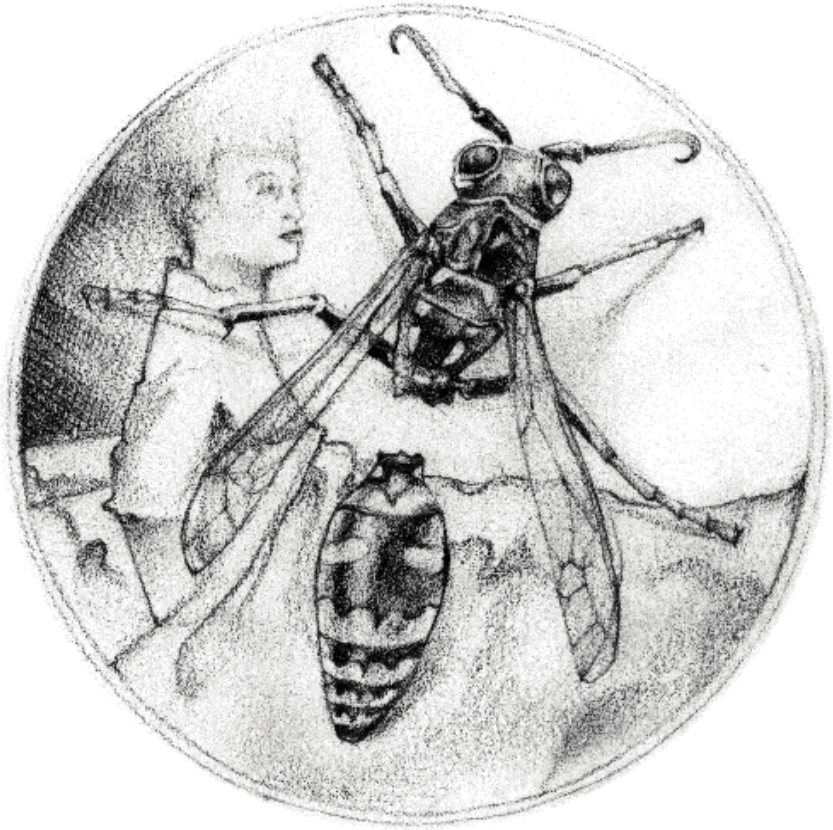


“COTTONMOUTH”



SPIT DICTION

ISSUE 18

OCTOBER 2010

COTTONMOUTH

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editor & layout JEREMY BALIUS

COTTONMOUTH is a monthly performance night which is produced in conjunction with a podcast and publication. Please direct all submissions or requests to zine@cottonmouth.org.au and be sure to check regular updates online by visiting www.cottonmouth.org.au (.)

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WE ARE NOT THE DOUCHEBAGS

Tristan Fidler

We are not the douchebags. They were right next to us though. Confusion times, I know, but I swear to you right now, dude, they were not us; we were not them.

Yeah, we were talking during your set, you saw that, okay, but Larissa, the red-headed elf with the fake-ass fur-coat, was making some big deal about this loser across the room, some one night-one-kiss-no-action type of thing that happened six months ago or whatever, I could barely hear her yelling in my ear about it. So she was talking not me, you know, I was just standing there like a pole. What could I do, like, tell her to be quiet like some jaded librarian? I wish, dude. That would mean I would be talking too, which I didn't want to do, because you were all up there on stage, R.I.U, you know, Ripping It Up. There will be other gigs, other shows, other nights. We're here, right? Physical support has to count for something. And from what I heard, you were really playing that bass. Slapping that bass! Ha ha, like the dude said in that movie. You didn't see it? You were always too cool for that shit, I know. You with your Bass Face.

What was I saying again? Yeah, you guys were good because we were dancing. My crew don't dance for anybody. Didn't you see us twisting the night away near

the left wall? How about Neville, my man, the silk-coat beardo-weirdo that he is, swinging away there doing the Monster Mash? Hilarious. No, he wasn't being funny about your band. We dig it, yo, we were digging it muchly, you were dug, yeah. Dug-out. But those douchebags next to us, right, they were dancing in a really ironic manner after that third song, you know, like they were taking the piss, like you were Elvis impersonators, a bee-bop-a-loo-baa and all that shit, and not the world-class ass-burning rock-fuck-punk that you are. What are you called again? The Assburgers Syndrome or something? Anyway, those fucking douchebags; we were kind of taking the piss out of them. A parody of a parody of a parody. They were assholes anyway, yelling out to the drummer, "Take off your shirt." Jerks, am I right?

