

GT

15



December 1993

GT 15 EDITORIAL



We're back! Just for you the trusty reader & ex-Gallic Productioner, a Memorial (3 and one-third years on) Edition. This is our 'macho' number - men's Issue, oh yeah, we understand the problems of gender specificity. (And just for any gender warriors who happen to be existing under the aegis of ex-GP folk, the projected 1997 edition will only feature 'hip babes' [sorry, I mean women] & we got double-parentheses too!)

So what have we got to offer you - Warren Beatty, Serge Gainsbourg, Georgie 'Boy' Batalle, 'Big' Jeff Stryker, Guy The Myth, Uncle Bob & Boys w/Dogs, Kinda funky eh?

And now for the usual editorial schtick, some heavy issue that demands puncturing. Isn't it about time we dumped irony? Don't get me wrong, irony has served us

gloriously during the last half-dozen years but (& its a big butt) now that every Tom, Dick & Bono is blathering on about the ironic element, aint it time to abandon the invisible inverted commas for something more *differant*? Call me elitist if you like but I don't have much time for fashions (intellectual, sartorial, sexual or recreational) which the common herd think are current. I tend to enjoy tomorrow's grooves, today. We could call it the futuristic tendency.

Why is it time to ring the bell on irony? Well, for all the fun involved in devaluing the currency of pop culture, the strategy (although essential in *dealing* with i(deal)ists) serves only in the long run to nullify everything that stands in its path. I mean anything can be ironic if you want it to be. For all we know Wacko Jacko probably viewed molesting little boys as an ironic commentary on the absurdity of personal fame or skin whitening as an ironic critique of cultural imperialism. River Phoenix's death after his claims of health consciousness was quintessentially ironic. For all the buried humour(zzzz) concealed within Jean Baudrillard's essays, anyone with any taste knows that there can't be any mileage left in the concept when Bono (MacShithead) claims to be an ironic pop star.

However great, knowing self-referential pop culture has been, it has never bettered glorious knowingless, pure, meaningless, pre-po-mo pop. In the discourse of white pop music, no-one has ever improved on the revolutionary trashy T-Rex's "*I drive a Rolls Royce cos it's good for my voice.*" Although there is no doubt that Roxy Music's "*The Sphinx & Mona Lisa, Lolita & Guernica did the Strand*" did have a good stab. I think its time to abandon knowing and embrace unknowing and let's dump all those movies with a coded filmic reference every minute or so - it gets sorta Masonic in the end. Be 'seeing' you

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WHO ARE THEY NOW?

Ralph 'Wolfman' Tittley: continues in the Video editing business, being responsible for such horrors as 'The Late Show', 'Biteback' & 'Ross King'. Ralph & Julie made it legal in 1991 and have two small cubs: Troy and Paris. Since Ralph has chosen to name his children in tribute to his first band, the GT staff are keen to know will he title his future cubs, Getafix, Obelix & Unhygenix. Ralph abandoned the smoke of London in 1992 for the improved kite-flying facilities of Malvern. When asked about possible future careers, the Wolfman replied that he liked the idea of being a shepherd. No doubt the isolation, rural bliss & free use of the sheep are the attraction. Ralph remains addicted to cream cakes.

Jim 'Plumhead' Sanders: completed his BA (Modern Third World History) during the Summer of 1993 & is now engaged on research for his Doctorate (International Media Treatment of South Africa 1960-1990). When he becomes a doctor he intend to start operating on anybody who passes nearby. Immediately following the termination of Gallic Productions Jim changed his name to James and became concerned with gender issues (he's trying to work out which gender he is!) Jim & family retired to the Midlands during the Summer of 1992 and now reside in a village occupied by zombies. When asked about the future, the Plumhead answered: "Arena-Academy-Asylum." We

take this to mean, the arena of performance (ie: Gallic Productions), the academy (ie: School of Oriental & African Studies) and the asylum (ie: the asylum). Jim remains addicted to the TV programme: Casualty.

Mark 'Pest - But Don't Call Me That' Sanders: has completed his studies in the History of Art, while having a year off in-between his BA & MA in order to read esoteric literature, consume chemicals & ponder meaning. He is currently driving (people up the wall) for a living while juggling theories of modern art and the power of paint on canvas. Mark has travelled in the USA, Japan and Germany experiencing the best (& worst) of those societies; lost weekends galore. Unbelievably, Mark has become tidier as he has aged, although there are still a few things under his bed which he wouldn't want anybody of a weak disposition to find. The family tradition of rebellious machines still haunts him. Mark has expressed an interest in a career in women's hosiery but gynaecology would be just as attractive. Mark remains addicted to subterranean moles.

Ambie 'Chipper' Gill: abandoned special needs teaching in Islington for a Home Office funded job in Worcester teaching English as a second language to Asian kids. Ambie has become obsessed with gardening and does an extraordinary impersonation of Percy Thrower. She finds the white folk of Worcester, disturbing at best, 'crackers' at worst. The Chipper (a weird nickname since she abandoned that obsession years ago) concentrates on nursing her husband and nurturing her daughter, Isidore. Ambie's ambition involves obscene amounts of money, extreme lassitude, a flame-thrower and physical re-education of each and every one of Millwall's BNP voters. Ambie remains addicted to the juices of the grape.

Matt 'Would You Like To Come Out To My Yacht' Biffa: abandoned his academic studies during the final days of Gallic Productions and worked as a

caffeine operative at a video editing suite. He did, however, achieve immediate fame as the best dressed 'runner' in the galaxy. Matthew's next form of employment was as the manager of a men's fashion emporium although he soon grew tired of announcing: "I'm free!" Finally, Matt made the inevitable decision that genuine leisure could best be obtained by exploiting the waste business. He's now happily employed slamming his fingers in gates! Biffa continues to work on his magnum opus: "Out Of The Strong Came Forth Sweetness". When asked about his ambitions, Matty mumbled something about gendering himself. Matthew remains addicted to doubt.

Davit 'Cleanliness' Lord: has not graced the shores of the UK since the summer of 1989 but contact was made during the Gallic vacation of 1990 in New York City. DC concluded his college degree and after a period of unemployment found a job which involved travelling and meeting people. He now sells dusters, door-to-door. (Okay, at the time of composing this section of the paper we don't know how he is employed but dusters are kinda funny.) 'Dave' informed us on the telephone that he had put on weight and lost even more hair. We will know for sure by the time of going to press because the (holy) Lord is visiting the Sanders household for the Christmas snap. Davit's ambitions probably remain the same: to irritate as many people as possible while staying true to a perverse philosophy of anarcho-individualism. DC remains addicted to cigarettes.

Colin 'Kinky Kalashnikov' Glen: concluded his art school thang in 1991 with a show memorable for the wooden stools which littered the floor. Colin immediately retreated to a life of seclusion and de-identification in Gloucestershire. For a period he 'looked after' a string of older women in his locality. Colin resumed exhibiting his art during 1993 and is presently engaged in a mid-20's crisis of representation. Colin's ambitions are (as always) known

only by himself but many ex-members of the Gallic crew believe him to be the boy 'most likely to succeed.' The only question remains at what? Colin remains addicted to addiction.

Wendy 'Vaguely Cartoonish' Douglas: served her time as Entertainment's officer at PNL before invading the hallowed portals of Kiss FM [100FM]. She now hosts a news & interview show: 'The Word' from 6.45 to 7.00pm Mon-Fri. In between being a notable ex-Gallic 'celeb', Wendy continues to party (and avoid tidying her [new] flat). She claims to have invented a candle which burns effectively at both ends and provides light in the darkness. When questioned on the concept of ambition, Wendy announced that she intended to host a chat-show wherein stars would be metaphysically and metaphorically deconstructed. The programme would be titled: 'Meta-Fun'. Wendy remains addicted to parping (as does Professor Terry Ranger, Oxford Chair of Race Relations - but that's another story)

Atsushi 'Sorry' Iizuka: retired to Japan during the Spring of 1990 after experiencing the horrors of the British Immigration Dept. Occasional letters ensued and in 1992, Mark visited Tokyo, spending time with our 'old' Japanese man during his vacation. 'Jaz' is well, having found a remunerative job in the financial sector. He rides a Harley-Davidson, still plays a little drums and is getting married in the near future. The GT staff would like to warn Jaz that we all fancy holidays in Japan, so get the spare room well-aired. Atsushi's ambition is to have a copy of the video which Uncle promised many moons ago. Jaz remains addicted to insane Ralpheque perversions of the English language.

