

Ident

Art zine, Mike Fischer, 32 pgs.

Zine Review by Cole Bisson

With one foot in reality and another foot in fiction, *Ident* speculates on possible stories using identification cards as its jump-off. The tales are imagined, but the cards belonged to real people at some point, collected by the creator and given life on each spectacular page.

A mix of personal diary entires, cut and paste images, and clip art, *Ident* looks like someone home printed it and penned each story in the margins. Short pieces of prose surround and overlap the identification cards. It's a class DIY look, appropriate for this low-stakes but interesting experiment of a zine., down to the cover—perhaps a copy of a passport booklets.

The autobiographical entries, however fabricated, are not merely an exercise in speculation. Rather, they touch on the problems of today. A Russian photo card, imagined to be a remnant of a “random” police search in the hunt for a criminal, depicts someone originally from Sierra Leone. The character pleads, “How utterly foolish I would have to be to commit such a crime,” in a desperate attempt to reason with the stern officer. More than a character sketch, this story traces a line to comment on present day turmoil surrounding racist policing. It's a critique of the present through a slice of the past, condemning racial bias and abuse of power.

Every tale struggles with how we see other people. The card details are but an introduction to a story which all warn against making unfair inferences about other people. We are each more than our height, eye colour, skin colour, date of birth, or national origin, and there are potential consequences for making assumptions. Yet, one wonders, is Fischer's whole project premised on inference? You be the judge.