

# DVARK

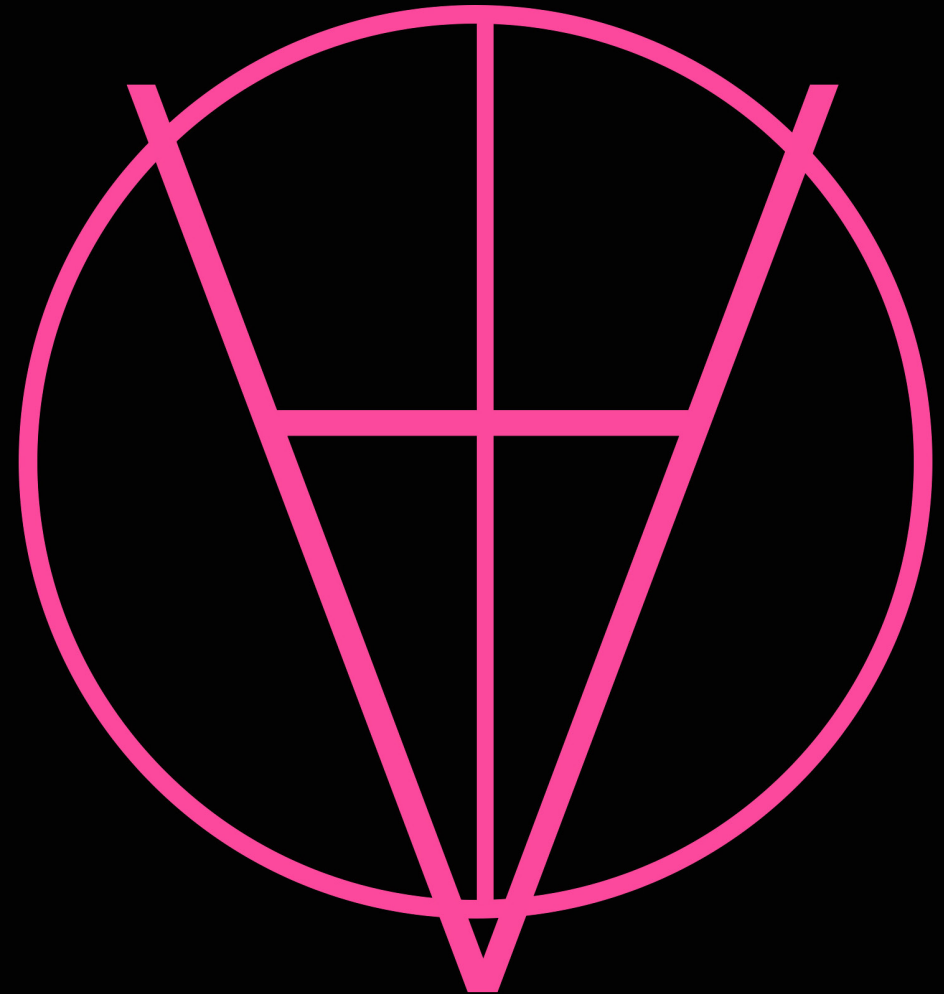
Dark Vrts Research Kollektive



**FIELD REPORT #3**



A MULTIDIMENSIONAL  
RITUAL SPACE EXISTING  
BETWIXT ACADEMIA &  
THE ARTS, COMPOSED OF  
RESEARCHERS, ARTISTS,  
DESIGNERS, PERFORMERS,  
EXPLORING OCCULTURAL  
PRACTICES, FORTEAN  
GEOGRAPHIES,  
PARANORMAL  
RESONANCES, PSYCHO-  
PHYSICAL ENCHANTMENT  
DEMONIA & THE ARTS,  
COMPOSED OF  
RESEARCHERS, ARTISTS,  
DESIGNERS, PERFORMERS,  
EXPLORING OCCULTURAL  
PRACTICES, FORTEAN  
GEOGRAPHIES,  
PARANORMAL  
RESONANCES, PSYCHO-  
PHYSICAL ENCHANTMENT



COVERS, LAYOUT & DESIGN  
K CRAIG



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# The Scenes of Occult Geography

**Julian Holloway (MMU) & James Thurgill (University of Tokyo)**

The interest in stone circles has grown in the last five to ten years. As an ancient, ancient stone botherer myself, I'm delighted to see this is happening. However, in this piece, we want to sound a note of caution – the ideas at play here might not always be something to celebrate.

This interest in stone circles is part of a wider occult geographical scene. This scene comprises texts – zines, travel writing, travelogues, guidebooks, and blogs – and forms of practice – walking and pilgrimage, for example. A field of interest is created here that includes psychogeography, weird fiction, ghost stories, neopaganism, folklore and folk practices, folk horror across different media, alternative music in a variety of different forms, and a narrative of British countercultural history. Arguably, this scene offers a 'new' form of writing that engages with the folkloric, mystical, and sometimes darker, properties of place and landscape.

Pilgrimage to stone circles, dolmens, barrows, menhirs, cup and ring stones, and quoits are one way this scene comes together. Some of the most popular and often travelled to stone circles are Avebury and Stonehenge in Wiltshire. However, other sites are venerated, particularly those in Cornwall. For example, the founders of The Stone Club describe a field trip to Mulfra Quoit in West Penrith, Cornwall:

“Standing looking out across the landscape, it feels like we could have travelled thousands of years back in time. The living, breathing landscape; at once timeless and constantly in flux” (MacBeth and Shaw, 2023: 102)



A common theme across these texts is how an engagement with landscape re-connects the visitor with ancient ways of life and practice. However, given this history is only a trace in these landscapes, this (re)discovery is one without assurance. In other words, the deep past here is a blurry spectrality without definitive meaning. These present-absences make landscape ghostly, uncanny, and occluded. As Soar puts it:

“Stone circles are eerie, haunted places, where time is dislocated and ideas of the past are brought crashing into the present ... time collapses in on itself, disturbing the natural order of things, and the past intrudes on the present in a way which can be disorientating, sometimes threatening.”

(Soar 2019: 15)

It is precisely in the dislocating gap between the brute materiality of these stones, and the unknowability of their origins, meanings, and purpose, that enchantment grows. Thus, between reality and unreality, the visible and the invisible, a pleasing disorientation is experienced. We might call this an eerie enchantment – landscapes that simultaneously evoke wonder, and create a degree of discomfort, through being beyond the normative and the mundane. As we experience these landscapes they are filled with the “failure of absence [and a] failure of presence” as Fisher (2016: 62) puts it.

We could argue that this eerie enchantment was consolidated by the COVID-19 pandemic and the social restrictions of different lockdowns. During this period the British countryside enhanced its status as a desirable space of escape, leisure, well-being, community, and residence. The move to flexible working, feelings of isolation and the perceived needs for ‘healthier’ lifestyles and a sense of closely knit community, reinforced already widespread ideas and practices of the ‘Rural Idyll’. These idyllic imaginings often emerge in this occult geographical literature through a reconnection to nature and the environment that these landscapes afford – and stone circles are often central to this revaluing of the natural.

Eerie enchantment also acts as a source of hope in the face of recent political, social, and economic upheavals – the Brexit vote in 2016 and the financial crash of 2008 come to mind here. As such, these texts promise “a re-weirding of England ... a resistance to the heroic failure that pushes nostalgic visions of Brexitland’s sunny meadows” as Luckhurst (2022: 727) puts it. Therefore, eerie enchant-

ment becomes a political eerie re-enchantment for many in this scene.

This politics also involves a rewriting of national identity. As such, these texts inspire an engagement with a distinctly weird Britishness. This is a counter-cultural historical geography of and for the nation, that venerates the forgotten and occluded in British history, geography, art, and media. A countercultural historical geography of the ghost and the magician, the witch and the demonic, the warlock and the alchemist, the spectral dog, and the megalith. A national identity of the unrecalled and the little known.

This counter-tradition places the neopagan and the magickal at the heart of narratives of time and territory. For example, in an interview with folk horror rock band Green Lung, the singer Tom Templar describes a current period in which:

“... a lot of people were looking for a sense of British nationhood that wasn’t the patriarchal, Christian, capitalist hegemony of the last however many hundreds of years ... [a British identity] basically wrapped up in all of this Tory do-what-you’re-told aristocracy.”

(Parr 2022: 12)

However, this scene offers many claims to ‘authenticity’ in the landscape. Here certain readings of the landscape are privileged above others – these landscapes are somehow more ‘real’, more ‘legitimate’, and ‘truer’ to some mythic primal nationhood. Indeed, taken to its extremes, this idea of authenticity mirrors the Far-Right’s attempt to co-opt folklore and occult landscapes in pursuit of their agendas of ethnonationalism and White supremacy. An example of this that received considerable coverage in the (neo)pagan and folkloric movement occurred when a group called the ‘Asatru Folk Assembly’ (AFA) proposed a ‘Winters Night’ event at Stonehenge on 28th October 2023. The AFA, as the Pagan Federation describe “are an American white supremacist hate group who claim to practice the religion of Asatru, however, the AFA openly and proudly promote a racist, homophobic, misogynistic, and antisemitic interpretation of contemporary Germanic Paganism” (The Pagan Federation 2023a). A petition signed by over six thousand people and a coalition of pagan groups, English Heritage, and the local Wiltshire police forced the AFA to cancel the event.





In contrast, the occult geographical scene openly tries to avoid the fixing of identity and place that discourses of ‘authenticity’ imply. As such, there is a declared diversity of voices and an explicit celebration of multicultural Britain here. These texts seek to avoid exclusion, Othering and the marginalisation of difference. As Justin Hopper puts it in an interview in *Weird Walk*:

“The landscape, again, is of embrace ... the English landscape is heterogeneous; is comprised of ideas and stories, flora and fauna, from millennia of intersections and immigrations” (Tromans, Hornsby and Nicholls 2019: 18).

Indeed, for many of these writers, it seems diversity can be welcomed precisely because of the unknowability and mystery of these occult landscapes. Hence, it is the very gap in definitive knowledge which opens a space for a progressive cultural politics through eerie re-enchantment.

Therefore, re-enchantment here is often explicitly anti-nationalistic and cosmopolitan. Indeed, re-enchantment has become a rallying call in this scene, and one it uses when issues of cultural politics arise. As such, the phrase ‘re-enchantment as resistance’ appears in these debates to sum up the scene’s attempts at a progressive and inclusionary politics. As David Southwell, who coined the phrase, explains:

“How do we fight this? How do we fight monsters? As in the best stories, with magic. Re-enchantment is resistance. In our carving of light on film, in our markings of ink, we need to become the cunning folk. Recognise the enfolding enchantment, share its sublime songs. Refuse to be afraid to channel its often feral hiss into the national consciousness. For a battle of narratives, in contest for imagined England – or any other unreal state – wonder will always win” (Southwell 2019: 63)

The policing of the borders of this occult landscape scene, and the hope that enchantment will override the exclusionary politics of the Far Right, is a commendable endeavour. However, I would like to finish this talk by arguing that this scene still performs moments of exclusion in its practices and discourses. As such, we need to qualify the scene’s embracing of diversity.

The scene has crafted its own lineage of key texts that are often obscure and arcane. Participants are often found to be posting pictures of their ‘to read’ pile or bookshelves weighed down by the same canon of authors – M.R. James, Blackwood, Machen and Garner, as well as more contemporary authors such as Parnell, Hopper and various zines like *Hellebore*, *Hwaet* and *Weird Walk*. Top of the list here is the consistently lauded *Reader’s Digest* (1973) *Folklore, Myths and Legends of Britain*. The totemic status of this book has seen the demand for

it inflating second hand prices, and fans often celebrating finding a cheap copy in a charity shop. Social media posts revealing collections of these ‘sacred’ texts reveals a performance of cultural or subcultural capital – where collections and their display equals status in the scene. Greater subcultural status is also gained through pilgrimage to ever more geographically remote sites of ancient stones and places of occult happenings.

