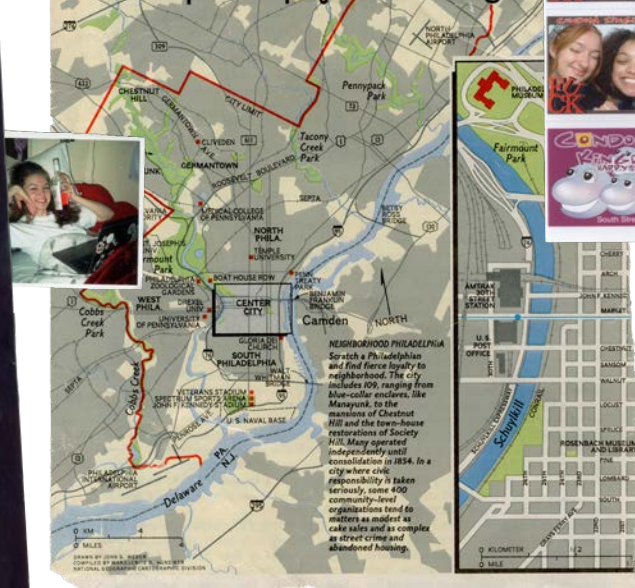
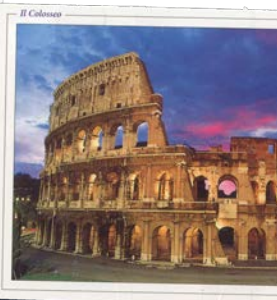


TRASHY RUTH'S V.C.B. **HELL** **NET OF WHITE LOVE** **APERT PARTY**

Hi Kat!  
☺



**"Good designers make trouble."**  
*Tibor Kalman*



**SILENCE = DEATH**  
ACT UP: The AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power  
Join ACT UP Philadelphia every Monday night at St. Lukes Church, 330 S 13th St, 6pm-8pm

**WALL OF**

**REFLECTION**



Washington Globe  
**TIME SCANNER DISASTER!**  
Sinister Events Bedevil Scientists

**KAT KLUGE**



合格证  
品名: 电子烟  
产品编号: TCR  
产品规格: 1.2欧  
执行标准: GB



Partnership For A Drug  
NY 10



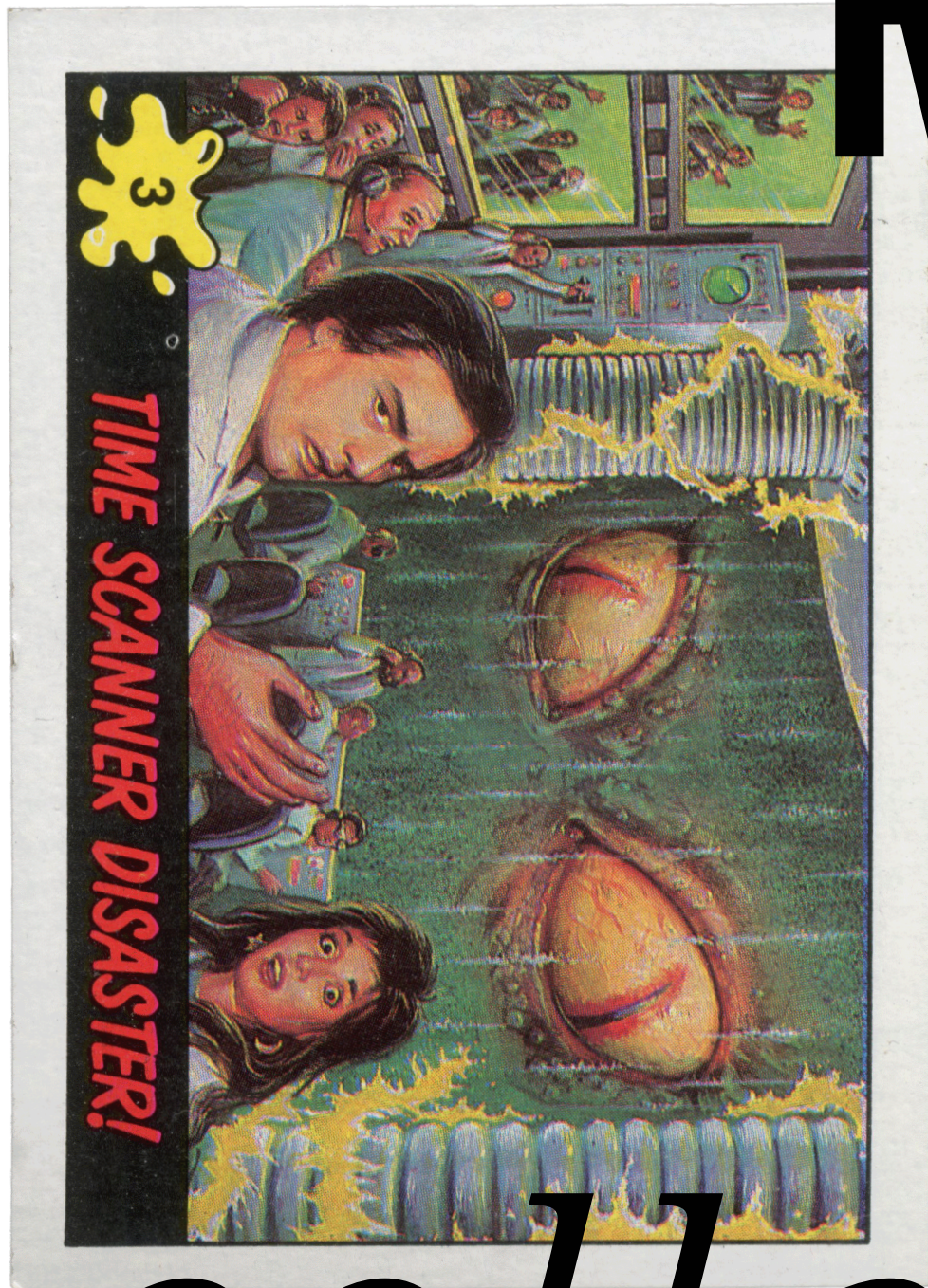
# **WALL OF REFLECTION**

**KAT KLUGE**

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# ROOTS IN



# collecting

I HAVE  
*always*  
BEEN A  
DEEP-ROOTED  
COLLECTOR.

My parents divorced when I was three.

Their separation began the bi-weekly exchange for my brother and me. When I left one house for the other, I packed a bag, full of things needed for the following days.

At a young age, my compulsions to hold onto ephemera that no longer served me were critiqued, often when moving out of homes with either parent. Throughout my childhood, I moved at least five times between my two families, and four times since living on my own. Each time, being asked if I still used something of mine, or if I wanted to get rid of said object hurt me. I was often pressured into throwing stuff away, especially if it seemingly held no monetary value, or was deemed useless based on how often I used them. This signified the root cause for my collecting fixation.



It wasn't until high school that I started holding onto more objects, mostly notes and drawings, that I kept in a small, purple box on a shelf next to my records. Quickly, I accumulated photos, wrappers, ticket stubs, and other things tied to memories.

Once my collection outgrew the purple box, I started taking and using them to adorn the edges of my full-length mirror. With time, my collection found its way to the walls of my bedroom, in concentrated areas. This was the beginning of the habit I continue to this day.

Initially, the wall collection began with nothing more than a few posters and insignificant photos. Through the years it's extended to objects of different mediums. Collectibles have come and gone with time, often dependent on my emotions

and mindset. What I've found from this practice of collection and exhibition is a better understanding of how I process the emotions and memories that live within my collection.

I've since moved out of my childhood homes, and into my own space, subsequently losing an older portion of my collection to the guilt its uselessness created. With this, I've fully embraced the liberating, free reign over the walls, both in my room and the rest of my apartment. The bedroom in my current apartment has no door, but a staircase with a tall wall that overlooks my space. This is the wall where my collection currently resides.

# Collecting is not about *what* you collect, as much as it is about *who you are*.



*Many of the first items in my collection were polaroids.*

Possession somehow connotes transference of the objects virtues to its owner. Collections are about the recollection. Collections exclude the world and are symbolic of it. Writing about why one collects what one collects is a bit like self-psychoanalysis; it is hard to be objective. Taking the longest of you, I have observed and deduced that the Collector Pie may be divided into three wedges: those with full pockets, deep pockets, or big pockets; and each is epitomized by a literary or historical character. Different things call out to each of us for different reasons. Each collectible object has a different level of complexity for each of us and may be perceived singularly as revelatory or captivating. As the saying goes, "one man's meat is another man's poison." I have about 200 collections that could be classified among the "unlovable" or the "unloved." These objects were never precious. What is valueless beyond its functional use is usually not kept (unless you're a Collyer brother). Once it's service has been spent, it's likely discarded, transformed to cinder, dumped. These "diamonds in the rough" are not reset, reframed, or even recycled. Artistic collecting and archiving is at first sight hardly distinguishable from stamp or vase collecting, in that the basic impulse - the desire to own and keep and not to let go of something - is

very similar. When we examine which objects artistic interest typically turns to, however, we quickly get to the particular nature of artistic collection. This is where the paradoxes of collection come in.

