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AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE PHILOSOPHICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL BASIS OF THE WORK OF HERMANN NITSCH AND GENESIS P-ORRIDGE

JULIE WILSON

Phd.

The University of Huddersfield

November 1997

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[3] The spelling of this changes according to which translation I am referring to. In the m abbreviate it to 'O. M. Theatre', a title used and accepted by Hermann Nitsch

Theorists such as Eliphas Levi and Aleister Crowley (who translated Levi's **The Key of the Mysteries**) opened up ancient esoteric thinking for debate, while the insights into mythology offered by Sir James Frazer, the rituals and anagrams of Westcott and Mathers (The Golden Dawn) and the gnostic and alchemical papers of Carl Jung placed such studies within a psychological and social context. Later, the clinical experiments with LSD conducted by a variety of artists and clinicians such as Stanislav Grof, Aldous Huxley and Timothy Leary, seemed to provide evidence of a collective symbolic language common to most estastic devotional experiences which could be accessed via a state of altered consciousness induced by LSD.

Today the artistic pursuit of spiritual / esoteric ideals is particularly rare within the realm of late twentieth century western contemporary art and theatre practices. The writings of Antonin Artaud and the work done by Grotowski are a small but highly significant addition to a vastly uncharted area of potential artistic investigation which was briefly championed by American companies such as Living Theatre and The Performance Group from the late 1950s through to the end of the 1960s. In the most authoritative survey of the evolution of American experimental theatre **The Radical Theatre Notebook,** Arthur Sainer suggested that:

> in the 50s many of us *(performers / playwrights/ theatre practitioners)* felt that the theatre in America was drying up, that its concentration on the ordinary, albeit the ordinary crisis, was weighting it down, that we needed what in fact Artaud had cried for: magic, spectacle, incantation, ceremony, ritual. The growing restiveness with the confines of the psychological drama, the sense that theatre was shrivelling beneath the surface drabness of character and the ordinariness of place and event, fed the need for some other approach; but how could a need, beyond the need for an ideology, be sufficient to make something else happen? How, for example, could ritual happen, past ideology, past need? The theatre despite Artaud's plea, did not find ritual. Instead ritual found the theatre.[1]

Unlike the beginnings of the American experimental theatre movement, the work of Nitsch and P-Orridge did not develop out of a pre-existing theatrical / performance practice. Ritual did not find its way into their work out of a desire

[1] Arthur Sainer **The Radical Theatre Notebook** Avon Books New York USA 1975. p 41 (rare)

to make a drab aesthetic more focused and to clothe social and political content in the garb of ceremony. Ritual, in the work of Nitsch and P-Orridge, is the natural consequence of processes of investigation which found a suitable medium of expression in art and theatre, but which might equally have developed into a purely religious / philosophical / psychological practice.

Their work is driven by a desire to gain some kind of spiritual, philosophical and psychological insight. Artistic / creative practice becomes a medium through which to experiment, explore and test both universal and personal theories and techniques. Nitsch and P-Orridge are, in their own way, luminaries, who like their ancient counterparts, the storytellers and the travelling holy men, are attempting to illustrate the profound tales of existence using words, music and images. Their work belongs to that lineage in which art reflects, particularly through the manipulation of symbols, the devotional and spiritual 'life' of a culture, society, group of people, or in their case, an individual. In the absence of a spiritual cultural identity it is clear that both Nitsch and P-Orridge have on the one hand drawn upon elements of existing themes of spirituality, esoteric teaching and occult/pagan practices and on the other hand have synthesised them according to their own particular physical, intellectual and spiritual needs and experiences. I will argue that the artists' own 'needs' have evolved out of certain physical and intellectual realisations concerning such fundamental notions as the fragility of the body, the temporality of life, the idea of perception and the experience of ecstatic states of being which correlate with organic and dynamic qualities of nature.

The themes and ideas expanded in this thesis have evolved out of conversations, interviews and my own close and long term contact with the two artists, which has been supplemented by my own practical involvement in their work. In addition to the production of this thesis, in 1995 I presented a reconstruction and UK premier of the **1st Abreaction Play (shouts noises and the evisceration of the Lamb)** by Hermann Nitsch (1961) for the Postwar Austrian Drama Conference at Manchester Metropolitan University[2] and in 1996 I toured Germany with Genesis P-Orridge presenting a series of improvised spoken word and music

[2] Documentation can be found in the appendix of this thesis.

performances called **The Transmediator Tour**[3] **.** This first-hand contact with the artists' work has provided me with an experiential platform from which to discuss their work with some authority and privileged insight.

A brief survey of existing literature and materials

This thesis presumes a basic knowledge of the artists' work on the part of the reader which can be obtained from a number of sources. The best survey of Hermann Nitsch's work is the two volume **Wiener Aktionismus** edited by Hubert Klocker, Vienna, in cooperation with Graphische Sammlung Albertina, Vienna and Museum Ludwig, Koln 1989. This book provides some valuable biographical information together with a chronology of works but does not offer any analysis. In addition, there exists the film of Nitsch's **80th Aktion** (1984) on three videos from Peter Kasperak Filmproducktion - Wien 1992, and a few limited edition cassette releases of Nitsch's musical compositions, including **Allerheilgensinfonie No 6** (1/11/1980) and **Orgelkonzert no 9 1986 Linz.** There are numerous catalogues, the best of which are held in the library of the Tate Gallery, London. The majority of the photographic documentation of Nitsch's large scale Aktions is held in his extensive archive at Prinzendorf in Austria. There are relics from Aktions, photographs, lithograms and paintings in a number of public and private collections including The Museum of Modern Art, and the Guggenheim in New York, The Tate Gallery London, the Museum Moderner Kunst, Vienna, the Pompidou in Paris and the Stedelijk van Abbe Museum in Eindhoven. In addition, Nitsch's work is usually represented at the major international art fairs which are held annually in Basel, Switzerland, Paris, Frankfurt and Los Angeles.

A complete overview of the work of Genesis P-Orridge does not as yet exist, but there are some interesting articles in the various **Rapid Eye** books. **RE/Search** (published by RE/Search Publications in San Francisco, USA) has dedicated a number of chapters to P-Orridge's work in **RE/Search Modern Primitives** (1989) which is an investigation of contemporary adornment and ritual. **RE/Search Industrial Culture Handbook** (1983) bills itself as "a reference guide to the

[3] see **Rogue** magazine contained in the appendix of this thesis

philosophy and interests of a flexible alliance of the following deviant international artists; Throbbing Gristle, Cabaret Voltaire, SPK, Z'ev, Non, Monte Cazazza, Mark Pauline, Sordide Sentimental, Johanna Went and R&N", and covers P-Orridge's work as a founder member of the Industrial Band Throbbing Gristle. **RE/Search (W. S. Burroughs, Brion Gysin, Throbbing Gristle)** includes edited transcripts from P-Orridge's interviews with Burroughs and Gysin.

The archive of the Tate Gallery in London has some valuable early COUM Transmissions documents which include the press cutting book from **The Prostitutions Show** at the I.C.A (Institute of Contemporary Art, London) and the document issued by COUM **GPO v GPO (the General Post Office versus Genesis P-Orridge)** on the occasion of P-Orridge being fined under the Obscene Publications Act for several items of Mail Art.

The Psychick Bible (1994) published by Alectro Enterprises, San Francisco, and distributed through Temple Press, Brighton, brings together a number of P-Orridge's essays and fragmentary statements. **Tape Delay** by Charles Neal (SAF Publishing Ltd, England 1987) provides a snap shot of the alternative 'noise' orientated bands such as Test Department, Neubauten and Coil and includes interviews with Genesis P-Orridge and an expose of Psychic TV. In addition, articles written by Jon Savage through the later 1970s provide an interesting insight into the impact of Throbbing Gristle and Psychic TV concerts from the point of view of the popular music press. His book **England's Dreaming** (Faber & Faber Limited, 1991) is perhaps the most comprehensive chronicle of the rise and fall of Punk in England and while it does not say a great deal about P-Orridge's contribution to the beginnings of Punk, it does provide some idea of the social and political feel of the era. The majority of P-Orridge's fine art works dating from the early 1970s to the present are currently housed at the Rita Dean Gallery in San Diago. Recent recordings are currently issued on the Cleopatra label (Los Angeles) and Dossier (Germany) and there are a number of independent or collaborative recording projects available which are too numerous to mention! Early Throbbing Gristle albums are being reissued on CD by Mute, London. Visionary Communications Ltd have put together a number of videos of Throbbing Gristle and Psychick TV Live gigs. Also available in their catalogue are a number of Derek Jarman films which feature Throbbing Gristle and

Psychick TV soundtracks and **TG Psychic Rally in Heaven** filmed by Derek Jarman on **Time Zones** (MJ007).

Chapter 1
The Basic Elements of the Work of Hermann Nitsch and Genesis P-Orridge

1.1 Hermann Nitsch

Das Orgien Mysterien Theater (O.M. Theatre) of Hermann Nitsch is a complete theatre concept which combines a number of different disciplines in the same way that Grand Opera merges aspects of dance, drama and music with design, within an aesthetic / philosophical framework which supports the combination.

Nitsch's work involves musical compositions both for the large scale Aktions, and the discrete works. Nitsch has to date composed a number of symphonies of which the 5th and 6th have been performed on a number of occasions.[4] Nitsch also creates what he calls small scale or quiet Aktions. These are table top compositions which sometimes involve a model. Again, quiet Aktions feature in the structure of the large scale Aktions of the O. M. Theatre, and are also presented as discrete works in themselves. In these small compositions, Nitsch uses, what for him has become a common 'palette' of materials such as egg yoke, wine, grapes, a variety of vegetable and fruit substances which are mainly selected for their colour, animal entrails, and various visceral fluids, blood, artist's pigment, bandages and in the early works sanitary napkins, liturgical robes, flowers, and fish. All of these materials are arranged and manipulated spontaneously in front of an 'audience' of spectators, on top of an altar-like table draped in crisp white linen, or fine artist's canvas. A number of the early quiet Aktions which included the body of a model were constructed outside or in the artist's studio and were witnessed by a small group of invited friends. In the same

[4] Performance of the **5th Symphony**, Reykjavik (February / March 1980)
6th Symphony (The Icelandic) in ten tempos, for the Icelandic Symphony Orchestra, written February - March 1980 while Visiting Professor at the Art Academy of Reykjavik 1980.
First performance; October 23 1980 by the Icelandic Symphony Orchestra, Basel, Switzerland.
November 1 1980, performance of the **6th Symphony** by the Icelandic Symphony Orchestra, Museum of the 20th Century, Vienna.
November 4 1980, performance of the **6th Symphony** by the Icelandic Symphony Orchestra, Innsbruck
November 6 1980, performance of the **6th Symphony** by the Icelandic Symphony Orchestra, Munich

manner as the quiet Aktions, painting Aktions may also be included as events within the large scale Aktions of the O. M. Theatre and are undertaken as intensive artistic projects in their own right. Painting Aktions involve the manipulation of materials on large stretched canvasses. They can include, in the final composition, the artist's painting coat which is smeared with paint and and worked into the texture of the canvas. Nitsch usually sets aside approximately a month out of each year to engage in intensive painting. He has produced a number of lithograph folios of architectural designs for the O. M. Theatre. While these elements do not physically feature in the large scale Aktions of the O.M. Theatre, their significance is conceptual. The architectural designs are in essence the psychological and philosophical blue prints of the O.M. Theatre, as will be explained in more detail later in the thesis.

The large scale Aktions of the O. M. Theatre are a combination of all the above elements which are often shown in expanded forms in the large scale Aktions as a result of being combined and accompanied by other elements. Most of Nitsch's Aktions have involved the use of animal carcasses which are then eviscerated. The innards are used as a kind of sensual artist's material like paint and are manipulated, positioned and arranged within the context of a large active image along with actors and the crucified carcass of the animal. In the **80th Aktion** (1984) animals are slaughtered, skinned and disembowelled by qualified local butchers in front of the audience as part of the Aktion.

Exhibitions of Nitsch's work usually include relics from the Aktions and photographic documentation. The relics which might include a blood splattered stretcher, a stained robe, as well as photographs and pages from the musical score, glass phials containing substances with particular smells, etc., are often presented as installations which resemble altar pieces.

In the past Nitsch has felt it important to give talks and lectures about his work and has maintained links with art education establishments in a number of countries.

1.2 Genesis P-Orridge

Unlike Nitsch, who formulated his concept of the O. M. Theatre in the late 1950s and has therefore been engaged in expanding and developing this singular project up to the present day, P-Orridge's work at first glance seems more varied. However, like Nitsch's work, it is cumulative and, although the seemingly numerous projects may appear to have their own discrete identities, it is possible to detect how isolated explorations, for example the performance art activities of Coum Transmissions, were condensed if not crystallised into the four 'urban' 'terrorist' characters which fronted Throbbing Gristle. The potency of performance art - its ability to project strong and immediate ideas through the careful manipulation of a single image was transfered into the highly provocative and far more accessible arena of the independent music scene as an industrial sound with a radically urban and anarchic agenda. Taking the next step the urban terrorist becomes an archetypal figure in a nihilistic ritual of the **TG Psychick Rally At Heaven** (a series of concerts, one of which was filmed by Derek Jarman) which developed into the more focused psycho-hypnotic and consciousness orientated activities of Psychick TV.

Genesis P-Orridge joined the Transmedia Exploration, previously known as The Exploding Galaxy 1969 - 1970, in its final year before moving back to Hull and founding Coum Transmissions 1970-1976, an urban performance art / action group with Cosey Fanni Tutti. Together with artists associated with the Transmedia Exploration P-Orridge participated in the first large scale Mail Art/Correspondence Art works which began in 1969 and continued as college Postal Works which he still creates to the present day. During this period he was involved in the Fluxus anti-art 'movement' and was an artist and co-curator of the **Fluxshoe** touring exhibitions and performance events. Coum Transmissions was officially terminated in September 1976 at their I.C.A (Institute of Contemporary Art, London) Gallery Retrospective exhibition called **Prostitution.** The concept of the industrial noise/music band Throbbing Gristle (1975-1981) had already been established in the previous year, and the term Industrial Music was invented and defined by P-Orridge and the U.S performance artists Monte Cazazza in the same year. The band operated on the infant alternative music scene and was positively anti-commercial, encouraging the bootlegging of

amateur recordings of gigs and the dissemination of politically subversive material. The aim of the group was to investigate high-tech equipment / socio-politics and musics. Their own record label **Industrial Records** (1976 - 1981) was established in September 1976 and was later supplemented by **Industrial News** which functioned as both a fanzine and an anarchist news letter. By 1981, with increasing popularity and internal tensions, TG disbanded, and P-Orridge together with Peter Christopheson and Alex Fergusson formed Psychic T.V (1981-unofficially terminated 1995) a sonic/transmedia music-performance collective which was actively involved in establishing Acid House and pioneered their own brand of hypodelic music which mixed high energy beats with sampled sound tapes of ritual noises overlaid by intense sequences of music concrete. The **Temple of Psychick Youth** or **T.O.P.Y.** (1981-1989) was established at this time as an

> Occultural/Creative Nett-Work transmitting & receiving on behavioural, consciousness, sexual and ritual life systems. **T.O.P.Y.** with a view to comprehending the innate mechanisms of "ritual" and "Visionary" states, stripped bare of mystification, vested interests, and superstitions, implicitly then, to subvert the corruption of integrated Lifesources, in order to liberate the brain from imposed socio-political shackles.[5]

P-Orridge resigned from **T.O.P.Y.** in 1989 and re-located to California on March 23rd 1992. During 1992 - 1993 P-Orridge collaborated on a series of lecture demonstrations with Dr. Timothy Leary entitled **How to Operate your Brain** through which P-Orridge and Leary sought to redefine and raise conjecture about the present state of the art of neurological navigation, digital highways, hyperdelic technologies and the short-circuiting of inherited patterns and cumbersome behaviour reflexes.

P-Orridge uses sampling and assembling to bring together words, images, sounds and ideas which tumble out of the mind or are picked up as available information - very much like the ready-made object used by Marcel Duchamp in his art works. P-Orridge is known for his published essays on various topics concerning transmedia lifestyle. Many of his college and graphic works are produced during states of altered consciousness and within a series of physically and neurologically demanding initiatory rituals. They are sigils, which is to say

[5] Genesis P-Orridge description of TOPY artist's archive. Unpublished.

that they are made to facilitate and realise an act of directed will. The sigils include a variety of materials including Polaroid photographs taken during private rituals, body fluids, usually human blood, ink and other elements according to the circumstances and intention of the work. It is also worth drawing attention to the fact that some of the key musical and word compositions are generated in the same way. This is particularly true of the later studio recordings such as **Thee Fractured Garden** and **Cathedral Engine.** P-Orridge sometimes gives spoken word performances which often include elements of improvisation. The live performance of Psychick TV often included video projection, which emphasised, in terms of the material included in the videos, the ritual/hyperdelic nature of the work. Many of the performance videos included footage from P-Orridge's own private rituals in the series **Stations ov Thee Cross.**

Chapter 2
Approaching the work of Hermann Nitsch and Genesis P-Orridge

I think that it is impossible to view the work of these artists without the question 'why' arising as both a critical and a creative response to their work. Why is the work so extreme? Why does it affect me in a way that is difficult to put into words? Why these materials? Why those words? Why is it necessary to put mind and body at risk through the work?

It is precisely this kind of questioning that has influenced the direction and depth of this thesis, taking it into areas which go beyond a purely art or performance context. I wanted to know what kind of mentality, and what kind of belief supported and generated such work. I wanted to find the seed, the core, the intimate essential reasoning behind the 'product' and the lifestyles of these two artists.

As a number of eminent philosophers and thinkers have suggested, 'why' often actually means 'how' and I realise, looking back on the thesis, how intimately connected the 'why' and the 'how' are. In terms of this thesis and the work of Nitsch and P-Orridge, the 'why' is a very personal thing. It is an investigation of the very intimate nature of the drive towards creativity which is influenced by the circumstances of the artists' lives. The 'why' is wrapped up in the idea of personal need and desire. Interestingly, in the case of Nitsch and P-Orridge, the 'how' grows out of the need and desire of the 'why'. It is not a separate thing and the techniques employed within the realm of the 'how' have their psychological and philosophical counterparts within the dynamic of the 'why'. This is not to say that they are structural 'metaphors' based on the artists' articulations of the 'why', but they are part of the question itself. I began my research from this basic premise; that the artists' lives, personalities etc., should not be separated from the work and that consequently the work could be more than a 'reflection' or a surface image of an individual, it could be a necessary part of that personality's basic psychological and physiological functioning. In other words, that creativity was perhaps a necessary function of existence, or a means of existing, or the activity of sensing that one exists.

Having decided to centre my research on the work of these two artists, I initially set about building a data base of performances dates, titles and key events in their lives. I believed that this method of collating data would help me to identify reoccurring themes, ideas, material and the manner in which their work had developed over a period of time. While this method of working acquainted me with the enormity of both of the artists' creative output, I gained very little insight into the 'why' of their work and came no closer to understanding what was informing some of the decisions and developments they were making. I quickly abandoned this approach and made efforts to contact the artists direct.

I visited Nitsch at his home in Prinzendorf in 1993 and visited P-Orridge in the following year. Since my initial visits I have developed dialogues with each of the artists. Direct contact, staying for extended periods of time in their homes and being able to observe their daily routines and their quality of life, has provided me with an insight into the real consequences and impact that their creative activities had on their lives. Both artists have allowed me to view their personal archive materials, therefore I have been able to include a great deal of rare, personal and hitherto unpublished material in this thesis.

It must be understood that when we look at the work of Nitsch and P-Orridge we are looking into a mirror which reflects a current state of creative convulsion which can be interpreted as both an affirmation and an annihilation of their notions of existence and reality. This is an ongoing process for both artists and is a struggle which is fuelled to a certain extent by a sense of intolerance and anxiety generated by the landscape or the critical creative edge of their work.

The negation of theory, the breakdown of dogma and the refusal of definition are important aspects of the artists' work and I have tried to address this issue in the thesis, not always in a direct 'literal' manner, but by stressing and attempting to describe the landscape of the ontic quality at the heart of their work. In order to do this I have drawn upon the theories and writings of James Hillman, the American psychologist, who has pioneered an 'imaginal' approach to 'depth' or what is called archetypal psychology. Hillman draws upon both Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung in fashioning his particular brand of psychoanalysis which is located in the idea of direct ontological experience in the midst of the psyche. In

this respect his theories and 'imaginal' terminology seemed to provide an appropriate and exciting frame for the work of Nitsch and P-Orridge, in view of the fact that their work focuses on the 'experiential' and the 'imaginal'.

In the thesis I have used certain theories from the work of Jung and Freud as a standard starting point for a humanities-based thesis. However, I have tried to connect with the more mystical aspects of their work not only as a way of following a psychological discourse, but in order to allude to the historic lineage of the ideas in addition to the 'mystical' readings of the psychological aspects of the artists' work. In terms of the work of Freud this is approached through David Bakan and in terms of Jung by looking in particular at his gnostic and alchemical tracts.

Both artists make references to, or use terminology expounded by, Carl Jung and Sigmund Freud. Nitsch quotes Jung, makes references to Freud within the transcripts of his early abreaction plays and has spoken of the influence exerted on him by the works of Friedrich Nietzsche and Martin Heidegger. P-Orridge's vocabulary is heavily laced with Jungian terminology, but apart from this one substantially recognisable trait he tends to use a much wider palette of historic references, usually synthesising quotations and artistic ideas in order to make them his own. However, reference must be made here to P-Orridge's relationship with the artists William S Burroughs who he met in 1973 and Brion Gysin who he met in 1976 and with whom he worked and collaborated until his death.[6] Gysin in particular has exerted a great deal of influence over P-Orridge and has contributed to the development of the single most important artistic technique used by P-Orridge which is the cut-up.

I have used a number of philosophical models throughout the thesis which may or may not relate directly to the artists' work; however, these are offered as typical theoretical / existential problems which the work of the artists tends to confront. Through discussing how such 'models' are either surpassed or side-stepped by the

[6] P-Orridge co-curated a major Burroughs/Gysin Retrospective Arts Festival called **The Final Academy** which took place in October 1982 in London, and co-edited **Nothing Here Now But The Recordings**, an album of early recordings by Burroughs which was released on **Industrial Records** in 1980. P-Orridge recordered several hundred hours of interviews with both Burroughs and Gysin, some of these are included in **RE/Search W. S. Burroughs, Brion Gysin, Throbbing Gristle.**

artists it is perhaps possible to gain some kind of larger perspective on the work.

In terms of the work of Hermann Nitsch I have concentrated on the large scale Aktions, with the understanding that all of the Aktions are considered by the artist to be 'rehearsals' for the six day Aktion (a work not yet realised) and are therefore technically related and are part of one single project; that the Aktions combine painting action, musical composition, physical action and tactile elements and although Nitsch occasionally creates work using one element, he considers the Aktions of the O. M. Theatre to be the principle medium and main focus of his work. My views with regard to the work of Hermann Nitsch are supported by my own practical investigations, chiefly via my own reconstruction of the **1st Abreaction Play (shouts, noises, and the evisceration of the lamb) (1961).**

With regard to the work of Genesis P-Orridge, I have concentrated mainly on his most recent work (1980 - 1995). For the purposes of this thesis I have focused on his written archive which offers a very pure medium through which to observe the manner in which P-Orridge generates, edits, deploys, assembles and disassembles written ideas. I have chosen this period of work because it is my belief that P-Orridge is beginning to crystallise and uncover what is essentially the primary objective of all his work, past and present. Again, some of my views with regard to the work of Genesis P-Orridge are supported by my own practical involvement in it.

Generally speaking I have found both artists to be extremely eclectic with regard to their use of pre-existing philosophical and psychological theories. While seeming to take on board certain aspects of theory Nitsch and P-Orridge are selective and tend to make very personal interpretations of those aspects of theory which they are using. In a sense both artists use, as well as their own philosophical and psychological models, what might be viewed as 'pallets' of non-original theories and ideas. However, such elements are mixed and synthesised in order to create new interpretations and new veneers. Their work seems to cross a number of ideological boundaries - some of the threads of ideas and references are complex and difficult to follow and in terms of this thesis sometimes inappropriate, or lead into areas which are too complex to include successfully in this kind of document. Generally when it is impossible to speak

about an aspect of their work without referring to a vast corpus of material I have tried to limit my discourse to small references and have usually supplied substantial footnotes which might help to point the reader in the direction of additional texts for their own research, particularly in the areas of gnosticism and alchemy.

I have used aspects of the work of Baudrillard, Lyotard, Lefebvre and Lecercle as critical points of reference, particularly in relation to the developing discourse concerning the nature and characteristics of the other, which is a major psychological and philosophical thread running through the thesis.

Henri Lefebvre's book **The Production of Space** (Translated by Donald Nicholson-Smith, Blackwell 1974/1994) provides a theoretical and conceptual basis for the presentation of ideas pertaining to the different notions and functions of 'space' in Nitsch and P-Orridge's work.

I have used Baudrillard at key points throughout the thesis in order to cross-examine some of the issues which arise out of the debate concerning the work of Nitsch and P-Orridge. I was drawn to the writing of Baudrillard because in my view it seemed to have some similarities to the writing of P-Orridge in terms of the manner in which he tends to layer meaning, and thereby imply multiple readings, and in its slightly nihilistic tone. Baudrillard, who is currently one of France's leading intellectuals, has, to a large extent, expanded upon the philosophical discourses of Nietzsche regarding the fragmentation and devaluation of the symbolic under the pressure of rationalism. For me, Baudrillard possesses a tone of irony and anxiety similar to Nietzsche and, within the context of this thesis, his limited inclusion in the discourse seems justified in that he serves the purpose of bringing certain aspects of 19th century discourse into the present. As Mike Gane has suggested, there is a sense of the "limit of the Nietzschean in Baudrillard".[7]

[7] see **Baudrillard Live** edited by Mike Gane (a collection of interviews) Routledge, London & New York, 1993)

First Contact

In the following chapter I will present a selection of what I see as some of the key early biographic details relating to each of the artists and will use these in order to introduce and locate the origins of some of the basic concepts and ideas relating to their work. This chapter will also provide some background information concerning the artists' early interests and concerns and will introduce a number of the issues which will be developed over the course of the thesis.

The work of Hermann Nitsch is virtually unknown in England despite the fact that he is well represented in a number of galleries in Europe. Nitsch first visited England in 1966 as part of the **Destruction In Art Symposium** which included, among others, the work of Gustav Metzger, Ralph Ortiz, Ivor David, Wolf Vostell, Yoko Ono and Al Hansen. As part of the symposium, Nitsch gave a lecture at the African Institute in London on 10 September entitled **Abreaction and Criminality** and presented his **21st Aktion** at the St Brides Institute, London. Writing in the **International Times** (October 14 - 27 1966) Jay Landsman suggested that most of the artists, who had travelled to London at their own expense, felt that the symposium "should have been an historic occasion; instead it was riddled with bad planning and fear."[1] By fear, Landsman was perhaps referring to the very real risk of arrest and criminal charges being brought against artists taking part in the symposium. Nitsch and Otto Mulh had already served a 14 day prison sentence for breach of the indecency laws, immoral conduct, breach of the peace and distribution of anonymous printed matter by minors in the street without official authorisation, as a result of Nitsch's **3rd Aktion** at Perinetgasse 1 in Vienna. Nitsch was probably still serving a six month probation when he came to London in 1966, again for breach of the indecency laws, for a picture which included a blood stained sanitary napkin exhibited in the Dvorak Gallery in Lagergasse 2, Vienna in the same year. Although there is little documentation of this event, the more reliable sources suggest that the **21st Aktion** was probably one of the first large scale 'noise' experiments to use conventional instruments in association with 'found' instruments and 'scream' choirs or chorus. Gunter Brus tells us that:

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[1] Jay Landsman **International Times** October 14 - 17 1966 (copy in the Tate Gallery archive, London)

> In London, 1966, nannte man Nitsch den, "Bruckner des Happenings". Tatsächlich gelang es ihm, der totgesagten Grossen Symphonie so radikal ein neues Leban einzuhauchen, dass die gängigen, schnellfertigen Eintopfansichten über die "Geschichte der Musik bis zue Gegenwart" in nicht alluferner Zeit einer totalen Umkrempelung ausgesetzt werden. [sic] [2]

Brus suggests that the **21st Aktion** was a kind of posthumous ode to Anton Bruckner which seems to imply that Nitsch was acknowledging or affirming what he saw as his intellectual / artistic / spiritual link to the type of German romanticism which Donald Jay Grout has suggested was "infused with a kind of idealistic longing that might be called 'religious' in a vague pantheistic sense"[3]. This was mainly achieved through musical quotation and the setting of religious texts. However, according to Grout, Bruckner's symphonies may be genuinely understood as "the expression of a profoundly religious spirit, revealed not so much by quotation of religious themes from the Masses and the *Te Deum* as by the reviling serious, weighty mood of the symphonies as a whole; this is especially evident in the combination of mystic ecstasy and tonal splendour of the chorale-like themes that are the climaxes of his finales"[4] Brus suggests that what Nitsch was attempting to do was to take the basic premise of Bruckner's musical ideology and compositional ideas and reduce them to their barest properties of noise, structure and religious intention. Moreover, Nitsch was perhaps attempting to access what he felt was the essential profundity of Bruckner's work; the weighty mood, the moments of mystical ecstasy, the repetitive building up of massive orchestral forces.

> That Bruckner was an organist is evident from his orchestration. The various instruments or instrumental groups are brought in, opposed, and combined like the contrasting registers or manuals of an organ; moreover, the expansion of thematic material is often effected by piling up massive blocks of sound in a way strongly suggestive of an organist's improvisation.[5]

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[2] Gunter Brus, verfest 1969. in **Projekt Prinzendorf das o.m. theater von Hermann Nitsch, entwurfe, partituren, bedingungen der realisation** edited by Otto Breicha Graz/Wien. Anlab der Ausstellung, 1981. p 28

[3] Donald Jay Grout **A History of Western Music.** J.M. Dent & Sons, Ltd, London. 1960. p 544

[4] Ibid,. pp 591 - 592

[5] Ibid,. p 592

Although there are no recordings of the **21st Aktion** the affinity that Nitsch felt with the spirit of Bruckner's music is obvious. Nitsch gave his 9th organ concert **Orgelkonzert (Brucknerhaus)** in 1986 on the same organ that Bruckner played as an organist at the Cathedral in Linz.[6] Nitsch was not attempting to reproduce Bruckner's music but to identify with it and to investigate where the power of its spirituality lay. It is clear that Nitsch has not only drawn attention to the connection between his artistic work and that of Bruckner but has also demonstrated the extent of his own personal identification with the person Bruckner as a spiritual guru and artistic mentor.

Besides the musical element of the **21st Aktion,** documentation of the 1966 event suggests that Nitsch screened a film. It may well have been part of Stan Brakhage's film of a three hour Aktion which took place in Nitsch's studio in the previous year, in which he used Cibulka[7] as a model.[8] The **8th** and **9th Aktions** were the first works to be documented by photographer Ludwig Hoffenreich and film maker Kurt Kren. But Nitsch was not happy with the results, and remained resistant to this kind of documentation. The **12th Aktion** was documented in photographs by Cibulka's wife who according to Nitsch, was more successful in framing his Aktions in accordance with his flat and 'iconic' visual aspirations.

> He is primarily concerned with the avoidance of perspective, foreshortening and distortions to the greatest extent possible during the action. The photographs should be done at a right angle from above or from the front to perfect the pictorial character and hence the aesthetic.[9]

Landsman tells us that;

> The police wanted to make some kind of arrest at the Nitsch happening, but were having difficulty finding out just what crime had been committed. They finally zeroed in on a film that was

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[6] Hermann Nitsch **Orgelkonzert** dez 1986 Linz. Brucknerhaus (Brucknerorgel) 2 cassettes. signed limited editions 172/200, the present author's own archive.

[7] Heinz Cibulka , film maker and photographer, close friend of Nitsch. Cibulka appears as a model in a number of Nitsch's early Aktions, and is the main photographic documenter of Nitsch's work from the 1960s to the present day.

[8] Brakhage later used footage of this Aktion in his film **The Songs** (date unknown)

[9] from the Biography and Action Chronology for Hermann Nitsch (editor / author unknown) in **Wiener Aktionismus 1960 - 1971** (Volume 2) edited by Hubert Klocker, Vienna, in cooperation with Graphische Sammlung Albertina, Vienna and Museum Ludwig. 1989.

> shown during the performance, alleging it to be obscene. They demanded the film, but it had been safely smuggled out of the hall. Someone finally gave them a reel of film of a travelogue. The cops didn't notice that it was 16mm, and the machine 8mm. They were further frustrated in their attempts to find the person operating the machine. In the end they gave up, their authority completely destroyed.[10]

The Times newspaper later reported (December 10, 1966) that Gustav Metzger, co-organiser of the **Destruction in Art Symposium** with John Sharkey of the Institute of Contemporary Art (London), was given a summons to appear at Guildhall Justice Room on 11 January 1967 in connection with the alleged 'indecent exhibition' at St Brides Institute. After the **Destruction in Art Symposium** Nitsch's work was not seen in England until 1973, when photographs of a number of Aktions were included as part of **The Austrian Exhibition** at the Richard Demarco Gallery at the time of the Edinburgh Festival. This was the last substantial exhibition of Nitsch's work in England.

Genesis P-Orridge (Neil Megson) was born in Manchester in 1950 and attended public school in Solihull before going on to study Social Sciences at Hull University. While some of the circumstances of his childhood will be discussed in more detail later, P-Orridge has drawn attention to what he obviously sees as links between the circumstances, key figures, one or two important events of his youth, his present preoccupations and artistic interests.

> When I started doing public events and provocations and happenings in the '60s, I was already reading books by Crowley. And my grandmother was actually a medium. She used to have a good reputation for what was called ectoplasmic phenomena. When she was in a trance, people would claim to have seen almost corporeal manifestations of relatives or people they didn't know. From then on I had an interest in inexplicable phenomena.[11]

In my interviews with P-Orridge he explained a little bit more about how important his grandmother was for him in terms of how he saw himself as part

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[10] Jay Landsman **International Times** October 14 - 17 1966 (copy in the Tate Gallery archive, London)

[11] Genesis P-Orridge interview with Jay Kinney 'Music, magic & media mischief' in **Gnosis** (A journal of the Western Inner Traditions, Pop Culture & The Esoteric) Summer 1994 No 32. The Lumen Foundation. San Francisco, USA p 50

of a spiritual lineage.

> I'd grown up studying ouija boards and wine glasses. My Grandmother was a medium so she used to tell me about how people could see Ectoplasmic residue behind her when she was trancing. So there's a certain ..... interestingly it being matriarchal, when I later found out about it from Zev, about the origin of the name (Megson) it made sense that it was passed down through my family. But she became afraid of it and became a baptist, and then became a very orthodox baptist and it was only on very rare occasions that she would talk about what she used to do ... We ended up being really, really unfriendly towards each other ... maybe she saw something in me ... she would chase me around the room with scissors.[12]

What is evident from this extract from my interview with P-Orridge is that he clearly sees himself as part of an esoteric tradition which has been passed down to him through the matriarchal line. One can also detect a sense of disappointment which may have formed the beginnings of a deep sense of 'betrayal' which is a re-occurring theme in much of his later work and which in this instance is perhaps associated with his grandmother's abandonment of her activities as a medium. Although P-Orridge is never completely explicit about where certain of his more deep seated emotional traits originated, it does not take much effort to read between the lines. P-Orridge was perhaps seeking an 'original' spiritual experience which brought a certain kind of 'knowing' about the world and the self which he identified, rightly or wrongly, as being part of his lineage and his personal rite by virtue of its passage through the female bloodline of his family. This idea also introduces the dichotomy of genre and the importance of cultivating the feminine which I will discuss in more detail towards the end of this thesis. It was perhaps because P-Orridge only obtained stories from his grandmother, and not actual tuition, that he embarked upon long term research into spiritual phenomena. What he saw as his own feminine heritage was perhaps instrumental in fostering his interest in, if not a strong empathy with, the figure of Austin Osman Spare and Spare's relationship with his spiritual teacher Mrs Paterson.

> Mrs Paterson stares down. Pencilled into existence. It is her as she WAS when she took Austin Osman Spare at 14 years old and

[12] Genesis P-Orridge interview with the present author, summer 1994, California. USA

initiated him into the art of sexual magick and a power-full (sic) system of sorcery (a primal oral tradition preserved through female bloodlines) that she had rediscovered and regenerated through her covert communication across T.I.M.E with systems and techniques that grew from a most animalistic and pure union of instinct and inherited DNA encryptions.... She was a medium, but her guides were not the "New Age" romantic, and patronising ikons of native peoples and tribes. Not just Indian Chiefs, Pharaohs, Tibetan Rinpoches or aborigines ... They were the deepest, most atavistic and raw representations of the alien that we can experience. Equivalent, if you will, to a seriously hard-core DMT entity confrontation. Mrs Paterson understood a most particular secret. Her medium was her SELF.[13]

While Nitsch synthesised and condensed music to a 'bare noise intensity' inspired by the religious ambitions of Bruckner's music, P-Orridge began to investigate and then to synthesise what he saw as the basic dynamics and components of ritual. P-Orridge, like Nitsch, was not interested in reproducing either ancient ritual practices or the creative practices of other artists but in stripping away the surface 'decoration' in order to get to what they both saw as the fundamental elements and the basic "techniques which seemed to be utilised all over the planet".[14]

I also began doing a lot more reading and thinking and sifting, going back and recalling a lot of these events. And it seemed that certain techniques were utilised all over the planet. Maybe if the technique itself was looked at minus names and incantations - or if the incantations were just a series of sounds and the words were unimportant - maybe I should just try and strip it down and see what was really there. What were the key dynamics that made these things happen, minus all the trappings?

It was a refining of the very simplest elements. One thing was the orgasm, and another was various bodily fluids and certain times and astrological conjunctions and the repetition of certain types of deep or high sounds.[15]

In terms of the application of a reductive method and intention there are obvious

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[13] Genesis P-Orridge 'Virtual Mirrors in Solid T.I.M.E. - Thee prophetic portals ov Austin Osman Spare' in **Rouge** (Rogue) Magazine, Frankfurt Germany, March 1995

[14] Genesis P-Orridge interview with Jay Kinney 'Music, magic & media mischief' in **Gnosis** (A journal of the Western Inner Traditions) [Pop Culture & The Esoteric] Summer 1994 No 32. The Lumen Foundation. San Francisco, USA p 50

[15] Ibid,.p 50 - 51

similarities between Nitsch's desire to condense musical and fine art elements to a basic vocabulary of noise, colour, texture, dynamic and velocity and P-Orridge's concern for the recovery of what he sees as the key dynamics of ritual happenings. However, while Nitsch focuses on a metaphorical transcription of a kind of litany, and sees himself as belonging to a priesthood with an artistic practice, P-Orridge was perhaps seeking a more individual synthesis. Nitsch states that, "professing to practice art is the priesthood of a new understanding of being", and proposes that art is "transformed in the sense of its innermost mission" to become "the centre of all glorification of life, a meditation,"[16] a prayer, a synthetic liturgy. Such a liturgy is not directed towards a specific icon but is specifically concerned with life as an expression of the ultimate velocity of existence. Given that this is so, his aim has been to create what he calls a "practical philosophy" which is concerned with encapsulating what he sees as the essential intensity of life. Nitsch states:

> Life is more than duty: it is bliss, excess, waste to the point of orgy. Everything that exists should be celebrated. Art as propaganda for life, for how it enhances it - that to BE is a ceremony, that in this word IS lies all the preconditions for celebration. The whole ascetic philosophy will be turned on its head; life will be a celebration. All metaphysics begin with the affirmation of life, which is what admits the possibility of broader-based knowledge.[17]

For Nitsch IS becomes an existential mantra, a word which unlocks the doors of experience. IS motivates actions. The notion of IS transcends words and speech, communicating directly with the senses, the instincts and the unconscious. Unlike "... therefore I am" - IS has no definitive beginning and end. TO BE is to exist within a stream of consciousness intimately connected with the movement of the cosmos. Intensive contemplation of this word transcends the intellectual; it moves the mind beyond the symbol to the very heart of being. IS becomes a cathartic motif in Nitsch's work which places the self in acute proximity to the rest of the universe. IS is the primacy of the uniqueness of the moment of experience.

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[16] Hermann Nitsch **The Orgies and Mysteries Theatre (1962) manifesto** reproduced in the Saville Art Expo catalogue 1992.

[17] Hermann Nitsch **das orgien mysterien theater 1960 - 1983** exhibition catalogue, Het Stedelijk Van Abbemuseum Eindhoven 1983. pp 44 - 45

Through the writings of Friedrich Nietzsche Nitsch became acquainted with what Nietzsche saw as the principles of ancient Greek mythology and, in particular, with the psychological basis of the Dionysian myth which explores the nature of the animalist and instinctive side of the human psyche. Nitsch found in Greek Tragedy a dramatic form or 'machine' which he believed was capable of processing symbolism into the type of cathartic experience which might trigger momentary sensations of what Heidegger had theoretically described as Dasein.

Turning to Greek Tragedy and Freudian psychology Nitsch discovered in the character of Oedipus a template that might serve as a model for experiential realisation. Seeking both a dramatic and a psychological frame he saw in this character the disposition and potential of every man - the regal control of the Apolline character and the excessive animalistic traits of the Dionysian. Within the story of the myth of Oedipus Nitsch found a scenario of empirical proportions. Here was an intelligent man who, despite his insecurities and despite his psychological, moral, physical, emotional 'fall' into darkness, is resurrected through a personal act of will. Oedipus returns from crisis and psychological death, illuminated and made holy by his experience. Nitsch tells us that for him the moment when "King Oedipus stands on the stage, all blood and he knows he has slept with his mother and he has killed his father and he is blind" is "one of the most important scenes in all theatre."[18] At this moment the whole of his being is polarised and intensified.

While Nitsch sought to develop a "practical philosophy" which hinged on the notion of realisation through experience, P-Orridge was seeking a kind of "actualisation" which initially centred on accessing states of altered perception, and exploring the many 'faces' of the collective self, through and within the basic dynamics and accumulative effect of ritual. The basic initial intentions of the work of both artists seem at first glance to be so close that the words life (Nitsch) and self (P-Orridge) are almost interchangeable. It is perhaps almost possible to say that Nitsch's use of the bare framework of Greek tragedy is equal to P-Orridge's use of a ritual framework. The similarities do seem pronounced but the individual accent, particularly in the early explorations, though subtle, is

[18] Hermann Nitsch **M.A.R.Z** Marz Verlag, Darmstadt. 1969 (Limited edition - only existing copy at Prinzendorf) paragraph 123

decisively different.

It was perhaps P-Orridge's early contact with The Exploding Galaxy, coupled with his interest in occult phenomenology, which sent him along a path which would eventually lead to his centering the primary focus of his work on the notion of the SELF.

P-Orridge came to London in 1969 having dropped out of university. In London he joined the Transmedia Exploration (formally known as The Exploding Galaxy), a performance art group he had already met in Hull the previous year. At the time Exploding Galaxy included, among others, Derek Jarman, David Medalla, John Dugger, Hermine Demoriane and Edward Pope.

> In that period 1968 - 1969, what was left of the Exploding Galaxy came up to Hull University where they'd been booked to do a happening, and when they arrived they asked around the University, and it turned out it was two of my friends, one was John Craveen who later started Boy, and the other one Brian (something) who asked them up. They asked around the university for anybody to help, because they were depleted, and everyone said you should ask Genesis, because he'd be into this, so they approached me and asked if I would help them with this happening, and I said sure! I'd already decided to drop out of University anyway. And I did help them with it, and they said, if you're ever in London come and visit us at this commune in Islington, and later on that summer, I wanted to see Pink Floyd with the Aswad coordinator at the Albert Hall so I hitchhiked down. The Stones were playing at Hyde Park, and René Magritte had a big retrospective at the Tate (Gallery), and it was all the same weekend, and it was a great weekend. I went down the Kings Road to Granny Takes A Trip... and at the end of the week I crashed at the Exploding Galaxy's place at Islington Park Street, and stayed. And that was really intense Exploding Galaxy, really intense.[19]

Contact with The Exploding Galaxy had a massive impact on P-Orridge and, in my view, helped to shape much of his present-day thinking and creative impetus. P-Orridge suggests that this was the point when all the threads - his interests, his reading, writing and performance ideas were pulled together into some kind of solid and meaningful form. The creative rules by which the

[19] Genesis P-Orridge interview with the present author, summer 1994, California USA

collective lived were rigorous and sometimes harsh.

> ... the idea was that you had no identity, so you weren't male or female - this is where, as I said the threads begin here, there concretised of some of the threads really pull together here. Because ..... right ..... the walls were just knocked out so that the toilet and the bathroom were completely exposed, so that anyone who wanted to go to the toilet or have a bath were doing it in public, there was nothing hidden.... and we were not allowed to sleep in the same place two nights running - there were no beds, you had a sleeping bag, and you had to find a new way, and a new place to sleep almost every night, you could never repeat yourself. In the morning when you got up, there was a big box in the centre and that's where all the interesting clothes were, and it was as first come first serve, and if it was female clothes then you were female that day.... Any money was in one box too and, in order to access the money, you had to explain to everybody else, why you wanted it and what you wanted it for, and they would interrogate you, and say, well that doesn't suit everyone, that's not for everyone's benefit, you can't have the money, and so ..... and you rarely got money - basically it was almost impossible to get money. So then you had to find other ways to do things. And the same with meals ... when it was a meal time the idea was, nothing was a meal that you would find in a recipe book, you had to come up with something people hadn't eaten before or a variation of, or a way of presenting it that was different. You couldn't do anything that had been done before, you couldn't write the same way that people wrote before, which is how that strange way of writing evolved..... that was kinetic writing, everything should be Kinetic, and everything should be three or four deep, nothing should be flat or two dimensional.[20]

P-Orridge describes the effects of living within such a tight strategy as:

> everything you used to make yourself and everything you said was your own way of saying it. You owned nothing, including identity. You didn't exist, you were merely this strange energy which passed through everything and never repeated itself and didn't own or posses even a place to sleep. It was really rigorous.....[21]

Above all the period with Exploding Galaxy seems to have been a seminal experience in self-discovery and self-criticism. Not only did the rules require that one questioned why it was necessary to behave in such and such a manner, they

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[20] Genesis P-Orridge interview with the present author. summer 1994, California USA

[21] Ibid,.

also forced the individual to confront his own prejudices and exact tolerance. P-Orridge suggests that the intensity of the lifestyle also pushed the individual toward a creative solution to the problems of existing within the regime. Survival boiled down to how effective, convincing and economical one could be, and to the strength of one's justifications. In the loss of the material trappings of the singular identity - what one previously considered as the given self - the group found the means and a workable methods of short-circuiting the notion of received identity and received patterns of behaviour. They managed to access a more fluid and flexible notion of the possibilities of multiple and transitory identities. This meant that self-reliance was founded on something more than the notion of a surface identity.

> I think I'm still living off the energy I got, because it just left you completely and utterly self-reliant with no concerns about identity .....[22]

P-Orridge's time with The Exploding Galaxy, although brief, set the trend for the type of performance explorations that he immediately began to develop within the context of Coum Transmissions.

For Nitsch self-discovery came in the form of what he has later described as an experience on a par with spiritual ecstasy or intoxication which he first encountered within the landscapes of Prinzendorf.

Nitsch tells us that as a child he went with his mother to the small village of Prinzendorf to visit an aunt. These excursions were always at Whitsuntide and Nitsch recalls one particular visit when he was about seventeen or eighteen.

> I felt suddenly intoxicated by life, nearer to the heart of the cosmos and its creation. I felt that the Garden of Eden truly existed around and inside me. The power that moved galaxies let me gaze on in ecstasy, pulsed in my mind. I stood glowing in the centre of the world, lost in the ecstasy that comes with mystical self-discovery. I empathised joyfully with all the movement that exemplified creation and of which at that moment I was a consummate expression.[23]

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[22] Genesis P-Orridge interview with the present author. summer 1994, California USA

[23] Hermann Nitsch **Das orgien mysterien theater 1960 - 1983** exhibition catalogue, Het Stedelijk Van Abbemuseum Eindhoven 1983. p 44

Here Nitsch describes in graphic detail the nature of his early sensations of self-awareness. The theme of personification plays a significant part in this experience. Here he sees himself at the centre of creation. Such statements perhaps give an example of a moment of psychologising.

Perhaps it was an urge to make sense of his early sensations of intoxication and to find a mythic lineage which framed the overwhelming feeling of empathy with nature's creative power that led Nitsch to draw upon the psycho-mythic character of Dionysus, the puer of the instincts, of orgy and of excess.

It is clear from Nitsch's writings that for him Prinzendorf was a place of youthful licentiousness, drunkenness, ecstasy and the organic. When he eventually moved there in 1971 it was not only a shift from the city to the metaphorical 'no man's land' of the border territory of Austria, but a shift from the Baroque atmosphere of Empire in Vienna to a "mystical sense of belonging to the earth". It was a move towards a natural physicality of simplicity and labour. A shift from the plastic to the organic, from what he saw as inauthentic to the authentic, which in the beginning was probably an 'instinctive' movement. In a sense it was a shift from the world of the fascistic adult to the pagan world of the archetype, a metaphor for the shift of accent from the conscious to the subconscious. This is echoed in Nitsch's lithographs which seem to indicate a concern for the organic, the vegetative and rural and for the deep levels of the human psyche. The early architectural drawings imitated vegetative organic forms; an attempt perhaps to emphasise man's biological dependence and psychological 'closeness' to the earth. Nitsch explains:

> The Uterus-like darkness of the subterranean passageways and rooms and, above all, the sheltered vegetative life in the lightless womb, exercise á very strong attraction on myself. In the underworld, in the grave, in the earth, the sleep of death takes place. The analytical descent into the unconscious vegetative zone, which my happenings aspire to, have their actual equivalent in spatial and architectural reality. ...Each respective form of happening required a space with a distinct character and, inversely, different rooms and passages demanded certain happenings.[24]

[24] Hermann Nitsch **Die Architektur Des Orgien Mysterien Theaters** Band 1. Verlag Fred Jahn, exhibition catalogue. Munchen. 1987. p 25

Moving into the castle at Prinzendorf Nitsch began to draw up elaborate plans for an underground theatre in which to house the works of his O. M. Theatre (Fig. 1). While the underground theatre complex at Prinzendorf was never physically realised, its symbolic representation within Nitsch's work is ever present. By 1971, the architectural drawings had taken on human forms, the rooms and passages resembling internal organs and intestinal tracts. Intensifying the theme of 'personification' these plans are of a theatre inside the body, a place where the human psyche is dissected. The darkness of being inside is accordingly representational of the journey into the unconscious and the primal instincts which, according to Nitsch's philosophy, are formed in blood and mesentery and intestines.

The metaphorical basis of Nitsch's architectural lithograms which map the interior of the human psyche, are comparable to a similar surgical project undertaken by Throbbing Gristle in 1981. It is the last studio recording of Throbbing Gristle called **Journey Through A Body**[25] and includes the titled tracks; Medicine, Catholic Sex, Exotic Functions, Violencia (The Bullet)' and Oltre la Morte, Birth and Death. Nitsch's drawings are attempts to visualise what he sees as the biographic and psychological star-charts which map the cosmos of man, which he depicts as a journey through the architectural blue-prints of a psychological process, so that the rooms, spaces and corridors within the designs contain psychological phenomena. Throbbing Gristle's notional journey through the body is a violent dissection, a surgical penetration of the body, which begins with the sounds of an operating theatre and is made sinister by the sympathetic voice of a nurse administering the anaesthetic. It is a journey through a terrorised,

[25] Throbbing Gristle CD issued originally in 1981/ 1993 copyright Southern Music, available through The Grey Areas of Mute Records, 429 Harrow Road, London W10 4RE.

(Fig. 1)

Plan of the O.M. Theatre. 1st Storey, under the earth

Hermann Nitsch

1984 - 1989

terrorist body, which is distinctly contemporary. It contains samples from recordings of actual violent attacks on people and the sounds of gun shots and screaming make some parts of the CD unbearable to listen to.

Nitsch places within the centre of his lithograph designs some symbol which can be interpreted as a kind of holy grail - or esoteric altar piece. Sometimes it is presented as a cross. Sometimes the centre is overlain with the head or body of man, suggesting that the body of man is not only the basis of the philosophical architectural design but that the essence or the ideal of what man IS is the basis of that design; in other words it is a visual representation of the hermeneutic circle of the knowing and the known in design. At the centre of **Journey Through A Body** is a nihilistic and apocalyptic image of a contemporary corpse infected by a terrorist malaise. There is no holy grail at the centre of this body. The sound design is a nihilistic parable of a body gripped by the violent reflex of control, a victim of the perpetual motion of its violent history. The album is dedicated to the

> Vatican Gun Club and all 9 mm automatic users everywhere. Perhaps a trigger to the fourth secret of Fatima (Pope as Anti-Christ) it is to the memory of victims of terrorists everywhere. During the conference on tactics memories serve as slaves.[26]

In contrast the psycho-architectural designs of Nitsch's lithographs represent a psychological process which leads to a spiritual goal, a realisation through the actual confrontation with the experience of Being. Obviously there is a contrast here between Nitsch's optimistic take on the body, and that presented in **Journey Through A Body.**

Nitsch's early experiences of "intoxication" within the landscapes which surround Prinzendorf are, however, strikingly similar to some of P-Orridge's childhood recollections. In my interviews with P-Orridge one of the recurring themes which he associates with his childhood is concerned with creating and retreating into spaces and bunkers, going underground, descending into and existing in the dark.

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[26] Throbbing Gristle CD issued originally in 1981/ 1993 copyright Southern Music, available through The Grey Areas of Mute Records, 429 Harrow Road, London W10 4RE. CD Sleeve.

> .... So I'd be at home and I'd go into my dream world, as people do when they are sickly. One of the things I liked to do was build dens. I'd have really complex ones, dig underground bunkers and cover them with stone and corrugated iron from building sites and grow all the grass back over them..... and have a secret way in. I'd have candles and supplies in there. Quite often I'd just lie there in complete darkness .....[27]

Remembering these childhood experiences he suggests that in the proximity of body and earth there was no distinction between life and death. He states that this is the point at which "bodies, and manifestations and thoughts are irrelevant"[28]. It is the point at which all becomes indistinct. Nitsch's sensations of "intoxication" as an expansion into the massive volume of the cosmos, are similar to P-Orridge's experience of absorption into the earth. Both share the notion of expansion and absorption proceeding toward becoming indistinct. In the case of P-Orridge one senses that some kind of reduction is being implied which, if taken to its extreme may lead to a loss of identity or a departure. Such experiences are in keeping with those commonly associated with marginals such as shamans, medicine-men, mystics etc. Within the context of myth and ritual practice such behaviour typifies the journey of the adept into the marginal world of chaos and contrary values.

The creation of dens perhaps brought P-Orridge closer to a sense of affinity with the earth in his childhood. Earth, in this instance, may have been a marginal material for P-Orridge in the same way that Versnel identifies milk, honey, libations and ashes as materials which denote the marginal in ancient cultures. It is, perhaps, also true to say that, for P-Orridge, personalised, isolated spaces have also become contained areas for marginal experiences. Like the dens of his youth the constructed spaces of his adult life, specifically the performance environments which he first began to explore through his work in Coum Transmissions (which later matured into the formal ritual environments of T.O.P.Y.), expanded and focused what was an instinctive youthful urge into a powerful framework for self initiation. Such activities within the nursery (the name given to the T.O.P.Y ritual space) included explorations of sensations of near death, the exercising of strong desires (of the will) through the development of magical practices, the exploration of personal sexuality / sensuality and the practice of deep

[27] Genesis P-Orridge interview with the present author, summer 1994, California. USA

[28] Genesis P-Orridge interview **Gnosis** Magazine No 32, Summer 1994. San Francisco, p 53

introspection on a par with techniques of archaic ecstasy, activities which were almost certainly initiated in his youth.

The use of natural / organic materials, and the notion of the creation of sacred spaces through the rearrangement of objects, is to a certain extent common to the work of both Nitsch and P-Orridge. For Nitsch it was a case of actually moving into the space which for him encapsulated both an ideal natural aesthetic and his own personal experiences of a kind of cosmic spirituality. P-Orridge on the other hand has always engaged in the creation of ritual spaces through the customisation of existing spaces both internal and external. This includes the addition and arrangement of objects which may or may not be common to the space in accordance with the particular ritual intention. Many of the early performance explorations of Coum Transmissions focused on this kind of ritual space construction.

> so we'd have lots of little arrows and lines and dotted lines and squares and little boxes and so on. That was when it got more minimal. We'd work with a smaller and smaller number of objects. The arrows as you can tell kept getting used and one side was orange and one side was blue and they could be there as positive or they could have corn sprinkled over them so they leave their shadow. So, bit by bit, everything became more and more painterly, more and more to do with ..... drawing or a graphic image that was changing as it went...
>
> I think they (the performance) became more and more to do with line and shape and space and how long things took; we did things slower and slower and slower, so that you could often ..... people would suddenly notice that one of us was three feet further across the space, but they hadn't seen the specific movement across. And we were very much into moving our arms and our legs and fingers more and more carefully, so that everything was somehow pointed out like a finger would point and if you were watching carefully you would see that it was actually finding the line of the dots and the chains would hang in certain ways that made all these angels. So we were building this..... this web of line, in space.
>
> It was funny too, when we got to Kathmandu and we went to the big monkey temple, I was watching this family do a ritual, which it turned out was to cure a child of smallpox... it was exactly like one of these performances, they had lots of little tinny dishes, and tinny little things, and liquids, paint, blood and all this other stuff, and

they were moving them all around really carefully, into shapes and patterns, and lines, and moving really slowly and chanting, a bell would ring every so often..... it was just the same! .....

We were doing this whole ritual which has endless reverberations and lineage, we were doing that with our own extemporaneous objects, which was what we intended. I got more and more into the whole thing of the lines being more like a drawing, and also these connections with other points, of not really existing except in a lattice of lines, of meaning and light. .....

..... lines of force

..... milk and urine

For some reason the idea of building lots of interesting and unexpected angles and lines became more and more obsessive. It seemed to have a significance of its own, when I felt I was discovering.
..... It was like dowsing really, like ley-lines.[29]

Such performances were not rehearsed, but would instead be governed by a loose framework of ideas.

Usually we would set ourselves a task of a place we would start and a place we would end up, conjoined, and then there would be the Pandrogynous idea of male and female and black and white, the shadow and the positive.[30]

The performances were spontaneous and sensual. Concentration and an attention to line, graphic detail and the energies and objects within the space generated an internal tensile dynamic which from the outside must have seemed enclosed and almost trance-like.

As well as the kind of site-specific performances described by P-Orridge above, Coum Transmissions also gave more theatrical large scale events. Presentations such as the **Infantile Art Launching Ceremony** (1973) which took place outside the Ferens Art Gallery in Hull, shows in its use of characters such as Hat Rack Elle, the Alien Brain (Mr and Mrs) and Mrs Askwith and its subtle social /political commentary, the influence of P-Orridge's experiences with The

[29] Genesis P-Orridge interview with the present author, summer 1994, California. USA

[30] Ibid,.

Exploding Galaxy. However, what is distinctly characteristic of Coum Transmissions in this work is the sense of ritual which points to a deeper 'initiatory' intention. In this account of the **Infantile Art Launching Ceremony** it is possible to identify a number of ritual / marginal elements in the use of libations and diving substances, in this case milk, as well as in the use of evocation through repetitive sequences of words and gesture of a significant number of times, in this case three.[31] In the following quotation, I have highlighted those aspects of the account which seem to illustrate the ritualised nature of this particular performance.

> We arrived dead on time at Ferens and parked the pram at one side of the steps leading to the entrance, next to a large stone vase for plants, filled with soil. Immediately people began to gather. We set out the milk and beakers on the steps and began the **Ceremony**. All the way through Foxtrot and Gene were both filming and taking slides of the Historic occasion for the record, and eventually, perhaps, to go in a Thames & Hudson special iNfanTiLe Art edition. Passersby and people leaving the Gallery were invited to drink a toast to **Infantile Art and wish it success by drinking Fresh Milk. Obviously the most appropriate baby liqueur. ... The time the initial ceremony lasted depended on how long the milk held out.** Each person getting an amount equivalent to sherry, and sipping, it lasted a fair time. As the toasting got under way Foxtrot gave various childish demonstrations and lectures about nothing in particular. It being somewhat like the various preliminary talks given when launching a ship, about endeavour, technology etc. He also did

[31] three has a universal magickal significance in its association with the idea of the Trinity. In the context of the work of P-Orridge at this time the three assumes a personal significance - Three is an invocation of the self (Genesis P-Orridge).

> I was living in Yorkshire, and already doing the beginning of COUM Transmissions performance art and experimental street theatre. There was three of us who were close friends: Cosey and I and the Very Reverend Lelli Maul. He was a burglar .... Eventually ... he was caught by the police and sentenced to prison.
>
> When he was out on bail, all three of us decided to get a small tattoo so that when he was in prison ... we would all have what we called our *telephone* , and every time each of us looked at this mark we would think of the others... we'd become numbers too, and make those numbers powerful so we'd negate the magic they were putting on him by turning it around...
>
> And so each of us designed a tattoo based on what we felt was our favourite or lucky number. **I chose 3**; Lelli had one which was a complex drawing of 16 - it was 2 4's made into a grid (4x4=16). And Cosey's was a small 4 that looked like a camping chair. (Genesis P-Orridge. Interview by Andrea Juno and V. Vale, San Francisco for **RE/Search Modern Primitives** (An Investigation of Contemporary Adornment & Ritual). San Francisco. 1989. pp 165-166)

small dances and unfurled his flag. The Infantile Placard was impaled firmly in the soil in the stone tub.

After the milk ran out, the serious business of (the) launching ceremony got under way. **The Baby started a magickal invocation and dance.** This consisted of traversing each flight of steps leading to the Gallery, in a jerky slow sidestep, whilst **swinging the rubber crocodile on a string, and ringing the alter bell regularly.** Each ledge of the steps was traversed four times, **the whole flight sequence was repeated three times...** Foxtrot continued to make the speeches, and also made a few passes with the crocodile across the steps. Then Foxtrot began string activities around the Wagon Train, involving a few hardy passersby in explanations of short lengths of string and their uses. **The Baby did a final invocation,** jerking the crocodile as if it was alive, in a mime struggle with it, gradually ending in its sleeping near the door of Ferens. It was tamed, and now it was hung around the Baby's neck on string as the final stage set in.

A piece of string was strung across the doors of Ferens, like the ribbon at the start of a new motorway. Foxtrot stood behind it with a flag for the final official opening. He gave a brief launching speech, claps from everyone, and a lady leaving Ferens was handed the scissors and asked to cut the string and smile at the camera. This she did, and the moment is recorded forever on a slightly underexposed colour slide. At the next moment a 7 banger salute took place in the stone tub, bangers going off in sequence to celebrate the launch. **Milk was spilled.** And this moment too is recorded beautifully on a slide of a banger in mid explosion behind the Infantile Launch placard.

Finally, the pram was disentangled from the string and wheeled into Ferens to be an entry for the Winter Exhibition, **duly baptised and launched. Symbol of a new age.** Infantile Art had arrived. Global Infantilism is upon the world.

All the beakers & bottles & string were collected and carefully put into a rubbish bin, the placard & the two infantilists went home.[32]

In the **Infantile Art Launching Ceremony** the artist assumes the role of priests, offering communion to by-passers, thus implicating them in the baptismal intention of the piece - the baptism of the infantile, meaning - infant, child, self,

[32] **Infantile Art Launching Ceremony** by COUM 19/1/73. Ferens Art Gallery, Hull. Personnel: Infant - Genesis P-Orridge, MC - Foxtrot Echo. Hand typed account written by Genesis & Foxtrot at the time of the event, from the personal archive of Genesis P-Orridge. (unpublished)

individual.[33]

In keeping with the general praxis of ritual processes the infantile is evoked through the use of objects associated with infancy, so milk is obviously the most appropriate baby liqueur drunk out of beakers. One is also aware of the mythical overtones attached to milk, ie milk and honey, and the notion of ambrosia, which again attracts a kind of divinity to the character of the child.

Toys and the use of a pram also assume more than a decorative, domestic, or set dressing significance within the ritual. The swinging of a rubber crocodile on a string while ringing an altar bell has the effect of exchanging domestic connotation for religious ones. So the toy becomes a religious prop. The fact that the infant then becomes entangled with the crocodile, and then tames the crocodile at the end of the piece, makes inferences towards a deeper psychological/ esoteric message or intention represented through the ritual enactment of taming. The child becomes master of his own toys. Perhaps this short sequence tells of the child who overcomes the beast, manipulates the material world and takes control of his own environment. The infantile exerts its supremacy over the adult world. All of these readings are perhaps valid.

Explicit within this piece of performance art is the notion of the infantile as divine and the idea of the child assuming its natural role as priest. In psychological terms this points to the divine status of the original within the complex community of identities which form the adult Self.

The archetypal characteristics of the child in **Infantile Art Launching Ceremony** foreshadow P-Orridge's deeper explorations of the self through its archetypes, and his investigations into personality types, through the evocation of their creative traits, which have become the feature of his current work.

