

LONDON STREET-ART DESIGN



LSD MAGAZINE ▶ ISSUE 4

www.londonstreetartdesign.com

FOREWARD

So why is LSD so long? It's a question that has popped up again and again, not least because attention spans when reading a screen are vastly shorter than they are with hard copy. There are in fact myriad reasons, some practical and some profound that tie directly into our concept of this entire project. For starters, all the art that we include in our galleries is shot in its brief, transient lifespan over the 3 months or so between issues, and since the very essence of graffiti and wider street art is in its fleeting, ethereal glimpse of the sublime, it is critical to document the moment before circumstance has its wicked way. So there's the practical.

But it runs far deeper. One of the fundamental flaws within any subculture, be it political, artistic or musical in nature is intrinsic insularity. The revolutionary nature of building a movement based on one particular strain of thought or one particular expression of the creative arts rarely feeds back into a sustained flourishing of ideas, but rather rides the initial wave of originality and iconoclastic power before settling into a safe and often blinkered rhythm. We lock ourselves into certain genres, certain styles and certain headspaces with a sour view of those outside our chosen field and an all too human sense of self satisfaction with what we have so tirelessly built. We've all been there, all done it. But as we refine the power of subculture and work the unprecedented scale of global interconnectivity to our advantage, it becomes ever more important to look beyond the frontiers of our own reality and push hard for the next spark, the next epiphany, the next voice and the next explosion of conscious experience.

Sounds pretty grand, but in our own chaotic and humble way, that's what we're pushing for within these pages. We saw a post on some forum somewhere that read 'is this a street art mag or a music mag?'. Which just blissfully misses the entire point. It's not even both, it's neither. In our view, restricting oneself to a particular dimension of the modern underground actively serves to undermine its wider evolution. Of course we all have our tribal loyalties and our comfort zones but it is for precisely that reason that we have to explore and expand our horizons and open ourselves to external currents that will crystallise in our own perceptions and our own flashes of creativity. We have learnt a phenomenal amount in simply trying to put these issues together about styles we never knew, ideas we never considered and beauty we may never have had the opportunity to experience and it's the sheer range and diversity of what the underground throws up to the world that makes it such a dynamic, throbbing, unstable, dazzling force.

In this issue we explore extraordinary art of all persuasions, colours, conceptions and angles and music that is steamrolling the cutting edge ever further into possibility. And it's deeply tempting to dismiss the grubby realities of the outside world and gorge ourselves on the underground kaleidoscope that we feel truly represents us as individuals and as a wider connected whole. But within our wholly undefined and fluid scope, we also discuss the nature and dynamics of power systems with the legendary

Noam Chomsky, open a window onto the nature of censorship and its subversion in the internet age, hitch an astral ride to the healing mysteries of Amazonian shamans, explore the nature of the repressive Iranian regime, open the floor to our wildly eclectic blend of lunatic columnists and discuss the quantum theories of inner space and outer space before plunging back into the crucible of conscious creativity with our featured artists and musicians.

The graffiti / street art divide can go elsewhere for the confirmation of existing prejudices and people who religiously move their bodies to one rigorously defined style of music can equally go and polish their copies of DJ Magazine elsewhere. We hope to unify and open channels of communication and offer each of our interviewees a forum for a lengthy, unedited, profound expression of what they're about, rather than simply write up our own feature, sprinkle it with quotes and label it an interview. So yes, the pieces are long but bulging with artistic and conceptual insight. Yes there's a lot of them, but it's by hoisting the big tent that we may be able to open a forum for the cross fertilisation of ideas and possibly bring the spectrum of experience each issue organically creates for itself to a new and wider audience. This isn't about art, it's not about music – it's about visceral creativity, subversive perception, buried truth, pure beauty and the exploration of a wider consciousness. Long story short.... It's about the underground...And there's a LOT of it!

On that note – let's crack on with some seriously wikkid creativity

WAYNE ANTHONY (CLASS OF 88) AND SIRIUS 23



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Grafter

LSO
Magazine



Photography: WA

Brick Lane Area - March 5th



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Photography: Brendan Mckenna

GENERAL ELECTION

I'm a party boss with a worrying gloss
Hang on a mo while I have a quick old floss
Campaign's away, up North today
Much to my wife's profound dismay
Bounded into the car with a jolly wave
While some bitter granny called me a grinning knave
'My pensions gone and my hospital's closed
And the bloody bank has just foreclosed'
Well we sped away without delay
Should've planted a child with a fresh bouquet
Reading strategy notes to maximise votes
And perusing the latest peerage quotes
3 hundred grand to be Lord of the Land
A bargain struck – hardly underhand
A call came in on the image line
Seems my current tie was a tad malign
The scarlet red you could take the wrong way
Memories of all the blood we spilt today
Neutral blue – through and through
And we'll promise a war cabinet review
But policy was never my strongest suit
More a comforting smile of great repute
Seize the limelight with an apt soundbite
Assuring you that we feel your plight
5 words is apparently your mental limit
Slip in 'change' 5 times then start to trim it

I wiped the excess gel on my wife's lapel
Then boarded the stage kindly sponsored by Shell
Spoke of austerity ahead while promising cheaper bread
How we'd all go broke if you vote them instead
But a lone voice yelled 'what about the war'
Until my SAS minders booted him out the door
My pollsters tell me that you're not very bright
Apparently half of you can't tell left from right
And so I'm told I can get away
Pretending nothing happened yesterday
The war just is – it's not my fault
Though I'm still reluctant to call a halt
And as the economy crumbles into a barren waste
My passionate denials may be in the poorest taste
But I'm the man to save the day
No want of ideas and abject decay
Amnesia is such a political tool
And let's face it now – you're just a fucking fool
I can buy your dreams and your deepest fears
A couple of smears to savage my peers
And if my new tax plan promises a couple of beers
I'll just sit here basking in your inevitable cheers
My youthful charm will finally overwhelm
Lead to another 5 years at the helm of the realm
Because my opponent has clearly had his day
And we've just got footage to prove he's gay
Can't come from us, that would not be right
Let a friendly journalist fight the spite
As the applause roars out amongst the assembled crowd
I pose in an oily fashion with Girls Aloud
And speak in ringing tones of a bright new dawn
As the rest of you stifle a weary yawn

ΑΙΩΝΕΙ - ΙΣΤΟΡΙΕΣ
ΕΠΟΧΕΣ - ΠΡΑΞΕΙΣ
ΚΕΡΑΜΙΚΕΣ - ΠΡΑΞΕΙΣ
"ΟΛΟΚΛΗΡΩΣΗ" και "ΟΛΟΚΛΗΡΩΣΗ"
ΟΛΟΚΛΗΡΩΣΗ και "ΟΛΟΚΛΗΡΩΣΗ"

**Because truth be told – despite all the talk
Of democracy's light in the countries we stalk
You've got no real choice at substantive core
So vote for me although I'm a hideous bore
And a little bit of a lobbyist whore
But the other bloke is a total snore
Hasn't got the balls to take us to war
You and I, we've got a fine rapport
And I'm swearing you promises of riches galore
So to the polling booth friend and give me 5 more
With teeth this white you can't show me the door
And hurrah three cheers for democracy's dream
Inside the corridors of power we find that a scream
You've got us to thank that you're convinced you're free
Now excuse me while I launch yet another spending spree**

SIRIUS 23







ASD
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Magazine

Photography: Brendan Mckenna

Mike Ballard - The All of Everything

BEST EVER

Dark, haunting and imbued with a melancholy mystery, Best and Ever have flourished from their roots in writing into painting multi dimensional spray masterpieces. Framing a sepia surrealism and a dualist exploration of the human condition in the visual poetry of stunning realism, their work sings a soft lament for ephemeral fragility and masked vulnerability, capturing fragments of skewed pathos in a searching vision. They spoke to LSD

You originally started out as graffiti writers, tell us a little about the journey from writing on walls to creating photorealistic wall impressions.

Best: In around 2005 I'd kind of had a break from painting letters for a year or so when me and a couple of others began getting involved in commissions and so forth. I've always drawn and painted using other mediums pretty well so it was a pretty easy transition for me

Ever: For me just writing my name wasn't enough.

You were a member of the 54 Crew, writer Busk tells us you guys used to paint trains whilst completely naked. Would you mind sharing a funny story about painting in your birthday suit?

Best: Ha ha, there's so many funny stories... One of the standouts had to be one time when we were working on a community project subsidised by the local police force... one of the members of the crew fancied himself as a bit of a lothario (anyone who knew us at this





point will know who I mean), and managed to blag us round to a young WPC's house for drinks after a day on the job. The cheeky bastard then managed to blag a shower there, and swiped a pair of her knickers in the process, which he promptly donned whilst painting his panel later that night... that was what it was like all the time, you'd be painting your piece in nothing but a pair of socks and look up and down the train and see all your mates doing the same funny shit and just crease up thinking 'what would the trackies think if it came on top now?'

How long have you been painting now?

Best: I started painting letters in 1997

Ever: And I started in 2004

We're told that photorealism is one of the hardest techniques to learn, would you agree with that?

It's definitely one of the hardest techniques to get right...

How long has it taken to perfect your photorealistic techniques?

Best: I don't think I have yet... it's five years



since I first attempted photorealism using spraypaint and i feel like i've learnt a lot from Busk and guys like Maclaim, but i'm still a long way off perfection...

What does photorealism involve?

Actual photorealism relies on the artists ability to translate the information into solid technique with the can. A lot of so-called photorealists only have one without the other, and you can tell when people have made the mistake of painting what the assume something should look like rather than studying the actual forms. i also think it's important that people understand the structure of what they are painting, for example, many photorealists will shade the skin of someones face in the same way as they would shade say, the bonnet of a car. skin is flawed and as such has to be tackled in a different way.

What inspires you most?

Sadness, mental illness, the fragility the human body, depression disease. External inspiration can come from seeing our peers creating stuff





How often do you paint on the streets?

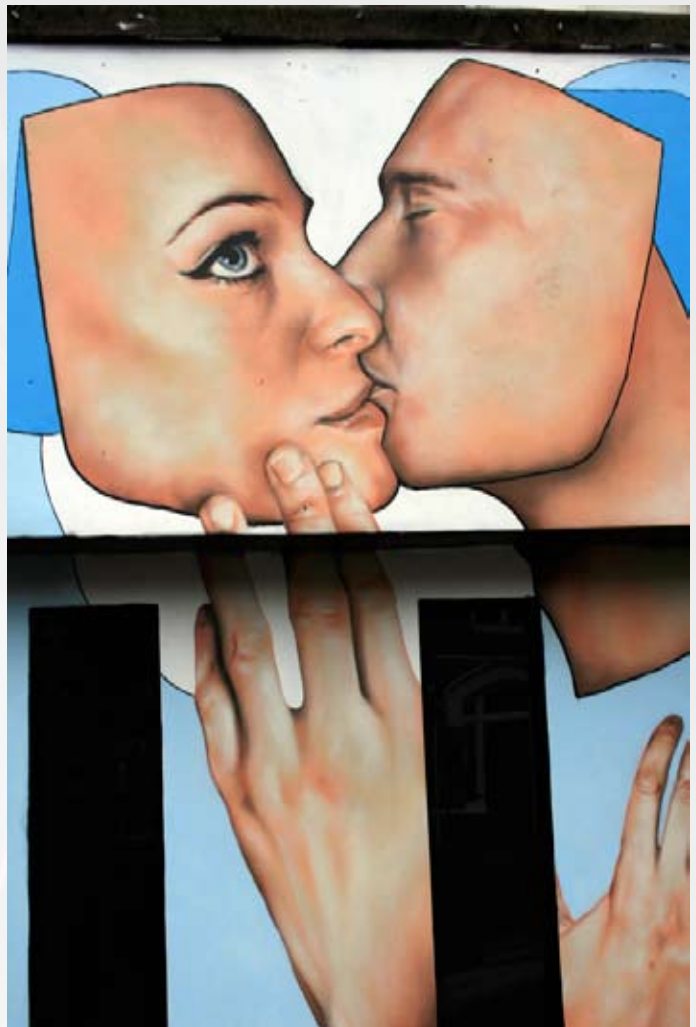
Not as often as we'd like

Is it easier for street artists to earn a living these days due to recent interest in collectible street artists?

Definitely. The unfortunate offshoot of this is that the scene has been saturated by countless chancers with very little talent, and a buying public that seem patently unable to tell the difference between a piece of art created with passion and integrity and one that merely emulates someone successful with the sole purpose of making a quick buck

Some of the work contains what might be deemed as a spiritual component, would you call yourself spiritual?

We're not spiritual in any religious sense at all. We're aware of how fleeting our lives are, and to me, the religious iconography present in our work reflects human kind's need to seek comfort from this fact.



The human face is featured throughout your works, what does the face represent to you?

We concentrate on the hands and faces because they are visually the two main tools humans use for communication.

Dualism also plays prominence in your works, are you doing this consciously or subconsciously?

You're the first person to pick up on that... yes it's conscious.

If you made millions of pounds from your work, do you think you'd still paint on the streets in the dead of night?

Best. Without doubt, but it would be somewhere nicer than the UK.

Ever. I would do it in broad daylight if I knew I could pay my fines.









The general public are joining forces to lobby London Councils to protect works created by Banksy. What does an artist of your standing think of the governments decision to protect just one artist out of thousands?

You've got to laugh about that really... It's disgusting when you think about Hackney Council's current policy of bullying property owners into removing legal work from their premises and covering huge tracks of incredible work with dirty black gloss whilst ordering the preservation shit which has been ignored for years, solely because they're now told that it's valuable and 'culturally important'.

Do you think that street art / graffiti has been accepted as an art form by the public?

Accepted maybe but not understood

Can you see the scene expanding in size or do you think its has peaked?

I hope that the current glut has peaked, and now the genuinely talented people will be able to continue to do their thing.

What would you like to be doing more of in the future?

We've got some huge wall space to paint over the next few months, and that's something we hope to do much more of.

Should we expect to see you at many shows this summer?

No gallery shows planned at all, we just want to spend the summer painting large scale pieces and travelling as much as possible.

Anything else you'd like to say to our readers?

Thanks for reading.

www.wearebestever.co.uk



LEAKE
STREET SE1
SOOTY BANK





Photography: Brendan Mckenna

London 2010

Banksy - Film Screening Red Carpet - Exit Through the Gift Shop



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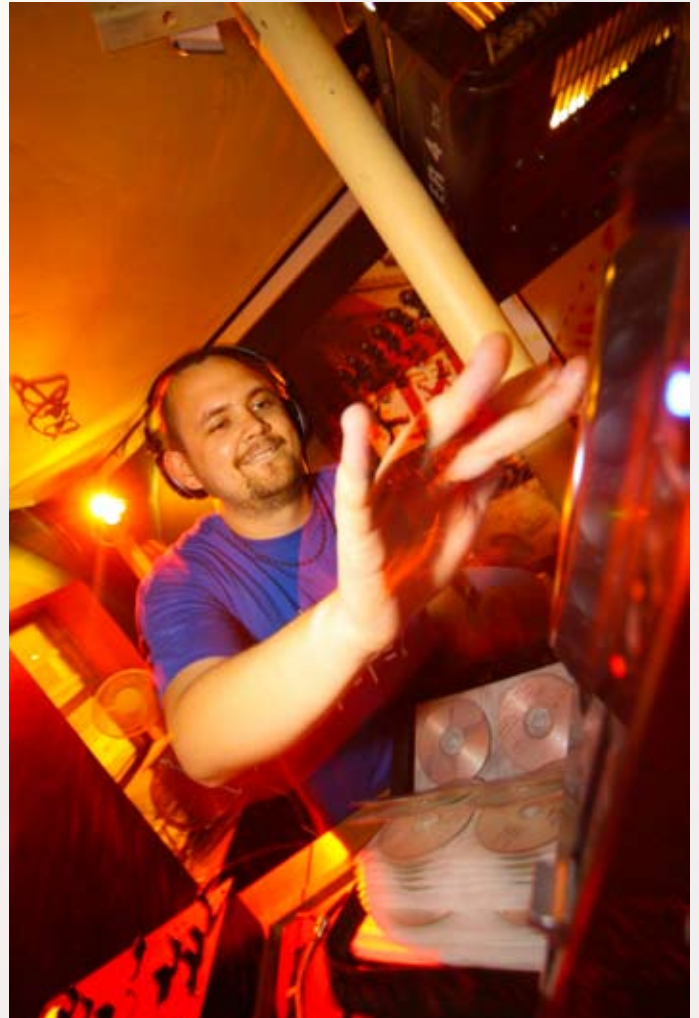
HEDFLUX

STEVE YOUNG

What do you get if you combine a PHD in quantum physics, a sublime understanding of the fabric of reality, a myriad of creative talents, pure psychedelic dancefloor mayhem and a cracking bloke. Well you get our newest columnist, Steve Hedflux Young who will be bending our minds and spirits alike from the next issue. A phenomenal producer, Steve has woven a visceral web of relentless driving bass, synth wizardry, rhythmic groove and filthy psychoactive frequency into an explosion of imagination anchored firmly on the dancefloor. We spoke to Steve about everything from music to the mysteries of consciousness and connected so instinctively that Steve will be joining LSD on our next issue to help map the fringes of understanding....

Could you give us a little background on yourself

I grew up in Scotland, in a small town called Newport-on-Tay, near Dundee. I got into rave music around 1992, through such legendary mixtapes as the «Hit the Decks» series - SL2, Krome & Time, Carl Cox etc and then began obsessively seeking music like that. I used to blag myself onto the decks at local «discos», and eventually i got my own decks in 1993 when I was 15. From that point I was hooked on buying records, and DJing as much as i possibly could. At the same time, I was dabbling with Octamed and Protracker on my Amiga (when I wasn't busy getting lost in space for hours on Elite 2) and learning the basics of music production. My first taste of raving was at about 16, I looked old enough to get myself into the Rezerrection parties - it was happy hardcore and gabba all night long



and they were amazing events - up to 16000 people at the outdoor ones, just THE best thing I had experienced ever.

My electronic music path through the 90s went from house and techno, to hardcore, then onto jungle and liquid drum & bass. In about 2001 I got really into breaks, then in 2004 psytrance and the whole gamut of psychedelic music. I started taking music production much more seriously around 2002/2003 and it was from there that Hedflux emerged. The first track I was really happy with was finished in 2006.



In parallel, I went to university in St Andrews in 1996 to study theoretical physics - I always had an obsession with stretching my imagination into the most abstract places; mathematics and electronic music are good ways to do that. When I graduated in 2000, I hadn't had enough, so I went on to do a PhD in quantum physics in Guildford. When I finished that in 2004, I HAD had enough, and so I finally took the leap into the «real world» of employment. I have worked in the IT industry for the last 5 years, although I have maintained a studious interest in esoteric knowledge ever since.

What was the pull into electronic music

Doesn't good electronic music just make you feel super-fuckin-cool and futuristic? To me it feels like a window into the future. When I'm havin' it on the dancefloor I feel like I am marching into the future with joyous determination. With other styles like rock/metal, hip hop, indie etc, they just didn't satisfy

my imagination like that, most of it sounded to me like I had heard it before in some form or another. I don't mean that as a sweeping criticism to the talented people who make that kind of music, nor to the people who love listening to it, its a purely subjective thing, its just how it made me feel, I don't really know why. However, later in life I have started to get into more non-electronic music, especially folk, medicine music and world music.

At what point do the physical world and consciousness meet and is there any rational explanation for their interplay

My current thinking on this relates to the Pineal gland - a small pine-cone shaped sack in the center of your brain. It contains light receptor cells very similar to those in your eyes. Descartes, who studied this extensively, believed it to be the «seat of the soul» - literally the point where consciousness and the body meet. I have often wondered what it is we are seeing with, when we have

closed-eye visions, dreams, imagination etc, and I currently think that it is the Pineal gland. Our observer, the «I» that is in every one of us - our Soul - is surrounded by an intelligent animal body which responds to our will as best it can. This integration of Soul and body gives us the capacity to pull new realities into our experience by expressing our will with thoughts, feelings, words, and movements.

It is essential to develop your awareness of thoughts and feelings (both your own, and those of others). The dimensions of inner space are as vast as the dimensions of outer space, but on the whole we rarely stop talking (or watching TV/youtube/porn/whatever) long enough to witness the scale of the world behind our eyelids. I'm not saying live in a cave in the lotus position for the rest of your life, but make time for meditation - the benefits are astounding. It connects you to the source of your creativity. There are also magickal non-physical realms of consciousness which are accessible to each and every person through a variety of techniques and technologies, though much of this knowledge is esoteric, occult or muddled in propaganda. But seek and ye shall find.



How has your background on the edge of science influenced your approach to music

A crazy sound appeals to me in the same way as a big equation. Its unusual, complex and full of mystery, yet it has internal consistency and logic to it. In fact, a synthesised sound literally is an equation, expressed by the movement of the speakers over time. Synthesizers and FX are an expression of mathematical theory, and sampled or recorded sounds are the raw observed data from nature. My preference for theoretical physics over practical physics is mirrored by my love of synthesised music over recorded music. I love how synthesized sounds are purely born from the human mind - in a way they feel more human to me than natural sounds.

Its interesting that in quantum physics, the equations which represent the behaviour of an electron in an atom, are very similar in structure to an equation describing, for example, a frequency modulated sine wave with an exponential decay on the volume envelope. Its cool to think that the processing in sound design is the same kind of processing the universe performs on physical energy when it forms atoms and molecules.

Also, just as the concepts represented by quantum mechanical equations can be mind bending (to say the least) so a sound can bend your mind into strange new states where you don't quite know what you're feeling or how to express it. Art then becomes an imperative, because language is inadequate to describe your experiences.





There has always been a close interplay between music and science throughout history. In both cases, to paraphrase Terence McKenna, 'we are casting our nets into the ocean of mind, looking to catch a good idea'.

What are you looking to feel from your sound

An urge to get up, flap my hands and bounce around on the spot whilst feeling cool and making sense of everything that's going on in my life.

Are inner space and outer space the same thing?

Yes. The stars above, and everything you know is actually inside you. We are the container of our experience - everything is within. There is clearly a perceived distinction between the inner world of thoughts and emotions, and the «external» world of people and nature, but the experience of both of these aspects, and of the

boundary between them, is happening within our consciousness, within us.

How has your reception been on the wider scene – did you find it cliquy and insular or open and embracing

Well over the years I have moved around a fair bit, so I tend not to be out and about within a specific scene so much, but I have been welcomed and treated with great hospitality at most of the gigs i've been invited to, and I'm always really grateful for all of them. Its amazing to have someone contact you from a country you know nothing about, tell you that they and hundreds of their friends love your music, and want to pay you to come and play at their party! I never lose sight of how amazing that is, and I'm always warm toward the people I meet.

Most party crew's tend to be big tribes of people who have known each other for donkeys years and been through all kinds of adventures together - they work hard for

the love of the music, and usually don't make much money. Despite those deep roots, I have generally found people welcoming and friendly - a little crazy sometimes perhaps ;-)

I completely trust where my music leads me, it has brought amazing friends and experiences into my life. I believe that as long as you express yourself truly through music, it will lead you to where you want to be.

Do you see dance music as a portal to a heightened state of consciousness or is it just fucking wicked?

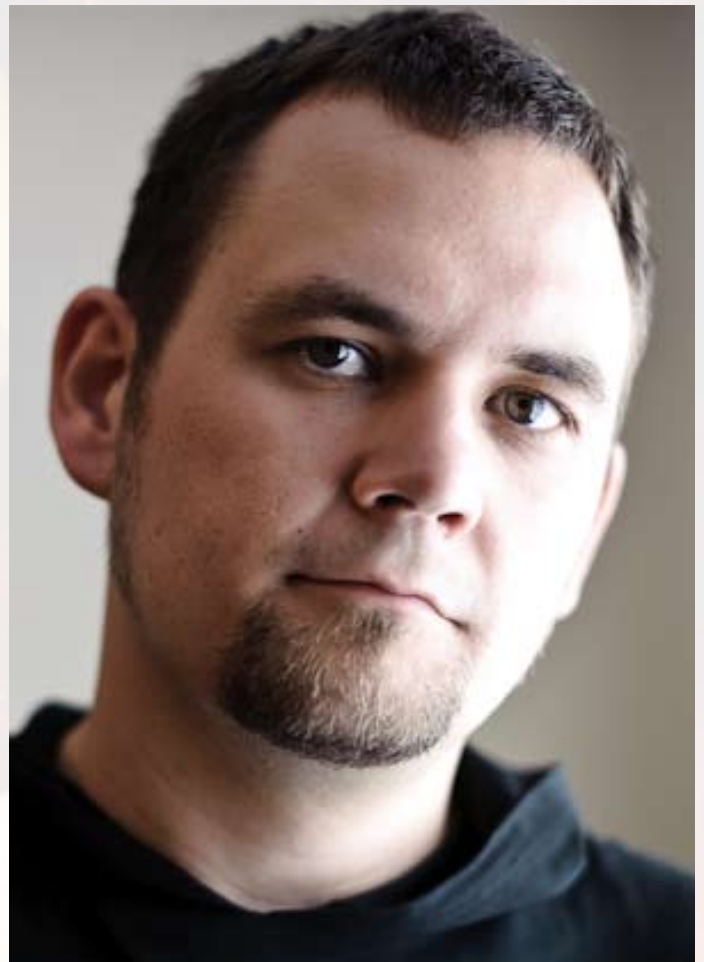
Erm, both!?

How do you view the relationship between the mind, the soul and the technology in music

Technology extends the will of the mind, and the capacity and influence of the imagination. It responds to our movements, and processes information in a very precise and powerful way, then the output is ultimately fed back into our mind through a monitor. So its a kind of neuro-feedback. I think where the Soul comes in, is in the choice of settings on the technology - the mind figures out how to operate it, and the soul chooses a particular expression which you commit to, and becomes a piece of your art.

How is your approach to remixing different from your original stuff

With remixing, I dont feel like I am producing so much for myself - it feels more like a gift to the original artist and label, since you are working with their sounds. For this reason i've mostly found it a bit of a struggle, and in almost all cases I have done 2 or 3 completely different versions before finally handing one over when the deadline comes. With my original stuff, I I am not really concerned with what anyone else might think, so my creativity flows much better.



Does analysis destroy beauty or accentuate it

Well, if we were to catch a Butterfly, anaesthetise it, cut it open and analyse it in an effort to find the source of its beauty, would we find it? I suppose it depends whether you get off on looking a insect entrails or not. I think beauty is in the relationship between the subject and object. I look at my cats and I am drawn into their endless mystery and beauty - they are just fountains of happiness and joy in my life. However, a person who long ago made an agreement with themselves that they hated cats, is unable to see the beauty and the mystery that I can see, because that belief they hold serves as a barrier to the formation of beauty in their experience in relation to cats. That belief is probably some kind of logical analysis of why cats are evil, based on a single experience with a cat when they were younger, or because their parents didn't like cats! We all tend to miss so much beauty around us because we have analysed, labelled and judged things in our mind, so when we see them, all we see is the label and the mental associations. I think true beauty can only be experienced without thought.



What does quantum physics tell the switched on layman about the fabric of reality

I can only give you my take on it, there are many! But I believe it tells us that observation is creation, that our attention, combined with our intention, is a force which converts possibilities (ideas) into physical reality. The academic view of an electron is that when it is unobserved, it exists as pure potential - a spectrum of possibilities - then when it is observed it randomly collapses into one of those possibilities, and an observed reality is created. But I don't believe that randomness is the deciding factor in that process. I believe electrons are like choosers i.e. the collapse of probability waves into observed events is affected by the qualities of the consciousness doing the observation. There is now a huge body of evidence for this kind of telepathic influence over nature at the quantum level (see for example Dean Radin).

If you think about it, you do this all the time, especially during the creative process. In your mind you perceive a set of options, then you choose one, and that choice determines the experience that becomes your reality

and forms your life history. But choices have emotion, intent and reason behind them, they are not just cold scientific observations. Quantum physics describes those cold observations, but stops short of describing the properties of the observer. For historical reasons relating to the Church and their tendency to murder people who make heretical claims, science tip-toes around any issues to do with mind and spirit.

So quantum physics holds deep spiritual lessons for the switched-on layman, but there are also dangers. The scientific establishment sees the universe as spiritually devoid, purposeless and fundamentally random: First there was nothing, then it randomly exploded (the big bang) and since then a bunch of lifeless particles have coasted through the universe bumping into each other and eventually by complete luck, atoms were formed, then molecules and dust, then rocks, then stars and planets and so on, right up to the myriad of beautiful forms we see around us today. No reason for it, no purpose or direction to it, it's just happenstance. And NOTHING is conscious except humans, and maybe dolphins and dogs. Darwin's theory of evolution, which is so popular right now, also



purports this idea of randomness dictating all change. The effect of this on the popular culture is a total lack of spirituality and personal responsibility, and an ignorance toward our intrinsic creative potential.

Thankfully now there are lots of great authors and researchers who are tying together quantum physics with the most ancient and profound aspects of religion, discarding all the old dogma and creating a new view of the universe which has spirit, purpose and value, and in which everything is conscious, and we humans play a key role as co-creators.

What lessons does the dancefloor hold for human unity

On the dancefloor, everyone is brother and sister. The music projects a common feeling into peoples hearts and minds, and the strength of feeling in each person feeds into the people around them, and the whole thing grows in a wave of euphoria and common purpose. I suppose it could happen on a planetary scale, if everyone experienced a common feeling or purpose that felt so good that it made all conflict seem utterly pointless. Nowadays with everything being

hyperconnected, there is much greater potential for this kind of global unification. The recent RATM christmas #1 campaign is I think an early example of the power at our fingertips now. Of course, everyone has a cause that they want you to support, but the thing with the Rage campaign was it just resonated with people, it snowballed. I am certain that in the next few years we will see much more powerful acts of mass influence like this - like a planetary «hands in the air».

How's the rave scene in the research labs

Well, not great on the whole - but I met some of my best raving buddies through physics :)

How important is a bit of humour and a bit of a laugh both in tunes and physics

Very important! More so than I give it credit for. I have a tendency to get quite serious about things (a hangover from my academic years perhaps) then I remember its all supposed to be fun and a good laugh. I have some great friends and a wonderful wife who keep me grounded and amused!



How small and how large does the physical world go

I think scale is an illusion created by the bandwidth of our perception. Its interesting to note that the scale of the human body is pretty much midway between the smallest scale we can conceive of, and the largest. If there were boundaries to the scale of the universe, then maybe we'd be closer to one end than the other, but we seem to be right in the middle. Also, the scales we can conceive of get greater as technology improves. I think the universe is fundamentally fractal - like the perimeter of the UK - it gets bigger as the measuring stick gets smaller.

What are you working on at the moment

Just continuing to try and lift my sound to new levels. I've been dabbling in a dubstep side project, and learned a lot of new tricks lately to create a much bigger sound, so I'm excited with the projects I have ongoing just now. I have a new one coming on Broken Robot called Mind Cell, which has been getting a lot of good feedback. I recently finished a remix for Odissi called Dirty Secrets (out now on Lot49), this one is a bit different from me, using a more rolling breakbeat,

with tight clean bass and lots of percussion and vocal stabs. Also have a new one called Rhythm Prism which you'll be hearing soon. In between my impulse to write dance music, I dabble in other styles of chill out, house, electronica, and the aim is one day to get all that together into an album.

I recently got an Akai APC40 which is an awesome piece of kit and I would ultimately like to be able to do a live set with it.

What's the dream

A life of creative satisfaction and consciousness expansion as a musician, producer, artist and writer. To continue to travel, meet people and experience the best of what this universe has to offer.

www.myspace.com/hedflux

www.facebook.com/pages/Hedflux/42827540024?ref=ts

<http://soundcloud.com/hedflux>



Photography: Nicole Blommers



Vitry-sur-Seine - Paris April 2010



PIRATING THE WAVEZ



It's a bitterly cold night in London town. The concrete monuments to urban modernity stand tall in the night, illuminating the shimmering cityscape, hurling small squares of light into the wind and across the moment. Two shadowy figures ride the rooftops, brandishing their metal arsenal and slowly lift it into position.....And in that moment....The sound of the underground is live, direct and transmitting to the world. Freedom beats ring out through the unsuspecting night, the deep soul pirate firm is in control and generating a scorching sonic wave of pure liberation.....

Fuck me we've come a long way from this picture.... But before the drop it's time for the reload... The phone line's going mental.... Reload Reload.....Let's GO



From the second the first wireless crackled into life, it was only a matter of time before a new medium so revolutionary in its ability to touch a universal public was hijacked by the supposedly passive audience and transformed into the sound of the people rather than the message of the establishment. Ironically enough, it was governments and their military wings that first harnessed the penetrative powers of the airwaves, using them to skip effortlessly and undetected over enemy lines and pump propaganda freely into the living rooms of the 'enemy' population. Clandestine stations beamed defeatist messages into Germany, and by the time the Iron Curtain had slammed Eastern Europe shut, stations like Voice of America, the on air PR department of the US federal government were using radio waves and selective information as sophisticated, elusive weapons of cold war. As the Soviet defences evolved jamming technology, the US government pursued equally fluid tactics and began fitting a fleet of disused ships to operate as floating studios, hovering offshore and saturating the surrounding area with their version of reality.

One of the aspects of history that maintains eternal optimism is the almost infallible ability of people to turn ideas and methods originally created for less than savoury

PIRATE RADIO DJs HIT BACK AT CRIME CLAIMS
**'We're not horrible,
we just play music'**



purposes into something glowingly positive. And the offshore fleet of radio stations was no exception, giving a few enterprising crews in the 60's a cracking idea. Sat off the Suffolk coast, an old Danish passenger ferry was about to hoist the Jolly Roger, chuck the clipped tones of the BBC Home Service firmly off the plank and then settle in for rum, singing and freeflow good times... Radio Caroline was born. While modern pirate radio might piss itself laughing at the thought of the Top 40 being deep underground, that was the reality in the 60's. The BBC, which had a virtual monopoly on domestic radio resolutely refused to acknowledge the existence of youth and 'the new Satanic dance crazes' leaving the revolutionary sound of the increasingly liberated 1960's generation with little option but to create its own outlet. DJ's were feeling the music instead of preaching a humdrum gospel of stiff upper lip bollocks, and Caroline quickly spawned a small, makeshift navy of similar stations that carried the new sound of pop into the bars, the casual workplaces and the home. The backlash was not long in coming, and in 1967 two epic decisions were taken to combat this unregulated public access to the airwaves. The Marine



Broadcasting Act was passed, closing the legal loophole of offshore broadcasting and almost simultaneously, lo and behold.....the BBC set up Radio 1 to bring mainstream youth back under their wing. It seemed that this unstable and dangerous monster had been reined in and smothered, but of course – we're not that gullible, not that conformist and not that stupid.

During the 70's and 80's, transmitter kits became more and more compact and practical and the flower of the 1960,s – the tower block became the ideal and inevitable host for the next generation of pirate broadcasters. This had the effect of localising catchment areas, and while having a 40 watt transmitter and 15 stories of concrete reaching 40 miles democratised the potential for anyone to set up a station, the limited range and the relative ease of getting hold of the equipment meant that 4 or 5 stations couldn't really monopolise the pirate scene with a national presence. London was already throbbing to the sound of the future, but pioneers in far further flung areas began bringing the tunes and the liberating secret of pirate music to less obvious parts of the country. The DIY, can do spirit flourished and the overriding principle of 'by the people for the people' embedded itself in creative crews the length and breadth of the UK. Back down in London, stations



RADIO PIRATES PUT OFF THE AIR



This is the window a man risked his life to get through.

POLICE have smashed a lucrative pirate radio operation in a dramatic mid-afternoon swoop on the Marks Gate estate.

Officers raided the roof of multi-storey Highview House on June 27 and arrested two men who were trying to fix an illegal mast.

The masts had been broadcasting Temptation FM - a pirate, underground garage show thought to be responsible for causing massive radio interference across the Borough.

In a joint operation with the DTI's Radio Communications Agency and council security, the mast had been deliberately sabotaged to lure the men up to try and fix it.

And police swooped after colleagues in observation points set up around the building gave the signal when a man was spotted on the roof.

Police couldn't believe their eyes because the man gained

By Tom Bryant

not only were they putting themselves at risk by climbing out of the window, but the people coming out of the building below.

Trop Manger added: "We've sent a message to everyone that this sort of thing will not be tolerated here and that Marks Gate community can expect us to deal with it robustly."

Temptation FM has been operating for a number of years in the Borough, with its logo daubed over a number of walls.

It's understood that the illegal radio show was a lucrative business, with good money made through advertising slots.

Police seized all the broadcasting equipment, including the radio aerial.

A council spokesperson said: "The council will continue to work in partnership with the radiocommunications agency and emergency services to ensure



began to diversify and devote themselves to certain genres and communities with exclusively reggae or Northern Soul stations springing up as the sound of disenfranchised subcultures, and the Afro Caribbean influence on modern music truly found its voice. Stations began to build tangible identities and DJ's went from playing the generic 'sound of the moment' to breaking new styles, new artists, new tunes and becoming the reliable reference point for the cutting edge of the sound they had honed. Jazz musicians, reggae musicians, rare groove artists and soul singers began to see the pirate stations as their direct line to the people they were trying to reach, and any aspirations to breaking Radio 1 were tempered by the communal need to nurture the musical underground and build a real basement scene rather than pander to mainstream tastes and the bookers at Top of the Pops.

Music and underground media has always truly unleashed its greatest potential when it's riding a wave of social and cultural revolution and in 1988/89 that wave swelled into a tsunami and irreversibly changed the cultural landscape of the UK. Acid House had landed. As promoters and party crews like our very own Wayne Anthony cracked the locks off enormous warehouses and vast communities

of LSD and MDMA enlightened individuals came together as one under the hypnotic and euphoric basslines of house music, two stations evolved into the critically important radio and public dimension of this movement. Sunrise and Centreforce exploded onto the airwaves, playing not only the heady cocktail of soul and Rare Groove, but embraced, generated, perpetuated and energised the new sound of Acid House. More revolutionary still was the unified front DJ's, promoters and these 2 stations formed to keep the movement flowing with DJ's from the parties guesting on and often helping run the stations while the stations gave info on upcoming parties and ravers would have them whacked up full in the car as they got spectacularly lost somewhere near the M 25 looking for the glint of a laser. The triangle between the new music, the new way of partying and the radio stations providing both the soundtrack and the hype formed a formidable axis of people power





and it was no surprise that when the police set their mind to eradicating the 'drug addled horrors of acid house' they also set their sights firmly on the pirate stations. In 1990, the Broadcasting Act sought to undermine some of the raw power of the pirates by opening up commercial radio much like Radio 1 was inaugurated in response to Radio Caroline and far tougher penalties were introduced for outlaw stations.

Stations were encouraged to go legit, the most notable example being the soon to be fucking awful Kiss FM. And it was a tempting offer – make no mistake. Any advertising revenue to pirate stations basically came at 'mates rates'

as everyone was trying to support everyone else and keep the scene alive and vibrant, and so running the risk of losing expensive equipment on a frequent basis, being heavily fined and regularly finding a new studio near enough the roof of a tower block to run a cable was an increasingly difficult task. Financial rewards were non-existent, and in a spectacular testament to underground passion, it actively cost a bloody fortune to keep transmitting. The authorities did what they did best, subverting unity and belief with a combination of carrot and stick, presenting the false option of continuing your desired music policy with no threat of prosecution, vast financial rewards from legal advertising and universal coverage with a transmitter that no longer needed to be makeshift and hidden. Kiss swallowed that line and chose that route, but the vast majority, still seething from the authoritarian crackdown and assault on the freedom of the sparkling Acid House movement, saw this ploy for exactly what it was. The bottom line was that music policy was only one of the constituent parts of the power of piracy. Freedom and the trust built from doing it for the love was the absolute core essence of the whole phenomenon and nothing whatsoever could be allowed to compromise that.





After a brief dip in 1990 and early 1991 in both sides of the underground, radio and party alike, the matrix of new music, illegal parties and pirate radio fused back into one at the end of 1991 and 1992. Hardcore breakbeat slammed across the airwaves with more and more stations taking on the new beat and the darker sound of the moment. Again stations were the information outlet for the scene as well as the musical generators and as the free party scene again revolutionised youth consciousness, the collaboration between Spiral Tribe and Touchdown FM to fuel the explosion in rhythmic harmony stood out as especially powerful. Secret rave information would hit the airwaves as the latest tunes belted out of the car radios. And this time, the sweeping police reaction to this dangerous exhibition of unregulated freedom did nothing to dent the rise and rise of the pirates. As hardcore metamorphosed into sub genres

of jungle, happy hardcore and techno, stations set up all over England pushing the frontiers of the new electronic waves, stations like Kool FM, Don FM, Chillin FM, Dream FM, Eruption FM and Rude FM continued to keep the fire burning. Hundreds came and went, but the bigger stations broke now internationally famous DJ's, set up club nights and parties and became a driving force behind the entire dance scene in the 1990's. And then something unique happened that defied all previous history. You're using it right now... Yep.... The internet.

Now while it was a matter of pride and a top rush to stay one step ahead of Plod and keep the station on the air despite raids, confiscations and complete on topness, the basic reality was that it was a fucking massive hassle and if there was a way to preserve underground identity and stay true to your values without having to deal with all this grief – well – it would be worth investigating. And the internet fit the bill and much much more. Here was an unregulated, totally free and uncontrolled medium that could be broadcast on. OK you couldn't hit people in their cars on the way to a rave, or people doing time, but you could hit far beyond your city and out into the undiscovered international spectrum. Location was suddenly irrelevant, a basement was as good as the top floor of a tower block and you could broadcast all week rather than turning on at weekends for maximum



From : <[REDACTED]@met.police.uk> Inbox
Sent : 18 November 2005 20:36:23
To : <frontlinerradio@hotmail.co.uk>
Subject : your system siezed today-[REDACTED]

Hi Lads,

We popped around today with the housing association and put the door in and siezed your decks under s.15(4) Wireless and telegraphy act as a station broadcasting without a licence and disturbing radio 4 listeners with their 'story at bedtime and their hot chocolate'. There is no decks or anything electronic at the flat and so do not attempt to get in or you will get nicked for burglary. The OFCOM have siezed all the gear so call them? They seemed very pleased!
So best of luck for the future.

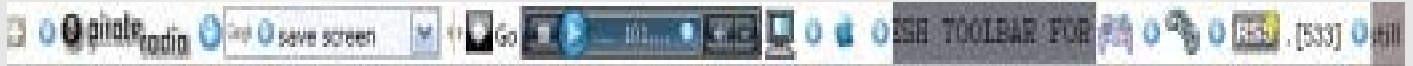
[REDACTED]
NDC-North End Ward North Fulham
020 82462909
Not Protectively Marked FOIA.

It is the policy of the MPS that:

effect and minimum traceability. Slowly but surely, current stations opened up an internet channel, and some of the old masters of the pirate art who with kids and responsibilities could no longer stay on the hop, came back to their one true broadcasting love. But who knew about them??? You couldn't just flick slowly through your FM dial until you heard some tunes that had you grooving. You had to actively search names of specific stations and there was no real possibility of switching between a heavy drum n bass show and an old school garage show. Something needed to happen to maximise the potential of internet broadcasting and reunify the stations into a virtual FM dial.

And it was one of the old school pioneers who developed the solution.....Sunrise FM who originally set out to build a toolbar to sit atop a browser that you could tune into Sunrise from. Until they realised the possibilities expansion might offer. In the classic difference between the commercial and the underground worlds, rather than build

technology exclusive to themselves and use it to edge out the competition, they opened the toolbar to each and every station that lived the pirate philosophy. Over time, stations from across the UK added themselves to the toolbar offering a wildly eclectic range of sounds and styles, stations who still had an FM presence used the toolbar to open a window onto the net and stations who would be off air without this all access reach and ease of broadcasting set up pure internet streams that could be accessed at one click through the toolbar. Recording facilities and a range of switched on options were swiftly added, and the entire dynamic of underground radio was revolutionised. Skilfully sidestepping the fragmented nature of the internet by collating everyone into one 2cm wide toolbar with immaculate reception on every station, a whole new world of communal creativity was opened up and the sense of unity rather than competition was set in stone. Pirate chatrooms now include people locking on for an original, cutting edge groove and a few laughs from all four corners of the globe and the whole concept of by the people for the people radio has matured in a brave new world.



In retrospect, it's amazing how far pirate radio has come since the days of Radio Caroline (still on air by the way – as are Sunrise and Centreforce). Pirate radio was always infinitely more than just unlicensed broadcasting or a specific style of music. It was ownership by us, even if you didn't know anyone involved at the station – it was still YOUR station and not because of some subtle branding campaign. It has fired and carried mass movements, given music and freedom to its listeners, offered a break and an outlet for talent and after all these years, never been broken by the power and the temptations of the state. It has a new and still not fully realised home in the self controlled anarchy of the worldwide web and an unshakeable and still dominant place in the energy of sub culture.... Get downloading that toolbar – and keep it locked – Big up your chest.....



www.sunriseradio.ourtoolbar.com/

SIRIUS 23

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AUDIOTRIX 12



LSD
Magazine



LSD
Magazine

Photography: WA

Mile End Skate Park - Mar 1st

CAN2WO



Can 2 has been styling the wild across the four corners of the world for over two decades now. With a style that comes fat, furious and bursting with an edgy joy and charisma, his pieces fuse the old, the new and the hip hop tradition into an dazzling explosion of art, life irreverent humour and the street.. Legend to many and inspiration to many more, he took a moment out from his globetrotting to have a word with LSD....

Can you give us a bit of background on yourself

My Name is CAN2 and I live in Germany. At the tender age of 7 I had a driving need to artistically improve the desk at my school as well as my school books with my own comic style illustrations, but I did my first piece in 1983. Before I got into Graffiti I was into B-Boying. I saw some Music Videos on TV where kids were spinning on their heads and backs so I started dancing too. Graffiti was mostly shown in the backgrounds of the videos. One night a day before christmas in 1983 me and two friends went out and I did my first Graffiti saying "Windmill". I got the cans from the garage of my father and it was silver with anthracite outlines. The other two

guys were just on the lookout.

That was the only outdoor action so far but as soon as ZEBSTER showed me his first sketch I started sketching too. We had like a little battle going on, who's gonna do the dopest sketch and who got the best colors and the best fine liner for the white highlights ect... and in 1986 I got my first airbrush so that gave the sketches another quality. Also in 1986 I got the opportunity through my art teacher to do a big wall at my school. Since that time I only wanted to paint on walls.

What does graffiti culture mean to you?

I've been doing Graff for more than the half of my Life and I'm still going strong, this fact should answer the question. Graff is my Life.

What happened to you in the late 80's and how did you bounce back

In the late 80's/early 90's I almost stopped because there was nobody I could really paint with. I concentrated a lot on B-Boying again. It all changed when I moved 1992 to Hamburg for my Illustration Studies with my Old School





Partner JASE aka Sonny. And I met so many new writers plus there were quite a few hall of fames so I had my "comeback".

How has the scene developed in Germany over the time you've been painting?

It has developed a lot. A lot of good talents pop up in every city and it is hard nowadays to follow the complete scene. Generally you can say it's getting better, but sometimes it got strange turnarounds style-wise. That's when kids follow a strange or wrong trend. The Graff community in Germany has grown a lot and there's so much going on everywhere. It makes it very hard for an individualist to stick out of the crowd. You have to do a lot on a high level continuously for years to get recognized.

How did you hit your style and how have you refined it?

I call my Style a Semi-Wildstyle. It is wild but still readable and that's very important to me. I want people to realize and comprehend what swing I gave the letters. It is about fame, it is about to be known, so I want the people to see my letters, to feel my style and to know my name. I don't want them to guess my name. To me it makes absolutely no sense to camouflage the letters and to do a mad wildstyle with unreadable letters (and mostly

on top of an unreadable tag). I always tried to orientate my style at the bronx-style from the mid 80's and at the same time I think this was the apex of style...and that's the reason why I do it...and it was a great honor for me to hear from people in the Bronx that they like my style and that they got remembered of the old times when they see my stuff...

How do you feel about galleries?

I like galleries, I have no problem when writers show their Art and try to sell it. Canvas is not my field of interest. I did quite some canvas but the most of them werete commissioned jobs. From time to time I consider to concentrate more on canvas, but I often think: I rather prefer painting a wall instead of sitting in my garage and painting on a piece of drapery. Anyway, who knows, maybe one day, it will change when days become shorter and colder.

What does color bring to a piece and how do you structure yours?

First of all I have to say that I used to choose my colors differently back in the days compared to today. On the one hand, you couldn't choose between that many colors and on the other







hand there was the question of money or rather the ability to get hold of the cans. When Sparvar finally hit the market the range of colors increased at least. Thanks to some commission graff jobs I also got some more cans back in the days. Most people might don't know about it, but I developed 20 new colors during my time at the Art Agency Oxygen in Frankfurt. Many of these colors are still a part of the Molotow color range, such as kiwi, violet, apple etc.

I am sponsored by Montana Cans since 2000 and the new Montana Black Line that they had brought out this year are the best colors I have ever painted with. And in April 2010 the new Montana Gold Line will hit the streets and they will probably be the best paint ever produced. Color wise and technically. I always try to paint with some new color combinations... but even when you have about 300 different colors...sooner or later you come back to the same colors. That's why I sometimes prefer that somebody picks colors for me, so I have no choice but to work with them.

How important is having an empowering tag that suggests that anyone seeing your pieces Can 2

A tag is like a trademark. It should be like a stamp. It should be readable and always stay the same. A tag is a logo.

Tell us about Stick Up Kids

Well, I formed the Crew STICK UP KIDS in 1993. I had that name in mind since I first heard the Song "Stick Up Kid" from "The B-Boys" in 1986 but I never thought of naming a crew after this song. For me it was more

important to get good friends in that crew, regardless of their fame or skills. I just wanted to have a crew of good friends that I can hang with, paint with and have fun with. Now we got a website where every member can upload his own stuff. To see all members check www.stickupkids.de.

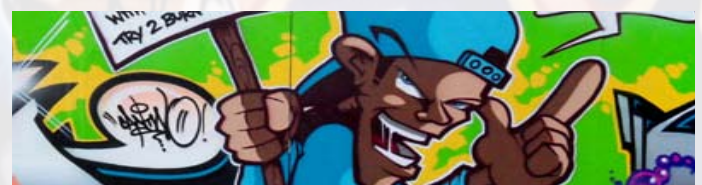
Has the increasing commercialization of Graff corrupted the art or brought it to a new acceptance?

You always have to remember that the Media brought the whole movement in the early 80's from New York to the world. You can consider that already a commercialization. But all in all I don't see any negativity in it. Graff is still alive, legal and illegal and it seems to be unstoppable, no matter how many negative or positive reports you see in the news.

Where do you take your imagery from?

From the very beginning I was influenced by several unknown artists and pieces (just rare stuff that seeks through the media). But as soon as I have seen Style Wars it was SEEN's style who influenced me the most. But also DONDI, DERO and DUSTER had quite some influence.

Nowadays I'm more influenced by parts of pieces from different writers. I still rock my style but I'm always looking for new ways to interpretate it.





How has the cross cultural painting been going in places like China?

The scene in the Asian countries is still very young. In Korea you're considered old school if you started in 1999! In China the scene is even younger. In Seoul live around 12 million people, 20 of them are active artists and maybe 50 are writers. I guess that shows the dimensions we are talking about. With regard to the b-boying, it's completely different. Nevertheless I think that thanks to events like the 'Wall Lords Graffiti Competition' the scene will grow up quickly.

How do you abstract your lettering?

First of all it's the Style that is most important. Each single letter has to communicate with the neighbor letter or some other letters in the piece. I do connections, arrows, bit and pieces to connect them. The whole style got to have swing. It has to catch your eye. It should not be too wild, still readable. If it's not readable it makes no sense in my eyes. You want to become famous with your name...but if you camouflage your name, nobody will be able to give you props.

Secondary there will be the colors; you have to come up with some dope color combinations. Sometimes less is more when it comes to coloring the piece.

After that comes the background, not that important but still part of a good wall. It gives the whole piece its frame. Last but not least, a funky character could probably enhance the overall look.

To break it down into a simple formular: A good piece has to have fresh style, dope colors, mad background, funky characters.... it's as simple as that ;)



What is the creative difference between canvas and mural?

The biggest difference is the size. I still try to treat the canvas like a wall (so you can guess I love big canvases). People know me for my style and my characters so that's what I am painting on most of the canvases. I have to stay true to myself. Sometimes I go back to the color sketches and do some sketches with markers on it. I always try to convert my style onto the canvas but because of the size I can only make one letter or a part of a letter or just a character.

What has collaboration brought to your art?

I met so many cool people through my travelling and still until today I think that travelling and meeting people is one of the keys to success in Graffiti. People get to know you, people talk about you and people hang with you.

Some of the best experiences I had in the last years were in New Zealand. I had the most fun painting there. It's just the whole vibe and the people there which motivate you to paint and to be creative.

But also painting in New York was an adrenalin rush to me. I felt the energy of the city and it is







no wonder that Graffiti originated from there. Travelling with the Montana Team is always a highlight too. It's like going on a trip with your best friends and do the thing you love most. I have travelled so many countries worldwide, and I met a lot of nice and cool people everywhere who share the same passion and I have learned also so much on those travels, I won't miss that part of my life and I'm still jetting through the globe.

When you started out, did you imagine earning a living from your art and travelling the world to paint?

No, and it was never my intention when I started 26 years ago. I was just fascinated by the energy of B-Boying and the power of the Electro Funk Music that came with it as well as the creativity of Graffiti. And I still get my thrills when I hear Planet Rock in a club and I can hardly stop my feet from moving to the circle and do some windmills ;) My invitations to Graff Jams have taken me all over the world, Europe, USA, South America, Australasia.....but besides all the travelling and invitations I also have never ever imagined working with Adidas and create my own shoe or work with other big companies such as Coca-Cola, Marks & Spencer, Mini USA, MTV, Nestlé, Procter & Gamble, Puma, Toys 'R' Us, and much more.

But still it's not easy to manage travelling, painting, family, work.... I think every freelancer can talk hours about that and the ups and downs regarding work. One of my side jobs is also design and illustration of flyers and posters for different labels and clients. Nevertheless, the fact is; since the birth of my son I do less travelling and painting and this is also good for me

Current and future projects?

I'm still working on my CAN2-Book which will be hopefully launched next year. I have also put a book together that'll be coming out around March 2010, it is a re-make of the JEPSY On The Run Blackbook from 1997 with more background informations and new flix, old and new. Besides that I have already a few interesting invitations for 2010 to Manila, LA, Sao Paulo,... and another big project is coming up which I cannot talk about yet...but when it's done it'll be mind blowing in every aspect. In Summer 2010 I am planning our first big Stick Up Kids gathering. I hope that all members can make it to Germany. And for sure you can expect more pieces, more characters and more productions with friends all over the world!

www.cantwo.de/





Photography: WA

London March 21st



<http://groups.to/lzd/> (log on first)



Photography: WA

London March 21st

CILVARINGZ

Scion of the legendary Wu Tang Clan, Cilvaringz overcame astonishing odds to take his place in one of the most influential hip hop collectives in history. Hitting the heady heights of international stardom with a magnetic cocktail of sublime lyrical flow, heaving beats, and a conscious, politically engaged lyrical canvas, Ringz is now a universally respected artist, manager and producer. Conquering his dream, he rolled the geopolitical and cultural maelstrom of the post 9/11 world radically across the beat, the street and the international heat, opening up debate and a fiercely dynamic dialogue with power, policy and identity. He took a moment out from strategising his upcoming tour to tell us his story and have a remarkably free exchange of ideas with LSD

How the hell did a Moroccan guy from a small town in Holland end up part of the Wu Tang Clan?

I was playing a lot of basketball in my teens for the South Dutch team, and with the initial passion for the game and the culture within it, the hip hop just fell into place. We had begun listening to hip hop on and off the court and one day, a friend of mine comes up to me with a tape that he had done, I took one listen, and thought to myself... 'let me see if I can do that myself!' I pulled in one of my teammates from the basketball courts to see if we could lay down a rap, and we had so much fun doing it that it became almost addictive as we kept nailing one and trying another and over time it started sounding better and better. At that point you start dreaming about going pro and looking at your idols like Snoop, Dr Dre and the Wu Tang in a different light, wondering if it might actually be possible to finish up on stage with them one day. My journey into hip hop started around the same time that the



Wu Tang Clan put their first album out, and I became a super big fan, going to all their gigs and snapping up all their records until one day I heard that group was expanding to take on new members and I was basically crazy enough to believe that that might just be me.

In 1997 when they were Grammy nominated and at their peak, they announced a May show in Amsterdam and while I bought my tickets the second they went on sale, I went off to New York in February. Standing in Times Square with all these huge 'W' 's everywhere, the sheer enormity of the Clan hit me and I've got to say, definitely discouraged me. No matter where I went – billboards, Virgin Megastore displays completely decked out in the colours, 20 foot banners – the Wu was EVERYWHERE and I was awestruck into



thinking 'Fuck...there's just no way I can crack this' The dream took a bit of a battering at that point and in the time leading up to the May gig, my visions of a future with the Wu certainly calmed right down. But May came and they hit town riding the phenomenal success of their second record. We were right up front for the whole 3 hour show when they suddenly launched a freestyle session for local talent to jump up. Now I was a bit shy, but my cousin who was with me literally pushed me toward the stage making it look like I was pushing my way through, and before I knew it, Method Man and Ol' Dirty Bastard were pulling me up and putting the mic in my hands. A total blur descended on me and I just started rapping. There was no getting into it, no letting it sink in....I just launched straight into my rap with Method Man and Ol' Dirty Bastard flanking me. RZA, the leader of the Wu Tang was standing over by the DJ table, not really participating, but as I started to settle into my panicked flow, I noticed that they were all getting into it. Ol' Dirty had this big smile plastered across his face and was looking back at RZA as if to say 'This is pretty cool'. What RZA told me years later was that it

wasn't that they were blown away by my raw talent, but that I looked like such a nerd with my glasses and retro haircut rapping away on stage in all my hip hop clothes! For him, the impressive aspect was less my rapping, but this kind of Clark Kent persona I had going on – this nerd that suddenly turns into Superman when he gets on stage.

So as I finished to a cheering crowd and I'm getting back pats from all the members, RZA pulls me over to the back of the stage. He told me that he liked what he'd heard and what he'd seen, that he was starting a Wu international label and would I maybe want to be a part of that!! The very moment he said it and I was trying to savour the golden glow washing over me, Ol' Dirty was on stage touching some girl's boobs. Well her boyfriend was not only in the audience, but he took it pretty bad, he and his crew jumped on stage and suddenly this massive fight broke out. Security grabbed everyone who wasn't part of the group and threw them off the stage including me with the words 'Fuck Yeah RZA' still on my lips. So I lost contact, but you know – I was happy and I had one serious

story to brag to all my friends with – and boy did I milk it for a while. As I got back from Amsterdam to my home town – the full weight of what I had done began to sink in. Inevitably you start thinking – what if that fight had never happened??? Would I have gone back to the hotel with them and been flown into New York to sign a contract for millions...you know all these crazy thoughts and finally, I decided I was going to go look for him in New York.

Now I was going to New York anyway for the February sales. My friends and I went every year for the latest clothes, official Wu Wear, music, vinyl, merchandise – you name it, we would buy it and then show off like crazy once we got back to Holland. But while the first time was with my friends on the scheduled trip, I went back another 5 times in 18 months....all to look for RZA. Now that's madness....I mean where the hell do you even start looking for the Wu Tang Clan? Me – I started by asking random people on the street who just looked at you like you were fucking crazy. But funnily enough, every trip, I would meet someone from Wu Tang whether it be a member, his mother, his brother or his uncle, and I started to get closer and closer...just VERY gradually! Eventually, on one of these lunatic trips, I ended up at the Wu Wear store in Staten Island and RZA's sister had just opened Wu Nails...yep a nail salon – no joke and it was really big - don't forget, at this point, the Wu Tang brand was so all encompassing that they were about to open a theme park in Fort Lauderdale. Anyway, I hit the nail salon and there was RZA's mother and sister. I gave them my demos, my letters and my lyrics, and even



then it was still a pipe dream because you never thought that they would ever actually make it into his hands. But amazingly enough, his sister gave me her phone number and it turned out much later that she'd been passing on everything I gave her all along and he'd been checking it. It's fucking unbelievable – just pure unadulterated luck with a little push from some insane dreaming on my part.

On my fifth trip, I found out where the record label was, and decided to basically camp outside the building from an hour before it opened to an hour after it closed. He had to come through at SOME point. First day dug in outside the label I meet the entire fucking Wu Tang Clan.....but him. I had 10 demos on me and after laying a copy on each of them, I was left with just one. It was 6 pm, the building was closing, but as the group was leaving, RZA's sister comes by, recognises me, asks me what fresh level of weird stalking I've reached now, and with this really warm smile on her face, invites me upstairs. Her and his uncle had been incredibly kind to me throughout, pre-warning me about events RZA might be at. Then I'd fly to NY just for that and somehow never managed to pin him down... although one episode that had me kicking myself in hindsight was a launch party a few doors down from the studio where RZA's uncle conspiratorially said to me, 'he's not far from here' and it never clicked that he meant the studio!!

So we get upstairs and the place is flooded with Tarantino's people who had come to talk about the music for Kill Bill (way back in 1999) and RZA's sister strides over to the tape deck, puts my demo on and cranks





it really loud to see how people react to it. Now all I was doing was systematically scanning the walls, because there were all kinds of phone numbers up there and I was just looking for RZA's. The logic was – there's no WAY this is going to work , so just mine it for all the information you can get. I finally saw RZA's number and was trying to edge close enough to read it clearly without giving the game away when people started going 'Yo – who's this' and RZA's sister is doing this totally priceless PR for me and bigging me up. Suddenly, Ghostface Killa calls from jail (he was doing time for beating up MASE – one of Puff Daddy's artists) and she gets on the phone saying 'Ghost – I'm going to play you something down the phone – see what you think'. She plays him the demo over the phone, and he liked it and again, that for me was already enough. As long as I knew that I had what it took to enter the Wu Tang world,

then I'm good. I started to perceive it in a different way – you know, I might not join the Clan in the end, but you got this far, people at this level like it, and that is already fucking amazing. But my fairy godmother wasn't done yet. When she heard Ghost's reaction, she called RZA and basically said 'You HAVE to get down here right now, because that guy who's been sending you shit for years...well he's here, everyone's loving it, and you have to be right here right now.

He came in, said a quick 'Peace, what up' to everyone, went straight into the office and 30 seconds later I could hear my demo pounding through the walls of his office. He listened to about half of it, came out and called me into his office. I mean – this is just something that doesn't happen – some real Hollywood shit and there's all of Tarantino's people waiting their turn patiently. His office was tiny, and he's

sat in this chair with his fingertips together looking at me and my friend. One seriously long uncomfortable silence later, he says 'look..I've got all your demos and your letters, and here it is. I don't think you're that great a rapper just yet but under the guidance of the Wu Tang Generals (he spoke in this total Shaolin style) I think we may have something. I'm going to assign you to the label just because your motivation and determination shines through so clearly.' I just felt my friend's hand tightening on my shoulder as he said 'here's my phone number and my address – come over to the house later and we'll talk.' Well as soon as I had that, I was fine because I was going to stalk the fuck out of him if he changed his mind.... 'Remember what you said that day!!' And suddenly you're hanging with the Wu Tang.

He gave me some beats and told me that he was coming over to the Wu Villa in Paris later that year and that we would seal the contract there. I would call him every now and again, and he would...you know...pick up and I started to record. After that I started to realise that even now, it wasn't all going to drop on my lap. You had to chase him up for studio time and I learned enough in those months to book things myself, get producers in, get Wu Tang members in to guest, book hotels and basically take the initiative for my own project. I was all over the Dutch press at the time – this kid from the nationally irrelevant town of Tilburg who had made it to the Wu Tang – I was everywhere and a friend of mine in a band gave me an invaluable piece of advice. He told me to use this wave of national fame to go shopping for a really favourable publishing deal and I landed this huge advance from EMI with an incredible split of 85% to 15% which



was known as the Springsteen Split at the time because you had to have that level of solid gold bankability to be able to get a deal like that. Not for the first time, I had this amazing luck, landing on all the right lawyers and advisors, and with that advance from EMI, I produced my own album rather than languish in the queue for Wu Tang studio time. The main Wu Tang members did it all for free too – and that was not a given, because if there was a budget – brother or not – you gonna pay up.

You weren't black. You wore glasses. You had a different history. How important was it for you to carve your own identity.

It wasn't in the beginning because I was copying everything they did. I was a total wannabe. If they came in with 2 different colour shoes they'd had customised by their guy in SoHo, I'd have a pair the next day. Their slang? I copied it. So in the beginning I was rapping about swinging swords and cutting heads off – all that Shaolin kung fu shit. I didn't even know what I was talking about – it just sounded like some cool shit. All the newest slang – I was with it straight away even though I had no idea what the fuck it meant. Shit, I ended up talking about shooting people and how the black man was superior to the white man. 'Kill the white devil???' I would say all of that. My album was wrapped just before





9/11, and as 9/11 happened, my outlook on the world took a radical shift. Politics and religion came into play and I started looking within and exploring my own thoughts and my own identity. So when I listened back to my album it just hit me... 'That there.....that's some bullshit' Certain songs had been leaked, and all the Wu Tang and wider hip hop forums were analysing it wondering why the fuck this guy was talking about monks with swords. And that was superb criticism because it reinforced the growing feeling within myself that this was not representative self expression. And I realised that I already had the Wu logo on my CD, that I was part of this group, and that in itself would open doors and ensure acceptance by a loyal fan base. Why not weave a message into the music or at the very least, look within and come out rapping from the heart. I re wrote the whole record from that moment. But it was a difficult journey to reach that point, because you don't want to be that nerd, and it takes a degree of security within yourself to explore your own ideas and build your own creative identity.

Where is the balance between rhythm, voice and story that makes a great rapper.

There's no formula. I can only give you my personal perspective on what makes a great rapper. Take Eminem on his first 3 records for example. He had beats that were alright, but he would have my attention for the entire 4 minutes – even for the 6 minutes of Stan. That beat never changed once, but he made the song so picturesque that he held me for the duration, painting a picture that I could see clearly. That's what makes a rapper great to me – keep my attention. Because it does just boil down to rap – chorus – rap – chorus. There's not going to be any bridges in there, no sophisticated song structure – this is hip hop. Look at Method Man.... he can be talking about farting, but he'll do it in a flow where he plays with his voice, plays with melodies, works together different flows and the way he puts it down is so incredible that it makes him an interesting rapper. Other rappers have a very dark or gravelly voice that infuses everything they do and sets them apart. Then you have guys like Jay Z, who I never got, but New Yorkers were all over because he spoke directly to their issues and they could relate to him. He's a great rapper, but it's only now that

I've started to get him, and it took a long time. Tupac's another one that I never understood – still to this day. It was all the same fucking song about drive by's, bitches and police.

There is this stereotype about hip hop, and while many of them did come from the street, do stories evolve as success changes their circumstances?

Absolutely. If you listen to Jay Z, he's not talking about crack and hustling anymore. Neither is Puff Daddy or Lil Wayne. The problem is, now you're going to hear about the bling, the bitches and the cars. Just yesterday I was looking at some of Lil Wayne's videos and it's all the same shit... 'I make this much money and I've got this many girls. As soon as she sees me she wants to do this to me, then I drive away in my Lamborghini to my big fat house.' It's still the personal story that was always at the heart of hip hop but now it's just fucking boring to me. I'm deeply disillusioned with rap right now. Even Eminem, once he was done telling the story about his mother, his childhood, the ecstasy pills he takes and all the craziness he tells so vividly, he's at a point now where he's said it all. This is someone who on a storytelling level was possibly the greatest rapper of all time, and now that we've heard the driving passions of his identity, the stuff he's rapping about now, is not only uninteresting, but actually quite irritating. Now he doubles his voice everywhere and is doing all this horror movie shit. It's no Stan. So yes,



they evolve, but it was much more interesting to me when they were going through all these harsh internal and external realities. Even if I couldn't relate to the gangster shit and I can't relate to this private jet shit, at least on a gangster level sounded a bit more vibrant and real.

Is hip hop a victim of its own commercial success?

Yeah. I mean some of these rappers are now so powerful that they don't need to listen to the record label. They used to be to blame, because they would come in and say right – you're going to talk about the big screen TV, this brand, this car and these rings. Now there's no record label that can tell someone like Lil Wayne what to do.

But you explored religion, politics and American power in your work. If you have run out of personal stories as a rapper, isn't it time to start developing wider themes and rap as an author for the street?

It depends if you're a storytelling type of rapper. That's the problem. A lot of these artists, like DMX for example, were so successful with their first record that the label forced a second out in the same year. Now how much can he go through in those months for him to sound different or come with a new story. He can't. Artists like Michael Jackson or Sade would leave 6 or 7 years





between records, and in that time you've almost forgotten about them, but when they do come back, they come back strong with new experiences and a fresh angle. Dr Dre in a whole career from NWA to the present only put out 2 solo albums – The Chronic and The Chronic 2. Not only is it interesting every time, but when he does come back, the instinctive respect makes you open to what he has to say now, and that gives longevity to their careers. But DMX put out 6 albums in 3 years and now he's a nobody. 50 Cent sold 11 million copies of his first album, but his second record came through so fast that it dropped to 3 million. Why? Because it was all too fast, too saturated – he was every fucking where. His most recent record only sold 500,000. You'd heard it all, how he grew up, how his mother was shot, how his father was shot, how he was shot. But you do have to respect these artists on a business level. 50 Cent did a commercial for Vitamin Water and took a stake in the company rather than a fee, so when Coca Cola bought the brand for \$4 billion, he cleared 10%. Jay Z's rich – why??? Because of music?? No, because of his Rocawear that he sold for \$200 million. Diddy the same with his Sean John fashion label. It's the clothing lines that took them to the big leagues, not the few records they sell.

Has an art form that was once the perfect mirror to the street become a perfect mirror to the worst excesses of capitalism, and shouldn't there be some form of social responsibility toward all the kids out there that idolise these rappers?

Yeah, but in the end the effect on the individual teenager comes down to how you were raised and the values your outlook is based on. I knew the gold and the diamonds were all bullshit when I was 15, and so did you. But American kids just don't. Method Man summed it up perfectly in an interview recently. 'If a guy comes up to a kid and says I'm a rapper, the kid will not say – OK rap something for me and let's see what you got lyrically, he'll say where's your gold chain.' That's what defines a rapper these days. And the kids see wealth as a means to freedom rather than creativity as a means to a deeper freedom.

And what happens when a rapper tries to critique this status quo?? They get dismissed as old school – and that ain't no compliment. How is someone like KRS 1 or Chuck D going to attract some young kid these days over Lil Wayne. The videos, the MTV presence, Lil Wayne is everywhere and sells 3 million an album. Chuck D for all his conscious lyrics and social awareness has a hard time selling



40,000. The time when rap was an active window onto social reality is gone. Jay Z is getting phonecalls from Obama who says his favourite album is *Blueprint 3* (by Jay Z) which is full of the N word. It's changed beyond recognition and in today's society, it really is that big. Which in a way is positive because it does encourage people to leave a life of violent crime to try and make their fortune with a microphone. If money, gold and bitches can be acquired through singing rather than at gunpoint, surely that is at least one positive aspect of the commercial phenomenon behind hip hop. Ultimately, morality in wider society comes down to the individual and how they were raised. You can't blame everything on Lil Wayne.

You moved behind the scenes to study entertainment law and began organising tours. How did that come about.

I was initially motivated by the potential for travel. I wanted to visit as many countries as possible and this was the way to do it. It then dawned on me that I could get a bit of self promotion in and that added in an

artistic motivation. I was set to go on my first European tour in 2003 as I was finishing off my entertainment law course, and I decided to make the tour itself my graduation project. I had no idea what the organisation behind a tour actually entailed and I started about 6 months before the opening gig. I had no clue that you needed to book tour buses well in advance, no clue about the logistics, and it was very stressful and not enjoyable at all AND it ended up costing me about 2000 Euros, let alone making any money. But on tour itself was great – luxury hotels, a new crowd loving it every night, on stage with RZA, those were all the really cool parts. Before long I began to get my head around the possibility of making a lot of money, and I found myself with an address book full of connections and having organised the RZA tour, all of them were now taking me seriously. RZA spread the word that I was the man to speak to about organising world tours because out of all the crew, I was willing and super organised. The logic of how to put it together very quickly snapped into place for me – it just made sense. Once I'd seen the world though, in about 2006, it became all about the money. I had to assess my position as an artist and affiliated with the



Wu Tang, whose own name was declining after 17 years in the game. None of us were going to be popular forever, and I was now married, we'd moved to Morocco with the ambition to build our dream house and try for kids. No-one was going to give an artist that lived on royalties rather than a salary a mortgage, so if we were going to make it, I was going to have to make a shitload of money. This upcoming tour with Method Man, one of the greatest Wu Tang artists is the perfect way to hone my organisational skills, book my brother a killer tour and put some money aside for my house. There's worse ways to make a living!

You now manage a small stable of Moroccan hip hop artists . How do you see the evolution of Moroccan hip hop both within the national psyche and in the international arena and what future do you see for these artists in a changing world.

I have no idea. I work with all these great artists here, and they rap well, they put out albums, but what is there in the end for them? After a few years, someone is going to come along who is going to outdo them, because that's how it always goes.....and what are they going to do with their lives then? Start a job?

After all the adulation and stretch Hummers of their early twenties? So I'm starting to ask myself, what the fuck is it for. Clichés aside, it's not like it was when I started. I still experienced the final moments of that heyday when record sales were through the roof, and you could put a record in a store and it would be out there. Today, artists survive on touring and spinoff businesses rather than record sales, and there are no venues for these guys in Morocco. There are festivals, maybe 4 or 5 of them, all in the summer, and any fees for a group like H-Kayne or Fnaire get split across all the members and you as an individual end up with maybe 5000 Euros for the year, a limited lifespan on your career and huge adjustment problems once your star begins to wane. Even the groups themselves... they may get creative fulfilment from the first album, but they are increasingly starting to see it from my point of view. There was a lot of crossover work in Fnaire's first album, the use of the Arabic language alongside traditional instruments and there is no doubt that it was a creatively spectacular album. Then they got every single 24 carat aspect of their fifteen minutes in the spotlight, but now...they're saying, what's next. And sadly there is no next.

