

THE ARCHIVE

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LESLIE/LOHMAN GAY ART FOUNDATION

Number 29 Winter 2008

G O S E E S Y O U

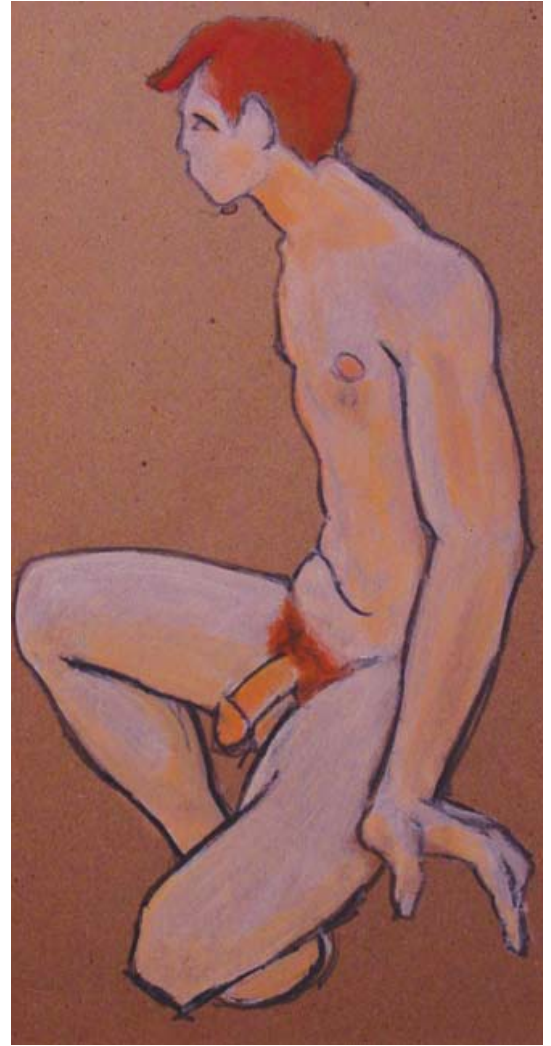


Leslie Lohman

HARMON van den BOGAERT & TOBIAS
Nieuw Amsterdam
1647



Carlson Lage, *Harman and Tobias*, 2008, Digital photograph, 20" x 20"
See the article on the *Imaginary Portraits: Gay Lovers in History* exhibition on page 22.



J.B. Harter,
Left: *Untitled, n.d.,*
 Acrylic on paper,
 16" x 8"

Right: *Untitled, n.d.,*
 Gouache on brown paper,
 14" x 8"

Courtesy The John Burton Harter
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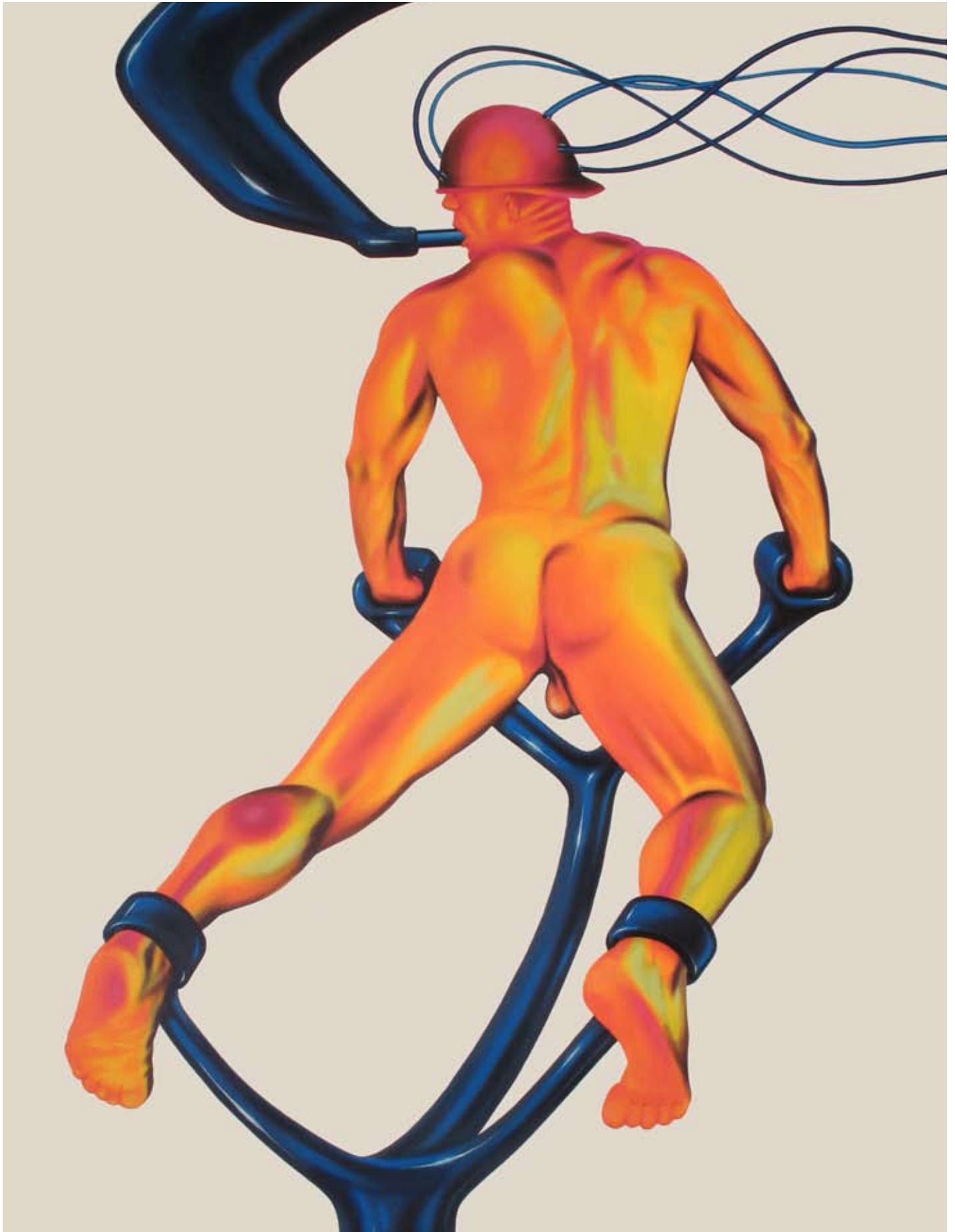
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COVER: Peter Harvey, *God Sees You*, 1992/96,
 Pencil, Conté, and watercolor on paper
 See the article on Peter Harvey's *Images from the Triangle* on page 9.



Spike, *Caught In The Web*, 2003, Oil and latex on canvas, 60" x 48"