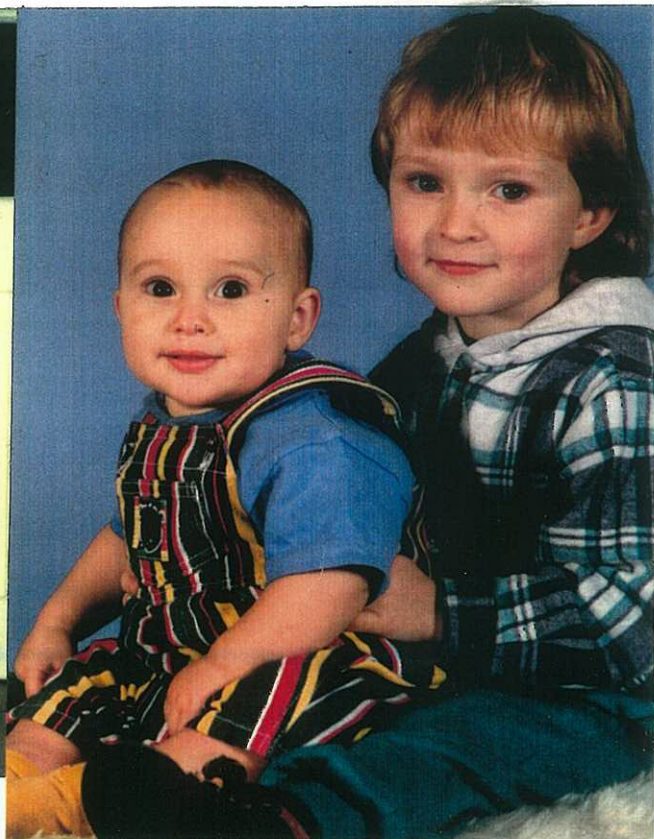
Introducing ... Nick 'Nack' Holt: Nicky was ho|o|veering around the GP offices towards the end of the period of production and has agreed to contribute a few words to this GT memorial edition. Nacky is older than some while continuing to feel younger than others.

He is the third in a triumvirate of artists (with Mark & Colin) to nail their canvas to the Gallic flag. Nocky's ambition is to seize control of the state whereupon he will designate himself better housing. Necky has studied despair in depth and is the sort of person one would want to get stuck in a lifeboat with (ie: he [probably] wouldn't eat you).

IN BRIEFS: **Dave Birkbeck** lives in some godforsaken suburb and is a sub-editor on 'The Builder' magazine. So much for going straight! **Chris Underwood** works in computers (he probably thinks there's money to be made in cyberspace!) The GT staff have learnt that Chris lives in Dottingham (use Tunes) and is soon to be married to some 'bird'. So nothing's changed - just remember to use the gaffer tape. **Bruce Cochrane** is living in Hull and is now entering the 3rd year of a Marine Biology degree. He got married during 1992. Although we had thought him cured, the old devil re-emerged and his last contact

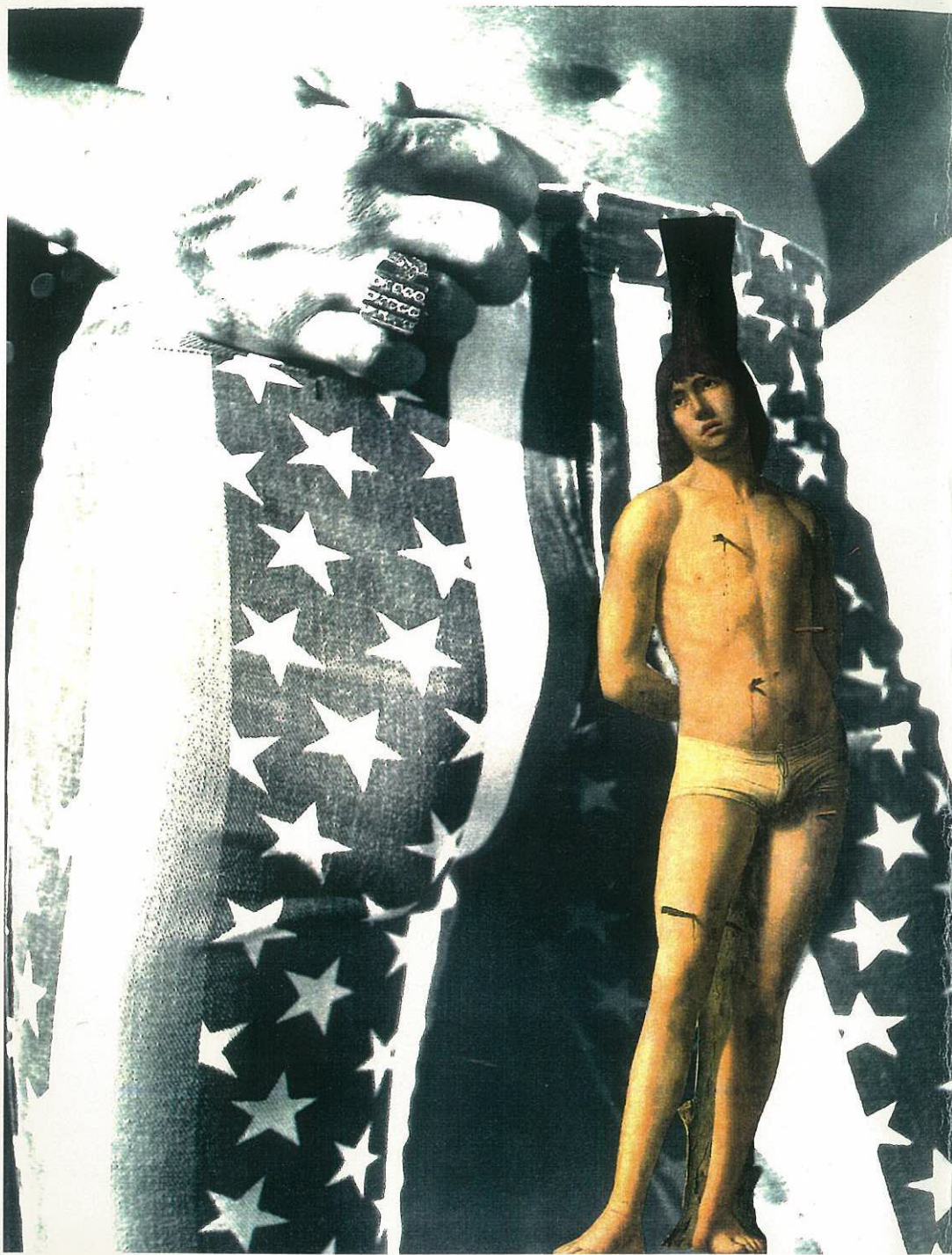
with Gallicdom was both fraught and fractious. **Martyn Lucas** is now living in Leicester and is the proud father of a little boy: Joe. We have no idea whether Martyn is still plucking the axe but we all wish him well with house-husbandry.

VAGUE CONTAX: **Amanita Forma**, who was a regular at early Asterix & the Gauls shows, has become a presenter on TV, hosting shows as diverse as 'Network 7' and 'The Late Show'. Her elder, hipper, sister, **Mem** (with whom we lost contact after an unfortunate incident with Ralph) writes regular articles on women's genitals for 'The Guardian'. **Bob**, who Steve employed as a Ralph impersonator in the early 1980s, appeared on 'Top Of The Pops' before disappearing into the primordial slime. Apparently we also have some tenuous link with meaningless fakers, **Fabulous**, but we'd rather forget that. Finally, **Toby**, the keyboard player with Jamaritwat [sic], features on Matt's unfinished symphony.



Izzy is normal size - Troy & Paris are giants!

PAGE SIX FELLAS



THE GALLIC GUIDE TO GEORGIE BOY

George Bataille b.1897 d.1962 will probably be best known to most of you as that bizarre addition to French erotic (pornographic) literature. Author of *The Story of the Eye* (first published in 1928) he is celebrated on bookshelves around the world as that infamous creator of Simone, the young girl who initiates our anonymous narrator into the dark world of eroticism. Eyes, eggs, milk, yolk and sperm are inserted into every describable orifice while priests are tortured, the English nobility warped and a band of Negro sailors coaxed into providing a fitting escape from punishment. Yet in true Gallic fashion we bring you a guide to that the other side of George (one merely glimpsed at in the above narrative), that side that is often left neglected due to its macabre and frighteningly truthful outlook on life. Rejected by André Breton in the 1920s as nothing but an "obsessive", adding "he reasons like someone who 'has a fly upon his nose'" (Second Surrealist Manifesto), Bataille responded by accusing Breton of being a sham. He argued that the Surrealists' attempted revolution of the mind was a facade, representing only a pathetic lack of strength - a personal retreat cloaked in the costume of revolt. George considered Breton to be a latter day Oedipus, quite content to blind himself from the reality of the human condition rather than confront it directly. What follows is a step by step account of the different facets of Batty's theories. We shall uncover the significance of the Big Toe and reveal the meaning of the Labyrinth. Hold on to your heads and we will begin the long trail into the dark mind of George Bataille.

THE BIG TOE



For George, the big toe signifies the base disposition of man. Whereas he stands erect with his head held high in the Heavens he can never escape the fact that his foot remains firmly placed in the dirt. It represents the secret horror of the human condition which is tied to the earth even though the mind may attempt to escape upwards. We may try to conceal its length and form as much as possible (using heels of a greater or lesser degree in order to distract from the foot's low and flat character) and yet it still returns to haunt us. It is the sign of our anthropoidal past and as such is a subversive element that will always drag us downwards towards our true nature.