To counter that bullshit, we started yelling at them and being really loud about it, because that's the only way to fight fire. With a firestorm! Neville just decided to start yelling out the "c" word, just yelling it out non-stop at them. Constant like a mantra. Not at you guys, no way. I know it would have been a bit weird to hear because you know, you've got a "c" word and all, but so does Larissa and she wasn't freaking out about it.

We were mocking those other assholes, the ones who just saw you as some pair of tits with tights, not like us, no. I respect your ability to sling them grooves. Like that famous bass player. Ace Frehley or whoever. The girl version of him.

Wasn't it hot in there? Better out here in the courtyard, yeah. What was I saying? So how have you been and stuff? In a band and shit, I gather. It's like news flash: you never told me about it. I know I never like texted you back that time, but yeah, don't keep me out of the loop, yo. I had to find out from Warner about this. We were all here to hang, yeah, because I wouldn't be here otherwise. This fucking place is like Waterworld, you know, like a future prison filled with people who are all wet, if you follow me, like that lame dude over there. Look at that fucking shirt he's wearing. What a fucking hipster, eh? Like I'd wear anything from Dilettante. He might have been one of the douchebags before, carrying on during the concert, not that it was a concert, not at this shitty little venue, but yeah, he was one of those douchebags. Again, don't quote me on that. At all. You're my witness. You're my little Amish kid. You know, the movie with Indiana Jones? Don't you fucking know anything? Hey, I'm only kidding. Good thing you're a pretty face around these parts and that you've got parts if you know what I'm saying. Again, kidding. Lighten up, dude.

Or should I say Dude-ly Moore. Ha ha. I don't know even know what that means. No, I'm not going out with Larissa. We're just friends. I mean it's been six months or three months. Ages. Water under the bridge. Why else am I here if not to support you and be like a friend. Different kind of friend to Larissa in that we're not so friendly despite how it looks, I mean, I only hang with her because she drives me places and wears a red tie occasionally. Wait, didn't you get my e-mail? I'm sure I spelled it out for you. The situation. Situated you in relation to me and what's going on in my life. I mean, the photography is taking off, yeah, I'm going to Melbourne in three days to do some stuff with Eleanor who is out there working with bands and models. Magazine bullshit but whatever, you know, it can be art too. Just because it's glossy doesn't mean it can't fuck with your head. Kind of like what you guys did on stage. Head-fucking good times. I mean that in the most positive sense possible. Posse-bull. Trademark that shit. Man, I gotta go. Yeah, Larissa is my ride home. We riding like that fucking stupid rap song, ha ha. Or that other song: ride with me, ride with me, like that band that went nowhere, I mean, are they one of your influences? Ah fuck, how lucky are you not to be with me anymore? And are you like fucking someone else now? Don't answer that. Just jokes, you know.

If I were you playing the bass in that band,
I'd fuck that lead singer. He must have a
huge cock, right? Relax, I haven't seen you
in a year or whatever and you're getting
shitty. I'm just fucking you about. It's all
good, right? Oh man, I have to skedaddle.
Look at Larissa with her fucking face.
She's a riot. Good seeing you again and if
you get any static from those douchebags
again, take 'em out with extreme preju-
dice. We have to stick together against the
hordes of idiots out there.
Take it easy, sleazy. I'm out like a Christ-
mas light in July. Ha ha. Oh, and we're
cool and shit, right? Word.

IT'S 22 HOURS UNTIL YOU GO

Matt Giles

and I am on the bed and
I don't know what I am doing

I am under the supervision of a Sunair fan and
my school photos are all around
and I am thinking, "with a rugby jumper like that
and those hillbilly chums
how can it be that you will
possibly think of me
when you go?"

