



## in the closet ■

accccdiscrdddiscsdecsis

```
# cd /tmp/srv
# ls
closet
# cd closet
# ls
disc_unreleased.cda
# pico disc_unreleased.cda
<B><FONT SIZE=+1>disc</FONT></B> -
<A HREF= "http://www.vinylcomm.com/
index.shtml"><B>vinyl
communications</B></A> supergroup
comprised of southern california's
<B>kid 606</B>, <B>lesser</B>,
<B>matmos</B>. previous releases
include: <B>2XCD</B>, <B>Gaijin</B>,
<B>Nullsonic</B> <I>(collaboration with
K.K. Null)</I>, <B>Brave</B>.
experimental sound excavated from the
ruins of post-drum'n'bass/noise and
hard(drive)core. hand-crafted digital
abuse music compiled from compact disc
cuts, scratches, gouges, burns, and
skips. installation consists of two
randomly-shuffled multi-tracked cd-rs
mixed into a single signal, ensuring a
perpetually unique output. contact <A
HREF="mailto:kid66606@aol.com">
miguel</A> or <A HREF:
"mailto:j@lsr1.com">jay</A> for
information.
^X
```

accccdiscrdddiscsdecsis









# TEMPORARY SERVICES

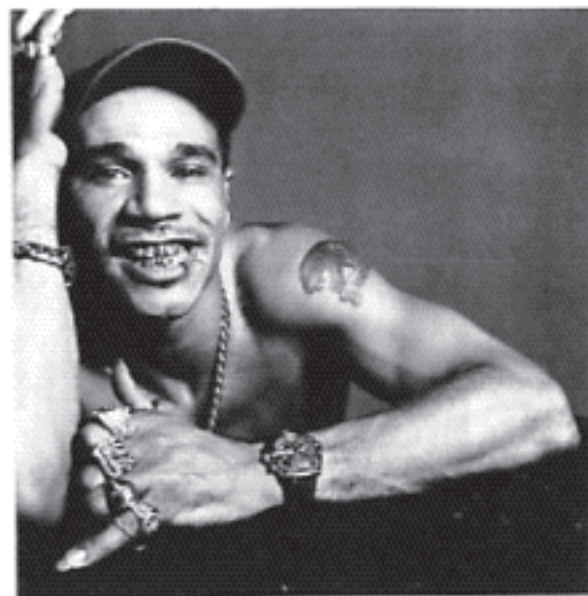
- In the main space - "Axe Street Arena" a documentary exhibition of the gallery/ meeting place that was active during the mid 1980s (just down the street from Temporary Services at the corner of Kimball and Milwaukee) - compiled by Michael Piazz (a cofounder of Axe Street).
- In the window, on the banner and in the back hallway - Selections from the "Allison and Fischer Atlas" - an ongoing, collaborative project by Matti Allison and Marc Fischer.
- In the video/audio 'closet', the music of the Southern California group Disc (made up of Lesser, Kid-606 and Matmos) - curated by Mike Javor ( a regular contributor to "Urban Sounds" - an online music magazine found @ [www.urbansounds.com](http://www.urbansounds.com)).

**Dec. 18, 1998- Jan. 25, 1999**



AXE ST. ARENA MEMBERS

- |                     |                    |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| 1. James Koehnline  | 2. Michael Piazza  |
| 3. Laura Piazza     | 4. Bertha Husband  |
| 5. M. J. Marchnight | 6. Rebecca Wolfram |







## BASIC FILING SYSTEM:

INSERTIONS • MIRROR REFLECTIONS  
PROGRESSIONS • OUT OF FOCUS  
COLOR CHARTS • BLACK & WHITE  
ASSORTMENTS • IMPORTANT MEN  
TOES/FEET • AWARD WINNERS  
INFLATED OBJECTS • SCHEMATIC FACES  
PEOPLE HOLDING GLASSES • TOUCH  
PEOPLE HOLDING SIGNS • SHELTER  
PHALLIC OBJECTS • HAND GESTURES  
VAGINAL • BROWN OBJECTS (SHIT)  
BEFORE + AFTER • HAIR  
NUMBERED DIAGRAMS • RELEASE  
NO (X + Ø) • MESSSES + SPILLS  
ANIMALS DRESSED AS PEOPLE +  
PEOPLE DRESSED AS ANIMALS  
STRAPS + HARNESES

justice that still continues. It is this other history that never gets told on the corporate media - the history of oppression that needs to be forever re-illuminated through our artistic endeavors lest we forget.

All in all, Axe St. Arena must have appeared too political for the art world and too weird for the politicians. We were interested in formulating a politically engaged art where the message is not overt - one that borders on the poetic as opposed to the didactic. The immediacy of specific political models over art practice pre-determines the outcome - in essence, an imposition. We experienced Axe St. as a place in which guests were invited to collaborate and explore notions of liberation however momentary.

