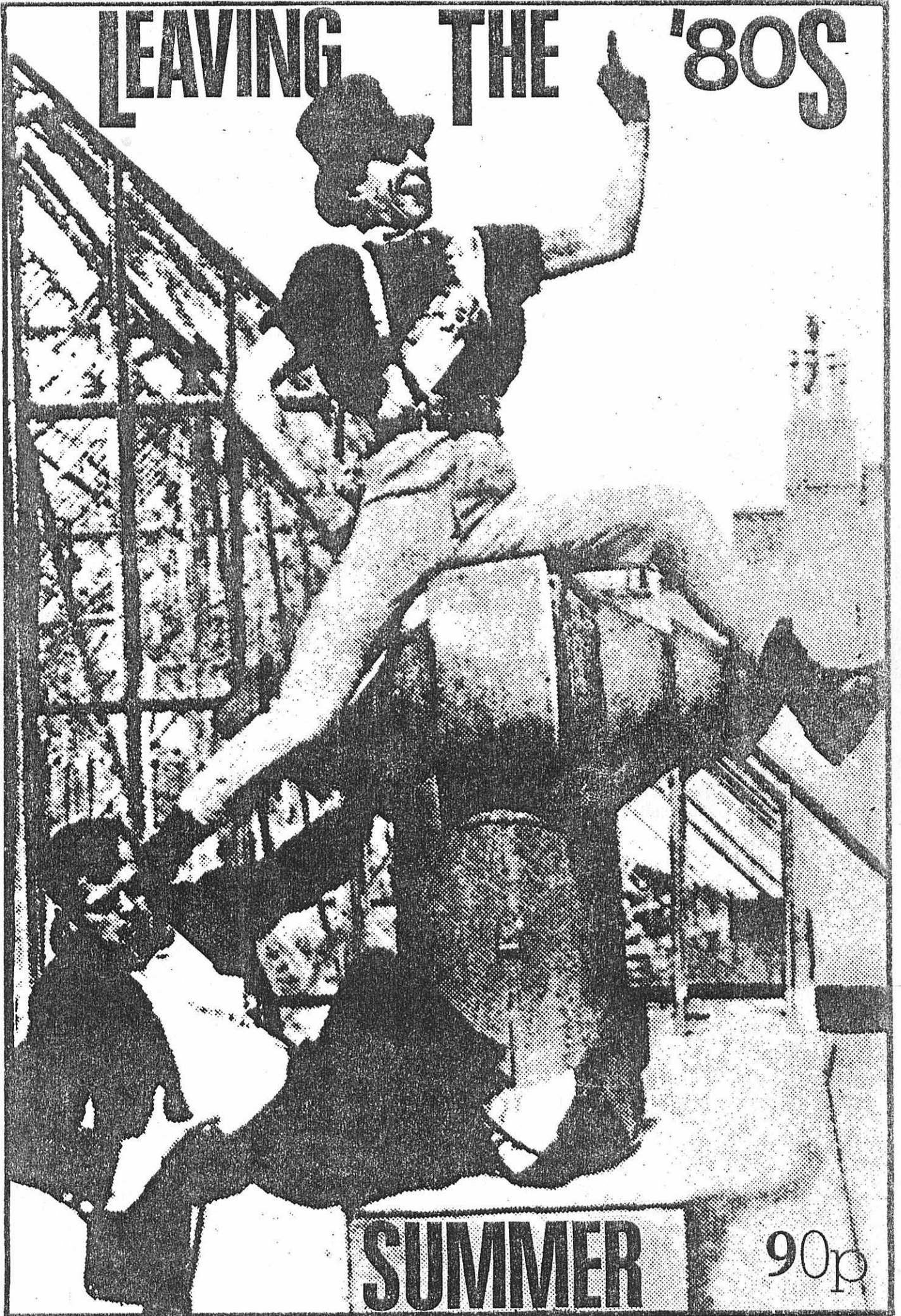


LEAVING THE '80S



SUMMER

90p

Welcome to the first edition of this 'new' magazine - 'Leaving The 80's' - for those about to do so Some of you may have read our sister-paper 'The Gallic Times', some of you are dead. No Matter! Why start a new publication? Why not! The rag is waved in front of the bull. The bull loses interest and returns to grazing. "My mother said I never should play with the gypsies in the wood." Dream on sweet casualty of the last decade. If you don't remember the '70s - tough luck!

In this up-market version of the 'Sunday Sport' we intend to hod a nod at the folk who inspired Gallic Productions to 'create'. Create what? I hear you asking. Create films, music, magazines and situations, I hear myself replying. Forget it! What do you get for your measley 90p - state-of-the-art - horse and cart - Mr Bart - a new start? Some of it will bore you, that's good, you people don't understand that sometimes it takes longer than 30 seconds to comprehend something. Burn it Eat it Chew it Kill it.

We are not ashamed to publish articles from elsewhere. In fact we dare the writers to sue us. The only way to achieve freedom is through freedom of/for/to information. Sit on that one!

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cover illustration - the first FEKS film 'The Adventures of Oktyabrina' (1924).

B-WILDERED

"Billy Wilder is too cynical to believe even his own cynicism."
(Andrew Sarris - The American Cinema, 1968)

"I have a kind of philosophy; maybe it's cynical, but I have to be true to what I feel."
(Billy Wilder interview, 1969)

I 'discovered' Billy Wilder late one night about five years ago, 'Double Indemnity' was on late-night TV and I found myself being sucked into it's 'sex-dialogue'. The Insurance salesman (Neff) is trying to sell the housewife (Dietrichson) insurance (and chat her up at the same time);

"There's a speed limit in this state, Mr Neff, Forty-five miles an hour."

"How fast was I going officer?"

"I'd say about ninety."

Slowly but surely I tracked my way through Wilder's back catalogue; of course I already knew 'Some Like It Hot' and 'The Seven Year Itch' but the discovery of 'Ace in the Hole' (a tale of mass-deception and cynicism) and 'Kiss Me, Stupid' (which should have been titled 'Fuck Me, Stupid!') encouraged me to keep searching. Before too long, I realised that this man had made 25 movies of which at least eight are masterpieces and the rest easily respectable.

Most film-directors have peak periods and long stretches of garbage. For all of their classics, Ford, Hawks even Lang turned out their fair share of rubbish. Not so with Mr Wilder, if one film was below par you could guarantee the next would be a gem. I only consider Welles and Renoir to be greater and lets not forget that Renoir worked for the majority of his career in Europe and Welles found the financial constraints of Hollywood unbearable!

So what we have here is a Director who not only managed to work within the Hollywood mainstream but who also made money! It's worth pausing for a second on the word 'money', elitists and cultists will tell you that it's good to be unknown, exclusive even undiscovered. This is errant stupidity, if you can tell a good story (or even write a good song) you want/need as many people as possible to see (hear) it. During the '50s Wilder was one of the most 'bankable' American movie-makers and rightly so.

Never a 'flashy' mover of the camera, he told his stories simply and the 'genius' was in the dialogue and subject-matter. Or as he said himself: *"You will not find in my pictures any phony camera moves or fancy setups . . . I like to believe that movement can be achieved eloquently, elegantly, economically and logically without shooting from a hole in the ground, without hanging the camera from a chandelier, and without the camera dolly dancing a polka."*

Oscar-wise he was very successful; winning 'best director' and 'best screenplay' in 1945 ('The Lost Weekend') and 1960 ('The Apartment') and best screenplay in 1950 ('Sunset Boulevard').

For all these reasons Billy Wilder bewildered me!



He was born on June 22, 1906 in Vienna. His first job was as a sports-writer on a leading Austrian paper. He then moved to Berlin where he worked on one of the cities largest tabloids ostensibly as a crime-reporter. In the late '20s he moved into films and got his first credit for the screenplay of Robert Siodmak's semi-documentary 'Menschen Am Sonntag'. Between 1930 and 1933 he worked on more than ten UFA pictures before having to flee Germany. (His mother and relatives were gassed in the concentration camps). He went first to Paris where he co-directed his first film; 'Mauvaise Graine'. The experience was not one that he enjoyed!

He arrived in Hollywood in 1934 with barely any money but luckily (due to his UFA contacts) a job as a scriptwriter. He didn't achieve success at first, he didn't actually get much script-writing at all but he did sell some stories. In 1938 he began a partnership with Hollywood writer Charles Brackett which was to prove fruitful, of the six films they scripted together two are classics; The first 'Ninotchka' was an Ernst Lubitsch movie released in 1939. Lubitsch specialised in gentle-bitter-sweet comedies and due to the phenomenal success of his pictures in the '20s was reputed to possess the 'Lubitsch Touch'. 'Ninotchka' tells the story of a rigid, female Russian commissar who arrives in Paris and how she is awakened to luxury and love. The Russian is played by Greta Garbo and the first part of the film can be seen as a wry comment on Garbo's previous career, she plays a woman who appears utterly cold (frigid), completely the reverse of all her previous 'emotive' characters. The picture is very funny and Wilder's sarcasm runs amok dealing with the hypocrisies of Communism. Wilder seems to have been extremely influenced by Lubitsch's gentle style, check 'Love in the Afternoon', 'Sabrina' and 'Avanti'. The second key screenplay was 'Ball of Fire' for Howard Hawks in 1941; Hawks was one of the great Hollywood talents (he directed 'Scarface; Shame of a Nation', 'Bringing up Baby', 'His Girl Friday', 'The Big Sleep' and 'Red River'), an incredibly diverse film-maker who could handle anything from gangster pictures to screwball comedies. The script for 'Ball of Fire' is classic 'screwball'; a gangsters moll on the run hides out with eight professors, one of whom is preparing a dictionary of slang. This clever re-reading of 'Snow White and the Seven Dwarves' provides Wilder with the room to fling around some stunning dialogue playing the 'hip' young woman and her street-talk off against the boring professor who doesn't realise that he's being used. The story bears a resemblance to 'Some Like It Hot' in it's comical use of the gangster genre. The Hawks influence also persists in later Wilder movies - 'Five Graves to Cairo', 'Stalag 17' and 'The Front Page'. In 1942 Brackett and Wilder were offered their first chance to make a picture of their own, Wilder as director, Brackett as producer and both of them writing the scripts.



There are a variety of themes which recur in the movies of Billy Wilder, perhaps the most important is the element of exposure. Having worked in newspapers he is drawn to expose - alcoholism ('The Lost Weekend'), corruption in postwar Berlin ('A Foreign Affair'), the nightmare behind the facade of Hollywood ('Sunset Boulevard') and ultimately exposure of press exposure ('Ace in the Hole'). Wilder's exposés are not, however, as clear cut as orthodox journalistic objectivity; *"His key pictures evince a Germanic predilection for misery and misdeed, tinged by 'the fascination of the abomination'. It is this hint of fascination which separates him from the disinterested Mervyn LeRoy tradition of crusading Hollywood journalism, aimed simply to denounce and reform."* (D. McVay). Linked to this element of exposure is his use of investigator figures; The insurance man, Keyes in 'Double

Indemnity', the congresswoman in 'A Foreign Affair', the defence lawyer (Laughton) in 'Witness for the Prosecution' and finally Sherlock Holmes. This leads on to the joy of deception in Wilder's movies; Ginger Rogers dressed as a child in 'The Major and the Minor', Neff and Dietrichson (conning the insurance company) in 'Double Indemnity', the alcoholic (deceiving himself) in 'The Lost Weekend', Tatum's scam in 'Ace in the Hole', Jack Lemmon and Tony Curtis (dressed as women) in 'Some Like it Hot', the entire 'borrowing the flat' thing in 'The Apartment', Nestor's English Lord in 'Irma La Douce', the insurance scam in 'The Fortune Cookie' and so on,.....

Being a European who emigrated to the States, Wilder enjoys reversing his own situation to tell stories of Americans in Europe: Most of his American characters in Europe are scoundrels but from Bing Crosby selling phonographs in 'The Emperor Waltz' to the ingenious Sgt Sefton in 'Stalag 17' they are deeply positive people, they have the world in their hands and more than anything they possess ENERGY. This does have a side-effect; the Americanisation (cheapening) of everything, for instance Jimmy Cagney's comment in 'One Two Three': *"Look at it this way, kid; any world that can produce the Taj Mahal, William Shakespeare and striped toothpaste can't be all bad,"* The 'eleventh hour' conversion is another Wilder favourite; Dietrichson lowering her gun, experiencing a pang of love in 'Double Indemnity', Joe Gillis informing his girlfriend of the sordid nature of his relationship with Norma Desmond in 'Sunset Boulevard', Tatum's change of heart at the end of 'Ace in the Hole' and Jack Lemmon abandoning the hoax in 'The Fortune Cookie'. Billy Wilder isn't totally cynical, it's just that his reading of innocence isn't as simple as ours! In fact most of his stories seem to end in the loss of innocence of the characters after the deception is revealed. All of his heroes are classically 'disenchanted'.

His hatred of the mob is obvious from the vicious portrayal in 'Ace in the Hole' to the crowd singing 'Somebody stole my purse' in 'The Lost Weekend'. But what is more interesting is his attraction to the vulgarity of America, when Marilyn Monroe says in 'The Seven Year Itch': *"Every time I show my teeth on television more people see me than ever saw Sarah Bernhardt. It's something to think about isn't it?"* you cannot help but feel wonder at the tackiness of modern life! The analysis of love in Wilder's films is peculiar, love can never, it seems, be a pure experience, he continually casts younger women (or men) with older men (or women). It is as if somehow one partner has to be experienced before love can be achieved, perhaps this is related to Wilder's own life. He says of the time he arrived in Berlin: *"I danced as a gigolo for a while in the Eden Hotel, and at the Adlon I served as a teatime partner for lonely old ladies."* This old/young relationship appears over and again but especially in 'The Major and the Minor' (even if Ginger Rogers is only dressed as a 12-year old), 'Sunset Boulevard' (Joe Gillis and Norma Desmond), 'Sabrina' and 'Love in the Afternoon' (both starring Audrey Hepburn, probably the most useful actress for portraying innocence). He never casts his characters as searching for love, he always places love as a means to something else, whether it be the insurance payout in 'Double Indemnity' or fame in 'Kiss Me Stupid'.

This leads onto homosexuality in his films (which could be seen as a deception of sorts), the transvestitism in 'Stalag 17' and 'Some Like it Hot' is obvious, but there are elements in the relationship between Don Birnam and his brother in 'The Lost Weekend' and especially between Neff and Keyes in 'Double Indemnity': *"The guy you wanted was too close - right across the desk,"* Neff tells Keyes. *"Closer than that,"* replies Keyes. At the end of 'The Fortune Cookie' the homosexual overtones are quite blatant, having recognized his wife for what she is, the hero, Lemmon, goes off with the black football player. Whether he meant it quite like that I somehow doubt but that's what it looks like! Wilder got very close to examining the relationship between Holmes and Watson in 'The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes'. The narrator implies that Holmes is gay but then turns it into a joke and sadly investigates it no further.

Suicide is also a theme which appears as a motif in his pictures; Sabrina attempts to asphyxiate herself in a garage ('Sabrina') and Fran Kubelik tries to kill herself in 'The Apartment', Don Birnam considers shooting himself at the end of 'The Lost Weekend', Molly

Malloy leaps from an upstairs window in 'The Front Page' and Wilder's last film 'Buddy Buddy' is based around Jack Lemmon attempting to kill himself because his wife had left him. It is this overuse and often flippant approach to suicide which has earned Wilder the description 'bad taste'. Personally I think it's funny when the psychiatrist in 'The Seven Year Itch' says: "My three o'clock patient jumped out of the window during his session, and I've been fifteen minutes ahead of schedule ever since."

Wilder is not scared to film-quote in his movies (something that is accepted by modern directors as normal). In 'Sunset Boulevard' he cast a real silent movie star (Gloria Swanson) as an ex-silent movie star (Norma Desmond) and Erich Von Stroheim as her butler. The bit at the end of the picture when Stroheim directs her down the stairs is classic cinema reflecting cinema. (nb. Stroheim directed Swanson in 'Queen Kelly' in 1928, the film was unfinished and extracts are shown in 'Sunset Boulevard'). In his lighter comedies Wilder pastiches Lubitsch while still introducing an original element that is purely his own. Perhaps the most extreme example of film reflecting film is Tony Curtis impersonating Cary Grant on the yacht in 'Some Like it Hot'.

Many of Billy Wilder's movies are shot in flash-back which makes it easier for him to introduce a narrator. The use of flash-back/narrator in 'Double Indemnity', 'The Lost Weekend', 'Sunset Boulevard', 'The Emperor Waltz' and 'Fedora' all build up and support the story unlike some directors who use the flash-back device to complicate and ultimately ruin their projects.



Billy Wilder & Kim Novak on the set of 'Kiss Me, Stupid'.

1942-50; With Charles Brackett - Immediate Success.

Wilder made his first movie for Paramount, a relationship that was going to continue for twelve years. He refers to 'The Major and the Minor' as "a saleable hunk of celluloid" and it is a commercial film (but commercial in the Billy Wilder way). The film opens with the lines: "Why don't you get out of those wet clothes and into a dry Martini." Susan Applegate (Ginger Rogers) decides to flee the decadence of New York but when she gets to the train station she finds the price of the rail fare has gone up and is forced to dress as a twelve year old child in order to purchase a ticket. On the train she shares a cabin with Major Philip Kirby (Ray Milland), who takes her back to his cadet-camp where she falls in love with him. All this is played out with Su-Su disguised as a child, the only person who recognises her for what she is, is another child, showing up the stupidity of the adults. This primitive version

of 'Lolita' glosses over Kirby's attraction for the child but the paedophilic urge is apparent. The story ends with a Capra-style revealing of the truth at a railway-station, and everyone lives happily ever after (or do they?). This idealised view of Middle-America is not one usually associated with Wilder but this 1942 film contains hidden criticism of America's war-preparations, the parading of children dressed as soldiers and the failure of the adults to see through Susan's disguise bodes badly for the up-coming 2nd World War.

His next film was an anti-war melodrama with a splash of pro-Allied propaganda thrown in for good luck; 'Five Graves to Cairo' is a Howard Hawks-style action movie, Bramble (an English corporal) is on the run; he arrives at a hotel in the middle of the desert and takes on the identity of Davos (the waiter) who has been recently killed in an air-raid. Before long Bramble discovers that Davos was a spy for the Germans and so when the Axis forces arrive Bramble is forced to play out this new role. Pretending to be their spy the hero attempts to learn from Rommel (Erich Von Stroheim) the position of the hidden supply depots. Successfully discovering this information he leaves for Cairo (supposedly on German business) and informs the British authorities. Wilder does not portray his characters in classic good/bad terms but rather like Jean Renoir in 'La Grande Illusion' he analyses them along class and cultural lines. The Italian General Sebastiano provides comic relief with his ridiculous moaning at the Germans. Near the end of the film Bramble delivers one of the great anti-war speeches: *"In Tobruk I saw them in their hundreds, in Sebastopol they were ten deep, in Athens they're dying of starvation, four hundred a day. For what, Mouche? So that somebody like you can hold a tin cup to a victorious Lieutenant begging for a Pfennig's worth of pity? It's not one brother that matters, it's a million brothers. It's not just one prison gate that might sneak open for you, it's all the gates that must go."*



Dietrichson & Neff in the supermarket.

'Double Indemnity' is the first Wilder masterpiece. Walter Neff (Fred MacMurray) meets and is attracted by Phyllis Dietrichson (Barbara Stanwyck), together they plan and execute the murder of her husband. Due to the method of his death his wife is able to claim the double-indemnity clause on the insurance policy. Neff, however, is the insurance salesman and thus the tension revolves around Neff and his boss, Keyes (Edward G Robinson). The story follows classic film-noir lines and Dietrichson betrays Neff and shoots him, he kills her and the entire voice-over of the film is tied up to Neff recording his confession as he dies. The film was recognised as exceptional at the time and was nominated for Best Picture, Direction and Screenplay Academy Awards. Raymond Chandler (the 'hard-bit' novelist) wrote the script with Wilder and perhaps it is to him that we can credit the portrayal of Los Angeles as an urban hell of dark streets. As in so many Wilder films 'Double Indemnity' features a classic 'love-triangle'; the femme fatale, Dietrichson represents the Dionysian (the concealed,

exciting, sensuous and feminine), while the investigator, Keyes represents the Apollonian (the visible, severe, rational and masculine). Thrust between these two polar opposites is Walter Neff, attracted by Dietrichson but wanting to be like Keyes. As Neff comments at one point in his voice-over: *"I was trying to think with your brains, Keyes."*

'The Lost Weekend' was Wilder's first Oscar-winner, but it is not in my opinion a masterpiece. Taken from a best-selling book it is said that Wilder based some of the film on his experience writing 'Double Indemnity' with the alcoholic Raymond Chandler. The story follows Don Birnam (Ray Milland) through a weekend as he recounts his sorry tale and ultimately decides to try and write a book: 'The Bottle', about his experiences. The recurring motif in the picture is circles; the stains on the table in the bar, the balls over the pawn shop, the light shade he hides the booze in, even his prospects: *"Zero, zero, zero."* The film itself is shot to a cyclical structure, a slow zoom through the window at the beginning of the movie through to the open ending, where it is not completely clear that Birnam is 'cured'. Wilder gets one thing spot on, there are no real characters in the story except for Birnam and the barman, the addict and his supplier!. There is a sort of black humour in the many flashbacks; the scene where he meets his girlfriend at the opera and the use of the drinking song in 'La Traviata' is a brilliant idea. The cruelty of the walk down Third Avenue to find a pawnbroker's shop on a Jewish holiday rings true to real life. Wilder said himself of the famous 'delirium tremens' sequence: *"Birnam's hallucination is a result of his schizophrenic, or split, personality. The mouse represents the everyday Birnam; the bat - or mouse with wings - the artist he dreams of being."*



Wilder rehearsing with Ray Milland.

His fifth film was perhaps his least important: 'The Emperor Waltz' is rather a silly little thing, Virgil (Bing Crosby) is an American in Europe, trying to gain endorsement for his phonograph. The juxtaposition of the American and his record player in a 1906 Austrian court reminds one of the sort of situation Ernst Lubitsch might have engineered if he had lived longer. The Emperor wants to find a dog to mate with his own and the Countess Johanna von Stolzenburg-Stolzenburg has arrived in town with her large French poodle purely to satisfy this canine requirement. Virgil's dog gets involved with the French poodle and true to form Virgil gets involved with the Countess. Suffice it to say the whole thing ends happily after much talk of who is suitable for who. This human/canine psychology is really just the skeleton for a Bing Crosby musical. 'The Emperor Waltz' is only interesting with regard to the rest of Wilder's oeuvre: the American abroad, love/sex for a reason, the Lubitsch touch and the fact that it's his first film in colour. Unsurprisingly Wilder does not like it: *"As for 'The Emperor Waltz', I never want to see it again."*

In 1948 he turned his attentions to a more challenging subject, 'A Foreign Affair' places Congresswoman Frost (Jean Arthur) in Berlin, investigating corruption among the American troops. Berlin is painted as an American colony, the neo-realist influence is quite apparant. (Wilder's Berlin feels like Rossellini's 'Germany Year Zero' or De Sica's 'Bicycle Thieves'.) The triangle in this story is between Frost, Capt John Pringle (John Lund) and his mistress the German femme fatale Erika von Schluetow (Marlene Dietrich). The portrayal of Germans is quite radical, they are not cast as forceful Ayrrians or snivelling psychopaths just human beings (with human defects), this is also true of Wilder's 'Stalag 17' and 'One Two Three'. In this Berlin, everyone is corrupt, the deception is played out by the Captain as he tries to avoid the Congresswoman finding out information. Eventually the investigator is de-frosted by Capt Pringle and the two fall in love. Schluetow is arrested for her contacts with the Nazis but the implication is that she will not be held for long. This is not a perfect film by anybody's standards but the use of Dietrich, in her songs and posture very reminiscent of her famous role as Lola in 'The Blue Angel', is exceptional. Dietrich, herself said to Peter Bogdanovich: *"I only worked for two great directors, Von Sternberg and Billy Wilder."*

'Sunset Boulevard' won Wilder and Brackett their second Best Screenplay Oscar and is without doubt their second masterpiece. The film starts with Joe Gillis (William Holden originally Monty Clift was going to play the role) head down in a swimming pool, recounting the story in flashback, we later learn that he is dead! Talk about 'ghost writers'; this is the genuine article! The basis of the story is yet another love triangle, this time between Gillis, his girlfriend Betty and the aged silent film star, Norma Desmond (Gloria Swanson). Gillis takes on a job writing the screenplay for Desmond's come-back movie; 'Salome' and in the process becomes fascinated by her 'seperated' world. The film is exceptional in the way it blurs fact and fiction; by casting Swanson (an old silent film star) as Norma, Erich Von Stroheim as Max (her butler) and Cecil B de Mille as the director she wants for her picture, Wilder almost tells the truth. He also gets the opportunity to comment on the differences between the old (silent) Hollywood and the new, brash version (represented by Holden). He comments on Hollywood in another way by genre-hopping, the film starts like a gangster flic with a car-chase, then enters a 'March of Time' style newsreel, continuing into 'Naked City' style urban documentary before descending into film noir and finally gothic horror (as practiced in the '30s by James Whale and Tod Browning!) In the story, Gillis tries to leave Norma when he realises just how possessive she is (echoes of Wilder as a gigolo?) only to return when she attempts suicide. He is consistently torn between Betty who represents everything behind the camera and Norma who represents stardom and fame. The dialogue throughout the movie is stunning, as in the conversation when he meets Norma for the first time: *"You're Norma Desmond, You used to be in silent pictures, You used to be big."* Norma replies: *"I am big, It's the pictures that got small."* Early in the movie, Gillis likens Norma's house to Miss Faversham's in 'Great Expectations', the same sense of suspended time and decay is also built into this story. 'Sunset Boulevard' is one of the great post-War films, it's study of fame-induced dementia will continue to fascinate viewers for many years to come, as Norma says toward the end of the film: *"No one ever leaves a star, that's what makes one a star."*

1951-57: The search for a Collaborator - The Wilderness.

Wilder's first film without Brackett is one of the darkest portraits of America ever painted. 'Ace in the Hole' is his third masterpiece and my personal favourite! It was also a financial disaster, perhaps audiences don't like to have themselves reflected back from the screen! The film begins with Tatum (Kirk Douglas) arriving in a small desert town. Sacked from a New York newspaper and needing work, he introduces himself to the Editor of the 'Sun Bulletin' with the words: *"I'm a pretty good liar, I was worth a thousand dollars a day, you can have me for forty dollars per."* Tatum is a cynical and embittered man but he is also vibrant and energetic and this is where the dichotomy of the film lies. Driving out to the desert to report on a rattlesnake race, Tatum discovers that a man, Leo, is trapped inside a mountain. Realising that to get him out quickly will mean the loss of a good story, Tatum



The local sherrif and Tatum in 'Ace in the Hole'.

puts into practice a slower rescue method; drilling through the top of the mountain! Being an opportunist, Tatum soon sets up a media carnival with hundreds of 'tourists' turning up to watch the great rescue. This is a tale of avarice and ambition and there are no positive characters except Tatum and Leo (similar to the exploiter and the exploited in 'The Fortune Cookie'), Leo's wife, Lorraine, is like Phyllis Dietrichson in 'Double Indemnity'; blonde, fatale and out for what she can get! The local police chief is only interested in re-election and the people who come to pay witness to this human tragedy are merely locusts! The entire picture reeks of hypocrisy! When Leo develops pneumonia, Tatum begins to experience real pangs of guilt. Leo dies and the media circus is disbanded, Tatum argues with Lorraine and she stabs him, he dies back in the 'Sun Bulletin' office after experiencing the classic Wilder eleventh hour conversion. Where the film is doubly interesting is in it's comments on cinema itself; the cars lined up around the mountain are reminiscent of a 'drive-in movie' and the whole spectacle element is similar to Hitchcock's 'Rear Window'. This film is Wilder's most Hitchcockian, here more than anywhere Wilder appeals to the impure feelings in us and thereby asks us to examine our own morality. Or as Wilder said in defence of the project: *"People criticised me for bad taste but it really happened!"* * referring to the case of Floyd Collins who died in similar circumstances in Kentucky in 1925.

In 1953 Billy Wilder turned his attentions to the prisoner-of-war movie; 'Stalag 17' is one of the most original in the genre. Like Tatum, Sgt Sefton (William Holden) is de-humanised but dynamic. The ultimate aggressive and separate individual! The story makes great fun of the existence of cut-throat capitalism inside a prisoner-of-war camp, Sefton organises rat races (capitalism - ha ha!), has his own private distillery and rents a telescope to the sex-starved inmates so they can ogle the Russian women in the next camp! Otto Preminger plays a hilarious German sergeant, yet another cartoonish (but not negative) characterisation and the movie proved to be a box-office smash! The total lack of women in this film makes it very Hawksian, but unlike Hawks, Wilder portrays the power of the individual and not the strength of the all-male group. Sefton is not really goaded into action until the arrival of Lieutenant Dunbar and only then because he resents the upper-class background of the officer,

Ultimately Sefton is a realist while the other soldiers are deeply engrossed in a romantic myth of heroism. Without explaining too much of the story Sefton exposes the spy and escapes (ostensibly to get the reward money from Dunbar's family for information of his whereabouts). As he disappears down the escape tunnel 'Animal' perfectly sums up the inhabitants lack of understanding of why Sefton is Sefton: *"Maybe he just wanted to steal our wirecutters. Did you ever think of that?"*



'Sabrina' was Wilder's tenth picture, it starred Audrey Hepburn in the title role. Mellow, light and dreamy it was everything 'Stalag 17' and 'Ace in the Hole' weren't. But examined more closely this short tale of love between the chauffeur's daughter and the Boss attacks capitalism as violently as the POW comedy! The theme of the story is the breaking down of barriers; both social

(Sabrina) and emotional (Linus). As so often with Wilder it features a love-triangle between Sabrina, the playboy David (William Holden) and his businessman brother Linus Larabee (Bogart). In brief; Sabrina is involved with David, he rejects her and she attempts suicide (she tries to gas herself with monoxide fumes in the garage), Linus gets involved in order to stop the relationship so that his brother can marry someone suitable. Thus the deception is Linus courting Sabrina; at the last minute he realises he is in love and he throws up his business to leave for Paris with her! The portrayal of Linus as semi-machine who can only see humans as objects provides Wilder the room to both comment on capitalism and cause a transformation through 'love'. By the end of the picture the three main characters have changed; Sabrina has blossomed like Cinderella (this story has some similarities), David has accepted his responsibilities and in the process gained self-respect and Linus has accepted a new role in life! This is a personal film in the same way as the later 'Avanti!' would be, it's interesting to note that as in 'Ninotchka' Paris is once again a place of healing and a refuge from capitalism (or communism). Cary Grant was intended for the Linus Larabee role and indeed the film may well have been quite different if Grant had been available!

In 1955 Wilder moved from Paramount for the first time in his directorial career to go to 20th Century Fox to make 'The Seven Year Itch'. This is quite a complex film to analyse; it was a gigantic commercial success, the title has become a public phrase and it massively boosted Marilyn Monroe's already immense success. On the other hand it is not one of Wilder's better works. The film (his first in colour since 'The Emperor Waltz') tells the story of a middle-aged man whose family have gone away for the summer and who becomes 'involved' with the girl upstairs. In reality the subject-matter is the media created deception; the fantasy woman. The problem is that Tom Ewell is too weak/negative as the leading man (Matthau was the original choice) and due to Hollywood morals the couple are unable to actually have sex. The 'comic-book' titles imply that Wilder was well aware of this element of falseness (weakness). The result of the mixed morals, faked innocence and abundant phallic symbolism (the subway train that raises her skirt (one of the most famous shots in film), the champagne bottle and lines like *"In this heat I always keep my undies in the icebox"* is to elevate Monroe from 'dumb blonde' to 'sex goddess'! The potential similarity to the 'Lolita' story is unfortunately never allowed to emerge and the cheap psychology only muddles the problem. Or as Wilder, himself said in a 1976 interview: *"Unless the husband, left alone in New York*

while the wife and kid are away for the summer, has an affair with the girl there's nothing. But you couldn't do that in those days, so I was just straitjacketed. It just didn't come off one bit and there's nothing I can say about it except I wish I hadn't made it, I wish I had the property now." Ignoring these criticisms it's still a damn funny movie!!

Moving to Warner Bros, Wilder made one of the most peculiar works in his canon; 'The Spirit of St Louis'. Costing over \$6,000,000 it was a financial disaster. The film is a semi-documentary account of Charles A Lindbergh's non-stop solo flight from New York to Paris in 1927. Jimmy Stewart plays the lead role in this fundamentally Hawksian adventure. Why did Wilder make this movie? The answer is not immediately obvious, no deceptions, love triangles etcetera. Perhaps it's because like other Wilder heroes; Tatum, Sefton, Neff even Don Birnam, Lindbergh is an individual who more than anything wants to be an original. The strain of the flight is acted quite splendidly by Stewart (who with Fonda is the only 'everyman' figure in American film), the noisy/funny flashbacks helping to emphasise the solitude/fear of the enormous journey. The picture is graced with some stunning aerial photography and does possess some amusing moments but is in no way classic Wilder. Considering his vicious portraits of the USA in 'Ace in the Hole', 'Double Indemnity' and 'Sunset Boulevard' perhaps this is a paean to the one thing Billy Wilder does consistently admire about America; it's determination, drive and energy!

Returning to more familiar territory Wilder's next picture; 'Love in the Afternoon', tells the story of a rehabilitated playboy, this dreamy romantic comedy is both a progression from 'Sabrina' and his most Lubitschian work. Claude Chevasse (Maurice Chevalier - who starred in Lubitsch's early '30s pictures) is a private detective who lives amidst the detailed files on the many cases he has investigated. To Chevasse his files are a "sewer", to his daughter Ariane (Audrey Hepburn) they are a "Library of Romance"! Frank Flannagan (Gary Cooper, originally Wilder had wanted Cary Grant) is an executive millionaire, Ariane discovers (from her fathers files) that Flannagan has gone too far with his adulteries and is in severe danger of being killed by a cuckolded husband. Climbing through Flannagan's hotel window she bundles out the muddled woman and takes her place thereby saving her fictional hero from involvement in a 'crime passionel'. And from this point on she hooks Flannagan by deceptive methods, to keep him fascinated she tells stories of her affairs (neatly stolen from her fathers files) but this use of mystery to entrap the millionaire rebounds on her when Flannagan hires Chevasse to investigate his own daughter. The similarities with 'Sabrina' are worth noting; instead of going from New York to Paris, Ariane and Flannagan end up making the journey from Paris to New York. The millionaire is the same as Larrabee, ie a de-humanised being who is transformed by genuine love. Or as Stephen Farber noted in 1971; "*The most worldly characters hanker for virgins, Wilder helplessly confesses that for all the weary cynics of his disillusioned world, the appeal of innocence (which may be partly an urge to corrupt that innocence) is indestructable.*" The triangular structure of the picture is sealed when Flannagan hires Chevasse; realising what his daughter has been doing, Chevasse attempts to buy Flannagan off, offering his most valuable possession; his files. Flannagan agrees but at the train station he cannot resist taking Ariane with him, Chevasse recognising genuine love weeps tears of real joy. The pleasure of this film is the way the characters build from states of inhumanity and naivety to a position of benevolence, maturity and grace. This was Billy Wilder's first screenplay written with I.A.L.Diamond, the man with whom he would write all his movies after 1959.

'Witness For the Prosecution' may look at first glance an unlikely Wilder subject, adapted from an Agatha Christie play it turns out to involve all his favourite themes; deception, the investigator who gets it wrong and the woman as executor. Without going into detail, the premise of the story is a man accused of murder which he denies, it is more useful, however, to point out Wilder's underlying strategy. Throughout the film we are lead to think Christine Vole (Marlene Dietrich) is the guilty party; she fails Sir Wilfred Robarts (Charles Laughton) monacle test and is involved in the deception at the end (the whore in the bar disguise) that wins her husband, Leonard Vole (Tyrone Power) his freedom. On a second glance we see that Dietrich's classic femme fatale (predator) is in fact a pose, Leonard is the real villain. In

the flashback to post-war Germany (very reminiscent of 'A Foreign Affair' 1948) Vole is a Sgt Sefton figure, dealing in black market goods, exploiting the vulnerable Dietrich! Sir Wilfred is like Keyes (or later Holmes); an unmarried misogynist who trusts too much on instinct, a monacle reflecting light into the accused's face does not the truth tell! This helps to explain why Robards fails to see through Dietrich's weak disguise. The electric lift that carries the aged barrister up and down the stairs is another clue to how Sir Wilfred can be 'controlled' (or manipulated) by outside forces. At the end of the trial Vole is freed but immediately betrays his wife for his brunette mistress, Dietrich like previous Wilder heroines; Dietrichson (in 'Double Indemnity'), Desmond (in 'Sunset Boulevard') and Lorraine (in 'Ace in the Hole') has her own revenge by stabbing him with the knife that is neatly on hand as an exhibit; *"She's killed him"* cries Nurse Plimsoll, *"No, she has executed him"*, responds Sir Wilfred, Justice (even if slightly perverse) has been done!

1958-66; With I.A.L. Diamond - The Glory Years.

In 1959 Wilder made his fourth masterpiece: 'Some Like it Hot', one of the most famous films of all time! Set in the 1920's, two struggling jazz musicians witness a gangland killing and are forced to flee Chicago, dressed as women, to play in an all-girl band in Miami. This hilarious story is given impetus when Joe/Josephine (Tony Curtis) falls for the singer of the female band; Sugar Kane (Marilyn Monroe). The entire foundation of the movie is 'fear' (jokes on death are abundant throughout), the two jazz players fear of the Mob in Chicago and fear of exposure, capture in Miami. The transvestitism as a gag is kept alive by the many tensions that run through the picture; male/female, gangster/musician, Chicago/Miami, death/romance, reality/unreality, nightmare/dream. The movement from Chicago to Miami symbolising the escape from night, death, violence, gangsters and masculinity and the awaking awareness of sun, life, song and femininity. The story has some similarities to Kafka's 'Metamorphosis' in the 'out-of-control' change which comes over Jerry (Jack Lemmon), see 'The Apartment' for more Kafkaisms. The change of names is interesting, Joe becomes Josephine and always seems in control of his male sexuality, if anything the process seems to make him a better human being. Jerry, however, does not become Geraldine, he makes a much greater leap to Daphne, a new role he seems to enjoy; *"Hi! I'm the bass fiddle, just call me Daphne!"* This role playing, role reversal runs throughout the film like a thread, after years of trying to employ Cary Grant, Billy Wilder gets Joe to impersonate him on the yacht.