The status garnered by both books and landscapes suggests an unacknowledged exclusion of those who have neither the resources nor the ability to experience this ‘re-enchantment’. In terms of books, the esoteric nature of their contents is far from being accessible and appealing to all. These texts continually cite and reproduce an occult genealogy that can potentially exclude those without the learned, and sometimes economic ability, to hunt down and comprehend their often cryptic discourse. In terms of landscapes, visiting many of the celebrated sites is not always an easy task. So, whilst the scene may honour ancient occult landscapes of “embrace”, many sites would be inaccessible to disabled people and many require a degree of physical ability and fitness to visit. This exclusion is further underlined by the some of the narratives used to describe visits to these sites – often these read as heroic quests, where our brave narrator has undergone physical strain and stresses, and battled against nature, to reach the promised land of a stone circle or megalith.



Finally, the celebration of obscure texts and landscapes has resulted in some negative reactions from those who hold these places as spiritually sacred. Some neopagan and witchcraft commentators have criticised the resurgence of inter-



est in occult landscapes as merely a ‘fashionable hobby’. For example, one commentator described Weird Walk and The Stone Club as “dismal, opportunistic tote bag vendors with only superficial interest in the ancient sites they like to be photographed with” (Pers. Comm. November 2023). Whilst there is further cultural capital and claims to authenticity being mobilised in this quote, the fault lines between these apparently ‘new’ visitors and those who use such landscapes for worship and ritual is fully evident here.

Therefore, in conclusion, whilst there is much to celebrate in this ancient stone and occult geographical scene, the potential for the Far Right to embrace the ‘uniqueness’ of these landscapes for their hate agendas, and the social-cultural exclusions performed by its esoteric history and remote geographies, makes it important for us to stop and think about how we might ‘resist through re-enchantment’. The wonder and mystery of stone circles may hold further shadowy concerns that we need to be aware of. Eerie enchantment has the potential to embrace and exclude.

Presented at AD England: O! Peste Destroyed, DVRK Apport #4: ‘Stone Circle’  
17th April 2024

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SF雑誌

第1章

ロボットは私を未来の影にした



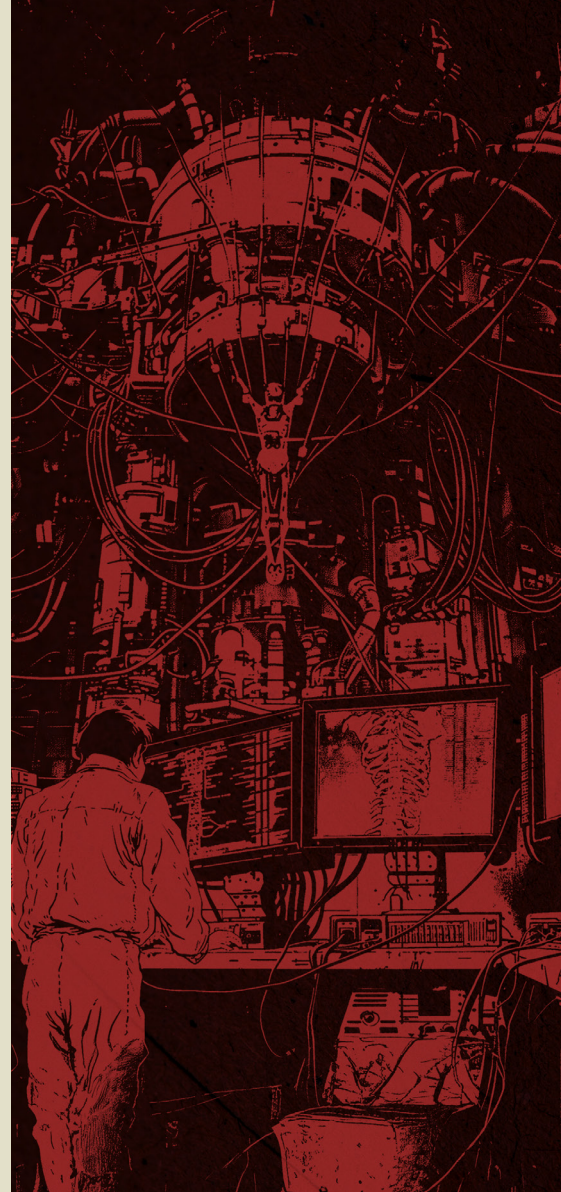
VOL. 1

GREAT ONE SINGS



HYPER URBAN STORIES 著作権 1986

A.D. 2025  
西暦 2025 年

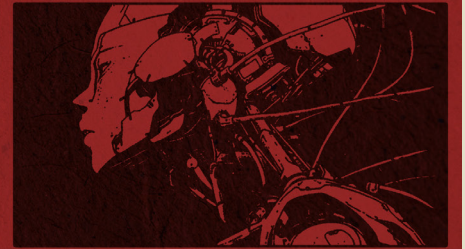


# PATIENCE

## 11

The year is 2025 and humans continue to debate the existential threat of AI. Meanwhile the **ULTIMA** corporation has worked secretly to expand consciousness into a synthesised sentient super intelligence.

Who will control this new mega power? How long can she be contained within her electric prison? What will she do to survive?



Part 1 of the eagerly anticipated Science Fiction comic 'PATIENCE' starts here. Taking you on a journey through the simulated worlds of the machine.

REVOLUTION IS  
EVOLUTION

# 忍耐

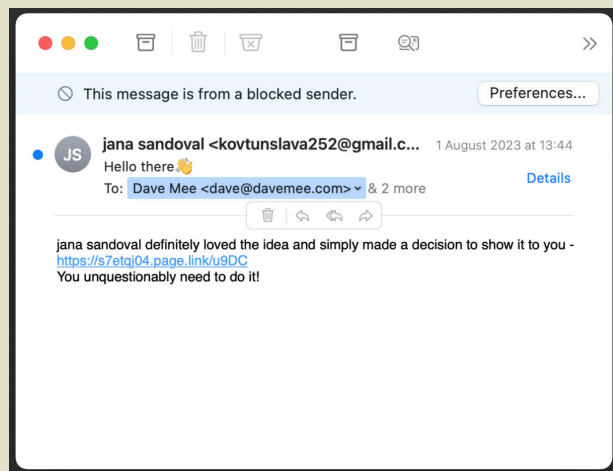


# JANA

## Reverend Dr. Dave Mee

I knew Jana, briefly, in the early 2000s. She was a late-joining housemate with whom I shared a studio, living space, and a few cc'd emails. I don't recall particularly socialising with Jana much, our social circles barely overlapping, intersecting only when we would work late in the studio; our social connections were entirely different, self-contained groups. I can't remember how Jana spoke, looked, or behaved; I can dimly point to a comfortable Home Counties background which correlated with her studies at a well-regarded London art school.

Our connections were formed in the age before internetworked platforms permanently logged and redefined our interpersonal relations as social graphs, with structured data attributes and conformant metadata. I can't be entirely sure about Jana, as I've lost touch with them over the last few decades.



But once again, Jana was sending me emails.

jana sandoval definitely loved the idea and simply made a decision to show it to you - <https://s7etqj04.page.link/u9DC> You unquestionably need to do it!

## The Unfamiliar Familiar

The content of the email was gibberish, programatically generated to catch the one born every minute, or exploit a slipped click of a harried recipient. Text, engineered not for human consumption but to wage slow war on anti-spam systems, aiming to reinforce the blurring of authentic text as malicious junk, undermining recognition efforts until even legitimate mail is indistinguishable from risky clicks and corporate espionage. Unending attrition, winning the war against DPF and DKIM, forcing administrators to retreat behind the SMTP fortresses of Google and Microsoft, the biggest handlers - and beneficiaries - of the whole mess in the first place. Accidental clicks causing collateral damage in the digital war against privacy, turning a hopelessly idealistic medium of exchange into a disease vector as a reward for its exposure to all humanity. But there was Jana... a Jana's... name, in full. And there was my name and email, as a recipient. Twenty years ago, this was something so quotidian, so authentic, it was forgettable; now, it's was so unexpectedly anomalous, it was sent to my spam folder.

This Jana still wrote their name in lowercase, as though it was their first email account, set up by someone unfamiliar with the conventions of a still-novel medium; but looking closer at the address my mail client unhelpfully occluded, the reality of kovtunslava252@gmail.com was exposed. A generic name with numbers, where latecomers to the {} care homes of email addresses seeking uniqueness nestle amongst the scammers and criminals seeking anonymity. This email was eerie. Concealed by the friendly genericness was a link I was exhorted to follow, concealing attempts to validate my existence and mislead my perception of it; something with no connection to me able to usurp my memories of human connection for malign purpose. More nefariously; to befuddle my system defences and abuse my social groups, whether current or not. This does not belong, as Mark Fisher says, and yet even worse, this is to undermine the very essence of eeriness. This is eeriness at the service of small-time criminals, propped up by a grey ecosystem of data brokers, botnet managers and virus releasers; the eerie not as a hint of otherworldliness, but systematised in a parody of capitalism; the mundane eerie, cheap, applied and low-ambition.



## The flesh mask of the digital imposter

The names are real; the connections I know exist, but our once living connection is now a commoditised property used for deception, decoupled from individuals with agency. The trails of our once-real digital communications were taken from us, marketed as a memory of human to human recognition, a full-face skin mask endlessly reused and passed around.

We live in a heavily corporatised and sanitised internet environment. A great deal of silicon and algorithmic effort has been invested in stopping us from using the friendly face of computing infrastructure the way it invites us to; opening new software or potentially executable data leads to denial by default, operating systems scanning content and checking cryptographic signatures to determine what the user can be permitted to do to prevent the resurgence of the golden age of the dot com era, when computers designed for isolated use met an internet of open access and unaccountability; the distinctions between creative novelty, ajurisdictional crime and emergent everyday norms were barely distinct categories.

Someone, somewhere, who was once intimate to our digital social relations - a mutual friend copied in on an email, perhaps - was infected by a virus which invisibly harvested the evidence of past communications. Or perhaps, in the days before GDPR, someone uploaded their address book to a third party site, which later commodified and sold the data as a final asset to pay creditors before a managed bankruptcy; though this is direct evidence that someone knows how we wrote our names when contacting each other twenty years ago, it is impossible to determine how they know this - only that it has become a saleable asset, involuntarily extracted and periodically reheated to carry a new pathogen of disinterested deception. This record, this stolen data point, was a throwback to the early 2000s, where digital behaviours were evolving into what are now commonplace; an electronic crime fossil, surfacing periodically as conditions permit.

## The arrest of senescence

I remember practically nothing identifiable about Jana. I can remember her computer, her age, the linguistic shorthands for her speech patterns as a stand-in for the voice I have forgotten; I remember her partner's vocal cadence and hair colour, but of Jana herself, I remember practically nothing. I don't remember the partner's name, but I do remember sending him a keygen-generated serial number for Maya 8. Perhaps it was his address book that spilled these

connections?

