

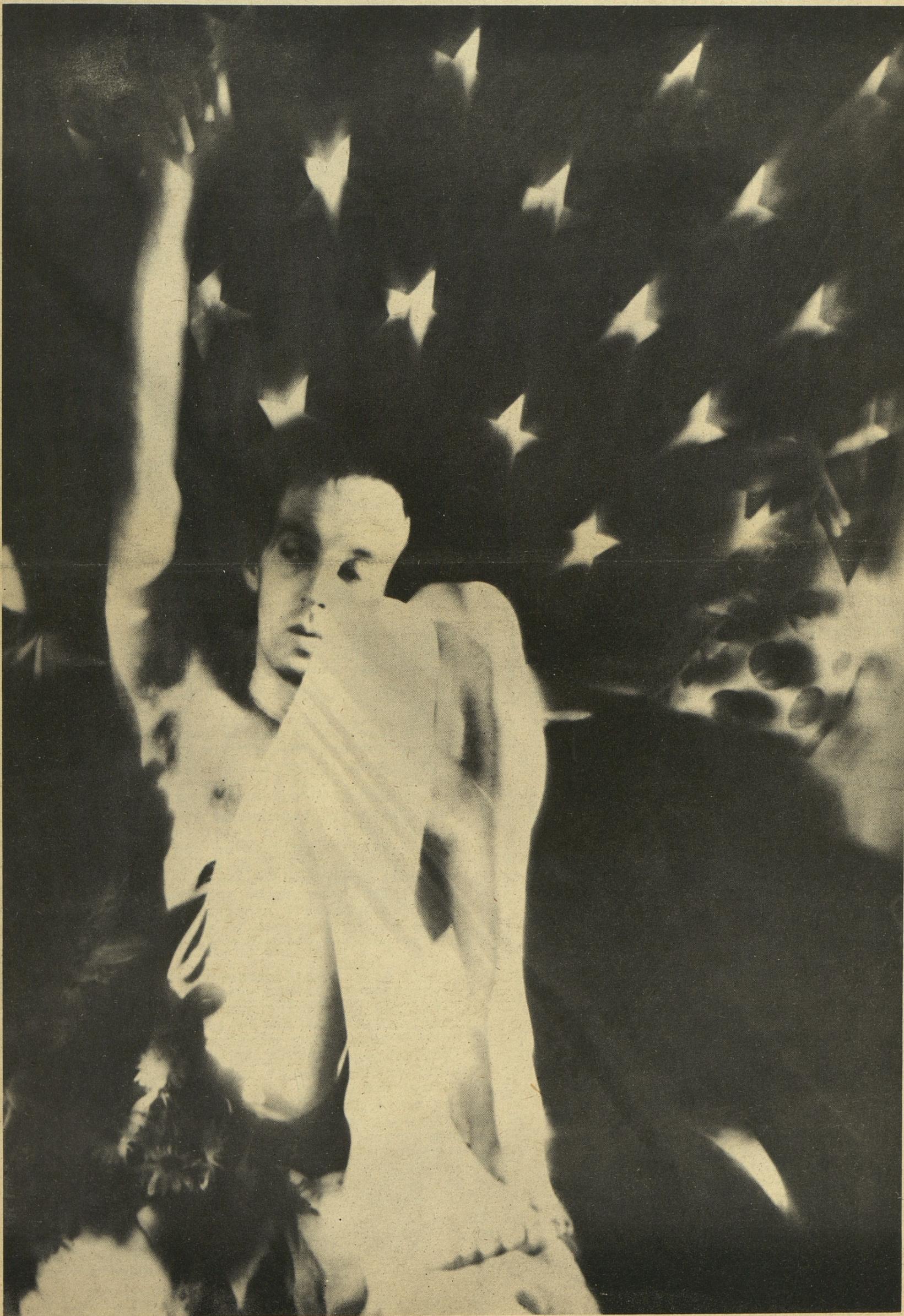
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# OTHER SCENES

**TAYLOR MEAD** See page 2

APR 8 1968

ABADIE COLLECTION



Photos by John Chamberlain

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# Taylor Mead

I think Taylor Mead is a genius. I have seen and heard him turn on a French audience with the most bizarre version of A Whiter Shade Of Pale ever. I have seen him do a spontaneous strip show in the street or in the middle of the worst bourgeois environment. I have seen him shoot his mind changing home movies with his scotch-taped thirty-year-old Kodak in the wierdest situations as naturally as he would say hello or look out the window (he once told me that he started his frame-by-frame technique because he wanted to shoot all of his Mexico trip and had very little film.. His use of frame-by-frame is different from Dziga Verton's or Robert Breer's, it has inbuilt editing and visionary focusing but it really depends on how high he is when he shoots.