CYBEROTIC

SPIKE'S VISUAL JOURNEY INTO CYBERSEX

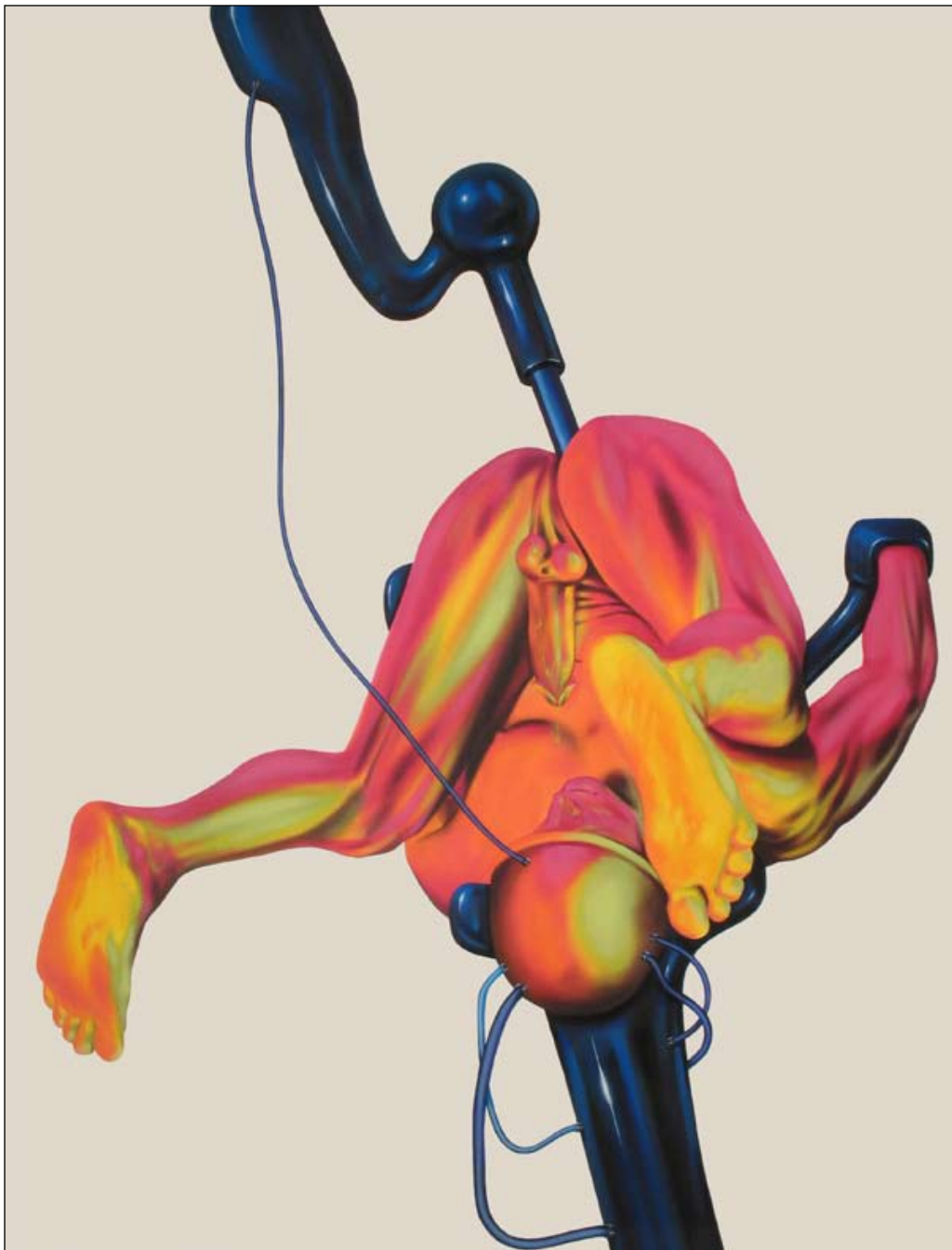
BY JERRY KAJPUST

Artists visually represent what they experience in life and see in their world; Spike is no exception. Sex, men, color, and beauty are some of Spike's life experiences projected in his art. He has been a film and set designer, a painter, a graphic artist, and a porn actor, starring in over 37 films for companies including Falcon, All Worlds Video, and Chi Chi La Rue.

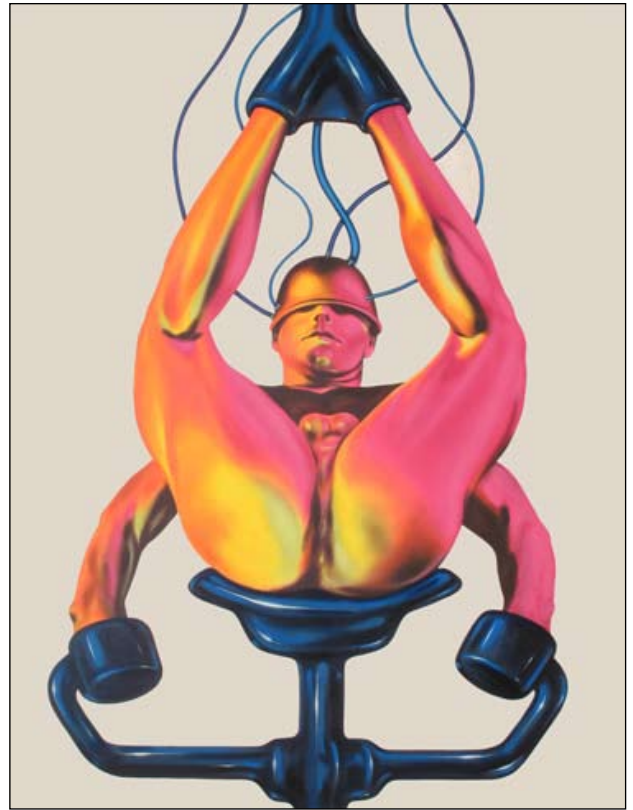
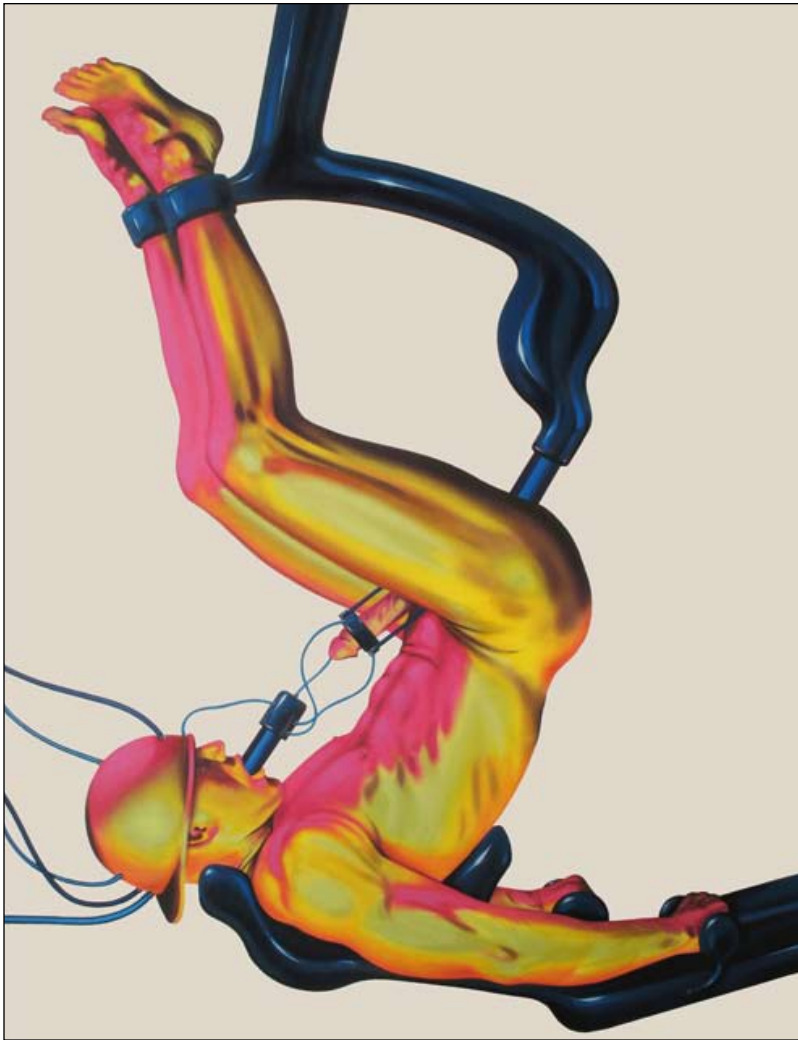
Cyberotic, exhibited at Leslie/Lohman Gallery Nov. 19–Dec. 20, 2008, is a series of 10 4.5' x 5' paintings that explore the visual and mental imagery of cybersex—cybersex or virtual sex is two or more people exchanging digital information with the intention of sexual arousal; cyberdildonics are devices which enhance cybersex with actual physical stimulation. One look at Spike's single helmeted male nudes dangling in bizarre positions amid techno-hardware immediately propels you into this cyber-realm.

In 2003, the *Cyberotic* series started from a drawing inspired by Spike's mother, which he titled *Sex on the Brain*. In this drawing, the grey matter of the brain is comprised of intertwined bodies. This drawing inspired Spike to think of the mental gymnastics that occur in the brain during sex. In creating *Cyberotic*, Spike explored virtual eroticism with pencil on vellum, sketching a man in various poses surrounded by machine parts. Next, he photographed a friend posing in various sexual positions. The lighting was enhanced with color gels to contrast and highlight the shadows and lines, creating intense dynamic images. After completing the color studies, he was ready to interpret these images in paint on canvas.

Inspired by the images of Maxfield Parrish, Spike worked in a medium of Liquin and oil paint to create these dazzling images. Wikipedia states that Parrish's art "... features dazzlingly luminous colors. He achieved these results by means of a technique called glazing where bright layers of oil color separated



Spike, *Gigahurtz*, 2003,
Oil and latex on canvas,
60" x 48"



Left: Spike, *Hardware*, 2003,
Oil and latex on canvas,
60" x 48"

Above: Spike, *Megabyte*, 2003,
Oil and latex on canvas,
60" x 48"

by varnish are applied alternately over a base rendering. The result is realism of elegiac vivacity. [Parrish's] work achieves a unique three-dimensional appearance which does not translate well to coffee table books." In *Cyberotic*, male images have a soft, sensual feel and appear to be airbrushed, but they're not. In contrast to this softness, the figures are juxtaposed with hard metal machinery. As with Parrish's works, *Cyberotic* is best seen in the original state as the three-dimensional appearance makes for difficulty in capturing the intensity and depth through photography.

In approaching art, Spike prefers to focus more on process and details than the finished product. He gains inspiration from the great masters as well as contemporary artists and illustrators such as J.C. Leyendecker, Olivia de Berardnis, Mel Odom, and Hajime Sorayama. "I'm inspired by the beauty of color and the male form. I'm often disappointed that the pop art artists of the 60s didn't really push the envelope; a large mono-

chromatic canvas of green paint just doesn't do much for me."

Spike, born Ernest Trevino, grew up in Southern California and began his art education as part of an elementary school program called GATE (Gifted and Talented Education) and continued with study at Golden West College, and jewelry making at Cerritos College. His skills developed further through hands-on training, creating film and set design, and stage backdrops. He became a trained muralist and is proficient in trompe l'oeil. His first major film project was *Army of Darkness (Evil Dead III, 1992)* directed by Sam Raimi. He has worked on several other projects including *The Fifth Element (1997)*, directed by Luc Besson and starring Bruce Willis. Spike performed the role of a drag singer in *Billy's Hollywood Screen Kiss (1998)* starring Sean Hayes.

In addition to *Cyberotic*, his work includes *Martini*, a series of bright, intense, colorful graphic illustrations of martini glasses; and *Tatt2d*,

featuring male figures painted against fields of metal leaf. Both these series have been exhibited at Posh Bar in NYC. Currently, he is experimenting with digital manipulation and video editing. Also nearing completion is his website, which he plans to launch in spring 2009.

