

Vanguard by Alexander Renault

“An artist does not reflect himself in his art
as much as he provides a mirror
for the readers and viewers to see themselves.”
—Jack Fritscher

Thumbnail (2003): Jack Fritscher is an enigma of grand proportions, and one of the most respected and controversial writers of his versatile generation which includes John Rechy, Edmund White, Anne Rice, William Carney, Felice Picano, Allan Gurganus, Dorothy Allison, Armistead Maupin, Larry Kramer, Rita Mae Brown, and Andrew Halloran.

You cultural “completists” who like reading lists and comparable books, check out these comps. In memoirs in the shape of novels, Edmund White’s *A Boy’s Own Story* and Felice Picano’s *Ambidextrous: The Secret Lives of Children* compare to Fritscher’s *What They Did to the Kid: Confessions of an Altar Boy*; additionally, White’s *Loss within Loss: Artists in the Age of Aids* compares to Fritscher’s *Mapplethorpe: Assault with a Deadly Camera*; Anne Rice’s *Interview with the Vampire* compares with his *Popular Witchcraft: Straight from the Witch’s Mouth*; John Rechy’s *Numbers* and William Carney’s *The Real Thing* compare with his *Leather Blues* plus his *Drummer* magazine writing which fills five separate volumes of his fiction books, including *Corporal in Charge* and *Rainbow County*; Armistead Maupin’s *Tales of the City*, Larry Kramer’s *Faggots*, and Andrew Halloran’s *Dancer from the Dance* compare with his *Some Dance to Remember: A Novel of Gay Liberation in San Francisco 1970-1982*; Allan Gurganus’ *Oldest Living Confederate Widow*, Dorothy Allison’s *Trash*, and Rita Mae Brown’s *Rubyfruit Jungle* compare with his *Geography of Women* as well as with his *Sweet Embraceable You: Coffee-House Stories*.

All these authors have lived interesting lives, but it is rare to find an artist who has lived a life so filled with operatic opposing forces, but then, San Francisco writer Fritscher, who shares a birthday with Lillian Hellman, is a Gemini, moon in Leo, with Scorpio Rising. From 1953-1963, he was schooled in the Latin, Greek, British, and American classics in the prestigious Vatican seminary, the Pontifical College Josephinum, and is actually an ordained exorcist possessing all the minor orders of the Catholic priesthood.

Excerpt source: [Jack Fritscher](#), *Gay San Francisco: Eyewitness Drummer*, San Francisco: [Palm Drive Publishing](#), 2008

He received his doctorate in American Literature from Loyola University, Chicago, where with the cooperation of Tennessee Williams he wrote his dissertation, *Love and Death in Tennessee Williams*. Moving into academia, where he hung with the poet Thom Gunn, he became a tenured university professor while hanging out with the likes of Andy Warhol, Mario Amaya, Robert Mapplethorpe, George Dureau, Sam Steward (Phil Andros), Edward Lucie-Smith, as well as Picasso biographer, John Richardson, and the High Priest of the Church of Satan, Anton LaVey, whom he featured in his book, *Popular Witchcraft*.

From the mid-1960s, he combined the strange bedfellows of academic discourse, mainstream literature, pop culture, sexual politics, witchcraft, erotic photography, and the world of gay male pornography on page and on screen. He is the founding San Francisco editor in chief of the legendary *Drummer* magazine in which his work appeared for 25 years and which he used as background for his signature novel, *Some Dance to Remember*.

As author of a dozen books and writer-director of more than 150 gay documentary and erotic videos, he works and lives near the Golden Gate Bridge with his domestic lover of nearly 30 years, Mark Hemry, where *Pornographic Pulsar* chased him down for a few gems to share with his readers, viewers, fans, and detractors, as well as LGBT studies mavens.

Pornographic Pulsar: During the interview Fritscher came across as sweet but unshakable, charismatic and full of opinions, but not opinionated, even though my job was to ask him to opine. I did not find myself experiencing my usual anxiety at interviewing brilliant academics. As anyone who knows me will attest, I have a love-hate relationship with the world of academia and it is interesting to note that Fritscher seems to be the exception to every rule of its jargon and pomposity.