Marilyn Monroe in 'Some Like it Hot'.

Monroe plays the male role by attempting to defrost the supposedly impotent Joe: "I spent six months in Vienna with Professor Freud, flat on my back," Joe complains, "Have you ever tried American women?" offers Sugar. Jerry/Daphne is forced to date the millionaire, Osgood Fielding III in order to let Joe take Sugar to the yacht; upon realising that they must flee the hotel Daphne comments: "I will never again find a man so good to me." The tenuous position of Joe and Jerry is made complete when Spats Colombo (George Raft) and a host of gangsters arrive at the hotel for a 'Friends of Italian Opera' convention. This inspires the most profound moment in the entire story, when Joe (dressed as Josephine) kisses Sugar Kane on stage: "Those who think of Wilder as a small-time cynic, peddling imitation Berliner Weltschmerz will find their definitive refutation in the conviction, technique, assurance and audacity of a simple kiss between an ageing sex queen and a Bronx boy in drag." (Richard Corliss). At the end of the story everyone confesses; Joe that he is a sax player, Jerry that he is a man, a problem that Osgood doesn't seem to notice: "Nobodys Perfect!" But no genuine resolution appears to have taken place; how can a man marry a man? Joe is everything that Sugar wants to escape from! I could go on for ever, the film is splendid and the immense number of in-film gangster jokes are staggering, or as Wilder put it when asked about Monroe: "My God, I think there have been more books on Marilyn Monroe than on World War II, and there's a great similarity. It was not easy, It was hell. But it was well worth it once you got it on the screen."

One year later Billy Wilder won three Oscars for his sixteenth picture; 'The Apartment'. After having 'discovered' Jack Lemmon in 'Some Like it Hot' he used him again in this fifth Wilderian masterpiece. Once again we return to the familiar love-triangle, CC Baxter (Lemmon) lends his apartment key to his superiors in order to make better his chance of promotion. The superiors use the flat for illicit encounters with their girlfriends and mistresses. Baxter becomes attracted to Miss Fran Kubelik (Shirley MacLaine), the lift operator (the elevator is the only way out of the building, the only method of escape!) As the story develops and Baxter is promoted we learn that Fran is having an affair with the Director of Personnel, Mr Sheldrake (Fred MacMurray).



This Kafkaesque tale set in an impersonal city and a massive office that employs 31,000 people is a gigantic allegory for social climbing. Baxter is another of Wilder's semi-people, a man who will allow himself to be exploited in order to get on. He is both dumb and an opportunist! Jack Lemmon, himself said of the character: *"Baxter was ambitious; a nice guy but gullible, easily intimidated and fast to excuse his behaviour. In the end he changes because he faces up to having rationalised his morals. He realises he's been had, and that's when he turns in the key."* Baxter is alone; *"Robinson Crusoe shipwrecked among eight million people"*, he is a victim but he changes from being a statistician to being a (melancholic) human being through his growing love for Miss Kubelik.

Upon Baxter's promotion Mr Sheldrake demands use of the key and at the Christmas party Baxter discovers that Fran is Sheldrake's mistress, Fran also discovers that Sheldrake has had other women. This discovery is heralded by the broken mirror that Baxter had previously found in his flat and returned to Sheldrake. The moment when he realises that it is Fran's is his moment of self-recognition. He looks into the cracked mirror and sees a distorted reflection of himself! Returning drunk to his apartment with a woman he has picked up in a bar, Baxter discovers Fran in his bedroom, unconscious from a drug overdose. Sheldrake's brutal lack of interest in this tragedy pushes Baxter further toward dropping the sham. At the end of the movie Baxter chucks in his job, handing the other key (the one to the executive washroom) to Sheldrake. When Fran learns of this dramatic move she drops Sheldrake on impulse and the film ends with them out of work but supposedly content,



playing cards. This is not however a happy ending; Fran is emotionally vulnerable and an utter romantic and it could be read that she is acting out a fantasy. Note the last lines: Baxter says; *"Miss Kubelik, I absolutely adore you"*. Her reply; *"Shut up and deal."* When asked if the ending of the movie was too sentimental, Wilder answered; *"It was made so as not to be sentimental ... We have a prefabricated loneliness in America - TV dinners and everything. With this loneliness goes the urge to better oneself and rise from the masses ... I portray Americans as beasts ... I never considered 'The Apartment' to be a comedy."*

'One, Two, Three' was made in Berlin in 1961 and is a 'speed-fueled' screwball comedy: *"When I got Cagney interested, that was good enough for me. For me there's never been anybody better on the screen. Also, I happen to think Coca-Cola is funny. A lot of people didn't. Maybe that's why the picture bombed out. I still think it's funny. And when I drink it, it seems funnier."* (Wilder interview 1974). MacNamara (Cagney) is negotiating a deal to sell Coca-Cola to the Russians when his Boss puts his daughter, Scarlet under MacNamara's care. She runs off and marries an East German Communist, Ludwig Piffel. Mac has the task of turning Piffel into a smart young capitalist before the Boss arrives to meet his new son-in-law! Berlin has changed drastically from Wilder's portrait in 'A Foreign Affair' the Cold-War is in process and the dominant presence now is American imperialism (and aggression). Cagney portrays this perfectly with a classic fire-cracker performance, his energy, freneticism and frantic deceptions inspiring the movie with a pace that can only be described as unbelievable. In fact the entire film seems to be about movement and the total failure of the characters to get to where they want to go, it is as if everyone is trapped in a sort of 'quicksand'. There are similarities to 'Ninotchka', the three Russian commissars and the fact that a young Russian is transformed into a capitalist but that's where it ends, times have changed. The constant harking back to Cagney's own film career is a joy; the cuckoo clock on the wall (*"handmade by dwarves in the Black Forest!"*) chimes 'Yankee Doodle Dandy' throughout

the picture. And at one point Cagney threatens Piffel with a grapefruit, a direct steal from 'The Public Enemy' (1931). The tragedy for MacNamara is that he succeeds too well with Piffel and the young East German gets the job in England that Mac has been so violently chasing. MacNamara deserves to go back to the USA he is selfish and completely destroyed by the deceptions that he sets up through out the story. This splendid satire on ideological rigidity spares no one in its violence, the Americans are cast as out-of-control, the Russians as turgid and ponderous and the Germans as utterly rigid and mechanical. The comic-book element reminds me slightly of Kubrick's 'Dr Strangelove' made one year later. One last point; the character, Schlemmer is allowed to explain that he worked on the underground railway during the war ("Adolf who?"), his persistent clicking heels and a chance encounter with an old comrade later inform us that he was in fact in the SS. That Billy Wilder, a Jew who lost his family in the Holocaust can write gags like this says everything about his sense of humour!

Wilder's eighteenth film; 'Irma La Douce' (1963) was also his most commercially successful (and one of the highest grossing comedies ever!) Shot in colour, (for only the fourth time in his career) this stage musical was radically transposed to the screen without the songs. Nestor (Jack Lemmon) is a rookie gendarme, patrolling the red-light district of the "Stomach of Paris"; the markets, a place of moral fluidity and romance, "smelly" but "alive"! After arresting an entire hotel's worth of prostitutes and their clients he is sacked by one of those arrested, his chief inspector! During the next scene Moustache (Lou Jacobi), the barman, helps to destroy the remainder of Nestor's petit bourgeois values and the film really begins. After becoming Irma's (Shirley Maclaine) pimp/lover Nestor becomes jealous of her clients and decides to impersonate a rich English lord in order to monopolise her time. As with many other Wilder films the essence of this story is the 'enoblement of man through suffering'. The love triangle involves Nestor, Irma and the (Nestor created) English Lord. As in 'Some Like it Hot' this new character seems to take over Lemmon; Nestor is forced to work enormous night-hours at the market to earn the money so that the Lord can continue to visit Irma. Like Tony Curtis in the above mentioned picture, the Lord is a film creation; he lost an eye at Navarone and became impotent when the Bridge on the River Kwai fell on him! Nestor is a chameleon throughout changing from naive cop to worldly pimp to English Lord to market worker. The divide between golden-hearted whore (Experience) and puritanical pimp (Innocence) are what make the ridiculous deceptions possible. Moustache serves as moral commentator, he is an ex-Professor of Economics, ex-Doctor, ex-Lawyer etcetera ("But that's another story.") Charles Laughton was going to play the role but unfortunately died! Since the story is set in Paris, marriage is of course the end result. Jacque Brunius attacked it's "foul taste" and Pauline Kael described the movie as a "monstrous mutation". Next up Wilder would really give them something to moan about.

Wilder's sixth masterpiece is the shocking 'horror-comedy': 'Kiss Me, Stupid' in which he attempted (and succeeded) to cross the Doris Day comedy genre (pornography without sex) with 'Psycho' (escape into terror). If money is the obsession in Hitchcock's classic then sex is in Wilder's. Where Hitch attacks the Hollywood ideal of the family, 'Kiss Me, Stupid' attacks the ideal of marriage! Both pictures paint America as grey and foreboding and both portray Dionysian dream-visions of fulfilment that lead into nightmares of the soul! Universally condemned by critics and church-leaders. This, the third Wilder 'pimp' movie - check 'The Apartment' and 'Irma La Douce' - is against all the usual Hollywood formulas; the star is repulsive, the wife dominant in the home, the whore the sympathetic character and materialism more important than marriage. Throughout the picture women are seen as objects, wives to be cosseted, whores to be abused therefore when Wilder describes the theme as "human dignity and the sanctity of marriage" we know that for once he is not joking! To fully understand this film the viewer has to think back to the old-fashioned farce or the restoration comedy with their underlying moral messages. The story starts with Dino (Dean Martin) arriving in "Climax", Nevada. Two local song-writers, the demonic instigator of the entire scam, Barney Millsap (Cliff Osmond) and Orville J Spooner (Ray Walston), the emasculated male who gets totally out of his depth, plot how to make Dino interested in one of their songs. Realising

the best way to Dino is through his groin and since Orville is already disturbed by his wife's attraction to the singer, they send the wife away and pay the local 'hooker', Polly the Pistol (Kim Novak) to 'entertain' Dino. As it happens, Orville finds he can't let the singer have Polly either and ends up spending the night with her himself. Here the story truly twists, Dino goes down to the 'Belly Button' Club and runs into Orville's wife, Zelda (Felicia Farr), he beds her and takes the song that Orville has been trying to sell him. At the end of the picture Millsap and Spooner watch Dino perform their song through a television shop window, (The glass barrier providing the customary Wilder comment on film itself). So in one respect all the characters have got what they want; Dino has a hit, Polly the car she wanted (from the money paid to Zelda), Spooner and Millsap a song on TV and Orville and Zelda are reconciled. But it's not as simple as that, Spooner's success is also his punishment, the domination by Zelda continues. So many elements of this movie are extraordinary; the portrayal of the whore as soft and romantic and the wife as practical and calculatingly clear-headed. The fact that instead of a love-triangle we have a love-quadrangle; Orville and Zelda (man and wife) swap with Dino and Polly (natural man and wife?). That Zelda deceives as readily as her husband; Polly says to her *"Whatever he did, he did for you."* Zelda answers *"Whatever I did, I did for him."* It's patently obvious that both of them commit adultery for their own sakes! There is no happy ending in this movie, hypocrisy and materialism are indicted but not totally condemned, each character is given something approaching what they want but only Polly actually escapes from "Climax". It's the anguish, moral despair and ugly reality of American life that sting most in this most brutal of Wilder's comedies.

'The Fortune Cookie' in 1966 ended Billy Wilder's twenty-four year reign as a bankable Hollywood Director. The story is similar to Ben Jonson's 'Volpone'; the exploitation of feigned infirmity for commercial ends. Harry Hinkle (Jack Lemmon) exaggerates the extent of an injury sustained filming a football game in order to claim insurance damages and thereby win his wife back. The real battle in the movie, however, is not between Hinkle and the insurance company but between Hinkle and his lawyer, Willie Gringrich (Walter Matthau). Hinkle represents weakness, decency, conscience, love, failure and is seen almost exclusively in white. Willie, on the other hand is shot in black and symbolises strength, duplicity, conmanship, loot and success. The competition in this film is not the football-game but the struggle between the Dupe and the Rogue! One of the problems is that Willie is painted as too positive, the viewer can't see him as evil, (like for instance Sheldrake, in 'The Apartment'). Willie's ability to survive is what we admire and the negative portrayal of the insurance company only increases this feeling. The fact that Hinkle is 'soft', only strengthens this perception or as Willie says to Hinkle: *"You're hopeless, Harry, a loser! Always have been, always will. You want to know why you lost your wife? Because you got no character - no guts, I'm surprised it didn't show up on your X-Rays."* The essence of the story is that everyone is 'on the make', from nuns gambling to doctors who have given up smoking requesting for some smoke to be blown their way! The truth is that graft, greed and fraud lead to wealth and getting ahead. If one imagines Gringrich as Nixon the whole picture comes together! At the end of the film emotional commitment does win out over mercenary cynicism, Harry cannot bear the suffering of Boom-Boom, the black ball player who injured him, any longer and owns up to Purkey, the insurance investigator. This ending is not 'happy'; as in 'The Apartment', both the hero and the ball-player are out of work! Neither is Willie destroyed by this outbreak of honesty, he merely accuses all parties of unethical conduct. The only two people really savaged in this film are Harry's wife Sandi who is exposed as a money-grubbing wretch and Purkey (Cliff Osmond), who is the most detailed, evil, stupid, suspicious investigator in any of Wilder's movies: *"It is the detective with his bugging devices and hidden cameras, poking into the most intimate activities and conversations, who represents to Wilder the most frightful possibilities of our age."* (Stephen Farber). Ultimately it is this recognition of the contradictions and the failure to reconcile them that stops this picture from truly working.

1967-81: *Out of Favour - Maturity.*

After four years of inactivity Billy Wilder's seventh masterpiece appeared in the cinemas: 'The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes' shows that he had made an enormous leap as a creative artist. For the first time many of his themes merge in total harmony. Fifty years after the death of Dr Watson a dispatch box is opened to reveal one of Sherlock Holmes lost (failed) cases. A genuine feeling of affectionate nostalgia for the period is evoked in this opening scene. We soon discover that Wilder does not envision Sherlock Holmes in the Basil Rathbone mould, if anything this movie portrays him as a tragic suppressed romantic. The actual case is not important (midgets, Trappist monks, canaries, a mechanical Loch Ness monster, Queen Victoria), it's the character of Holmes that we are examining. We have to remember that the Holmes we know is the creation of Dr Watson and the doctor and Sherlock are completely different individuals; the Doctor is Dionysian, undisciplined, energetic, passionate, a man of the senses (note the scene when he dances) and a failure. Holmes is Apollonian, lethargic,



melancholy, easily bored, a success and a man of the mind. Other examples of Dr Watson's creative pen are the fact that Holmes is not a violin virtuoso, the myth of his drug addiction is shattered when we learn that it is diluted, or as Holmes informs Watson on the subject of his misogyny: *"Actually, I don't dislike women, I merely distrust them."* (Like other Wilder investigators; Keyes and Sir Wilfred, Sherlock Holmes is always betrayed by women.) So what we have is the romantic/artist crossed with the scientist/logician, whose wit and theatricality are often forgotten. At one point he complains to Watson: *"Oh, come now Watson, you must admit you have a tendency to over-romanticise. You've taken my simple exercises in logic and embellished them, embroidered them..."* This film is an elegy for a lost era, a study of individualism in a de-personalised society. Like the movie Holmes is an anachronism! Some of the details are gorgeous, the essential Victorian dust that so helps to demonstrate the (emotional) aridity of this legendary investigator. In the story, the woman; Ilse, offers a release to this emotional repression, no actual physical contact occurs but they play the role of man and wife (under the name Ashdown). Holmes is deceived twice in the picture, once when he discovers that she is a spy and again when he hears that she has been executed by the Japanese where she has been living, under the name, Ashdown. On hearing this news he reverts to his syringe and drugs: *"We all have occasional failures. Fortunately, Dr Watson doesn't write mine."* The picture failed commercially and was cut from it's original 200 minutes to 125. Since it's a masterpiece in this form, we can only hope that one day the full-length version is reassembled!

In 1972 the conflict of American and European values were finally laid to rest in Wilder's eighth and final masterpiece; 'Avanti!', perhaps his most perfect study of Europe as a place of transformation (rejuvenation). The film begins as Wendell Armbruster III (Jack Lemmon), an American plastics millionaire, boards a plane to Italy, he changes clothes in the toilet with Dr Fleischmann and on landing runs into difficulty because he forgot to switch over his passport. Immediately we are shown how deception leads to destruction! The pace of the film slows from America (business) to Italy (romanticism), Wendell has been called to Italy to collect his father's corpse, arriving at the hotel he discovers that his father has been having an affair with an English woman for many years: *"You mean all the time we thought he was over here getting cured he was getting laid? That grey-haired self-righteous son-of-a-bitch!"*



Pamela Piggott & Wendell Armbruster III.

The English woman died in the car with him and her daughter is also there to collect the body. Bureaucratic difficulties mean that coffins can not be found and Wendell is faced with more problems: the Trotta family want compensation for their vineyard which was damaged when the car crashed and the daughter, Pamela Piggott (Juliet Mills) wants the two old lovers buried together in Italy. By this point in the picture we have realised that Wendell's values are far worse than those of his father: *"Miss Piggott, I have nothing against sex, pre-marital, extra-marital, you name it and I'm for it, I mean, just because a man's married doesn't mean that he can't have a thing, you know with a secretary or with an airline stewardess, Let's say you're at a convention in Hawaii - you meet some chick and, Ok, you swing for*

a couple of nights, but then aloha." At the beginning of the movie Wendell is rude, bigoted, xenophobic, materialistic, emotionally dead. The re-evaluation of his father forces him to re-examine himself, the scene with the robotic, efficient Coroner only reminding us of what Wendell himself was like (nb the Coroner is human, his perfection is ruined by the wet sponge in his pocket!) To a certain extent the deception in 'Avanti!' has already occurred (the parents illicit summer sex-holidays) but when Wendell thinks that Pamela has stolen the coffins he is forced to 'date' her in an attempt to deceive her into relinquishing the bodies. The dinner in imitation of their parents, the same clothes, food and music help to bring the two children together, the naked rock scene demonstrating that Wendell is almost cured, the fact that he cannot bring himself to take off his black socks implies that this is not complete. Even Carlucci (the wonderful hotel manager) is bemused by this detail: *"Is it because you are in mourning?"* After the involvement of Bruno (a crazed Italian black-mailer) Pamela's bags are moved into Wendell's room, originally offended by this presumption, she is deflated when she realises the real reason for this movement. The kiss on the weighing scales is an extremely moving moment, Wendell is cured, he no longer cares about her weight (something he has been bitching about since their first meeting) and he asks for the kiss in Italian (previously he has only used the single word 'Avanti'.) However, American state

department official ("CIA? Never heard of them") JJ Blodget arrives and this idyllic scene is disrupted, Blodget is another reflection of what Wendell could have become, the intrusion of American time shaking up the slow pace of Italy. At the end of the movie Europe has worked, Wendell and Pamela agree to meet every summer like their parents.

Wilder's twenty-third picture was a version of Ben Hecht and Charles MacArthur's '30s play 'The Front Page'. Originally made as a film in 1931 by Lewis Milestone and in 1940 as 'His Girl Friday' by Howard Hawks, this classic newspaper story seemed to be suitable for the '70s, 'The Sting' (a similar period piece) was a big hit at the time and 'buddy' movies were the trend, Wilder's recent failures had taken their toll, for the first time since 1957 he had a producer checking the budget on this feature. He made some immediate changes to the play; the Molly Malloy (prostitute) character who attempts suicide for love and Hildy's fiancée are enlarged.



Mephistopheles and Faust!

The newspapermen are shown to be blind (surrounded by glass partitioned offices that reflect back onto themselves) and living on the thin line between sanity and insanity. In fact an air of bedlam seems to intoxicate the entire film; the Keystone Cop-style chases, the general lunacy and excessive noise. As Wilder, himself said in 1974: "*The time for Lubitsch is past, it's just a loss of something marvellous, the loss of a style I aspired to. The subtlest comedy you can get right now is M*A*S*H. Something which is warm and funny and urbane hasn't got a chance today. What good is it being a composer of polkas if nobody dances the polka anymore?*" The real premise of 'The Front Page' is a Faustian struggle for a man's soul, Walter Burns (Matthau) is Mephistopholes, note the name and his preference for the electric chair, Hildy Johnson (Lemmon) is the Faust figure; the moral question of the story is can Hildy be saved from the newspaper business? The love-triangle is between the editor, Burns, the star reporter, Hildy and his fiancée, Peggy. The scene in the press room is crucial; Burns is pacing the room, Peggy is standing by the door when Hildy (typing his article) says: "*Cigarette me.*" Burns leaps over, lights the smoke and menacingly puts his hand on the reporter's shoulder. Peggy turns and leaves, Burns has won! The clothing should be noted, Burns in black, Hildy in white and Peggy in (girlish) pink. There is a certain Nixonian element running through the corruption of the Sheriff and Mayor, the brothel-raid and exposure of the Mayor could be seen as a facsimile of the discovery of Watergate. On the other hand the film also has similarities to 'Ace in the Hole'; a man trapped (Leo in the mountain, Earl Williams in the roll-top desk) and the continuation of the confinement in order to increase circulation figures. The moral change in Hollywood since 1951 is shown when

one realises that Tatum had to die for his sins in 'Ace in the Hole' whereas Burns and Hildy only go to jail for a short while and then continue up the ladder of success. Ultimately this is a very dark work about damnation without redemption. At the end Hildy is leaving with his fiancée on the train when Burns gives his watch to the reporter as a wedding present. As the train pulls out the demonic Burns says to a guard: *"Stop the train at the next station, the son-of-a-bitch stole my watch."* The closing titles inform us that Hildy Johnson does indeed go on to become editor of the newspaper.

'Fedora', the penultimate picture in this great man's career was financed from Europe, American cash was not forthcoming. This complex tale of a star's suicide is thought by many critics to be Wilder's 'swansong'. In some ways the story is similar to Hitchcock's 'Vertigo' (1958), in the use of the 'double' idea and the giving away of the ending half way through. In others it is a virtual catalogue of Wilder themes and obsessions: film-making, Hollywood, Europe, masquerade, grand deceptions, stars, re-generation, charisma, reality/illusion and truth/legend. It is also like another one of his mature works: 'Avanti!' in that it involves the idea of children reproducing their parents. More than at any other time Wilder uses older (often women) characters, the tone seems to swing between nostalgia and bitterness, romance and sombreness. The film starts with news coverage that a film-star has committed suicide, Fedora has killed herself by jumping under a train. The entire narrative is told in flashback around the coffin of this dead legend. Barry Detweiler (William Holden) starts to explain how he came to France to lure the 'ageless' Fedora out of retirement to star in his remake of 'Anna Karenina'. (It's amusing to note that her suicide is a direct steal from the book!) We later learn that Holden had a brief affair with the star in 1947 on a Hollywood film-set. The link with Wilder's 'Sunset Boulevard' is quite important, both pictures deal with legends who are rapidly losing control of their sanity: *"What would you give to be reborn ... To have a second chance?"* During the first half of the film Holden is a participant in the drama, (another failed Wilder investigator), he develops suspicions about Fedora and thinks she is being held against her will at the Villa Calypso (a well chosen classical reference). During the second half he is the audience, released from the mystery by Fedora's mother, Countess Sobryanski's confession. We learn that the real Fedora (the Countess) underwent an operation to keep her young that failed miserably: *"You can't cheat nature without paying the price."* The hoax began because Hollywood wanted to give Fedora an honorary Oscar, determined to receive this award the idea to get Antonia, Fedora's daughter, to dress up to receive it, was born. The divide between beauty and decay, luxury and horror, glamour and evil permeate the entire story. Antonia (one of Wilder's most tragic characters) begins to lose her mind, her insanity is brought on by the 'doppelganger' scam, the loss of her real self and her infatuation with Michael York (with whom she is acting in a new movie.) The only way out is death and that is why she is the first successful suicide in any Wilder film. The substance of the movie is not merely the conquering of age (life), it is an examination of change, Detweiler as he was and as he now is, Fedora I and II. Or as Wilder joked: *"I've never tried to repeat a success of mine. But sequels are very fashionable today. The picture I'm preparing now, Fedora, well, I was seriously thinking to make it sound more fashionable, of calling it Fedora II."* The film is visually stunning truly killing the myth that Wilder is a 'boring/bland' director.

The final Wilder movie: 'Buddy Buddy' is a modest little black-comedy. Trabucco (Matthau) is a hit-man for the Mob killing off a variety of witnesses in order to earn enough money to buy an island in the Caribbean where he can retire in luxury. Victor Clooney (Lemmon) is a middle-aged, middle-class businessman driven to the point of despair by his wife leaving him. They bump into each other because Matthau is cooped up in a hotel attempting to assassinate a target when Lemmon disturbs him by trying to commit suicide in the next room. Not a classic, this picture demonstrates the supposed Wilder 'bad taste' treating murder and suicide as a joke! Matthau is the deceiver, constantly in disguise, prepared to even kill the man who he has just stopped from killing himself. The pleasure is in the splendid play-offs between the sour-faced Matthau and the neurotic Lemmon. The fact that Lemmon's wife has left him for a sex-doctor (played by Klaus Kinski) is exploited to demonstrate the horror that the typically

bourgeois Lemmon feels for such sordid subjects. It's quite sad that a director of the depth of Wilder is forced by 1980s film standards to make a movie of such little substance, that said it's still very amusing. At the end of the picture Matthau and Lemmon are re-united (much to Matthau's distaste) on his desert island.

There are so many things that I haven't had room to say about Billy Wilder. For instance his approach to sex which is radical, liberated and fully utilises the fantasy element of American pictures or the recurrence of images dealing with coffins and cemeteries: the title of 'Five Graves to Cairo', the monkey's burial in 'Sunset Boulevard', the cave as coffin in 'Ace in the Hole', the coffin leaking booze at the beginning of 'Some Like it Hot', the entire plot of 'Avanti!' and of course the coffin that contains the dead Fedora. The Jewish characters that appear throughout, from the doctor in 'The Apartment' to Willie Gingrich's entire performance in 'The Fortune Cookie'. The notorious obsession with hats that reached it's zenith when he actually named a movie after a hat: 'Fedora'.

His use of familiar actors in unfamiliar roles is also impressive; Fred MacMurray in 'Double Indemnity' and 'The Apartment', Bogart in the gentle love comedy 'Sabrina' and Jimmy Cagney as screwball comic actor in 'One, Two, Three', Supreme Wilder interpreters like Jack Lemmon and William Holden made their names in his films but it is also worth noting that he is also a great director of women; Monroe ('Seven Year Itch' and 'Some Like it Hot'), Audrey Hepburn ('Sabrina', 'Love in the Afternoon'), Dietrich ('A Foreign Affair', 'Witness for the Prosecution') and Shirley Maclaine ('The Apartment' and 'Irma La Douce').

His detail and care in juxtaposition of music is equally extraordinary; Schubert's unfinished symphony in 'Double Indemnity', Rachmaninov's Second Piano Concerto for the seductions in 'The Seven Year Itch', Gingrich whistling Rossini in 'The Fortune Cookie' and of course Miklos Rozsa's stunning score for 'The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes'. American popular music is not forgotten either, check the movie 'Some Like it Hot', the song 'Isn't it Romantic?' in 'A Foreign Affair' and 'Sabrina' or the tune 'Fascination' in 'Love in the Afternoon'.



The rows of cars lined up by the mountain in 'Ace in the Hole' reflect perfectly the voyeurism of the film-goer at the drive-in.

Billy Wilder is still alive, he will be 83 this year. In 1986 he was given a Life Achievement Award by the American Film Institute. In some ways it's a tragedy that he wasn't allowed to make more movies between 1966 and 1980, since he was so obviously at his creative peak or as Detweiler says in 'Fedora': "The kids with beards have taken over. They don't need scripts, just give them a hand-held camera with a zoom lens."

The key lesson to be learnt from the career of Billy Wilder is that if you control the production, direction and script-writing stages of a movie anything is possible! Now go and watch the movies!

Filmography:

(As scriptwriter in Germany): 1929 *Menschen Am Sonntag* (d, Siodmak) / *Der Teufelsreporter* (d, E. Laemmle) // 1931 *Ihre Hoheit Befiehlt* (d, H. Schwarz) / *Der Falasche Ehemann* (d, J. Guter) / *Emil Und die Detektive* (d, G. Lamprecht) / *Der Mann Der Seinen Morder Sucht* (d, E. Pommer) // 1932 *Es War Einmal Ein Walzer* (d, V. Janson) / *Ein Blonder Traum* (d, P. Martin) / *Scampolo, Ein Kind Der Strasse* (d, L. Stark) / *Das Blaue Von Himmel* (d, V. Janson) // 1933 *Madame Wunscht Keine Kinder* (d, L. Stark) / *Was Frauen Traumen* (d, G. von Bolvary), (As co-director, scriptwriter in France); 1933 *Mauvaise Graine*, (with Alexander Esway), (As scriptwriter in United States of America); 1934 *Music in the Air* (d, E. Pommer) // 1935 *Lottery Lover* (d, V. Thiele) (As co-scriptwriter with Charles Brackett); 1938 *Bluebeard's Eighth Wife* (d, Lubitsch) // 1939 *Midnight* (d, M. Leison) / *What a Life* (d, J. T. Reed) / *Ninotchka* (d, Lubitsch) // 1940 *Arise My Love* (d, A. Hornblow Jr) // 1941 *Hold Back the Dawn* (d, M. Leison) / *Ball of Fire* (d, Hawks).

(As Director):

1942 *The Major and The Minor* (p-A. Hornblow Jr sc-W&B act-Ray Milland & Ginger Rogers).
1943 *Five Graves to Cairo* (p-Brackett sc-W&B act-Franchot Tone, Anne Baxter & von Stroheim).
1944 *Double Indemnity* (p-J. Siström sc-W & Chandler act-F. MacMurray, B. Stanwyck & E.G. Robinson).
1945 *The Lost Weekend* (p-Brackett sc-W&B act-Ray Milland & Jane Wyman).
1947 *The Emperor Waltz* (p-Brackett sc-W&B act-Bing Crosby & Joan Fontaine).
1948 *A Foreign Affair* (p-Brackett sc-W&B act-Jean Arthur, M. Dietrich & John Lund).
1950 *Sunset Boulevard* (p-Brackett sc-W&B act-Gloria Swanson, W. Holden & von Stroheim).
1951 *Ace in the Hole* (p-W sc-W, Samuels & Newman act-K. Douglas & Jan Sterling).
1953 *Stalag 17* (p-W sc-W & E. Blum act-W. Holden, Don Taylor & Otto Preminger).
1954 *Sabrina* (p-W sc-W, S. Taylor & E. Lehman act-H. Bogart, A. Hepburn & W. Holden).
1955 *The Seven Year Itch* (p-W & C.K. Feldman sc-W & G. Axelrod act-Marilyn Monroe & T. Ewell).
1957 *The Spirit of St Louis* (p-L. Hayward sc-W & W. Mayes act-Jimmy Stewart).
Love in the Afternoon (p-W sc-W & IAL Diamond act-Gary Cooper, M. Chevalier & A. Hepburn).
Witness for the Prosecution (p-Hornblow Jr sc-W & Kurnitz act-Laughton, Dietrich & Power).
1959 *Some Like it Hot* (p-W sc-W&IALD act-Marilyn Monroe, Tony Curtis, Jack Lemmon & G. Raft).
1960 *The Apartment* (p-W sc-W&IALD act-Jack Lemmon, Shirley MacLaine & F. MacMurray).
1961 *One Two Three* (p-W sc-W&IALD act-James Cagney, H. Bucholz & Pamela Tiffin).
1963 *Irma La Douce* (p-W sc-W&IALD act-Jack Lemmon, Shirley MacLaine & Lou Jacobi).
1964 *Kiss Me, Stupid* (p-W sc-W&IALD act-Dean Martin, Kim Novak, Ray Walston, F. Farr & C. Osmond).
1966 *The Fortune Cookie* (p-W sc-W&IALD act-Jack Lemmon, Walter Matthau, R. Rich & C. Osmond).
1970 *The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes* (p-W sc-W&IALD act-R. Stephens, C. Blakely, G. Page).
1972 *Avanti!* (p-W sc-W&IALD act-Jack Lemmon, Juliet Mills & Clive Revill).
1974 *The Front Page* (p-Paul Monash sc-W&IALD act-Jack Lemmon, Walter Matthau & Carol Burnett).
1978 *Fedora* (p-W sc-W&IALD act-W. Holden, Marthe Keller & Hildegard Knef).
1981 *Buddy Buddy* (p-W & ? sc-W&IALD act-Jack Lemmon, Walter Matthau & Klaus Kinski).

Books/Essays on Wilder: 'Billy Wilder' by Axel Madsen, 'Billy Wilder in Hollywood' by Maurice Zolotow, 'Journey down Sunset Boulevard' by Neil Sinyard and Adrian Turner, 'The Hollywood Professionals Volume 7: Billy Wilder' by Leland A. Poague, 'Wilder Reappraised' by Robert Mundy (in Cinema), 'The Private Life of Billy Wilder' by Joseph McBride and Michael Wilmington (in Film Quarterly), 'The Films of Billy Wilder' by Stephen Farber (in Film Comment).

THE INVISIBLE O



All films today are unfinished - except, possibly, those of Bresson.
(Raul Ruiz in conversation).

You don't imagine that posterity's judgment, do you? Posterity is a whim. A shapeless litter of old bones; the midden of a vulgar beast; the most capricious and immense mass-public of them all - the dead.

Kim Menaker in *The Big Brass Ring*.

It seems typical of the misunderstanding which plagued Orson Welles' life that he died, as a working artist, in almost total obscurity. The director of *Citizen Kane*, to be sure, taped a lengthy TV talk-show appearance the day before he died which summarised a substantial portion of his career - as magician, actor, director, one-time political aspirant, show-biz personality and, most recently, the subject of a biography by Barbara Leaming. Yet such is the nature of our media and its discreet omissions that this generous glimpse of Welles failed even to hint at the artistic activity that consumed the last two decades of his life. The closest the programme got to this reality was a passing acknowledgement of *Chines at Midnight*, released in 1966, as an unjustly neglected film.

It's an unpleasant but unavoidable fact that according to the logic of capitalism, which tends to define reality exclusively in relation to marketable items, Welles as an artist died in disgrace - the butt of endless fat jokes, has-been references, and morose reflections about what would or could or should have been had the man not gone so distressingly to seed. This wasn't, of course, the general response outside the US; in Paris, to cite the other extreme, only two days after his death by heart attack on 10 October 1985, *Libération* came out with a twelve-page tribute. But, by and large, the American response was remorseless in its verdict. Decline, failure, inactivity, endless 'taking meals' at Ma Maison in Los Angeles and hack TV appearances by a one-time genius were mostly what one read about, often with a reference to Pauline Kael's pejorative 'Raising Kane' thrown in for good measure.

Why was Welles hated and feared so much on his native soil? Was it because he was perceived as the man who had it all, and then threw it away? But of course Welles never had it all to begin with; despite

the strength of his original RKO contract, only one of his many projects there ever got made and released to his satisfaction, and that one came dangerously close to never getting made or released at all. The legend embraced the boy wonder in power, but fell aground as soon as it had to cope with him as deposed royalty - which is what he remained for the next forty-five years. For the most part, critics and public alike remained loftily indifferent to this second Welles, at least until it was too late to make any difference; if it wasn't another *Citizen Kane*, made with the virtually limitless resources of a major studio and released by a major distributor, they weren't interested - until the film was revived as a classic a decade or so later.

Considering the brashness of Welles, it would be foolish to claim that he was entirely blameless in what happened, yet no less foolish to assume that he should somehow have tempered his brashness in order to stay in the game. (He tried that in *The Stranger*, and only an anti-Wellesian like James Agee could have been very pleased with the results.) And it is important to remember that he was brash as an artist, not as a celebrity or public figure; he never shocked anyone on a TV show - which is perhaps part of what made the periodic need to shock in his art so palpable. *Touch of Evil*, *The Trial* and (as scripted) *The Big Brass Ring* are all like the volcanic eruptions of a caged beast kept too long in confinement - excessive at times to the point of losing control over their own meanings, yet richer and more thrilling for the headlong risks they take.

If Welles, along with Murnau, was the most poetically gifted master of camera movement in the history of cinema, this was largely because he wasn't a rationalist like Mizoguchi or even Ophuls in his charted arabesques and flourishes, but an explorer of unconscious and semiconscious drives and transports. The bravura of the descent into and eventual ascent away from the El Rancho; the giddy, fleeting entrance into the last of the Amberson balls; the almost prenatal

backward probe down a dark courtyard passageways, away from Van Stratten on his way up the stairs through the snow towards Jacob Zouk; the swoops and dives of a crane across a Mexican border town, or the serpentine chase around the pillars of a ruined building outside a stripjoint - always the elation of a Victorian imagination run riot.