All these big stars we see today are fucking lucky that they came up at a time when you



could still sell records. What do you do today as a new artist? Everyone says independent is the way forward, but how the fuck am I even supposed to know you exist. Before, you had MTV that would showcase new artists, new singles and help generate a brand. Now it's reality soap and there's no music videos on it at all. Yes there's Youtube, but I would have to search specifically for your artist name. They say there's more possibility now, but I think that's made it even more difficult, because now everybody's making music on their laptop and will never have to master or sound engineer, or invest in top of the range mic because it's all for Youtube and Limewire anyway. The market is saturated across the board, but it's especially flooded in hip hop. Shit, you go to any classroom and half the kids are rappers. All these big artists either came up right before it crashed, or they came up under a superstar. Kanye West came up under Jay Z and Drake, who's been nominated for a Grammy without even having put out an album came up under Lil Wayne.

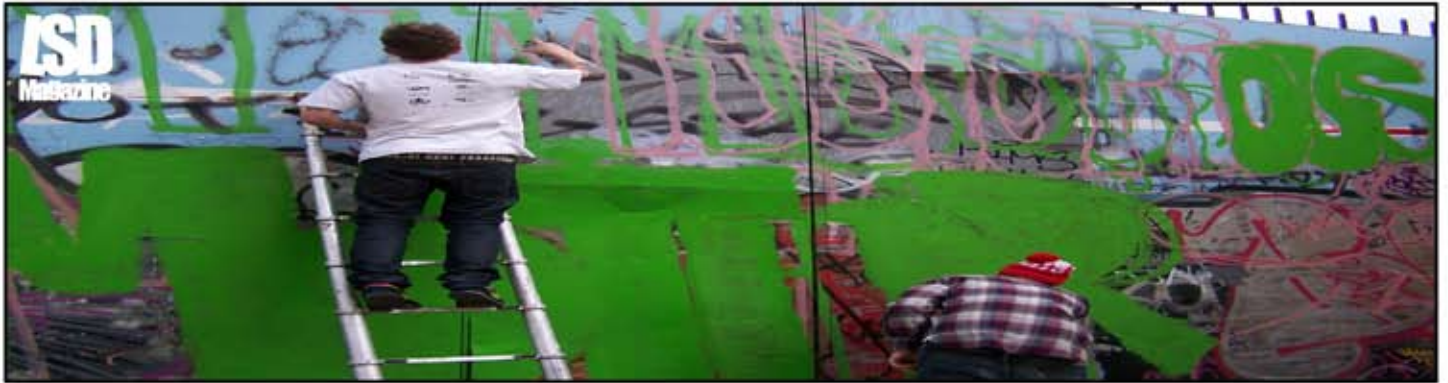
So you either emerge under the patronage of a superstar, or you're on your fucking own. Record labels are all going out of business, and the ones that are still afloat aren't signing anyone new. You can forget artist development deals at a label – there just isn't the money. So you either put out a clone of a current hit single and accept you're going to be a one day fly, or you try your luck on the internet. And if the public are just downloading the records in shitty mp3 format from itunes, why

would anyone bother to get it mixed and mastered? I pay \$99 a year to have my album for sale on itunes. Distributors are gone, labels are gone, and where is the reinvestment ever going to come from to break new frontiers of creativity and sonic excellence. It's not. What used to be a treasured product that supported the development of the whole industry is now a disposable commodity off some download site. How is that ever going to change? You may get 3 million hits on Youtube with a quirky video, but you'll probably only sell 10 records, because you can listen to it whenever you want on Youtube for free. I have artists in Holland where one gets 60,000 views and sells 20,000 records, while another gets 5 million hits in Holland alone, and sells 2000 records. What is wrong with this picture.

So the answer is, that I just don't know what the future holds for any of us. It's not like dance music where the end user is a DJ who will pay for quality. The end user in hip hop and wider pop music is a kid with a terrifyingly thorough knowledge of download sites. And it's not even something that you can put down to being a phase, because who is going to volunteer more money out of their own pockets to resurrect an industry whose expertise and infrastructure is falling away. Would you?

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Word to Mother / Mysterious AI - March 15th

TALES FROM THE SOUNDLABZ



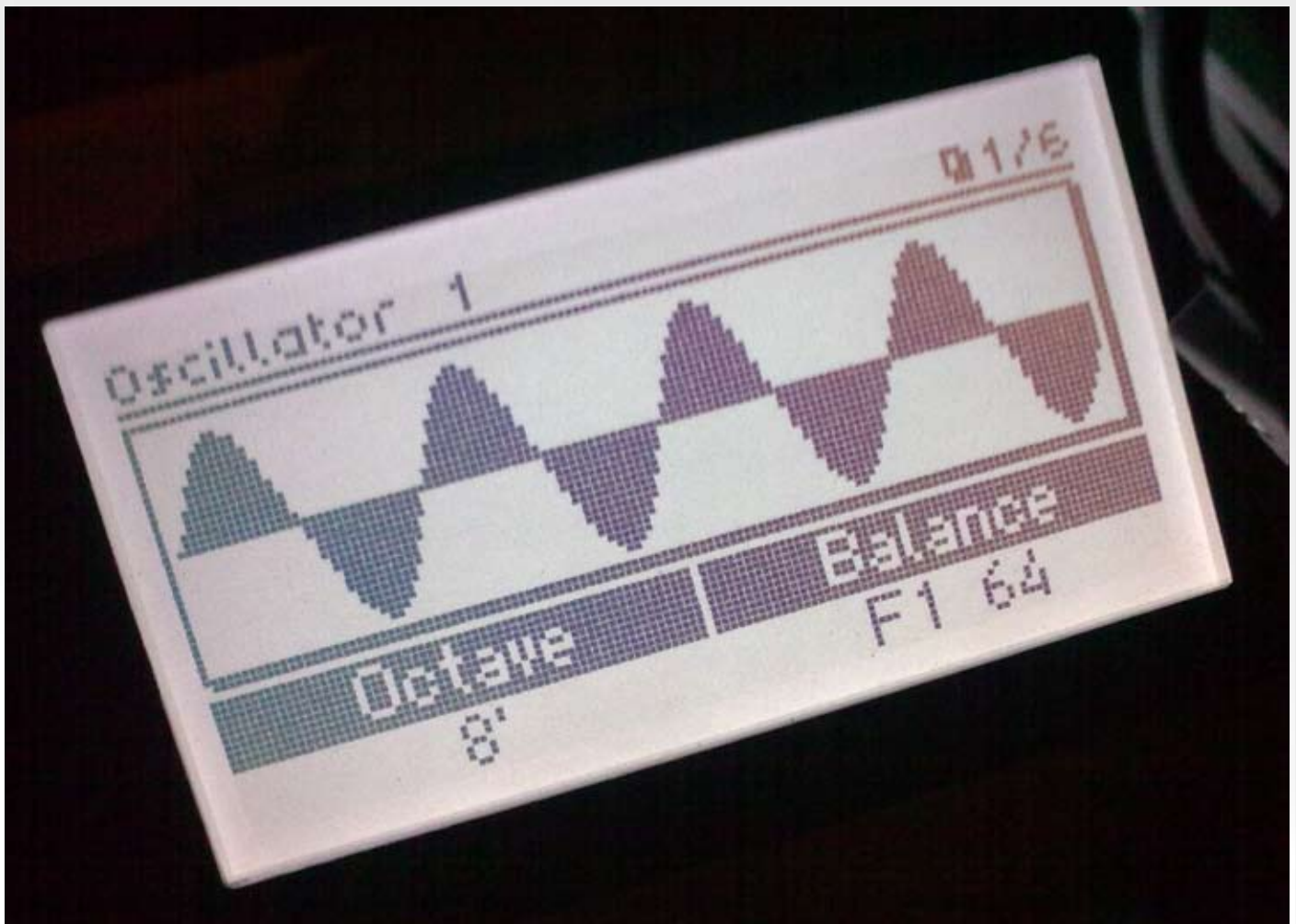
Without any further ado, it is our immense and lasting pleasure to introduce LSD's bassline consultant, roving frequency reporter, international vibe generator of mystery, and spanking new columnist trIX5ta 5 who has sent us this dispatch by sub woofer from deep in the French countryside..

The Audiatrix SoundLabz

So here it is - Tales from the Soundlabz Part 1. If I get too geekish on a digital sonic sort of level and start to talk excitedly about low frequency oscillators and reverse side chaining or automating the threshold of ya noise gate - feel free to jump onto the next paragraph (or even the next article!)

The Audiatrix Soundlabz actually exist twice: the first is my creation space and is situated somewhere in the southern French countryside. After however many years since I moved off the road it's now pretty tip top with a respectable collection of hardware synths etc and top of the range recording stuff - which we'll come back to later

The second Soundlab exists in a parallel dimension residing inside my active imagination; you can find it on a satellite space station - head towards Saturn and hang a left - and it's here that we have our secondary studios equipped with sound designing machinery fabricated using alien technology, unavailable on our planet.



This is where roughly 10 years ago, under the influence of a local psychoactive tonic, crew members discovered a new method of frequency manipulation that became known as an AUDIOTRIK. Applying the results of this research on large groups of assembled people (or aliens) at high volumes the Audiotrix crew found that by using combinations of the right frequencies they could induce positive mood change and dancefloor wide euphoria. We use the results of this experimentation regularly to play out live and also record them and release them on vinyl.

The advantage of playing live practically every weekend is of course that I get to test new sounds, rhythms and samples almost instantly on a receptive public. There's no better buzz than hearing a noise you've just created on a massive rig with a bunch a nuttas going mental right in front of you! If I lunch out the next stage which would be trying to capture this moment, record it at home into a track, tweak it up, mix it down, get it mastered and release it so that other DJ's and ravers can experience my original buzz - please forgive me - I've got a lot on!

And Now.... My latest listening theory

MLPL = Maximum listening pleasure Level

MLPL is reached when the fresh and the familiar combine bringing us the excitement of hearing something new mixed with the familiarity of recognising something you like. This normally peaks around the 3rd or 4th time you hear a tune but can be maximised by several other external factors such as: people, place, product consumption, company, quality of sound system, what you had for breakfast that day and if there just happens to be 20,000 hardcore ravers in front of you loving it big time .

After the 4th or 5th time the MLPL rate will start to gradually fall, descending faster and faster directly proportionally to the amount of listening done per every 24hrs. Over listening can cause a drastic plummet in the rating as we all know. Then of course if left to mature over a certain period of time the MLPL wil start to creep up - the longer its left to mature equalling a steeper gradient.....

Which also explains the popularity of the Bootleg - fresh and familiar in 1 neat package - but this works 2 ways as well as I'm now sick to death of Bootlegs!

This of course brings me to ponder the very relation between time and music itself, the key word being FRESH. 20 odd years ago we were blown away by the sounds of the 303; 10 years later its screaming resonance led us (or at least me) to run screaming to the bar area searching for something to dull my extremely sensitive mood inducing frequency detectors (ears) until someone sorted the tunes out.

10 years later on from that i came to find the sound of funk and jazz refreshing (ideally with a banging kick or humming bassline chucked in for good measure) particularly the brass section. So we've come full circle: now I'm finding the old stuff sounding freshest of all - in fact any sort of roots music such as reggae, folk or jazz sampled up and added to electronic beats and basslines is doing it for me.

This is personal to me and every human being will find that their particular "whattayoufindFresh" will depend substantially on when you were born in the overall scheme of things.

Example: It's hard to get your granny into your latest bangin techno set, however well you mix it!

I am part of the chemical generation. We are the Pacman-affected eighties children whose MLPL was shaped by the electronic synth sounds of eighties pop preparing our young psyches perfectly for the acid-house explosion that was coming our way in the 90s which we embraced wholeheartedly, then clung on to for dear life (and some of us have refused to ever let go!).



MUSIC NOW

Part of my job is to be constantly on the look out for new sounds - if a new form of electronic music gets invented its up to me to be the first to be playing it on my patch (as long as it's dancefloor-compatible that is).

I've been listening lots to a wide range of different music - soaking it all up letting it sink in ready to mutate it chew it up and chuck it back out at an unsuspecting public.

I'm happy to report that Dubstep has at last decided to meet breakbeat and even 4 Beat in the middle - It was actually those dreary half speed beats that really pissed me off.

Keep your ears peeled because things are moving in a very interesting direction as genre busters worldwide work to mix melange and mash up all to keep your ears intensely interested.....





Has the Internet Peaked?

The internet is a big subject but I'm gonna touch the sides.

Here at the Soundlabz our internet was recently down for over 3 weeks....

Now If you had cut me off the net a couple of years ago even for a few hours I would have been in instant cluck mode - agitated, moody and zippin off sharpish down to the nearest cyber caff - but this time my instant reaction was a deep breath followed by a calm relaxing feeling of chill.

I am lucky enough to be in the position where I have already built up a bit of a following over past years so that in actual fact if I disappeared from the internet tomorrow

there would probably still be a group of people making an effort to find out where i was playing and when my next record was out, without a relentless round of social networking. At the same time if I wanna do "serious damage with online spamage" as we call internet promotion these days it will just be interpreted as keepin me peepz informed.

Anyway why stop? The internet is the most addictive thing since electronic dance music and although you might be able to give it up for a week or even 2 by taking yourself into a situation where it was not easily accessible or filling your life with infinitely on-it activities, you'll never stop for long - no one is that strong !!

It would be something akin to a 100% worldwide alcohol ban.

We are in the age of communication and me for one feels time slipping past faster and faster as we all get busier and busier. This is often put down to getting older as we all know that time speeds up the older you get. But can overcommunication also be a culprit: the fact that we can communicate instantly and pretty much non-stop with people all over the world, does this speed up time? We spend more time actually communicating with each other than actually getting shit done.



Has over communication held us back from developing telepathic communication functions? Not to mention normal conversation!

How did we manage to organise massive illegal raves every weekend back in the day without so much as a mobile phone between us ?

Sorry am I being negative here? I know there are a million and one positive things we can get from the internet; it's just that having an anti addictive personality, barring an extremely healthy sonic obsession and the odd mind altering substance binge, i find its pull at times a bit too intense.

And anyway I'm generalising - there is a whole other massive population of peepz out there who never go online and will never read this - the very fact that you are probably guarantees you're an info addict like me!

Anyway enough theorix

Now a Story....



And talking of time, I'm now going to take you back.....

I made my first tune in the Spiral Tribe studio trailer when it was parked up on Potsdamer Platz, Berlin. I was 8.5 months pregnant and it was -20 outside, there was no heating in the trailer so we worked with fingerless gloves.

Most of the Tribe were busy combating the cold by caning it - playing some game involving pills balanced on shots of strong alcohol - i never understood the rules as I never played.

At this time we all wore black and had skin heads . It was a uniform that had developed primarily because it was the easiest way to keep clean without running water. And it gave us a strong crew identity.

I wasn't worried about my baby's haircut, I



knew he would be born with a skin head, but it did bother me that I couldn't find any black babygrows . I was also pretty miffed that he wasn't born on the 23rd - its something of a tradition in our family but by the 17th the German doctors were getting pretty concerned and my waters finally broke....

When he was born we left the hospital after a couple of hours to rejoin the Tribe. It never occurred to us that we would need a piece of paper to go with our new baby and we totally overlooked getting a birth certificate!

Then I spent 2 weeks in bed recovering enough to be able to mix at the Blast Off 94 Mutoid Waste/Spiral Tribe New Year party at Tacheles, Berlin only getting up once to record a quick DJ Mix. (SP23X - mixtape)

I spent 3 days alternating between sleeping, running upstairs for DJ sets and feeding my new baby. At the end of the party I collapsed in bed with a fever.

FOR THE CONTINUING STORY....

Tune in to the next exciting episode of Tales from the Soundlabz in LSD mag where I'll continue this story and also discuss other such fascinating subjects as:

Synthesizers I have known and loved and how to work out your TMEC or Travelling Musician Efficiency count per weekend

trIX5ta 5







LICENCE BOARD OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA
CURTAIN ROAD
EC2



Photography: WA

Case - February

RON ENGLISH

Dispensing with the usual platitudinous outpourings such as 'legend', 'godfather of street art' etc (all true by the way), we here at LSD were lucky enough to have an in depth chat with Uncle Ron himself. A lifetime spent subverting the subversions of corporate society, Ron has not only pioneered a canvas style of surrealist pop psychedelia, a creative dynamism that fuses music, activism, art and irrepressible mischief, but tackled the pressing social issues of our generation. Pirating commercialised public space to bring a winking mirror to the absurdities of a media driven conquest of identity, Ron has triggered debates, self questioning, national campaigns and the reclamation both of the physical world around us and the spirits corporate culture take so dismissively for granted. Reinventing media and perception all with a gloriously freewheeling spirit and an open loving heart we tip our Burger King crown to the man himself

How do you think branding and consumerist culture has changed in the last century.

Well as the industrial revolution came into its own and more and more systems were mechanized, output began to dramatically outstrip what people actually needed. At that point, a second industry was needed to sell products that people didn't need, and out of that imbalance came the advertising industry. As time went on, advertising grew more and more sophisticated and became increasingly about creating identities out of a hodgepodge of brands, honing a brand loyalty that encouraged people to self identify with product image, and taking the phenomenon well beyond just selling you a car or whatever it may be. It has now evolved into a set of transient global tribes where you identify



yourself with the most powerful brands and categorise yourself according to your consumption. Don't forget, when the industrial revolution started out, everyone was told how great things were going to be, that everything would be mechanised, that people would work for 2 or 3 days a week to maintain the machines and the rest of the time, everyone was going to be at the beach. Once industry was able to use advertising to create demand rather than need, factories realised that they could just keep making stuff and factor in reduced longevity. If I were to sell you a lightbulb that could burn for 100 years, you'd never buy another, but if I sell you something that lasts 6 months, I can keep perpetuating



demand. And when feminism broke, instead of becoming easier for everybody because there were now two people working in a family, the circle jerkers in the boardrooms maximised disposable production to the point where not only were families not working less, they were now having to take on second and third jobs, consuming all their thought, emotion and energy and leaving them with no time to rebel. And consequently – people just don't know that there's an alternative

How do you think billboards became the acceptable face of public space and what motivated you to start pirating them?

When billboard advertising first started to penetrate public space, there was a contract that at least 15 or 20% of all public advertisements would be set aside for public service announcements such as Fasten your Safety Belt, and a deal was struck that corporations would be allowed to advertise within the public realm as long as they gave something back to wider society. Over time, that has diminished to the point where nothing at all is being given back. I started taking them over purely because they were everywhere, but the reason that I did them for so long, rather than say walls which have a longer lifespan (you can guarantee that even if it's not immediately taken down, doing a billboard can only ever last a few weeks) is that there is a subliminal authority that goes with very powerful corporations. When people see something on a billboard, it's like it's sanctioned by some higher power, whereas if it's graffiti on a wall, that is dismissed as youth and doesn't carry the same authority. For me, my billboard stuff was much like a political cartoon, and it's nice to make something that doesn't have to hold up in 20



years time. Circumstances around the piece change so rapidly that it may not be funny or relevant after a few years, but it's intensely relevant the day you do it. It's equally nice that it gets cycled out otherwise you could still be looking at stuff critiquing Watergate which simply isn't that pertinent any more. But the way you have to approach fine art is with the overriding thought – 'is this still going to be relevant in 100 years' and there has to be something more universal and less specific in the way you take it on. There is something special in knowing that the street work will be gone and it was just for that moment. The humour is a particularly useful weapon as rather than coming across preachy in a way that often solidifies people in the opposite position to where you want them to be, it's a language between friends, so it already feels like this is someone on your side because you're sharing a joke – they're not preaching to you or explicitly telling you what to think.

You spent a lot of your early life in Texas. Is it stereotyping to presume it was incredibly right wing and hostile to art or any form of social questioning? How did the ingrained attitudes there affect you?

No. It's very right wing. But I started out going to school in Denton where half the town is made up of college students attending a surprisingly liberal college, full of wild parties and gay fraternities, so I didn't really discover conservatism until I moved to Austin. The art department in Austin didn't like content in







art, but wanted you painting empty streets with no people in them, and just within the overall atmosphere I realised how oppressive it all was. How scared people were. They were scared for their jobs, scared for their tenure and scared of offending the rich people in Austin. When I went to fraternity parties, everyone would be dressed exactly alike and very threatened by my appearance. They wanted to know why my hair was long, why my girlfriend had unshaven legs and I was an affront to everybody there, from the art department to the fraternities without ever trying to be – but purely by being myself. So I really had no idea of how regimented society was in Texas until I got to Austin. I did have some interface with what they call the Goat Ropers . One time I went to this park to see some hippies down there – to fill up on dope I guess, and while I was hanging out with the

hippies, on the other side of the park were this group of cowboys, the Goat Ropers, and they had beaten up one of the hippies. So I said to them, 'Let's go fuck em up' and they looked at me like I was out of my mind, and I kinda was, because I didn't fully understand the situation. The way I saw it, there was 30 of us and 30 of them and that should be fair enough. So finally they said to me 'Are you sure??? Ok.. But are you sure??.....OKlet's go'. I started to walk over to the other side of the park until they called me back saying they were up on Deltaville Road. Now I didn't know there was somewhere they all congregated, but we headed off up to Deltaville Road where I saw what I assumed was a huge truck lot because it was just so full of trucks. Once we were surrounded by guys with chains and baseball bats it dawned on me that this was no truck dealership – there were hundreds of trucks because there were hundreds of rednecks and the 30 that had made it down to the park were only a tiny fraction of them and suddenly we were outnumbered by hundreds. So by this point, my knees are banging together and I'm thinking to myself 'er guys...why didn't you tell me there was so damn many of them' and suddenly the whole scene took an incredibly bizarre twist. One guy at the back of the crowd starts shouting 'Jesus, Jesus', pushes his way through the redneck army and gives me this huge hug. Now that threw the rest of them off who couldn't for the life





of them understand why he was hugging me and calling me Jesus and they kind of looked at each other for a while and finally offered us a beer. "Yeah" says I. "Fetch us a beer" and we sat with them drinking a couple of beers for a while until one of my crew chimed in with the timely reminder that we still needed to get the fuck out of there, because it wouldn't be long before they got back to killing us. So we got away unscathed and a couple of beers to the good, but that was my first experience of rednecks and put alongside the incredibly conservative college people, it made for a very interesting place!! We were just down there at the weekend painting cows.

How is it that the right wing in America has so much power. It's complete insanity from an outsiders perspective and totally unfathomable – can you shed any light on this mass lunacy?

They're highly organised, very uniform, and while the left wing is made up of a hodgepodge of different interests – artists, gays, unions – whatever, the right all stick to the same agenda. Something like 90% of them go to church every Sunday, but probably in their heart of hearts they don't really believe that Jesus hauled his ass out of the grave and went flying up into the sky. They don't quite believe it but they are very into being part of society and the regimentation they impose on their own lives extends into their organisation.



The right was very smart in taking over all the radio stations in the country and syndicating Rush Limbaugh across them and even our troops are only allowed to listen to him. He gets to rant for 3 hours a day before Sean Hannity comes on and rants for another 3 hours and it is basically brainwashing. We have censorship here, but it's not government imposed so it's not taken seriously because in theory, only the government has that kind of power. What they don't understand is that there is this new kind of censorship invented by the United States right wing, where you can let all the facts come out, but make sure that you have a louder megaphone than anyone else and you shout louder than the facts. They shout it more specifically and they all get texts and faxes with the talking points for the day, and then stick to those talking points like glue. Occasionally Democrats are mistaken for Republicans and receive one of the talking point faxes, but despite being pre warned and sharing it with other Democrats, rebuttals never seem to get off the ground purely because the Republicans shout the loudest. There's a lot of information out there but a lot more disinformation and Republicans have got really great precedents too. A lawsuit was brought against Fox News, which is the number one news outlet in the US for constantly lying about shit and the Supreme Court decided that they could fucking lie. They could present themselves as news never mind 'fair and balanced' and brazenly lie.







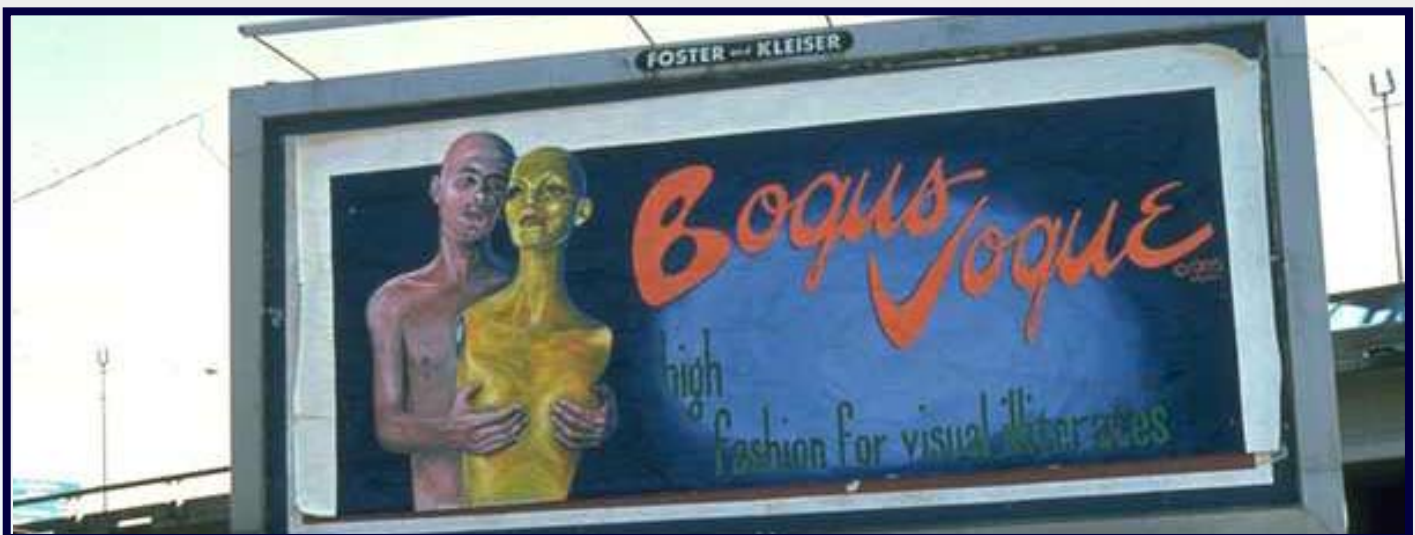
Do you think that in their relentless use of simple slogans and images, the right has mastered pop culture and mass media to a far greater degree than the supposedly 'pop' liberals?

Totally. And one of the biggest strategic things that they did was, as I said, to take over the airwaves. They had a set of laws passed in the 80's that did away with anti-trust legislation preventing competing radio stations from sharing an owner, so it was very clear that they knew what they wanted and were playing a long tactical game to achieve it. After Nixon and Watergate, all the people that worked in that administration, especially the younger generation had a lot of time to think about gameplans and how they could fight a war abroad and stay unopposed domestically. Well first you don't draft anybody, but make it a supposedly volunteer army while recruiting teenagers with little prospects from working class parts of the country, and then you just chant at anyone and everyone 'Support our Troops....Support our Troops'. So all you've got to do is pop the cherry and then you're golden, because if you don't support our troops, you're not a good American and if anyone tries to nuance an argument that has nothing to do with the troops but questions the political decision making...well you just shout 'Support our Troops' even louder. Control of

the radio waves gives you both a megaphone and a propaganda outlet and in factories the length and breadth of the country, workers are listening to Rush Limbaugh and Sean Hannity over the PA systems and being systematically brainwashed as they work.

How did guns become a fundamental part of patriotism and national identity

I don't know, but Americans have always had a lot of guns!!! But part of the right wing coalition to pare down government and unleash rampant private interest has always been the militias and these people who fantasise about taking down the government. They love to be armed and crawl around the Midwest on pseudo military psychosis, completely convinced that Armageddon is weeks away and that they will have to survive in the absence of any infrastructure. That kind of mentality is embedded somewhere in the psyche and those guys are inevitably all Republicans. Ironically of course, the Republicans don't really want small government, but a very powerful one inexorably linked to the corporations, and basically control both. Now while that is antithetical to what these people actually want, they don't really understand the difference





and they are the most fervent supporters of the Republican party. They say they want the revolution, but I doubt they actually do!!

How did the Obama Lincoln connection come about

I did the poster at the end of May 2008 when Hillary was still in the running and fuelling the debate over whether Obama was too young or unqualified for the presidency. It struck me that they were both from Illinois, had pretty much the same qualifications and a range of other aspects in common. The piece was only supposed to be for that week – that moment and the faces happened to match. The eyes and lined up and the facial geometry was surprisingly synched which doesn't often happen with the human face, and it was kinda eerie to see just how well they fit together. The internet made it famous before it even came out of the press and we decided to take it on tour across the country as if we were a rock band. We began in Boston and Boston is a very conservative town.....they gave Shepard Fairey 37 felonies and when Joe Coleman went up there and did his act, they slapped another load of felonies on him for 'concealing explosives' when he blew himself

up with fireworks, which none of the rest of the country seemed to feel threatened by. You can create huge controversy in Boston and we started there on the 4th July (Independence Day) and sure enough we found ourselves in the midst of a national controversy and took it from there.

On that note – just how much fun is it causing a national controversy?

I don't think it's that fun actually, because you're never sure how hard they're going to come after you. They're not very happy with Shepard and many of the other street artists because they believe that between them, they helped put Obama in office. They want to take their revenge on him particularly, seeing him as the lead troublemaker, and knowing that there's a lot of very powerful people out there thirsting for revenge doesn't really help you sleep at night.

Have you ever had any threats or actual repercussions?

Well it's a bit like when we were involved with the flag controversy in 1989. We received





death threats but you were never quite sure how serious they were, given that people making death threats are pretty reluctant to identify themselves. I don't get it though, because they only seem to go after the lead, and since Shepard was the lead, I think he took the brunt of it. I've always been number 2, and there's this great safety in being number 2. They're so desperate to knock the guy at the top off the ladder, that no-one even notices the next guy down or the people supporting the ladder and holding it in place.

Speaking of campaigns – can you give us some insight into the concept of painting the 2 separation walls in Berlin and Palestine

Well back at the end of the 80's, a lot of artists were going over to Berlin and the concept was that if we started doing murals on the wall, seeing as we get a lot of media attention when we paint, it might help bring the spotlight back onto the wall and start the questions about why it was still there. But it's hard to get people's attention focused on something outside of their daily lives and when you look at the Palestinian wall – Americans are funding it through their taxes....but they don't

even know it's there. They've never seen it, they don't understand the implications of its existence and they have no idea of how brutalised the Palestinians are. The Palestinians have absolutely no power in the United States; they don't get to say anything publicly or have any kind of opinion and nobody ever gets to hear their side of the story. That's why it was so brilliant that when Banksy went there and did stuff, it got people looking at the wall. Then he called up a bunch of other street artists the next year to come and revisit the wall, and it was the only thing we could think of to do to bring attention to it and make it harder for Americans to support it. The Israelis methodically pushed a lot of people into power in the United States and the rest of the one sided public debate is sold through propaganda. People feel very sorry for Israelis, thinking it's a very poor country and that they are brutalised daily by these asshole terrorist guys who keep bombing them and blowing up their kids. That's the perception and we ought to do anything we can to help them because they're a democracy and we should help other democracies rather than these pitiless, homicidal terrorists. It's an incredibly myopic vision and again, it all stems from a combination of disinformation and people opting to be ill informed.



With the complete corporate monopolies on media and the boardroom news agendas, is there any hope of people ever becoming better informed and independent thinking

Sure. Things always change.....and sometimes that change just comes from left fucking field.

What are you working on at the moment and where is your art taking you

I'm putting together a set of rather big paintings for a fall show. They seem to be about death, but I'm not sure why. Sometimes you just follow your obsessions. That's the thing about being an artist. You seem like you're a very public figure, but you're not. My studio is in the house I live in and consequently, I sometimes don't interact with people for weeks, but live in this zone where I'll dream something and then wake up and paint it. When Andres Serrano was doing all that work with the Piss Christ we were doing all these rallies and we'd say to him – 'look, you HAVE to speak, because they're going to take away the funding for the NEA (National Endowment for the Arts), and you're the flag that the right wing is waving, so you've GOT to get up and at the very least explain what it means or SOMETHING. He was terrified and just did not want to do it, because he's just a guy alone in his studio, in his own head, making this stuff. It's very personal to him and he's not a public speaker or a showman with a permanent need for attention.

Isn't that why people collect and pay fortunes for art – to own a fragment of a private soul.

I don't think that's too far from the truth. If a painting takes a month, that's all the artist was thinking about for that month – it was their entire life for that month. You may move onto the next month and the next painting, but that was a representation of your soul and your life in that moment. I've contemplated suicide after losing major paintings, and I don't think there's enough money out there to compensate for that loss of part of yourself. You'll never be that person again, so you can never think of repainting the same piece. Some people seem to think you're a whiny



ass because you supposedly have it so good, but that is the overwhelming emotion. But as a side note – it's weird to be in a profession where just by making a living, you're a big fucking hero. What's wrong with this picture??

What we're doing right now is trying to make this movie doing art stunts around America and trying to find out why Americans don't like art – what went wrong, why there's so much hostility towards art, and what their reaction would be if we showed them art and interacted with them in some way. We just talked this Texan farmer into letting us paint his cows and unbelievably, he just stood near his house the whole time, never once coming over out of even basic curiosity to see what the fuck we were doing. Just no interest whatsoever. We were 50 feet away and he never walked over. And this is the guy that gave us permission to do it. Isn't that weird?

Does that lack of engagement get frustrating and make you want to retreat back into your studio.

Every billboard and street piece I've ever done, I've hauled ass outta there straight away and never stuck around to see what





people think. To me it's very interesting though because I do want to know how people perceive the art. I have my own philosophies about what happened, and a lot has to do with the squashing of the Social Realism movement and the promotion of the Abstract Expressionist movement that people didn't really understand and rapidly became a social divider leaving those who weren't part of this avant-garde clique alienated from the art world. That's the whole reason for this road movie. I don't know what people think and I want to find out what's going on out there.

Speaking of alienation, we've just seen this Giacometti piece sold for \$103 million. Damien Hirst sells trite bullshit for 35 million. Are we seeing a hostile corporate takeover of art and the quantification of the sublime?

Well this mostly happens with dead artists and as we know he only has about 60 sculptures, so it is a very limited thing, but at some point it just quits being art. At some point it's a placeholder for the money of the wealthiest people in the world. Damien Hirst basically emulated Warhol in growing so powerful within the artistic elite, that when he no longer

wanted to play by the rules the art world had to adapt to suit his direction. Both were game changers and I suppose that is reflected in the pricetags.

You're often referred to as the father of street art. How do you view its evolution especially in the last few years where it has become both increasingly intelligent and increasingly prolific. Do you feel that is part of your legacy?

To be honest, I did it just to do it. I didn't know there was an art world when I started, and suddenly it became really huge in the 80's, then it went away and then suddenly came back. It's exciting it's got so big, to the point where kids now think that it's a career to be a street artist. We thought it was a felony to be a street artist and the most exciting thing that could happen to you was to not get caught. I think Banksy had a lot to do with its resurgence and explosion because he really broke it out of people just writing their names in weird zip lock letters to become social commentary and very, very clever. I think that now it is a recognised medium and a way to grow your art career. Banksy brought something different though. There's always





a new genre – look at pop which was aimed at 14 year old kids in an attempt to sell them 1 or 2 singles before they grew out of it...and then the Beatles come along and take an artform that was meant to be like a comic book to be bought then thrown away and turned that musical medium into something as good as classical music. For me that is what Banksy did for street art, because while some artists were using the street to try and sell their gallery art, he was actually using them to comment on society. His work is very much like a political cartoon both in its satire and analysis and the ease with which it fits straight into the page of newspaper.

Do you think that by taking socially relevant issues outside the closed and cliquy gallery world, street art has democratized art across the board in a period where it seemed to be getting ever more exclusive

Absolutely. And it's made it very difficult for the people who are trying to control art. Say you're the dealer and I'm the CEO of a big company and a well known art collector, you've been telling me what to buy for years and on my way to see the next piece of bullshit you're trying to sell me that I don't actually like but know will be valuable, I see this amazing graffiti piece. Well I like that. Why can't you get me that? You're supposed to be this big, important art dealer that sifts through every artist that's ever existed and selects only the best....well I like that guy. Where the fuck is he on your wall? And that puts pressure on them to put this person who they would never have given the time of day to on their wall and provide his work to clients who are starting to demand it.



And do you think that by the very fact of street art being free, it is a statement about a society where everything is packaged, sold and quantified

Well this goes back to what I was saying before about the divide that happened, especially in the United States between art and the people. A lot of that damage was done by Abstract Expressionism and the extreme support it received from people like Rockefeller and the fact that it was just SO much money. Back then it was \$10,000, but your house cost \$8,000 so how come some artist splashed a painting in an afternoon and it became worth more than my house. That was disconcerting and offensive to people and when they looked at the art itself which looked like a monkey could do it, they became very hostile to the art without really stopping to try and understand it, and the divide began. But if that Jackson Pollock painting hadn't been sold again and again for ever more millions of dollars, and it hadn't been made by an 'artist' but was just on the wall of the Grand



Canyon and you saw that pattern in nature, you would be taking photos of it and genuinely appreciating it. Which is actually what those guys were about – not painting a picture of something but creating an aesthetic in its own right. But the obscene money involved means that you can't appreciate the art in its own right, because you're too disgusted by the size of the numbers and the apparent ease of producing the painting. But the second you put something on the street – well – it's fucked and there's no way anyone is actually going to own it, so all those factors are gone. Then people don't care how long it's been up for or how much it might possibly sell for, because it's never going to sell for anything – it's destroyed and by the mere fact of putting it on a wall, there's no way anyone's going to be able to get it back off. So now it's purely for you to look at and engage with and you have no better or worse view of it than the richest guy in the world.





I've got to ask. Do you actually get some of these so called 'modern art' installations where an empty bucket with a philosophical description above it is supposed to be this piercing statement on the human condition

What it can do is change your perceptions of random objects in the everyday world. Say you go and see a Rauschenberg with all these traffic cones stacked together and then go back into the street, the impact of having seen it as art can then provoke your mind to see the scattering of cones out in the street by the wind or by humans as an aesthetic experience rather than mundane and random and thus open up a whole new experience of the world around you. Again though, maybe it's insensitive that those 3 cones are more venerated than anything you'll do in your life and worth more than you'll ever earn. When you look at a piece of art and realise that it's worth more than everyone you've ever met, their incomes, their lives and their work combined.....then it's getting a little egregious.

Are you optimistic about our communal future despite ever more sophisticated control mechanisms and begin to develop itself rather than be developed.

It always happens that way. Unfortunately things get pretty dire before they start to correct. And all of this brainwashing and marketing is still dependent on the choices of the individual, so while all these strategies to influence those choices make it in some ways more difficult to regain independence....it also makes it that much easier.....

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CONSCIOUS CURRENTS

IRAN

LSD is honoured to have this balanced, thoughtful and insightful dispatch from inside the closed and often misrepresented world of Iran... Our love, hope, respect and admiration for the courage and intellectual rigour of the author cannot be expressed in words alone.....

The retired colonel finally lost patience when a radical student living in the same London building at the height of the Cold War continued to slip Communist literature under the doors of residents. "Could I circulate my views in Moscow as you are doing here?" he fumed. "Of course not," replied the student, somewhat taken aback, "it wouldn't be the truth."

To millions it was almost the coming of the messiah. People swore they had seen his image on the face of the moon. To others, though, it was as if their lives, hitherto in full color, were now covered in a depressing cloak of black and grey. Most would admit that Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini's victory in 1979 over the most powerful regime in the region was little short of miraculous; that the people had overcome overwhelming odds and triumphed in an unusual show of unity; that after many centuries the majority had thrown off the oppressor to become masters of their own destiny.

Retribution against the old regime would continue for months and years, especially the appropriation of property. At first the executions targeted only those with "blood on their hands" but the net would be widened again and again. Unlike the regime it had replaced, the Islamic government in its early days was still decentralized and the clergy,



humiliated for so long, were out to settle old scores as were former political prisoners and anyone else who had been abused under the Pahlavi dynasty.

It's difficult to speculate what course the revolution would have taken if Saddam Hussein hadn't invaded Iran in 1980. The pent-up energy that was unleashed by the revolution needed an outlet and for the next eight years that energy was consumed by the bloody conflict between the two neighbors. However, there was a considerable amount left over to plan the reconstruction, industrialization and social programs after the war, even if much of that energy was squandered in the trial-and-error initiatives



rammed through by inexperienced officials whose good intentions overshadowed their abilities.

In the early days of the new regime, with “Islamic” as its ideological base and “Republic” denoting the primacy of the people, its two basic component parts appeared to stand on an equal footing within the system. Somewhere along the way, probably soon after the revolution, the will of the people began to take a back seat to the principle of the *Velayat-e Faqih* — the guardianship of Islamic jurists. Attempts were made in the 1990s, especially after the 1997 presidential election, to restore some power to the people but events at home and abroad frustrated such initiatives, allowing the ultra-conservative clergy to re-assert their influence even more strongly than before.

For a while from late 1978 Iranians had devoured the news through the local press, which after many years had thrown off its shackles during the period that straddled the old and new orders. Dozens of new titles and the revival of existing ones electrified a public that had been accustomed to mind-numbing censorship. Soon though, new restrictions began to bite and many newspapers were forced to adopt a lower profile or cease publication altogether.

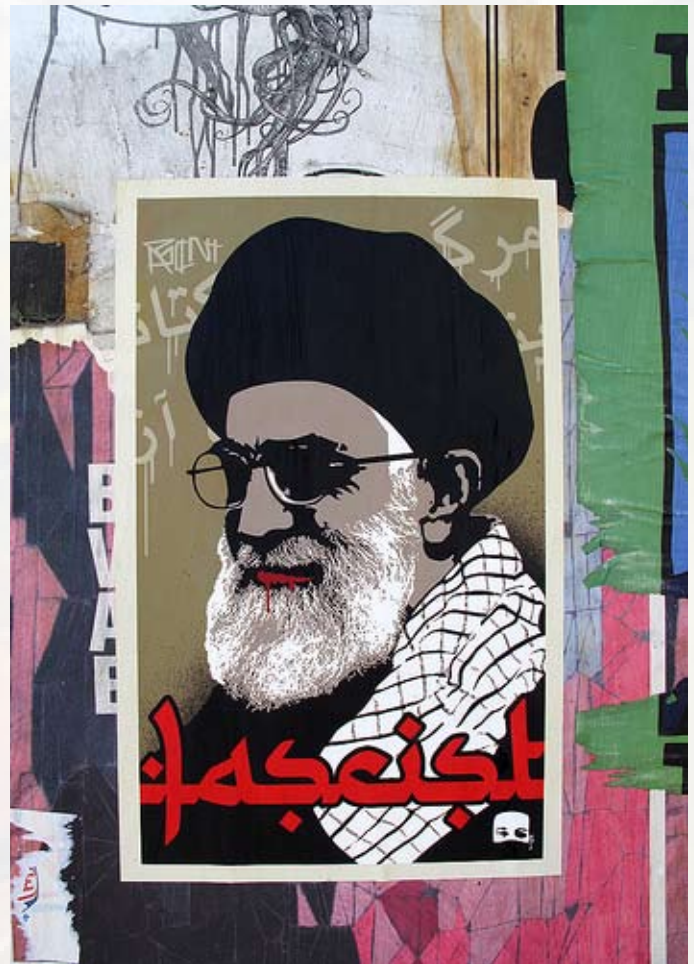
The difference between the old and new censorship was in the nuances employed by the media. The old regime not only refused to tolerate allusion and insinuation, it found them where none existed. After the 2009 post-election crackdown the press continues to squirm as if wriggling to loosen its restraints, but so far the government has held firm,



arresting journalists who step out of line to maintain an atmosphere of anxiety. TV/ radio remains strictly within the sphere of the government, a powerful tool that can easily upstage other media, especially in times of political crisis. Its budget ranks among the top in state allocation of funds

In describing the course the country would take in the future the key slogan, somewhat catchier in Persian, has been “neither East nor West, only the Islamic Republic”. Thirty-one years on, Iran stands almost alone with few powerful friends in either hemisphere. As every Iranian schoolboy knows the country has been not once but several times the center of an empire. Even today there is no ethnic majority within its reduced borders. Strong adversaries have tried to break up the country, often along ethnic lines, but the bonds that hold the people together have proved more enduring. The emphasis on the Islamic ideology notwithstanding, nationalism remains a potent force just below the surface as manifested in general policy statements, speeches on important occasions and the acceptance of certain pre-Islamic traditions that the clergy considered abhorrent in the immediate post-revolution period.

Without explicit references, there is also an undeniable tendency to view Iran’s development as paralleling the Chinese example – their past grandeur, the periods that each was under foreign domination, the revolutions that altered the future of both nations as well as their gradual emergence as independent states. Geography and economic



expediency have played an important role in their expanding relations but other commonalities are also in evidence. The heavy emphasis that Iran has placed on the route to development -- prioritizing infrastructure, education and technology -- also dovetails with the Chinese experience. Most important of all is the tight rein that both countries keep on political activism while advocating economic growth through private enterprise.

As Iran’s relations with the West have deteriorated in recent years, mainly because of its refusal to bend to U.S. pressures on a range of issues, the regime has become less tolerant internally, displaying mistrust of all Western intentions and the fear that foreign plots and “velvet” revolutions are aimed at undermining the regime. Reports that sectarian and ethnic violence inside Iran’s western and eastern borders are being financed by the foreign countries have only aroused further suspicion.

The 2009 presidential election, which was to have showcased Iranians’ support for the regime with a huge voter turnout, backfired when the losing side challenged the results. So far no incontrovertible evidence has been





offered to substantiate ballot rigging and it is more than likely that the anti-government demonstrations would have been triggered by legitimate complaints that had nothing to do with the election result.

Western governments and their media have been quick to throw their support behind the opposition. U.S. condemnation of post-election events resembles in intensity comments reserved for the former Soviet Union and Mao's China. No Western ally with a record of political crackdowns and other abuses, whether in the Middle East or elsewhere, has been subjected to the same censure or anything resembling the media scrutiny directed at Iran. Some observers are convinced that human rights and even the nuclear issue, if not to bring about regime change, are used as a smokescreen to squeeze Iran into falling in line with U.S. policies.

The unexpected reaction of demonstrators to the election caught the leadership off guard, rattling some in the highest echelons of power. Not only did the security forces react with unnecessary brutality but they had no strategy to confront the tens of thousands of people marching in the streets. Although subsequent demonstrations were contained

without causing deaths, the damage had been done. Hauled before the courts, leaders of the opposition, which included officials that previously had held important positions in the Islamic Republic, hardly helped the regime's image with their statements of contrition. The self-condemnation by the accused was





such that that it was difficult to distinguish them from the prosecuting attorneys. The defendants' own lawyers were a sorry excuse for advocates as they seemed merely to endorse the charges against them.

There has been on average one election of some kind every year for the past 30 years. The democracy that the regime is fond of referring to is essentially an electoral one.

However, in order for contenders to get their names on the ballot they must first receive the blessing of the Guardian Council, a conservative body that determines whether political hopefuls are sufficiently Islamic in their beliefs, that they are adherents of the *Velayate-e Faqih* and that they harbor no "Western liberal" notions nor have they in the past. Having survived such a going over, the radically reduced roster of candidates can look forward to a fairly open electoral process. Even so, there is no independent body to oversee elections, a grievance that was on the list of complaints submitted by the opposition.

It has been said the only thing that makes Iranian authoritarianism bearable is the inefficiency with which it is enforced. That is true under the Islamic Republic too, even if sophisticated tools have helped close the more glaring loopholes. The regime has clamped down on a wide range of activities -- from the basics such as the kind of clothes people can wear and a ban on alcohol, to censorship of books, films and the media -- in the name of Islam and Iran's cultural traditions. It wasn't too long ago that men would think twice about wearing short-sleeved shirts in public.

During the 1990s tentative suggestions were made to allow satellite dishes since banning them was considered too difficult to enforce but that was quickly batted down. Yet standing on high ground in any city, indeed many villages, one can see dishes adorning





balconies, terraces and rooftops. One offshore TV channel airs Western entertainment 24/7 with Persian subtitles. The culture police nevertheless make periodic, though less frequent, forays into targeted neighborhoods, one step behind the concierge in apartment blocks who scramble to conceal the dishes until the heat is off.

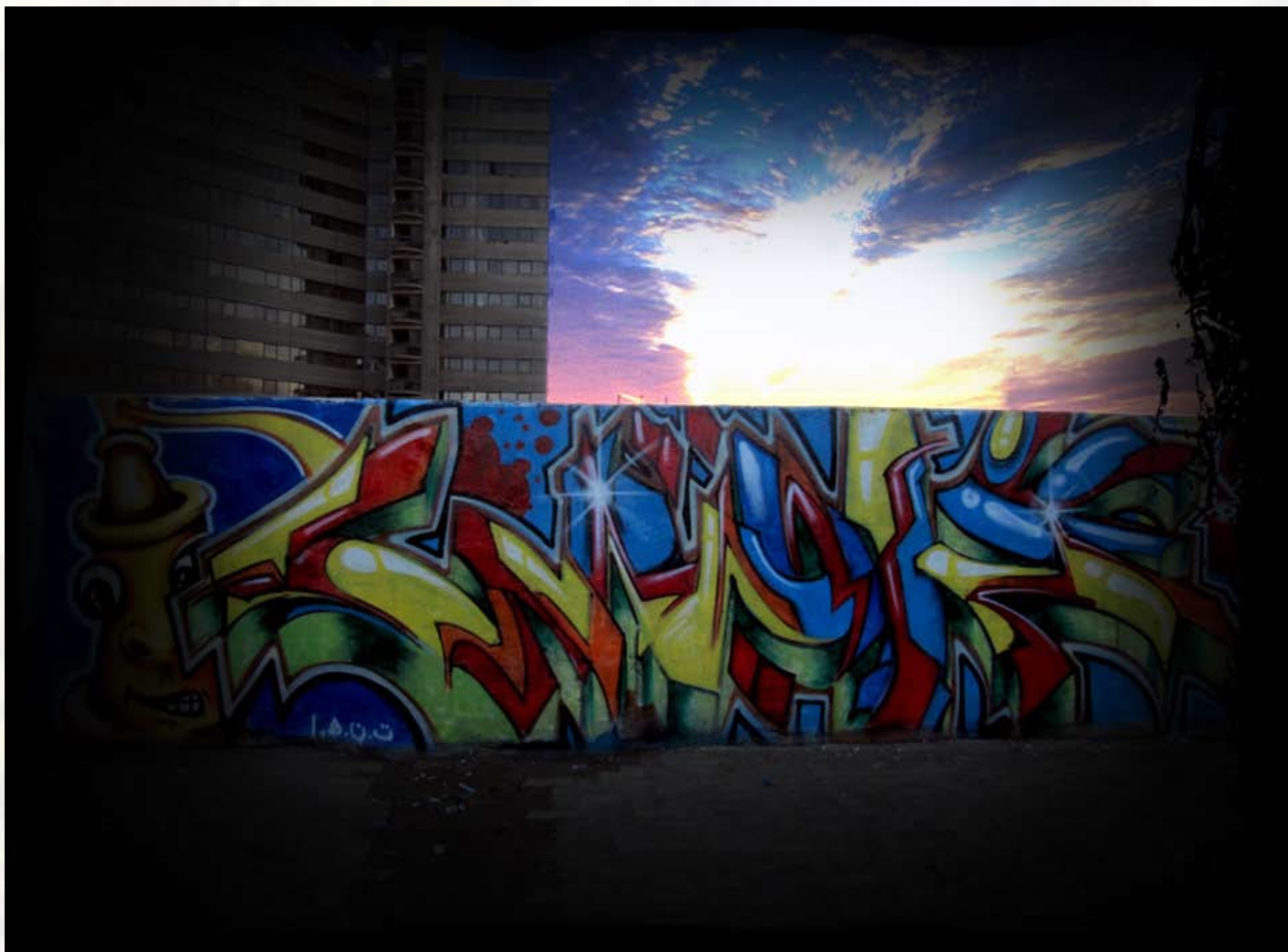
No one knows how many telephones are being tapped but it's prudent not to mention names when discussing taboo subjects. With the internet under heavy control, one woman was overheard urging her husband to get rid of some of the items saved on their computer lest they be discovered by the authorities. "If they come to someone's house," the man replied resignedly, "it's already been decided to make an arrest." The computer savvy can easily access most blocked sites, including uploading items on to Facebook and Twitter.

Inexplicably, a number of internet sites that lean toward criticizing Western policy in the Middle East also are blocked. Aside from politics, pornography is the prime target. But here too absurdities abound. Googling "sex" understandably gets you nowhere under the puritanical rules, but try Essex and the same warning appears on the screen. Looking for shower suppliers is a dead end thanks to manufacturers who like to show their products next to near-naked women. Neckties,

considered symbols of Westernization, are out but doctors wear them with a certain bravado to show that the authorities indulge them for having served in field hospitals during the Iran-Iraq war.

Teenagers generally have a low threshold of boredom, but two generations of Iranian





youth have seen their lives diminished by a lack of entertainment, easy access to places of unrestricted congregation and contact with the opposite sex. The affluent surreptitiously exchange mobile phone numbers while joyriding in cars; most use parks, university campuses, sports facilities and even religious festivals. Gone are the discos and tea dances where the young could get away from their parents. Today it's marriage to someone through family connections while the less well-off have to wait until they can afford to rent or buy a place of their own.

The rationale behind all the restrictions is that in a system where the guardianship of the Islamic jurist rules, the truth and accepted values are what the collective leadership, and in particular the Supreme Leader, say they are. Thus it is considered perfectly reasonable to claim freedom exists, but a freedom that must remain within the bounds of Islam, as interpreted by the leadership and to the exclusion of all else.

Nothing defined the collapse of Communism more vividly than the spontaneous rejection of Nicolae Ceausescu during a huge government

rally in December 1989. Minutes into his speech the customary public adulation of the president spontaneously gave way to slow handclaps followed by boos before a TV audience of millions of Romanians who saw their leader climb up to the rooftop before escaping aboard a helicopter.

A Ceausescu moment could be looming -- but perhaps not just yet.

PROCIVIC



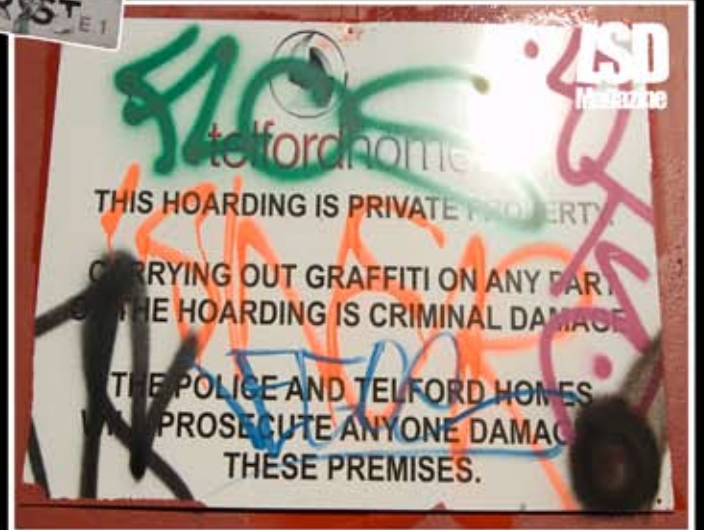


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THE ART TART GETS DEEP

“TO FOOLISH WORDS , DEAF HEARING”

TO LISTEN IS ONE SENSE...LUCKILY I HAVE MORE SENSE

I HAVE NO PARTNER SO MUST HAVE SOMETHING WRONG WITH ME
I FEEL INSECURE SO I WILL SLEEP WITH ANYONE
I AM SCARED TO BE ALONE SO WILL GET A PARTNER JUST FOR THE SAKE
OF IT

I AM OVER WEIGHT

I HAVE NO CHOICE

I HAVE NO IMAGINATION

I CANNOT CHASE MY DREAMS

I AM SCARED TO BE ME

I AM SCARED TO BE DIFFERENT

I AM SCARED TO GO WRONG

I AM SCARED TO EXPRESS

I SPEND MORE MONEY ON MY EXTERIOR BODY THAN EXPLORING MY
INNER PIECE OF MIND

I BELIEVE I AM NEVER GOING TO BE ANYBODY

I BELIEVE I WILL NEVER BE ABLE TO GET OUT OF THIS STAGNATE LIFE I
LEAD

I BELIEVE I AM TRAPPED WITH NO POSSIBILITY OF A BRIGHTER FUTURE

I THINK PEOPLE ARE EVIL AND HAVE NOTHING TO GIVE

I THINK WE SHOULD LIVE AS FAST AS WE CAN

I'M NOT GOING TO ACKNOWLEDGE THAT MY LIFE WILL END

I WORSHIP CELEBRITIES FOR THERE AIRBRUSHED LEGS

I WILL WORSHIP ICONS INSTEAD OF BEING MY OWN ICON

I THINK BREAST FEEDING IS UNNATURAL AND SHOULDN'T BE SEEN IN
PUBLIC

I THINK IT IS DISGUSTING AND NOT FUNNY WHEN A GIRL FARTS

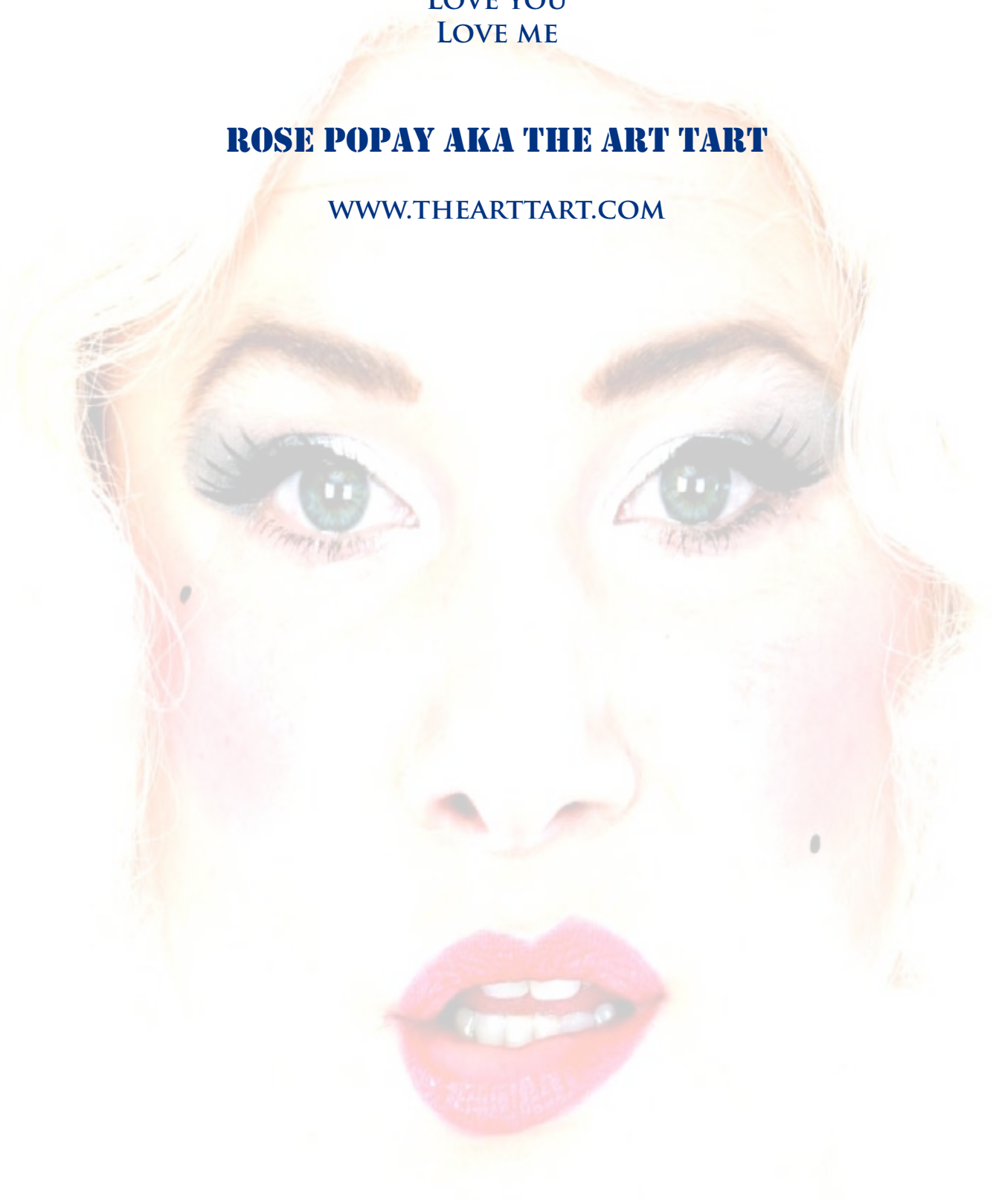
I THINK ALL HUMANITY SHOULD RELIVE THEM SELFS BY BUYING PLASTIC
SHITE THAT WILL NEVER NEVER GO

I THINK NATURE SHOULD BE COVERED IN CONCRETE

TO LISTEN IS ONE SENSE...LUCKILY I HAVE MORE SENSE
AND SO DO YOU
USE THEM WELL
LOVE YOU
LOVE ME

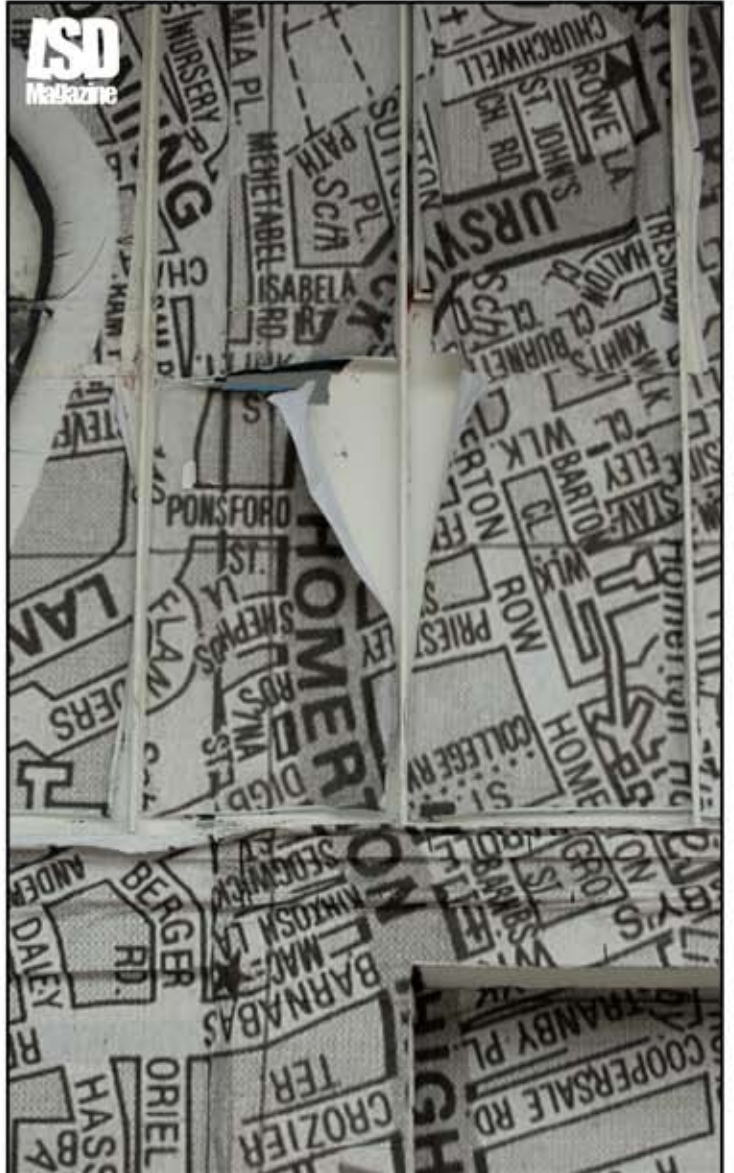
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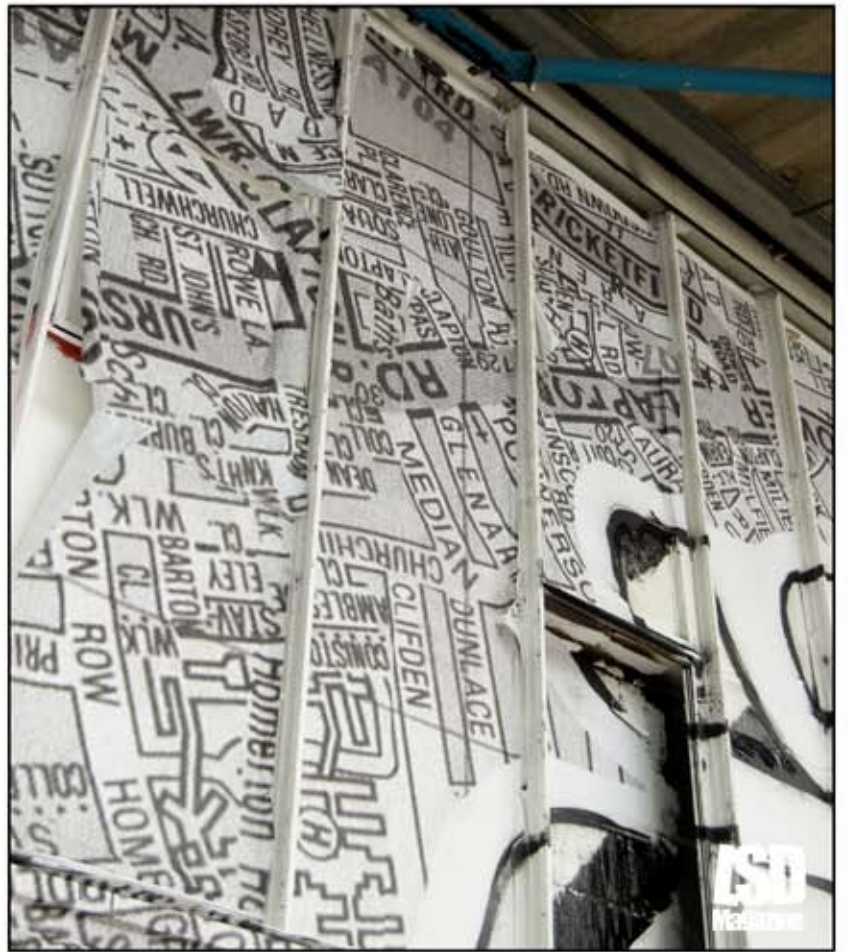




Photography: WA



Micawber - Hackney March 21st



Photography: WA

Micawber - London March 21st

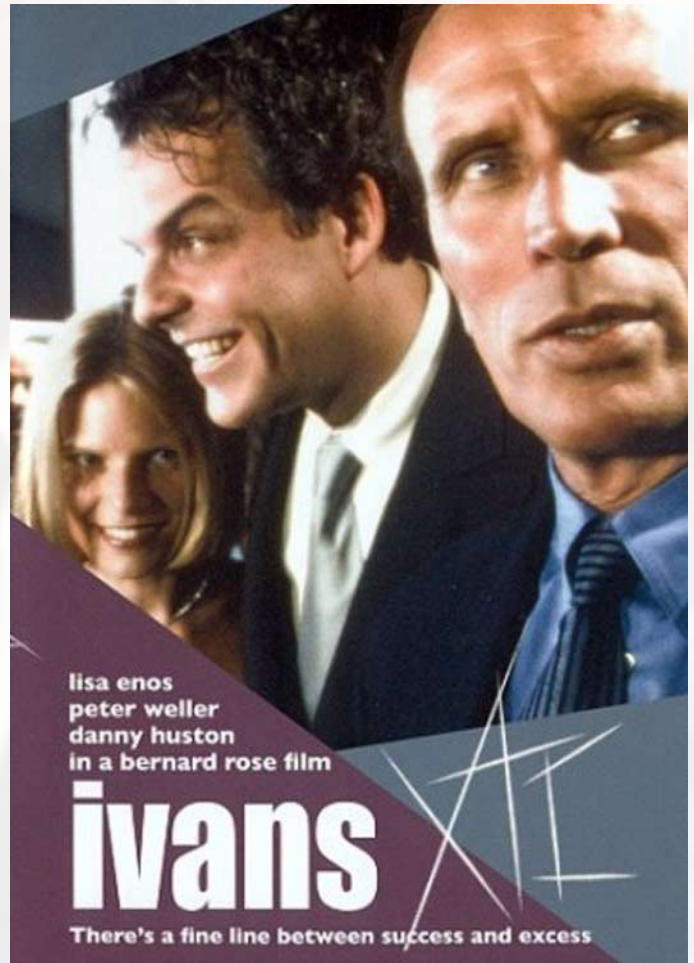
CHAZ

CHAZ CHATS TO LISA ENOS

A few years back the director Bernard Rose stood up and stated "Film is dead, long live cinema" there was a buzz around the London underground film scene at the time, there was hope, we could make Art and get it out there and certainly Bernard Rose who had found fame with such films as 'Paperhouse' and the classic horror 'Candyman' had rejected the Hollywood machine and embraced the HD camera for the sake of Art. He created an expose of the Hollywood system itself within the story of 'ivansxtc' which led to the film being blacklisted by the Hollywood giant Agency; CAA (allegedly). In the US it is still very difficult to get to see 'ivansxtc'. But in the UK the film was critically acclaimed and was the making of it's star; Danny Huston.

Recently the film has come to light again, with the support of vampire Robert Pattinson proclaiming that it is one of his favourite films. I decided to find out more about how the film was made, especially with the increasing difficulties in the film industry with the BECTU wage debates and Funding Issues it is becoming more and more impossible to be able to get a film out there in the marketplace, unless you know people with a lot of money (and willing to give it to you too).

To me, Bernard Rose was a hero and I envisaged this one man and his camera out there making his film, but of course, the reality is something different. Everyone needs a team around them, so to dispel this myth within myself as an underground filmmaker; I decided to find out who was behind this



great man and his conversion from celluloid to digital. I tracked down Lisa Enos, the Producer of many of Bernard Rose's films including; 'ivansxtc', 'Snuff-movie' and at the beginning of April the release of the critically acclaimed, 'The Kreutzer Sonata' the second in what will come to be known as Bernard Rose's 'Tolstoy Trilogy' which was shot on HD. So rather than moaning about everything as per usual, I thought I'd take the productive step in finding out how exactly does one set about making a revolutionary HD film? Here's what she had to say.

"Thanks Chaz for the opportunity to talk



about my part in the digital film revolution. In 1994 I started working for a very small Chicago-based company called, Loxley Hall Productions. By very small, I mean, two of us worked there, a guy by the name of Ken Goldstein, and me. We purchased some digital editing equipment (a Mac and Adobe Premiere editing software) and an EVW-300 news camera, which had an awesome lense on it and moved the company and ourselves to Portland, Oregon in January of 1995. A very talented D.P., Ron Forsythe, who had previously contracted with the company joined forces with us. Upon arriving in Portland I landed a day-job at Wieden & Kennedy Advertising Agency where I offered to use some of my equipment to make research videos for clients.

“At the time, Wieden & Kennedy made high-end commercials for Nike. Some of the budgets of the commercials were in excess of \$3 million, yet when I showed the high-ups at my advertising agency our Loxley Hall Productions company reel, they were almost sure that I was wrong when I told them that the “footage” I was showing them was Hi-8 videotape. This is a company that had recently hired Spike Lee to direct commercials, so these weren’t amateur

producers I was talking to and showing this stuff to. They were at the tippy-top of the TV advertising world. They were pros. So I got to thinking...if people who are really supposed to know what they’re looking at can’t tell the difference between 35mm film and Hi-8 video, why the hell would anyone spend the money on film as opposed to video?

“At the time, those of us who produced “videos” (i.e. shot on videotape) were thought of as lesser beings, and all I could think is what a bunch of fools they all were spending tons of dough on film, lighting, processing and the whole rigmarole that goes along with shooting on film.

“Goldstein landed us a four-video contract with an educational film production company called Film Ideas, Inc. - enough money for me to quit my day-job. We made several children’s films using the EVW-300, which was a high-end news camera, which used Hi-8 tape. We took turns writing, producing and directing and produced films which included titles such as the award winning series, ‘Life Lessons’ and a documentary on domestic abuse and violence called, ‘You’re hurting me, too.’

There’s a fine line between success and excess

“While working on those films I was lucky enough to come across the harrowing story of Luba Traszynska, a holocaust survivor who saved 54 children by hiding them in her barracks at camp Bergen Belsen during WWII. I read about her in the Oregonian newspaper. It was a story with local interest because her cousins live there. I fell in love with the story and felt it must be told. I went to New York and pitched the idea to Gayle Gilman, who was a programmer there at the time. Last I knew she had moved to London and was working in the documentary division at Channel Four. A&E gave Loxley Hall \$180,000 to make the one-hour TV documentary – enough to make the doc on film, but we did some digging around and found out that a new, digital format camera would soon be available that would be high enough quality to shoot the TV doc on.

“We had had several problems with Hi-8 tapes, as they were not very stable and vulnerable to damage. The shoot was to take place in England, Ireland, The Netherlands, Belgium and several locations in the United States. We decided to sink about \$40-60k into the Panasonic AJD-750 and a playback deck so we could shoot digitally and edit it on Mac.

“In May and June of 1996 we set off to Europe to shoot ‘The Angel of Bergen Belsen’ - the first digital film ever to air on A&E Network. It aired in spring of 1997 and it is also part of the permanent WWII exhibit at the Imperial War Museum in London. I wrote and produced the doc and wrote and performed the original music for the doc, Ron Forsythe was our Director of Photography, and Ken Goldstein took a director credit on the film though I did conduct many of the interviews. Morgan Vukovic’ was my faithful assistant. I was invited to speak at a digital film conference sponsored by Panasonic at the Beverly Hilton in the same ballroom where the Golden Globes are held annually.

“I then directed Loxley Hall’s subsequent film for A&E Network, a documentary called, ‘Copycat Crimes’ about violence in cinema and its relation to actual crimes. In 1998, I traveled to Los Angeles and conducted on-camera interviews with many film industry executives and talent including Julia Phillips who produced ‘Taxi Driver’ and John MacNaughton, who directed, ‘Henry: Portrait of a Serial Killer’. Both films had copycat crimes associated with them.