Many artists do not collect objects commonly considered exceptional (the rare piece that, as part of a collection, is immediately trivialized as one case among many), but they collect the trivial that becomes exceptional in a collection. Like all collecting, artistic collecting changes the individual piece through its absorption into the collection. But the change apparently takes place in reverse order when artists collect trivia. Now the worthless, unnoticed, anything-but-rare piece is rendered exceptional. This suggests that, if a paradox such as that of the similarly dissimilar is hard and real in conventional collecting, and if it is inevitable, it can be reversed as well. In artistic collection, it can be used backwards, so to speak.

Such a realization is genuinely artistic. It exists independently of theory and is the result of play - not casual, but serious play. The treacherousness of the object, the unavoidable trivialization of the exceptional object as a result of being collected, is not fought against, but it instead agreed with. Amidst this process of combing through my collection, I've divided my things into five categories: Gained and Re-Imagined, Factory Sealed, Inked Thoughts, Multiples, and Iconic Images.



*A small part of where my collection adorns my wall.*



# GAINED AND RE-IMAGINED

The individual object does not have to be damaged or destroyed in order to be documented in the collection. But instead, it only comes into being by virtue of being collected. This artistic procedure becomes all the more obvious when ephemera are collected and sorted, by way of intuitions and associations. Another artistic possibility for dealing with the paradox of protective destruction consists in not taking up the objective and theme of the

collection, but to aim wide of the mark, so to speak. Traces and mirror images, but not the thing itself, then enter into the artistic collection. Re-invention of objects in my collection is a trend that's presented itself since its creation. When I've decided that an object no longer serves me, I take it upon myself to make something new from it, with materials from outside—or within—my collection.

This is arguably the most artistic movement to come from collecting. When thinking about what it means to give an object purpose, there is a tendency to evaluate its usefulness, but how an object serves me has nothing to do with its usefulness. It has everything to do with what emotions and memories someone can pull from observing it.



*I have found traditional, as well as digital, collaging to be not only therapeutic, but a good way to find inspiration among items around me.*



# *Amidst the stars, I landed.*

*As I revisit this post-lock down, there is a sense of longing for order and purpose at a time when neither was present.*



In 2019, I found myself looking for an apartment in Philly. I wasn't sure where I wanted to live as a rising junior in my undergraduate career, blissfully unaware of the pandemic's plan for the upcoming semester. At the time, a lot of my friends going to school were living in West Philly, which resulted in me hoping to live there, too.

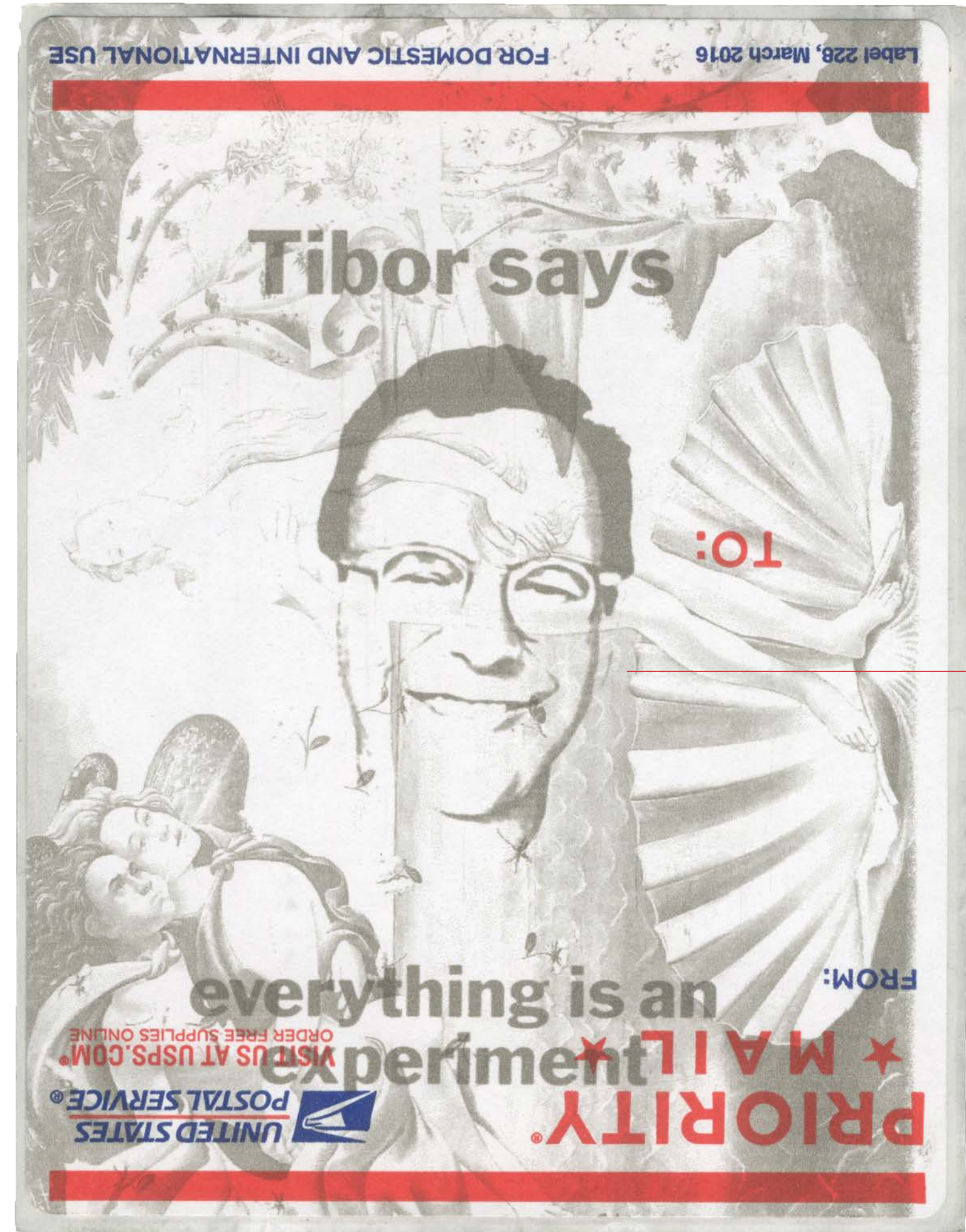
One day, while visiting open houses in the neighborhood, my friend Emma and I came across a magazine page. It was a striking photo of a snowy morning in Philadelphia. At the time it was just a beautiful picture, lacking a reason to mull-over. This was until I re-visited it in the beginning of the pandemic, then it became so much more. I used it as the centerpiece in a collage, which I have continued to keep as a highlight in my collection, a striking black and white photo adorned with neon stars and a flying woman.

# everything is an experiment

Amid quarantine, I experimented a lot with supplies around my house, because I wanted to try and keep my creative mind alive and well. Before the world shut down, my dad gave me an old printer, whose only purpose previously was to collect dust in his basement. I pulled the printer out from under my bed with the intention of trying out peculiar mediums to print on, (i.e., anything I could stuff

in the paper tray). I took an old post office sticker, which I'd been hoarding in my collection and attempted to print Botticelli's "Birth of Venus" onto it. At first try, the image came out blurry and unrecognizable. I took it upon myself to take this opportunity to create something out of my mistake. Tibor Kalman's works were always an inspiration to me. His unique approaches to socially conscious

design captivated and changed the way I thought design was supposed to be. After coming across a graphic with his quote: "Everything is an experiment," I took it upon myself to do just that. As one of my most cherished pieces in my collection, this post office sticker is a perfect embodiment of this category.



