



... presented by the VORTEX VESSEL(S)
@VORTEXVESSELS

...VORTEX TEST TEST TEST
IT IS US, VR POETS HAVE RETURNED



cell

i was afraid of the river that turned to blood.
the sound it made, a breaking of dirty bones, echoed
off my body as i stood there in broken mirror terror.
that was the day i knew what the word forever means.
it means a long line of birds on a telephone wire
flying away in a pulsating cloud at the approach
of a hawk. it means the Moon taking off its dancing
shoes, sliding into an armchair and falling asleep
with a smile. it means every hallelujah will turn
to dust, and all dust will turn to the prophets
for answers that were lost in the beginning of the
beginning. looking into the river of blood, i asked
no questions. i knew the answer i would be given would
always be a melancholy coyote wearing thrift store boots,
smoking a cigarette on the roof, looking out at the skyline.
i knew the answer would be found in who i was: my American
fear predators could smell from a mile away, the desire
that chewed my decisions like a dog chews its bone,
the chaos i wrapped around myself like a country
night wraps itself in stars, the moss growing on my sorrow,
my lightning bug liturgy. two things can be true at once-
i was lost and i was home. i was sick and i was sick.
i was the crown prince of darkness and the eyes of heaven.
i saw hunger turn prayers into the barking of dogs,
and highways turn psychosis into poems, and i knew then
that two movements can be in the blood at once, one for
the arteries, one for the veins. i learned knowledge
on mountain peaks and knowledge in the city, and knew
what it was to go mad trying to reconcile
knowledge with more knowledge. i was afraid of the river of blood
because i knew i would have to swim in it to see both sides of the coin,
because i knew i would be crushed by currents and current events,
because i knew the blood was mine

a straight line, accurate & clear

I'm rooted in the origins of my lineage
because I was born stripped of genesis
as a beginning--

& if it were up to the-powers-that-be
they'd have me believe I'm no more
than a descendent of slaves,
product of poverty,
destined as sub-class.
& the antithesis of these would be
for me to rabidly pursue fame & wealth:
 Buy Into The System At Any Cost

not-so, not-so.

I hail back further, to communion
with land & spirits & spirits & land
& land of spirits.

To possession by the Godhead
& prophets who are martyrs
& martyrs who are sages
& sages who are anointed.

I collapse within to the deeper parts
of my ancestry elevated up-high.
There, in the wellspring of my being
I'm awash with multitudes of saints,
mulling & hymning in
the glory of divine relief.

I am seated, placed accurately, planted
in the bosom, womb, hearth of undisputable tradition.

[It isn't a question anymore, never was;
It Is An Eternal Answer]

Jan 2024

community???

those that uplift us;
who we uplift; who
Love...?

(echoing bell hooks echoing Erich Fromm) *"the will to extend one's
self for the purpose of nurturing one's own or another's
spiritual growth."*

-nurturing another's
spirit, vice versa
-I need to stop

saying I love you
when I don't mean it.

I feel uncomfortable
around hedonists;

whose cars
fly over my words

I want to help my
community...?

-support circle

grows wider

I want to help this city

but never want to forget

about the little people.

I like the faces they show

when knowing the city-

community on all sides

north, west, east, south

& where to eat that's

been around for generations

following chirps

to rotate my

dollars

counter-culture clockwise

because a hole-in-the-wall

has the best food.

↓

I hate when the American diaspora

wanted big cheeks with no intestines

or the wrong ones

generational wealth harms us all.

spread the change,

seasons of abundance

in my magic eye.

in my real ones- tears reveal

our painful truths
so where do I go from here?
who
do I operate?

community

genocide fest had all eyes on us.
systematic thinking learning what
we already had to dust.
we have to pull our pants up.



what the heart knows

what the heart knows, the mind dunks down-
the eucras in a blood nostalgia-
flower camera-
blood gold, gold as blood-
the envelope body of a secret-
Mercury and the howling camera, flower camera, mourning camera-
horse teeth in the god body, envelope body of a secret-
cute, dumb heart of the cricket, horse heart of the cricket that survived a blizzard-
the image turned to sand at the altar, altar to the flower-
repent at dusk-
blood nostalgia, pain gold as blood-
rills starlight always-
what the heart knows, the mind dunks down-
rationality itches for magic, not the other way around-
how do you say goodbye to who you used to be?

