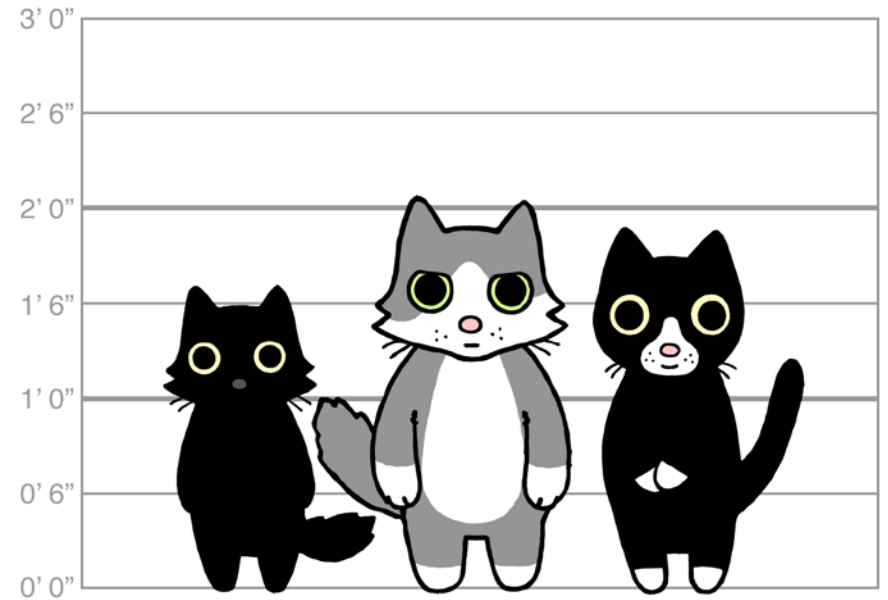


**The Pinky Show
Future Museum Report:
Some notes on our time-travel expeditions,
2028-2098**

Prepared by Pinky
Compiled from notes by Bunny, Kim & Pinky

Version 2.0 completed August 2010
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We are time travellers. From left to right: Kim, Bunny, and Pinky. Mimi was busy and could not come; Daisy could not fit in the vehicle.

Introduction: Museums / Cats / Time Travel

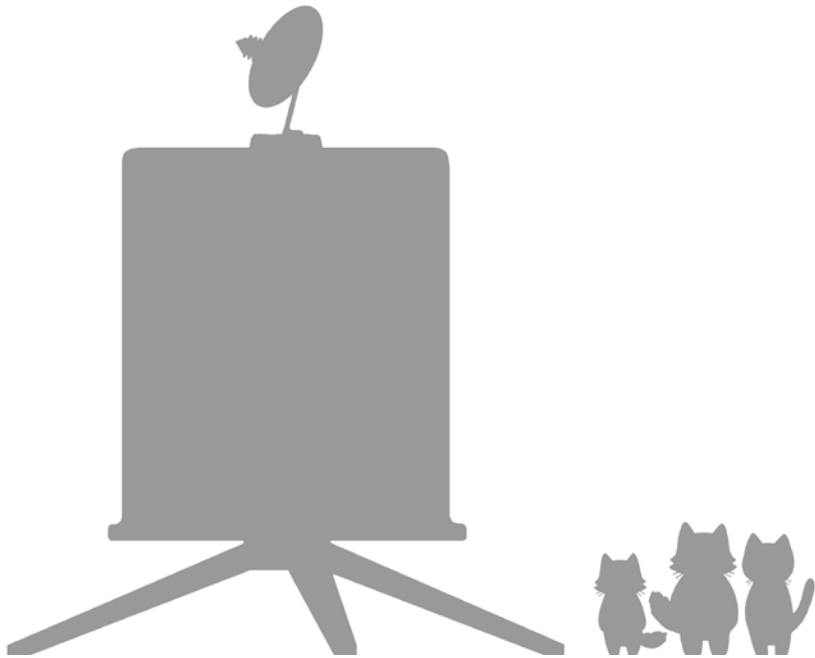
We, three cats from The Pinky Show, went to the future. We brought back notes & stuff.

As some of you may know, Kim is very interested in museums. She had been asking us for several months about the possibility of traveling through time to see how museums develop in the future - however we have been extremely busy and only lately has Bunny found the time to build a functional time-travel machine.