“I decided to move to Los Angeles and rented a house where I finished editing the film with Goldstein. In September of 1998, about eight days after moving to LA, I was introduced to Bernard Rose. He came to a dinner I hosted at Drai’s on La Cienega. He glanced around the room as we were waiting for our table and announced, “It looks like an old man and whore party.” I couldn’t help but agree. The place was packed with pretty-ish, much younger girls dining with old men. We hit it off immediately. About a week later I met Bernard and Danny Huston again at a place called The Colonial where we first talked about collaborating on a film. Bernard learned from me at that time that my mother had died of cancer and felt I had a story to tell.

“At Thanksgiving I invited Rose to the house I shared in Larchmont Village with Ken Goldstein and ‘Copycat Crimes’ writer Matthew Tebbe. Bernard was very impressed by our digital editing system and the cameras (we had several, including a Russian 16 mm camera). He invited me to come to a dusty office he had the key to on the Universal lot to read a script he was writing with his ex-girlfriend, Chloe King. I read it and told him I didn’t like it. He said he agreed and asked me

there's a fine line between success and excess



again if I would collaborate on something with him. I was busy writing a script with Goldstein and a guy named Howie Samuelson at the time, and Bernard didn't seem to be writing anything at all...just giving notes to Chloe on their script and notes to Matthew Jacobs on another.

"I moved in with Bernard and a few months later and stepped down from Loxley Hall. There's a bit more to it than that, but the gist of it is that Bernard took me to his house and wouldn't drive me home. Goldstein and I had been engaged to be married, but had called off the engagement and the relationship months before, but Goldstein was hurt by my exit, so I ended up losing my BMW (my character, Charlotte's car in *ivansxtc*) in the break-up.

"That March, my documentary, 'Copycat Crimes' aired on Television, and Bernard and I watched it together. He was impressed with the quality. I guess he was expecting it to look like a piece of shit, because after it was over he said something to the effect of, "I thought they only gave you about \$200,000 to make these." I answered, "That was for *Angel of Bergen Belsen*. For this one they gave us something like \$140,000." And Bernard said,

"So then why is the studio telling me it cost millions of dollars?" I said, "I don't know, I made that film for \$140,000 and I could make another one."

"So we did. We put our heads together and wrote a script. It was called '*ivansxtc*.' and it's about a man who dies of cancer. I called my brother, Ken Enos, who arranged \$68,000 in financing with some money he and I and our other brothers had inherited. I called my friend Stephen Nemeth at Rhino Films and he matched that amount.

"Bernard and I formed a production company called, 'Two Lobsters' and opened a bank account. I hired Morgan Vukovic' and she and I immediately began planning the shoot, making phone calls, scouting and hiring talent. I called up Ron Forsythe in Chicago (who Bernard had not yet met) and hired him as the D.P. Ron had been shooting a lot with a Sony digital Betacam and we decided to shoot "*ivansxtc*" on the Sony High Definition Camera. Goldstein was being a dick about letting me use the DVC PRO and the High Definition Camera was getting a lot of good press, plus it was true High Def, 1080 lines of resolution and the ADJ-750 was about half the resolution.

There's a fine line between success and excess



“Bernard and I had been invited to the Sony lot to look at some tests of the new HD Cam footage written out to film. I was impressed. The only problem was that the 24-P (progressive frame) version wasn’t available commercially yet, so the only High Def camera we could get our hands on in June of 1999 - would only allow us to shoot at 30 frames per second or 60 interlaced frames per second. To me, it looked very video-ish and it was going to be a problem writing it out to film, which is projected at 24 fps.

“The film had 85 speaking roles in it and I organized it as a SAG low-budget film, which allowed us to pay each SAG actor only \$100/day. We got Danny Huston to play the lead. He was out of work and needed to come up with about \$3200 or be thrown out of his West Hollywood apartment. Peter Weller came along for the ride, too, because Adam Krentzman – mine and Bernard’s CAA agent at the time, represented him. We shot for 30 days in almost as many or more locations in July of 1999. We held the wrap party on August 4, which was both Bernard and Ron’s birthday. It took a while to complete the film. Bernard and I cut it in our apartment in West Hollywood.

“I really wanted to wait until it was written out to film before we screened it, but Bernard was very excited about the look. He thought the video patina made it look more real, like it had really happened, like a documentary, but I thought it would make it difficult to sell if the whole world knew we only spent \$136,000 on it. But as soon as it was in a screenable state, against my better judgment we organized a high def screening of the film on a Barco High Def Projector in front of a big audience which included stars such as Melanie Griffith and director Hugh Hudson, among many other Hollywood movers and shakers. Many, if not most people in attendance, didn’t like the film, and CAA boss Rick Nicita called Bernard up the next day to basically tell him that. So, in the first quarter of year 2000 we flew to London to show it to agent Jenne Casarotto, and Terry Gilliam (who she also represents) attended that screening. Still nobody wanted to buy it, but I just kept arranging more and more screenings until it got accepted to the Toronto Film Festival. Hamish McAlpine of Tartan Films eventually picked it up. He didn’t pay any money for it, but he put it out in theaters and it was a critical success in the U.K.

“The U.S. theatrical run was nearly non-

There’s a fine line between success and excess



existent. It was put out by a woman named Susan Jackson who used money from a company called, 'Promark' to put it in a few theaters in the U.S. Ebert and Roeper gave it two thumbs up and played a clip of the movie on their national TV show – it was a scene in which Danny Huston and I at a dinner party where my character, Charlotte, keeps sniffing because she has just done a line of cocaine and is trying to hide it – about one of the only laughs in the film.

"After we wrapped in August of 1999, Danny went on to do a movie called 'Timecode' with his friend, Mike Figgis in L.A. Bernard and I finally got our print of "ivansxtc" made around the corner from Jenne Casarotto's office. A woman named Cat Villiards saw the film at a screening I arranged at Cannes in 2000 and fell in love with it. She talked Torsten Leschly and Mark Harris into working on it gratis – making the interneg in Soho, through a Danish company called Wave owned by Leschly. It was a long row to hoe, but the film seems to have finally made its mark in cinema history – at least in the U.K.

"Huston has gone on to star opposite Nicole Kidman, Mel Gibson, Jim Carrey and Ralph Fiennes and has worked with all sorts of other celebrities since then, but at the time we cast him he had only been in three movies. He played an unnamed bartender in Mike Figgis' 'Leaving Las Vegas' and had a significant role in a film by Daphna Kastner called, 'Spanish Fly'. He also had a role in Bernard's 1996 version of 'Anna Karenina'.

"Many attempts have been made to market the film as a Danny Huston and Bernard Rose collaboration, but apart from showing up for his 20 some days of work in 1999 and subsequent festival screenings, Huston wasn't a collaborator at all in the filmmaking part of the process, and Bernard, as far as I was concerned, was a director for hire. I retained sole "Producer" credit on the film, and at the end of the film is a title card that reads, "In loving memory of Joan I. Enos 1939-1997" my mother, who died of cancer."

Thanks Lisa. Nuff' said. Chaz.

There's a fine line between success and excess



Photography: Dom Spreadlove

Brighton - Feb 2010



Photography: Dom Spreadlove

Brighton - Feb 2010

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Photography: WA

Hackney Wick - March 10th

OTTO SCHADE

The Chilean Connection, London based Otto Schade has taken the highly unusual step of moving from an architect's protective vision of structure to licking up the bricks and mortar with a staggering surrealism. Bringing a screaming palate and and a glowing imagination to the streets of London, Otto was embraced the public medium with every particle of his paint. Featured previously in our galleries, we finally caught up with the man himself for a quick word

How did an architect go from designing buildings to actually painting on them?

Well, that's a good question. Architects and art are always related, that's why there are a big percentage of Architects that also paint or make sculptures. The thing is that I paint because in Architecture there are always freedom restrictions (or the client, or the Council, or the budget, etc) but in Art you are absolutely free to do whatever you want. I've painted on canvas since 1996 but I started here in London with street art just last year, after realizing that was so difficult to be able to exhibit my work in a gallery where I don't have to hire the space. At the same time another street artist friend, PXL convinced me. For me Art is for the people and need to be shown. There is nothing better that being judged as an artist by normal people, within public space. I think is easier as an Architect to find the "eye catch" wall and as an artist sometimes you see a seductive wall looking at you waiting to be treated as it deserves. On the other hand, doing graffiti on walls you are not allowed to is so risky, but the adrenaline keeps you going, just because



you want to see your work finished, even if the police catch you. You just would like them to let you finish it.

You've exhibited your work in many different countries, how has the world responded to your art so far?

I am interested in showing my work everywhere just because art is a way to express something



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and I want my work to be seen by many different cultures. I have had a very good response from the public, the best one was from the people in Moscow. I had a very comfortable reception because maybe I came from Chile (I even sold 9 small pieces).

One of my best experiences ever was in gallery in Berlin, 3 deaf-and-dumb guys came to me because they wanted to explain to me (in their own way) what do they were seeing in my surreal piece, I was deeply impressed by what they explained to me. I really loved it.

I have to say that I don't sell too much, but as a negative (or positive) response from the people, 11 of my paintings have been stolen (1 in Chile, 8 in New York and 3 in London) and I could recover only one (unbelievable but thanks to CCTV cameras in Camberwell School of Arts). Another recent and a bit funny experience was a friends restaurant in the city where I come from (Concepcion-Chile). I left one of my pieces there and after the earthquake, the restaurant was destroyed, fortunately the painting didn't get any damage but a thief was running away with it and my friend caught him.

Why did you decide to settle in London as opposed to other arty cities?

To be honest I didn't want to come to live in London after living in Berlin for 2 years. That amazing city (but very cold in winter) to produce art is really good but to sell not too much. So I decided to get a job as an Architect and due to a high unemployment level in Berlin, I couldn't get an interesting job. Then I received a nice offer from England afterwards I decided moved to London, wher equally, the diversity of the arts is infinite.

How important is the cityscape to surrealists?

It's an amazing stage. I think street art here in London has this surreal quality that amazes us (from stencil art to hand paint art). From my point of view we can learn a lot from Surrealism. There is nothing better than changing a surface into a space, for example, just painting a brick from the wall black and then painting some hands and a sort of face on the black brick (now this black brick became a hole) Or just confusing people by playing with the





perspectives as Escher or Dali did. I also get impressed by these weird creatures and faces from crazy dreams you find here in London walking around Shoreditch. Surrealism feeds our imagination, I can't live without it

We've featured your art in past LSD issues; tell us a little about the concept behind your Spider Swan piece on Regents Canal and why you placed it in that spot.

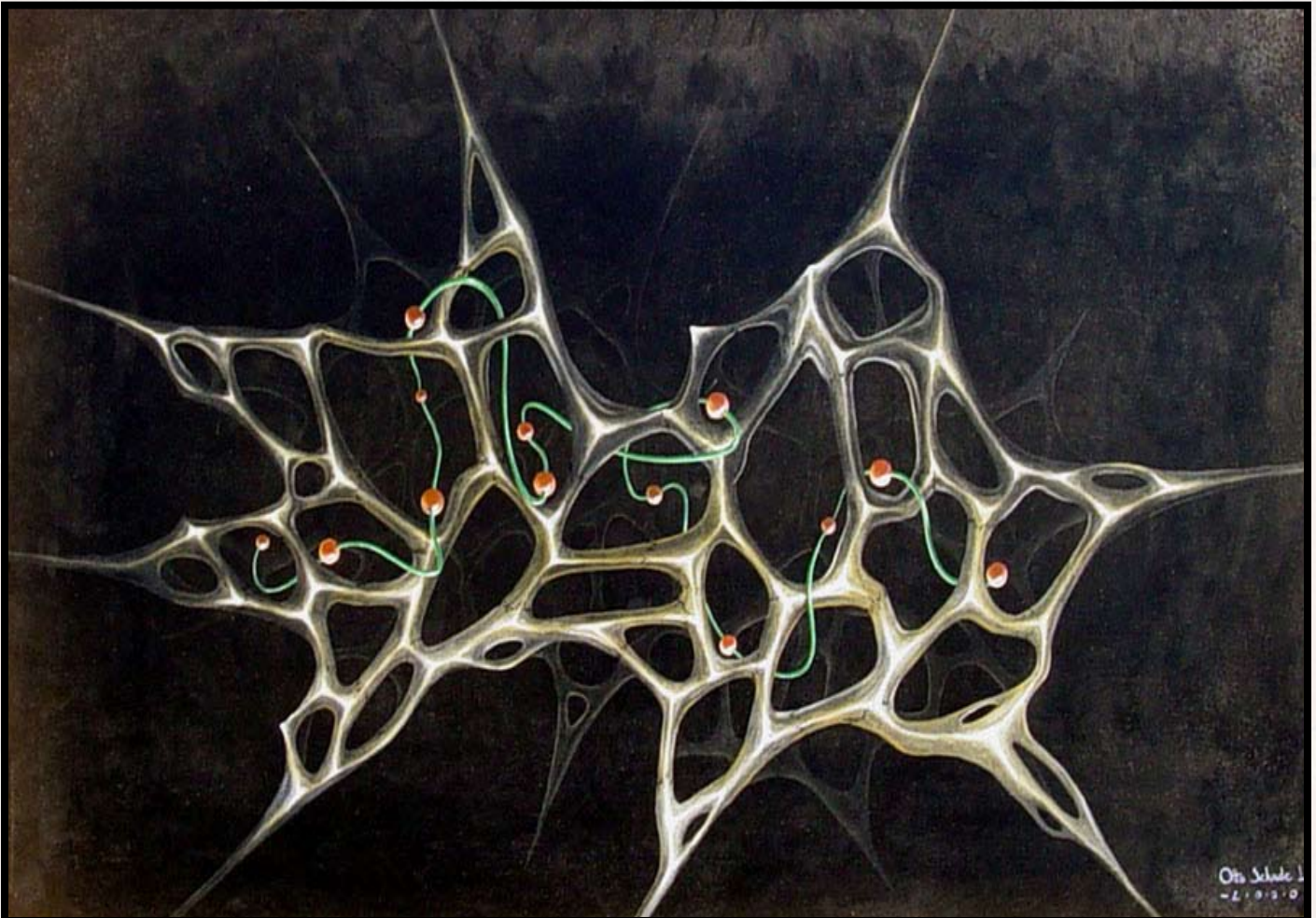
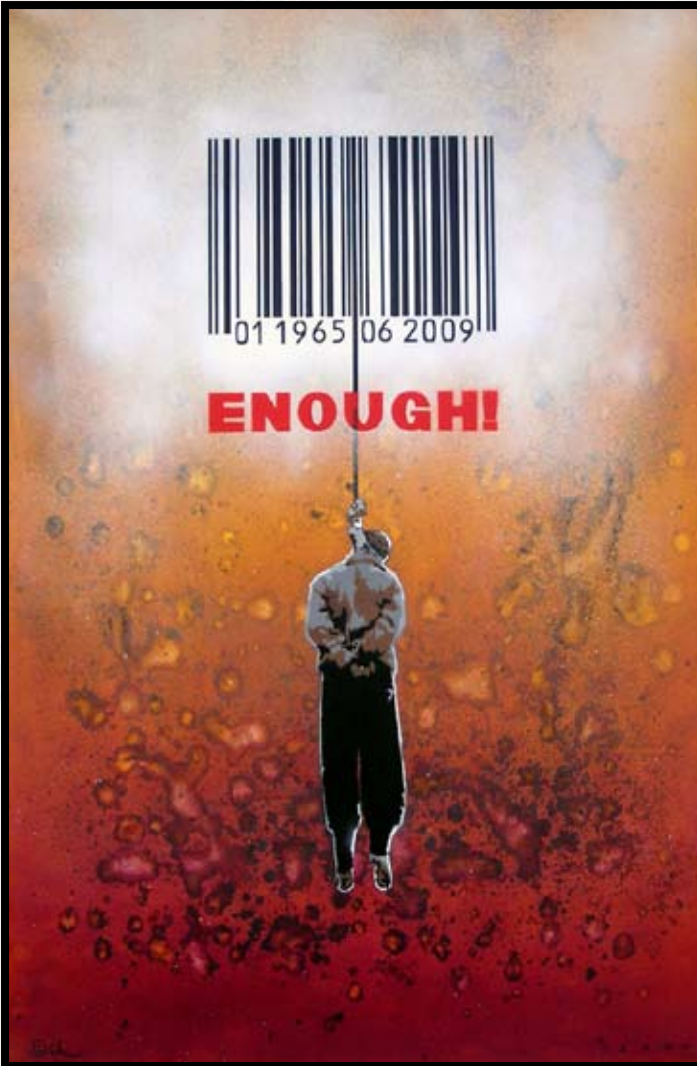
That was one of my first experiences painting illegal walls. The idea was making a sort of gift to Regents Canal, more for sailors than for the pedestrians because actually, you need some distance to really see this stuff. So a tunnel was a good place to situate a big spider with brush legs painting swans. Eyes are part of the things I love to paint incorporating them as part of bodies or like witnesses of what I was doing or on what people see from them.

What motivated your decision to place art on the streets?

Show what I feel to everyone and not just who has the money to buy a paint (even when we need to sell to carry on). It's a way to express yourself to almost anyone and maybe to express as well the feelings of more people.

Is your street work a reaction to world events?

Yes, some of my street art stuff is a reaction to world events ("Hunted by the system", "No comment", "Welcome" or "Enough") attached 2-5. There are so many different ways to make street art but to me is very important to give a message to the people, even is a way to protest (in an artistic way).



Who influenced your earlier work and what influences your work today?

I have been always influenced by Salvador Dali, Max Ernst and Roberto Matta. And lately I have been influenced by Beksinsky, Giger. And the sarcatstic messages from Banksy.

Do you have any exhibitions planned?

I have just one collective exhibition planned for April called "No Refund" (space and date not clear yet), 2 more maybe in June but not clear yet. Honestly I am really bad to promote my work and I hate to spend my time knocking galleries doors to get an exhibition for free. I know that I have to do it but now I am focused on a Urban Sculpture I would like to built (I need to look for some funds), teaching Architecture at Southbank University and doing new art work.

Where is the line between street art and vandalism?

This is a topic I would really like to talk about. I see street art as a GIFT, on the way of materializing an idea or a concept behind. What I really find vandalism is what I have heard is called "Tagging"; I can't understand the Ego level so high to tag your nickname or your street artist name everywhere. I know some street artist have some respect for hand drawn work but for stencil works they don't care and they tag on them, thing that grieve me. Instead of tagging why don't they paint something better over? If they can't do it, don't do vandalism instead.

My first experience with vandalism was in Concepcion, Chile. I built a sculpture in a Park, once it was finish was immediately tagged



(attached pictures before - after) 6-7, that was a very bad new focused on vandalism in the locals newspapers. The point is the shape and the materiality, the sculpture was inviting to be tagged. But after thinking about it, I would preferred the sculpture to be the tagged completely in a smoothly way, as a sort of texture or writing a story for example related to the context.

I would really prefer that the policemen can have the option to decide on time what is vandalism and what is not, so you can do your job in a more relaxing way.

Is there anything else you'd like to share with us?

I would like to add in relation to Street Art, that this not just communicate something straight to the people (I mean not just related to one building), it can also communicate pieces of work from different buildings. You can create stories that can been seen or understood just from some specific points from the city or the story could be different depending on the point of view. And thinking about "walls", because it's a surface where you have an internal and a n external side you can show something in one way to the outside and in another way to the inside. There are a lot of more interesting things coming on street art for sure, but we just need the spaces .



www.ottoschade.com



Photography: WA

Eastside - March 1st



Photography: WA

Eastside - March 9th



Photography: WA

Eastside - March 9th

PADDINGTON GREEN



'That's the seventh incident of Grievous Bodily Harm on a traffic warden this week' muttered Barry as he pulled away from the blue and white tape. 'Local rag's calling this bloke the Congestion Charger'

'Yep' replied Joe (last seen in Issue 1 pulling off feats of balaclavad artistry and painting the London night a dazzling shade of subversion but who had since had a frontal lobotomy to surgically remove powers of independent thought considerably in excess of Metropolitan Police guidelines. ' Calling this The Yellow Peril on the news apparently'

'My personal favourite is the Militia Beacon' quipped Barry as he trickled over the speed limit

'No left turn' grunted Joe

"Well that's a fucking feeble name for a traffic warden vigilante'

'No... DON'T TURN FUCKING LEFT'

The unmarked police car had turned into 3 lanes of oncoming traffic and an orgy of car horns as Barry panicked wildly, forgot the distant memory of vehicular training and shot straight into a phonebox. An array of colourful

cards showered down on the bonnet and Joe's last moment of clarity before passing out was a mental note to take up Madame Colin, the bearded transsexual on the enticing offer of her services.

The Chief Inspector was not impressed. 'I don't know what I'm going to do with you two. Liability don't even begin to cover it.'

Joe sniggered. Bad move

'Listen you fucking morons – insurance jokes aside. I've had it with your endless capacity for disaster. That time you shot Mrs Grunfield while she was doing her gardening because you thought her hedge was a terrorist beard. The time you lost surveillance on an actual terrorist because Greggs were offering free hot cross buns with every pasty. And let's not forget the brutal arrest of a double decker full of Japanese tourists for photographing Westminster Abbey. The ambassador's wife still won't tell me who did her chintz curtains. You're done as detectives. Uniform from tomorrow. And be fucking grateful.'

As both squeezed 10 years of Greggs loyalty cards into a fading blue uniform the next day they shared a look of extreme pathos. The flat share arrangement between them had worked well since Joe's divorce. He was still smarting from the indignity of being left for a traffic warden, and had quietly been consoling himself during the recent spree of parking meter related assaults that at any moment he might be scraping up his nemesis off the pavement. They scoffed down a healthy,



balanced breakfast of 3 day old curry and ventured forth onto the beat.

They trotted around the local streets looking for an adoring granny that was lonely and misguided enough to ply them with tea and biscuits but only really succeeded in subjecting themselves to a barrage of curiously witty abuse from the local kids. Pelted with copies of Heat magazine, they beat a hasty retreat to the public toilets where they discussed the merits of Cheryl Cole's skin care regime and narrowly avoided being arrested themselves for soliciting a pensioner for unspeakable acts of sodomy. 'The urine soaked old git is flattering himself' protested Barry to the two young lads that were settling themselves into their old jobs. 'We only asked him if he wanted an escort'.

'Filthy bastards' croaked the belligerent pensioner. 'I didn't narrowly avoid going to war for the likes of you, you perverts'

Leaving the bunker like safety of the local toilet, Barry and Joe wondered to themselves how they were going to avoid the public at large for the rest of the morning. Dangerous bunch the local populace. At that moment, the radio staggered into life in a shitstorm of static.

'3 2 from Sierra Nevada. Calling all units in the Asbo Road vicinity'

'Recieving' yelled Joe into the wrong end of his radio.

'Reports of a disturbance at 23 Letsby Avenue'

'Confirmed' said Joe in his most 'consider it handled' voice. 'Proceeding immediately'.

As these two geniuses of detection and scourges of the criminal underworld rounded





the corner of Letsby Avenue, they dropped their packets of limited edition Brown Sauce Monster Munch in disbelief.

‘Er... Barry...what the fuck is that’

‘There appears to be a large, swirling, metaphysical object in front of the laundrette Joe’

‘I had noticed that too Barry. Any ideas on an identification’

‘Not as yet Joe. Hello there sir, would you mind stepping this way for a quick chat please’

‘What the fuck are you doing Barry. That is not a wandering vagrant or a black person. That is a large piece of unidentified matter’

‘You’ve got a point there Joe. Training kicking in there’

‘Well it never has before. You do pick your moments don’t you’

Joe edged closer and whipped out his notebook.

‘11:23. Large unidentified object. Fluid colour scheme. Exerting suspicious dynamic force on local area.’

‘Put the bloody notebook away you stupid bastard. Let’s move in for a closer look’

‘You sure that’s wise Barry? That looks like a malevolent slice of Armageddon if ever I saw one’

‘Bollocks’ ridiculed Barry. ‘Probably some sort of ethnic festival. Might even get a curry’

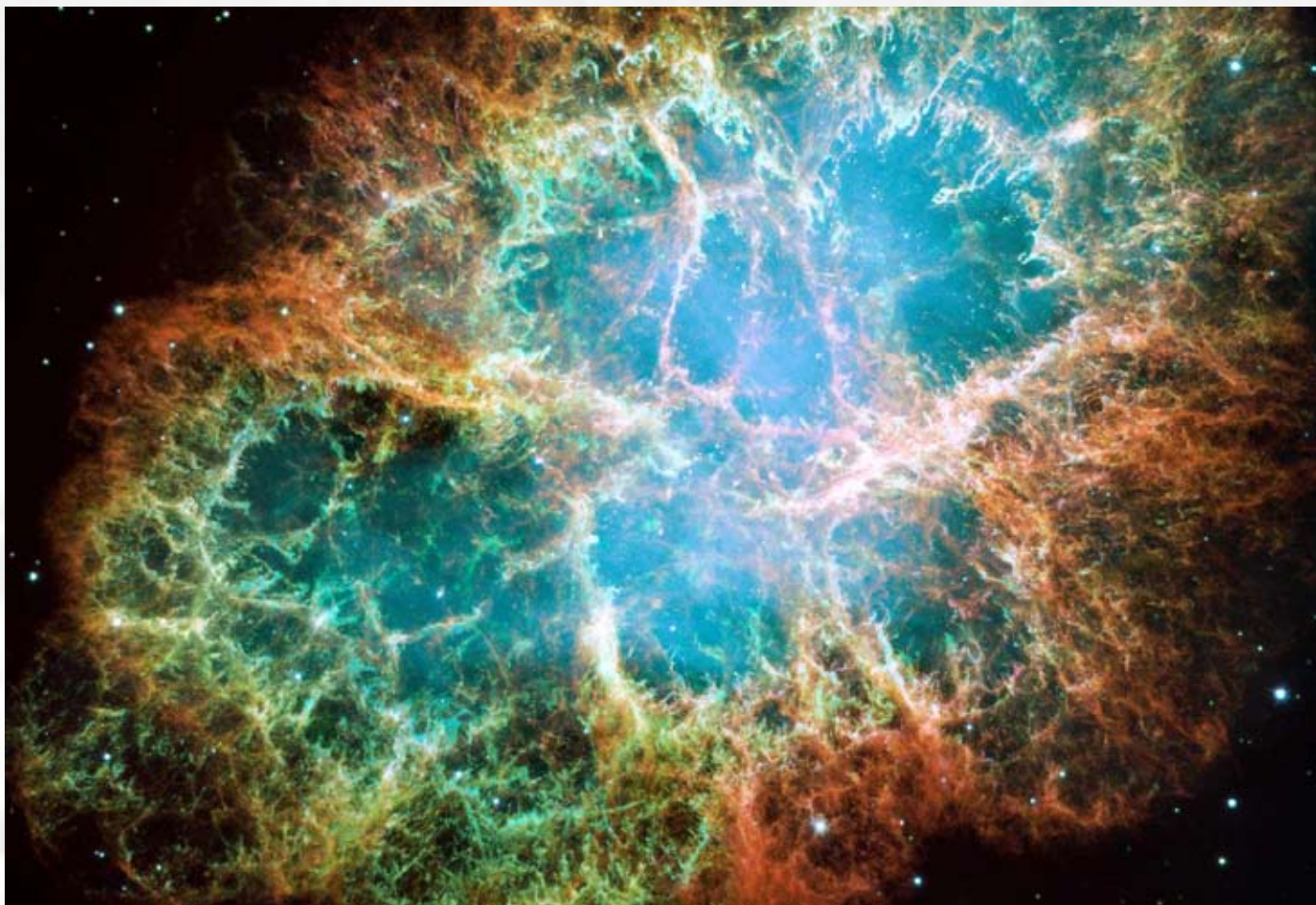
They edged closer to the sprawling mass of mystery that had now acquired a shade of fractal fuschia. The road was suspiciously deserted, although they could still hear the comforting screech of the Jeremy Kyle show wafting out of an upstairs window. As they drew nearer they noticed it pulsating with a raw overpowering energy and were penetrated by a wave of the inexplicable that united all the senses into a shining window onto cosmic truth.

‘I do believe Joe, that we have stumbled onto a tear in the fabric of time and space’

‘That’s a bit presumptuous wouldn’t you say Barry. Could be some of this internet I’ve been hearing so much about’

‘I think not Joe. Not enough adverts. No, I believe that we are interacting with the physical manifestation of the wonders of the universe’

‘That’s hippy talk Barry. You been smoking that pot pourri again?’



'No Joe. Although I have been seeing things slightly differently since I blagged a cup of tea off that Amazonian shaman down at the bingo hall'

'Whatever happened to him anyway'

'Got kneecapped by a local firm for bingo debts. But returning to the unfathomable presence in front of us'

'Yes. Well I'll call for backup then shall I. "3 3 from Beta Blocker. Come in please. We need a couple of cars and possibly a social worker"'

There was no response beyond a resplendent hum that vibrated through their bursting uniforms.

As Barry peered into the spiral abyss within the heart of the presence, he witnessed dimensional physics melt into an atomic infinity. Well known faces swept into archetypal images as he was torn into a lightspeed breakdown of time and the collective unconscious. Realisation rained down on his mind's eye and then dissolved back into mystery leaving only a silent echo.

'This is most irregular Joe'

'It is indeed Barry. I appear to have witnessed the eternity of my own death and a multi dimensional universal reality. I need a cup of tea'

'Possibly with some brandy in it' whispered Barry

'So what do you reckon then. Shall we go to the cafe via the off license and pretend this never happened or shall we venture into the heart of this portal to higher consciousness and the essence of life itself'

'I'm thinking cafe'

'Let's just pop into to this worm hole first and have a quick look around'

'Yes but what if our physical bodies are instantly vapourised by the unimaginable power of the universe.'

'Well at least we'll still have our pension to fall back on'

'Right you are then Joe. After you'

SIRIUS 23









Photography: Nicole Blommers



Vitry-sur-Seine - Paris April 2010

HOW SHIPIBO HEALERS CURED MY BRAIN TUMOR



Why I Chose Ayahuasca

I came to South America early in 2009, in search of a cure. I was acting on a gut feeling, that the legendary visionary plant, ayahuasca, would help me. I had a brain tumor, caused by a chronic degenerative condition, called “acromegaly” which had dogged me for 20 years. I had spent many years searching and trying a plethora of complementary and alternative approaches to restoring my health, continually postponing major brain surgery and radiation therapy, despite the progressive degeneration and deformation of my body. I wanted to avoid the conventional treatments, because in my case, they would have meant severe physical trauma, the destruction of a vital organ, and ultimately destined a life monitored by a hospital and dependent on

heavy medications. I was so determined that I could never lead this life that I was, quite literally, prepared to die instead of give in to it. And this conviction was never so stark as when my doctors landed the final bombshell late in 2008; I was definitively out of time. My tumor was dangerously close to my brain stem, which, if it impinged on it, could have meant some vital bodily function just ceasing. It was also millimeters from my optic nerves. So, if not death, then I could expect certain blindness, followed some time thereafter by death.

I had been working periodically with ayahuasca in Europe, with various guides, for a couple of years. The plant had impressed me. It was the only thing, amongst the many alternatives I had tried, that had offered

me a real hope of a resolution, whether that resolution be cure or death. At that point, it was ayahuasca that was helping me come to terms with the fact that I could not avoid death, and that it was something I had to prepare for. That said, I wanted to live. I wanted to be healed. I wanted to experience life in a healthy body. And I wanted to prove that my family, my friends, and my doctors were wrong -- that it was possible to heal a terminal condition that has no known cure. Because my very core ideals were encapsulated in this illness and in the choices I made with regard to it, it challenged me to confront my truth in the very bluntest way possible, and it was forcing me to pursue, and embody, my ideals -- that we are indeed the creators of our own lives, living in an earthly paradise, where absolutely everything we want for can be resourced through nature. If I managed to heal, managed to overcome a life threatening brain tumor and achieve full health, then it would prove that there is always hope, and that truly anything is possible, if only we believe, if only we pursue what is in our hearts.

And so, I came to South America with urgency, acutely aware the decision to reject the western approach in the 11th hour might mean imminent death. But if my illness were to seal this fate, then I knew ayahuasca would give me peace.

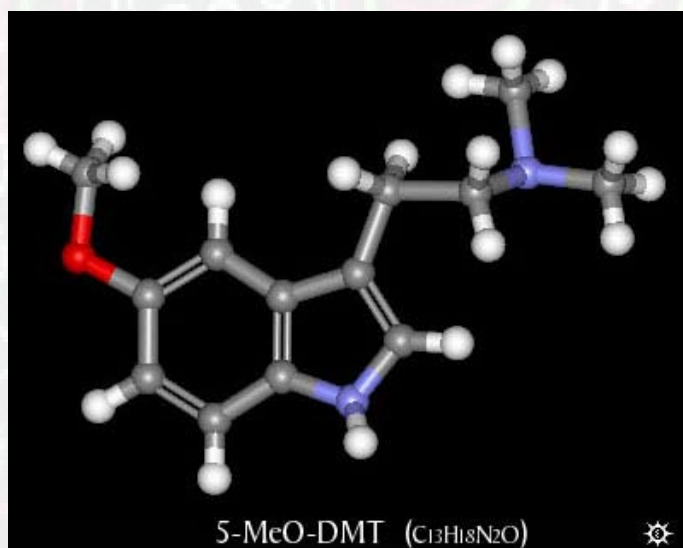
Ayahuasca, also known as “vine of the soul” or “vine of the dead,” is a visionary plant and master curative. The active agent, DMT (dimethyltryptamine), is also the chemical that is released from the pineal gland during birth and death. In other words, DMT produces the consciousness that we experience at our major transition points between the material



world and the spirit world. Ayahuasca is, therefore, literally a gateway to the spirit and as such, a very sacred medicine.

This potent liquid brew is comprised of two plants: ayahuasca (*Banisteriopsis caapi*), a vine, and chakruna (*Psychotria viridis*), a leaf. Sometimes other plants with different healing qualities are added. Chemically speaking, chakruna contains DMT, which is normally suppressed from activity in the body, by the MAO (monoamine oxidase) enzyme, but the vine ayahuasca contains natural MAO inhibitors, in the form of harmalines, which literally contain light. They allow the disintegration of the DMT to be by-passed, resulting in a psychoactive state. But it is naive to reduce the magical properties of this symbiotic combination of plants to mere chemistry.

Ayahuasca and other plants that produce trance states are grossly misrepresented in the West, often understood to be simply “hallucinogenic.” This is a derogatory term for a medicine that is actually a master healer and teacher. The correct conceptual term for this class of plant medicine is “entheogen,” meaning “revealing the divine within” And indeed this is what ayahuasca does; it clears toxicity on every level, removes the dross, the stuck patterns and programs, the negative thoughts and behaviors, and indeed, anything that prevents us from being who we truly are, by revealing the full potential of humans as divine creators. The spirit of ayahuasca is perceived as a female, a mother, or a grandmother (*Abuela*). This is because it is a very loving spirit, and compassionate, though the lessons and the cleaning process are not always easy. However, the depth of the process reflects the depth of the transformation. The results are always astonishing.





The Journey to the Right Place

Coming to South America, I had no specific destination in mind. I prayed that somehow I would find the right people and places, following the advice of an experienced friend who told me, “let the plant guide you.” I arrived in Iquitos, a jungle city, accessible only by boat or plane, in Northern Peru, that is also renowned as a hub for ayahuasca. From here, I intended to go over the border into Amazonian Brazil to meet that friend, who was going to bring me to a powerful ayahuascero that she knew. However, our paths were never to cross as a couple of twists of fate thwarted my plans and instead led me to the Temple of the Way of Light.

I met the Temple’s founder, Matthew Watherston, in Iquitos and he accompanied me to the premises, where its very first group retreat, in its present form, was underway. On the journey, he told me a little about the background of the Temple and its unique ethos. Matthew believes medicine and healing should be accessible to people of all walks of life, all races, and all financial circumstances,

and so his vision was to create a place where money was not a barrier for anyone desiring true healing. And so, the Temple is not-for-profit, and is certainly the best value in Iquitos. This contrasted sharply with the rest of the ayahuasca based centers in the area, which are expensive and run as businesses. My cure was absolutely priceless; I would have paid anything for it, regardless of the financial repercussions. I just wanted to be sure I was spending my money wisely.

It pleased me that the Temple matched my own ideals concerning money and access to health services. And the greater vision for it also impressed me. Matthew plans to build a hospital to treat all sorts of disease and illness, including those of chronic degenerative type, and to build a self sustaining community that would produce jungle superfoods and provide everything needed to create a truly healing environment. It also has a fundraising arm in the West, with a view to setting up projects in the indigenous communities such as water purification, dengue eradication projects, permaculture, cottage industries, etc., and to build a network

of schools to restimulate the youth's interest in their traditional medical culture, focusing on plants, botanical gardens, and their cosmological vision of the world. But there was another aspect of the Temple's works which set it apart.

Ceremonies are led by at least four female indigenous healers and one male. This is an unusual and special situation as normally there is one central figure leading ayahuasca ceremonies. The ratio of healer to participant is thus very high, and as such the quality of the healing is deeper. The fact that it is mainly women led was also very unusual. Shamanic traditions, like every other facet of life in the modern world, have a tendency to be male dominated. On the other hand, women, Matt says, "have a gentler and more caring approach, working primarily from the heart with loving compassion, and therefore, offering a safe and comfortable environment in which to deal with personal issues." Being a woman, I was excited to work with female adepts, but, I was also doubtful as I had heard many grand proclamations of healing ability before, which had never lived up to the hype.

Matthew expounded on the history of the Temple, which began life in Feb 2007, when he bought a place near to Iquitos. He started to run workshops with the original male curandero[i] connected to the property, but as time went on he became more and more concerned about the integrity of this individual, as he witnessed incidents that "showed his machismo, ego, control, and a begging bowl." It was totally at odds with the sacred process guided by ayahuasca, which



involves opening to the higher self. After a couple of sinister occurrences involving alcohol and sexual inappropriateness, Matthew replaced him with a female curandera. It turned out she was not a true healer. However, the energetic content of the ceremony was completely different, and he realized that women brought a purer quality to the ceremonies as well as a significant lack of ego. Shortly after this, a series of synchronicities led him to a group of female indigenous healers, and drinking with them, he says, he "had my head blown off my shoulders by several Mother Therasas of the jungle, who were clearly the real deal, and who typically had not worked with Westerners. Some of them spoke only their indigenous language, not even able to speak Spanish." He recounted that he was "blessed with an incredible vision and healing that was connected to divine feminine energy." He was clearly shown that the world's suffering was due to domination of the negative aspects of the masculine, and that it was his mission to promote the work with female healers, thus connecting with Mother Earth and Mother Ayahuasca as a way to redress this global imbalance and bring in the divine feminine, in line with the transformation that is happening across the planet. These were the women



he brought to work at the Temple, to the workshop I landed into.

We conversed over the hour-long journey by boat from Iquitos, which navigates a sprawling river that spills into the surrounding jungle. Another half hour walk through jungle brought us to a gently undulating glade where an impressively large “moloka” -- a circular building made of timber and giant fronds -- was the first sign of civilization to greet us. The moloka holds the ceremonies and it overlooks a natural swimming pool that has been created by damming the central stream. Dotted around the lush jungle setting of wooden bridges and diverse flora are smaller wooden and mosquito netted “tambos,” simple individual accommodations where guests are housed.

I was only going to stay for one ceremony, because at that point I still intended to move on. But ayahuasca had other plans for me. That night was the most powerful sacred medicine experience that I had had to date. This was due to a potent combination of the medicine and the Maestra’s^[ii] work with me. Mostly, I felt, and even distinctly smelt, volumes of rancid decay pouring out of my body. From a Chinese perspective, my condition is conceived as a stagnant one, and

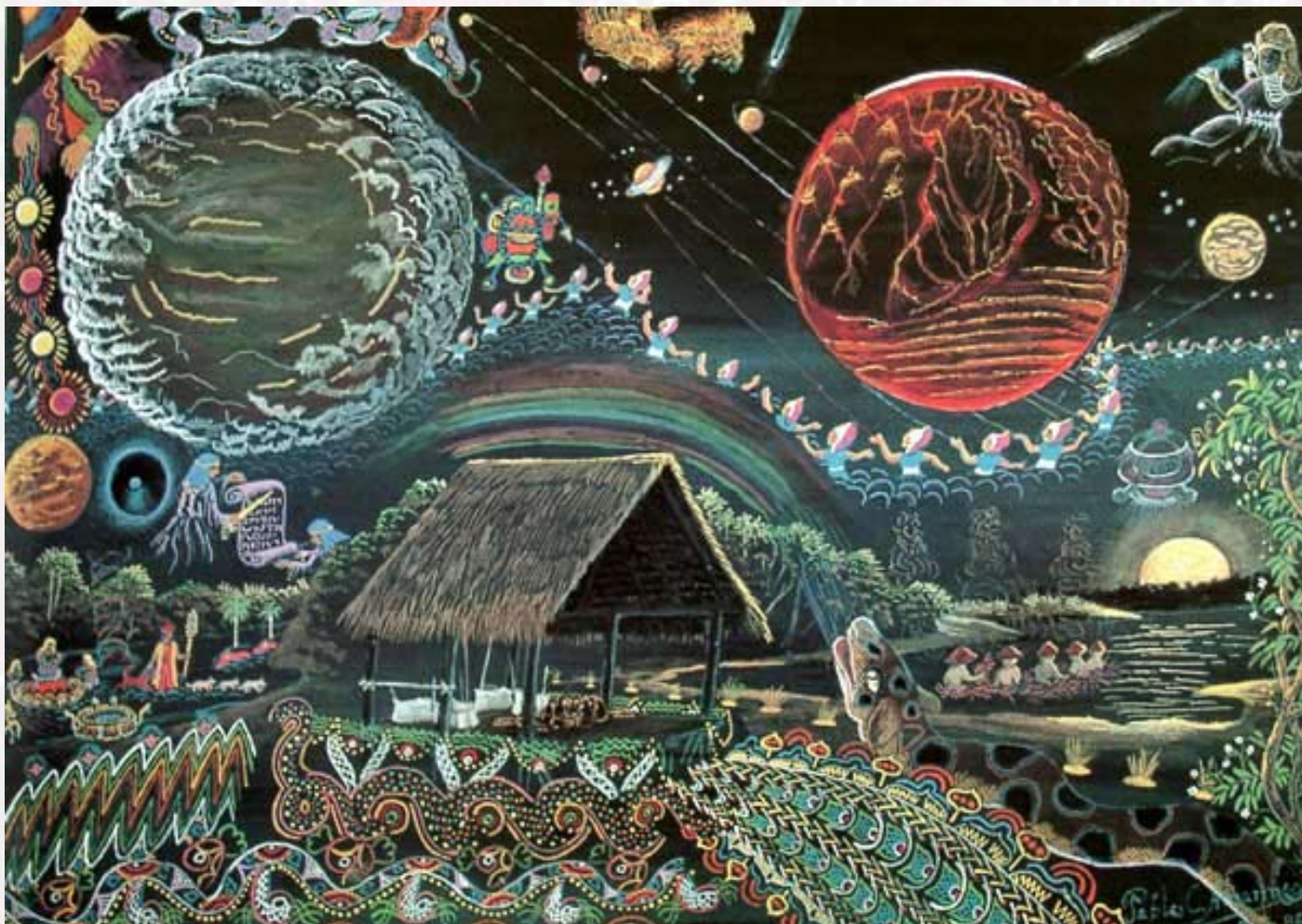


this is exactly what I felt was being cleaned out of me; old, stale and putrefied energy. Sweating profusely, I expelled a lot of phlegm, water streamed out of my eyes, and, I vomited heavily. Somewhere deep in the midst of this strong physiological flushing, I understood that this is where I would be cured. This knowing came from my bones, and not from any intellectual place. But, the message was loud and clear; I had to stay. Somehow, my body knew that I had found real healers, not merely facilitators, but people who could actually cure.

Shipibo Healers

This was my first encounter with healers from an ethnic group I had never heard of before; The Shipibo, a jungle dwelling indigenous people numbering about 45,000 individuals. They live in Amazonian Peru, in tiny villages dotted along the upper and lower Rio Ucayali, a large river that becomes the Amazon just before it enters Brazil. The Shipibo are an egalitarian culture, with a traditionally strong connection to the plant spirits of the jungle and the mysteries of plant medicine. Not many Shipibos are “Onanyas” (healers), as it is a highly specialized ability that is mostly inherited and learned through family lineages. Their vocation is developed by going through “dieta” with ayahuasca, which entails following certain food and lifestyle restrictions to foster a deep understanding and connection with the spirit of ayahuasca. Diets may be followed with other plants too, each of which has a unique spirit and a unique healing gift to bestow on the seeker. The healers diet, mostly, in solitude, for a number of years, and, whilst under the guidance of a





more experienced Onanyo(a), they actually learn all of their knowledge and capability directly from the plants that they diet. And so, they possess esoteric knowledge, healing abilities, and techniques inaccessible to the populace at large, due to their deep relationship with the spirit of ayahuasca and the other plant spirits of the jungle. As such they are called Maestros.*

Shipibo ceremonies are simple and unembellished. At the temple, mattresses for the participants are arranged in a large circle, with the Maestros stationed in the middle. After dark, small shot glasses of ayahuasca are distributed. The medicine takes about an hour to take effect, and as it does, the Maestros being to sing their beautiful “icaros.” These are sacred songs and musical weavings that fill the ceremonies with otherworldly ambiance. Icaros are in fact powerful healing tools, given directly by the plants to the healers, that can be understood as prayers or instructions that direct ayahuasca’s work in each individual. The Maestros describe themselves as channels for the spirit of ayahuasca, and they work by attending to each person and applying their magic through the

icaros and complementary healing techniques such as blowing tobacco smoke, applying floral colognes, and massage.

How Ayahuasca Works

The way the medicine works is absolutely unique with each individual. For me, it was very physical, yet also somehow intertwined with my spirit bodies. This physio-spiritual process became progressively more profound as my work with the medicine continued. The evening after my introductory ceremony, a Maestra sang to me and touched my head; as she did, I felt it opening, and for the first time in my life I actually felt energy and a lightness moving through it. It was an astounding experiential realization that the tumor was a very real physical and energetic obstruction lodged in my head. More doubts peeled away as here was tangible evidence that the illness was curable, via the spirit realms and with the help of the Maestras.

The remainder of that workshop had me sleeping for most of the waking hours. Any time I was awake I was heavy, headachy and

irritable. Doubts, judgments, and negativity arose and fell, fluctuating as part of the heave and flow of my healing process. By night, in ceremony, I was purging, yet alive, happy and intensely feeling the energy of my illness leaving my body in different ways. Every morning there would be a mountain of used tissues beside my bed, as I continually expelled phlegm. I have had chronic phlegm for most of life, and at last here it was coming out in volumes that astonished me.

Ayahuasca can be viewed as a cleanser; infiltrating and clearing at every possible level of being, chelating wherever darkness hides in the body and energy field, and expelling it. This means the purgative quality of this work is a crucial part of the process. Whether the cleaning is emotional, physical, mental, or spiritual, the offending item must be expelled from the body / energy field. Purging can take many forms; vomiting and diarrhea being the most obvious, but also profuse sweating, watering eyes, burping, sneezing, yawning, crying, farting, experiencing coldness, even going through negative emotions; all are forms of purging. I purged in a multitude of ways and was often awestruck by the way things came out and the depth of the places where they came from, sometimes coming from places and planes of existence I didn't even know existed.

One night, it felt like liquid metal was pouring out my skin, and that my hair was drenched in mercury. Another night the tears from my eyes were so viscose and thick with toxins, they came to a standstill half way down my face. In the process, I could feel the medicine targeting different systems or organs in my body on different nights. As it worked deeper and deeper into my being, I could feel the purges become more energetic in content. I had nights of vomiting pure energy as it went to work on my subtle energetic bodies, ridding my field of rigid bodily patterns. I could feel meridian lines being washed and channels being polished.

One night later in the process, my whole body was morphing and contorting, I could feel energetic imprints lifting and my DNA restructuring; it was like my body was a circuit board that was recalibrating my whole energetic matrix and physical makeup too. It was about this time when the last of my doubts fell away. My physical transformation was so



experientially profound and so starkly visible in my outward appearance as my deformed jaw started to rectify, my eyes stopped being puffy, and I kind of glowed more, that there was simply no more room for uncertainty. I sometimes went through difficult days or nights, but I accepted this as part of the cleaning and so was able to detach from it and allow it to take its course.

The women would immediately tune into me if I was going through something difficult and come to sing to me, or in some way help me ease through it. In any case, there were tangible improvements every day; in fact, I started to make leaps and bounds. I don't regard the purging or the vomiting as unpleasant, because there was so much learning contained in each one of those experiences. Each purge had its own particular energetic quality and I became very sensitive to what kind of negativity each represented. Each showed me something new about the nature of energy, and how it interacts, and is even intrinsic to our life experiences. I was gaining this spirit knowledge on a physical level. Moreover, I was shedding so much unwanted stuff, and I was only happy to see it go.



I never received visions. The Maestras explained that this was because I had to clear my physical body first. It wasn't important to me anyway. Ayahuasca was doing the infinitely more important job of clearing a terminal illness. Many westerners, when first starting to use ayahuasca, do not get visions, as the more pertinent work of the plant is to clear the ailments derived from living in industrialized, urban, and disconnected environments. In the Western frame, oftentimes the visions are one-dimensionally emphasized over the other aspects of ayahuasca's work. This is to misunderstand, because even with the presence of visions, in most cases, messages, teachings and healings from the medicine are communicated in others ways. These ways are hard to understand from the limited perspective of ordinary reality. But in the "mareacion" [iii] (journey) of ayahuasca, the experiences can be more real than anything experienced in waking life. Journeys come in many shapes and forms. They can be wonderfully ecstatic or painfully challenging. They can be emotional, mental, physical, spiritual, or any combination. Visions may indeed

appear, some might be incoherent, others gloriously intricate. What is so special about this medicine is that it works to the particulars of each and every individual, giving them exactly what they need at that given moment in time, but also in line with their desired transformation.

Intention is a vital component to approaching the sacred medicine. This is not a straightforward tonic that has prescribed and set effects. Rather, as a sacred spirit medicine, it works in partnership with the higher self, thus producing unique experiences and results. With the privilege of free will, we may direct the work of the medicine in the way we desire most for our lives. A clearly focused intention will yield far superior results than one where intention is fuzzy. This is because the medicine is able to respond more efficiently to clearly defined directions. It must also be understood that, even with a strong intent in place, the medicine will sometimes go to where it is needed most, which is, frequently, a subconscious issue. This is usually something that must be dealt with in order to make way for the intention to



be eventually fully realized.

The medicine also very often gives more than is asked or expected, bestowing gifts. In my own case, apart from the physical transformation I have been going through, as per my intention, the plant is giving me a profound knowledge of my body's inner workings. I can actually feel it from the inside now; the ducts and channels, the tendons and the lymph, the blocks and the free areas, the bits that need extra attention. I was amazed at how blocked I was with regard to my body before, how I distained it, and disregarded its needs, mostly unconsciously and at the behest of a willful mind denying the seriousness of my condition. For me, my body is now a universe that I want to explore, to take care of, and to love. I could never have conceived this was possible before. The beauty with which various aspects of my physical self are being revealed to me makes me revere and respect the medicine more and more with each passing day. And even more magical is the fact that what I considered ugly in my physical form before, I can now see it is a perfect, divine, and even beautiful creation.

Whilst the medicine works in magical ways, delivering profound insight and

transformation, it is also very important to understand and respect that there is an integration period after the work. This means sticking with some dietary and sexual restrictions for a period after the work and also being conscious of taking care of oneself in appropriate ways, in the interest of retaining the changes. Ayahuasca will continue to work in the body and energetic field for a long time after an intensive workshop. Revelations, liberation from stuck patterns, and changes in behavior may be experienced months later. The work is suitable for people who recognize that personal development is a lifelong commitment. Ayahuasca is not a magic wand to make all the bad stuff disappear. It takes a while to get to the final layer of the onion, which is why continued personal development is necessary; some time is needed for the benefits to integrate into the rest of your life.

In my case, I have to rest for a number of months, without taking ayahuasca, to allow my body to integrate the massive changes. I have to be conscious of my diet and vigilant to the needs of my body. It would be highly destructive for me to be drinking alcohol, undertaking strenuous physical activity, or even getting back into a stressful job situation immediately. All this would obstruct

a thorough healing, and in fact, may even reverse all the good work. I recognize that I need a lot of physical therapy, such as massage, to help my body get used to its new configuration. Moreover, in ceremony, I have been shown the areas that need a bit of extra care. And so my focus is now to take care of my physical needs first and foremost.

For most people, one workshop at the Temple is enough to significantly transform a life. With the gravity of my particular case it was clear I had more work than most to do, after all I had a very serious and deeply embedded illness that has been eating at me for all of my adult life. I attended three workshops in a row, all the while observing and marveling at how these women worked and how their intervention was reflected in the amazing progress of my healing. By night they helped me through the physical processes the medicine induced, and by day they dropped lime juice into my eyes. They noted that part of the illness resided in my eyes -- I have always had puffy eyes and in fact the tumor was directly behind my right eye. Although it stung, my tears would wash away the acidic juice along with plenty of grungy material. They would also give us massage every day and bathe us in a floral concoction that was designed to protect and bring love, luck, and harmony.

The care I received at the Temple was exemplary, and inspiring, to work with such powerful, yet humble women. My process was utterly supported through the highs and the lows. I was tended to and nurtured with gentle compassion. And I experienced a miracle, nothing short of a cure. My process is not finished yet. After a convalescing period, I will return to the temple to finish my physical



cleansing and continue my personal growth.

Other People at the Temple

I met people of all walks, types and ages at the Temple. All had different reasons for coming and of course unique experiences.

Toby, 62, a writer from Denmark, came "because my life was at standstill after a broken relationship and a deep depression. I became self destructive, my mind had turned black." After his retreat, Toby wrote to me, "I had dramatic and profound experiences and visions. The ayahuasca cleaned my body and reset my mind. To explain is impossible, it is so personal and individual, but it has changed my life. Happiness and energy is flowing freely through my veins and I was not surprised when my closest relatives confirmed the changes when they met me shortly after the trip to Peru. Years of therapy and psychoanalysis would not have been able to do this healing. My life is back on track and I am grateful."

Virginie, 27, a student and traveler from France, came to the temple because she felt she needed a ritual to mark her passing from youth into adulthood. She was returning to Europe after extensive travels in South America and she wanted to clear any debris and not fall back into old patterns on her return. She felt she got rid of a lot of her childhood fears and insecurities, through purging, by crying and vomiting. Furthermore, she stopped smoking, after

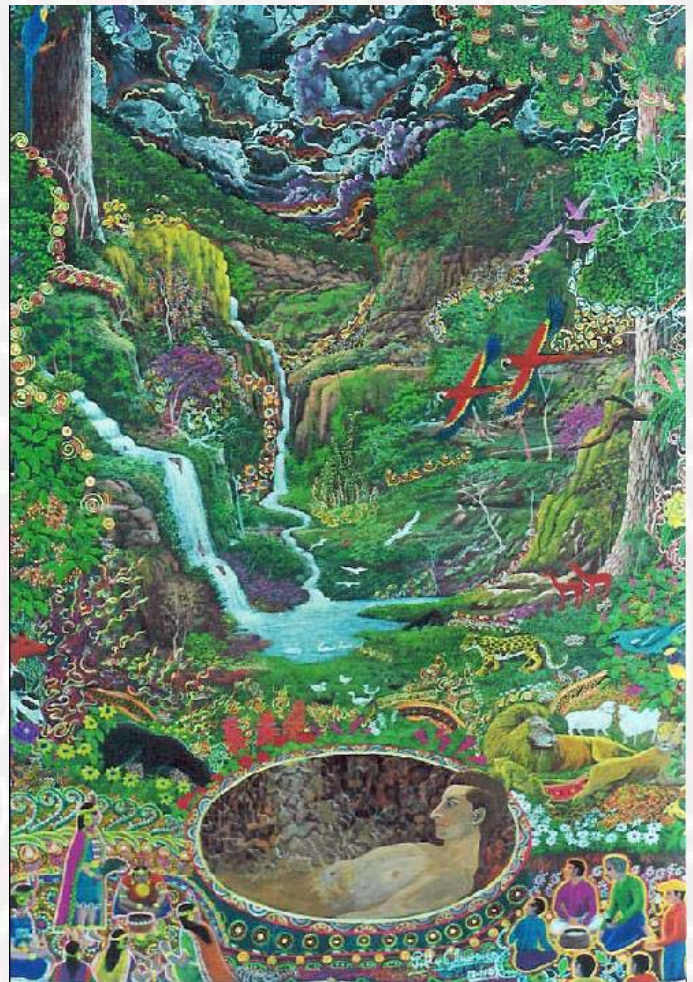


experiencing that she had received a new set of lungs during the workshop. She said she understood that the cigarette smoke was her mental confusion, a foggy blanket which, one evening in ceremony, she started to blow and blow, blowing all the smoke out of her system, she could feel charred heavy energy coming out with her breaths. She summed it up at the end by commenting, "I feel super good and centered."

Judy, 35, a mental health worker from Ireland, described her reasons for coming to the temple as, "needing help with my addictions, needing healing, direction, and focus. And I wanted to detox." The experience for her was very difficult, but also wonderful. "I faced all my demons; I went through every kind of emotion possible. It was like I already died and went to my own purgatory, this felt really familiar and very claustrophobic. It sounds strange but I was trying to make sure I was still part of my soul. The Maestras massaged my tummy and blew on my head. One of them sang to me while I lay in the fetal position and sucked my thumb. Maybe I was being born again." She concluded that the whole experience was amazingly powerful and intense.

Marcel, 35, a professional sportsman from Switzerland, came to the temple because he wanted to change his life, to deal with his frustration, to improve his energy levels and because he very much wanted to find answers. And he got his answers about "illusion and reality, fear and trust, and about love." He said every night in ceremony was special in a different way, with each passing night, he felt his process was moving forward, always learning. "It was really tough, I had to fight fear I have had all my life. Ayahuasca cut through the fear and opened new doors. For me ayahuasca is pure love." On his way out of the temple he commented, "I am not 100% sure I can handle all this, but whatever happens it's all learning, I keep on working on removing the fear to have a beautiful life."

A Dutch woman, Vanya, 43, a massage therapist, said that in one ceremony, she faced her family. She explained that they tend to take advantage of her, and do not take her seriously by disregarding her. She doesn't fight her corner, saying nothing, but it hurts her. She realized that when she returned home she would have to have a serious talk



with them, and ayahuasca had given her the impetus and courage to do it.

Tracie, 44, from Australia, had an auditory journey one night that started with a hum, she could feel it in her whole body. "With every in breath it raised me higher so that I was hovering in the air and with every out breath I came down like a leaf to the ground -- such a lightness!"

Temu, 27, from Finland, came for a depression. He prepared mentally for a long time to come to the retreat, as he had a lot of fear about it. His process involved a lot of internal dialogue and facing his fears and anxieties, "ultimately getting the awareness that everything is actually alright, I don't have to worry, I am taken care of, even though I don't always realize it. In the process I also had a rebirth of my connection with nature, remembering that I am a part of this wholeness, this nature." He finds it hard to verbalize his final ceremony, summing it up by saying he had a lifetime of insights and lessons.

Cielo, 52, Australian and the administrator for the Temple, told me that one night she had a pain in her stomach, and Horacio, one of



the Meastros, sang to her and sucked out the bad energy using “Kananga” (a kind of floral infused water), she lay down and had a vision of a huge white centipede undulating, as it rose up it started to transform into something else. She noticed that the women were doing something fiddling with something on the ground; she went to look and saw that they were killing a centipede. They confirmed that the bad feeling in her stomach was in the energetic form of a centipede and that following the healing it had manifested into physical reality.

Indigo, a 40 year old farmer from USA, “I had one experience where I was too tired to come to ceremony, so I was sleeping in my tambo. Sometime later, I could hear the Maestras singing, but my tambo is far away, the singing was so loud and clear, I thought she was with me. I could feel the energy pulling me,

moving things inside my body. I went into a vision of beautiful fairies who wanted to take me somewhere, but my mind got scared, because I had not drunk ayahuasca that night. This was not a dream. I decided to go to the ceremony two hours after it had started; it was not too late. A Maestra came to sing to me, I didn’t need to drink, I was getting the same healing. I asked Rosa (one of the Maestra’s) about it the next day, and she said she had done a distant healing. That was pretty profound for me.” She adds, “I feel I learned a lot not just from the Maestras but also from the people here. It’s a place where people gather and share and help each other. As the week went on people’s stuff was coming out. I got into a thing with someone, it was very significant, I wasn’t even thinking of it, but that argument was my core issue being expressed. That night, in ceremony, was difficult, I could feel the anger coming out and going under



me, and since then I have been going even deeper. The medicine is always working, even when sleeping and dreaming. It is important to pay attention to everything that happens here."

Daniela, 43, from Holland, learned a lot from other people in the group also. She thought that the plant puts the group together, so you can meet certain people and experience certain situations, so that you can learn from each other. "Ayahuasca calls everybody to work with her," and "if everyone in the world did ayahuasca, the world would be an amazing place." Then she added, with a laugh, "all politicians should be locked into the jungle for at least a month!"

Isabel, 36 an actress from the USA, says, "I think spirit guided me here, to where I needed to be, even without knowing it. I feel really blessed to have found it, such an amazing community space. I have seen more healing here than any other ayahuasca space, it is shocking, and it will continue when people go home, which is amazing." During her process, Isabel says, "I received information that my stomach was carrying negative energy, which I did not realize before. I received such a powerful healing one night in ceremony, it was so obvious I was being healed through the

icaros and the physical movements they did, it calmed it, and made me purge so to get rid of it." About the group experience, she remarks, "the difference in people from when they arrived to when they left -- the lightness in people's faces, the way they carry themselves, the love that these women emanated. They were the channels from this amazing plant to us." Another night she had a vision, "that we were all roots, the curanderas were at the bottom and our limbs were attaching to become a part of the root system to spread all over the world."

The Future is Bright

Many people had this vision about the potential of ayahuasca, me included. Matthew concurs that those who come to the Temple, "become fertilized with the seeds of light and positive energy -- and return to the west newly fertilized, to raise awareness and touch others with their light, and demonstrate the benefits of working with sacred plants. If enough people do this, then real planetary change can be affected." We are now at a great juncture of planetary transformation; we do nothing and let the planet die, or we change. I hope to play a part in this great mission and that when I return home and my friends and acquaintances see the miraculous change in me, that they too will be inspired to change their lives and become what they truly want to be. I feel great hope for the planets future. And I honestly believe the Temple of the Way of Light is birthing a whole new world.

APRILE BLAKE







Photography: Brendan Mckenna



SIMON SHACKLETON

A WORD WITH ELITE FORCE

Whether dropping the filthiest of breaks as Elite Force or savaging the boundaries of electronic possibility as Zodiac Cartel, Simon Shackleton can always be guaranteed to serve up a mind altering, soul shaking cocktail of sizzling personality, sonic purity and gleaming artistic mischief. A musician through and through, slicing across the artificial limits of groupthink and technological restraint alike, sHack has been rampaging across global dancefloors for many a year now. Dipping in and out of styles and moments, fusing his experience on the cutting edge into pioneering the fresh and eclectic sound of Tech Funk and unleashing the next generation, sHack took a moment out from cooking up the next dancefloor destroying monster to have a chat with LSD.

Could you give us a little insight into your background and history as a producer?

Well I've been at it for years now, starting out in the mid 90's and the first Elite Force release came out in 1996 on a label that I'd just started up called Fused and Bruised, and while the majority of the stuff I was doing back then was breakbeat based, it was very eclectic, ran right across the board and BPM's weren't quite as formalized as they are today. That was my launch point, and I started to really get a hold of it in earnest as a project around 2001. Been remixing various artists over the years – people such as Grandmaster Flash, Groove Armada – all sorts of bits and pieces and released a number of singles on Whole Nine Yards which was Meat Katie's label prior to Lot 49 before moving on to Kingsize and then Adrift, but over the last 2 or 3 years, I've really been focusing on releasing through U&A, which is my own label. My third solo



album, ReVamped has just come out on U&A, and occupied the top 13 spots on the Beatport breaks charts, but we released a vinyl sampler back in February - the first time we've actually put out anything on vinyl since the first 2 or 3 releases on the label and it's going to be fascinating to see how that pans out, although I was really chuffed to see the early runs all sell out instantly – so there may be life in the old format yet!!!

Speaking of vinyl runs – how many do you think you'll be pressing up now, given the format's current condition and how does that compare with a few years back?

It's very hard to say, and totally dependent on demand. Nowadays – well it's a whole different



ball game. I remember the first single I did with Meat Katie, we pressed 5000, and the range of bootlegs and bits of vinyl we used to quietly release would easily sell 4 or 5000 without any form of promotion whatsoever. Obviously that market is WAY diminished these days, and both labels and distributors have a far more cautious approach – people will press 3/400, see if they sell and then possibly run off another couple of hundred if it's going well to keep things ticking over. You have to remember that a few years ago, the vinyl release was THE release, timing was key, and you would have really large runs in order to exploit the initial rush of the release in the first week or two. Now of course with the digital model, it's not so time contingent and the download format is the core of any single, and despite the piracy issue, you can still expect to sell substantially more than you would on vinyl.

On the piracy tip, how big an issue is it, bearing in mind that a DJ needs a 320 mp3 or a wav if he has any self respect whatsoever?

It does have to be said that the lion's share of our fanbase and the people that buy our

music is other DJ's. Now there's clearly a lot more people than that coming out to the clubs and loving the music who would never buy an mp3 or engage with the artist on that level. I guess that from a business point of view, the payback for the artist comes with the live bookings and the gigs so it is still swings and roundabouts at the end of the day, it's just that in the current climate, it's all a bit more of a hustle than it used to be to earn a crust out of the music

Bearing in mind the miniscule profits from actual releases and the need for gig bookings to reach self sufficiency, how long does it take an artist coming up through the ranks to reach the point where he is getting the bookings and earning purely off the music?

Really hard to say, and you know, it depends on the productivity as well, because the hardest aspect when people are getting started is striking that balance between earning an income and having enough time to dedicate to making the music. It's difficult to dictate to people what they should and shouldn't do, and I know that in my own experience of starting out, I spent about 5

years just on the dole because learning to make music is mastering a trade, much like any other and I was prepared to sacrifice a comfortable standard of living to achieve that goal. Are people willing to give that much up for their trade as we stand today? I don't know

That's an interesting point, because when you were starting out, it was all about the expensive studio hardware and the initial float to release a record. Has the rise of computer studios and the low investment needed to release digitally, democratized or saturated the scene?

I think that ultimately, it's about filters. There's always been a vast amount of music out there being made one way or another and the filtering point for people used to be the record labels. That would be the first stage at which the wheat was separated from the chaff and I think that the sheer ease with which it's possible to set up a digital label today and start putting music out that never had to pass that original hurdle has made it harder and harder to find those solid reference points. In a lot of ways I do think it's a really positive phenomenon and it has democratized music *making* certainly and brought it to a wider audience, but whether the quality is there is an open question. There does seem to be a lot less professionalism and people do seem to divide their time more evenly between self promotion and actually making the music, and while it is necessary to develop both strands of the project, you really need to focus on developing that craft and nurturing the music.



I have to say that I do find a substantial chunk of the music flying about at the moment quite sub standard and throwaway, and I think it'll be a shame if that democratization has led to a general reduction in quality.

As you say, you started out with the breaks, but a lot of your recent stuff has been a lot more techno orientated. Would you say that after the stylistic splintering of the 90's into genres, we're finally coming back together into cross fertilized fusion?

It has been for many years now. You're always going to have the purists and the people who are, for whatever reason, really rigid and intensely tribal about what they like and more specifically, about what they don't like, but in the last 2 or 3 years, I've seen far more openness from people and certainly DJ wise in the flavour of what's being played out – just look at people like Erol Alkan bringing a truly diverse sound to really big crowds. To me, that's a very breaks way of doing things, I never really saw breaks as a stylistic closed shop, it was always about the eclecticism and the blending of a range of different styles. That's the way I've always seen it, and if people want to call me breakbeat on that





basis, then I'm more than happy to accept the label, but if the labeling is an attempt to shoe horn you into a tight stylistic space that you're not allowed to dip your toes outside of, then all you're effectively doing is ruling out whole spheres of quality music out there.

Speaking of limits on musical freedom, do you find that this phenomenon of the 1 hour DJ set where you're booked to play a specific style and then need to chuck the kitchen sink at it over an hour rather than working up a groove and diversifying over a longer set is constricting when you play out?

It really does restrict you. The more ravey the event and the bigger the crowd, the shorter the sets tend to be as the promoters inevitably have to throw a massive arsenal of different talents at the bill in order to guarantee pulling the crowds. So yes, in the bigger clubs and the larger events you do end up with shorter sets and that's bound to inform the way you play. You can guarantee that the person before you has thrown every single big tune they've got

in their bag at the crowd and you're not really in a position to be able to take it deep – you just have to play that game and I do think that's a bit of a shame. It effectively means that some of the craft of DJing is getting lost in the mix, and you know, I've never really understood why, certainly within the breaks scene which is potentially so varied, diverse and has so much range to it, those longer sets haven't been something that the genre has really thrived on. I know that I would – if people were booking me to play a 4 hour set, I'd love that opportunity to really explore and take the dancefloor somewhere in a set like that. There are occasions when I do get to play for that long, particularly when I go to China where they always basically tell me to keep playing, which I'm more than happy to do, and end up taking it really deep and much more techno. And as I say, I do relish those opportunities and I guess it's a part of my heritage as a DJ and where I'm coming from as a music fan.



On an unconventional places to play note, you've recently become pretty involved with Burning Man haven't you?

Well last year was the first time I went. It's something that I've been thinking about for years, and I've had people burning my ears off about how I have to go and all the rest of it, and while I always took that with a bit of a pinch of salt, last year I just fancied it and I went off to the States to find out first hand what it was all about. And I have to say.... it was utterly mind blowing, exceeded all of my expectations and I can't really speak of it highly enough

We've heard from some of the old UK free festival crew that it's one of the last bastions of the pure festival, somewhere you can truly lose yourself over several days and has none of the tame commercialisation and rigidity we see in the European festivals. Would you agree with that?

Oh 100%. I remember cutting my teeth as a raver in the West Country back in the days of Spiral Tribe and the free festival movement in England, but I suppose that in some ways, Burning Man is a lot more fun than that because a big part of the buzz back then was the thrill of the chase – actually being able to get the party on without getting nicked, getting busted or getting your head stoved in by the business end of a policeman. That was all part of the rush, but on many levels, a large part of that movement was a political statement for everyone who was involved and it had a real sociological resonance. Burning Man is kind of like that in a way, but you know, it's safe, it's going to happen – once you're there, you're generally in pretty safe hands for the week. They're spot on about the lack of commercialisation, not only is there no branding allowed anywhere on the site, there's actually nothing for sale. There's no litter bins and so on, and a fundamental part of the Burning Man experience is people taking responsibility for themselves and their actions, for what they want to consume, and for taking all trace of that consumption away with them at the end of the festival.



Do you think that on the human and social responsibility levels, and the potential to really voyage beyond normal parameters, we are missing something of the Burning Man spirit here in Europe?

People are still able to do that within their own boundaries. Even at the most corporate of clubs with 20 Euro drinks, it is ultimately between the person and the music, so you can close your eyes and totally lose yourself, totally immerse yourself in almost any situation as long as the music's right and the vibe's right. That being said – it's properly free, you're out in the desert under the stars and there's a survival aspect to Burning Man too – a different level of responsibility. If you fall in a ditch at somewhere like Glastonbury, there's always going to be security about, you'll be in the First Aid tent before you know it – everything is very, very structured. And from a performer's point of view, none of the artists can do anything without the media being all over it. Every facial tick will fly straight out in HD on the BBC and be replayed before the band's even got off stage. In some ways it is nice if you haven't got a ticket to sit



in your armchair and watch the whole thing close up and live – but does that not make the artist that much more self conscious with the record labels putting that much more onus on them to deliver a streamlined performance that's going to do the utmost for their career trajectory? Something like Burning Man is just so spectacularly different, and I suppose that the best example I can give is that if you penetrate the furthest fringes of Glastonbury where it gets as weird and as out there as it possibly can, well that's the starting point for Burning Man. That's the best way I can put it!!!!

Love it! – coming back onto you personally, you are Zodiac Cartel aren't you?

Yes

Why did you keep that so quiet?

To be perfectly honest, I really didn't want to make a big deal of it. It was about the music, and I just wanted to diversify musically. With the amount of output I was working on at that time, it just seemed like too much to fit under the one Elite Force banner. The Zodiac Cartel stuff was finding its own feet and had a substantially different sound to

what I was doing as Elite Force and I just wanted the music to speak for itself so I hid it behind a bit of an alias, and the one thing that really amazed me was just how few people actually twigged that it was me! A few did, naturally, but it wasn't until recently that I've been quite happy to come out and front the whole thing and start to do a fair few Zodiac Cartel live shows. It's been nice having an alternative, slightly cartoonish image to work the whole project behind and that's something that I'm going to be looking at developing over the next couple of years with one or two animators. Those live shows are distinctly removed from the Elite Force stuff, and for me it's all about keeping it fresh and concentrating on projects and angles that inspire me.

What's your take on the general health of the scene? We're seeing changes and evolutions of all different shades and flavours – ketamine becoming more and more a drug of choice which does not a unified dancefloor make – Is it as positive and as vibrant as ever?

There's no outright answer to that. I think that when you've been around for a good long

while as I have, it becomes increasingly easy to be disillusioned. And that's something that I always try to keep on top of, because there is that archetypal temptation to look back through rose tinted specs at an intangible 'golden age' where things were healthier and things were better. I think that you need to put yourself in the shoes of today's 16 year olds going out to their first rave, and hopefully it's as fresh and exciting for them as it was for us when we first started out. The other thing from my perspective is that I probably play out in the UK far less often than I do overseas, and obviously, wherever you go, it's a different atmosphere – a different vibe. Each country has its own scene, its own drugs of choice and it's constantly evolving. Clubbing simply is not a static entity – you can't just press pause and define it. Even going to the same club week in week out fluctuates in your experience of it. Ultimately, you just have to keep an eye on the future and try and be as positive as possible about what you have to work with on any given night.

How connected are music and freedom?

