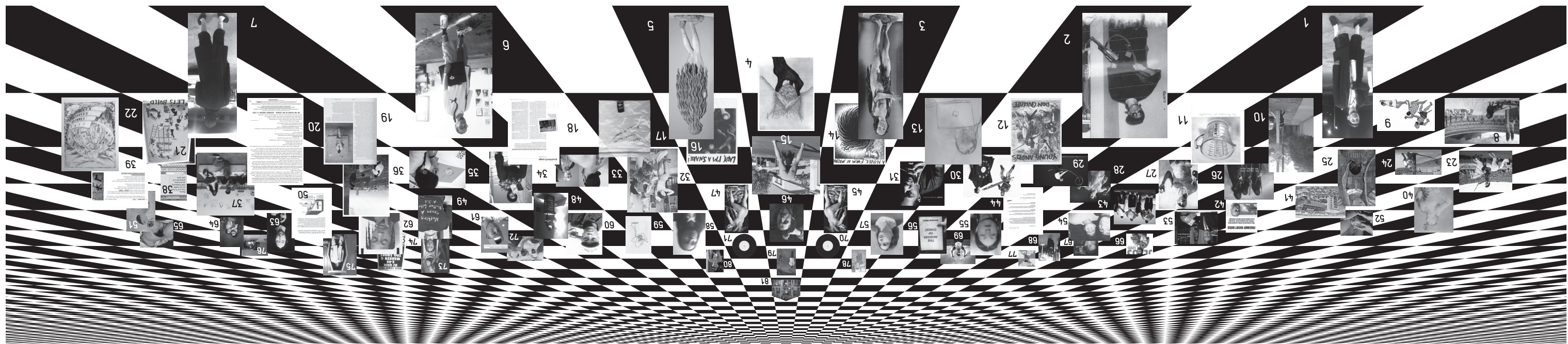


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The iconic portraits of Tupac, Ice Cube, Dr. Dre, and Biggie, as well as portraits of me and my son, were all taken by the artist Shawn Martensen, a friend since high school, who tragically took his own life with a gun in 2009. I'm continually moved by his fearlessness and his romantic idealism embodied in the work. A collection of his photographs, *Shawn Martensen: Out of Mind*, was published by Abrams Image in 2007 with a foreword by Glenn O'Brien and an afterword by Richard Prince. My copy bears this inscription: 'For Frances & Arla! Oh My Beanie! We've been friends for 23 years of full on LIFE! Let's look forward to 50 wonderful years!'

A note on the music: DJ Quik is a legendary west coast artist out of Compton, California whose music career took off in 1991. The two songs sampled here are: Catch-22, from his 2005 album Trauma, and Fire and Brimstone, from his 2011 album The Book of David. Twice onstage in the last year I've seen him announce that he's retiring at the end of the year. Enormous fan that I am, I hope he changes his mind about that, yet at the same time I eagerly await the results of whatever transformation he may have underway. It doesn't seem possible to stop being an artist.

All quotes attributed to Father G are taken from Father Gregory Bayle's book, Tattoos on the Heart: The Power of Boundless Compassion, published by Free Press, a division of Simon & Schuster. Bayle, a Jesuit, is the founder of Hamebay Industries—an organization that serves high-risk, formerly gang-involved men and women with a continuum of free services and programs, and operates seven social enterprises that serve as job-training sites. He is affectionately—and ironically—referred to as Father G ('G' being slang for 'Gangster').

Jonathan Hurtada, 18, described by police as Latino and by medical examiners as black, was shot in a park at 127 South Pecan St. in Bayle Heights, and died at 7:29 p.m. March 2, 2007. Hurtada's attacker, another Latino youth who walked or bicycled up to him, said, 'Hey, hamie, what's up?' then shot him four times. Jonathan, aka J Gutta was the best friend of Bobby, aka G Business.

Bobby Jesus's Alma Mater b/w Reading The Book of David and/or Paying Attention is Free, Frances Stark, 2013.