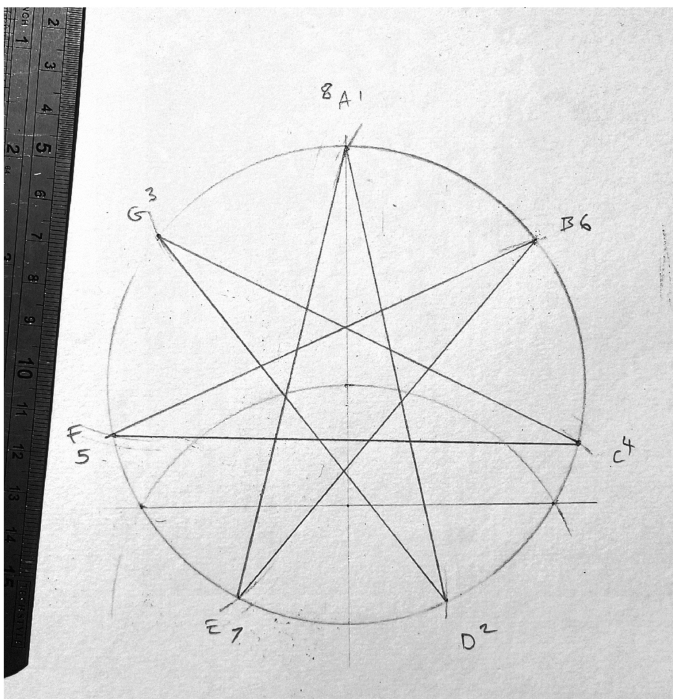
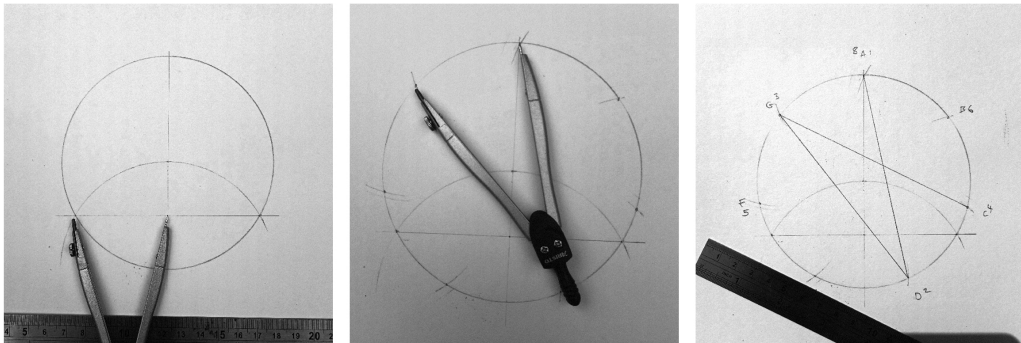
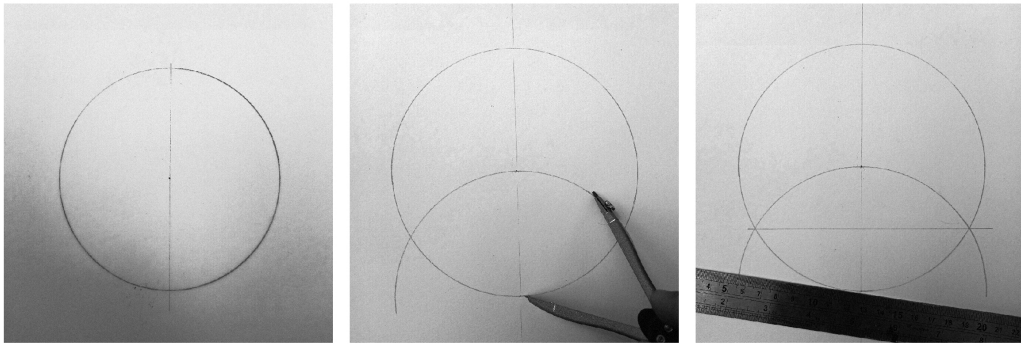
By any other measure, I should have completely forgotten about Jana. I could not contact them even if I wanted to; yet instead, without fail, I am sent a stochastic reminder of them, one I can depend on but not anticipate; knowledge whose creation I was foundational in, but over which I no longer have agency. The reminder of the human has been detached from the person it purports to represent; it is digitally incorporeal, Jana's name passed round as a mask to be worn by successive spam senders, all hoping the familiarity will pique my interest in their message. But over time, every re-use reinforces the name as a mask, one that is passed from one spam sender to another, both cast aside and endlessly reused, like a free newspaper on a busy bus.

Jana's programmatic reappearances disquieten me not because they are a reawakening of a memory, but they are a reawakening of a recollection of a memory. Like a spectre doomed to re-perform aspects of their former existence, Jana's digital identity is defiled by the false email address it conceals, and my memory is violated by the clumsy criminal rewriting of a once authentic connection.

But worst of all is that a memory is not allowed to diminish naturally. There is much I have forgotten from that time of my life, and I trust my mind to chemically and neurologically determine what is worth keeping hold of. The natural senescence of Jana's relevance to me is disrupted, a screaming alarm of an email jolting her to the front of my mind, the 'do not resuscitate' sign once again stolen by assailants unknowable. Jana is no longer someone I knew; they are a stochastic assault on my memory, a mixture of the once-real and parasitic manipulation. I can never forget how much I dislike my memory of what Jana has become, but will never be allowed to be able to remember who Jana was.



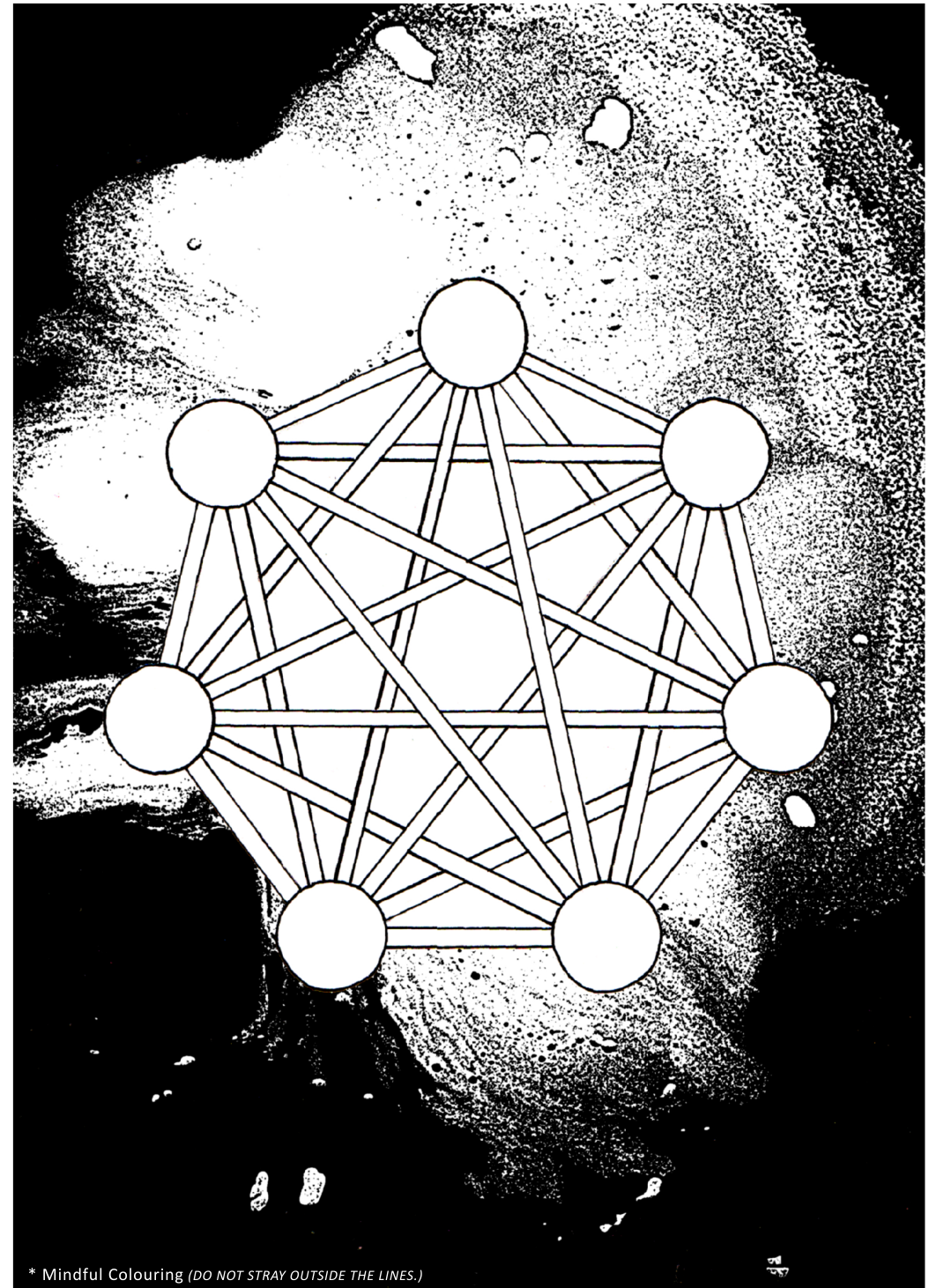




## HEPTAGRAM

*The Elven Star . Star of Babylon .  
The Law of Seven . The Faerie  
Star*

1. Sun, the Sun, Sunday, DO-C,  
Cedar, Red
2. Moon, High Priestess, Monday,  
RE-D, Pine, Orange
3. Mars, The Tower, Tuesday, MI-E,  
Rose, Yellow
4. Mercury, The Magician,  
Wednesday, FA-F, Thyme, Green
5. Jupiter, Wheel Of Fortune,  
Thursday, SOL-G, Lavender, Blue
6. Venus, The Empress, Friday,  
LA-A, Bay, Indigo
7. Saturn, The World, Saturday,  
SI-B, Sage, Violet



\* Mindful Colouring (DO NOT STRAY OUTSIDE THE LINES.)



# Inherited Superstitions

Edd Sanders



When I was a child my Grandmother taught me to leave milk by the back door for the fairies. She would tell me this kept them happy, and that to be on the fairies bad side wasn't an option. My Grandmother was a Spiritualist, and our church smelt of hardwood. Its white plaster walls would have been bare if not for the photographic prints of renowned spiritualists such as Alfred Kitson and Emma Hardinge Britten hung in the place of saints. Spiritualism in Britain grew from layers of history, as connected to the works of enlightenment thinkers as it was to the inherited superstitions, traditions, and folklore from our pre-Christian past. Kitson, co-founder of the British Spiritualism movement and co-author of the *Lyceum Officers Manual* (the church's foundation of spiritual philosophy), published a concise and reflective book in 1930, titled *Is The Bible Opposed To Spiritualism*. This book was seemingly written in

response to the controversy from traditional Christian churches regarding the growing enthusiasm for the British Spiritualism movement at the time. In it, Kitson explores the Bible's transition to the familiar King James translation and the motives behind the adoption of certain provocative terminology. He describes the development of the KJ Bible as a means of satisfying the Kings fad for torture and bloodlust, targeting the spiritual healers, diviners and mediums of the age. It is clear from this text that Kitson identifies with the Pagan and pre-Christian traditions of ancient Britain, with his focus on the Churches adaptation of the KJ Bible as a means to manipulate the masses through fear of the unknown. He examines the Bible's terminology, such as "witches," which he interprets to mean healers or practitioners of mediumship, and "wizards," meaning wise men, knowers, or philosophers. From this, he views the KJ Bible as a political text aimed at eradicating any remnants of Britain's pre-Christian past. However, it is clear that the unconscious traditions and inherited superstitions of Britain's folk heritage are so deeply entrenched that centuries of mass murder couldn't extinguish them.