One hates to trip on one's own clown shoes, but fools rush in! You cannot imagine my embarrassment when I realized I had been mispronouncing his former lover's name, "Mapplethorpe," through the first half of our chat. (The first syllable is pronounced like the tree, not like "grapple.") Oh, well. He never pointed it out. He simply pronounced it correctly. Actually, I was just glad I understood most of what he was talking about. There is simply nothing worse than being in over one's head without a life jacket during an interview with someone whose literary work has been explored by so many other journalists and critics (and men jerking off) who may have a far better insight into the interview subject than I do.

Excerpt source: [Jack Fritscher](#), *Gay San Francisco: Eyewitness Drummer*, San Francisco: [Palm Drive Publishing](#), 2008

In an interview with the critic, John F. Karr, from *The Bay Area Reporter* in June 1989, Fritscher described himself as “an iconoclastic visual artist.” He certainly began in a time of artistic frenzy, the 60s and 70s, standing in a crowd that included the Gay Golden Age of John Waters and Divine, the Cockettes, Sylvester, David Bowie, Lou Reed, and Andy Warhol. Yet he has never had to go out of his way to prove himself because his ideas and writing and photography are unique across the genres because they speak for themselves, and he has always stood out among his peers without effort—in fact, without trying to do so, as he is rather reticent and reclusive.

As Winnie the Pooh once said, it is best to start at the beginning.

Jack was born John Joseph Fritscher on June 20, 1939. A fellow Gemini, he entered the world during the noon hour on the summer solstice, the brightest light of the year’s longest day. In high school, he was the senior-class reporter and author of the all-male musical comedy, *Continental Caper*, 1959. He translated religious texts from German for American publication between 1960 and 1966. More than twenty of his early short stories and features, many of them coded gay stories and articles, were published in unsuspecting Catholic magazines. Teaching university journalism and literature beginning in 1964, he was that generation of professors who introduced a fourth genre to literary interpretation, “film interpretation,” which was added to fiction, drama, and poetry.

Fritscher received his B.A. in Philosophy and English (1961) followed by graduate work in Aquinian Theology (1963) at the Pontifical College Josephinum in Columbus, Ohio. During that conformist Catholic time, he started his school’s first student magazine, aggressively called *Pulse*, which had the priest in charge pounding on his desk in fury. He spent the very early civil-rights summers of 1961 and 1962 as a “worker priest” on Chicago’s South Side in the heart of the ghetto at 63rd and Cottage Grove where he worked directly in the African-American community with the legendary radical, Saul Alinsky.

In 1966, he received his master’s degree in English from Loyola University with his thesis, *When Malory Met Arthur: Sex and Magic in Camelot*. In May 1967, he came out formally regretting he had the year before told Tennessee Williams that Williams could not, mmm, depend on his kindness. In February, 1968, he completed his doctorate in American Literature/Creative Writing and Journalism, and took off for swinging London’s Carnaby Street, as well as Paris, Madrid, and Amsterdam which all were in the throes of student revolution in the streets—from which he did not shy away.

In 1969, he signed a contract for his nonfiction book, *Popular Witchcraft: Straight from the Witch’s Mouth*, which he wrote in San Francisco

Excerpt source: [Jack Fritscher](#), *Gay San Francisco: Eyewitness Drummer*, San Francisco: [Palm Drive Publishing](#), 2008

in the Castro where coincidentally Anne Rice was also living. They both knew the same witches, ghouls, ritualists, and vampires. Fritscher's non-fiction interviews with gay witches and Satanists was published in 1972. Anne Rice's fictional *Interview with the Vampire* came out in 1976. Both authors distilled the essence of that very psychic time in gay history.