*Kalman and the work of his firm M&Co. cemented the idea that design isn't supposed to be marketable or consumer friendly all the time. Sometimes it's great, sometimes it fails, it's an experiment, nonetheless.*

# FACTORY SEALED

Loving the unloved is the undefined state of collecting from which the motives of all collectors may be deduced. Of all the phases of collecting, this is the purest: collector and object, no intervening issues of value or competition, wholly unselfconscious choices. Children who collect, collect in this way. Some things found are too remarkable to be adjusted, depending on the condition, and context of which they were found in. When an object in my collection is deemed as

irreplaceable, or holds significant meaning in my life, I make the decision to try and preserve it to the best of my ability. This is opposed to examples of ephemera in my "Gained and Re-imagined" section of the collection, where I may take an item and transform it to fit whatever purpose I want it to serve. While not actually "Factory Sealed," these objects hold the same condition in which I found them in.

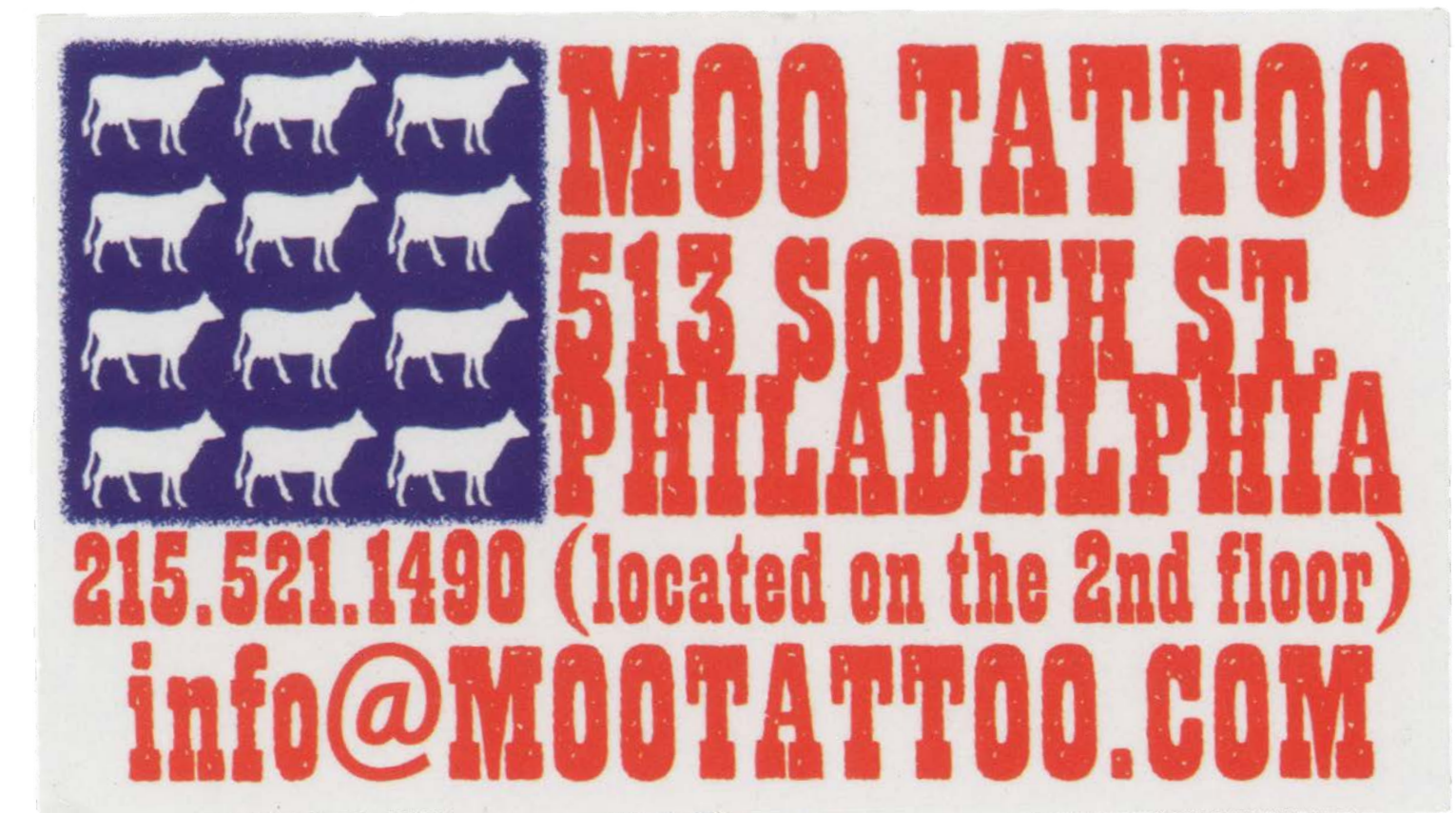


*One of my favorite places to pull imagery from are old photography books via thrift stores and garage sales.*

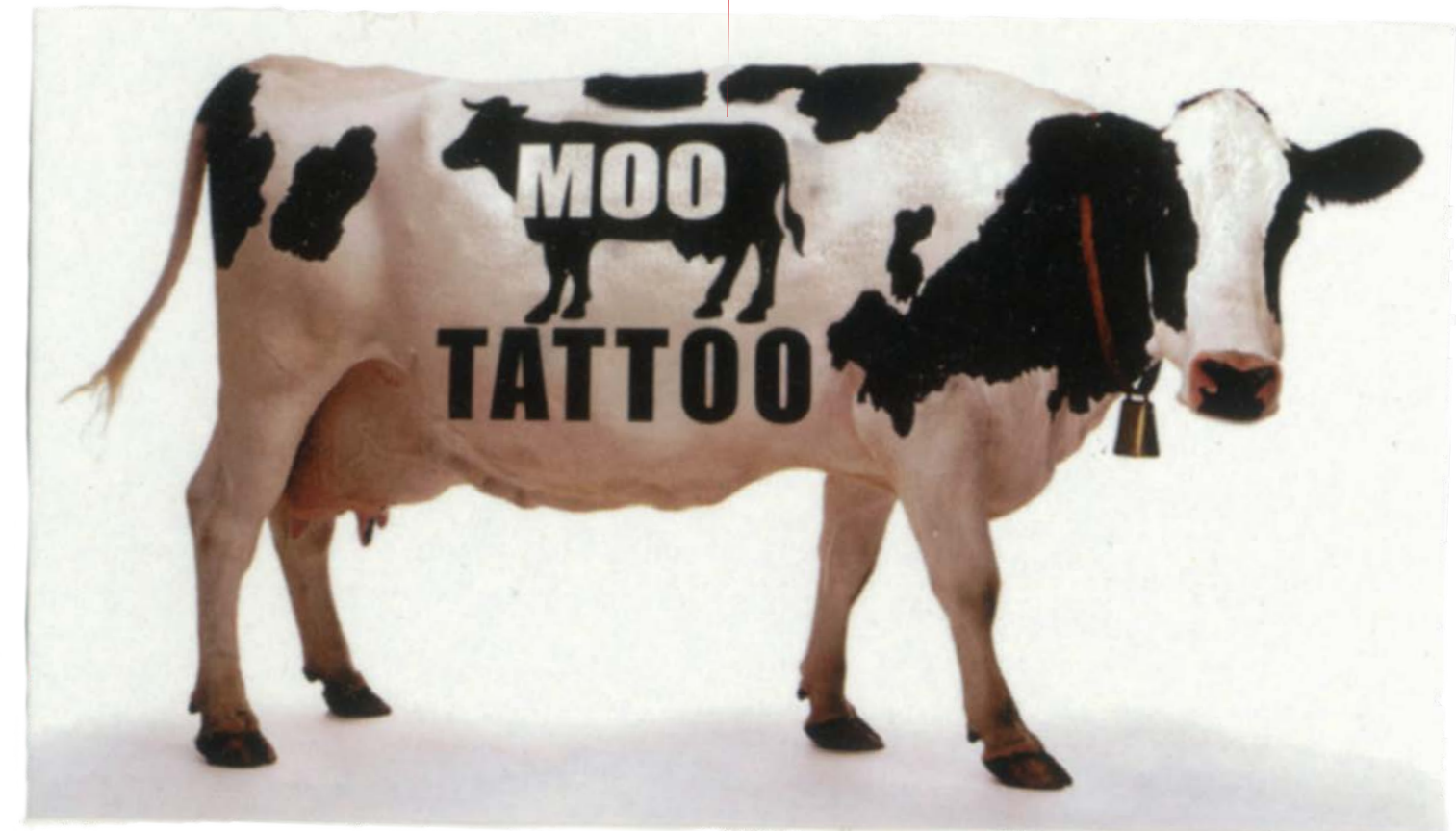
## *I have a soft spot for old print PSA's*

because they have limited means to make the viewer stop and truly care about the cause at hand. Public service announcements have always held my interest; especially the jarring PSA's, you know the kind. In my first semester of college, we were assigned a drawing project based on collages we'd made in class. My professor, at the time, was a collector in his own right, and provided us with stacks of old magazines to use at our disposal.

