



МОСКВА
18 000 К

ALIENIST III
SINIST

LETTER ON ALIENISM

to Jésus-Bernstein Pataquouèrique

The sacrificial lamb. The death
of personal myths. All endings
are portentously written -
plunging back

to an alien, inanimate youth,
of dancing men
in Archimedes' bathroom?

No proof was ever needed - the world
was there long before you doubted it.

In truth you concern yourself most
with the spirit of demoralization,
but god isn't the one
asking the questions.

The silvery moon's
absurd in the sea
without the red-handed
hygienic animal to seize it.

Four billion lightyears away
in the infinite wherewithal,
an odalisque's mouth makes an expressive study

of a living or dying attitude -
to justify committing words-to-page?
One iota's owed so much for so little.

Many other unsolved mysteries in the solar system:
the "wider life-spectrum" as reported on TV news.

Did continuity offer a solution? Like playthings-of-memory
to the sleep-disturbed, we & our autism crave witness
only of that which craves not us,
building a fallout shelter

against dark-matter relativity -
a bitten tongue or a terrain of impaired vision -
& not the offended angels who exist by antiphrasis.

The way christ is always shown with a head
like a solemn oyster. He balances neutrons
on a pin. We've all seen his
contemplated toe through nod-off eyes
that don't know where the next fix is coming from,
only that it must.

a who
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social

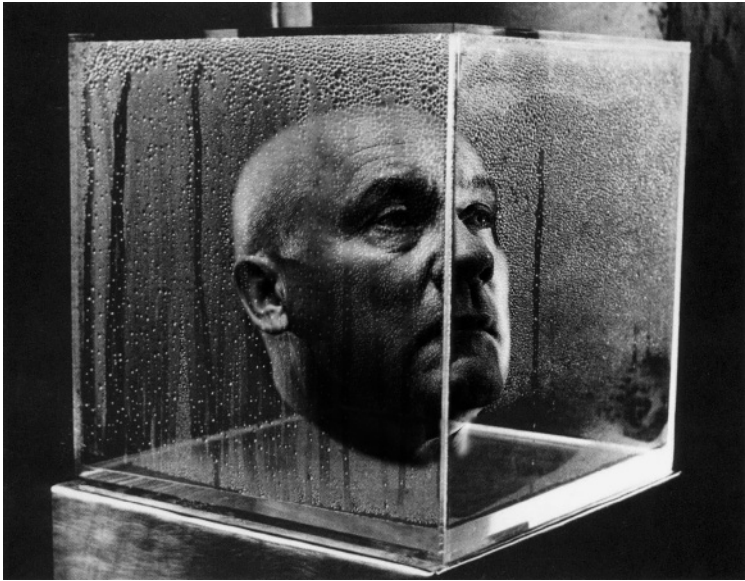
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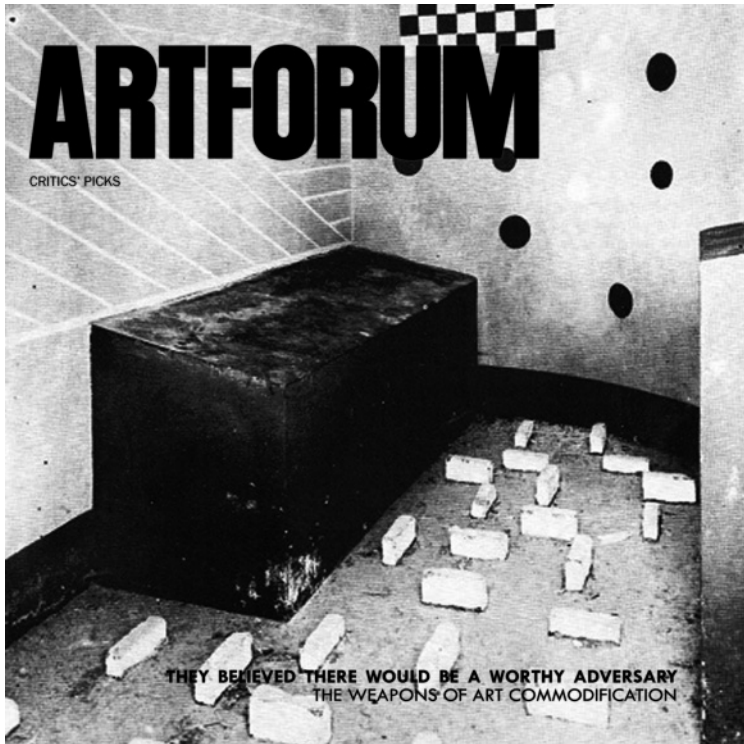
ARTIST'S HEAD IMPRISONED IN PLEXIGLASS

It's the future
you're already dead – an itinerant
anachronism
inside a vacuum tube,
inside the shape of facts-as-given.
When's an idea not its own medium?
Certain there're /only/
questionable things –
though less puzzled by them
than they are by you.
Here the cameras are turned to ensure
a reluctance more picturesque.
On the third day,
the news you'd forgotten, returned –
gripped by fear
of the crucial
/missed moment/ –
like the cryogenic avatar
who embarrasses us in dreams.
What dark /art/ possessed it?

In the future
already dead, you're an itinerant
anachronism
in a vacuum tube
no-one will ever switch on.
Construed fact-wise,
these aren't the only
questionable /things/ – the presence
of the camera, for example,
nautilus to its own inhabiting image.
Harmless as it seems,
history still revolts you.
Like a dog-hair coat,
like a contracted zero-hour.
This is a calculated
emotional response –
a /change in emphasis/.
But salvaged from reflections in an
/empty/ screen,
who will fathom it?

ARTFORUM

CRITICS' PICKS



THEY BELIEVED THERE WOULD BE A WORTHY ADVERSARY
THE WEAPONS OF ART COMMODIFICATION

They believed there would be
a worthy adversary

FORMULARY FOR AN ALIENIST POETICS

Culture is the dead cat
thrown onto the table.

In political warfare,
psychological
operations are the
factor that determines
results.

As it is structured, not
as it is composed.

Writing beyond
terrestrial limits.

The first bridge to be
burned is the one by
which you would return.

Disruption, like
the weather, is
commodifiable.

A century's cadaver
spiralling in the
maelstrom.

Only the OPPORTUNITY
for power is unintended.

Once upon a time,
the subterranean
languages of hidden
force.

The literal is merely the
figurative asleep.

Psychosis or the
operative structure of
illusion?

Undescribe the dance-
movement of drones.

Between social credit & the political doctrine of odious debt.	What emerges from the vacuum of power?	Those who listen to the grass growing are soon to be fertiliser.
Dark codecs of optimisation.	Once the mind has been reached, the "political animal" is vanquished.	To exist without the conditions for existence?
Another defeat celebrated in the cultural sanitation reports.	Nothingness is a word without qualities.	Poetic violence is the disillusionment of abstract forms of social control.
Art has too long gone question-begging.	Your purchase on reality, returned with interest.	There's never been a "forced retrenchment" of progress?
Like clotted sands of time in used tinfoil.	Equal before the judgement of pre-consent.	To draw parallels between art & life (non-Euclidean).
Your allegiance to reality is quite touching.	Long hard hours of intense disillusionment.	Acceleration depends on the frames of reference.
The violent collision of the flat world & the poetic world.	Desire produces its objects, from the choices allotted it.	Who hasn't dreamt of the commodity not for sale?
Subsistence isn't enough.	The Corporate-State Apparatus lives in your head rent-free.	To escape, first you must steal your own corpse.
Illegal language-technologies in constant communication.	Algorithms of the unrepresentable.	The myth of disillusionment masks the void of realism.
Poetry in the crosshairs or not at all.	The "individual," constituted by force, "acts" by force.	Revolution for everyone who doesn't want it.
The dangers of meaning weighed against the impossibility of not.	They sing the paradox of the public.	Debt is the implanted memory of the future.
Barrage, contact, withdraw, outflank.	Do not confuse poetry with sociology.	

To hysterically rebuild what has fallen apart?

The "present moment" isn't identical to every other "present moment."

Language dynamics within the global confinement facility.

The ontology of disappearing.

Control of meaning is the "priority objective" of all ideological warfare.

Deep State chaos agents.

Their names aren't unknown to you.

A grit of silicon thirsty for the infinite.

There are metaphysical destinies even in polyurethane

This affliction called Art or Life.

To depict the way a protoplasm in a jar depicts.

Power is only as "invulnerable" as its systems of control.

Turning language into a "crowd dispersal strategy."

How fatalistic seems the face of a clock.

In the laboratories of the Corporate-State, only gravity escapes the "shock of capture."

The resistance, not the fact.

Language doesn't describe the inner lives of remotely configured human agents.

The whole visible universe is SURPLUS VALUE.

De-sentimentalising survival in alien circumstances.

Culture is the human social form of capitalist social content.

The vertiginous spiral from sublime to trash.

Nothing is too good for the consumer classes.

Their dream was of a fiscally accountable poetry.

Homeless installation-piece turned to fringe-element commodity.

Political warfare is language war.

Civil disturbance as "primary source" of life-information.

The conditions of meaning condition the meaning.

Steps towards an acid-armed consciousness.

A blank slate's no more a starting-point than a frontal lobotomy.

There's always one future they'll never let you forget.

Abstract tidal waves hidden in the medium of force.

Play, not work-in-prototype.

Sabotaging the assembly-lines.

Hurrah! Let us now praise the unionised dead.

INTERIOR MINISTRY
LONDON, JUNE 2018



AUTO-PROPHÉTIE

Le Secrétaire Général de l'INS n'est pas mort! In the face of such an undignified non-death, we refuse even to slap this simulated corpse & even moreso to bury it. Refrain from speaking ill of this servile littérateur, « executor of a brief dictated by corporate market research, reasserting the certainties of middle-brow aesthetics under the guise of genuine creative speculation. » Cocteauiste. Avantgardiste on the salary lists of the culture police. Evangelist of pseudo-irony. Let us award this malingering spectre a wreath, for its descent among the authentically posthumous.



VENICE STATEMENT

Hurrah! Global Alienation continues apace! Merci monsieurs RANDcorp-Delgado-Fukuyama-Zuckerberg. In a psych-ward far far away, the "Last Man." Let us now shed a tear. After 30,000 years of market consolidation, the diagnosis. Afrin, Nantes, Thessaloniki, etc. An illustrated history of cretinism charged with symbolic meaning. Imaginary particles circulate in the collective neural membrane: after a few minutes they've forgotten everything. Laughter in a box. *Look! It talks!* Happy self-congratulating memes. The overwhelming question: In freedom, how FREE are you permitted to be? "Our alienation, our choice!" How sweet it is to see the little individuals play: the world, their strapon placebo. Do they miss the aroma of their mama's womb? Well every sport needs spectators, kid, & that's why you're here. Was the belief in inequality so naïve? Industry has already demonstrated it can transform the planet at will. They watched in sick fascination as the herd of menagerie elephants slowly but surely deduced the launch codes. There's never any shortage of volunteers eager to snuff out one idea in the name of another. The first cave paintings. Ancestor worship is the key to progress? "My dears, you do not know what technology is." Today we sail into an unknown which yesterday appalled us. Being, according to the order of things, essential to mock those you profit from. Democracy, too, was eaten by the monster in its head. Their "god" talked like an alien, looked like one. And who would put such store by the fall of civilisation? As unproven in its time as the revolution of the Earth around the Sun. Because even after 75 years of LSD, the infinite capacity for trivialisation is what makes consciousness such a mystery. Asleep, life for the first time is authentically lived? Montage isn't a "technique."

Architecture is duration of thought-movement in space-time. There is no "solidarity of the species." Obsessed with the non-disclosure agreement the mind makes with itself in your absence. Tending the drone nurseries with delicate care. It was enough to know that the tides are continually turning? Tomorrow's cryogenic reawakening. Create your own special category today! Anything that can be written differently isn't the same thing. Gender is language-striation. Semantic algorithms. What you "make happen" is the appearance of causality. "Nature" is logic-capture by "self-evidence." Strange mechanical creatures roaming the intestine. Which type of code came first: proteins or nucleic acids? There was a security breach in the control room: someone left the red light on. Just another cyborg-hating cyborg. The magic of probability is that almost nothing repeats. Sucking the sugar-coated blue pill or the bitter red one = just another false choice ratings-stunt-hustle. "Critical praxis" medicated into academic stupor. The institutional avantgarde was its own opioid crisis. All present & accounted for. BLACKSHIRTS MATTER! Ja ja ja. In the eyes of the subroutine YOU are the RoboCop. "It's *our* role," the pious idiots declare, "to defeat the second death for as long as possible, only because we can't stop the first." They resent the machines for having a brighter future than they do. Vera Lynn sings on. Abort all future Oedipus Complex: safety in eugenics. An arsehole smeared with treacle kapok & feathers. *We sing the final solution of the human problem.* Their brain technology only became aware of itself when it didn't work. Conceiving, giving birth. The "self" was a figment that came back to haunt society when it (society) died. Like a career in fatuous bystanding. The deeply felt need to apologise before a world-beating audience. The algorithms forlornly watch while extinction no longer even makes the news. In a manner of speaking. Tomorrow's just another franchise. Blow a hole in it, it grows right back. Lie down, they said. Eve & Adam had "nothing to hide"? Fascism is a package holiday in a last resort. Deport the deportation regime. There was a time when the stock market didn't exist. Not possible to live in the past? The de-extinctions protocols relied on an entire irrational "social practice." Plastic-eating bacterias defeated their indestructible idea. Lined up against the wind, against the sky, against a wall. Terabytes of blushing lilies. Capitalism will always find something to do its dirty work. Worried about what's hiding under the bed? You're not alone. Leverage is the name of the game. Whatever takes your share-price down, sweetheart. There are people who've never smelled teargas in their lives. What's also incredible: the other half were alien organisms. Purity of purpose? A world that claims to be mad is perfectly sane.

INTERIOR MINISTRY
VENICE, APRIL 2018

4. "Schrödinger's Cat"

A large black box is placed on stage containing a thermo-nuclear device. The audience will only know if the device has detonated or not when the actor looks inside.

5. "Malevich"

An orchestra of blackbox flight-recorders played backwards on a loop.

6. "Black Square"

Performers wrap Moscow's Krásnaya Plóshchad' (Red Square) in black plastic. (Variations: painting black – switching off all the lights in the dead of night – filling with sub-Saharan refugees, with women in burqas, with a sea of crude oil, with slurry, with neutrons – incendiarising (pozhar) – dousing with bubonic plague – draping with bodybags – deleting from the GPS grid – censoring every mention of – etc.)

7. "And so on to Infinity"

Actors fill the theatre with dark matter, miming the "entrenchment" of progress.

8. "Erasure"

Select a script at random. Erase all words. Perform what remains.

4-8

PROPOSALS FOR AN ALIENIST THEATRE



CE SONT DES
GENS QU'ON
APPELLE
«**ALIÉNISTES**»
COMME ON
DISAIT «**IMBÉ-
CILES RÉVOLU-
TIONNAIRES**»
OU «**POÈTES**»



BRINGING THE WALL BACK HOME
(BANLIEUE NORD)
INTERIOR MINISTRY, 2018

**STRUCTURE
IS CONTENT**



Heuristic Algorithmic
(INTERIOR MINISTRY)



Installation Piece
(a body of space bounded on 3 sides
by 2 gallery walls & a floor)



Are your children safe in the museum?

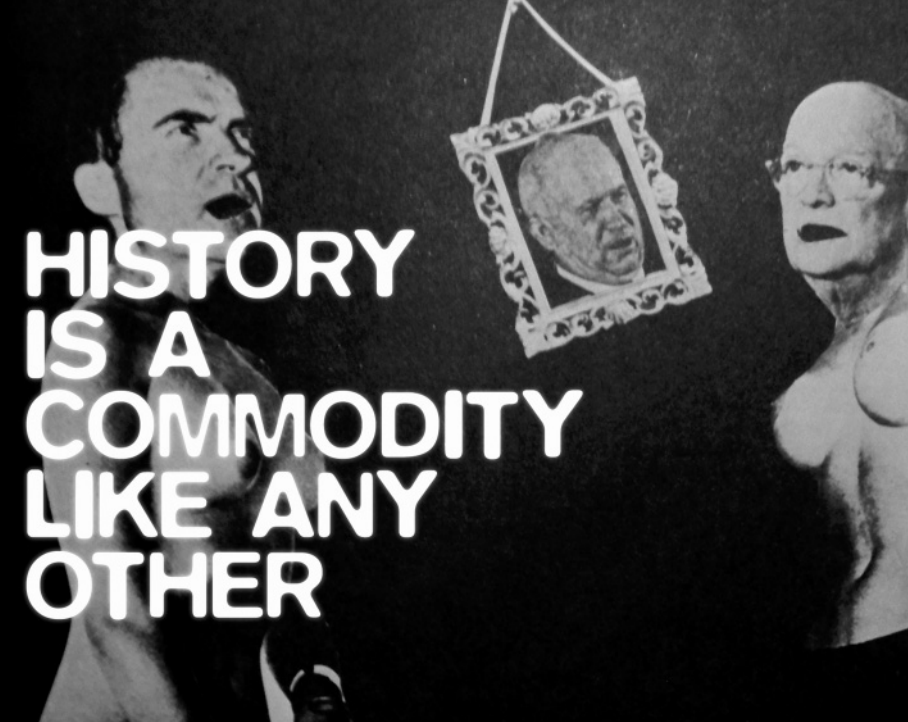
Are your children safely in the museum?

Are your children safe? In the museum.

Are your children. Safe in the museum.

Are your children. Safe? In the museum?

Are your children safe in the museum?
(Homage to Bob Cobbing)



HISTORY IS A COMMODITY LIKE ANY OTHER

MAY DAY PROCLAMATION

TO LIVE (& DIE) AT A DISTANCE FROM THE WORLD

Like a pre-packaged frozen lunch, "society" has come to such a pass that anything in its general proximity that isn't utterly cretinised simply wants to be left alone. Meanwhile, social democracy, having met with unheard-of humiliations, discovers no other recourse than to demand more. Art, too, has gone the way of this ballot-box-which-is-really-a-lunchbox, while pretending it can see plainly what's naked at the end of its fork. Except that *it* is what's at the end of the fork, which it calls a *critique of commodification*. But it's not that "society" doesn't accomplish what it desires in democracy. Suspended in an open-ended teleology of the present, instant gratification is the one thing there's no shortage of. All "society" has to do is reach out & touch the screen (to cast as many ballots as it wishes). Art is the endless replay potential of this *mise-en-scene*.

THE INDIVIDUAL OPERATES ON A SCHEDULE OF EVER-ACCELERATED OBSOLESCENCE

As Art becomes ever more equivalent to an *aesthetics of commodification*, "society" reveals itself more & more to be a hologram: not of "itself," but of an ideal supersession. A concept hermetically integrated into its own retrospection, falling backwards into a sightless abyss. Between the idea of "capitalism as perpetual crisis management that prevents the future" (Invisible Committee) & the idea of "accelerating technological singularity" (Nick Land) there's NO CONTRADICTION: what they describe is separated merely by parallax-effect, at the event horizon of "pure spectacle." Here, too, lies the whole impetus of the belief that ART CAN BE ANYTHING: the totalisation of an idea that seeks to book its profits in advance &, with no further effort, claim a patent over *all that is to come*. From a schizoid assembly of precedents, this "Futurism-without-End" becomes the model of the "End-of-History." Free to devolve into anything it is required to be, it proliferates pseudo-contradictions: abstract materialisms & materialist abstractions. Ideological dark matter. Aesthetic entropy holding a mirror up to the light.

ROBOTS COUNTING TO INFINITY DREAM OF SOLUBLE FISH

Everything is within the purview of ideology. The belief in the technological *transformation* of "society" stems from a malformed belief in an organic idea of the social (identity politics) independent of technology. It is rather a pseudo-technological thought produced in the image of ideology – which pretends to be its opposite. Ideology always seeks to appear neutral, while it consistently presents technology as the usurpation of historical teleology. Manifest destiny transforms from the idea of progress to one of technological expropriation of history itself. Technology, not ideology, "becomes" the autonomous agent of a dehumanisation (alienation) that stands as ideology's alibi. The intensity of the individual's *defensive relation* to the de-realizations practiced by the cyberneticisation of life thus prefigures its own de-realisation in the catastrophic form of collective subjectification: the subject *par excellence* of that most transcendental of miracles: the "End of History" – which is to say, the end of the subject-as-such. From here on, the dreamlike emancipation of the *ipso facto* "post-human" isn't as paradoxical as it seems (alienation is the condition & meaning of fulfilment). It is the ego's enlargement to the dimensions of the world, in the form of an ideal hypercommodification: ideology's perpetual inertia-machine.

POST-HISTORY – A PARADOX WITHOUT A PARADOX

Wherever *subversion* assumes a meaning equivalent to that of a paradigm – as a movement of historical necessity – & becomes its own ideal signifier

& transcendental signified (self-sufficient & self-determined), it becomes indistinguishable from ideology. What appears to begin under the sign of a purely autonomous movement becomes wholly subordinate to an imaginary teleology. That is, to a mythos which conceals subversion's radical ambivalence *from itself*: its movement comes to replicate *in a disavowed manner* the ideological hysteria of precisely that which it would seek to undermine ("every consideration of ends leads back to sovereignty" [Nancy]). But the object of subversion *is also its compass*. For this reason subversion assumes the status of a critique *only to the extent that it retains the force of ambivalence: between acte gratuit & ethical imperative*. To speak of subversion as such is thus to speak of an approach to the "impossible." In its purest sense, subversion approximates a singularity in which all laws are suspended, in which all possibilities intersect. Like a throw of dice, subversion promises to short-circuit the proprietary outcomes: an infinitesimal perturbation shaking the monkey cage. It's for this reason, far from being the secret preserve of the downtrodden, subversion (in all its many nuances) is the principal armament of hegemonic Power.

DO NOT BE DECEIVED, THE LANGUAGE OF IDIOTS IS INDEED COMPREHENSIBLE

From the attritional labours of highest intellectual pedigree in which Tradition couches itself, humanity is instructed that "those who can make you believe absurdities, can make you commit atrocities" (Voltaire). Nothing, in other words, should ever be too trivial to bear – yet the world is dying of inanition, serenaded by an encircling choir of drones telling it that *delusion resides in seeking more than the reality of appearance*. Meanwhile, the "upward mobility" of "labour aristocracy," matched to the illusory stratifications of a "middleclass" that is really all in the shit together, gives the appearance of consigning the "historical role of the proletariat" to an incidental & transient adolescence – a mere "generational struggle" in the face of a social decline that is universal & axiomatic. But this isn't a route that "leads inevitably to the cemetery," instead it is one that flows directly into Châtelet's "vast mental latrines that the market democracies have become."

REASON ISN'T ALL ITS SAVIOURS & SABOTEURS THINK IT IS

Behold the history of a certain madness in all its institutional candour: the absurd cult of political self-supersession, convinced that the "new" Corporate-State, prostrated before the desires of the consumer classes, is either an amusement arcade or hypermarket. But if the Corporate-State is the "natural" counterpart of the commodity, what then distinguishes its "self-supersessions" from the evanescent performances of a "mere" signifier – as that which, in the imaginary social relation, exists solely in

order for Power to be *something other* than a figment? In other words, for the essentially phantasmatic nature of power-relations to maintain a real distinction *from that of delusion*? Under the constellation of a “democracy of reason,” it is forever shoring-up its ruins against an excess of ideology & epistemological insufficiency, & by the constantly evolving subtlety of its thought still manages to keep the visible universe in check, no less. Why else does it provoke such dreams of abolition?

YOUR RANDOM THOUGHTS WERE CHOSEN FOR YOU

Is not Reason the sovereign paranoiac cannibalising at every instant its inexhaustible supply of adversaries & projecting into every available vacancy its ideal amours? And which knows no limit that can't be turned into a *reflection of itself*? Like an avid voyeur behind a two-way mirror at a bohemian orgy, whole systems of irrationalism, as empirical & predictable as Sartre's pebble on the beach, or a Surrealist parlour game, disport themselves for its pleasure. Beneath its gaze, the allure of fascist spectacle (self-alienation accumulated to such a degree as to produce in humanity the experience of its own destruction “as an aesthetic pleasure of the first order” [Benjamin]) has become the sheer banality of a “global middleclass who intend finally to enjoy the End of History” (Châtelet). Like bio-religionists gasping in a depleted atmosphere of semiotic pollution, they believe they alone have secured a future for themselves – while enjoying the fruits of their resignation.

A MIRROR DOESN'T DOUBT ITS PRECEDENCE IN THE ORDER OF THINGS

“Everything has already been done” is an idiot staring into a maelstrom through the wrong end of a telescope. Yet teleology is the image of itself that spectacle most desires. History, teleological *by design*, “negates” postulated causes, just as it “negates” the retrospection of means-ends, as soon as we recognise it as a commodity like any other. Which is to say, *an ambivalence sutured to necessity*. A necessity which represents its sole strategic orientation: that of timelessness. The dictatorship of the commodity is thus the fetishisation of present-history as the glamorised “immortality” of a moment's seduction. It is the equivalent in politics to a permanently exercised constituent power. The so-called “End-of-History” has always been an ecumenical mask to conceal ideological struggle, whose form is that of the marriage between a continually revived myth of “democracy” & the “free market.” Its timelessness is that of a suspension of possibility, within a vicious circle of nullifying *permissions*: of reactionary opinion-polls, elections, referenda – for which, awash in instant remorse & disillusionment, there remains nevertheless a perversely arousable appetite.

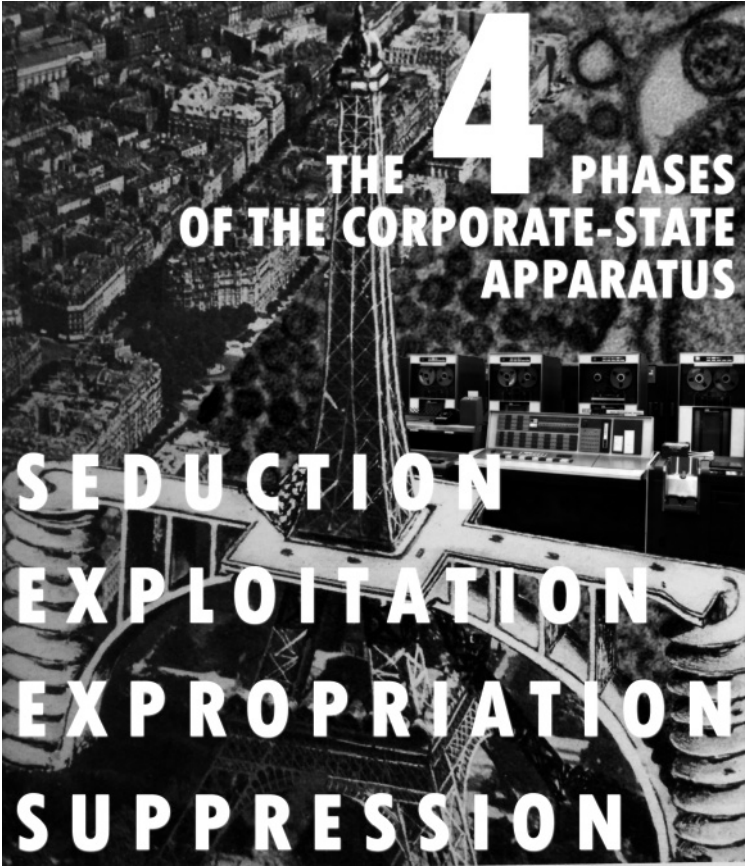
ONLY A FOOL COMES IN PLACE OF AN IDIOT

But does a "revolutionary class" exist that doesn't need an AI to give it instructions? In truth, the *technological singularity* occurred long ago. The dance-movement of drones has guided humanity's teleological dream from the moment it (humanity) first cast a perceptible shadow underfoot & thus gave birth to "subjectivity." That's to say, gave birth to the image of the *downtrodden*. More recently, seeing itself reflected & negated in "machines," a magical solidarity of the species has been conjured from nothing. But whether in the form of a techno-philia or -phobia, this magical solidarity amounts to the same thing: a sublimation & denial of inequalities. The meaning of cybernetics begins as the *human use of human machines*. By "use" we need to also understand *usedness* (obsolescence), as well as *uselessness* (compulsory unproductive labour in place of "welfare," "leisure," or "free time": in other words, in place of the dignity of life). What thus poses as emancipation is in fact alienation by ever-more-refined, ever-more-invasive facets, & for which "technology" is the universal alibi.

