

trouble

t r o u b l e




volume two • number four • spring 2023



Would you like to learn to play the Banjo?



No Thanks
No Thanks
No Thanks
No Thanks
No Thanks
No Thanks
No Thanks
No Thanks
No Thanks
No Thanks

<p>G g</p> <p><i>G</i></p> <p>GIRL</p>  <p>जी (गर्ल) लड़की</p>	<p>H h</p> <p><i>H</i></p> <p>HEN</p>  <p>एच (हेन) मुर्गी</p>
<p>I i</p> <p><i>I</i></p> <p>INK</p>  <p>आई (इंक) स्याही</p>	<p>J j</p> <p><i>J</i></p> <p>JUG</p>  <p>जे (जग) जग</p>
<p>K k</p> <p><i>K</i></p> <p>KITE</p>  <p>के (काइट) पतंग</p>	<p>L l</p> <p><i>L</i></p> <p>LION</p>  <p>एल (लायन) सिंह, शेर</p>

1/16 M. Kelly





t r o u b l e m u s i c

volume two • number four • spring 2023

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Paris & France Apartments & Homes
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You Are What You Ear

My neighbors have had enough of me. Downstairs, D., has worn out her broom pounding on her ceiling (my floor). Across the hall from her, O., scowls at me on the stairwell. Opposite me and sharing a wall (their bedroom), I get pleading looks from A. & C., but thus far there are no formal complaints to throw me out of the building. I think the reason for this is, in spite of the fact that I'm keeping them awake, disturbing their evenings of NETFLIX and their sanity, my neighbors secretly like the mandolin and its child-like ringing and secretly enjoy how much better I play now than only eight years ago! But then I'm prone to fantasy.



In working on this issue, I must have asked 20 people if they'd like to write a piece called "Does Taylor Swift Suck?" No takers. I just heard on the radio that there were 3.5 billion requests for Taylor Swift tickets. To satisfy her fans she'd have to play capacity football stadiums every night for the next five years. But I have a pair of tickets – hit me up.



As a child and even a teenager I had little interest in music beyond the occasional joke banging on a piano. I did like The Beatles (we watched on Ed Sullivan!) and I identified with George (the quiet Beatle). My AM radio was tuned to baseball and talk shows (listened all night long; still do). But eventually I relented to fit in and spent \$150 on a Yamaha acoustic guitar. I was 14 and played two



chords endlessly (an open G and an open C) for about 2 years until I learned A minor. When I started getting high a friend taught me a D chord and that was good for months. My brother Yohan would sometimes let me play along with him, but he tired of me and said I couldn't keep rhythm. Oddly though, I persisted. It wasn't as if I aspired to become a rock star, or even a folkie, it was something else. But still I had it in my head that I couldn't keep rhythm. I didn't understand rhythm. It seemed as foreign to me as Japanese. But was it?



Eventually I did go to Japan and strangely enough, I played on stage at a blue-grass club in Tokyo in the Ginza. A place called Rocky Top. I was a big hit and the 70 people there, many drunk on sake, gave me a roaring ovation. I kept rhythm in Japanese!



One of my favorite musical objects is Man Ray's Object to be Destroyed, a 1923 ready made. It's quite simple: A metronome with a photograph of an eye attached to its wagging spindle. The Smithsonian Museum's history of the sculpture reports that Man Ray's work was destroyed in 1956 in Paris. Apparently a visitor thought it meaningless and gave it meaning by smashing it. Man Ray made another metronome readymade but called it Indestructible Object.

[\[https://americanart.si.edu/artwork/indestructible-object-33672\]](https://americanart.si.edu/artwork/indestructible-object-33672)



When my parents died six months apart and I was living alone in their Florida home, my brother Yohan's guitar was at the house, a nylon-string Yamaha. Yohan had died 10 years prior and his guitar was in a closet. I pulled it out and played all the chords I knew and then a couple of songs. Before my father died I played a sad bluegrass tune for him about lost love – "Bury Me Beneath the Weeping Willow." My father, an optimist, said to me "Why don't you play 'Home on the Range'?" So I learned it and played it for him, but he had already died. So I played it to the empty house.



I knew a busker here in Paris who one September night was rocking a half dozen empty plastic mustard tubs and tin pots on the street near Châtelet. Set up with this home-made kitchen tom-tom kit, he sat on a milk crate and thumped away. It seemed like he was making a fortune. A large crowd formed a half moon around him and were happily flipping coins and bills into his cowboy hat. They were fascinated. He was non-stop, rat-a-tat, bang-bang. He played with an



intensity and was soaked with sweat even though it was closer to October than August. Police cars whizzed by; ambulances blew past, their sirens screaming. But the busker never once looked up. It was quite stunning. You could tell he was poor and most probably high. I can't imagine he made much money in the end playing pots and pans on the street, but he was a star.



"Cause We've Ended As Lovers" was the tune I most loved to play to once I had the chords down. With a high school friend Richie, I would lay down the progression and he would play this Jeff Beck monster of a love song note for note. Blow by Blow. RIP Jeff Beck (1944 - 2023).



I have two mandolins. One is an "F" model (with a scroll) and the other an "A" model that looks a little like a pear. The F model is called "Mandolinsky" and A model is named "Selma," after my Aunt Selma. I rarely leave my house without one or the other. I tell myself, "You just never know when the opportunity might arise when you need a mandolin or the music you can tease from it." My favorite place to play? Airport waiting lounges and train stations.



Elvis Presley made everyone want to play music, or dance. His daughter, Lisa Marie, died in January. She was born in Memphis, Tennessee in 1968 and had a smokey lounge voice. She married Michael Jackson in 1994 but divorced in 1996. Her one gold album was titled "To Whom It May Concern" ... She was repeatedly raped by her mother's boyfriend, she told Playboy in 2003. So much tragedy rolled into one human being. Lisa Marie was only 55 years old when she died.



My brother Yohan had a wonderful voice. He recorded The Rolling Stones song "You Can't Always Get What You Want" and my friend Adam said it was so much better than Mick Jagger's version because "Your brother really understood the song."



According to Facts and Factors, the Global Musical Instruments Market was valued at around US\$13 billion in 2021 and is estimated to grow about US\$15.2 billion by 2028. One million harmonicas are sold each year. 21 million Americans play the piano. In 2019 some 2,489,390 guitars were sold on Earth, a decrease of 3% from 2018. The pandemic, however, boosted sales of guitars. Guitar Center

however went bankrupt; Sweetwater, the online e-tailer, hit \$1 billion in sales in 2020. Global guitar sales reached \$9.2 billion in 2020; in the US that was \$1.67 billion – 2.7 million acoustic and electric guitars, banjos, mandolins and bass guitars. Most guitars sold in the US are electric (48%) followed by acoustic/electrics (33.2%) and acoustic guitars (18.6%) in 2020. Fender reported that 45% of those who began playing guitar in 2020 were women – a 15% bump up from 2019.



Years ago a friend of mine turned me on to Limewire, a peer-to-peer music stealing site, I mean “sharing platform.” I accumulated a lot of music files this way and my collection was a kind of mirror to who I was, who I aspired to be. You are who you listen to – or share...or steal. I had every Steely Dan tune available and grabbed all the songs I could from Jim Croce, David Bromberg and Four Way Street (CSNY). Then Limewire was told they couldn’t do that anymore; Napster showed up big time, and they too, got the Kabosh. Digital theft is super interesting intellectually. You simply touch something, and in so doing, make a perfect copy, then give it away for free. For that act you could be arrested (in some countries – not China, obviously). Then of course CDs took over and then, they disappeared, yielding to playlists on YouTube, Spotify, Deezer and Lordy knows what else. My friends are just now finished with their CDs (which they turned into MP3s and stuck on iTunes), with vinyl. Pretty heavy. Christian Marclay created a column of vinyl LPs three meters high. You can’t tell what music is on them. It’s a self-portrait.

Matthew Rose



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A handwritten musical score on aged, yellowed paper. The score consists of 12 staves of music, written in black ink. The notation is dense and complex, featuring a variety of note values, rests, and dynamic markings. The paper shows signs of wear, including creases and some discoloration. The overall appearance is that of a working draft or a composer's manuscript.



Rob Miles, The Guitar Player, 2021, Oil on canvas, 150 x 150 cm

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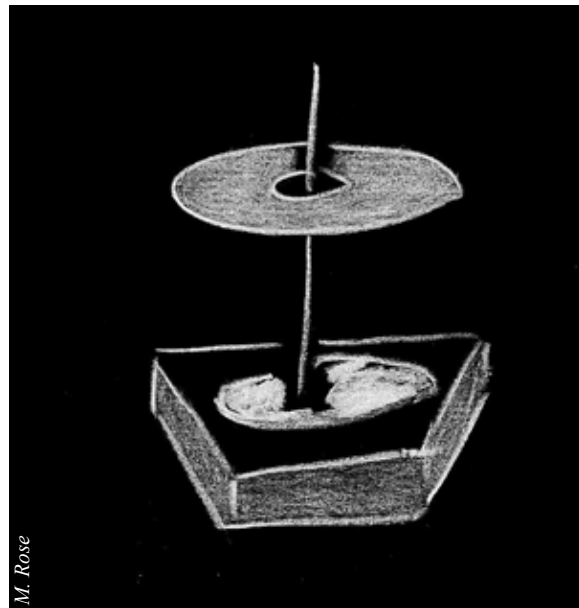
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The (un)Death of Vinyl

Vinyl records emerge from oblivion, providing the most unlikely comeback story of the digital age.



By Larry Jaffee

A *Billboard* headline from May 11, 1991, screamed ominously: “The LP’s Passage to Oblivion.” Distribution companies owned by the major labels Warner/Elektra/Atlantic and Sony Music were no longer accepting returns from retailers on vinyl albums. Universal’s distribution group wasn’t either. Twenty years ago, six major record conglomerates rode the compact disc (CD) as the cash-cow music format of choice. The internet, as a means of electronic distribution, was still a decade away from being a commercial option as the industry played catch-up with Napster, the cowboy peer-to-peer free music sharing platform.

Two analog home entertainment formats (vinyl and cassette) were quickly replaced by advanced digital technologies in fast succession (CD, digital downloads, and streaming). That was 30 years ago. Then, much to the surprise of record companies, vinyl reemerged as a deluxe product where consumers are willing today to pay twice as much for a newly-pressed LP as they did for a compact disc. Strange!

Record Store Day, an annual event held during one Saturday in April each year (and Black Friday in November) celebrates the culture of independently-owned record stores. In fact, Record Store Day has become a global event with fans, musicians and record stores praising the vinyl music disk and the massive culture it gave birth to. By most accounts, Record Store Day saved an entire industry. So did the cofounders of this “holiday” know what they were doing? Not really – they were mostly making it up as they went along. Record stores were mostly in the CD business in 2007, and some couldn’t fathom stocking new vinyl again in any kind of meaningful numbers, even though loyal customers regularly picked over the bins for used three-dollar records. Michael Kurtz, who became the face of the RSD movement and his band of misfits hammered away, however, and in 2009 mobilized enough interest among record companies and consumers to bring vinyl records back from the grave.

Vinyl’s rebirth in the digital age defies all economic, technological, and ecological logic. First, it’s expensive to manufacture an LP that, secondly, relies on mostly antique pressing equipment and processes, which largely haven’t changed in a half century. Thirdly, records are made from polyvinyl (PVC) – not a green-friendly raw material. Although today’s pressing plants are far more conscious about sustainability than their 1970s counterparts, and use modern processes and new equipment that reduce carbon emissions, it’s still plastic.

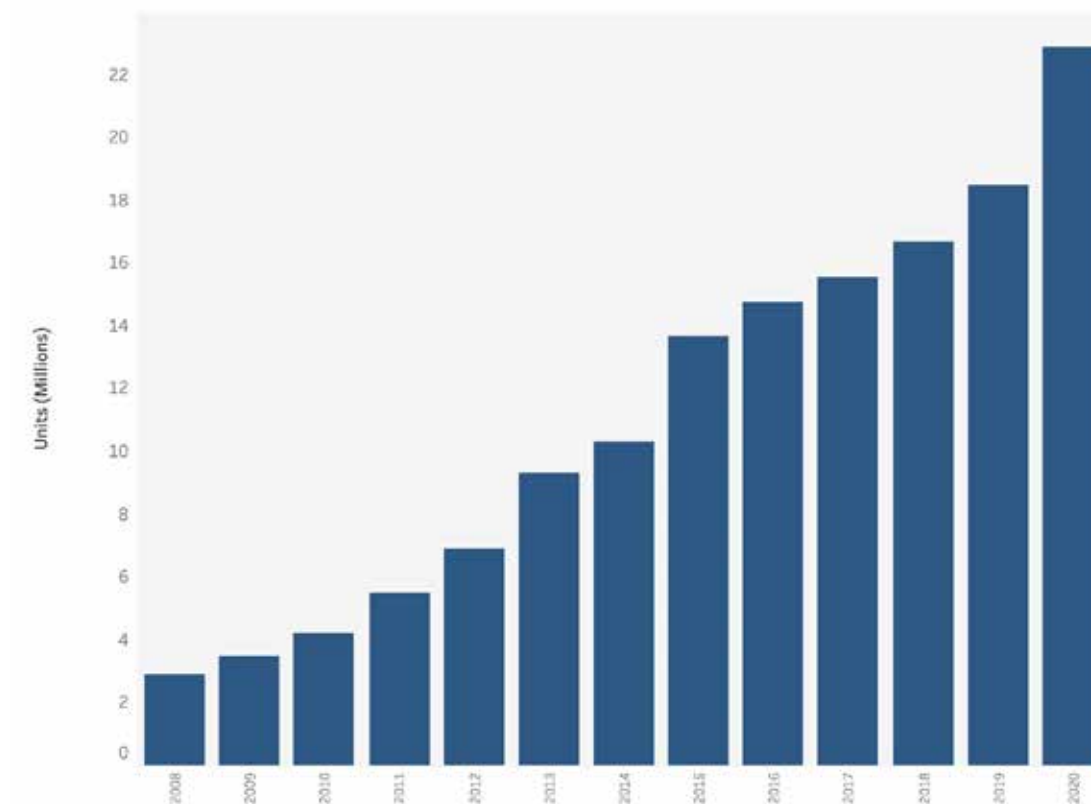
Record Store Day does however, deserve praise for kickstarting the entire vinyl supply chain, creating new opportunities for distribution companies, mastering and cutting facilities, raw material suppliers, packaging firms and printers, designers who create album graphics, turntable manufacturers, and ancillary products such as record sleeves and disc cleaning kits. It’s no coincidence that vinyl’s exponential growth year-to-year over the past 15 years syncs up exactly with RSD’s launch and the positive impact the 1,400 independent record stores feel in their communities.

But indie record stores celebrating a hallowed “Record Store Day” is full of misconceptions: That RSD is a ploy of the major music labels; RSD cofounders and the record stores selling exclusive pressings all get rich off of limited editions; that RSD releases clog up the pressing plants so that other vinyl records can’t get manufactured. All completely untrue.

U.S. Recorded Music Sales Volumes by Format

2008 to 2020, Format(s): LP/EP

Source: RIAA



Take a look at recent history: By 2012, vinyl record sales represented 2.4 percent of the physical music business with 3.3 million units sold; CDs accounted for the balance. A year later, vinyl grew to 3.5 percent of the business with 4.3 million units sold. In 2014, that number jumped to 6.2 percent with 6.4 million units sold. In 2015 growth continued and the numbers shot up to 8.8 percent and 8.4 million units, sold, followed by 11.2 percent and 9.5 million units sold in 2016. In 2017, vinyl sales rose to 14 million units, and in 2018, units continued upwards to sales of more than 16 million units. In 2019 it was forecasted that vinyl was trending at 24 percent of the physical music business. In 2020, the Record Industry Association of America’s (RIAA) reported that vinyl grew 28.7 percent with gross sales of \$626 million. Yes, vinyl had overtaken CDs in revenue generated.

While these numbers tell a positive story, most record stores do not in fact, report sales, so both Nielsen and RIAA estimate figures don't jibe with the large volumes pressing plants are producing today. In the US, record stores only buy titles they are certain will be bought by music fans largely because they cannot be returned. Only 250 independent record stores in the US report their sales to MRC Data, which is clearly estimating sales; approximately 1,400 US stores participate in Record Store Day.

Steve Sheldon, owner of the Rainbo, one of the world's largest vinyl pressing plants, said his California plant in 2018 was producing seven million LPs annually. United Record Pressing in Nashville, the nation's largest manufacturer, pressed more LPs than Rainbo. Making Vinyl, an industry group, estimated the additional output from 27 smaller US facilities, not to mention the 63 plants around the world also making records, pointed to a global production of 160 million records manufactured in 2021.

Market research firm Deloitte nearly broke the internet in 2017 when it estimated vinyl that year would be a \$1 billion industry for the first time in decades. The firm took into account not only newly-pressed vinyl, but also the sale of used records, turntables, and accessories. Since then, vinyl and ancillary revenue demonstrated, as of this writing (2023), more than three years' worth of substantial growth. At Making Vinyl Virtual in December 2020, Deloitte's Duncan Stewart told me, "We think the US number for [new vinyl sales] will be well over \$500 million this year." These numbers, however, don't capture the small record shops sales or the used vinyl trade.



While vinyl registered a negligible sales blip in the 1990s, the format never really went away, thanks to old-school DJs spinning dance records, audiophiles with their thousand-dollar-plus stereos, and a few boutique labels catering to a high end audio market along with flea-market crate diggers hunting for collectibles. One person's trash is another's treasure. Those used record bins gave indie retailers confidence that perhaps vinyl still had some life in it.

Vinyl 2.0 is not your father's record business. LPs produced for Record Store Day are pressed in fairly small quantities, which then creates a frenzy of consumer demand. Scores of people in any city where there's an RSD-participating record store often line up the night before in hopes of snaring a particular LP – and they often they walk out with many other impulse purchases not on their original list, several hundred dollars poorer but musically satisfied. It's the epitome of FOMO: Fear of Missing Out.



Record Store Day's "exclusive release" albums, produced for that one day in the Spring and Black Friday, are pressed in low quantities of 15,000 or even less. Update: a non-RSD title like Taylor Swift's 2022 *Midnights* proved that a new vinyl release can sell a half million copies. Today, Record Store Day is fêted on every continent but Antarctica.

The CD Made Vinyl's Comeback Possible

To understand why Vinyl 2.0 is working, glance back to the early 1980s when the industry replaced the LP with the shiny little disc known as the CD. Retailers, as noted, could return unsold CDs giving them an incentive to usher in the new format, but no longer would major labels and distributors accept unsold vinyl records. Without returns, vinyl's footprint and consumption was forcibly minimized in the early 1990s.

The major labels' ulterior motive in the 1980s was to make sure that CDs reinvigorated the industry at a time when video games and VHS formats were capturing a commanding share of the home entertainment market, much like MTV did on cable TV. The record industry needed to reinvent itself and make itself relevant again. Portable cassette players gave music lovers the soundtrack of their lives as they roamed about their city streets or daydreamed on their mass-transit commutes. Data shows cassettes from 1983 through 1990 were the most popular prerecorded music format; tape decks became standard car accessories. As CDs gained acceptance, portable disc players improved on the tape players, and in-dash CD players rapidly became standard automobile features.

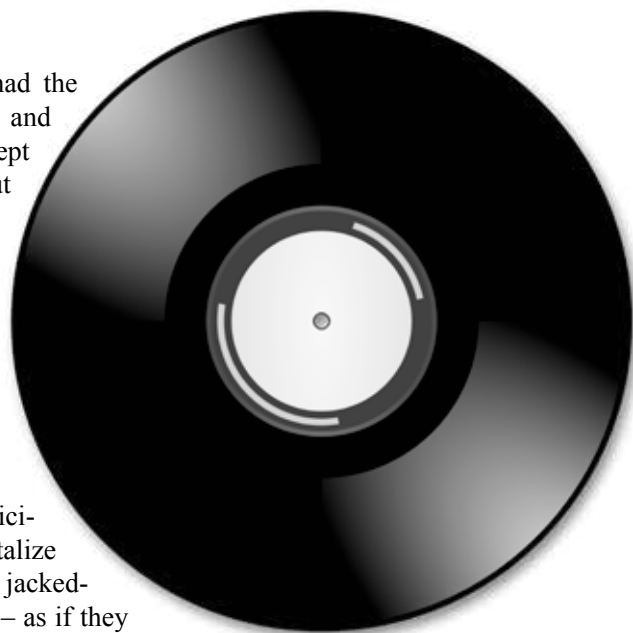
Launched commercially in 1982, compact discs quickly gained traction as labels and retailers supported the format, most importantly by accepting returns. By 1986, 45 million discs were produced, exceeding the number of LPs. Two years later, more than twice the number of CDs (149.7 million) were shipped; LPs managed only 72.4 million units. In 1990, worldwide CD sales roared to 288 million units sold – even with CD player penetration in only 28 percent of US households.

By 2000, the CD peaked, with sales of 785 million units in the US. CDs represented 91 percent of all US music units shipped, reported the RIAA. In 2002, CD's 20th anniversary, 1.63 billion audio discs were replicated, according to the International Recording Media Association. But then the CD market caved, partly because in 1999 Napster and other "peer-to-peer" file-sharing services unleashed the concept of "free illegal music" and partly because CDs were overpriced. From a manufacturing standpoint, the CD became a mass-produced commodity. The best-selling CD soon became a blank CD-R, as optical drives became standard in laptops and Apple legitimized paid downloadable music with its easily navigated iTunes library and well-designed iPod where earlier MP3 players appeared clumsy. In 2018 CDs sold dropped to roughly 70 million units.

CDs ruled for at least 25 years. Yet even when record stores stopped carrying *vinyl* — the word always seemed synonymous with *record* — customers didn't say they were "going to the CD store." It sounded weird. The technical term for a physical carrier of music is "phonorecord." But the only people who speak about phonorecords are music lawyers who chase down royalties.

Limited-Editions Worked

Record Store Day's cofounders indeed had the right idea. Create limited edition releases and throw a party! If production levels were kept down, music fans would get excited about collecting limited editions and stores would have a good chance of selling out. If you missed RSD or Black Friday, you would lose out and risk paying a ransom online like obsessives of everything from designer sneakers to luxury automobiles. But how to create a frenzy without having greedy speculators ruin the fun?



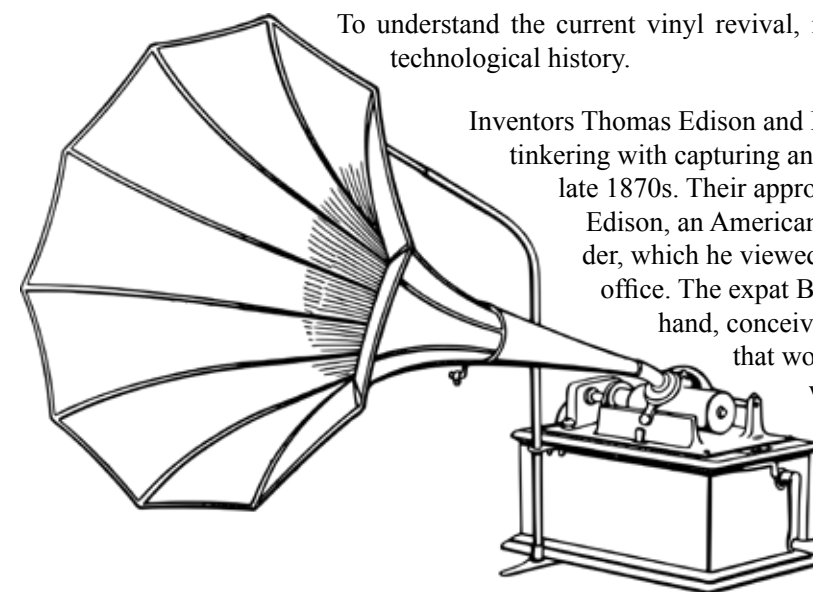
Indeed, what irks Record Store Day participants most are speculators trying to capitalize on a good thing by posting RSD releases at jacked-up prices months before they're available — as if they have them in their possession, something that's quite impossible. RSD holds its participating stores to a "pledge" that they only sell the exclusive releases at the established price, or risk not being labeled an official Record Store Day retailer. Honesty counts and generally, the limited-edition system works fine for both stores and fans.

Fifteen years ago we coped without smartphones being at the center of our daily existence, and the notion of having instantaneous access to the world's recorded output for a fairly nominal subscription fee seemed like pie in the sky. Consider the convenience that digital music subscriptions — and the promise of the celestial jukebox in the sky — provided as mobile phones soon became the center of entertainment in the palm of your hand. Can you say MP3? Spotify?

But 15 years ago, a digital file was "a crappy gift" pioneer rap label boss Tommy Boy quipped in 2015 at his New Music Seminar conference. It is indeed crappy compared to the permanence of a shiny 12-inch x 12-inch object of beauty — even before it's placed on a turntable. As vinyl evangelist

and musician Jack White insists: "Your turntable is not dead!" And even if it is, there are plenty of new options to spin your records from cheap players to million-dollar audiophile setups.

A Record Production Primer



To understand the current vinyl revival, it's useful to dive into a little technological history.

Inventors Thomas Edison and Emile Berliner were separately tinkering with capturing and playing back sound since the late 1870s. Their approaches and aims were different. Edison, an American, built a tinfoil-wrapped cylinder, which he viewed as a dictation machine for the office. The expat Berliner, a German, on the other hand, conceived a device for recorded music that would be imprinted on a disk that would sit on a primitive turntable, equipped with a stylus.

Ten years after Edison's "phonograph," Berliner filed his patent for a hand-cranked "Gramophone," marking the first format

war — a precursor to the mid-1970s videocassette battles of Beta vs. VHS, or the early 2000s feud over Super Audio CD vs. DVD-Audio. When it comes to consumer electronics, coexistence rarely works, with perhaps prerecorded 8-track tapes and audiocassettes during the go-go years of the 1970s the lone exception.

Edison's cylinders hit their sales peak in 1907. By 1912, Edison realized the Berliner model was winning the war, and he introduced disc phonographs, although he still produced the cylinders well into the late 1920s. Berliner's machine required a stylus to follow a groove for capture and playback on a chemically treated material that was pressed onto a round, flat disc. Berliner gained investment from US corporate backers for his vertically integrated operation, signing up musical star power like Caruso, the opera singer.

Edison eventually recast his business model, and licensed music for his cylinders and, eventually, round discs. Berliner's records were conceived with mass production in mind. From the cut master disc a "stamper" was made — conceptually no different from today's vinyl-making process. Playing time generally was under five minutes, and a two-sided disc soon emerged. Edison halted production of his records and record players because of the Great Depression. With the global economic crisis, only the well-to-do could afford such a home luxury. Records spinning at 78-rpm in diameter sizes from five to 14 inches were made out of easy breakable shellac, a material replaced in the 1940s with polyvinyl chloride (PVC), now referred to as simply "vinyl." Plastic's manufacturing advantages included stability, durability, their thrifty price, plus PVC was easily formed and molded. In development for about a decade, World War II forced CBS to delay its introduction of a new long-playing "LP" offering up to 15 minutes of music per side. But after the war, recorded music took off.

RCA soon debuted its seven-inch “singles” that were spun at 45 rpm and clearly aimed at the bar jukebox and youth markets. Enter Elvis Presley in the 1950s, The Beatles, the British Invasion and Motown in the 1960s, and then transistor AM radios and cheap record players flooded the planet. Kids could play relatively inexpensive 45s in the privacy in their rooms and take their AM transistor radios to the beach.

Since the 1950s, sound engineers experimented with the record’s ability to expand sound by cutting two channels into a single record groove. By the mid-1960s, and with the rise of FM radio, they perfected the sound, resulting in record labels’ focus on long-playing albums or LPs. Full-on stereo had arrived.

An irony of music history is that “purists” coveted recordings of the Beatles and the Rolling Stones and others in mono instead of stereo. So it’s no accident that often an RSD release’s selling point is “Now in Mono.” Vintage sells.



Third Man Pressing

In fact, remastered mono vinyl was at the center of the strategy of Sundazed Records a reissue label specializing in lost classics from the 1960s. Founded by Bob Irwin in 1989, he was previously a reissue producer for Sony Music. Irwin enjoyed an inside track on vinyl comeback by being able to license Byrds and Bob Dylan because the major labels had no interest in bringing back the mono format to a niche audience.

“I don’t feel that anybody making vinyl has to plead their case,” said Irwin in 2002 in *Medialine*, the magazine I used to edit. “All any average Joe has to do is flip on their TV on a weekday night for three hours during primetime, and you’re going to see at least one commercial romanticizing

vinyl or a big-ass rack of records. It’s the truth. I’ve seen it everywhere from Mohawk Carpeting to Tide detergent to Volkswagen.”

Fast forward a few years: The future of brick-and-mortar stores selling home entertainment items like CDs, vinyl, videotapes and DVDs would suffer when streaming movies became wildly popular. EMI Music chairman and chief executive, Alain Levy, told a London Business School audience in 2006 that the CD was “dead.” Independent music shops grimaced because they were still selling healthy volumes of new and used CDs. (Used because consumers were increasingly dumping their collections as they digitized them onto their laptops, which now also held their iTunes purchases of single songs for 99 cents and full albums at \$9.99. Apple Computer and their stockholders became richer.)



In December, 2006, Tower Records liquidated and permanently closed its 89 US stores. Tower Records once had 200 stores in 21 states and at its peak, logged \$1 billion in annual revenue. When Tower Records fell, it marked the end of an era for music-oriented “megastore” chains in the digital age. Tower’s demise came on the heels of HMV in 2004 pulling out of the US market after a decade of its superstores losing lots of money. By 2009 Virgin liquidated its 23 US stores. Mall-based corporate chains with smaller record stores also went belly-up, including Sam Goody, Strawberries, Coconuts, Peaches, Tape World, Camelot, Turtle’s and National Record Mart. Remember those? Also biting the dust during this period were national chains Circuit City (2009) and regional chain, The Wiz (2003), both specializing in electronics and appliances with new CDs priced at \$9.99 — called “loss leaders” because they sold below wholesale in a strategy to get consumers to purchase big-ticket items.



For the independent record stores managing to hold on, the behemoths’ disappearance meant one or two things: Physical media was doomed and/or an opportunity was knocking on the door. Some of these indie stores diversified into DVDs, T-shirts, and comic books, but ancillary merchandise couldn’t save the big

chains...so in 2007 the record industry needed to be convinced that vinyl remained a viable product. A unifying campaign that celebrated record stores as a cultural phenomenon where people learn about life, meet future spouses and enrich their lives with great music was born: Record Store Day.

The RSD story is an elixir of community, business, art, music, and records. The secret sauce mixed together the entrepreneurs behind the stores themselves and people who worked there — those who upon reaching adulthood decided to “not get a real job,” or after getting a taste of corporate America (or anywhere else), decided it was not for them.

It’s no wonder so many A-list musicians worked in record stores. Guns ’n’ Roses’ Axl Rose and Slash, were former Tower Records employees. Slash, in fact, was arrested for shoplifting from the same Sunset Boulevard store he was supposedly banned from. Axl managed Tower Video across the street. R.E.M. guitarist Peter Buck met his future lead singer Michael Stipe at the record store where he worked. Similarly, Hüsker Dü’s Bob Mould met the band’s future bassist Grant Hart while Hart was working at a St. Paul record store; their drummer Greg Norton worked at a different store.

Other record store employees include RSD ambassadors Iggy Pop and Dave Grohl, as well as Mötley Crüe’s Nikki Sixx, Joy Division’s Ian Curtis, Moby, and Nelly Furtado.

Jeff Tweedy worked at Euclid Records in St. Louis before making it with Uncle Tupelo and then Wilco. Not surprisingly, those bands’ archival music is often on sale for RSD. In fact, a 1994 Uncle Tupelo live show became an RSD live album in 2020. Tweedy these days does in-store appearances or performances on Record Store Day. Paramore, Ani DiFranco, Common, Steve Earle, Panic! At the Disco, Regina Spektor, Dresden Dolls, Marshall Crenshaw, among many others, typically plan indie-store RSD stops whenever they’re on tour both domestically and overseas. Some still record for major record labels and others have gone the indie route. In Record Store Day’s early years, with the exception of the Warner Music Group, the major labels didn’t take seriously the new business models floated by RSD’s cofounders.

“Early on in the vinyl resurgence, many in the industry dismissed the trend as a niche format,” said Sujata Murthy, Universal Music Enterprises’ senior vice president of media and artists and repertoire. “Vinyl continues to outperform expectations year over year,” she added, crediting RSD and indie stores being at the forefront of vinyl’s resurgence 15 years ago.

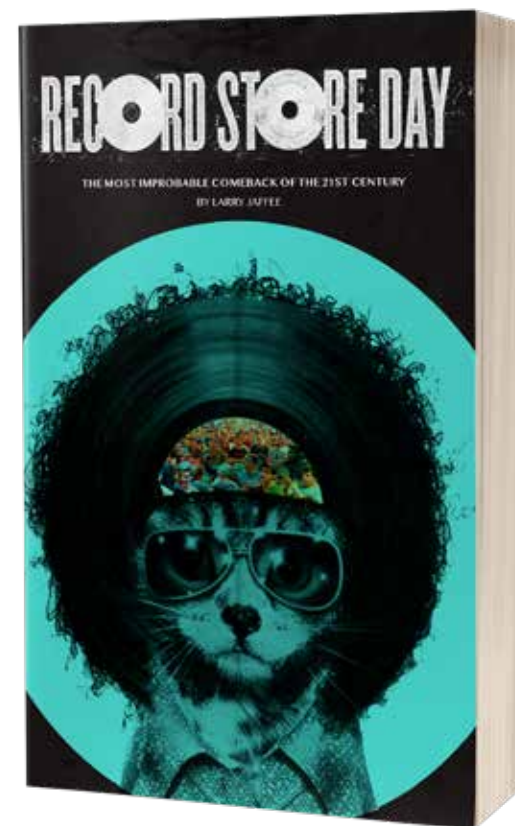
Gerhard Blum, Sony Music Entertainment’s senior vice president, distribution and supply chain international, said that a major label typically requires four years to respond to a music industry trend, so the slow enthusiasm for Record Store Day is not surprising, but he remains astounded by the format’s resurrection.

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The author with special edition of *Record Store Day*

“I saw it dying,” said Blum. “I saw it dead. And then I saw it rising from the ashes. No one in the industry can get enough vinyl right now. This is beyond your wildest dreams. The independent sector—the stores and Record Store Day—can claim they ensured the resurrection LPs.” The record is back.



The preceding article was excerpted from the book, *Record Store Day: The Most Improbable Comeback of the 21st Century* (Rare Bird Books, Los Angeles). It may be purchased online here <https://www.wordupbooks.com/book/9781644282557> or Amazon globally. Larry Jaffee (<https://larryjaffee.com>) has written about music since college, covering Sid Vicious’s pre-trial murder hearing (reprinted by *The Guardian* in 2013) and giving a bad review to a Jerry Garcia solo concert, which garnered plenty of hate mail. In 2010, Jaffee made a colossal mistake purging most of a 4,000-LP collection, and he has spent the past decade rebuilding it to its former glory. In 2017, Jaffee co-founded *Making Vinyl* (larry@makingvinyl.com) as a B2B conference celebrating the global rebirth of record manufacturing.

[Recommended reading for the insidious side of the music industry: *Stiffed—A True Story of MCA, the Music Business, and the Mafia* by William Knodelseder (1993); *Hit Men: Power Brokers and Fast Money Inside the Music Business* by Fredric Dannen (1990). Under such an environment, artists with gold records could find their supposed best-sellers in the cut-out bins, while owing their labels ridiculous amounts of money for video production costs.]



crank sturgeon



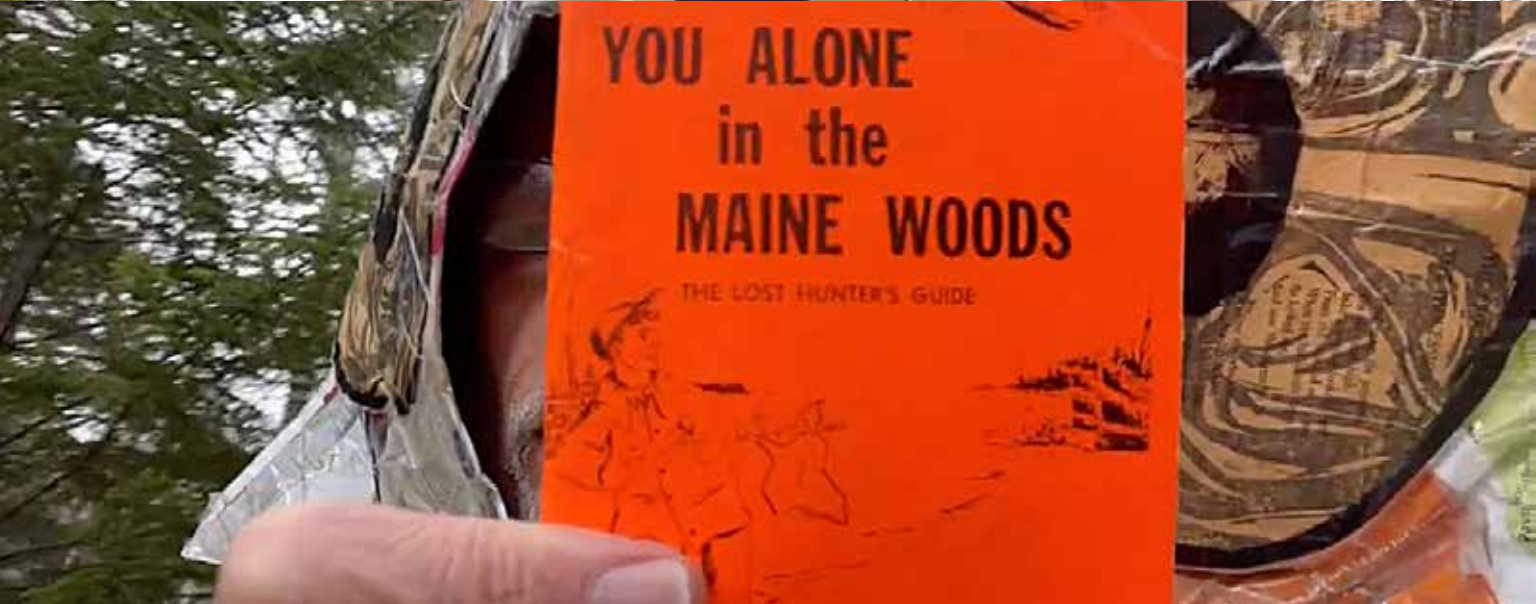
Foaming at the gills with pockets full of thrift store novelties, homemade transducers, and costuming collaged from mailbox circulars, Crank Sturgeon utilizes such finery to marinate a commingling of noise and lower case art interruption. The result has been a multi-decade journal entry that reads something like a traveling circus flier: brimming with tales of dirigible mishaps, bathtub teleconferences, cassette recordings consisting of hiccuping contests, and skits showcasing repurposed office equipment that never seem to stay on script (or upright for that matter).

