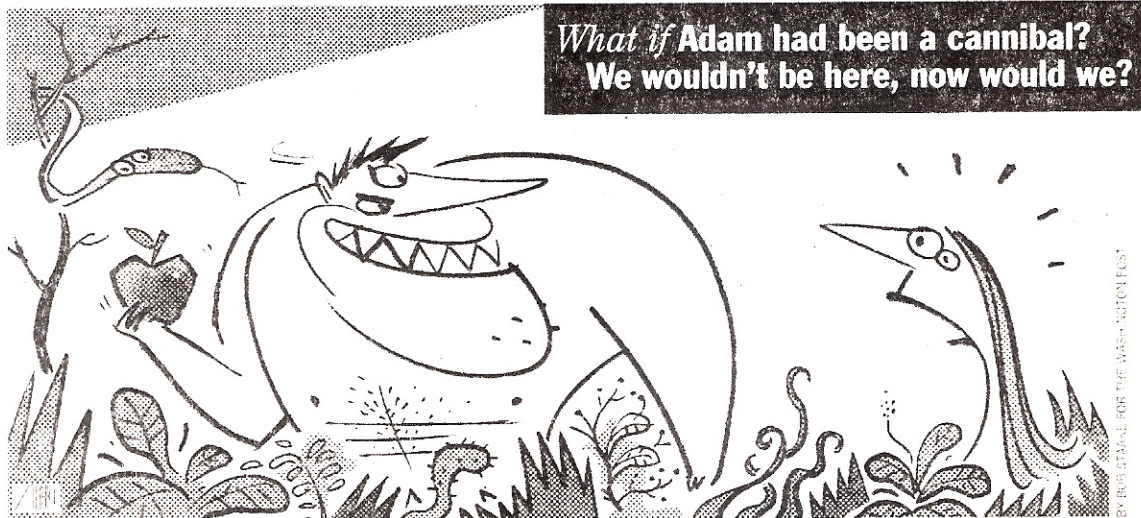


# The Style Invitational

## WEEK 140: WHAT IF YOU GIVE IT A TRY?

*What if, instead of gasoline, Henry Ford's internal combustion engine had used dried sheep dung as fuel? America would have low unemployment because each car would have to pull a tender and fireman, and Scotland would control the world economy.*

*What if the Pilgrims had landed on the West Coast? Come this Thursday, we would be sitting down to the traditional Thanksgiving dinner of sauteed mahi-mahi, avocado stuffing, candied arugula and strawberry daquiris.*



**This week's contest** was suggested, independently, by Elden Carnahan, of Laurel, and Kathy Kevany, of Silver Spring, who each win a slice of realistic white bread made of foam rubber. If they find each other and pool their booty, they have a

Runners up, as always, get the coveted Style Invitational losers' T shirts. Honorable mentions get the mildly sought-after Style Invitational bumper stickers. Winners will be selected on the basis of humor and originality. Mail your entries to the Style Invitational, Week 140, The Washington Post, 1150 15th St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20071; fax them to 202-334-4312; or submit them via the internet to this address: losers@access.digex.net. Internet users: Please indicate the appropriate week number in the "subject" field. Entries must be received on or before Monday, Nov. 27. Please include your address and phone number. Winners will be announced in three weeks. Editors reserve the right to alter entries for taste, appropriateness or humor. No purchase necessary. The Faerie of the Fine Print & The Ear No One Reads thanks Russ Beland of Springfield for today's Ear No One Reads. Employees of The Washington Post and their immediate families are not eligible for prizes.

sandwich. Otherwise, they go hungry. More on this affair as it develops. Elden and Kathy suggest that you come up with What If scenarios and logical outcomes. First-prize winner gets an Army-issue gas mask, a value of \$30.

### REPORT FROM WEEK 137,

in which we asked you to come up with a title and/or art gallery blurb for this Elvis on black velvet. Could it be that Style Invitational readers lack culture? Most of you had no idea what to do with this contest, as though you had never been to an art gallery or read an art book. We wanted pretentious artbabble, but most of the 1,200 entries delivered snide captions and caustic one-liners more appropriate to Open-Mike Night at the Improv. Many of these were very funny. Alas, they are honorable mentions only. Fortunately, those who did get it right got it very right.

◆ Second Runner-Up: **PLEASE RELEASE ME** (Taiwanese, 1977). **With its masterfully airbrushed chiaroscuro background of *fabrique noir*, this tour de force depicts the King's revelation that he, like Christ, would be sighted after his death. Note the parallel apostolic symbolism of the dozen dazzling stars on Elvis's jacket and the Tinkerbell-inspired angels floating above the**





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◆ **First Runner-Up: The Appalachian folk art masterpiece "Four Notched Pieces of Wood" was discovered recently in the Annie Groer Collection. It will be put on permanent display following a cleaning, waxing and the removal of a piece of stained blackish fabric.** (Greg Arnold, Herndon)

◆ *And the winner of the Velvis:*

**LOVE ME GENDER**

Anon. American, c. 1990 (Oil on Troubled Velvet)

This epochal, post-American Naive rendering evokes hermaphroditic motifs epitomizing rampant confusion of sexuality and patriotism characteristic of the late 20th century. A popular entertainer, styled "The King" by his fanatic devotees, is depicted in antithetical forms that mimic the unevolved psycho-social premises of the era.

The King wears a feminine coiffure known as a Prince Valiant, itself being a transsexual adaptation. The low brow connotes the milieu, while the lineage of the eyes, nose and cheeks suggests a painful masculine quest. The eye is led downward through a Der Führer mouth (echoing Edvard Munch's "Der Schrei") and thence to an *ancien dame* chin of greatly exaggerated proportions.

The torso and arm are masculine, while the effeminate neckline plunges through successive structures directed insistently toward the pelvis. From this tantalizing region 12 stars erupt in an ejaculatory paean to the United States. The mystical, prime 13th star remains obscured at the uncertain nexus.

The viewer is drawn into an endless autoerotic cycle, against the backdrop of the infinite darkness surrounding, embracing and overwhelming the figure, who seems to cry out for immortality amidst the vortex of oblivion. (Dr. John Rather, Washington)

◆ **Honorable Mentions:**

**The best thing about this picture is that when you hold it between yourself and the sun, it helps prevent skin cancer.** (Mike Connaghan, Gaithersburg)

**Portrait of Elvis the Pelvis's twin brother, Enis.** (Ray Cohen, Fredericksburg)

**This piece can fill the gap in your decor that somehow seems wrong for duct tape.** (Elden Carnahan, Laurel)

**Proposed logo for the rejected 1995 NFL expansion team, the Memphis Presleys (shown in helmet).** (Ben Feldman, Washington)

**Frustrated by absence of the King, velvet artists turn to impersonators for inspiration.** (Randy Wadkins, Silver Spring)

**ELVISA—Visa card from First National Bank of Graceland.** (Sarah Worcester, Bowie)

**LEGO LAS VEGAS—This painting was commissioned by Lego Industries Inc. for display in its corporate headquarters. It is the Lego characterization of Elvis, complete with the distinctive dome haircut worn by the toy company's human figures.** (Greg Arnold, Herndon)

**"It is amazing. I am in awe of the effort. It must have taken hours."—LeRoy Neiman** (Art Grinath, Takoma Park)

**The Kentucky School for the Blind proudly announces the recent acquisition, for \$6 million, of its first original van Gogh.** (John Kammer, Herndon)

◆ **And Last:**

**"Apples With Basket." American abstract, artist unknown.** (Dave Ferry, Potomac)