Some of our most important work was with artist and writer, Elizam Escobar. Elizam was a member of Axe St. in absentia as he was and still is incarcerated in a Federal Prison. To take from a Call to Free him, - ...on April 4th, 1980 Elizam Escobar was captured together with others fighting for the liberation of Puerto Rico, accused of belonging to the FALN, Armed forces for National Liberation, and convicted of seditious conspiracy, a broad political charge historically used to repress political rebellion." His sentence is 68 years. In 1986, Elizam's exhibition, "Art as an Act of Liberation" opened at Axe St. Arena. The Reader featured an article on him, and renowned writers such as Lucy Lippard contributed to the catalogue. Two days later, Elizam disappeared into the penal system from the facility in Oxford Wisconsin only to reappear days later at El Reno Federal Prison in Oklahoma. It took well over a year to fight through letter campaigns for his right to paint again.

Over the years, a series of Axe St. collaborations with Elizam resulted from visits that Bertha Husband, Rebecca Wolfram, and myself took to El Reno. One of the collaborations was an anthology of alternative essays by international writers and artists called, *Disparities and Connections: The Excluded on Postmodernism*. Because of carceral limitations, we concocted collaborative games with parameters in which to create works on our own with the intention of being brought together into a single entity. During our talks, we managed to create some



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exquisite corpse drawings under the watchful eye of the surveillance camera.

Through all of this, though still uneasy, I realized how familiar the prison surroundings were becoming. Like the prison with its panopticon tower( but it wasn't the prison, it was the airport), the metal detector, the lock on the motel room door. Everyone who stayed at motels in El Reno were, more than likely, there to visit prisoners.

In the worst sense of our present alienated situation, all space is at once mediated, contested, monitored, and controlled and all traces of what could be ascertained as a public is erased. Collaborative intervention in different locales could press against the limits (aesthetics as tacit terrorism) and establish what Hakim Bey refers to as a "temporary autonomous zone" where, "we can pretend that the bastards haven't gotten us yet, that we can still make contact without the mediation of media, that we can still feel without prosthesis..."

After Axe St. closed, we continued with exhibitions and publications together and apart. I became more interested in the liberatory potential of collaboration beyond a gallery setting such as working with resident youth at the Cook County Juvenile Temporary Detention Center. Today, there are many more venues to accomodate a great diversity of artists and a growing number of artists dedicated to social activism. But within such a society which really cannot be bothered or prefer their solutions of gambling/amusement/ incarceration , battles thought won can all too easily erode.

Meanwhile, Elizam is still in prison, artists fight against censorship, arts organizations feel the crunch as federal money disappears and scramble for the education dollar dangled by corporate foundations... Where is the artist being shoved to anyway? Maybe this is why I have taken an ambivilant stance in relation to our extreme alienation; my own search for what Debord referred to as truth inherent in universal history and "...the critique which goes beyond the spectacle must know how to wait." I was going to bring the telescope over to the Detention Center so the youth could watch the final lunar eclipse of the millenium but the sky was overcast.

Michael Piazza



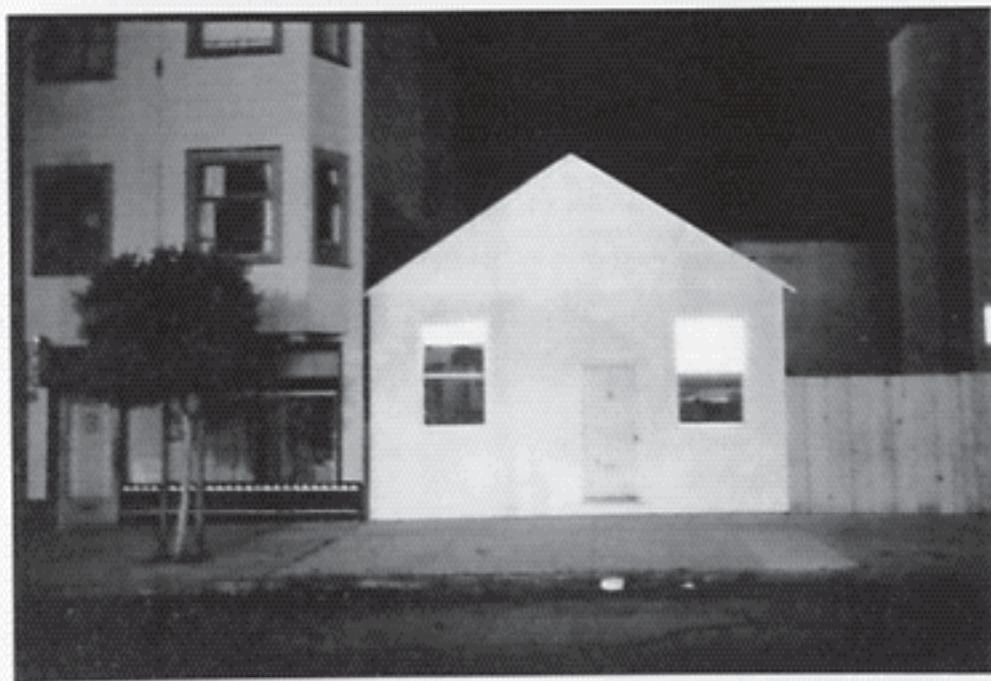
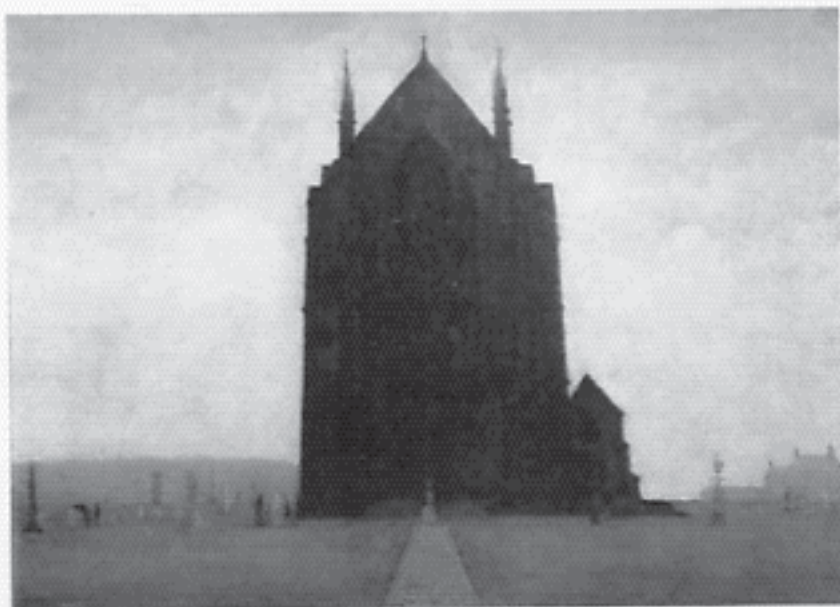
# SELECTIONS FROM THE ALLISON AND FISCHER ATLAS



