



I thought that if I ate the food
of the area I was visiting
That I might assimilate the point of view
of the people there
As if the point of view
was somehow in the food
So I would make no choices myself
regarding what food I ate
I would simply follow the examples,
of those around me
I would study menus very carefully
Making note of important differences
and similarities
When shopping at the supermarket
I felt a great desire to walk off
with someone else's groceries
So I could study them at length
And study their effects on me
As though if I ate their groceries
I would become that person;
until I finished their groceries
And we might find ourselves going to
the same places
Running into one another at the movies
Or in a shopping mall
Reading the same books
Watching the same T.V. programs
Wearing the same clothes
Travelling to the same places
And taking the same pictures
Getting sick at the same time
And getting well again simultaneously
Finding ourselves attracted
to the same people
Working at the same job
And making the same amount of money
Living identical lives as long as
the groceries lasted

David Byrne
Music for "The Knee Plays" (1984)



at fire





in action





making money



getting creative



Spreading words





Spreading sounds







transportation





animals as accessories





actions



movement



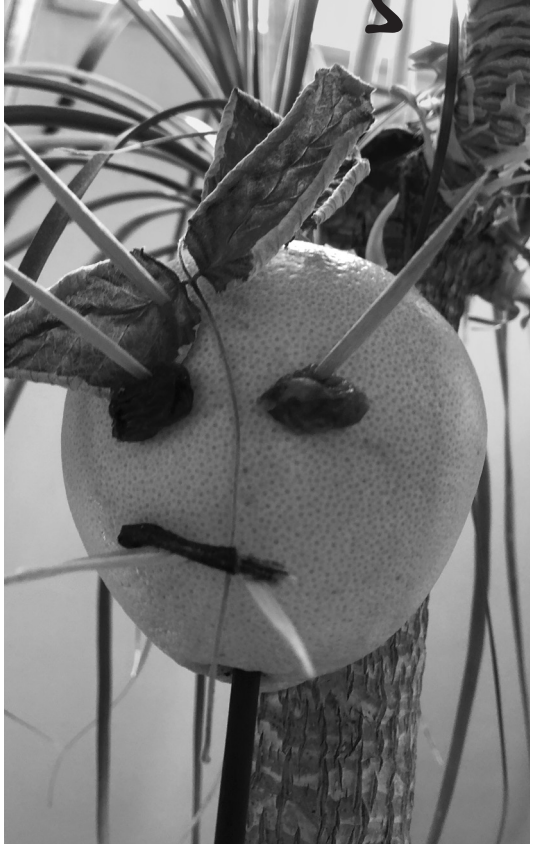


props





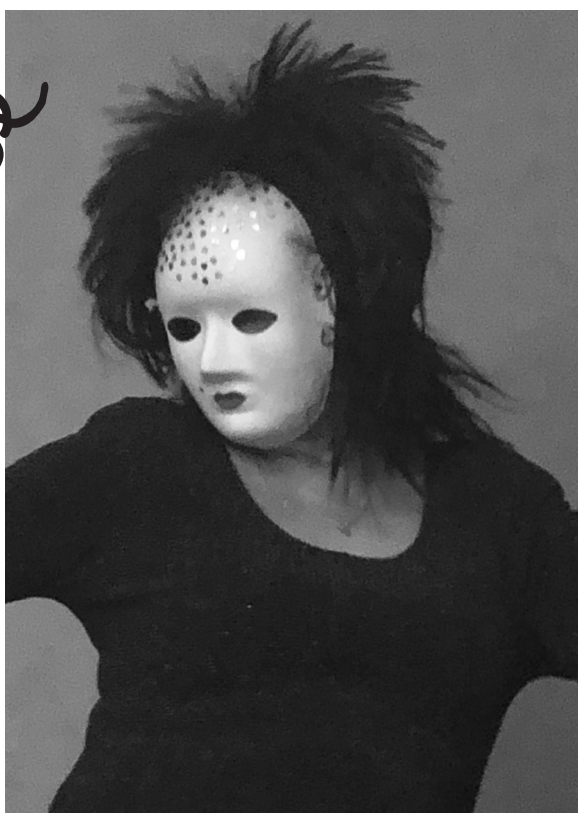
modifications



coverings



disguise





Knocking



[p. 2] A road worker by profession, his outfit keeps him from being turned to dust by the passing vehicles. He doesn't particularly love attention but has taken a liking towards wearing neons.

She walks the streets parading her uniform on a daily basis. Always on display—she knows this well and is all but not prepared. With her favourite pair of sun-glasses and her hair done up just right, she gracefully promenades through the city.

It's 34 degrees outside and he's wondering why he's not allowed to do this job in his underwear.

[p. 3] They've been working all day and the load is becoming unbearable. They couldn't care less about their posture and are hoping this will signal to the world that their boss is having them work overtime.

He's learned the tools of the trade. With immaculate precision and just the right look on his face, he extends the squeegee into the sky and carries out the show for the bystanders observing from the outside as well as for the ones admiring the spectacle from their desk inside.

This gang of cheerful yet naughty youngsters offers cleaning services to vehicles for a fair price but also complimentary showers to unassuming passerby (yes, me). Alternatives for a rainy day.

[p. 4] She spends long days heaved up on a barrel, carrying a tall beer mug filled to the brim in one hand, pointing to it with the other to suggest you might too want one. When her mind drifts off and her smile begins to fade she quickly realises and assumes her standard position again. She's at work.

She, too, is at work. She stands there with a smile carrying the world on her back, handing out brochures to an event she might never have the time to visit.