When asked about his hopes for the future, he replied, "Although I primarily paint for myself, I would hope that I inspire others with a sense of beauty and that they are moved by what I create. I see myself as visionary and in the future hope to expand my artistic endeavors to other mediums such as clay, metal, and stone, exploring sculpture as well. Ultimately, I would love to have a large studio space where I could work on several different projects simultaneously in order to play, create, and grow my craft."

Jerry Kajpust is a personal development coach, and an archivist at the Leslie/Lohman Gay Art Foundation.

MAKING GAY POLITICAL ART

BY NATHANIEL SIEGEL



As an artist the work I feel most connected to comes at times of complete psychic freedom, in the early morning, the post-dreams, pre-awakening, hypnagogic state. Creating for me is a political act—for example writing poems and reading them aloud. To quote the poet Sapphires: “Who says it for one says it for all.”

Organizing public readings is an opportunity to present my own work and the work of artists who I admire and emulate. The evening I curated honoring the poet, Thom Gunn on Dec 1, 2004 at The Bowery Poetry Club, and the evening of gay male poets presented at The Leslie/Lohman Gay Art Foundation on Oct 16, 2008 are two examples.

In my paintings I work with emotions and make instructional pieces.

Painting To End the War Now is a meditation on how we define ourselves as human in a time when human life is under attack.

My drawings trace the exchange of energy between overlapping energy fields: my eye, where the model is in his body, and where I am in my body. I follow my vision and allow my reaction to the stimulus—a beautiful nude male model—to appear. My lines are minimal, the ideas not overworked. As a guide I use Allen Ginsberg’s concept: “first thought, best thought.”

As a photographer I record moments in the street: a cloud formation, building graffiti, or a protest. I think I appear relaxed and confident so the people I photograph can be themselves, smile back, and shine through.



Above: Nathaniel Siegel, *2,117 Days of Silence*, 2007, Installation, First installation Poetry Club, NYC. Recreated 2008 Leslie/Lohman Gay Art Foundation.

Left: Detail from *2,117 Days of Silence*



Approaching my performance work I follow this sequence: first to be grounded and free of worldly stuff—watch, keys, coins, clutter. Check my voice and vibration. Connect with the words on the page and feel them inside of me. Then connect to the audience. I believe people want to be connected to their feelings and performance is a ritual through which this can be achieved.

The Leslie/Lohman Gay Art Foundations presented my installation *2,117 Days of Silence*, Nov. 18–Dec. 20, 2008. This piece was created to mark the 20th anniversary of ACT-UP New York City. I assembled documentary evidence of the political struggle of people with HIV/AIDS and their supporters beginning with the first mention of AIDS in *The New York Times*, July 3, 1981: “Rare Cancer Seen in 41 Homosexuals” by Lawrence K. Altman. Other documents incorporated into the installation include the poster *SILENCE=DEATH* (1986) inspired by President Ronald Reagan’s inaction; the transcript of Reagan’s first public statement of the word

“AIDS”, April 1, 1987, at a luncheon for Members of the College of Physicians in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; and ACT-UP New York City’s notice on their website in the same year, “41,027 persons are dead and 71,176 persons diagnosed with AIDS in the U.S.”

Using calendars of the years 1981 to 1989, the years of the Reagan administration, I have visually presented those days of silence. The calendars presented are from my own collection and are representative of images that would be available to gay men in the 80s.

And I offer this postscript to the installation. A full twenty-seven years since the world first learned about HIV/AIDS and effective ways to prevent infection with the proper use of condoms, the silence continues. In New York City, there is still no public school education of ways to prevent the transmission of sexually transmitted diseases including HIV/AIDS. The Bush administration’s abstinence programs regarding discussions of sexual activity among teenagers and young

adults amounts to the same *SILENCE=DEATH* scenario for our lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and straight youth.

As an author, artist, and presenter I expose myself to the world at large. As an out artist I am ready to expose my essence: my love of men—my eyes going to other men’s eyes as well as to the tip of their cocks. And I relish the fact that the hand with which I create touches men’s bodies—my own and my lovers.

I record and instigate change in myself and others as we move from passivity to active citizenry in democracy, in the universe, in love.

Nathaniel Siegel is the administrative assistant for The Leslie/Lohman Gay Art Foundation. He thanks The Foundation for inviting him into this out world as a member of the staff, contributor to The Archive, and as an exhibiting artist.

Nathaniel Siegel, *Painting To End the War Now (Washington DC)*, 2008, Photograph by Dan Wilcox. The painting consists of the ages of service men and women who have died in Iraq stenciled in the chronological order of their deaths. The painting has also been presented at the Howl Festival and Brooklyn Peace Fair, NYC, 2008.

ABOUT IMAGES FROM THE TRIANGLE

BY PETER HARVEY

As the AIDS years passed and brought me nearer and finally face to face with direct personal loss, I found two things were happening; First I was saddened and then isolated by the deaths of so many people I knew and worked with in the 60s and 70s—that singular period of sexual revolt that produced the Stonewall and of which we are all heirs. For example, out of the eighteen or so men involved in “The Boy in the Band”, only the author, three actors and an assistant stage manager survive. The rest, beside myself, have all died from AIDS. This kind of annihilation of my peers and professional connections led me to work more by myself as a painter, rather than a theatre designer. The second is that within a few years I found the shadows of loss and grief made it harder and harder to believe in the colorful cheerful subjects my gallery dealer cared about.

I also found that the climate of destruction about me made me take more seriously my identity within the group that are the prime victims of this scourge here in America. As a gay man I needed to make some gesture of solidarity within the community and to help, somehow, in encouraging and strengthening our self-image and pride in it. I could only do this through my painting, as I'm not a public demonstrator type.

So I began to think about what had always given me a positive attitude towards my sexuality and its world and what connected me to the past and present in that milieu. Clearly it was the cultural contributions by other gay artists that had enriched my life, as well as all Western culture, that had constantly sustained me. I also realized in thinking about this that many of these artists were often obscure or esoteric and sometime it was not generally known they were gay or it was denied—although that it harder to do these days. So here indeed was something I cared deeply about and which would be meaningful to bring to the attention of others and in doing so, hopefully, enrich them



Peter Harvey, *Four Self-Portraits*, 1993, Oil and charcoal on canvas, 39" x 32"

Details clockwise from upper left: Marsden Hartley (*Self portrait*); *Painting #47, Berlin*, 1925, by Marsden Hartley; *Peter Getting Out of Nick's Pool*, 1964, by David Hockney; *David Hockney (Self portrait)*; *Decorative Painting from Fireplace at Charleston House*, ca 1930, by Duncan Grant; *Duncan Grant (Self portrait)*; *Assembly of Figures*, ca 1950, by Keith Vaughn; *Keith Vaughn (Self portrait)*. Images were chosen to illuminate the continuum from the cryptic symbolism of Marsden Hartley, through the sensual painting of Duncan Grant, and the stylized men of Keith Vaughn, to the openness of David Hockney's imagery.



and help bolster them along as it does me.

Of course I'm aware that these paintings are loaded with things paintings are not supposed to be concerned with—I've always loved content and found it important. I tend to agree with the school that says pure abstraction really remains decoration and so is unable to move us, while human images will always connect us with our humanity. I hope I'm not preaching but just reminding the viewer that such and such exists or was done in such a way once and it has enriched

our lives and we mustn't forget it. That is how and why the *Image from the Triangle* series came about.

Peter Harvey's series of painting and drawings Images from the Triangle were exhibited at The Leslie/Lohman Gay Art Foundation from November 18-December 20, 2008.

Peter Harvey is an accomplished theatre designer, and painter. In 2007 he curated the Leslie/Lohman exhibition Stage Struck, with a vast selection of costume and set design .



Top left: Peter Harvey, *Homage to Genet*, 1997, Oil on canvas, 39" x 32"
Top right: Peter Harvey, *Images from the Triangle*, 1993, Oil on canvas, 39" x 32"
Above: Peter Harvey, *Alas, No Phoenix*, 1995, Oil on canvas with dissicated bird, 46" x 35"

ANGELA JIMENEZ PHOTOGRAPHER

BY JENNIFER EDWARDS



Recently I had the opportunity to sit down with freelance journalist and documentary photographer Angela Jimenez. We explored many avenues of discourse stemming from one theme: How do you balance your work as a mainstream photojournalist and as a very out artist? Where does the balance lie? Where does one meet the other?

Jimenez pauses and begins, "The way that I balance [my work] has shifted as society has shifted. I think the identity and access I bring to journalism as a queer person have become more valued."

As the conversation revolved around identity and bringing "who you are" to the work you do, Jimenez

shared that she is always in a learning process.

Angela Jimenez (AJ): I have been thinking about the intersection of journalism and art. Stories I come to with a real passion challenge me to acknowledge that it's OK that some things are close to home. It's OK that it feels intimate. This is something that is radical to me. It's not necessarily what I was taught to do as a journalist. I have been reading about "participant observation," which is a term from anthropology. I've been searching for language; I don't have it, and I feel a little disoriented by that. As journalists, we are trying not to affect what we are observing, but there is an intimate dialogue that has to go on with

subject matter that you are personally connected to.

We talked about a particular project that ran in *The New York Times*. The piece was about the last existing day high school in the United States for boys who are considering the vocation of the Roman Catholic priesthood.

AJ: My father was a priest. And I absolutely did this story because of my father. I have always been intrigued and confused by the idea of him being a teen-ager and deciding to go into this way of life, which he then left. I was therefore connected to the larger story of the Catholic priesthood as a waning institution. There was a two-pronged motivation here.