I have seen him walk onto our Desire Caught by the Tail stage in St. Tropez, late and still putting on his dog costume, having forgotten to take off his red socks (did you ever see a dog with red socks?)--and getting the first belly roar by just turning around to face the audience; his cue was "Et voici Sainte Therese d'Avila dite les Deux Toutous..." (roar). (Actually he really looked like St. Sebastian tied to a tree, his body oozing with arrows. I often wanted to film him in such delicious camp agony or as Saint Mary Magdalene the whore-saint. Who else's ass could Andy Warhol logically make a movie about?)

I have seen people get sick, physically sick, from watching Taylor--he has the gift to upset protestant and catholic stomachs--Alain Jouffroy the art critic once had to leave the room of a chinese restaurant because he couldn't take Taylor--but I have seen others loosen up beautifully and break up. Normal citizens feel Taylor is a menace to them and I think they are right. And if he's a put-on what then is the permanent masquerade of freaks who dare not express themselves and who abide by the Fascist rules of Decency?

I have seen him wake up in the morning and reach for his peanut butter jar and quietly lie in bed staring lovingly at his little gray cat while one of his transistors played Italian elevator music (we use to call the cat Fuck Sucky, after a dance we invented). "I have the body of a dancer" He would always say after a bump and grind (actually when I saw Shirley Clarke's masterpiece, Portrait of Jason, I couldn't help thinking of Taylor, specially when Jason says: "I'm an experimental queen, I'll try anything once."

If Taylor ever gets even a bit part in a big Cecil B. de Mille Bible movie, playing a begger or a witch or something, everybody will go to see the movie for HIM; he would easily steal the show from Elizabeth Taylor or Doris Day or Victor Mature or Ronnie Reagan or any of those other straight queens--and he could easily play the part of Christ (god is gay) and wipe them all out. When Hollywood gets hip to Taylor's being Him, get ready for another Miracle. He turns life into a movie (contrary to "cinema verite", live cinema?)

His home movie "characters" are silent gods from the everyday Balinese subway turn-on. They smell under the armpits. Funky hairs stick out from under their swimming trunk crotchs. They laugh in high voltage. Come dripping from their hands and cheeks and cunts (once in a while Taylor throws in a juicy Kosmic Kunt for us horny boy-scouts) and assholes--look at them walk, you can tell they've fucked or been fucked very recently--look at them crawl, eat, sleep, shave, piss (one of his European



diaries starts with a shot of three boys peeing). Did Taylor ever come out from that barrel of horse he stuck his head in (that was The Queen of Sheba Meets the Atom Man)?

Actually he really gets stoned on peanut butter, look at him stick that experienced finger in the jar of Skippy's goldshit, look at his eyes sparkle. I say TAYLOR MEAD FOR PRESIDENT! He has all that "Kennedy" background and sophistication, being born in Grosse Point (near Detroit), from a wealthy politician and a lovely high-society doll, in the gilded all-American cornball upper middle class who no more "understand" their son than they "understand" the Detroit riots or the reluctance of the Vietcong to fall for their dollar power "civilized" social order.

I have seen Michelangelo's Satisfied Slave come alive and cease to be satisfied. It was Taylor again (and he physically resembles the statue, too; the posture is one Taylor often took in the St. Tropez production of Desire). Visionary minds seldom find practical solutions to change the world, but he has. In one of his great poems (Anonymous Diary of a New York Youth published in Reggie Gay's Boss magazine #1) he hits Johnson's great anal society in its bull's eye: "UNDERMINE THE ENTIRE STRUCTURE OF SOCIETY BY LEAVING THE PAY TOILET DOOR AJAR SO THE NEXT PERSON CAN GET IN FREE."

That, children, is the message of Saint "cosmonaut, dope-addict, aerodynamic expert José Mead".

Jean-Jacques Lebel

# Black Flower

Ted Joans, poet, was born in America, in Cairo, Illinois, on July 4, 1928. His father worked as a master of ceremonies on a Mississippi riverboat. His mother was a cook. Joans learnt to play the cornet when he was five and plays trumpet still. Ten years later he learnt to avoid unnecessary contact with white people after his father was killed in a race riot in Detroit.