Significantly, at a tribute to Welles held at the Directors Guild in Hollywood last November, Charlton Heston described Welles as the most gifted director he ever worked for, but demurred when Peter Bogdanovich labelled *Touch of Evil* (1958) Welles' last Hollywood film, 'a masterpiece'. Heston said that he preferred to call it 'the best B picture ever made.' In America, to make the best B picture ever made means, on the bottom line, to be a failure; acutely aware of this fact, even as he railed against it, Welles could not transform himself into a mainstream figure, and wound up subsidising most of his late work himself. Quite simply, to 'succeed' in the 80s, he would have to have been someone else.

Yet during the last week of his life, at age 70, he was working on at least four of his own features, and even died while typing stage directions for the last part of one of them, which he planned to shoot later on the same day. And since his death, an accumulating legacy of invisible works has slowly yet obstinately been rising to the surface, giving the lie to the cherished industry fiction that all those legendary titles - *Don Quixote*, *The Deep*, *The Other Side of the Wind*, *The Big Brass Ring*, *The Cradle Will Rock*, *The Dreamers*, *King Lear* and still others - were merely (or mainly) apocryphal alibis from an artist who was no longer producing. The new counter-evidence, at once heartening and appalling, is that Welles' phantom filmography really exists, and is larger than anyone expected.

Thanks to computers, economic balance sheets are available in a flash. Aesthetic balance sheets take much longer, and we are still years away from the point when the 'entire' Welles legacy

can simply be *seen*, much less studied and assessed. In the meantime, a certain amount of clarification seems both possible and desirable, even the fragmentary evidence already becoming available suggests a different Welles from the one we have become accustomed to calling our own, and clearly this is as it should be: was there ever a film in his career that *didn't* confound our expectations? And for starters, it is now evident that Welles continued to produce for half a century at very nearly the same alarming rate which he had sustained in his youth, however and whenever he could. It was only the rest of us who had slowed down.

Indeed, one could argue that it was precisely this non-stop production which aborted Welles' career and led to so many unfinished, unrealised and/or invisible projects - to the same degree that it yielded the substantial (if partially mangled) *oeuvre* which we already know. Living on the wire, Welles saw life and work alike as a treacherous balancing act requiring constant improvisation, meaning that no script, however elaborate, could be simply executed, and no footage, however successful, could be simply edited - a style of work which sent chills up investors' spines, but one not incompatible with the ordinary working methods of many painters, composers and novelists. The resulting martyrdom has usually been rationalised in one of two ways, neatly summed up by the two Welles biographies which appeared last year: either by blaming everything on Welles (the Charles Higham formula) or by blaming fate or the world (only a slight exaggeration of Barbara Leaming's approach). Surely the fact that Welles' subjective private world tended to be split between fidelity and betrayal only added to this polarisation. But the truth has to be somewhere in between, and no single or simple Rosebud can be produced satisfactorily to dissolve the dilemma. Perhaps it isn't a dilemma that *should* be dissolved; perhaps, on the contrary, it is the peculiar strength of Welles' work to keep it alive and worrying - a continuing rebuke and challenge to the

way the world usually goes about its business.

In love with process rather than product, Welles triumphed as well as suffered by postponing deadlines; it is worth recalling that the most celebrated works of his career - *Julius Caesar* on stage, *The War of the Worlds* on radio, *Citizen Kane* on film - all thrived on last-minute delays and revisions. The only thing that changed, really, was our tolerance for such activity, and the loss is mainly ours. Welles, after all, had a thousand and one Welles films in his head and at his disposal; we only have the ones we allowed him to make.

In the latter part of his film career, Welles took a dramatic turn towards privacy that makes many of his late works more intimate and personal and less tied to his public image than the earlier ones. As an integral part of that life and work, the figure of Oja Kodar is likely to disconcert many of those Welles aficionados who assume that they had the master all figured out years ago. Until very recently, she has remained a willing stranger to the world of cinema, and apart from her appearance in *F for Fake*, unknown to most of Welles' audience. Yet insofar as there is an invisible Orson Welles to contend with, she is clearly, along with cinematographer Gary Graver, a major collaborator, witness and resource.

A Yugoslav sculptor who met Welles in Zagreb during the shooting of *The Trial* in 1962, and lived with him for the better part of the last two decades of his life, she worked on at least a dozen of his late features and projects - beginning with the dubbing of Jeanne Moreau's lovmaking sighs in *The Immortal Story* and proceeding through a major part in *The Deep*, script collaboration and lead parts in *F for Fake* and *The Other Side of the Wind* (films whose titles are incidentally hers), work on many other scripts (including *The Honorary Consul*, *The Surinam*, *A Hell of a Woman*, *The Big Brass Ring* and *The Dreamers*) and some projected or semi-realised parts (Pellegrina, the lead role in *The Dreamers*; Cela Brandini in *The Big Brass*

Ring; Cordelia in *Lear*). Apart from this, she assumed such varying tasks as props and wardrobe on *F for Fake*, assistant director on *The Magic Show*, and everything from slate holder to focus puller on still other projects.

The Welles legacy, such as it is, consists of works in different forms and different stages of realisation and completion, ranging all the way from scripts to finished films. Most of the films require lab and/or restoration work before they can be seen at all, and when this will happen depends on several factors, most of them legal and/or financial. Omitted from the inventory below, the order of which is roughly chronological (and often misleadingly so, for many projects were worked on concurrently), are several late projects or scripts about which I know little beyond their titles or subjects: adaptations of *Catch-22*, Conrad's *Lord Jim* and *Victory* (the latter of which, entitled *The Surinam*, Bogdanovich once planned to produce), Greene's *The Honorary Consul* (co-scripted by Kodar), Jim Thompson's *A Hell of a Woman* (co-scripted by Kodar and Gary Graver); films about Chaplin, San Simeon and Central America; and a couple of Kodar stories, *Blind Window* and *Crazy Weather* - not to mention the twenty or so earlier scripts listed in an appendix to Peter Cowie's *The Cinema of Orson Welles*, as well as other titles which we may both have missed.

One further caveat. In what is conceivably the last draft of Welles' script for *The Magnificent Ambersons* before shooting started, dated 7 October 1941, one encounters the following:

The Middle-Aged Citizen

Sixty thousand dollars for the woodwork alone! Yes, sir - hot and cold running water upstairs and down, and stationary washstands in every last bedroom in the place!

Pretty much the same dialogue occurs in the film, but split between no less than four gawking townspeople, two men and two women. A small change, perhaps, but rhythmically and musically a crucial one in terms of the line's delivery and



impact, and only one of the countless examples of Welles' creativity on a set. Bearing this in mind, it is impossible to read any of his unrealised scripts and confidently imagine that one can conjure up the film that would have been from the printed evidence. Yet the remarkable thing about the scripts I've read for *The Cradle Will Rock* and *The Big Brass Ring* - unlike the first and ninth drafts of *The Dreamers*, which leave more to the imagination - is that they often register like living, breathing and finished works on the page, almost as if Welles had suspected that they might never be allowed to live elsewhere, as such, they virtually cry out to be published, and one hopes eventually they will be.

It's All True. Although much has already been written about this doomed Latin American venture of 1942, a considerable portion of the unprocessed and unedited silent footage had not until recently been seen by anyone. In *Cahiers du Cinema* last autumn, Bill Krohn reported at some length on the tortuous history of this episodic documentary and its partially recovered footage. Since then, Richard Wilson and Paramount executive Fred Chandler have been working on a documentary about *It's All True* which will incorporate much of the available

footage, primarily a version of the jangadeiros episode edited by Wilson, as well as interviews with some of the surviving participants on the project.

While hardly any of the three-strip Technicolor carnival sequences appears to have survived (unlike much of the black and white coverage of the same events), the most important material to have been uncovered this year is said to be the footage shot in Fortaleza with a silent Mitchell camera and a skeleton crew of four (Wilson and his wife Elizabeth, cameraman George Fanto and Welles' secretary Shifra Haran) during Welles' last six weeks in Brazil, which Krohn finds comparable in some respects to Eisenstein's *Que Viva Mexico!* rushes. (Whether Welles would have appreciated the comparison is doubtful; according to Kodar, whose anti-cinephilia runs as deeply as Welles' did, my own suggestion that the beginning of *Othello* is Eisensteinian wouldn't have pleased him either.)

Moby-Dick. A few sources cite a film made of Welles' celebrated 1955 stage version of Melville's novel, done in the form of a stage rehearsal, at London's Hackney Empire and Scala Theatre. According to some reports, the film was never finished. Kodar has recently uncovered three very old and fragile reels of 16mm footage labelled *Moby-Dick*; if this *is* in fact the material, we can perhaps look forward to a unique film record of Welles' stage work.

Life of Lollobrigida. In my translation of André Bazin's second book about Welles (Elm Tree Books, 1978), I said in a footnote that this TV film was never completed. But according to Jean-Pierre Thibaudat in *Libération* last February, three more mouldering reels comprising a half-hour personal 'essay' by Welles about Lollobrigida have recently surfaced in Paris. The story recounted by Thibaudat is quintessentially Wellesian. Circa 1958, probably on his way back from Rome, Welles stopped off at one of his favourite hotels in Paris, and left the film cans behind when he departed. As the canisters bore no name or address, they wound up in the hotel's lost property

department, were never reclaimed, and were eventually transferred to another storage area, where they remained for a further two decades.

The film was made for CBS and, according to Welles in a 1982 interview, 'sent to them, where there were cries of horror and disgust from (James) Aubrey there, whose nickname you remember was "The Smiling Cobra". And that was the end of that.' Apparently done in a manner that anticipates *F for Fake* and *Filming Othello* (as well as some of Fellini's film journals), the film has Welles ruminating on other Italian stars, pin-ups and Rome, speaking onscreen and off over Steinberg drawings and Italian landscapes, including brief encounters with his wife Paola Mori, and with Rosanno Brazzi and Vittorio De Sica, and finally visiting Lollobrigida in her native village (Subiaco) in the third reel, after being greeted by her three wolfhounds at the door.

Don Quixote, aka *When Will You Finish Don Quixote?* The film with the longest production history in Welles' career, this adaptation of Cervantes' novel in a modern setting, financed entirely out of Welles' own pocket, was worked on intermittently for thirty years. He started it in France in 1955, with Mischa Auer as Quixote and Akim Tamiroff as Sancho Panza, continued it in Mexico over three months in 1957 (replacing Auer with Francisco Rieguera), and added further material (shot in Mexico, Spain and Italy) in the 60s and early 70s, the last of which was footage of the Holy Week Processions in Seville, shot by Graver. He edited a more or less complete version in Rome in the mid-70s, and shortly before his death had the workprint shipped to Los Angeles, planning to discard the film's original framing device (Welles, as himself, telling the story to a young Patty McCormack) and add a colour prologue and epilogue - work which was never completed.

The film is currently in the process of being restored. When it finally becomes visible, one wonders to what degree it will reflect the varying conceptions Welles had of it as he progressively

developed the project. According to Bazin, the original material shot in Mexico followed 'a principle of complete improvisation inspired by the early cinema.' Kodar reports that Welles, apart from supplying the narration, dubbed the voices of both Don Quixote and Sancho Panza. At one point in the early 80s, Welles hoped to return to Spain and add material about changes since the death of Franco, giving the film more of an essay form. It would appear that part of his reluctance to conclude the project stemmed from his changing attitudes towards Spain, where he lived for many years during the 50s (and which is the principal setting of *The Big Brass Ring*.) Dominique Antoine, the French co-producer of *The Other Side of the Wind*, recalls that he once

told her he could finish *Don Quixote* only if he ever decided *not* to go back to Spain - apparently because each return visit suggested further revisions.

The Deep. Not to be confused with Peter Yates' 1977 feature of the same title, this adaptation of Charles Williams' thriller *Dead Calm*, scripted by Welles, was shot in colour off the Dalmatian coast at Hvar, Yugoslavia between 1967 and 1969, with Welles, Laurence Harvey, Jeanne Moreau, Oja Kodar and Michael Bryant. Most of this film was shot and edited, but gaps remain due to the death of Laurence Harvey in 1973 and the still undubbed part of Jeanne Moreau. Welles, Kodar and others have regarded this as the least of his features, so one imagines that it has a low priority on the list of works to be completed and/or released - although, as Kodar points out, priorities may change on any project if investment is forthcoming.

At the Rotterdam Film Festival last January, Kodar, Dominique Antoine and I compiled a 90-minute videotape of

Wellesiana to be shown there, and among the clips we included was a two-minute trailer for *The Deep* - an early action sequence including brief glimpses of all five of the characters on two yachts and an effective use of percussive jazz (bass and drums) on the soundtrack. Crisply if rather conventionally edited, it does not suggest major Welles, although a look at Williams' novel



suggests an intriguing tension between the characters of Hughie Warriner (Harvey), a psychotic hijacker, and Russ Brewer (Welles), an acerbic macho writer, which in some ways parallels the charged relationships between older and younger men in *Chimes at Midnight*, *The Other Side of the Wind* and *The Big Brass Ring*. (If the theme of mothers and sons seems to inform the early features - *Kane*, *Ambersons*, *The Lady from Shanghai*, *Macbeth* - the emphasis on fathers and sons seems no less prevalent in some of the later projects.)

The Merchant of Venice. The most unknown of all Welles' invisible features, shot in colour (by Giorgio Tonti, Ivica Rajkovic and Tomislav Pinter) in Trogir, Yugoslavia, Asolo, Italy (the villa of Eleonora Duse) and Venice in 1969. The film was completed - edited, scored and mixed - over fifteen years ago but has not yet seen the light of day because two of the workprint reels, including the sound elements (which are now missing from the original negative) were stolen from the

production office in Rome.

The last of Welles' realised film adaptations of Shakespeare, featuring himself as Shylock, Charles Gray as Antonio and Irina Maleva as Jessica, it is set in the 18th century and, according to Kodar, reflects Welles' interest in Judaism, as well as his belief that the play is neither anti-nor pro-semitic. 'It's impossible to believe that [Shakespeare] didn't know Jews', Welles told Bill Krohn in 1982, during the interview in which he first acknowledged the film's existence. 'And there were few of them in England at the time. But there was the theory that he'd been in the Low Countries and doing military service, and it would have been there that he'd run into a lot of Jewish people. Because the rhythms of speech are so Jewish.' (It is worth noting that in *The Dreamers* Welles also cast himself in an explicitly Jewish role.)

Welles originally wanted Kodar to play Portia, but she refused, at that stage considering her English inadequate, and Welles wound up eliminating Portia from the story altogether - a startling move, but one not inconsistent with some of his other drastic changes in Shakespeare throughout his career. One of the segments planned for *Orson Welles Solo* was an abridged one-man performance of *Julius Caesar* eliminating Brutus!

The F for Fake Trailer. Before the disastrous American release of Welles' 1973 feature (but after its successful run in Europe), he filmed a promotional trailer with completely new material, featuring Kodar and Gary Graver. Because the film runs about a dozen minutes, the American distributor indignantly refused to process it; it remains in black and white workprint form, with sound and image on separate reels, and was shown in that form at a Welles tribute in Los Angeles a few years ago.

The Other Side of the Wind. If *Don Quixote* has the longest production history, this colour and black and white feature, prefigured to run about three hours, has certainly had the most complex and nightmarish vicissitudes; Kodar has remarked that the

correspondence file alone is as long as *War and Peace*. (See the lengthy account in Leaming's biography, which co-producer Antoine informs me is entirely accurate.) Started well before *F for Fake*, in 1970, and continued for years afterwards, in Arizona, Los Angeles and elsewhere, the film was very nearly completed; Antoine recalls Welles putting together a rough cut with the aid of no less than eleven movieolas, arranged in a semi-circle. But for the last decade it has remained, unseen, either in the possession of the brother-in-law of the late Shah of Iran or in the French courts, where Kodar is trying to retrieve it, hoping to complete it with the assistance of Graver (who shot the entire film and worked on the editing) and Peter Bogdanovich. From all accounts, it would appear to be both Welles' last satiric word on the world of cinema and one of his most adventurous stylistic experiments.

'When we started writing the script', Kodar says, 'we had two stories, Orson's was called *Jake Hannaford* and it was too long, because it was based on the life of movie director Rex Ingram, and on Hemingway following the bullfights through Spain, and on some of Orson's own experiences. Orson came to the conclusion that the bullfights had become just a tourist attraction and had lost whatever sincerity they once had.

'So after he discovered his script was too long, and cut everything he wanted to cut, he discovered it was too short. This is how we decided to make a sort of osmosis of his story and my story, and began working together on a new script. My story is that there is a man who is still potent - it's not that he is impotent - but gets a real kick from the idea of sleeping with his leading man, sleeping really with the woman of his leading man. So he is not a classic homosexual, but somewhere in his mind he is possessing that man by possessing his woman. And at the same time, just because there is a hidden homosexuality in him, he is very rough on open homosexuals, as so many of those guys are.

This is one reason why the script is so complicated and has so many chords. When you see the film, you will feel that somebody else worked with him because there are things that he never would have done alone, and never did before. He was a very shy man, and erotic stuff was not his thing. And in this film, you will see the erotic stuff. He kept accusing me with his finger: "It's your fault!" And he was right - it's my fault!"

Part of this film's formal interest is that it incorporates two separate styles, neither of which can be associated with Welles' customary signature (apart from the almost subliminary rapid editing which characterises his 'late' manner from *Othello* to portions of *The Trial* to *F for Fake*). One style belongs to an unfinished, rather arty film which Jake Hannaford (John Huston) is screening at his birthday party; the other derives from the diverse 16mm, Super-8 and video footage being shot by several TV crews at the party.

Centred round the night of 2 July (which, Joseph McBride has noted, 'is not coincidentally the date of Hemingway's suicide'), and reportedly employing a somewhat *Kane*-like flashback structure, the film features TV actor Bob Random as Hanniford's leading man, Kodar as his leading actress, Lilli Palmer as the friend giving the party, Peter Bogdanovich as a younger director (patterned in part after Bogdanovich himself) and, among others, Norman Foster, Curtis Harrington, Henry Jaglom, Joseph McBride, Mercedes McCambridge, Paul Mazursky, Cameron Mitchell, Edmund O'Brien, Paul Stewart, Susan Strasberg, Dan Tobin and Richard Wilson. Two excerpts from the film - both witty and frenetic - were shown by Welles at the AFI's Life Achievement Award banquet held in his honour in 1975, in an unsuccessful attempt to raise completion money, and these are described in some detail in the closing pages of James Naremore's excellent *The Magic World of Orson Welles*. Which affords us a match cut to

The Magic Show. Shot intermittently between 1969 and 1985 with Graver, Kodar and fellow magician Ab Dickson, in Los Angeles, Atlanta and Kodar's home in Orvilliers, France, this is the project Welles was working on when he died. The centrepiece of this theatrical smorgasbord, which seems to bear some resemblances to Tati's *Parade*, is an assortment of some of his best acts of prestidigitation, all done without camera tricks. According to Graver, this portion of the programme runs about half an hour and is more or less edited.

The remainder consists of *The Orson Welles Special*, completed, a 90-minute talk-show with Burt Reynolds, Angie Dickinson and the Muppets; and *Orson Welles Solo*, scripted but regrettably unrealised, which Welles wanted to shoot partially with a Betacam - a one-man show that would have included the abridged *Julius Caesar* without Brutus and the telling of an Isak Dinesen story, 'The Old Chevalier', which Welles had originally planned to include as part of a sketch feature for Alexander Korda in the 1950s, *Paris by Night*. Other cast members in *The Magic Show* as a whole include Senta Berger, Artie Johnson, Lynn Redgrave, Mickey Rooney (whom Welles once expressed an interest in casting as the Fool in *King Lear*) and restaurateur Patrick Terrail.

The Big Brass Ring. Although this project never got beyond the script stage, it is unquestionably one of the most remarkable and revealing works in the entire Welles canon. Written at the urging of his friend director Henry Jaglom, ostensibly as a 'commercial' Hollywood screenplay, it is in fact nothing of the sort - though no less brilliant for that. The settings are New York, a yacht in the Mediterranean, North Africa, Barcelona and Madrid. Senator Blake Pellarin, a Texas Democrat, has just lost out to Reagan in a presidential election, to the bitter disappointment of his ambitious wife Diana. On a yachting trip, he spies a Portuguese maid about to steal his wife's emerald necklace and impulsively urges her to take it. Then, even more



impulsively, he offers to find her a fence for it, snatches it back, and sets off on a wild goose chase leading him to his beloved Harvard mentor Kimball Menaker (Welles), holed up at the Batunga Hilton with a sickly, dying pet monkey and two black, nude female bodyguards.

Having thus in effect gone AWOL from his wife and political entourage, Pellarin asks for Menaker's help in fencing the necklace, which eventually leads to secret meetings between the two in Madrid. As the story shuttles in Arkadin-like fashion between Pellarin, wife and entourage, and Menaker, and their occasionally parallel trajectories, the major go-between is Cela Brandini, a jet-set journalist in army fatigues clearly patterned after Oriana Fallaci. Rather like the faceless reporter in *Kane*, she probes the painful half-secret that has helped to undo Pellarin's political career and continues to bind him to Menaker - the fact that Menaker, once a prized member of FDR's brains trust, has belatedly come out of the closet and, in a letter to his former lover, now a basket-case casualty from Vietnam, declared his love and lust for Pellarin.



The above barely summarises the plot's point of departure, but cannot begin to do justice to the manic energy of this demonic, tragicomic thriller, which Welles hoped to shoot in black and white. (Most of the members of Pellarin's entourage are comic grotesques worthy of the Grandi clan and night watchman in *Touch of Evil*.) Shortly after Welles' death, Jaglom complained bitterly to the *Los Angeles Times* about the circumstances which sank the project. Producer Arnon Milchan agreed to put up the money if Jaglom and Welles could find a bankable star to play Pellarin for two million dollars, but all seven of the stars who were approached - including Warren Beatty, Clint Eastwood, Jack Nicholson, Robert Redford and Burt Reynolds - turned them down, each for a different reason.



The script manages to convey complex feelings about Spain since the Civil War and the US from the New Deal to Watergate, as well as a Goyaesque view of powerless and helpless suffering (which 'rhymes' Menaker's pet monkey with a blind beggar whom Pellarin kicks to death), and a delirious depiction of sexuality which comes to the fore in Pellarin's reunion with a former Vietnamese mistress (another contribution by Kodar of 'erotic stuff'). Overall, the plot gradually develops from a kind of bouncy naturalism to a nightmarish phantasmagoria, before returning to mischievous comedy. It is clearly too advanced, too sophisticated and too candidly personal for anything that Hollywood in the 80s could begin to handle, much less imagine. Forty years earlier, Welles had RKO and all its resources at his disposal; with a fraction as much today, he might well have come up with a feature just as startling.

The Cradle Will Rock. Like *Touch of Evil*, this was a project not initiated by Welles, but one which he was able to take over after it had been developed separately - in this case, scripted by Ring Lardner Jr for producer Michael Fitzgerald. According to Kodar, Welles' version of the script, written during the fall of 1984, was entirely original.

Set in New York City and environs in 1937, *The Cradle Will Rock* depicts Welles' life and career at the age of twenty-two: performing *Dr Faustus* on Broadway, meeting composer Marc Blitzstein and launching his leftist musical *The Cradle Will Rock*, and meanwhile performing weekly on radio shows ranging from *The Shadow* to soap operas to *The March of Time*, proceeding from one studio to the next in a rented ambulance. The plot is candid enough to comment on some of the problems in Welles' first marriage as well as his ambivalent relation to Blitzstein's radical politics. Members of the Mercury Theatre such as John Houseman, Augusta Weissberger, black actor Jack Carter and Welles' first wife Virginia Nicholson figure prominently; and the script begins with Welles himself as narrator, succinctly evoking the mood of the Depression of the mid-30s.

After Welles cast Rupert Everett as the young Welles and Amy Irving as Virginia, sets were constructed at Cinecitta in Rome and exterior locations selected in New York and Los Angeles; but three weeks before shooting was scheduled to begin, the budget evaporated after some difficulties between the investors. Tragically, not even Steven Spielberg, Amy Irving's husband, who once paid a princely sum to purchase one of the original Rosebud sleds, was willing to lift a finger to save the project. Apparently Fitzgerald is still interested in filming Welles' script, with another director. A fascinating and highly critical self-portrait, it tells a lively story whose interest goes well beyond its autobiographical aspects in its nostalgic evocations of the period.

Whether a film of the script could overcome the problem of casting young



actors as Welles, Agnes Moorehead and other Mercury figures without alienating older viewers remains an open question (Welles himself was apparently concerned about this issue). But for any reader of the script who can fill in the names with the appropriate faces, it remains an exciting and crucial document - possibly the most extensive exercise in literal self-scrutiny that Welles has given us. And considering the over 40-year feud between Welles and John Houseman, it is worth noting that Welles' depiction of his Mercury producer is in fact rather benign; the script even paraphrases Houseman's description of Welles as a Faustian obsessive in his memoir *Run-through* - a view hotly contested in Leaming's Welles biography.

King Lear. I haven't read Welles' screenplay for the last of his projected adaptations of Shakespeare, which he planned to shoot in black and white, with himself as Lear, Kodar as Cordelia and Ab Dickson (the magician in *The Magic Show*) as the Fool. But going by Kodar's description, it is a good deal more detailed than the other scripts which I have read - indicating every move of the camera and actors, and supplemented by many drawings for the costumes and constructed models for the sets. And Welles' proposal for *Lear* in the form of a six-minute videotape,



shown in Rotterdam last January, gives provocative and tantalising clues about the form and style that his film would take.

After powerfully evoking the play's theme of old age, he begins to describe what the film *won't* be like. It will not, he promises, be 'what is called a costume movie' in any sense of the word. 'That doesn't mean that the characters are going to wear blue jeans; it *does* mean that a story so sharply modern in its relevancy, so universal in its simple, rock-bottom humanity, will not be burdened with the time-worn baggage of theatrical tradition, it will be just as free from the various forms of cinematic rhetoric, my own as well as the others, which have already accumulated in the history of these translations of Shakespeare into film. What we'll be giving you, then, is something new; Shakespeare addressed directly and uniquely to the sensibility of our own particular day. The camera language will be intimate, extremely intimate, rather than grandiose, the tone will be at once epic in its stark simplicity and almost ferociously down to earth, in a word, not only a new kind of Shakespeare, but a new kind of film.'

Conceived of largely in closeups, Welles' *Lear*, one imagines, would have been a logical successor to *Chimes at Midnight*.

Although *Lear* was ostensibly to have been financed by French television, Kodar firmly believes - as did Welles - that they never sincerely intended to make the film, speaking in a barely controlled rage at the Directors Guild tribute to Welles last November, she read a cable of condolence from Francois Mitterrand stating that Welles 'may not have been able or may not have wanted to have followed to an end this film.' 'I am sorry', Kodar then remarked, 'that M Mitterrand, even at this sad hour, has had to play politics and defend his establishment... Who would be the best person to help French Minister of Culture Jack Lang to take his foot out of his mouth for openly declaring his dislike and disdain for existing imperialism of nonexistent American culture? Who else? Welles.'

Speaking of an artificially inflated budget, impossible production conditions and broken promises, Kodar read the last part of Welles' own message to Paris in May 1985: 'In the fifty-five years of my professional career I have never, not even in the worst days of the old Hollywood, encountered such a humiliating inflexibility. Need I say that this is a bitter disappointment to one who has until now received so much heart-warming and generous cooperation in France. To my profound regret, therefore, I must accept that your own last Telex is the last word about *Lear* and that there is no longer any hope that in this affair a constructive relationship is possible.'

Despite this loss of finance, Welles continued to hope to make the film by other means, and had himself photographed in his *Lear* costume and make-up shortly before his death.

The Dreamers. 'The last of Orson's dreams,' Kodar describes this colour adaption of two Isak Dinesen stories, worked on between 1978 and 1985. While trying unsuccessfully to raise money for this project, Welles shot various tests

and a few scenes, totalling about twenty minutes, in and around the house he shared in Hollywood with Kodar, with Graver as cinematographer and Kodar in the lead part of Pellegrina - an opera singer who, having lost her voice, decides to live many other lives. In the first story, 'The Dreamers', three men who have fallen in love with her - a young Englishman, a Danish cavalry officer and a young American - converge on an inn, each in search of her, and during a blizzard pass the time by telling one another about their affairs with this elusive woman, only gradually discovering that they are all in pursuit of the same person. In the second story, 'Echoes', Pellegrina arrives in a remote mountain village and, in a church, encounters a young boy named Emmanuele whose singing voice seems identical to the voice she once had. She proceeds to give the boy voice lessons and falls in love with him, until he denounces her as a witch.

In the earliest version of the script, entitled 'Da Capo', Welles introduces the film by speaking of his lifelong infatuation with Dinesen's work. In the last version, the introduction is given over to Warren Beatty, who introduces Welles, who introduces in turn Lincoln Forsner, the young Englishman in search of Pellegrina - who is himself only the first of many narrators in Welles' intricate Chinese box structure of tales within tales.

Probably the most romantic of Welles' late projects, the Dreamers would almost surely have embodied his most exquisite and developed use of colour. Over two years in Madrid, still photographer Jose Maria Castellvi worked as Welles' 'colour scout' by photographing precise changes in the colours of the leaves in a park at different times of day and recording the time and date of each photograph, all in preparation for sequences to be shot in Spain. (Shortly before Welles' death, Castellvi told me, a trunk arrived containing all the costumes to be worn by Kodar.)

A three-minute scene filmed in 1982 in Welles and Kodar's backyard in



Hollywood, describing Pellegrina's departure from her life as a famous opera singer, represents as much of a quantum leap from *The Immortal Story*, Welles' previous Dinesen adaptation, as *Othello* does from *Macbeth*. Admittedly, the scene is no more than an unfinished fragment; Welles never got round to shooting his own close-ups (in the part of Marcus Kleek, the elderly Dutch Jewish merchant who is Pellegrina's only friend), and the dialogue - a lovely duet of two melodious, accented voices, accompanied by the whir of crickets and even the faint hum of passing traffic - is recorded in direct sound. But the delicate lighting, lyrical camera movements and rich deployments of blue, black and yellow, combined with the lilt of the two voices, create an astonishing glimpse into the overripe dream world that Welles envisioned for the film.

As suggested earlier, the above list is far from exhaustive; but clearly it is more than enough to vindicate Welles from the charge of idleness in his late years. The range of the work is as remarkable as the breadth, and the fact that virtually all this legacy has remained buried gives the film industry and media a lot to answer for. But a tentative hypothesis or two about how this happened might help to shed some partial light.

A man who was deeply moved when he was

once recognised as Falstaff (rather than as Orson Welles) by a driver on the Champs-Élysées, Welles felt he belonged more to the public than to the film specialist. After the fame that carried him through his mid-twenties, conceivably the most galling aspect of his subsequent career was the lack of a clear mainstream success. The only time that I met him, in 1972 - having unexpectedly been invited to lunch by him in Paris two days after writing a modest letter of inquiry about *Heart of Darkness*, his first feature film project - I was surprised to hear him say that he was reluctant to release *Don Quixote* then because he didn't want it to compete with *Man of La Mancha*. No less surprising was the discovery that not even the earliest of his film dreams, *Heart of Darkness*, was regarded by him as abandoned; he still nurtured hopes of making it one day. Yet as the projects accumulated and the investments dwindled, he steadily refused to accept the status of a marginal artist - a decision which undoubtedly spurred his creative activity at the same time that it edged him further away from the mainstream, except as an entertainer.

Thus, even while his work grew more inward and self-reflective in its resonance for Welles fans - with characters as diverse as Russ Brewer, *Don Quixote*, Shylock, Hannaford, Pellarin, Menaker, Lear, Pellegrina and Kleek all taking their places beside the direct self-portraits in *F for Fake*, *Filming Othello* and *The Cradle will Rock* - the conscious address grew ever more expansive and generous in its appeal to the general public. This discrepancy may finally have less to do with Welles than with the shrinking and diminishing culture around him; but whatever its source, it could only be judged one way while he was alive - as creative blockage. Ironically, now that he is dead, the floodgates can open; demonstrating once again that what a culture wants of an artist at any given moment may at best be only incidental to the range of his or her talents.

As we know now from Leaming and Higham,

Welles grew up trying to please parents who were diametrically opposed and eventually became estranged from one another, both of whom expected him to be entertaining and 'grown up'. Considering how well he succeeded with both of them, it is scarcely surprising that he extended these talents to the outside world, which initially rewarded him no less handsomely for his deceptions, like *Pellegrina*, he became more than the sum of his roles, even if his public career afforded him less than the sum of his reputation.

With this background in mind, the standard objections to Welles' 'character' remind one of Rene Clair's fatherly advice to Preston Sturges, cited and admirably glossed by Manny Farber and WS Poster: 'Preston is like a

man from the Italian Renaissance; he wants to do everything at once. If he could slow down, he would be great; he has an enormous gift, and he should be one of our leading creators. I wish he would be a little more selfish and worry about his reputation.' 'What Clair is suggesting', note Farber and Poster, 'is that Sturges would be considerably improved if he annihilated himself'. This is more or less what we tended to expect from Welles, and although it took him the better part of seventy years, he finally obliged us.

There are only two things it is ever seemly for an intelligent person to be thinking... One is: 'What did God mean by creating the world?' and the other? 'What do I do next...?' (the end of *The Dreamers*).

This essay was written by Jonathan Rosenbaum and originally published in Sight & Sound in 1986.

Gallic Productions Recommends:

Citizen Kane, 1941 / The Magnificent Ambersons, 1942, / Journey into Fear, 1943, / The Stranger, 1946, / The Lady from Shanghai, 1948, / Macbeth, 1948, / Othello, 1952, / Mr Arkadin, 1955, / Touch of Evil, 1958, / The Trial, 1962, / Chimes at Midnight, 1966, / The Immortal Story, 1968, / F for Fake, 1975.

*The Arena TV Interview with Orson in 1982 is excellent. There are four books all titled 'Orson Welles' by Andre Bazin, Joseph McBride, Barbara Leaming, Charles Higham. *Simon Callow's book on the 'Orse' will be published in 1990!*



HARDCORE



"There's a lot of strange things happen in this world, things you don't know about in Grand Rapids, things you don't wanna know about, doors that shouldn't be opened."

Paul Schrader really went to town with this movie, back in 1979 he re-wrote 'The Searchers', switching John Wayne hunting down his niece kidnapped by the Indians for George C Scott hunting down his daughter taken by pornographers. To look further back it's the Orpheus in the Underworld story, Scott plays a deeply religious (puritan) Calvinist (like Schrader) who, it is never made clear, may have pushed his daughter into running away by only providing her with a repressed home-life (the mother is dead). The scenes in which Scott searches through the porno districts of LA are both amusing and disturbing, amusing because there is an inherent humour in a deeply religious man being tested (the sex is virtually thrust in his face) and disturbing because the seedy world of underworld porno is painted as utterly soulless. After discovering a prostitute who knows his daughter the movie develops into a thriller (chase-movie) in which Scott must find his daughter before the increasingly sick people she is hanging out with kill her (they are into snuff movies!) The dialogue between Scott and the whore is fascinating as both are forced to re-evaluate their view of life. I particularly enjoy the way Scott changes his clothes and image as he gets closer to finding his daughter. If the end is slightly poxy good guy (preacher?) causes the death of porn-killer, (actually killed by the private detective who hovers over the movie like some sort of schizophrenic guardian angel - half saviour, half devil) then the original refusal of the girl to return to her father is the leveling force. As in 'The Searchers' there is a certain disgust that Scott/Wayne feels for the child who has been tainted by evil, the fascism of the former has however turned into a form of 'seperated' tolerance.

When one considers how good Schrader's movies were in the '70s ('Blue Collar', the clothes scene in 'American Gigolo', the script for 'Taxi Driver', this) it raises the question why has work fallen so much in the '80s ('Cat People', 'Mishima', the script for 'The Last Temptation of Christ'), perhaps the new Patty Hearst picture will show a return to form.

"You think its (sex) so unimportant you don't even do it, I think its so unimportant that I don't care who I do it with."



LANG

as Script Writer: 1917 - *Die Hochzeit im Exzentrick Klub*, (d,J May), / *Joe Debbs (series)*, (d,J May), / *Hilde Warren und der Tod*, (d,J May), / 1919 - *Pest in Florence*, (d,O Rippert), / *Totentanz*, (d,O Rippert), / *Die Frau mit den Orchideen*, (d,O Rippert), / 1921 - *Das Indische Grabmal pt1&2*, (w,Lang & T von Harbou, d,J May),

as Silent Director: 1919 - *Halb-Blut*, (w,Lang), / *Derr Herr der Liebe*, (w,O Koffler), / *Die Spinnen pt1: Der Goldene See*, (w,Lang), / *Hari-kiri*, (w,M Jungk), / *Die Spinnen pt2: Das Brillanten Schiff*, (w,Lang), / *Das Wandernde Bild*, (w,Lang & T von Harbou), / 1920 - *Vier um die Frau*, (w,Lang & T von Harbou), / 1921 - *Der Nude Tod*, (w,Lang & T von Harbou), / 1922 - *Dr Mabuse der Spieler pt1&2*, (w,Lang & T von Harbou), / 1923-24 - *Die Nibelungen pt1&2*, (w,Lang & T von Harbou), / 1926 - *Metropolis*, (w,Lang & T von Harbou), / 1927-28 - *Spione*, (w,Lang & T von Harbou), / 1928 - *Frau im Mond*, (w,Lang & T von Harbou),

as Sound Director: 1931 - *M*, (w,Lang & T von Harbou), / 1933 - *Das Testament von Dr Mabuse*, (w,Lang & T von Harbou), / in France; 1933 - *Lilliom*, (w,Lang & R Liebmann & B Zimmer), / in USA; 1936 - *Fury*, (w,Lang & B Cornack), / 1937 - *You Only Live Once*, (w,G Towne & G Baker), / 1938 - *You and Me*, (w,V Van Upp), / 1940 - *The Return of Frank James*, (w,S Hellman), in Colour, / 1941 - *Western Union*, (w,R Carson), in Colour, / *Man Hunt*, (w,D Nichols), / 1943 - *Hangmen Also Die*, (w,Lang & Brecht & J Wexley), / 1944 - *Ministry of Fear*, (w,S Miller), / *The Woman in the Window*, (w,N Johnson), / 1945 - *Scarlet Street*, (w,D Nichols), / 1946 - *Cloak and Dagger*, (w,A Maltz & R Lardner Jnr), / 1948 - *Secret Beyond the Door*, (w,S Richards), / 1949 - *House by the River*, (w,M Dinelli), / 1950 - *An American Guerilla in the Philippines*, (w,L Trotti), in Colour, / 1951 - *Rancho Notorious*, (w, D Taradash), in Colour, / *Clash by Night*, (w,A Hayes), / 1952 - *The Blue Gardenia*, (w,C Hoffmann), / 1953 - *The Big Heat*, (w,S Boehm), / 1954 - *Human Desire*, (w,A Hayes), / *Moonfleet*, (w,J Lustig & M Fitts), in Colour, / 1955 - *While the City Sleeps*, (w,C Robinson), / 1956 - *Beyond a Reasonable Doubt*, (w,D Morrow), / in Germany; 1958 - *Der Tiger von Eschnapur/Das Indische Grabmal*, (w,Lang & Luddecke), in Colour, / 1960 *Die Tausend Augen des Dr Mabuse*, (w,Lang & Wuttig),

*** in 1941/42 Archie Mayo took over 2 unfinished Lang projects; *Confirm or Deny* & *Moontide*, in 1963 Lang played himself in Godard's: *Le Mepris*, ***

MAD SYD?

