



Art School Prostitute

Dylan Jonas Stone

Abstract

In *Art School Prostitute*, Dylan Jonas Stone describes deceiving the authorities in order to purchase an authentic police uniform to wear working as an escort. As a young boy, art making came easily to Dylan, sexualised at the age of 12 by an older man; incorporating the confusing combination of sex, dreams and drawing to create his feature film *The Gardener's Theatre*, has been enlightening – and cinematic.

I'm not the only one in my family to fake some paperwork and change my life forever.

In 1904 my great grandfather came to New York City to find work and set things up for his wife and four daughters who were to arrive the following year, they were working class jews, leaving a hard life in Eastern Europe.

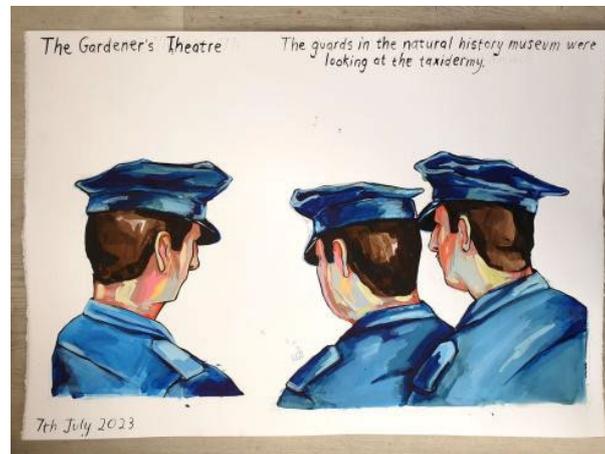


Image 1. The Gardener's Theatre, a drawing from the feature-length film.

In the early 1920s there was a fire in a hospital in Brooklyn. The building burned to the ground. Thousands of immigrants who had arrived in New York via Ellis Island the previous 100 years claimed their birth certificates had been destroyed in the fire. My grandmother was one of those people, she was born in Moldova and came to the United States in 1905 when she was four years old with her mother and three sisters.

Now, she was a US citizen from birth and, six years younger.

In 1996 I was an art student in New York City and I had no money. I asked a friend in my class to create for me a fake letterhead for a theatre company. I wrote a handwritten letter from a nonexistent costume designer of a fictitious off-Broadway play in production. The letter stated that I was in rehearsals and I needed an authentic New York City police uniform as my costume for the play.



Image 2. The gardener, in his free time, is drawing model ships at the museum.

I walked into the official shop where police officers buy their equipment, showed them my letter, they believed it, and for several hundred dollars I owned an authentic New York City highway patrol uniform including tall black motorcycle boots, a truncheon, handcuffs, a Sam Browne, and a wide black leather belt to hang the various accessories.



Image 3. As he draws, he begins to get tired, his eyes close and he is naked, tied to the main mast of the ship.

My friend took photographs of me in my new gear.

The previous day I was in the gay bookshop on 18th street looking for work on their bulletin board. I came across a book titled 'How to be a Gay Male Escort'. I read the book cover to cover that afternoon and the author described how a man can earn \$250 an hour; the first sentence in the book read –

“There is always someone for someone else.”

I didn't have a mobile phone; I needed one when I decided to become a prostitute.

In those years, gay bars had free magazines lying around listing all the events for the gay community. At the back there were a few pages where escorts advertised with a photograph and phone number.

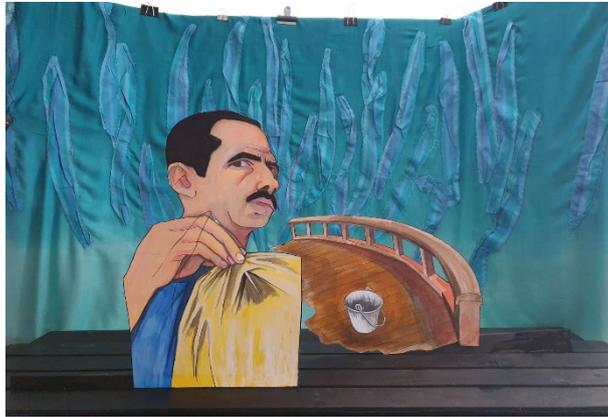


Image 4. The captain of the ship is embroidering, and looks towards him. There is a tin bucket on the deck.

After reading the book, buying the uniform and taking the photographs, I took out an ad, mine read –

OFFICER STONE HAS YOUR SUMMONS, CALL –

Men called, I went into apartments and hotel rooms all over Manhattan, the men who I visited knew exactly what they wanted, they told me beforehand either in an email or over the phone. Their front door was left ajar at the allotted time, I would walk in, make sure the \$250 dollars cash was left within eyesight of the threshold (as the book had instructed), take off my coat and I'd be ready for action for one single hour. I found in most cases, these men wanted repeat visits, with the same identical scenario.



Image 5. In his dream, the gardener looks over the balcony at the theatre and sees a man sitting in the middle of stalls, there is no one else in the other seats.

Here are some of the scenarios that took place:

- A man in his twenties lying naked on top of his bed wanted me to pretend I had had a rough day at work. He wanted me to lay on his bed in my uniform, he would be cosied up next to me. He didn't want me to say a word because it had been such a hard day, for an hour we played out this scenario.
- This man wanted me to come into his apartment and sit in a particular chair. He had a dildo that was screwed to the floor and when I was sitting down watching him, he would sit on the dildo, and it would go straight up his arse, he wanted me to hold onto a long piece of string tied to his testicles. I would tug this while he ejaculated.
- An airline pilot came through the city frequently and he liked me to tie him across the bed widthways with a rope. His wrists and ankles were tied with the rope going under the bed. Then I'd spank him with a paddle he supplied.
- This man had a specific like for a particular clothes hanger. He liked me to tie his ankles together with rope and with the hanger (which he supplied) in between. He always told me I could never get it right, nor all the other escorts he paid to come to his apartment. Although I guess he liked that aspect, because I was always invited back.
- This was a young man who was a hoarder, just about everything one can imagine was stored, everywhere. He liked to lick my tall motorcycle boots, including the soles.
- This man liked me to come into his flat and he would be laying on the kitchen floor naked. I would stand over him smoking a cigarette in my uniform, and urinate all over him. I intentionally drank a lot of water directly before I entered

his flat so I would have a lot of urine, as that was what he wanted, a lot of piss all over him. Of course I would talk as dirty as possible.

- This man liked me to urinate in a dog bowl. Alongside the dog bowl there were several dildos of various sizes, from small to large. When he was on his hands and knees ready to drink my urine from the dog bowl, I would insert the smallest dildo, take it out and proceed to the next largest one.
- This man created a set of rules: For me to insist he call me SIR and, he had to ask permission before being allowed to talk with me. One scenario was to pretend we were friends having a drink, then I get angry with him, I get rough, I force him to drink another bottle of beer, handcuff him, order him to apologise to me, he has to get down on his hands and knees and I kick him in the arse while I ejaculate over him.
- This man liked me to put a lot of lube around the end of my truncheon. I would have to say, "How does this look?" he'd tell me to keep on greasing further along the truncheon. Then he'd say, "Please shove it up my arse SIR". I'd order him to hands and knees, and he'd tell me to keep pushing the truncheon up his arse as he wanked and ejaculated.

These men without exception had a glazed look in their eyes when I was in front of them in uniform, their dream had come true. A New York City cop was in their apartment and I was going to use them, handcuff them and beat their ass. So my roll was pretty clear, I had to treat a guy badly.



Image 6. In the dream, rows of seats pass by, hands are taking the rows of seats back and forth.

Although in the outside world I had absolutely no idea how to treat a guy well in the first place. My few experiences of long-term relationships were breaking other men's

hearts then walking out because I had no idea how to maintain any kind of loving companionship.



Image 7. His trousers are undone; a hand is reaching down the small of his back and under his arse.

I am now 58 and I look back with no amazement at all at my activities as a prostitute.

I was desensitized to sex, my penis was just like a sausage hanging off the front of my body, I ordered these men to suck my cock while I got an erection then I'd tell them to back off and I'd ejaculate all over their face while they were handcuffed. They'd get the machismo of my persona and the necessary coldness for what I was there to do, of course to give them the brush off.