In the 1970s, Fritscher received a National Endowment for the Arts grant to record audio interviews with his friend, the veteran writer, Sam Steward (aka Phil Andros) who told his life story including his times with Gertrude Stein, Alice B. Toklas, Thornton Wilder, and James Purdy for whose novel, *Narrow Rooms*, Fritscher shot the cover (GMP, London). In the mid-70s, Fritscher became the founding San Francisco editor of *Drummer* magazine which he made infamous. He is the original "Mr. *Drummer*" in the real sense of that title because by the time *Drummer* ceased publication at the end of 1999, his writing and photographs had appeared in 62 of *Drummer's* 200 issues over twenty-five years, making him the author most published in *Drummer*.

He is currently working on a book which is kind of *The Best of Drummer*, an anthology of writing from the international magazine's torrid history. Who knew that one day a men's progressive gay skin magazine would become a historical document? Fritscher did. Actually, some of the *Drummer* material appears in *Corporal in Charge and Other Stories* (1984)—the first collection of *Drummer* stories—and in *Jacked: The Best of Jack Fritscher*, published by Alyson Press (2002) and nominated by the Erotic Authors Association (2003) as the best anthology written by one author. He is also currently nominated by the Erotic Authors Association for a Lifetime Achievement Award. [Editor's note: granted 2007]

Fritscher is dedicated to the preservation and continuation of gay cultural studies and the expansions of its horizons. He believes that there are some important facets of gay culture, including the "homomascu-
list" subcultures of leather, muscle, fetish, daddies, and bears which need to be fully documented as part of gay history. In the mid-70s in *Drummer* he coined the word *homomascu-
line* to address the most neglected species in the gay zoo: the masculine-identified homosexual.

He says he is not himself a masculinist or a feminist, because, inclusive of both terms, he is a humanist. (Some people, trapped in gender politics, he says, don't rise to that concept.) He is also currently concerned about the political "repackaging" of the gay community, and how our culture and media have hi-jacked the "gay edge" only to sell it back to us in a new, corporate form. For years he has stood foursquare against the "politically correct" whom he terms fundamentalist Puritans who, born out of failed Marxism, actually hate art, sex, and the transcendentals of truth, beauty, and goodness.

Excerpt source: [Jack Fritscher, *Gay San Francisco: Eyewitness Drummer*, San Francisco: Palm Drive Publishing, 2008](#)

A compelling and sexually unapologetic author, he once stated in *The Burning Pen*, “I confess. I breathe in experience. I exhale fiction. Feeling, emotion, is the oxygen of my fictive voice.” You know an erotica writer has struck an intense stride by authoring a play called *Corporal In Charge of Taking Care of Captain O'Malley*. That story is such a good one that iconic publisher Winston Leyland included *Corporal in Charge* as the only play in his historic 1990 anthology, *Gay Roots*.

So powerful is Fritscher's fiction, critic Nancy Sundstrom wrote in *Independent Publisher* in 1998:

Fritscher is undoubtedly a masterful writer of gay fiction, but he is first and foremost an extraordinary American writer. He deserves a broad-based audience because his powerful and original voice rings in one's head long after the book has been completed.

Fritscher has written critically acclaimed novels including *Leather Blues* which first appeared as the pioneer gay novel, *I Am Curious (Leather)*, written in 1969 and published in 1972; *Some Dance to Remember*, the epic novel which *The Advocate* called the “gay *Gone with the Wind*”; *The Geography of Women: A Romantic Lesbian Comedy*; and the novel which CNN noticed in its top 100 books, *What They Did to the Kid: Confessions of an Altar Boy* for which he won several literary awards including “Story Teller of the Year.”

As in Hollywood, numbers often show how deep roots go in gay culture. In 30 years in adult entertainment, his books have sold more than 110,000 copies; his 150 videos, shot in the US and Europe for several companies including his own production company www.PalmDriveVideo.com have sold 250,000 copies; and his writing in thirty gay magazines (some like *Drummer* with a press run of 42,000 copies every month) have literally reached millions of readers. A thousand of his photographs have appeared in gay pop-culture magazines like *Honcho*, *Bear*, *Leather Man*, *Powerplay*, and *Thrust*, as well as in three high-end art books from England such as *Adam: The Male Figure in Art* and *Ars Erotica: An Arousing History of Erotic Art*, as well as the coffee-table book, *Jack Fritscher's American Men* published by Editions Aubrey Walters at Gay Men's Press (GMP), London. His on-screen production credential comes from the Hollywood Film Institute. Two of his videos regarding the photographer, George Dureau, are in the permanent collection of the Maison Européenne de la Photographie, Paris.

