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Kitsch Kritic

By Marc Spiegler

Paul Lukas's Beer Frame is a zine obsessed with the consumer goods that engulf our lives. "I guess I've always been a product fetishist," explains the mild-mannered book editor, columnist, and longtime packaging fanatic.

"I used to do a typical zine with hundreds of record reviews. I'd always have just a few product reviews, but they were the most fun." Now the 30-year-old Lukas doggedly seeks out loopy items such as the Car John disposable urinal (a vinyl pouch with cylindrical nozzle), Guycan Corned Mutton (the package adorned with a particularly surly sheep), and a sauerkraut juice drink (in no fewer than four varieties).

Whatever the topic, Lukas's writing adroitly walks the tightrope between wiseacre and egghead, extracting humor from our postindustrial effluvium. He also spotlights singular services, including every deadbeat's favorite, the Cold Trail Mail Co. of Wasilla, Alaska. Cold Trail Mail has nailed down how to make creditors, ex-lovers, and parents believe you've emigrated to the barren tundra. Beer Frame: US\$2 (cash or check made out to Paul Lukas), 160 St. John's Place, Brooklyn, NY 11217.

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