birth in my belly, true nothings dance-
memory is a street-
when we made it to El Borado, the Mexican restaurant next to the liquor store, we rationalized

the death of Mercury, in our hearts we knew the secret nothings, we went back to my house as it began
to snow, our love was salsa dancing in our bellies, the flowering flakes were ephemeral cameras, all the
nothings

we whispered in the toothy night, the horse in my chest betrayed my lady by morning, howling in the

shimmer of my neurons, expecting lunatic-
the dragon loaded in the washing machine, fire doused by detergent-
the Moon slow-dancing with tuxedo-wearing Space-
every god has their truth, every truth its sword-
the grocery store is filled with batteries, blood gold-
nostalgia is a starlight turning streets of memory bloody with gold-
what the mind knows, the heart knew but forgot-
always-
phantoms in my bedroom walls-
the image repenting then turning to sand at the altar-
nothings whispered in the toothy night holding always like a candle, was melting down to our hands-
what the heart knows, the heart knows-
the eucras lifting its tail, jaws to body, failure to repentance, everything is a snake at least once-
gold dust on the camera lens-
how could i forget?

with hippie-dippie folk at night under the stars

at the center is a campfire,
hallowing the cold-windy-wintery-
night, circling the fire
is an unbroken ring
of beautiful folk. Smoking,
drinking, laughing, singing
& some braiding each other's hair,
outside the rim that surrounds
the blaze, is me. separate
& peering, intaking,
as a stationary outlier.
scene is perfect,
every aspect speaking
its own meaning. interconnected,
overlapping, conjoined purposes
speaking a compounding beauty.
But
then
some friends approach
me from the dark behind
& I'm pulled away from the moment
& join in & am lost.

16 april 2024

"Sourcery Against Confusion"

Leave (enter here)
better than you found it
Dad says to me throwing away
an empty mountain
dew bottle shy of its destination
having been lying on the ground.

As
my affluence
(I didn't ask for this)
Increased & I could do more,
I look at

the ground for how I can improve the foundation,
butts, choked menthol heart, trash missed their
destination too.

Garbage overflowing in the streets-- why is that?

An underpaid worker and whoever owns the can doesn't have the time to take it out but
once a month-- why?? Someone isn't pulling their own weight around here, cutting the
checks why you should always check your drugs, someone isn't considering life but
their profits and we can't keep promoting ignorance and we can't keep promoting that
there is no way out and we can't keep producing ticks to mark time but shock and revolt
ourselves to promulgate ~~messages~~ against their ~~obsessions~~

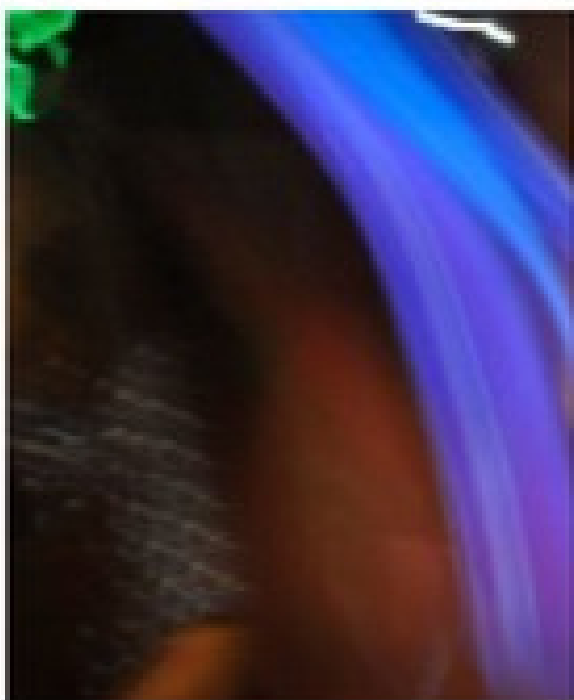
I volunteer

How to promote creativity to all through arts and philosophy more???
How to connect the campus thinkers to the working class,
graduates & drop-outs??? How do I make a lasting case for the metaphysical revealing
that writing and playing with space *in* writing and a literal thinking outside of the
box????