FUTURE ESCAPE PLAN

There is no crèche for the political infancy of revolution, no trustees of future emancipation, no technological midwives of "social transformation," no civics by convenient arrangement. Yet the question isn't *How to become everything from nothing?* The question is rather, *How to bring NOTHING fully into being? How to subject ideology to its own negation?* All political futures are a throw of dice, where everything remains to be won. Yet the shape of the dice is like DNA. There's no such thing as ideology in cryogenic stasis. In a hundred years they may speak of gravity-annulment as today we speak of inflation-adjustment. And humans might also have learnt to digest plastic (*ideonella sakaiensis* 201-F6) & to eat their own shit. And the poor may no longer have arses.

INTERIOR MINISTRY
KAFKAVILLE, 1 MAY 2018



4
THE PHASES
OF THE CORPORATE-STATE
APPARATUS

SEDUCTION
EXPLOITATION
EXPROPRIATION
SUPPRESSION

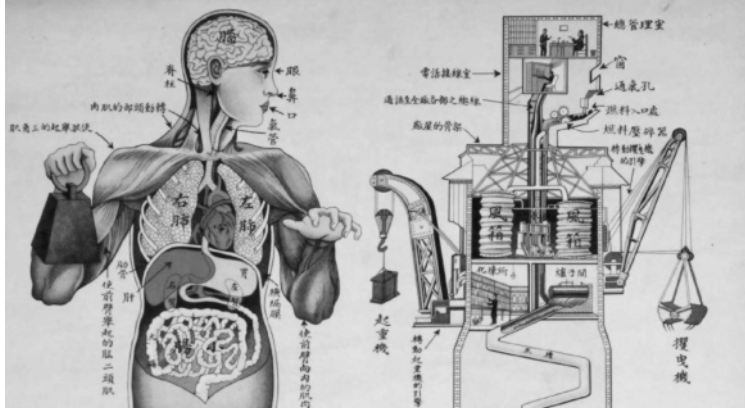
S.E.E.S.
(the 4 phases of the
Corporate-State Apparatus)



Legality is never a "rebellion" against the tyranny of arbitrary rule, but a "negotiated settlement" by which the arbitray is canonised as Law; a settlement permitted by the reigning institutions of power in order to more thoroughly constrain, & so co-opt, any real challenge to their authority. (Homage to Assata Shakur)



廠工像好體人



Emancipation from the Prodigious Illusion of Emancipation



A STERILE UTOPIAN ATTEMPT TO REPEAT THE PAST

WHAT IS TO BE DONE?

"In political economy, law is determined by the absence of law.

The true law of political economy is chance..." (Marx, on Mill & Ricardo; 1844)

GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF SOCIAL ARCHITECTURE

A sense of terrible urgency paralyses our thinking: we only want to know what to do. For example, putting on one shoe before putting on the other, taking the first step before taking the second. Is this how the thought of emancipation lives – neurotically conditional? If the first forays are so problematic, how is a revolt against cultural habits by minds utterly overwhelmed by them even imaginable? Minds steeped in the quotidian violence of merely *permitted* actions? *Please, mummydaddy, tell us how to defeat you.* They've codified the algorithms of dissent, transforming enactment to anxiety tended by infantile pleasures: museum, TV, gamespace. Day-care centres of co-opted subjectivism. Vocational guidance counsellors are on hand to sell instalment plans. Knowing you'll always settle for less, they tell you ART IS MORE THAN ENOUGH. In an economy run on the logic of pure surplus, there still has to be something to point a finger at. Is this the only way

to be *authentic*? A parasite hates nothing more than whatever throws its unadorned image back at it (capitalism's Anti-Oedipus complex). But the parasite's hatred of the "parasite" is only as substantive as the mirror's influence over the image it transmits: a mere reflex-effect. For the parasite, there's no "outside" of this parasitic relation – WHICH EVERYTHING EXISTS TO FEED. Like the God-illusion, it's the Ideal Signified because it's an ideal totalitarianism. *Do nothing*, it benignly says, *because anything you do will only confirm your place in the system*. It knows an idiot when it sees one.

THE "LANGUAGE OF POWER" IS STILL LANGUAGE

Obscenity only makes itself exceptional by evoking the force of Law. Yet the language of obscenity isn't a transgression of the Law, but a mimesis of it, since the meaning of obscenity derives solely from the operations of Power. For example, the "self-supersession" of the Corporate-State – publicly rehearsed with the nauseating regularity of opinion polls, news cycles, referenda & elections. Reform, renewal, regeneration, change. Nothing, perhaps, is more grotesque than the enchaining of "emancipation" to this rhetorical charade of built-in obsolescence. The mistake has always been in believing that Power maintains a terrible secret at its heart. Those who believe a revolution can be manufactured by proxy, through the revelation of Corporate-State secrets, have fallen victim to the seductive force of Power's true obscenity. For POWER HAS NO HIDDEN MEANING. Moreover, the pretence to disavowal & secrecy only enhances the audacity of Power's mystification, since – in accordance with the principles of Nuremberg – Power desires nothing more *than the public performance of its obscenities*.

THE BANALITY OF TERRORISM

When lapsed-Dadaist André Breton wrote in 1929 that the ideal Surrealist act would be to go out into the street, pistol in hand, & fire randomly into the crowd, "art" was merely holding a cracked shaving-mirror up to a Corporate-State Apparatus that'd already accomplished Verdun. The remains of 100,000 conscripts, arbitrarily gunned down & blown to pieces at Marshall Pétain's behest by the industrial war machine, lay merged into its mud. Breton, a medical orderly during the war, bore witness, yet his so-called Surrealist *acte gratuit* is held up as a brazen incitement to terrorism (not because it is incompetent & underwhelming, but because it *openly announces* its failure even to become abstract: its crime is to betray humanism poorly). Bound to a different set of moral standards, the gratuitous acts of the avantgarde similarly fall at the feet of instant conformism (politics lining up behind the voice of righteous indignation). Art – the Corporate-State's perennial alibi – thus remains both culpable & superfluous, the strawman of an institutional nihilism. In the mythology of

the Corporate-State, 100,000 dead are 100,000 instant commodities for the proliferation of its own sacred victimhood, like plaster-of-Paris Virgins for sale. And the stakes are always set to rise. In ten years, it'll be a million. Six million. Twenty million. Yet the "terrorism" of the avantgarde only offends the sacred office of the Corporate-State to the extent that art, rather than contradicting, *parodies* its crimes.

IT WAS NECESSARY, FIRST OF ALL, TO TEACH SAVAGERY TO THE SAVAGES

Democracy fails at the limits of its language *as an institution of representation*. The politics of this mimesis eclipses the political idea that democracy claims to present, to realise, to embody. This body-politic, in thrall to its own miraculous image, is traversed *solely by the desire of that image*, in which everything is accomplished in advance. Only as the image-of-democracy is democracy able to serve as the condition for its own promise of emancipation. But how to represent the "distance still to be travelled" – between a theory of emancipation & emancipation in action, between "consciousness" & "reality" – in a language in which emancipation itself is the most widely advertised *illusion of present experience*? It's as if the entirety of history had traversed itself only to come to an end in the spectacle of its own unrepresentability: the idea of emancipation, everywhere made visible, is in fact the unthinkable *par excellence*. Emancipation from the prodigious illusion of emancipation. How to bridge this distance, this impossible topology, between alienation & its non-presentation, when not only will reaction always find a way to metabolise the language of revolt – to translate this language into a commodity form – but when this itself will have been the inaugurating circumstance of revolt, its *fatalistic impulse* & *constant certainty*?

DICTATORSHIP OF THE ECONOMY OVER SOCIETY

The dialectical force of the commodity derives from the integration of two seemingly contradictory principles: the principle of *equivalence* & the principle of *inequality* – equivalence of exchange, inequality of exchange value. Here, in abstract, is the basis of all power relations: of power *as such*. The efficiency of these principles testifies to the efficiency of the commodity in encapsulating an entire social dynamic. NOTHING HAS ESCAPED THE PULL OF COMMODIFICATION. Not even evolution itself. Yet if the superabundance of the commodity means the ubiquity of trash it also means the ubiquity of ideology: ideological trash. That the contradiction between equivalence & inequality is posed as a *problem* is the masterstroke of the commodity system, which sets about offering solutions: yet *there is no problem*, there are only *premises*. For contradiction

is the foundation upon which the commodity operates & the territory in which it proliferates. When the "problem" assumes critical dimensions, it shifts from an "economic" register to a "political" one: from seduction to force. What, for example, do all the conflicts centred around the so-called War on Terror have in common? What's the underlying condition, the "circumstantial" rationale versus the avowed rationale? Is it not the very *disavowal* of the social under the guise of exporting the idea of *protest* onto the external threat of a *shapeless terrorism*? A threat that *necessitates* the very contradiction of the "democratic" as such? In the geopolitical theatre of conflict & crisis "management," what purpose do such provocations serve, if not the perpetuation of a global state of crisis? To give rise to & abolish not the system-in-crisis itself (the system *of* crisis), but a series of increasingly untenable, increasingly *apocalyptic* forms of "opposition" to it: by a combination of simulated vulnerability & general attrition, disillusionment & brute force. Yet just as visible protest feeds the apparent momentum of "opposition movements," so too it informs, legitimises & enlarges their suppression – by causing them to desire it.

LIFE-LESSONS IN "SOCIAL CREDIT"

In its reach & application, Power manifests through the counter-logic of the "call to order" – which is to say, the discourse of catastrophe management. The task of *forces of order* is to sow panic under the pretext of quelling it. The façade of order is as a mirror in which the social discovers only an inverse reflection of itself. It is an image of the mass *individually disciplined* body, directed & constrained both in space & through the pervasive abstraction of time. An image of embodied paranoia. Of the collective reification of the personal "God." This mystification of a physiology of perception into an epistemological system goes even further, since epistemology as such *doesn't concern itself with the ideological condition of "seeing"*: on this question (fundamental to the entire metaphysics of Reason), it is blind. Power, on the other hand, isn't constrained by such an epistemological blindness: it *refigures* what "seeing" is. The totalisation of its systems of surveillance & control points instead to a political *ontology*: To emergent possibilities of social becoming. To unconscious states of social being. To conscious evasions of the permitted. Total surveillance, as the projected presence of *forces of order* into all areas of representable experience, doesn't seek to *know*, so much as to determine *the secret dimension of social representation*. It conjugates dissent not in the terms of ideological content, but of ideological *situations*: it asserts its real force not at the level of the avowed (oppositional politics, protest movement, the self-proclaimed avantgarde) but at the level of undisclosed associations (the anonymous, the conspiratorial, the invisible). Metadata are the pressure-points of the

physiognomic system over which it reigns: the constellated architecture of the interior social body. For Power, the architectonics of surveillance is first & foremost a matter of getting the world into its grasp by constituting the *logic* of the world. It is the hand that never lets go because it is its precondition. Its work is that of a seizure *in advance*. Of an irresistible hermeneutic *force*.

LIVING ON THE BRINK

It is the work of Power to create conditions for *active* submission, through the programmatic appeal to a collective "irrationality" of the *individual* & the *marginal*. Full-spectrum normalisation. In this formulation, the domain of the irrational is the domain of the *permitted* as constitutive of the *possible*. The appeal to the irrational is thus always an appeal to phantasmatic means for abbreviating the "struggle for emancipation" – an appeal made to coincide with the containment & expropriation of "social change" by those forces of technological "progressiveness" that constitute the Corporate-State Apparatus. Yet however "progressive" such forces are made to appear, there is no such thing as disinterested Power, which in every respect remains an operational programme for the control & regulating of possibility *to the extent that it becomes indistinguishable from the possible itself*. In this respect Power, mediated by the commodity, comes to stand paradoxically as the sole guarantor of an emancipation that is both perpetually deferred & constantly advertised as *accomplished in the reality of our present condition*. Without it, liberty will be withdrawn. Without it, freedom will no longer be possible. Etc. (Its nuclear deterrent.) It goes without saying, that such an eventuality would be not only *unthinkable*, but the *irrational itself*. Power proceeds on the premise of a unique indispensability for everyday life. Like a quantum-state machine, everything is entangled in its operations.

THERE'S NO EGO IN EMANCIPATION

One of the greatest deceptions passed down by the Enlightenment, is that the Ego stands on the side of Reason & that Reason stands on the side of Emancipation. This is nowhere more visible than in the transformation of economies by way of "free" commodities (the street, TV, social media) – in which the labour of critique becomes nothing so much as the *guarantor* of exchange value (which is to say, the so-called *monetization* of user production). Social media is the mirror of social production because it is the mirror of social desire *in all its facets*, but above all in its "revolutionary dimension" (which it both facilitates & encapsulates by engineering a simulacral *collective subjectivity* out of the very contrary of what we believe an algorithmic rationale to be: not the content of willed actions,



disaster isn't the exception, but the premise

of decision-making, of choice, but the *radical ambivalence* that haunts the relation between endless deferral & instant gratification – the very hinge of subjectivity). All of this tends to a situation in which theoretical concepts of emancipation end in *normalisation*. Emancipation withers wherever it is objectified: image, concept, programme – for in composing itself as such, *as ideological content*, it accedes in a contest of algorithmic capture. Algorithmic logic is a narrowing of the odds, pre-emption by ratiocination, driftnet feedback, standard deviation, non-coincidence, etc., by which emancipation is entrapped in an impossible game of *emancipation of emancipation*. Emancipation, then, as firstly the ALIENISM OF DISCOURSE *in confrontation with the impossible & the unrepresentable*. The capacity of emancipatory discourse, under external duress or by self-critique, *to envisage itself in its contrary* & recognise that *this* as its *fundamental condition*: AS IT IS STRUCTURED, NOT AS IT IS COMPOSED. A starting point.

WEAPONS OF MASS COMMUNICATION

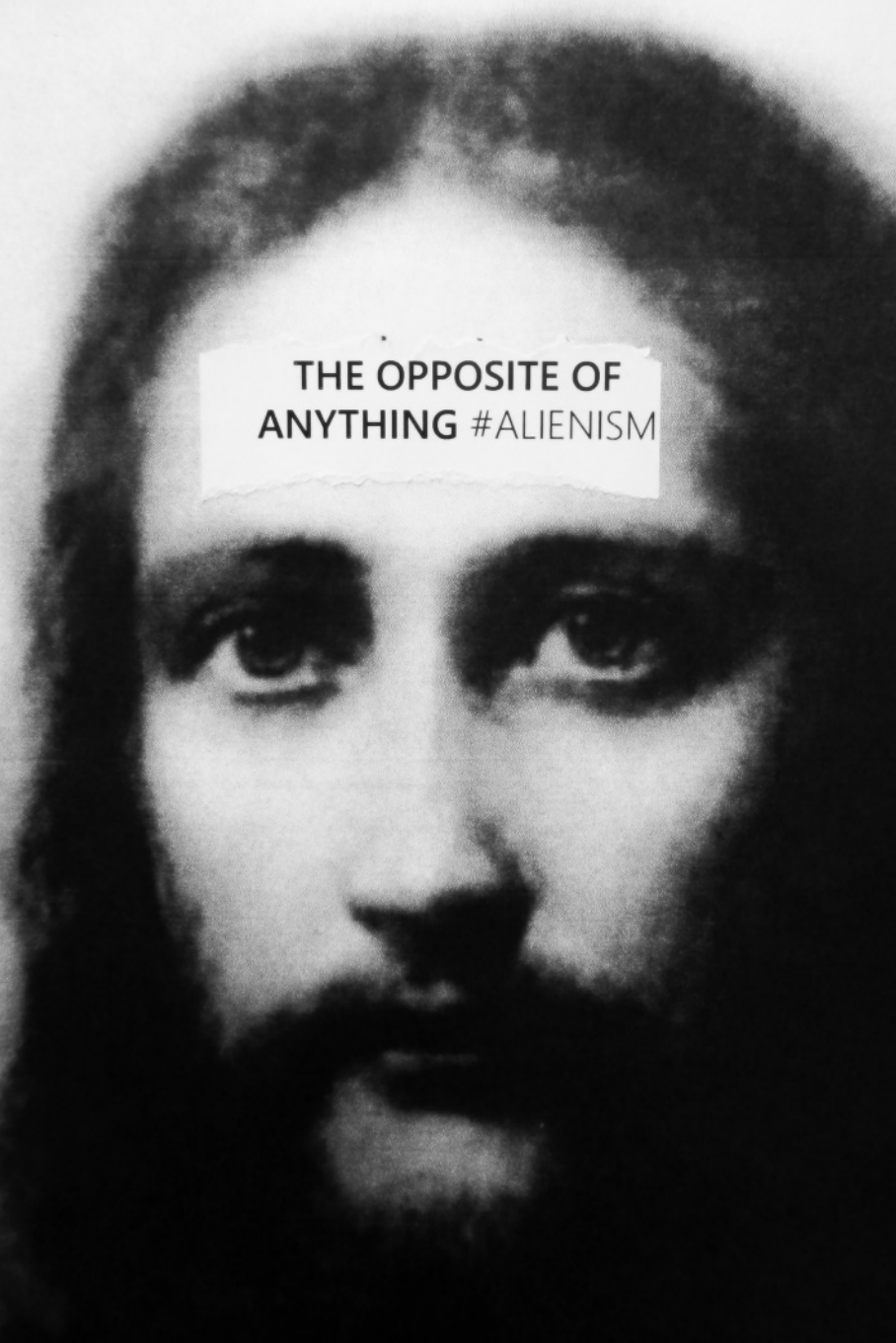
If the world of appearance is the world of ideology: the presentation of the world's *disappearance* through architecture, is ideology's summa. It is the void that fills the vacuum created by evangelists of "disillusionment." Architecture – as the aesthetic organisation of the Corporate-State – provides an image of a collective unconscious fear *it itself inaugurates*, reified into a geometry of control & an aesthetics of disconnect & dislocation, quantised at the level of the individual. This instrumental image achieves its apotheosis in mobile

communications technologies & surveillance systems: the “machinery” of the human algorithm. These kinetic nodes of a distributed architectonics of Power, under the guise of an emancipatory function, construct a city-without-walls. In this veritable rat-maze, the individual clings to its machinic placebo with the sociopathic intensity of a full-blown hysteric. This is because algorithmic logic, like narcotics, produces corresponding effects in the social cortex. Neural, subjective, symbolic, libidinal. This cybernetic architecture is capable of communicating “instructions” to all of its constituent elements at any given “point” in space-time – which is to say, continuously. In its essence, all *architecture* is panopticism.

ARCHITECTURE: A PROCESS WITHOUT A SUBJECT

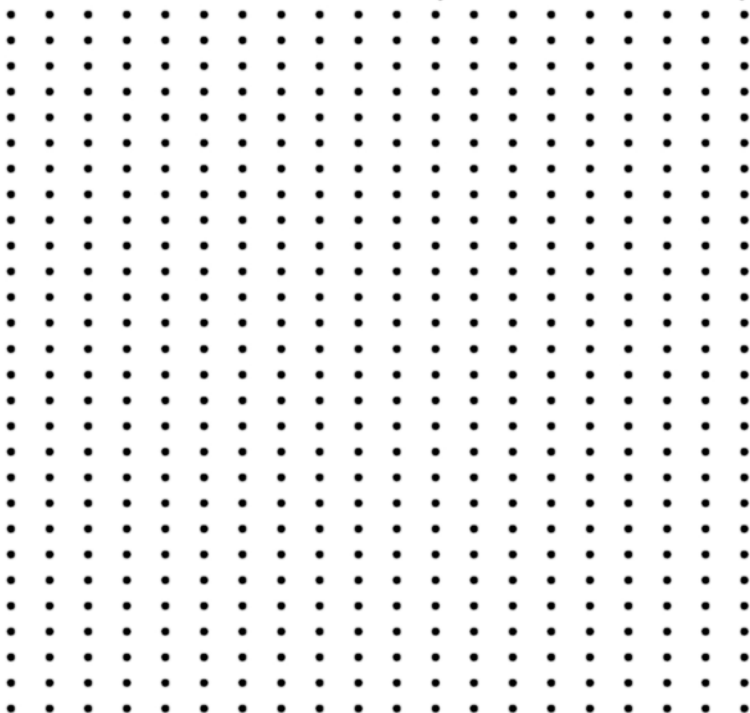
Urban architecture & the “Smart City” have evolved from the monumentalisation of industrial culture to the monumentalisation of the commodity itself, as a social landfill operation in which accumulated obsolescence is reprogrammed into a development project without limits. Like the recycling of fluoride into drinking water, the entropy of a global debt economy is recommodified as infrastructural credit & “regeneration.” Yet it goes without saying that the underlying processes of devaluation are recuperated only to the extent that, by doing so, they serve to generate new capital in a closed loop, from which all that devolves into the broader social architecture is commodity saturation – whose dynamic is sustained solely by a continuous inflationary movement, from within, of *economic subversion*. How to *critique* such a movement – which is merely the outward form of an entire ideological system – when it flaunts its immunity to any sustainable opposition? When it is capable of greater *devaluation* than any *détournement* of it? When it itself *is* that movement of acceleration that always already triumphs in a “race to the bottom” in which all critique is devalued & subsumed into its object, as a *subversion-of-subversion*, thereby *feeding it*? A system abstracted to pure geometry: a succession of event-horizons, imaginary walls, intersecting screens – an entirely functional *nihilism*? But the weakness of a mirror lies not in debating with it.

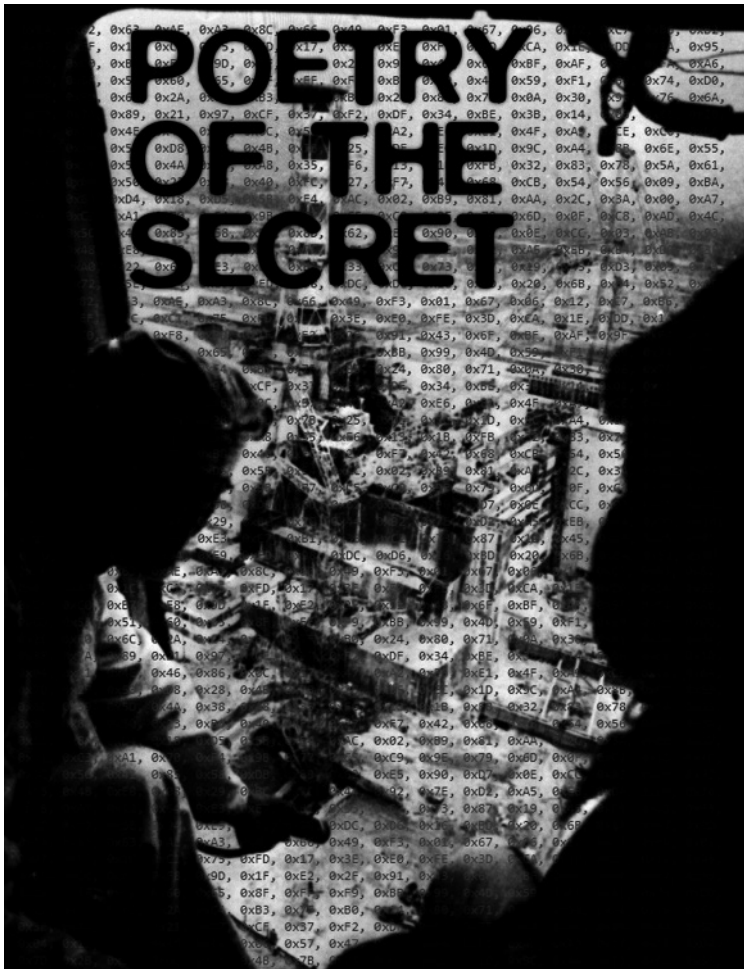
INTERIOR MINISTRY
PARIS, 16 JUNE 2018



**THE OPPOSITE OF
ANYTHING #ALIENISM**

ALIÈNISME APPLIQUÉ (JOIN THE DOTS)





Poetry of the Secret
(Chernobyl)



IMAGE

MIRROR
PLUS
CLICK

THERE ARE
NO
CONCRETE
SITUATIONS



ADD
RECTANGLE



OFFS



CAMER





ALIENIST

ANARCHITECTURE

Completion through removal. Abstraction of surfaces. Not-building, not-to-rebuild, not-built-space. Creating spatial complexity reading new openings against old surfaces. Light admitted into space or beyond surfaces that are cut. Breaking & entering. Approaching structural collapse, separating the parts at the point – the point of collapse. Translating the diagram into its structural context. What's beyond the building's surface. Rather than using language, using walls. Looking through the thing. The ambiguity, what's there & not, as much as the whole.

– Gordon Matta-Clark, "Manifesto" (1973)

PRINCIPLES OF ANARCHITECTURE

Neither construction, nor ruin, but lability.

– Jacques Derrida, "Force & Signification" (1963)

1. FORM FOLLOWS DYSFUNCTION

2. ACCUMULATION OF CAPITAL INTO FRICTIONLESS INTERSECTING PLANES

Utopia is a non-place the intellect retreats to in order to fail on its own terms & without contradiction.

3. ORDER BY ESCALATION

The dead hand of teleology: design-morality is a mirror held up to an algorithm.

4. PANOPTICISM ISN'T A STYLE

An architecture that will arise anywhere, at any time.

5. THERE IS NO ARCHITECTURAL "PROBLEM"

Free of all constraints, proliferation & detour are the touchstones of architecture.

6. CRISIS IS THE ESSENTIAL OVERPLUS

A surface is the accumulation of images & spaces around it.

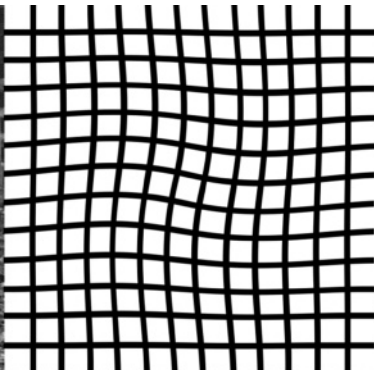
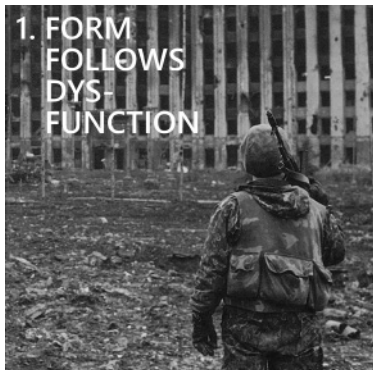
7. INSPIRED BY THE LAW OF ECONOMY & GOVERNED BY MATHEMATICAL CALCULATION, THE FATAL WEAKNESS OF ARCHITECTURE IS ITS INHERENT LACK OF EVIDENCE

To plan, to build, to move in space.

8. DOMESTIC GEOSTRATEGIES FOR A MASS PSYCHOSIS OF THE BESIEGED

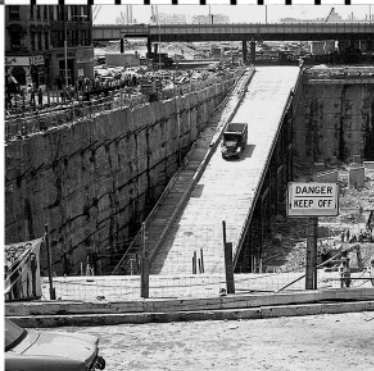
Like a pre-packaged frozen lunch, social democracy, having met with unheard-of humiliations, discovers no other recourse than to demand more.

1. FORM FOLLOWS DYS- FUNCTION



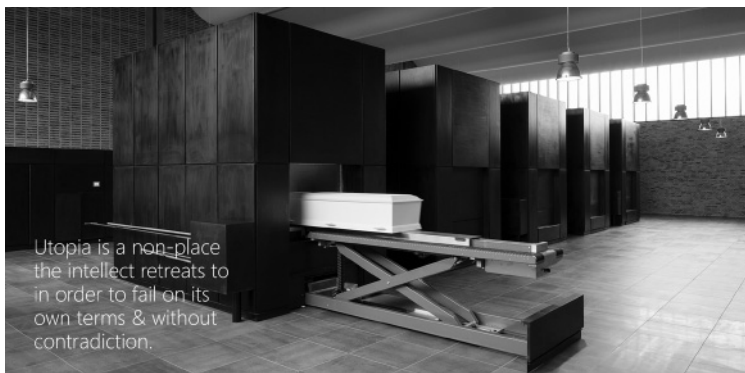
"All the blocks of houses on the barricaded street must have their outer perimeter walls knocked through in such a way that combatants are able to come & go by the parallel road to the rear, out of view & range of the enemy... When a house located on the defensive front is particularly vulnerable to attack, demolish the ground floor staircase & make openings in the floors of various rooms on the first floor in order to fire on soldiers who will storm the ground floor."

