

Surrealism, Poetry, Anarchy

An introduction

May Thistle

2002

This issue's focus on poetry and surrealism evolved in a surrealist fashion as synchronicity and serendipity weaved this theme into being.

Certainly, our friendship with anarchist writer and anthologist Ron Sakolsky played a part as we anticipated the release of his newest book *Surrealist Subversions*.

Sometimes activist 'zines can come off as too serious and self-important. I feel we need a balance in our paper: not just analysis, critique, and exposure of institutional atrocity but also examples of creative, playful thought and action. Thus, this gift.

Specific to surrealism, I have an admiration and possibly innate affinity for its extra-rational, collaborative, and convivial components. More attitude than activism: through living and dreaming, surrealism might seem aimless. It's not. Like an iron beam in the swirl of mighty mist, it's capable of cracking illusions and opening more than a few minds.

Ron Sakolsky's in-depth introduction to his massive anthology is called "Surrealist Subversion In Chicago: The Forecast Is Hotter Than Ever." In this, he tracks the curvilinear journey of contemporary American surrealism. He elaborates, "By unleashing poetic fusillades aimed directly at the heart of bourgeois complacency, [Surrealists] have always sought to reveal, and then break the bars of the prison called miserableism." Further, Sakolsky sees surrealism as nothing less than the "Wild Child of Mother Anarchy," and it is the surrealist-anarchist connection that Sakolsky's book traces and triumphs.

In the words of a regular FE contributor, "our adventure is...to be found in...that ineffable, numinous relationship with an intelligent, animate world that only a renewed mythopoetics can approach." Rejecting and reinventing the ancient archetypes, then inviting them for tea. Invoking insurrection through inspiration. Fueling dissidence through play and poetics. Cutting away from the herd though finding pleasure in collective scheming. Celebrating individuality, diversity and eccentricity while tinkering with ways to bust out of tedium. We uplift one another as we ignite imagination and draw way outside the lines. Beyond reason. Embracing the random. Watching reality bend.

I hope that our paper will continue to highlight opportunities where folks have taken the time to conspire not only in rants, demos, and protests, but in cafes, communes, and bedrooms (okay, living rooms). We can't always count on breaking down the walls of institutions so heavily armed, so sometimes we must tunnel or catapult or slip through the cracks. That demands expanding and sharing power, wisdom, humor and humility.

-August 2002

"It is time to let the cat of hallucination out of the bag of reality. Long live the impossible!"

- Chicago Surrealists

WHY SAY NO? (sidebar)

Against the laughable legion of puritanical movie-stars, athletes, TV celebrities and assorted politicians' wives who tell us to "just say no" to everything from sex and drugs to dropping out of high school, the surrealists put forth for the consideration of the public these modest

IMMEDIATE DEMANDS

1. Absolute sexual freedom, eroticization of everyday life, expansion of pleasure uninhibited by bourgeois notions of guilt and duty
2. Global supersession of wage-slavery by the cultivation of inspired laziness.
3. Emancipation of children from all forms of patriarchal domination.
4. Expansion of wilderness everywhere, at all times, by any and all means.
5. Destruction of Family, Church and State—the indispensable first step toward a pleasurable life for all.

THE SURREALIST GROUP

Chicago, August 1987

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