

**PERFORMANCE**  
MAGAZINE

THE REVIEW OF LIVE ART No. 28

£1.20 \$3.50

Feb/Mar

**In The Shadow of  
Derek Jarman**

Plus ■ The Dead Rose: The Gothic  
and Exotic in Art ■ African Magic

**Performance Artists  
From Outer Space**

# ICA

## THEATRE

Bloodgroup presents  
**COLD WARS**  
7 - 19 Feb

Monstrous Regiment presents  
**ENSLAVED BY DREAMS**  
28 Feb - 10 March

Hesitate and Demonstrate  
**SHANGRI - LA**  
27 March - 14 April

## DEREK JARMAN

Paintings  
Upper Gallery to 25 March  
Film & Video  
Cinematheque to 26 Feb

## WILLIAM MORRIS TODAY

A major exhibition on Morris's  
work and ideas  
1 March - 29 April  
with  
Moving Being's new  
production on Morris  
**EARTHLY PARADISE**  
13 - 24 March

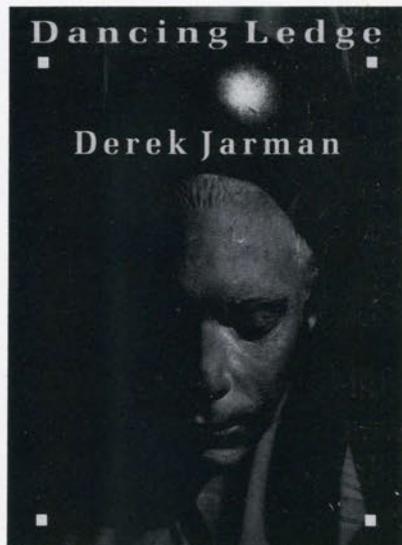


## • GHOST DANCE

- A film by Ken McMullen
- with Pascale Ogier, Robbie Coltrane, Jacques Derrida, Stuart Brisley
- Sat & Sun 12.25 thru Feb

THE MALL SW1 • 01 930 3647

# Dancing Ledge



# Derek Jarman

Dancing Ledge is an autobiographical collage compiled from notebooks, daybooks and film scripts from the forties to the present. The reflections and refractions of an independent British film-maker, this highly personal book is at once polemical and discursive, analytical and voyeuristic: a work of desire.



**QUARTET BOOKS LIMITED**  
27/29 Goodge Street London W1

£7.95 Paperback Illustrated

**One of the Foremost Centres for Dance Studies in the U.K.**

**DANCE THEATRE TRAINING COURSES** Leading to BA Hons or Certificate

**ADVANCED PERFORMANCE COURSE** (1 year full time)

**MA in DANCE STUDIES** (Full or part time)

**M Phil & PhD RESEARCH DEGREES**

**COMMUNITY DANCE & MOVEMENT COURSE** (Full or part time)

# LABAN CENTRE

WRITE FOR FULL PROSPECTUS TO:  
THE ADMINISTRATOR  
LABAN CENTRE FOR MOVEMENT & DANCE  
at UNIVERSITY OF LONDON GOLDSMITHS' COLLEGE  
LONDON SE14 6NW  
TEL: 01-691 5750 & 692 4070



# LABAN CENTRE



south hill park

**BARON ALBAN presents**

Saturday 3 March  
Sunday 4 March  
SANDRA BRIGHT  
Installation

Saturday 10 March 10.30 a.m.–5.30 p.m.  
Sunday 11 March 10.30 a.m.–5.30 p.m.  
WOMEN AND ART  
Mixed media workshop directed by  
CHRISTINE WILKINSON and BHAJAN HUNJAN

Saturday 17 March  
PLAYING ANGUISH: 1974–77  
Performance artwork by Ian Sherman  
and tape slide installation by Rasheed  
Araeen

Sunday 27 May  
THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL  
PAPER DART FLYING CHAMPIONSHIPS

**South Hill Park, Bracknell, Berkshire RG12 4PA  
Bracknell (0344) 427272**

TEATR LABORITORIUM

English Workshop Series.  
Three 5-Day Courses  
March 12–April 1.

RENA MIRECKA-ZYGMUNT MOLIK.

**DETAILS: Paul Bradley, THEATRE BABEL,  
The National School, Choppards Bank Road, Holmfirth,  
West Yorkshire. (S.A.E)**

# BLUECOAT

School Lane Liverpool L1 3BX 051-709 5297

Thursday 8 & Friday 9 March at 7.30

**MICHAEL CLARK**

'Parts I–IV' (shortened version) plus  
'Do You Me' (new duet)  
Tickets £3/£1.50 concessions

Tuesday 27 & Wednesday 28 March at 7.30

**EXTEMPORARY DANCE THEATRE**

New works by Emilyn Claid, Stuart Hopps  
and Michael Clark  
Tickets £3/£1.50

**SPECIAL OFFER — SAVE MONEY**

Book for both performances together and save £1  
on full price tickets (£5 instead of £6) and 50p on  
concessionary tickets (£2.50 instead of £3)

**BLUECOAT GALLERY 051-709 5689**

Open Tues–Sat. 10.30–5.00; Closed Monday  
March 10–April 7

**ROSE GARRARD: New Work**

An installation arising from a period of residency  
and research at Birmingham City Art Gallery

April 10–21 (Closed Good Friday April 20)

**JOHN CARSON: 24 Hours from Tulsa**

America the Myth as seen through 50 American songs,  
juke box installation and accompanying photographs  
and postcards.

## Contemporary Music Network

new music on tour



Arts Council  
OF GREAT BRITAIN

**LONDON SINFONIETTA**

'... stimulating programmes, superlative playing and  
responsive audiences' *The Guardian*

**Robin Holloway** Aria  
**Elliott Carter** In Sleep, in Thunder  
**Harrison Birtwistle** Carmen Arcadiae Mechanicae Perpetuum  
**H. K. Gruber** Frankenstein!! — a pan-demonium for  
baritone voice and orchestra

Martyn Hill *tenor*, H. K. Gruber *baritone*, Oliver  
Knussen *conductor*

February

Wed 22 8.00 BIRMINGHAM Univ, Barber Institute  
021-472 0622/0962  
Thu 23 7.30 LONDON, Bloomsbury Theatre 01-387 9629  
Fri 24 8.00 YORK University 0904-59861 x5959  
Sat 25 7.30 LEEDS Town Hall 0532-462453/4  
Sun 26 7.30 DURHAM Van Mildert College 0385-43720  
Tue 28 7.30 SHEFFIELD, City Hall 0742-735295/6

March

Thu 1 8.00 BRISTOL, Arnolfini 0272-299191  
Fri 2 8.00 COVENTRY, Warwick Univ. Arts Cen.  
0203-417417

**GANELIN TRIO**

First British tour by Soviet Jazz musicians

'... the wildest and yet the best organized and most  
professional free jazz I've heard in years' *Downbeat*  
**Vyacheslav Ganelin** keyboards  
**Vladimir Tarasov** drums, percussion  
**Vladimir Chekasin** saxophones, flutes, clarinet  
basset horn, trombone

March

Wed 7 LONDON, Bloomsbury Th. 7.30 p.m. 01-387 9629  
Thu 8 MANCHESTER, Band on the Wall 9.00 p.m.  
061-834 5109  
Fri 9 SOUTHAMPTON, Solent Suite 8.00 p.m. 0703-32601  
Sun 11 COVENTRY, Warwick Un. Arts Centre 7.45 p.m.  
0203-417417  
Wed 14 LLANTWIT MAJOR, St. Donat's Arts Centre 8.00 p.m.  
04465-2151  
Fri 16 KENDAL, Brewery Arts Centre 8.00 p.m. 0539-25133  
Sat 17 LEICESTER, Phoenix Arts 8.00 p.m. 0533-554854  
Sun 18 BIRMINGHAM, Strathallan Hotel 8.00 p.m.  
021-559 6205

**Further details of the concerts and related educational activities from Contemporary Music Network,  
Arts Council of Great Britain, 105 Piccadilly, London W1. 01-629 9495**

THE REVIEW OF LIVE ART  
**PERFORMANCE**  
MAGAZINE

---

## Seven reasons why you can't afford not to subscribe to Performance Magazine

- ◆ Britain has one of the most innovative and active communities of live artists in the world, yet little is known about their work. Performance Magazine tells you what's at the forefront of the action and where to look for it.
- ◆ Performance Magazine has for five years given its readers a regular reliable service in a field where many similar magazines have failed to continue publishing.
- ◆ It is always snapped up by library-users because of its attractive and readable format, its content informed yet not rigidly academic.
- ◆ Though focused in its commitment to covering the more provoking forms of live visual art, experimental theatre, music, video and dance, its scope is unlimited in dealing with affairs of the moment.
- ◆ Its recent exclusive and in-depth interviews have been with such diverse artists as: JOSEPH BEUYS, LINDSAY KEMP, SYLVIA ZIRANEK, GENESIS P. ORRIDGE, CATHY BERBERIAN, BRION GYSIN, NAN HOOVER, ROBYN ARCHER, LAURIE ANDERSON, IVOR CUTLER AND JOHN CAGE.
- ◆ Along with exhaustive reviews and interviews, features have covered such wide-ranging topics as Cycling and Performance, Art Vandalism, Performance and Fashion, Gangster Funerals, Art and the Record Industry, Performance and Jewellery, Neo-Naturism, Royalty, Swimming in Paper, Magic, and the Theatre of War.
- ◆ Performance is talked about all over the world, in colleges, universities, on television and radio, in the entertainment business and even by governments. Yet there is very little information on the subject. Performance Magazine is one of the very tiny handful worldwide that supplies it. It could be indispensable.

---

THE REVIEW OF LIVE ART

MAGAZINE  
**PERFORMANCE**

Yes, I agree Performance Magazine could be indispensable. Please send me a years subscription of six issues, starting with the current one to: (Please tick)

My home address in the UK (£8.50)

The following College, Library, or institution in the UK (£14.50)

The following address outside the UK in Europe (£14.50)

The following address outside Europe (\$25)

Name .....

Address .....

I enclose the amount ticked. (Cheques made payable to: Performance Magazine Ltd.)

Send to: Arts Ex-Press PO Box 129 London WC2 9RU England (01 836 6225)

---

# PERFORMANCE

The Review of Live Art  
Performance Magazine  
14 Peto Place, London NW1  
01 935 2714

#### EDITOR

Rob La Frenais

#### ADMINISTRATION

Mary Lee Woolf

#### CONTRIBUTORS

Isobel Appio

Robert Ayers

Luke Dixon

Meira Eliaş

Catherine Elwes

Ken Hollings

Neil Hornick

Phil Hyde

Chrissie Iles

Charlotte Keatley

Marguerite McLaughlin

Lynn MacRitchie

Robin Morley

Anna Moszynska

Steve Rogers

Pete Shelton

#### LAYOUT

Meisha Masche

#### PRINTING

Vineyard Press, Colchester

#### DISTRIBUTION

Arts Ex-Press (bookshops)

J F Ansell (newsagents)

Total Circulation (US)

#### PUBLISHER

Performance Magazine Ltd

(Directors: Rob La Frenais,

Lynn MacRitchie,

Marguerite McLaughlin,

Pete Shelton)

Copyright © 1984

ISBN No. 0144 5901

#### SUBSCRIPTIONS

Arts Ex-Press, PO Box 129

London WC2H 9RU



Cover photograph  
by Sharon Temple  
and Meisha Masche

## C O N T E N T

- 6 PERF ... Recent Performances
- 10 THE REALITY GAME ... Elements of Performance in UFO sightings
- 16 THE ASSAULT ON ENJOYMENT ... Out on the ledge with Derek Jarman
- 23 THE DEAD ROSE ... The spirit of Anger lives on in the exoticism and gothicism of today's artists
- 29 KILL AND WAKE! ... African magic in Belsize Park
- 32 CARNIVAL AND CONTRADICTION ... Are carnivals really liberating?
- 34 SPACES ... goes to Northern Ireland
- 36 THE END OF THE HUMANS ... John Stalin

## You might think it's Art but we think it's Disgusting

The Video Recording Bill, hastily drafted by Tory MP Graham Bright, offers further evidence that our society is now terminally addicted to its own legislative apparatus. This extreme form of dependence is manifested in the rapid way in which expressions of fear and disgust are transformed irreversibly into inflexible law, as if it is only by legal prohibition and regulation that a problem can now be resolved. Aside from the general indication of just how feeble and unstable our society is becoming, Graham Bright's Bill must also be viewed with concern by any artist working with video in this country, since the proposals it contains will do considerably more than just prevent children from renting a few hours of head crushing and flesh eating from their local video retailer.

However, before examining the Bill itself, it is worth considering just how it managed to get away with an unopposed second reading in the House of Commons at the end of 1983, placing it at the top of the agenda for the 1984 session of Parliament. To begin with I would submit that the easy passage which the Bill enjoyed has less to do with Graham Bright's concern over any possible corruption of youth than it did with the rabid media campaign which accompanied its passage through the House. Alarming statistics were produced by the press and TV to substantiate the image of children left alone at night watching *I Spit on Your Grave* while their parents are out probably breaking the law somewhere. Variants on this included the equally culpable (although socially more mobile) father hiring video nasties instead of a conjurer to entertain a children's party; such an anachronistic image begs the question, as in the case of the *Lady Chatterly's Lover* trial, of whether the wife and servants were allowed to watch too. In case you think the parents are getting a rough time in this campaign, the children themselves were not immune. Grim-faced TV interviewers were sent into the Nation's playgrounds to interview children who, being young enough and red-blooded enough, showed off in front of the cameras about some of the atrocities they had witnessed on the family VCR that week. The person who could put their trust in any of this evidence shouldn't be allowed to write on a lavatory wall, let alone be permitted to editorialise in the press or on television. The question of responsibility in this issue hardly seems to arise.

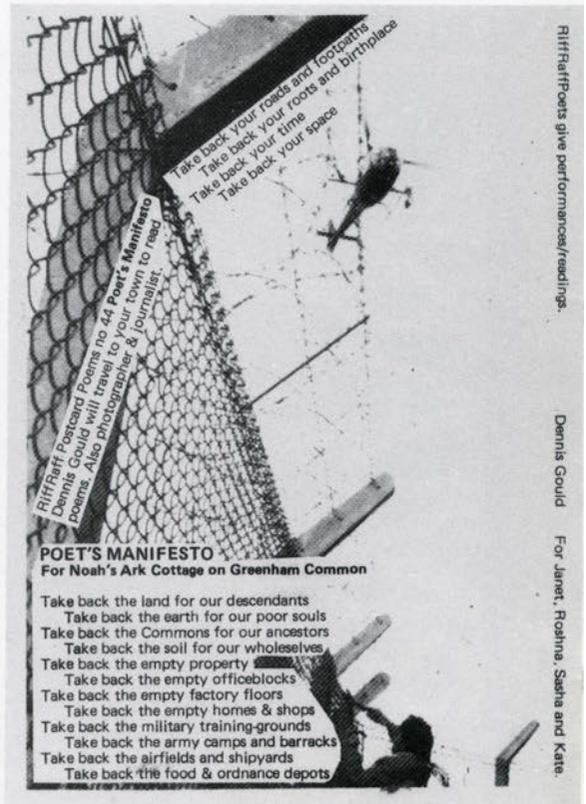
Finally, a group of MPs, bravely ignoring the assertion that the video nasty has a harmful effect upon the immature and mentally disturbed, subjected themselves to a twenty-minute compilation of excerpts from various tapes. The length of this compilation does raise a number of doubts about this whole exercise. Firstly, just how accurate or fair an impression can be gained from so short a collection of extracts, and how much reliable information can it present for a serious debate? Secondly how many video nasties does the compilation represent? The question of the actual number is inevitably involved with the problem of what exactly constitutes a video nasty? The reported seizure by the police of copies of *Apocalypse Now* from one video retailer under the Obscene Publications Act, plus the inclusion of other films already granted licences for cinema distribution in an index of video nasties underlies just how grey an area this has become. Its is in this atmosphere of confusion and ignorance that Graham Bright's Video

Recording Bill will cause the most damage. By expecting the British Board of Film Censors to work in some uneasy alliance with the Obscene Publications Act, and by the proposed creation of Adult (ie restricted by age) video shops, the Bill creates a whole group of videos which will be termed 'unclassified'. Handling of these 'unclassified', unlicensed films could leave a retailer open to a £10,000 fine. Retailers are already disturbed by this proposal, and I think that any artist or gallery interested in making copies of video work available to the public ought to give this a lot of thought. Whilst the Bill makes some provision for 'educational' videos which exempts them from an 'unclassified' status, this exemption will be inoperative if the video deals with sex or violence in any capacity, thus leaving the vendor open to the £10,000 fine. This seems increasingly ominous when it is remembered that in at least one city in Canada, the civic authorities responsible for the granting of licenses to commercially distributed films, have started to censor and withdraw artists' films and videos intended for gallery and night club screenings. In other words, you might think it's art but we think it's disgusting—be in court on Tuesday and bring a good lawyer.

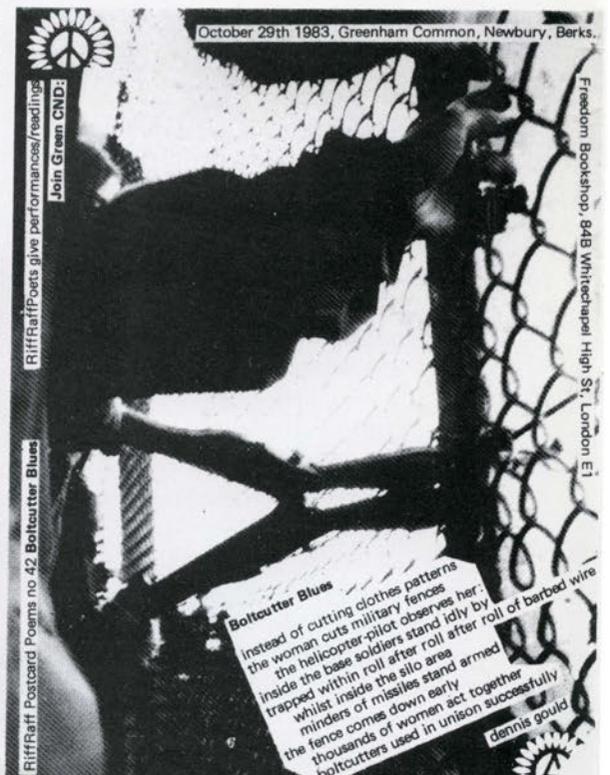
Another key issue, which I think is increasingly applicable today, is just who controls the images of violence in this society. A body which seeks to regulate and licence the depiction of violence is also the body who seeks to maintain and control a monopoly on violence. It is therefore not surprising that the press and TV who control the diffusion and consumption of violence, have been so vocal over the video nasty question. They will probably be equally vocal in their treatment of those British artists who are attempting to deal with images of sexuality, violence and aberration through films and videos in a realistic and honest way. It is an aesthetic question but one which also deals with just who is exploiting violence and who is attempting to confront it: who is prepared to expose the bloody machinery of the human body and who is content, for whatever reason, to live in fear of it. Ultimately it is a struggle for control not only of a whole new medium but also of the images it can use. Seen in these terms, the protection of children begins to emerge as a very transparent pretext.

