

PRESS KIT

Press Release

Contents

Quotes

Reviews

Interview

Graphics

— PRESS RELEASE —

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Will Roscoe
Bradley Rose
(415) 731-4503

WHAT DOES PREHISTORIC CAVE ART HAVE TO DO WITH FUTURISM? WHAT DOES GAY HISTORY HAVE IN COMMON WITH FEMINIST SPIRITUALITY, OR CONTEMPORARY XEROX AND RUBBER STAMP ART, OR ESSAYS REDEFINING CONSCIOUSNESS ITSELF?

SUCH DIVERSE SUBJECTS HAVE A GREAT DEAL IN COMMON ACCORDING TO A NEW PUBLICATION CALLED VORTEX: A JOURNAL OF NEW VISION. THESE AND MANY OTHER FASCINATING TOPICS ARE ALL INCLUDED IN THE MOST RECENT ISSUE OF VORTEX WHICH FEATURES CONTRIBUTIONS FROM POET JAMES BROUGHTON AND WRITERS DEAN GENGLE, H. CONSTANCE KING, AND MARK THOMPSON.

VORTEX, BASED IN SAN FRANCISCO, IS A QUARTERLY JOURNAL NOW ENTERING ITS SECOND YEAR OF PUBLICATION. FOUNDED BY A GROUP OF ARTISTS AND WRITERS, VORTEX IS DESIGNED TO COMBINE CURRENT MATERIAL FROM WOMEN, GAY MEN, NEW WAVE, NEW AGE, AND ALTERNATIVE ARTISTS.

"VORTEX IS A SPIRAL VISION," SAYS THE PREFACE TO ISSUE #2, WINTER 1981, "IT BEGAN WITH THE KNOWLEDGE THAT CREATIVE PEOPLE WERE MAKING LIVES FOR THEMSELVES OUTSIDE THE MAINSTREAM." WITH THAT WORKING PREMISE, VORTEX PUBLISHES ARTICLES, ART, GRAPHICS, POETRY, LITERATURE--EVEN MUSIC--BASED ON EACH PIECE'S CONTRIBUTION TO AN "ALTERNATIVE CULTURE."

"THAT MEANS THAT VORTEX SHARES THE VALUES OF MANY POLITICAL AND CULTURAL MOVEMENTS TODAY. AT THE SAME TIME, WE ARE NOT ADVOCATING ONE IDEOLOGY. WE ARE QUESTIONING AND CHALLENGING. WE ARE EXPLORING A NEW CONSCIOUSNESS, A NEW WAY OF SEEING THE WORLD AND NATURE. THIS MEANS PERSONAL AND SOCIAL CHANGE," SAYS WILL ROSCOE, CORE CIRCLE MEMBER.

"VARIETY IS ALSO IMPORTANT," ROSCOE ADDS. "IF ONE ARTICLE

—more—

The logo for Vortex, featuring the word "VORTEX" in a stylized, bold, sans-serif font. The letters are slightly irregular and have a hand-drawn feel. The 'V' and 'X' are particularly prominent.

P.O. Box 11622

San Francisco, CA 94101

DOESN'T WORK FOR A PARTICULAR READER THEN MAYBE A VERY DIFFERENT APPROACH WILL."

CONTRIBUTORS TO VORTEX INCLUDE SOME FAMILIAR NAMES: STARHAWK, AUTHOR OF THE SPIRAL DANCE, SAMUEL M. STEWARD, AUTHOR OF DEAR SAMMIE: LETTERS FROM GERTRUDE STEIN AND ALICE B. TOKLAS, POETS LIKE JAMES BROUGHTON AND JUDY GRAHN, ARTISTS CAMILLE O'GRADY, EVA LAKE, LOU RUDOLPH, AND PAUL E. BROWN. EQUALLY NUMEROUS, HOWEVER, ARE THE NAMES OF NEW, YOUNG ARTISTS AND WRITERS APPEARING IN VORTEX.

VISUAL VARIETY IS ALSO A KEY ELEMENT OF VORTEX. WITH THE DIMENSIONS OF NINE INCHES WIDE BY SEVENTEEN INCHES TALL, VORTEX IS UNIQUE AMONG NEWSPRINT TABLOIDS. THE 32-PAGE JOURNAL IS FILLED WITH GRAPHICS IN BOLD BLACK-AND-WHITE.

