

SKIN

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VOLUME 2 NUMBER 6

THE HARDON MAGAZINE

2ND ANNIVERSARY SPECIAL! 16 HARD COLOR PAGES!

PETER BERLIN
TODAY!
sizzling
words
& photos

exclusive
shots!
PORNSTAR
JIM KING

REX'S
MINDBOGGLING
ARTWORK!

Harry
Chess'
creator
confesses!
A.JAY'S
COMIC
STRIPPING

J. BRIAN'S
'GOLDEN GUYS'

ADULTS ONLY



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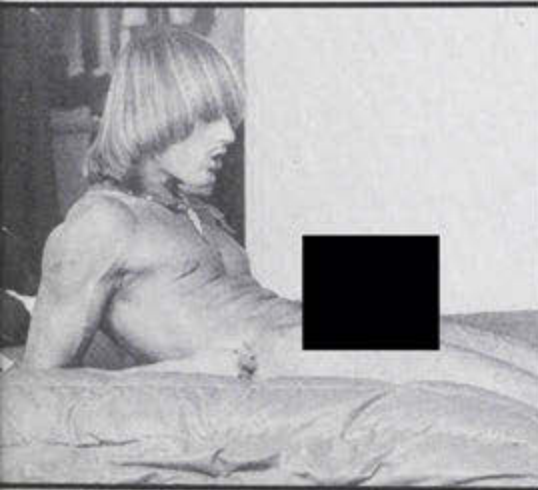
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COVER PHOTO:

He's a true legend in the skin biz, and from the cover shot and an exclusive color and black and white spread inside, veteran pornstar Peter Berlin proves he's just now getting into his prime! In an extremely rare interview, and pictures from his own private files, he shows why he remains the narcissistic idol of countless, breathless fans!

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an erotic portfolio:



REXWERK! The name smacks of Germanic discipline, of heroized masculinity, and of the art that imitates life—if a man goes to the right places when he cruises out to be with other men. REXWERK, the smartest new international gallery in San Francisco, is located off Folsom, South of Market, the district of the darker side of manhood. REXWERK features the visions of the elusively mysterious, but very personal and personable artist, Rex.

No male erotic artist today surpasses Rex's stylized characterizations of men. Tom of Finland, a master artist himself, sees his men as sanitized blond Aryans: always young, always hung, usually in uniform. Etienne (see Vol. 2 No. 4), a formidable name for years, draws hot storyboard scenarios, fantasy but not reality. A. Jay (also this issue) is a magnificent cartoonist/artist of male erotica through his continuing spoof of Harry Chess. Each of them is a j/o turnon in his own way. Each has his following. Each has his audience.

But no artist scares guys the way Rex's work scares guys. It's the basic difference between simple erotic entertainment and art. With *entertainment*, you get exactly what you bargained for. With *art*, something

you might not have bargained for happens; the artist confronts you; you look; you see; your way of seeing begins to change; your values slip another notch toward your id.

ARTIST OF THE ID

Rex draws for big boys grown up enough to face their fantasies. His Rapidograph pen taps out the dots, lines, and shadings that sometimes take months for him to transform an ordinary subject into the extraordinary statement. Who hasn't been to the baths and seen and felt, but been unable to capture in words or graphics, exactly what Rex communicates in his drawing "Bath House"?

"Bath House" was inspired by hot memories of the old St. Mark's Baths in New York, which was a wonderland of depravity years ago before gay-lib and wall-to-wall shag took their middleclass toll of the bathhouse scene. Once upon that time, the St. Mark's cubicles offered the dedicated voyeur more peepholes per square inch of plywood than any place since. "Bath House" is Rex's cubicle-to-cubicle homage to its sexy,

"Love Rex, or hate Rex, no man is unmoved by Rex."