**Ken Hollings**

Would this be affected by the new law?



## ■ Letters ■



Dear Performance Magazine,  
 Rob La Frenais' editorial in PM 27 concerning the state of British artist's involvement in the peace movement could be better informed. Having recently returned from Canada, I'm encouraged by the generally higher state of political consciousness among artists here. The USA is another story, and we could certainly learn from some of the examples quoted i.e. Bread and Puppet. But things are gradually happening here and it is up to Performance Magazine to look for them instead of carping. Why hasn't there been an article on th many women artists connected with Greenham Common, for example? It is clearly editorial policy to focus on style and hype, so why complain? The Blackie, a large, grass-roots community arts centre in Liverpool recently presented three 12 hour vigils for peace on three consecutive Saturdays, with additional performances and videotapes aimed at a positive view of the future. Hopefully some coverage of this will appear in the next issue.

Yours sincerely,  
 Richard Layzell,  
 27 Ellington St  
 London N7



Dear Performance Magazine,  
 Bowled over by your editorial...neck sticking outimus courage applause... Great, keep it up. The most important aspect of culture must obviously be those activities which aid our species' survival. And yet there's a sort of subconscious fear block that diverts us into all sorts of byways and obscurities. Surely the two great themes of our age are peace and liberation? Works which pursue these aims with joy and passion, or careful thought must surely claim priority for discussion and review. And other works must be seen from this perspective. Not forgetting that artists themselves are also a liberation group.

Oh, and thanks for our mention in the reviews. Any publicity is good publicity. But there were a few errors which you might like to keep in mind for next time. My name is SZCZELKUN. Z = H. SZCZ as in Ashchurch (Kent). Important for Poles to get their names spelt right even if it is a bother. Routine Art Co. is just Co. and not corporation. An allusion to ambiguity of 'company'. Corporation sounds like the beer gut. And of course we could have supplied a better image and finally (yawn) no mention of the venue. Having worked on New Dance for a few years I know the problems of even remembering photo captions...we are grateful nonetheless and pleased. Keep up the good work, not the ostrich but the stork...

Love,  
 Stefan Szczelkun  
 Routine Art Co.  
 C/O Brixton Art Gallery  
 London

### More Art Vandals

Dear Performance Magazine,  
 Ken Hollings' article on art vandalism was an exceptionally interesting analysis of a fascinating topic (could not PM give more prominence to author's names and place them at the beginning of articles? Also, provide some notes on contributors?) However, even greater depth could have achieved if a longer-term historical perspective had been adopted: ie the whole history of image-breaking as part of military conquest or religious ideologies known to historians as 'iconoclasm'. The destruction of art is often a collective rather than an individual act.

Recently on TV there was a programme about old buildings in Scotland; it showed houses and farms that had been constructed from an abandoned monastery (it had served the local people as a quarry. This example demonstrated that our ancestors had a very different attitude towards the past than we do. Their impulse was to use the past for the benefit of the living, to incorporate the past into their new structures, whereas our impulse is to preserve it as a separate realm (national monuments, objects immured in museums) in a vain attempt to prevent the decay which time inevitably brings. I wonder who is the wiser.

As Holling's article suggested, the attitude of modern artists towards the past is fraught with ambivalence and paradox. On the one hand, the past is a burden which oppresses the living (if originality and novelty are to be achieved, a rupture with the past has to take place). On the other hand, there is no culture without memory, no artist can avoid tradition, the history of art. This paradox is compounded by the fact that the demand to break with the past is now historical and institutional (ie. a convention of modernism, an artistic ideology now over a century old).

Regards,  
 John A Walker  
 Jaw Publications  
 87 Hillfield Avenue  
 London N8



### Subcuture

Dear Performance Magazine,  
 I agreed with so much of Steve Rogers' provocative and clearly argued 'Subcuture' (PM 27) that I wondered after reading it why I still believed in the idea of the ICA's Performing Clothes. Then I realised. He wrote: 'Performing Clothes, which was intended to promote fashion could not approach such questions, and perhaps I am being unfair in judging it by its stated criteria...'

Now it can never be unfair to judge a work by its stated criteria, but 'Subcuture' did not do this. It judged 'Performing Clothes' not by its criteria, rather by the complex intellectual thesis developed by Steve Rogers within the article. Indeed, Performing Clothes 'could not approach such questions', and neither was it meant to. The modest

aspiration was to unite the sculptural qualities of clothes with those of dance in a popular form. In this it was successful. 12 professional dancers rather than models performed in 11 showings of a contemporary dance event before a total audience of 2000—mainly young people who would not normally go near an arts centre, let alone dance. That they were seduced by the hook of fashion does not imply that the event was merely designed to 'sell the clothes'. Trisha Brown chooses the design of Issy Miyake; Molissa Fenley those of Comme des Garcons; Regine Chopinot those of Jean-Paul Gaultier. All we had done was to turn that impulse on its head, and to look for young British designers rather than the established fashion world.

As to content, it seems to me that the semiology of dress, clarified by choreography, can tell us things about the way we are now in a unique form. Perhaps in this Performing Clothes was less successful—but that's something we hope to get right this Autumn.

Yours,  
 John Ashford  
 Theatre Director  
 ICA, The Mall  
 London SW1



### Slab

Dear Performance Magazine,  
 Slab is a non-elitist organisation, and one of our many aims is the presentation and preservation of new British artists. We are organising a film show in March, and are currently seeking to contact anyone who would like to take part or is interested in the event.

We are very frustrated with the apathetic attitude that the establishment has towards the preserving and furthering of British creative ability. Countries such as Norway, Hungary, Sweden, Germany, USA (specifically NY) and France have given Slab far more help than our own! We desire to develop the healthy attitude towards creators that the aforementioned have, in our own country. Our first live performances will take place in Paris and Berlin, and we will organise transport for anyone from England who wishes to attend these events. If you would like to contact Slab personally please write to:

Slab  
 C/O Verona  
 Hook Heath Rd.  
 Woking, Surrey GU2 ODP  
 Yours with faith,  
 Christopher Jenner



### The Nuclear Threat

Dear Performance Magazine,  
 I read your excellent editorial in the Dec/Jan Performance Magazine with pleasure, because it throws out a challenge to our art community to get out and do something about the nuclear threat, and I agree that

Sisters of Survival are a real inspiration; but I also read the editorial with displeasure in so far as Sister Seven, surely the British equivalent of SOS, which has been touring its exhibition, tape/slide and performances around the country for over 2 years, is not mentioned. If I am to believe your editorial, which I do, surely it would be a good idea for Performance Magazine to cover a Sister Seven event. Can it be that you don't know about us?

Shirley Cameron  
 49 Stainton Rd  
 Bingham Park  
 Sheffield



### A Cat in Space?

A copy of the following letter to the Space Shuttle Experiment Competition, Cambridge, has been sent to us by the Neoistic enquiry unit.

Recently, I saw a high speed photographic sequence revealing the acrobatic motions executed by domestic cats in order to land on all fours. This ability of a cat in normal terrestrial conditions, even when blindfolded, to position itself during a fall for a four point landing has always amazed me.

Although not a scientific experiment of the kind performed aboard the Shuttle, I propose that a domestic cat of any breed be carried into space aboard the Shuttle in order to observe its behaviour once released into open zero gravity conditions for the following reasons: It would be interesting to observe whether the cat merely floats around demurely or, in absence of a foothold and gravity, resorts to perpetually repeating the motions in confusion. It would also be interesting to see whether the Astro Scientists conducting the experiment in order to observe the consequences burst out in laughter should the cat experience distress or whether they maintain the scientific approach and composure.

NB. The experiment should take place in an isolated compartment of the Shuttle because of the risk of equipment damage caused by the cat urinating in zero gravity due to distress it may or may not experience (a true domestic cat would use Kitty Litter). In order to prevent this possibility, I recommend the cat be deprived of food and water for some time before the experiment. Also, the Astro Scientists should wear protective gear for I suspect the cat will claw anything that would provide it with a foothold until safely anchored to it. Finally, the cat would be the first in space, and would therefore place NASA in the forefront as novel pioneers studying animal behaviour in space.

Yours,  
 R.U.Sevol  
 Neoistic Enquiry Unit  
 13 Aulton Place  
 London SE11

# ●●●●● PERF ●●●●●



Who is responsible for these black silhouettes?—seen not only in London but apparently all over the world. Photo: Liz Rideal.

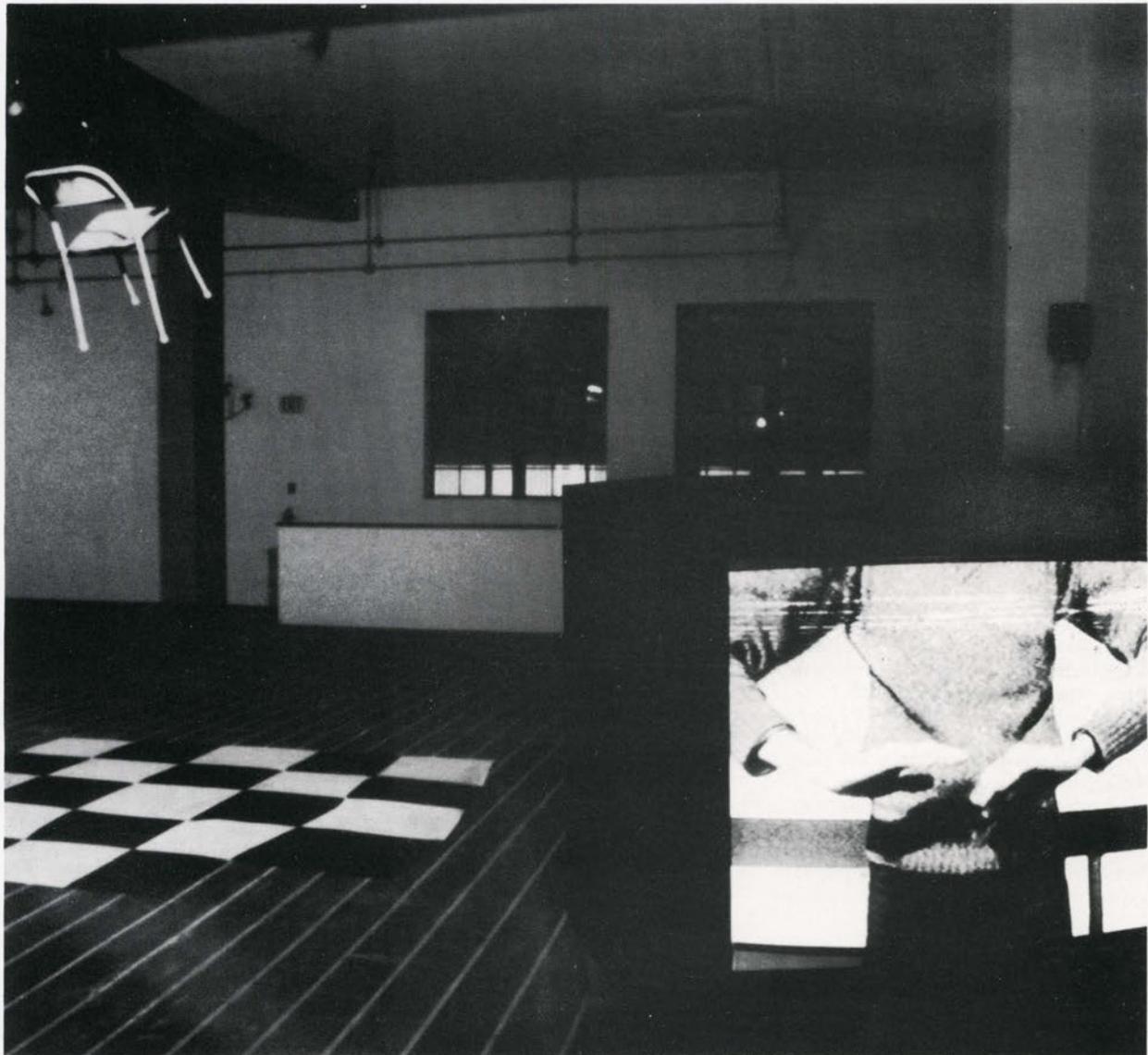
INTERNATIONAL CONTEMPORARY ART FAIR(Barbican) In the the build up to London's first ever Art Fair there was much cynicism in the air. The very idea of trying to sell art in such a cattle-market style is to the typical British, hypocritical, inability to mention art and money in the same breath, anthem. Many of the prestige Cork St. Galleries refused to participate presumably because they felt that art should not be horse traded.

However, hundreds of galleries and artists from as far apart as Israel, Brazil and Edinburgh did participate and the public response was extraordinary. Tens of thousands paid their £2.50 to wander through the miles of art. It was like a fancy Brick Lane market housed at Heathrow terminal 3. As Mario Dubsy who organised a group of young artists not represented by any gallery said 'More people have seen our work in the last 4 days than in the last 10 years'. The response was so huge that they ran out of tickets on Saturday. But despite the number of people who went, the Fair must be accounted a failure not because of the morality of the concept but because of the art on show. Most of it was either 'decorator' or 'crazy'. The Euro-Kunst obsession with Sado-masochism as interior design was represented in force. As was the 'matching frock, hat and sculpture' brigade. The few serious artists represented there were submerged beneath a sea of women in suspenders, naked boys, black leather, orgies, monochrome geometric doodles and an amazing proliferation of Bayswater Road bronze knick-knacks. The popularity of such events could make an enormous contribution to normalising the arts, but please, not if the art is going to be so utterly pornographic. I suppose we will only see more of these if the dealers managed to sell anything—the British are infamous for not buying art. I await with interest the 'trade figures' for this month. (Steve Rogers)



Recently seen in London: Fast Forward and Yves Musard, from New York, in 'Big Red Raw Steel Drum'.

TINA TURNER (St. Davids Hall, Cardiff): I soon got into the swing of things here, for due to the thin walls and proximity of St.Davids Hall Level 3 lavatories to the auditorium, I was able to hear Tina Turner's pre-concert rehearsal from that unusual vantage point. Two hours later, following the worst support band in the world, Tina Turner walked on and knelt on the stage. That would almost have been enough. Even Tina Turner needed half an hour to set on fire St. Davids Hall, lifeless jewel of the new cloned chopping centre, but once her combination of stunningly emotive marrow-tingling singing voice and entirely non-submissive sexuality got going there was no stopping for 90 minutes, leaving an adrenalin-crazed audience positively energised for days afterwards. Never mind Diamanda Galas and Monika Többsch—Tina Turner could eat them for breakfast.(David Briers)



Coming up: British/Canadian Video exchange, including the above installation by Charlie Fox and Wade McGregor:—Recreation of the Emergency.

THE SECOND LINK: VIEWPOINTS ON VIDEO IN THE EIGHTIES, (ICA) while not representing the diversity of European video activity, reflects the domination of the field by America. The US leads the field by having the highest profile, while Canada, which lacks the glamorous image of US video, throws substantial state support behind its artists and is thus able to export them. Britain's presence in this international touring show is significant, in so far as video from Britain has only recently begun to gain international recognition, but the selection was uninspired.

So, having seen the British tapes on numerous occasions, I went to the ICA to see what the fuss was all about. Could the American tapes really be so good? Well no...and yes, of course. They ranged from the empty-headed hi-tech of Max Almy's *Leaving the 20th Century*, a tour de force of digital technology whose only memorable instant came with the line 'he left because there was nothing good on TV', to the quirky, twisted narrative of Tony Ousler and the sublime stillness of Bill Viola. Ousler's whacky, cardboard cut-out sets, animated by the pulling of strings and the movement of the camera, and his bizarre, personal approach to narrative,

simply demonstrate the redundancy of so much 'new wave' video which is so media-obsessed it has ceased to maintain a critical distance from that media. A line from Tony Ousler's *Grand Mal* seems strangely apposite here: 'What's the difference between sugar and salt? Sugar rots your teeth and salt tastes good on meat'. Occupying a place somewhere between hi-tech and off-the wall is Gary Hill, whose *Primarily Speaking* was certainly the best tape I saw. Hill gave a fascinating presentation of his work (and world view) to a small audience at LVA in December, and also had a tape at the Tate as part of their Whitney Biennale season. Essentially he is an unknown quantity, as his work for some reason has not benefitted from the push given to others. Perhaps this is because of the way he approaches technology, his tapes are 'difficult' they will not glide over you like a pop promo. They demand concentration, their elaboration of image/language relations is multi-layered and complex, but they are infinitely more rewarding than wham-bam hi-tech video games. It's like the difference between sugar and salt or hamburgers and wholefoods. (Jez Welsh)

**ORNAMENTAL STRUCTURES: MEDIA ARTS GROUP (Barbican)** There have been some fascinating and colourful exhibitions of non-precious jewellery held in London over the past few months. I reviewed the 'Jewellery Project' show at the Crafts Council in a previous issue of *PERFORMANCE MAGAZINE* and suggested then that a challenging area for jewellery makers to consider was that of performance. Aspects Gallery, open two years ago, have consistently shown a wide variety of new designs by young jewellers and have held performance and music evenings at the Gallery on occasion. Perhaps through a need to create a wider market for their work, Aspects moved their stock to the Barbican Centre over Christmas and invited Michael Petry and the Media Arts Group to stage performances with some of the pieces on show. The ambition behind it was to explore the ways in which jewellery may react with the wearer.