While I flipped through a few that piqued my interest, I came across a print version of one of the most recognizable anti-drug PSA's of our time, probably, "This is your brain, this is drugs, this is your brain on drugs." I could hear the actor from the TV version narrating the words in my head. I quickly ripped and slipped the yellowing magazine page in my bag. As if it would be missed in the pile of magazines everyone was picking from in the center of the room. I took it upon myself to hold onto it and preserve it as best I could.



*Front and back of a business card from Moo Tattoo, where I got my first tattoo.*



# ABSENCE OF *belonging*

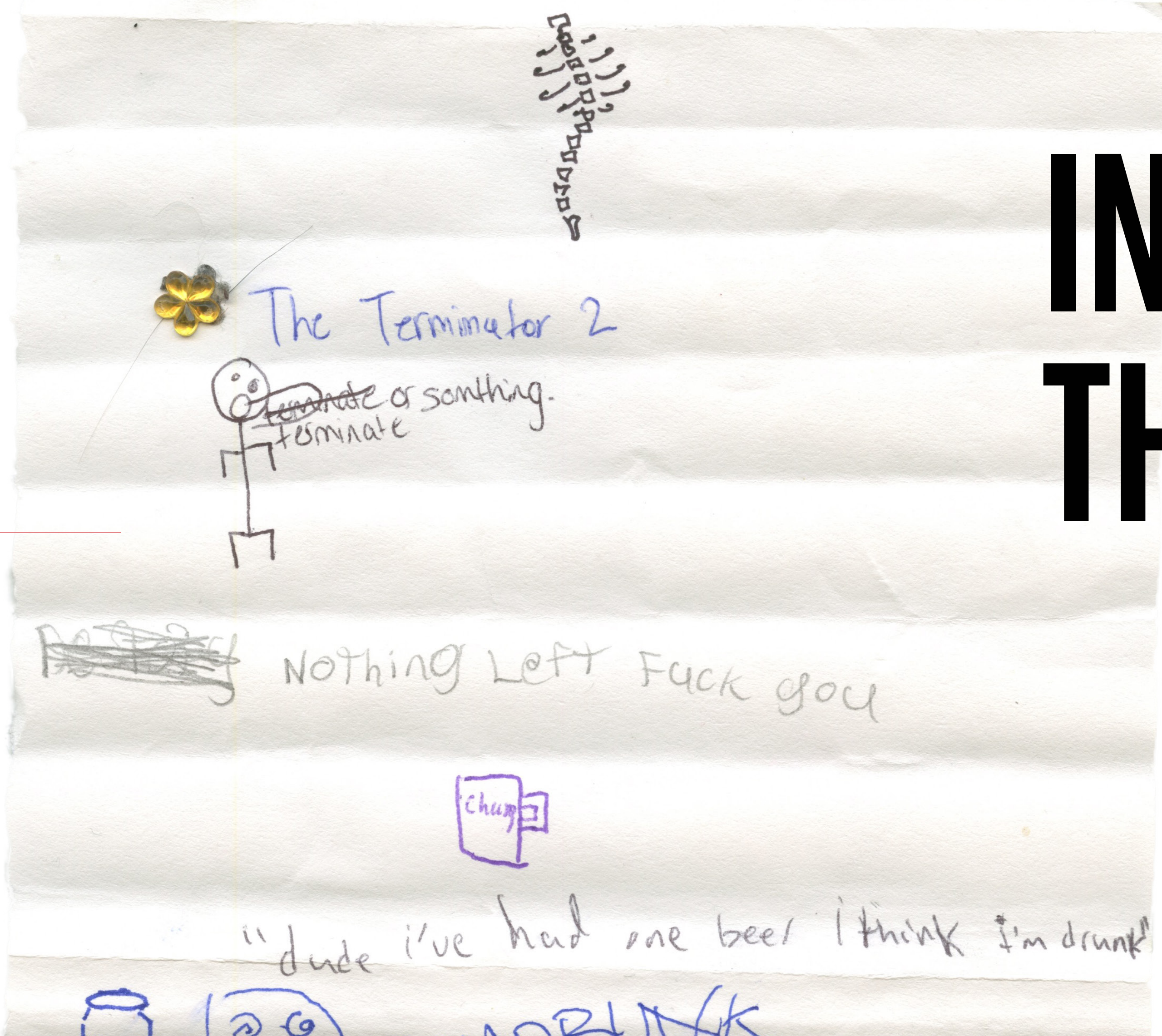
Before moving to Philadelphia, I spent a semester in my hometown, and I'd come across this old map of the city. The map highlighted different neighborhoods and landmarks in the city with small red squares and a description that reads, "Scratch a Philadelphian and find a fierce loyalty to neighborhood." At the time that's exactly what I needed. I had little loyalty to my hometown and even less respect. The map made me feel somewhat closer to my end goal: living and going to school in the city at a time where it felt so far away and unachievable.

*It's funny to look at this map now and think about all the little memories I have scattered across this map.*



# INKED THOUGHTS

*This is a group poem written during my Introduction to Poetry class. I adore the small drawings people added.*



I have always found hand-written media so captivating and exceptional. Regardless of context and meaning, the act of physically manifesting ideas, imagery, and daydreams is so freeing and beautiful. In this section of the collection, I highlight hand-written pieces created by myself and others, as well as notes and drawings I've created that are particularly striking to me. There is something so raw about these manifestations, whether that be content or context. These pieces of paper are the purest form of communicating.