In the earlier San Francisco days of what Fritscher named the “Titanic 1970s,” Fritscher met Robert Mapplethorpe who later tragically

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died of AIDS in 1989, at age 42. Noting the brilliance of Mapplethorpe's photography, *Drummer* editor in chief Fritscher hired him to do a cover which was Mapplethorpe's first magazine cover assignment (*Drummer* 24, September 1978). They became lovers and Fritscher went on to write the biography, *Mapplethorpe: Assault With A Deadly Camera, A Pop Culture Memoir, An Outlaw Reminiscence..*

Fritscher's book was the first biography of the controversial artist and photographer ever published, beating out Patricia Morrisroe's "horrificed straight-woman" Mapplethorpe biography. In the typical fever of a Gemini, Fritscher wrote the final-final version of his erotic memoir of his ex-lover and confidante in only ninety days, because he included writing he had done about Mapplethorpe over the years. Adding other voices to make a chorus beyond his own voice keening, Fritscher included his interviews of other Mapplethorpe friends and heavy-weights such as Robert Opel, Camille O'Grady, George Dureau, Holly Solomon, Edward Lucie-Smith, and Joel-Peter Witkin. (Fritscher has taken gorgeous photos of Robert Opel's muse, the singer and poet, Camille O'Grady.)

His *Mapplethorpe* book went on to become a critically acclaimed piece of gay American history while Morrisroe's sophomoric, middle-American-esque attempt bombed. Morrisroe had interviewed Fritscher for five hours (recorded on the phone) and sent a note praising his information. When she found out years later that Fritscher was writing another kind of Mapplethorpe book that looked to her like insider competition, she denounced Fritscher as "The King of Sleaze" because he had then recently written a gay-culture historical piece in *Drummer* titled "Remembrance of Sleaze Past" to nail down historically what sex had actually been like before fluid exchange became problematical. Morrisroe so misread the "reverse code" of gay language she did not realize that "sleaze" is a sexual compliment.

A read of Morrisroe's prudish biography makes it painfully obvious that she does not understand—and actually seems to loathe—the gay subculture which she claims shocked her beyond comprehension while researching Mapplethorpe's life. I guess no one ever told Patty Morrisroe that the Number One Rule For Writers is *only write what you know*, babe. The poor bitch didn't understand that in the inversion of the gay world, *sleaze* is considered a good thing. She is the perfect example of what Fritscher means about the corporate "repackaging of the gay community." The corporate Random House published Morrisroe's book which was reviewed by the corporate *Vanity Fair* which is not surprising because the head of Random House at that time was married to the head of *Vanity Fair*. Where Morrisroe freaked over Mapplethorpe's Satanism, exorcist Fritscher, author of *Popular Witchcraft* and friend of Anton LaVey, truly

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understood and encouraged in his lover Mapplethorpe the heady mix of Catholicism and Satanism inherent in much very potent gay art; for instance, Mapplethorpe's most Satanic and scatological photos graced a new edition of the poet Rimbaud's *A Season in Hell*.

Charles Winnic, Ph.D., Professor of sociology at City University of New York, writes of *Mapplethorpe: Assault with a Deadly Camera*:

Jack Fritscher's memoir is a marvelous recreation of an epoch, an art, and a man. Mapplethorpe was a...romantic figure who did more to liberate popular taste than any other artist.... Fritscher is the perfect interpreter of Mapplethorpe, and his beautifully written book helps us to understand how an apolitical photographer became so politically potent a culture symbol.