Sex didn't take place when I was an escort. A man kneeling on the floor while he is handcuffed who proceeds to suck my cock because I order him to do so is not what I would call sex. I was entirely devoid of understanding anything remotely emotional. I was there to use these men and I was paid well in return.

Sexual intimacy had been robbed from me when I was twelve years old. The Portuguese man who worked at my parents' business lured me in and when I was thirteen we started having sex. We had secretive meetings, with gentle force, he would push his erection into my mouth, keeping his right hand on the back of my head. When he ejaculated, he released his hand so his sperm was all over my face, hands and clothing. Through the power of his deception, he trapped me and used me to have his kind of sex.



Image 8. The gardener is cycling from one job to another, as he cycles, he passes by an empty auditorium.

That was how I learned to have sex. I don't think in my 45 years of having sex with men have I ever really known how to remove some aspect of that coldness, the impersonal and insensitiveness.

Being used has been a prominent fear throughout my life. I have had to forgo friendships, sometimes quite suddenly if I feel I am being used for whatever reason, whether for my sex, intellect or for my practical abilities.

I may have been hasty when I decided to stop talking to specific friends or partners, I probably was rash over the years and I could easily have made serious mistakes and hurt people.

In Gestalt therapy I have been able to express in words what it is like to be used and not know how to escape. The specific nature of having a space to speak from the perspective of a situation, not as me, has helped me to understand what it means to create scenarios that are not necessarily real. These psychological situations are a war in my mind and to verbalise my dreams enabled me to live through difficult and debilitating thoughts.

My dreams had specific scenarios; they would be about my precarious home being destroyed leaving mountains of rubble and of living in a state of destruction. Another would be that my friends wouldn't rescue me in a state of war, they wouldn't attempt to contact me to bring me along with them, I'd be left by myself with no home.

This last one made me extremely sad; it made me feel quite alone for many years.



Image 9. He continues cycling to work, he sees his collection of rocks and minerals he keeps on top of his chest of drawers at home suddenly break apart.

One day when I was with a close friend for dinner in a restaurant, I actually asked her if she and her partner would come get me if we found ourselves in a state of war. I started crying at the childish nature of my question, it sounded absurd. She reached over the table, took my hand and said, “Of course Dylan, of course we will come get you”.

I asked her the question because I needed that exact response. Saying it aloud was what I needed, I was used sexually at such a young age, dumped when I was thirteen; these feelings most likely come from a real-life situation that happened when I was a boy.

There is a film by the Australian director Garth Davis made in 2016 called *‘Lion’*, the film has an extraordinary opening scene, a boy of eleven is looking after his younger brother who is five, they are going on a train journey. They are accidentally separated and the younger brother is trapped on a different train going to another part of the country where they don’t speak his language. It is a nightmarish scene and I realised I have felt this happening to me in my mind, trapped, thousands of times. I was watching images of how I have felt for over three decades.

On the other hand, sexual intimacy and tenderness has been an absolute mystery to me. I met a man in the kinky uniform scene who had a specific taste for Nazi gay porn. He sent me some of the videos in his collection and they were an absolute curiosity to me, devoid of anything remotely sexual. One of them shows a man in Nazi uniform, he carries a machine gun and attached to the muzzle is a dildo.



Imager 10. The gardener is at the Natural History Museum, drawing rocks and minerals.

There is a naked man in front of him, on his back, cuffed into a position for the man in uniform to fuck him with his AK-47. The man in uniform salutes Hitler and repeatedly shouts, “Seig Heil” as he proceeds to fuck the man with his machine gun.

The entire scenario is surreal, the gritty pornography is set within a WWII bunker and it is truly startling imagery. The magic of filmmaking makes these pornographic mixed messages extremely effective, clearly there are some people who are turned on by the swastika banners, props, sets and uniforms. The location is visually integral to the sexual violence and is in such poor taste, it truly reaches the lowest level of desire.