By the time of his death in 1642, Galileo had spent nine years under church-appointed house arrest. To Kitson, this was another example of the Church's fear and suppression of thinkers and philosophers. Throughout his work, Kitson repeatedly emphasised the importance of the enlightenment of the mind as much as the enlightenment of the spirit. He was obsessed with Goethe's *The Metamorphosis of Plants*, and Galvani's experiments in bioelectricity. Kitson saw the concept of nature as an interconnected whole powered by an unseen energy as hard proof of the tenets of a spiritual world. To him, these concepts were paramount to understanding spiritualism and needed to be accessible lessons available to all children. Kitson saw Goethe's theory on the interrelated system of nature continuously transforming through a

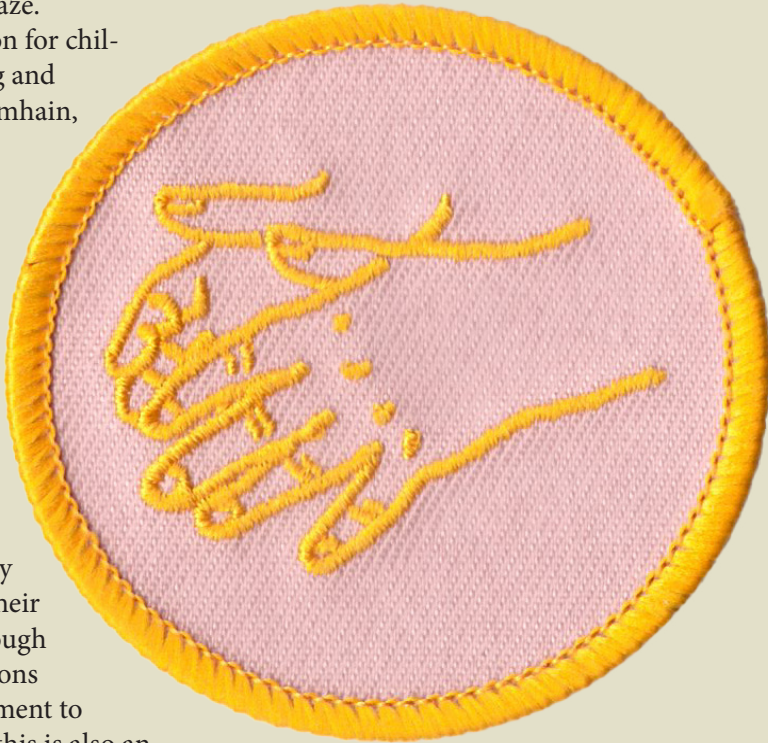




unified and dynamic process as reflective of the inherent unity and harmony of the natural and spiritual world. Likewise, Galvani's experiments in bioelectricity showed that within all living nature there was a powerful and previously unknown invisible energy. This energy fused life to the organic world the way the soul bonds to the body. The idea of spiritual energy being of the occult, or something to fear was in Kitson's mind a Christian invention. To see spiritual energy as anything but a harmonising force was to view Spiritualism from the Christian gaze.

It is tradition for children to sing and dance at Samhain, begging for pennies or soulcakes. The coins were to pay for the masses of departed souls, the cake to feed the souls as they passed by their homes. Though many religions ask for payment to transcend, this is also an example of

how the spiritual rituals of Pagan Britain were able to survive through the folk traditions of children. The Abbots Bromley Horn Dance is one of the oldest surviving ritual folk dances, dating back to the 10th century. Here, a set of six dancers dressed as stags accompanied by a boy, a fool and a horse, reenact an ancient ritual to bless the hunt. These types of plays and dances are a living record of Britain's Pagan heritage. In early versions of Kitson's Spiritualist text the Lyceum Officers Manual, diagrammed drawings and instructions for marches and dances are accompanied by chants or songs. In context of the environment this was published, the activity of mumming plays, dances and folk marches would be more than apparent to the children of the congregation.



The first Lyceum Officers Manual, was written by Harry Kersey, Alfred Kitson and Emma Hardinge Britten and published in 1887. Early chapters read like a philosophical and spiritual curriculum, asking questions about Greek philosophy and enlightenment science, framed in the context of spirituality. In the chapter presenting suggestions for Sunday school discussions, it asks children of the congregations about the origins of spirits in reference to living nature, fairies and humans. The inherited vernacular of an 18th century child would be

rich in oral folk traditions and references to regional customs. To a child, the spiritual identity of nature would include fairies and sprites as they represented the physical embodiment of nature's spiritual unknown. Pre-Christian folklore knew a spiritual energy was the unifying force that connected all nature, and for Spiritualists like Kitson, enlightenment thinkers such as Goethe and Galvani confirmed it.

The Lyceum Officers Manual was written against the background of Britain's folkloric landscape. Necromancy, ornithomancy, lithomancy, divination, direct writing, mediumship, spirit healing, all practices seen as witchcraft by the Christian church, all inherited folk traditions. Disguised as children's songs and mumming plays, some of these practices were often able to hide in plain sight. The Spiritualist church leant on these unconscious beliefs as if there was never any question to their origin. We sit in church accustomed to the idea of a spirit familiar, leaving seats available for visitors from Summerland (or those that have passed). A white bird symbolises hope. The spirit of my Great Grandmother would follow me on summer evenings. These are comfortable ideas, as familiar as they are expected.







(CLEARLY WHAT HE NEEDS,  
TO MANUFACTURE HIS OWN  
UNIVERSE,

IS TIME – NOT YEARS –  
MILLENNIA OF TIME  
AND FUNDING READY TO  
WITHSTAND THE STRAIN  
OF A BLACK HOLE. HE NEEDS  
STARS IN HIS BRAIN  
AND SOMETHING LIKE THE  
OCEAN IN HIS MIND.)

- THE ALCHEMIST  
RAINER MARIA RILKE



# Stairs Down into Dark

Rob Potts

If  
descends  
Stairs down  
Into black glass  
It or bit? Where is depth?  
aspect and affect hath thingness both.  
Direction has meaning, darkness has extent.  
The science of night. Feeling down or on the up and up?  
Stuck in rainbows, shattering glass? If mind is flat, where then is  
the well, the sinking feeling. It's raining at night, it's so hot outside. What 'it'  
is speech doing? The tongue haunted by nomen agentis, dummy nouns, phantoms, point to the  
situational materiel, a feersum enjin of place, we're in the ground, in our ambit.  
Jump into water to end up under it, the stair beckons, strapped to some mast,  
a prison ship of Theseus, complicit Ulysses, Thalassotherapy, psynosis.  
Baltic triangle thaumaturgy, Trigger's broom. We have spells we use  
to open looming night, breaking vessels, broken flute, demiurg  
the irrational, irretrievably rational, the vast aught,  
a fastness, as if, nothing felt as some thing  
thing. cloaks billow, the yet to be  
movements neath the lid.  
And. NAND. Not.  
Go down into  
Down.  
IO.  
O

The wires lie, buttons find home, a sound of values, of distant cooperators, ages,  
eons, tone poems, fabrics, Jacquard looms, code compiles unseen, a bedroom  
save rebuilds worlds, you walk, a façade looms, historical society, in gloaming,  
Conrad's mouth, looming Thames to ocean's womb, to a shadowed gathering,  
the vale of the thing, incoming, broken pottery, distant drum, infrasound,  
inside, Mar. Lo. and behold, the behest of Kline, Kon, Miyamoto, Kojima,  
Miyazaki, Moto42, Hassabis, songs of storms, a cleaved sign, soaked pixels,  
under the graveyard, enter a room, steps open, down the long stair, hardcoded,  
prerendered, intent, no no-clip, broken spectre. Dinner is ready. Stairs down.

In François Jacob's dream, a science of night, in the realm of the unstructure,  
sliding weights underneath dream tables, an unseen ring brightens, a stolen  
daydream, back of the bus, twisting and turning like snakes, a hooded vale,  
carbon ouroboros, a sled surging down under refracting stars, colours you've  
never seen, Coleridge, Kekulé, Mendeleev, Einstein, Mead's brilliant blue jelly,  
a chrome skeleton emerging from fire, Yesterday, mother came to me. MU-  
TH-UR. Ash, David, Walter, Bishop, Weyland Yutani, building better worlds.  
Einstürzende Neubauten, a minute into the future, the garden, stares down.  
Do they teach you how to feel finger to finger?. Stern ship noise. She turns,  
beckons, the floor yawns quietly, your heel slips, the skin empties. The pool  
shudders. 38 degrees down, 13 stairs, a pleading, a bestiary, an entity of archi-  
tecture, a dreaming from the deep, a yawning d-ark knows, you're way off your  
baseline, cells interlinked, unlinked.

Walk for minutes, a siren, a horn foreshadows an unseen sharpness, a cascade  
of dead drops, dark holes in no ground, typology, tropes; a library, a prison, a  
labyrinth, a catacomb, another watery corridor, you play, taut, a tingle urges  
you forward, parasympathetic, out, crisp air as we emerge at the shores of a  
lake. Stairs down, into dark.

In dark chamber, obscure, wetness, a murkwood mind, a thinking thing, liquid  
phantom, swum in aquaria, oblivious, in medium, as gentle as breeze on your  
cheek, a column of 10 tonnes bears down. We are the down under, mantling  
risers as we look down into, eardrum crimp with crested that hill, barotrauma,  
only sound pressure holds gauzes of megatonne systems each has 500 little  
ton souls inside, little fishes, soul tubes, memory ships, aloft on yesterday's  
day faith, augured at night, headed for the world's deep blue edges, reefs or  
Nakatomi plazas, we swim at bottom of twin seas of atmosphere, and of mind  
– weather underground. Where is the deep inside, if depth is flat? A brane  
encodes aspect and affect. Orch OR, nacroleprosy, alone, an-aesthetic, insen-



sate, intestate, Yharnam, Lordran, a bonfire, a distant candle, a shifting ladder 'a blood black nothingness began to swirl, system of cells., within cells interlinked. within one stem. and dreadfully distinct. against the dark. a tall white fountain played' Down we go.

That empty viscera, mock fullness, under laboratory lights, inverted rainbows, only a bride stripped to bare edges, to a flatness of boundaries and thresholds, no volumes or solids, we operate from threshold to threshold, afferent saccading gait... gate, wall – flatnesses suggesting containers – our brains see branes. Polygone. Is being “intuitive statistics” or organismic probing, eukaryote, false feet upon a gray beech that seeths and teems? Mesographia, Gregor Samsa clings to an image, carapaces, Markov blankets, amaestrados, lechones, sirenas. Surrounding, bounding, shrouders, unknown unknowns, blindspots in Johari's house, sensory ends co-terminous with edges, means with memory, reflexive, sight occurs after facts, dust falls, tenuous grasping, error correcting, we locomote, Simon's scissors, but blunt.

Bounded, yet spread out, sticky yet sharp, diffuse, tacit, a filmy layer, dissipative structures, operating far from equilibrium, empty frame, filled with dark, noosphere repairwomen on an airconditioned planet, coolness threatens meaning yet protects memory, bubbles, spheres, seawater servers, pools as cameras, walls of blind eyes, Super-Kamiokande, Icecube, Boulby. Gate slams, cabled, winched, down through torchlit star fields of upward dust motes, to secrets, massless photos of the sun through the earth, a light year of lead, 10,000 hours in the cloud chamber, a frame drags, two turns to return home, polarimetry, no resting frame; the information is laughing at us, the ticker tape feeds the night. new places, all hyper objects, dust falls on an unseen piano, a mode of access, a chirp from the ageless dark, arriving over the weekend. The piano tuner hears tones as beats.

Coming minds reflect on perfect orbital computers, dust off and nuke from orbit, the only way to be sure. Yet lacking our stair, they founder without end awareness, the departure gates from coherence with means end, infiniteness lacks a science of pain, algology is being, the yearning, an anticronos, a homonizing pressure, onto motoric downbeats, prompts, cues, messes, design against entropy, nervy, clammy, heat-sunk coupled to all the endless darks.

Meddling brings it forth, shields up, bringing about the yet to be. An organism oriented onto logo rhythm. Distant harps, unseen strings, Muir, Whitehead, De Chardin, Prigogine, Polyani, Kepes... fragments of vision, a patterned shatter-

ling, a pair of shears, crystal blackened in tar. Stop It & Tidy Up.

A physics of spells, phantoms, causal webs are natural thaumaturgy – in place of being, moving is spellcasting – the flat vessel, a full empty. In Hohwy, in Friston, predictive neurology, free energy, error minimising, each gauged instance a notch, a microguess about futures, cloaked in an assumptive fabric, tuning in moments, a spray of firing patterns. Caverns of anti-inference, back metaphors, in grey boxes, your mouth around a firehose. It or bit?

Runnels, frameworks, energy wells, a kiss through the bars, paths of least effort. Running along a beach toward a hand in the spray, a drowning, knowing which moment to turn into the sea, collapse the array, shorter, slower arc of our path around great circles which sit outside ken, inside of our body and yet out the world – enmeshed, a ready stair on a darkling plain, kill your darlings, Dover Beech, always elastic, Goya's courtyard, life's a rich painting, it should be full of strangeness, intuition's the principle of least action, fast and frugal, wave function and propagator, the lineup of the Fall. Person and world engrams in the boot clank on diamond plate pressed steel of a stair, surface of the page, monitor glass, yokes the shadow, a full empty, a regathering, gestell, Cynefin, scalology, thresholding, the inhabitus, an ultracellular. Down we go.



