

By James Pepper Kelly  
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*Sources liberally appropriated from the Internet.*

**Walter Benjamin** | At the center of this exhibition is man. Present-day man; a reduced man, therefore, chilled in a chilly environment. Since, however, this is the only one we have, it is in our interest to know him. He is subjected to tests, examinations. What emerges is this: Weird Dude Energy (WDE), a layering of men, a group perspective on masculinity.

**Wilde, Oscar** | But is WDE, as a meme/concept, actually on display in this show, or only in the title and statement? Is GDBD curating a show of WDE, or instead the passions of one's friends? There's crossover, and it may all be equal—those passions are the fascinating things IRL anyway. For me, the highlight was Andrew Mausert-Mooney & Nicholas Wylie's performance of foot washing, massage, and chanting of "Poor Unfortunate Souls" from *The Little Mermaid*. It had the dignity of a ceremony, as well as its unreality, and combined the insincere character of a romantic movie with the wit and beauty that make such movies delightful to us. Is insincerity really such a terrible thing?

**Weiner, Anthony** | It's passion that's a terrible thing, and let's just forget about online WDE. Let's recalculate, let's talk this show. Now Andrew Doak's photo: I don't know where that photograph came from. I don't know for sure what's in it. I don't know for sure if it was manipulated. And I'm going to get to the firm bottom of that.

**Eagleton, Terry** | Don't know Doak? It's a self-portrait as John Belushi's character in *Animal House*, from the artist's ongoing portraiture project. There are several orphaned pieces in WDE, but I'll admit that this one does suffer the most for it. Oli Rodriguez's photographic portrait

integrates well with the other work, even though it is delinked from the S&M series it's part of. The problem is, what we consume now is not objects or events, but our experience of them. We buy an experience like we can pick up a GBDB beer coozie (\$2.00 at the opening).

**Immanuel, Kant |**

Sure, there's no doubt that all knowledge begins with experience. That's why I bought three. But reading about the Weird Dude Energy Tumblr that was the inspiration for the show, I learned two things on the Hyperallergic comment thread: first, apparently no one reads my books anymore; and second, "Young people's ideas about whatever is cool can have a conversation with contemporary art." If you can't deal with merch and memes, fine, how about Mike Rea's virtuosic wood installation: jail cell/microphone/and, inevitably, glory hole? Out of the crooked timber of humanity, no straight thing was ever made.

**Rahm, Emanuel |**

Fucking retarded. Take your fucking tampon out and tell me what you have to say. Best was Ivan Lozano's installation of glowing blue hands on poles. It reminds me of when I sliced off my finger working at Arby's, went swimming in Lake Michigan, and got gangrene. That's when I decided to become king of Chicago. Lozano fucked up his hand and made some casts based on not being able to move. Same idea, different goal. You should never let a serious crisis go to waste.

**Derrida, Jacques |**

Can we *not* talk about, biography, please? Stick to the work! Look at how the hands' blue glow syncs with Zak Arctander's red tinted photo of the young man in a Vans cap, shown from his chest up. Whatever precautions you take so the photograph will look like this or that, there comes a moment when that photograph surprises you. It's the other's gaze that wins out and decides—

which Arctander must be thinking about because look, he made sure the man's eyes are covered by his cap! Rose, with your own compromised intuitions, what did you like?

**Duchamp, Marcel** | I just like—breathing. *It's* so necessary that I don't question it.

**Umberto, Eco** | You are odd. Weird, I mean; but then, it's only petty men who seem normal. Didn't you like Alex Gartelmann's limp aluminum baseball bat, bent over a wooden peg? A mash-up of your own readymades and an '80s sculptural phallus, a strong piece with good position.

**Duchamp, Marcel** | I don't believe in art, I believe in artists and the most interesting thing about artists is how they live. All this twaddle are pieces of a chess game called language.

**Eco, Umberto** | Perhaps.... Maybe I'm—maybe all this is not as wise as it likes to think it is. And if Jacques's right about epistemic plurality, is this some eternal zugzwang, as you chess people say? It's true that the most interesting letters I receive are from people in the Midwest, people like the lone figure in John Opera's lovely, desolate Wisconsin landscape. So let's turn to their official sources instead!

**Newcity Art | (Bert Stabler)** | A variety of manly tensions are borne out by the juxtapositions in the group show "Weird Dude Energy." In the end, there's just nothing that says "competence" like a great curatorial concept enjoyably, even suavely, executed.

**Rose, Sélavy** | Fine, fine. You do have to have an official existence. Intermezzo. One more, then back to the living, then the end.

**Jason Foumberg | (Chicago Mag.com)** | Weird Dude Energy, a concept and an exhibition, probes the unkempt desires of men. You know how guys act when they're all

together, without women around? This show amplifies that vibe with work from 17 male artists.

**You + Yr Friends** | \_\_\_\_\_

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*Sources: **Walter Benjamin**: "The Author as Producer", Reflections. **Wilde, Oscar**: The Picture of Dorian Gray. **Weiner, Anthony**: "GPS Speech" to Springfield Community Church, et al.; Interview with Emily Miller, Washington Times. **Eagleton, Terry**: How to Read a Poem. **Immanuel Kant**: "Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Purpose". **Rahm Emanuel**: Comment on a liberal group's concerns about Obamacare, Wall Street Journal; Response to a male staffer, New York magazine; Interview, Wall Street Journal. **Derrida, Jacques**: There is No "One" Narcissism, Interview with Didier Cahen. **Duchamp, Marcel**: Line for the character "Marcel Duchamp", The Mysteries and What's So Funny, David Gordon (referencing Interview with Jean Antoine, The Art Newspaper); Interview with Jean Antoine, The Art Newspaper. **Umberto Eco**: The Name of the Rose; **Duchamp, Marcel**: The Writings of Marcel Duchamp; Letter to Jehan Mayoux. **Eco, Umberto**: Interview with Nigel Farndale, The Daily Telegraph; Interview with Adam Langer, Book magazine. **Newcity Art** (Bert Stabler): "Review: Weird Dude Energy/Heaven Gallery". **Rose Sélavy**: Interview with Jean Antoine, The Art Newspaper; **Jason Foumberg** (Chicago Mag.com): "Weird Dude Energy Promises a Freaky Prelude to Father's Day". **You+ Yr Friends**: \_\_\_\_\_.*