

Revolution of the Moment

Bill Brown describes his trip to Boston as "a reality TV show all the time." Charlie-Girl Anders decides that being called "faggot faggot" in Cleveland really means "feminine and graceful girl of tomorrow." Marc Ngui calls his tour the "guinea pig run." Emily Pohl-Weary names Vermont "The Border Guard Fake-out State." m@b gets a ticket from a pock-marked cop in Cincinnati and witnesses a backyard prostitution ring in Chicago. Corey Frost battles bronchitis and decides the show must go on. These are just a few of the adventures of a team-up indie touring circuit known as The Perpetual Motion Roadshow.

Toronto, Montreal, Boston, Brooklyn, Cleveland, Cincinnati, Chicago: by the end of June 2003 these seven cities will have hosted nine visiting performers plus local acts in an effort to keep indie art moving across two nations. Each month three different performers pile into a vehicle together to deliver their spoken word, zines, comics, or literary experiments from one city to the next. Organizer Jim Munroe of No Media Kings insists I write as little about him as possible when covering The Perpetual Motion Roadshow. But that's hard to do, given that he's the mental wheels behind this magical mystery detour from the mainstream.

Munroe began working on his vision for the tour — named in tribute to the clean power perpetual motion machine once envisioned by Leonardo da Vinci — after making his own appearances across Canada and the US in conjunction with his self-published books *Angry Young Spaceman* and *Everyone in Silico*. "It's set up on volunteer power," he says.

To render the best shows, Munroe's goal is to find people who have eclectic personalities and talents — a musician and a comics artist for instance. For Munroe, it's all about selecting people who will push the limits of their genres, creating a different performance than a straight reading. Zines have a



large influence in this line of thinking. "Because they're not a traditional medium, they lend themselves to performance or other ways to go at something," Munroe says. On her Roadshow, Charlie-Girl Anders, author of *The Lazy Crossdresser*, cast the book aside and picked up the mic for a karaoke rendition of "Be a Lady." Marc Ngui brought alive his graphic novel *Enter Avariz* with slide show and a whole slew of characters streaming out of one voicebox. By using the audience's ears instead of just their eyes, his illustrations became animated. "People apply the same creative muscle to the presentation of the work as they did when they made it. [It's] just exciting to give them a space to do that," Munroe says.

The tour is about aiming at the ideal and leaving behind the notion that one needs the budget of a large publisher in order to tour. "Very few publishers do effective tours," Munroe points out, adding, "The people who know your audience best are you." A partnership between Munroe, the performers, and local organizers, coupled with indie culture networks, and reasonable expectations are the fuel for The Perpetual Motion Roadshow. E-mail is one of the most efficient ways to build a network and most of the authors on tour use word of mouth to promote their shows. Some audiences have been more receptive than others, with an average of 15 in attendance at the shows.

Undaunted, departing June 14th on another round of the Roadshow are: Todd Dills of Rock Hill, South Carolina; Cynthia Gould of Toronto, Ontario; and Joe Meno of Chicago, Illinois. This new tour combines the talents of three lit-based performers, but all posters bear the following guarantee: "No Boring Readings or Your Money Back."

You can listen to the Pay Phone Tour Diaries online at www.nomediakings.net, or sign up to be a crew member.

(Emily Schultz)

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