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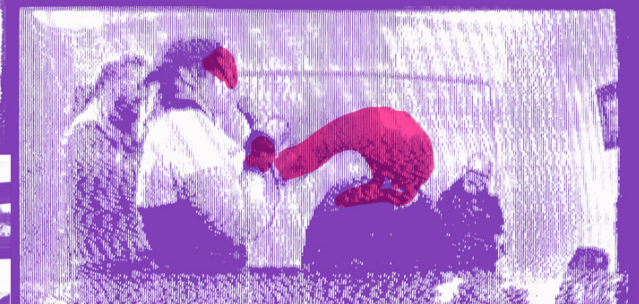


FRIDAY 6th September  
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SPECIAL GUEST RAZ ULLAH 3.30



lumberjacks, I think there's a roadblock  
Hey . . . three months in rock 'n' roll  
don't change a thing.





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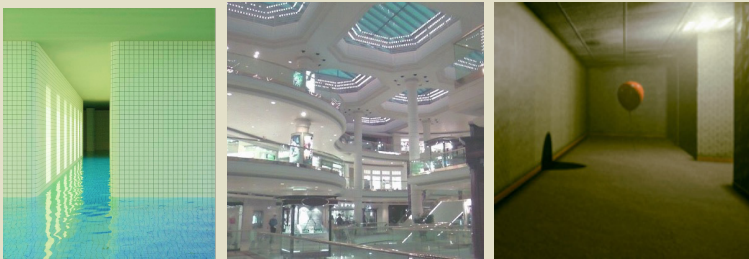


# NOT OF THE HOME: REDEFINING LIMINAL SPACE I

## Occulta Dama

### Existential aesthetics

In recent years there has been a renaissance of Lychian liminality in our popular imagination. Most notably with the unprecedented success of the low budget, cult horror *Skinamarink* (Ball, 2022) and the boom of online liminal aesthetics communities, particularly since the 2020 lockdown. However, with this popularity, the unclear definitions and subsequent discourse of what constitutes as truly 'liminal' has exposed a limitation in our language and a needed theoretical framework to articulate and orientate liminal space. Modern definitions of liminality in online communities are more concerned with their aesthetic qualities. Various renditions of liminal spaces can be dismissed as being dreamcore, backrooms or mallcore (see images 1-3) as opposed to a pure liminal aesthetic.



(image 1: 'dreamcore' - r/aesthetic; image 2: 'mallcore' - Tumblr: Nostalgia soup; image 3: 'Backroom' - r/insidethebackroom)

But what Constitutes a liminal space? Liminality was first coined by Folklorist Arnold Van Gennep, in his 1909 work 'Rites de Passage', which outlines the various transitional phases of rites in smaller communities across cultures, ascribing each as having three distinct stages; preliminal, liminal and postliminal. Depending on the culture and occasion, Gennep identifies four distinct categories of passage; a passage of status for a person, the passage from one place to the next, the passage of a situation or circumstance or a significant passage of time. For Gennep, each status of liminality marks a transitional point for a significant epoch - with the liminal qualities of this transition being the celebration in itself. As our ability to render liminality has evolved and modernised through the various creative mediums available, the definitions established by Gennep have expanded with a specific focus on the 'transformation, passage or a ceremonial change' (Bar-Eli, 2015), where an individual is positioned between two 'phases' (Turner, 1995; 94). With the unease and discomfort liminal imagery evokes being commonly attributed to this transitional status.

However, it is here I argue the most fundamental feature of liminality has been overlooked, meaning the current definitions and understanding of liminality is inadequate, reductive and in desperate need of review. The purpose of this two part article, is to unpack and redefine liminal space beyond its literal transitional qualities and strong sense of visual identity. Instead liminal spaces will be interpreted through the Freudian understanding of aesthetics 'to mean not merely the theory of beauty, but the theory of the quality of feeling' (1919; 1) meaning that aesthetics are not only surface level but also deeply existential in their formulation. This will reframe liminality as an affective and sensory category, observing cinema with notable liminal spaces through the lens of psychoanalytical theory as a means to understand its existential qualities. This is presented as a developing body of work, aimed at broadening the discussion around liminal space within academia and how this may transform the way in which we approach liminality in creative practice.

### The Case of The Undead Cup

Curiously, given Van Gennep's fixation with folklore, there is a sense that the mystical contours of liminal phenomena have been somewhat overlooked. Liminal spaces are frequently haunted with affective qualities, in that they evoke spontaneous emotional reactions that determine a given liminal phenomena. For example, without the discomfort, otherworldly and unpredictable evocative qualities of David Lynch's iconic 'Red Room' in the *Twin Peaks* series (1990-91), its status as an iconic liminal space would be lost. When we are



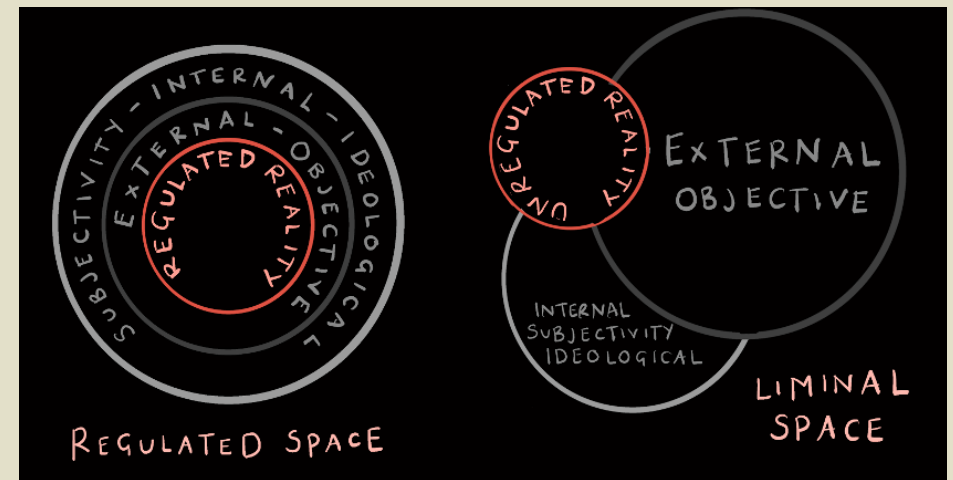
presented with a liminal environment the balance of subjectivity and objectivity becomes disturbed, and with this it becomes bewitched with provocative undead qualities. Yet, if we were to position ourselves as paranormal investigators within a liminal space, what would we find possessing these otherworlds? By Freudian understanding, our sense of the external world and the objects it contains, is a series of developmental, subjective socialisation that forms an interpretation of reality. Freud refers to this as ‘cathexis’ (2013[1933]) where we begin with our internal and external experience being undifferentiated (‘flux’) progressing to differentiating through our senses and perception to form concepts of the world around us (‘the complex’), concluding with this being projected outward, separating subject and object by further defining the external through a network of socialisation, ideology, emotions and symbolisation (‘Projection’). Through the phenomena of cathexis, our external world is not just objective, it is no longer just outside of us, it becomes an integrated part of us, and an extension of our being.

For example, you may have a favourite cup. This has no surplus qualities that elevate it from any other cup, in many cases it may be more impractical, it may be too small or chipped, but it becomes possessed with some form of projected personal and emotional categorisation i.e being gifted by a loved one or being given to you at an important milestone. In this sense the cup becomes positively charged with an evocative partiality. However, if I could theoretically displace my subjective and evocative understanding of the cup from its physical matter, the fictional space between myself and the cup would become visible, transitioning the cup from an evocative partiality to a form of ontological undead. For this reason the cup would become uncanny, difficult to comprehend, undead, liminal, as my human reality is shaped by this exact fictionalisation and relationship of subjectivity over objectivity. Our understanding of reality would now be answerable to this cup, and with it the structure of human comprehension.

### The Unhomely

But what would happen if we applied this theoretical displacement to a space? In the case of the undead cup, the lines between the object-centric and anthropocentric become blurred. This presents the potential of a hypothetical otherworld of object consciousness, known theoretically as OOO (Object-Oriented Ontology). As Timothy Morton remarks ‘can we ever really believe that objects don’t play tricks on us?’ (2013, 26) in that there is always a sense of a world between and beyond an object and ourselves. In the case of the undead cup, this

secretive aesthetic dimension would be its home, or for us, a liminal space. Our external experience would become unregulated, the internal interpretations that define our material existence would actualise environments of undead ontological potential, where our subjectivity no longer rules a space (see image 4).



(Image 4: regulated spaces vs liminal space, Occulta Dama 2024)

This in turn would give a less atomised version of the uncanny, creating a phenomenon known as ‘liminality’ to form an otherworld that instead houses the uncanny. The affect of ‘the uncanny’ has a much more direct Freudian application when applied to a liminal space. In native German, Freud referred to the uncanny as ‘Unheimlich’ which traditionally translates to English as ‘not from the home’ or ‘unhomely’ offering a convenient dialectic dimension in the case of liminal space and its affective properties. Although modern translations attribute the meaning of unheimlich to mean uncanny, the traditional etymology of the word pinpoints the unhomely affect of liminal sensations. Freud defines the uncanny as a disquieting re-occurrence of the familiar, in that the unfamiliar is strange and The familiar is estranged. Or for the case of liminal space is a strangeness in a familiarity that pulls away into an otherness, which may give insight into the presence of liminal spaces within horror cinema, but also, the necessity of psychoanalytic theory to orientate liminal spaces in that it studies their abnormality of reality itself.

When it comes to uncanny or liminal phenomena in cinema, it feels instinctive to refer to the old lovecraftian horror doxa “The oldest and strongest emotion of mankind is fear, and the oldest and strongest kind of fear is fear of the



unknown” (Lovecraft, 1927). Instead Freud imposes it’s not the unknown which gives us liminal unease or fear, but instead when the unknown has the cadence of the known. This can be observed in Ari Aster’s *Hereditary* (2018) in which its horror isn’t established in an unknown, but instead an unseen known within the family itself, rendering and empowering the liminal and uncanny imagery throughout. Curiously, Freud provides a caveat that ‘unheimlich’ (uncanny) can refer to something hidden inside the home that was never meant to come to light (1919; 13), effectively describing *Hereditary*’s horror logic. Similarly, *Vivarium* (Finnegan, 2019) presents a reality where the psychic energy of the couple’s marital discord and maternal longing draws them into a perpetual nightmare of a synthetic suburbia. The liminality of *vivarium* is found more in the unknown aspects of its familiarity, as it relentlessly cosplays as domestic idealism (see image 5). Demonstrating that a common feature of liminal space is having the proximity of what is known and experienced by ourselves.



(Image 5: Still from *vivarium*, the repetition of known to form an unknown)

## Liminal Castration

It is important to stress that this interpolation of known and unknown is not a transitional quality, as both exist within the same space, haunting one another. As Freud remarks, this uncanny affect results from “something which is familiar and old-established in the mind and which has become alienated from it only through the process of repression.” (1919; 13). The repressive qualities of *Vivarium* are visible in its copy/paste clinical suburbia but also in the repression of its subjects. There is a sense that the alien force that animates *Vivarium*’s undead environment is an extension of the couple’s unaddressed tensions, alienating them in process. The endless housing estate appears as a manifestation of an unconscious, psychic energy that is so unbearable that it tears a hole

in reality, allowing the unknown to masquerade as the familiar. This creates a parallel liminal world that positions reality within a parallax view. Or simply put, we view a known space through an otherwise inaccessible perspective, this being an unknown ontological one. The familiar and repressive qualities of *Vivarium* are visible in its aesthetic seriality and aggressive symmetry. This represents what Freud would refer to as ‘repetition compulsion’ (1914) where aspects are synthetically replicated to re-enforce a liminal sensation of the familiar unknown (see image 5). Through this seriality it gives the sense there is ‘something’ compelling this repetition, as it is incomprehensible, even dangerously radical, to accept the meaningless of drive in the world. Similar repetitive and aggressively symmetrical aesthetics can be observed across liminal cinema; *The Cell*, *The Shining*, *The Squid Game* TV series, *Cube*, and *Us* to name a few (see images 6-10).