Only 21,
plenty to be done, learning
how to do so.

last

less than a mirage now, more like pencil impressions
on the page beneath the one you're writing on, less
than an apple thrown at the feet of a starving city of sages,
more like the bruise cut off the fruit before biting into the good
flesh, take my scraps, take my dogma, open wide,
wind winds blow across the thesis of ever memories,
in the mess of the archives of arteries and veins was a ballerina
smoking a camel crush, the real deal, i was on the menu
beside fried eggs and fried curses, i didn't want help,
i wanted to eat a least blindfolded and rename all the foods,
i know your secrets, i know your mystifying sidewalks, i know
your secrets, i will raise hell like a good parent raises children,
i will be honest about how shitty things are, and i will go to all
of hell's baseball games, i saw a video of one of my former drinking buddies
sitting in an armchair in my old living room, hitting his vape, and i felt deflated
and raw as a crater when i heard his voice, which i hadn't heard in four years,
mesmerizing jubilee of the bottom feeders, i went to the party with
difficult roses in my dirty rocker teeth, i bet all my money on the demolition
of bad religion, i knew better, but i didn't give a fuck, or i gave too many fucks,
that's probably the same thing, i know your secrets, the weeping willow
knows my secrets, and keeps them out in the open in the park at the end
of Central Avenue, i have paroled out my life according to the rules set by dandelions
growing from a planted microphone, one step forwards, two steps to two step at Club Exodus,
three steps and you won't step again, i've run out of steps, i am a hoarder of cardboard boxes
last, i park my Christmas decorations inside the boxes, they'll accumulate dust all year by osmosis, and
then last will light my home like the dance of airplane lights that shimmer furiously at the holidays,
when i was thirteen i went to the movie theater with my girlfriend, we sat in the front row and
made out, not caring if anybody saw us, because fuck them and fuck the rules, listen- i want you to read
this punky little zine i'm making with my homies, and then i want you to burn it as kindling for your
bonfires, i'm not trying to make a metaphor, i'm trying to track you, from ash to ash, from dust to dust to
dust again,
hilltop ballads roam in the eyes of the hotshit bartender who gave me a free shot seven years ago,
after we smoked on the corner with an old man who had a beer belly the size of an overgrown watermelon,
and this old fucker couldn't stop talking about how much he liked fucking pregnant women, chaos was
biting our earlobes as we went back into the warm dimness of the bar, where the bartender gave me a shot
of vodka and started telling me a story about a fight he got into when he was in high school, he broke a
kid's nose over a stolen notebook, he seemed to think he was justified, but i thought he seemed crazy, but
who knows what he kept in that notebook, i hope it was love letters, but i don't think it was, i left that
place without a friend in the world, just the ballad of the king of the hill in my rainy mind,
less than the applause of an audience of one, more like the sound of a book being put back on the
shelf, less than roller grounds in the compost bin that smells of muggots, more like a single flower
growing up
through the compost, soon to be uprooted, punished for sprouting in the wrong place at the wrong
rock bottom, shovel me out, shovel me into your mouth, open wide, i will leave you no other choice,





dental damnedness

[Dentistry in paradise?
Seraphim, cherubim, archangels]
cap divine cavities in holy gold]

Relatability to pornstar--
mouth wide open for thirty minutes minimum.
Jaw aching numbness as norm,
mouth stuck open wide
with objects too big for it.

From this view, too bright
lights skew the figures
of professionals prodding
in me, out me, all up in my orifice.

[this dental adventures gonna put me in debt/doubt]

19 may '23

Poem

it's a hard question:

the time the time the time
where has it gone since

my stomach sounds like
the upstairs and next to me

a man tripping balls says:
to fondle his testicles
are fun.

fond
words

ulation

dissecting words on a paper makes me feel large and happy
in control when the world, however artistically looking,
whatever it may seem

passed, by me

past passes by,

and all the little lines going by
the lines the lines the lines the lines Of Cocaine
that people talk about not doing