By JACK FRITSCHER

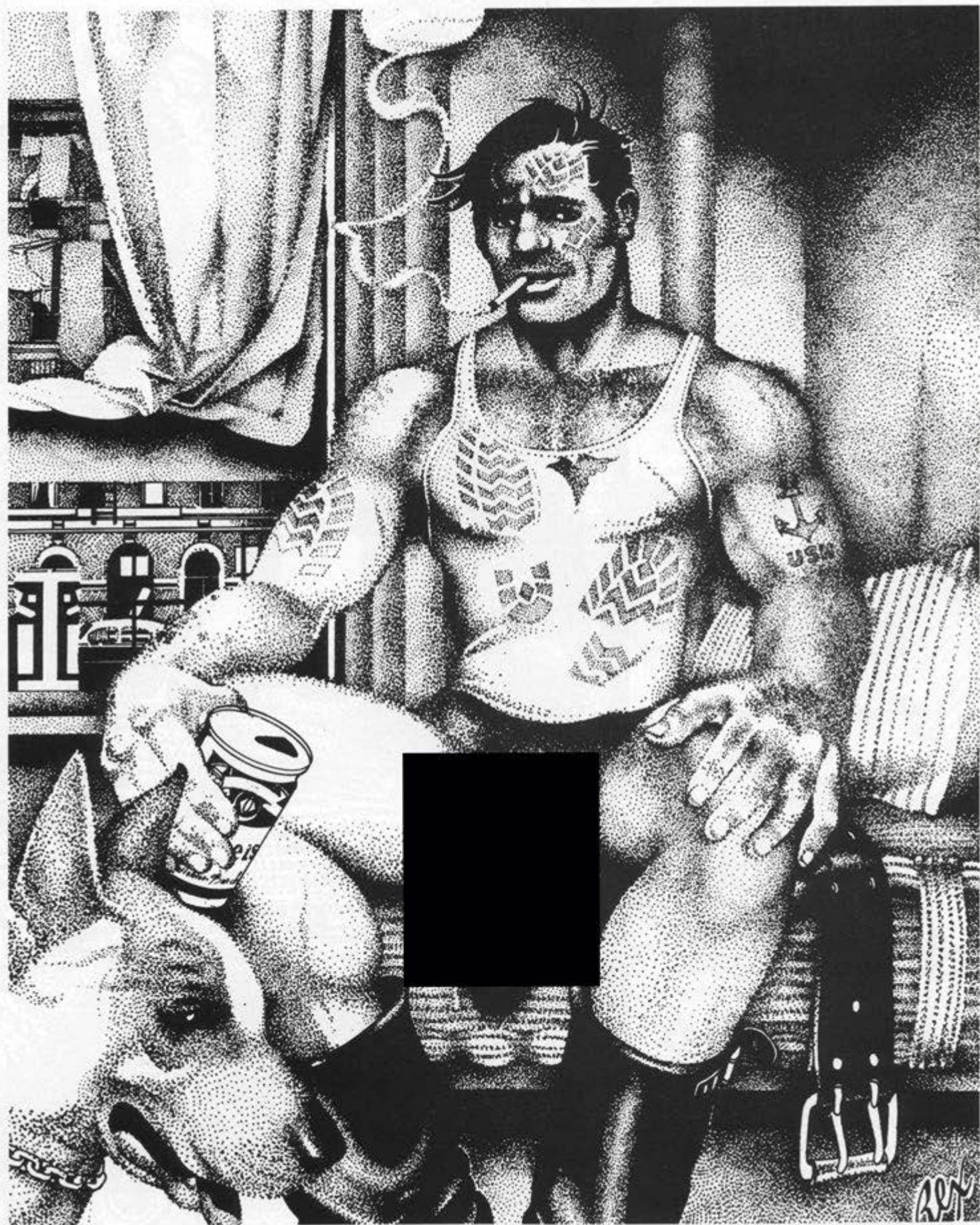
seedy glory.

Each cubicle in the drawing overflows with the touchstones of Rex's eroticism: hairy, often clipped and shaved, muscular tattooed men, wearing the stuff of fetish trips—socks, jocks, bits of uniforms, bike gear, and leather. Cocks drip through thick foreskin. Nipples stand erect on big pecs. Rex's men live in a roustabout world of YMCA rooms, all-nite diners, truckyards, and mattresses without designer sheets.

His men are denizens of the rebellious night.

They are men who have passed their male initiation rites and rituals.

They suck, fuck, submit, and dominate in rooms of falling plaster, naked lightbulbs, dripping washbasins, a shower down the hall, the floor littered with the macho refuse of their *mondo sleazo* bluecollar pleasures: Bud cans, crushed Camel packs, guns, used rubber scumbags. Rex's men celebrate their physical bodies and sensual appetites without apology to Mom and Apple Pie. His men are the beguiling trash our parents always pointed out to warn us away. His men are attractive mirrors of the very id we homosexual men grew up to harbor in our own secret heart of hearts. His seductive men,



through his mirror darkly, are us!

REX: EVERYBODY'S OPINION

Some guys like a "favorite" Rex drawing while taking exception in a quieter tone to another Rex work they "can't stand because it's, well, too HEAVY!" Other guys say the same thing, but reverse the order. (*Heavy*, like *beauty*, is in the eye-and-stroke of the beholder.) No one is supposed to like all the work of any artist. Different drawings, especially in the commercial statements.

"Twenty-one Tongues," for example, is a rare commission for one of Rex's close buddies. Even the title is a personal joke between them. (There are only, by actual count, seventeen tongues.) Nevertheless, this private commission has a universal appeal as the communicants in the military-latrine setting gang around the communion rail of the trough-like worshippers at a temple.

