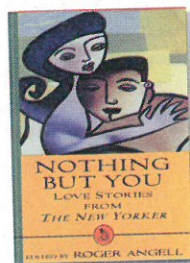


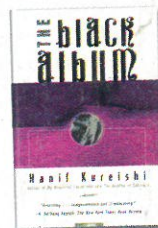
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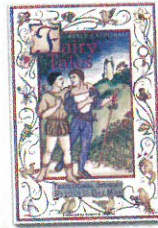
Nothing But You: Love Stories from The New Yorker
edited by Roger Angell
For 75 years, The New Yorker has published some of the world's best fiction from the best authors. Here's a collection of 38 love stories. (Random House)
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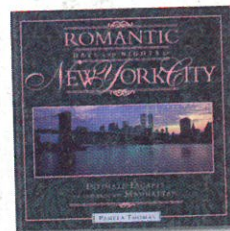
In the area? Stop by. You'll be welcomed with open books. Revisit a classic. Hang out with a new favorite. It's all at Barnes & Noble. Your home away from home.



The Black Album
by Hanif Kureishi
Shahid is a confused student drawn both to conservative Muslims and to a gorgeous, scandalous professor. A daring novel from an acclaimed author. (Scribner Paperback)
Pub. Price \$11.00
B&N Price \$9.90



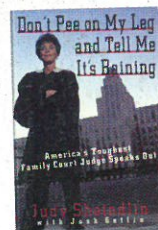
Fairy Tales: Traditional Stories Retold for Gay Men
by Peter Cashore
Here's a funny and moving collection that puts a gay twist on childhood favorites. (HarperCollins)
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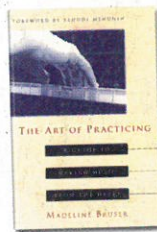
Romantic Days and Nights in New York City
by Pamela Thomas
Thirty romantic itineraries highlight Manhattan's most intimate venues—quaint cafés, cozy hotels, historic theaters and more. Choose a weekend and create magical moments. (Globe Pequot)
Pub. Price \$14.95
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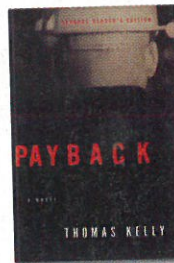
Kink
by Dave Davies
Volatile feuds. Hedonistic parties. Outrageous songs. The Kinks' cofounder recounts his wild and turbulent life on the road, off the road and with brother Ray Davies. (Hyperion)
Pub. Price \$22.95
B&N Price \$18.36



Don't Pee on My Leg and Tell Me It's Raining
by Judge Judy Sheindlin and Josh Getlin
America's toughest family court judge attacks the defects in the system, and provides solutions. (HarperPerennial)
Pub. Price \$12.00
B&N Price \$10.80



The Art of Practicing
by Madeline Bruser
Learn the physiological and meditative principles that help musicians improve their skills while avoiding crippling injuries caused by repetitive movements. (Random House)
Pub. Price \$23.00
B&N Price \$18.40



Payback
by Thomas Kelly
In this intense novel, the loyalty of two brothers—one an Irish mob henchman, the other a college student—is put to a brutal and profoundly telling test. (Knopf)
Pub. Price \$23.00
B&N Price \$18.40

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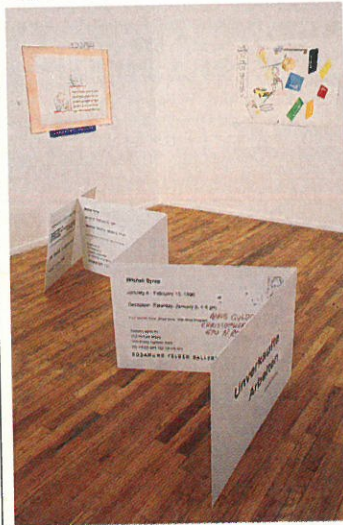
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favorites—and
they've got their
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ART

Review

REGULAR, NO SUGAR

In "Hot Coffee," six L.A. artists offer a tasty, mild blend



"Hot Coffee," installation view.

"Hot Coffee," Artists Space, through Mar 15 (see SoHo).

Twenty years ago this fall, Artists Space broke new ground with an exhibition curated by Douglas Crimp entitled "Pictures." The show helped launch one of the central strains of the '80s aesthetic: appropriation art. Although the original exhibit included only Troy Brauntuch, Jack Goldstein, Sherrie Levine, Robert Longo and Phillip Smith, the movement soon swelled to accommodate artists as diverse as Cindy Sherman, Richard Prince, Laurie Simmons and Thomas Lawson. Now Lawson is closing a circle of sorts by organizing "Hot Coffee," an exhibition (also at Artists Space) of six young L.A. artists who presumably represent the dawning millennium in art.