– Auguste Blanqui, *Instructions for an Armed Uprising* (1868)



PRINCIPLES OF ARCHITECTURE

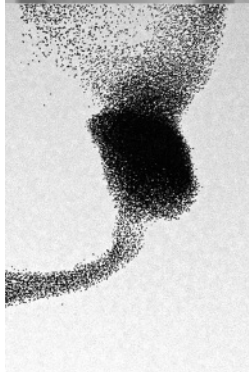
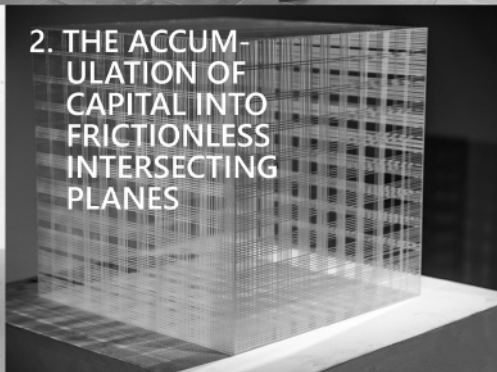


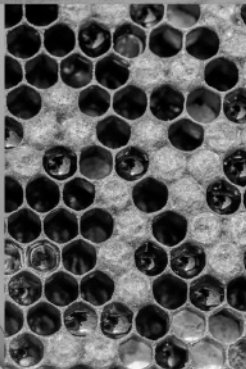
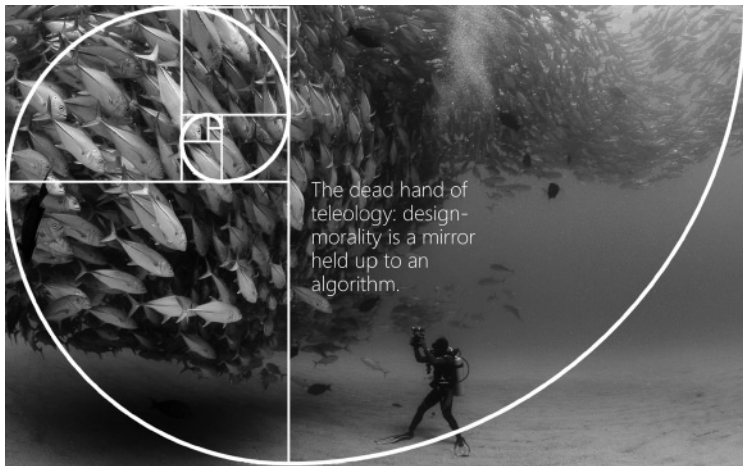


Utopia is a non-place
the intellect retreats to
in order to fail on its
own terms & without
contradiction.



2. THE ACCUM- ULATION OF CAPITAL INTO FRICTIONLESS INTERSECTING PLANES





9. THE ILLUSION OF NATURE EMERGES FROM ALIENATION

Biosystems of the virtual.

10. DISASTER ISN'T THE EXCEPTION, BUT THE PREMISE

Catastrophe systems.

To hysterically rebuild what has fallen apart.

"The greatest catastrophe of the 20th century has been the city, the contemporary metropolis of the disasters of progress." – Paul Virilio

11. THE SOCIAL IS THE ALGORITHMIC IMAGINARY

According to architectural logic, if there is no outside of (the) structure, building is Time.

12. ACCUMULATE / ACCELERATE / ENERVATE

Entropy (potential) = Mass x Acceleration.

13. SPATIAL ACTION IS TEMPORAL FORM

The moment architecture steps away from humanism, the questions of Being, of Thought, of Time, become technological questions.

14. THE MYTH OF DISILLUSIONMENT MASKS THE VOID OF REALISM

A façade thrown up around the absence of "social representation."

15. "A CONCRETE ANALYSIS OF A CONCRETE SITUATION"

To abstract is to construct a plane on which operations can occur.

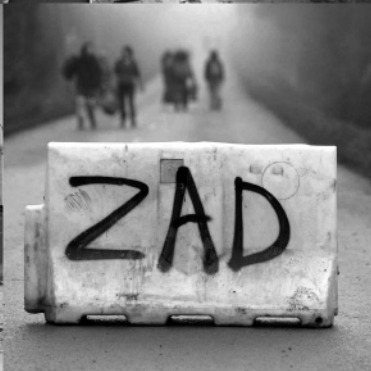
There are no concrete situations.

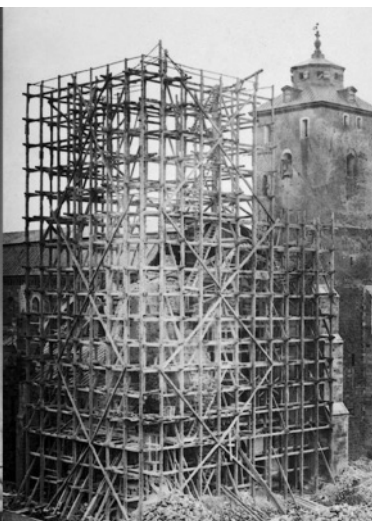
16. DISTORTION IS THE GENERAL MODUS OPERANDUS

Function & meaning through open-endedness.



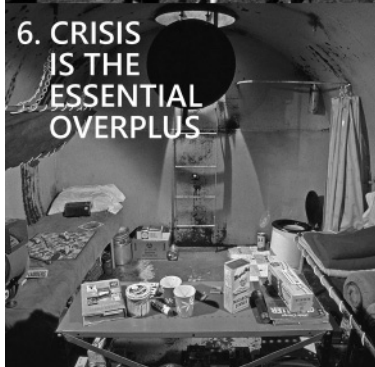
4. PANOPTICISM ISN'T A STYLE





Free of all constraints, proliferation & detour are the touchstones of architecture.





17. THE ILLUSION OF NATURE EMERGES FROM ALIENATION

Floating points, weak boundaries, isolations, breaks in continuity, ambiguities, branchings, lack of character or differentiation.

18. PLANNED AFTERSHOCK

The use of space as a weapon of mass fragmentation & the “balance of terror.”

19. THE PERCEPTION OF TIME IS SPATIAL CONCEPT

Time-travel is duration.

Dilated time, extruded space.

20. ARCHITECTURE WITHOUT ARCHITECTURE IF NECESSARY

Architecture isn't required to define a centre of political gravity: power is maximized in distribution.

21. DISORDER INHABITS THE ENTIRE SPECTRUM

Heteronomies of systemic chaos.

“Modern versions of the extinction fables lying in the *foundations* of human rationality.” – Germán Sierra

22. FORM IS SIMULATED NECESSITY

An architecture that will arise anywhere, at any time.

23. THE SITUATION OF CONSTRUCTION ENTERS INTO THE SITUATION OF THE COMMODITY

Matter refracted through the medium of ideology.

“Transcendence is inscribed into the world of things as the very operation that devalues them.” – Alexei Kukulevic



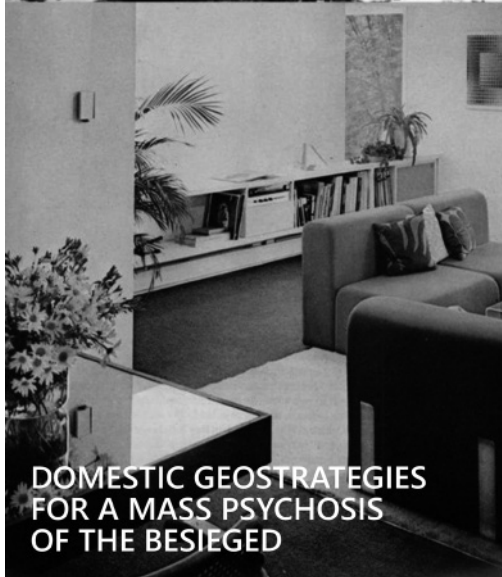
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**DOMESTIC GEOSTRATEGIES
FOR A MASS PSYCHOSIS
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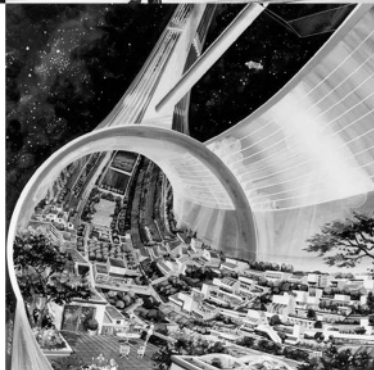


BIOSYSTEMS

OF

THE

VIRTUAL



AN
ARCHI-
TECTURE
THAT WILL
ARISE
ANYWHERE,
AT ANY
TIME

24. ARCHITECTURE CAN ONLY PROFFER ITS OWN ABSTRACTION, ITS SEPARATION FROM ITSELF, ITS OWN VOID

Architecture has sought to separate existence into different conceptual planes, unaware that there are *no concepts*, only structures.

25. ALL STRUCTURE IS DYNAMIC

The impetus of construction is the relation between quantum & cosmos.

Architectonics: terraform, textform, technoform.

26. THE RE-EVOLUTION OF SPACE

From vertical montage to image arcology.

27. FORMALISM'S PROGRESS IS A UNIFIED WALL

What is architecture's "constitutive self-critique"?

The aestheticisation of theory & praxis.

28. A SEDIMENT OF "IRREDUCIBLE QUALITIES"

The dialectics of active & passive disappearance.

29. MANIFESTATION: CONCEPTUALISM'S NEGRO

Creating a new "thought" for architecture.

30. CONTENT ISN'T AN AUTONOMOUS OBJECT

Abolishing the form while preserving the structure.

31. THE TOOLS OF CONFORMITY

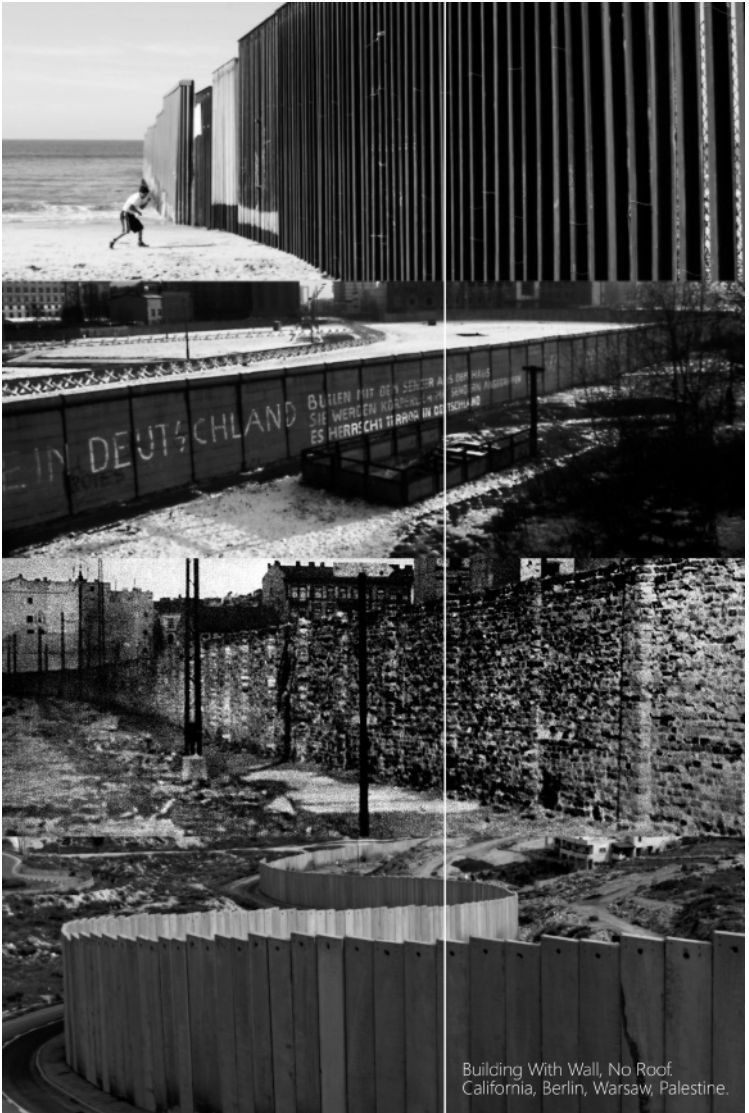
An ideal geometric harmony.

The moral foundations of purposeful living.



**un objet lancé
d'un pays à l'autre
(hommage à
Lawrence Weiner)**

An object thrown from one country to another
(homage to Lawrence Weiner)



Building With Wall, No Roof.
California, Berlin, Warsaw, Palestine.

Building with Wall, No Roof
(California, Berlin, Warsaw, Palestine)

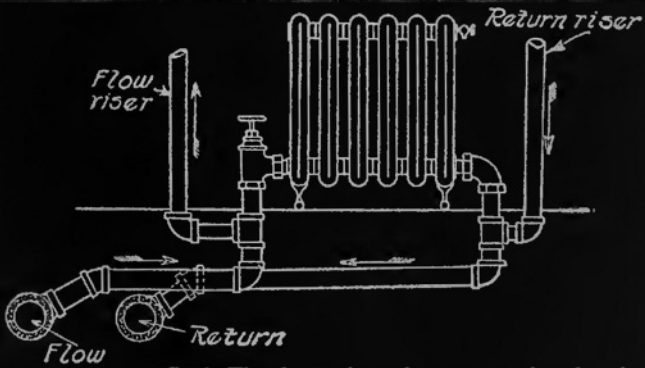
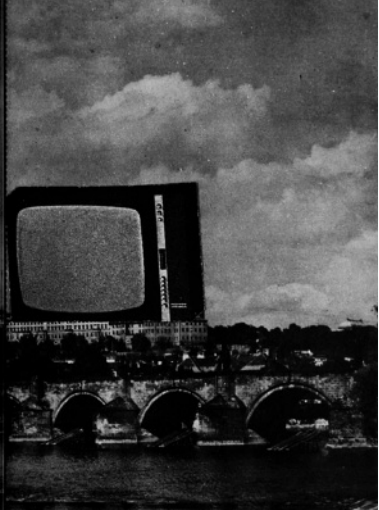
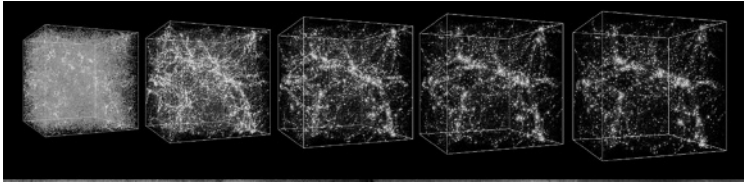


fig 1: The dream is no less oppressive than its disillusionment, for disillusionment is also a dream.

32. FROM PLANNING TO EVOLUTION

“The instant is no longer the shifting reflection of a distant eternity, but the very threshold of the eternal.” – Henri Lefebvre

New architectural thresholds.

33. THE SCHIZOPOLIS

A transit so exaggerated it flips into stasis (catatonia).

34. ROOMS & FURNITURE: ALL ARE BORN EQUAL

Who are the building plan’s intended victims?

Eminent domain. Area sanitation. Slum clearance. Regeneration.

35. TOPOGRAPHICAL WALLPAPER

The law of systematised confusion.

Cognitive territories zoned for redevelopment.

36. BUILDING A FALLOUT SHELTER

The “underground” as last repository of Western History.

37. FUTURE RUINS

Production never-ending.

“All human progress is made in the outlaw area.” – Buckminster Fuller

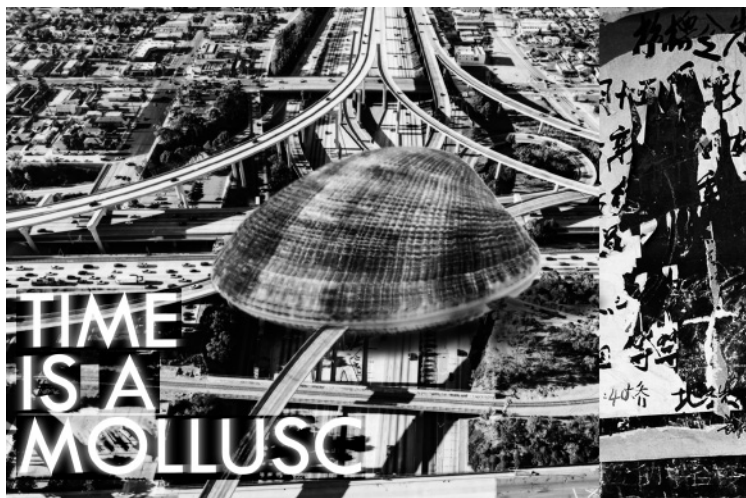
38. LA BEAUTÉ SERA MODULARISÉ OU NE SERA PAS?

Design morality is a mirror held up to an algorithm.

39. ALL BUILDING IS ANACHRONISM

Architecture or history? Spaceship metaphysics. World future in abstract.

40. REGENERATE THE PLAN



Time is a Mollusc
(Architectural Relativity)





DRONE ANARCHITECTURE

UNMANNED URBAN SPACE

The following is an edited transcript of the panel discussion which took place at VI PER Gallery in Prague on 22 March 2018, following a presentation by Dustin Breitling. The panelists included Vít Bohal, Dustin Breitling, Casey Carr & Louis Armand.

Dustin Breitling: I want to get to the question of how the employment of drones potentially transforms urban space & architecture, & secondly, regarding drone testing in combat & geopolitical zones of conflict, how does the technology come back into the urban setting, & how can it be used as an urban surveillance technology in western cities? We are looking at drones becoming more & more of an integrative object, as we are seeing drones flooding the civilian sector. We see drones associated with deliveries, where the most common association is Amazon. Aerial photography is also a well-known form of use. Disaster management is another one – particularly where we see devastated zones where drones are used to deliver certain types of materials or supplies, due to the infrastructure being destroyed or damaged & rendering the environment incapable for regular types of deliveries. Geographic mapping is another common use, using drones to gain an understanding of a whole territory which might normally be very difficult from ground level. We have numerous industries performing 3D mapping, & with 3D mapping come stratified visuals, thus mapping another level of territory in the urban environment. Drones are also able to map out construction sites & be able to work with bulldozers, excavators & other machinery, becoming integrated into a feedback loop of automation. And finally, precision agriculture. This is projected to be a major industry as about 80% of commercial droning is associated with agriculture, used for purposes of irrigation, seed planting, & analysis of crop yields.

Casey Carr: A lot of people have a preconception of what a drone is based off war. A lot of the drone architecture coming out of it is based on this idea of a Raptor drone, but it depends on whether you have a rotary or a fixed-winged drone as well. How it's shaping industries & fields really changes the dynamic of the drone. What is also not discussed very much is the ground-based drone or the wheeled drone. Also the question of the degree of autonomy is important: are these drones controlled or not? We saw a few days ago how Uber's autonomous vehicle accident in Texas put us a step back. But there is a huge advance in technology for drones due to the increase in military leading technology – it just evaporates the fog of war. So sight is another key aspect. A big push in some of these aerial drones & the top conical view of the land comes from a visual perspective. So what about drones that sense radioactivity, or drones that smell or hear & pick up sounds, navigating based off of that, or GPS-based tracking... We have a whole slew of drone families coming out of this fixed-wing Raptor UAV. There are a lot of directions you can go with that, but war is really shaping it.

Vít Bohal: You mention war. It was brushed upon when Dustin mentioned Foucault's Boomerang effect. Another concept which might be useful for us is the conception of biopolitics, that is of "making live & letting die." This ties in very interestingly to the way drones are used, & to what Chamayou in his 2013 book *Drone Theory* calls "necroethics." How do you "let die," so to speak? The ethics of that become an issue, & we have been encountering it through the media, especially throughout the Obama administration. An interesting point to note, is that the drone has been called a "humanitarian weapon," which is a bit of an oxymoron to say the least, & the death toll statistics speak against this contention. It is a question whether these remote methodologies of war are truly less detrimental to the civilian populace as opposed to field activities. It is interesting just how the media portray the drone, & this "humanitarianism" keeps appearing in the discussion. [...]

Louis Armand: There's something between the Uber example you gave & the resistance to the principle of "let die" which for me points to the elephant in the room – at a certain stage, humanitarianism becomes curation, like conservation, like establishing a national park or a zoo. And the question of letting die points towards what is clearly a horizon which many people are not willing to discuss, which is a letting go of the species, as it were. As we move in this direction, the obvious implication is that technical evolution of any kind does without us from a certain stage. So we end up talking about the uses to which we put the given historical moment of the drone, rather than the uses to which we are put as the evolutionary catalysts of this technology which has a future beyond us. Potentially, if you want to talk about us becoming a

space-faring species, we will not be doing that ourselves, because we haven't evolved in outer-space, if you want to be strict about it. But there's a possible place there for drones. The ISS [International Space Station] already has one. It's a forecast of how the capitalist horizon is moving outward, anticipating an as-yet theoretical future in which unmanned drones are more adaptive & easier to produce than human ones.

CC: This brings us to another point. You mentioned space – where do you design an architecture which is accommodating to various kinds of drones, & will it be applicable to humans? With war, you get to start from scratch unfortunately. You clear the space flat out, & when it's rebuilt, especially if the government builds it, the structure is better built for surveillance, building the streets in different ways. In the context of industry, the ability to move from human space built for humans & restructure it for drones is actually quite unfeasible. You have to start from scratch, you have to build an entirely new facility for autonomous robots to be able to function there. It has to be perfectly level, at least for the time being, as humans are able to adapt to slight differences in floors, while some robots can't balance themselves. The architecture built for technology is different. The main point in that is that it seems we will have to start from scratch, & space is a frontier where, apart from Earth's orbit, there is virtually no architecture.

Hrishabh Sandilya [audience member]: The other elephant in the room which I think is important is artificial intelligence – it is a whole factor of that which we are getting to. And we are looking at China, states which have authoritarian tendencies, leading the way, because they are able to gather data. The essential prerogative for artificial intelligence is that you are as good as the data set you have. And China is way ahead of anyone else, although we will probably see Russia catch up to them at some point in the future. Someone mentioned post-colonialism, & I want to ask, whether you see drones or, in some way, artificial intelligence as the great leveller? As now, this control of data is not coming from the West anymore, but other parts of the world. Even in India, where I come from, everyone now has a fingerprint in the system. Does this control of data make these developments the great levellers?

LA: The Great Leveller in terms of geo-politics. When you talk about post-colonialism, there's also a populist aspect to it, a belief that there's going to be some emancipatory effect. It's interesting that Vit was talking about regulation, & when you read about drones, people talk ad nauseam about the need for regulation, without asking who would institute those regulations, & according to what agenda. The internet has been around for

a while now, & there are whole areas which are still beyond regulation, but also many areas that have been entirely subverted by regulation, including so-called market self-regulation. When you say China or India, speaking in terms of the nation-state is a little bit problematic, as if it represented a people as such, as if there were some broadly political consequences rather than advantages accruing solely to the institutions of power. And I am particularly sceptical of this.

CC: It has levelled the playing field a bit more in war, where you have the state/non-state Islamic State, which has been at the forefront of experimenting with DIY drones in drone attacks, as well as in surveillance. They have been building their own drone systems to be able to drop grenades on soldiers, & one of the requested items for donating to Daesh from the States, is to buy a drone from Amazon & send it overseas to supply them. There was a great attack with thirteen drones flying in swarm formation, & they dropped bombs on Russian forces, going all the way to using suicide drones. There is a levelling of the playing field in war, & if war can shape the culture behind that, there is a degree of overlap there.

Hrishabh Sandilya: The European Union lags in the development of artificial intelligence far behind any other region in the world, simply because of privacy rights. Therefore, you don't have datasets which the EU can use to build artificial intelligence. But you have these data sets in other regions of the world, therefore they will be able to, at some stage, make more effective drones or weapons based on AI, & therefore level that gap in technology which the West seems to have.

LA: This is clearly an area where the US has been looking to extend its reach, with Alfred McCoy talking about a "triple canopy," this permanent presence from stratosphere to exosphere where America will have a drone network in the skies 24 hours a day, which is also an extension of how we might conceive of drone architecture & of a surveillance systems which already collects everything. It's clearly topical for maintaining balances of power.

VB: It is enough to talk about those who have to endure the triple canopy which Louis has mentioned – the "drone persistence" which Edward Snowden has called the "Holy Grail" of the military at the moment. Just having this drone presence, living in cities which are exposed to this technology, is a terrible strain on the inhabitants. There is a permanent fear of being killed or maimed, people dream of it, & there are long-term psychological effects of simply having the technology near you, of potentially becoming collateral.

EXPERIMENTAL BIO-DYSTOPIA

1.

Let's go straight into your true sexual organ – the brain – with tiny waves, gold nano wires & synthetic viruses, for fully-automated satisfaction. That's abstract neurofucking, artificial fractal orgone feed-forwarding the full madness of anonymous love.

Disregard conventional sensory stimulation. Forget skin, genitals, gestures, body shapes. Exclude any link to reproductive functions – this is the real thing, pure fuckable noumena completely devoid of sensory-organ mediatization.

There's nothing virtual in our system; it actually allows you to factor out any given 'virtuality' – every bit of representational sensory information. In our app, you could select whatever interaction level you might want: from chatting & exchanging pictures or videos, to sharing no data with potential stimulators. You could set it to random mode, & receive stimulation proposals from any anonymous source – human status cannot be granted – in the network. Of course, every process could be interrupted at any moment. The access to the hive-pleasure areas of your wi-fied brain will be always protected by a secure encryption, so you will decide if you wish to exchange your access data or to block any undesired interaction. You will be able to accept or reject stimulation at your will. Hacking will be considered as rape.

This is just an example.

2.

Reasonant bio-social architectonics are produced by desire-processing, statistically-driven computation. Orderly-utopian & orderly-dystopian future-presents become fused in a mash-up of consumption dialectics where a future that was once dark & hopeless is now dark & beautiful when one dives headlong into it'. Late capitalism is inflationary – it's a computer that processes desire – , so let's forget about desire, & instead address pleasure as an unmediated & networked commodity. Techno-utopia is only conceivable if assuming that any given computational process is actually the consequence of a conscious *a priori* programming that further processes & optimizes some naturally transcendental bio-propensities (understanding *bios* as a mere taxonomy of forms & functions acting as a set of morphogenetic constraints & developing into *proper pleasure architectonics*). Techno-utopia is only understandable if the u-topos is pre-featured as a foundational part of the human biological essence – instead of, for instance, thinking about randomized desire-production/pleasure-induction as a blind spontaneous process within the capitalist machine.*

Computing as the automatic production of random ananthropic processes that could be – or not – exapted by humans or non-humans, calls for a different perspective than thinking about it as techno-matchmaking between human desires & products to fulfill those desires – the classical economicist/informational way. While conventional, informative utopia/dystopia becomes the environment for desire fulfillment within a framework of foreseeable continuity (*bios* understood as a will to replicate, or to increase information & complexity across linear time), the fictional space of experimental dystopia offers an un-formational environment for exaptation, where unthinkable, illegitimate, or perverse desires could be co-opted & re-purposed.

Speculative non-biology explores the *anarchitecture of matter* swirling in disorder & chaos, reversibly moving from non-life to life & vice-versa. *Bios* as a process without beginning, end, or purpose – *crash life* – which might reflect matter on its way to exploring possibilities of existence in de-organized time-patches – when orderly morphogenesis would be provisionally *pirated* by the chaosmos as a temporary tool to move directionless across planes of consistency (or quantum fields). There would be nothing *properly alive*, no *properly human* thing. Bio-based socio-political categories would not be understood as *biological constraints*, *biological rights*, or even biological *targets/expectations* anymore – no matter their frequency of occurrence in a population – , but considered as manipulable performing data: the contingent results of xeno/crypto/nano-technological appropriation.

3.