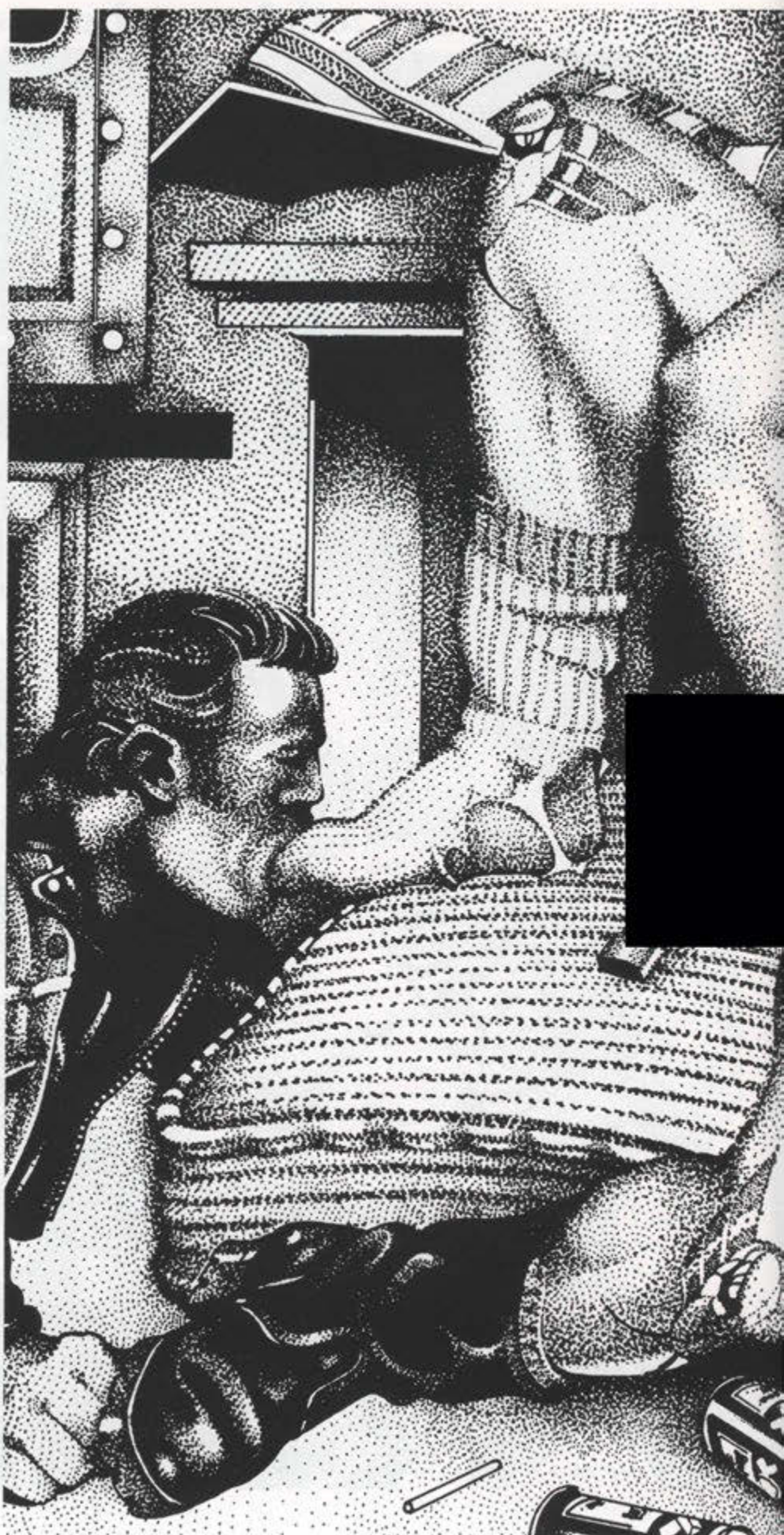
***"His men are the beguiling
trash our parents always
pointed out to warn us
away."***