Originally from Scotland, Lawson made blunt, figurative paintings laced with subtle social commentary back in the '80s. He also wrote. In the October 1981 issue of *Artforum*, he published an amazingly lucid—and still pertinent—essay titled "Last Exit: Painting," in which he argued eloquently for the medium's continued relevance.

Lawson now heads CalArts, the Los Angeles art school founded by Walt Disney, and as it turns out, the artists of "Hot Coffee" (named after a 1937 Edward Weston photograph of a banded-up coffee shop sign in the Mojave Desert) are all recent graduates from there—which is what you might expect. You might also expect that for Lawson at least, there would be some parallels with "Pictures"; indeed, when you examine the cura-

tors' statements for each show, there are remarkable similarities: Crimp writes about the "ambiguities of recognizable images," while Lawson speaks of a "refusal to find closure." Crimp talks about an art "not confined to any particular medium," and Lawson, an art with no "particular allegiance to medium or category." But more intriguing perhaps are the differences: Whereas Crimp claimed that his ideas formed a "predominant sensibility" (which they did), Lawson modestly prefers to "form a puzzle" and "raise interesting questions about aesthetics, spectatorship, class alienation and humor." For this reason alone, "Hot Coffee" and "Pictures" are two very different shows.

At first it seems that there's no "there" here. Things are strewn about: rags on the wall, junk on the floor, a couple of TV monitors. It all fits the Los Angeles stereotype, but if you examine each artist's work carefully, you'll find it thoroughly provocative.

Start with Julie Becker, who makes miniature interiors that look like the homes of people who get busted on Cops—barren except for a TV, fake wood paneling, a mattress on the floor, a couple of cheesy pictures and maybe a dresser. She then makes photographs from these models. The result is seedy and fantastical: part docudrama, part psychodrama.

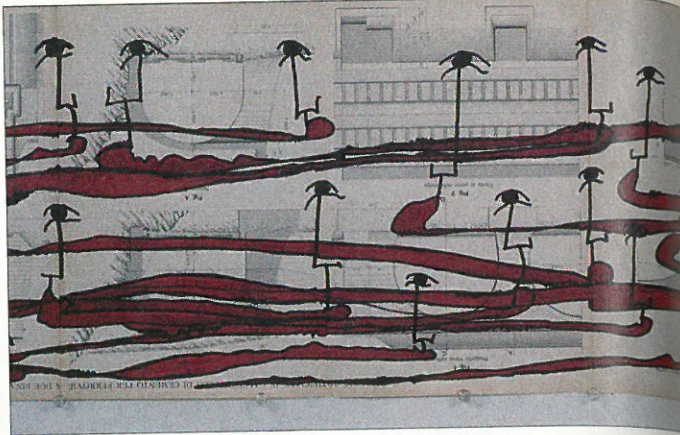
Next is a Naumanesque video projection by Marina Rosenfeld of a figure playing air guitar. Just who this person is (it's unclear if it's a man or a woman) and why he or she is here is left unanswered. The artist suggests, in the title, that it is *The Lingering Afterglow of Repetitive Longing*. I think it's about masturbation. Whatever the case, the piece is mesmerizing.

Laura Owens has only one of her paintings here, but it's a good one. Big and open, it starts out as a perspective diagram, then zooms in to become an uneven wood floor with a couple of puddles spilled on it. It also has a touch of that Cops pathos.

Andrea Bowers draws banal pictures of spectators at sporting events. They're interesting as exercises in voyeurism. She also exhibits her source material, a set of videotapes. They make for a nice ambient soundtrack for the whole exhibit, alternating between overcharged crowd noise and bored silence.

Composing loving paeans to his fellow artists, Dave Muller enlarges and alters the announcement cards for their shows. In one piece, he glitterizes photographer Sharon Lockhart's name; in another, he paints the names of T. J. Wilcox and Francis Stark (also young L.A. artists) in pretty colored inks. Finally, Kent Young pieces together different colored squares and rectangles to form a wall painting/semblage. It's a haphazard combination that works here, falls apart there. It's an apt analog for this entire light-handed yet edgy show.

Ultimately, this exhibition lacks the manifest destiny of "Pictures" and its focused exploration of a big idea. After all, it's not a "Pictures" kind of moment. As it is, "Hot Coffee" is more like a warm cup of cocoa: quiet and soothing. —Jerry Saltz



Carol Rama, *Tongues 17 (horiz.)*, 1996.

