

Henry Darger

by Mamma Andersson



The first time I saw **Henry Darger** was in *Flash Art* magazine in the mid-90s. I tore the page out and kept it just for me. I wondered who the hell could have ever painted something like this. Back then no-one really knew about his work. But some years later, I found a catalogue. And some years after that, I saw a huge show at the American Folk Art Museum in New York. In some strange way, it shocked me, seeing them in the flesh after years of studying reproductions. Suddenly I was face-to-face with the life-size works and undistorted colours. The remarkable thing about **Henry Darger** is that he never planned on being an artist. Perhaps that's why his images seem so naked, so terrifyingly beautiful, so naïve, so dangerous. He never intended us to enter his therapeutic fantasy world. So each time we

look at them, it is as if we're reading someone's diary without their permission.

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