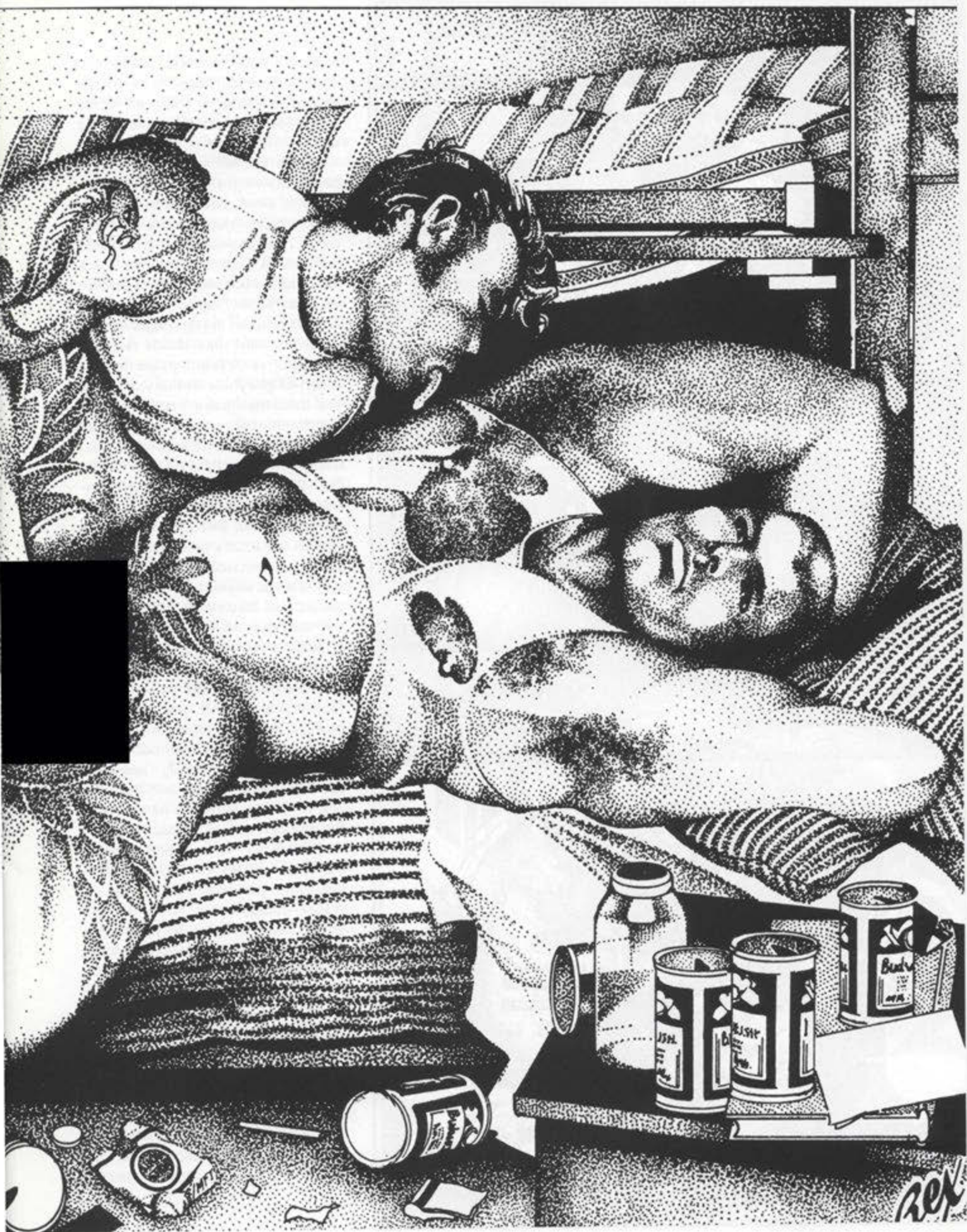
The pissing is a perversatile ritual baptism wherein the High-Priest DI at the top of the trough pisses down to initiate the new recruits whose tongues lap up the piss as if they are at the Fount of Saving Grace. This is the irony of Rex that makes his hyper-masculine style so gutwrenching: he is basically a ritual, religious artist sanctifying the profane and the depraved. Rex glories in flesh.