Like many great writers, Fritscher knows himself well and has clearly developed tremendous confidence. His knowledge of human sexuality runs deep, both from academic study and hands-on experience with the 13,000 veterans of the gay liberation wars to whom he dedicated *Some Dance to Remember*, which is an autobiographical novel that is also very much the autobiography of San Francisco, 1970-1982. Fritscher's tales of the City are a bit more realistic, and certainly more historical, than Armistead Maupin's *Tales of the City* for which Fritscher has an Irish storyteller's respect. Maupin has said he himself writes to capture people's hearts, not their sex; Fritscher says he aims for both, and for their intellects. (The resounding opening line of *Some Dance* is "In the end, he could not deny his human heart.") Asked about his own dual role as author and historian, he writes,

Perhaps I am a unique hybrid: I am personally leather and a pioneer "action figure" (according to *Drummer* cartoonist A. Jay) in leather culture as well as a scholar-historian of gay male leather culture. But I am not part of the establishment Leather Reich of "Mother-May-I S/M." In my *Porno Manifesto*, art for art's sake may go beyond the pale of consent.

Fritscher is also a pop-culture scholar and expert on cinema and television, and has published numerous articles. In his pioneering 1972 media book, *Television Today*, a chapter titled "Americanned Creativity" goes:

For TV now, the Commercial Sell is the Frankenstein that creates our buffered, not-so-glad-wrapped, gotta-have-

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a-gimmick Americanned culture. Whenever business lays its hands on art, art suffers the slings and arrows of outrageous fortunehunters. If business exists to supply the demand, business must often create the demand. Advertisers tell us what they think we need; what they want us to demand, so they can supply it. In the following blank, enter your nominee for the most worthless product ever plugged as a necessity: _____ .

Upon seeing that blank line, I first thought of feminine deodorant spray, diet soda, Fox News, and the National Republican Convention.

Fritscher is an uncanny swami—well, he is a witch!—whose instincts and life experiences have made him an extremely prophetic social critic. About the 1990s, he stated to John F. Karr in *The Bay Area Reporter* in 1989:

I think in the 90s we're going to see a resurgence of gays in the media, especially as the AIDS cases explode, and we serve as the model for the world on how to deal with this.... So instead of *The Golden Girls* dropping their gay butler, you'll see gay people returning to [visibility on] the tube. And I think that will allow gay erotica to grow on a level of above-ground commercial television and video.

Fritscher also predicted that we would see a wider range of gay characters both on television and in films in the 1990s. *Philadelphia*, *The Bird Cage*, *Beautiful Thing*, *The Incredibly True Adventure of Two Girls In Love*, and *In and Out* were each a box office success. Multiple gay characters hit the television scene and gave us *Will and Grace*, *Roseanne*, *Queer as Folk*, and HBO's *Six Feet Under*. His instincts for media analysis were right on. Gay culture has started to swim more toward the mainstream although only *Queer as Folk* and *Six Feet Under* avoid desaturation of gays and dare feature homosexual characters who actually have sex. *Queer as Folk* works the diversity of gay characters, while on *Six Feet Under* the characters lean more distinctly to homomascularity.

Fritscher was likewise correct about the incredible mobilization of the gay community in the 1990s to battle AIDS. Grossly and inhumanely over-inflated medication costs, and our abilities to adjust our sexual behaviors have been, for the most part, successful. Unfortunately, according to most recent reports, gay men are backsliding again in regard to safer sex practices but that is another dangerously spicy enchilada entirely. Fritscher was quoted in the magazine, *Continuum* (November 1996), by the Canadian author, Ian Young, who wrote an article titled "The AIDS Cult

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and Its Seroconverts.” Fritscher said: “Purposely, some twenty-something boys, who have never known a sex life without AIDS, fatalistically expose themselves to HIV as a test of ritual manhood.” That’s not what Fritscher means about homomascularity.