Travail Transcription Teleprompter Transferral

Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts, Omaha, NE / 2022

Crank instructed an audience to write down their travails on a piece of paper. Crank then read these travails into a voice-to-text app on his iPhone, with the text projected behind him. As the app had considerable difficulties understanding the text, the travails would often come out as gibberish. Crank read the gibberish text while shredding the travails with an amplified office paper shredder.





You. Alone. In. The. Maine. Woods. / 2022

Our unflappably abstruse Test Dept Lad went outside and got himself lost again. This video was found in a 32 megabyte thumb drive, tethered to a prickerbush via his tattered lanyard, which he'd diligently worn ever since the first HusoCon, back in the late 90's. TDL is still out there in the woods somewhere (it's only been, like, a minute). Investigators are still debating putting in an order for a search party, or if they should just sit back and catch up on the new reboot of "Friwnss".



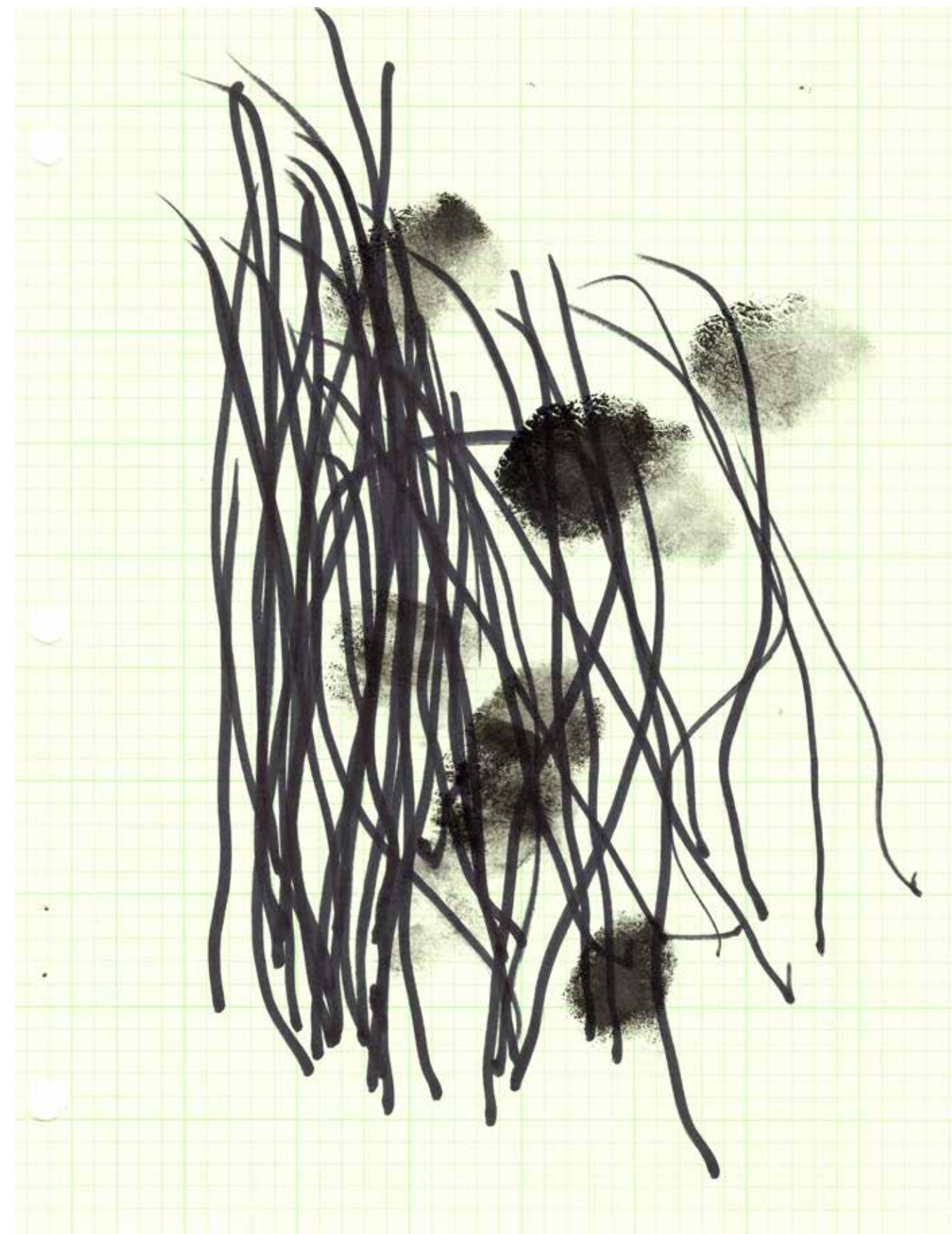
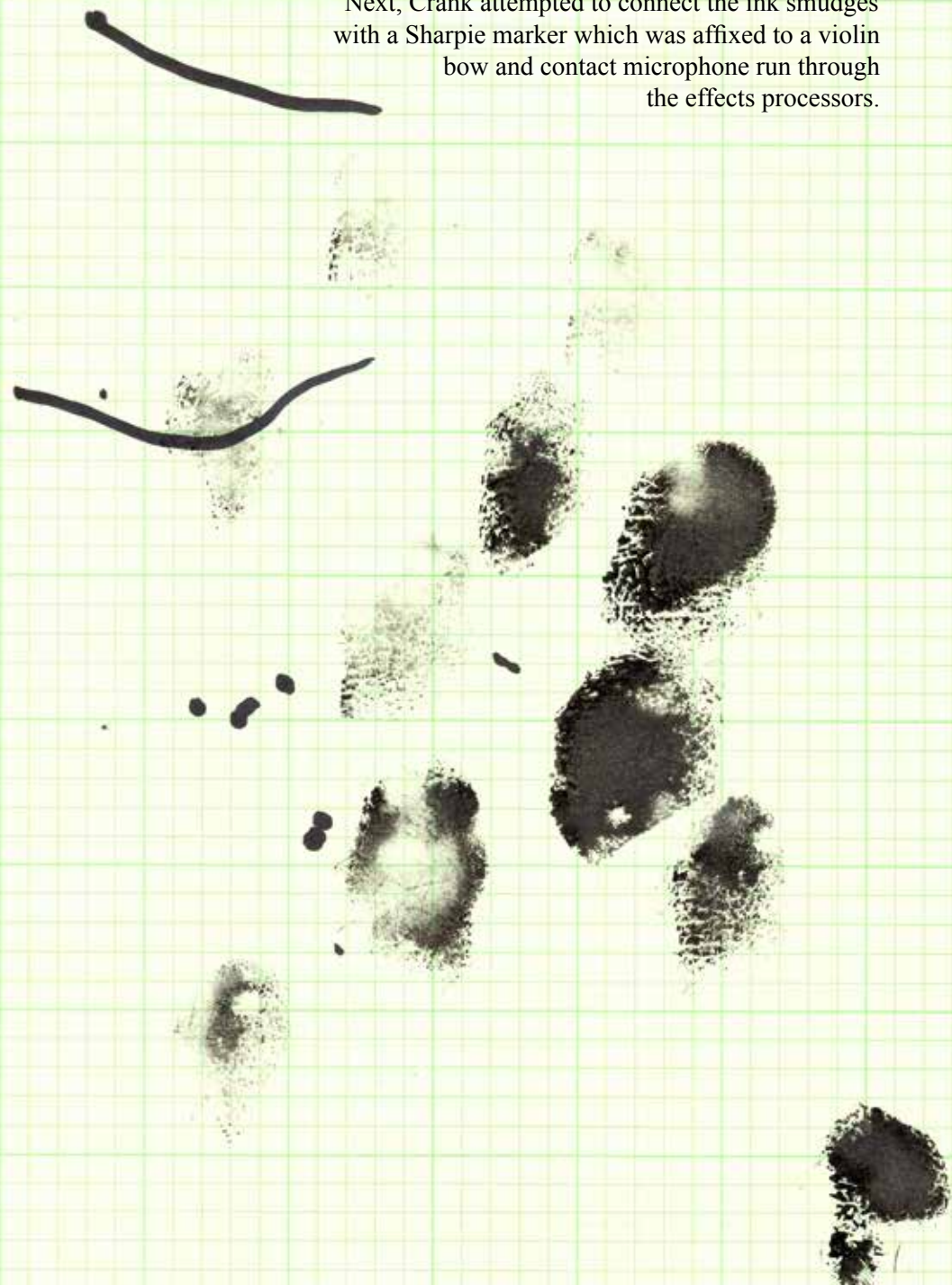
Bow/Elbow

Coaxial Arts, Los Angeles, CA / 2019

Crank amplified a table consisting of a ledger and ink stamp, displayed prominently among a slew of sonic effects processors and other musical gear. Crank stamped pages of the ledger using his elbow for several minutes.



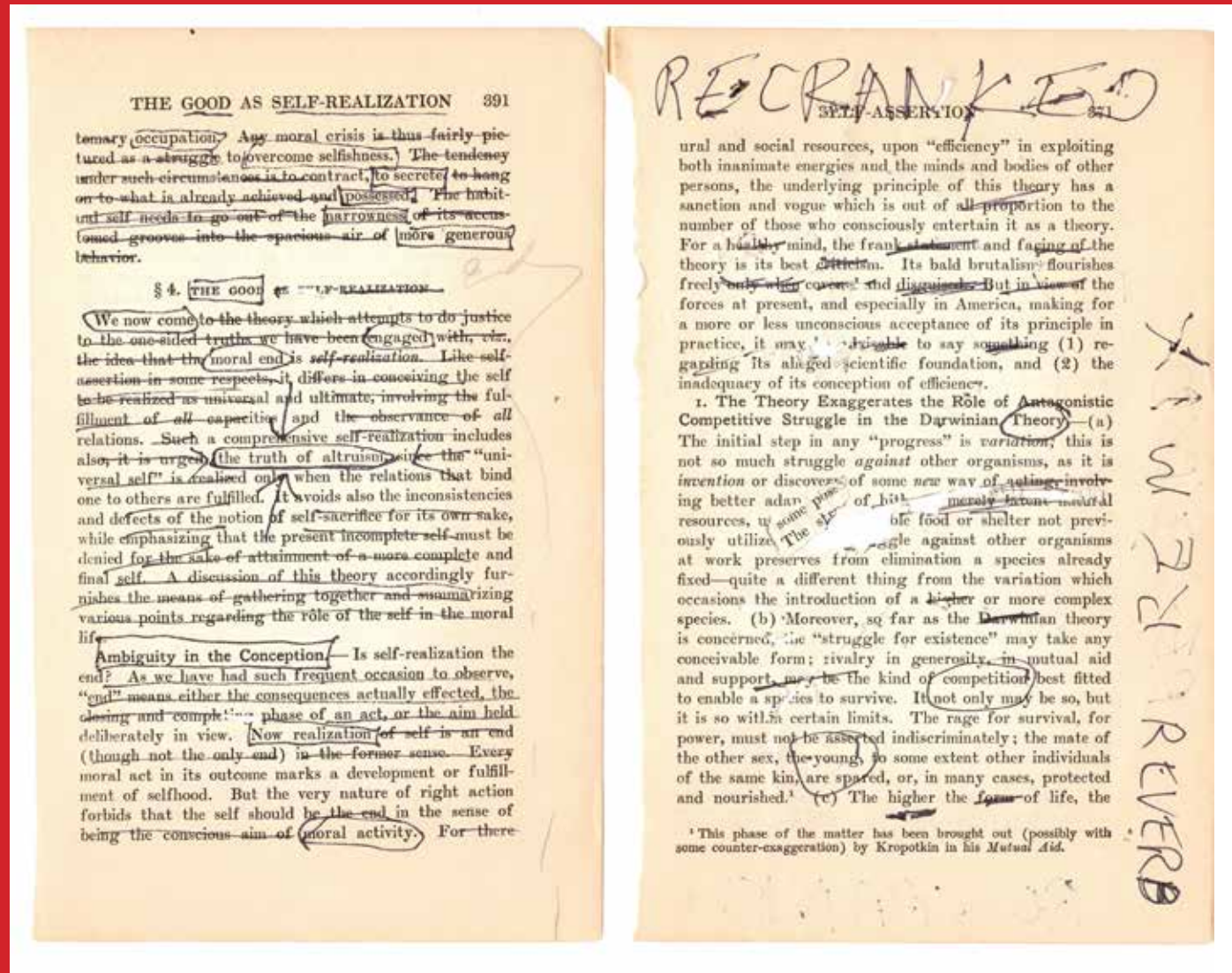
Next, Crank attempted to connect the ink smudges with a Sharpie marker which was affixed to a violin bow and contact microphone run through the effects processors.



Audience Redaction Poem

The Brickhouse, Turners Falls, MA / 2018

An audience was instructed to redact the pages from a thrift store book. Upon finishing the task, the audience was then handed out envelopes containing instructions. Crank directed the audience to pull out one instruction at a time, read the instruction, and then perform it for five minutes. Each instruction involved a reading, rendering, or an action pertaining to their redacted poem.



then that sort of thing constitutes my self. Our instincts, impulses, and habits all demand appropriate objects in order to secure exercise of their expression; and these ends in their office of furnishing outlet and satisfaction to our powers form a cherished part of the "me." In this sense it is true, and a truism, that all action involves the interest of self.

True and False Interpretation.—But this doctrine is the exact opposite of that intended by those who claim that all action is from self-love. The true doctrine says, the self is constituted and developed through instincts and interests which are directed upon their own objects with no conscious regard necessarily for anything except those objects themselves. The false doctrine implies that the self exists by itself apart from these objective ends, and that they are merely means for securing it a certain profit or pleasure.

Suppose, for example, it is a case of being disturbed in mind by the thought of another in pain that one is moved to do something to relieve him. This means that certain native instincts or certain acquired habits demand relief of others as part of themselves. The well-being of the other is an interest of the self: is a part of the self. This is precisely what is meant ordinarily by unselfishness—not lack or absence of a self, but such a self as identifies itself in action with others' interests and hence is satisfied only when they are satisfied. To find pain in the thought of others pained and to take pleasure in the thought of their relief, is to have and to be moved by personal motives, by states which are "selfish" in the sense of making up the self; but which are the exact opposite of selfish in the sense of being the thought of some private advantage to self. Putting it roundly, then, the fallacy

¹ Compare what was said above, p. 273, on the confusion of pleasure as end, and as motive. Compare also the following from Leslie Stephen, *Science of Ethics*, p. 241. It is often "mistakenly

and right purpose of individual rulers and judges. Moreover, the separation of law from morality has likewise its gain or loss. On the one hand, to separate off a definite sphere of external acts to which alone physical constraints or penalties may attach, is at once to free a great sphere of inner thought and purpose and to enable purely psychical values and restraints to attain far greater power in conduct. Liberty of thought and religious belief, sincerity and thorough responsibility, require such a separation. It is also to make possible a general law which rises above the conscience of the lower even if it does not always reach the level of the most enlightened and just. To make a command a "universal law" is itself a steady and elevating influence, and it is only by a measure of abstraction from the individual, inner aspect of conduct that this can be achieved. On the other hand, the not infrequent contrast between law and justice, the substitution of technicality for substantiality, the conservatism which made Voltaire characterize lawyers as the "conservators of ancient barbarous usages," (above all the success with which law has been used to sanction or even facilitate nearly every form of oppression, extortion, class advantage, or even judicial murder, is a constant attestation of the twofold possibilities inherent in all institutions. Government in other functions exhibits similar possibilities. At first it was tyranny against which the subject had to defend himself. Now it is rather the use of political machinery for private gain. "Eternal vigilance" is the price not only of freedom, but of every moral value.

The Religious Life.—When freed from interdependence with kinship, economic, and political association, religion has an opportunity to become more personal and more universal. When a man's religious attitude is not fixed by birth, when worship is not so closely bound up with economic interests, when there is not only religious

ulate this general principle of the sense is natural. But just as the activities of the infant are wisely directed in the degree in which attention is fixed upon weakness, but positive opportunities for growth, and the efforts of those who are in the circumstances, especially remedial and palliative are most effective when centered on the social rights and possibilities of the unfortunate individuals, instead of treating them as separate individuals in their separateness, "good is to be done."

The best kind of help to others, whenever possible, is indirect, and consists in such modifications of conditions of life, and general subsistence, as enables them independently to help themselves.¹ Whenever conditions require purely personal aid, it is best given when it proceeds from a natural social relationship, and not from a motive of "benevolence" as a separate force.² Altruism, when proceeding from sympathy in its specific capacity, is a tacit acknowledgment of the relationships of the case when it comes from a neighbor or from one who has other interests in common with the one assisted.

The Private Self.—The contrast between the narrow restrictive and the general or expansive good explains why evil presents itself as a selfish end in contrast with an authoritative, but faint, good of others. This, as we have seen, because regard for the good of self is inherently bad and regard for that of others intrinsically right; but because we are apt to identify the self with the habitual, with that to which we are best adjusted and which represents the cus-

¹ Compare Spencer's criticisms of Bentham's view of happiness as a social standard in contrast with his own ideal of freedom. See *Ethics*, Vol. I, pp. 162-168.
² See Adams, *Democracy and Social Ethics*, ch. II.

admit that these instances describe a usual, though not universal, state of affairs. But does it follow that such men are unselfish merely by the thought of some public relation? Can it be said that the man who happens then the act is selfish in the obnoxious sense. The man has isolated his thought of himself as an end and made the thought of the improvement of the world merely an external means. The latter is not truly his end at all, he has not identified it with himself. In other words, the individual would not have organized the end if the thought of him or of him not been implicated, if he had not been originally by the

two—the thought of my friend. It is the intimacy to an object, cold, while it is deepened by taking (to take the sense of the word) of having a "good" the pleasure in it is preconceived the him its legitimate relaxation is a serious mentally balanced which he enjoys as a distinct end. It is not likely to be the only pleasure which he derives from the amusement a home-coming and

ness. Moral and the problem of equating the general good. Right consists especially of it aim at the good of a just and righteous that the man who seeks also himself to be happy directed to explaining it as a discrepancy in the regard for others or for view of it seems to make of happiness; while men our own range of sympathy debit balance. The respective good and entirely accidental and from the moral factors difficult to build up an home viciousness or is happiness, so also are the argument would course of life is one of intimacies with enough persons to secure for himself their support and aid, but avoids engaging his sympathies too closely in their affairs and entangling himself in any associations which would require self-sacrifice or exposure to the sufferings of others. A course of life in which the individual shuns those excesses of vice which injure health, wealth, and lessen the decent esteem of others, but also shuns enterprises of precarious virtue and devotion to high and difficult ends.

Real and Artificial Aspects of the Problem.—The problem thus put seems insoluble, or soluble only upon the supposition of some prolongation of life under condi-

appearance, but the Lord looketh upon the heart" has its literary parallels in Xenophon and Plato and elsewhere. The distinction between high and lower values has received its most impressive symbol in the conception of "another world," in which there is neither pain nor sin, but eternal blessedness and eternal life. Ideals of character, when embodied in divine persons, command love, reverence, and devotion in supreme degree. A society in which love and justice are the law of life has seemed more possible, more potent to inspire sacrifice and enthusiasm, when envisaged as the Kingdom of God. But in all these illustrations we have, not the religious as

- Read the poem aloud, backwards, and with gusto.
- Whisper the poem to a friend. Have them whisper it back to you.
- Shout, holler, and scream the poem, sprinkling obscenities throughout.
- Sing the poem to the tune of a national anthem.
- Clap the poem. Stomp the poem. Repeat this a few times. When you're finished, snort like a pig for the duration of the performance.

Don't read the poem out loud. Instead, why not be a hero? Inform people that by reading the poem, they're in danger of becoming sheep, that they're being lied to, and that that they need to wake up from this apparent form of mind control. This is serious stuff, and the people have a right to know.

Read the poem aloud while rearranging furniture.

If you have an instrument, perform the poem in the manner of an insipid children's song. If you fail to garner attention, perform the poem in the style of death metal. If you don't have an instrument, recite the poem in the aforementioned styles or just sit there quietly with your hands over your ears, eyes closed.

Read the poem aloud inserting the word "cocaine" between each word. If you finish early, tell someone about how Eric Clapton may or may not have affected your life.

Sing the poem in a high falsetto voice. Or, recite the poem while plugging your nose. Or, do both.

Repeat the phrase "this poem is stupid" while increasing the volume of your voice. Repeat the phrase while decreasing the volume of your voice. Do this over and over again, and do it with a BIG SMILE.

Read the poem aloud while rhythmically patting your chest. When you finish, continue to pat your chest while going "uhhh".

worth for him. The process of attainment calls for toil which is disagreeable, and imposes restraints and abnegations of accustomed enjoyments. An Indian boy, for example, thinks it desirable to be a good rider, a fat fat shot, a sagacious scout. Then he "naturally," as we say, disposes of his time and energy so as to realize his purpose. But in trying to become a "brave," he finds that he has to submit to deprivation and hardship, (to forego other enjoyments and undergo arduous toil. He

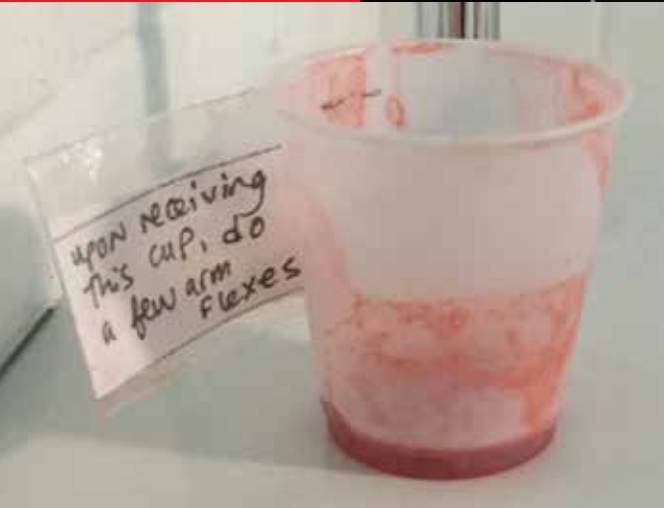
¹ While we have employed Spencer's example, it should be noted that incompatibility of ends is not the criterion of the distinctively moral situation which Spencer himself employs.

CHAPTER MORAL SITUATION

Object of Part 10.—The object of this chapter is to explain the theoretical analysis of reflective morality. We are concerned to discover what is the nature of the moral situation, and what are the principles of conduct which are to be followed in it; (2) what we mean by good and evil, right and wrong; (3) on what basis we apply these conceptions to their appropriate objects in conduct. But before we attempt these questions, we must detect and identify the moral situation, the situation in which considerations of good and evil, right and wrong, present themselves and are employed. For some situations we employ the ideas of true and false; of beautiful and ugly; of skilful and awkward; of economical and wasteful, etc. We may indeed apply the terms right and wrong to these same situations; but if so, it is to them in some other light. What then are the differentiating traits, the special earmarks, presented by the situation which we identify as distinctively moral? For we use the term moral in a broad sense to designate that which is either moral or immoral: i.e., right or wrong in the narrower sense. It is the moral situation in the broad sense as distinct from the non-moral, not from the immoral, that we are now concerned with.

The Moral Situation Involves Voluntary Activity.—It will be admitted on all hands that the moral situation is one which, whatever else it may or may not be,

MFAJR



upon receiving
this cup, do
a few arm
flexes

Drinks are on the House

Recombinant Festival, Grey Area Gallery, San Francisco, CA / 2019

Two assistants, each clad in white Tyvek bodysuits, helped Crank into a dentist chair. Upon wiring Crank for sound (affixing contact mics to his neck and so forth), one assistant would feed Crank a prescription of blood capsules, alka seltzer tablets, and soda water. When it was time for Crank to spit, the other assistant would capture the foamy fluid in a cup (affixed an instruction card) and wipe Crank's mouth with toilet paper from a roll fastened to his forehead. Throat and spit sounds were amplified through loud speakers. The action was complete when fifty or so cups of blood spit were filled. Each assistant carried serving trays of cups and distributed them among the audience while Crank sang the line, *Drinks are on the House*.



[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	please take this home and refrigerate
Switch this cup with your neighbor's cup	Photograph the contents & email to a friend	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	upon receiving this cup, SIGH
upon receiving this cup, yell "FUCK SOUSA"	upon receiving this cup, yell "NARC"	tell your neighbor that you think the server is a NARC	Pour contents into your neighbor's cup	[REDACTED]
take this cup for a walk later tonight	DEMAND A REFUND. you did not order this.	Switch this cup with your neighbor's cup	Put this cup on your head. GROAN.	Hold this cup over your head and ask for more
inform your server that you did not order this	[REDACTED]	inform your server that the cops are watching	Pour contents into your neighbor's cup	upon receiving this cup, SNORT repeatedly
upon receiving this cup, yell "PORK RINDS"	Did you tip your server? Did you?	when you leave, balance this cup on your head	Photograph the contents & TEXT to your boss	[REDACTED]
upon receiving this cup, yell "COMATOSE"	upon receiving this cup, do something virtuous	[REDACTED]	Balance this cup on your shoulder	upon receiving this cup, MAKE flatulent sounds.
upon receiving this cup, yell "COPS"	upon receiving this cup, MOAN	Put this cup on your head. BELCH.	Hold this cup in the air for several minutes.	upon receiving this cup, recite the pledge of Allegiance



cranksturgeon.com
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現在の美術館の様子（2022年8月23日現在）→ [こちらから](#)

軽井沢ニューアートミュージアムとは

軽井沢が陽光に輝く4月、JR軽井沢駅から目抜き通りを真っ直ぐに8分あまりそぞろ歩いた通り沿いに、軽井沢ニューアートミュージアムがオープンしました。この「軽井沢ニューアートミュージアム」は、主に日本の戦後から現在までの優れたアートを、新しい視点から日本の現代アートとして再領域化し、国際的な評価にたえる諸作品を、広く国内外に普及してゆくことを目的として誕生しました。企画展では、世界の第一線で活躍中の日本の現代アートの作家やそのグループ展だけでなく、海外作家も含めて、日本国内のみならず海外からの美術ファンの期待にも応えられるような斬新な切り口の展示を展開していきます。また近年顕著に国際的評価が高まっている「具体美術協会」に所属した前衛作家たちの作品など、日本の前衛作家の作品を積極的にコレクションしていく方針です。美術館の設計は建築家・西森陸雄によるもので、総ガラス張りをベースにカラマツ林をイメージした白い柱をデザイン的に林立させた構造は、さわやかな高原リゾート地・軽井沢に心地よく溶け込んでいます。この美術館は、2007年に商業施設として建てられたものを新たに美術館として内装のリニューアル工事を行い2012年にオープンいたしました。軽井沢には美術館をはじめとして数々の文化施設がありますが、そうした既存の文化施設、団体の方々も協働し、軽井沢町を国際的な芸術文化の拠点としてさらなる繁栄へと導くことを目指します。また、「軽井沢ニューアートミュージアム」は、上記の目的実現のために「軽井沢国際芸術文化都市推進協議会」（略称 KIAC）の後援を受け、地域と連携した様々な活動を展開していきます。

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The Glasgow Piano



By Lene de Montaigu

During the first COVID-19 lockdown in Glasgow, my roommate and I found bits and pieces of a broken piano on the street. All these beautifully crafted pieces of wood and little delicate mechanisms caught my eye, and I decided to take them home, keeping in mind that, eventually, I would make something with them. These disjointed parts were kept in my basement for almost two years.

Reaching my final year of university, courses started again with in-person teaching, and the technical facilities at school were re-opening. In a need to make the best of it whilst I could, I decided to get this beautiful, yet intimidating object out of my basement and do something with it. Coming from a background in computer coding, interactive and digital art, I wanted to challenge myself to build a physical sculpture from scratch, perhaps a kind of machine based on a vision I had two years back, using these beautiful pieces of mechanism and hand-crafted piano keys.

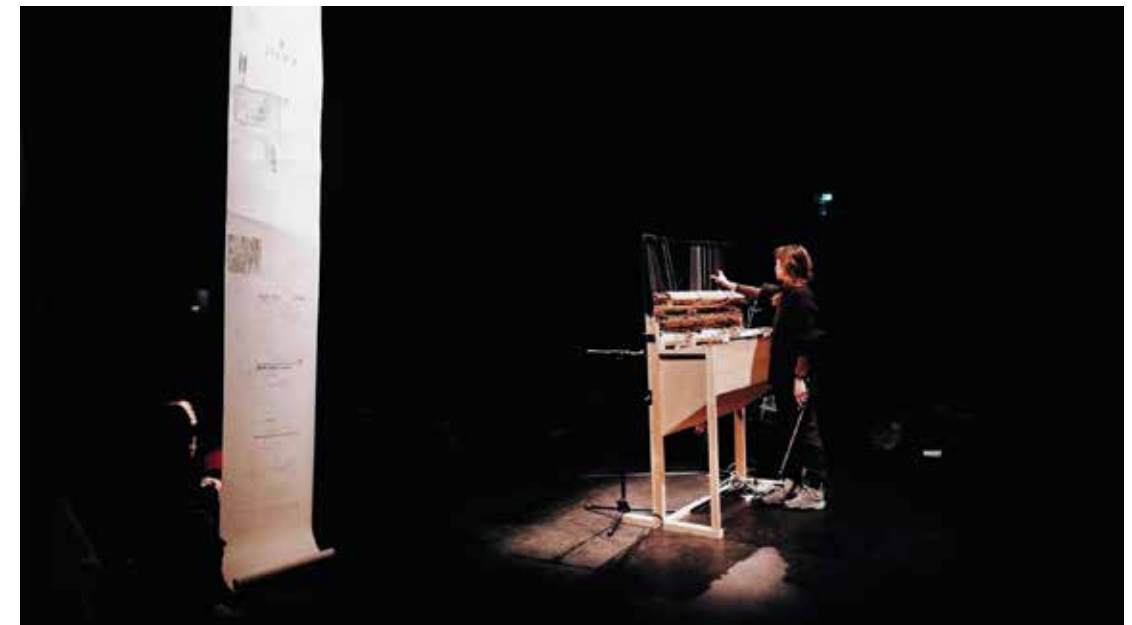
During the pandemic, I was studying interaction design at The Glasgow School of Art. Interactive

Design refers to any computer-based medium of art, ranging from 2D to 3D objects, time-based media, real-time virtual reality spaces, artificial intelligence or machine learning. My course was not too badly affected by the need for on-line teaching as I was particularly at ease with staring at a computer screen all day. My need to build this sculpture came as a reaction towards the flattened digital world, not as a rejection of it, but in critical questioning of it. It is common that in my digital art courses and digital art production, a certain pre-assumed aesthetic appears. Clean, presentable, modern, and slick – were the stereotypical attributes of such works – akin to a techno-futurism of the 21st century imposed by the designs of companies like Apple. In my ongoing search to creatively re-appropriate digital technologies and their usages in everyday life, I wanted to challenge these often unquestioned aesthetics imposed by them.

Being in a design course rather than a fine arts one, I found it even more relevant to address such concerns. Since I knew that my final year would be dedicated to a project meant to be exhibited, I wanted to make a statement that contrasted with

the assumptions of what “interaction design” looks like. To contrast clean and presentable digital works, I wanted to suggest something messy, broken, fragile, open, turned inside-out. Another important element that pushed me in this direction was the overwhelming excess of information we typically deal with in our lives.

missing parts using digital tools – 3D printing and physical computing. It was missing keys, mechanisms, and most importantly, a sound producing mechanism – or so I believed. How could I give it a voice again, as though I were a surgeon operating on a dismembered body. I wanted to articulate a physical 3D object through the



Not simply from the internet, but the art world as well. Constantly confronted with the abundance of artworks, art objects, and art things, I was repulsed by the idea of creating yet another new thing, and quite simply more attracted to recycling something old and used.

The time seemed ripe for me to build my machine. At first, I decided to simply try and rebuild the piano using the found parts with the aim of recasting a real piano; but I knew at the same time that was impossible. I determined that whatever point I would get to from that initial attempt would be interesting enough – for it would be about the body of an object reaching for its fully-formed voice; a thing limited by a body in decay, or in disorder. It would be an act of archeological reconstruction, and I quickly imagined rebuilding the piano by replacing its

ontology imposed by the digital world, one in which “objects,” or physical entities, have no clear borders and limits and whose physical properties are infinitely malleable. One does not know where an object begins or where it ends; empty gaps and spaces within a physical object, cut out in arbitrary and accidental ways, refer to the immateriality of what a digitally-reconstruct-





ed object is. Sound, also invisible, becomes the echo of an interaction between us and the object.

I started to calculate and model the missing piano keys using 3D software. It was an intricate process that led to a series of trials and failures. I spent several months testing the sound, drilling holes, welding the bits together, hammering nails, gluing, breaking and repairing, drawing and sketching, staring at the machine, wondering whether it could be something...in the end. As the building process was ongoing, I became more interested in the cultural significance of the piano as an instrument, and more focused on creating a performance out of it. I began recording sounds from the construction process, discovering music born out of the labor involved. The notion of an “instrument” took on a different meaning for me – from an instrument as the creator of music towards an instrument as “tool,” like a hammer (piano hammers), etc. My approach became a deconstruction through reconstruction, uncovering the cultural significance behind the ordering of objects and of bodies. A piano is both a symbol of Western music and its implied

ordering of sound, as well as a feminine object, delicate and polished, having been for a time the only socially acceptable instrument women could play. Through this skeleton’s new body, I discovered a new sound, rewriting the past by voicing an imagined future.



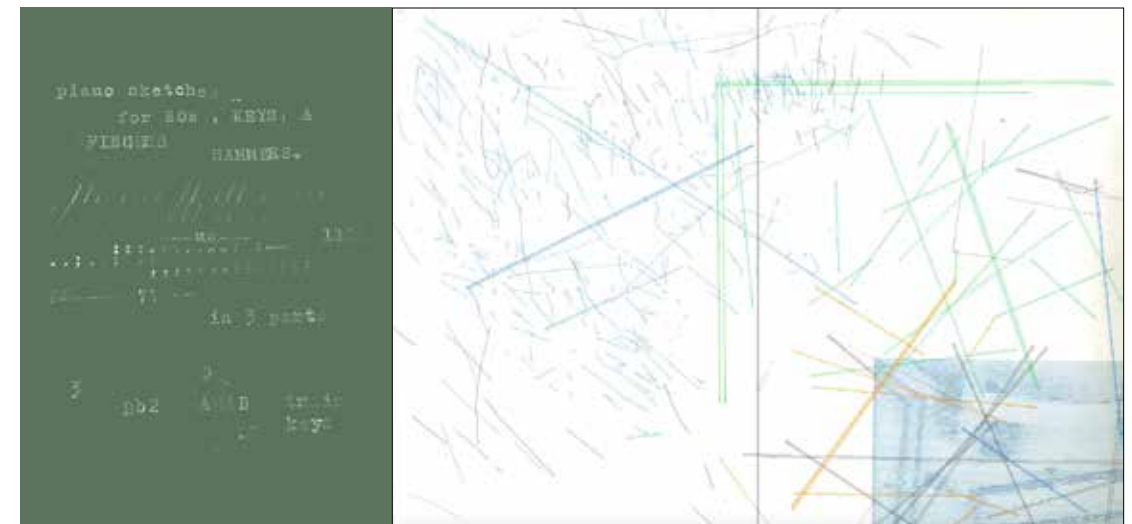
Lene de Montaigu is an artist and musician living and working in Glasgow, Scotland. <https://omedenel.cargo.site/>



This sonic sculpture is a digitally and acoustically interactive piano rebuilt from recycled and reimagined parts. Its skeleton is left open, inviting the architecture around it to become its resonant body. All missing pieces were measured, determined, reimagined, and reproduced through digital tools. The sound you interact with marries both acoustic and digital sound. Certain hammers trigger sound samples from online media. Simultaneously, the keyboard triggers acoustic sound from the harp using the repurposed mechanism of the once-obsolete piano.



The Glasgow Piano : <https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x8f5hw6>



From the Piano Sketches booklet: *This piano was patched together using found parts (wooden keys, hammers and their mechanisms, piano strings) and by rebuilding its missing parts (metal harp frame, 3D printed keys, wooden structure, circuit for a hybrid sound).* Piano Sketches for (1) Bow, (2) Fingers, (3) Keys, and (4) Hammers defines those four elements as tools that construct and deconstruct the instrument both sonically and sculpturally, delineating a space that places the labour behind building the piano and its sound at the forefront of its soundscape. Piano Sketches as a live performance is therefore composed by these tools.

Coronaville Episode 1 "If I Get Corona, I Get Corona."



«Coronaville»

A Dystopian Comic Book Opera

Matthew Rose

«Coronaville is my comic opera of the pandemic, produced during the quarantine in Paris in the Spring of 2020. There are 40 episodes made during 40 days and 40 nights. Coronaville captures the self-dealing and double-speak of (mostly) American politicians who have diasterously and criminally mismanaged the Coronavirus pandemic.»