With a degree in painting from Indiana University, he came in 1950 to New York. There he painted, wrote, read and published poetry, and also published a book of collages. There he met Jack Kerouac, Allen Ginsberg, Le Roi Jones, Gregory Corso, lived for some months with Charlie Parker and for a longer period with a white girl of wealthy family (mother tried to buy him off) and, eventually, their four children.

In 1960 he left America and has only paid one brief return visit. He does not want to go back. He now migrates between the more interesting cities of Europe and Africa. His home, as much as he has a home, is Timbuctoo, on the south-west edges of the Sahara. This summer Joans has been performing his poetry in London, Liverpool, on trips to Finland, Norway, Ireland, and he has been presenting evenings of poetry and jazz at the Old Place jazz centre in London. As a performer his experience as a jazz musician puts him very much in a class of his own. Every syllable is given its rhythmic place in what is sometimes the verbal equivalent of a jazz solo (Joans himself speaks of "blowing" his poems), and in this manner he is often able to fulfil one of the poet's most essential tasks: to reinsert into words their potential beauty and significance.

Next year Penguin are to publish a book of poems by Joans, LeRoi Jones, and Bob Kaufman, three afro-american poets. This will be the first time Joans has been published in this country, although many of his poems have reached us in American anthologies and magazines. Meanwhile, Joans is for the moment living in a room near Covent Garden market, touring publishers, reading poetry (and writing it), waiting for the Suez Canal to reopen so that he can visit Kenya and Tanzania to write a book on rhinoceroses, and finding himself, as a black American, both involved with and amused at what he sees as the beginnings of a "spiritual revolution" in the Western world.

"You don't know how I feel when I go and watch the people dance here in London, or in Stockholm, or in Spain, or Italy. It's almost exactly like if you'd go to Harlem, USA, and everyone said [in English accent] 'Oh, good evening, how are you? It's so great to see you. I see you have a new umbrella, just like me.' You'd say, wow, what are they coming on with? You see? Well, that's what I see.

"I have a book where it shows a group of English people pointing and laughing at the colourful natives: 'Look, that one has red pants on, and look at that striped coat and curious hat.' But now when I walk down the streets of London, what do I see? I see their grandchildren wearing red pants, yellow shoes, striped . . . see? You understand? Do you understand who the natives are, now?

"When I go to the rituals that are held with those guys playing so loud . . . there they are with their jingle bells and all like that . . . I say go ahead, because they're searching for a spiritual revolution. It's so great to see them shaking their ass and breasts for the first time now. The first generation of Western people to do it, you know that? If you don't believe me you can check with your own family. Just go and interview an aunt."

"Mine is this. It's not an Hitlerian type of superiority, nothing like that. It's just, what bag is the youth of the world in and what is it pointing towards? When they use that term "undeveloped country", to me the Western world has undeveloped countries, Africa has undeveloped countries. Undeveloped countries in Africa; materialistic. Undeveloped countries in Europe; spiritual. Timbuctoo is undeveloped in one sense, like Newcastle is undeveloped in the other sense.

"The woman in Timbuctoo, if she sees the man passing by with some



vegetables, can go out with her cloth tied around and knotted at the waist and buy it and feel no shame, and wave to you or me that's passed by, 'Hi there, good morning,' and just go back in. She has no shame. She has her spiritual revolution. She's not ashamed of her breasts.

"Look at all photographs or paintings when it shows someone walking in on a nude Western woman. What does she hide? She does this. Why does she do that? It's because of a thing that's been taught. A thing that the youth of the Western world is out to destroy.

"We must have this. I'm interested because I feel that each one of these things makes my personal battle with this thing that prevents man from being free. And in the Western world, when he's not free or happy, he reacts, and he usually reacts in a violent thing on me who has nothing to do with it. It's just like I'm not supposed to have anything, and he wonders how I've got my own bag; in other words, I'm still smiling. He says, 'I have a car, I've got this and I've got that, look at him!' I don't understand it."