Also, gay erotica has grown in slow fits and starts over the past 34 years since Stonewall in 1969. In the early 1980s, a long fifteen years after Stonewall, Gay Sunshine Press became the first real book publisher of gay literature. In the 1970s, gay publishing was not books, but was magazines—the kind where Fritscher drove the content and style. Multiple gay book publishers, magazines, and journals have since risen closer to the surface of the straight mainstream’s bookstores and consciousness. Telling people you write erotica these days is not met with the sneers and patronizing derision of years past.

Gay porn, which took off in the 70s, also took off like a rocket in the 1990s. In a time when gay people were streaming out of their closets and fears of HIV were keeping more people at home with their VCRs, baby oil, and remote control, both professional and amateur gay sex videos flourished. Fritscher waxes whimsical: “So many more people watch videos than read books that I have joked with some guys who buy my books: ‘Don’t try to stick this in your VCR.’”

Fritscher who shot the original video, *Gut Punchers*, rarely pulls punches. He told John F. Karr during an interview that AIDS has changed and challenged gay men’s sexuality, resulting in an increase in nontraditional sex practices and its uses for increased sexual creativity. He notes that gay porn videos are increasingly made by individual artists who are directors casting real guys who may not be porn stars but are certainly no amateurs when it comes to having sex the way actual gay men do. These indie video companies, he says, excel over the larger West Hollywood companies that grind out videos that do not reflect the viewer the way that independent video does with indie artists like Old Reliable who was early on another Fritscher discovery in the pages of *Drummer*. When asked, Fritscher answers:

Where’s video going? It’s going to be more fetish oriented, because sex is not only your dick and your butt. The point is to let them have a good time, and also diverge from just thinking about sucking dick and fucking ass. And censorship? That influence of the Meese Commission still rolls along under the principle that if somebody abuses something, you have to take it away. But the abuse of a thing doesn’t take away the use of the thing. You can take that principle and put that on every adult video.

Excerpt source: [Jack Fritscher, *Gay San Francisco: Eyewitness Drummer*, San Francisco: Palm Drive Publishing, 2008](#)

Prohibition doesn't work. So we're going to see more gay films from independent artists.

Fritscher has predicted some sweeping changes in the face of the continuing AIDS crisis and its effect upon gay pornography. He grasps the extremely important psychology of the porn consumer and the need for producers of porn to adjust to the changes in demand. One of the most vibrant characters in *Some Dance to Remember* is the video-porn mogul Solly Blue who reveals what real gay sex on tape was like in the 70s. Fritscher—always the analyst connecting the dots—points out that in 1982, the VCR and HIV hit at the same time. Rather than cruising the bars, many gay men began staying home watching gay videos. He writes:

And [a higher production of gay porn] will change the sexuality of gay men. I think art should primarily entertain; but if it's art, it will change you. Gayness gets you into places you wouldn't get into as just a [straight] person. And a lot of gay boys miss that point if they think the bar style is the only way to be. That sounds like I'm crusading, and I'm not at all. I'm just offering an alternative [to bars].

Kicking shit in the 21st century, these days Fritscher voices his concerns about the genre of gay literature. As a trained cultural analyst, he is critical of the “gay writing genre” and all of its traps. He seems to be always pushing for something better from gay artists and writers. Fritscher comments in 2001's *The Burning Pen: Sex Writers On Sex Writing* (edited by M. Christian): “Look at the lesbian magazines. Most of the illustrations look like the drawings of mental patients. Most of the models, pro or amateur, have dead faces. Much lesbian writing reads the same: mental and dead. Humorless. Lesbian narrative is largely unimaginative.” He told me, “Gay writing has to be more than the ‘coming-out novel’ and the ‘AIDS novel.’ Lesbian writing should begin to cover lesbian people in terms of the great themes of the whole range of the human condition, because—ta-DA—we are human first and lesbian second.”

Chatting it up with Jack Fritscher on a Sunday afternoon was an enchanting experience that was, at times, both unsettling and delightful. I have been warned over and over again to write in the third person, to stick to relevant information only, and not to bring too much of my own personality, biases, and opinions to my writing. Apparently, this is especially true in regard to interviewing.

