



# Henry Darger: Disasters Of War



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Henry Darger spent his life working as a janitor in Catholic hospitals, living alone in a rented room on Chicago's north side, attending Mass up to five times a day, and writing a picaresque tale in 15 massive volumes, composed of 145 handwritten pages and 5,084 single-spaced typed pages, and titled *The Story of the Vivian Girls, in what is Known as the Realms of the Unreal, of the Glandeco-Angelinian War Storm, Caused by the Child Slave Rebellion.* To accompany this enormous literary production, Darger also created several hundred large-scale illustrations--pencil on paper drawings painted over with watercolor and occasional additions of collage--that relate the story: on an unnamed planet, of which Earth is a moon, the good Christian nation of Anniennia wars with the Glandelinians, who practice child enslavement. The heroines are the seven Vivian sisters, Abbiennian princesses, who, after many battles, fires, tempests, and lurid torture, succeed in forcing the Glandelinians to give up their barbarous ways. *The Disasters of War* offers an affordable introduction to Darger's astonishing outsider oeuvre. It explains the technique, diligence and creativity of the works, illustrates details, and features a conversation between the Darger estate holder and the Kunstwerke's curator. A selection of 12 previously unpublished excerpts from *The Realms of the Unreal* and from Darger's diary explore the artist's favorite topics: thunderstorms and atrocities. With a biography and exhibition history.

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