If you were here
you would
make a face like you'd tasted something bad
and say
"don't be stupid"

the Sunair fan blows back and forth and
I am cold, and already
pretty bald
and it is 21 hours until you go

BUDDHA

Lily Chan

At the Red Dot Store there were
rows and rows of Buddha statues.
Grinning chubby Buddhas
and solemn sitting Buddhas
and standing ascetic Buddhas
bald and bronze
black and lumpy
heavy and light
beads swinging from necks.

I sit him in the palm of my hand.
And peel the price tag off his leg
to sit on the corner of my desk
and look at me
when I'm happy
and when I'm sad.
Ever calm.

1 AT A TIME

Mark William Jackson

it

is all

the fall the

crash the time when we

laughed in line or cried the crack

shot in to a field of sighs we love the sound

but mute the mark and once more set the spot the find but

all ways just one at a time just to leave a place where we once were stop



HAPPY TURTLES TO ALL AND TO ALL A GOOD NIGHT

Jennifer Smith

Illustration by Michael Hall

She stood on a train platform, and when I say she, I mean I, and I mean I the way most people wish they could say she when they mean I. So, she, which is and isn't I, stood at the platform frantically swearing at a train as it moved out from the station. Damn the train and its tracks and every ugly person who got on board, she thought, though the truth was not that all the people were ugly (though some of them were) but rather that they were on the train. Being on the train while she was on the platform seemed enough to make them all ugly and undeserving.

"Fuck", she said aloud, then "fuck" again, and again, it whispered with the tapping echo of the sole of her shoe against the bitumen. It was cold, she had forgotten her jacket, and asides from several handfuls of almonds, she had not eaten. Almonds are not a meal, she said to herself, then she said fuck again, just for good measure.

Twenty minutes until the next train made the people inside the last one even uglier. She sat down on the cold ground, as all the seats were taken. A man cried out from further down the platform. "You fucking bitch". She looked at her feet and pretended not to hear him. "I said you fucking bitch, come here!"

Again her eyes stared down at her shoes as if they were trying to burrow down to her little pinkies.

"You bitch, listen to me when I am talking to you, the fucking nerve, hey BITCH". His steps grew closer. She began to wonder what she had done. She hadn't sworn so loudly to have been heard by anyone before, let alone a man on the farthest side of the platform. Pondering again she realised she hadn't knocked, hit, stamped, stolen from or offended any one in any particular way recently. Perhaps he was not talking to her after all. Looking up, he most certainly was. He also seemed drunk and was wearing scary pants- the ones with the long line down each leg, the kind that say either "I haven't eaten carbs in a month" or "Imafuckyouup" - depending on what suburb you're in at them time. Looking at his patchy beard and slack-jawed taunts she guessed he was part of the latter group.

Staring at her shoe, she ignored him until his shadow fell over her. "I said, HEY BITCH..." She wished she could have stood up and said something grand, or pulled a glove from her pocket and slapped him hard with it across the face, or even said in a proud voice "yes, good sir, what is it that you want?"

But instead she relied on her instincts, and when it comes down to it, instincts can be very silly things.

“Happy Turtle,” she said with her hands, “happy turtle, confident turtle. We all applaud the confident turtle”—the only thing she could say in sign language. She said it again and again and again. “What the fuck are you doing” the man spat. She was not proud, but knew what she had to do next. She pushed her tongue to the roof of her mouth, pushed as hard as she could, and spoke: “I’m deaf- Soh-ary”.

“Fuck” the man said, wobbling slightly as he started at her false confession. It seems that even assholes have their limits, who knows, maybe his mother was deaf. The girl returned her gaze to the shoes and continued waiting for the train as the man stumbled down the station ramp, swearing at strangers. Happy turtle indeed, she thought as the next trainload of passengers, beautiful ones this time, pulled up at the station.

THE BEGGAR

Karen Murphy

He wasn't very old—about 30 or so; and he was the kind of man people liked to whisper about.

“He could've done such great things;” his family said this all the time.

“Such a bright future, such a shame.”

“Oh and so much money;” his sister would mumble at the four empty chairs over Christmas dinner.

Sometimes he saw them in his head, and they were so clear he would swear they were standing right in front of him, but it always turned out to be another suit hassling him.