VORTEX ALSO INCORPORATES ACTUAL "ART-ON-THE-PAGE." ISSUE NUMBER TWO FEATURED A PHOTOCOLLAGE ON THE BACK COVER BY GINNY LLOYD WITH A RUBBER-STAMP IMAGE, IN COLOR, APPLIED BY HAND TO EACH COPY OF THE MAGAZINE. WHILE ARTISTS' HAND-MADE PUBLICATIONS HAVE BECOME POPULAR RECENTLY, VORTEX IS ONE OF THE FIRST PUBLICATIONS TO EXPLORE ITS APPLICATIONS IN AN OVERALL PRINTED MAGAZINE. PLANS FOR THE UPCOMING FOURTH ISSUE INCLUDE AN APPLICATION OF COLOR XEROX ART.

WITH DISTRIBUTION AND SUBSCRIBERS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY, VORTEX HAS BEEN RECEIVING ATTENTION FROM MANY QUARTERS. "VORTEX IS THE PAPER OF RECORD--NOT OF THE PAST--THE FUTURE," SAYS BRAD MULROY, WRITER FOR THE NEW YORK CITY NEWS.

AS ARTIST CAMILLE O'GRADY SAYS IN ISSUE TWO, "THE PEOPLE WHO HAVE BEEN PUSHING THE BOUNDARIES ARE THE ONES WHO ARE GOING TO BE READY FOR THE BIG TIME CHANGES AHEAD. THIS IS MAGIC." VORTEX: A JOURNAL OF NEW VISION BRINGS US THE VIEW FROM THE BOUNDARIES ON ALL FRONTIERS--POLITICAL, CULTURAL, SPIRITUAL. IF THIS IS MAGIC THEN VORTEX IS FILLED WITH THE UNEXPECTED SURPRISES OF MAGIC COVER TO COVER.

CONTENTS

VORTEX #1 - Fall 1980

<i>Nightstick: A Novelized Account of the May 21 Riots</i>	Stephen Marks
<i>A Call for Sanctuaries</i>	Harry Hay & John Burnside
<i>Behind Me (fiction)</i>	Bradley Rose
<i>Planet Lake (centerfold art)</i>	Eva Lake

PLUS Poetry and graphics by: Nona Collins, Carol
Queen, H.B. Pony, and Mrdr.

VORTEX #2 - Winter 1981

<i>Statement & Other Writings (poetry/prose/graphics)</i>	Dennis Miles, graphics by Paul E. Brown
<i>Mainstream Exiles: A Documentary Review</i>	Contributions from: Tede Matthews, Judy Grahn, Blackberri, Randy Johnson, Canyon Sam, Emanuel Ro
<i>Orpheus (fiction)</i>	Samuel M. Steward, graphics by Larry Bord
<i>Fairy Tongue (etymology)</i>	Bradley Rose
<i>Fractured Image (back cover art with rubber stamp)</i>	Ginny Lloyd

VORTEX #3 - Spring/Summer 1981

<i>I Am Running (poetry)</i>	James Broughton
<i>Futurism and Neoshamanism</i>	Dean Gengle
<i>Magic of the Caves: Art of Spirit and Harmony</i>	H. Constance King
<i>Thoughts About My Art in Context (essay, portfolio)</i>	Cornelia Reich
<i>A Sense of Center: Interview with the Marxist Spirituality Collective</i>	Will Roscoe
<i>In Our Own Way: An Interview with W. Dorr Legg</i>	Brad Mulroy
<i>Lou Rudolph (review, graphics)</i>	Mark Thompson, Lou Rudolph



QUOTES

OPENING STATEMENT

V. 1, No. 1 We call to readers and contributors to join us in exploring new possibilities, new worlds, new ways of seeing and feeling...the New Vision.

JOHN BURNSIDE

V. 1, No. 1 One of the aspects of our work is to find all those people, gay and straight alike, who are working toward new possibilities and things.

STARHAWK

V. 1, No. 2 I feel myself more and more committed to pulling together the political and the spiritual.

DOCUMENTARY REVIEW OF MAINSTREAM EXILES

V. 1, No. 2 Artists have to offer not only a powerful means of communication -- they can also project actual visions of non-sexist, non-racist, non-hierarchical consciousness.