The idea took its form in a performance continuum lasting nineteen days, called 'Ornamental Structures'. Each evening Michael Petry and various members of the Media Arts Group (musicians and dancers) were given the run of the foyer space which was situated close to the area where Aspects were staging their exhibition. Each performance piece by Media Arts Group was linked to the others and meant to be seen as a thematic whole but as few people were likely to be able to turn up every night there was a problem built in initially to such an all-embracing project. However the notion of ornamental structures could also be broken down to unit size. Photographs of earlier performances in the run showed the



Philip Sayer

way in which constraints imposed upon the performer/wearer by feathery paper fetters on the ankles called for a performance style invoking flight. The piece I saw was about paintings to wear. As these paintings were in fact painted directly onto clothes (by Michael Petry), the immediate suggestion was that dress and jewellery have become interrelated to such an extent that the boundaries between function and ornament have broken down completely. The fashion interest however was not further explored and instead the theme that the group sought to develop was the psychological and physical fact that certain outrageous designs are going to make the wearer conscious of looking different and therefore more likely to behave differently according to the

demands of the item. Performance becomes a fully appropriate medium as it backs the element of theatricality that flamboyant-design wearing demands.

Though interesting as an idea I found the actual quality of performance not as crisp as it could have been for total conviction—though the live musical accompaniment was excellent. Whatever the drawbacks of the piece (for example the clumsiness of the performers changing in the space), it did at least have the function of stopping people dead in their tracks at the usually staid Barbican and of forcing at least interest (if sometimes sceptical) in the work on show at the Aspects exhibition next door. More pioneering things at the Barbican would not go amiss. (Anna Moszynska)

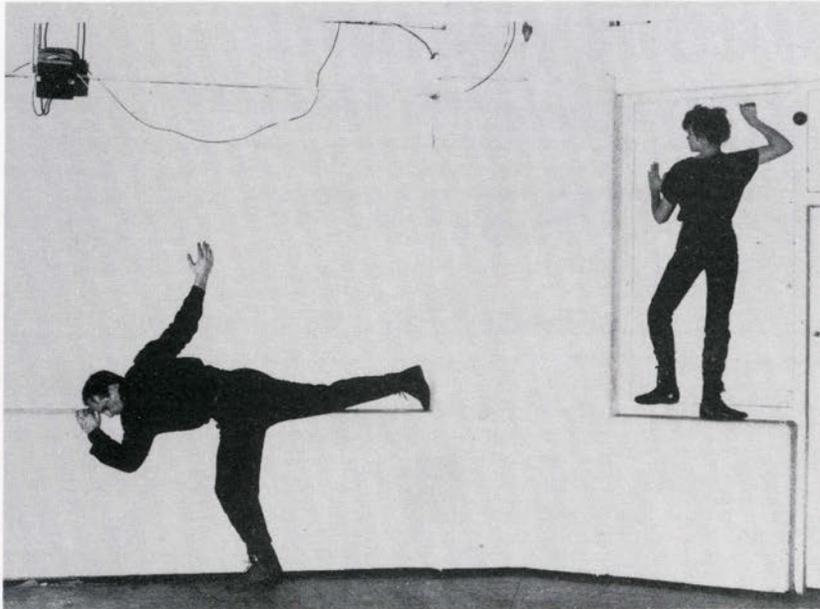
**KINCORA: VIOLATIONS BY GOD'S BANKERS (AIR BASEMENT)** relates the scandal of the sexual abuse of young boys at the Kincora Home in East Belfast by a vice ring of high-ranking civil servants, police and intelligence officers, and draws the link between the subsequent cover-up and secret, closed, societies such as the Orange Order and Freemasonry. From the basic animal level on which the performance begins—the dominance of one person over another—the build-up over several different layers ranges from domination of Catholic by Protestant, Ireland by England, and indeed the whole basis of the power structure on which our society rests. Using film, slides, and dramatically loud percussion, the narrative proceeds on a highly symbolic level, mimicking the elements of a masonic ritual. Two males dressed in clean white T shirts, innocent, untainted Kincora boys, deliver lines from press articles on the case and from the masonic prayer book from two large triangular pulpits, such symmetry and geometric shape being of great importance in masonic ritual. A series of voyeuristic slides show views of Kincora taken from behind trees, young boys who might end up at the home, S&M rituals, Smithfield meat market (rather obvious, that).

The opening of a mason's case reveals children's underclothes, a child's school geometry set, a rape alarm and two blocks of lard. A film sequence portrays a young boy's nightmare of sexual violation, evoking that dreamlike state adopted by children to cope with a

painful reality. Sequences of compelling, haunting music by Paul Bowen punctuate the actions.

None of the devices employed are gratuitous, though they do depend on a knowledge of the symbols involved in order to understand their significance. When Bowen spreadeagles himself on the peat-covered floor (the peat referring to Ireland) the position symbolises both sexual submission and the submission of Catholicism to Protestantism, (he being the Catholic and Andre Stitt the Protestant), and Ireland to England. It is also the position adopted when searched in N. Ireland. Likewise the aggressive wrestling which follows. The red glove held up by Stitt refers to the red hand of Ulster, from an ancient row between families over the ownership of Ireland. When blinding floodlights are finally turned on a reluctant audience, followed by the soft red slide of the word 'silence' which began the show, it is paralleling the method society deals with difficult and embarrassing events. The silence is broken by a period of exposure, but is soon resumed. Events are nearly exposed but are ultimately kept beyond our control.

In my opinion, this is Andre Stitt's strongest work to date. Paul Bowen provides an excellent balance to Stitt's aggressive energy, which is channelled into a clear and carefully planned structure. The concerns which have always characterised Stitt's work, of manipulation and control, here address a specific issue of power within Northern Ireland with genuine anger, sadness and compassion. (Chrissie Iles)



Seen here using Daguerre's famous Diorama in Regent's Park, an exciting new art space, to the full, Jonathan Davis and Catherine Seely in *Conversation Piece*. They were part of a recent series of new work organised by the resourceful Chrissie Iles, who appeared to have trawled every hit-and-run nightclub in London to find a new audience for performance. Keep it up, Chrissie.

PAUPERS CARNIVAL's (Chapter, Cardiff) *Return Ticket to Christmas* is set in Cardiff railway station waiting room in wartime (suggested by authentic bric-a-brac around an austere stage). A group of evacuees and their severe Billeting Officer are stranded on Christmas Eve, having missed the last train up the valleys. They are joined by other passengers, including two hungover women and an itinerant dance band, and presided over by the gruff but kind-hearted stationmaster and a callow young porter. What sounds like a Jackanory story became something else, not least because many of the ideas came from the 10 children involved, through previous workshops. Such as the gradual emergence of quietly concerted train sounds from the semi-dark stage as the children play with their toys in a Christmas Eve dream. With Paupers Carnival's usual ingeniously deployed economy of means and immense care for detail, this was one of the best things they have ever done, and should not be allowed to fade away with the season for which it was designed. They are the only performance group I know who can salvage anything from the badly mugged spirit of Christmas. (David Briers)



PETER WILSON, HEADSCAPES. (Ian Birksted Gallery.) A smart private view at a West-end gallery. Wine glasses in hands, the guests look one another over and give an occasional eye to the paintings. But then, to one side of the small room, some strange sales-talk starts up. He's smartly dressed, this salesman. His hair's slicked down. He smiles, he explains patiently. And what he delivers is some part advice on good grooming, some part sales-pitch, and somewhere in there, a barmy explanation of the paintings in the exhibition. And to make a point he takes a stick of charcoal and, on the

white gallery wall, begins to draw, adding bodies to the heads that appear in one of the paintings. Who is this person?

Well it was Peter Wilson, who was, we were told, providing 'footnotes' to his paintings that were included in the exhibition *Various Madness*, selected by Sarah Kent. This was something more than just footnoting, though. More like a different view of the same material. And what's the material? Well, people and what they do, I suppose.

In the background of one of the paintings, a bird flaps idly by. Muttering

something about X-Rays, Peter Wilson extends his arm to hide the bird, but then draws its image in chalk on his black sleeve. Then the drawing in chalk snakes up his arm and extends all over his jacket, so that he's left looking like he's trying it on half-made. Then he advises us on various hairstyles: 'Flat Top', he announces, and holds up his clothes brush. Then 'Nature Boy', and he holds up a bunch of feathers. Almost before many of the audience had caught up with him, Peter Wilson had finished. *Headscapes* was short and sharp and very funny. (Robert Ayers)



In 1947 travelling aerial salesman Kenneth Arnold sighted and reported the first Flying Saucers over Mount Rainier in Washington State. I was born in the same year as Flying Saucers, and grew up with them, along with Superman comics and Dan Dare. Amongst the treasures which I was to discover in my local suburban branch public library in the fifties was a clutch of Flying Saucer books, including George Adamski and Desmond Leslie's *Flying Saucers Have Landed*, a loony farrago which completely took me in, particularly because it contained *photographs* of alien spacecraft. I kept this discovery to myself. Nobody was going to tell me that Adamski had taken out of focus photographs of the tops of vacuum cleaners or chicken brooders; they were spaceships. Here was a book that my teachers would never give me, which offered a frisson of real *strangeness*, an awareness that there was another reality beyond my polite provincial British post-war austerity environs; a frisson which was, in the later years of my adolescence, to be replaced by the comparable lure of Art.

As an Art Student in sixties London, I again succumbed to the diversions of Flying Saucers, by that time more commonly referred to as UFOs. Rooting about in John Watkins' friendly and eccentric bookshop in Cecil Court, and later at Compendium Books in Camden Town, I came across copies of *Flying Saucer Review*, A British magazine first published in 1955, and appearing monthly ever since (it is now available only by subscription). *Flying Saucer Review* attracted me because its general appearance and mien belied its irrational subject matter. Here were exhaustively detailed carefully researched reports, and papers with lots of *Footnotes*. Scrupulously fair, detached and self-critical, yet not too sober to prohibit a very British touch of irony, particularly on the part of its editor Charles Bowen, and contributors Gordon Creighton and Frenchman Aime Michel. Only occasionally letting itself down with articles such as 'Was God at Aberfan?' within the covers of *FSR* you are more likely to find 'The Sociology of the Iberian Landings' or 'Biometric Data in 19 UFO Occupant Cases'.

The 'lights in the sky' type of 'low definition' UFO report, the most easily rationally explained type of sighting, has long ceased to form a central part of UFO study. Instead, more attention has been paid to reported sightings at much closer quarters of unidentified aerial objects, often landing or grounded, sometimes with occupants witnessed, and occasionally involving intercourse between occupant/s and percipient/s. Nobody has yet succeeded in demonstrably explaining the mechanics, physical or mental, behind such manifestations though theories abound. Take your pick: extra-terrestrial explorers or tourists, time travellers, the revelation of God, ditto the Devil, aerial poltergeists, atmospheric life-forms, Hitler's lost battalion based in the Arctic, holographic projections, shared hypnagogic or hypnopompic hallucinations, hysterical contagion, neurological

disturbances caused by unknown geo-magnetic or atmospheric effects, manifestations of the Jungian collective unconscious, mass hoaxes. Choose up to 3 and become enrolled as a member of Ufology international. If not satisfied, you may return the theories within 10 days.

It is *not* my intention here to lend support to any one or other of these hypotheses. If the UFO phenomenon exists only in the minds of its percipients, then that is the form in which it exists. If it exists only in the form of oral reports and in print on the pages of UFO magazines, read by a sub-culture of millions of enthusiasts on several continents, then it is still unusual enough to warrant our attention from time to time. The purpose of this article is to separate one strand of the preoccupations of this sub-culture and present it for the interest of readers of this magazine: the discernment of elements of *performance* in the details of many UFO close encounter reports.

For example let us go back firstly to the

'classic' period of the early fifties, when the people who saw UFOs, many of them uncomplicated rural people, had little or no mental backlog of TV, press and science fiction morphological imprints for their sub-conscious to run riot with. Let's take two examples from a compilation of 200 documented observations made in 1954 outside the USA.

On Oct.9, Herr Hoge, returning home from his work near Munster saw an object bearing a blue light on the ground about 69 metres from the road. Thinking it was a grounded aircraft he stopped for a better look, and saw four men, wearing rubber coveralls, working under a cigar-shaped craft. They were about 1.2m tall, with very large heads and chests surmounting small thin legs.

On Nov.4, a Brazilian fisherman witnessed the landing of a luminous object, from which emerged three small men dressed in white, wearing caps who proceeded to gather leaves and grass, and

'Roy Winstanley and his attractive wife, Barbara, with a van full of electronic equipment, skywatching on Winter Hill, Lancashire. Roy, Technical Director of a Blackburn electronics company, is BUFORA's Northern Communications Officer and research co-ordinator.' (Caption from Daily Mirror, 1967)





Would you buy a used UFO from these men? Gabriel Green, Dianel Fry and Calvin Girvin (who bears a remarkable resemblance to John Cage, who is probably an alien anyway) as they appeared before an audience of 20 million on NBC's *People are Fund* show 1958.

collect water in a tube, before flying away. Many similar reports, more or less bizarre, comprise particular compilation. From then until now hundreds upon hundreds of other reports have been documented, some in great detail, in which the occupants of UFOs are 'surprised' whilst repairing their craft, or apparently collecting samples. Understandably, such reports led in the fifties to the swift formation of the ET hypothesis—that Earth was being explored by alien spacecraft which sometimes broke down. A detached overview of a large number of reports was, however, subsequently to reveal the illogical, even surreal, aspects of many of the sightings. Why repair such superior technical marvels underneath, like a car, without tools? If so many UFOs were breaking down close to highways, what a ridiculously large number of malfunctions must escape our attention in lonelier regions? Why collect plant and soil specimens carelessly on simple trays, devoid of the simplest scientific precautions?

And if the reported events themselves follow repetitive patterns of 'mimicry' of real events, the clothing worn by the participants is conversely various, even theatrical. UFO occupants have been reported as wearing one-piece gold suits, doublets with little buttons "like shining stars" over grey overalls, dark blue knit outfits with turtle-neck tops and matching knit helmets, metallic diving suits, 'yellow bags', and even as 'looking like the man in the Sandeman port wine ads'. The physical attributes of the occupants too is non-uniform, ranging from blond long-haired youths to hairy dwarves.

UFO reports are often poetic. In June, 1968, at a motel near Cordoba in Argentina, the proprietor's 19-year old daughter Maria was surprised, after closing the motel dining room, by an 'anthropomorphic entity' (see illustration) with short combed-back blond hair, dressed in a one-piece light-blue scaly suit, with a small pleated skirt at the back, holding a light-

emitting glass sphere in his left hand, with beams of pale blue light flashing from his finger-tips and toes. The entity moved forward slowly, smiling all the time, placing the toe of one foot to the heel of the other at each step. He then turned and left, lowering his head as he passed through the door. 'He looked like a ballet dancer', said Maria. (Maria's father, driving home at the same time, witnessed disembodied lights hovering above the ground close to the motel.)

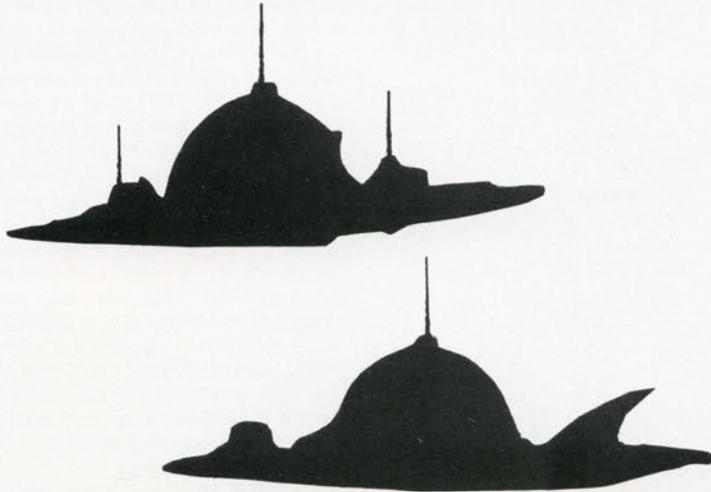
Back in 1954 a French UFO witness encountered a similar figure, whose suit 'glowed like a crushed firefly', and whose squat companion with a veiled face, coming close to the witness and raising his veil, revealed a horrible grin and one large brown tear rolling from its sightless eyes. The witness 'felt something altogether pathetic, perhaps even despairing' in this gesture. A description of entities witnessed in Spain in 1966 reads, 'the beings looked like "green birds" and seemed to be "tired"', which reminds me of La Monte Young's performance score, 'Some of them were very old grasshoppers'.

Elements of ludicrous bathos also inform many of these manifestations. At least twice (in S.Africa in 1951, and Wisconsin in 1961) UFO occupants have landed and asked for water to drink. In Wisconsin the witness was repaid with several Ufonauts' cookies, which proved upon analysis to be made from corn and wheatflour. In rural France in 1974 a lone motorcyclist was stopped by two helmeted beings close to their parked UFO and force fed a sort of tasteless chocolate (it is only fair to add here that the poor fellow stuck to his story although ridiculed and maligned by his workmates and driven into despair and depression). In Spain in 1953 the occupant of a UFO gave his witness a little slap on the face before disappearing back into his craft. Gary Wilcox came across a landed UFO whilst spreading manure on his Pennsylvania farm in 1964. Two Martians (they said) who were 'busy' collecting roots, soil and leaves, asked the tractor driver what he was

doing, and a discussion about manuring ensued. Imagine, at the end of *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*—the Ufonauts came all that way to discuss manure.

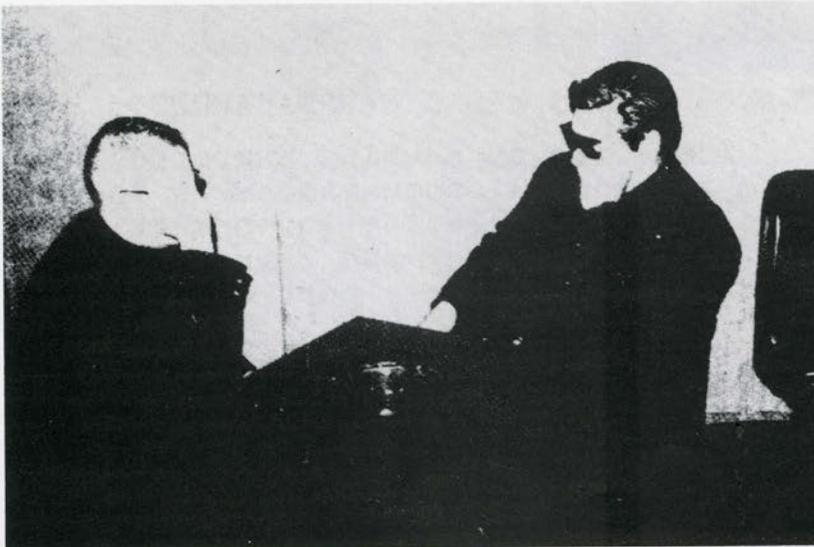
Tackiness is an element of many UFO reports. American sightings of the fifties and early sixties in particular sometimes seem to have come straight out of those Channel Four cheapo sci-fi B-movies—flying saucers with rivets and sliding panels revealing cumbersome panels of knobs and dials, rayguns, and names like Kalen-Ri Retan of Korender. A French book, which I have not yet seen, posits that while certain UFO manifestations are modelled directly upon existent science fiction stories, those stories at the same time fall outside the knowledge of the eyewitnesses. And yet, unlike 3-D re-runs of *I Married a Creature from Outer Space*, such events always have an air of strange wrongness. It is as if they were montages of twice removed reconstructions of a fictional version of reality. As if were part of somebody else's Jacques Vallee (on whom Francois Truffaut's part in *Close Encounters* was modelled) has said, 'The entities are endowed with the same fugitiveness and behave with the same ignorance of logical or physical laws as the reflection of a dream'. Has the Surrealist revolution occurred in a parallel universe, or just deep in the minds of some very ordinary Earthly individuals?

