

Alan Catlin -- Three Poems

Collage Art Cards: an assemblage

for Steve Dalachinsky, too soon gone

He sent post cards of the hanging
from Desolation Row, trans-
continental railroad dead man riding
snapshots of the ruins taken from low
flying aircrafts, bomb laden blimps
tiny men in swaying gondola dropped
incendiary devices from, imagined the
effects of exploding, post-apocalyptic
hand grenades on the remains of
what passed for Western civilization,
saw the shining path of jazz police,
forged through thickets of riot geared
barricades, bunker breastworks, then set
the lithium battery under growth on
fire using tiki torches and flame throwers,
asked the Old Testament god where he
wanted the killings done, sharpened
Exacto knife blades on the heads of
graven idol mules and fatted cows,
spoke to the spirit guides in tongues
the way snake handlers and faith healers
do, and learned all the secrets of what
lies inside, the way artists will.

L. Cohen's First European Tour

All along the watchtowers, the Martello
ones facing the sea, gun slits for eyes
viewing the garbage in the harbors,
world war ruins, the ones just past
and the ones to come, that first European
tour the backup band felt as if they were
playing one venue and the singer another,
summers of love ending in ashes,
Isle of Wight in the rain a long, extended
suicide note, a bad trip even without acid,
stoned reflections in muddy water.
Not quite the prophet, then, or is it, yet?
ascending the tower of song. The last
gig, and probably the best, in an institution

in London, “I really wanted to say that this is the audience that we’ve been looking for. I’ve never felt so good playing before people before.” The asylum of song, crazy, man, crazy.

The Human Condition

is a three-sided rectangular box,
one side left open to admit the sun
for small fruit trees, ornamental shrubs,
flowering cacti arranged around marble
benches and tables, an oriental screen
blocks harmful light, shades a wooden
bench an old lady sits on, her shawl
tightly wrapped around her shoulders
as she knits, occasionally looking up to
admire the identical view outside four
picture windows: the suspended in mid-
air top hat, the unmoving white puff
clouds, the static egg-shell blue sky.

Alan Catlin’s most recent full length book publications include, *The Road to Perdition* (Alien Buddha Press), *Memories Too* (Dos Madres) and *Sunshine Superman* (Cyberwit). He is the poetry and review editor of *Misfitmagazine.net*