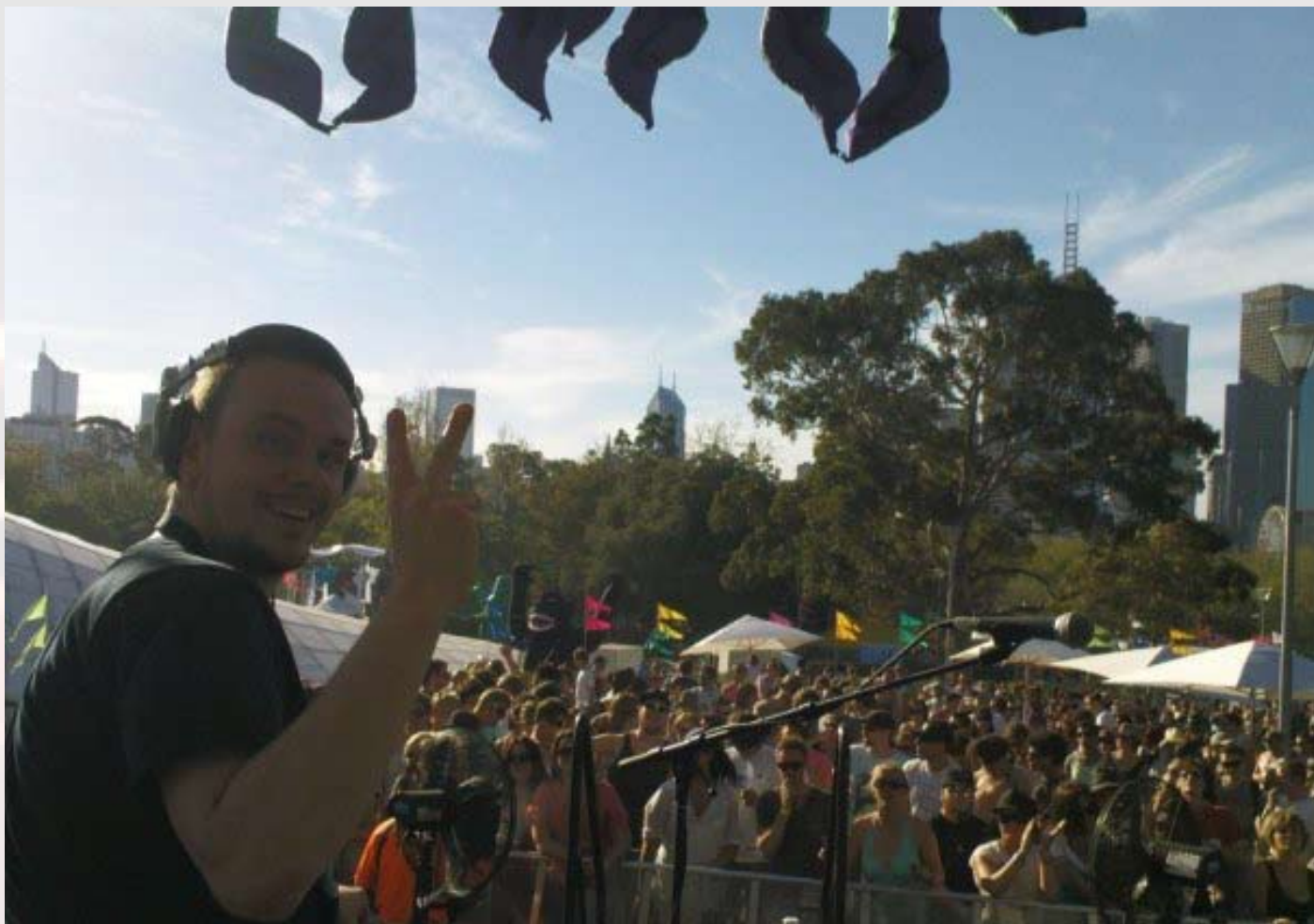
Traditionally, very VERY. It doesn't get more liberating than music – going back through the millennia to when people were banging drums around a campfire, the two have always been intrinsically linked. In some ways, I think it's a shame that dance music doesn't have a bit more to say for itself sometimes. That music and message can't necessarily flow together hand in hand a little bit more within the club music context, but then, that's not really the forum that people want to be hearing the message.



Long term – how many barriers are there left to push. How long can a 4 beat or a breakbeat continue being interesting?

There's a vast amount of quality to be had within that framework. You could say the same thing about a piano keyboard – you know – 'how long can Middle C be interesting!' It all depends on the combinations and the context within which you use it with other notes. And it's the same with breaks, the same with the 4 / 4. There's always new stuff coming up – just yesterday I heard a Gui Boratto remix of Massive Attack's Paradise Circus – you hear something like that and it is TOTALLY inspiring. Familiar sounds in a fresh context are the essence of dance music in many ways. I've actually been doing a lot of breaks, and this album coming up reflects that, but within it, a lot of the reworkings I've done have been dubstep tracks, and the same thing goes for that. Those sounds, the space around them and the attention to detail on the production has sustained me as a producer for a long time now. I've become quite passionate about that sound, pushing it in my own direction, and it's really encouraging to see the first remix I've done in that vein currently at the top of the Beatport Breaks charts. The bottom line is that there's always something new around the corner, it's just how you choose to embrace it.





A lot of your music has featured in films and computer games. How does that work then? Do they just lift a pre released track or are you commissioned to write for a specific visual moment?

Being commissioned to write for specific scenes is the Holy Grail, and what tends to happen the vast majority of the time is that you submit some music to the films' music supervisor via your publisher, and if you're lucky enough, something will get chosen – it really is as simple as that. What has always amazed me is that with films like *The Matrix*, which we had some music on many years back – well – six weeks before it hit the theatres – they had no music for it!!

You're joking – and of all films too – soundtrack was key to the visual language!!!!

It's unbelievable isn't it!! So literally, the music supervisors had a week to get all the music sourced, signed off and cut to the film. So you suddenly get this stampede of people chucking music left, right and centre, and if

you're lucky enough to be one of those artists whose tracks get pretty much plucked out of a hat – it's a fantastic break for you. And while I would imagine that for example, in Tarantino's films, he has a very clear idea of what music he wants and how he's going to use it within the film, the vast majority of the time, something is grabbed off the shelf at the very last minute.

How important is mastering to your end product?

Well I still think it's essential. Personally, I take great pride in my own production – I've grown up with the hardware, moved into the software, I'm constantly re investing in my own studio, and I take a lot of time and trouble to ensure that a track is as finished as it can possibly be. I'm quite capable of doing stuff that is technically speaking, more than good enough to play out on the dancefloor, but still, when you go somewhere like *Finyl Tweek* or *Wired* where we do all our digital masters and look at the sheer quality of the equipment – you realise that it gives you that extra 10%, and on tracks that aren't that well



produced or well finished – it'll give you a hell of a lot more than 10%, and it ties in with what I was saying about the pride or lack of pride in the finished products coming out of so many digital labels. Nowadays, when I finish a remix for somebody, they don't want an unmastered version to take to professional mastering studios – they just want something that's ready to bung on Beatport, and that just doesn't fit with my approach to production. Ultimately, no matter how prolific you are as a producer, every opportunity you get to release something should be showing you and your music in the best possible light. Recently, I've done a couple of Zodiac Cartel remixes where the label hasn't wanted them to be professionally mastered – they're happy with what I've sent them, and I've quietly paid out of my own pocket to have them mastered, because I just want that extra dimension of quality on there. And every time I'm out and about and reaching for my CD wallet to drop one of my own tunes – I'm grateful that I did. Call it being a perfectionist if you will, but it's all about the quality.....

You've got a gloriously talented phalanx of artists at U&A, what's it like to be responsible for that?

It's exciting. I've slowly been bringing quite a few new artists up through the ranks, and pretty much all of the people on the roster started out without any real releases to their name or without any tangible profile, and if people are hard working and willing to come up with the goods, it's a real privilege. I love seeing people do well – I love seeing some of those younger guys thriving and long may it continue. It's something I'm really focused on for the year ahead, developing the U&A brand, trying to get one or two label nights going and consolidating that sound. The first label based night that we did was up in Manchester a few weeks ago, and it was a slamming success which launched the year for us on a real high.





You're a switched on guy. We're talking to Noam Chomsky in this issue – has he been an influence on your life at all.

He has. I've read a healthy chunk of Noam Chomsky's work, perhaps less so recently, and what an inspirational character. I remember when I was studying music at college finding his angles on mass communication and media really quite fascinating and coming at the classical music I was studying from a far more popular culture point of view than most, he was the go to guy for an extraordinarily quotable analysis of pop culture and the mass media.

So what's the dream for the next 2, 3, 5 years

If I can carry on doing what I love doing and making a living out of it – well that's the objective. Obviously as you get older, things do change, I've got children, I've got dogs, I live on a farm – you know – there's constant overheads from the mortgage payments downwards that you have to meet, tedious

though it may be. But the longer I can continue doing what I'm doing, making enough of a living to finance that mission, do what I love, look after my family, continue to bring people up on the label, keeping the quality control high, the happier and the more fulfilled I'll be. Hopefully I'll still be around in five years time making music that I'm proud of. Dreams don't get much better than that.....

www.eliteforcemusic.com

www.zodiaccartel.com

**[www.myspace.com/
uandarecordings](http://www.myspace.com/uandarecordings)**

www.myspace.com/shackforce

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Photography: Nicole Blommers



Vitry-sur-Seine - Paris April 2010



LONDON BOROUGH OF HACKNEY
CURTAIN ROAD
E.C.2



Photography: Brendan Mckenna

Case - February 2010



Photography: Nicole Blommers



Vitry-sur-Seine - Paris April 2010

BILL DRUMMOND

THE 100 QUESTIONS

In the summer of 2009, we contacted Bill Drummond in the hope of securing an interview for our Booting off the Doors issue. We heard nothing back from Bill, the issue came out in due course and we consigned the piece to the 'might have been' fragments of memory. Just over a month ago, Bill got in touch with us with a proposition. Always a man of pattern and concept, he was now shaping the endless onslaught of interview requests in his own image through the 100 Questions project. 25 media, ranging from mass circulation dailies to radio programmes dedicated to the social and cultural contexts of map making were invited to ask 4 questions each – no more – no less, each reflecting a sphere of Bills' interest or his creative spectrum. The questions we sent are answered with deeply personal dedication below and the link to the other 96 questions and answers follows at the end of the piece, and as we were limited in the scope of our questions, we have gone for a longer introduction than normal.

Mercurial and mysterious – at least through the prism of the media, Bill Drummond has always slipped through the all too tempting net of characterisation we cast as a society. Once an A&R man and always a musician, Bill began his creative journey as set designer for the first 12 hour stage production of the Illuminatus trilogy – an epic of pure conspiratorial psychedelia which would later infuse KLF philosophy and symbolism both in name – The Justified Ancients of Mu Mu - and in blurring the ever elusive line between visionary truth and a complete piss take. Tearing a mischievous current through the Acid House revolution and the heady consumerism of the 80's, taking pop to



its most absurdist extreme, and helping fuel the electronic explosion, Bill and Jimmy Cauty found themselves lionised by a music establishment who had no idea what the fuck they were on about, but labelled them avant garde pop pranksters and invited them to take their place on the pedestal of sterile blandness.

The destruct button beckoned, both as a mirror to the absurdities of the sweeping fashions of modern culture and as a bid to retain their core identities, and the KLF mockingly sabotaged all the trappings of fame and success, coughing up a dead



sheep with the biblical words 'I died for ewe – bon appetit' to celebrate their being voted Best British Group at the 1992 Brits, before moving swiftly into a raucously announced retirement, and perhaps the one unforgivable sin in the eyes of even the most 'underground' of artists. The deletion of their entire back catalogue.

With the KLF a smouldering shadow, Bill and Jimmy formed the K Foundation and promptly did a huge favour to anyone who has ever actually liked art rather than quantified it and spilled drivelling champagne cocktails over it. The first K Foundation art award for the worst British artist was unceremoniously presented to Rachel Whiteread on the day she claimed the dubious accolade of the Turner Prize. Call it a stunt – many did, but the fact that the K Foundation award came with double the amount of cold hard cash than the Turner, both persuaded good old Rachel to accept it before it went up in flames and turned a bleak spotlight on the firesale of artistic truth. And a year later....well.... they ritually burnt a million quid. We won't go into the controversy here, but needless to say, the sight of rapaciously selfish bourgeois wealth suddenly invoking starving Africans and waste was an irony

not lost on any of us. Every single middle class mouthpiece sang outrage from the rooftops, and while on a personal level, we could sit here and lyricise about the true Bonfire of the Vanities and the conceptual surrender of monetised individualism – we don't wholly understand it – best to admit it really.

Bill resumed his writing career – hot on the heels of his and Jimmy's smash hit, *The Manual (How to Have a Number One the Easy Way)* and began diversifying his individual journey away from K related activities and further and further away from accepted notions of normality in 'culture'. And then came No Music Day – apparent lunacy for a seasoned recording artist, but he had recognised that music, and indeed all art is at its purest and most archetypal, a fleeting, transient moment of connection that draws artist and those who experience the art into a circle of primal emotion. Experience that penetrates the intangible levels of consciousness is both unrepeatable and unrecordable – it is in its very essence – not open to capture or to analysis. The technological revolution that brought about the possibilities of recording and sampling intrinsically neutralised the experience of music that has woven

What does graffiti mean to you as self-expression, a wider medium and a social force?

1968:

January and February 1968 were dark months, but March, April and May were even darker. I was 14 going on 15. Reinhardt Alders had come around to mine, with the jar of chloroform that he had nicked from the Biology laboratory at school, a week or so ago. I hadn't tried it yet but Pete, Donald and Gary all had and said that it was good. None of us had even come close to trying real drugs yet. Real drugs were exotic. The Beatles and the Rolling Stones took real drugs not ordinary kids like us who lived on the estates in Corby. In my bedroom Reinhardt removed the lid of the jam jar he had the chloroform in, pored some of the liquid onto his hanky and then some onto mine. Reinhardt explained that I should now lie down on my bed with the hanky over my face and he would do the same lying on the floor. Soon the walls started to throb and after a while time seemed to slow down. This was good.

The next thing that I can remember was being in the back of an ambulance and the blue lights flashing. By the time we were in the Accident & Emergency at Kettering General I was coming around proper, and was soon discharged. They kept Reinhardt in over night.

Next morning in school assembly, words were spoken. Mr Bradley, the headmaster, explained how two boys (un-named) in the fourth form, had seriously endangered their lives by inhaling a substance stolen from the Biology Lab. One of the boys was still in hospital. I expected the school to come down heavy on us, but no action was taken.

A few days later I was sitting in the Maths class, Miss Bevin the deputy head, was our maths teacher. I was not listening; instead I was using a drill bit that I kept in my pocket, to drill a hole through the top of the desk. I hated Miss Bevin and she hated me. I never did any work in her lessons even though I both liked and was good at maths.



Later in the day I was called to Miss Bevin's office, she asked me to empty my pockets and put the contents on her desk. This I did, the contents included my knife, a snotty hanky, some fish hooks, and my drill bit. She asked me if I had been responsible for the hole that had been drilled in the desk where I had been sitting this morning during her maths lesson. I said yes. She told me that I did not deserve to be at this school and that she was going to punish me as severely as she could. I expected the chloroform incident to be mentioned but it wasn't, it was as if it had never happened.

Mr Tuffin was called in, I liked Mr Tuffin, he was our metalwork teacher and had also been our maths teacher the year before. Miss Bevin asked him if this drill bit on her table might have been stolen from the metalwork shop. He said it could have been as there were ones that size missing. I had not stolen the drill bit, it was mine, bought with my own money. I liked drill bits, I liked drilling, still do.

That evening there was a knock at our door. It was Mr Tuffin and my form master. They asked my parents for permission to search my bedroom. They were interested to see



if I had a stash of all the other tools that had been going missing from the metalwork shop. I had numerous tools in my bedroom; chisels, hammers, saws and drills. I liked tools; I liked banging and sawing, still do. But none of these tools had been stolen from the metalwork shop and Mr Tuffin knew this.

The next morning I was called back into Miss Bevin's study, and accused by her of stealing not only a drill bit but also numerous other tools from the metalwork shop. This was not the first time I had been accused of doing things that I had not done, nor the last. I was put on detention for the rest of the term.

Some evenings later I was watching the TV news. French students were rioting in the streets of Paris. They were upturning cars and setting fire to them. They were pulling up the cobblestones from the boulevard and hurling them at the massed ranks of Gendarmes. I had no idea what they were rioting about, but it looked good to me. But there was something else that they were doing that really caught my imagination – they were getting pots of

paint and large brushes and daubing words and slogans on walls and shop windows. I knew sod all French, but this looked like a very great thing to be doing.

In bed that night I hatched a plan. Our school had a central block, four stories high. On the north side of the block was four large rectangles of brickwork, one above the other. So the plan was, I would get a big pot of white paint and paintbrush and on each of these rectangles of brickwork I would paint a huge letter. Once I had got all four letters done, they would make a word and this word would be seen, not only by all the school kids and the teachers coming in the next morning, but everybody driving up Gainsborough Road out of Corby, heading towards Great Oakley and Kettering. I mean this would be hundreds of people, maybe thousands. And they would all see what I had written and nobody would know it was me. The four letters that I planned to paint, starting from the top floor were, F, U, C and K.

By the next night, I had the paint and the



brush and under the cover of darkness I went up to the school. Remember this is decades before CCTV. But what I had not taken into account in my detailed planning was how I was going to do this painting right down the outside of a four story building. This chronic lack of foresight on my part did not quash my ardour. Instead I went down to the school next door (across the playing fields), Pope John the 23rd. Here I was able to clamber up onto a first floor roof, via a fire escape ladder. Here I was hidden from the road and I got to work. Instead of the letters that I originally planned to daub down the side of my school, I painted the slogan MISS BEVAN IS A CUNT. This felt good. Very good indeed. It did not matter to me that what I painted, could not be seen by all the kids or teachers on their way to school, the next morning or by anybody driving up Gainsborough Road.

That night I lay in bed, with a big smile on my face. The dark months were over. A job well done!

That story above is my answer to first of these

four questions; interpret it, as you will.

Where is the line between art and vandalism if any, and does anyone have the right to draw that line?

1969:

A year and a couple of months later, Ian Fordyce and I get the train down to London. It is Saturday 5th July 1969. We are off to see the Rolling Stones in Hyde Park. I had missed both The Doors at the Roundhouse the previous September and Blind Faith, also in the park, a few weeks earlier (6 June 1969). Ian was in my class but had not been caught up in the chloroform-sniffing fad.

We got the tube from St Pancras to Oxford Circus and then walked along Oxford Street towards Hyde Park. It was down in the tube station at Oxford Circus that I saw the first one. Then walking along Oxford Street I saw a couple daubed onto doors between the shops. Then there was one daubed onto the back of a lad's donkey jacket. All had been done in white paint and all were made up of the same three words – CLAPTON IS GOD.



Now anybody of my generation knew the Clapton in question was Eric. Back in '69, Eric Clapton, late of the The Blues Breakers and Cream and currently of Blind Faith, was not the safe middle of the road singer songwriter he was to become, but he was our original guitar hero. Most of us would not have doubted his God like genius, but what would motivate somebody to want to go and get a pot of paint and paint brush and paint this statement on a wall?

I bet, whatever those French students in Paris were daubing on the walls of their city, was a lot more important and exciting than proclaiming Clapton was God in London. I should have asked the lad with it on his donkey jacket, but we were already running late.

By the way the Stones were rubbish and we left before the end.

1973:

Four years later when I was coming to my end at art school (Liverpool) and becoming disillusioned by everything that was being done within art schools and even more disillusioned with what I had been doing there – I started to feel the urge to get a tin of household paint and a broad brush and head out into the streets and make my mark. I have

written about this at length elsewhere, so for the sake of this answer I will keep it short. The urge was to paint on doors and walls and any place else across the streets of Liverpool just two words – I HATE. I did not know what I hated or why I should hate it so much. The trouble is I never acted on this impulse, just left the urge repressed and festering. Instead I got some planks of wood out of a skip and nailed them together. On this I painted the words IS CLAPTON STILL GOD? This was the only work that I put in the end of year show. Fuck knows why I needed to ask the question, but if it needed to be asked I should have done it in huge letters along the wall of the Mersey Tunnel and not in some pathetic little art student exhibition.

1975:

Over the summer of '75, I had done a lot of hitching around the country looking for something, and everywhere I went there seemed to be the same crudely painted words on walls and bridges – GEORGE DAVIS IS INNOCENT. This George Davis was some East End gangster who had got banged up for a crime he had not supposedly committed and a mate of his had taken it upon himself to go around the country painting this slogan wherever he thought appropriate. Now I couldn't have given a sod if this George Davis



was innocent or not, but I loved the fact that whoever had done this graffiti had gone to the effort of going all around the country doing it, to the point that it had entered the general public's imagination. It had become a legend.

Back then felt tip pens were not yet on the market and aerosol spray paint cans were not comparatively cheap. Thus the easy to purchase and use tools to make your mark on urban walls were not readily to hand. To carry a pot of paint and paintbrush was a lot more of an investment of time and energy and you stood a good chance of getting your clothes splattered if not ruined. Thus our walls were as yet not covered in graffiti. Thus when you saw some it had a far greater impact than it could ever do now.

Late in '75, I was back in Liverpool, working at the Everyman Theatre building the stage sets. The artistic director at the at the Everyman decided to turn Ken Kesey's *One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest* into a stage play. This was before the film starring Jack Nicholson was out. I had loved this book in my late teens. Another book I loved from the same cannon of the new American Literature was *Fear &*

Loathing by Hunter S. Thompson. It was as much for the scrawled and splattered cartoons that appeared throughout *Fear & Loathing* as the actual text. These cartoons were done by a Ralph Steadman. Thus I was more than pleasantly surprised to learn that the artistic director of the Everyman had invited Steadman to do the stage designs for the play.

Steadman and I spent an evening together, he had given me a stack of his splatter like cartoons that we were somehow to interpret and turn into working drawings to build a stage set from. This was all a welcome challenge, but the greatest thing that I got from the evening I spent with Steadman was his stories of what he and Hunter S. Thompson had got up to. The story that stuck in my head above all the others was the one of when the pair of them were in New York. It so happened that the Pope was making a Papal visit to the city. They, Steadman & Thompson and not the Pope, got a small boat, and under the cover of darkness, rowed out into the harbour beside a well chosen ship and painted **FUCK THE POPE** down its side, using paint rollers on telescopic handles. The next morning the Mayor of New York City was doing some big welcome to the Pope occasion in the open air, a live on prime



time TV event – a sweeping view of the River Hudson as the backdrop, the Statue of Liberty on the horizon, all adding to the grandeur of the occasion. Then one particular ship sails down the Hudson, behind the Mayor and the Pope and across the nations TV screens. Now I have nothing personally against the Pope or the mayor of New York, but as a fuck you to authority and everything that tries to control us and keep us down and make us feel rubbish, this seemed to the then 22 year old me to have been a great and liberating thing to have done.

There was something else that I started to notice in Liverpool. The bus I took to the Everyman Theatre each day would go down Princess Avenue. This was a wide tree lined boulevard about half a mile long. At one end was a statue. On the plinth of the statue someone had daubed the words NEVER WORK. I would see this on the way to work in the morning. On my way back from work in the evening I would pass another statue at the other end of Princess Avenue, on that one the same hand had daubed DRIFT AROUND. I had no real idea what was meant by these two statements or why somebody would have been motivated to do them, but for some reason they cast a spell on me. To paint MISS BEVIN IS A CUNT or GEORGE DAVIS IS

INNOCENT or even FUCK THE POPE made sense but NEVER WORK and DRIFT AROUND seemed more oblique, even mysterious. I liked this. Every morning and every evening, I looked forward to seeing them and turning the words around in my head. Sitting on the top deck of a bus is one of the best ways to view graffiti.

If you had asked me then, where the line between art and vandalism lay? I would have not been able to answer you. To make that judgement, you would first have been able to define what vandalism was and what art is. I could not have made neither of those judgements. As to the 56 year old me that is attempting to answer these questions in 2010, I can still not make those sort of judgements. You might think I am trying to side step the question, but... The trouble is I have always been drawn to the more visceral kind of ART, the sort of art that you have to get out there and do. The sort of art that does not exist in galleries or that can not be bought and sold and owned and discussed properly and understood and valued and does not even know it is art and does not give a sod anyway. That is my favourite sort of ART. But there again if somebody came along and painted a giant toaster on the side of my flat I would be totally pissed off. So what does that say about



me?

Post Script: I have never seen or heard of the FUCK THE POPE graffiti done by Steadman & Thompson since. I have just done a check on Google and nothing came up. Thus I have no proof it ever happened. This lack of proof has not stopped it from being a hugely inspirational event for me, ever since Ralph Steadman told me about it in 1975. But somehow, not as inspiring as the NEVER WORK and DRIFT AROUND ones.

Why do you consciously sidestep aesthetics in your work? Does a sentence speak a thousand pictures?

This urge to make your mark on a wall or door, out in a public space, comes from somewhere very deep and primal. For me it is not about wanting to make something that is pleasing to the eye, or to impress the passer by, or even as a career move. And definitely not something to brighten up the neighbourhood. I do not even want to make something that is obviously understandable.

It is far darker than that. In the story of the Passover in the book of Exodus, God says to

Moses - 'Go tell the Children of Israel that each family is to slaughter a male lamb and to take the blood of that lamb and daub the side posts and the lintel of the door of their houses and in that way the Angel of Death will know to fly over that house and not take the first born boy.' Or something like that. And that is what happened.

When I first saw Ralph Steadman's splatterings across the pages of Fear & Loathing, it reminded me of that lambs blood daubed on the doorposts and lintels in the story from Exodus. Don't ask me to qualify the connection. But both had the same sort of urgency that need to make your mark or die.

In a lot of my work, be it posters, paintings, pamphlets or books, I try to make everything as simple, clean and direct as possible. I keep everything down to two typefaces, ones with as little character as a typeface can have. I want things to look as non-designed as possible, thus no illustrations or graphics. This I hope gives the words far more room to do their job. That said Cally and I have worked long and hard at attempting to achieve this affect. Cally being the designer I have worked with over the past 12 years.

Thus when I end up finding myself on a dark winter's night, with the pot of paint in one hand and brush in the other, the last thing I want to be doing is making something aesthetically pleasing to the eye of the passer by. Our urban streets are full of cars that I hate the look of, all around us are billboard advertisements that reek of everything I loathe in society, and 99% of the buildings going up are as equally offensive to my eye. And all are trying to seduce us with design. They are all desperately seeking our approval. Doing everything they can to get in our knickers or taking whatever is left in our wallets. And they do this at the same time as lying to us at some very deep level. It is rape masquerading as seduction. And we just accept it. We lie down and take those adverts, because it is the way that it has always been through our lives. We can even think we like it at times. I mean this is the free world where we can choose what we want. I understand the logic. I too have put my X in the box. I know that I am just as much part of this system as whoever I may be pointing my finger at. Give me your hand and I will bite it now, just to prove this point. But this does not stop me seething inside and wanting to rip the whole lot down. Pass me a tin of paraffin and let me be the first to strike the match.

A picture can grab our attention but it is words



that can start a revolution. Not that I have ever set out to start a revolution. But you know what I mean?

Looking back at the 30 years you have been involved in graffiti, how do you view its evolution and increased commercialisation?

Some looking back first then I will try and focus in on the question.

1987 – 1992:

When Jimmy Cauty and I started to work together in early 1987, we found we both had had this similar need to make marks on walls. Thus it was only natural for it to become part of the other things we were doing together. Thus the lift shaft block on the top of numerous high rise flats across South London, began to have The JAMS or 1987: What The Fuck Is Going On? painted on them in large white letters. They could be seen for miles. Then we did the north side of the fly tower of the National Theatre on the Southbank, with a massive 1987 and to the side a small The JAMS. We used paint rollers with telescopic handles just like Ralph Steadman and Hunter S. Thompson. When we went back the next morning we were disappointed with how small it looked from the other side of the Thames. We promised ourselves we would come back in ten years and do it again but bigger. We did do it in 1997, it was on the night of our Fuck The Millennium performance at the Barbican Theatre, but it too seemed a bit pathetic, as if we were doing it by numbers or as performing monkeys. We always planned to do it properly in 2007, but by then (post 9/11) the security on public buildings like



the National Theatre made it impossible. But back in '87 we also started to deface billboard advertisements. Some of these got picked up by the press others didn't. The best one we did was on a billboard for the New Statesman. In the advertisement they had used that photograph from the Vietnam War of the terrified naked girl running towards the camera to escape a napalm attack. This was maybe the most iconic photograph taken during that war. We painted a crude speech bubble coming out of her mouth, with the words 'Merry Xmas from The JAMS.' You would have been hard pushed to do something more crass than that. I was perfect.

We some how justified what we were doing as promotion for the records we were putting out. But we knew in ourselves that the graffiti was about something else altogether and equally as important as anything else we were doing.

2000:

After we stopped making records and my practice as an artist became a lot less definable, there yet again was no good

justifiable excuse for doing the graffiti. I was by now a grown man in my 40s with numerous family responsibilities. But for the first time in my life, I had my own transport, a Land Rover. It was not long before I had a 10 litre tub of white emulsion and a sic inch brush in the back of the Land Rover with me at all times, just incase. I mean what was the harm? And anyway I had it basically under control. There was never anything that big or too blatant. I made sure very little of what I did was documented.

But then it all came to a head in the year 2000 when the police knocked on my door. Standing before them was this mild looking middle aged man, thus they started by apologizing for disturbing me, as they assumed there must be some mistake, but it was their duty to follow up the leads they were given. Basically the number of my Land Rover had been taken down while a man in Liverpool had painted the words DEAD WHITE MAN in large letters on the outside of a casino in broad day light. I told them I was the man they were looking for and that I would come



quietly. So I was up in front of the beak without any sort of defence that I could articulate. The chairman of the magistrates made some remarks about me being an otherwise upstanding member of the community and had obviously only had a momentarily lapse of reason, and as it was a first time offence he only gave me a fine of a few hundred pounds plus costs. This amounted to a bit more than a £1,000 all told. After this, for the sake of my family, I tried to keep things under control. Well as much as I could.

Sometime in the early 2000s I read a biography of the French Situationist, Guy Debord. It dealt with his influence on the rioting students in Paris '68. The ones I had admired on TV as they splattered slogans on the walls and doors of their city. In the book there were photos of their graffiti, there was also translations of what these slogans were. One was NEVER WORK and another was DRIFT AROUND.

2008:
I was in Derby doing a massed version of The17, involving 1,700 of the citizens of the city. This was something that I had been

commissioned to do to celebrate the opening of a multi-million pound arts centre. This was high profile establishment stuff. It had taken months of putting it together. And it had all gone well. The people in power and who wrote the cheques were pleased with the results. But then I had to go and spoil it all (like Frank & Nancy). Close to Derby city centre underneath a bridge over the River Derwent, that I regularly walked under, there was this spot that was a natural for graffiti. There was already a few generations of tagging on a grand scale there, but nothing too fresh. In my head I could see the job that needed to be done. I chose a night when it was pissing down, thus there was nobody about. Under the bridge it was dry and I could get on with the work. It only took just over two hours. Each of the letters were a couple of metres high and all told the graffiti was about 30 metres long. It read: IMAGINE WAKING UP TOMORROW & ALL MUSIC HAD DISAPEARED. The next morning I came back, it looked brilliant. The words referenced something that I was doing with The17, too long for me to go into here. And anyway, like most of the graffiti that I have done over the decades it makes no direct sense, I am more interested



in people wondering what the sod was meant by the words and it some how playing on their minds for sometime, as opposed to it being an obvious one line type statement or joke thing.

And because I judged this graffiti in Derby to be a grand success I made the decision that I would repeat the same graffiti in every location around the world that The 17 performed on their world tour. And in each country I would have the line translated into the local language. And if the language uses a different alphabet or characters then I use the local ones. This world tour goes on until 2013, thus there is a lot more to get done. It also means that my habit is under control and reasonably well focused. Doing it in China last autumn was the first time out of Europe. Using Chinese characters was very exciting. Then I was in Port-au-Prince in Haiti the week before Christmas (2009). There I did in Haitian Kreyòl. The earthquake happened three weeks after my return. The wall that my graffiti was on was one of the only walls left standing in that part of the city. I have been in almost daily contact with some friends and colleagues in Haiti since the earthquake. What I have learnt from them is that a myth has built up around the graffiti that I did. The myth being that my graffiti was a prophesy about the earthquake.

That I had somehow, foretold the act of God to come. In the aftermath of the earthquake there was no music in the city. And since learning this I have lost all desire and compulsion to make graffiti. This I know will not last. It never does.

So onto the evolution and increased commercialisation part of the question: Over the past 30 years I have been daubing paint on walls and doors, I have seen graffiti that has been done all over the world. And I still see stuff that excites me. Stuff that makes me think, that is why we make these marks in the night, why we risk climbing over gates and fences and up fire escapes and across roofs, dodging the CCTV cameras and the security guards.

It is usually in the most unlikely places, way out in the middle of nowhere or maybe can only be seen from the window of a plane. I love the ones that you get in railway tunnels that can only be seen from the light of the window as the train speeds by. And it is always great to see them on the outside of bridges high above motorways or rivers or rail lines. I like to feel the urgency, that desperate need, with no obvious reward or return for the effort put in.

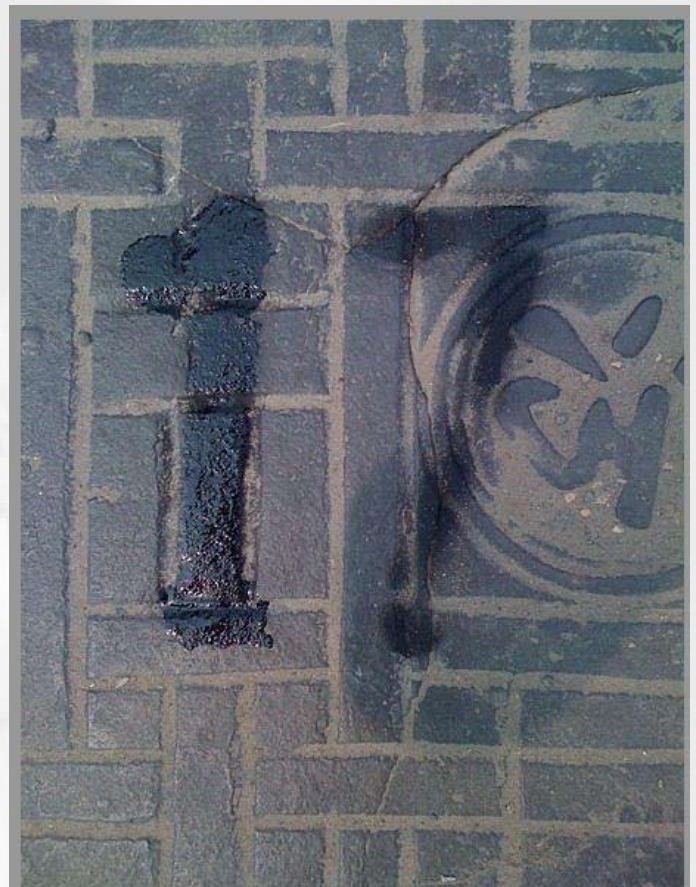


When I was driving through the former Eastern Germany and Poland just a few years after the collapse of communism, there was all this graffiti on the side of crumbling factories in the remotest of regions. It was the same when I was working in Siberia a couple of years ago. Whoever is doing these graffiti is not thinking about careers as artists, exhibiting in galleries and selling works for thousand and thousand. They are making their mark 'cause they have to, and there is no other way that they can. And for me it is still potent. Still makes me go – you soddin' show them. I would have no interest meeting those that have done these graffiti, it is more than enough to know that they are out there doing it.

I was in Sao Paulo in Brazil, doing No Music Day back in November 2008; there was some great graffiti there, mainly under the flyovers and along the side of the freeways. This was colourful stuff, very creative in a way that I am not usually bothered about. But there was a wildness to it that redeemed any of its artiness in my judgement.

I have never been interested in the 'street art' that is sponsored by local councils to try and make their borough seem more inclusive. Or

for that matter special places designated by local councils for teenagers to go with their spray cans and stencils. Once something like graffiti is validated by the art world or patronising local councils, its like it has had its bollocks cut off. It no longer does the job it is supposed to be doing.





As for the stuff you see around Shoreditch and Hoxton nowadays. This on the whole does not excite me. It seems too self-aware. Too trying to be part of a career path. It lacks that dark and primal thing. I know it is obvious for someone like me to have a go at any of the post BANKSY generations of wannabees. But to me, what they are doing is the complete opposite of what excited me about graffiti in the first place. To me they are the ones that I was wanting to have nothing to do with, when I was back in art school in 1973. It's as if they are part of that 'creatives' world, part of the world that designs cars and billboard advertisement and all the other shit that is clambering for our attention. That said I still wholeheartedly go along with the sentiment

of taking art out of the galleries and onto the street where it can be for everyone and does not have to have price tags or be written about in 'art speak' ways. Just don't put an email address at the bottom of it. And now that brands of vodka are using graffiti to try and hip themselves up you know it is time to move on.

For most people that do graffiti it is just a phase they pass through. Maybe an intense phase, but a phase all the same. I realise with myself it is here for the long haul. It will be something that I will never grow out of. It is not like I do it to define who I am, being a 'street artist' is the last thing I am or have ever aspired to be. I never feel I should go and do some graffiti 'cause I have not done any this month. Sometimes I get through a couple of years without doing any. Then some words will come into my head, words that might not make any obvious sense, even to myself and they will start to gnaw away at my resistance. And it always ends in the same way with me going off into the night with the paint pot and brush. Afterwards I still get that sense of release sweeping over me. I guess it is more of an illness than a form of self-expression. The trouble is I am getting no younger, the arthritis in my left knee is beginning to get to me, but even in my old age I sense it will be an urge that I will have to deal with and let it find its outlet.

Any suggestions?

100 Questions

[www.penkilnburn.com/
paintings/100_questions/
questions.php](http://www.penkilnburn.com/paintings/100_questions/questions.php)

www.penkilnburn.com

www.the17.org

With thanks to Tracey Moberly for the fishing portraits







Photography: Nicole Blommers



Vitry-sur-Seine - Paris April 2010

PAGE 51

facecunt

Evening all. well, I guess I got the job because here I am, back in pdf fact y'all !!!

It looks like this is going to be one of the few places I can share my thoughts after my recent disasters with social networking. Yep there's a nasty little hacker out there trying to ruin my life; oh they've gotten hold of the Myspace profile, i can't get back in or cancel it (handy), but then they went one better and faked up an entire doppelganger profile of myself on Facebook which i discovered , to my dismay, that people I thought I knew and trusted went off happily and became friends with. Well, if that nasty little geek is reading now, I have a message for you: considering you want to be me, you could start by paying my rent! That'd really sort me out. Hell, I might even let you babysit my children , as long as you're tied to a concrete pillar and drip fed liquid THC.....

Anyway, no more Friendface or Placespace or Arsebook for me my dears, got much better things to do than share youtube clips and play mafia wars (to which i was thoroughly addicted by the way,) I got an album to write, and you know what? I'm getting it written a hell of a lot quicker now I don't have the option to fritter away hours on the world's biggest timesponge (thanks Jake for that quote btw) sneak previews available on soundcloud.com/lab51rat for anyone who's interested (oops, self promotion there, I'm as bad as a Myspace user, tsk, tsk, tsk , !!!!!)

Believe it or not, I do actually have something to write about, and it concerns how I get my after work doses of TV entertainment these days. Come on, who doesn't love a bit of web streaming? I get every brand new episode of the Simpsons bright and early Monday morning, literally hours after it was first aired in the States, if there's something that someone says you absolutely 'gotta see', 9 times out of 10 its available via 'Megavideo' to watch right there and then, or download for later. The be all and end all of this being that despite the fact I still require to numb my brain with couch potato inducing entertainment, I am the master of my own broadcast schedule; yes the TV networks are still providing force feed tripe for me to choke on of an evening, but at least I say what goes in, and when.....

So, why , in the year 2010, is what I'm doing still ILLEGAL?

No, sorry, think about it, there is NO reason why my watching a TV show online should





affect revenue somewhere else on the planet. First, I do believe that the majority of the western world are now in the process of switching off all terrestrial, UHF and VHF TV transmissions in favor of a digital only community, Great!!!! that'll get the elderly either off their beds and out into the fresh air wherever possible, or for the particularly far gone, a good bout of static could rival even the most riveting episode of 'Crossroads', and there's a lot to be said for using it as a training tool to decipher those 'magic eye' books (oh look, it IS a dolphin!)

Ok, secondly, I gather that once a TV show is successfully received, it's the networks that buy the show with money made through providing advertising space for other companies at crucial moments during the program. Now, bearing this in mind, coupled with the fact that the closest anybody gets to paying for TV nowadays is via their internet service provider, the money to keep these producers in clean cottons in order to bamboozle us further with their wacky ideas to keep us chained to our screens is out there, TV license or not. (come on, did they really get the cash to make 'Doctor Who' and 'Torchwood' from Mrs Bloggs and others like her dutifully forking out 130 pounds a year to keep the detector vans away? And why was the TV license advert always played

on a commercial channel anyway? Sake of integrity? an institutional pillar to claw onto while all about you the world is tossed and turned like crimson tides on heat? is that what the BBC represents?)

Here I am, an Englishman, abroad, fluent in the local lingo, but refusing to watch dubbed Anglo/American shows. Despite being able to understand them, David Duchovny in French just doesn't quite cut it (and there's too many differences in our



and their uses of sexual innuendo to make an episode of Californication even slightly convincing to me) So, what can I do? If I was to play the game legally, what have I got? Sky news, France 24 English, and Al Jazeera International. Yes, that's All.....fine if I want to scare myself silly of an evening about our society's ever impending doom (or pretend that I am, actually an 'Emirates' frequent flyer, and really do care what the weather's like in Johannesburg today) OK, next up, and I'm still trying to do this legally OK? What happens if I go to, for example, Channel 4's website, find out there's a new series of 'Shameless', and oh look, there's catch up episodes online, by which point I'm champing at the bit to find out the latest antics of the Gallagher and Mcguire families. And so I click.....

Oops! The media you are trying to access can only be viewed by users in the U.K !!!!! now WHAT THE BLOODYHELL IS THAT ABOUT? AND WHY? 'Desperate Housewives'? , same thing again, and this wasn't even made in England. Somebody, somewhere, sat in a plush office overlooking the London eye has decided, without dare I say, putting it to public vote, that, no, sorry, if you're an Englishman abroad, you'll have to make do with popping down to your local touristy newspaper vendor, and grabbing a copy of the 'sun' for nearly a fiver!!!

And, so I go, with great reluctance I might add (not out of principle, just because it's a royal pain in the bum!) to illegal online TV show streaming sites, and hunt down what I'm looking for. Oh look, I even get the option to download and keep it! Surely no TV network wants me to do that now do they? Too late! I've just stuck the last season of 'Lost' on my laptop, and no you can't have it back. Can't you see Mr Network Producer, by making it impossible to attain legally and just watch it while



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COMMENCE THE RIOTS

available, I've managed to track your program down like a wild beast in the jungle, ensnare it, take it home, and put it in a cage (my hard disk) and parade it around for all to see, and you no longer have the control. What can you do? Delete the links? Too late, I got it last night while you were having a poolside massage! It's called, and take note sir, 'Shooting yourself in the foot before chasing a petty department store thief!'

Ok, now some benefits to be incurred if these draconian entertainment licensing laws are lifted, and I'm still only on about the TV shows here, I understand its a lot more difficult for movies because the TV networks are usually the last to get them if they weren't specifically made for that purpose. Why stop at premiering a new show just in your country? Why not get the whole flipping world to watch it within the same 24 hour period? Ratings would go through the roof, social networks would be championing the latest thriller or comedy to grace our screens with worldwide debate, whether it was any good, or not! People in Japan, Russia, and America would all have something in common for once. Who, and I mean, what kind of sick pervert, would have a problem with that?



It can't be about the money, because if that's what it was, none of these shows would get made in the first place. Look, everybody who makes a show wants it to get seen by as many people as possible, right? I mean, how else would I know that the Americans had done their own version of 'Life on Mars', or that 'V' got remade the end of last year, if it wasn't for the Internet? And this goes right across the scale of society too: what about the Jones's, who decided to have a 2 week break in Magaluf, and Marjorie, that's the wife, just can't bear to be without her daily fix of 'Corrie' or 'Eastenders', and bugger me if it's about time she used that computer I got her for Xmas for something other than an over intelligent photo album and recipe book.

Well, there it is, I rest my case. I've emailed the BBC and Channel 4 to no avail (no reply either, not even an automated one so somebody did actually read it, I kid myself...) we all knew that a grave shaped hole in the ground was opening up to swallow television as a media dinosaur ever since the Internet became ubiquitous in daily life. Abolishing these pathetic and outdated rules over who can watch what, and where, may be the only thing to stave off the nailing on, of its own coffin lid.

Saying that though, the sun's just come out, and I think its time to get my head away from this screen, and take a de-ionizing stroll outside.....

bysie bye....51.



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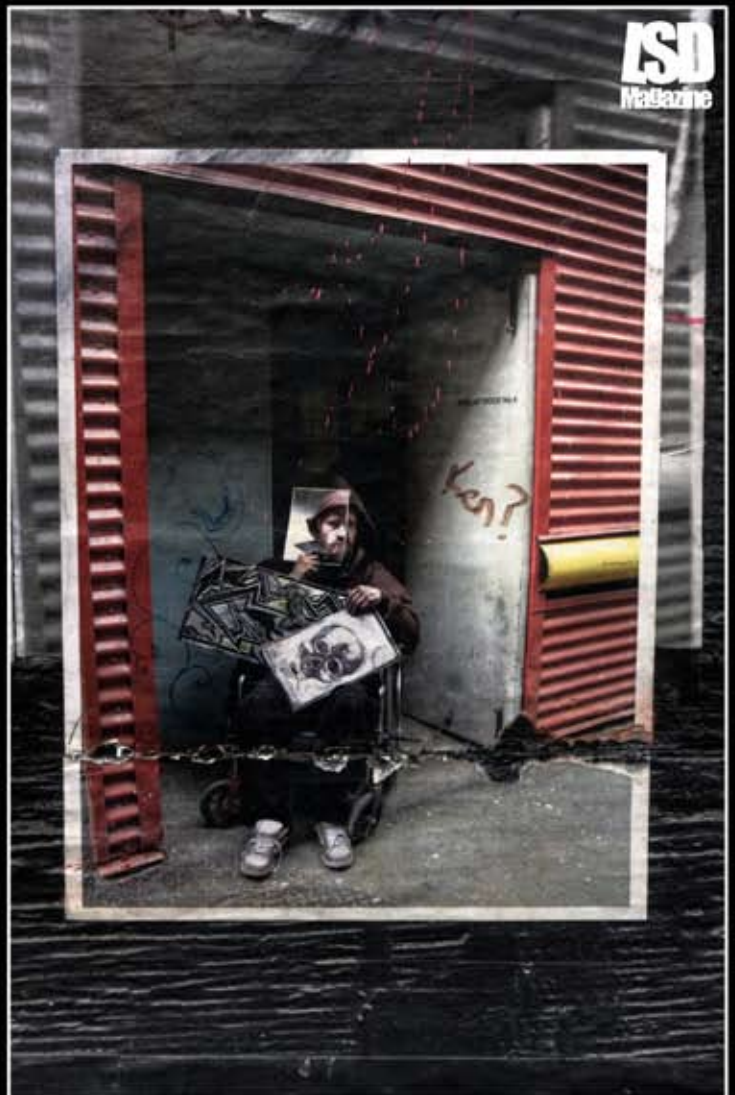


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Photography: Vegas



Vancouver - 2010

Pichi + Avo

Bringing a spectacularly lucid splash of Mediterranean colour to the streets of Valencia and wider Spain, Pichi and Avo have infused a stunning level of figurative detail into their work. Hints of surrealism leap out and slap the viewer about while drawing you into a radiant explosion of unrestrained, spray painted talent. Creating a massive stir in their hometown and just about to set the rest of Europe ablaze, we caught up with them for a word. The original Spanish is included after the translated answers

Tell us a little about both of you and your backgrounds and how you came together as a partnership

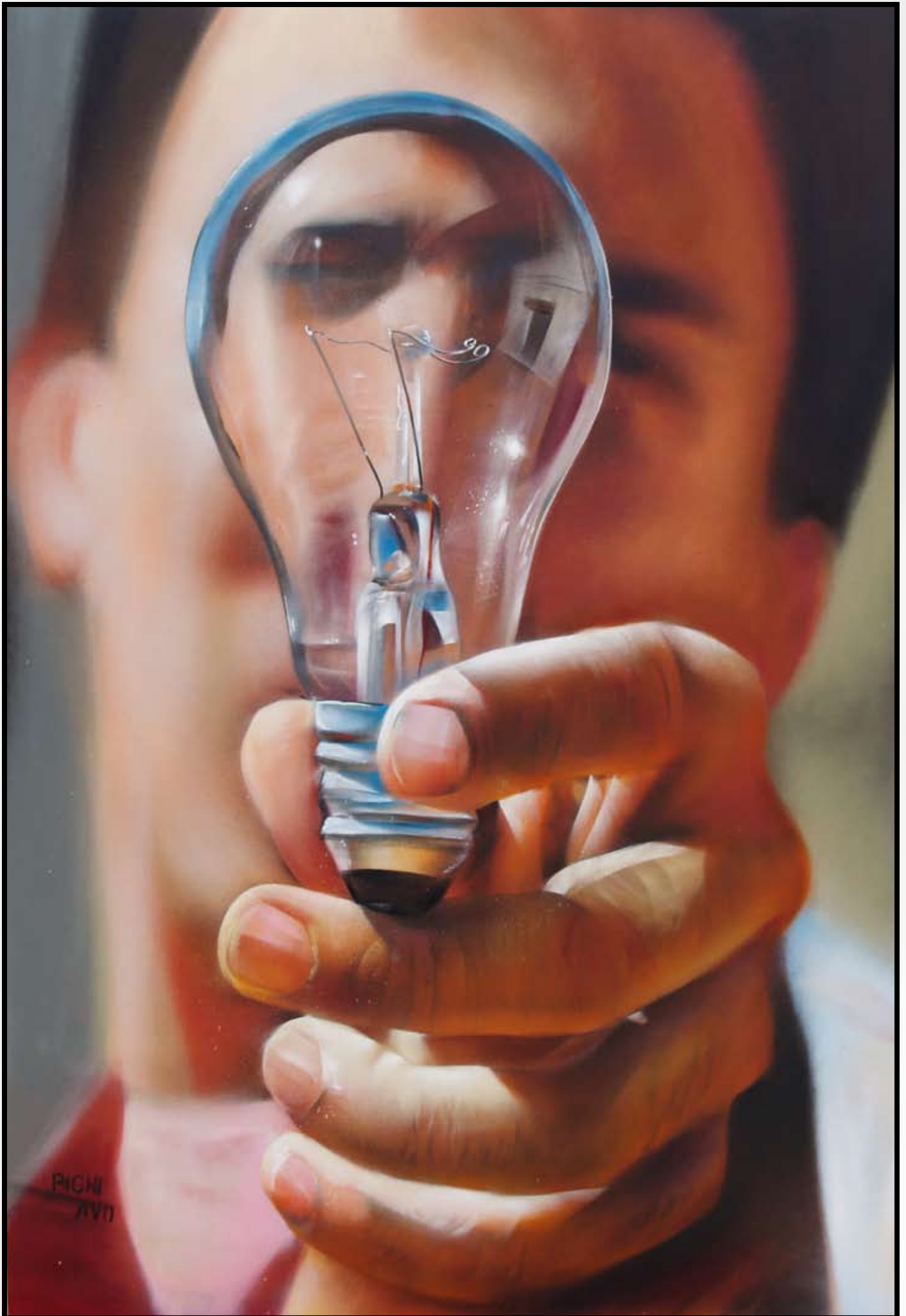
Pichi started painting in 1995 and was one of the first graffiti artists in Valencia doing figurative realistic paintings in the street. Throughout his artistic evolution he tried his hand at every aspect of graff - bombing, trains – but you could always see the figurative theme in whatever he did. I (Avo) started out 8 years later, where graffiti and spray work was far more widespread than in Pichi's day and so I found it easier to break into the street art scene and my tastes were already pretty well defined. I still did lettering when I began but I didn't particularly enjoy doing it. We consider ourselves as coming from a graffiti background – although Pichi has more of an old school influence than me who I suppose came more out of the evolution of old school graffiti

We came together as Pichi and Avo 3 years ago, realizing that our artistic philosophies



were very similar and our conceptions of how we wanted to develop as artists met perfectly. We mixed our styles more and more with every wall we did until we realized that we were doing almost exactly the same thing, and that's when the fusion between us was born. It's difficult to explain but two techniques and two visions do make one!

Pichi empezó en 1995, siendo uno de los primero artistas de graffiti que hizo realismos en las calles, durante toda la trayectoria en el mundo del graffiti Pichi ha probado todos los estilos dentro de este mundo, trenes,



RICH
JAN



bombing... y en ellos siempre se ha visto la tendencia a lo figurativo.

Yo (Avo) empecé casi 8 años más tarde, teniendo ya muchas referencias, no como pichi que en esos años no se tenía casi nada de información del graffiti, mis comienzos fueron más sencillos, y mis gustos más o menos estaban definidos, aun que también he hecho letras, pero no disfruta haciéndolas. Consideramos que venimos del graffiti, Pichi mucho más que yo, ya que se podría decir que tiene la influencia del Old School, y además a practicado mas esa parte de graffiti, trenes, letras... yo quizás venga de la evolución del graffiti.

Y bueno nuestro encuentro como pichi&Avo fue hace 3 años que nos conocimos y nos dimos cuenta que la filosofía que teníamos era muy similar, y que los conceptos a la hora de pintar eran similares, ha sido una progresión en cada muro nos íbamos mezclando mas hasta darnos cuenta que los dos estábamos haciendo lo mismo, y ahí nació la fusión entre los dos, y hoy en dia es lo que hacemos mezclar nuestras técnicas, es algo difícil de explicar pero bueno 2 técnicas hacen una.

Did you have any formal training in realism or did you hone the style on the streets

We both did art studies. 3 years ago, Pichi

started a fine arts course and I come from industrial design. Naturally our studies in both these fields have influenced our current work, but we fundamentally believe that there is nothing quite so powerful as actually getting out there and painting on walls. Ultimately, graffiti is about paint and walls rather than books and classrooms. Saying that, it's always important to keep learning, and keep opening your mind to any form of external influence

Tenemos nuestros studios relacionados con el arte, pichi empezó hace tres años bellas artes y yo vengo del diseño industrial, lógicamente estos conocimientos influncian, pero consideramos que practicando en las paredes es donde consigues el estilo, el graffiti es mas en las paredes que en estudiar y los libros, aun que lógicamente influencia mucho el estudiar algo relacionado con el arte, Te abre mucho mas la mente.

How difficult is it to get that level of realism with a spray can and do people appreciate that?

To reach a serious level doing realism involves a hell of a lot of practice and wasting untold cans. It's time and labour intensive, so you have to be really dedicated and genuinely enjoy doing it. You have to buckle down and keep trying new lines, new colours and new combinations. I think people who aren't in touch with the graffiti and spray paint worlds





don't really understand that this can be done with spray paint and keep asking us if we use brushes because it can be difficult for them to grasp the possibility of getting that much detail from something so supposedly blunt as a can. Those in the graffiti scene know that it's a can but do wonder where the trick lies because they are well aware of how complicated it can be

Conseguir nivel haciendo realismo es practicarlo y sobre todo gastar muchos botes, realmente no lo sé, es tiempo y que te guste, si no te gusta el realismo nunca podrás tener un nivel, simplemente hay que atreverse, probar combinaciones de colores y cosas nuevas.

Creo que la gente ajena al mundo del graffiti realmente no se lo imagina, y preguntan, como lo hacemos, o si usamos pinceles, porque realmente les cuesta creer que con el spray se pueda detallar tanto, y ya la gente que está relacionada con el graffiti sabe que es spray pero sí que preguntan si hay algún truco, ya que ven la complicación de hacer eso.

What is the art scene in Valencia like ?

Valencia has always had a high level of creative arts and has art in its blood and its culture, but on a graffiti level, letters, bombing and trains still totally predominate. For that reason, we are somehow not considered graffiti artists by the real 'purists'. But it does seem that the few who can escape this rigid way of thinking as to what is and what isn't graffiti are the ones who manage to attain a higher creative level and develop new and interesting styles. But the scene is very fluid and has seen a lot of recent changes with new blood coming in trying new techniques and pushing the artistic envelope.

Valencia artísticamente tiene mucho nivel, es una ciudad con mucho arte a su alrededor, el arte forma parte de nuestra cultura, pero a nivel de graffiti, lo que más predomina son las letras; bombing y trenes... por eso algunos no nos consideran graffiti, .. los pocos que se salen de ese concepto la verdad que están a un alto nivel, hoy por hoy está cambiando bastante la escena y la gente nueva se está atreviendo a hacer cosas más figurativas y realistas.



What themes and emotions drive your work

This is a bit of a tricky one because it depends on whether we are painting commissions which are essentially pretty things without any underlying concept. Having said that, everything always expresses something and has some part of yourself in it. Even with the work that we do that does contain a deeper message, very often people don't really get past the realist beauty and don't really get what we had embedded into the piece. We tend to work with a mix of concepts while always staying true to a beautiful aesthetic. But we aren't really about incisive social commentary, and any message that may come through is very subtly worked in. We just paint and see where it takes us.

Eso es difícil porque a veces simplemente hacemos cosas bonitas para la gente, sin ningún concepto detrás, aun que después siempre expresa algo, y también a veces lo que hacemos tiene una crítica de fondo, aun que la gente normalmente no lo ve, porque solo ven lo bonito y no la crítica que tiene.

Solemos trabajar con conceptos, y los mezclamos e intentamos innovar haciendo cosas bellas para la gente que al fin y al cabo es quien lo va a ver.

Realmente nuestra obra no es una obra crítica, sino que la crítica sea sutil, simplemente pintamos y a veces nos apetece hacer algo crítico y a veces solo bonito.

So tell us about the 3 faces

That is a portrait of Avo and it's actually on the terrace of our building. We tend to work with ourselves as models as we don't exactly have a large queue of volunteers. In this painting, we were working with veils – transparent tones that alter what has already been painted – as if they were layers on Photo Shop with a ghostly aspect. We were trying new things and the result proved very interesting. It was left very open to interpretation with many people wondering if it wasn't a statement on schizophrenia or the multiple characters within a personality. It expresses something different to everybody and we love leaving people free to draw their own conclusions and love it when people stand in front of a piece and really think.



Ese está en mi terraza, ese soy yo (avo), casi siempre intentamos trabajar con nosotros como modelos ya que no disponemos de muchos modelos. En este trabajo estábamos trabajando con veladuras, como si fueran capas del photoshop con transparencias, con un aspecto de fantasma, probando cosas nuevas, y bueno el resultado fue muy interesante, por las cosas que a la gente le expresaba, como que son las diferentes personalidades de una persona... lo podemos definir como un wild style realista, lo gracioso es que a cada uno le expresa algo diferente y saca sus propias conclusiones, eso nos encanta de nuestras obras que la gente fluya y piense.

And the pig eating the baby?

That one has a story because Pichi was vegetarian and he was doing a project at university about vegetarianism. The theme that Pichi chose was to do a street mural about the mistreatment of animals and forcing empathy with the plight of the animals we so nonchalantly eat. I wasn't anything to do with the course, but I pitched in and helped anyway as if it was one of our normal works. We opted for a parody on the theme with the animal eating the human, and decided on



a baby because it's a harder, more visceral image, although others have read a critique of greedy capitalism into the piece.

Ese tiene una historia, Pichi era vegetariano y tenía que hacer un trabajo de Universidad sobre el vegetarianismo, el tema que eligió Pichi era hacer un mural en la calle en contra del maltrato de los animales, yo como no estoy ya en la universidad simplemente colabore con pichi como en todo lo que hacemos.

Por eso elegimos realizar una parodia sobre este tema, en este caso el animal comiéndose a al humano, y para que fuese una crítica más directa optamos por poner un bebe ya que es más duro.

The tortoise brain – a reference to humanity being outrun by its own development?

Well you can absolutely see it like that, but the original concept is to illustrate the way people rush around life with a million things to do bound by their needs and obligations. It is important from time to time to simply slow down and savour what life really has to offer. The shape of the tortoise fits perfectly as a brain and it adds a touch of humour and a very traditional image of placid tranquility

Bueno también se puede mirar de esa manera, el concepto real es la mente lenta, las personas van por la vida con la mente acelerada con todo lo que se tiene que hacer y hay veces que la mente tiene que ir más lenta para vivir más tranquilos. En este caso la forma de la tortuga se adaptaba perfectamente a la del cerebro y dama mucho juego...

In one or two of your paintings lightbulbs are the focus – is that the power of ideas

Yes. It is a symbolic representation of ideas. At the time, we were looking for new ideas and new inspirations within our work, and what better idea than ideas themselves! We decided to first do the lightbulb mural with the fish, and then entered it in the Badalona art competition where we won a prize. It's a very universal image that speaks as a metaphor to all forms of creativity that were originally born as a brief flash of illuminated inspiration.



Tratan sobre el concepto simbólico de la idea, en ese periodo estábamos buscando nuevas ideas para pintar y que mejor idea que el símbolo de la bombilla. Por los que nos planteamos hacer primero el mural de las bombillas con los peces y más adelante lo aplicamos en un concurso en Badalona consiguiendo un de los premios, en definitiva para nosotros el concepto bombilla está muy unido con cualquier artista metafóricamente hablando, puesto toda obra de arte sale de una idea preconcebida.

What is the balance between commissions and street work

The street work is naturally far freer and we have total liberty on every front – be it concept, colour, composition or finishings and this is what it's all about for us rather than working to order. Commissions generally tend to be very specific about what they want and leaves limited room for self expression. It's purely a means to an end and that end is to continue painting. The sex shop was not our finest hour, but we did have fun doing it because it was so different, but the Rubiks cube piece was one of the rare occasions that we were granted total freedom. The owner





asked us to work as we do in the streets but just vaguely related to a clothes shop. That's the kind of stuff that you really enjoy, we smuggled in a mild critique of fashion and they were delighted.

Los trabajos que hacemos en la calle son más libres y realmente hacemos lo que queremos con plena libertad a la hora de elegir colores, composición, acabados... disfrutamos mucho mas con esto que con los encargos, ya que en los encargos nos dicen exactamente lo que quieren y en muy pocas ocasiones nos dan plena libertad, simplemente es trabajo y con el podemos ganar dinero para seguir pintando, el sexshop es un trabajo más en el cual no nos pudimos expresar, pero se disfruto ya que ha sido diferente. La obra con el Rubiks es un caso de un trabajo con plena libertad, el dueño nos pidió que nos expresáramos como en las calles, pero haciendo algo relacionado con la tienda de ropa. Ese es el tipo de trabajo que realmente disfrutas, nos planteamos hacer una crítica de lo fashion y se quedaron muy contentos por el trabajo realizado.

Do you do gallery exhibitions ?

We would love to, but we haven't had time to make it happen yet, and as soon as we've finished our pending projects, we hope to start pulling an exhibition together. We have one gallery in the Portobello Road in London interested, but people in Valencia will be expecting new stuff from us before we exhibit here and we might actually do a few canvasses

Nos gustaría la verdad, pero aun no hemos tenido tiempo, tenemos proyectos pendientes y pronto esperamos ponernos a ello, tenemos por ejemplo una galería en el mercado de Portobello en Londres que estaría interesada en nuestro trabajo, aparte en Valencia la gente está esperando algo nuestro ya, así que cuando por fin tengamos tiempo empezaremos con los cuadros.

In Spain what is the police's attitude to street art ?

I think it is similar to Europe. They treat us like scum and we are nothing but delinquents in their eyes. These days, we try and get permissions or paint private sites, so we come

into less and less contact with the authorities – but by and large it's pure censorship of urban art like anywhere else in the West

Creemos que igual que en Europa, no nos tratan muy bien, para ellos somos delincuentes, nosotros casi no tenemos problemas ya que tratamos de hacer cosas legales y tenemos unos sitios específicos por lo que la policía no se interesa por esa zona.

Pero por lo demás la policía es como en Europa, es dura y censura mucho el arte urbano.

You were saying that graffiti artists don't see you as graffiti etc. Do you think all the different styles are breaking down and coming together ?

We think that there is a natural evolution that everything should become one. Graffiti coming together with fine art, graphic design, realism surrealism. We love the fact that the edges are being blurred and that is exactly what we are trying to do. Whether you are painting a wall or a canvas, it's the inherent expression that counts

Pensamos que es una evolución natural que todo se una, el graffiti ya forma parte de arte, se están mezclando el arte, el diseño grafico...

A nosotros eso nos gusta que se mezcle, de hecho es lo que intentamos. Para nosotros pintar graffiti en las calles es lo mismo y nos expresamos igual que al pintar lienzos.

What are you doing this year and what is the long term dream for your art ?

In the short term, we have various projects like Meeting of the Style in Wiesbaden, Germany, an exhibition in Sevilla this month, and some work for shops and companies. Painting is the fundamental, and if we have the opportunity to do it outside Spain, we'll jump at it.

In the future we'd love to do bigger and bigger projects like the whole facades of buildings, and we'd just like to carry on and keep evolving. You always have to dream.

A corto plazo tenemos varios proyectos, como el meeting of styles en Wiesbaden- Alemania, una



exhibición en Sevilla este mes, y trabajos para tiendas y empresas. Pintar es lo fundamental y si tenemos oportunidades de hacerlo fuera de España como es el caso lo haremos.

En el futuro nos gustaría realizar grandes proyectos como pinta fachadas de edificios, por supuesto galerías, simplemente seguir trabajando y mejorar juntos.

Siempre hay que soñar.

www.avoart.es



Photography: WA

Cyclops & Sweet-Toof in Hackney - March 9th



Photography: Vegas



Vancouver - 2010

THE SHAMAN AND I



Since I will attain the Messianic age of 33 this coming year, I felt it was time to spend my first ever Christmas away from home. This makes sense on a practical level - I now live in San Francisco while my family is in Europe. However, on a deeper level, maybe I also felt an urge to manifest my autonomy. Perhaps Christmas away from home is a last symbolical severing of the umbilical cord.

For a while now, I have wanted to take part in a shamanistic Ayahuasca ritual in the Peruvian Amazon. My interest was piqued by an email which I received over the summer from a good friend, describing his experience of such a ceremony. He wrote:

“I am a very scientific, secular and skeptical person... I have not had any experience that could not be better explained by science and by a proper understanding of statistics. That is until I took Ayahuasca last Christmas. It

was very much a spiritual experience for me, the sensation that you are interacting with something that is not a creation of your own mind is ... well, for the secular among us, a new taste for the world, a flavor of experience that reminds me of being two or three years old again, when everything was alive and magical.”

So, rather than return to Europe, I decided that this year I would head to the Peruvian jungle. I flew to Lima, and from there to Iquitos. On arrival the air was thick and soupy with humid tropical heat. The streets pulse with innumerable ‘moto-taxis’ – motorbikes whose back wheels have been removed and replaced with benches, converting them into a form of rickshaw. I took one of these to the Plaza de Armas where I was due to meet a shaman by the name of Otilia.

As I sat waiting in the courtyard of the hotel Casona, the heavens opened, as they would do once at least once a day throughout my week in the jungle. Eventually Otilia arrived. She was a calm, composed, middle-aged woman with broad Andean cheekbones. However, she had none of the jewelry, the nose bones or the wild stares which I associate with shamanism. We shook hands and made small talk while she went to buy some Wellington boots for her daughter, then we took a taxi along the road towards Nauta.

The road was flanked by wooden huts thatched with palm fronds. It was five o' clock in the afternoon and everywhere portly, half-naked men were reclining in hammocks and stroking their stomachs. The younger men played football on the many compacted earthen football pitches.

The roadside gradually became less populous. After 50km the taxi stopped. Four handsome young Peruvian men – Otilia's boys - were waiting for us. With their muscular bodies, olive skin and thick dark hair, they bore a striking resemblance to the Native American werewolves in the recent film of Stephanie Meyer's fang-bang novel, *New Moon*. They hoisted the water barrels, oil and food which Otilia had bought onto their backs, securing the weight with straps around their foreheads, then they made their way down the path into the jungle.

I followed. The thick mud was reluctant to release my feet. There were a number of small rivulets which had to be crossed – I inched cautiously along the slimy tree trunks which served as bridges. I was soon dripping with sweat and the mosquitoes begun their week long feeding frenzy. The jungle floor was gloomy owing to the extreme height of the trees which towered above. Vines and tendrils



hung in my way, motionless in the syrupy air. Underfoot, the intricately twisting roots were traps for the unwary. Some were a bright shiny blood red and others ivory white, like the bones and arteries of the earth itself.

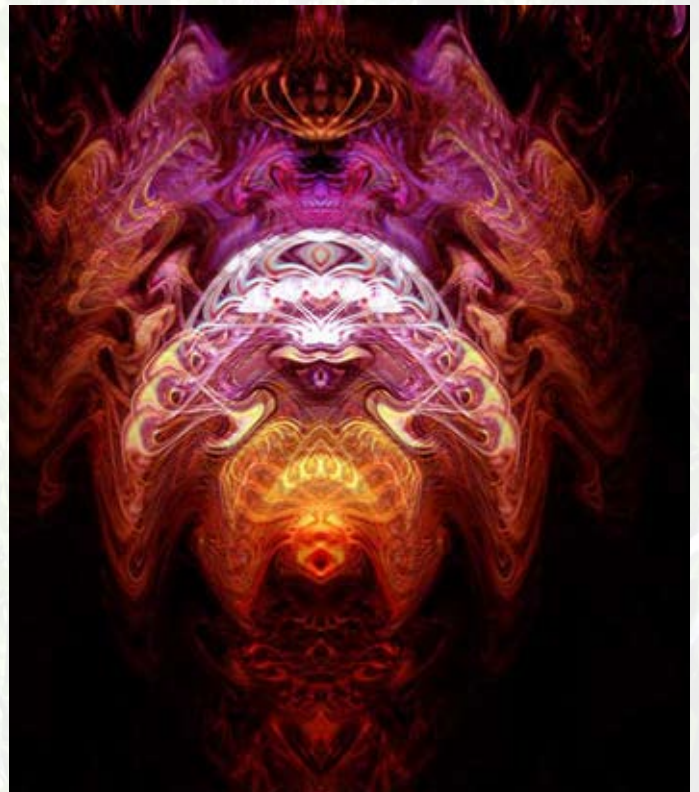
After half an hour I arrived in the jungle clearing which would be my home for the next week. I was shown my hut – a rudimentary construction balanced on stilts on the fringe of the jungle. None of the buildings had running water or electricity. In the communal dining hut I met two Frenchmen and one French woman who had also come to take Ayahuasca. Antoine was in his fifties – he was thin, smiled easily and his triangular head appeared a little big for his body. He was an old friend of Otilia's and, after a career in television, he now worked in Paris as a healer. Claude was in her forties and Stephane in his thirties; they had both come to the jungle for healing purposes. Claude was a good looking woman, though the jungle humidity wreaked havoc with her thick hair; she was half Algerian. Stephane had a drawn face and small, intense, intellectual eyes. Primarily out of politeness, I had initiated a conversation about Sarkozy's healthcare reforms. Every time Stephane saw me, he renewed his tedious disquisition on the subject with monomaniacal fervor. Later I also met an Australian woman who has been living with Otilia for over a year now; she is trying to fight breast cancer using only the medicinal powers of plants.



For the next three days we ate according to the Ayahuasca 'dieta' – fresh fruit and rice but no sugar or salt. On the third day we met at nightfall in the space underneath the floor of the temple building (the building itself was under repair). Otilia and Antoine sat at the large table at one end, lit only by a flickering candle. Claude, Stephane and I occupied the three benches which completed the rectangle, each of us about 5 metres apart. Otilia, dressed in a bright traditional dress, began furiously to smoke thick cigarettes. She came to each of us in turn and blew smoke over us. Then she returned to her table and blew smoke into a plastic bottle containing a brown liquid. She whispered mysteriously throughout.

I was the last to be called to her table. She passed me a small earthenware cup containing the brown liquid. I lifted it to my lips and swallowed the contents. Ayahuasca means 'Vine of the Souls'; it is brewed from the Banisteriopsis Caapi vine. The liquid was viscous and extremely bitter, though not as revolting as I had anticipated. When I had returned to my bench, Otilia blew out the candle. We sat in the pitch darkness in silence. I never felt nauseous myself but occasionally one of the others would vomit. In fact, for two hours I felt nothing at all. Then, slowly, I began to feel a gentle rocking. At about the same time, Otilia began to sing *ícaros*, the beautiful Spanish melodies which traditionally accompany the ceremony.

I became aware of the sounds of the jungle weaving a rich matrix around me. At the same time everything seemed to brighten, as if suffused with its own internal green



luminescence. The *ícaros* reminded me of nursery rhymes and my mind wandered back to my childhood – I remembered what it was like to be a baby. Occasionally Otilia would interrupt her singing to ask us individually how we were feeling, and whether we were experiencing *visiones*. I did not experience *visiones*, but I did become aware of a growing sense of joy within me – the universe seemed like such a great cosmic joke. Soon I was battling to fight back the waves of laughter. At the same time, however, I could hear the sound of others vomiting in the dark. I heard Claude writhing on the floor, alternately groaning, weeping and throwing up. I thought of snakes thrashing around in the squelching mud, locked in some dreadful deathlike embrace. However, the whole experience was characterized by an astonishing degree of lucidity which differentiated it from other psychotropic experiences.

While Otilia sang, she accompanied herself by tapping a bushel of leaves. After a while I could have sworn that the sound of the leaves and the sound of the singing were coming from different places. Then, as clear as daylight, I felt a tap of my knee. I extended my arm into the darkness but there was no one there. However, it did feel as if there were other beings around me, beings who had not been there before





Eventually Otilia came to sit down beside me. She continued to sing and started to tap me with the bushel; the taps felt like moths dancing over my fingers. Then she began to tap my stomach and I started to feel a little queasy, though again not sufficiently to vomit. Still in pitch darkness, Otilia made me lie down on my bench and began to massage my stomach. She pressed into my belly button, something which I hate. After a while she told me that I had an internal hernia, whatever that is. She made me repeat after her the names of the fruits and plants which I need to take to effect a cure.