“Get off the street, bum, you're screwing up the scenery;” well, something like that anyway.

Sometimes he liked to stick their hazy faces onto the heads of others, the ones that dropped him coins and commented on the neatness of his handwriting. His family were blurring now, he used to see such bold, heavy lines, acrylic paints in blocks and shades; now they were just running water colours and the harder he tried to focus, the more they ran away.

This was his home, the white walls, the dirty windows, boarded up when the last shop owner gave up and joined a line of business men with broken dreams they'd left behind them.

It suited him perfectly—sheltered from the wind, the rain, the sun, well, all weather really. He liked that. He stood out against the white, the dirty white contrasted with his black, sooty appearance; his dreadlocks, which were entirely by accident. He liked the wrinkles, they made him look older. He wanted to be older, he wanted to die; and everyone knows that only the good die young. And he definitely wasn't good, so he'd have to wait. But the wrinkles fooled people.

“Dirty old man;” they'd whisper to each other in passing.

It made him wonder if he could fool God as well. The old man didn't think that he was worth remembering; no-one had ever remembered him, so maybe God forgot, got preoccupied with someone more interesting, looked back and saw this dirty old man.

“Bout time you kicked the bucket;” he'd think to himself, “look at ya, you poor bastard.” Although this hadn't happened yet, he hoped.

He'd given up on all that house crap; happy family bullshit. Even when he had money, he didn't have it, not really, and the rare occasion he did have it, he couldn't let himself believe it was enough, always had to give them more, keep them safe, or so he thought.

Death had a way of slapping you across the face when you've been driving with your eyes closed. The accident destroyed the old man's heart, the old man destroyed his soul.

On the street, the man liked to think he didn't care about anything, he didn't have anything to care about, except his hate. It wasn't much, but it was really all he had. He was quite proud of it, no holes, the only thing he owned without them; and it was mighty important to him that it didn't have holes as he used this particular hat to collect money, coins. He never got very many so it was all the more important that he didn't lose the few he did have. At least, that's what he thought, until she walked past.

She paused at him and read the cardboard sign. "Money for food," had been written neatly across the torn box in black permanent marker. She looked at him.

"Educated?" she said.

She wasn't very old, about 20 or so, and dressed in green cargo pants and a rainbow tie dye singlet. It was her hair that caught his attention; it was tied back but would have easily reached her hips if she left it out. She looked at him, but not with the same air of discontent that all the others did, she looked at him with pity, her blue eyes like an empty stage that was littered with roses.

It didn't matter how hard the old man tried to focus on the beauty of the roses, he couldn't detract himself from the fact that there were no longer any actors left to bring the stage alive. He almost felt sorer for her than he did for himself.

"U-dub," he said, "commerce, ironic, huh?"

"Could happen to any of us," she said, and dropped ten dollars in his hat. He went to thank her but nothing came.

"You're welcome." She said, and smiled. "My name is Marilee, and I'm an alcoholic."

She walked off and he never saw her again. "An alcoholic," he thought, "how curious."

He scurried off to MacDonald's, gripping the money in both hands as if it would bite him should he dare let go. The line was long, and he hung low, keeping his head to ground as he didn't dare draw attention to himself. He smelled repugnant and he could see the peoples upturned noses as they walked by, the way they turned their heads and took deep breaths in, the way you're taught to when you're really stressed or anxious, or just around a rubbish bin or something just as horrible. He didn't mean to smell, he didn't, and sometimes he could afford the showers in the City Square, \$2 a shower, or \$4 including a towel.

It took three weeks of coins, but sometimes he would wander over, half bent over by the throbbing weight of his head and his dangling arms that drooped beside him and pulled him further to the ground.

“A Big Mac meal, please?” he said as made his way up to the front.

“Next please!” The attendant ignored him.

“Ahh, excuse me? I think I was next.”

“I’m sorry, sir, I’m busy serving, have you tried the foodbank?”

“No, I have money, here, see?” He held out the ten dollar note and watched the attendant shake her head.

“Sir please, wait your turn.”

“But I—”

“Next please.”