Angela Jimenez,
Performance Poet/Activist Jen/
Ed at the Storm King Art Center
in Mountainville, NY, 2005

We continued to examine how she bridges these aspects of her life.

AJ: In the past few years, two things have happened at the same time: First, there has been a broader and deeper discussion about gender and sexuality in our society. Second, I have developed a solid background as a journalist. Besides bringing a "gay" story to the table, I feel confident, as a reputable journalist, to be able to tell sincerely and document different kinds of stories as well. Telling stories in the media is an incremental process, each story builds on what has already been explored.

We spoke of her involvement with Velvetpark magazine.

AJ: It was like a lifeline to me. Otherwise I might have dropped it. I might have just thought, well I'm a queer person, but that doesn't necessarily have anything to do with my work. If you don't have an outlet, what motivates you? If I don't have an audience, whom am I telling my story to?

Jimenez has published work in the Advocate, Our Chart, Curve and S. She describes what she has done in the queer media as a labor of love.

AJ: I do it because it's valuable and has tuned into something that I take seriously. I am working on a book documenting the Michigan Womyn's Festival, and it has been very bare bones: drive across country, live in a tent. It is important too, to highlight that I do many things to be able to do my work: weddings, promotional shots, apply for grants, and self-fund many projects. I do want to emphasize that artists work hard to make the financial and physical space to create work.

Regarding personal identity:

AJ: I send out a monthly newsletter, and I don't differentiate between a family member, a friend, and an editor. At this point, if I were to sit down and look at my work and have to comb out what's queer and what's not, that would break my heart. There is just work that I am doing, and I don't even know how, or want, to separate them out.



Final question: If your approach to a project were a costume, what would it be?

AJ: Journalistic "clothing" is a neutrality. When approaching a subject, the most important thing is that readers see through my work that I respect them. My sexuality does not need to be present in every setting. I like putting myself in situations where there exists a philosophy I don't understand or necessarily agree with. I generally focus on how I am going to listen; how I am going to watch; how I can be a clear chan-

nel or conduit through which a story can visually unfold.

A regular contributor to The Archive, Jennifer Edwards has also been published in Velvetpark magazine, Tathaastu: So Be It magazine, and womenandbiz.com. Her work as a teacher of sustainable stress reduction has been featured in The New York Times. www.relaxationonthego.net.

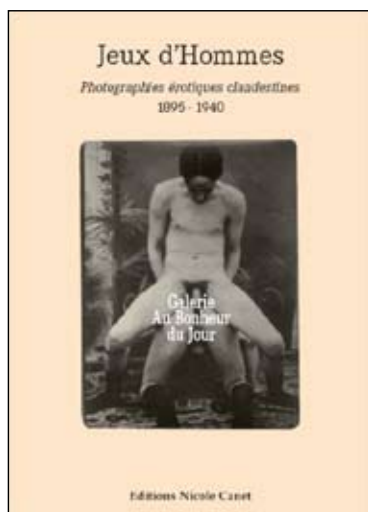
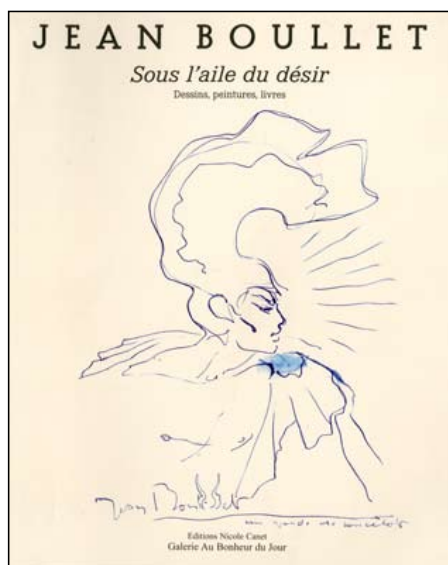
Angela Jimenez,
Top: Lesbian ballroom dancers Petra Zimmermann and Caroline Privou of Cologne, Germany, Dancesport, Gay Games VII, Hilton Hotel, Chicago, 2006
Lower: Miki Plumbing in the Ferns, 2006, Color digital photograph. From the project: The Michigan Womyn's Music Festival

WINGS OF DESIRE

BY DOUGLAS BLAIR TURNBAUGH

Jean Boulet: *Sous l'aile du désir*
Dessins, peintures, livres (1942-1965)
Preface in French and English by Denis Chollet
116 pages, 80 illustrations, 8 ¼ x 10 ½ inches
Limited edition of 500 hand-numbered copies
Published by Nicole Canet, Galerie Au Bonheur du Jour

Jeux d'Hommes
Photographies érotiques clandestines (1895 -1940)
Preface in French and English by Raymond Martinez
112 pages, 92 illustrations, 6 x 8 ¼ inches
Limited edition of 1000 hand-numbered copies
Published by Nicole Canet, Galerie Au Bonheur du Jour



Jean Boulet, *Untitled (French Sailor)*, n.d., Ink on paper

As for really rare and fabulous pictures of various aspects of homoerotica, we can always turn to the publications of gay art connoisseur/dealer Nicole Canet. Her recent publication on Jean Boulet (1921-1970) will be an introduction to most Americans of this major French artist. He was a truly exotic creature, not a poseur, but an extrovert manic-depressive “Accursed Painter.” His flowing almost calligraphic style reminds one of Cocteau, but not for long. Boulet’s work is more spontaneous and varies in quality according to his mood. Unlike Cocteau, he had no ambitions to be part of the smart set of Paris. While Cocteau wore lipstick, partly to appear scandalous-chic, Boulet wore leather before it was a fashion statement and hung out with anti-social, dissolute people. He had more in common with Jean Genet. This toughness is reflected in his art.

His work is autobiographical, as was Picasso’s. He celebrates himself, male beauty (including

the penis), and homoerotic sexuality—“hard” as the French say. Sometimes depicted are his most tender romantic fantasies, even visions of pre-sexual rapture, as in his series *Le Tapis Volant* (1945). This is a kind of Arabian nights vision of a little hookah-smoking harem boy (as would have been played by Sabu in an x-rated movie version). It also has innocence reminiscent of Antoine de Saint Exupéry’s *The Little Prince*.

I first saw work by Boulet in a book published in 1960 by Der Kreis, a group of homosexual Europeans based in Switzerland because of its more liberal laws. Even so, membership was anonymous. This was a group of closeted gentlemen who worked in a quiet way for relief of persecution of gays. Many gay artists contributed to the book, Boulet and Cadmus under their own names, but some used pseudonyms. It was a brave publication and, to minimize risk of prosecution it was printed exclusively for its international membership: it was not



Left: Jean Boulet, *Untitled*, n.d., Ink on paper
Right: Jean Boulet, *Tapis volant (Flying Carpet)*, 1945, Charcoal on paper
Below: Anonymous, *Jeux de jeunes hommes au corset et à la robe* (*Young Men's Games with Lingerie*), 1895, Citrate print, 8" x 6", Collection Michael Stokes, Los Angeles



offered for sale. The fear of these men was not paranoiac: Boulet was found dead, hanging from a tree on the edge of the Algerian desert, in 1970. His death might have been suicide, or sex games gone wrong, or drug related or murder by homophobic or a jealous lover. Maybe he died for love? Remember Marlene Dietrich taking off her high-heeled shoes to join a group of whores following a troop of French legionnaires (including Gary Cooper) out into the omnivorous desert?

Jeux d'Hommes: Photographies erotiques clandestines 1895 – 1940 has a selection of vintage photographs the like of which I have never seen. Surviving photographs of male nudes of the turn of the century are usually of body culturists, mustachioed or not. And it is easy to find vintage photos of men in drag. But homoerotic pornography, always illicit, was rarer. Strange to our eyes are naked men, sporting erections, wearing black shoes and black hose supported by garters! A fetish of yesteryear.

Mme. Canet has pieced together, from various collections, a fabulous set of thirteen photographs of two attractive young men wearing sumptuous female lingerie. They are obviously enjoying themselves immensely, performing a selection of sexual intimacies worthy of the *Kama Sutra*. In his insightful intro-

duction to the book, Raymond Martinez writes "All these photographs belong to a period when erotic self-assertiveness silently sprang up.... This world rejected the power of morality and the dominant rules of love.... Some courageous photographers dared to...stage erotic scenes, straightforwardly and very personally.... Suddenly, strong erections are no longer the focus of attention. Our interest is now aroused by the unforgettable eye of the model. The smile of those who delightfully consented to be shown caressing each other will now be eternally remembered." He goes on to ask "Will we be able to share the history of our desires in the future?" going on to mention that contemporary photographers

"no longer reveal the faces of Eros. They only sing of the cock and the phallus."

Published by Nicole Canet, Galerie Au Bonheur du Jour, 11, rue Chabanis, 75002 Paris, www.aubonheurdujour.net, aubonheurdujour@curiositel.com.

Douglas Blair Turnbaugh, author, collector, filmmaker, is a Member of the LLGAF Advisory Committee, and a frequent contributor to The Archive.

The Leslie/Lohman Gay Art Foundation has an exquisite drawing by Boulet in the permanent collection, Two Young Men in 69 Position, n.d., Ink on paper.

