

acted out in silence. At ten, we are still learning

the rules of cartoon animation,

and this whole panel under by sharks, she will learn

that if a man runs off the edge of a cliff
he will not fall

a man draws a door on a rock
he can pass through it,
else who tries

will crash into the rock. Ten-year-olds
should stick with burning houses, car wrecks,
ships going down-- earthbound, tangible

until he notices his mistake.

...s, until the bone snaps, save him

I have to tell him. From my roof I can see
the East River, it looks blackened with oil

the river north I could still
reach him.



Of Two Minds

Poetry and Comics

Nick Flynn

As far as I can tell every aspect of what I do is collaborative. I couldn't write a poem if others hadn't written poems before me, or if others hadn't made films, or danced, or painted. Or built bridges. Or fixed my car. But could I, do I, collaborate with the guy who fixes my brakes? I haven't so far. There is that necessary inward time, as well, but without pulsing between the two, the inner with the outer, the collaborative with the independent, then what? I worked with a couple of dancers on a piece once, and during the performance they somehow pulled me in, had me dance with them. Utterly unnerving and inspiring. As poets we can forget that the poems exist in the body, more so than in the mind, and by working with artists—sculptors, painters, dancers—who intuitively understand this, we can only deepen the work.

Josh Neufeld

I've always been geared toward collaboration, and it's always been part of my comics work. In high school I teamed up with classmates to make amateur superhero comics; one of us would write the stories, another would pencil them, and still another would ink the pages. After college I illustrated stories for David Greenberger's *Duplex Planet Illustrated*, and for years now I've been drawing for Harvey Pekar's *American Splendor*. As a cartoonist, I've had the opportunity to form creative partnerships not only with writers from the comics world, but also with playwrights, journalists, poets, family members, and children—not to mention such unusual (and sometimes unwitting) collaborators as The Beatles, an old issue of *Superman*, and my own mirror reflection. I love the energy of a good collaboration—the back-and-forth of ideas, words, and images—each collaborator challenging the other. The result truly is of two minds.

Nick Flynn's Another Bullshit Night in Suck City (Norton, 2004) won the PEN/Martha Albrand Award, was shortlisted for France's Prix Femina, and has been translated into thirteen languages. He is also the author of two books of poetry, *Some Ether* (Graywolf, 2000) and *Blind Huber* (Graywolf, 2002), for which he received fellowships from, among other organizations, The Guggenheim Foundation and The Library of Congress.

Josh Neufeld is the designer of *Teachers & Writers* magazine. He is the writer/artist of the nonfiction graphic novel *A.D.: New Orleans After the Deluge* (Pantheon, 2009). A collection of Neufeld's comics collaborations (including two with Flynn) can be found in *The Vagabonds #2: "Of Two Minds"* (Alternative Comics, 2006).