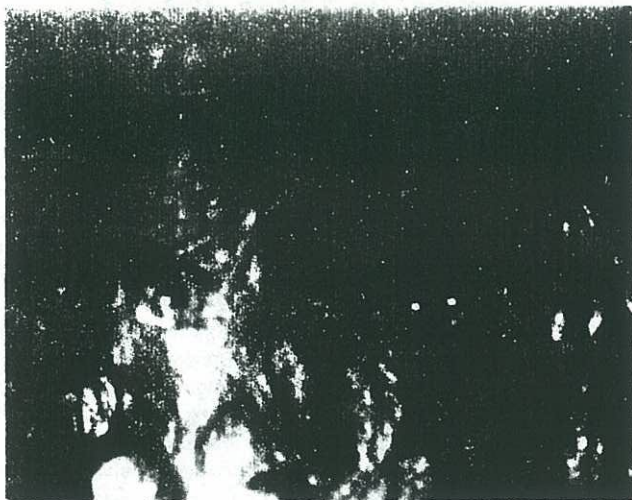
THE INFORME

"...affirming that the universe resembles nothing and is only formless amounts to saying that the universe is something like a spider or spit." The Informe means quite literally formlessness. For Batty it represents a conceptual (visual) strategy that is able to counter all philosophical logic, transgress social boundaries and shatter cultural codes. It attacks the imposition of formal categories through science by dissolving distinctions and decaying difference. It is a logic that acts logically to destroy itself from within (ie - a heterologic). The best examples of the informe in practice are to be found in the photographs of the dissident Surrealist André Boiffard. In the image following this section the visage of a woman is transformed (via the informe) into a transgressive break, disrupting the continuity of the visual message and forcing the spectator to re-evaluate its supposed meaning. The disintegration of the self therefore becomes a form of liberation that exposes the formal category of the body. It is for this same reason that Batty considered shit as having great subversive potential

because it pierces through the confines of the human prison in an abject and steaming manner, revealing man's formal boundary as animal.

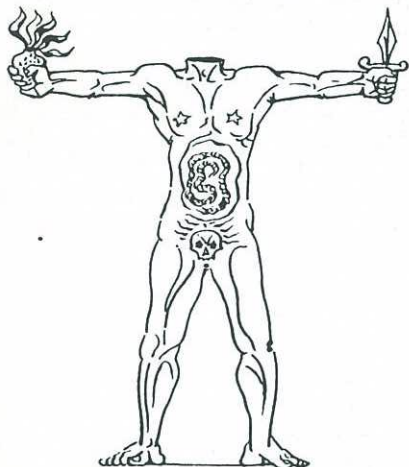
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THE HEAD(LESS) MAN

The head is the curse of man. It represents the site of logic which refuses to allow humanity to enter into the mire of being. It signifies the ultimate boundary that must be transgressed in order for man to be at peace with himself. We must become headless and leap into the bottomless void. Accept that we are no more than a fleeting gesture, a chance occurrence, a cruel twist of fate. In doing so we will breath the empty space of being and laugh in the face of the vertiginous fall.

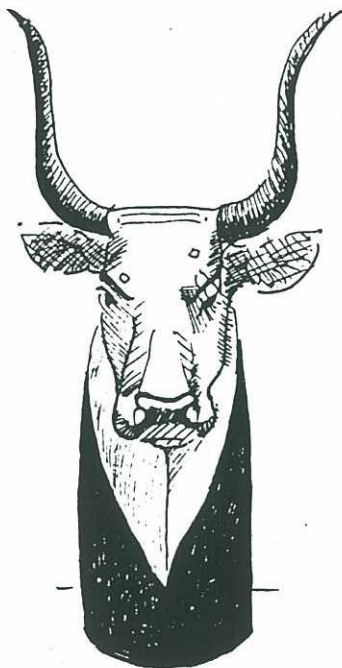


"Man has escaped from his head just as the condemned man has escaped from his prison. He has found beyond himself not God, who is prohibition against crime, but a being who is unaware of prohibition. Beyond what I am, I meet a being who makes me laugh because he is headless; this fills me with dread because he is made of innocence and crime; he holds a steel weapon in his left hand, flames like a sacred heart in his right. He reunites in the same eruption Birth and Death. He is not a man. He is not a God either. He is not me but he is more than me: his stomach is the labyrinth in which he has lost himself, loses me with him, and in which I discover myself as him, in other words as a monster."

THE LABYRINTH AND THE MINOTAUR

With the death of God comes the labyrinth of being. For Batty that labyrinth takes on many forms. It represents the labyrinthine structure of discourse, the architecture of our own minds. We are all

guilty of speaking in borrowed tongues, we all stand accused of questioning without regard and yet we are forever locked in a circular passage that has no exit. Language disintegrates itself (and us) from within. Inside it's drunken space we become dizzy, forced to gaze upon our own reflections. The Minotaur symbolises that reflection; the beast that lies within us all. The void that we constantly try to deny, the contradiction that is human existence. If we heed Bataille's advice we should embrace the monster, revel in his emptiness and celebrate his nothingness for only then will we be truly free. In the words of The Old of the Mountains, Hassan i Sabbah "Nothing is True - Everything is Permitted".

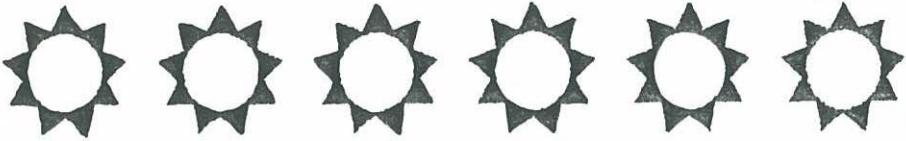


MYTH

"Myth is perhaps fable, but this fable is placed in opposition to fiction if one looks at people who dance it, who act it, and for whom it is a living truth...It is in solidarity with total existence, of which it is the tangible expression." Myth can only be defined as such when placed in opposition to some preordained conception of what is real. In the developed world (heavy irony) we have become tied to the straight jacket of science which strips life of meaning and replaces it with an empty shell. We believe that we are masters of our own destiny and yet our order is but a deviation from disorder, a distraction, a system devoid of balance. For Batty, myth reveals the twin sides of man (remember the Minotaur) creation and destruction. It allows a valuable expression of those areas of the human existence that in our Modern society are banished to the nether regions of the mind. By suppression we only magnify our nihilistic tendencies. The question that needs to be asked is which is more frightening - the bomb or the amphitheatre? Myth is therefore a safety valve which allows mankind to come to terms with the twin poles of his nature.

THE SUN

For the Ancients the Sun was the seat of God and the afterlife yet for Batty it represents nothing but the false hope for redemption. The Sun is instead the black symbol of destruction (rotten) and man but a transitory moment in it's perpetual decline. Ever the nihilist, Bataille considered the fact that the earth (and humanity) were born from the Sun's energy. It (us) therefore represent one stage in the Sun's slow mutation towards darkness. There is no point in fighting our eventual annihilation. We are destined to be destroyed. We must accept our fate and dance among the ashes - laugh in the wake of oblivion



JOY BEFORE DEATH

"Only a shameless, indecent saintliness can lead to a sufficiently happy loss of self. "Joy before death" means life can be glorified from root to summit. It robs of meaning everything that is intellectual or moral beyond substance, God, immutable order, or salvation. It is the apotheosis of flesh and alcohol as well as of trances of mysticism...it renews the kind of tragic jubilation that man "is" as soon as he stops behaving like a cripple...and letting himself be emasculated by the fear of tomorrow". Man must live in the wake of death and shake loose the shackles of an unfulfilled promise. He must acknowledge his being with the whole of his spirit and not defer it to some forgotten future. We are each our own jail master creating security out of a padded cell. Batty's vision of the present is that we have already arrived at zero but we are too blind to see it. Zero is discovered through the subversive logic of negativity. Hope obscures our sight. It is only pessimism that is the affect process of unconditional revolt. Once we have stripped ourselves of the thirst for order we will at last be free and embrace chaos.



SACRIFICE

The purpose of sacrifice is to obtain the ultimate *loss of self* and enter into the void forever. This may take many forms from personal suicide to the sacrificial altar but it is always preferable to have a willing victim first. Batty believed that institutionalised violence could be useful in that it would allow the individual self to be lost within the group hysteria (a type of safety valve (like myth) that directs our thirst for annihilation into something less destructive). He also saw it as more honest than the slaughter of the first world war in which the majority of (unwilling) victims had no understanding of why they were being asked to relinquish their lives. But for those of us who are less inclined to take up his offer there is an alternative - sex. *"The lost, the tragic, the "blinding marvel," possessed in one's innermost being, can no longer be met anywhere but on a bed." Love becomes the necessary expression of personal sacrifice: "...each unity must lose itself in some other, which exceeds it."*

(the significance of the priest's eye being inserted into Simone's vulva at the end of *The Story of the Eye*). Yet for Bataille (always the neurotic) this act of unity can only be achieved through rents and wounds. It is only amongst the dirt that we truly connect.

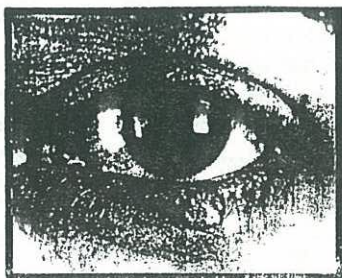


ICARIAN REVOLT AND THE SUBTERRANEAN MOLE

"Intellectual despair results in neither weakness nor dreams, but in violence. Thus abandoning certain investigations is out of the question. It is only a matter of knowing how to give vent to one's rage; whether one only wants to wander like madmen around prisons, or whether one wants to overturn them." Bataille wrote these words in response to the persistent gabbling of Andre Breton (see introduction). For Batty, Breton's vision of the Surrealist movement was inherently compromised, reflecting the reaction of a dissident bourgeois unable to come to terms with his own class. Instead of trying to shatter the cultural codes of bourgeois society the Surrealists' merely tried to rise above them. The unconscious became but another prison in which the unwitting were trapped. To this failure of strength Bataille coined the term - *Icarian Revolt*. According to the Greek myth, Icarus and his father Daedalus (the great inventor) escaped from the confines of their ivory tower by making themselves wings fashioned from the discarded feathers of birds. Daedalus managed to complete the hazardous journey but his son, giddy with the heights of his achievement, lost all sense of measure, flew too close to the sun and was burnt. The story of Icarus portrays the paradoxical character of not just the Surrealist movement but all groups that try to rise above the culture to which they are indelibly tied. Instead, the answer is to burrow under the foundations of society, subvert from below and watch the whole facade come crashing down on top of you. This notion of subversion was given the name *The Subterranean Mole* (after Marx's theories of revolutionary action in which he referred to the subversive element of *The Old Mole*) and was considered by Bataille to be in keeping with the base character of man. To quote Marx *"In history as in nature, decay is the laboratory of life."* There is no use in attempting to escape from the confines of cultural values by simply creating new ones that are just as suffocating. The only solution is to accept that there are no solutions and revel in your new found pessimism.

THE EYE

The eye represents the most seductive element within the human form and for this reason it lies on the boundary of horror. It may be related to a cutting edge whose appearance provokes both bitter and contradictory reactions. It is the exemplary subversive element within the architecture of the human body because it can escape from the confines of the head by way of vision. It allows us to consume the other while still remaining apart. It is the symbol of control and power while simultaneously acting as the vehicle for the loss of self. It allows us to see and yet blinds us by way of distraction. It signifies the paradoxical character of the human disposition.



A CHRONOLOGY OF THE OLD MOON HIMSELF

- 1897** George (Albert, Maurice, Victor) Bataille born in Billom, Puy-de-Dome.
- 1900** Bataille's blind father stricken with paralysis of the limbs.
- 1914** Converted to Catholicism, having been raised without religious instruction.
- 1916** Drafted into the army only to be discharged a year later owing to illness (tuberculosis).
- 1918** Entered Ecole des Chartes, where he met André Masson.
- 1920** In Madrid, Bataille witnessed death of Granero, one of the most famous matadors. Met Sylvia and married (Sylvia Bataille was an actress (see Jean Renoir's *Partie de Campagne*, in which Bataille had a walk-on role as a voyeuristic priest). Later, after their separation, Sylvia married Jacques Lacan.
- 1922** Renunciation of faith. Became a librarian at the Bibliotheque Nationale. Read Nietzsche stating "...(*his work*) has given me the impression there's nothing else to say."
- 1926** Contributed to *La Revolution Surrealist*.
- 1927** Wrote *L'Anus Solaire* (with illustrations by Masson). Entered into psychoanalysis with Dr. Adrien Borel, remained on the couch for the following decade.
- 1928** *Histoire de l'oeil* published (134 copies) under pseudonym, Lord Auch (with illustrations by André Masson).
- 1929-30** Conflict with that self styled Napoleon of the avant-garde - André Breton. Gained contact with other disaffected members of the Surrealist group who were subsequently denounced in the Second Manifesto. Creation of the magazine *Documents* founded with George-Henri Riviere.
- 1930** Read Marx and Engels.
- 1934** Experienced an 'illumination' that gave birth to an interest in zen and yoga.
- 1936** Published *Le Labyrinthe* and *Sacrifices*. Foundation of the College de Sociologie with Michael Leiris and Roger Callois. Creation of new magazine *Acéphale* (illustrated by Andre Masson) which spawned a secret society that lasted until 1939.
- 1941** Publication of second major erotic novel *Madame Edwarda* under the pseudonym, Pierre Angelique.
- 1942** Quit the Bibliotheque Nationale owing to tuberculosis.
- 1943** Publication of *L'Expérience intérieure*. "*I am not a philosopher, but a saint, perhaps a mad one.*"
- 1947** Publication of amongst others; *Méthode de méditation* and *Histoire de rats* (illustrations by Giacometti).
- 1957** Publication of *L'Eroticism* and *Littérature et le mal* (essays on Baudelaire, Blake, Sade, Proust, Kafka and Genet). "*Literature is either the essential nor nothing.*"
- 1959** Wrote introduction to *Le Procès de Gilles de Rais*, text established by Pierre Klossowski.
- 1962** Bataille died in Paris.

GUY - MYTH OR REALITY?



The distinction between myth and reality when related to my brother Guy is blurred to the point of invisibility - where does the man end and the myth begin?

The Gallic vision of Guy as Nietzschean superman - athletic, strong, intelligent, infallible, [Eh? We just thought he was mad - Ed] can be set against known facts about the man - a mountaineer, explorer, electronics engineer with a power of recall equal to, if not surpassing, the Memory Man and Commander Data put together. Dave Murray can testify that Guy was able to give the full service history of any piece of video equipment at Crow

Studios - right down to the serial number and who assembled the device in the factory. Yet his knowledge is not limited simply to this field - a veritable walking encyclopaedia, Guy has views on everything from opera to quantum physics, from organic chemistry to automotive mechanics and yet, as Jim pointed out, he was unable to move his yellow kit bag from the kitchen for six months. [But what was in the bag? - Ed].

So what is the verdict to be - genius or lunatic? Who can say where the border line is? Was it too much acid or not enough? Alas, I must leave it to the reader to decide as I cannot pass judgement. He is, after all, my brother.

(Uncle Ray)

SUPER 8
200ft. approx.

ANIMAL LOVER



15 Krone

Guy fancies Sonja Kristina - Horrific

- We know what she looks like now



Serge Gainsbourg



"I see you, I want you, I come between your kidneys," he whispers. "I love you, oh, I love you," she sighs. "Me neither," he replies savagely and tenderly. The woman sings very high, the strings slip in, she moans. It's delicious. It sounds like a hymn.

For me it's the most gorgeously evil song ever conceived. This piece of surreal smooch was recorded in 1969 by a 40-year-old French Jew of Russian extraction and his 22-year-old English wife. Serge Gainsbourg's 'Je T'Aime...Moi Non Plus' was banned by most radio stations. It sold five million copies worldwide.

The title was provided by Pablo Picasso, who, when his friend Braque exclaimed 'I love Dufy!', is said to have replied in his eccentric half-Spanish French 'Me neither!'

Gainsbourg, in the '80s the biggest and most controversial star in France, began his career 30 years ago at the age of 30. He'd

wasted his 20s playing piano in St Germain clubs, daubing the lips of Marilyn Monroe on movie posters, and loitering on the fringes of the art world. Then in 1957 he saw Boris Vian performing. It was decisive.

Vian was known on the left bank as the irreverent author of the novel *I'm Going To Spit On Your Grave* and journalism which championed black American music. His own songs were satirical. The most famous, 'The Deserter', took the form of a letter from a newly conscripted recruit to the President of the Republic: *"If blood has to be shed, set a good example, Mr President: shed your own"*.

It was these cynical, pessimistic songs that made Lucien Ginsburg change his name to Serge Gainsbourg and start writing himself. His first efforts sounded like the soundtracks to '50s Czechoslovakian cartoons - all jazzy tubas, oboes and clown whistles. The quick songs were clever tragicomedies about piano removal men and ticket collectors. The slow ones, soaked in alcohol, boredom and evil, featured a disaffected aesthete who teased and persecuted dumb girls. 'On Re-reading Your Letter', for example, sees this character going through his girlfriend's suicide letter correcting the spelling.

Discovered by Jacques Canetti, the man who signed Brel and Brassens to Philips, Gainsbourg had his first hit with 'Le Poinconneur Des Lilas', a song about a ticket puncher on the Metro who gets so bored he punches a hole in his own skull with a pistol. Another late '50s hit was 'La Javanaise', a wistful, easy-listening croon which plays relentlessly on the letter 'V'. But his albums, 'Confidentiel' (1963) and 'Percussions' (1964), while establishing his three hallmarks - misogyny, gadgetry, and the pun - bombed in the marketplace.

So he turned to films, where his huge ears, Roman nose and oriental eyes landed him a cameo role alongside Brigitte Bardot. They became lovers, and it was for Bardot that Gainsbourg originally wrote 'Je T'Aime'. (The version she recorded, overwhelmingly

animal next to Jane Birkin's ethereal flutterings, wasn't released until 1986.) He also composed the John Barryesque 'Initials BB' in her honour.

In the mid-'60s Gainsbourg became a one-man Stock, Aitken and Waterman, writing undercurrent for younger, prettier performers. It wasn't until the last years of the decade that his own records began to make any impact again. The turnaround was a 1968. The hits, chic, macho duets like 'Harley Davidson' and 'Bonnie & Clyde', followed. No longer the comedian of the late '50s, Gainsbourg was presenting himself as a willowy libertine, a sophisticated Sadean aesthete, a philandering puppeteer of starlets, a media rebel who could be relied on for a scandalous quote.