EDWARD MELCARTH

AN ESSAY ON AN ENIGMA

BY JAY BODA

There is in the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, an archive measuring 7.3 linear ft. It includes biographical information, photographs, correspondence, writings, and works of art, printed material, sound recordings and miscellany of Edward Melcarth (1914-1973). The photographs taken by Melcarth are of the gritty streets of New York in the 1940s and 1950s and of the wide world of the glitterati in various watering holes of the world. There are 146 manuscripts of short stories, novels, poems, song lyrics, essays, books, and travel articles, few of which were ever published. The works of art include sketchbooks and loose sketches, besides a list of works sold by Durlacher Bros., 1948-1962. This archive is not easily accessible and the reproduction of any material not easily gained.

In the Forbes Gallery Collection, there are several highly charged homoerotic paintings: *The Rumble*, *The Last*

Supper, *The Rape of the Sabines* (All three paintings from 1950s and 1960s.) These paintings are not on display, and one is not able to ascertain their location. Reproduction of these paintings is not easy to obtain and requires a contract, if allowed at all.

Melcarth's mural *The Four Winds* (1957) in the lobby of the Lunt-Fontaine Theatre has been painted over. The room that contains his mural in the Hotel Pierre, which he painted together with Richard Taddei in 1967, is currently under restoration. It is, however, a sumptuous work depicting the rich and famous in the style of Giovanni Battista Tiepolo for a room where the rich and famous gather. Earlier paintings such as *Sit Down Strike*, a sixty-foot long painting for an auto workers union, and *The Sleepers* (1952), a twenty-foot long painting which appears to have been based on Walt Whitman's poem and a scene at Columbus Circle, have both been lost. Melcarth, however, designed

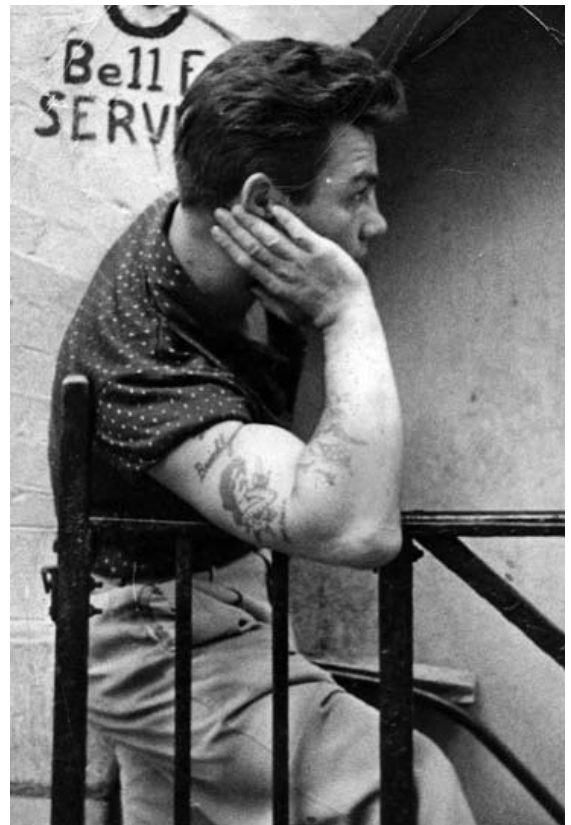
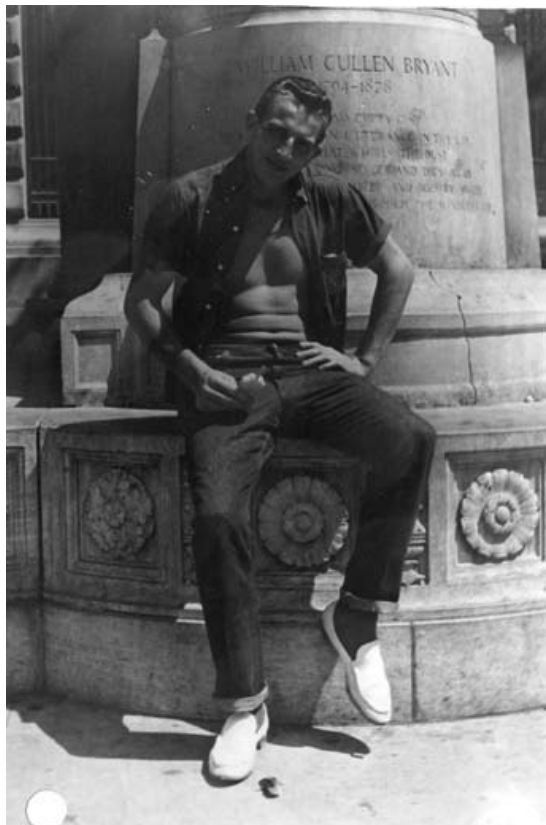


Edward Melcarth

Top right: *Two Sailors "On Leave"* (42nd Street and 8th Ave.), Late 1950s, Copy courtesy Richard Taddei.

Right: *Hustler Posing at Bryant Park*, Late 1950s, Copy courtesy Richard Taddei.

Far right: *Hustler*, Late 1950s, Copy courtesy Richard Taddei.





sunglasses for Peggy Guggenheim (1960)—the Guggenheim Museum sells reproductions of them for a sizable sum.

The only written study is Virgil Burnett's *Edward Melcarth—A Hercynian Memoir* (1995). This short work gives a brief overview of the artist's life and work and has many reproductions, mostly in black and white. There are no notes or resource material, but it does present a cogent summary of the man. For his entire career, Melcarth was a teacher and imbued his students with his ideas of what art should be—art was the representation of the human figure as idealized in Greek and Renaissance Art. He stood firmly against his own times with its proliferation of styles from Cubism, Abstract Expressionism to Pop Art, all of which have become entrenched, established styles. He was dogmatic. And he was also unabashedly gay. His models were often street trade from 42nd Street, with whom he often had affairs.

The relationship in his work between classical styles and modern rough young men of the streets is apparent in *The Last Supper* which is based on Leonardo da Vinci's fresco (1497) but shows a modern betrayal of members of a gang,

their faces hard and mean, and no trace of idealization. The same is true of *The Rape of the Sabines*. The central grouping is of two muscular men stabbing another in the back. The women look like inflatable dolls. While there are many paintings on the subject, the one by Jacques Louis David (1798) is a likely candidate, given Melcarth's admiration of this neo-classical painter. David's painting is thought to be an allegory of the excesses of the French Revolution, namely The Terror, but also expresses his admiration for the antique. Melcarth's appears to be a display of erotic images of his hustler models and the men he often photographed at home and on the streets and at the present time, these are the only images allowed for reproduction.

There are many puzzles in the above story, particularly related to Melcarth's life and his art. Yet at the moment, the primary enigma of Edward Melcarth is why a gay artist working in a style and with subject matter appealing to gay men is so unknown to them and will remain so for some time.

Jay Boda volunteers for LLGAF and works on various projects including this publication.



Edward Melcarth
Top left: Tommy Irwin, bare torso, (*Hustler and Melcarth's favorite model*), Late 1950s, Taddei Collection.
Top right: Tommy Irwin "mug shot", Late 1950s, Copy courtesy Richard Taddei.
Far right: *Untitled (Tough Street Kid)*, Late 1950s, Clay Sculpture, Ownership Unknown. Copy courtesy Richard Taddei.

RECENT DONATIONS

COMPILED BY WAYNE SNELLEN



Above: Matthew Stradling
The Threshold, 1991
Oil on canvas
82" x 65"
Gift of the artist

Right: Jeffrey Byrd
Caravaggio, 1989
Toned photograph
17" x 14", unique
Gift of Nicholas McCausland

Please note both images are reproduced correctly.



Once again the Leslie/Lohman Gay Art Foundation is indebted to the following donors for their generous gifts. Thank you very, very much.

James Childs donated 1 drawing.

Anthony Gonzales donated 10 copies of his recently published book, *Bronx Boyz*, publisher by Bruno Gmunder

Angela Jimenez donated 2 photographs.

Joseph Kozak donated 1 painting.

CharlesLeslie donated to the Foundation: 2 Anthony DeFrange paintings, 18 sculptures by Fernando Carpaneda, 1 relief by Campbell Paxton, 1 Todd Yeager painting, 6 paintings by Joseph Radoccia.

Daniel Malisky donated 1 painting, *Embrace*.

Nick McCausland donated 15 art works: 2 Darold Perkins (Perk) paintings, 1 Don Gene Bell painting, 1 Delmas Howe painting, 1 Jeffrey Byrd photograph, 1 Joe Ziolkowski photograph, 1 Ray Schulze painting, 1 Daniel Millsaps (Nuki) photograph (3 framed as one), 1 Kas Sable drawing, 1 Mark (Roger Payne) drawing, 1 Ed Cervone painting, 1 Jakal drawing, 1 Mohlitz etching, 1 Tumarkin print, 1 three dimensional work by an unidentified artist.

Vivian E. O'Shaughnessy donated 1 signed copy of *King of Shadows*, by Aaron Shurin.

Ted B. Perez donated 4 Joseph Friscia sculptures.