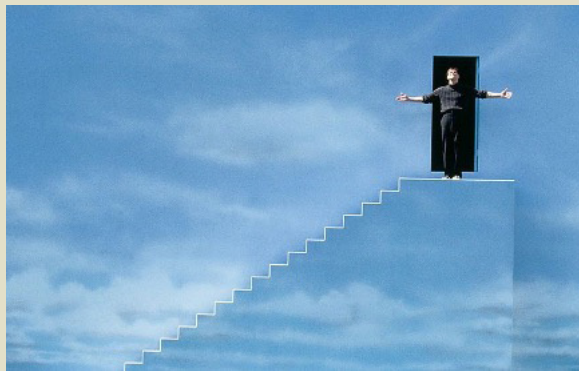
(image 6: Still from *The Cell* - repetitions in body and space / Image 7: Still from *The Shining* - aggressive symmetry and vanishing points of repetition / Image 8: Still from *Squid Games* - repetition and symmetry/ Images 9: *Cube* - repetition within repetition in the logic of its design/ Image 10: Liminal repetition, symmetry and sense endlessness in *Us*)

The proximity of liminality to the unconscious, assumes a loss of ‘mastery’ (Freud, 1930;124) for its subject. In that, liminal spaces are an abnormalisation of normality, rather than a normalisation of abnormality. It’s here that we find the differences that separate liminal spaces from ‘the uncanny valley’ (Mori, 1970; 33). The uncanny valley is where the uncanny becomes understood, whereas in the liminal space, it’s where the uncanny becomes further distorted. For example, *The Truman Show* (Weir, 1998) only truly becomes liminal when the awareness and perversity of the town’s synthetic conditions become visible to the protagonist, Truman Burbank, as he is thrust into the role of an observer. Before this point, it is more reminiscent of an uncanny valley in its hyper-realism, existing within a microcosm of an understood synthetic symbolic order that mirrors the world outside. Both the uncanny valley and liminal space exist



within a scale, between feeling at home and feeling alienated, with liminality being more committed to this alienation. The loss of mastery is key in rendering this liminal sensation, which for *The Truman Show*, is the gradual breakdown in the structure of this synthetic reality including its uncanny valley, which confronts its subject with the essence of its unconscious failures. For *The Truman Show* this is a literal breakdown in the show's set, creating an extreme in what Lacan refers to as 'symbolic castration' (1960-61; 240) where the impotence, or fragility, of what the subjective meaning is structured around, this being Christof - the director of Truman's synthetic reality, is exposed to be inherently lacking in subject and of necessary representation.

Christof, Curiously acknowledges the symbolic regulation of reality stating 'We accept the reality of the world with which we're presented. It's as simple as that' we could speculate here that Christof's is already symbolically castrated, and for this reason the set, the reality of his own creation, begins to disintegrate. Through Christof and the unregulated disorder of his symbolic world, the networks of our subjective reality become more visible creating this sense of liminality. The truth being, we are the undead/alien force that sustains and drives our reality forward through our ideology and the spontaneous instinct for symbolic fictions. Christof represents the 'Other' (Lacan; 1954-55) a paternal, god-like 'quilting point' [Lacan; 1956] for all meaning to be substantiated, pushed forward and for reality to be given a sense of cohesion. Yet he represents an Other that is inherently lacking and with this reality begins to shift into liminal conditions (refer back to image 4). On Truman Burbank's departure from the show's set, symbolic order isn't abandoned however; he becomes the new Other, or phallus, for an alternative structure of meaning to be formed post this symbolic castration. Potentially there is an unseen dimension behind the set's door (see Image 11)...something beyond the liminal space...which will be the next destination of this two part article.

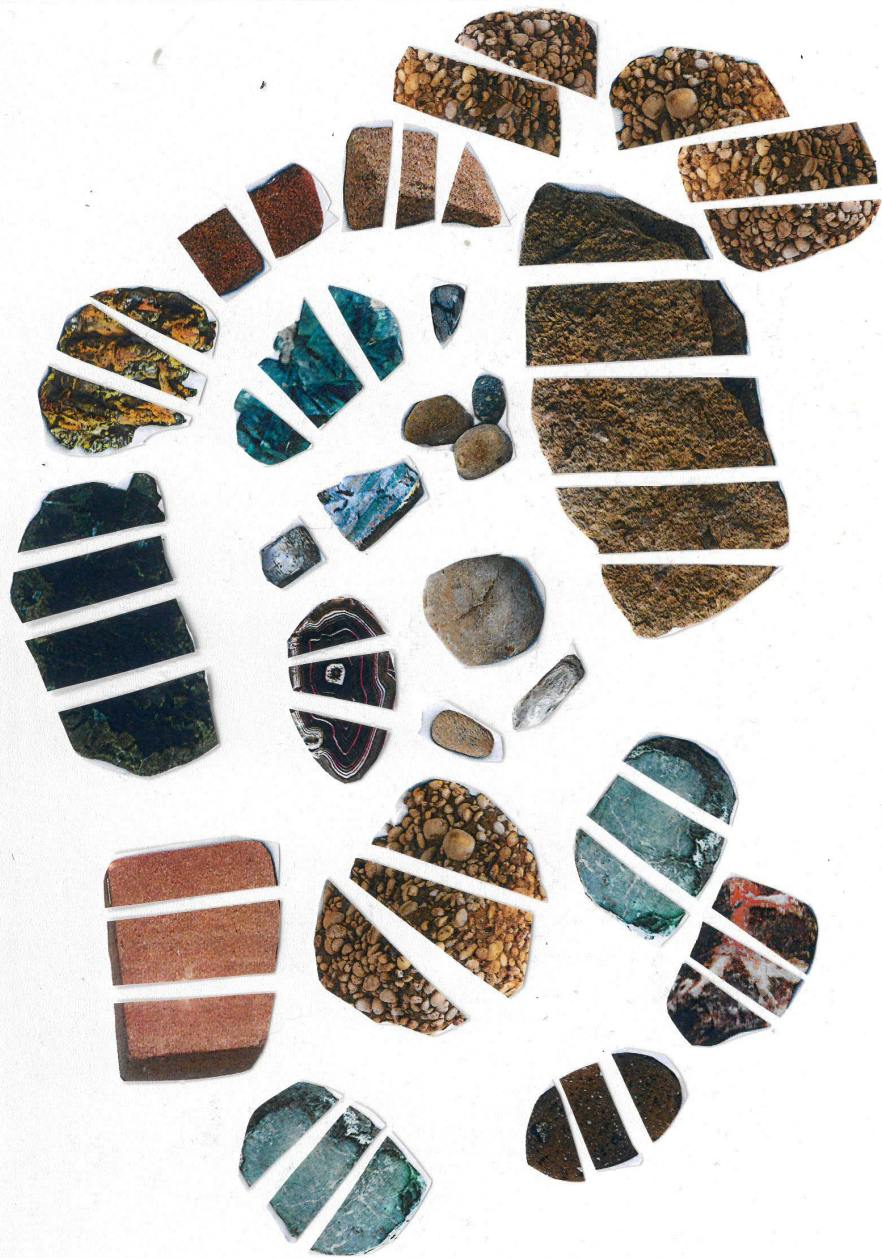


(Image 11: Still from the *The Truman Show*, Truman's departure)

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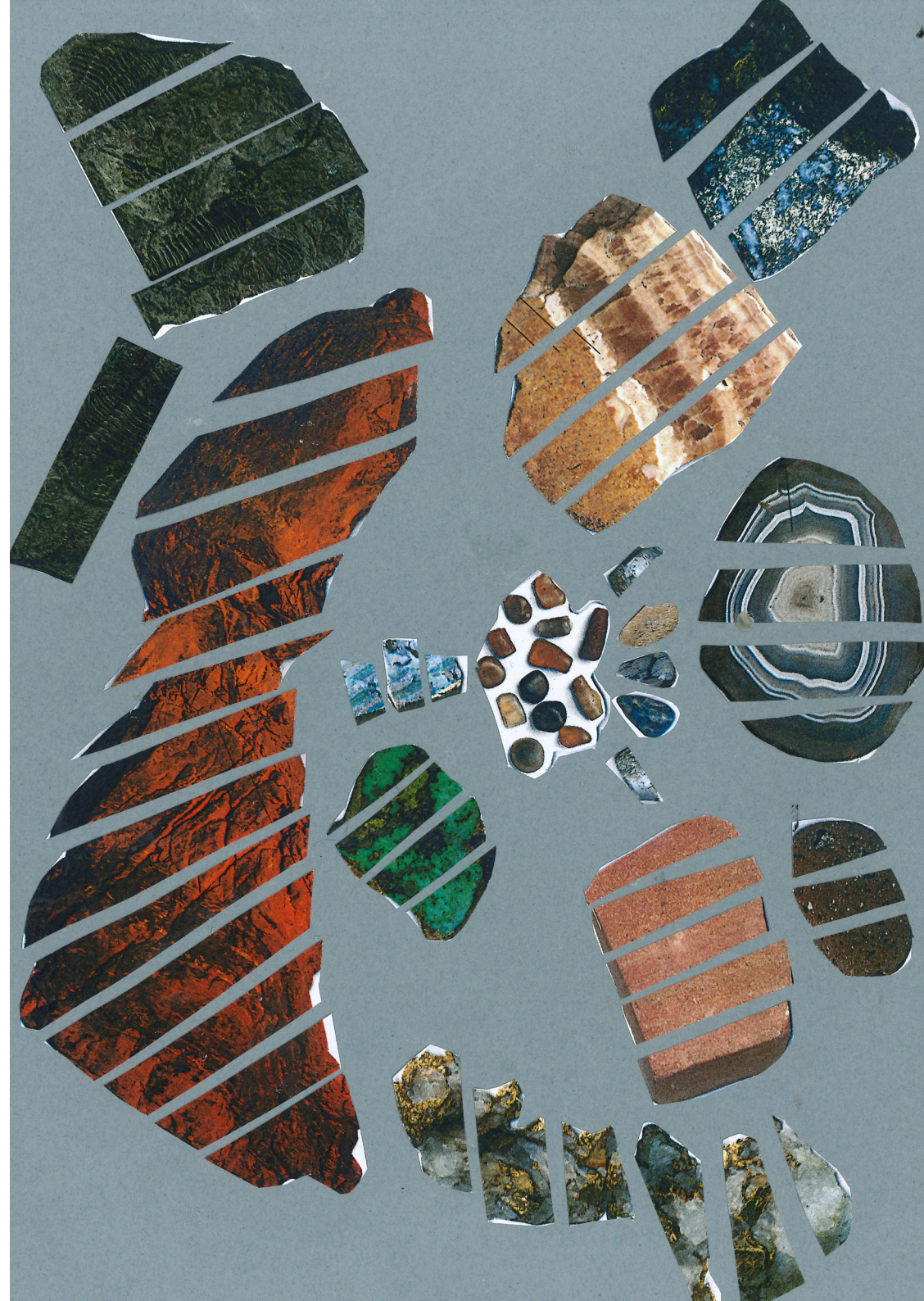
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### **Mexican Sweat Lodge 1&2**

Made at Stone Circles event at Peste, in response to José Sherwood González | PhD Researcher : Reimagining the Codex Tezcatlipoca (Fejérváry-Mayer): Smoke, Mirrors, and Virtual Repatriation – SODA Salon (17th April)





