

Incubating Wino
Befriends
Friendly Human *Ball*

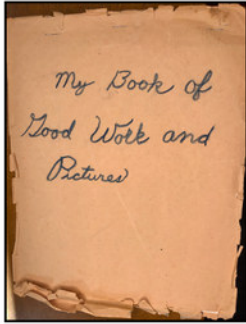
Bruce Anderson

selected works 1970-1977



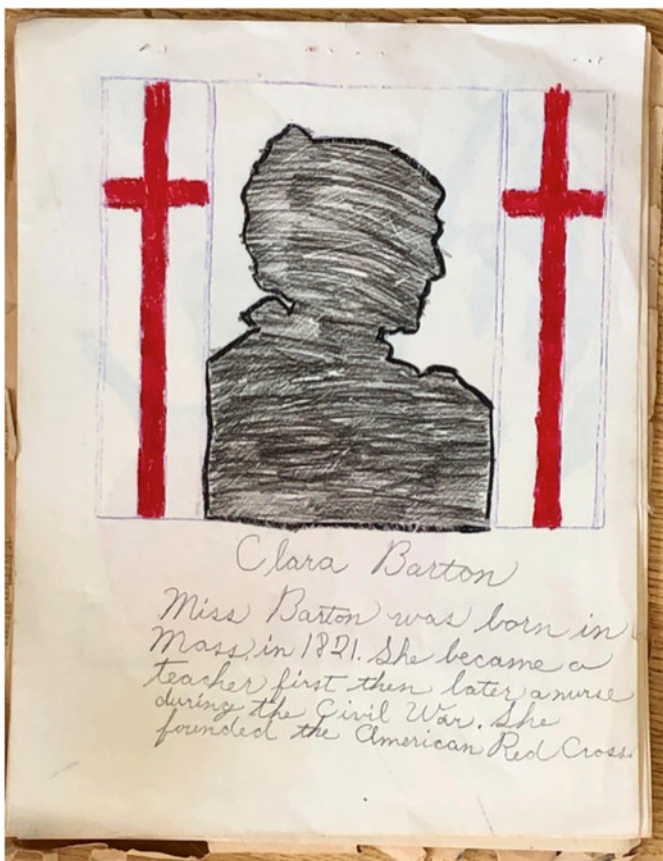
Bruce Anderson
1949 - 2022

While gathering material for this catalog, Meredith Clark, Bruce's wife, provided me with a sheaf of construction paper entitled *My Book of Good Work and Pictures*. It was a grade school project created by Bruce in Oolitic, Indiana and it included an image (right) with elements that later defined Bruce's style. The elongated red crosses that would evolve into tubes and chair legs, the repetitive shading and overlapping lines, the handwritten commentary ... it was all in *Clara Barton*.



Bruce went on to study fine art at Indiana University in Bloomington and it was there that he established himself as a one-of-a-kind guitarist with a devoted following. By 1975, Bruce's band, MX-80 SOUND, included drummer/painter Kevin Teare and bassist Dale Sophiea. (Kevin contributed an essay for this collection as did painter Elania Nanopoulos.) In 1976, I joined MX-80 and it was around this time that Bruce stopped creating drawings. I can only guess why he stopped. Bruce's monk-like devotion to the guitar was all-encompassing, and he needed to put all his mojo into his instrument, his compositional thinking, his strings, and his fingers. Bruce didn't "give up" artwork; he fed his visions into his guitar which is why sometimes, when listening to his music, I can see Bruce's subjects — Olion Step, Crayon Rollup, Darcy Hep, and even Clara Barton — lurking behind his guitar amp.