There is a story that exists pertaining to an incident which occurred during one of Syd Barrett's last gigs with the Pink Floyd. After a lengthy interval, the band decided to take to the stage (there is a certain amount of dispute as to which venue this all took place at) all except for Syd Barrett, who was left in the dressing room, manically trying to organise his anarchically-inclined hairstyle of the time.

As his comrades were tuning up, Barrett - more, out of desperation than anything - emptied the contents of a jar of Mandrax, broke the pills into tiny pieces and mixed the crumbs in with a full jar of Brylcreem. He then poured the whole coagulated mass onto his head, picked up his Telecaster, and walked on stage.

As he was playing his customary incoherent, sporadic, almost catatonic guitar-phrases, the Mandrax-Brylcreem combination started to run amok under the intense heat of the stage-lighting and dribbled down from his scalp so that it looked like his face was melting into a distorted wax effigy of flesh.

This story is probably more or less true. It exists amidst an infinity of strange tales - many of them fact, just as many wistful fiction - that surround and largely comprise the whole legend in-his-own-time schtick of which Syd Barrett is very much the dubiously honoured possessor.

Barrett is still alive and basically functioning, by the way.

Every so often he appears at Lupus Music, his publishing company situated on Berkeley Square which handles his royalties situation and has kept him in modest financial stead these last few dormant years. On one of his last visits (which constitute possibly Barrett's only real contact with the outside world), Brian Morrison, Lupus' manager, started getting insistent that Barrett write some songs. After all, demand for more Syd Barrett material is remarkably



high at the moment and EMI are all ready to swoop the lad into the studio, producer in tow, at any given moment.

Barrett claimed that no, he hadn't written anything, but dutifully agreed to get down and produce *some* sort of something.

His next appearance at the office occurred last week. Asked if he'd written any new tunes, he replied in his usual hazy condition, "No". He then promptly disappeared again.

This routine has been going on for years now. Otherwise Barrett tends to appear at Lupus only when the rent is due or when he wants to buy a guitar (a luxury that at one point became an

obsession and consequently had to be curtailed).

The rest of Barrett's time is spent sprawled out in front of the large colour TV in his two-room apartment situated in the hinterland of Chelsea, or else just walking at random around London. A recent port-of-call was a clothes store down the King's Road where Syd tried on three vastly different sizes of the same style of trousers, claimed that all of them fitted him perfectly, and then disappeared again, without buying any.

And that's basically what the whole Syd Barrett story is all about - a huge tragedy shot through with so many ludicrously comic aspects that you could easily be tempted to fill out a whole article by simply relating all the crazy anecdotes and half-chewed tales of twilight dementia, and leave it at that. The conclusion, however, is always inescapable and goes far beyond the utterly bogus image compounded of the artist as some fated victim spread out on the altar of acid and sacrificed to the glorious spirit of '67.

Syd Barrett was simply a brilliant innovative young songwriter whose genius was somehow amputated, leaving him hamstrung in a lonely limbo accompanied only by a stunted creativity and a kind of helpless illogical schizophrenia.

The whole saga starts, I suppose at least for convenience's sake, with a band called The Abdabs. They were also called the 'T'-Set and no-one I spoke to quite knew which had come first. It doesn't matter though.

The band was a five-piece, as it happens, consisting of three aspiring architects, Richard Wright, Nick Mason and Roger Waters, a jazz guitarist called Bob Close and - the youngest member - an art student called Roger Keith Barrett (Barrett, like most other kids, had been landed with a nickname - "Syd" - which somehow remained long after his schooldays had been completed).

The band, it was generally considered, were pretty dire - but, as they all emanated from the hip elitist circles of

their home-town Cambridge they were respected after a fashion at least in their own area. This hip elite was, according to fellow-townsmen Storm of "Hipgnosis" built on several levels of acquaintances, mostly by age.

"It was the usual thing really, 1962 we were all into Jimmy Smith. Then 1963 brought dope and rock. Syd was one of the first to get into The Beatles and The Stones."

"He started playing guitar around then - used to take it to parties or play down at this club called The Mill. He and Dave (Gilmour) went to the South of France one summer and busked around."

Storm remembers Barrett as a "bright, extrovert kid. Smoked dope, pulled chicks - the usual thing. He had no problems on the surface. He was no introvert as far as I could see then."

Before the advent of the Pink Floyd, Barrett had three brooding interests - music, painting and religion. A number of Barrett's seniors in Cambridge were starting to get involved in an obscure form of Eastern mysticism known as "Sant Saji" which involved heavy bouts of meditation and much contemplation on purity and the inner light.

Syd attempted to involve himself in the faith, but he was turned down for being "too young" (he was nineteen at the time). This according to a number of those who knew him was supposed to have affected him quite deeply.

"Syd has always had this big phobia about his age," states Pete Barnes, who became involved in the labyrinthine complexities of Barrett's affairs and general psyche after the Floyd split.

"I mean, when we would try to get him back into the studio to record he would get very defensive and say 'I'm only 24, I'm still very young. I've got time' That thing with religion could have been partly responsible for it."

At any rate, Barrett lost all interest in spiritualism after that and soon enough he would also give up painting. Already he'd won a scholarship to Camberwell Art School in Peckham which was big potatoes for just another hopeful from out of the sticks.

Both Dave Gilmour and Storm claim that Barrett's painting showed exceptional potential; "Syd was a great artist, I loved his work, but he just stopped. First it was the religion, then the painting. He was starting to shut himself off slowly then."

Music, of course, remained. The Ab-Dabs...well let's forget about them and examine the "Pink Floyd Sound", which was really just the old band but minus Bob Close who "never quite fitted in." The Pink Floyd Sound name came from Syd after a blues record he owned which featured two bluesmen from Georgia - Pink Anderson and Floyd Council. The two names meshed nicely so..

Anyway the band was still none too inspiring - no original material but versions of "Louie Louie" and "Roadrunner" into which would be interspersed liberal dosages of staccato freak-out.

"Freak-out" was happening in the States at the time - the time being 1966, the year of The Yardbirds, The Mothers of Invention and the first primal croaks from the West Coast. Not to mention "Revolver" and "Eight Miles High".

The fat was obviously in the pan for the big 1967 Summer of Love psychedelic bust-out. However, The Pink Floyd Sound weren't exactly looking to the future at this juncture.

Peter Jenner, a lecturer at the LSE and John "Hoppy" Hopkins were in the audience for one of their gigs and were impressed enough to offer them some sort of management deal.

Admits Jenner: "It was one of the first rock events I'd seen - I didn't know anything about rock really." (Jenner and Hopkins had in fact made one offer prior to the Floyd - to a band they'd heard on advance tape from New York called The Velvet Underground)."

"Actually the Floyd then were barely semi-pro standard, now I think about it, but I was impressed by the electric guitar sound. The band was just at the point of breaking up then, y'know. It was wierd - they just thought 'Oh well, might as well pack it all in.' But as we'd come along, they changed their

minds."

The first trick was the light show and the UFO concerts. The next was activating a policy of playing only original compositions.

This is where Syd Barrett came into his own. Barrett hadn't really composed tunes before this - the odd one here and there - a nonsense song called "Effervescing Elephant" when he was maybe 16 - and he'd put music to a poem to be found in James Joyce's "Ulysses" called "Golden Hair", but nothing beyond that.

Jenner: "Syd was really amazing though. I mean, his inventiveness was quite astounding. All those songs from that whole Pink Floyd phase were written in no more than six months. He just started and took it from there."

The first manifestation of Barrett's songwriting talents was a bizarre little classic called "Arnold Layne". A sinister piece of vaguely commercial fare, it dealt with the twilight wanderings of a transvestite / pervert figure and is both whimsical and singularly creepy.

The single was banned by Radio London who found its general connotations a little too bizarre for even pirate radio standards.

The Floyd were by now big stuff in Swinging London. Looking back on it all, the band came on just like naive art-students in Byrds styled granny glasses (the first publicity shots are particularly laughable), but the music somehow had an edge. Certainly enough for prestigious folk like Brian Epstein to mouth off rhapsodies of praise on French radio, and all the 'chic' mags to throw in the token mention.

There were even TV shows - good late night avant garde programmes for Hampstead trendies like "Look of the Week" on which the Floyd played "Pow R Toc H."

But let's hear more about Syd's inventiveness. Jenner again: "Well, his influences were very much The Stones, The Beatles, Byrds and Love. The Stones were the prominent ones - he wore out his copy of "Between the Buttons" very



quickly, Love's album too. In fact, I was telling him about this Arthur Lee song I couldn't remember the title of, so I just hummed the main riff. Syd picked up his guitar and followed what I was humming chord wise. The chord pattern he worked out he went on to use as the main riff for 'Interstellar Overdrive'."

And the Barrett guitar style? "Well he had this technique that I found very pleasing, I mean, he was no guitar hero - never remotely in the class of Page or Clapton, say." (Thank God - Ed)

The Floyd Cult was growing as Barrett's creativity was beginning to hit it's stride. This creativity set the stage in Barrett's song-writing for what can only be described as the quintessential marriage of the two ideal forms of English psychedelia - musical rococo freak-outs underpinning Barrett's sudden ascendancy into the artistic realms of ye olde English whimsical loone, wherein dwelt the likes of Edward Lear and Kenneth Grahame. Pervy old Lewis Carroll of course, presided at the very head of the tea-party.

And so Arnold Layne and washing lines gave way to the whole Games-for-May ceremony and "See Emily Play".

"I was sleeping in the woods one night after a gig we'd played somewhere, when I saw this girl appear before me. That girl was Emily."

Thus quoth the mighty Syd himself back in '67, obviously caught up in it all like some kite lost in spring.

And it *was* glorious for a time. "Piper at the Gates of Dawn" was being recorded at the same time as "Sergeant Pepper" and the two bands would occasionally meet up to check out each other's product. McCartney stepped out to bestow his papal blessing on "Piper", an album which still stands as my fondest musical memory of 1967 - even more so than "Pepper" or "Younger than Yesterday." (All except for "Bike" which reeks of crazy basements and Barrett eccentricities beginning to lose control - psychedelic whimsy taken a little too close to the edge.)

You see strange things were starting to happen with the Floyd and particularly with Barrett.

"See Emily Play" was Top Five which enabled Barrett to more than adequately live out his pop star infatuation numbers to the hilt - the Hendrix curls, kaftans from "Granny's", snakeskin boots and Fender Telecasters were all his for the asking - but there were the, uh, unstabilising influences.

First came the ego-problems and slight prima donna fits, but gradually the Floyd, Jenner et al realised that something deeper was going on. Take the Floyd's three Top of the Pops appearances for "Emily".

Jenner: "The first time Syd dressed up like a pop star. The second time he came on in his straightforward, fairly scruffy clothes, looking rather unshaven. The third time he came to the studios in his pop star clothes and then changed into complete rags for the actual TV spot."

It was all something to do with the fact that John Lennon had stated publicly he wouldn't appear on Top of the Pops. Syd seemed to envisage Lennon

as some sort of yardstick by which to measure his own situation as a pop star. "Syd was always complaining that John Lennon owned a house while he only had a flat," states Peter Barnes.

But there was far darker manifestations of a definite impending imbalance in the Barrett psyche.

He was at that point involved in a relationship with a girl named Lynsey - an affair which took an uncomfortably bizarre turn when the lady involved appeared on Peter Jenner's doorstep fairly savagely beaten up.

"I couldn't believe it at time. I had this firm picture of Syd as this really gentle guy, which is what he was, basically."

Something was definitely awry. In fact there are numerous fairly unpleasant tales about this particular affair (including one that claims Barrett to have locked the girl in a room for a solid week, pushing water-biscuits under the door so she wouldn't starve) which are best not dwelt on.

But to make matters worse, Syd's eyes were often seen to cement themselves into a foreboding, nay quite terrifying, stare which *really* started to put the frighteners on present company. The head would tilt back slightly, the eyes would get misty and bloated, then they would stare right at you and right through you at the same time.

One thing was painfully obvious; the boy genius was fast becoming mentally totally unhinged.

Perhaps it was the drugs. Barrett's intake at the time was suitably fearsome, while many considered his metabolism for such chemicals to be a trifle fragile. Certainly they only tended towards a further tipping of the psyche-scales, but it would be far too easy to write Barrett off as some hapless acid amputee - even though certain folks now claim that a two-month sojourn in Richmond with a couple suitably named "Mad Sue" and "Mad Jock" had him drinking a cup of tea each morning which was unknown to Syd, spiked with a heavy dosage of acid.

Such activity can, of course, lead to a certain degree of brain-damage, but I fear one has to stride manfully blindfolded into a rather more Freudian landscape, leading us to the opinion of many of the people I talked to who claimed that Syd's dilemma stretched back to certain childhood traumas.

The youngest of a family of eight, heavily affected by the sudden death of his father when Syd was twelve years old, spoilt by a strong-willed mother who may or may not have imposed a strange distinction between the dictates of fantasy and reality - each contention forms a patch-work quilt like set-up of insinuations and potential cause-and-effect mechanisms.

"Everyone is supposed to have fun when they're young - I don't know why, but I never did" - Barrett talking in an interview to *Rolling Stone* Autumn 1971.

Peter Jenner: "I think we tended to underrate the extent of his problem. I mean, I thought that I could act as a mediator - y'know having been a sociology teacher at the LSE and all that guff..."

"I think, though... one thing I regret now was that I made demands on Syd. He'd written "See Emily Play" and suddenly everything had to be seen in commercial terms. I think we may have pressurised him into a state of paranoia about having to come up with another 'hit single'."

"Also we may have been the darlings of London, but out in the suburbs it was fairly terrible. Before 'Emily' we'd have things thrown at us onstage. After 'Emily' it was screaming girls wanting to hear our hit song."

So the Floyd hit the ballroom circuit and Syd was starting to play up.

An American tour was then set up in November - three dates at the Fillmore West in San Francisco and an engagement at LA's Cheetah Club.

Barrett's dishevelled psyche started truly manifesting itself though when the Floyd were forced onto some TV shows. "Dick Clark's Bandstand" was disastrous because it needed a miming job on the band's part and "Syd wasn't into moving

his lips that day."

"The Pat Boone Show" was quite surreal; Boone actually tried to interview Barrett on the screen, asking him particularly inane questions and getting a truly classic catatonic piercing mute stare for an answer.

"Eventually we cancelled out on "Beach Party", says Jenner's partner and tour manager Andrew King.

So there was the return to England and the rest of the Floyd had made the decision. On the one hand, Barrett was the songwriter and central figure - on the other his madness was much too much to handle. He just couldn't be communicated with.

Patience had not been rewarded and the break-away was on the cards.

But not before a final studio session at De Lane Lea took place - a mad anarchic affair which spawned three of Barrett's truly vital twilight rantings. Unfortunately only one has been released.

"Jug Band Blues", the only Barrett track off "Saucerful of Secrets", is as good an explanation as any for Syd not appearing on the rest of the album.

"Y'see, even at that point, Syd actually knew what was happening to him," claims Jenner. "I mean 'Jug Band Blues' is the ultimate self-diagnosis on a state of schizophrenia -".

"It's awfully considerate of you to think of me here,

And I'm most obliged to you for making it clear that I'm not here

And I'm wondering who could be writing this song."

Barrett even had a Salvation Army Band troop in during the middle of the number. The two unreleased numbers (incidentally these, contrary to belief, are the *only* unreleased numbers Barrett has ever recorded) are both unfinished creations - one a masterful splurge of blood-curdling pre-Beefheartian lunacy - "Scream your last Scream"...

"Scream your last Scream / Old Woman with a basket / Wave your arms madly, madly / Flat tops of houses / Houses Mouses / She'll be scrubbing apples on all fours / Middle-dee-tiddle with Dumpy

Mrs. Dee / we'll be watching telly for all hours."

The other, "Vegetable Man," is a crazy sing-along.

"Syd", recalls Jenner, "was around at my house just before he had to go to record and, because a song was needed, he just wrote a description of what he was wearing at the time and threw in a chorus that went 'Vegetable Man - where are you?'"

A nationwide tour of Great Britain followed - Jimi Hendrix, The Move, The Nice and the Floyd on one package - which distanced things out even further. Syd often wouldn't turn up on time, sometimes didn't play at all, sat by himself on the tour-coach.

The rest of the Floyd socialised with The Nice (guitarist David O'List played with the band when Barrett was incapable). But surely the two uncrowned kings of acid-rock - Hendrix and Barrett - must have socialised in some capacity?

"Not really," states Jenner. "Hendrix had his own limousine. Syd didn't really talk to anyone. I mean, by now he was going onstage and playing one chord throughout the set. He was into this thing of total anarchistic experiment and never really considered the other members of the band."

There was also this thing with Syd that the Floyd were 'my band'. Enter Dave Gilmour, not long back from working with various groups in France - an old mate and fair guitar. The implications were obvious.

Jenner: "At the time Dave was doing very effective takeoffs of Hendrix-style guitar-playing. So the band said 'play like Syd Barrett'."

Yeah, but surely Dave Gilmour had his own style - y'know, the slide and echo sound?

"That's Syd. Onstage Syd used to play with slide and a bunch of echo-boxes."

Hmmm.

The Floyd played maybe four gigs with the five-piece and then Barrett was ousted. It was a courageous move - he reacted and everyone seems to agree that it was perfectly warranted. Except,



maybe, Syd.

Jenner: "Yeah, Syd does resent the Floyd, I don't know - he may *still* call them 'my band' for all I know".

From here on in, the whole Barrett saga goes a trifle haywire.

Barrett himself loped off into the back country of Earl's Court to greet the usual freak show, but not before he'd stayed over at South Kensington awhile with Storm.

"Syd was well into his 'orbiting' phase by then. He was travelling very fast in his own private sphere and I thought I could be a mediator of some sort, Y'see, I think you're going to have to make the point that Syd's madness was not caused by any linear progression of events, but more a circular haze of situations that meshed together on top of themselves and Syd, Me, I couldn't handle those stares though!"

By that time, the Floyd and Blackhill Enterprises had parted company, Jenner choosing Barrett as a brighter hope. What happened to the Floyd is history - they survived and flourished off on their own more electronic tangent, while Syd didn't.

"The Madcap Laughs", Barrett's first solo album, took a sporadic but nonetheless laborious year to complete. Production credits constantly changed hands - Peter Jenner to Malcolm Jones (who gave up half the way through), ultimately to Dave Gilmour and Roger Waters.

By this time Barrett's creative processes refused to mesh properly and so the results were often jagged and unapproachable. Basically they were essays in distance - the Madcap waving whimsically out from the haze. Or maybe he was drowning?

"My head kissed the ground / I was half the way down... Please lift a hand / I'm only a person / With Eskimo chain I tattooed my brain all the way / Would you miss me / Oh wouldn't you miss me at all?"

On "Dark Globe" the anguish is all too real.

Many of the tracks though, like "Terrapin", almost just lay there,

scratching themselves in front of you. They exist completely inside their own zone, like wierd insects and exotic fish, the listener looking inside the tank at the activity.

In many ways, "Madcap" is a work of genius - in just as many other ways, it's a cranked-up post-acid curio. It's still a vital, thoroughly unique album for both those reasons.

Jenner: "I think Syd was in good shape when he made 'Madcap'. He was still writing good songs, probably in the same state as he was during 'Jugband Blues'."

Storm: "The thing was that all those guys had to cope with Syd out of his head on Mandrax half the time. He got so 'mandied' up on those sessions, his hand would slip through the strings and he'd fall off the stool."

"Barrett", the second album, was recorded in a much shorter space of time. Dave Gilmour was called in to produce, and brought in Rick Wright and Jerry Shirley, Humble Pie's drummer, to help.

Gilmour: "We had basically three alternatives at that point, working with Syd. One, we could actually work with him in the studio, playing along as he put down his tracks - which was almost impossible, though we succeeded on 'Gigolo Aunt'. The second was laying down some kind of track before and then having him play over it. The third was him putting his basic ideas down with just guitar and vocals and then we'd try and make something out of it all.

"It was mostly a case of me saying 'Well what have you got then Syd?' and he'd search around and eventually work something out."

The Barrett disintegration process continued through this album giving it a feel more akin to that of a one-off demo. The songs, though totally off the wall and often vague creations, are shot through with the occasional sustained glimpse of Barrett's brain-belled lyricism at its most vivid.

Like "Wolfpack", or "Rats", which hurtles along like classic "Trout Mask Replica" Beefheart shambling thunder, with crazed double-edged nonsense lyrics

to boot,

"Rats, Rats / Lay down flat / We don't need you / We act like Cats / If you think you're unloved / Well we know about that."

"Dominoes" is probably the album's most arresting track, as well as being the only real pointer to what the Floyd might have sounded like had Barrett been more in control of himself. The song is exquisite - a classic kind of Lewis Carroll scenario which spirals up and almost defies time and space - "You and I / And Dominoes / A day goes by," - before drifting into an archetypal Floyd minor-chord refrain straight out of "More".

Gilmour: "The song just ended after Syd had finished singing and I wanted a gradual fade so I added that section myself. I played drums on that by the way."

Gilmour by this time had become perhaps the only person around who could communicate with Barrett.

"Oh, I don't think *anyone* can communicate with Syd. I did those albums because I liked the songs, not, as I suppose some might think, because I felt guilty taking his place in the Floyd.

I was concerned that he wouldn't fall completely apart. The final re-mix on 'Madcap' was all mine as well."

In between the two solo albums EMI, Harvest or Morrison had decided to set up a bunch of press-interviews for Barrett, whose style of conversation was scarcely suited to the tailor-made ends of the Media.

Most couldn't make any sense whatsoever out of his verbal ramblings, others tumbled to a conclusion and warily pinpointed the Barrett malady in their pieces. Peter Barnes did one of the interviews.

"It was fairly ludicrous on the surface. I mean, you just had to go along with it all - y'know Syd would say something completely incongruous one minute like 'It's getting heavy, innit' and you'd just have to say 'Yeah, Syd, it's getting heavy,' and the conversation would dwell on *that* for five minutes."

"Actually, listening to the tape afterwards you could work out that there was some kind of logic there - except that Syd would suddenly be answering a question you'd asked him ten minutes ago while you were off on a different topic completely!"

Hmm, maybe a tree fell on him. Anyway another Syd quirk had always been his obsessive tampering with the fine head of black hair that rested firmly on the Barrett cranium. Somewhere along the line, our hero had decided to shave all his lithesome skull appendages down to a sparse grizzle, known appropriately, as the "Borstal crop".

Jenner: "I can't really comment too accurately, but I'm rather tempted to view it as a symbolic gesture. Y'know - goodbye to being a pop-star, or something."

Barrett, by this time, was well slumped into his real twilight period, living in the cellar of his mother's house in Cambridge. And this is where the story gets singularly depressing.

An interview with *Rolling Stone* in the Christmas of '71 showed Barrett to be living out his life with a certain whimsical self-reliance. At one point in the rap, he stated "I'm really totally together. I even think I should be."

Almost exactly a year later, from the sheer frustration of his own inertia, Barrett went temporarily completely haywire and smashed his head through the basement ceiling.

In between these two dates, Syd went into the studios to record.

"It was an abortion", claims Barnes. "He just kept over-dubbing guitar part on guitar part until it was just a total chaotic mess. He also wouldn't show anyone his lyrics - I fear actually because he hadn't written any.

Jenner was also present: "It was horribly frustrating because there were sporadic glimpses of the old Syd coming through, and then it would all get horribly distorted again. Nothing remains from the sessions."

And then there was Stars, a band formed by Twink, ex-drummer of Tomorrow, Pretty Things and Pink Fairies.

Twink was another native of Cambridge, had previously known Barrett marginally well, and somehow dragged the Madcap into forming a band including himself and a bass-player called Jack Monck. It is fairly strongly considered that Barrett was *used* - his legendary reputation present only to enhance what was in effect a shambling, mediocre rock band.

In the meantime, Barrett has been elevated into the position of becoming perhaps the leading mysterioso figure in the whole of rock. Arthur Lee and Brian Wilson are the only other figures who loom large in that echelon of twilight zone notoriety and myth-weaving.

His cult-appeal has reached remarkable proportions in America, to the extent that Capitol Records are finally



The main Stars gig occurred at the Corn Exchange in Cambridge where they were second-billed to the MCS. It was an exercise in total musical untogetherness and, after an hour or so, Barrett unplugged his guitar and sauntered off the stage to return once again to his basement.

Since that time, Syd Barrett may or may not have worked in a factory for a week or so / worked as a gardener / tried to enroll as an architectural student / grown mushrooms in his basement / been a tramp / spent two weeks in New York busking / tried to become a Pink Floyd roadie.

All the above are stories told to me by various semi-authentic sources.

More than likely, most of them are total fabrications. One thing, though appears to be clear; Syd Barrett is unable to write songs ("Either that or he writes songs and won't show them to anyone" - Jenner).

releasing the two Barrett solo albums in a double package, while in countries as diverse as France and Japan, Barrett is a source of fanatical interest.

And then there is the Syd Barrett International Appreciation Society centred in Britain, which puts out magazines, tee-shirts, and buttons. It is unfortunately as trivial as it is fanatical.

"I mentioned the Society to Syd once", states Peter Barnes. "He just said it was OK, y'know. He's really not interested in any of it. It's ironic I suppose - he's much bigger as the silent cult-figure doing nothing than he was when he was functioning."

And still the offers to take Syd back into the studio come in from all manner of illustrious folk. Jimmy Page has long wanted to produce Barrett, Eno has eagerly inquired about such a collaboration. Kevin Ayers has wanted to form a band with the Madcap for ages.

David Bowie is a zealous admirer (his version of "See Emily Play" on "Pinups" will certainly keep Syd financially in adequate stead for a few months.)

"Syd has always said that when he goes back into the studio again he will refuse to have a producer. He still talks about making a third album. I don't know - I think Dave is the only one who could pull it off, there seems to be a relationship there."

The last words are from Dave Gilmour:

"I don't know what Syd thinks or *how* he thinks. Sure, I'd be into going back into the studio with him, but I'm into projects like that anyway. Period." (Muso - Ed!)

"I last saw him around Christmas in Harrod's. We just said 'Hi', y'know. I think actually of all the people you've spoken to, probably only Storm and I really know the whole story and can see it all in the right focus."

"I mean Syd was a strange guy even back in Cambridge. He was a very respected figure back there in his own way."

"In my opinion, it's a family situation that's at the root of it all. His father's death affected him very heavily and his mother always pampered him - made him out to be a genius of sorts. I remember I really started to get worried when I went along to the session for 'See Emily Play'. He was strange even then, that stare, y'know!"

"Yeah, it was fairly obvious that I was brought in to take over from him, at

least on stage... It was impossible to gauge his feelings about it. I don't think Syd has opinions as such. He functions on a totally different plain of logic, and some people will claim, 'Well yeah man he's on a higher cosmic level' - but basically there's something drastically wrong."

"It wasn't just the drugs - we'd both done acid before the whole Floyd thing - it's just a mental foible which grew out of all proportion. I remember all sorts of strange things happening - at one point he was wearing lipstick, dressing in high heels, and believing he had homosexual tendencies. We all felt he should have gone to see a psychiatrist, though someone in fact played an interview he did to R. D. Laing, and Laing claimed he was incurable. What can you do, y'know?"

"We did a couple of songs for 'Ummagumma' - the live tracks - we used 'Jugband Blues' for no ulterior motive - it was just a good song. I mean that 'Nice Pair' collection will see him doing alright for a couple of years, which postpones the day of judgement."

"I dunno - maybe if he was left to his own devices, he might just get it together. But it is a tragedy - a great tragedy because the guy was an innovator. One of the three or four greats along with Dylan."

"I know though that something is wrong because Syd isn't happy, and that really is the criteria, isn't it? But then it's all part of being a 'legend in your own lifetime'."

This essay was written by Nick Kent and originally published in 1974 in the New Musical Express. (Nick Kent now writes for The Face / Arena). Syd Barrett is still alive, but has never recorded again!

Gallic Productions Recommends:

The Pink Floyd - Piper at the Gates of Dawn, Lp, 1967.

- Arnold Layne/See Emily Play/Apples & Oranges, Singles, 1967.

*- BBC Radio session, (featuring Vegetable Man/Pow R Toc H/
Scream your last Scream/Jugband Blues), 1968.*

Syd Barrett - The Madcap Laughs, Lp, 1969.

- Barrett, Lp, 1970.

- Opel, Lp, 1988, (Out-takes etc).

THE FUNKING

SUN RA - As instigator /composer/ arranger of the Arkestra, keyboardist Sun Ra's abilities these past 35 years to concoct heady mixtures of be-bop, free jazz, funk, cosmology and more makes him the ultimate underground avator. Through he has never expanded beyond cult status, Sun Ra's presence in the scheme of things is of undiminished importance. As inspirational touchstone, Sun Ra continues to influence those forever driven by the spirit of adventure.



Sun Ra comes from Saturn.



James Brown rehearsing in 1964.

JAMES BROWN - By whom '50s R&B was grabbed by the very vitals, turned on its head and led kicking and screaming round the perimeter of mainstream '60s soul to play stud to the muthas of the mid-'70s. The question is without James Brown would funk exist as we know it today? Answer if you have to ask you just aint funk'n! After outclassing his R&B contemporaries to become 'Soul Brother No 1', in 1964 JB and his brand new bag of frustrated jazz musicians leapt 'Out of Sight' (the first funk record?) into a decade of idiosyncratic, polyrhythmic extemporisations that, together with Brown's pioneering personal independence, were the blueprint for all who followed. Essential sidemen on his '60s classics ('Papa's Bag', 'Cold Sweat', 'Say It Loud', 'Give It Up Or Turn It Loose' et al) included saxist/arrangers Nat Jones, Alfred 'Pee Wee' Ellis

and Maceo Parker, bassists Bernard Odum & Charles Sherrell and drummers Melvin Parker, John 'Jabo' Starks and Clyde Stubblefield. In 1970 a new younger band - The JB's featuring William 'Bootsy' Collins on bass and brother Phelps on guitar - brought freshly energised force to the funk on hits like 'Sex Machine', 'Super Bad' and 'Soul Power'. Bootsy & Co soon moved on (eventually to George Clinton) and The JB's settled down into a less innovative amalgam of old and new at first led by Maceo and trombonist Fred Wesley until they too split to Clinton. Meanwhile James himself refuses to lose and although no longer the main man is still capable of outfunkin' the best of the rest of 'Good Foot', 'The Payback', 'Get Up Offa That Thing' etc. His 1981 US single, 'Give The Bass Player Some' was among the hardest of that years funk yet it stems from one of his '67 riffs, that's how far ahead of the field he was. During the '80s JB has acheived little success, (apart from the magnificent 'Bring It On') unless being sampled by a million Rappers and collectors turning your back-catalogue into a cult (Rare Groove) is counted as such; he is presently serving a 6 year jail-sentence in a Georgia prison.

JIMI HENDRIX - Jimi Hendrix came out of soul music into rock, blues and beyond; but he played enough music to leave fallout everywhere, to influence everybody from the legion of guitar jackoffs to Miles Davis to the funksters. When - belatedly - he became a hero to black kids as well as white, it was the casual funk accents of his rhythm guitar playing that stuck rather than the soar and grind of his endless soloing. His effortless dandyism and tormented cool left a strong visual impression and - along with Sly - his influence got black music out of the shiny suits and off onto the windy sartorial road.

SOUTHERN SOUL - In many ways the gospel-derived country-inclined southern soul scene was (still is, what's left of it) the antithesis of funk and suffered accordingly as the beat of the street gained prominence. Nevertheless, some of the earliest examples of funk came from below the Mason-Dixon line. Excluding James Brown (who, although a southern artist, had picked up "big city ideas"), the first southern funk forms stemmed from New Orleans, where Allen Toussaint wrote and produced funky hits for Lee Dorsey ('Working In A Coal Mine' etc) and others as early as '66. Two years later, also under Toussaint's direction, The Meters emerged as the most basic, metronomic funk outfit of all time. Up in Memphis, Stax went funky in 1968 with Johnnie Taylor's 'Who's Making Love' leading to the likes of Rufus Thomas ('Do The Funky Chicken / Penguin' etc) and the re-modelled Bar-Kays ('Son Of Shaft' etc). In 1971 Stax also grabbed Jean Knight's 'Mr Big Stuff' from Mississippi, while in the same year Atlantic got Betty Wright's classic 'Clean Up Woman' from Miami's TK outfit, who later brought the world a gang of soft-funk/disco stars, including KC & the Sunshine Band ('Sound Your Funky Horn') and George McCrae ('Rock Your Baby'). Throughout the late '60s/early '70s there were many more examples of the south recognising the funk (the previously-gospel-styled soul preacher Joe Tex's hit 'I Gotcha' for instance) but generally speaking the confederate south opted out of, or has been excluded from, the Funk Union.



SLY & THE FAMILY STONE - One of the instigators of funk, Sly Stone - aka Sylvester Stewart - emerged in the late '60s with his Family Stone and immediately served notice of a profound originality with 'Dance To The Music', a driving mixture of hard soul riffs and West Coast psychedelic exuberance. The band pursued the formula with dazzling success into the '70s, steamrolling racial and musical barriers and establishing Sly as a new breed of young American Black alongside Hendrix. Even a steady disintegration into cocaine lethargy and paranoia was turned into great music on 'There's A Riot Going On' and 'Fresh' though by the mid '70s Sly had gone too far down for the up stroke and slid steadily into obtuseness and forced exuberance that mocked his earlier triumphs, as did a late-70s attempt to 'disco-ise' his hits. His influence, however, is everywhere, from the bold bassline to the surefire brass and chorus exchanges, from the slinky vocals to the sassy superdude persona. No-one has yet surpassed the man at his former zenith! (Rumour has it that Prince is recording Sly at the moment!)

TAMLA MOTOWN - Though the might of the Motown hit machine was somewhat diminished by the turn of the decade, producer Norman Whitfield continued to uphold its reputation for innovation with a string of superlative hits with The Temptations ('Cloud Nine', 'Papa Was A Rolling Stone' etc), Edwin Starr ('War'), The Undisputed Truth ('Smiling Faces Sometimes') and others. Combining more intricate versions of the TM '60s rhythms, powerful arrangements, and technically outstanding production, Whitfield's influence on funk and soul was immediate and far-reaching and certainly few of the Motown artists remained uninfluenced. As the '70s progressed the majority of Motown artists - like Diana Ross - disappeared into mainstream pop.

THE ISLEY BROTHERS - After gospel, the twist and Motown, the heavyweight trio of '60s soul etched a funk landmark with 'It's Your Thing' in '69 and repeated the feat in '73 with their dazzling '3+3', cleverly adding a surrogate Hendrix guitar from bro' Ernie to their vocal power.

MARVIN GAYE - Gaye's metamorphosis from slick soul crooner to conscience stricken introvert on the timeless 'What's Going On' epitomised the shift in black awareness in the early '70s and introduced a more reflective subtle style to the music whose resonance is still felt today.

CURTIS MAYFIELD - After pioneering the sound of '60s soul with The Impressions, Mayfield went solo in 1970 and immediately set new standards for the '70s with 'Move On Up'. His style over the next few years - particularly on the 'Superfly' film soundtrack with its effective integration of hard rhythm and lush orchestration - was never far from the surface of contemporary black music.

ISAAC HAYES - Helped originate the overblown orchestral style of the early '70s; more notably introduced the overweight over the top sex/chains/macho theatric since ripped off by everyone from Clinton to the Village People. Has also written every TV cop show theme since 'Shaft'. Honest

KOOL & THE GANG - The first band to blow a whistle on wax as they took the US by storm with 'Funky Stuff' and 'The Bump' became the dance to do. Previously their heavy jazz rock leanings had denied them commercial success. They continued to put their creative side across on albums that contained and were sold by their dance hall boogies. Were hit very hard by the disco boom.

THE JACKSON 5 - Are 'ABC' and 'I Want You Back' funk? Is a Cadillac an economical car? As funky pop goes, the Jackson 5 came and went, everyones favourite family, the sane response to Osmondmania.

PHILADELPHIA - Though the Gamble/Huff Philly sound was content with flying cymbal and a dull 4/4 rhythm for the most part, its outings with the O'Jays on 'Backstabbers', 'Love Train' and especially 'For The Love Of Money' provided some of the highspots of orchestral funk and put ideas into countless disco (and house) producers' heads.

STEVIE WONDER - Innovation was rife in the early '70s but 'Music Of My Mind', 'Talking Book' and 'Innervisions' were still stunningly different from most everything else. The influence of the latter two albums - in particular, the singles 'Superstition' and 'Living For The City' - was enormous, and Stevie has probably funkcd more straight households than any other individual alive. In production, lyrical scope and technical innovation (particularly the now ubiquitous clavinet), this man has done wonders.