He sat, very small in the corner, the wall and the counter were at a ninety degree angle and didn’t hide him from the other customers quite as well as he hoped they would. They all stared and he thought for a second that he could see his wife staring down at him, so disappointed. Then he saw the flashing lights and realised it was all a dream, she’d never stare down at him again. He closed his eyes.

“Please, miss, I have money, it’s my money, I just want some food. I can pay for it, I’ll pay you, and you can even keep the change. Please...”

She didn’t even look at him.

“I don’t accept bribery, sir, you have to wait your turn, now please, step aside.” She swept her arms in front of her, “you’re scaring all the customers.”

“A large Big Mac meal and a sundae,” a woman said, another suit, about 25 or so.

“That’s nine ninety—”

“Hey! I’m still standing—”

She looked at him and winked, her hair was golden like the sun and she had green eyes like his eldest daughter. She handed him the tray, shaking her head as he pushed forward the ten dollar bill.

“You keep it,” she said and walked away.

The attendant watched him scurry off into a seat in the restaurant, in a corner so out of the way he couldn’t possibly bother anyone with his ragged looks or primitive smell. He was hungry, and he ate like an animal, but they did not kick him out. The woman had left the building now and was not to be seen, he did not think about it, he ate, and when he finished he stood up and emptied the tray into the bin. Paused to think, turned, and threw out the ten dollar note as well.

INK MISSING DREAM

Coral Carter

I dream. I was reading poetry, published by bohemian male poets with beards, in an apartment supplied by their rich parents. The room was full of collected treasure. Skins of hunted animals on the floor. Icons glowed gold on walls. Glass cornucopias spilled tribal jewellery and cut gems. The font of the book I was reading was coloured, Times Roman, with uneven ink pressure as if it had been printed by a typewriter. Some of the letters had not printed at all but were an indentation. The word 'this' could read his and 'here' could read her.

this his
here her

Awake. I want a type writer to write poetry without a ribbon. Invisible poems. Invisible words. My invisible poetry. Half written. Ink missing. Meaning hidden.

in the mirror
at the foot of the bed
i am a blur

THE PEG WALL

Type / Write / Draw Peg

The peg wall is an anonymous space, one in which all Mouthers can contribute at our events to an ongoing dialogue and neverending narrative. We supply the typewriters, the pens, the pencils, the textas and plenty of blank paper, and you provide the art and words.

this isn't a typewriter
it's a writetyper
i'm not listening to the bands
they've been banned
banned by popular demand
bowl haircuts are comin back
bowl haircuts aren't
go and buy a zine
some of them are free
if you buy okay ampersand
the bearded tennis umpire will shake your hand
and draw you a flan

subliminal advertising to follow:

&

&

&

SADLY THESE AMPERSANDS WERE LIMINAL
..except for the ones you could not see
spooky

*this is the way
this is the way
this is the way
to start the day
take an egg
take a steak
take a hoe and
take a rake
crack them all
break them in
write a poem to
drown the din*

