Art, AIDS, SF
Tales of the City

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In considering San Francisco of the AIDS years, I keep recalling an unnerving telephone conversation I had in the early 1990s with a Los Angeles–based editor of a lifestyle magazine. Before we began discussing the article I would be writing for her, she asked me sympathetically, "So, are there people dying in the streets there?" Certainly she wasn't being literal; she was responding to news coverage of the health crisis, which conjured an image of a city overtaken by catastrophe.

This was not the city as I knew it. While indeed catastrophic things were in effect—there was even the Loma Prieta earthquake of 1989 to rock the foundations—San Francisco in those years was filled with a vitality, creative passion, and sense of community that I feel lucky to have experienced. There were candlelight marches down Market Street, and all sorts of activist planning sessions over coffee at Café Flore. There was artist Jerome Caja go-go dancing on Sunday nights in tattered lingerie and expressionistic kabuki makeup at the joyously punky Club Uranus. General Idea's AIDS poster campaign (fig. 00), in the style of Robert Indiana's *LOVE*, was popping up all over town like a virus,[1] and Ross Bleckner was showing his elegiac paintings at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art when it was still on Van Ness.[2] There were showings of Marc Huestis's films at the Frameline International LGBT Film Festival, and of Group Material's AIDS Timeline at the University Art Museum (now Berkeley Art Museum). There was Nayland Blake's brilliant and witty presence, both in conversation and in his art, and the magnetic Rick Jacobsen, who started Kiki Gallery in 1993 (fig. 00) and organized the incendiary *Sick Joke* exhibition to tackle the subject of AIDS humor and irony as a coping strategy (with a logo of the HIV-awareness red ribbon slyly restyled as a noose) (fig. 00). And there was the *High Risk* book series, with dashing, urgent covers designed by Rex Ray (fig. 00). Most of all, when I think about that time, I see a city on fire with the urgency of grappling with mortal coils, and with the erotic power of seizing a moment as if it were your last.

The scale of these memories, and this is just a sliver of them, is as elastic as are aspects of the city itself. San Francisco is geographically and demographically compact, which tends to magnify the cultural conditions that have resonated here. Statistically speaking, more of the population[3] might be touched by whatever actions and ideas course through the streets, landscape, and cultural institutions than would be the case in larger metropolitan areas. Spending time here means likely having a direct interaction with the social and economic dynamics that have been reported upon in national and international media. Over the last 50 years, hippie, gay, and tech cultures have all loomed large enough to make contact with its denizens unavoidable.

I lived in San Francisco during this challenging, exciting time, and witnessed and participated in a great deal of artistic activity firsthand. Like many who gravitated here, I was drawn to the city for its sense of freedom and creativity, as well as for its

1 General Idea's AIDS poster campaign was presented both as a public art project and in gallery form as part of the 1988 exhibition *The Public and Private Domains of the Miss General Idea Pavilion*, Artspace, San Francisco.

2 Bleckner's first museum solo exhibition was organized by the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art in 1988.

3 In 1990 the census figure was 723,959; http://www.bayareacensus.ca.gov/counties/SanFranciscoCounty70.htm.

Fig. 2
Rick Jacobsen, owner and curator, outside Kiki Gallery on 14th Street, San Francisco, circa 1994.

Fig. 3
Catalogue cover of *Sick Joke: Bitterness, Sarcasm, and Irony in the Second AIDS Decade* (San Francisco: Kiki Gallery, 1993).

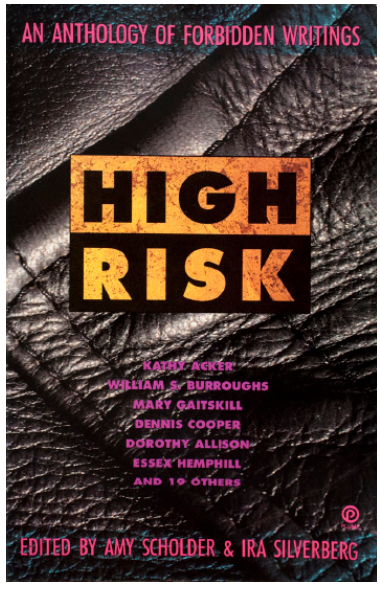

Fig. 4
Catalogue cover of *High Risk: An Anthology of Forbidden Writings*, edited by Amy Scholder and Ira Silverberg (City: Publisher, Year).