OHIO PLAYERS - Born out of mainstream '60s soul via James Brown and Funkadelic (with whom they were early label-mates), the Players first grabbed attention in the early '70s with a startling line in sado-masochistic artwork and profunky recordings 'Pain', 'Pleasure' & 'Ecstasy'; hit the big time in '74 with full funk 'Skin Tight' and 'Fire'; then slowly eased their way into spaced-out oblivion.

THE LAST POETS - Forerunners of the current rapping craze, these four militant black consciousness poets first gained notoriety with their 'Niggers Are Scared Of Revolution' and went on to produce several albums of innovative if erratic brilliance.

FATBACK BAND - Probably the NY 'street music' originals and certainly the only ones to carry it through to today. First hit big with 'Nija Walk' and 'Street Dance' and continued via 'Wicky Wacky' and 'Keep On Stepping' into 'I Gotta Get My Hands On Some (Money)' in 1980. In the early days, they laid claim to inviting bunches of neighbourhood kids into the studio with them "for hand claps, vocals and to generally create a party atmosphere". As we're sure you all know, they were rapping six months before the Sugarhill Gang with 'King Tim III (Personality Jock)'.

GIORGIO MORODER - An Italian studio technician who claims to have invented Disco while working in Munich! (He actually ripped the ideas of from Kraftwerk, Can, Faust etc). "One of the biggest problems with American R&B before disco was that you had to be a good dancer to dance to it. It was too complex for many white people. We simplified it. We started by emphasising the bass line - I think 'Love to Love You' was the first song with a bass drum played 1-2-3-4 all through."

PARLIAMENT/FUNKADELIC - "As it is written henceforth, . . . that on the eighth day, the cosmic strumpet of Mother Nature was spawned to envelope this third planet in FUNKACIDAL VIBRATIONS. And she birthed apostles Ra, Hendrix, Stone and Clinton to preserve all funkiness of man unto eternity. . . But! Fraudulent forces of obnoxious JIVATION grew; Sun Ra strobed back to Saturn to await his next reincarnation; Jimi was forced back into basic atoms; Sly was co-opted into a jester monolith and, . . . only the seedling GEORGE remained! And the followers of FUNKADELIA multiplied incessantly."

(Cover notes: "Standing On The Verge Of Getting Up".) They multiplied into Bootsy's Rubber Band, The Sweat Band, The Brides Of Funkenstein, Parlet, The Horny Horns, Phillippe Wynne, Bernie Worrell and, of course, Parliament/Funkadelic. After the mothership touched down in '76, George Clinton assumed responsibility for the future of funk (check 'Up For The Downstroke', 'Chocolate City' etc) expanding it into a state of mind/way of life rather than merely music. To offer an alternative to the sterility of disco he flooded the market with various forms of acid inspired subversion. He has influenced many but eventually lost his grip as self-indulgence whittled away at his originality. (Rumour has it that Prince has also recently been recording Clinton).



Mr George Clinton (Funk Apostle).

DAVID BOWIE - Rock and science fiction exhausted, Bowie turned to black America (Philly's Sigma Studios) for the inspiration for 'Young Americans' and 'Fame' and was duly rewarded commercially. Subsequent late '70s lps continued to feed off the funk carcass.

DONNA SUMMER - Quickly surpassed Gloria Gaynor to become sweetheart of the disco, thanks to Moroder's production techniques and her self-parodying role as aural sex aid.

NORMAN WHITFIELD - Having parted company with Motown, the '70s producer par excellence set about carving himself an empire of his own. Working with the adaptable Rose Royce, he quickly established a new accessible soft soul subsequently widely emulated and hugely successful on sides like 'Love Don't Live Here Anymore'.

SATURDAY NIGHT FEVER - What the word 'Disco' conveyed to most of the world's population was Travolta in white suit strutting to The Bee Gees in 'Saturday Night Fever' - white boy as black ace face in superpimp threads. (Actually based on a Nik Cohn story about mods in Shepherd's Bush in 1964). The movie was enormously popular but Disco as a musical force never recovered its momentum and quickly spiralled downwards in a parody of its consumerist self. Gloria Gaynor ('I Will Survive') and Sylvester ('Mighty Real') had some of the best of disco sides and the Village People sold Disco's gay New York origins to the straight world before sinking beneath the waves.

THE CHIC CLIQUE - In which already successful backroom writer/singer musicians find their own thang and thrust themselves into the limelight. With Disco providing the opportunity and muscular beat, and perhaps Brothers Johnson's breakout being the inspiration, in '78 and '79 from out the studios came Nile Rodgers and Bernard Edwards as Chic and McFaddon and Whitehead as themselves. Between them they cut some of the more memorable hits of the era but didn't dramatically affect the flow of the funk.

MICHAEL JACKSON - Whereas Jermaine's and Jackie's solo outings appealed only to desperate JS fans, and musically just satisfied the artists' DIY instinct, Michael Jackson - always the group's focus - achieved such an overwhelming success with 'Off The Wall' that he pointedly exposed just how expendable the brothers were. 'Off The Wall' was as near a perfect album as you can get, produced by the ever-busy Quincy Jones, and providing the charts with five hit singles. Michael Jackson has one of the greatest voice in funk - a swooping, sensuous falsetto. In 1982 he cut one of the all-time funk classics; 'Billie Jean' but since then has been slipping into madness, reclusion and self-parody.

TALKING HEADS - David Byrne's early songs itched and twisted and cried out for funk rhythms, which is what they got as Byrne and Eno proudly announced the discovery of Africa to the world and expanded T Heads to a ten-piece band with the addition of a variety of funk celebs including Bernie Worrell, whose credentials (James Brown, Parlyfunkadelicament) were impeccable. By the mid-'80s they had grown tedious and become the property of the bourgeois record-buyer.

GRACE JONES - A fashion model in the Donyale Luna school, Jones managed to transcend initial scepticism with the cleverly produced 'Warm Leatherette', which welded funk styles with reggae rockers rhythms courtesy the ingenious Sly'n'Robbie powerhouse, and fronted it with '80s deadpan seriousness. (Vocal chords were always a limitation). 'Pull Up To The Bumper' (1981) was, however one of the greatest odes to sodomy ever written.

KID CREOLE & THE COCONUTS - Little new in the Salsa/Latin school was achieved until the emergence, towards the tail-end of 1976, of Canadian-born August Darnell's Dr Buzzard's Original Savannah Band. The Visuals were a combination of '30s elegance and '70s pimp flash, the music was a concoction of latin rhythms, big band swing, soul saes and disco dash. Having undergone a drastic streamlining, Darnell manifested as Kid Creole & The Coconuts with a circus of idiosyncratic celebrities like Cristina and Coati Mundi. Early records like 'There But For The Grace Of God Go I' and 'Me No Pop I' were loaded with good ideas but sadly the whole thing faded away by the mid-80s into bad pop.

JAMES CHANCE - Rose to prominence in post punk New York City on a heady mixture of aggression (attacking audiences), borrowed visuals (modelling himself on the look of the '50s jazzers), notoriety, opportunism and talent. Chance has claimed affinity with black giants like James Brown, Charlie Parker and certainly never balked from using their extensive heritage to his own ends, adding a tortured dementia of his own on sides like 'Contort Yourself'. Has been variously James Chance and the Contortions and James White and the Blacks. In 1980 his backing band left to become Defunkt (more jazz-based but still funky),

while Chance himself quit Ze Records. Extremely influential but artistically erratic he disappeared during the mid-'80s.

THE POST-PUNKS - With a new spirit abroad in Black American music after several fallow years - and a parallel downturn in the inventiveness and optimism of rock - a declared interest in and borrowing from funk were inevitable. The ever eclectic Pop Group (and later Rip Rig and Panic) had been among the first (though they took as much or more from straight jazz); A Certain Ratio were also among the first to co-opt funk rhythms, although they later lost it completely. Among the other white British bands to declare themselves 'funk' were Spandau Ballet, whose plodding beat was a parody of the real thing; Stimulin; 23 Skidoo; Pigbag; Fire Engines (who took their cue and very near their entire first record from James Chance); and Funkapolitan, Britain's first rapping outfit. Mostly though these bands only offered an underground alternative.

LINX & JNR GISCOMBE - After innumerable false starts, the emergence of Linx ('Intuition') and Junior Giscombe ('Mama Used To Say') offered British pop-funk a genuine maturity. As Britain has no heritage of black radio, Linx masterminds Sketch and David Grant were directly influenced by '60s British pop, Motown and Stax to an extent that saved them from joining their contemporaries in slavish imitations of current Stateside stylings. Unfortunately they faded into obscurity nearly as soon as they had started.

RICK JAMES - Former Motown session bassist who cut loose with his own thing on 'You And I' and updated the Sly Stone west coast cool cat persona into something he touchingly dubbed 'Punk Funk'. Defeated in the '80s by Prince who just happened to be following a similar idea.

WHITE FUNK - This odd hybrid hit the charts during the 1981/82 period, ABC (with their massive 'Lexicon Of Love' Lp), The Jam, Scritti Politti, Culture Club and Wham were all to some extent fuelled by the funk; since that time many chart bands of the '80s have had a funky element to their often extremely bland work.

PRINCE - First popping up in the late '70s, Prince effectively won his war with Rick James by introducing large chunks of mid-American rock to his 'Punk Funk' especially on 'Little Red Corvette' and the 'Purple Rain' Lp. Image-wise he incorporated the high points of black pop: James Brown's dancing and control, Sly's 'flash', Clinton's funk, Hendrix's guitar-soloing and Little Richard's effeteness. As his success has grown he has taken more risks, by the mid-'80s cutting superb post-Sly funk: 'Kiss', 'Sign Of The Times' and 'Alphabet Street'. For my money some of his most radical work is



His Purpleness.

to be found on the un-released 'Black Album' (1987). Prince, however, cannot be tied down to pure funk and not all his other influences are quite so exciting.

RAPPING - Sly Stone was rapping on San Francisco radio in 1961, but it didn't achieve any international significance for another eighteen years. It is the second coming of street funk when, by means of Rupert the Bear style rhyming couplets, the likes of Grandmaster Flash, Sugarhill and Kurtis Blow landed the ghetto's boot squarely back in the establishment's groin. Kurtis Blow explains: "Deejays had to keep the crowd rocking and keep their own shows individual, but the music was so bland that people couldn't identify with it anymore. So we started talking in time to the beat to make things a bit different. Plus, middle America was taking over soul music, but they couldn't understand rapping so that made it our gain."

This essay was originally written by Neil Spencer, Roy Carr, Cliff White and Lloyd Bradley and published in wall-chart-form in the New Musical Express in 1981. I have adapted it somewhat, hopefully removing what was boring and adding some ideas of my own.

In 'Leaving the 80's #4' we will provide a similar notation on the history of rap, house and Prince during the last decade.

Discography:

James Brown - Solid Gold Lp Money Won't Change You / I Can't Stand Myself / Licking Stick / Ain't it Funky Now / Body Heat / It's Too Funky In Here / Rapp Payback / Bring It On singles, The JB's - Pass the Peas / Hot Pants Road / Doing It To Death singles, Sly and The Family Stone - Stand / There's a Riot Going On / Fresh Lps Dance to the Music / M'Lady / Thank You Falletimme Be Mice Elf Again / Everybody is a Star, singles, Parliament - Mothership Connection / The Clones of Dr Funkenstein Lps Up For the Downstroke / Chocolate City, singles, Funkadelic - One Nation Under a Groove, single, Bootsy's Rubber Band - Stretchin' Out / AHH The Name is Bootsy, Baby, Lps, Lee Dorsey - Get Out of my Life Woman / Working in a Coal Mine / Everthing I Do Gonh Be Funky / Give It Up, singles, The Bar Kays - Soul Finger, single, The Meters - Sophisticated Sissy / Cissy Strut, Isaac Hayes - Shaft, single, The Staples Singers - Respect Yourself / I'll Take You There, singles, Marvin Gaye - What's Going On / Let's Get It On Lps I Heard it through the Grapevine, single, The Temptations - Cloud Nine / Psychedelic Shack / Ball of Confusion / Papa Was a Rolling Stone, singles, Undisputed Truth - Smiling Faces Sometimes / You + Me = Love, singles, Edwin Starr - War, single, The Jackson 5 - ABC / I Want You Back, singles, Johnnie Taylor - Who's making Love, single, Betty Wright - Clean Up Woman, single, Joe Tex - I Gotcha / Ain't Gonna Bomp No More (with No Big Fat Woman), singles, The Isley Brothers - 3+3 Lp It's Your Thing, single, Stevie Wonder - Talking Book / Innervisions Lps, Curtis Mayfield - Super Fly Lp / Move On Up, single, The Last Poets - The Last Poets / This is Madness Lps, Maceo and the Macks - 'Cross the Tracks, single, The O Jays - Backstabbers / Love Train / For the Love of Money, singles, Ohio Players - Funky Worm / Skin Tight, singles, Harold Melvin & The Bluenotes - The Love I Lost, single, Timmy Thomas - Why Can't We Live Together, single, Bohannon - Dance Your Ass Off Lp Keep on Dancing / South African Man, singles, FatBack Band - Nija Walk / Street Dance / Wicky Wacky / Keep On Steppin', singles, The Hues Corporation - Don't Rock the Boat, single, George McCrae - Rock Your Baby, single, Gil Scott Heron - The Revolution Will Not be Televised Lp The Bottle / Johannesburg, singles, Rose Royce - Car Wash, single, Gloria Gaynor - I Will Survive, single, Sylvester - Mighty Real, Rick James - You and I, single, Chic - Good Times, single, Evelyn Champagne King - Shame, single, McFadden and Whitehead - Ain't No Stopping Us Now, single, Michael Jackson - Off the Wall Lp, Billie Jean, single, Linx - Intuition, single, Jnr Giscoombe - Mama Used To Say, single, Was (Not) Was - Out Come The Freaks, single, Grace Jones - NightClubbing, Lp, Defunkt - ThermoNuclear Sweat, Lp.

CAN YOU ?

How can you begin to write about and give opinions on music that you've not heard in its entirety?

Such is the problem with CAN. Even the glorious *You Doo Right* which lasts for twenty minutes is only a section of a longer recording edited so as to fit on one side of an lp. To get more than just a glimpse of what CAN were about you 'had to be there'.

The most important thing about CAN is RHYTHM. Rhythm is what makes it possible to improvise for 45 minutes, rhythm is what makes such improvisations listenable.

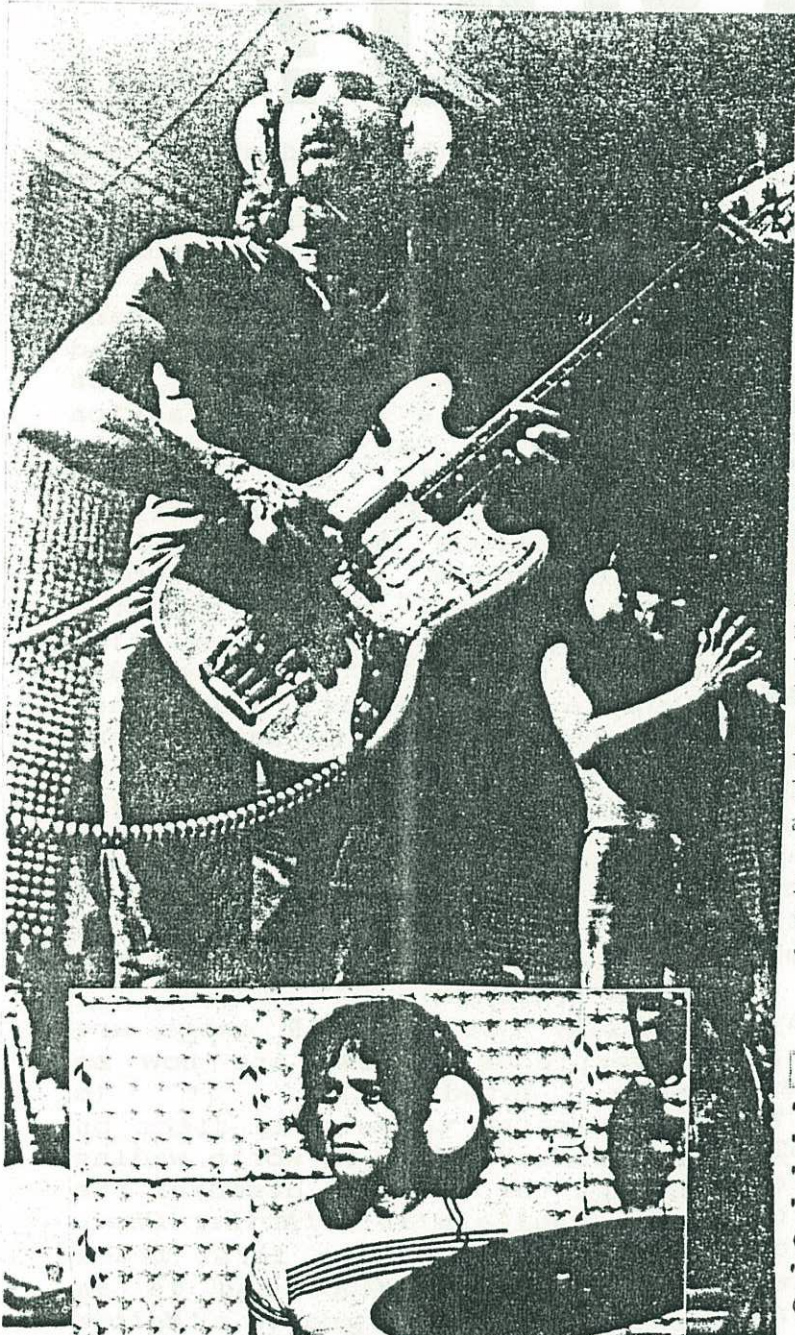
The rhythmic backbone of CAN was provided by Holger Czukay and Jaki Liebezeit with guitar by Michael Karoli and organ by Irmin Schmidt. Between them they managed to create a sound that defies description. The perfect marriage of simplicity with complicity that manages to fool you every time.

From an early age Holger Czukay was interested in electronics, teaching himself how radios and tvs worked by taking them apart and reassembling them. In 1962 Czukay learned to play the double bass, his tutor was soloist in the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra. That year also saw him expelled from the Berlin Music Academy where he was studying. He went on to study composition with Stockhausen at Darmstadt. In 1968 the founding members of CAN met in Cologne and 'began without any concept, our only concept was to find a concept in making music altogether spontaneously, in a collective way and without any leader.' Czukay chose to play bass guitar because he believed that no one really listened to what the bass player did. Jaki

Liebezeit had been a drummer in a free-jazz outfit before playing with CAN and this along with his long studies of ethnic musics helped him to develop a style at once both primitive and brand new.

Czukay's bass and Liebezeit's rhythms mesh perfectly in a hypnotic fashion that gave CAN their truly original sound. The best CAN songs are long, repetitive improvisations based around a simple rhythm that develops, expanding yet never becoming anything other than a variation on the original. The bass and drums are one entity and cannot be separated, as the music grows and builds a simple tight cymbal crash drags the music onto yet another level which becomes the foundation for another build and so it continues. This sort of music should be unending and it is always with regret that the track finishes.

Sadly not all CAN songs are masterpieces. Some are now so badly dated that it is embarrassing to put the discs on the turntable but is worth wading through the trash to discover the gems: 'Hallelujah', 'Mother Sky', 'You Doo Right'. The first track is from 'TAGO MAGO' and is an up-tempo rhythmic groove. 'Mother Sky' is from the 'CAN SOUNTRACKS' lp and was originally music for the film 'Deep End'. It suffers from some rather appalling lead licks and breaks but the backbone is sound. 'You Doo Right' is CAN epitomised. A twenty minute section of a longer piece that is without doubt a masterpiece. The constant pounding rhythm from the drums and the insistent bass combine magically with timing as perfect as a drum machine but with an instinctive feel that no



electronic device could match.

CAN vocals were provided by several individuals; the American Malcolm Mooney, Damo Suzuki and Reebop Kwaku Baah as well as the musicians themselves. The lyrics to most of the songs are pretty pointless and beside the point. CAN was not strong in this field but then that didn't matter. CAN were all about music, music with rhythm, rhythm that is repetitive, repetition that is unending. This was provided not by the vocalists nor by the (sometimes dodgy) soloists but by the perfect marriage of drums and bass guitar provided by Czukay and Liebezeit who for me are CAN.

Listening through the feet is far better than listening through the ears

- Holger Czukay

DISCOGRAPHY

- 'Monster Movie' 1969.
- 'Soundtracks' 1970.
- 'Tago Mago' 1971.
- 'UnLimited Edition' 1976.
(compilation).
- 'Prehistoric Future' 1984.
(cass only '68 first gig).

Related Musics:

- Faust - 'Faust' 1971.
- 'Faust So Far' 1972.
- Neu - 'Neu 75' 1975.
- Public Image Ltd - 'Metal Box' 1979.
- Asterix & the Gauls - 'Everything'
('Blindness' & 'Vulnerability') 1986.

There is very little written material on Can - 'The Can Book' by Pascal Bussy & Andy Hall. 'Germany Calling' essay in the NME '72 by Ian McDonald. 'Deutsch Nepal' essay in 'Strange Things are Happening' '88 by Armstrong Whitworth.

'the lexicon of love'



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It is always hard to judge classics like ABC's 'The Lexicon of Love', maybe the fact that I have fallen asleep to it for the past year is enough. It was the second album I ever bought, the first being 'London Calling' by The Clash. By my mid-teens it had been relegated to the record-case replaced by various psychedelic groups ie: The Electric Prunes, The Seeds, The Misunderstood. Yes, in those days I was an out and out hippy, I grew my hair as long as I could get away with at school. By sixteen I was introduced to the Velvet Underground and Captain Beefheart, it was not until eighteen, when I thought I was in love that 'The Lexicon of Love' was dusted down and put back on the turn-table, it's never left the vicinity since. I have listened to it at least once a day, usually the second side and it has never bored me yet. 'The Lexicon of Love' is personal, that is the essence of it's perfection, it's beauty is that it can relate to everybody individually.

Onto a more detailed analysis of the album it combines funk with orchestration with pop music, not many albums could boast that! What's more you are not left confused by the mass of instruments, rather the whole scene seems crystal clear and simple. This album is a work of pure genius, just as much as the Art we hoard and keep safely in public or private buildings. Martin Fry's vocals are delightful, coupled with the use of strings they have the power to steer your emotions, to raise or subdue you.

One particular song on side two - 'All of my Heart' is a fine example. This was the song I found myself returning to again and again when I thought I was in love, lyrics such as: *"The Stars collide if you decide"*, say it all. They may look corny or over-romantic on paper but not in context, this is unique to this album, cliches seem to work as fine prose, no other love album and very few love songs (Hey what about Smokey Robinson - Ed) have ever reached the same heights. The 'Lexicon of Love' is the definitive Romantic album, it can not fail unless you are totally senseless:

"And then my friends just might ask me, they say 'Martin maybe one day you'll find true love', Ah! I say 'Maybe' but there must be a solution to the one thing, the one thing ... you can't find." ('The Look of Love')

The vitality or the despair, the joy, the depression, it's all there, all the feelings one experiences to make this album deeply personal but with one important condition it's love about women, I can't comment on how a woman would view this album, all I can say is that if any lover was like this album she would be head over heels in love with him.

To finish off, not since Marc Bolan and T Rex ('Metal Guru', 'Children of the Revolution' etc) have strings been used to such an effect in what are essentially pop songs. The bass and guitar play in perfect harmony with an overriding funky feel. My only advice is to buy it, you can pick it up second-hand for less than a fiver, well worth it for the doors it will open up for you.

Davey Henderson

Meat For Sale: (left to right) Graham Main, Russell Burns, Murray Slade, David Henderson.



FIRE ENGINES; SINGLES.

- Dec 1980 - Get up and Use Me/Everything's Roses.....Codex CDX 1
- May 1981 - Candy Skin/Meat Whiplash.....Pop Aural POP 010
- Nov 1981 - Big Gold Dream/New things in Cartoons/Sympathetic Anaesthetic.....12" Pop Aural POP 01312

ALBUM.

- Feb 1981 - Lubricate Your Living Room (Background Music For Active People)
Plastic Gift/Get Up and Use Me/Sympathetic Anaesthetic/Dischord/New
Things In Cartoons/Hungry Beat/Lubricate Your Living Room parts 1 & 2....Accessory ACC 001

HEARTBEAT:

- 1982 - one track; 'Spook Sex' on NHE's Racket Packet compilation cassette.

WIN; SINGLES.

- Feb 1985 - Unamerican Broadcasting (part One)/Unamerican Broadcasting (part Two)...Swamplands SWX 5 12"
- June 1985 - You've got the Power/Unamerican Broadcasting/In Heaven (Lady In The
Radiator Song).....Swamplands SWX 8 12"

- Mar 1986 - Shampoo Town/Shampoo Town (dub)/Empty Holsters/The Slider.....12" London LONX 85

ALBUMS.

- Mar 1987 - Uh! Tears Baby - A Trash Icon
Super Popoid Groove/Shampoo Tears/Binding Love Spell/Unamerican
Broadcasting/Hollywood Bob Too/Empty Holsters/You've Got the Power/
Charms of Powerful Trouble/It May Be A Beautiful Sky Tonight But It's
Only A Shelter For A World At Risk/Charms (reprise)/Baby Cutting.....Lawan LONLP 31
- Mar 1989 - Freaky Trigger
What'll You Do Til' Sunday Baby/Taboo/Love Units/Rainbow/Truckee
River/How Do You Do/What's Love If You Can Kill For Chocolate/Mind
The Gravy/Dusty Heartfelt/We Could Cover Up The 'C'.....Virgin V2571

OFF A POLLOCK LOAD SKCO?



Jackson Pollock was an individualist and an artist not caught in any particular time period. As a painter he transcended the narrow limits of nationality and to a certain extent 'movements'. He refused to exhibit in the Surrealist Exhibition of 1941 although Matta tried hard to persuade him, he was not favourable of group activities on the whole, they were too restricting. The dilemma of the Modern Movement was that in trying to obtain freedom it had reintroduced a different type of dogma that was just as restricting. The concept of the 'manifesto' is the concept of 'rules', shown at its most ridiculous with Andre Breton adopting the self appointed position of spiritual leader over other mens 'free' spontaneous, subconscious thought, this insistence on movement and manifesto caused the eventual disintegration of the Surrealist party as a whole; who could hope to bind into a logical movement a subconscious entity? Although Pollock is always associated with Abstract Expressionism it is important to realise that this was not a movement as such but a concept. No manifestos, no special aim heralded apart from abstract freedom and no one leader. If one goes along to the Tate gallery and actually sees the Abstract Expressionist paintings together one fact stands out beyond all else, their individuality. Not one Pollock, Motherwell, Newman or Rothko is similar to another.

Pollock was born on the 28th January 1912 in Cody, Wyoming, the fifth and youngest son of Stella and Leroy Pollock. Always a rebellious youth Jackson was hostile to institutional constraint, expelled in 1927 from Riverside High School and again in 1928 from Manual Arts, for publishing a *'Journal Of Liberty'* with his friends, Guston and Tolegian, a quote from which follows:

"...the consequent degradation of scholarship. Instead of yelling 'hit that line', we should say 'make that grade', Give those letters to our scholars, our artists, our musicians instead of animated examples of physical prowess."

The fact that Pollock was expelled for such a statement is a reflection of the society he was brought up in. America was still deeply conservative, prohibition, a shining example of Puritanism in action. At the turn of the century, American art institutions were academically-based and relatively ignorant of contemporary Art in Europe; in New York the avant-garde barely existed. The 1913 Armory Show exhibited modernist theory but little practical notice was taken, and those painters that did acknowledge it were usually more content to explore the 'look' of modernism than the logic behind it. There was a definite reactionary feel from American artists especially by the Regionalists who felt that isolation from European ideas was their only salvation. This was in no way peculiar to Art, it extended to wider issues, for instance the 1st and to some extent 2nd World Wars.

It was into just such an environment Pollock entered in the early Thirties when he registered to the 'Art Student League'. He was taught by Thomas Hart Benton who stated that he, himself had been saved from the monster modernism. Benton became very influential on the young impressionable Pollock, even though later, he served as something to rebel against. The paintings stemming from this period are very 'Regionalist' in tone, for example; *'Camp With Dil Rig'* 1930-33.

Jackson left the Arts Students League in 1933 at a time when the Depression was at it's height, unemployment running at 25%. Very important to his development was the foundation of the 'Works Progress Administration' in 1933 and the 'American Artists Congress' in 1934. These institutions were unique to America, they were state run for social activities, for instance; Public Murals etc. Most of the Arts were represented, music, theatre and the artist were given security via a monthly wage. These new institutions were founded on solid social principles and were a fine example of social theory in action, very similar to the NHS in England. It gave new identity to young artists, a new 'social significance' and unity to a rapidly developing Art world in New York. Pollock joined a section of the Works Progress Administrations, the 'Federal Arts Project', firstly to work in the mural division in 1935 and then the easel division in 1936. Although control was still exercised experimentation was condoned and Pollock joined the experimental workshop set up by Siqueiros near Union Square in 1936. Here use of new materials was encouraged along with new techniques. The use of spray guns, airbrushes, latent synthetic paints, lacquers, the notion of the 'controlled accident' and the direct-spontaneous application of paint were all investigated. This workshop was crucial to Pollock's later development.

New York in the Thirties had two exhibitions at the recently established Museum Of Modern Art (MOMA), that could not fail to influence young artists at the time. These were *'Cubism and Abstract Art'* and *'Fantastic Art; Dada and Surrealism'* both in 1936. Here the most revolutionary and radical concepts that had occurred in early Twentieth century were represented. Pollock immediately started to analyse Cubist and Surrealist thought, for a young painter of the Thirties it was essential that he or she was conversant with the implications of these two 'movements'.

Picasso's *'Damoiselles D'avignon'* in 1907 established that ideals had been broken down. In analytical Cubism, Picasso and Braque continued to revise traditional ideas of space. Ever since the Renaissance, painters had adopted 'one-point-perspective', a painting should be like a view through a window. Representation in Art was beginning to seem inadequate with the advent of Photography. Art was trying to re-value it's place. Picasso, especially by the late

Thirties had discovered more expressive potentialities of the human figure based on complete freedom to re-order the human image and thus the evocation of unexpressed states of mind. This aspect influenced Pollock to an extent in the late Thirties, we can see that he well conversant with Picasso's Minotaur images and even painted certain Picassoid figures ie 'Naked Man' 1938-41. It was radical re-evaluation of space that I feel influenced Pollock a lot more in his great paintings of 1947-50; during the late Thirties he found it hard to break away from Picasso's immense influence on Art. A French critic of 1912, Jacques Riviere describes exceedingly well the theory behind Cubist space. In his article 'Present Tendencies in Painting' he states that perspective must be eliminated;

"It is the sign, not of a particular moment in time, but of a particular position in space. It indicates not the situation of the objects, but the situation of the spectator."

In reality, we can change position giving an over-all idea of an object; to demonstrate this in painting, the Cubists invented multi-viewpoints. Riviere believed an object should be shown at it's most revealing angle, he even criticised Cubism for being too ready to show all the faces of an object, giving the appearance of an unfolding map, subtlety was extremely important. Riviere believed depth should be expressed in a subtle and visible recession accompanying the object;

"...he will make all the edges of an object into starting points for gentle planes of shadow that will recede towards more distant objects."

Thus giving transitional space and depth while not impairing the essence of an object.

Light was very important as an element of space. It is via light that we can place objects in space, traditionally by shadows and highlights. Riviere states lighting should be eliminated since it is also the sign of a particular instant and changes profoundly the objects themselves. He recognises though that the Cubists renounce only the direction of light but not light itself, instead a more subtle and equal distribution is given. These are some of the principles behind Cubist thought, mainly based in analytical Cubism up to 1912. It was the implications of such thought that Pollock had to review. In his paintings of the late Thirties we can see aspects of modern thought. Firstly he recognises the two dimensional quality of the canvas, just as the Cubists did, this quality never left his work. At this time Pollock was still not ready to totally enter abstraction and leave figuration behind. Clement Greenburg states that painters of the period could not depart completely from Cubism, it was unthinkable, the answer still had to come from Paris. It was important, however, for Pollock to work through Cubism and learn to use it's grip on the picture plane, dismantling of illusion and loosening of fixed form.

It is arguable that just such an answer came from the Surrealist notion of 'automatism'; the importance of the sub-conscious freedom. This side of Surrealist theory was explored

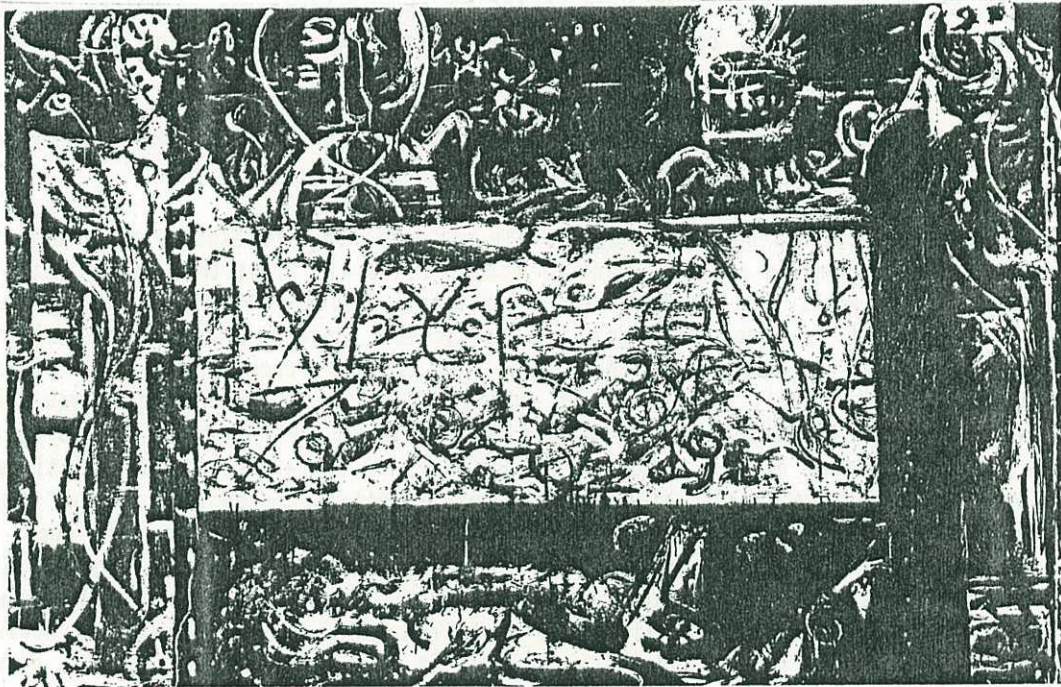


'No 1A'. (1948).

primarily by Andre Masson and Joan Miro. Due to the 2nd World War a large exodus of artists from Europe to New York was in progress, Joan Miro was one of those artists. More importantly exhibitions by both these artists were held annually at the Pierre Matisse Gallery. In the late Thirties Surrealist imagery began to appear in Pollock's work, especially the eye motif; the point where reality and the inner-mind connect. [Right on, man - Ed] In the early Forties his subject matter was decidedly mystic (another Surrealist reference point). In 1942 Pollock executed three paintings which constituted his arrival as a major force, 'The Moon Woman', 'Male And Female' and 'Stenographic Figure'. 'The Moon Woman' acted as an autonomous zone for painterly markings, in fact during this period Pollock devised his own personal markings as a development of his subconscious.

Success finally began to appear at his first 'one man show' in 1943 at the Peggy Guggenheim Gallery, where one painting caught the critic, Clement Greenburg's eye, this was 'The Guardian's of the Secret' and he wrote that it was:

"...between the intensity of the easel picture and blandness of the mural."

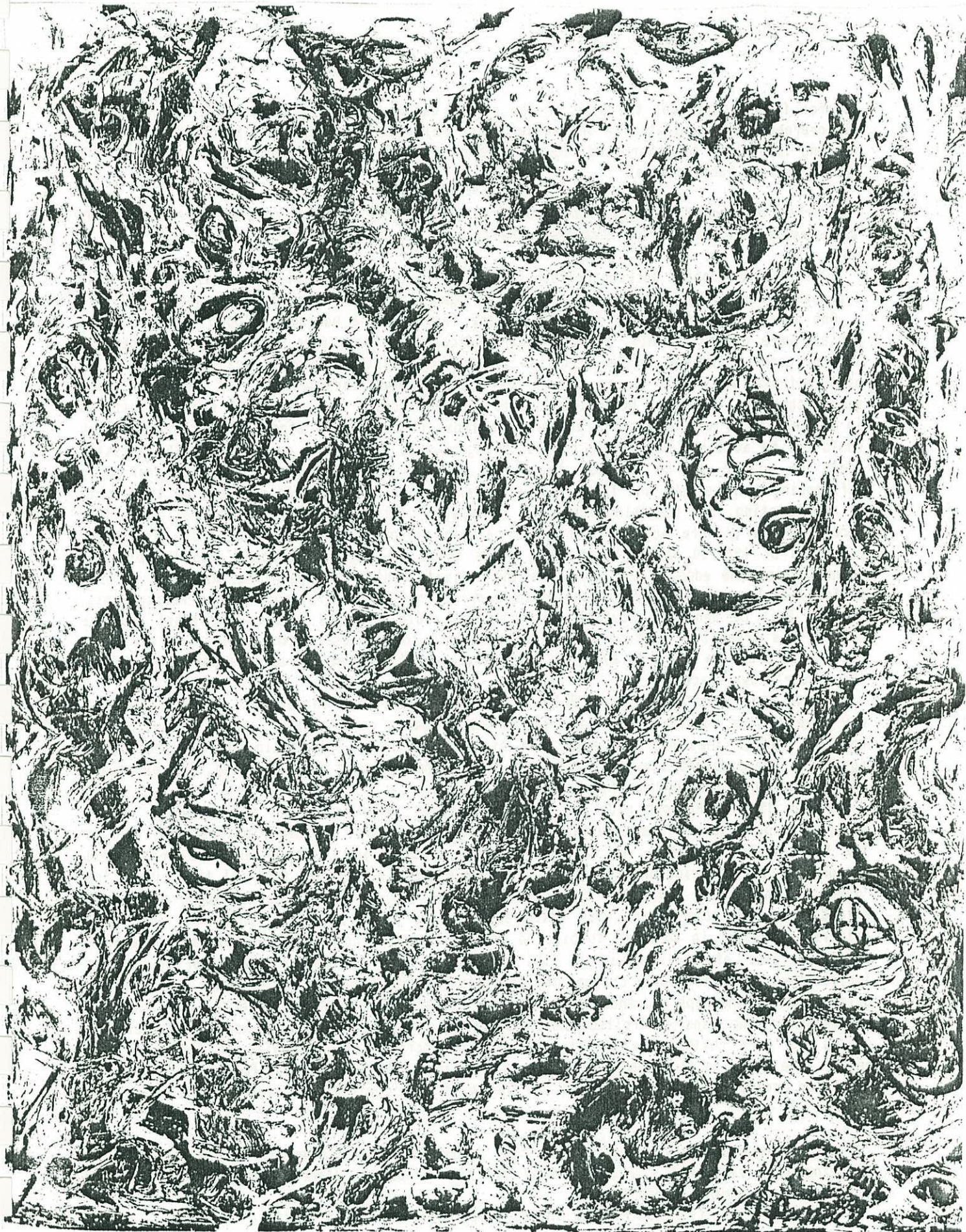


'The Guardian's of the Secret'. (1943).