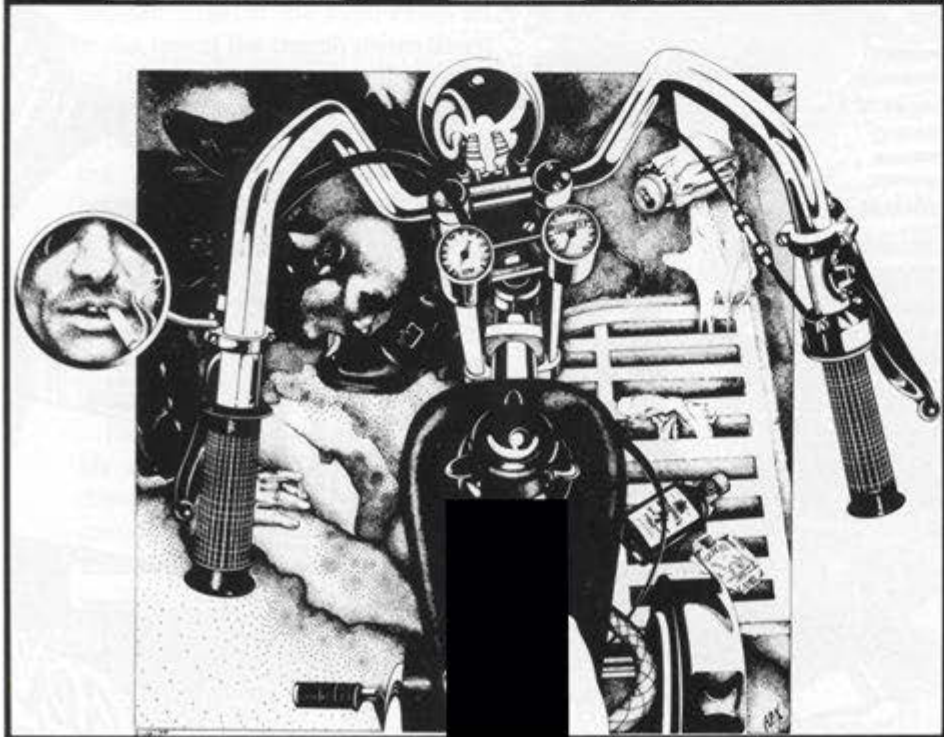
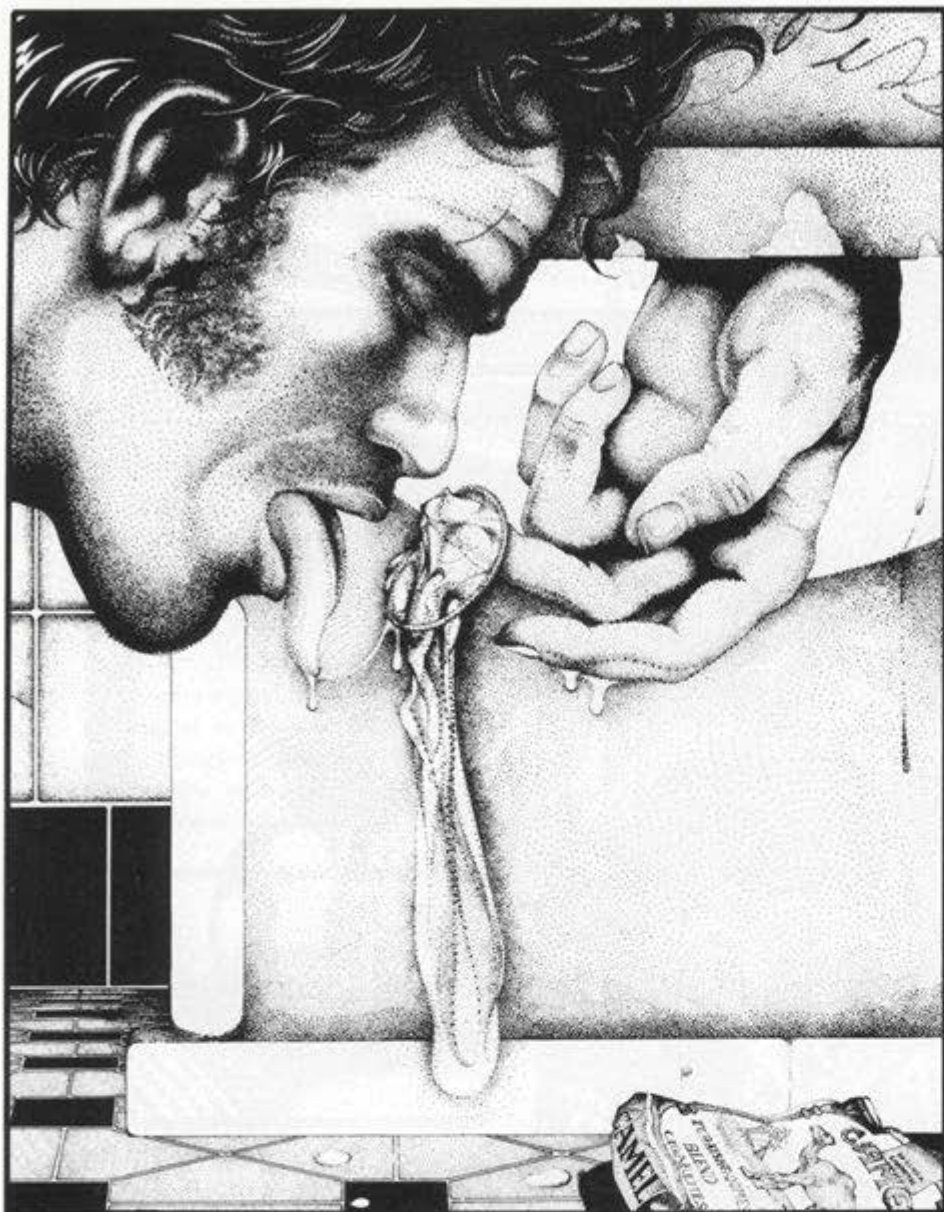
Love Rex, or hate Rex, no man is unmoved by Rex.

FANTASY, FETISHES & FACES

Rex knows his territory. He says his say with his Rapidograph. He draws in seclusion, listening to tape cassettes of 1930s and 1940s European marching music. He reminds us, maybe in the middleclass glare of dawn, of the dark, "low-class" animal pleasures we sometimes like to







forget, when we feel we're too "spiritual" or too "nice" to ever have sucked a cock, a jock, or worse (somehow in descending order): a sock.

"Black Socks" strikes some as a heavy drawing: the sailor being serviced is aloof, hardassed, tattooed, uncut, hairy, muscular, and dominant. The tattooed biker who sucks the sailor's foot through his black sock kneels, booted, in the ritual litter of porn books, liquor bottles, and restless nights in one-night cheap hotels. A third man stands reflected in the mirror. A fourth peers through a sort-of-gloryhole in the wall. Who are these two extra men? Why do two toothbrushes stand in the glass? The drawing's strong impersonal sexuality (in a gay, Gay GAY World O-D-ing on "interpersonal relationships"), and its high technical skill, mirror much of what one suspects is clue to the artist's personal vision of life as homomascuine men live it.

Rex is not afraid to push his subject matter past taboo to the point where the viewer is so fascinated that he forgets he first was socially repulsed by the hardline lowlife scene. Life seems sometimes like a contest to find new and better ways to be disgusting. Rex turns repulsion, with the same sort of skill as a Roman Polanski, through technically seductive talent into acceptance, and finally to jerk-off judgement of a hand hitting the popper, giving greasy salute to the drawings' values, and tripping the head off into the darksome fantasy world perfected by the artist.