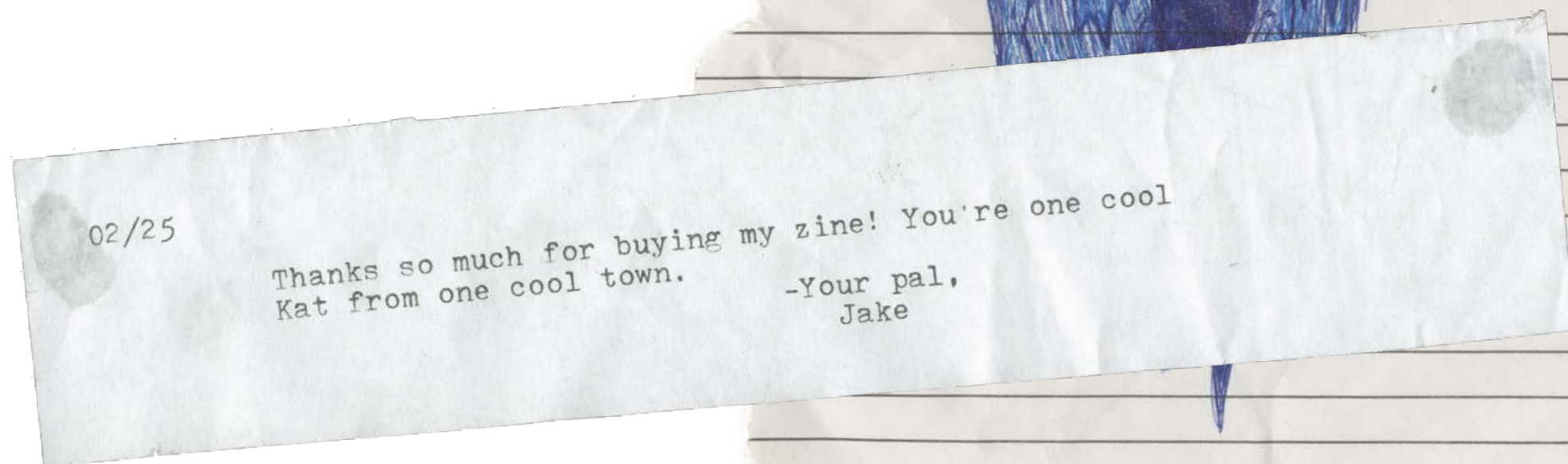
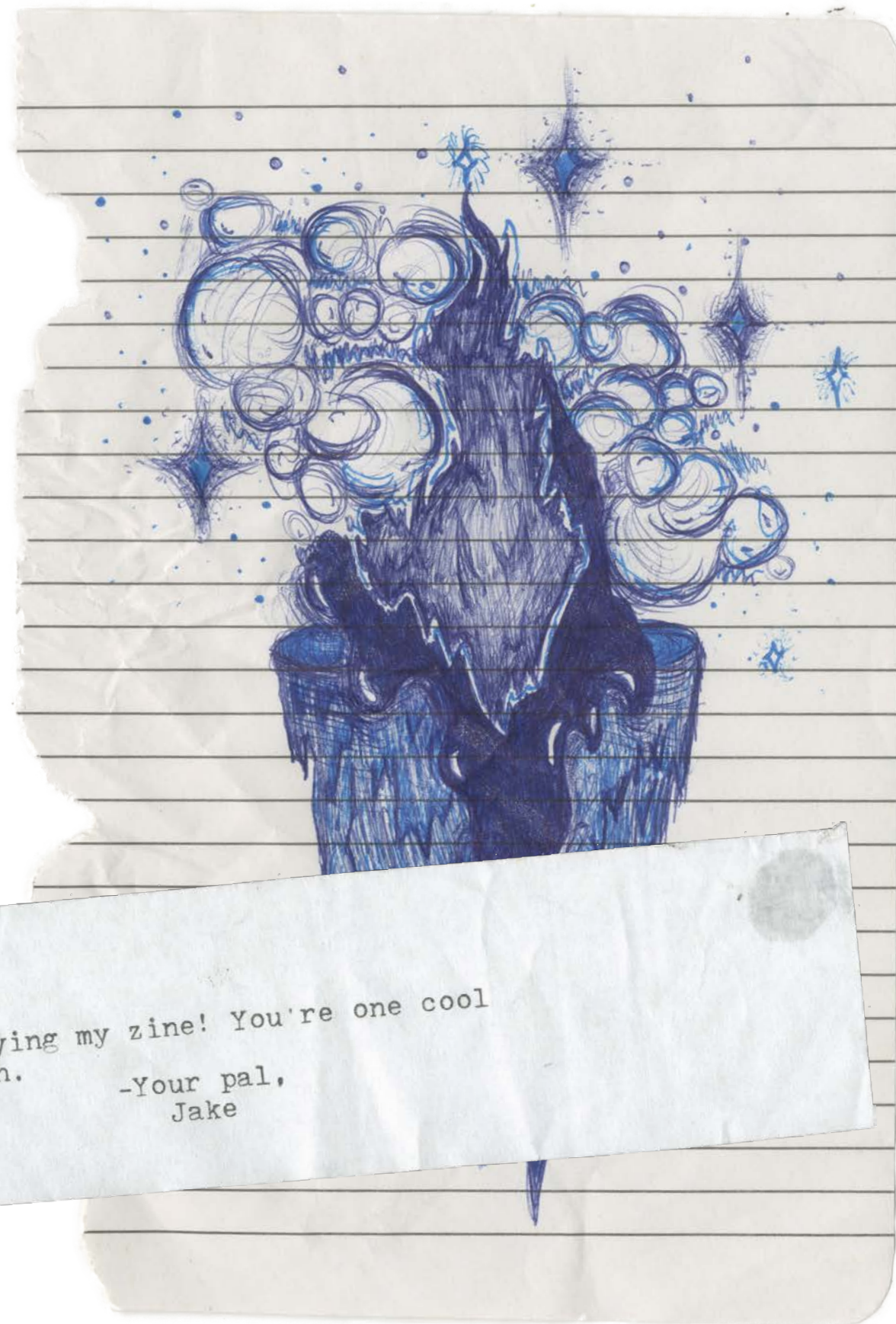


# ONE MONTH *without*

*She returned a month later with pasta she'd bought for me, handmade from her time in Italy.*

In the summer of 2016, my sister went to Italy for a month, and she lived on a farm with a host family among other people her age. At the time, these weeks were the longest amount of time I'd spent apart from her. We're step siblings, but we've always maintained a very close bond, and this time away from her was exceptionally hard for me. I was only just entering my teen years and often

looked to her for advice and inspiration, as well as clothes to steal from her closet. I remember getting a postcard in the mail: a vivid picture of the Colosseum in Rome where she'd been writing to me from. The note brought me a kind of solace that I'd missed since she left, and a reminder that she'd come back to me again soon.



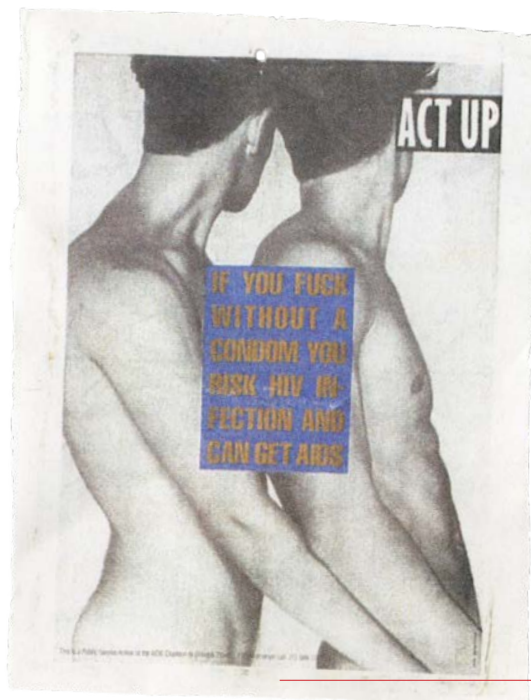
# *I've always hated birthdays.*



On my twenty-first birthday I found myself spending the monumental day without my family because of the distance between our respective homes. My stepfather had never been great at ideating gifts (sorry Rich), but this year he struck gold. This isn't to say the gift I received was particularly useful, or something I wanted for a long time, but the undertones were silly and unintentionally meaningful. Along with the twenty packages of microwave ramen that came in the mail for me that day, there was a note addressed to me from our family dogs; simple, frivolous, and perfect. It read: "Happy Birthday Kat, From Jameson and Rosie." It was the note, in combination with the absurd amounts of ramen, that resonated with me on a day I usually dread.