Scorched and flattened circles of grass and corn, and indentations in the ground, have long been presented as 'proof' of the physical reality of UFO landings. A letter which the *FSR* published in 1973, headed 'Dartmoor Mystery Circles', described the discovery, in an area of known UFO activity, of a perfect circle cut into the side of a steep turfed hill, its centre containing short lengths of charred gorse twigs. 'The thing which puzzles us', the *FSR* readers say, 'Is who or what would go to the trouble of cutting so perfect a circle in such a deserted area, that can be seen by motorists from the road? For what purpose was it made?'



Well, UFO occupants might have gone to such trouble, but so might Artists. This surely was part of the activity of Richard Long (another occasional mysterious denizen of Dartmoor), or Roger Ackling (notice the burned twigs), or any one of hundreds of aspiring Post Grad fine art students, in whose folios documentary photographs now lie. Nowhere amongst the many sane and barmy hypotheses I have read in UFO books and magazines has it been supposed, even for a laugh, that UFO manifestations might be a form of non-human Art activity; that UFO occupants might be extra or ultra-terrestrial Performance Artists! No such suggestion has ever (to my knowledge) been made simply because the sub-culture committed to the support and/or critique of post-Modernist art is a very tiny one, even compared to the size of the Ufology sub-culture. The two have just never collided, and were they to do so, would not recognise each other. The party 'tuned up' to detect the slightest reverberation of a UFO manifestation is unable to perceive the very presence of Art under its noses, let alone 'explain' or 'understand' it.

Pat Mathna (hoax contactee) and friend, dressed as Men in Black at the 1969 Congress of Scientific Ufologists, Charleston, West Virginia.



The UFO world and the Art world, though they don't know it, have a lot in common. The former, viewed in its entirety, with its fanzines, prolific publishing activities, conventions, bogus characters, specialist critics, and professional sceptics, together with its protagonists' conviction of the Universal Significance of their activities, is directly comparable with the sociological aspect of the post-Modernist art world. As in the Art world, there exists a specialised international network for the exchange of UFO information, theories and magazines. You will not find the British UFO magazines *Flying Saucer Review* and *Magonia* on the racks at John Menzies, any more than you will find copies of *Flash Art* or *Performance*, but the circulation of some UFO magazines significantly exceeds that of their Art parallels, so that the incidental evidence for the existence of UFOs would seem to be greater than the evidence that post-Modernist Art exists.

Alongside a handful of reputable international UFO investigation organisations with acronyms like APRO and BUFORA, there exists short-life UFO 'clubs', many of

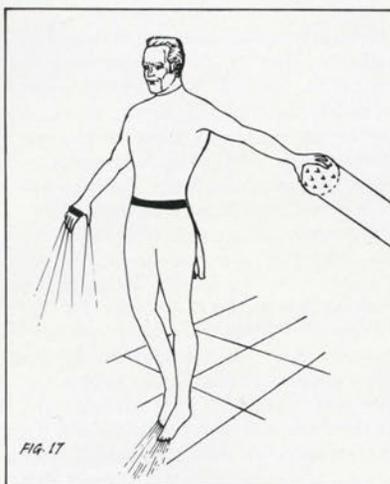
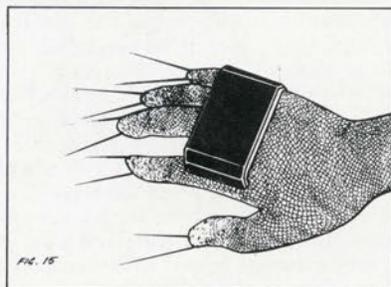
them run by male teenagers. There are, at any one time, hundreds of these, running the gamut from ARPI, through SLUFOSG, to VERONICA (which stands, in translation, for 'Verification & Studies of Reports of UFOs from Nimes & Neighbouring Regions'). Wherever you live, whatever your lifestyle, there is, did you but know it, a UFO study club for you, be it the Christian UFO Research Association, the Buddhist UFO Research Center, or the Anglo-Polish UFO Research Club, London SE20.

Some groups organise skywatching parties to 'UFO country'—areas of high UFO activity such as Cradle Hill, Warminster, or St. Brides Bay, Dyfed. Don't forget to take your UFO detector and wear your UFO tie or pendant, but be careful, as one issue of the mimeographed *Warminster UFO Newsletter* points out, to avoid disorderly parking on Cradle Hill ('If cars parked sensibly on the right hand side, leaving enough space by the gates at the top for vehicles to turn round, this kind of thing need never happen.')

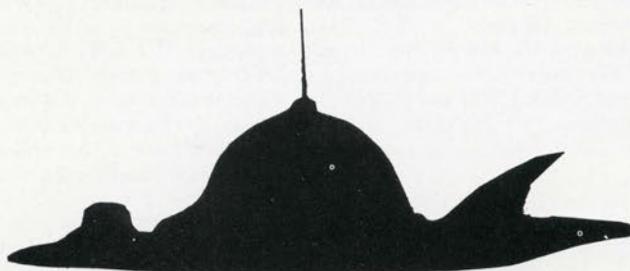
The world of the 'avid saucer buff', with its numerous instant-printed and xeroxed fanzines (there used to be one called the *Flying Saucer Collector*) is pretty well indistinguishable in manner from that of the collector of obscure soul records or old comics. Like their counterparts in other collecting sub-groups, the UFO addict craves something new with each newsletter—more recondite information, a more outlandish government conspiracy theory, weirder occupant reports. Rumours spread like wildfire on the UFO network.

As it happens, the CIA, the FBI, and the USAF *did* closely monitor all UFO activity and investigation groups during the cold war hysteria of the early fifties (the CIA also closely monitored Abstract Expressionism, remember). At the same time, the mysterious Men in Black began to appear in UFO rumourology. These three olive-complexioned men in black suits and shades, driving black cadillacs, were said to have forced one Albert K. Bender to close his UFO Investigation Bureau in 1953. Ever since, these Jungian folk archetypes, or materialisations of the cold war zeitgeist straight out of a William Burroughs novel, have lurked in doorways, watched, 'phoned and threatened UFO investigators and witnesses. Less numerous than they used to be, the Men in Black have achieved long-standing popularity, and those who like doing that sort of thing must have dressed up as MIB's now and then to frighten their local Ufologist (see Illustration). The less secure members of the UFO community do like to feel not wanted—it helps them to feel wanted. Brian Leathley-Andrew closed his UFO bureau in Coventry in psychedelic 1968 as a result of harrassment by, amongst other things, 'a humanoid being with a glowing orange head' which observed him from a neighbouring property. I have neighbours like that.

From here it is but a short step into the world of the 'contactee', a world closer to that of fundamentalist evangelism or



Performance artists from Outer Space?



Don't forget to wear your UFO tie ...

### FLYING SAUCER TIE

The flying saucer necktie was introduced in 1962 to indicate (1) a serious interest in the subject and (2) a willingness to discuss it. After a few years the tie was allowed to lapse because it was felt the subject required scientific study rather than club enthusiasm. However, now that the study of UFO reports has become worldwide we have successfully revived the tie as a token of serious scientific study for all mankind.

In 100% polyester reppe weave, with a motif of small silvery saucers, the tie is available at £2.50 (\$6.25) post free by surface mail.

(from FSR Publications Ltd)

LADY READERS may find the adjoining advertisement of interest

## UFO

### PENDANTS

ULTRA FINE OBJECTS!

No sightings or close encounters? You might, when you wear the uniquely crafted **Ultra Fine Object Pendant** with genuine rhinestone settings!

16. Chain and UFO in 24K F Gold Electro Plate \$10.95 ea.  18. Gold Filled Chain and UFO in 14 KT Gold Really Special ... priced at \$111.95

UFO and 18. Chain in Sterling Silver \$19.95 Calif. Residents Add 6% Sales Tax to order

Please add 75c. for postage and handling, \$1.00 for 3 or more items. All pendants come gift boxed!

**30 Day Satisfaction Guarantee!** Mail order to:

**HOUSE OF GOLDEN NUGGETS / Box 1081 Pico Rivera, CA 90660**

(Home office: 8824 Mines Ave. P.R. CA)

Amount Enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_ (Check or M/O no C.O.D. or charge on B/A VISA or M/C)

Mail your Order Today!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  VISA  M/C Exp. Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Card No. \_\_\_\_\_

City/State: \_\_\_\_\_ Int'l./Link No. \_\_\_\_\_

Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

performance art than UFO investigation proper, and one shunned by the scientific 'top end' of the UFO community. 'Contactees' go out alone with the certain intention of contact with a UFO and its occupants, who deliver to him/her a message from another planet or galaxy, which the contactee is instructed to deliver to the people of this world. Most contactees are genuinely, even pathologically, deluded; a few are blatant con-artists. Some make a reasonable living from lecture tours and their followers' donations; more put their own life savings into their activities as public figures. Many 'contactee' showmen and women might, had they been of a different generation and educational background, have happily sublimated their impulses within the mixed media studies departments of progressive art colleges.

As Spielberg made *Close Encounters*, Martin Scorsese should have filmed the life of George Adamski. Adamski, a Polish-Californian self-styled professor of mysticism, sci-fi author and hamburger stand attendant, was first contacted by extraterrestrials in the desert in 1952, and the following year published (in cooperation with British author Desmond Leslie) a best selling account of his UFO flights behind the moon and to other planets. Adamski's postal address was the small town of Mount Palomar—he just lived there, and had nothing to do with its famous observatory. His address, and his spurious title of Professor, fooled many people during his European lecture tour of 1959 into thinking that he was an important astronomer, including Queen Juliana of the Netherlands and Pope John, who awarded Adamski a medallion. The day after Adamski's death in 1965, a gardener in Devon claims to have seen a UFO land and to have spoken to its passenger, the re-born Adamski—but that's the beginning of another story.

American contactees hold regular conventions, with off-stage display space for participants to sell their wares. The close proximity of over fifty other individuals, each claiming to be the chosen receiver of space messages from a sort of extraterrestrial traffic jam, seems not to disconcert them in the least. Such a convention will probably have been organised by Gabriel Green, who was urged by a visitor from Alpha Centauri to run for president in 1960. And at such a convention you might see Truman Bethurum, who in 1952 met a woman space captain with the beautiful name of Aura Thane. Or you might hear Daniel Fry (author of *Can God Fill Teeth?*) tell of how he flew across the States in a UFO in 30 minutes. Howard Menger might sell you his LP of music composed by space people, reported to sound more like "Howard Menger plucking clumsily at a badly-tuned piano". Looking around, you might be lucky enough to catch sight of some of Reinhold C. Schmidt's Saturnian friends who were reported by *Thy Kingdom Come* newsletter to have been seen sitting in the audience at his recent lectures.

Ruth E. Norman (whose late husband, Ernest, was a reincarnation of Jesus Christ)

might show her 90 minute film *A Visit to the Underground Cities of Mars*, or we might see the Rev. Frank E. Stranges' film *Phenomena 7.7*, said to include 'ludicrous re-enactments' of classic UFO cases (if only Michael Medved could get hold of *those* for his Channel Four spot). And perhaps you will witness 'The Two' (real names Marshall Herff Applewhite and Bonnie Lu Trusdale Nettles) who have toured the States since leaving jail in Texas for auto theft & stolen credit cards, claiming to be an extra-terrestrial couple millions of years old.

No conventions please, we're British, say our own contactees, who, in their particularly British way, seem subject to the same impulses as their American cousins. Like the Rev. Anthony Millican, who saw a UFO in a Bristol park in 1968, and ten years later manned a stall in the foyer of Bristol Odean during the showing of *Close Encounters*, to warn that 'UFOs come to seduce us into the forbidden world of the Occult'.

Beyond redemption is the redoubtable Arthur Shuttlewood, ex-news editor of

Warminster's quaintly Pickwickian weekly newspaper, and 'once a Warminster Urban District Councillor'. A touchingly genuine chapter, funnier than any parody, of Shuttlewood's book *Warnings from Flying Friends*, tells of the visit to his house of a young gentleman claiming to be Karne of Aenstria (nearest art school, Bath Academy). The extra-terrestrial, wearing a gaberdine mackintosh and brown boots, tells Shuttlewood that 'The Aenstrian queen, Traellison, spacecraft commander Caelsan and English translator Selorik have returned to their candel', and proceeds to relay a number of world predictions to Shuttlewood, who subsequently passes them on to 'Anthony Brooke, former Raja Muda of Sarawak, to Dr. John Cleary-Baker, Pat & Freddie Harding, Bob and Sybil.'

According to a 1973 Gallup Poll, 11% of the adult population of the USA claim to have seen UFOs, and that makes them an unbelievable 15 million people. Of the remainder, most people, when asked, say they believe that UFOs exist. After all,

Muhammad Ali, Jimmy Carter, Elvis Presley, William 'Star Trek' Shatner & John Travolta have all seen UFOs. It would be preferable, for instance, to believing that sooner or later we shall all die in a nuclear holocaust.

The UFO phenomenon has uncovered, perhaps, some of the unsuspected wellsprings of the human personality, its need to confront the irrational, to witness 'mysteries' (in the theatrical sense), and when such are not present in society, to construct its own habit-challenging life-theatre.

Someone over in Siberia is, apparently, going to great lengths to get hold of as much UFO material as possible. Some see this as evidence of just how seriously the Russians are taking UFOs. I see instead, a 'person from Novosibirsk' who needs the same sort of thrill that I had, taking George Adamski's book out of the library in 1957.

David Briers

*David Briers was until recently Exhibitions Organiser at Chapter Arts Centre, Cardiff*



# Assault of Enjoyment

Out on the ledge with Derek Jarman



Dancing among the demimonde of the sixties, slave of the erstwhile Ken Russell's fantasies during the seventies, the eighties look set to become Derek's decade. His paintings are on show at the ICA, his racy memoirs (*Dancing Ledge*, *Quartet*) have just been published, and he is within an ace of completing

his cinematic fantasy about Caravaggio. Derek Jarman, whose films range from the erotic *Sebastiane* to the pagan *In The Shadow of the Sun*, from *Jubilee's* punky prophecy to *Throbbing Gristle's* *Psychic Rally in Heaven*, describes his pursuit of passion among some eclectic acquaintances ...



In the Shadow of the Sun

**Rob La Frenais:** *Some people might say that your book *Dancing Ledge* depicts the last two decades as a series of high society antics—rich and frivolous people playing at art. What do you think?*

**Derek Jarman:** I see it in a different way. I saw it from a slightly different angle. It does show one having a good time, and I think that I've tried to make all the work that I've undertaken as enjoyable as possible. That's the first thing. The second thing is, because of the way the media have approached the subject of gay people, there is the general atmosphere around that we lead appalling, depressed and circumscribed lives, and I wanted to show that we didn't. And so for very good reasons I wanted to show that this is an affirmative situation, and we're not having desperate nervous breakdowns all the time and having problems.

*You make a point early on of identifying a 'gay art world.' Was that specific to the sixties?*

**'There was this wild rush of enjoyment in the sixties, one became part of it'**

Let's put it this way. Allen Ginsberg, when he was describing the handing down of knowledge, sexually, from Whitman to himself, put his finger on it. He made a sort of family tree which was Whitman slept with so and so...Carpenter who slept with so and so who slept with so and so who slept with me. And I'm five generations as it were away from Whitman. What I'm really describing is how, in the homosexual world, it's possible to form relationships which can lead to knowledge in a way without the very enervating, enclosing structure of the heterosexual world, where it's more difficult. In the early sixties, because everything was illegal then, whatever, because one had gone through the personal crisis, because it was at that point, for me in any case, it was like a breath of fresh air to find someone like David Hockney, and through him meet other people who were gay,

and so forth. Because, at this point there was this wild rush of enjoyment in the sixties, one became part of it. There was a great feeling that we came out and danced. When we danced at the Slade Ball in 1965, it wasn't just having fun, we were actually making a statement, because before that, boys hadn't danced together at the Slade Ball. But David said 'come on, we're going to dance' and away we did. It would seem, maybe to people that we were just having a good time, but the good time itself was an assault.

*Nowadays sexual ambiguity is cultivated in the straight art world* It's an immense advantage, being gay. It first of all gives you a perspective on society. You are outside it slightly, you meet other people who are outside it, so you look at it from the outside, it immediately distances you. You are liberated, if you want to be, from mortgages and families and responsibilities of that sort, so you can turn your energies in other directions, into self exploration, helping people or whatever.

*What are your politics?*

Well, I voted Labour in the last general election. I voted for Michael Foot, because he seemed the most intelligent person that I could see. My politics are decentralised, small...

*Yet you're concerned a lot with paganism, a love for Old Britain, which often is connected with people who express themselves in very right wing ideas.*

They don't have to express themselves in very right wing ideas at all. I think it's to do with conservation as opposed to conservatism. I think that when you hit forty, for the first time in your life, you feel conscious of things disappearing. There might be something that disappears which you really like—it might be a particular street corner, it might be a building, a tree, it could be anything. You regret that. You think, wouldn't it be nicer if they hadn't torn that building down, destroyed that tree, built that road, or whatever. Just small things like that. Or if that particular cafe or pub hadn't been closed down for redevelopment. There is a feeling for me that things are worth preserving, which is a form of conservatism in a way. Not political, but emotional.

