

THE LESBIAN AND GAY NEWS MAGAZINE NO. 66

OUTWEEK

\$2.95 USA \$1.95 in NYC

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EICHELBERGER
1945-1990

COLOR
ME
UGLY:
The
Helms
Portrait
Contest

GEFFEN
DUMPS
DICE
CLAY



NEWS • SEXUAL POLITICS • HEALTH • THE ARTS

stronger in a different context; here, inclusion seems based on stereotypical gay iconography. Some of the collages make you wish such a technique had never been invented.

The stronger work includes Bastille's untitled 1982 oil of five men connected by tubes, having intricate sex. Keith Milow's sculpture, "Blue Balls," is both funny and poignant. William Sande contributes a perverse mixed-media piece of a dirty sock mounted on cardboard which is attached to a plywood scrap decorated with a cheesy pinup. Linda Matalon's "From the Wound Series #4" is a vertical tarred box with gauze slit that battles all the encroaching maleness. There is also a "dried sperm" work by Mike Biblo, a Rainer Fetting tucked in the back office and a notebook of delicate ink washes by David Wojnarowicz, entitled "Ink Paintings of Third Avenue Movie Houses Before Health Dept. Closures."

Cary Leibowitz contributes a belt triptych to *Queer*. Each buckle is a word—as with Madonna's Boytoy belt—the three spelling out "Your Dick Here." More of Leibowitz's (aka Candyass), satire can be seen at Stux Gallery. In an installation entitled *bric-a-brac*, he's decorated the walls with pennants that say, "Go Sadness," "Life Sucks," and "Drop Dead." The lower half of the wall is covered with wallpaper that reads "I am a miserable and selfish person." Large felt banners, dinner plates, teddy bears, floor mats and flattened cardboard boxes displayed in two other rooms deliver different messages.

There are many influences at play in Candyass' work, most notably Mike Kelley, though not in as sloppy an incarnation. Three pairs of polyester pants, with "Kick me" spelled across their seats, suggest Jenny Holzer loose in a K-mart.

One of the best pieces is the calendar given away at the gallery's counter. Every month is September and features a different nude photo of a very hairy Candyass performing household chores such as vacuuming or weighing himself on a scale. It is this sense of absurdity that is Candyass' strongest suit, and not his celebration of angst.

An installation about the current

status of the AIDS crisis is at PPOW. Entitled *The Lazaretto*, after a quarantine hospital, the exhibition seeks to draw the parallel between PWAs and lepers. One enters the installation through a labyrinth of black plastic walls. In these hot and claustrophobic passages, PWAs' handwritten horror stories are taped to the plastic. Some of the handwriting is shaky; some is clear; some may remind you of your own. These are disturbing statements, free of jargon and matter-of-fact: "I get black and blue very easily."

The viewer is in a New York City tenement apartment. A bleeding skeleton lies in the bed: The nightstand is crowded with medication; garbage and vomit dot the floor. Under the bed lies the *Post*, with the headline "We May Lose Some Boys."

Spanish Eyes

REALMS OF STRIFE: THE MEMOIRS OF JUAN GOYTISOLO, 1957-1982
by Juan Goytisolo. Translated by Peter Bush. North Point Press. \$19.95 cl. 261 pp.

by Max Cavitch

Juan Goytisolo is one of the most important Spanish novelists of the 20th century. He was also a prominent figure on the international literary scene and a vocal opponent of Franco's regime. Yet, unlike his similarly brilliant, acclaimed and politically correct (or wildly incorrect) peers such as Genet, Calvino, Beckett and Borges, Goytisolo remains relatively unknown to the American reading public. Not only do his marvelous books go neglected, but the man himself remains a stranger.

Happily, a little more of Juan Goytisolo is now available to us in *Realms of Strife*, a second and final installment of his memoirs. The first, entitled *Forbidden Territory*, was published in English last year, also by North Point Press, and leaves off more or less where *Realms of Strife* begins. Both volumes, however, rely very little upon sequential narrative, so that one need not feel obliged to begin at the beginning. *Realms of Strife* stands on its own as one

In the last room drifts a lifeboat with passengers Cardinal O'Connor, George Bush and Jesse Helms. The sea is full of drowning men whom they ignore, continuing their feast of brown babies. The walls have clock faces with no hands and white arms reach out from the black plastic. There are pie charts displaying the demographics of AIDS.

The artists responsible for this report from the front wish to remain anonymous. They prefer education to career advancement. In the front gallery are three tables of extensive information about available services. One only wishes that the men in the boat and others like them would see the installation. To an HIV-positive person, this show is his or her worst nightmare; to someone with AIDS, it's all too familiar. ▼

man's exploration of his identity.

Of course, I mean *identities*, for Goytisolo has many: writer, politico, Spaniard, expatriate, husband, homosexual. The struggle so thoroughly charted in his memoirs is the struggle between the identity he is trying to synthesize and the many tribes, places and principles he identifies *with*. Ideally, there would be no struggle; ideally, the world without would tally with the world within. But it never does, especially for a gifted novelist who is also a propagandist; especially for a Spanish-born hater of Spain, obsessed with a country he cannot live in; especially for a gay man in love with a woman. The contradictions Goytisolo embodies are striking, and what he learns from them during the course of a lifetime is his gift to the reader of *Realms of Strife*.