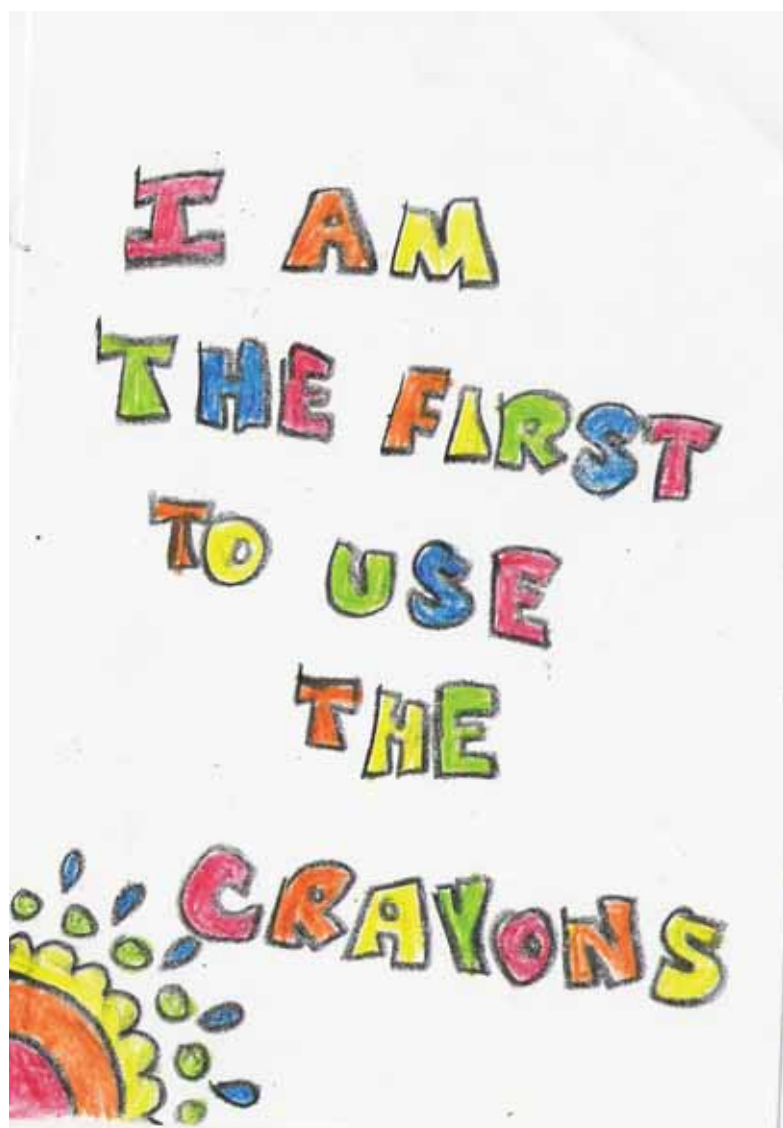
ETC

*i set up my record player the other day
so now i listen to lionel ritchie's hello several times
a day, but i pretend that it's God singing to me,
instead of lionel ritchie singing to a sculptress in
a classroom*

WRITE,
YOU
SUCKER



BY ORDER
OF
SIMON C.



INSTRUCTIONS FOR SURVIVING THE ZOMBIE APOCALYPSE

(INRHYMING COUPLETS)

Elizabeth Tan

Reviewed by Scott-Patrick Mitchell

I can't wait for the *Zombie Apocalypse*. I'm like a kid waiting to kick Santa Claus or take a hatchet to that rabbit, the one that steals chocolate eggs. Ever since the '80s colour remake of *Night Of The Living Dead*, the *Zombie Apocalypse* has been a highly anticipated calendar date for yours truly.

Elizabeth Tan, one of the founders of new wave literary journal *Dot Dot Dash*, understands how exciting the *Zombie Apocalypse* will be when it arrives with blood splattering high definition death and decay. That's why she wrote this zine.

Her logic is brilliant in its simplicity you see. When the dead finally call it a day and decide to rise from the grave, you're not going to need some *New York Times* Bestseller piece of gloss. No way... it has way too many words in it.

What you need is something simple, something you'll remember in a heartbeat (hopefully not your final one): after all, when fighting your dead great aunt, on the verge of hysteria, you want to be able to remember something with catchy ease. Something that comes, say, in a rhyming couplet.

The whole reason rhyming poetry was written was so it could be remembered. Ok, so there might be some stylistic intentions too, but it was so people who couldn't read could hear it and carry it on. Or some such. I don't know. It won't matter when the zombies rip out your brain anyway now will it. No. So trust me.

Tan's instructional economy pays off. She's investing in your life. In the future of all our lives. Her stark incredibly restrained dead pan instructions roll off the tongue as though they were ripped out in a matter of fact style. There's nothing iambically pretentious here, just a well calculated gait, quite unlike a zombie's shuffle.

Tan clearly knows how to kill a zombie. She also knows how to make a good getaway. Sacrifice is such a noble virtue she acclaims, but only if its other people who are the ones being sacrificed, naturally.

Oh, and apparently we'll all need can openers. Yeah, apparently pull top cans aren't that universal. At least not at the end of the world. Who'd have thought? Accompanying each couplet is a wry wit and a jaunty stick figured sketch. Nothing overt. Nothing glossy. Just plain simple facts.

And some brilliant insights. And funny black eyed cartoon zombies.