H. CONSTANCE KING

V. 1, No. 3 We can learn much from ages and cultures that knew/know the inter-relationships of all things, whose spirit and life were one.

DEAN GENGLE

V. 1, No. 3 The shaman of the '80s is at the hard-cutting, sinewy blade-edge of disruption.

LOU RUDOLPH

V. 1, No. 3 I now see how art is directly tied with the very core energy of life.



ACCLAIM

"VORTEX IS THE
PAPER OF RECORD
--NOT OF THE PAST
--THE FUTURE."

BRAD MULROY
Columnist for *New York City News*

"VORTEX IS THE YELLOW
(RED HOT, WHITE-ON,
SINGING-THE-BLUES,
GREEN LIGHT)
JOURNALISM OF ITS DAY."

MARK THOMPSON
Cultural Editor for *The Advocate*

"VORTEX STRETCHES
THE BOUNDARIES
ON ALL FRONTS."

MAGICAL BLEND
Issue 4, Summer 1981

"RFD WELCOMES
THIS EMERGING VOICE
FOR NEW VISIONS."

RFD: A Country Journal
Fall Issue 1980

"THE FORMAT IS INTERESTING.
NUMBER 2 HAD A HAND-RUBBER
STAMPED IMAGE ON EACH COPY. THE
ARTICLES ARE VARIED AND PROVOCATIVE."

Judith Hoffberg
UMBRELLA, May '81



BEHIND VORTEX

An Interview with Vortex organizers Bradley Rose and Will Roscoe

HOW DID VORTEX GET STARTED?

BR: We both knew people who were writing interesting things or doing fantastic artwork who weren't being published. We felt there was a need for a publication that featured individual expression with a lot of experimentation, and we felt that we could start that publication.

WR: We formed a small working circle. We're all basically artists and writers ourselves. We shared among us a disillusionment with the directions many of the movements of the '70s have taken as they've tried to establish relationships with the larger world. Where were the people who still wanted to explore being *different* from the mainstream, taking risks and exploring new forms? Well, we knew they were out there in every community. We started VORTEX to bring them together, to juxtapose and connect the vital core of what we see happening today in art, politics and spirituality. We are the underground press of the '80s.

HOW DO YOU DEFINE VORTEX? IS IT A 'GAY' PUBLICATION?

WR: Gay people produce VORTEX and contributions of writing and art by gay people can be found throughout VORTEX. But for us, 'gay publication' was just a starting point. The problem we had was that the word 'gay' has come to be so broadly applied that it has little meaning anymore. There are 'gay Republicans', 'gay marching bands', and 'gay shopping and dining streets'. If we called VORTEX a 'gay publication' what would that say?

We decided that our values and visions are most important. We put those upfront. We share ideals with many political and cultural movements. But we want to go past the very concept of 'movement'. We are questioning and challenging. We are seeking a new consciousness, an alternative to Western worldviews, a new way of seeing our planet, a way, we hope, that will lead us out of this blind tunnel of nuclear and environmental holocaust. As Mark Thompson said in VORTEX #2, 'In the coming epoch our essence will be determined less by creed or affiliation - more by the arch of our vision.'

BR: The material in VORTEX is inspired by vision. It includes gay experience, the variety of gay experience, as well as individual expression. We use the term 'New Vision' to describe our sort of publication.

WHAT CONNECTS ARTICLES LIKE 'MAGIC OF THE CAVES: ART OF SPIRIT AND HARMONY', 'FUTURISM AND NEOSHAMANISM', SUBJECTS LIKE WITCHCRAFT AND POLITICS, AND ARTISTS LIKE CAMILLE O'GRADY AND CORNELIA REICH?

BR: The work of all these people point to alternative directions for our culture. These people are exploring and inspiring. They aren't just taking the route of attaching themselves to a mate and reproducing - and that's it. Their offspring is vision and vision is the connection - New Vision. Born into every culture are those few who reject the established values and metaphors - who see something new and better beyond the status quo. This is what we mean by New Vision. Without such people, culture would be left entirely to its conservators who would preserve it from change. And this in our rapidly evolving world would mean extinction.

