

Wilderness House Literary Review 2/2

Mad Hatters' Review: A Review of Issue #7

www.madhattersreview.com

Review by Daniel Y. Harris

Lewis Carroll, patron saint of the unsaintly and unpatronized, in bestowing such idiosyncratic mirth to the Hatter's position at the tea party, sets the parameters for *Mad Hatters' Review* and its Internet and Outernet world. Adorned with Carroll's 19th century vision of the demented hatter as "victim of mercury poisoning" (the poor, working-class hatter "worked with hot solutions of mercuric nitrate, in poorly ventilated rooms"), the Review makes contemporary and metaphorical the plight of the hatters, who suffered "neurological damage, resulting in such symptoms as tremors, slurred speech, irritability, and depression." This enfolding of legacy bestows *Mad Hatters' Review* with a new canon particularly interested, as publisher Carol Novack says,

"in edgy, experimental, gutsy, thematically broad (i.e., saying something about the world and its creatures), psychologically and philosophically sophisticated writings."

Issue #7 continues to endow this canon. Poets Joe Amato, Gunnar Benediktsson, Bob Marcacci, Sally Molini and Michael Neff are genes spliced from E.E. Cummings and some of his inventive and eloquent ancestors and progeny. Each contributor is granted a vibrant trove of visual and musical accompaniment, if s/he so chooses. Custom-made artworks are provided by staff and guest artists and composers, including (classical) Sandra Scheetz Wise, Quartetto Constanze & Jon Leifs, Suchoon Mo, (jazz)

Benjamin Rush Miller, the versatile, melodic Guthrie Lowe, Steve Kane, Paul Toth, and fusion ace Benjamin Tyree. Stay for the mad multimedia spree, a unique experience in the expanding field of cyberitic publishing.

Gryphon, dormouse and dodo metaphorically abound in *Mad Hatters' Fiction*, Non-Fiction, Whatnots, Dramas and Audio Text Collages. Notables, among the fine work of Claire, Millas, Ratner, Wilson and Wuori, is Brandon Hobson, who retells Hellenistic Alexandria, illuminated by the epochocal art of Peter Schwartz. *A King of Hearts* (writer Kevin P. Keating) appears to wrestle with Kubricks's demons.

In case you've been beaten by love or have reified sex, pedagogic lessons to redeem erotic neurotics surface in Lynda Schor's "Sex for Beginners 2." Be not dismayed; the end is not near. Check out the Columns, Comics (including "The Perils of Patriotic Polly"), Contests, Galleries, Interviews, Site and Book Reviews, Video clips, and text and visual collages. Pay your nickel and the brilliant Don Bergland's "Mental Theater" comes with 1954 American cheese. You'll stay parked, neck, and miss the movie.

Before sleep, as the rabbit hastens to his black hole, *Mad Hatters' Review* probes Scottish talent in "Viva Caledonia." Featured artist Calum Colvin was born in Glasgow. It is well-worth perusing Colvin's phantasmagoric visual wit, as you extend your stay with fiction, poetry, and a play by the famous Alastair Gray, selected by associate editor Peter Robertson. Each issue includes a special section devoted to creations from a different part of the world.

Frontispiece "Lamb," by artist Camille Martin, exemplifies the Hatters' daemonic ethos, carried from the inaugural issue. The sublime and the agitated meld in these seven issues. Of note in prior issues: #6, the poems of acclaimed poets Meltzer and Rothenberg, the art of Lynn Schirmer, Art Director Tantra Bensko, associate art editors Peter Schwartz, X-8, and D.K. Macdonald, and the expressionistic art animations of

Jean Detheux, who moves colors and primordial forms to music.

The Review's resolute spirit and determination to artfully exploit the expansive possibilities of Internet publishing and offer quality, inventive creations, is manifest in every issue of the journal.

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