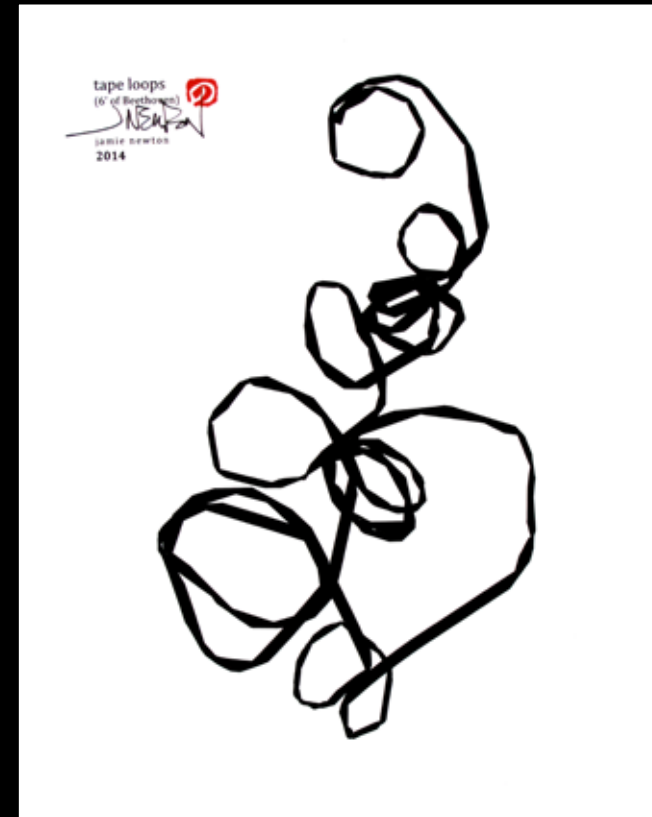
Coronaville is wicked, an acid romp through the cult minds and neighborhoods of Trump World. Coronaville is the dark comic opera of our times.

Matthew Rose is an American artist and writer living in Paris. Click on the QR code, get your copy of Coronaville.



loops, scores & dances

jamie newton



tape loops (6' of Beethoven)
laminated audio tape (piano sonatas), 2014



tape loops (3' of Beethoven)
laminated audio tape (piano sonatas), 2014
40 pieces for Franticham's Assembling Box nr. 29
redfoxpress.com

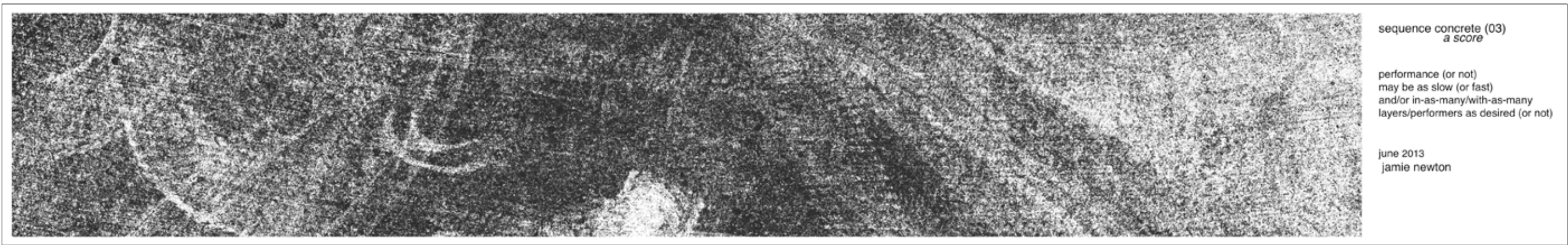


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concrete score 001 • 2013



sequence concrete (03) • june 2013



concrete score (002) • june 2013





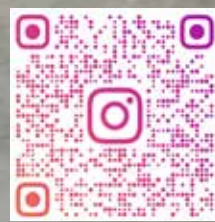
These pieces are part of a 500-day sequence of one-a-day sculptures. The last fifty or so of the series were impromptu constructions that moved and generated sound by way of motors, fans, wind, and/or gravity.

466 / 365+ . stool, concrete block, f clamps, saw motors, tape, wire, board, pot, pot lids & sundry . 11 Apr 2018

Hardware Dances



composition for ten impromptu sculptures



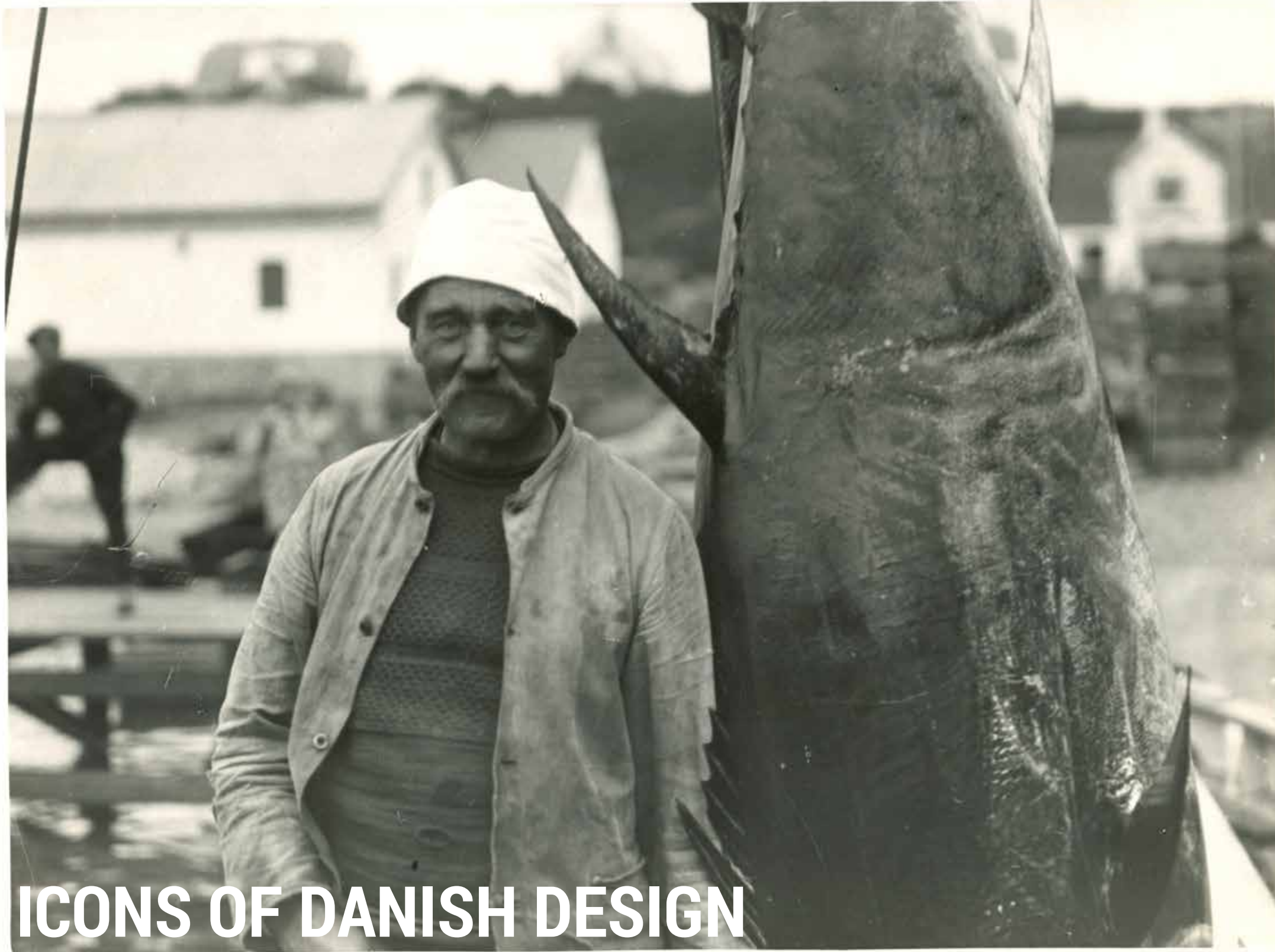
468 / 365+ . bells & flags (snow shovel, wire rack, fan, motor, c clamps, f clamps, tape, wire, string, tin can, bundt pan, pizza peel, etc.) . 13 April 2018

composition for ten impromptu sculptures

2019 • sounds generated by moving sculpture (from the 2017/2018 one-a-day sculpture series)
This recording is composed of ten tracks taken from sounds generated by sculptures 445, 449, 466, 468, 469, 476, 486, 493, 496 & 497 [Listen on bandcamp >](#)



*jamie newton lives & works in the coast range foothills west of portland, oregon
he is an artist, writer and co-creator of trouble magazine
[@concretewheels](#) / [@mocostabafo](#)*



ICONS OF DANISH DESIGN



Astronaut Diapers and the Unimaginable Zero

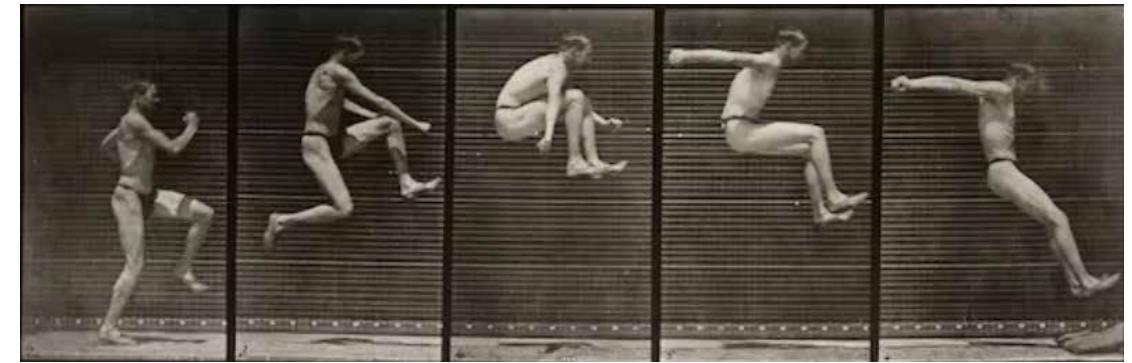
By Christopher Mooney



My piano playing is becoming more athletic, less ecstatic, more a pursuit than a calling. This morning I waded deep into the second English Suite with unflagging finger speed and power but not much else, no lightness, nothing expressive, nothing strategically or spontaneously placed. I have a bad cut on my right thumb – how, I have no idea – and the trill passages in the Gigue make my teeth ache.

Is it love? The so-called spiritual approach is lacking and I have lost the liquid element. Write what you know, said the old man. Every beauty, every truth, every sin? The examined life, the philosophers say. My eye. The unexamined life may not be worth living but the examined one is no great shakes either. This bears no scrutiny. I bear no scrutiny. I made a brilliant start, then fell. When I was at Groton, and later, in the Navy, despite being a loner and an outsider, a stumbler and a bumbler – my hands still sweat and shake in social situations and I have to fight the urge to kiss people, total strangers, policemen, clerks, waiters, gas station attendants – I excelled at the triple jump, or rather, the “hop, step and jump” as we called it then, which is about the most ridiculous thing a human being can do, let alone excel at. Many activities are plum weird, but most don’t reach the level of international competition; what’s more, the triple jump, the experts agree, produces higher levels of bodily stress than any other voluntary human activity. More than mountain climbing, more than lumberjacking, more than Saint Vitus dancing, more than Tantric sex. Ridiculous, yes, yet I did it, religiously, morning, noon and night, and I was good. I won medals, held records.

Run, hop, step, jump, land in the sand. Never fall backwards. This is a bit like that, this book, my



life, never falling backwards, a series of almost-comical contortions, then a leap into space. Trying to set the record. Trying to set the record straight.

Perfect example, last night at the Catalina, little Niko in her silly fez and schoolgirl getup, sitting in with the older cats, pounding out wrist-rolling cluster chords, shaking that ass, shaking that ass. I hear it, your Groton question. How in Christ’s name is Niko playing piano half-naked in a jazz club the perfect example? Because inside, my son, inside here, there was nothing. Less than nothing, a new level of nothing. O halcyon days! We walked back through the dark Hollywood streets in silence, climbed the stairs, carried out the door protocol, took off our shoes. Not a single word. Niko slipped out of clothes and placed a new mandarin on the altar.

Nothing. Niko, naked in the moonlight, and nothing stirs. No goosebumps, not one single hair follicle, not a single cell on my entire fat senescent carcass even near a semblance of aquiverment.

The body, sluggish, aged, cold – the embers left from earlier fires,

The light in the eye grown dim, shall duly flame again.

Whitman. The heart turns to stone, alright. Or worse, it rots, like a decayed tooth. Then the nerve connecting it to the brain blows – pffff! – and it dies, and we feel nothing.

When cavities, thus, the solid tooth destroys,

That sullen enemy to mortal joys,

The tooth-ache, supervenes: – detested name,

Most justly damned to everlasting fame!

Solyman Brown, “Dentologia; a Poem on the Diseases of the Teeth and Their Proper Remedies,” 1840. A favorite poem of James Forrestal, the last Cabinet-level United States Secretary of the Navy and the first United States Secretary of Defense, a man of taste who positively absorbed and exuded poetry from every pore – he could recite from memory more than half of Van Doren’s World Anthology – blessed with an orator’s voice, heroic posture and immaculate dentition, and yet, in 1949, he cracked like a China teacup during the mildest Beltway spring on record, and under considerably less political and psychological pressure than what I’m exposed to every second of every minute of every day. Zionists and commies? Narcosis with sodium amytal? Insulin sub-shock? Pah. They tossed him out of a diet pantry window on the top floor of the Navy hospital in Bethesda with

a bathrobe belt noosed around his neck. I'll be trussed to a tree, like Marsyas, and flayed alive.

Here's how this works: the last time I saw NSA Director Mike Hayden's sorry ass it was swathed in blue pinstripes and plopped on a folding chair at a Mark Strand reading in the Phillips Gallery, off Dupont Circle, near the L. Ron Hubbard House, in the Music Room, where, half a century earlier, on my very depressing thirty-fifth birthday, your mother (then in the throes of an affair with a Scandinavian novelist named Jørgen Bojer), Cal Lowell, who had just been released from the locked ward at Payne Whitney (no belts, pajama cords or shoestrings; round-the-clock injections of chlorpromazine) and I squirmed through Gigi's American debut – Gibbons, Sweelinck, Bach, Webern, and Berg.

Gigi. Her name for Glenn Gould. GG. Gigi.

What was she wearing? An apricot-colored silk zibeline dress by Cassini. Gigi, that day? An off-the-rack Hudson's Bay suit, charcoal gray, with one of my favorite Dunphy ties, a pair of my oxford shoes and underpants from the Eaton's Catalogue. Rumpled and dandruffy but he played well, all things considered. Fumbled the first phrase of the Gibbons and the tempi got away from him a few times, especially in the Berg. But in his defense the room was cold, and Nixon was there, and Joe Alsop, and Lennie Bernstein, and nobody but Lennie was paying much attention, and I forget what else. Or who else. The Bundys. McGeorge and Bill. And poor Cal, folded and molded into his plastic chair in the front row, throbbing to the music and the musician and strobing on lithium. Lowell. Your mother's word for it. Sunday, January 2, 1955. The day before Congress reconvened. I remember this now because I came across the Washington Post review a few minutes ago in one of the UW-Madison boxes, along with some other stuff we'll try to get to later: "January 2 is early for predictions, but it is unlikely that the year 1955 will bring us a finer piano recital than that played yesterday afternoon in the Phillips Gallery. We shall be lucky if it brings others of equal beauty and significance. Glenn Gould of Toronto, Canada, and barely into his twenties, was the pianist. Few pianists play the instrument so beautifully, so lovingly, so musicianly in manner, and with such regard for its real nature and its enormous literature. Glenn Gould is a pianist with rare gifts for the world. It must not long delay hearing and according him the honor and audience he deserves. We know of no pianist anything like him of any age."

Washington Post, page ten. I putted it last night after the walk home from the club to the epicenter of the altar wall, where it immediately set off, like a grenade harpooned deep into the head of a whale, an imponderable bloom of connections, which I will hereunder try to enumerate, as soon as Niko returns with a fresh bottle of Plymouth Gin Navy Strength. First, though, I am compelled to review the reviewer, Paul Hume – namely, his use of the words "musicianly in manner" and "It must not long delay hearing" and, especially, the 'and' in the sentence "Glenn Gould of Toronto, Canada, and barely into his twenties, was the pianist." You can hear and taste the condescension in that 'and', the imperial flex. 'And' as in from Canada and barely into his twenties. As in, not only is this talent, this precocious freak of pianism a mere whelping pup, he is also from the backwater that is Toronto, Canada, as freakishly absurd and unlikely as that may sound.

Canada!

This sort of thing never used to bother me.

Speaking of which, we said Canadian spelling. I will correct this as I go along.



Also on the altar wall: a photo of your mother, naked, taken by Man Ray in 1956; a photocopy of the first page of "Howl" that Niko putted up a week ago; a 1973 photo of Gigi that I found in a CBC handout, sitting on his stupid stool at his Chickering; the Carcano Model 91/38 infantry rifle that "A. Hidell" purchased by mail order; the switched frames 314 and 315 (the "printing error frames") of the old man's Kodachrome II; and a Muybridge wet-plate of semi-naked women carrying jugs of water on their heads.

Although I love the past, the dark of it,

The weight of it teaching us nothing, the loss of it, the all

Of it asking for nothing, I will love the twenty-first

century more.

This is from the Strand reading (should we footnote poems?) at the Phillips. A cold day in early March. NSA Director Mike "Tighty-Whities" Hayden in attendance, surrounded by government law enforcement officers, a random assemblage of Groton boys and half the faculty of the Iowa Writer's Workshop. Your mother, gorgeous in black mantua and petticoat. Still smoking but the accent gone, voice low, sad, lovely, like honeyed money. We were at a think thing when I ran into him – literally, in the men's room – not Mike Hayden, Mark Strand, Strand the bland and perennially tanned, and not exactly literally but close enough: during a break, I sidled up next to him at the urinal.

"Mark," I said, a weird croaky squawk. The first word uttered in days. Sputtered, more like. He lurched, splashed.

The goddamned

gland

of Mark Strand...

This is the first strophe of a poem started and ditched. Sidled not as in furtive or timid, sidled as unobtrusive. Cash in hand on the witness stand in no man's land. How old is Mark Strand? Younger than me. By a few. He's aged better, too. No stress, no sturm und drang. Another conquest of your mother's. "Smart and sharp, handsome as hell." Perennially tanned. He was there to plug *Blizzard of One*, a chap book, twenty-odd poems of lineated prose with arbitrary why-here line breaks and next to no meter, manifestly knocked-out on the fly, and yet, surprise surprise, shortlisted for this year's Pulitzer (Chuck Wright, last year's winner, chairs the jury), up against Alice Notley (you met in Paris), who won the LA Times thing, and Fred Seidel, who I haven't seen since our weekly bent-knee visitations with Lowell and Merrill Moore to the Temple of Pound – the Ezraversity – at St. Elizabeths ward for the criminally insane.

He urinates and defecates

And looks out at the universe.

He is looking out at it through his

helmet mask.

Why, Niko now asks, was my thirty-fifth birthday depressing? Something to do with the Scandi novelist, Jørgen Bojer? Or something to do with Nixon? Lydia and I were blessed with both their august company all afternoon – dyspeptic Veep and Jørgen the Llap dancer, the pawing Norwegian, long since forgotten, even among his childhood fjords. He and a group of other mid-brow transatlantics had been cobbled together at the last minute by Lydia and the Encounter team, tasked with preparing Nixon for Cuba, assembling a list of writers and musicians and ordering books for Batista, whom Nixon for some reason had pegged as a "voracious reader" though when I met him, five times over a three-year span, he was always "en el medio" of Jim Bishop's *The Day Lincoln Was Shot*. Meanwhile, Nixon was said to be engrossed in Clausewitz, Kissinger's doing, but was actually reading sputum like *The View From Pompey's Head*, which topped the NYT bestseller list that year for forty weeks. Heard of it? Of course not.

Here's a thing: over drinks, after the concert, someone else from the Post asked the VP about the Republican leadership post-Ike. "When we cross that bridge," Nixon said, "we'll jump in the river." This then segued into his whole boring Heraclitus schtick. He was in the early stages of his we-need-an-intellectual phase. James Laughlin (Groton & Yale, 1946), whose family started the Phillips Collection – the fully fictional Phillips-Laughlin coat of arms is mounted high above the giant fireplace mantle in the Music Room, which used to be the family library – had organized the outing; he was trying to revive interest in *Perspectives USA*, which the Ford Foundation was about to cut and run on. Because nobody read it. Meanwhile, the Norwegian hack had his mitts all over your mother.

Gigi hunched at the piano, moaning and mumbling, straining at his stool, Cal twitching in the chair next to me, the Bundys smirking, the Europeans with their wino noses out of joint, it was too much.

And then there was Nixon.

"Luke, Lydia, I apologize," he said, as we left our seats. "Bad gas." The last word barely audible, wheezed out like air from a balloon.

"Could you repeat that please, Mr Vice President?"

He shook his head, wearily.

"Gas. I've got gas. Bad gas."

No fucking kidding, Mr. Vice President.

Bad gas. Who says such things? A Quaker kid from Yorba Linda, that's who.

"Is any gas good?" I said.

Fifteen minutes later he made another fumbling pass at your mother, and then pretended he hadn't, and then turned to me and said:

"About this boy of yours," he said. "This Gold boy."

"Gould," I said.

"Gould? So not a Jew?"

"Not sure, Mr Vice President." I had actually never entertained the possibility.

"A fine player, nevertheless." The "nevertheless" made his jowls wallow. "We should saddle him up."

Then the Bundys angled in. Groton boys. Action-liberals with stick-figure wives, instilled with the classic values.

No hangover. In fact, I shot out of bed, flung myself onto Gigi's stool and banged out twelve tones, humming, singing, moaning – bellowing! – like a love-sick elephant, just to let your Groton cronies know that I've worked it through, basic cat and mouse, keep the levels high, no more real moves till the fans hit the shit. To prove it, more to myself than anything else, just after daybreak I filled a bag, popped the locks and slid out onto the creaking floor of an empty hall rank with reefer and piss.



Creak creak creak. The camera up in the corner tracking everything, twisting in its ball joint.

Lady with a mop and pail. "Mister Luke, where you off to now?"

"Nowhere fast, ma'am."

Cackle cackle cackle.

I tipped my hat.

On the front steps I ran into a three 'tenants' trying hard to look as if they lived there. Central Casting types, sitting on the stoop, blocking the steps.

"Excuse...me...could...you...move...please?" Speaking slowly, lobotomized syrup, a dyslexic reading off a cue card. The three of them looked me up and down a full nine, then one slides his fat butt over and I slip by with a "thank you, suh."

"Take a fucking bath, man," he says, and the others laugh, and I laugh back, spin around to face them and bow, saying, "Yes, thank you, and I won't forget to wash between my ears," and I show them the Tide and the Bounce and the taphole in my tear duct and they give me their best half-assed look and freeze – unprompted, no one there to feed them the next line. Extras. What happened to the talent in this town? I turned on my heels and headed west, tall and fearless through the intersection of 5th and Central, all the facades up, lights on, people in place.

Niko nowhere to be seen.



From here I have three choices, north, east or west, so this is usually where they try to pull off a set piece; and sure enough, as I approached the intersection a signal is given and the cameras twist and "people" start crossing from every direction. Gleaners and gatherers go through the garbage cans. Hinky-dinky music pours out of doorways. The buses roll by. The loud women. The drunks, the ranters, the bozos, the panhandlers. A man in a black Lincoln pulls to the curb, opens the door, flips his tie over his shoulder and vomits Gallo wine and Kraft Dinner into the gutter. Frankie Machine pours out of the open door.

In the wee small hours of the morning

while the whole wide world is fast asleep

you lie awake...

A newsstand – the LA Times, well beyond anything we ever mustered, cartoons and op-eds and color inserts. As an added bonus wiggle and bang they threw in two police cars, four minutes apart, dead slow, all eyes. I smiled and kept walking. Now I'm back holed up inside watching dog owners on the sidewalk below. Loopy grins, carefully calibrated leash tension.

My hands are poorly organized. The distal and medial phalanges are unresponsive. The arches start off as cupped as church ceilings, then empty out and become passive, pointless. The forearms tense, the muscles spasm. The lumbricals are forced to do all the heavy lifting. With Bach, the fingers are never allowed to rest, even during the staccatos



they flutter like crows high above the keybed, then swoop down in uncoordinated, hyper-individuated nose dives. The crashing descent gives the tone a bitter clanking harshness. The wrists too, especially through the long trills. What to do? I get a certain cheesy richness, that big Romantic sound, but polyphony falls flat. Brahms yes, Berg, yes, Bach, no. I believe it to be dystonia, drug induced. Too much muscle tone, twisted posture, a side effect of the therapy. Gigi, however, do you remember the way he would describe it? Out in the cottage on Lake Simcoe. Bodiless. Fingers only. Pure finger. Boneless. It helped that he was neuro-biologically right-handed but had trained himself into a state of left-handedness; that, pianistically, like Lizst, he was ambidextrous, with equal control in both hands and hemispheres: problem solving, what the Groton types call creativity, motor functions, language, thought, fear, lust, reversed. All in one. Hence the rituals. Hence the scalding sessions, hands cleansed and purified before each session in boiling holy water. His newborn fingers. What happened on that Russian tour?

Sinatra.

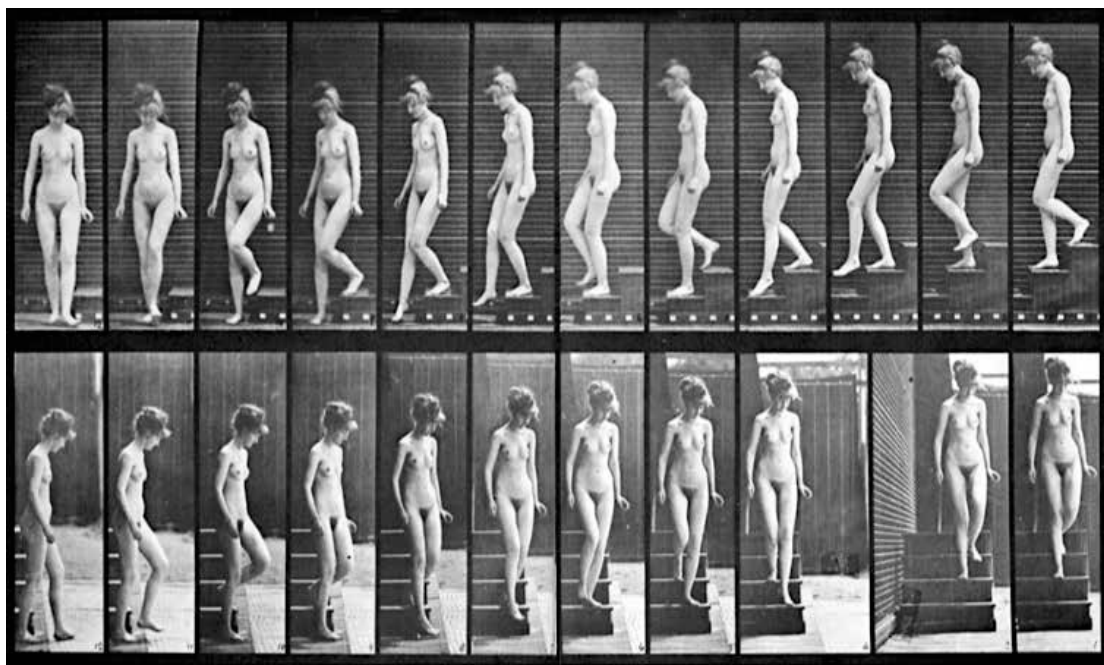
Today is Independence Day, the day we the call aphelion, when the earth is at the furthest edge of the sun's gravitational pull. Like the nation, almost untethered, yearning to snap its reins, break free forever. The parallels are more than just striking: you can feel the orb's growing hauteur, the sun's empirical pique. This is the apoapsis — the highest point in the orbit, where and when the space crew fire the on-board rocket thrusters to increase the orbital altitude at the other end, the periapsis, where the craft drops closest to the surface. The sling-shot moment, the roller derby whip.



This is the furthest we have ever been from the sun – ninety-four point five million miles – yet it is the hottest day of the year: how is this possible? And how do we know this? The Greeks? The Persians? Kepler?

My new sodium polyacrylate underpants fulfill the promise made in the package claim: they look, fit, and feel like real underpants, despite the alarming fact that they only have to be changed every eight hours and can absorb four hundred times their weight and sixty times their volume: two liters of urine, blood, and/or feces. I only wear them when I require full, free-ranging independence: hunting or stalking, or the longer night walks, when Niko and I go as far as the coast and back, or up into the hills, or when writing, or in the deeper phases. Situations requiring maximum absorbency and concentration. Astronauts wear them under their Liquid Cooling and Ventilation Garments, which I have never worn, during spacewalks and extra-vehicular activities (EVA). I wear them under custom-tailored suits.

Telling you this is not embarrassing. I don't think. Senators wear them during filibusters. Strom Thurmond wore them as a Democrat and as a Republican. Their arboreal origins, however, embarrass me. Forests chopped down so I can piss my pants.



Niko is on her knees still, jazzed-up on the pent-up and the caterwaul. Trying to empty, bottom out. Have a drink, I say, but the words are jumbled and slurred. Little thong underpants thing. You can see the cartoon death rays streaming out of her head. Alcohol, its perpetual lazy dead yellow haze, protects me from their deadliness. Alcohol and the Adderall, which has significantly increased my output. "You are writing like a maniac," Niko said yesterday. Meaning what, fast? Or crazy? "I like to write in mania, and revise in depression," Lowell used to say, a riff on Dylan Thomas's "write drunk, edit sober" routine. I don't think Niko reads this. I don't think she can. It's barely legible. Does she telephone people, the way Gigi used to? On the phone all night, one-sided blatherfests. Me, me, me, want, want, want. Everything else about him locked down and pre-recorded since 1963, the year he decided to quit the concert stage (and JFK quit the world stage) and squirreled himself and his hands and his ears away with Lydia in the recording studio. What would he have made of Niko? The smooth-skinned hands and ears and eyes and breasts and sex of Niko? There was nothing live left in him the last twenty years of his life – every cell, every mitochondrion inside every cell, suffocated by bad decisions – except for the all-night phone calls and the late-night donut debates with

Marshall McLuhan. He thought live was degrading, a "trained-horse act," or worse, a blood sport, the audience screaming for the kill, but he never saw someone turn the tables and attack an audience the way Niko does, rip them open, eat their brains, hollow out their hearts, gut them like fish. Gigi was soft – a spoiled punk thirteen-year-old at the end of the war, twenty-three at his American debut. Niko has already played every major room and hall on the continent; she has seen it all and done it all and she is what, barely eighteen? 18+ – the category on the porn sites. Where's the passport? Gigi never knew or saw real violence, never heard it take a musical form – certainly nothing like the hot flawless fury of our little Niko.

Now look at her. Naked as a jaybird. Sated, spent. Barely breathing.

Your mother and I used to look at paintings like these while lying on the museum benches with our heads tilted backwards.

You apparently cannot do this anymore.

Niko wanted to take a three-hour bus to Rancho Santa Fe to see the bulldozed remains of the Heaven's Gate house.



"What the fuck for?" I said. I hate buses.

Niko was wearing a large felt hat. Her hair streamed out of the back of it.

"Why must you use such language?"

"Because I fucking hate buses."

"I am curious," she said.

"About what?"

"About them."

So we went. Three hours there, three hours back, in an evil-smelling Pacific Surfliner loaded with First Amendment loudmouths – communists, Klansmen, pornographers, flag burners and peace activists. The type of people who make free expression taste like a mouthful of shit.



The people? What people? The people in the streets? They don't break into song. They crowd behind barriers. They shout slogans. They pour over the curbs. They gape at the cars in the motorcades. "The people don't want war," Goering said. "Why would some poor slob on a farm want to risk his life in a war when the best that he can get out of it is to come back to his farm in one piece?"

You think you know me. You think you know what I am going to say. It is not about high and low. Schoenberg experimented with different hair styles. He ate hot dogs. He watched baseball on TV. He cut little peanut butter and jelly sandwiches into animal shapes for his kids. He banged out Christmas carols on the harmonium. He liked Frank Sinatra. He wanted to be Bing Crosby. He crooned, for chrissakes.

The people, my eye. If I were a cattle farmer and this were my herd, I would cull the bottom third, they are too far gone, nothing can save them. The rest, touch and go. Build them new barns, give them extra feed and hope for the best. How many can be saved? And saved for what? The slaughterhouse?

Write what you know, said the old man, but what if you know everything? Someone in your Groton outfit needs to re-examine the difference between fact and fiction, and what it means to be a "fully active and contributing participant of the community," and while they're at it a few of the old man's other "fundamental essentials" — objectivity, for example. Distance. Responsibility. Freedom. I wanted you to be a Communist, for chrissakes. I wanted



schoolchildren to sing songs about you, carry pictures of you around their necks. I wanted you to hide in basements and make excuses for Stalin. I wanted you to rebel against everything we stood for, piss on the idea of property and propriety, spit on my memory, shit on my grave.

Instead, you're worse than I am. Just look at yourself.

Gigi was using the upside-down technique years before anyone at Langley — as a mnemonic device, playing a score backwards or turning it around and playing the notes inverted. Most of his Goldberg is based on this technique.

"It works, Luke," he told me once on the phone. "I hear it inside out, and it sticks forever in my craw."

His craw. Whatever was stuck in there was stuck in there by us. We chose the furniture and wallpapered the walls. The dancer and the dance. A chestnut tree is a chestnut tree is a chestnut tree — not its trunk or its bark or its leaves. These are its bits, its parts. The indissoluble unity thing — outside of the music — is horseshit. Yeats died playing charades — died of a heart attack playing a game of charades — did you know this? Stiffened like a scarecrow, twitching and jerking something terrible, and the other people playing kept guessing even after he slumped dead to the floor.



"Write in a way that comes naturally." Ted Kaczynski underlined this one in his copy of *The Elements of Style*, along with "Revise and rewrite," "Do not explain too much," "Omit needless words," and the absurdly obvious, "Be clear." Clarity, clarity, clarity. Echo the halloos. Want, want, want. And the cleansing clarion call itself, worthy of the shofar: "Do not affect a breezy manner. A breezy style is often the work of an egocentric, the person who imagines that everything that pops into his head is of general interest and that uninhibited prose creates high spirits and carries the day." Horseshit. Yeats syringed powdered monkey glands into the veins of his manhood. Did you know this? Proust ate ice cream for the last five months of his life. Herbert Hoover read Chaucer and Dante. "Perhaps what this country needs is a great poem," he is said to have said. "Something to lift people out of fear and selfishness." Perhaps. Haven't we not seen this, already? They are all familiar now. Deja-vooodoo, spilling forth from the dream state. This would make a great license plate:



In France, there are six sides to every story...

hexagonpodcast.substack.com

О музыке, коллажах и марках художника

Александр Лимарев

МУЗЫКА в моей жизни присутствует с того момента, когда я стал, в силу независящих от меня обстоятельств, отличать бытовой шум от какой-нибудь примитивной мелодии, которых в моё далёкое детство было в изобилии и слышались эти мелодии, как у нас говорят, из каждого утюга. Это произошло в самом раннем детстве. Нужно отменить, что современная ситуация изменилась мало, а если и изменилась, то в худшую сторону. Осязаемо деградировала.

Дальше к радио прибавился телевизор, и поток музыки просто обрушился на мои неискущённые уши, но когда в нашей семье появилась радиолка – это был ничем не замутнённый, химически чистый восторг! Со временем у меня появился катушечный магнитофон, но это другая история.

Моя потребность в рисовании ничем не отличалась от потребности первобытного человека фиксировать на стенах пещеры ряд событий своей богатой на приключения жизни. В нашей квартире моими каракулями была испещрена прихожая и часть коридора на уровне моего роста. Сначала родители сопротивлялись, но потом отвели мне в прихожей особое место, где я мог удовлетворять свою потребность в творческом самовыражении.

Свои первые КОЛЛАЖИ я смастерил ещё в детском саду или даже в яслях. Они сохранились, хотя это было уже почти полвека назад. Желание рисовать, вырезать и клеить не прошло и по сей день, только я теперь по большей части, делаю это с помощью компьютера в соответствующих графических редакторах.

В юности я заразился коллекционированием почтовых марок и этот интерес не угас с годами, а трансформировался, с учетом моих профессиональных навыков в изготовление **МАРОК ХУДОЖНИКА**. Стало очевидным, что я могу пополнять свою коллекцию марок уникальными экземплярами собственного производства. Очень удобно, кстати. Рекомендую.

Основой ко всем представленным листам артистампов выбраны ранее созданные цифровые коллажи. Коллажи сделаны в разное время и по разным поводам. Как правило, идея или композиция приходит моментально и затем только уточняется и доводится до приемлемого результата. Важно, чтобы форма соответствовала содержанию и наоборот. Понятно, что этому мгновенному озарению предшествует большая интеллектуальная работа, эмоциональные переживания, подбор необходимой информации и материалов, перебор вариантов и прочее. И поскольку однажды запущенный творческий процесс никогда не прекращается, то моё желание трансформировать коллажи в марки художника стало просто следующим этапом эволюции уже созданных визуальных образов.

В мире существует давняя традиция трибьютов и оммажей – разного рода памятных посвящений известным личностям в различных областях творчества: литературе, изобразительном искусстве, архитектуре, музыке, режиссуре, кинематографе, театре и т.д. В связи с этим у меня возникло желание изготовить серию авторских марок, посвященную культовым личностям музыкальной индустрии. В выборе героев будущих артистампов я руководствуюсь моими личными музыкальными предпочтениями. Один из листов посвящен Фрэнку Винсенту Заппа. Яркий, самобытный, талантливый исполнитель-мультиинструменталист, композитор и неутомимый экспериментатор **ФРЭНК ЗАППА** относится к музыкантам, творчество которых мне особенно импонирует. Знакомство с творчеством Заппы произошло до банальности просто. Я выбрал из фонотеки моего хорошего знакомого альбом (Frank Zappa «Tinsel Town Rebellion», 1981 г.) с сумбурно построй, как мне тогда показалось, обложкой неизвестного мне музыканта. Это была бомба!

- 5 и 3 на игральных костях символизируют его недолгую, но очень плодотворную жизнь.

On Music, Collages and Artist Stamps

By Alexander Limarev

Music has been part of my life since the moment I became able, due to circumstances beyond my control, to differentiate domestic noises from primitive tunes, of which there were plenty, coming from everywhere, even the electric clothing iron*. It happened in very early childhood. In fact, the contemporary state of things has changed very little, and if it has, then only to the worse – it's been palpably degraded.

After the radio there came television, and a stream of music fell upon my unsophisticated ears like a shower; but when our family purchased a Radiola – it was an unclouded, chemically clear delight! Some time later I got a reel-to-reel tape recorder, but that's another story ...

My wish to draw didn't differ much from the wish of a prehistoric man to engrave on cave walls a series of events from their adventure-filled life. The walls of our apartment were similarly covered with my scribble-scrabbles on the level of my height. First my parents resisted, but then I was allotted a special spot in our hall where I could satisfy my need in creative self-expression.

