



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 Mortensen, 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 Mortensen: Out of Mind, was published by Abrams Image in 2007 with a foreword by Glenn O'Brien and an afterward by Richard Prince. My copy bears this inscription: 'For Frances & Arlo! 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 returning at the end of the year.

Emarous 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.

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

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Paying Attention Is Free

Ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls, pimps, players and women of the night, welcome to the world of Rhythm-al-ism! Now since this is my intro, I'mma do some-
thin' a little crazy.

Check it out...
We gon' show off a little bit.

Now watch it, cause t h e s e ain't no s t u d i o tricks...
DJ Quik

The pregnant heart is driven to pay that much for my it, I

literally speaking, an 'aesthe' is defined simply as 'one who perceives'. Perception and its resulting understanding, or meaning-making, is the most basic, immediate

and FREE activity everybody has the capacity to derive joy from. I'm

t a l k i n g a b o u t aesthet-ic ex-peri-ence, n o t c o n-sump-tion o r get-ting a fix f r o m the type of enter-tainment that tends to want to do the per-ceiving for you ahead of time.

Mother F

side 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 aesthe by nature (like myself) and, well, I never went around saying it but there was no denying that I believed on some level that an aesthe (and/or potential artist) is some kind of supra-mortal being... in the beyond good and evil sense, exempt, somehow, from society's definition of failure. This was my faith.

Mother F

T wenty 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?

I'M A HOLY WHORE, PLAYERS, HEAR ME OUT

'The pregnant heart is driven to pay that much for my it, I'

a lot for it. So then I thought that if somebody was willing to pay that much for my it, I

Salivating for success keeps you from being faithful, keeps you from truly seeing whoever's sitting in front of you.

Father G.

f our primary goal is results, we will choose only to work with those who give us good ones... You stand with the belligerent, the surly, and the badly behaved, until bad behavior is recognized for the language it is: the vocabulary of the deeply wounded and of those whose burdens are more than they can bear. [...] Jesus jostled irreparably with the purity code of the shot callers of His day. He recognized that it was precisely this code that kept folks from kinship. Maybe success has become the new purity code. And Jesus shows us that the desire for purity (nine times out of ten) is, in fact, the enemy of the gospel.

Father G

hopes that are the wrong size for this world.'

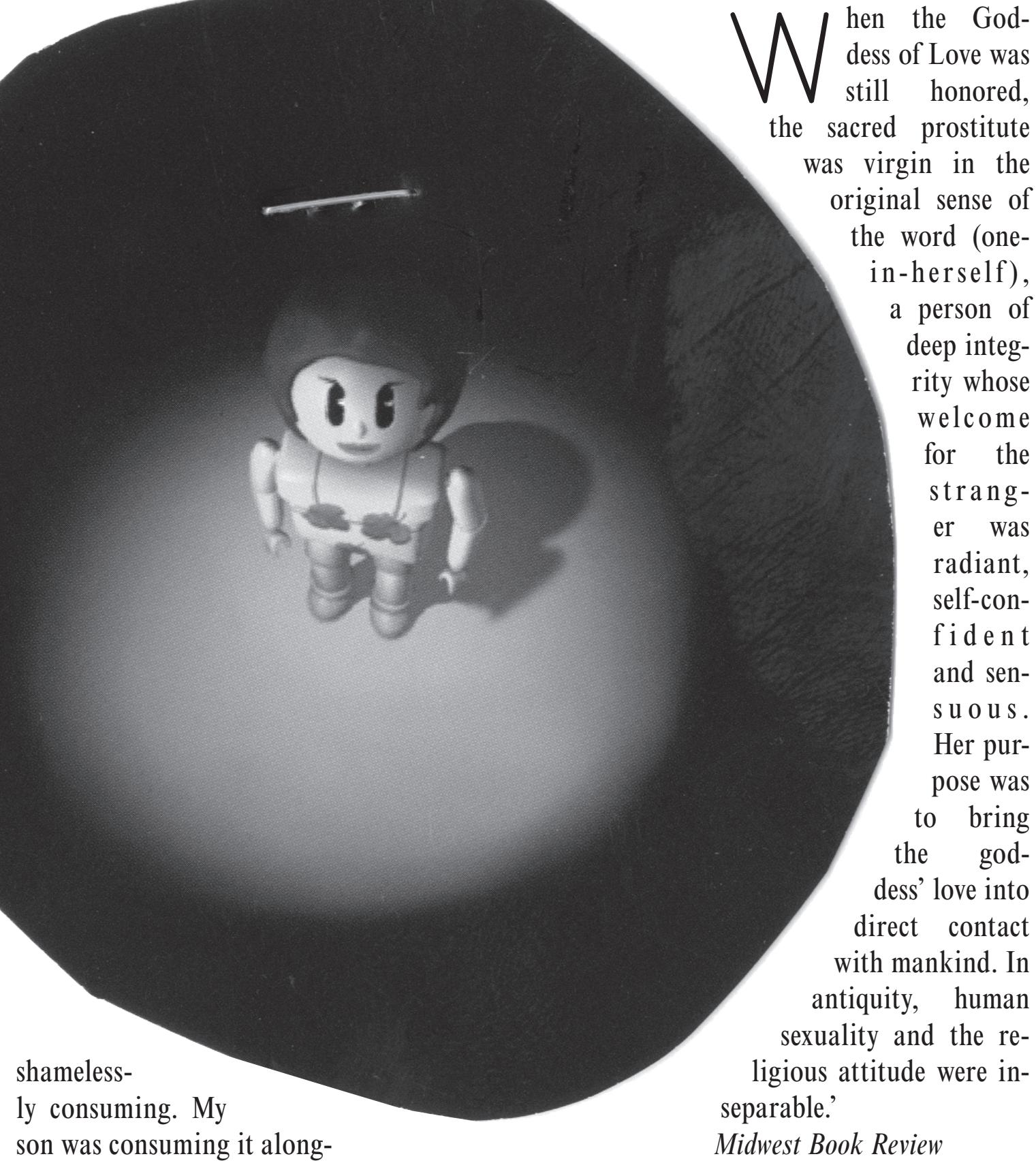
Valerie Solanas, The SCUM Manifesto

should try to figure out what it is.

Andy Warhol

P erhaps 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



W hen the Goddess of Love was still honored, the sacred prostitute was virgin in the original sense of the word (one-in-herself), a person of deep integrity whose welcome for the stranger was radiant, self-confident and sensuous. Her purpose was to bring the goddess' love into direct contact with mankind. In antiquity, human sexuality and the religious attitude were inseparable.

Midwest Book Review



Frances Stark "Free Money", 2004 Courtesy Galerie Daniel Buchholz, Cologne