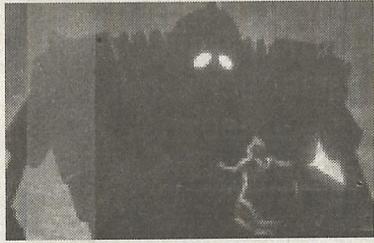


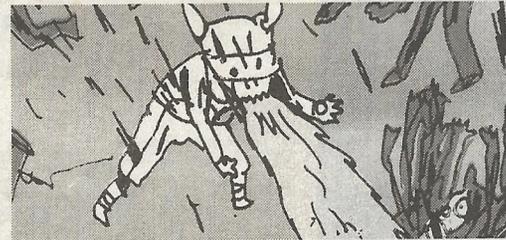
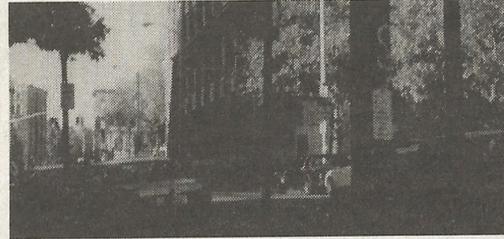
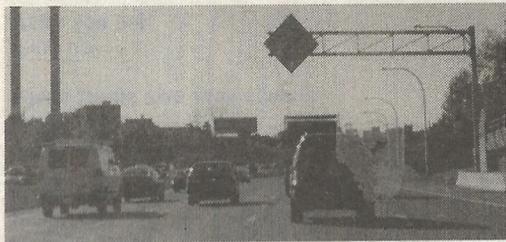
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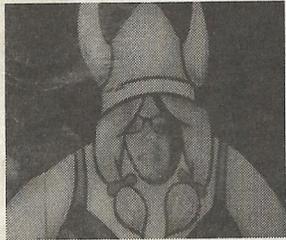
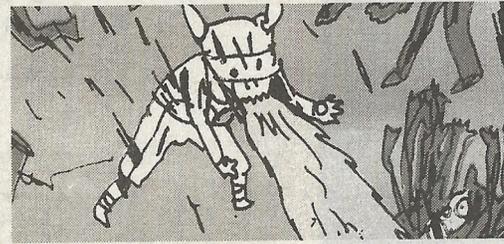
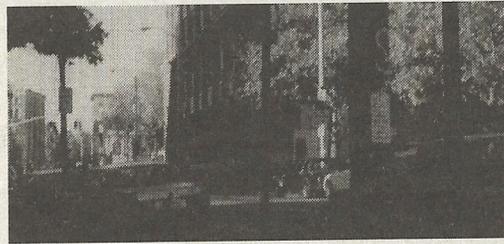
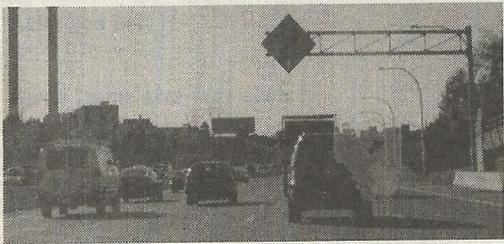
MEDIA



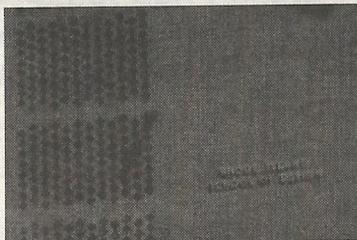
I will not dump you after you like me



LIFE AT RISD



LIFE AT RISD



volume 6. issue 4.



RESPONSES

Response Heard on the Mixed Media Answering Machine:

Hi! I just wanted to call and say that I really like the article that Don Morton wrote in this month's issue and also the article on the following page is great, too . . . And good luck in the contest—the win a date with Allen Spetnagel [laughter] contest—that's cute. Just a RISD community person . . . You're doing a great job! See ya, bye!

in response to the letter to the risd community in last issue

I am saddened and absolutely disgusted by the lack of intellectual commentary and respect of fellow students work. Critique and discussion of feminist issues are valid. Yet I am ~~very~~ curious to know who appointed you five gals and one boy the righteous mentalities to deem the project of two people to hold "no discovery no creativity no depth, no artistic triumph"

