

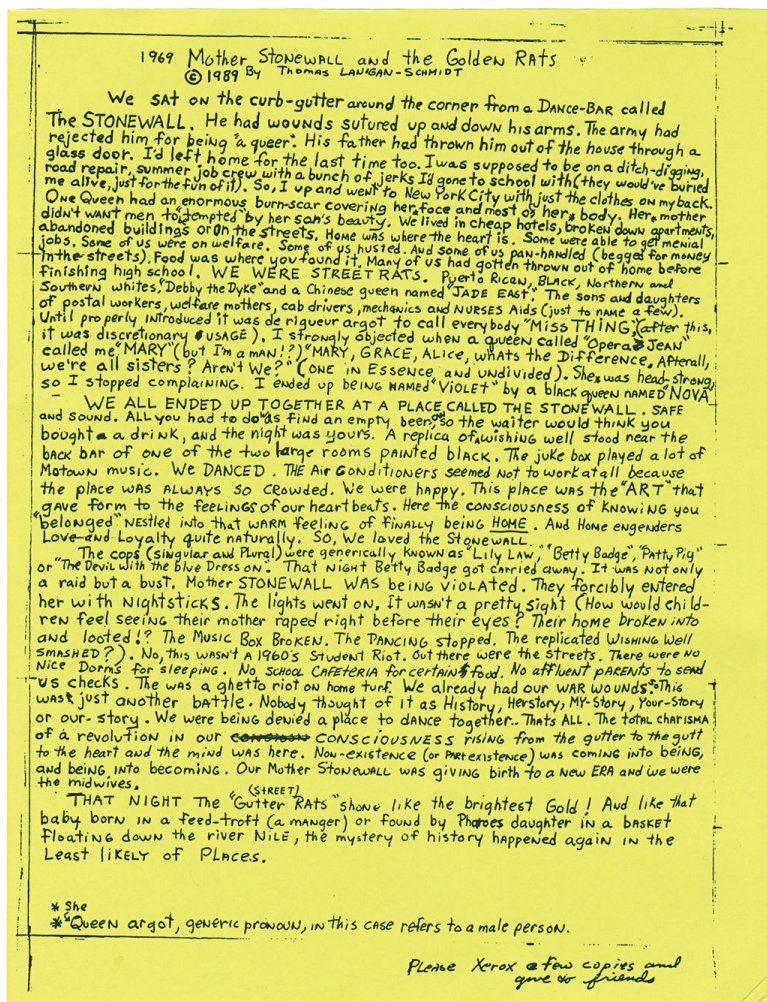
ARTFORUM

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PRINT SUMMER 2019

CONFESSIONS ON THE DANCE FLOOR

Reveries From The Gay Bar



Thomas Lanigan-Schmidt, *Mother Stonewall and the Golden Rats*, 1989, Xerox, 11 × 8 1/2".



The Duchess Club, Grove Street, New York, ca. 1980s. Photo: Lesbian Herstory Archives.

EILEEN MYLES

The Duchess in Sheridan Square, 1979. I spent time there in the first few years I was in New York. It was a very mixed-class bar, which gave the impression that once you dove into the lesbian realm your sense of time and place got lost. Lots of women looked very bridge-and-tunnel which I didn't like since I had come to New York to be a poet and meet artists and that wasn't the scene in the Duchess. Basically it was anyone who was gay, which didn't imply a specific style or social class. But my strongest memory was the night I completely drunk threw a drink in the face of my then girlfriend who was cheating on me. I had just gotten my first grant that day and I was out celebrating. I was very quickly thrown out of the Duchess (and even barred from drinking there for a while) by a short but very tough butch who of course I was yelling and swearing at but nonetheless I landed out there on the sidewalk on my ass like in

cartoons.

For the purposes of writing another Stonewall piece, I've been researching Stormé DeLarverie, the swank bulldagger who famously threw the first punch at Stonewall, and apparently she was working at the Duchess ten years later (as a bouncer) at the same time I was thrown out, so I'm pretty sure it was her.

*Eileen Myles is a poet, novelist, and art journalist in New York. Their most recent book of poems is *Evolution* (Grove press, 2018).*



Jacolby Satterwhite and Forrest Wu at Grindr and *Visionaire*'s "Slumbr" party, Top of The Standard, New York, June 24, 2017. Photo: Job Piston.

JACOLBY SATTERWHITE