Malcolm X made me proud and you all got scared  
 Malcolm X told me to hurry and you began to worry  
 Malcolm X sung to me but growled at you  
 Malcolm X freed me and frightened you  
 Malcolm X told it like it dam shore is!  
 He said I gotta fight to be really FREE

Malcolm X told both of us the truth, now didn't he?  
 "I feel that if there is a spiritual revolution in the Western world, it'll come through the poet. Allen Ginsberg to me is one of the living examples of that. And LeRoi Jones is a living example of what a poet can do, not only write his words but carry it out into action. One of the reasons I have set myself in self-imposed exile is because I came to a point in my life where things I was saying people thought I was just saying it; but I was really going through a thing, getting to a point where I would have to run into the midst of the crowd and act these things out.

"Now I've come to Europe and I have found that there is also spiritual corruption here. Not as bad as in America, but it is growing because of the imitation of the United States.

"I use the term Black Flower. It's a whole surreal attitude I have towards my own everyday life. To have the real and beyond the real. It's a point of view, a poetic point of view. It's different things that happen. Automatic things, spontaneous things. I cannot say this is surrealism or this is not surrealism. The chance encounter of beautiful people, or a beautiful situation, or beautiful image, is a whole surreal experience."

Peace News

If you should see a man walking down a crowded street talking ALOUD to himself don't run in the opposite direction but run towards him for he is a POET you have nothing to fear from the poet but the TRUTH

Dear John

today is February the 21 1963 and I have returned to tangier with my wonderful Tor Lumumba boy child and my strong passionate Norwegian wife Grete. I went by the american express and received all those great large envelopes of U.S. goodies that you sent to me am very very please with it all especially those VW. I leave them at the US library when we finish reading them. things here are warm and shiney. I am having a difficult time at this time and must start my mail-a-painting bit. I have exactly ten dollars and not one cent over but I do have more than fifty oils and hundreds of drawings that I can send to people in the US for twenty dollars each and if they do not send the money for them I shall instruct them to leave with the 8th St Book shop or someplace. My bit is that I send everyone a note stating that I am mailing them a oil from Africa that I feel that they would like to own and if they dig it they can mail twenty dollars to me in care of the American Expr. I can not give them this home address for I may not be living here much longer since I do not have March rent either for this Tangier pad or the mud brick pad in Timbuctu (rent due 17th March \$5 per yr) So I'm in a tight squeeze but pleeze dont think that I will rush back to the USA, no man, I aint that hard up. Langston Hughes is another cat that I dig like you he sends me things also and I am sure that he'll help me sell a few pictures. Things here in Tangier are getting rough since one of the Beats died from an overdose and they found his body in the Beat hotel three days later. US consulate making it hard on all but I stay away from the Soko Chiconiks. Marc Schlieffer may take over the Cafe Bohemia down there in the Medina but he plans it for tourist which is a good idea. The festival plan I feel may not prove to be boss at this time for the weather fucked up so many things here and too the Europeans that fall down here this summer perhaps will not be as gay after such a severe winter. Floods, and semi famine and the removal of the US airforce bases are going to affect the scene too. Morgenstern sent #1 & 3 Jazz magazine Happy to get them I sent him the last US dollar that I had. I had saved it and used it as a model for some of my collages and paintings. Spadework will be sent to Normal Mailer perhaps for an introduction. Burroug is too busy zooming around the world scene to write the intro and Paul Bowles perhaps will do the preface. If this hits I'll return to US for a month or so to show Grete and Tor the great big blarey neon noisyscho that should be a gas for her. But first things first. Bread not big big bread but bread to eat, pay utilities and support family. So until I write to you again. I close this by saying thanks thanks thanks and thanks. I shall always receive mail at the AMEXP so write me there.

ted joans

p.s. the baby is British, American and Norwegian and called a Gibraltarean!

Black Flower the mother of music, the bebop of poet's rhyme, the uncle of art, the aunt of architecture and father of time  
 Black Flower a nest of sexual saxophones ruffling Shakespeare's children into giving  
 head and singing: "Cummlingus to Allen Ginsberg's birthday you" on Black Flower in coloured cups of tittes separating okapis, giraffes and aardwarks from spunkick dildos, and silly putty  
 Black Flower in this fotted tops of Liverpool  
 love baby born curly head half him half her part Irish kanda Scottish plastic fur  
 Black Flower growing upward all over now  
 Black Flower here - Black Flower over there  
 Black Flower uncut - unspoiled - the bare truth  
 this mixture of the marvelous magics alive  
 that true poets see, as we breath air! That is Black Flower!

TED JOANS, poet  
 talking to DAVE KENNARD