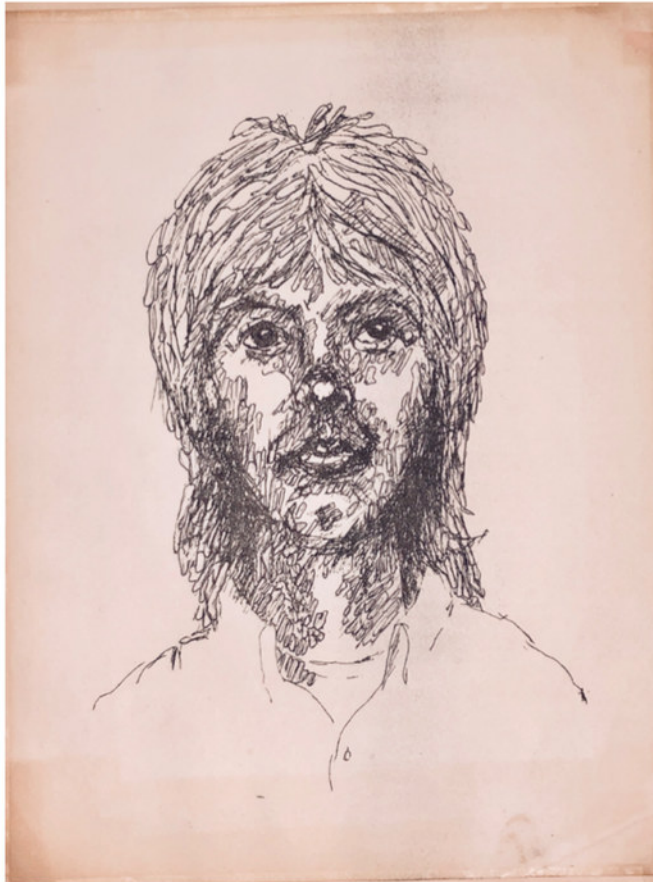
— Rich Stim



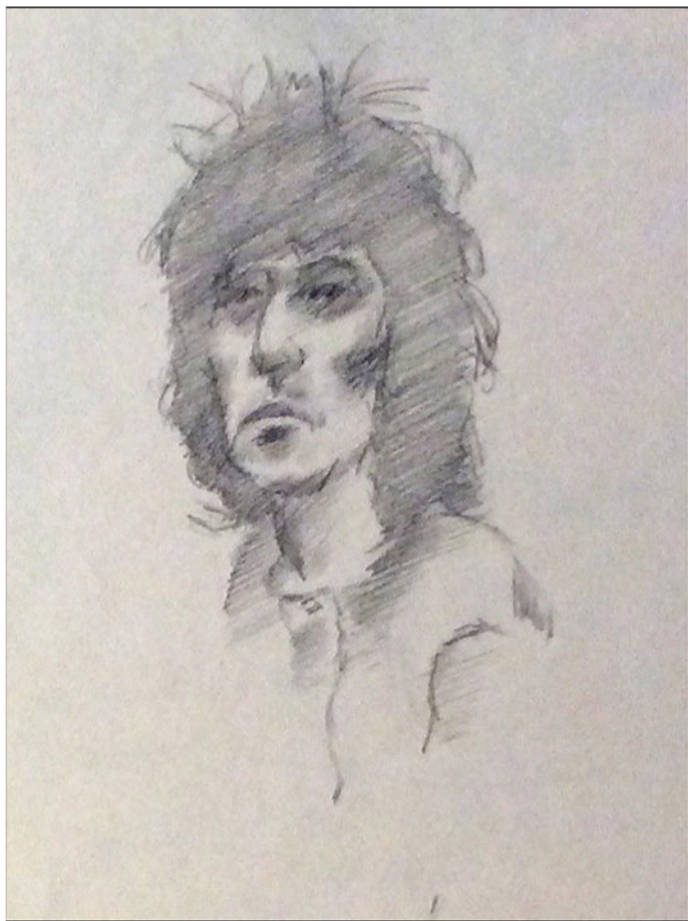
Clara Barton

Miss Barton was born in
Mass. in 1821. She became a
teacher first then later a nurse
during the Civil War. She
founded the American Red Cross.

Clara Barton
pencil, pen, and marker on paper
8.5 x 11



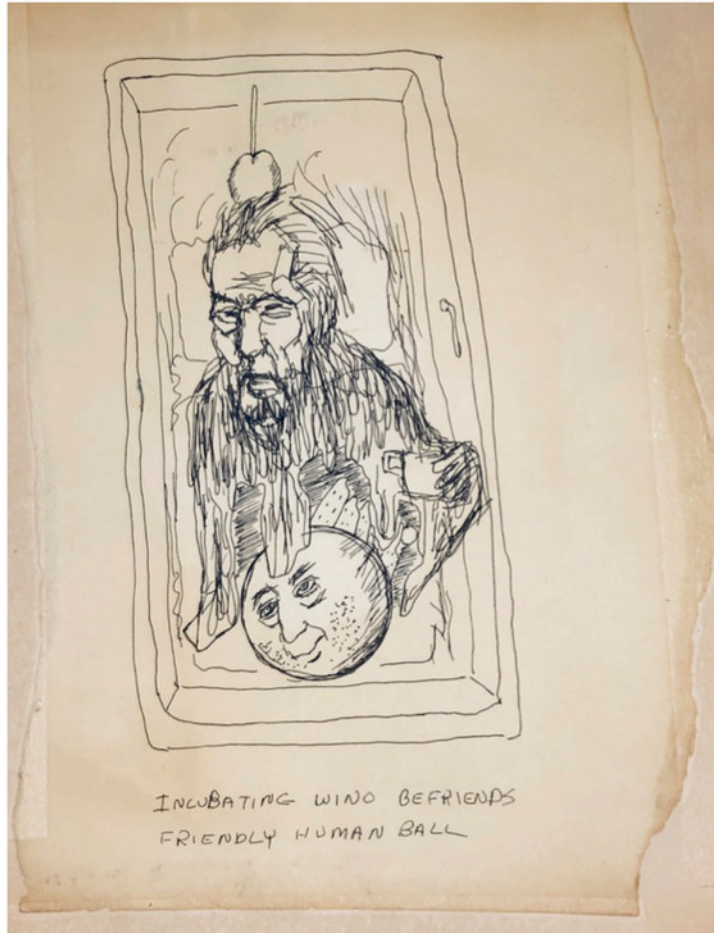
Self-Portrait
pen on paper
9 x 12



Untitled
pencil on paper
8 x 10



Michael (who lived in Bruce's closet)
pen on paper
8.5 x 11



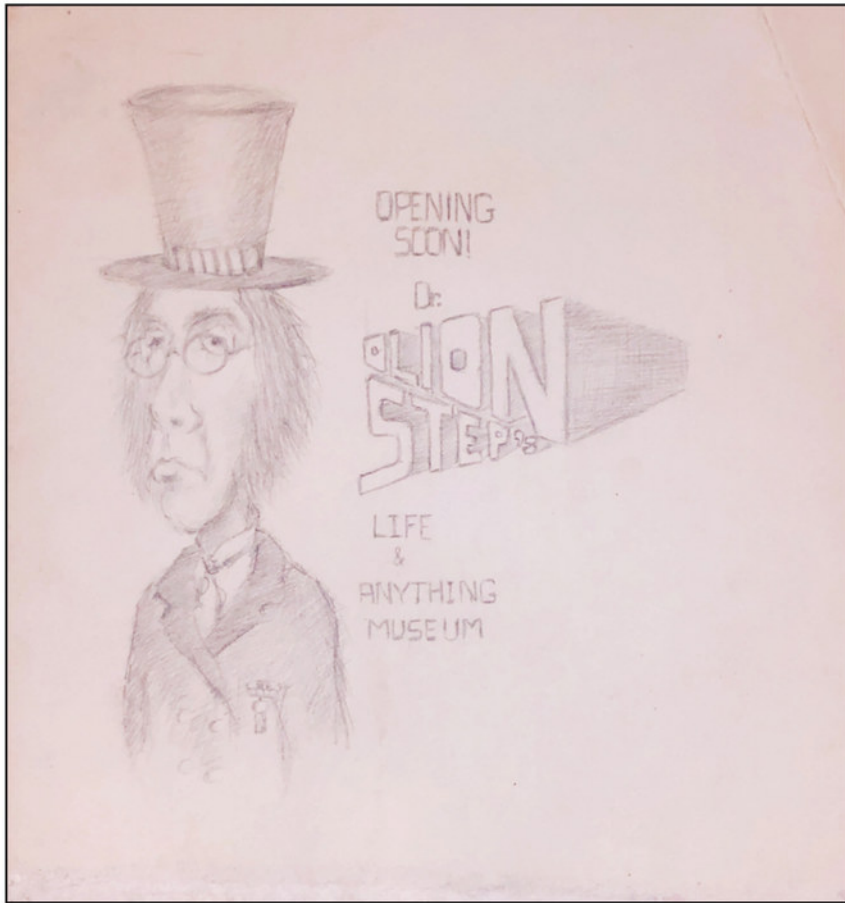
Incubating Wino Befriends Friendly Human Ball
pen on paper
8 x 10