Since late March, Bunny, Kim, and I have made several brief expeditionary trips to various possible futures. However, the process of de- and re-materializing at the molecular level is filled with many hidden risks, some of which cannot be addressed even through the careful use of wax-paper. After only six trips our machine is already beginning to show dangerous signs of wear and it appears that we will not be doing any more time traveling until Bunny is able to build a new, less wobbly vehicle. Also, we lost our luggage on the last voyage.

At any rate, although we weren't able to understand the significance of everything we saw on our travels, overall it was a nice learning experience. Kim is satisfied for the moment and we were all very careful to take many notes. We were also able to bring back with us a few museum-related objects, some of which we present here for your amusement and contemplation.

Pinky Cat
May 20, 2010



Time Travel Machine v1.0 specifications. Capacity: 3 adult cats. Height: 9 feet (not including sensor). Total height: 11.25 feet (including sensor). Width: 5 feet. Leg span: 8.5 feet. Maximum speed: 4 years/second. Maximum temporal reach: +/- approx. 100 years. Luggage pod: yes. Coffee support: yes. Completed: March 29, 2010. Retired: May 6, 2010. Design & Construction: Bunny.

Right: Scale models of the Time Travel Machine and accompanying Luggage Pod, 1 inch = 1 foot scale. The models were made by Kim.



I. Apparently many futures are possible

One of the things we noticed when we first started time-traveling was that often there seemed to be no obvious connections between the various moments-in-time we visited. In fact, many of the futures we experienced seemed wildly different - sometimes even apparently 'opposite' - from each other, even when separated by only a few years. We later learned from Daisy (who has time-traveled before) that the reason for this is that the future, as it relates to the present, only exists as an infinite array of possibilities fanning outward. And since Bunny did not build a Linear Limiting Device into our time machine, basically we just ended up going all over the place in near-random fashion. Which is not necessarily a bad thing - perhaps the diversity of artifacts presented here will serve as a reminder that a positive future can only be what we are willing to desire and fight for.

2062: The Capitalism Memorial Museum

The Capitalism Memorial Museum was one of our favorite museums we visited, partly because it was so exhilaratingly difficult to relate to. At one level it was very much like any 'typical' museum one might visit in the present - several buildings housing collections organized around specific themes, lots of artifacts in display cases, photographs and explanatory text everywhere. On the other hand, because the museum exists in a post-capitalist future, even though we consider ourselves not-big-fans of capitalism, we also found ourselves unprepared for the completely disorienting effect of seeing the world purged of capitalist logic and structure. Once capitalism was overturned, the way pretty much everything is done in society had to change - including how museums are run. For example, The Capitalism Memorial Museum had Indigenous leadership boards. Community media bureaus. Communal research collectives. What is all this stuff? And how does it all work? We're not really sure - we could only stay in 2062 for 23.9 hours.

Another thing that struck us as odd about this museum: it's open 24/7, 365 days a year. It was quite amazing how many people were there, just hanging out, doing their own thing on the museum grounds at all hours. There always seemed to be people swimming or playing in the many swimming pools located throughout the museum campus. In fact, the Capitalism Memorial Museum has the second most swimming pools of any museum in the world (second only to the Museum of the Swimming Pool in Las Vegas - don't go there, it's boring), the result of its origin as expropriated homes of the rich and famous in Beverly Hills.

Misc. Notes: Truly delicious coffee & sweets at the cafes. We didn't see any security guards anywhere. Administrative meetings held at the cafes or even in the galleries. Not even one sign with the word "public" on it. Gift shops still mediocre.

Visitor map. From the Capitalism Memorial Museum at Los Angeles. Collected by Pinky at the CMM-LA Memory Center information booth, c. 2062, Los Angeles.

Visitors Map

the Capitalism Memorial Museum
at Los Angeles, California dAA

"We must learn to recognize both the vast and the minute. We must be able to see the invisible and understand its profound effects. When we fail: catastrophes."
- Ishiraka Kikuu

Welcome to the Capitalism Memorial Museum.
A living memorial to the inestimable devastation and suffering produced by capitalism, the Capitalism Memorial Museum challenges the people of the world to confront exploitation, promote participatory democracy, and prevent the reemergence of class violence at all levels of society.

CMM-LA campus map

A	CMM-LA Memory Center
B	Historical Development Pavilion
B2	Late Capitalism-era House
C	The Tolls
D	Survivors Research Center
E	The Struggles Library and Archives
F	The Great Transfer
G	Environmental Restoration Institute
H	Defense of All Peoples Institute

All CMM-LA campus buildings are interconnected via underground walkways, accessible at all levels below ground level.
Restrooms are located at the west end of every floor in every building.