scale. Unlike suburban Southern California, where I was raised, San Francisco is navigable on foot and public transportation, and the streets between Castro and Market down to the Civic Center were regularly enlivened by marches, political confabs, pride parades, and impromptu gatherings of celebration or mourning, depending on the political winds. There was fluidity among the many places of convergence, from cafés, bars, and nightclubs to ACT UP meetings, film screenings, and art openings. And the effect of HIV/AIDS coursed through them all. The virus had a powerful impact on notions of community, identity, and personal and collective expression. To look back a quarter century, to the late 1980s and early 1990s, is to consider a moment when HIV was perhaps the city's most critical civic motivator—certainly its most urgent. This period points to how one community, albeit one composed of many subgroups, social circles, and cliques, responded to crisis.

Micro/Macro

The Bay Area has a history of this kind of micro dialogue. The intimate LGBT art community of artist/poet couple Jess and Robert Duncan, for example, was very much a group of like-minded friends. Their interactions were addressed in the 2013 traveling exhibition *An Opening of the Field: Jess, Robert Duncan, and Their Circle*, which centered on shared interests and modes of visual and literary expression in San Francisco. Art critic Holland Cotter, in his review of the show, commented on just this aspect: "So much of the art fits into no school, suits no market, lies outside the range of normal. It was an end in itself, a psychic collaboration, the communal property of lovers, spouses and friends."[4]

Such work may have seemed out of step by the 1980s, when LGBT culture had moved into the streets. Official timelines of the AIDS crisis point to the first evidence of HIV/AIDS at the start of the 1980s,[5] though it took some time for the blindsiding nature of the condition to find expression in artistic terms. Once artists began to address its impact and implications—

4 Holland Cotter, "The Company They Kept: Robert Duncan and Jess, and Their Wonderland of Art," *New York Times*, January 16, 2014.

5 US Department of Health and Human Services, "A Timeline of AIDS," http://www.aids.gov/hiv-aids-basics/hiv-aids-101/aids-timeline/.

which were highly evident to anyone living in San Francisco at the time—powerful questions arose about mortality, the survival and/or legacy of an entire generation of gay male culture, the politicization of sexual practice and drug therapies, and how to give image to this culture-shifting period. The role of art in this dynamic, however, is difficult to parse. Although artists have always been a key part of the city's social fabric, San Francisco has long had a reputation as an enclave in which creative expression is tangential to social experimentation. The most visible manifestation of gay culture, and by extension HIV/AIDS, in San Francisco was found not in local galleries but in lifestyle itself.

During a visit to San Francisco in 1987, writer and (at the time) *Village Voice* critic Gary Indiana was struck most by the city's public health policy: "It's possible to deal with AIDS in the way that you see it dealt with in San Francisco on the backs of buses where it says, 'Use Condoms.'. . . This is all over San Francisco. We don't have anything like that in New York. I have not seen one billboard, I have not seen one single piece of public advertising for safe sex, for condoms, for anything."[6] He did not, however, discuss this concern from an art perspective.

How then did HIV/AIDS figure into the contemporaneous art dialogues of the late 1980s and early 1990s? The lineage of Bay Area Figurative art continued to course through painting discourses, while Bay Area conceptualism, a term applied to artists such as Howard Fried, David Ireland, Paul Kos, and Tom Marioni, was rooted in the phenomenological; even though their work had a relationship to the legacy of free-thinking hippie culture, sexual identity was not a primary concern. The conceptualism of artists such as Lynn Hershman, Linda Montano, and Bonnie Sherk, on the other hand, dealt with issues of social space and gender, though they were not directly aligned with queer dialogues.