I am sorry to be reminded that some artists in this world have the colossal egos to make such arrogant statements. I am not sorry to say that you are



This letter is in response to the recent response concerning the apparel events held at Woods-Gerry Gallery and Fort Thunder. After reading the article, I felt that certain issues were overlooked and ignored, hence resulting in an inaccurate account of the event. I will be able only to comment upon the Fort Thunder show as I unfortunately missed the Woods-Gerry event. The level of professionalism involved at Fort Thunder does invite a critique, but when the critique is effected by the audience's drunken response—the resulting observations are jaded. According to the critique, "the clothes seemed less designed to display craft, creativity, or talent than to elicit catcalls from the audience." I would like to stress the fact that while catcalls did fill the air—a greater number of beers circulated the room. A drunken group of college students are not going to stand passively while their classmates are expressing and celebrating their sexuality. While the

I felt that the artists were gender conscious in their choices made at Fort Thunder. The article mentions that the clothes do not empower but, "dress women up to play the same roles we've always had to play." I would argue that the clothing did empower the models, and celebrated the versatility in which females can and do express their sexuality. By taking recognizable roles and interpreting them through the clothing and dance performed, the designers successfully displayed the fluidity of sexual identities even to the extreme of incorporating a drag queen into the performance. The audience, both male and female alike, were able to identify with each role from both levels of the runway. The article concludes with a question in regards to the designer's goal, message, or statement. I would like to conclude with my own interpretation of the event. (This is by no means me speaking for the artists, for I do not even know them). The statement or message dis-

community person . . . You're doing a great job! See ya,
bye!

in response to the letter to the
community in last issue

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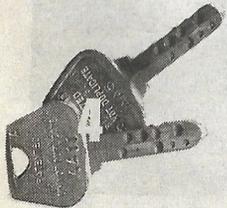
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artists in this world have the colossal
egos to make such arrogant statements
I am not sorry to say that you are
full of shit

elizabeth
tomasetti

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the audience." I would like to stress the fact that while cat-
calls did fill the air-a greater number of beers circulated
the room. A drunken group of college students are not
going to stand passively while their classmates are
expressing and celebrating their sexuality. While the
authors may feel that this was inappropriate, the environ-
ment functioned as a means to maximize the exposure of
their designs. The actions of the public does not dictate or
disqualify whether the clothing displayed craft, creativity, or
talent. The structure and method of presentation at Fort
Thunder exhibited the strength and versatility of female
sexuality. Each model came out portraying a different
stock character, some of which included what the critics
called, "cliched feminine roles." While the vamp, doll, call
girl, and bride were acted out, the article neglected
to mention the tomboy, business woman, and ballerina.
The show was not weighted to strengthen the voyeuristic
gaze, but to display the variety of forms female sexuality
may exhibit. As far as the role of the impassive male mod-
els, they appeared to function as guards for the
models, servants, or merely pieces of scenery. Personally,

I felt that the artists were gender conscious in their choices
made at Fort Thunder. The article mentions that the
clothes do not empower but, "dress women up to play the
same roles we've always had to play." I would argue that
the clothing did empower the models, and celebrated the
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of the runway. The article concludes with a question in
regards to the designer's goal, message, or statement. I
would like to conclude with my own interpretation of the
event. (This is by no means me speaking for the artists, for
I do not even know them). The statement or message dis-
played through the combination of seamless transitions,
charged clothing, and expressive models, uphold the range
and freedom of sexuality and therefor celebrates what it
means to be young, physical, and alive. A message which
extends and includes both sexes.

-Abbey Dehnert '01



THE

LAST

MIXED MEDIA

Does anyone else find the trendy "White Trash" theme to fall a little short of being funny?