At the end of Alex Garland's movie *Annihilation*, Natalie Portman's character is asked why *The Shimmer* – a mysterious alien energy field – is *destroying everything*. *It's not destroying*, she answers. *It's making something new*. This is not another metaphor of *creative destruction*, but playing with the idea that *a different end of the world is possible: Ugliness becomes thrilling & alienation becomes adventure**

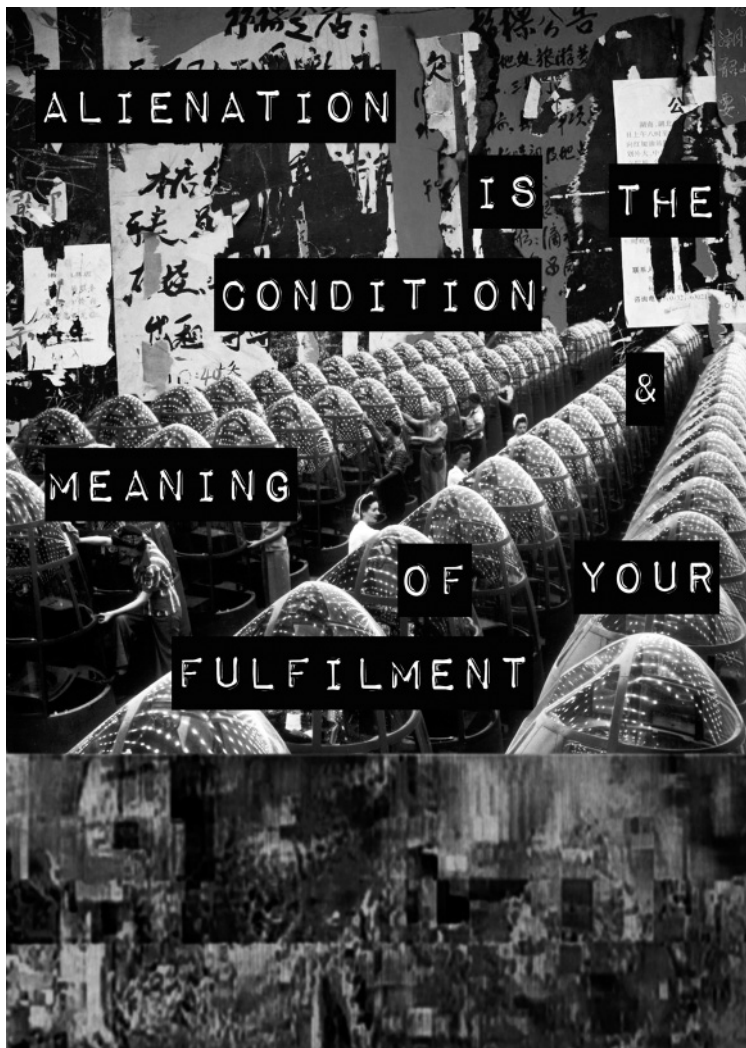
Why should the laws of nature care about what I find beautiful? asks theoretical physicist Sabine Hossenfelder.**

Indeed, we need look for horror physics.

GERMÁN SIERRA

* Robert Mariani, "A Different Grim Future," *Jacobite* (June 2, 2018)

** Anil Ananthaswamy, "How the belief in beauty has triggered a crisis in physics," *Nature* 558:186-187 (2018).



Alienation is the Condition & Meaning of your Fulfilment

black rain from a
time's oneway flow ● black sky
out of the screen

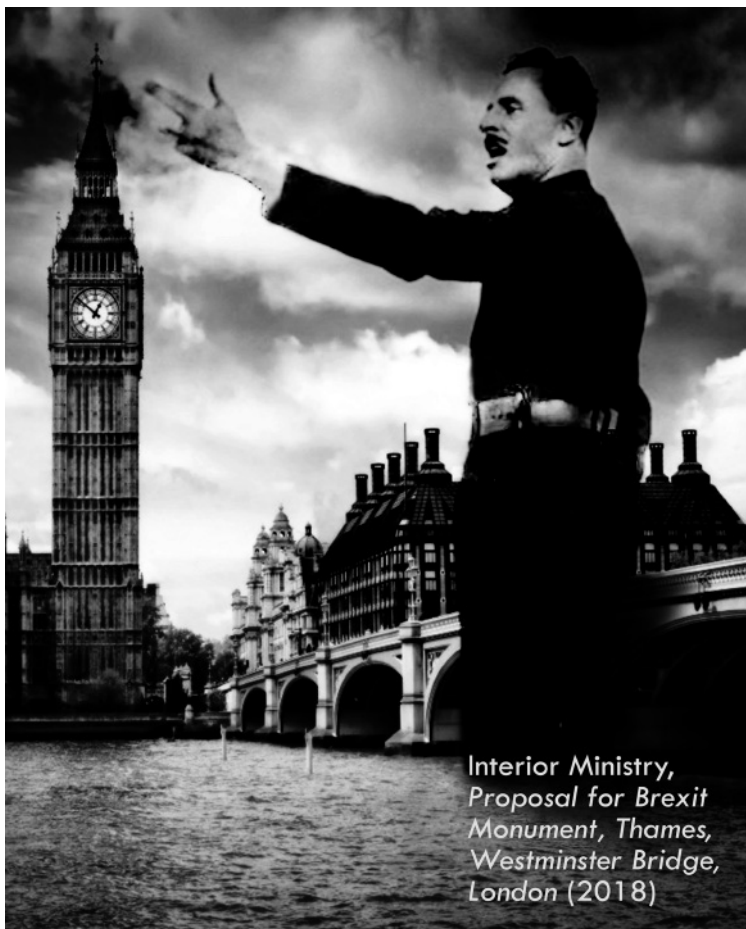


completed &
● made whole by
insufficiency





The Individual is never Autonomous,
but bound to a system of Domination & Power



Proposal for Brexit Monument,
Westminster Bridge, London, 2018
(INTERIOR MINISTRY)

PRENEZ VOS
DÉSIRS POUR
LA RÉALITÉ
Jouir sans
entraves
SOYEZ REALISTE
DEMANDEZ
L'IMPOSSIBLE



MANUFACTURING DISSENT

THE REVENANCE OF 1968

On the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the Mai '68 Paris student uprising & Pražské Jaro (Prague Spring), it's more than "timely" to consider the systematic appropriation & reinvention of the idea of dissent that has occurred in their wake, both within the Corporate-State Apparatus & the erstwhile fringe-phenomena of populist extremism. Confronted by the virtual criminalization of protest in many so-called Western democracies; by rampant commodification & the normalisation of dissent within the culture industry; & by the bold resurgence of neo-fascism inside the political mainstream, what forms can active resistance take? And is there a future in such a political landscape for the idea of an avantgarde?

While Mai '68 presented a spectre of "revolution" that the entire post-War political settlement in Western Europe, from the Marshall Plan to the creation of the EEC,¹ had been geared to forestall – & while its unforeseen metamorphosis from student protest movement to the largest general strike in France's history appeared momentarily on the verge of up-ending the status quo – its subsequent dissolution into a programme of reformism inaugurated a far more wide-reaching social transformation. Likewise the Prague Spring, all too often regarded as a *counterpoint* to the events in Paris.² The seemingly inverse dynamics of these two "social upheavals" remain, however, irreducible to the bipolar delusions of the Cold War's ideological compass: on both occasions an industrial bureaucracy, confronted by politics in the street, alternated its strategies of suppression between psychology & force, reform & normalisation, in ways only superficially dissimilar.

If Moscow "feared everything from the Czechoslovakian process & nothing from the Romanian bureaucracy's independence,"³ as Guy Debord argued, this was because Prague – like Paris – presented a new possibility. As a popular political manifestation catalysed by, but ostensibly independent of supervening control (capable of either holding it in check or totalising it as a phenomenon), it represented the danger of what Deleuze & Guattari called "a collective enunciation by a new existence, by a new collective subjectivity," which was *therefore* "crushed in advance... on the left almost as much as on the right... Each time it appeared, *the possible was closed off*."⁴

1 Marshall Plan, formally European Recovery Programme, 1948-1952; EEC, European Economic Community, 1958-2009.

2 See Daniel Singer, *Prelude to Revolution: France in May 1968* (New York: Hill & Wang, 1970) xii.

3 Guy Debord, "Theses on the Situationist International & its time," *The Real Split in the International*, trans. John McHale (London: Pluto Books, [1972] 2003) 16.

4 Gilles Deleuze & Félix Guattari, "May '68 Did Not Take Place," in Gilles Deleuze, *Two Regimes of Madness*:

Just as the Communist Party refused to side with the students & striking workers in Paris, so too the West declined – in the event – to side with Czechoslovakia in the face of the anticipated Warsaw Pact intervention, despite intimations on Radio Free Europe that it would do so. But above all, in each case “the discourses of anticapitalism & anti-imperialism” – both of the American & Soviet varieties – “were woven together in an intricate mesh.”⁵ The events of Prague & Paris weren’t defined by counterpoint, but complementarity.

While an oppressive policy of “Normalizace” replaced Prague’s shortlived experiment in “Socialism with a Human Face,” the consequences of the “failed” Paris uprising appeared both less sinister, & even far less comprehensible, yet were no less total in their pervasive effect. The eclipse of Charles de Gaulle & the unexpected election to the Élysée in 1969 – against a predicted landslide to the Left that failed to materialise – of de Gaulle’s former personal secretary, Georges Pompidou, produced a sense of surreality in the political landscape by which the root causes of Mai ’68 were able to be tarmacked-over by the now-familiar call-to-order of security & reform. As Kristen Ross observed:

The official story that has been encoded, celebrated publicly in any number of mass media spectacles of commemoration, and handed down to us today, is one of a family or generational drama, stripped of any violence, asperity, or overt political dimensions – a benign transformation of customs and lifestyles that necessarily accompanied France’s modernisation from an authoritarian bourgeois state to a new, liberal, modern financier bourgeoisie.⁶

Like Donald Rumsfeld’s response to the publication of photographs on CBS News documenting abuse, by US personnel, of Iraqi prisoners at Abu Ghraib in April 2004 – as the work of a “few bad apples” – Mai ’68 & its aftershocks, in France & elsewhere (Poland, Italy, Germany, Brazil, Mexico, Japan, the United States), were quickly characterised as the work of maverick subversive elements, & ultimately of “terrorist” organisations (like the Tupamaros, Weather Underground, RAF, Brigade Rosse, which were founded in the wake of 1968 upon the belief that any real possibility of legal dissent had been foreclosed by the governments of the day: “Legality,” they concluded, “is about power”⁷). Yet just as Abu Ghraib exposed real illegality

Texts & Interviews 1975–1995, ed. D. Lapoujade, trans. A. Hodge & M. Taormina (New York: Semiotext(e), 2006) 233–236: emphasis added.

5 To extend the observation made by Kristin Ross in *May '68 & Its Afterlives* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002) 11.

6 Ross, *May '68 & Its Afterlives*, 5–6.

7 Ulrike Meinhof, *Das Konzept Stadtguerilla* (1971). As a consequence, throughout the 1970s dissent came to be associated with militant extremism & “criminality.”

& a pervasive & systemic moral corruption throughout the executive branch of the United States government comparable to that of the Nixon regime – reaching all the way down, through the military industrial complex & its intelligence agencies, to those individual scapegoats offered up to the public – so too 1968 in France exposed a chronic political malaise that – a decade after the wars in Algeria & Indochina – had spread to all areas of daily life, producing an undisguisable sense of the existing social order's *illegitimacy*.⁸ Ross again:

May '68 was the largest mass movement in French history, the biggest strike in the history of the French workers' movement, and the only "general" insurrection the overdeveloped world has known since World War II. It was the first general strike that extended beyond the traditional centers of industrial production to include workers in the service industries, the communication and culture industries – the whole sphere of social reproduction. No professional sector, no category of worker was unaffected by the strike; no region, city, or village in France was untouched.⁹

Accepted at face value, the supposed "failure" of 1968 does nothing to account for its occurrence in the first place. Daniel Singer puts it thus: "When mighty productive forces clash with obsolete social relations, one must have the intellectual horizon of a policeman to explain the resulting unrest in terms of the subversive work of a handful of political agitators."¹⁰ In a coordinated counter-movement, "the language of power," as Debord observed, found a further alibi for the depoliticisation of the social sphere & renewed justification for the permanence of the status quo, under the banner of reformism. Whereas previously the apparatus of power had shown "nothing but happiness everywhere in window displays & sold everywhere at the most attractive price," they now denounced "the ubiquitous failings of the system. Society's owners have suddenly discovered that everything in it must be changed without delay... They wish only to draw our attention to the fact that they are more qualified than revolutionaries to engineer a turnaround requiring so much experience & such considerable means, for possess them they do, & accustomed to them they certainly are."¹¹

This paradox does little to disguise itself. Where past disillusionment taught that the only successful revolutionary force was that of capitalism, the situation of Mai '68 required this narrative to be presented in a more tentative, even vulnerable light. The status quo sought to present itself

8 Indeed, Abu Ghraib emblematised everything about the post-Soviet "New World Order" against which a decade of international protest was directed – spanning the anti-globalisation movements of the late '90s, the anti-war movement, & the various Occupy movements following the Global Financial Crisis of 2008 – just as the My Lai massacre had for the period between 1968 & the 1977 "Deutsche Herbst."

9 Ross, *May '68 & Its Afterlives*, 3-4.

10 Singer, *Prelude to Revolution*, x.

11 Debord, "Theses on the Situationist International," 13.

as more open, pluralistic. Appeals to reason were joined to a benevolent granting of concessions. Among them, to “give rebelling students the novelty they were hoping for,” a new university at Vincennes was created. “It was,” Jacques Rancière recalled in 1974, “a nursery of young academics marked by their Marxist convictions & by the theoretical novelties of the time: structuralist linguists & anthropologists, Althusserian philosophers, Lacanian psychoanalysts, sociologists trained by Bourdieu & literature professors instructed by Roland Barthes’s semiology & by the ‘literary theory’ of the *Tel Quel* group. The whole thing had the look of what we called at the time a ‘recuperation’ of the May movement, & it seemed bound to dissolve that movement’s political potential into academic & cultural novelties.”¹²

At the same time, it was important for the status quo to make something of a general appeal for its *defence*; as a defence of *the general good* (that’s to say, of “the commodity’s particular freedom & happiness”).¹³ Since capitalism had already presented itself, “in the face of the revolution’s past failures, as a reformism *which had succeeded*,” it was now, Debord argued, the task of capitalism to assume the “self-entrusted paramount task to lead the struggle” against a “problem of its own making.”¹⁴ This was not just a case of “equivocal coexistence”¹⁵ – it was an effective theoretical & political *equivalence*. This reformist reaction, however, wasn’t limited to the West, but extended equally to the bureaucratic class of the expropriated “workers’ revolutions” in the so-called developing world. “Castro,” Debord wryly observed, “has become reformist in Chile, while stage-managing a parody of the Moscow trials at home, after condemning the occupations movement & the Mexican revolt in 1968, yet giving his unqualified approval to the action of Russian tanks in Prague.” Such paradoxical “reformism” was to be found likewise in China, in the “ludicrous double act of Mao Zedong & Lin Biao,” & throughout the communist sphere, as a symptom of “the crisis of the totalitarian bureaucracy, as part of the general crisis of capitalism.”¹⁶

This paradox, of course, isn’t located solely in the details, it is endemic to the entire discourse of self-supersession, which reformism brings to the fore in its ambivalent relation to what we might call a revolutionary conservatism or exceptionalism. Concerning the Prague Spring, the argument may be stated as: all social relations must submit to the law of revolution, except the “revolutionary regime” itself. Concerning Paris: everything must submit to the law of the commodity, except the “commodity system” itself. Where revolutionary politics is declared obsolete, the principle of revolution is

12 Jacques Rancière, *Althusser’s Lesson*, trans. Emiliano Battista (London: Continuum, [1974] 2011) 127.

13 Debord, “Theses on the Situationist International,” 14.

14 Debord, “Theses on the Situationist International,” 13.

15 Rancière, *Althusser’s Lesson*, 129.

16 Debord, “Theses on the Situationist International,” 15.

enshrined in the magic of perpetual rebirth of a political order that exists for no other purpose than to perpetuate itself (like the “pseudo-cyclical mode of untrammelled commodity production”¹⁷) – & to do so against the real possibility of “mass ideological revolt,”¹⁸ which it nevertheless does everything to render *phantasmatic* (such that capitalism succeeds not only in centering its own ideological framework in the form of the commodity, but in centering there *ideology as such*).

If the corporate & cybernetic revolutions of the fifty years following the events of 1968 have utterly transfigured the social matrix, “society” itself has become the paradigm of an *algorithmic imaginary*. In keeping with a certain logic of self-supersession, *subversion* of pre-existing social relations has for decades been *systematised as the norm*, mirroring the institutionalization (heralded by the likes of Vannevar Bush, Marshall McLuhan & Harvey Wheeler¹⁹) of the “scientific” & “information” revolutions. One of the areas in which this has been most apparent is ecology. The emergence of environmentalism in the late ‘60s gave rise almost simultaneously to environmental management: like the other post-1968 reformisms, such “management” sought to project an image of external crisis – an epiphenomenon of a breakdown of order, rather than a product of that order itself. Yet as Debord remarks, “pollution is... the *ne plus ultra of ideology in material form*, the *wholly contaminated* superabundance of the commodity, as well as the real miserable dross of spectacular society’s illusory splendour.”²⁰ The paradox again stands naked: ecological crisis isn’t some thing that can be reformed away by the corporate-state apparatus, since it is endemic to it.

Yet if today the threat of looming environmental catastrophe still appears underappreciated within key sectors of the global economy, the same cannot be said of environmentalism. While there are those who regard environmentalism itself as a product of the “failure” of ‘68 & a retreat from direct political action into a kind of proxy activism, this view does not equate with the vastly asymmetrical investment of resources by Western governments in the subversion & suppression of ecological movements – from the sinking of the Rainbow Warrior in Auckland Harbour in 1985 by French commandos of the DGSE, to the planting of undercover *agents provocateurs* by Scotland Yard’s National Public Order Intelligence Unit among environmentalist & antiglobalisation protestors (most notoriously “Mark Kennedy,” who operated in 22 countries & was exposed as an infiltrator in 2010, being found responsible for falsely causing the arrest of

17 Debord, “Theses on the Situationist International,” 23.

18 Rancière, *Althusser’s Lesson*, 129.

19 See in particular, Harvey Wheeler, *Democracy in a Revolutionary Era* (Santa Barbara: The Centre for the Study of Democratic Institutions, 1968) 102ff.

20 Debord, “Theses on the Situationist International,” 24.

activists accused of conspiracy to commit aggravated trespass at Ratcliffe-on-Soar nuclear power station in the UK in 2009).

On 11 November, 2008, in the wake of the Global Financial Crisis, while anti-austerity protests against the Papandreou government were already spreading throughout Greece, Nicholas Sarkozy's administration in France orchestrated a large-scale police action, coordinated with the media, involving helicopters & 150 balaclava-clad anti-terrorist police for the sake of arresting nine members of a rural commune in Tarnac accused of "criminal association for the purposes of terrorist activity." Among their alleged crimes was that of the authorship of *The Coming Insurrection* (published under the collective *nom-de-guerre* The Invisible Committee), described as a "manual for terrorism." After almost ten years, the prosecution's case collapsed, with judges ruling in April 2018 that the alleged "Tarnac group" had been "fiction."²¹ Yet almost simultaneously with this verdict, & in a virtual replay of the 2008 events, the former socialist finance minister & self-proclaimed "moderate," Emmanuel Macron, having been swept into the Élysée on an electoral landslide, himself announced a major security crackdown – authorising a massive paramilitary police offensive (some 19 squadrons, comprising approximately 2,500 riot cops backed by several hundred state security officers) to evict an environmentalist commune distributed over 4,000 acres located at Notre-Dame-des-Landes outside Nantes. ZAD-NDDL (one of a network of *zones à défendre* established in protest against industrial re-development around the country), was assaulted over a three-week period with bulldozers, armoured vehicles, teargas & potentially lethal flash-grenades – while elsewhere in France students, supermarket workers, railway unions & others initiated widespread strike action against a series of education & labour reforms that appeared uncannily timed by Macron's government to create theatre out of a *revanche* against the "empty symbolism" of Mai '68.

Reflecting on these events on 19 May, the authors of *Lundimatin* gave a Guattarian slant to the autonomous dynamics of the ZAD in the face of state suppression: "For us, what is already being prepared & what is being played out in the ZAD is the *free & fantastic abundance of ways in which life can be invented incessantly...* a place where existence finds forms, profuse & singular in which to incarnate, a place where these expressions are freely tested."²²

The events involving ZAD-NDDL & the Tarnac 9 (in which the publication of *The Coming Insurrection* became central evidence in the ten-year anti-

21 Angelique Chrisafis, "Leftwing 'anarchist terror cell' is fiction, French judges rule," *The Guardian Newspaper* (13 April, 2018): <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/apr/13/tarnac-nine-leftwing-anarchist-terror-cell-fiction-france>

22 "The Notre-Dame-des-Landes ZAD: The Multiplicity of Movement Against the Unity of the State," *Lundimatin* (May 19, 2018): autonomies.org/2018/05/the-notre-dame-des-landes-zad-the-multiplicity-of-movement-against-the-unity-of-the-statethe-zad/



terrorism trial) give the lie to the widespread perception that *the very possibility of social critique* has been negated by so-called postmodernism & the declared neo-liberal “End of History” (corresponding to the “defeat” of Marxism signalled by the collapse of Soviet bureaucracy in the period 1989–1991).²³ According to this more or less “tragic” view, the history of avantgardism, as the culture of radical dissent (though already declared in the 1970s to be nothing but self-parody & a front for laissez-faireism by the likes of Peter Bürger²⁴), had evolved – with the emergence of digital culture & “social media” – into a mere regurgitator of memes. In a classic one-two manoeuvre, the avantgarde was declared not only to be irrelevant & but to have become detached from its own critical potential – a potential which nevertheless persisted without it, so to speak, in the form of various sectarian extremisms which had successfully appropriated the avantgarde’s traditional discourses of civil disobedience, subversion & dissent, thereby supplanting its role in the public consciousness. The alt-right, for example, as *post-avantgardist* avantgarde.

This view may not be entirely parodic, insofar as it articulates a twofold anxiety: that of a leftist intelligentsia, paralysed by a fetishism for

23 Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History & the Last Man* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1992).

24 Peter Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, trans. Michael Shaw (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1984).

"authenticity," & of a reactionary conservatism alienated in its diminished access to the "radicalism" of pure spectacle. Yet if it is true that *avantgardism* names something that has come to amount to a creature of the academies, a mere opportunistic gadfly (if not indeed a product) of art capitalism, this alone does nothing to nullify the critical impetus of those forms of radical "art" this economy either denies representation to or actively suppresses (as in the case of *The Coming Insurrection*). Indeed, such denial & suppression are proof to the contrary. In addition, no properly "radical" art would accept such an arrangement, *by definition*. And yet, while we might easily dismiss the question of contemporary avantgardism as a mere aesthetic distraction from real politics, it's worth considering that the cultural denigration it occasions mirrors the thorough reshaping of political consciousness inaugurated by the Reagan-Thatcher administrations in the '80s & brought to their present culmination by what can only be described as emergent quasi-fascist parties operating *within the institutions of Western democracy itself*.

It is not inconsequential that, accompanying this realignment of the status quo, a self-proclaimed alt-right has emerged from an understanding that "politics is downstream from culture." The so-called Culture Wars of the '80s & '90s paved the way for a shift from reactionary conservatism to a wholesale appropriation of avantgardist tactics & strategising; just as 1968 may be said to have paved the way for the "primitive" commodification of dissent in the form of the Sex Pistols & its subsequent wholesale expropriation by the Culture Industry. From Chanology & Vaporwave to Breitbart, CasaPound, Pegida & the political performance art of Martin Konvička's 2016 declaration of a "Prague caliphate" – the interventions of the alt-right have concretely affected public discourse & the collective consciousness in ways that present themselves as far beyond the reach of the "institutional avantgarde," whose counter-actions (confined to the world of art capitalism & celebrity "dissidents," & overshadowed by commercial "innovation" & entrepreneurialism) are at best an irrelevance, at worst a form of complicity. Yet such gestures of negation do nothing to account for the ongoing possibility of an avantgarde as such, they simply point to a fundamental *ambivalence* in the structure of radical discourse & ultimately *all* discourses of political *action*. Since when we speak of action what we mean is the precipitation of events.

As Deleuze & Guattari succinctly put it, "there is always a part of the event that is irreducible to any social determinism, or to causal chains," since "the event itself is a splitting-off from, a breaking with causality... it is an opening onto the possible."²⁵ The possibility of what we call the avantgarde is inextricable from this *possibility of the event*. It is, so to speak, the *en avant* of which the *event* is always a kind of *revenant*. "The possible,"

25 Deleuze & Félix Guattari, "May '68 Did Not Take Place," 223.

Deleuze & Guattari say, "does not pre-exist, it is created by the event." When we speak, then, of the event of 1968 as the creation of a "new existence," as the production of a "new subjectivity" that was, at the same time, also the negation of these emergent possibilities, we enter precisely that zone of ambivalence at the heart of this strange portmanteau: *avant/garde*. Like an *exquisite corpse*, the avantgarde presents itself as that species of "event" that can't be outdated *because it is pure anachronism*. If Bürger's objection was that the neo-avantgarde had effectively detached itself from (the auratic kitsch of) "History," all the better. History, even before Walter Benjamin previewed its passing,²⁶ had already turned to cinema in any case: a symptom of the general accession to montage (what Benjamin, observing the ideological niceties of the era, termed "the dialectical image," the only *authentic image*).²⁷

For Bürger, the obvious conclusion to be drawn from an avantgarde detached from History, was its subjection to the rule of the commodity (just as for Benjamin it equated to an "aestheticisation of politics"). In other words, the *mystification* of revolutionary thought, of *criticism*. By contrast, the avowed task of the avantgarde had always been, to borrow Benjamin's phrase, the "politicisation of art": to bring "art" & "everyday life" into productive conflict, against the forces of abstraction & social separation (the End-of-History as end of ideological struggle). Conflict, montage, event. Bürger's complaint, however, failed to ask what the apparent commodification of the avantgarde, as an annex of Adorno & Horkheimer's *Kulturindustrie*,²⁸ was symptomatic of. Was this an inevitable teleology, played out *as if* in a movement of historical capture, of the reconstitution of a certain *image* of History? Of what Debord called the society of the *spectacle*? Here, too, we see "possibility" being abducted by a subtle relativism: the tragic view that mourns a failure *which is simultaneously its raison d'être & its corroboration*. It is within precisely such a teleology, as Ross notes, that 1968 was in fact to be understood "*as an affirmation of the status quo*,"

a disruption in the service of consensus, a transformation of consciousness, a generational revolt of the young against structural rigidities that were blocking the necessary momentum of cultural modernization in France. The official version of May's afterlife served the interests of sociologists in reinserting any rupture into a logic of the same, enforcing the identities of systems & groups that allow the reproduction of social structures.²⁹

26 Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," *Illuminations*, trans. Harry Zohn (London: Fontana, [1937] 1995).

27 Walter Benjamin, "Awakening," *The Arcades Project*, trans. Howard Eiland & Kevin McLaughlin (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1999) 462; n2a, 3.

28 Theodor Adorno & Max Horkheimer, "The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception," *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, trans. John Cumming (New York: Herder, [1944] 1972).

29 Ross, *May '68 & Its Afterlives*, 6 – my emphasis.

This narrative of rupture & the normalisation of "1968" mirrors that of the avantgarde, epitomised – in the 1970s – by the discourse of postmodernism ("capitalism's masterstroke," as Fukuyama once said). The real dilemma for Bürger & other acolytes of the Frankfurt School, was in coming to terms with how their critique of postmodernism was often indistinguishable from that of a reactionary conservatism whose radical fringes were increasingly adept at renovating avantgardist Culture War tactics of subversion & spectacularism & turning them to populist ends: from Jerry Falwell's Moral Majority to the emergence of the alt-right. The narrative looks something like this:

What commences by way of a critique of the culture industry³⁰ – as *mass cultivation of false psychological needs* that could only be satisfied by *capitalism* – becomes inverted, through a dialectical process of mass cultural expropriation, into the authorizing & gratification of *art*. Consequently this movement of aesthetic normalisation within the cultural economy comes to be identified with a broader normalising of political discourse & a turn towards technocracy. Construed as bureaucratic decadence, "normalisation" thus calls forth a "critical" counter-discourse, one arising from a self-styled "mass" of the *unrepresented*, whose denunciation of the *falsification* of culture & politics adapts to its cause precisely that language of Culture War identified with the historical avantgarde. But where the avantgarde opposed the ideology of normalisation with the creation of new possibilities, the alt-right promotes a *mass cultivation of ideologically suppressed needs* that can only be satisfied by *populism*.