Six hours after drinking the Ayahuasca, Otilia drew the ceremony to a close. The world was no longer lit by pulsating green light, but when I stood up I was very unsteady on my feet. I set off towards my hut but got lost as soon as I was out of sight of the temple. Everything looked different by torchlight and I backtracked a number of times. I was beginning to fear that I would have to spend the whole night stumbling blindly around the jungle when, thankfully, my hut hove into view. I barely slept at all that night; however, lying beneath my mosquito net, I was flooded with a sense of serenity and with an intimation of the mysteries that surround us. The following day, unusually, Otilia joined us

for lunch. I asked her how she had learnt the *ícaros*, of which she knew upwards of 500. She told me that she had never learnt them, that she was born knowing them. So from your mother, then? I asked. No, she replied; her mother did not know any. Then I asked her how she knew which plants to use to treat ailments. She replied that the spirits come to her and tell her during the ceremonies. So you see the spirits? I asked. She nodded; she said that as soon as the ceremony begins, her own spirit leaves her body. Her body will continue to sit at the table and sing the *ícaros*, but her mind will go from person to person, sharing their experience. She says she has been telepathic since childhood.

At this point Antoine, who has done many ceremonies, told me that he once left his body and observed a dinner party hosted by his housemate in his apartment in Paris. When he spoke to his housemate by telephone the following week, his identification of the guests and the topics of conversation was spot on. But, said Antoine, that was an unusual experience. More frequently he sees people from his past, and occasionally he is able to walk the streets of past civilizations. Those are his visions.



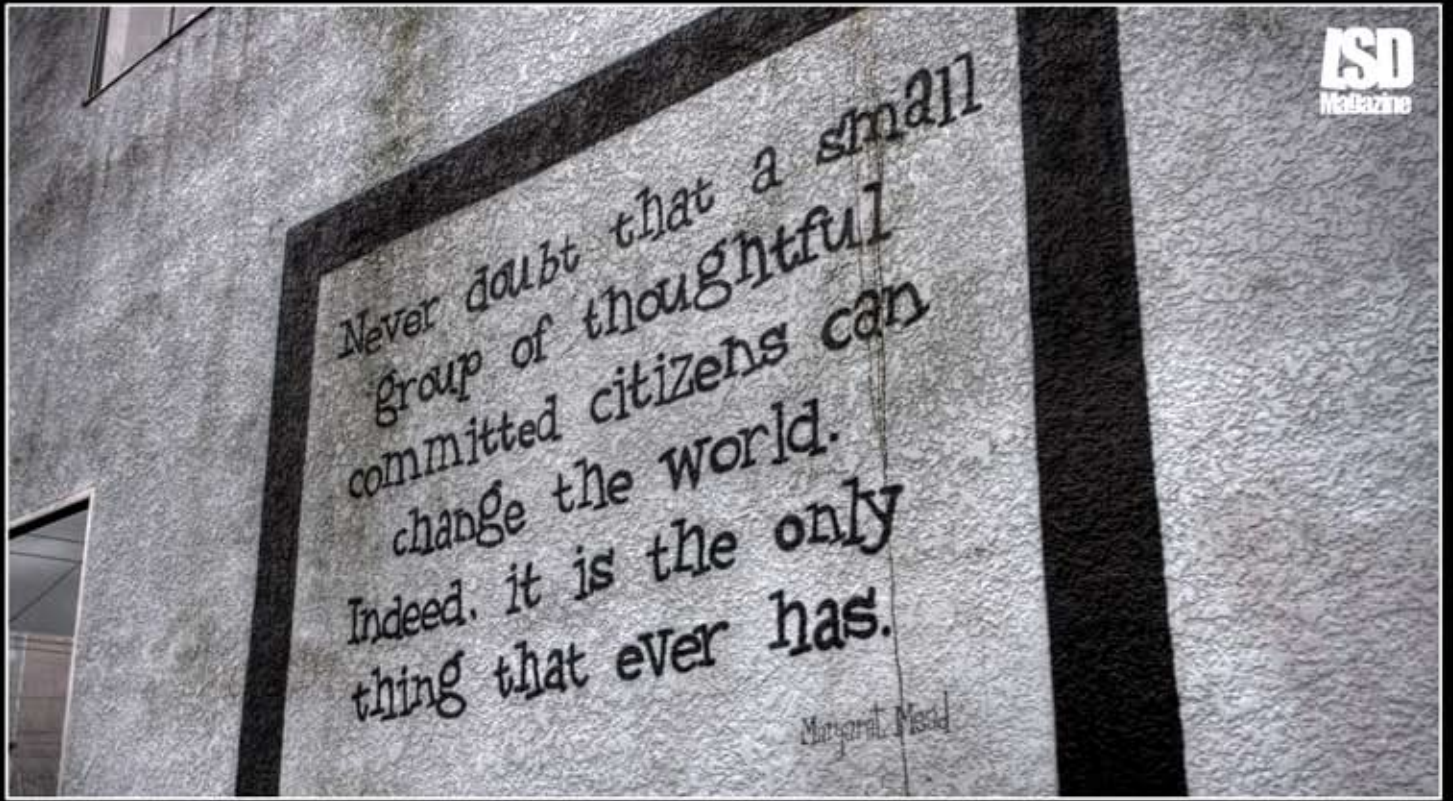
Having not had any proper visions myself, I was skeptical of all this. However, my skepticism diminished as Otilia spoke to us about our individual experiences. She obliquely referenced Stephane's childhood trauma, something which, he later assured me, he had not mentioned to her. And she had a good grasp of my own psychology.

Taken alone, nothing that happened to me in the jungle is incontrovertible evidence of the existence of a spirit world. However, I am more willing than ever to suspend my disbelief. Leaving the jungle, I had a renewed sense of the mysteries and interconnectedness of life. Since my departure from Iquitos I have felt lighter and my mind has been clearer – I certainly think there is potential therapeutic value in Ayahuasca. Strangest of all, I have felt an odd tickling in and around my belly button for the last few days. I intend to ask my doctor about the 'internal hernia' that Otilia mentioned; if he confirms some malign goings-on, that would be fairly strong evidence in favor of shamanism. However, it is perhaps no coincidence that one of the original intentions of this trip was the symbolical severing of my own umbilical cord.



CLAUS VON BOHLEN





Photography: Vegas



AUSTIN HEAP

ENCODING FREEDOM



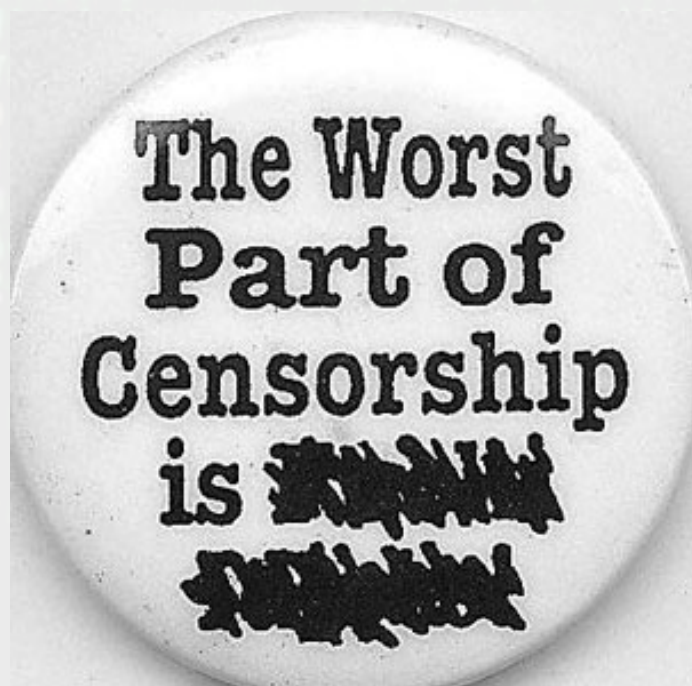
The spectacular flourishing of the internet as the ultimate language of information, connection, global unity and unrestricted freedom of thought, knowledge and belief is under attack. The organic chaos of shared data and the interaction of thought and passion poses an all too terrifying threat to systems of authority who have begun an insidious counter offensive to wrench back control. Filters, monitoring, blocks, hacks now form part of the armoury of any repressive government, but while individuals may never be able to match them in military hardware or ruthless brutality, the wonderous beauty of the internet dynamic is crystallised in the ability of one man who with his passion for human freedom in all

spectrums of life, his digital genius and his dedication has managed to take on the resources of an entire regime and surface exhausted but victorious. Anyone who saw any video, Twitter post, Facebook update, - indeed anything at all emerge from the powder keg of the Iranian street owes a debt to Austin, his partner Daniel and the Censorship Research Centre. The software they built to neutralise all the virtual repression the Iranian state could rain down on its people allowed individuals to maintain contact with the outside world, with each other, organise, strategise and open up their struggle to the eyes of the world. Austin spoke to us....

Could you give us some background on yourself, how you honed your skills, and some insight into how you ended up designing software to circumvent Iranian internet filters

Well myself and Daniel, the other primary guy that I work with in the non profit organisation, are both self taught computer junkies. I often joked with my parents that it was the internet rather than them which raised me and there was a point in the 6th grade when they actually tried to take me to internet addiction therapy! The internet for me has always been this endless source of information, an incredible way to learn, and such an empowering tool and even when I was in 4th grade learning my first programming language, I saw just how amazing it was that we could all participate. There I am sitting at home on my little 25mhz computer and my dial up and there are these giant universities with their 100mhz machines but we can all participate in this global community. The ground work at that point in time was just being laid and I was spending phenomenal amounts of time on line learning a vast range of different programming languages and the internet just became a central point in my life. I don't want to speak for Dan but I know that he has a similar history. We learned everything from the open source community and from people who didn't necessarily want any money but a chance to contribute their knowledge to what could be a greater good and help develop the potential of the internet. Throughout that time I had always been a heartfelt opponent of censorship and a vigorous supporter of open information, consumer rights and human rights, even down to Apple telling you how you can and can't use the iphone.

I got in trouble a few years back for posting some internal emails from a company here in the states called Diebold. They are the manufacturer of our voting machines and in one of the emails to Jeb Bush before the 04 election, the head of the company promises to "deliver the election" to George Bush in Ohio. There were 5 of us, all students that were involved in the leak and people all over the world helped post and disseminate these documents. Diebold slowly started going after various people and going after their schools and you know it really doesn't matter who or



where it comes from, I just don't like when people try to control information especially when they have no business doing it. Bottom line, when you make our voting machines, you sign up for openness, proprietary technology or not. I'm sorry but when you control our democracy via your technology, if you don't want to be open we're going to help you be open.

On that basis what do you make of sites like Wikileaks?

We've been talking to some of the guys at Wikileaks and I really hope that we can collaborate in the future. I think that Wikileaks is one of the most breathtaking projects on the internet and in their short history, they have broken more giant stories than the Wall Street Journal has in the past 100 years. Standing up for this cause, dealing with the law suits, dealing with the political impacts, setting up servers all over the world just so they can give a whistleblower the chance to tell their story is I think such a remarkably noble cause - I'm a huge, huge fan of theirs.

How was the Censorship Research Centre born?

Pretty much right after the election happened this past summer I was on Twitter (on the internet as always!) and it occurred to me that Iran was behaving in a way that falls into



the category of stuff that I don't like. Trying to mess with the internet is not something I take kindly to and that combined with Iran having such a young, well connected and tech savvy population really brought the whole thing crashing home. It became very clear, very fast (of course I say this in hindsight!) that we had to set up the non profit and do everything we could to tilt the power back in favour of the people and we were lucky enough to team up with the most phenomenal pro bono legal team you could ever ask for.

I'll never forget them sitting me down in a bar here in San Francisco and saying 'look Austin, you have to stop doing things so fast, you have to do them legally, you have to set up your organisation and if you want to take on internet censorship and freedom of speech as a human rights issue which was the core of our mission, you have to do it within the letter of the law or it's not going to be sustainable. So that's where forming the CRC came in. If you had asked me a year ago whether we would be setting up a non profit I would have said no – we're just going to release some technology, then I'll go back to my job and Dan will go back to his, Today, Dan and I are working 60 to 80 hours a week at the CRC and that's not including the travel which I now consider

personal time! It just got so busy, there is so much to take care of and I'm lucky to have such a great team who share this vision but it's not an easy or quick undertaking to say that you will provide a whole country with unfiltered internet. It's not something that happens overnight and I think the foundation of our non profit was just step 1 in doing this the right way and making sure that we are able to meet our goal and remove the ability of oppressive governments to censor and control what people can say online.

Could you please explain Haystack to us

Sure. Haystack is a piece of software that was specifically developed to target the Iranian government's filtering capabilities and mechanisms. Basically what we did right after the election was to provide proxy servers for people in Iran, (we still do) and putting instructions out for how other people could set them up and could volunteer to help people in Iran get access to the internet again. During that process we realised that these proxy servers were simply not sustainable – it's a cat and mouse game that takes way too much time and energy and it's not scaleable so that's where Haystack came in. Dan and I sat down

and started talking about how we could push them up against the wall. How could we, with everything we know about their filtering, with Dan and my background, develop a piece of software specific to Iran that will address all of these problems, be scalable, and be easy for users. That's safe, that's secure, that's unblockable, that runs on mac /pc /linux as well as mobile phones. This is what I mean when I talk about sustainable and long-term - there is a big picture here. Haystack is a piece of software that runs on your computer or your mobile device and all of your outbound connections run through Haystack which does 2 things. The first is to encrypt that data so that if it falls in the hands of the authorities or someone with malicious intent, there's nothing that they could do with it. The second thing that it does is cloak that encrypted data to make it look like normal traffic. The entire concept behind Haystack where its name comes from is finding that little needle is that we hide in 99% of data that's completely normal. So we don't look like secure data unlike HTTPS when it puts that little padlock on your browser and it becomes dead clear to anyone watching that you are trying to hide something. It's also easy to block so instead of going that route we decided it's better to go on the route where hell we'll just hide. We'll just hide in completely normal looking traffic, we'll just hide inside part of a Skype call, anywhere we can hide some encrypted data.

Is it specific to Iranian filters or could it work in say China?



Haystack was designed to address only Iran's infrastructure and there was zero consideration of any other infrastructures. Now will this technique work in China? Possibly. Have we tested it? No. One of the funnier examples is how on flights they will filter the internet. I cannot be on flights without internet - it drives me crazy, and on Virgin for example, they'll de-prioritise gaming packets or they'll block Skype packets so I've tested Haystack on Virgin and it works, but generally speaking, Haystack does not function outside Iran. If you try to use our software and you are anywhere except Iran you cannot connect to the network.

And that's primarily because we're a tiny year old non profit and we simply don't have the resources to take on China, Cuba, North Korea, Syria, Venezuela - there are so many important countries where this slippery slope to censorship is being oiled up . I don't know why there is such a resurgence in censorship right now but the thing they don't understand is that you can't have the internet and only take it for the chunks that you want. That's not the way this works, that's not the way this was designed and taking this very open peer to peer system and trying to shove it into this censorship mould doesn't work and yet there's so many different countries going down this path.



How did you alert people in Iran to the possibilities of Haystack

Through all kinds of weird channels - you name it we've probably gone through it. Everything from personal friends who are Persians here in San Francisco to people that I've met through Twitter. I have many good contacts in Iran, some that I've met through Twitter and some who've emailed me and said that they have heard about me on Voice of America... you know it's all been very, very organic.

You're clearly very open. Have you had any threats against you or any hacking attempts?

Funny you should ask that. I was just last night wondering when my site was going to go down. There's been plenty of attempts, plenty, to the point where I don't even monitor or pay attention to them anymore. My machine is locked down as best it can be, and while there are a few more extreme things I could do, internet attacks are internet attacks and you just have to be ready for them. I'm ready and I hope that I will be resilient in the face of them. In terms of physical threats outside of your

run of the mill internet death threats which are a dime a dozen, there's clearly a group of people that's happy with the work that we're doing on a human right level even outside of Iran and there is clearly a group of people that think I have no business doing this. I think one of the most shocking comments that I've had said to me is "don't you understand that Ahmadinejad is our Obama". I didn't even know what to say for a good minute and I just started questioning life.

I think it's important to point out that we're not a political organisation. From where I personally stand, I don't understand why anyone in their right mind would shoot, kill, jail and torture people that have an opinion contrary to theirs. It just blows my mind. We want to make sure that people can have the conversation and have it safely. What they want to talk about, none of us at the organisation care. We just think that everyone has the right to have the chance to have an opinion, to have a chance to speak their mind and not be afraid that if they don't agree that they'll end up dead or that their family will be missing the next week.

When we were researching you for this interview, something popped up that effectively accused you and your organisation of being a front for the CIA and Mossad. What do you say to that?

I'll show you my bank account!! Trust me, it hurts just looking at it. There are just so many things I can't do. I can't go out to dinner, can't go for a drink in a bar there's just zero money. So that's the most straightforward answer but I think it's unfortunate that there is so much distrust in the community. From a tech standpoint if I were concerned that my communications were being monitored even after using something like Haystack, what I would do is I would run Tor or I would run other encryption software on top of Haystack. so Haystack will let you get around the firewall and Tor will give you that additional layer of encryption if you feel that's necessary and I would completely encourage people to do that. You know no one has any reason to trust me or trust the person next to them. I don't remember the first time someone accused me of being CIA but I was just so, so confused. I don't even have health care, don't people in the CIA get health care? So you know there's only so much I can do to fight that but I think our actions speak louder.

How are things looking on the donation front.

We are trying to get proper funding, and trying to get grants from different foundations but without those micro donations online we would not have been able to put the organisations together or pay for all the travel. We would not have been able to pay for everything from printing out supplies for



when we go to speak to someone or when we go to present to organisations in DC - I mean it's really non stop expenses. But at this point I think it's better for the donations to be used directly for the non profit and hopefully we'll get the organisation to employ Dan, myself and the other people we need to do this on a large scale. Just for the time being I think our assets are better focused - I mean our bandwidth bill every month for the servers cost \$10,000 a piece.

They're really powerful machines but when you say you're going to provide Iran with unfiltered internet, people don't get how big of an undertaking that is. So I'm kind of at the stage where I need to decide if we can pay ourselves or our server bill.



What is more dangerous, censorship or the illusion of freedom? Actual clinical cut off where people look for ways to get round it or the insidious assault of advertising and filtered news that is much more prevalent in the western world than in repressed societies.



It's like comparing killing someone with a gun or a knife. They're both bad. I think that the bigger threat is going to come from this insidious censorship that the west has. It's largely the media's fault I think. I feel like in America if the story is not going to get high enough ratings it's not worth running. And we are seeing this in the case of Iran and in Haiti. If you look at the way American news just jumps into a tragedy and I don't want to call them ambulance chasers...

If it bleeds it leads.

Oh my God that's horrible.

It's their line!

That's a great quote "if it bleeds it leads". You threw me through a loop with that one! I think that the bigger threat is going to come from this self censorship, and if you look at Australia right now; they are slowly getting into the censorship area and the problem with the slippery slope as I call censorship is that people don't realise it until it's too late and I hate this saying but freedom isn't free and if people aren't defending it each step

of the way and demanding something better from their news organisation they have no expectation of freedom. In America, we have this whole net neutrality debate going on where I don't even understand the question. Comcast should not be able to censor some of my internet and not other parts of it. They are a provider and should stay out of that entire business. But people won't fight for little things like that and I think that that is what is ultimately going to be a larger threat. I never have to worry about waking up one morning wondering if my cell phone is going to work that day. I never have to wake up and wonder if text messaging has been blocked by the government. And if people aren't diligent it's only a hop-skip away from that being a reality.

Do you think that's a major problem in democratic societies. People are so convinced they are free and are so comfortable with the idea of being free that they forget to be diligent?

I have a quote that sums up my opinion on life:

“People demand freedom of speech to make up for the freedom of thought which they avoid”.

And it's so true, people walk around convinced that they are super free and believing that they are thinking for themselves. You have to go out of the echo chamber to even begin thinking for yourself and if you stay inside the chamber, the only thing you are going to think about is Tiger Woods and there's plenty of people that do that. I'm so spoiled by living in San Francisco where most people I meet are aware of what's going on in Iran and they are active in technology or politics. I ran into one person a couple of weeks back and he was asking me what I do and I said 'do you remember the election in Iran over the summer and he goes "no what's going on?" But you have to remember that's most people at least here in the States. It doesn't pay to be – perhaps pay is the wrong word, but it's not seen as essential to be informed

There's two questions I often get that drive me insane: One is 'when are you going to visit Iran?' Don't know but probably not soon.

Doubt that they would have the red carpet ready.

Seriously!! The second question is 'you are not Persian so why are you doing this?'

That misses the point entirely doesn't it?

Well you know we're all humans to start with. Everything else is systems that we use to divide each other and to self segregate and just spare me that. I just think that too often people lose sight of that. The people that only pay attention to their home town news forget we are all participants in a shaping new global economy. Internet is now king and I think that's beautiful and amazing because it's giving us all a chance to be involved in



something that's not just 10 miles around our house. But people still have to have the drive - the internet has made all this information available but it never has and never will provide the drive

Long term are you optimistic about the internet and the general democratisation of information?

Absolutely. There's so many times when the internet has lived up to what I know it can be and I half say this jokingly and half seriously but I'm proud of the internets and that's plural. I think the internet has time and time again shown the power and compassion of humanity - it happens every day in big ways and small ways and I truly believe that this is an unstoppable force.

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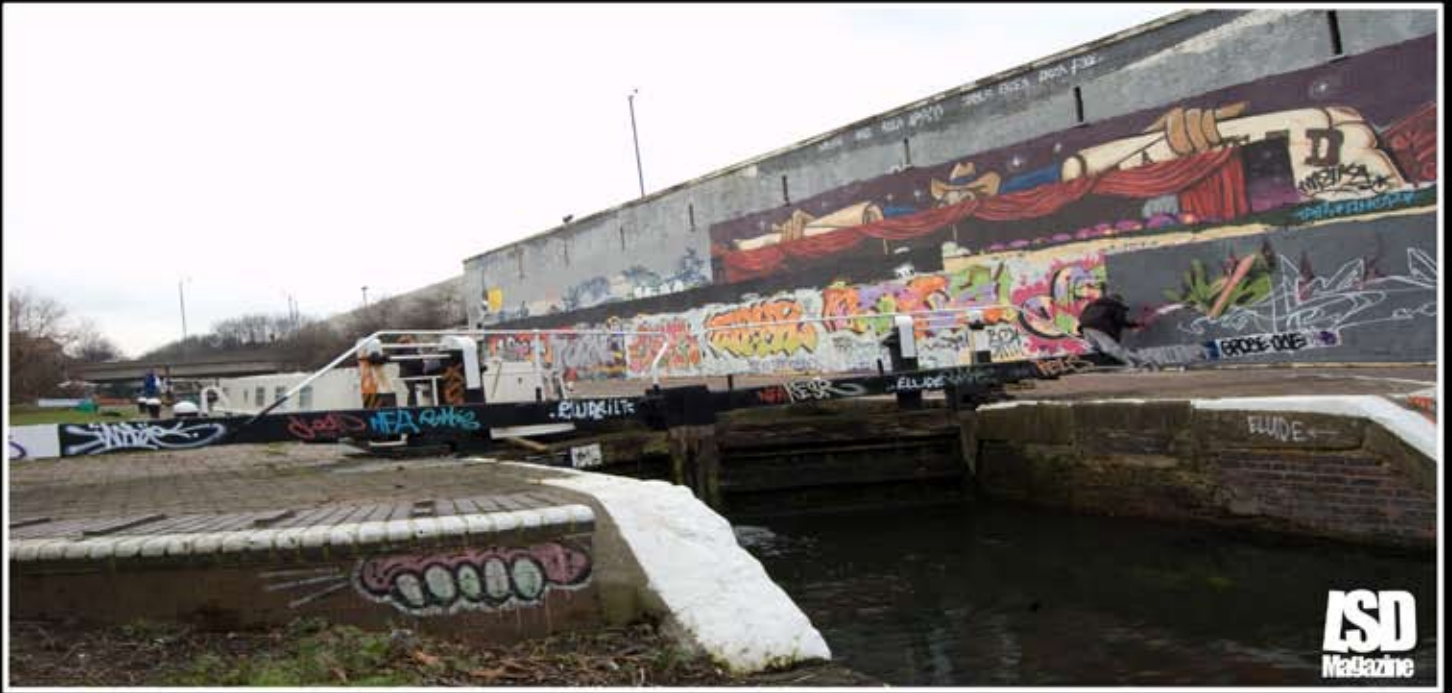
LSO
Magazine

Photography: Vegas



Vancouver - 2010





LSD
Magazine



LSD
Magazine



LSD
Magazine



LSD
Magazine

Photography: WA

The Wall - Hackney Feb 1st

A PASSING BREEZE

**I whispered truth to a passing breeze
An instinctive seize of the subliminal tease
Ducking visual assaults on every pore
A guilty dalliance with the media whore
Abstract wonder reduced to dust
Collective unity subsumed by lust
A panoramic vision of inner space
The outer spectrum; Trademarked disgrace
The bitter expression of humanity's flaw
Pure disconnect with archetypal awe
Blinded by the warm embrace of neon Mace
The shimmering abyss of our public place**

**Tribal dreams hurtling back to fashion
An ashen passion for a lost compassion
Quantified memory of a core spirit lost
Unimaginable glimmers of the ego's cost
Buy a visit to redemption at 12 percent
Lament the shadows of manufactured consent
But ask yourself as you begin your week
Of indulgent wisdom tinged with chic
Whether you're being sold a soul that indolence stole
Blinded by a shining, sensual control
Implicated deep in ego's mystery
That first cold admission that will shape the key**

**Individual growth is a weighty mission
Submission, transition and sublime cognition
The liberating recognition of silent intuition
A searing admission of a numb condition
But inner space is outer space
And external expression all embracing grace
As infinite worlds dissolve the now
Sub atomic immensity flowing through the Tao
The river runs both ways to the light
The enlightened fight for our universal plight
Sipping private growth is but the Yin alone
The Yang's ethereal unknown still left to atone**

**The hallowed life in the panoplies of the mind
Transcendental liberation free from all mankind
But are we not all echoes of the same DNA
Is there truly an I and then again a They?
An unchained consciousness needs rooting in the now
Creativity's channel and unity's plough
Breathless surrender to imagination's guide
Confide, provide and take it worldwide
Spreading the message is a dangerous slide
Intention died in the pedagogue's divide
But allusion and action can be released from pride
Take public space on a subconscious ride**

**What can I do to change society
Wrestle it back from consumer piety
Let the third eye redefine the Me
And then channel a rampant creative spree
Speak to your brother from an eternal mother
Let visceral beauty entrance another
Dazzle timeless eyes with crystal skies
Cry lie's disguise to intangibly wise
And speak to the world in colour and beat
A symbolic sacrifice to deceit's defeat
And never forget that we have the power
To raise us all to a spectacular hour
And drown in the caress of a future in flower
Brothers and sisters that we can all empower
Bestow what we know, glow, and let the growth flow
Burning expression's dream to a liquid gleam– Let's fucking go**

SIRIUS 23





LSD
Magazine



LSD
Magazine

Photography: Vegas



Vancouver - 2010

MEAR ONE

If the apogee of the graffiti artform is the hijacking of commercially numb public space to question, provoke and elevate the viewer into a higher state of reflective consciousness then Mear One is spraying up the cutting edge. Unifying the psychedelic truth of inner space and the multi dimensional journey of the soul with a piercing lament for the geo political genocide of the human spirit, his work shatters the barricades of daily reality and forces engagement with the archetypal issues we face both as individuals and a society. His spirit floods forth in paint, colour and sublime abstraction, questioning our existence, subverting our comfort zones and relentlessly driving the consciousness of the street into bitter realisation, the anger of activism and the transcendental exaltation of true unity within our collective consciousness. LSD caught up with the man himself for a quick trip

Could you please tell us a little about your background and your journey into art

I got my start as a graffiti artist in Los Angeles in the late 80's doing vandalism, learning how to evolve my art through the graffiti form and practising and competing as an artist out here in America. Being a graffiti artist means that you have a lot of competition and it really provokes you to go places with your art that no school can ever reach or to pull unexpected bits of information out so that you can get the attention, make the noise or get the big bang that all graffiti artists are looking for. I think we all start out in graffiti looking for a major impact to get some recognition because we're coming from the hood, coming from the streets and we're coming from a



place of poverty and coming from a place where you don't really have a chance. In the mid nineties I evolved into a different head space after witnessing the LA riots and after going through years of gang violence in LA, being endlessly in and out of jail, dealing with getting beat up and watching the courts financially wrench the hell out of you and take all your money all the time. I think it caused my mind to metamorphosise into a new state where I started to look at the world very differently. I was raised by an intensely liberal hippy mother who was a deeply radical thinker in her own right and whose ideas and training went into me and started to emerge





at this point in my life. I was waking up to what was really screwed up with the world and what was really going on, relentless oppression and this whole capitalism, money matrix that's running the planet, and realised that as far as graffiti art went... It was great to put up my name and my crew's, but I wanted to dive artistically into a far deeper message and I think that some of my first canvases began to reflect that. My message was revolution - don't believe the hype, wake yourself up to the complicated world around you and take some accountability. I guess my art has now evolved into more of a story telling language machine that communicates ideas that we're not always talking about but need to be discussed, and what I'm doing now is working on a lot of pieces that are either social commentary or politically charged and have some essence of the spirit in them that lifts us out of the mockery that we find ourselves in.

Speaking of spirituality, a lot of your work references eastern spirituality and there's a lot of third eye's in there. Can you give us a bit of insight into that?

Absolutely. A lot of my work also references western traditions, I'm very much into philosophy, psychology and theology - I find all these ism's incredibly fascinating...

Buddhism, Hinduism, Catholicism, Judaism whatever it may be. Religions and sciences enthrall me. I've actually come up with a term called "ismology" - ism and ology fused together and that is effectively the type of work that I do. I incorporate a lot of fantastic ideas that come from philosophy and spiritual beliefs that are a huge influence to me and I feel that to express these philosophical or spiritual ideas is the most rewarding act I can take on as an artist, because when you are painting these things they actually realise themselves in your life and start to resonate within everything you do. It actually becomes in a strange sense, healing as an artist to paint this way because it's the association you're hanging out with. If you're hanging out with your art all the time and your art is talking a lot of negative shit it's gonna affect your head space but if you're hanging out with your art and you're really pouring some heavy work into philosophies and spiritual ideas that thousands of people have invested thousands of years into, suddenly you have a very powerful generating energy and reality manifested around yourself and I think that that's probably what people recognise in my art. My overriding passion within this art form is to tell stories and to speak to people directly about whatever is hanging me up in the moment or whatever I feel is hanging the world up - quite often it's both me and the



world, all of us being held up by something and you know my biggest joy is to try to articulate that hold up. What's blocking our lives? What's fucking with us? And I want to illustrate that for people so that they can get a firm grasp around at least the conversation, at least inspire them to start talking about their lives and the world that they live in and the way that it's politically or spiritually growing or diminishing around them.

On that note should art ever just be about aesthetics or should it always be pushing the boundaries of understanding and consciousness?

Well that's an interesting question! Should life be purely functional or should we enjoy it and get something better out of life than we put into it? I don't know. I think that there is something spiritual and powerfully moving just in colour alone; purely in form and shape. But I do think that one has to have an understanding of something higher than themselves and something greater than their own ego just to be able to use colour in its higher form because we can use colour to match the couch and we can use form to shape the environment, but at the end of the



day a lot of form, shape and colour around us just falls to the background. It has no voice, it has no entity to it at all and my goal is to try to invest as much of that entity, of that voice into my work as possible. You know I don't think that everyone needs to dig deep into their soul and express their spiritual or philosophical spectrum to do good art but I do think that art should communicate and it should communicate something that's worth communicating.

Has DMT or any other transcendental psychedelic had any impact on your work?

Big time. I would say that as a graffiti artist, my first time taking mushrooms changed my life dramatically. My mother was a hippy from the 60's who lived up in San Francisco in the heart of it all, undergoing many of these experiences and it truly made her a different woman, a different human in my eyes and when I got the opportunity to take it I was really excited because I knew it was going to do something positive for me. It opened my eyes to things that people are just getting hip to now, like our connection to the earth, our connection to the environment and literally





looking at science break itself down and a universal language form right before your eyes. Watching blades of grass open up to the sunlight and seeing photosynthesis taking place as plants express gaseous crystals into the atmosphere which capture water molecules turn them into gas vapours and clouds. Watching this process is something that everyone should do. Everybody should take a psychedelic induced trip in their lives at least once to open their minds up to the beauty of the organic universe.... A lot of people are like "what's it like to be an artist, how do you paint these beautiful things, how do you express yourself?" and I always just tell people like if you want to feel like what it is to be an artist really go take some LSD, go smoke some DMT, go eat some mushrooms because the ultimate goal as far as I'm concerned is to be able to reach those places in the mind and be able to express them.

Is that one of the influences that opened you up from the vandalism to a wider message in your art?

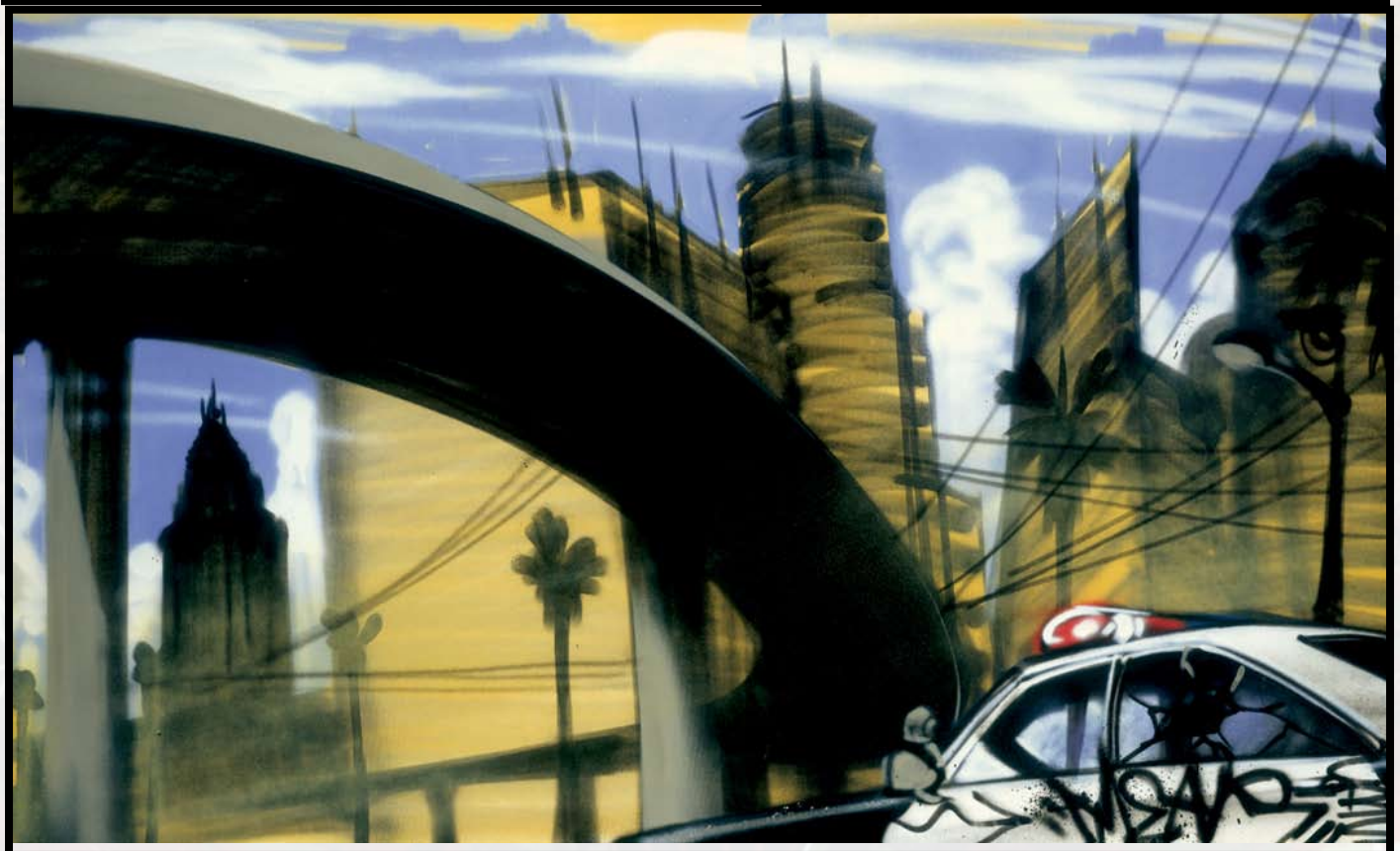
Yeah. I had already opened up to a lot of this stuff but I was kind of on the fence - wanting to maintain my street credibility and my Hip Hop shit and all this BS that I was trying to live up to, when suddenly this experience slammed things into perspective for me. It made me reflect on the kind of egotistical, competitive, macho, aggressive energy that I was plugging into and enjoying so much. I mean it really was a great joy throwing bricks through windows and setting buildings on fire and getting beat up or beating someone up - this destructive shit was a lot of fun at that point in my life you know vandalising a wall and running down the street high fiving your homies and ditching cops trying to catch you and getting away with it I mean there's nothing that exciting except the introduction to psychedelic journeys. They were so far beyond getting chased by the cops in LA or getting away with some expensive shit in your pants that no one saw you steal from a store. You just want to be the little mischievous character inside your soul somewhere, you want to go fuck shit up and cause some trouble and suddenly you're stripped butt naked in front of the universe. It's like you're completely strung up on some universal barbed wire fence for the universe to open it's



biggest aperture and take a fucking x-ray look at you. There's just nothing else that can be said for that - you come back into this reality and realise that so much of your fascinations and shit that you've been investing your time into is just worthless and that there's so much of a greater, more wonderful, more meaningful life right here right now in this moment, and it's so easy to plug into, you just open your heart and your mind to it.

Has America actually learned anything from the Bush years? Has the world actually learned anything from the Bush years?

Well I'm sure the world fucking knew the moment he got elected and a big Oh Shit! flew across the world!! But I yes I think that for the first time that sheer blatant disregard begged the question 'who's running the store?' It was the first time I've witnessed the country saying "well what the fuck, who's driving the vehicle? You know who's running the boat?" That was the first one I got. The second one I got was "He's not really that evil is he?". And then the third one I got was "Oh that was the fall of the western empire?" A lot of people in the US run around and act like everything is ok but I think deep down inside we're terrified. I think we're terrified because Bush was just fucking





blatant with what he was doing and I wouldn't even blame him as much as I would blame his cabinet - he was just along for the ride.

Cheney and Rumsfeld have had a nefarious history and a full blown knowledge of what they were doing. They were never in the dark. You know Bush seemed to be in the dark the whole time, he didn't really know what the fuck was going on, he was having a good old time but now that we have Obama, I personally don't think that anything is better. I think Obama is a fucking piece of shit lying mother fucker. Just because we want to believe we had a revolution, we want to believe the first black president is this major change, we want to believe this shit is real but it doesn't make a difference man. I mean they've got us all in check mate out here so and we just need to stop playing the game cos we're not going to win this stupid fucking game, we need to throw the pieces off the fucking table and say there is no table, fuck this. But America is nowhere near its rock bottom either. People talk about America hitting rock bottom and now we're on the way back up..... Bullshit. Nobody had to really

tighten up their belt around here - it's all a big lie, a sham and it's all continuing and it's all illusionary. We might as well all be on psychedelic drugs at this point - I mean it's all one big hallucination anyway, so we'd be better off taking psychedelic drugs because maybe then we might be able to make some sense of all this

It's funny you mention the fall of the western empire. Has imperialism itself changed that now people are voluntarily giving up their identity to MTV, to Levi's, to Coca Cola, to this intangible dream.

Yes absolutely, you nailed it. I think that globally we are witnessing the new war. I mean we've been at war it seems with China for a while and no one notices. It's a trade war and it's also a who trades with who war and it seems like we've lost already because we're broke on a global scale, no one wants our money. And yeah I think that the scientists and philosophers of this country who worked so hard for so long to



protect the idea of western capitalism, the republic and 'democracy' have packaged it with marketing and advertisement so fucking well that they've made imperialism almost invisible. Everybody is taking high doses of this American toxic dream and they are falling asleep within it. I always say that the American dream is real only for those that are sleeping. It's a toxic serum, it's fucking Snickers bars, it's Cadbury chocolate's running the world, fucking Chevy and Ford and Nike and none of these mother fuckers are even in the USA anymore. They are all off shore they are all in another country so really, in a strange sense there's a shadow government running America, it's not even America that's running the world or losing it's grip on the world - it's this shadow government which consists of the banking industries and the higher echelons of corporate corporations that exist off the coast of Miami or on some island somewhere. It's insane that we all believe in something that's completely fabricated, that's completely false and empty. There is actually no American system left. I mean everything is black operations now as far as security goes in our cities and our country now, it's all privately owned. We have private owned security firms that are running surveillance on our cities and while that information gets processed through the city, it ends up in the private sector's hands - with businesses that are no longer necessarily owned by Americans, but owned off shore by a multi national cabal. What the fuck is really going on here? We thought it was big whitey fucking us all and suddenly we find out that there is a multinational shadow government in operation that consists of the IMF and the World Bank and all these people running around trying to preserve land in other people's countries and prevent their natives from using the land, prevent governments from using their own land. This is the international, multinational IMF, bankers, fraudulent fiends running around in control.

It's amazing to see this go down and best way I can share this information with people is to paint it which gives someone enough breath and enough space to back up and think. They don't feel intimidated and they don't feel like someone's shouting a philosophy down their throat, an opinion, they feel that an idea is being expressed and it's their duty to administer, to view, digest, take it all in and have a relationship with that piece for a



moment. They move on, but later that night when they are taking their clothes off or taking their shower, getting into bed or waking up the next morning, if that piece sticks in their mind and continues a dialogue inside someone's mind for weeks down the line I'm really pleased, I'm really happy because to me that is the greatest power of art, is to change and to facilitate change within people to the point that when it's done so artfully that they are not even aware that it's being done and that's what's being done to us.

I consider that 9/11 was the biggest art installation we have ever seen on the planet. It was a very evil, nefarious, painful one, mindless destructive, no point behind it but it was art. It was pre thought out and it was brought into realisation by witnessing it. Art to me can go either way and the powerful message of art really comes through when it doesn't destroy anything except for the way you see - it helps to build new ideas and it doesn't hurt you in any way.

Are you optimistic that despite the more sophisticated methods of control, more and more people are coming alive?

Not at all. I don't believe in optimism I believe in realism, I think that optimism is "deer



in the headlights syndrome” - you can be optimistic until a car comes and takes you out. I think that the idea that we are going to overcome, that we are going to reach a point in reality where we say here is change is fundamentally flawed. Change takes place every moment and I don't think that there's going to come a point in our human history where we all wake up and get along. I don't think that that is what being human is about but I'm a realist and I know that for me there will come a point where change doesn't occur until you no longer need it to occur. So I think that whatever we're going through right now will work itself out slowly but I doubt that we will ever see masses of people form a utopian planet where everything gets perfect and we all wake up and we can hug each other and we can say what a nightmare we been sleeping through but we're all awake now. I think that we're more complex than that and I think that part of our reality is based on the teeter tottering from destruction to creation and we exist somewhere in the middle. We need to balance it though because right now for the last hundred years it's been extreme on one end and it's definitely leaning further and further towards that one end right now. I feel like either we will experience change through a natural process or the earth will cover us in mud, and we will be just another civilisation wthat got buried.

In your work there's a lot of apocalyptic imagery, is that a reflection of how you view the world currently or is that a prophecy of what is going to happen if we don't wake up and start doing something about it?

That's how I see the world currently. I feel



like we are riding with blinders on so I want you to take the blinders off. Everything I paint happens... it maybe doesn't happen in one painting all at once but you look around the world and you put about 5 or 6 different extreme events together in one day; it's my painting. A lot of people wonder if I'm negative, am I having a good time painting hell reaping its course through our reality, but the hellacious visions that I paint are mainly geared towards those in society that are completely unaware that that shit is taking place. It's designed to shock them in the hope that they'll see their real life as something similar. My more higher thinking spirit work and soul work ends up speaking to people that are already aware of it, that do find optimism and joy and beauty in it and they are already in that head space. I'm catering to both sides but what I'm trying to do is bring them to the middle.





Are the record covers you do just some band that want a cool painting that you've already done or was it an active engagement with the music?

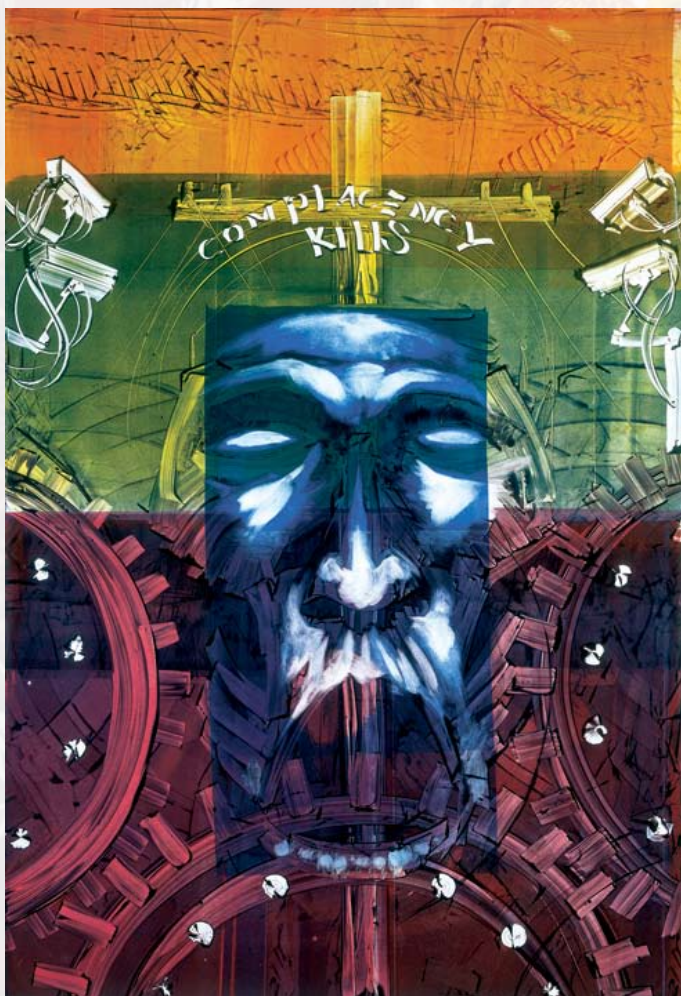
Well it varies, most of the Celestial records that I did and the Hives work that I did and the work that I did with Freestyle Fellowship and Tre of the Pharcyde was honestly some higher level work. I've never really been one just to get hired by a record company or a movie company and marketing doesn't work well with me because I think that they are the devil's. Most of my album covers that I worked on I was trying to work with the music, explain the story, listen to the words, what's the message of this music, how can I illustrate this message. Sometimes it wouldn't be that complex it would be that a musician came to my house and said "oh my God this is the piece that will be my album cover" and it would work out that way. There's no rhyme or reason to that to tell you the truth and you know I'm not like the average artist who graduates from art school and has this very regimented business minded way of approaching everything where there's a serum to my madness or something. My



method comes from the heart and the way I take on a job is to listen to the music, drive around and listen to the music and paint my other work listening to the music and it'll come to me, I'll get a feel for it and what the message what are they trying to get at where's this coming from and how can I illustrate that.

What does the street as a medium of expression and social connection mean to you?

It means exposure to the world. It means the public, it means society, social normality and the middle class. I have an incredibly wide reach when I hit the streets and my work and my message can hit a lot of people. There's a lot of traffic going on, my mural becomes a form of entertainment or it becomes a bright spot in everyone's moment of drag. They're in traffic and you know there's a mural so I try to play off of the streets and I let the streets be my game of ping pong, we're playing tennis with each other or you know shooting hoops, you know I shoot one, the street shoots one, I shoot one, the street shoots one and we try to see how this communication is working out.

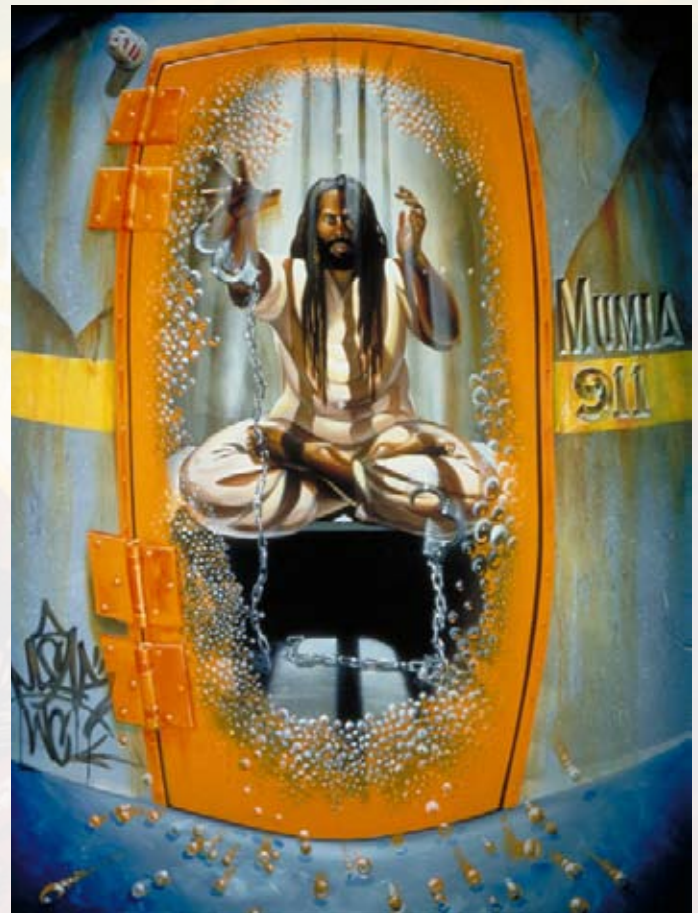




Is the most important journey in life within ones own consciousness or is it external?

Well I don't think that there is much separation between the two especially when you become awakened. The container that contains the contained is still contained within a greater container and so I think that it's like saying do you separate the dancer from the dance. I think that waking up to being inside your own container is a big trip on it's own when you realise that you're not your body that your body is a vehicle and you realise that you are not necessarily always in your body even though you think you are. But then you realise OK, well I like my soul, in this body, in this world but I'm not only in this world physically or am I? I mean I can ask my friend next to me 'am I here?' Yes you're here. You know if you really want to get brainy and crazy and get into some real deep thinking and think what are we made of? Atoms. What's an atom? You know it's a circular shape that we've identified under electro microscopes and you look at an atom up close and you realise that I don't know that something like 98% of it is empty or 99% of an atom is empty and you start to really wonder am I really here then? Or am I just inside, is this all just a projection from inside? So I think that there is a strange relation, a dichotomy between who's inside and what am I doing here and what is my body doing here? I don't really separate them. I think that the true awakening takes place when all of these levels come together and you realise in a sense that it's really your vehicle, your body that it's the earth's body, that this body is connected to the earth and that sends a whole bunch of other questions out for circulation like...If I am a soul and I'm operating this body and if this body is not mine it's the earth's then who's soul am I? Is there one soul going on here through all of us, are we separate souls? I start to really get into some deeper ideas on that level where I don't know those answers yet, those are the questions that really ring true in my mind and my life right now that I want to know the answers to and they cause me to do the art and the thinking that I'm going through.

Just back down to earth quickly... Current projects and stuff



Yeah it looks like I'll be going out to Art Amsterdam and to Art Basel in Switzerland. So I'll be travelling out to Europe this spring and I'm really excited by that to tell you the truth. I just wrapped up one of my better shows that I've done with em Bryce and Strauss and Carlos Rivera in downtown LA and we just did the LA art show which is kind of like Los Angeles's Basel. We kind of stole the show down there and really made some noise. Currently, I have a team following me around filming my whole life, my boy Motion who has been following me for several years is working on a bigger film with a team of heads and they are hoping to have it done by October for the Sundance film festival so there's a lot of stuff going on.

Actually now that you mention the film do you find it therapeutic having to pause and explain something to someone else that you wouldn't necessarily articulate if you were just out on your own?

I never thought about it being therapeutic but yeah I guess it would be. I kind of see it like a lot of people say "oh that must be fun" and while it is fun, I do see it as an obligation. If I'm going to take everyone's time and invite





them to look at what I'm saying then there is this responsibility to everyone who's "so what, what are you saying, you know you want the attention, here's the spotlight, what do you want?" " So I guess I have to. Whenever I'm asked about meaning in a painting, I tend to say 'here's the canvas'. But this time I guess it's more like 'OK here I am let's talk about art'. This is what I'm dedicated to this is what I do so lets really get into this and I think that's the reality of it is that it's an obligation but it is fun and it is interesting. Sometimes it is like "God can you leave me alone" We're not really in the reality programme frame of things either we're in a much more artistic state of how we're trying to do this one so I don't know it's interesting and it's another one of those things that's new in my life and it's working itself out and I'm new to it and so I'm still learning about it.

Has Noam Chomsky been a big influence in your life?

Oh huge, huge influence. His lectures right after 9/11 when he shared his thoughts of what he felt took place were very inspiring and I hold him and Howard Zinn and est in peace Mumia Abu Jamal who's on death row in very high respect. I even hold Richard Pryor and Bill Hicks up there - I mean these are great spiritual teachers I mean literally Richard Pryor - I love him but Noam Chomsky is one of the American greats. His voice and his dedication to political discourse and his

evolution from being a linguist to being a socio-political commentator is beautiful and I have huge respect for him

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MAELSTROM

Scything accross genre, style, borders and dancefloors is the one man bassline hurricane Maelstrom. Exploding out of the smouldering remains of the French illegal rave scene, he has taken the UK and the world by storm with his sizzling beats and searing basses and is currently one of the hottest and most inspirational producers in up front dance music. Whipping together funk, breaks, D N B, a pure house groove and a sinister, filthy edge, his gloriously eclectic sound is thundering through international bassbins to a dancefloor near you. Be warned. He took a moment out to speak to LSD



What initially inspired you into music

Honestly it's been so long that I can't even remember exactly how I got into it, but back in the days when I was 14 or 15 at the time of disco house and all that kind of stuff back in 1995, I used to go to these house parties in Nantes. We had a small club in the town and my friends and I used to go there every Friday and Saturday night and they would actually let us in despite how completely underage we were. That was the beginning of my love for dancefloors, music and sound systems, we decided to buy turntables and records and it all went from that point.

What made you move from straight up DJ'ing to production?

That's a good question. I think that I reached a point when I was around 17 when playing on the decks simply wasn't enough for me anymore and I began to look to the next level. If that was one of the reasons, the other was the arrival of the Spiral Tribe techno traveller movement in France. I had the chance to

see some of them perform live and I was incredibly impressed with the dimension of freedom that they represented. The first stage was to go live with the electronic machines and from there it went logically into production.

How empowering did you find the Spiral Tribe spirit

It truly had an enormous impact on me and a lot of people in France. For me it opened my eyes to the fact that you didn't need any relatives, any friends or much money to get into it - it was just a matter of willing and that really was important for the kid that I was at the time. Before that you had the Parisian style system and the whole you know "you're a DJ and you're a great star" sort of stuff and then the whole sound system/ free party movement arrived and showed us that we only needed our desire and our dedication to make it work and if we just had enough motivation we would succeed in any way we chose.



How do you feel about the free party scene in France as it stands today

I don't know - it just doesn't!! I just don't know. You still have the artists, you still have Simon and Seb playing all over the place but it's not the same. They are musicians just like any other now but at the time it was something a bit different - there was this spirit and this vibe which was always for me much more about the freedom and the possibility to do something even if you are not trained as an artist or have the luxury of an environment that commercially supports creativity. That aspect is now a part of history.

When we first heard of you, it was through the UK scene rather than the French scene. How did you manage to penetrate a UK scene that is known for being very closed.

Well what happened was that I got very much into that free party techno hardcore scene for maybe 6-10 years. I had labels and I released techno/hard techno. Overall, I probably released 15 or 20 records in that scene and

around 1999 or 2000 I got really bored both with the music and where the free party spirit was, so I decided to go back to the musical roots of all that music which for me was black music and got back into funk and soul. I spent a whole year browsing the internet and buying old funk records and trying to do some music with the different influences until I recorded a CD with 5 or 6 tracks and sent it to maybe 10 record labels in the UK that might potentially be interested and luckily 2 of the labels called me back the week just after that. And it just went from there

Having had so many of your records released in England and playing there so often , how do you view the cultural differences between the French and the English scenes

There's not a huge amount between them it has to be said. There are a lot of differences between different scenes but for example in the breakbeat scene or the house scene it's kind of the same whether you're in France or

in England.. Now everything is so globalised I guess it's really the same everywhere. The only difference is that I think in the UK now you have more opportunities to have your music heard, to play in clubs, to play as a DJ. They have more radio stations, more labels and more clubs. In France it's a bit different because these days you don't really have that many opportunities to get heard and for someone around 16 or 18 in France I guess it can be very difficult to succeed. If you want to have your music heard and you know if you don't have the chance to know someone or be known by someone who is big it is very hard to make it happen. In both England and Germany that's the difference that really stands out for me.

You do a lot of remix work, do you feel that that interferes with the development of your own sound or does it bring new ingredients and help evolve it.

No it really helps. it's something I love to do even though sometimes it can be a bit confusing for some people who are into my sound because I use remixes to try out new ideas. It's a way for me to have different sounds and different influences coming in and trying something very different with them, whereas when I'm producing my own sounds I have a very precise idea of what I want to do so the whole process is very different. When I do a remix I just let the original parts influence my production process whereas when I produce for myself, my ideas are far more defined. It really helps to bring new influences, new techniques and I love it.



Do you find that now you're successful, that success opens up experimentation or does it limit it?.

Honestly it depends. On the gig front it happens... So a promoter books me maybe in Germany or the UK or anywhere and this particular guy or this particular crowd are waiting for a certain style because they have heard one or two of my records and they think that I'm going to play one or two hours of that particular music but it never happens because if you have heard me playing or my mix tapes I'm really into crossing the boundaries between style and I really don't pay any attention to genres or labelled styles and I don't even think that being trapped into a particular sound can be called success no matter how big the payday at the end of it.

You mention crossing borders and crossing genres. Do you feel that dance music in general is maturing in that direction.

I think you've got two different forces and two different directions. Indeed with the whole internet phenomenon and globalisation in music you have everything melting together



and now you can't really say you're playing House music or Breaks or whatever. You're playing music of a certain BPM with a certain vibe but it can have a breakbeat inside or it can have a full jacking beat it can really be anything including dubstep. Everything goes together because every artist is taking influences from every other artist on the internet now. That's one point and the other point is that journalists and people in the shops and distributors they need to have pigeon holes, they need to have stickers to define what they are selling so you have more genres because people are trying to define music more despite it's ever increasing diversity.

Speaking of dubstep - what is your take on it both as a producer and from a dancefloor perspective

Well as a producer, it's been something really really fresh. We haven't had something that original for ages so it really was something that blew everyone's mind. You had guys writing shuffle beats that you had never heard before but in the way that they made people dance it was clear that it wasn't purely experimental - it was really interesting and

forward thinking music in a dance floor way. You got the same aspect with the sounds and how they were crafted and built so it really is something that had a great impact on pretty much every every single producer around.

Your music has changed in the last 2/3 years from funky breaks to more fidgety bassline four beat stuff. Was that a conscious transition or was it something that just organically evolved?

I think it just happened and certainly wasn't something I planned. I think it happened for the reasons I gave about the impact of dubstep which in turn influenced the fidget sound. I felt the same for fidget as Dubstep for the first maybe six months and then it became a bit boring but at first it really was a bit of fresh air too because you had all these huge basslines and it really sounded free, like it had no boundaries and it could do anything with any sound. I got into it because of the freedom at first and I have also a strong Drum n Bass background so it all connected. It seemed obvious that I had to do something with these basslines and my previous influences. It felt right.

When you play out do you play live or do you play on the decks?

That's a tricky question. I used to play on the decks and I used to play live. In 2005 when I began to gain real recognition on the funky breaks and nu skool breaks scene I tried to play genuinely live acts with some effects and keyboards and devices. I really tried to play like that for maybe 6 months but what happened is that when I arrived at a gig I had a DJ playing right before me and another playing right after and with this kind of music it is so difficult to have the same impact on people on the crowd with a live act because you really have to have your music breaking down and having a specific impact. Every minute it has to drop again and you just can't do it with your two hands. Maybe with two or three people you could achieve something but with Breaks or even with the kind of House that I'm playing you don't have the whole mental psychedelic vibe you can have with Techno so it's very difficult to play live. What I did is keep the live aspect by playing with Ableton playing tracks by other producers or other DJ's as well as mine and what I do is I cut the tunes into six or eight or maybe even ten parts and put them all in Ableton so that I can play every part of every tune with every other part of every other tune. Maybe play the drum part of one tune with the bassline of another and an acapella dropped on top so for me it's not really a DJ thing and it's not really a live either so it's just in between both techniques.

It's interesting that you say with a DJ either side, you've got to make quick sudden



impacts. Do you think that a lot of that has got to do with the fact that nowadays it's always an hour, hour and a half set that limits the extent you can take the dancefloor on your trip

Well for example, I played in the Nuovo Casino recently. I had one hour and I was playing with Sinden and Don Rimini and I didn't have any time to build anything from scratch. You know, when you play three hours you can build your groove and all the atmosphere and take your time to convince the crowd that you are taking them somewhere but when you only have one hour it's just not long enough. The other reason is that in the breaks but specifically the whole bassline house and banging electro that I'm playing more and more these days, it's not that much about the groove but about the drop. It's all about the impact - you know you have a huge breakdown and then you've got the drop and people are screaming and dancing and bouncing for maybe two or three bars and then you have to drop another tune because after the three first bars people are beginning to drop their energy and as the groove is not the main element and they are really waiting for something to drop very hard and they are not paying that much attention to the groove.

How does relentless week in week out gigging impact your family life.

Well em I don't know if it really does impact my family life too much because I'm only working on weekends. I'm producing the whole week but I have plenty of time to pick up kids at school and take care of them so it's more a chance to be able to be at home most





of the time and only working or being out of home every weekend so I see that has a huge opportunity to have a more fulfilling family life than most! The only impact it has is that I'm fucking tired every fucking day because when you don't sleep on Friday and you don't sleep on Saturday and then on Sunday morning you've got kids jumping on the bed at 7 o'clock in the morning it really can be utterly exhausting so that's the main fallout I guess.

Speaking of producing, how intimate a zone is your studio? Is it somewhere you just lock yourself away and just flow?

It's not in my house so I have to take a bus and go somewhere else. I'm not living with my studio and that has really made a difference because before I had kids I had my studio in my bedroom and every time I had an idea I switched it on and just went for it. But from the moment I had kids I moved the studio into another flat so I have to take my bag and go out to produce. I have a reduced amount of time in that I arrive at the studio and I have maybe 3,4 or at the most 5 hours to do something so it really helped to concentrate

on something efficiently, it helped me to achieve things and not to just play around with a keyboard for hours

Any tips for amateur producers?

The most important aspect for me is to really understand how it works so you really have to understand what an oscillator is, what a filter is, what an LFO is and how they all interact with each other. Once you know what every parameter and how every parameter affects the sound you can go wherever you want but you really have to know what it does and what it means to really achieve the sounds that are interesting. I think it depends. I mean you can't open a piece of VST software for instance and have something sounding great if you don't know how it works. I think that's the basis and then I don't know there's not one trick that gives you a big bad bassline you have many ways to achieve this but for bedroom producers my advice would be to go to Youtube where you can find great videos with people explaining how to write a specific bassline and it can be very useful.



Tell us about your record label Katorza. What's the artistic goal you're going for with that?

Well it's quite simple the first goal was to release banging and really dance floor efficient music. Besides that we wanted to have vocals - that was really an important point because we felt there wasn't that many vocal tunes in either nu skool breaks or bassline house, so we wanted to have MC's or singers collaborating with us on the label. The whole idea was to have an original on one side and a remix on the other side and if the original is House the remix will be breaks and vice versa

2010 what does it hold for you?

Well I've got a new original EP out on Expressillon soon, we're still working on it and I keep changing my mind every two weeks because I've got plenty of tunes and I just can't decide which ones will make it onto on the EP. It's taking some time but hopefully it will be released before summer.

www.myspace.com/misterstrom

<http://soundcloud.com/maelstrom>





DARE (RIP 2010) Graffiti Legend





Photography: Nicole Blommers



Vitry-sur-Seine - Paris April 2010



PUSH PONY

ART, FASHION, VANS AND COCK BLOCKING DRUNKS

We started the year launching our first Push Pony fashion event, by kicking off London Fashion Week at too cool Shoreditch House. It went even better than we dreamed possible, so mwah, mwah kisses to Felder Felder, Jenny Packham, Irwin & Jordan and for all the amazing art from our friends at Amuti Gallery who provided original prints from Banksy, Damian Hirst, James Cauty, along with a stunning piece of graffiti from Part2ism. The star of the day was the retro neon's designed by God's Own Junkyard. Everything in our pop-up shop was available for sale and we got fantastic responses from the fash pack, the press, art dealers and drunken friends.

But, its not all sex, drugs and you know what? The fact is the day before we had to pick up all the cloths, art, rails, blah blah, blah, so we became man-and-van for a day, beeping at people, even the ugly ones got beeped by us. And after the event, we had to pack it all away; we somehow got the help of two party-boys, Alister who was drunk and Simon who was hammered!

So picture the scene...us packing away and carrying stuff into the tradesman's lift, while lots of merry Shoreditch House members attempted to chat us up, and once downstairs the party-boys were handling original art and cloths worth thousands and thousands of pounds. The craziest moment was when two even drunker guys turned up and asked them for directions, talk about the blind (drunk) leading the blind, at the very moment they



were holding a £3,000 Part2ism graffiti canvas over a huge muddy puddle, well it can only describe it as frighteningly funny!

The final scene was us three Ponies, in a delivery van at 3am with around £100,000 worth of art and fashion driving to Soho, Cricklewood, Balham and Peckham, in a zombie like state, discussing "cock blocking"...oh the glamour of fashion!

B*tches We Hate to Love

While we spent most of last year pinching pennies and clipping coupons for cocktails

these b*tches were bathing in a pool of luxury. "Working" in the most incredible and fabulous jobs, we can't even believe exist? Here are the Top 5 Fashion Fatales we Hate to Love.

1. Caroline Sieber- Brand Ambassador for Chanel

Austrian born Caroline originally came to London to pursue Accounting, until she realised a) its boring! B) balancing a load of Chanel bags was a lot more fun. Recently selected to be one of Karl's 5 (the iconic number for Chanel and Coco herself) Miss Sieber is rarely seen off the best dressed list, and has become one of the most sought after celebrity stylists. As Brand Ambassador for Chanel her duties include attending product launches, being at all the right parties, front row seats at all the major Fashion Week's, access pass to the entire collection, beauty products and accessories long before anyone else. The swag is never ending and the glamour over flowing. Other ambassadors include Leigh Lezark, Jen Brill, Poppy Delevingne, and Vanessa Traina...all b*tches!

2. Ellen Sirot- Hand and Foot Model

Known as the "Supermodel of Hands" Ellen's hands have appeared in nearly every major fashion and beauty magazine in publication, she has worked with top photographers and



has been a hand for Sarah Jessica Parker, Hilary Swank and celebrity chef Rachel Ray. She has also made a career as a foot model appearing in endless commercials and beauty campaigns as well as modelling foot wear for many of the leading fashion houses. Earning anywhere from \$10,00 per day Ellen takes her perfectly manicured hands and feet very seriously by perfecting her craft with optimum lighting and sensual hand poses! She takes grooming very seriously and follows a strict regime. Now that's a serious hand job lady!!

3. Harley Viera-Newton- House DJ for Dior Beauty

22 year old British born Harley Viera- Newton has it all. Recently named one of New York's top "It Girls" it seems everything she touches turns to gold. Spotted spinning at a New York hotspot by Dior, Harley was appointed House DJ for the Beauty branch of the brand immediately. Her duties include creating playlist's of playful tunes inspired by each season's palette. "They send me colours for the upcoming season <http://www.allure.com/trends?mbid=yshine_dbr> , and I assess its mood and pinpoint a vibe." Said Harley in a recent interview. Other responsibilities include hosting parties and consulting on new product launches for Dior Beauty as well as



sampling all the new products...JEALOUS?!! She has recently been named the face of DKNY and has appeared in NYLON, Jolouse and Vogue to name a few. This b*itch is spinning it!

4. Antonio Bracciani - Professional Fit Model

Ok so he may not be a woman but he's still a b*tch! Antonio has made a name for himself by being the fit model for Gucci, Prada, Burberry, Zegna and Calvin Klein. That's right some of the most coveted suits in men's fashion have been designed after his exact measurements...and that's his job! Having the same figure he had at 18, gorgeous Antonio has kept his physique with a consistent diet and devote exercise regime. At 32 his job entails standing very very still while clothes are measured, fitted and designed onto his fabulous body. He has also worked as a model for several campaigns and was recently featured in Fantastic Man Magazine...we're drooling!

5. The IPOD Nanny - Employer: Karl Lagerfeld

Last on our list is a B*itch whose name we don't even know, whose job is...an "IPOD Nanny". Trust Kaiser Karl to have created one of the strangest and most indulgent jobs in fashion. Karl regularly employs an "IPOD Nanny" who's daily duties include updating and organising playlist's and music libraries on 100's of the designers IPOD's and gadgets. The job of "IPOD Nanny" is not only to keep the vast musical collection obsessively organised and to make sure the Master of Fashion is at the forefront of what's musically hot...

WHAT MAKES PP TINKLE

1. DayLight Savings- Lighter evenings have us itching to open up the after work beer gardens and bring out the Rose! The summer months are near!

2. Good Vibes- With Bikini season quickly approaching, we are loving the idea of power



plate sessions. Double the toning and the results in 25 minutes of vibration! How can you go wrong?! www.goodvibes.com <<http://www.goodvibes.com/>>

3. Kitty La Roar and Nick of Time - First discovered at Hugh Hefner's 80th Birthday the duo plays weekly in the west end at Cellar Door, doing sultry Jazz Mash-Ups including Shaggy, Radiohead, Nirvana and Frank Sinatra. AMAZING! www.kittyandnick.co.uk

4. Bride Wars- The season of romance is upon us and everyone is tying the knot. Were in the process of launching our first Push Pony bridal event, to fulfill all your wedding day desires. Watch this Space! Details to be announced soon on www.pushpony.com

5. London Ink- Move over Megan Fox everyone's getting them! Tattoos were all over the catwalk this season. If you too scared to commit then check out Chanel's «Les Trompe-LOeil» temporary skin art. Hand-drawn tats by artist Peter Philips. Instant Rock n Roll!



GOING DOWN ON US

1. Shake your bon bon boys Ricky Martin's come out! Ending years of speculation?! We thought it was like a month back in the 90's that we were unsure.

2. "Sexting"- Every D list male celebrity, boy band member and athlete seems to have been caught in the act. Glamour models and hookers are seeing the possibility of money, fame or more shagging in telling us their grim stories, we're so over it. Wasn't that Tiger Woods thing like 4 months ago and further more, are you thinking what were thinking, these guys aren't even remotely hot? Honestly the John Terry and Wayne Bridge and sluttish girl love triangle...ew!

3. Election- Watching Gordon Brown and David Cameron doing mandatory televised surprise visits to Bolton and Doncaster to "meet the people"

4. Bare Legs- We're breaking out our spring wardrobes and getting ready to bare all. But our nearly naked legs are looking a bit anemic. Why are good fake tans so expensive, while the cheap one's leave you smelling like digestive biscuits.

5. Fashion Week Withdrawal - We drank, we saw, we wore higher heels each day. Our feet are finally beginning to heal and we have begun acting like decent people again.

THE WORLD ACCORDING TO KARL

Karl Lagerfeld creative genius, visionary designer, and man behind super brands Chanel and Fendi offers his own fascinating and sometimes controversial take on life.

Children

"If I wanted children, I would be a godfather"

«They grow so fast, and having adult children makes you look 100 years old. I don't want that»

Elton John's Wedding

«I refused to go to Elton's civil ceremony. I got a paper saying no gifts for the couple. Cameras are forbidden; cell phones are to be deposited at the arrival. No smoking. I will not go where things are forbidden and I'm told to behave. You feel like You're hostage for a party.»

Porn and Prostitution



“I personally only like high-class escorts. I don't like sleeping with people I really love. I don't want to sleep with them because sex cannot last, but affection can last forever.”

«I'm rather pro-prostitution; I admire people who do it. It can't be much fun. Thank goodness for it. People need relief or they become murderers.»

Texting

«I send notes. I'm not a chambermaid whom you can ring at every moment. Today, most people act like they work on a hotel switchboard.»

«People I'm really friendly with have faxes. Anna Wintour has one.»

Smoking

«When I was 14 I wanted to smoke because my mother smoked like mad. I wanted to smoke to look grown-up. But my mother said, 'You shouldn't smoke. Your hands are not that beautiful and that shows when you smoke'.»