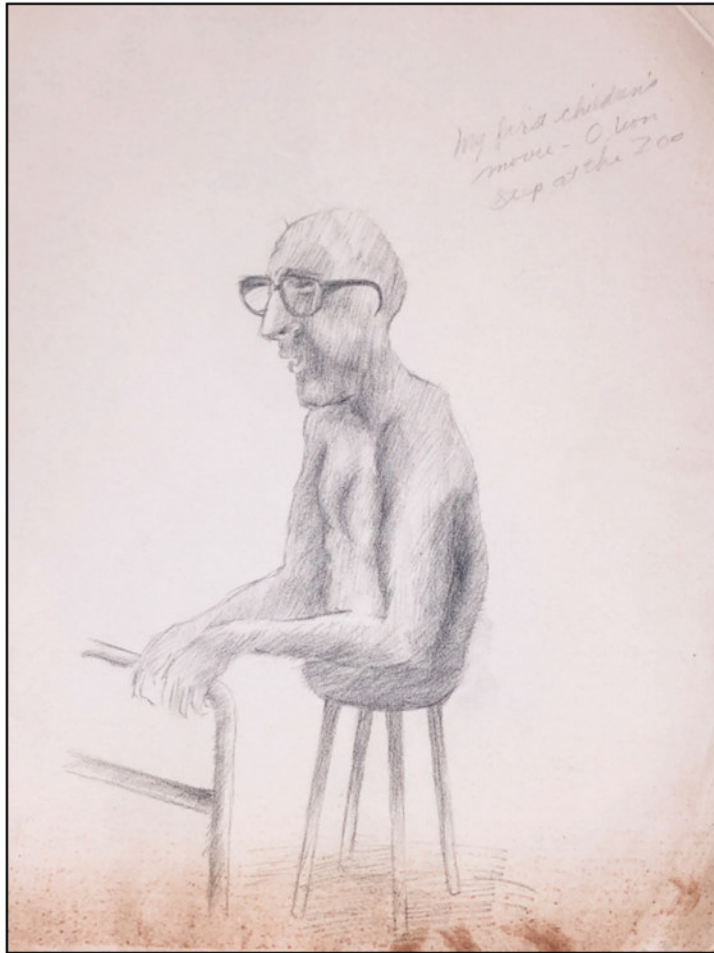
On the Bench
pen on paper
4 x 5



*Self Portrait of Myself Eating Lunch Inside
My Uncle's Vibrating Breathing Capsule*
pen on paper
7 x 8



Opening Soon! Dr. Olion Step Life & Anything Museum
pencil on paper
10 x 12



My First Children's Movie - Olion Step at the Zoo
pencil on paper
8.5 x 11



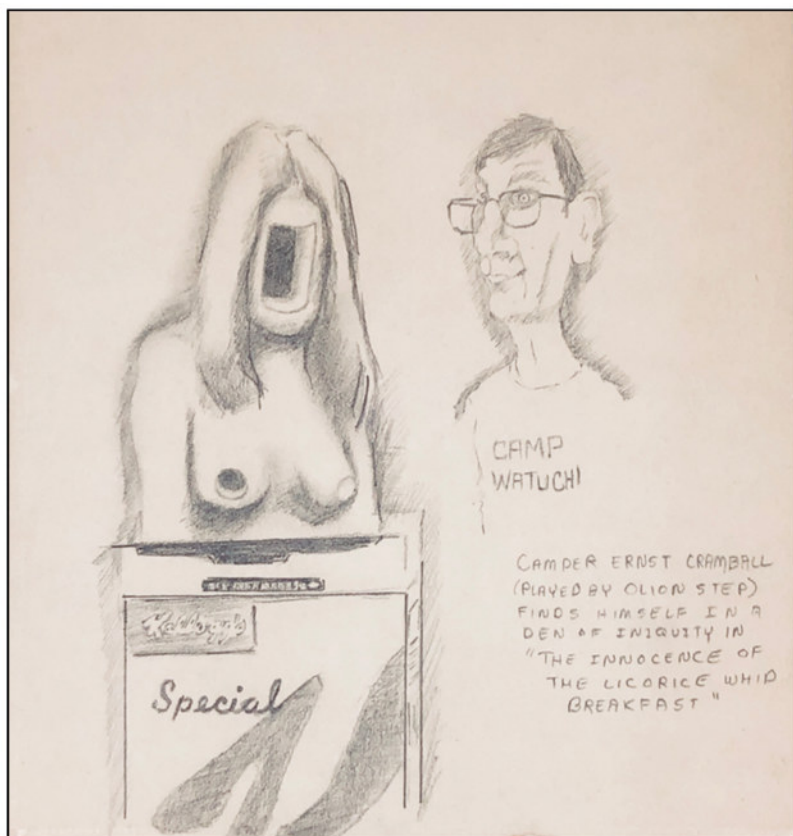
My First Major Film, Olion Step in Africa
pencil on paper
9 x 10



"Since my faithful scientists have cited me with flying apparatus, the damage I can perpetrate upon mankind is unlimited."

Olion Step portrays Von Shotputz, the Evil Flying Nazi Amputee in War! War! War! I Wish You Would Do Something for That Cough

pencil on paper
8 x 9



Camper Ernst Cramball (Played by Olion Step) Finds Himself in a Den of Iniquity in The Innocence of the Licorice Whip Breakfast

pencil on paper

7 x 8



Olion Step
ink on paper
7 x 11

Bruce Anderson: A True Outsider

By Elania Nanopoulos

I met Bruce while I was a student at Indiana University in Bloomington. He was part of the music, art, and politics crowd I had come to feel closest to at the 30,000-student campus. By the time I met him, Bruce was already a celebrity of sorts in the local alternative music scene.

And quite a scene it was! Hundreds of musicians, many part of IU's famous music school, were in bands vying to break music and social codes. It *was* fun, but some social codes were harder to break than others... all of the bands were male-dominated and the atmosphere was one of casual misogyny. I don't think I understood that quite so analytically back then, but intuitively, I understood enough to make me dismiss the whole scene as boys in bands wanting to get laid.

But not everyone was like that. Although Bruce played in many of these bands, he was never part of the pervasive rudeness and meanness. I saw him as a true outsider. I don't mean the hip, studied kind of outsider. I mean the grit your teeth in social situations kind. The kind I could relate to. What really impressed me about Bruce was that, despite this, he had mastered the art of sociability. His clever retorts, his genuine erudition and his gentle cynicism were awe-inspiring. I wanted to be just like that!

As I got to know Bruce, I realized that the way he *really* mastered his isolation was by creating whimsical, complex worlds in his head and sharing them. I never thought of his music as belonging to any particular category; rock, metal, art, whatever. Nor was it merely a formal or stylistic exploration. I thought of it as the narrative of those stories in his head. A narrative played by a guitarist who would create any sounds necessary to tell the story.

I find the same obsession with storytelling in Bruce's art as in his music. He created elaborate alter egos with wild back stories. The images alone could not contain those stories, so they often spilled out in words written beside the image yet somehow an inseparable part of it.

Bruce was talented. Had he chosen, he could have pursued art instead of music. Looking back, I find it touching and rather brave that he chose to pursue the less lonely and more social of the two.



Happy Birthday Elania (Doll House No. 2)
pen on paper
4 x 5



*Myself as the Evil Motorcycle Hoodlum, Hubcap, in
Motorcycle Lust*
pencil on paper
9 x 12



Myself Portraying The Family Maniac
pencil on paper
8.5 x 11



Untitled
pencil on paper
8.5 x 11



Tubular Wireless Stuffed Female Insert Over Cracked Misanthrope Tourniquet Toast With Purple Dolphin Overturning Naked Lunch Counter Standing in Embarrassing Repose While Watching Seven Ink Wells Ovulating at Various Velocities

pen on paper

9 x 10



Untitled
pen on paper
7 x 10



Untitled
pen on card stock
4.5 x 6



*Uncle Ed Watering the Lawn at Midnight Through His
Breathing Rubber Enclosure*

pencil on paper

8 x 10



Untitled
pencil on paper
6 x 8

PRIMO ARTS/*PRIMO TIMES*

circa 1975

MX80: Playing bad time is easier

By Bruce Anderson

My reasons for writing this expose are thus:

A. All my close friends and band members have gone to “summer camp” and there is nothing to do. A gap filled.

B. MX80 has evolved to such a highly personal state that performances beyond an occasional eruption at Monroe County Library are impossible. A vicarious performance.

C. Everybody seems to be writing these days and I think I can, on a good day, be as entertaining as a CIA investigation or where to get the best and cheapest brown rice.

The Beginning

MX80 started in mid-November rather conventionally. We learned songs that were composed of three distinct modules which were stapled together within close proximity of each other. These were the tunes.

I had already decided by pre-conceptualization that our strengths would be our weaknesses. Let me explain. Nobody in the group really plays well in a lineal setting. We’ve tried to play straight rhythm and it just doesn’t work. The times goes here and the time goes there.

So, I said, “We’ll play time, but we’ll concentrate on playing bad time or incongruous time.” Now everything is hunky dory. Playing bad time is much easier than playing good time because there is a lot more bad time than there is good. So much more to choose from. Just like K.Mart.

Also, you don't have to listen to what another person is playing because you don't have to come in on any specific beat. This is helpful because if someone is playing something you don't like you can blot him out and play by yourself when playing with other people anyway. From this rhythmic philosophy came our most famous motto: "Decision vs. Precision."

After we learned about ten tunes (hard work!) I decided to tune up differently to desensitize my ears. I have always had a problem with intonation which possibly stems from the fact that most electric guitars really don't tune up precisely which was the problem because I know exactly how a major chord sounded down to the nth degree and if I didn't get that major chord exactly then I would kick and scream and get very embarrassed when I would have to play a big block major chord and it would go "CLANKGOFF!

Oh, No! It's out of tune.

Then I remembered that when I first started playing I didn't have this problem because I hadn't played long enough to really know what a major chord sounded like exactly. So, I changed my tuning and my life is much fuller and happier now. If I'm out of tune I really can't tell that much. When I can tell too much about this tuning I'll change it again. The band has gone through three basic mutations. The first being a rhythmic mutation, the second a melodic mutation, and the third, a modular improvisational mutation. I will explain the third.

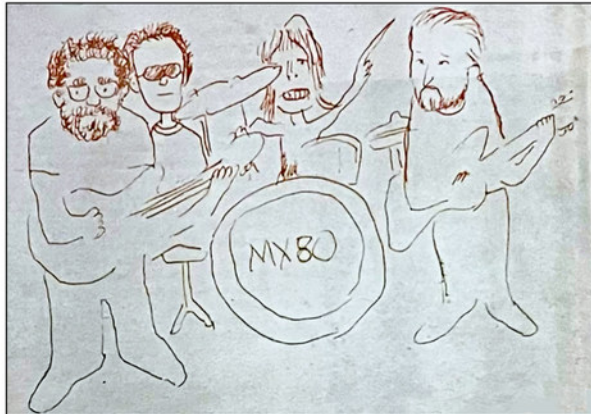
Now remember when I said that our tunes were made up of three distinct sections? This means that no logical transition or for that matter any kind of transition exists between any of the modules or sections. They're just sort of slapped together arbitrarily.

This made separation very easy. After learning several songs we started interchanging the modules and playing them against each other. This meant by establishing about a dozen songs we now know several hundred. Very resourceful.

For now we have a computerized modular system of creating. We're trying to play very spontaneously now but we still throw a module in when we're stuck or we enter vapor lock.

I've recently added Kevin Teare to the group and he plays high hat and cymbals. The idea behind this was to at-will split the drum kit in half so a greater rhythmic flotation was possible.

Well, that about covers it up till now, I hope we'll be playing soon so those that are interested can hear what we're up to. Nice writing at you.



Sketched Here By Their Most Ardent Fan, Famous Comedian Jack Carter, MX80 is Depicted Mesmerizing the Audience at the Sand's Hotel in Sunny Las Vegas, pen on paper size unknown

*Band portraits, published with Hard Attack
Island Records, 1977*



Bruce
pen on paper
6 x 8



Dale
pen on paper
6 x 8



Rich
pen on paper
6 x 8

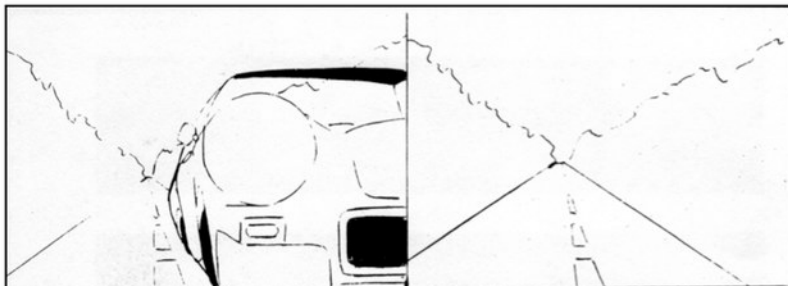


Jeff
pen on paper
6 x 8



Dave
pen on paper
6 x 8

Published in *MX-80 SOUND's Big Hits Songbook*
lyrics © Bruce Anderson 1976



Industry
In a time of need
Feed me your ashes
Simplify matters
Industry
Chunka-bonk Chunk chunk
Industry
Industry

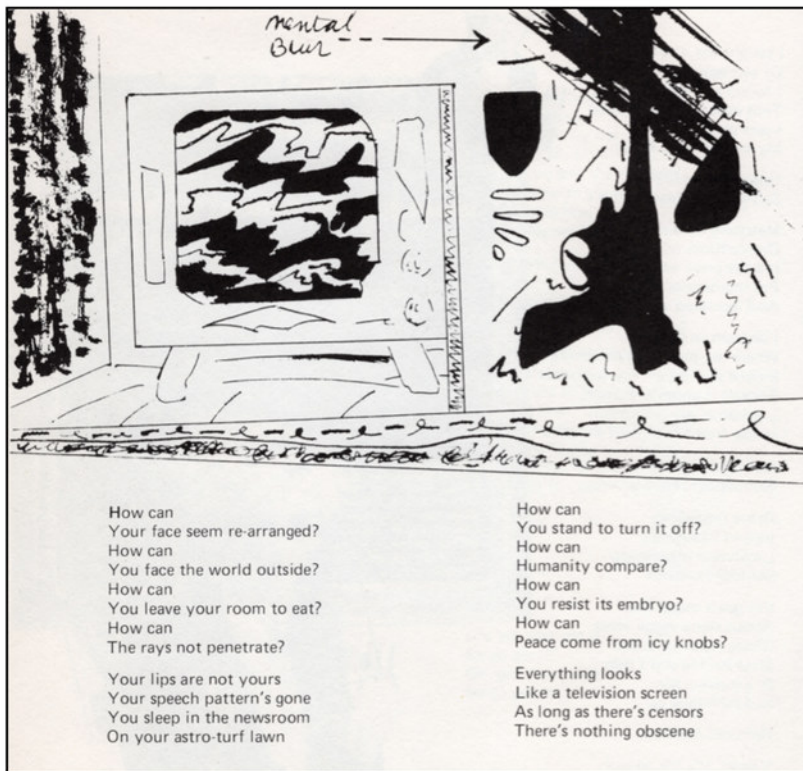
Industry
Finger pies action
Industry
Constant re-seizure
Industry
Starless glazed ceilings
Industry
Industry

Y'know sometimes I feel almost human
Then I have another generator dream

Industry
Clock-time subtraction
Industry
Efficiency glow-goat
Industry
In seas of precision
Industry
Industry
Industry

I wonder what she packed for lunch?
Wow, double-knit cheese-whiz sandwiches

Industry
pen on paper
8 x 8



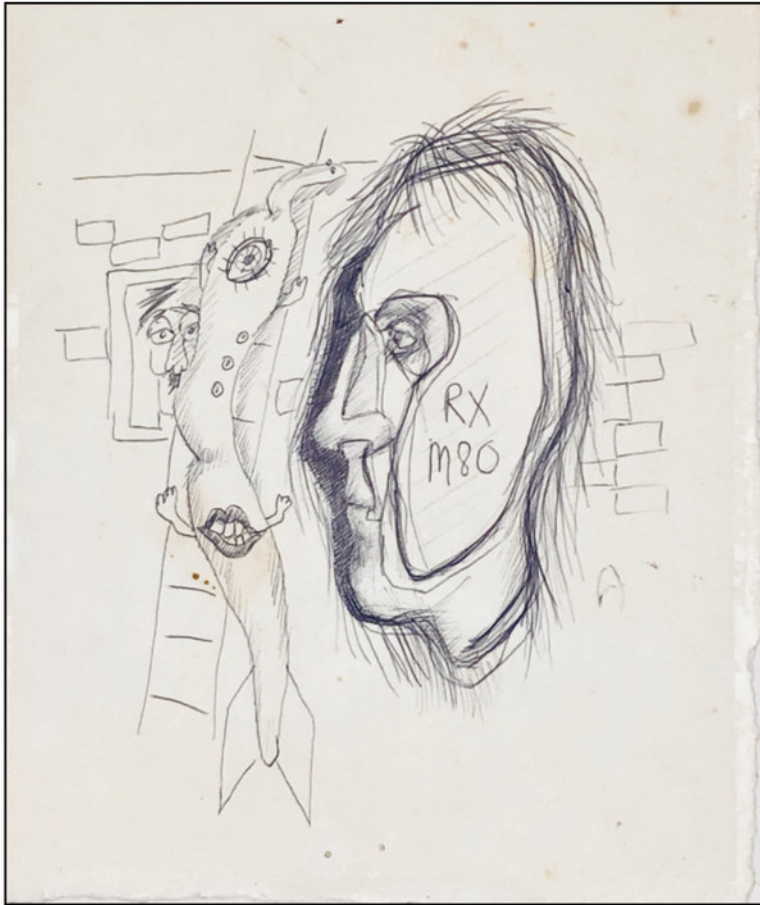
How Can
pen on paper
8 x 8



Poster
pen on paper
8 x 10



Bruce with Andrea Ross displaying glass slide innovation described in poster (left)



Untitled
pencil on paper
5.5 x 7



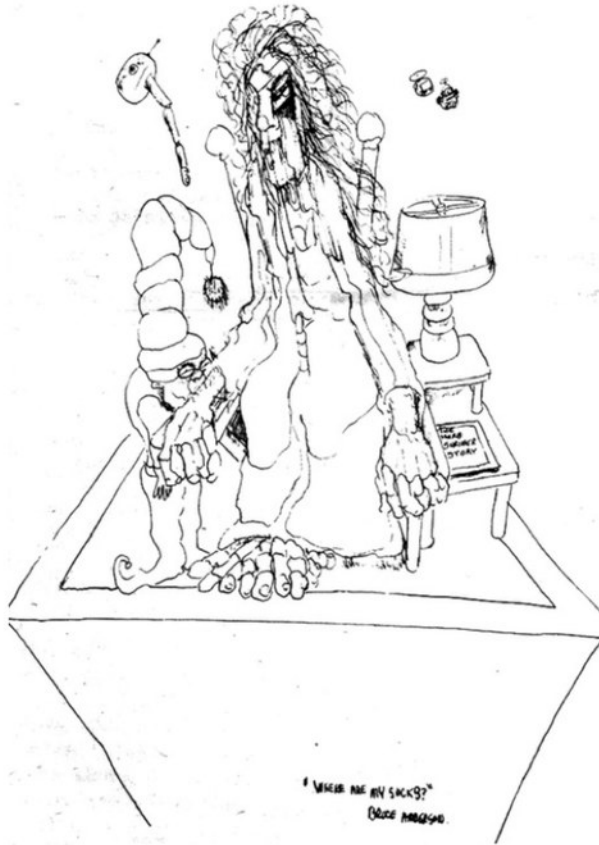
Poster
pen on paper/collage
11 x 14



*I Am Aware of Your Inability to Pay For An
Operation of Such Magnitude*
pen on paper
5 x 9



She Rates, Skates With Fate and Foot, Miss Andrea
pen and pencil on paper
6 x 11



Where Are My Socks? (Hubris Magazine)
pen on paper
size unknown

Bruce Anderson: Carp The Duck-Boy

By Kevin Teare

It's not clear to me at this juncture when I first knew about, let alone met and got to know Bruce Anderson.

I think one of the kids at Brown County High School might have mentioned that there was a really good band out at the Needmore Commune. The Screaming Gypsy Bandits was the band and are still the best kept musical secret of that time period.

I remember seeing Bruce with Mark Bingham and Caroline Peyton playing in a backyard somewhere in Brown County and again in the cafeteria of a dormitory at Indiana University.

Early on, Bruce reminded me of Bluesbreaker era Eric Clapton. The John Mayall album cover where Clapton's reading a comic book.

Not his playing style...just his style. The color and length of his hair and his physique. His guitar playing seemed masterful years before he'd mastered his instrument.

I figured out pretty early that he knew about visual art. He probably told me that he'd been a painting major before dropping out of college. He also had art books!

It was then I probably figured I needed some art books as well.

I bought a Fritz Scholder monotype and immediately rushed over to show Bruce. Bruce hadn't heard of him but said: "Why bother with Scholder, when you can look at Francis Bacon?" Scholder was a Native American artist who painted in the style of Bacon. Bruce showed me his Bacon book. I'd seen one of his paintings in high school art class...the one with part of a Pope and a side of beef. I hadn't started connecting the stylistic dots yet. Bruce also turned me on to David Hockney.