This character is trying his luck at making a buck with a brand new service of sorts: offering photo ops with pigeons to curious passerby. He is not particularly fond of birds, but enjoys the company.

[p. 5] He is a professional entertainer on tour amazing the crowds with countless tricks. About to catch some torches from an audience member for a juggle session, he sure has learned the craft but could possibly improve the quality of the jokes.

This humorous stranger in a robe is takes photos with tourists for petty cash while also acting as a living advertisement of their town—or somebody's town at the very least. They sure are giving it their all.

This believer has travelled the world to spread his message on countless street corners while also offering words of wisdom to passing strangers. Carrying beautifully hand-crafted yet identical sheets in his hands, he is ready for a chat but not for a new hat. I told him we're not particularly religious in my nook of the world, but he didn't seem to mind.

[p. 6] This bubbly brass band featuring a man dressed as a banana providing a true spectacle on a breezy Tuesday morning in late August surely wakes up the entire neighbourhood but also renders me late to a meeting.

She's new to the business but loves music and that's just it. She never struck up a conversation with a fellow performer on the square (and questions the legitimacy of some) but is working up the courage.

This underground karaoke act can be found performing by public digging grounds after work is completed. Holding the microphone up to each other like irritating reporters, this duo sounds like no other.

[p. 7] A grandfather of four, this fully immersed maestro is performing a world-class live on a Thursday afternoon. He exited the bed with his right foot first today and it's all going to be just fine.

This classical virtuoso, a trendy yet sombre young man, passes his days in the tunnel while trying to make a buck or two. He's feeling a little blue today, hence sporting the John Lennon inspired sunglasses.

He is always there. Dedicating his weekends as well as weekdays to the sheer joy of mankind, he enjoys the comforts of his arm-chair-on-wheels.

[p. 8] A one-man-band eager to collaborate, this eccentric stud is promoting his latest album while showcasing his most prized instrument.

This proud young man is busy taking his brand new vehicle for a spin. He bargained a good deal for it and is now ready to show it off to the world.

This sporty stranger wheeling around a gigantic mock-up sauna oven hasn't been on the stage for a good while. With caution but also with a sense of excitement he hits the road wondering how his role will come off today.

[p. 9] She's been upping the size of the animals for a year now. This beast is the biggest one yet. With slight discomfort she rushes forward, thinking that the faster she goes the sooner she can drop the act.

This city-dweller is taking her beloved pet for a morning stroll. She loves the attention though wonders if her fuzzy friend is stealing her thunder a little.

A tired transportation worker offering free rides to four-legged passengers. Will drop you off at the doorstep for a brief massage.

[p. 10] This time they've chosen the most visible location yet. Lit by all the streetlights surrounding them they look larger than life.

These pals are hitting the museums just like every weekend. Naked, just like every weekend. They're completely used to all the looks by now and welcome the attention, hoping that soon more people will pick up this jolly habit.

This mighty Mr had a little too much to drink but—surprise, surprise—this was no accident. A grand display much like a fountain unravels, luring in a couple of fanatics that join the irrigation game.

[p. 11] It's Thursday and she's loving it. It's about to start raining but she doesn't mind. She called in sick and is now playing her luck on one of the most populated corners in the city, doing not much more than sitting. She's wondering what she'll have for dinner tonight.

This busy bee is late for a meeting again. They've been late for a meeting four times this week. Over time a very specific being-late-run has developed that looks like no other.

A fun-loving human practicing silly walks after the phenomenon made an appearance on the teevee recently (yes, you know what I'm talking about). It's not quite there yet.

[p. 12] This look has really grown on her. A great nuisance at first, she's now wondering if she should keep it around a little longer.

She's used to wearing bright colours to deal with the bore of the winter but is considering spicing it up a little this season with a bold headpiece.

He just got a new round of extensions and is wondering if it still needs an extra kick. It'll do for now.

[p. 13] Since getting this cute devil tattooed on the back of his leg he only wears shorts or capris.

She's been donning the spikes for 20 years already and is considering getting them removed, but the wilting plants is a look she simply can't let go.

She's just put on her favourite make-up while listening to the new David Byrne album and is ready for a night out despite the scorching heat outside.

[p. 14] This is what he wears outside when he's ready to meet some new people.

This mysterious lady felt like switching it up a little and made an extra effort before heading out to work today. She can't wait to leave the house.

He did a search on how to disappear and is now busy trying out the solutions. He's a little disappointed in this first outcome, so he is reading up on it and looking for alternatives.

[p. 15] This wanderer is avoiding being seen. The alarm went off when she exited the supermarket, but she was too bored to deal with it and walked away; wondering if she's a fugitive now.

She was tired of being stared at so looked for cover, but then wanted to check if the perpetrator was still present (you guessed it).

She's ready to call it a day.

Tree

(Today Is an Important Occasion)

Today is an important occasion.

She thinks that she must wear the right clothes.

The right combination of clothes ...will make her lucky.

But there are specific kinds of luck.

And different kinds are needed

for different occasions:

'A blue dress for intuition'

'The grey shirt and maroon slacks

for making strong statements'

'The navy pullover and the woollen skirt

for discovering mystery.'

She thinks of what she wore

on a similar occasion

like the one she will be involved in today.

Particularly a similar occasion

that was successful for her.

She lies on the bed

and imagines herself in a variety of outfits.

She quickly narrows

the range of possibilities.

She tries them on

in a few combinations.

The striped shirt

and corduroy slacks.

The red dress.

She leaves the house...

The outcome is certain.

David Byrne

Music for "The Knee Plays" (1984)

#4

Whatever It Takes
(Going Out of One's Way)