



*Self-Portrait with Cocoon Motif Immersed in
Worldliness and Crowned by Pretentious Ideals*
COLLAGE WITH AQUARELLES BY RFS, 2009

Self-Portrait with Jaunty Halo, That's Really a White-Washed Sphincter

*“Any club that would have me as a member
I'd be too proud to join.”*

—GROUCHO MARX

Sarcastic, incisive, rebellious;
Pre-conditional and at times a real punk;
My own worst enemy and dog's best man;
Preternatural but post-industrious;
Translator of great Frogs; a gypsy scholar,
And a cunning linguist; over-educated and
And under the covers; priggish, priapic,
And an assaholic; a rat-rhyming iambist, now
And again; prideful, fixated; and a dipsomaniac;
Stumbling drunk and a barrel of ha-ha's;
Watched over by angels, undermined by demons;
Wide-eyed and blinded by dubious lights;
Lustful, irascible, and overly generous;
Short on restraint and given to extremes;
Heartfelt about hard-ons and timid toward truth;
Impractical, spendthrift and missing the real point;
A lover of animals and dogged by lovers;
Antsy, irresponsible and afraid to sit still;
Uppity, forceful, and a wind to be reckoned with;
Bullish to wave my own flag of obsessions;
Prehensile in monkey-business, if not post-modern
In flummery; an aficionado of insomniac starlight;
Haughty, naughty, and nodding in; cavalier
On the horsefly of my flighty convictions;
Haberdasher to the blithely impoverished;
A piddler with preciousness; a diddler with death;
Well-read, and, well, why?

Fully matriculated in the school of hard knocks;
Passionate, pugilistic, and impertinent;
Pre-Socratic when not post-traumatic
And professorial if not full to flatulence;
A jumper-in; hell-bent on feelings;
A free-rider upon Bacchus and his pards;
Arrested in development if not in temerity;
A first lieutenant under general malaise;
Two-fisted, forewarned, and high-stepping backwards;
A bingo existentialist; honest to a San Andreas;
Underpaid and over-indulged; and human,
All too human.



Everybody Wants In (detail)
MIXED-MEDIA COLLAGE BY RFS, 2019

Sun

Sun,
You kiss me with
Your full, warm lips
Unreservedly,
Without those
“Better-wait-until tomorrows.”
All past and future moments melt
In the crucible of your touch.
You take my face in palms of honey.
As slow, as sure,
As the ascending saps
Your fingers have reached me—
Just like that.
With all your gold ringing
At the door of my skin.
And nothing for sale
So we can begin...
You’re delicious, nutritious,
Cornucopic, a hot peach! Or—
I swarm for you: bees!
These words drunk
At your great flowering brim...
You give me your love,
Your warmth, your *gold*, your *hope*,
And *you*
Never wanted *me*
To get a job.



Photos by Bobby Yarra
PARIS, 1989

At One O'Clock In The Morning

by Charles Baudelaire

Story X from *Le Spleen de Paris* (1860)

—TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH BY RFS

Alone! At last! One no longer hears but the rolling of some old carriages, belated and broken. For a few hours we shall possess silence, if not rest. At last! the tyranny of the human face has disappeared, and I shall no longer suffer but through myself.

At last! it is therefore permitted me to unwind in a bath of shadows. First, a double turn of the lock. It seems to me this turn of the key will augment my solitude and fortify the barricades that now separate me, in fact, from the world.

Horrible life! Horrible city! Let us recapitulate the day: having seen many men of letters, one of whom asked me if it were possible to travel overland to Russia (he taking, no doubt, Russia for an island); having argued magnanimously with the editor of a review, who says at each of my objections: "Honesty's the policy around here." this which implies that all the other reviews are directed by con-artists; having greeted some twenty people, among whom fifteen were unknown to me; having distributed handshakes in the same proportion, and this without having taken the precaution of buying gloves; having gone up, in order to kill time during a downpour, to the apartment of a local "lady-loose", who begs me to design her a love costume of velvet; having paid my respects to the director of a theatre, who says in dismissing me: "You would perhaps do well to address yourself to Monsieur Z~: he's the heaviest, drunkest, most famous of all my authors; with him perhaps you can uncork something trendy. Go see him, and then we'll see."; having boasted (why?) of many villainous things that I had never actually done, and cowardly denied other misdeeds that I accomplished with joy, brassy dereliction, criminal disrespect; having refused a good friend a small service, and given a written recommendation to a perfect idiot; ugh! is it finally over and done with?



Scena Classica

ACRYLIC, WATERCOLOR & DECOUPAGE ON POSTER BOARD, 2015

Early Memories of West 47th Street, Manhattan

Melting peeled crayons
on the radiator in winter.–
And my brother and I used
to make fabulous wax fires
 in the ritual ashtray
on the kitchen table...
The Darning-Needles in summer
on West 47th Street... Swatting flies
with rolled-up newspapers
in the plague of heat.
Playing “skelly” toward evening
when the asphalt had cooled off–
The summer The Night Rider,
 all in black, on a white horse,
Midnights through our rapt silence
ambled west down the block...
The dark, little synagogue
that was hushed by our entrance:
Then, buzzing with prayers again,
And we’d soon leave from respect...
The Firehouse we would sneak into
when the engines had gone off.
We would race up the stairs and
slide down the brass poles (Once I
got caught and in fear pissed my pants.
They brought me home
 and were offered a cold beer).
The night I was given a whole dollar
and lost it: I came home crying
shamefully, and was given another.
The shaved-ice in paper cones,

from the Puerto Rican grocery store
(the bright colors of the cane syrup
 made me feel more secure).
The High School yard
elevated above the street
with its parapet, over which
Tommy Troyce and I once threw
Mission Soda bottles on a mutual dare.—
One came down on the windshield
 of a passing cop car (There was
a Station House down the block), and
we were arrested: my first anarchic act
as a cultural worker.—
And I remember
early one summer morning
a bunch of us bombarded
 Mr. Conklin with eggs
because *he* was a landlord's lackey
who had fallen from favor.



Ronald in New York

DATE & PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN