

**"Dialogues"
Just Above Midtown Gallery (October).**

Although JAM/Downtown, a Tribeca alternative arts center, attempted to bring together the diverse and divergent groups that make up the "downtown," just-out-of-the-mainstream part of the art world, few of the participants made use of the theme—"Dialogues." The performances presented were for the most part "monologues" with passive audience participation.

Halloween brought out a large and curious crowd of costumed funseekers as well as friends and fans of the performers. The mood was festive but the pieces were mostly serious, a couple very melancholy. John Malpede—who has the face of a Wendell Corey-type B-movie actor—performed "Too Much Pressure." His deadpan

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delivery, choice of music, and arch storytelling did center on the dialogue theme. Mostly, his response was to speak of the futility of communication by centering on the manifestations of those afflicted with "hebephrenic schizophrenia"; i.e., laughing when it is most inappropriate. The laughter arises because "the hebephrenic regards the very fact of communication ludicrous and ridiculous." As Malpede stalked in front of an overstuffed chair, he gave three versions of a terrifying story of patriarchal manipulation. His piece, despite its brevity, questioned not only the value of communication but the necessity of the family, of ambition, philosophy and art.

Patricia Jones

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