The other three books I remember seeing lying around his front room were: that fat City Lights book "Artaud Anthology," Kenneth Anger's "Hollywood Babylon," and "The Life & Death of Yukio Mishima" by Henry Scott Stokes. His front room was like a library with a bean bag chair. It was from that chair he'd practice scales while watching Mod Squad or Johnny Carson.

From Bruce I got that his being an artist wasn't something he was going to try until he figured out something else to do... He was self-taught and all in... there would be zero compromise and absolutely no turning back.

Bruce always seemed to be sketching, usually with ballpoint pen. His drawings skewed toward figurative mutations. Bruce was a natural portraitist. Also, he had a basketball he kept waxing. It was a curious object and a good decade or so before Jeff Koons. I think the practice of waxing the ball replaced actually practicing with it. He'd told me that he didn't want to jeopardize his guitar playing by accidentally jamming his fingers. When I left Indiana for New York in 1976, he gave me a painting titled "Escape."

It's a thirty-four inch square acrylic on canvas number, showing a Bull Terrier astral projecting out of a prison cell and



Andrea and Bruce with wax-dipped basketball.



Escape
acrylic on canvas
34 x 34

toward a Rothko-esque sunrise. Forty-six years later I still treasure it. A couple other events stand out that led to our friendship prior to him asking me to join MX-80 Sound in 1975 as its 2nd drummer.

The cultural center for Bloomington, Indiana from 1969-1976 was Discount Records. I think Discount had a store next to every large college campus. I believe Iggy Pop worked at the one in Ann Arbor, Michigan. At this branch, due mostly to the proximity of I.U.'s famed School of Music, you'd be just as likely to hear George Crumb's "Ancient Voices of Children" blasting out the door or The Art Ensemble of Chicago's "A Jackson In Your House" than you would be to encounter any pop radio fare.

At ours, MX-80's bassist Dale Sophiea was an employee as well as Andrea Ross and future Cottonmouth bandmate Patrick Callanan. The store was managed by an older (probably 40 at the time) debonair gentleman named George. George could be surly or friendly. Once I asked him if he'd heard the new Sons of Champlin record, to which he replied: "Why the Hell should I have?"

Because said I: "They do really great vocals." George said: "If I want really good vocals I'll listen to fuckin' Sinatra!" George set the tone there, top down. There was also a clerk who was a pianist from Chicago named Herbie. He had a caustic sense of humor and if you were checking out with an album he disapproved of, the criticism could be withering. On this day I was checking out with: "Message From the Country" by The Move.

I'd loved their previous outing "Looking On" and dug the way their drums exploded out of the speakers. Herbie was conversing with Bruce at the cash register...Herbie took the album looked it over and proclaimed: "How come all these British bands think they're The Beatles !?"

Bruce looked at him and said, "So what Herbie, all the American bands think they're fuckin' cowboys!"

If you were stuck up for by Bruce, you were stuck up for. Herbie rang me out.

The other time was when he stopped over on his way to his janitor gig at Sarkes Tarzian. It was 1973 and I played him Funhouse by The Stooges...really LOUD. Most of the folks I knew were listening to The Allman Brothers and The Dead... At that time Bruce was all about Pharaoh Sanders and Albert Ayler, so I didn't have a clue what he'd think. He couldn't stop laughing. For him it was hilarious ecstasy and he totally got it. In some ways we bonded over Funhouse.

Over the past three years from August 2019 to November 2021 I've recorded about fifty hours of conversation with Bruce covering every conceivable topic...not the least of which is art...specifically painting. He was a huge admirer of Cezanne. A great foundation in my estimation. If you love western modernism you'll probably start with Cezanne...or Matisse...or Picasso...or all three...WHY NOT!

We totally agreed about the genius of Joesph Beuys, Cy Twombly and Philip Guston. There was always epiphany with Bruce...and a lot of laughter. The combination of an incredibly dark sense of humor and a bright heart of gold was unbeatable. Bruce Anderson, still undefeated!



He's Happier Than Most - He's Got White Walls
pencil on paper
9 x 12



The Day Mahalia Jackson Died
pencil on paper
8.5 x 11



Untitled
pen on paper
8.5 x 11



Untitled
pen on paper
6.5 x 8

"Come my little one, and let me run my rubber blade over those huge brown saucers, making them as hard and erect as a stale pineapple bon-bon."



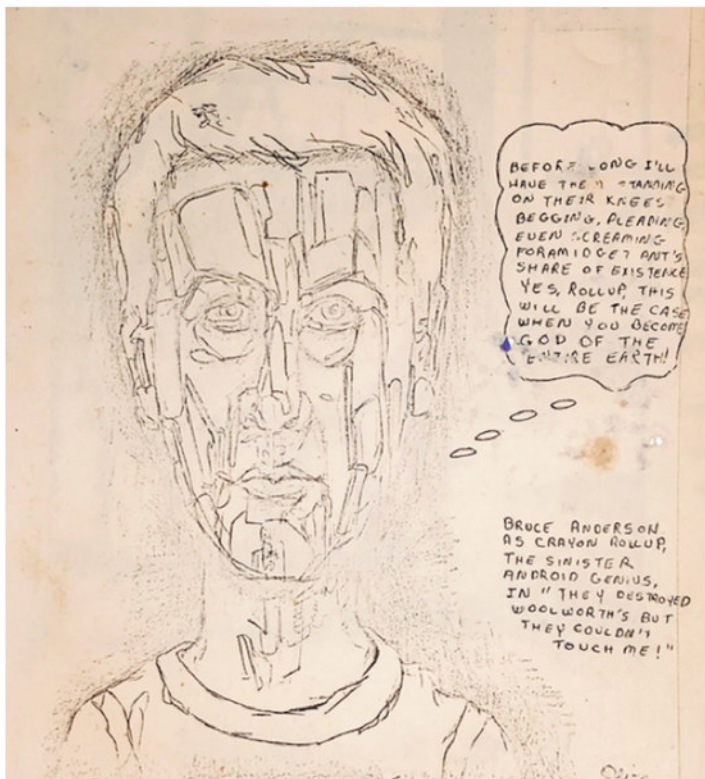
"Jeez, the shitheads I have to put up with! Oh, well."

