

Sterling Bunnell wrote a memorable poem about the Batman Gallery

REMEMBERING THE BATMAN

By Dr. Sterling Bunnell

**Here's to William Jahmarkt
Alias Billy Batman
A prince of the night
Who echolocated his way
Among the beat-ing sounds
Of imagination's wings.
Before he graduated
To the Empyrian college
With a bullet in the abdomen
As his diploma
He started a gallery---
A creative wormhole
In the smug matrix
Of the late fifties mentality.
From childhood he had worshipped Batman
To him a god, perhaps Hermes,
The Olympian messenger and guide
To the dark inner realms.
So when he came into the money
He opened a gallery on Fillmore Street
Called it the Batman and painted the walls black.
Like the Bermuda Triangle
It only opened now and then
But on some magical evenings
The lights were on and the door unlocked..
The artists who showed there
Were not those fondled by the local critics
But their work was rimmed with the divine fire
And glowed before the stygian walls
Like the molten lava of the creative unconscious
Pouring out volcanically into the night
Carl Gustav might think it a case of synchronicity
That one of the Batman's major artists
Was George Herms, whose name recalls
The phallic monuments to the messenger God
Which Greeks erected along their roads.
The Batman was surely a road to wonder.
When Billy could no longer keep it going
He sold it to Mike Agron, a wise and
compassionate mind healer**

**Who recognized the gallery
As a miraculous passageway between the
worlds.
With a little business sense
The doors stayed open.
From the patient attention of Hazel Agron
Who minded the place day after day
What had been a flicker became a steady light.
From opening to opening
The Batman was home to those of us
Who live by the inner eye.
What openings of the spirit flowered there!
Charles Plymel's incredible collages
Would grace the ceiling of any Renaissance
chapel
Bruce Conner brought us web-shrouded relics
from the
 catacombs of far Arcturus
While Bob Brannaman tapped a gusher surging
 from the wellsprings of archetypal mythology.
Dion Wright fashioned his own authentic Medusa
With a writhing mop of red diamondback
rattlesnakes
Her hand and gaze reaching out to freeze your
gizzard
For these and all the others who showed there
The Batman will be remembered.
But now that it is gone
We are left to wonder
How could such a thing
Come to be? And if we knew
Then just maybe
Could some of us do it again, please?**

Dr. Sterling Bunnell 1998