-Anonymous

In response to the sexual fantasy peep-show silhouette sculpture girls who have so much intellectual insight:

damn-isn't displaying your body fun?!! We had a blast at the Ft. Thunder show. Sorry your sexual fantasies have to be limited to restrictive gender consciousness imposed by college ethics. Would we engage in a show that perpetuated gender stereotypes? Damn straight, sisters, if it's sexy and fun. Let's not get caught up in a politically correct agenda. We all want to get laid. The performance at the Arcade spoke of women's interior role models; our show flaunted women's exterior behaviors. So it irri-

FIGHT

OR

FOLLOW



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Andrea Hackman

Lu Heintz

direct all responses to mixed media to:

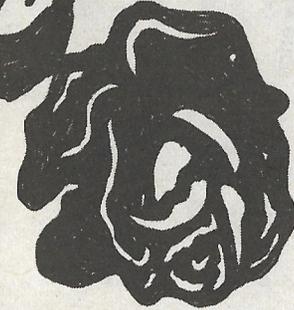
FIGHT



OR



FOLLOW



WE ARE THE

FUTURE

mixed media: risd box e-8

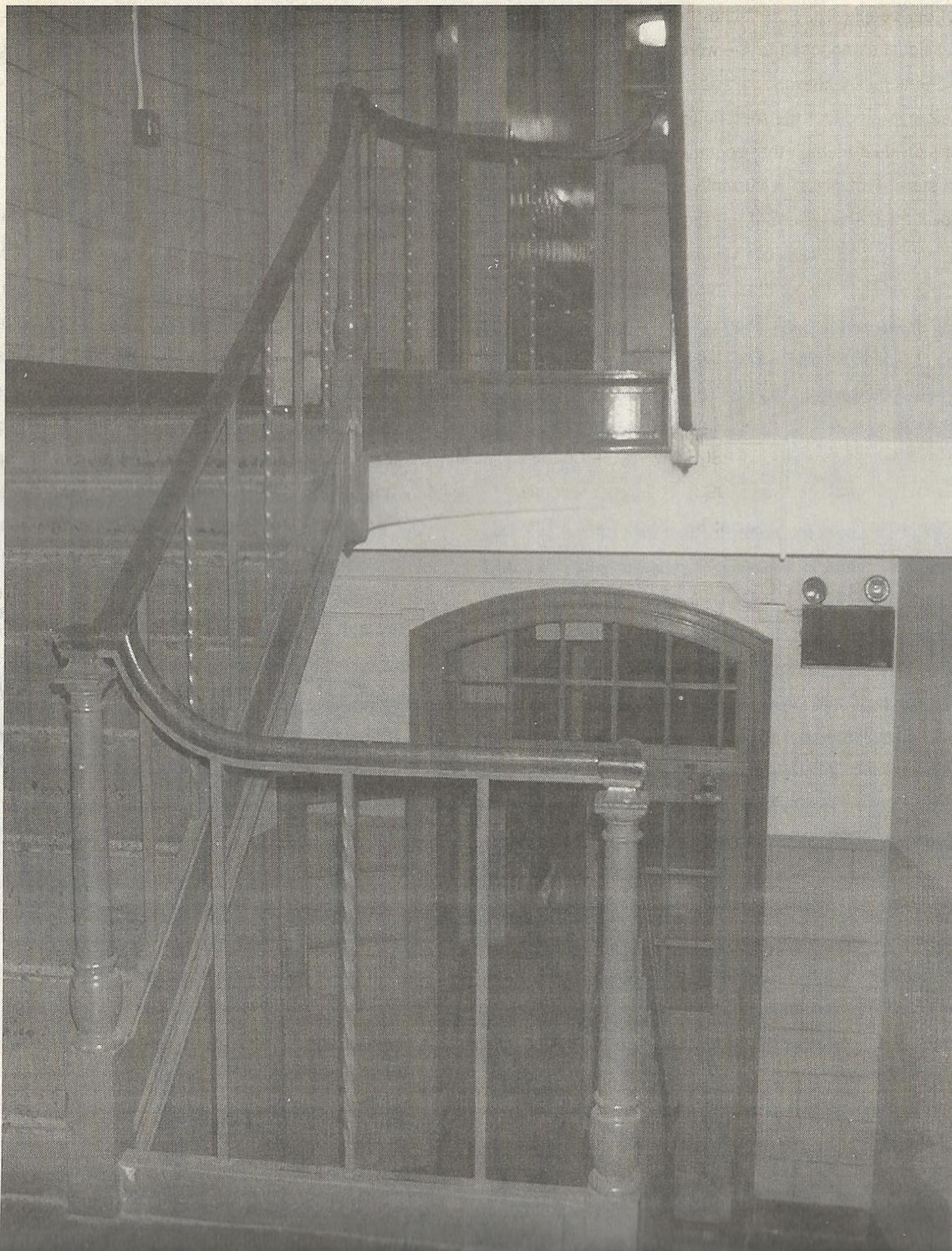
mmedia@risd.edu

(401)454-6682

meetings are in the mixed media office above
the mailroom, wednesdays at 7:30pm.