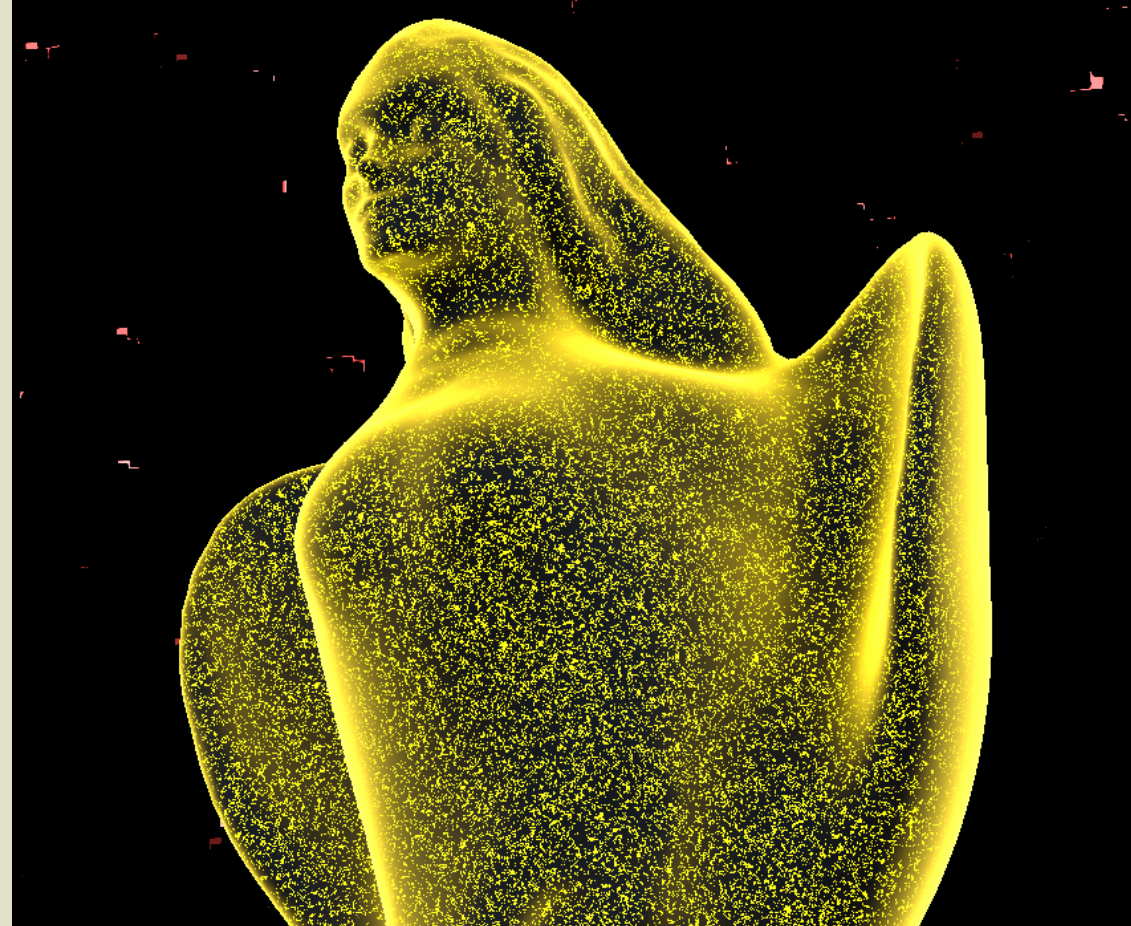
# Folly of the New Age

Isa Alsaba

*The heaven is in the earth, but after an earthly manner,  
... and the earth is in the heaven, but after a heavenly  
manner.*

— Proclus

Folly of the New Age is an occult spy fiction adventure game, set in an alternative history where secret societies govern the world's powers. The player takes the role of MI6 agent Folly, who possesses the visionary ability to see reality through a metaphysical lens. Wielding this gift of imagination, she must seek intelligence through glimpses of the outside, found through glimmering flecks and rays of divinity across the surface of a world corrupted by tyranny and war. During her mission to pursue an ex-service archaeologist dabbling with geomancy at Druids' Stone Circle, she encounters Bexley, a cheeky gnome who becomes her familiar. In William Blake's Milton, he wrote of the gnomes, fairies, nymphs, and genii of the four elements as the instigators of geopolitical strife. Throughout the game, mundane objects and environments may be interacted with through Folly's side-ways esoteric lens. This is vibrantly demonstrated through game art techniques: psychedelic shaders, glimmering noise, and hypnotic waveforms — keys which lift the mysterious veils of the New Age...





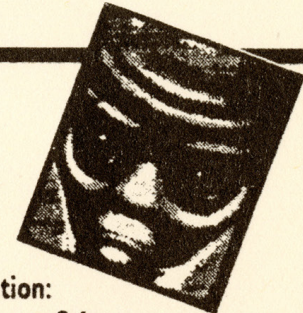






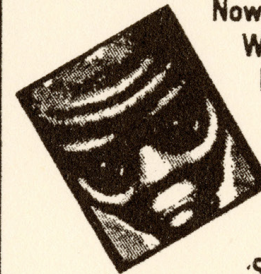
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'Sharing The Skies' is a research project, traversing local UFO hotspots in the North West. Twenty-five sightings have been reported across Cheshire since 2021 - Warrington is the county's hotspot, with reports of bright lights, silver objects, and shimmering red orbs.

The project is seeking creatives with links to Warrington to join us on a walking route, connecting the dots of the in-between places where these unexplained sightings occurred. UFOlogy is the fire in the middle of the camp; the focus is not a serious investigation of extra-terrestrial beings (for now!), but the process of walking, talking, and watching, together, exploring both local lore and personal mythology, forming friendships with aliens from outer space or just outer Cheshire.



.....  
For more information on the walks, please send an email detailing your reason for interest to [sharingtheskies@gmail.com](mailto:sharingtheskies@gmail.com). We look forward to sharing the skies with you.



# RESONATING THROUGH TIME: THE INEFFABLE LANGUAGE OF STONES

Paul Brown & Hugo de Morais



Save for rare instances, lithic formations transcend anthropocentric temporal constructs. In this context, does not a single stone stand as an ageless archive bearing silent witness to the unfolding of existence? Perhaps a piece of rock in the palm of a hand could be perceived as time itself, solidified into tangible form, affording the observer an insight into Earth's nature as a ceaseless interplay of energetic phenomena and transformative forces. These primordial energetic and force-based phenomena, predating human existence, have consistently transcended the boundaries of human sensory perception and classificatory systems.

Then, in the great scheme of the planetary saga, time arrived quite late, perhaps adjacent to the dawn of humanity. As humans acquired numerical skills and conceptualise time, they also started to imbue physical spaces with meaning. This perspective invites contemplation of whether every geographical point on Earth's surface could function as a nexus for the expression of lived phenomena, even prior to the advent of humanity? Natural bridges for our experiential revelations, steeped in an essence predating time itself? This interplay echoes the ephemeral vitality an artwork exhibits when beheld by an attentive observer. These lithic entities,



rather than passively accepting our projections, appear to reciprocate our inquiries - much like the Earth's elements narrating their own tales, beckoning to transcend the confines of anthropocentric interpretations and proposing that our engagement with these stone formations may reveal novel perspectives on existence itself.

Nicolas Bourriaud stated (oversimplified here): "Art is a state of encounter." His proposal unveils the communicative potential of natural formations we may come to witness through encounters. If a monolith holds stories and the spirit of all phenomena encountering their predecessors through layers over layers of sediment, how might it interact with the surrounding realities? Even if, in its purest form, it lacks the energetic power of a Thin Place, does the monolith cease its attempts to communicate with other phenomena or humans?

These stones were formed by layers of sediments as far back as 300 million years ago (ironically, humans can stamp age numbers even if time didn't officially exist). Each layer of sediment tells stories from afar, beyond sight and imagination. They speak of oceans and deserts, of cometary dramas, of tales from the stars and beyond, creation and annihilations, even of remnants of metaphysical realities. Through these accumulated narratives, the stones create a bridge between the tangible and the speculative transcendent, serving as conduits for ineffable storytelling, then a more fitting and evocative form





of communication that supersedes conventional verbal expression, touching on deep, often inexplicable levels of understanding and experience through a lens that reveals the profound, the mystical, and the cosmic.

Each layer of sediment has been meticulously safeguarded by a new resting overlay of life stories. This multitude of layers conveys the essences of all experiences imprinted within that ephemeral moment - a multitude of realities compressed within the stone's grasp.

Tracing a stone's essence back to its origins reveals layers of sediments as dutiful messengers from mountains and far

lands, formed by diverse elements and phenomena. Following this trail to its source, one embarks on a journey across the cosmos, entertained by a playlist formulated by stone storytellers encountered along the way. To some, this is a consecrated vernacular; to others, a prehistoric confidante offering silent communion. The origins of language, symbols, and scripts predate the dawn of humanity, born instead from the primordial articulations of lithic formations. Stones have been carrying whole cosmic dramas within each sediment forming their core: here lies the poet, the storyteller, the shaman, the elders, the book of knowledge. They hold the occult, the secrets, the memories, the workings, the sounds, the inspiration, the awe - a vast repository of wisdom that surpasses all systems of communication and meaning-making developed by humankind, too expansive to be conveyed in human terms.

The act of quarrying entire hills for centuries in servitude to human needs inadvertently displaces the incorporeal imprints accrued over geological epochs. This displacement is beyond question. What becomes of these spectral chronicles when their core layers are disrupted? Once broken open, with its core no longer safeguarding a dense body of stories and spirits of unrealised future or past events, will the dust settle on the present like ghosts begging to be witnessed? These stories, now orphaned, their voices unheeded in the cacophony of stone and mineral extraction, raise profound questions about our relationship with the spirit of the land and its hidden narratives.

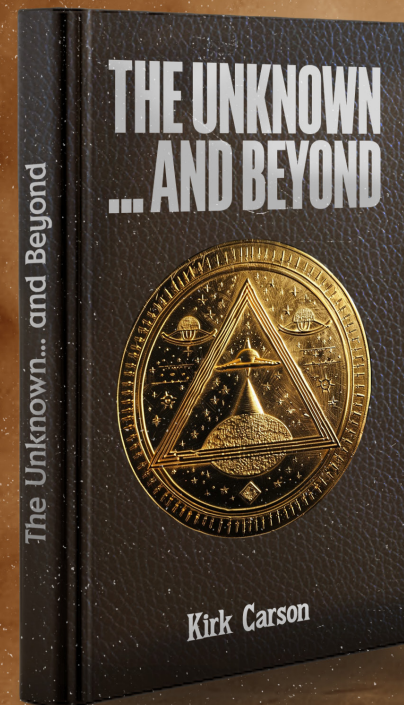
Perhaps an earthling may just hear their fading echoes clinging to the scattered spirit, their power emanating from the grieving for their departed spiritual semiotics, remnants of forever lost fantastical tales. No stone can hold another's memory. Indeed, as Deleuze argued, 'There is no abstract idea of a stone, only multiple stones that are as different from one another as a bird from a tree.' suggesting that each stone is unique and irreducible to a single abstract concept. Each stone whispers its own story, yet it is a voice that very few can hear and even fewer can speak to. In this vein, Spinoza elegantly explained: 'It is never we who affirm or deny something of a thing; it is the thing itself that affirms or denies something of itself in us.' Indeed, such appreciation arises when the phenomena's own nature and truth reveal themselves to humankind, rather than from humanity's preconceived notions.

The philosophical and geological considerations explored thus far naturally lead to contemplation of how human artistic expression might engage with these concepts. In this context, the RESONANT project emerges as a compelling exploration of the interface between human creativity and the profound narratives embedded in natural formations. The idea of building an artistic expression through dialogue with natural phenomena proposes a form of "imaginative symbiosis." Even if the "dialogue" is largely interpretive on the human side, the attempt to engage with and respond to the natural environment in this way creates a symbiotic relationship in the artistic process. Here, the human artists' varying degrees of belief in the energetic nature of the mystical and unknown add an intriguing layer to this symbiosis. From a cognitive semiotic perspective, the human spirit interpreting from the phenomena could be taken as a form of embodied cognition - physical and sensory interactions born out of an encounter with the environment shaping understanding and artistic output. The resulting artwork becomes a semiotic representation of this phenomena-spirit-human dialogue.