Tan has my back when the dead rise to reclaim our cities as their mausoleums. She also has my back when the night of the living turns into the dawn of the dead followed by the day of the dead, not to forget the remake of the day of the dead, the diary of the dead or even the survival of the dead (capitals removed for dramatic effect). And if you didn't get the Romero references... well, I hope the zombie's eat you first. As does Tan.

Although, to be honest, I'm pretty sure she hopes they eat me too... particularly before they get a nibble in on her.

\$2 – 3 available from Perth Zine Collective or Sticky Institute's Mail Order Dept.

zombiecouplets@hotmail.com or
swirlingblacklillies@hotmail.com

Instructions for surviving the
ZOMBIE APOCALYPSE

In rhyming couplets



LOOSE LEAF

Reviewed by Scott-Patrick Mitchell

The zine scene in Perth owes a debt of gratitude to Kristy Felton, aka K. She's like the fairy godmother of Perth DIY publishing, bringing back to life a zine cult WA hadn't seen since '80s punk clubs and brief utilitarian love affairs in the '90s. All brought back to life with a wave of her photocopied wand.

K's zine *The Ponies* revived an artform of self-expression that the new millennium's romance with street art and customised fashion had all but forgotten. What made *The Ponies* such a hallmark moment was K's dedication – she began with a plan, stuck to it and only ever deviated to create opportunities by bringing more people into the mix, in turn creating a scene

The Ponies kicked out 12 issues from 200- to 200-. When it ended, there was a collective moment of silence... before zines galore exploded, creating all manners of self-publishing jaunts. It culminated in the Perth Zine Collective, zine shop Coastal Shelf and a general sense of flourishing. The scene went on without K and her landmark zine.

But now she's back, reinterpreting what a zine means once again. *Loose Leaf* is subscription only. That's right, you have to pay up front for it, easily done with Paypal, and very cheap (\$20 for five issues, \$25 if you live overseas). The first issue, however, is free.

Loose Leaf arrives in your letterbox with a fun sticker on the envelope. Inside, the formula is set, the rigidity of form allowing for an amazing expression of content: five double-sided, black and white pages cut 'n' pasted as a collage of contributors to be exact.

That means you can find poems squirreled away on a page, or a whole leaf dedicated to the ingenuity of one person. Every month there's a feature artist and a feature illness. There's also a space for a recipe you stole from your gran's kitchen. Oh, and contributor by-lines, a point of significant difference to K's last little world, a bigger nod toward the uniqueness of those creating this zine.

Loose Leaf is bound for success. It has that swooping moment of excitement when you open the envelope and realise who it's from. There's also contributors from *The Ponies* who have continued their loyalty across, including Perth poet Kevin Gillam and K's Melbourne counterpart Tim B, whose letter writing inspired this new moment in WA DIY zinery.

The charm of this format is that it will roll along unknown to the larger population. While *The Ponies* got out on the streets and sought an audience through clever marketing, *Loose Leaf* sees K drawing in a select crowd to create something that brims with potentiality. It isn't cliquy but rather underground in the truest sense. Nostalgic really.

After all, how many letters do you receive these days, letters that you actually like opening? Loose Leaf guarantees that every month you'll have at least one. As for K, her shrewd success is a brilliant calculation of doing something that makes her own heart sing. It was the key to The Ponies. Undoubtedly it'll be what makes Loose Leaf unique and inspiring... along with your voice, naturally, contributing to the excitement of the experiment.

\$20 (\$25 overseas) subscription for five issues – issue #1 free until

Monthly, available through www.looseleafzine.com

Contribute drawings, photos, recipies, illnesses, confessions, fiction (400 words max), poems, reviews, etc by email to k@looseleafzine.com) or by post to PO Box 7931, Cloisters Square, Perth WA 6850.



ISSUE ONE
SEP 2010

K@LOOSELEAFZINE.COM

PO Box 7931, Cloisters Square, Perth WA 6850
---write me a letter---

Joirey Foley designed the logo
---write me a letter---

Hi Friends

Welcome to Loose Leaf. How fun is it getting actual letters in the post? If you like this one, please subscribe - see details below.