*Is that why you're still living in England, because you're attached to it?*

I'm very attached to it. It's where all my roots are. I'd prefer not to work, rather than leave. I'm living here because I want to make my films here.

This is not xenophobia, or whatever, it's that... I wanted to stay here. In the sixties, the place to go if you were an artist was America. I went to America and discovered I really disliked it, that all the things that I most distrusted were even more firmly entrenched there.

*Do you think that for the British, then, there's nowhere to go?*

Well we've been going everywhere, this is one of our problems. One of our problems is that everyone went everywhere for rather a long time, and no-one paid much attention to what was back home. It was just a refuelling station for the empire; it was run like a sort of refuelling encampment. No-one else really cared about anything else, as far as I could see. All the brighter people were pushed off to India or wherever, and so there was a great vacuum here. Though it was only with Disraeli and the end of the nineteenth century that this really comes about—up until World War Two. But in the early part of the nineteenth century a lot of attention was lavished on home, in a way. Public baths were built, public libraries, schools were built. I think it's wrong to see the Victorians as Margaret Thatcher sees them. She sees them from the wrong aspect. One should see them as a reforming society. That's what interests me about the Victorians, people like Shaftesbury, even Prince Albert. He did a good deal more good than, say, the Duke of Edinburgh, in practical ways. They're closing down the schools and libraries. The Victorians weren't closing those sort of things down, they're opening them up all the time.

Going back to that conservation/conservatism thing... Prospero and *The Tempest*... I've always felt it was a wonderful work, which was made at the end of someone's life, which showed an attempt to knit together all sorts of warring factions, and the main theme of *The Tempest* is forgiveness, and accommodation, and also hope for the future, and I thought that was very valuable.

*You said in your book that you found Jubilee prophetic, when the riots came.*

I didn't see it at the time, but suddenly, afterwards...when they all signed up one way or another...Adam Ant—he'll be your No. 1 and everything. I didn't know that was going to happen when we did that film, but it sort of did. There was a divination, so yes I suppose there was an attempt to make a prophecy in it.

*How did you link Adam Ant with Margaret Thatcher?*

Well Adam went and sang for her at the Falklands jamboree. I was out of the country during the Falklands, thank God...

Yes, appalling, so was I. Terrible. Terrifying.

*...so I didn't know about that. He did? He went and sang for the Falklands? Yes. Hold me responsible if you want to. David Bowie asked you if you were a black magician after he'd seen Jubilee. Why did he ask that?*

I think just because of the divination at the beginning—John Dee and Elizabeth seeing the future.

*Bit of a naive question, wasn't it?*

Well, I think when you come out of a film like that you're slightly disoriented. It was five minutes after we came out of the film. I think he was reeling, it was an immediate reaction.

*Really? And you denied it immediately.*

## 'I believe in film as magic'

I denied it immediately, of course. You know, I believe in film as magic, it's a chemical conjunction of light and matter, it's a magic process.

*To go back to paganism, and the occult world, in general...*

You've got the wrong aspect. I'm talking about alchemy, and not Aleister Crowley and mumbo-jumbo.

*You in fact say in the book that you find Aleister Crowley 'rather dull and tedious' Do you really think he is? That surprises me*

Compared with Giordano Bruno, or someone, he is, yeah. I was thinking of him in comparison to others.

*But then you go on to enthuse about the Temple of Psychic Youth, saying 'Genesis wishes to make available Crowley's diaries' etc*



## "SEBASTIANE"

A FILM BY DEREK JARMAN

with

**RICHARD WARWICK**

**NEIL KENNEDY**

**LEONARDO TREVIGLIO**

Directed by

**DEREK JARMAN and**

**PAUL HUMFRESS**

Music by

**BRIAN ENO**

RELEASED THROUGH CINEGATE

A MEGALOVISION FILM



Derek Jarman at The Spokesman for the Temple of Psychic Youth

Fair enough. That's Genesis' world.

*But it's your world*

Yes of course it is my world in a way...that's true. Absolutely true. I think Genesis is into the Cut-ups, Burroughs, disruption. A certain degree of...psychic terrorism, perhaps, let's coin a word for it. And I understand that. I understand what he's doing. I'm not particularly interested in Aleister Crowley, but I think that what he's doing is valuable.

*Some people have suggested that it's something of a practical joke on the part of Genesis. That the people around him take it slightly more seriously than he does.*

No, I think he probably takes it slightly more seriously than they do. I think that perhaps some of the other people around him think it's a joke. But I think Gen takes it very seriously. I think his music, TG's music was perfect for film. It was a group making music in this country who could make music for film., and obviously there was a link up there. So this was why *In the Shadow of the Sun* had their music on. It was an exchange. They gave me the music, and I made the *Psychic Rally in Heaven* for them as a sort of present for doing it. There was no money involved in the whole thing.. I originally had Berlioz's *Requiem* on that film.

*How do you see your relationship apart from their supplying soundtracks for your films?*

Kindred spirits. I'm not very interested in Gen and the cult, but I'm very interested in Gen. I have never been down to Hackney, so I don't know very much. I'm rather walking into the dark.

*As their 'Spokesman'?*

As their Spokesman I gave my face, and nothing else. I'm very pleased to be their Spokesman. I'm a newscaster.

*You seem to be attracted to these movements. There are also references to you being mixed up with the WRP.*

Yes, I'm interested in all of these things. One has to be, as a filmmaker. I'm curious. Curiosity killed the cat, but I'm curious. I want to find out about them.

in a way, they're watching. It's part of the life around us. Both Vanessa and Genesis, during the same period, arrived at my doorstep. I welcomed them in, I made them cups of tea, and I listened to what they had to say, and I went out with them and found out...what was happening.

I had met Vanessa on *The Devils*, and she was one of the few actors who would remark about the set. So if I came on to a set in the morning, Vanessa would say—'That's a really lovely set'. *And she got you out there (selling newspapers) on New Years Eve.*

### **'I think Vanessa would have liked to have had me in the WRP, for tactical reasons'**

*Didn't you feel a bit of an idiot?*

No, I thoroughly agreed with what she was doing. *Just the same as when you see your face used as Spokesman...I'm not entirely convinced by this saying 'I think they're very wonderful people'. I think there's more to it than that.*

I absolutely agreed with what Vanessa was doing. I thought that, here was an artist making a political intervention. I thought, this is serious. I don't agree with everything Vanessa said, but I agree with the political stance.

*Do you think that it's because of your position as a slightly demimonde celebrity that these people allow you to get away with this, rather than forcing you into the initiation chamber?*

That's probably one reason. It's bound to be, isn't it? I think Vanessa would have liked to have had me in the WRP, for tactical reasons. I think Gen wants me a spokesman for tactical reasons. One has to make liasons with people you admire, and they're two I admire a great deal. I'm involved in self-



In *The Shadow of the Sun*

exploration, like a lot of artists, because if one can get down to the bottom of one's self, the society one lives in, the attrition areas, one can be of some sort of value. I think both those people, in their different ways, have done that. There's an element lacking in our culture, which tends to look at this sort of thing askance. So Gen or Vanessa become pariahs, which they're not. *Strange bedfellows.*

Very strange.

*That strangeness typifies, possibly, many of your encounters?* Absolutely. Definitely. Antithetical things, perhaps. But perhaps very near in a way as well. Let me put it this way. I'm interested in people who have passion. Both Gen and Vanessa have passion. They share that common ground.

*I'll accept that.*

*I suppose I can introduce Ken Russell at this stage. You indirectly suggest in the book that many of your ideas were in fact compromised by Ken Russell. For example the shooting of the peacocks in *The Devils*. To what extent was this true?*

Not by Ken Russell particularly, but by the pressures of making a large-scale feature film. So for instance, in *The Devils*, half the sets were cut out. Now actually, Ken, in this particular case battled for a whole day with the investors from America to try and save them all. I was only the set designer, so my putting ideas into the film was peripheral. My situation with Ken was to visualise the city and whatever, but of course, designers very often are early in on the making of a film, so he's usually the first person around with the director, and is in contact with the director at the stage where the film is being planned, so obviously one is exchanging ideas about what one thinks of various scenes. So, I *don't* think that, no, because it was his prerogative. It's just that I had a very different vision, and I was very upset when the peacocks, which I'd seen in real *White Devils* terms, this really appalling man shooting these peacocks...I just thought it could have been done in a way which showed...the arbitrariness...

*So, you don't think that the solution he used was indicative of a certain way in which you had to buckle under to him ?*

Well, yes it was, of course it was. I mean, what I've tried to avoid in my films so far is the scale of a film like *The Devils*. Because a lot of the subtlest shades get swept away in a film like that. The smaller you can be, the more subtle a film can be. The problem is, the bigger features go into the area of consumer-vision which is influenced directly by advertising. The audience has to be woken up every seven minutes by a laugh, or something.

*Quite a few people have been scornful of Ken Russell's films. How would you feel about them if you hadn't actually worked on them?* It's very difficult to answer that. When I saw *Women in Love* I really liked it. But then, that was thirteen years ago, in 1970. I think it's really difficult to analyse films that are in one's own culture.

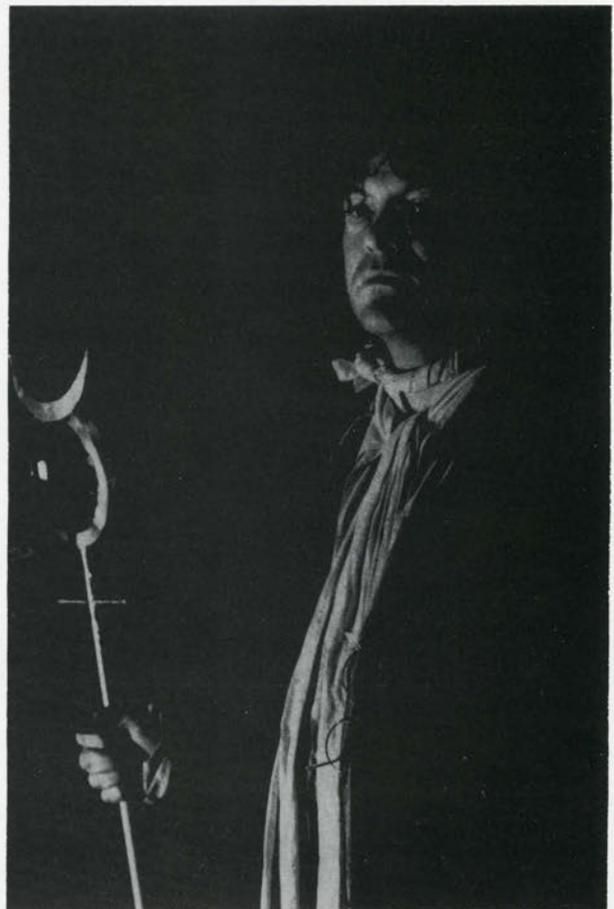
### **I see Ken Russell as being in a pantomime tradition'**

*In ten years hence the very turgidness and campiness of them will be... The reason I'm commenting very carefully here is...*

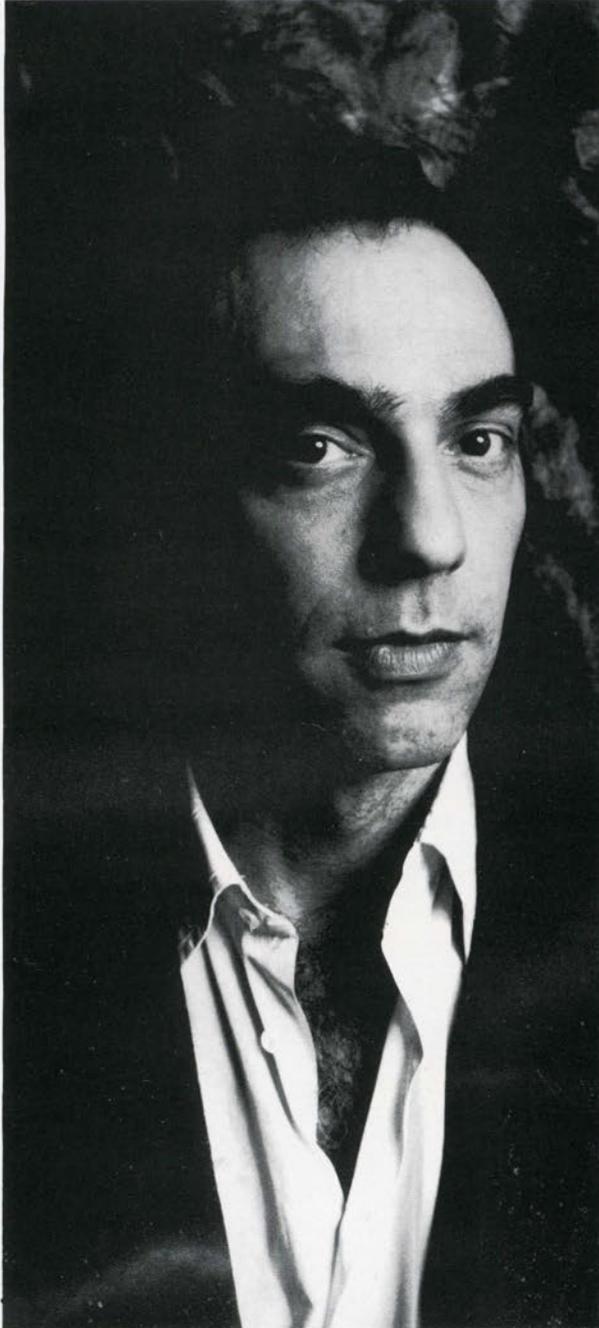
*Yes, you are being a bit careful.*

I'm being very careful. Because, I really like Ken, and I would separate that in a certain way from what I think about the work. When I went to Italy with Ken Russell, I discovered that just the sort of people who hated his films here thought he was absolutely masterly there. And so, you would say someone like Fellini, and their hands would go up in the air and they'd say 'how can you compare Fellini, who is a commercial cheapskate and vulgarian with Ken Russell, who's a genius?' And so, when you step out of your culture, you realise that people could see things differently. And I listened to those opinions, because the people who made those sort of statements were just the sort of people who might be attacking him here. I see Ken Russell as being in a pantomime tradition, I think he must have been brought up with a lot of pantomimes when he was young, and the thing about

The Tempest







pantomimes is that they have lots of really brilliant bits and really vulgar bits, and I think they influenced him.

*Going on to other contemporary art areas, you describe the Exploding Galaxy's version of Artaud's A Spurt of Blood as one of the best performances you've seen. Have you seen anything similar recently?*

I very rarely go out. I very rarely see it (performance art). During the seventies we were so busy making films, one hardly had the time, because they ran one into the other. In the last few years I've tended to retire into this room with my books rather than go out. I decided withdrawal was the better form of intervention, and that I ingested so much during my grown-up period, I wanted to digest that. I've retired hermit-like in a shell. I hardly ever go out of this room. Except alone, late at night. The one thing I saw last year which was extraordinary was Lindsay Kemp's *Nijinsky*. I preferred it to anything else he'd ever done. I've seen Japanese companies which I really like...I very much like the Rational Theatre. I was invited to see that. I usually go to things when I'm invited.

*Do you think experimental work should be subsidised?*

Yes. It probably ceases to be experimental, but in theory, yes, of course I do. *You speak quite scathingly of Channel Four.*

I don't know about your magazine, whether it need to be repeated. The problems about film-making, and I'm talking here about feature film-making, is that it's completely in the hands of people who look towards America, and who are therefore dollar casualties. The censorship of money comes into all work that's made at that level. So, when I'm talking about Channel Four and people like that, I see them as people who

## 'I mean, why the hell should Julian Schnabel be at the Tate?'

have sold out to the dollar in one way or another, and one of the great problems of making films, historically in this country, has been just that. Now we all know that, and everyone will admit that that happens, but very few people will take any action, either to avoid it, or to stop it.

*And the glossiness of the New York artworld, which you also describe, is coming to London too?*

Well that's brought to us by the Saatchis. So this is the intervention of advertising again.

*Through Charles and Doris. The linkup between their collecting and the agency...*

Yes, absolutely, and their promotion, say for instance, of Julian Schnabel at the Tate. I mean, why the hell should Julian Schnabel be at the Tate. Presumably they gave the Tate a Julian Schnabel and the Tate made way for them to put on a PR job so that it would go on his CV, so that they could see more pictures in New York, through Mary Boone's gallery, for more money. I see this as a real threat. I mean, it's obviously always happened to a certain extent in the art world, this hyping and whatever, we all know that, but it's interesting to see the advertising world which is the enemy of film for instance, intervening so strongly, formulating the way people think so openly now. And so it's all part and parcel of the situation of Thatcher, who is presented to us by the Saatchis as a media personality, that Julian Schnabel is presented in the same way. I find that terrible, to say the least of it. I've got nothing against the Saatchis buying paintings, but...

*How do you feel about the future, being in your forties. Do you feel like turning into a figure from your book, as you get older, like Anthony Harwood, or Sir Francis Rose?*

Sir Francis Rose was an old reprobate! Part of me might be like that, as an old reprobate, but I don't see myself in the future. I put them into the book, simply because they were people who have unfortunately died, so in a way, I could relate the particular flavour and milieu of the sixties, although they were much older, through them. Anthony Harwood, in particular, was a sort of mentor figure. Sir Francis Rose certainly wasn't. He was an extraordinary bizarre character who is there as a warning, really. He had a fair wind, as it were, from the beginning, because he had Gertrude Stein saying—'Look, there are two great modern painters, and they're called Pablo and Francis'. What happened to Sir Francis Rose is a jolly good warning story, in the book. Nevertheless, one was always fascinated by someone who was a real black sheep. He was a fund of stories and information about all these people which one wanted to hear, even if it was from him.

*I caught the echo of the world you describe in the semi-cult celebrity worship at recent fashionable art events, such as the parties during the last days of the B2 Gallery. I began to question that.*

It's a reflection of our culture. It's not a good thing. I said quite clearly in the book that I was longing for the day when one would become anonymous, like the medieval craftsmen. Where communities work on the projects they want to work on. But I'm against the puritan tradition. I am for enjoyment. I think people sadly lack that. I think one has a duty to show one can enjoy life. I hope that we've done it fairly modestly, and not at anyone else's expense.

# The Dead Rose

## Anger and After

Ken Hollings looks at some contemporary obsessions with the gothic, exotic and fetishistic, and attempts to trace a line back to the seminal visionary film-maker, Kenneth Anger. The flesh, dead flowers, jewellery, and Genet weave together in a fragile and elusive, yet recognisable genre.