**(iron here: a tool with a flat metal base used to make clothes smooth; an expression to come / to be heard from every iron is used in Russian for the situation when some news/song/movie etc. are in high rotation and can be heard from all possible broadcasting devices)*

It was in the kindergarten or probably even in the nursery school when I first made my collages. I still have them, though it was half a century ago. My wish to draw, cut out and glue hasn't disappeared to this day, though now I mostly do it with the help of a computer and graphic editors.

In my youth I fell ill with collecting postal stamps and this hobby hasn't faded away with time. Moreover, it has transformed into making my own artist stamps. Making artist stamps came as a fascinating discovery for me: now I could extend my collection of stamps with unique samples of my own creation. Very convenient, by the way!

All my artist stamp sheets are based on digital collages I had already created. Collages were made at different moments of my life and on different occasions. As a rule, the idea or the image comes suddenly and afterwards I simply tried to achieve a desired result by making the form correspond to the meaning and vice versa. Clearly, this sudden insight was preceded by hard intellectual work, emotional sensations, search of data and materials, sorting and matching process etc. But once turned on, this creativity mechanism is never turned off: my desire to transform collages into artist stamps has turned into a new stage of evolution of visual images for me.

There is a long-lasting tradition of tributes and homages dedicated to celebrities in different spheres of art: literature, painting, architecture, music, cinematography, theatre etc. Hence is my wish to create a series of artist stamps, dedicated to iconic personalities from music industry. When selecting a famous person for artist stamps I follow my own preferences. This sheet is devoted to Frank Vincent Zappa (December 21, 1940 – December 4, 1993). A skillful multi-instrumentalist performer, a talented composer, an original and inexhaustible experimenter, Frank Zappa is one of those musicians whose creative work I particularly appreciate.

I was first acquainted with Zappa on a trivial occasion: looking through my friend's record collection I chose an album of an unknown musician (Frank Zappa «Tinsel Town Rebellion», 1981) by its weird, messy-bright cover. It blasted like a bomb!

- 5 and 3 on dice symbolize his short but prolific life.



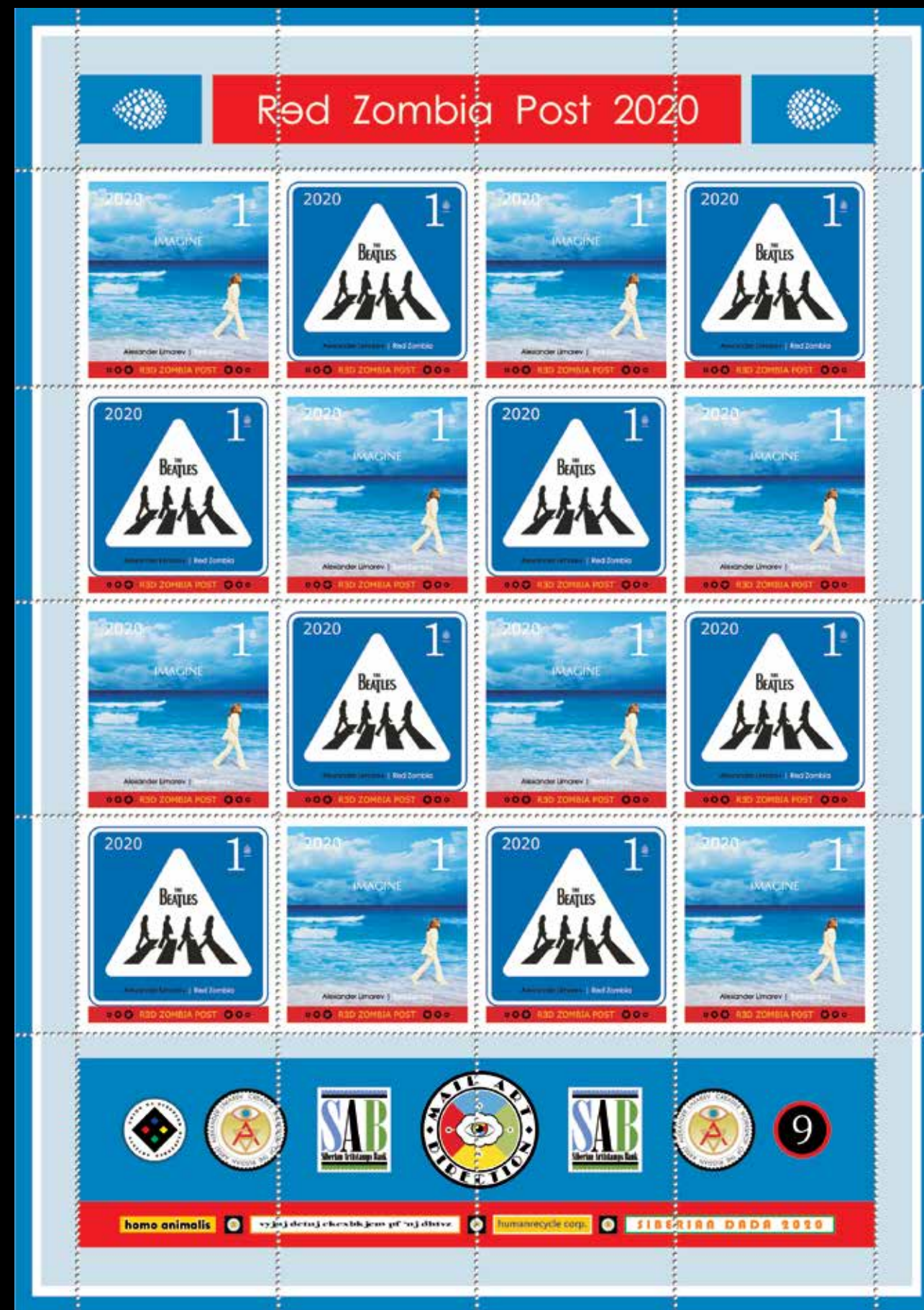
Artist stamp sheet, digital manipulation, A4 (297 x 210 mm), 80 g/m2, full color laser printing, manual perforation, 2021.

БИТЛЗ услышал довольно рано. Чистая, прозрачная, полноцветная, калейдоскопическая, интригующая, уникально мелодичная музыка. Воспринималась как полная противоположность тому, что я слышал до сих пор. Нужно учитывать ситуацию, в которой мне пришлось взрослеть. Холодная война, железный занавес, всепроникающая человеконенавистническая пропаганда и ложь. Всё что просачивалось сквозь этот удушливый, непроницаемый занавес было нещадно купировано, цензурировано и регламентировано. Но какими-то странными неисповедимыми путями на государственной фирме звукозаписи «Мелодия» малыми тиражами выпускались миньоны западных поп и рок исполнителей. На миньоне помещалось от двух до четырех композиций. Одному исполнителю соответствовала одна пластинка. То есть за пять – семь лет я мог услышать только около четырех песен одного исполнителя. Возможно даже не самых популярных. Согласитесь, что сложно было представить себе всю палитру музыкальных жанров целиком. Я перечислю некоторых исполнителей: Creedence Clearwater Revival, The Rolling Stones, Uriah Heep, Deep Purple, The Beatles, Sweet, Middle of the Road, Christie, T. Rex, Smokie, Queen, Bee Gees, Teach-In, Cliff Richard, Elton John, Leo Sayer, Donny Osmond, Lipps Inc., Les Humphries Singers (это то, что было у меня в фонотеке в разное время) и что-то ещё было выпущено из репертуаров зарубежных эстрадных оркестров и исполнителей кантри музыки на дисках гигантах (LP).

- *псевдо дорожный знак с интерпретацией известной обложки альбома The Beatles «Abbey Road», 1969 г.*
- *коллаж навеян трагическим событием (убийством Джона Леннона) 8 декабря 1980 г., Дакота, Нью-Йорк, США. Белый цвет, или «сиро», считается священным цветом богов. Он символизирует духовную и физическую чистоту. Однако в буддизме белый цвет также означает смерть.*

I heard The Beatles early on in my life. Clear, transparent, full-color, kaleidoscopic, intriguing, unique melodious music. I perceived their music as something completely different to what I had heard before. It is necessary to take into consideration the circumstances under which I was growing up. Cold war, iron curtain, pervasive inhumane misanthropic propaganda and lies. Everything that squeezed through this stifling impenetrable curtain was mercilessly cut, censored and controlled. However, via some incredible way, the state audio-recording company “Melodia” managed to issue in small numbers vinyl mini-records of Western pop and rock performers. There were from two to four music tracks on them. One musician per one mini-record. Thus, in five to seven years I could hear only about four songs of one singer. Perhaps, not the most popular songs either. As you may guess, it was next to impossible to imagine the whole variety of genres. Let me enumerate only a few musicians: Creedence Clearwater Revival, The Rolling Stones, Uriah Heep, Deep Purple, The Beatles, Sweet, Middle of the Road, Christie, T. Rex, Smokie, Queen, Bee Gees, Teach-In, Cliff Richard, Elton John, Leo Sayer, Donny Osmond, Lipps Inc., Les Humphries Singers (these were in my record collection at different times). Something else that they were issuing on LPs was some samples from foreign dance orchestras and country music.

- *pseudo-road sign interpreting The Beatles «Abbey Road» iconic album cover (1969).*
- *this collage is inspired by a tragic event (John Lennon’s murder) on December 8, 1980, Dakota, New York, the USA. White color is considered a sacred color of gods. It symbolized the chastity of the body and the spirit. However in Buddhism white is the color of death.*



Я не особо разделяю коллективное творчество КУИН и сольное творчество фронтмена группы - ФРЕДДИ МЭРКБЮРИ. Мы были очевидцами какого-то совершенно феноменального симбиоза высокоодаренных, харизматичных личностей. О том, что состав группы представлял собою творческий союз невероятно талантливых и профессиональных музыкантов говорит тот факт, что после кончины Фредди Мэркьюри так и не нашлось ему достойной замены. Хотя были предприняты многие попытки. Мне нравится все без исключения альбомы группы и сольные альбомы в том числе. То же я могу сказать и о Битлз. С той только разницей, что тут у меня есть личные предпочтения – сольные альбомы Ринго Старра.

Очень сложно сейчас передать мои переживания, ощущения, которые я испытывал в то, теперь уже очень далёкое время, в основном по тем, если можно так сказать техническим причинам, описанным выше. Можно назвать это катарсисом, началом детоксикации моего тогда подросткового Я от яда всепроникающей пропаганды и повседневно навязываемой некрофильской эстетики.

Могу назвать себя меломаном. За все прошедшие годы услышано много музыки, чему я очень рад, конечно, но в данной ситуации, в режиме воспоминаний, мне это никак не помогает. Это было. Что то вспомнилось, что то забылось, что то дофантазировано. Да будет так.

**уважительная шуточная интерпретация.*

I do not differentiate between collective creative work of Queen and that of their frontman, Freddie Mercury. We have witnessed a sort of absolutely phenomenal symbiosis of exclusively gifted, charismatic personalities. After Freddie Mercury's death it was impossible to find a substitute for him, which proves the fact that this was a union of incredibly talented and highly professional musicians. I'm fond of all their albums without exception, both group and solo. The same with the Beatles. The only difference in the latter case: Ringo Starr's solo albums are my personal favorites.

It is rather hard to define feelings and emotions I experienced at the time which is now long past. One can call it catharsis, beginning of detoxication of my teenage self from the poison of pervasive propaganda and daily imposed necrophiliac aesthetics.

I can call myself a music lover. I have heard a lot of tunes and songs in my life, which is a great joy. However, under the present circumstances, in the memo mode, it doesn't seem to help at all. It used to be. Something comes to mind, something is gone, something is a bunch of fantasy and past images. Let it be.

**honorific jocular interpretation.*



Artist stamp sheet, digital manipulation, A4 (297 x 210 mm), 80 g/m2, full color laser printing, manual perforation. 2020.

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Александр Лимарев, художник-фрилансер, мэйл-арт художник, куратор, поэт, фотограф из Сибири (Россия). Участник более 1000 международных проектов и выставок. Его работы находятся в частных и музейных коллекциях 72 стран. <https://www.facebook.com/alexander.limarev.7>



The Plastic Ono Band maquette (1968) with Yoko Ono and John Lennon, page 19 of John & Yoko/Plastic Ono Band, photo by Ethan Russell © Yoko Ono Lennon

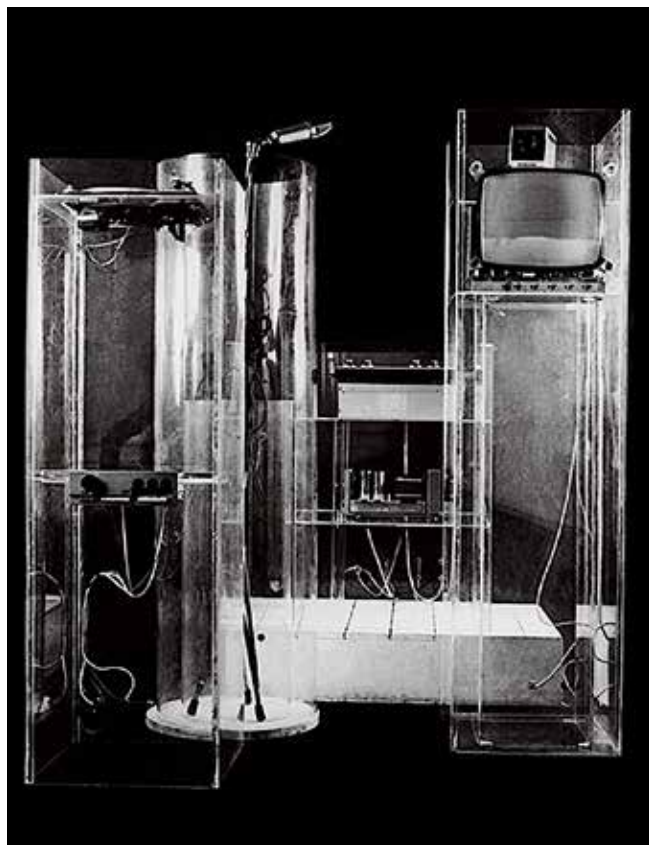
John & Yoko Plastic Ono Band Thames & Hudson

By Joseph Nechvatal

The Plastic Ono Band multi-media sculpture, photo by Iain Macmillan © Yoko Ono Lennon

In the Beatle's song *The Ballad of John and Yoko* (1969) John Lennon and Yoko Ono tell the story of their ill-fated Paris wedding. They decided to marry in Paris and the two chartered a private jet in England and flew to the French capital on March 16 to tie the knot. Unfortunately the French authorities refused them permission to wed – they had not legally lived in France long enough, so they married instead in Gibraltar (a British protectorate) on March 20. Following this well-publicized wedding – based on a 1968 multi-media machine maquette called *The Plastic Ono Band* – the couple decided their future art-music endeavors would be credited to that conceptual art vehicle.

The Plastic Ono Band was conceived of by Ono in 1967 for a Berlin art show. Her concept was of an automated,



staged multi-media music presentation. The maquette was constructed by Lennon out of small found plastic containers, including a cassette box. When fully-realized, *The Plastic Ono Band* consisted of four Perspex plastic acrylic container objects housing electronic equipment – Three tall containers, with the other, a shorter square figure at the back – like a seated drummer at his kit. Encased within the movable transparent structures of *The Plastic Ono Band* were an amped tape recorder, a closed-circuit TV camera, a record player with amp, and a miniature light show and loud speaker – stocked by electrician-artist Alexis Mardras of Apple Electronics. According to Lennon's drawn specs, *The Plastic Ono Band* assemblage needed enough sound producing power to be the loudest band on earth.

The Plastic Ono Band movable media project should properly be considered within the context of intermedia: the term used already in the mid-1960s by Fluxus artist Dick Higgins to describe inter-disciplinary art activities. Another probable influence is Fluxus artist Nam June Paik, when considering his prescient *Exposition of Music: Electronic Television* exhibition (1963) at Galerie Parnass in Wuppertal. Going further back, there is also the precedent set by experimental musician John Cage's *Williams Mix* (1952), a piece of electronic music composed using chance operations derived from the I-Ching that was Cage's first composition for tape recorder. *Williams Mix* was first performed from only quarter-inch magnetic tape in Urbana, Illinois in 1953, where its *musique concrète* sounds were played on four stereo tape machines connected to eight speakers. No human performers were required. So Higgins, Paik and Cage had already demonstrated artistic uses for electronic media presentations that marked the beginning of long careers during which they foresaw and actively influenced the technological, philosophical and social development of the new media: television, video and computers. Paik's idea of an anti-technological technology set the stage for *The Plastic Ono Band*'s an-

ti-pop pop. And when one thinks of Fluxus-related precedents for a Plastic Ono Band-type music presentation capable of creating visceral sound presentations without the necessity of musicians, La Monte Young's continuous and autonomous electronic drones come to mind – *The Dream House*. Beginning in 1962, Young had begun formulating the concept of a continuous sound environment requiring no human performance, but facilitating it, if desired. In a 1964 program note for this Theatre of Eternal Music project, Young describes the *Dream House* as that which will allow music to propel itself by its own momentum.

The Plastic Ono Band realized maquette had several aspects that marked out its short but prolific oeuvre. The flat transparent image, sculptural form, and media machine assemblage was an aesthetic taking root in the early 1960s. For example, up-scaled maquettes played a key aspect within minimal-conceptual art. Sculptor Tony Smith started creating small sculptural maquettes (with the help of his three daughters) using agglomerations of tetrahedrons and octahedrons while recovering from an automobile accident at home in 1961.

The use of maquette-based scaling is fundamental to moving from the industrial mechanical age into the speed-info-mechanic-electronic approach towards culture, marked by the promotion of project-based on-time scalable intelligent apparatuses. Maquettes, boxes and conceptual plans typified the minimal art movement that Ono had been enthusiastically taking part in where art works often aimed at escaping narrative in favor of anti-subjective formalist explorations. In that sense Ono was to be both modestly innovative and very influential in guiding *The Plastic Ono Band* project to its fragile physical fruition – apparently the media sculpture was presented once in London at the Chelsea Town Hall on July 3 in 1969 on stage at the modestly attended Apple Records launch party for *The Plastic Ono Band* record single *Give Peace a Chance*. Judging by photos, it was rather overwhelmed by a huge collage display by designer Christine Marsh of

well-known faces hung behind it. Though the live camera feed showed images of members of the audience incorporated into *The Plastic Ono Band* sculpture on stage.

Give Peace a Chance, an anti-war song written by Lennon (credited to Lennon–McCartney), was recorded live with Ono, Tommy Smothers, Timothy Leary, Petula Clark, Dick Gregory, Allen Ginsberg, and others during the famous Lennon-Ono Plastic Ono Band *Bed-In* media happening in Montreal. *Give Peace a Chance* was the first solo single issued by Lennon, and was released with *The Plastic Ono Band* sculpture printed on the record sleeve, while Lennon was still a member of the Beatles. *Give Peace a Chance* became something of an anthem of the American anti-war movement during the early-1970s.



Plastic Ono Band's Give Peace a Chance single issued by Apple Records with The Plastic Ono Band media sculpture printed on the record sleeve

As the video feed wished to suggest, The Plastic Ono Band project's original aim tried incorporating the Fluxus values of 'welcome all' interactivity by promoting a "You Are The Plastic Ono Band" attitude. I think this very Fluxus at-

titude was a central part of Lennon's attraction (and contribution) to The Plastic Ono Band idea. That his insufferably bloated reputation, so often the result of the excesses of celebrity culture and its attendant cult of personality, could be self-combated by evoking a sense of collective impersonality that could be used to oppose forms of assumed technological progress – namely the use of the reduction of private property utility in favor of collective incoherent chaos and caprice (basically the hippie free-share revolution) and resistance to cultural expectations. Though it would prove highly impractical for famous wealthy artists like Lennon, The Plastic Ono Band placed emphasis on encouraging an impersonal social realm for open counter-cultural culture.

Within the conceptual-minimal movement of the mid-60s, autobiographical symbolism was generally regarded as corny by artists like Robert Morris, who rejected the presence of a singular and particular hand in favor of impersonal formal qualities that were perceived as new and mesmerizing. Ono's Zen-Fluxus conceptual-minimalist films did that too – like *Fluxfilm no. 14: One* (a.k.a. *Match*) (1966): A silent 4:30 minute piece shot on high speed film by Fluxus photographer par excellence Peter Moore in which in super slow-motion a wooden match is struck.

Also consider the cold formal abstraction of an ostensibly biographical piece called *Self-Portrait* (1969), Ono's rarely seen 42-minute film that unflinchingly frames the semi-erect penis of Lennon in its states of tumescence and de-tumescence. This brio but *sang froid* approach to only framing a bit of her lover (though the title *Self-Portrait* suggests this is more of a Lennon-Ono Plastic Ono Band galvanized project than a film by Ono) is the opposite of mawkish sentimentality.

Reintroducing formalism to a warmer autobiographical intent is the short Apple Film *Two Virgins*, the second John and Yoko film collaboration. Again, using Ono's typical slow-motion approach, it beautifully merges John and Yoko's heads together, before the couple face each other. John and Yoko's LSD-influenced intimate noise album *Unfinished Music No. 1: Two Virgins*, created the night before they first made love, provides the ambient abstract soundtrack, and lends the film a mobile and marvelous mood. *Two Virgins* may be their most successful collaboration in terms of balanced equity. Without it there is probably no Plastic Ono Band.

The Plastic Ono Band congregated structure coincided with Lennon's tumultuous personal and artistic transformations occurring around the breakup of The Beatles, and is the unearthed archival subject of the *John & Yoko/Plastic Ono Band* book by Yoko Ono and John Lennon, published by Thames & Hudson Ltd. The book is a celebration of the couple's bond and a product of their collective creative energies that rotated around their mutual interests in radical politics, experimental film, and avant-garde musique concrète audio art – best demonstrated with their astonishing indulgent aforementioned *Unfinished Music No. 1: Two Virgins* and *Unfinished Music No. 2: Life With The Lions* recordings.

Ono's and Lennon's interactive *Plastic Ono Band* media sculpture, and unfixed approach to musical participants, encapsulated and extended their ambition to expand into society their no holds barred creative union. The book concentrates on these days: Their early, radically tender years together, roughly between 1968 and 1971. Certainly it was a period drenched in drugs, but also focused on sincere searches for love, truth, meaning and peace. In that sense the book can-

not fail but to un-cynically inject a sense of the possibility for progressive change and new viable lifestyle alternatives into our conservative and confined times.



John and Yoko on the roof of Apple photo by David Nutter © Yoko Ono Lennon

The generously scaled book is beautifully designed and produced and is packed with evocative and revealing letters and recorded conversations, but rightfully takes *The Plastic Ono Band* apparatus and Lennon's handwritten song lyrics as central. The book also does a good job exploring Ono-Lennon's DIY all-inclusive hippie cultural views that they bravely/naively took up in the face of Lennon's crippling celebrity status, heightened further during this highly charged post-Beatles transformative period.

The dominant black and white look of the book is gorgeous and it rivets the eye on Plastic Ono Band first-person recollections, particularly when Lennon talks about his painful relationship with his parents. Listening to the relevant Plastic

Ono Band tracks makes for a rich stay-at-home cultural experience. It is heartwarming when Ono speaks touchingly about falling in love with Lennon. We also hear Lennon's important psychic experiences within Arthur Janov's Primal Scream Therapy – something central to The Plastic Ono Band expressive project.



John & Yoko/Plastic Ono Band book

For added flavor, there are short written contributions from Petula Clark, Ringo Starr, George Harrison and Eric Clapton; and many previously unseen photographs by Annie Leibovitz, Ethan Russell, Richard DiLello, Iain Macmillan, John Reader and David Nutter. The book ends with reminiscences of those musicians who performed on The Plastic Ono Band albums and with short text contributions from Leibovitz and Jann Wenner of *Rolling Stone Magazine*.

Though begun as a conceptual art project – interesting in its own right – the emphasis in the book is on the music. The Plastic Ono Band proper delivered two solo music albums in 1970 by the pair, both recorded with the participation of Ringo Starr (drums), Klaus Voormann (bass), and a bit of Billy Preston (piano). Lennon's highly-acclaimed disk is an intense dive into self-demythification. Co-produced by Lennon, Ono and Phil Spector, it is widely regarded as Lennon's best solo album, due to its raw, stripped-back-to-basics lyrics that are matched to an equally

just-the-essentials musical rock-blues style. (John Lennon/Plastic Ono Band preceding the also acclaimed *Imagine* solo record that was released in 1971.) Magnificent Lennon songs on John Lennon/Plastic Ono Band include *Mother, Isolation, Working Class Hero, God* (with Preston's gospel-tinged piano and the then shocking line "I don't believe in Beatles"), the nursery rhyme-like *My Mummy's Dead* and the deliciously delicate *Look at Me*.

Ono's esoteric, improvisational and more experimental album *Yoko Ono/Plastic Ono Band* was released simultaneously with Lennon's – thus begging comparison. From the standard (popular taste) point of view, *Yoko Ono/Plastic Ono Band* is often considered pretentious and/or abysmally vapid. One could stupidly say that of Kurt Schwitters' transcendent *Ursonate* vocalizations too, I guess, but from a noise music

appreciation point of view, *Yoko Ono/Plastic Ono Band* can be viscerally compelling, and as majestic and gorgeous as the roaring ocean.

Ono created tracks tinged with an eroticism that ranged from subtle insinuation to salaciousness by surpassing tonal expectations with atonal saturation. Some can be musically accommodating to an altered state of emotional scale and time not dissimilar to the John Coltrane *Vigil* cut on *Transition* from the same year. Certainly Ono's record appears more musically daring and original than Lennon's when seen from the experimental free jazz, downtown art music scene, and/or free feminist points of view. Lennon, though once an art student, was not the most adventuresome as far as The Beatles' use of *musique concrète*. Listen to Paul McCartney's *Liverpool Sound Collage* CD (that goes back to 1963) if you have any doubts who was.

Yoko Ono/Plastic Ono Band was no art music fluke, and was soon followed up by the *Fly* recording in 1971 that has on it the track *Open*

Your Box (first released as the B-side of Lennon's single *Power to the People*). I love the way it constructs a dissonant noise happening in hyper-space seemingly shrunk to fit inside an opened bag (apropos Ono's self-described Bagism performances). Lyrics include "Open your box, open your trousers, open your sex, open your legs, open open open open open ...". But compared to her Plastic Ono Band album, *Fly* has other less interesting/more accessible tracks on it like *Mindtrain*. With that track, Ono continued to try to push the pop envelope without getting close to making popular music. A fool's task. Yet I appreciate what Ono does on both recordings (both produced by Lennon, by the way), as it seems to me she was conveying through her pained yelps and glossolalia-guttural Kabuki-style shrieks, murmurs, tremulous wailings and scat jazz vocalizations – volatile female emotions beyond normal human language. That or the pleasures of the erotic female in the throes of orgasm. (I think of the *Why* and *Why Not* cuts here from *Yoko Ono/Plastic Ono Band*).

Though usually regarded as an affront to the ear, some of the cuts on *Yoko Ono/Plastic Ono Band*, like *Why Not*, and *Greenfield Morning I Pushed an Empty Baby Carriage All Over the City*, can actually be hauntingly beautiful if one concentrates on sticking with them and listening to them with an open mind. Like the great Diamanda Galás, Ono's vocal soundings – on both tracks – might seem offensive and objectionable to some, but after a time, the ear-mind takes little further offense and a euphoric acceptance, verging on enjoyment.

Ono is far more experimentally valuable, and certainly more artistically daring than Lennon, within The Plastic Ono Band. Lennon's stark autobiographical blues rock music is tightly structured and harmonious, making it commercially acceptable. Ono's cut *AOS*, however, recorded with The Ornette Coleman Quartet, is an excellent piece of noise music that merits repeated listening by the artistically adventurous. But for me, the best Ono Plastic Ono Band track is *The South Wind* because of its delicate, phantasmagoric treatment of noise. Ono's vocal output on *Don't Worry, Kyoko (Mummy's Only Looking for*

Her Hand in the Snow) (The Plastic Ono Band, 1969 *Live Peace in Toronto*) is notable in that it uses a vocal atonal dissonance while the other musicians – Lennon and Clapton on electric guitars – display too little.

What works best with her voice are the hand-made Fluxus musical machines of Joe Jones, who co-produced the *Fly* record together with Lennon and Ono. The album *Fly* contains three confounding cuts with Joe Jones' automated music machines: *Airmale, Don't Count the Waves* and *You*. *Airmale* was used in 1971 as the soundtrack to The Plastic Ono Band film *Erection*; a time-compression film shot over a period of 18 months showing the sped-up construction of a hotel in London in 19 minutes.

Fluxus artist-musician Joe Jones does not get a mention in the John & Yoko/Plastic Ono Band book, but had important input during the New York Plastic Ono Band period, not only co-producing the album *Fly*, but presenting a two-month long Plastic Ono Band Fluxus festival in his JJ Music Store (aka Tone Deaf Music Store) at 18 North Moore Street. From April 18 to June 12 in 1970, Plastic Ono Band enjoyed *carte blanc* there, presenting a series of Fluxus art events and concerts called *Grapefruit Flux-Banquet*, promoted with a poster designed by Fluxus leader George Maciunas.



John and Yoko masks designed by George Maciunas (1970) worn by participants in the *Come as John & Yoko* event at the *Grapefruit Fluxbanquet* party for the *John & Yoko Fluxfest + Fluxus art festival*



1970 Ono Lennon GRAPEFRUIT FLUXBANQUET publicity poster designed by George Maciunas

Perhaps some Plastic Ono Band participants have been forgotten, as it featured an ever-changing line-up of musicians; including Clapton, Preston, Voormann, Starr, Alan White, George Harrison and Jim Keltner. Clapton's electric slide guitar contributions to the 1969 *Live Peace in Toronto* album stand out, particularly on the live version recording of *Don't Worry Kyoko (Mummy's Only Looking for Her Hand in the Snow)*. Lennon's fantastically gut-wrenching rendition of *Yer Blues*, a song he originally issued as a Beatle on *The White Album* (1968) is on that Plastic Ono Band *Live Peace in Toronto* album, too.

If you like counter-cultural art-music historical detail (as I do) – did you know The Plastic Ono Band song *Cold Turkey* is not about withdrawal from heroin addiction, but rather from methadone addiction (bizarrely Ono and Lennon skipped over smack and got straight into methadone) – be assured that the *John & Yoko/Plastic Ono Band* book is interspersed with lots of it, along with hundreds of photographs, John's handwritten lyrics and funky drawn cartoons and reproductions of posters used to promote The Plastic Ono Band.

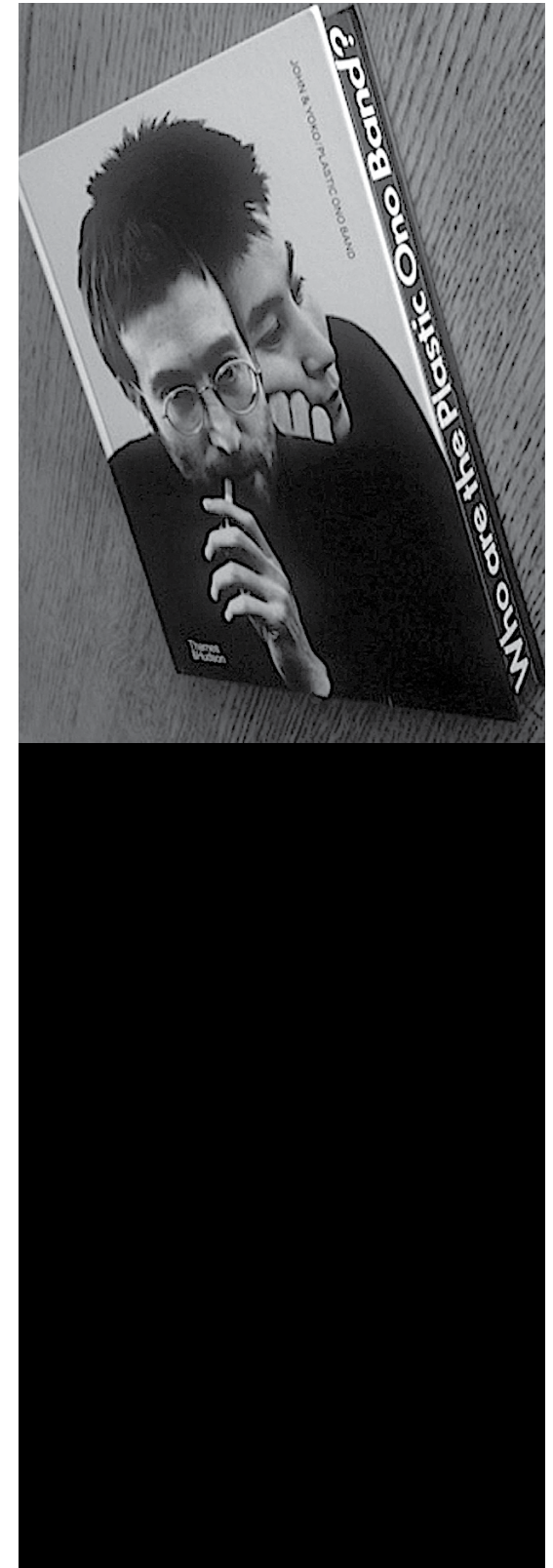
After enjoying and digesting all of it, I found in the end a great contradictory tension in The Plas-

tic Ono Band project. First, the chosen confines of The Plastic Ono Band's minimalistic aesthetic form was radically contradicted by its ideological, intentionally open-to-all, free ethic. These two aims appear as mutually exclusive to me. This contradiction is then complicated further as The Plastic Ono Band's cool impersonal aesthetic is perversely ignored (or counterpointed) by Lennon's musical participation: his songs doubled down on personal autobiographical qualities, even while using the bare bones minimalism of a basic trio and by avoiding the sophisticated studio production techniques that made *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* the Beatle masterpiece that it is. Perhaps Ono and Lennon, already weary from Lennon's worldwide fame, missed the irony of the parallels between The Plastic Ono Band (a fabricated collective/installation/concert mechanism) and *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* (another fabricated imaginary group). Certainly no such comparison is drawn in this Ono-approved book. But to me, both faux groups conveyed longings for forms of de-personalized idea-based art-music that were, in fact, no longer possible for Lennon to make after Beatlemania. What remained was an illusion of critique and a phantom of free creation.

"To create is to lighten, to unburden life, to invent new possibilities of life."

– Gilles Deleuze, *Pure Immanence: Essays on A Life*

John & Yoko/Plastic Ono Band
by Yoko Ono and John Lennon
288page hardback book
published by Thames & Hudson Ltd October 2020
Reviewed by Joseph Nechvatal
Published at *Whitehot Magazine of Contemporary Art*
<https://whitehotmagazine.com/articles/john-yoko-plastic-ono-band/4863>





Jeff Ross : The Music of Posters

“Posters posters, I have been a fan of music posters since I was a teenager. I started screen printing posters in the late ‘80s/early 90’s. I came up with the “Sub Pop Live At” series remembering record store promo posters with a blank space at the bottom of the poster for local shows to be written in – ‘Appearing at...’ The Nirvana and Mudhoney posters were the first ones I made for Sub Pop. The rest is rock ‘n’ roll history. I will be working on a book of my work from those days.”