Roy Oxley donated 2 drawings, 34 watercolors and 15 photographs by George Daniell. This donation was encouraged by Jim Shields

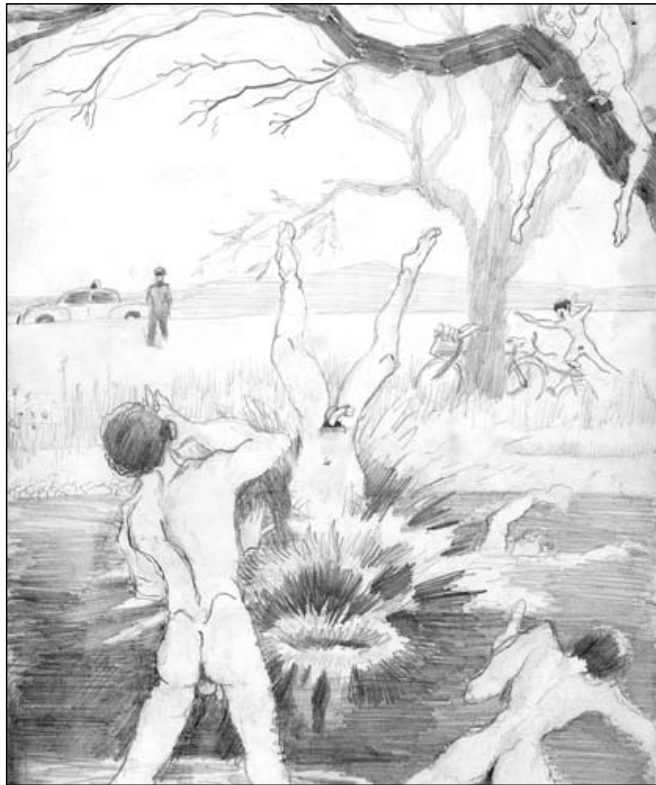
Steven Stines donated 3 drawings.

Matthew Stradling donated 1 painting, *The Threshold*, 1991.

Thank you all.

HOMAGE TO NORMAN ROCKWELL

BY ROBERT CHARLES RHODES



Left: Robert Charles Rhodes, *Untitled*, n.d., Pencil on paper, 17" x 14"

Right: Robert Charles Rhodes, *Untitled*, n.d., Pencil on paper, 17" x 14"

AIn the Seventeenth Century, Benjamin Franklin published *Poor Richard's Almanac*; in the Eighteenth Century, it was resurrected as *The Saturday Evening Post*. And in the Nineteenth Century, it began using covers illustrated mostly by Norman Rockwell. They were amusing, familiar, and heart-warming covers that kept coming until the magazine finally folded in the Twentieth Century (alas!). Rockwell's illustrations have suddenly become art instead of illustration, and Curtis Publishing kept most of them as a permanent collection, an incredibly valuable trove in today's art market.

In finally cleaning up my basement studio, I came across a casual pencil drawing of some adolescent kids being chased by a cranky, old biddy, who had called the cops. The said pubescent boys were wet, naked, angry, and rebellious against being denied their Lake Success swimming hole, while the biddy's

hen-pecked spouse looked on in wistful sympathy. The event is a true one. Occurring in the summer of 1943, just at the time when a Lake Success munitions factory was being transformed into the temporary home of something called the United Nations. I can be seen sitting on a rock at water's edge with a disgusted, unhappy expression on my 14-yr old face. I drew the picture fifty years afterwards in fond memory of things past.

The style is that of Norman Rockwell. So is its theme. Although the great *Saturday Evening Post* artist never published naked kids with genitals exposed, Rockwell did draw unclad youngsters, and in one had them running hurriedly with clutched clothes past a "No Swimming" sign. My sketch is my own souvenir of a frustrated afternoon.

We hormone-happy youngsters were not only learning to duck our heads under water, but to open our eyes and glide past other guys

with submarine hard-ons. Pricks were getting felt, squeezed, and, if somewhat older lads were among us, they experienced their first fellatio—warm mouths contrasting with the cool water. Giggles there were, of course, guilty giggles for being deliciously naughty. And, holy cow, what would Father Byrnes say in Saturday afternoon confession when we told him such a wicked sin? We most certainly would be absolved from our misdeeds but would also tell ourselves we were man enough to take any punishment—even if it was only the Seven Sorrowful Mysteries of the Rosary or a whopping seventy Hail Mary's on our knees at the altar. And every other kid in the church knew what we must have done to deserve such a penance. Heroics of our time.

Retired from a career in diplomatic relations, Robert Charles Rhodes now writes, acts off-Broadway, and draws. He is a frequent contributor

VIBRANT ENERGY

BLACK MEN REVEALED

CONTEMPORARY EDGY IMAGES BY LARRY CROSS

BY DANIEL KITCHEN

Vibrant Energy: Black Men Revealed
Contemporary Edgy Images,

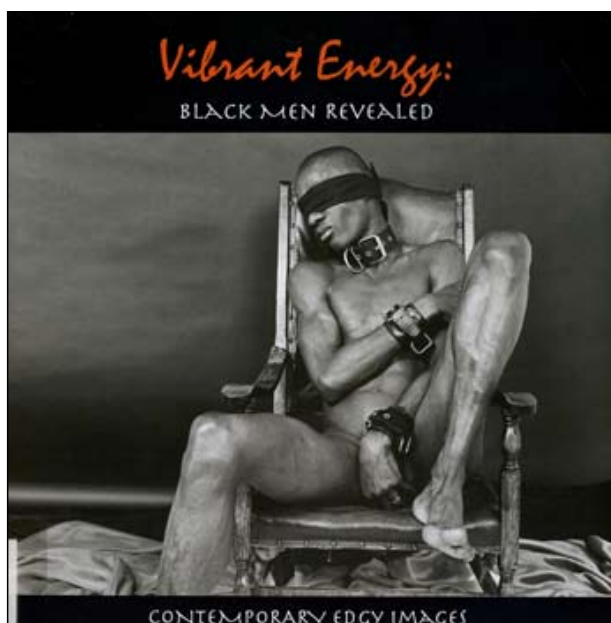
by Larry Cross

ISBN: 87-0-615-15636-1

Tree of Life Press,

7407 SE Glenwood Street, Portland, OR 97206-7265,

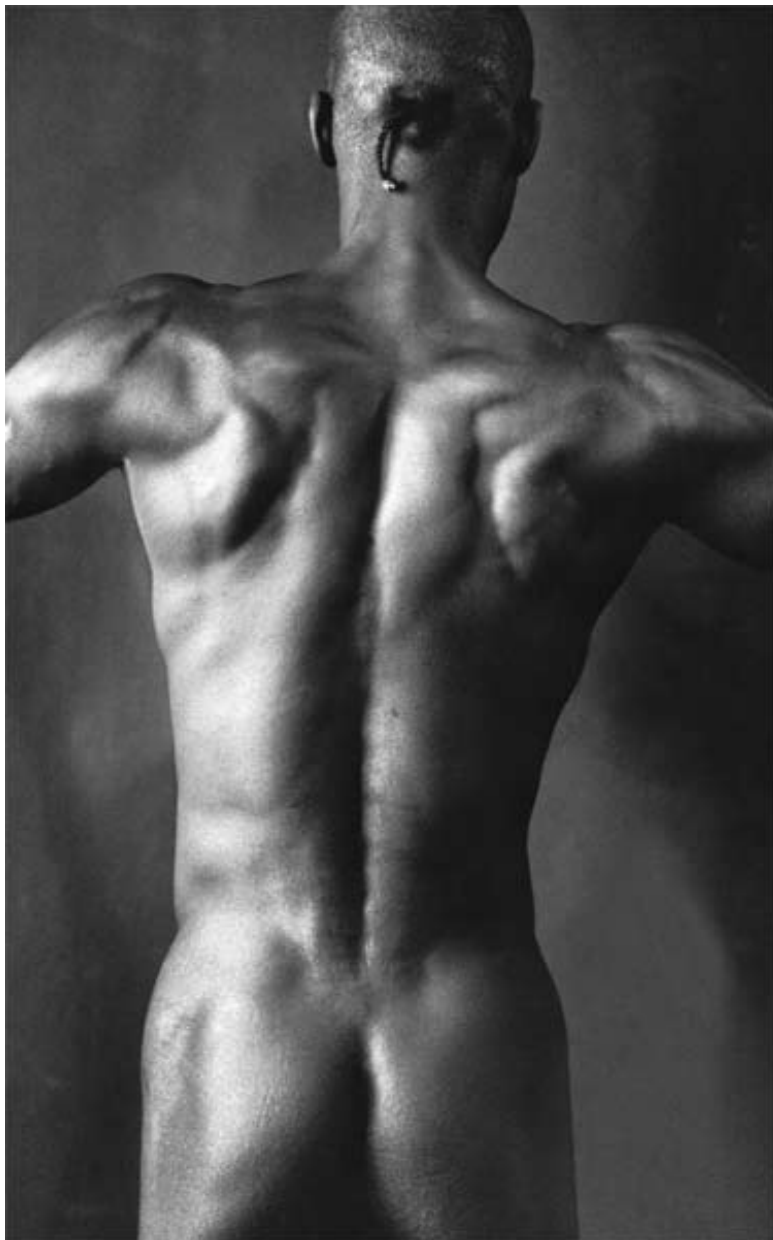
503 2331780, treeoflifepress@yahoo.com



Cover: Ajamu X, Black and white photograph

Right: Michael Gesinger, *Kimo's back*, Black and white photograph

There are numerous photography books of nude men currently on the market with a wide appeal investigating men from many perspectives. There is a new book in the category focused on the nude black male—*Vibrant Energy: Black Men Revealed—Contemporary EDGY Images* by Larry Cross. The book is a rare collection of 101 photographs of which 83 have never previously been published from nineteen male photographers of which six are black men. The photographers come from Great Britain (1), Germany (1), Kenya (1), South Africa (1), Nigeria (1), Brazil (1), and the United States (13). The book is large format 11" x 11", with photog-



rapher bios and notes on the photographs at the end of the book.