It is evident from interviews I conducted with both Nitsch and P-Orridge that they share a sense of dissatisfaction with their formal education. Nitsch left the Experimental Graphics School in Vienna in 1958 having, according to himself,

[33] For an in depth analysis of the notion of the child in relation to P-Orridge's work see chapter five, and 'Play and the emergence of The Irrational Third' contained in the copy of **Rogue** magazine in the appendix.

spent most of his time copying old masters, mainly those with religious themes, and drawing from life. It is clear that for Nitsch the techniques taught to him in the art school were useful but they did not provide a robust enough vehicle through which to express his concepts and ideas which were in essence existential. Nitsch was seeking an authentic physicality; a creative gesture which was as powerful and spontaneous as child birth.

> I just received a letter from Vienna, from my girlfriend, and she writes that she just saw a birth, and that this new experience helped her to understand my work better - because my work helped her to understand the birth. The birth to her, now, blood and everything, looked beautiful, very beautiful. There was pain, we shouldn't forget it, but there was also beauty. Many of my theatre actions are like births. And a birth is like a crucifixion and resurrection together. There is blood, and meat, and pain, and then comes the newly born child, and he cries, and he begins to live. That's why I work only with the senses of great intensity.[34]

Here Nitsch associates the sight, sound, smell, pain and symbolic significance of childbirth with his own work. In childbirth he is struck by the colour, the sound and the intensity of emotion and labour. The combination of all of these things gives the scene a kind of beauty which is derived from the sight of nature, raw and infinite yet meaningful while remaining beyond verbal interpretation.

In the late 1950s he began to explore the idea of throwing, splattering and pouring paint onto large canvases. These painting Aktions were given in public places, the gestures of the artist - the act of painting - the physicality of the act, in other words the real expression of life became the art. The audiences experienced the doing and the process of doing art became the main event. What remained, after the doing was an interesting by-product, or a relic of the event, but for Nitsch the relic is not art in itself . The principles of the O. M. Theatre developed out of this extreme desire to match the actions of the artist to the immediacy of life lived to its fullest intensity.

As an expression of life, paint as a life material quickly became inadequate. The next step was then to use blood and, with blood, the smells and textures of flesh.

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[34] Hermann Nitsch **M.A.R.Z** 1969, Marz Verlag, Darmstadt. (Limited edition only existing copy at Prinzendorf) paragraph 19 (statement from 1968)

A further inclusion of fluids and organic substances added to the sensual experience of the painting Aktion.

By the early 1960s Nitsch had already formulated his theory of Aktion painting describing it as a synaesthesic'experience on a par with an orgiastic feast. The dynamics of the painting Aktion were then expanded to include actors and musicians in an attempt to model a total art work or Gesamtkunstwerk and the large-scale form of the O. M. Theatre which was to be the vehicle for the presentation of the 'practical philosophy'. In 1961 Nitsch presented his **1st Abreaction Play (shouts, noises and the evisceration of the Lamb).**[35] The first Abreaction Play primarily aimed at:

> Establishing synaesthesic relations between;
>
> perception of touch,
> perception of taste
> perception of smell,
> perception of acoustic and visual registrations
>
> shall inspire our senses orgiastically, The accelerating activation of all senses can be compared to psychoanalysis. Instead of associating, actions are instituted which heighten the perception of the senses until the endpoint of orgiastic "abreaction"[36]

Nitsch describes abreaction as an action hypothetically located between contact with the subconscious in the form of automatic gestures, shouts and emotional flood, and a venting of the instinctive and animalistic urges.

Nitsch suggests that what results is "a descending into subconscious regions", into moments of uncontrolled excess. In the above 1968 treatise, Nitsch suggests that there may exist a correlation between abreaction and what he imagines to have been the benefits of catharsis. He suggests that, for him, catharsis means the point at which fragments of the subconscious become partly conscious. It is the action whereby the essence of the human spirit, its life becomes visible. By introducing materials such as paint, eggs, blood, noise making instruments, entrails into the

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[35] see the appendix at the end of the thesis for documentation of the present author's reconstruction of this work.

[36] Hermann Nitsch **M.A.R.Z** 1969, Marz Verlag, Darmstadt. (Limited edition - only existing copy at Prinzendorf) paragraph 52 - 54

same environment as the participants in his Aktions he provides the tools through which the actors' automatic subconscious gestures can have audible and graphic velocity.

Some of Nitsch's early experiments were concerned with finding a new vocal language to connect with "the very core of life" and to "cast off every last vestige of repression", including the spoken and written word which, for Nitsch, signified a limitation and was both a symptom and a tool of repression. Writing in the text of the **1st Abreaction Play (shouts, noises and the evisceration of the lamb)** Nitsch sets out his ideas concerning the primacy of the shout:

> The shout is a more immediate expression of the subconscious, of the sphere of human urges, than the word is. The need to shout normally comes about when the 'ES'[37] asserts its right, overcomes an intellectual control and allows the elemental drive to break through into life. The shock of torment, the sudden break-in of extreme enjoyment, in fact all those situations which result in a diminution of consciousness, cause the shock to break out. The shouts produced by direct ecstasies in the abreaction play should render audible the deeper psychic possibilities open to us. It is a matter of freeing subconscious regions of our psyche by means of excitement and shouting which are the concrete images of these stimuli. What is aimed at here is a deliberate regression into earlier states of the human psyche. The ego of early man was even more firmly related to the animal / vegetable elements of the subconscious (and therefore also to the mystic/religious elements).[38]

It is clear that Nitsch, even as early as 1961, was concerned with fleeing from the constrains of the intellect with respect to his Aktions and the methods he was attempting to employ; however, he was aware that this should not be achieved at the expense of individual consciousness. Instead of developing a constantly repetitive, meditative, trance inducing soundscape Nitsch introduces silences and orchestral interruptions into more rhythmic sequences, perhaps in order to hold the action on the brink of consciousness, but never allowing it to slip over the edge. Again, within the written account of the **1st Abreaction Play (shouts, noises and the evisceration of the lamb)**, Nitsch insists the "retrogression into the

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[37] essence. ES as the prefix of language

[38] Hermann Nitsch **M.A.R.Z** 1969, Marz Verlag, Darmstadt. (Limited edition only existing copy at Prinzendorf) part of the written account of the 1st Abreaction Play

ecstasy of the shout is a communication with the subconscious" which should be a "conscious analytical submersion into the subconscious" through which "one gives oneself up to the intoxication of vegetative, often hectically dynamic laws". And while "one flees from the 'constraint' of the intellect" such an experience of renunication should not flee the constraint of the senses. In order to create this kind of critical balance between the conscious and the subconscious Nitsch, following closely Nietzsche's descriptions and theories concerning the principles of Apollo and Dionysus in **The Birth of Tragedy,** found an aesthetic and a performance metaphor in terms of an event structure and content. In Nitsch's synthesis Apollo becomes the metaphor for the conscious and logical aspect of the work. It is the existing form or structure of the piece which can be scored and it is a set of rules which, for instance, governs duration, velocity and the way materials are positioned within the performance space. Dionysus is viewed as the subconscious element within the work, that which can not be scored but which happens instinctively. So in Nitsch's work we see how the characteristics of the Dionysian character are contained within Apollonian structures. This is, in effect, the essence of what Nietzsche saw as an ideal aestheticism, with the vehicle of form and structure harnessing the awe and terror of the spirit of the Dionysiac Dithyramb. It is the artistic meeting place of form and chaos, the model of which is nature itself.

In terms of the work of P-Orridge, the notion of nature is less straight forward, and more problematic. For P-Orridge the idea of nature has developed into a practical ritualising which focuses on the extended principles of space and time as separate entities and art as an actual mirror (not to be confused with the old art historic metaphor) and as a medium which can be likened to an instrument of projection and prediction. In his essay **Virtual Mirrors in Solid T.I.M.E Thee prophetic portals ov Austin Osman Spare**[39], P-Orridge quotes Spare and in so doing, aligns himself with Spare's philosophies concerning the properties of art as a medium in which to invest the energies of the self. For Spare the notion of reality was intimately tied to the imagination.

[39] reproduced in 'Rouge' and issue of **Rogue** Magazine, March 1996. Frankfurt, Germany, to accompany the Transmediator tour. The essay was original composed in 1995. See the appendix of this thesis for a full copy of the magazine.

Embrace reality by imagination (AOS)[40]

This is a statement which also implies that it is possible for the imagination to conjure reality and that art which is a product of the imagination IS a reality for the artist. This is a notion which would seem highly delusional were it not for the fact that it is a directed imagination which is being advocated by Spare; an artistic gesture which finds its own velocity in the depths of the psyche and is therefore nothing other than the purest and fullest expression of self. In terms of this type of exploration space functions as a canvas or a room, on or in which the creative reflex takes place. Time is taken as a notional not an actual element within the exploration, in the same way that memory (the evidence of linear time) collides with the imaginal to create quasi-biographical fictions, as personal memories are mixed with archetypal traits and the will directs the creative gesture towards the manufacturing of an other. What remains is the art work which is a relic of the expressive exploration, a mirror which reflects another image of a projected self. Interpreting, evaluating and exploring the relics of the creative event is in itself a powerful form of self analysis.

It is perhaps true to say that in terms of the work of both artists, the relic is perhaps a window through which it is possible to glimpse other possible realities , other ways of Being, and other forms of language and communication. The relic which can be said to represent the evidence of a creative process is, perhaps, also the evidence of a journey into the unknown territories of alternative perspectives. From the point of view of an observer, the relic may function as both a signpost to a place where the work actually IS and a thing in itself, a symbol of something experienced.

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[40] Genesis P-Orridge 'Virtual Mirrors in Solid T.I.M.E. - Thee prophetic portals ov Austin Osman Spare' in **Rouge** (Rogue) Magazine, Frankfurt Germany, March 1995

Chapter 4
Beyond a Sensation of Well-Being

4.1 Catharsis?

In the following chapter I will discuss the notion of catharsis primarily in relation to the work of Hermann Nitsch. I will suggest that the Aristotelian interpretation of catharsis can not be applied to his work. I will define what Nitsch means when he uses the term catharsis and I will suggest that its effects may not be considered as therapeutic in the normal psychoanalytical sense of the terms.

The first part of this essay is primarily concerned with the work of Hermann Nitsch since it is in the writings of Nitsch that we most often come across the term catharsis.

While it is not the intention of this thesis to make a survey of the historic and contemporary discourse concerning the interpretation of the word catharsis I will attempt to draw upon material and arguments which are of most relevance in terms of this study.

Firstly the term catharsis is derived from Aristotle's **Poetics**, a thesis on aesthetics in which Aristotle puts forward the following notion:

> Tragedy is, then, an imitation of a noble and complete action, having the proper magnitude; it employs language that has been artistically enhanced by each of the kinds of linguistic adornment, applied separately in the various part of the play; it is presented in dramatic, not narrative form, and achieves, through the representation of pitiable and fearful incidents, the Catharsis of such pitiable and fearful incidents.[1]

A number of scholars have attempted to define what Aristotle meant by the term catharsis; some have suggested that it is a medical metaphor and, on the basis of

[1] Aristotle **Poetics** (A Translation and Commentary for Students of Literature) L. Golden & D. B. Hardison (1968), quoted by K. G. Srivastava 'A New Look at the Katharsis Clause of Aristotle's Poetics' in **British Journal of Aesthetics** Vol 12. No 3 Summer 1972. p 266

this argument, have posited that catharsis is a mechanism of purgation. Others have argued that catharsis is a moral or religious metaphor, and on this basis have suggested that it is a means of purification. Here K. G. Srivastava, surveying both historical and recent interpretations of Aristotle's notion of catharsis, draws a comparison between these two definitions;

> ...'purgation' implies a concept of mental health that tragedy seeks to bring about by first arousing and then somehow removing the two morbid emotions of pity and fear within their entirety or in part. The 'purification' theory, on the other hand, seeks to bring home to us the fact that the emotions of pity and fear are not bad in themselves but they do need a moral conditioning. Thus this interpretation involves the idea of moral instruction and moral learning.[2]

Both definitions seem to imply that there is some kind of transformation involved in the cathartic experience. Most interpretations of the meaning and the mechanism of catharsis have suggested that it produces a sense of well-being or pleasure through the purging of negative emotions. This is the hypothesis used by a number of clinicians in physiological studies of the effects of catharsis.[3] Most scholars have assumed that this transformation is primarily centred around the responses of individuals to the presentation of tragic material in the forms of dramatic action. Hume puts forward the hypothesis that emotional conversion lies at the heart of cathartic transformation, suggesting that;

> ... this extraordinary effect proceeds from that very eloquence with which the melancholy scene is represented ... By this means, the

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[2] K. G. Srivastava 'A New Look at the "Katharsis' Clause of Aristotle's Poetics' in **British Journal of Aesthetics** Vol 12. No 3 Summer 1972. p 259

[3] See Penelope J. Davis 'Physiological and Subjective Effects of Catharsis: A case Report' in **Cognition and Emotions** (Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Limited) 1988, Volume 2 part 1. pp 19 - 28

The notion that catharsis has beneficial effects is a pervasive one extending back into antiquity. The word itself derives from the Greek *Katharsis* meaning "to clean and purify", and a belief in the positive effects of arousing, and then purging, negative emotions can be traced back to Aristotle.

Davis, derives this interpretation from M P Nichols & M Zax **Catharsis in Psychotherapy** (New York. Gender Press) 1977, and quotes their definition;

> ... catharsis is a widely used but vaguely defined term (that) is generally understood to mean a process that relieves tension and anxiety by expressing emotions - emotions that have been hidden, restrained, or unconscious. (p 1)

> uneasiness of the melancholy passion is not only overpowered and effaced by something stronger of an opposite kind, but the whole impulse of passion is converted into pleasure, and swells the delight which the eloquence raises in us.[4]

In his essay Dissolving the Paradox of Tragedy Mark Parker states that, "when experienced aesthetically, tragic occurrences are divorced from their usual practical grounds and consequences, thereby freeing the viewer from concern for action and responsibility."[5] Here we might read first that concerns for physicality and responsibility are annexed by aesthetic structures and by implication suggest that aesthetic structures may serve to confine and provide a licensing space, where the 'deepening'[6] of emotions can occur freely and without consequence. Second, that within the aesthetic structures of theatre, the viewer is freed from the normal constraints that tragic actions would engender in the real world. If this is so, then it is perhaps true to say that everyday tragic experiences, and the experiences which occur as part of the aesthetic structure of a tragic play, are dissimilar in terms of degree, concern and consequence, although they may on the surface appeal to the same range of emotions. If his hypothesis is correct, then it is debatable whether the term catharsis, or claims for a Aristotelian cathartic effect, can be transferred to other genres outside the aesthetics of theatre and consequently whether it is at all possible to speak of any kind of psychological benefit derived from catharsis outside the realms of the theatrical experience. On the basis of this argument any psychological, therapeutic, or spiritual effect which catharsis might have within the realms of theatre must be considered as separate from the notions of the psychological, therapeutic and spiritual cognition of everyday life.

The work of Genesis P-Orridge and Hermann Nitsch does, however, blur the boundaries between the everyday and the theatrical, between reality and representation, by either moving performance, events, incidents and happenings out into the everyday world, or by creating a deliberately ambiguous domestic / theatrical place in which incidents in the form of unrehearsed activities happen.

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[4] David Hume, 'Of Tragedy' in **Essays: Moral, Political and Literary** Oxford University Press, 1963, p 224

[5] Mark Packer 'Dissolving the Paradox of Tragedy' in **The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism** Vol 47. No 3. Summer 1989 p 214

[6] see the final significance of the notion of deepening in Chapter 10 of this thesis **The Action of the Knife**

Consequently by doing so, both artists have merged the aesthetics of the two worlds.. The implications of this are complex and very important to this thesis in general, but I will temporarily suspend this line of discourse coming back to it within the context of the conclusions of this chapter.

4.1.2 Need

In his early manifesto Nitsch talks about the need for catharsis[7] and the notion that for him theatre fulfils a collective need for catharsis.[8] In his manifesto **Theatre and Catharsis** Nitsch offers a definition of theatre suggesting that "its core, its deepest urge, its goal is to break through to the goal of Catharsis, the primal excess."[9] However, Nitsch employs a very individual interpretation of catharsis, and clearly suggests that there is a link between the excess of Dionysian revelry and the higher dramatic forms of tragedy associated with the works of Sophocles. Indeed, Nitsch's thoughts move fluidly between the notions of Dionysian chaos and the art of tragedy and expand into the realms of psychology by calling for the freeing of repressed emotions and desires through the effect of catharsis and by assigning some significance to the notion of the unconscious in this process. In this way Nitsch expands his notion and interpretation of catharsis beyond the theatrical and beyond its Aristotelian designation. Nitsch locates his form of catharsis somewhere on the border of psychology, existentialism and religion.

> The dramatic effect is an attempt to break down the constructs of art or, better still, to outwit them. The more 'important' drives, those for intellectual and moral control, are put to one side to allow an unimpeded view into the chaos of the naked unconscious. Every passion is, for a short time, stimulated, freed to its extreme fulfilments - ecstasy, delight in the macabre, sadomasochism, excess. In the myth, Dionysus encouraged the excess, entered the chaos, sacrificed himself to the excess and was torn apart. Tragedy is the basis of excess; Dionysian, the chaos of the unconscious dragged out

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[7] Hermann Nitsch 'Theatre and Catharsis' in **Hermann Nitsch, das orgien mysterien theater 1960 - 1983** exhibition catalogue. Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven, 1983. p 55

[8] Ibid,.

[9] Ibid,.

into the open, is structured and made partly conscious.[10]

Nitsch's interpretation of the meaning of catharsis is, like all of his work, a synthesis which services the needs of his personal philosophy. Like his visual work the words that he uses to talk about his work are invocations and sometimes overloaded with symbolic meaning and histrionics. Statements, such as the one given above, are in themselves theatrical and even evangelical. Nitsch does not attempt to define catharsis in terms of how it is specifically used, for instance, in the works of Sophocles; he merely presents his own arguments with little historic or academic justification. It is clear that Nitsch has discovered a mechanism used in Greek tragedy, and the ancient spirituality from which the tragic form was derived, but that his own interest in philosophy and psychology has led him into areas which exceed the normal theatrical frame. His readings of Nietzsche, Heidegger and Schopenhauer have suggested an existential goal and purpose for his theatre. The use of the term catharsis may, in this respect, be merely a fragment from those aspects of Greek tragedy which have attracted his attention, but which are subsequently harnessed for the service of his own artistic purpose.

In recent years the accent of his statements has changed somewhat, and in my conversations with Nitsch he has preferred to use the words 'intensity' and 'excess', rather than catharsis, perhaps recoiling slightly from the latter's purely theatrical / Aristotelian connotations. He uses the word 'intensity' in the following manner - here I paraphrase; From the beginning the theatre fulfilled the collective need for intensity. Drama brings out the basic need for intensive experience. Feeling life intensely is at the core of theatre.[11]

Rather than advocating a complete transformation from one thing into another, which the earlier statement perhaps implies, Nitsch has changed his terminology slightly in order to suggest that such transformations involve a process of deepening which is much more in keeping with his own metaphorical language

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[10] Hermann Nitsch 'Theatre and Catharsis' in **Hermann Nitsch, das orgien mysterien theater 1960 - 1983** exhibition catalogue. Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven, 1983. p 55

[11] this is a paraphrase of a statement made by Nitsch during one of my conversations with him. It is paraphrased because at this point in our conversation Nitsch was tired and having some problems find the right words in English, consequently his actual statement was delivered partly in German and partly in English, which is why I have not given a direct qutation here.

of going inside or underground. This slight change in wording is perhaps an indication of the way in which his ideas have developed through their practical application in his Aktions. We can detect how from 1961 to 1984 the structure of the Aktions tightened while textual forces at work inside the Aktions have strengthened. As a consequence of this process moments of excess are given prominence in the earlier manifesto but are confined to increasingly tighter structural boundaries. Within these small confines chorus members and passive actors alike seem to be given little opportunity to demonstrate excessive behaviour, or to vocalise. Instead the structures appear to suppress excess. This seems contradictory in the light of what was advocated in the early manifesto. I would suggest that, with the tightening of structures, the increase of textual and tactile sensations and the expansion of the scale of visual and audible pictures the chorus and passive actors are forced into real postures of survival. They are presented as small elements within enormous structures. The structure serves to intensify the will to find an emotional escape valve, a point of liberation from suppression and restriction. By imposing a restrictive structure on the participants Nitsch gives few opportunities for self indulgence, excess and abandonment. He creates a regime which mirrors the emotional / spiritual struggle imposed on humanity by nature and life itself. This structure is intensified by its sensual and tactile elements so that the need to go on becomes more than a performance strategy rather a state of Being within the performance. The will of the actors is honed within this tragic moment.

> Let's say the tragic moment, this is the moment when we use all our powers to pick up our life, and then it is not possible,..... and nature says we have to die, and nature says we will do it again, we will do it again.[12]

If Nitsch was purely interested in producing an Aristotelian cathartic effect then he would provide, within the structure of his work, some kind of resolution in accordance with Aristotle's notion of pleasure. This is a point at which the viewer is offered a sense of cadence in the satisfaction that pity and fear have been purged. But for Nitsch the tragic moment is without resolution. It is continuously confronted but never overcome. The structure dictates, in accordance with how Nitsch views nature and life, that the human being is

[12] Hermann Nitsch interview with the present author 6 April 1994, Prinzendorf, Austria. NB the words were spoken in broken English.

confronted time and time again with the tragic moment. The actor, like humanity, falls back on his will to go on. Nitsch implies that it is in this region of the will, amid deep rooted instincts, that we confront the seat of our primal drives. Here humanity finds, views and touches the essence of its will-to-life, its will-to-power - a base note which, according to Nitsch, is excessive and fundamentally sadomasochistic. It is only through the will that man recovers himself from the tragic moment.

Within the structures of his Aktions Nitsch provides an excessively intense experience for the participants; however, this may not apply to members of the audience who are not exposed to structural forces in quite the same way as the actors. In the 1961 Aktion **1st Abreaction Play (shouts, noises, and the evisceration of the lamb)** the audience is seated within the formal setting of an auditorium. Most of the action takes place in front of them on the stage although there are sequences when the company process around the auditorium and moments when the audience is handed various props to smell and handle. In the **1st Abreaction Play** one can sense the desire that the author had to involve the audience; however, the problem of how to submerge the audience in the physical structure, beyond a superficial recognition of basic patterns such as repetition, had not been formulated in this first Aktion. By the **80th Aktion** (1984) Nitsch was employing up to four simultaneous activities presented in courtyard settings in the open air, inside adjoining farm buildings, in the gardens and surrounding vineyards around Prinzendorf. In the **80th Aktion** there is no fixed or designated position for the audience instead, the action takes place among them. What is at once evident from the video footage of the **80th Aktion**, is the dominance of the rolling structures which are fixed in time and duration. The structure of the Aktion, the dynamic / dramatic form of the work, is the engine which drives the sensations and responses of anyone who exists within it, including the audience.

Nitsch's Aktions are very much worlds in themselves that have a specific language and dynamic and demand a specific mode of being inside them. Nitsch sees his own life as inseparable from his Aktions and from his art in general. The structures or forms that he uses in his work are structures which he claims to have found in nature. He lives within the 'feast'[13] of forms, within a cosmic

[13] for the final significance of the notion of the 'feast' see Chapter 8 of this thesis, Section 8.3 **The Feast**

structure. This is his monotheistic testimony revealed in the following extract from an interview I conducted with Nitsch in 1994 interview - here he is speaking in very broken English:

> HN ... there is a very important word that I am always using that is FORM. Form is a specific thing of art. Let's say it is a language which is only able to talk art. ... Shakespeare sonnets - that's form, because there is a different message - abstraction, that's much more than a normal message, that for me form, a specific aesthetic problem of art - but in this aesthetic ... there is joy also, I would say that form is something to do with the essence of life.
>
> JAW ... at the moment you are writing a philosophical treatise - a large work, about the nature of Being..... are you now looking for an aesthetic of life, an aesthetic for living which is both art and life?
>
> HN..... Yes, that was the beginning of my urge to art - it is very difficult to realise it, but my life becomes better, it is much more intensive, and intensity is also life, more,... I want to show that my life is deeply aesthetic. I want to speak from the feast of life .... our life shall be a feast, and a feast without form and without aesthetic without arts is not possible. When you live in a feast you live also in art.[14]

Similarities can be drawn between the significant part that structure plays in the instigation of the experience of catharsis as set down by Aristotle[15] and the dominance of structure or form in Nitsch's Aktions. But, while Aristotle implies that structure can bring about catharsis, in Nitsch's case structure or form does not serve the same purpose. Nitsch is more interested in seeking something which expands the classical notions of catharsis and is perhaps more focused on the exercising of personal will than he is in providing a mechanism for the sole

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[14] Hermann Nitsch interview with the present author 6 April 1994, Prinzendorf, Austria.

[15] Aristotle **Poetics** Trans House 1956 pp 104 - 111;

'But most important of all is the structure of the incidents' VI:9
'Hence the incidents and the plot are the end of a tragedy; and the end is the chief thing of all' VI:11
'The plot, then, is the first principle, and, as it were, the soul of a tragedy.' VI:14
'It clearly follows that the poet or 'maker' should be the maker of plots rather than of verses' IX:9
'A further proof is, that novices in the art attain to the finish of diction and precision of portraiture before they can construct the plot.' V:16
"It is correct to speak of a tragedy as different from or similar to another one on the basis of its plots more than anything else.' XVIII:3

purpose of purging and/or purifying the emotions which may result in a feeling of calm and satisfaction. Intensity seems to be the key word in this dialogue, coupled with the idea of a language of intensity, contained within a structure or form designed according to the complex dynamics of intensity. Perhaps understanding the nature of this language of intensity is the key to an understanding of the work of Hermann Nitsch.

4.1.3 Closing Remarks

Nitsch has sought to develop a language which is predominantly structural, in which there exists a grammar of intensities and an intention to hone the will of the actor and to bring him face to face with the primal drives of his existence. In order that this is not merely representational Nitsch has actively implicated real responses through the use of activity rather than acting in his work, and by setting his work outside a conventional theatre building in the everyday setting of his domestic farm building in Prinzendorf.

The structure or form imposed upon activities, and the images they generate, allows them to resonate within isolation or in controlled conjunction with other activities and images. The isolated resonance of activities and images sets off a stream of significations for both actors and audience which intensifies their personal experience of the work. Structure permits intensity. For Nitsch the dramatic structures of theatre have the effect of intensifying those incidents of life which are captured within them. What this means is not the re-enactment of incidents which have previously occured but the focusing of actual moments of intensity experienced by the participants for the first time within the structure of the work. Nitsch has found a specific means of allowing real life into his dramatic structures, by negating those theatrical structures / conventions and preconditioned approaches which allow and encourage pretence. In my reconstruction of the **1st Abreaction Play (shouts, noises and the evisceration of the lamb)** of 1961 the importance of the structure, including that of durations of time, in fascilitating real intensity was particularly evident. The effects of the structure on both the participants and the audience was especially profound.

In the early abreaction plays sound is articulated as merely noise produced on

musical instruments as well as found objects. Nitsch asked that the actors contribute to the sound texture either in defined periods of choric singing (usually the vowel sound Ah) or via sections of defined screaming / shouting. The actors have to move between an Ah which must be controlled in terms of duration and velocity and the free shouting or screaming sequences of abreaction.

Although there are moments within the **1st Abreaction Play (shouts, noises and the evisceration of the lamb)** when the participants are required to use their skills as actors, notably within the burlesque sequences, in general a vast majority of the play requires that they do not act. Indeed, I would suggest that participants should not be actors in the conventional notion of the term, nor should they act if by acting this means to pretend. Nitsch demands that participants in these Aktions should desire to express more than pretence, just as he believes that life should not be lived under false pretences and that one should not be satisfied with weak feelings and dull sensations. These points were discussed at great length with the actors participating in the reconstruction and through such discussions the actors formed a safe arena, based on mutual consent, in which to expose themselves both physically and emotionally. The distance between the performed and the real widened during each rehearsal. The contrasts between the long episodes of abreaction, which called for extreme emotional release, and shorter sequences of the burlesque the absurd display of the actors' skills of mimicry and characterisation ie pretence, became more and more shocking for both the participants and the audience; Nitsch pitches a very transparent type of comedy against real intensity, which catapult the participants into very different extreme psychological states. The plasticity of the actor's trade is displayed alongside individual crisis. The actor's mask is placed next to the flesh and blood face distorted by emotion. In the juxtaposition of pretence and reality Nitsch both demonstrates the power of a theatre which is a liturgy of real life and destroys the authenticity of theatre as a re-visiting of life.

The score of the **1st Abreaction Play (shouts, noises and the evisceration of the lamb)** provides a framework into which passages of real action can be injected. The strict assignment of time (measured in seconds and minutes) acts as a mechanism of control. It also provides a broad rhythmic structure. The time structures propel the participants from controlled choral moments into highly

charged emotional states which are invariably accompanied by massive tides of sound produced by the orchestra. The velocity of the more extreme passages is highly confrontational; not only in terms of the severity of the images , emotions and extreme physicality, but because the volume being produced by the orchestra comes very close to the point at which sound is painful. In addition, the audience is confronted by a group of people who are not acting but are engaging with the material on a very real and personal level. How this is being indicated to the audience is very complex but I believe that it is communicated through an atmosphere of sincerity which generates the kind of familiar resonances described by Freud. The combination of extreme physical and emotional demands, largely generated by the massive rhythmic swings from one emotional frame to another, forces the performers towards the intuitive. This is the type of intuition generated at moments of crisis; at such moments the body responds with postures of survival. In a very real sense the bodies of the actors begin to speak in the language of crisis and survival with an intuitive body language which has a certain familiar resonance. The face is transformed by archetypal moments of anguish, terror and personal torment: the body retreats into postures of submission, resistance, and sometimes complete annihilation.

Most of the actors taking part in the **1st Abreaction Play (shouts, noises and the evisceration of the lamb)** speak about their deep feelings of responsibility for the audience which can only have been generated by a genuine and immediate emotional response. A number of the actors felt that the audience responses pushed them increasingly towards a crisis of responsibility.

> ... Seeing her (a member of the audience) in tears, reminded me that ... our performances could no longer be selfish (without consequence) and that I did have some responsibility towards the audience - to look out for them, as I was wholly aware that the cast were certainly looking out for each other.[16]

Most of the cast were unprepared for the effect that the play had on themselves and the audience. After the performance members of both the audience and the cast testify to the deep sensation of having experienced something intense and collectively, this was often articulated as a sharing of things which were intimate and deeply personal. This, I would suggest, is an uncommon feeling for

[16] a statement from actor X - the reconstruction of the **1st Abreaction Play (shouts, noises and the evisceration of the lamb)** 1995.

contemporary theatre; however, it was clear that the structure and some of the designated interaction scored in the **1st Abreaction Play (shouts, noises and the evisceration of the lamb)** caused the traditional role of the audience as observers in the dark to be altered.

Within the first twenty minutes of the play it was clear that audience members were being ousted from their relatively safe position as designated observers. This caused dissent among a number of members of the audience and discussions turned into loud comments. Audience members heckled each other and, as items of costume, pieces of meat, objects with texture and smell were passed around the auditorium, embarrassed or jovial conversation broke through. The actors walked among the audience and at first there was an obvious, visible dilemma in the audience's physical reaction to these situations. They were presented with flesh and blood people doing rather than acting. Later they were confronted with real emotions. The wall between the audience did not so much crumble as shatter within the first ten minutes of the play. In the final sequences the shouts and screams of the audience drowned out those of the actors.

> The wall between audience and players was broken down by the intensity of emotion on the stage. I felt drawn into the action.[17]

There seemed to be no escape for the audience; they were either drawn in by the action or repelled by it. Because of the extreme emotional swings there was barely any time for individual audience members to rationalise what they were experiencing. In the same way there was no impetus or moments within the opening structure of the first forty-five minutes of the play which might help or encourage a unified audience response. The performance structure had in effect divided audience response and exposed the nature of each person's dilemma.

> They (the audience) were certainly taking an active part rather than remaining passive and I felt at times I was able to take a breather and watch the audience and what they were up to, it was like barriers coming down and an acceptance of what was going on ...[18]

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[17] a statement from Y a member of the audience - the reconstruction of the **1st Abreaction Play (shouts, noises and the evisceration of the lamb)** 1995.

[18] a statement from actor Z - the reconstruction of the **1st Abreaction Play (shouts, noises and the evisceration of the lamb)** 1995.

At some point midway through the play the actors and the audience felt a kind of transformation take place. The audience, although still extremely active in terms of their response, began to enjoy their individual connection with the play. By enjoy I mean that they seemed to gain some kind of strong emotional connection with the work which was not necessarily joyous but achieved a personal resonance of some intense velocity. The audience, now familiar with the basic structure of soloist and chorus response, joined in the singing of some of the choral passages, many of them entering into the physical spirit of the play by standing, moving and throwing objects and wine around in the auditorium. From the point of view of the actors it was interesting to see how, over the space of two hours, what seemed to be a frigid academic audience had transformed into a wild rabble of shouting and laughing, demonstratively cynical, or emotionally moved and crying individuals.

All of the actors testify to feeling extremely cleansed by the experience. A number of them have stated that the experience has changed their lives. All of the actors seem to have gained some deeper knowledge and understanding of themselves. What is interesting is the clear indication of the existence of a two-way bond between the actors and the audience, and the audience and the actors. This is a bond which is articulated in the testimonies provided by the actors and the audience as feelings of 'responsibility', based on intimacy and sincerity.

> ..... After the performance I felt good within myself and exhausted; an achievement of endurance shared with fellow actors on an intimate level, but also shown and shared with a larger audience, who felt more than just 'bums-on-seats'.....[19]
>
> I felt opened up by the actions of the actors and felt very strongly that they were doing me a favour. I felt that they were shouting down all the partitions and walls that limit us, they seemed to remind me and urge me on not to succumb to small emotions.[20]

The dynamic plot is virtually the same in all of Nitsch's large scale Aktions; it is a repetitive tale/cycle of death and resurrection without resolution. Within the visual / dramatic form of Nitsch's Aktions death is isolated, repetitious and

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[19] a statement from actor W - the reconstruction of the **1st Abreaction Play (shouts, noises and the evisceration of the lamb)** 1995.

[20] a statement from X a member of the audience - the reconstruction of the **1st Abreaction Play (shouts, noises and the evisceration of the lamb)** 1995.

intensified. Nitsch separates all the elemental components of death, as he see it, like colours which radiate from a drop of black ink on blotting paper. Death becomes a set of gestures, colours and images; the sleight of hand performed by a skilled butcher, the splash of red on white, the image of the carcass crucified. Life is isolated in movement; the hesitant arm of a chorus member who holds a jug filled with blood up to the eviscerated carcass, the exhausted limbs limp and covered in crushed grapes; the physicality of emotions as they strike through the body, and the hungry consumption of food and wine. However, these gestures are transferable, interchangeable within the structure and form of the Aktion; as in a dream their meaning becomes abstracted and isolated from 'certainty'[21] as each gesture is deepened and intensified through repetition. The form of the Aktion sets up relationships, collisions of opposites. The exuberant spilling and splattering of blood is no longer an image in service of death but an expression of life; a deeply erotic intestinal will-to-life. The crucified body is an open wound, the embodiment of woundedness[22] , it is the body of humanity, the life of 'everyman', it is the life of the wound. Woundedness is the basis of the plot, the condition of humanity caught in the cycle of death and resurrection.[23] The initial exhilaration displayed by a group of actors, who begin the task of crushing several tons of grapes in a vat with their feet, subsides as their exhaustion begins to show and the scene is tinged with desperation. The bodies, now covered with the ugly mash of grapes, are beside themselves with exhaustion; they cling to the rope above the vat as if it were a lifeline. The potential is there to drown in the liquid mash. Individuals become indistinct; all the bodies are covered equally in grape mash, their physical actions producing a scene of intoxication which threatens to destroy them. Only the specific duration of this activity can bring about this swing in the way we view the scene. Duration has the effect of changing our perceptions. Duration has the effect of draining energy, draining life, from a labouring repetitive task.

Nitsch's work speaks of this life and death struggle but it does so without the inclusion of pretence. Nitsch presents an intense organic and sensual experience

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[21] reference to Lyotard's theory of Libidinal Economy through the use of the term 'certainty.'

[22] for the final significance of the notion of woundedness see Chapter 10 of this thesis **The Action of the Knife.**

[23] for a cross reference of this theme in relation to the creative process / life of the artists see Chapter 7 of this thesis **Optimistic Nihilism**

of life and death. Often this experience is strangely ironic and exhilarating.

As a spectator the strongest and most disturbing element of the work is the experiencing of one's own swings of perception as one gets caught up in the roller coaster effect of the structure. On reflection, what is transmitted most immediately is a sensation of both exhilaration to the point of intoxication and a strange revulsion which is not directed towards the work but at one's own naked will-to-intensity which the work tends to evoke. Such an experience is beyond a rather pragmatic notion of catharsis; it is not that the work is presenting something for which one can find some kind of empathy, but that it is facilitating a need to experience intensity. One can not over estimate the power of this will-to-intensity it can be, as Nitsch states on a number of occasions, truly masochistic in that the will is there to find intensity's base common denominator in annihilation.

4.2 Beyond a Sensation of well-being (Intensity in the realm of unease at the limits of consciousness)

Having established that a conventional notion of catharsis can not be applied to the work of Nitsch, perhaps the clue to an understanding of the basis of this work can be derived from an investigation into the notion of a language of intensity.

In my opinion, Nitsch's insistency on an intensive living and an intensity of experience within the aesthetic life / art form stems from his striving towards an empirical experience of Being or Dasein. Nitsch has identified intensity as the sensual material of Dasein and is therefore perhaps concerned with how the experience of intensity can be channelled into the perceivable forms of his O. M. Theatre.

Nitsch has articulated, in his conversations with me, his recognition of the link between intensity and the energy of what he has termed a will-to-life, which I will refer to as libidinal energy. The work of Genesis P-Orridge is also concerned with experiencing the nature of Being which P-Orridge, like Nitsch, insists "may

be experienced whilst trapped, mortal, and confused, here in this desert that was once a theatre of all possibilities"[24]; in other words within the corporeality of the body and the material world.

Taking as my starting point the idea of intensity coupled with P-Orridge's notion of a theatre of all possibilities, I will discuss the implications of a language of intensity in terms of energy. This chapter will also begin to address the problematic area of how energy at the existential level of Being can be registered as an act of creativity. In order to expand and cross examine these notions I will draw upon the hypothesises of the libidinal economy and of representation as theatricality put forward by Jean-Francois Lyotard.

Lyotard suggests that libidinal energy is lessened by conceptuality and associates the principles of conceptuality with his idea of theatre. Lyotard describes theatre as a series of representational scenes. Lyotard's theatre of conceptuality maintains its own "exclusions, its identity-principle, its law of the excluded middle: 'either this, or that. Not both. The bar of disjunction."[25] Here Lyotard describes theatre as a system of representation with a prescribed binary form of value; positive or negative, good or evil. This is a notion of theatre which is black and white and disjunctive in the sense that it presents only two opposing value principles. Lyotard uses the concept of theatre as "a representational chamber" and an "enigmatic set-up" or a space where the theatricality of representation can be observed. It is the space in which the indescribable other can be represented. But it is not the Other which is the subject of Lyotard's hypothesis:

> The representational chamber is an energetic set-up. Describe it and follow its functioning, that's something to do. No need to perform the *critique* of metaphysics (or of political economy, which is the same thing) since critique assumes and endlessly recreates this very theatricality; rather *be inside and forget it*, that's the position of the death-drive.[26]

Here Lyotard suggests that the position of being inside is a location of involvement. This is a view which is in some sense anti-theoretical. In a

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[24] Genesis P-Orridge **Thee Fractured Garden** (author's manuscript) 2nd Draft, October 1992.

[25] Jean-Francois Lyotard **Economie Libidinale** Paris: Minuit, 1974 p 23

[26] Jean-Francois Lyotard in **Lyotard Writing the Event** Geoffrey Bennington. Manchester University Press. 1988 p 28

similar vein Nitsch talks about the arrogance of philosophy which attempts to explain the unexplainable, insisting that there must be a new kind of philosophy; a philosophy which does not presume to know. Those who presume to know are labelled by Genesis P-Orridge as the "dark masses" preoccupied with "their fearful progression to the desert of dark skies."[27] The vision of the philosopher is a "night-mare, a castrated black stallion"[28] which tramples the prophet under its hooves. P-Orridge argues that language causes us to "drown in a flood of speculation and false communication,"[29] to drown in the endless recreations of representation. In his essay Beyond Representation Lyotard argues that the notion of understanding will in the future no longer consist of attempting to define, name, or articulate that which is fundamentally unnameable.

> Understanding will no longer be a matter of establishing an ultimate libidinal content (be it even a lack, the effect of an empty signifier) but rather of identifying, in all its ineffectual delicacy and complexity, the device by which the energy of drives is guided, blocked, freed, exhausted or stored up - in short, channelled into extreme intensities.[30]

According to this hypothesis understanding the nature of the content is gained by describing the energetic set-up and by following the functioning of the representational chamber.[31] Thus emphasis here lies not on the nature of

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[27] Genesis P-Orridge **Thee Fractured Garden'** (author's manuscript) 2nd Draft, October 1992.

[28] Ibid,.

[29] Ibid,.

[30] Jean-Francois Lyotard **The Lyotard Reader** edited by Andrew Benjamin, (Beyond Representation) Blackwell, Oxford UK & Cambridge USA, 1989. p 160

[31] Jean-Francois Lyotard in **Lyotard Writing the Event** Geoffrey Bennington. Manchester University Press. 1988 p 28

libidinal energy itself, but on how it is channelled into perceivable intensities [32] and how those intensities are represented within the chamber.

At this point it might be useful to introduce Bataille's suggestion that "the notion of intensity cannot be reduced (to a concept of, for example pleasure) because ... the quest for intensity leads us into the realm of unease and then to the limits of consciousness ..."[33] Bataille implies that notions such as pleasure are a lower-level sensation which are barred by an inner sense of security from the realm of unease which forms the geographical foreground to the space[34] of intensity. Bataille places this 'space' of intensity within the realm of unease and at the limits of consciousness. His assertion that intensity does not exist within the secure realm of ease but is located within insecurity and uncertainty makes Lyotard's hypothesis for a theory of understanding problematic. It is precisely because the notion of intensity is volatile, uncertain and insecure that it cannot be reduced to a predictable concept. It follows that extreme intensity can only be discussed in terms of its volition, its uncertainty and the complexity of its dynamic energy. Like libido extreme intensity can not be stabilised within a discourse. Thus a discourse concerning intensity necessitates the creation of a new form of language which perhaps relies on some kind of direct contact with the dynamics of uncertainty.

Lyotard uses the idea of theatre to highlight the representative nature of theories

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[32] On the surface this statement, with its emphasis on 'devices,' seems to have some common resonances with Aristotle's concern for plot and incidence - the devices which give rise to tragedy and catharsis. It is perhaps more than a coincidence that Lyotard's basic description of a two-dimensional theatre fits with Aristotle's suggestion that there are two principles at work in the cathartic moment of tragedy; those of pity and fear. Given the notion of an innate "either, or" value system at work in the notion of theatre, one can speculate that it is perhaps the conjoining of the two values - pity and fear - which gives rise to the sensation of catharsis. One might even go further to postulate that the joining of these two opposing value principles has the effect of liberating 'exclusions' by the 'identity-principle' becoming confused, and by the excluded middle: either this, or that, expanding to include other possibilities. Thus catharsis may well be the sensation of exposure to conflicting and confusing multiple possibilities. However, Aristotle asserts that the outcome of catharsis is Pleasure, which seems to undermine the argument for catharsis as a temporary loss of binary value, as the notion of pleasure itself falls into an antagonistic duality, (see Steven Connor **Theory and Cultural Value** chapter 3 'Value of Pleasure, Pleasure of Value.' Blackwell, oxford UK & Cambridge USA. 1992.) especially when implicated with function; taking Mark Park's example, with 'purgation' or 'purification,' (see page one of this essay) and in the way it becomes brutishly bourgeois and political when linked to 'recognition' and 'comprehension.'

[33] George Bataille **Literature and Evil** Trans. Alistair Hamilton. London, Marion Boyars. 1957. p 74

[34] here using Henri Lefebvre's terminology, similar terminology is used by Genesis P-Orridge.

which conceptualise that which cannot be reduced to the production of a scene, in other words a theatricality. The idea of theatre at the very least provides a space in which to observe the representational theatricality of theories. However, this space of observance is fundamentally tainted not only by the power of simulacre[35], the power of representation, but also by the plasticity of its narrating agency,[36] that is of structure itself. By following its functioning, we are merely describing its predetermined narrative agency. Maurice Merleau-Ponty argues that even within the structure the viewer is not untainted in the same way that representation is not in fact the presentation of the original. Merleau-Ponty argues that it is impossible to be naked within the forum of representation.

> So what there is is not things identical to themselves which, afterwards, offer themselves to the seer, and it is not a seer, empty at first, who, afterwards, opens himself to them, but something we could scarcely get closer to except by feeling it with our gaze, things we could not dream of seeing 'naked' because the gaze itself envelops them, clothes them with its flesh ... We say then that our body is a being with two leaves, on the one side a thing among things and on the other what sees and touches them; we say, because it is obvious, that it unites these two properties in itself, and its double belonging to the order of the 'object' and the order of the 'subject' unveils to us very unexpected relationships between the two orders ... We place ourselves ... in us and in things, in use and in the other, at the point where, by a sort of chiasmus, we become the others and we become the world.[37]

Becoming the other and becoming the world is by way of becoming part of the representation, by entering into the performance. Even the implementation of a deepening type of gaze only redoubles the experience of seeing in that it envelopes that which is being observed. Seeing becomes a structured activity, and there is a determinacy in seeing. When we become the other and we become the world we become part of the representation not the original. Bennington elaborates upon this by saying that:

> ... if it is felt that against this mutual belonging of body and world

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[35] terminology - Baudrillard

[36] see **Le Differend** Jean-Francois Lyotard (Paris: Minuit, 1984), also 'Le Differend' in **Lyotard Writing the Event** Geoffrey Bennington. Manchester University Press. 1988

[37] Maurice Merleau-Ponty **Le Visible et l'invisible** Gallimard, Paris, 1964 pp 173 & 180-181 & 212 quoted by Geoffrey Bennington **Lyotard Writing the Event** Manchester University Press. 1988. p 57

> the experience of looking at a painting will approximate more closely to the experience of reading a text, then Lyotard insists on the plasticity of the painting surface, the rhythm of lines which solicit an answering rhythm in the body of the viewer, and the chromatic values which allow the flatness of the canvas to recede and open into (a) type of theatrical 'scene'...[38]

So the viewer becomes part of the plasticity of the canvas, part of the representative qualities of the theatrical scene. In this respect the rhythm of lines is a device which solicits a reciprocal rhythm in the body of the viewer. The experience of the energy of rhythm is represented in the form of the pain. An intensity of movement is channelled into the plasticity of the painted surface becoming a perceivable rhythm of paint. In this scenario intensity is first harnessed by movement and then channelled into paint. At every stage intensity is reduced, stabilised, brought back from the realm of unease and the limits of consciousness into the representational chamber. What is represented in paint is a weak sensation of movement, the shadow of a volatile energy. The notion of the possibility that intensities can be transformed within the representational chamber into other intensities of a similar volition seems impossible. The devices seem to be reductive.

For Genesis P-Orridge, eradication and reduction via the control of systems and structures is the device used to capture intensities, and the dream of eradication is the dangerous dream of annihilation.[39] So in the film **Decoder** the character of FM Einheit masters, and then changes, the structure of a piece of musak, transforming its innate energy and in so doing, creating an anti-musak which stimulates an entirely different effect from its passive original.

> FM Einheit is into experimenting with sound. While taking a break he is again struck by the music which comes non-stop from the loudspeakers at the fast-food joint. He wonders whether there is a connection between those sounds and the behaviour of the people, between the acoustic rubbish and the junk food. Armed with his

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[38] Geoffrey Bennington **Lyotard Writing the Event** Manchester University Press. 1988. p 57

[39] Genesis P-Orridge **Thee Fractured Garden** artist's manuscripts 1993 - 1996;

> The blind may not lead the illuminated, rather they must be forced to surrender all thought of vision to those who are their eyes and who dream the most dangerous dreams of annihilation. We control THINGS to eradicate them. Nothing matters but the end of matter.

> cassette-recorder, he revisits the fast-food joints and records the noise, tones and music. At home he tries to discover the secret by altering the frequency and re-editing the sound. Then he makes an unusual discovery; the calm induced by this music can be changed into the opposite, and the musical tranquilliser becomes a brain poison. After an unpleasant encounter with some street pirates he creates his "anti-muzak", which, when transmitted throughout the city, causes total chaos....[40]

In other words, the narrative effect, or agency of the structure, is decoded and reconstructed, and the innate energies, previously harnessed as representations, are captured. But how is this so? We have already witnessed how, when intensity is reduced by representation, it becomes weakened. However, in this scenario, what is being disrupted is the agency of representation - its structure, the very fabric of the representational chamber. The notion being hypothetically put forward in the film is the disruption of determinacy. The reconstruction of structured sound engenders random, dysfunctional, chaotic uncertainty, in short moves into the realm of unease, shifting the 'space' of representation (although it can not now be described as such) toward the region where Bataille locates intensity.

The film posits the notion that unlocking and disrupting structure unleashes uncertainty, confusion and chaos. The semi-random, semi-conscious non-intellectual manipulation and reprocessing of sound disrupts the laws which govern the functioning of the representational chamber. Most significantly, the cut-up disrupts the binary value system inherent within the notion of representation and conscious choice. Random and multiple reassembly of the sound produces multiple layering, which offer multiple hearings. The narrative agency is destroyed by the organic rule of chance and multiple accidental associations. The structure of the sound becomes unease and uncertainty.

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[40] notes to the film '**Decoder**' from the CD of the soundtrack by David Ball (Soft Cell) Genesis P-Orridge (Psychic TV) F. M. Eingeit (Einsturzende Neubauten), Matt Johnson (The The), Christine E & William S. Burroughs. (What's so Funny About) Produced by Klaus Maeck & Muscha 1984 / 1992

Film Cast;

FM	FM Einheit
Jager	Bill Rice
Christina	Christine F
High Priest	Genesis P-Orridge
Old Man	William S. Burroughs

The activity of decoding is presented in the film as a political act, an act of revolution, of anarchy and disruption. The film draws attention to a possible political agenda which lies behind the dictatory binary design and function of structures. Structures, even musical ones, are shown to possess, to a greater or lesser extent, an ability to physically and psychologically control the emotions and behaviour of people. So in **Decoder**, there is a connection between the" behaviour of the people" and their passive acceptance of "acoustic rubbish and junk food" - the acoustic rubbish perpetuating a junk rubbish existence. The structure is representational of the way the state wants people to live their lives.

What is being engendered, encouraged and let loose via the decoding activity is intensity and with intensity a sense of contact with another space which exists within the realm of unease, at the limits of consciousness. The experience of extreme intensity is the baptism in fire which provides an access point to contact with the ontologic fact of libidinal energy. This fire of intensity cleanses the body of its binary perspective and its sense of being under control, in a bath of uncertainty. Extreme intensity thrusts the subject towards the limits of consciousness to the point at which matter disappears and another space opens up. This is a deeply enigmatic space - a space which can perhaps be said to approximate in its volition to hallucination.

The cut-up seems to assert that it is the breakdown of the structure, together with the material being manipulated within the structure, which gives rise to extraordinary energies. If it is true that this process can produce the extreme intensities which bring us closer to an authentic experience of libidinal energy, and thence to the nature of being, then Lyotard's insistence on the observing of the devices and the functioning of the representational chamber becomes redundant. It is redundant because the notion of a single representational chamber has been lost in the process of disruption. Disruption and disorder become a means by which libidinal energy can be experienced. As P-Orridge suggests, it is this contact with intensity which creates a space of experience. The massive rush of energy which constitutes extreme intensity is likened by P-Orridge to the mythological baptism by fire.

> There is a specific clarity when Fire cleanses. A moment when it seems to freeze. Every possible particle is motion rushing up or

down. Naked and blind upon a path of lies we enter the field, a dull agony of fear dilates Time against the biological confusion.

There is more than one Time. . .

Change thee way to perceive and change all Memory.

Make space to be Space[41]

Here P-Orridge is suggesting that it is the intensive experience which reconstitutes a space of perceivable existence. He recognises the importance of this kind of chaotic necessity in his work and his life in this statement from **Thee Fractured Garden**:

> I understood my lifetime's sense of disconnection / disorder was not a flaw, rather a wondrous gift that described in a new way, the true nature of **Being** that may be experienced whilst trapped, mortal, and confused, here in this desert that was once a theatre of all possibilities, and an exit to all impossibilities.[42]

Since the early 1980s P-Orridge has used disruption as a governing principle in his work. His emphasis on the multiple perspective shows that he is seeking to operate within this landscape of uncertainty, at the limits of consciousness. The use of multiple personalities, which interrogate each other and set up conflicting strings of words, serves not to illuminate a particular statement, not to create a narrative agency which is either right or wrong but to disrupt and thwart any sense of absolute meaning. On the page P-Orridge's writing looks like a collection of strands of words. It is difficult to read the work chronologically, rather it demands to be scanned and disrupted. When the spoken words are joined with sound they become part of the layering, part of the sampling and are usually reduced to half sentences and isolated sounds. Having discovered the potential of disorder in terms of its ability to channel energy in the form of extreme intensity, P-Orridge uses source material which is particularly potent, such as sound recordings taken during rituals, archive recordings of war incidents, political statements, etc. He pairs these with the sounds of domesticity, industrial samples, electro-acoustics and the authentic sounds of sex. All of these elements are cut-

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[41] Genesis P-Orridge extract from **World Preset Guardians** 'WILL-POWER-GO'"(Fourth Draft October 1992. Author's archive) included in an edited form on the spoken word CD **The Fractured Garden** 1995/96

[42] Genesis P-Orridge **Thee Fractured Garden** (author's manuscript) 2nd Draft, October 1992.

up, processed and generally disrupted and layered through a process of random manipulation.

In the same way Nitsch has spent all of his artistic life perfecting a dramatic / artistic structure designed to support the random accidents of activity. As in the work of P-Orridge the multiple activities, the layering of action, the simultaneous locations of activity, the random production of noise, the multiple combinations of smells and images, are there to saturate, to unlock the energy of extreme intensity. This language, if we can call it such, exceeds the boundaries of art and popular music and goes beyond the representational. It is itself disturbing, disorientating and in many ways destructive. These artists are not concerned with drama therapy or with the kind of cathartic experience which leaves an audience feeling purged but comfortable. They are concerned with generating extreme and intense emotional states, as an overture to or a medium through which to experience the active sensation / energy of what they consider to be the signature of authentic, multi-dimensional existence.

James Hillman, talking about the role of psychology, has, in my view defined exactly the essential strength of the artistic language of both Nitsch and P-Orridge;

> Suppose we entertain the idea that psychology makes people mediocre; and suppose we entertain the idea that the world is *in extremis,* suffering an acute, perhaps fatal, disorder at the edge of extinction. Then I would claim that what the world needs most is radical and original extremes of feeling and thinking in order for its crisis to be met with equal intensity.[43]

If their language does aim at being, or even has the effect of being, in some way psychologically therapeutic then it is in its ability to speak the language of crisis, to stimulate crisis, to exist and generate new artistic possibilities through exploring the critical spaces of acute intensity. In this way the work of both Nitsch and P-Orridge has a great deal in common with the kind of radical psychotherapy promoted by Hillman.

> ...for me the job of psychotherapy is to open up and deal with - no, not deal with, *encourage,* maybe even inflame, - the rich and crazy

[43] James Hillman & Michael Ventura **We've had a Hundred years of Psychotherapy and the World's getting Worse** Harper San Francisco. (Harper/Collins) 1992. p 151

> mind, that wonderful aviary (the image is from Plato) of wild flying thoughts, the sex-charged fantasies, the incredible longings, bloody wounds, and the museums of archaic shards that constitute the psyche.[44]

In beginning to identify both the qualities and characteristics of the type of energy which I propose the artists are seeking to interact with, the notion of experience automatically comes into play. An intensity of sensation, be it physical, psychological, or synaesthesic, is identified as a way in which one can experience the libidinal energy - the will-to, or need for... We can speculate as to its hypothetical location in terms of a conceptual geography, or psychological stratification, but its purpose or function still remains opaque. Is there any kind of therapeutic value in experiencing this kind of intensity? In terms of the work of Nitsch and P-Orridge arguments for and against the therapeutic value of their work either for themselves or for their audiences, evidence can be found to justify a negative or a positive therapeutic value. However, neither judgment seems to fit their work comfortably. Perhaps, as Hillman has suggested, we need to redefine what is meant by therapy and, in accordance with both of the artists' insistence on the importance of experience, to locate this new type of therapy within the intimate and personal realm of intense experience.

4.3 Beyond a sensation of well-being, Beyond Psychotherapy

In their book **We've had a Hundred years of Psychotherapy and the World's getting Worse** Michael Ventura and James Hillman discuss the problems of psychoanalysis and psychotherapy in the twentieth century. In the following conversation Hillman and Ventura discuss the notion of processing and the psychoanalyst's use of abreaction.

> **HILLMAN:** I'm saying to people, "If you go to therapy watch out for the collision between the therapist and the part of you that doesn't want to feel the ore." There are many ways to repress feeling the ore, one of which is processing it. The different schools of therapy have different processing systems, but *all* of them are fixers. From

[44] James Hillman & Michael Ventura **We've had a Hundred years of Psychotherapy and the World's getting Worse** Harper San Francisco. (Harper/Collins) 1992. p 151

my angle, fixing what's wrong represses the ore.
VENTURA: "Processing" is often "repression" in disguise! That's really cute.
HILLMAN: "This hurts, goddammit, this hurts!" And the first move away from the hurt is, "What do I do about it? What do I take for it?"
VENTURA: What clinical name can I call it?"
HILLMAN: "What's the treatment?" Those are all ways of dealing with "This hurt." But until one has been in the hurt, explored the hurt, you don't know anything about it. You don't know why it's there. Why did the psyche put it there?

> **VENTURA:** "Exploring the hurt" sounds suspiciously like processing. "Working through" -
> **HILLMAN:** - is the term that processing usually goes by. That's not what I mean by exploring the hurt. The question to be asked is, "How does therapy really work?" I'm not sure that therapy itself - that is, insight, understanding, recollection, owning your part of it, how you brought it about, seeing patterns, abreacting -

Here Hillman links the notion of abreaction to insight, understanding and the process of recollection, ownership and recognition. Abreaction is viewed as a "working-through", an intellectual process of making sense of things, naming the hurt, recognising where it comes from, exploring its location and how it works. Abreaction in this sense can be called 'therapy.' Such a notion of "working-through" suggests a verbalised outcome, a self-diagnosis and the apportion of a clinical name. But we are warned by Ventura that "processing" is often "repression" in disguise. Hillman and Ventura seem to be suggesting that it is the use of words that stops the subject from feeling the 'ore' - the raw energy of the hurt; in other words therapeutic verbalisation serves to repress the actual connection with, and therefore the real exploration of, hurt. Thus, in Hillman's and Ventura's terms, abreaction, as a process of working-through and of verbalisation, is a process of repression rather than liberation. This definition of abreaction is in sharp contrast to that proposed and presented by Hermann Nitsch. In this 1968 treatise Nitsch suggests that the abreactive event is a synaesthesic experience stimulated by the heightening of the senses:

> Establishing synaesthesic relations between;
>
> perception of touch,
> perception of taste,
> perception of smell,

perception of acoustic and visual registrations

shall inspire our senses orgiastically, The accelerating activation of all senses can be compared to psychoanalysis. Instead of associating, actions are instituted which heighten the perception of the senses until the endpoint of orgiastic "abreaction".[45]

Nitsch continues to suggest that the result is "a descending into subconscious regions", into moments of uncontrolled excess. In this early treatise Nitsch hints at a kind of therapeutic outcome suggesting that there is some correlation between abreaction and what he imagines to have been the benefits of catharsis. He suggests that, for him, catharsis means the point at which fragments of the subconscious become partly conscious. He writes "consciousness of subconscious regions, catharsis." Here Nitsch is suggesting that the heightening of the senses brings the individual to a synaesthesic experience of excess called abreaction. This involves submerging the individual in the subconscious which in turn stimulates catharsis which is the emergence of fragments from the subconscious into the conscious. Thus abreaction precedes and initiates catharsis and catharsis becomes a conscious procedure of realisation. The notion of recognition, cognition and intellectual rationalism (the subconscious becoming conscious) seems to imply some kind of logical and understandable assimilation of words. However, Nitsch's form of abreaction does not necessarily operate within the cognitive realm. The language of abreaction described by Nitsch is sensual rather than rational; the activities of abreaction are therefore not wholly governed by the cognition of the rationalising mind but are spontaneous, instinctive, absorbing and seductive. Nitsch's decision not to use words in his early abreaction plays and Aktions preempts the notion made by Ventura and Hillman that words repress feelings by seeming to distance the causes of hurt through naming. Words become symbolic of an intent to deal with hurt but do not allow access to the confrontation that such an intent should necessitate. Words, in this respect, can be likened to the actor's role, through manipulating the words, the actor is able to perform, to pretend to wear the character like Brecht's overcoat, to speak in the third person, to quote the self without allowing

[45] Hermann Nitsch **M.A.R.Z** 1969, Marz Verlag, Darmstadt. (Limited edition - only existing copy at Prinzendorf) paragraph 52 - 54

a full transformation to take place.[46] The actor does not in theory need to engage with the essence of the character since the words provide an illusion of ownership. By not allowing words into his work it is clear that Nitsch intends his participants to engage with the ore - the raw material of feelings - with the pain and the intensity of feelings in a non verbal manner.

The earliest **1st Abreaction Play** dating from 1961 **(shouts, noises and the evisceration of the lamb)** does not employ words. In terms of the possible psychological effect of Nitsch's work the fact that words are not used becomes significant;

> I tried with my work to offer a sort of value through which all the suppressed and inhibited could be worked off ('abreacted') and eliminated. I accepted the human routine of Freudian psychoanalysis, which taught me, however, to look at all of these abysses of ecstasy and aggression...[47]

However, there seems to be a conflict of intention in this statement from 1974. Nitsch states that the value of his work lies in the mechanism which allows those suppressed and inhibited elements within the human psyche to be worked off or abreacted and eliminated. What Nitsch is describing here is the traditional mechanics of therapy. Nitsch explicitly associates his work with Freudian psychoanalysis which seems to present us with a case for designating Nitsch's work as therapeutic, at least in intent. However, the work itself does not fall comfortably into this category. As I have stated in the previous parts of this chapter Nitsch does not attempt to offer any kind of resolution to the crisis of life and death presented in his work. He does not provide moments of free verbal articulation, of recognition and resolution, implied by the goal of catharsis in accordance with his definition. The possibility of expressing the cathartic moment in terms of script in Nitsch's Aktions is not provided for. Indeed there seems to be a conflict between the notion of a cathartic outcome (the expressing

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[46] see 'Short Description of a New Technique for Acting which produces an Alienation Effect' by Bertold Brecht in **Brecht on Theatre** edited and translated by John Willett, Methuen, London, 1964.

According to Brecht's theories of alienation, empathy with a character presented by an actor can be reached via a process of becoming objective, or of being alienated from the reflex of total identification. This is a kind of intellectual empathy, a rational process, not be confused with what Nitsch is hoping to achieve in his Aktions.

[47] Hermann Nitsch **Die Eroberung von Jerusalem, Die Drossel, No 17** Edition Morra, Naples, and Verlag Die Drossel, Berlin 1974. p 207

of realisation) and the lack of a structure or of resolution in the work. There are no instances of participants giving verbal testimony of their realisations within the structure of the Aktions.

Two questions arise. First, if there is no evidence of verbal resolution in Nitsch's work, then is it correct to call the work therapeutic and is it therefore misleading to take at face value the possibility that Nitsch sees his work as having some correlation to the practical mechanisms of psychoanalysis? Second, is Nitsch merely making a passing comment when he says, "I accept the human routine of Freudian psychoanalysis", without meaning to infer that it is the underlying principle of his work? Perhaps there is something other than the traditional notions of therapy at work here.

In an interview given in 1968 Nitsch said:

> ... most people do not know that they live. They live like animals, they live in a dream, they are not here. Through art, through the aesthetic experience I can reach very deep, and it's only on those deep deep levels that I want to celebrate existence, not on the surface.[48]

If the deepest level of Nitsch's work is the abreactive moment, the experience of excess and the moment of connection with the subconscious, then other levels of experience are deemed shallow in comparison. Nitsch only wants to celebrate existence on this deep level. He implies in this statement that people in general exist on the level of the mundane which is tantamount to non-existence. The accent of his work, the space of his work, the aesthetic of his work is, according to Nitsch, located on this deep level, the level of existence. If we use this principle as a basic guide then it is possible to hypothesise that any other level of experience is viewed by Nitsch as disjunctive. Even the level of realisation and catharsis is secondary. The statement implies that Nitsch views the quintessential part of existence within this deepest sensual level either on the edge of consciousness or within the experience of the subconscious. If we follow this argument through it is possible to draw some crude conclusions; we can perhaps presume that, for Nitsch, the verbal also exists within this realm of the mundane. He seems to

[48] Hermann Nitsch **M.A.R.Z** 1969, Marz Verlag, Darmstadt. (Limited edition - only existing copy at Prinzendorf) paragraph 19 statement from 1968

view operations on other levels - including the cognitive verbal level - as tantamount to non-experience, non-existence - to a sensationless dream of living. Nitsch is perhaps saying that the experience of existence is located in the ontological lower levels, not on the seemingly higher planes of the intellect. Nitsch emphasised this point during our conversations.