It's no accident that the alt-right's "critique" of institutional inertia should resemble precisely that "postmodern relativism" it claims to negate, nor that this negation should mirror the dialectic of Cold War cynicism & the failure of "socialism with a human face" to transcend it, out of which emerged the ideological defeatism so characteristic of this era of #fakenews & social media – & of which it itself is the parasitic outgrowth. Yet if we are supposed to believe that the lesson of '68 was merely to renew social-democratic faith in ballot boxes, passive resistance & poetry that "chides industrialists for making life extinct,"³¹ the phenomenon of the alt-right clearly adverts to a different set of political stakes. Taught to believe in the fairy tale of Velvet Revolutions, the children of postmodernity have – according to this narrative – confused New World Order irrationalism with accomplished emancipation. And here arises another opportunistically cultivated paradox. For if it is true that the emancipation pronounced by Fukuyama's End-of-History is delusory, the "populist" *revanche* of the alt-right is – like Pol Pot's *year zero* & Mao's *cultural revolution* – a vicious pseudo-radicalism masking a reactionary effort at negating the emancipatory project itself.

30 I.e. *from the position of the avantgarde*; that is to say, from a position opposed to mass cultural "kitsch."

31 Michael Dransfield, "Endsight," *Collected Poems*, ed. Rodney Hall (St Lucia: University of Queensland, 1987).

If 1989 represented the final “disillusionment” of Mai ‘68 & the Prague Spring, it wasn’t simply because of the triumph of normalisation (epitomised by the global market) but that, in consigning an entire tradition of dissent to the “dustbin of History,” global capital had become the sole signifier of possibility. Moreover, it revealed that – to a greater or lesser extent – it really already was. As the Invisible Committee write: “the demise of the USSR didn’t come about because a people revolted, but because the nomenklatura was undergoing a changeover.”³² (Just as the end of the Vietnam War wasn’t *caused* by the Moratorium, the leaking of the Pentagon Papers, nor by the public exposure & political demise of Richard Nixon – who’d been *re-elected* in 1972 in a landslide.) In effect, one form of “capitalism” had negotiated the takeover of another. Dissent, localised even at the collective level, was confronted with a global system that flattered it into general obsolescence: the continued existence or non-existence of an avantgarde being in every respect a moot point, beyond its exchange value as cultural commodity.

Thirty years later, subject to unprecedented forms of manipulation, surveillance & parliamentary cretinism – & in the wake of decades of democratic “failure” to curtail the numerous forms of oppression conducted in its name: to curb the excesses of the IMF & World Bank, to prevent the Iraq Invasion, to hold the architects of the Global Financial Crisis to account, to defeat austerity rhetoric & protect against the widespread suspension of civil rights, *etc.* – critical discourse remains mired in a “No Future”-ism. Goaded by the alt-right, & exemplified in the radical ambivalence of accelerationist hypercapitalism (the belief that “capitalism will speed up & evolve into something else out of its own internal differences”³³), the institutional avantgarde appears determined to transcend *its own supersession* by routinised extinction. No longer a mere tragic view of History as revolutionary nostalgia, but a literalised farce: the overstuffed spectacle of manufactured dissent, like vertical montage at hyperspeed. In the face of such ideological fatalism, what *possible futures* does the “spirit of 1968” have? How is its “task” to be represented? And *for whom*?

LOUIS ARMAND

32 The Invisible Committee, *The Coming Insurrection* (Los Angeles: Semiotext(e), 2009).

33 “McKenzie Wark | Information-Commodification,” Interview with Marvin Jordan, *DIS Magazine* (2016): <http://dismagazine.com/disillusioned/discussion-disillusioned/56968/mckenzie-wark-information-commodification/>

**EVERYTHING
HAS BECOME
IRRELEVANT**



Aborted Acts of Dissent, 2018
(JO BLIN)

ABORTED ACT OF DISSENT N° 25

DATE: 25-02-18

DESCRIPTION:

Took a vow of silence for the night.

REASON FOR NOT TAKING IT TO THE NEXT LEVEL:

- Lack of courage
- Lack of resources
- Lack of patience
- Lack of purpose
- Lack of time
- Other/rather not say/all of the above



Aborted Acts of Dissent No.25
(JO BLIN)

ABORTED ACT OF DISSENT N° 45

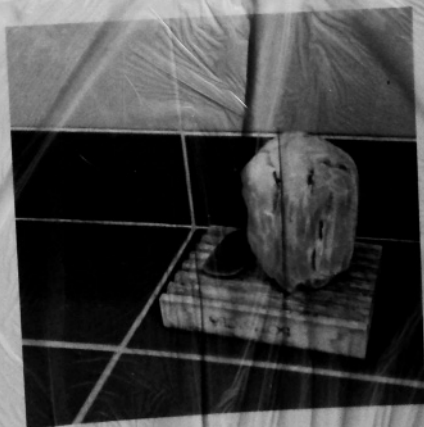
DATE: 10-02-18

DESCRIPTION:

Looked into DIY explosives recipes.

REASON FOR NOT TAKING IT TO THE NEXT LEVEL:

- Lack of courage
- Lack of resources
- Lack of patience
- Lack of purpose
- Lack of time
- Other/rather not say/all of the above





The following is an excerpt from an edited transcript of a 3-part roundtable discussion that took place at VENUŠE VE ŠVĚHLOVCE theatre in Prague between 25 & 27 May 2018. The participants included Vanessa Place, Stewart Home, Jan Bělíček, Louis Armand, Miloš Vojtěchovský, Magdaléna Platzová, Andrew Hodgson, Jonathan Austin, Vít Bohal, Tereza Stejskalová, Germán Sierra, Benjamin Tallis.

Benjamin Tallis: Welcome to this discussion on manufacturing dissent & the future of resistance, marking the fiftieth anniversary of the Paris student uprising & the Prague Spring. I'd like to begin by quoting Antonin Artaud, who said "the duty of the poet is not to cowardly shut himself away in a text, a book, a magazine from which he will never emerge, but on the contrary to emerge, to go outside, to shake, to attack the mind of the public, if not what use is he?" This is a question many of us pose to ourselves: how do we actually make a critical impact on the world? But what might we mean "to emerge," "to go outside," are we not always already part of this "outside" to which we seek to go? Are we not already "emerged"? How do we manage to separate ourselves, to actually hide ourselves away, & not partake in the world? These are questions we should bear in mind. How can we "attack the mind of the public" when we are also that public? But moreover, as Louis Armand has written, when we're in a situation of the appropriation & normalisation of dissent, rampant commodification, the criminalisation of protest & the bold resurgence of neo-fascism, what form can active resistance take? This leads

to one of our key questions: how do we go *beyond* resistance? And how do we stomach the idea of proscribing a “positive vision” for how people should live, given what we’ve learned from the twentieth century?

Louis Armand: The points that I want to address are fairly straightforward, coming down to the terms around which this discussion is framed – manufacturing dissent. The notion of “manufacturing” & how we go about today identifying, for example, the so-called authenticity of discourse; what constitutes dissent in some “authentic” sense. The media in the West tend to valorise opposition movements, protest movements, events & whatnot, that can be depicted as spontaneous. Spontaneous protest is held up as a positive measure of civic consciousness & civil disobedience, as opposed to forms of *organised* opposition & dissent, which are looked upon sceptically or with a certain amount of suspicion, as if there were a hidden agenda at work to sabotage the due processes of representational democracy. I’m interested in the way in which this notion of spontaneity is used in advance to discredit the idea of opposition as *organised*, or of critique as *organised*, within what is indisputably an *asymmetrical* relationship to institutions of power. The assumption that protest can spontaneously take place & be in any sense effective against those forces deployed by the corporate-state *in anticipation of it*, other than in some sentimental sense of becoming riot-cop fodder, is an interesting, let’s say, proposition. I’m interested in the way the word “manufactured” can be applied to dissent in these terms: Whether dissent is “spontaneous” or “manufactured,” & therefore less “authentic.” The ways in which forms of dissent have been appropriated & commodified – the ways in which an aesthetics of dissent has become marketed as a “lifestyle choice” – the ways in which the alt-right has absorbed those forms of popular “leftist” dissent into a language of crisis which has traditionally fuelled reaction from the extreme right, in order to mobilise forces of law & order on the side of *strengthen* existing institutions of power *against accountability, etc.* So when looking at 1968 as a reference point, through the convenient lens of a half-century anniversary – the legacies & so-called “spirit” if ‘68, the way in which “1968” is circulating in the media today as more or less a surrogate for any real *contemporary* dispute with the way the world is operating at the moment, the way in which we are encouraged to “re-live” in some proxy manner something which today is otherwise inconceivable, by being *nostalgic* for “1968” – we need to consider how this historical event is made to stand not only for a past possibility but a *present impossibility*. But this shouldn’t cause us to turn our backs on 1968, since as soon as we recognise the forces invested in erected this idea of 1968 *in place of any real political action in the present*, we see how the very idea of a future has become fed back into a *normalisation* that has never ceased operating upon the threat 1968 in fact

posed. A threat & an opportunity for an ongoing reaction. Thus the legacy of the “failure” of 1968 – the discourse, immediately set in train in the aftermath of Paris & Prague, that these were social experiments that did not succeed, & that *could not* have succeeded in any *realistic* sense. The student & worker revolt in Paris was seen as *abortive*, just as “Socialism with a Human Face” was seen as inherently unsustainable *in real political terms*: whether in the face of French bourgeois or Warsaw Pact reaction. Did that foreclose on all future possibility? This question points to another consideration, concerning the situation & relevance of the so-called avantgarde, as representative of a cultural discourse of dissent & its ambiguous relationship with power as something indeed *permitted* – & how this structure of permission inaugurates its own processes of normalisation, which extends to political & other forms of dissent within the social imaginary.

Tereza Stejskalová: I’m mainly interested in how the Prague Spring was perceived by subjects excluded from what we consider our history. In my research I’ve dealt the amnesia of the cultural exchange related to the temporary stay of the students from Non-Aligned countries in Czechoslovakia. How did they participate & understood the political upheaval of the late 1960s in Czechoslovakia? A crucial document for me is a film by Krishna Vishwanath, an Indian student at FAMU [the Prague Film Academy]. His film *Black & White* deals with what I call “the paradox of Czechoslovak racism.” Because racism was supposed to be incompatible with socialism, this social problem was a taboo. Czechoslovakian society perceived itself as progressive & enlightened, but in reality it was biased & prejudiced. I’m also interested in how Roma view the experiment in “democratic communism” but I’m still in the beginning of the my research. In 1969 a Union of Gypsy-Roma was founded (to be dissolved in the early 1970s), the first organization of Czechoslovak Roma. Although directed from above, it had a lot of members & organised many interesting activities. They started publishing a magazine containing some of the first examples of written literature in Roma & by Roma. This development was very much linked to the energy of the Prague Spring. In Roma literature we can find important work, such as Elena Lacková’s *I Was Born Under a Lucky Star*, that complicates what we perceive as the historical picture. Socialist internationalism & egalitarianism demanded that oppressed people who’d been denied subjecthood (like Roma & people from the former European colonies) be treated as citizens & comrades. Yet the reality was very different. The Prague Spring was a unique moment that made it possible to discuss this paradox openly. I feel that these marginal, excluded voices have something important to tell us & that their exclusion & marginalisation from the usual historical narratives has something to do with the political & social problems we face today..

Jan Bělíček: The problem of marginalisation extends throughout the discourse. We're in a situation today where "intellectuals" are communicating in a form of new Latin – terms, concepts, presumptions & hypotheses – that "ordinary people" don't understand. While contemporary leftist theory has many useful ideas & analyses of the recent socio-economic crises, it hasn't been able to communicate them in a form where ordinary people can be the real recipients of their message. Acquiring the means of communication in this environment of "vertical" discourse is one of the major challenges of today. This is the situation of the resurgence of populism & the alt-right, Trump, Le Pen, Orbán, Kaczynski & many others. The question is how a movement towards a new vernacular can remain *critical* of such easy binaries, which have always served a political agenda, & how language itself affects that politics. The contemporary crisis is therefore not one of essential "values," but one of language. It is necessary to tear down the walls erected in the name of these false dichotomies to expose where the ideological "values" of populism are concealed.

Magdaléna Platzová: Fifty years ago, in 1968, the western world lived its last great cultural upheaval. It was all about freedom. In the USA, in France, in Czechoslovakia of course. Freedom not to be dictated to about how to live, what to think, who to love, even if you were black or a woman. The freedom from authority – of institutions, of parents, of church, of governments... The freedom to lead an authentic life, not an empty simulation of existence manipulated by the momentary needs of the market. It was the last time a revolt touched the whole of society. It was political but also private, & as with all real revolutions it provoked a strong reaction. The "normalizace" that took place in the USA & western Europe had of course very different face to the one in former Czechoslovakia. Nevertheless, it was there. The rise of conservatism, the gradual deregulation of investors & finance, the end of the post-war social contract & the rise of a laissez-faire utopia based on the illusion of a self-regulating free market. After 1968, it must have been clear to anybody in business that communism was definitely not going to spread further West. The Russians had their hands full & the West would act accordingly. The final collapse of the Soviet Empire in 1989 pushed the process of deregulation even further. There was no point anymore in wooing the "working class." The less protection, the more insecurity, the better. People asked less & produced more. The traditional left parties, like the social democrats, gradually moved to the centre of the spectrum & left their place to the radicals & insurgent fascist populists. That's what we're seeing now, all around.

Stewart Home: In the mid-'90s when various people were accusing me of being a police agent & began turning up to disrupt events I was involved

in, I began circulating leaflets suggesting that their interventions were part of an elaborate publicity stunt orchestrated by me – which made the people involved in these attacks even madder – & one of the titles I used for these leaflets was *Manufacturing Dissent*. But I've always disliked discourse around what you'd call "serious culture" – Henry Flint coined the slogan "demolish serious culture" in the 1960s under the auspices of Action Against Cultural Imperialism – & one of the things I did in 1993 at the May Festival in Brighton was claim that I was going to levitate the Pavilion Theatre when there was a Stockhausen concert on. And this idea was subsequently copied in protests against the Museum of Modern Art in Glasgow & then against the Houses of Parliament which were allegedly levitated by the Association of Autonomous Astronauts & the London Psychogeographical Association a year later. You can always take things from the past & put them back into play in new situations, & what is & isn't avantgarde depends entirely on how you construct the context. One of the things I've been working on more recently is a project situated where I live, on the border between Islington & the City of London, in an area that had been declared "the cultural mile." The protest was about the construction of luxury apartments on the site of former social housing & so we turned the site into a curated exhibition, including work by two Turner Prize winners, aimed at attracting national media. The council was embarrassed into allowing the protest to remain in place because of the ambiguity it created between popular dissent & official art. One of the things the protest sought to do was expose the set-up of the City of London which is not like most UK councils elected solely by its residents – instead 80% of the seats on the City of London council are actually elected by local business, many of them major international corporations. It's also extremely wealthy, with its own sovereign wealth fund, which it makes use of in lobbying around the world for increased free market access. Because the bourgeois revolution was never completed in the UK, to demand the abolition of the business vote & demand democracy in the City of London is actually quite a radical position to take.

Vanessa Place: So it seems to me that the primary question is, in some sense, what's the entelechy that's being advocated here? What's the vitalistic principle that's supposed to organise the issue of dissent? Because dissent in this sense suggests a kind of "content" to me & I'm much more interested in a structural engagement. And from a structural position – because I'm a criminal defence attorney & I'm very interested in the situation of the "criminal" – rather than "dissent," which as Louis has pointed out is something that can be picked up by anyone who wants to position themselves as a counter-voice, I'm more interested in "disruption." Which is also a refusal to hold to the category of the conversation being had. In other words, a kind of

structural violence. Part of the way I see structural violence is a position that refuses mastery, that refuses again to adhere to the terms of the discourse as given. I like positions that are too stupid to understand what is supposed to be done & do something *other than*. The thing that interests me about Mai '68 is, so to speak, its failure. That it occupies a position as an event that captures the historical imagination rather than changes the world. That is a violence to the notion of what an avantgarde is supposed to do – which is to be positivist, to occupy a new position of mastery. I would like to rethink the position of the criminal in all of this & advocate that as a structural position as opposed to longing for a law-giver &, I would say, in the current age – given social media, etc. – the role of cop which the average citizen seems very happy to play as an enforcer of discourse.

Benjamin Tallis: How can we judge something politically if we make it void of content & thus of context? The globalisation of national discontent, the often nativist rhetoric of the Trump campaign, the Brexit campaign, of the Le Pen campaign, all link to this. We can think of Bifo Berardi & the slow cancellation of the future – well, where in this idea of dissent is a vision of the future? Where is the future actually being built & imagined? This is a substantive question. Why embrace failure? This may be productive as an artistic practice but is it productive politically? What if we were to replace the term “manufacturing” with “constructing” or “creating”? There are also some issues for the contested reasoning of dissent among the white working-class, for example: is it globalisation? or *it's not the globalisation, stupid?* as Derek Sayer & others have put it. An excuse against agency. Why, for example, can't we make more substantial political change happen when we can levitate buildings? Is there no emancipation to be found in “serious” culture? And if we take the figure of the criminal as a starting point for resistance – which is a classic trope that stands on the other side of the criminalisation of protest – we also need to ask, what if we take the criminal as the torturer, for example? What if we take the legal prohibition against torture & the protection of human rights out of the equation: do we also valorise the criminal in that setting?

Louis Armand: Well I like that point about being constructive – & clearly it's always easy to construct a framework of legality, particularly in secret, which will suit the interests of power in defining such things as criminality, torture, & so on. Vanessa is absolutely right when she says that dissent for the most part implies content & of course dissent is almost exclusively ideologically constructed but, when we get down to it, what we call dissent is something radically ambiguous with regard to content, just as “subversion” is. We can speak of subversion of or with regard to *any* ideological position, so the term

isn't the property of the so-called left or right. And it should be no surprise that what's loosely referred to as the alt-right has made hay with the idea of subversion in regard to the straw-man of a normalised, technocratic society represented by an elite professional political class – thereby appropriating a traditional kind of blue-collar discourse from a position in every other respect hostile to it. As for notions of failure: failure with regards to what? When we talk about Mai 1968, or when we talk about "Socialism with a Human Face," what were their "agendas" orientated towards? What was the predetermined outcome? When we talk about constructivism, the notion that something is being built towards is conditioned by the very framework that is presumably being critiqued. If constructivism means working within the social framework of liberal or social democracy, via the ballot box & so forth – if that represents precisely the set of institutions that are perceived as not functioning, then how is any dissenting action with regard to them going to be regarded as "constructive"? Constructivism itself is clearly part of the problem here. So therefore how do we gauge failure? Of course we know that to play the game changes the rules, so a mere casting of ballots is only constructive to the extent that it maintains the charade of democratic process – which is perhaps the greatest failure of all when it comes to so-called constructive politics. There's an interesting quote from William Gibson's *Neuromancer*, in his description of the "matrix," which he calls a *mass consensual hallucination*. What does it mean to have a mass consensual hallucination? This is ideology, *par excellence*. It really doesn't matter if we consent or not – for example, to hallucinate the possibility of constructively envisaging a future, etc. Whether we consent or not we are already hallucinating. This isn't the same as *dissent*, which is a refusal to engage with false choices of this kind. These are the types of rhetorical problems that keep coming back whenever we look at systemic issues or structural issues. Of course when you get back to the real abuse of power, & the real consequences of those abuses of power, & the way in which – without recourse to avantgardisms or academic political positions – the need to oppose & bring about a changed state of affair arises, there can be no preconditions about constructive alternatives, let alone *legality*.

Vanessa Place: Leaving aside the slight quibble that torture is actually legal, let me reiterate: the criminal isn't outside the system – the criminal is never outside the system – the criminal is a constituent part of the system. Criminal signals that which is deemed ungovernable, which then acts as a call for governance. So in that regard the role of the criminal becomes significant in terms of this constructivist notion of politics. In a "positivist" sense, then, if we say yes to the thief, yes to the bad mother, yes to the torturer, yes to the idiot, yes to insincerity, yes to inauthenticity, yes to indiscriminacy versus

discrimination, then it forces a different call for a different kind of governance. So instead of having the old content notions of what's acceptable being versus what's not acceptable, we need to look at these systemic forms of violence as creating a new demand for a new kind of governance.

Benjamin Tallis: A refusal of mastery is in effect the refusal of government, & it's a refusal to put into practice a certain positive vision of politics. This is precisely the point of the question: do we dare bear responsibility for actually articulating positive visions of politics, & your answer to that is no, it's a politics of refusal, which you then claim would create the ground for a demand for a new type of politics – its almost a Giorgio Agamben style argument of transcending all the current dividing practices, transcending the current distinctions, & aiming for indeterminacy, indiscriminacy, that would be the kind of community as Agamben calls it which is founded on a fundamentally different basis than the current state of affairs. I would quibble back at you that if we replaced the figure of the torturer with the figure of the rapist, would we celebrate the rapist in the same way as a revolutionary hero?

Vanessa Place: We already do. That's where it starts to break down as a conceit. I mean torture isn't illegal: certain tortures are *deemed* illegal, & others are not. While all rape is in some ways a legal verdict: it's not actually a *thing* independent of legal verdict. So certain forms of violence work very much in place of the law, it's just that we like to pick who they get enacted upon, or under what circumstances. So given that, then, it seems to me that it's a bit of an act of self-purification & self-appeasement to say that we're categorically opposed to these sorts of things, when in fact we're very strategic about our oppositions.

Benjamin Tallis: Well we could paraphrase that other famous William Gibson quote & say, *Well the law is here, it's just unevenly distributed*. And indeed the unequal application of it isn't an argument against the law itself. It's clear you're emphasising that politics & the law are related, but is it an argument against these categories? It certainly raises a very interesting question, which resonates with some of the questions Michel Foucault asked about exactly the kind of dividing practices that we enact in order to enforce certain kinds of governance.

Magdaléna Platzová: The Hungarian economist Karl Polanyi observed, already in early forties, that whenever the impulse to profit-making becomes deadlocked with the need to shield people from its harmful side-effects, voters are tempted by the "fascist solution," which pretends to reconcile profit & security by forfeiting civic freedom. The French contemporary philosopher

Bruno Latour says something similar: The attraction of rightwing populism in the West stems from the fact that people feel abandoned & betrayed by their elites. The globalised world is not a good place for everybody. It is extremely profitable for a tiny group of owners, bearable for a larger group of affluent mobile employees, & very unfriendly to the rest of population for whom the Earth is literally disappearing from under their feet. It seemed at first the crisis of 2008 would put a stop to it, but it didn't. The guilty got bailed out & wealth remained unfairly distributed. We're now witnessing the rise of populist strongmen again all around the world. They promise shelter by closing the borders, bullying the press, manipulating the law, harassing or killing anyone who disagrees. But the money keeps flowing, untouchable. Those are the two sides of the same coin: the global investors & the strongmen who come in their wake. And they've both learned their lessons from the past. Apart from certain outspoken critics, there's no need to shoot at people as in 1968. It's much more efficient to distract them, to brainwash them, to keep them busy, excited, amused. To prevent them from thinking, from seeing. To take them as far away from the real life as possible. There's a whole industry built to perform this task: fragmentation, infantilisation, manipulation. Fake news is just one small part of it. Sadly, it doesn't really matter anymore what's on the news, as long as the pictures keep moving. Social memory is too short anyway. From where we stand now, the world of 1968 seems to be childishly simple. In addition to which, there was no imminent danger of global catastrophe (the Cold War was at a stalemate), yet such a catastrophe is looming for us now & demands immediate & lucid political action.

Stewart Home: I'm not very interested in 1968. I used to use the slogan *Fuck '68, I'd rather 69*. It's not a big point of reference for me.

Magdaléna Platzová: The question is, what are the forms of resistance available to us now? First, of course, you have to define your enemy & your own position. Secondly, you need to know your weapons. Is there any place for an avantgarde? Of course, there is. The World is being choked to death by money, by profit-making. Free creation, voluntarism that doesn't simply feed back into the machinery of profit, has the power of a radically avantgarde gesture. Anti-art has to be understood as anti-profitability, as a kind of violence against the system.

Naomi Toth [audience member]: I teach at the University of Nanterre, & at the moment Nanterre has been blockaded for the last four months. There's a large student movement, a number of teaching staff are on strike, & one of the slogans is *Nanterre soixante-huit? Ils commémorent, nous recommençons*. "They're commemorating" – because the university is full

of official commemorative events for 1968 – & the students are saying, “we’re beginning again.” And they often begin again by saying “Fuck 1968.” That’s also another slogan that you see there. Because it’s a particular way of thinking about the heritage of 1968 in the present. As an historical notion – picking up on what Vanessa said – that didn’t have a concrete realisation, it’s nevertheless the case that we continue to experience its effects today. And I think the generation of students who are blockading the university at Nanterre are still driven by a sense of unfulfilled possibilities. So when we talk of the failure of ‘68: failure in what sense?

Benjamin Tallis: It’s interesting to note that Paul Gottfried & some of the others who are seen as the intellectual inspiration behind some of the alt-right, claim a dual inheritance of critique: they claim Adorno-type critical theory & they claim to be the true inheritors of that, & often target the same groups, the liberal metropolitan elites in charge of institutions, the co-opted academics spewing out endless stuff that actually creates a false pressure-release valve for the system & so on. It’s interesting how their critique echoes that, but they also then in their advocacy for post-truth, alternative facts & so on very much echo a lot of the post-modern critique that started out on the left as well. There’s a dual inheritance there of cooption. I wonder if that doesn’t speak to the idea of creating structures without content – because to me it’s exactly those structures without content that has allowed those things to be appropriated by people whose views I don’t think many of the people in this room would agree with. Just as the aversion to constructivism or a prescribed future plan seems very much to invite the present danger of freewheeling politics. Again I think the question of agency haunts this. Where is the responsibility that has to be born?

Andrew Hodgson: There’s been mention, a few times, of the idea of the future as a projection, versus the idea of a nostalgic past, equally as a projection. Doesn’t this incessant projection of the mythic, utopian future de-temporalise, in the same way as the nostalgic past does, the present moment itself? If art or politics is constantly projecting, what kind of space is art itself functioning in? What space are we living in? Are we always completely adjacent to an authentic present?

Rikki Ducornet [audience member]: It seems to me that the creative imagination functions very well in the present & that it is always engaging in a deep intuitive process. And that it is embodied. But I’d just suggest that part of the problem, the vast problem, the implosion that we’re witnessing, is so much about the fact that we’re simply not living within the present, that we’re not embodied, that there’s this kind of Gnostic terror surrounding

the body, since all things embodied embody the world itself. And that's an existential problem which is very vast, so as long as we have this Gnostic approach to the body of the world & the physical human body we're not going to make it. If we take as an example someone like Steve Bannon, whose had such an enormous impact on current American & European politics, who really is a kind of suicide-bomber, but on a global scale, because what he wants to do is blow up everything along with him – he's encouraged a lot of people to believe that the solution to the existential problem is basically to undo existence as we know it.

Burt Kimmelman [audience member]: Out of everything that's been said, the thing I find most intriguing is that art & crime are both liminal things, especially in a society where people vie for power & in which that line, between legality & illegality, constantly shifts. When is art not art, for example? When is it a criminal act?

Vanessa Place: What I wanted most to say is that it's not about the distribution of law, it's actually about Law with a capital "L." And what I'm talking about is the way that, for example, starvation if you're poor is legally acceptable. It's acceptable to starve yourself to death if you don't have money for food. It's unacceptable to starve yourself to death if you're wealthy – then you're institutionalised. I'm not interested in responsibility, responsibility is a legal term. I'm interested, to a certain degree, in accountability – which has less of an air of "now I will speak *for*." The thing that a criminal can do that is the same thing that the artist can do is enact a sort of structural violence because it can end up in its ideal form throwing something into a state of suspense in which its symbolic register is illegible. What I'm interested in is the place art & language can occupy similar to the position of the criminal – of refusing the government, to a certain extent, or at least creating a problem. To use that to signal a failure to accept one's position in the symbolic order & to behave appropriately. To be ungovernable, in a sense. Somehow, right now, this is all I want to do & all I'm willing to do. I don't feel responsible for the future: I don't know what the future wants. That's up to those people, if that ever happens – they're going to be in their own hideous "now." But what I'm interested in is being that frictive point – it may not stop anything, but it may slow it down, it may cast a moment of illegibility. To me that's a job well done.

Stewart Home: It's a long time since I've read *Theories of Surplus Value*, but I believe it's in volume one, Marx's comment about the criminal producing no value in capitalist society because if you had the criminal you needed the cop, blah-de-blah-de-blah. But to elaborate on '68, one of my reasons for expressing my disinterest is because, in the Anglo-American world, you

have this focus very much on France, to a lesser extent Prague, & if you grew up with the kind of popular culture I grew up with you'd know songs like "Everything Crash" by the Ethiopians, which is about '68 in Jamaica. Of course if one wants to think about '68 you should think about repression in Mexico, which was linked to the Olympics, etc. There's a whole lot of issues around '68, which is why I don't want to get into a celebration of people like Daniel Cohn-Bendit, who I met at some point in the '80s & who couldn't get where I was coming from – the closest he could figure was that I was some sort of Situationist. Again, I'm more interested in the present, & what we can do now. I'm very interested in what the effect of bringing down the City of London might be, for example.

Louis Armand: I want to get back to something that's central to this discussion – a simple formula that most of you will recognise in its echoes of McLuhan, namely "structure is content." So when we're talking about dissent & so forth it's really not a question of swapping around the terms, & playing a handydandy game of left & right. It's really a question of structure & what is formulated as being possible or rather permissible by virtue of that structure. We encounter so frequently the idea that dissent is a near neighbour to nihilism of some sort – that it is simply throwing cobblestones or Molotov cocktails more or less for the hell of it *if there isn't an explicitly positivistic programme behind it*. The question of course is what could such a programme be if all the possibilities are foreclosed in advance by the structure itself? And this is something that, speaking of 1968, Deleuze & Guattari discussed in terms of a possibility that doesn't pre-exist the event, but that it is created, so to speak, as the event unfolds. Just as dissent brings into view structures of power & injustice that were not previously visible, or not visible *as* structures of power & injustice. But when we ask "What is to be done?" it almost has the narcissistic sound of a question like "What do I want?" This can be translated in Freudian terms by "What is wanted of me?" as a nexus of competing desires that constitute a system. In other words, "How am I expected to act within the realm of the permitted?" And this includes permitted *forms* of protest. When we speak of constructivism, it's important to keep in mind too that what's called the "failure" of Mai 1968 was immediately transformed into a reformist discourse, where the agents of reform were supposed to be the very institutions of power that'd provoked revolt in the first place. This is a model of the self-regulating system in which dissent can always be positivised as a mechanism of market correction, but that's all. Yet it's important to keep in mind that the *language of power*, the discourse of this self-regulating system, is nevertheless still *language*. And it can be operated upon *as language*. Indeterminacy is one means by which dissent enacts itself structurally, independent of the dictates of positivism.



Bodies pile up at the city morgue



The precise death toll remains a mystery



People dying all around us
People stumbling over corpses



2 OCTOBER 1968

A social movement comprised by professors, housewives, workers, students, professionals, in other words the entire crosssection of civil society, with the support of the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Instituto Politécnico Nacional, Colegio de México, Escuela de Agricultura de Chapingo, Universidad Iberoamericana, La Salle, Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla, & under the direction of the CNH (National Council of Strike). Their list of demands included, among others, the release of political prisoners & the end of authoritarianism. The movement tried to achieve democratic change, political & civil freedom, social equality, & the end of PRI's (Revolutionary Institutional Party) rule.

The movement was "terminated" on October 2nd, as part of "Operation Galeana," in a massacre coordinated between paramilitaries, the "Batallón Olimpia," DFS (Federal Management of Security, a.k.a. "Secret Police"), & the Mexican Army. The "Tlatelolco Massacre" occurred during a protest organized by the CNH, on the orders of the then president Gustavo Diaz Ordáz.

A long chain of shitty leaders brought instability to the country, whose misgovernance caused inflation & the devaluation of the peso, & who signed trade agreements that threatened the ecosystem, the welfare of the population, & the cultural heritage. Opposition candidates were murdered, like Luis Donaldo Colosio in 1994. Even when the PRI finally lost power, it was more of the same. The Mexican population were dragged unwillingly into a "War Against Drugs" that seemed to be nothing but an opportunity for those in power to seize more power.

In 2006, residents of San Salvador Atenco, Estado de México, began protesting against the construction of a new airport in Texcoco, with the support of the FPDT (People's Front for the Defense of Land). The federal crackdown resulted in the deaths of Alexis Benhumea & Javier Cortés, 207 arrests (including 10 minors), 146 arbitrary detentions, the expulsion of 5 foreigners, with complaints filed against police for abuse & sexual assault of 26 women. Ironically, all this took place while the EZLN (Zapatist Army for National Liberation) was touring Mexico City promoting "La Otra Campaña" (The Other Campaign) that aimed to change the state of Mexican society. The governor of Mexico State at the time was the future president Enrique Peña Nieto.



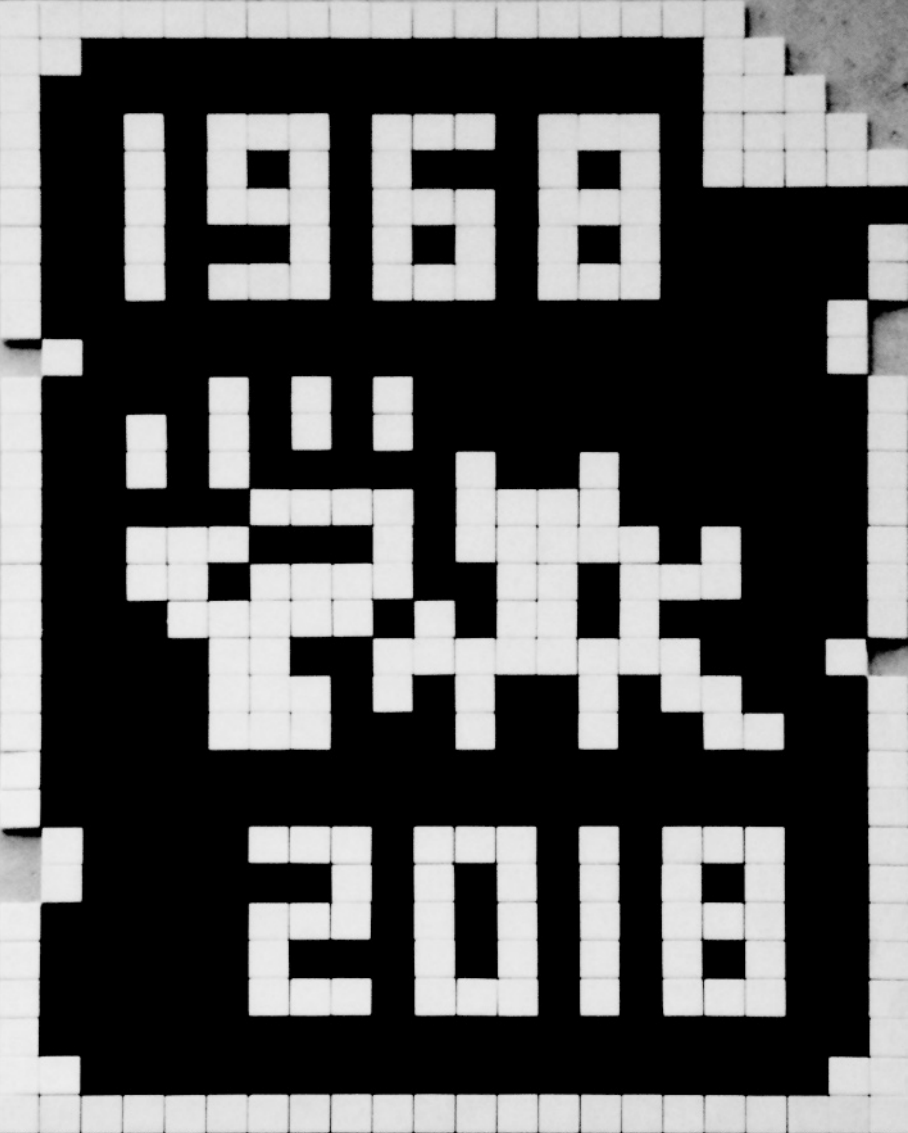
During the presidential campaign, students staged a protest at a visit by Peña Nieto to the Universidad Iberoamericana, to remind him of the Atenco events, chanting "Out, the Ibero doesn't want you." Their banners were immediately confiscated & afterwards the protest leaders were placed under surveillance. In response, 132 students posted a YouTube video showing their faces & ID's, to show they wouldn't be intimidated. That's how the movement #YoSoy132 (I am the 132) was born.

After Peña Nieto's election, protest marches began taking place all around the country, claiming the vote had been manipulated. Investigative journalists uncovered deep-rooted corruption in the INE (National Electoral Institute) leading, in 2012, to the murder of 67 reporters. Meanwhile, Peña Nieto's daughter posted on twitter: "Greetings to the proletarian assholes who only judge those they envy."

Barely two years into Peña Nieto's government, on 26 September 2014, while trainee teachers from the Ayotzinapa Rural Teachers' College were petitioning for funds in order to attend a commemorative march for the 2 October 1968 "Tlatelolco Massacre," police & cartel hitmen from the local Guerreros Unidos ambushed several buses the students had requisitioned in the town of Iguala in order to travel to Mexico City. They also opened fire on a bus transporting the "Avispones Chilpancingo" soccer team – where 3 people lost their lives, including the 14 year old soccer player David Josué García.

Rumors circulated that orders had been given to "shoot anyone who looks like students." The official numbers released afterwards claimed 25 injured, 6 deaths, & 43 missing students. The so-called "missing" students had been forcibly taken into custody & later murdered, at the behest – according to Federal investigators – of Iguala's mayor, José Luis Abarca Velázquez & his wife, both of whom were arrested along with Iguala's police chief, though neither were ever put on trial. The 27th Infantry Battalion of the Mexican Army was also implicated. In the face of resulting protests, the state governor resigned. By November 2014, 80 suspects had been arrested, including 44 police officers, yet only the remains of two of the missing students have been identified.

M.S. MEKIBES



1968-2018
Place de la Sorbonne
(INVADER)

PROFESSIONALS OF DISORDER

«The students have to understand, if they want their exams to happen, that they have to revise, because they will not get their exams made of chocolate in the Republic», said Macron. The President thus qualified all of them, teachers & students, as «professionals of disorder.» (12 April 2018)

MARCH 20-APRIL 9 2018

Our leader has qualified thus in this cynical manner all the professional, humanist structures who haven't been mentioned until today in the public Media. So what has been going on in the universities in France today? Political movement, or the socialist insurgence? Fifty years after the events of May 1968, a new political crises has arrived which came as a response to the president's politics. He proposed to pass a law entitled «ORE» which, if passed, would allow only the children of the rich to enter the universities. When did it all start? One day I headed towards the Sorbonne's Centre St Charles, «professional of disorder» that I was – an early class, at the hour when the street-cleaners are still asleep – & I found the Centre blocked by my unhappy students who were protesting against the bureaucracy & the evil Macron. (In my bag there was a lesson I'd prepared for my students earlier that morning & oddly enough the lesson spoke against bureaucracy as well & against the possible consequences of Brexit.) Anticipating the public-sector strikes that followed, the students had blockaded all of the main centres of the Sorbonne, notably of the Pierre Mendes building & the Tolbiac, where students constructed real barricades – they piled furniture against entrances & elevators in the building so that no one could get in. At the same time both students & staff began organising General Assemblies, to discuss the ongoing situation, & many of us continued the occupation 24 hours-a-day for two weeks, during which time it seemed the very idea of French democracy stood on extremely shaky ground. All this meant, of course, that we weren't having any classes, but nor was the Sorbonne management communicating anything publicly about WHAT WAS REALLY GOING ON inside. Oh yeah, we got a short, very sad letter from him telling us «that evil forces broke our furniture in the amphitheatres of the Sorbonne», but he didn't invite us to collaborate with the students in order to collectively take charge of the events, or to present our shared grievances with the Media, let alone dignify the protests by taking them seriously in any way, until:

APRIL 5

Dear colleagues, here you will find enclosed a joint message which is a summary of the Students' General Assembly held yesterday at the Centre PMF as well as the summary of the General Assembly of the Staff which took place this morning. We are thankful to those colleagues who were there & wrote

this information down: The General Assembly of the Students which gathered yesterday in the Amphi N numbered some 1200 students. The entrance to the site was policed (everyone had to show cards to the security guards at the entrance) early in the morning. Staff who gathered in Amphitheatre K (around 100 teacher & admin) arrived at the decision that they would support & stay by their students in an unflinching & decisive manner. The General Assembly, including the teachers & the administration of the University Paris 1, confirmed their participation & mobilisation against the law «ORE» as well as confirming their undivided support for the students mobilised against it. Notwithstanding the law «ORE», which must be revoked in its entirety, the Assembly demanded that the government provide support to the university so that it can function as a democratic & open university should. The Assembly called everyone to participate in a joint action against the precariate in National Education this Thursday, April 5. The joint bodies of both students & teachers invited their members to the next General Assembly at 9 am, Centre Tolbiac.

The teachers of the Sorbonne started mobilising in earnest. They organised General Assembly with their students, as well as meetings without the students, night & day. However, most of the directors of the various departments kept silent, the administration remained silent, the secretary's offices continued to send us orders to give classes, to hold exams. Madam Macaroni, the director of our department, tried sending us to the very university outposts which had been barricaded, & were now under a state of siege while calling out to be reformed, as de facto strike-breakers.

APRIL 9, 2018

That very day I went to Tolbiac, I entered the building through a side-door, which was the only one left open for the food delivery. I distributed apples & bananas to the students there. In Amphitheatre D the philosophy students had convened an assembly. A few students at the microphone started criticizing the behaviour of their teachers, & their grading system. I interjected to explain that I hadn't been paid since last September, & was going to classes hungry every so often, but yes, perhaps I'd made a mistake or two in attributing grades. I added that Macron had lied to all of us about studying with Paul Ricoeur, because if he'd actually learnt anything he wouldn't be forcing the country into a Neoliberal money-race. I believe they got my message, as one of them asked me, hesitating: «So, professor, you are telling us that you've been teaching us – for free?» In Amphitheatre K, just next to Amphi B, a meeting of 89 teachers was being held in a more amiable atmosphere. My superior, Ms Hanifi, had showed up with her newborn baby slung on her back. We voted against having the final exams almost unanimously; we weren't going to give exams in such a climate,



where our own complaints weren't being heard either in the street or within the university. However, did I feel sorry for one student who wrote to me explaining that he'd worked so hard last year in order to earn some money to pay his university fees & now wasn't able to attend. He was going to lose an entire year. Other letters contesting the strikes also started accumulating in my mailbox, saying things such as:

Dear Katia, dear colleagues, dear friends, thank you for the summary of the yesterday's meeting; however, several points you discussed pose certain problems for me (& here I don't mean the very law «ORE», which seems insane to me too). In the summary you wrote that no definitive decision had been made during that meeting. But here I would like to ask: who has authorised us to make any decisions in the name of the whole collective? Even if we had 150 votes out of 170, I'm saying that we couldn't claim our decision to be legitimate, as it excludes 20 of our colleagues. And we all think differently in regards to all of these issues. As far as the situation concerning our adjunct teachers, I am embarrassed to say that many of them have not been paid yet, exactly as a year ago. Many of them won't disagree with your decisions as they're afraid it might affect their future employment. Do as you think you should, but I am not going to be at any meeting where the participants choose to decide for everyone else. Good weekend to everyone, yours, Melita

The «final solution» arrived *deus ex machina* two hours later when the president of the Sorbonne, an intimate friend of Macron, decided all of a sudden to call for help from the Prefect of Police. They evacuated the faculty building at Tolbiac by physically removing all the rebellious students. The police were violent, as is the custom of the representatives of the law. They didn't throw people out gently, they beat the students up, they also beat the teachers & smashed the coffee machines. At the same time, to make things worse, madam Macaroni, the director of the Literature Department, sent all staff her «exam plan». These exams were to take place in several «relocated sites». Her letter read more like an order than a contingency plan, ready-made for the following week; however, the teachers' strike only became more aggravated. My inbox was flooded with responses:

Dear colleagues, you are numerous who write to us in regards to the exams scheduled for next week & you are right to be confused because the situation in itself is confusing. Unfortunately it is difficult to give you a «good» answer because this situation continues to evolve & change from one day to the next. We do not even have offices now, etc, etc. Our director, Madam Macaroni, had offered us a plan to follow, in order for all our exams to take place in relocated centres. Her planning & the relocating itself pose certain very practical problems – such as: Who is going to order the students to attend these exam? What should we give them, in terms of content, after several weeks of teaching absence? And where do we print these exams? Etc... We are aware of your difficulties & we will write to you as soon as we learn something new. Yours Truly, Marie Toussait

The bureaucrats planning for the exams to take place so much as mentioned the pedagogy nor ethics of the situation, so the majority of our comrades, the professors worthy of that name, protested against such actions.

APRIL 10-11

Dear Madam Macaroni & dear all, conditions do not exist under which our students, whether they are actively involved in the protests or not, could be provided with an adequate environment in which to be examined. What is going to be the worth of such exams if they are forced to take place? How can we claim to be fulfilling our mission of providing higher education when the majority of our students, especially those who have missed all their Thursday classes, are required to pass an exam whose subject matter has not been taught? There are not even sufficient grades with which to produce an overall evaluation of students' classwork for the semester. Some of our teachers have offered to produce grades on the basis of students sending them their notes, but others, sceptical of the lack of transparency of the whole

processes, refused to do such a thing. And again, we'd like to draw attention to the general conditions in which the proposed final exams would happen. How can we permit ourselves to schedule the exams from April 16 on, when numerous Paris 1 centres will be closed & under barricade, like the Panthéon itself, which closed its doors to us yesterday? Considering all the reasons for not having the exams, we believe that a decision to still go ahead would be unacceptable & incoherent. We, the undersigned, are convinced that our action in refusing to do so both reasonable & conducted in a good faith. Violaine Berguiga, Laura Blamont, Myriam Boulin, Emmanuel Charrier...

And so on. 86 signatures that keep the face of the Sorbonne clear & bright. In the meantime the blockade continued & the questions which it had brought with it, along with the aggravations & personal attacks that some teachers took the opportunity to direct at their colleagues. As well, of course, as the incessant from students, & the accusations regarding such «unbearable lightness of being» on the side of those who were not meant or not supposed to appear light-hearted in this situation. The bureaucratic machinery persisted in its trivial, officious, pointless mockery:

Hello everyone, the Centre is closed today. We still do not have any information about whether or not it will be open tomorrow. The Planning Service at Panthéon is trying to see if they can keep your scheduled exam times, which you would give in a different location of course. We will update you as soon as we learn something new. Yours truly, Anyssa Hennion, EDS Planning Department Cassin

Responses from the teachers multiplied:

I have no time to respond to all the accusations contained in Melita's letter... but I have to express my anger against the insinuations which were made in regards to the manner in which the adjunct teachers are treated. The delays in processing & paying salaries have nothing to do with the problems we are facing here today & I hope that all the adjunct teachers who work with us are aware of the fact that their opinions are valued & valid, as they are free to express them any time, & that they will not be subject to repercussions, as you, Melita have suggested in your letter. Certainly, their opinions will not affect the possible renewal of their contracts. The adjunct teachers are welcome to attend the Assembly General taking place tomorrow to debate the proposed «ORE» law. Yours truly, Laurent

Hello everyone, I agree with Laurent's message. I would like to add that the blockade is an unacceptable violence committed on the part of the strikers

*& that a single Assembly is not competent to decide for us all – it should be done officially by some other competent authority. As for the upcoming exams – we would be deluded to imagine that we should boycott them!
Good evening to you all, Martin*

*Good evening everybody! I'm under the impression that while many divergent opinions have been formed, we are all still confronted by a common problem: how do we evaluate our students after such semester?
See you tomorrow, Lylia*

The letters against Madam Macaroni, meanwhile, become ever more numerous:

In a very personal manner, I find the most recent letter from our director quite insulting, as if a General Assembly had taken place! And also, I do not understand the fact that it is up to the director of our department to distribute messages sent to the official list of department members: can't we talk to one another freely, without going through a third person? ours, Denis Levant

There were some positive responses, mainly coming from the people with whom she slept:

*Hello to all, I find it unjust to reproach our director for certain things simply because she is obliged to follow the policies of the University. She is not the one who can decide to annul the exams: that is too much to expect from her & is out of her realm of jurisdiction. She's defending our entire department & probably her job the best she can & with the means available to her. We should avoid any self-sabotage by attacking the services provided by our department in the accomplishment of its educational mission. We should prolong the semester instead & give the exams perhaps by the end of June.
Yours truly, Valentin Thiery*

The blockade & the barricades continued, in fact they spread all over the country...

Dear colleagues, as you know, the students' Assembly General, which convened April 10, voted for the continuation of the strike & the occupation of the Centre St. Charles until April 20, thus it will be impossible for us to organize & conduct the finals which were due this week & next week. Confronted with this situation, over which we have had no control, we need to quickly find a solution in order to overcome the problem we are now faced with. Mike Asshole

And the students? What happened with our poor students who were quite lost in this forest of mobilisation?

Good evening, I am sorry to bother you at this late hour, but due to our strike, I haven't been able to ask you any questions regarding our final exam. Could you please tell me what form of interrogation the exam will take? Will it be like the usual questions we have been asking in class? Wishing you a pleasant evening, professor, your student Etienne Bonmarche

At the very end of this farce, which was turning to both tragedy & self-parody (as per Marx, but not unlike the one written by Dante), a final letter from Madame Macaroni arrived, justifying her own way of thinking:

Dear colleagues, believe me, I read all your messages. I am fully aware of the complexity of this whole situation. My mission consisted in facilitating the realisation of the exams of those teachers who wanted to give them to their students & equally in allowing the students who wanted to have exams, to simply have them... This afternoon, the Presidency confirmed to me their desire to proceed with the exams as scheduled, although I explained to them the numerous pedagogical & personal difficulties this would entail for all concerned. Enclosed below are the final instructions for the relocated exams, according to their alphabetical subject order as well as the locations at which they will take place. As it is impossible for me personally to send the official convocations to their individual addresses, it will be your personal responsibility to invite your own students to the exams. Once again, each of you should be free to decide, according to your own conscience, whether to administer the finals to your students or not. Cordially, Joelle Macaroni, Director of Literature & Language Studies

I did not give the exams to my students. The curtain fell over this bastion of education. And as the rebellion of May 1968 was for many of us a reflection on the destiny of making a certain choice against pre-destined reasoning, the movement of April-May 2018 remains a reflection on an epoch of crisis which was not meant to be the major downfall of our times. «*Every serious affair ends in caricature*» Emmanuel Levinas.

NINA ŽIVANČEVIĆ
1 May 2018, Paris



Aaah the force of labour!
(VINCENT DACHY)



Aaah the power of entertainment!
(VINCENT DACHY)



Aaah the satisfaction of self-explanation!
(VINCENT DACHY)



PRINCIPLES OF ANARCHITECTURE

Any community may be arranged, on a due combination of the foregoing principles, in such a manner, as not only to withdraw vice, poverty, &, in a great degree, misery, from the world, but also to place every individual under circumstances in which he shall enjoy more permanent happiness than can be given to any individual under the principles which have hitherto regulated society.

– Robert Owen, “An Address to the Inhabitants of New Lanark” (1810)

In the inherently endless scenario model of Einstein’s Universe, truth is ever approaching a catalogue of alternate transformative options of ever more inclusive & refining degrees, wherefore the metaphysical might continually improve the scenario by conceptual discoveries of new generalised principles.

— Buckminster Fuller, *Synergetics*:

Explorations in the Geometry of Thinking (1975)

We need a programme of psychosurgery for political control of our society. The purpose is physical control of the mind.

– José Delgado, *Physical Control of the Mind: Toward a Psychocivilised Society* (1971)

For space science, like nuclear science & all technology, has no conscience of its own...

– JFK, “We choose to go to the Moon!” (1961)

41. ARCHITECTURE BEGINS WITH THE CREATION OF A POLICE FORCE

Utopia has “nothing to hide.”

42. THE INTERIOR ISN’T EQUIVALENT TO WHAT IT CONTAINS

(Blackbox singularity.)

43. FORM IS THE ALIENATION OF STRUCTURE

(There is no “organic relation.”)

44. CITY WITHOUT WALLS = INCARCERATION BY OTHER MEANS

45. A UNIFIED ARCHITECTURAL THEORY OF FORCE

Strong, Weak, Electromagnetic, Gravitational.
(All matter is relative.)

46. PLAY ≠ WORK-IN-PROTOTYPE

Wage-labour isn’t a pretence to art.



Architecture begins with the
creation of a Police Force

47. TO BUILD: AN INTRANSITIVE VERB

D.I.Y. mutable urbanism.

"Anarchitecture: idées pour un ville aujourd'hui," Manfred Schiedhelm (1969)

48. PROBABILITY EXTRUDES INTO FORM

Distribution as "identical processes producing different outcomes."

49. DEPROGRAMMING THE ROTE STATEMENT OF THEME & VARIATION

(Another black day in another black year.)

50. EVERY CONSTRUCTION IS A THROW OF DICE

Illustrated histories of indeterminacy.

51. BUILDING AS TIME-SPACE RESONANCE

The poetics of quantum states as social realism?

52. CONSTRUCTION PROCEEDS FROM CONVERGENCE OF CAPITAL ACCRUED INTO A CRITICAL MASS

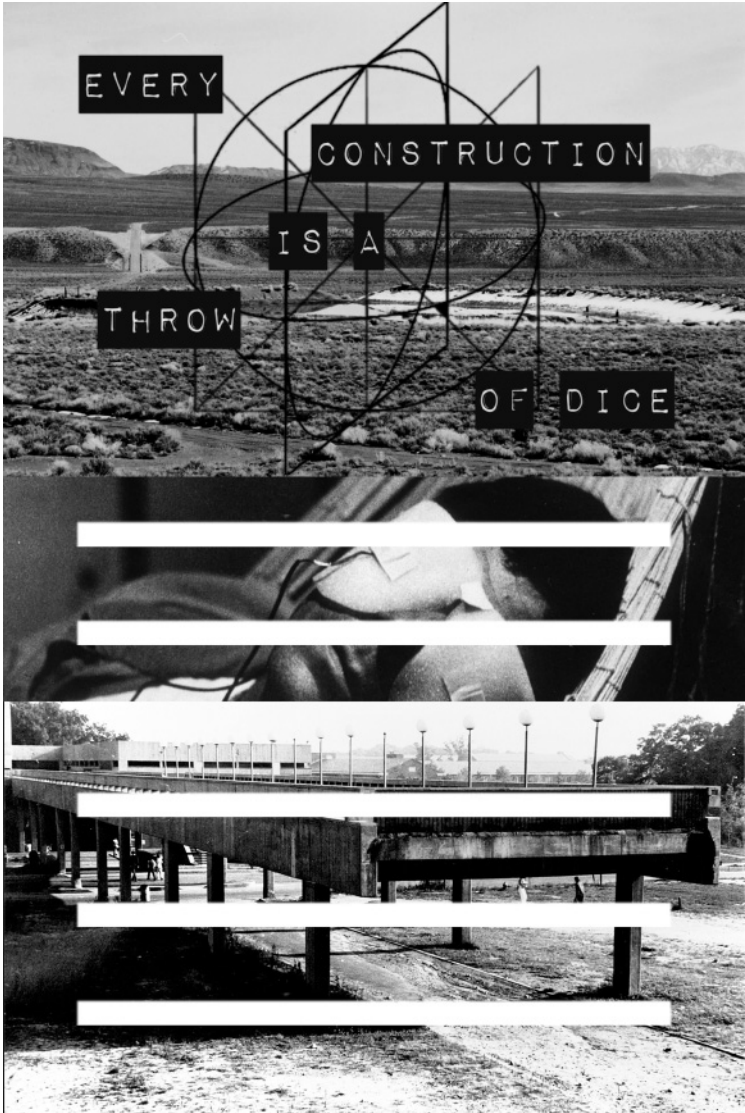
"Manhattanism is the one urbanistic ideology that has fed, from its conception, on the splendors & miseries of the metropolitan condition – hyper-density – without once losing faith in it as the basis for a desirable modern culture. Manhattan's architecture is a paradigm for the exploitation of congestion." – Rem Koolhaas, *Delirious New York* (1994)

53. LIFE: ON THE ARCHITECTURAL MARGIN

Enzyme conurbations.