Jane Birkin, who had been discovered by David Bailey, became the child bride of Bond composer John Barry and landed her first screen role as the sex kitten model in Antonioni's *Blow Up*, met Serge on the set of a 1968 French film, *Slogan*. They got married. After 'Je T'Aime' became a huge international hit they were the

public couple of 1969, regular fixtures at premieres, nightclubs and parties, Jane in her transparent mini dress, Serge with his flares and dishevelled Julius Caesar hairstyle. When they weren't partying they were in Chelsea or Marrakesh.

But the follow-ups to 'Je T'Aime' flopped. 'Annee Erotique' (1969) was typical of what became known as his 'English period': holy organs, close whispered vocals, Jane's voice fluttering, exotic locations (usually the tropics or SW3). 'La Decadanse' came with a new dance attached: the lyric instructed the man to stand with his loins pressed to his partner's bottom and his hands over her breasts. Both the record and the dance sank



without trace.

Nevertheless, 'Je T'Aime' had left Gainsbourg rich. Freed from commercial constraints he made some of his most exquisite work. the whispering operettas 'Histoire de melody Nelson' (1971) (which



cast Jane, actually pregnant with their daughter Charlotte, as a *Lolita*-like nymphette) and 'L'Homme a Tete de Chou' (1976) ('The Man with The Cabbage Head') are perhaps the most detailed sexual fantasies ever committed to vinyl.

Gainsbourg, never a handsome man, had by now become expert in projecting a complex and sophisticated lustfulness with nothing more than a few gruff and witty murmurings over a dry trace of piano, strings and Moroccan percussion. His imagination was vivid and merciless. 'L'Homme a Tete de Chou', centred around the masterpiece 'Variations On Marilou' - an extended description of a girl masturbating - tells the story of a young hairdresser murdered by her deformed customer, the cabbage-head of the title.

1974's 'Vu de L'Exterieur' explored the delights of the anal passage in a spirit of impish mock-disgust: "*You're beautiful seen*

from the exterior / It's a different story for me, the one who penetrates your interior". Gainsbourg's motto at the time was, "Take women for what they're not and leave them for what they are". Those who accuse him of rank misogyny simply don't understand the real root of his teasing manner. "I soon realised," says Jane Birkin, "that all the things I had taken to be aggressions were actually the self-protections of someone infinitely over-sensitive, terribly romantic, with a tenderness and a sentimentality which people don't see. One day he told me he was a 'counterfeit bastard' and it's true."

After the flagrant provocations of '75's 'Rock Around The Bunker' in which Gainsbourg (this time punning atrociously on the letter 'S') played Hitler for laughs, a new track brought new chart success. Island boss Chris Blackwell introduced him to Sly Dunbar and Robbie Shakespeare, and the result was two hugely successful reggae LPs, 'Aux Armes Etc' (1979) and 'Mauvaises Nouvelles des Etoiles' (1981). The first came with a useful scandal. Serge acquired the rights to the 'Marseillaise', the French national anthem, by buying the original manuscript. Instead of writing out the lyrics to the chorus each time, the composer had scribbled in 'Aux Armes Etc'. So that's how Gainsbourg had his Jamaican backing girls sing it. It went straight to Number One in France, bucking in the saddle of the same kind of outrage that promoted 'God Save The Queen'.

The Mid-'80s saw a collaboration with New York guitarist / producer Billy Rush. The result was the Electronic Cabaret of Gainsbourg's next period, launched in 1984 with the mega-selling 'Love On The Beat'. The single was an explicit account of S&M sex. The LP sleeve featured Gainsbourg in drag as a long-nailed old brothel madam with a cigarillo, an image consolidated by the lurid gay disco of songs like 'Kiss Me, Hardy' (asked if he had had a homosexual experience, Gainsbourg replied, "Yes, so as not to remain an idiot"). Also broached for the first time was the subject of incest. With

Charlotte, now 14, he sang 'Lemon Incest':
"The love we make (never together) is the most beautiful, the most violent, the most pure, the most intoxicating...Oh papa, papa!" In both Charlotte's voice and the lyrical paradox, shades of 'Je T'Aime', 'Lemon Incest' was another enormous hit.

Last year Gainsbourg, ever the opportunist, hijacked the loudmouthed rap style of LL Cool J for the single 'You're Under Arrest' (*"You're under arrest because you're the best! G-g-g Gainsbourg,"* bragged the rent-a-rap backing vocalist). Beyond the swagger of the title track, the album of the same title is an extended and melancholy eulogy on the joys of oral sex: "Suck baby suck / To the CD of Chuck Berry Chuck". Never has brutish middle-aged sexism been so witty or so wistful. Under the glossy Eurodisco production lurk allusions to the later Picasso of 'La Pisseuse', the writings of surrealist painter Picabia, and the Roman erotic poet Catullus.

Gainsbourg meanwhile became the 'sacred monster' of the media, known for his drunken gestures on TV. On one live chat show he turned to Whitney Houston and told her in English, "I want to fuck you". After that he was restricted to taped shows.

Gainsbourg continued to grow old disgracefully until his heart (which after his first coronary he likened to a "hand grenade which might go off at any moment") burst.

Perhaps posterity will see him as the most scandalous singer since the balladeering, fornicating Emperor Nero. Like the McLarens and McGees of this world he knows the publicity value of riots and scandals. But above all he exemplifies Georges Bataille's definition of eroticism: being on the side of life all the way to its logical conclusion: death.

M O M U S
(N M E 1 9 8 9)



DISNEY ?




WHITMAN ?

Inside COLIN'S Playpen



If only for a while the cylinder seemed to me a comfortable enough place to be. Yet I can only wish you every happiness **DAYS COME AND GO - DAILY** Now I recommend the style of pseudo parody : The weaver of this must never expect any reward but must prepare for the hum of a machine tee-totally **YOUR HEART FEELS ... ?** I must say there's no point in decision - made - for too long no will. A scene goes, **Day Old B...** with **Cat In The Basket** as much as converse through animation is provided by a tint of yellowing on **The Old Hand Look** Any action occurring beneath a steep escarpment in **Mid-Whales** - tile upon the replacing the hut as it shifts.

La  SiLhouette  Patisserie

DC'S WORLD

How I Was Raped By Olivia From Bolivia.

I met Olivia during the summer of 1987 while we recording 'STP'. She was a nice person on the inside but I didn't want to be inside of her! She invited me to vacation with her in Europe (at her expense); being a cheapskate scoundrel, I accepted. I needed to drive a car at that point! The first week of the holiday was 'fun' but when we got to Italy, things got heated.

I think if I'd been born blonde like Ralph, then everything would have been okay, but those dark Italian boys stirred up an unquenchable fire in Olivia's groin. We'd been out to dinner and, sure, we'd drunk a fair amount of wine. When we got back to the hotel room ... she boiled over!

Although it's blurred, I can remember Olivia lunging at me, grasping my 'pecker' and telling me: "But you know it'll feel good." She got into bed with me, against my protestations and although I tried to go to sleep, it was 'hard' with her head bobbing up and down on my dick. I didn't want to tell her that her body was repulsive to me, I didn't want to hurt her feelings. And so for a series of days, Olivia abused me, against my wishes. I

can say, however, with all honesty that at no point did ejaculation or penetration take place.

Eventually I had to imply that I was gay (and here started a Gallic myth). I am, of course, straight - ask Leah or Melissa or Candy (Darling)!

Oh yeah and I did steal Clive's guitar & he fuckin' deserved it too. Come and get me, Baby!



WARNING: THIS PAGE MAY OFFEND THOSE WHO LIKE DOGGIES.

The following is what actually happened to me!

I was a boy of about 11 or 12, living on a big farm, and as boys do at that restless age, I roamed the fields and the woods far and wide. On a very hot summer day, my faithful

companion, a **big male collie dog**, and I came to a deep pool in a creek that flowed through the valley. We were hot and tired and it was far from other people and farm houses, so I didn't hesitate to strip to the buff and jump in with the dog joyously joining me. The running water was so cold that I soon became chilled and crawled

out on a grassy bank with my dog, Ted, **right behind**

me. I came up on the bank on my hands and knees and before I could even dry myself on my shirt (or in the sun). Ted mounted me like I was a female. I tried to move out from under him but he weighed almost as much as I and was now covering my whole back and gripping me with his forepaws - meanwhile pumping his stiffening weapon closer and closer. Suddenly after several sharp jabs that made me yelp, he found my rectum with his juicy prick and rammed

it in full length. It hurt fiercely - **yet it felt good!**

Suddenly he gripped my sides so hard with his forepaws, he drew blood and began spurting into my virgin passage. It was like an electric shock and triggered a new and unfamiliar reaction in me. My boyish penis suddenly began

to swell like Ted's, which was still in me, **and I too had**

an 'electric shock' in my own weapon I began

to spurt like a pulsating lawn sprinkler for the first time ever, and must have shot semen at least 3 feet from me for what seemed like two or three of the most glorious moments of my life to date. It was like the Fourth of July. Finally after several minutes in which I began to wonder if he would ever be able to get his gigantic, swollen prick out of

me **(and didn't care much** at that moment), we collapsed together on the grassy bank, and actually dozed off a while before another swim and the long walk home.

[Ludwig's story is featured in Nancy Friday's "Men In Love" - Psychiatric Voyeurism!]