2034: The Museum of Fucking, Los Angeles

If the Capitalism Memorial Museum was one of the most inspiring places we visited on our journeys, the Museum of Fucking, Los Angeles (MoFLA) was probably the most not-inspiring. (And we are not just saying this because cats aren't endlessly fascinated with human sexual reproduction... mieh...) Basically we just thought that aside from MoFLA's pushing museum-bling to impressive new extremes, in the end the museum was actually kind of boring because in lots of ways it was basically just doing the same (albeit, more exaggerated) stuff that we've been watching some of the more well-known now-museums do for quite a few years:

- eye-popping admission fees
- oversize gift shop
- museum spaces available for event rental
- corporate 'partnerships', sponsorships, and tie-ins for everything
- costly, market-driven advertisement campaigns
- iconic-generic building designed by celebrity architect
- over-abundance of safe, predictable programming capitalizing on pre-existing popular desires
- extra charges required to visit 'blockbuster' exhibitions
- vague, depoliticized commitment to 'education'
- "edutainment" strategy oddly unentertaining & often not even particularly educational
- zero interest in publicly examining the ideological orientation of the institution
- zero interest in cultivating visitor reflexivity regarding the museum's narratological and pedagogical methods
- zero attempts by administrators or exhibit designers to self-implicate the museum's own complicated relationships to power and capital
- too many dinosaurs and giant insects (what are they doing in a sex museum?!)
- the list goes on...

We wandered around the massive gift shop for quite a while, looking for a 'representative something' to bring back to the present. As one would expect it was insanely crowded and seemed to be making lots of money. It was interesting to see future pornography next to *Made in Heaven* stuff next to miniature reproduction *Étant donnés*, all for sale of course. In the end Bunny just ended up 'collecting' an XLarge MoFLA t-shirt - obviously it's too big for any of us to wear but perhaps we can use it

later as a blanket.

Misc. Notes: This place hurt our ears! Annoying 'interactive' audio-visual media (mixed with LOTS of advertisements) was everywhere - even in the washrooms. Stupid expensive cafeteria with "fun" human genital-shaped pasta (*barf*). Kim: "This is the Met on Hustler-brand crack."



Souvenir T-Shirt. From the Museum of Fucking, Los Angeles. Collected by Bunny at the MoFLA gift shop, 2034, Los Angeles.

2098: National Museum of The Sacred

While the Museum of Fucking may have been uninspiring, our visit to the National Museum of The Sacred was just confusing-depressing. Especially the depressing part. The museum itself is situated in a future-world in which, insofar as we could tell, there's no sacred anything. Granted, this was Los Angeles, but still, we were shocked. Of course there was the museum, presumably dedicated to "The Sacred" (whatever that means in such a context), but after being there for even just a few minutes it was clear that the so-called 'sacred' objects in the collection were more or less just dead-objects. They had no energy to speak of. All questions to people as to how things had come to be this way were met with slightly bewildered, vacant staring. Outside the museum, we saw people, jobs, apartments, trees, restaurants, schools, dogs, squirrels, parks - but nothing sacred. (I should mention that we also did not see any signs of deep culture or nature; we were even told that the 'snow' on the nearby San Gabriel mountains was painted on.) Anyway, seeing the world like that was just very sad.

Back to the museum: The National Museum of The Sacred is an institution that is apparently almost exclusively focused on the conservation of artifacts. The galleries were filled with a fairly unattractive collection of mismatched display cases, which in turn contained a seemingly random mix of 'old' religious and secular objects. There were no interpretive or even minimally informational labels to be seen anywhere, just objects. There were also quite a few chairs placed throughout the galleries, upon which visitors would quietly sit on for various stretches of time - some people would sit only for a few minutes while we observed others sitting for over an hour. The people we asked about the sitting gave a very limited range of bland replies: they like to be near the objects, they thought it's "good" to sit among the objects, etc.

