

considerable

PEOPLE

PHOTO BY MAX S. GERBER



CHRISTOPHER RUSSELL  
BEDWETTER

**LAST YEAR, CHRISTOPHER RUSSELL BOUGHT A DEFUNCT DOT-COM'S COLOR PRINTER** and launched *Bedwetter* Publications ([www.bedwettermagazine.com](http://www.bedwettermagazine.com)) from his Silver Lake apartment. In the black-and-white world of the zine, his works bloom brightly — at least briefly. His zines, which are mailed at random, are meant to be torn up, literally: A flurry of color photos, handwritten notes, Xeroxed paintings and self-produced pamphlets tumble out of *Bedwetter* #3 when it's opened. It's a way, he says, for the reader to be an active participant. "The zines aren't really something that can be left on the coffee table." *Bedwetter* #4, another exercise in ephemera, is due out any day.

Russell, a soft-spoken Art Center MFA student who tends to sound professorial, came up with the name *Bedwetter* because "bedwetting is the first site of social rejection, a child's first understanding that he might not be able to meet social expectations." He also produces chapbooks that, like his zines, subvert the genre: *Absolute Gothic Masterpiece* uses cinematic conventions of subtitling and fading as well as having a poem run along the bottom instead of page numbers.

He distributes his chapbooks at arbitrary locations around L.A. such as restrooms, phone booths and parks, and he also sells them at Beyond Baroque and Skylight Books. "They read at a glance as commercially produced," he says. "But that reading collapses on closer inspection as the books are anonymous, requiring one to struggle more to come to a conclusion about the quality of the story. Coming from photography, I looked for odd juxtapositions or things that were out of place. I want to create that sort of situation for other people to discover."

—Diane Mooney