

**JERRY PHILLIPS**

**IT SHOULD HAVE BEEN THE HAPPIEST MOMENT OF MY LIFE**

**Solo Exhibition -- February 18 - April 3, 1993**

What sort of a person was this man? A thought formed in my mind before I was aware of it. Why was I so interested in this person whom I had never seen? I watched his frenzy calmly.

Edited from Romance comic books, like all the text he uses in his drawings, the above (borrowed from an unfinished work) could be said to accurately capture my thoughts upon meeting Jerry Phillips. I "watched his frenzy calmly" as he first described his work. "Why was I so interested in this person...?" Could it be that I too "recalled fantasies that were centered on muscular comic book heroes"? Perhaps. But, I was also deeply moved by the simplicity of the drawings, their naturalness. Perhaps the honesty and vulnerability expressed in the drawings in such a direct, matter-of-fact attitude pushed all the right buttons. Haven't we all felt a little tongue-tied when faced with a possible love interest? How often have we felt physically inadequate in the pursuit of romance, and then anger for buying into "ideal" unrealistic models so pervasive in our society. How often "it should have been the happiest moment of my life"? The text in Jerry Phillips' drawings conjure up images of ideal romances played out by perfect human beings, while the portraits bring it all down to earth. Together, text and image, confront the viewer directly, challenging our preconceived perceptions, pointing out our "hesitancies and anxieties" and, if met with the same openness which they proffer, helping us "maneuver through a world which often seems intimidating."

Artists Space, established in 1973 is a not-for-profit culturally broad-based center for contemporary arts and artists service organization. We are committed to the presentation of work, in all disciplines, by unaffiliated artists; to ignoring the arbitrary and capricious boundaries between disciplines; to exploring non-hierarchical methods of developing programs and to providing artists a forum through which they may refine and define our culture.

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