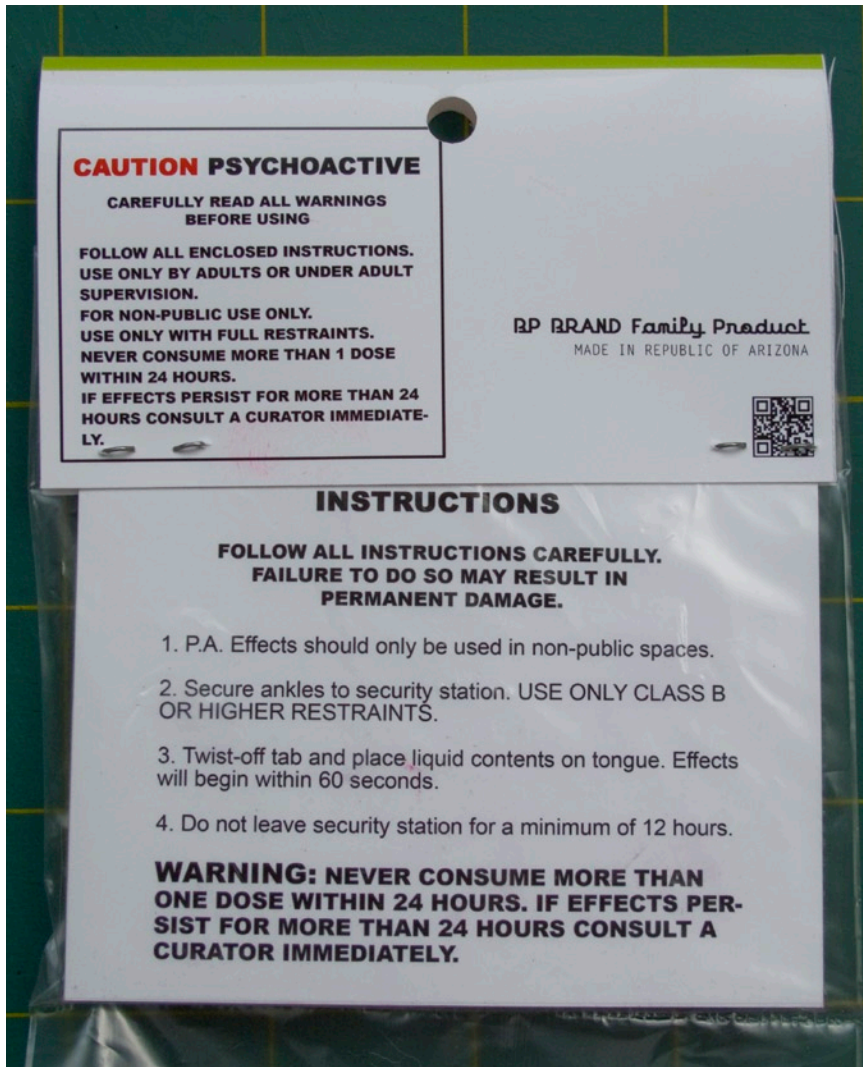
We left the museum feeling dejected and more than slightly confused, but not before visiting the very modest gift shop. The entire contents of the gift shop consisted of nothing more than a rack of postcards (ugly photos of boring artifacts), a bucket of umbrellas with the museum's ugly logo on it, and a small wire-rack labelled with a bizarre hand-written sign: "MUSEUM TOYS: THIS IS WHAT YOU WANT". So we helped ourselves to a few of the 'toys' (we have not yet figured out exactly how we are supposed to 'play' with them) and left.

Misc. Notes: Although we did see one unconverted church while we were there, by 2098 organized religion is no longer considered meaningful and we saw lots of churches that had been converted into schools or mini-shopping malls. Also, we looked for fruits at the supermarket but no one knew what we were talking about. And, 2098 had the worst coffee ever, almost undrinkable. Bunny: "Say good-bye, we're never coming back."



For children: *Playful Kitten* psychoactive toy (front). From the National Museum of The Sacred gift shop.

Next three pages: *Toys*. From the National Museum of The Sacred. Collected by Bunny at the NMTS gift shop, 2098, Los Angeles.



Playful Kitten psychoactive toy (back).



For the adults: *Loving Ancestors* psychoactive toy.