Several years ago, an actress friend introduced me to her acting coach who she was working with. She told me he had a similar story to mine and that we should meet. This man was my age and he told me how he came from a C of E family and when he was a boy, the local vicar lured him in and they started having a sexual relationship. The location of their secret meetings was the church, surrounded by the rows of pews and the altar up in front of them. In my case, when I was twelve, we were surrounded by rows of cinema seats, and up on the magnificent silver screen would be an incredible film. When I met the acting coach, he was at the beginning of a law suit and wanted to have the vicar arrested for what had happened 40 years previously (he was successful in having the vicar put into prison). These sexual situations are overwhelmingly about control, the vicar was so entirely convinced of the power structures of the religious architecture, the cross, his liturgical clothing, he really did think he had the power to do as he pleased at the back of his own parish church, with children.

We talked for a few hours. I had floods of tears for the majority of our time together. He was describing my life although he didn’t know me in the slightest. He told me about being used, by lovers as well as friends throughout his entire adolescence and adulthood and, he told me about having to drop friends from one day to the next.



Image 11. As he draws, his eyes begin to close, the cabinet of rocks and minerals goes out of focus and a hand takes it away.

Many people have suggested for me to do the same, to notify the police. I learned that this kind of investigation is a massive intrusion into one's life.

The police take the case and it becomes entirely out of my control and takes years to come to a conclusion.

I don't honestly think I can deal with more things being out of my control than I have already had, for so many more years of my life.

I made the decision not to pursue the Portuguese man but to create a film about the perverse control he placed upon me as a young person. This film consists of my drawings, performed in a large-scale paper theatre. My drawings will shift and slide along the stage and a no holds barred storyline will set the scenes in vivid colours; the narrative told through nightmarish dreams and the irrational make-believe, non-existent disaster scenarios around me I've carried around for decades. I'll make a feature film and people will be able to see my story at a film festival, maybe even the man who I had the sexual relationship with when I was twelve and thirteen years old will see it.

In the film I've turned myself into a gardener, when he touches the soil, his dreams partially appear, the storyline travels through a confused life of images from the past that occur while he cycles and gardens. Erratic memories are always present. The gardener disappears into worlds of paper theatres, images on glass slides projected through magic lanterns show incomplete stories he is always trying to understand.

The Italian painter Zoran Mušič was interred in Dachau and dared to create tiny drawings of the grotesque scenes he saw in the camp. He would have been killed if found out. He hid them and after the war they were made public. His drawings are extraordinary Goyaesque pencil sketches and for decades after the war he painted piles of dead bodies. In a documentary he said, "All I wanted to do was make something beautiful out of the horror."

I'd love to be able to say those words about my film 'The Gardener's Theatre', the story of how a boy is sexually manipulated, lives a life of promiscuity and fear and as an adult tells his story through his own drawings.

When I was twelve years old the risk backfired and I was taken advantage of by a man whose motivations were selfishly sexual, his own vanity and prowess took control of my young mind; A silent threat led to a form of sexual violence. His deception changed my life and I would not want it to happen to anyone.

When I was at my most active making money as a prostitute, I wanted to see if I could earn additional money by appearing in gay porn films with a police theme.

I contacted a few porn film production companies, they all had the same requirement. I needed to send them photographs of myself naked, showing the size of my erect penis (though not enormous, my erection is most likely adequate in size).

So my friend who created the false letterhead for me, this time took photographs of me with an erect penis. Of course, this time I couldn't create a fake document; if I showed up on set and my erection wasn't the size it was in my pics, I would have been kicked off set.



Image 12. The Gardener's Theatre, a drawing from the feature-length film.

In 'The Gardener's Theatre' there will be no CGI or digital manipulation. My drawings will pass by the camera frame creating the perspective of my childhood, watching the history of films and now I can show my film to others.

I have to admit to myself that although years of Gestalt therapy has helped me draw out the words from my childhood, I do carry around hatred and anger. I probably would have taken my life years ago if I didn't also carry around a lot of humour and the fantasy of one day becoming a stand-up comedian.

When I was eleven, I wrote about everything in my diary. A year later, the eyes of the Portuguese man enclosed me; the sexual conduit of our secret twosome.

My writing became simplistic, purely stating non personal activities. I became a sexualised child adult. For fear of writing, I drew detailed drawings of imagined characters and environments coherent to a child floating in a misunderstood and conflicting world. I didn't know what was going on; I knew how to wash his cum off of my face.

