

Dylan understood his work more fully when he looked at the floor in his dorm and spotted a term paper entitled, "Creativity and Depression."

page interactive, autobiographical book that explains the "meaning of life" and eight slide-show-like "movies" that incorporate his photographs, writing and self-described "ambient dolphin music." The people Dylan has met since Tabitha are what have kept his project moving at a prolific rate.

Vincent Van Gogh and Frida Kahlo were not alone in their torment over heart-wrenching lovers. Their work, like Dylan Tauber's, speaks of love, depression and suffering in ways that feel altogether genuine. Dylan understood his work more fully when one day he looked at the floor in his dorm suite and spotted a term paper entitled, "Creativity and Depression." "The more suffering I have," he said, "the better my art is."

Tabitha, his muse, disappeared after that first week only to resurface a month later. She was recovering from a brief heroin stint and had quit her job as a stripper. She left a phone message saying she was back. They spent another week together. Dylan took some more photographs.

He asked her to read the story he was still writing, an experience about which he would later write: "She read the entire thing in silence ... The wait was excruciatingly painful. But in a very sick way I was getting a rush off this absurd situation — sitting in my room with somebody who I wasn't sure was really there — maybe she's just a character in my story."

Her silence nearly drove Dylan mad, until he again picked up his camera and filtered his feelings through it. Tabitha was a willing subject, allowing herself to be directed by Dylan to his bed, where she lay down naked as he triggered away.

Later, Dylan likened this experience of photographing Tabitha to "madly fucking her." There was no tenderness, no soft focus, no filtered light. He placed a photo flood light beneath her, creating hard shadows and shot her from a low angle. She appeared ominous. Loud, tense rock music blared throughout. Tabitha stopped at one point, put on some make-up and wrapped herself in Saran Wrap.

"I was tapping all my obsessive, manic energy into my camera. I jumped around the small room with my camera like a mad warrior attacking a demon in my sights with clicks of my shutter button."

Dylan was so engrossed in the moment that he barely noticed when a fan fell on his face and cut his nose. The blood stimulated both of them. Tabitha tended to the cut and for a moment Dylan's "normal" half wanted to kiss her. "But my manic rush was cli-

myself ... Here I am with Isis, Goddess of Cats and all I can do is jerk off with my camera."

The last time Dylan saw Tabitha was in a campus darkroom where he developed for her the photographs he took that second week. Months later, without Tabitha but with a new, seven-gigabyte computer, scanner, printer and photographic imaging software, Dylan would replace Tabitha's head in a photograph with the head of a cat.

Dylan's time with Tabitha was an inspiration not only for his multimedia project, but also for what he considered an individual spiritual evolution. For Dylan, Tabitha embodied New York City.

"I come here and I feel like I get trampled on," he said. "This is not a good place for spiritual people, it is a spiritual void. I feel like a dolphin in a swimming pool." For him, the cat's head on Tabitha's body represented an encounter with deadness. "I failed," he said. "I wanted to bring her deadness to life." He recalled a moment at a diner during which Tabitha provoked him to utter that lurking of all questions, "Would you like to be my girlfriend?" Dylan said nothing instead. Now, he speaks of Tabitha in technical terms. She comprises just 350 megabytes of his seven-gigabyte computer, a mere footnote in the world of experiences he since has had that comprise his *Double Mirrors* CD-ROM.

More important to Dylan is his "vision quest," a pursuit to share the meaning of life he realized through trips between New York and Israel during the past four years.

"But what I really want is to wake up every single person out there in this cave of ours who's been victimized by the lies, fear and hatred that saturate our society... We must put an end to organized religions, oppressive governments and every other institution that spreads human suffering. But more than that we must Love. Free love isn't some slogan from the sixties. It is the only thing that will keep humanity from destroying itself."

Dylan has pursued his vision quest with quixotic verve. In addition to explaining his meaning of life to "hundreds of people," Dylan currently is trying to sell *Double Mirrors* to a publishing company.

The beginning of *Double Mirrors* has the following warning: "This CD-ROM contains the meaning of life." The warning Dylan neglects to

He is convinced it will be a best-seller.

Dylan hopes to sell the CD-ROM soon so that he can retire to Israel, where he will meet his current, imagined muse: the Ethiopian Woman. Israel also holds his other muses: the dolphins of the Mediterranean Sea ("Dylan" in Welsh means "Son of Waves"), and the "visionary," a man named David who roams the beaches of Tel Aviv and with whom Dylan felt a strong connection upon their meeting. Each of the Israeli muses comprises its own "movie" in *Double Mirrors*.

Tabitha also has her own "movie." It opens with an image of a lush rose stabbed by a frighteningly long knife. A downward spiral underlay with descending cats' heads acts as a contents page of sorts.

The phone message Tabitha left from Dylan's dorm lobby fades in and out, as does the slow, whispering Nine Inch Nails song, "Something I Can Never Have." A slide-show of images fade to and from the screen: an innocent, half-smiling Tabitha laying on her back with her head tilted to the viewer; a Saran wrapped Tabitha applying lipstick; a dressed Tabitha putting on the fake pearl necklace that Dylan loved; a nude Tabitha clenching a sheet behind her as she stands like the crucified Jesus ("Jesus," wrote Dylan. "Only prettier").

There is a viciously-smiling Tabitha with her spiked heel lunged at the viewer's face; the heel inches closer and closer to the front of the screen, towards the viewer. And in the end, there is Tabitha with a cat's head.

Dylan has worked constantly on *Double Mirrors* since last October. "I spend all my time on this. This is my life," he said. But the past few months have been like torture. For him, knowing the meaning of life and having it all but fall on deaf, unwilling ears has been unbearable. Moments of self-doubt are coupled with moments of "what if?" wondering. Every day that *Double Mirrors* goes unpublished is a day that bottles up anxiety and energy.

Dylan in New York is alone in his vision quest. The woman remembered as Tabitha is married and works as a publicist in Los Angeles. He says he never loved her, nor did she love him. There was a two-week exploration of a potential for love, nothing more. They understood each other.

He spends most of his waking hours in a dim, one-room apartment on East 14th Street. The

screen. The air is filled with the monotonous buzzing of his large computer set-up, occasionally piqued with his meandering, soulful "dolphin" music. He sometimes plays this music on his synthesizer so loudly the walls shake.

The photographs he took of Tabitha still hang on her walls in Los Angeles, now enjoyed by both her and her husband.

Break a Leg, Now!

By Josh Wolk

When James Michael King, a six-year veteran of the audition circuit, found out that his friend Mary Mara had landed a role on *E.R.*, his first reaction was, "That's fucking wonderful!"

That feeling lasted two hours. Then he was visited by a couple of old friends: jealousy and self-doubt. "I could do that," he thought, as his friend rejoiced in her coup. Well, maybe he couldn't play that exact role, which was that of a prostitute, but he could certainly do something else on *E.R.* Or on any other show, for that matter. Where was his part?

King's experience is common to most actors at some point in their careers. In a recent *Movieline* interview, Gary Sinise confessed to vicious jealous thoughts when John Malkovich, the co-founder of their Chicago theater company, Steppenwolf, was drafted to New York and Los Angeles for high-profile roles. Just as there's a difference between telling your cohorts to "Break a leg," and actually wanting them to suffer a fracture, so too is there a difference between wishing the best for someone and actually wanting to see them get the best in place of you. While watching a fellow actor get a big break can be cause for optimism, so can it be cause for paralyzing pessimism. "Seeing



Defactor a male actor out of jealousy