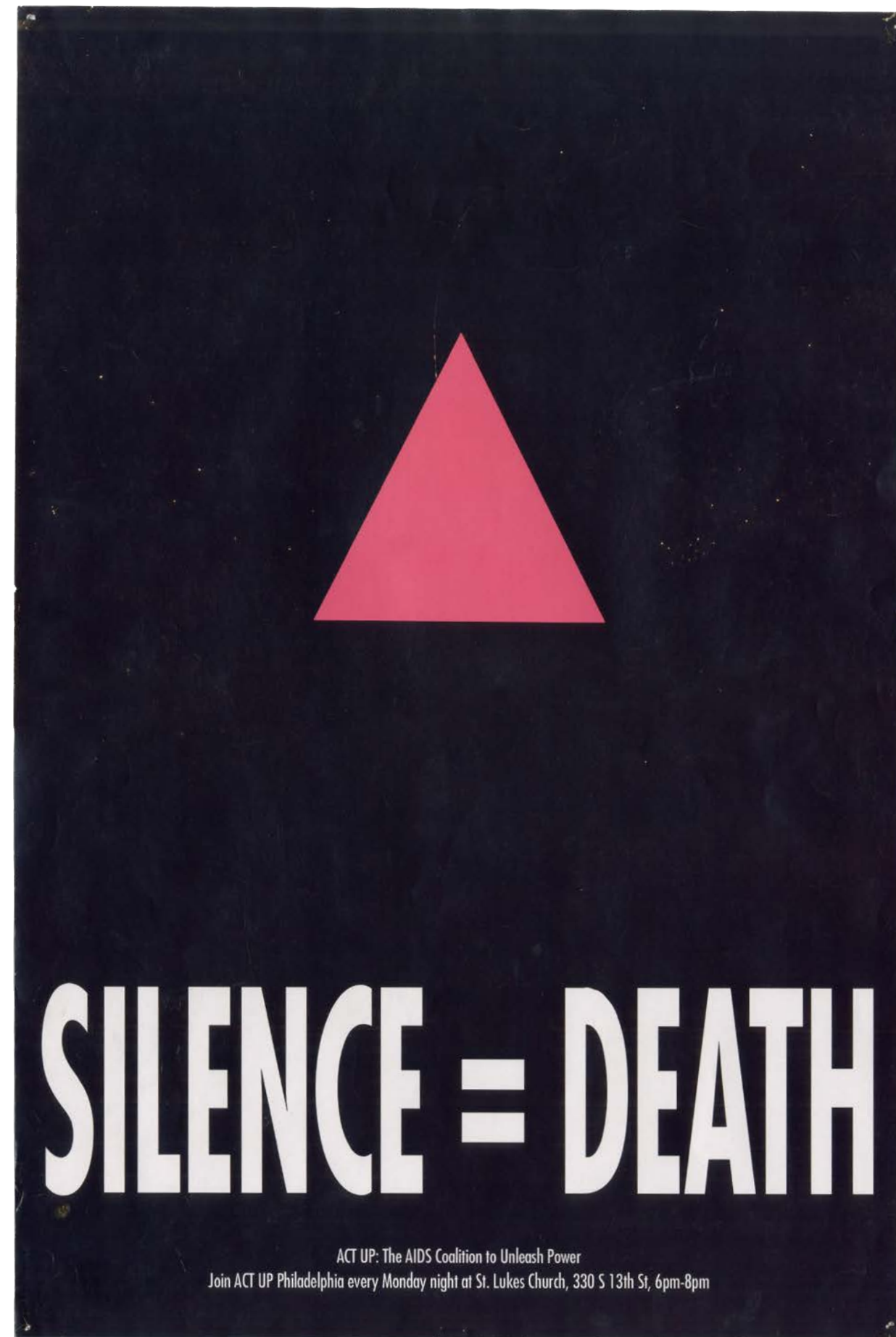


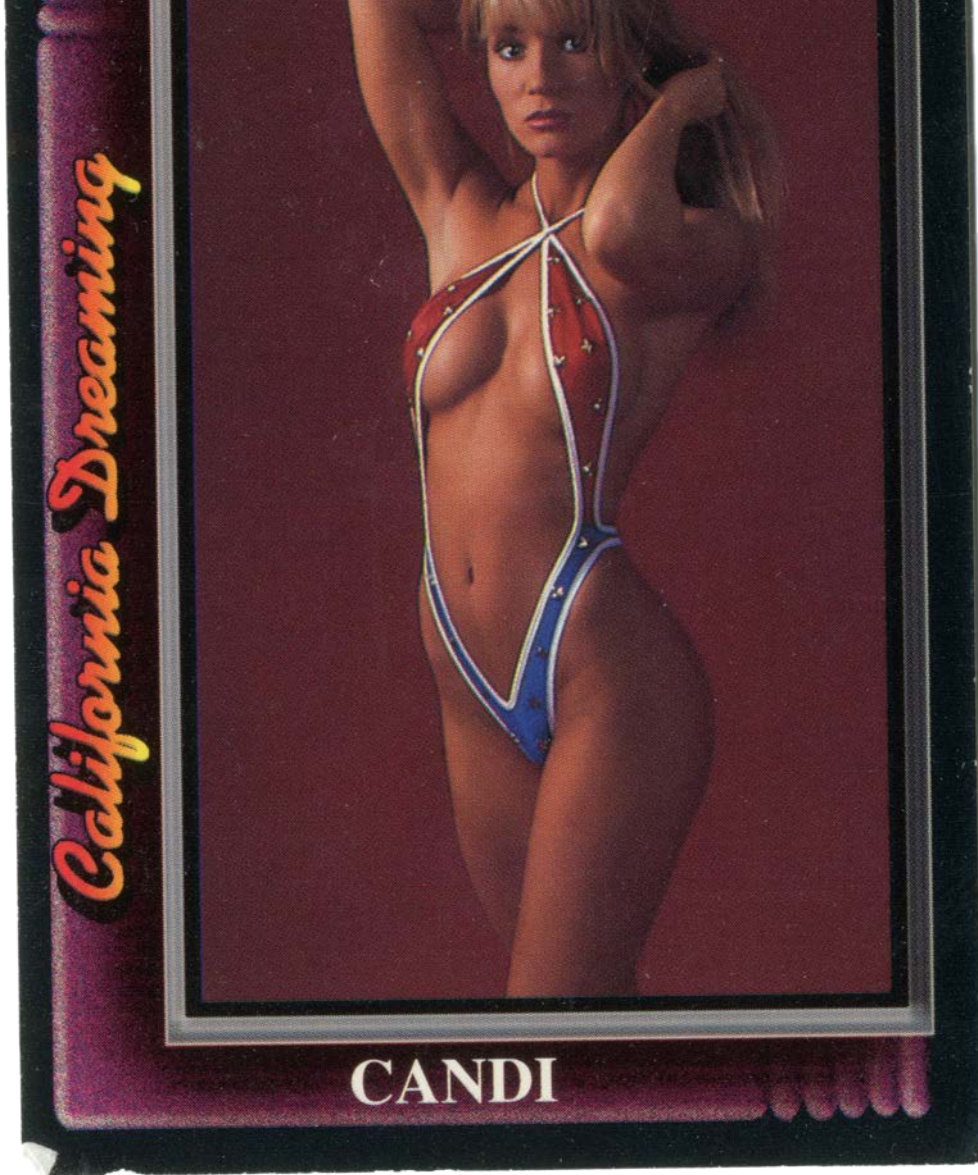
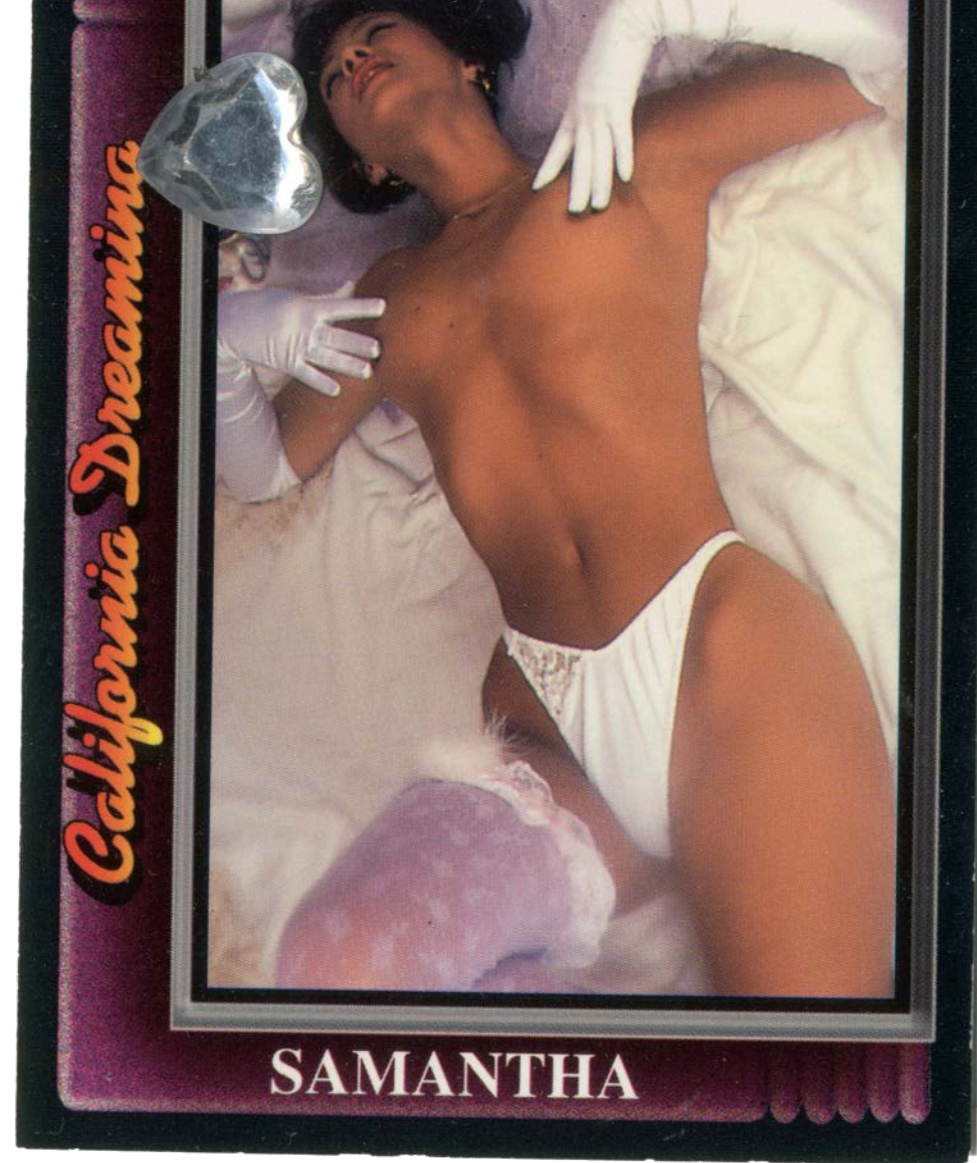
# MULTIPLLES