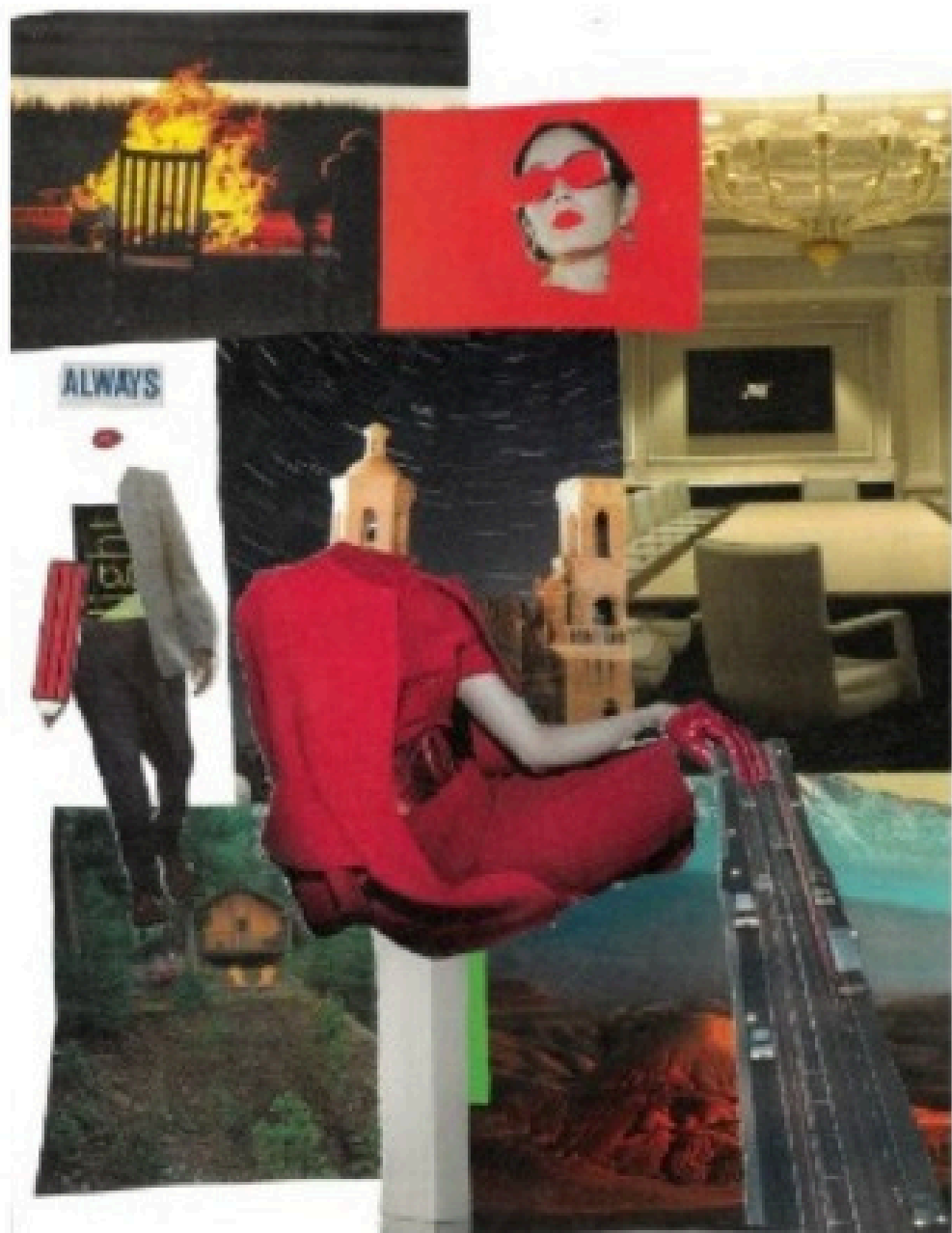
its essential to not do the thing sometimes
while doing the thing

Look at me I'm a writer!! How pretentious!! How many lines in front of me singing
like the aloe plant I've had for years
helps me be, Soaking it in with
every tear drop into the plains
of hell beneath soiled carpet,

wind on the surface of a river

icicle phantoms dance the wind worn waltz in the ballroom of the king of small victories
and all across the floor they drip and melt memories that dry too quick to memorize
so the triumph is lost to the sorry wings of no history, meanwhile, on a red towel
on the shore of the sea of longing, i'm sunbathing like a basket of Easter eggs, and
i don't dare swim, i know longing is a shark attack as well as a heart attack.

minutes mince men into minuets, hours hammer hamlets into icicle phantoms,
this is common logic, these are ordinary scars, this is the land of casting dice
and spells and victories and losses into a blender while listening to Nikes
and starting everything over again, crying on the starry shoulders of the part
of yourself that sings, the songs changes, the phantoms slow dance and weep.
i roll over on my stomach, the melting, the melting, the melding, you may hurt me if you wish.



shinbet*

*Israeli govs FBI

Mossad espionage;
counterintelligence assassinates
vigilant stances.

Globalization gobbles
the globe as gruel-
stew accented with
tech tonic
and in-between fine
print caveats.