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## Overcast Eclipse

*"And the big Milwaukee Avenue moon of home casts an equal light on neon wilderness and payola jungle... Where not one should be slighted. Blows on the head or blows on the ear. Not one should be turned away. Under any old moon at all."*

-Nelson Algren 1946

It was a perfectly clear night in August, I think, when the last total lunar eclipse happened over Chicago. That was in 1989. We had gathered on the roof outside of Axe St. Arena which was on the top floor of the old Goldblatts Building at Milwaukee, Diversey, and Kimble Avenues. Axe St. was closing and we were to move out. Drinking from the bottle, we watched as the moon appeared to be a faint ruddy bubble over the city skyline. I know we were all burned out from 4 years of running an artists' space. It was time to move on -anyway our lease was up. (The owners misjudged the gentrification trajectory.)

What had motivated us all to move in together to set up this arena in the first place? We all shared a political commitment and vision- that art should not be separate from everyday life -that art should look for subversions which raise the possibility of undoing the prevailing dominant ideology- that many artists/ activists who were excluded from more mainstream venues needed a place to congregate. We desired to be on the margins where questions could be raised and imagined possibilities could emerge.

Axe St. Arena became a work in progress. The collective involved Tim Andrews, Bertha Husband, James Koehnline, M J Marchnight, Laura Piazza, Rebecca Wolfram, and myself. From 1985 to 1989, we established links with artists in Nicaragua including cultural exchange exhibits. We held annual exhibits for Int'l Womens Day, Gay and Lesbian Pride Week, Artists Call Against U.S. Intervention in Central America and the Caribbean, and a citywide Graffiti Art Exhibition. We also welcomed groups at odds with policies of the U.S. government. On one



particular Saturday, for example, Casa Chile conducted a morning strategy session prior to the plebiscite to oust dictator Pinochet from power and in the evening there was a Palestinian meeting which overlapped with a Northern Irish Aid event. This blurring of artistic intent could be why we were never approved for 501(c) not for profit status.

There were other vital artist groups throughout the city such as Inkworks, Chicago Public Arts Group, Beacon Street Gallery, Pros Arts Studio, etc.(many of which are still active) developing community based projects and working out their strategies towards a people's art. Diverse as their approaches were, these artists believed in the social significance of art as a means to empowerment and change. Still there was hardly enough socially committed artists to counter the cultural void left by exclusionary practices. The importance at that time, I feel, was to expand the myriad of cultural options available as resistance to the closed dominant culture, in hopes of further exploration by more and more people in the future.

It has always amazed me how much activity could go on unbeknown to many- a sort of hidden culture on the fringe. One example was the Haymarket Centennial in 1986 in which people from all over the world converged on Chicago- anarchists and socialists or what have you. It was sort of a citywide underground event. Many activist organizations such as Casa Aztlan and Inkworks in Pilsen hosted commemorations to the Haymarket martyrs. Franklin and Penelope Rosemont and the Chicago Surrealist Movement staged interventions. Axe St. hosted an International Mail Art Show which now is housed in the Sangamon University archives. During the centennial gathering on May 4th at the Law and Order monument (that base which used to be at Randolph and DesPlaines for the past 100 years has suddenly disappeared just prior to the 1996 Democratic Convention) hordes of police on horseback lined the streets. reminiscent of when Captain John Bonfield, known all to well by the workers' as "clubber", sent his troops in to disperse the crowd before the fateful bomb went off. Chicago has long been the stage for political unrest, labor strife, struggles for equality and