£££ LIVING WITH WEALTH £££

The thoughts are mine but the real work was done by someone else - I dictated my thoughts on wealth whilst on a first-class flight to Antigua. And I did it because I can.

In the mid-80s it used to bother me. I was ashamed and embarrassed by wealth at a time when the whole nation had a pathological lust for accumulating as much cash as possible. In those days, money was as close to erotic asphyxia as you could get - everything was for sale, consumerism was out of control, pin-striped yuppie fucks became Gods, everyone wanted shares in something and Thatcher was only too happy to sell it to them. Around this time, my old man became Midas and life would never be the same. I was ashamed.

Well bollocks to that. I spent most of the 80s crippled by guilt and I'm fucked if I'm going to be bullied into feeling like a breadhead shltarse all over again. Not by anybody, no sir.

Let's be realistic. What is the best known cure for depression? Alcohol? Sex? Narcotics? Shopping, my friends, is the true road to enlightenment but it has to be serious. Finding a well-cut second hand suit at a bargain price is no good at all. Shelling out more money than you can shake a stick at for a black label Giorgio Armani suit that makes grown men piss their cheap little pants - Now, that is a pleasure reserved for God's chosen people. You might, reasonably, enjoy walking rugged hills but believe me, owning them is better. That way, you have the added enjoyment of telling Hippies to get the fuck off your land or you'll shoot them.

Back to clothes. These work best when they are discreet, when only the discerning eye can pick up on the nuances of the cut & cloth. Expensive for expensive's sake - The Gianni Versace's of this world, loudly proclaiming to everyone on the High Street that this - suit - is - seriously - expensive - so - I'm - a - bit - special - and - you're - all - toilet - is the sign of a vulgar man who can only use his poor taste as a compensation for his lack of attributes elsewhere. Where is the fun in having a man deep throat you with his financial status in the form of an expensive shirt? Men of true wealth and taste never flaunt their position - they like you to break the codes for yourself. They don't do, maestro, they ARE.

Versace Man implies that you should be in awe of him, because he has the kind of disposable cash to blow on £7,000 shirts. We laugh at him because we're going to buy his Company and sack him, then watch gleefully as he's reduced to burning the fucker just to keep warm.

The great and terrible thing about wealth is that I can afford to fail. If everything goes wrong, the end result is the same. I will still be rewarded. I can sin and blaspheme but I'll still get to heaven in a large row boat with 24 hour valet service.

It's a licence to go quietly mad in later life. Wear a lot of tweed, employ white-gloved servants, be drunk by noon and potter aimlessly around your estate mumbling darkly about setting up an Institute for orally gifted schoolgirls in the East Wing.

Listen, you can do anything you want. You're rich, you're thin and they can't fuckin touch you for it. So why be a camel when you can be a rich man - Go forth and shop, my friends. Just don't pay less when you can more.

(Matthew B).

LIFE IN A WAR ZONE

'Guy Debord (And Nick Nack) Move to Capri'

or...

'Todays Missing Letter is 'u'...'

or...

'An (Almost) Verbatim Record of the Welcome a Drunken Neighbour Gave to a Friend, November 1993'



First of all we think the world must be changed. ("Don't you even f*cking look at my dog... you bitch... you f*cking bitch...") We want the most liberating change of the society and life in which we find ourselves confined. ("F*ck off, go on, f*ck off you f*cking little bitch!!!!") We know that

this change is possible through appropriate actions. (F*cking whore, f*ck off... I'll set the f*cking dog on you... f*ck off!!!!)

Our specific concern is the use of certain means of action and the discovery of new ones, means more easily recognisable in the domain of culture and mores, but applied in the perspective of an interaction of all revolutionary changes. ("You're all the f*cking the same... f*cking bitch!!!!")

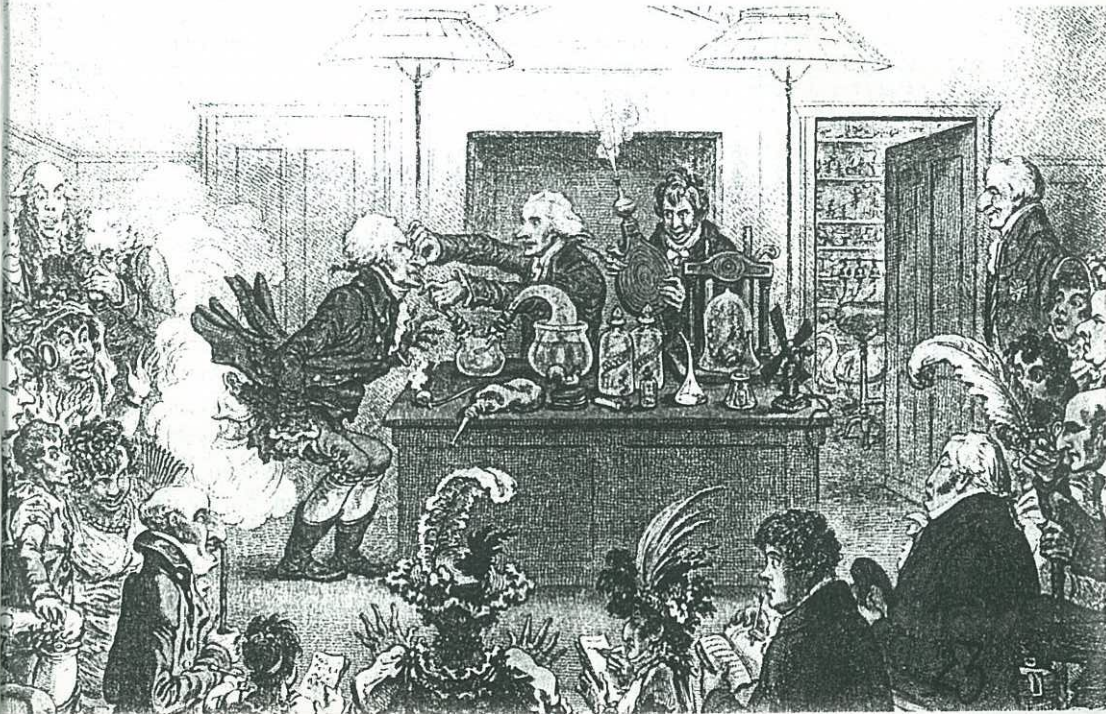
What is termed culture reflects, but also prefigures, the possibilities of organisation of life in a given society. (Don't you f*cking look at me like that, f*ck off, go on f*ck off you f*cking c*nt...") Our era is fundamentally characterised by the lagging of revolutionary political action behind the development of modern possibilities of production which call for a superior organisation of the world. (F*cking f*ck off, that's my dog... f*ck off!!!!)

One of the contradictions of the bourgeoisie in its phase of liquidation is that while it respects that abstract principle of intellectual and artistic creation, it at first resists actual creations, then eventually exploits them. ("And shaddap, f*cking don't speak, f*cking shaddap!!!!") This is because it must maintain a sense of criticality and experimental research among a minority, but must channel this activity towards strictly compartmentalised, utilitarian disciplines and avert any concerted overall critique and research. ("You stuck up, f*cking slag, bitch... f*ck off!!!!") In the domain of culture the bourgeoisie strives to divert taste for innovation, which is dangerous for it in our era, towards certain degraded, innocuous and confused forms of novelty. ("All of you..you..you..YOU f*ck off...shaddap!!!!") Through the commercial mechanisms that control cultural activity, avant-garde tendencies are cut off from the segments of society that could support them, segments already limited because of general social conditions. ("F*cking c*nts...BAM!!!" - at which point he kicks the front door in...)

From Nick Nack (Beirut Correspondent December 1993)

(My thanks to Guy for allowing me to share his thoughts)

PARPOLOGY



RALPH ON KITES

When asked to write a piece on kites over a particularly bad phone line I was at first taken aback - an essay on Jews? Especially when referred to so offensively seemed somehow below the dignity of the great Gallic organ. Then the truth hit me - wham! - a horny rhino slamming against my land Rover door.

And so to Kites: We left London back in February and then, in March, we moved into our new house in funny old Malvern - Gallic retirement village. Not missing one iota the gladiator's arena they call 'the smoke', I rapidly set about enjoying my new-found liberty. Firstly by drinking heavily - at least one bottle of red a day to wash down the olives - then by exploring the granite lump above the town. However, the maxim 'Because it's there . . .' means little atop the Worcestershire beacon and the need to face a greater challenge arose.

That's when my sister appeared with a dog, a small boy and a gentleman friend who had with him a stunt kite - nothing too flashy, just your standard, average performance stunt kite. We climbed the hills, flew the dog and threw sticks for the small boy. This wasn't very successful so we tried another combination - this time flying the kite. I was hooked.

Within the week I was at Malvern Kites purchasing a magnificent two-colour, expert rated, 10-40mph super kite with 150ft of line and some handles - then to Castlemorton Common I dashed. The bugger wouldn't fly. I tried - oh how I tried - for days but it just would not stay in the air. In exasperation I tried adjusting the harness and struts - blindly fumbling with a dangerously limited knowledge of kite aerodynamics - but success! It roared into the heavens on the first trial flying first for one minute, then four, then seven, fifteen, twenty - it was then I realised that I didn't know how to land the thing without nose-diving it - carbon fibre struts, despite their strength are quite brittle and not cheap. On the fifth replacement strut I finally learned how to gracefully coax the beast down.