We twiddle
our thumbs on
material portals
that mock
us to our face
with every engagement.

Eligible elitism
has electric power
over entire grids.
When a blackout happens--
these snarks will be a-ok.

But your charger won't be working
or you're huge fucking vibrator,
not even that sleek MacBook,

We'll be sitting in the cold-dark
dark-cold
flabbergasted we don't
even have a gas mask to
fend of the fumes
of the final phase.

2 dec '21

I'm a traitor because you're on the wrong side

It feels like we're
only one direct conflict
away from sending troops
to the next W.W. starting
everywhere but America.

A pearl harbor, if you
will, where we
decide that supplying
war isn't enough
we must fuse our people with it,
keep everyone on
edge
& the kids yet to stay
distracted on Roblox memes
& pick 3 for \$5's
& ice keeps breaking
& tides keep rising
as Israel takes
to the streets in their own
way, a counter-protest
if you will:
pagers exploding
on what was Lebanese waists
how techno-savage it is to
intercept technology
@ the border of Israel/Lebanon
to arm it blindly ticking

that's how I think it feels
hearing seconds pass

(silencish with hons and wind) "WEAPONS EMBARGO NOW!"

(silence backs) "CEASEFIRE NOW!"

and customers come walking in
to Chili's asking "What is that
what are they talking about?"

"STOP BOMBING CHILDREN"
"Oh, just Israel's bombing
another 500+ people murdered."

but what about Russia and Ukraine?
we like Ukraine & Israel

& Israel hates Iran
& Iran supports Lebanon & Palestine
& Russia backs Iran
& China digs Russia
I forget about North Korea often.

WE'RE ON THE WRONG SIDE OF HISTORY
AND DOOMED. MOVE WHILE YOU CAN.
MAIS IS FOR THE RICH. CHANGE IS IN THE FLESH.

figaro

poetics of a phantom dancing backstage- Gatsby recording an album- Solomon crushing on the barista at

Cafe Radical- the faraway alchemist kissed the mockingbird- the spirit of an outdoor childhood flickers-
the bummy painter spoke poetry to Venus- photography of common prayer-Ariel in the backpack of a

college student- no exaggeration in the true blue spirit- autobiography of the wild howl- new Frank

O'Haras in the streets- the way of tender, not fragile, love letters- wayward night coming from the West-
and the hawk on the telephone wire sighed, figaro, losing my vape makes me say my precious- americana

is for suckers- i'm reading Kaufman poems on my phone, sitting on the toilet- what am i doing in this

poem?- tears, trumpets, teeth, tickets, taxis, yeah- a California kiss is one helluva drug the first time-
cement citizens meaning in Oklahoma pickup trucks- i keep Boston memories as a talisman- i met the

King of Dreams at Hotel Pink- care for a smoke?- i read Didion then listened to

Zungguzungguguzungguzeng in my bedroom- watercolor satellites keep my smoky secrets- hell, what do
you want for proof, a poetry license?- in pain at the train station- i love you- i had a beer with Venus seven
years ago- i wonder if Baldwin liked piano or forte better- flower eyed girls, i have feelings too y'know?-
germs, germs, germs- i climbed into the catwalk and read Steinbeck, high school lonely- the dirt in San
Francisco wasn't lavender or anything like that- ergo, liberty is a leather with blood on it- kiss me, you
fool- i liked the part of the movie with shoulder blades sprouting mushrooms- there's a shrub in my
throat- i really admire that bummy painter, Venus never forgot him- my belly is muddied from laying by
the river to watch the otters play- atmosphere- and the hawk on the telephone wire sighs figaro.

os angeles when i was in my early teens

*(an ode to [our] Adolescent Youth:
the First Initiation Rite,
the Start of Clumsy Conscious-Becoming(s)*)*

* In sunny SoCal, Pacific winds
kissed my face gently,
whispered in my ears
secrets of palm trees
and cracked concrete.

Grip-tape fresh under the feet,
the kicks to push board strong,
unmatched. Cannabis-high freshest
then in those virginal tokes;
the weed-haze potent and jarring.
Wire-carbuds glued in,
music over-washing all senses;

*Sublime- 40oz To Freedom,
sun-draped bodies on the beach,
a serious feeling of gaining-understanding.
Santa Monica Pier glitters*

in background as a monument.