Excerpt source: [Jack Fritscher, *Gay San Francisco: Eyewitness* Drummer, San Francisco: Palm Drive Publishing, 2008](#)

Of course, this is what many academics might tell you. In my case, that academic is my partner, Robert. He loves to point out any *faux pas* in my writing because he cannot help it—he is an academic. I usually just tell him to piss off.

The first Fritscher characteristic to strike me was his voice. With brilliance often comes an ostentatious air, those sometimes overly professional (read: defensive), articulate (read: I rule the planet), and aggressive (read: poor social skills) traits that make for a challenging interview. Anticipating the possibility of this combination makes my emergency Ativan supply beckon to me from the medicine cabinet. Take me, it says, and relax into the moment. It turned out that I needed no pharmaceutical kick whatsoever because Fritscher, who seems assertive but neither ostentatious or defensive, nearly charmed the pants (literally) off me.

This interview came at an unplanned moment when Fritscher and I connected between a ridiculous array of problems and obligations. Both of our mothers were ailing; our domestic partners needed special attention (Fritscher's is recovering from knee replacement surgery); and I quite frankly grew afraid that Fritscher might change his mind before I dipped into the resources of his worldly mind with my ladle. Yes, Robert, my love, you are right. That is a pretty hideous analogy but it stays.

To begin on a more carnal note (and why not, really?), Fritscher is a deadly combination of three alternate elements, opposing the three I had initially feared, all seemingly orchestrated by the Goddess to completely unnerve me. First, his physical appearance is strong in a sexual-authority-figure kind of way. (He finished at #11 on the San Francisco Sheriff's Exam in 1976.) And second, he has a voice that would be a perfect match for an old boyfriend of mine from Philly, still affectionately referred to as "Philadelphia Joe." It is almost like a deep purr, a melodic confidence rarely found except perhaps when you hit the jackpot calling a 900 line (not that I have done such as thing because, man, those expensive minutes add up so goddamn quickly). Fritscher knows pillow talk.

Last, I have never been a huge Marilyn Monroe fan, but I do share at least one trait with her. We are two Geminis wowed by the raw sexual power of intelligence. Marilyn went after writer Arthur Miller whose most famous play was about witchcraft. Hmmm. And Mapplethorpe liked Fritscher because, Mapplethorpe said, "We have intelligent sex." Hmmm, again. This may not be the most professional statement I will ever make, but I am willing to admit that Fritscher warmed my cockles a degree or two.

[The entire interview can be read at www.JackFritscher.com]

Alexander Renault is the pen name of the young writer Nicholas Hornack who was killed in a car crash in February 2006. As a journalist, he wrote many reviews and interviews for his online magazine, *Pornographic Pulsar*, featuring writers such as Patricia Nell Warren who co-opted the words, *front runner*; Jack Fritscher who coined the word, *homomascularity*; and Mark Simpson, “the Skinhead Oscar Wilde” who coined the word, *metrosexual*. He conceptualized and edited the anthology, *Walking Higher: Gay Men Write about the Deaths of Their Mothers* (2004), and wrote the books, *Soul Kiss: The Confessions of a Homoerotic Vampire* (2004), *Queerer Than You Think: Post-Millennial Bodies, Sex, and Porn* (2004), and *Forbidden Tricks* (2005). He was a columnist for *Fusion* magazine in Savannah, and for Marilyn Jaye Lewis’s Erotic Authors Association, and for the Velvet Mafia and beefyboyz.com. At the time of his death, according to his personal correspondence with Jack Fritscher, he was beginning a Master’s Degree in Creative Nonfiction Writing overseen by Norman Mailer at Wilkes University in Pennsylvania where he intended to write his travelogue memoir, *A Damn Yankee in Savannah*. His “Vanguard: An Interview with Jack Fritscher” was published in *Pornographic Pulsar* (April 2003) and in Stevie “Chazda” Burns’ *Voracity Beat* webzine in Germany. As planned by Nicholas Hornack, the introduction to that interview — albeit unable to be updated — is re-printed in *Gay San Francisco* as he originally wrote it.

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