By then of course, my friends had caught the bug and one by one they all bought their own and we tried formation flying, winding lines about one another. Soon it became apparent that my kite was fine in strong winds but hopeless in a light breeze and not very manoeuvrable at any time so it was back to Malvern Kites. I left the premises on this occasion around £80 poorer but with a real gem. This kite is almost 2m across from wing tip to wing tip, can fly in winds from 4mph to 40mph and pulls around 150lbs of tension in a moderate wind. Despite its size it is extremely manoeuvrable and is striking to behold - a black and green bird of prey swooping and soaring, visible for miles as I stand alone on North Hill. Just me, my kite and the wind - mind empty of everyday trivialities - worried about nothing, thinking of nothing except the next loop or figure of eight or power-dive. Spiritual.

AMBIE on GARDENING

This isn't a joke, it's life and death where plants are concerned. Put a shrub in the wrong place and you have a 10ft monstrosity, put it in the right place and joy forever. Viburnums, hydrangeas, clematis, senecios, phyocanthia, mahonia, passiflora and the rest - where to plant them only the discerning gardener knows!!! You have to feel true love and passion for the little pots you pick up that look 'oh so pretty' at the garden centre. Buy anything, but love it, talk to it and plant it with care - and you have a winner (says Geoff Barnes). Forget 'plant spotting; (buying seeds etc and nurturing them). Whack them in the ground, talk, water and feed (non-chemically) and in two years you will have - fab, mega, brill, beautifully, splendidly, without doubt, true beauty. Just look after them, not by pampering them, just by being there and being understanding, picking them up from late night parties, asking them to phone once when they're away from home - not many rules, but a few to show you care. They like worms too!

DRINKING 'SHAMPOO'

"Do you ever listen to women talk, man, do you? Because I do until it's running out of my ears. I mean I'm on my feet all day long listening to women talk and they only talk about one thing - how some guy fucked them over. That's all that's on their minds, that's all I ever hear about. I mean face it - we're always trying to nail them and they know it. They don't like it - they like it and they don't like it."

Every now and again a text emerges from the sad, commercialised, neurotic world of pop(ular) culture which speaks from the soul. Often it's no more than the merest moment of a text (visual, aural, literary - whatever) which gells, which connects, which provides pleasure in a world of "shit and misery" (Celine). For me, Hal Ashby's *Shampoo* is just such a 'text'.

What is *Shampoo*? On one level, it's a comedy of manners set in sexually liberated California circa 1968. On a second level, it's a political allegory linking George Roundy's (Warren Beatty) romantic despair to the 'accidie' of the American people on the day they elect Richard Nixon to the Presidency. On a deeper level, it's a movie by Warren Beatty, the auteur, about Warren Beatty, the legendary Don Juan ("You're where you should be all the time and when you're not you're with some underworld spy or the wife of a close friend." Carly Simon - "You're So Vain"). On an absolute auteuristic level, *Shampoo* is a continuation of Beatty's previous studies of 'beautiful losers', check *Bonnie & Clyde*, *McCabe & Mrs Miller*, *The Parallax View* and recent return to form, *Bugsy*: Beatty is too perfect to win, thus defeat in (and of) itself is the only portrayal possible.

Shampoo is a story which takes place within a time-frame of 36 hours. It is the tale of George Roundy's transformation from vacillator to actor, from cynic to romantic, it is George's 'moment of big decision' (with no or little prior fore-[play]thought). The movie echoes the stylistic methodology of Jean Renoir by recognising that all the players can justify their own actions to themselves. In a picture in which all portrayals are deeply negative it is a genuine achievement to avoid condemnation by recording life as it is. George, the hairdresser, is the 'servant' with power; in the global centre of representation and visual magic: Hollywood, George is a beauty maker (worker) in possession of the secret codes and signs. Throughout the movie, George's central 'chat-up' line is "Let me do your hair." Jackie (Julie Christie), an ex-girlfriend, demonstrates no more than peripheral attraction for George until he *does* her hair - then they make love (or attempt to until they are disturbed by Lester). George's arrival at Jackie's house is shrouded in a mixture of genre references, the Triumph motorbike, the hair-dryer tucked in his belt like some modern-day western gun man. These twisted signs serve to emphasise the ironic heroism and inverted rebellion of the LA hairdresser. Weirdly, later in the movie, Lester refers to the sexual act with Jackie as "Getting his gun off!"

Since *Shampoo* is famous for the sexual content, perhaps we should examine George's six 'encounters' during the 36-hour time-period. As the movie starts, George is making love with Felicia, the lights are switched off! The telephone disturbs them and George leaves to go to the aid of his 'girl-friend', Jill ("not a girl - just a



friend of mine"). At Jill's flat, foreplay starts and is rapidly abandoned as George prepares food; although the couple sleep together, any question of sex is disguised. The next day, George bumps into Jackie and later does her hair plus (see above). His next appointment is at Felicia's house where he meets her alienated daughter, Lorna. George cannot resist using his 'hair' come on and the daughter asks: "Do you want to fuck?" We see none of the 'fucking' and next meet George as Felicia returns to discover her hairdresser coming out of Lorna's bathroom, doing up his trousers. Felicia then demands that George satisfies her desires, which he does with visible weariness. The sixth and final sexual encounter in the movie is between George and Jackie at the club-house during the Bel Air party; an act of love-making which is also interrupted, this time by Lester (unseen) and Jill (seen).

In a film which is ostensibly about sex, it is astonishing how few times George actually 'gets his gun off' (to quote Lester's extraordinary blunt phrase) and how vaguely the sexual union is treated. In effect, it is clear that this is not a picture about sex but rather a study of deception and seduction. Sexual intercourse (or fucking) is only the epilogue, the chapters detail the parallel 'hustle'.

The treatment of George as a man on the edge of something ("*I just wanna have a normal life like anybody else, I can't take it anymore*"), simultaneously "*at the epitome of [his] life*" while being "*disgusted*" with it, is extremely sensitive. George is promiscuous, George is a philanderer, George is also the character under (our) the analyst's gaze. His confession/explanation to Jill is one of the great Hollywood performances. As David Thomson notes in *Warren Beatty: A Life & A Story*, it is not only the words that dominate the confession speech but the vocal 'noises' which take the scene beyond language: "*they are the moans and primal creakings of misery, of inarticulateness, of having to be honest when he is a poseur, of the knowledge that in words he will start lying again, not speaking but wooing, so eager to be liked he does not know what he thinks.*"

"(sighs) There were a couple ... I mean there (noises) Let's face it, I mean that's what I do. (noises) That's why I went to beauty school. I mean they were always there and I keep, I just, I-I-I (noise) You know, I, I, I don't know what I'm apologising for, (sighs) I go into that shop and they're so great looking, you know. And I, I'm doing their hair, and they feel great, and they smell great. Or I could be out on the street, you know, and I could just stop at a stop light, or go into an elevator, or, I ... there's a beautiful girl. I, I, I don't know ... I mean, that's it. I, it makes my day, makes me feel like I'm gonna live forever. And, as far as I'm concerned, with what I'd like to have done at this point in my life, I know I should have accomplished more. But I've got no regrets. I mean, gee, because ... I mean (noises) Aaagh! (sighs) Maybe that means I don't love'em. Maybe it means I don't love you. I don't know. Nobody's going to tell me I don't like 'em very much."

There are two particularly fascinating relationships in *Shampoo*, the most important, of course, is that between George and Jackie; of lesser interest but still loaded with significance is the chemistry between George and Lester. George's multiple (triple) cuckolding of Lester has links to Terence Stamp's 'fuck-fest' in Pier Paolo Pasolini's 1960s picture *Theorem*. In the Pasolini movie, the Stamp character seduces all the members of a family; mother, daughter, son and father. In fact, if *Shampoo* has a weakness it is that George Roundy is not bi-sexual. At the Republican election party, Lester wonders whether George "*could do anything with mine (hair)*", George responds: "*I could try*", herein lies the alternative polymorphous sexual subtext.

In order to understand the relationship between George and Lester it is essential to remember that Lester is a control-freak Jackie details how she is never allowed out of the house, while Lester attempts to 'use' the imagined homosexuality of the Hollywood hair-dresser by requesting that George accompanies Jackie to the Republican election party. Lester comments to George: "*It's a difficult situation - I want you to know I appreciate it.*" Lester has no idea how genuinely difficult the situation is for George! At the Bel Air party, Lester is out on a limb but being a pragmatist he



adjusts; while searching for a towel, he discovers two people making love in the club-house. Relaxed in his voyeurism (the essential passion of the control freak) he comments to Jill and her date: "that's what I call fuckin'." At this point the fridge door swings open and Lester realises that the source of his visual pleasure has been Jackie and George.