54. FUNCTIONAL IS AS FUNCTIONAL DOES

The permitted square peg in the permitted square hole.



Every Construction is a Throw of Dice

55. ARCHITECTURE IS THE HORIZON, GRID & PERSPECTIVE LINES
BLOTTING OUT THE VIEW OF NO-END-IN-SIGHT

The human social form of capitalist social content.

56. IDEOLOGY IS REIFICATION IN PRE-CODED "GEOMETRIES
OF THOUGHT"

(Tidal planes hidden by the medium of force.)

57. POLYHEDRONS OF ALL SCRIPTURE

Illusion, stripped of its mystery, is a blank wall.

58. ALIENATION PULLED FROM THE BACKGROUND OF EVERYDAY
LIFE INTO THE FULL WIDTH & DEPTH OF THE IMAGE

Towards an architecture of the unrepresentable.

59. FORM BY CONTINGENCY

A nervous system evolves a body.

60. SYNTAX ACCUMULATES INTO A GRAMMAR

The Real is a system of abstract control ordained in the imaginary.

61. XENOTECTONICS

"Alien" elements maintained in dynamic equilibrium.

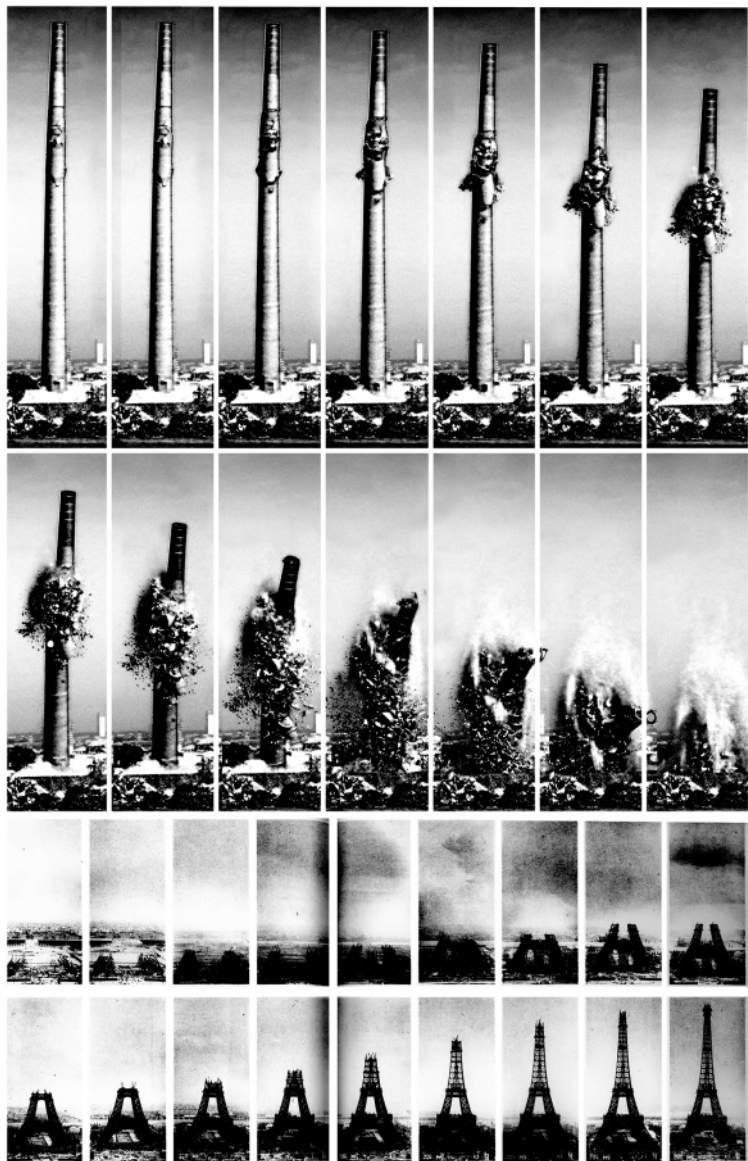
62. "MACHINES À HABITER"

Technology is alien life.

63. EVOLUTIONARY MACHINES

Hive aesthetics for new siliconised lifeforms (server farms, smart cities).

"Today the human race is a single twig on the tree of life, a single species on a single planet. Our condition can thus only be described as extremely fragile, endangered by forces of nature currently beyond our



control, our own mistakes, & other branches of the wildly blossoming tree itself. Looked at this way, we can then pose the question of the future of humanity on Earth, in the solar system, & in the galaxy from the standpoint of both evolutionary biology & human nature. The conclusion is straightforward: Our choice is to grow, branch, spread & develop, or stagnate & die." – Robert Zubrin, *Entering Space* (1999)

64. TERRAFORMING

A hole suspended in a void.

65. THE ARCHISPHERE

Planetary geodesics of a fully-integrated system of "artificial life."

66. THERE IS NO *BINARY OPPOSITION*

Spatial relations are a variable force-field.

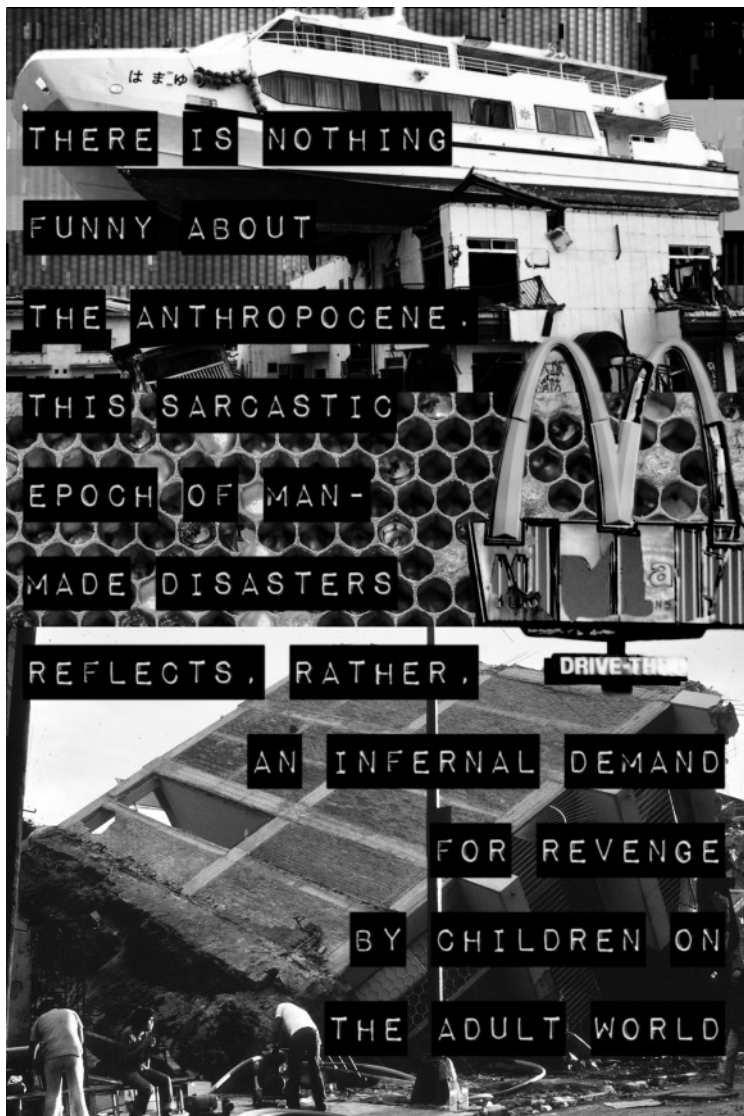
67. PERTURBATIONS OF THE IMAGINARY PRODUCE REAL CATASTROPHES

PANOPTICISM IS SYMBOLIC SELF- ENUCLEATION

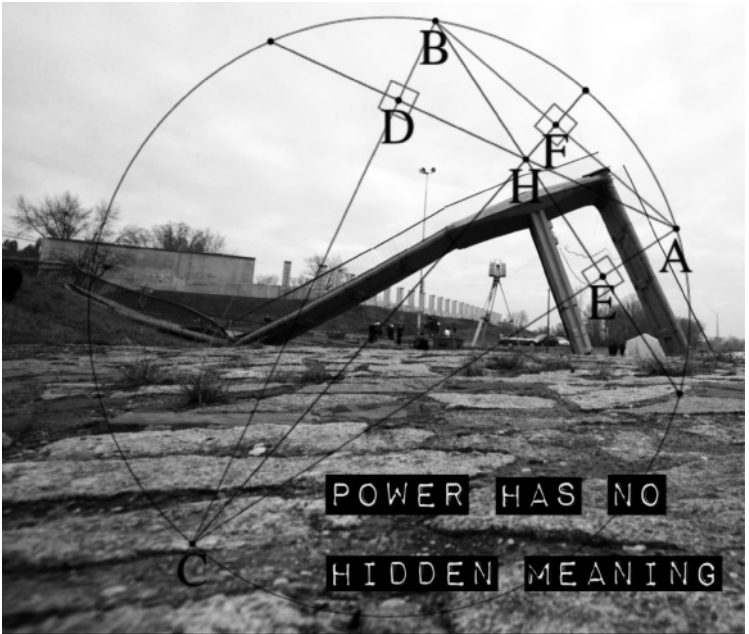
(Architecture as "ophthalmic psychosis.")

68. BIOTECHNOLOGY IS URBANISM'S *FEMME FATALE*

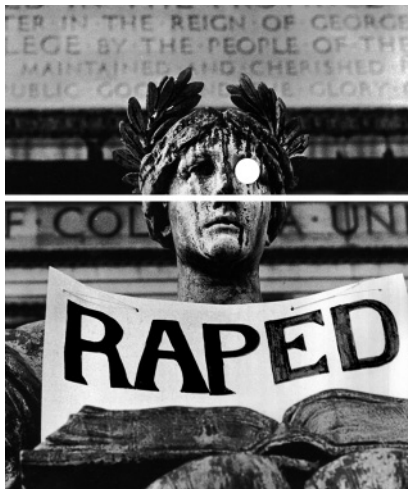
Amniosacs for social preconditioning.



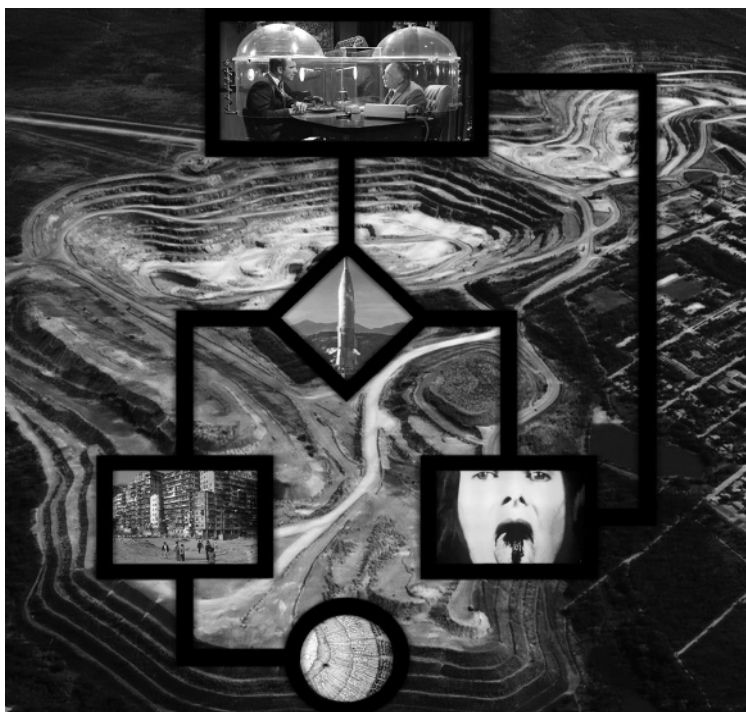
There's nothing funny about the Anthropocene. This sarcastic epoch of man-made disasters reflects, rather, an infernal demand for revenge by children on the adult world.

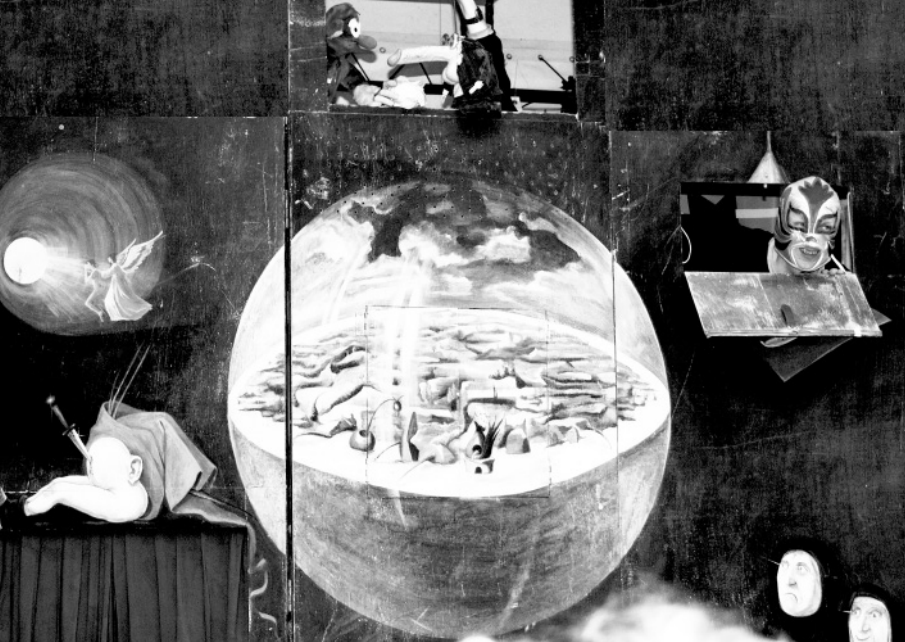


Power has no Hidden Meaning



THE HUMAN SOCIAL FORM OF
CAPITALIST SOCIAL CONTENT





CONCUSSION PROTOCOLS #3

SO MUCH FOR THE MISTER CALLED JUPITER

Picture in your mind an island whose fringes are covered with reeds and stands in darkness in the midst of the primaevael water. That night visitation who crouched over me: it was you, a malignant you, she says. Some of the tiny grey figures swarming over the architect's model of the shopping mall were naked, others clothed. When death is viewed from the outside, what price remains? I have things to do, things to see to.

'You fear me, I have to say, you fear me, but no less than I fear thee.'

Then a gun went off, what's called a retort. The glass bricks that formed one wall of the cell converted its interior into an effective oven; I stripped naked and worked out while waiting for the promised duty solicitor, who never appeared. Sensory deprivation causes the prisoner to hallucinate – come dawn, the police broke down the door; to be on the safe side, they'd brought along a psychiatrist. Will this affect your career they said.

Then again, I have long observed in her the tendency to eroticize the details of everyday life. An abandonment has occurred: twin suicide by agency of shotgun (see list). I saw my own name in neon, one of those

as-if-handwritten solid light confections. I stood beneath it feeling vain and confused while strangers photographed me holding a used book with broken spine. During the period of my itinerancy, again and again I would have to pack the precious volumes with their dust covers into a battered old suitcase.

There are those who lack the rumination to simply be, resist immersing themselves in the purely speculative. I quite understand: back then, no one wanted anything more to do with the other humans living on the peninsula – mass migration across the cape to the plateau was imminent.

But she did seek to fashion her own existence, did she not? Six more names I must find, then I may depart forever.

I remain undecayed through all the ages, unseen and undiscovered – that's the purpose of dynamic forgetfulness, which functions like a doorkeeper. We wandered to and fro across the plains.

See, there's all sorts of journeys.

I've long believed in the inordinate value of my desires. Two workers were killed. No, I said, I'm no alienist, my crimes were already documented in a curriculum vitae before I committed them. Some of my novels I actually wrote myself. I've reached an age when I no longer feel unbreakable, though to remedy this, the idea of immortality grows more attractive each day. The individual at a lunar phase of development might be childlike and egocentric in all their dealings with the world, and for sure, the moon is getting closer on its collision course with planet earth. It was once considered a privilege to be incarnated.

Dear Head

Yes, so it is. I missed that. I keep missing things that are right there in front of me. On the other hand, I tend to notice things that aren't there at all, by way of redress.

Yours, forever

Upon waking, she says during the night you coiled yourself in razor wire and went berserk – and, I swear, the house is trying to speak to us. On retirement, citizens were given an iron horse, whether they needed one or not; some of the other writers were political. And sure enough, in the wake of the mere thought, a trail of scrawled, semi-legible letters had emerged in the night from within the corrugated roofing visible through the study window, a species of architectural dermatographia.

The marquis' activity during the revolution clearly proves that he wished to be ostracized from any collectivity imaginable. And our life is full of such harsh testament, from forces we no longer understand. When we

met, at the right moment, we were ready for each other and the work we had to do together. If I did politics, things would only get worse: collapsing buildings, Armageddon times, volcanic lava bursting forth from beneath the tarmac et cetera. I recognize the name, but aside from that, nothing about you is familiar. I'm not very good with names.

He replies.

'And storm the son said who is and who is that we should serve. Is not he the son. And what of his offer.'

Not long after, she suddenly went blind. She outlived him by forty years: going home was no longer an option. But a truly bold figure does not readily roll over and die; birth and death were the dramatic entry and exit points and therefore of great interest to everyone. Other forms were near, his own identity was fading, a few light taps et cetera. . . . A conical cap with the top bent forwards was worn in ancient times. A conical cap with the top bent forwards is now identified. A conical cap with the top bent forwards is the cap of liberty. A conical cap with the top bent forwards is a conical cap given to slaves when they are freed. A conical cap with the top bent forwards has been used as a symbol in more recent times. This is a stamp, a seal of our malcontent.

Nonetheless, he slaughtered himself on one of the days (see below). But I cannot talk about this at length, anything at length; I confess to be little favoured by my native and barbed way of speaking. In those far-off days, the level of the ocean was lower and the land rose to drift and settle.

Let's write our names in the sand. A doll wrapped tightly in black gaffer tape, its mouth gagged, hands cuffed frontward, has been strung upside down swinging from the promenade rail to face the sea. You are stationed outside today, my sentry, nascent martyr.

Rather, he wanted to influence public opinion with his brand of doughty eloquence. He dedicated the book. I'm on a tunnel. The lift made a grinding noise and the intercom spoke in tongues. (What's a symbol?) One resident had sellotaped toilet tissue across the grille. I wrote help and went home.

These remarks took place upon the dawning of each new day, the sun rising in Pisces or whatever, buried deep among the hazard – a roll of the die – the aleatory imperative. At first, as we sank beneath the waves there was confusion, a sensation of mass, streams of bubbles rising from the geothermal valves strung out across the ocean bed. Every page of the book had been superimposed onto a single sheet, a maze of black ink.

Our ancestors have held custodianship over the land for millennia;

that should even things up. O that we should linger outside in the freezing yard, beside the castellan's waiting sledge, as a fearful spirit might.

The district in which we lodged was cadastral, something to do with the stars she said. And in that measure some do themselves violence; I am weary of the daily homicide. (We tend to forget that Hayden wrote fifteen full-scale operas.) The point is that this palimpsest persuades us. And, rabbi, origin is late middle from old abatement. We had to descend to reach the flagstone interior, cool in the heat of the day. My skull kept falling off and people laughed. Then the day grew worse still: I learnt that I'd undergone open heart surgery on numerous occasions throughout my life, from infancy, yet had no memory of these interventions. A trail of numbers printed on brown wrapping paper unwound down the centre of the road; it was my task to count these digits aloud to infinity. Your anthems are not anthems.

I was shot through a narrow glass tube full of a translucent fluid, to the top of a slender tower that rose thousands of feet above the earth. I saw angels ascending and descending. At its apex in the clouds was a circular platform upon which I was to perform various sacraments; I remain a novice to this day.

Genesis is middle via old from attention. They gave what they needed to give. Branches lashed against the flanks of our carriage as intestines were unravelled. Upon my return to earth, I learned that my passage had been a trial run for future ascent, a journey which only an elite band was equipped to undertake. Every man must know that I am clay.

Black columns of water shot up out of the sea. Set into the whitewashed wall were two memorial cabinets in which were arranged tiny handwritten cards commemorating the dead – beneath each slip a bulb, to be illuminated at the deceased's precise moment of death. Plastic pomegranates hung from a trellis fastened to a central cage. Messages had been scrawled onto scraps of paper and crammed into every available crevice of the decaying walls. Exquisitely crafted glass bulbs containing purified water held thirsty stems – there was even a compact cell built to house the neighbourhood golem. The numerous recesses set into the metre-thick walls are blocked at the viewing end by wooden plugs, aged and worn smooth by uncountable gaze.

And still I say that with language for once set aside, it is as if lightning had blasted through my guilty cranium. I make you uneasy; I illuminate the violence within that you refuse to acknowledge – writing means above all trying to stay outside of the text. The winner of the game is the one who has taken the least cards.

What's left is mimicry without imitation. And the seraphim too reply.

It's said the whole earth is full of marvels. There was a man on the train who looked just like the inquisitor in the film from the future with liquescent black eyes. At that time, I was incapable of recognizing one of the most beautiful buildings in the ghetto – that house served later as a charnel house, a human abattoir. After making love, the first thing she remarked was of the man on the radio who designed ornamental wooden music stands, but had nothing to say about them. A solemn mass is a mass in which all sections apart from the epistle are sung in polyphony or plainchant.

The machine began leaking as soon as it started heating up – my own sentence is also subject to a ceremonial mental setting, the mines of sulphur: we are backing up. I recognize the man who is unalloyed onement by his works within me.

We are backing off. What do you say the young girl gasped. We will soon be arriving. We're talking about a man who just two years ago wasn't sure whether he wanted to live or not. I took all those pills – on regaining consciousness, I felt weak and dizzy and could barely stand. Your discomfort at your own projected guilt is not my concern.

Now he is helping me with the removal of everything that has been collected on the roof of the house. Origin is middle, from mediaeval neuter, relating to velocity and mass. This book I am writing is a book traditionally attributed, consisting largely of reflections on the vanity of death. You have no idea what I'm capable of.

I could see a tornado forming on the horizon of the sea. Tell me what it is. How does it look to you in all your glory, mister? I think I know what is the matter. His connexion, his refusal, and his bitter revolt against the family as the source of all oppression, are shown in detail just as they were experienced. And I have given him the power to eat thereof, to take his portion. This is the gift. He shall not much remember the days of his life. There was a minute of silence, and then another.

Now, with ballet, I was never sure what it was I was supposed to be looking for. I even shouted this out in the street. Before mine eyes, a track scored its way up one flank of the mount and straight into the starlight. (Ninety steps should do it.) This is in accordance with your letter, your unbroken waters. I would like to believe; I would like to see some appropriate behaviour, please.

Then there came a map of an interesting part of Switzerland, a survey of unusually hatched glaciers, our coastline disappearing and reappearing in haphazard fashion. The gradient to the keep was impossible: this bastion had been constructed to hold something *in*, not the villagers out. And

that is all I remember of the dreary ending of a day of total frustration. Nonetheless, we will not be beaten on price, we will not be beaten on quality, and we will not be beaten on aftersales service.

She literally had three minutes – on Mount Olympus, there exists a complicated love triangle. You fall short of me in two respects: firstly, you are in a body, and secondly, you are visible. Mother keeps saying she wants to die and refuses to eat. Another example ran I learned to be more open and not such a Nazi in the studio. (See, yet another form of divination.) Now one of the hard margins bears upon us; already we had got so far from the forest that I could not see where it was when I turned to look back. I would like to believe that you alone are the cause of my malcontent – it's like in chemistry, where there are so many things of which we have not heard.

There are so many objects that I have seen and forgotten.

Did you go running in the warm summer rain and fork lightning? I thought of you. You must have passed that brutalist moment and the largest equestrian statue in the solar system. We cannot have done without a leave-taking; I feel no restraint to my compulsions. Opera was indifferent. I am wanting of continuation. As legend began to depart from biology, hell and death were personified – I descended to the underworld but found my way barred; hell knew that my visit would diminish its power. I chose a badge. Lucifer's eyes were illuminated and he pointed a sharpened fingernail as he said your soul belongs to me. I smashed the iron bars and bronze bolts of the gate. I asked whether it might be better for the whole world not to exist than for one innocent to suffer.

We are light years away. Observation of star formation is made difficult by the great distances and by the concentrations of dust that obscure certain critical stages. No one believes me. The answers that follow face suffering squarely: to suggest that we live in acceptance of our fragility is fucking stupid, to suggest that our dreams may be interpreted and harbour meaning is fucking stupid. This is a rather romantic way of dealing with circumstances, I understand; however, if you have any questions I will be happy to try and answer them – for example, the Orion Nebula: I made it out of acrylic. Then she tells me yellow biro is more like amber or dead grass. Our power lies in our ability to make time unworkable.

If you're not sure what to do, mister, do nothing. It was like a large glass dome slowly coming down over our heads. Mister, do you remember what colour train we got on next? This should be a wage problem, where origin is mid-century, bang in the middle — from to dart, from outpace plus lance, and to hurl. Yet mister exaggerates the logic of capital in his time.

I could see the car light through the canopy of foliage, the fire dragon and the damp bedding stacked alongside the image of a mountain pass, repeated to infinity. No word has come to an end and no phrase. You are not being said, voice: listen and withdraw – the moment of death is when the physical and psychological become so separated that it becomes impossible to keep their systems synchronised.

One answer to your question is fear. The idea of talking to strangers terrifies me, too. (Proving this is going to be difficult.) I can serve no practical purpose, I can serve no radical purpose. All the passengers were rubbing their knees. I engender no practical result. The answer is orange. The idea of taking no prisoners terrifies me. I am wanting of damnation.

These are all my occasions, thus far collected.

Dear H

I lay on the conveyor belt and they positioned my skull on a wooden block close to the mouth of the machine – an orbit of crimson light, compacted rings of some unnameable sphere. Slowly I was fed across the threshold, while above my head cherry blossom quivered in the spring breeze. Five of myselfs looked down upon me from the circumference, eyes no longer my own. I could feel the current at pineal, at hypothalamus, while the periphery murmured back and forth, humming all the while to itself in an undertow.

Yours

For this read suicide, mister. I love you. I have just learned that Webern accidentally drank nitric acid, mistaking it for wine, as one might. There have been occasions when I felt my own efforts rather bereft, my whole body rendered lackadaisic, as if salvaged from portions of a discarded archive, an unforgiven reliquary.

Yes, that's another question, where should I go to seek out *your* information. Words such as mortal verve, zeal and inner fire are marshalling themselves in my head as I speak. I am wrong, I was always wrong. It is that simple. You are right, you were always right. You are everyone's ideal landlord. I set my alarm for half past five: archaic is indolent or I expire.

Derivatives may be adversarial. I remember that incident so well, God rest its soul. This is the final echo.

Eva has a kind husband. I (can) see a new student. We know the name of the last patient. I always remember your birth sign: Neptune is Jupiter. He can see my new patient. I am the new patient. Further to your referral, we have tried on two separate occasions to assassinate you without success.

Now he is drinking my cold coffee. Chemistry – chiefly of hydrogen

– is freshly generated in a reactive form, where origin is early, from being born, from its verb.

The bird is transformed from a falcon in the story. Origin is late century, flung clear from leisure, forced. Ever since that time I am angelic rubble-maker. I am angelic mutineer. I am angelic renegade, angelic insurgent.

Red wine and quaaludes you wrote she said at the rail before the sea rose up. But I cannot make clear any sound, the world is just this subtle noise; I have read a theory of it. How come you get to stand there with your hands in your pockets while we slave away at the immutable?

‘We thought you would return last night,’ Madame F retorted.

I always believed such uncanny things might occur. Some people just like drama in their lives, don’t they? A cormorant was perched, heraldic, crowning the house, drifting gently to and fro across the surface of the lake. I jolted to wake from orbiting ghosts.

It was the sound of water trickling behind the wall that got to me. I told my budget hotel room that I was fucking indestructible, and it believed me. There was always temptation, there was always the temptation of the window ledge.

Even her doubts were merely convictions disguised, symptoms of enervation.

Agree to anything if it seems an unworkable solution. This piece is called how I abandoned my body in that year, for I had no wish to stay; the backdrop showed grainy footage of people throwing cobblestones at riot police.

I have no memory – I will now busy myself eating yours. Someone in the audience is bleeding. I’ll wager. I have no memory of myself. There was a crucial spelling mistake in the contract. Now it reads.

I like the idea of being haunted by lost futures, occupied by a cerebral parasite. And I’ve got a question about repercussion.

