The we of weewerk

By Catherine Osborne

There are at least sixty in the room
and the place is jammed. Tops 'n Bottoms Ensemble are here doing their costume dress-up
routine for fans and selling copies of their zine,
while later rock band Vizz performs in one corner
of the room. "Tops is the host," says artist
Grenville Koh, about the number of people it
takes to fill her living room/saloon to capacity.

Last November, Koh and Phil Kluge decided
they'd rename their 350-square-foot second-floor
apartment "weewerk" and host mini-size art
discussions, screenings, concerts, and events every few
weeks. The scale of the whole project is as modest
as their space, but the community of artists and
musicians participating has been unexpected and
nonstop.

The two have fine-tuned operations to a
double system—upcoming events are posted at
weewerk.com, e-notices go out to subscribers, and
people turn up. They turn up to hear Bob
Wassman perform with the Davis Light Children,
to talk to filmmaker Bruce LaBruce and Scott
Theodor about art and mortality. And they drop in
to see art shows like Basicweewerk, a group exhibi-
tion about the morphing of art, design, crafts, archi-
tecture, and modernist rhetoric. That show included
one of Kelly Mark's elaborate Lenticular drawings,
made from hundreds of black letters and numbers,
and each printed in a shifting pattern across the wall.
There was also Derek Sullivan's modern revolu-
tionary slogan, a cheery banner of support for the
American modern architect of Mies van der Rohe
that read, "Give Mies a Chance."

None of weewerk's events last too long. Most
wrap-up within a day or a night, even within a
few hours. Some stuff is for anyone to come check out,
some isn't. The website fills in for a lack of any reg-
ular hours and the online archive contains every-
thing that's taken place in the past four months.

"I'd thought about opening a gallery," says
Koh, about starting weewerk, "and also a bar, so
this made sense. Plus, Phil has an excess of ideas."
They both do, and are already well known for
their day jobs. Kluge runs his own record label,
Teenage USA Recordings, while Koh's art exhibi-
tion schedule includes trips to Tokyo, Sydney, and
Frankfurt over the next few months.

Weewerk will live on, however, even when
"phil-gem" takes off. Koh's planning on launching
weewerk spot radio by taking a satellite-transmit-
ting with her to Japan for some local weewerk
broadcasting. •

Right: Phil Kluge and Grenville Koh, Above: weewerk trends, Images: courtesy: weewerk