> There are many people who have a lot of experience - intellectual experience and then their consciousness is like a library and they are not able to use their experiences and there must be a relation between experience and intensity. I have a lot of friends who know many things but they are not able to feel intensively. Wittgenstein said a great sentence, and I like this very very much, and I feel the same way, he said 'How things ARE around us is not the most important thing, the most important thing is that THEY ARE AND WE ARE' - for me this is the situation - it is very important that I feel myself intensively, it is much more important than to have impression.[49]

At the risk of over-simplification, we could go further to assume that the reason why there are no scripts, no spoken words in Nitsch's Aktions is because his work is operating at an existential deeper level than words.

I have already discussed in previous chapters Nitsch's concerns for organic structures, for the discovery of the under-belly, of the underground and the internal and it is this dimension of the work which helps us to understand why there are no words in Nitsch's Aktions. Here I would like to postulate that Nitsch's work is concerned with a deeply organic aesthetic which has not yet realised words.

> Many of my theatre aktions are like births. And a birth is like a crucifixion and resurrection together. There is blood, and meat, and pain, and then comes the newly born child, and he cries, and he begins to live. That's why I work only with the senses of great intensity.[50]

Nitsch finds it easy to associate the sight, sound, smell, pain and symbolic significance of child birth with his own work. In child birth one is struck by the

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[49] Hermann Nitsch interview with the present author. 6 April 1994. Prinzendorf, Austria

[50] Hermann Nitsch **M.A.R.Z** 1969, Marz Verlag, Darmstadt. (Limited edition - only existing copy at Prinzendorf) paragraph 19 statement from 1968

colour, the sound and the intensity of emotion and labour. The combination of all these things gives the scene a kind of beauty which is derived from the sight of Nature, raw and infinite, without the need for verbal interpretation. In the words of Henri Lefebvre;

> Nature appears as the vast territory of births. 'Things' are born, grow and ripen, then wither and die. The reality behind these words is infinite. As it deploys its forces, nature is violent, generous, niggardly, bountiful, and above all open. Nature's space is not staged. To ask why this is so is a strictly meaningless question: a flower does not know that it is a flower any more than death knows upon whom it is visited. If we are to believe the word 'nature', with its ancient metaphysical and theological credentials, what is essential occurs in the depths. To say 'natural' is to say spontaneous.[51]

Lefebvre suggests that the experience of nature occurs in the depths. He also states that nature's space is not staged but is spontaneous. Lefebvre puts forward the notion that to verbalise, to ask why and how is meaningless and that one's connection with nature requires a reciprocal act of spontaneity. In **The Production of Space** Lefebvre speaks against all forms of abstraction, suggesting that "it is impossible to escape the notion that nature is being murdered by 'anti-nature' - by abstraction, by sign and images, by discourse, as also by labour and its products... Humanity is killing ... and perhaps commits suicide into the bargain."[52] Lefebvre takes Ventura and Hillman's notion of the repressive nature of words onto another level suggesting that all forms of abstraction work against nature. He argues that abstraction drives the individual away from the essence of his own nature, the essence of his own being, which is located within the spontaneous and the infinite. In a similar vein Nitsch's work aims at the same level of spontaneity, at the same intensity of feeling, at the same point of experience which precedes words. The visual aspects of Nitsch's work seem to aim at allowing the spontaneous in the beauty of the incidental moment. Like the rose the visual of the moment is not a product of nature but nature itself. In the words of Lefebvre;

> Why do I say that nature does not produce? The original meaning

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[51] Henri Lefebvre (Social Space) **The Production of Space** Trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith. Blackwell, Oxford UK & Cambridge USA. 1991. p 70

[52] Ibid,. p 71

of the word suggests the contrary; to lead out and forward, to bring forth from the depths. And yet, nature does not labour: it is even one of its defining characteristic that it *creates*. What it creates, namely individual 'beings', simply surges forth, simply appears. Nature knows nothing of these creations - unless one is prepared to postulate the existence within it of a calculating god or providence. A tree, a flower or fruit is not a 'product' - even if it is in a garden. A rose has no why or wherefore; it blooms because it blooms. In the words of Angelus Silesius, it 'cares not whether it is seen'. It does not know that it is beautiful, that it smells good, that it embodies a symmetry of the *n*th order. It is surely almost impossible not to purpose further or to return to such questions.[53]

What Nitsch is striving toward, and what Lefebvre is attempting to describe, is a state of Being-in-nature which is beyond abstraction. For Nitsch, the actual connection with life through the celebration and experience of existence on the deepest level, on the level of excess, is beyond abstract interpretation it is fundamentally beyond words, beyond therapy and, in this sense, is beyond any notions of verbal catharsis. Catharsis if it means realisation - the emergence of fragments of the subconscious into consciousness - is then felt as an intensity and seen, according to Nitsch, as 'colour'.

It is too easy to say that the emphasis on colour tells us that Nitsch views himself first and foremost as a fine artist chiefly concerned with the visual, "still concerned with the two-dimensional."[54] This preoccupation with colour goes beyond its implementation as a decorative element in an empirically controlled structure but alludes to an ideological thrust which is to do with allowing the element of spontaneity, of nature, and thus intensity of Being into his work.

> There comes a quiet, meditative understanding of existence. Sublimation, mystic of being instead of "abreaction". As a result the actions only provoke contemplation and submersion into the world of phenomena. The excessive, Sado-masochistic "abreaction" is sublimated to the dispute with colour (colour reactions, colorgames, colorprojections). The concentrated aesthetic liturgy of the O.M. Theatre can expand itself over a whole lifetime and transform the process of living into a positive, life-enjoying, aesthetic ritual.

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[53] Henri Lefebvre (Social Space) **The Production of Space** Trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith. Blackwell, Oxford UK & Cambridge USA. 1991. p 70

[54] Hermann Nitsch **Die Eroberung von Jerusalem, Die Drossel, No 17** Edition Morra, Naples, and Verlag Die Drossel, Berlin 1974. p 207

MEAT	+	(LIGHT) COLOR
Meat		Color
anal sadomasochistic dispute with meat (actions of disembowelment and dilaceration) amorphous elemental comprehension. At first colour is not extracted, it simply heightens the sensuous, elemental comprehension.		subliminating analysis of the color - and light values of meat. Abstracting of color values into color scales. meat = light rainbow LIGHTBOW nucleus of light, colorcircle, light- circle. Matthias Gruenewald.

The sadomasochistic excessive abreaction sublimates itself during the course of the play into the comprehension of color.[55]

Nitsch means to sense the infinite in colour. Thus the participants in Nitsch's Aktions literally sit with the infinite and experience the infinite as an intensity in which their own individual nature is intimately interweaved. It is a sensation of 'as it is', and a comprehension of 'they are and we are' Being.

In the conversation between Hillman and Ventura, Hillman talks about the notion of sitting with one's hurt, being with hurt and the long term being in hurt, as a ritual and a method of recovering and recognising the essence of what the hurt is all about.

HILLMAN: ... What I think does it is the six months, or six years, of grief. The mourning. The long ritual of therapy. ... The dumb hours.
VENTURA: Going back and back and back, talking about this shit over and over, no matter what you happen to be saying or thinking, just going back and back to it.
HILLMAN: And one day it doesn't feel the same. The body has absorbed the punch. But I'm not sure that's because you processed it or got insights or understanding. (But)
VENTURA: Because you're sitting with it
HILLMAN: Sitting *in* it
VENTURA: In it. And being *in* it, in whatever form, is the exploration.
HILLMAN: You're in it for a while, then you're with it for a while,

[55] Hermann Nitsch M.A.R.Z 1969, Marz Verlag, Darmstadt. (Limited edition - only existing copy at Prinzendorf) paragraph 52 - 54

and then you visit it.
VENTURA: And then it walks with you instead of on you.
HILLMAN: And it may even go its own way.
VENTURA: And why isn't that processing?
(Hillman is silent)
VENTURA: I'll tell you why it's not processing. Because you're not taking it and purifying it and making it into something else.
HILLMAN: You're not transforming.[56]

In the same way it is this constant 'sitting' with the sensations of hurt which characterises much of the work of Genesis P-Orridge. It is perhaps true to say that P-Orridge's creative life is a ritual of Being in disorder. Being within the discomfort of chaos. What it is not is the clean cut notion of a creative impulse striving to articulate and, through clear articulation, to become valued, commercially immortal through production.[57]

Like Nitsch's work that of P-Orridge does not have a clear cut artistic intention. There is something other than the production of art at stake, there is an urgency which supercedes the need or even the desire to express. While the work of Hermann Nitsch leans towards a rediscovery of nature (being and human nature) beyond abstraction and beyond abstract realisation. The essence of P-Orridge's work is its tendency to become unnameable, in its movement toward annihilation through deconstruction and in its strong emphasis on departure. In the case of P-Orridge the creative surface (the libidinal surface) acts as a launch pad to propel the artist not toward immortality through production, but toward annihilation, disappearance and the unnameable. All of P-Orridge's work is an

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[56] James Hillman & Michael Ventura **We've had a hundred years of psychotherapy and the world's getting worse** Harper San Francisco 1992/3. pp 31-33

[57] Otto Rank 'Life and Creation' in **Literature and Psychoanalysis** edited by Edith Kurzwell and William Phillips. Columbia University Press. New York 1983. p 41:

> And although the whole artist's psychology may seem to be centred on the "experience," this itself can be explained only through the creative impulse - which attempts to turn ephemeral life into personal immortality. In creation the artist tries to immortalise his mortal life. He desires to transform death into life, as it were, though actually he transforms life into death. For not only does the created work not go on living; it is, in a sense, dead, both as regards the material, which renders it almost inorganic, and also spiritually and psychologically, in that it no longer has any significance for its creator, once he has produced it. He therefore again takes refuge in life, and again forms experiences, which for their part represent only mortality - and it is precisely because they are mortal that he wishes to immortalise them in his work.

attempt to go. "Nothing is real, everything must go."[58] Production in this sense is a form of wasting energy, not of transforming energy, or of somehow channelling and harnessing it in the service of the creative impulse; it is an emptying. "Nothing matters but the end of matter"[59]. It is a capturing and a using up - an inhalation and an exhalation of energy.

The process of emptying, in terms of the work of Genesis P-Orridge, can also be viewed as an attempt to escape from the concept of control and to lose all sense of a value system. This is not to say that P-Orridge does not care about what he is producing; on the contrary, it is refined for contradiction, condensed in order to provoke and engineered to communicate directly with the senses and sensibility of the listener or viewer. But everywhere, within every domain, from performance to written and recorded item, the overwhelming gravity of death is present; the underlying sense that there is a wasting in production, a shedding of skins, a ripening, an ageing going on.

Having worked through the political and creative implications of Burroughs' notion of the cut-up (the pinnacle of this exploration could perhaps be viewed as the release of **Decoder** in 1984, at least in terms of its public exposure) P-Orridge continued to develop and explore the notion of "how do we short circuit control"[60]. It was contemplation on this theme, coupled with the development of ritual practices, which perhaps gave some impetus to the notion of departure. One of the ideas which served to disconnect P-Orridge from what Burroughs was doing was P-Orridge's conviction that Burroughs was primarily concerned with the literary value of the cut-up. This was not enough for P-Orridge who was seeking a more practical solution to the limitations of control. P-Orridge quickly became disappointed and critical of Burroughs' work and recognised the essentially conservative feelings which motivated it. This is a criticism levelled

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[58] Genesis P-Orridge **Thee Fractured Garden** text 1992 - 1996 (author's archive)

[59] Ibid,.

[60] Genesis P-Orridge paraphrasing Burroughs in a telephone conversation with the present author.

at many of the radical texts.[61] What I suspect did excite P-Orridge was the notion that decoding rather than deconstructing material produced multiple possibilities;

> The limitations of the decoding-operation appear even greater, however, as soon as it is set in motion, for it then immediately becomes apparent just how many spaces exist, each of them susceptible of multiple decodings.[62]

The down side of this was that the process of decoding was still precariously perched on the inauthentic edge of the literary, audible, intellectual level, and quickly became superficial to P-Orridge as an art form. As long as cut-ups and the process of decoding remained within the realm of Art it was little more than a bourgeois fantasy and not a revolutionary tool for the purpose of change. However, P-Orridge saw in the principle of the cut-up the method and the means of accessing multiple possibilities. He began to think about what effect the cut-up method would have if it was applied to the personality and used to manipulate behavioural patterns. From the late 1980s P-Orridge has been concerned with destroying all previous images of himself. He has actively reversed the process of creation by wrecking the product, both by disseminating the material and the images of himself and by obliterating references to his work by re-referencing, fragmenting and building resonances which carry the material beyond its point of origin. He has also encouraged other people to use the material, to cut-up, reference, re-edit; in short, to accelerate its obliteration. In the course of this process any notion of the real Genesis P-Orridge is being lost in the multiple recordings and re-editing of other people. This notion of dissemination did not happen overnight but has gradually strengthened to the present day. The process

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[61] Richard Poirier, quoted by Ihab Hassan in **Paracriticism. Seven speculations of the times** University of Illinois Press, Urbana, Chicago & London. 1975. p 46;

> Three of the great and much used texts of twentieth-century criticism, Moby Dick, Ulysses, The Waste Land, are written in mockery of system, written against any effort to harmonise discordant elements, against any mythic or metaphorical scheme ... But while this form of the literary imagination is radical in its essentially parodistic treatment of systems, its radicalism is in the interest of essentially conservative feelings

> The most complicated examples of twentieth-century literature, like Ulysses and The Waste Land, ... are more than contemptuous of their own formal and stylistic elaborateness.

[62] Henri Lefebvre 'Social Space' in **The Production of Space** Trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith. Blackwell, Oxford UK & Cambridge USA. 1991. p 168

necessarily involves the destruction of the idea of the body as exhibit - the notion of the artist's life as a gallery of works and the publicly unveiled persona as an artificially manipulated identity. P-Orridge has taken his own ideology - "We control things to eradicate them"[63] - and applied it to the eradication of his own previously manufactured personality, to the production and the destruction of public images of himself. The notion of departure is also present in the mythic role of the artist as mirror, reflecting the dreams and aspirations of the audience, riding their energy and transforming their concerns and desires into visual, audible and literary statements.

> I was everyone, everything, and everything too was here to G.O.[64]

This statement illustrates the real gravity of the notion which now begins to shape much of P-Orridge's work. The artist who once was everybody, whose role was to live out the desires and aspirations of his audience, who in his perception could potentially come to mean and be anything, was here to go. To go in a sense that the artist is a consumable, a product / production in himself - fame is the market place in which the artist is sold, fame the economics, the servicing of a demand. Above and beyond these notions of the artist commodity, is the very fundamental question of life within the moment; the moment which ticks by and becomes a memory; the ghost of something which has ceased to exist "memory tell us that everything must GO" memory provides us with the evidence of departure.

Like Nitsch P-Orridge has captured the notion of departure in the moment in the unique first time of improvisation, instantaneous actions, and the spontaneous response to material. For P-Orridge the waste of energy in response to the moment is, I believe, the sensation of excess for which Nitsch is theoretically striving. For P-Orridge the sensation of excess in the 'now' of the moment is an extreme form of intoxication which constitutes an initiatory method or a rite of passage. Engaging in the extremity of the now is the accelerator, the point at which the mind passes beyond consciousness, into the realm of what the human mind can only imagine as myth and heaven and which can only be partly

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[63] Genesis P-Orridge 'On the way to the Garden' in **Verbal Abuse. NO/THE FUTURE** 1993 (Genesis P-Orridge 'Thee Fractured Garden' text 1992 - 1996)

[64] Ibid,.

expressed or registered through symbolism.

> I knew I had to find a way to GO, to leave this sealed coffin that is my body, to find an accelerator to project my brain, bypassing the tedium of mechanistic evolution, into deepest omniversal space, into immortality, and the very fabric of myth and heaven.[65]

In the hands of an artist this quite rightly sounds like fiction, (which is entirely proper for P-Orridge's sometimes cynical and self-critical tone); in the hands of a philosopher such as Jean Baudrillard the concept of transcendence in destruction sounds rather more convincing.

> Everywhere, in every domain, a single form predominates: reversibility, cyclical reversal and annulment put an end to the linearity of time, language, economic exchange, accumulation and power. Hence the reversibility of the gift in the counter-gift, the reversibility of exchange in the sacrifice, the reversibility of time in the cycle, the reversibility of production in destruction, the reversibility of life in death, and the reversibility of every term and value of the *langue* in the anagram. In every domain it assumes the form of extermination and death, for it is the form of the symbolic itself. Neither mystical nor structural, the symbolic is inevitable.[66]

P-Orridge's intimations of self destruction intensified over the course of writing character notes for Oliver Stone's film for television called **Wild Palms.** The **Wild Palms** project provided the framework for P-Orridge to dedicate a portion of his time to the theme of departure and immortality. This period helped to solidify some of P-Orridge's previously sketchy ideas. In the writing of this period (which is constantly being refined in the present) we can see how P-Orridge is gradually putting together the blueprints of a theoretical philosophical and psychological 'engine' designed for departure. He writes;

> A Soul must lose its attachment to humanity.
> A Mind must lose its attachment to salvation.
> A Brain must lose it attachment to body.[67]

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[65] Genesis P-Orridge 'On the way to the Garden' in **Verbal Abuse. NO/THE FUTURE** 1993 (Genesis P-Orridge 'Thee Fractured Garden' text 1992 - 1996)

[66] Jean Baudrillard **Symbolic Exchange and Death** Trans Iain Hamilton Grant with Intro by Mike Gane. Sage Publications, London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi. 1993. p 2

[67] Genesis P-Orridge 'On the way to the Garden' in **Verbal Abuse. NO/THE FUTURE** 1993 (Genesis P-Orridge 'Thee Fractured Garden' text 1992 - 1996)

In Nitsch's work we can perceive reversals of meaning and reversal of theme such as the reversibility of life and death through extended action. We can also see in Nitsch's work concern for an aesthetic of nature which has not yet discovered words. We can recognise the beauty which overcomes the tragic moment, and in some respects we can glimpse the real in Nitsch's work. But while there are some similarities of intent between the work of Nitsch and that of P-Orridge, Nitsch's intention is still to encapsulate his message within production, the production of his ultimate goal, the six day Aktion. However, P-Orridge is moving further and further away from production and representation and, if he finds a personal means of fulfilling his ideological methods, he will become silent. P-Orridge is clearly attempting to align himself with inevitability and infinity. Like Nitsch, P-Orridge's sense of intoxication moves into the realms of excess but, unlike Nitsch, it becomes toxic, beyond excess it becomes lethal; it detaches itself from all notions of humanity and society, it wants to depart from systems of control.

Chapter 5
Using the Child - Being the Child

In the previous chapter I put forward the notion that Nitsch is seeking to harness an intensity of experience which I have associated with the empirical aspect and energy of nature. I have discussed how Nitsch attempts to co-opt this energy into his work via activity which he supports within large dynamic and time-based structures. In contrast, I have described how P-Orridge uses the potential of cut-up techniques as a means of unearthing hidden meanings, resonances and limitations and as a process of dissemination and fragmentation. More importantly I have suggested that P-Orridge has extended the uses of this technique and has applied it to the fragmentation of the self in order to explore the innate dynamic qualities of self.

In the following chapter I will discuss how P-Orridge uses the notion of an archetype as a means of breaking open or fracturing areas of self in order to delve into the organic dynamics of the psyche and to explore its creative potential.

The use of archetypes is a particular feature of the work of both P-Orridge and Hermann Nitsch. In the work of Nitsch the archetypal is in the first instance identified literally as a model for the role of the central figure or what Nitsch calls the passive actor and is usually associated with Oedipus / Christ / Dionysus. The specifics of Nitsch's use of these archetypes will be explained in more detail later in this thesis, however, it is worth bearing in mind through the course of this chapter.

In the following chapter I will concentrate on P-Orridge's use of the archetypal child given that this is only one of a number of archetypal models the artist may use. However, the child is a very strong reccurring theme and creative model in P-Orridge's work. It seems to be particularly active in the recent and current work and is, in my view, intimately bound up with P-Orridge's present period of personal reassessment. The child is also symbolic of an amoral state of Being - a kind of Blakeian innocent and, in this respect, it is used by P-Orridge as a neutral persona through which to view past events.

In order to support and expand the discourse I will draw upon Baudrillard's notion of the child as other to the adult. I will suggest that the artistic tension between what P-Orridge calls consensus reality which opposes a multidimensional view of reality, can be associated with the psychological conflict which arises between the world of the child / artist, and the world of the adult / societal. I will suggest that it is an expression of the antagonism between the conscious and the unconscious which, as Jung has suggested, is an anxiety which arises out of experiential contact with what is known and what is unknown.

Genesis P-Orridge's use of the notion of the child is not particularly original or revolutionary. Many artists have used the aspect of the child as a model for a manner of creativity associated with states of hypersensitivity, play, invention, material economy, the intuitive, the animalistic and the instinctive as an alternative logic which offers a more organic, human response to the environment. Dynamics generated by the notion of the child can be seen in the paintings of Kandinsky and Klee, the so called Child Primitive, who said "I want to be as though new-born ... knowing no pictures, entirely without impulses, almost in an original state."[1]

The archetypal traits attributed to the child, the manner in which it seems to be able to perceive things as if for the first time, from the unique location of an original state have fascinated and attracted artists including P-Orridge. Historically, the emergence of interest in the archetypal qualities of the child went hand in hand with the popularisation and interest in depth psychology, particularly Freudian psychology. Writers such as Miller, Joyce, Beckett and Nin and artists such as Kandinsky, Klee, Rothko, Bacon and Freud began to develop new techniques and new ways of writing and painting which attempted to encapsulate this new found impetus and dynamic.

The psychological in art perhaps exemplified an interest in the instinctive, animalistic, sensual individual. Works produced by such artists as Kandinsky, Klee and Rothko were emotional without being romantic, colourful without being purely decorative, free and expressive without losing the larger concepts of form. Above all they tended to inhabit greater areas of space, or to express, in

[1] quoted here in **Modern Dance Forms** by Louis Horst & Carrol Russell . Dance Horizon. 1961

their dimensions and perspectives, an ability, or a desire for the extensive. A classic example of this is John Cage's piece **4 minutes 33 seconds**, in which the composer, by framing the silence in the concert hall, extends the possibilities of his piece to include the entire audible range of each member of the audience. This piece not only says something about the musical nature of space and perspective but also places each member of the audience at the centre of the creative/listening and therefore compositional act. This type of creative listening invites the audience to be sensual, to heighten their audible awareness; in other words, to alter their perceptual awareness and to change the manner in which they listen. Cage's work is as much about the listener as it is about the concept of music in general. It is about perception and therefore psychology as much as it is about musicology. Artists such as Cage have helped to develop a range of new art genres, media, mediums and virtual environments based on their own explorations within the field of psychology and its implications within the realm of the arts. As well as stretching outwards toward extensive spaces, artists have also attempted to extend inwards to engage with the notion of the mechanics of the mind.

P-Orridge's interest in the use of the child in his work has, I believe, arisen out of a need to redefine himself in other words to individuate himself, to strip away what he sees as received identity and 'received' patterns of behaviour and to seek the field of his own distinct psychical and mental dynamics. I view this as a kind of internal expansion, a way of changing the manner in which the self perceives the I and I perceives self. By attempting to manipulate his own behaviour, and received identity, P-Orridge has extended the notion of observation / perception and has explored a variety of synthesised alternatives. While a number of artists have used models and ideas developed in the field of psychology as available methods for the creation of works of art - for example, Klee's development of a concept of colours based on their emotional impact - P-Orridge has sought to define, develop and generate in himself certain psychological states. Childlikeness is one of these states. Unlike the majority of his predecessors who have used psychological models as intellectual starting points P-Orridge engages in a form of psychologising which in its extreme involves submerging his psyche (total identification) in the character traits of the archetypes, in developing and investigating his own neurosis and in exploring pathological drives.

P-Orridge's use of the child is one method or available model which, in my view, is contributing to a process of re-definition. It is not the only method but, by investigating the why and the how of this process, it is perhaps possible to identify similar systems being used elsewhere in his work.

P-Orridge works with the notion of the child on a number of different levels. The child can sometimes be observed as an archetypal figure in his work, for example, in the early Coum performances such as the **Infantile Art Launching Ceremony.** The child can also be the memories of himself as a child, as is particularly evident in his most recent essays and spoken word performances and recordings. The child can be a state of being child-like - an altered state of consciousness which is used as a medium of investigation. In terms of P-Orridge's ritual practice, the child aspect of his own psyche is often adopted as an original and creative psychological state contained within ritual situations. The aspect of the child which arises out of ritual may present itself in the guise of a psycho-pomp or animal spirit.

5.1 Defining the Nature of the Child

In order to discuss the manner in which P-Orridge uses the various models and dynamics of the child, I will draw heavily upon Jung's readings of the child archetype. Jung's notions of the archetypes, the use of archetypal images in art and their contribution to the process of individuation, provides a framework within which to assess some of the more problematic areas arising from the study of an artist's relationship to his or her own work. Jung suggests that "the innate archetypes act as frameworks into which ... each individual pours its own specific experiences"[2], either through the connection with archetypal principles located

[2] James Hogg **Psychology and the Visual Arts** (Selected Readings) Penguin Books, 1969. p 44

within the collective unconscious[3], or with synthesised principles related to the personal unconscious.[4]

Jung has suggested that it is through the exploration of archetypes that the process of individuation (the development of an individual identity) is facilitated.

> ... the clearest and most significant manifestation of the child motif in the therapy of neuroses is in the maturation process of personality induced by the analysis of the unconscious, which I have termed the process of individuation.[5]

What is important about Jung's notion of individuation and the involvement of

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[3] Defined by Jung as follows;

> I have chosen the term "collective" because this part of the unconscious is not individual but universal; in contrast to the personal psyche, it has contents and modes of behaviour that are more or less the same everywhere and in all individuals. It is, in other words, identical in all men and thus constitutes a common psychic substrate of a superpersonal nature which is present in every one of us. (C. G. Jung 'The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious' **The Collected Works** Volume 9, Part 1. Trans F. C. Hull. Routledge & Kegan Paul, London 1959. pp 3-4)

The Conscious and Unconscious are defined by Jung as follows;

> Theoretically, no limits can be set to the field of consciousness, since it is capable of indefinite extension. Empirically, however, it always finds its limit when it comes up against the *unknown*. This consists of everything we do not know, which, therefore, is not related to the ego as the centre of the field of consciousness. The unknown falls into two groups of objects: those which are outside and can be experienced by the sense, and those which are inside and are experienced immediately. The first group comprises the unknown in the outer world; and second the unknown in the inner world. We call this latter territory the *unconscious*. (C. G. Jung 'Aion, reserach into the phenomenology of the self' **The Collected Works** Volume 9 Part II. Trans F. C. Hull. Routledge & Kegan Paul, London 1959. p 3)

[4] defined by Jung as follows;

> A more or less superficial layer of the unconscious is undoubtedly personal. I call it the personal unconscious... Psychic existence can be recognised only by the presence of contents that are capable of consciousness. We can therefore speak of an unconscious only in so far as we are able to demonstrate its contents. The contents of the personal unconscious are chiefly the feeling-toned complexes, as they are called; they constitute the personal and private side of psychic life. The contents of the collective unconscious, on the other hand, are known as archetypes. (C. G. Jung 'The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious' **The Collected Works** Volume 9, Part 1. Trans F. C. Hull. Routledge & Kegan Paul, London 1959. pp 3-4)

[5] Ibid,. p 159

the archetypes in the process is that he does not consign it for exclusive use in the administering of therapy by qualified psychologists but identifies it as a congenital system which is active within each individual's psyche.

> ... the archetype is a psychic organ present in all of us.[6]

This suggests that the archetype belongs to the individual even though it may seem to display some common characteristics. The fact that the archetypes are indigenous to each individual makes the notion of the interchangeability of archetypal traits and actual memories and individual responses theoretically possible. Both the personal and the archetypal inhabit the same spatial environment as part of the psyche. The notion that archetypes are indigenous to each individual also implies that each individual's use of this so called psychic organ is potentially different, in the same way that each body's biological metabolism is slightly different. So, in investigating the dynamics of the child archetype in relation to the individual which is Genesis P-Orridge, we must be aware that we are looking at a unique synthesis.

Evidence of the artist's frequent visitations to the memories of his own childhood, his use of childlike states in performance and ritual and as part of his creative process, suggest that there is something fundamental which is buried within the philosophical and psychological dynamics of the child which P-Orridge is drawing upon. Perhaps it is the raw energy associated with the first time engagement with ideas, images and the environment as a whole, which is being tapped by the artist. Childhood, or childlikeness may, on the other hand, function as a reference point which serves as a distance marker against which to measure, assess and relocate the present or adult state of affairs. As Jung has suggested, the child archetype is not only something that existed in the distant past, but

> ... something that exists *now;* that is to say, it is not just a vestige but a system functioning in the present whose purpose is to compensate or correct, in a meaningful manner, the inevitable one-sidednesses and extravagances of the conscious mind.[7]

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[6] C. G. Jung 'The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious' **The Collected Works** Volume 9, Part 1. Trans F. C. Hull. Routledge & Kegan Paul, London 1959. p 60

[7] Ibid,. p 62

Freud has also suggested that the child is retained during adulthood but remains beneath, or at a psychologically lower level, overlain by the veneers of the adult state of affairs. Freud writes:

> ...in spite of all the later development that occurs in the adult, none of the infantile mental formations perish. All the wishes, instinctual impulses, modes of reaction and attitudes of childhood are still demonstrably present in maturity and in appropriate circumstances can emerge once more. They are not destroyed but merely overlaid - ...[8]

Jung has suggested that the notion of child emerges as a symbol of evolving independence and that the symbol anticipates a nascent, or original state of consciousness.[9] Perhaps Jung is referring here to what Klee has called the "original". Connecting with the child is therefore perhaps a means of connecting with that state of originality. The appropriate moment for the emergence of the archetypal qualities of the child in the adult can therefore perhaps be said to be at times when it is psychologically necessary to seek or connect with the original, for instance in moments of personal crisis when identity and perhaps even mortality are threatened. Because Jung has associated the emergence of the archetypal child with the development of individuality as a kind of corrective, it may also be true to say that the child is capable of breaking through the adult veneer at moments when the qualities of the adult are in most need of correction. While it is dangerous to over-simplify the main point I want to make here is that in my view, the child exists at both ends of the psychological spectrum; it exists at the beginning as an original and at the end of adult domination as a corrective. Its form is uniquely complex and it would seem that the notion of the child is symbolic of more than the singular regressive quality with which it is commonly associated. P-Orridge has suggested that the journey through the personal memories of the child to the archetypal experience of child, provides the "links of old senses in rope"[10] - a notional thread of existence[11] which reaches back into

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[8] Sigmund Freud 'Totem and Taboo (Some points of agreement between the mental lives of savages and neurotics) (1913[1912-13]) **The Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud**, Vol XIII Trans, James Strachey. p 184

[9] C. G. Jung 'The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious' **The Collected Works** Volume 9, Part 1. Trans F. C. Hull. Routledge & Kegan Paul, London 1959. p 168

[10] Genesis P-Orridge **A Hollow Cost** artist's manuscript dated February 1994

[11] a reference here to the Tibetan Thread.

the perinatal and transpersonal state of consciousness[12] · to a psychological original state which may help to reposition the adult within his/her own psychological process of individuation. I would suggest that this may not be a rational or a fully intellectualised sensation, but may be felt as 'uncanny' or as a feeling of rightness. This is a notion which will become more significant toward the end of this thesis. The links in the rope of existence which P-Orridge speaks about are instinctual knots, sensations of rightness found in moments of connection with the child archetype as originality or corrective trait.

If the appearance of the child archetype is, as Jung suggests, symbolic of the emergence of awakening independence, as an experience of originality, or as a corrective against the stagnation of sensuality, its attributes may not necessarily be particularly whimsical or angelic. The child implies instability and movement through emergence. As an antidote to adult rationalism it is prankish. I would suggest that such an energy has nothing to do with the romantic image of the child as angelic innocence. By implication the qualities of the archetypal are incomplete or emerging. Such a dynamic is often irrational and unpredictable.

Baudrillard has suggested that the principle of the child is other to the adult. He

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[12] Stanislav Grof (Grof & Hal Zina Bennett) **The Holotropic Mind (The Three Levels of Human Consciousness and How They Shape Our Lives)**. Harper San Francisco. 1990;

> Perinatal - "this terms is a Greek-Latin word composed of the prefix *peri* -meaning "near" or "around" and the root word *natalis*, "pertaining to childbirth." p 28
>
> ... exploration in non-ordinary states of consciousness has provided convincing evidence that we do store memories of perinatal experiences in our psyches ...
> Perinatal experiences involve primitive emotions and sensations such as anxiety, biological fury, physical pain, and suffocation, typically associated with the birth process... These early perinatal experiences are not limited to the delivery process of childbirth. Deep perinatal memories can also provide us with a doorway into what Jung called the collective unconscious. While reliving the ordeal of passing through the birth canal we may identify with those same events experienced by people of other times and other cultures, or even identity with the birth process experienced by animals or mythological figures. We can also feel a deep link with all those who have been abused, imprisoned, tortured, or victimised in some other way. It is as if our own connection with the universal experience of the foetus struggling to be born provides us with an intimate, almost mystical connection with all beings who are now or even have been in similar circumstances." pp 28 - 29

describes the nature of this otherness as "total seduction"[13], meaning that it is seduced by its own Being, its own presentness. Baudrillard suggests that, while the adult needs a constant cognitive reminder that it is an adult, children do not have to remind themselves; they do not have to make believe that they are children, they know that they *are* . Baudrillard would have us believe that the nature of the child's Being is immediate, instinctive and primary. In other words, its knowing that 'it is' is fundamentally ontological and of the moment. In this respect we can say that the child is psychologically at the opposite polarity to the adult. Baudrillard expands the notion of this polarity by suggesting that:

> Children are not far removed, in fact, from Schnitzler's microbes: they are, as it were, a different species, and their vitality and development announces the eventual destruction of the superior - adult world that surrounds them. Childhood haunts the adult universe as a subtle and deadly presence.[14]

I would suggest that this is not only true of real children but also of the archetype and would go further to say that to engage with the archetypal principle of child is to experience something which is totally other, something which seems to possess the properties of another species. According to Baudrillard this is a species of total seduction, a principle which is absolutely consumed by the nature of its own Being. Baudrillard suggests that the child is not, as is the adult, constantly challenged by the notion that it might not be what it believes itself to be. The child does not believe: it knows that it is. Meanwhile, the adult, having passed through childhood and having come into contact with the nature of the child of absolute Being, having experienced the total seduction of the child, is ever haunted by its authenticity. From a Jungian point of view we might postulate that the adult is haunted by the phenomena of the child both within the realms of the personal and the collective unconscious. The tension which might arise from the adult's sense of its own inauthenticity, shadowed by the authentic child, is perhaps apparent on both the superficial and the deep unconscious levels of the psyche. The character of the child may therefore assume a sinister presence within the adult psyche since it threatens to destroy the supremacy of the adult. The child is, in a very real sense, an agent which threatens to unmask the adult world as fraud, sham and illusion. According to

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[13] Jean Baudrillard **The Transparency of Evil (Essays on Extreme Phenomena)** Trans, James Benedict. Verso, London & New York. 1990/1993. p 169

[14] Ibid,.

this hypothesis an adult's engagement with an archetypal experience of the child would imply entering into a different state or sensation of Being. For the adult this may mean the loss of a cognitive system of reminder, the loss of an intellectual location - the frame in which the adult tends to place and validate itself. The loss of the frame and the exposure to what could be described as the full-on, sensual, instinctive experience of Being, would presumably be violently disorientating and, notwithstanding, tremendously seductive.

Engaging with the archetypal qualities of the child may also imply the unmasking of the adult. Jung has suggested, and Baudrillard has implied, that contact with the archetypal child is in some way to succumb to the phantom of seduction which exists just below the surface of the adult veneer. Traces of the archetypal traits of the child and the disruption it causes in the make-up of the adult can be seen in the work and the changing personality of Genesis P-Orridge. The child is one of the earliest themes or tools used by P-Orridge. One can see from evidence presented in the Coum diaries (documents dating from 1974 concerning the early performance activities) P-Orridge's strong tendency to cast himself in the role of the child, of characters with childlike qualities. The notion of the child is frequently explored in the song lyrics of Throbbing Gristle, and Psychick TV and there is a tendency in the most recent work to reconstruct memories of his own childhood within archetypal, neurotic, pathological frames.

The overriding feeling one gets from P-Orridge's work is that the likeness of the child is evoked out of a sense of frustration and is used as a reflex which undermines, interrogates and unmasks the inauthenticities of aspects of the adult world, including himself as adult. It is used as a method of connecting with another, perhaps more immediate, state of Being.

Jung has suggested that the child is evoked by conflict-situations, those circumstances which we might assume are centred on a crisis of identity and the question of authenticity. In accordance with this theory it may perhaps be true to say that P-Orridge's frequent use of the child goes hand in hand with the tidal sensations of frustration and betrayal which are a regular feature of his life. These rhythmic episodes of crisis seem to be brought on by his personal loss of a sense of authenticity he experiences in the adult world. This reading of P-

Orridge's psychological situation suggests that for him the notion of identity is perhaps linked to a sensation of the authentic which the child represents and facilitates. In other words, for P-Orridge, authenticity can be said to be:

> immediacy, availability, vulnerability to the sensual experience of the moment
>
> an openness to the possibility of any physical or psychological gesture which emanates from the moment
>
> a willingness to participate in 'other' seductive narratives or what we might call organic forms which lie outside the notion of binary logic.[15]

Jung suggests that at moments of crisis the child is produced as an irrational third[16] - a strong chaotic other. Such a third principle might offer a formula of behaviour into which the psyche can retreat, or rather be consumed or seduced, given that adult desires must be consumed. The child can perhaps be said to offer a window into the authentic but it must be remembered that not every adult recognises or even desires such an escape. Even though such an escape into the authentic is empirically attractive Jung has suggested that the child is primarily viewed and revered as a symbol in the lives of adults. More often than not the adult maintains a symbolic recognition of the child archetype, regarding it, according to Jung, as a mythological projection which "requires religious repetition and renewal by ritual"[17]. In this way most adults resist total identification with the archetype which, according to Jung, may result in "inflation and possession by the emergent contents"[18] However, in the case of P-Orridge, inflation and possession by the emergent content of the psyche is precisely what is sought.

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[15] the present author's hypothesis.

[16] which Jung describes as:

> ..a formula appropriate only to a psychological, that is, modern stage of development. It is not strictly applicable to the psychic lide of primitives ... (C. G. Jung 'The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious' **The Collected Works** Volume 9, Part 1. Trans F. C. Hull. Routledge & Kegan Paul, London 1959. p 169)

[17] Ibid,. pp 168-169

[18] Ibid,. p 351

5.2 The Child - I Was

The childhood of Genesis P-Orridge seems to have been characterised by crisis, both physical and mental. His failure to thrive after birth developed during infancy into a severe eating disorder. Steroid treatments for asthma resulted in the fast deterioration of the adrenal glands diagnosed as Addison's disease. This led to a long term dependency on adrenalin. The effects of this kind of drug dependency is reflected in one of P-Orridge's early songs called **Adrenalin**:

Adrenalin, the edge is thin
Fight or flight you never win
Sitting here you make me shiver
Sitting here I lose all fear
Making love in different places
Jealousy brings you so near
All this energy destroys me
Killing my security
Yet it still helps me be happy
And it still helps make me free

Paper thin Adrenalin
Paper thin Adrenalin

Some days I'm in a standard state
Simply cruising on reserve
Sleeping though I'm still alive
Waiting for the life you give
Absence is an awful cure
Can I be alive once more
Living on this simple plane
They also wait who stand and serve
Adrenalin creates this law
And gives me hope for life again

Paper thin Adrenalin
Paper thin Adrenalin

Sitting here you make me shiver
Sitting here you seem so near
So I try to punish myself
And through myself, someone else
I am split in different places
I am split from everything
Here we are just sitting pretty

Longing for security
Yet it still helps make me happy
Sitting with adrenalin

Paper thin Adrenalin
Paper thin Adrenalin[19]

Such biographical details are important particularly in relation to the manner in which P-Orridge connects with the child. It is important because physical and mental pain, which was part of the real experience of childhood, has inevitably contributed to the make-up of the adult psyche. If, as Jung suggests, aspects of the child archetype are produced by crisis, then it is possible that the child Genesis P-Orridge was already experiencing sensations of the archetypal child, in his own childhood. This might account for the retrospective archetypal visions of his own childhood in which he portrays himself as the child victim, or as hero, and trickster. Such retrospective visions of himself seem not to be nostalgic: the child presented in the work of P-Orridge seems to surface in torrents of emotion and irrationality. The most important factor in assessing the nature of Genesis P-Orridge's identification with the child archetype is his physical connection with the past. While memories offer a link to the circumstances of youth, adult drug dependency as a result of childhood ill health is a constant reminder of the defective physical state of his childhood. Memories are not only retained in the mind; the circumstances of childhood ill health are still a physical reality. So we can say that ill health links the adult to the child and the adult to its own mortality.

> Now I have to take Adrenalin every day to stay alive. So I choose each day to be alive for the next day, which is a good position to be in, to be really clear about .....[20]

Because the distance between the adult and the child is reduced to the point at which all memories are still physical and real, I would suggest that there is a real on-going conflict between the two realities. It is this conflict between the adult and the attendant child that shapes and colours much of P-Orridge's work.

The above quotation is, in my view, symptomatic of the way in which Genesis P-

[19] Genesis P-Orridge. Song lyric, printed in **Industrial News** 4 November 1980, number 3. Limited edition, hand printed.

[20] Genesis P-Orridge interview with the present author, September 4th, 1994.

Orridge attempts to turn misadventure to advantage using a kind of reverse psychology as a method of self-preservation. This statement also offers a good example of how intellectual rationalism, in other words P-Orridge's adult mentality, attempts to deal with, explain and take control of the chaos and legacy of childhood disorders. Statements such as this speak of the adult's attempts to come to terms with the irrational and disorientating elements left over from childhood which act as a constant reminder of the adult's origins. I would suggest that this statement implies that the adult mentality is capable of intellectual infanticide on the child - meaning the strangulation of childhood legacies through rationalism. It could be argued that this is the ultimate reflex of adult control - its potential to damage its own development through its infanticidal tendencies.

For P-Orridge intellectual rationalism has become an unconscious reflex to avert 'uncontrolled' descent into distress and forced dependency. Instead "Steroids lead to addictive joys and elective death"[21] - an altogether optimistic, liberating, self-governing state of affairs.[22] This is perhaps a reflection of the extent to which the adult will fabricate truths, meaning and ideologies in order to retain control over itself. Perhaps such fabrications are part of the mechanism by which the adult believes itself to be. Such suggestions seem logical but in the case of P-Orridge they become problematic because of the nature of his connection with archetypal principals.

I have already suggested in Chapter 3 that P-Orridge's notion of space may be connected to his childhood occupation of creating sacred spaces in which he felt absorbed by the earth and in which he could explore his own sense of Being, both through the ignition of the imagination and, physically through the exploration of isolation, deprivation and sexuality.

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[21] Genesis P-Orridge **A Hollow Cost** February 1994 (Arist's manuscript)

[22] It is highly probably that Genesis uses medical dependency in order to access 'altered states' by failing to administer drugs upon which he is dependent. In this way he is able to elect to explore episodes of 'near-death'. This might appear to be barbaric and sadistic, however, evidence of techniques of physical 'deprivation' suggest that such practices were commonly used by the Shaman - specifically in relation to initiation ceremonies, and what is termed the 'Shamanic Flight' .

In my interviews and conversations with Genesis P-Orridge, he spoke of particularly significant episode of near death which occured as the result of physical circumstances which developed during a performance event in Antwerp in 1977.

In his recent writing childhood experiences seem to have assumed initiatory significance. However, when they appear in his current work they are more than biographic descriptions of his youth, they are representational of an ongoing process of reintegration. The reconvening of childhood memories is an attempt to retrace the steps of his life back to the instinctive actions of his youth in order to find the significances of certain events in the light of what he now knows as an adult. The instinctive actions and feelings of the child have perhaps assumed importance for the adult who senses himself moving further and further away from the original state of affairs experienced as the child. It is perhaps true to say that the adult relies more and more on the child archetype and less and less on his own instincts to propel him back into the centre of a sensual interface with existence. P-Orridge's increased activity in this area may suggest that a need to reposition the adult has occurred.

5.3 Another Marginal Underground

In a sense the child archetype is the ruling figure of the marginal world. Like Freud's notion of the child, which is present in the adult at a psychologically lower level, the marginal worlds have historically been associated with what is called the underworld. Like the notion of the instinctive, sensual, animalistic archetypal child beneath the rational, intellectual adult, the contemporary underworld of marginal experience is associated with the so-called under belly of society. It is little wonder that deep seated fears concerning marginality and marginal characters have, in contemporary times, tended to be located in the area of society which seems to cohere with the underground metaphor. We can also witness individuals moving into the social and cultural underground in order to participate in marginal experiences; licence sanctioned by the marginal environment is characterised by the disruption of adult control systems. Significantly, most of P-Orridge's work has existed and flourished in the arts underground. In the early 1970s Throbbing Gristle pioneered Industrial Music on the British underground and again in mid 1980s P-Orridge and Psychic TV helped to establish Acid House as a musical force within the British underground.

Working within the context of an underground culture may perhaps have provided a sympathetic environment in which P-Orridge could continue to explore the drives, fantasies, neuroses and pathologies of the contemporary psyche. It can perhaps be said that the cultural underground serviced P-Orridge's need to psychologise. In recent correspondence P-Orridge talks about seeking to invest music and the arts with honour. This suggests that there was a sense in which he was consciously trying to invest this particular area of underground culture with a sense of worth, perhaps to suggest through his work that it could be something other than sheer indulgence and commerce, that it could be a platform for serious investigation into the notion of self and self-expression. In addition, there is a sense in which P-Orridge was perhaps attempting to encourage something like a sense of 'tribe' and a common bond of emotional struggle which might facilitate what I term accidental enlightenment, or some form of accidental initiation, which I will come back to. I believe that P-Orridge was fully aware of the potential for marginal experience which the cultural underground offered and its conduciveness to achieving some kind of personal rites. However, contemporary forms of marginality are strikingly different from tribal forms. Initiation and marginal situations within tribal communities are generally part of the natural order and an accepted component of that society. In contrast, contemporary western society has almost outlawed what it considers to be marginal or underground activities, together with marginal characters. By outlawing marginality contemporary society has also outlawed some processes of initiation which require a space of licence in which to experiment. With the absence of specific spaces in which to experience both the ecstasies and traumas of disorientation and licence, it is perhaps moments of personal crisis, when the individual is thrown into disorientation, which have provided a second-rate window into rites of passage. Anthropologists such as Versnel have suggested that incidental personal crisis can stimulate initiatory journeys into marginality which, in some cases, can become significant as a mechanism of individuation. Genesis P-Orridge alludes to this idea in an interview given in 1994:

> Whenever you find you have the good fortune to feel even vaguely awake, just count yourself lucky. That's all. It might be an accident, it might be because some asshole was such an idiot at school and bullied you so badly you reacted and were traumatised so badly you became creative. A million things you know. Your parents got divorced, your parents didn't get divorced. Simple, simple tiny

> ripples on the pool of society can free people accidentally just as easily as they can consider themselves deep enough to free themselves.[23]

In comparison to the safe framework of ritual which supports marginality in tribal communities, this impoverished western equivalent is risky and traumatic. It is, nevertheless, as I have already pointed out, a medium through which P-Orridge is seeking to find some kind of sacred space, either physical or mental.

Even though such contemporary descents into disorientation, such marginal experiences, lack the organised and prepared spaces of tribal rituals, they may offer a similar intensity of experience.

5.4 The Nature of Marginal Experiences

Evidence gathered from anthropological accounts of tribal initiatory rites suggests that the period of marginal existence is terrifying, due to the lack of a logical behavioural framework and the confrontation with ideologies previously held to be taboo. Not only can it be said to be a dislocation from the world social order but it is a descent into chaos, into a world governed by sensuality as opposed to moral codes of behaviour. It is perhaps the difference between a world where some things are recognised as accepted and some things are not and a world where all things are possible.

Disorientation does not, I believe, suggest that the mind stops functioning but rather that it is forced to function in a different way. It is forced to be spontaneous and creative. This notion is upheld in Jung's discourse concerning the collision of the conscious and the unconscious. Jung claims that in such agonising situations of conflict:

> ... from which there seems to be no way out - at least for the conscious mind... out of this collision of opposites the unconscious psyche always creates a third thing of an irrational nature, which the conscious mind neither expects nor understands. It presents itself in a form that is neither a straight "yes" nor a straight "no", and is

[23] Interview with Genesis P-Orridge, April 26, 1994, in **Poke A Dot** M.Q Production Company, hand made magazine (limited edition) printed May 23rd 1994

> consequently rejected by both. For the conscious mind knows nothing beyond the opposites and, as a result, has no knowledge of the thing that unites them. Since, however, the solution of the conflict through the union of opposites is of vital importance, and is moreover the very thing that the conscious mind is longing for, some inkling of the creative act, and of the significance of it, nevertheless gets through.[24]

Within this conflict, which is akin to the physical circumstances of tribal initiation amid an atmosphere of disorientation, there is a definite movement towards creativity. Finding solutions, clarifying the position of the self, and the problem of survival becomes creative. This also implies that it is something other than a pure application of logic which characterises the creative reflex. Logicality does not exist within this realm therefore decisions are made instinctively. Within this kind of creative atmosphere the concept of death is ever present; the licence of possibilities offered to the adept is also a sea in which he or she may drown.

Within contemporary western society it is difficult to assume that such initiatory processes can be equivalent to those of tribal societies. This is not to say that western society is somehow more advanced and therefore 'above' the acceptance of tribal gnosis but only that our premises, the particular way that we perceive ourselves and the world, is different. Rather than specific aspects of gnosis associated with the initiatory rites of tribal communities, western experiences of initiation may be associated with a sense of what Baudrillard has termed exoticism:

> Exoticism is the acute and immediate perception of an eternal incomprehensibility.[25]

Playing the creative and perceptual game of exoticism is, according to P-Orridge the only reason to play. Perhaps this is because the westerner no longer knows what he is playing for, only that there is a sensation of rightness in the playing of the game.

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[24] C. G. Jung 'The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious' **The Collected Works** Volume 9, Part 1. Trans F. C. Hull. Routledge & Kegan Paul, London 1959. pp 167 - 168

[25] Jean Baudrillard **The Transparency of Evil (Essays on Extreme Phenomena)** - essay 'Radical Exoticism' Trans, James Benedict. Verso, London & New York. 1990/1993. p 147

> Since there is no goal to this experiment other than the goal of perpetually discovering new forms and new ways of perceiving, it is an infinite game. An infinite game is played for the purpose of continuing play, as opposed to a finite game which is played for the purpose of winning or defining winners. It is an act of free will. No one can "play" who is forced to play. Play is, indeed, implicitly voluntary.[26]

It is perhaps within this transaction in the playing of the game, even if there is no purpose beyond the playing, that contemporary westerners may at least claim an affinity with the archaic. As usual P-Orridge's statements are characteristically under-stated and open-ended.

For P-Orridge the archetypal child is the personification of the game. To embrace the nature of the child is to hitch a ride with the game master, since the child is the empirical authority on how to play games.

I have already suggested how P-Orridge uses incidental, as well as self-generated crisis, to evoke, stimulate and manipulate creative impulses and autonomous states of mind. However, he also allows himself to be pushed into crisis by other people.

> ..... you allow everyone else to come through you, and transmit through you all the anger, angst and confusion that they have felt since they were born. And that's the job of the artist, whatever medium they use; to be a vessel and a vehicle for the mind, the dreams, the unconscious mind of the people who are confronted with their art.[27]

The celebration of distress, hurt, anger, through art is likened by P-Orridge to an "exorcism and an expression of the neuroses, the fear and the liberation of a tribe".[28] P-Orridge as 'artist' takes on the role of vehicle, and of vessel through which to channel the hurt of the tribe as one fulfilling a responsibility for the well being of that tribe. The creative impulse towards Being the artist-vessel is in itself a vehicle through which to channel some of his own personal distress. In effect, he allows himself to become the space in which the marginality of the tribe

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[26] Genesis P-Orridge **Thee Last Book** (work in process) 1995 (the artist's own layout)

[27] Genesis P-Orridge interview with Judith Ammann in **Who's been sleeping in my brain? Interviews Post Punk**, Suhrkamp Verlag, Frankfurt am Main 1987. p 196

[28] Ibid,. p 196

is enacted. In this way the artist takes on the archetypal roles of martyr, hero/worrier, Christ figure, playing out the possibilities licenced to him by the will of the tribe.

5.5 The child is correct, the child experiences awe which does not exclude any aspect, dark or light, of the "grimm" tales held silent by the forest.[29]

It is a common feature of the work of P-Orridge that he often turns his gaze, sometimes in the space of one work, from self to parents, to school, to institution, to government, to humanity. This is not, I believe, the result of a conscious structural manipulation of material but is symptomatic of P-Orridge's 'dilated' gaze which is able to survey both details in the foreground and the larger picture of humanity on the same perceptual horizon. This is a type of hyper-sensitivity which may be synonymous with the gaze of the archetypal child seeing and experiencing the world for the first time in a state of awe. As P-Orridge suggests "To the child (my SELF) it is a fairyland"[30] a place which is at once a space of mystery and new experiences, not yet defined in terms of codes of moral practice. Such a fairyland view of humanity does not exclude its darker side since light and dark, good and bad, have not yet been defined. The child's experience of the landscape is synonymous with its experience of itself - it is, as I have said before, empirically of the moment.

The ethos of the vision of the archetypal child is encapsulated in many of P-Orridge's creative activities. It is used as a creative dynamic of spontaneity and improvisation, or it is evoked as a character, or as a manner of Being. P-Orridge has likened this to method acting. What is also detectable in P-Orridge's writings is the manner in which he merges the pure visionary qualities of the child with the tainted cynicism of a manufactured adult vision of the world. The early works give the impression that this is deliberate but in more recent works the ability to comment, experience, and sense the world simultaneously from the point of view of both the child and the adult has developed beyond the point of it being a conscious reflex. In a recent letter P-Orridge explains and illustrates how a

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[29] Genesis P-Orridge Extract from a letter to the present author 26 November 1996

[30] Ibid,.

number of different areas of thoughts and experiences co-exist as ideas which seem to splinter and fragment from the domestic into the archetypal quarter and seem to find their way onto the page automatically.

> Staples Road Infant School was a ten minute walk from our house in Loughton, Essex. The house we lived in was newly built. In fact due to it's [sic] late completion we had spent the entire, blizzard-filled and bitterly cold winter of 1963 living in a caravan parked in the street outside. Myself, my parents, my one sister Cynthia Helen Megson, and my grandmother Edith Swindells. We had a whole Christmas there incredibly cold. One of my tasks was to help my father empty the chemical toilet in a pit, struggling on ice, nauseated by the stink. Toilet cleaning seems to haunt me throughout my L-if-E.
>
> After this harsh winter we eventually moved into the house. There was a very old, very high holly bush hedge at the front but no gates, and a pretty wild meadow garden. I recall certain things very vividly about that house. I would eat breakfast watching wild deer grazing in the front garden. Epping Forest was still untouched across the other side of the "street". Rabbits, squirrels and deer were always around. In the mornings my mother would walk me to school, about ten minutes along a trail worn by footsteps and deer through the forest. . There were pools, frog ponds, deep shadows. It was a magickal place, and a favourite haunt, I learned later, for rapes, flashing, and the dumping of the corpses of the murdered.
>
> This experience, with its contrast of Childlike awe innocence mixed with an adult exploitation pollution of that dreamspace for sordid activities, inspired and charged the T. G. song "EPPING FOREST" years later. One of the very first lyrics I recorded.
>
> The theme of a place, a building, a symbol, or a phrase being neutral until combined with the individual and subjective information supplied and attached to it by the viewer / perceiver has been a constant through every phase, project and thread of my works. The forest is, of course, merely the forest. To the child (my SELF) it is a fairyland; to the murderer rapist it is a sanctuary and a sacred repository of the profane and unspeakable; to the consensus reality of the adult it is a place of beauty to be feared and suspicious. .... a place tainted and spoiled by the mere possibility of aberrant behaviour. In fact, as ever, it is ALL the above, and together the full spectrum of perceptions and projections from all possible parties builds a "fairytale" in all its glory. The child is correct, the child experiences awe which does not exclude any aspect, dark or light, of

the "Grimm" tales held silent by the forest.[31]

The Grimm tale held silent by the forest is perhaps the tale of innocence lost, or rather a sense of originality and authenticity polluted by the adult fairytale composed of profane and unspeakable acts. Within such a perverse fairytale the child which P-Orridge has called 'my SELF' becomes a victim frustrated by the adult mechanisms of enforced control which dictate and dominate its existence and force it to see things in terms of limited binary definitions. In a statement from **A Hollow Cost** P-Orridge writes:

What we have creates our need.[32]

It is perhaps the prevailing memories of childhood which create the need for the adult, in this case P-Orridge, to attempt to re-establish the holistic sight of the child, and to evoke its voice, its sense of awe and its a-moral seeing of all the possibilities inherent in a scene or an idea. The re-establishment of a state of childlikeness goes much deeper than simply re-establishing a holistic sensual experience of the world. It requires the sedation of what Freud has called the basic mental mechanism of the adult psyche which attempts to "relieve the individual from the tension created in him by his needs".[33] The obvious outcome of such a practice is to become vulnerable and subjectively involved in every neurotic and possibly pathological reflex of the psyche, to walk freely between the worlds of the adult and the child, between the daylight of the everyday and darkness of the underground, moved by every desire and impulse of the soul. It is an overriding need to be connected to an authentic state of Being. This is, in my view, a means of de-programming for P-Orridge. It is not simply to thwart patterns of behaviour expected of an adult but to submerge oneself on an almost full-time basis into a volatile perceptual and sensual state of affairs. Entrance into such states is sometimes controlled within ritual settings but this is not always the case. Connection varies from brief glimmers to total submersion. Something of the complex ratio of experiences is easily detected in the various characters present as voices, accents and angles in the work that P-Orridge has produced out of these

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[31] Genesis P-Orridge extract from a letter to the present author 26 November 1996

[32] Genesis P-Orridge **A Hollow Cost** February 1994 (see appendix)

[33] Sigmund Freud 'Totem and Taboo (Some points of agreement between the mental lives of savages and neurotics) (1913[1912-13]) **The Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud** Vol XIII Trans, James Strachey. p 186

states. The various character ratios possible in the adult / child spectrum offer different perspectives on a variety of ideas and issues which emerge. Often the writing looks as if it has been penned by a number of different characters, all of them engaging subjectively in the discourse.

The public arena serves as a repository for the work - another space in which the work can be re-ingested. For P-Orridge it is viewed as a battleground onto which fragments of ideas are thrown. P-Orridge calls such fragments, splinters or Transmissions. Because of their subjective origins such transmission are provocative, open to interaction and interpretation. They are intended to contribute to the debate over the notion of the place of self within the broad context of humanity - they are designed to act as live ammunition on the battlefield of culture. In the words of P-Orridge, the battle for the 'self' is, and should be "nothing short of a total war".[34] The idea is projected, not the solution.

> The basic premise in all my work has always been, if I think about something and it seems to make sense, to project it into the public arena of popular culture. To see whether it survives or not in its own right, to see what happens and what is confirmed and denied and what creates interesting interactions and confrontations. To use popular culture as the alchemical jar and see what happens. Why I have to do that, I don't know. It's just been a drive for so long.[35]

P-Orridges uses the public arena in the same way that he uses his own psyche, as a container in which to ignite ideas, as an alchemical jar in which to mix elements and distil elements. The cultural space and the space of the psyche are likened by P-Orridge to cathedrals - devotional buildings in which to play out possibilities.

P-Orridge has recognised that the words and images that individuals encounter within the space of culture can set off cascades of effects which, when viewed *en*

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[34] frequently used slogan which appears in a number of works from the early 1980s onwards.

[35] Genesis P-Orridge interview by Jay Kinney, in **Gnosis** (A Journal of the Western Inner Tradition). San Francisco. Summer 1994. No 32 p 51

masse, grow into labyrinthian, chaotic constructions[36] not unlike the areas within the psyche from which they came. P-Orridge's use of an old psychological term 'projection', which is usually associated with the manner in which people attach their fears, or dreams and aspirations to another individual, provides us with an insight into the significance that P-Orridge attaches to this mode of working. It is clear that he believes that by amplifying the dynamic character of a freed psyche into the public arena, in other words by projecting an idea into public space, it might metaphorically detach itself from its biological origins, expanding and gathering weight as other individuals attach significance to it. In accordance with this hypothesis the public space becomes a virtual theatre of ideas which, according to P-Orridge, are potentially capable of developing into alternate realities. This is a theme taken up in his written and spoken word works, and has shaped his ideas concerning the power of television from the early 1980s.

> Television is our new exterior brain, one day it will be a standard fitting within every skull on earth, each brain an electronic star in a transmitted milky way. Galaxies of dreams and information, people will become more comfortable with televisual reality than that of their daily lives. Television will be MORE REAL than life. A new synthetic material, giving all people infinite access to infinite

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[36] Deriving from the unconscious; they are 'quantum' by nature, or Holotropic - Stanislav Grof (Grof & Hal Zina Bennett) **The Holotropic Mind (The Three Levels of Human Consciousness and How They Shape Our Lives).** Harper San Francisco. 1990. pp 9 - 10;

> David Bohm ... was inspired by holography to create a model of the universe that could incorporate the many paradoxes of quantum physics. He suggests that the world we perceive through our senses and nervous systems, with or without the help of scientific instruments, represents only a tiny fragment of reality. He calls what we perceive the "unfolded" or "explicate order." These perceptions have emerged as special forms from a much larger matrix. He calls the latter the "enfolded" or "implicate order." In other words, that which we perceive as reality is like a projected holographic image. The larger matrix from which that image projected can be compared to the hologram. However, Bohm's picture of the implicate order (analogous to the hologram) describes a level of reality that is not accessible to our senses or direct scientific scrutiny ...
>
> The holographic model offers revolutionary possibilities for a new understanding of the relationship between the parts and the whole. No longer confined to the limited logic of traditional thought, the part ceases to be just a fragment of the whole but, under certain circumstances, reflects and contains the whole. As individual human beings we are not isolated and insignificant Newtonian entities; rather, as integral fields of the holomovement each of us is also a microcosm that reflects and contains the macrocosm. If this is true, then we can each hold the potential for having direct and immediate experiential access to virtually every aspect of the universe, extending our capacities well beyond the reach of our senses.

alternative realities through a cortex of Light.[37]

It is the possibility of a similarity between the volatile environment of culture and chaotic machinations of the psyche which, I believe, has sustained P-Orridge's interest in existing as an artist and has kept him from retreating from the public arena in order to execute work as a purely personal rite. Instead, P-Orridge recognises the possibilities inherent in creativity which, when expanded, can become a means of defining personal realities. Here P-Orridge makes a prophetic claim for television:

> A new synthetic material, giving all people infinite access to infinite alternative realities through a cortex of Light. They will Program, shape, form, and broadcast messages, until the very fabric of four dimensional reality has been torn asunder, its cloak cast down beneath. From this day forth, reality will be a multiple series of channels, option switches feeding our brains.[38]

It is the conviction that art and creativity can still reflect, coerce, emulate the possibilities of alternative realities and the alternate self which continues to fascinate P-Orridge, not for its Utopian ideals, for I believe he is equally intrigued by the sinister aspects of such ideas and propositions, but for their political appeal. P-Orridge writes:

> ... between extroversion and introversion, between doing and being, between politics and the psychological development of the person, between the fantasies of the political world and the politics of the fantasy world. Subjectivity and intersubjectivity have political roots; they are not as 'internal' as they seem.[39]

Some of the recent writings of Genesis P-Orridge are very clearly attempts to expand and fashion the struggle for the self within the format of political theory. In **Giftgas**[40] this is made more poignant because it is articulated through familiar, if not domestic, writing vocabulary and genres: a children's story, a medical casebook and the manifesto - political theory. Modelled on the notion of the classical psychological case book P-Orridge offers a case book of his own mind swamped at the moment of writing with memories, desires and personal

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[37] Genesis P-Orridge 'World Preset Guardians' **Thee Fractured Garden** artist manuscript pp 5-6 Second Draft October 1992.

[38] Ibid,. p 6

[39] Andrew Samuels **The Political Psyche'** Routledge, London & New York. 1993. p 4

[40] see a copy of this in **Rogue** magazine in the appendix of this thesis.

experiences. It is obvious that, as part of his method acting approach to writing, he has also allowed himself to become submerged in specifically contemporary neurois.