Designed by Frances Stark and Chris Svensson with the assistance of Andrew La Costa and Sydney Schrader, and the generous encouragement of Daniel Bauman and the Carnegie Museum of Art.

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Twenty years of this work has taught me that God has greater comfort with inverting categories than I do. What is success and what is failure? What is good and what is bad? Setback or progress? Great stock these days [...] is placed in evidence-based outcomes. People, funders in particular, want to know if what you do ‘works.’ Are you, in the end, successful? Naturally, I find myself heartened by Mother Teresa’s take: ‘We are not called to be successful but faithful.’ This distinction is helpful. [...] Salivating for success keeps you from being faithful, keeps you from truly seeing whoever’s sitting in front of you.

Father G.

AWW LOOK
AT WHAT
YOU MUTHA-
FUCKAS DONE
WENT AND DID,
Y'ALL DONE
PISSSED ME OFF

The real source of trouble is the bourgeois claim to be the 'Party of Order' in modern politics and culture. The immense amounts of money and energy put into building, and the self-consciously monumental character of so much of this building, testify to the sincerity and seriousness of this claim. And yet, the truth of the matter, as Marx sees, is that everything that bourgeois society builds, is built to be torn down. 'All that is solid'—from the clothes on our backs to the looms and mills that weave them, to the men and women who work the machines, to the houses and neighborhoods the workers live in, to the firms and corporations that exploit the workers, to the towns and cities and whole regions and even nations that embrace them all—all these are made to be broken tomorrow, smashed or shredded or pulverized or dissolved, so they can be recycled or replaced

next week, and the whole process can go on again and again, hopefully forever, in ever more profitable forms.

Marshall Berman, All That is Solid Melts Into Air (1982)

ncapable of enjoying the moment, the male needs something to look forward to, and money provides him with an eternal, never-ending goal: Just think what you could do with 80 trillion dollars—Invest it! And in three years time you'd have 300 trillion dollars!!!

Valerie Solanas,
The SCUM Manifesto

Perhaps if we can break Jesus out of religion, free him from creeds, doctrines and dogmas, we can once again hear his invitation to enter the God experience known in the fullness of life. That is the Jesus I seek. He neither was nor is a miracle worker. He did not walk on water, heal the sick, or raise the dead. Rather, in his radical humanity, he lived out the meaning of God and caused those who glimpsed his life or felt his power to exclaim, 'God was in Christ,' and thus God, the gospel writers assert, can also be in you and in me.

John Shelby Spong, Jesus for the Non-Religious

In Africa they say 'a person becomes a person through other people.' There can be no doubt that the homies have returned

me to myself. I've learned, with their patient guidance, to worship Christ as He lives in them.