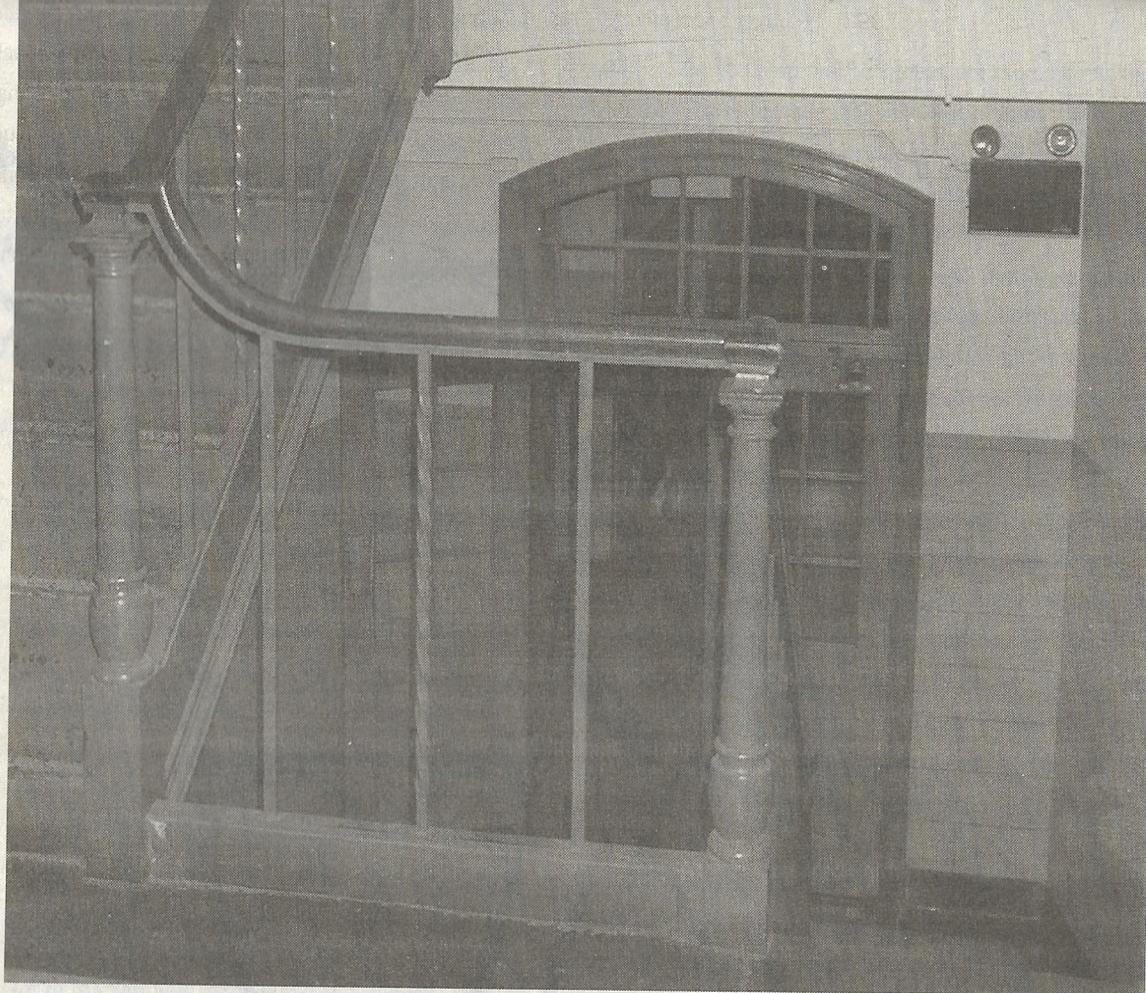
Prof. Patricia Barbeito reviews Kenyan author Ngugi wa Thiong'o