Bruce Anderson Presents: Darcy Hep, Sissy Pervert, Meets the Prostitute
pen on paper
7 x 9



Blind Date
pencil on paper
6 x 8

"Before long I'll have them standing on their knees, begging, pleading, even screaming for a midget ant's share of existence. Yes, Rollup, this will be the case when you become GOD OF THE ENTIRE EARTH!"

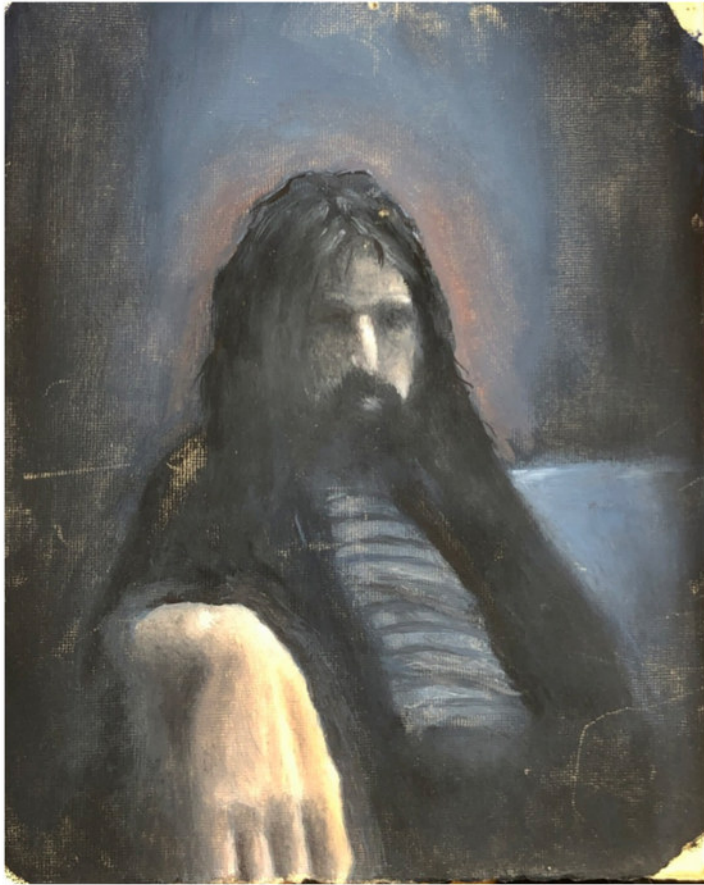


Bruce Anderson as Crayon Rollup, the Sinister Android Genius in They Destroyed Woolworth's But They Couldn't Touch Me!

pencil on paper
8.5 x 11



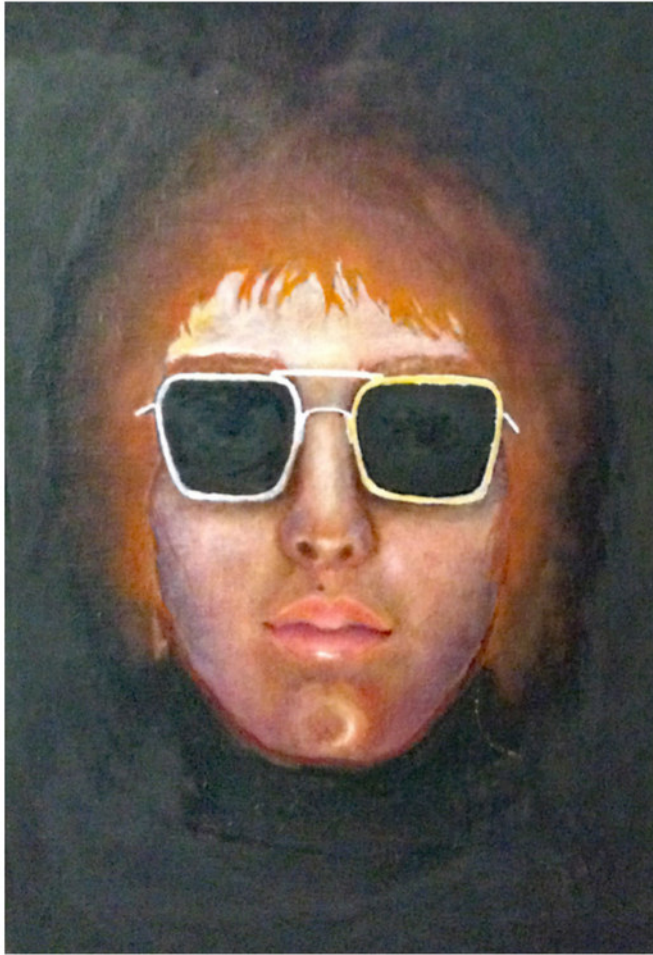
Happy Birthday Love Bruce
pen/water color on paper
8.5 x 11



Untitled
acrylic on canvas/paper
9 x 12



Untitled
acrylic on canvas/paper
9 x 12



Self-Portrait
acrylic on canvas
size unknown





Most of the works in this collection were created in Bloomington, Indiana between 1970 and 1977, assembled by Andrea Ross, and stored within a 14 x 17 newsprint pad. Thanks to Meredith Clark, Kevin Teare, Gary and Linda Anderson, and Dale Sophia and Elania Nanopoulos, for contributing additional works. In some cases, images have been cropped and sizes approximated. In a few cases, images have been restored from copies.

© 2022 Bruce Anderson and Meredith Clark

