

Introduction

THE INAUGURATION is at hand. Sometimes the darkest hour comes before blackout. A plebiscite has spoken for theocracy and empire, for surveillance of brain and blood, for whiteness of soul and skin, for missionaries and missionary sex, for war and oil, for the reduction of art and thought to lockstep and lockjaw.

How vain now, in a little magazine, to stand up like a cock and dissent from the sunset. But we must. Art and politics, by their very nature, have to crow against the banality of evil. In Utopia, we would dissent from the banality of good. Not by polemic alone, but with beauty and the shock of the unexpected. Not in the intricacies of policy or the juridical tunnels where sages go to hide, but with one flashbulb after another illuminating the night surface. Not by making ourselves small to fight the small, but by making ourselves large to affront hegemony itself.

Homo sum, humani nihil a me alienum puto. These words of Terence, that Karl Marx took for his motto, describe the diversity, the vitality, the appetite for life and thought that survival demands of us: I am human, and I hold nothing human to be alien to me. A cockcrow that will bring the dawn around.

And so by continuing, we begin. Find inside a pictorial remembrance of Jean Becker on the tenth anniversary of her death, prefaced by the eminent critic Grace Glueck. Gaze on Tintoretto, and on women bodybuilders. Hear the charge of Babel's *Red Cavalry*, the voice of Cory Doctorow, the jangle of alternative music. See Albee on the stage. Have a heart stop.



David Lenson, for the editors