On Monday, April 10th, at 7 p.m. in the RISD Auditorium, Kenyan author Ngugi wa Thiong'o delivered a lecture titled "After Asmara: The Language of Arts, Knowledge and Scholarship in Africa." Considered to be one of the most important living African authors, Ngugi wa Thiong'o is an internationally acclaimed playwright, novelist, and critic, and is Professor of Comparative Literature and Performance Studies at New York University. The lecture grew out of Prof. Ngugi's recent participation in a groundbreaking conference on African languages (the first such conference ever to be hosted on African soil) in Asmara, Eritrea. His talk revealed how the dominance of European languages in Africa has become one of the most subtle means of excluding the majority of the African population from the venues of official culture and power.

Language, for Prof. Ngugi, is the voice of a whole culture; when a language is lost, so is that culture and the particular histories, experiences, and values contained within it. The dominance of European languages is the obvious result of colonial and imperial intervention in Africa; separated from their lands and homes, the African people were also separated from what Prof. Ngugi calls their "base" and forced to speak through a series of Western constructs or masks. Prof. Ngugi's work recuperates these silenced cultural forms. More of a performance than a linear academic presentation, Prof. Ngugi's lecture used oral storytelling techniques to link together a set of interrelated concepts — homestead, base, language — into an evocative talk/story. Prof. Ngugi has stated that "struggle is a main part of [his] aesthetic." His novels elaborate on this statement, not only in the way they draw on the cultural roots of his people, but also in the way they insist on linking the plight of individual characters to the history and struggle of a collective.

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Art, no matter what its context, is always political for Prof. Ngugi; it may either serve to support the assumptions and value judgments of the status quo, or to call these assump-

Art, no matter what its context,



The momentary panic disappears like the fleet footed rabbit as you realize "I am a true artist. 'Jobs' are for those sell-outs in illustration. My work is all that's important." Graduation comes and goes, as do the following months, and your parents refuse to pay any more of your bills. You have three options to escape the wrath of creditors:

- page 50. Live in the sewers painting its denizens and "experiencing first hand" the life of a "hobo."
- page 57. Board a cargo plane at Providence Airport. Note: This option is suggested for Glass majors.
- page 51. Decide to build a large animal to hide in and place it on the White House Lawn.

tions into question. Prof. Ngugi's novels include: *Weep Not Child* (1963) for which he received the UNESCO First Prize, *A Grain of Wheat* (1967), *Petals of Blood* (1980), *Devil on the Cross* (1982), and *Matigari* (1986). These novels are powerful chronicles of the struggle against the colonial state. His novel *A Grain of Wheat* dramatizes the anger aroused by the colonial state's public execution of the Mau-Mau guerrillas who resisted British rule in Kenya during the 1950's. From this, one of his earliest works, he focuses on forms of exploitation and control that link the colonial to the post-colonial state. *Matigari*, a seemingly simple yet incredibly haunting novel, traces the journey of the novel's eponymous protagonist as he struggles to find his lost family and people and gain possession of the home that he built with his own hands but that was taken away from him.

Of all of Prof. Ngugi's novels, *Matigari* is the one most consciously based on oral storytelling techniques; the repetitions in the novel strengthen the mythic resonances of the character *Matigari*, who, ageless and often formless (he sometimes appears as a dwarf, at others as a giant) seems to be an avenging ghost, a Christ-figure, and a figment of rumor. Located in an unspecified but clearly colonized space, the novel blurs the distinction between particular, individual definitions of family, home, and identity and the larger but related concepts of "people," "country," and the "masses." *Matigari* first struggles to wrest his home out of the hands of the appropriately named Settler Williams, only to find that during this struggle John Boy Jr., the son of Settler Williams's faithful black servant, has made it his residence. Educated at the London School of Economics, John Boy Jr. is on the governing board of a number of multinational companies and, consequently, is in a position to have his interests represented by the governors of his ostensibly democratic state — he is able, after all, to contribute generously to their various "charitable" causes. When *Matigari* reminds John Boy Jr. of his debt to his own people, John Boy replies, "I would ask you to learn the meaning of the word individual.

rance of our people. They don't know the importance of the word individual as opposed to the word masses." The novel reveals the complex network of racial, class, and political oppression veiled under the rhetoric of free-enterprise and tales of individual triumph that continues to plague the post-colonial state. Prof. Ngugi is currently working on a 1,500 page novel titled *The Wizard of the Crow*.