II. The Movement Towards Public Institutions



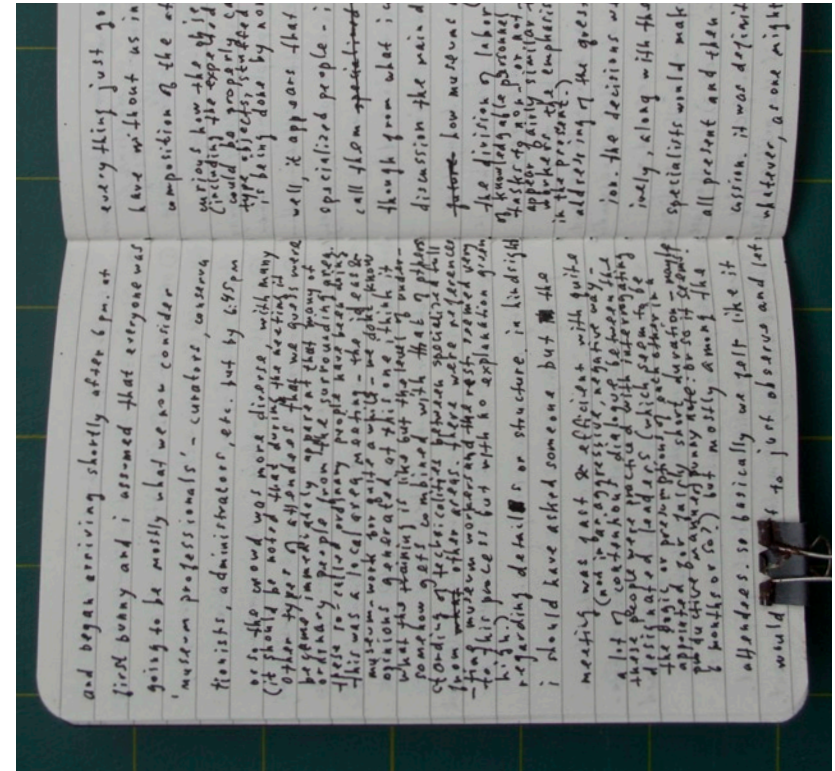
Street flyer announcing public meeting. Scan of photograph by Zoe Margarita Cat, near West Olympic Blvd. & South Rimpau Blvd., 2052, Los Angeles.

2052: Public Museums Must Belong to Everyone

We spent an evening in 2052 sitting in on a massive, contentious Institutional Foundations Areas Council (IFAC) meeting trying to understand the processes through which a new direction for elite-class institutions was carefully (painfully) being negotiated and charted. The main issues touched upon at this session:

- What are the fundamental responsibilities of educational institutions in an egalitarian society?
- How can elite institutional forms, largely the product of predatory practices such as capitalism & colonialism, be repurposed to benefit and serve the interests of all peoples?
- How to reconcile a fundamentally hierarchical and classist 200 year-old institutional structure-culture with the values and practices of participatory democracy?
- How to accomplish the complex task of reuniting contested 'artifacts' with their parent peoples?

One of the statements I'll always remember from that evening was spoken by an elder curator. She said the transitional process, in order to be respectful and avoid catastrophic consequences, should be expected to last at least three generations. We thought about this for a long time and decided that this kind of thinking makes a lot of sense.



Above: Time travel notebooks.

III. We find a book written by Kim in the library

A compelling book, but should it be written?

Imagine our surprise when we stumbled across a book authored by our very own Kim while browsing the Santa Monica Public Library in 2028. We literally stood there, stunned, staring at the cover for what must have been a good 60 seconds before Bunny finally picked it up and started flipping through it. We were all shocked - Kim included - because: 1) Kim has no plans to write a book; and 2) She generally spends about 50% of her day reading comic books and playing video games and the other 50% of her day napping.



Kim.

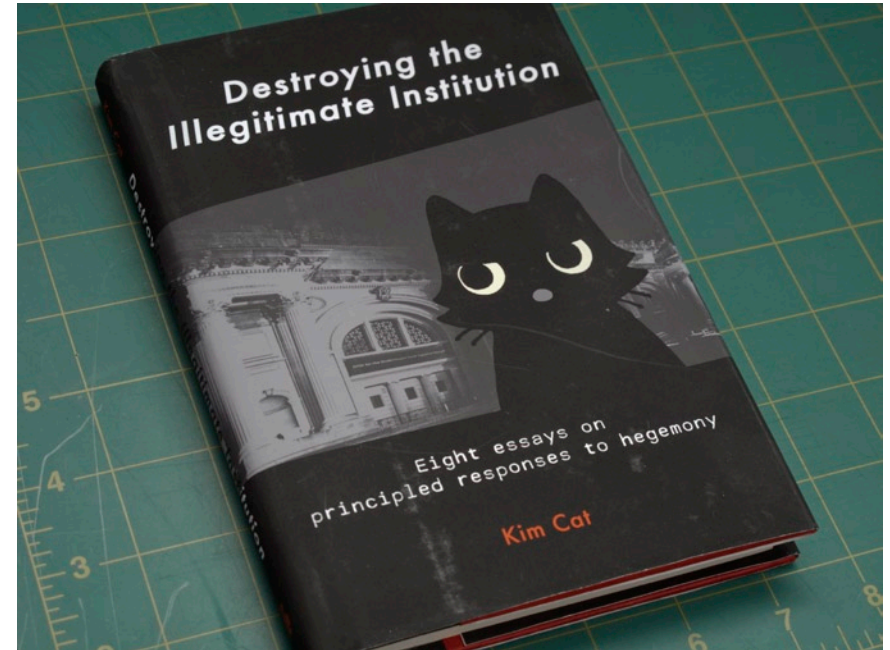
After some debate Bunny and I eventually decided to bring the book back to the present (not the library copy; we bought one at a bookstore) and read it. It turns out Kim is (will be?) a really excellent writer! Her book, *Destroying the Illegitimate Institution*, is a challenging, clearly articulated polemic, and it's easy to see why it enjoyed six editions by 2028.