Rex dumps more "story" into a single frame than most filmmakers can manage in a full-length feature.

ANDREW WYETH JACKS OFF

"Mad Doctors" is exceptional among Rex's drawings. Most of his work stems from real life. "Mad Doctors" is a drawing commissioned by a patron whose fantasy, somewhere this side of the Third Reich, was "Man: The Ultimate Experimental Animal." Rex prefers not to work with a client's detailed "script," but more with a man's general

"concept." Rex nevertheless is not chary of accepting the discipline of working at his usual intensity to develop the real guts of someone else's fantasy. This is, after all, the essence of erotic art: to dare to put detailed pen to blank paper and make real what heretofore has never been concretized out of deep desires acted out in the dead of night.

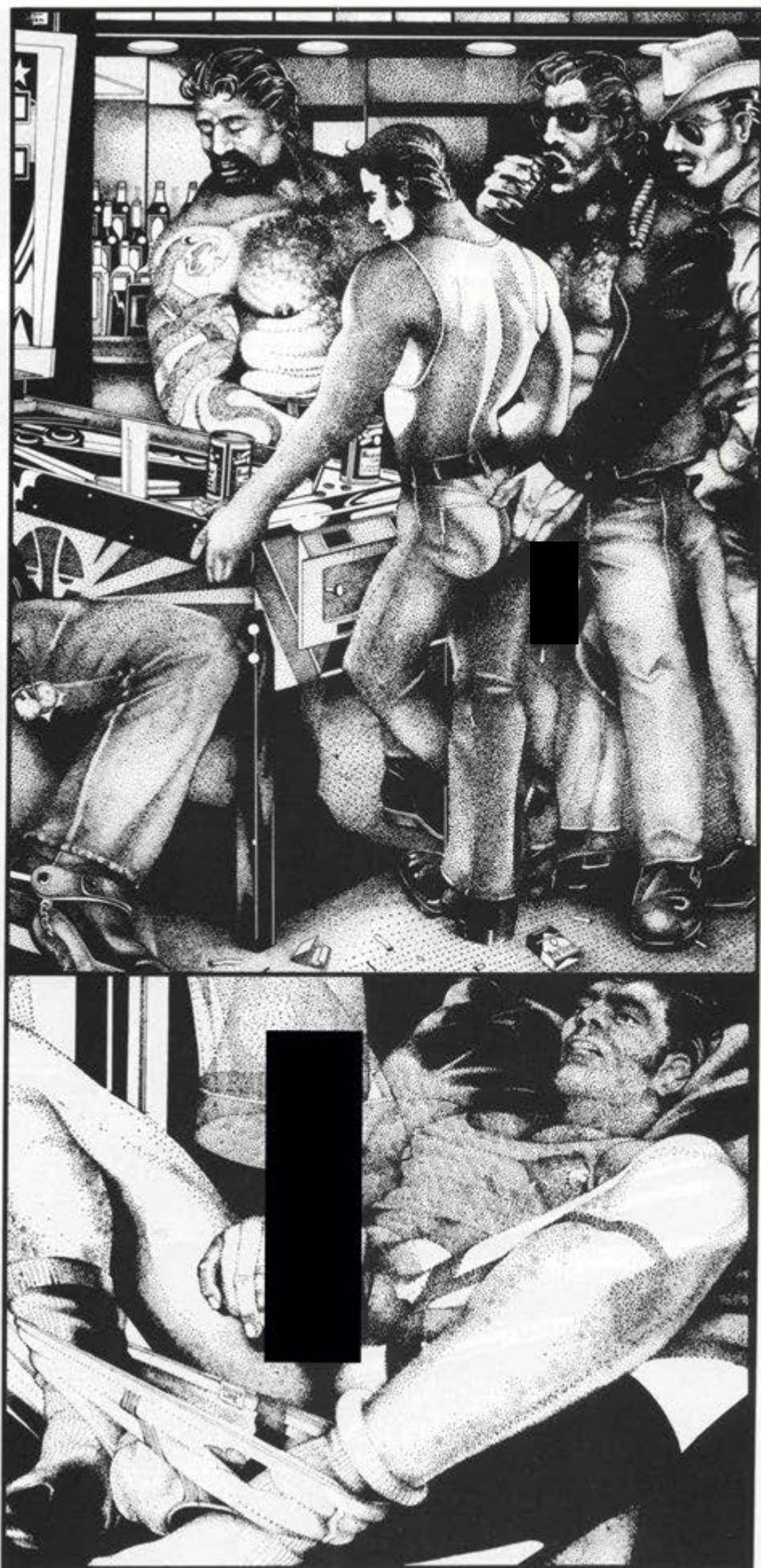
At the opposite extreme from "Mad Doctors" is "Jack Off," a picture Andrew Wyeth would appreciate. This is an early Rex. Its romantic YMCA isolation of solitary love on a bored summer afternoon has made it a classic favorite of Onanists everywhere: here the hunk is alone, independent, noble, not necessarily queer even, and totally content with his Self in his private laidback world.

