

white columns

For Immediate Release

**White Columns proudly presents:
February 3 – March 13 , 2006**

Other People's Projects: Dodie Bellamy and Kevin Killian

Other People's Projects is an occasional programming strand at White Columns in which our project space is offered to idiosyncratic organizations, collectives, publishers, individuals, etc. to introduce their activities to a wider audience.

The fourth project in this series is presented by the San Francisco-based writers **Dodie Bellamy** and **Kevin Killian**, who will present – in the manner of a reading room - a complete run of their literary 'zine **Mirage#4/Period(ical)**, alongside related ephemera and artworks from their personal collection.

Since the early 1990s Bellamy and Killian have published more than one hundred issues of **Mirage**, a stapled 'zine modeled on the magazines the celebrated San Francisco poet Jack Spicer sponsored in the late fifties and early 60s, such as *J* and *Open Space*. Speaking about **Mirage** in 2002, Bellamy said: "We wanted to create a forum for a writing community ... that was inclusive, not exclusionary, which is often the (perceived) tone of more upscale journals. With 'zines the stakes are low. It's easy to take risks. We wanted to recontextualize the work of prestigious writers by jamming them up against unknown, beginning, or, frankly, nonwriters. We could print the Goth-death poems of the security guard at New College next to **Jackson MacLow**, or the work of MFA sex workers (of whom there are dozens in San Francisco) next to **Barbara Guest**—to invent a new economy of reading. A lot of magazines seem very fraught and labored, afraid of making a mistake and getting humiliated. Though **Mirage** has printed much great work, our guiding principle has been "interesting" rather than "good." For we all know there are no longer masterpieces. ... In San Francisco in the 80s we were caught up in a very unusual schism or division, in that the poetry and art worlds worked side by side but completely separately. You could go to an opening and see no writers there, a poetry reading and see no visual artists, unlike the art worlds of New York or Los Angeles—or, indeed, the earlier San Francisco Renaissance of the 50s and 60s when the prototypical couple was Robert Duncan, a poet, and Jess, a painter. **Mirage** seeks to reunite the two mythic orders of poetry and visual art, and we have succeeded to a certain extent. We boast about our covers, which feature the works of among others, **Vija Celmins, Sol LeWitt, Pierre et Gilles, Nan Goldin, Jack Pierson, Jess** himself, **Peter Saul, Charles Ray, Mike Kelley, and Raymond Pettibon**. But the process is more than just skin deep, and we have invited artists of all descriptions to write for us. I imagine that the artists think of **Mirage** as a kind of conceptual Ray Johnson-type of mail art project. We wanted to be more than a vehicle for the new narrative, we wanted to be more than a magazine for poetry, we wanted to be more than an art 'zine, we wanted it to be some fourth thing. Charles Bernstein called us the absolute low end of high art. ... Someone once said **Mirage** is the easiest magazine to get into and the hardest magazine to get a copy of. Does anyone ever feel excluded from our lowly Xeroxed pages? Tragically, they have. As an advertisement for democracy, we have failed, and the illusion of egalitarianism is just that, an illusion. Because **Mirage** solicits almost all its material, Kevin and I are behind the page pulling all the strings and speaking through a vocoder, like Frank Morgan in the Wizard of Oz."

LISTING EDITORS: PLEASE NOTE!

On Saturday February 4th, 2006 at 7pm, Dodie Bellamy and Kevin Killian will give a rare New York reading of their own work at White Columns. Admission is free.

Dodie Bellamy is a San Francisco-based writer. She is the author of numerous books including *The Letters of Mina Harker* (1998, Hard Press); *Cunt-Ups* (2001, Tender Buttons Books); and *Pink Steam* (2004, Suspect Thought Press.) Her essays have appeared in *The Village Voice*; *Bookforum*; *The San Francisco Chronicle*; *Nest*, and elsewhere.

Kevin Killian is a San Francisco-based writer. He is the author of many titles including *Poet Be Like God: Jack Spicer and the San Francisco Renaissance* (1998, Wesleyan University Press. Co-written with Lewis Ellingham); *Island of Lost Souls* (2004, Nomados); and he edited Sam D'Allesandro's *The Wild Creatures* (2005, Suspect Thought Press.) His writings has appeared in *Framework*; *Artweek*; *Artforum*, and elsewhere.