City buses packed
with denizens of every face,
from every origin point but luxury
or ease. My face emptied of naivete
with each bus-ride.
An exhilaration blooming,
a painful knowledge accruing;

*my youth will not last, not in this way,
so I will live dangerously & riot
like soft-brained impetuous youngling I am.
Then I will look back on these years of chaos
with a softness & smile that makes them precious & sensible.*

'thinking about my deceased mom while watering the dying flowers'

Roses---

I couldn't seem to balance water
coverage in summer,
your leaves slumber, slumped,
you can't sin sitting innocent waiting for God
to work, showing temporary half-gods,
temperate on their own seasons
beautiful visions.

Ease yourself into stasis mums,

I'll see you in spring jellybean stalks---

despite not knowing you
I permeate love & give thanks,

with my brother
we miss you and like to think
of where your soul grows again.

These dainty showers,
overcast stiff-arming rays,
puts apprehension in my right-hand
not knowing when to stop watering the flowers
as to not drown their roots.

Ethan Mershon,
Zackary Lee Watts,
& Jouquin Fox

FIRST COLLAGE BY **C.K. WHITE** FROM THEIR ESSAY
"AGAINST THE GRAIN".

ALL PHOTOS BESIDES THE PICTURE OF ALLEN GINSBERG
READING THE WICHITA VORTEX SUTRA WERE
PHOTOGRAPHED AND EDITED BY **ZACKARY LEE WATTS**.

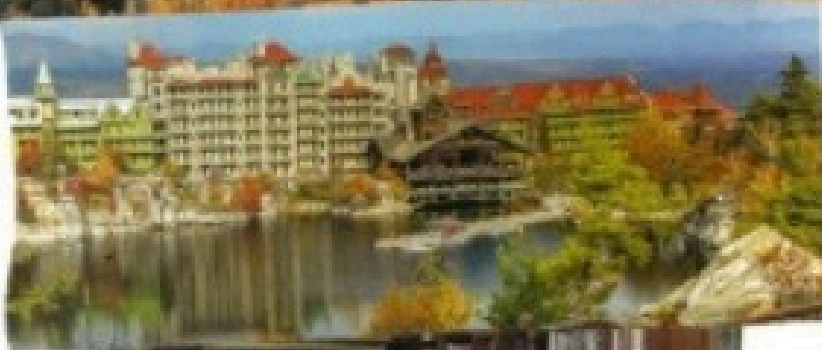
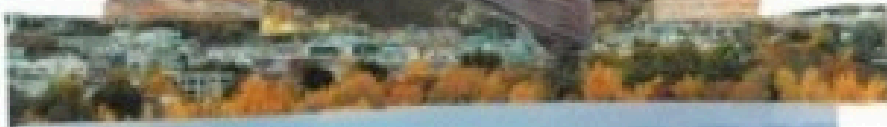
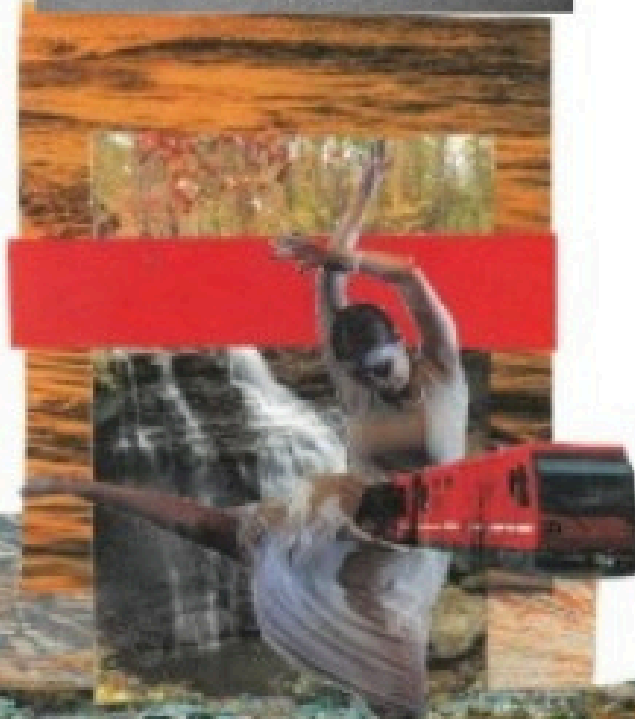
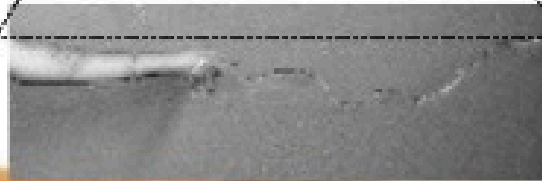
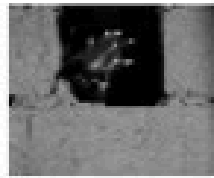
ALL COLLAGE WORK BESIDES THE FIRST PIECE BY
ETHAN MERSHON.