The San Francisco Museum of Modern Art set a sleek, East Coast tone of discussion with its presentation of Jeff Koons's traveling retrospective in 1992, followed a year later by General Idea's touring swan song *Fin de Siècle*. These two postmodern spectacles were related in surface effect: Koons had his vacuum-packed virginal vacuums lit in ethereal fluorescent, and General Idea had a year's worth of AZT capsules rendered at inflated scale, doubling as minimalist sculpture. These were decidedly East Coast visions, with slicker production qualities and art-world dialogues, not to mention international art-world cachet. In contrast, works emerging from San Francisco at the time were scruffier and more community-based.

The role of LGBT art and artists has a surprisingly sketchy relationship to mainstream art history of the region. In the 2002 survey publication *Epicenter: San Francisco Bay Area Art Now*, 48 artists are profiled—including Hershman, Ireland, Kos, and Marioni—but none foregrounds any sort of LGBT concerns. The volume might be dismissed for this egregiously limited view, but the book's coauthor Mark Johnstone does offer a useful observation on regional conditions. Writing about the artists who had been invited to perform actions at the 1992 groundbreaking ceremony of SFMOMA's new South of Market building, Johnstone identified a divergence: "[David] Ireland and SRL [Survival Research Laboratories] ostensibly represent the poles of calm highbrow intellectualism and spectacular lowbrow chaos. Both poles have historically marked the Bay Area's cultural reputation."[7] A similar polarization occurred between expressions of political activism and personal loss, passionate anger and anguish.

HIV/AIDS perhaps provided a thematic opening for artists, a sense of gravity, not to mention urgency, to the act of making art in the service of a broad range of concerns: activist expression (ACT UP chapters, Boy with Arms Akimbo), community collaboration and memorial (the NAMES Project), documentation that engaged the language of documentary photography and portraiture (Marc Geller, Ann P. Meredith, Daniel Nicoletta, Jessica Tanzer), and more conceptual approaches (Nayland Blake, David Dashiell). The art in question drew on the strengths of the local setting—its intimacy, freedom, and freakiness—and negotiated identity through works that are formally transgressive, and/or incorporate transgressive ideas within traditional media.

6 John McCarron, interview with Gary Indiana, *Shift*, no. 2 (1987): 32.

7 Mark Johnstone and Leslie Aboud Holzman, *Epicenter: San Francisco Bay Area Art Now* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2002), 9.

Fig. 5
Nayland Blake (born 1960)
DUST, 1987
MEDIUM TO COME
DIMENSIONS TO COME
CREDIT LINE TO COME

Fig. 6
Exterior signage for the Stud Bar, San Francisco.

In the context of *Art AIDS America,* at one end of the spectrum is Nayland Blake, whose work is cerebral, playful, and at times arcane, but notably attuned to the metaphorical and actual effects of HIV/AIDS on the city's psyche; on the other is Jerome Caja, whose fetish paintings of scary clowns and skinny drag queens rendered in nail polish are intuitive and dreamlike, evoking a scene out of an eroticized Hieronymus Bosch painting but with figures dressed in ripped fishnets and ornamented with crudely rendered Happy Faces. The works of many other artists can be located at various points between these intellectualized and expressionistic impulses. And though few artists claimed HIV/AIDS as their sole subject, the impact of HIV/AIDS on art produced in San Francisco is as multifarious as the specific underground communities of artists who produced it. The effect was, for the most part, something that changed a view of the world, that made it more urgent and powerful.

Mind/Body

The polarities of high and low, mind and body, of course were not clean. Art is an arena of unruliness, and the art of the time was driven by obsessions, emotions, and guiding texts. Blake's work fused art world concerns of the day with the dramatic quandaries of what HIV/AIDS brought to San Francisco culture. His sculptures, installations, videos, and performances (at times in Duchampian drag as a character named CoCo) merged ideas around the body and literature, at the time an understandably fashionable subject of theory and of postmodern questions related to identity. A New Yorker who had made his way to San Francisco after receiving his MFA from CalArts in 1984, Blake worked within artistic reference points that stemmed not from Bay Area art history, but from a brand of Southern California conceptualism practiced by CalArts dean Douglas Huebler and prominent faculty such as John Baldessari. Blake's approach to the subject was filtered through literary sources, appropriationist strategies, and layered personal revelations.