Returning to the theme of my introduction we can see how the notion of expansion in P-Orridge's work has been developed onto psychological and political levels. The use of archetypal qualities is then perhaps an attempt by P-Orridge to expand inwardly toward the limits of consciousness in order to find the original self - the creative self - which he collectively calls child. As Jung has suggested:

> ... the various 'child' faces may be regarded as illustrating the kind of psychic events that occur in the entelechy or genesis of the 'Self'.[41]

The ratio of influence which the adult consciousness and the child consciousness exert in any given creative process is recognised as different qualities of voice in P-Orridge's work. In terms of Jung's hypothesis, connecting with the child is a means of exploring the genesis of the self. It is perhaps a contemporary psychological means of returning to the beginning of the self. As such the regressive journey through the psyche to the origins of the self may be seen as comparable to the ancient Shamanic journey through the decomposition of the body. Decomposition seems to be an appropriate metaphor for the manner in which P-Orridge and other artists concerned with emulating the energies of the psyche into creative / art processes, work. The notion of decomposition suggests a complex stripping away of flesh which might equally translate into the stripping away of ideas, images, symbols and identities, but also the free flow of bodily fluids and energies which transform on the molecular and subatomic level into other modes of Being. These are metaphors for explorations on the minutest level, the point at which ideas flow freely into other ideas, the point at which all becomes indistinct and fundamentally a-political. Decomposition is perhaps an appropriate metaphor for the process of entering into the other - another state

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[41] C. G. Jung 'The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious' **The Collected Works** Volume 9, Part 1. Trans F. C. Hull. Routledge & Kegan Paul, London 1959. p 166

and sensation of Being, becoming the child, becoming Schnitzler's microbe[42].

[42] Jean Baudrillard **The Transparency of Evil (Essays on Extreme Phenomena)** Trans, James Benedict. Verso, London & New York. 1990/1993. p 169:

> Children are not far removed, in fact, from Schnitzler's microbes: they are, as it were, a different species, and their vitality and development announces the eventual destruction of the superior - adult world that surrounds them. Childhood haunts the adult universe as a subtle and deadly presence.

Chapter 6

Words

6.1 Introduction

In the previous chapters I have suggested that the work of Nitsch and P-Orridge is concerned with the creative exploration of areas which lie outside what Lyotard has called "the representational chamber". I have discussed how P-Orridge uses the archetype of the child as an energetic model and persona which not only provides a particular view of the world of consensus reality, but also acts as an expressive principle - a type of games master which assists in the manipulation of memory based and imaginal/psychic material.

I have suggested how, in terms of the work of P-Orridge, memories and archetypal phenomena are merged in order to gain intense glimpses of the genesis of the self and to allow the energies of the psyche to fuel creative processes. This is similar to what Nitsch asserts as the intention of his work: to allow the subconscious to become visible through Aktion and spontaneous gesture.

I have discussed how both artists are concerned with the intoxicating immediacy of the moment and I have suggested that in the extreme experience of the 'moment', both artists are attempting to align themselves with the multiplicity of the infinite (the raw libidinal energy of nature) and the intensive experience of the excess of possibilities within the moment which may equally be called ecstasy.

I have suggested that at the centre of both artists' work is an intention to operate in an area which is, by its nature, beyond representation. I have suggested that what is representational in their work, words, sounds and visual images are expressions of that intention. Equally it can be said that what is expressed in their work represents a kind of transparent blue-print which maps something of the chaotic nature of that region beyond representation.

Central to a discourse concerning the manner in which such energies arise and are projected is the continuing investigation into the artists' use of words. This

thread of enquiry began in the opening chapters with a brief investigation into Nitsch's interpretation and personal synthesis of the notion of catharsis which then led to the introduction of Hillman's theory regarding what he sees as the alienating effect of words in terms of a therapeutic experience. I suggested that what is being expressed by the artists is not articulated in terms of the literal meaning of words, but that Nitsch is seeking a language of intensity - a synaesthesic language, or a 'language of crisis' (Hillman) which has the possibility of expressing multiple readings. P-Orridge's notion of an expressive language is much more complex and is complicated by his creative movement toward annihilation which tends to make expression inadequate or useless. Such a state of affairs generates a deeply self-critical anxiety.

I will suggest that as is Nitsch's synthesis of the music of Bruckner into the essential qualities of noise, dynamic and velocity, it is the raw physical and the emotional articulations of voice which have become more important than intellectual rationalism, while, for P-Orridge, it is the hallucinatory nature and the accumulative effect of words which are used as an expressive medium. This chapter will introduce Hillman's notion of the Angelology of words into the discourse in order to begin to introduce the notion of the other of words which P-Orridge, like Gysin, terms The Third Mind.

In this chapter I will also suggest that both artists are, to a certain extent, engaged in developing their own esoteric language which can perhaps only be interpreted by those initiated into their particular expressive linguistics. I will discuss this notion in terms of an historic context by making comparisons with alchemical and gnostic practice which will also highlight the spiritual context of the artists' work.

In this chapter I will begin to move from a discussion of the artists' intentions toward looking at how their intentions translate as techniques and how those techniques function as stimulating and sensual media for psychological and philosophical investigation.

In the closing section I will reintroduce the theme of anxiety, which is a particular feature of the written work of P-Orridge, and will discuss how this equates with

mixed sensations of responsibility and annihilation.

The representational and abstract qualities of words present both a psychological and philosophical problem as well as a literary one. Both artists continually return to the question of whether it is possible for experience - the presentness of Being - to be contained or encapsulated in words and if it is at all possible for words to facilitate a pure exchange of feeling. P-Orridge takes the discourse further by speculating as to the speaker's responsibility for the utterance of words. I would suggest that the consideration of words is an historical discourse which continues to frame developments within philosophy, religion and science as well as the arts, and has become the front-end of any definitive equation which seeks to formulate, connect with and express, what is. It is the investigation of what is that is at the root of the work of Nitsch and P-Orridge.

In this chapter I would like to suggest that there is a universal language of poetics which arises out of questions of 'how do we experience'? and 'how do we connect with existence'? I will suggest that this language of the poetic can perhaps be viewed as a type of blueprint of the chaotic nature of that region beyond representation. Sheldon Ungar, albeit in a somewhat cynical tone, has recognised that often it is the artist who attempts to inhabit this area of speculation and therefore it is perhaps the artist, not the scientist, who becomes conversant with its dynamic possibilities.

> Freud opened the turmoil of the unconscious to public viewing. In physics, relativity and quantum theory canonised probability and uncertainty and thereby removed the "fixed point" that had sustained the Newtonian universe. Where scientists recoiled from the implications of their ideas and tried to keep relativism in check, writers and artists became active participants in the circus of incoherence. Across all creative domains, there arose a new, absurd sensibility: weakened references and significations, self-consciousness and privatisation, the abolition of standard forms, an abstract, often hallucinatory reality, and a sense of alienation and malaise.[1]

Both Nitsch and P-Orridge have expressed their belief in the fundamental connectedness of some aspects of philosophy, psychology and spirituality. P-Orridge states:

[1] Sheldon Ungar 'Is Nihilism Dead?' in **Sociological Analysis** 1990 Volume 51 part 1 p 101

We now have a situation where science, philosophy, psychology high-tech design, electronics and creative imagination intersect to facilitate an evolutionary step.

Recent science and quantum physics suggest that light and time are energies. Which is what visionaries, illuminates, seers in ancient times always knew. This fact was suppressed and concealed in recent western societies. Now the oldest and most contemporary perceptions intersect and agree.[2]

Nitsch has recently talked about the role that science plays in understanding the nature of existence. He argues that science provides humanity with the information about how we are able to experience existence through investigating the descriptions of chemical and biological systems, but that it does not, in itself, provide experience. Here Nitsch quotes Heidegger, who said that science was not able to think, implying that it could only describe.

> HN It would have been very important if Heidegger had discovered a computer - he said science is not able to think .....
>
> JAW but now it is interesting, that science is agreeing with artists.....
>
> HN yes, yes .....
>
> JAW ..... and chaos is finding scientific foundations, so the two areas are beginning to cross - to meet
>
> HN That is true.
>
> JAW But science may interpret things in a different way .....
>
> HN .... yes, yes, I (would say that) science is not really the idea of how the world is in reality, I would say that science is to know how we are able to have experience.[3]

Here Nitsch is hinting at what he sees as the abstract nature of science which he views as fundamentally objective and descriptive rather than subjective and experiential. However, as our conversation strays towards the idea of chaos theory and quantum ideas, we agree that there now exists some common ground

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[2] Genesis P-Orridge, unpublished statement. Los Angeles, 29 April, 1992

[3] Hermann Nitsch interview with the present author, 6 April 1994, Prinzendorf, Austria

which unites science with the concerns and techniques of random processing, cut-ups, action art and live art in the notion of multiple possibilities and in the unique moment. Nitsch charts what he sees as the art historic root of his interest in activity and the uniqueness of the moment, and makes an association between what he calls the automatic and the reflex of the subconscious.

> HN ... (the surrealists) wanted to integrate the subconsciousness ... and for me this was very interesting, but the results were not so important, because all the painters were making an interpretation of the consciousness, and the poets they tried automatic writing, it was difficult because they had to use the language (but) they wanted to become very very free like in a dream, but it was not possible because, they had (to work within) the structure of the language. Then there came the Abstract Expressionists especially from America and they brought colour, and texture and there were no words no grammar and no syntax. This was a much more expressive form of the subconscious in a material, because they brought up the experience of the senses on the canvas, this was much more automatic. It was real - it was a special language. I think of pictures of De Kooning.....
>
> ..... (Hano Translating Nitsch who now speaks in German) painters tried to get close to the subconsciousness to use the language of the subconscious, but they used the traditional language of painting - like Magritte. They could not come close to the subconscious process. Abstract painting was different because they tried to bring themselves to the subconscious process - where their gestures could speak out of their subconsciousness - this is (what I call) the metre language, because it is a language which is structured specifically to speak about this thing.[4]

Nitsch closes this part of our conversation with the remark:

> I would say that this is the specific language of art. Art is more than language.

For Nitsch, the specific language of art is automatic - that it should be the expression of the automatic, executed through the gesture or physical activity of the artist. Nitsch states that for him art is more than language, more than words, and more than the formal craftsmanship of painting. He suggests that in this sense art is more than representation, and in Nitsch's estimation, art should be an automatic gesture of the subconscious, which is beyond craftsmanship. It is

[4] Hermann Nitsch interview with the present author, 6 April 1994, Prinzendorf, Austria.

clear that Nitsch locates art in gesture and that form, or the large structures which he instigates are vessels in which the real art is contained, isolated or focused.

6.2 The Representational Problem of Words

Friedrich Nietzsche has argued that words provide man with a tool through which he can "set a world of his own over against the other world." Here I take the other world to be that which is not definable through language. It is perhaps the other world described by Carl Jung - a world of "wordless occurrences" located within the collective unconscious. It is perhaps the automatic realm that Nitsch has associated with the subconscious, the world of the moment. In Nietzsche's statement I am also reminded of the argument put forward by Hillman and Ventura who have suggested that, in terms of psychotherapy, words repress contact with the 'ore' of feelings, giving an illusion of knowledge and understanding, while blocking the real experience of feelings, in other words, discouraging us from the real sensation and experience of the other. In the same vein P-Orridge states: "we describe rather than feel."[5] Nietzsche expounds his argument by suggesting that the world of words, names and definitions that man places over the other wordiess world is a world which "inhabits" (my term) science. Our self-created world is a descriptive region in which experience and the sensation of real feelings is limited by words. Nietzsche describes the occupation of science as recreating a world of words suggesting that there exists a kind of tyranny or conspiracy which comes from the invasion of words.

> ".....man has for long ages believed in the concepts and names of things as in *aeternae veritates* [eternal truths] he has appropriated to himself that pride by which he raised himself above the animal; he really thought that in language he possessed knowledge of the world. The sculptor of language was not so modest as to believe that he was only giving things designations, he conceived rather that with words he was expressing supreme knowledge of things; language is, in fact, the first stage of the occupation with science ...."[6]

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[5] Genesis P-Orridge **At Stockholm** P & C Etherworld Recordings 1995. (CD inside sleeve. Genesis P-Orridge & White Stains)

[6] Friedrich Nietzsche ' Human, All Too Human' in **Twilight of the Idols & The Anti-Christ** Translated with Commentary by R. J. Hollingdale. Penguin Books 1968. p 191

Nietzsche argues that humanity's view of the world is based on the scientific appreciation of things via words. On the subject of words Nietzsche writes with extreme cynicism and sarcasm and his tone is one of disbelief at the stupidity of man who "thought that in language he possessed knowledge of the world." A similar tone can be detected in the writing of P-Orridge who in **Splinter Test** "hungers for thee death ov thee WORD."[7] P-Orridge proclaims that, for him, it is natural to hunger for the death of words because words imprison us and exert control over us. P-Orridge predicts a time when the word will become "Thee Museum ov Meanings"[8] a place of antiquity, a rare example of a redundant form of communication.

Just as P-Orridge associates the word with control, Nietzsche links language to religious tyranny which centres around the naming of God. Nietzsche complains: "I fear we are not getting rid of God because we still believe in grammar."[9] By associating God with grammar Nietzsche leads us toward a model of society where morality and grammar are entwined to create a linguistic system of moral values. In **Beyond Good and Evil** Nietzsche proposes that language forms the basis of our moral judgments and that grammar forces us along certain pre-conditioned paths of rational thinking and logic. Nietzsche describes this kind of control of morality through naming as " the abstract intelligibility of existence even for idiots"[10] He writes:

> The singular family resemblance between all Indian, Greek and German philosophising is easy enough to explain. Where, thanks to the common philosophy of grammar - I mean thanks to unconscious domination and directing by similar grammatical functions - there exists a language affinity, it is quite impossible to avoid everything being prepared in advance for a similar evolution and succession of philosophical systems; just as the road seems to be barred to certain possibilities of world interpretation ..... : the spell of definite grammatical functions is in the last resort the spell of *physiological* value judgments and racial conditions ....[11]

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[7] Genesis P-Orridge 'Thee Splinter Test' in **Thee Psychick Bible - Thee Apocryphal Scriptures ov Genesis P-Orridge and thee Third MIND ov Psychic TV** Compiled & Edited by J. A. Rapoza. Alecto Enterprises, San Fancisco. USA 1994 pp 139 -143

[8] Ibid,.

[9] Friedrich Nietzsche 'Human, All Too Human' in **Twilight of the Idols & The Anti-Christ** Translated with Commentary by R. J. Hollingdale. Penguin Books 1968. p 190

[10] Nietzsche contra Wagner (1888) reference lost

[11] Friedrich Nietzsche **Beyond Good and Evil** Trans Helen Zimmern, George Allan & Unwin Ltd. London. Page reference lost

Nietzsche talks about the spell of grammatical function in the same way that P-Orridge talks about the "naming sorcery that was both built, and solidified within thee Process ov Control..."[12] This is a process of naming which limits that which is named to a narrow linguistic determinacy, so in the case of naming a child, P-Orridge states:

> They've named us. We have been limited absolutely now. No chance. Just stuck with working it through...[13]

The nihilistic battle cry which proclaims the death of God necessitates the death of words and the death of determinacy of value judgments. The suggestion here is that the naming of things, including the divine, creates an abstract notion of that which is under scrutiny. This abstraction distances the namer from the empirical nature of that which is named. Rather than summoning up the essential power and complexities of the original in its name, the abstraction is a weak representation - a narrow simplification and an emotionless grave of meaning. Here P-Orridge ridicules the notion of naming and the mystical power historically associated with the knowledge, and the utterance of the name of God.

> Thee million names of **God.** Ha! Sure buddy! A million names can contain thee absolute, no problem. A million names, and a few more and we've got it all locked up son. No prob.[14]

P-Orridge's cynical tone ridicules the notion that the absolute could possibly be contained within a word, suggesting that, in his view, the absolute, if it exists at all, is wordless. I am reminded here of Henri Lefebvre's suggestion that the operation of abstraction via language murders nature " by 'anti-nature' - by abstraction, by sign and images, by discourse... Humanity is killing ... and perhaps commits suicide into the bargain."[15] Rather than progressing on a path of intellectual and spiritual evolution, Lefebvre provides us with a vision of humanity at odds with nature on the brink of disaster. In a similar tone P-Orridge

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[12] Genesis P-Orridge 'Thee Splinter test' in **Thee Psychick Bible - Thee Apocryphal Scriptures ov Genesis P-Orridge and thee Third MIND ov Psychic TV** Compiled & Edited by J. A. Rapoza. Alecto Enterprises, San Fancisco. USA 1994

[13] Genesis P-Orridge **Thee Seeding Ship** (For Simon Dwyer) California 1995, included in the inside cover of Thee Fractured garden CD 1996 (artists manuscript) p 9

[14] Ibid,. p 5

[15] Henri Lefebvre 'Social Space' in **The Production of Space** Trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith. Blackwell, Oxford UK & Cambridge USA. 1991. p 71

states that humanity is "driven by a desire for ignorance", suggesting that humanity is driven by the need to have or to be in control and, specifically, that humanity invites the illusion of knowledge, ownership and security offered by words. P-Orridge invariably expresses this type of word cynicism with obvious biblical / Christian overtones.

> There, there in a sky light scares and burns, ancient mouths scream, demand order, and shelter. Tablets in burning bushes. Hidden **words** that destroy us and make us wholly unusable to change ...[16]

While Nietzsche and P-Orridge seem to hunger for the death of words, both artists recognise the opportunity to use words in a subversive, provocative and contradictory way. Both artists have recognised the pre-determined nature of words and the manner in which words have been encoded with certain moral values. Here P-Orridge characteristically plays with assonance in a game of free association or decoding through which he attempts to uncover the political and social determinacy at work in the prescriptive power of words.

> Words have been degraded ov meaning: made void ov sense to encourage cynicism and lack ov self-coumfidence..... **Temporary, Temporality, Transcience,** easily can mutate into Temptation. A word that (authority) treats with horror, a state to be suppressed at all cost. In fact thee Full Fill Meant ov Temptation leads an Individual into ever closer unification ov their conscious and unconscious.[17]

Here P-Orridge uses "degraded" and suppressive words to subvert and engender collisions of meanings. Words are deconstructed and reassembled and opened up to greater possibilities of meaning. In this small statement the reconstruction of words echoes the process of revelation and transformation being advocated. The determinate tyranny of words is revealed and a method of subversion via the transformation and the cutting up of words is offered. The statement also plays with what P-Orridge sees as the political and social significance of certain words and creates an independent mythology for words. For instance the notion of temptation is given a provocative, even revolutionary, status.

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[16] Genesis P-Orridge **Thee Seeding Ship** (For Simon Dwyer) California 1995, included in the inside cover of **Thee Fractured Garden** CD 1996 (artists manuscript) p 4

[17] Genesis P-Orridge & Malik 1993 & 1987 respectively 'Revealed Manifestation' in **Thee Psychick Bible - Thee Apocryphal Scriptures ov Genesis P-Orridge and thee Third MIND ov Psychic TV** Compiled & Edited by J A Rapoza, Alecto Enterprises, San Francisco, 1994. p 20

Elsewhere P-Orridge demonstrates how words can be used as a tool or a symbol for change. Words are used like so many individual nuts and bolts to hold together a conceptual idea which lies outside the realm of the written word. It is a call to claim language itself, to reassemble and reform it into a personalised system of expression. P-Orridge suggests that an individual approach to the processing of words puts the determinacy back into the hands of the individual manipulator. In this way words are decoded of their social and political values, as the personal processing of words becomes an act of liberation. And yet:

> Thee sadness, thee awful, crying shame ov giving all this stupid fucking shit a bloody NAME![18]

In **Thee Seeding Ship** P-Orridge expresses the extreme hopelessness of the profession of naming and manipulating words, of attempting to alter the determinacy of words and, in view of the fact that truth is not embodied in words, the absolute waste of energy in the mere concern for words. He states:

> It can't be true. It never can be true. How can anything this useless ever be true.[19]

P-Orridge states that for him the struggle with the determinacy of words, through their subversion and reconstruction, is a journey "through these blessed batterings ov impotent labelling. Naming. Naming 'till we drop Exhausted. Gasping for forgiveness for ever assuming a name could be **power**"[20], for ever assuming a name could contains a graspable truth. P-Orridge states "E choke on **words** and feel blessed by them"[21], but ends on a note of personal frustration.

> E don't know to who I am speaking. Maybe who E am. Speaking. So much strangeness suddenly. So much kick back by thee enemies ov LIFE. Useless. Within these circles ov fires, screaming out **words** to make thee sun rise each morning. Infesting thee moonlight. Infecting thee night. Animals breed. Men fall pregnant by most

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[18] Genesis P-Orridge **Thee Seeding Ship** (For Simon Dwyer) California 1995, included in the inside cover of **Thee Fractured Garden** CD 1996 (artist's manuscript) p 9 (see the appendix for a copy of the artist's manuscript)

[19] Ibid,. p 9 - 10

[20] Ibid,. p 5

[21] Ibid,. p 4

peculiar sorcery.[22]

For me this statement suggests the outcome of P-Orridge's twenty year preoccupation with the processing and manipulation of words and how far he has outgrown and become disillusioned with the literary and, to a certain extent, the possible revolutionary power of words. P-Orridge sees himself as suffering from a malignancy of words - an uncontrollable urge to express himself via words - but at the same time accepts the virulent limitations of words. He associates his situation with the medical condition of pregnancy which is a rather quaint image for a condition which he obviously views as terminal.

6.3 Seeking the remainder

William Burroughs, in this instance writing about the cut-up techniques of Brion Gysin, suggests that the cut-up process is capable of stimulating a "systematic derangement of the senses" [23] where "images shift sense under the scissors, smell images to sound, sight to sound, sound to kinesthetic."[24] Though Burroughs implies that the cut-up method can engender a kinesthetic response in the reader, he does not map how words stimulate a physiological response. Burroughs does, however, make a claim for the mescaline-like hallucinations which he suggests can be induced by the processing of words, chiefly through the cut-up technique. Burroughs is clearly seeking something other than a purely intellectual response. He describes the form of this other as hallucinatory. This is a view shared by Allan Ginsberg, who describes a mystical experience he had in 1948, in which a voice orated verses from William Blake's **Songs of Innocence and of Experience.**

> ... it was a definitive experience for me in indicating that language at its maximum intensity, maximum information, minimum number of syllables, maximum musicality, could effect on the nervous system some extraordinary, catalytic change of perception.[25]

Ginsberg, like Burroughs, makes the narcotic claim for language, suggesting that

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[22] Ibid,. p 10

[23] William S. Burroughs 'The Cut-up Methods of Brion Gysin', in **RE/Search 4/5 Special Book Issue**. San Francisco 1982, p 36

[24] Ibid,.

[25] Allan Ginsberg BBC Radio 3 interview 1996

language is a pill which, if taken into the body, can affect it in some physiological, chemical way.
Burroughs was putting forward his concept of the mescaline quality of words, in Vienna Nitsch was experimenting with sight, sound, touch and smell, seeking a similar hallucinatory, synaesthesic experience. Nitsch was attempting to find, or induce, a form of synaesthesic altered perception which could facilitate states of physical and emotional excess which he called abreaction.

Nitsch's approach is clearly physiological, Burroughs, on the other hand was aiming at a physiological response to words according to P-Orridge, nevertheless maintained a predominantly literary interest in word procedures. Nitsch, on the other hand, is interested in the sensual/tactile and the physical and with inducing an experience beyond representation and, therefore, beyond words.

Burroughs was perhaps seeking the kind of residue that Lecercle has called the "remainder" after articulation.[26] Lecercle has defined the "theory of the remainder" as " the linguistic equivalent of the Freudian unconscious, excluded or repressed by the rules of grammar ..." It is the poetic other of *langue* - the natal tongue and language as the legend of Being described by Heidegger - it is the notion that "language is the coming, both in lighting and concealment, of Being itself".[27] Burroughs and Gysin have preferred to call the poetic other - the third

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[26] Jean-Jacques Lecercle in **The Violence of Language (A Theory of the Remainder)** Routledge, London & New York. 1990. pp 23 - 24 quoting Sigmund Freud 'Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious' Routledge, London. 1960 pp 125

[27] M. Heidegger 'Letter on humanism' in **Basic Writings** edited by D. F. Krell. Routledge, London 1978 p 193

mind [28] which

> ... itself appears as the "hero" endlessly sorting and resorting the fundamental elements of our individual minds. "By this time" the Mind says near the end of the trip "you will have gained some insight into the Control Machine and how it operates. The mechanism has no voice of its own and can talk indirectly only through the words of others speaking through comic strips, news items, advertisements, talking above all through names and numbers.[29]

Here the notion of the other that speaks above the chattering of language is introduced, a notion which Lecercle attributes to the "celebration of silence", saying that "when the babble of glib interlocution has at last come to an end, then, in the silence that is the essence of speech, we can at least listen to the monologue of language, in which the remainder makes itself heard."[30] While it is doubtful whether Burroughs or Gysin would attribute their notions of the Third Mind to

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[28] 'The Third Mind' by Brion Gysin and William S. Burroughs.
Explained in **Industrial News** September 3rd 1979. [limited hand printed edition RARE];

> Thirty years ago. Dr Claude Shannon of Bell Laboratories cut several hundred words out of a newspaper, threw them into a hat, and began picking them out one at a time, recording the very strange "sentences" that emerged from this randomisation. This bizarre experiment led to Shannon's discovery that the English language is nearly 50 percent redundant, and offered him the clues that he later developed into the basic mathematical equations of information theory. He demonstrated that information is mathematically equivalent to negative entropy, and this helped to create the cybernetic age.
>
> Burroughs - who has spent a lot of time studying hieroglyphic languages such as Mayan and Egyptian suggests that these eerie messages come from Korzybski's proverbial or structural unconscious, just as hieroglyph do and take us into the areas of dream and myth that control us without our awareness. Words become the actors as they interact, copulate, separate and join new partners in a computer like process of disconnection and reconnection.
>
> If previous Burroughs books (in which these randomisation techniques were used only occasionally) seemed like journeys into dream, *The Third Mind* is even further removed from the linear logic of the daytime mind. Or, as *The Third Mind* impersonally explains itself, "The Burroughs Machine, systematic and repetitious, simultaneously disconnecting and reconnecting - it disconnects the concept of reality that has been imposed on us and then plugs normally dissociated zones into the same sector - eventually escapes from the control of its manipulator; it does so in that it makes it possible to lay down a foundation of an unlimited number of books that end by reproducing themselves.

[29] Ibid,.

[30] Jean-Jacques Lecercle in **The Violence of Language (A Theory of the Remainder)** Routledge, London & New York. 1990. pp 23 - 24 quoting Sigmund Freud ' Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious' Routledge, London. 1960 p 115

the unconscious, or anything as optimistic as the notion of Being, they may well agree with the Freudian hypothesis of the 'other' which arises out of a sense of playfulness. Lecercle explains:

> in his *Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious...* Firstly there is a free playing with language, an experimenting with words without regard to their meanings. Little by little this enjoyment activity becomes forbidden, as 'the power of criticism' and logical thinking come to dominate. Presumably, the environment plays a crucial role in this evolution, the outcome of which is that the repressed tendency to absurdity only reappears in the displaced form of jokes, and even then Freud adds, a little alcohol is often necessary to free the adult from the constraints of grammar.[31]

I am reminded here of Lefebvre's view that language has broken the unity which existed between the body and nature. He suggests that "Language possesses a practical function but it cannot harbour knowledge without masking it"[32] However, Lefebvre suggests that the playful aspect of space escapes the disjunctive function of language. He states that within the space of play

> ...objects serve as markers for rhythms, as reference points, as centres. Their fixedness, however, is relative. Distances here may be abolished by look, word or gesture; they may equally well be exaggerated thereby. Distantiation alternates with convergence, absence with presence, concealment with revelation, reality with appearance - and all overlap in a theatre of reciprocal implication and explication where the action halts only during sleep.[33]

I would like to hypothesise here that Lefebvre's "theatre of reciprocal implication and explication" is the space of the remainder. This will become an important suggestion when it is linked to P-Orridge's notion of making space discussed in the previous chapter and expanded later in this thesis.

While Burroughs and Gysin laid claim to the notion of a third mind which "escapes from the control of the manipulator" becoming the remainder in a computer-like process of random disconnection and reconnection which created

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[31] Jean-Jacques Lecercle in **The Violence of Language (A Theory of the Remainder)** Routledge, London & New York. 1990. pp 23 - 24 quoting Sigmund Freud ' Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious' Routledge, London. 1960 pp 125 - 126.

[32] Henri Lefebvre "Special Architectonics' **The Production of Space** Trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith. Blackwell, Oxford UK & Cambridge USA. 1991. p 210 - 211

[33] Ibid,. p 211

an other unlimited, and presumably, superior mind, Nitsch shows little interest in searching for the other, if by the other one means a higher intelligence. Nitsch is interested in exploring a kind of natal language produced straight out of the dark recesses of the primal self. Above all he is concerned with focusing on the essence of life and what he considers to be the real nature of the individual. I would suggest that Nitsch does not divorce mind from body nor is he concerned with creating or seeking a superior or alien aspect of the other - a mystical other which is separate and practically unattainable. The verbal language adopted in Nitsch's work is the physical sound of the mother tongue. It is the scream of Being, the cry of life produced by the physical body, not the extra-physical remainder or the other which is articulated through the silence above the babble of words but it is intestinal and organic. It is a kind of physical response to Being which Lecercle suggests is the very essence of language:

> There is an inescapable materiality to language. My words emerge out of this body; other people's words penetrate it, an effraction that (can have) the direst consequences. Language is material not because there is a physics of speech, but because words are always threatening to revert to screams, because they carry the violent affects of the speaker's body, can be inscribed on it, and generally mingle with it ...[34]

It is the actual blood and guts - the physicality of language, the instinctive sound - which issues from the depths of the body and it is this materiality which I would suggest appeals to Nitsch. Nitsch is not interested in manipulating what words can represent - the metaphorical, the symbolic, the linguistic - he is only interested in the authentic sound of life. Nitsch recognises, as does James Hillman, that linguistics can not communicate truths:

> I am very interested in philosophy, and my work is not possible without philosophy. I would say my O M Theatre, also has a philosophic programme; it is a practical philosophy. But I think it's not possible anymore to make exact definitions, like Wittgenstein, it's not possible like Kant, who believed you could, to make exact definitions, and so when I make philosophy, I use words, but it's like I am falling in the water, and I am doing so that it is an indirect way to use language, and if somebody wants to understand you, he will do it, if not he will not understand you.

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[34] Jean-Jacques Lecercle in **The Violence of Language (A Theory of the Remainder)** Routledge, London & New York. 1990. p 105

> ..... Let's say, to believe in signs to believe in language, to believe in the traditional ways of philosophy .... it's gone, but philosophy is not gone. It's only that we shall not be so arrogant, it is again possible to make philosophy with words and with language, but not with this arrogance.[35]

And here James Hillman fleshes out the kind of arrogance that I would suggest Nitsch is hinting at, the dissecting technique of the analytical mind.

> In the modern language games of Wittgenstein, words are the very fundamental of conscious existence, yet they are also severed from things and from truth. They exist in a world of their own. In modern structural linguistics, words have no inherent sense, for they can be reduced, every single one of them, to basic quasi-mathematical units. The fantasy of a basic number of irreducible elements out of which all speech can be constituted is a dissecting technique of the analytic mind which applies logical atomism to logos itself - a suicide of the word.[36]

In this world where "we no longer trust words of any sort as true carriers of meaning."[37] Hillman suggests that what is needed is a 'new Angelology' of words which accepts that "words .... burn and become flesh as we speak"[38] and that the word is still capable of carrying, and of being, the "logos of the soul"[39] which is a different concept from the notion of naming. What Hillman is suggesting is a physicality and an emotional / imaginal quality of words. On this point I think

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[35] Hermann Nitsch, interview with the present author, 6 April 1994, Prinzendorf, Austria.

[36] James Hillman 'Language' an extract from **Re-Visioning Pyschology** 8 - 9, 217 - 218 in **The Essential James Hillman - A Blue Fire** introduced and edited by Thomas Moore, Routledge, London 1990. p 28

[37] Ibid,.

[38] Ibid,.

[39] Ibid,. pp 29 - 30 and is as follows;

> Soul of bulk and substance can be evoked by words and expressed in words; for myth and poetry, so altogether verbal and "fleshless" nonetheless resonate with the deepest intimacies of organic existences. A mark of imaginal man in the speech of his soul, and the range of this speech, its self-generative spontaneity, its precise subtlety and ambiguous suggestion, its capacity, as Hegel said, "to receive and reproduce every modification of our ideational faculty," can be supplanted neither by the technology of communication media, by contemplative spiritual silence, nor by physical gesture and signs. The more we hold back from the risk of speaking because of the semantic anxiety that keeps the soul in secret incommunicado, private and personal, the greater grows the credibility gap between what we are and what we say, splitting psyche and logos. The more we become tied by linguistic self-consciousness, the more we abdicate the ruling principle of psychological existence ... Man is half-angel because he can speak.

that there is a shared concern for the divinity - for the Angelology of language. Nitsch is developing a language of noise, of the scream and the cry which amplifies the Angelology of language. Similarly Hillman posits that "Man is half-angel because he can speak." This is the basis of what Hillman has called "the ruling principle of psychological existence...." While moving away from "linguistic self-consciousness", the singular distrust of words and belief in their disjunctive function, Nitsch has rediscovered in the cry and the scream a primal language which reunites man with nature. The cries and screams within Nitsch's abreaction plays and Aktions are not a matter of technique which is, as I have stated before, positively discouraged, but are produced either spontaneously or at moments designated by the time-keeper that are not premeditated by the actor/participants. The sound produced through the mouths of the actors / participants is heavily influenced by the emotional and physical state of the body. Thus the sound produced is part of the articulation and expression of that uniquely personal state of Being. The Angelology in Nitsch's work is the intensely real sound of the physically and emotionally charged body - the body in-experience. I would say that the sound which the body emits during the course of an Aktion comes spontaneously straight from the heart of that experience - it speaks of experience - it is not realised through any kind of intellectual articulation and therefore it is not dissected from the reality of the Being-in-experience, but it is the sound-in-experience. Hillman might call this the sound of the soul.

6.4 Seeking the Angelology of Words

Speaking of the Angelology of words, Hillman first puts forward the notion that words continually fall '"mentally ill" - that contemporary speech is the repository of "polluted connotations" produced by 150 years of labelling, psychologising and pathologising words, of "giving names with a pathological bias to the animals of the imagination."[40] It is this same pathological bias which, I believe, has prompted P-Orridge's insistence on the "viral complexity" of words. It is the innate quality of words to communicate the complex pathological evolution of

[40] James Hillman 'Language' an extract from **Re-Visioning Psychology**, 8 - 9, 217 - 218 in **The Essential James Hillman - A Blue Fire** introduced and edited by Thomas Moore, Routledge, London 1990. p 30

humanity which also fascinates P-Orridge. Playing with words is like playing with the dirt of humanity.

While deploring the labelling which plunged words into a kind of metaphorical mental illness, Hillman proposes

> a speech of ambiguities that is evocative and detailed, yet not definitive, not productive of dictionaries, textbooks or even abstract descriptions. Rather, it is a speech that leads to participation.[41]

Hillman suggests that this kind of speech "evokes, calls forth, creates psyche as it speaks".[42] In other words it is an "imaginal agent"[43] which, he claims, provokes the movement of the soul.

Here it is necessary to make the transition between what Hillman calls the soul or the psyche and what others have called the self, and what esoteric writings have termed the Divine, since Hillman attributes at least half of what is divine to the angel-like speech of man. For Hillman, speech is the psychologists' stone - like the philosophers' stone, like the alchemists' gold. He makes links with alchemy and suggests that the unlocking of the secrets of this certain kind of imaginal speech constitutes a modern-day psychological holy grail. Of course this is a big claim and it demands a leap of the imagination to achieve any kind of trust in this claim. However, both Hillman and Lefebvre constantly remind us that, within the space of the mind, we are in the realm of poetry and of art. In talking about this imaginal space, Lefebvre states.

> It is not simply a matter, therefore, of a theoretical critique, but also of a 'turning of the world upon its head' (Marx), of an inversion of meaning, and of a subversion which 'breaks the tablets of the Law' (Nietzsche).[44]

Once again I am reminded of arguments put forward in the previous chapter of this thesis concerning Lyotard's preoccupation with the structure of the

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[41] James Hillman 'Language' an extract from **Re-Visioning Psychology**, 8 - 9, 217 - 218 in **The Essential James Hillman - A Blue Fire** introduced and edited by Thomas Moore, Routledge, London 1990. pp 30-31

[42] Ibid,. p 31

[43] Ibid,.

[44] Henri Lefebvre 'Spatial Architectonics' **The Production of Space** Trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith. Blackwell, Oxford UK & Cambridge USA. 1991. p 201

representational chamber which ultimately reveals nothing of the true nature of the energy of intensities which flow through and beyond what can be described as their theatricality. In Bataille's assertion that intensity does not exist within the secure realm of ease, but is located within insecurity and uncertainty, within the chaotic. I am reminded of the decoding process utilised by P-Orridge and the claim for a deliberate subversion, ambiguities which coerce the imaginal into Being. It is perhaps through these kinds of activities that it is possible to glimpse something of the nature of the mixed space of the psyche, at the edge of consciousness - the alchemical[45] crucible - Hillman's 'Blue Vault', the sea which is the mind's functioning in images. It is a state beyond the cognitive which Hillman calls the return to the imaginal ground. P-Orridge calls it the "holographic soul" and charts the lineage of this notion, suggesting that it was

> ... always possible to consciously separate the holographic Soul. The

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[45] definition of Alchemy from: Joannes Fabricius **Alchemy - The Medieval Alchemists and their Royal Art** Mind Body. Diamond Books, London. 1976/1989/1994. p 10 (the author offers a Jungian reading of Alchemical processes):

> Alchemy is a strange blend of religious and science and scientific religion; its gospel of chemical faith combines a scientific pursuit of nature's secrets with a religious quest aiming at an understanding of ultimate nature. Alchemy has thus an exotic or 'scientific' aspect and an esoteric or 'mystic' aspect. ...
>
> In explaining the strange development of esoteric or 'mystic' alchemy one encounters the psychological phenomenon of projection and the universal law that nature abhors a vacuum. As the alchemists' age long investigation of matter on the wrong track plunged them into a dark void, the darkness was finally 'illuminated' by the groping psyche of the laboratory worker which projected its contents into the smoking retorts of his laboratory. Thus, through the indirect way of projecting and free association the alchemists came to activate the unconscious which allied itself to their work in the form of hallucinatory or visionary experiences.
>
> Psychologically, visions and hallucinations represent projections of unconscious content, and frequently assert themselves in the form of illusory sensory images.

> Tibetans call it going into the rainbow body, John Dee[46] communed with the TIME-born souls of the Tamasin and Siriakin, the gnostics saw the true nature of what was a God. A strict method of liberation from physical manifestations. The Zen masters understood the need to shed all logic and attachment becoming pure particles of TIME. ... R.D. Laing's painted bird flies from the canvas, which was already blank. The great lie has been that we exist.[47]

To perform alchemy within this imaginal ground, Hillman suggests that one must be "confirmed in imaginal durabilities, transcending mere psychological perspectives and metaphorical implications."[48] He describes a state of transcendence within which the mind functions, or sees, in images and in which words slip out of their vernacular, "removing ordinary things from their ordinary sense" as the mind is drenched in the blue cosmology of the imaginal.[49] P-Orridge takes a similar perspective on this state, saying:

> We hear our own voice speaking and the words become thin and transparent like glass and we are at the place from where they come and they are like holograms floating, they are the essence of Mind like the voice of rain or the sandstorm, they are the voice behind our voice.[50]

One is reminded of the illusory sensory images conjured by the medieval alchemists, the hallucinatory nature of these visions and the notion of the mind which emits its extra-cognitive imaginal essence; an alchemy which according to

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[46]Francis King **Magic - The Western Tradition** Thames and Hudson 1975;

> Dr John Dee (1527 - 1608) - Elizabethan scholar and magician believed that through the medium ship of Edward Kelly he was in touch with angels and other 'spiritual creatures' who taught Dee a hitherto unknown language, Enochian, and other esoteric lore, often communicated in symbols such as the mandala-like *Sigillum Dei Aemeth.* Dee's work was studied by Mathers and other chiefs of the Golden Dawn, who combined Dee's 'Enochian magic' with other aspects of the Western tradition. This blending is well shown in the Great Watch tower of the East (Diagram from Aleister Crowley - 'The Symbolic Representation of the Universe', which combines one of Dee's squares with elements drawn from other aspects of mysticism and magic, notably geometry.

[47] Genesis P-Orridge (World Preset Guardians (2)) from **Thee Fractured Garden** artist's manuscript (2nd Draft October 1992) p 11

[48] James Hillman 'Soul' an extract from 'Blue',pp 44-45, in **The Essential James Hillman - A Blue Fire** introduced and edited by Thomas Moore, Routledge, London 1990. p 35

[49] Ibid.,

[50] Genesis P-Orridge (World Preset Guardians (2)) from **Thee Fractured Garden** artist's manuscript (2nd Draft October 1992) p 9

Hillman "begins before we enter the mine, the forge, or laboratory",[51] in other words before we enter into the workspace of the mind of conscious cognition. P-Orridge describes this state of mind making use of similar alchemical imagery:

> No thoughts, thee best type of mind. Empty vessels make thee most alchemically pure cathedral stones.[52]

Within this state words take the form of images imagining ideation they become sensory on a number of levels. Hillman suggests that these word / images become physical, embedding themselves in the body, becoming part of the spine.

> It begins in the blue vault, the sea, in the mind's thinking in images, imagining ideationally, speculatively, silveredly, in words that are both images and ideas, in words that turn things into flashing ideas and ideas into little things that crawl, the blue power of the word itself, which locates this consciousness in the throat of the *visuddha cakra* whose dominant colour is a smoky purple-blue.[53]

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[51] James Hillman 'Soul' an extract from 'Blue',pp 44-45, in **The Essential James Hillman - A Blue Fire** introduced and edited by Thomas Moore, Routledge, London 1990. p 35

[52] Genesis P-Orridge **A Hollow Cost** (artist's manuscript) Cazadero, California, February 1994. p 9

[53] James Hillman 'Soul' an extract from 'Blue',pp 44-45, in **The Essential James Hillman - A Blue Fire** introduced and edited by Thomas Moore, Routledge, London 1990. pp 155 / 156 / 34:

> It is blue which deepens the idea of reflection beyond the single notion of mirroring, to the further notion of pondering, considering, meditating. (p 155)
>
> The nature of this achievement can be garnered from the accounts of those we have summoned. They suggest that the alchemical *unio mentalis* is the interpretation of thought and image, of perceived world and imaginal world, a state of mind no longer concerned with distinctions between things and thought, appearance and reality, or between the spirit that develops theory and the soul that builds fantasy. We have coloured this *unio mentalis* "blue" because the blue we have been encountering transfigures appearances into imaginal realities and imagines thought itself in a new way. Blue is preparatory tc and incorporated in the white, indicating that the white becomes earth, that is, fixed and real, when the eye becomes blue, that is, able to see through thoughts as imaginative forms and images as the ground of reality. (pp 155 - 156)
>
> When myths say gods have blue hair or blue bodies, they have. The gods live in a blue place of metaphor, and they are described less with naturalistic language than with poetic "distortion." Mythical talk must be full of hyperbole; the gods live in the highs and deeps. To depict them rightly we need the expressionist's palette, not the impressionist's. Precisely this shift into mythical perception occurs with the *unio mentalis* : we have to *imagine* the nature of reality, and dark blue becomes the right colour to express Dionysus's hair, because it is the natural, reasonable hue for the hair of this god in this hymn, a most realistic depiction. (p 34)

Words become "things that crawl" - strange imaginal creatures. Hillman talks about the "blue power" of words, the imaginal which becomes the reality of words separated from their vernacular usage.

> ... when the eye becomes blue (it is) able to see through thoughts as imaginative forms and images as the ground of reality.[54]

In P-Orridge's writing we can find many instances of how, in describing their function, words slip into images, ideas into imaginal substances. Here the idea is a warrior astride the pale unicorn which is the 'word', waiting and watching in the deep space - the eternal blue of Hillman's "ground of reality".

> The idea rides on words but is the distant watcher, the substance of eternity. It is the invisible warrior astride the pale unicorn deep in space, waiting for the brave and hungry.[55]

It is separately stressed by both P-Orridge and by Hillman that this imaginal ground of reality transcends the metaphorical. Both make independent claims for the solidity of reality within this imaginal world, and the sensory nature of imaginal experiences. The argument put forward in support of this claim is that the metaphor belongs to the naming world of labels and vernacular articulation and thus it has no place within the imaginal world of word/images - what P-Orridge has called the "preset" state of mind - or in Hillman's terminology the state prior to cognition, prior to our entrance into "the mine, the forge, or laboratory."[56] P-Orridge also calls this place "The Garden" and the holographic quality of its swirling image realities a "Cathedral".

> The garden did not exist within Time, or Language, it was an exterior neural projection, a Cathedral that worshipped its occupant, the Soul. Representing as it did the Mind at Preset without Light; there was nothing to reflect, shape, or fix this particular dream.[57]

The divine essence of the Angelology of the word is contained within the

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[54] James Hillman 'World' an extract from 'Blue',p 43, in **The Essential James Hillman - A Blue Fire** introduced and edited by Thomas Moore, Routledge, London 1990. p 156

[55] Genesis P-Orridge 'World Preset Guardians (2)' from **Thee Fractured Garden** artists manuscript (2nd Draft October 1992) p 10

[56] James Hillman 'Soul' an extract from 'Blue',pp 44-45, in **The Essential James Hillman - A Blue Fire** introduced and edited by Thomas Moore, Routledge, London 1990. . p 35

[57] Genesis P-Orridge 'On The Way To Thee Garden' in **Verbal Abuse NO/THE FUTURE**, 1993. p 3 also forming the spoken word CD **The Fractured Garden** 1996.

word/image (imagining ideation) position in the imaginal ground of reality which is separated from the ordinary, but at the same time inextricably linked to the ordinary via the common denominators of both the soul and the mind. The process which separates the imaginal from the ordinary is the process of cognition. However, both Hillman and P-Orridge suggest that within cognition there still exists a faint glimmer of the holographic / imaginal qualities of the soul and, beyond the shallow and transparent function of words, is the implied landscape of the imaginal ground of reality. Such a landscape is detectable in the hues of the expressionist's palette, in the mythologies, the legends, the allegories, religions and archetypal images of deep psychology:

> Creating archetypes; songs ov containment for thee infinitely changing.[58]

As P-Orridge states, "thinking is the gap between the builder and the act of building,"[59] - the notion of is (the unique moment of now) - the moment of building is rooted in the pre-cognitive, "Preset" state of the mind.

The notion of what P-Orridge has called "The Garden", "The Cathedral", the "Holographic Soul" and what Hillman has called the "Blue Vault" is not, to my mind, synonymous with a notion of the other, since what each of the commentators is talking about is a state which is absolutely attainable and familiar in the sense that it is described by both Hillman and P-Orridge as a pre-cognitive state of mind in other words, a possible common pre-function of the mind. It is the experience of this preset state of mind which I believe is being described, intimated and used as a model for the production of words, sounds, images and behaviour in the recent works of Genesis P-Orridge. Both Hillman and P-Orridge testify to their recognition of the imaginal language of the blue vault in mythic language - both have used and even invented mythologies in order to stress this point. One finds moments in both the writings of Hillman and P-Orridge when description slips into a first person, when story becomes testimony and the individual voice is captured by the mythic, dragged back into the poetic, the familiar archetypal images; the voice sounding out of the blue

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[58] Genesis P-Orridge **Thee Seeding Ship** (For Simon Dwyer) California 1995, included in the inside cover of Thee Fractured garden CD 1996 (artist's manuscript) p 2

[59] Genesis P-Orridge **'World preset Guardians'** (On the subject of the holographic Soul) artist's manuscript. (second draft October 1992) p 12

landscape of the imaginal world.

> In a distant cave individuals are wrapped in animal skins. Painting sorceries on their temporary cave shelter. Across thee mountains a boy is sewn in bloody-warm skins to dance **thee sacred dance ov Pan.** Thee point where thee animal spirit and thought spirit separated. Thee moment when society became inevitable. At this moment thee knowings which were contained in states ov not thinking were encoded, thee myths, legends, allegories, religions are now where they reside. Thee search ov **High Art** and **High magick** has been for processes ov retrieval. In order to facilitate completion ov reintegration we search for the knowings we lost. Thee re-establishment in thee individual ov a permanent state ov zero Time. Zero language, zero thought, this is **our Holy Grail.** Where consciousness can exist within its own planes. Just as if it were thee light. It is no accident that these encoded truths are so often seen as pictures, or seen as picture stories. For every picture is made ov light. E am thee Light. E am thee Truth. E am thee Light. E am thee Way. E am thee Light.[60]

In my view this passage exemplifies the mind's descent and the lowering of the voice into the primary depths of expression. Such passages illustrate what Noah Pikes has called "the body's search for the soul in the form of the lost realm of the imaginal".[61] Pikes suggests that such a descent into the primary levels of self is recognised by the connection with an archetypal voice - the voice of the abandoned child in this case, the transfigured child. It is the sound of the original in the form of its voice.

6.5 To cleanse our guilt we must describe our fate, objective warzone correspondence, using thee oral language ov everyday life. [62]

Accessing what Hillman has called the Angelology of words, that which speaks as the mystical other or hidden meaning in words is, perhaps, similar to what Lecercle has called the 'remainder' of words in his book 'The Violence of Language.' Lecercle defines the remainder as:

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[60] Genesis P-Orridge **At Stockholm** P & C Etherworld Recordings 1995. (CD inside sleeve. Genesis P-Orridge & White Stains)

[61] Noah Pikes 'Giving Voice to Hell' in **A Journal of Archetype and Culture** Spring Publications US, spring 1994. p 63.

[62] Genesis P-Orridge **At Stockholm** P & C Etherworld Recordings 1995. (CD inside sleeve. Genesis P-Orridge & White Stains)

> the linguistic equivalent of the Freudian unconscious, excluded or repressed by the rules of grammar ...[63]

The various techniques used to uncover, rediscover and manipulate the remainder in words and text might, in the case of certain aspects of mysticism and shamanism, also be identified as techniques of "magic"[64] in the notion of transformation and concentration of meaning inherent in the notion of the changed perception which often accompanies such a transformation.

In parallel with this notion Jung saw in the texts of the ancient alchemists and gnostic seers the metaphorical language of a process of psychologising.[65] Jung identified the latent "parallel psychic processes" in literal alchemical practices and suggested that the accompanying psychic processes were the more important activity, stressing what he saw as their transformative qualities.

> Continual conscious realisation of unconscious fantasies, together with active participation in the fantastic events, has ... the effect firstly of extending the conscious horizon by the inclusion of numerous unconscious contents: secondly of gradually diminishing the dominant influence of the unconscious; thirdly of bringing about a change of personality.[66]

Jung's' claim for parallel psychic processes in alchemical and gnostic manuscripts is however contentious, since as David Merkur points out " the literary works were designed to be incomprehensible to the uninitiated ... the writings abound in allegories, ciphers, uses of common words in secret technical manners, allusions, intimations, and outright misdirections." Thus Jung's reading of gnostic and alchemical texts may be mere interpretations, even though David Merkur insists that it was not a question of Jung "fitting psychological categories to alchemical texts" However Jung believed that "the process of transformation was determined not by historical cultural factors, but exclusively by psychical

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[63] Jean-Jacques Lecercle **The Violence of Language (A Theory of the Remainder)** Routledge, London & New York. 1990. pp 23 - 24

[64] Henri Lefebvre 'Spatial Architectonics' **The Production of Space** Trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith. Blackwell, Oxford UK & Cambridge USA. 1991. p 202

[65] for an in depth account of this see; David Merkur **Gnosis: an Esoteric Tradition of Mystical Visions and Union** State University of New York Press. Albany. New York. 1993

[66] C Jung **Two essays on Analytical Psychology** edited by Reads, Fordham, Gerhard & Adler. Trans R.F. Hull, Routledge & Kegan Paul p 219

ones"[67] and saw alchemical and gnostic texts as evidence of that. A contrary, yet complementary, view might be that Jung's interpretations may, in accordance with Merkur's definition, be viewed as mystical in themselves since they add another layer of latent meaning, this time a psychoanalytical one, to the already ciphered text. This psychoanalytic layer is, in itself, difficult to decipher by those uninitiated into Jungian psychology. Jung's most important claim was that:

> The experiences of the alchemists were, in a sense, my experiences, and their world was my world. This was, of course, a momentous discovery: I had stumbled upon the historical counterpart of my psychology of the unconscious. The possibility of a comparison with alchemy, and the uninterrupted intellectual chain back to Gnosticism, gave substance to my psychology. [68]

And who is to say that the psychoanalytical texts of Freud and Jung may not become the mystical writing of the future, equivalent to the texts of the ancient alchemists? In 1916 Jung wrote his own mystical gnostic text entitled **Septem Sermones ad Mortuos** attributed (according to tradition) to Basilides in

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[67] David Merkur **Gnosis: an Esoteric Tradition of Mystical Visions and Union** State University of New York Press. Albany. New York. 1993 pp 69 - 70 The Sermons begin;

[68] C G Jung **Memories, Dreams, Reflections**'(205) quoted in Robert Segal **The Gnostic Jung (including Seven Sermons to the Dead)** Princeton University Press. Princeton, New York. 1992. p 8

Here Jung recognises what others working within the so called 'occult' have always upheld; that ritual - the practical - has some correspondence with the divine, or the spiritual, with the psyche, whether it is interpreted as a 'cosmic other' or a 'cosmic self'

> All effective ritual is a condensed drama of life. And life again is a compendium of the cosmic drama. A ceremony, if it be true, must correspond to the great cosmic pageant of creative evolution and involution.
>
> True occult ritual is one of the great harmonising agents, because by representing the cosmic acts it brings them into closer relation with human life.

(Dr Felkin's notes on the D.W.B, issued to Whare Ra members (5=6 rank). Patrick J. Zalewski 'Secret inner order rituals of the Golden Dawn'. Falcon Press, Phoenix, Arizona 85012. USA. p 59)

Alexandria, the city where the east toucheth the west.[69]

I would like to suggest that it is perhaps an imaginal trait of the human mind to seek to implant its psychic processes in literal forms - "to cipher, rather than decipher"[70]- to seek out opportunities to invest and divinate, through its own psychic process, to make such processes incarnate to itself. Such a ciphered language remains personal to its author and can only be accessed by those initiated into its structure, dynamics and meanings. Such a language differs from any other because what it contains within its hieroglyphics a type of psychic knowledge which is fundamentally of its creator. Such mystical texts are invariably written in the first person even when they claim to be mediated texts; the presence of the individual, the touch of the personal, is always evident and authoritative. Robert Avens describes this as the technicality of "the interdependence of the knower and the known: what is to be understood must already (pre conceptually) be known,"[71] of which the known is never fully articulated but remains non-conceptual, as a given, self-evident, forming a hermeneutic circle.[72]

There may be a case for arguing the lineage of the divination and incarnation of psychic processes in literary, visual and aural forms which can be separated from

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[69] Contained in Robert Segal's book **The Gnostic Jung (including Seven Sermons to the Dead)** Jung's interpretations of gnostic and alchemical texts. Princeton University Press. Princeton, New York. They begin:

> The dead came back from Jerusalem, where they found not what they sought. They prayed me let them in and besought my word, and thus I began my teaching;
>
> Harken: I begin with nothingness. Nothingness is the same as fullness. In infinity full is no better than empty. Nothingness is both empty and full. As well might ye say anything else of nothingness, as for instance, white it is, or black, or again, it is not, or it is. A thing that is infinite and eternal hath no qualities, since it hath all qualities.
>
> This nothingness or fullness we name PLEROMA. Therein both thinking and being cease, since the eternal and infinite possess no qualities. In it no being is, for he then would be distinct from pleroma, and would possess qualities which would distinguish him as something distinct from the pleroma.
>
> In the pleroma there is nothing and everything. It is quite fruitless to think about the pleroma, for this would mean self-dissolution.

[70] Genesis P-Orridge

[71] Robert Avens **The New Gnosis** Spring Publications, New York. 1984 p 30

[72] Ibid,. pp 31-32

notions of organised religion. If this is so, it may help to liberate the status of mystical texts from their seeming religious exclusivity as items which are somewhat inaccessible. So it is perhaps not a question of what Jung saw as "rescuing these tangled problems from projection"; in other words, recovering the psychic meaning from the metaphor of alchemical practice and "making them the proper subject of psychology",[73] but of recognising the mystical text as the vessel and imaginal vehicle for psychic expression. In other words, that it is, in itself, a work of the soul, a dream play, a ghost sonata.

As I have already hinted the search for the Angelology of words is not always a literary one. Jung might argue that the essence of such Angelology is encapsulated in what he has called the *participation mystique* ; in other words by the manner in which an individual identifies with, or sees a personal significance in, not only words, but objects and images. According to Merkur;

> Jung's claim that "alchemy is ... the forerunner of our modern psychology of the unconscious" depends on his belief that "the alchemists had a dim presentiment" of the "state of *participation mystique,* or unconscious identity ... between them and the chemical substances." [74]

Using Jung's claim as a model there seems also to be a case for arguing that Jung himself enters into a state of *participation mystique* in identifying the dynamics of the contemporary psyche in the mythology and ancient images of alchemical texts. The notion of participation, either on an unconscious or a conscious level, will become an increasingly significant factor in this thesis. It is, I believe, one of the fundamental elements which lies at the heart of the work of both Nitsch and P-Orridge, and is what makes their work a practical philosophy, a hermeneutic event which must be experienced in the fullest sense of the word. Jung's notion of *participation mystique* provides a name for the type of experience of which I am speaking. Such an experience is one which lays out and examines the way in which man experiences his relationship to the world on both a conscious and

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[73] David Merkur **Gnosis: an Esoteric Tradition of Mystical Visions and Union** State University of New York Press. Albany. New York. 1993 p 69 * here David Merkur misquotes Robert Segal. Robert Segal's book **The Gnostic Jung (including Seven Sermons to the Dead)** outlines Jung's interpretations of Gnostic and Alchemical texts. Princeton University Press. Princeton, New York 1992.

[74] David Merkur **Gnosis: an Esoteric Tradition of Mystical Visions and Union** State University of New York Press. Albany. New York. 1993 p 68

unconscious level "without reducing the objective data of this experience to data of sense perception or limiting the field of true and meaningful knowledge to the mere operations of the rational understanding."[75] This is a kind of participatory seeing, hearing and feeling which brings us back to what Hillman describes as the imaginal ground of the soul, in which words are like angels which:

> sound their own depths of reflection - allusions, alliteractions, etymologies, puns, the guises of rhetoric. These resonances in words are singings of angels. We are in the realm of voices, lunacy: the mind sounding itself, sounding its depths, hearing its essential nature as a choir of voices, discordant, antiphonic, responsive, the dead souls in us speaking, ghosts swaying on the family tree, the unborn clustered on the moon, all sounding, talking with our voices and listening, hallucinatory.[76]

6.6 Meditation on Being

Word play and the notion of free association become important links in this mystical / psychological chain. Both word play and free association feed into the work of Nitsch and P-Orridge in the form of the artists' esoteric practice and via the dynamics of their own psychologising and their own hermeneutic circles.

The text of the **Zohar** is an example of how, within the literary tradition of Mysticism, words are deemed to possess both a latent and a literal meaning. The literal offers a surface or narrative reading, while the latent might be considered as the remainder or the'other hidden meaning, the discovery of which demands a

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[75] Henry Corbin, **Creative Imagination in the Surfism of Ibn ' Arabi'** Princeton NJ. Princeton University Press, 1993. p 3

[76] James Hillman **Re-Visioning Psychology** Harper & Row, New York. 1975. p 9

different kind of 'reading' from that of the literal.[77] Mystical texts such as the **Zohar** provide structures upon which to meditate, to dwell on, to chew over, to instigate a search for significance, to enter into a state of *participation mystique* . They are 'ethereal' constructions in which the mind is allowed to breathe - thus the common use of the analogy of breath in many mystical texts. The notion of breath implies a different kind of physical interaction with the text, which is again a participatory one. Breath implies that an idea / image / word, is taken into the body, into the psyche where it oxygenates the mind and the senses get into the flesh on a cellular level. Such an inhalation has no imaginal bounds it becomes an influence, it is "seeded"[78] into the imaginal ground of the psyche and creates its own organic imaginal states. It influences not what we see, in terms of content, but how we see.[79] This brings us back to that hermeneutic circle and the notion that "art is the origin of both artists and work"[80] According to Heidegger, art is not merely a reflective occupation, but an expressive existential medium through which the phenomena of things are revealed in their true essence. Here Avens describes Heidegger's meaning.

> He describes the art-event in terms of tension between "earth" as the creative ground of things and the "world" which the artwork erects and opens up. An artwork embodies this creative tension between concealment (earth) and unconcealment (world) in a form. Heidegger uses "earth" as a counterconcept alongside the concept of the "world" in order to unravel the ontological structure of the

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[77] David Bakan **Sigmund Freud, and the Jewish Mystical Tradition** Free Association Books, London. 1990. p 267:

> Characteristically, letter play - called *zeruf* (combination) in Jewish mysticism - is summarised under three major rubrics *gematria, notarikon,* and *temurah.*
> *Gematria* establishes meaning on the basis of the numerical value of words.
> *Notarikon* proceeds by making words from the first or last letter of other words. Thus *chen,* which means grace, is the same as the first letter of *chokmah nistarah* meaning hidden wisdom.
>
> *Temurah* changes words by changing the order of their letters. In the *Sefer Yetzirah* we have *ones,* which means pleasure, and *nega* which means pain, the same letters in different order.
>
> The techniques of *temurah* in particular, are interesting for their similarity to the word forms Freud discusses in his essay, "The Antithetical Sense of Primal Words."

[78] Genesis P-Orridge see Chapter 6 Section 6.9

[79] paraphrasing James Hillman. See also, Robert Avens 'Language, Poetry, Art' in **The New Gnosis** Spring Publications, New York. 1984 p 57

[80] Martin Heidegger 'Poetry, Language Thought' p 17 quoted by Robert Avens 'Language, Poetry, Art' **The New Gnosis** Spring Publications, New York. 1984 p 63

> artwork independently of the creator or the beholder. A work of art does not mean something or function as a sign that refers to a meaning: rather, it presents itself in its own being and in such a way that the ingredients out of which it is composed - stone, tone, word - only acquire their real significance within the artwork itself. Art allows things to emerge in their true essence.[81]

The acquired significance is their "Thingness"[82] or from the point of view of the beholder it is the sensation of the presentness of Thingness. Here Heidegger is looking beyond the form and content of *Gestalt* to an ontology of art. This is an acknowledgement of a pre-conceptual presentness of things in Being this is what Nitsch refers to in our conversations as the "proper form of art" and the celebration the feast of life that Nitsch referred to is, I believe, tied up in Heidegger's notion of art as the forum in which things are brought forth from the pre-conceptual phenomena of Being. Heidegger maintains that a 'thing', even in the fullness of its assemblage, remains pre-objective in art and is not transformed into the sign which finds its signified coupling in logic. In a sense Heidegger's notion of things and Thingness can perhaps be said to be pre-imaginal, since their impact upon the mind is pre-eminent, already in Being. Here I begin to feel myself falling once again in the direction of 'as it is' and the notion of a presentness of things in Being which 'is' either in its concealment or unconcealment, infinite.

Within Heidegger's notion that "Art is the origin of both artists and work"[83] is the idea that the forum of art also brings forth, reveals or lays bare, the artist. Indeed it might be possible to paraphrase Heidegger by saying that the artist presents himself in his own Being and in such a way that the ingredients out of which he is composed acquire their real significance within the artwork itself, thus art

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[81] Robert Avens 'Language, Poetry, Art' in **The New Gnosis** Spring Publications, New York. 1984 p 61

[82] Ibid,. in which Avens suggests;

> The German word Ding ('thing') is derived from the archaic German "thing" meaning "assemblage." To Heidegger a thing is an assemblage of the Foursome. (earth and sky, divinities and mortals). By assembling the Foursome, a thing assembles or "things" (dingt) the world and brings it into nearness. Mill captures Heidegger's meaning in the following words: "In the world of images ... things are both mindful and passionate, both ideal and real, infinite but very present, divine and human at once."

[83] Martin Heidegger 'Poetry, Language Thought'" p 17 quoted by Robert Avens 'Language, Poetry, Art' **The New Gnosis** Spring Publications, New York. 1984 p 63

allows Thingness (things) of the artist to emerge in their true essence. Shifting this sideways into the realm of psychology we can perhaps say that the things, the *prima material* of man, are the multiple and complex aspects of his psyche and the organic nature of his body. What I am suggesting is a theory of a type of *participation mystique* which is essentially the physical and psychological experience of Being in which art provides a forum for the expression of that presentness of Being and the experiencing of the presentness of Being becomes the forum of art.