– Jeff Ross

www.jeffrossart.com

IG : @jeffrossart

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC1En-zMltR2P7GHPLpfZlw>



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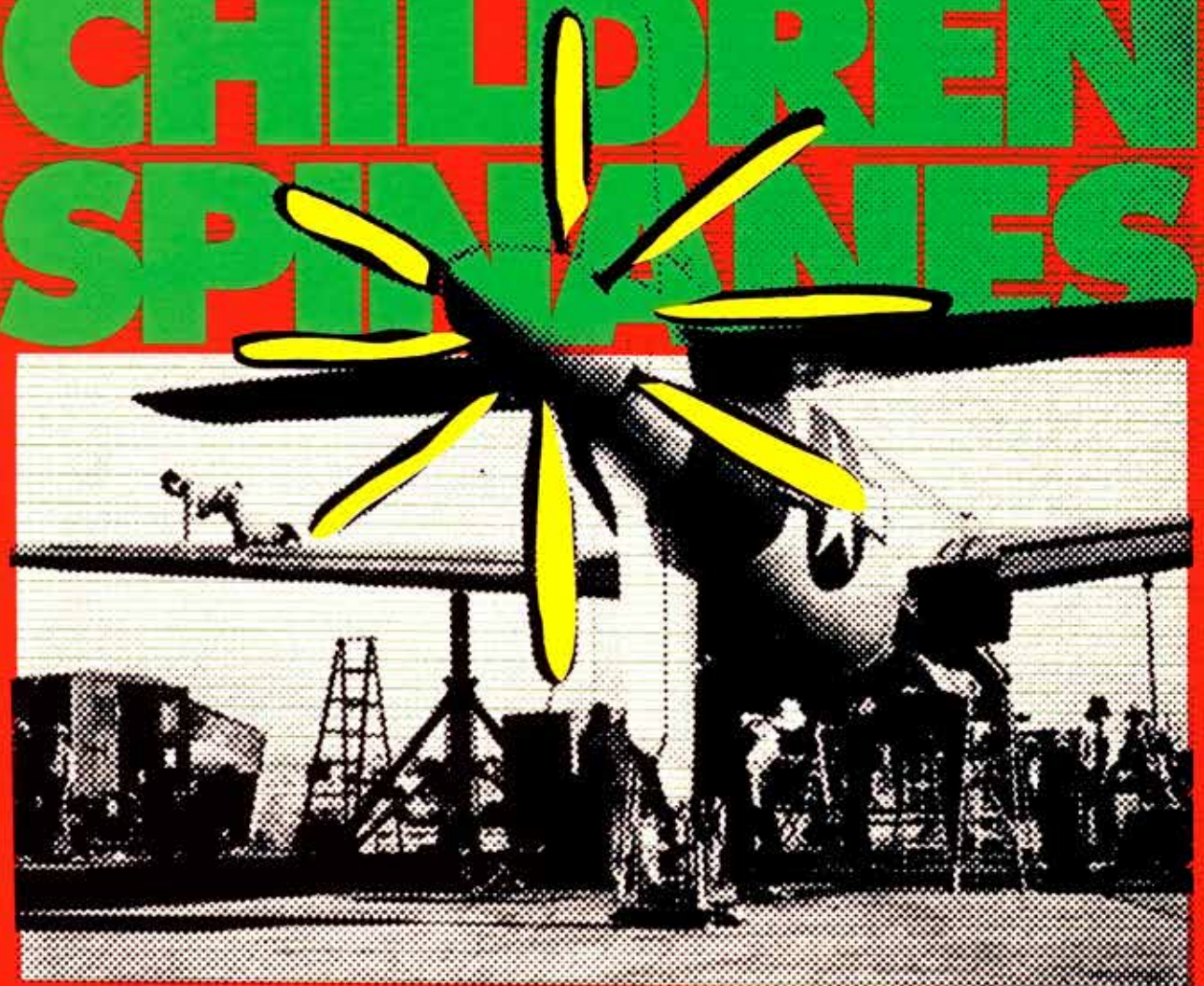


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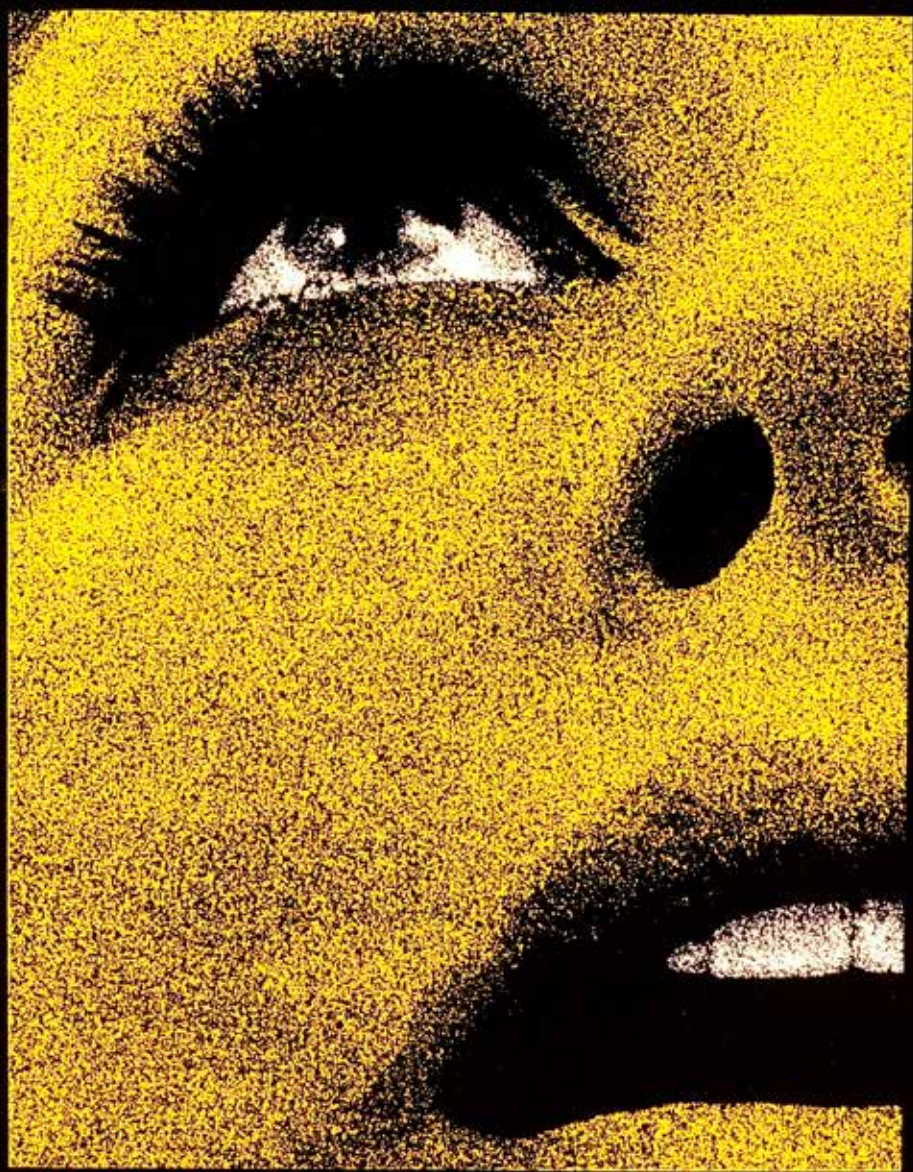
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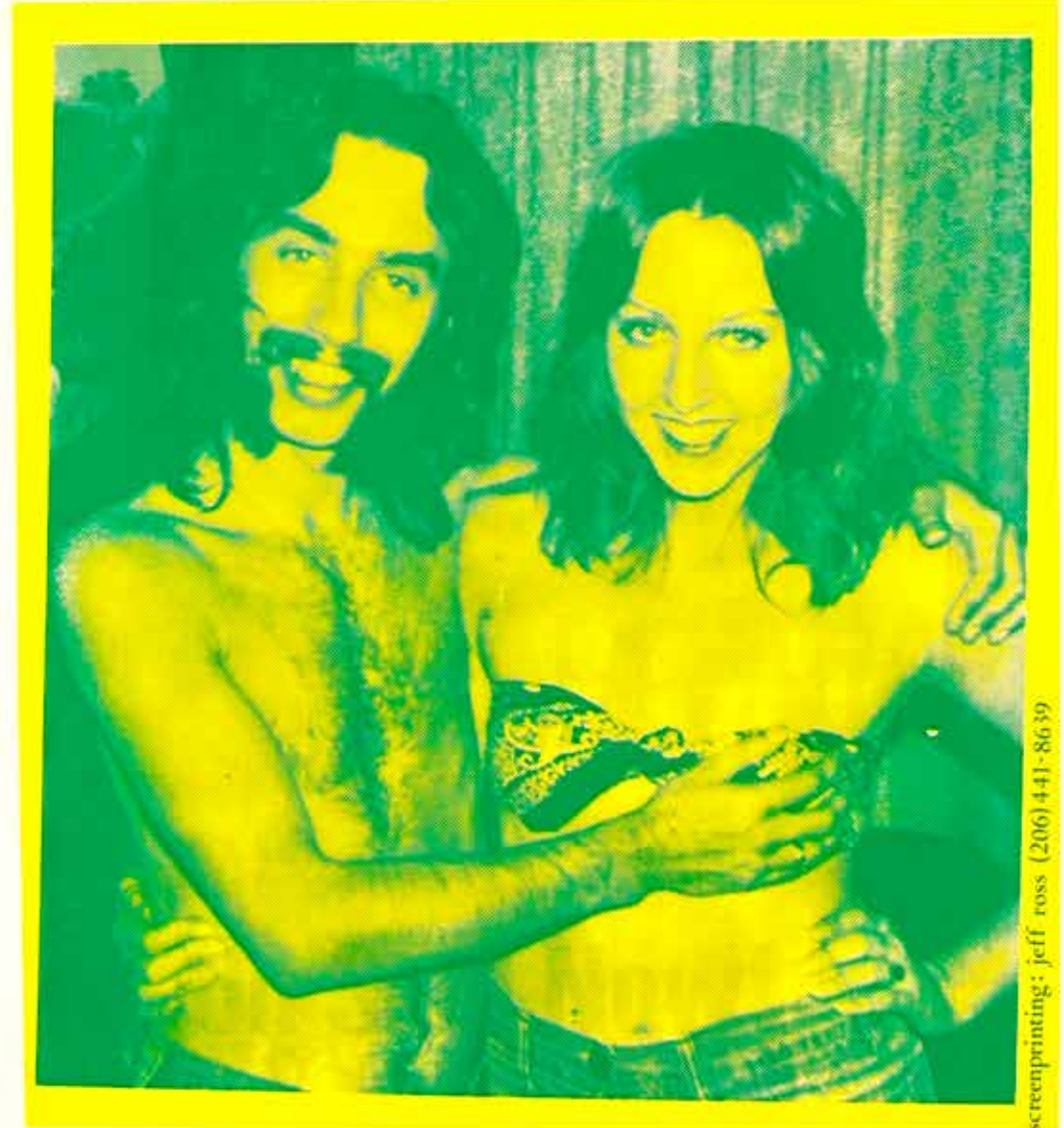
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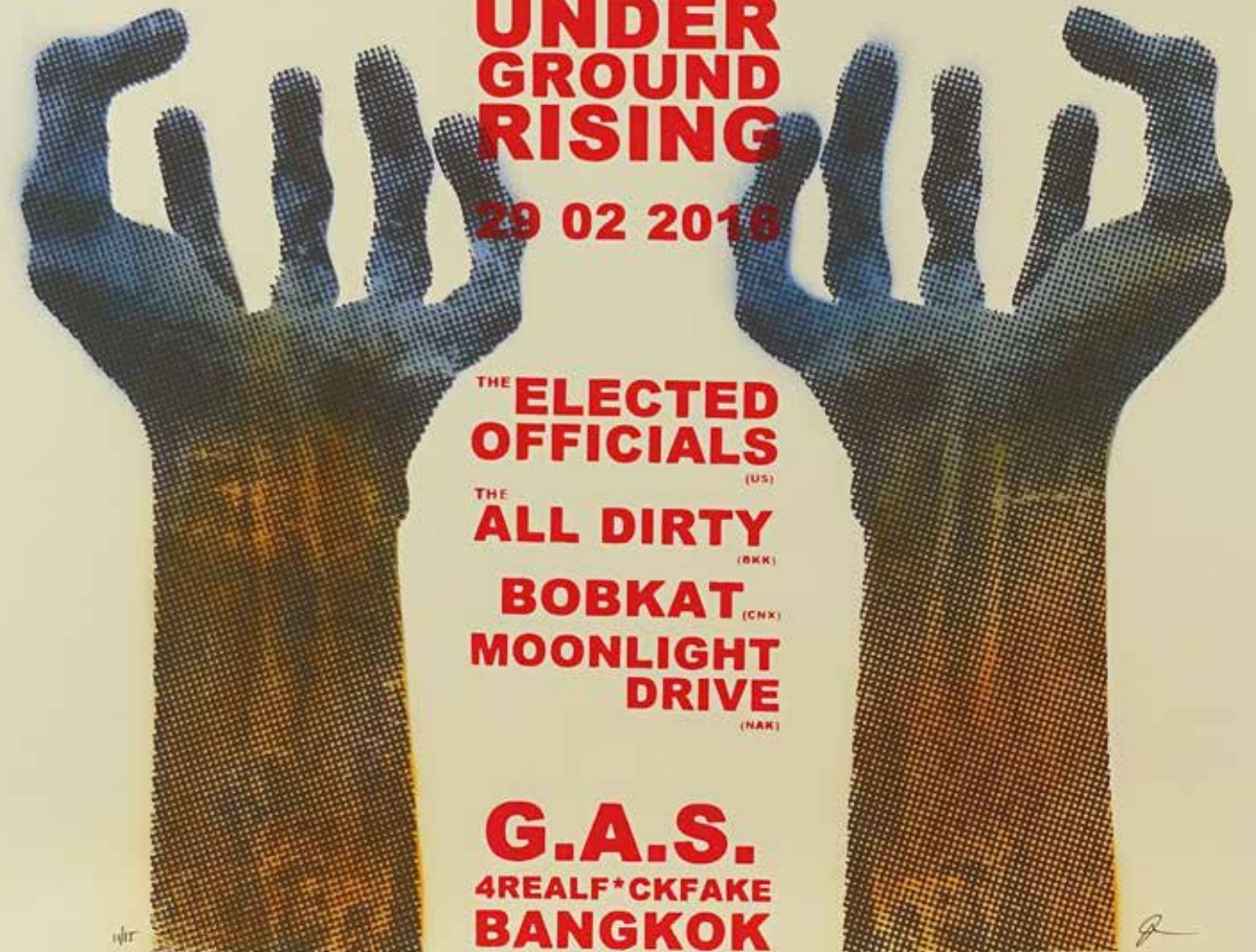
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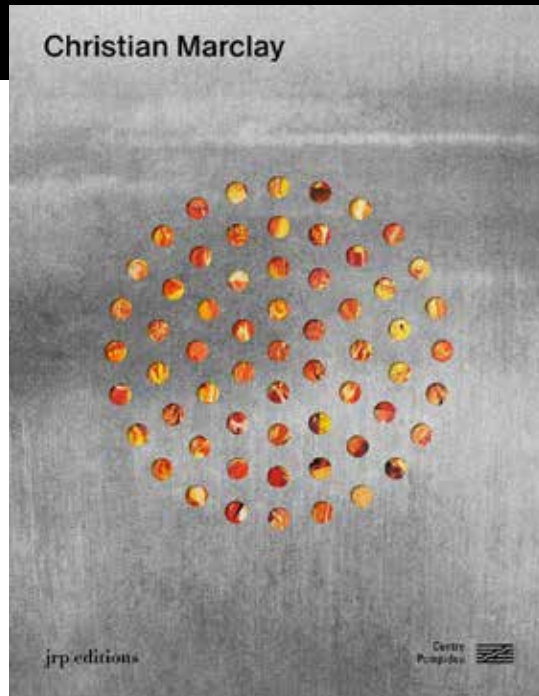


LA
CAVE
des Papilles



Christian Marclay: Chewing on Ear Candy

By Matthew Rose



Rifling through Christian Marclay's recent Centre Pompidou catalog, the essay titles sounded like record bin vintage 45s: "Ephemera" ... "More Encores" ... "The Eye That Looks at the Hand Holding the Ear" ... "The View of Sound." My favorite was Curator Jean-Pierre Criqui's piece "...The Melody of Things" cited from 2018. Criqui's catalog essay/ conversation with Marclay, "Noise, Silence, Art & Life," is served up on a pair of cymbals – a colorful Smörgåsbord for the ears.

The Swiss-born American artist has created a unique space for his work at the crowded intersection of sight and sound. A scratched record found on the streets of Boston in 1979 inspired the launch of Marclay's Duchampian-flavored band, *The Bachelors, even*.

Taking a cue from Fluxus, punk rock and the disco craze, Marclay strapped on his invention, a turntable PhonoGuitar and began to perform with it in downtown 1980s New York City clubs. He soon helped launch a cottage industry: Dance Club DJs. [Listen to Marclay performing at Roulette in 1987: <https://paulacoopergallery-studio.com/posts/christian-marclay-performs-at-roulette>].



Marclay performing at Roulette in 1987

The artist's exploration of music genres, random noise, sound and their attendant visual content has expanded in all directions at once with films, prints, paintings, scores, altered objects, recordings and performances indicating there is little Marclay won't seize and wield – from music staffs to instruments lashed to pickup trucks and obscene quantities of recorded disks, tapes, digital widgets and all kinds of music packaging.

His everywhere-at-once catalog of works is imbued with a unique sense of playfulness, an art rife with puns, double entendres and exuberant visual wordplay. The 1984 piece "Record Players" (video), for example, shows

a group of people literally playing with records in a room, producing sounds as they paddle the disks about in the air or crash them against each other. Marclay said in "London," a film about his work: "I like to use the potential of images to create music."



I first encountered Christian Marclay's work in New York City around 1991, when at the Tom Cugliani Gallery dozens of "exquisite corpses" — *Body Mixes* — covered the walls: Pop LPs sewn together, riffed on the frisky visuals of sirens and crooners Grace Jones, David Bowie, Diana Ross, Michael Jackson, Jim Morrison – even Arthur Fielder. These collages are low but effective couture, and perform as musical transgender hook ups: half-waltz, half-tango, half-bunny hop (I know, it doesn't add up), offering up a surreal, readymade sexual salad.

Marrying the past to the present is a Marclayan brand of recycling, and in reusing the material products of music, a borderland emerges where telephones ring endlessly in the air and the land is carpeted with LPs. Simple, stunningly familiar and wonderfully strange, these concrete music lessons could be labeled "How to hear with your eyes."



Tape Fall, Marclay's 1991 Whitney Biennial contribution, consisted of a brown audio tape unspooling from a reel-to-reel player perched atop a scaffold at the uppermost level in the museum's staircase. As one climbed, a narrow band of tape was visible as it descended through the stairwell's open shaft; the sound of some enchanted water gurgling above beckoned climbers to its source. This secret, resonant plashing in the urban confines of Manhattan's Upper East Side served up a striking simplicity that, for me, continues to echo. A prior iteration of *Tape Fall* in 1989 at the New Museum of Contemporary

Art in New York, necessitated 187 reels of tape that were collected at the exhibition's end and bottled in an edition of 150.

Born into a Pop art culture infused with chance and experimentation, Marclay's pieces often involve entire museum spaces or find themselves represented in small, unadorned altered objects. His ideas are both philharmonic and telescopic, and while his intentions seem clear enough – the search for meaning in his designs and installations are multilayered and almost always mysterious. Marclay seems to want the viewer to ask: "How did this get this way? Did you hear that? Did you see that?" His power is to tap into the innocence and wonder of listening, hearing, seeing and, by extension, being.



Wall / 2019, Installation in situ, peinture à tableau / peinture blanche / craie, Christian Marclay, MACBA, Barcelone, ES

Marclay takes his job seriously. He's a teacher, a community organizer and a skilled entertainer in how he will play a room. *Chalkboard* (2010) featured a massive music sheet wall installed at The Whitney Museum of American Art. Visitors were invited to scribble "notes" and/or scores across a giant curved chalkboard wall. Some musicians arrived afterwards to interpret the pieces in a concert.

Endless Column (1998), a totem of hundreds of LPs stacked three meters high makes it impossible to read the labels and know what these records are about. In any case, this pillar of

plastic stands silenced – a measure of its musical potential and the metaphors abound: Tower Records, the defunct music retailer. The cylindrically-shaped Capital Record Building in Hollywood or the Leaning Tower of Pisa or any number of sculptors like Brancusi’s “Colonne sans fin (1930-1931).”

Marclay’s covered floors with records and invited visitors to walk on them, as he did in 1987 (850 Records, The Clocktower, PS1), a work he reprised and expanded in 1989 with 3500 vinyl recordings of his own footsteps (*Footsteps*, Shedhalle Rote Fabrik, Zurich). He’s also “played the room” covering Cage’s *4’33”* (1952), a three-part work by the Fluxus artist where musicians are instructed not to play their instruments. Only Marclay would treat Cage’s work with this kind of affection by performing it as one would a pop tune at an open mic.

The artist, however, loves his objects and delights in their childlike surrealism – their “What if?” presence. He melted records into black cubes (*Cube*, 1989) and crocheted entire Beatles’ albums into pillows from audio tape (*The Beatles*, 1989) and cut “f” holes into an Armoire (1988), a play on Man Ray’s surrealist photograph “Le Violon d’Ingres” (1924).

He wedded a pair of 45s together in a musical Möbius strip (*Endless Love*, 1988). A Barbie pink rubberized silicon Stratocaster is his guitar gently weeping, or at least falling asleep, on its stand, (*Prosthesis*, 2000). A drum kit reaches up five meters is wonderfully impossible to play; a giant accordion snakes across a dais (*Virtuoso*, 2000); a chipboard guitar case is riddled with saucer-sized holes *Untitled* (*Guitar Case*, 1988), and its companion piece, *Breathless II* (2000) — a recorder with some 30 holes— forces the viewer to consider how holes affect, influence and determine aspects of music making. *Manga Scroll* (2010), a wave of action words torn from a teenager’s comic books is actually a music score. Marclay’s mode d’emploi is to squeeze the full load of onomatopoeia from each work. In almost all of the artist’s decidedly low-tech

installations one can hear, see or sense a beating heart, even though the artist’s approach is more phenomenological than emotional. His creations perform and issue an evident choreography of sound and image. They entertain, are pleasing, puzzling, and at times, unsettling.

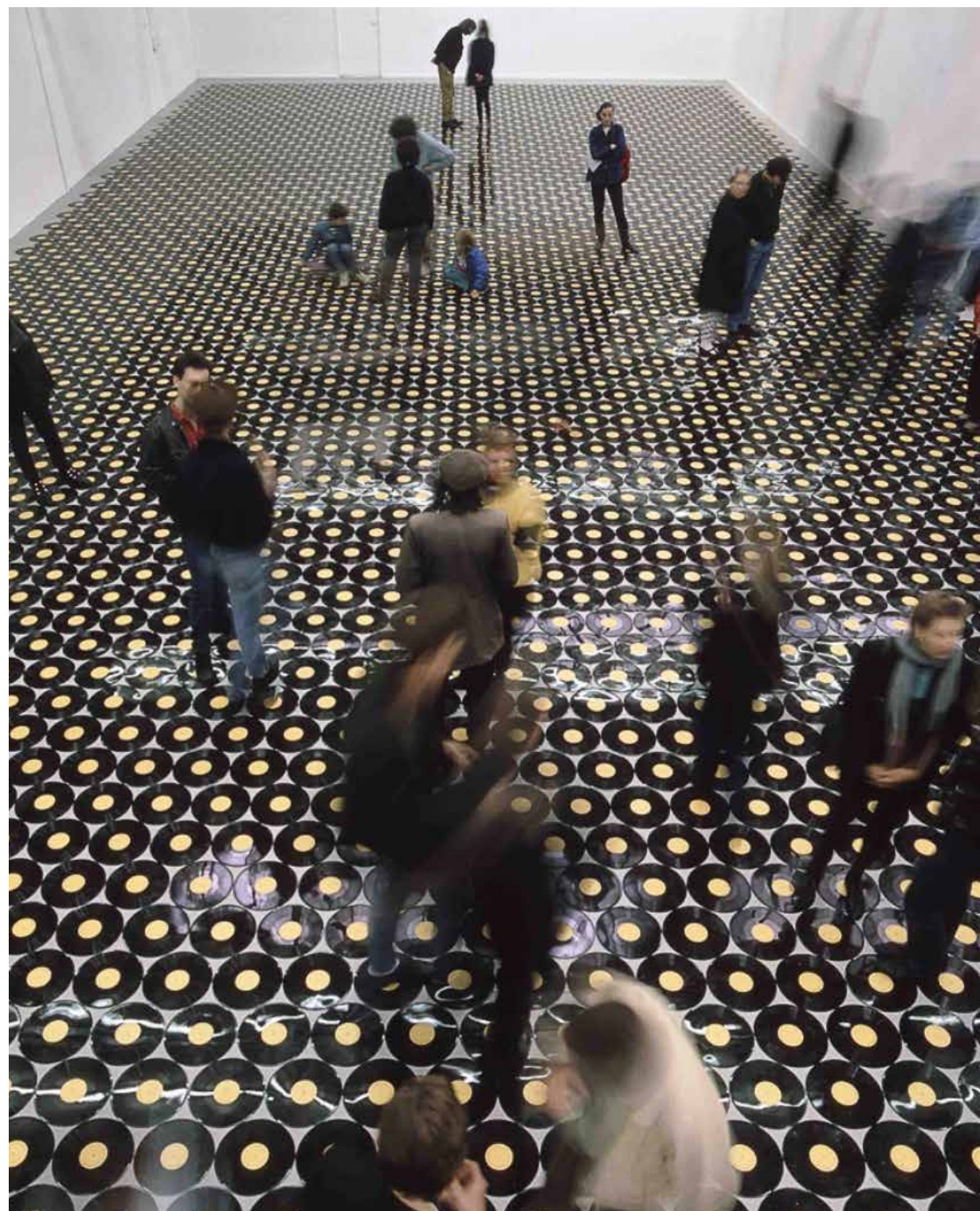


Prosthesis / 2000



A dozen years ago in Helsinki’s Kiasma Museum of Contemporary Art, I watched with fascination *Telephone* (1995), Marclay’s short film whose stars were ringing telephones – supported by dozens of Hollywood actors anxiously dialing, picking up, answering “Hello? Hello?” ... then hanging up the phone – or getting hung up on. I studied the actors as they listened and reacted, then hang up, puzzled, frightened or annoyed. It was mesmerizing. The edited clips, mostly in black and white, flash by without commentary. The film played on a small black and white television in a vast gallery, had the ringing phones reverberating through the museum. Unnerving, *Telephone* captured everything those pregnant and foreboding calls elicited – terror, satisfaction, loneliness, problems.

Marclay’s short film *Guitar Drag* (1999), serves up a monstrous metaphor in the artist’s own ver-



Footsteps, Shedhalle, Zurich, June 4 – July 16, 1989 In 1989, Marclay created the installation *Footsteps* where visitors were invited to view and step on exposed vinyls containing recordings of footsteps. Following the six-week exhibition, the vinyls, damaged by the all of the foot-traffic, were removed and became recordings of new scratchy rhythms, which were then packaged with a poster of the show and sold as individual pieces. © Christian Marclay / Courtesy Paula Cooper Gallery, New York; Installation Photo: Werner Graf

nacular: A Stratocaster is roped to a pickup truck and then, yep, dragged down a lonely dirt road in Texas. Connected to an amplifier the guitar moans and screeches as it is pulled unleashing an electronic rock ballad of noise and screams; the film serves as witness to hideous crime – the lynching of James Byrd Jr., a 49-year old black man. In 1988 Byrd was tied to the back of a pickup truck and dragged down this very same road by three white supremacists in Jasper, Texas. Marclay’s guitar records Byrd’s death in an eloquent but brutal re-enactment that lingers in the mind because, while there is no documentation of Byrd’s death, Guitar Drag’s three miles and 13 painful minutes forces the viewer to witness the last moments of James Byrd’s life. [<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ENzw0XGAX2Q>]



Marclay doesn’t illustrate music as much as offer up unique sonic points of view. Poetic and exact, he works with Zen purpose without being Zen — as if he’s making his art on the wing of a flying airplane. His music does actually show up on Spotify — with the most popular piece being *Winding Shadow* (2000), a 4-minute 20-second “song” with 23,000 listens. But his recordings falls into a unique, avant garde category of music — orchestrated noise — perhaps because he’s uninterested in either choruses or verses. Lou Reed’s full album of feedback *Metal Music Machine* (1975) anticipated the electronic noise category of music Marclay exploited.

Marclay’s fascination with social media technology and its ability to rewire, redirect and recast images and sounds in fresh combinations afforded him contact with SnapChat engineers. The social media techies enthusiastically worked with him to create an algorithm that delivers particular sound/video clips that had been uploaded to their network. The result was *Sound Stories*, an installation at the LA County Museum of Art (2019). Comprised of five sound/image installations that trolled SnapChat for specific video/audio pairs, visitors found them by fishing for them on an electric piano connected to the network.

Images flashed on screens with accompanying audio played on speakers. These sound stories seemed to satisfy the scavenger in Marclay, as if he were foraging for sounds on a vast beach and hit the jackpot buried in the sand.



In conversation with curator Criqui, Marclay discussed Lucio Fontana’s *Concetto Spaziale* (1947 - 1968), the Italian artist’s aesthetic manifesto that heralded the opening up of the fourth dimension (Time) via his sliced up monochrome canvases; the cuts revealed dimension, and gave the paintings a fuller “object quality.” One can draw a line from the Italian’s “spatialist art” and Marclay’s co-opting museums’ architectural spaces as instruments for his installations. With their attendant silences, rests, pick up notes and full threaded melodies, he’s replaying with a certain eloquence the sound and fury of ordinary life. As in music, time is the animated and fragile hinge — and key — to his arsenal, used to open a sonic and visual rift.



Marclay’s skills are formidable and his precision poetics are applied with a tireless editing down of the dross. The artist has hypothesized in the expanding breadth of his works, an unfinishable symphony: His output intimates an endless series of codas, an infinite number of replays, a concert for eternity. There’s no closure in his scribbled score of infinity. He might only just run out of time.*

**Note that Marclay’s masterpiece The Clock, a 24-hour real time film, while not discussed here, might be the artist’s most well known artwork.*



Matthew Rose is an artist and the editor and publisher of Trouble. His most recent exhibition, OVERDOSE, is currently on view at Strauss Studios in Canton, Ohio.

Instagram: @maybemistahcoughdrop

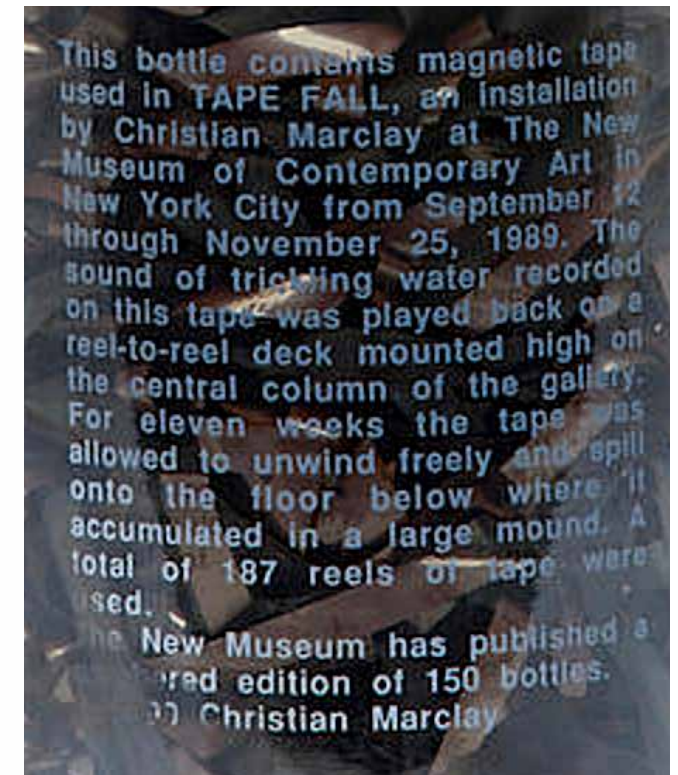


Stills of Christian Marclay – *Telephones*, 1995, video installation, single-channel video, black-and-white and color, with sound, 7-30 min, dimensions variable

Christian Marclay

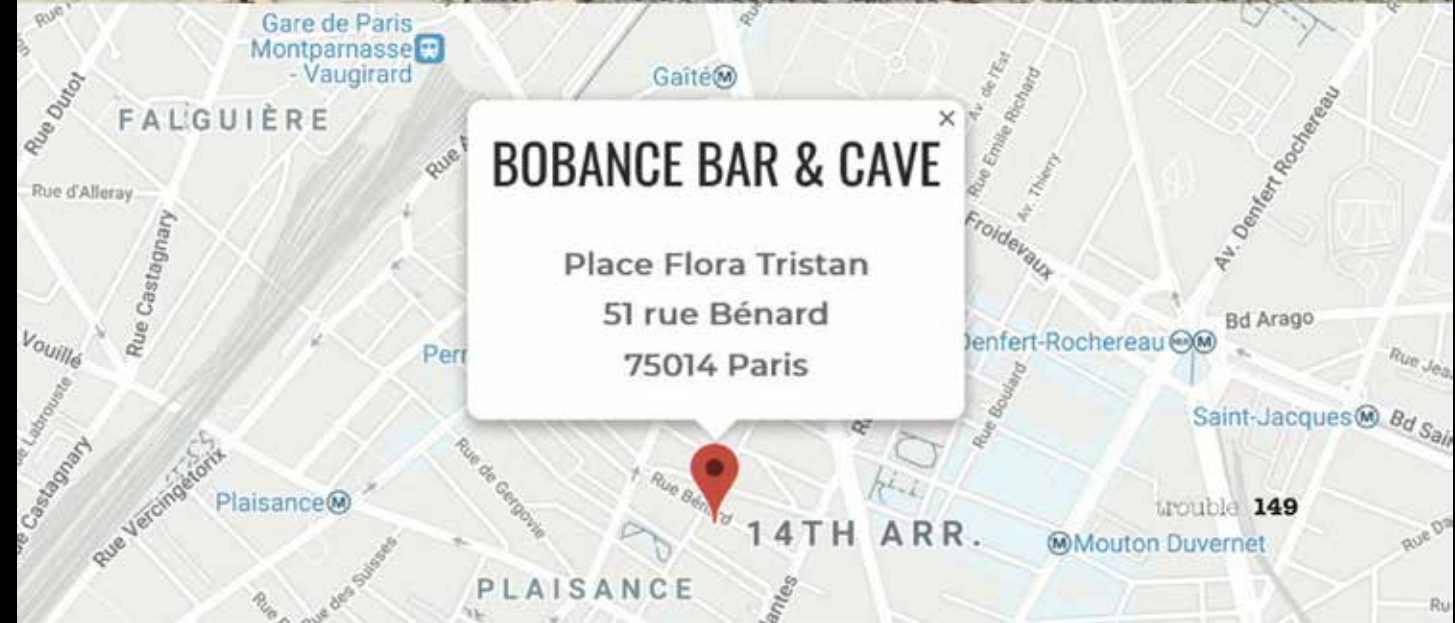


Tape Fall, 1989 Sitting atop a ladder, a reel-to-reel recorder plays the sound of running water. The tape, instead of catching onto a second reel, cascades down the height of the ladder as it advances. The sculpture, which is continually reloaded with new tape, plays for the duration of the show and creates an ever-growing pile of ribbons. © Christian Marclay / Courtesy Paula Cooper Gallery, New York





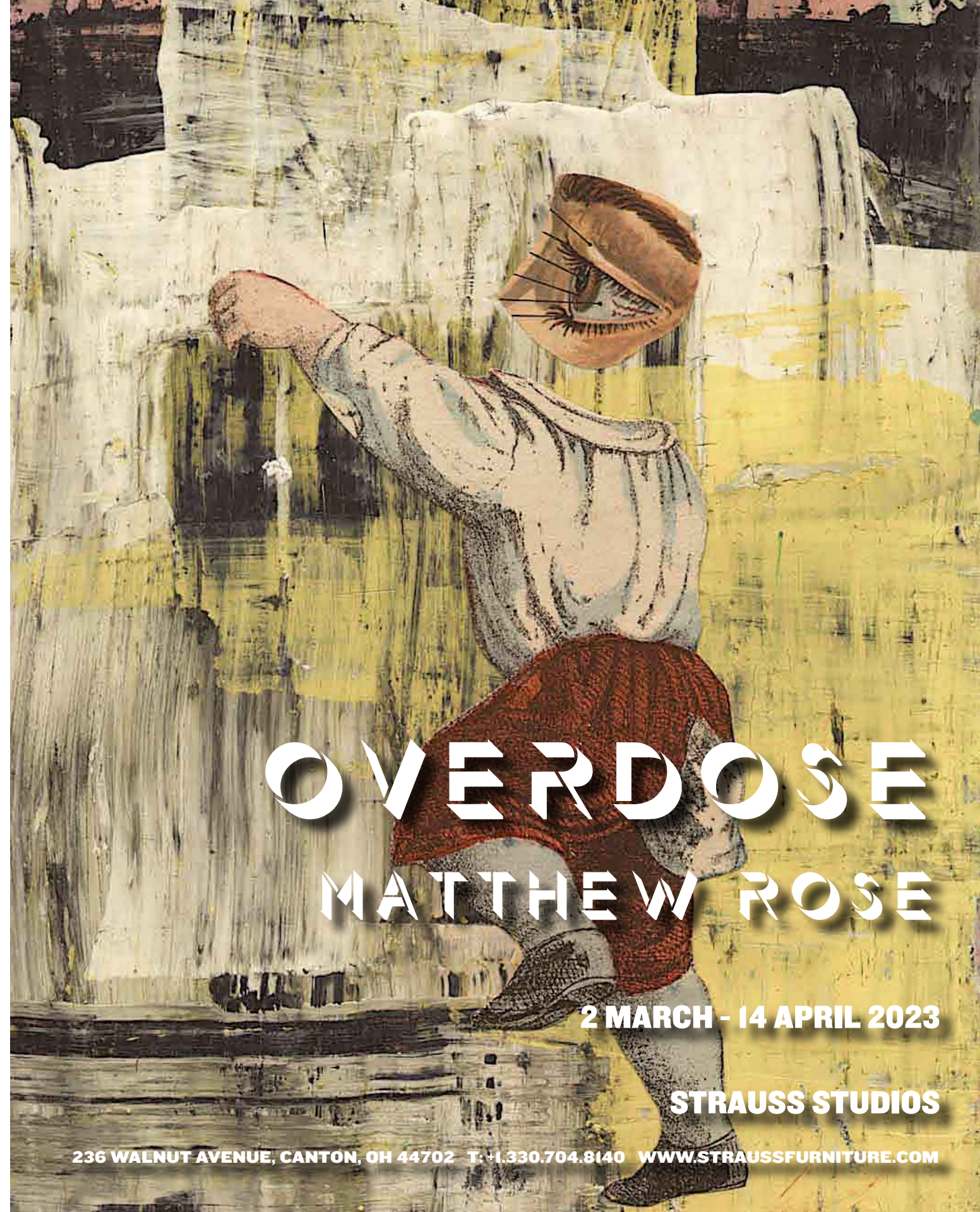
Christian Marclay: Video still from *Guitar Drag*, 2000
video projection, view #1 running time 14 minutes
© Christian Marclay. Courtesy Paula Cooper Gallery, New York



Playing music in cafes and public spaces, encountering diverse Persian musical cultures, jamming with local musicians, I travelled across Iran with a guitar during the Nowruz festival of spring in March and April 2019. Here I'm playing on a rooftop for some friends near the grand Jameh Mosque in the desert city of Yazd. – Dan Friesen