Charismatic, with crackling wit and intelligence, Blake was a catalyzing figure whose aesthetic inclinations differed from the communal style that was perhaps more typically associated with San Francisco. *DUST* (1987), a flag that rearranged the letters of the STUD bar, an LGBT establishment that has been in operation since 1966, is wry, arch, and elegiac (figs. 00, 00). It was a bit of tailoring perhaps related, but antithetical, to the NAMES Project AIDS Memorial Quilt, which had been established that same year. Blake's use of the instantly recognizable typeface of the bar sign offered a micro view of place (a particular community watering hole), while the stud/dust anagram evoked the transitory nature of masculinity and life itself.

His *After Veronica* (1987–88) is composed of handkerchiefs stained with wax and blood, semen, and saliva—body fluids charged as transmitters of HIV (fig. 00). The sculpture echoes the kind of theorizing of

Fig. 7
Nayland Blake (born 1960)
After Veronica, 1987–88
MEDIUM TO COME
DIMENSIONS TO COME
CREDIT LINE TO COME

Fig. 8
Kiki Smith (born 1954)
Untitled, 1987–90
Silvered glass water bottles
Each bottle 20½ × 11½ inches in diameter
Museum of Modern Art, New York, Gift of Louis and Bessie Adler Foundation, Inc., 565.1990.a-l

the flesh expressed in philosopher Michel Foucault's three-volume series *History of Sexuality* (1976/1984), or in the anthology *Fragments for a History of the Human Body*, published in three volumes by Zone Books in 1989. *After Veronica* also shares a trajectory explored by Kiki Smith, whose *Untitled* (1987–90) consists of a shelf of silvered jugs containing various body fluids (fig. 00).[8]

After some early exhibitions in the Bay Area, Blake quickly went on to participate in major national group exhibitions and was something of an emissary of San Francisco art activity. He became a program director at New Langton Arts, an important alternative space, where in 1991 he organized *Situation*, a pioneering exhibition of LGBT work that was the precursor of *In a Different Light* at the Berkeley Art Museum, which Blake co-curated with Lawrence Rinder in 1995. Curator Renny Pritikin, who hired Blake for the New Langton job, suggested that he was the center of a "gay intelligentsia,"[9] a queer brand of Bay Area conceptualism practiced by D-L Alvarez, David Dashiell, Cliff Hengst, Scott Hewicker, and others.

Dashiell, another CalArts alumnus, took a similarly cool, conceptual approach to unpacking signifiers of identity.[10] His work is filled with Magritte-like flash cards where meanings are inverted and short-

8 This work was featured in Smith's *MATRIX 142* exhibition at the Berkeley Art Museum in 1991; http://bampfa.berkeley.edu/exhibition/142.

9 "The 'gay intelligentsia,' as coined by Pritikin, consisted of Nayland Blake, D-L Alvarez, Glen Helfand, Scott Hewicker, Cliff Hengst, and other artists related to the late David Dashiell and the prominent Kiki Gallery." Carlos Garcia Montero, "What Went Wrong? You Vanished in Front of Me: BAN1 and Its Reconstruction," *Art Practical*, no. 5.1 (September 11, 2013), http://www.artpractical.com/feature/what-went-wrong-you-vanished-in-front-of-me/

10 To add to Dashiell's San Francisco credibility, he is reportedly the grandson of hard-boiled detective novelist Dashiell Hammett; see http://www.oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/kt4489n8mf/entire_text/.