Carol Rama, "Works on Paper: 1930s to the Present" Esso Gallery, through Mar 8 (see SoHo).

Women artists such as Frida Kahlo, Elaine Sturtevant, Lygia Clark and Yayoi Kusama—whose talents were ignored due to subtle, pernicious misogyny—have benefited to a certain degree from historical revisionism over the past 20 years. Now it's Carol Rama's turn: At 78, she has been famous in Italy for many years. While too small to cover her 50-year career, this exhibit is still a triumph, providing a fascinating introduction to her powerful, vibrantly erotic drawings.

It's easy to imagine how Rama could have been an influence on Sue Williams, Kiki Smith and even Cindy Sherman. But it would've been impossible, since Rama has never exhibited in the U.S. before, and

only one article on her work has been published here. (When I walked into the gallery, though, Smith was sitting on the floor, gazing at Rama's work—making up for lost time, perhaps?)

When asked in a gallery interview what her favorite "form" is, Rama replied, "The dick, as it has given me so much pleasure." While her *Via Borgodoro*—a funny, nasty watercolor of a man fucking a bear cub—may not turn you on, other drawings nearby possess the same palpable sense of erotic derangement found in Egon Schiele or Jean Cocteau. Rama's recent drawing series, "Tongues" and "Masurbator 1-4," are less exciting. But they still have a wonderful sense of obsession. In them, strange bodily forms are repeated over and over in scroll-like fashion.

Clearly an artist in full command of her powers, Rama has much to say to younger contemporary artists. I'm glad to see she's finally being given her due. —Bill Arning

Ken Lum, "Photo-Mirrors" Andrea Rosen Gallery, through Mar 8 (see SoHo).

Just as Germany flooded the art market of the early '90s with artists promoting a stark and dispassionate brand of Photo-Conceptualism, Vancouver these days seems to be the source of a whole new school of coolly conceptual photographers. Jeff Wall, Roy Arden, Stan Douglas and Ken Lum all use photography and video toward Marxist-inspired ends. But unlike their European counterparts, their work is filled with low-culture references, and tends to be more involved emotionally.

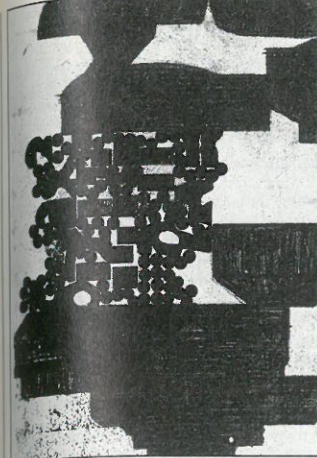
A case in point is Lum's work from a couple of seasons back: a series of photoportraits and text panels, coupled with tragicomic flair. Among them, an elderly woman is seen struggling to learn French, while in another, a young woman argues on the phone with her boyfriend. Both demonstrate an approach that's more intimate and narrative than, say, Thomas Ruff's looming heads.

Lum's current show, "Photo-Mirrors," seems both more personal and less so. Culling found snapshots of family gatherings, graduations, reunions, vacations and the like, Lum sparingly tucks them into the spaces between specially fabricated mirrors and their wooden frames—like everybody does in bedrooms and beauty shops around the globe. In appropriating this gesture from the everyday, Lum reminds us of how looking at ourselves can mean looking at our loved ones—that placing a photo



Ken Lum, *Photo-Mirror: French Maid*, 1997.

against a mirror is one way that photography provides continuity for our lives. The series also dredges up a whole host of theoretical issues surrounding both the photograph and the mirror—especially how each allows a presumably objective glimpse of oneself. But while gathering snapshots seems like a logical move for Lum (who, after all, has been delving into vernacular approaches to photography for some time now), his "Photo-Mirrors" ultimately don't pack much of a punch. Looking at this group of works makes you long for the detail, the depth and the humor of Lum's earlier work. Mostly, you miss their sense of reflection. —Martha Schwendener