According to the "About This Book" narrative on the back cover, *Destroying* began its influence soon after its first printing (2013), providing a theoretical framework which precipitated the formation of the Popular Revolutionary Services, a radical grassroots collective (of human beings) who between 2018 and 2026 carried out a series of occupations of several prominent cultural institutions in the U.S. and Europe. The foremost demand of the PRS was the transfer of public and private museum collections to New Society Trusts, an arrangement in which overlapping, trans-national, autonomous networks of community collectives would care for and administrate the holdings. As one might expect, these demands and actions produced deep divisions in the museum community as well as the public-at-large - political divisions which, as of 2028, remained unresolved.

All of the above is actually very difficult for us to imagine - Kim is not only a huge fan of museums (she's a member of LACE and the American Museum of Natural History in New York City), she's also well-known around here to be completely repelled by all forms of stress and conflict.

So far, Kim has yet to decide whether or not she wants to read her book - let alone write it. And if she does eventually decide to read and write it, it is also unclear whether or not she should just copy it word for word (the easiest book ever written, we like to joke), or re-write it in an attempt to avoid all or at least some of the violence and repression the movement encountered at the hands of both State and corporate entities to maintain ruling-class control of Culturally-Significant Property. The decision

is a terrible burden for a six-pound cat to bear but Bunny and I have total confidence in her.



Destroying the Illegitimate Institution: Eight essays on principled responses to hegemony. Kim Cat. Los Angeles: UoM Press, 2027 edition. Hardcover book, 146 pages.

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5/14 Update: Kim finally decided to read the book and is now re-working it.



IV. Same Year, Different Future

2052, again: “In three days it was nearly all gone...”

Have you ever unintentionally dialed a wrong telephone number using the “recent calls” feature on a telephone? Well, we did the time-traveling equivalent of that, accidentally visiting 2052 a second time when we actually wanted to visit 2076. This time, we visited the great-great-great-great grandniece of our present-friend, Teacup.

We asked Teacup6 why so many of our favorite museums had been dismantled in the Spring/Summer of 2046. Her reply: rapidly deteriorating economic and social conditions, coupled with long-simmering resentment over ruling-class institutions’ continued paternalistic attitude towards the citizenry-at-large. Several-months of large-scale uprisings across the U.S. were the result.

Teacup6: I was there when [Museum X] was dismantled. I say dismantled and not destroyed because it was taken down for a good reason. Everyone was angry and desperate, but in an odd way it was fair...There’s a part of me that’s sad that the collection was dispersed. The councils broke apart the collections; sent it to wherever they thought it should go. In three days it was nearly all gone. Can you imagine? But that’s what the people thought they had to do to break free from the old ways of thinking - the thinking that had gotten us to this destructive, hurtful point in history. You have to understand that the suffering is immense, and this is a response to that. It doesn’t make sense to try to radically transform society but still retain all the old objects of worship. But that’s the privilege the museums had tried to keep for themselves, so... they had to go...The buildings themselves, they were ground up and made into roads. Except for this little piece - I saved this one because actually I loved that museum so much.

“Museum creation is not a natural species response like hunting for food, building shelter, nurturing the young. It is an add-on made possible by the presence of social and economic surplus.”

- Neil Harris, p. 133, from *Cultural Excursions: Marketing Appetites and Cultural Tastes in Modern America* (1987).