This was extremely observant of Greenburg since 'mural' had played a decided influence upon Pollock for some time, especially the work of Mexican muralist Orozco. The painting itself shows two vertical figures either side of a central panel filled with hieroglyphics, featuring a dog at the base acting as guardian of the painter's 'psyche' (those personal marks and signs in the central panel). In his painting of this period Pollock chooses to veil his imagery, the net result is an image that is hard to read due to the application of paint. This in a broken up manner gives an 'all-over' effect on the surface of the canvas. Pollock even renamed paintings in order to imbue greater mystical quality ie the change from 'Moby Dick' to 'Pasiphae'.

In 1944 a mural was commissioned by Peggy Guggenheim, this was Pollock's first distinct break from the easel, it's size was roughly 8ft by 20ft. This increased size broke normal drawing and painting distinctions by creating a large sustained rhythm of pattern in the all-over style. This all-over effect denied the dimensional illusionistic devices and brought the two dimensional quality of Art to the fore-front.

During the early Forties, Pollock's canvases began to increase in size as a whole, this allowed the all-over effect to work in a more substantial way but by 1947 and his final



'Eyes in the Heat'. (1946).

divorce from figuration, the size of the canvas became a crucial matter. In 1946 Pollock's all-overness had culminated in the masterpiece: *'Eyes In The Heat'*. The painting is a thick, teeming impasto of brushwork and pigment laid on via the tube and short cursive strokes. The critic William Rubin states:

"a series of looped and arabesqued patterns all roughly similar in character and in the approximate size and more or less even density over the whole surface of the picture,"

By 1947, the problem Jackson Pollock faced was the creation of an impersonal means of all-overness without arty connotations, a means to express the flow of profound personal feeling.

One aspect of Art Pollock tried to escape from was the making of 'good' pictures. The Cubists were guilty of this, for all their radical ideas they were still in the business of making 'good' paintings. (This criticism could be levelled at European Art as a whole). The picture-frame was seen as an aspect of these 'arty' connotations, it tried to give significance to the panel it enclosed, this was restricting in a practical sense as well as in a theoretical one. Pollock's answer came from increasing the size of his canvases, they would now be so large that their enclosing edges would lie on the periphery of the artist's field of vision as he worked. Therefore instead of the frames rectangle profoundly influencing every stroke and line, the artist arrived at the frame as a result of the growth of the painting, not something subjected in advance. This does not mean that Pollock didn't recognise the picture edge as a barrier between pictorial and real space. In his mature paintings of 1947-50 Jackson's rhythmic lines touch the edge and rebound into the picture, acknowledging the edge of the canvas as the ultimate context for painting. As early as 1946 Pollock heralded the *'easel picture to be a dying form'*, by 1947 though he had revised this, stating that he wanted a moveable picture that would function between the easel and the mural. This effective 'halfway-state' meant Pollock could preserve the quality of the easel picture to draw the viewer's eye into a 'fictive world' and use the mural's power to inhibit the viewer's own space.

By 1946 and *'Eyes In The Heat'* Pollock was still restricted in movement by the brush. The new size of the canvas meant that he started to paint on the floor, often on sealed but unprimed canvas that had not even been stretched or cut. This again allowed freedom as against a pre-ordained structure and size, the painting could develop along it's own rules and be cropped and stretched afterwards.

Between 1946-47 Pollock made the final transition to dripping and pouring paint onto a newly laid out canvas. His experimentation in dripping paint stemmed right back to 1936 at the Experimental Workshop, it was now that he used it as a liberation from traditional design. The canvas being on the floor meant that Pollock could work from all four sides (the 'arena' as he called it), thus creating no defined top or bottom. He developed new tools, sticks, hardened brushes etc with which to drip the paint onto the canvas, he also used different mediums; in addition to oils he was also fond of commercial enamels and aluminium paints because of their fluidity. The placing of the canvas on the floor had other implications, it drastically changed the artist's position. Instead of the wrist the point of balance became the hips and shoulders therefore giving a more rhythmic effect. Large sweeping movements of the hand controlled the application of paint, this gave more sway over the canvas and more rhythm! The dictates of gravity increased the fluidity of the paint and became more prone to 'accidental' effects in the name of automatism. But Pollock did not rely simply on accidents and chance, it is the theory of the 'controlled accident' that imbued his Art:

"I want to express my feelings rather than illustrate them. Technique is just a means of arriving at a statement... I can control the flow of paint; there is no accident, just as there is no beginning or end."

(Jackson Pollock in the *'1951 Paris Review of 1944'*).

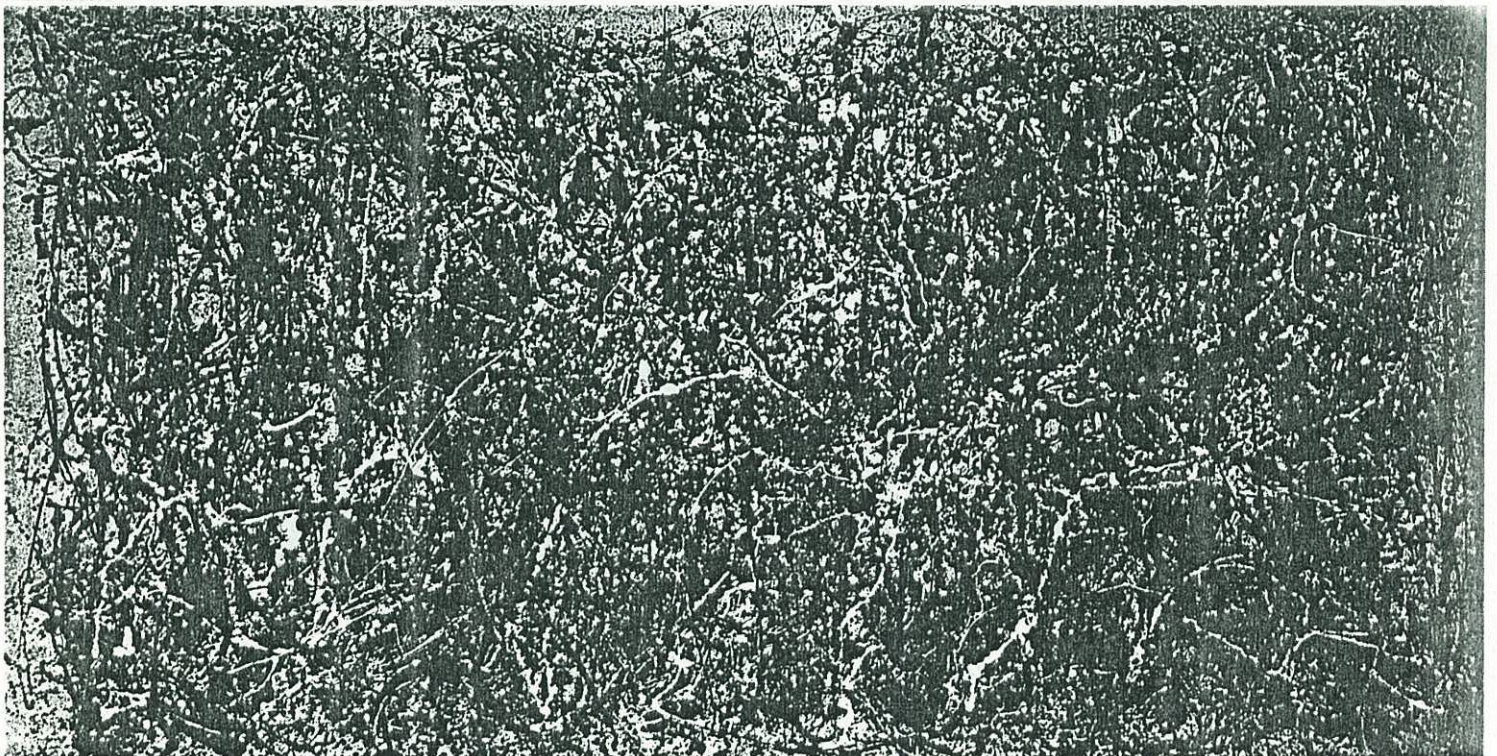
Pollock shows us an alternative reality, himself on canvas in a timeless quality. He stated that he didn't work from sketches, he was direct, he allowed his paintings to grow instead of being tied to preconceived ideas. To Pollock, his art was himself, in 1947 in an excerpt from *'My Painting, Possibilities'* he stated:

"I feel nearer, more a part of the painting, since this way I can walk around it, work from the four sides and literally be in the painting ... When I am in my painting, I'm not aware of what I am doing. It is only after a sort of 'get acquainted' period that I see what I have been about. I have no fears about making changes, destroying the image, etc, because the painting has a life of it's own, I try to let it come through. It is only when I lose contact with the painting that the result is a mess. Otherwise there is pure harmony, an easy give and take, and the painting comes out well."

Pollock, for the first time in Western painting, allowed different elements, most importantly line and colour, to function as wholly autonomous pictorial powers. The line is totally liberated, but controlled to slow or quicken the eye within the painting. As William Rubin states:

"Controlled pouring could thicken, thin and articulate the line at will in a way a loaded stick or brush could not."

By flooding line Pollock could arrest the attention of the viewer, Charles Harrison in his essay on Abstract Expressionism in *'Concepts of Modern Art'* recognised that although the 1947-50 rhythmic compositions are non-referential, individual 'incidents' still detach themselves to assume particular pictorial purposes as one's concentration intensifies. The paintings of this period have to be seen intuitively, one senses the idea of some significant state.

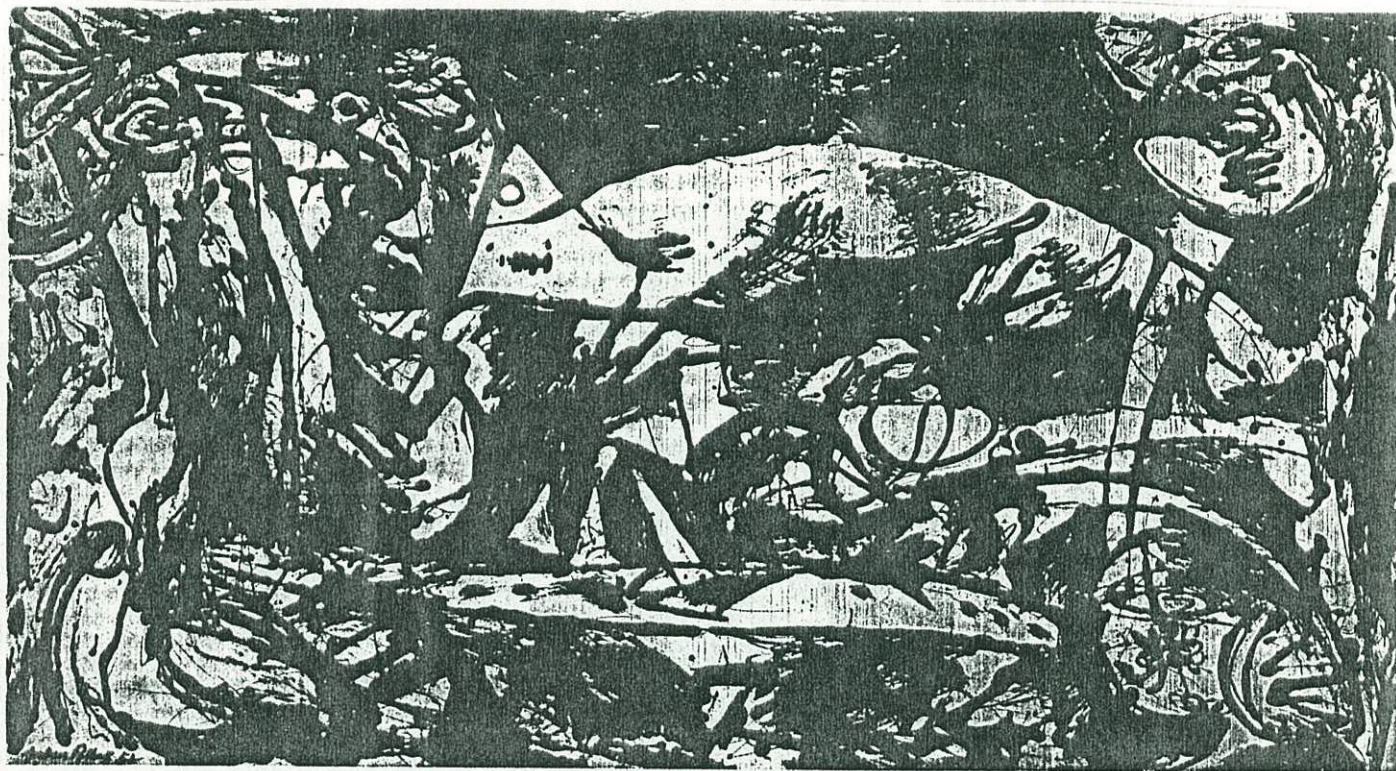


'One: Number 31'. (1950).

Clement Greenberg in *'Art and Culture'* raises an interesting point about the 1951 exhibition. He sees all Western Art before Pollock as holding onto value contrast in painting. The opposition of light and dark giving a convincing illusion of three-dimensions is what distinguishes it from other traditions of pictorial Art; the emphasis on illusion! The Western viewer tries to contact differences of shade, without which he is lost. Abstract Art, especially Pollock in the Fifties was trying to repudiate value contrast. Even Cubism was conservative on this level, it succeeded in restoring value contrast to it's old preeminence as a means to design and form, undoing all that the Impressionists, Post-Impressionists and Fauvists had done to reduce it's role.

Pollock's use of colour between 1947-50 was rarely emphasised for it's own sake, in his all-over poured paintings, colour is secondary to tonal abundance of black, white, grey and silver, these may have been tones but they weren't contrasted tones designed to provide illusionistic depth. Hue was sometimes used in minute quantities, normally to arrest the eye and give local intensity. It was also used as a powerful emotional agent ie *'Lavender Mist'* 1950, which has a pinky haze giving abstract softness.

Figuration had continued to persist to a greater or lesser extent in Pollock's late-Forties work. Paintings such as *'White Cockatoo'* and *'The Wooden Horse'* are obvious examples but more obscure is *'Out Of The Web or No 7'*. Pollock often used to give names and numbers to his paintings as if in a paradox between Abstraction and figuration. Still the purpose was for people to look at the paintings for what they are, pure painting, and not simply try and relate it to their own everyday reality. In Seldon Rodman's *'Conversations With Artists of 1957'* a quote by Pollock is published from this period:



'Number 14'. (1951).

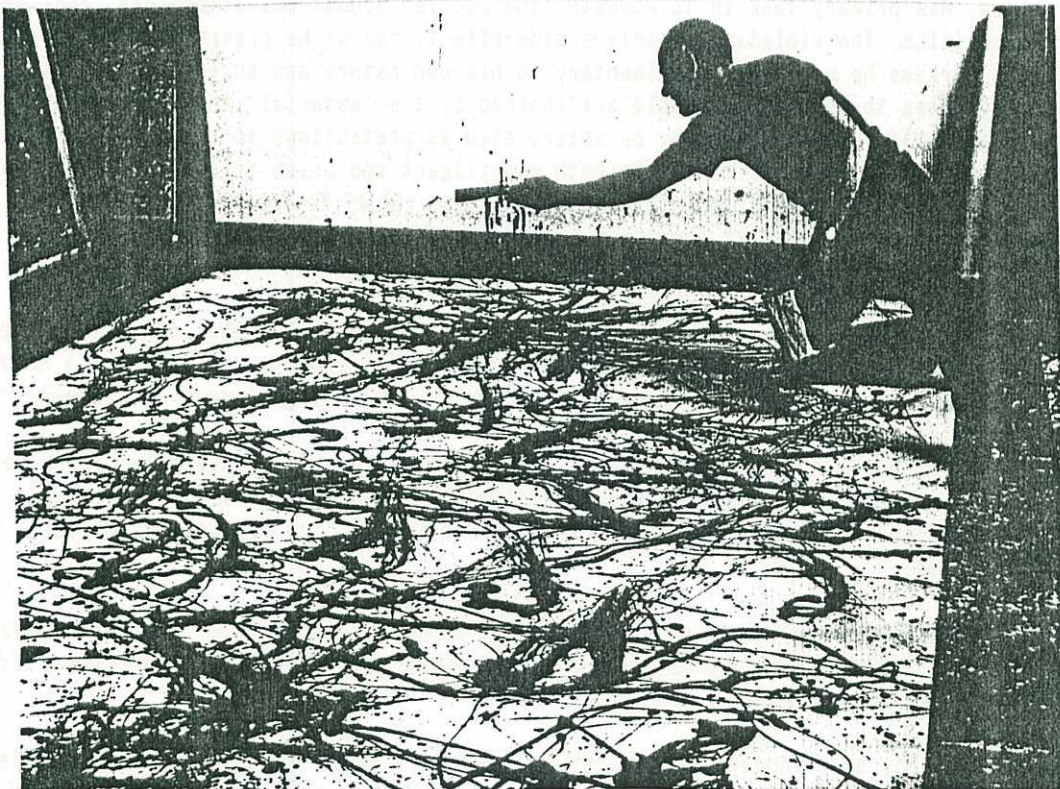
"I'm very representational some of the time, and a little all of the time. But when you're painting out of your subconscious, figures are bound to emerge ... painting is a state of being ... Painting is self-discovery, every good artist paints what he is."

From 1950-53 Pollock returned to figuration. This baffled the critics, especially Clement Greenberg who saw it as a repentance for the previous three years. Elizabeth Frank, in her book *'Pollock'*, gives a refreshing new look at this period showing that it was not as divorced from Pollock's previous line of work as had been considered. Firstly, to work in

black was to make a symbolic choice. After 1950 Pollock seemed to have reached a point where further development seemed impossible. Pollock's gift was primarily linear and therefore black signified for him line, black was a search for renewal and change from within, the most recent as well as the oldest, most essential element of his art. His working methods were not radically different from 1947-50, he still poured paint from a can, used sticks etc. In this black period line is liberated again from contouring. 'No 14' and 'No 5' in 1952 both have mysterious shapes and inescapable material abstractness, despite their figurative qualities; heads emerge from blotches, curves and flecks, the over-all image is non-specific. The Surrealist influence comes to the foreground during the Black paintings of 1950-53, line is freed from simply describing and contouring pre-conceived illusions, instead it makes the image occur subconsciously.

Jackson Pollock died in 1956 in a car-crash at the age of 44. His alcoholism eventually got the better of him. His last three years from 1953-56 continued the development of 1947-50, repeating certain images but he was definitely in a transitional stage from which he was cut off. It is impossible to say whether the crash was an accident or some romantic gesture by Pollock.

To conclude, Jackson Pollock is one of the few painters who has achieved something of total importance in Twentieth century art; namely Abstract space. Clement Greenburg recognised that Pollock went where Analytical Cubism had feared to tread and took it to its logical conclusion. When standing in front of a Pollock painted between 1947-50 one appreciates the painting for itself not for its illusionistic quality of everyday reality. A new reality would seem to exist within its own laws. A painting of this period like 'No 1A' 1948 creates its own unique abstract space, it hangs in front of the canvas. Uncannily, this space reminds one of that which Monet arrived at toward the end of his career in his 'giant water lillies'. This abstract space is the way forward for modern Art today, it is the essential lesson of the Twentieth century and must not be categorised and placed on the shelf of a time, period or movement!



BUKOWSKI: **A WRITER FOR THE PEOPLE**

Like his work, Charles Bukowski's life is simply meaningless, it possesses little if any poetical grandeur. But unlike his work, his life is a living parody of which his poetry and novels are a yard-stick measured against it. Born in Andernach, Germany in 1920, the son of poor German-Polish parents, Bukowski was taken to the USA at the age of three. He had a 'typical' (whatever that word means) slum childhood mostly centred in Los Angeles. Of LA; Bukowski once said: *"Of all the angles, I am the greatest one this city has ever fallen over"*, a distinct remark about his enjoyment of alcohol. He published his first stories at the age of twenty four and began writing poetry at thirty five, that is almost all one can say about his life. That is except the following interesting facts. After publishing prose in 'Story' and 'Portfolio', Bukowski stopped writing for ten years. He arrived in the charity ward of the Los Angeles county hospital, haemorrhaging from a ten year drinking bout. He later turned to prose and gained some fame with his column 'Notes of a Dirty Old Man'. After 14 years in the post-office he resigned at the age of 50, he says, to keep himself from going insane. He now claims to be unemployable and eats type-writer ribbons.

There is a reason for such a long introduction. I am merely attempting to point out the different approaches one can attribute to Charles Bukowski's literal reign of terror. There is no puzzle about the man but yet his work has no legitimate value. That is the problem of Charles Bukowski, if there ever was one. Like Napoleon the third, Bukowski is a sphinx without a riddle.

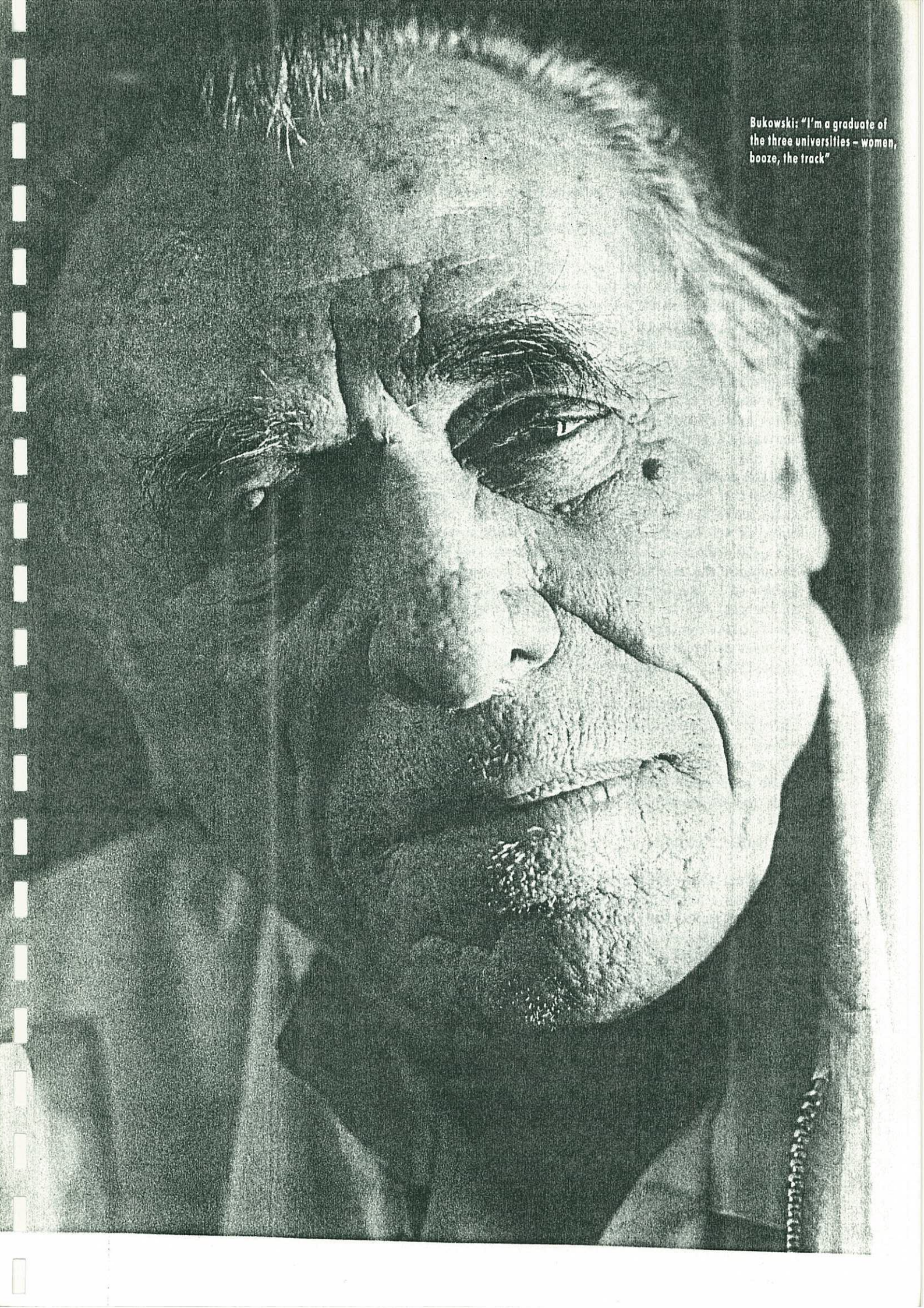
The stories in 'Tales of Ordinary Madness' and 'The Most Beautiful Woman In Town' were originally published in a single volume entitled 'Erections, Ejaculations, Exhibitions and General Tales of Ordinary Madness'. It is evident that Bukowski is not merely out to violate the senses. His primary task is to educate 'the people' about real literature, real people and realpolitik. The violation is only a side-effect, for as he presents the material, the words and phrases he uses are complimentary to his own nature and surroundings. His philosophy seems to be that if people are shocked by the 'material' then they are not living in the real world. His concepts may be interpreted as pretentious to the more cynically minded, but his philosophical ordeal is both magnificent and brash in its pointedness. Such an occasion is violently portrayed in his opening story: 'A.45 To Pay The Rent', when he states in an obvious comment aimed at America's legalistic attitudes towards contemporary life whereby anyone is able to sue everyone:

"fuck Dillinger! he's dead, Justice? there ain't no Justice in America, there's only one Justice, ask the Kennedies, ask the dead, ask anybody! this (holding a heat a.45) . . . this is the only Justice in America, this is the only thing anybody understands."

To state that Bukowski's stories are perverse is a fallacy. Certainly they are perverted in the sense that they contain strong sexual appetites but so powerful is his world that perversity and pervertity(?) do not intermingle. For example and from the same story, Bukowski states:

"your kid? see that money mouth on her? just like mine, see those eyes? see those insides? just like mine, your kid - just because she slid out of your crack and sucked your tits, she's nobody's kid, she's her own kid".

In this speech, the language used is not intentional. There is no premeditated violence. These are the words of a mad misfit and should be treated as such. Any admission of violence is purely on the reader's part, the rest is complimentary to the author. What Bukowski is saying is that HIS world (which might not satisfy the reader's world) is the real world, that does portray this form of imagery and seeing that we are all beautiful creations, then the



Bukowski: "I'm a graduate of
the three universities - women,
booze, the track"

individual who is offended by such imagery is either blind or a hypocrite. In this unusually barbaric style Bukowski announces both enigmatically and triumphantly that traditional fiction is dead and if we can't understand that fact then we are all hypocrites, as we can't all be blind.

More recent writers of fiction convey the premeditated horrors of the world through the intensity of their imaginations. There is a feeling among writers like Iain Banks and his counterpoint Ian McEwan that the adventures of the modern individual, as expressed in their stories, *'The Wasp Factory'* and *'The Cement Garden'*, are solely founded in non-realistic terms. The reader almost feels that there is a gap of experience in what they write. Bukowski's material, on the other hand, is both exact and frightening. Exact in it's appeal and frightening in it's enjoyment. The reader cannot run away from the fact that Bukowski's fiction is auto-biographical. For example his most famous novel and probably his best: *'Post Office'* is a lurid and graphical account of the author's experience in that 'insane' asylum-like world of a post-office clerk. However Bukowski is not safe in the world of auto-biography and this further confuses the issue by adamantly stating on the inside cover: *"This is presented as a work of fiction and dedicated to nobody"*.

How much of that statement is true is for Bukowski to answer, but nevertheless, the sentiment expressed is of the first hand experience. Such is the audacity and power of the book that it led Sartre to call Bukowski; *'the best poet in America'*, of which Bukowski has replied to the effect that *'there are no poets in America - only people.'* If nothing else Bukowski's *'Post Office'*, gives the reader the opportunity to deeply divulge into hidden American values as represented by the formal 'down and outs'. In his prose there is no such thing as the American illusion. The education programme is self-evident in this novel, for it not only presents real characters in real life situations, but the message is concurrent throughout the events, that being: disappointment, disillusionment and depravity, all these summed up in one exchange. In this sequence, the main character Chinaski has to pass a test at the post office in order to gain elevation in rank. He has to, within a certain time limit, place certain cards in certain pigeon-holes, a task we are told proves to be of enormous difficulty, so much so that a major amount of practice is needed in order to accomplish it. The sequence occurs as follows:

"Sir, I truly believe that I am ready!"

'Alright', I reached out and shook his hand, 'go to it then my boy and the best of luck.'

'Thank you, sir.'

He ran off towards the scheme room, a glass enclosed fish bowl they put you in to see if you could swim their waters. Poor fish. What a comedown from being a small time villain. I walked into the practice room, took the rubber band off the cards and looked at them for the first time.

'Oh Shit!' I said."

What the above statement is showing is typical of Bukowski's style in his prose. Every action has a story behind it. Calling it a message is perhaps not quite strong enough. In Bukowski's world the power of spiritual love is overpowered by the agonies of the flesh and further it becomes evident that Charles Bukowski is not able to make love, only the untainted process of 'fucking' is the basis of his spiritual ideal. But through all this vile acidity there are touching moments. These moments are so rare that even when they are encountered they possess a magic of their own. For example he states the following on witnessing his lover's death:

"Betty! Betty!"

I touched her arm,

'Betty!'

Her eyes opened. They were beautiful again. Bright calm blue.

'I knew it would be you' she said."

However hopeful this exchange is, by the end of the chapter Bukowski becomes bitter again thus enabling the reader to regain confidence in him, as when he states:

"SIR! SIR! SIR! FORGET THAT 'SIR' STUFF, WILL YOU? I'll bet if she were the president or governor or mayor or some rich son of a bitch, there would be doctors all over that room doing something! Why do you just let them die? What's the sin in being poor?"

The 'sin' is all too obvious to Bukowski. He understands more than anyone the idea of Human productivity. In his world the poor cannot be productive and therefore they are sinning for society. A crime which Bukowski is proud to commit, Bukowski is not writing for the intellectuals or the city brokers. He does not even write for himself. Bukowski writes for the people who want to listen. The problem is for Bukowski that we all have ears but some of us cannot hear that well. In the end for Bukowski perhaps there is no end. But that's the beauty.

*"In the morning it was morning and I was still alive,
Maybe I'll write a novel, I thought,
And then I did,"*

*Gallic Productions Recommends;
Post Office, 1969,
Erections, Ejaculations, Exhibitions
and General Tales of Ordinary Madness, 1970,*

*Avoid the movies ['Tales of Ordinary Madness' (83) 'Barfly' (88)
and 'Crazy Love' (89)] They never come close to the novels!*

Charles Bukowski is alive and well in LA.

ANGELS

. . . . The menace is loose again, the Hell's Angels, the hundred carat-headline, running fast and loud on the early morning freeway, low in the saddle, nobody smiles, jamming crazy through traffic and ninety miles an hour down the centre stripe, missing by inches like Genghis Khan on an iron horse, a monster steed with a fiery anus, flat out through the eye of a beer can and up your daughter's leg with no quarter asked and none given; show the squares some class, give 'em a whiff of those kicks they'll never know Ah, these righteous dudes, they love to screw it on tense for the action, long hair in the wind, beards and bandanas flapping, earrings, armpits, chain whips, swastikas and stripped-down Harleys flashing chrome as traffic on 101 moves over, nervous, to let the formation pass like a burst of dirty thunder

The emblem of the Hell's Angels, termed 'colors', consists of an embroidered patch of a winged skull wearing a motorcycle helmet. Just below the wing of the emblem are the letters 'MC'. Over this is a band bearing the words Hell's Angels. Below the emblem is another patch bearing the local chapter name, which is usually an abbreviation for the city or

locality. These patches are sewn on the back of a usually sleeveless denim shirt. In addition, members have been observed wearing various types of *Luftwaffe* insignia and reproductions of German Iron Crosses.

Every Angel recruit comes to his initiation wearing a new pair of Levis and a matching jacket with the sleeves cut off and a spotless emblem on the back. The ceremony varies from one chapter to another but the main feature is always the defiling of the initiate's new uniform. A bucket of dung and urine will be collected during the meeting, then poured on the newcomer's head in a solemn baptismal. Or he will take off his clothes and stand naked while the bucket of slop is poured over them and the others stomp it in.

These are his 'originals', to be worn every day until they rot. The condition of the originals is a sign of status. It takes a year or two before they get ripe enough to make a man feel he has made the grade.

One of the worst incidents of that era caused no complaints at all: this was a sort of good natured firepower demonstration, which occurred one Sunday morning about three thirty. For reasons that were never made clear, I blew out my back windows with five blasts of a 12-gauge shotgun, followed moments later by six rounds from a .44 Magnum. It was a prolonged outburst of heavy firing, drunken laughter and crashing glass. Yet the neighbours reacted with total silence. For a while I assumed that some freakish wind pocket had absorbed all the sound and carried it out to sea, but after my eviction I learned otherwise. Every one of the shots had been duly recorded on the gossip log. Another tenant in the building told me the landlord was convinced, by all the tales he'd heard, that the interior of my apartment was reduced to rubble by orgies, brawls, fire and wanton shooting. He'd even heard stories of motorcycles being driven in and out the front door. No arrests resulted from the incidents, but according to neighbourhood rumour they were all linked to the Hell's Angels, operating out of my apartment. Probably this is why the police were so rarely summoned; nobody wanted to be croaked by an Angel revenge party.

The whole thing was born, they say, in the late 1940's, when most ex-GIs wanted to get back to an orderly pattern: college, marriage, a job, children - all the peaceful extras that come with a sense of security. But not everybody felt that way. Like the drifters who rode west after Appomattox, there were thousands of veterans in 1945 who flatly rejected the idea of going back to their pre-war pattern. They didn't want order but privacy - and time to figure things out. It was a nervous downhill feeling, a mean kind of *Angst* that always comes out of wars. . . . a compressed sense of time on the outer limits of fatalism. They wanted more action, and one of the ways to look for it was on a big motorcycle. By 1947 they state was

alive with bikes, nearly all of them powerful American made irons from Harley-Davidson and Indian.

The concept of the 'motorcycle outlaw' was as uniquely American as jazz. nothing like them had ever existed. In some ways they appeared to be a kind of half-breed anachronism, a human hangover from the era of the Wild West. Yet in other ways they were as new as television. There was absolutely no precedent, in the years after the Second World War, for large gangs of hoodlums on motorcycles, revelling in violence, worshipping mobility and thinking nothing of riding five hundred miles on a weekend . . . to whoop it up with other gangs of cyclists in some country hamlet entirely unprepared to handle even a dozen peaceful tourists. Many picturesque, outback villages got their first taste of tourism not from families driving Fords or Cheverolets, but from clusters of boozing 'city boys' on motorcycles.

Extracted from Hunter Thompson's 'Hells Angels'.



REVIEWS

'Dead Ringers' (David Cronenberg).

In this picture Cronenberg makes the leap that he has been threatening for some time (well through 'Videodrome' and 'The Fly' at least), the visual 'horrific' elements have been relegated whilst the complex interior madness has increased. The story is of two gynaecologist brothers, Beverly and Elliot Mantle (both superbly played by Jeremy Irons), visually identical, they are in fact very different human beings. As they present themselves to the outside world as virtually a single being it is not surprising that they find it easy to get on in their careers (two minds are better than one). One of the ingenious uses of this twindom is for Elliott (outgoing, confident) to pull women while Beverly (insecure, academic) stays home, after Elliott has scored Bev steps in to share them with him. This wierd variation on a multiple menage-a-trois comes to an end when Claire Niveau (Genevieve Bujold) enters their game. Beverly falls in love with her and decides to tell her the truth. Niveau rejects him and exposed by his own honesty Bev slips into drug addiction and insanity. In an attempt to save his twin, Elliott locks him into their apartment and tries to de-toxify him; being twins (and twins who share/feel every experience together) Elliott starts taking the drugs as well. Both die at the end in a wierd attempt to cut themselves apart from each other (using special medical tools commissioned by the insane Beverly for operating on mutant woman.

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The essence of the film is not the odd plot, rather the ideas that Cronenberg buries in every scene are what causes the picture to reverberate around your head long after you've left the cinema. The portrayal of drug-usage is impressive and not ridiculously unbelievable as in most Hollywood films, humour is rife, at one point during his breakdown Beverly asks a patient: *"What, exactly, did you have intercourse with? I once heard of someone who had it with a Labrador and I just wondered."* The medical theme that runs through Cronenberg's films is interiorised with ideas about the beauty of the inside of the body: *"We've not devised an aesthetic for the inside of the body any more than we have developed an aesthetic of disaes ... I'm trying to force the audience to change its aesthetic sense just as the characters in*

my films do."

