

I Want to Know the Habits of Other Girls

by Dewayne Slightweight

I Want to Know the Habits of Other Girls began as a comic which interweaved autobiographical elements with the stories of four characters: Limbo Tomboy, child prodigy composer, Gilda Radner, a fictionalized comedian who loves a woman called Jean Wilder instead of a man called Gene Wilder, Gordon Gaskill, world expert on erotic relations between men and pelicans, and Auntie, keeper of the family flame. Around this time I started to construct life-size stuffed bodies skinned in satins and covered in embroidery inspired by my feelings of loneliness after many people I knew left Chicago, and I called them my "friends" who lived in my tiny attic apartment with me. Eventually they became the physical embodiments of the four characters in the performance version. Composing a soundtrack for the performance made the characters talk and sing, both amongst themselves, with me as the performer, and with the audience. I wanted a new way of visually and aurally expressing relationships and communities that were always intertwining and moving away again, unstable but certainly precious, psychedelic but not opaque, fantastical but intimate.