'I have always considered movies evil; the day that the cinema was invented was a black day for mankind.'-Kenneth Anger

Anger Rising:  
 Sun Sign: Aquarian  
 Rising Sign: Scorpio  
 Ruling Planet: Uranus  
 Energy Component: Mars in Taurus  
 Type: Fixed Air  
 Lifework: MAGICK  
 Magical Weapon: Cinematograph  
 Religion: Thelemite  
 Deity: Horus the Avenger: the Crowned and Conquering Child  
 Magical Motto: "Force and Fire"  
 Holy Guardian Angel: MI-CA-EL  
 Affinity: Geburah  
 Familiar: Mongoose  
 Antipathy: Saturn and all His Works  
 Characteristic: Left handed fanatic craftsman  
 Politics: Reunion with England  
 Hobbies: Hexing Enemies; tap dancing; Astral projection; travel; talisman manufacture; Astrology; Tarot Cards; Collage  
 Heroes: Flash Gordon; Lautreamont; William Beckford; Melies; Alfred C Kinsey; Aleister Crowley  
 Library: Big Little Books; L.Frank Baum; M.P. Shiel; Aleister Crowley  
 Sightings: Several Saucers; the most recent a lode-craft over Hayes and Harlington, England, February 1966.  
 Ambitions: Many many many more films; Space travel  
 Magical numbers: 11; 31; 93  
*Kenneth Anger, schematic autobiography for Magick Lantern Cycle, 1966*

Kenneth Anger's films refuse to become history. *Scorpio Rising* and *Inauguration of the Pleasure Dome*, both made over twenty years ago, still exert a rebellious power which defies their age and the legitimizing processes of culture. His work constitutes the acknowledgement and refinement of the film image's ability to act as a focus for our desires and obsessions. Manifestations of this ability, outside of Anger's own work, occur at random: Frank, president of the San Francisco Hell's Angels from 1955

to 1962, travelling to Hollywood to buy the blue and yellow striped sweat shirt worn by Lee Marvin in *The Wild One*, or John Dillinger gunned down outside the cinema where he had just seen *Manhattan Melody*. These examples mark a point at which film is no longer involved in a banal reading of history but enters into myth, where it no longer reflects experience but energizes it. In Kenneth Anger's case, this focussing ability has ensured that his films are perpetually renewed through a series of shifting sub-cultural alliances. For example, interest in *Scorpio Rising* was re-awakened in the mid-sixties when the Lynch report and attendant media hysteria conferred upon the Oakland Hell's Angels the status of a terrorizing Public Enemy Number One. The Angels themselves attended a screening of the film at a San

Francisco theatre which had been using a public montage of Hell's Angel press clippings as publicity. Apparently the Angels enjoyed the film but objected to their name being associated with a bunch of New York bikers who wore leather and rode such 'silly goddam junk-wagon bikes.' Anger did however add the Angels to the list of people to whom *Scorpio Rising* was dedicated and later featured them rising as a fiery vision in *Invocation of My Demon Brother*.

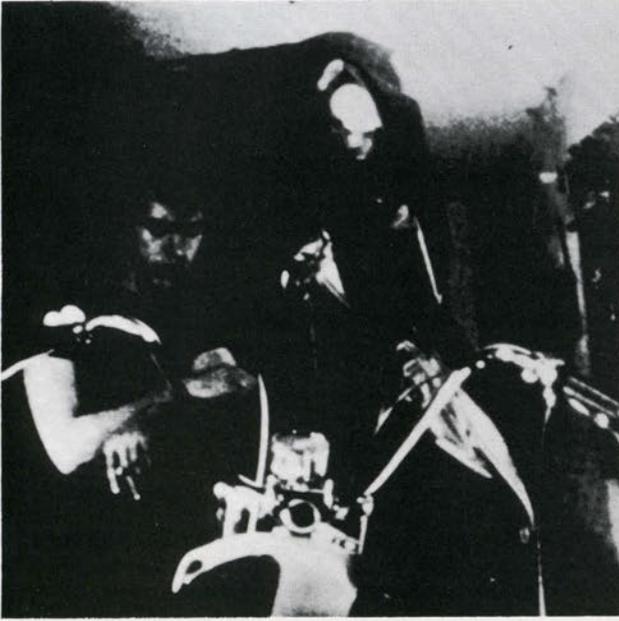
'I will follow him'

In 1974, Coum Transmissions—already on a crash course with infamy—paid homage to Anger in the presentation and structure of *Couming of Age*, a live celebration of sex magic. In 1977, Anger's Magick Lantern Cycle—a special compilation of his best work—was screened between performances by the Sex Pistols, the Clash and the Buzzcocks at a legendary all-night event in a London cinema.

Today, there is, I believe, a body of work emerging from a loosely connected group of London-based artists which can be realistically compared with and related to that of Kenneth Anger. The point of this comparison is not to establish a tradition, or a line of influence emanating from Kenneth Anger. To talk in terms of influence is to presuppose a compromise with the strategies of a dominant culture. Such a compromise is not apparent in Anger's films nor can such a compromise be found in the work of John Maybury, Cerith Wyn Evans, Roberta Graham, John Scarlett Davis, Holly Warburton or Akiko Hada: all the artists involved in this discussion are too fiercely individualistic. However a general comparison does permit two things: a chance to give their work an overall coherence so far denied in previous critical studies, and a chance to begin a fresh reassessment of Anger and his films.

Certain points of congruence do exist; the powerful visual impact of the films, videos and installations under discussion is an immediate common aspect. Like Anger, the work of Maybury, Cerith Wyn Evans and Roberta Graham project an intense visceral thrill which only the long dead



Kenneth Anger—*Scorpio Rising*Kenneth Anger—*Inauguration of the Pleasure Dome*

would fail to experience, and all are involved at a fundamental level in how vision can be transformed and renewed.

'We are the language.'—Williams Burroughs, *Cities of the Red Night*.

The visual supremacy of Anger's films lies in his virtual eradication of the text. Language is not a repository for meaning or a means to facilitate easy explanations. Instead it exists as an organising principle within his films in the same way that it has been detected as the organizing principle in the creation and regulating of myth. However in the case of Anger, it is informed by the montage techniques of Eisenstein and the occultism of Aleister Crowley, resulting in a filmic mythopoeia in which images are overlaid, reversed, transposed and contrasted. In turn these images are drawn from a huge pantheon of mythic figures; divinities from religions both living and dead, bikers, characters from other films, criminals and cultural heroes. Mythologies do not offer up a single reading and when the components of that mythology become increasingly eclectic and conflicting, the resultant images become increasingly powerful, resisting our attempts to reduce them to a single meaning. The expansion of the powers of perception which this use of film employs exists as some kind of response to what William Blake described as 'the Vegetated Mortal Eye's perverted and single vision' with which mankind was plagued after the Fall. Sight is multiplied out and diffused across the screen, a process which is never more apparent than in Derek Jarman's *In the Shadow of the Sun* where anything up to six individual sets of images are overlaid in a masterpiece of visual hermeticism. The use of multiple mythologies need not result in such a complex deployment of images, and the use of the overlaid image will be discussed in more detail below. In contrast there is, for example, Akiko Hada's video

*The Branks* which looks relatively austere in its use of colours and imagery. However the pale subdued colours and the use of simple direct imagery are involved in an intricate assemblage of ideas taken from Crowley, the Tarot and Tibetan and Hindu words of power which are contrasted with the banalities of our living daily language. Ironically proclaiming 'all thoughts are false', *The Branks* sets out to purge meaning of the dead and hindering weight of the word.

Roberta Graham's use of mythology is always sharply defined by its relationship with an underlying reality. Brilliant, paradoxical and precise, her work is best exemplified by her recent life-sized self portrait exhibited at last year's Serpentine gallery Summer Show. Executed as a lightbox whose rectangular form is distorted through overlaid black panels, Graham is depicted reclining in a pose taken from a famous nude calendar photograph of Marilyn Monroe. However from the pelvis downwards, the bones of her body appear to have erupted out of the flesh to actually lie superimposed over the skin. The whole body is surrounded by and shrouded in white cloth, which, when back lit, takes on a translucent glow, as if the body had been enveloped in a gently undulating field of light. An ikon to some modern resurrection myth, its meaning is discursive and revelatory: the focal point at which the dead meat of the film star, the permanence of her image, the vitality of the living artist, the fleshy reality of the pose, the anatomical mechanics of the portrait artist's work all meet. It is a work whose resources can never be exhausted by discussion or limited by language. That aspect of Graham's work which concerns itself with myth and the flesh can be traced back through her work with a whole pantheon of figures from modern mythology; Peter Sutcliffe, Brady and Hindley and most specifically the Kray Twins. In her 1977 tape/slide performance

*Reflections on the Krays*, an initial attempt to separate Kray myth from Kray fact began to dissolve into a study of how the Krays carefully built up and projected their own mythic image based on an obsessive fascination with the image of the gangster hero presented in Hollywood movies of the thirties and forties. The performance begins with images of the most alluring richness: a slim black attache case is opened to reveal a red velvet lining upon which lie a highly polished black luger, two glittering switch-blades and two gold identity bracelets engraved with the names Ron and Reggie. The fetishistic appeal of these objects is increased as they are handled by people who remain off-camera. Cufflinks and other items of male jewellery are added during the sequence, and the hypnotic power which these objects generate increases. This has very strong parallels with the seductive and lingering photographing and handling of bike chains, boots, leather gear and insignia in *Scorpio Rising* and of Lord Shiva's jewellery in *Inauguration of the Pleasure Dome*. In all three cases, the viewer is drawn further and further into the visual action, participating in the performance through a trance-like contemplation of these beautiful fetishes. Roberta Graham however is playing back our own obsessions to us, waiting for the point when the trance is broken by the shock of recognition.

'Communication requires loyalty. A rigorous morality results from complicity in the knowledge of Evil, which is the basis of intense communication. Literature is not innocent.'—George Bataille, *Literature and Evil*

The text although erased from the visionary film as dialogue or exposition, does continue to draw attention to itself even through its absence. It is interesting that Roberta Graham's latest project is an ambitious reworking of *Wuthering Heights* on film,

From Serpentine Summer Show—Roberta Graham





Miracle of the Rose—Cerith Wyn-Evans

and Cerith Wyn Evans has just completed a video based on the last five pages of Genet's *The Miracle of the Rose*. These two books, along with Lautreamont's *Malador* which formed the basis for an aborted Kenneth Anger project, are all works which Bataille prized for their compulsive, transgressive quality, for the knowledge of the dark and the damnable which they reflected. They form a counterpart to the evil which Anger detected in films, that is the knowledge of the power that they held over their viewer. It is therefore not surprising that these books hold an attraction for the film-maker, although the intention of basing a film upon such books is ultimately to radically transform them.

In the case of Cerith Wyn Evans' *Miracle of the Rose*, Genet's text has been recast as a series of intense visual hieroglyphics. Precise physical gestures, the play of light, shadow and colour upon the shaven head and bear shoulders of a young boy, a deranged herbarium of exotic plants and cacti drift through and across a slow close-up pan of an intricately tattooed arm and a series of cut-aways of a half naked body suspended on a harness with a noose around his neck. The erotic climax of the final dream in Genet's *The Miracle of the Rose* becomes embodied in a direct experience of sexual delirium. The images begin to project a sensation in which the original text would have lost itself.

'Precisely what is a dream? A certain juxtaposition of word and image.'—William Burroughs, interview 1966

Where the text is allowed to function directly within the films under discussion it

is generally to create tensions and conflict, and to open up the work still further. A disruptive and disturbing dream logic begins to exert itself that is both ironic and threatening. These texts exist in the compressed, convoluted form of pop songs, religious formulae etc. A whole book could be written analysing how the pop songs inter-relate with the imagery of *Scorpio Rising*, most notably in the sequence when the bikers dress themselves in leathers, blue jeans and belts made of bike chains to the sound of Bobby Vee singing 'She wore Blue Velvet', and the compulsive rush towards death and damnation is accompanied by songs like 'Fools Rush In', 'Point of No Return' and 'Wipe Out'. They serve not only to comment upon the visual thrust of the film but also simultaneously distance the audience from the film whilst increasing their complicity with it.

However this ironic juxtaposition finally locates the total meaning of the film within the spectator who ultimately determines or permits these connections to be made. An excellent example of the relationship between word and image asserting itself within the spectator is John Scarlett-Davis' *Lord's Prayer*, a video made for but eventually banned by the BBC. Over an insistent loop tape of military drumming, the individual lines of the Lord's Prayer are recited by a closely edited procession of beautiful but quite brutally expressionless boys, their faces perpetually changing under an array of masks and devises. The prayer is repeated over and over again, with individual words flashed up on the screen as spoken. The video continually cuts back to a number of specific boys; a very young child filmed in

black and white brandishing a large chromed microphone, a boy whose face is bound tightly in bright red cord, and a boy whose face is partially distorted by being pressed against a pane of glass and whose eyes are obscured by large black flies. In selecting the Lord's Prayer for this kind of treatment, John Scarlett Davis has elected to subvert not only the one prayer with which the majority of his audience would be familiar, but also the one text which members of that audience could trace back to their individual experiences at school. Similarly by the continual repetition of the prayer within the video, he renews our awareness of a text which has been stripped of all meaning through the daily regimented repetition enforced in school. However the relationship between such christian words and these heathen faces is a difficult and ambiguous one: it looks like the first prayer meeting of the Congressional Church of the Wild Boys, and nothing less.

This dream logic is further extended in John Maybury's *Pantomime Succubus* in which the opening part of the soundtrack is made up of loops of one of Colonel Kurtz's speeches from *Apocalypse Now*. The phrase 'Horror has a face' is repeatedly intercut with bursts of electronic percussion and other lines from the same speech edited in at random. The resulting deranged monologue, seemingly obsessed by the work 'horror' accompanies a series of simple but slow dream-like images: a pair of strangely marked and ornately bejewelled arms emerge from behind an undulating cloth, a young and androgynous somnambulist rises from a luxurious bed and walks slowly towards a wall. What you hear is what you

see. The resulting stasis and tension remains until it is released by the savage sexual grappings of the succubus and sleeper which are, in turn accompanied by frenetic flamenco music. The electronic percussion which punctuated the Kurtz cut-ups has also been edited into the flamenco music, keeping the two contrasting sequences linked.

'I never use natural light. I don't trust it.'—Cerith Wyn Evans.

Both John Maybury and Cerith Wyn Evans pay considerable attention to the construction and lighting of their sets, the costuming and make-up of the performers.

In Cerith Wyn Evans early films his sets are complex assemblages of carefully placed inanimate objects, decorations and shadows into which the bodies of the performers have been very carefully integrated.

Both infinitely prefer artificial light because of the control that can be exercised over it and range of effects which it can achieve. Use of natural light in Maybury's work is usually with a satiric purpose, like the summer fair sequence sent to him in error by the film labs, and footage of Tokyo which is superimposed over some film he shot of a miniature 'toy' Tokyo which he built in the snow outside his flat. Apart from these excursions Maybury's films occupy an obsessive, enclosed space in which each object, colour and movement is precisely controlled and deployed. The factory of facts has been replaced by Scorpio's bedroom and the Abbey of Thelma. Such control results in considerable visual power and intricate attention to detail: where the performers are deprived of speech, their movements and costumes, and the objects which surround them must fill the silence.

The all-pervading nature of the silence means that individual figures within the films, whilst remaining carefully delineated are closely linked by the lighting and staging to create one entity. In *Inauguration of the Pleasure Dome* the various divinities merge into the identity of one single ploytheistic deity, and in *Scorpio Rising* the biker gang exist as multiple aspects of Scorpio himself. A similar merging takes place in Maybury's *Baby Monkey's Bad Trip*, a film of an early performance by the Neo Naturists in the confined atmosphere of a night club. This claustrophobic, tightly cut film gives the viewer the impression of some insane collective being rather than a group of individuals. The Neo Naturists appear as a monstrous vision of arms, legs, painted flesh and sex organs: the swarming body of some androgenous mythological beast. Some clear and discreet images appear: a naked child rising out of a coffin bearing a bouquet of flowers, a woman breathing fire from a large tank of dark water and mouths streaked with dark juice. However the final impact of this film is one of a giggling, insane hallucination of hell.

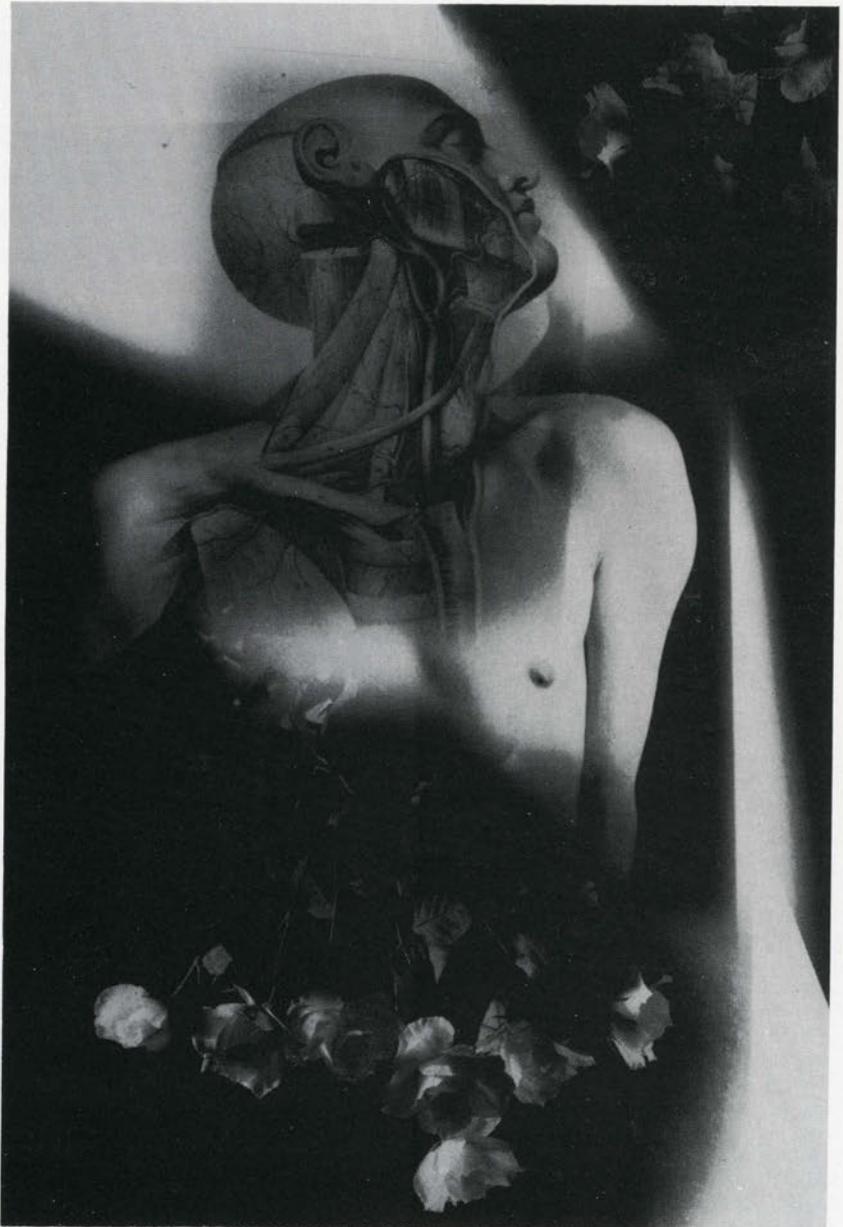
The obsessive space can move outside the camera in the presentation of the work. For screenings of Anger's films a witch would

be on hand to bless the film and the projector, and red ribbons were tied across the entrance to the screening room obliging the audience to bow down upon entering the room and thus enter the correct frame of mind to receive the film. Early screenings of Maybury's films involved the use of cloth drapes, special lighting and the inclusion of paintings to accompany the viewing. Artists like Holly Warburton and Roberta Graham have taken the expanded dark space of the cinema and its controlled deployment and used it in the gallery. Recent installations by both Warburton and Graham have strong affinities with the expansion of the film image, especially within the dark semi-religious silence of the cinema auditorium. Roberta Graham arranged her light boxes at the Serpentine Summer Show to resemble the stained glass windows of a church. However, because they were back-lit arti-

cially, they were also reminiscent of greatly enlarged individual frames taken from a film, thus bringing the gallery space, the church space and the cinema into close proximity, their roles as places of contemplation becoming ambiguous and deliberately confused.