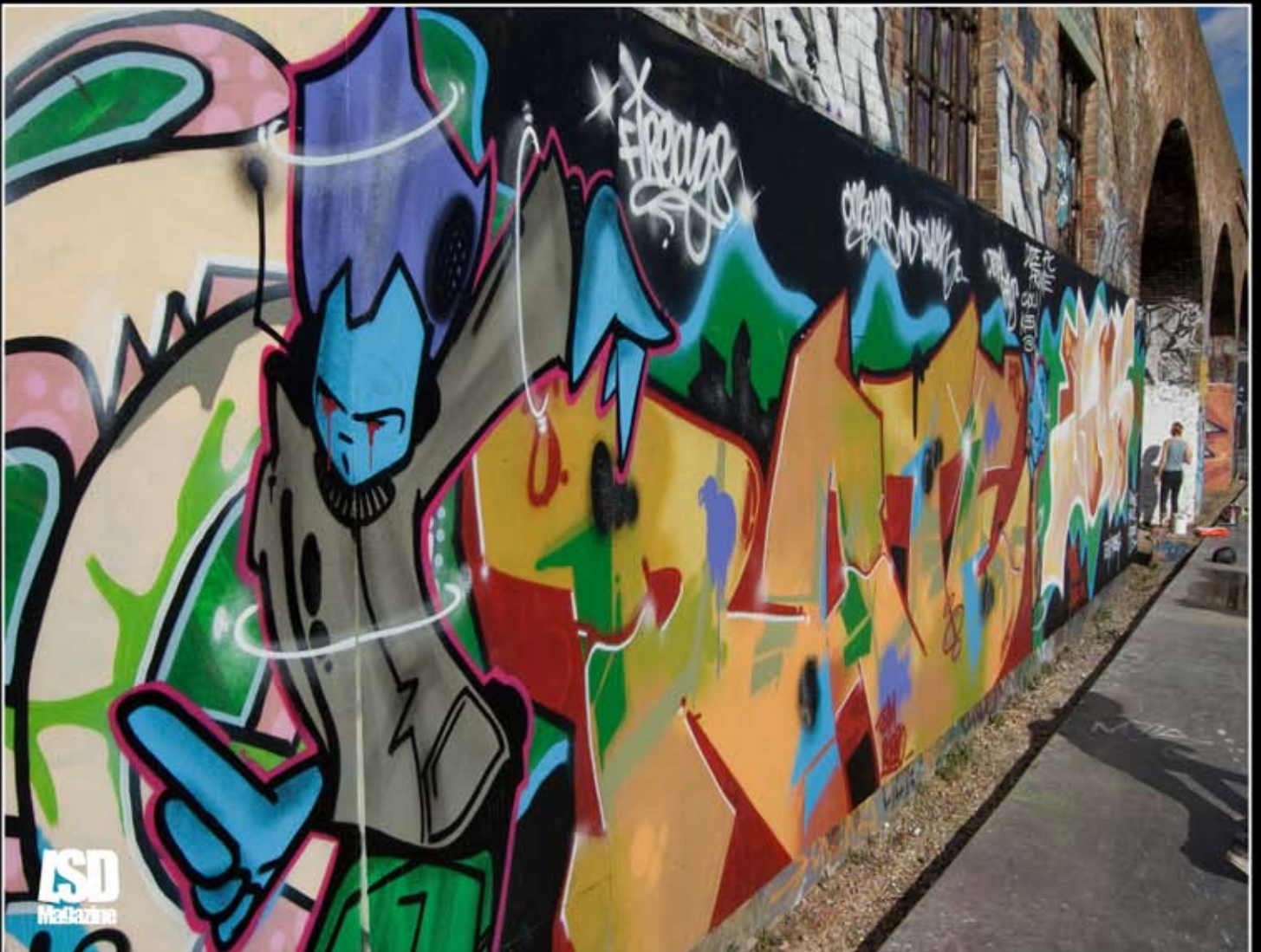
Gadgets

“I love iPod's...I have 300 of them”





LSD
Magazine



LSD
Magazine

Photography: WA

Mile End Skate Park - Mar 1st



Photography: Nicole Blommers



Vitry-sur-Seine - Paris April 2010



Photography: WA

Mile End Skate Park - Mar 1st

TOBIAS ZEHNTNER: ZEITFENSTER, LIGHT WALL



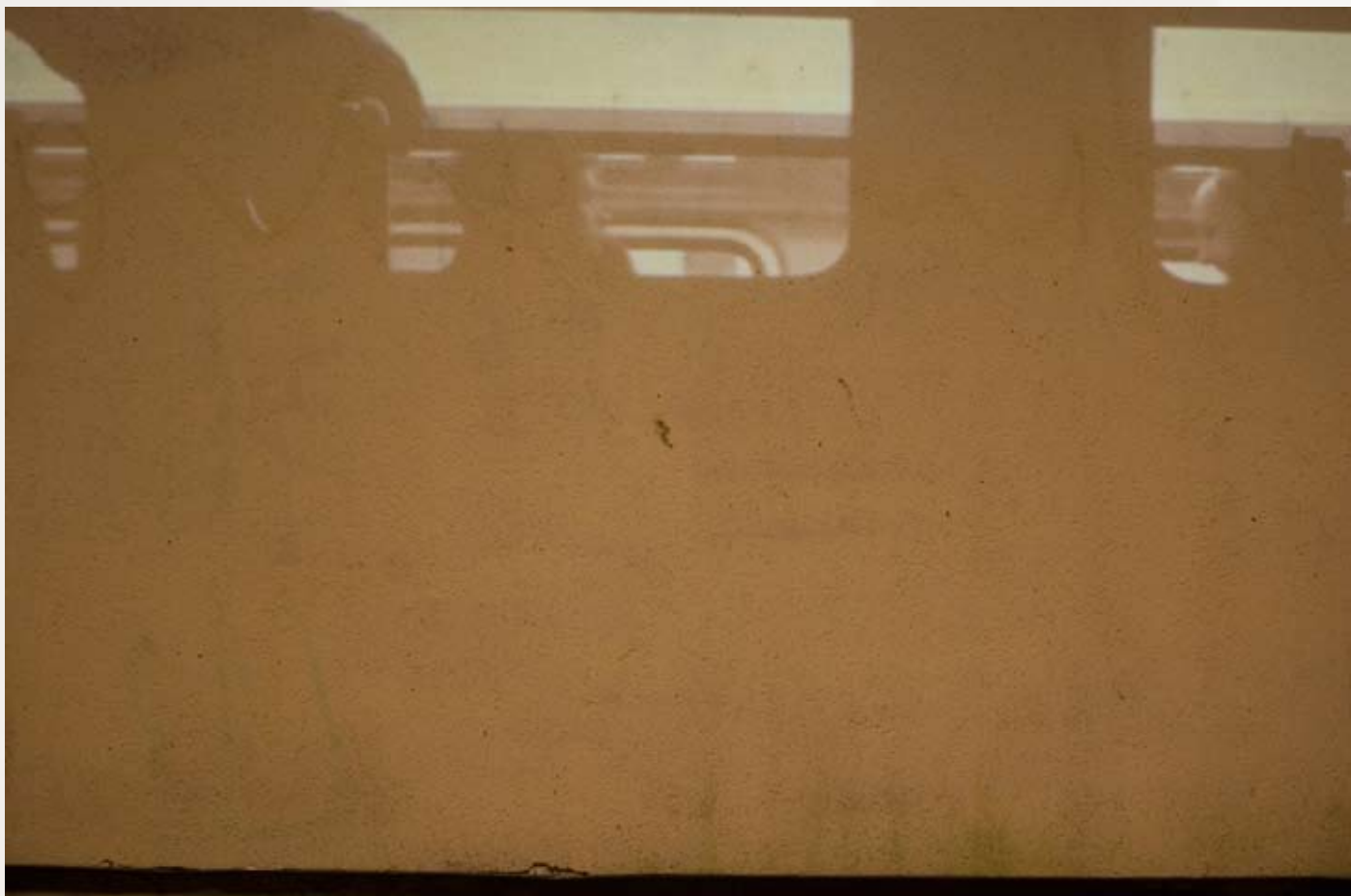
No ticket, donation, nor reservation is required to walk along Calvin Street in the Spitalfields district of London. The street is dark and deserted. Somewhere perhaps where one would not choose to walk alone at night. But out of the darkness comes light. Tobias Zehntner's *Zeitfenster* is the first in the *Lightwall* programme of outdoor video installations. A project which heralds the entrance of Eiko Honda - assistant to the internationally renowned artist Gonkar Gyatso - into the world of art direction. As it happens, establishing oneself as an artist is an arduous task. Eiko's intention: to challenge the conventions of the traditional gallery space by providing an alternative platform for audiences to encounter the work of emerging artists.

To the Swiss artist observation is key. His undirected recordings urge the audience to reflect upon aspects of their daily lives.

His editorial input; looping and sequencing, frames human behavior in an unconventional context. *Zeitfenster* takes the notion of the London commute as a starting point in which to explore the space in-between the home and the workplace. "I am fascinated by it partly because I am not taking part in the daily commute myself," says Tobias, who also plays the role of the outside observer in his other works.

"Whenever I travel through London I see myself in this unproductive state, it's a place where I spend a lot of time but also somewhere I feel unable to achieve anything. I find it to be an almost hypnotic state to which the work *Zeitfenster* with its repetitive nature makes reference. The passengers of this seemingly endless train do not seem to notice that they are in this non-space."

Characteristic of time-based media is its



request for the viewer's time, which can indeed create limitations. The 'endless train' to which Tobias refers is the result of his looped video footage:

"By creating video loops I leave it up to the viewer when to join and when to leave. However, I find that the audience is generally willing to engage with *Zeitfenster* for much longer than I would expect them to."

For the artist direction occurs in the editing of his observations from reality. The footage is never staged although its creator claims that the viewer often believes his work to be preconceived, as the behavior of the subjects appears to be too 'comical'.

Video as a medium is often understood as



destined to have sound and to be shown on screen. Instead the twenty-seven-year-old finds it to be an ideal way to present what he describes as the moving image. "Today the moving image is my favoured media, but I prefer to leave my visual observations without disturbance", he insists:

"I worked with photography for many years. Undoubtedly this experience still influences my practice today. But through my shift to the moving image I found a way of describing movements in space and time."

Certainly, Tobias' photographic influence manifests in his use of static cameras and the waiver of sound in his work. Yet it is his keen interest in architecture and 'artificial spaces' that claims an almost secondary role within the visual content. Prior to his entrance into the art world Tobias' studied for four-years on a vocational course for draughtsmen. Whilst he admits there is a strong architectural influence contained in his work it is, of course not the point: "Architecture is all about compromise, where in visual art I am able to follow my own interpretation of things."

Rather than a form of institutional critique on the traditional art gallery, Tobias believes



that the alternative gallery space enriches his work. “It gives you the possibility to show your work outside the usual art frame. As an artist I am forced to take a stand on the surroundings. I found it was actually more difficult to make *Zeitfenster* work in such a setting compared to a white cube.”

For an artist eager to become established in the competitive sphere of contemporary art, *Lightwall* cultivates the opportunity for a ‘different’ audience:

“*Zeitfenster* attracts a lot of people from the art scene, but its public display opens the work up to random passers-by. I hope it makes people stop up for a moment. I hope it makes them look at things differently.”

Lightwall’s art in the dark challenges perceptions of what an art gallery should be. Yet it can also be credited with marking Tobias and the other participating artists out as ones to watch.

LAURA BEANEY





Photography: WA

Run, Busk - Hackney Wick - April 12th



Photography: WA

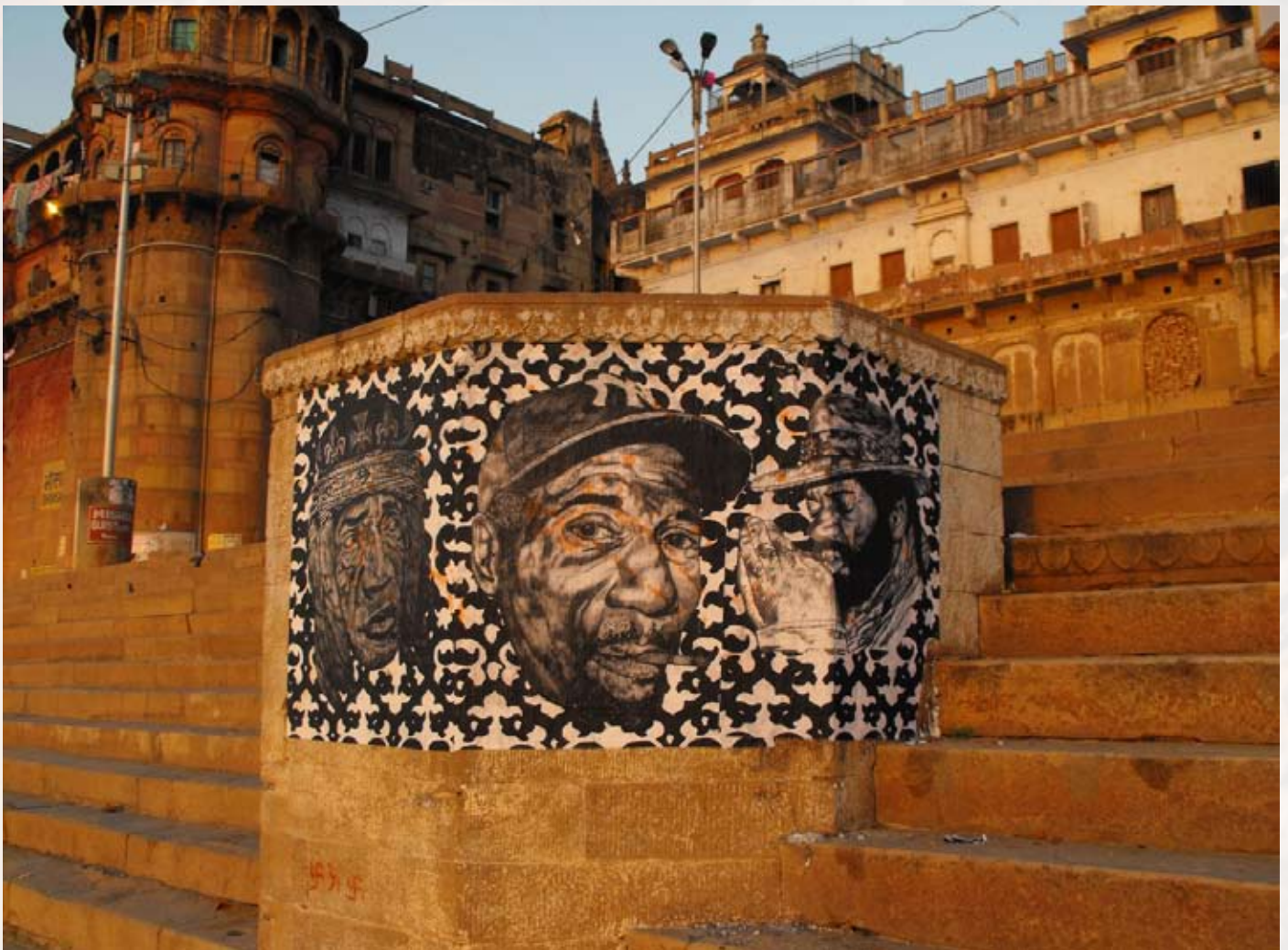
Run, Busk - Hackney Wick - April 12th



Photography: WA

Run, Busk, Milo - Hackney Wick - April 12th

HUGH LEEMAN VARANASI



Like a lucid dream reminding you of a pain you may have once witnessed and one that you yourself must surely endure in time. Yet somehow there is nothing scary nor is there any pain, only a fascination. One which finds its beauty in a truth that is undeniably dark. Varanasi, India is the holiest of Hindu cities, where believers bodies are cremated on the Ganges River's banks on a daily basis.

Putting my art here is akin to a foot note with no reference or explanation. Its like leaving a love letter that would be read over and over again but never fully understood. Only to find not every word must carry a meaning. It's existence would be as out of place here as I had felt throughout most of my childhood and found art gave me a place to find myself.





As crass as it could sound, watching bodies cremated by the dozen was purely sublime. It was like witnessing your own surgery but with no repercussions of pain or rehab. I came to see a world different than all my other travels. In getting what I came for I found myself so far removed from the place which I stood but somehow directly inside myself. Our only connection, death, transcends all barriers and is universally achieved if never grasped in our understanding.

For centuries Varanasi has served as a constant reminder to every lives ephemerality. At it's ghat where the bodies are burned those on the lowest rungs of society handle the lumber and the bodies of those who can afford to be cremated here. In creating a street art which celebrates the lives of the disenfranchised this place seemed a poetic host for my street pieces.

Leaving my art here will keep us connected, however distant and ephemeral. I will be glad to leave Varanasi and excited to know a piece of me and my mind stays here, but happiest to know one day it too will be gone.

HUGH LEEMAN

<http://hughleeman.com/>



Hugh is an old friend of LSD, and you can find our interpretation of his mission and his work in Issue 2 on page 208

<http://issuu.com/lsdmagazine/docs/bootingoffthedoors>



Photography: WA

Post Morten - Hackney Wick - April 12th

You **Tube**™





Photography: Vegas



Vancouver - 2010

THE WINDS OF TRADE



Ever wondered how the hell a tiny, irrelevant, rain drenched and windswept island off the coast of mainland Europe became known to itself and the world as 'Great Britain'. How it conquered India, bullied China into opium addiction, occupied the entirety of North America and managed to chair the top table of European power broking for over two centuries. Well if you'd asked John Bull somewhere in the mid 19th Century he would have spun you a still familiar imperial line about God's Chosen People, innate racial and cultural superiority and some guff about virtue. The reality of course is slightly less hyperbolic but all the more fascinating for it and demands a trip back into the Middle Ages and beyond to find the starting point for this story.....

Trade was rampant during the heyday

of the Roman Empire as the Pax Romana offered a safe framework for mercantilism and an international spectrum of profitable possibility. Business flourished and archaeology is still throwing up the evidence of Syrian merchants in Northumbria, British wool exports in North Africa and the aesthetic legacy of comfortable living in the decaying villas of those who proved most skillful at working the vast empire to their advantage. Yet as Rome fell into a mire of staggering incompetence and then to the Goths, this enlightened spirit of Roman enterprise spread east to the new capital of Constantinople and as the dying embers of Western supremacy fizzled out in the mud, the East took up the mantle of military, economic and artistic ascendancy and the door of fleeting history finally slammed on the wild wastelands of the West.

It will of course be argued that the so called Dark Ages weren't really all that dark, and that this historical narrative has some sort of agenda behind it, but despite the evidence of stunning artefacts and painstakingly vibrant illuminated manuscripts, the fact remains that Western Europe was closed, insular, backward, and fucking freezing. Charlemagne at the turn of the 9th century was apparently responsible for the Carolignian Renaissance, powerful kings came and went, dynasties dominated and fragmented, but life, art, standards of living and the understanding of social potential remained grimly static as the centuries ambled by. Why? Power was not in question, as Charlemagne proved in his military domination – Henry II reigned over England and much of France- the fatal cocktail of slaughter and strategic marriage led to relatively stable control of huge areas of land and yet very little of any lasting consequence actually happened. And it was the whole basis for the Western logic of power that was the reason why. Land = Power.

In a feudal and agricultural economy, land was everything. If you were King Cuthbert of Bollocksland, you were feeling a bit skint and had the pressing need to ramp up the income flowing into your coffers to keep your extortionately bought Queen in silks and furs, you had one option and one option only. Invade the nearest bit of fertile land and after a swift bit of butchery, add the farming revenues to your Exchequer. There was no other way of raising money – land = money = power and it was as simple as that. Except for one or two slight problems. Land was finite, so was your military capacity to control it, and this primitive law of economics that Stone Age man would have recognized instantly, did not allow for a middle class to develop independently of the feudal power structure



and go on to innovate, beautify and explore new possibilities.

And yet a new phenomenon was stirring in the marshlands of northern Italy. The city state of Venice was rapidly cornering the market in Eastern trade, acting as a bridge between Western Europe and the decadent and oh so desirable luxuries of the Byzantine and Arab worlds. Venice had no land – it had 117 reclaimed islands that no-one with a grounding in agricultural economics would have touched with a bargepole, and yet it was quickly becoming one of the foremost powers in Europe. Concentrating solely on trade and fitting a fleet to protect itself and its trading posts, Venice was awash with money, goods, ideas and influences and an unassailable naval hegemony. Kings came cap in hand to beg for transport or assistance, crusaders relied on Venetian help for their ludicrous missions to the Holy Land and in 1215, Venetian skullduggery saw the capture of Constantinople – the first time the capital of the Roman Empire had been sacked in over a millennium. And all this from a load of soggy islands. Venice looked not for territory but for trading posts, and its pack of competitors, Pisa, Genoa and Amalfi tried desperately to emulate her. Her control of trade routes into Europe, her control of the sea lanes and her pseudo colonial influence on islands throughout the Mediterranean





all held in place a new and counter intuitive power model. No land – just trade, maritime supremacy and an entire system of government built around protecting those assets.

Venice was a Republic. And in that we find a key insight into the nature of maritime trade based societies. Aristocracy had no place, dependent as it was on land ownership. Kings were equally useless. Guilds and merchants controlled the levers of power and as we can still see from the lavish museum town that stands today, they lost no time in cashing their prosperity in for spectacular buildings and glorious works of art. Councils abounded with the Doge or leader being far more like a modern chief executive than an absolute monarch. Standards of living for all rocketed during the 12th and 13th centuries and the kaleidoscope of cultural and scientific influences brought back from the East on her ships moulded her into by far and away the most cosmopolitan, forward looking nation in Europe. And exactly the same phenomenon was soon to replicate itself in 17th century Holland.

In a brief window between warring land powers attempting to occupy the similarly reclaimed Netherlands, the Dutch republic took the world by storm. While Venice's chokehold on Eastern trade had been based on being the last link in a long chain beginning in the spice rich regions of the Far East with every middleman adding his profit to the original price, the Dutch capitalized on the legacy of Magellan and the circumnavigation of the world. Building the most dominant navy in Europe, they bypassed the tortuous Venetian system of trade and sailed directly to the source, both maximizing profits, and in lowering prices, democratized Eastern luxuries and opened up a vast new market as the burgeoning middle classes discovered that what had once been the preserve of the rich was now accessible to them. The Dutch dominated trade, and again we find a collegiate form of government that offended the sensibilities of all the major European powers and the Vatican. No-one could quite believe that a society that was neither based on religion or a single leader could be quite so successful – and yet they failed to learn the lesson that Dutch success

was because of this system of government rather than in spite of it. Stock Markets were inaugurated, the middle class took a stake in foreign trade, and the link between trade, navies and open mindedness came into its own. Dissidents from all over Europe flocked to Holland. Revolutionary pamphlets, banned everywhere else were printed there, and Holland became a hothouse of ideas, innovation and urbane sophistication.

One country above all was paying attention. England. The defeat of the supposedly invincible Spanish Armada had sparked a new naval consciousness that grew cautiously in the century that followed. Locking horns (usually unsuccessfully) with the Dutch led to an overhaul in naval administration (under the aegis of the celebrated diarist Samuel Pepys) and the realization that trade was the islands ticket to supremacy embedded itself during the course of the 17th century. Yet again maritime thinking, trade and enlightened forms of government flourished as one, and in 1689, the Glorious Revolution saw the political rules rewritten as the monarch became constitutional, his powers bound by law and the merchants took a leading role in the government and priorities of the country, marrying into the nobility to give themselves the last vestiges of honour required to run a government. From that date onwards, Britain focused on it's navy and its trading weight, colonizing strategically to maximize revenue and concentrating on the seas for its power base and while Louis XIV was taking the time



honoured crack at conquering Europe, Britain was setting up shop in India and the Far East.

The overwhelming irony about the British Empire was that Britain was an exceedingly reluctant colonist. Just take India. Until the Mutiny of 1857, Britain's India affairs were run by the East India Company. Yes they had armies, navies and all the trappings of colonial power, but they remained a company whose glory was defined by its balance sheet. It's system of empire was based on retaining trading posts as sovereign territory and nothing beyond that, striking deals with local rulers to control their trade and using only the threat of military force to keep them in line. No company wanted to occupy the vast hinterlands – that would require men and money, and they effectively acquired their vast land empire by default. They would only take over states and countries to protect their trade and always reluctantly – whether it be to prevent the French or the Spanish getting a look in or to crush trade threatening political instability between warring local lords. Land was never the goal – it was far more a necessary evil to keep the trade routes open, and it wasn't until the late 19th Century after the shock of the Indian mutiny that the proselytising, Christian, superior brand of colonial benevolence kicked into action.





Before that, ambassadors tended to blend into the local culture with a keen eye only on trade and no real desire to make everyone into a Britain Fearing Christian. Trade was the sole purpose of military and especially naval power rather than conquest for land revenues and royal hubris. Indeed the King had very little control over British naval expansion during the 'glory years' of the 18th and early 19th centuries. Companies ran the show and if we look at the systems of government in Venice, Holland and Britain, we find something that resembles the modern corporation far more than the old model of absolute monarchy.

Trade led to record keeping and exactitude. The business mentality led to industrialization and advances in science. Arts and literature flourished as the middle classes found themselves sufficiently well fed to pursue pleasure and hobbies. Farming land for 14 hours a day does not an artist make. When Napoleon called the British 'a nation of shopkeepers', not only was he spot on, but his eventual demise may perhaps have lifted some of the heavy and condescending sarcasm behind them. Even today – why did America dominate the 20th Century and not Russia or China?? Very simply because

military power will only take you so far, but economic power will rule the world. The US seems to have forgotten this lesson today, and in it's bid for imperial glory, it would do far better to sit back and let Coca Cola conquer the world for them than get involved in messy military adventures. The historical lessons of the last millennium tell us that dominance, empire and economic power go hand in hand whereas military land based power is ethereal and finite. And there is another, far more insidious point. Military power will never completely conquer a culture. In fact it will galvanise the cultural identity of the oppressed and keep their traditions alive and hostile. Sell them a dream though – and watch them all speaking English and wearing baseball caps within a generation. Sun Tzu would have a lot to say on the matter.....

SIRIUS 23



LEAKE
STREET SE1
SOUTH BANK





Photography: WA

London March 2nd



PAGE 23



So, after an edition off, where I was keen to conjure up different subjects I could offer up opinions and reflections on – I discovered that I am not capable of writing about anything other than my present life and those I share it with – which I guess means I am deeply experiencing it.

It turns out, my 15 year old son is quite good at making electronic music – someone suggested the apple doesn't ever fall that far from the tree – but to be fair, the only electronic thing connected with a studio that I know anything about is a microphone, and even then I am pretty limited – I can switch it on and off. When people start talking 'shop' to me, they soon realise I haven't got a clue what they are talking about.

The son happened to be thrust back into my care last year, after a good few years with his father – this meant being forced very reluctantly into school in a different country and a different language. This did not bode well for anyone at the time and there was a distinct lack of interest from both him and the various schools we approached. Finally after

a few months of very early starts and long bus journeys to the nearest school, - where he then sat at the back of the class very bored, the school came up with a solution. He spends 3 weeks of every 4 on what they call here a 'stage' which is essentially work experience. The fourth week he has to go to school – a legal necessity.

SO then it was down to me to find various businesses and organisations that would be willing to adopt him for 3 weeks at a time.

First stop – friends with businesses – you can kind of see how this is going.....





So far, Expressillon, 69db, Audiotrix and Crystal Distortion have all been teaching the young lad new trix.

Now admittedly this is all very cushty for him, and to be fair, he's a good lad, polite and helpful – until it comes to that fourth week – where waking him is akin to raising the titanic with a crane made from lego.

And to be honest, I cant blame him – the school aren't interested in him at all, they are just wriggling out of any responsibility and fulfilling the legal requirements. They dont care where he's been working or ask him anything about it.

However – the tiny adult in me tries to relay to him that he's actually got it a lot easier than his peers and at some point in his life he will realise that getting up at 6.45am for a week, and doing something he doesnt want to do, then followed by 3 weeks of stuff you do want to do – isnt a bad deal.

Needless to say, my 8 year old listens intently to all sides of the arguments as dawn breaks in that 4th week and I am sure he is cleverly hatching some kind of a plan for his own adolescence. (I might suggest he hangs out with his Dad around this point)

I suppose I am caught up in an underlying belief that we have to struggle for something

to truly appreciate it, and part of me feels that he is not having to struggle. Obviously this comes from my upbringing and I've dragged the belief kicking and screaming along with me for years. But actually, why does this have to be the case? Royalty and the 'priveliged' have been getting it on a plate – for centuries.

School is not the be all and end all of anything – we are forced into accepting that there is no hope for us without qualifications – but we all





know this is rubbish. Obviously it is better to nurture and nourish those skills and attributes that come naturally to us, and in doing this we learn all about everything else we need to know without even trying. Who needs a bit of paper to prove you memorised how to do equations once, but now you've forgotten completely how to do it.

I know this is almost utopian, a nice belief and all – to think that each individual child has the freedom and capacity to develop at their own pace in an environment that brings the best out in each of them - but I mean, would you want the job of re-structuring schools to operate in this way? I am not about to take it on!! Just coping with the three I have is enough!

However, I am just being resourceful, with the friends I have at hand and the situation I am in – and lets face it, this is just one of three – I dont think they are all wanting to make electronic music – Although, the 17 year old daughter does like dancing to it – the apple hasnt fallen so far on this one! And from here, it looks like the 8 year old will be just

be bombing whats left of the rainforest and training ninjas – is this something we want to nurture and develop?

Its actually never easy I guess!

SIM SIMMER



SOLATER ST E1



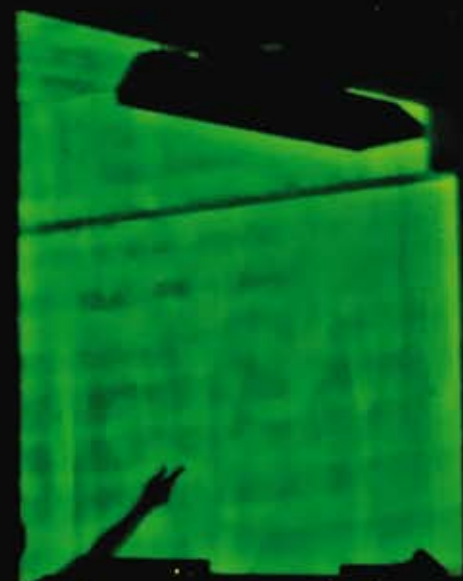


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COCO EDWARDS

VISIONARY UNDERGROUND

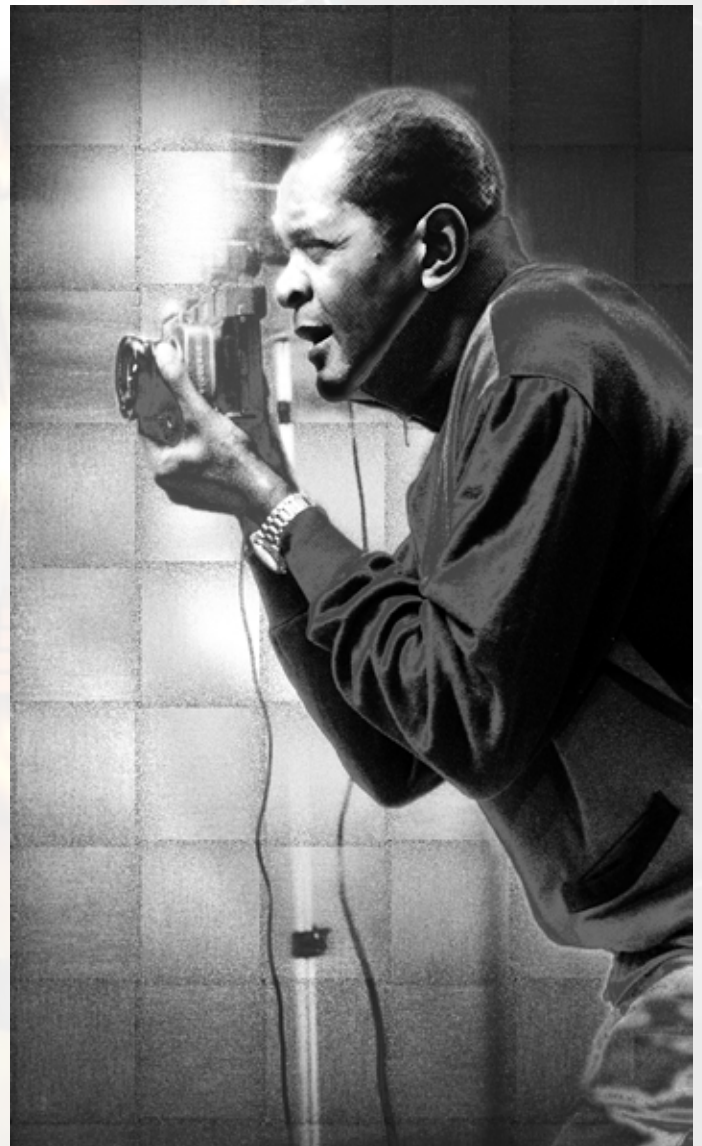
We love our multi genre, multi talented, multi tasking, multi dimensional visionaries here at LSD, so we jumped at the chance to sit down with Coco Edwards and chat through some of her projects. VJ, photographer, graphic designer and founder member of the Drum n Bass band Visionary Underground, Coco has worked with acts as diverse as Sting, Ice T and, the Labour Party!! and brought her own eclectic vision and relentless creative energy to everything she does.

When did you start your Drum n Bass band?

The band was started around about 2000 / 2001. My partner is a Drum n Bass / Breaks producer, and was actually in the Garage scene before, throughout the 90's. It was a natural progression to move on from writing dance tracks to forming a band.

So was you doing Dance music in the 90's yourself before the Drum n Bass band?

Well I'd never done music but always been in and around people doing music. My brother formed Asian Dub Foundation. When I met Paul, he's a DJ and so he started writing music. That's why the VJ software when I found it in 1999 appealed to me so much because it was like a way of being involved in and around the music without you know, without being musical. To be honest, when I was younger I was forced to learn Indian instruments, and



Sitar and classical singing but I really didn't like it. I was being forced into it and also it just wasn't my thing. So as I say it's funny but I love music and I love being around it and that's why I love the whole visuals thing because it's my take on doing what I love doing.



What made you actually decide to follow the Drum n Bass band route as opposed to being a DJ?

Personally I never wanted to be a DJ. So you know maybe if I wasn't into the photography, film and graphic design so much, maybe I would have veered that way to wanting to DJ.

Does your band do many tours abroad?

Yeah you know festivals, we've done quite a lot in Eastern Europe, Hungary and Poland. They love it! I'll tell you something about this place, when in Italy, France and Germany people show you love but in Eastern Europe they're really grateful you came and it's so friendly, they're really up for it and got really good taste in music as well. Going around the festivals and the quality of music they're listening to I think is really good. It's not cheesy like some of these places you go to. So yeah a lot of the places they show love. Very big Drum n Bass scenes there.

Do you think VJ's are the DJ's of the future?

I know there's stuff out there now where you can DJ and you can trigger and play software that works to the beat and kind of set up visuals like that you know. You can almost do it like a one man band but then it's how sophisticated you want to be.

But that's not an art form is it?

No, it's not an art. The whole visual is definitely the way forward. I still find there's a lot of people that just run a DVD. You know the actual art form of it is still growing, and I think it's taking a bit longer because it's not very accessible. You kind of have to have a bit of money to be able to do it. You know if you want to DJ you can go into any club and there is a sound system there so if you're lucky enough to get booked all you got to do is turn up with your records or some CD's these days or an MP3 player. But as a VJ there's a lot more involved.

What does a VJ do?

Ok, well you got all different types of VJs but me personally I'm almost like a visual DJ,



that's what I say because I've got two laptops, I've got a mixer, my two screens which is like my monitors and I mix from one laptop to the other laptop via my mixer. So I've got two software's going on. I also have a live camera feed that goes into the mixer so I've got my channels and I can swap between channels and mix, either the two laptops or a laptop and a camera etc.

Also what I do is kind of interactive as I can type text in live, so when I do a club set, I got the MC or whoever live on stage and if they say make some noise, then I'll type that in quickly so that it corresponds. I mean I've done loads of bands and all I might have from them is their logo and I wouldn't even know their style of music but you can feel it out because the whole thing as well beat matching and playing stuff in time.

Does a VJ play music?

No. A VJ just does visuals. I mean ironically I've got one of the only visual mixers a Roland V5 that does connect audio and video but I use it only in a visual capacity. My whole thing is that if it's an art form it's about what I'm doing. I'm not connecting it up to anyone else, so musically to do an automated beat I've got to produce the thing on time. Just like if a DJs mixing.

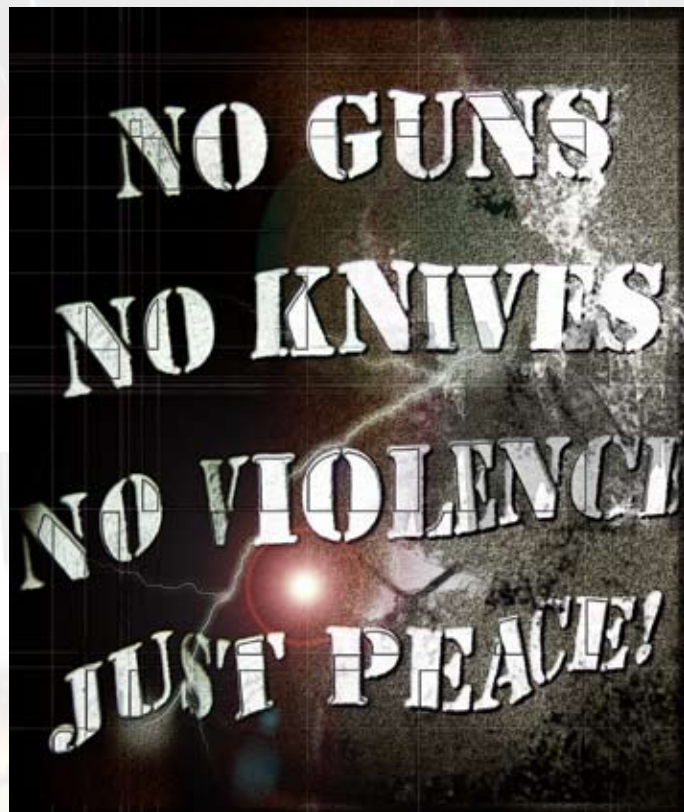
I'm dealing with live loops but I have my pre-prepared stuff that I've made and then in the same way a DJ has their own dub plates it's the same with me. I have some stuff that's library that comes with the software and other stuff which is dub plates of stuff I made myself. When I do different shows I tailor-make things, promoters give me bits and bobs I might just speed it up a little bit and mix up.

Do you go out and actually find footage that you can use in your shows?

I'm always collecting footage and between photography and film, thank God we went digital because from I've got boxes of negatives and boxes and boxes of tapes. To be honest it's a mammoth job, I've got to sit down one day and edit all of this. You know I've got things like where I've filmed Sting, Estelle and different people. When I'm doing the visuals I've got a camera pointed at them I just press the record button, no one's questioning me or nothing. I did Ice T a few years back and they didn't want me to film and I said look this is for the visuals and they actually wanted to see there wasn't a tape in there and things like that.

How long have you been doing photography?

I left school and did A level art and photography and I started doing art sociology and English literature for six months before thinking God there's got to be more to life than this. My brother from Asian Dub Foundation was living in Nottingham at the time and he came down and showed me a prospectus for College. I just thought art, photography yeah that's me. Got there and loved it, I was 17 years old at the time. So I did that came out of there worked in a camera shop for a year and a half because I figured



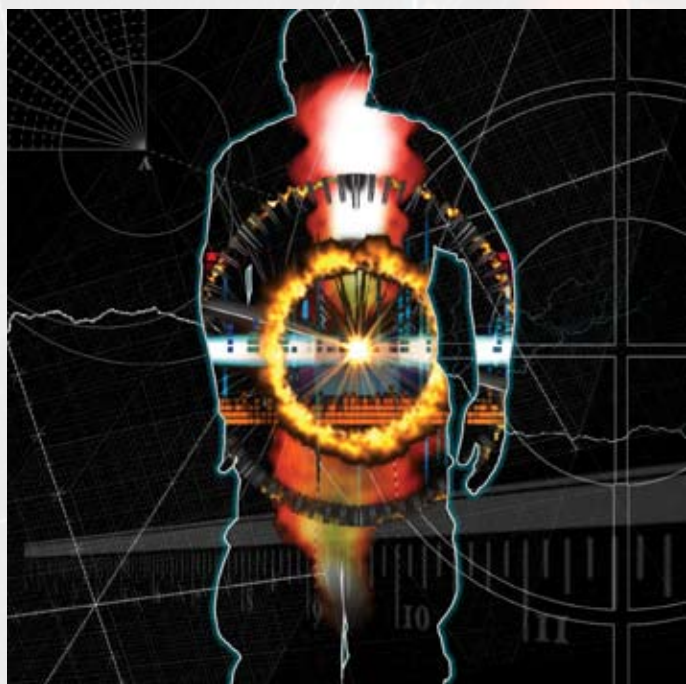
I can get my gear at discount, did a few days voluntary in someone's dark room and then a junior position for a press agency. So I went and worked there for three years and it was just a good grounding because if other things didn't work out at least I was a qualified dark room technician, and back then it was the E6 and C41 film and stuff like that. It was just a good environment to be in because we used to do all the papers and the magazines, there were 4 o'clock deadlines every day so you'd have that mad rush everyday to get your stuff in and out on time.

So how frequently do you do the workshops?

As a digital media creator and photographer I get asked to do stuff for companies or people with no budgets. I say to people looking to succeed in music to get a graphic designer onboard with your crew, someone who's interested in a little filming, photography, design and you all grow together.

I noticed there's pictures of Sting, what are those about?

I did the visuals at one of the Labour conferences back in 2000 in Brighton and





that's how I got to do the Sting thing, there was a classical pianist, who saw some of my work and because of her work, she's always had the classic black and white photograph. I took a few bits over to her which I just mashed up and put colour, shapes everything all over them. She loved it, and asked if i could come to Italy the following week.

This started a working relationship which sent me backwards and forwards to Italy and to France. She was doing a concert with Sting in some ruins in Barcelona. These are two very special dates. Problem was September 24th, September 26th 2001 it got mash up, because of 911, Sting had to pull out and start doing the benefit gigs and stuff like that. In the meantime I'd been to Sting's place in Tuscany where we stayed for four days as she lived in Florence. So we'd drive to Sting's place in Tuscany where he's got a big house and a big studio where everything happens with all the other musicians. So I was there I had access basically to film and photograph, I've got loads of footage Sting I just kept the camera rolling. Yeah, you know that's one of my most surreal moments in my life, I'm sitting there at the computer all of a sudden he pops up and he's sat there and he starts singing Fragile,

I've looked round and literally he's just yards from me. He's sound, what you see is what you get. So that's how things came about.

Does your band have its own independent record label?

Yeah we made our own. Really if you don't do your own thing you ain't gonna get no where. So we started our own label and we put everything out ourselves. We sell off our site, iTunes and all download sites worldwide.

How important are sites like iTunes for digital artist these days?

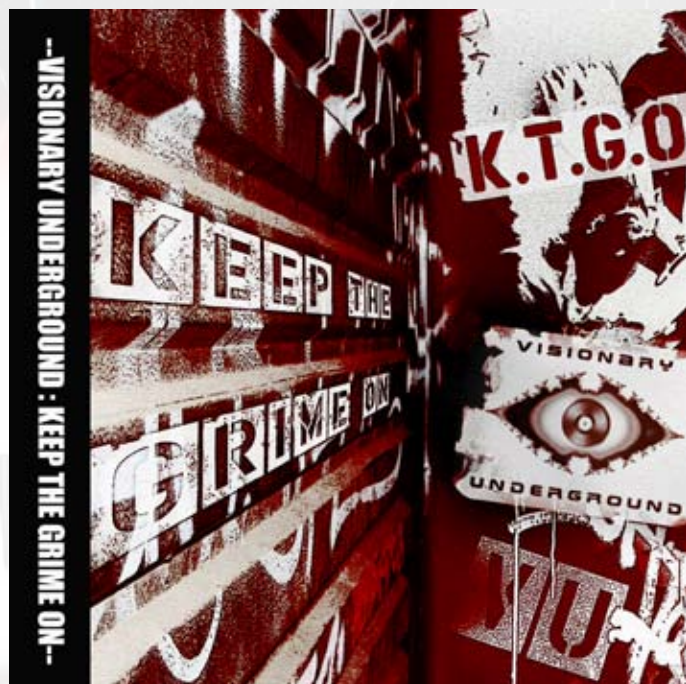
I think it's very important at the end of the day. You know it's not just about vinyl and CD. I mean this is the ironic thing like ok, if your more of an unknown artist yeah, you probably got a bit of a better chance in the digital age because If your really well known people just go to Limewire or something and download your thing. If you're not that well known you can't access it that easy which might force you to buy it.

How do you see your future? You've got many different talents in so many different fields is there one particular favourite area?

You know what it really is a combination of them things. When I was just doing just the photography I was never just happy with it and perhaps if I was only doing graphic design then that would be the same. No, I think it's the fact of combining everything and creating artwork, visuals, things like that you know.

You seem to have bridged the gap between being a lonesome digital artist to being able to get up on the stage and perform. That's not an easy thing for creative people to do. So what do you prefer, being in that room on your own creating or up on that stage?

You know what I love both yeah. Being up on stage yeah what I love about it is I actually get the best of both worlds. I have no desire to be upfront but to be on the back scene, if you look at the stage in two parts you got the front the MC and the singer or whatever and then you got the technology on the back, DJ, producer and visuals. So I'm on the stage and



I'm part of the performance and I'm getting that whole experience without standing right there in front.

So how do you see the future then?

I actually want to go into animation as well 3D, I started learning Maya 3D but you know I kind of need a couple of years just to sit down and do nothing else just to reach the tip of the iceberg and id really like to go into TV graphics because I'm always looking at things and thinking, I know how they did that, I know how they done that blah blah, so if you asked me where id be in 10-15 years I would hope to have learnt stuff like animation and more because you can't stand still software's always changing everything's always moving. So you know I just want to keep progressing and keeping up with things and who knows what's round the corner.

Are you freelance?

Yes I am freelance and anyone can get hold of me through the website.

**<http://visionaryunderground.com>
www.cocoedwards.com**



Photography: WA

Das @ The Wall - Hackney - Mar 10th



Photography: WA

DasR @ The Wall - Hackney - Mar 10th



Photography: WA

The Wall - Hackney Feb 1st

ONE MONK

Urban Myths - Did someone find a real fairy?

In late March 2007, Dan Baines from London posted on his website images of an unusual corpse, claimed to be the mummified remains of a fairy which was discovered by a dog walker at Firestone Hill in Duffield, Derbyshire. The remains were complete with ears, wings, hair, skin, and teeth, and were claimed to 'have been examined by anthropologists and forensic experts who can confirm the body is genuine'. According to the website, X-rays of the 'fairy' showed that its body's structure was the same as that of a child. The bones, however, were described to be 'hollow like those of a bird, making them particularly light.'

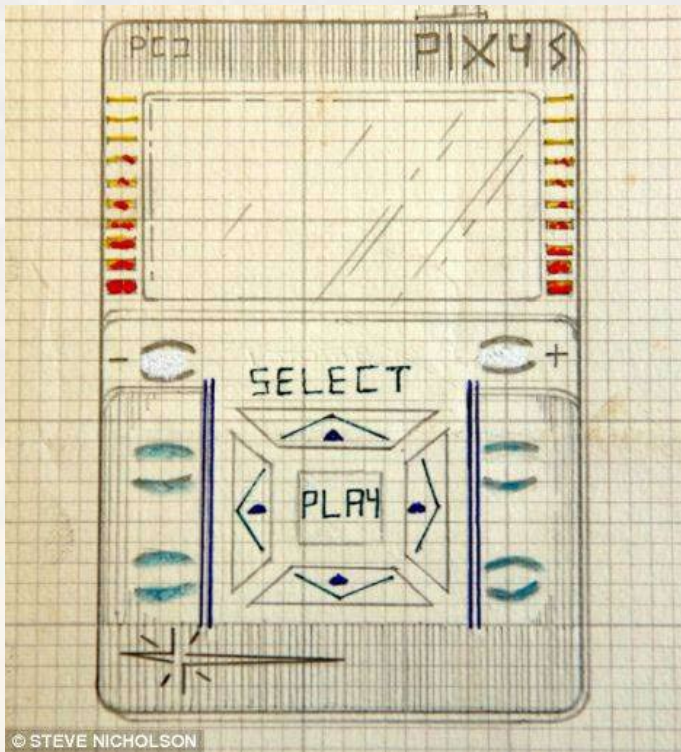
The website received feedback from a large numbers of believers, with over 20,000 hits in one day. On April 1st, Baines made a note to the website, thanking everyone for their interest in the story and acknowledging that the fairy corpse was fake. He wrote: "Even if you believe in fairies, as I personally do, there will always have been an element of doubt in your mind that would suggest the remains are a hoax. However, the magic created by the possibility of the fairy being real is something you will remember for the rest of your life." Baines listed the mummified fairy on eBay and the model attracted nearly 40 bids. The highest at the close of the sale was made by a private art collector in the United States and the fairy was sold for £280.

Unsung hero - The man who made the original iPod



Apple launched the iPod to worldwide fanfare in 2001 and over 220million have been sold in the noughties. But who really invented it? Why back in 1979, British inventor Kane Kramer made detailed drawings of his idea for a pocket-sized digital music player, which had a neat LCD screen and nifty navigation buttons. In those embryonic days of the internet, Kramer even made the futuristic suggestions that his device would be able to play music downloaded via telephone lines.

A prototype music player attracted a lot of interest at a London trade exhibition in 1986, but the patent lapsed in two years later and it never reached the market. Last year Apple finally acknowledged Kramer as the creator of the concept behind the MP3 player.



Kane Kramer has since founded the British Inventors Society and invented the Bully Button a gadget to discourage bullying. And for a digital inventor, he has the perfect birth date: 23/4/56

Name that drug...

Way back in January 2009, not long after Mephedrone first began to be sold online, members of the web forum attached to the now-defunct "headshop" Champagne Legals discussed what brand name might be attached to the new product, which has the chemical identity dimethylmethcathinone or MM-CAT.

"What shall we call this drug? Its called MM-CAT so why not Miaow? suggested one. The name did not catch on - as unimaginative users simply called in Meph or Drone. But on 1 November 2009 someone did add the name "Meow" to the Wikipedia entry for Mephedrone at the head of the list of "street names."

Three weeks later a 14 year old girl died after taking the drug (although the cause of death was later determined to be bronchopneumonia following a bacterial infection) however the Sun declared the arrival of a "new party favourite called "Meow Meow" and the world went cat-call crazy.

Among a host of riddiculas headlines the Sunday Times reported the "rise of Meow" the Times has told us about the many "Meow Meow arrests" the Sun screamed "Harriett Harman snub for Meow Meow ban" and the Daily Telegraph took a long hard look at the "Meow Meow menace in Europe."

"No one ever called it Meow seriously until the papers picked up on the Wikipedia entry" said one drug expert. However had hacks checked the Wikipedia site on 17 November, the drug was commonly referred to as "Mugabe" or on 31 October, when users claimed "on the streets its called "The Chinese." Neither names really fit a good scare-mongering drug story, without that catchy name, it probably would have never made the papers, and sales wouldn't be going thru the roof right now!!

Cheryl 's mood changes...

"Cheryl Cole's delight at facing the single life couldn't have been more apparent, she looked absolutely stunning as she left her

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hotel. In a fitted black, white and lace dress which clung to her curves, her happy face was a far cry from the somber and woeful look she displayed yesterday...in their place was a glowing and healthy girl who looked ready to take on the world”

Sara Nathan & Georgina Littlejohn, Daily Mail website 25 March 8.36am

“Cheryl Cole maybe keeping tight-lipped as she deals with her marriage woes, but her thin body tells the real story of her heartbreak. The Girls Aloud singer stepped out looking extremely thin...it was the smallness of her waist which really drew attention to her dramatic weight loss”

Sara Nathan & Georgina Littlejohn, Daily Mail website 25 March 3.07pm

View from the Sky...

In the latest edition of Sky, the satellite giants freebie magazine, Sky News anchor Kate Burly reminisces about her proudest moments.

“Anchoring from Sky News studio on 11 September 2001...it was very very moving experience. With emotionally charged stories like this or the death of Princess

Diana, my job remains a conduit to bring the information as accurately as possible, without emotion, to let the viewer decide what their view is on the story”

So how did she go about that on 9/11? “If you’ve just joined us, the entire eastern seaboard of the United States has been decimated in a terrorist attack.”

You’ve ad it...

The decline of traditional TV ads (we fast forward through them) has led to a rise in TV “Break Bumper” sponsorship deals (we can’t avoid them) which in turn means more fuck-ups like Living TV’s US import Criminal Minds, the episode was about a serial killer who removes his victims eyeballs as mementos. And the programme sponsors? Acuvue contact lenses!

Behind you...

Online ads are annoying, but they have an upside: because they are placed in web pages by software, using keywords and relevance



matches, therefore inappropriate placement is rife. Take for example, the Telegraph's piece online about the tourist eaten by a shark off Fish Hock beach in Cape Town. Immediately to the right was an advert for Henderson New Star's investment fund featuring a diver waving to the camera with a shark coming up behind him with the tagline "You're less likely to find yourself in the wrong place"

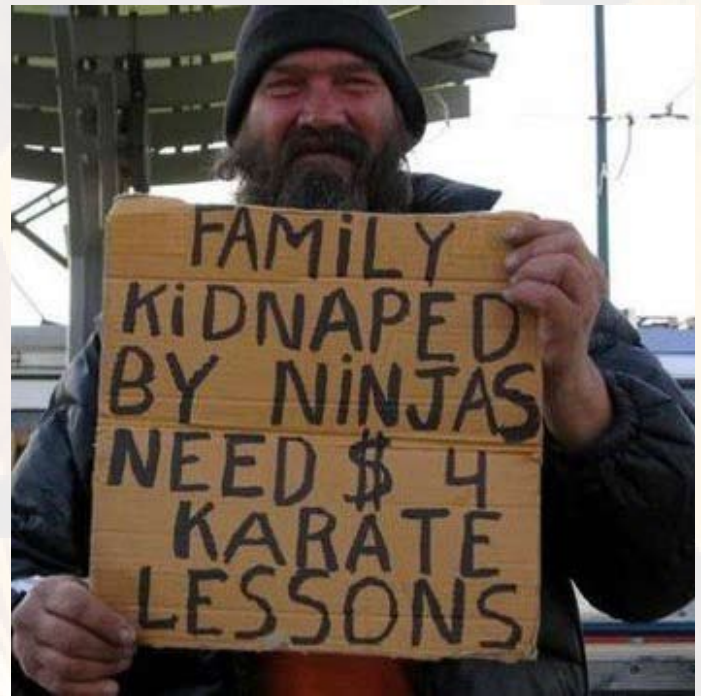
Taxing the taxman...

How the hell did a National Audit Office report in January detailing 44million missed telephone calls last year (that's 47% of those made) not pose more questions over HM Revenue & Customs "contact centers", its now been discovered they also have some very unusual ways of choosing the people to run the centers

HMRC's first call centre, and still one of the largest, is in East Kilbride, just outside Glasgow. Since June last year, it has been managed by Robert Bowering, a call centre veteran with firms including HSBC and outsourcing call centre lot beCogent Ltd. However, getting the job at HMRC was not his first encounter with the taxman. At Linlithgow sheriffs court in March, just three months before starting work Bowering had been made bankrupt by...HMRC!

Bowerings debt (origins unknown) stands at £75,545, of which the Accountant of Bankruptcy estimates it will recover...the square root of zero (fuck all). So how did a man made bankrupt over unpaid tax land a job advising everybody else on their tax bills?

He was brought in -on a higher level of pay than normal for his grade- by a personal friend of his, the department's director of contact centers, Linda Maslen. HMRC insists



that although Maslan had "advocated" her appointment, the correct procedures had been followed taking into account "the risks posed by appointing someone who is insolvent, and the organisation's ability to manage those risks" Oh so that's all ok then.

Number Crunching

60,000 Number of "ice deaths" the Sunday Express predicted this winter
67,000 "Civilian death toll in the entire second world war" the paper compared this to
31 Number of people who have actually died in accidents caused by ice and snow this winter

£700m Efficiency savings made by Ministry of Defense
£733m Rise in costs of defense procurement projects through "deliberate delays" identified by National Audit Office last year.

9.7ins Size of screen on the new iPad
11ins Size of photograph of the new iPad on the front page of the Telegraph

2m Number of people affected by Haitian earthquake the UN is currently trying to feed
2m - Number of people in Haiti the UN estimated did not have a guaranteed supply of food before the earthquake struck



Eco PR disaster

Poor old Nestle, just when they were trying to convince people it was doing something about palm oil (how much later could they be?). Greenpeace hit it hard with a viral “killer KitKat” ad and then invaded its pan-European office dressed as endangered orangutans.

So began a PR disaster of huge proportion. Apart from its “fair trade” KitKat being portrayed as ape killers and ending pristine rainforest. Nestle then fuelled the crises by handling its PR by being totally heavy handed and arrogant.

First their lawyers shut down the Greenpeace viral ad on YouTube. Needless to say, campaigners then posed it pretty much everywhere else on the internet and it spread onto Twitter and Facebook. Nestle then made the brilliant and interesting strategic decision to insult the tens of thousands of “fans” who were plastering the companies Facebook page with protests about its palm oil sourcing. “As you’ll see, we’re learning about social media as we go along” said a pathetic Nestle post later in the day, when the company finally

realised that being rude to people is not the best way for a company trying to sell us things to behave in social media.

**Ian Milne founder of
3000monks
www.3000monks.com**

Sources: Private Eye, Times, Mirror, Sun, Mail Online, TV, Sunday times, Telegraph, Mail, Sky, YouTube and using my eyes and ears





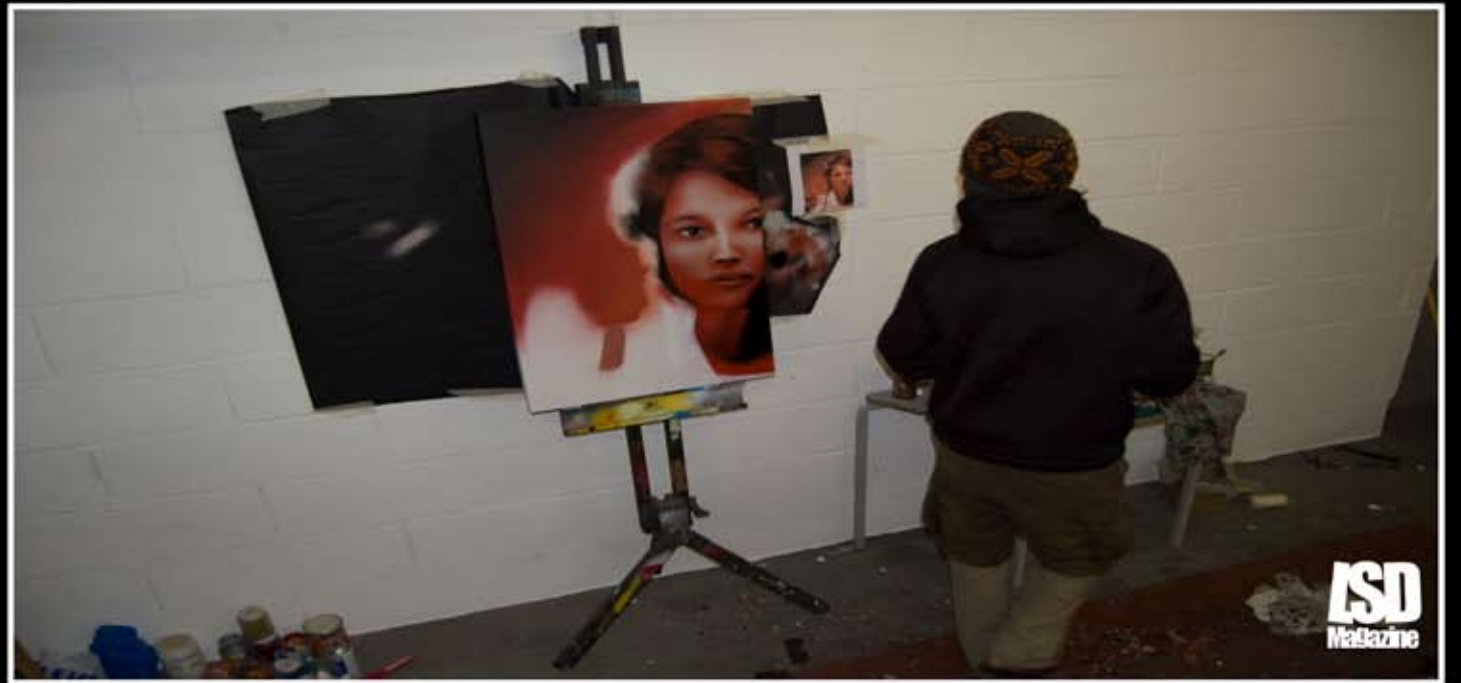
LSD
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BUSK



Photography: WA

Busk Studio Sessions 2010



Photography: WA

Busk Studio Sessions 2010

id-iom

Gonzo designers from the frontiers of civilisation (also known as the Isle of Man), Sholto and Hugo have poured their skills into a sustained assault on the preconceptions of daily normality. Wry humour and social skepticism are tinged with an irreverent joy and their immaculately designed yet oh so slightly out of place commentaries could be nestling their way onto a shelf near you when you are least expecting it. Mocking the boundaries of situationism and challenging your own sense of autopilot, the lads took a moment out for a quick word

Tell us a little about yourselves

id-iom a.k.a Sholto & Hugo - now living in South London but originally from the bustling metropolis that is the Isle of Man

How many people make up id-iom?

Just the two of us - a bit like the Bill Withers song. Although we are brothers...

Do you have an art background?

SHOLTO: My dad was an architect and my mum did fashion so there was always something of an artistic influence around our house. The last bit of proper art background I have however would be my art GCSE! It wasn't until much later on that I realised how much I love doing art and how much better than a 'proper' job it really is.

HUGO: The best I've got is about 2 weeks at GCSE art but I ended up quitting because



the teacher kept rubbing out my work doing it herself and then giving me an A. Although both our parents were into art in some way - I have no true art experience but so i suppose its in my bones somewhere.

When did you decide to paint on the streets and what was your motivation?

SHOLTO: We started on the streets just a few years ago and i think our motivation was



getting stuff up where people would actually have a chance to see it (rather than doing stuff on paper/canvas and just have them sitting around the house). Plus there's the whole possibility of getting caught thing which can be quite amusing too.

HUGO: Yeah, I think the reason we started was because you get a bigger canvas but also you can make the art contextual/site specific.

How does the freedom of painting on the streets compare to painting for galleries?

HUGO: I find they both have their benefits. Painting on the street you can go a lot bigger than you normally would but you can also use the environment around you to heighten the viewer's experience. Whereas when you paint on canvas you can get a little more risqué as to the subject matter as you know who exactly will see your work.

SHOLTO: Well, you can do exactly what you want on the street. There are no rules and it's definitely a whole load of fun.

We noticed you place a lot of art on the streets for people to take home, how important are street drops to you and do you think more artists should be doing it?

HUGO: Yeah, why not? They are fun to do and it's always nice to see if anyone gets back to you saying thank you - which we've had a few



times. I also think the way we treat art drops keeps us on your toes. We are not allowed to take more than a day on each drop, so it really gets the creative juices flowing.

SHOLTO: I love doing street drops as it takes any pressure to sell right off you. You just do it in your own time, take it out and place it somewhere and then if someone likes it (and they can get it) they just take it home with them. It's a nice, non-commercial system for getting out of the house and at least thinking you are doing good work.

How often do you go out painting?

SHOLTO: We've done a few bits with permission recently although now that the weather seems to be improving somewhat I'd like to think we'll get out and about a bit more. It's just depressing going out when it's raining...

HUGO: Since it's been winter not all that much to be honest but now the weather is picking up I'm definitely looking forward to getting out and about. One good thing I suppose



about not going out is that I now have loads of places stored on Google maps where we plan to do some work.

How often do you exhibit your works at galleries?

SHOLTO: As often as we can. We've had a couple of shows at a place in Clapham and have had some pieces accepted into galleries but we'd definitely appreciate the chance to get it out there even more.

HUGO: We've had a few small shows recently which has been fun but i think now that summer is starting we'll be heading back on to the streets for a while.

Can you define your style?

HUGO: Gonzo art cowboys more than willing to take a punt at pretty much anything - and failing that I'd probably say pop/street art. We are heavily influenced from comics, music, tv, film and popular culture as we have been avidly consuming it our whole life.

SHOLTO: I don't think we have a particular style as we are always both so eager to



experiment that we'll give pretty much anything a go. I suppose I'm a sucker for stencils and bright colours but that doesn't mean it's all we do... In fact I think Hugo has summed it up with gonzo art cowboys. It's got a nice ring to it.

Is your work political or reactionary?

SHOLTO: I would say our work is probably more reactionary in nature as i find it difficult to make a political comment with a straight face. They (the political parties) are all largely as bad as each other.

HUGO: A little bit of both I'd say but probably more reactionary.

Have you ever been caught by police?

HUGO: I have been caught by the police but for indiscretions other than spray painting. There is always time though i suppose.

SHOLTO: Not yet. A close shave to be sure but nothing worse as yet. (*touches wood*)





Do you see a future in street art?

HUGO: I can't see it ever stopping to tell you the truth because people always have something to say about society and as long as there are blank walls people are going to tell what they think. I also know many people who are addicted to the smell of spray paint and are quite willing to get a criminal record for doing what they love.

SHOLTO: Definitely. You see how different areas and countries have completely different responses to it. In some places it is considered vandalism of the highest order (i.e. Singapore) and then in others it is really appreciated. I don't think you can be too concerned about that though as when the urge strikes it's difficult to hold back.

How does the rest of Europe respond to your street work?

SHOLTO: Hopefully with a little smile. That would be the best i could hope for i reckon.

HUGO: I think generally our art is liked all over Europe, we do seem to have a lot of people from South America who like our stuff though.

Tell us a little about the concepts behind your labelling and packaging pieces...

SHOLTO: As with a lot of our work it came from a (probably drunken) conversation about the general availability of drugs and how these days so many celebrities have been caught with them that the next (and surely ultimate) step is celebrity endorsed drugs? Well that's how it seemed to me at the time and so I set forth to create the packaging we came up with. I think that was it anyway...

Should we expect to see much of your work on the streets this summer or will you be off in some exotic location painting?

SHOLTO: I should wish we will be painting in some exotic location but i think we'll have to



see. Why? Do you know of some where we'd be welcome?? We do want to get abroad a bit more to get our stuff out as far and wide as possible and hook up with various folks from around the world who I'm hoping would be eager to help us out...

HUGO: Well we have a few things planned for the summer. We will hopefully be spray painting at a few festivals in the UK but do plan a few trips to other locations. Apart from that I think London will be smelling of CFC's come the autumn

Anything else you'd to share with us?

SHOLTO: Where is best to start... I'd love to do some street drops using geocaching – which is basically like a big treasure hunt where we give some co-ordinates and instructions and then you set off with your GPS phone to find the prize. I thought it sounded like fun. I'd also like to do some installation style pieces and get a load more wheatpasting done too.

HUGO: Definitely some installation style pieces, i have a whole load of ideas for a few of them. We have also just released our first print which is quite exciting. Hopefully more to follow...

www.id-iom.com



Photography: WA

DONK- London March 5th



Photography: WA

DONK- London March 5th

ROGUE STATE

Ram raiding the frontiers of electronic music with a genre busting, dark soul fusion of dubstep, UK garage, junglism and UK funky, Liam 'Rogue State' Wild is tearing up the British underground. Whether ruffin up crisp, uptempo, tribal beats with pure rudeness on the bassline heave, or unleashing dripping atmosphere on the dub drop, Rogue State has carved a sizzling sound into bass bins up and down the country. Collaborating with reggae vocalists like Daddy Freddy, Top Cat and David Boomah, Bongo Chilli, and Dan Man to bring an urgent dancehall depth flying across the bassline pressure and whipping in the occasional homage to the old school and random electronic weirdness, we're talking fusion in motion. Totally switched on as well as a producer of some serious menace, we caught up with him to chat meaning of life as well as tunage...

Can you give us a little window onto your background and how you got into music and production

I had musical parents, both sang and my dad plays a few instruments. I spent a lot of time absorbing the music they played and listened to, a lot of Celtic music. I started writing songs and playing guitar. When I was 12 and got a 4 track tape recorder which led me into production. I was really in to Hip Hop and my older brothers sorted me out with mix tapes of Deep House and D'n'B. I started getting drawn towards the Garage and Bashment scene in my late teens as it felt really fresh, this eventually lead me into Dubstep.



Do you see a relationship between the dance music revolution and spirituality

The link with the drug scene is significant, there's a lot of prang people walking around due to street drugs, they messed with my head big time! Having said that they can inspire intriguing ideas and spiritual concepts.

R8 RECORDS





How do you view the energy of life and the physics of reality

Both mainstream science and many religions agree that everything seems to be made up of the same energy at its most basic level, even thoughts. I see the human experience as a soul able to make sense of chaotic energetic vibrations. People have been philosophising the concept of oneness from way back and it's exciting that science might be proving it.

What makes an individual's experience/ reality? It may be that a living being manifests due to entanglement. Entanglement theory picks up the scientifically proven idea that particles can be intrinsically connected regardless of spatial barriers; physicality could be a sensory interpretation of entangled energy. All our universal connections, weak and strong, may amass in the sensory image we paint of our world throughout our life.



How do you view the interplay between sonic frequency and consciousness?

I see all our human senses as somewhere on the spectrum of universal energy, all cohabiting the same space and time, subtly influencing each other. Negative thoughts/ sounds can arguably become physical pain and lead to illness, also, we physically buzz off a good tune, we want to dance and get tingles down our spine. Different scales, tones or vocal intonation have positive or negative effects on us, although I think the exact effects are personal, some really dark music makes me feel really good! Sound has been used to elevate the mind in many spiritual movements throughout history, from gospel choirs, to the ancient belief that different notes resonate on different chakras of the body.

Can you fill us in on the creative vibe in Sheffield

There's some wicked music that comes out of Sheffield but it's a quite lo-key place. I think Sheff's vibe has the hard industrial feel from its steel days and the mellow feel, perhaps influenced by having the wicked Derbyshire countryside on our back door. With our label R8 Records, we work with a lot of local talent and we have a lot of forthcoming releases from Sheff producers.

Tell us a little about R8 Records

I run R8 Records with Alex Deadman, we started the label in 2006 and other than myself we have released artists such as RSD, Twisted, Dutty Dan and have forthcoming releases with Sheffield artists such as Squire of Gothos, Vandal Aka, Arie, Dj Deadbeat and Autograff. We try to promote originality and our sound encompasses genres such as Dubstep, Uk Funky, D'n'B, Bassline....



What do vocals bring to the dancefloor

I think vocals can really bring a track to life, especially with synthesized music; it's nice to get some natural tones and flow in there.

How deep an influence has reggae culture been on your music

A massive influence, love the music, its brought so much to the table, wicked rhythms and vibe. There are a lot of musicians really passionate and aspirational, making the standards really high. Take a vocalist like Sizzla, his vocal versatility is second to non, you've gotta work proper hard for that. The influence on modern dance music is huge as well, there's always a bit of reggae in there with my stuff.

What's your production setup these days

Pretty simple setup, a PC, some nice monitors and mic. I've got a few live instruments and percussion as well. I had some nice old school





synths when I was younger but my flat got robbed, I also lost 1000s of samples I'd taken over the years, it was crap, always back things up!

What has dubstep brought into dance music

I think initially it was the space in the drums that allowed for the big subs and wobbles. Wicked new noises have come from the scene as well as interesting new rhythmical patterns.

How important is cross fertilisation to artistic development

I love it! That's part of what gives me my drive, experimentation.

Why do you think our public spaces have been abandoned to relentless corporate advertising rather than respected as our only shared physical space

I haven't really got too much of a problem with advertising but I think there should be more space for public street art such as graffiti.

Is the universe a single organism, and if so, why is humanity in such denial of that unity

I don't practice any religion but I have often thought about it, in particular the concept of Allah - everything being part of a single being appeals to me. I think it's kind of like Russian dolls, individual beings within individual beings unknowingly or knowingly connected.

Do you think it is more worthwhile to try and change wider society or try and build a positive sub culture

I think it's more important to try and change wider society but that can start with sub cultures. A lot of powerful people were influenced by movements such as Hippies and Punks as youngsters. Sometimes it just takes time for sub cultures to filter through to the mainstream.



What does playing out mean to you on a visceral level

- There's no better feeling than a crowd buzzing off tunes you and your friends have made. It's the beard stroker crowds that I find hard, "too many man, too many many man" lol, have a friggin dance!

What is your connection to Tricksta records

- I used to make a lot of tunes with Ian, one half of Tricksta. Him and Matt are really cool lads and make some wicked tunes as M.I Loki. I've done a couple of releases with them and there's a 2010 version of my tune 'Can't Take the Pressure' ft U Brown in the pipeline.

Are inner space and outer space the same thing

Same same but different lol

Are psychedelics a brief chaotic window onto truth

They certainly changed my perception of reality, for better or worse is hard to say.

What are you up to in 2010

I'm moving to London, I love Sheffield but I've wanted to go to the smoke for a long time. I think it will be good to get the label more exposed down there.

Long term – what's the dream

A pagoda overlooking oriental mountains

**[www.myspace.com/
ukroquestate](http://www.myspace.com/ukroquestate)**





Photography: Annar 50





EZRA

From the spraying up the tranquil idyll of Lucerne to shaping the world into an explosion of piercing image and ravishing colour, Ezra's dazzling work is on the rampage. Incredibly clean forms are illuminated by a spectacular assault of colour and an imagery that fuses together a surreal landscape of the nightmareish, the dreamlike, and the raw power of the street. Collaborating far and wide and taking his talent intercontinental, Ezra took a moment out from the can to have a word with LSD..

You've been painting for fourteen years but what initially brought you to graffiti art as opposed to other art forms?

The fact that my father is an artist (www.rolandpirk-bucher.ch) always kind of made me being interested into art in general. When I was a kid I was drawing almost every day and got familiar with art after seeing my father paint and having exhibitions. Around 1996 I got more and more into the Hip Hop culture. Next to the music I found out about the other elements and soon got in touch with Graffiti. I didn't really know what's behind it and didn't know that much about the scene but I was fascinated by the movement and that so many people my age and a little older were into it. I loved to see how people worked together and pushed each other that defiantly made me fall in love with that kind of art.



Your work is of an exceptional quality did it take you very long to master the graffiti style?

In the beginning it was hard because I didn't know how to use a spraycan that well. The old cans called Sparvar were a little different than the ones nowadays as well. But after painting a couple of years I found out about the tricks and how you paint clean and small stuff and developed more ideas and my style. It was a lot of learning by doing and painting as much as I could.







Graffiti writers and Street Artists are being called anti-establishment and at times anarchists, do you think this accurately describes the artists involved in street work?

In my opinion the graffiti culture definitely has its roots in the anti establishment. I remember that graffiti artists often added words to their pieces and wrote critical things about the society. You still find that nowadays but not as often as in the past. As a street artist it is much easier to reach people because they have to see what you paint either they want to or not. You don't have to tell people to come to a gallery to see what you paint and think- the streets become your gallery and the reaction happens immediately.

Tell us a little about the graffiti / street art scene in your city.

I live in Lucerne which is in the middle of Switzerland. Lucerne used to have a lot of graffiti artists in the past but never really was the main city in Switzerland when it comes to Graffiti art these are more Basel and Zürich. In the past couple years the scene went back a lot in Lucern which is a pity. There are still people doing their thing but you don't see graffiti that much anymore. When I was younger people were painting a lot and you

could see new pieces and bombings all over the place. People were gathering at jams and a lot of productions happened all the time.