Photo: © 2023 M. Sofraee



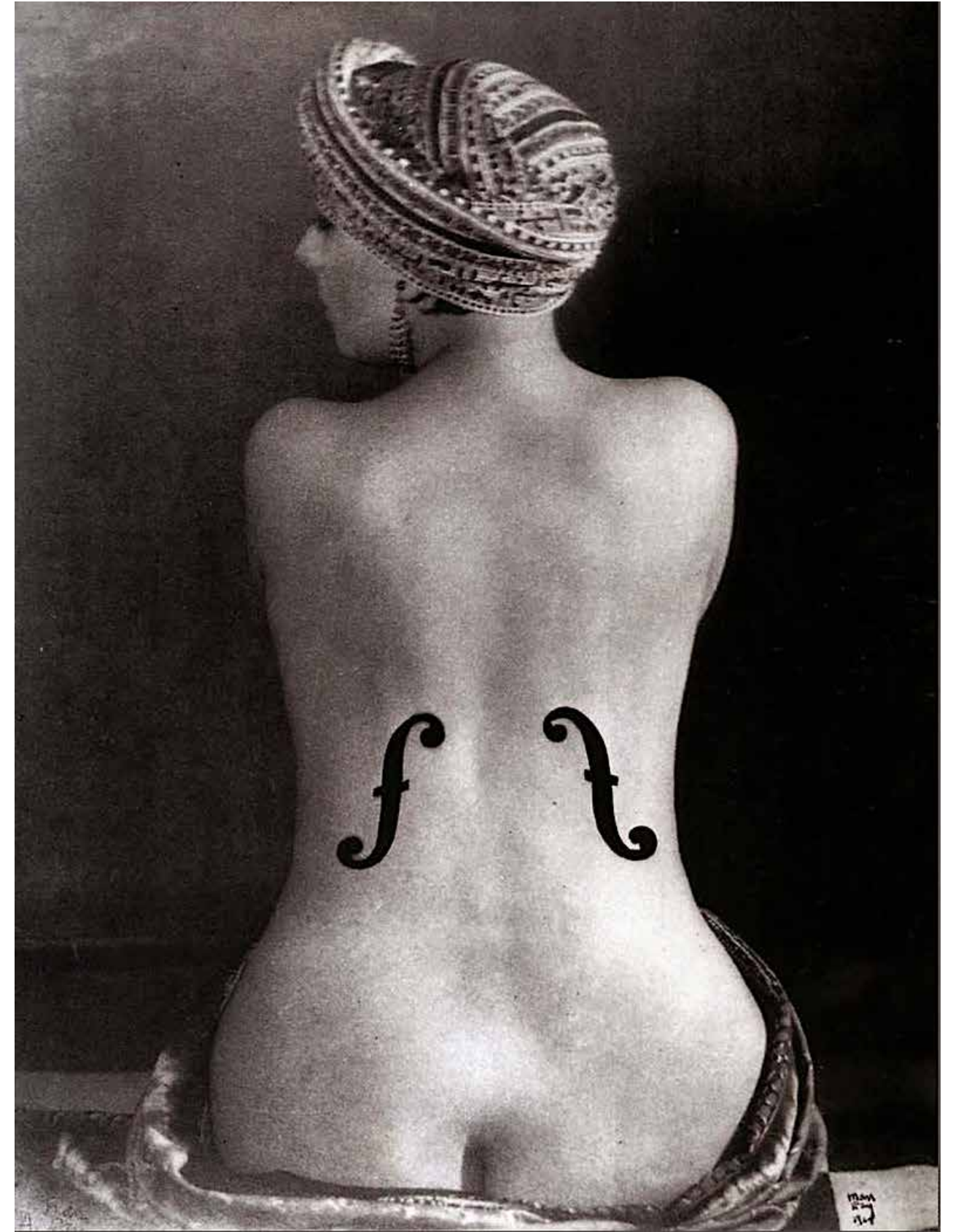
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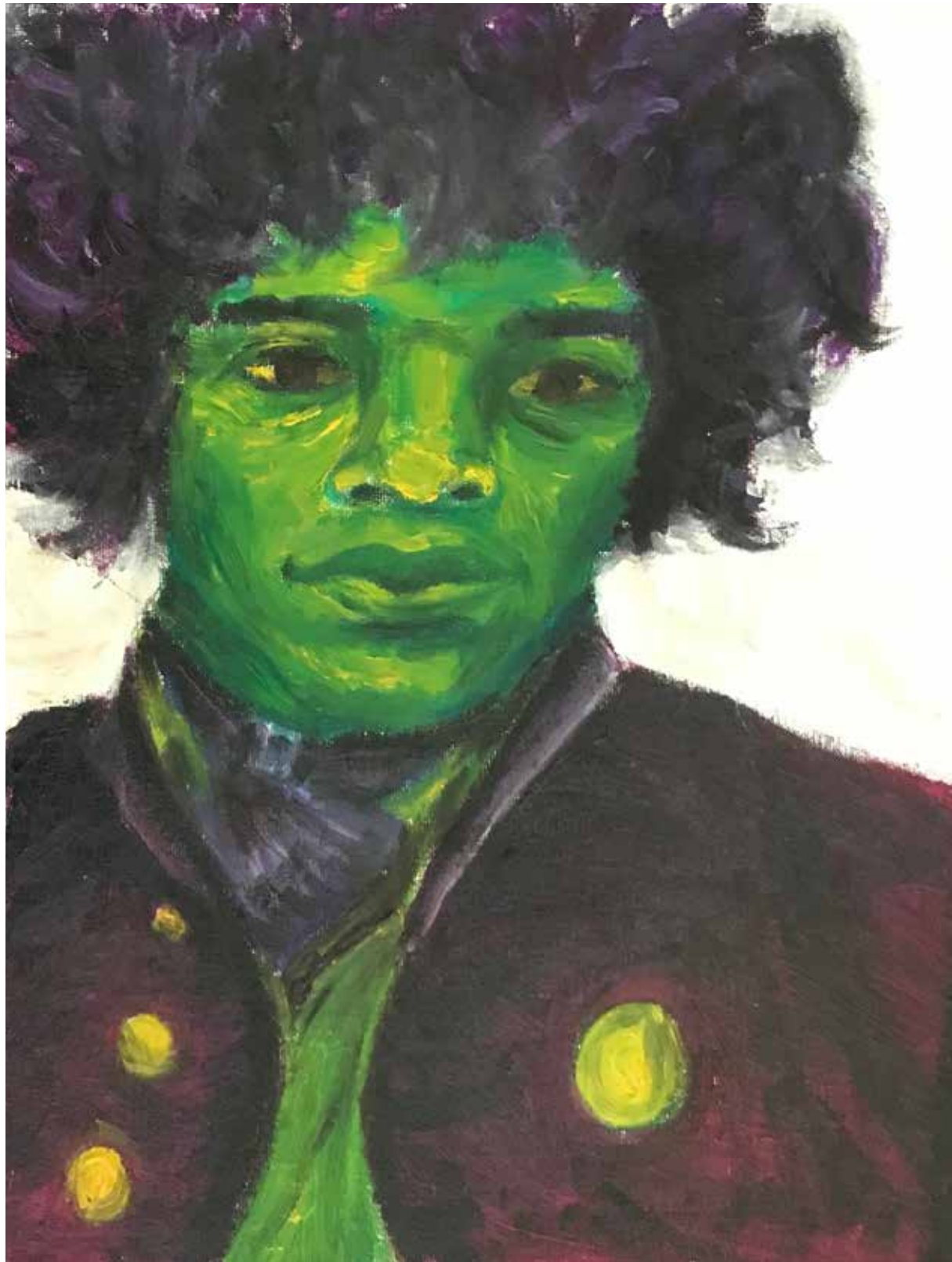
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Music in MOBA

By Michael Frank / Curator-in-Chief, Museum Of Bad Art

The Museum Of Bad Art (MOBA) has collected and presented original art too bad to be ignored since 1993.

In 1993 an antiques dealer took a painting from a pile of roadside trash in Boston, MA. He thought he would sell the ornate frame until some friends convinced him to keep the painting. They asked more friends to contribute similar amateur works of art and established the Museum Of Bad Art in their home. Word spread quickly and the collection was moved into the basement gallery of a movie theater. Thirty years later, MOBA is recognized among the most popular museums in the world!

MOBA collects original work created by someone seriously attempting to make an artistic statement – that has gone horribly awry in either its execution or original concept. Poor technique does not ensure a painting's acceptance into the collection unless the lack of drawing ability, perspective, or sense of color results in a compelling image. Other works exhibit the artist's technical command, but suffer from questionable decision making. Some of our most remarkable works feature over-the-top imagery, whether or not the artist's intent is decipherable.

MOBA does not collect the work of young children, nor paintings on black velvet, paint-by-numbers, completed craft kits, commercially produced paintings and paintings produced for tourists. Any of the aforementioned may be compelling, but are probably better suited for the Museum of Questionable Taste, The International Schlock Collection, or the National Treasury of Dubious Home Decoration.

As the Curator-in-Chief, I find and accept art donated by MOBA fans around the world. It is also my awesome responsibility to interpretate every painting to help viewers understand what they are seeing. Some of the images in the MOBA Collection are so confounding that merely interpreting them would be insufficient.

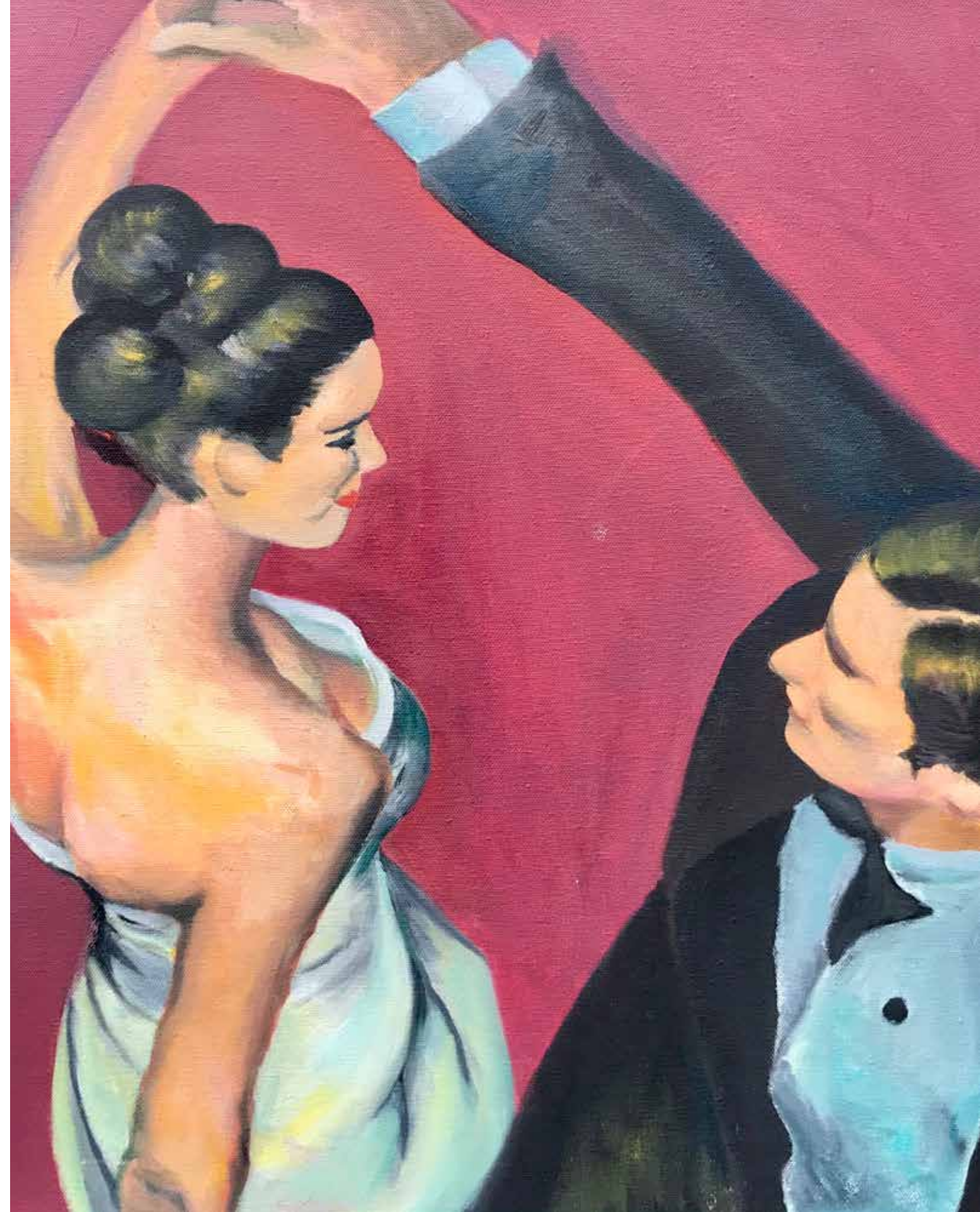
The MOBA Gallery is at Dorchester Brewing Company, a craft brew pub in Boston, MA. We have sent traveling exhibits to various cities in the US and around the world, including Taipei, Tokyo, and Quebec City.

There are over 800 pieces (mostly paintings) in the MOBA Collection. We have divided them into Galleries:

- Poor Traits: paintings of people.
- Dopplehangers: paintings that, by accident or design, resemble famous people.
- Unlikely Landscapes and Still Lifes: Here the symbols crash!
- In the Nood: Naked people in the museum!
- Oozing My Religion: No offense meant.
- MOBA Sports Section: Every one's a winner!
- Aye Aye Aye: Human eyes are portals to the soul.
- The MOBA Zoo: Our furry, feathered, fishy friends.

The paintings featured in this edition of *Trouble* come from various MOBA Galleries. There are images of people (and animals) singing and dancing, Dopplehangers of famous musicians, and images inspired by record album covers.

If you have or find a piece you believe may be appropriate for the MOBA Collection, send a photo to: curator@museumofbadart.org.

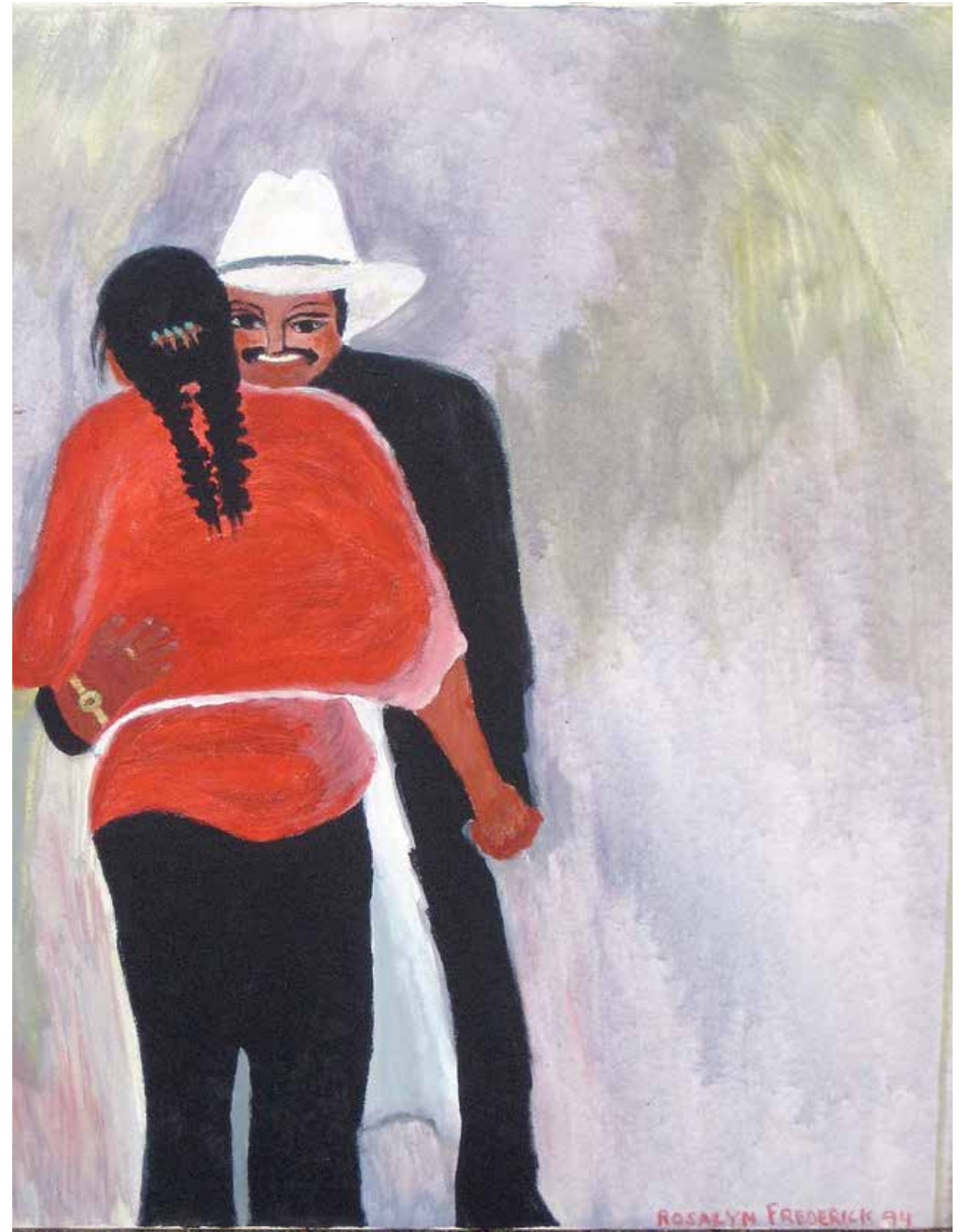




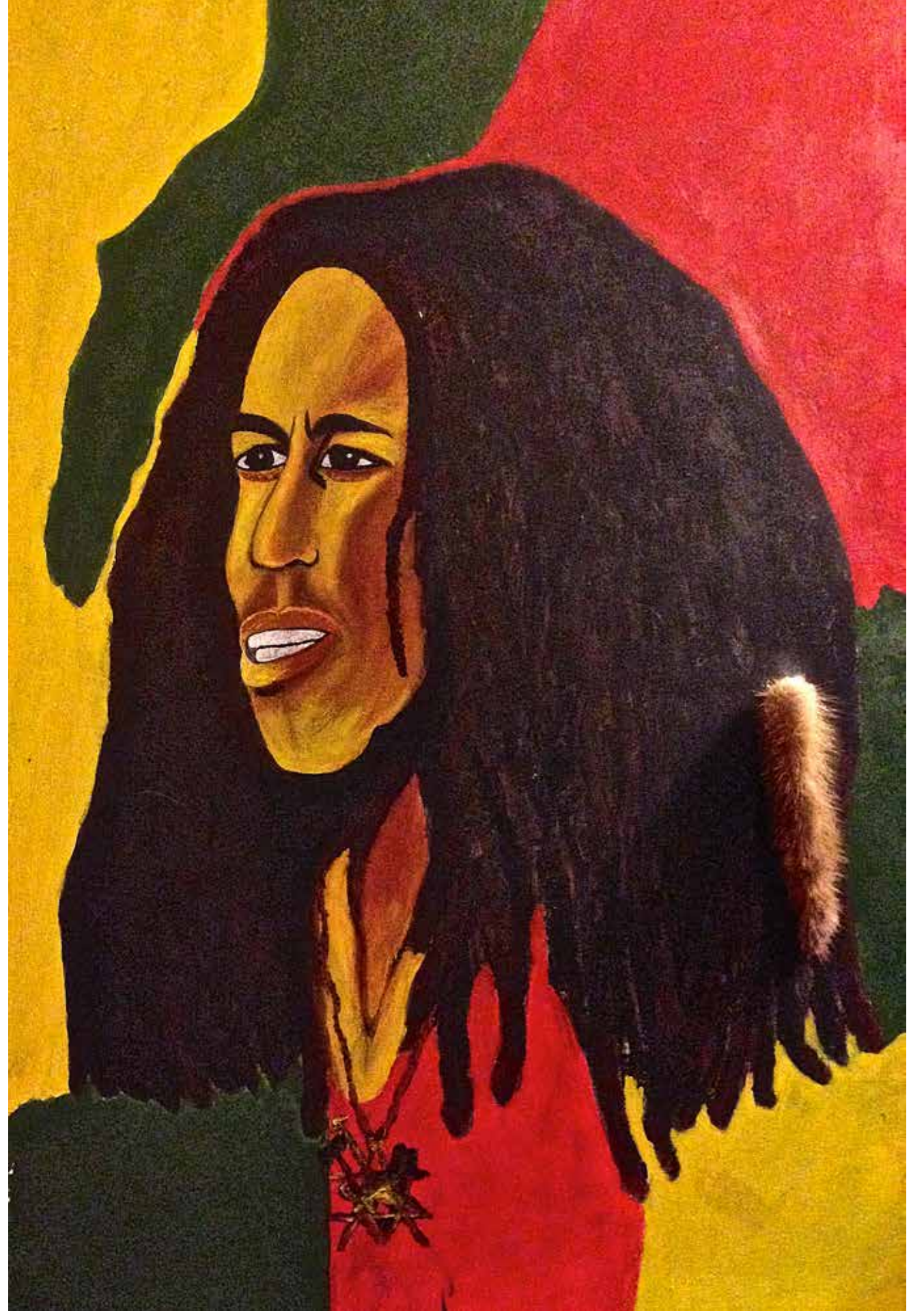
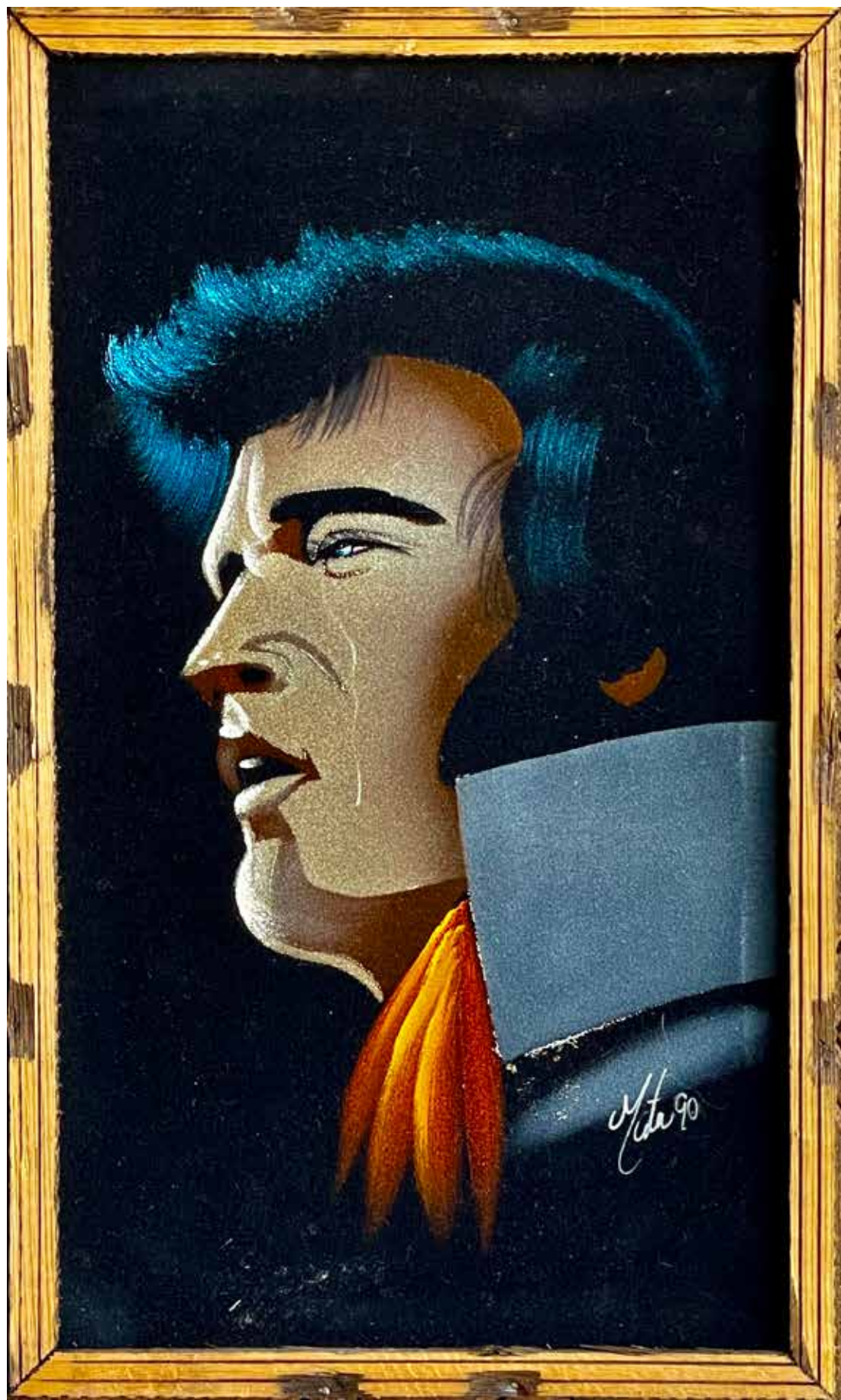








ROSALYN FREDERICK 94



Notes on MOBA paintings, in order of appearance:

Green Jimi (S’cuse Me While I Kiss This Guy)

Anonymous / Acrylic on canvas board, 14” x 11”

Purchased at a thrift shop in Boston, MA / March 2018

Jimi Hendrix was famous for playing the blues. In this portrait he is either green with envy or suffering from hypochromic anemia

Yellow and Blue Prince

Franny (September 1991) / Oil on canvas, 18” x 24”

Purchased at a thrift store in Boston, MA / July 2006

This portrait works both as a full-face portrait of the Purple One and as a profile view. Franny spared no paint in this work which brings to mind the work of Vincent Van Gogh in his LSD period.

The Waltz

Anonymous / Acrylic on canvas, 20” x 16”.

Purchased at a thrift store in Boston, MA / October 2019

An elegant couple performs the traditional woman’s underarm turn. Many viewers are so distracted by the woman’s décolletage they fail to notice her unusually curved left arm.

Woman with Guitar

Jane Doyle, 1992 / Acrylic on canvas board, 18” x 14”

Donated by Cathy Soderquist

A pensive young woman clearly has an intimate relationship with her guitar. MOBA Curators believe she might be Scottish singing sensation Susan Boyle.

Red Rose Serenade

Susan Rose / Acrylic on canvas, 20” x 16”

Donated by the artist / May, 2013

A delightful bouquet sits atop a keyboard guaranteed to tie the musician’s fingers in knots.

Thriller

Anonymous / Oil on canvas, 20” x 16”

Liberated from the Boston Center for Adult Education and donated by Peg Tully and Jim Pintar

This poor trait of the King of Pop is notable for his vacuous orifi

Blue Tango

Anonymous / Acrylic on canvas, 24” x 21”

Purchased in a thrift shop in Brownsburg, IN and donated by Anne Simon and Sam Pope / Dec 2014

We see a stylishly handsome couple mid-step as they glide across the floor cheek to cheek. The artist has captured the dancers’ exuberance and joy in this dynamic image reminiscent of three paintings by Pierre-Auguste Renoir: Dance at Bougival (1883), Dance in the Country (1883), and Dance in the City (1883).

Don’t Want to be a Cowboy’s Sweetheart

T. Abbott (1975) / Tempera paint on canvas board, 14” x 11”

The singing cowboy’s friend questions the rationale for yodeling, while his dog howls along in this cutesy Norman Rockwellian tableau.

Man in the Mirror?

Geraldine “Jere” Deuro, 2009 / Oil on canvas, 16” x 12”

Donated by Jason Deuro / August 2010

His eyes closed and long hair blowing in a wind-machine generated hurricane, the late Michael Jackson exudes emotion in this lovingly executed portrait. It is difficult to ascertain which, or whose, hand is holding the microphone in this heartfelt performance.

Jazz Hands

Linda James, 1987 / Acrylic and mold on art board, 30” x 24”

Donated by the artist / March 2014

In spite of her unfortunate haircut which was fashionable at the time, Liza Minnelli’s remarkable stage presence at the peak of her career is evident in this portrait.

The artist believed her inexperience with paint and brush caused her to miss the mark, so she stored her painting in a damp garage for twenty-seven years. What appears to be chest hair on the pop icon is actually mold.

Inspiration

Anonymous / Pastels and acrylic on canvas, 24” x 30”

The organ master stares, transfixed by twin mysterious visions; the Neanderthal saint in the setting sun and the Gothic monk proceeding out from the cathedral’s sanctum, each framed by a halo of organ pipes, reminiscent of #2 pencils.

Ferret in a Brothel

Anonymous / Oil on canvas, 24” x 18”

Purchased at a thrift store in Oakland, CA and donated by Nicoletta Karam

Master painters as varied as Titian, Picasso, Gauguin, and Van Gogh have found prostitutes in their work environment to be a rich and interesting source of thematic material. The anonymous painter of this work has inexplicably chosen to depict a ferret as a “lady of the evening” in a Victorian room featuring flowered wallpaper and luxurious velvet curtains. She wears only a long pearl necklace and gazes provocatively at the viewer as she dances unashamedly to the music playing on a vintage Victrola record player.

The reversed eighth notes may hint at secret meaning in the music being played backwards, e.g., “Paul is dead”, or, more likely, a reflection of the artist’s unfamiliarity with proper musical notation.

Bailando

Rosalyn Frederick, 1994 / Oil on canvas, 20” x 16”

Purchased at a thrift store in Boston, MA / September 2009

The artist celebrates the joy of social dancing in this delightful depiction of a Mexican couple.

This work is reminiscent of Pierre-Auguste Renoir’s trio of paintings from 1883: Danse à la Campagne, Danse à la Ville, and La Danse à Bougival.

NOT BAD ART: PAINTING ON VELVET

Thousands of paintings on velvet like this are produced in Mexico and sold around the world. They are fun, but more kitsch than art. Unfortunately, this nice piece was stolen from our gallery. An anonymous fan of the museum heard about the theft and donated another **Velvet Crying Elvis**...

Natty Dread

G.P. / Acrylic on canvas, mink tail, 36” x 24”

Rescued from curbside trash in Somerville, MA and donated by Amy Russell

In light of Bob Marley’s strict vegetarian lifestyle, the artist made an ironic decision to lively up the reggae idol’s dreadlocks with the tail of a small mammal.

Librairie Anglophone

THE RED WHEELBARROW



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The image displays a musical score for a carol. The score is written on a yellowed, aged piece of paper. It consists of ten staves of music, each with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The lyrics are written below the notes. The lyrics describe a scene of suffering and grief, with phrases like 'grief bro - ken heart', 'Tree of scorn', 'the bit - ter doom!', 'O'er - whelmed in depths of woe, bit - ter loss; a - ban - doned -', 'Man of sor - rows, wound - ed, crown of pierc - ing thorn! de - spair -', 'bleed - ing Head, Flesh all rent and torn, ag - o - ny; pierc'd, and flow'd', 'a Vic - tim Pierced re - ject - ed bit - ter pains robe of scorn:', 'trou - ble and dis - tress, the dread - ful wrath death and dan - ger', 'the press of fu - ry, bit - ter ag - o - ny; wrapt in grief,', 'the cup of fire death, hell and sin, shad - ow rack - ing, an - guish', and 'woes and wounds moan, - suf - f'ring sad - ness the mourn - ful hear our cry!'. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings like 'mf' and 'all'.

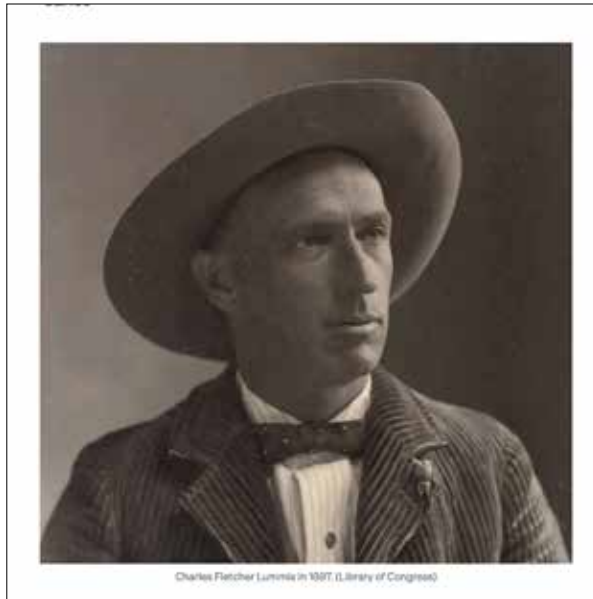
Cecil Touchon / Fluxmass Carol No. 5, Dedicated to Ukraine, 2022

Cecil Touchon is an artist living and working in Albuquerque, New Mexico. <http://ceciltouchon.com>

The Apostle of the Southwest

The antiquarian approach of Charles F. Lummis (1859-1928), collector of Hispanic songs from California

This article is excerpted from *Les Inventeurs de l'American Folk Music* published by *l'Harmattan* (Collection *Anthropology and Music*) in December 2022. *l'Harmattan* ©



By Camille Moreddu

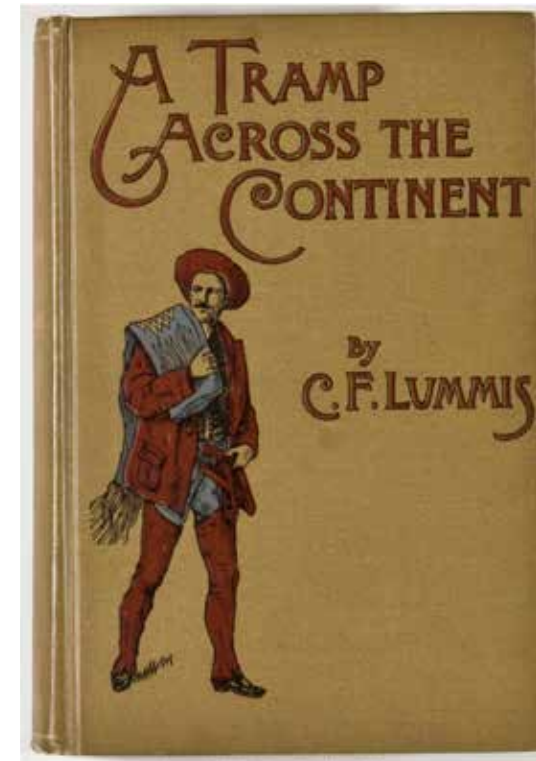
Collecting songs is just one of the many facets of the extraordinary career of the eccentric Charles Fletcher Lummis. Lummis was a poet, farmer, journalist, publisher, prolix author, photographer, archaeologist, Native Americans rights activist, advocate for the preservation of Hispanic heritage in California, founder of a museum and also collector of folk music. His November 27, 1928 obituary published by *The Los Angeles Times*, the newspaper for which he covered the surrender of Chief Geronimo in 1886, dubbed him “an apostle of the Southwest.”

Charles Lummis was born in 1859 in Lynn, Massachusetts. His mother died when he was only two years old. His father, a schoolteacher and minister, took care of his education.

A brilliant student, particularly in the field of classic literature, Lummis had no trouble enrolling in Harvard University where he befriended Theodore Roosevelt, who would become to twenty-sixth President of the United States (1901-1909). But he was more interested in athletics and young women than in classical Greek lessons so he left the university before obtaining his Senior Year diploma. He then began a career as poet and journalist.

In 1884, at the age of 25, Lummis undertook an expedition whose media coverage earned him national notoriety. Having obtained a job as a journalist at *The Los Angeles Times*, he decided to walk from his residence in Ohio to the journal's headquarter. His goal was “to learn more of the country and its people than railroad travel could ever teach” and to experience “the physical joy that only the confirmed pedestrian knows” (Lummis, 1892). Thus, from September 1884 to February 1885, he traveled more than 3400 miles from Cincinnati to Los Angeles via Missouri, Kansas, Colorado, Arizona, and New Mexico. His travel stories were published along the way in *The Chilico*, *The Leader* and *The Los Angeles Times*. Lummis became a national media sensation, the living demonstration that in every American there is Frontiersman.

His tramp across the continent was punctuated with hardships: He broke his arm, almost perished in the thick snows of New Mexico, faced the wildlife of the great outdoors and was attacked by bandits. He also met with Native American and Mexican populations that were both strange and fascinating to him. During a stopover in a Santa Fe hacienda, Lummis discovered the songs of New Mexican shepherds



which he transcribed and which he published a selection a few years later. Through his report, readers could learn about the heroic and athletic feats of “a man who got outside the fences of civilization, and was glad of it.” [...].

“Catching our Archeology Alive”

Between 1904 and 1905, Lummis recorded more than 500 cylinders of Spanish-American and Mexican music as well as Native American songs in 23 different languages. Most of these recordings were made at his home in El Alisal, at some of his informants' in Ventura County and at the Sherman Institute in Riverside, a boarding school established in 1892 to educate young Native Americans in Euro-American culture. These cylinders are the earliest known collections of field recordings documenting Hispanic music from the United States

Lummis' informants for Spanish-language songs were mostly relatives: Friends, acquaintances or domestic workers. He recorded amateur musi-

cians as well as semi-professionals. Their social backgrounds were varied: some were descendants of Spanish aristocratic families, the Californios, while others were recent immigrants from Mexico.

Lummis used a survivalist rhetoric that supported an archaic presentation of Hispanic songs from California. In “Catching Our Archeology Alive,” his 1905 article published in *Out West Magazine*, he compared the recording and preservation of the “precarious memories of the aged remnants of a disappearing people” to an archaeological project and drew a parallel between the music of “Old California” and the literature of Greco-Roman civilizations and medieval England. While the writings of Caesar and Shakespeare have survived through the ages, the “great first American literature” of Californios was in danger of disappearing [...].

He also compared his *Californios* songs collecting to the archaeological research then being conducted in Palestine: “While, in Palestine, Science is groping in the dust that was Abraham, we in the Southwest talk with the patriarch himself.” [...]

Although the son of a Methodist minister, Lummis was not a particularly devout Protestant – he loved women and cigars too much. He worked for the reconsecration of the Spanish Catholic missions for their value as living archeology at a time when, in California, anti-Catholic sentiments were exacerbated by Mexican immigration. His reference to archaeological explorations, unusual for a folk music collector, can be partly explained by his exchanges with several members of this discipline which he himself studied at Harvard. But his elevation in biblical terms of this heritage is all the more unusual as the place of the religious in the notion of *folk* is problematic.

Lummis' vision of “old California” and Hispanic music is nostalgic and antiquarian. The songs of the old Californian nobility are set in an idealized past and, according to him, are as valuable



Photograph of Lummis' house, El Alisal, built on the model of hispanic haciendas and which hosts today the Autry Museum. c. 1890-1910.

as art music: "Schubert's 'serenade' is no more exquisite than some serenades of these simple old times." These are, however, the songs of the common people Lummis valued the most: "Perhaps most interesting of all are the songs nearest to soil – the melodious whimsies of cowboys, shepherds, peons, rancheros, and all the other humble units of that lonely life."

Regardless of their social background, the singers of old California would be "natural troubadours," heirs to the art music of the old continent, but living in a simple and barbaric world, without professional musicians, something which would have favored the appearance of their folk music: "The majority of our music today is made to sell, the old songs were made to sing."

However, Lummis neglected to mention the professional musical activities that developed in Los Angeles from the second half of the 19th century on, as well as the music schools founded as early as the 16th century by Franciscan missionaries. Several military orchestras and minstrel troupes performed in Los Angeles after California became part of the Union in 1850. In the 1870s and 1880s, composers and music teachers from Europe settled in the city and several concert halls were built. Internation-

ally renowned musicians and composers performed in Los Angeles, such as the Venezuelan singer Teresa Carreno in 1875, the pianist Maria Pruneda in 1882 and the Mexican guitarist Miguel S. Arevalo. Los Angeles musical life was thus far more professionalized than Lummis suggested. His description seems to relate to the musical situation of a period that would predate the US domination of the region. Yet, the majority of the songs he recorded are recent and belong to the repertoire of Mexican *canciones* from the second half of the 19th century (*canciones* are

non-narrative songs imported from Mexico into a large part of the Southern United-States, from California to Florida, through New Mexico, Colorado and Louisiana).