11 Nayland Blake, interview with David Dashiell, *Shift*, no. 10 (1990): 47.

circuited with postmodern filters. In his most ambitious work, *Queer Mysteries* (1993), he worked with Neo-classical motifs to reenvision the murals from the Villa of the Mysteries in Pompeii as a steampunk fantasia of science-fiction narrative and sexual perversity (plate oo). Dashiell's references to AIDS are not veiled, but rather tempered in semiotics and sensibility. As he expressed in a 1990 interview with Blake, "Things like the AIDS epidemic have forced us to be analytical about people's emotional reactions. So thinking in terms of a sensibility where we are critical of the world and ourselves, then yes, it has a gay sensibility."[11] For media arts curator Robert Riley, *Queer Mysteries* "is perhaps the most vivid and most astonishing chronicle of an era of confusion, of alarm and of crisis that visited San Francisco and largely wiped out the artist's community and thousands and thousands more, and that is the era of AIDS."[12]

Charisma of a different sort informed Jerome Caja as an artist (known simply as Jerome). Beanpole thin, even before testing positive, he was an indelible figure in garters, fishnet stockings, and trawled-on horror makeup—a look that has been called "skag-drag"[13] and that was very much a part of his artistic expression. He conveyed fearlessness and vulnerability in his being, and also in his purposefully crude, mixed-media paintings—most rendered in nail polish—that whirled together aspects of religion, art history, and sinister sex. In the indelible *Bozo Fucks Death* (1988), for example, the clown does the nasty with a skeletal figure (plate oo). Caja channeled Catholic guilt and his Midwestern roots into works that explored the pleasures and perils of the flesh.

Whereas Blake's use of persona in his work is more calculated and metaphorical, Caja's was direct and often narrative, at times representing an insular personal dialogue. As the artist explained: "I have a working behavior and it's . . . less intellectual thought; it's more habitual. It's something that I just do. . . . Usually I'm telling a story and playing and chatting with myself. 'Cause that's what my painting is, it's me talking to myself, telling jokes, or making a statement, or losing my temper, or whatever. Usually that's what I'm doing, when I'm painting, I'm talking to myself, I'm having a private conversation."[14] And yet, one of his most powerful projects related to HIV/AIDS was conceived collaboratively with artist Charles Sexton, a friend from Caja's student days at the San Francisco Art Institute. The pair had made a pact that whoever survived the other would have to make artwork with the other's ashes. Caja lost that wager, surviving Sexton, who died in 1991, to create small portraits of Charles made by mixing the remains with nail enamel (fig. ??).

It is worth noting here that the legacy of artists who died of complications related to HIV/AIDS, including Dashiell (1952–1993) and Caja (1958–1995), often is vastly different from that of artists who may not have been infected or who survived. Blake, for example, has developed into an MFA professor and a BDSM celebrity in Brooklyn, and his work continues to explore signifiers of experience and identity, albeit in more improvisatory ways. Caja on the other hand is justly a cult figure, a character worthy of more biographical exploration,[15] but his approach was fittingly iconoclastic. "His imperative to produce art was never compromised by a desire to direct it where art becomes successful," wrote Adam Klein in a biographical essay that elaborates how Caja would consciously make works that were difficult to be collected.[16] The fact is that the works he did complete were distributed so widely—one might say "democratically"—that they're not easily wrangled for art historical scrutiny, though his work, as well as that of Dashiell and Blake, is in the permanent collection of SFMOMA.

Location, Location, Location

In 1994 Caja was in a memorable group exhibition at Kiki Gallery, a compact space run by Rick Jacobsen on 14th Street in the Mission.[17] The show was titled *Toilet Water*, and the artist famously bubble bathed in the claw-foot tub in the back of the gallery during

12 Robert Riley, transcript from an audio tour, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, quoted in Sono Osato, "Master of Queer Mysteries," *Stretcher* [2003], http://www.stretcher.org/features/master_of_queer_mysteries/.

13 Craig M. Corpora, "Caja, Jerome (1958–1995)," *GLBTQ: An Encyclopedia of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Culture* (2013), http://www.glbtq.com/arts/caja_jerome.html.

14 Artist page, Gallery Paule Anglim, San Francisco, http://www.gallerypauleanglim.com/Caja.html.

15 In fact, a biographical documentary film about Jerome and a catalogue raisonné of his work are currently in development; http://www.thejeromeproject.com/.

16 Adam Klein, "A Harsher Discipline," in Thomas Avena and Adam Klein, *Jerome: After the Pageant* (San Francisco: Bastard Books, 1996), 17.

