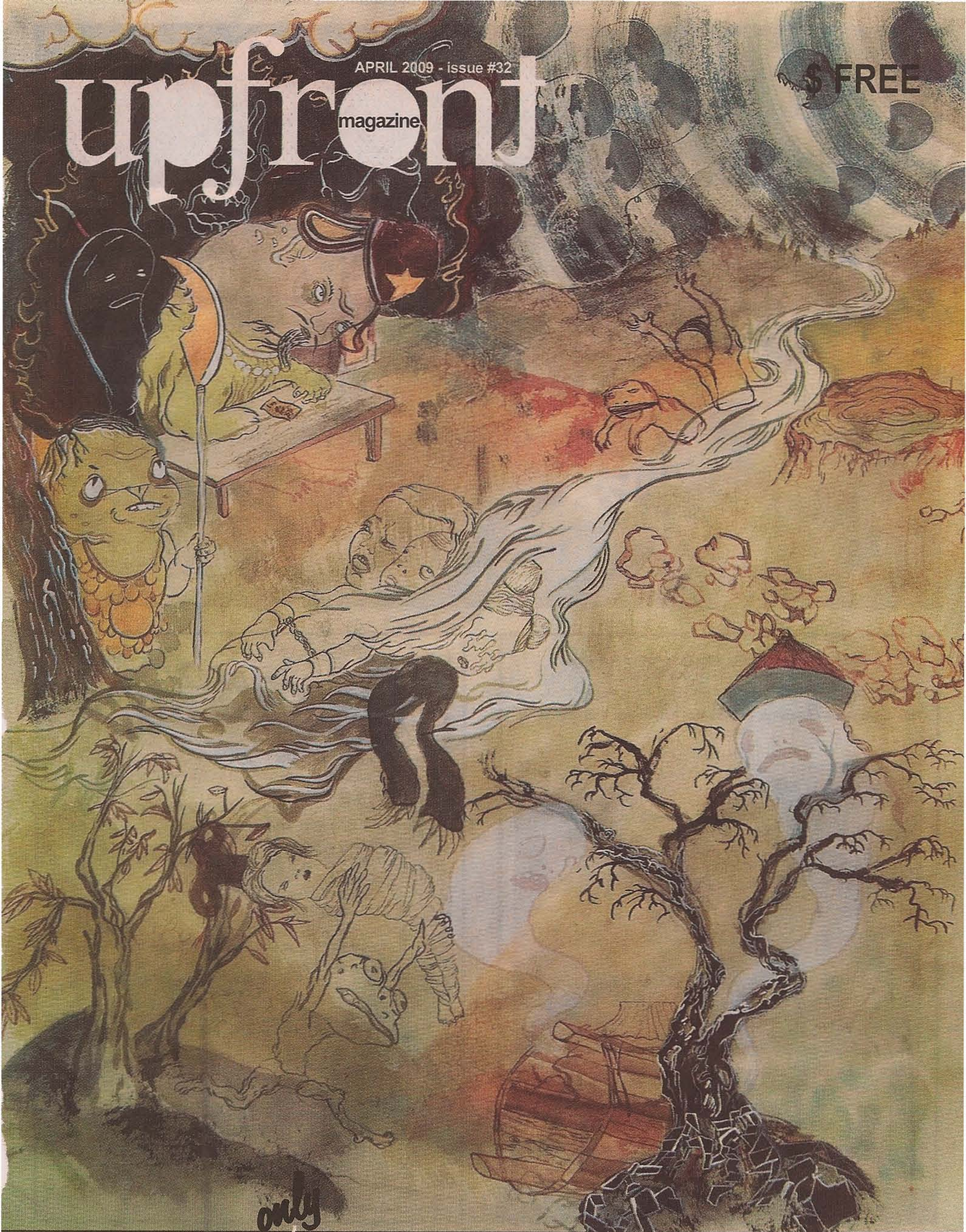


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there's horror outside

By: Morgan A Cook

On April 4th a Band of Outsiders will be celebrating their no holds barred show at Gallerie SAW Gallery. The Lil' Shop o' Terrors will be hosting the closing party for this exhibition which started with an Outsider Art Fair in late February.

This exciting and unconventional evening included the premiere screening of Mackenzie MacBride's video "Believe in Love", the debut single from her newly released album "An Outsider's Heart", and featured artist Yves Benoit of hair and mixed media fame. Club Saw was bazaar with tables for local galleries and art groups Nomad, Petit Mort, Canteen, h'ART of Ottawa, Agitate and Spins and Needles. The focal point of the show was the work shown by 13 established and emerging outsider artists from the Ottawa Gatineau region.

Curated by Stefan St-Laurent and Ainsley Walton, Band of Outsiders was a "refreshing look at the influences of outsider art on contemporary art practices..."

Angie the Barbarian, the genius behind the Lil' Shop o' Terrors, an arthouse, rattstoration extravaganza, created a strong, dynamic and distinct body of work which was housed in the small single room on the west side of the gallery. These pieces and dark, detailed scenes, were created using an incredible array of found objects and creative impulses. Bike wheel chandeliers, a miniature pirate town with incredible details (a voodoo shop, spiral staircases, oozing green goo etc.), a chiaroscuro circus with working lights, a hor-

rific tableaux involving dolls and skulls and symbolizing friendship, Angie's work is unequivocally outside the norm.

JeanGuy's work was also a standout. These small pen and ink drawings, heavy with contour lines and unconventional subjects like "Dawn at the Crackhouse" and "L'Overdose". Poignant and striking, JeanGuy's further exploration into the depths of outsider art has progressively created darker scenes both in subject and with number of pen strokes.

Rene Price's "Art Viewer 2002" (a rolling chair that viewers are encouraged to use) was on display. As were Trevor Laalo's enormous quilt/collages. "Am I Hyper-Sensitive" is a busy and stimulating example of this unique media filled with pop images and phrases.

The Outsider Art Fair provided both an

informative and a shopping experience for the perusers. Local galleries and art groups held court in their own booths handing out pamphlets and hocking wares. Canteen was well represented as the new kid on the block, the gallery opened last November and continues to grow in popularity. Specializing in prints, zines, mags, art books, toys and pop art, Canteen offers Ottawa's art community a unique experi-

ence with their art book library. Access to high-end art books for the starving artist. The young gallery is also avidly promoting local art, Pierre Richardson's work was featured and for sale that night.

Crazy Dave, known for his cardboard and sharpie street poetry was there promoting a collaborative book "My Streets" with a local photographer.

This outsider extravaganza was best described by a Jean Dubuffet quote in the events literature; "Those works created from solitude and from pure and authentic creative impulses-where the worries of competition, acclaim and social promotion do not interfere-are, because of these very facts, more precious...we cannot avoid the feeling that in relation to these works, cultural art in its entirety appears to be the game of a futile society, a fallacious parade." up

