

I flew out of Sydney for New York November 2 just as the polling booths closed in the United States.

I flew United.

I sat next to a retired couple from Melbourne who were going to visit their daughter in Boston, he took the window seat, I always ask for the aisle.

I listened to the BBC on channel 9 on the audio program as the pilot advised rather than the flight traffic he would switch over so we could follow the election coverage.

I had that familiar sinking feeling that comes of backing the wrong horse; hope the pancreas is better Mark, even though technically I had not actually bet. I worried as Bush took a slight lead which increased until the only discussion was focused on the Ohio Electoral College.

I interpreted this through the Australian vernacular so there seemed to be a vague hope that this may go to Kerry and push him to the lead and the presidency. I was wrong.

I had to watch I Robot as simultaneously the transmission from the BBC ceased and alcohol service was suspended.

I heard the pilot making an announcement as the breakfast was being served in what I thought were joyous tones that President Bush has been returned to the White House and that John Kerry was now making his concession speech which we could listen to on channel 9 on the audio program.

I was digitally photographed and fingerprinted entering the country under the visa waiver program (VRP) as I have a machine readable passport (MRP) and was taken aside for a bag search (BS).

I told the homeland border protection official that the only other time I had been searched at a border was by the French (I was on a night bus from The Netherlands to London and understand somewhat why that search occurred) and she said oh the French don't say that, stopped searching my bags and said that I could go.

I was struck by the peculiar orange glow of the electricity that stretched to the horizon as we flew into New York.

I heard Michael Craig-Martin say that installation of Donald Judd's sculptures at Marfa complete the landscape.

I did not hear Michael Craig-Martin say anything about the potential significance of the site from an indigenous perspective.



I learnt that Marcel Duchamp is an American.

I was advised by a girl at a party not to get a greyhound bus to Philadelphia because they are full of African Americans and all they do is eat fried chicken which stinks up the bus.

I was asked by a policeman what I was doing with my video camera at the world trade centre site and told him I didn't really know and was moved on.

I watched a John Bock video three times through at Anton Kern and thought it was the best contemporary work that I saw.

I learnt that customer service does not have to involve answering any of the customer's questions.

I saw a good Anri Salas exhibition and thought that the mayor of Tirana must be a wonderful person.

I went to Coney Island to have a go at the baseball pitching machines but it was closed.

I took the lift to the top floor of the Guggenheim and walked down the ramp.

I used someone else's card to get free admission to all the museums.

I took a photo of Guy with the girl that had a beard on the door of a bar we went to on Avenue A where ten dollars bought you all you could drink.

I met a junkie on a train who offered me methadone. I attempted to get a better deal on a camera case off a Jewish guy at JR.

I couldn't buy a Robert Ryman as the show was sold out before it opened.

I couldn't understand why the tax could not be figured into the shelf/menu price.

I went up to Lexington 125.

I tried to turn a trick at 53rd and 3rd but was one they never pick.

I caught the train to Beacon and looked at all the flagpoles.

I saw an excellent Ant Farm retrospective.

I could not believe how cheap books and electronic goods were.

I thought Lombardi's did the best slice of pizza that I ate.

I don't think that I saw anyone famous in the street but I may have and not noticed.

I heard people say right a lot.

I was surprised that you could not buy a catalogue with your credit card at Sperone Westwater Gallery and thought it lucky that I did not want to buy a Rothenberg.

I only ate two meals a day due to the size of the portions at restaurants.

I enjoyed smoking a cigarette in the herb garden at the cloisters looking at the colours of the trees across the river.

I followed a homeless guy collecting cans one night for five hours while he filled six bags with cans and tied them to his trolley.

I took a photo of Vito Acconci's old apartment building in Christopher Street where Dan Graham introduced him to Dennis Oppenheim.

I could not understand why Julian Opie's sheep were everywhere downtown.

I asked the girl at the Guggenheim bookstore if the Barney DVD was multiregional and she told me that it would not work in Europe.

I went to MOMA the day after it reopened and the sculpture garden was closed as it had been raining.

I better understood the ongoing contemporary reality that Kunst equals Kapital.

I really enjoyed the Rodney Graham retrospective at MOCA Geffen in LA especially the halcion work and even enjoyed the country self city self work which I



did not like when I saw it before in Berlin.

I ate delicious burritos at a Mexican diner on Thanksgiving and was thankful that they were open and had nothing to be thankful for.

I heard a hippy say that honey is bad for your body but taking lots of codeine is really good for your body and felt confused.

I ate at Roscoe's with TV grits and collard greens no Fuzzy.

I met a native New Yorker Italian-American who thought that all of the Anglophonic countries should form a super country and fuck the rest of the world and that the use of nuclear weapons against any country that was against us was essential to show those bastards that we aren't fucking about.

I did not know what to say when he took a dollar bill turned it over and said look at that the United States of America in god we trust isn't that the most beautiful thing you have ever seen.

I am glad I am not a seppo.

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**Tony Schwensen is an artist based in Marrickville, Sydney. FATWHITESTRAIGHTBALDGUY, a survey of his video performance works of the last six years, was shown at The Performance Space, Sydney (17 March – 16 April 2005).**