Larry Cross began developing this book in 1999 and published it in 2007. He states his goals in assembling this diverse collection of photographs as "an affirmation and celebration of the Black Man", to exhibit "a perspective of inclusion and universality" of the black men,

and to show "stunning aesthetic creation" through the eyes of these many photographers. His effort is an outstanding success.

Cross's initial interest in photography of the black male began in 1979 when he visited a San Francisco art gallery and saw a poster featuring an image of Nehemiah by the photographer Judy Dater in



THE LESLIE/LOHMAN GAY ART FOUNDATION

is a non-profit foundation which was established in 1990 to provide an outlet for art work that is unambiguously gay and that is frequently denied access to mainstream venues. The Foundation's gallery mounts exhibitions of work in all media by gay and lesbian artists with an emphasis on subject matter that speaks directly to gay and lesbian sensibilities, including erotic, political, romantic, and social imagery and providing special support for emerging and under-represented artists. Its programs include regularly scheduled exhibitions, artists' and curators' talks, panel discussions, a membership program, a quarterly journal, an archive of artists' data, and a permanent collection of art.

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The Archive

The Journal of The Leslie/Lohman,
Gay Art Foundation
Number 29 • Winter 2008

Editor: Tom Saettel

Contributors:

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Blair Turnbaugh.

Please submit articles for consideration for *The Archive* to the editor, Tom Saettel, POB 7785 New York, NY 10116, or tomsaettelnyc@yahoo.com.

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Foundation and Gallery:

26 Wooster Street, New York, NY
10013-2227,

Gallery Hours: Tues.–Sat., 12–6pm

Closed Sun. & Mon.,
all major holidays and
between exhibitions

212-431-2609

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http://www.leslielohman.org

Artists and curators are encouraged to submit images and proposals to ATTN: The Exhibition Committee at above address. Appointments and studio visits are possible, by contacting: Rob Hugh Rosen, Director of Operations, at above address/telephone/email.

Right: Greg Friedler,
Harvard Grad. Student—30 Yrs. Old,
n.d., Black and white photograph
Opposite Page: Jurgen Jansen,
Spears, n.d., Black and white
photograph



1975 promoting Dater's exhibition at Witkin Gallery in New York City. As he explains, "The image viscerally grabbed me with its intense frisson. It was a Black Man's back (Nehemiah), he was unclothed, the sensuous and graceful curve of his body, the bald head, the lengthy spine, the sole of his left foot transported me with the implicit eroticism, not yet unveiled." And so began a new path in his life. Cross began researching photography of black men. He discovered the earliest images of nude black men were daguerreotypes of South Carolina slaves from 1850. In three years of research he discovered hundreds of images of nude black men. This project soon became as he describes it "unwieldy".

A second epiphany occurred in early 2007 at 2am. He had found a solution to his efforts—to focus on black and white, contemporary photography only. He sought whenever possible images which were unpublished. In this evolving effort he came to know and befriend many noted photographers of black men. From these associations came the photographs which make up this book. All of the photographers are living with the sad exception of two who died of AIDS.

The book is divided into twelve sections with various photographers included in the sections: Edgy—images of drama, shock and power; Fantasy; Portraits; Elegance—images of poised men posing; Playfulness; Regular Folks—includes a series of double portraits by Greg Friedler showing men fully dressed juxtaposed with nude portraits; African Men; Intimacy; Kissing; Metamorphosis; Kink; and Tumescence.

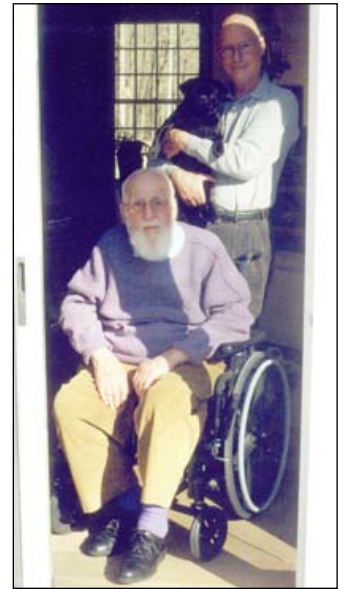
Stephen Arnold ; Ajamu X; John Casado; Duane Cramer; Paul Dahlquist; Christopher Ellis; Rotimi Fani-Kayode; Greg Friedler; Colorado Michael Gesinger; Jurgen Jansen; James L. Klelowski; David Leachman; Marcelo Maia; Geoff Manasse; Kagatu Mbeya; Tony Ward; and Leonard Zett.

Larry Cross has reached far and wide to find images for this book. This book is a testament to Cross's creative energy in pulling these diverse photographs together into a cohesive whole celebrating the beauty of the nude black male. In addition to this effort Cross self published the book. This is no small feat!

KERMIT LOVE 1916–2008

BY TOM SAETTEL

*Kermit Love
and Christopher Lyall
(at their home in
Stanfordville, NY),
April 2008,
Photograph by Peter Harvey*



Kermit Love known internationally—though not by name—for his creation Big Bird died June 21, 2008. He was 91 years old. He was living with his partner of fifty years Christopher Lyall in Stanfordville, New York.

Born in Spring Lake, NJ in 1916, he was raised by his grandmother and great grandmother who introduced him to *Punch and Judy* lantern shows. He was soon creating versions of his own. Confined to bed from ages 12 to 15 after being thrown from a horse, Love listened to the radio and drew his visions of the radio plays. By the early 30s he was working as a puppeteer on Broadway. In 1935 he created puppets for the WPA. He went on to work for Orson Welles's Mercury Theater. After working for awhile in New York City with the great Barbara Karinska of Imperial Russian Theater, he was quickly designing in the big league—the cowboys for Agnes de Mille's *Rodeo* (1942), *One Touch of Venus* by Kurt Weill (1943), and the sailors for Jerome Robbins's *Fancy Free* (1944). Love lent the original Oliver Smith set design for *Fancy Free*, along with three of his own costume designs to Leslie/Lohman's *Stage Struck* exhibition in 2007.

After WWII love moved to Europe first working for the Paris Lido and then moving to London to work in film. In 1958 he met the Australian dancer Christopher Lyall who would remain his lover the rest of his life. On a visit to New York he and Peter Harvey met through mutual designer friends on Jones Beach in 1954. Love returned to the U.S. in 1963 and began teaching theater history at Pratt Institute. Love took to tutoring Harvey by assigning him texts to design for. The two remained friends and frequently threw work to one another. Harvey recommended Love to design the legendary knight for Balanchine's *Don Quixote* (1965) which would rise from its collapsed form on the stage floor to its gigantic, twenty-eight foot tall personality. After his 20 year hiatus he was soon in demand as a costume designer.

Out of his workshop on great Jones St. in NYC came the designs for the revivals of *L'Enfant de les Sortilege* and *Parade*; and the modern look of Tywla Tharp. He drafted many of his Pratt students as apprentices. Love was known to be very persuasive and seductive and to this day some men will clasp their heads and exclaim, "How could I ever let Kermit seduce me like that."

In the early 60s Don Sahlin suggested to Jim Henson that they recruit Love to work out the mechanics for Big Bird. Love brought more to Big Bird than internal rigging. In his masterful way he instilled the 8'2" puppet with a personality which has endeared Big Bird to millions of children and adults the world over.

THE FOUNDATION
ALSO MOURNS THE DEATH OF
STEPHEN M. HALE, 1961–2008

See *The Archive* #17, Summer 2005, for an article on the artist.



Daniel Kitchen is a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania with post-graduate work at The Barnes Foundation. He is the Co-Chair of the Friends of the East Orange Library

and a trustee of the Friends of the Newark Library. Daniel is a member of the LLGAF Advisory Committee and organized the Foundation's Artists Studio Tour in the spring of 2008.