Unlike most movies released nowadays 'Dead Ringers' is a gem, make sure you catch it on the video! There are rumours that Cronenberg is preparing to bring 'The Naked Lunch' to the screen - now that should be something!

'Tucker: The Man and his Dream' (Francis Ford Coppola).

Coppola returns with a movie that is at least more ambitious than 'Peggy Sue Got Married'. Jeff Bridges (surely one of the great actors of the '80s) plays Preston Tucker, designer and inventor of the 'Tucker Torpedo', a car which in 1948 incorporated a host of innovations: rear-wheel drive, disc brakes, fuel injection and a pop-out windshield. The Big Three (Ford, General Motors and Chrysler) didn't take too kindly to this challenge to the power-base and drove the imaginative Mr Tucker out of business. As the closing titles inform us Tucker's innovations are common-place today.



The movie is very 1930/40's, in fact it reminds me more than anything of a King Vidor picture 'American Romance' (1944) (with splashes of Vidor's 'The Fountainhead' a project which Michael Cimino has long expressed an interest in remaking). The idealism, individuality and corruption of the old movies is reinvented here to great effect. The Fordian element of the family business working from home is another facet of movies which I thought were dead for ever. The film even ends in a court-room showdown where Tucker appeals to the nobility of the great American jury - of course he is set free, but is unable to return to the car production business.

The scene with Howard Hughes (Dean Stockwell) is excellent and very frighteningly set in an enormous air-craft hanger. Tucker is shown the dark side of the American individual, he does not learn his lesson. The story has similarities to Coppola's own movie career, the establishment of Zoetrope studios and his own struggle against the faceless multi-corporates. A battle which if you remember he lost.

'Tucker' is not a great movie, but it is enjoyable, personally I love the old cliches of Hollywood, I just wish he had used them in a slightly more complex way. For instance if we could have seen more of the brutality of a man who could take on such mega companies, perhaps we would have been able to handle a harder a more twisted ending.

Still, not a bad view, make sure you catch it on vid.

MUSIC

Lou Reed - 'New York' (Sire Lp/Cassette).

What can I say? The unbelievable happened, Lou recorded a good album. Now let's get one thing straight, I'm a Louis Alan Reed devotee, perhaps I didn't realise quite how much until recently. This Lp helped push me into that acknowledgement. It's his best work since 1975's *'Metal Machine Music'* (a monster which like Lester Bangs I used to get up to) and it features his best lyrics since *'Berlin'* (1973). I seem to remember Lou held a press-conference in 1982 where he stated that he wanted to write 'pop' works as important and profound as Dostoyevsky or Joyce. Big words but lyrically he has done exceptionally well this time: *"There's a rampaging rage rising up like a plague of bloody vials washing up on the beach It'll take more than the Angels or Iron Mike Tyson to heal this bloody breach."* But don't get me wrong, there are many things wrong with this collection, for one thing I wish he'd grow up and realise that '2 guitar, bass, drum' = rock/wank! As Reed (with Woody Allen) is one of the key mythologisers of New York the Lp title and subject matter is well chosen. His new-found political sense (not that new - he was always a liberal) is of interest, I particularly enjoyed the admission (first ever??) of his Jewishness (see *'Good Evening Mr Waldheim'*). The Lp opens with a perverse re-write of *Westside Story* (*'Romeo had Juliet'*) drifts into genuine sorrow over the death of old friends from AIDS (*'Halloween Parade'*) passes through *'Dirty Blvd'* (love the Velvet's style *"And fly fly away"*), flounders slightly on *'Endless Cycle'* but lifts for the hard rock *'There is No Time'* (the trash intellect is at work; amidst a list of things there is no time for he cites: *"This is no time for circumlocution This is no time for learned speech,"*) I didn't like *'Last Great American Whale'* (I didn't like *'Oceans'* either!), *'Beginning of a Great Adventure'* is interesting, the words tell of a man imagining how he will bring up his child, it should be crap but is actually quite provocative. Side two starts very strongly, *'Busload of Faith'* is mean and rockin', *'Sick of You'* is reminiscent of the 'acid-freeform' lyric style he occasionally used in the old days (for all you Gallic fans, it's broadly the same gag as *'Murder'*), next up is my fave; *'Hold On'*, ace music, ace lyrics: *"You got a black,38 and a gravity knife You still have to ride the train There's the smelly essence of New York down there but you aint no Bernhard Goetz"* nuff said! He continues with his anti-anti-semitic number *'Good Evening Mr W'*, surprisingly his argument is coherent and worth a listen. Of the last three *'Xmas in February'* is a cheap musical version of a Vietnam vet movie, *'Dime Store Mystery'* is Reed on Warhol, hey what's all this shit about the Last Temptation, too many movies Lou! *'Strawman'* however is okay and pretty damn angry (rightfully so): *"Does anyone need another President or the Sins of Swaggart parts 6, 7, 8 and 9"*. All-in-all not a bad effort, I just hope he lets his more perverted (musical) side come through next time (some hope). Reed has however proved that you can cut a half-way decent Lp when you're over thirty and that's an achievement in itself. Welcome back Uncle Lou! (Bangs of course would have hated it!)

Elvis Costello - 'Spike' (Warners Lp/Cassette).

This collection has been hyped into infinity by the press when it is in fact a moderate album by a moderately talented singer/songwriter. Poor old Elvis, too old to be a punk, too ugly to be emotionally believable, too childish to be politically astute! Like the Reed Lp this thing is loaded with songs (and that is a good sign - it's about time we had a bit of value for money in pop music!). I don't wanna go into any deep analysis of the record because I don't think it deserves it! In brief, *'...This Town...'* has a great double-chorus idea, whereby when you get to the end of the chorus the song seems to suck back into itself and back into the chorus in the process. *'Let Him Dangle'* is a very strong number and quite passionate even if it does verge on the hysterical at times, I particularly enjoyed the bit about *'calculating the weight'*. *'Veronica'* is a pop song like any other (except for the Maccaesque middle-eight - very Beatles), only amusing because it's about an old person. *'God's Comic'* is probably the best effort here, a surreal lyric that features God listening to Andrew Lloyd-

Webber amidst a musical setting of mournful despair. 'Chewing Gum' features the Dirty Dozen Brass band (Tom Waits) and is tight psychotic post-'Kiss' funk. 'Tramp the Dirt Down', yeah the one about Thatcher, is utterly ridiculous, in the song Costello spells out in boring detail how much he hates Mrs T and how he wants to stamp on her grave (very mature!); *"When England was the whore of the world Margaret was her madam And the future looked as bright as the black tarmacadam."* If someone can tell me in what way England are the 'whore of the world' I'll give them the tape. (Listen, protest songs don't change anything - I recommend he buys a gun!) The second line is quite clever and a nice rhyme but is that what we've been driven to praising? On side two we are graced with quite a clever instrumental ('Stalin Malone') the sort of thing any intelligent musician might cut after 11 albums. 'Satellite' is indecipherable (if Andy Clifton wouldn't understand it then what's the point in me translating it for him?) 'Pads, Paws and Claws' is the second song written with McCartney and it's pretty good but still missing something. I much preferred all of these tunes on BBC2's 'The Late Show', 'Paws' in particular was far better with just guitar and voice. 'Baby Plays Around' written by Costello's wife (ex-Pogues bassist) Cait O'Riordan is so bad I feel sorry for him, perhaps he picked up the idea from Macca to get the wife to ruin his career. The remainder of the Lp is as I said at the beginning 'bearable', 'Miss Macbeth' has a nice lyrical idea while 'Any King's Shilling' discusses the role of Irishmen in the British army during the 1915-22 period. The truth is that at any other time than now (1979 or 1972 or 1967 or ...) this record would be virtually ignored because it is merely 'okay' and from the man who wrote 'Watching the Detectives' I think we're entitled to more than that!

Win - 'Freaky Trigger' (Virgin Lp/Cassette).

The first 'classic' Lp of 1989; Davey Henderson (ex-singer of the Fire Engines) returns displaying the sort of deep pop intuition that has always been his trademark (even if no one has ever heard of him!) Looting the ultimate 'Trash' idea that is so central to Prince, good Scritti Politti and T Rex he has turned in a record that says everything and nothing, makes you dance and causes thought, makes you laugh and makes you cry (God, I'm sounding like Paul Morley). Look it's a gem YOU MUST BUY IT!!! Check out 'Love Units' a Prince take-off, the lyrics tells of a guy phoning his girl and running out of phone-card units, this is the sort of meaningless pop pap that is the life-blood of the post-war democratic youth culture revolution! At last people have arrived who understand how to be trash, glam, epic and tongue-in-your-cheek all at the same time. On 'Truckee River' he sings: *"After all it's just a call from a second degenerate Barbie doll with a passion for regurgitating Seconal!"* - chew on that one. The title of one of the songs is 'Whats Love If You Can Kill For Chocolate' now that's my idea of post-modern neo-semiotic pop sociology. Amidst the piss-take rock guitar solos there is a killer of a machine rhythm (Maxine, come home all is forgiven), what I want to know is why have the last three truly important Lps; 'Tackhead Tape Time', 'Introspection' and this one been fundamentally computer-based? The new single is 'Dusty Heartfelt' (actually 'Telegram Sam'); *"I wanna see a wild bee - a wild 'B' movie - about you 'n' me made by Tigers but there's no space left on my TV so I'll send you a firearm if you sing for me."* This band are the same as us, they have the same reference points, they grew up in the democratic '70s, were kick-started into action by the Buzzcocks and the Subway Sect, drifted badly in the mid-80's (lost in the sea of mediocrity that was called the 'new pop') and have returned with music that is absolute! I love it to death.

Barry Adamson - 'Moss Side Story' (Mute Lp/Cassette).

This record is supposed to be the soundtrack to an un-made movie set in the Moss Side area of Manchester. On the cover it states: *"In a Black and White World - Murder brings a dash of colour!"* This Lp is murder on the ears, it reminds me of a bad (they were all bad) Pink Floyd concept album, let's pray that he never gets the chance to waste any film-stock getting the goddamn thing on screen! Adamson was the bass player in Howie's Magazine and he later assisted Nick Cave in the occasionally interesting Bad Seeds, how could a man of such high credentials have sunk to such indulgent depths of pretension and stupidity? There are the odd

dashes of interesting music but the whole is so horrific I was forced to throw the record clean out of the window. For those of you who don't understand I'll try and explain; Music (at it's best) is fundamentally Dionysian (ie of the senses - spontaneous, instinctive, emotive, orgasmic) with a tiny splash of Apollonian control thrown in for good measure. Film is essentially Apollonian (ie of the mind - planned, constructed, separate what do you think 'shots' are) with the Dionysian only present when the Director or actors are improvising. The differences between hearing and seeing are immense, just check out your average exhibitionist or voyeur. Film and Music can only mix effectively when the artist is intrinsically both looker and doer. Got it? I hope so!



Giorgio de Chirico, The Spirit of Domination (*L'esprit de domination*) 1927

ART

'Italian Art in the Twentieth Century'

Another great exhibition at the Royal Academy running along the theme of European Twentieth century Art. It began in 1985 with 'German Art in the 20th Century: Painting & Sculpture' and was followed in 1987 by British Art in the 20th Century: The Modern Movement. The exhibition led you through the serious stages of Italian Art in the last 88 years, from Marinetti's

radical view of 'modernity' to the intriguing sculpture of Mario Merz in the '80s. Certain key ideals of profound influence to the present are given due attention; Medardo Rosso is for once represented in his own right without being shadowed by Rodin while 'Metaphysical painting' heralded by Giorgio de Chirico is analysed for its influence upon Surrealism and on a more contemporary note, Modern advertising.

'The Spirit of Domination' by De Chirico was one work that was directly poignant, especially as this was the work chosen for the poster of the exhibition and was consequently splattered all over London, visible therefore to the general public. The refined classical motif of the 'nude' is reclining on wooden floor boards, not on some draped coach. She rests on a broken Ionic pillar, symbolising classicism while her other arm lies on the drapes that used to surround her. The sculptural quality of her flesh recalls classical influences but wait! on the right breast vibrant colour is bursting forth; the express of colour so radically re-evaluated in the Twentieth century. There is an open door behind her that reveals the sky, a dominant blue through which both the spectator and Art can escape from the restraints of classicism. This statement is greater when one remembers it is 'Italian Art' that we are seeing, at last the Italians could see past their overbearing heritage.

Unfortunately, Mussolini's Italy desperately tried to cling onto the Imperial past and it was not until the late '50s that the Italians began to look forward again. In the '60s Italian Art is at one with the Modern Movement. Emilio Vedova's piece 'Absurd Berlin Diary' 64 - Plurimo No 5, to the rest of us was a large shattered box suspended from the ceiling. Although the symbolism passed me by a bit, the intense pleasure I felt standing beneath its splintered edges was immeasurable, fear and pride intertwined. The 1971 sculpture; 'Golden Italy' has a more direct message; Italy is hung by the toe, a shining edifice, behind it a block of flats with its sky dominated by a cut-out silhouette of the sculpture. I'll leave you to analyse this one after all a piece of Art is there to stimulate our thought, not provide the absolute answer.

Joan Miro 1929-41.

Interestingly the Whitechapel Gallery decided to look at a decade of immense importance in Miro's development as an artist. However, sexual motifs still prevail in the main body of his work, obscure may be, but it is still possible to decipher male and female figures doing some interesting things; one painting, 'Man and Woman in front of a pile of excrement' (1935) shows the male's genitalia equipped with an eye having a life of its own, I am inclined to agree. Again, a particularly interesting sculpture is made up of various mundane objects, an umbrella, a dried-out branch, an ambiguous piece of furniture with an extremely large piece of wood in the shape of a pole, protruding from the main body symbolising 'you know what'. In his paintings of 1940-41, automatist ideas are present, thus allowing the subconscious to form the basis of the picture, although figuration is derived from this, the image is arrived at not by a pre-destined plan. Funnily enough I continually saw whales in Miro's work, but this was almost certainly due to having just read Melville's epic 'Moby Dick'.

Leonardo Da Vinci - The Tragedy!

The exhibition was so hyped up on television, that consequently no one could see it due to queues that stretched down the embankment. If you were lucky enough or bored enough to wait, in order to get in, you were filed past each work like school children on a day out in London. It was ridiculous to believe the Hayward gallery could cope. After such media attention, the exhibition was bound to attract none-gallery going public.

The Last Romantics at the Barbican.

I didn't go, I don't like them!

(BananaFishFace).

B O O K S

To build your own Dreamachine you need a sheet of 4-ply paper, 32 inches by 32 inches in diameter, a record player that can revolve at 78rpm (available from many secondhand shops for a few quid) and a hanging lightbulb.

On the paper, draw three inch borders along the top and bottom, then carefully divide the rest into two inch squares. Cut out the cardboard templates, then trace them onto the paper in the positions illustrated. With great care and accuracy, then cut the holes out and connect the two ends together, thus forming a cylinder. Dangle a light bulb down the middle of the cylinder and rest this on the turntable. Now, darken the rest of the room, play some repetitive but 'unfocussed' music, and spin.

From now on, it's all free, it's all safe, it's legal and it really works.

Imagine that you have been treated badly in a restaurant - the food off, the service bad. You refuse to pay your bill, so you are beaten up and robbed. Circumstances dictate that you cannot retaliate in the ordinary manner. So. Go back the next few days, standing nearby the restaurant for half an hour at a time. Take photographs of the building. Record the sounds of the restaurant and the street outside on a Walkman. Steal a menu card from a table. Then, at a time you choose, develop the film. Cut the negative up and print your pictures of the street minus the restaurant. Overdub onto your recording the sound of breaking glass, of fire, of doors slamming shut. Concentrate your thoughts on the restaurant. Slowly cut the menu up, paying particular attention to the logo. Then bury all the photos and shredded card in your dustbin. Forget the incident. A week or two later the chances are that the restaurant will, for one reason or another, close down.

These two extremely interesting extracts are culled from a new magazine of ideas: 'Rapid Eye'. Although very expensive this publication is the best of it's kind, it includes articles on subjects as diverse as Modern Art, Bill Burroughs, Derek Jarman, the Rituals of Dance, The Nazis and the Occult, Neicism, Tantra, The Gemstone File (the truth about Onassis, Howard Hughes and the Kennedys), Foot Binding, Acid tripping on the BBC, Kathy Acker, Psychic Youth, Cattle Mutilation, Crowley & Huxley on drugs, Jim Jones and his People's Temple, Alchemy, Colin Wilson on sex-Crime, the Anthropic Principle, the erosion of freedom in the 1980's, Dr Patterson's Black Box (for curing addictions), Brion Gysin and his Dreamachine, Language, Body piercing (yuk), Austin Spare, post-Situationism and Montague Summers. It really is a fascinating read, the layout is excellent, the pictures splendid and the obsession with the right to information freedom totally in tune with our own rag.

You can purchase 'Rapid Eye' by sending a cheque for £12.95 (incl P&P) to R.E Publishing Ltd, PO Box 23, Brighton BN1 3PG England.

'Rants and Incendiary Tracts'

compiled by Bob Black & Adam Parfrey (Amok/Loompanics £7.95).

This follow-up to 'Apocalypse Culture' is another collection of wierd articles about extremely interesting subjects. (The Yanks are so good at this sort of thing!) Stretching from 1558 and John Knox through to now; the reader is subjected to political, insane, arty, ethical, social darwinist and general 'fuck you' rants. Not by any means perfect, (the extracting of 'bits' from books is always irritating) it is however, good for late-night perusal. (AMOK Press publish some damn good books you can contact them by writing to:

AMOK PO Box 875112, Los Angeles, California 90087 USA.)

Adoration

Television is the most important entity known to man! It is tragic how it is so mis-used. Over the last four months I have been watching the mindless trash consistently. (In fact over the last twenty-six years I have been up to my eyeballs in it!) We've seen loads of documentaries about Mrs Thatcher and her ten years and the similarity to the recent treatments of Hitler have not been missed. This is not the place to discuss soap-operas even though they alone are the reason that I have failed to become another Shakespeare, Goethe or Proust.

'Inspector Morse' was surprisingly good, John Thaw played a middle-class version of Regan (the same sense of hatred), even if the fact that so many insoluble crimes in the Oxford area seems slightly unlikely. 'The Labours of Erica' (from the folk that brought us 'Chance in a Million') was a joy! Brenda Blethwyn was perfect as the thirty-nine year-old woman who discovers a list of 'tasks' that she had wanted to do when she was at school and decides to 'do' them all before her fortieth birthday. The comedy had all the usual 'insane suburban' touches that graced the mad adventures of Tom Chance: sex-crazed boss, sixteen year-old child running computer business, unbelievably offensive mother etc etc. Make sure you catch it when it's re-run. With regard to 'youth' arts programmes, Tony Wilson's 'Other Side Of Midnight' shows just what you can do with a tiny budget. 'Night Network' never needed to be that moronic! Try and catch 'The James Whale Radio Show' (Fridays 1,00am) - the essence of the game is can the caller yell an obscenity at him before he switches them off, now that's what I call telly Vol 45. Three cheers for getting Bernard Manning back on the box. Avoid the terminal 'Saturday Night at the Movies', Tony Slattery was dead funny on 'Who's Line is it Anyway?' on this crock of bourgeois shit he is terrible. If you want to get people (who have just got home from the pub) interested in films you don't talk about 'linear' this or the dichotomy of that! Finally, how come the BBC had lost the 1960s film in which Joan Bakewell interviewed a doctor about (the joy of) oral sex, John Ford humiliating a dildo of a film-critic only partly made up for my disappointment!

Coming up in the near future...

'The Survivor's Guide' (Thursdays 6,30 C4) featuring those two mad twins from Highbury tube station. Of course it'll be complete rubbish but then as Ralph reminded me they deserve a mention for buying 'Crazed', the comic that pre-dated an obsession!

Moviedrome (Sundays late BBC2) hosted by that total idiot Alex Cox, is an attempt by the Beeb to run some 'cult' movies. Last year it was moderate. This season they've got Billy Wilder's stunner 'Ace in the Hole', Alexander Mackendrick's 'The Sweet Smell of Success' (and before anyone says it yeah I am JJ Hunsecker) and a couple of Bob Aldrich pictures (now there's an under-rated director!). If you're clever you'll manage to avoid Cox's 'dick-head' introductions.

OBITS

Salvador Dali died on the 23rd of January in Spain. One of the last surviving Surrealists he leaves behind a legacy that has been severely tarnished in recent years. He was born in 1904 and at the age of 17 gained admittance to the Fine Arts Academy in Madrid. While there he made friends with Federico Garcia Lorca (the gay poet) and Luis Bunuel (later to become one of the greatest film-makers of all time). Expelled from the college in 1926, Dali went to Paris where his name was made by his work on the movie: 'Un Chien Andalou' with the aforesaid Bunuel. In 1929 he met his 'perfect woman': Gala (Paul Eluard's wife). By 1930 Dali had elaborated his Theory of Paranoiac-Critical Activity, which he defined as "the interpretation of delirium". Sensing that money was to be made in the United States he slowly began to spend more time there, Breton nicknamed him 'Avida Dollars'. His lack of interest in Communism alienated him further from the Surrealists, he was expelled in 1943. Returning to Spain after the War, he embraced Franco's Fascist regime and developed an increasing fascination with

Catholic mysticism. More interestingly throughout the '50s and '60s he surrounded himself with transvestites, dwarves, acrobats, aristocrats, movie stars, millionaires, chemistry professors and nuclear physicists. This veritable "Court of Miracles" was quite incredible, when asked for his opinions on hallucinogenic drugs he replied "I am LSD!" Gala died in 1982 and Dali became a virtual recluse, (he was suffering from an illness similar to Parkinson's Disease). After a fire in 1984 he was left badly burned and his final years were obviously very miserable. One of the greatest self-publicists this century perhaps his most radical artistic achievement was the signing and selling of countless blank sheets of paper that has so upset the money-dominated art world! (His paintings will be discussed in 'Leaving the '80s #2').

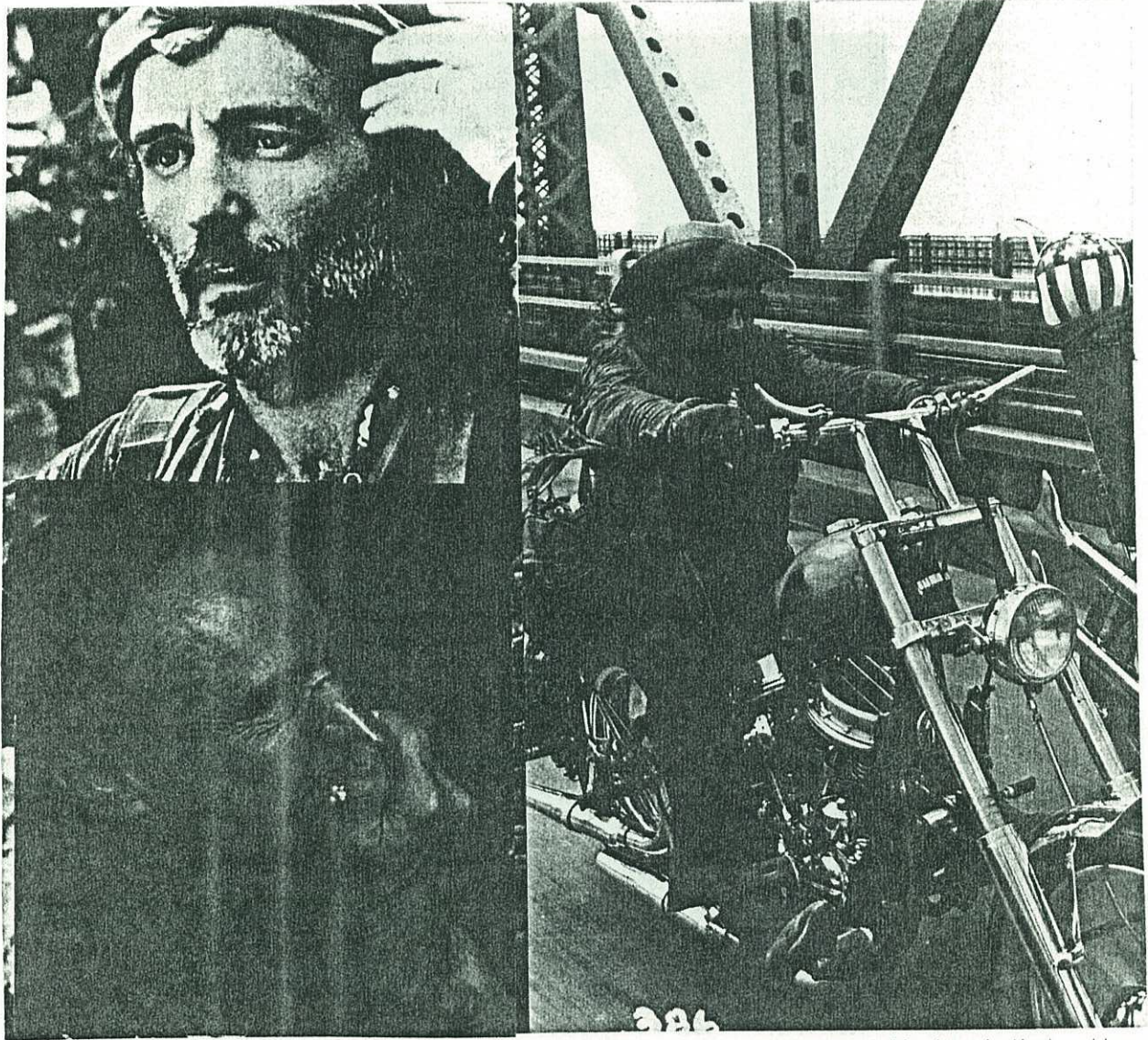
John Cassavetes died during February. As a film director he had revolutionised screen acting, unlike the remainder of America here was a man who had embraced the ethos of the international New Wave! Born in 1929 he began acting in movies in 1951, his name was made by the 'Johnny Staccato' TV series in the '50s. Using some of his earnings from the show he made 'Shadows' (1960), rejoicing in it's improvisation, low-budget and cinema verite feel the picture went on to win five prizes at Venice. After an unhappy period as an orthodox Hollywood director Cassavetes returned to his original style with 'Faces' in 1968. Two years later he turned in what many people consider to be his masterpiece; 'Husbands' - the film explores the marital manners, morals and sexual identity of three men (Cassavetes, Ben Gazzara and Peter Falk) who are forced to re-examine themselves after the death of a friend. He continued to make pictures through the '70s (often financed by his acting roles in films like 'Rosemary's Baby') perhaps his best work was to be seen on 'A Woman Under The Influence' (1974) starring his actress-wife Gena Rowlands. The impact of this maveric on American film is profound, directors Scorsese, Bogdanovich and Jaglom can all be numbered amongst his admirers. As he said to an interviewer in 1980: "People who are making films today are too concerned with mechanics - technical things instead of feeling ... Execution is about eight percent to me. The technical quality of a film doesn't have much to do with whether it's a good film."

Hal Ashby, the director of 'Shampoo' (1975) died in February of cancer of the liver. Born in Utah in 1932, he hitched to LA in the '50s and worked for the next twenty years as editor, assistant director etc. He began directing in 1970, his other successful films were 'The Last Detail' (with Jack Nicholson), 'Coming Home' (anti-Vietnam War) and 'Being There' (Peter Sellers' last movie). One day 'Shampoo' will be recognised as the classic it truly is - Warren Beatty as beautiful loser anyone?

King Tubby (nee Osbourne Ruddock), the Jamaican record producer was shot dead on February 6th by a lone gunman. He was one of eight people murdered in the run-up to the JA elections. Involved in reggae music since the mid-60s, he is best known for giving the world it's first modern reggae MC; U Roy and being one of the prime pioneers of the dub sound of the '70s. Check out 'King Tubby Meets the Rockers UpTown'. His killer stole his wallet and took a gold chain from around his neck!

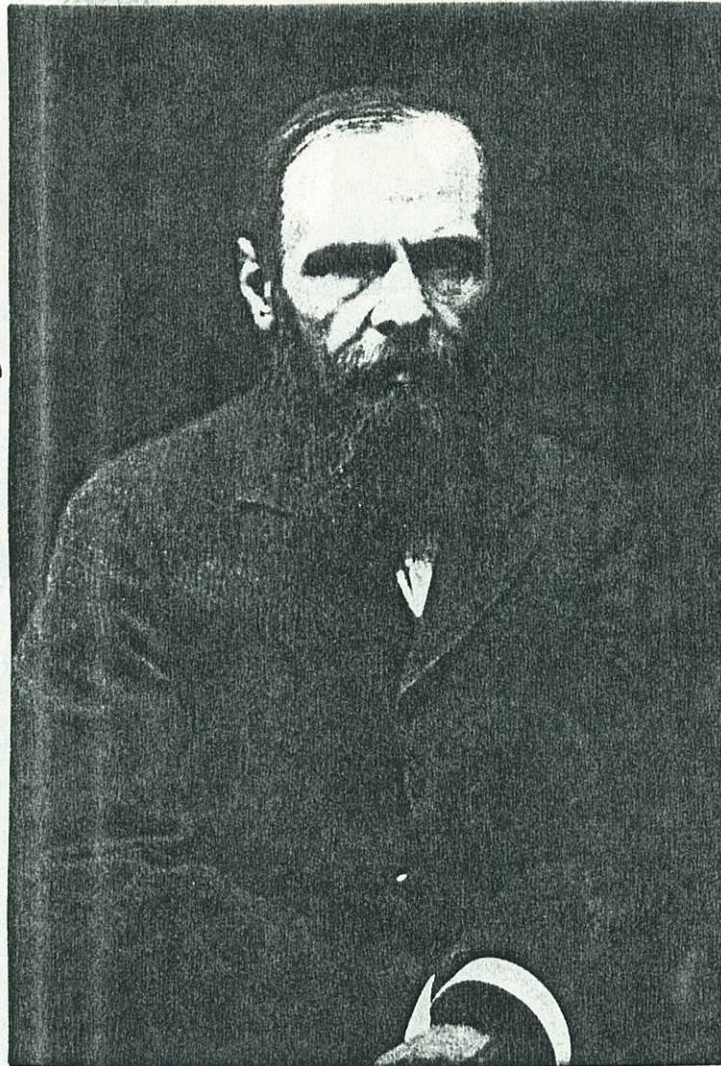
Richard Roud, the film critic passed away in February. An American living in England he was director of the London Film Festival, NFT programmer and Guardian film-critic in the '60s. A devotee of the New Wave, his 1967 'Cinema One' book on Jean Luc Godard is required reading for anyone even remotely interested in film. His other books include work on Ophuls and Henri Langlois. At the time of his death he was preparing a (sorely-needed) biography of Francois Truffaut. He was 59 years old.

Sylvester, the disco superstar died from AIDS in January in San Francisco. He was 42 years old. His '70s hit; 'You Make Me Feel (Mighty Real)' was one of the few genuine disco gems.



Dennis Hopper was born in Dodge City, Kansas on 17 May 1936. In the mid-50s he studied acting at the Old Globe Theatre in San Diego. His first screen role was in Nick Ray's classic youth picture; 'Rebel Without a Cause' (1955). Heavily influenced by James Dean (with whom he also appeared in 'Giant'), Hopper went beyond playing mere rebels, his speciality became the semi-hysterical fragile character. In the 60s he developed a 'difficult' reputation due to his drink and drug abuse but somehow still managed to get acting work; a couple of Henry Hathaway movies ('The Sons of Katie Elder' and 'True Grit'), 'Cool Hand Luke' and a primitive Warhol avant-garde flic. His real success didn't occur until 1969 when he directed, co-wrote and starred in 'Easy Rider'. This movie was at the commercial spearhead of the new wave of American film, the new-wave that later gave us Coppola, Scorsese, Bogdanovich etcetera. Given a free-hand (\$1,500,000 up-front and 'final cut') by Universal Pictures he went on to make 'The Last Movie', perhaps the most indulgent film made in the USA in the last twenty years. His basic idea had been to merge the aesthetics of the radical European (Godardian) cinema with the dynamics of the American Western. He failed! After five years in the 'wilderness' he returned with classic performances in 'Tracks' (as a Vietnam veteran), 'The American Friend' (for Wim Wenders) and as a burnt-out 60s photographer in Coppola's 'Apocalypse Now'. In 1980 he once again got the chance to direct a low-budget picture, providing his backers with the monstrous 'Out of the Blue'; a horrific tale of incest, murder, madness and youth culture. This done he disappeared for a while with a severe cocaine habit. After a spell in a lunatic asylum he played Mickey Rourke's drunken father in Coppola's 'Rumblefish'. In 1986 he finally mastered the 'crazed' persona that he had been brewing for years with two stunning performances as Frank in 'Blue Velvet' and Fekk in 'River's Edge'. Last year he returned to direction with a cop movie; 'Colors' about black youth gangs in LA. A successful sculptor and still photographer, it is quite unbelievable how he has managed to stay 'where it's at' for more than thirty years!

Fyodor



Dostoyevsky

1821 30 Oct - Fedor Mikhaylovich Dostoevsky born in Moscow,

1843 - Translates Balzac's *'Eugenie Grandet'*,

1846 - Writes: *'Poor Folk'* and *'The Double'*,

1849 - Writes: *'Netochka Nezvanova'*,

1849 22 Dec - Is led out for execution in St Petersburg, at the last moment his sentence is commuted to penal servitude, followed by exile in Siberia,

1850-54 - Serves four years imprisonment in Omsk,

1859 - Writes: *'Uncle's Dream'* and *'Stepanchikovo Village'*,

1861 - Writes: *'Insulted and Injured'* and *'A Series of Essays on Literature'*,

Begins publication of new literary monthly; *'Vremya'*,

1861-62 - Writes: *'Memoirs from the House of the Dead'*,

1863 - Writes: *'Winter Notes on Summer Impressions'*,

'Vremya' is banned for political reasons by the authorities,

1864 - Writes: *'Notes From Underground'*,

Launches second journal; *'Epokha'*,

1865 - *'Epokha'* collapses for financial reasons,

1866 - Writes: *'Crime and Punishment'* and *'The Gambler'*,

1868 - Writes: *'The Idiot'*,

1870 - Writes: *'The Eternal Husband'*,

1871-72 - Writes: *'The Devils'* (also called *'The Possessed'*),

1873-74 - Edits the weekly journal *'Grazhdanin'*,

1873-81 - Writes: *'Diary of a Writer'*,

1875 - Writes: *'A Raw Youth'*,

1879-80 - Writes: *'The Brothers Karamazov'*,

1881 28 Jan - Dostoevsky dies in St Petersburg,

EDMUND EMIL KEMPER III

Ed was born in 1948 and demonstrated signs of 'wierdness' at an early age: acting out executions with his sister, mutilating dolls etc. At the age of 9 he killed his pet cat (buried alive), cut off it's head and stuck it on a spindle. By the age of 12 he had realised that for him love/sex and death were intertwined. He told his sister that he could only imagine kissing his school teacher if he had killed her first! He fantasised about killing and his schoolfriends slowly left him alone. At the age of 13, he killed another cat, this time slicing the top of it's head off with a machete, covered in blood, he buried the body in the garden and kept the head in his wardrobe!

His parents were divorced and at the age of 14 he was sent to stay with his paternal grandparents in California. During the summer of 1963 he 'freaked out' and shot his grandmother in the head with a .22 rifle (stabbing her repeatedly afterwards) and when his grandfather returned he killed him as well. He then telephoned his mother and waited for the police to arrive. He told the cops: *"I just wondered how it would feel to shoot Grandma"*. He spent the next four years in a maximum-security mental hospital but being a minor, at the time of his crimes, he was later pronounced fit to re-enter society and released in 1969 (he was now 21 - 6ft 9inches tall and weighing 21 stone!) On parole he lived with his mother (a woman he hated) and got a job.

Three years later on May 7th 1972 he picked up two young hitchhikers: Mary Ann Pesce (18) and Anita Luchessa (18). Pulling into a quiet cul-de-sac he locked Luchessa in the boot and handcuffed Pesce to the back seat. Pesce tried to reason with him and it appears that this struck a chord (he was obsessed with her for some time

KILL CITY No1



after her death, later claiming that he loved her!) Having tied her up he stabbed her countless times before slashing her throat. He then pulled Luchessa from the boot and killed her as well. Returning home he took the bodies into his apartment, photographed them, beheaded Luchessa and dissected Pesce, he then sexually assaulted various parts of them, dumping the body parts in the mountains but keeping the heads for some time.

Four months later on 14 September 1972 he picked up another girl; Aiko Koo (15), taking her to a similar deserted place he taped up her mouth, closed her nostrils with his fingers and proceeded to suffocate her. He raped her when she was dead (or dying). He took the body back to his apartment and performed the same rituals on it. The very next day two psychiatrists interviewed him and agreed that he was now "safe", he had Koo's head in the boot of his car during the entire discussion!

Once again it was four months before his next 'kill'. On 8 January 1973 he picked up Cindy Schall (19) took her to a place of seclusion and put a bullet through her skull. He was amazed at how quick it was: *"One second she's animated and next second she's not. Just a noise and absolute, absolute stillness."* He drove to his mother's house with the corpse, hid it in a closet and the next day when his mother had gone to work he had sex with the body, he cut her up and dumped the parts, keeping only the head which he buried in the garden, facing the house so that she could see him!

Confidence boosted by his success, he only waited four weeks before killing again. On 5 February he picked up two hitchhikers (separately) Rosalind Thorpe (23) and Alice Liu (21). He stopped his car on the open road and shot Thorpe through the head: *"She had a rather large forehead and I was imagining what her brain looked like inside, and I just wanted to put it right in the middle of that."* Liu took a few more bullets, she struggled and tried to hide her face. He drove to his mother's and left the bodies in the boot of the car, after supper he went outside and decapitated the two young women. The next morning he took Liu's torso into the house and had sex with it, unbelievably he cleaned up Thorpe's head, even managing to remove the bullet! The body parts were once again ditched miles from where he committed the murders.