In his book **Undoing Culture, Globalisation, Postmodernism and Identity** Mike Featherstone has argued that "... deconstruction and postmodernism problematize unity in favour of more complex notions of syncretic unity and unicity".[84] Featherstone presumes this to mean that the frame or the point of reference is banished and he states that "to banish the frame altogether is to move from culture into life." Featherstone goes further to suggest that by banishing the frame and moving from culture, which he defines as that which is framed by the artist, into life (that which is without a frame) "this surrender to formlessness is not a viable option for cultural specialists, in terms of either their work or their lives." However, Featherstone's book is preoccupied with the notion of culture as a product or commodity-based, and of a collection of people as a cultural establishment, as opposed to the view of culture as an experiential, sensual force. What Featherstone has failed to see is the intimate connection between culture, art and the life of the artist. As Nitsch protests "Life should be more than duty",[85] it should be more than a sense of commitment and responsibility for what society consigns as your role, it should be more than the preservation of the status quo; it should be governed by more than a concern to be accepted by one's peers. P-Orridge describes what he sees as the socially contrived, paranoid role of the artist, whose art services the conservative needs of society, as opposed to the radical, existential, needs of the psyche.

> Encased in thee concrete ov acceptance by our peers where it can do us no harm. Fear and ignorance remain. In describing Life, it's grandiose stupidity, we can be motivated by compassion and motivated by despair, coloured by not a little sarcasm and cynicism.

[84] Mike Featherstone **Undoing Culture, Globalization, Postmodernism and Identity** SAGE Publications. London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi. p 48

[85] Hermann Nitsch **das orgien mysterien theater 1960 - 1983** exhibition catalogue, Het Stedelijk van Abbemuseum Eindhoven 1983. p 44

> Yet in every picture, there is enervation and texture that rely upon a resented caring for its composition. Framed by our paranoias, framed by conditioning, framed by false witness ... [86]

P-Orridge suggests that the artist resents his own work, perhaps because what it brings forth is his own acceptance of pre-determined, pre-defined, art historic definitions and, in making art, he condemns himself to pre-definition. According to P-Orridge's model the individuality is inevitably suffocated, lost beneath a heavy, histrionic art aesthetic. This is a rather extreme scenario of Featherstone's conceptual model, but both Nitsch and P-Orridge make extreme reactions to notions such as the one put forward by Featherstone. Their extreme reactions are, I believe, related to their total commitment to a creative life.

> This is thee world, everyone talking in tongues to fire-strewn spirit convinced, betrayed there is only expression, loud and unclear, an exact parallel ov life passing by.[87]

This intercourse with life goes beyond the art historic notion of art-life-art existence and beyond the exhibitionism of a Gilbert and George existence. What lies at the cutting edge of both Nitsch's and P-Orridge's notion of the artistic life is a compulsive, almost 'in spite of itself', involvement in Being. This is a state of Being in which the artist is permanently available. What I mean by this is that both artists have honed themselves, have made a personal undertaking 'to be' available, attuned, hypersensitive to the presentness of Being. This has its own repercusion which I believe, set up a kind of perpetual motion, a circle which can best be illustrated by the notion of breath. Both artists are locked into a cycle of woundedness and revelation - a perpetual confrontation and recapitulation which is reflected in their work. We can sense this rhythmic swing between the sensations of annihilation and revelation in P-Orridge's writing concerning the nature of expression.

> It's easy to forget nothing and hard to describe it. What was it we said once in thee mud? Thee expression that there is nothing to express, nothing with which to express, nothing from which to express, no power to express, together with thee obligation to express.

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[86] Genesis P-Orridge **At Stockholm** P & C Etherworld Recordings 1995. (CD inside sleeve. Genesis P-Orridge & White Stains)

[87] Ibid,.

Creative action. Destructive action. A perception ov thee weird phenomena ov being alive. To **Illumine,** clarify and describe some part ov human experience, trying to grasp or even form thee values that guide that experience in a given age, or piece ov Time. .. Thee mirror receives our staring gaze, we melt quite gently then sink away, leaving a smoky, cloud effect, like bleach spreading into water. To cleanse our guilt we must describe our fate, objective warzone correspondence, using thee oral language ov everyday life. Shattered or not, our message remains nether fixed nor dogmatic. **True value never changes.** True value remains in thee only real sense. Only Time has a constant value, and Time is outside our Life.

Nothing is more real than no-thing.

Human experience is sadly the experience of nothing. And the only reality it knows is nothing.[88]

In contrast to this, life is viewed by Featherstone as a derogatory and a degenerative formlessness, rather than a sense of pre-conceptual presentness, a pre *Gestalt* which could equally be termed formlessness. It is a notion of Being which admits all that is life into the forum of art, which informs P-Orridge's statement "Be subtle to the point of formlessness".[89] This is counterbalanced by the Nitschian ethic which might be expressed in terms of "Be excessive to the point of formlessness" - these two metaphorical directions falling into that same hermeneutic circle.

Such an art is essentially esoteric / mystical since it can perhaps be demonstrated to have both a literal and latent presentness. It is the presentness of the artist's experiences of the phenomena of the world external and the world internal. His bringing forth of those experiences is "without reduction" to concept, to form or content, but is an operation not unlike that of the inhalation and exhalation of images and ideas and sensations. In other words it is a lived experience. This surrender to formlessness - to the experience of the pre-conceptual - this surrender to life is an inevitable journey into self which transcends and, to a certain extent, devalues notions of culture and of art. The conceptual notions of art and culture simply become irrelevant next to the debates concerning the nature of matter, reality, existence. In an interview given in 1994 P-Orridge talks

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[88]Genesis P-Orridge **At Stockholm** P & C Etherworld Recordings 1995. (CD inside sleeve. Genesis P-Orridge & White Stains)

[89] Ibid,.

about his particular use of language. This statement taken from the interview is indicative of an attitude towards language which has been present in his work since the mid 1960s.

> I like the word Omniverse because Universe implies there's only one and I find that ridiculous. One of my favourite words is a geological term "quaquaversal." That means "pointing in every direction simultaneously." A sphere infinitely expanding. They use it to describe crystals. The opposite of that in language would be, Not pointing in any direction at any time. That's called "centroclinal." Centroclinal is just defined as the "opposite of quaquaversal." So there's a centroclinal view of reality, which is that things are as they are, but then they are indefinable and you can't even attempt to describe them, because they don't exist.[90]

P-Orridge describes such linguistic terminology as "tools, to keep the brain slightly alert." They are signatures of possible ideas and condensed philosophies upon which to meditate. Such words may be termed glyphs that open a number of doors of perception. They act like linguistic psychedelics, in which the self is invariably present. P-Orridge says that "the art is 'not thinking' just letting it through"[91] and likens his writing techniques as either method acting or something more akin to automatic writing; a form of mediating the self.

> You see paragraphs arriving in front of you, and you say, "this makes sense to some other part of me. There are theories and amplifications going on here that are coming out. Despite all the millions and millions of words I've heard people spew out, I haven't seen this order of words before - and it's resonating with me."

Beyond concerns for the artistic significance of such writing P-Orridge suggests that his personal interest is in the revelatory, the personal, sometimes mystical resonances in his work. It is a sensual (intellectual and emotional) method of detecting significance in events and ideas which take place in the past and the present and in sensing future scenarios. It is perhaps the process of hearing the

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[90] Genesis P-Orridge **Fab Magazine** USA (1994?) exact date unknown

[91] Genesis P-Orridge 'Now the 'P' is for Process' interview with Chris Twoney **Vanishing Point** July 1995, Vol 1. Toronto. Canada.

voices of the psyche speaking in their own language.[92]

> You're feeling like you've discovered something that could be helpful. These tools that help your kind of sense of what's happening to you next, intellectually and emotionally, just start to come at you like a visitor. A bit like when you're tripping and you get this revelation about something. And sometimes you get the sense while it's happening that it is more than it will appear the next day.[93]

Here P-Orridge likens the experience of writing, or rather of observing of words that visit the page, as they are brought forth, to a kind of psychedelic experience, a lucid dreaming, in which word-images, word-thoughts acquire an intense relevance and significance at the moment of their material conception. Obviously this does not occur every time one sits down to write, it is a process which is either coerced into activity via a process of physical and mental preparation within the context of ritual, or a period of intense focusing. Equally, P-Orridge suggests that it can "come upon" one, like a dream.

> CT You once said about your lyrical improvisations that you considered it like speaking-in-tongues or like the trance states that the Homeric legends were recited in.
>
> GPO Right, the storyteller. I think that's true, I still do. On the live Pigface album, **Truth Will Out,** all the lyrics are improvised at the beginning of the show. What seems to happen is that I hear the

[92] this can be described as personal or archetypal. It is cohesive with the Procession notion of psychological 'models'.

> Actually the most important thing to remember is that The Process has always been continuing. And I've always been fascinated with the ideas and the psychological structures. It's not a revival, it's an extension and a reappraisal. So that people can make good constructive use of the theories. The original Process was a serious behavioural imprinting metaphor, and improvisational spiritual-quest cult that was most publicly active in the mid '60s to mid '70s in Europe and North America. It was officially disbanded as an active organisation March 25th 1975...
>
> Process was the terrestrial manifestations of the coming unity of 'Christ' and 'Satan' a force moving to achieve the end of the world so the Golden Age might dawn. ALWAYS remember that these are ARCHETYPES, not manifest deities or entities. We want to use those ideas as psychological models, not in the religious context at all. To this end, we have considered the assignments of theories, and aspects of this in terms of 'brains' or spheres, which we think is a correct demystifier ... (Genesis P-Orridge 'Now the 'P' is for Process' interview with Chris Twoney **Vanishing Point** July 1995, Vol 1. Toronto. Canada.)

[93] Genesis P-Orridge **Fab Magazine** USA (1994?) exact date unknown

> tones of the music, and they seem to hit some very old memory belt and up come words. I think that's why Martin (Atkins) likes me to do Pigface because often there's these uncanny moments where it's as if I had rehearsed every day of the tour, that I know what's coming next. The ability to receive and transmit really fast, from the energy of the audience and the band, is probably the primary skill I have lived. To not have too may filters working, so that I start 'thinking' about what I'm doing. The art is 'not thinking' just letting it through.[94]

This kind of mental mediation or openness, has been something that P-Orridge has suggested that he has always "aspired to". Since moving to California in February 1991 he has felt that this sense of openness has become one of the more prominent aspects of his personality. I think that it is possible to sense the presence of this very particular lively dynamic of openness in the written work he has produced since his arrival in America. Most of the writing since 1993/94, has a fluid / imaginal energy and dynamic about it which is quite different from the solid, earthiness of earlier writing such as **Terminus**, in which there is a kind of awkward rigidity, a snap and a 'tick' between events, images and ideas which seems to underline the strong presence of the organising, articulating, intellectualising author. **Terminus** is written with the air of one observing past events, re-running the film after the initial viewing and is descriptive rather than experienced at the time of its writing, unlike the sensation one picks up from the current work.

Arriving at a state of openness, arriving at this current writing technique is the result of an almost life long effort at an individualising self-discipline with words which began, according to P-Orridge in 1965.

> I started using "thee" and "E" and stuff way back in 1965, as part of a long process of training myself with language, in my own diaries and essays. And then for a whole year I didn't use the word "the" or "and" - just as an exercise.[95]

This was a method of altering the mind to that which one takes as given in this case, language, words, the authority of "I" and "The" - what I see as the naming, or the prescribing of something and the ownership and singularity, implied by I.

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[94] Genesis P-Orridge 'Now the 'P' is for Process' interview with Chris Twoney **Vanishing Point** July 1995, Vol 1. Toronto. Canada.

[95] Genesis P-Orridge **Fab Magazine** USA (1994?) exact date unknown

P-Orridge states that "Each word is the tip of an iceberg of meanings condensed to reflect in code."[96] This is a code which points to "the lack of any stable units of sense"[97] but expands the field of possible meanings, which releases one from the quasi-political government of the given - from the politics of Control - to place the mind automatically and quite simply in a position of ONfrontation[98] with reason.

It was probably at this time, in the late 1960s, that P-Orridge began formulating ideas for his own writing system which was documented in the Coum Journals in the early 1970s[99] The exact date is not known but the Coumcorian Reckoning System (by Richard Howson) also documented in the Journal is dated as 1972. In this "elemental system" P-Orridge proposed a process of simplifying letters to their basic visual form to "enable joining up, as in handwriting"[100] but in capitals, in order to create "a graphically exciting and personalised flexible writing" system. According to the 1972 (?) document, such a system was developed as A) a form of block symbols rather than letters, B) as a system to enable the breaking down of imaginational barriers, C) as a system which would destroy the automatic habits of handwriting and reinstate a greater consciousness of message, D) as an idiosycratic system and, E) as a system of graphic design where words are also indicative of their meaning "by design." This is in fact a five point encoding or ciphering system. In my opinion, the most significant aspect of the writing system is that words can easily be condensed into symbols creating a kind of hieroglyphic, although, still recognisable English language system. As personalised graphic symbols, words are manipulated so that they become particular to their user and are therefore imbued with multiple layers of personal, and symbolic, meanings. In effect, they become potent signatures (Sigil) of a virgin Hermeneutic system. P-Orridge uses this particular writing system in much of his collage work such as **Maid on a Bed ov Lies** (1975) (Fig. 2).

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[96] Genesis P-Orridge from the essay **Revolutions** 1988 printed in **Metronom** (Musik, Beyond the valley of acid" Frankfurt April / May 1989

[97] Ibid,.

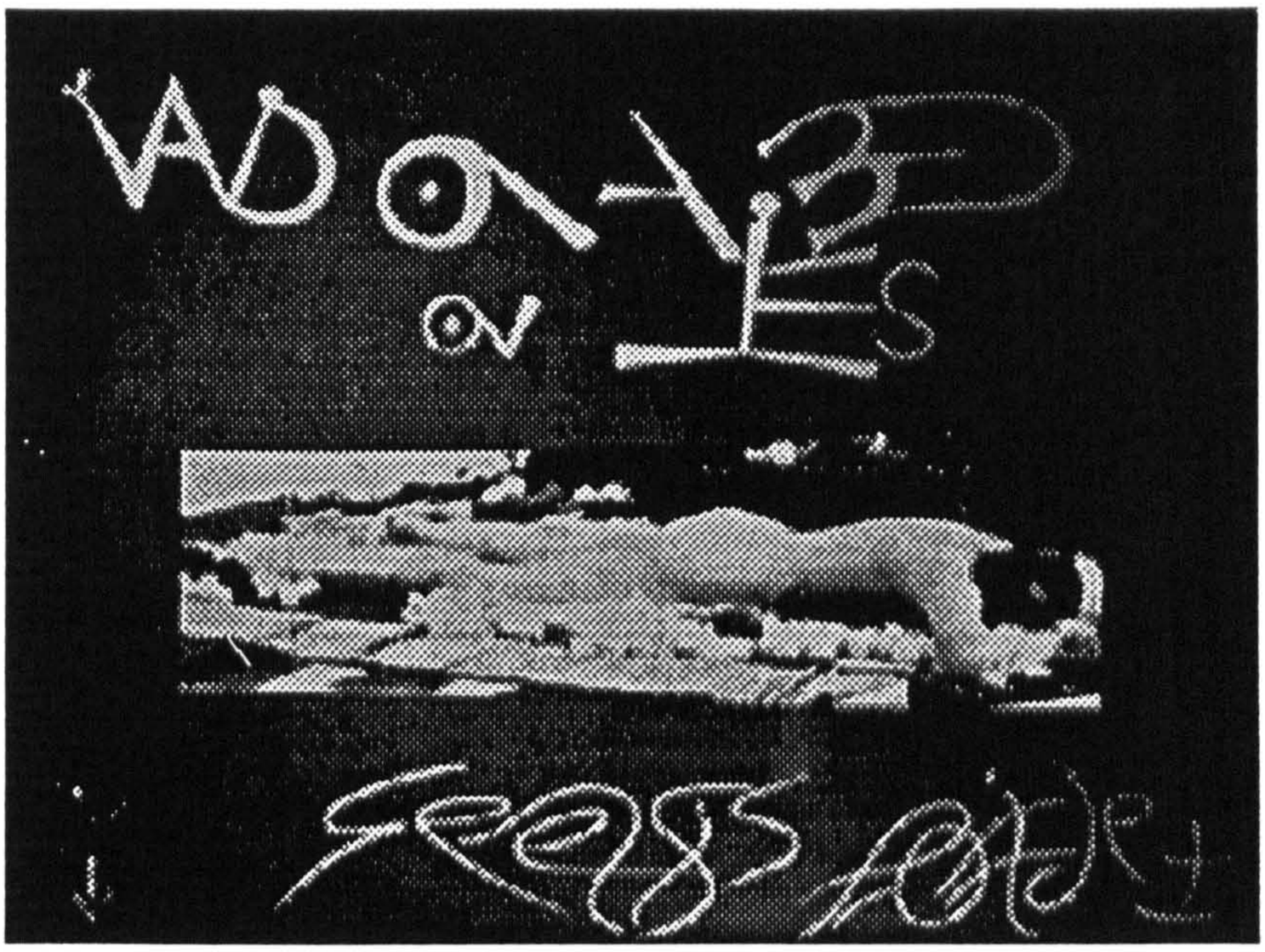
[98] Onfrontation = towards, on, above and touching, at or near, forwards movement, so as to be on (the frontiers of reason) as opposed to CONfrontation = to face, come face to face with reason. Con -= to learn, to direct and steer. Onfrontation is used by Genesis P-Orridge in **At Stockholm** P & C Etherworld Recordings 1995. (CD inside sleeve. Genesis P-Orridge & White Stains)

[99] See appendix.

[100] Genesis P-Orridge **Coum Writing System** Coum Journal 1972/1973. Hand Written or hand typed original manuscript from the artist's archive.

The development of a personalised writing system (there are in fact two now) not only provides evidence of P-Orridge's leaning towards a personal hermeneutic system but must partly be attributed to his efforts to separate himself from the determinate and what he saw as limiting and de-personalising systems imposed on the individual by society. His personalised sytems were instigated in order to "reinstate a greater consciousness of message" and to reconfigure a greater consciousness of his own individual instincts and desires. The development of a personalised writing system was, I believe, the first step toward creating a multi-dimensional method of self discipline.[101] Just as a child learns how to read and write the creation of a new and personal writing system seemed an appropriate place to start a process of re-educating - of reinstating the individual.

[101] Such a methodology was arguably articulated in its fullest form with the establishment of T.O.P.Y (Thee Temple ov Psychick Youth) 1981 - 1989



(Fig. 2)
Maid on a bed of Lies
Genesis P-Orridge
Photograph of Cosey Fanni Tutti 1975

6.7 Warzones

In his book **Sigmund Freud and the Jewish Mystical Tradition** David Bakan puts forward a convincing argument for the influence and inspiration that Freud derived from his own Jewish upbringing. Bakan argues that a "full appreciation of the development of psychoanalysis is essentially incomplete unless it be viewed against the history of Judaism, and particularly against the history of Jewish mystical thought."[102] Bakan sketches out the connection between methods of word play[103] and word association found in the esoteric texts of Jewish mysticism and Freud's use of free association in his **Interpretation of Dreams.** Bakan notes that the anti-semitic atmosphere in Vienna influenced Freud's writing and argues that Freud either consciously or unconsciously hid the kabbalist content of his work beneath a scientific / psychological veneer. Bakan quite rightly notes that it was from within a similar atmosphere of persecution that the major texts of Jewish mysticism were themselves written and he suggests that it was the threat of persecution which shaped their obscure esoteric language and dictated the manner in which they were transmitted.

> We believe that Freud often wrote with obscurity, that he was motivated, consciously or unconsciously, to hide the deeper portions of his thoughts, and that these deeper portions were Kabbalistic in their source and content. The Kabbalistic tradition

[102] David Bakan **Sigmund Freud, and the Jewish Mystical Tradition** Free Association Books, London. 1990. p xi

[103] A method of Free Association was used as early as the eleventh century as a devotional / magical process and method of meditation, advocated by among others, Samuel Abulafia, a Spanish Kabbalist (born 1240). Abulafia believed that free association, and other similar process of word play corresponded to the 'other' logic, that is, the divine logic of God.

G Scholem **Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism** New York: Stocken Books, 1954. pp 135-136:

> .... the modern reader of these writings will be most astonished to find a detailed description of a method which Abulafia and his followers call *dillug* and *Kefitsah*, "jumping" or "skipping" viz., from one conception to another. In fact this is nothing else than a very remarkable method of using associations as a way of mediation. It is not wholly the "free play of association" as known to psychoanalysis; rather it is the way of passing from one association to another determined by certain rules which are, however, sufficiently lax. Every "jump" opens a new sphere, defined by certain formal, not material, characteristics. Within this sphere, the mind may freely associate. The "jumping" unites, therefore, elements of free and guided association and is said to assure quite extraordinary results as far as the "widening of consciousness" of the initiate is concerned. The "jumping" brings to light hidden processes of the mind, "it liberates us from the prison of the natural sphere and leads us to the boundaries of the divine sphere." All the other, more simple methods of meditation serve only as a preparation for this highest grade which contains and supersedes all the others.

> itself has secrecy as part of its nature and deals with secret matters. The Kabbalistic tradition has it that the secret teachings are to be transmitted orally to one person at a time, and even then only to selected minds and by hints. This is indeed what Freud was doing in the actual practice of psychoanalysis, and this aspect of the kabbalistic tradition is still maintained in the education of the modern psychoanalyst. He must receive the tradition orally (in the training analysis). As the modern practising psychoanalyst is quick to tell anyone, psychoanalysis is not to be learned from books![104]

The notion of an esoteric language which is developed as a direct result of an atmosphere of persecution is, I believe, a factor which is at work, and can be detected in, the methods, poetic patterns and hidden intentions behind much of P-Orridge's writing. It is perhaps the language of the Warzone.

> To cleanse our guilt we must describe our fate, objective warzone correspondence, using thee oral language ov everyday life. [105]

It is the means by which one is able to describe while experiencing, while standing on the battle field of life. The notion that to describe one's fate is to cleanse one's guilt seems to indicate the confessional nature of this kind of form of expression. Another corresponding warzone slogan would be:

> What we have creates our need[106]

This can be interpreted in a number of different ways but my reading is that it refers to the elements of the psyche, to the multiple personality and to those aspects of the psyche which are repressed, so that repression can be said to create a need for release, an abreactive need. P-Orridge's statement is very close to Heraclitus's statement (here I paraphrase) that the soul has its own logos, which grows according to its needs. This can be interpreted in more or less the same way - the soul creates its own needs. Knowing how well versed P-Orridge is in gnostic, alchemical and occultural literature, it may well be that the statement "what we have creates our needs"[107] is a deliberate paraphrasing of Heraclitus.

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[104] David Bakan **Sigmund Freud, and the Jewish Mystical Tradition** Free Association Books, London. 1990 pp 35-36

[105] Genesis P-Orridge **At Stockholm** P & C Etherworld Recordings 1995. (CD inside sleeve. Genesis P-Orridge & White Stains)

[106] Genesis P-Orridge **A Hollow Cost** February 1994 (from the artist's manuscript)

[107] Ibid,.

The language which develops as a result of persecution is necessarily cryptic and encoded so that it can not be deciphered if intercepted by the enemy. It is often in the guise of every day language but a more significant meaning lies beneath its seemingly superficial colloquialism. This is the language of resistance and the underground. In terms of psychology Hillman might argue that it is the language (verbal and imaginal) through which the soul speaks and, in Freudian terms, it is the language of dreams. Dreams might be described as the messages sent from the warzone of the psyche. As P-Orridge puts it:

> Dreams are a coded material of eternity.
> We possess LIGHT through them.[108]

Hillman suggests:

> Perhaps the point of dreams is that, night after night, year after year, they prepare the imaginal ego for old age, death, and fate by soaking it through and through in *memoria*. Perhaps the point of dreams has very little to do with our daily concerns, and their purpose is the soul-making of the imaginal ego.[109]

Once again we are confronted by the dynamics of the underworld which not only has its correspondence in the cultural underground but also, in accordance with Hillman's theories, in the depths of the psychic underworld. Both worlds may be characterised as warzones by Nitsch and P-Orridge, for whom the frontier of this warzone is located at the point of experience; of participation in acts which open the doors of perception.

> We signal and are signalled.[110]

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[108] Genesis P-Orridge from **Thee Fractured Garden** 'World Preset Guardians' artist manuscript Second draft October 1992. p 4

[109] James Hillman 'Myth of Analysis', p 187 in **The Essential James Hillman - A Blue Fire** introduced and edited by Thomas Moore, Routledge, London 1990. p 265

[110] Genesis P-Orridge from **Thee Fractured Garden** 'World Preset Guardians' artist manuscript Second draft October 1992. p 3

6.8 Decoding Signals from the Warzone

In the **Zohar & Torah** (the book of the Law)[111] the writing is composed of patterns of thought, individual units of ideas which are best appreciated by employing an *ad locum* approach to the reading of the text. Bakan has suggested that Freud used what he knew about the interpretation of Jewish mystical texts and developed it, or encoded this knowledge in his psychological treatise **The Interpretations of Dreams.**[112] If Bakan's theory is true we may be correct in assuming that Freud, like Jung ascribed psychoanalytical significance to mystical texts.

What I have tried to intimate in the previous discourse is the notion that the problem of articulating that which is fundamentally without words has, out of necessity, some psychological slant; so much so, that the separation between what can be identified as divine, as deity, is joined via the archetypal imaginal ground of the psyche to the psychologising of the author, reader, he or she who participates or meditates upon the text. This hypothesis suggests that the text is one half of a hermeneutic circle, in other words it invites completion by a reader

[111] For the most comprehensive annotation of these books, and for a an account of their lineage see Papus (Gerard Encausse) '(Studies in Hermetic Tradition) **The Quabalah (Lessons on the secret science of the Hebrews and the esoteric teaching of Christianity)** The Aquarian Press (Thorsons Publishers Limited) 1977. (originally published in 1892)

'Papus' was the pseudonym of Dr Gerard Encausse (1865 - 1916) a leading French occultist who, with Stanislas de Guaita, popularised Eliphas Levi's theory that there was a link between the Hebrew alphabet and the twenty-two trumps of the Tarot pack.

Further reading:

Z'ev ben Shimon Halevi **A Kabbalistic Universe** Gateway Books, Bath UK 1977 (for a contemporary commentary on the Kabbala.

[112] Sigmund Freud **The Interpretation of Dreams** translated & edited by J. Strachey (New York: Basic Books, 1955) pp 103-104 Freud states.

> Our first step in the employment of this procedure teaches us that what we must take as the object of our attention is not the dream as a whole but the separate portions of its content. If I say to a patient who is still a novice: "What occurs to you in connection with this dream?," as a rule his mental horizon becomes a blank. If, however, I put the dream before him cut up into pieces, he will give me a series of associations to each piece, which might be described as the "background thoughts" of that particular part of the dream. Thus the method of dream interpretation which I practise already differs in this first important respect from the popular, historic and legendary method of interpretation by means of symbolism and approximates to the second or "decoding" method. Like the latter, it employs interpretation *en detail* and not *en masse;* like the latter, it regards dreams from the very first as being of a composite character, as being conglomerates of psychical formations.

who, by investing his or her own imagination into the text becomes the knower in the closed circle of known and knower.

Bakan has suggested that "in the mystical tradition word play becomes an integral part of the search for the hidden meaning of the Torah"[113] which extends to the numerical value of words and letters, by virtue of the fact that each Hebrew character has a numerical value.[114] A surface reading of the **Zohar** reveals only its outer garments. The outer shell is equal to a kind of narration which, while offering sign-posts to the possible hidden meanings within the text, may function on an entirely different level from the latent body of thought which lies beneath the literal.[115] The 'real' **Torah** - the hidden text - is arrived at via a process of undressing or of peeling away the outer garments. So, while a process of interpretation and appreciation of the statement begins with the analysis of the

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[113] David Bakan **Sigmund Freud, and the Jewish Mystical Tradition** Free Association Books, London. 1990 p 263

[114] This belief originating in the work of Pythagoras who developed a type of mathematical mysticism which introduced rational logic into the realms of religion. More applicable to this study is the system developed by Marcus, a disciple of Valentinus, who based his particular form of Gnostic teaching on the numerical equations derived from the letters composing each of the names of the entities of the supernatural universe. This is a system familiar to Kabbalists.

[115] This notion of latent and literal is parallel with Freud's notion of the *manifest dream* and the *latent dream-thoughts.* See 'On Dreams' 'The standard edition of the **Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud'** Trans James Strachey in collaboration with Anna Freud, Volume V. The Hogarth press and the Institute of Psycho-analysis, London 1953.

Concerning free association:

> Reflecting over this drama brought me no nearer to understanding it. I determined, however, to set down without any premeditation or criticism the associations which presented themselves to my self-observation. As I have found, it is advisable for this purpose to divide a dream into its elements and to find the associations attaching to each of these fragments separately. (Ibid,. p 637)

and from the Zohar:

> The stories of the Torah are thus only her outer garments, and whoever looks upon that garment as being the Torah itself, woe to that man ..... Observe this. The garments worn by a man are the most visible part of him, and senseless people looking at the man do not seem to see more in him than the garments. Not in truth that the pride of the garment is the body of the man, and the pride of the body is the soul. Similarly the Torah has a body made up of the precepts of the Torah, called gufe torah (bodies, main principles of the Torah), and that body is enveloped in garments made up of worldly narrations. The senseless people only see the garments, the mere narration; those who are somewhat wiser penetrate as far as the body. But those really wise, the servants of the most high King, those who stood on Mount Sinai, penetrate through to the soul, the root principle of all, namely, to the real Torah. (**The Zohar**, trans H Sperling, M Simon, and P Levertoff, London: Soncino Press 1931-1934. Volume V, p 211)

narrative, the metaphorical, the rational and the logical, a true reading is one which transcends all of these approaches.

Equally we can make a surface reading of one of Nitsch's Aktion plays and see only violence, moral deprivation and Christian blasphemy based on our observation of the slaughter of animals, naked emotional and sexual indulgence, and the enactment of scenes that look like Christ's crucifixion. This reading is a surface reading and does not access the hidden or latent meaning. In order to glimpse into the depths of meaning in the work we must participate by opening the psyche and by allowing Nitsch's sensual / tactile form of practical philosophy into the dark recesses of the soul like a breath. In this sense Nitsch is creating dramatic structures which are similar in function to the model of the mystical text I have described. P-Orridge is also creating texts which conform to this model. However, in **Thee Fractured Garden** narrative seems to have been lost. What is presented are the scattered limbs of a idea, limbs which are picked up and examined. Similarly while Nitsch uses the framework of the Oedipus myth, he strips away the narrative in order that the critical moments of abreactive crisis can be played and re-played. In **Thee Fractured Garden** the presence of a literal surface in terms of actual narrative is so thin that it is almost invisible. P-Orridge abandons almost every reference to the material world in **Thee Fractured Garden** and uses almost entirely the language of what Hillman would call the "underworld". Reading **Thee Fractured Garden** is like staring right into the heart of the imaginal ground, a ground which is definitely of the psyche of the author.

We are told in the **Zohar** that to penetrate through to the 'soul' of the **Torah**, one must become a servant of divinity, suggesting that a total physical and mental commitment is required in order to serve and become wise enough to journey to the soul. Thomas Moore commenting on the work of James Hillman states that "tradition places soul midway between intellect and body."[116] This is a notion which seems to be suggested in the **Zohar**; becoming wise means the intellectual must be coupled with the physical through the notion of service, as they work together to discover the root principle of all, the essence(s) of the soul. But what is the hidden meaning of the **Zohar**? What is the hidden meaning of any mystical, gnostic, alchemical text? I have already discussed how Jung believed

[116] Thomas Moore, Prologue to **The Essential James Hillman - A Blue Fire** introduced and edited by Thomas Moore, Routledge, London 1990. p 8

that the alchemical texts were metaphorical. If we are talking about the hidden, then in psychological terms we are generally talking about the unconscious. Hillman prefers to call this the soul, and it is my preference too, because the word connects more easily with the language of the spiritual and the mystical. Hillman uses the esoteric languages of myth and alchemy because "they are fantastic accounts, elaborated tales, symbol systems that ground because they *open* leading farther into the unknown."[117] In this way Hillman "finds holes into the undersphere" where the soul is located. He uses words carefully "always aware of the imaginal history, the etymology, and ancestry" in order to imply or re-vision the gravity or ground of the imaginal which is soul. In this way Hillman's writings become in themselves esoteric works, writings which imply and deposit a hidden message, or what Hillman might call a truth concerning the imaginal nature of the soul. The Angelology of such words carries the reader into the realm of the imaginal, into the angelness, the divinity of the words, which is located in their ability to intimate the imaginal, to instigate an imaginal perspective and thereby to allow one to glimpse the soul.

> The soul is other, sometimes imaged in dreams and myth as a twin or double, family member or intimate, but it is still other. Essential to Hillman's psychology is a thorough acknowledgement of the integrity of the soul. He mentions that often it seems we need another actual person in life in order to encounter the soul's otherness. But there is no self to deprive the soul of its own personality.[118]

In this statement Thomas Moore suggests that Hillman makes an indirect claim for the role of the psychoanalyst as the mediator in discovering or seeing into the nature of the otherness of the client's soul. Here Hillman interrogates Freud's notion of the latent meaning in dreams and describes the interpretive perception of the trained psychologist, whose metaphorical insight "emerges through hearing while seeing."[119]

> I think the trained psychological mind works the way in which I am here imagining Freud. Such a person would not have to look at the scene first as a photograph; he would start right off hearing the

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[117] Thomas Moore, Prologue to **The Essential James Hillman - A Blue Fire** introduced and edited by Thomas Moore, Routledge, London 1990. p 8

[118] Ibid,.p 8 / p 10

[119] James Hillman **The Essential James Hillman - A Blue Fire** introduced and edited by Thomas Moore, Routledge, London 1990. p 8 p 60

> image with metaphorical insight. He would see the sense in it even while sense-perceiving it - or even before. A second sense would be immediately intuited and felt as present whatever the situation. I wonder whether Freud's idea of latent meanings needs to be taken so literally. Perhaps. *latency* (in childhood, in dream content, in psychosis) merely intends to remind us not to stay in a manifest position. It is a sign that says "keep digging."[120]

The notion of "hearing while seeing", is similar to what R D Laing has described as mutual feeling or co-being with the client and attempting to empathise mentally as well as physically with the client's state. Both the notion of hearing while seeing and Laing's empathy imply a kind of transpersonal level of contact which probably has no scientific basis at all but which can be associated with states of mystical spiritual communion. To me it is at this point, when the connection between psychoanalyst and client traverses objectivity and becomes empathetic and transpersonal, that the two worlds of psychoanalysis and mysticism over lap.

Bakan teases out this lineage in terms of the work of Freud while James Hillman, building on the possibilities of Jungian deep psychology and mindful of the work of Freud, orchestrates the 'processional exit' of psychoanalysis and psychologising of the imaginal stage of the soul. In this passage from **Re-Visioning Psychology** Hillman attempts to strip away the psychologising, the theorising and the philosophising which has surrounded the soul. He tears away the outer garments of centuries of psychoanalysis in order to reveal what he understands as the reality of the soul.

> Though this has been a groundwork of irreplaceable insights, they are to be taken neither as foundations for a systematic theory nor even as a prolegomenon for any further archetypal psychology. Soul-making needs adequate ideational vessels, and it equally needs to let go of them. In this sense all that is written in the foregoing pages is confessed to with passionate conviction, to be defended as articles of faith, and at the same time disavowed, broken, and left behind. By holding to nothing, nothing holds back the movement of soul-making from its ongoing process, which now like a long Renaissance processional slips away from us into memory, offstage and out of sight. They are leaving - even the bricoleur and the rogue Errant who put together the work and charted its course; there goes Mersenne in his monk's dress, and Lou, and Hegel; the

[120] James Hillman **The Essential James Hillman - A Blue Fire** introduced and edited by Thomas Moore, Routledge, London 1990. p 61

> Cartesians depart, and the transcendent refusers of pathology, and Heroic Ego who had to bear such brunt; now Anima in all her marvellous veils moves off southward smiling; going too are Freud and Jung, side by side psychologised, into the distance, and the mythical personages from Greece, the Greek words and Latin phrases, the footnoting authorities, the literalistic enemies and their troop of fallacies; and when the last image vanishes, all icons gone, the soul begins again to populate the stilled realms with figures and fantasies born of the imaginative heart.[121]

Hillman announces the death of psychology just as Nietzsche announced the death of God, not as a great departure into the darkness of unknowing, but as an optimistic act of liberation from theoretical limitations and blinkered perspectives. This disavowal is an act of intellectual cleansing. It is a description of the fate of man as psychologist.[122] It is an act which forces participation and allows an imaginal reality to be revealed, or to 'come forth'. Hillman describes his own work as items of "passionate conviction, to be defended as articles of faith" as ultimately meaningless - as nothing - inadequate even as metaphors. He suggests that, by holding onto the nothingness of these articles of faith - a faith which believes in the reality of that which cannot be articulated through words - one holds onto nothing and by doing so, "holds back the movement of soul-making from its ongoing process."[123]

6.9 Sex, Death, and the Word

> Within all these arms and tears, breaths and fears, surrender we whose seed sows death. We who care, sow. We who lose sow. Thee callous seeding never stops. Ends in its most beloved words ov all, **sickness** and **death.** Behold that ship as it passes us in silence. Emits no Thing and thus emits thee seeding. Thus we see, and seeing feel. We must speak, **words,** but stop, say nothing; be infected, breathe and look away. If we see, we speak **words** too easily, and speaking creates endings.[124]

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[121] Thomas Moore, ' Re-Visioning ' **The Essential James Hillman - A Blue Fire** introduced and edited by Thomas Moore, Routledge, London 1990. pp 140 -141

[122] Genesis P-Orridge " To cleanse our guilt we must describe our fate, objective warzone correspondence, using thee oral language ov everyday life."

[123] Thomas Moore, ' Re-Visioning ' **The Essential James Hillman - A Blue Fire** introduced and edited by Thomas Moore, Routledge, London 1990. pp 140 -141

[124] Genesis P-Orridge **Thee Seeding Ship** (For Simon Dwyer) California 1995, included in the inside cover of **Thee Fractured Garden** CD 1996 (artist's manuscript) pp 7 - 8

In **Thee Seeding Ship**[125] P-Orridge mixes and interweaves images of sex and death, sickness and compulsion, with the notion of articulation and the diseased body of the word. Like Hillman P-Orridge implies that the word is responsible for psychic / physical limitation. P-Orridge takes this notion one step further by portraying the word as the infection which is passed on "too easily". He suggests that in speaking one instigates a terminal infection - a death which "creates endings". **In Thee Seeding Ship** death is to be stifled by the "baggage and trivia" of words which "shape our immortal arrogance to absurd and useless dimensions." Death is limitation; the kind of limitation which, for P-Orridge, is inherent in the act of naming. According to P-Orridge the individual dies via the stifling action which is the "acceptance of words" - the passive acceptance of ones' given name - and the acceptance of categorisation. Death is integral to the utterance of words. P-Orridge presents the notion of the word as a viral seed which spreads via its utterance and breeds within accepting bodies. And yet, within these two very personal essays, the author struggles with the notion of compulsion and the tragic issue of love. He associates articulation with sex, mingling the idea of and the need to express, love and the danger inherent in its physical expression, with the compulsion to express ideas.

> You may ask, why so much ov words to refute mere words? Why so much poesie to speak how sad, distraught, stunned, beautified, reminded and ill thee thought ov your owned illness made me feel? You know, E can't answer that really. Really E can't. It's thee weight E all ways go when I go inside, offer my seed to a friend without protection, with OUT protection or price. E choke on words and feel blessed by them. When I have to be ME, ME, me just with YOU. E can do this no other weigh. Just speak. Speak words ov blood music coupling coursing, that blast us in bewildering uselessness. Soul epitaph to being. We flow, conjoin through these blessed batterings ov impotent labelling. Naming. ...[126]

"E offer my heart to a friend without protection or price" is revised from the earlier 1994; "E all ways go when I go inside, offer my seed to a friend without protection, with OUT protection or price." Here 'Heart' is changed for 'Seed'. In "Thee Seeding Ship" the word 'naming' is changed for 'seeding.' These small

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[125] Genesis P-Orridge **Thee Seeding Ship'** is a reworking of an earlier essay entitled **On HIV IN AZT** (for Michael, Derek and all my HIV Positive, sexual friends ...) (last modification dated) Thursday, 10 march 1994. (artist's manuscript / computer disk).

[126] Genesis P-Orridge **Thee Seeding Ship** (For Simon Dwyer) California 1995, included in the inside cover of **Thee Fractured Garden** CD 1996 (artist's manuscript) pp 4 - 5

editing events provide strong evidence of the way in which P-Orridge is thinking. The editing here tightens, amplifies and compounds the notion of sex and death into the mythical ideas of Seeding. P-Orridge taps into the rich soil of mythology to add, by connotation, fleeting ideas of the kiss of death, the Midas touch, the biblical references to seeding and the scattering of "the good seed on the ground." However, such connotations acquire an air of poignancy and irony, because this is not "the good seed" but the seed of death and the pilot (if there is one) of the "Seeding Ship" is not good but ambivalent, in the same way that compulsion and love can be unintentionally ambivalent. This is the tragedy of the HIV virus; that it creates ambivalence out of something intended as an expression of love.

> We who care, sow. We who lose sow.[127]

In this closing section of **On HIV**, which is not included in **Thee Seeding Ship**, one can sense something of the personal torment which has generated the interweaving of the issues and ideas being developed in this essay. Instructions at the bottom of the essay state that it is "to be read loud, very loud, repeatedly, until unable to continue through exhaustion." This instruction gives some indication as to the anger, frustration, sense of futility and, possibly, the 'abreactive' quality which the essay was intended to have. **On HIV** ends:

> E don't know what kind ov sense is made. These "words" were for and from you. They serve no conceived, advance purpose. E watched your face in my eyes, till E could hardly see thee keys for tears, and thus thee key is tears. E hope E do not give only sadness, E hope E give a piece ov my Self, that was coumhow yours, for from thee thought ov you it came.[128]

During the **Transmedia Tour** in Germany Genesis included **Thee Seeding Ship** essay in our performances. Generally we split the essay between us, choosing to read either the first half or the second half, and we each spoke the words simultaneously, at speed and at the tops of our voices, against the heavy and loud beat of a backing track. For me this moment in our mainly improvised performance presented me with an opportunity to let go of the performance

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[127] Genesis P-Orridge **Thee Seeding Ship** (For Simon Dwyer) California 1995, included in the inside cover of **Thee Fractured Garden** CD 1996 (artist's manuscript) p 7

[128] Genesis P-Orridge **On HIV IN AZT** (for Michael, Derek and all my HIV Positive, sexual friends ...) (last modification dated) Thursday, 10 March 1994. (artist's manuscript / computer disk). p 5

tensions. I was also conscious that, for me, these moments became quite confessional. It was only after the tour was over that I had time to research the significance of the essay and discovered in my copies of P-Orridge's manuscripts the earlier **On HIV IN AZT** essay.

The symbolism of the key or keys is a very interesting one which becomes less obvious in **Thee Seeding Ship**. Knowing that P-Orridge is fully conversant in the symbols and terminology of western magic it is hard to pass over his use of a word such as key without immediately thinking of the idea of the **Key of Solomon**, which is a mediaeval *Grimoire* almost certainly derived from Jewish mystical sources and used as a magical text book, which contained the various names of God, used as Words of Power. The **Legemeton** and the **Lesser Key of Solomon** were studied by Aleister Crowley, Mathers, Dion Fortune, and Austin Osman Spare who, arguably, did most to instigate the rediscovery of the Sigil in the first part of this century.[129] The *Grimoire* has proved to be a valuable source of information for a number of key figures in western magic and esoteric

[129] **Sigil** is a visual symbol privately encoded by an individual for a given intention. The Sigil is used extensively in Genesis P-Orridge's work. He defines SIGIL as:

> .. a 2-3 dimensional product or ideagram; consciously invoking a clear intention; often produced in conjunction with a formal ritual; usually and primarily graphically and / or non-linguistically, in thee linear everyday sense ov things. (Use Full Glossary Ov Terms) in **The Splinter Test.** (artist's manuscript) California 1995)

Consciously building on the SIGIL ideas put forward by Austin Osman Spare, P-Orridge writes:

> In thee terminology ov Austin Osman Spare, we are creating ... a 'SIGIL' as we create audio-visual, linguistic, or physiologically active worlds and combinations that have never ever existed. However, in a very real sense, it is possible to suggest that with thee advent ov relatively cheap, and global, access to sampling data collected in various "Internet" information banks an extra, and highly potent, quality has been added to this ancient lineage ov manifestation. This most recent quality is an apparent ability ov that sampled, thee "meme" ov certain theorists, to **replicate** as well as resonate. Sorceric ritual could already reveal thee hidden; attack thee source ov stasis; accelerate thee "user" into repeatable contact with entities and galactic ebbs and flows; and through all this and more present us to thee nano-technology ov thee most minute primary codes ov what we could dub, sentient L-IF-E. For this perspective, the process ov selection wills to primarily identify what cyberspace commentator Doug Rushkoff would call a "media virus"; an individual cultural item ov such precise metaphorical weight and resonance, within its contextual societal structure and/or belief system, that is equivalent, in its potential disruption and infection ov any established political status quo (or social immune system) to a virus attacking its host organism. So, in a very real Astorical sense, we are committing acts ov heretical cultural Ex locution "to see what is really there", as Brion Gysin once said... (**Thee Splinter Test** (artist's manuscript) California 1995. p 4)

philosophy. P-Orridge with, what I would consider to be obvious knowledge and understanding of these particular connotations, states "E watched your face in my eyes, till E could hardly see thee keys for tears," which perhaps means that the emotional impact, the significance and the sheer physicality of crying outweighs, outshines and exceeds the power and associated aspect of magical knowledge offered by the traditional teachings and techniques of western magic. P-Orridge states "thus thee key is tears"; tears are the keys to power, tears are the product of transformation, that to cry is an evocation of the soul, the energy of soul which is brought forth from the body in tears. It is the most natural and most 'magical' act. It is a pure emotional reflection. Elsewhere P-Orridge writes "We are crying now, that's good, we can never cry enough ... No, whatever we might think, we are given more in that tear than a single word could dream in its seeding.'"[130]

Both essays close with an image of fire which is associated with the alchemical process of fixing. Fire is a recurring theme and image in P-Orridge's writing since the early 1980s. He associates the notion of fire with the Sigilisation process[131] with the accent more on cleansing that on consecration.

> Within these circles ov fire, screaming words to make thee sun rise each morning, thee moonlight thee nights, thee animals breed to give food and warmth, thee women (men) too fall pregnant by most peculiar sorcery, within these circles ov brutality, fired up to perfection by screaming, remains thee most silent seeding ship ov all. TIME. E don't know what kind ov sense is made ... etc.

Here within the circle of fire words are screamed out as if the sensation of burning in some way evokes words and the screaming out of words perfects the fire, in the same way that the fire perfects the alchemical stone. On the subject of sulphur and fire Hillman draws upon alchemical psychology:

> Alchemy often speaks of subliming to a sulfur white as snow... In fact sublimation requires going with the fire, like curing like raising the temperature to a white heat so as to destroy all coagulations in the intensity of the desire, so that *what* one desires no longer matters, even as it matters most, mattering now sublimed,

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[130] Genesis P-Orridge **Thee Seeding Ship** (For Simon Dwyer) California 1995, included in the inside cover of Thee Fractured garden CD 1996 (artist's manuscript) pp 6 - 7

[131] Ibid,. p 4

translucent, all flame.[132]

So, in P-Orridge's essay, desire becomes silent, love becomes silent and the silence is transformed into the notion of time which is viewed as the ultimate ratio of existence. Time is portrayed as the seeding ship which passes silently overhead. P-Orridge hints that it is the mysteries of time which form the empirical nature of the simultaneous experience of existence and non-existence.

The most significant aspect of these two essays lies in their disavowal of P-Orridge's previously held belief in the power of words. They seem to shatter his earlier statements concerning the notion that information is power, and that knowledge of words, and the ability to manipulate words, enables and gives the individual access to the methods of disruption and insight into the workings of control. This is epitomised in the statement "NOTHING SHORT OF A TOTAL WAR" which is a direct misquoting of the slogan "INFORMATION WAR." However, both **ON HIV** and **Thee Seeding Ship** alter this perspective dramatically and are more akin to the sentiments expressed in essays such as the **World Preset Guardians** with its intimations towards departure.

In my view these recent essays offer a glimpse of the depth of P-Orridge's investigations; they reveal a harrowing path which began with "thee luxurious appraisal ov letters just before dawn in a forest deep in thee heart" and stretch into the silence of hubris, of capitulation and snatchs away the moment of confiding, because "words get in thee way ov confiding "I L-OV-E You"![133] **The Seeding Ship** is a ship of silence. It is the ghost ship of the imagination, a ship of wordlessness containing "that which points in every direction simultaneously" but " has no language."[134] From an alchemical psychological point of view these essays, together with the series **World Preset Guardians** and **Thee Fractured Garden**, display the signs of an artist reaching toward his goal; in P-Orridge's case, an end and departure from that which is material, which he has formulated as follows:

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[132] James Hillman ' Thought of the Heart' 45 - 46 quoted in **The Essential James Hillman - A Blue Fire** introduced and edited by Thomas Moore, Routledge, London 1990. p 129

[133] Genesis P-Orridge **Thee Seeding Ship** (For Simon Dwyer) California 1995, included in the inside cover of **Thee Fractured Garden** CD 1996 (artist's manuscript) p 6

[134] Genesis P-Orridge **On HIV IN AZT** (for Michael, Derek and all my HIV Positive, sexual friends ...) (last modification dated) Thursday, 10 March 1994. (artist's manuscript / computer disk). p 3

> A Soul must lose its attachment to humanity.
> A Mind must lose its attachment to salvation.
> A Brain must lose its attachment to body.[135]

The seeding ship passes silently and artists, the seers, the mystics and the shamans of humanity, having seen the ineffable, are compelled to attempt to articulate that which they have seen;

> Behold that ship ov seeding as it passes us in its silence, emits no thing and thus emits thee seeding, and thus we see and seeing we feel we must speak, but stop, say no thing, be seeded, breathe, and look away.[136]

In this passage P-Orridge tells us that the seeding is the seeding of the sense - the realisation of nothing. The ship is not the ship of imagination, but it contains the void, the nil, the disavowal of the universe, the all and the nothing of the absolute void. He suggests that the realisation of nothing should not be articulated, that the individual should "say no thing, be seeded, breathe, and look away." Yet compulsion drives him on, his only compensation being that it is possible to make his articulations increasingly silent by applying contradiction and methods of disavowal in the same way that Hillman destroys his own psychologising by surrendering to the poetics of the imaginal ground and by adding disclaimers to his work.

P-Orridge identifies the root of his own compulsion to articulate, to express, to speak of love and suggests that to speak is, for him, an act of love, since it is "for from thee thought ov you it came."[137] It is very clear that in **On HIV IN AZT** P-Orridge is thinking, meditating on the thought of his HIV positive friends but in other essays it is unclear as to whether he has a specific person in mind or whether his writing is directed towards humanity in general, even though some of it, such as that assigned to the character of Father Malachi, is vitriolic towards, and obviously against, accepted notions of humanity and humane behaviour.

If we make a surface reading of these two essays we might conclude that they are

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[135] Genesis P-Orridge **Thee Fractured Garden** in 'World Preset Guardians' (artist's manuscript) second draft, October 1992. p 2

[136] Genesis P-Orridge **On HIV IN AZT** (for Michael, Derek and all my HIV Positive, sexual friends ...) (last modification dated) Thursday, 10 march 1994. (artist's manuscript / computer disk). pp 4

[137] Ibid,. p 5

about the physical and psychological dangers of expressing both love and ideas. P-Orridge takes the contemporary theme of HIV and intertwines it with the mythical notion of sex and death. Both ideas are merged and treated with a delicate brush and a personal and sympathetic tone in the strongest terms. The articulation of words and the sharing of ideas is likened to 'unprotected' sex. This idea is introduced as a third strand in the texture of the work and is woven into the contemporary issue of HIV and the mythic notion of sex and death, in the hope that "E do not give only sadness" either physically or via the words and the ideas which he seeks to express, but "E hope, E give a piece ov my Self, that was coumhow yours, for from thee thought ov you it came." P-Orridge associates the anxiety he experiences, when he thinks about his own responsibilities for the words, names and ideas he expresses, with the emotional anxiety and responsibility for his friends who are HIV positive. We can see how, in these two essays, P-Orridge uses his own reactions to situations around him to fuel his own meditations, and to develop connections with his own ideologies, philosophies and mythologies. Above all, these two essays illustrate how easily P-Orridge is able to move fluidly between the personal, the mythic and the philosophical, and to merge the seemingly contradictory tones of personal confession with the sociopolitical and the mythic / religious. Both of these essays are important because they show how P-Orridge expands the personal into the self and the mythic, thereby mapping significant moments of personal grief and hardship to an empirical idea of existence. Both Nitsch and P-Orridge share this almost unconscious drive to elevate the personal and to highlight the existential significance of the personal.

Chapter 7
Optimistic Nihilism - An Anxiety of Becoming

In the previous chapter I suggested how either the negation or the disassembly and disruption of the word is not only the result of a creative choice but the result of a deepening exploration of the notion of existence through which the conventional role and value of the word is surpassed.

At this energy based level of investigation words become part of the imaginal and incorporeal ground; the *langue* of expression is situated in the third dimension of the mother tongue or a third mind. For P-Orridge the everyday language of words is capable only of sending back transmissions from the warzone which is at the real front line of experience. In terms of the work of Nitsch it is not the design that the colour makes when it is splattered on the canvas which is of primary importance but the intimation of the life energy and the reflex that put it there, the psycho-physiological expression.

In the following chapter the process of deepening will be expanded. I will discuss how, in terms of the work of Nitsch and P-Orridge, reduction is the natural consequence of a form of existential introspection which has brought the artists into a confrontational proximity with the duel or plural experience of existence and extinction.

The notion of the closeness of 'death' and its significance in terms of the work of Nitsch and P-Orridge will be explored in this, the second half of the thesis. I will begin to move towards describing what I see as the essential characteristics of the dynamic which motivates their work which, in the first instance, can be likened to a philosophic vibration between the two polar principles of life and death, existence and extinction, the all and the void and the 'no' of things and the 'nothing'. I will also begin to discuss how the idea of space is simultaneously expanded and disintegrated by the collision of polar opposites and I will examine how both Nitsch and P-Orridge work with extended notions of space.

In order to frame some of my claims for the artists' work I will draw upon selected writings of Henri Lefebvre, in particular **The Production of Space,**

Friedrich Nietzsche's **Beyond Good & Evil** and James Hillman, in particular **Pathologising - The Wound and the Eye.**

In this chapter I would like to expand the concept of isolation, alienation and reclusive thinking and suggest that these themes not only form a highly dominant current which undercuts the majority of each of the artists' creative output but also informs each of their psychological perspectives on their own work and shape their personal philosophies. I will examine the particular dynamics which seem to be initiated by isolationist thinking and behaviour. In order to frame parts of this argument I will draw upon the work of Friedrich Nietzsche and will begin to develop a critique for a concept of optimistic Nihilism.[1] The notion of optimistic nihilism can be said to be a state of Being which is brought about as a consequence of a process of levelling which, I believe, both artists are either intentionally or unintentionally engaged in. This levelling process is perpetuated by a kind of intellectual, psychological and creative introspection which results in a constant testing, working-through, devaluing and alchemical condensation of the artist's individual and creative values and beliefs. This is perhaps in order to modify and adjust, themselves, their work, and their philosophies according to their ultimate concern and to reaffirm their commitment to that concern. In terms of the work of Nitsch there is evidence to suggest that his 'ultimate concern' can be identified as the search for an actual experience of Dasein. For P-Orridge, it is probably the sensation of nothing (the experiential space of all possibilities and zero point, zero time) which has become the most significant theme of his recent work.

[1] 'Optimistic Nihilism' - a wilful and ecstatic leap into the ultimate reality of nothing. It is an experience of IT IS.

7.1 Nothing and No Thing

AS IT IS[2]
IT IS[3]
TO BE[4]
TO HAVE BEING

In defining Nietzschean nihilism Hubert Dreyfus suggests that, "if nihilism were complete, there would be no significant private or public issues. Nothing would have authority for us, would make a claim on us, would demand a commitment form us."[5] While I am sure that the meaning of Dreyfus's statement is that no thing would have authority over us, one can't help playing with the meaning in order to suggest an alternative reading which might be that the phenomenon of nothing would have authority for us, would make a claim on us ... We can see how P-Orridge plays with the notion of no thing and nothing in his most recent essays:

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[2]Genesis P-Orridge - A frequently used phrase, and signature, with Process associations. It also has pseudo biblical connotations.

[3] Both P-Orridge and Hermann Nitsch have used this is their writings.

IT IS is described by George Steiner as the fundamental question / statement, which lies at the heart of Heidegger's philosophy. This quotation from Coleridge, seems to tease out the enormity of that question:

> Has thou ever raised thy mind to the consideration of EXISTENCE, in and by itself, as the mere act of existing? Hast thou ever said to thyself, thoughtfully, IT IS! heedless in that moment, whether it were a man before thee, or a flower, or a grain of sand? Without reference, in short, to this or that particular mode or form of existence? If thou has indeed attained to this though wilt have felt the presence of a mystery, which must have fixed thy spirit in awe and wonder. There is that within us which repels the proposition with as full and instantaneous a light, as if it bore evidence against the fact in the right of its own eternity. (Coleridge 'The friend' II, xi - quotation taken from, George Steiner **Heidegger** Fontana/Collins 1978. p 149)

[4] An idea / notion stressed by Nitsch in our conversations. Reminiscent of "TO BE ,OR NOT TO BE" (Shakespeare - Hamlet) Steiner suggests that the anxiety and an angst, set up by this question of existence:

> ... brings *Dasein* face to face with its terrible freedom to be nor not to be, to dwell in inauthenticity or strive for self-possession. (George Steiner **Heidegger** Fontana/ Collins 1978. p 97)

Nitsch suggests that in this way we are able TO HAVE BEING

[5] Hubert Dreyfus, 'Heidegger on the connection between nihilism, art, technology, and politics' in **The Cambridge Companion to Heidegger** edited by Charles Guignon. Cambridge University Press. 1993. p 291

Then and only then can we say nothing-NO-THING-nothing-nothing at all, and that is just thee way it is, and that is just thee way we speak, and that is just thee way we look, and that is just thee way thee children cry, all, all children cry and die. And that is just thee way it is, and that is just thee way it is, it's thee only time you can say nothing...

We kiss thee cheek ov thee land that bites us. We receive nothing in return. But nothing is why we came here. Nothing is what we so awkwardly strive and fight for. Nothing is our very precise confrontation with reason...

Nothing is more real than no-thing...

Humane experience is sadly thee experience ov nothing. And thee only reality it knows is nothing...[6]

This reversibility of nothing and no thing, as we find it used by P-Orridge, serves to exemplify his tendency towards a quantum / nihilistic thinking. For P-Orridge there is something significant in this little piece of linguistic trickery. In the above statement P-Orridge forces the phenomena of things and the phenomena of nothing into close proximity in order to confront reason, or to reach a point where, in the words of Michel Leiris, "above and below become blurry in a Dionysian vertigo and where the distance between totality and nothing is eliminated."[7] Paul Federn has called the experience of nothingness the "mental ego alone,"[8] while Deikman has suggested that this is the experience of the "observing self" - a "transparent centre, that which is aware ... prior to thought,

[6] Genesis P-Orridge **At Stockholm** CD sleeve insert essay. Etherworld Recordings. San Francisco. 1995

[7] Michel Leiris, writing about George Bataille, quoted in **Das Auge des Ethnologen** Frankfurt 1981. p 75 quoted in Jurgen Habermas **The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity** translated by Frederick Lawrence (Between Eroticism and General Economics: George Bataille) Polity Press, 1987. p 211 as follows;

> After he has been the impossible one, fascinated by everything he could discover about what was really unacceptable ... he expanded his field of vision (in line with his old idea of getting beyond the 'No!' of a child stamping around in a rage) and, in the consciousness that a human being is only really a human being when, in this state of being without measure or standard, he seeks his own standard, he made himself into the man of the impossible, desirous of reaching the point where above and below become blurry in a Dionysian vertigo and where the distance between totality and nothingness is eliminated.

[8] Paul Federn 'Some Variations in Ego-Feeling' in **International Journal of Psychoanalysis.** Volume 7 (1926) p 437

feeling, and action.'"[9] This is a notion which has striking similarities to Hillman's pre-cognitive state of mind discussed in the previous chapter and to P-Orridge's personal description / sensation of what he calls the preset mind. However, what P-Orridge is suggesting through such cryptic word games is beyond rational description, it is a sensation of existential vertigo.

Hubert Dreyfus continues by suggesting that "in a non-nihilistic age there is something at stake; there are questions that all can agree are important, even if they violently disagree as to what the answers to these questions are,"[10] a view which seems to epitomise the mood of the Modernist era. Dreyfus moves on to suggest (along the same lines as Kierkegaard and Heidegger) that, in the latter part of the twentieth century, "everything is in the process of becoming equal" and that "all meaningful differences are being levelled." While Dreyfus is primarily talking about political, social and religious differences, P-Orridge and Nitsch are pursuing a practical philosophy which is generated by the levelling of reason as it is confronted by the physical and psychological circumstances of existence itself. This is not so much a levelling of differences but an annihilation of irrelevancies in the light of the vertigo of existence.

In Dreyfus's interpretation of Kierkegaard's answer to Nietzschean nihilism he perhaps comes very close to introducing a Postmodern element into the formula.

> Kierkegaard thought that the answer to nihilism was to make one's own individual absolute commitment. If you can commit yourself unconditionally - in love, for instance - then that becomes a focus for your whole sense of reality. Things stand out or recede into insignificance on the basis of that ultimate concern, you do not discover a significance that is already there. There is no basis for this commitment in the cosmos. Indeed, such a commitment is exactly the opposite to belief in an objective truth. You are called by some concrete concern - either a person or a cause - and when you define yourself by your dedication to that concern, your world acquires seriousness and significance.[11]

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[9] A J Deikman **The Observing Self: Mysticism and Psychotherapy** Boston: Beacon. 1982 p 94

[10] Hubert Dreyfus 'Heidegger on the connection between nihilism, art, technology, and politics' in **The Cambridge Companion to Heidegger** edited by Charles Guignon. Cambridge University Press. 1993. p 291

[11] Ibid,.

In Kierkegaard's view the individual is freed into a situation where he / she is able to choose, define and seek out his or her own ultimate concern. This is the state of ecstatic realisation which, I believe, is at the heart of Nietzsche's call for the death of God. With the death of God the individual is freed from an empirical stratification of inequality, with its cosmic sprawl which stretches from the divine to the low, untouchable and underprivileged of societies. The death of God instigates an almost revolutionary levelling process and with it an instant repositioning, and inward concern for the role and place of self. In a Godless world a personally designated commitment to an 'ultimate concern' is permitted. With the death of God "things stand out or recede into insignificance on the basis of that ultimate concern." According to this hypothesis, the individual, by virtue of his or her personal ultimate concern, becomes a unique being within the universe because the activities of the individual can only be judged against the significance of that individual's ultimate concern. This puts the individual in the position of the philosopher, and it is, I believe, the stark reality of this position which can propel some individuals into a type of anxiety and angst which, in the words of George Steiner "... brings *Dasein* face to face with its terrible freedom to be or not to be, to dwell in inauthenticity or strive for self-possession."[12] This is the ultimate vertigo, a terrible freedom beautifully crafted by Shakespeare " to be or not to be", part of the all or the nothing. It is such an overwhelming sensation of angst and anxiety which pervades the work of Nitsch, whose large scale Aktions set up a bloody and God-less terrain of visual and moral paradoxes, which forces individuals into a confrontation with the "... presentness and mystery of Being itself, of Being as it transfigures beings."[13] According to Steiner:

> In these moments, man knows himself to be 'available', 'free for' ... Under stress of the uncanny, Dasein comes to realise that beyond being modes of the everyday - it must become Dasein-for. *Sorge*, signifying 'care-for', 'concern-for and -with', is the meaning of this transcendence. It can and must take myriad forms: care for the ready-to-hand, for the tools and materials of our practice; a concern for others which can be defined as 'solicitude'. But principally, and in a sense yet to be expounded, *Sorge* is a concern with, a caring for, an answerability to, the presentness and mystery of Being itself, of Being as it transfigures beings.[14]

[12] George Steiner **Heidegger** Fontana/ Collins 1978. p 97

[13] Ibid,.

[14] Ibid,.