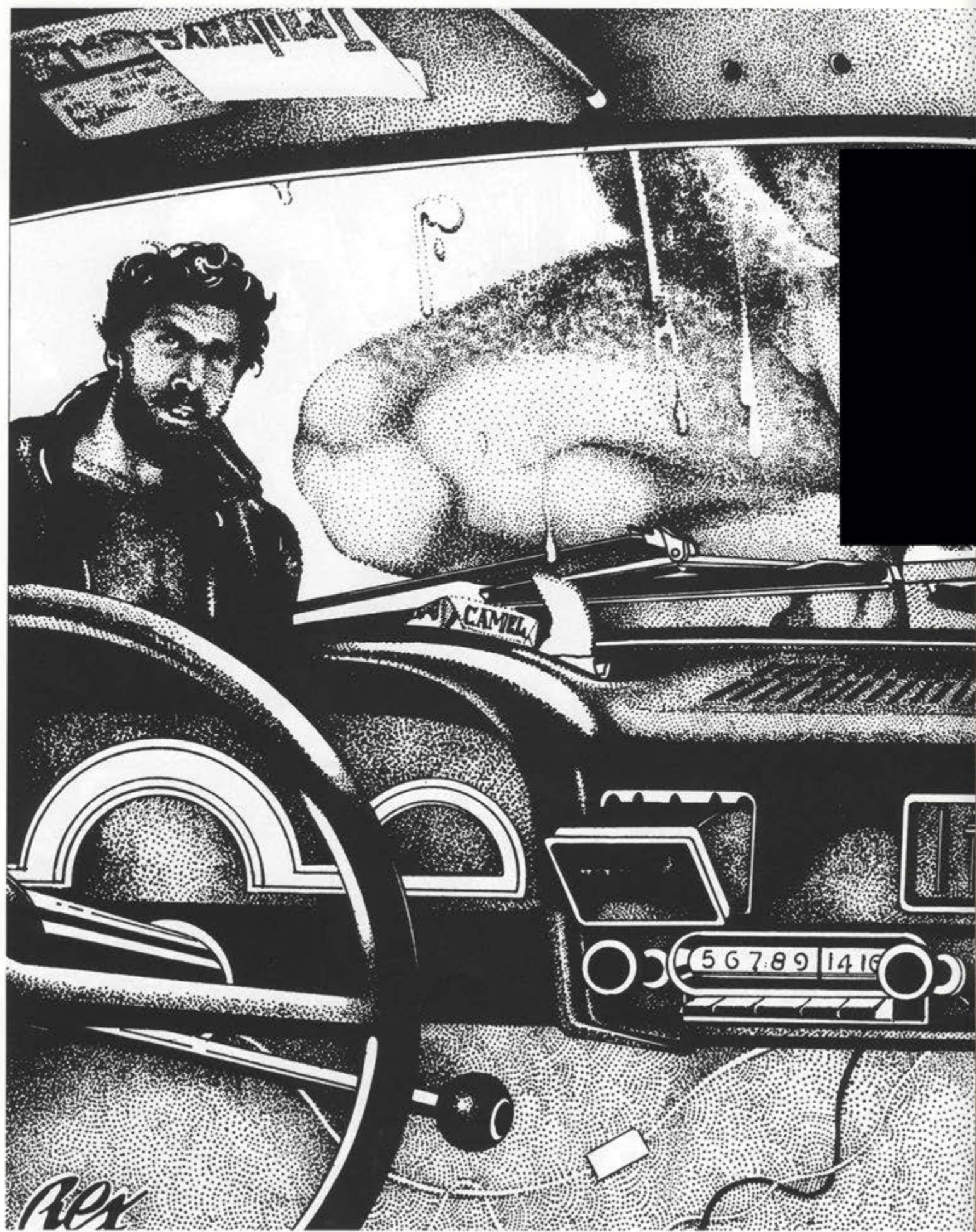
Rex's world is populated with single men, not "lovers." In pairs, men are at their best: buddies. Alone, paired, or in groups, they're all upfront animals.