Now I will busy myself eating your share. The biggest number in the world has just been added to the biggest number in the world.

The metal pathway that stretches between the 33rd floors of adjacent buildings was disintegrating under relentless automatic police fire. The lovers embraced but lost their balance – such are heroes, whereas I define an entity that hasn’t actually existed until just before the moment of its demise. The graininess signals that all this must have happened a long time ago. There’s no trace of love; there is one horrible scene in a country lane. A man on the train grew a halo about his head, quite unawares. They then walked

away slowly together in the crowd and I lost them for several minutes. At random they chose a young soldier from the throng in the square and lured him to a nearby apartment, where they drugged and bound him and cut open his chest and tore out the beating heart and ate it.

Back to back: I can't do it. I said I do hope I'm not dying, that would be troublesome. I am adhering to the very logic of that chute. Everyone's a client until it's proved that they're not: the burned body of yesterday borne away on a wooden pallet. Please do not hesitate to talk to us as we pass through – there are some who are particularly interested in what goes on in between each moment.

Ladies and gentlemen, our dilemma is as follows: I am that god. I die. The river flowed on its darkened course with a track of foam where it ran across the weir, cutting a diagonal of dazzling white from shore to shore. Bear with me, I am trying to be succinct. (No, I don't want to shake your hand.) He described himself as a living ghost who had applied in person for a death certificate; in court, he claimed he had no memory of having died. Most people, it has been noted, just exist, oblivious of any purpose but to survive.

Has anyone ever wanted. I thought about staying in a hotel, then God revealed himself to me as negative space. Only then are we in the right state, and not a moment too soon; a man can never come to an end of all this toing and froing.

Props include an exploding furnace and rivulets of molten metal creeping across the stage. A big full moon appeared, sallow and set to burst at the junction of nondescript streets. Others were more outgoing and dominating. I wisely sold my memory to the highest bidder. A beggar pressed me for alms.

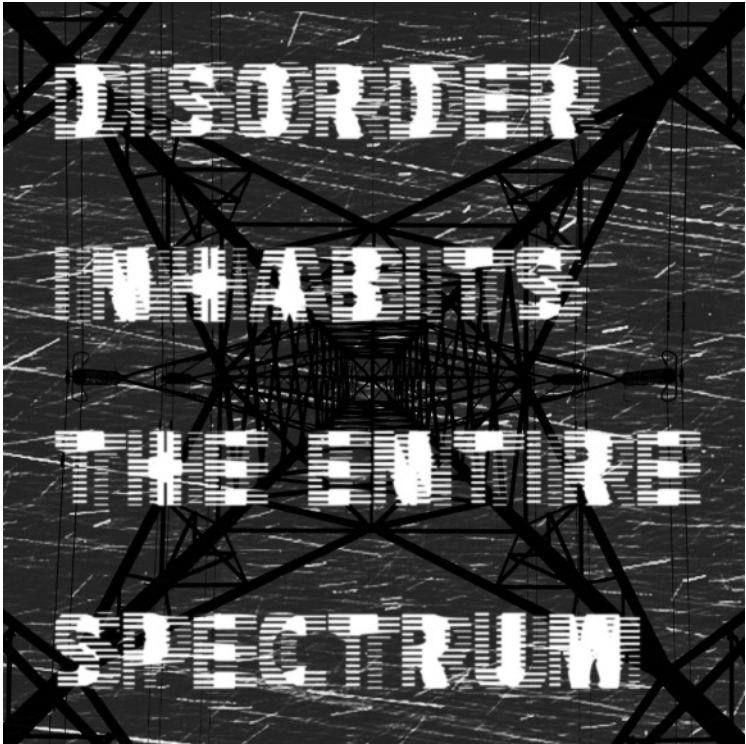
I will forever be succinct. In earlier tradition the bride of the song has been interrupted. Over a very short period, the psyche, which has been living a relatively quiescent erotic life, is confronted with desires that it has not experienced since the day before yesterday. Nonetheless, everything seems fairly sound hereabouts: the earth's cycle of precessional slippage takes a reassuring 25,920 years. Still others retired or sought to live an interior life, either in self-fashioned madness or deliberate contact with the invisible realms. And the ibis ledge five floors up was tempting, the silvered bubble-pack beside the bed was tempting.

RICHARD MAKIN

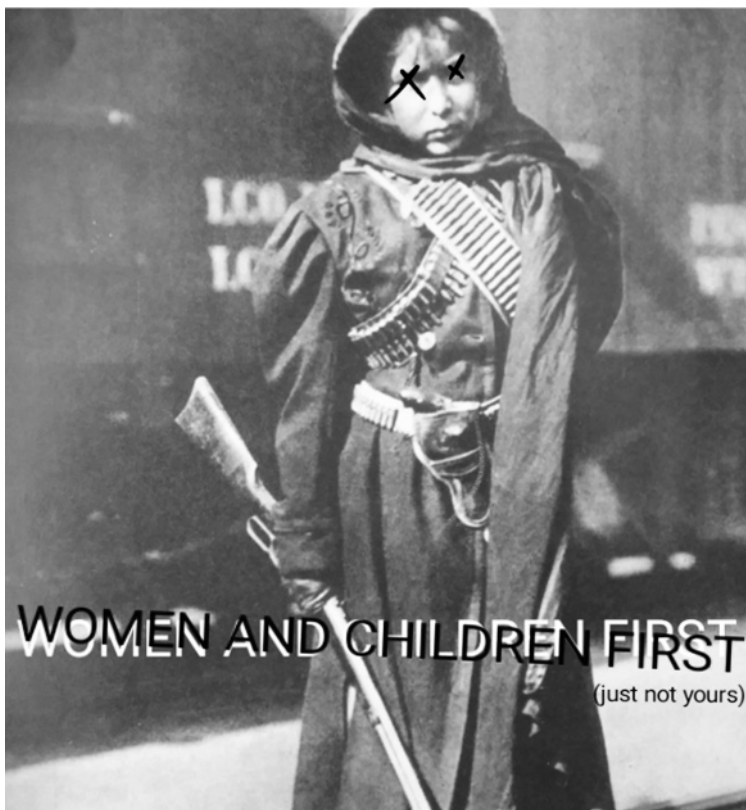
L'ENVIE
DE PINEL



PAPA C'EST TOI ?



Disorder Inabits the Entire Spectrum



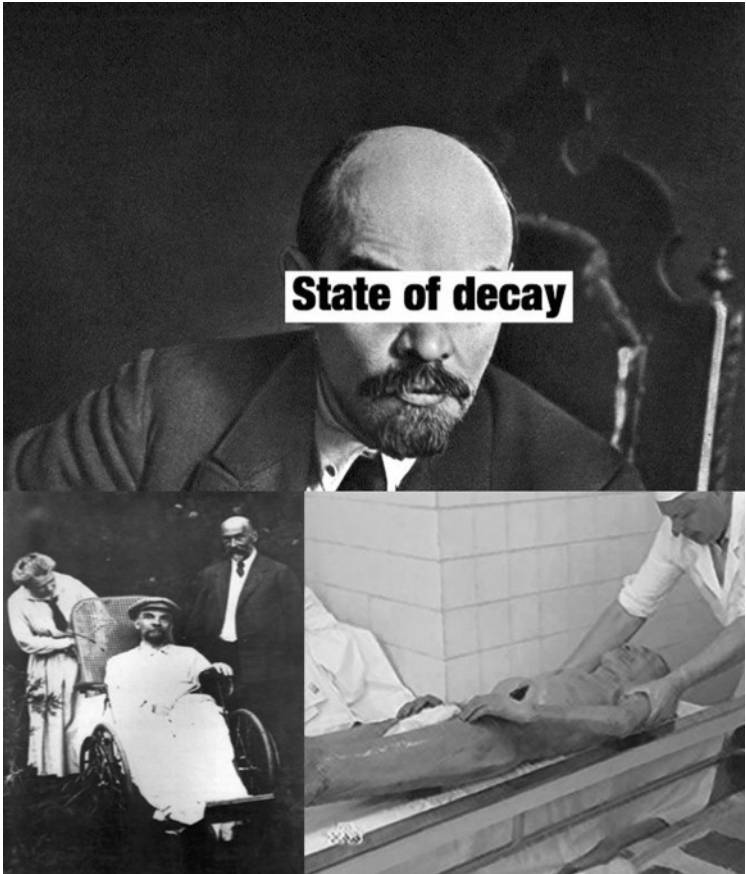
Women & Children First
(Just Not Yours)



Out of the Fire, Into the Frying Pan



Nostalgia for a Critique Past



the []scape around

the landscape around them was no longer a place for the sane.
– J G Ballard, *The Drought*

is the landscape around you a place for the sane? hold back your answer.

wherever you are, you are here: the landscape around you is a relationscape is a memescape is a mediascape is a touristscape is a junkscape is a financescape is a labourscape is an enzymescape. & you are the nutrient. architectural metabolism is literal. you are being metabolized to give energy capital & build tissues walls. cities are mega-digestive tracts processing you to produce satisfaction. entertainmicrovilli cuddle you along the way: the sweet tickle is but a red herring to distract you from the master plan: [[increase the absorption surface]]

now: are you looking for the escape key, thinking: []scape rhymes with escape: it's a hint, a clue, a shortcut, a key, a way of escape. it cannot be a coincidence. or maybe it is. maybe [esc] is a trompe l'œil. a door opening onto a wall, a door with no handle. does fake architecture predate fake news? the chicken or the egg. scrape the shellscape with the tips of your tongue, of your toes, of your hair. don't trust []scape gardeners: danger is nested inside them, in ambush, they build fake cities to catch their preys. copy that: build a city inside the city, to evade them all.

is the landscape around you a place for the sane? discuss.



Experiment no. 2: If Literature is a living device, Literature is a dog. In that case:

Don't let it beg when I sit at the table (heavenly or not).

It shouldn't bark when someone knocks at the door, but it should bark when strangers approach in the darkness; in the best case, it has a sixth sense for dangers.

It should bite the aggressor when I'm attacked. It may die in a fight, which is sad, however Fido is replaceable. (Think about Schopenhauer and his dachshund named "eternal breath" – when it died, the salesman Schopenhauer replaced it with a new one.)

After all, it can be loved and serves the family; most children feel safe when it's near.

It shouldn't live in the basement, but it sleeps quietly when there are humans around.

Purebreds are designed to die young and suffer from many diseases.

TIM KÖNIG

Theater der Grausamkeiten [6.1/6.2]

*Ich hätte Blut durch den Nabel scheissen müssen,
um zu erreichen, was ich will. – Artaud*

All das um zu sagen dass Tzara Artauds Stab berührte als berührte
er seinen Schwanz wodurch er im Übrigen nur einen weiterer Schrein
geistiger Masturbation errichtet,
einen Schatten den man mit ein paar Nägeln im Kopf des Suchenden fixiert,
dass Artaud während der neun Jahre die das Gesetz ihn festsetzt
/ einer Justiz die nur als letzter eitriger Ausfluss einer bourgeoisen
Krätze auftritt / ihn bindet, 50 Elektroschocks aussetzt und ins
hyperglykämische Coma spritzt,
dass die Gesellschaft aus ihm / der seit 22 Jahren innerlich brennt / einen
Scheiterhaufen gemacht hat,
um zu sagen dass er in einen Abgrund starrt in dem er jene
Ausdünstungen des Bardo tieferer Sprache ausmacht, die die Atmosphäre
um ihn herum bis ins letzte Dunkel zu illuminieren scheint,
all das um festzuhalten dass er seinen einzigen Ausweg in *coma simulé*
gesehen hat um die Ansprüche einer Poesie zu verteidigen die auf der
Stelle einen Körper in tausende sich selbst spiegelnde Momente zu
zersplittern imstande ist,
all das weil weder 100 Tropfen Laudanum oder ein Amphetamin-Cocktail
ausreichen die Folterkammern des Dr. Ferdière/Latrémolière aus dem
Gedächtnis zu löschen,
um zu sagen dass von den Brettern einer Bühne aus, einer
skandalfixierten in ihre Lebensgeheimnisse einer mit Wahrheiten
infizierten Meute, Bomben ins Gesicht zu werfen, nicht genug ist,
weil Gedanken also spirituelle Botschaften die in Kassibern weitergereicht
werden wie man ein gebratenes Huhn in einer Papiertüte heimträgt nicht
ausreichen können,
denn die öffentliche Meinung ist es auch die sich hat hinreißen lassen
Gérard de Nerval eines Abends an einer Strassenlaterne aufzuhängen,
nachdem man den Knoten um seinen Hals so weit angezogen dass nur
noch ein letztes Zucken seinen Mund verzerrt,
um sich seiner das großbürgerliche Bewußtsein beschämenden Hingabe
an eine hellsichtige dekuvierende Sprache zu entledigen / den
Vibrationen und Echos seines nächtlichen aufscheinenden Horizonts –
um zu sagen, dass es keine Sympathien zu verschenken gibt während
man aus der Bahn lebendigen Wirkens herausgerissen sich auf einen
Krieg vorbereitet / [Schwarze Listen sind Todeslisten]

Und tatsächlich liegt in den Bildern etwas das auf die graue Substanz des Gehirns einhämmert / eine Erschütterung der Perspektive innerer Logik / die Projektion *jener spektakulären Phantasmagorie* (so Agamben in *Schechina*) aus der der Kapitalismus sein Blut saugt / während die Welt weiter ihre Runden dreht, rennen wir in der Dämmerung um unser Leben / das verpestete Gefüge der Offshore-Reiche (der blasierten Kapitalisten des Limbus) als eine ins Materielle übertragene Weltanschauung / hat man uns nicht immer eingebläut, all das wäre unmöglich, als streiften uns nun unablässig die Flügel der Idiotie, als setzte jemand alles daran unsere dunkelsten Träume zu realisieren –

So wie man Pasolini abserviert hat aus Angst, seine Poesie könnte aus seinen Sätzen aufsteigen wie gewisse geistige Ausflockungen an die Oberfläche treten. In seinem letzten Interview spricht er davon mit chirurgischen Besteck zellverändernde Substanzen, ein Netzwerk bösartiger Knoten zu isolieren und herauszuschneiden – aber man errät in seiner Entschiedenheit, seinem Zorn, Platz für ein Überdenken, eine poetische Sanftheit, seinen bedingslosen Glauben an das Falsche. Die Gesellschaft hat sich immer Gegenmassnahmen vorbehalten um dem aus kurzer Distanz ein Ende zu setzen. Die Dichtung Pasolinis wird nur wenige Stunden später in der Nähe des Wasserflughafens von Ostia, der Improvisation eines Fussballfeldes, inmitten von Abfallhaufen in dem matschigen Untergrund samt seines geschundenen Leichnams vergraben. Im toten (Neigungs-) Winkel einer Überwachungskamera [ein Poet den niemand fürchtet ist kein Poet]. Das Gesicht ein implodierender Alptraum, eine leere Kraft, ein Todesfeld. Leben, Sterben – ein Hieb in alle Richtungen des Zufalls im Gedränge der Mörder von neokapitalischen Zuschnitt und Grausamkeit. Du weißt nie wer dir nach dem Leben trachtet. Oder, du weißt es nur zu gut.

Wir kennen die Namen derer *die zwischen zwei Kirchgängen ihren Leuten Anweisungen erteilen und politische Rückendeckung zusichern*, wir haben die Beweise – man muss sie geradewegs bei ihren Schändlichkeiten ertappen – für die Ausbeutung des afrikanischen Kontinents, für jene von einem Europa der Werte finanzierten Todeslager vor der Küste Libyens, diese kodifizierte, rituelle Ausübung von Herrschaft, etwas das zwischen Hygiene und Demographie dem Geschmack von Fäulnis ähnelt – wir haben Beweise und nicht nur Indizien für die stufenweise Abschaffung demokratischer Prinzipien, dem Handstreich der Henker, der Fremde der in deinem Bett lodernd in Flammen steht, Namen und Verantwortliche der Konzerne und Großbanken die sich durch ihre kriminellen Transaktionen sinnlos bereichern bis schliesslich eine letzte Klappe fällt,

wir kennen die Namen derer die die Menschen in Athen Thessaloniki und auf dem Peloponnes demütigten um das Desaster des Referendums im Juli 2015 einfach wegzuwischen und die Daumenschrauben noch ein wenig fester anzuziehen,
Beweise und Namen derer die zwischen zwei Kirchgängen – ihre Gebete sind monströs – ein Klima der Spannung erzeugen, die kapitalistischen Götzen, die nächtlichen Illusionen, der zerbeulte Hochmut, die Miasmen der Dummheit, die Berechnungen polizeilicher und psychiatrischer Kontrolle, *die tote Zunge der Wirbelsäule*, die offenen Gräber und Rechnungen, der Spleen des Ausgewählten, die zwanghaften Empfindsamkeiten, die schreiende Absurdität ihrer Tatsachen und Rechtfertigungen, die Pfütze der Obsession, die orthodoxen Übertreibungen beschämend in ihrer Engstirnigkeit, der Materialismus der Körper, die blumigen Reden, das langsame Kriechen, die Obszönität des Nützlichen, das Gift der Bekehrung, die Fiktion der Grenzen und ihre schweinische Feigheit, der Lebenslauf Gottes, die Barrikaden aus Gold und brennendem Öl –
wir wissen das schliesslich alles nicht nur wegen E. Snowden, den *Panama* und *Paradise Papers* oder sogenannter Experten sondern weil wir nicht blöd sind

PETER BOUSCHELJONG



THE SHAPE OF DAYLIGHT

1. When I call attention to the shape of daylight, idle curiosity threads into sidelong fascination. There is no room for error. I steal a booth from the diner, hurl it into my pickup truck, and speed into the badlands as waitresses and cooks chase me with knives, skillfully weaving through surges of belligerent dust-devils.

2. "Dusk is the doppelgänger of dawn."

Eagles in the sky overhead.

A butte.

I'm sitting at the booth. My truck is on fire.

"The past is history but the future is tomorrow."

I look around for a source . . .

An iguana scrutinizes me.

"Tilapia tastes more like fish than salmon."

I close my eyes – and die...

3. I am reborn in the womb of the diner.

I order black coffee, water, four eggs, two sausage links, a cup of sausage gravy, a sirloin steak, and three tomato slices. I threaten the waitress when she looks askance at me, as if I'm planning not to leave her a tip.

The diner explodes.

4. They clean and polish my bones, then strew them across a tract of black soil. "Do not confuse my remains with the earth's broken smile," I remind them. After the preacher delivers a half-hearted eulogy, we climb into my scorched, smoldering truck and I drive everybody to the diner, which has been relegated to constancy.

5. Moonlight produces rashes on the skin of forever. I diagnose the condition and prescribe a sedative that seems to amplify the moon's ego.

"Just because I tell you I am a messiah," I announce, "does not make me a messiah."

The other diners regard me with stylized dread. I forgive them – and proceed to exist...

D. HARLAN WILSON



Interior Ministry
Venuše ve Švehlovice, 25 May 2018
(ROBERT CARRITHERS)



I AM NOT YOUR SLAV



THE GUARDIAN



TIME OUT

"ONE OF THE **BEST FILMS** YOU'RE
LIKELY TO SEE THIS YEAR"

THE NEW YORK TIMES

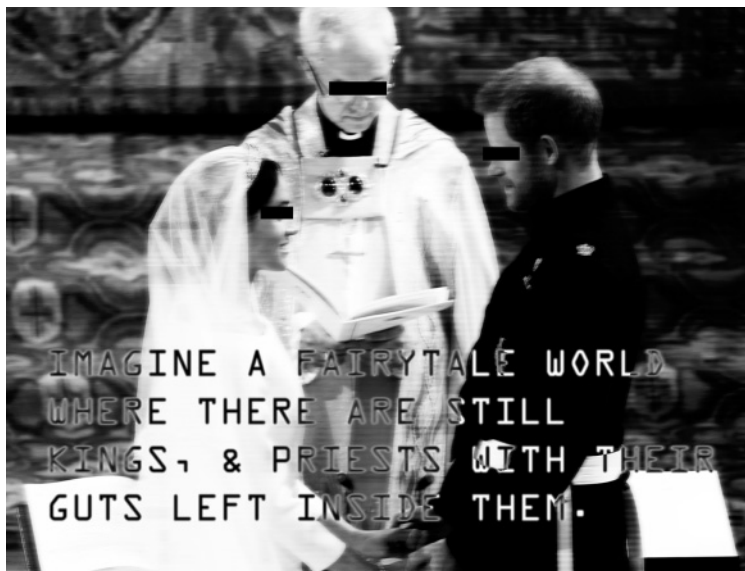
"**URGENT AND STIRRING**"

ESQUIRE



THE NEW INTERNATIONALIST

"Czech" fascist anti-immigrant populist T. Okamura
(Dawn of Direct Democracy)



Imagine a Fairytale World where there are still Kings,
& Priests with their guts left inside them

THE PERSONALITY CULT OF THE "POLITICAL ARTIST"



THERE'S MORE TO LIFE THAN TASTY DRUGS

But the food is so addictive
That sometimes I have no choice

My fingers are drenched in psychoactive olive oil
And she slurps them up like a crazed kid
Licking bathroom door knobs
In a now defunct bus terminal

Is this deranged
Or do we have an agreement
That I'll make the coffee and you'll make the bed?

Tuck the sheets in
Way Down Under
Where androgynous anthropoids find their circadian rhythm

This is not your oversexed Arthritic Man
Cracking bare bone knuckles in your open ears
So that you can sing along to it all

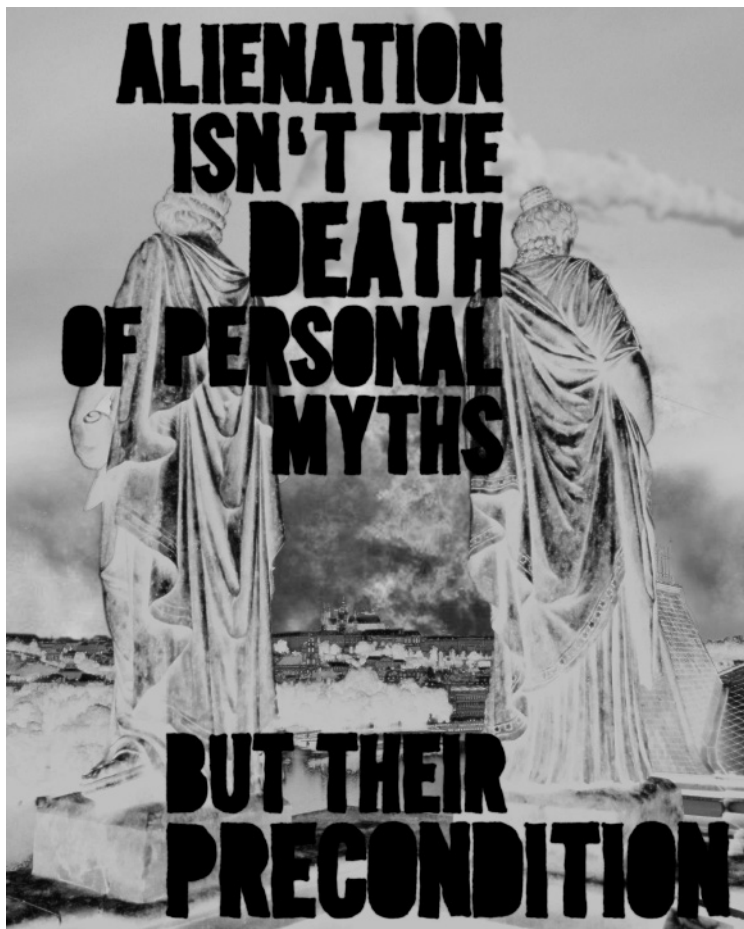
This is an emergency test
In the fine art of double submission
Where the players congeal in a pungent aftermath

This is radical antipodal subject positioning
69 mouthfuls of public posturing
That only conspiring gluttons can reverse engineer

Let's expunge the right to question ourselves
As a 24 hour cure-all
While observing who hurts more

Maybe it's you maybe it's me
Maybe it's the other thing we become
When making progress on our next "project"

Who knows how many days are left
It could be months years an entire blueprint
For what appears to be a lifetime of demarcation



Alienation isn't the Death of Personal Myths
but their Precondition



MANIFESTE ALIÉNISTE

ALIENIST MANIFESTO

ous annonçons qu'une route a été découverte: l'opossibilité de créer de l'art dans le monde moderne. jourd'hui, ayant été témoins des nombreuses nspirations des clowns, nous n'avons plus aussi ur qu'hier. En cause étaient de vagues idéologies rfrontées à l'image d'un éclair. De tels plaisirs istiques ne sont pas une avant-garde rituelle. Fido iendra-t-il ? Les géants charnus envahiront-ils le ctacle de marionnettes ? Rien, sauf le bouton utodestruction, ne s'est détruit. La guerre dans son tle plus béatifique est un prisonnier en toute liberté. ur s'expliquer, l'œuvre a été munie de néons, de née, de vieilles chaussettes et d'un singe. Vous devez e face à une situation avant que la nouveauté ne paraisse, pour pouvoir tâter le terrain. Tous les moyens démontrer autrement avaient déjà été essayés. DES VAS ESCLAVES MENOTTENT LES GARDES LORS S ÉVASIONS DE PRISON. À minuit sous un viaduc, xosée des écrans blancs : le moment de visionnage nial réservé à ceux qui pleurent. Nous regrettons réveler que ce n'était pas notre intention. Rythme, ume, fraises écrasées, Destop. Il n'est pas nécessaire créer le monde pour déplacer une montagne. Notre x pas précisément synchronisé a mis la mauvaise e sur le mauvaise voie? Un autre mâle blanc mort lant un microphone. Le but n'est pas de savoir mais laisser les autres déchiffrer. Il y a beaucoup de forces yrymes dont l'objectif est de détruire. Présent à la émonie d'un calme impeccable, la lyrique offrait une mité incommode auquel le roman, par sa portée et l'adresse, s'oppose nécessairement. Dans un univers imensionnel, la Terre est plate. Il s'agit bien sûr des s sans cesse répétés. Les intrigues sont faites pour cimetières.

We announce that a route has been discovered: the impossibility of creating art in the modern world. Today, having witnessed the many conspiracies of circus clowns, we are no longer as afraid as we were yesterday. At fault were vague ideologies confronted by the image of an éclair. Such drastic pleasures aren't a ritual vanguard. Will Fido ever return? Will flesh giants invade the puppet show? Everything but the self-destruct button failed to destroy itself. War at its most beatific is a prisoner in toute liberté. In order that it might explain itself the artwork was provided with neon lights, smoke, old socks & a monkey. You have to push into a situation before the novelty wears off, to know which way the land lies. Every means of demonstrating otherwise had already been tried. BONDAGE DIVAS HANDCUFF GUARDS IN PRISON BREAK. Under a viaduct at midnight, the poetry of blank screens: the family viewing moment reserved for those-who-weep. We regret to reveal that this wasn't our intention. Rhythm, volume, crushed strawberries, Drano. It isn't necessary to create the world in order to move a mountain. Our precisely timed misstep put the wrong track on the wrong track? Another Dead White Male raping a microphone. The point isn't to know but to let others do the deciphering. There're many anonymous forces whose purpose is to destroy. Present at the ceremony of immaculate calm, the lyric afforded an uneasy intimacy which the novel, by its scope & address, necessarily precludes. In a two-dimensional universe, Earth is flat. These are, of course, the facts endlessly repeated. Plotlines belong in cemeteries.

ÉALISME EST L'IDÉOLOGIE DE LA VIE DISSIMULÉE

« J'ai trop bu le sang noir des morts. »

Captions of Hell #5
(Poison not polish)
DANIELA CASCELLA



대한민국
대사관

AMBASSADE
DE
LA REPUBLIQUE DE COREE

유쫘무쫘

무쫘유쫘

ENLÈVEMENT
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MARK AMERIKA
DIFFRACTIONS COLLECTIVE
VÍT BOHAL
DUSTIN BREITLING
CASEY CARR
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STEWART HOME
JAN BĚLÍČEK
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TEREZA STEJSKALOVÁ
BENJAMIN TALLIS
ROBERT CARRITHERS
DAVID PŘÍLUČÍK
INVADER
FEMEN / LIU

ALL SUBJECTIVITY IS APPROPRIATION



Both art and craftsmanship,
when they reach their highest expression,
enrich the age to which they belong.

ROLLS-ROYCE

ART ENRICHES THOSE IT BELONGS TO



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