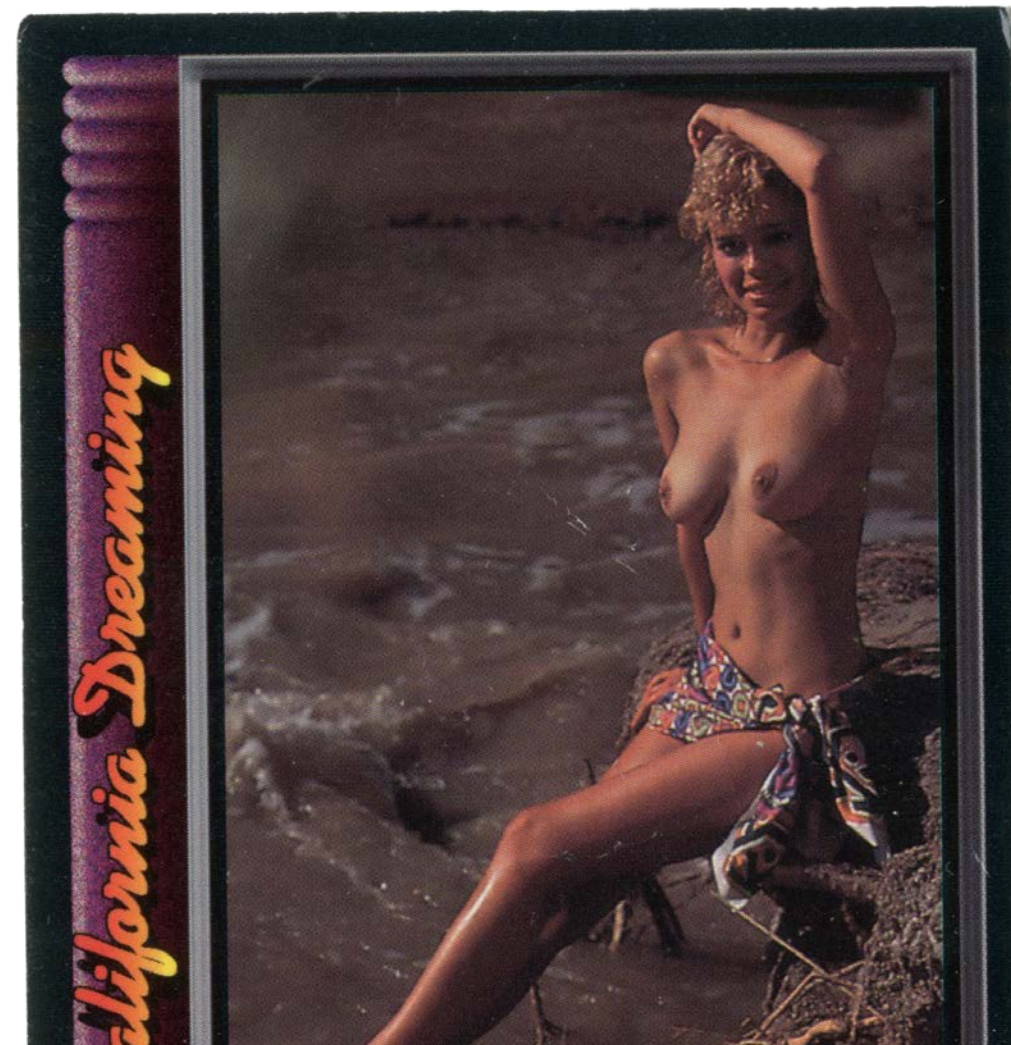
I seek out particular objects repeatedly. This is not something new to most collectors. These trends within my collection happen subconsciously and are a result of my hyper fixations. For collectors like me with Attention Deficit Disorder, fixating over a particular topic or item is nothing new. The items these "mini-collections" contain everything from polaroid pictures and collector's cards, but riff on the idea of hyper fixation of certain media across collections wholly.

*I've always admired the work done by **ACT UP** and other organizations in the Eighties and Ninties during the AIDS epidemic.*



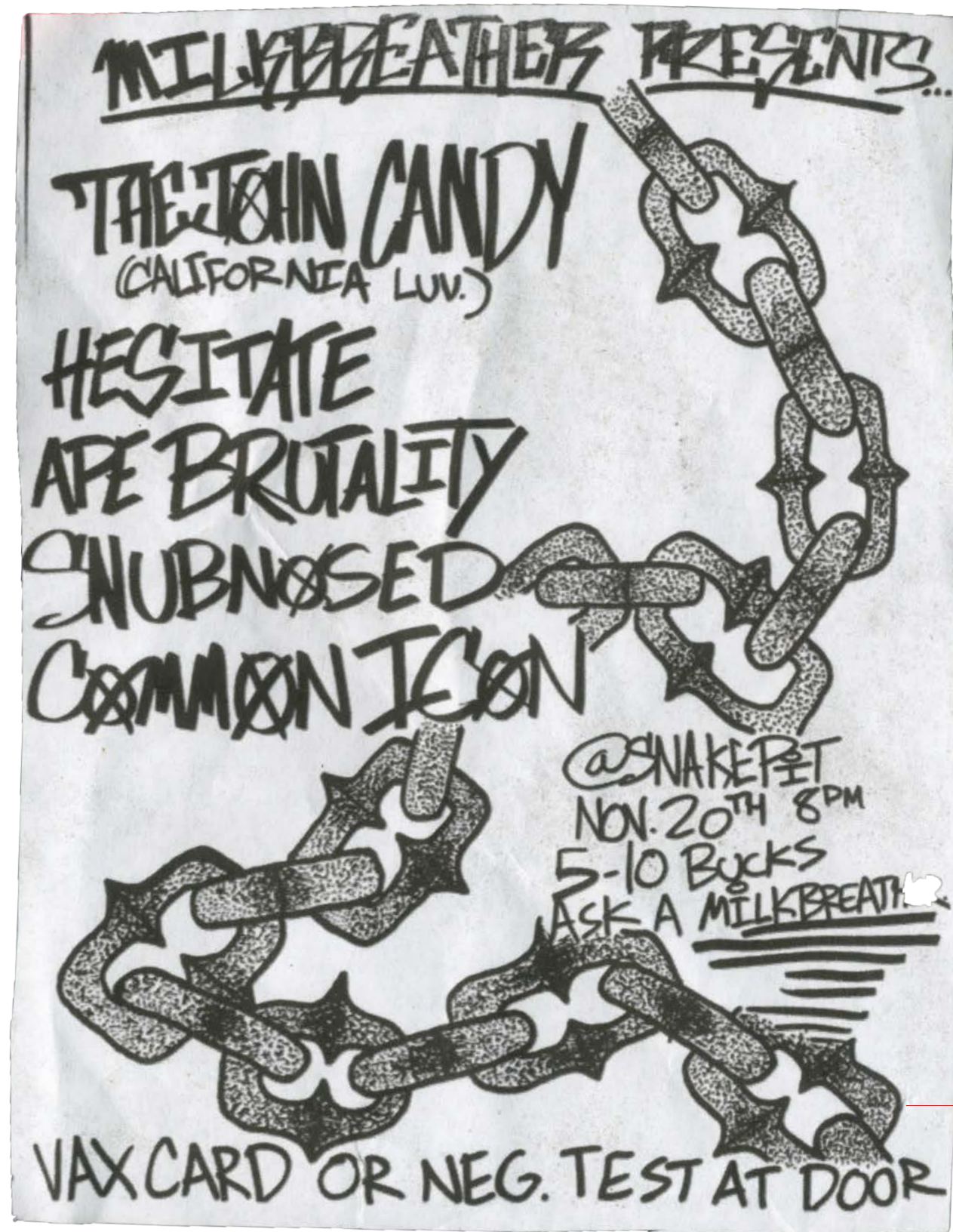


*The content of the trading cards in my collection sway from innocent to outwardly explicit.*



I have always held a strange fascination with voyeurism and the way it manifests in the female form. The male gaze presents itself in almost all forms of media, and often, oddly enough, in the form of trading cards.