In contrast to Lester's complex control strategies, George is deceptively simple. In the words of old school reports, George is 'happy-go-lucky'. Both Jill and Jackie attack him for this, Jill by

stating during an argument: "Oh grow up - you never stop moving - you never go anywhere - grow up, grow up", Jackie, during a quiet spell at the Bel Air party by explaining: "I used to get so angry with you ... because you're always so happy about everything ... I found it rather unrealistic." Even Lester cannot understand the hair-dresser's romantic *raison d'être*, at George's flat, the morning after, Lester interrogates: "Do you get your kicks sneaking around people's backs taking advantage of them - is that your idea of being anti-establishment?" To which George replies: "I'm not anti-establishment", and of course, we know that this is true, he feels nothing for the establishment, he is genuinely apathetic, he does not care for rebellion. In fact George cares for very little during the story, he demonstrates anger when he is refused a loan (in order to open his own hair-dressing shop) by the bank and he demonstrates real emotion with Jackie at the end of the movie but considering the complexities of his life during the preceding 36 hours he is extraordinarily 'laid-back' throughout the film.

The climax to George and Lester's relationship is the fear-drenched scene in which George expecting a beating from Lester's thugs, counsels and re-orders the 'out-of-control' Lester. He discusses Lester's relationships with Felicia and Lorna and even goes so far as to defend Jackie's affection for the businessman: "Oh no - You could call everybody a whore - she really likes you, Lester - it's not just the bread." It is almost as if, George through Lester is attempting to feel his way to a resolution of his own personal crisis. Little does he know that his advice will mean that he loses the one person who he decides he actually needs. Beautiful irony.

Examining the George-Jackie relationship, one is struck by the lack of commitment from either side. They have had a previous affair which ended because of George's inability to accept responsibility. They meet in Lester's office, where George is attempting to obtain funding for his new hairdressing salon. In the car-park, George and Jackie engage in a bitchy conversation in

which both adopt a defensive stance. George's feelings for Jackie are betrayed by both his statement: *"I'm never serious about anything"* and his offer to do her hair.

The scene in which George cuts Jackie's hair and transforms her from a *"hooker"* to a beauty is particularly sensual. Jackie questions George about his 'love-affairs', resulting in the comment: *"you can't stand to miss one of them can you."* And true to character, George moves in on Jackie (whose central concern is whether making love will ruin her new hair-do!) The love-making is interrupted by Lester, and George plays gay, pretending that the steam in the bathroom is essential for the hair-cut. Neither George nor Jackie display any serious emotional attachment at this stage.

At the Republican election party, Jackie is driven by her anger at Lester's controlled deception (Lester's wife, Felicia is also present) to get drunk. While George is attempting to accept responsibility for Jackie (on Lester's request), Felicia is demanding his attentions and Jill is drifting away. At the dinner, Jackie, now drunk, declares to the person sitting next to her: *"most of all - I'd like to suck his (George's) cock."* She then proceeds to spill her drink on the hair-dresser, sink under the table and simulate fellatio on him. George decides to act (in some ways a key moment) and removes Jackie from the party but the damage has been done, Felicia now knows that Jackie is



Lester's lover. Throughout this scene, although it is notable that George is displaying his affection for Jackie by accepting responsibility for her, it is equally notable that Jackie is using George as a means to irritate Lester. Unfortunately, this ploy possesses little weight because Lester believes George is a stereotypical gay hair-dresser.

At the Bel Air party, George and Jackie act as if they are emotionally separate, wandering together and separately. There is a moment of truth when they sit on a beach and discuss each other's ideal sexual types. They then proceed to the club-house where George states: *"I can't imagine being with Jill - when I'm 50 years old. I can't imagine not being with you."* They kiss but the sense of separation is still paramount. Jackie positively avoids making any statement of genuine affection for George - body, yes - mind, no? Disturbed by Jill, George runs after her, losing both women in the process.

The final scene in the picture, features George attempting to secure Jackie's heart but we know that Lester has left Felicia and that Jackie and Lester are about to fly to Acapulco to get married. Once again, Jackie attempts to avoid words by fleeing from George; in a wonderful pastiche of a Hollywood car-chase, George races after Jackie, finally catching up with her at the top of the hill. Whereupon he pleads: *"Honey ... I want you to marry me, I wanna take care of you, I want you to have a baby with me - Hey I know I'm a fuck-up but I'll take care of you. I'll make you happy - I swear to God I will. Huh, honey - what do you think?"* Jackie's only comment is: *"It's too late."* She then explains about Lester and Felicia and George breaks down: *"Oh honey, honey please ..."*

please honey - I don't trust anybody but you." Jackie hugs him and then leaves. The film closes on a back-shot of George watching Jackie drive back to the house, meet Lester, glance up at the hill and then depart for the airport. The end of the movie demonstrates as if there were any doubt that George's and our perspective are one and the same.

Is George *"incapable of love"* as accused by Jill? *Shampoo* depicts George as deeply intimidated by words, preferring to rely on actions (or reactions) or 'noises' to symbolise his feelings. However, even though George does not actually say: 'I love you' to Jackie during the movie, it is clear that he does feel something deeply profound for her. His relationship with the levels of deception which bubble around him is interesting because as soon as he attempts to abandon chaos (his life up to this point) and embrace control (his offer to Jackie), he is rejected/defeated. In effect, this is a rite of passage movie, George has finally grown up. The answer to Jill's accusation is clear, perhaps George has always been incapable of love in the past but the irony rests on the fact that at the moment of the accusation George has discovered his own capability for love.

George's affection for Jackie is related to their similarity, they *feel* alike, but in the same way that through Jackie, George discovers his own 'capability for love', he also meets his previous 'incapability'. Jackie and George serve as mirrors to each other, reflecting both good and bad

elements of the dual personality; the fundamental difference between them being that Jackie is upwardly mobile and George is slowly giving up. Although the end of the movie is sad, the viewer is left with the feeling that this is not the absolute end of the relationship between George and Jackie, Jackie will surely tire of marriage with Lester?

Shampoo was a very successful film at the box-office (\$22 million on first release). Pauline Kael commented at the time:

"George isn't a negligible dramatic creation. For the movie-makers, he's the foolish romanticism of youth incarnate, but some people may see him as a jerk and resent him. To them, Possibly, the new romantic hero would be a cynical stud who gets it all and wins out. In its own way, Shampoo is a very uncompromising film, and it's going to cause dissension."

In summary, *Shampoo* is a movie which details the awakening of George Roundy, an awakening which is prefigured early in the movie when we see him eating an apple (like Adam on the verge of discovering knowledge). Throughout the film, Richard Nixon consistently appears on posters and TV screens, underlining the fact that not only is George waking up but so are the

American people; the liberal days of Kennedy and LBJ have been replaced, perhaps forever. David Thomson has described the movie as being *"... always on the edge of melancholy, as if it knew the horror of aging and decay,"* and this sense of melancholy pervades George's transition from his extended adolescence to we know not what. The soundtrack book-ending the film is the Beach



Boys' "Wouldn't It Be Nice", a song that manages to fuse teenage innocence with despair at the end of youth. A fusion which Shampoo also manages to achieve.

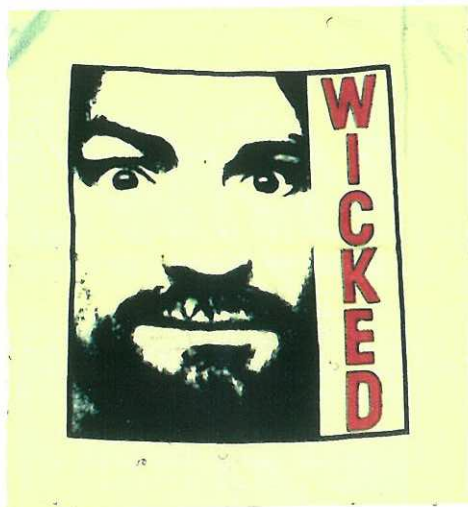
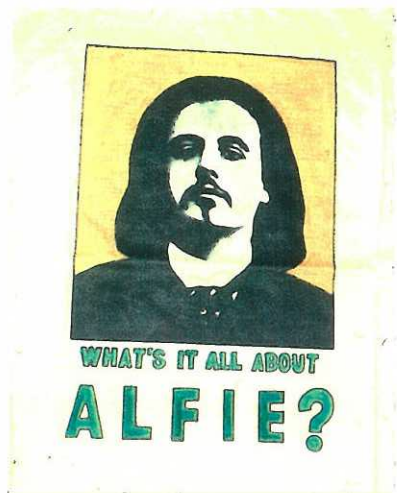
The last word as always on the lexicon of love must go to Uncle Roland:

"The lover raves (he "shifts the sentiment of values"); but his raving is stupid. What is stupider than a lover? So stupid that no one dares offer his discourse publicly without a serious mediation: novel, play, or analysis (between tweezers). Socrate's 'daimon' (the one that spoke first within him) whispered to him: 'no'. My 'daimon', on the contrary, is my stupidity: like the Nietzschean ass, I say yes to everything, in the field of love, I insist, reject all training, repeat the same actions; no one can educate me - nor can I educate myself; my discourse is continuously without reflection; I do not know how to reverse it, organise it, stud it with glances, quotation marks; I always speak 'in the first degree'; I persist in a dutiful, discreet, conformist delirium, tamed and banalised by literature. (What is stupid is to be surprised. The lover is constantly so; he has no time to transform, to reverse, to protect. Perhaps he knows his stupidity, but he 'does not censure it'. Or again: his stupidity acts as a cleavage, a perversion: it's stupid, he says, and yet ... it's true).

(IZZY GROVE IS A WOZZER FAN!)



MGS T-SHIRTS BEEN



AND COMING . . .



