

SPECIAL FEATURE: Mailer's Vertical City
A raffle to benefit the Norman Mailer Society

Background: In 1965, Norman Mailer and two friends, Eldon Mowery and Charlie Brown, spent three weeks assembling a seven-foot high structure out of thousands of Lego Blocks. Titled "Vertical City," the construction, Mailer said, "was very much opposed to LeCorbusier; I kept thinking of Mont-Saint-Michel." He goes on to say, "Each block represents an apartment. There'd be something like twelve thousand apartments. The philosophers would live at the top. The call girls would live in the white bricks, and the corporate executives would live in the black." Long strands of wire would hold the soaring towers together and "once it was cabled up, those who were adventurous could slide down. It would be great fun to start the day off. Put Starbucks out of business."

A photograph of Vertical City accompanied the essay by Mailer in the *New York Times Magazine* (31 January 1965) attacking the unimaginative functionality of modern architecture. The essay was reprinted in Mailer's 1966 miscellany, *Cannibals and Christians*, which featured a color photograph of the structure on the dust jacket. For the next 38 years, Vertical City sat in the corner of the Mailer's apartment in Brooklyn Height. When Mrs. Mailer redecorated their apartment in 2004, the structure had begun to fall apart and it was decided to take it down. A few memorial chunks and piece were saved and now the Mailers have donated one bowling ball-sized piece to The Norman Mailer Society. The Society will raffle off this chunk, which is yellow and black and blue, along with a copy of the first edition of *Cannibals and Christians* and an 11 x 14 inch color photograph of Vertical City. Both the book and the photograph are both signed by Mr. Mailer. Raffle tickets (\$10 apiece) will be sold at The Mailer Society Conference in Provincetown, November 4-5, 2005. These may be purchased only by members of The Society. The winner will be announced at the Society luncheon on November 5th.

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