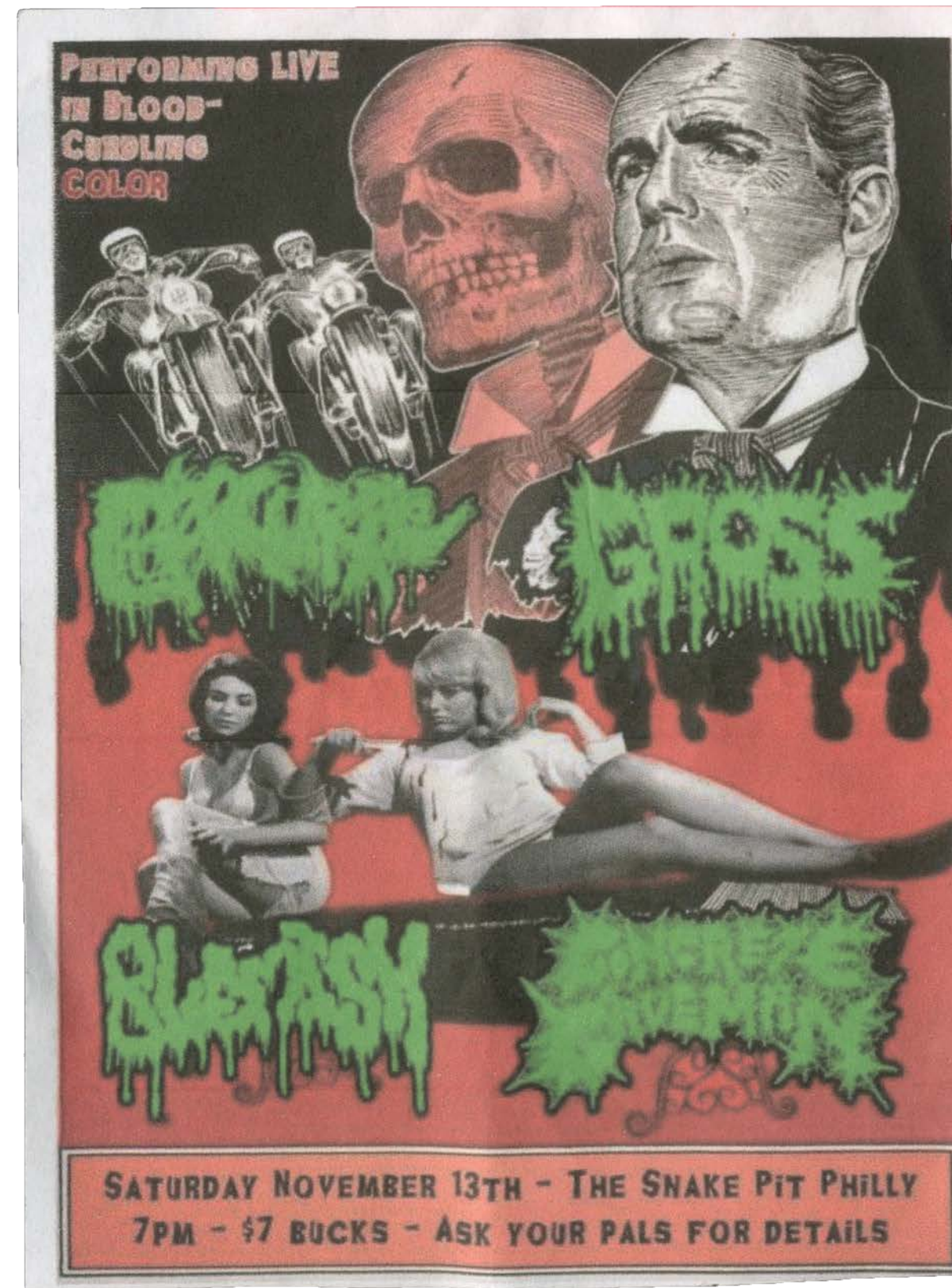
In the summer of 2020, I came across a pack of "California Dreaming" nude cards. Since buying them, they have been dispersed across my home in a respectful manner. They presented themselves on the walls of my bathroom, my bedroom, even the kitchen. It is only fitting they would end up immortalized in this book..



# HOUSE shows

have always been a staple of the Philadelphia DIY music scene. The proximity to local bands that I enjoyed listening to was something I looked forward to. A big part of promotion for these shows are left to the people who live at the venues. Since shows have started back up again, I've started collecting fliers from shows I've attended, or fliers given to me from people promoting their shows. I held onto a flier from a show my friends played sometime in November. It was cold, windy, and held in a garage. Huddled around a garbage can fire pit, we waited before moving toward the garage. I found my way to the dusty couch, in front of the table embellished with piles of the same flier.

*This flier was for a house show venue in Kensington, where my friend's band, Common Icon, was playing.*



# ICONIC *Images*

I am a photo-hoarder at heart, eternally falling victim to "storage full" notifications, piles of negatives, and prints galore. While not every photo taken is saved, holds sentimental value or intent, they are personal, and hold subtle hints to why they exist. In this part of my collection, I observe the photos that not only made it into my collection, but also gives the observer the most context and holds the most emotion.



*I've always saved my negatives, even on rolls that didn't come out the way I would have hoped.*





# *My mom and I have always been close,*

*When I was little, I attempted to preserve old film prints of my mom and I by laminating them onto pieces of paper. Unfortunately, these were the only copies and I effectively **destroyed** them.*

closer than I have found the relationships between other people and their mothers. But when I was younger, I never understood why I felt so removed from her. Not in an emotional way, but in the sense that I was a product of her, yet so different. Born a natural red head to a family of brunettes, I always possessed an essence of the "black sheep." As I grew older, the similarities between us,

physically and personally, grew stronger and more evident. In this photo, my mom carries me through a wedding, boasting a huge smile. She looks proud to be my mom. Through our differences and trials, the proudness never dulled, and she remains a figure of strength and love in my life. I cannot think of a better reason to include her as a crown jewel in my collection.

# I WAS NOTHING BUT A *shell*.



During my first year in Philadelphia, I lived around the corner from a pharmacy that I frequented for late night bags of popcorn, and items I'd forgotten to grab on grocery runs. I had a short stint of carrying around disposable film cameras that were often more trouble than they were worth. On one of my usual runs to this pharmacy, eggs riddled the sidewalk in front of the entrance. With no context, I pulled out my camera and took a quick photo without thinking, then continued with my day. That was it. The photo embodies the

random and, seemingly, meaningless collection of photos that I've hoarded. These eggs were just lucky enough to see the light of day. Crushed on the sidewalk below me, their arrangement almost looked intentional. In my freshman year I was lost, as most people who move far from home usually are. By the end of my spring semester, I was a shell of who I was in the beginning; fractured, but somewhat beautifully arranged. Maybe the comparison I drew of me to the broken eggs is stale, but it was too fitting to ignore.

*This photo is now hanging on my fridge in my apartment.*



# DENOUEMENT

What then, are the shared traits, the commonalities among these, the least biased of collectors, lovers of the unloved, that can be ascribed to all the collectors?

Unquestionable Dominion: collecting gives a province of absolute control, a domain. The collector is pharaonic, The godly king and absolute monarch of a singular and self-defined territory, Master of all he or she surveys.

There is deep satisfaction in organizing, inventorying, embracing, handling, and communing with the booty. Touching material objects connects us with the time and place in which they were made. Fondling the objects within one's own realm and arranging discrete and fluid categories is a gleeful exercise, a personal potlatch.

The choices within one's collecting sphere are limited only by one's imagination. Answers to one's own questions of what to seek or self imposed.

Should the quest be directed towards variety or quality? Quality or quantity? Quantity or one of a kind, each perfect? Should one upgrade? Should one trade? The boundaries, criteria, and standards or one's own. Limitations of budget are personal and may be built into one's criteria, a fungible scale of allowable desire.

Exhilaration in the quest and the satisfaction attendant to acquisition encourage a refined sense of strategic reconnaissance and a fulfilling sense of personal acuteness, judgment, attainment, and achievement. Regarding one's own collection, choices that were individually made hone self-respect and invite responses from others ranging from curiosity, consternation, admiration, and astonishment to envy. Ownership is an act of self affirming intimacy and self committing responsibility acquisitions require maintenance and other kinds of attention. A collector's singular voice is witnessed in a collection.

A collection is a constructed definition of the collector who amassed it. An era may be possessed through ownership of its artifacts. A collector owns history by osmosis.

Husbanding in transference of characteristics grants protective custody over or of the object, in some cases granting asylum, resurrecting, or gripping the object back from the maw of oblivion. A collection is a charm against chaos. Husbanding confers transference of the characteristics that define what is collected (beauty, wisdom, strength, poise, dignity, quirkiness.) The salient attributes of the collection accrue to the collector. Since the source of these characteristics is the material object, they consequently transfer to successive owners (each owner adding patina to that object.)

# *Credits*

Schaffner, Ingrid, and Matthias Winzen et al. *Deep Storage: Collecting, Storing, and Archiving in Art*. Munich, Prestel-Verlag, 1998.

Karp, Marilyn. *In Flagante Collecto (caught in the act of collecting)*. New York, NY, Abrams, 2006.

This project was completed as partial fulfillment of the requirements of DESN 402, Senior Studio II, in the Graphic Design Program, University of the Arts, Philadelphia, PA, Spring 2022. Angela Riechers, faculty advisor Douglas Riccardi and Emily Famularo, critics



