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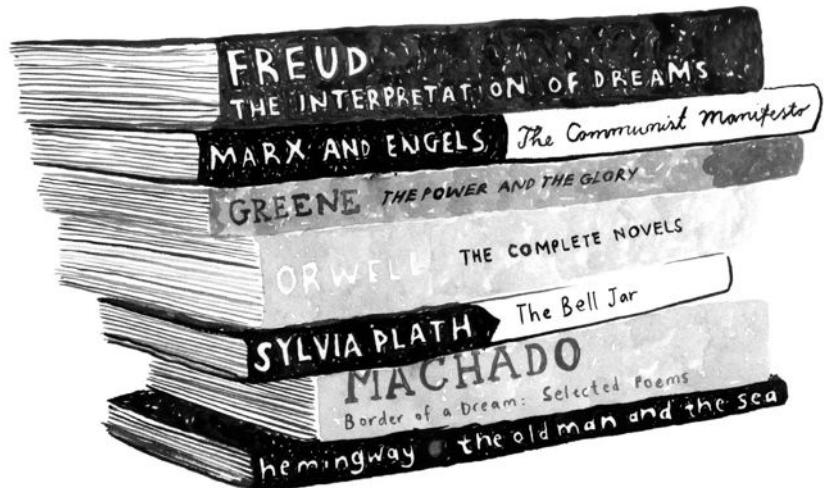
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Yuck 'n Yum

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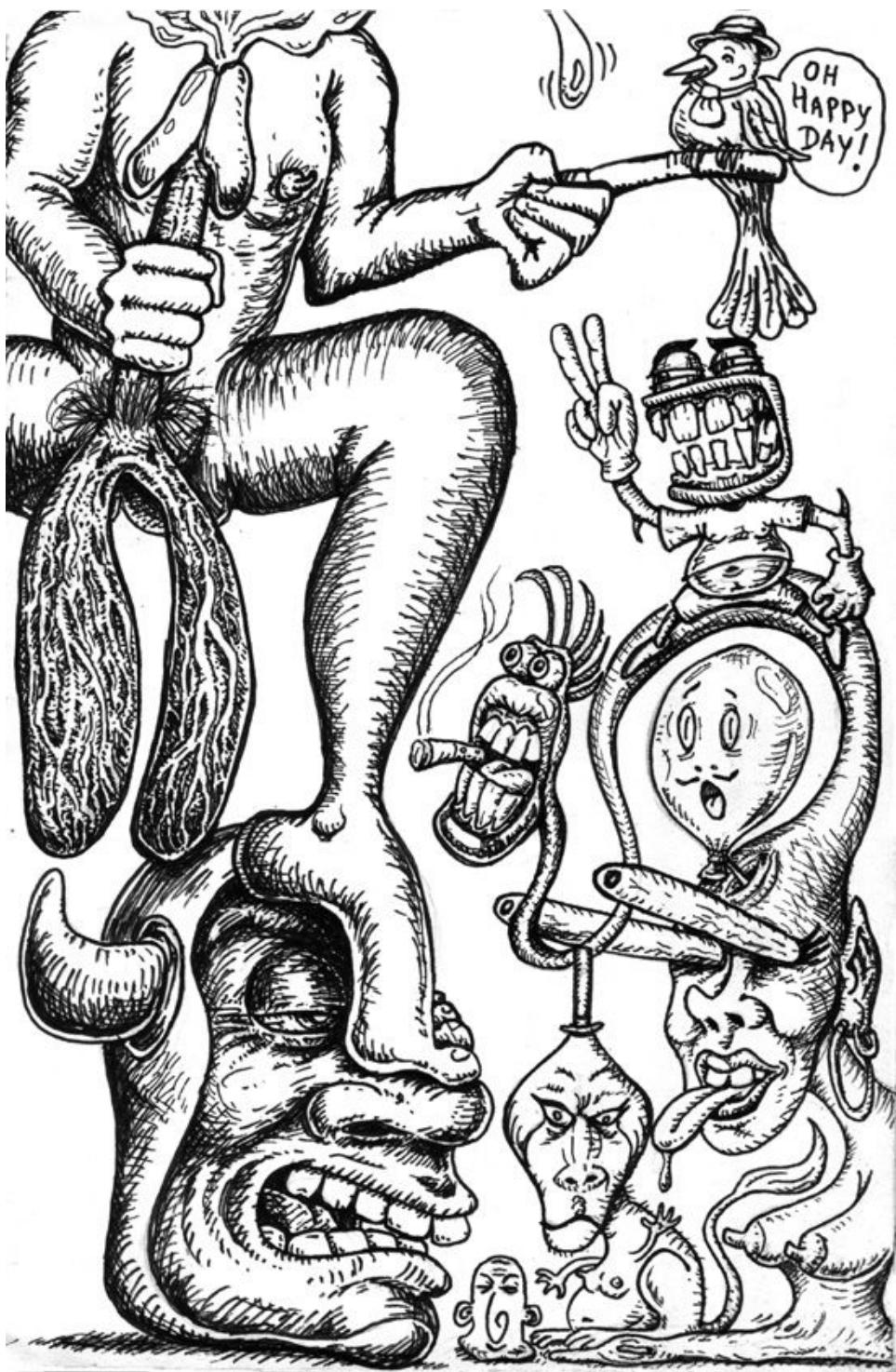
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Cover by Ross Hamilton Frew









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A Trash Humpers Dialogue with **Ryan Weir** and Ben Robinson