Has graffiti been commercially excepted as an art form in Switzerland?

I would say yes it has. Not completely but I know about the reactions of different people when I paint. Next to young people a lot of older and even really old people like this kind of art. When people catch me painting they always ask me many questions and watch how I work with spraycans. It is something people see but they never really get in touch with the person behind it which makes it interesting to them. Over here Graffiti artists go their way into galleries and lawyers and business people buy graffiti art. Even art collectors start collecting canvasses and artists get invited to big art events. Graffiti appears in the graphics a lot too. I appreciate that development but I hope that the standard always stays high and wont become too adapted only to sell.

Are many graffiti writers breaking from tradition and creating other art forms?

It depends who it is. I know people who follow





the traditional style and want to keep it that way which works for them. Others try to break out and mix graffiti with other directions. I think it doesn't depend if you break from tradition or not it's about the result and the idea behind it. Me personally I like to break with tradition.

Are graffiti writers upgrading their style to incorporate so called modern trends?

I don't know if they do that to incorporate trends. Maybe some do but to me it's more about trying things out. Graffiti started many years ago and always got bigger and people added more different styles to it. It wouldn't be good if graffiti stayed always the same it's a movement and the evolution is a big part of it.

Who were your mentors in the early days?

When I was younger and barely started with graffiti a lot of big names painted in Lucern. People like Daim, Dare, Mate, Shark, Toast or

Cantwo and many others left their mark. It was great to see their work and it motivated me and of other writers a lot. My father was and is always a big inspiration to me and we always have good conversations about art even when we do very different things. He gave me some advise when I started painting with brushes but then let me try out and do my thing. Before I started painting with spraycans I sketched a lot. Not only artists inspired me I loved comic books and cartoons when I was a kid and was always interested in art history and nature. I never really had a mentor in the graffiti world but had many friends painting a lot too so we motivated each other to go on and get better.

How important is placement to writers?

Well...Nowadays it isn't that important anymore because the internet makes it possible for everyone to see what's going on. Back in the days it could be a big difference where you lived and who painted their. Once I read a line from Mode 2 and he was talking about the French and German scene. He said that they wondered in France that many new



styles came from Germany until they found out about the American soldiers who were placed in Germany and made the Germans having easier access to Graffiti photographs, movies and so on. So I think good placement definitely can help you to find out about graffiti and the learn and get better.

Where else in the world have you graced walls with your work?

In the past couple years I went to the USA a lot. I painted a lot in New York, Los Angeles, San Diego and some walls in Connecticut. I also painted a lot in Mexico- in Tijuana, Rosarito, Mexicali. I painted in Germany a couple times as well. Of course I painted the most walls in Switzerland.

Do you still paint on the streets or do you prefer the security of a studio?

I still paint in the streets. I love to paint on walls and don't want to replace it. I do my canvasses or other things more than in the past and it is a lot of fun but it is a different feeling than painting a wall. To me it's like two different categories which I love to do. On one hand the nice thing about a wall is that you can go very big and work more with other artists. I also love to chill with other writers and have a good time while painting. On the other hand I like being in the studio by myself and create



objects or canvasses and do crazy stuff which I can't do on a wall.

You ever been arrested on the job?

I never really got arrested on the job. The only time I got arrested in front of the wall was my first I wall I painted with a friend when I was sixteen. When I was older I got arrested because somebody snitched on me.

Do you support legal walls or would that undermine the power of the art?

I am in the lucky position to have walls for myself. The district I live in gave walls to me I can use how ever I want to. Most productions happen there. About two months ago the city of Lucern finally opened a hall of fame. People can go there when ever they want and paint legally. I think it is good to have something like that in every city. It's a good thing when young people have a place where they can be creative without being disturbed.

Your work is very rich in colour, how





important is colour to your work?

It depends a little what I paint and where. Outside I like to add colours. On canvas I use less. To me it's a lot about the idea behind the painting. Sometimes it works perfectly with a lot of colours sometimes less colours express the painting in a better way. But I definitely realised how colours can influence people. And it is nice to play with that.

How do you choose locations?

When I paint productions I meet friends at some hall of fame or some wall I heard of and then just paint there without knowing too much about the location. When I travel I look for walls which can be seen well so people can check out my art. I like walls which are in the centre of cities. I also paint indoors in stores sometimes so people get in touch with my stuff and it stays up.

How does the public respond to your work?

Most people like it and tell me about it. There are always some people who don't like it but I do my thing anyway. I like compliments but try to be my biggest critic and always see something I can do better next time.

Is there a conflict or a union between street art, graffiti and conventional art?

I don't think that there is a conflict between those directions it is more a union. I like to go to exhibitions and see other art and I also like street art and I know artists who don't



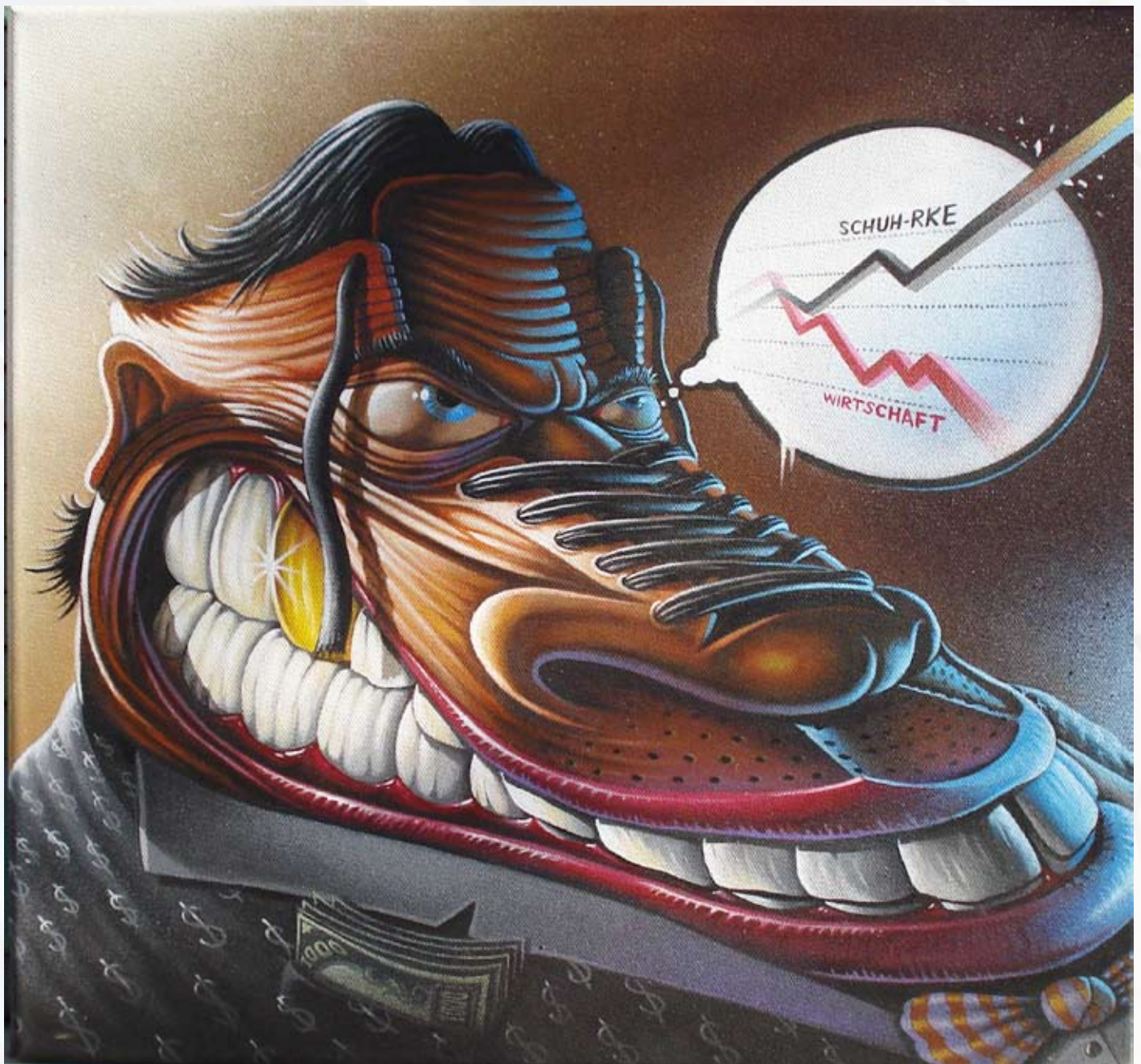
do graffiti and like to see what's going on in this scene. I know that some people think that graffiti only exists between certain borders. But this isn't my way of thinking. To me there is no limit when it comes to creativity. The great thing about graffiti is that the network between artists world wide is very big and people travel all over the world to paint with others. Artists in the field of conventional art don't do that so often so this is definitely a big advantage we have.

Do you resent someone painting over your work?

It really depends how that happens. If the person paints over my work only to damage it and to disrespect me I don't take it easy. If the person goes over it to paint a nice new wall it is the way of life in the graffiti world. I like the attitude from back in the days when people went with throwups over tags with pieces over throwups and so on and didn't fuck walls up. Respect is the keyword then nobody will get upset.







How much influence has street art had on the resurgence of traditional graffiti?

To me Street art is the more openminded way of graffiti. I remember when people didn't respect it when someone painted with a brush or used stencils and today a lot of graffiti writers paint with it and nobody really says anything any more. Of course street art had a lot of influences from graffiti because it was there first. But then people started changing their mind and this opened a lot of doors for writers. It is a lot easier to pan out nowadays in different directions in the graffiti scene than years ago.

Name some of the other artists you've worked with?

Ces, Pose 2, Chor Boogie, Dare, T-Kid, Brisk, Persue, Vyal, Pres, Libre, Shente, Threat, Kafy -HEM crew, Eysel, Kuya, Break, Ice Roc, Note, Disk, Push and so on...

What is the central focus of artists in your city?

I don't know that much about the central focus in general of other artists. I only really can tell about mine. But I know that many graffiti writers try to show their art in galleries nowadays.

Is your work reactive to world events?

I had many people world wide writing me and



inviting me to their countries. People ask me to work with me from all over the place so this shows me that my art stirs something up in this world. I had exhibitions in the past and went to events people asked me to come to...I'll see what will happen in future.

Does art give hope to the hopeless?

Graffiti doesn't care where you come from only what you paint. I like that attitude and it gives a chance to everybody. And art gives you a chance to self actualise.



www.ezraone.ch

www.welovekicks.ch





Photography: Vegas



Vancouver - 2010





NOAM CHOMSKY

We've always been fond of our superlatives here at LSD, but suddenly the spectrum of the English language seems hopelessly wanting in our efforts to introduce the great giant of ideas Professor Noam Chomsky. For those who are unfamiliar with the name, Professor Chomsky is one of the pioneers of linguistic science, author of over 50 books, a political thinker unique for his piercing understanding of the dynamics of history and political power systems, one of the top ten quoted figures of all time alongside Shakespeare and the Bible, and the most quoted man alive today. A longstanding hero to millions who have questioned (in his own phrase) 'manufactured consent', Professor Chomsky has been the literary, philosophical, and theoretical driving force behind the intellectual search for geopolitical truth, the historical patterns that define it, and the models that shape it. A quite extraordinary mind, he has always illuminated his revolutionary theories of the nature of the world we live in with an inexhaustible supply of iron clad evidence, indisputable fact and unassailable logic. Relentlessly smeared by the establishment for the mirror he holds up to their systems, he remains untouchable through the depth of his passion, his intrinsic desire to teach and by the sheer weight of his arguments, to the point that his critics only dare impugn him from afar lest their world view collapse under the weight of his discourse. There is no right way to interview Professor Chomsky; the list of questions, themes and concepts is virtually infinite, and the piece



below represents a fragment of a snapshot. It is indeed impossible to express the depth of the gratitude that we feel towards him for granting us the opportunity and the time to speak to him, and all we can really do is profoundly thank him and urge you from the bottom of our hearts to research his work, read his books and engage with his ideas so that we all might penetrate a deeper understanding of the world we live in.



How would you say that control structures and the imperialist model have changed during the last half century in an increasingly globalised world.

The world has certainly changed but the basic principles remain virtually identical though adapted to changing circumstances. In 1950, the United States had a position of power and wealth that was simply without historical parallel. The US literally had half of the world's wealth and indescribable security. It controlled the Western hemisphere, it controlled both oceans, its industrial rivals were either seriously harmed, or indeed in some cases destroyed and vast swathes of the world were still under colonial rule. Now that was an extraordinary position of power and of course the US used it. Power systems use their power – there's no great secret in that.

Well that's changed. By around 1970, the other industrial countries had reconstructed and decolonisation was underway, thus making the United Nations somewhat more representative of world opinion. The United States now had approximately 25% of global wealth as

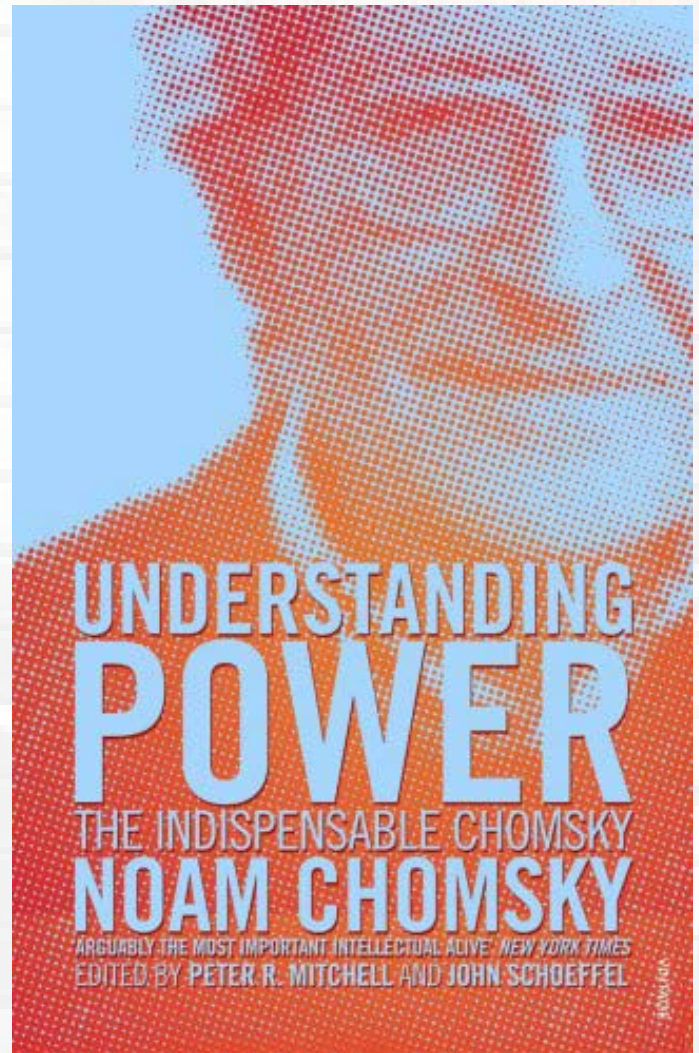
opposed to 50%, so the nature of its efforts to control the world naturally changed, and an excellent example of this shift is the history of the UN. During the early stages of the post war period, the UN was very popular amongst US leaders because it was doing exactly as they wanted, (given the circumstances, there really was no alternative) and the US could use it as a weapon against their enemy, Russia. If you look at American intellectual discussion of the period, there was great love for the UN and great efforts to explain the nature of Russia's psychological malady in always saying No. Literally! In fact, one anthropologist attributed Russian intransigence at the UN to the fact that they traditionally raised their children in swaddling clothes which made the Russian people inherently negative, and apparently explained why whenever Gromyko got to the UN, he always said 'No'. As a graduate student, we used to refer to this particular branch of science as 'Diaperology'!

This dynamic of US control over the UN shifted slowly over the 50's into what became a pretty sharp break in the 60's, and the use of the veto serves as one clear index to map

this change. Up until 1965, the US had never actually vetoed a Security Council resolution. From 1965 to the present, the United States is far in the lead on veto use, Britain is second, and nobody else is even close, whatever the Western press may suggest about recalcitrant Russians or wantonly stubborn Chinese. Well, that reflects a shift in attitudes towards the UN which in turn reflects a shift in the distribution of world power. The basic principles remain the same, there are just different ways of doing things.

But in light of Joseph Nye's famous phrase, 'soft power', with military and economic dominance diminishing, would not an imperial power such as the United States' best bid for hegemony in today's world be corporate and cultural rather than the militarism and traditional imperialism of the last decade? Is that not where power models are heading?

First of all, as far as military power is concerned, the United States spends almost as much on its military as the rest of the world combined. Its military is technologically far more advanced than any of its potential rivals, developing new ultra sophisticated techniques of warfare such as miniaturised drones using nanotechnology and the militarisation of space. All sorts of things are on the drawing boards and in development. The United States has about 800 military bases



around the world and a global surveillance system – you have to remember that no other country has anything like this. In fact most of the rest of the world, led by China, has been trying to block the use of space for military purposes, but the US has vetoed that at every step, under Clinton and Bush senior – certainly not just the last 10 years. So in military terms, it's overwhelming, and if you add intelligence into that, it becomes even more so.

There's nothing new about trying to use soft power – the phrase happens to be new, but the concept goes way back. That's what the cultural programs of the CIA were about, what Kennedy's Alliance for Progress was about. There have always been attempts to use what is now known as soft power – the Congress of Cultural Freedom is another of many examples. There is always a mix between the two tools that calibrates according to circumstance. When you ask 'what should the United States be doing', it's really impossible to answer because it depends on what goal you have in mind. If the goal is to control the world, then it probably should be doing about what it's doing.





Speaking of the United States, do you think that its relative youth and short history goes some way to explaining an obsession with patriotism, expansion and religion that's pretty unique in the developed world?

There are historical reasons. This is, I suppose, the only country in the world that was founded as what was called 'an infant empire'. That's George Washington's phrase, and he was founding an infant empire which was to expand, and the goals of that expansion were pretty broad. Thomas Jefferson, perhaps the most libertarian of the founding fathers viewed the 13 colonies as the nest from which the entire hemisphere would be peopled, replacing the 'Red' or indigenous population who were essentially exterminated and the blacks once they could get rid of them. Jefferson was a slave owner but not in favour of slavery, so sending them back to Africa seemed like the tidiest solution, and of course the new United States would also replace the Latins who were regarded as inferior people – a perception that carried right into the twentieth century. Well the infant empire first expanded over what is now called the National Territory to - and it's important to remember that was the exact phrase used by

John Quincy Adams (*6th President*) and others - exterminate and expel the indigenous population. The next phase was to conquer half of Mexico, and by the end of the 19th century when both of these territories had fallen securely under American control, the US proceeded beyond. It invaded Cuba in 1898 which was heralded at the time as the 'Liberation of Cuba', though it is accepted by modern scholarship that it was in fact an intervention to prevent Cuban independence from Spain and essentially turn it into a US colony. Also in 1898, the US essentially stole Hawaii by force and guile from its indigenous population and then expanded into the Philippines where they launched a major war killing a couple of hundred thousand people. The Philippines saw the imposition of a new style of colonialism based on hi tech surveillance (with force in the background of course), techniques to break up national movements, co-optation and so on, which represented a significant advance in colonial style which in many ways still persists in the Philippines to this day. That being said, the US was not a major player in wider global affairs, where Britain largely remained the leading power until the Second World War. By the time of Woodrow Wilson (*1913-1921*) however, it had been recognised that oil was going to

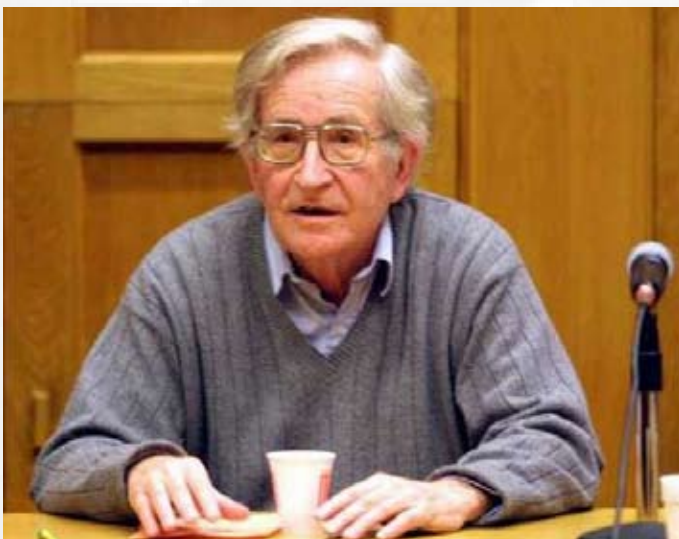
be a major commodity both militarily and economically, so Wilson kicked the British out of Venezuela, supported a vicious dictator, and by the late 1920's, Venezuela was the world's leading oil exporter with US firms firmly in control. Meanwhile, there were conflicts going on in the Middle East among the imperial powers including the US about who was going to control most of the oil and by the time of the Second World War it had become clear that the US was going to be the dominant power.

Now as far as religion is concerned, you're quite right; the US is off the spectrum. The early colonists were in fact religious extremists who were following the word of God – it's called Providentialism – and it became the principal streak in US history. Americans were fulfilling the God's word by waving the holy book, and slaughtering the Amalekites (mainly the domestic Indians). You should look at the 1629 Great Seal of Massachusetts – it goes a long way to explaining what the country is all about. Massachusetts had just received its charter from the English king, Charles I, and the Great Seal depicts an Indian with his spear pointing down – a sign of peace, and there's a scroll coming out of his mouth saying 'Come Over and Help Us'. So when the colonists were coming over to exterminate the indigenous population, following God's will naturally, they were doing it benevolently – they were coming there to help them. And if you look at later commentary from Supreme Court Justices and so on, they puzzled over the fact that the Indians seemed to wither away as the colonists came despite their noble intentions. And of course you can translate that straight into current events.



But the US didn't make this up. Every imperial power does the same thing. If you read John Stuart Mill (*British philosopher and author of Utilitarianism*) who was a decent honourable man and take a look at his classic article on interventionism, it's very revealing. He explains that Britain is unique in the world and a sort of angelic presence whose magnificence is so radiant that nobody understands us. Other Europeans who cannot conceive of our moral worth and angelic character attribute all kinds of base motives to us, so perhaps we should just stay home and be noble. But, he goes on to say....that simply wouldn't be fair on the barbarians, so therefore we have to conquer the rest of India so that the ignorant natives can benefit from the light of civilisation and our nobility. Of course he says, we will be subjected to obloquy and harsh charges, but we will suffer that, knowing that noble benevolence is our only motivation.

Now that came out in 1859 in a climate where the newspapers and parliament were full of discussion of massive British crimes in India suppressing what is called the Indian Mutiny – but was in fact a rebellion. And here's John Stuart Mill, perhaps the most respectable of all the contemporary commentators I can think of, writing things like this. In the same essay, Mill goes on to praise France for its





efforts in Algeria, where one of the senior members of the French cabinet was calling for the extermination of the entire population. But again, if you look into the French version of events, they are adamant about the noble, civilising nature of their mission there. In fact, I can't even think of an alternative. When the Japanese were conquering north China during the Second World War, their internal documents – not their propaganda, were overflowing with love for the Chinese. They were bringing them an earthly paradise, they were there with no purpose other than to help the poor Chinese people from the malevolent bandits that ruled over them. And so it goes on...try to find an exception... and the US is merely the most recent example.

Do you think that it is ultimately more insidious to live conscious of repression under clearly defined authoritarian rule or to live in what you assume is a democracy with access to supposedly fair and balanced news from a selective and corporate media where you don't see a pressing need to fight for your identity.

Well first of all I'm not sure that's true about authoritarian governments. Authoritarian is a pretty weak word for it, but take Nazi Germany. Hitler was probably the most

popular leader in German history until the war started to go bad, and the population strongly supported him. Look at the Soviet Union and you'll find plenty of support for Stalin. In fact even looking at polls today, he is regarded as one of the most popular figures. People living under authoritarian rule tend often to accommodate it and even to huddle under the umbrella of power. If you look at psychological aspects, I think it is actually far more complicated than that. If you look at Erich Fromm's classic work, *Escape from Freedom*, he discusses these issues quite brilliantly. So I don't know which is more dangerous – just that we need to get rid of both of them...

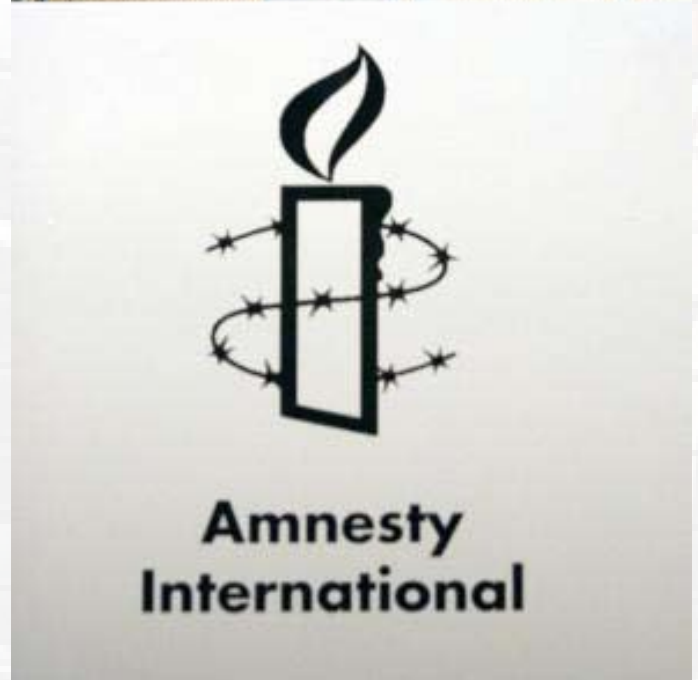
Do you believe that the mass activism that we began to see in modern times during the 1960's has been superseded in an internet connected, globalised world by the rise of stand-alone subcultures where people are less concerned with changing wider society than with creating micro cultures with like minded individuals.

To tell you the truth – I don't see it quite like that. A lot of the 1960's activism was deeply personal and actually very similar to what you're describing. 'Let's find a great lifestyle for ourselves'. Much of the counter culture

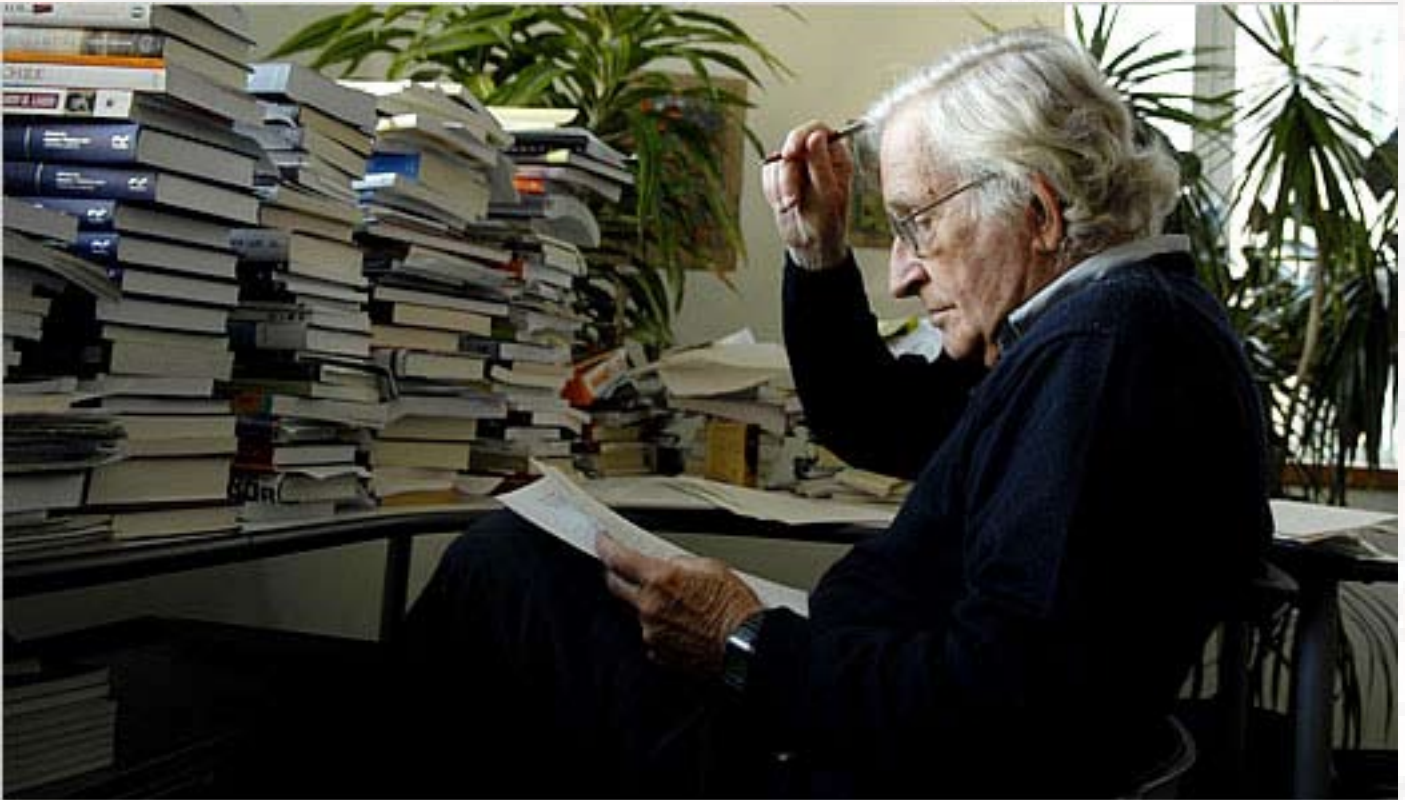
movement was in that spirit, and while it was side by side with efforts to change wider society, I think that you find a similar mixture of commitments and motives today, especially amongst the young. In fact, it's on a higher plane today because the legacy of the 1960's was to substantially civilise society and today's youth builds from there. I happened to be walking down the halls of MIT (*Massachusetts Institute of Technology*) shortly before this conversation and the first thing that you realise is that half of the students around you are women. Everyone is in casual dress, there's a substantial proportion of ethnic minorities and there's tables with students trying to convince others to support really quite decent causes. Well you know, I've been here for 55 years, and before the 1960's, if you walked down the same hall, you would have seen formally dressed, deferential white males, no politics, no concern for social causes and that's not just MIT of course. It's true of wider American society and indeed of much of the world. These are among the civilising effects of the activism of the 1960's. They did improve matters to a significant extent and that is why there is such an elite hatred of the sixties. They are constantly denounced as a time of troubles when youth was running wild. Well there was some of that around the fringe as with any mass popular movement, but the vast majority was serious and had substantial positive consequences.

Looking back on Eisenhower's parting words – to what extent has the 'military industrial complex' penetrated the world we live in

It was an important speech, if a little misleading. When you talk about the military

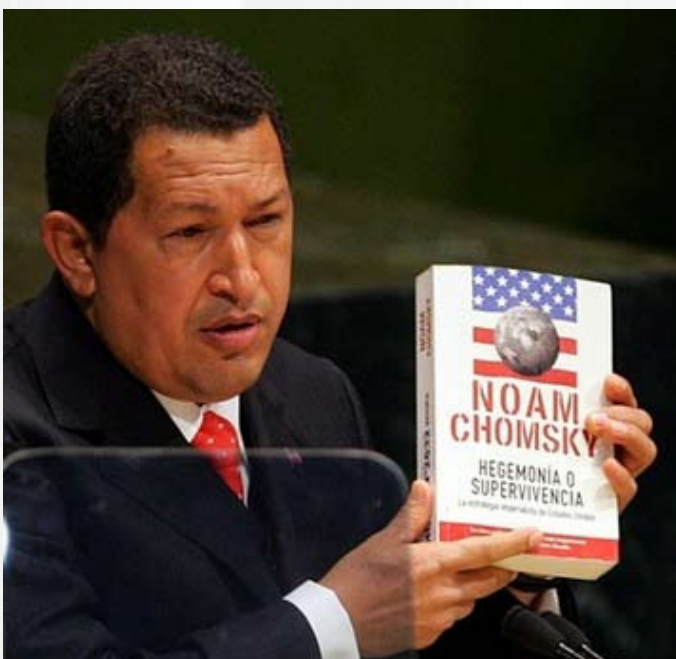


industrial complex, the reference is really to hi tech industry. So let's take MIT again which happens to be a good example. When Eisenhower was speaking (it was a little after I got here), the Institute was almost exclusively funded by the Pentagon. What was it doing? OK, it was administering a couple of military labs, but the wider campus as a whole and the research departments weren't pursuing a military agenda or developing weapons but developing the technology of the future. You mentioned the internet earlier...well that's where it came from. Military funded labs at MIT and places like them. When I got here, I was working in an electronics lab that was 100% military funded but doing no military work and was essentially developing modern computing. Now at the time, a computer spanned a couple of offices with vacuum tubes blowing up all over the place, and you'd wait hours to get a basic printout. But by the 1950's a computer had been reduced to the size of a couple of filing cabinets and some



of the project leaders had pulled out to form the first commercial mainframe producer. IBM was there, learning how to shift from punch cards to computers on public funding (mostly military) and produced their own very fast computer. But it was still far too expensive for business so the government bought it. In fact, governmental procurement is a major technique for public subsidy of private power. The internet actually stayed within the government system until 1995, although transferred from the Pentagon to the National Science Foundation and computers didn't really become profitable until the 1980's after 30 years of astronomically

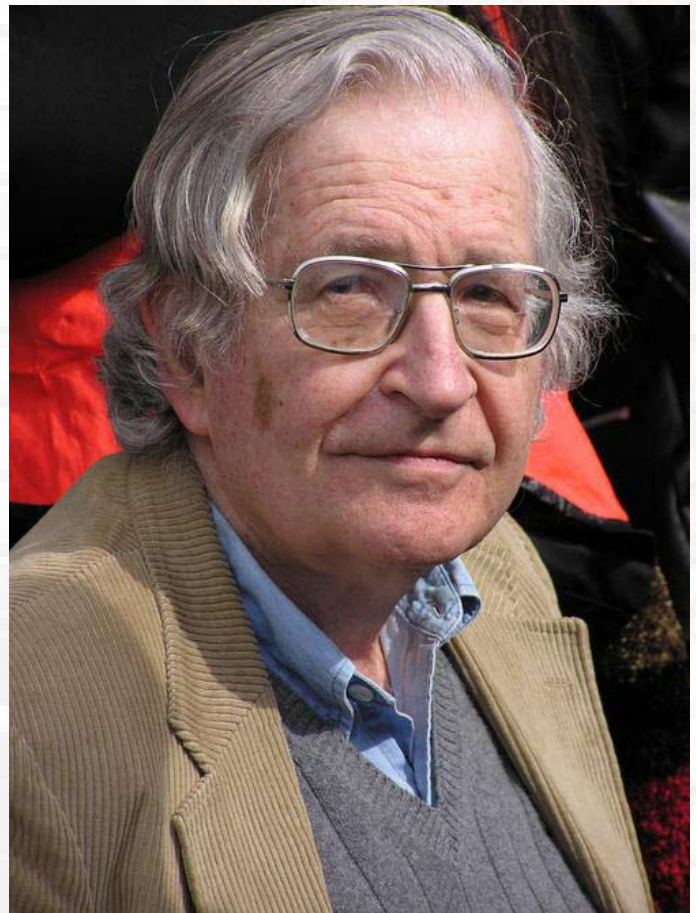
expensive development within the state system, mostly military. And that's true of a whole range of other things – information technology, software, satellites, lasers and so on. Even transistors which were developed in a private laboratory were only pursued and advanced thanks to public subsidy. They were developed in the Bell telephone company laboratory, which was a great research centre, but at that point, AT&T, the parent company, had a monopoly granted by the government, and were able to use the guaranteed income the monopoly provided to set up this superb laboratory. As soon as the monopoly was broken, the lab went too. Transistors were too expensive so the government bought them – procurement again. 100% in fact



Going back to Eisenhower and his phrase 'military industrial complex'; it was true, it was there, but it's a misleading way of describing the fact that to a rather significant extent, hi tech industry is based on the dynamic state sector of the economy. And as long as the cutting edge was electronics based, it came largely under a Pentagon cover. Again at a place like MIT, you can see very clearly that in the 1970's, Pentagon funding was declining and funding from the National Institute of Health was increasing. And the reason was pretty straightforward. The cutting edge of the economy was shifting from electronics based to biology based and therefore the public has

to take the risks and pay the costs under some other cover with the final benefits reaped by the private sector once the technology had reached a profitable plateau. Now that's a bit of a caricature – it's not quite that simple, but it's a substantial part of how the economy works. We don't live in market societies. There are market elements of course, but there are others too, not least the substantial state component. I think Eisenhower's criticism was apt – we don't want to have an economy that is geared to the military for all kinds of reasons but it doesn't include the fact that so much of our technology could only ever be developed that way.

If you want to understand the Cold War, the obvious place to look is US government decisions at the beginning of the 1990's. 'OK – Cold War's over – now what do we do?' Well there's documentation on that. The first President Bush immediately established a new national security strategy, budget and so on, and if you read them, they're pretty illuminating. They basically said everything should go on as before, but with new pretexts. So we still need a huge military force, but not because the Russians are coming – they're



not, but because of what was referred to as the 'technological sophistication of third world powers'. We have to maintain what was called 'the defence industrial base' – that's hi tech industry. Perhaps the most interesting part was with regard to the intervention forces aimed at the Middle East. So the documents outline the strategy behind intervention forces for oil producing countries and then came this interesting phrase, 'Substantial threats to our interests could not be laid at the Kremlin's door', but were rather what's called 'radical nationalism'. So the clouds had lifted, the Russians weren't coming, so we concede that threats to our interests weren't solely being engineered by Russian machinations, but were indigenous and as great as ever. So nothing has really changed – just new tactics and new pretexts.

So in that light, how relevant today is Shakespeare's line 'Busy giddy minds with foreign quarrels'

Foreign policy has always been based on interests. Adam Smith made some very simple comments on how power is exercised. They need some modification for today, not least because he was talking about England, but



in England, the architects of state policy were merchants and manufacturers. They designed policy to make sure that their own interests are peculiarly attended to no matter how grievous their impact on others, including the people of England but mostly on those who he described as 'subject to the savage injustice of the Europeans'. Well that analysis was accurate then, and now we wouldn't say merchants and manufacturers, but rather multi-national corporations and financial institutions, but the basic principle holds good. They are the primary architects of policy that they design to meet their own interests, and that includes international policies. The effects on the domestic population may be grievous, and others may be subject to their savage injustice, but they're concerned for their own welfare – that's how power systems operate. Adam Smith was absolutely right. Now of course when you say this, you're called a radical Marxist conspiracy nut or whatever, but it's simply repeating truisms that Adam Smith perceived perfectly well, and of course he was not alone.

But is not an aberration to that rule the relationship between the United States and Israel. Has there ever been a situation where the dominant power of the age has had its foreign policy so heavily influenced by a smaller ally even to its own eventual detriment?

I don't agree with the statement. I agree with Israeli commentators who describe the United States as Bossman / Partner. The US does what it wants, and if it doesn't like what Israel's doing, it tells it to stop and they will have to stop. Israel has been regarded by the US government as a strategic asset in an important region. US hi tech business regards Israel as its darling – just take a look at investments. Intel, the world's major chipmaker is putting its major new international factory for a new generation of microchips in Israel. Warren Buffet is investing there, as are a host of other technology firms. There's a very close relationship between US and Israeli advanced technology to the point that some Israeli companies are shifting operations to the United States because they have better market and subsidy opportunities.

And if Israel gets out of line, the United States just tells it No. We're seeing this right now. Israel wants to bomb Iran, but so far the US hasn't allowed it to do so.

But Obama seems to having a lot of trouble stopping settlement building. First Netanyahu ignores him, and now that the stance has toughened, AIPAC has got over three quarters of the House of Representatives to sign a letter calling for an end to public criticism.

The US government really does not have any trouble bending Israel to its will. If it wants to stop settlements, it knows exactly how to do it. Stop funding them. But they don't care. They're perfectly happy to see a powerful Israel and the Palestinians offer nothing to the United States. They're weak and defenceless.

But surely with the US fighting a war on two fronts in the Arab world and Islamic religious and nationalist feeling proving a major threat both to domestic security and oil interests should a US backed regime fall, it should at least pay some heed to the effect of its unquestioning support for Israel

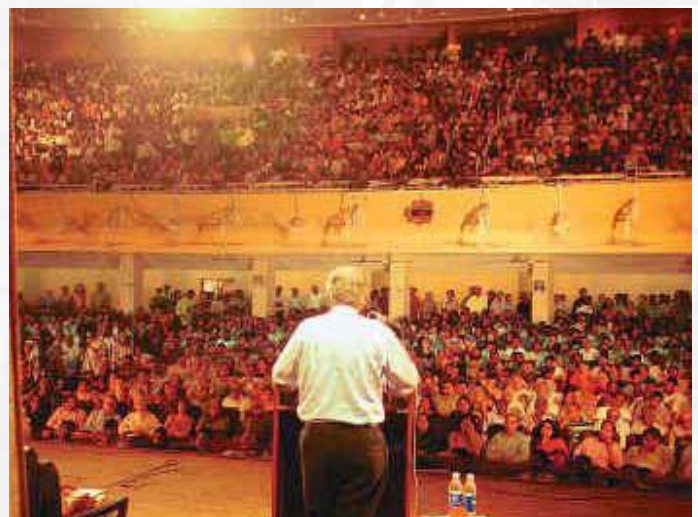
Should it? Let's go back 50 years to before Israel was a big issue. In 1958, internally (we now have the documents) Eisenhower raised the question with his staff, 'why is there a campaign of hatred against us in the Arab world?' And the National Security Council had just come out with a study on this which answered the question. It said 'there's a perception in the Arab world that the United States supports harsh and dictatorial regimes, blocks democracy and development and we do this because we want to maintain control over their energy resources.' It then went on to say that these perceptions were pretty accurate, it was natural that we should be doing it and we are going to continue doing it, so yes, it was going to lead to a campaign of hatred in what's known as the Arab street. We count on the dictators we support to suppress that. In fact, that's perfectly explicit. Now, the Obama administration and the press (like the New York Times) are praising the Palestinian Authority because for the first time, they are offering Israel a legitimate partner for peace – actually I'm now quoting Senator John Kerry, Obama's point man on this, head of the Senate Foreign Relations committee and



a liberal Democrat. He then goes on to give the reason. There's an army there under a US general, Keith Dayton, it's trained by Jordan (the Jordanian dictatorship) and by Israel and it operates in the West Bank very effectively so Kerry says. He then gives an example. During the attack on Gaza last year, it was anticipated that there would be protests in the West Bank, but the US run army was so effective that it prevented any sign of protest or any expression of sympathy for Palestinians getting slaughtered in Gaza. And that was apparently really impressive, demonstrating that Israel had a legitimate partner for peace. The facts speak for themselves.

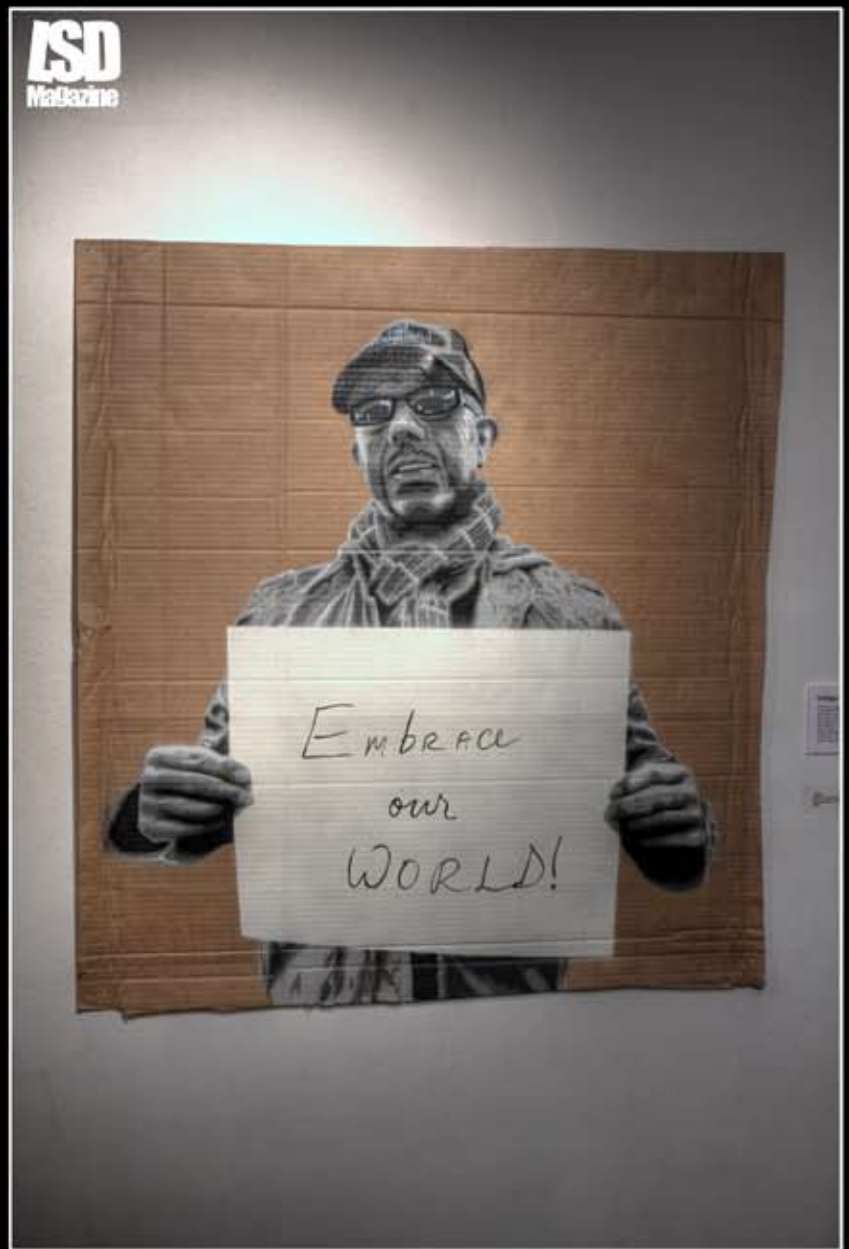
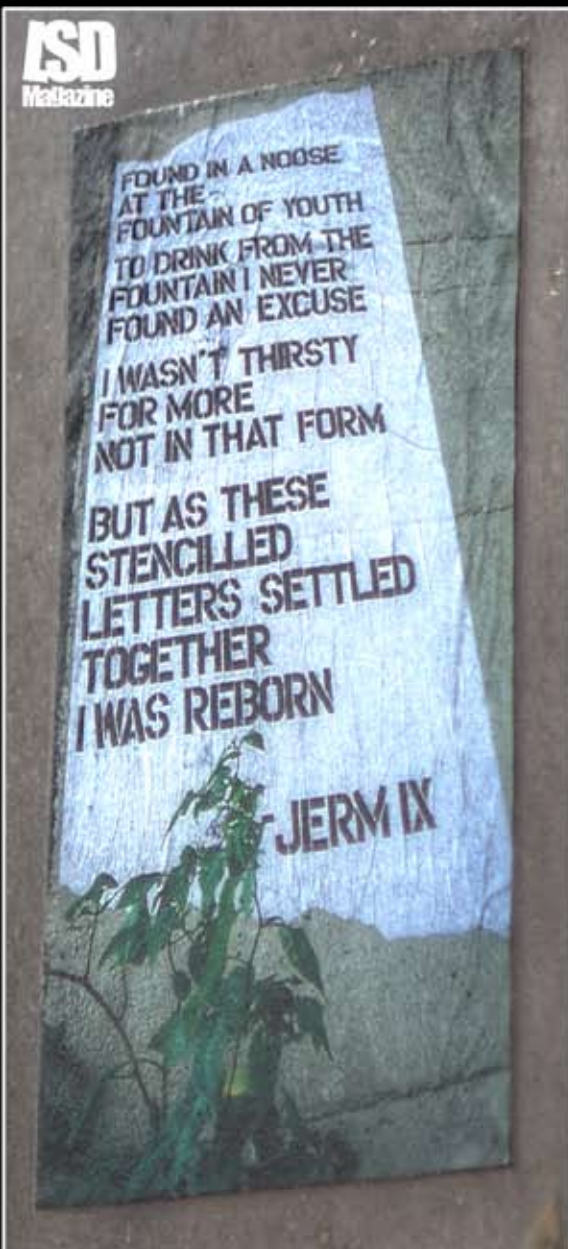
Thank you Professor Chomsky

www.chomsky.info





Photography: Claude London



Photography: Vegas





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BECKER HARRISON

Fluctuating vividly between the sublime and the abstract, Carolin Becker and Simon Harrison have come together in a synthesis of styles and artistic media to breathe an immortal fluidity into snapshots of the earthly. We were fascinated by the idea of spray painting photos with such collaborative sensitivity that the seams were washed away into an ethereal echo and the concept of abstracting the physical into pure shimmering perception. Their India series moves away from infusing glimpses of multi dimensional wonder into nature and weaves stories and reflection into scenes the original photos capture, adding a fresh layer to the possibilities of this intriguing concept. We caught up with the two of them

Can you tell us a little about your respective backgrounds and how you came together

Simon: Artistically speaking, I was heavily involved with graphic design and working on comics and animation and the two of us met through my teaching Carolin martial arts. At the time, she was working on a photographic project based around photographing the homeless and I basically said to her one day – ‘wait a minute – you’re wandering around London on your own photographing potentially unstable people with a 5 grand camera – maybe that’s not the best idea!’

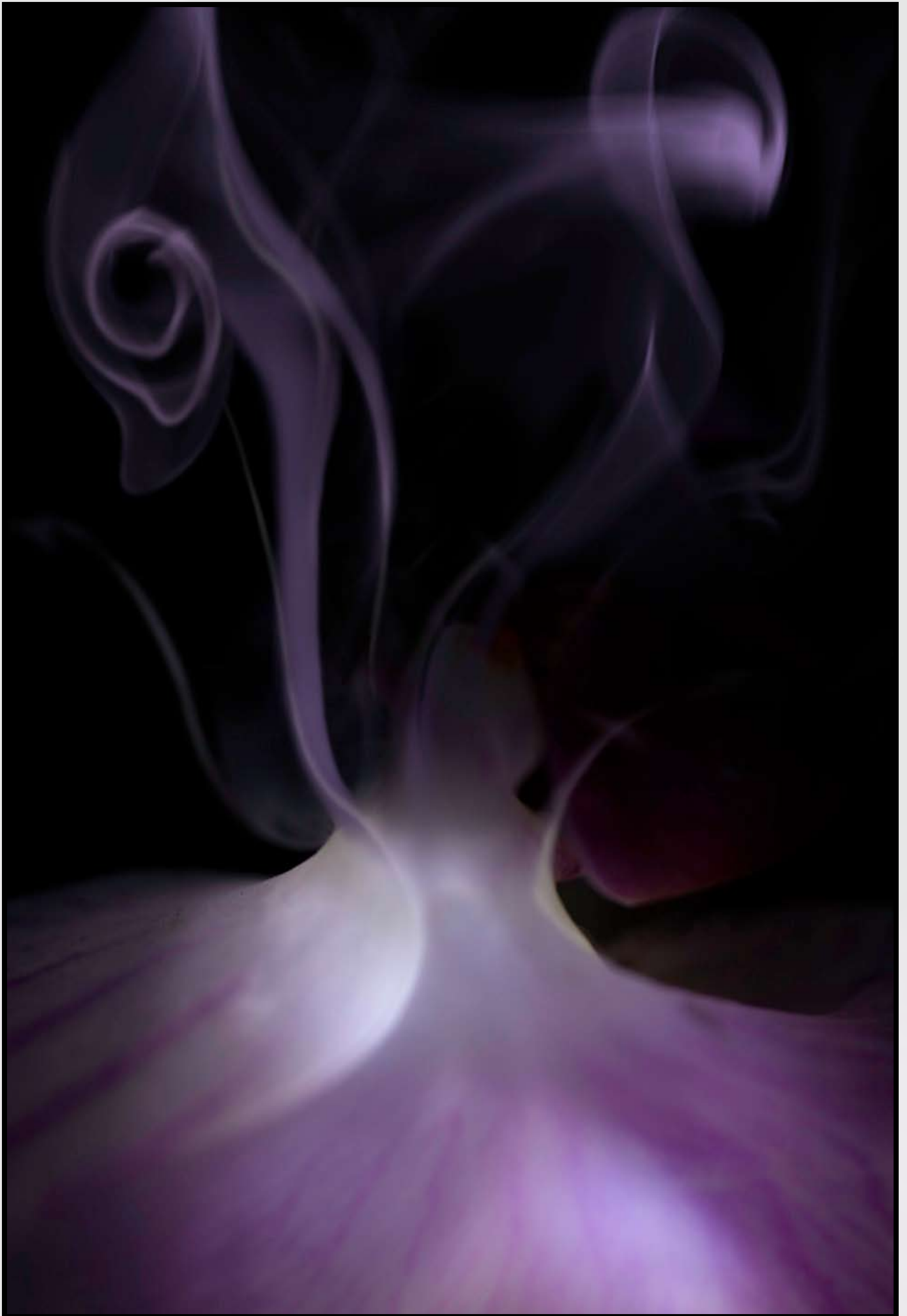
Carolin. So Simon offered to accompany me on my more potentially threatening photographic missions and we developed our creative relationship from there, wondering if we couldn’t combine our ideas and extend the



images I was taking into something entirely new and the project took off from there.

You had a spray paint and graffiti background too didn’t you Simon?

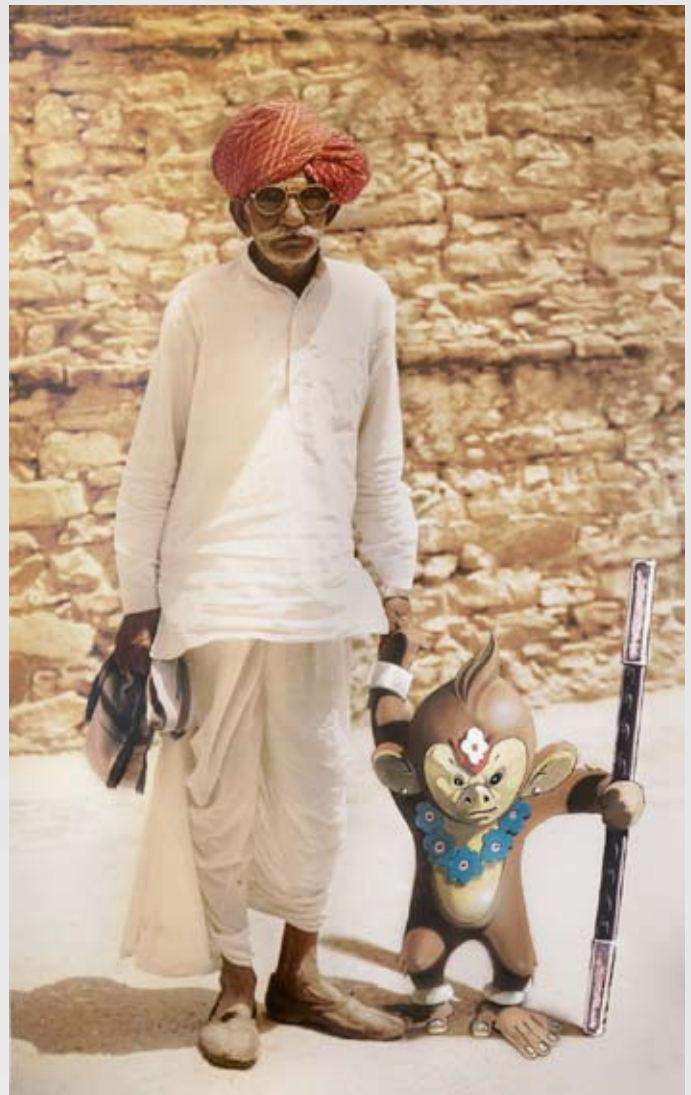
Simon. Yes. I spent a good few years in Zurich working with some graffiti artists out there, who were also part of a band called Primal Lyrics. It’s got to be said, they were a little naive, but they really were talented musicians and great artists, although they were endlessly hamstrung by the huge fines



the Swiss imposed for illegal graffiti work and the chunks of community service they were constantly being obliged to do. So while I was doing a lot of can work with them, I was also getting into airbrush painting which is a similar process – just finer and then began to combine the two, where they would paint with the cans and I would airbrush the pieces afterwards to throw an extra dimension into the mix.

Carolyn. Usually people are very proud and protective of their photographic vision. What was it that made you want to open up what you were doing to someone else's input?

Carolyn. I had developed an intrinsic trust in the way Simon saw things and became more and more interested in offering up what I saw in my images to his interpretation. It clicked on an intangible level and instead of seeing the photographs as a finished whole, I realised that we could literally bring another whole, another 100% into the equation. It opened up a whole new world of possibility, of vision, and of abstraction as well as bringing a male female, yin yang dynamic into the collaboration.

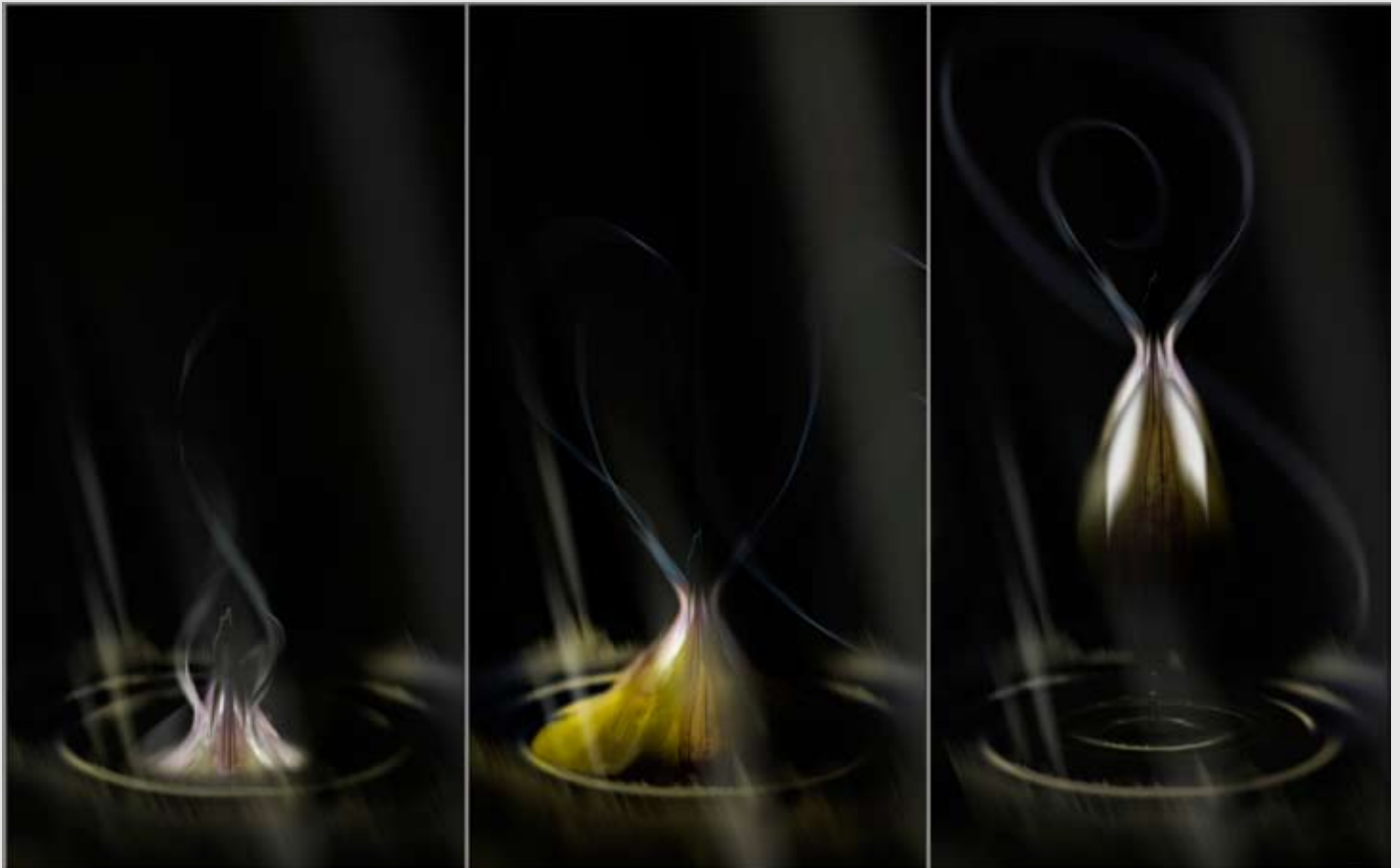


It's interesting that you mention the male female interplay because it almost seems as if the roles are reversed here, with the female bringing the male, 3 dimensional object to the table and the male diffusing the edges into abstraction

Simon. Absolutely. There's a vast amount of totally imperceptible symbolism in what we're doing, especially within the Luminosity series. You've got a solidly manifested thing in the photograph, and then the invisible creative input that attaches new and deeply subtle layers to it, and so in both those processes, you have a heavily masculine element and a heavily feminine element. And what was really interesting is that the graffiti work, particularly with the nature of the photographs that Carolyn took, categorically had to move away from any hint of the overwhelming masculinity of traditional tagging and writing and I found myself having to approach the graffiti medium within the piece in a deeply feminine way to have any hope of it dissolving seamlessly into the photographs.







Carolin. It was a totally subconscious process that we only really discussed after the pieces were finished, and it was fascinating to look back into the work and discover that dynamic. Spontaneity was really at the core of what we were doing. We didn't over think or relentlessly analyse the framework of what we were doing, it just organically happened through an unspoken trust and it's only now through retrospectively looking at the work and hearing the interpretations of others that we are discovering fresh layers within it, and that's an incredibly rewarding aspect .

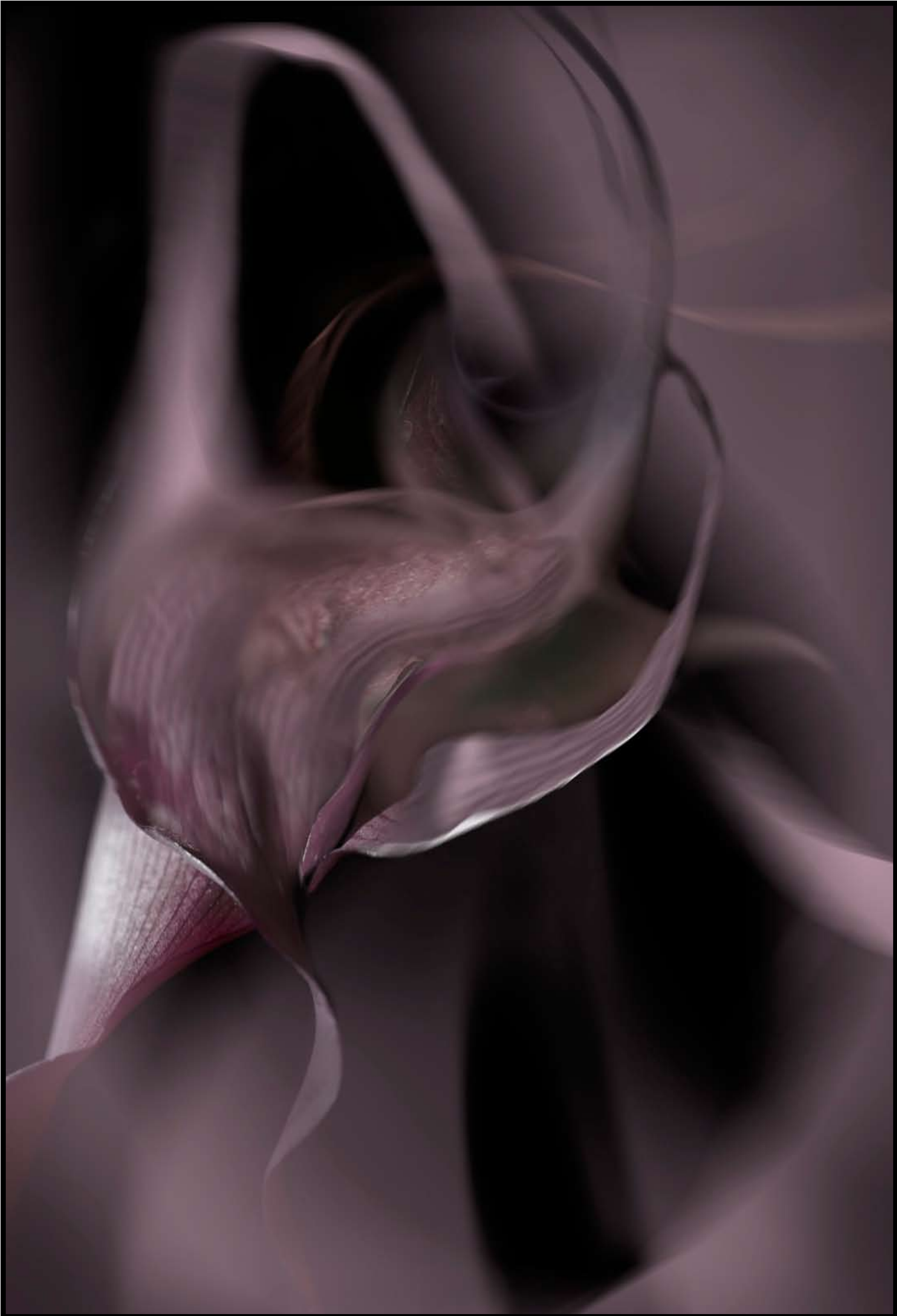
Is it total surrender to each others' perception or is there an element of 'hang on – not feeling that – can you do it a bit differently'?

Simon. Well she'll give me a batch of images and I'll sit and go through them and when I've decided which ones stand out to me as something I can read deeper into and really work with, the vast majority of the time, I've landed on exactly the same ones that Carolin had chosen herself. Personally, I saw the Luminosity series as flawless collaboration and when the images were first displayed, people simply didn't know how it was done. They couldn't see the join between the paint

and the photograph, they couldn't get their heads around the idea that it was two people that had done it, and they were literally looking behind the images because they assumed they must be backlit. I remember asking one guy what the hell he was doing trying to get behind the piece and when I'd finally managed to convince him that there was no hidden light source behind the image, he just looked at me very suspiciously and mumbled something sceptical. But they really did glow!!!

What is the secret behind the illumination, and how does that capture the ethereal?

Simon. By the very fact of using spray on the image, what you've got is a particle based paint, and what's happening is that when external light hits a layer of particles, it's reflecting it almost like a cats' eye. So not only are you getting a dimension of illumination from the paint, when Carolin took the photographs, they already had such a vitality, that I knew what to do with them straight away. Ordinarily, if anyone had suggested to me working on a load of pictures of flowers, I'd have done an instant runner, but there was such depth to them, such an inner spirit that extending the image into pure abstraction just





made total sense. As far as I am concerned, those pieces are the very definition of ethereal, personifying light and emotion that was already the essence of Carolin's original photographs, and my trip into the image effectively mapped itself. They were so sensitive that there was no way they could be hamfistedly dealt with and so the in your face nature of traditional graffiti – which I love by the way – simply had to go out the window.

Carolin, when you saw what Simon had added to your photographs express what you had originally seen in the subjects when you shot them?

Exactly. And that was what really blew me away. I completely left him alone with the floral series, gave him his space, and when he finally came back with the finished Luminosity,



not only did it confirm every instinct I had had, but it was like he had seen them through my mind's eye. And that is as good as collaboration can ever get.

Is the Luminosity series ultimately about interpretation or enhancement?

Simon. The photographic aspect is necessarily more immediate and existential, and while Carolin reached an extraordinary degree of enhancement merely through the lens, she was ultimately limited by the tools at her disposal to really take it to the next level. I'm lucky enough to be able to go absolutely mad on it and completely breach the boundaries of reality. In that respect, I think that where I can go with it, what I can bring to it is far more subversive. I mean, we've had a physicist look at some of the finished pieces, and his immediate interpretation was that they could be images of quantum events at a subatomic level. They can be anything, And at that point it becomes a complete synthesis of enhancement and interpretation, because you're abstracting nature through your own perception, but illuminating underlying dimensions of beauty and ethereal physicality. It may not look like a flower any more, but it's certainly a window onto nature.

Bearing in mind that you're taking a spray can to a photo, what size prints are we talking about?

Simon. Large. The average is about 2m x 1.5m. And it did come down to a mixture of straight up spray and an airbrush, because there were lines and angles that demanded a delicacy that becomes simply impossible with a spray can. And don't forget, they don't come cheap!! Carolin handed me a print and said 'Go for it' and I'm thinking to myself – that's 300 quids' worth of photograph. Not exactly much margin

for error here! I can't blow it! I would just sit there looking at them while Carolin was ringing up asking how it was going, and I'd just be saying...'erm...I'm in the zone, getting there!' until I finally felt confident enough to take a crack at them, and now I'm totally at my ease with it.

The India series brought a new set of challenges, because unlike the Luminosity series where I could go mad anywhere and everywhere because it was pure abstraction, I was dealing with concrete objects in the shot and it became more about where I could place my input in relation to what was already clearly there. I also used a totally different range of materials, some acrylics, some watercolours, dirty rags and even felt tips!

What was the context of the India series?

Carolin. The photos were taken in Jaipur on the 13 May 2008 about 5 hours before 9 bombs went off in the heart of the city killing 63 and injuring over 200 people. We were there by pure coincidence (we don't exactly make a habit of shooting disaster zones) and the photos that we took were wholly innocent in the sense that they had no foreseeable connection to what was about to take place. We were really there to try and capture some of the sparks of pure madness and glorious colour that India throws up anywhere, everywhere and all the time. And yet, in the light of the awful atrocities that followed, we inevitably began to see them in a different way, and certain indiscernible moments that had jarred, suddenly took on a far darker significance. There is the image of the man with a turban wrapped round his head giving the full fisted salute. He struck us as strange at the time, not least because everyone else



who we had photographed had been very soft, very calm and imbued with a silent, peaceful nobility – very Hindu in fact. But this guy just stood out as seriously dodgy....he came running up insisting that we took his picture at the top of his voice, and when we agreed and started reaching for the camera, he wound this scarf around his head and raised that violently militant salute. Hours later when we heard what had happened, there was this unavoidable sense that he may have been involved in it. There was just something about him, something unsettling.

The events of that day also shaped our vision of the young boy running. That image was commissioned for Art Review. Tom Watt, the art director for the publication visited us in our studio, and when he saw the India stuff, he suggested we create a piece for their Manifesto centrefold. The meeting with him was decisive and sort of re launched the India







project into its current more socio political context. The running boy is one of our more controversial visual metaphors, illustrating the cycle of fear and violence that a bombing can create and that haunting image represents the potentially turbulent future and the possible twists of fate that innocence can take when brutality leaves its mark on a community.

Your website says that each of the photos incorporates an Indian deity. Some are more obvious than others, but for example, what is the face in the sand?

Simon. Kali, the female goddess of destruction and rebirth. We came across these women drinking water out of the river, and it was just so obviously foul and utterly poisonous. It was all they had, and they had absolutely no choice but to drink it, but the scene just invoked cycles of life and death because while they were clearly only able to survive by drinking it, it was also killing them slowly. The Wanted poster on the cow isn't a god at all, but the face of one of the men wanted in connection with the bombings, and he appears on the cow which is of course a sacred symbol in Hinduism, and so you've got the profane corrupting the sacred.

Can you tell us a little about your current project?

Simon. In a word...not really.

Carolyn. A close friend of mine is a leading

nanophysicist, who we approached with an idea that had come up between us, and just after telling us that there was no existing method to achieve what we were looking for, he announced that it was definitely worth dedicating some research to making it happen

Simon. They've already found a medical application for it apparently!!!

Carolyn. So it doesn't exist yet, but it's in development in the research labs, and once it's been tested and we've managed to harness it to what we're doing, all will be revealed!!!

Doesn't really get more intriguing than that!

Simon. Well we've already started branching out into the cutting edge of science because it really is on those macro and micro levels of nature that you find the most mind bending, spectacularly beautiful abstractions. The wife of a friend is also a physicist who has been working on delivery systems for viral and bacterial cures that can be introduced into the body by attaching them to liposomes which are basically fat cells and Carolyn has managed to take some photos through the laboratory's electron microscope that are also really promising as a fresh canvas.

Carolyn. It's going far, far deeper. Watch this space.

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NUGGETS FROM THE ILLEGAL FESTIVAL

'Bollocks' thought Pete as he hung a right back onto the festival site. 'I can't believe this is actually happening. How, HOW did I allow this to happen and not just put my foot down once and for all'

But his granny had proved very persuasive. It seemed that her recent successful hip replacement operation had not only put a fresh spring in the old gal's step, but something about the anaesthetic had provoked musings on the meaning of life, a renewed desire to make every day count, and a sudden willingness to stop peering through her hedge disapprovingly at the state of the modern world. A late life crisis if you will. And while Pete was naturally all for this new found joie de vivre, he couldn't help wondering how he got the brunt of it. Last week, Granny had announced (there was no asking involved) that she would be in full effect at this weekend's festy. Pete's diversionary tactics, obfuscation, general avoidance of the issue and gentle insistence that it might not quite be her cup of tea fell on a recently abandoned hearing aid, and his mates' apparent pride in what a game lass his gran must be somehow failed to reassure him. But here she fucking was.

The initial signs were less than encouraging. As he bundled her out of the van and into her wheelchair, he followed her rapt gaze to a sight that shortened his life expectancy by about 23 years. Official site lost it and raving exhibitionist Cal, wearing a tailcoat and not a lot else bar an assortment of scattered Special Brew cans and the telltale white polo mint nostrils of a man who has been mining ketamine with his facial appendages was having a nice tranquil summertime swim. In a fucking 3 millimetre deep puddle. At any



other time, Pete would have seen something magnificently zen in this picture. Cal's face shone with calm beatitude and his breast stroke was really quite elegant considering he was more spannered than the Annual Mechanics Union Garden Party. He stole a glance at Granny who had begun emptying her colostomy bag onto this dubious mermaid. 'Interactive art installations – how imaginative' she croaked.. 'I thought he could do with some more water through', she grinned unnervingly as she wrung out the last drops.....