Early in the book, Goytisolo makes a touching admission that resonates throughout these pages. Speaking of the pain that results when nostalgia for the old confronts longing for the new, he observes that we "who are not single-minded

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but are made up of variegated, anti-theoretical features struggle for a world that we will perhaps find uninhabitable." Over and over again, this proves true, as in his fight for the liberation of a country in which he can neither live nor write, and in his devotion to a lifetime partnership with Monique Lange, though in many ways it cannot accommodate his developing sense of himself as a gay man.

Anyone who feels impelled toward alignment with a difficult cause or an unpopular lifestyle knows, along with Goytisolo, that the urge to take part and join with others is often thrown into crisis by the new discoveries we constantly make about ourselves. Suddenly and without warning, the tribes, places and principles we have long embraced can come to seem less and less like expressions of who we really are. Or think we are. Euphoria encounters disillusionment, trust becomes resentment.

Thus, there comes a point in Goytisolo's activism when he realizes that the anti-Franco movement is misdirected and futile. Fed up with the pettiness and infighting that tend to characterize all political movements, no matter how righteous, he becomes disaffected: "I had prepared myself for something that never happened and for a time experienced a strong sense of being cheated." The alternatives are, on the one hand, despair, on the other, radical change—both in himself and in his writing. He opts for the latter: "a change of skin, an end to posturing, gradual purification, a purging of a surly, inhospitable identity." He flirts with Cuba, clings to Paris, cultivates his relationship with Genet and continues to adore Monique while exploring the "masculine world" toward which he is newly drawn, always seeking to develop a better, more honest voice.

One great challenge to that voice is the letter Goytisolo decides to write to Monique prior to their trip to the Soviet Union in 1965. It is, foremost, a coming-out letter, but it is also a letter about integrity and sacrifice and therefore has much to do with Goytisolo's own exposure to the Soviet system and the realities of political change. Coming out from behind the Iron Curtain is the distillation of a lifetime of insight for Goytisolo: insight into himself and his sexuality as well as the political world in which

he is still trying to find a place.

Years ago, the feminist movement deconstructed a tired, old opposition and, at the same time, gave us a very useful slogan: "The personal is political." So shopworn has that phrase become, however, that it has lost its usefulness. *Everything* is political. *Everything* is personal. The words don't mean anything anymore. Juan Goytisolo hasn't come up

D.O.A.

by Tim Dlugos

"You knew who I was when I walked in the door. You thought that I was dead. Well, I am dead. A man can walk and talk and even breathe and still be dead." Edmond O'Brien is perspiring and chewing up the scenery in my favorite film noir, *D.O.A.* I can't stop watching, can't stop relating. When I walked down Columbus to Endicott last night to pick up Tor's new novel, I felt the eyes of every Puerto Rican teen, crackhead, yuppie couple focus on my cane and makeup. "You're dead," they seemed to say in chorus. Somewhere in a dark bar years ago, I picked up "luminous poisoning." My eyes glowed as I sipped my drink. After that, there was no cure, no turning back. I had to find out what was gnawing at my gut. The hardest part's not even the physical effects: stumbling like a drunk (Edmond O'Brien was one of Hollywood's most active luses) through Forties sets, alternating sweats and fevers, reptilian spots on face and scalp. It's having to say goodbye like the scene where soundtrack violins go crazy as O'Brien gives his last embrace to his girlfriend-cum-Girl Friday, Paula, played by Pamela Britton. They're filmdom's least likely lovers—the squat and jowly alkie and the homely fundamentally talentless actress who would hit

with a brilliant, new catch phrase of his own, but he has restored a little clarity to the old one. The political and the personal are, in his memoirs, distinct realms; they are "realms of strife" and realms *in* strife with one another. Neither one can be absorbed by the other; neither one can be ignored. It's the antagonism of the two that helps Goytisolo see what he may become. ▼

the height of her fame as the pillhead-acting landlady on *My Favorite Martian* fifteen years in the future. I don't have fifteen years, and neither does Edmond O'Brien. He has just enough time to tell Paula how much he loves her, then to drive off in a convertible for the showdown with his killer. I'd like to have a showdown too, if I could figure out which pistol-packing brilliantined and ruthless villain in a hound's-tooth overcoat took my life. Lust, addiction, being in the wrong place at the wrong time? That's not the whole story. Absolute fidelity to the truth of what I felt, open to the moment, and in every case a kind of love: all of the above brought me to this tottering self-conscious state—pneumonia, emaciation, grisly cancer, no future, heart of gold, passionate engagement with a great B film, a glorious summer afternoon in which to pick up the ripest plum tomatoes of the year and prosciutto for the feast I'll cook tonight for the man I love, phone calls from my friends and a walk to the park, ignoring stares, to clear my head. A day like any, like no other. Not so bad for the dead.

POETRY

Tim Dlugos lives in New York and in New Haven. His most recent collection of poems is *Entre Nous: New and Selected Poems*. ▼