Wow, lucky you! The use of degraded VHS tape to film *Trash Humpers* really gives it a unique look. **But yeah, I think being engaged by or attracted to someone or something for which there isn't an easy explanation is a common occurrence and it's definite Harmony Korine territory.** The characters wear these outfits with such lurid colours. **It's maybe not conventional beauty but it's captivating, and quite possibly sexy.** Tracksuits in fucshia and lime that the recording technology heightens to eye-wateringly intense levels, and it presents the world in a new, startlingly different way. **It reminds me of being around 11 years old and fooling around with some friends in the wooded area behind my house.** For example, during the film I left to go take a piss. **We came across a set of photographs in proper Boots packaging in the middle of a path but the pictures inside had clearly not been developed in Boots.** The water in my toilet is bright blue, but the bleach was turned to green on contact with my urine. **They were essentially 'dirty pictures' of various girls on swings or on chairs, breasts and vaginas exposed, but their faces were hidden because of the lighting and some of the images ran from one photograph to the next.** The scene was framed by my bright red slippers and it was just an intensely beautiful experience. **None of the girls were particularly attractive but you can imagine this nonetheless sent all kinds of crazy feelings rushing through our scrawny bodies.** Werner Herzog was an early champion of Korine's work. **It wasn't just the naked girls but the whole question of their origin and the illicit nature of their production that enthralled me.** During a 1997 article for *Interview* magazine he famously said, "What I like about *Gummo* are the details that one might not notice at first." **We were all fighting over what to do with them and how we could divide them but already I had decided if I alone couldn't have them then no one could.**



The permanent exhibition is a carefully choreographed sequence of rooms denoting the linear passage of time of the two administrations. It seamlessly incorporates video and sound with a specially commissioned score playing throughout the exhibition. Early on you enter a carpeted room lined with widescreen monitors and cone-like structures placed across the room. The videos are archival footage of survivors describing their experience of Soviet Work Camps. Each video is timed, and as each screen plays it gently navigates you through the space. As you advance, you become aware that the carpet is a map of Hungary and the cone-like structures, which contain artefacts, are in fact giant map pins denoting where the objects were found, with its geographical spot correlating with the content of the videos. The cone's purpose is to house the artefact, yet in its present form as map pin it takes on a more sculptural quality, transforming it from display cabinet to art object. This integration of video, space and object is without fault, with each element of equal weight within the space. Another example of historical information displayed as art object is a passage denoting the farmers' struggle with Soviet administration. The passage is made entirely out of soap with dates and names inscribed into it, and would definitely not be out of place in any white cube.

I could wax lyrical about many other aspects of this museum that I found to contain parallels to contemporary art, but I won't. What I will say is that the symbolic nature of the exhibits within the Terror Haza means that it should be considered in a contemporary art context as well as an historical one.



Terror Haza : Museums as Art

On a wide grassy street in Central Pest stands a monument to the victims of two horrific regimes that reigned over the Hungarian people for more than fifty years. Publicly commissioned works of art commemorating historical events are not uncommon in cities across Europe with Budapest as no exception, yet the monument that sits on this leafy street is not your average gilded bust. This monument is the former building that housed the administrations of terror. This is 60 Andrassy Ut.

The Terror Haza (House) is a museum about the Hungarian people's plight under the Nazi and Soviet regimes spanning the decades of the Second World War until the late sixties. What captivated me whilst conducting my visit was its use of contemporary art techniques to convey history. It seemed that the museum's curatorial team had turned the building into a work of 'art' both internally and externally. As you approach the building it is hard not to miss the giant metal overhang that frames its façade. The word "terror" has been cut out and casts an ominous shadow over the building in the harsh midday light. It has been painted a stark matt grey with its windows blacked out contrasting to its sandstone neighbours and is reminiscent of a Rachael Whiteread sculpture. Small oval, sepia toned photographic plates of the victims of the two regimes line the perimeter of the building, all contributing to a visually arresting sight that instils a sense of foreboding and evokes these once omnipresent regimes before you step into the museum.



Images Courtesy of Alcove Entertainment and O' Salvation

"There's the scene where the kid in the bathtub drops his chocolate bar into the dirty water and just behind him there's a piece of fried bacon stuck to the wall with Scotch tape." **And so I swiftly deposited them down the nearest drain, much to the bemusement of my friends.** "This is the entertainment of the future." **It wasn't even the pictures I couldn't bear sharing but the whole experience; the packaging, the moment, the thrill of the found object.** I think that's a good way to approach *Trash Humpers*, to look out for those "fried bacon and Scotch tape" moments of artistic clarity. **Hours later I returned to that drain alone and in the dark but they were gone.** During the film I believe there are many such moments.

The film really brings home how Korine is an artist who is able to capture a specific place. **Well I think looking at it that way certainly gives you more in terms of something you can take from the film but it's not really up for giving anything away too easily.** Just as the paintings of Ed Ruscha define a vision of California, a vision of billboards, empty spaces and gas stations, so Korine sees the landscape of Nashville. **Living outside the major cities, the abandoned trailers and deserted car parks are instantly recognisable symbols of the banality of life and I suppose Korine is happier in the repressed south because it's modern life stripped to the bare bones, no more or less worthy a setting than the back alleys of New York, just more fun and interesting for what it leaves out.** *Trash Humpers* sees his vision taken to its logical conclusion with a renewed emphasis on destroying the landscape. **But yeah, I don't think Korine read the newsletter about art having a contractual responsibility to provide wholesome entertainment to the masses.** Smashing TV screens with hammers, throwing a stereo up in the air then watching it crash to the floor, this is what the end of the world will look like.