Moving swiftly on in silence, Pete deposited her in the kids area where the nutter ratio

was the lowest, and whipped out the sponge cake he had prepared earlier. He was due on the decks in about 10 minutes, and with a sudden flash of inspiration, as he pretended to be rooting through the branch of Boots behind her wheelchair, he cunningly let her tyres down. That'll keep the old lunatic out of trouble for a while he thought. He installed her with a family sized teapot complete with cosy ,a whacking great big slice of his cake, and asked a couple of the mothers who had been thoroughly briefed to keep a watchful eye on her. Confident she had been immobilised, he strode off toward the back of the rig.

2 hours later, and mighty pleased with the way his new daytime ska set had gone down, Pete appeared briskly round the corner of the bouncy castle and to his undying horror saw an empty wheelchair. No sign of the duty mums either. But there was this curious circle of people all huddled round about 20 meters away. His heart in his mouth, he pushed through the crowd. There was granny with what appeared to be a freshly installed nose ring, and the words Punk's Not Dead scrawled across her forehead in lipstick. A large bottle of cheap brandy lay mockingly empty at her feet and she seemed to be giving the onlookers a rendition of God Save The Queen while flashing them from various angles. 'Who's got a fucking pole then and I'll teach you bloody whippersnappers how to ...what is it...bump and grind' she screeched...

Bollocks' thought Pete



Negotiations had been going swimmingly. The thin blue crescent rippled with something approaching smiles and Gary could not help but feel that vague permission and a healthy understanding was imminent. Looked like that despite all the odds – this festival was going to get the green light. Possibly even portaloos and a rubbish collection - who knew or dared to dream.

The senior officer who had been conducting proceedings with a silky benevolence rapped his clipboard and said 'Right. I think everything's in order here. But if you could just accompany me over here sir for a quiet word about camping logistics'

Gary went quietly – keep the man sweet and all. He'd also done a massive line of cocaine shortly before bounding up to the incoming police squadron, had impressed himself with his extraordinary eloquence and wanted to continue the thread with his sparring partner. He might even have a crack at convincing his new friend of the moral turpitude inherent in a police career. Seeing as he was on form and all.

As they disappeared from general view





behind a small copse of trees, the Chief Superintendent put his arm knowingly around Gary's shoulder and winked at him.

This was not part of the deal.

'I think we have a little unfinished business' bellowed the chief jovially

Gary felt his arsehole tighten and his stomach begin to dissolve. He had sort of fancied Jimmy Dettinger when he was 13, but that had been a passing moment he'd chalked up to the mysteries of adolescence. Certainly nothing had ever prepared him for being propositioned by a uniformed senior police officer behind some bush in the middle of nowhere. He wondered if he ought to casually float his dubious personal hygiene in the hope of making this randy enforcer look elsewhere for his thrills.

Instead he strategically did nothing but panic. The chief was looking at him with a predatory twinkle in his eye. Gary was processing mentally. Should he take one for the cause? Would it hurt? Would the chief be gentle with him? And would this make him bulletproof as far as the law was concerned. He even let his mind stray onto the potential for post coital documentation and subsequent blackmail.

'Hurry up lad – I haven't got all day – someone might come round the corner.'

Gary closed his eyes, braced himself, thought of his selfless contribution to the illegal rave scene, undid his trousers, bent over and spread his cheeks gingerly.

'What the fuck are you doing you fucking freak' yelled the chief holding his nose as eau de been a while since my last shower pierced

his brain.

'Be soft with me' whimpered Gary

'My god – I always knew you lot were a bunch of unstable weirdos' spluttered the chief in disbelief 'but this takes the fucking biscuit. Get up you disgusting animal and put your bloody clothes back on.'

"But, but but..... I thought.....'

'You thought I was going to bugger you in broad daylight in the open air when any of my officers could come round that corner at any second. Are you insane?'

'But you said we had unfinished business... and..and..well, you winked at me...put your arm round me'

'Your stupidity is outweighed only by your complete lack of any redeeming attractiveness or sexual magnetism. I was referring to the envelope stuffed full of cash that I presumed you understood needed to change hands if I was going to let this utter aberration of a festival go ahead. You're done. This party is over.'

As he reached for his radio, 2 blue clad figures appeared round the corner and drank in the sight of their chief stroking his truncheon while Gary sobbed violently with his trousers round his ankles. In a flash of clarity, Gary screamed. 'He's trying to rape me'.

'Think you better come with us sir'. And the chief was led off to his own station as the music rang out





Photography: WA

February 11th - East London



KRAK IN DUB

Pure roots reggae junglist, Krak in Dub has come a long way from his early days as one of the original pioneers of the junglist movement in France. Now working with Jamaican legends such as Capleton and Demolition Man, and laying down screaming riddims and blazing basslines, he's harnessed the original junglist free flow spirit, throbbing with roots and the soul of reggae into improvised liveset. Kicking dancefloors and putting the hardest sub bins through their paces, he's bringing the sound global, from South America to Eastern Europe earning full throated respect from the cream of Jamaican artistry and inspiring a whole new generation to embrace the junglist movement. We had a word.

Where does the name Krak in Dub come from?

It comes from my time as a selecta. At that time, on the free party scene, the sound system's name was far more important than the DJ's name - we were all hidden behind the rig instead of on some pedestal and so what you decided to call yourself was less of a personal statement or a career move... I played under the name Krakook which was basically a private joke with my Mas I Mas mates, and then a few years later, when I began my live set project, I kept "krak" because for me it represents the sound of what's breaking and I added dub because of the technique I use to play my sets.



Can you fill us in on your musical background?

I was raised in a very musical family - my dad was a bass player and a saxophonist who used to build congas and kintos in the garage in his spare time and my mother was a dancer in her younger years. So we were always listening to jazz and Afro Brazilian music, surrounded by instruments and old vinyl that I still keep in my collection to this day.. I touched my first sequencer at the age of eleven on my dad's Atari - I think it was Pro 12 or 24, playing with general midi sound machines! And I was still using an Atari, the original old school sequencer in all my livesets between 2004



and 2006... My electronic music revelation came in 1989 with Public Enemy's album, those loops were crazy and I could not take the tape out of my walkman before it broke! I listened solely to hip hop and jazz for a good few years before discovering reggae, dub and jungle in the early 90s... which led me into rave culture and wider forms of music like techno that I still love.

What does reggae culture mean to you

My big brothers within reggae music and reggae culture are the members of a French band called 'Spartacus Dub Commando', who gave me a grounding in the basis of sound system work and the fighting spirit in it... Reggae music is revolutionary, coming straight from the people and carrying a conscious message about life and its threats: politics, cops, army, love and so on. I still work with SPARTAK on a project called "Fogata sounds", and in 2010 we have already released 3 ten inches feat: Guive and Lone Ranger, Alborosie and Luciano (all available

@ Patate records) and all the tunes are written with intelligence and deep consciousness by the authors, New Start takes on the system, Rainy day is about Babylon and their impact on the freedoms of cultural life and in Business Lock, Luciano lyricises his life's journey and how he managed to get to where he is without firing a shot! All reggae tunes tell stories about the different ways to live your life and about the choices you can make to fight the system. Reggae is also a great form of total feel good living and happiness, and sound clashes are a superb theatre piece, with great actors like Ninjaman, Beenie Man and so many more Jamaican artists.

Music is a weapon, use it!!! That one sentence completely sums up my understanding of reggae, and in fact - all music..But this tiny island called Jamaica shows us the way. It draws inspiration from black American music, transforms it, makes it totally explode and creates something new that, in its own creativity and its own momentum inspires other artists all over the world! I love reggae man!

We've see you refer to musical activism - can you shed a bit of light on that?

You can find different ways to be active, mine is to travel and to link up with people that share some of my ideas. Of course I often play for regular promoters, but I also try to go to places where the vibe pulls me in. The perfect example is the festival 'Bogotrax' in Colombia, where if you want to go and play, it's as a volunteer all the way - you even pay your travel!! Of course the organisation takes care of you, helping put you up, helping feed you etc and just feeling the sheer positivity coming off it, I quickly became part of it! The first time I heard about Bogotrax was just before its second year.. I promised myself I would go there for the third and I made sure I fulfilled that promise. It's a crazy 10 day long electronic music fest that opens rave culture to the people in the streets, favelas and even the prisons of Bogota. And you don't just go to play music, you do work shops in poor suburbs, street parties, university conferences, radio shows, and so many socially productive things!!! I arrived there with a mini Mas i Mas crew in 2006 and the connection with the organisers was unbelievable!!! They were just like us, doing the same work in a similar spirit, and we quickly became close friends. The connections I made there took me to play in Berlin, in Czech and back to Colombia where I left part of my heart!!! I participated in the subsequent years, helping to organise it, and playing for that completely crazy, totally inspirational Colombian crowd.

After a few years of doing my thing, I now have an international network with some great people all over the world: Bogotrax in



Colombia, Illiosporoi in Greece, Junglist Call and Mayapur in CZ, Kronik poeple and Smoke dog in Portugal and the list goes on!!! I know all of them personally and they all are my friends because of what we lived together, good or bad times... Another route to activism for me is to release on vinyl: underground distribution with Toolbox (France), bootlegging tunes with Znotpoch and doing official remixes with great French ragga labels like Ink a Link... That's how I try to make it forward and make my contribution to the underground

Can you tell us a little about some of your vocal collaborations and how they work

Well, I can say I' m lucky! I've been cutting dub-plates for 7 years at DK Mastering, I worked for every single sound system in France and for a good few more over Europe. I also participated in some dub recording





sessions with the creme of Jamaican singers. Once when I was working, Echo Minott and Robert Lee appeared together to chill with us! Two years prior to that I remixed a riddim of Mafia & Fluxy with those two singers - I had the tape there, we listened, they loved it and I had the chance to appear on Echo's first anthology: Roots of Dancehall (Maguari prod 2005). That was my first try, from a homebootleg to revoicing the artist and featuring on his album with King Jammy and Black Scorpio's productions from the early 80s! Over the years I became friends with some of my customers from DKs, - some of them were already producing reggae at an international level, they knew about my remixing work and asked me to remix their tunes. The first one was Ink a Link, with Capleton's big hit "Prophet Rides Again". I also work with Soul Vybzs, a wicked label who gave me the opportunity to remix Luciano (one of my favs), Alborosie, Anthony B and many more superb singers! As you can see the lyrics come along with the music, I receive the tunes in full multi-track Pro Tools session that I re-work, changing the bass line to a more electronic style, changing the drums, and dubbing the mixture! That's how I work with singers, not that many of them are recording with me as the original producer.

How did you come to work with Demolition Man

Demolition man was one of the singers I was recording for. We were promoting a jungle-reggae party in Paris with some of my Mas I Mas friends, called "Un Cri Dans la Jungle", with many French artists (Step express, Dj Science) some from North America (Jamalski, R-Cola) and few coming from England (General Levy, Terry T). We invited Demo with his backing DJ, Cab, as he was free the day before the party, so he came for two nights: one for production and the other for the gig. We listened to my work at the studio and found a jungle re-cut of the Cuss Cuss riddim I had in my set. After a half an hour Demo had already mashed the tune up with a conscious lyric about London's youth violence! The tune was been released in 2009 on Mas I Mas records and I play it out all the time.

Tell us about the Capleton mix you did .

First let me big up Mister Ink and Waks the producers of the original tune "Prophet Rides Again"! BOOM! They trusted me for that remix and released the 12 inch which has



been a great success and a great calling card for me. Ink a Link kru gave me the Pro Tools session, and I was like a kid, 'Capleton pon my computer, sick!!!' The music was inspiring, Denis Brown's voice pitched singing that melody, all that elements matched perfectly with the amen loops I edited and the bass line I added! We mixed it with the producers and it quickly became a hit. And on the hush hush, soon come on Ink a link: "Worlds Crisis" riddim remixes 12 inche with on Don Carlos & Million Styles on the A side and Capleton's "Life" on the AA. This one is going to be huge!

What is the scene like in Argentina

It's sad to say but I've only played a couple of times in my own country!!! While I've played in Colombia more than 30 times! All I can say about the scene in Buenos Aires is that you have many club promoters, free organisers, musicians, performers, dancers and a crazy way of living art. I hope to make it there someday...

Please tell us the history behind Mas I Mas sound system and your involvement with it.

That s a long story!!! It all began in 1995, Dj Bear and Dj Mannix created Mas i Mas through their love of jungle music and the lack of it in France. In 1996, I joined the crew which was growing as a DJ collective. We were 10 DJ's playing dub, techno, acid, jungle and hard core in progressive parties and free parties, but also in clubs, bars, radio, pirate tv OSF... Those years were accelerated! Non stop partying, organising, playing music having a massive laugh I was a selector, playing boggles, dubs and jungle and I also was one of the sound men, we had a nice Martin Audio rig. The sound system's philosophy was not only about putting records out, we loved to have visuals and an original artistic concept in the decoration. In France we were the first and only to play jungle in big free parties at the peak hour! For all those reasons Spiral Tribe musicians that we often invited supported us - Ixy, Crystal Distortion, 69DB and Jeff! We carried on for several years, but the scene was growing negatively out of control, too many



sound systems, too much hard tekno, too many drugs, giant teknivals under police authority... And the French anti freedom laws about free parties, well that was too much for us!!! When our brother Dj Willyman (RIP) passed the way we did a last big party in his memory, it was half nightmare half dream... Now we do parties from time to time with the kru and work separately most of the time. But as Mas I Mas means more and more, you can't say it's dead, we will maybe celebrate our 15th anniversary this year!!!

You mentioned your work in professional mastering how has that impacted your music and do you master your own stuff

It has certainly had a huge influence in my work, partly through the technical skills I have had to develop, but also because of the range of music I have to really concentrate on listening to during the mastering process. That opens me up to a lot of stuff I may not normally get to hear. I did use to master my own tracks, but I now give them over to someone else - it is just one step too far to do it yourself after making it and mixing it and it's very valuable to have an outside trained ear on it - a second professional opinion!

When you play out, do you play live or on the decks or a mix of the two

I play liveset with Logic Audio. My style is Dub Technic so it's very live and very effects orientated. I will have basic tracks running in Logic - a synth on one channel, a bass on another, a snare on another, a voice on another and so on all set up in basic loops. Each of the channels within Logic has a direct output into a channel on the mixing desk, so I mix the desk live rather than mixing within the program. That gives me a huge potential for live experimentation and heavy live effects which are the essence of the Dub Technic style

What is the difference between jungle and drum n bass for you

Jungle is older, purer and the origins of everything that came after it. And for me - it is genuinely fun - you never quite know what is coming next and there's always an element of surprise. Drum n bass is more of a musical motorway with far less unexpected moments and listening to a standard drum n bass tune, I can pretty much predict when the hats, synths or basses are going to come in without even hearing it! So in that musical respect, drum

n bass is a little bit boring, but on a wider scene level, the differences are even more pronounced. The drum n bass scene is far more separatist and closed minded than the roots orientated jungle scene which is open to a far wider array of influences, and where you find everyone from skinheads to rockers. Drum n bass is more a club based mafia with less of the open hearted sound system influence. The UK is the kingdom of drum n bass, very reluctant to open itself to what the rest of the world has to offer, and promoters running D n B nights in the rest of the world are equally closed minded, insisting on only English DJ's and producers rather than on the merits of the music, and if you want to get anywhere you have to imitate the English scene at the expense of originality. It's a lack of imagination.

Can you bring a South American dimension to jungle

Of course!!! I've done it and I've made a load of fusion tunes with a boogaloo flavour, horns, typical South American beats - the whole thing! But I can't really release them on vinyl for the moment because it's so different from what I do with the reggae jungle and with the level of risk pressing vinyl involves these days, it's hard for me to find a place to make it happen or the label to release it. It does make up part of my liveset, but you have to already have the crowd locked before you can drop them, because it is always a risk if people have come for a specific vibe. Some will love them - some not so much, but it is absolutely possible to mix them.



What are you up to this year

Well I'm looking for a label to release my album on. The thing about being totally independent is that when you're producing you can't look for gigs, when you're looking for gigs you can't make music, and when you're playing, you can't do either. The album's nearly finished with all my big remix work, but I can't find the time to really research a serious label -- hopefully in England to put it out as an album rather than 12 inches. So that is my mission for this year - avoiding the drum n bass mafia obviously!! I have some wicked productions coming up including a hip hop album with MC Troy - a hugely talented vocalist from Bermuda. It won't come under the name Krak in Dub, but the 2 of us will also be touring this year. Bottom line...playing, playing and playing!!!

www.myspace.com/krakindub





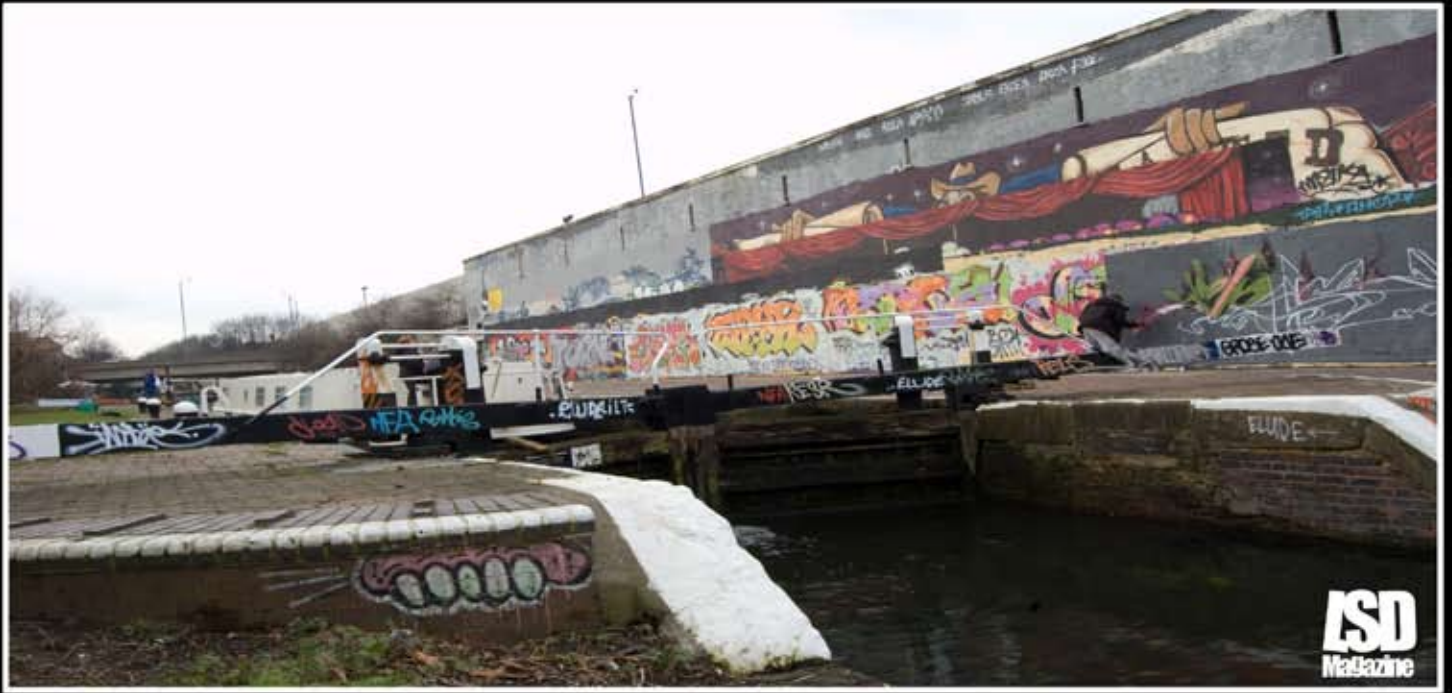
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Photography: WA

The Wall - Hackney Feb 1st

EVER / SIEMPRE



Diving into the extraordinary world of Argentinan street art we have managed to have a quick chat with Ever. Lighting up the streets of Buenos Aires with a scintillating sensitivity, a bold sense of empathic mischief and wild palatte of imagination, his art has trully brought an openness and embracing sense of artistic indulgence to the sun soaked streets of the Argentinian capital. The Spanish translation is also included

Do you have an art background?

Yes but not much, just enough to develop and progress myself. I don't think that a person should be taught art, only in as much as how to use materials (acrylic oils etc) and after that creation is free.

Si, pero pequeña, lo justo y necesario para

después moverme yo mismo. Tengo una opinión bastante distante a la enseñanza en el arte, creo que a la persona se le tiene que enseñar nada mas a usar el material (oleos acrilicos, etc) y después que la creación sea libre.

How long you been painting walls and how important is painting on the streets to you?

I've been painting on the streets since 2000. Like everyone, I started off by believing that hip hop and graffiti went hand in hand. I wore my trousers so that my boxers were showing and walked as if I'd crapped in my pants. I started with letters until I realised that I wasn't actually any good at making them.

I realised how important painting in the street whilst in the middle of doing it,





you can transmit ideas through an image on a pavement or wall or sometimes it doesn't relay anything! But afterwards you wonder how a passer-by might react with the images and how they will interpret them and this feels really powerful. You realise that you have a type of 'power' in your hands. I'm happy when I know that someone takes maybe even 3 seconds to look at something I've done, I know that in 3 seconds you can think, 'What is this?', 'Do I like it?', 'Who did it?', your brain works quickly!

En la calle pinto desde el 2000, empecé como todos creyendo que el hip hop y el graffiti iban de la mano, usaba mis pantalones que se me veían el boxer y caminaba como si me hubiese hecho popo, empecé haciendo letras, hasta que me di cuenta que no era bueno en las letras. Pintar en la calle, es algo que a medida del tiempo me di cuenta de lo importante que era, uno transmite ideas en un pedazo de pared, o tal vez no transmite nada!, pero después uno se da cuenta de como eso llega al cerebro de la persona que camina y como esa persona procesa el mensaje, y eso si es muy fuerte. Uno se da cuenta que en su mano tiene una especie de "poder",

yo estoy feliz cuando se que alguien se tomo tal vez 3 segundos en mirar algo que hice, yo se que en eso tres segundos el penso:"que es esto?","me gusta?","quien lo hizo?", el cerebro es muy rapido!.

What motivates your art?

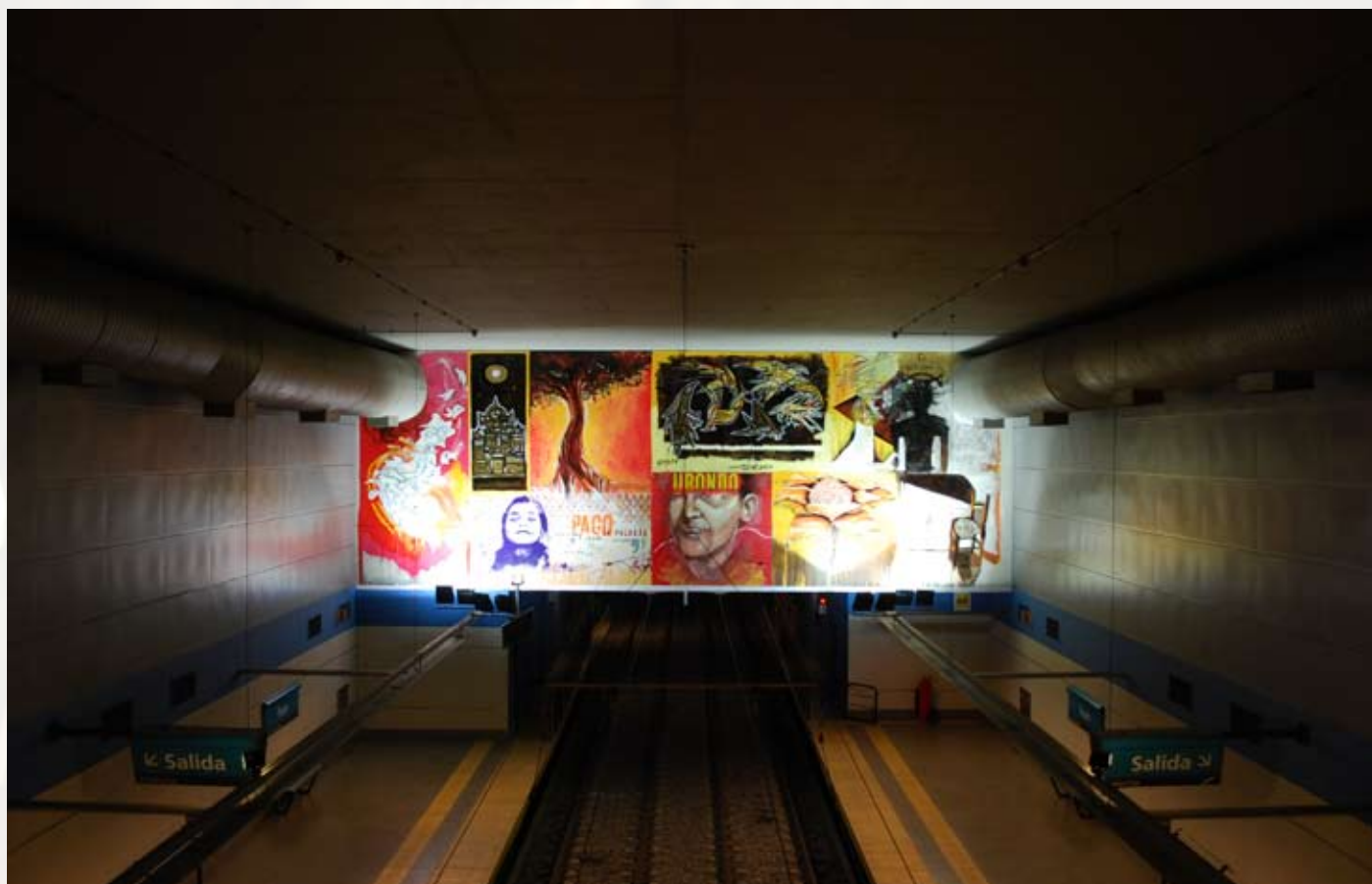
I'm motivated by the things around me. My thoughts at that moment; I'm always thinking a lot, too much, about so many things at the same time. I'm really inspired by the past, by South America, by the origins of everything.

Las cosas que me motivan son mi alrededor, mis sentimientos en ese momento, yo pienso mucho mucho, todo el tiempo, en tantas cosas a la vez, me inspiro mucho en el pasado, me inspiro en sudamerica, en los origenes de todo.

How do the police respond to artists painting walls in your city?

The situation in Buenos Aires is particular to the city. I think it must be one of the few 'graffiti-friendly' cities in the world. The





police react well, as in you're painting and sometimes they'll ask you what you're doing, but nothing more than this. An Argentine is a very special kind of person, luckily people in Buenos Aires are very receptive to art, and when I go and paint I know for sure that I'm going to spend more than 2 hours talking to someone strange who's going to ask me what my painting means, if I take drugs. Sometimes I realise that these people have changed the meaning of my work and this makes me happy. Seeing how the situation is in other countries, I'm happy to be in Buenos Aires.

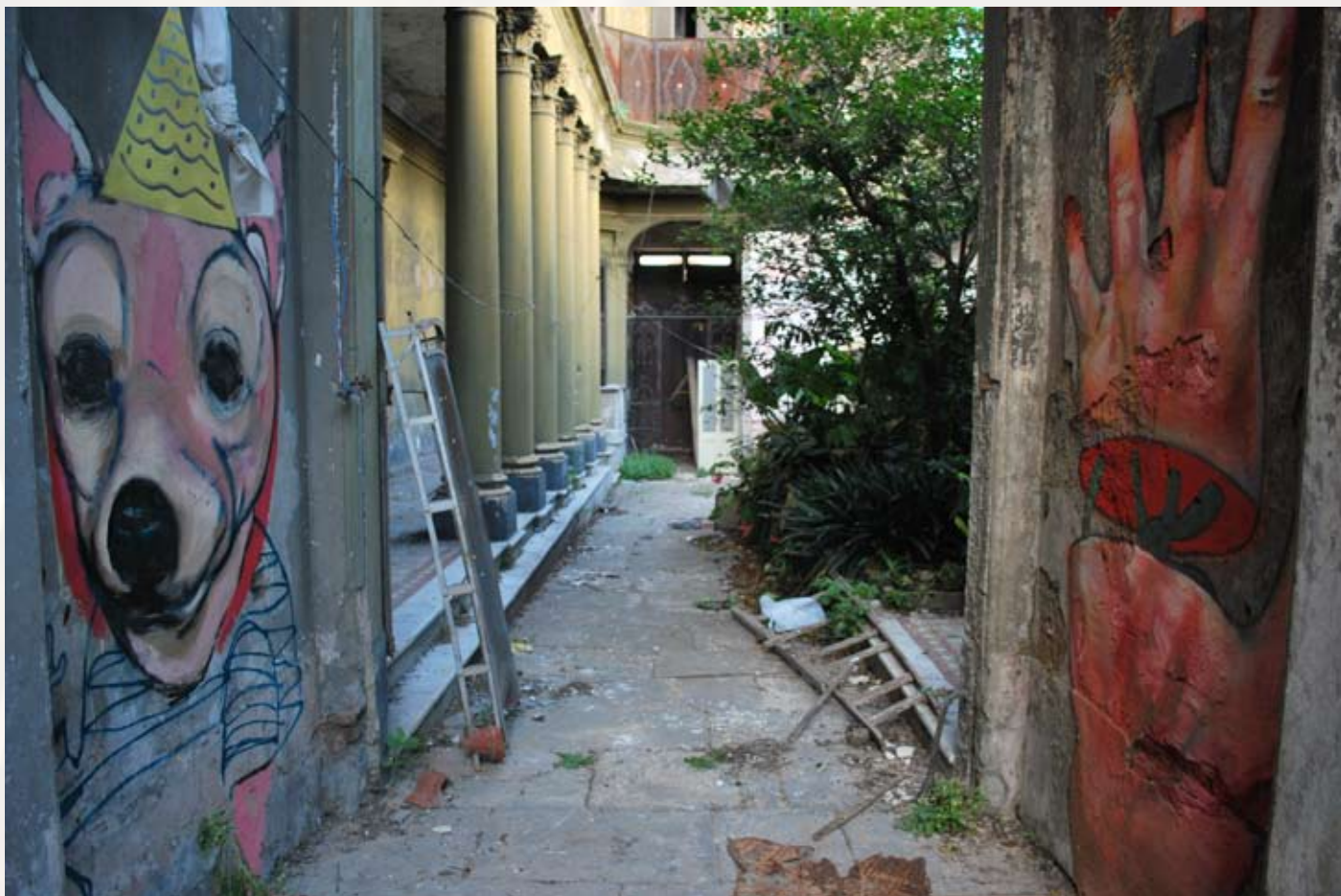
Es una situación bastante particular la que pasa en Buenos Aires, creo que debe ser uno de las pocas ciudades "graffiti-friendly" de la tierra. La policia reacciona bien, es decir uno esta pintando y tal vez te preguntan que estas haciendo, pero no mas que eso. El argentino es una persona muy particular, por suerte en Buenos Aires las personas son muy receptivas con el arte, yo cuando voy a pintar se que voy a pasar seguro mas de dos horas hablando con algun extraño, que me va preguntar: "que significa lo que pintas?", "si me drogo", hasta me a pasado a veces de gente me cambia el significado de mi obra, y eso me pone contento. Viendo como es la situación

en otros paises, estoy feliz de estar en Bs As.
Does street art have a future in your city?

I think there is a positive future for street art here. There are some very interesting artists in Argentina, not many, but we're all very different and that's what's important. Also the Street Art movement is being seen and accepted in artistic circles, which is opening doors for us. An example of this is graffitimundo, run by Marina Charles, who shows tourists or any street art lovers what's happening in the Argentine urban art scene and who the artists are. Apart from that, Marina has a smile that I've rarely seen in London.

Creo que hay luz en el camino, hay artistas muy interesantes en Argentina, somos pocos, pero todos son muy diferentes, y eso es lo importante. También la movida de Street Art esta siendo vista y aceptada en los ambitos artisticos, se estan abriendo caminos. Un ejemplo es el manejo de Marina Charles a través de GraffitiMundo una idea muy particular para hacerle conocer a los extranjeros o a la persona que tenga ganas de saber sobre Urban Art Argentino lo que pasa, y quienes somos. Aparte Marina tiene una sonrisa que muy





pocas veces vi en Londres.

Do you prefer painting on walls or canvas?

I prefer to paint on both, I work very differently on canvas and in the street. When I paint on walls I work more synthetically, I try to keep the message simple, whilst on canvas I'm more reflective and my work is more complex.

Prefiero pintar en los dos, yo soy muy diferente en Canvas y en Calle, cuando pinto en paredes soy mas sintetico, trato de que el mensaje sea simple, em cambio en el cuadro me pongo mas reflexivo y complejo.

Are there many legal places to paint in your city?

Yes, too many, the good thing is that Buenos Aires is a big city. The problem occurs when you look to be in a specific 'zone', where there can be a kind of visual contamination, but there is a lot of space. If you want to paint a wall, you speak with the neighbour, explain what you want to do and generally they say yes. Of course it depends on how you manage the situation

:)

Si, demasiados, lo bueno es que es una ciudad grande, el problema viene cuando uno busca estar en "zonas" determinadas, ahi puede haber una contaminación visual, pero hay mucho espacio. Uno si quiere pintar en una pared, habla con el vecino, le explica lo que uno quiere hacer y generalmente dicen: "si".. también depende de como uno maneje la situación :)

How often do you work alongside other artists?

Continuously, the best things come out of interacting with other artists because you have to adapt to different styles, this is a challenge too. Painting alone does have it's advantages, if you want to leave a really clear message. Likewise I share a similar aesthetic with the people I often paint with.

Seguida, en la interacción con otros individuos salen las mejores cosas, por que uno tiene que adaptarse a trabajos diferentes, y también es un desafio. Pintar solo tiene sus ventajas, si uno quiere dejar un mensaje muy claro. Igual con la gente con la que pinto suelo tener un vinculo estetico.





Can you name some of the other known artists in your city...

You've got "Gualicho", an incredible artist who lives in another world, the majestic "Jazz" with his powerful works in the streets, the delicacy of Triangulo Dorado and RUN DONT WALK fill the city with stencil. These artists transport me to other places when I see their work.

Obvio, gente como "Gualicho", una persona increible con una cabeza en otro mundo, la grandeza de "Jazz" sus impactantes obras visuales en la calle y la delicadeza del "Triangulo Dorado", RUN DON'T WALK los chicos que llenan de stenciles la ciudad, esos para mi son los artistas que te trasladan a otros espacios cuando uno ve sus obras.

Where are the best places to find art in your city?

There are several places but the most interesting pieces can be found in Palermo, Congreso, San Telm. According to the area they could be more political, for example San Telmo is the stencil zone, the variety is incredible!

A donde se puede encontrar las mejores lugares para descubrir el arte en Bs AS? Hay varios, pero los mas interesantes se encuentran en Palermo, Congreso, San Telmo, segun la zona puede ser mas politico, por ejemplo San telmo es la zona del Stencil!, es increible la variedad!.

Do you welcome international artists to paint in your city or is it localised?

Luckily a lot of important figures have come to Argentina, the first that come to mind are DAIM and OS GEMEOS. All are welcome; when someone comes from abroad you know that you're going to learn something from them.

Han venido por suerte muchos personajes



fuertes a Argentina, los primeros que me vienen a la mente son DAIM y OS GEMEOS, todos esta bienvenidos, cuando viene alguien de afuera, uno sabe que, algo va aprender de ellos..

Are you doing many shows this summer?

At the moment I have an exhibition coming up in buenos Aires with 20 artists from all over South America in the new headquarters of the Spanish cultural centre in Argentina. We are the first artists to exhibit in the centre, which I'm really pleased about

Tengo por ahora una muestra en Bs As con 20 artistas latinoamericanos en la nueva sede del centro cultural español en Argentina, nosotros somos los primeros en inaugurar el centro, eso me pone muy contento.

Do you have anything else you'd like to say to our readers?

Yes, stop worrying about having a better

car, television and the latest mobile phone, we're wasting our lives on things like this. In reality, life is simple, I think that if we all walk naked in the street, we'd realise this..(or maybe it would create the world's largest orgy!)

Si, dejemonos de preocupar por tener el mejor auto, el mejor televisor, el ultimo celular, gastamos tiempos de nuestras vidas en esas cosas, cuando en realidad, las cosas son muchos mas simples, creo que si todos caminaramos desnudos en las calles, nos dariamos cuenta de eso.. (o tal vez se crea la orgia mas grande del mundo!!).

Saludos.

**Nicolás Romero Escalada
(ever)**

www.flickr.com/ever_dsr





Photography: WA

The Wall - Hackney Feb 1st



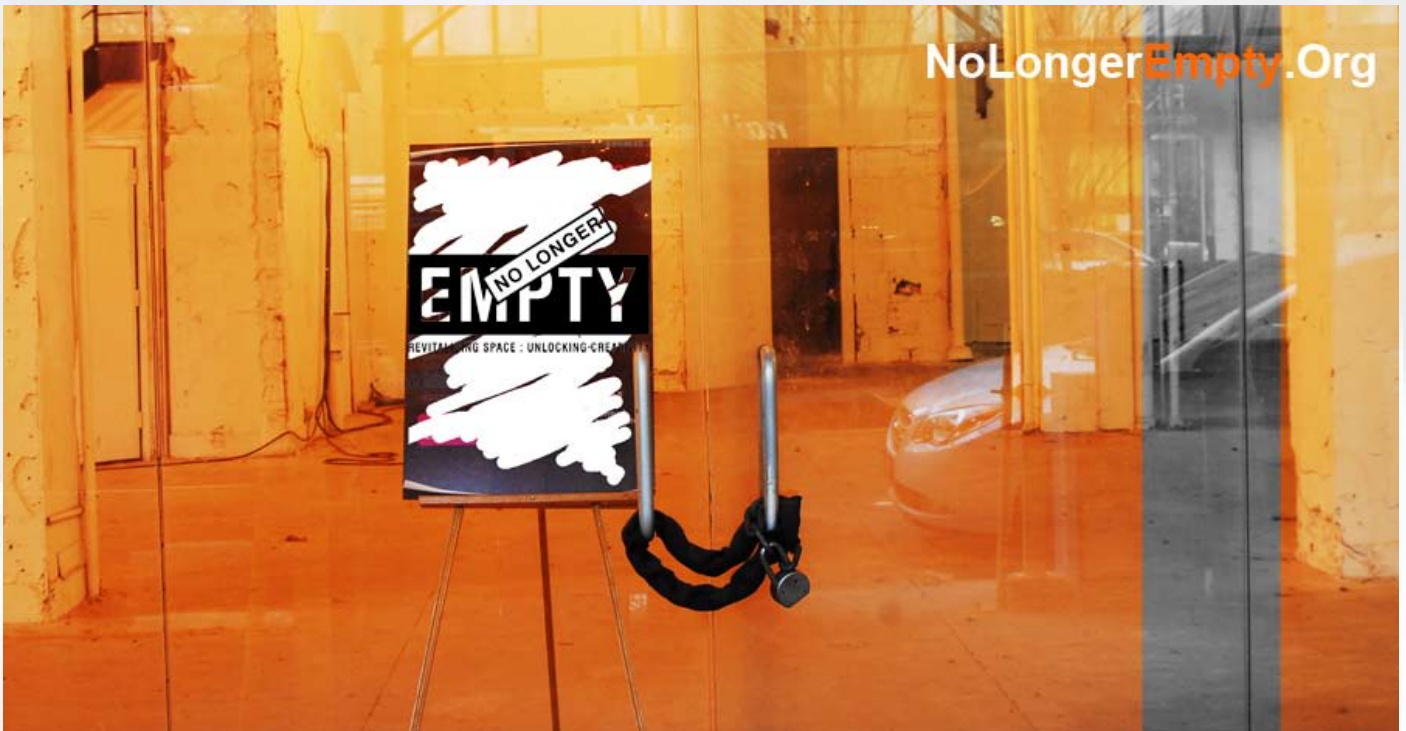
NO LONGER EMPTY



To be empty or not to be empty that is the question and the answer is: No Longer Empty an amazing organization that takes vacant store fronts and creates site specific art exhibits street murals and erases barriers created by the failing economy that leaves it's mark in traces, in spaces empty and defunct, in abandoned canvases awaiting there final demise but I have news for you economy we are warriors you cant stop us that easily. Where there is space there is opportunity to expand create and grow where there is space there is a chance to broaden horizons and soar beyond heights.. Where there is space there is "foot traffic" there are people who are alive and moving and adventurous willing to investigate something new, create something new out of something old and usher in a new paradigm shift!

"Never can say goodbye" the former Tower Records store being transformed into "Never Records" a fictional label created by Ted Reiderer including 40 other artists work and conceptual creations and turning into something truly out of this world.. Record bins, boom boxes, paper mache employees, and lets not forget the ever so popular yet ever so non present "in store" stage highlighting writers, poets, bands and video installations throughout the run of the exhibition.. Boxes bins photos of band stickers where anyone passing by can feel the essence from a store a hangout a library of the eclectic, a once known legendary space no longer empty breathing and living again...





**HUDSON ZUMA WITH MANON SLOME
CURATOR FOR NO LONGER EMPTY**

HZ: This is such an interesting project and I happened to stumble upon it on my way into soho one evening as I am sure many of your visitors do especially in a grand hub such as New York City. So let's just dive into it..

What first inspired you to start NLE...NO LONGER EMPTY?

MS: The rash of empty storefronts throughout the city, how depressing the streets felt and the Obama spirit of Yes we can - for me it was yes.....Art can make a difference

HZ: Absolutely I agree 100 percent on the "Yes We Can" change. I have seen a lot of great changes happening here in the city in the Arts and all around the globe. It is so amazing how a collective positive consciousness can spread like wildfire.. only takes one spark.

Do you foresee branching out to other cities with NLE or other areas abroad?

MS: Yes - we have advised many groups about starting a NLE model and I would like to have NLE spread throughout the States and Europe

HZ: Is this something you can see working in London as well??

MS: Very much so.

Please have someone invite us!

HZ: You got it Manon! this seems to be a rising concern around the planet and as it applies to Art and Non Profit Organizations in particular, in an ever-changing economic climate do you find that the audience for these site specific exhibitions has changed from the start of NLE until the present?..

MS: Our audience has certainly grown from around 300 at our first opening to 3000 at our last. So much wider audience but still a spread between art world, those who have started following us and passers by.

HZ: What comes first when you begin searching artists for a site specific exhibit?

MS: The concept always come first and then we choose artists who are appropriate for the theme in question

HZ: Great and last but not least, where do you see NLE going in the near future and what are your next plans for NLE?

MS: Upcoming projects are...

Overflow on the Williamsburg Bridge



with artists Guerra de la Paz

Remember the Upstairs Lounge (opens April 27th) with Skylar Fein

Tapestry - a new building in East Harlem - opens mid May, Governors Island -so very busy!

HZ: yes so little time and so little time but lots of great ideas to pause the clock!! terrific, looking forward to checking them out.. Thanks Manon!

Check out this mad video link for highlights of the exhibit never can say goodbye

VIDEO LINK: <http://www.nolongerempty.org/exhibitions/L2%206%20Ncsg.html>

**Manon Slome
Curator and co-Founder
No Longer Empty**

www.nolongerempty.org





HUDSON ZUMA WITH KEITH SCHWEITZER FOR THE STREET MURAL PROJECT AT NO LONGER EMPTY

HZ: Hey Keith whats happening. Cool meeting you at the NCSG exhibit. I understand that you are the Street Guru heading up the street Mural program at NLE?

When did you come on board with NLE and how were you or what led you to be inspired to create the Mural project?

I teamed up with NLE from the very beginning during our first exhibition (at the Hotel Chelsea). There is a definite commonality between what NLE does and what good street art does. Both place art in unexpected places and both are temporal ways to display/exhibit art, so the NLE Street Mural Project was a natural fit. Our first mural was with Know Hope on a roll-down gate at the Hotel Chelsea. Titled "See Where We Were", Know Hope placed his signature character, wearing his heart on his sleeve, holding an hourglass in one hand with two hearts in the bottom chamber representing (the way I see it) a certain longing or fondness of times gone by,

while looking to the future as time marches on. With the other hand, he is reaching into an empty heart, filling it with hope (and making it "no longer empty"). It was such a perfect, poetic first mural for NLE, being that all of our exhibitions are site-specific and speak of the history of the building we occupy and it's surrounding neighborhood allowing us, in a way, to "see where we were". A video of my still-image timelapse documentation of Know Hope's "See Where We Were" mural installation can be seen here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gFkAUdgbCE>

HZ; Yes I checked that one out and encourage readers to check it as well fly work . I know that you've worked with such great renown artists such as D*Face and KNOW HOPE how did you come about that collab?

KS: D*Face was in NYC from London preparing for an exhibition of his artwork "Ludovico Aversion Therapy / All Your Dreams Belong To Us" at the Jonathan LeVine Gallery last year. Jonathan and his gallery have done great things to elevate the artform, and NLE collaborated with JLG on the D*Face mural.



A major obstacle for any street artist is a lack of permission to do what they are doing, which is usually on an outdoor property that is owned by someone else. Getting caught sucks, especially in NYC right now. If you're an artist from somewhere outside of the United States, this especially holds true these days, as getting nabbed by the police while putting up artwork here can result in some unwanted difficulties the next time you apply for a tourist or artist visa. We get proper permissions from property owners for each of our murals. This allows the artist to paint without having to look over his/her shoulder and also gives me great freedoms to document the installation. We get such an amazing response from the neighbors and passersby while the murals go up. The documentation of the D*Face mural can be seen here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VGB6ZRH2Hpw>

HZ: Righteous and you are definitely welcome in NYC.. Being a Video Installation/Multimedia artist and Graffiti Reviewer i have a specific interest in this portion of the project in particular, what's your background in street art and or graffiti?

KS: I grew up in NY, and went to University in DC, so I've been surrounded by cities for a

good portion of my life. As a photographer, the city is a recurring character and an essential element in my images. When I was shooting fashion, the city's streets and rooftops served as my backdrop, and in my recent work, things I find in the city's nooks and crevices have become the main subject of my images. I guess, for me, I've always found myself around street art and street artists because the subject matter that I'm most passionate about is on the streets of the city.

HZ: I love it! I know in England right now the younger artists are being introduced to doing there graff on canvas do you see a leaning towards that direction in some of the mural artists you work with?

KS: I think the artform is evolving, just as it always has. Technology has evolved too, where the world has become smaller and the artform is much more accessible. Where pioneers would have books filled with sketches and polaroids of their artwork that they would carry around in their backpack, now a digital image or video of an artwork completed tonight can be seen instantly by the world at large, online. You don't have to travel to the artwork, the artwork can now travel to your desktop. There is a greater appreciation of street art globally. This allows for such



wonderful events to take place such as Primary Flight in Miami or The Thousands in London. I think it's important to do public work outdoors as well as indoors on canvas. I mean, if you want to have a solo show of your work or participate in a group event or exhibition, you can't take the wall off of a building, but you can ship a crate of canvasses.

HZ: Exactly this IS the future of portability and crossing barriers. I am definitely on the tip of coming in to interview some of the muralists while they are on a specific project sometime would you be adverse to that?

KS: I'd definitely have to clear it with the artists first as each project develops, but, sure, why not?

HZ: Groovy. I am also aware of the Times Square project going on would be great to see some of NLE's work getting in there. Do you have some prospects in having some murals go up in times square?

KS: We're constantly deluged by advertising and visual noise, especially in times square. I think it's great to give ample room to the artists in places like times square as a way for the public to reclaim choice of what our eyes are exposed to. I cannot speak about NLE's future plans before they are announced formally.

HZ: No worries not trying to cause an uproar. lol what are your plans for the future for the Mural project/expansion??

KS: We have a very exciting line up of projects to take place this spring and summer... Stay Tuned to: www.nolongerempty.org !!!

HZ: And you bet we will be here at LSD and all the readers around the world we'll be into seeing what evolves.. Thanks Keith

HERE ARE THE STREET MURAL VIDEO LINKS IN CASE YOU DIDN'T CATCH THEM ABOVE.. PEACE HUDSON.

KNOW HOPE

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gFkauUdgbCE>

Know Hope 222 w 23rd st NY 10011

D*FACE

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VGB6ZRH2Hpw>

D*Face Clinton & East Broadway, NY 10002

GAIA NYC 2009

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4AMmC1G9MJ0>

Gaia 223 East Broadway, NY 10002



HUDSON ZUMA WITH RYAN BRENNAN FOR THE BOOM BOX INSTALLATION FOR NO LONGER EMPTY

HZ: What's up Ryan. This was wicked, first thing to hit me as i walked into the Never Can Say Goodbye exhibit and being a fond fan of the "old school" scene and collector of the old sound equipment this was right up my alley for sure. How did you come across the idea for the boom box installation? What inspired you?

RB: Hmmm, several years back I randomly started collecting vintage Boom Box radios and one day I found myself decorating them or as one might say customizing them. Then about two years ago I lived in Chicago with two DJ's. We started hitting the streets with these beautiful monster boxes and the response from strangers on the street was incredible. Wherever we would go in downtown Chicago all kinds of people would pause life for a few moments and start dancing it up with us! It was so inspiring to see how such an iconic device representing such a pivotal musical movement in American history would bring people together. Yeah, to be cheesy it was magic but it really struck a chord with me. I realized this genre, Hip Hop is something that many Americans not only relate too but also are proud of. Because Hip Hop formed in the US I feel it's something that unites us and can span many divides. These thoughts were the initial spark behind the Bling Box series and it's this unifying contagious spirit that I wanted to capture and celebrate.



HZ: Wonderful, that must have been a cool experience. Can you explain the process in designing your installation?

RB: The idea to combine 8 Boom Boxes in a surround sound experience initially was to highlight that the growth of the Hip Hop movement as a very inclusive and organic movement; for it was born in a party scene with turntables and microphones. It was this festive nature and the simplicity of the technology used, that made it accessible to super broad range of people enabling different fractions and styles to pop up almost over night even as Hip Hop was just taking form. With the surround sound installation I was able to emphasize this notion by separating geographic styles in a 3-D environment. A Boom Box on one side of the installation will be playing a beat from a east coast artist while the one the opposite side a west coast artist.

On top of this, often times these artists will be sampling from the same source song thus I can match the tempos of these songs and play them together on beat in a sound collage or as the technical term has it a "Mash Up". I constructed this (rather abridged) 30minute audio tour in this collaged manner to accentuate Hip Hop's communal nature of sampling.





HZ: Right , clever...I Love the concept of never can say goodbye records and taking an empty space specifically one that has such a value emotionally in the community as Tower records,how did this relate to your connection with the actual store?

RB: Being that I moved to NY in late 2008 I never had a chance to go to the Tower Records store while it was open but of course I did have my local music store growing up where we'd congregate to talk music and check out the latest releases. Being involved in the show one could not deny the overwhelming sense of nostalgia for the sacred music meeting place. I heard much talk glorifying these times gone by which was often subtly underlined with mild contempt for how new music technology is responsible for the death of this scene. I would argue though, that sure the days of the mega store, which used to be home of these interactions are gone, but a new platform of music dialogue and exchange has been born. Music chatrooms and blogs are a plenty on the Internet; offering a new space for the age-old scene of music dialogue and swapping. It may not be a physical space but it is very much real.

HZ: Yes the whole industry is shifting and i do believe it will be a welcome change for the Music business as a whole in putting all off the control into the hands of the Artists.. I am with that!... what's next for you?

RB: Next for me, I just did a Solo Show with Jackie Paper at the Scope Art Fair in early March. As for up coming, I have a solo show at the National Arts Club here at Gramercy park in NY, Opening on April 30th, then for the Miami Basel I will be showing once again with Jackie Paper and I'm currently talking with Real Art Ways in Hartford Connecticut about doing a 3 month Solo Exhibition starting in December this year.

HZ: Right on looking forward to it and how can we keep up with your works?

RB: Websites!

**www.RyanVBrennan.com
www.jackiepaperart.com**

HZ: Cool thanks Ryan!

HUDSON ZUMA





Photography: Vegas



Leaside Skate Park - Vancouver - 2010



Photography: Vegas



Leaside Skate Park - Vancouver - 2010



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Magazine

Photography: WA

The Wall - Hackney - April 12th

THE TURF WARS MOVIE

After several failed attempts to make contact, we finally managed to book an interview with the team at Prank Sky Media to learn more about their forthcoming street art 'war film', which has caught the eye of all of us here at LSD.

The interview took place upstairs at Bafta at Piccadilly, London, back in February, where we met four members of the Prank Sky Team including Sir Pranksky, the director. We were also invited 'behind the scenes' later that month, during the shooting of a scene approximately mid-way through the film.

Sir Pranksky has allowed us to publish some of the answers to approved questions that he posed to himself. At this point we began to wonder if the prank was firmly on us - see what you make of it

LSD takes no responsibility for the use of the word movie rather than film (we are Londoners after all) and none whatsoever for asking if there are any famous actors in it... As for the rest - we're intrigued.....

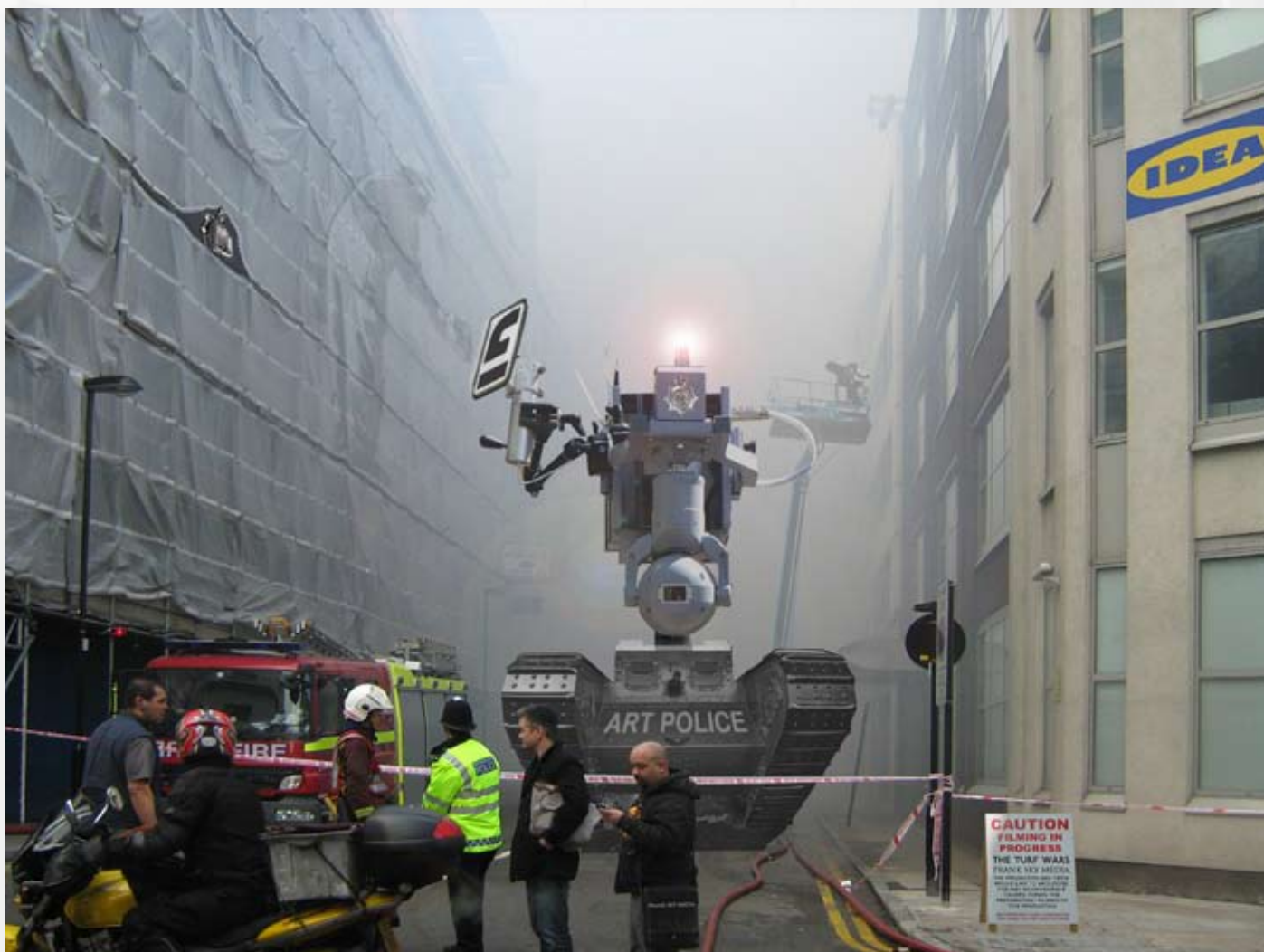
Is 'The Turf Wars' really a war movie or will it be more of a comedy?

We actually envisioned the film as a definitive statement on the nature of the current war between street artists and graffiti writers, making parallels with the difference between good and evil, and the impact of this on society and the rest of the world. We want to take the audience through an unprecedented experience of a battle between artistic cultures and have them react as much as those who have actually taken part in the war.



The film seems to deal with events that are very current and still unfolding...surely the movie is more of a documentary than a movie?

This aspect of the movie is causing people a lot of confusion and we have received many questions before about this. We've actually been working fervently for two years, in secret, on the Turf Wars Movie. However ever since action broke out at Camden in December last year and we started to hear rumours of the release of Banksy's movie 'Exit through the Gift Shop', we abandoned the original script and decided to start filming live war action and incorporate this into the movie. We had of course originally intended to keep the whole thing under wraps, but we decided that the real war was becoming too important to ignore and that the movie might even benefit from feedback from real artists



and writers as well as members of the public. We were therefore forced to turn the whole movie production schedule upside down. Before December we had worked very closely with a street art reporter from Berlin - Steve Traumsdorf who is working on a forthcoming book about street writers to be called 'Wall without Piece'. He had developed a treatment for a movie that transposed graffiti mythology into a narrative that was easily accessible to the public. Everyone was really pleased with the results of the script that he had developed - I personally thought that his last draft of the script in particular was really kick-ass and did a good job of introducing the public to the art of writing, while also satisfying hardcore writers who knew every nook and cranny of their craft. He tidied up the script and we then commissioned a professional screenplay last summer. We actually started production in November last year, but when the real war began in Camden, we felt we had no option but to abandon Steve's original script.

We then more or less made up the movie as real life events unfolded, however Steve still acts as a creative advisor to us as the

'real-time' script develops. We also became fascinated by the whole idea of the collision of fiction and actuality and a new idea about the making of the film began to take shape. As the concept evolved we became comfortable with the idea of mixing everything up. There is one very memorable point in the film, which I don't think Dave has published anywhere yet, where we have footage of two street artists videoing our cameraman - who is simultaneously filming a couple of writers during real war action. At one point the whole production team including our cameraman broke down with laughter because we weren't really sure who was making a film about who... Since that point we have never looked back and I think some of the stills from the movie start to give a clue about how the final movie might end up upon release - but to be honest, even I am not too sure.

Is the trailer that you have published real or is this just a strange joke?

Well you can rest assured that it is nothing



like the 'real' movie, but the actual movie is being edited as we speak and there is still a big debate between all of us as to how far we depart from the story line that is suggested in the trailer. There is also going to be a part two for the trailer, that we shall be releasing later in the year.

Many writers believe that you might be part of Banksy's PR machine...is there any truth in that?

Absolutely not...I can assure your readers that we have no connection with Banksy or any of his representatives, although they have lent us a few props.



Some commentators view you as artists and not really a media company - how do you see yourselves?

Well that's obviously up to the public, however I guess we are not really bothered about the distinctions between these titles...these days - art, literature and media are increasingly convergent...however if some people conceive of us as artists, maybe we should consider that a compliment. One of our prime concerns is to promote writers and elevate their position. Currently they are sidelined... not just by street artists attacking their pieces, but also by the mainstream media who don't really bother to understand their work. We are therefore hoping that our film will enhance the writing community and promote public appreciation of the genre.

What films have you made and directed in the past?

Mostly commercials for toothpaste and headache tablets, but due to contractual

restrictions, we are not allowed to mention the actual company names.

How is the film being financed and what kind of budget do you have?

This is a very difficult question for us to answer but basically our original backers have mostly withdrawn and our lawyers are now involved in a boring legal battle around this. We are sincerely hoping that this does not escalate too far, because it could start to divert us from the movie production. Basically our last stage of funding may not be forthcoming and we may be forced to dig into our own pockets to complete production. This is another reason why we have gone public with the movie before it is complete - there is a chance that a few new backers may approach us and help us to take the movie forward. The daft thing is that distributors have already been signed up, subject of course to us realising the final thing.

What about the cast - are there any famous actors in the movie?

No - sorry to disappoint you there, that was never part of the original concept and that was never included in our original budget - we have used either volunteers or real life artists and writers. Even the police are real and they have obtained official clearance from the Met HQ in London to take part. We think that the sexy artwork and written pieces depicted throughout the film will attract a very big audience.

You mentioned a sequel when we spoke last week on the phone...is this still envisaged?

Obviously this is highly dependent on public reaction and box-office success after *The Turf Wars* is released, but yes, we are already working on a sequel - however this will be an entirely different kind of movie...

In what way?

We are not releasing any details at this stage, but basically the sequel aims to define a



completely new genre - it merges street art and writing that mostly takes place in entirely 'out of this world' locations...the Avatar of the street art world if you like!

Well we will certainly be watching your space!...thank you Sir Pranksy, Alan, Dave and Gail for talking so very candidly (sort of) with us.

Trailer -

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jYkgbO7D1p8>

www.flickr.com/photos/pranksky/4494660106/

All photos are copyright to Prank Sky Media and we strongly discourage any blatant piracy. That would just be wrong and not at all how we do things..Erm



Photography: Vegas



Leeside Skate Park - Vancouver - 2010

ASD
Magazine







Photography: WA

Stik - 24th Feb



Photography: WA

Stik - 24th Feb

POST MORTEN



Post Morten has been leaving a trail of tongue in cheek, slightly slimy destruction around the streets of London with his array of amorphous characters. Busk caught up with him for a quick word and a bit of an insight into the man behind the monsters

Tell us a bit about yourself & what you do...

The name that I paint under is Post Morten, I've been moving around the world for the last 20 odd years, & been in London for about the last 5 years, absorbing art on the streets & in the environment around me. I've been putting my energy into pretty much anything which is creative, which recently seems to be taking the form of street art. I've really been getting down with my painting & trying different

ideas & techniques, that have developed into a style that I'm happy with putting out there.

Did you come from a graffiti/street art background?

No, not necessarily. I've always been creative and been painting, sculpting etc, for work - right now, I'm involved in the more technical side of making & building stage props, but with regards to myself & my own personal projects, they are definitely influenced by street art these days, I've been dabbling with it for years but never seriously, just because I didn't feel I had anything to say back then.

You were **originally** from Copenhagen?



Yes, I grew up in Copenhagen, till about the age of 10, then moved to Bangkok, lived there for 10 years, then the UK for the last 10 years, I guess I have 3 places in the world that I call home, but I feel like an alien in each one of them.

London has definitely become my home now, I feel like I've found my place, there's so many interesting things going on that I want to be a part of, & be amongst, at the moment what I feel is that in the past I haven't really been that active in a scene, but in the last couple of years I've felt a lot more comfortable about showing people what I'm up to & what I'm about, & producing work that I'm happy with within myself,

How would you describe the kind of artwork were you doing when you were younger, & what kind of art were you into?

I was painting a lot of stuff on canvas, a fair bit of sculpting, pretty much using anything I could get my hands on. In fact I would say that most of my time was taken up with sculpting.



When you say sculpting, what kind of materials would you use?

Clay mostly, but most of the work was small as I didn't have a studio to work from back then, so I would use anything I could lay my hands on, anything I could have fun with creating my little characters. It's always been about these characters that I created in my mind, so I guess that's why I never really got involved in the letter forms that made up the main basis in most graffiti, I've always been inspired by the more character based graffiti that I see on the street, recently for me my work has been about deconstructing the characters back to the most basic, simple form, so that I can throw them up in a few minutes, & not have to think too much about them, I suppose that they are kind of like having a tag, but without having to put a name up.

Denmark had a big graffiti scene in the 80's, would you say that it influenced you in any way artistically?

No not really, I was too young, I didn't absorb too much of it, my big brother was doing some stuff and I suppose what he was doing may have rubbed off on me a little, but I definitely wasn't part of any scene back then. Over the years, I'd go back to Copenhagen and there was always lots going on there, & I'd see a lot of good work, so maybe later I was influenced a little. I didn't see much graffiti whilst growing up in Thailand, but when I go back now, it's definitely taken off, there's a strong scene developing.



INVASION - HACKNEY WICK, LONDON JULY 2009



Would you say the many of the artists are Thais or are many international artists/ tourists painting there too?

I say it was more locals than tourists and there's a lot more commissioned work being done too, but I'm not sure who's doing that?

Are there any artists that you have been influenced by outside of street art & graffiti?

Ralph Steadman is definitely someone I'm into - he's been one of my main influences, him & Basquiat, who I really dig for the rawness, the looseness, the splatters, & those sorts of lines that he comes with, I'm very much driven, & found a lot of inspiration from those guys. Tell us about the characters that you create - do you have a collective name for them? I've been playing around with ideas as to what to call them, but I find it much more interesting to see what other people come up with, & see what they label them with, my little monstrosities. I don't know, I like to call them heathens or something like that, there's different characters, & I like them to all have their own identities, & story behind them.

When you go out painting, do you have a pre conceived idea of what you're going to paint, or is it more about the location?

The environment definitely has something to do with it, in the sense of getting inspiration, sometimes I'll see an object, & I can't leave it alone, or location and it won't need much to change it into something else, & I'm like «perfect, I love you already». It's almost like just putting an emphasis on it. I do sometimes have an idea, but most times I just grab some paint & go out & just let it happen. Most of the characters are pretty basic, so I don't have to think about it, each one just kind of reveals itself, sometimes the mistakes turn out to help, I like to keep them loose for that reason. If I'm going to do something bigger, then I like to have some kind of basic plan.

You play instruments tell us a bit about that.

I've been playing for quite a few years now, & dabbling in a bit of everything musically, the music is another creative outlet for me it's a big thing in my life, it's really an amazing



release for me when I play, especially when I play with other people, I get a different buzz from collaborating in music than I do with art. I find art is something very personal to me, that I like to get deep into on my own, but I really enjoy playing music with other people, vibing off each other & pushing each other forward.

SCENE

**B-BOY DISPLAYS, LIVE MUSIC,
DJS, MCS AND LIVE GRAFFITI.**

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8PM TILL LATE - 4 QUID ENTRY

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BRICK LANE**

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Photography: WA

The Wall - Hackney - Mar 1st



MY FIRST KISS



Tenby, South Wales, 1991. An English seaside resort with everything that entails – bright cylinders of sugary rock, rain and flaking paint. This is where I have come with Phillip and his family.

We are 14 years old. Phillip is my best friend. A year ago we went to different schools. We have barely seen each other since. He is a geek, brilliant in a way I could not understand back then. We are sitting on the beach. He says to me:

‘The future is compression.’

‘What?’ I ask, dubiously.

‘The ability to compress information, that will be the most important discovery which we will witness in our lifetimes.’

Nerdy crap, I think to myself.

Phillip’s parents allow us to sit on the windy hill and eat fish and chips for dinner from greasy newspaper. When we have finished eating, we throw the soggy chips to the gulls.

Phillip’s brother’s friend is three years older than us. He has a girlfriend. He says to us, ‘When you go down on a girl, you have to keep spitting and spitting. The clit dries out fast.’ We hide our awe.

Phillip’s mother is a French teacher. When his brother and his brother’s friend have gone to the pub, Phillip’s mother walks with us to the arcade. The sun is setting over the port. She stops walking and says, ‘Just look at that. You, whose eyes are not blinded by adolescence, don’t you think it’s beautiful?’

I resolve never to let my eyes be blinded by adolescence.

We arrive at the arcade. Phillip’s mother gives us some money. We play the computer games. Then we play the game where you drop a coin onto a moving ledge and hope that it knocks off other coins. It’s almost impossible to win but every time you think you will.

Through the glass of the coin machine I see a girl in green leggings. She is spotty and tall



Meekly, I accede.

Her dumpy friend leads me out of the bus shelter. We snog by the dustbins. Her tongue thrashes about spasmodically, like a dying fish. The cigarette smoke makes her mouth taste like metal. It's like when a bit of foil gets stuck to a chocolate but you don't see it. You put the chocolate straight in your mouth and start chewing. That's what her mouth tastes like.

Phillip wastes no time in telling his brother and his brother's friend about our adventure. I am mocked mercilessly. They spend an afternoon building a primeval earth goddess out of sand. She looks like a recumbent sumo wrestler. They invite me to 'get my rocks off'. I decline the offer, but commit the expression to memory.

I never see dumpy again. I must have seen green leggings again, though I don't recall the encounter. But I do remember writing her a letter once I'd returned home. I forced my own brother to take two films of moody black and white photos of myself posing and tensing my scrawny torso. I sent the least hideous to green leggings. I never received a reply, and I hope to God those photos no longer exist.

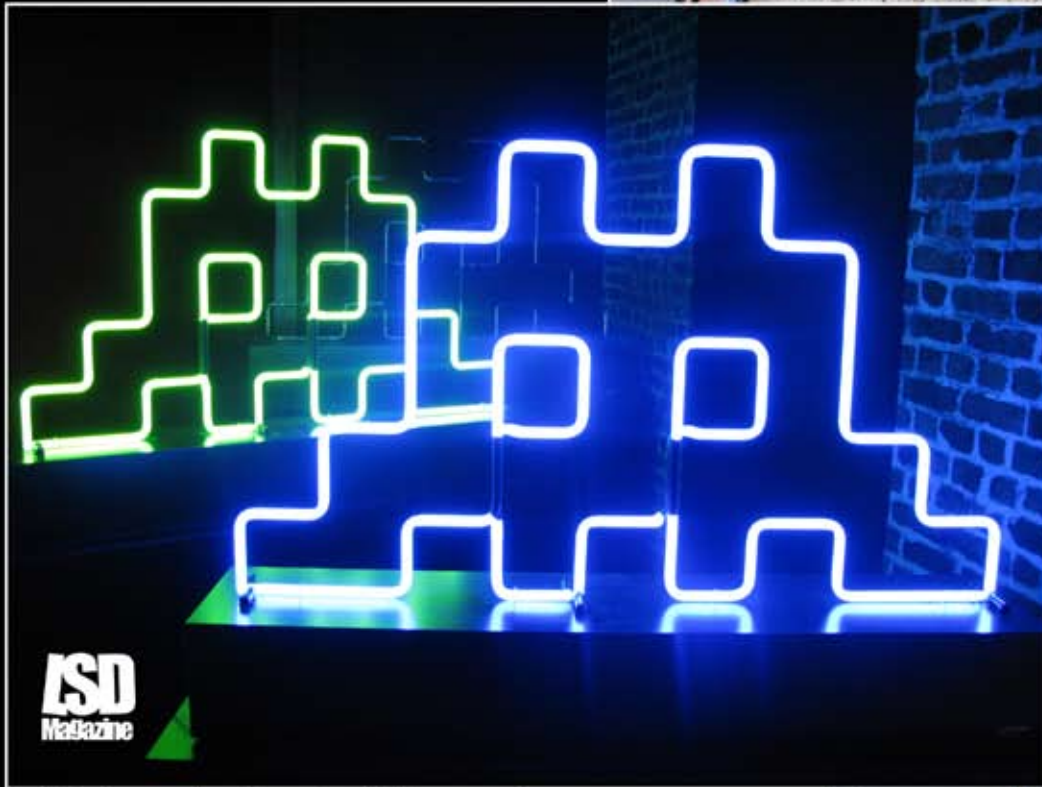
but I like her graceful green legs. My heart beats faster. We spy on each other through the glass which is greasy from the noses which have been pressed up against it.

Later Phillip and I talk to the girl in green leggings. She is Welsh. She has two friends. They are dumpy. She suggests going to the bus shelter by the beach. We go to the bus shelter by the beach. It's next to the dustbins. The girls smoke cigarettes. Phillip and I don't smoke.

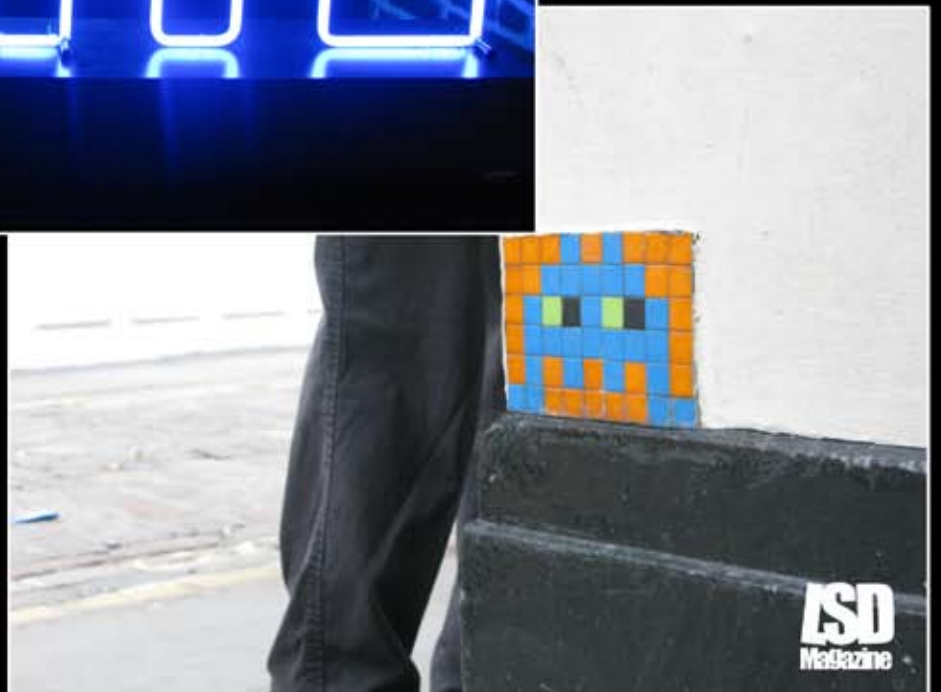
Green leggings and I make eyes at each other. She sidles up to me. She whispers in my ear, 'My mate finks you're fit. Will you snog 'er?'

CLAUS VON BOHLEN





Photography: Brendan Mckenna



Invader London 2010



DARE (RIP 2010) Graffiti Legend



DARE (RIP 2010) Graffiti Legend



DARE (RIP 2010) Graffiti Legend

So Long

and Thanks

for All the Fish...



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