Believing his 'task' to be nearing completion, he began to prepare himself for the 'kill' that perhaps he had been planning the longest. On Easter weekend '73 at 5.15am he walked into his mother's bedroom, hit her with a hammer and cut her throat. He then chopped her head off, cut out her larynx and pushed it down the garbage disposal and sexually assaulted the corpse. (Rumour has it that he put her head on the mantle-piece, punched it and threw darts at it!) Reading the accounts of the case she does not come across as a particularly nice woman still this was a pretty brutal punishment!

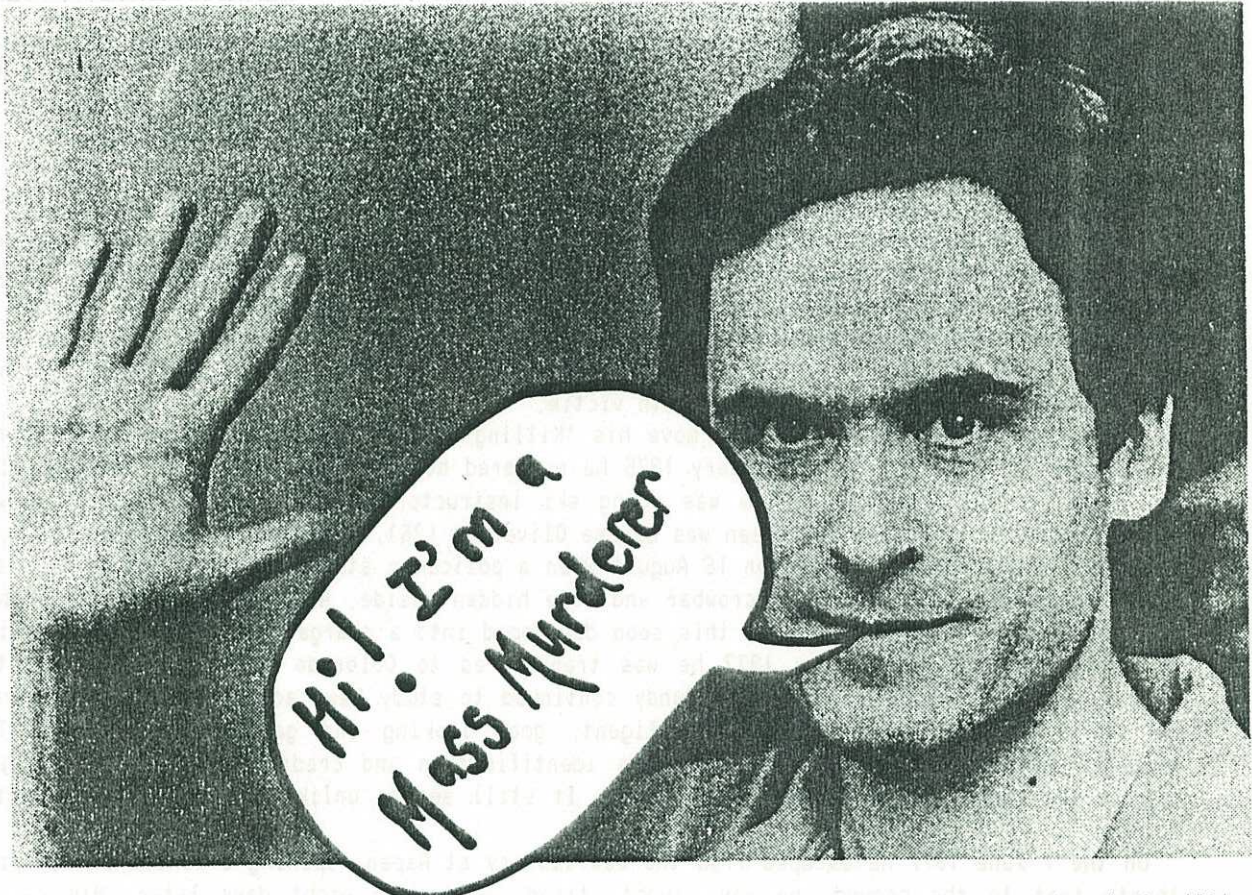
Now totally crazed he went out drinking: *"I couldn't stand being around the house any more."* He met an acquaintance who owed him ten dollars. The fact that this guy offered Kemper the money probably saved his life. *"To tell you the truth (that) saved his life, because with his little excuses, I needed to kill somebody at that point, and I think he deserved it more than anybody."* Still mad with blood-lust he phoned one of his mother's friends; Sally Hallet and invited her around for dinner. When she arrived at the house exhausted from work, she apparently said: *"Let's sit down, I'm dead."* *"And I sort of took her at her word there"*, said Kemper, who punched her in the stomach and choked her to death. He cut off her head and left her body on his bed, he spent the night in his mother's room!

His task now completed, he fled, driving east, firstly to Reno and then deep into Colorado, exhausted from lack of sleep and hallucinating from the number of No-Doz tablets he had been consuming, he stopped at a telephone booth and phoned the Santa Cruz police. The cops didn't take him seriously at first but when they had checked his home they believed him and the Colorado police dept picked him up. He gave as his reason for giving himself up; *"I felt I was losing control, and I was afraid that anything could cause me to go off the deep end, and I didn't know what would happen then, I had never been out of control in my life."*

He was judged legally sane and sentenced to life imprisonment.

THEODORE ROBERT BUNDY

Ted Bundy was born illegitimate on 24 November 1946 and suffered from the shame of this for the rest of his life. In the late-Sixties he worked for the Republican party and dated a wealthy Californian socialite. He completed his psychology degree in the Summer of 1972 and re-entered the University of Washington in 1973 to study Law. By this time he had already started to consume hard-core pornography. During 1972 he was making love to a casual date when he suddenly felt the urge to throttle her; within a few months he was tying up his girlfriend during sex! In late '73 this desire to link pain and pleasure resulted in him hitting a woman in the street with a wooden club. Early in January 1974 he felt confident enough to take his violence further, he attacked a woman in the university area of Seattle, fracturing her skull with a heavy metal rod and pushing a medical instrument into her vagina. 'Mary' was in a coma for months and when she recovered she could remember nothing.



He killed for the first time two or three weeks later. On 31 January Lynda Ann Healy (21) was abducted from the basement flat she shared with four other women. In his biography which was written in a curious 'as-if' third person style (the only way he would give information) he said: *"Once he had arrived at this point where he didn't have a fear of alarming anyone ... he would have the girl undress and then, with that part of himself gratified ... he would kill her and leave the body where he'd taken her."* Six weeks later he struck again, on 12 March he coaxed Donna Gail Manson (19) into his car, her body was never discovered. His 'coaxing' technique was to wear a cast and splint on his left arm and fumble with a large amount of books, asking girls to help him open his car! During mid-April two young women avoided being trapped this way, Susan Rancourt (a Biology student) was less lucky, her raped and murdered body was found lying next to Lynda Healy's.

Bundy's reign of terror did not stop there, on 6 May he travelled 260 miles to Oregon State University, once there he abducted Kathy Parks, it is believed that after raping her, he drove her to Seattle and committed the murder there! On 1 June he altered his method even

more, he picked up Brenda Ball (22) in a bar and in his own words: *"The initial sexual encounter would be more or less a voluntary one, but one which did not wholly gratify the full spectrum of desires that he had intended,"* Some time later he strangled her, there is evidence that he kept her dead body in his flat for some time, even going so far as to re-do her make-up and shampoo her hair. On the night of 11 June he 'took' Georgeann Hawkins from the University of Seattle and raped and murdered her. Witnesses saw a man in the neighbourhood wearing a leg-cast and using crutches.

Six weeks later on 14 July 1974 he killed two in a day (some sort of record?) Janice Ott (23) and Denise Naslund were picked up (seperately) using his familiar method. Both were found six weeks later raped and murdered. Another nineteen days later he killed his ninth victim; Carol Valenzuela (20), another body was found nearby, but the corpse was never identified. In September Bundy moved from the University of Seattle to Salt Lake City, ostensibly to continue his legal studies.

On 2 October he killed Nancy Wilcox (16) and on 18 October he made it twelve by snatching Melissa Smith (17), the daughter of the Chief of Police. Evidence shows that he kept her prisoner for a week before ending her life. Her nude corpse was found dumped by the side of the road, she had been raped and sodomised and strangled with one of her own stockings. Her vagina had been stuffed with dirt and twigs! On 31 October Laura Aime left home for a Halloween party in Orem, her body was found three weeks later, she been the victim of both vaginal and anal rape. The fact that her hair was freshly shampooed implied that Bundy kept the body for some time after her death. On 3 November he made his first big mistake, posing as a policeman he talked Carol DaRonch into his car, luckily she fought off his attempt to handcuff her and managed to take shelter in another car. She was the only survivor of a Bundy attack, she would later prove to be a valuable witness. Later that same day Debra Kent was not so lucky and she became his fourteenth victim.

The uproar in Utah forced him to move his 'Killing Ground' again, this time he drove his Volkswagen to Colorado. On 11 January 1975 he murdered holidaying nurse Caryn Campbell (23), on 15 March his sixteenth victim was young ski instructor Julie Cunningham (her body was never discovered). Number seventeen was Denise Oliverson (25), snatched as she rode home on a bicycle. It all came to an end on 16 August when a policeman stopped his car and found a ski mask, handcuffs, an ice-pick, a crowbar and rope hidden inside. A warrant was served on him for possession of burglary tools, this soon developed into a charge for attempted kidnapping of Carol DaRonch. In January 1977 he was transferred to Colorado to stand trial for the murder of Caryn Campbell. In prison Bundy continued to study Law, acting as his own lawyer, he was a popular inmate, being intelligent, good looking and genuinely humourous. The evidence against him was strong, DaRonch's identification and credit card receipts placing him in the right places at the right times. It still seemed unlikely that he was a serial killer!

On the 7 June 1977 he escaped from the Law library at Aspen, opening a window and jumping thirty feet to the ground, he was caught, tired and hungry eight days later. His second escape was more successful, on 30 December he cut a foot-wide hole in the roof of his cell with a hack-saw blade and hoisted himself through it. During early January 1978 he fled through Chicago and the 'deep South' finally arriving at Tallahassee, Florida where he took a room. Two blocks away were the rooming-houses of Florida State University. After two years in captivity he was obviously 'crazed' on 15 January he demonstrated this by attacking five sleeping women. The first Lisa Levy was smashed across the head with a club and raped, (he also sodomised her with an aerosol can), he made the mistake of biting deep into her buttocks. He entered the next room and brutally attacked Karen Chandler and Kathy Kleiner, both survived but at a cost, he had broken Chandler's jaw, her right arm and one of her fingers, fractured her skull, the orbit of her right eye and both her cheek bones. He left deep gouges and cuts on her face. Kleiner had her jaw broken with such force that several of her teeth were later found in the blood-soaked bedclothes. Entering another room, he clubbed and strangled Margaret Bowman to death. Interrupted he fled the building, running home he stopped outside Cheryl Thomas's apartment, breaking in he woke her with a blow to the jaw.



She survived but Bundy had gone, he had left a pantyhose mask and semen stains on her bed.

Instead of moving on to another state Bundy appeared to give up at this point, he stayed in Florida indulging himself with heavy drinking. On 9 February he made his last kill: Kimberly Leach (12) was talked out of her high school playground, kidnapped, raped vaginally and anally and either strangled or had her throat cut. He dumped her body in an abandoned hogshed after keeping her corpse with him for an unknown period of time.

On the night of February 14-15 1978 he was arrested for driving erratically. He asked the policeman to shoot him; he would never be free again! On trial he pleaded 'innocent' but his arrogance got the better of him, he couldn't help implying that he was the murderer. (Like a lot of serial killers there is a certain amount of pleasure in the notoriety - see D Nilson). The daughter of the Police chief who interrogated him said that she found him: *"the kind of guy a girl of my age would look at and just say wow! Sort of Kennedy-like"*. Bundy was sentenced to death on 23 July 1979. For the last ten years of his life he seemed quite happy, he never expressed any guilt for the number of people he had killed. Like Orson Welles (in 'The Third Man') he once said: *"What's one less person on the face of the earth anyway"*. He was executed in January 1989 by electric chair. The twenty murders that we know he committed could in fact be as many as forty!

For further information - Colin Wilson & Donald Seaman - *'The Encyclopedia of Modern Murder 1962-1983'* / Elliott Leyton - *'Hunting Humans; The Rise of the Modern Multiple Murderer'* / Margeret Cheney - *'The Co-Ed Killer' (on Kempner)* / Stephen C Michaud & Hugh Aynesworth - *'The Only Living Witness' (on Bundy)* / Ann Rule - *'The Stranger Beside Me' (on Bundy)*.

POESIES

*I replace melancholy with courage, doubt
with certainty, despair with hope, wickedness
with good, complaints with duty, scepticism
with faith, sophisms with the indifference
of calm and arrogance with modesty.*

The poetic moans of this century are only sophisms.

First principles must be above argument.

I accept Euripides and Sophocles; but I do not accept Aeschylus.

Do not display bad taste and a breach of the most basic proprieties towards the creator.

Repel disbelief; you will give me pleasure.

There are not two kinds of poetry; there is only one.

There exists a far from tacit convention between author and reader, by which the former calls himself patient and accepts the latter as nurse. It is the poet who consoles mankind! The roles are arbitrarily reversed.

I do not want to be branded poseur.

I shall leave no Memoirs.

Poetry is not a tempest, any more than it is a cyclone. It is a majestic and fertile river.

It is only by admitting night physically that one succeeds in doing away with it morally. *O Nights of Young!* how many headaches have you caused me!

One dreams only when one is asleep. There are words like those of dream, nothingness of life, earthly thoroughfare, the preposition perhaps, the disordered tripod, which have instilled into your souls this clammy poetry of languor, like that of putrefaction. To pass from words to ideas is but one step.

The disturbances, anxieties, depravities, death, exceptions to the physical or moral order, the spirit of negation, the brutishness, the hallucinations waited upon by the will, torments, destruction, madresses, tears, insatiabilities, slaveries, deep-thinking imaginations, novels, the unexpected, things which must not be done, the chemical peculiarities of the mysterious vulture that watches for the carcass of some dead illusion, precocious and abortive experiences, obscurities with a flea-like shell, the terrible obsession with pride, the inoculation with deep stupors, funeral orations, envies, betrayals, tyrannies, impieties, irritations, bitternesses, aggressive tirades, insanity, spleen, rational terrors, strange misgivings the reader would rather not feel, grimaces, neuroses, the cruel routes through which one forces last-ditch logic, exaggerations, lack of sincerity, the nuisances, platitudes, gloom, the dismal, the childbirths worse than murders, passions, the clique of assize-court novelists, tragedies, odes, melodramas, eternally presented extremes, reason hissed off stage with impunity, the odours of wet chicken, dulled tastes, frogs, octopi, sharks, the simoom of the deserts, whatever is clairvoyant, squinting, nocturnal, narcotic, somnambulist, slimy, talking seal, equivocal, consumptive, spasmodic, aphrodisiac, anaemic, one-eyed, hermaphrodite, bastard, albino, pederast, phenomenon of aquarium and bearded lady, the drunken hours of taciturn dejection, the fantasies, pungencies, monsters, demoralising syllogisms, the excrement, whatever is thoughtless as a child, desolation, that intellectual manchineel-tree, perfumed chancres, thighs like camellias, the guilt of a writer who rolls down the slope of nothingness and scorns himself with joyous cries, remorse, hypocrisies, the vague perspectives that grind you within their imperceptible mills, the sober gobs of spittle upon sacred axioms, the insinuating tickling of vermin, idiotic prefaces like those of Cromwell, Mlle de Maupin and Dumas *fils*, the decrepitude, impotence, blasphemies, asphyxiations, fits, rages, - before these foul charnel-houses, which I blush to name, it is time at last to react against what offends us and so imperiously bows us down.

You are being driven incessantly out of your mind and caught in the trap of shadows built

with coarse skill by egoism and self-esteem.

Taste is the fundamental quality which sums up all the other qualities. It is the *nec plus ultra* of the intelligence. Through this alone is genius the supreme health and balance of all the faculties. Villemain is thirty-four times more intelligent than Eugène Sue and Frédéric Soulié. His preface to the *Dictionary of the Academy* will survive Walter Scott's and Fenimore Cooper's novels, and all novels possible and imaginable. The novel is a false genre, since it describes the passions for their own sakes; the moral conclusion is missing. Describing the passions is nothing; it is enough to be born part jackal, part vulture, part panther. We do not hold with that. To describe them in order to submit them to an exalted morality, like Corneille, is another matter. He who refrains from doing the former while remaining capable of admiring and understanding those with the gift of doing the latter, surpasses, with all the superiority of virtue over vice, him who does the former.

For that reason alone a fifth-form teacher who says to himself, "Were they to give me all the treasures of the universe, I should not wish to have written novels like those of Balzac and Alexandre Dumas," for that alone he is more intelligent than Alexandre Dumas and Balzac. For that reason alone when a fourth-form pupil is imbued with the idea that one must not harp on physical and mental deformities, for that alone he is stronger, more capable, more intelligent than Victor Hugo, had he produced only novels, plays and letters.

Alexandre Dumas *fills* will never, never make a school prize-giving speech. He does not know what morality is, it will not compromise. If he were to make one, he would first have to cross out with one stroke of the pen all he has so far written, starting with his absurd Prefaces. Summon a jury of competent men; I maintain that a good fifth-former is superior to him in any respect, even on the *offensive* subject of courtesans.

The masterpieces of the French language are school prize-giving speeches and academic treatises. Indeed, the instruction of youth is perhaps the finest practical expression of duty, and a sound appreciation of Voltaire's works (underline the word appreciation) is preferable to the works themselves. - Of course!

The best authors of novels and plays would in the long run distort the well-known idea of the good, if the teaching professions, repositories of what is right, did not keep generations young and old upon the path of honesty and work.

In its personal name, despite it, necessarily, with an indomitable will and an iron tenacity I have come to deny the hideous past of blubbery humanity. Yes; I want to blazon forth the beautiful upon a golden lyre, allowing for the goitrous melancholies and stupid pride that pollute at its source the swampy poetry of this century. I shall trample underfoot the shrill stanzas of scepticism which have no reason for their existence. Judgement, once involved in the efflorescence of its energy, imperious and resolute, without wavering for one second over the ridiculous uncertainties of a misplaced pity, like a public prosecutor, fatefully, condemns them. Without weakening one must guard against purulent insomnias and atrabilious nightmares. I scorn and execrate pride and the infamous delights of an irony employed to extinguish and which displaces precision of thought.

Some characters, excessively intelligent - you have no grounds for invalidating this with recantations in doubtful taste - have hurled themselves head first into the arms of evil. It was absinthe - tasty I rather doubt, but harmful - that morally killed the author of *Rollis*. Woe betide those who are gluttons! Hardly has the English aristocrat reached middle-age before his harp breaks beneath the walls of Missolonghi, having plucked along his way only the blossoms that brew the opium of bleak annihilation.

Although his was an uncommon genius, if during his lifetime there had happened to be another poet like himself endowed with a similar admixture of exceptional intelligence, and capable of coming forward as his rival, he would have been the first to admit the uselessness of his efforts to produce ill-matched maledictions; and that it is good and good alone which, by general consent, is deemed worthy of annexing our esteem. The fact was that there was none effectively to rival him. That is what no one has remarked. How strange! Even on leafing through the anthologies and books of his day we find not one critic who thought to point out the foregoing strict syllogism. And the one to go beyond it need not have invented it. One

was so filled with astonishment and unease, rather than considered admiration, faced with words written by a treacherous hand, but which nonetheless revealed convincing evidence of a soul that did not belong to the common run of men and found itself at ease with the final outcome of one of the two less obscure problems to interest non-solitary hearts; good, evil. It is not given to anybody to grapple with extremes, whether in one sense or another. Which explains why, while unreservedly praising the marvellous intelligence he manifests at every turn, he, one of the four or five beacons of mankind, one silently makes numerous reservations about the unjustifiable applications and use he has knowingly made of them. He should not have traversed Satanic domains.

The ferocious revolt of the Troppmans, the Napoleon the Firsts, Papavoines, Byrons, Victor Noirs and Charlotte Cordays shall be continued by my stern gaze. These great criminals with such varied claims, I wave them aside. Whom do they think they are fooling here, I ask myself with an interposing deliberation? O prison-hulk hobby-horses! Soap-bubbles! Gold-leafed puppets! Frayed strings! Let them draw near, the Konrads, Manfreds, Laras, the sailors resembling the Corsair, the Mephistopheleses, the Werthers, Don Juans, Fausts, Iagos, Rodins, the Caligulas, Cains, Iridions, the shrews imitating Colombus, the Ahrimans, the Manichean manitous spattered with brains, who ferment their victims' blood in the sacred temples of Hindustan, the serpent, the toad and the crocodile, divinities considered exceptional in ancient Egypt, the sorcerers and demonic forces of the Middle Ages, the Prometheuses, the mythological Titans blasted by Jupiter's thunderbolts, the Evil Gods spewed forth from the primitive imaginations of barbaric races - the whole resounding range of pasteboard devils. Assured of overcoming them, I seize the whip of indignation and of concentration that tries its weight, and awaits these monsters resolutely, as their predestined tamer.

There are down-at-heel writers, dangerous wags, quadroon jokers, heavy hoaxers, real lunatics fit, to fill Bedlam. Their softening patés, from which screws have worked loose, create gigantic phantoms that sink rather than rise. Scabrous exercise; specious gymnastics. So hey presto, grotesques. Kindly withdraw from my presence, fabricators of forbidden riddles by the dozen, in which previously I did not spot straight off, as I do today, the trick of the frivolous solution. Pathological case of a fearsome egoism. Fantastic automata; point out to one another, children, the epithet which puts them in their place.

If they existed somewhere in plastic reality they would be, despite their proven but double-dealing intelligence, the opprobrium, the gall, the shame of the planets they inhabited. Picture them for a moment reunited in company with substances that would be their counterparts. It is an uninterrupted succession of combats undreamed of by bulldogs, forbidden in France, by sharks and macrocephalic cachalots. There are torrents of blood in these chaotic regions full of hydras and minotaurs, and whence the dove, frightened off for ever, flies swiftly away. There is a mass of apocalyptic beasts who are not unaware of what they do. These are the collisions of passions, irreconcilabilities and ambitions, through the shrieks of an indecipherable pride that controls itself and whose reefs and depths none, not even approximately, can fathom.

But they shall foist themselves upon me no longer. To suffer is a weakness, when one can prevent it and do something better. To give vent to the sufferings of an unbalanced splendour is to give proof, O moribund ones of the perverse maremmas!, of still less resistance and spirit. With my voice and my broad daylights' solemnity, I call you back to my deserted hearths, glorious hope. Come and sit beside me, wrapped in the cloak of illusions, upon the rational tripod of assurances. Like a piece of cast-off furniture I chased you from my abode with a scorpion-lashed whip. If you wish to convince me that when returning to my home you have forgotten the sorrows which, as tokens of remorse, I once caused you, then damn it, lead back with you that sublime retinue - hold me, I'm fainting! - of offended virtues and their imperishable redresses.

I record bitterly that only a few drops of blood remain in the arteries of our consumptive epochs. Since the odious and odd snivellings, patented without warranty of a trademark, of the Jean Jacques Rousseaus, the Chateaubriands and wet-nurses in diapers like Obermann, through to the other poets who have wallowed in the foul slime, right up to the dream of

Jean-Paul, Dolores de Veintemilla's suicide, the Raven of Allan, the Pole's Infernal Comedy, the bloodthirsty eyes of Zorilla, and the immortal cancer, A Carcass, once painted lovingly by the morbid lover of the Hottentot Venus, the unlikely sufferings that this century has created for itself have, with their monotonous and disgusting insistence, rendered it consumptive. Absorbent larvae in their unbearable torpors!

Music, ho.

Yes, good people, it is I who direct you to roast upon a red-hot shovel, with a little brown sugar, the duck of doubt with lips of vermouth, which, shedding crocodile tears in a melancholy struggle between good and evil, without an air-pump everywhere brings about the universal vacuum. That is the best thing you can do.

Despair, subsisting with prejudice upon its phantasmagorias, imperturbably leads the man of letters to the wholesale repeal of divine and social laws and to theoretical and practical wickedness. In a word, makes the human arse prevail in arguments. Come on, my turn to speak my piece! One becomes wicked, I repeat, and the eyes take on the hue of men condemned. I shall not retract what I propose. I want my poetry to be fit reading for a fourteen-year-old girl.

True grief is incompatible with hope. Great though this grief may be, hope raises it vastly higher. So leave me alone with the seekers. Down, boy, down, ridiculous bitches, show-offs, *poseurs*! Whatever suffers, whatever dissects the mysteries that surround us, does not hope. Poetry which questions the necessary truths is less fine than that which does not question them. Indecisions to the bitter end, misused talent, time-wasting; nothing easier to prove.

To sing of Adamastor, Jocelyn, Racambole, is puerile. It is not even as though the author hopes the reader infers that he will pardon his knavish heroes, since he himself betrays them, and relies on the good so as to do without the description of evil. It is in the name of these same virtues Frank misunderstood that we wish to support him, O mountebanks of incurable malaises.

Do not do as these shameless - in their own eyes, magnificent - explorers of melancholy, who discover things unknown within their minds and bodies!

Melancholy and sadness are the start of doubt, as it is; doubt is the beginning of despair; despair is the cruel beginning of the differing degrees of wickedness. To convince yourself of this, read the *Confession of a child of the century*. The slope downhill is fatal once one is committed to it. It is certain to lead to wickedness. Beware of the slope. Rip out evil by the root. Do not indulge the cult of adjectives such as indescribable, inenarrable, rutilant, incomparable, colossal, which shamelessly lie to the nouns they distort; they are pursued by lewdness.

Second-rate minds, like Alfred de Musset's, can mulishly force one or two of their faculties far further than the corresponding faculties of first-rate minds, Lamartine, Hugo. We are faced with the derailment of an overworked locomotive. It is a nightmare that holds the pen. Learn that the soul is composed of a score of faculties. Talk to me of those beggars who have one grandiose hat, with squalid rags!

Here is a means of establishing Musset's inferiority to the other two poets. Read to a young girl *Rolla* or *The Nights*, *The Fools* by Cobb, or else the portraits of Gwynplaine and Dea, or the speech of Euripides' Theramenes translated into French verse by Racine *père*. She shudders, frowns, raises and lowers her hands aimlessly like a drowning man; her eyes will flash greenish. Read her Victor Hugo's Prayer for All. The effects are diametrically opposed. The type of electricity is no longer the same. She bursts out laughing, she asks for more.

Of Hugo nothing will remain but his poems about children, where badness abounds.

Paul and Virginie shocks our deepest aspirations to happiness. In the past, this serial which broods gloomily from the first page to the last, especially the final shipwreck, made me gnash my teeth. I would roll upon the carpet and kick my wooden horse. The description of suffering is a misconception. One should present a rosy view of things. If that story were related in an ordinary biography, I would not be attacking it at all. It changes character at once. Misfortune becomes august through the impenetrable will of God who created it. But man must not create misfortune in his books. This is to want, despite all opposition, to consider

only one side of things. O maniacal ravers that you are!

Do not deny the immortality of the soul, the wisdom of God, the grandeur of life, the order manifest in the universe, physical beauty, love of family, marriage, the social institutions. Discard the dismal hacks; Sand, Balzac, Alexandre Dumas, Musset, Du Terrail, Féval, Flaubert, Baudelaire, Leconte and the *Blacksmiths' Strike!*

Convey to your readers only the experience which emerges from suffering and which is no longer the suffering itself. Do not weep in public.

One must know how to snatch literary beauty from the very bosom of death; but these beauties do not belong to death. Death is here only the occasional cause. It is not the means, it is the end - which it is not.

The immutable and necessary truths which are the glory of nations, and which doubt strives in vain to shake, began ages ago. These are things one should not touch. Those who would make literary anarchy under the pretext of novelty lapse into error. One does not dare attack God; one attacks the immortality of the soul. Yet the immortality of the soul, that too is as old as the world's foundations. What other belief will replace it, if replaced it must be? It will not always be a negation.

If one recalls the truth whence all the others flow, God's absolute goodness and his absolute ignorance of evil, sophisms will collapse of their own accord. At the very same time there shall collapse the rather unpoetic literature which relied upon them. All literature which debates the eternal axioms is condemned to live only off itself. It is unjust. It devours its liver. The *novissima Verba* make the snotty third-formers smile haughtily. We do not have the right to question the Creator on anything whatsoever.

If you are unhappy, you must not tell the reader so. Keep it to yourself.

If one were to correct sophisms via the truths associated with these sophisms, the correction alone would be true; while the work thus recast would have the right not to call itself false any more. The rest would be out of true, with a trace of falsehood, and therefore of necessity considered null and void.

Personal poetry has had its day of relative juggling tricks and contingent contortions. Let us take up the indestructable thread of impersonal poetry, abruptly cut short since the birth of the would-be philosopher of Ferney, since the miscarriage of the great Voltaire.

It seems fine, sublime, under the pretext of humility or pride, to argue about final causes, to falsify their stable and known consequences. Disabuse yourselves, for there is nothing more foolish! Let us again link together the orderly chain with bygone times; poetry is geometry in the highest sense. Since Racine, poetry has not progressed one millimetre. It has regressed. Thanks to whom? Thanks to the Great-Soft-Heads of our epoch, thanks to the old ninnies, Chateaubriand, the Melancholy-Mohican; Senancourt, the Man-in-a-Petticoat; Jean-Jacques Rousseau, the Socialist-Grouser; Anne Radcliffe, the Crazy-Spectre; Edgar Poë, the Marmeluke-of-Alcohol-Dreams; Mathurin, the Accomplice-Of-Darkness; Georges Sand, the Circumcised-Hermaphrodite; Théophile Gautier, the Incomparable-Grocer; Leconte, the Devil's-Captive; Goethe, the Suicide-through-Weeping; Sainte-Beuve, the Suicide-through-Laughter; Lamartine, the Maudlin-Stork; Lermontoff, the Tiger-who-Howls; Victor Hugo, the Funereal-Green-Spindleshanks; Miszkiewicz, the Imitator-of-Satan; Musset, the Shirtless-Intellectual-Dandy; and Byron, the Hippopotamus-of-the-Infernal-Jungles.

Doubt has existed at all times in the minority. In this century it is in the majority. We breath the violation of duty through the pores. That is only evident once; it will never be seen again.

The notions of plain reason have been so obscured nowadays that the first thing third-form teachers do when instructing their pupils, young poets whose lips are still moist with their mothers' milk, how to write Latin verse, is to reveal to them through practice the name of Alfred de Musset. Well, I ask you! So fourth-form teachers in their classes set two bloody episodes for translation into Greek verse. The first is the repulsive simile of the pelican. The second being the dreadful catastrophe that befell a labourer. What is the use of contemplating evil? Is it not in the minority? Why weigh down a schoolchild's head with questions which, for want of being understood, caused men like Pascal and Byron to lose

theirs?

A pupil told me that his fifth-form teacher had given his class, day after day, these two cadavers to translate into Hebrew verse. These plagues of animal and human nature made him ill for a month, which he spent in the infirmary, as we know each other, he got his mother to call for me, he told me, somewhat naively, that his nights were troubled by recurrent dreams. He thought he saw an army of pelicans that swooped upon his chest and ripped it out of him. Then they flew off towards a thatched cottage in flames. They were devouring the labourer's wife and children. His body charred by burns, the labourer would come out of the house and engage in a frightful struggle with the pelicans. They would all rush headlong into the cottage, which would collapse in ruins. From the heaped mass of rubble - this never failed - he would see his fifth-form teacher emerge, holding in one hand his heart, in the other a sheet of paper on which could be deciphered, in lines of brimstone, the passages about the pelican and the labourer, just as Musset himself composed them. It was not easy at first sight to diagnose his type of illness. I enjoined him to be sure to stay silent and to talk about it to no one, especially not to his fifth-form teacher. I advised his mother to keep him at home with her for a few days, assuring her that this would pass. Indeed, I took pains to visit him for a few hours each day, and it passed off.

Criticism must attack the form, never the content of your ideas, of your language. Settle it among yourselves.

The feelings are the most incomplete form of reasoning that can be imagined.

All the water in the sea would not suffice to wash away one intellectual bloodstain.

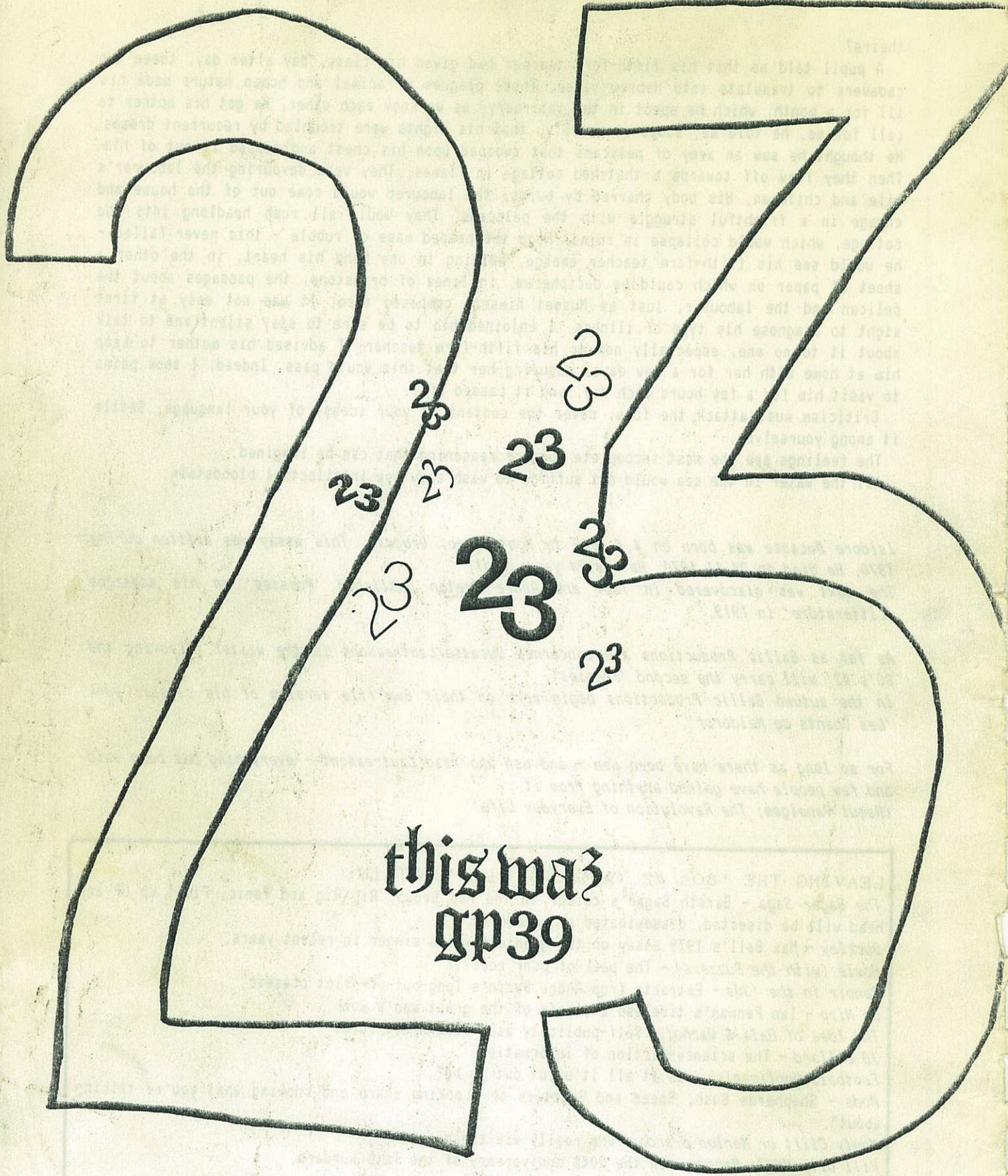
*Isidore Ducasse was born on 4.4.1846 in Montevideo, Uruguay. This essay was written during 1870. He died on 24.11.1870. He was 24 years old!!
The text was discovered in 1891 and Andre Breton published 'Poesies' in his magazine 'Litterature' in 1919.*

*As far as Gallic Productions are concerned Ducasse/Lautreamont is the writer. 'Leaving the 80's #2' will carry the second 'Poesies'.
In the autumn Gallic Productions begin work on their 8mm film version of his classic work 'Les Chants de Maldoror'.*

*For so long as there have been men - and men who read Lautreamont - everything has been said and few people have gained anything from it.
(Raoul Vaneigem; The Revolution of Everyday Life)*

LEAVING THE '80s #2 (AUGUST) WILL CONTAIN:

*The Sagar Saga - Gareth Sagar's career in The Pop Group, Rip Rig and Panic, Float Up CP and Head will be dissected, disseminated and debunked.
Buckley - Max Bell's 1979 essay on the greatest white singer in recent years.
Howie (with the Buzzers) - The peak of punk rock???
Renoir in the '30s - Extracts from Andre Bazin's long-out-of-print classic.
De Niro - Ian Penman's timeless analysis of the great man's work.
The Idea of Dali & Warhol - Self-publicity as a modern art-form?
JG Ballard - The science-fiction of Information.
Football Hooliganism - Is it all it's cut out to be?
Mads - Shepherds Bush, Speed and Scooters or "Looking sharp and knowing what you're talking about".
Monty Clift or Marlon Brando - Who really was the greater?
Kill City No 2: Manson - On the 20th anniversary of the Tate murders.
Poesies II - The other wierd Ducasse essay.
+++ 'Nuggets' and 'The Wicker Man' re-evaluated and fact-files on Vic Godard, Roman Polanski and Jean Genet.*



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