17 The gallery was next door to Red Dora's Bearded Lady Café, founded by artist Harry Dodge.

Fig. 10
Catherine Opie (born 1961)
Jerome Caja, 1993
MEDIUM TO COME
DIMENSIONS TO COME
CREDIT LINE TO COME

the opening.[18] It coincided with an exhibition there of Catherine Opie's first series of portraits, including *Jerome Caja* (1993), in which the subject poses regally in a red dress (fig. 00). Both the gallery and the *Toilet Water* exhibition exemplified the kinds of tight creative communities that defined the San Francisco ethos. Existing somewhere between commercial gallery and clubhouse, Kiki reflected Jacobsen's wit, showmanship, and endearing cynicism. He was, as described in an unattributed press release, an "activist, theatrical producer, substance-abuse counselor, bookseller, and certified massage therapist"—as well as a person with AIDS. He exhibited a generation of artists, like Opie (who also attended the San Francisco Art Institute), who went on to become important international figures. Opie's "court" portraits of her queer circle were perfectly suited to this intimate space in the center of its own community.

Jacobsen's most notable project was the 1993 exhibition *Sick Joke: Bitterness, Sarcasm, and Irony in the Second AIDS Decade*. The exhibition remains the stuff of legend, as documentation is spotty; but the chapbook catalogue expresses the tone of survival humor that Jacobsen was after.[19] A series of cartoons by D-L Alvarez, for example, riffs on tacky T-shirts and custom license plates, as in "2QT 2B DI'N" (fig. 00). In

18 Corpora, "Caja, Jerome (1958–1995)."

19 Full disclosure: I coauthored a piece with Kevin Killian, which is published in the catalogue.

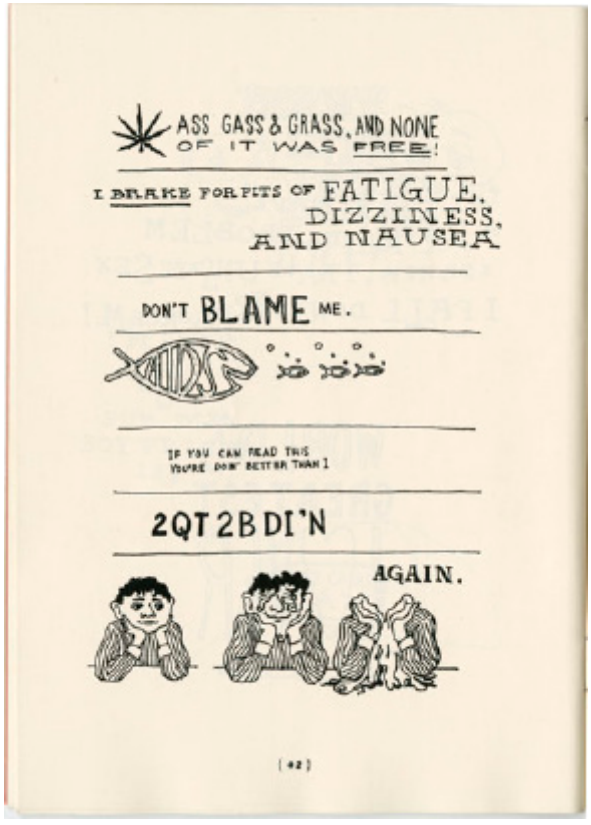

Fig. 11
D-L Alvarez, "2QT 2B DI'N," reproduced in *Sick Joke: Bitterness, Sarcasm, and Irony in the Second AIDS Decade* (San Francisco: Kiki Gallery, 1993).

his introduction, Jacobsen writes autobiographically of being an emotional-support volunteer for people with AIDS, irreverently describing how one man's KS lesions had "the look of hearty raisin bread."[20] Jacobsen goes on to reveal his own battle with the virus and his stints as an activist. In referring to the works in the show, he starts with his wide-eyed entry to San Francisco, like Dorothy in *The Wizard of Oz*, and ends with Old Testament wrath: "It is my hope that they reflect where a sizable stack of fallen branches now lie. This is not a particularly hopeful time. The wind has taken too many, the downpour drenches without pause. The storm as metaphor takes on biblical proportions and I know no Noah."[21]