WR: I can offer an example of that connection. In VORTEX #3 we featured two artists, Cornelia Reich and Lou Rudolph. On the surface they have little in common. Cornelia creates carefully refined images with oil pastels. Lou takes his six foot canvases into night clubs and paints punk bands while they perform. Although there are these differences, both artists stressed one point in their interviews: The process by which they express themselves is a conscious, chosen process. For Cornelia, self-hypnosis opened the way to her own inner imagery. For Lou, the connection with explosive punk performance 'lets the more psychic/spiritual side come out.'

When I saw these two articles together in VORTEX, I realized that the connection between art and spirituality is the process both use to acquire a broader way of seeing.

Connections like these, deep and not immediately apparent, link the material in VORTEX and make reading the journal a little like detective work if you get into it. We try to leave clues when we can.

UNLIKE GAY MEN'S PUBLICATIONS LIKE *GAY SUNSHINE* ON THE ONE HAND AND WOMEN'S LITERARY PUBLICATIONS LIKE *HERESIES* ON THE OTHER, VORTEX IS CO-SEXUAL. WHAT HAS IT BEEN LIKE TO WORK ON A PUBLICATION INVOLVING MEN AND WOMEN?

WR: Many women have always been interested in work with men - but to be effective in working together with women, men generally have to unlearn a whole consciousness, a whole way of imposing their reality onto the world. Some of us are doing this unlearning. Over the years a small group of men have gained a great deal from the teachings of feminism and the experience of women.

When VORTEX started we believed it was possible to say that there were certain areas of interest that some men and women shared. VORTEX is based on the intersection of two independent circles - that area where the two circles overlap. Our experience so far has been successful and the response is supportive.

HOW DID VORTEX COME TO HAVE SUCH AN UNUSUAL DESIGN? WHAT IS THE SOURCE OF YOUR FORMAT AND YOUR GRAPHICS?

WR: People describe our look as 'new wave' and there is influence from the graphics of the new wave/punk scene. Specifically, I would trace our influence - in terms of contemporary graphics - to black and white xerox art of the '70s - cheap, accessible mass communication. Street posters, etc.

Even greater has been the influence of that art's origins, namely, the avant garde art of the first two decades of this century in Germany and Russia (as opposed to the Western and French modern art that's promoted and marketed almost exclusively in America by mainstream art schools and museums).

These artists from the German Expressionists to Bauhaus, from Kandinsky to Malevich - in all their variety - were exploring a new way of seeing, a way beyond the narrow 19th century materialistic worldview. An exploration that I feel is essentially spiritual in nature. So when we planned our design we got a lot of inspiration from such early publications as *Der Blaue Reiter*, *Die Bruecke*, *De Stijl* and *Lef*.

BR: The designs of Natalia Goncharova, Olga Rozanova, Malevich, and Kandinsky still agitate established notions of orderly design. They went for the rough and irregular, the iconoclastic, the rubber stamp, the flawed, hand-lettered face. VORTEX has this same sort of kinesis and texture, is moved by a kindred spirit. VORTEX is tall and narrow, black and white, memorably irregular.

WR: William Stewart suggested the actual dimensions of nine by seventeen inches. It requires a special trimming, but the result is a totally unusual format.

In an even larger sense, our goal is to integrate the written word with graphics and visuals in a new way. This was also I think one motivation of the artists of the early 20th century, too. In VORTEX we want to communicate on many levels. We try to give the reader as much information as possible, organized in an intelligible way. To do this, we try to connect every written contribution with visual graphics, usually contacting artists or designers to do original work to accompany a piece.

WHAT CAN WE EXPECT IN FUTURE ISSUES?

BR: Art, spirituality, politics...lots more art. Seeing how we see. Interviews, fiction, autobiography, essays, history, music. Bold lines going this way and that, some white space, and plenty of black and dark.

We'll look at how decisions are made. Articles on anarchy, subversion, consensus, imperialism - in theory and practice.

But always fresh, personal, and new. Always in the VORTEX.

WR: Look for surprises, too. Our second issue had a rubber stamp image applied to each copy. At our last meeting we tried to figure out how to do a 3-d cover. Right now we're planning a color xerox application for issue #4.

Copyright 1981 by VORTEX

*Permission granted for reproduction in part or whole
for one time publicity/review purposes.*

VORTEX

P.O. Box 11622

San Francisco, CA 94101