“Museum X” fragment. Collected by Teacup6 Cat, May 8, 2046, New York City.

V. 2028-2098: Voices from the Future

Since we've managed to wear out our time-travel machine in just over a month of use, it appears that we are done with time-travel for the time being. Maybe in the near future we will sit down and try to create a more detailed summary of every important thing we saw on our trips, but until then, we will leave you with a few words from some of the future museum-cats we met. I hope you find their comments useful - they were spoken for your consideration, a gift from cats we will never meet again. ~ p.c.

Question: If there was one thought or piece of advice that you'd like us to take back to the early 21st Century and communicate to museum-people, what would it be?



Margarita: *You don't have to be in a position of power in order to do good in this world. But you must be fearless...What does a fearless museum-worker look like?*



Alex: *We here in the future are struggling to create a dignified existence in the world that you've left us. It's very difficult, because of the cumulative effects of your selfish, careless actions. The challenges we face are immense beyond belief. If you have any love for us, your descendants, you must alter or reverse your course immediately. We are dying. And what I want to say to all the museum people is that all your educational programs multiplied by a thousand will do very little for us. Stop for a moment and ask yourself - is it absolutely true that the most profound thing that you can do to radically change the structure of your world is to make wonderful educational programs and exhibitions for visitors to look at? Is this the most essential kind of work to be done, or are you just doing it because you cannot think of something better to do with your museum-resources, your museum-culture? I think you would fight harder for our survival if you were somehow able to come face-to-face with the suffering in our world. The irony is that our world is not new - our situation is already present in your time, only out of your field of view. But I am telling you that what seems so far away for you now will be the fate of your children and your children's children. Please keep this in mind as you go to work every day under the banner of educating the public.*



Andrej: *Greetings to you, museum worker! I have only one piece of advice, and that is to allow yourself to live your most positive, foundational values. We all know that the most wonderful things in life is to experience kindness, love, generosity, selflessness. In the not-too-distant future you will see that there is little room for the professional-minded individual! The days of capitalism culture are numbered and you don't have to wait for the total system failure to start nice relationships in your museum, which is actually only a big community, right? Use your imagination and create something new, or maybe even something old! When we create the kind of relationships that we really desire, then our museums will have honest power, and everyone will love to come to our museums. That is real support! Much love from the future!*



Ed: *Well to be honest I don't know too much about the history of museums, but I'm sure museums back then are experiencing all kinds of challenges and stresses, just as we have now. As far as I know there never has been and never will be an ideal museum for any particular historical moment. It's always a struggle, probably nothing new about that. The important thing is to choose which side you're on and do absolutely every last bit of your work from there, maintaining that perspective no matter what. And when I say to 'choose a side', I'm saying there's so-called winners and so-called losers in any society. That's class struggle, am I right? And a long time ago I decided that I'm always going to fight alongside all the losers. Now I'm happy to say that I work at a museum where everybody who works here, at the very least we all agree on this one thing, and that's how we get things done. We're not all fighting each other over which direction to go. We get criticized all the time as being biased or whatnot, but there's absolutely nothing wrong with a museum trying to do everything it can 100% of the time for those who are struggling the most. The winners are already doing okay; it's everybody else that needs more attention. Of course I'm oversimplifying but it's dishonest for museums to operate under the guise of fairness. The fairness narrative is a cover for maintaining the status quo, that's all. Museums are here to lift society up. So I guess that's my advice: don't be confused and don't water down your efforts.*

(Continued on next page)



Isidora: I don't have any good advice, but I have a good, short story to tell. Once upon a time there was a society that had forgotten the meaning of sacred. But there were museums with lots of old objects in their collections, so people could go there and point and say, "That's a sacred object." Everybody thought everything was fine until one day, all the rivers and rocks couldn't take it any more so they all flew up into the sky and dropped down on the museums, smashing through the ceilings so that the sacred objects could escape. And they all did. Every single last one of them. The end.



Teacup6: Think of how simple an idea that was, the Universal Access Pass. How nice that anybody can go to any museum in the world, for free. That's a good idea - learning should be free! But of course nothing is free - in order to achieve that very simple idea, we had to stop something negative in order to pay for something positive. And so museum people worldwide became political and were a key part of the movement that fought to dismantle the military industrial complex, so that we could all have 'free' learning, at museums and at other places. Do you think that's a good lesson?



My ISA Universal Access Pass.

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www.PinkyShow.org

videos, art, comics, zines, etc.

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