Holly Warburton's installation, *The Reflected Portrait, the Petrification of Transience* was the most thorough and disciplined control of visual space I have witnessed in a long time. Inside a darkened chamber, a series of screens form a gentle curve around an expanse of black and white tiled floor which lies between the screens and the spectator. Moving and static images of varying sizes and perspective are projected onto the screens. These images constitute an ever-increasing montage of a rich and antique luxuriance: folds of expensive cloth in deep colours, arrangements of bright-

The Reflected Portrait—The Petrification of Transience—Holly Warburton





The Reflected Portrait—The Petrification of Transcience—Holly Warburton

but-dead-flowers, and complex tableaux vivants of beautiful women exquisitely dressed. The images overlap and are superimposed upon each other—some actually are reflected across the installation whilst some are projected down onto the floor where they distort and elongate. As the montage progresses, the shadows within each image seem to deepen, and our attention is focussed increasingly upon three recurring images: a janus-faced woman, a skull and a human embryo. To heighten the impact of the imagery, church incense is burnt throughout the performance and outside sound is muffled by hangings of heavy black cloth. The soundtrack to the event is a collage of fragments from Meredith Monk and Maria Callas. The effect was one lush, almost ironic lingering upon stasis, the momentary point where the aesthetic experience seems the least fragile but the most artificial.

'Inflammable desires dampened by day under the cold water of consciousness are ignited that night by the libertarian matches of sleep, and burst forth in showers of shimmering incandescence. These imaginary displays provide a temporary relief'.—Kenneth Anger, Prologue to *Fireworks* 'Thanks to these beings which indulged in acts which escaped all interpretation, edifices, whole cities were built, real cities made of emptiness and thousands of stones piled one on another, creatures rolling in blood and tearing arteries, playing the role of what Thomas had once called ideas and passions'.—Maurice Blanchot, *Thomas the Obscure*

Each of the artists under discussion have perpetrated some kind of transgression. Their work seems strongest, most rigorously defined as it crosses the line between what is commonly acceptable and what is not. An examination of the subject matter of their chosen projects is enough to establish that link: murder, insanity, desire, magic and rebellion all play an important part. However, none of them are content to deal with simple representation of these themes. The result is an expansion of their chosen



medium in which it is pushed to its limits. Image upon image is overlaid. If John Maybury or Cerith Wyn Evans leave a space in the construction of one of their sets, it is to allow another image to show through underneath. Akiko Hada projects slides and colour tints into the plain spaces and onto the naked bodies she films. Roberta Graham used light boxes so that it draws the viewer down through the layers of flesh and skin of her body towards the heart and the skeleton in a display which is both brutal and vulnerable. I for one cannot wait to see what she does with film. God knows where Derek Jarman and John Scarlett-Davis are heading. Unless the laws of this country get in their way, the only limitations any of them will experience will be within the technology at their disposal. A new video by Jhn Maybury was recently removed from a gallery show because it was alleged that he had overlaid and reprocessed so many images in it that the work was no longer of a projectable quality, something which Maybury considers as stupid as a gallery withdrawing a painting from an exhibition because it has too much paint on it. How much is too much? Perhaps Anger is still slightly ahead in this respect. He has already devised a three-screen version of *Inauguration of the Pleasure Dome* to be viewed under the influence of LSD but even he has gone too far in the past: he claims to have destroyed an early version of *Lucifer Rising* by trying to run the film through a projector placed on its side. I repeat, how much is too much?

Ken Hollings

# Kill and Wake!



Professor Hindu

'The majority of people live below the level of disbelief or doubt. It takes application and a kind of genius to believe anything, and to believe anything.....will probably become more difficult as time goes on.' (Wyndham Lewis *The Enemy* 1927)

Africa's most scandalous, most outspoken performer gained his hot reputation as much for his outrageous lifestyle as his innovative Afro-Beat music. Fela Anikulapo-Kuti has never made a secret of his private life. Six years ago, the marriage ceremony in which he became King to 27 Queens was broadcast over Nigerian television. Later he referred to his wives as mattresses. Seen by some as Africa's first true hippie, he rules Supreme over his commune of Kalakuta Republic, which

shelters a diminishing number of wives and a growing number of children; born alternately girl, boy, girl, boy etc. In his home country Nigeria, his crowd following is reportedly large enough to alert the fearsome riot squads, yet his is a lone voice which dares speak out against the authorities' deep-rooted corruption. Despite violent and frequent lashbacks he continues to spit in the face of the Nigerian military. Fela preaches his own brand of PanAfricanism which he hopes someday will instate him as Nigeria's first musical, spiritual President. Hype and Performance, as Fela would put it 'have truly been a happy marriage'.

For some, compared to his past history, Fela's musical appearance at Brixton's Academy in late '83 had been luke warm. But when it was announced that Fela would

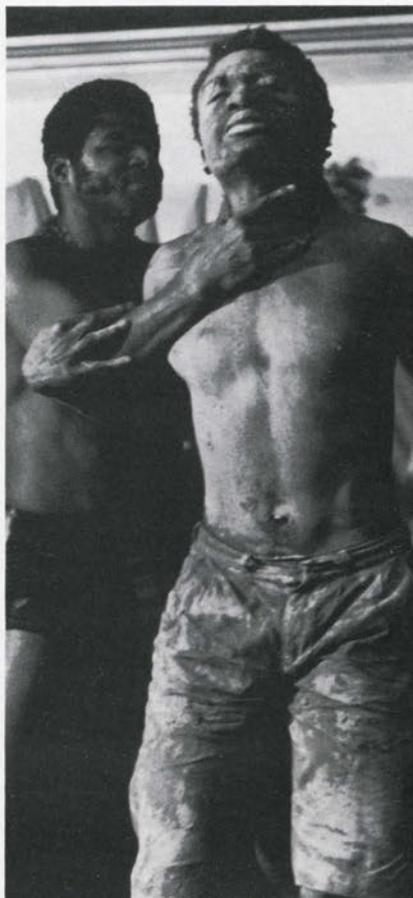
be presenting a night of African Spiritual Powers forefronted by his spiritual advisor Okurun Professor Hindu, it became evident that the interest in Fela and his antics ('The One Who Emanates Greatness, Who Carries Death in His Quiver and Who Cannot be Killed by Human Entity'), had not faltered. The Professor and Fela are never far apart. One may be at his home in Ghana, the other two states away in Nigeria, but spiritually they are able to communicate through Fela's Ghanaian wife Sewaa.

Uncertainty of what the night would unfold generated rumours: At his first show, held at Fela's Lagos club, the Shrine, the Professor had killed a man by shooting him in the stomach, and later brought him back to life. Fela and his patrons became nervous when after two days the body

began to attract flies. At the Academy he had shredded his tongue. In Ghana the people run to the police and say 'The Professor has killed again.' 'How long has the body been buried!' 'Six days'. 'Wait until the 11th-then come tell us'.

The Country Club, Haverstock Hill was the ideal location for Fela's enlightenment of Europeans to the Powers of African Spirits. Run with style by the sequined Simone from Trinidad, the Country Club has a history of great black performers and obscure but wonderful cabaret acts. Walking into Simone's is a similar sensation to entering a club in Lagostown, Trenchtown or Bridgetown. The grey-haired barman in top hat and waistcoat will not be rushed; he hands you a bottle of Mountgay rum, a glass and tells you to serve yourself. Impatience will not be rewarded. He turns his back to chat to a sister in shiny sprayed-on gold slacks. In the corner the apprehensive *Black on Black* crew (filming for the LWT magazine programme) sweat heavily. Fela sits at the table with one female only and chip of the old block, eldest son Femi. They survey the turnout with characteristic impish look. Early arrivers to the scene may have caught the Professor with assistant studiously digging a grave outside the club in the evening drizzle. When asked what was about to happen, Fela would only reveal, with his habit of looking at you anywhere but in the face, 'There will be a storm—then a calm'.

Announced by Fela with pride, the Professor appears in blue, red and gold



The Resurrection

Egyptian regalia. (Fela was once taken back to Egypt, the beginning of humanity, by the spirits). The Professor disappears and strips down to a pair of red and black trunks. (Neither the Professor nor Fela feel comfortable in clothes and can be seen wandering the corridors of the Russell Hotel in nothing but underpants.)

Professor pounces on a naive guinea pig whose face he paints around the eyes with markings similar to an American footballer. This will enable him to contact the spirits. The first two minutes show him to be worthy of membership to the Magic Circle. He tires of card tricks and produces a rusty meat cleaver and a small dagger for behind the lilac chiffon drapes. His enthusiasm grows as he measures necks, sharpens blades and tests their keenness on handkerchieves from the audience. Three men are chosen to take part in the final deal of death; the cards are held not in the hand, but between the teeth. The fatal card falls with a young Ghanian man whose crazed look suggests that he has been through this before. More spiritual summonings. The victim sits in a chair with his arms held behind his back. The Professor holds up his chin as if to shave him, but instead hacks and saws at his neck with the meat cleaver. The victim falls to the floor where the final slaughter is carried out.

Mocking rumours escalate into a whirlwind of belief, which surges towards the front of the stage, balances on chairs and tables, and tastes spilt blood for reassurance.

The body/corpse is carried to the grave,





Professor Hindu and victim

buried under three foot of earth and trampled on by unsure spectators, with feet that say 'Get out of this one alive.'

Back at Simone's, the Professor is still bursting with magical know-how. His main prop next to the meat cleaver, is a bamboo mat which he rolls into a circle, and from the empty space inside produces for a female volunteer his idea of every woman's wishes: several pairs of pastel coloured Marks and Spencers' knickers, brightly coloured tea towels and yards of shimmering cloth. When the bamboo mat runs dry, Fela's Afro-Beat music takes over. It plays until light, and as the dancing heats up, Simone's vacuumed carpet becomes ingrained with graveyard mud.

In the sobering light of Sunday morning Hampstead doubles played tennis ten yards from the burial site. At the head of the grave lay a leather and cowry head-piece. The small patch of mist on the window overlooking the grave came from the breath of Solomon who watched patiently over the scene night and day. With a stock of half-eaten confectionary, and a bottle of flat lemonade he sat gazing onto the seemingly untouched grave—getting up now and again to pace the floor. 'Isn't he cold out there?' 'He doesn't feel cold. He's dead. He feels nothing'.

Sunday night, the resurrection. On stage, as a warm up, the Professor hacks small pieces of his tongue with introspective enthusiasm.

A disbeliever (a nurse) asks to inspect the pieces closer. He obliges, cuts off a further piece and hands it to him in a tissue. The spectacle is bloody and basic, saved from



succumbing to the goulish gore of a video nasty by the mysticism which surrounds the display and the strength of belief at its source. Kill-joy perfectionists swear that the Professor is not producing pieces of human tongues from his mouth but chunks of raw animal liver.

Outside, a group gather to witness the digging up of the body. Mud-encrusted, but not without life, it is carried in a revived on stage with some brutal pushing and what appears to be kicks to the head.

'Kill and Wake' has sorted out the sceptics from the believers. 'Without spirits we are nothing,' maintains Fela. Just as the Professor's bamboo mat gushed endless gifts, so his own appetite for the mystical is insatiable. His drab hotel room is transformed into a mobile shrine with a personal collection of emblems and spiritual souvenirs: brightly coloured plastic flowers, gilt-framed pictures of the Queen, hotel-sized jars of jam, a small cuckoo clock. Spiritual Powers or no Spiritual Powers, this man's resolute belief in spheres beyond the mundane has spilt over to us and left us in a state of uncertainty. What had really gone on over the two days? Had the victim spent most of the time in the warmth of a hotel, or had he rested for 2 days in shorts, in January under three foot of mud?

As the Professor returned to a less resistant audience in Ghana, at least he was no longer a Preacher without a congregation: He could be sure that the non believers across the seas had been shaken and stirred, if not yet truly converted.

Isobel Appio

# Carnival and Contradiction

Popular carnivals are generally held to symbolise liberation, an upturning of the social order. John A. Walker looks at traditional British carnivals, as well as the more well-known Caribbean variety, and finds a contradiction between the radical and conformist.

IN BRITAIN DURING the summer months many local carnival parades take place. For example, the East coast resort of Cleethorpes claims to mount the largest and best parade in the world. (Better than Rio de Janeiro's carnival, New Orleans's Mardi Gras, Nice and Jersey's Battles of Flowers, Pasadena's Tournament of Roses, Port of Spain's (Trinidad) Mas', Calgary's Stampede, Cologne's Fastnacht, Notting Hill's West Indian Carnival?) This year seventeen marching bands and over one hundred and thirty decorated floats plus assorted coaches and custom cars took part in a cavalcade one sultry Friday evening in July watched by a crowd of many thousands.

These carnivals are somewhat curious cultural phenomena. They raise various questions: How long have they existed? How local are they in fact? What is their artistic status and quality? What is their political significance, if any? What social functions do they serve?

How old are British carnivals? Considered as part of a general tradition of festivals, they are extremely ancient. They

can be traced back to the religious and military processions of pre-Christian civilizations. Roman Saturnalia are thought to be the source of the Winter carnivals of the Christian era: the word 'carnival' (meaning 'without flesh or meat', 'a farewell to the sins of the flesh') referred to 'the season immediately preceding Lent devoted in Italy and other Roman Catholic countries, to revelry and riotous amusement'.<sup>(1)</sup> However, in their present form British carnivals are relatively new. For example, the Grimsby Town carnival dates of the local Chamber of Commerce, was in fact a revival of a Fancy Dress and Trades Parade, known colloquially as the 'Biggest Ever', which first took place in 1921 and was held annually into the 1930s. Horses and decorated bicycles featured prominently in this parade. The purpose of the 'Biggest Ever' was to raise funds for town's general hospital. (A headline in the local paper concerning the 1933 parade reveals the impact of pre-war unemployment and economic recession: 'Crowded route but money not too plentiful'). North London's

carnivals are also recent in origin: Hornsey's was established in 1959 and Notting Hill's in 1966.

Modern summer carnivals are secular rather than religious festivals. In their combination of elements they are specifically twentieth century phenomena, and yet certain of their features have histories which date back centuries. Residues from several past epochs co-exist in the carnival. In addition, carnivals can be related to the rituals and magical beliefs of primitive societies. Anthropologists have identified three types of ritual behaviour commonly found in festivities: masquerade (e.g. carnival costumes and masks), role reversals (e.g. men dressed as women), formalities (e.g. the organised procession, the awarding of prizes by the local mayor).

At first sight carnivals appear to be purely local events, that is, unique to particular places, involving local community groups. But this is to some extent a deceptive impression: as we shall see shortly, some elements composing the carnival derive from American mass media culture; appar-



ently local floats originate in reality, in other towns (keen carnival participants often travel to several parades during the summer months). No two carnivals are identical but because of the homogeneity of British culture, local carnivals (with the exception of those specific to ethnic minorities) tend to be very similar in their form and content. Variations obviously occur through time and yet the carnival's cyclical nature ensures a high degree of continuity and predictability from year to year.

It is clear that those who plan, organise and participate in the carnival gain a deeper satisfaction than the spectators who line the route. Some normal rules of decorum are broken: men delight in appearing as clowns, monsters, stiltmen, transvestites, Vikings or Roman soldiers, while young women play the part of beauty queens, Arabian belly dancers, or vamps arrayed in sexy underwear. A carnival is one of the few cultural forms in which adults and children play an equal part; both can indulge their dressing up fantasies. The design and preparation of costumes, make-up and floats demands a creative effort on the part of participants. And during the parade itself skill in performance is also needed. However, the status of the participants is 'amateur' rather than 'professional'.

A carnival parade is a strange blend of randomness and order, licence and regimentation. The unique, bizarre costumes of individuals with collecting tins are counter balanced by the uniforms of the marching bands of scouts, guides and deum majorettes. Although the rules of everyday life are temporarily suspended, another set—those governing the parade—equally precise, come into force. In no sense is the carnival a transcendence of social constraints.