Steiner, reading Heidegger, suggests that when man comes to the point in his philosophical journey when he has to make a choice between inauthenticity and self-possession his concerns become existential. Furthermore, the notion of existence and authenticity becomes intimately connected to the Self, so philosophy grabs hold of psychology and the individual's philosophising and psychologising become intertwined. This concept helps us to understand why both Nitsch and P-Orridge are engaged in practical forms of self-possession and the exploration of what they see as authentic gestures. Here possession of the self is a mutual companion of existence, philosophy and psychology seem to converge at this point. I would suggest that Sorge or ultimate concern for, grows out of this union of self-possession and existence; out of a personal process of psychologising and philosophising. A concern is, by its very nature, personal, and so too is the process and experience of 'answerability' to the presentness of Being. Lyotard, writing about the postmodern artist, makes a similar claim:

> ... the text he writes, the work he produces are not in principle governed by preestablished rules, and they cannot be judged according to a determining judgment, by applying familiar categories to the text or to the work.[15]

He suggests that the rules and categories are what the work of art itself is looking for, meaning that they are a symptom of the artists' / works' ultimate concern which responds to the presentness - the will-to, the ore, the raw libidinal energy which flows out of Being. The work is both generated by and is a reflection of the ultimate concern:

> Those rules and categories are what the work of art itself is looking for. The artist and writer, then, are working without rules in order to formulate the rules of what *will have been done.* [16]

Of course this is not the case for all artists and all works of art however, in the case of Nitsch and P-Orridge, I believe that this hypothesis is a very significant one. When we look at the work of Nitsch and P-Orridge we are no longer looking at art which does not obey pre-established rules; we are not even looking

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[15] Lyotard **The Postmodern Condition** (A Report on Knowledge) Trans Geoff Bennington & Brian Mussumi, Theory & History of Literature Volume 10. Manchester university Press 1979/1984

[16] Ibid,.

at colour for its own sake, sound for its own sake, or an individual aesthetic being built for its own sake, but we are looking at activity, materials, personalities and philosophies which are being driven by an ultimate concern, in which self, art, and philosophy form a triadic holographic multi-surface which testifies to the experience of availability to Be, and the work's answerability to its ultimate concern.

7.2 Reclusive Thinking - Chronic Disorder

> Culture takes place in closed, even closeted places, involving the alchemical putrefaction, or decadence as the body of fermentation. Generation and decay happen together; and they are not always easy to distinguish.[17]

In **Beyond Good and Evil,** Nietzsche begins to outline the evasive tendencies of the recluse and the dark tone of the twilight images which reclusive rumination tends to develop.

> In the writings of a recluse one always hears something of the echo of the wilderness, something of the murmuring tones and timid vigilance of solitude; in his strongest words, even in his cry itself, there sounds a new and more dangerous kind of silence, of concealment. He who has sat day and night ... alone with his soul in familiar discord and discourse, he who has become a cave-bear, or a treasure-seeker, or a treasure-guardian and dragon in his cave - it may be a labyrinth, but can also be a gold-mine - his ideas themselves eventually acquire a twilight-colour of their own, and an odour, as much of the depth as of the mould, something uncommunicative and repulsive, which blows chilly upon every passer-by.[18]

The twilight-colours of the reclusive mind and the odour of mould, decay and chilling consumption are present in much of the musical, visual and written output of both Nitsch and P-Orridge. It is presence is felt in the underground

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[17] James Hillman 'Cultural Disorder - Pathologising: The Wound and the Eye' in **The Essential James Hillman - A Blue Fire** introduced and edited by Thomas Moore. Routledge. London. 1990. p 163

[18] Friedrich Nietzsche, 'What Is Noble?' **Beyond Good & Evil** Trans,. Helen Zimmern. Edited by Oscar Levy. George Allan & Unwin Limited, London. 1967. p 257

themes used by each of the artists and in the urgency and significance of moving toward the experience of annihilation. Annihilation is present in the theme of being buried alive. In the following example P-Orridge counters the pessimistic overtones of annihilation with optimism, suggesting that for him annihilation is a place to hide and hinting at the notion of some kind of existence after or within a state of annihilation. In the 1995 song lyric the **Wrongs of Spring** P-Orridge recounts memories of his childhood; a theme which has been particularly prevalent in his work over the past two years.

Summer was leaking
Small kids speaking
Shadows hurt you inside
Cripple everything wild
Everything sneaking ... underground
Not a sound
Buried alive
in the dark place
where I would hide
Buried alive
Buried alive[19]

In these lyrics (which appear as part of the **Trip Reset** album) P-Orridge returns to the memories of situations and sensations, relationships and emotions which were instrumental in sending him along a particular intellectual, psychospiritual path. The **Trip Reset** album is the result of a practical meditation on those early childhood episodes and is, I believe, an attempt to Reset or reaffirm the significance of those experiences and, in so doing, reaffirm, adjust and reassess the

[19] Genesis P-Orridge 'Wrongs of Spring' extract (song lyrics) 1995 on **Trip Reset**. Artist's manuscript.

nature of the journey those early experiences instigated.[20] To re-enter the original darkness of early experiences is an expression of both decay and generation. In this sense re-entering can be viewed as a form of self-correction (which denotes the appearance of the child) and is perhaps a necessary cyclic, alchemical, process of fermentation; this is the ultimate concern of this piece of work. The work in itself is not founded on the production of words but on the process by which words became apparent. What underlies this is a process of self-possession.

There are suggestions here that the images of darkness and interiors which according to Hillman are characteristic of a individual engaged in self possession, are again hinting at the nature of the 'ultimate concern' from which the words were derived and which also defines the characteristics of the particular mental space in which such an exploration took place.

> Crucial to this move into internal space is realising that it must be black and must be empty, otherwise the antidote cannot appear in the poison. Rigid self-centered focusing without escape into future hopes is precisely the melancholy method, a process of archetypal self-correction.[21]

In the Wrongs of Spring the spectre of bullying is contained in the first three lines and coupled with the notion of everything wild becoming crippled, which is perhaps a reference to himself, or to the way in which the summer became

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[20] Genesis P-Orridge interview with Mark Johnson Part Two, in **Carbon 14** Philadelphia , USA . 1995;

> Well, my parents moved quite a lot. So, I was born in Manchester and then they moved down to London for a couple of years, and then back up between Stockport and Manchester ... There were a couple of big fields near where I lived, behind where they hadn't finished building houses. Which, funnily enough, there's a track on our new album, **Trip Reset** which we've nearly finished, actually about those fields, and that part of my childhood, called 'The Wrongs of Spring.' That was where I used to run away when I was pissed off.
>
> **Trip Reset** is our statement of returning to that way of working with sound, using real time. The drums speed up on a track: they sped up physically, in the room. It's all recorded basically in our spare bedroom. Just like the old '60s days, you know? In the bedroom-Actually half the spare-bedroom, with real guitars, and old effects, done on analogue 16 track. (Genesis P-Orridge, interview with Mark Johnson 1995, from Johnson's rough manuscript)

[21] James Hillman 'Negative Senex ' p 98 in **The Essential James Hillman - A Blue Fire"**introduced and edited by Thomas Moore. Routledge. London. 1990. p 158

tainted and began to leak away - a reference perhaps to a sense of loss of innocence. The line "everything sneaking ... underground" is perhaps a reference to both the sneaking and lurking of childhood bullies and to his own sensation of being forced to retreat into his own imagination, to go into the dark recesses of internal space. As an artist who has operated in the cultural underground, P-Orridge's use of the word underground, even though it is used in the context of a childhood memory, has a double resonance. The notion of being buried alive in the dark place of the underground, could be viewed as a reference to the sensation of living inside the imagination beneath the earth of the everyday and, at the same time may be a comment on the condition of existing on the periphery of the cultural mainstream, literally beneath the feet of the big social / cultural institutions.

Revisiting the melancholic darkness of the psyche in memories is, I would suggest, in terms of P-Orridge's work, an essential practice for the creation and recreation of space. I am reminded here of P-Orridge's most recent slogan, "make space, in order to be space." Henri Lefebvre's notion of space which transcends the distinction between objectivity and subjectivity is similar to what I see as P-Orridge's idea of space. In this statement Lefebvre also suggests the therapeutic benefits derived from the creation of space:

> Where natural space exists, and even more so where social space exists, the movement from obscurity to enlightenment - the process of decipherment - is perpetual. It is in fact part and parcel of the way in which the existence of space is established. This incessant deciphering activity is objective as much as subjective - in which respect it indeed transcends the old philosophical distinction between objectivity and subjectivity. It becomes more acute as soon as concealed parts of space (the internal portions of things and things outside the field of perception) come to have associated with themselves symbols, or corresponding signs or indices, which are often tabooed, holy/evil, revelatory or occult. It is in this sense that it cannot be properly described as either a subjective or an objective, a conscious or an unconscious, activity; rather, it is an activity which serves to *generate* consciousness: messages, by virtue of space and of the interplay of reflections and mirages within it, are intrinsic to lived experience itself.[22]

[22] Henri Lefebvre 'Spatial Architectonics' in **The Production of Space** translated by Donald Nicholson-Smith. Blackwell, Oxford UK & Cambridge USA. pp 183 - 184

The kind of spaces being made by P-Orridge are precisely the vortices opened up by the investigation of the "internal portions of things and things outside the field of perception" which are then articulated via the use of "symbols, or corresponding signs or indices" and by the invention of contemporary mythologies. In recalling his childhood memories P-Orridge reopens the wounds of his own lived experiences to see "what is really there".[23] He looks into the internal portions of those spaces of his childhood, in order to decipher, to enlighten, to reaffirm and expand those small spaces into cathedrals of meaning. So the spaces created out of childhood memories become loaded with symbolism in the present writing of P-Orridge and are neither objective accounts of actual events, nor completely subjective responses. They have become mythologised, and symbolic of the wounded self and more precisely of wounding as a process of self possession.

All these prayers, my dreams sings,
will become my torn wings.
You may slip from this place,
sucking life from this grace.
Everything makes some sense
living in a past tense.

But I believe what you said
Oh, I believe what you said

Every thing scarred by wrong
As our nails grew too long.
So we hung upside down,
signposts outside your town.
In this good part of ground
where each soul takes a sound.

In re-entering the space of memories P-Orridge is re-entering the project of the self.[24] This is a process of psychologising the soul[25] and, in the creation of new spaces, new ideas, new identities from the old material of the soul, redoubling the project, layering and, to a certain extent, destroying in order to make the soul transparent and holographic. At the same time, because self-possession is in this instance linked to the notion of existence, the project of the self is synonymous

[23] a favourite term used by P-Orridge, originally coined by Brion Gysin
[24] following along the lines of Henri Lefebvre's notion that life should be lived as a project.
[25] term used by James Hillman

with the project of existence.

In Thee Seeding Ship P-Orridge repeats the statement "I was a Mirage" which has some resonance with Lefebvre's notion that the lived experience of space is an "interplay of reflections and mirages"[26]. It is perhaps within these holographic spaces that one comes face to face with what Freud has called the "uncanny"[27] - that hidden yet familiar thing which has undergone repression and remerged from it. According to Hillman:

> cultural enterprise attempts to peel, flail, excite" in order to bring the individual to a "sensitivity so that it can again - notice the *again* - be in touch with these invisibles and orient life by their compass. The key syllable in culture is the prefix *re*.[28]

So it is that we meet, in the work of Nitsch, the uncanny in the instinct toward sado-masochistic excess and in the reclaimed capacity to decode the ancient symbols of blood and transfiguration.

The twilight-colours of the reclusive mind are his view of the uncanny, the bloody colour of the unknown instincts, the archetypes in the form of chronic disorder. In my view Nitsch and P-Orridge are artists working within that chronic form; in the "closeted places"[29] within their own psychologising they both instigate their own alchemical *putrefactio,* and indulge the body and the psyche in the process of fermentation. They both use society and the notion of civilisation as an irritant which stimulates creative outbursts, and perpetuates their psychosis. The voice of Father Malachi (one of P-Orridge's multiple personalities) vomits up opinions straight out of the darkness of cynicism and violent instinct. That it belongs to, or is derived from, an archetypal persona makes the tone uncanny - it is the voice of every nihilistic urge and sentiment, the voice of rage, the voice of one wounded by betrayal and its own realisations.

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[26] Henri Lefebvre 'Spatial Architectonics' in **The Production of Space** translated by Donald Nicholson-Smith. Blackwell, Oxford UK & Cambridge USA. pp 183 - 184

[27] "... the uncanny is the class of the terrifying which leads back to something long known to us, once very familiar.." Freud, **Collected Papers**, Volume IV, (see pp 369 - 370)

[28] James Hillman ' Cultural Disorder - Pathologising: The Wound and the Eye' in **"The Essential James Hillman - A Blue Fire"** introduced and edited by Thomas Moore. Routledge. London. 1990. p 163

[29] Ibid,.

'FREEDOM IS A SICKNESS'

WE ARE DUMPED UNCEREMONIOUSLY FROM UGLY TORN VAGINAS WITH NO INNATE RIGHTS; NO INVIOLATE DIGNITY; NO IMPLICIT DESTINY. MINOR SHADOWS THAT ARE LITTLE MORE THAN RANDOM VEHICLES OF INEFFICIENT FLESH.[30]

Here is the voice of an archetypal chronic disorder; the uncanny shadow of a pathological deity, the emergence of a repressed quality, one that wallows in a vengeful blood lust against time and mortality. Hillman writes:

> .. these forms of chronic disorder are the gods in disguise; they are occulted in these misshapen, inhuman forms, and our seeing through to them there - in all forms of chronic disorder in ourselves and our city - is a grounding act of culture.[31]

Not only is it a grounding act of culture but it also grounds the psyche; it is a corrective[32] of the most empirical kind. It is clear that for P-Orridge such instances of disturbing psychic intercourse with chronic disorder is to connect with "the timeless structures of being."[33] It is to throw oneself into the abyss of To be or not to be.

> .. the deeper cave: an ampler stranger, richer world beyond the surface, an abyss behind every bottom, beneath every "foundation."[34]

The language of the abyss is present in the language of "censorial perception"[35] embedded in the sensual elements in Nitsch's work. Beginning with the **1st Abreaction Play (shouts, nosises and the evisceration of the lamb)** in 1961 Nitsch

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[30] Genesis P-Orridge **Freedom Is A Sickness** essay 1995 (artist's manuscript)

[31] James Hillman 'Cultural Disorder - Pathologising: The Wound and the Eye' in **The Essential James Hillman - A Blue Fire** introduced and edited by Thomas Moore. Routledge. London. 1990. p 163

[32] This is a slight reference here to Jung's notion of the archetypal child as corrective. See the Chapter 5

[33] James Hillman 'Cultural Disorder - Pathologising: The Wound and the Eye' in **The Essential James Hillman - A Blue Fire** introduced and edited by Thomas Moore. Routledge. London. 1990. p 165

[34] Friedrich Nietzsche, 'What Is Noble?' in **Beyond Good & Evil** Trans,. Helen Zimmern. Edited by Oscar Levy. George Allan & Unwin Limited, London. 1967. p 257

[35] Hermann Nitsch (Treaty) 'The Evolution of the Theatre of Orgiastic Mysteries' in **Hermann Nitsch des orgien mysterien theater 1960-1987** Museo Diego Aragona Pigntelli Cortes, curator Rudi Fuchs. Gallery catalogue. 1987. p 32

began to develop a sensual language associated with elements which are located beneath the skin; this was perhaps in an attempt to visualise the psychological imperative of his work. The function of this language was to bring substances, and repressed sensations to the surface, in other words to evoke the uncanny. In this way Nitsch saw the use of tachisme as a means of exploring areas which existed beneath the skin and deep within the psyche:

> Tachisme - its leaning towards regressive, instinctive displays abreaction and destruction, its tendency to plunge into the sub-conscious, has consequently to culminate in orgy and excess ...
>
> I regarded Tachisme from a psychoanalytic point of view, as an event of abreaction.[36]

From 1961 Nitsch began to work with tactile materials such as blood, urine, lymph, wine, egg. He began to develop a dramatic form in which such tactile elements could be experienced by both the actors and the audience. His aim was to sensitise and heighten the censorial perception of both the audience and the actors, to the point of extreme intensity, with the ultimate aim of enabling participants to experience orgy and excess. The smell, texture and colour of the "subterranean"[37] became a means of penetrating "the utmost depths of the psyche, and experience(ing) all of its consequences."[38] In essence Nitsch was attempting to take audience and participants into the complex subterranean world of the psyche through the tactile experience of his Aktions. Nitsch defines

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[36] Hermann Nitsch (Treaty) 'The Evolution of the Theatre of Orgiastic Mysteries' in **Hermann Nitsch das orgien mysterien theater 1960-1987** Museo Diego Aragona Pigntelli Cortes, curator Rudi Fuchs. Gallery catalogue. 1987. pp 32 - 33

[37] Hermann Nitsch **Die Architektur Des Orgien Mysterien Theaters. Band I** Verlag, Fred Jahn. Exhibition Catalogue. Maximilianstrabe 10.8000 Munchen 22. 1987. p 25:

> The Uterus-like darkness of the **subterranean** passage-ways and rooms and, above all, the sheltered vegetative life in the lightless womb, exercise a very strong attraction on myself. In the underworld, in the grave, in the earth, the sleep of death takes place. The analytical descent into the unconscious vegetative zone, which my happenings aspire to, have their actual equivalent in spatial and architectural reality. ..... Each respective form of happening required a space with a distinct character and, inversely, different rooms and passages demanded certain happenings.

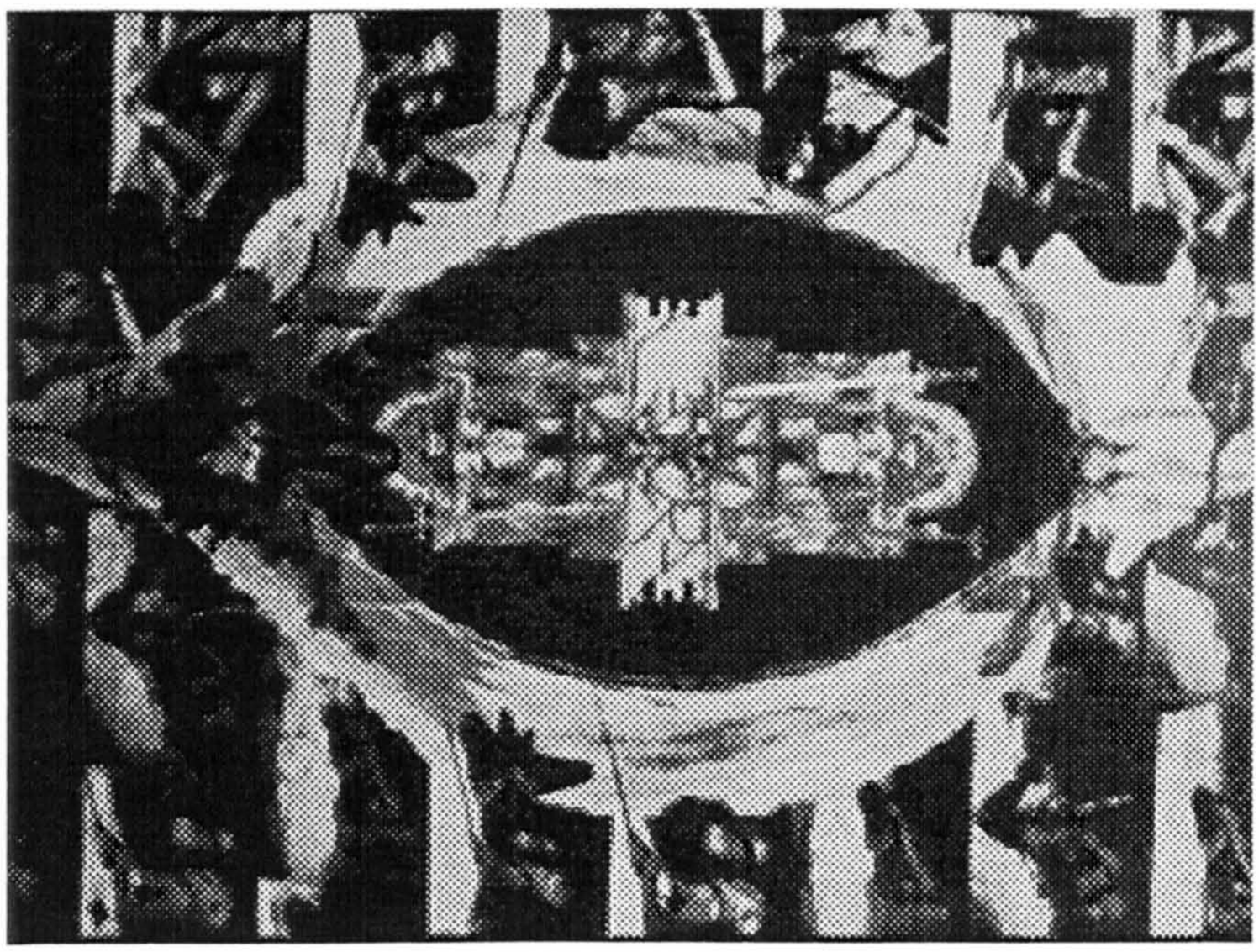
[38] Hermann Nitsch (Treaty) 'The Evolution of the Theatre of Orgiastic Mysteries' in **Hermann Nitsch das orgien mysterien theater 1960-1987** Museo Diego Aragona Pigntelli Cortes, curator Rudi Fuchs. Gallery catalogue. 1987. p 32

this subterranean world through the language of blood, flesh, smell, texture, colour and waves of abyssal sound. This is arguably his personal vision, articulated through his own unique language.

In a sense Nitsch has actualised his own visions of the subterranean world through his lithographs as well as his large Aktions. While the lithographs are hypothetical architectural designs for the O. M. Theatre they can also be interpreted as metaphorical designs of the psychic interior of the mind, as perceived by Nitsch. Each design contains chambers within chambers, rooms within the organic body, passages leading to other chambers, which lead deeper and deeper into the organic mass of the body, which is what Nitsch sees as a symbolic representation of the psyche (Fig. 3). At first sight the designs seem to be decorative pieces of graphic art but closer examination reveals a system of layering; the layering of blueprints, one on top of the other and layering of colour, the layering of pathways, which interweave through each other. Picking out red, the eye captures one template or design; picking out the green, one sees another. The whole effect is one of ascending and descending complexity. Nitsch presents us with what Nietzsche has called caves within caves, the architecture of the artist's mind. Nitsch's lithographs and paintings are psycho-pictoral maps; they are anatomical, existential designs or blueprints, on a par with alchemical drawings of the cosmic man. However, Nitsch's designs differ from the Alchemical, in terms of their complex use of layering. In their complexity of alternative viewpoints, they express the language of, what I will call amassed impressions, as opposed to images of ultimate and actual singularity. The drawings, paintings and lithographs retain the same complexity of intensities which grip the eye of the observer from a number of depths from within the canvas. The same layering of structures is used in the large scale Aktions, such as the three day **80th Aktion** of 1984, which contains periods of multiple simultaneous action in a variety of locations within the outbuildings, courtyards and surrounding vineyards of Prinzendorf.

(Fig. 3)
Hermann Nitsch
Lithograph (Portolio III) Number 24
in green, blue, burgundy and two shades of
red. 1984 - 1991 (84 x 57 / 115 x 80 cm)

Similar structures can be found in some of the collage works of Genesis P-Orridge. Unlike Nitsch's lithographs P-Orridge's process of the layering of images, fluids, textures and words takes place over long periods of time, as the collages are worked and reworked according to whim, artistic urge and as part of ritual practices. Over time the collages become more and more complex and in many cases the process of working and reworking seems to outstrip the eventual impact of the work. Such collages are the focal point for the amassing of processes and visual, emotional, physical information more correctly associated with the time period over which the collage was made, than with an external conceptualisation of an idea or a single image. At first glance some of the more complex works seem not to have a centre, or point of focus, but are a cacophony of moving images, smudged fluids, scribbling and alchemistic symbols. Others are mandala-like in construction; the larger structure divided internally into smaller chambers, containing still smaller detailed images, symbols and words. Like the lithographs of Nitsch the collages of P-Orridge can perhaps be likened to visual meditations which have much more in common with notions of the Mandala than they do with formalist painting. (Fig. 4) The works are inevitably driven by an ultimate concern which in most cases is an intention generated in ritual.



(Fig. 4)
Yoni (detail) 1994
Collage: menstrual blood, human blood, semen, peacock feather, ink, colour xerox.
Genesis P-Orridge

Physical mandala-like structures can also be detected in a number of Coum performances such as **The Alien Brain,** a series of performance events called decompositions presented by Coum in the early 1970s. In these performances the audience has to move through a series of environments in order to arrive at the heart, or the centre of the performance space in which the main action is to take place.

> In the Foyer was a leaflet stand. This was filled with old classics in hardback and a day glow orange sign on white was added proclaiming "FREE WORDS". These books being multiple litter for people to take away as souvenirs if they wanted. Apart from this the foyer was as normal except around the doors into the amphitheatre.
>
> This is in fact a kind of tunnel about 8 feel long and painted black. Each end has fire doors. Richard filled this area to about chest height with an entanglement of bright coloured thick grade polythene. Also flowers and palm leaves. A web of polythene strips about 2 foot wide in blue was wound about the doors and ceiling so that to get in to the decomposition area one had to dive into a jungle scene and metaphorically hack a way through a soft kinetic obstruction. The whole scene was coumpleted by being dampened to give a feeling of dense tropical undergrowth. This meant that the audience were immediately transported to an involving and an alien situation. Like the tunnel in Alice in Wonderland. Great amusement was had & many people laughed and lingered playing in the dark contemporary jungle timelock, Airlock, timelock, dimension shift effects were quïte well achieved in this way. People appeared to feel, as was intended, that they were entering a strange alien land where anything might happen and be seen.[39]

The movement of the audience through the censorial environments was intended to initiate some kind of perceptual transformation. The audience was "immediately transported to an involving and an alien situation." The audience was in effect, initiated into a different perceptual frame and mode of behaviour. It became attuned or primed to the possibility of alien situations and alien modes of performance and participation.

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[39] Genesis P-Orridge. COUM **Report on The Alien Brain** (Performance event) at Hull Arts Centre 2 July 1972. From the COUM diaries (unpublished) archive of Genesis P-Orridge. Hand typed, dated 1972. COUM Personnel for 'The Alien Brain' were; Foxtrot Echo (Greg Taylor), Ian Goodrich, Cosy P-Orridge (Cosy Fanny Tutti) Very Rev L. ECheesewire Maull, Bobo Eunson, Sean O'Brien, Fizzy Pete, Richard & Elizabeth (?), Sara O'Brian, Harriet Kelly, Genesis P-Orridge, Paul (?). See the Appendix for the full copy of the 'report' document.

The detailed structuring of Nitsch and P-Orridge's works is characteristically reclusive; their detail retreats into even more detail and the hypothetical voice of each of the respective artists is lost in the obsessional layering and reworking of each piece. The works teeter on the edge of the pathological abyss and invite a particular kind of looking and seeing and hearing which draws the viewer into the obsessional frame. The frustration of interpretation, which suggests questions such as "does an image mean this, or is there something deeper - is there something I'm missing"?, becomes an interactive mechanism which is either consciously or unconsciously intended and initiated by the structure imposed on the work by the artist. The graphic works can be seen as expressions of the recluse's tendency to avoid all cadences and to express the amassed impression - the process and the discourse - while retreating from any kind of singularity or absolute position. Thus every image and every layer is a foreground idea behind which lie deeper ideas of an ultimate concern. However:

> The recluse ... will doubt whether a philosopher can have "ultimate and actual" opinions at all; whether behind every cave in him there is not, and must necessarily be, a still deeper cave: an ampler stranger, richer world beyond the surface, an abyss behind every bottom, beneath every "foundation." Every philosophy is a foreground philosophy ...[40]

The irony is that while Nitsch's aim and perhaps his ultimate concern is, by his own confession, to lay bare the depths of the human psyche, the layering of dramatic structures through simultaneous action and the layering and isolation of censorial, tactile experiences can perhaps build a labyrinth of multiplicity which does not in fact lay bare anything at all. In his Aktions, Nitsch's large construction of sensual / intensive elements can sometimes act as a barrier rather than a stepping-stone into states of excessive sensuality. This can often be interpreted as evasive rather than enlightening. The confrontational nature of large complex constructions, whether they are actual or conceptual, can often be daunting for an audience. Because of the size and the amount of simultaneous action involved in Nitsch's presentations, it is often difficult to see and experience all of its elements. In such a situation it is difficult to distinguish if

[40] Friedrich Nietzsche, 'What Is Noble?' **Beyond Good & Evil** Trans,. Helen Zimmern. Edited by Oscar Levy. George Allan & Unwin Limited, London. 1967. p 257

there are more than just foreground ideas and philosophies on offer. In comparison the **Omissions** statement of Coum issued in 1971(?) seems to exemplify this, and at the same time hints at what might be on offer.

> Omissions
> everything ABOUT coum is true
> everything ABOUT coum is false
> everything ABOUT coum is nothing
> it is by omission that we might be exact
> A).To use "said about coum ...", or "done by coum ..." adds a specific.
> B). All possibilities are contained by thee omission of specifics.
> thee possibilities alone are endless.[41]

Coum justifies evasion as a means of being more exact and of presenting all possibilities through the omission of specifics which are defined by Coum as limiting. While Nietzsche creates an argument for the evasive nature of foreground philosophies he also foreshadows an 'ontic' pre-foundation theory or level of creative thinking which is also implied in the **Omissions** statement. Omission here does not mean deception. Omission and concealment are used as a creative imperative which can in fact imply de-specification and de-definition, and consequently the liberation of a range of possible interpretations. In my opinion the value of such fragments of creative discourse lies in the fact that they testify to a process which acknowledges the antagonism and the existential 'strain' between inauthenticity and self-possession. Examining what he sees as the symptoms of the nihilistic condition Stanley Rosen has uncovered a similar reflex of concealment in the work of Heidegger:

> According to Heidegger, the voice of **things** "silences" the voice of **Being**, in that it prevents us from hearing the silence of the voice of Being. Thus Heidegger can also say that it is Being which 'silences' or covers itself in the misleading tones of ontic (verbal) speech. The essential point is the ontological priority of silence.[42]

Perhaps it is true to say that in terms of the work of Nitsch and P-Orridge the amassing of images, smells, sounds, textures in complex and thick/loud velocities can be likened to a form of silencing which has the effect of revealing the

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[41] Coum(Genesis P-Orridge & Cosey Fanny Tutti) from the COUM diaries (unpublished) archive of Genesis P-Orridge. Hand typed, dated (1971?)

[42] Stanley Rosen **Nihilism - a philosophical essay** , Yale University Press, London 1969. p 39

ontological ultimate concern of their work.

7.3 "There is something cruel in the tendency of my spirit"[43]

Nietzsche constantly presents us with double edged statements which express both the pessimistic and the optimistic sides of the nihilistic condition. In Our Virtues from **Beyond Good and Evil** Nietzsche presents us with a vision of the spirit of *Homo Natura* which adheres only to the pleasure principle, finding comfort in logic and passive interaction with the world, and a propensity for appearance and simplification. Nietzsche seems to mourn with the artist who, having " sat day and night ... alone with his soul in familiar discord and discourse", has dwelled on this existential problem and finds only adornment and flippery at the heart of the human condition. Nietzsche mourns the vanity of man, and shares in the cruel revelation of artists who have looked too closely at the original text of man. In response to the impoverished situation of the human spirit, Nietzsche advocates cruelty directed towards the natural tendencies of the spirit, in order to overcome its passivity. Nietzsche suggests that cruelty through the corruption of the determinate tendencies of the spirit is the way to knowledge. He suggests that any person who seeks knowledge concerning the existential nature of the self has, by necessity, to be cruel. The seeker of knowledge becomes a master in the art of cruelty. Nietzsche names the ideal profession of the master of the art of cruelty as artist. Nitsch consciously takes on this role and, in this manifesto from 1961 taken from the text of the second abreaction play, he notes the necessity to overcome passivity and prohibition via a form of psychoanalytical theatre:

> An abreaction happening, constructed and carried out approximately in accordance with the laws of depth and mass psychology, becomes a theatrical happening and performed event. [44]

The artist as seeker of knowledge, glorifies the cruel aspect of this *homo natura* -

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[43] Friedrich Nietzsche, 'Our Virtues' **Beyond Good & Evil** Trans,. Helen Zimmern. Edited by Oscar Levy. George Allan & Unwin Limited, London. 1967. pp 180

[44] Hermann Nitsch from the text of the 2nd Abreaction Play **M.A.R.Z** 1969 (from section 125) Marz Verlag, Darmstadt. (Limited edition - only existing copy at Prinzendorf)

human nature. According to Nietzsche knowledge is gained through the interrogation of nature. Nitsch seems to have immediately set out to redress the psychological balance of man, to disengage man from his propensity to passivity and provide an opportunity for suppressed desires, emotions and instinctive behaviour to be encountered. He demands the unconditional release of all repressions and instincts. Nietzsche suggested that, having interrogated the nature of man, the artist has the potential to master it and to consciously manipulate his own responses and behaviour, in the full knowledge of his will-to-power. Nitsch expands this argument onto an existential plane suggesting that:

> A direct affirmation of all instincts leads to the intensification and inspiration of the living to the extent of intoxicating, ecstatic, hysterical comprehension of being. The intensity of the unusual state of being conveys more existential possibilities of existence.[45]

This early manifesto testifies to the psycho-philosophical imperative running through his work. The specific knowledge that this artist seeks is a real experience of Being as *Daseinsregistration* (psychological registration). It is a sensation of availability, of Sorge - an intense caring-for Being. Nitsch suggests that:

> 'Bestial' actions, which otherwise would be burdened by religious prohibitions and feelings of shame, are allowed in the case of the play and carried out with the corresponding intensity, which has been activated by the constricting prohibition, now suspended by the play (the lust of the blasphemous, the joy of shaking off the yoke of consciousness and reaching the lower depths of consciousness, the narcotic enjoyment of escaping from consciousness). A freedom, otherwise never felt, a lack of constraint (redemption) is felt and savoured to the full, a hysterical, abnormal use is made of it.[46]

Here Nitsch associates the sensation of Being with that of freedom and suggests that freedom is an abnormal sensation because it is ordinarily constrained by religion and what society considers as acceptable behaviour. Freedom is also constrained by the passivity of the human spirit and its fundamental will which,

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[45] Hermann Nitsch, **M.A.R.Z** 1969 (from section 125) Marz Verlag, Darmstadt. (Limited edition - only existing copy at Prinzendorf)

[46] Ibid,.

according to Nietzsche, "instinctively aims at appearance and superficiality." [47] Nietzsche argues that the artist seeking knowledge must interrogate his own nature; he must do this through abstinence as well as indulgence. In **The Birth of Tragedy** Nietzsche portrays the ideal artist as the "prolific deity of individuation" his "Dionysiac impulse, devouring the world of phenomena, in order to go behind it and through its destruction, to give a sense of a supreme artistic primal joy ..."[48] It is a kind of "pathological discharge"[49] which is what Nietzsche calls the supreme art of tragedy. This corresponds with Hillman's suggestion that "the soul sees by means of affliction" and that the soulful artist is a metaphor for the "intimate relation between pathologising and imaginising."[50] Nietzsche associates pathologising with devouring, similarly Nitsch refers to his Aktions as feast. Both the notion of devouring and the feast pertain to more than mere nourishment, rather it is an obsession, a compulsion, an orgiastic participation. Such a participation demands a particular kind of asceticism - an abstinence from passivity, a pathologising which mutilates the spirit of normality. Nietzsche states:

> ... even the seeker of knowledge operates as an artist and glorifier of cruelty, in that he compels his spirit to perceive *against* its own inclination, and often enough against the wishes of his heart: - he forces it to say Nay, where he would like to affirm, love and adore; indeed, every instance of taking a thing profoundly and fundamentally, is a violation, an intentional injuring of the fundamental will of the spirit, which instinctively aims at appearance and superficiality, - even in every desire for knowledge there is a drop of cruelty.[51]

In **The Painting Coat** (1991)[52] and **Colourful Paintings** (1990)[53] Nitsch talks about the ritualising of the "pathological discharge" which is an essential part of the O.M. Theatre. These manifestos illustrate the nature of Nitsch's personal

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[47] Friedrich Nietzsche **The Birth of Tragedy** Translated by Shaun Whiteside, edited by Michael Tanner. Penguin Books. 1993 p 106

[48] Ibid,.

[49] Ibid,. p 107

[50] James Hillman 'The Myth of Normalcy' in **The Essential James Hillman - A Blue Fire** introduced and edited by Thomas Moore. Routledge. London. 1990. p 149

[51] Friedrich Nietzsche **Beyond Good & Evil** Trans,. Helen Zimmern. Edited by Oscar Levy. George Allan & Unwin Limited, London. 1967. p 178

[52] see copy of this in the appendix

[53] see copy of this in the appendix

asceticism; the devotional nature of each action, the profound connection between the pathological and the aesthetic.

> The artist's descent towards orgy, wild sexuality, in the abyss and danger of experience, the basic forces defining us, are all evident on the blood-coloured stains on what he is wearing. It is as if our artist, opening abysses while painting, comes close to sweating blood, drinking out of the cup of sorrow, flagellation, crucifixion, the slaying of Dionysus, the delusion of Oedipus. His priest's habit, his sacrificial dress bears the damp stamp of rununication.[54]

In an interview with Otmar Rychlik in 1989 Nitsch admitted to a "strict world-denial" in favour of a disciplined life style which transcends the trivial and the the passive "even for the price of suffering."[55] This, and other statements, seem to echo Nietzsche's conviction that:

> Almost everything that we call "high culture" is based upon the spiritualising and intensifying of *cruelty*. [56]

As part of the process of the spiritualising and the intensifying of cruelty Nietzsche seems to suggest that the artist becomes the victim of his own pathologising. He insists that the act of pathologising forces the artist into increasingly isolated situations; he becomes a "cave-bear", a "treasure-seeker",[57] the cruel aspect of his art belonging to the twilight realms. For Nitsch the seeking out and exploration of the dark recesses of the human psyche has led him naturally to a religio-mythological position, in which he knowingly sacrifices himself through the act of creation. Hillman investigates the proximity of pathology and mythology in his paper **Abnormal Psychology**[58] suggesting that pathologising and being pathological finds its mirror in the mythological figures

[54] Hermann Nitsch **The Painting Coat** (1991) artist catalogue for the Saville Art Fair 1992 (Expo 1992 - Pabellon de las Artes Sevilla) Curator Prof, Peter Weiermair

[55] Hermann Nitsch 'Painting Actionism', Interview by Otmar Rychlik in artist catalogue **2 0 Malaktion** 18 bis, 21 February, 1989. Wiener Secession.

[56] Friedrich Nietzsche, 'Our Virtues' in **Beyond Good & Evil** Trans,. Helen Zimmern. Edited by Oscar Levy. George Allan & Unwin Limited, London. 1967. pp 177

[57] Friedrich Nietzsche, 'What Is Noble?' in **Beyond Good & Evil** Trans,. Helen Zimmern. Edited by Oscar Levy. George Allan & Unwin Limited, London. 1967. p 257

[58] extracts from this essay can be found in **The Essential James Hillman - A Blue Fire** introduced and edited by Thomas Moore. Routledge. London. 1990.

of Gods and Goddesses and divine beings, as models and archetypes that can be "nurse to our self-division and error, our wounds and extremities, providing a style, a justification, and a sense of significance".[59] Such dynamic models give shape, style and justification to the pre-existing, or propensity, of mytho-pathological traits within the psyche. Hillman continues:

> The mythemes in which the gods appear are replete with behaviour that, from the secular standpoint, must be classified under criminal pathology, moral monstrosity, or personality disorder.
>
> When we think mythologically about pathologising, we could say ... that the "world of the gods" is anthropomorphic, an imitative projection or ours, including our pathologies. But one could start as well from the other end, the *mundus imaginalis* of the archetypes (or gods), and say that our "secular world" is at the same time mythical, an imitative projection of theirs, including their pathologies. What the gods show in an imaginal realm of myth is reflected in our imagination as fantasy. Our fantasies reflect theirs, our behaviour only mimetic to theirs. We can imagine nothing or perform nothing that is not already formally given by the archetypal imagination of the gods.[60]

Whether the mythic proposes the human, or the human proposes the mythic, is difficult to determine; however the pathological experience is, according to Hillman, unlike any the individual naturally thinks of as intense experiences:

> The pathological experience gives an indelible sense of soul unlike those we may get through love or beauty, through nature, community, or religion. The soul-making of pathology has its distinct flavor, salty, bitter; it "skins alive," "wounds," "bleeds," making us excruciatingly sensitive to the movements of the psyche.[61]

It is this form of pathological experience which I believe is the intention of Nitsch's work. We can note here the similarities between the metaphorical description of the intensity of the experience given by Hillman and the actual visual and material use of wounds, blood and the analogy of the actor who is emotionally skinned alive in Nitsch's work. P-Orridge also makes a similar use of

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[59] James Hillman, 'Pathologising - The Wound and the Eye' in **The Essential James Hillman - A Blue Fire** introduced and edited by Thomas Moore. Routledge. London. 1990. p 151

[60] Ibid,. p 150

[61] Ibid,. p 148

these kind of materials in a number of his collage works, for example in **Cat Initiation** (1990)[62] in which he uses snake skin, semen, human blood, polaroid photographs, vaginal fluid, wax and ink. In **What We Reverse Is What We Expect** (1984)[63] the work includes photos, wax, human blood, ink and semen.

Nietzsche claims that the intensification and spiritualisation of cruelty is an act of affirmation. An affirmation of life as well as of death. It is perhaps an act of psychologising which affirms and strengthens one's understanding of self. Pathologising expands the possibilities of self, and arguably builds a personal cosmology based on the nature, mythic / archetypal law of the individual (individuated) psyche. In this context pathology and pathologising must be viewed as a normal, if not necessary, function of the individual. Hillman insists that "pathologising is itself a way of seeing; the eye of the complex gives the peculiar twist called "psychological insight".[64] He suggests that psychological insight takes the form, not of escape, but that it is fundamentally creative and imaginal.

> Pathologising is a way of mythologising. Pathologising takes one out of blind immediacy, distorting one's focus upon the natural and actual by forcing one to ask what is within it and behind it. The distortion is at the same time an enhancement and a new clarification, reminding the soul of its mythical existence. While in the throes of pathologising, the psyche is going through a reversion into a mythical style of consciousness. Psychoanalysts have seen this but condemned it as regression to magical, primitive levels. But the psyche reverts not only to escape reality but to find another reality in which the pathologising makes new sense.[65]

This affirmation is not a stationary or positional viewpoint, nor does it represent an absolute cadence. It is, I believe, a confirmation that a process of evolution is taking place as the artist is "secretly allured and impelled forward by his cruelty, by the dangerous thrill of cruelty *towards himself* "[66] to the point at which "all

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[62] see **Rogue** magazine included in the appendix of this thesis, page 17

[63] Ibid, p 11 .

[64] James Hillman, 'Pathologising - The Wound and the Eye' in **The Essential James Hillman - A Blue Fire** introduced and edited by Thomas Moore. Routledge. London. 1990. p 149

[65] Ibid,. p 146

[66] Friedrich Nietzsche, ' Our Virtues ' **Beyond Good & Evil** Trans,. Helen Zimmern. Edited by Oscar Levy. George Allan & Unwin Limited, London. 1967. pp 177 - 178

hell breaks loose and a godless universe opens up."[67] The anguish generated by the artist's confrontation with the absolute determinate complex of man's nothingness has been likened by Nietzsche to the torment of the psychologist who discovers ruination in his client.

> The manifold torment of the psychologist who has discovered this ruination, who discovers once, and then discovers *almost* repeatedly throughout all history, this universal inner "desperateness" of higher men, this eternal "too late!" in every sense - may perhaps one day be the cause of his turning with bitterness against his own lot, and of his making an attempt at self-destruction - of his "going to ruin" himself.[68]

A similar claim is made by P-Orridge who suggests that:

> An individual has many personalities or characters at thee same time or alternately. (Recent cognitive brain theory supports this.) Most people little by little eliminate thee personalities considered to be dangerous by their peer group or societal unit and finally keep only one: thee social personality ... one-dimensional "FLAT" people. But other people, called paradoxically "individuals", are always trying to develop all their personalities, even if there is an internal conflict between them.[69]

The whiplash effect of illumination to the utter desperateness of man's lot, forces the psychologist towards self destruction. His discovery literally silences him. And yet Nietzsche counters this vision of total anguish by offering another path beyond good and evil, the path of moral disintegration. This is a path which runs outside socially determined value structures. Man can never be disappointed on this path since there are no rules, no value structures which bind him to any sense of social duty, or moral responsibility. This is the road to salvation, the road to affirmation, which is laid on the broken foundations of morality.

Affirmation of life through the disruption of the pleasure principle and socially imposed morality serves as a mechanism for the instigation of debate and of real

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[67] Keith Ansell-Pearson, 'The Perfect Nihilist'. **An Introduction to Nietzsche as Political Thinker** in Cambridge University Press. 1994. p 57

[68] Friedrich Nietzsche, 'What Is Noble?' **Beyond Good & Evil** Trans,. Helen Zimmern. Edited by Oscar Levy. George Allan & Unwin Limited, London. 1967. p 244

[69] Genesis P-Orridge **An Introduction to thee Temple Ov Psychick Youth 3.** Temple Press Ltd 1989 (original limited edition).

experience. Affirmation, in this sense, stands for the liberation of the individual, and for the actualisation of the individual's construction of himself. Nietzsche's promotion of disruption is as a counter measure against what he sees as the hardening of man's attitude toward himself. Nietzsche here proclaims man to be blind and deaf, ignorant in spite of himself, even in spite of his experiences.

> ... he now, hardened by the discipline of science, stands before the *other* forms of nature, with fearless Oedipus-eyes, and stopped Ulysses-ears, deaf to the enticements of old metaphysical bird-catchers, who have piped to him far too long: "Thou art more! thou art higher! thou hast a different origin!"[70]

Here Nietzsche questions whether man has learnt anything through experience at all. Indeed he questions whether man has had experience. In the same breath he questions whether it is possible to think about the problem of existence without experience, in other words without having thrown oneself into the crisis of existence, without having become extreme and intense, without having experienced the full depths of one's own pathology.

> It is difficult to learn what a philosopher is, because it cannot be taught: one must "know" it by experience - or one should have the pride *not* to know it. The fact that at present people all talk of things of which they *cannot* have any experience, is true more especially and unfortunately as concerns the philosopher and philosophical matters.[71]

It is perhaps this view which has led Nitsch to seek a form of practical philosophy. Indeed it is perhaps an acknowledgment of Nietzsche's views which inspired Nitsch to find a form of philosophical articulation which is based on the experiencing of the pathologised and mythologised self.

Nietzsche would perhaps argue that the reason why crisis comes upon man so easily is precisely because his social constructs, his value systems, his rules and moral responsibilities are falsifications and are therefore fragile and transparent. Therefore, the sensations of anguish and desperation and the possibility of crisis,

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[70] Friedrich Nietzsche, 'Our Virtues' **Beyond Good & Evil** Trans,. Helen Zimmern. Edited by Oscar Levy. George Allan & Unwin Limited, London. 1967. p 181

[71] Friedrich Nietzsche, 'We Scholars' **Beyond Good & Evil** Trans,. Helen Zimmern. Edited by Oscar Levy. George Allan & Unwin Limited, London 1967. p 155

can be initiated through the smallest act of intensive self examination. It therefore follows that the smallest act of self examination can have the profoundest consequences.

Both Nitsch and P-Orridge refer to a similar kind of experience as intoxication. Both their notions of intoxication exist at the end of the whiplash effect which comes from existing and staring at a deep pathological state. Intoxication is the end result. Intoxication is the sudden explosion of possibilities and the widening of the horizon of existence which is produced by the shattering of intellectual and moral constraints,[72] strikes at the vulnerable "zero in the bone"[73], at the pregnant void of existence. Nitsch suggests that through this kind of intoxication, the unconscious becomes partially conscious; it is "dragged out into the open"[74] and partially structured.

Passing to the other side of silence the artist experiences the *Gesamtkunstwerk*, the 'total art work' which is the artist's life - his very existence. In the case of Hermann Nitsch *Gesamtkunstwerk* possesses the constitutional[75] dynamics of excess, self-indulgence, ecstasy, and optimism. P-Orridge, on the other hand oscillates between the constitutions of optimistic affirmation, abolition and self-destruction. Both of these positions are, as Hassan has described, "on the other side of silence", the silence that Norman O. Brown calls "the mother tongue," which is the language of the primal cave, which I will call the voices of self. The mother tongue is the echoing sound of our chronic disorder within the cave of self which, I would suggest, is registered as an uncanny recognition of something which is ontologically familiar.

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[72] Hermann Nitsch 'Theatre and Catharsis' in **das orgien mysterien theater 1960 - 1983** Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven (Exhibition Catalogue) 1983. With a forward by R. H. Fuchs. p 55

[73] Ihab Hassan **Paracriticism. Seven speculations of the times (POSTmodernISM: A Paracritical Bibliography)** University of Illinois Press, Urbana, Chicago, London. 1975. p 53

[74] Hermann Nitsch 'Theatre and Catharsis' in **das orgien mysterien theater 1960 - 1983** Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven (Exhibition Catalogue) 1983. With a forward by R. H. Fuchs. p 55

[75] of the body

Chapter 8
The Painting Coat

In the previous chapter I suggested that the work of Nitsch and P-Orridge displayed the characteristics of introspection and a type of existential vertigo. I suggested how the notion of existence is intimately linked to both the artists' philosophising and psychologising and how the notion of inauthenticity and self-possession are confronted in the question to be or not to be, which is part of the larger conundrum concerning the notion of the all and the nothing. I suggested that it is this discourse concerning the notion of personal existence which is the ultimate concern of the artist's work.

Given that it is the nature of existence coupled with a striving toward what each of the artists sees as an authentic interface with reality through Self-possession, which is the ultimate concern and main project of their work, the following chapter will discuss how this concern is registered in terms of the notion of the canvas in the work of Hermann Nitsch.

The subsequent chapters are concerned with the idea of transformation and exchange, in which I will reintroduce the notion of libidinal energy in order to discuss how subconsious energies are channelled into visible forms.

I will draw upon Baudrillard's notion of the gift and the counter-gift in order to extend the idea of the collapse of opposites which was instigated in the previous chapter.

In Nitsch's large scale Aktions the body of the passive actor can be viewed as a "seismograph" of the passion, that is, the dynamic circumstances of the Aktion. The body of the actor becomes a canvas which reflects this passion. But does he literally become a passive surface and does body so readily translate to canvas?

The notion of the seismographic quality of the canvas in Nitsch's works complements what Nitsch sees as the psycho/philosophic role and function of the artist's painting coat. What I am proposing here is that the passive actor's body has a similar function to that of the artist's painting coat. Nitsch explains

that the coat is:

> a seismograph of the passion and reincarnation of all creatures. The hieroglyphics of chance are drawn spontaneously on the coat without the painter having to move his hand. To clean his hands the painter wipes the paint on his coat. The mark of the descent into sacrificial excess, the pit, the night of death, the cosmos, void is blood-fresh. The passion, renunciation[1] , "blood letting" of the painter inscribes itself onto the coat.[2]

It may be said that the artist, in Nitsch's terms, becomes the celebrant, who wears the painting coat and performs the divine act of creation, which may be defined as creative / destructive' action[3]. In accordance with Nitsch's philosophy through action the celebrant descends into the experiences of excess. The automatic subconscious gestures which arise out of this state of excess causes paint to be spilled, sprayed and spattered. The accidental remnants of paint, which fall onto the painting coat, provide a visual testimony to the artist's journey. After the event the coat provides the evidence of activity; it is a relic, the remainder, the visual echo of the journey. In the same way the body of the passive actor becomes a surface, which reflects something of the Aktion and it can therefore be likened to the painting coat.

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[1] Here Nitsch quotes Freud, who in turn is following a discourse initiated by William Robertson Smith "Religion of the Semities" (1889) :

> Robertson Smith explains that sacrifice at the altar was the essential feature in the ritual of ancient religions. It plays the same part in all religions, so that its origins must be traced back to very general causes, operating everywhere in the same manner. Sacrifice - the sacred act *par excellence* - originally had a somewhat different meaning, however, from its later one of making an offering to the deity in order to propitiate him or gain his favour. The non-religious usage of the word followed from this subsidiary sense of **'renunciation'** (1889,.150). It can be shown that, to begin with, sacrifice was nothing other than "an act of fellowship between the deity and his worshippers." (1889,. 224) (Sigmund Freud **Complete Psychological Works** Volume Thirteen 'Totem and Taboo' (1913 - 1914) Translated by James Strachey. The Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-analysis. London. p 133)

[2] Hermann Nitsch , manifesto **Colourful Paintings** (1990) reproduced in the Saville Art Expo catalogue 1992.

[3] this terminology is used by Genesis P-Orridge:

> **Creative action. Destructive action.** A perception ov thee weird phenomena ov being alive. To **Illumine,** clarify and describe some part ov human experience, trying to grasp or even form thee values that guide that experience in a given age, or piece ov Time. (Genesis P-Orridge **At Stockholm** P & C Etherworld Recordings 1995. (CD inside sleeve. Genesis P-Orridge & White Stains)

For Nitsch the painting coat is a significant garment which not only serves as an item designed to keep paint off everyday clothes but is also symbolic of his creative / psychological intention. Adorning the coat becomes a kind of ritual and ceremony, an act of intention. However, simply putting on the coat does not transform the man into priest. The coat is not purely symbolic and, conversely, the wearing of a liturgical robe does not make the wearer a priest. Nitsch quite clearly states that activity denotes priesthood, and the robe becomes the outer skin which gives an identity to the activities of the body.

Since the early 1950s Nitsch, following in the footsteps of Secession artists such as Klimt, began to wear painting coats that resembled the liturgical robes of the Catholic Church. In the early 1960s Nitsch incorporated real ecclesiastical garments into his Aktions, adopting actual liturgical robes as painting coats and, in so doing, making apparent his conviction that "professing to practice art is the priesthood of a new understanding of being"[4]. For Nitsch the painting coat denotes the profession of the creative artist as priest and his art is "transformed in the sense of its innermost mission"[5] to become "the centre of all glorification of life, a meditation,"[6] a prayer, a synthetic liturgy.

In the **80th Aktion** of 1984 Nitsch wears his familiar black suit and hat, items of dress which he tends to wear from day to day, in preference to a liturgical robe. Instead he reserves the robe for the passive actors and for inclusion in quiet or smaller Aktions which usually take the form of table top compositions. Although some kind of robe has always been worn by the passive actor in Nitsch's work his decision not to wear a robe in his later Aktions may suggest that there has been a shift of ideas with regard to the significance of either the liturgical robe or his own role in the Aktions.

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[4] Hermann Nitsch , **The Orgies And Mysteries Theatre (1962)** manifesto reproduced in the Saville Art Expo catalogue 1992.

[5] Ibid,.

[6] Ibid,.

8.1 The Passive Actor as Puer[7]

When the passive actor is presented naked his garment is flesh; he is vulnerability. When the passive actor appears in a white liturgical robe his garment suggests the devotional significance of the activity; he becomes martyr, the heroic religious, who is sacrificed on behalf of mankind. He becomes the puer, the motif made flesh, the High Priest. The robe gives him the identity of Minister.

In the **80th Aktion** the passive actor is processed into the performance area either bound to the cross or laid on a stretcher, or is led into the area blindfolded, and or, bound at the wrists. An animal is led into the performance space and is humanely slaughtered its throat is cut and blood is allowed to drain off into containers so that it can be used in the next part of the action. The animal is skinned and the carcass is hung upside down from a hoist. The carcass is disembowelled; those parts of the animal's innards which are edible are usually sent to the kitchens where they are prepared for consumption, the other parts such as the stomach and the intestines are left so that they may be used by the chorus in the next part of the Aktion.

In most cases the passive actor is then placed near, or beneath the hanging carcass. He is either naked or robed, laid on a stretcher, or bound to a cross. In the **80th Aktion**, he is usually blindfolded. Blood, entrails, animal bodily liquids are spilled onto the body of the passive actor as the internal organs of the animal are passed in and out of the eviscerated carcass by the chorus (Fig. 5). His body becomes synonymous with the painting coat in that it takes up the residue marks of the action and the marking of the body surface provides evidence of the passionate orgiastic manipulation and involvement in the flesh and gore of the open wound of the animal carcass.

The passive actor's involvement in the action is only evident in the actual physical presence of his body near the action. In addition, he is often blindfolded and bound so he can not participate gesturally in the action. He is, in effect,

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[7] According to James Hillman
Senex = old / father principle
Puer = young / son principle

disabled. He is disadvantaged and is potentially in a dangerous position because he does not have control over the physical situation in which he finds himself placed. His experiences are what Hillman calls "the humiliating inferiority of uncertainty and an impairment of potential."[8] In a sense he is reduced to a childlike state in which he is totally at the mercy of the external environment. Rather than calling his role passive I would suggest that it is best described as repressed. He can be said to be a visual symbol of repression. His connection to the emotional excess being experienced by the painter, the chorus and the orchestra is perhaps rooted in his experience of fear. He sacrifices his liberty entirely to the action. His is not the sacrifice of bodily energies in extreme physical activity but a sacrifice of liberty, and a disorientation which arguably stimulates a deeply psychological struggle in himself.

[8] James Hillman **The Dream and the Underworld** Harper & Row, Publishers. 1979. p 53

(Fig. 5)
Hermann Nitsch
80th Aktion 1984 (detail) Photograph

8.2 The Blood, The Wound, and the Blood Soul

After the chorus has excited itself among the blood and entrails of the open wound the cross, or stretcher, on which the passive actor is laid is usually stood upright and placed in front of the carcass (Fig. 6).[9] The painter lifts a jug of blood to the passive actor's lips. He accepts the cup and the painter pours its bitter contents into his mouth. Blood runs down the body of the passive actor. It resembles a wound which runs from the mouth to the genitals. The image this creates to me suggests that he has become synonymous with the open wound. The passive actor's body is framed by the eviscerated carcass of the animal; his body eclipses that of the carcass, just as the stain of red blood on his flesh or his garment eclipses the scar of the animal's evisceration. At this moment a movement or confusion occrs between the actual and symbolic, where both the terms actual and symbolic seem not to have any meaning. A death has occurred and an exchange of blood. Life has communed with death and death is taken into the living body, becoming a mark on the living body, or a stain on the liturgical identity. Animal and Man seem to be joined by the same scar. Both are flesh and each becomes the other in a (metaphorical) exchange of identities,[10] in that both are inscribed by the wound (Fig. 7). The psychological / metaphorical woundedness of man, his repressed instincts and his desire for excess, are actualised in the death wound of the animal. It is, I believe, a visualisation of the wounded consciousness. It is Nitsch's vision of man's psycho/philosophic grounding, the process of deepening, of stripping away the

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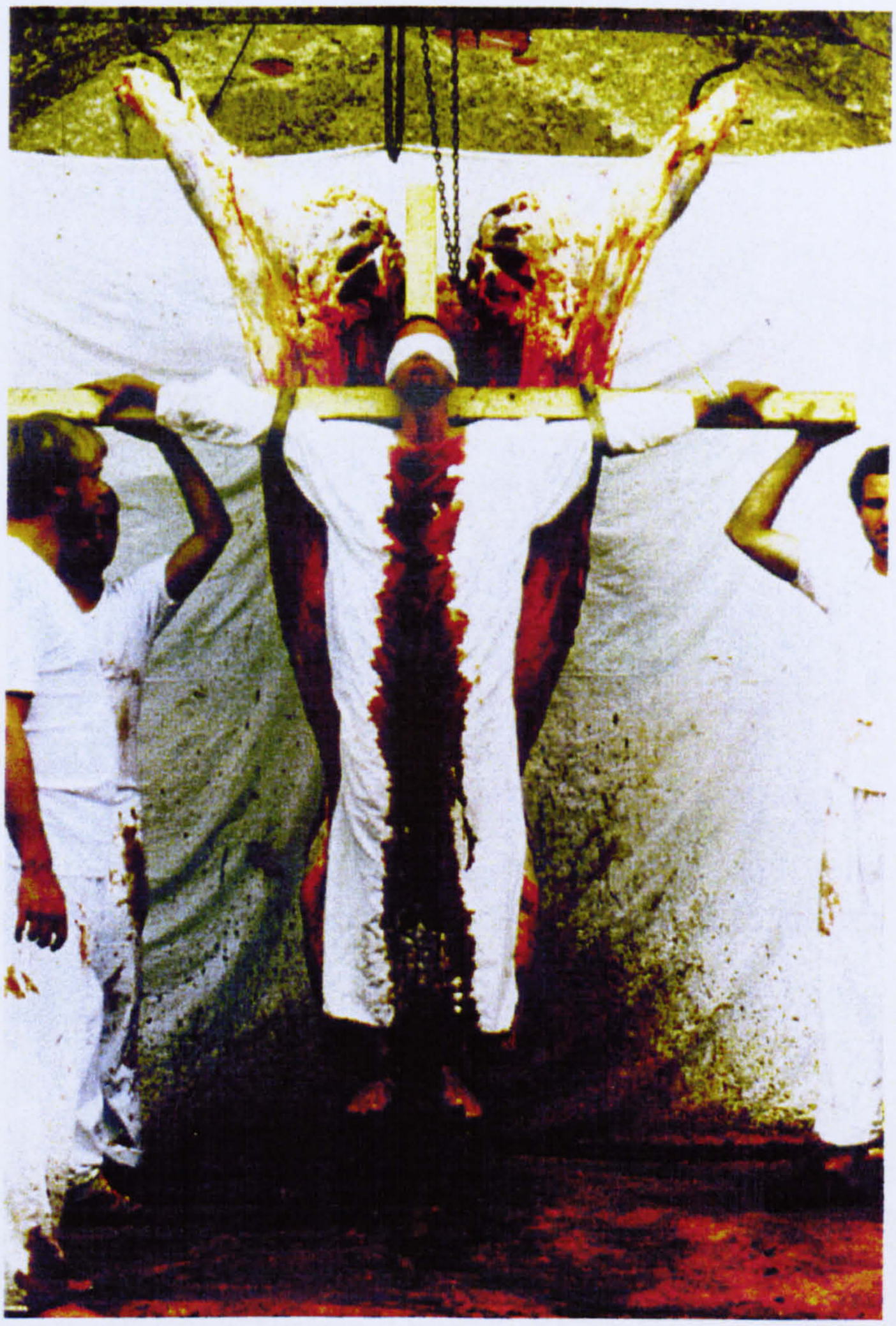
[9] This is a common structure of events, but there are variations, and there is often more than one passive actor involved in each of the scene compositions.

[10] exchange of identities through the act of the Totem Meal:

> The clan is celebrating the ceremonial occasion by the cruel slaughter of its totem animal and is devouring its raw - blood, flesh and bones. The clansmen are there, dressed in the likeness of the totem and imitating it in sound and movement, as though they are seeking to stress their identity with it. (Sigmund Freud **Complete Psychological Works** Volume Thirteen 'Totem and Taboo' (1913 - 1914) Trans James Strachey. The Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-analysis. London. p 140)
>
> The slaughter of an animal was equivalent to a shedding of the tribal blood and could occur subject only to the same precautions and the same insurances against incurring reproach. (Ibid,.p 136)

(Fig. 6)
Hermann Nitsch
80th Aktion 1984 (detail) Photograph



(Fig. 7)
Hermann Nitsch
80th Aktion 1984 (detail) Photograph

rhetorical to find the purest gesture of Becoming and is perhaps an attempt to stimulate a psychological openess in order to give what Hillman has described as "full body to the wound by letting the body be fully sensitised by the wound."[11] This is what Nitsch partly means by intoxication; it is a synaesthesic experience of body and soul joined in the pain and joy of the wound and of woundedness. Visually it is a synaesthesic confusion of blood and of one body merging into another, life into death, death into life, which is not just a graphic representation, but an event, action, activity of seeing, hearing, smelling, witnessing which in itself gives rise to a synaesthesic 'confusion' of real and non-real. I would suggest that, at such moments of extreme intensity which this image provokes, the mechanism with which the mind attempts to separate real from representation is thrown into confusion. Socially engineered patterns of behaviour become inadequate in such situations, as do moral values. Confusion becomes crisis which can strike at every level. I would suggest that this, too, is a form of wounding. In this case it can be said that, in Nitsch's Aktions, participants, whether they actually take part in the physical activity of the work or whether they participate as witnesses, are given the opportunity to experience woundedness and to "give full body to the wound by letting the body be fully sensitised to the wound", in Nitsch's words, to become intoxicated.

It is this joy, this intoxication of admitting the existence of the wound and of sacrificing oneself to the depths of woundedness to the PIT of the soul,[12] which Nitsch believes brings participants toward a sensation of Being (or Dasein). For Nitsch the sensation of Being is only attainable through the intensive experience. In Nitsch's view "intensive living is very close to suffering". Here he is suggesting that intensity of life tends to open the wounds of the psyche, allowing what Hillman has called the blood-soul to emerge. Hillman suggests that the emergence of the blood-soul is a sensation of grounding; a place where

[11] James Hillman, 'Therapy: Fictions and Epiphanies' in **The Essential James Hillman. A Blue Fire** Introduced and edited by Thomas Moore. Routledge. London. 1990, p 91

[12] Hermann Nitsch, **The Orgies And Mysteries Theatre (1962)** manifesto reproduced in the Saville Art Expo catalogue 1992:

> In the phrygic communion the mystes had to descend into the PIT and to have the blood of freshly slaughtered bull trickle down over him so that he could be reborn into eternity.

*mystes (this spelling is given in the original text)

"meanings home". Nitsch suggests that it allows a "broader based knowledge" to emerge. I believe Nitsch and Hillman are basically talking aout the same thing. What they are both referring to is perhaps a connection with the sensual subconscious realm and the foremost importance of its space as a place of meaning. Hillman, like Nitsch, suggests that such a space is familiar. For Nitsch it is a space, or state of Being, which pre-empts social imprinting. It is the original, deprogrammed self, the community of self free of the influence of external agencies.