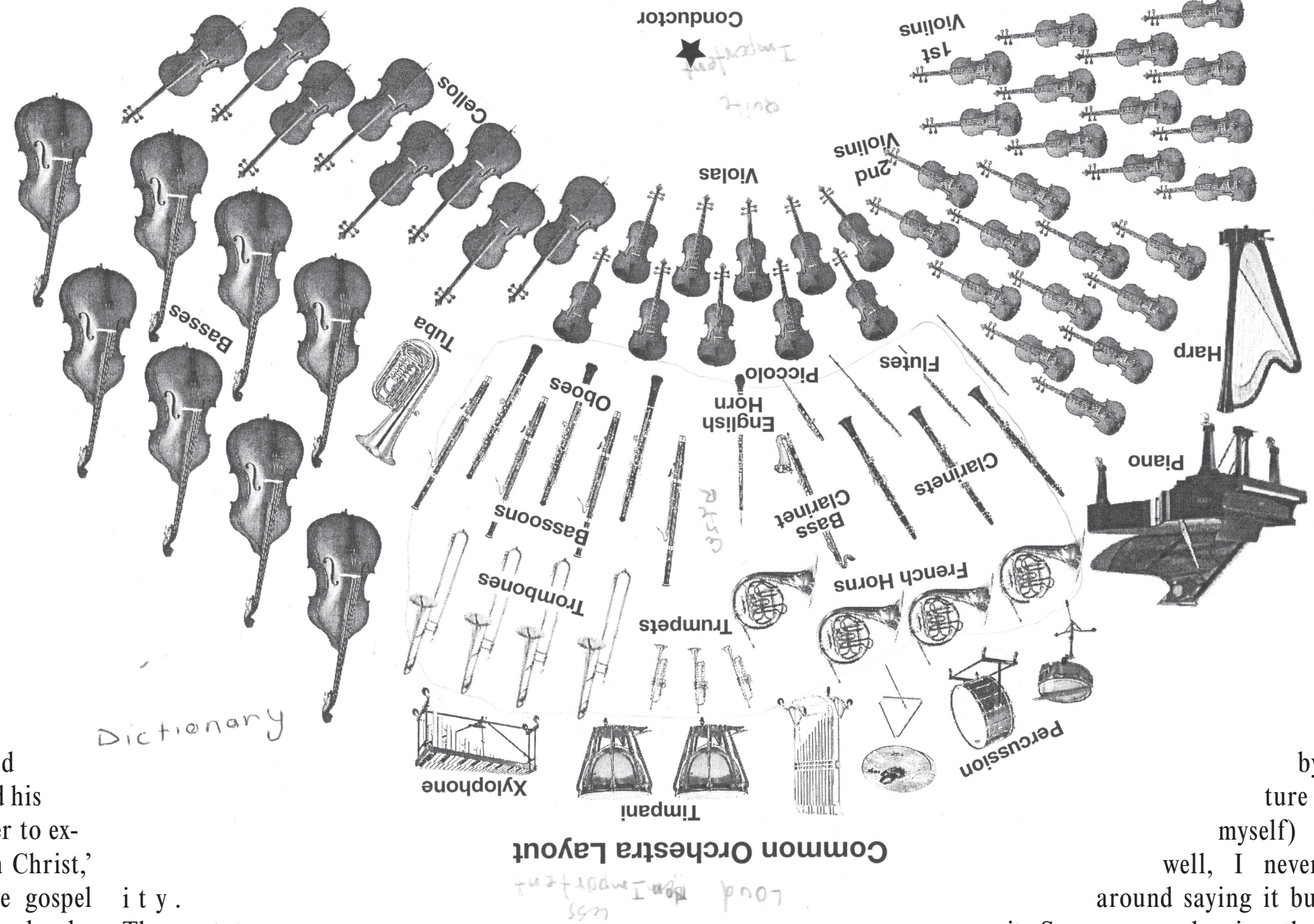
Father G

The tyranny of success often can't be bothered with complex-

'The pregnant heart is driven to hopes that are the wrong size for this world.' The strategy and stance of Jesus was consistent in that it was always out of step

Some company recently was interested in buying my 'aura.' They didn't want my product. They kept saying, 'we want your aura.' I never figured out what they wanted. But they were willing to pay a lot

a useful understanding of the misogyny that I had been joyously and shamelessly consuming. My son was consuming it alongside me and consequently I was continually struggling to answer precisely why I allowed so many appropriateness boundaries to be crossed. The recurring rationale was that my son was fundamentally an a s s



the
by na-
ture (like
myself) and,
well, I never went
around saying it but there
was no denying that I be-
lieved on some level that an
aesthete (and/or potential
artist) is some kind of su-
pra-moral being... in the
beyond good and evil sense,
exempt, somehow, from so-
ciety's definition of failure.
This was my faith.

Mother F

it. So then I thought that if somebody was willing to pay that much for my it, I should try to figure out what it is.

with the world. Jesus defied all the categories upon which the world insisted: good-evil, success-failure, pure-impure. Surely, He was an equal-opportunity 'piss-er-off-er' in this regard.

Father G

ity. The tote board matters little when held up alongside [R.I.P.]’s intricate, tragic struggle to figure out who he was in the world... Success and failure ultimately have little to do with living the gospel. [...] The American poet Jack Gilbert writes,