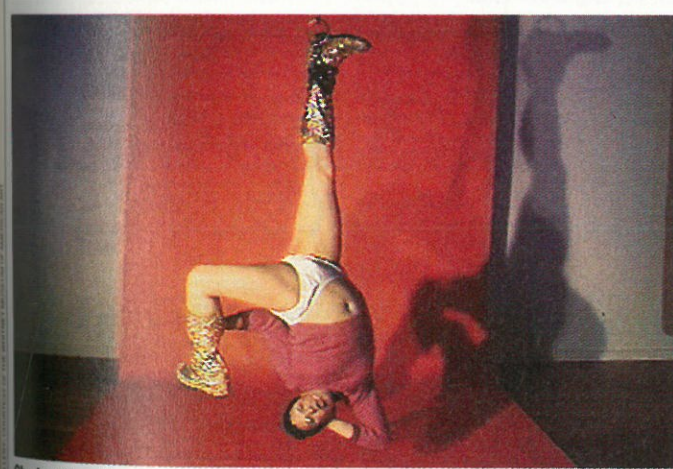


Barry Le Va, *Bunker Coagulation*, 1996.

Barry Le Va Nolan/Eckman Gallery, through Mar 8 (see SoHo).

If the art world were like *Apocalypse Now*, Barry Le Va would be its Colonel Kurtz. You may recall that in the movie, Kurtz is a Special Forces officer—played by Marlon Brando—who crosses over into Cambodia, sets up a private army and carries on his own war against the wishes of his superiors. Back in Saigon, the generals decide to "terminate" his command, sending Martin Sheen's character to find and kill him.

Le Va—who even looks a little like Brando—has been pursuing his own version of Kurtz's strategy since the



Charles Atlas, *The Hanged One* (detail of video), 1997.

Charles Atlas, *The Hanged One* Whitney Museum of American Art, through Mar 9th (see Museums).

In his collaborations with choreographer Merce Cunningham in the 1970s, Charles Atlas forced the video camera out of its passive documentary role and into that of a participating observer. Later, with Michael Clark, Karole Armitage, Bill T. Jones and others, he gave a static medium an almost three-dimensional buoyancy.

Here, *The Hanged One*, a room-sized installation inspired by a Tarot card of the Hanged Man, resembles an after-hours club on carnival night, the kind where you'd find a laced-in-leather card-reader. Atlas provides some social context here by suggesting foot fetishism. Indeed, a transgressive sensibility seems to have entered into the work from the Dada sur-

early '70s. Part of the generation that includes Bruce Nauman, Dorothea Rockburne, Mel Bochner and Richard Serra, Le Va is known for complex installations that involve wood, aluminum, glass and rubber, and that have always eluded easy definition; as a result, Le Va has remained largely an artist's artist in spite of his being "established." It's almost as if he were intentionally making his work difficult, refusing, as it were, to "follow orders" to please the art world. Still, Le Va's works on paper provide a key to unlocking the heart of his contentious art, and this terrific show of black-and-white drawings from the past three years is especially illuminating.

Executed in ink and graphite, and comprised of squares, rectangles, ovals, lines, notations and erasures, these works are as much maps or diagrams as they are abstractions. Evoking battle plans, electrical circuits, flow charts or floor plans, they're strangely calculating—sinister even. You can practically hear Le Va's mind turning, plotting out this movement, tapping out that secret code. The titles resonate with military overtones: *Bunkers Chemicals and Numbers*; *Studies for Sculpture Series: Identified, Classified, Cataloged*; and *Bunker Coagulation*.

In *Apocalypse Now*, Martin Sheen's character says of Kurtz, "He could have gone for general, but he went for himself instead; he split from their whole program." This amazing show offers clues to what Le Va has been up to since he went over the horizon, taking his work with him. —Jerry Saltz



Karl Blossfeldt, *Shield Fern*, ca. 1929.

Karl Blossfeldt, "First Forms of Art: 35 Photographs" Friedrich Petzel Gallery, through Mar 8 (see SoHo).

From 1899 to 1931, Karl Blossfeldt taught "Modeling from Plants" at the College of Arts and Crafts, a school of applied arts in Berlin. Blossfeldt's teaching program was based on a belief that solutions to industrial-design problems could be discovered through studying structures found in nature. So that he might have a compendium of these structures as a resource for his classes, Blossfeldt made thousands of photographic studies of plant specimens.

Solely concerned with the illustration of basic forms, Blossfeldt isolated the portion of the plant that concerned him, often emphasizing formal elements by rearranging leaves or stripping away outer petals. The prepared specimens were photographed by daylight, against a neutral background, using a medium format camera. A thin emulsion on the glass plates allowed extremely clear definitions. The resulting images, with glowing highlights and soft blacks, austere compositions and lush details, somehow captured both the natural vigor of the plant and the artifice of Blossfeldt's process. His method never substantially changed, and until the 1920s, no photograph was ever produced from the negatives. Instead, more efficiently, Blossfeldt made slides, which were then cropped further with black paper and projected so that students could trace the contours.