The gallery's own survival was tenuous; it was open only from 1993 to 1995, but nonetheless has garnered the same sort of historical status as Batman Gallery, a Beat showcase on Fillmore Street from the early sixties. Referring to Jacobsen's vision for the gallery, curator and Berkeley Art Museum director Lawrence Rinder observed that he was "too idealistic only in that he was not physically able to survive, because he died of AIDS. There was nothing inherently utopian about the gallery's project. . . . the Kiki thing—skeptical, un-serious, DIY, sassy, and smart—survives. Kiki was political and activistic only in a Dada way. It was not conventionally political at all."[22]

Although this patch of the Mission, downhill from the Castro but still somewhat dicey territory, was a neighborhood friendly to roving nightclubs and café's like the adjacent Red Dora's Bearded Lady catering to arty queers, a lively alternative could also be found South of Market. The blocks around the intersection of Ninth and Folsom Streets in particular was another locus of gallery activity, alongside leather bars and the notorious Folsom Street Fair. There, Blake had early exhibitions at Media Gallery, a warehouse space run by Patricia Davidson. Works by Blake, General Idea, Izhar Patkin, and Robert Mapplethorpe were shown at the maverick Artspace, a private nonprofit run by Anne MacDonald, a spitfire art patron who had decamped from SFMOMA's board to create her own very vibrant and social program (she also opened a restaurant/clubhouse, called Limbo, which was located next door). Perhaps most invaluable were Artspace's publishing activities, which included the journal *Shift*, and the extant Artspace Books, specializing in collaborations between artists and writers. A few doors down, the alternative space New Langton Arts featured queer-friendly programming.

Across Folsom street from New Langton was the flat and studio of Mark Chester, a self-described "gay radical sex photographer"[23] who presented exhibitions and "Sex Art Salons" that featured his black-and-white portraits of gay men engaging in kink. His work has a grittier, closer to the core approach than Mapplethorpe's more aesthetically cool views of similar subjects. Chester's iconic portraits, including Robert Chesley—ks portraits with harddick and superman

20 Rick Jacobsen, "Hit," in *Sick Joke: Bitterness, Sarcasm, and Irony in the Second AIDS Decade* (San Francisco: Kiki Gallery, 1993), 4.

21 Ibid.

22 Tamara Loewenstein, "Interview: Lawrence Rinder, February 29, 2009," KikiGallery.tumblr, http://kikigallery.tumblr.com/#6330594275.

23 http://markichester.com/.

spandex #3 (1989) (plate 00), give image not only to the experience of living with a body marked by HIV, but also to a defiant sexuality. The Sex Art Salons may have attracted a different audience from the one going to the more art-establishment galleries, but the coexistence of such a variety of venues speaks to the diversity of aesthetic and social groups that were active in this otherwise desolate and cruisy area.

Behind Chester's Victorian was Ringgold Alley, a notorious public sex street that would be teaming with activity after 2 a.m. Klein begins his essay on Caja in this very location. The two are eyeing a guy in a new leather jacket; Caja sneers: "I had that bitch behind Beck's Motor Lodge. We were about to get into it when he asked me, 'Don't you think it's time for you to stop having sex?'"[24] The suggestion was anathema to the artist's steadfast appetite for life and the gritty tone of his art. Jerome's defiant response is a narrative of perseverance.

The landscape and social fabric of San Francisco have shifted since then. Neighborhoods that were affordable enough to foster artistic experimentation are now home to sleek tech start-ups, artisanal watering holes, and pricy housing towers. The economic inequalities of this moment are seen by many as another sort of catastrophe. And yet the maverick subcultural expression of the 1980s and 1990s endures with the efforts of survivors, thesis-writing grad students, and historians—communities of individuals who know that the artistic and activist activities born of the AIDS crisis are an integral part of the city's cultural legacy. The neighborhood may have changed, but that is all the more reason to recognize and remember the community that once claimed it as home.

24 Klein, "A Harsher Discipline," 9–10.