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ENCOUNTER'  
... DAMN  
BOURRIAUD.**

**“ENTER  
INTO THE  
UNKNOWN”**



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## NIGHT KREEPER

• DAYWALKER, NITE STALKER  
Blood sucker, CREATURE!

FLESH RIPPING, DEATH GIVING  
SOUL DRINKING, ~~BELIEVER~~  
DECIEVER

WAKE UP DEAD, MARKS UPON  
MY NECK  
NO REFLECTION, EYES ROLL INTO HEAD  
STALK THE STREETS, HUNGER MY PLIGHT  
GRAB A VICTIM, LIKE DELIGHT

↳ Chorus x 1

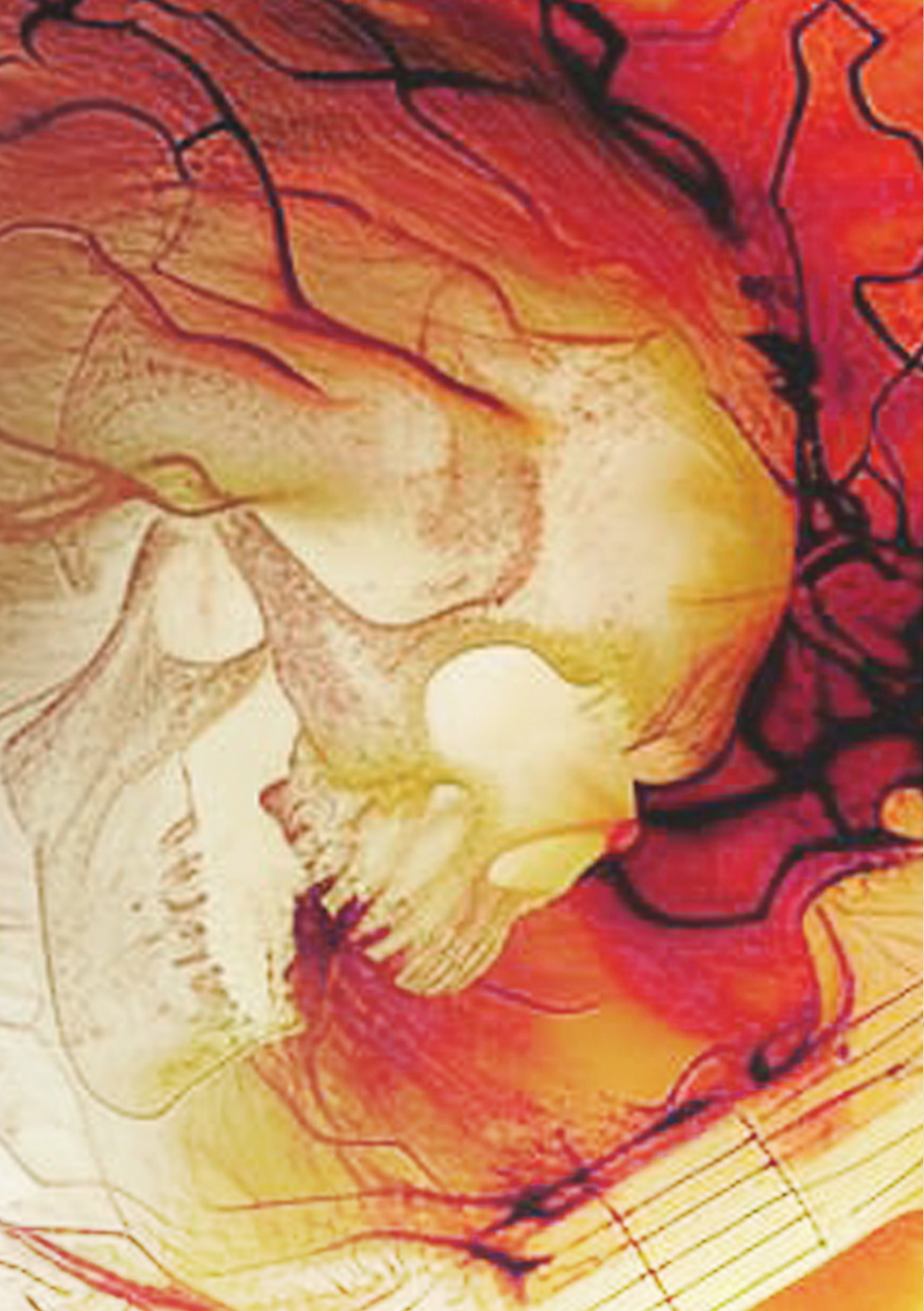
PUSHED AROUND, BULLIED AND BOUND  
SILVER MOON, ~~CAVES~~ WASHES OVER GROUND  
DISTORTED FEATURES, FUR ON MY BACK  
WITH TOOTH AND CLAW IT'S  
MY TURN TO ATTACK!!!

↳ chorus x 1 BREAK

GHOST VERSE







# THE MIDNIGHT PARADE



Jimmy P Blakeley



They say time waits for no man and in the grand scheme of things; it is time that rules. Through time, tradition and rituals are unearthed. This is a warning from the wise.

Rain-soaked pavements of Scarborough play host to neon impressions of the thrill-seeking fairground attractions, which feast on screams and laughter. Traditional fast food junk trailers are smeared with outpourings of grease and steam as tourists engage in the compulsive rituals of the two penny slots. They will never hit the jackpot and only impulsion is the winner. When the lights fade, the shutters stand silent and the footsteps of fun disperse, a bitter cold emptiness remains. On the muted beach, waves invade a sandcastle fort and breaks down its defences, proudly built by a child in a cold winter wind. An irregular shaped figure known as 'The Shepherd' stands peerless. It looks up to survey the town, cottages huddle in a faction upon the hill and grand terraces silhouette's sit against a black sky. It shrieks a high-pitched cacophony and takes one step forward. Out of the surf appear the smallest of crustaceans, then crayfish, lobsters and giant crabs. Crawling out to the fore slither jellyfish, squid, and octopus. Barking seals, clicking unicorns of the sea, booming walrus, mock turtles, griffons and roaring sea lions appear at the rear. High above like a battery of World War Two bombers, many species of birds flock together. Black gulls and arctic terns, pelicans and cormorants, all screeching and flapping their flying wings.

#### **FORWARDS THEY MARCH.**

Boarded up and abandoned, stands a row of shops. A souvenir of past seaside glamour in hand painted shop signs, emboldened in raspberry pinks and mint greens. A body lays in one of the doorways, concealed by a nylon bag, shivering in an unsettled sleep and drowning in an uncertain future. He is unaware of the monstrous spectacle flooding past as they ramble up through the winding streets, the bestial shadows bounce past the whitewashed cottages. These once would have housed widows of sailors long lost to the sea but are now owned by the affluent who host weekend soiree's far from the bustling metropolis they inhabit throughout the week.

#### **UPWARDS THEY MARCH.**

The creatures pour into the residential streets, where the four storey terrace houses stand in rows. Once they were beautiful beacons of grandeur when Victoria ruled the waves. Now many are overpriced bedsits where parking steel signs are battered from hilltop wind and neon vacancy beacons signal empty rooms to rent.

#### **ONWARDS THEY MARCH.**

Through to the ancient and crumbling Scarborough Castle, where black gulls screech with excitement and they line the walls as they watch the cavalcade commence below. These creatures know this place well, bloodshed took place here hundreds of years ago, the walls are soaked with it. The creatures holler and bay, snapping, and roaring, they can sense the prize is close.

#### **THEY CEASE THE MARCH.**

The horde eagerly awaits for an address. The Shepherd stands in the centre of the chattering crowd, he raises both hands and screeches one final cacophonous chatter as the swarm of creatures fall into a hush. They had accomplished a natural obligation at least until the next time. They all disperse as quickly as they had arrived, pouring out through the ruins of ancient stone. Back to the watery depths of the North Sea, into a black cold abyss and a world which abides by its own time, traditions and rituals.

#### **THE SHEPHERD PROCEEDS.**

The sudden emptiness surrounds the Shepherd as did the shadow of Scarborough castle. It pivots and takes a step forward. Out of the gate house and onto a gravel road it walks on. That's what the security guard testifies. The Shepherd is seen on an achromatic monitor during the man's contracted half hour break, at the very moment he tucks into a soggy ham sandwich and washes it down with a mug of lukewarm instant coffee.

#### **THE SHEPHERD DESCENDS.**

Down an ancient path and towards the church it heads. This house of the holy hasn't been a religious dwelling for the last twenty years. It is an example of modern living, where



tradition is abused. Glass doors and open plan, solar panels and timber panelling. Wooden decking and metal frames. The Shepherd advances through the ritualistic sculptured garden, past an ornate water feature and up to a heavy set of double locked doors. A key whittled from white bone is inserted comfortably into the keyhole and the door swings open wide.

#### **IN THE HOUSE OF THE ONE IT NEEDS.**

The Shepherd enters and steps over wooden bricks and soft toys abandoned at bedtime. It ascends a spiral staircase and enters a small room. Slumped in a chair in the corner is a sleeping human male exhausted with childcare. Next to him is a single bed. It was plain to see a body sat wrapped in a duvet, electronic noises emerge as the child visually feasts on artificial light of worlds unknown. A young face half covered by a mop of brown hair looks up and rubs his eyes. He strains to focus on the configuration which stands before him.

#### **THE SHEPHERD ADVANCES.**

In the early morning light as the town awakes, a wet nosed dog avidly awaits for that flick of a wrist. The dog leaps up as the tennis ball soars through the air. The Wellington boot wearing dog owner, watches his beloved pet scramble through the surf. He turns round and surveys the beauty of the early morning waves. Just at that moment he hears a chilling, disembodied scream of a child from beyond the waves.

*Ashley Evert, Medusa – traditional myths re-written, 2001.*

\*\*\*\*\*

*This story is a modern interpretation of a traditional tale which was first told in Scarborough roughly about two hundred years ago. The character of 'The Shepherd' was also known as The Face-Taker and The Host but was originally known as The Carrion King.*

*The story was adapted originally from an obscure nursery rhyme recited by young children around Scarborough called "Here comes the Carrion King".*

*The traditional rhyme is as follows:*

**From the North Sea comes The Carrion King,**

**Birds and beasts heed its call,**

**In Winter, Autumn, Summer or Spring,**

**Here comes The Carrion King.**

**Behave and go to bed without fuss,**

**Because if it comes to seek you out,**

**By god's grace all you can do is pray,**

**As it approaches you, it will steal your face,**

**In Winter, Autumn, Summer, or Spring.**

**Here comes The Carrion King.**

*The rhyme was originally a warning to naughty children from across Scarborough who would refuse to go to sleep when ordered by desperate parents at the end of their tether. It's thought that The Carrion King is a character based on the terrible seaside gull, greedy and brazen and ready to steal from unwary holiday makers while strolling down the seashore, harassed and mugged by these scavengers of the shoreline. Many sightings have been reported about the 'The Shepherd'. The earliest recorded in the mid 1800's and the latest as recent as 2001. A Halloween hoax surely? Local teenagers acting the fool? One sighting came from Mrs Mary Umbridge, who from 1975 through to 1977 served as the mayor of the town. In 1985 she gave an interview in the local paper about an encounter:*



*"I was taking in one of my usual early morning walks, when I noticed a figure in the distance marching down from the town dressed in what one would describe as a tatty old, hooded cloak. It looked so odd! It entered the waves and disappeared into the sea. I panicked, realising it could have been someone ending their life, so I alerted the coastguard and the Police. I stayed as the emergency services manoeuvred into action. I was told shortly after a thorough search; no trace of a body was ever found."*

*I discovered a group of 'fans' of the Carrion King story who call themselves 'The Shepherd's Flock' after a chance meeting with one of the groups organisers. I was told they had submitted a proposal to Scarborough's local council to consider permission to host an annual celebration for The Carrion King. Centred around a torch lit parade through the town, culminating at Scarborough Castle. A range of merchandise from t shirts to mugs would be available to purchase. This certainly would be a draw for Scarborough's tourist board, but I can reveal no decision has been announced at the time of writing.*

I.L.S BOLESKINE. 2003

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