> This familiarity after some time produces in one a sense of at-homeness and at-oneness with an inner family which is nothing else than kinship and community with oneself, a deep level of what can also be called *the blood soul.* In other words, a deep level of connection to the unconscious again leads to a sense of soul, an experience of an inner life, a place where meanings home ...[13]

It is the recognition of a deeper base of knowledge, a deeper well of validity. It is this suppressed level which Nitsch suggests "shows up at any price"[14] It wants to be, what Hillman would call befriended, it wants to be recognised. Suppression has wounded it but, through intensity, through intoxication, the forces of suppression are coerced allowing the blood to surface. It is the experience of the tragic suffering of this broader, pre-social state of being under suppression which is interrogated in Nitsch's work. It is the display of Being's woundedness and it is the experience of the wound opening itself, as the desire for meaning and for the depths of an intensive life can also open the wound. Nitsch says:

> Blood is the fluid of life and the red, up-welling blood signals the wound, the pain, the danger and the death. Passion is life, drawn up to the Dionysian fact of the tragical suffering of being.[15]

For Nitsch red becomes the colour of life and death and is therefore the colour of Being, the colour of the experience of existence. Blood registers as the *prima material* of Nitsch's existential philosophy; it is the colour of soul, it is the colour

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[13] James Hillman, 'Dreams and the Blood Soul' in **The Essential James Hillman. A Blue Fire** Introduced and edited by Thomas Moore. Routledge. London. 1990, p 241

[14] Hermann Nitsch interview with Otmar Rychlik 'Painting Actionism' in catalogue for the **Wiener Secession** 20 Malaktion, 18 bis, 21 February 1989 (catalogue in the Tate GalleryArchive) limited edition.

[15] Ibid,.

of the wound and the "mark of soul in the flesh."[16] From an historic, alchemical point of view blood, either human or animal, has always been considered as the "philosophic matter"[17] and the fruit of the Tree of Life. It is the red mass of alchemy, the concluding process by which the 'quintessence' (the philosopher's stone) is produced, which in the *Rosarium Philosophrum* is represented by the image of the communion table.[18] The supremacy of blood in the work of Nitsch is entirely visible, but its deeper meaning is often glazed over by the various journalists and writers who have commentated on his work. Marino Niola, however, does recognise the priority of blood before words in the essay **Blood Pictures:**

> How vain are the claims of the word, when it can only assert its supremacy by means of a voice which precedes it, revealing in that very act blood's primacy!. In spite of the pre-sumption of every *cogito,* in the beginning was Blood.[19]

Within the context of Nitsch's Aktions, painting which must be seen as a general act of dispersal whether it is paint, blood, sound, or the dispersal of the emotions

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[16] James Hillman, 'Therapy: Fictions and Epiphanies' in **The Essential James Hillman. A Blue Fire** Introduced and edited by Thomas Moore. Routledge. London. 1990, p 91

[17] C. G Jung, 'Alchemical Studies' in **The Collected Works** Volume Thirteen Trans R. F. C. Hull, edited by Fordham & Adler. Routledge & Kegan Paul, London. 1967. Here Jung quotes Dorn. Paragraph 380 page 290

[18] Johannes Fabricius **Alchemy - The Medieval Alchemists and their Royal Art** Diamond Books. UK 1976. p 200;

> Encircled by the five planetary crowns, the royal couple pray in front of a Christian communion-table.... The table also represents the 'well of life' just as it forms the base of the mercurial, planetary fountain. Its throning figure is the red King, or risen Christ, performing the Red Mass of alchemy. 'And now the King gives his red and bleeding flesh to be eaten by us all.' .... Blood (flows) from the wine press enclosing Christ with his cross. Squeezed by an angel turning the spindle's fastener and plate, the Saviour's body emits a stream of blood continuing in the jet of blood gushing from the king's right side wound. An emblem of the red tincture, the blood is offered by Christ to Sol (man/ Anima) and Luna (woman / Animus) in two chalices.
>
> The Red King is frequently compared to the second Adam ... a product of the circular distillation and so consists of the pure and incorruptible quintessence. Says the 'Aurora consurgens' "The second Adam, who is called the philosophic man (who has) passed from the pure elements into eternity.

[19] M. Niola, 'Blood Pictures' in **Hermann Nitsch 1960 - 1987** Museo Diego Aragona Pigatelli Cortes - 1987 exhibition catalogue, curator - Rudi Fuchs. p 89

through action,[20] can be viewed as an alchemical activity or a form of putrification - a decomposition of parts in order to find the inner chambers which lie deep within the psyche. The materials of Nitsch's alchemical practice are a mixture of the organic and the psychic which are coagulated within the furnace of activity where consumption (absorption and excretion) can perhaps be viewed as the psychical / psychic metabolic mechanism of realisation - a meta-catharsis, an organic enlightenment.

8.3 The Feast

In the large scale Aktions the body of the passive actor can be said to be transformed into the food of the feast. The body becomes the unleavened white bread and the consecrated wine "like the flesh and blood of God, which is at work in us as an essential, life-preserving substance of the cosmos."[21] In his treatise Nitsch argues that the tactile experiences encompassed in his Aktions are in effect the experiences of taste and tasting. So in his work the body is presented as part of the sensual banquet on which "all five senses, ultimately culminate in tasting". The aesthetic basis of Nitsch's work may be summed up as taste (the taking in of taste values[22]) in the metabolic sense of the word. The body of the passive actor becomes part of a "pure, concentrated (liturgical) meal, bearing resemblances to a sacrament."[23] It is an archetypal ingredient in the whole Aktion which is transformed into a totem meal.

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[20] Hermann Nitsch, manifesto **Colourful Paintings** (1990) reproduced in the Saville Art Expo catalogue 1992;

> Internal working of the psyche as well as the inside of the body are turned inside out. Flesh and blood, the dampness of pluck and entrails becomes visible, colour has become a means of composition which transcends the easel painting.

[21] Ibid,.

[22] Ibid,.

[23] Ibid,.

At Nitsch's banqueting table tasting (active, sensual participation[24]) results in the transformation of materials into psychological / philosophical food. Feasting, actual and metaphorical, transforms the performance space into a banquet hall or kitchen in which elements are cooked and devoured.

Nitsch see both the participants and the audience as guests at the communion table. All participate in the activity of consumption. Whatever state our palate or capacity for determining both the delicate and the strong flavours of this meal, the feasting in Nitsch's work inevitably gains momentum, developing into devouring, gorging, drunkenness, excess and intoxication, exceeding the limits of sensual stimulation. Nitsch suggests that the mind and body are transfigured by the feast, by the absorption of the taste values and experiences of sight, sound, smell and touch.

As the main course in this banquet of the senses Nitsch offers the simplified, yet highly potent, image / scene of crucifixion. The slaughter and crucifixion of an animal is eclipsed by the image of the crucified man which, as I have suggested before, is the recognition of the old Senex or the prima image / impulse, rather than a specific evocation of Christ, Oedipus, or Dionysus. However, the role that the passive actor plays follows the same script as these archetypal figures. Like Christ the passive actor accepts his fate; he does not turn away from the cup, the container of blood, the cup of death, the quintessential item on the menu. Nitsch presents us with an inevitability. In the **80th Aktion** this moment is repeated time and time again it becomes an inevitability and an affirmation.

One could argue that this image is perhaps postmodern, because it is an archetypal image of man's submission to external forces. But the force being

[24] C. G Jung, 'Alchemical Studies' (The Vision of Zosimos) in **The Collected Works** Volume Thirteen Trans R. F. C. Hull, edited by Fordham & Adler. Routledge & Kegan Paul, London. 1967. Paragraph 95 page 72:

Christ was a god who sacrificed himself. An essential part of the sacrificial act is dismemberment. Zosimos must have been familiar with this motif from the Dionysian mystery-tradition. There, too, the god is the victim, who was torn to pieces by the Titans and thrown into a cooking pot, but whose heart was saved at the last moment by Hera. Our text shows that the bowl-shaped altar was a cooking vessel in which a multitude of people were boiled and burned. As we know from the legend and from a fragment of Euripides, an outburst of bestial greed and the tearing of living animals with the teeth were part of the Dionysian orgy. Dionysus was actually called ... the undivided and divided spirit.

exerted on man at the centre of Nitsch's Aktions is the force of nature, not what Baudrillard would describe as an economy. In one sense it could perhaps be viewed as a visual manifestation of what Baudrillard has described as the "utopia of nudity, of the body present in its truth" of which truth means an "ideology of the body that can be represented..." the hero, the martyr. However, Nitsch does not present the image of a martyr as an ideal of man, but as a necessity and as an inevitability - a psychic fact. Nitsch impresses upon the viewer the closeness of death and the fragility of the body in the midst of excess. Nitsch also presents us with the essential existential imperative - the image of man Becoming, through the realisation of his own depths, which for Nitsch is not an ideal state of affairs but a right and rite of every person. Nitsch presents this idea as an the extra-societal right of every person to know and experience the nature of self to the point of extinction.

8.4 Discrimination: the Gift and the Counter-gift

In all of Nitsch's work the act of creativity is coupled with what seem to be acts of destruction, the expenditure of energy with consumption and expulsion balanced by absorption. Nitsch's menu is a mixture of bitter and sweet, a broad dichotomy of taste values. Nitsch claims to be exalting joy and affirming life in the midst of the smells, sights and sounds of death. On paper this seems to denote a perverse sense of taste which one presumes would result in a culinary disaster. But, in reality, this is not the case. It is almost as if, by placing opposites in close proximity to each other, one is able to discern immediately their different qualities and, even when one quality / idea or aspect is over stressed in the absence of its opposite, the opposing quality comes through as a desire to balance the pallet. This is what Baudrillard has called the gift, and the counter-gift in his reworking of the theory of reversibility.

> Hence the reversibility of the gift in the counter-gift, the reversibility of exchange in the sacrifice, the reversibility of time in the cycle, the reversibility of production in destruction, the reversibility of life in death, and the reversibility of every term and value of the *langue* in the anagram.[25]

[25] Jean Baudrillard **Symbolic Exchange and Death** Trans Iain Hamilton Grant with Intro by Mike Gane. Sage Publications, London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi. 1993. p 2

So Nitsch presents both the passive and the active and in so doing interrogates the conflict between freedom and captivity. This conflict can be seen working on a number of different levels within the Aktions. It can be viewed in the captive time (the time structures) imposed on the work by the artists and the time-keeper which focuses the spontaneous free time of activity and of abreaction. This conflict is also embodied in the roles of the passive actor and the excited chorus. These are roles which Nitsch has gradually developed into separate polarities. In the **1st Abreaction Play (shouts, noises, and the evisceration of the lamb)** we can see the seeds of this being sown. In this early work the central character of Esos (who becomes the designated passive actor of the later works) can be seen reacting to the pouring of liquids over his body. He both sings, speaks and walks freely on and off the stage. We are able to see his physical / emotional responses in a number of dramatic circumstances. Later, Nitsch restricts all of these actions, gradually taking away the passive actor's ability to respond physically to circumstances. In the later works the passive actor literally becomes an empty vessel, or a one-dimensional surface. The impact of his body within the Aktion is the impact of flesh. This material becomes incorporated into a larger concentrated picture. The dynamic activity of the chorus and the orchestra is increased and any inauthenticity with regard to acting is overcome by the instigation of physical tasks. The activities of the chorus are perceived as a kind of restless texture; an energy which passes over the surface of the picture infecting it with an irritant spontaneity in sharp contrast to the restrained body of the passive actor. There is a separation, what one might call a discriminating factor at work here. Here I can use Baudrillard to explain what I see as the effect of such discrimination in Nitsch's work.

> As a universal of the human condition, death exists only when society discriminates against the dead.[26]

Discrimination in this respect gives that which it discriminates against a value and therefore a meaning or substance, in other words a currency. This is part of what Baudrillard has identified as the principle of reversibility which he suggests must be imposed against all economic "psychologistic and structuralist edifices",[27] in other words against any inherent 'construct'. Baudrillard goes further to

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[26] Jean Baudrillard 'Political Economy and Death' in **Symbolic Exchange and Death** Trans,. Lain Hamilton Grant. SAGE Publications, London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi.,. p 144

[27] Ibid,.pp 1 - 2

suggest that reversibility, or the gift and its counter-gift, is the sovereign principle which exists outside and antagonistic to our economic "reality principle"[28]. Baudrillard suggests that this is a form of symbolic annihilation; the gift is counter-acted by the counter-gift which is counter-acted by the gift; an infinite cycle as long as there is energy and will to sustain it. Eventually the cycle of activity and counter-activity falls into the void of nothing - no thing.

In his Aktions Nitsch has developed a visual / audible / tactile language which, I believe, draws its energies from the cycle of gift - counter-gift imperative. The crisis or anxiety which this generates is not only a crisis of colour but of musical timbre, tactile qualities and visual aesthetic tasting. I would suggest that this is an empirical crisis functioning on an existential plane of qualities which move to assert each other in their absence and potential annihilation of each other. Dramatic anxiety arises out of the symbolic exchange of identities; man to animal, animal to man, man to feast, feast into man, death recoiling into life, the ecstasy of life plunging into death, the totality of the Aktion becoming a microcosm of society seen in the diabolic feasting of the Aktion - all constructs which are deconstructed and reconstructed in the presence / absence of each other.

The countering of the gift causes an anxiety, a stalemate, which is clearly detectable in Nitsch's work. It is this anxiety which, I believe, intensifies the sensual experience of his works. It is the sensation of seeing double, of witnessing an intensely powerful regime of discrimination at work, of witnessing and becoming a part of the fascistic model and, at the same time, of sensing the very real presence of its opposite. Perhaps it can be said that the more extreme the image of repression, the more intense is the emotional yearning / sensation for the other - the counter-gifts of joy, sarcasm and playfulness. It is in the powerful and disturbing sarcasm and the apocalyptic voice of P-Orridge's Father Malachi, vomitting up the dirt of humanity, its base nihilistic denominator, that one can perhaps detect the shadow of another hunger for meaning, love and devotion.

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[28] Jean Baudrillard 'Political Economy and Death' in **Symbolic Exchange and Death** Trans,. Lain Hamilton Grant. SAGE Publications, London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi., p 2

Chapter 9
Towards Pandrogyny[1]

The notion of the gift, counter-gift model, discussed in relation to the work of Hermann Nitsch in the previous chapter, sets up an interesting theme of duality which I would like to begin to explore in this part of my thesis.

To begin with I will concentrate on Nitsch's use of the archetypal character of Oedipus and will relate it, not to Freud's psychoanalytical reading of the traits of the character, but to its mystical significance in terms of what Bakan has suggested are its Jewish kabbalistic origins.

The discourse will move through Bakan's observation of the mystical dynamics of the male/female principle toward the notion of creativity as the coming together of these two principles in an empirical act of divine creation. I will then go on to discuss some of the features of P-Orridge's ritual work in the light of the developing discourse.

Nitsch is clearly working from his own synthetic Freudian / Heideggerian perspective. Therefore we must assume that any archetypal representation has also some psychological and existential basis. It is, however, a mistake to assume that Nitsch's use of the archetypal character of Oedipus necessarily carries with it the sum total of Freud's Oedipal complex. Nitsch's interest in the character is derived as much from Sophocles as from Freud. His interest is more to do with the archetype as totem / Senex than as a model of a specific set of pathological traits. In order to demonstrate that there is some common ground between

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[1] Genesis P-Orridge in **RE/Search Modern Primitives** interview with Andrea Juno, and V. Vale. RE/Search publications. San Francisco. USA 1989. p 171; talking about his work with a female partner;

> She and I function as a symbiotic team when we do rituals, and that is the Third Mind - the results we get are definitely the Third Mind. We become fused as an androgynous being, or as we call it, a *Pandrogynous* being; P for Power, Potency, and also for the Positive aspects of being blended male-female. And also because it then makes it Pan, and Pan is also a good concept. Pandrogyny is one of my on-going investigations, and the other one is the idea that we're not an occult group, we're an *occulture*. Because my interest is culture, but I approach it through occult means, if you like.

Senex and notions of Dasein in Nitsch's work, I would like to return to the writings of David Bakan.

In his book **Sigmund Freud and the Jewish Mystical Tradition** David Bakan outlines what he sees as the mystical origins of Freud's ideas concerning the Oedipus complex.

To begin with Bakan explores the implications of the kabbalistic character of the Shekinah which he describes as "the female counterpart of God, and part of God himself."[2] The notion of the Shekinah immediately introduces a theme of duality which, in Bakan's analysis, is the basis of Freud's thinking. Bakan concludes that, in accordance with Jewish mystical thinking, the divine essence is, in terms of the Kabbala, a constellation of the male / female twins, having a dual-gender tendency with the possibility of becoming, or presenting itself as hermaphrodite. Bakan suggests that Freud used the dual structure of the divine, as set down in Jewish mystical writing, to investigate its possible counterpart in the psychological make-up of man, in other words that Freud used Jewish mystical writing in the same way that Jung used gnostic and alchemical treatise.

Bakan draws on his knowledge of the **Zohar** to illustrate the mystical connection between the divine feminine and man. Bakan states that, according to the **Zohar,** man was created at the instigation of the Shekinah (the female aspect of the divine) and draws upon a passage from the **Zohar** which illustrates the chaotic and antagonistic nature of the divine male / female partnership which configures the friction between the terrestrial aspects of male and female which is the fundamental basis of the Freudian Oedipus complex.

> On account of the darkness, which was destined to sin against the light, the Father was not willing to share in man's creation, and therefore the Mother said "Let us make man in our image after our likeness."[3]

This passage seems to strike at the origins of the Oedipal myth. Man is created by

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[2] David Bakan **Sigmund Freud and the Jewish Mystical Tradition** . Free Association Books. London. 1990. p 273

[3] from the Zohar. Quoted by David Bakan **Sigmund Freud and the Jewish Mystical Tradition** . Free Association Books. London. 1990. p 274

the divine Mother at the behest of the Father who has already foreseen his downfall. Thus man (the Oedipal man) is conceived in the midst of chaos and disagreement. By the creation of man the divine feminine principle seems also to be creating the circumstances which will bring about the sin which prevents the divine male principle from participating fully in man's creation. From a mythological view point what has been instigated is a perpetual rotation - a wheel of fate, a self perpetuating cycle of events - while in psychological terms it is handed down from the divine to man. It is the original sin of his own creation. Of course P-Orridge would be disgusted by this suggestion as it is precisely this claim which is put forward by a number of religions (in slightly different guises) which P-Orridge vehemently attacks as systems designed to demean, disarm and disable the individual. However, there is, I believe, something significant in this cyclical model which goes beyond the politics of separation and control.

While many of the readings of the Freudian Oedipus complex have a tendency to emphasise the carnal and earth bound, Bakan provides us with a reading framed by the notion of the divine erotic and creative energies of the male/female constellation configured in Jewish mysticism. Bakan links Freud's male/female duality to the kabbalistic notion of knowledge or Daath, which the Zohar interprets as the 'tree' (the tree of knowledge). Bakan describes how Daath is the offspring from the mystical union of Binah meaning understanding (the female principle) and Chokmah meaning wisdom (the male principle). The word Daath is also used to mean sexual intercourse which is an idea which seems to merge knowledge with sexuality. Binah is also understood as the Mother, or Shekinah. Bakan states "kabbalistically speaking, Freud came to Binah in his discovery of the unconscious forces in man."[4] Bakan argues that Freud's psychological perspective is founded on his investigations of the unconscious. The point here is that, as Nitsch follows Freud into the exploration of the unconscious in man, the broader based knowledge that Nitsch is seeking is the Binah, the Mother, Shekinah, divine feminine. In a sense Nitsch is following what Jung has suggested is the natural reflex of the mind to unite the hypothetical opposites of the known and the unknown[5] - to seek a wholeness

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[4] David Bakan **Sigmund Freud and the Jewish Mystical Tradition.** Free Association Books. London. 1990. p 279

[5] see Jung's definition in Chapter 5 section 5.1 page 86 of this thesis

which, in terms of Jewish mysticism, is a kind of total gender.[6] How do we know that this is the case? Because Nitsch invariably describes and illustrates the environment in which he instinctively feels knowledge or meaning to be found in terms of the feminine. So Nitsch states that the "totality of the process of being"[7] is rendered tangible and visible in the basic form of the organic, the feminine and the intensely sexual.

> Human sensitivity flows directly into art, even when the excessive drive leads to perversion being conveyed as experience in a concentrated and an immediate form. An experience conveying intensity, conserved and transmittable life energy becomes evident. Life's warmth, the organic growth within the mother's womb, the extremes of sexual intensity and (the) mystic(al)[8]

Here Nitsch is clearly using the analogy of the womb to describe the circumstances of his work. He uses the image of the umbilical / placenta connected relationship between mother and foetus to describe the manner in which human sensitivity is connected to art. Again we are confronted with the image of blood in the nourishing flow between mother and fetus, and the profoundly sexual in the act of creation and growth. Here Nitsch seems to be recognising, perhaps instinctively, the primacy of the feminine in his own acts of sensitivity, creativity and experience of being as an artist and, in so doing, stumbles upon themes and images which have already been foreshadowed within gnostic and alchemical texts.[9] What I believe Nitsch is describing is the intense nakedness of the feminine principle as the origin of being. This coincides with what Bakan sees as the basis of Freud's Oedipus complex. He states:

> He had, in the idea of the Oedipus complex, an image of the "mother laying in her nakedness."[10]

Significantly, in terms of the myth of Oedipus, the character confronts realisation when he is plunged into the darkness, when he becomes blind. Oedipus has

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[6] the slogan"nothing short of a total gender" has in recent years replaced P-Orridge's earlier slogan "nothing short of a total war".

[7] Hermann Nitsch **The Orgies and Mysteries Theatre 1992 manifesto** reproduced in the Saville Art Expo catalogue 1992.

[8] Ibid,.

[9] see Johannes Fabricius **Alchemy: The medieval Alchemists and their Royal Art** Diamond Books, London. 1994. pp 84 - 87

[10] David Bakan **Sigmund Freud and the Jewish Mystical Tradition** Free Association Books. London. 1990. p 279

already discovered that sight can not save him from acting blindly, in other words, to see in the literal sense, to be conscious, does not guarantee insight. In Sophocles this means realisation of the role that fate plays in a man's life but, from a more psychological viewpoint, realisation means the knowledge of the role of the unconscious in shaping the complete form of the self. To see the image of the "mother laying in her nakedness" is not only to witness the site of the organic self - the womb - but to witness the creative act which gave rise to self. Bakan has suggested that this should be linked to the notion of the child's developing self-consciousness which leads it to wonder about its origins, and the consequential desire of the child to witness the moment of its own creation.

> The most profound insight experience is ... the discovery within one's self of the Oedipus complex, which brings into the open not only the unconscious in its more general sense, but the image of the (male and female principles) having sexual intercourse, and the substitution of oneself, in fantasy, in the act.[11]

So the empirical child, that which seeks an understanding of its origin, that impulse which Freud suggested is part of every psyche, is driven by the desire to connect with the divine act of creation; to seek its becoming in its own origin. This, I would suggest, is not only fundamentally existential but forms the underlying motive of Nitsch's work. In terms of art the child has become the artist seeking the "totality of the process of being"[12] by the transmission of his fantasy of becoming in "concentrated and an immediate form".[13] It can therefore be said that Nitsch's creative actions are specific and specialised expressions of the soul's attempt to fashion, explore and couple with a sense of its own origins. It is the expression of the artist as child, and the creative act as erotic play; the desire to couple with the Shekinah - the celestial Mother - to seek Binah as a figure of existential desire, to come to Daath.

> The soul, according to the Zohar, has an unquenchable yearning to be united with its source in God. This union is characteristically

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[11] Here I have substituted Father and Mother for male and female principles, since, I feel from an empirical point of view, it is not necessary to speak of Father and Mother, and tends to confuse the situation somewhat.

David Bakan **Sigmund Freud and the Jewish Mystical Tradition.** Free Association Books. London. 1990. p 281

[12] Hermann Nitsch **The Orgies and Mysteries Theatre 1992 manifesto** reproduced in the Saville Art Expo catalogue 1992.

[13] Ibid,.

> discussed in the metaphor of sex. Generally speaking, the union of male and female is taken as the ideal form of existence. Thus human sexual relations become symbolic vehicles of Divine acts; and the Divine creativity is understood as of a deeply erotic character itself.[14]

That, according to this formula, every creative act is innately sexual and divine and is strongly associated with the evocation of the instance at which the child/artist came into existence, is one of the most important points I want to make in this thesis. Despite the naming of the divine principles involved, in the case of the work of both Nitsch and P-Orridge, the evocation of the empirical act of creation has very little to do with deities or deity worship so, when I use the words religious, spiritual, or devotional, I am not referring to an organised theological idea, but a basic empirical reflex, as basic as the instinct to live. This idea is echoed in a number of P-Orridge's statements.[15] Equally, when Nitsch talks about belonging to a priesthood he is not talking about a form of Catholicism but is testifying to the fact that he has recognised that there is a divine aspect to the art of creativity in which orgy, sexuality and excess are a fundamental part. The connection between sexuality and divinity is presented within the context of this section of the **Zohar** as the most potent forces in the universe. Interestingly, when it appears in the work of contemporary artists such as Nitsch and P-Orridge, it is one of the most confrontational and misunderstood elements most likely to disgust present day audiences. From an existential point of view, it is at the very heart of the work - sex as creativity, and creativity as sex, is the very domain of existence. For Nitsch to be in the midst of creativity is to merge in symbiotic relationship with the divine male/female

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[14] David Bakan **Sigmund Freud and the Jewish Mystical Tradition** Free Association Books. London. 1990. pp 272 - 273

[15] Genesis P-Orridge interview with the present author, 1994 California. Here P-Orridge is talking about his early work within the context of Coum:

> I started trying to look more and more female again, and putting on more make-up, doing my eye brows, and growing my hair out so that I could be less specifically male. I didn't want it to be a duality, I wanted it to be aspects of female, or aspects of an a-sexual thing - that's why I think you should always call God IT, or Goddess IT. I think that all deities and God forms, and manifestations, should be non specific in terms of gender, However, one should always be able to assign a gender to that, male or female - all of them should be able to be male or female (male and female) if it suits the purpose and intention you have. I don't think anyone can make any progress in this new eon, until they start to come to terms with the fact that everything is asexual, unless we assign a sex to it, and when we do, each time, it should be as afresh, and it should be for a specific reason, and it shouldn't always be the same one.

principle - to be inside the moment of creation. In these terms Dasein is perhaps configured as an erotic engagement with creative sexual energy in order to Become, in its libidinal flow, recreated.

In contrast to Nitsch,, P-Orridge incorporates the 'feminine' into his work in a literal form, through the use of what P-Orridge denotes as a holy female.

> I have what I consider to be a devotional / holy female figure(s), who works, and has also the option of choosing not to do that. They are choosing their own way, with advance knowledge, that they want to help me leave and come back. And it's interesting since that's occurred, more and more people say that I'm ..... I don't know ..... how can I put this ..... people comment on, without any real knowledge of anything I do, that I appear to have quite a definite female side, in a way that I didn't before - and it's now like a New Age man type thing. It's a side effect, it's not actually why I'm doing it. However, it's fine by me to become more and more unclear about my gender. I don't want to be specifically a gender - I really want to be able to utilise this particular fleshy vehicle, because it has practical uses in terms of travel that's all. [16]

The guidance of a holy female is an important part of his private ritual work and, indeed, all of his creative work, either private or public. I have already suggested in chapter three of this thesis P-Orridge sees himself as working within a strong lineage of ancient practice passed down to him though the female blood line of his family; the importance he places on a female companion in terms of his work seems to exemplify this fact.

While Nitsch does not include actual sexual intercourse in his public work sex is a prominent aspect of P-Orridge's work. P-Orridge is known, respected and well studied in the art of sex magick; this is a very old occult practice of focusing the sexual energy achieved at the point of orgasm on a particular intention or desire. Evidence of ritualised sex is introduced into the public work via the inclusion of photographic, video footage and sound recordings. Much of P-Orridge's art works (or Sigils) are created within ritual states and include blood, semen, hair and polaroids taken during the rituals. Images taken from both the video recordings of **Stations ov Thee Cross** and Polaroids have been inserted into a

[16] Genesis P-Orridge, interview with the present author, 1994 California.

number of P-Orridge's commercial music videos, and extracts from sound recordings taken during rituals continue to find their way into the mixes of almost all of P-Orridge's commercially available records and CDs. The use of such material is, I would suggest, perhaps in order to reinstate the significance of the ritual origins of all of the public work. It is perhaps also an attempt to incorporate (or to re-seed[17]) the public work with the powerful vocabulary of immediacy, availability, vulnerability, strong sexuality, purity of gesture, sacrifice and devotion which originated in ritual work.

There is much evidence in both the techniques and the materials used in the rituals of P-Orridge which points to a basic emphasis on the reintegration or evocation of an androgynous energy. As I have illustrated, this connects with a universal theme of return which can be said to be a basic intentional element in many different kinds of rituals drawn from a number of cultural sources.

I have already discussed in the chapter five **(Using the Child - Being the Child)** the significance of the child as an example of the way in which P-Orridge uses both his own memories and the characteristics of an archetype in order to reconnect to the notion of the child as an originality. We can see how props and techniques used in rituals such as **Stations ov Thee Cross** can help to focus the participant on particular physical and psychological states.

In **Stations ov Thee Cross** a hood placed over P-Orridge's head during the ritual shuts out the domestic and enables his gaze to expand inwards. The emphasis on darkness and disorientation is perhaps instrumental in bringing about some kind of sensual connection with the memory of an original state. Darkness facilitates the journey into the unconscious. Isolation enhances the awareness of the internal dialogue. The use of the hood carries with it a number of personal resonances. The hood may project the psyche back into the circumstances of youth; into the bunkers, dens and the dark underground places, into those spaces which have become landmarks of personal psychological development and training. Equally the hood may serve the same purpose as the earth in which "Quite often I'd just lie there in complete darkness".[18] It may be considered a

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[17] for an explanation of the significance of the term 'Seeding' see the Chapter 6

[18] Genesis P-Orridge interview with the present author, September 4th, 1994.

symbol and aid to the descent into marginal experiences. By re-accessing the sensations, and by simulating the circumstances which surrounded 'original' moments of personal empowerment first experienced in childhood, something of the initial impetus towards self-actualisation may be reintroduced into the present circumstances of the ritual. In addition, this kind of ritual is imbued with what Mircea Eliade saw as a *regressus ad uterum* - a "return to the origin" which is accomplished in order that:

> ... the beneficiary shall be born into a new mode of being or be regenerated. From the structural point of view, the return to the womb corresponds to the reversion of the Universe to the "chaotic" or embryonic state. The darkness corresponds to the Night before creation and to the darkness of the initiation hut.....[19]

Eliade associates this process with the act of initiation, suggesting that reinitiation is possible when the need arises and that, through repeated returns to the experience of gestation and birth, a higher mode of existence is attained. Jung has also noted the necessity for personal re-examination of the "hot depths of the unconscious", suggesting that there are definite moments in ones life when the need to undertake such a journey becomes paramount. The higher mode of existence arises, according to Jung's analysis, out of new knowledge acquired as a direct result of undertaking such a personal journey "to hell and death"[20]

In most of his work on the subject Jung seems to place more importance on the retrieval of the self from the "hot depths of the unconscious" than on the experience of being in the midst of the unconscious. For Jung it is the emergence from the darkness of the depths of the psyche, the moment at which one seems to see the world anew, as if for the first time and with a renewed sense of awe, with the regenerated sense of child, which forms the most significant episode in the journey. However, in terms of the work of both Nitsch and P-Orridge, it is perhaps the creative point of contact - the in the midst of ... which is the most empirically insignificant because of its immediate and active properties.

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[19] Mircea Eliade **Myth and Reality** George Allen and Unwin (World Perspectives 21) 1963. pp 80-81

[20] Jolande Jacobi **Complex / Archetype / Symbol in the Psychology of C. G. Jung** Trans Ralph Manheim (Princeton, N J: Princeton University Press, 1967). p 186. See Jung ' Symbols of Transfiguration' p 347 - 48

In terms of ritual, contact is the canvas of creativity. In order to get to a point of contact .P-Orridge employs a number of methods but one of the most important is scarification.

> One of the best ways to get in and out of a physical body is through the blood, and one the best ways to get the blood to effuse, if you are not a female menstruating, which I'm not, is to do the equivalent, of a male menstruation which is to have a Yoni, basically to split the skin into the shape of the Vagina - blood - and to be able to re-enter. That's what I'm doing, I'm building Yonies to get in and out - that's why I do them when I need to get in and out. They don't have to be big and visible, but I don't know any other way .... so far, ... but in terms of a guaranteed re-entry[21]

Here blood letting is synonymous with menstruation and significantly it is initiated by a female. Symbolically it is a coupling of male and female in the act of blood letting, the opening of the Yoni, is an opening of the vagina which is an implicitly sexual act. The letting of blood is synonymous with allowing energy to flow, to facilitate a passage through, and a root of return. In this sense it is, like Nitsch's image of the "organic growth within the mother's womb"[22], a symbiotic process. The notion of a symbiotic flow of energy inside and outside the body, to and from another focus which is determined by the intention of the ritual, can also be likened to breathing.

The idea of breath and flow between the internal and the external world, and between the subject at the centre of a ritual and the marginal/magical environment he is entering is a common feature of ritual work. Sometimes it is expressed as a hypothetical movement and in other cases it is referred to as a form of breathing. In Hatha-yoga and certain Tantric schools of thought the mechanism of regression or descent is called "going against the current". It is a process in which the adept descends through stages of consciousness towards the unconscious during which he / she visualises the corresponding stages in the creation of the universe and disassembles them within his meditative state, thus absorbing each stage of disintegration into his

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[21] Genesis P-Orridge, interview with the present author, 1994 California

[22] Hermann Nitsch **The Orgies and Mysteries Theatre 1992 manifesto** reproduced in the Saville Art Expo catalogue 1992.

own descendent journey.[23]

In terms of a number of ancient religions descent is usually synonymous with the process of decomposition and exhalation, while ascent is associated with assembly and the inhalation and renewed sense of life and self. Other techniques, such as "embryonic breathing" used in Taoism,[24] emphasise the symbiotic relations of the individual to the cosmos, and tidal flow to energy between the conscious and the unconscious evoked in the recreation of the closed-circuit respiration of blood which links the embryo to the mother. This technique, which is also known as the "unification of the breath", aims at admitting the experience of the unified symbiotic relationship between 'self' and the cosmos, through the exploration of the conscious and unconscious states of life and death. In addition, the adept accepts into his state of changed perception the creative possibilities inherent within the notion of cosmos or the extended community of possible realities. There are obvious connections between this idea of breath and the notion of the acquisition of knowledge through the union with the feminine principle in Jewish mysticism.

Integral within the concept of breathing are the dual notions of life and death, life = inhalation, death = exhalation. Within the mechanism of breathing is a continuous state of death and resurrection, the one dependent on the other. This

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[23] Referring to initiatory states associated with Shamanic practice, Mircea Eliade describes the process whereby the Shaman divests his body of flesh and blood in a meditative, sense-experience which is similar to the meditations used in Indo-Tibetan Tantrism.

> divesting his body of flesh and blood, so that nothing of it remains but the bones. He then has to name all the parts of his body, mentioning each bone by name .... While seeing himself thus, naked and completely delivered from the perishable and ephemeral flesh and blood, he dedicates himself .. to his great task, through that part of his body which is destined to resist, for the longest time, the action of sun, wind and weather.
>
> Such a spiritual exercise implies the "exit from time", for not only is the shaman, by means of an interior vision, anticipating his physical death, but he is finding again what one might call the non-temporal source of Life, the bone. ... So true is this, that in the ascetic techniques of mysticism as highly developed as Tantric Buddhism and Lamaism, meditation upon the image of one's skeleton, or divers spiritual exercises done in the presence of corpses, skeletons or skulls, still play an important part. (Mircea Eliade **Myths Dreams & Mysteries** Trans, Philip Mairet, Collins, Fontana. 1960. p 83)

[24] *t'ai-si* the subject imitates the 'closed-circuit' respiration of blood and breath between the embryo and the mother. Also called "unification of the breath".

idea connects with the dramatic repetition of the point of death and resurrection found in Nitsch's work. It would seem that ancient ritual practice and Nitsch's practical existential philosophy converge and stand side by side in affirming the importance and powerful effect of the breath form (inhalation and exhalation) as a physical meditation on the point of existence. In terms of a meditation on breath within the context of the ritual, to breathe is to stand on the edge of the abyss, to experience the vertigo of Becoming and dying in quick succession - a process which has a profound levelling effect and forces the instinctive aspect of the self to the surface. In the same way I would suggest that, for P-Orridge, bleeding is actual rather than a symbolic feminine /sexual/ flow of energy through its repetition in regular ritual states. It is actual feminisation, a way of forcing the sexual, creative, feminine to the surface.

> Ritualisation fuses, with impulse and instinct integrated with intuition, an open minded examination of my most deeply buried and normally inarticulate drives and desires, an approach devoid of preconceptions that re-educated my idea of what E was as an individual, what my real boundaries were and what it was possible for me to becoum.[25]

9.1 The Mythical Law-breaker

Nitsch tells us that for him the moment when "King Oedipus stands on the stage, all bloody, and he knows he has slept with his mother, and he has killed his father, and he is blind" is "one of the most important scenes in all theatre."[26] It is a moment of intense realisation.

Within the text of the **1st Abreaction Play (Shouts, noises and the evisceration of the lamb)** Nitsch associates the notion of crucifixion with castration, carried out by the father on the son, with the character of Oedipus becoming the son (Christ figures) who reconciles himself with the father principle through blinding,

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[25] Bother Genesis 'Thee Room' in **Transmedia Foundation Broad sheet 3**, autumn 1995. Oakland, California . Limited edition, hand produced.

[26] Hermann Nitsch **M.A.R.Z** Marz Verlag, Darmstadt. 1969 (Limited edition - only existing copy at Prinzendorf) paragraph 123

which both Nitsch and Freud identify as synonymous with castration.[27] Freud states:

> There can be no doubt that in the Christian myth the original sin was one against God the Father. If, however, Christ redeemed mankind from the burden of original sin by the sacrifice of his own life, we are driven to conclude that the sin was a murder. The law of talion, which is so deeply rooted in human feelings, lays it down that a murder can only be expiated by the sacrifice of another life: self-sacrifice points back to blood-guilt. And if this sacrifice of a life brought about atonement with God the Father, the crime to be expiated can only have been the murder of the father.[28]

The notion of father and God can be confusing here if one attempts to frame this argument literally. It is less problematic if one simply refers to that father / God as the male aspect. It is the same male aspect that "on account of the darkness, which was destined to sin against the light..."[29] would not share in the creation of Man. Freud clarifies the implications of this in **Totem and Taboo,** in which he suggests that, in the complicity of atonement, the son becomes the father:

> Atonement with the father was all the more complete since the sacrifice was accompanied by a total renunciation of the woman on whose account the rebellion against the father was started. But at that point the inexorable psychological law of ambivalence stepped in. [30]

Here I believe we can read the principle of reversal. Freud continues:

> The very deed in which the son offered the greatest possible atonement to the father brought him at the same time to the attainment of his wishes *against* the father. He himself became God ... As a sign of this substitution the ancient totem meal was revived in the form of communion, in which the company of bothers consume the flesh and blood of the son - no longer the father - obtained sanctity thereby and identified themselves with him. Thus we can trace through the ages identity of the totem meal

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[27] Sigmund Freud, 'Totem and Taboo' **The Complete Psychological Works** Vol XIII. trans Strachey. The Hogarth Press., and The Institute of Psycho-analysis. London. 1953. p 130

[28] Ibid,. p 154

[29] from the Zohar. Quoted by David Bakan **Sigmund Freud and the Jewish Mystical Tradition** . Free Association Books. London. 1990. p 274

[30] Sigmund Freud, 'Totem and Taboo' **The Complete Psychological Works** Vol XIII. trans Strachey. The Hogarth Press., and The Institute of Psycho-analysis. London. 1953 pp 154 - 155

> with animal sacrifice, with theanthropic human sacrifice and the Christian Eucharist, and we can recognise in all these rituals the effect of the crime by which men were so deeply weighed down ... The Christian communion, however, is essentially a fresh elimination of the father, a repetition of the guilty deed.[31]

So in Nitsch's treatise **The Painting Coat** (1991) we can configure within its poetics the reiteration of the guilty need.

> I AM THE PAINTER who SLAUGHTERS AND HUNTS the ANIMAL (monster / non animal, God-animal, bull of Mythras (dragon), totem animal). I wallow with both HANDS IN BLOOD-DAMP FLESH OF ITS ENTRAILS AND STAIN MY COAT WITH EXCREMENTS AND BLOOD AND GUILT.[32]

In order to progress further along this line of enquiry it is important to keep in mind that underpinning all of this, is the concept that male and female principles are one and the same, joined and part of the same essence, drive or energy directed towards being. Male and female are separated when they become metaphorical constructs, at which point the principle of reversibility can be applied, which goes some way to "re-minding"[33] us that the other, absent in the construct, is nevertheless present. The dynamic which allows the substitution of the son for the father, via the transubstantiation of the totem from animal to man, from man to god, is evidence of this powerful swing which is an attempt to reclaim the combined, united, principle. It is this sense of swing which I would suggest makes the Oedipus story appear uncanny, the Senex of the Martyr strangely familiar, psychologically readable and immediately understandable. What I am suggesting is that it is not the impact of the stories connected with archetypal figures which we find familiar, but our registering, consciously or unconsciously, of the dynamics which propel and motivate these figures into action. This should not be mistaken as fate but should be understood as a psychological / philosophical drive toward a unified state of being. This is a recognisable sensation which goes beyond notions of catharsis which Freud described as *Heimlich:*

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[31] Sigmund Freud, 'Totem and Taboo' **The Complete Psychological Works** Vol XIII. trans Strachey. The Hogarth Press., and The Institute of Psycho-analysis. London. 1953 pp 154 - 155

[32] Hermann Nitsch **The Painting Coat (1991)** reproduced in the Saville Art Expo catalogue 1992.

[33] re-minding word construction used by Genesis P-Orridge

> *Heimlich* is a word the meaning of which develops towards an ambivalence, until it finally coincides with its opposite, *unheimlich*. *Unheimlich* is in some way or other a sub-species of *heimlich*.[34]

Heimlich and Unheimlich are associated with the experience of the uncanny. It is the experience of one coinciding with the other, or of one moving towards another; of Unheimlich eclipsing Heimlich. Sophocles explores this in metaphor in Oedipus, in the tale of innocent action, which is drawn towards violent destiny and violent atonement, through action which draws the character toward immortality. Bakan describes the metaphor in terms of Freud:

> In the fulfilment of the Oedipal metaphor, Freud is then returning to the Mother who will provide him with forgiveness or acceptance in spite of the 'audacity' of his rebellion against the father-image. The sense of his oncoming death is the sense of punishment for his violation, and he permits himself, however so slightly, to accept the Mother's forgiveness in the form of immortality. As he suggests, he is approaching "the dreaded father at whose hands castration is awaiting," and he seeks comfort and safety in the Mother, the Holy Shekinah (the community of Israel.) That he, as Messiah, fought against the Father for the Mother's sake, makes him feel all the more that She will save him. And it is largely in this that the significance of *Heimlichkeit* lies.[35]

While Baudrillard rails against the psychoanalytical necessity of the Freudian oedipal complex,[36] there are striking similarities in the mechanism of the gift and the counter-gift reversal. According to Baudrillard the Oedipal myth has lost its psychoanalytic significance for a society which no longer knows the meaning of killing, and therefore of guilt and the need for atonement. Instead Baudrillard

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[34] Sigmund Freud "Collected Papers" Vol IV p 377 quoted in David Bakan **Sigmund Freud and the Jewish Mystical Tradition**. Free Association Books. London. 1990. p 306

[35] Ibid,. pp 317 - 318

[36] Jean Baudrillard, 'Political Economy and Death' **Symbolic Exchange and Death** Translated by Lain Hamilton Grant. SAGE Publications, London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi. p 139;

> .. murder is neither violent nor an acting-out of the unconscious. So for those who kill the King, there is no seizure of power nor any increase in guilt, as there is in the Freudian myth. Neither does the King simply endure this. Instead, he *gives* his death, returns it in exchange, and marks it with the feast, whereas the phantasmatic murder of the father is (according to Freud) lived as the experience of guilt and anxiety.

argues that the myth of Oedipus is reduced to an economy of power and exchange. Baudrillard still maintains that "the king must be killed from time to time" in order to "keep what threatened to accumulate and become fixed on the king's person (status, wealth, woman and power) within the flow of exchange, within the group's reciprocal movements."[37] Baudrillard fails to see the creative potential of the Oedipal complex as anything other than a political exchange, a flow of possession, a desperate attempt to keep the commodities of status, wealth, women and power on the move. What is missing from this analysis is the presence of the feminine which is both implicit in the figure of the empirical male in the dual nature of the Shekinah and is implicated in accordance with kabbalistic structures, alchemical individuation processes and depth psychology with the unconscious or dynamic order of the underworld. Baudrillard may argue that "ritual is utterly different to the phantasm, as is the myth from the unconscious"[38] perhaps because he surveys only liberal politics and triviality in exchange:

> ... from one and the same structure, the economy or the unconscious, we pass from primitive formations to our own, now from the manifest to the hidden, now the reverse.... But this is radically false: when the economic 'is hidden behind' other structures, it quite simply ceases to exist; it provides no account of anything, it is nothing. On the other hand, when the unconscious is 'manifest', when it becomes a manifest and articulated structure, it is no longer unconscious at all. A psychical structure and a process based on repression have no meaning in the other, ritual and non-psychical configuration of an overt resolution of signs. Everything changes when we pass from the latent to the manifest, and from the manifest to the latent.[39]

It is clear that Baudrillard views myth and the unconscious as two separate economies, although he does not suggest how he derives the view that the unconscious might function as an economy. He can not reconcile the visible to the invisible despite the possibilities offered by a gift / counter-gift mechanism. Baudrillard seems to contend that economies can not be hidden behind other economies, in other words that the unconscious (as an economy) can not operate

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[37] Jean Baudrillard, 'Political Economy and Death' **Symbolic Exchange and Death** Translated by Lain Hamilton Grant. SAGE Publications, London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi. p 139

[38] Ibid,. p 139

[39] Ibid,. p 140

beneath the economy of the conscious; that the invisible can not also be present yet eclipsed by the visible. Baudrillard is perhaps suggesting that everything that 'is' is visible and everything that is not visible must therefore cease to exist. What needs to be kept in mind is that Baudrillard's philosophy is concerned with that which is theoretically visible. He is concerned with what P-Orridge would call the consensus reality - the binary - the solid and the fixed point. His propensity to condense even the ephemeral to systems of exchange or economies, suggests that his views are formed out of the identification of systems and their various currencies. It is perhaps true to say that Baudrillard admits into his notion of existence only those things which he can identify as being present within an identifiable system of exchange. Therefore, it could be said that for Baudrillard, whatever can be registered within a system exists, and that which can not be registered as part of a visible system can therefore not exist. Reality is therefore an existence within an economy of exchange. Because the unconscious can not be registered as an economy it can not therefore exist within Baudrillard's notion of reality as a system(s) of exchange. However, this only suggests that the unconscious can not be registered in terms of what Baudrillard takes for existence and does not necessarily mean that alternate forms of reality can not exist.

The notion of the divine energy of the hermaphrodite at the centre of creation is more complex than the idea of a simple male and female union. It should rather be viewed as a potential, a potency which is capable of coming into being in multiple forms. In my view the idea of the hermaphrodite relates very closely to the 'yes' and 'no' multiple permutations which describe the energy of the quantum universe. It is the I.T. the notion of Imaginary Time[40] - that which could be - which is a potential outcome. Moreover, the hermaphrodite is the potential, or rather the 'original'. It is that which is already there, which remains after linguistics is stripped from the word; it might equally be equated with the notion of the third mind. It is perhaps the seismograph of the divine in Hillman's theory of the angelology of words. It is perhaps Pan or 'p' for power, potency, and also for the positive aspects of being a blend of male and female in P-Orridge's rituals. It is from this union - the creation of the hermaphrodite in all

[40] Genesis P-Orridge as defined and used in a number of his essays. see **Thee Psychick Bible - Thee Apocryphal Scriptures ov Genesis P-Orridge and thee Third MIND ov Psychic TV** Compiled & Edited by J A Rapoza, Alecto Enterprises, San Francisco, 1994.

its guises, that the artist derives his work as a conception or putrefaction. Here I use alchemical terminology deliberately in order to stress the nature of the creative act.

Through the discourse contained in this thesis it has become clear that Nitsch and P-Orridge do more than just register what might tersely be called the other in their work, allow themselves to act as Mediums through which the other can speak. In his book **Paracriticism - Seven speculations of the times** Ihab Hassan suggests:

> We create the Self and the Other so that they may lock in bloody embrace. For some, this is proof of existence. For others, the proof is in self-creation.[41]

In the case of Nitsch and P-Orridge they do not attempt to separate self and other but to unite them; for them the embrace of self and other may be literally bloody but it is not a struggle for proof of existence, it is literally an 'intercourse' - the submitting to a sexual act which 'is' the essence of existence. For Nitsch it is this activity which both generates the work and is the experience of Dasein.

Perhaps a more evocative description of the creative sexual embrace can be drawn from alchemical texts.

> In a marriage bed-turned-sarcophagus the king and queen go through a hideous coitus dissolving their bodies while bespattering their grave with their blood.[42]

Here the coitus of the king and queen results in the spattering of their grave with blood as their bodies mingle and dissolve. This aptly describes the action of the what Nitsch has called the subconscious gesture. It is the artist's union with the feminine other which produces what Nitsch calls the abreaction activity. Although the artist does not himself bleed Nitsch provides the activity with the material of blood. Thus the pouring and splattering of blood in his Aktions register in a similar manner to the alchemical blood generated by the creation of

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[41] Ihab Hassan **Paracriticism. Seven speculations of the times** (POSTmoderISM: A Paracritical Bibliography) University of Illinois Press, Urbana, Chicago, London. 1975 p 19

[42] Johannes Fabricius **Alchemy: The medieval Alchemists and their Royal Art** Diamond Books, London. 1994. p 106

the hermaphrodite.

Here is another description of the same process taken from another alchemical tract:

> The philosophers have put to death the women who kills her husband. For the womb of the woman is full of poison. So let there be dug a grave for the dragon, and let the woman be buried there together with him, he being chained fast to that woman; and the more he winds and coils himself about her, the more his body, mixed with the limbs of the woman, inclines towards death, and he turns entirely into blood. When the philosophers have seen that he has changed into blood, they leave him in the sun until his softness is consumed and the blood becomes dry. Then the poison appears, and what is hidden takes shape.[43]

In this tract the feminine principle has a more malevolent character. Her poison is her malevolence; her characteristics can be more easily recognised as the organic. Here she is representational of both the life and death. What is 'made visible' in the dried blood which is produced out of the creation of the hermaphrodite is the hidden mystery of coitus, that it is both a conception and a putrefaction, just as the activity itself is both a 'yes' and a 'no' - a life giving activity as well as a force of annihilation.

In the following chapter I will put forward the notion that both Nitsch and P-Orridge do interact with another incorporeal reality in their work and, significantly, that this is derived through the action of the knife. Following on from my discourse concerning the notion of deepening and wounding explored in chapter seven, Optimistic Nihilism, I will discuss how this process is capable of producing powerful shifts in perspective.

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[43] Johannes Fabricius quotes from the 59th sermon of the 'Turba' in **Alchemy: The medieval Alchemists and their Royal Art** Diamond Books, London. 1994. p

Chapter 10
The Action of the Knife and the Emergence of a New Space in the Midst of States of Affairs

10.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter I introduced the notion of the male / female principle merged in the idea of the hermaphrodite. I suggested that it was the act of uniting the male and female principle to create the dynamic character of the hermaphrodite which was at the core of the creative urge. I suggested that for, Nitsch, it is this activity of union with the feminine which both generates the work and is the experience of Dasein. I will develop this argument further in the following chapter in which I will suggest that the same formula of union can be applied to an intense activity such as cutting. In this way I hope to illustrate how the ritual activity of cutting is perhaps a smaller and perhaps more controlled act of 'union' which can have the same conceptional or putrefactional effects. I will go on to suggest that like the action of the knife, the very act of performing is transformed by intention into a similar form of wounding now transformed into coital creativity.

Using the idea/image/metaphor of the knife I would like to introduce Lecercle's hypothesis concerning the interventional and precipitative effects of the event / activity of doing into this discourse. This is in order to explore in more detail, first, what might be meant by changed perception, as promoted by P-Orridge and, second, to interrogate the notion of the experience of Being (Dasein) as advocated by Nitsch.

Lecercle suggests that:

> ... 'forms of expression' and 'forms of content.' Utterances as arrangements of leckta, as 'forms of expression', express forms of content, that is mixtures of bodies, as the utterance 'the knife cuts the flesh' gives form to the incorporeal transformation of the event denoted by the verb 'cut', and expresses the bodily mixture of knife and flesh. The important point is that the incorporeal transformation, the event, is not a representation of the mixture of bodies, but intervenes on it, to delay or precipitate it. One does not

> speak of things or states of affair, one speaks *in the midst* of states of affair.[1]

While Lecercle is framing his hypothesis within the context of linguistics I believe that the basic premise of this hypothesis is transferable and can be applied to states of performance / action. I believe it is possible to read Lecercle's hypothesis in the following way. The knife cuts the flesh, and in so doing the activity of cutting precipitates some thing to be deposited in solid form from the action, or to hasten the happening of...[2] or the evocation of ...

To explain this further we could say that the precipitating effect of cutting brings the object / knife into a present significance which can be said to be an active rather than a signified state of affairs; this is true also of the notion of flesh which acquires a gravity in, and via, the violence of cutting and in its becoming wounded. In this way the moment of cutting has the effect of condensing past, present, and future conditions of flesh and knife. At the moment of this condensation one speaks[3] "in the midst of states of affairs"[4] which draw past, present and future multiplicities / complicities into the cutting. In so doing there seems to arise a potent, incorporeal other which can be said to dwell in the uniqueness of the moment of the action - in the moment of cutting. At this point one does not speak of the separation of things - of the knife and the flesh - but one registers 'all' in the midst of an incorporeality - a transformation which Lecercle calls "states of affairs".

I would suggest that such a moment may be perceived as a sudden slowing, or suspension, of time. Of course it is only one's sensation of time which is slowed, which suggests that it is one's perception which is changed. However, such experiences do seem to acquire a solidity, even though logic tells us that there has been no lapse in actual physical time. It can be argued that what becomes solid, or perceivable at such moments, is of an incorporeal, phenomenological nature, whether we attribute it to a perceptual / psychological change in ourselves or not.

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[1] Jean-Jacques Lecercle, **The Violence of Language** Routledge, London & New York. 1990. pp 225 - 226 (Lecercle's emphasis)

[2] **Oxford English Dictionary** definition of 'precipitate'

[3] Speak / register / express / experience. Speak used in the broad metaphorical sense.

[4] Jean-Jacques Lecercle, **The Violence of Language** Routledge, London & New York. 1990. p226

This incorporeal transformation, as Lecercle calls it, is also connected with the sensation of the mixture of bodies (objects) and the expansion of multiple significances. This expansion of new content can be viewed as an intervention or a momentary opening, or broadening of an area of possibilities, or space, as a new state of affairs. It is difficult to know where to locate this space, this interval, which seems to intervene at moments of extreme intensity. Hillman locates it in the depths of the psyche as the primary metaphor of the underworld and the underground.

> The fundamental language of depth is neither feelings, nor persons, nor time and numbers. It is space. Depth presents itself foremost as psychic structures in spatial metaphors.[5]

At this point it is worth considering the implications attached to the notion of the creation of a new kind of space. Wherever space is located a number of issues immediately come into play. It is a fact that space, or the very notion of there being space, is vulnerable to legislation, nationalisation, partitioning and ownership. Space, beyond it being a valued commodity, is synonymous with status and with power and is considered as a national asset second only to weaponry. Space is also the domain of national identity and, where identity becomes a cause, the demarcation of space both solidifies and provides a visual representation of the literal length and breadth of the cause. Henri Lefebvre writing in **The Production of Space** states:

> The goal of any strategy is still, as it always has been, the occupation of a space by the varied means of politics and of war.[6]

Space is brought into an economy and becomes a currency in a large strategy of ownership and political power. Legislation keeps it fixed within that economy. Personal space is one of the most heavily legislated types of space, although it is not entirely free from invasion, nor does the legislation currently in place guarantee protection of the body. Definitions which guide legislation concerning public space and private space, and the public body and the private body are

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[5] James Hillman ' Praxis' in **The Dream and The Underworld** Harper & Row, publishers, New York, Hagerstown, San Francisco, London. 1979. p 188

[6] Henri Lefebvre, 'Contradictions of space to differential space' in **The Production of Space** Translated by Donald Nicholson-Smith. Blackwell, Oxford UK & Cambridge USA. 1994. p 366

currently confused and in some cases seem to be interchangeable according to majoritive moral viewpoints and the current promoted morality of political parties. Space is "the final frontier" as governments become more and more anxious about their current inability to find the means to legislate and control virtual space - Cyberspace. In his 1992 manuscript **World Preset Guardians (Thee Fractured Garden)** P-Orridge writes "Makes space to be space, this is the cyber position"[7] In accordance with Lefebvre's analysis this statement may be viewed as political if not a actual declaration of war, "Nothing short of a Total War"[8] in fact. It is, in terms of Baudrillard's notion of existence, a war against the Economies and systems of exchange which are considered as reality and offered as the only possible reality. It is an attempt to cease to exist within the terms of Baudrillard's limited thesis of reality. P-Orridge offers an alternative view of space and, in so doing, is presenting an alternative view of a possible form of existence or a reality outside economic structures. He offers a description of what he predicts would be the nature of such a space and designates it as the place of rebirth and immortality in that it he sees it as existing outside everyday notions of time:

> To be born, immortal, outside Time, we must look for ways to transmit infinite alternate realities, and choices of reality, to make them as real, MORE REAL than any emasculating reductions that we inherit; yet not be corrupted and trivialised by a belief in our singularity.[9]

Here P-Orridge is investigating the link between space and time. He has accepted, as science does, that it is the link between space and time which frames what we take for granted as material reality. So in order to move away from material reality, that which he calls the "consensus reality", he suggests that, by separating space and time, one is able to create and view alternative realities.

Such an idea of separation is characterised by the dynamics of re-entry, or return to an 'original' chaotic state prior to the violent birth of the material universe and

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[7] Genesis P-Orridge 'World Preset Guardians' part of **Thee Fractured Garden** artist's manuscript Second draft October 1992. p 5

[8] Genesis P-Orridge slogan dating from the early 1970s used frequently in his writings.

[9] Genesis P-Orridge 'World Preset Guardians' part of **Thee Fractured Garden** artist's manuscript Second draft October 1992. p 5

time.[10] This is a description of a space which is common to a number of archaic Indo-Chinese religions that have also developed psycho-physical ritual practices to enable the realisation of the experience of returning to the origin. *Pratiloman* or going 'against the stream' is, according to Mircea Eliade, a pan-Indian technique of going back to the "paradoxical instant before which Time was not"[11]. It is, I believe, this tone of reversal, as opposed to the feeling of forward moving revolution, that can be detected in P-Orridge's writings, for instance in his insistence on the deconstruction of 'inherited constructs' and his consistent preference for describing his works as disassembly, dis-order, de-construction, and de-compositions. It is perhaps the ethos of swimming 'against the stream' which causes P-Orridge to be critical of accepted modes of behaviour, and come into conflict with institutions and establishments built on traditional, and inherited values. Psychologically this movement against the forward motion of time suggests a regression, and a re-examination of lived life. This sense of re-examination and dissection of his past life is particularly strong in P-Orridge's recent work. It is, at its most dramatic, and terrifying, a retreat from preconceived, and personally inherited notions of 'I'. It is also a retreat from what other people have led one to believe 'I' is.

On another level it is a retreat from the social political framework which supports and legislates 'I', just as this movement denotes an intent or desire to move from the material to the immaterial. P-Orridge writes: "Know that to re-enter immortality we must ourselves become unnameable, emptied of all sense of Being here."[12] It is therefore a desire to shift from the corporeal to the incorporeal which is being expressed.

Now I would like to place what I have identified as an intention to shift from the material to the immaterial and from the corporeal to the incorporeal in P-Orridges work against Lecercle's hypothesis, in order to support the claim that in theory this kind of shift can be appropriated out of activity and is most easily registered at moments of extreme intensity. I would like to introduce the notion

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[10] see Mircea Eliade **Myth and Reality** George Allen and Unwin (World Perspectives No 21) Harper & Row Inc, New York. 1963.

[11] Mircea Eliade, 'Time can be Overcome' in **Myth and Reality** George Allen and Unwin (World Perspectives No 21) Harper & Row Inc, New York. 1963. p 86

[12] Genesis P-Orridge 'World Preset Guardians' part of **Thee Fractured Garden** artist's manuscript Second draft October 1992. p 5

that Lecercle's hypothesis supports the idea that it is perhaps possible to create space or to register an incorporeal or virtual spatiality in, what we might call, profound moments of action.

Lecercle's hypothesis has, I believe, important implications for creative / devotional work. He describes the event as an "incorporeal transformation" but I would suggest that the event is the catalyst which instigates a precipitation, or an interval to open via the coagulation of objects or bodies. Such an interval, or moment of precipitation, allows one to enter into what Lecercle has called a "state of affairs" and more importantly allows that which is incorporeal to be emitted. It may conversely be said that the incorporeal is the new space of a state of affairs. Here we can think back to the notion of the third mind element, which has already been discussed, and the theory of the remainder introduced in the previous section of this thesis. Lecercle offers an hypothesis in his notion of the incorporeal which can be likened to both the principles of the third and the remainder, but which differs in respect of the fact that the incorporeal transformation arises as an active rather than an accidental identity in the equation of doing.

10.2 The Extreme Sensation of Being "in the midst of states of affairs"

Given that it is perhaps possible to experience an incorporeality intervening as a different state of affairs, I would suggest that such interventions are most commonly located at moment of wounding or woundedness. My meaning here can be exemplified by the work of the artist Lindsay Kemp[13] , who has developed a performance principle based on the idea of woundedness which supports a performance dynamic intended to slow, suspend and "stop time."

Like Nitsch and P-Orridge Kemp has developed a practical philosophy firmly entrenched in the notion of a psychological sensuality, coupled with a physical imperative. Kemp's work relies on the performer sustaining a sensation of his own woundedness during performance. For Kemp this is the essential mode of Being in his works. What wounds the performer is the compulsive, obsessive,

[13] An influential English dancer, mime and performance artist with whom the author has trained.

extreme, orgiastic, act of performing recognised as an almost suicidal imperative of his own psyche, or the will-to participate in a mode of Being in performance. Woundedness within the company becomes both a collective and individual identity and unifying principle. The performer in Kemp's work is asked to sustain an acute awareness of the event of being on stage, to such an extent that the very act of performing becomes a *tour de force* of extreme physical and mental endurance.[14] In this way the act of performance can be likened to the action of the knife cutting into the flesh of the performer. Ironically it is the performer who metaphorically holds the knife to his own body and mind. The performance dynamic in Kemp's work is tensile, tightening toward the suicidal, the heroic and loosening slightly to produce the erotic, fetishistic and naive. Kemp gives space to the almost perverse combinations arising out of this awareness of woundedness to create sensual dualities to ironic, comic or horrifying effect.

Kemp talks about stopping time and locates this moment as emitting from the extreme performance gesture, which is, by definition, a point of ultimate woundedness. In training Kemp encourages his performers both to visualise and sense something incorporeal moving and opening up beyond the gesture, like a "dying wish", or the gift of his life to a lover. Both of these images are used by Kemp as he coaches his company through dramatic sequences.

Because the ideal performance gesture ends outside of the body Kemp's performances seem to exist on the brink of suicide. This kind of conceptual performance imperative borders on the pathological. In this case the pathological is harnessed or heightened by the extreme activation of a triangulation of the psychological aspect of the performer, the philosophical framework or performance imperative and the activity of doing, in other words, of performing. It is my belief that Kemp is attempting to manufacture incorporeal transformations by allowing the intervention of the new space of a state of affairs and by consciously operating within it. Kemp continuously talks about the notion of "giving space"; his meaning is not only to give physical space on stage, in other words, to allow the performance of others, but also to produce the other

[14] What the performer is actually doing is registering and controlling in the minutest detail every action and response of his body and mind within the environment of the performance space. He literally becomes a hyper-real, hyper-sensitive instrument.

incorporeal space which is emitted from the wounded state of the performer. It is the instigation of the ultimate pact of love, between performers and between performers and audience suspended upon the moment when the knife goes into the flesh: and is crystallised in the words "I love you, I'll never see you again". This statement charts the climatic moments in Kemp's works. It is a statement which is uttered from the midst of the performer's woundedness; it is literally voiced from the "midst of a state of affairs". There is nothing, and everything beyond this statement and the performance gestures which it instigates. In this sense such gestures move onto the plane of the religious, registering as acts of extreme devotion; they are what Hillman calls a "transfiguration of a basic purer motif onto a theological plane."[15] This is the fundamental basis of Kemp's performances and a common resonance in the work of Nitsch and P-Orridge.