How's things with you? Everything's pretty sweet with me right now. I'm going to be a bridesmaid at Lindsay and Michael's wedding in a few weeks. And I'm heading over to Newcastle to go to the arts festival first (this is Art Act). Even work's pretty good at the moment. I was in Kalgoorlie last month to do some focus groups. The moment that defined Kalgoorlie for me: seeing a 20 year old guy pushing a trolley in a pram and drinking from a can of WD40, at 11:00 in the morning.

Have an awesome month.
Love, Kristy

SUBSCRIBE
This issue's free. If you like it, you can get a five month subscription for \$20 (AU\$25 overseas). One issue each month, posted to you. Go to www.looseleafzine.com/subscribe

it seems strange
how we used to wait
for letters to arrive

but what's stranger still is how something so small can keep you alive
--Arcade Fire

YOU

Reviewed by Scott-Patrick Mitchell

I don't actually read YOU. Never have. But I do collect it. Correction, love collecting it.

Each issue comes sealed or stapled shut. The outside is always so unique that I can never bring myself to opening one. Ever. So I just collect them. I have about 70 issues to date.

OK, I lie. I opened one once. It was A4 in size and I was curious to read what editor Luke You had put out into the world: it was thick like a manifesto. To my surprise, it was actually a one paged letter that had been blown up in size and spat out of the photocopier as a sequential puzzle composed of tiles you had to put together. I laughed at the ingenuity... and was grateful I'd picked up a second copy, which still remains unopened.

So to write a review of YOU when I don't actually read YOU seems a little redundant. So I thought I'd review the cover art of YOU instead. After all, this is what makes me pick it up: the usual brown paper bags decorated with discarded memorabilia from someone's life, somewhere.

I like it when there's a degree of deliberate anxiety present in the cover art. Like blue texta rain covering the front and back, pressed so hard it's rubbed itself off in parts, suggesting an underlying manic rush to get it done.

Or a cocoon of gaffa tape engulfing the butcher paper. A warped wrapping that says 'I've bound something in here that you might

not want to read, so I've made it difficult for you to read'.

What I do know is that each issue is a letter. Each issue is written to you. Yes, you... the reader. It comes from Luke. Or rather Luke You, editor of YOU. Although sometimes you can actually be the letter writer, as I have done myself, and if you are, Luke You sends you two copies of the issue of YOU you appear in. You in YOU and you get two.

Sorry.

YOU is a romantic expression of the art of photocopying conjoined with the confession, two elements that defined zinery when it emerged last century. They still remain crucial elements, although not necessarily essential.

Luke You has become an every-you, a voice of the people, a diligent distributor of the written photocopied word. He is anonymous. Try and google him. You'll only find references, not an actual account or profile. He's a purist like that, shunning new social media to keep it real, visceral, and sealed with staples.

I once read he even wrote to a fashion label because they had a copy of YOU in their advertising campaign. It wasn't so much that they hadn't asked his permission to have it appear there – which they hadn't – but the fact that having it appear in mainstream advertising devalued the legitimacy of what YOU embodies – of being present only in the

real world, in real time, like on the street or in a bookshop, YOU being a moment shared between two strangers for only a moment. Moments intersecting, dropped off for collection. Confessions confessed to people never met. See, romantic.

I don't think I will ever start reading YOU. Not because it's badly written or anything. Simply because I can't suddenly start ripping open these weekly unique envelopes and butcher paper bags reminiscent of tuck shop goodness. To do so would destroy the mystique I've created around them. So on I'll go, collecting unopened confessions meant for you. And you. And you too.

Free.

Weekly, available at Planet and independent bookstores.

Contribute a handwritten letter by attending YOU Letter Writing Marathons in Melbourne.



CONTRIBUTORS

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Michael Hill is an Australian animator and director. He has directed five independent short films and has co-directed several animated video clips. He is currently working on his new Screen Australia funded short film "The Orchestra". He enjoys sitting in a well-lit room, drawing the same picture over and over again until his hand freezes with RSI.

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Scott-Patrick Mitchell's poetry and fiction has been published in numerous anthologies. In 2009, he won The PressPress Chapbook Award for songs for the ordinary mass, a collection which fuses urban sampling with Gregorian musical notations. He's completing a Masters in Performance Poetry at WAAPA, Edith Cowan University.

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