Lummis's collection also contains Mexican patriotic songs dating from the 1860s (Maximilian period), songs quoted from zarzuelas (Spanish lyrical theatrical songs from the 17th century) and some romances. Apart from a few *corridos* – narrative ballads often based on historical events or dealing with political and social turmoils of everyday life – his recordings do not deviate from the tendency found among other folklorists and anthropologists of that time to exclude both protest songs and, despite his interest in Californian catholic heritage, religious songs.

The turn of the 20th century was, however, a propitious moment for the composition of protest songs: Mexico was then governed by the authoritarian and oligarchic regime of Porfiro Diaz, the Mexican Revolution of 1910 was in its infancy and the living conditions of Mexican immigrants in the Southwestern United States were often appalling. Folk music according to Lummis was thus thought of as archaic and created spontaneously, opposed to scholarly and commercial music, even if this does not necessarily correspond to the actual content of his collection [...]



Lummis at his desk in Los Angeles, early 1900s. (Autry Museum of the American West)

A selection of Charles Lummis's recorded cylinders have been digitized and can be heard here: <https://archive.org/details/autrynationalcenter>

Camille Moreddu is historian by day, and banjoist by night. She is researching the history of North American folk music collectors. Her PhD thesis just got published at l'Harmattan (https://www.editions-harmattan.fr/livre-les_inventeurs_de_l_american_folk_music_i_camille_moreddu-9782140301650-75541.html). Under the stage name of Camlamity Mo, she plays in Paris bars with various Old-Time bands, notably the Cuckoo Sisters (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NlxCD4ggSPk>) and the Hogs Trotters (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vri-P32Hmr8>).



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L'« apôtre du Sud-Ouest »

L'approche antiquarian de Charles F. Lummis, collecteur de chansons hispaniques de Californie

Camille Moreddu

Cet article est extrait de l'ouvrage *Les Inventeurs de l'American Folk Music paru chez l'Harmattan dans la collection Anthropologie et Musiques en décembre 2022.*

La collecte de chants n'est que l'une des multiples facettes de l'extraordinaire parcours de l'excentrique Charles Fletcher Lummis. Celui-ci a été tour à tour poète, fermier, journaliste, éditeur, auteur prolifique, photographe, archéologue, militant pour les droits des Amérindiens, défenseur de la préservation du patrimoine hispanique de Californie, fondateur d'un musée et enfin collecteur de folk music. Sa nécrologie du 27 novembre 1928 publiée par le Los Angeles Times, journal pour lequel il couvrit la reddition du chef Geronimo en 1886, le qualifie « d'apôtre du Sud-Ouest ».

Charles Lummis est né en 1859 à Lynn dans le Massachusetts. Sa mère décède alors qu'il a à peine deux ans et c'est son père, un instituteur et pasteur, qui s'occupe de son éducation. Élève brillant, en particulier dans le domaine des lettres classiques, il n'a aucun problème à intégrer l'université de Harvard où il se lie d'amitié avec Theodore Roosevelt, futur vingt-sixième Président des États-Unis (1901-1909). Plus intéressé par l'athlétisme et les jeunes femmes que par les cours de grec classique, il quitte l'université avant d'obtenir son diplôme de Senior Year. Il entame par la suite une carrière de poète et de journaliste.

En 1884, alors âgé de 25 ans, Lummis entreprend une expédition dont la médiatisation lui vaut une notoriété nationale. Ayant obtenu un poste



Image courtesy of the California State Library

de journaliste au Los Angeles Times, il décide d'en rejoindre les bureaux à pied depuis sa résidence de l'Ohio. Son objectif : « apprendre plus du pays et de son peuple que ce qu'un voyage en train pourrait jamais enseigner » et faire l'expérience de « la joie physique que seul le piéton confirmé connaît » (Lummis, 1892). Ainsi, de septembre 1884 à février 1885, il parcourt plus de 5600 kilomètres de Cincinnati à Los Angeles en passant par le Missouri, le Kansas, le Colorado, l'Arizona, et le Nouveau Mexique. Ses récits de voyages sont publiés au fur et à mesure dans le Chilicothe Leader et le Los Angeles Times. Lummis devient un véritable phénomène national, la démonstration vivante qu'en tout Américain sommeille un homme de la Frontier.

Son périple à travers le continent est jalonné d'épreuves : il se casse un bras, manque de périr dans les neiges épaisses du Nouveau-Mexique, est confronté à la faune sauvage des grands espaces, se fait attaquer par des brigands et rencontre des populations amérindiennes et mexicaines aussi étranges que fascinantes à ses yeux. C'est lors d'une escale dans une hacienda de Santa Fe que Lummis découvre les chants des bergers du Nouveau-Mexique qu'il s'attachera à transcrire

et dont il publiera une sélection quelques années plus tard. À travers ses reportages, les lecteurs peuvent prendre connaissance des exploits héroïques et athlétiques « d'un homme qui est allé au-delà des barrières de la civilisation, et en était ravi » [...].

« Catching our archaeology alive »

Entre 1904 et 1905, Lummis enregistre plus de 500 cylindres de musiques d'origines espagnole et mexicaine ainsi que des chants amérindiens en vingt-trois langues différentes. La plupart de ces enregistrements sont réalisés à son propre domicile d'El Alisal, chez certains de ses informateurs dans le comté de Ventura, ainsi qu'au Sherman Institute de Riverside, un internat créé en 1892 pour éduquer les jeunes Amérindiens à la culture euro-américaine. Ces cylindres sont la première collection d'enregistrements de terrain connue de musiques hispaniques des États-Unis. Les informateurs de Lummis pour les chants en langue espagnole sont majoritairement des proches : amis, connaissances ou employés de maison. Il enregistre des musiciens et chanteurs amateurs, mais aussi des semi-professionnels. Leurs origines sociales sont variées : certains sont des descendants de familles aristocratiques espagnoles, les Californios, alors que d'autres sont des immigrés récents venus du Mexique.

Lummis use d'une rhétorique survivaliste et construit une représentation archaïsante des chants hispaniques de Californie. Dans son article publié en 1905 dans le magazine *Out West* « *Catching Our Archaeology Alive* », il compare son entreprise de sauvegarde des « mémoires précaires des restes anciens d'un peuple en voie de disparition » à un projet archéologique et construit un parallèle entre les musiques de « la vieille Californie » et les littératures des civilisations gréco-romaines et de l'Angleterre médiévale. Alors que les écrits de César et Shakespeare ont survécu à travers les âges, la « *great first American literature* » des Californios risquerait de disparaître [...].

Il rapproche également sa collecte de chants des Californios des recherches archéologiques alors

menées en Palestine : « Alors qu'en Palestine, la Science tâtonne dans la poussière qui était Abraham, nous dans le Sud-Ouest parlons avec les Patriarches eux-mêmes. » [...]

Bien que fils de pasteur méthodiste, Lummis n'est pas un protestant particulièrement pieux – il aime trop les femmes et les cigares. Il œuvre d'ailleurs à la reconsécration des missions catholiques espagnoles pour leur valeur d'archéologie vivante à un moment où, en Californie, les sentiments anticatholiques sont exacerbés par l'immigration mexicaine. Sa référence aux explorations archéologiques, inhabituelle pour un collecteur de folk music, s'explique en partie par ses liens avec plusieurs membres de cette discipline qu'il a lui-même étudiée à Harvard. Mais son héroïsation en termes bibliques de ce patrimoine est d'autant plus inhabituelle que la place du religieux dans la notion de folk pose problème.

Lummis joue d'une vision nostalgique de « la vieille Californie » et d'une représentation passéiste des musiques hispaniques. Les chants de la vieille noblesse californienne sont situés dans un passé idéalisé et n'ont selon lui rien à envier aux compositions savantes : « La «sérénade» de Schubert n'est pas plus exquise que certaines sérénades de ces vieux temps simples. » Toutefois, ce sont les chants des gens du commun que Lummis valorise le plus : « Les plus intéressants de tous sont peut-être les chants les plus proches de la terre, les fantaisies mélodieuses des cowboys, des bergers, des péons, des rancheros, et de tous les autres membres humbles de cette vie solitaire. »

Quelles que soient leurs origines sociales, les chanteurs de la vieille Californie seraient des « troubadours naturels » héritiers de la musique savante du vieux continent, mais vivant dans un monde simple et barbare, sans musiciens professionnels, ce qui aurait favorisé l'apparition de leur folk music : « La majorité de notre musique aujourd'hui est faite pour être vendue, les vieux chants étaient faits pour être chantés. »

Lummis néglige cependant de mentionner les activités musicales professionnelles qui se développent à Los Angeles à partir de la deuxième moitié du XIX^e siècle, ainsi que les écoles de musique fondées dès le XVIII^e siècle par les missionnaires franciscains. Los Angeles accueille, dès le rattachement de la Californie à l'Union en 1850, de nombreux orchestres militaires, ainsi que des spectacles de minstrelsy. Dans les années 1870-1880, des compositeurs et des professeurs de musique venus d'Europe s'y installent et plusieurs salles de concert sont construites. Des musiciens et compositeurs de renommée internationale s'y produisent, à l'instar de la cantatrice vénézuélienne Teresa Carreno en 1875, de la pianiste Maria Pruneda en 1882 ou encore du guitariste mexicain Miguel S. Arévalo. La vie musicale de Los Angeles est beaucoup plus professionnalisée que ce que Lummis laisse entendre. Il semblerait ainsi que son propos renvoie à la situation musicale de la période antérieure à la domination états-unienne de la région. Or, la grande majorité des chants de sa collection sont récents et appartiennent au répertoire des canciones mexicaines de la deuxième moitié du XIX^e siècle -- chants non-narratifs importés dans une grande partie du Sud des États-Unis (de la Californie à la Floride en passant par le Nouveau Mexique, le Colorado et la Louisiane) depuis le Mexique.

La collection de Lummis contient aussi quelques airs patriotiques mexicains datant des années 1860 (période Maximilienne), des chants extraits de zarzuelas (chant théâtral lyrique espagnol né au XVIII^e siècle) et quelques romances. Hormis quelques corridos – ballades narratives souvent basées sur des événements historiques ou traitant de problèmes politiques et sociaux de la vie quotidienne –, sa collection ne déroge pas

Camille Moreddu est historienne le jour et banjoïste la nuit. Elle travaille sur l'histoire des collecteurs de musique en Amérique du Nord. Elle vient de publier sa thèse, Les Inventeurs de l'American Folk Music, chez l'Harmattan (https://www.editions-harmattan.fr/livre-les_inventeurs_de_l_american_folk_music_i_camille_moreddu-9782140301650-75541.html). Sous le nom de Camlamity Mo, elle joue dans les bars parisiens avec plusieurs formations Old-Time, notamment The Cuckoo Sisters (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NlxCD4ggSPk&ab_channel=skanarkillquick) and the Hogs Trotters (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vri-P32Hmr8&ab_channel=skanarkillquick).

à la tendance qu'on retrouve chez d'autres folkloristes et anthropologues de l'époque d'exclure tant les chants contestataires que, malgré son intérêt pour le patrimoine catholique californien, religieux. Le tournant du XX^e siècle est pourtant un moment propice pour la composition de chants contestataires : le Mexique est alors gouverné par le régime autoritaire et oligarchique de Porfirio Diaz, la révolution mexicaine de 1910 en est à ses prémices et les conditions de vie des immigrants mexicains dans le Sud-Ouest des États-Unis sont souvent effroyables. La folk music selon Lummis est ainsi pensée comme archaïque et spontanée, opposée aux musiques savantes et commerciales, même si cela ne correspond pas forcément au contenu de sa collection [...].

Une partie de ses cylindres ont été numérisés et sont écoutables ici:

<https://archive.org/details/autrynationalcenter>

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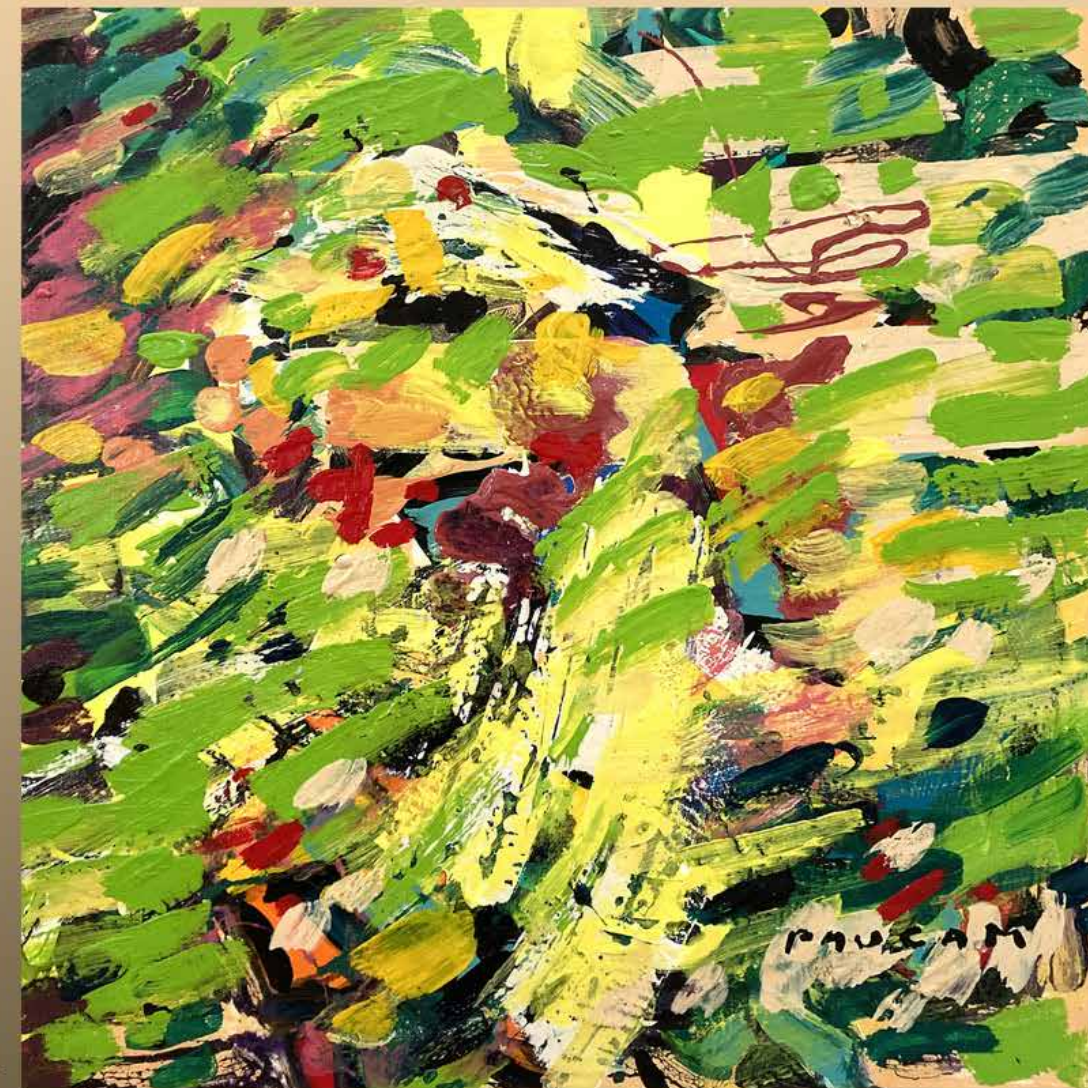
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“Steve”

And The Dilemma Of The Collective Consciousness

“Steve, The Album” is the musical brainchild of Seemore Middle, a writer and musician living in Western Massachusetts.

By Jody Jenkins

Deep into the Digital Age and 23 years into a new century, our technology has led us to a hypnotic state epitomized by the iPhone. Entranced by the wizardry and sleek sophistication of a world virtually at our fingertips, we are drawn to the hand-held oracle by the promise of love or finding meaning or greater understanding, almost evangelical in our faith in technology’s vision of gleaming tomorrows and personal fulfillment. But too, because of its power to reach out and virtually touch and see anywhere in the world, we can no longer claim innocence about the hard realities those gleaming tomorrows entail. We are Conquistadors in this New World, our empire of the mind built on the exploitation of peoples and continents, environmental degradation that leads to facial recognition and surveillance states and algorithms designed to maximize profits while literally leading to insurrection. We are all complicit, no longer merely citizens of the collective but clients and customers whose quest for meaning and mere entertainment funds the frenzy from afar.

Into that reality comes Steve, not so much a person as an idea, born of the recognition that the world we live in and who we have become in this new age has gone a bit sideways. In a world where the living is easy, it’s “Summer In The Congo” (Track One). Steve is childlike in his wonder at discovering the possibilities and, like a child, sometimes asks (“Thanks For Asking,” Track Nine), the strikingly obvious questions hidden in plain sight like “Where is the Congo?” begging the question, “Why should we care?”



Steve is revolutionary and robber baron, building a gleaming future for those who can afford it by exploiting subsistence miners for their mineral resources. He's the direct link between the "Tinder Girl" (Track Six) who simply yearns for love and the war minerals dug from the ground under gunpoint in the Congo necessary for her to find it. Steve questions whether consciousness is hot or cold, active and engaged like Murray Bookchin on the radio, or coldly calculating the bottom line which someday soon could literally lead to the demise of our planet.



Whichever side of the consciousness we're on, the paradigm is no longer simply "them" or "us." Despite the fact that the days of slave ships and colonial pillaging are behind us, we can no longer claim plausible deniability for our sins because we are all implicated on an almost moment-by-moment basis. As we both write and read this, our devices gobble up fossil fuels to feed the sprawling server farms needed to sustain demand.

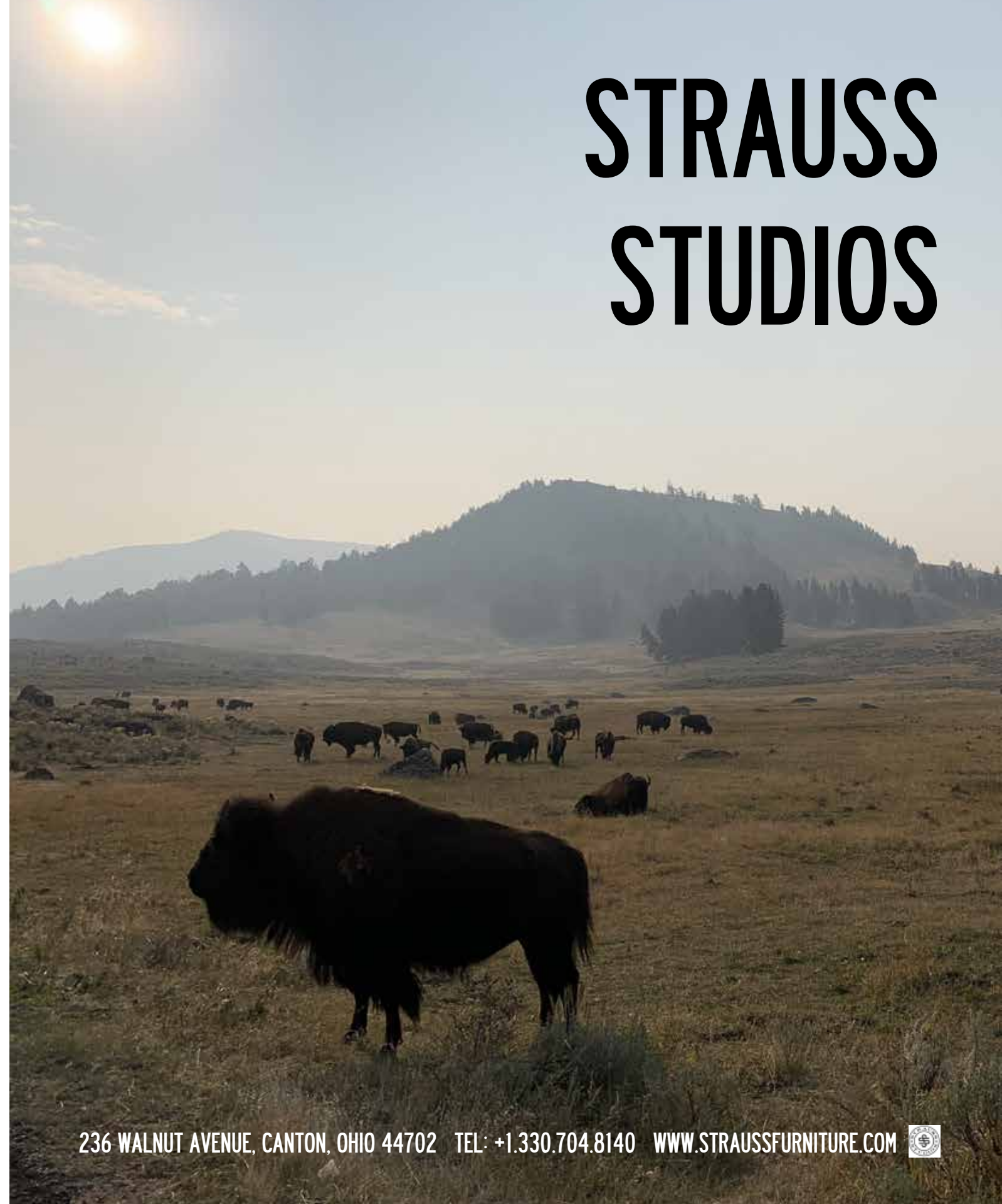
For Steve, the world is in our hands – literally – with cellphones. The enduring question of the ages has always been, how do we meet the moment instead of being bystanders in our own drama. Awareness is a beginning. Dr. Jonathan Sacks once wrote, "Modernity is the transition from fate to choice." Are we simply fated to go down this path? The answer is important. As Steve tells us, "It's summer in the Congo, it's an iPhone in your hand."

Get your "Charger" (Track Eight).

Visit the website at <https://stevethealbum.com/> and sample or purchase the music on iTunes at <https://apple.co/3ZShRw4> and Spotify at <https://spoti.fi/3XsseF5>

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Mark "Astronaut" Wilkins

Mark "Astronaut" Wilkins (1954-2022)

"Hope You Got to See it"

By Ben Yetts

When discovering something rare, there can be a temptation to keep it for ourselves. We've found a hidden gem and want to protect it from the greedy gaze of society. Sometimes the gem is too good not to share. The music of Mark Astronaut is an entire exhibition of gems, as unexpected and unlikely as the Anarcho-Punk scene of late '70s Britain that made it possible.

One of the main reasons Mark's music continues to exist exclusively in the underground, 46 years after it began, is that even the scene that facilitated it couldn't quite get its collective head around it. The early classic "Baby Sings Folk Songs" was too folky. "New Dixieland Blues" was too jazzy and experimental. Even "Everything Stops for Baby" – a much more obviously punk number – was probably too witty for audiences busy pogoing and gobbing on each other.

Ironically, the sheer variety of music Mark produced, too eclectic for the scene he felt akin to, is what allows it to endure to this day. The Astronauts' catalog takes the listener on a journey from '70s style dub to '00s indie rock, back to late '70s punk, '80s post-punk and ska while throwing in some '90s electronic dance and some timeless jazz. The only constant being the wit, wisdom and searing social commentary he delivered with vehemence in every recording and performance he gave.

"But you sit there with a grin on your face
Yeah you've always been a moderate and you
know your place
Slowly going nowhere in this nowhere race
And if you get into power
Nothing, nothing, nothing, nothing, nothing,
nothing, nothing's gonna change."

The music itself is sometimes simple, sometimes more complex, always well crafted. But it is the lyrics that entice and excite people like

me. They describe feelings we have inside us about our society, politics, and revolution in much better ways than we could do ourselves. The songs offer up a mirror, enhancing our understanding of our own feelings and views. They are serious and dark, with generous injections of real wit and humor and great storytelling. They provide joy and hope through the darkness.

The best artists go through multiple reinventions through their careers. Mark was constantly experimenting and reinventing his sound. Within the course of one album we are treated to sometimes literally four or five versions of the band, sometimes through necessity, but always in a forthright attempt to push the boundaries of what is musically possible.

For those of us who know and love Mark's music there is one extra quality we cherish – it's such a unique collection. That rarity, and its ability to describe things we feel deep inside ourselves, almost gives us the feeling of possessing the music, yet still we want to share it with the world. Mark's is a catalog of music truly like no other. Hope you got to see it – it won't be back again.

Ben Yetts is a super-fan of the music of the Astronauts

He lives in Welwyn Garden City near London where Mark was also based. Ben says "I probably wouldn't have got to hear his stuff otherwise."

You can find out more about the Astronauts at <https://theastronautsband.bandcamp.com>, and we strongly recommend these three tracks:

"Young Man's World"
"Typical English Day"
"One Wave"

Image by Steve Garry Holdway



peat & repeat

January 2023 etc...

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francine hunter mcgivern

pasha radetzki

jack greene

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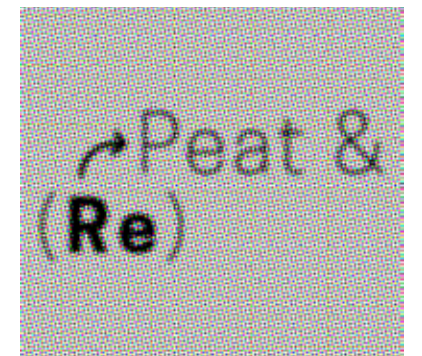
daniel rothbart

mandy morrison

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for exact dates

peatandrepeat.org



Thomas Brun's Longest Running Gig in Paris



In the summer of 1995, the Sorbonne mathematics student found his musical self busking on the Greek volcanic island of Santorini while seeking the solace of sun and ouzo after he failed 10 of his 12 Sorbonne exams. It was the dawn of Thomas Brun's longest running gig – more than 4000 open mic and solo shows in a non-stop musical performance in the French capital, Europe and North America.

Every Wednesday for the last 16 years, some two dozen musicians scramble to get on Brun's list for a chance to sing their guts out on the open mic stage at The Highlander, a Scottish pub in the heart of Paris's Latin Quarter.

Thomas Brun has been the face of the Open Mic for decades and he's welcomed more musicians to the stage than perhaps anyone with the refrain: "Mesdames messieurs, ladies and gentlemen, please welcome..."

Here's his story...

I just turned 20, I was smoking tons of pot, my parents were divorcing, I had no money, and I was in deep trouble, very depressed because after a disastrous term, I had to retake all my exams again in the fall. ... so I took a holiday for the summer. Very French.

With a few thousand borrowed francs in my pocket, I flew to Greece along with my first guitar, a cheap Korean Hondo acoustic, and soon found myself standing at the top of a cliff looking out across the Aegean Sea. Tourists had to climb 500 steps to get back to their hotels – so I parked myself at the little plateau with my Hondo – exactly where they had to rest. A perfect spot to start busking...but before I could play my first chorus to Cat Stevens' "Wild World" a waiter at a nearby upscale café approached me and said in perfect, very polite English, "I'm sorry but can you please go play somewhere else?" And he handed me a 5000 Drachma note – enough money at the time for two days of room, board and travel. It was a lot of money! My first busking adventure was successfully aborted.

With a pocketful of Drachmas, I hopped from one Greek island to the next and began busking

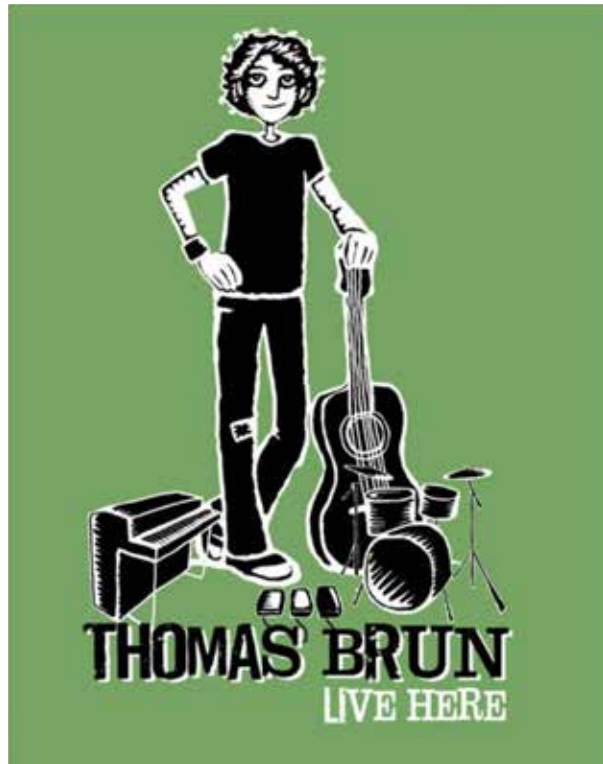
in the streets. My guitar work and singing improved. Even though I'd been the front man for a teenage rock and roll band, playing on my own allowed me to find my musical self and, I realize now, my vocation. I also found a Danish girl named Matilde. We had a nice little romance and when she returned to Denmark and I to France, I had a lot to think about during the last bits of summer when I poured myself back into my studies, preparing to retake my exams.

Through August and September I had a bit of depression, but Matilde proved she was the sunlight in my life – she sent me a postcard! I took my exams and passed everything except one class – economics. I could keep my credits, according to university rules, but had to take my economics class all over again; I couldn't advance until I passed the class. So my year would consist of economics every Tuesday from 2 pm to 5 pm and I was free the rest of the week – a serious waste of time! Fuck it! I said. I'm going to visit Matilde. However, my eternal problem remained: I had no money. So I ended up borrowing enough for an InterRail Pass to get me to Copenhagen and Matilde. We spent her birthday together. But, inevitably, she had her life. And while the French are romantic, the Danes are pragmatic. Days later her father drove me to a

train station and I returned to Copenhagen. Since I was now always traveling with my guitar, I decided it would be too sad to return home to Paris. So I started busking in the street in Copenhagen as I did in Greece, then I got myself a gig in a pub. Amazing! People paid me to play music. Suddenly, I had more money than ever before. I had learned more than three chords and how to make... a living! I'd lost Mathilda but found something else.

Before my Matilde era, I played the Mick Jagger frontman in a university band, singing everything from the Stones to Led Zeppelin and some Crosby Stills Nash & Young. But I hadn't really played guitar, and never performed solo or busked. Prior to heading out to Greece a friend invited me to perform at a student concert. There would be 400 people there and I was to do six songs. On my own! I was terrified! But I did it. And it went really well though days later I was still shaking. I played Tracy Chapman's "I'm Sorry," some Cat Stevens and other acoustic songs. I did have an idea about getting out of it – going on stage naked wearing only my guitar, but...

Fast forward to Post-Matilde, November 1995. I found myself proposing a gig at Cogun's, a bar near my university at Tolbiac in Paris. Strangely, I got the okay to perform. The next thing I knew, I was plugging in my Carlsbro amp, strapping on a harmonica and rolling out a few hours of Dylan, Beatles and Cat Stevens on a borrowed Seagull electro-acoustic guitar. It went incredibly well. I surprised myself and they paid me money. It was a revelation. Sandra, the woman who hired me, introduced me to her roommate, Annie McEvoy, who brought me over to the Leeson Street Pub near Odéon. And they hired me, too!. These gigs paid about 450 French Francs and I also got to pass the hat. This became my life every weekend for the next three years. If I had succeeded at my exams, perhaps I would be working in some office scratching out mathematical formulas on a chalkboard.



Father & Son

I've always had a difficult relationship with my father and once, when I did a show with a friend on the Rue Mouffetard, I told him about it and invited him. He said he'd come, which surprised me. And when he did, it surprised me even more. He walks in and looks around and then says, "I'll be right back – I have to park the car." He returns with a woman who I'd never met. I realized immediately he used this chance to see me and hear me play music to show me his new wife – not show me any kind of support. It was horrible and he seemed to realize that years later. He did come to a showcase I did on the Champs Élysées, however, at the FNAC when I'd put out my first CD and the French music store was promoting me across the country. It was amazing. He came for that having realized too late of course, that his support was important to me. But then I was already in my mid-20s and well, life had taken over. I toured my album with the remnants of the band Canned Heat – and rolled with them on their band bus all over France. My CD which

I produced myself, was taken over by a distribution company, Next Music, and they set it all up. At one point I sold more CDs at the FNAC than Sheryl Crow!

Self-produced, my album earned me about 10 euros a copy; when I signed up with a distribution company I only received only 2 euros a copy but they did all the marketing and put me on national and other "prestigious" radio stations, television and even more gigs. The distribution company sold about 5000 CDs but then, sadly, they went bankrupt. (I have about 150 CDs remaining, so if anyone would like one get in touch!).

Woodstock Every Week

Around 2006, promotion for the record slowed to a crawl and I was regularly playing solo five nights a week around Paris, St Michel pubs like The Galway and The Highlander.

I'd heard there was an open mic or two in Paris somewhere, but it was unusual. At the time, David Bennie, a Scotsman and musician who managed the Highlander Scottish Pub didn't run a music venue. When we met to talk about



a musical jam to juice up business; I would run it, he suggested, but that wasn't interesting for me. I suggested an open mic: A diverse evening of music that is sometimes bizarre but always entertaining. David said let's give it a shot.

I called a few friends, saying "I'm starting this thing..." About 10 friends came by that first night and maybe there were three or four other musicians in the bar. It was fairly tame. The next week more people came and each sang three or four songs. The following week more people came. It grew. And it hasn't stopped since that first Wednesday. It became a phenomenon.

My main concern was that the musicians would be too much about ego and overwhelm the evening. And if I'm just feeding egos, I thought, it's not going to work. But I was really surprised by the range of talent and personalities that produced evenings of diverse and sometimes bizarre but always entertaining music. I didn't know there was so much music out there, talent that would probably never manifest into stardom but good stuff, though.



So from 8pm til about 2am every Wednesday evening The Highlander hosts a very lively musical evening. Without fail every kind of musician walks in, signs up and gets the stage (and often borrows my guitar) and we're



Since I launched the Open Mic in Paris, I kind of gave birth to myself on stage – finding my inner self, my inner musician – and I realized I was on a musical path. When I performed something happened that was very telling for me. In between songs people would shout “Bravo!” and “We love you!” That was encouragement I never had from my parents. While I probably have overcome the need for that, I realized something about the hundreds of people who have come up to play on my open mic stages.

treated to about 10 minutes of every kind of musician telling the world in song what’s going on! I see the Open Mic as a weekly Woodstock. The musicians are shy, sometimes exuberant, many are beginners, some professionals. We hear French music, Blues, Americana, Pop covers, Irish ballads, Indian Tablas, Hang Drums, Polish folk music and on and on. About 25 people take the stage each week, and if you figure this has been going on for 16 years, we’ve done about 800 open mics – or hosted at least 12,000 musicians – excluding the COVID pandemic. Maybe half of them have played my Seagull acoustic – my combat guitar!

They needed something and I was more than happy to midwife them.

There are two things about the open mics that’s critical for all musicians to know: Their talent and their ego. However big the two are, it is always best when the first is bigger than the second. I think Bob Dylan has an enormous ego but



There are a lot of people who don’t really know what they are doing musically or barely realize how amazing they are once on stage. Three songs into their set, however, they instantly touch everyone’s musical soul for better or worse but mostly for the better. Most of those who perform at an open mic probably never thought of playing music in public – not as a job, or even as a lark. Either way, the open mic is there so they can express themselves. But clearly lots of people have something special to offer musically – that’s just one thing this vocation has taught me.

his talent is bigger. When ego is bigger than talent it turns the crowd away.

The Highlander Open Mic has had wonderful acts. Several years ago, a Japanese duo walked in with acoustic guitars. They barely spoke English. I set them up on stage, and they did a sound check with their crazy shredding. “Uh oh,” I thought. “All ego.” But in the moments



that followed, Taro and Giro performed a brilliant heavy metal set on their acoustics. It blew the minds of everyone in the pub. Singing in Japanese and in perfect harmony, these two guys made me think wow, our Open Mic was magical.

If I had 20 wanna be Bob Dylans every Wednesday, I wouldn’t be doing this for so long. We have a wide collection of musicians who make the whole mix marvelous – so many styles, voices, languages. Some years ago a young Scottish guitarist and singer came in – Siobhan Wilson. She told me she’d never performed in her life. She was terrified. Help me do this, she said. When she began to sing her own songs everyone knew at once, here was the voice of an angel. The pub went silent. It was astonishing. And now she’s professional! Look her up on YouTube!

We’ve had our share of crazies, too. One “rocker” recently showed up and every five minutes asked me when he was going to be going on stage – he wanted the exact time. I realized after a half hour of this back and forth that he was taking cocaine and was trying to time his performance to when he would be peaking up on

stage. Of course once in front of the mic, he was horrible; he couldn’t play, couldn’t sing, couldn’t focus – it was, to be honest, shit. Here was a selfish, egomaniacal dope... That’s showbiz.

We’ve had people from all over Europe, the US, Canada, Mexico, Columbia, Argentina, Japan, Australia, Poland, Georgia, Ukraine, Hungary, Sweden, Spain, Italy, Turkey, Israel, South Africa, Senegal, Moroccan, Algeria, Tunisia singing in almost every language on earth! Once we had an Icelandic choir – 50 singers! Of course we couldn’t put them on stage, so they all sat at tables around the bar and holding their beers and they sang three songs with their Viking voices all in Icelandic. It was our biggest act ever.

Paolo Nutini from Scotland came recently. He might be the biggest name to pass by. Hitzak, from the Basque country, comes regularly with nearly a dozen musicians! Melanie Horsnell from Australia and Paddy Sherlock from Ireland have played for us. We’ve had opera singers and musicians from the Opera Orchestra, as well as others who sing in Arabic or Georgian. Everything! Some musicians at the Open Mic



do covers, others originals. Maybe 60-40 percent. We're a good place to perform or try out songs in public. Many times I've had the feeling that here is an artist who will rise to the top but realistically, I know, having gone down that road myself, it takes so much more than an open mic (or a YouTube video) to launch a musical career: It's luck as to who you meet, where you're born and the right mix of ego and talent.

Our Open Mic is not a church but we create a safe environment for musicians to play for their first time in public, or experiment in a lively venue – with people drinking of course. Some musicians can deal with the heightened scene so it can be challenging, but we're on our way to reaching 1000 evenings. Every Wednesday night!