In the late 1970s my favourite toy was a reproduction Victorian paper theatre. I drew all the scenes, cut out the minuscule pieces, glued them onto cardboard and acted out my plays as great operatic classics. The Portuguese man's erection and ejaculations were my paintbrush and inks for my childhood plays.

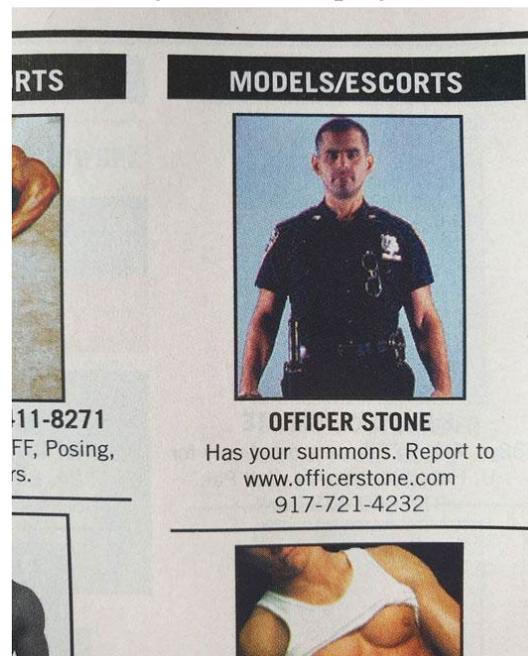


Image 13. Dylan's classified advert for his services in a gay magazine from the late 1990s.

Decades later, I've re-created my favourite childhood toy, my drawings will slide across the stage I have constructed and become a film – *The Gardener's Theatre*. The gardener, overwhelmed by his daymares (mine), escapes to the Natural History Museum's vast rooms where he draws in his notebooks a magical prehistoric past. His pencils are the bars of a cell of confused sleep, incomplete awful dreams and a pattern of leaving lovers; an opera for a paper theatre.

In Raúl Ruiz's *Mysteries of Lisbon* a paper theatre is the device for the child protagonist to see characters and scenography moving eerily, emotionally foretelling the premonitions of his own story arc. Thankfully I have always had the ability to love drawing and painting with ink and watercolour and has given me the gardener and his childhood paper theatre. Gestalt gave me adult words, to write this essay.

This essay is a sequel to ‘Queer Tango’, published in the *European Journal of Life Writing* December 2024

About the Author

Dylan Jonas Stone (www.dylanjonasstone.com) painted “Barbara and David Stone’s Bookshelves”, a 12 ‘x 14 ‘ watercolour of his parents’ library, acquired by the Museum of Fine Arts Houston. His 26,000 photographs of New York City, Drug Store Photographs was at the MoMA PS1, reviewed by Holland Cotter in *The New York Times*, acquired by The New York Public Library. His miniature rooms based on photographs by Eugène Atget, at the Nicole Klagsbrun Gallery, was reviewed by Roberta Smith, chief art critic for *The New York Times*. Susan and Michael Hort purchased several for their collection. For The Museum of Children’s Books in Turin, a collection of over 50,000 children’s books, he produced prints of a boy walking, cycling and drawing in the natural world. His collection of diaries featured in *Handwriting history: 200 Years of personal diaries*, an exhibition in 2024 at The Maugham Library in King’s College London.

The Gardener’s Theatre is his gay coming of age story: at the age of 12, he had a sexual relationship with an older man. Dylan is creating a film of this emotional account of his childhood. *Short Stories* are miniature bronzes of his sexual encounters. Nicole Klagsbrun showed them at the New York Armory; at Frieze London they were on the Deutsche Bank Top Ten List, and with Bill Arning Gallery, The Houston Art Fair and in Richardson Magazine. His work is in the Albert Rafols Casamada Foundation, and his botanical watercolours at Carnegie Mellon University, Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation.

Dylan storyboarded for Johnny Depp’s new film *Modi*, *Three Days on the Wing of Madness* and Anton Corbijn’s most recent film *Switzerland*.