IMAGINARY PORTRAITS: GAY LOVERS IN HISTORY

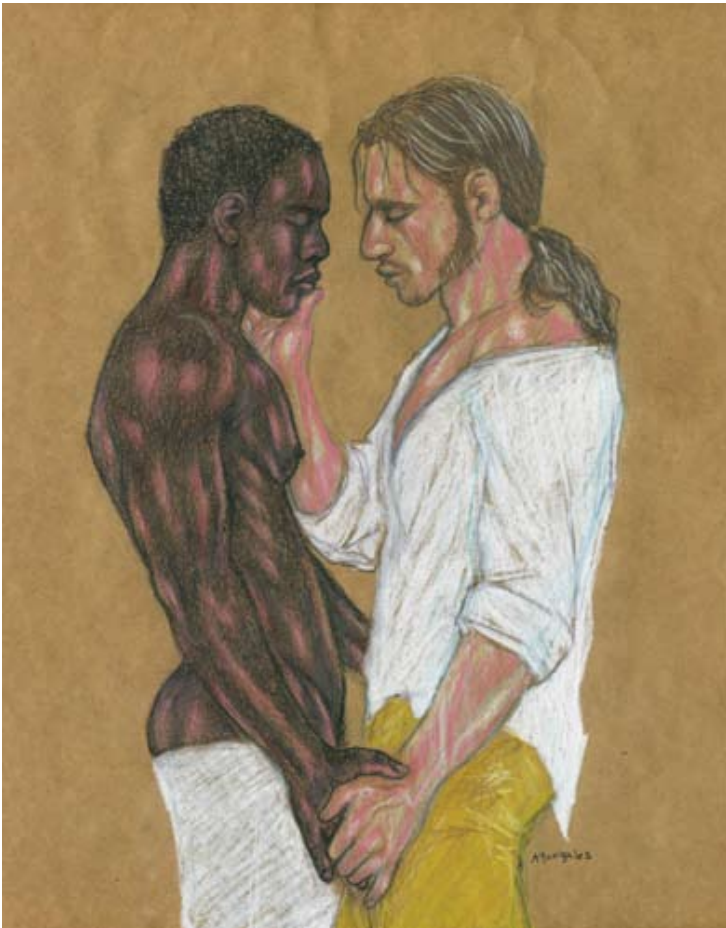
BY JAY BODA



The exhibition *Imaginary Portraits: Gay Lovers in History* is the brainchild of the inestimable Charles W. Leslie, the Executive Director and Chief Curator of the Leslie/Lohman Gay Art Foundation. Several years ago, he was inspired by the recently documented story of Harman and Tobias, gay lovers in New Amsterdam, the Dutch colony now known as Manhattan in the American historian, Russel Shorto's marvelous book *The Island at the Center of the World*. Harman was a brilliant and lusty Dutch adventurer, and Tobias was his black manservant. In 1647, they were caught *in flagrante* by the vigilant and vengeful authorities of the day. Tobias disappeared off the face of the earth; Harman tried to escape but, with his pursuers close behind, fell through the winter ice to a watery grave. Leslie wondered how artists would capture their visual appearances and lives, and he pondered all the other gay lovers throughout history whose faces were unknown and stories suppressed. He sent out a challenge to artists to submit artwork to discover and make known their heritage. Their overwhelming response was presented at the gallery, November 19–December 20, 2008.

Brendon Connors has painted Harman and Tobias in a landscape, innocently swimming surrounded by farm animals, at the moment of their expulsion from the peaceable kingdom of their love. Anthony Gonzales lyrically shows the lovers in a tender moment of affection made more poignant by Michael Kirwan's violent vision of the lovers being literally torn





asunder by the grotesque keepers of morality. The graphic quality of this dense composition is heightened by the void in the center, a reflection on the sense of loss by the lovers. Lage Carlson brings the lovers Harman and Tobias to life with a lusty 20" x 20" color photograph complete with images of Harman's adventures—a nautilus and a map of Africa.

Chuck Hettinger depicts *The Great Blondin*, the first man to walk on a tightrope over Niagara Falls. Blondin often wore flamboyant costumes in his escapades and sometimes carried his manager on his shoulders. Here Blondin and his manager are stripped bare to display their love unabashedly. In *Walt Whitman and Calamus*, Tommy Allen uses photography to render

the poet pensively sitting under a tree at the moment he is inspired to write the Calamus poems to celebrate the love between men. Ocean Morisset also uses photography in *Azande Lovers* to depict two magnificent warriors from the Azande tribe from central Africa bravely displaying their love.

In all 24 pairs of lovers from the Pharaoh Akhenaton and Prince Smenkhkare to Virginia Woolf and Vita Sackville-West are on view by the following artists: Frank Barrett, Keith Batten, Lage Carlson, James Childs, David Crocker, Patrick DeCoste, Miguel Angel Figueroa, Marco Finn, Steven Frim, Mark Frossard, Joe Giordano, Duncan Grant, Elizabeth Josephson, Josef Kozak, Kelley Gabriel Lee, David Livingston, Frank Louis, Daniel Malisky,

Sonia Melara, Greg Mitchell and Ken Graziano, Vivian O'Shaughnessy, Natasha Pogrebinsky, Michael Rogovsky, Carrimine Santaniello, Samir Sobhy, Gary J. Speziale, David Russel Talbott, Jiro Ueno, and Branden Wallace.

Jay Boda volunteers for LLGAF and works on various projects including this publication.

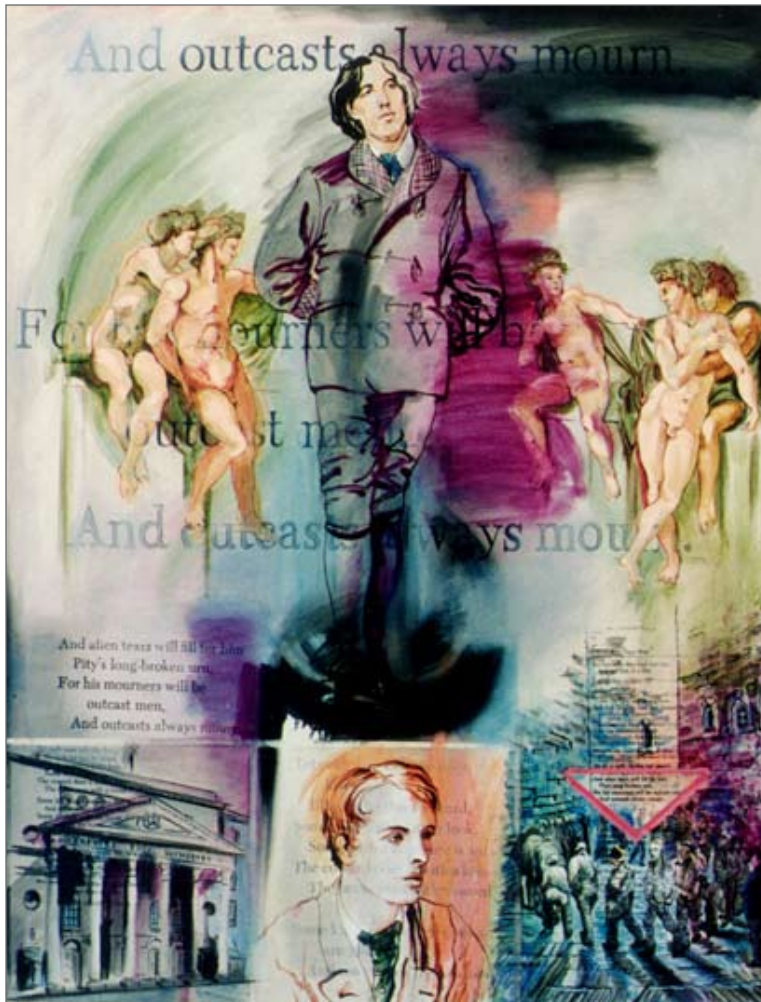
Opposite page: Michael Kirwan, *Harman and Tobias (Being taken from each other by a mob)*, Watercolor on paper, 16" x 16"

Top left: Anthony Gonzales, *Harman and Tobias Together*, 2008, Mixed media, 11" x 9"

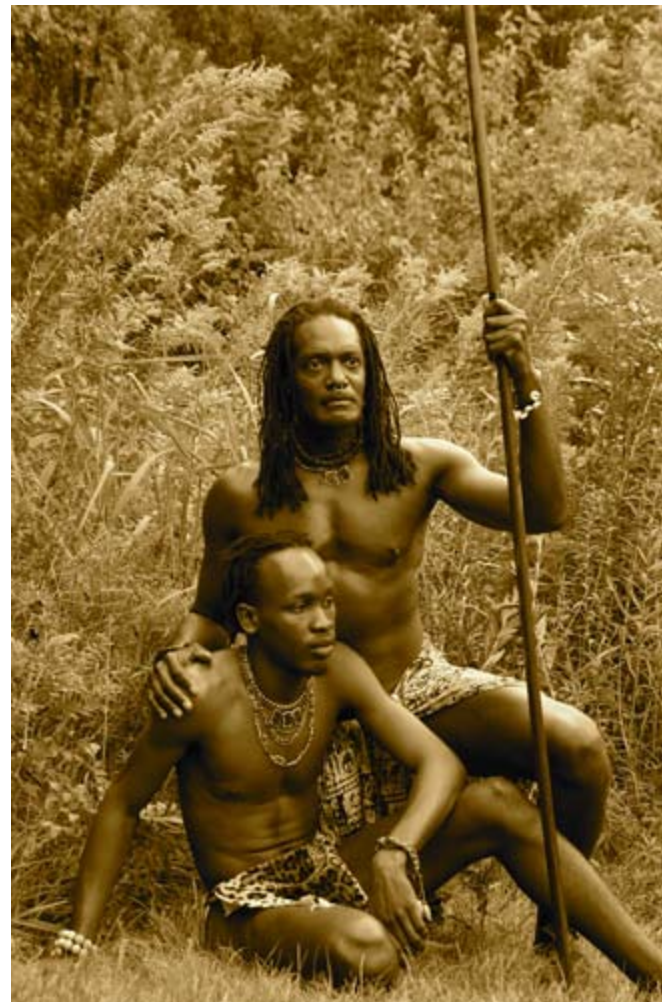
Above: Chuck Hettinger, *The Great Blondin and His Manager*, 2008, Acrylic and paint marker on canvas, 48" x 36"

Below: Tommy Allen, *Walt Whitman and Calamus*, 2008, C-print, 5" x 52"





Peter Harvey, *Holy Fool*, 1995, Oil and silkscreen on canvas, 39" x 32"
See the article on Peter Harvey, Page 9.



Ocean Morisset, *Azande Lovers*, 2008, Digital sepia C-print, 17" x 12"
See the article on *Imaginary Portraits: Gay Lovers in History*, Page 22.

UPCOMING SCHEDULE

JAN 20 – FEB 14 2009
RECENT ACQUISITIONS AND DONATIONS

SPRING WEEKEND TOUR OF NEWPORT
THE LESLIE/LOHMAN GAY ART FOUNDATION TOUR
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