Photos by Marie Rouge / <http://instagram.com/lesjouesrouges>

Thomas Brun is a musician living and working in Paris, France.

Connect with him here:

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www.instagram.com/thomas_brun

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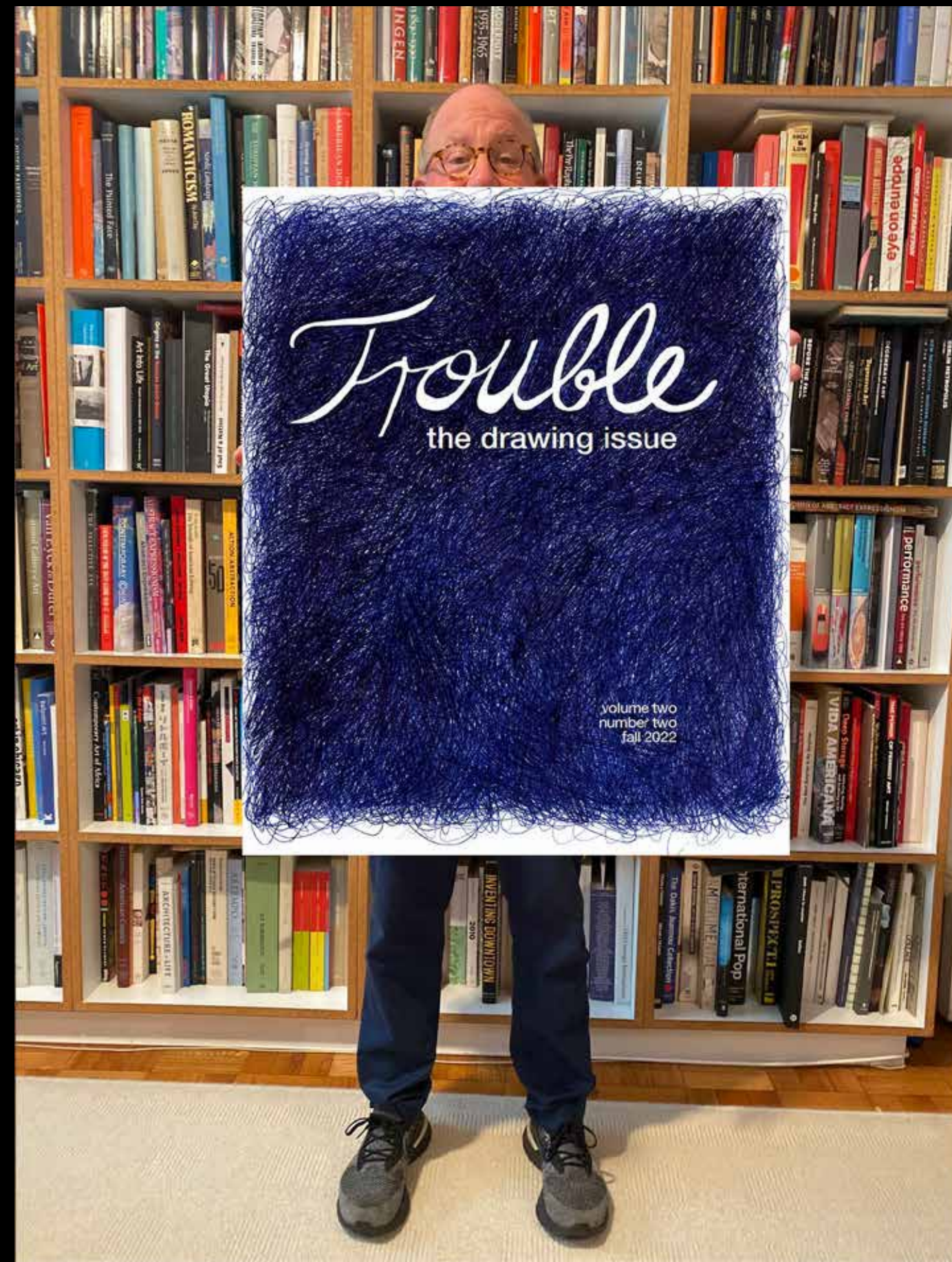
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by jamie newton

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& field recordings

- 01 tone wheel meditation* 15:11
- 02 isle walk to lopez 01:15
- 03 painted book 10:26
- 04 ember (fragment) 17:51
- 05 tone wheel II* 12:57

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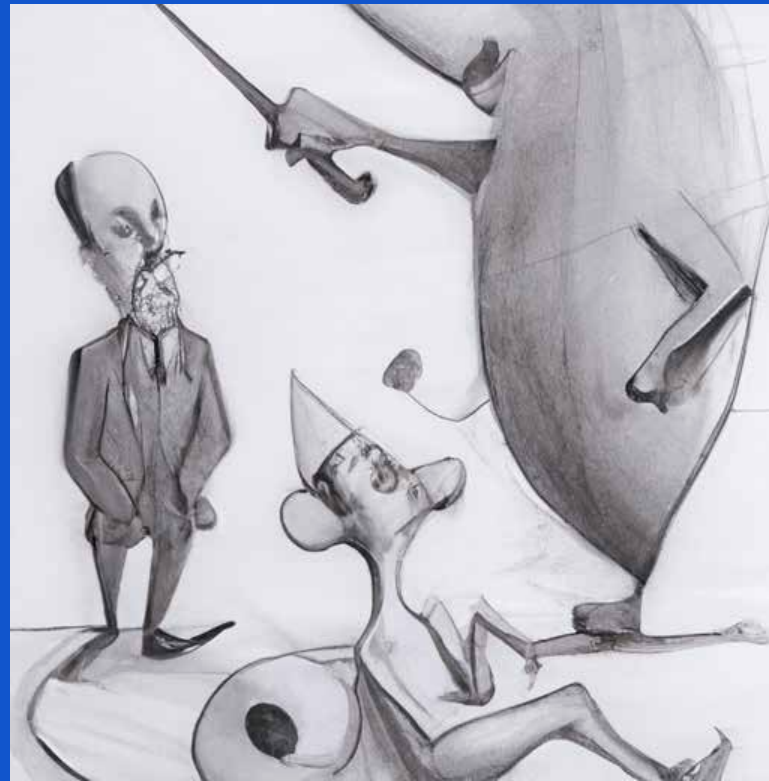
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“The Nonhumanist’s Mistake”



Drawing by Dall-E, prompted by “nonhumanist’s mistake, pencil sketch.”

By John MacFarlane

Playing fiddle at a contradance, I was two tunes into a three tune medley. The third tune was to be the Snowflake Breakdown. I launched into it, playing the first five notes correctly, but then my finger hit a D instead of an A. At this point the melody completely left my head. I continued on “autocomplete,” staring wild-eyed at my guitar player and trying to play something that made sense given how I had started. At the end of the first part, I tried to repeat what I’d just played, and then I made up a second part, trying not to forget how the first part went. Somehow, it worked. After the dance someone asked me what that tune was, and I said, “The Humanist’s Mistake,” because we were playing at the Humanist Hall in Oakland. I was able to reconstruct the tune later from a recording someone had made:

The Humanist's Mistake
John MacFarlane

(It turned out not to have been entirely original: the second half was unconsciously borrowed from another tune—appropriately, “Johnny, Johnny, Don’t Get Drunk.”)

Large language models such as ChatGPT have been much in the news lately. They are sometimes described as “autocomplete for everything.” Why not fiddle tunes, I wondered? What would a large language model do if I fed it the first five notes of Snowflake Breakdown and asked it to continue on its own?

To run the experiment, I created the skeleton of the tune (indicating the title and key and time signature), together with the first few notes. For this I used ABC notation, a standard way of representing music using plain text.

```
X:1
T:Nonhumanist’s Mistake, The
R:reel
C:J. MacFarlane + G. P. Terrington IV
M:C|
K:D
(3ABc|:”D”d2 F
```

I gave this to GPT-4 and asked it to write the rest of the tune. To my surprise, it had no trouble with this task. Here is the result (with a few small manual corrections):

The Nonhumanist's Mistake

J. MacFarlane + G. P. Terrington IV

This is quite good! It would work well at a dance. (You can hear what these tunes sound like at <https://johnmacfarlane.net/tunes/non-humanist-mistake/>.)

For good measure, I asked GPT-4 to create a minor-key version and a waltz:

The Nonhumanist's Mistaken Waltz

J. MacFarlane and G. P. Terrington, IV

I showed these to my bandmates and they wondered what the future might bring.

“Play a jig in G, up tempo, with a bouncy feel.”

“I’m sorry, Dave. I’m afraid I can’t do that.”

The Nonhumanist's Minor Mistake

J. MacFarlane + G. P. Terrington IV

John MacFarlane is a fiddlesopher living in Berkeley, California.



Carl

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Music World Stereotypes AI Investigation

By MJ Yetts

Many times at festivals and music expos, I find myself analyzing the attendees, their habits, their aesthetics. In these whirligig times, we feel the need to more deeply carve out our identities, displaying them like so many peacocks on the forest floor. The following texts document a case study of festival-goers and their attributes. The attendees will remain anonymous to protect the (mostly) innocent.

To enhance the concept and visualize the characters, I fed each stereotype into picsart.com, an AI text-to-image model. In some cases I had to reduce the word count due to a character limit in the image generator. It should be noted that the majority of the people created by the tool have a distinctly white European/American look, although no bias was consciously considered when writing the texts. To be fair, I was mainly trying to be funny. However, as a cis-male European, I can't be sure that my own subconscious hasn't got in the mix along with all the biases that we know are an inherent part of these AI models. **In the following passages, the text in bold was fed into the image generator.*

The Guitar Hero

Our guitar hero's band, Gripper, released their first album in '83, but his style hasn't changed since then. He's probably in his fifties, he just hasn't realized it yet. The sunglasses indoors, the black jeans. Is any seam of cliché left untapped?

The typical guitar-virtuoso daily routine follows:

||:
10 am - A cold bath, followed by overnight oats,
12 pm - Three hours practicing sweep picking
3 pm - Lunch, consisting of one of three things, depending on how this guitar hero's career has gone.
1 - Instant noodles
2 - Leon Veggie Burger (UK Burger Chain)
3 - Kobe steak with gold-leaf shavings
5 pm - Single launch
6 pm - Count all guitar effects pedals, order skinny jeans online
7 pm - An hour of shredding
10 pm - Crudités, before intermittent fasting
11 pm - Netflix and chill
1 am - Sleep
(Repeat) :||

Edit - we have omitted a lot of the more graphic details. Do not attempt the above if you have never heard of Carpal Tunnel Syndrome



The middle-aged Goth

This one basically looks like Robert Smith from the Cure does now, and acts pretty similarly too - ultimately being a grumpy white man with back pain and bills to pay, but with the added burden of needing to prevent themselves from spilling out of black skinny jeans.

Clearly, recent times have been tough; that black mascara is looking a little dry and the skinny jeans are fitting rather too well for someone in their mid-forties.



The Orchestra Cellist

The late nights, the endless rehearsals, the low pay, the lugging of instruments and papers and notes and more notes. Looking for that 1912 transcription of Vivaldi you know you have somewhere in your tiny flat, bursting at the seams with manuscript paper and wood polish and books, so many books - on bowing technique and Beethoven, on 5-minute meals and the menopause...

This is the lot of Lottie, primary cellist with the National Orchestra. Lottie lays awake at night with the bedside lamp on (naturally, sitting on a pile of books) and wonders if she'd be happier as a teacher.



The Neo-Jazz Pianist

Wayne is in the pocket tonight. In the groove. Off on one. He's absolutely storming it. He lugged his Nord keyboard to another steamy basement on another humid Saturday night, ever thankful for his case with the in-built wheels. Still, he really needs to call the GP about his lower back.

The 8-hour daily rehearsal schedule does rather take precedence, though, and there's still all those harmonic tri-tone exercises to transcribe before next week, otherwise he'd definitely get an appointment locked in. But right now, he's locked in with some absolutely blistering improvisation over a suspended F7 chord, and the crowd are EATING it. It's worth the back pain, and anyway the Disaronno really takes the sting off it.



That DJ you saw at 4 am in the club

You know the type. No one is listening to the music anymore, except the absolute hardcore. Even though they're chewing their faces off. And staunchly, behind his podium, the 4 am DJ is there, pumping his fist, waving his arms in the air and doing an adequate job of keeping the music going. Still, he needs his big break, and one day will hopefully be playing out at 2 am. (...two hours earlier but a gaping chasm of difference in the caliber of the set-time) at one of those mythological clubs you hear about, like Burgschein, Shrigleys, Wandering Clouds, or Textiles.



The Open Mic Performer

"It's just a bit of fun, really. A hobby of sorts, and it gets me out of the house on a Wednesday night". That's all very well, Jason, but please let me introduce you to the world of clip-on guitar tuners. Still, it's not hurting anyone and it keeps pubs and bars full - hundreds and thousands close every year! Plus it's quite rare to see live music in drinking establishments these days, especially in London, so bring on your cover of Wonderwall, Jason.



The Country Music Aficionado

Hillbilly Pete, Raggedy Jack, Skinloose Clive... it doesn't matter the name, there's always one hanging around near a rodeo, wild west event, Americana festival or Charity Cook-Off.

What a character he is with his denim vest and steel-adorned cowboy boots. Furthermore, his crafted belt seems to be wholly made of metal studs; could it be so? It's really just the UV-reflective sunglasses that ruin the look, but don't let that deter you when he pulls out his Gibson jumbo acoustic guitar.

No no, my friends, hunker down and witness a 4 hour romp through the last 100 years of country music. It'll go by before the campfire needs a-stoking. You'll come for the Dylan covers and stay for the Pete Seeger and Willie Nelson hits. Bliss.



The Music Teacher

Fern has been in teaching for a little over 5 years, and it already shows. She plays flute in her spare time, and has recently “been on a couple of Crochet courses which has been super cool! They’re sooo community-focused which I love,” so she’s definitely still got something to live for, apart from her 2 cats. These days though, the kids just seem to know less and less about the music she loves.

Or maybe she knows less and less about what they listen to... Either way, this term she’s heard too many tinny beats and not enough Chopin études as the curriculum is “diversified.” If she could just find an orchestra to play with, that would be great. “It’s just such a horrid shame about the cuts to Arts funding of late....” she says in that prim way of hers.



The Session Drummer

Gary knows very well that after arriving at the studio, it will take 3 hours to position the microphones around his drum-kit before he can even check that the tunings of his skins are correct. Since 1999, he doesn’t mind so much. These days he tends to bring along some old cloth and his secret-formula cymbal polish and will sit and keep those wrists limber by ap-

plying it in small sweeping motions to his back-up Zildjians while things get going in the studio.

At other times, he’s lugging drum cases around in the van, or using 5A hickory sticks to practice his 64th note triplets on the thigh of his skinny jeans. Just imagine the bruises!



MJ lives and works in London, UK, spending his time doing the following: Eating, sleeping, making music/veggie food, eating veggie food.

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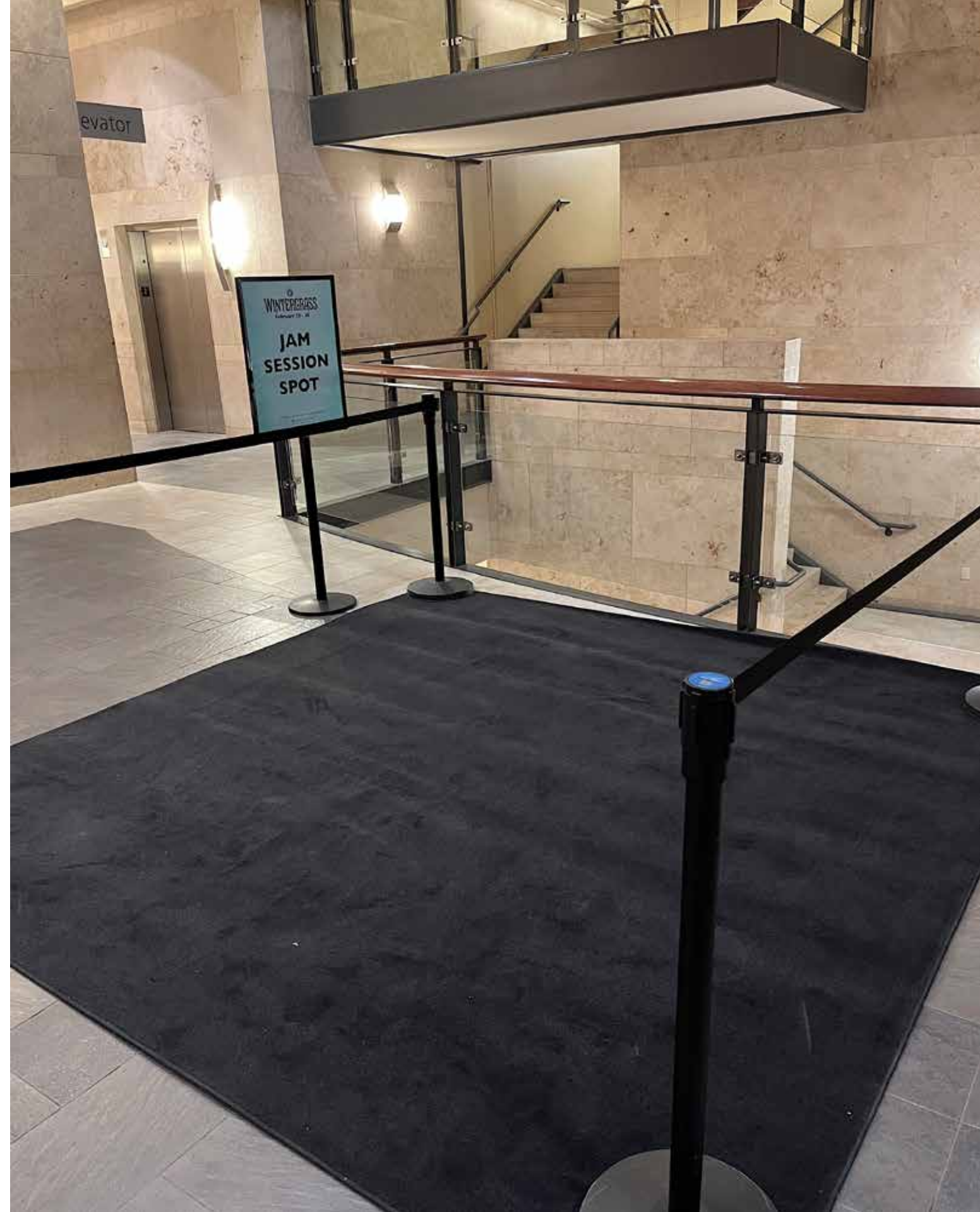
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Chris Davis Portfolio

Danny Barnes



Chris Davis

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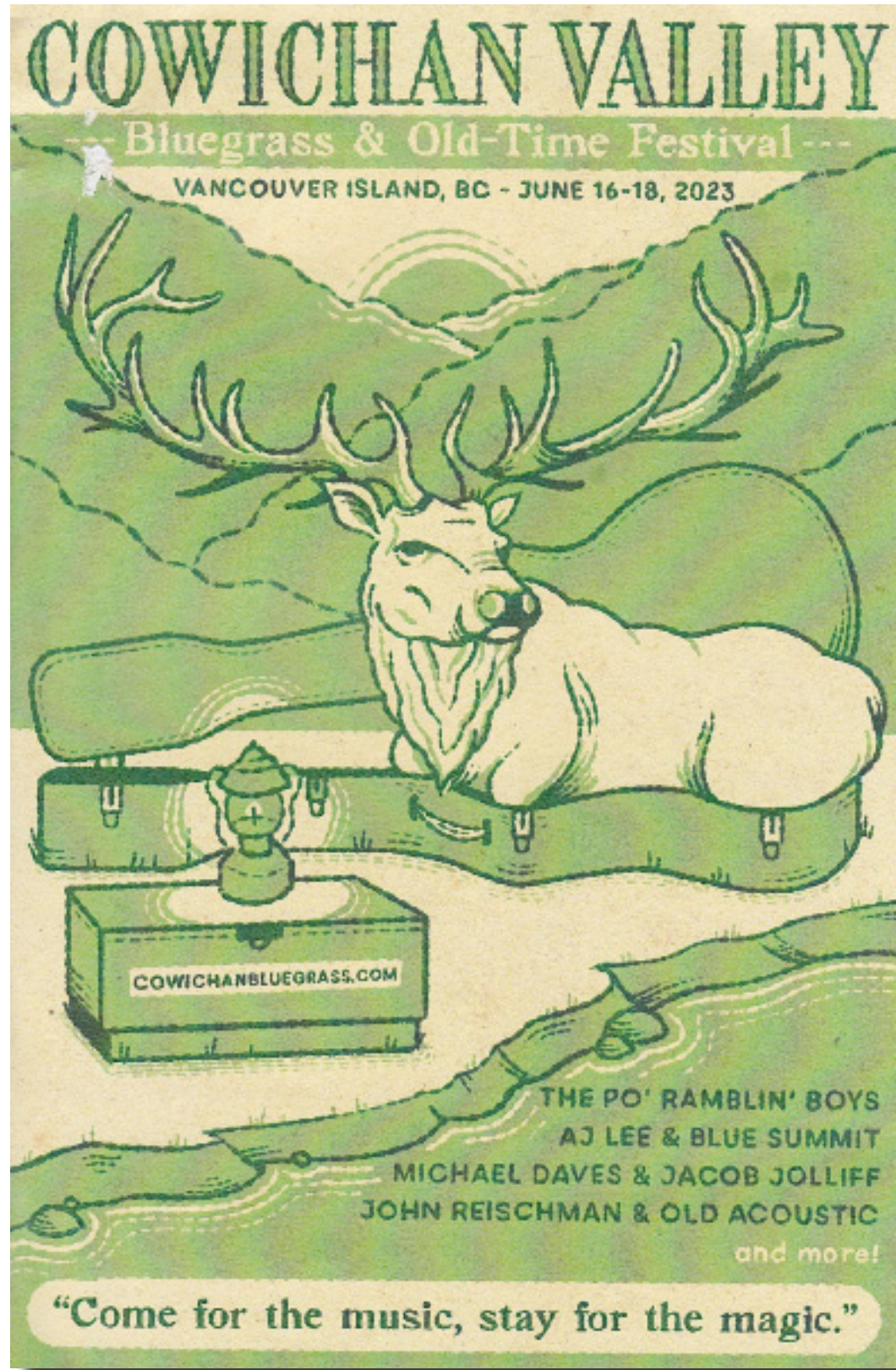
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More Trouble: Markus Hansen's Palindrome

By Matthew Rose

“My one regret in life is that I am not someone else.” Woody Allen

Markus Hansen, the London-based German-born artist, is trying in more than a decade's worth of projects to see what it might be like to be someone else, and then to confront that very notion of being someone else. So some years ago he created an installation that sought to unpack this idea: *Each Man Kills The Thing He Loves (Chambre Miroir)*, 2013.



Using a Felix the Cat bag o' tricks to flesh out the narrative or even the “feeling” he's someone else (you), one senses the teasing out – of one's singular identity. It's a bit more than hearing your voice on an answering machine, and a bit less than an LSD trip. Imagine Peter Pan the moment he lost his shadow. Hansen's work gives shape and form to the vagueness of sentiments like “It's hard to be you, I'm sure.”

Just as it's hard to be me. Walk a mile in my shoes? Sorry, I don't want the shirt off your back. You're one in a million. You're special. Unique. There will never be another you. I did it my way. I've got to be me.... Hansen's inquiry, I sense, concerns the mechanics of the examined life.

Each Man Kills The Thing He Loves is the artist's most precise expression of our dependency on seeing limited versions of ourselves reflected in someone else's eyes – and of course, our own.



Located in the artist's one-time Paris studio, the “chambre” (room) is housed in its own modest white labyrinth. Constructed of plywood, a single, doorless entrance leads you and then leaves you with the choice of turning left or right, although neither direction seems to portend any advantage or disadvantage. It is, as Hansen suggests, an architectural palindrome with rippling internal palindromes: Eve damned Eden, mad Eve.

Playing softly but consistently is the vaguely annoying song sung by Ingrid Caven from *The Ballad of Reading Gaol* (after Oscar Wilde). One follows a short corridor cushioned throughout with a common, office-style grey carpet, and we are suddenly in a room with a view: A hi-fi with a pair of speakers, and a spinning turntable; several wires flare out of the back of the turntable and a mirror behind the unit reflects the back of the turntable and high-fi with its inputs and outputs.

Or does it? One stands in front and examines the machine and then, of course, your reflection (my reflection). The mirror is the sort you see in department store dressing rooms: Long and inexpensive, edged with metal and often fastened to a wall with clear plastic clamps or hooks. The reflection has a slightly grayish tint to it. One problem: When I stand in front it, I'm nowhere to be found.



What is wonderful about this piece is the insistence of that the illusion we can see is really an illusion concerning ourselves, particularly how we grasp the past and manage the present. And it takes place in an instant and, as magic will have it, we need to dip into again. I imagine it like your first pot high when you find yourself in front of a mirror for what seems like the very first time.

This satisfying illusion harks back to the intimations of photography – the expectation of realism. A controversial theory and book by David Hockney and a University of Arizona physicist Charles Falco, *Secret Knowledge: Rediscovering the Lost Techniques of Old Masters* (2001),



proposes that many Renaissance painters didn't come by their "perspective" through imagination, but rather their "discovery" of the vanishing point was conceived by the use of lenses and mirrors.

Mirrors and self-deception are the province of most artists; illusionism in the package of Renaissance perspective (now no longer mined, interestingly enough) – delights us most when we are fooled and are conscious of it. Artists from da Vinci to Van Eyck to famously Hans Holbein to Manet on through to Escher and Michaelangelo Pistoletto and even the shaman of the art world, Jeff Koons (think stainless steel balloon dog sculptures) continue to pack in the crowds with their visual tricks. Impersonators, too, play off the mirror image game – check out Lorna Bliss impersonating Britney Spears in the barn burning "Idol" knock-off, Britain's Got Talent.

Holbein The Younger's *The Ambassadors* (at the National Gallery in London) resonates here, too, because to fully understand that painting, one must approach it from about a 5-degree angle to see the skull in perspective – perhaps the key to the entire work – the rendezvous with death, the great equalizer and all that stuff. With Hansen's *Each Man Kills The Thing He Loves (Chambre Miroir)*,



we are distracted by sound and shades of white (inside the labyrinth), and then encouraged to examine our presence and absence from multiple angles. An animated video on the artist's website plays a bit with this idea, drawing in and pulling back, but the web version lacks the "realism" and the presence of the illusion.

Few works of art, in the end, are not "reflections" of some kind – whether sketches of skyscrapers in a puddle, or our tormented inner worlds in globs of paint on canvas. As sentient beings, we seek to situate not just others but ourselves, and the reason might be simple: It is virtually impossible to see our whole beings in a mirror. What we get, even with multiple mirrors is a fragment or better, fragments. Only the other can see us fully, and yet we often say, they can't see us at all.



I should also point out a project Hansen launched in 2004 (and still ongoing) – *Other People's Feelings* – that echos this piece. In side-by-side portraits, the artist positions himself in relatively similar dress and more specifically similar facial gestures, with the idea to capture, in a flash, the mirror image of someone's feelings, someone's look. Subjectivity is truth, here, even as we objectively scour the image for "likeness" and incongruity. The examined life is indeed still worth living or worth at least taking a look at.



Matthew Rose is editor and publisher of *Trouble*.



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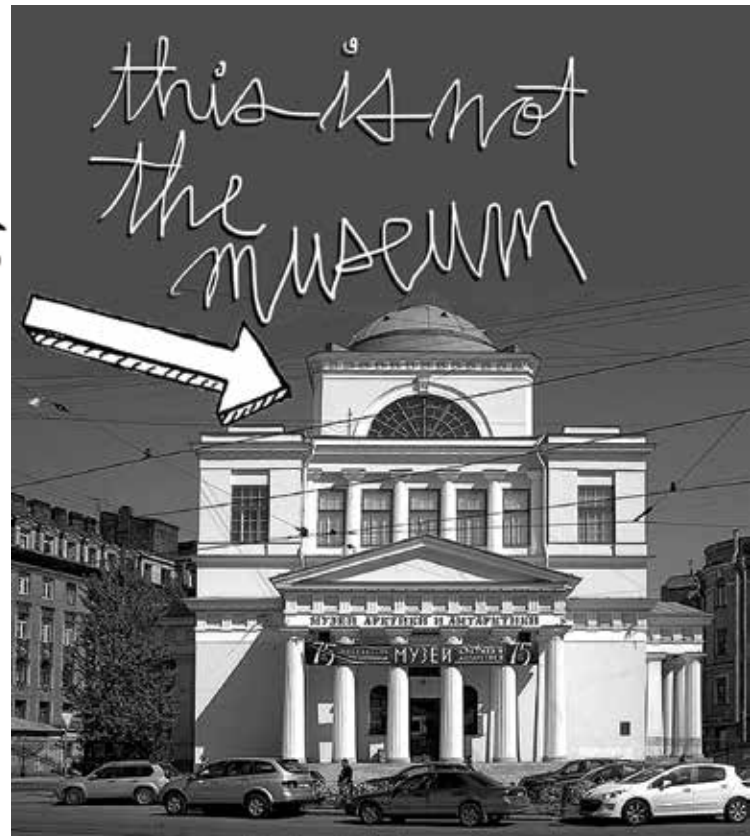
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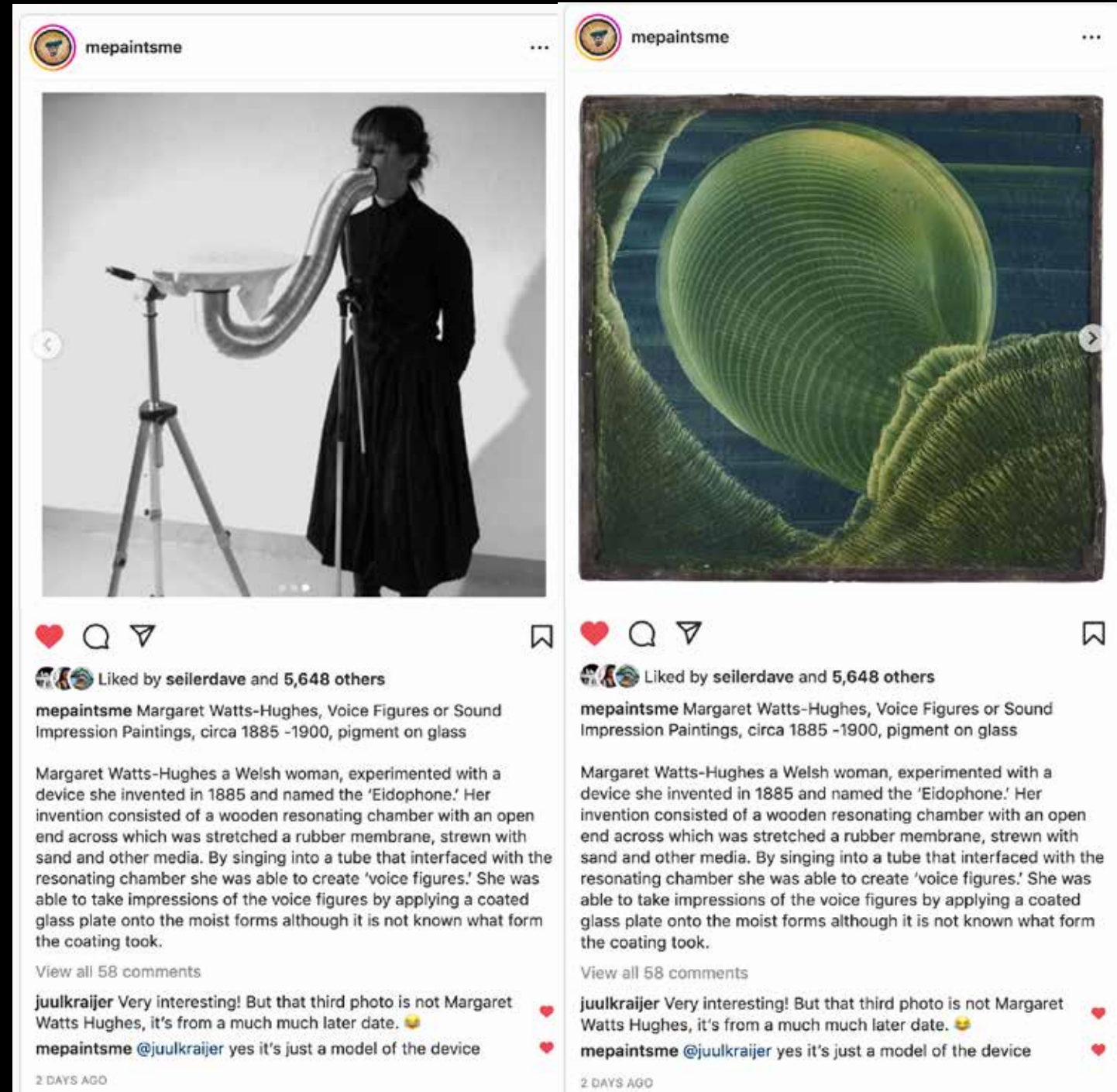


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A close-up shot of a woman with long, dark hair looking up at a man whose back is to the camera. She has a worried or questioning expression on her face. The lighting is warm and soft, suggesting an indoor setting. The man's hair is short and grey. The woman is wearing a pinkish-red top.

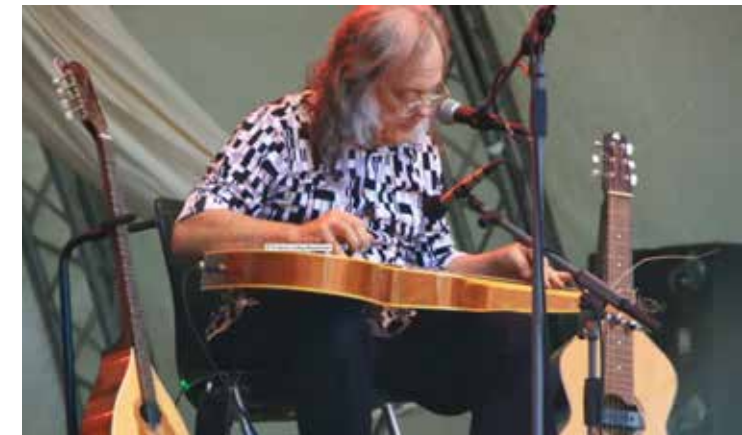
**You look like a man
who could handle trouble.**



Au Revoir

trouble and its editors and contributors
dedicate this eighth issue to all those
who have recently left the planet.
including those listed below:

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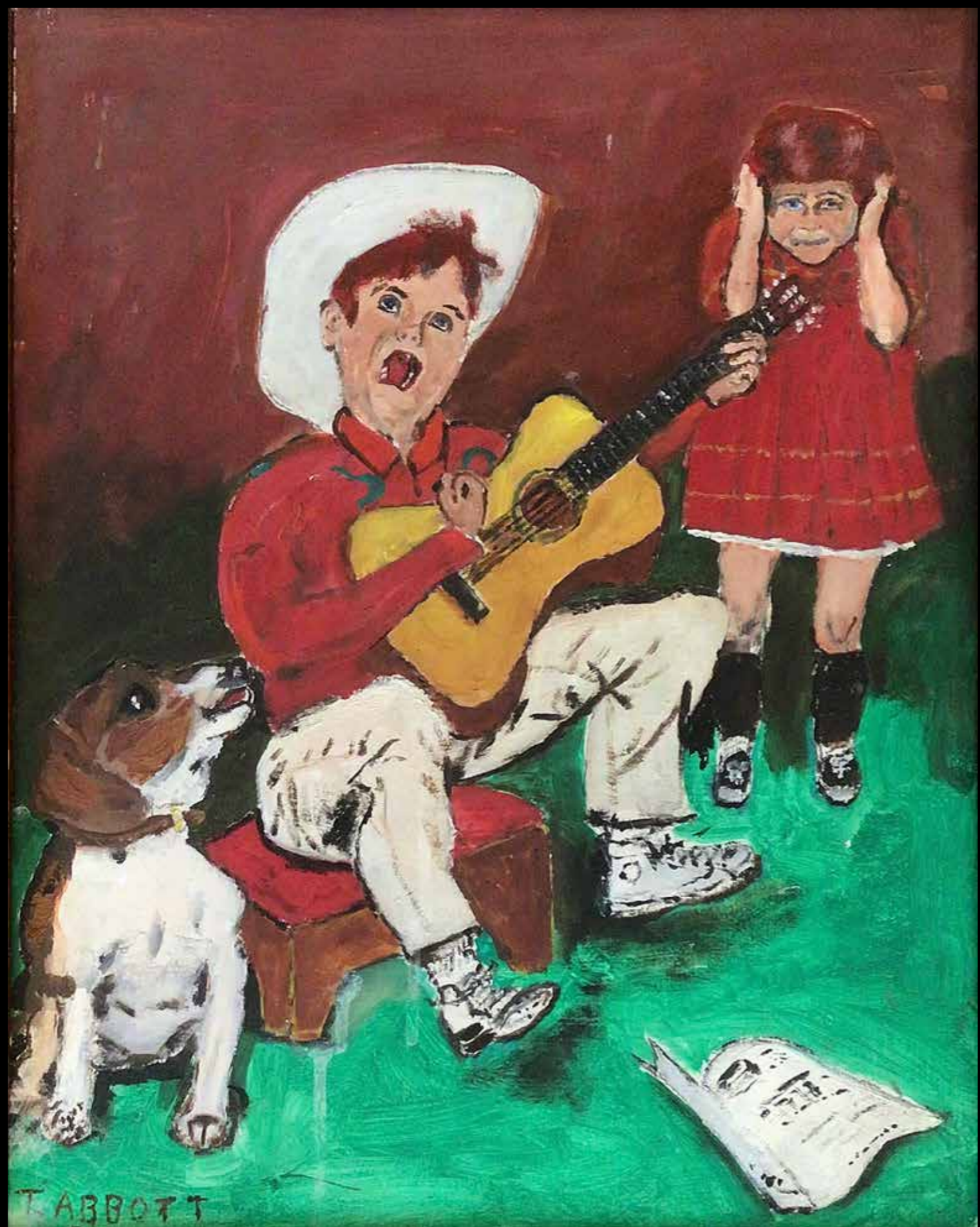
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