Prof. Ngugi wa Thiong'o's critical work combines his interest in African and Caribbean literatures, theatre, film, and cultural theory and practice, and elaborates on the connections between art and politics evident in his novels. His critical writings include *Decolonizing the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature* (1986), *Moving the Center: Struggle for Cultural Freedoms* (1993), and, most recently, *Penpoints, Gunpoints and Dreams: Towards a Critical Theory of the Arts and the State in Africa* (1998), which was drawn from his Clarendon Lectures, delivered at Oxford University in 1996. His most recent book, *Penpoints*, explores the relationship between what he calls "the state of art and the art of the state" in their struggle for the control of performance space. For Prof. Ngugi, the concept of performance space is crucial: it encompasses not only the literal space of an artistic performance, but also the whole state as a type of "stage" that imposes certain roles and restrictions on its citizens. The question of the politics of the performance space is, he argues, "basic to any theorizing about the post-colonial condition because it touches on nearly all aspects of power and being in a colonial and post-colonial society. It is germane to issues of what constitutes the national and the mainstream. In a post-colonial state this takes the form of a struggle between those who defend the continuity of colonial traditions and those who want to see reflections of a new nation and a new people in the performance space as a unified field of internal and external politics." Born and bred in Kenya, Prof. Ngugi studied in Uganda and England. During the mid-70s he participated as a writer in a community-based literacy and culture program with theater at its center,

program became a truly community affair, involving peasants and workers who created a play based on their own histories and sung in their own language — Gikuyu — rather than English.

These plays and their community-based structure were extremely threatening to the ruling regime, and Prof. Ngugi was arrested in 1977; he was confined to a maximum security prison for a year, to be released only after the death of the first head of state, Jomo Kenyatta. Since 1982 he has been in exile from Kenya. Much of his work, both fictional and critical, focuses on this issue of exile and homelessness. Prof. Ngugi has likened the state of exile to a type of imprisonment, an "exclosure," as he puts it, from the space which nourishes the artist's imagination; yet, exile can also grant the writer a type of freedom, a chance to reach back into his territorial space —ironically enough— through the authorizing ear of a global audience. Prof. Ngugi is consummately aware of the politics of the consumption, appropriation, and dissemination of postcolonial texts: he points to the prominence of postcolonial texts published in English and the avid consumption of certain genres in the West. His novel *Matigari* provides a particularly interesting example of the ironies of postcolonial writing in exile. *Matigari* was written in 1983-1984, in the first couple of years of Prof. Ngugi's exile, and is the second of his novels written in the Gikuyu language (since *Devil on a Cross*, all of Prof. Ngugi's novels have been written in Gikuyu).

It came out in 1986 and was very positively received in Kenya, so much so that the police issued a warrant for the arrest of the agitator *Matigari*. When it became apparent to the authorities that *Matigari* was, in fact, a fictional character, the book itself was "arrested" and taken out of circulation. The English translation of the novel came out in 1991, and two years later was sold in Kenya in this English translation; it wasn't until 1997 that the Gikuyu language original was slowly and somewhat surreptitiously reissued in Kenya.

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is always political for Prof. Ngugi.



You are now a designer of "cutting edge" labels for condiment packages! The designs are brilliant, bold statements that capture the essence of the "X-TREME CONDIMENTS!" line by Del Monte, such as Relish and Mayonnaise mixed together. That just shouldn't be done! It's morally wrong! But worse, when they said "cutting edge labels" they meant it literally: the razor sharp labels double as Ginsu Cutting Knives capable of cutting through a tin can like a hot knife through... um, butter... bad analogy. But after several lawsuits involving severed fingers resulting from stuck bottle caps, you are out of a job. But at least you can now use your design labels to work as a chef in a Japanese steak house!