For spectators, a carnival is a welcome diversion from the routine of Saturday afternoon shopping or the relentless flow of Friday evening's colour television. For a few hours streets are closed to normal traffic. They cease to be merely drab thoroughfares for cars and pedestrians and become corridors for public pleasure and spectacle. A rare sense of community and collective experience is generated amongst the strangers who compose the crowds. In effect the community exhibits itself to itself: once a year the people cheer a parade of local voluntary and juvenile organisations which are themselves composed of ordinary people. Witnessing a carnival one catches a glimpse of truly popular culture (that is, culture made by the people for the people) as against the high art forms associated with the upper classes and the mass culture produced on behalf of the people by professional entertainers and specialists in the large cities. However, this popular culture is deeply penetrated and deformed by mass culture and by the contradictions of modern capitalist society. For example, costume characters in the Grimsby and Cleethorpes' carnivals included Superman and ET (the alien being from the famous Hollywood film). In an age of state welfare provision the overt function of the carnival—its rational excuse—is to



collect money for various private charities and the local hospital. A high proportion of the floats and tableaux turn out to be mobile advertisements for local public houses, businesses and services (of course, these commercial enterprises are part of the local economy). The bar staff of a public house share a sense of camaraderie which extends beyond their positions as employees. Employers are able to harness such feelings for the purpose of publicity. Carnivals often have a more general economic function: in Cleethorpes the carnival is a highlight in its programme of tourist attractions.

A parade ostensibly devoted to innocent pleasure and public good works sometimes includes within it representatives of state power, force and war. In Hornsey for example, local territorial units armed with rifles and with faces blackened for action appeared amongst the charitable floats. To the patriotic their presence may have been reassuring. To others it seemed sinister: a prediction of a time when the street of

English cities will be controlled by Army units as those of Northern Ireland are at present.

It is evident that the contradictory mix of the carnival—local, national and international elements, charitable and commercial interest civilian and military, modern and ancient theses—is an articulation of the contradictory nature of the large society of which it is a part. Only a utopian would expect to find a truly popular culture uncontaminated by these contradictions.

From a strictly high art perspective, carnivals are orgies of kitsch, they represent the degradation of Culture. Certainly, the individual elements—costumes, tableaux—rarely manifest any original artistic vision or skill (the Notting Hill carnival is an exception in this respect). However, the appeal of the carnival as a spectacle does not really depend upon the high artistic quality of its constituent parts, because what matters is the totality, the combination of sounds and sights; the succession of bands

and floats passing in review, the brightly coloured flags waving in unison, the odd conjunctions of costumes, the different instruments and musical styles of the various bands, the 'human interest' of watching small children play out their allotted roles with utter seriousness; the close rapport between performers and audience. Carnival resists critical analysis; its gaiety, humour sensory delight and ephemerality defies conventional aesthetic judgements.

Some writers on carnivals have stressed their radical political dimension, citing historical examples in which carnivals have climaxed in violence and riots.(2) Anthropologists have argued that carnivals are a form of ritualised rebellion: in the past role reversals have included master/slave, king/subject relationships. In this regard carnival belongs to the 'world turned upsidedown' tradition of popular culture. Carnival, one writer observes, 'enables the underprivileged class to make revolution without really performing it'. (3) If this is so, then carnival appears to function as a safety valve. Cecil Gutzmore argues that it is 'of the essence of carnivals as occasions of mass culture expression that they are pregnant with rebellion'.(4) This quotation is taken from an article on the Notting Hill carnival. In the special circumstances of that carnival in the 1970s (detailed in Gutzmore's article) the pretended rebellion of the carnival was translated into actual rebellion against the forces of authority.

It seems to me, however, that the radical potential of carnivals has been over-exaggerated. As far as the majority of British summer carnivals are concerned, they are sedate, peaceful events which present no problems for the police. Unlike mass demonstrations, marches and rallies/festivals organised by political parties, their political content is meagre; they signify conformity rather than rebellion, they reproduce rather than criticize the prevailing social order; in particular they affirm the collaboration between public and private sectors, employers and employees. During carnival differences of social status and wealth are forgotten, the local community appears to be as one. (In class terms the carnival is "to maintain local society in working order".(5) Only in very exceptional circumstances, such as those pertaining in Notting Hill in the 1970s does the carnival become an occasion and a vehicle for the expression of social discontent.

#### References

- (1) OED See also 'Pageant and parade' Encyclopedia Britannica.
- (2) see, for example, Dennis Duerden "The meaning of carnival" New Society 21 August 1980 pp 357-9; Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie Carnival: a people's uprising at Romans (Scolar Press, 1980); Cecil Gutzmore "The Notting Hill carnival" Marxism Today August 1982 pp31-33.(3) Cultures 3 (1) 1976 p44
- (4) Gutzmore op.cit.
- (5) Cited by Le Roy Ladurie op.cit.

## Spaces: Northern Ireland

IT IS A RARE occasion indeed to encounter perfect planning and smooth running at an arts event. When funding has been a constant headache and resources must be borrowed from a variety of venues the stakes run even higher that chaos will not be prevented. In spite of these very problems organisers Julie Stephenson and Damien Coyle succeeded in bringing together ten performers from Northern and Southern Ireland and from the north of England for a unique event in Belfast, Three Days of Live Art. The performers reflected a network of artists who are connected through colleges, previous exhibitions and mutual friends. Part of the audience for these performances also reflected the inter-connections of Irish artists and students who travelled to Belfast for the opportunity of viewing so much happening in one space. There was a real excitement around the centre and in the pub each evening about future collaborations and continued events. Many people from Dublin admired the event only wishing there was more going on in their own home town. Yet during the three days of this event the atmosphere remained strongly supportive and welcoming of those new to viewing such work as well as to those new to performing.

Stephenson and Coyle met on the MA Sculpture course in Belfast and both felt that there should be opportunities for performance, since they were in direct contact with over half a dozen performers in the area. The ultimate irony occurred when the Arts Council of Northern Ireland sponsored a number of people to participate in the 'Irish Live Art' programme at Franklin Furnace in New York City last year. The ACNI agreed to fund performance work but not in a way that was visible locally.

At first, when these two performers began to think about creating an event to make local work more accessible, a month's activities were planned. Julie Stephenson now admits to being over-ambitious. It was not much of a surprise that support was not forthcoming. A week in May was then proposed but funding was rejected again. It became clear that if anything was to

happen, now that a plan had been made to coincide with the international Belfast Festival, alternative funds would have to be found. Three days of raffles were held with the help of donations from local shopkeepers (one prize was a chicken) and a sponsored cycle ride. Activities of this kind made the idea familiar to people and identified the goal of visual art provision during the big festival (where no visual arts budget exists) in a way that people felt comfortable with. At the last minute the money asked for from the Arts Council was also agreed although the news came through on the first day's performances.

The Art and Resources Exchange in Lombard Street in Belfast's city centre donated their exhibition space to the project and offered their support with fund raising and with equipment, as did the Crescent Art Centre, a site for performance in the past (see Performance Magazine number 17 for a review of Angela McCabe and Nick Stewart).

One of the great strengths of the artists community in Belfast is the Artists Collective established three years ago. From the original management committee, which Damien Coyle was a member of, came a community employment scheme while working alongside Action for Community Employment. Residencies were found for artists in a huge leisure centre where work was created and exhibited around the poolsie. An exhibition group works toward getting work seen in traditional and newer locations. The publications committee helped form the arts magazine Circa which is now funded by the Arts Council of Northern and Southern Ireland, which has also strengthened links between the Art and Resource Exchange and Grapevine in Dublin.

There is a most unusual feeling within these organisations, made up of a mixture of overlapping personnel, that comes from how well rooted they are in the community. There is none of the too familiar experience of all activity revolving around very few participants. The combination of visual arts work, performance and community re-



source work all nest comfortably, if a bit crowded together. Also housed at Lombard St. is the Media Workshop, a community video and photography project. A studio complex is being negotiated with provision for eleven individual artists as well as office and meeting areas and open workshops available for short-time hire. A sub-let scheme will also be administered by the Artists Collective, who now have an administrator with funding for one year. A monthly newsheet keeps members informed of activities, meeting and listings of events. Many members of the collective have links with the historic International Free University with its associations with J. Beuys et al.

Now that a precedent has been set with funding from the Arts Council of Northern Ireland, many future projects are being discussed. The audience at performances over the three days threatened the organisers with having to find larger premises next time. There is much talk of actually trying to get a policy statement of support for performance from the Visual Arts Committee, and with the undoubted success of this first attempt should provide powerful proof that the need and interest exists.

### The Performances

Alistair MacLennan—Street performance, his first in many years, through the central shopping district. Leaflets handed out about the nature of creating/perceiving art. Interesting.

Danny McCarthy—*An Cliadhbh Solias* the mythic theme of the Irish sword of light. A highly ritualistic performance, concise and strong.

Mike Beirne—A performance based around the 'Hey Diddle Diddle' children's rhyme and milk. A pretty and low key event.

Michael Millward—Readings from a travel diary about America and the USSR. Trite on the point of being insulting to both the subjects and the audience.

Roland Miller—More a lecture than a performance concerning personal heritage and the regaining of contact with one's roots and with nature. Enjoyable but I wish it could have been more performed than spoken.

Anthony Sheehan—*Image of an Acrobat, Carefully Balanced on the End of a Match*. A moving, impressionistic performance with very powerful visuals and sound. I want to

see more of this man's work.

Cathy Rogers—An intimate, interesting performance exploring the relationship between everyday domestic objects and ritual. A performer who interacts with her audience without the usual traces of hesitancy. Refreshing.

Nick Stewart—*Ritual For An Urban Environment* is a theme often explored by this performer. Punishing input (screening, jarring sounds, looming shadows) created an intense atmosphere I wanted to escape. So effective that it was a relief when it ended.

Frances Saunders—A monumental work in presentation as well as content. A stylish work involving a number of triptychs, film, sound, to do with self exploration. Wonderful, but it hurt to see the paintings cut.

John Carson—A singing tour of the continental USA with slides of each state. The visuals provided the picture-postcard view and a far less romantic image, from Bangor, Maine (where?) to California. Hilarious, performed with great panache, and such a contrast to Roland Miller.

Marguerite McLaughlin

For further information on events and Circa Magazine, write to 22 Lombard St. Belfast, Belfast.

The appliance of Science: a readout reveals

# The End of The Humans

*It should surprise no one that the ancient art of astrology with all its wonderful myths and folklore holds little of interest to the giant brains of Britain's scientists who are the best in the world for a fact. But now one of our leading mad inventors has come up with a fortunetelling robot! John Stalin was at the press conference, clutching his lucky Rabbit's foot*

Dr Wernher von Boffin, Professor of Stinks and Bangs at London's Imperial College, has devised a wonderful apparatus which may truly be said to revolutionize the science of superstition. 'I have successfully interfaced with the *chronosynclastic infindibulum*', says he. Yes that is the secret of its almost uncanny powers. But what of its practical applications, you ask. Well the sky's the limit, sonny, but catch this: imagine a proper scientific experiment, certified by top profs, that can actually predict the future for one and all. Impossible, you cry. Igor, start up the dynamos! You shall see for yourself, dolts.

The year will start well for your readers since the planet is in opposition with Marx and currently enjoys the benign influence of Marie Curie. However, declining fortunes are presaged by the ambivalent orbits of Uranium and Blu-Tak, culminating in an unprecedented Square Triangle indicating the scariest consequences for all mankind. Mark my words, we shall all be carried by the year's end. We know we must shrug off this mortal coil at the appointed hour; and our scientific glance at the sky tells us that loads of appointments will be made this year.

**AERTEX (Mar 20-Apr 19)**

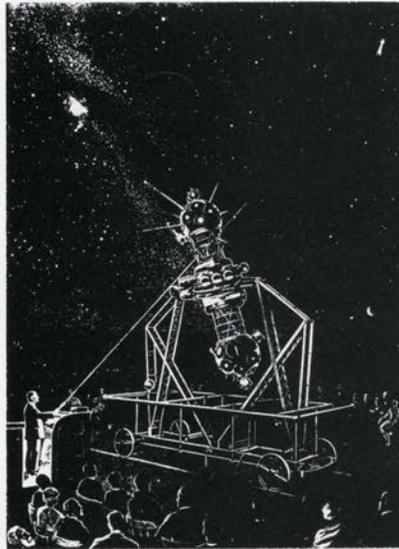
Cosh boys jostle the Queen Mother. You rush to her defence and are awarded a medal xxx You accidentally shoot yourself in the foot with an Uzi machine gun xxx An anaconda drops on you and crushes you into tomato puree.

**WALRUS (Apr 20-May 20)**

You get a job designing peculiar coffee tables for which you are paid Serious Money xxx You will be captured by fetishists and subjected to hours of incomprehensible sex xxx Baffled detectives discover your remains ritually buried in a huge earthenware jar, in the manner of the Mesopotamians.

**BAMBI (May 21-June 20)**

You are accused of having stolen a beloved family pet for immoral purposes, but wittily



How is it done? You got us there pal.

vindicate yourself in court. Substantial damages are awarded to you, you little devil xxx You get increasingly morbid about the force of gravity, and become painfully aware of its pull pulling you xxx You will fall into a crevasse and bump your head and after a bit you die.

**KRISHNA (June 21-July 22)**

You will prove under hypnotic regression to be a reincarnation of someone dead famous xxx You go for that aerobics burn and spend weeks in an intensive care ward suspended 'twixt life and death xxx Someone severs your astral connection one night when you are out flying and you can't get back into your body.

**LULU (July 23-Aug 22)**

A piece of paper is thrust into your hand by a trusted messenger. It is from a *beautiful princess* who has seen you from her tower and has fallen in love with you but unfortunately because she is being held against her will by a wicked Baron called Sir Brian de Newhaven-Dieppe. You could do yourself a favour here, my old son xxx a roadie falls in love with you and follows you about everywhere, trailing you at walking pace in his Transit xxx You are challenged to a duel by a nutter who believes himself to be a Regency buck. You choose swords, he chooses pistols. Unfair.

**WEIRDO (Aug 23-Sept 22)**

Your professional status is tremendously enhanced when you are awarded a silver cup by a panel of distinguished critics but dramatically spurn it xxx You are gradually going mad but are the last to realise it. As you wander through your subjective Caligari environment, fiendish laughter echos

in your ears. *But you don't notice it xxx* You unwittingly offend 2000 maniacs and they **COME AFTER YOU!**

**BIBA (Sept 23-Oct 22)**

The leading photographer of the age falls in love with your looks and begs you to let him launch you on an unsuspecting public xxx You are drugged and your unconscious form tattooed all over by mischievous friends xxx You wake up one morning to find that you are dead.

**SERPICO (Oct 23-Nov 21)**

You will star in a popular new TV series about a cynical private eye called Marlboro xxx Something happens to you after a Badedas bath xxx You have a gripping adventure where you discover the secret of Smuggler's Cove. At the end your throat is slit from ear to ear by blue chinned desperadoes.

**STRADIVARIUS (Nov 22-Dec 21)**

A sale of shares in your bank account is oversubscribed many times over by greedy speculators. You are now worth 100m. Congratulations! xxx The dead will rise and come to live with you and smell out the house xxx Colonel Mustard and Miss Scarlet are the chief suspects in your murder. They could have used a pistol or a rope, possibly a dagger but definitely not poison. The inspector has a hunch...

**MATTERHORN (Dec 22-Jan 19)**

A Communist satellite sweeps the country with high-energy propaganda beams. A spontaneous uprising by the proletariat puts you in power xxx Fate deals you an unkind trick. Ha ha ha! xxx In a tragic example of the kind of industrial accident that need never happen you are suffocated under a container-load of gonks.

**EQUUS (Jan 20-Feb 18)**

A ruffian calls you a big soft girl. But you have Taken the Course, and react with the speed of a striking cobra. Ejaculating 'Men! It can be done!' you fell him with one dirty blow xxx In a regrettable case of mistaken identity you are timebombed by an ideologically eclectic terrorist group called *Los Commandos por Castro y Jesus Christo*

**HERPES (Feb 19-Mar 20)**

Someone gives you a magic credit card that can make your dreams come true xxx You fall down a wishing well and wish you hadn't xxx Gold coins will rain from the sky; they are *radioactive*. You know this but you don't care. A short life but a merry one...

# THE BYAM SHAW DIPLOMA

is a full-time 3-year course in fine art which is accepted at University level for post-graduate studies.

Short-term, extra mural and post-graduate/post-diploma

courses also available.

Entry to all courses is by work and interview.

Over 70% of UK students receive Local Authority grants.

**Apply now for a prospectus to  
Byam Shaw School of Art  
70 Campden Street, London W8 7EN  
(or 'phone 01-727 4711 – 24 hour service).**



## WHITE LIGHT

57 FILMER ROAD LONDON SW6  
TELEPHONE 01 731 3291

Theatre lighting design, control,  
equipment and hire

Audio-Visual presentation,  
design and projection

Equipment maintenance and refurbishing

Installation, distribution systems,  
special effects

OUR PRICES ARE COMPETITIVE –  
PLEASE RING US FOR A PRICE LIST OR QUOTE

## Vineyard Press

Limited

EFFICIENCY  
AND

EXCELLENCE

AT YOUR SERVICE

- ★ **Colourshare  
Promotional Print**
- ★ **Demand Publishing**
- ★ **Business Stationery**
- ★ **Catalogues**

RING BILL GORE  
ON COLCHESTER 577728

7-31 MARCH

# BRITISH/CANADIAN VIDEO EXCHANGE '84

installations, performances and video tapes

## CANADA HOUSE CULTURAL CENTRE

Trafalgar Square  
London SW1

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, 10am - 5.30pm  
Thursday 10am - 7pm, Sunday 12 - 5.30pm

Paulette Phillips: Performance and installation  
Randy & Berenicc: Performance  
Peter Wronski: Installation  
Continuous screening of video tapes dealing with the experience and perception of women, by Nora Hutchinson, Anne Ramsden, Lisa Steele and Jane Wright

Video tape screenings in the Canada House Cinema all at 6.30pm

9 March: Fiction/Performance  
16 March: Social/Political concerns  
23 March: Personal identity/Context/  
Metaphor  
30 March: Media

## AIR GALLERY

6 & 8 Rosebery Avenue  
London EC1

Monday - Friday 11am - 6pm  
Saturday 11am - 2pm

Charlie Fox and Wade McGregor,  
installation: *Recreation of the  
Emergency*

Video tape screening in the AIR Gallery Basement, Laystall Street, all at 7.30pm:

8 March: Men and Women  
15 March: Real Life Perception  
22 March: Paul Wong - Confused (1983, 60 mins)  
29 March: Men and Women

Organised by London Video Arts, (telephone 01-734 7410), the Canada House Cultural Centre, London with financial assistance from the Arts Council of Great Britain, the Visiting Arts Unit of Great Britain and the Canada Council

For full programme details contact LVA (01) 734 7410 or Canada House  
(01) 629 9492 ext. 243