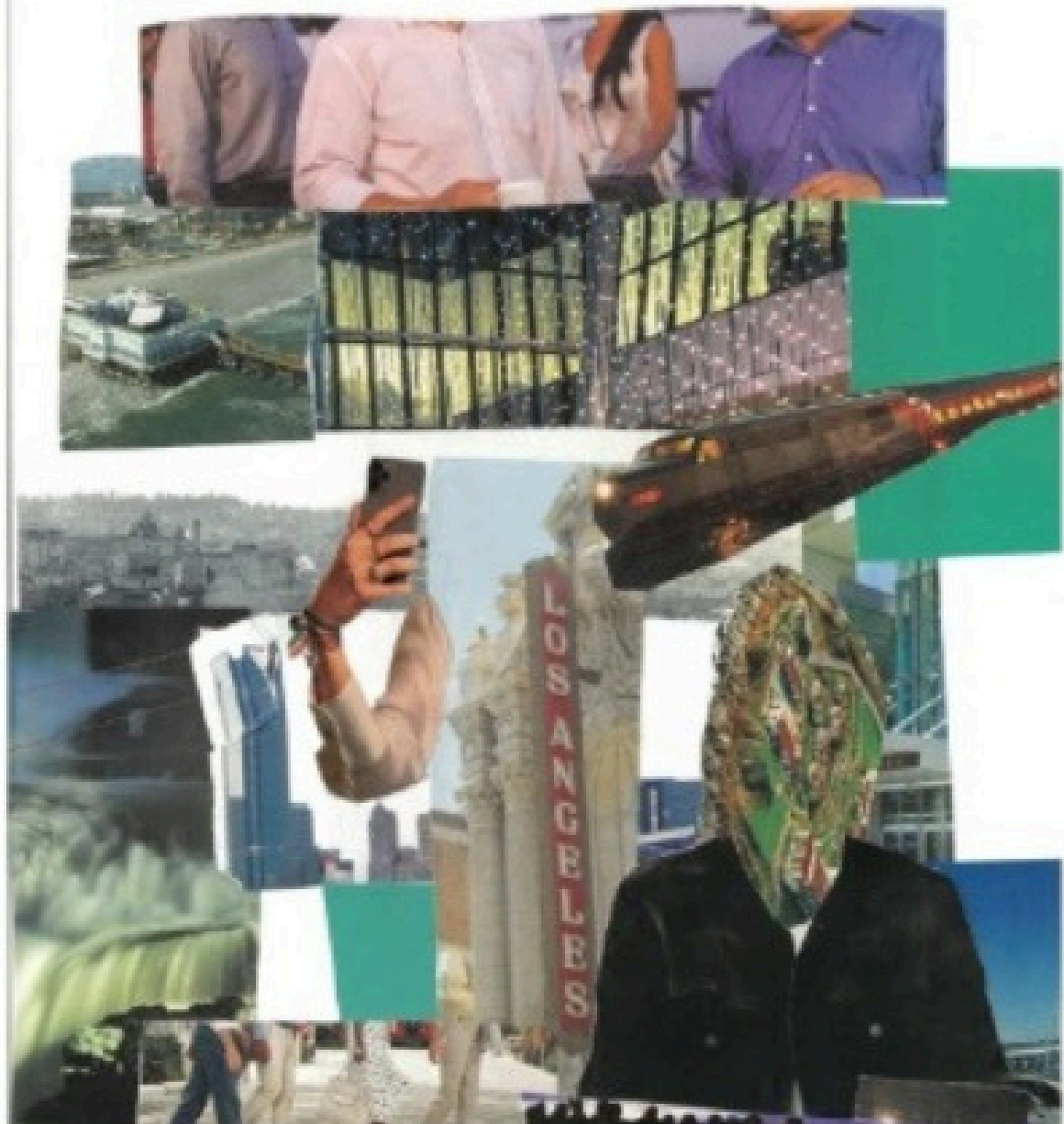
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