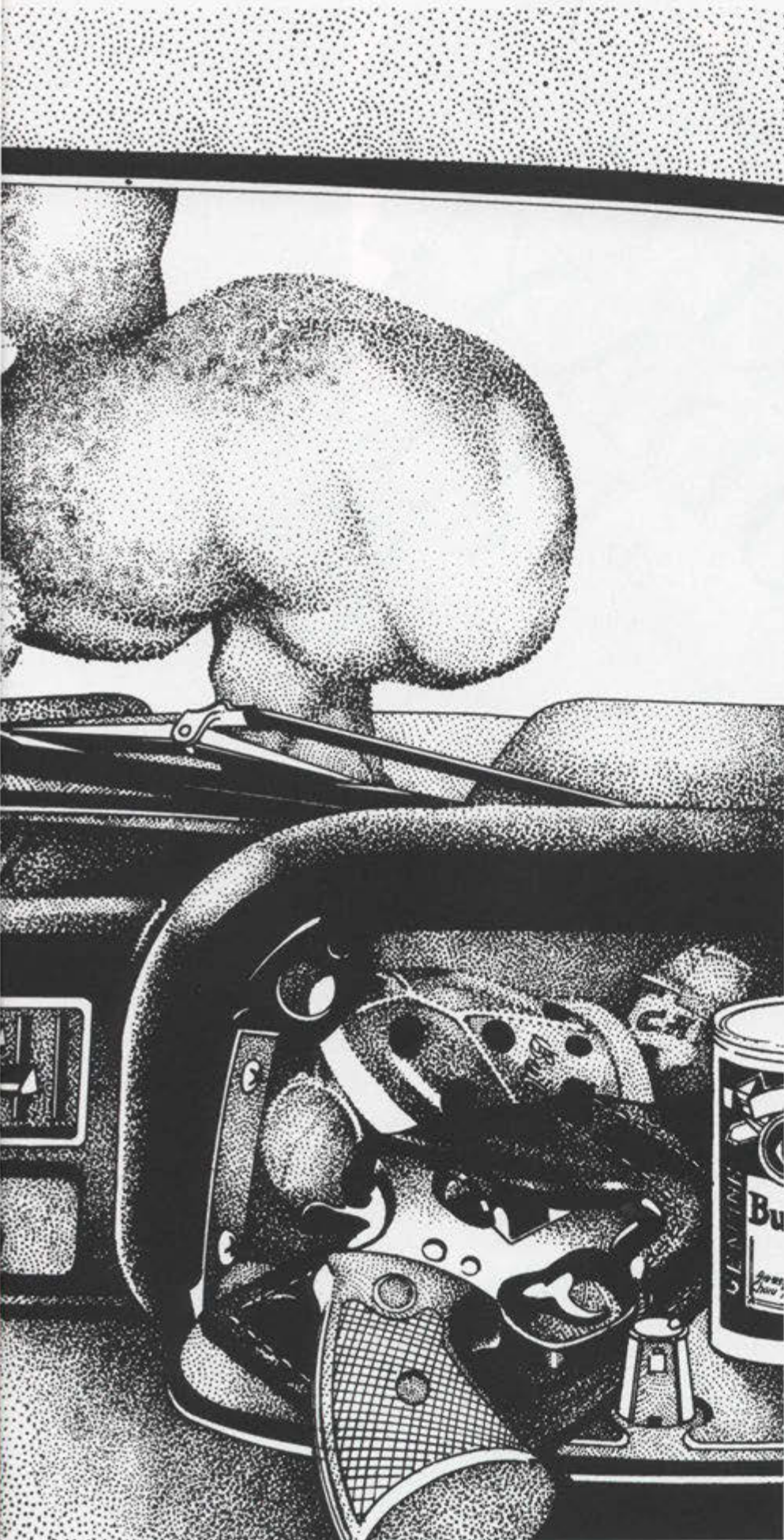
Critics who dislike Rex's work object not because of his peerless technique, but more out of misunderstanding of what the artist attempts. Objections run to queenly superciliousness like: "The faces aren't pretty, the bodies are too rough and muscular. The types are too dirty. None of them smiles. No blonds." Such objections reveal more about the limited "royalty" of the critics than about the real matter and manly style of the artist. Interestingly enough, Rex in America is somewhat controversial. Guys freak out at his raw masculinity, and then hide his stuff away under their mattresses to jerk off alone, not wanting their socialite friends to know how they feed their deeper needs. In Europe, Rex has long been considered a serious artist.

REX'S IMPORTANCE

Rex's vision of manly men, living on the cusp of unpretentious macho, is absolutely necessary in a world where media continually portray homosexuals as 28-inch waspwaisted little clone-fags who like to drag themselves up as female sluts. To







each his own; but to many, Rex is, certainly, a *champion*: an artist pursuing the romance of American manhood in its hardedged urban contest against the sissy norm of middleclass gayboy values.

Those who respond negatively to his noble sleaze merely protest, like Shakespeare's lady, a bit too much about their insecure class standing. If your mommie is still looking over your shoulder, you'll hate Rex. He is, before all, not an artist of the "normal." (No true artist is.) Rex is an artist of the "natural." To be true to one's essential male nature is always better than trying to fit into the mold of others' norms. In a world where many gays choose to do "their mother's act" rather than their father's, Rex offers refreshing support to men who are tired of seeing on the streets men doing to themselves things you hoped you'd never

"In pairs, men are at their best: buddies."

see men do to themselves.

REXWERK

Rex has located REXWERK in San Francisco because in the '80s, he predicts, San Francisco, particularly South of Market, will be to erotic male artists what Hollywood was for film artists in the Golden '30s. San Francisco is now the Dream Factory. For homomascuine men, South of Market is the Back Lot, and REXWERK is the major erotic studio.

REXWERK Gallery is open by appointment only on Saturdays and Sundays from 6 to 9 PM. Call for appointment: (415) 863-1897. If you can't wait to get to the Source of It All, send a \$4 check or money order made out to *Drawings by Rex* to Drawings by Rex, Box 347, San Francisco, CA 94101. You'll get three glossy 8x10 prints to help you make it *into* the night!