He never thought to exhibit, or even print, his work as art in its own right, but in 1925, Modern art dealer Karl Nierendorf discovered it. In 1926, Nierendorf exhibited the photographs along with African sculptures, and in 1928, he published 120 of them as a book entitled *Art Forms in Nature*. The avant-garde immediately responded to their stark simplicity and objectivity. The tension implicit in the delicate coil of a rolled-up fern frond, the explosiveness built into the spiral of a ripe seed pod and the measured stateliness of a twig's sectioned construction appealed to their sense of the inevitability of progress. The Surrealists, particularly, adored the weirdness of their magnified vegetable presences.

Blossfeldt was merely applying the principles he taught most rigorously to himself. Through its strict economy of means, his methods produced some of the most gorgeous and influential images in photography's history. —Anne Doran

ART

Submit information by mail or fax (673-8382) to Howard Halle. Include details of venues, dates, times, prices, telephone numbers and nearest subways. Deadline is Monday, nine days before publication. Listings information will not be accepted over the telephone.

USER'S GUIDE

The following is a selection of this week's exhibitions and events. For more museums, see the Around Town, Museums section.

Museums & Institutions

Brooklyn Museum of Art 200 Eastern Pkwy, Brooklyn (718-638-5000). Subway: 2, 3 to Eastern Pkwy-Brooklyn Museum. Wed-Sun 10am-5pm. \$4, students \$2, seniors \$1.50. "A Different Reality: Symbolist Prints from the Collection." Late 19th- and early 20th-century works on paper by artists of the Symbolist movement, including Gauguin, Redon, Whistler and Max Klinger. "Recent Acquisitions: The James Brooks Gift." New York School painter James Brooks's recently donated gouache and tempera studies for his 1930s WPA mural, *Flight*. Through May 4. "Mistress of the House, Mistress of Heaven: Women in Ancient Egypt." A major survey of 200 treasures that explores the role of women in Ancient Egypt. Through May 18. **Rona Pondick, MINE**, an installation evocative of childhood fears and desires. Extended through Sept 7.

Dia Center for the Arts 548 W 22nd St between Tenth and Eleventh Aves (989-5912). Subway: C, E to 23rd St. Thu-Sat noon-6pm. Suggested donation \$3. **Fred Sandback, Sculpture**. Work by this American sculptor known for his refined installations made from strands of yarn. **Hanne Darboven, Kulturgeschichte (Cultural History) 1880-1993**. A new installation of objects and text panels dealing with time, history and memory. **Juan Munoz, A Place Called Abroad**. A streetlike environment, populated by groups of figures, that takes up Dia's entire fourth-floor gallery. **Dan Graham, Two-Way Cylinder Inside Cube**. The artist's rooftop deck project. Through June.

The Frick Collection 1 E 70th St at Fifth Ave (288-0700). Subway: 6 to 68th St. Tue-Sat 10am-6pm, Sun 1-6pm. \$5, students and seniors \$3. "Mortlake Terrace: Turner's Companion Pieces Reunited." Through May. "Italian Old Master Drawings from the Ratjen Foundation." Drawings from the 16th through 18th centuries. Included are works by Canaletto, Tiepolo and Piranesi. Through Sun 2. Also on view: the permanent collection.

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum 1071 Fifth Ave at 88th St (423-3500). Subway: 4, 5, 6 to 86th St. Sun-Wed 10am-6pm; Fri, Sat 10am-8pm; closed Thu. \$8, students and seniors \$5, voluntary donation Fri 6-8pm. **AmEx, MC, V. "Rose is a Rose is a Rose: Gender Performance in Photography."** A photographic survey celebrating 75 years of gender-bending in art, encompassing 80 works by 24 artists. Through Apr 27. "A Century of Sculpture: The Nasher Collection." The Patsy R. and Raymond B. Nasher Collection of 19th- and 20th-century sculpture, including works by Rodin, Brancusi and Richard Serra. Through Jun 1.

Guggenheim Museum SoHo 575 Broadway at Prince St (423-3500). Subway: N, R to Prince St. Wed-Fri, Sun 11am-6pm; Sat 11am-8pm. \$6, students and seniors \$4. **AmEx, MC, V. "Bill Viola: Fire, Water, Breath."** Two new video installations. *The Messenger* and *The Crossing*. In *The Messenger*, a nude man rises from the depths of a pool; in *The Crossing*, a two-channel piece, one man is seen engulfed by water, while another is consumed by flames. Through Mar 23.