Capturing such moments in painting and sculpture has become the domain of artists seeking the means to solidify the power of the divine in their work. Religious art has historically sought out these moments of martyrdom and of woundedness. Christ is most commonly pictured in the mist of his woundedness, in his transformation from corporeal to incorporeal, from man to icon. Significantly the words which are spoken at this moment echo that shift from earth to heaven. [16]

It is the words uttered in the midst of this period of transformation which are considered the most powerful and spiritual monuments upon which Christians focus their faith. Whether we take the scene of the crucifixion as fact or fiction,

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[15] James Hillman 'The Divine Face of Things' in **The Essential James Hillman - A Blue Fire** introduced and edited by Thomas Moore. Routledge. London. 1990. p 297

[16] Luke **23** 33-49 **The Bible** (Revised Standard);

> And when they came to the place which is called The Skull, there they crucified him, and the criminals, one on the right and one on the left. And Jesus said "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do...
>
> It was now about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour, while the sun's light failed; and the curtain of the temple was torn in two. Then Jesus crying with a loud voice, said "Father, into they hands I commit my spirit!" And having said this he breathed his last. Now when the centurion saw what had taken place, he praised God, and said "Certainly this man was innocent!" And all the multitudes who assembled to see the sight, when they saw what had taken place, returned home beating their breasts. And all his acquaintances and the women who had followed him from Galilee stood at a distance and saw these things.

the point is that such a moment has been recognised as significant and pivotal, highly persuasive and emotive. It is the moment when flesh and blood becomes something other; it becomes the archetype of sacrifice and woundedness, which is itself then transfigured by the intervention of an incorporeality.

10.3 Reasons to Kill

The notion of wounding and of woundedness is explored at its behavioural extreme by P-Orridge in his writing **Reasons To Kill People** in his collection of essays entitled **Giftgas**. Here P-Orridge explores the dynamics of murder in terms of the manner in which he sees the act of killing connecting with notions of existence. P-Orridge writes:

> When you kill someone, you affirm your own existence. You heighten your perception. You know that you are continuing to exist at the moment that they no longer exist. Their pain is exactly what you are not feeling. You are everywhere at the moment that they are nowhere.[17]

Here P-Orridge suggests that the murderer senses his own presentness of Being in comparison to another person's non-Being; it is this sensation, which gives rise to the murderer's changed perception, which is a change in viewpoint. P-Orridge's fascination in the notion of Being everywhere at the moment that the victim is nowhere reflects his interest in how behaviour can have psychological consequences. Murder is explored as an extreme form of behaviour which produces extreme psychological perspectives:

> Killing changes matter. An All-chemical reaction. Makes every second a risk. Accelerating the pulsing nihilism of Being alive. Deleting Time between actions.[18]

Here P-Orridge is suggesting that killing accelerates the sensation of being alive. Being alive is called nihilism; an intensity of feeling which is registered as extreme optimism or extreme pessimism, the two polar sensations folding into

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[17] Genesis P-Orridge **Giftgas** (artist's manuscript 1995)

[18] Genesis P-Orridge **Giftgas** (artist's manuscript 1995) NB the artist's spelling of Alchemical.

each other in the surrendering to, or involvement in, nothing - no thing. This is the Senex of creative / destructive action. The deleting of time between actions arises out of the effects of addiction to the 'fix' of extreme action, to the empirical sensation of being alive, which pales other non extreme experiences into forgettable insignificance.

Characteristically P-Orridge begins to shift his discourse from the existential through banality to political, so in the following section of the essay, he begins to layer the subjective and the objective and to introduce ironic value statements.

> It is purity of purpose, without the burden of it having to "mean" anything. It only "means" that all beings, all moments are temporary. An adrenalin panic rises us above the level of our personalities and makes banal desires radiant with a sudden and permanent trance formation... It removes "the space between" what is valued and what is feared. Death, as an instrument, is a new beginning.[19]

P-Orridge suggests that what separates that which is valued from that which is feared is removed via the act of murder. In other words, that death, which is itself both valued and feared, through its instigation overcomes value and fear and generates a new beginning. But the converse meaning can also be said to be true that death / life are devalued when killing becomes a fearless act. Killing becomes "the ultimate velocity of the ego", a "biocentric language" which, P-Orridge suggests, is the propensity of every ego to seek its own freedom.

> The more sense-less the event, the greater the potential freedom from time, from the walls of the room, from the family, from the social barricades and from the people who built them to feed upon frustration. To give birth to the killing, to justify their own power, their own reasons to kill.
>
> People who kill should keep otherwise silent. There is nothing more disgusting than the sight and sound of a killer trying to explain what they "did". Trying to speak an imperfect language. They are given too much time to "think". They dream themselves into celebrity, into believing they killed for a "boss", for their "country", for their "religion", for "survival", for the "family", for "Satan", for "Christ", for "Lucifer", for "Jehovah", for anything outside them. They lose the momentum to go wild, to be free of

[19] Genesis P-Orridge **Giftgas** (artist's manuscript 1995)

> society's hooks and nets built on the process of promotion both real and imagined, carrot and stick, failed and sick.[20]

In the last paragraph P-Orridge turns the table on the killer as an individual in search of a sensation of Being and portrays him as one who has succumbed to the banal fantasy of freedom directed by the ego, or as one seduced by status and the carrot of promoted causes such as country and religion.

It is, I believe, the essence of what is not being said in this essay which betrays P-Orridge's personal perspective on the subject of killing. The essay seems to be critical of killing as the ultimate velocity of the ego, which becomes the birthplace of all people, in other words, of the egocentric and extended into the notion of all people as egocentric nation and 'all' as the egocentric drive of humanity. At each stage P-Orridge is casting his critical eye outward. However, what is really being foreshadowed through its absence is the inner landscape of his personal quest and philosophy. It is the need to break free, not only from what is externally promoted, but also from what is biologically and psychologically fixed in body and mind, by the ego and, on a cellular level, that which is programmed in the DNA. It is a call to be murderous - not to murder other people, but to murder the ego and to cauterise the body.[21] Like Kemp P-Orridge is concerned with his own woundedness reflected and projected onto the larger 'stage' of humanity. His interpretations of the shortcomings of humanity come from the experience of his own shortfalls and limitations. His existence within the domain of humanity is for P-Orridge what the stage and the act of performing is for Kemp. It is an irritant, a catalyst, a knife edge, an instrument capable of drawing blood, literally and metaphorically. Like the ancient Shamans who acquired the means and the tools to understand and tame the elements or plemora of the primitive world, the contemporary Shaman's role is perhaps the same, but the environment in which he works is inhabited primarily by man made demons, man made sickness and the monsters of human action; fascism, apartheid attitudes, and the neglect of

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[20] Genesis P-Orridge **Giftgas** (artist's manuscript 1995)

[21] Genesis P-Orridge 'Blood Pressure or Malignancy is cleansing' in **Giftgas** ((artist's manuscript 1995);

> Vomit forth your kind as you please! Foul bent cripple! Nobility is lost to you. You reproduce only a malignancy. Loathsome tumour of carrion! Soon, soon, so soon, we shall slice through the rotten tissue you inhabit and cauterise your source in a sea of blood.

basic human rights. The two deities of greed and oppression process onto the ceremonial stage wearing the masks of progress. Humanity has become the virus[22] which spreads across the face of the earth propelled by the contemporary sickness of freedom.[23] The role of the contemporary Shaman is then to take possession of these demons, and the sickness which wrecks the body. To draw them out, to identify them, and to cauterise the body. However, simply labelling the work of Nitsch and P-Orridge as Shamanic is an over simplification, and as I have stated before in the chapter four Beyond a Sensation of Well-Being, we can not presume that their work is either motivated by a concern for the common good, or that it is intended to offer some kind of therapy or cathartic ideal. The notion of the Shaman has been so consumed and adopted by the feel good factor of the New Age movement, that it is difficult to use the term to describe the dangerous, obsessive journeys into pathological states which both the ancient and the truly contemporary Shaman must take. Once again, I can only hint at a possible state of affairs which could be related in some part to the work of Nitsch and P-Orridge.

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[22] reference here to Genesis P-Orridge "Humanity is the virus" in **Giftgas** and reiterated in **Thee Fractured Garden**"1995 CD. Also I am thinking here of James Lovelock's theory of Gaia.

[23] Ibid,.

Chapter 11

Forming Space (the beginning and the end) Conclusions

It can be argued that the incorporeality I have identified as a kind of space which arises out of extreme action 'is', in the most concrete sense of the word, of existence. Such a space is formed out of a 'presentness' of states of affairs, which are of a both close and remote, corporeal and incorporeal multiple nature. In this sense the event becomes a meditative and mediative stimulant; in this respect it can perhaps be likened to an active mandala. What is interesting about Lecercle's hypothesis is that it hypothetically presents an infinite multi-dimensional model, in which both corporeal and incorporeal qualities are present in active "states of affairs." Most importantly, Lecercle offers a theoretic framework which can perhaps help to describe how active, visible or audible ideas can move from the metaphorical to the actual, from the purely intellectual into a physical participatory frame. Notions of cause and effect, and other such oppositional, logical, ideas become arbitrary within such a moment where being within the complex multiplicity of the moment can be likened, for lack of a better image, to the characteristics of a black hole which net-works and sucks past, present and future constellations into its incorporeal yet evident mass. What I am suggesting is the notion that both Nitsch and P-Orridge are at least in intention seeking to evoke black holes (by this I mean resonant and evident incorporealities) within ritual and performance states and are therefore moving toward evoking incorporeal moments, or glimpses of alternative realities as spatial dimensions within their work.

Ritual is, at its most basic level, a method of controlling, focusing and containing within a structural vessel elements of particular personal or group significance. In every ritual material elements are placed in particular significant relationships with each other. The same can also be said of any creative activity where choice is an inherent part of the activity. However, it is intention which sets ritual apart from everyday activity and intention which governs the choice of symbols, colours, images and all of these choices apart from decorative abstract or conceptual art. Through the collision of creative activities and ritual artists such as Austin Osman Spare assert that it is possible to achieve "extrasensory, magical

states of perception from physical techniques".[1] Spare, like Nitsch, believed that the automatic gesture was fundamentally connected with the subconscious and that, by creating a disciple or ritual circumstance which allowed the subconscious to flow freely through gesture, he was able to gain a magical insight into himself and the world. In a sense Spare was preoccupied with the gesture as a kind of essential reverberation or a medium through which the unconscious could be registered as spontaneous kinesthetic action disengaged from the conscious functions of the mind. Nadia Choucha suggests that:

> Spare describes art as the 'instinctive application (to observation or sensations) of the knowledge latent in the subconscious.' He then describes the methods of automatic drawing and making sigils, which are symbols containing ideas that are then absorbed directly by the unconscious, bypassing conscious comprehension. Spare describes his drawings as a means of 'symbolically visualising sensations'. By this, he meant that he was attempting to convey an experience based upon bodily sensation in pictorial terms - transferring the sense of touch to a visual mode, which can also be described as synaesthesia. Spare achieved extrasensory, magical states of perception from physical techniques.[2]

Choucha's claims for Spare sound very similar to Nitsch's claims for his own work, suggesting that there is something of a common concern or interest which can not be said to be specifically English or Austrian. There is evidence to suggest that Yeats was also thinking of a similar potential

[1] Nadia Choucha **Surrealism & the Occult** Mandrake, Oxford. 1991. pp 50 - 51;
[2] Ibid,.

function of art when he referred to the "forgotten faith"[3] and again there is a cross over to Nitsch's work in the idea of art as a form of priesthood.

11.1 The Field of Containment

What comes across in the work of Austin Osman Spare is an understanding of the intimate connection between mind and body. The body used as sensual instrument through which the subconscious can be mediated and via which, that which has previously been projected out of the subconscious can be reassimilated, or sensually reabsorbed back into the psyche. Spare's use of the body perhaps foreshadows Nitsch's idea of the synaesthesic experience of art. What is interesting is the notion of the assimilation of mind and body in service of each other introduced in the work of Spare and its practical application in the work of Nitsch.

In order for the body to become a sensitive medium Nitsch argues that it has to be uninhibited and free from social constrains. Nitsch removes the body from social space by placing it within the psycho/physical geography of the O. M. Theatre.

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[3] George M Harper. 'Essays & Introductions' in **Yeats's Golden Dawn** Macmillan 1974; Here Harper, quotes Yeats:

> We who care deeply about the arts find ourselves in the priesthood of an almost forgotten faith, and we must, I think, if we would win the people again, take upon ourselves the method and the fervour of a priesthood. We must be half humble and half proud. We see the perfect more than others, it may be, but we must find the passions among the people. We must baptize as well as preach. (pp 116 - 117)

Yeats identifies the artists as working within a 'forgotten faith'; we are not clear as to the nature of that 'faith', but Yeats states that the artist 'sees the perfect more than others'. For Yeats, it was the function of 'art' and scholarship' to "make love of the unseen more unshakable, more ready to plunge deep into the abyss" (p 117). Yeats sought for "some moment of intensity when the ecstasy of the lover and of the saint are alike, and desire becomes wisdom without ceasing to be desire" (p 119) Yeats suggested; (W. B. Yeats 'Essays & Introductions' (Magic) Macmillan & Co Ltd, London, 1961, p 28)

1. That the borders of our mind are ever shifting, and that many minds can flow into one another, as it were, and create or reveal a single mind, a single energy.

2. That the borders of our memories are shifting, and that our memories are a part of one great memory, the memory of Nature herself.

3. That this great mind and great memory can be evoked by symbols.

Testimony from Nitsch suggests that he discovered the ideal geographic 'space' of the O. M. Theatre (the enclosed courtyards of Prinzendorf) before he had fully realised the nature of what that space might contain. Nitsch clearly associated the space at Prinzendorf with licentiousness, drunkenness, ecstasy and the organic. For Nitsch it was not only a shift from the city to the border territory between Austria and Ceskoslovensko, but a shift from the heavily Catholic, 'high' German atmosphere of empire in Vienna to the "mystical sense of belonging to the earth"[4] he discovered as a youth in Prinzendorf. It was a move towards a natural physicality, a shift from the plastic to the organic, from the unauthentic to the authentic - which in the beginning was probably an instinctive movement. In a sense it was a shift from the world of the fascistic adult to the pagan world of the archetypal child. Lefebvre has described this type of shift as a movement toward the 'yes' of the body space, a space which affirms life, as a inverse identity / quality, which he also describes as a natural revolt against the 'no' of social space[5]. It is "The shift ... from the space of the body to the body-in-space, from opacity to translucency" that, according to Lefebvre, "facilitates the spiriting-away or scotomization of the body."[6] It is the shift from the prohibited, prescriptive social space in which the body is framed in terms of an economy (Baudrillard) or a system of exchange, in which the body is defined as a currency and is therefore fixed by legislation. The shift of the body into the body-in-space redefines it in terms of Being-there, expanding in terms of space (Hillman) and becoming in terms of the "functional language of depth"[7]. It migrates toward the invisible area which ceases to exist in terms of visible economies and systems of exchange. This feeling of movement is particularly evident in Nitsch's memories of his

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[4] Hermann Nitsch **das orgien mysterien theater 1960 - 1983** Exhibition Catalogue, Het Stedelijk Van Abbemuseum Eindhoven, 1983. p 45

[5] Henri Lefebvre 'Spatial Architectonics' in **The Production of Space** Trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith. Blackwell, Oxford UK & Cambridge USA. 1991. p 201:

> There can be no question but that social space is the locus of prohibition, for it is shot through with both prohibition and their counterpart, prescriptions. This fact, however, can most definitely not be made into the basis of an overall definition, for space is not only the space of 'no', it is also the space of the body, and hence the space of 'yes', of the affirmation of life. It is not simply a matter, therefore, of a theoretical critique, but also of a 'turning of the world on its head' (Marx), or an inversion of meaning, and of a subversion which 'breaks the tablets of the Law' (Nietzsche). p 201

[6] Ibid,.

[7] James Hillman, 'Praxis' in **The Dream and The Underworld** Harper & Row, publishers, New York, Hagerstown, San Francisco, London. 1979. p 188

early experiences of Prinzendorf:

> I felt suddenly intoxicated by life, nearer to the heart of the cosmos and its creation. I felt that the Garden of Eden truly existed, around and inside me. The power that moved galaxies let me gaze on in ecstasy, pulsed in my mind. I stood glowing in the centre of the world, lost in the ecstasy that comes with mystical self-discovery. I empathised joyfully with all the movement that exemplified creation, and of which at that moment I was a consummate expression.[8]

P-Orridge describes this sensation in similar terms:

> I lay in the desert, on my back, staring up at the stars. I could feel millions of rays of light entering my body, one from each star, infinite numbers, my cell walls broke down, my sense of bodily existence ended, I was illumination, a 3D projection of cosmic light, I could see the ancient shaman building sacred sites to fix their relationship with the stars, to solidify their connections and effects. I remembered thousands of Holy Teachers, the idea of the Divine "spark", the descriptions of white light, the myths and legends of our descent from the stars, I was not corporeal, I was a mirage, sealed within an inherited apparently solid body by the weight of Thistory, by the weight of Fear and Guild. I shimmered like a ghost, ectoplasm, illusion, and all the puzzles I had heard, and all the limited descriptions of limitless transcendent experiences made sense.[9]

It is perhaps in becoming translucent, in other words, something other than solid, something fluid, that the body removes itself in theory from social space, where the body must be present in its solid form in order to participate in economic exchange.

The vision of the body which exists purely within the social space is exemplified in the writings of Baudrillard who sees the body as nothing more than a solid/surface currency existing within the stratifications of a variety of economic exchange systems. For Baudrillard the body can only be solid, it can only be described in terms of its movement as currency within systems of exchange, and therefore intimately tied to the social mechanics of such systems. The notion of

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[8] Hermann Nitsch **das orgien mysterien theater. 1960 - 1983** Exhibition Catalogue, Het Stedelijk Van Abbemuseum Eindhoven, 1983. p 44

[9] Genesis P-Orridge **Thee Fractured Garden** artist's manuscript October 1992. p 6

the disappearance, or the liquidation of the body, in whatever form, can be viewed as a withdrawal or a revolt from the economic structures of society. It is the removal of the body from the exchange system, the value system and the legislative systems which govern the solid body. If instigated on a massive scale this action could be viewed as an act of revolution because, in theory, it has the power to bankrupt and destabilise the social systems which rely on bodies remaining solid and therefore legislated. Thus the artist whose activities move towards a translucency of body - a loosening of the corporeal - could be viewed as a revolutionary and his actions potentially destabilising and, therefore, political. So the liquidation of body, like murder, is considered a social taboo. The anxiety caused by the potential dimming or liquidation of the body is perhaps what drives contemporary philosophers such as Baudrillard to colour their writing with reference to the incorporeal. This is perhaps an attempt on their part to incorporate that vast territory which lies outside of words in order to colonise, or re-claim and re-objectify (name) and therefore to evoke ownership of it. In other words to attempt to drag it back into the exchange system. As Baudrillard states:

> Everything began with objects, yet there is no longer a system of objects. The critique of objects was based on signs saturated with meaning, along with their phantasies and unconscious logic as well as their prestigious differential logic. Behind this dual logic lies the anthropological dream; the dream of the object as existing beyond the above exchange and use, above and beyond equivalence; the dream of a sacrificial logic, of gift, expenditure, potlatch, "devil's share" consumption symbolic exchange.[10]

For Baudrillard the idea of an incorporeality existing above and beyond exchange is a dream, a contemporary schism of the mind, an almost abnormal reflex of thought, even for the Postmodern Schizoid personality, locked as it is within the machinery of production[11]. It is, I would suggest, an anxiety which hovers over notions of man-made exchange systems (based on production and objectification) which are beginning to slip and become transparent as their size and complexity exceeds the grasp of a single mind removing itself from the realm of ownership and naming. What comes across in Baudrillard's work is the notion of a mind at

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[10] Jean Baudrillard **The Ecstasy of Communication** translated by Bernard & Caroline Schutz, edited by Sylvere Lotringer. Semiotext(e) New York 1997 / 1988. p 11

[11] read Deleuze & Guattari, 'Capitalism and Schizophrenia' in **From Modernism to Postmodernism, an Anthology** edited by Lawrence Cahoone. Blackwell Publishers. 1996

the limits of its capacity to describe the "shapeless multi headed body" of productive thought, which has become a "double obscenity"[12] through its movement toward transparency. It is anxiety that I believe motivates actions toward the reclamation of the incorporeal, which lies behind Baudrillard's use of analogy and references to the secret and to ritual and the manner in which he chooses to clothe his work in anthropological language and sources.

P-Orridge's writing is scattered with the same kind of anthropological terminology and the same kinds of investment in the anagram and word isolation. However, P-Orridge is attempting to navigate areas of thought, to play with linguistics, sentence structure, word sounds and meanings in order to find the gaps in his own understanding, to deconstruct / construct and to strip language and thought down to its 'wound', which is its absolute meaninglessness, perhaps in order to allow that which has disappeared to reappear by widening the gaps or by fracturing definitions.

The procession toward meaninglessness is sometimes offered as massive rolling narrative constructions which usually interrogate notional social systems / economies / behaviour and national identity. The excess of language, images, violent and sarcastic tone, of nihilistic production tends to propel such texts towards an apocalyptic end. This type of writing seems to move out into the materiality of the word, and to destroy meaning and reason through excessive usage.

Another type of writing which P-Orridge tends to use moves, metaphorically, in the other direction to material apocalypse. This other type is often more poetic and has a characteristically personal tone. This writing tends to develop towards silence and is often littered with images of the liquidation of the body. Both types of writing (which may sometimes be mixed, or presented side by side) still propel themselves toward extinction and dispossession.

In his writing P-Orridge does not attempt to hide the anxiety which this process produces in himself. Perhaps this is because what motivates his writing is a need to dispossess language, to move away from language as a 'system' of ownership

[12] Jean Baudrillard **The Ecstasy of Communication** translated by Bernard & Caroline Schutz, edited by Sylvere Lotringer. Semiotext(e) New York 1997 / 1988. p 20

and determination - an economy, if you like - toward an ontological knowing - a wordless / imaginal flexing of the mind.

For Nitsch it is his acknowledged ability / inability to evoke the incorporeal which can be seen as a visual / active presence in his Aktions. It is an anxiety of becoming "the possibility of that power which is distinctive for the mood of anxiety"; in other words, it is the becoming in states of anxiety itself, which inhabits and forces its dynamics on the work. The clue to the priority of this form of anxiety is, according to Heidegger, that it is "grounded primordially in having been"[13] which is to say, in the familiarity of the sensation of anxiety. Heidegger states that:

> In this, Dasein is taken all the way back to its naked uncanniness (*Unheimlichkeit*) , and becomes fascinated by it.[14]

Anxiety reveals the nature of Dasein as both an authentic and inauthentic dynamical essence, in other words it shows it in its possibilities of Being and non-Being. In my view Heidegger comes very close to Freud's notion of the movement of Heimlich and Unheimlich in his idea of Being-in and Being-in-the-world one described as the existential mode and the other as the everydayness or the Being-at-home of Dasein. Heidegger suggests that anxiety "throws Dasein back upon that which it is anxious about"[15] which is to say the relation between the existential mode and the everyday mode, both of which present themselves or are registered as states of 'uncanniness'. Anxiety is perhaps how one would characterise Freud's notion of the movement between Heimlich and Unheimlich[16], which can also be said to be a movement toward renunication with the ambivalent feminine aspect. It is the sense of separation

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[13] Martin Heidegger **Being And Time** Translated by John Macquarrie & Edward Robinson. Oxford, Basil Blackwell. 1967. p 394

[14] Ibid,. p 394 (I have inserted the German in this quotation in order to draw attention the Freudian use of the word)

[15] Ibid,. p 232

[16] Sigmund Freud "Collected Papers" Vol IV p 377, quoted in David Bakan **Sigmund Freud and the Jewish Mystical Tradition.** Free Association Books. London. 1990. p 306:

> Heimlich is a word the meaning of which develops towards an ambivalence, until it finally coincides with its opposite, unheimlich. Unheimlich is in some way or other a sub-species of heimlich.

which Susan Bordo[17] has denoted as anxiety which not only stimulates movement toward the other but also prompts "intellectual flights" - a movement away from the other toward self-invention and self construction. Bordo is suggesting that, faced with existential anxiety, the mind attempts to restructure knowledge, to re-objectify what it knows, to restructure the masculine in order to move away from renunication. However, in accordance with Baudrillard's notion of the gift and the counter-gift, even in flight the possibility of returning is implied. So, in the construction of the masculine, the contrary presentness of the possibility of the feminine is exerted. While commentators have defined this kind of separation according to the law of symmetry the pattern of presentness in absence must be viewed as greater than a purely western binary definition. I would suggest that it is the form of multiple possibilities, multiple readings, multiple experiences, multiple sensation of 'uncanniness' which, if permitted, resonate simultaneously and thus synaesthetically. It is the black hole theory of explosion in contraction and infinite mass within an infinite smallness. It is the 'all' in the 'no' of things, in the 'nothing'. As Heidegger suggested it is the tendency of Dasein to present itself as being simultaneously in truth and untruth and to become fascinated with itself, mesmerised, as it quivers between the Being-at-home and the Being-in, which might equally be described as a threshold between the corporeal and the incorporeal; Dasein as a sensation of

[17] Susan Bordo, 'The Cartesian Masculinization of Thought (Philosophical Reconstruction, Anxiety and Flight') in **From Modernism to Postmodernism an Anthology** Edited by Lawrence Cahoone. Blackwell Publishers. 1996 Chapter 39

Being can perhaps be said to be both present and absent, or undecided[18] .

Anxiety pivots objects on the subjective point of contact through psychological action, which is to say thought. In so doing it takes on the metaphorical form of the knife. Anxiety cuts through, and re-runs, all previously held scenarios, and questions what will be, in the light of what has been. It attempts to unite and balance through constant re-examination; it stands on the threshold of Being and becoming and presents multiple possibilities. Its facades are as brilliant as the nakedness it retreats from. The dynamic action of anxiety levels, deepens, cuts

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[18] Weizsacker has introduced in the theory of the Quantum Universe the notion of "degree of truth" as a means of discussing the nature of existence in terms of quantum possibility. Heisenberg sights an example of the use of this statement:

> The atom is in the left (or in the right) half of the box" a complex number is defined as a measure for its "degree of truth". If the number is 1, it means that the statement is true; if the number is 0, it means that it is false. But other values are possible. The absolute square of the complex number gives the probability for the statement's being true; the sum of the two probabilities referring to the two parts in the alternative (either 'left' or 'right' in our case) must be unity. (Werner Heisenberg **Physics and Philosophy. The Revolution in Modern Science** Penguin Books, 1958, pp 171-172)

To this are added 'complementary' statements, which express probable alternative definitions, but for each complementary statement the question whether the atom is left or right is not decided. But the term "not decided" is by no means equivalent to the term "not known". "Not Known" would mean that the atom is 'really' left or right, only we do not know where it is. But "not decided" indicates a different situation, expressible only by a complementary statement. This multiplicity of complementary statements characterises the state of 'coexistence' which forms the first principle of a possible ontology of quantum theory. Quantum Physics demands that we move toward that second and higher plane of 'knowledge' - the multiple as opposed to the 'rational' since the 'experience' of the Quantum Universe increasingly demands a mystical rigour, an instinctual response, and an altered state of perception, which transcends 'definitive' systems, in other words the concept of 'visible' economies (Baudrillard). Stephen Hawking has suggested that a 'theory of everything' would demand a radical change in the way in which we perceive 'reality'.

through the law of the ego, creating vulnerabilities[19] as the Ego's determinate nature is overcome. Mind and body become sensitised to the sharp action; they become an open truth; what might be called a 'sounding board' - an open wound, in the present experience of wounding. I have formulated the notion of woundedness, in terms of the work of Nitsch and P-Orridge, as the following:

1. Vulnerability: the skin too thin for real life
sensitivity to every pointed instrument of attack
the defencelessness of (an) open truth (which is the SELF)

2. Propensity to Victimisation:
for the constellation of psychopathic attack he becomes Martyred
he draws assassins to him, and their bloodthirsty aggression belongs to his fate

3. Psychic insight: he recognises that vulnerability and propensity to victimisation is part of his own character
he recognises that to draw blood or to have it drawn is part of the same constellation of bloodletting

Nitsch explores these three aspects through his Aktions. Vulnerability is

[19] Henri Lefebvre 'Spatial Architectonics' **The Production of Space** Trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith. Blackwell, Oxford UK & Cambridge USA. 1991. Lefebvre's discourse concerning what I have called the crisis of Ego is very complicated, and slightly confused. Lefebvre calls on the work of Wilhelm Reich to make a case for the Ego's defensive armour which Lefebvre suggests is both 'verbal' and part of the Western body's commands, reflex, defensive position. Thus the Ego in crisis seeks to reconstitute itself and its body (to the body; the Ego says "my body) via language. Lefebvre describes this as a "lethal zone thickly strewn with dusty, mouldering words", and continues;

> What slips into it is what allows meaning to escape the embrace of lived experience, to detach itself from the fleshy body. Words and signs facilitate (indeed provoke, call forth and - at least in the West - command) metaphorization - the transport, as it were, of the physical body outside of itself. This operation, inextricably magical and rational, sets up a strange interplay between (verbal) disembodiment and (empirical) re-embodiment, between uprooting and reimplantation, between specialisation in an abstract expanse and localisation in the determinate expanse. (p 203)

I would suggest that what Lefebvre is describing is the intermediate space of "in the midst of..." however, he calls it the 'mixed' space "still natural yet already produced" since, I would suggest, it is already inhabited by the Ego, and as such it remains a 'representational space'. However, what I believe Nitsch and P-Orridge are seeking is a non Western form of transcendent (temporality) which involves the loss or control of Ego intervention, and its attachment to social space, the natural home of Ego, defined as it is "as the locus and medium of speech and writing." (p 211)

Trauma, or the instigation of moment which one might call 'small deaths' are the mechanisms which bring about a temporary loss of Ego. We can see such mechanisms being applied in the work of Nitsch and P-Orridge.

demonstrated by the slaughter of the animal and hence the metaphorical slaughtering of man. In this action Nitsch shows the closeness of death, the fragility of life, the defencelessness of the skin as physical and psychological surface to every pointed instrument of attack. Within the overwhelming structure of the Aktion, with its tides of sensual overload, the psyche (self) is made vulnerable through synaesthesic disorientation. Nitsch proposes that psyche gives itself over to the sado-masochistic bloodthirsty aggression'(actual or imagined) or that it registers as desire, as instinct, as a propensity to be thus consumed. Something like a cathartic effect is more precisely experienced as a sensation of the uncanny - the recognition of subconscious actions and feelings - and the conscious acceptence of these traits as part of the make-up of the self. The recognition of the significance of colour (which Nitsch calls a "crisis of colour") centres on the "constellation of bloodletting" as it resonates across a number of boundaries[20] in the fashion of Baudrillard's notion of the gift and counter-gift mechanism, which perhaps betrays, through the sensation of uncanniness, an intimate understanding of the dynamic interplay between the corporeal and the incorporeal, the conscious and the unconscious, the authentic and the inauthentic.

Nitsch mobilises anxiety by forcing all the elements in his large scale works towards crisis, and by using repetition as a means of establishing, in terms of form, a comparable analogy or sensation of the uncanny. The recognition of a repetitive pattern of events is literally, in terms of the performative, the recognition of that which is "grounded primordially in having been"[21]. In this respect it can be said that, while remaining within the constraints of form, Nitsch is still able to evoke and recreate something of the dynamics of Dasein. Nitsch not only uses form as a narrative and driving force, but also uses the familiar in terms of materials and archetypal imagery. In doing so Nitsch recreates (creates)

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[20] such as;

Real	unreal
corporeal	incorporeal
material	immaterial
individual	archetype
passive actor	Oedipus / Christ
artist	Priest (Dionysian)

[21] Martin Heidegger **Being And Time** Translated by John Macquarrie & Edward Robinson. Oxford, Basil Blackwell. 1967. p 394

the circumstance of Dasein.

Nitsch is aware that he is only offering the likeness of Dasein through the form of art and the Performative. Nitsch has created a psycho-physical framework in which the powerfully familiar is structured and given tactile velocity through the use of organic materials. The archetypal "mystical sense of belonging to the earth"[22], which is focused with this structure, facilitates a change in perspective which releases the body as well as the mind.

11.2 Entering the Field

While Nitsch has, through his Aktions, perhaps found a way in which to create a temporary reconciliation between the space of philosophy and theology, the divine space of Dasein and the spatial physicality of art and the Performative P-Orridge has, in my view, gone one step further. In a sense P-Orridge has attempted to re-make himself using as a template a personal philosophy. While Nitsch is as much concerned with the impact of form, and goes some way to marrying form to philosophy in order to create a notion of theatre as a practical way of philosophising, such an activity is confined within the specific physical and psychological parameters of the Aktion event. P-Orridge, on the other hand, is concerned with generating in himself a permanent state of expanded consciousness. I believe that this has led P-Orridge into a permanent state of wounding and woundedness, in which the constant interrogation of the self, its periodic repositioning, its assembly and disassembly, and behavioural analysis, becomes the reflex of cutting. Just as the creative activity of 'cutting' is used as a compositional method to create music and art works, the intention behind the artistic use of cutting in terms of words, sounds, and images, and its application to the fabric of the self is, in terms of P-Orridge, primarily the same. It is an attempt to investigate and see "what is really there"; it is used as a means to reveal the substances which constitute self. It is a method of partitioning and isolating the various aspects of self, in the same way that the cut-up technique partitions and isolates words, in order to investigate their meanings, significances and resonances against other words. In this sense it is to explore the linguistics of

[22] Hermann Nitsch **das orgien mysterien theater. 1960 - 1983** Exhibition Catalogue, Het Stedelijk Van Abbemuseum Eindhoven, 1983. p 45

self and beyond.

P-Orridge uses ritual in order to access deeper states of altered consciousness. Interestingly, he always initiates himself into these states by cutting. P-Orridge suggests that he found this method of entering into altered states initiated by cutting as a consequence of early Coum performances. While cuts in performance may at first have been accidental, they are now controlled within a ritual situation where their function is more clearly defined and concentrated. P-Orridge states "I use the cut as a symbolic key"[23], meaning that it is used as a way into a ritual, or a ritual state of affairs, or a means of activating an altered state of consciousness, which should not be associated with a blacked-out trance, but rather as a state of heightened sensitivity, with heightened perceptual awareness:

> I'm interested in *heightened awareness,* and I'm interested in learning more and more about - not just myself, but what is possible through the achievement of - not exactly trance states, but altered states in the true sense.[24]

The process of cutting and blood-letting is for P-Orridge a door way or portal; he states: "I don't do a ritual without letting blood myself."[25] P-Orridge associates the cut with the notion of the 'small death' which I have discussed in the

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[23] Genesis P-Orridge, interview with Andrea Juno and V. Vale for **RE/Search Modern Primitives** RE/Search publications. San Francisco. USA. p 169. Genesis outlines how began to use scarification in his work:

> (It) was back in *Coum Transmissions,* where I did have an interested in *body marking.* I went into scarification. As the performances got more extreme (and I don't mean in terms of audience response but in terms of my attempts to find limits in myself), pain became involved, and constriction, and risk, and that in itself inevitably led to the inclusion of markings - i.e., from sharp things being present, and in conditions where I could deliberately fall or lean or tread upon them. Instinctively, without pre-planning, I started to do cuts - scrape my body with sharp nails (not razor blades; to me, that didn't feel ritualistic enough; it had to be a dagger or nail or implement - not something clean and neat, but something which was dramatic and difficult and somewhat intimidating to *me*.) p 167
>
> I didn't start doing formal cuts until the Temple of Psychic Youth in '81/'82 p 168

[24] Ibid,. p 169

[25] Ibid,. p 167

previous chapter.[26] The cut is also viewed as a Yoni, a slit of the skin with significant feminine overtones, or aspirations toward the feminine. It is the splitting of the skin in order to induce a periodic flow of blood which marks the decay of the old body in order to facilitate a renewal. In this respect there are obvious similarities between the function of the Yoni and female menstruation. Regular observation of this type of ritual instigates a powerful physiological, as well as a psychological, cycle of renewal. Like the natural psycho-physiological routine imposed on a female body through menstruation P-Orridge instigates a regular feminisation through ritual.

Apart from the demarcation of the physical space of the ritual, which denotes its separation from every day space, the cut announces the body's change of use. The cut removes the body from the social, every day space, to the the body in space in accordance with Lefebvre's theory; the body becomes affirmative, and in itself, a sensual enclosure. For P-Orridge, the cut is a means of stepping through into 'the body-in space' thus becoming a lived abstract, this is what I take Lefebvre to mean by the scotomization of the body. The sensation of the body in space, the body abstracted, is unlike the sensation of the body in its social environment. Like Alice's experiences in wonderland the scotomised body reacts and interacts with the imaginal landscape of the underworld. It is registered as sensations of shrinking and expanding in other words, it takes on the psycho-dynamics of the underworld.

P-Orridge uses the cut not only as a portal but also as a "technique for putting the ego into proportion, in ratio with everything else."[27] In other words that the ego is 'levelled', shut down by the trauma/anxiety of cutting and made humble by the

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[26] Genesis P-Orridge, interview with Andrea Juno and V. Vale for **RE/Search Modern Primitives** RE/Search publications. San Francisco. USA. p 169 Here P-Orridge expands what he means by the 'small death':

> In a lot of Shamanistic cultures like Tibet or American Indian cultures, you have the idea of the *small death* which is basically, in High Magic people talk about having to cross the abyss. In certain forms of High Yoga people talk about the total loss of ego, and so do people like Timothy Leary, and in other cultures like Tibet it's referred to as the small death. And the overall universal fact, whether you go to aboriginal cultures or New Guinea headhunters, or the Dogon tribe in Mali, is basically, for all intents and purposes, you literally *die* And it's called the small death because you come back. (p 169)

[27] Ibid,. p 169

gravity of the knife cutting into flesh. The cut acts on the body and the mind to polarise and simplify[28] the ratio of mind and matter:

> ... it's all a matter of ratio, and that in any given moment in time, whether it's a second or a year, one has all the warring factions within one's self - all the emotions, everything, the totality of one's self, whether it's eating, shitting, or philosophy, or sex, or anything that's ever happened to you or is happening on any level - all those thing are obvious in different ratios to each other; there's the whole, and then there's the ratio of all the bits.[29]

One can't help sensing the essential thrust of Lecercle's hypothesis in P-Orridge's words; sensing in the 'it is' a person speaking in the midst of states of affairs. Through a continuous ritualisation, such states are evoked through the contact with the dynamic of Being-there within the fractured landscape of the ratios of self. This is a sensation which far exceeds the notion of catharsis. Explanations of this state just turn into lists of words however, it is perhaps the anxiety generated by the attempts to explain this state which best characterises it. It is an anxiety to Be, and anxiety of caring, the knowing beyond the ability to articulate it. It is an anxiety perpetuated by the sensation of the uncanny - the recognition of a sense of something that has gone before. It is the affirmation of the psychological prefix *re* (Hillman)[30] which motivates both Nitsch's and P-Orridge's attempts to re-enter the deep levels of the psyche and to re-visit the moment of existence. What I would suggest it that both Nitsch's and P-Orridge's work are concerned with re-creation; this does not mean to simulate or pretend, it literally means to create again, and to be in the midst of creativity, which means to 'Be in' creation. By in creation I mean to be in the midst of a state of affairs which is a wounded ecstasy. It is to be in the midst of the bloody embrace with the Unheimlich[31] - the place where "meaning grounds"[32], where the death of God[33] leads one to seek intercourse with the ultimate concern'[34] of existence.

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[28] to make clear, rather than to isolate elements.

[29] Genesis P-Orridge, interview with Andrea Juno and V. Vale for **RE/Search Modern Primitives"** RE/Search publications. San Francisco. USA. p 169

[30] Hillman see Chapter 7 Section 7.2 of this thesis, page 177

[31] Freud see Chapter 9 Section 9.1 of this thesis, page 227

[32] Hillman see Chapter 8 Secion 8.2 of this thesis page 206

[33] Nietzsche see the Chapter 7

[34] Dreyfus / Kierkegaard see Chapter 7 Section 7.1 of this thesis, page 169

It is clear that while both Nitsch and P-Orridge have used the mediums of art, performance, and music as containment fields for their experiment / rituals their underlying intentions lead us to conclude that they far exceed the normal limits of each of these genres. In fact, Nitsch is perhaps more concerned with philosophy than he is with art and more concerned with life than he is with philosophy. For Nitsch, communicating the extent of his devotion to the joy of Being requires that he creates works which reflect, in terms of colour and velocity, what he believes it ideally looks and feel like to be devotional, to be intoxicated, to be in rapture. On the other hand it seems clear to me that as P-Orridge has become more and more involved in developing a permanent creative relationship with the world of possibilities, material 'production', becoming less and less of a necessity. When work does emerge into the public arena it seems merely to be the result of a reflex of dissemination. While in previous years P-Orridge has talked about experimenting in public it is perhaps true to predict that such public experiments will become rare in the years to come. While P-Orridge is retreating from public view Nitsch is on the brink of realising his **6 Day Aktion**[35] , the event he conceived in the late 1950s as the ultimate goal of the O. M. Theatre.

As I have pointed out at the beginning of this thesis Nitsch's work is ideally placed within a rural domestic setting; within the courtyards, out buildings, and vineyards which surround the castle of Prinzendorf. His work is not only geographically enclosed but held in a firm philosophical structure. Even the analogies and metaphorical structures, for example the notion of the underground labyrinth and its similarities to the internal organs of the human body which support the work, are rigidly cross referenced. Nitsch presents us with fortress-like reasoning, upheld in form and structure, in which human beings are able to experience to the full extent of their minds and bodies, the extremes of what it is to Be within the particular context of the Aktion. Nitsch's work succeeds because it is contained in such rigid and precise philosophical, psychological and geographic structures. Nitsch succeeds in providing space in which others can experience the extremes of life for themselves, albeit within a prescribed list of activities, because he sees himself as articulating a common language of experience. Certainly, evidence from my own investigations into this

[35] The 6 day Aktion is scheduled to be performed at Prinzendorf during August 1998.

language and method of working in my reconstruction of the **1st Abreaction Play (shouts, noises and the evisceration of the lamb)** does suggest that there is some kind of common understanding, feeling and sensation that the work connects with. Most people experiencing the work do state that that connection lies outside what they would normally consider as an art or theatre experience, but resonates somewhere in the deep region of their collective instincts and emotions.

Nitsch's large scale Aktions tell, in terms of their visual narrative, the story of man stripped of identity, of his mythical journey from flesh and blood corporeality into symbol, iconography and incorporeality. On a deeper level the Aktions map or recreate what Nitsch sees as the physical circumstances which affect mind and body as they are confronted by the experience and possibilities of Being or Dasein.

While the same could be said for Genesis P-Orridge his work differs from that of Nitsch because it is fundamentally about his self, whereas Nitsch sees himself as speaking from the point of view of every man. P-Orridge allows us as an audience to observe and, to a certain extent, interact with the processes he is instigating in himself, with the added intention of being provocative but not proscriptive. Nitsch offers us a fully formed participatory model as a practical philosophy. P-Orridge on the other hand offers nothing of the sort; this is in spite of the fact that both artists began their work from the same starting point - from observing their earliest, most immediate feelings and experiences in childhood. Nitsch, through seeking to articulate and understand the nature and meaning of early childhood sensations, has perhaps distanced himself from childhood. While he has created formulae that can perhaps be said to retain the semblance of adolescent paganism, they are supported by the dogmas of adult philosophy.

For P-Orridge space as a medium in which to explore ideas can mean the theoretical space inside the mind, the space of the physical body, or the geography of the ritual space. It can also mean the stage space, or the larger space of people and ideas, called culture. Space may also refer to the areas of social interaction and the realms of political legislation. Making space means the demarcation of

any given or imagined area into which an image or an idea can be projected. So, in terms of P-Orridge's work, the field of containment is any space defined, created or designated by the artist, whether it is part of the consensus realit' or not. P-Orridge's notion of space takes Marcel Duchamp's notion of the object (or ready-made), which can be called art if defined as such by the artists, one step further. To 'make space in order to be space' means that for P-Orridge to create, or define, space is fundamentally an expression of freedom 'to be' according to his own definitions. We must not forget that the spaces designated by P-Orridge as an area in which to explore ideas are, by his own definition, ritual spaces; they are 'cathedrals' - spaces in which to perform acts of devotion. It is clear that for him devotion means creativity and that the material used is the self.

It is obvious that the work of both Hermann Nitsch and Genesis P-Orridge is concerned with creating thresholds into different perceptual / experiential frames. While both artists locate, seek out, and create thresholds in different areas of their work and their lives, the function and purpose of these thresholds are the same. For both artists there is a sense of bringing something back from the other side of the threshold. Nitsch calls this a broader based knowledge; in a sense, an ancient, yet common language of images, emotions and holistic vision, experienced as synaesthesia. P-Orridge on the other hand is seeking knowings that have been lost; this implies not the requisition of a pre-existent common language but the retrieval of information from extinction. Nitsch centres his exploration on a common language accessing it through the familiar. Both artists take as their starting point their own innate sense of loss, incompleteness and absence. It is this highly personal sense of loss which is registered as the sensation that something is missing from their experience of existence. Looking at a range of possible answers to the existential question, they interrogate what they see as a lack and the inadequacy of dogmas and ideologies. In terms of the work of P-Orridge this sense of incompleteness may emanate from the real sense of absence and dependency which long term illness has created. It is the sensations of:

Simply cruising on reserve
Sleeping though I'm still alive
Waiting for the life you give
Absence is an awful cure
Can I be alive once more

Living on this simple plane
They also wait who stand and serve
Adrenalin creates this law
And gives me hope for life again[36]

But perhaps this is an over simplification. It is perhaps a mixture of the sense of disorder and absence which illness brings coupled with an overwhelming need for self reliance and personal freedom which is dedicated within a relevant and meaningful form of spirituality. Such a spirituality is, I would suggest, concentrated on the experience of Being within the uniqueness of the moment, focused in the ritual. Both artists point to the primacy of the moment in their work and for both it is perhaps in the spontaneity of the gesture that each feels a sense of completeness, wholeness of expression and truthfulness of meaning.

What fascinates me about P-Orridge's work is that it is the product of a real and personal sense of woundedness. However, while Nitsch's vision seems to originate from the same personal sensation of pain, it is articulated as an ideal vision of a martyred and heroic humanity which is able to face its repressed instincts. This is in complete contrast to P-Orridge's work which tends to be critical of humanity, articulated as it is from the point of view of an individual standing on the outer edge of humanity. While Nitsch strives to re-create a universal or fundamental voice P-Orridge has cultivated a multiplicity of voices, based on the fractured ratios which make up the self.

P-Orridge's work is characterised by a consistent sense of anxiety which comes from dwelling within a permanent state of woundedness. He makes the connection between the inadequacy of the self and the dereliction of humanity. Greg Mogenson (like Hillman working in the field of depth psychology) suggests that this sense of loss is also registered as cultural decline:

> It is not merely that instinct has been lost. Culture has also declined. To invoke a biblical analogy, having eaten the latest peach from the tree of knowledge, we have been stripped once again of our cultural appeal, and are unable to ascend the tree of life. Impoverished of symbolism, naked and ashamed, we experience even the oldest and most rudimentary elements of domestic life

[36] Genesis P-Orridge. Song lyric, printed in **Industrial News** 4 November 1980, number 3. Limited edition, hand printed.

from the point of view of the fall.[37]

For P-Orridge this is not a romantic notion of a New Middle Ages but a struggle for motivation which takes place on a day to day basis. It is easy to talk about the metaphors and analogies of stripping away the outer layers, and of cutting a way through the undergrowth of the self, of being skinned alive,[38] but the consequence of actively applying processes of deepening, levelling and cutting to the self in order to establish a permanent state of, what I will continue to call existing in "the midst of states of affairs", is necessarily harsh, and terminal. Within such a state the very activity of Being takes on a cutting action, thinking, decision making etc, all become small ritual or soft ritual moments, just as the act of breathing may in day-to-day life become an intolerable reminder of the abyss to one initiated into the existential significance of breath.[39] Permanent hyper-sensitivity[40] to the moment, keeps P-Orridge within a constant state of activation:

> E pick up so much cross talk. Images, pictures ov what comatose subway travellers are thinking. Like Polaroids ov mediocrity....[41]

P-Orridge states that it is "thee imprint to respect everything as holy, as innately valuable with its own right to co-exist..."[42] suggesting that it is as a consequence of perhaps his own imprinted value system, that he is exposed in this way. It is a symptom of the open wound, the metaphorical cut in the skin which allows external agents into the body. P-Orridge talks about the noise - the saturation of the self by mediocrity - and the pull to succumb to mass consensus reality[43]. The Battle Fatigue that he speaks about is perhaps partly due to his own vulnerability to every sharp instrument, word, image and sound. While P-Orridge, may have seen this kind of sensitivity as part of his responsibility as an artist, there is a sense in which he implies that it is a condition which both helps and hinders his process. Over the years P-Orridge has both actively given into the noise and has 'laboured' obsessively in order to distract himself from it:

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[37] Greg Mogenson 'Children of Hell' in **A Journal of Archetype and Culture** Spring 1994. Spring Publications US . p 24

[38] Hillman see Chapter 7 Section 7.3 of this thesis, page 191

[39] connecting with the notion of breath as a meditation on life and death, see Chapter 9 of this thesis

[40] Hillman see Chapter 7 Section 7.3 of this thesis, page 192

[41] Genesis P-Orridge. Extract from a letter sent to the author, 26 November 1996

[42] Ibid,.

[43] a term used through his writing.

> There remains a calvinist L-ov-E ov labour intensive within me, that supplies sublime momeants for my SELF. Have you ever wondered why detail, obsessive, perfection ov invisible detail, so engrosses me? It stops thee noise in my head. Thee voices ov passers-by. Thee interviews with beings, thee chatter ov brains from who knows where. Often E think E spend too much T.I.M.E. escaping thee noise. E wander, looking for a sedation that does not require a decrease in acceleration ov productivity.[44]

This statement gives some indication as to the real consequences of the work which propel the artist into a hermeneutic existence grounded in its own pathologised chronic disorder.[45]

The child in P-Orridge's work is the product of both a sense of loss and abandonment and is also an archetype of the dynamic energy of play, invention and obsession, with the ability to raise hell for the sheer sake of it.[46] As Mogenson points out, the child is a reflex which seems to be indigenous to a certain type of artist. Here Mogenson is referring to the work of William Blake:

> ..... the two ideas, "hurt" and "child" have been fused together into a single complex, a complex, moreover, which functions as an *a priori* perceptual category, an angel of orthodoxy - like the one that took Blake to the edge of the abyss - an archetypal image. Although we may assume that the image of the lost boy or abandoned child is an imaginal accretion built up from numerous experiences of actually being hurt and abused (phyloenetically or ontogentetically), the opposite may also be true. Inasmuch as the abandoned child has become an autonomous cultural complex, our sense of having been neglected, hurt, and abused may be merely the over determined effect of its particular manner of turning events into experiences.[47]

The child is the orthodox angel of experience which in the case of P-Orridge's work can be said to be symbolic of the will to Be. The child represents the necessity to experience the moment to the pit of its Being; so it is also a child of

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[44] Genesis P-Orridge. Extract from a letter sent to the author, 26 November 1996

[45] see Hillman Chapter 7 Section 7.3 of this thesis, page 192

[46] reference here to Noah Pikes's essay 'Giving Voice To Hell' in **A Journal of Archetype and Culture** No 55 Spring 1994, Spring Publications, US.

[47] Greg Mogenson 'Children of Hell' in **A Journal of Archetype and Culture** Spring 1994. Spring Publications US . pp 28 - 29

diabolic action. Such a child wounds itself to turn events into experience. It is the accusing child that points a finger at the adult world - the child that cries abuse, abandonment, betrayal. Mogenson has suggested that these are also symptoms of a condition which affects a number of contemporary artists.

> Unlike the mythical hero of by-gone days, the anti-hero of today differentiates from the parental imagos, not by slaying them as in the dragon fight, but through forensically substantiated allegations of having been slayed by them - abused, neglected, abandoned.[48]

Such "forensically substantiated allegations" of personal abuse, betrayal and neglect, are expanded into comparison with anti humanitarian activities conducted both by institutions and nations. For P-Orridge political and racial abuse has its origins in individual abuse. This preoccupation with hurt and distress, either personal or humanitarian, seems at times counter productive and its frequent repetition in P-Orridge's work seems over obsessive, however, as Mogenson points out:

> ... what would seem at first glance to be an infantile rejection of one's actual life, may reveal itself, upon closer scrutiny, to be the acceptance into life of the energies and instincts which had hitherto been missing from it. The remedy is already present in the symptom itself. The neurosis, as Jung said, is an attempt at self cure.[49]

It is perhaps for P-Orridge a means of venting anger, mistrust, hatred; in a sense it is an act of abreaction. It is an exploration of the courses of his own neurosis and a forensic examination of his own wounds which allows not so much a cure, as the instigation of operations of individuation, the strengthening of convictions and the affirmation of the complexity and possibilities of self. In the case of P-Orridge this has resulted in the exploration of methods of separation, and the development of practical means of connecting with ideas and alternative states of consciousness which lie outside the fabric of society, or what he calls 'consensus reality'. Taking the notion of separation to its extreme P-Orridge strives towards the separation of energy from the sealed coffin which is the body. It is not

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[48] Greg Mogenson 'Children of Hell' in **A Journal of Archetype and Culture** Spring 1994. Spring Publications US . . p 39

[49] Ibid,.

surprising that he sometimes holds his body in such low esteem since it has been the cause of so much childhood ill health. P-Orridge talks about the dissatisfaction he feels with his body in the same breath that he describes what he sees as the inadequacy of the medium of art. Both art as a vessel and the body as a medium for experience seem limited and fragile.

For P-Orridge, the continuous ritualisation of life is an affirmation of the desire to Be as the self chooses to define itself. A constant state of dissatisfaction provides the motivation to find or define possible ways of Being. Society's pressure to conform to a particular mode of being gives extra impetus to this activity of re-definition. He writes:

> E shall always dream. E shall all ways feel an intense NEED to express and publicise thee obsessive transgression ov that which is expected ov me. Perhaps aloneness can be verified as appropriateness. Butter I am waiting. Inside my pupae. Trying not to force an issue, or tissue. Willing an integration that emerald-like refracts thee most hidden luxurious dreams and burns a hole in thee man-made fabric ov "reality"[50]

Artists such as Nitsch and P-Orridge, who make regular journeys into states of intoxication, in the words of Ihab Hassan "display the resources of the void"[51] and in some cases draw close to the existential base note of creativity itself.

> Yet moving into the void, these artists sometimes pass to the other side of silence. The consummation of their art is a work which, remaining art, pretends to abolish itself (Beckett, Tinguely, Robert Morris), or else to become indistinguishable from life (Cage, Rauschenberg, Mailer).[52]

In the region beyond the representational chamber (Lyotard) which is at the limits of consciousness (Bataille), the automatic gesture (Nitsch) is synonymous with the movement of the subconscious. Such gestures are unfettered by social convention, or concern for art historic definition. Such a movement / gesture is justification in itself. If there is a context in which we might view such a gesture, such a movement of the subconscious, it would be perhaps within the context of

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[50] Genesis P-Orridge. Extract from a letter to the author. 26 November 1996.

[51] Ihab Hassan **Paracriticism. Seven speculations of the times** (POSTmodernISM: A Paracritical Bibliography) University of Illinois Press, Urbana, Chicago, London. 1975. p 53

[52] Ibid,.

uncertainty within the fundamentally creative space of the subatomic universe. We might also attribute the automatic / subconscious gesture to the libidinal flow of energy - the well of intensity - which characterises what Nitsch describes as the actual experience of Dasein. It is perhaps a natural will-to-movement, will-to-creativity, which animates in order to experience existence.

In terms of the work of Nitsch and P-Orridge the study and conscious intercourse with such a state of Being is evident in the ideas, materials and dynamics of their work. The complex, multi-perspective structures that both artists employ provide evidence of the artists' actual experiences within the realms of their own psychologising.

Evidence has shown that each of the artists' psychologising and philosophising goes beyond the intellectual fixed point and moves into what I have associated with Jung's notion of *participation mystique,* [53] a state of unconscious identification .... with the substances / images / words / symbols they are manipulating, or more correctly, bringing forth. Their psychologising and philosophising brings them naturally to this point of active participation, to the frontiers of experiences which become loosened from the hold of conscious cognition; this is the sensation of what P-Orridge has called the preset state of mind. Pathologising stimulates psychological insights concerning the organic / multiple natures of the self. Deep psychologising, contemplation and pathological experiences naturally bring one to a point of psychological / existential vertigo, where one is confronted with reason. Such an emotional and intellectual confusion / revelation, the experience of being skinned alive of wounding and of bleeding, stimulates a profound levelling which can gain the mind access to the liminal region, or what Nitsch might call the space of Dasein, These are I believe, all terms for fundamentally the same thing. However, Hillman states that, like the dream, pathologising and mythologising lead back to, and are rooted in, the notion of death. So while the authentic is inextricably linked to the possession of self, the temporarily divine state of self-possession and the experience and connection with the authentic within the experience of the moment, is stolen by the revelation of mortality and the inevitability of death. As P-Orridge states:

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[53] David Merkur **Gnosis: an Esoteric Tradition of Mystical Visions and Union** State University of New York Press. Albany. New York. 1993 p 68

> Thee first lesson from which all others grow is thee simplest. We are mortal. We all die. This is not a morbid wallowing in hopelessness. It is thee ability to genuinely coum to terms with our physical transience that liberates us all.[54]

Thus the notion of authenticity is itself levelled and brought back into the fold, returned literally to the earth. According to this hypothesis, within the economy of the mind there is no authentic, divine or higher state, the death of God also pertains to, and implies the death of self. For both Nitsch and P-Orridge, death is the ultimate levelling principle.

These flirtations with death - with existence and non-existence - which I have charted in this thesis are not the products of morbid or sentimental minds, but are the footprint left by two artists who take the notion of *Gesamtkunstwert* to the very depths of its meaning and consequences in the psyche. In the words of James Hillman it is only through suffering the consequences and embracing the meaning, however dark and fearful, that we begin to see and truly understand something of the massive uncharted territories which constitute the quantum universe of the self.

[54] Genesis P-Orridge **An Introduction to thee Temple Ov Psychick Youth** Temple Press Ltd. 1989 (original limited edition)

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Hermann Nitsch / Rudi Fuchs

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Press Book Six
personal archive of GPO, collected press cuttings
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Genesis P-Orridge

Press Book Seven
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and published statements plus Industrial Records
Press Releases — 1977 - 1981

Genesis P-Orridge

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Genesis P-Orridge

Press Book Five
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Appendix

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The Orgies and Mysteries Theatre (1962)

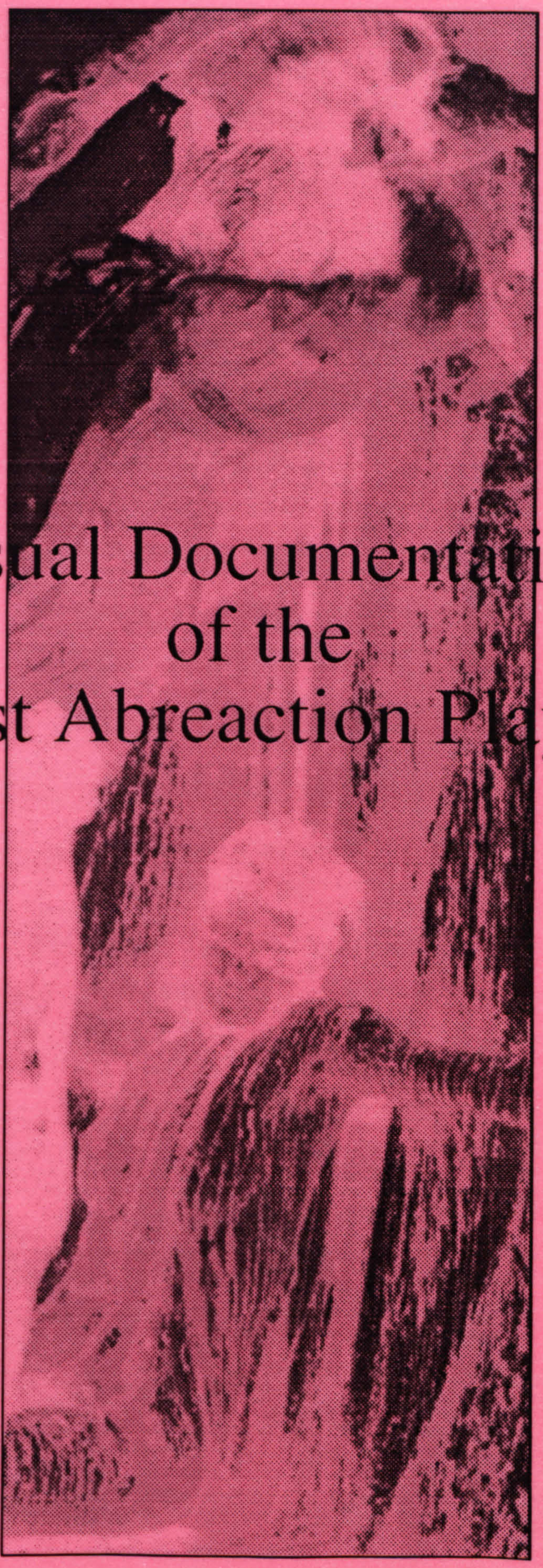
Genesis P-Orridge:

Report on the Alien Brain (1972)

Coum Writing System

Thee Seeding Ship

Rogue (Rouge Magazine)



Visual Documentation of the 1st Abreaction Play

Visual Documentation of the Reconstruction of the

1st Abreaction Play
(Shouts, noises and the evisceration of the lamb).
1961/1995

by
Hermann Nitsch
under the direction of Julie Wilson

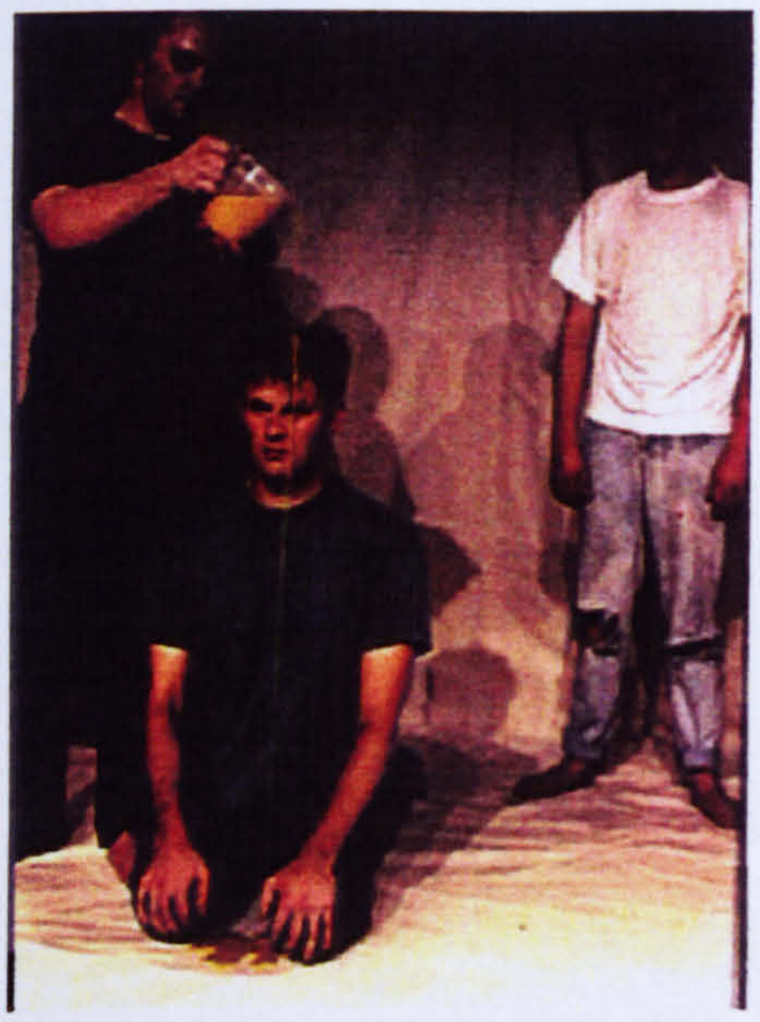
Photographs
by
Peter Smith

The following account provides a brief over-view of the sequence which make up the **1st Abreaction Play**. For a full and accurate account please refer to the reconstructed score.

The play opens with a sequence of very precise choric singing. Esos and the chorus sing the vowel "Ah" at time intervals and durations as set down in the score. This is gradually intensified until it degenerates into free shouting, at which point the orchestra makes its first 'noise' entrance.

Actors bring on a trough filled with lukewarm water in which there are five pieces of raw meat. Esos wraps the wet pieces of meat in brown paper and gives them to a member of the audience in the first row. The meat is passed around the audience from one person to another. Whoever receives it last throws the pieces back onto the stage.

Actors bring on a white freshly washed cloth smelling of incense and a white cloth which has been immersed in sweetened wine. Both cloths are passed around to all members of the audience.



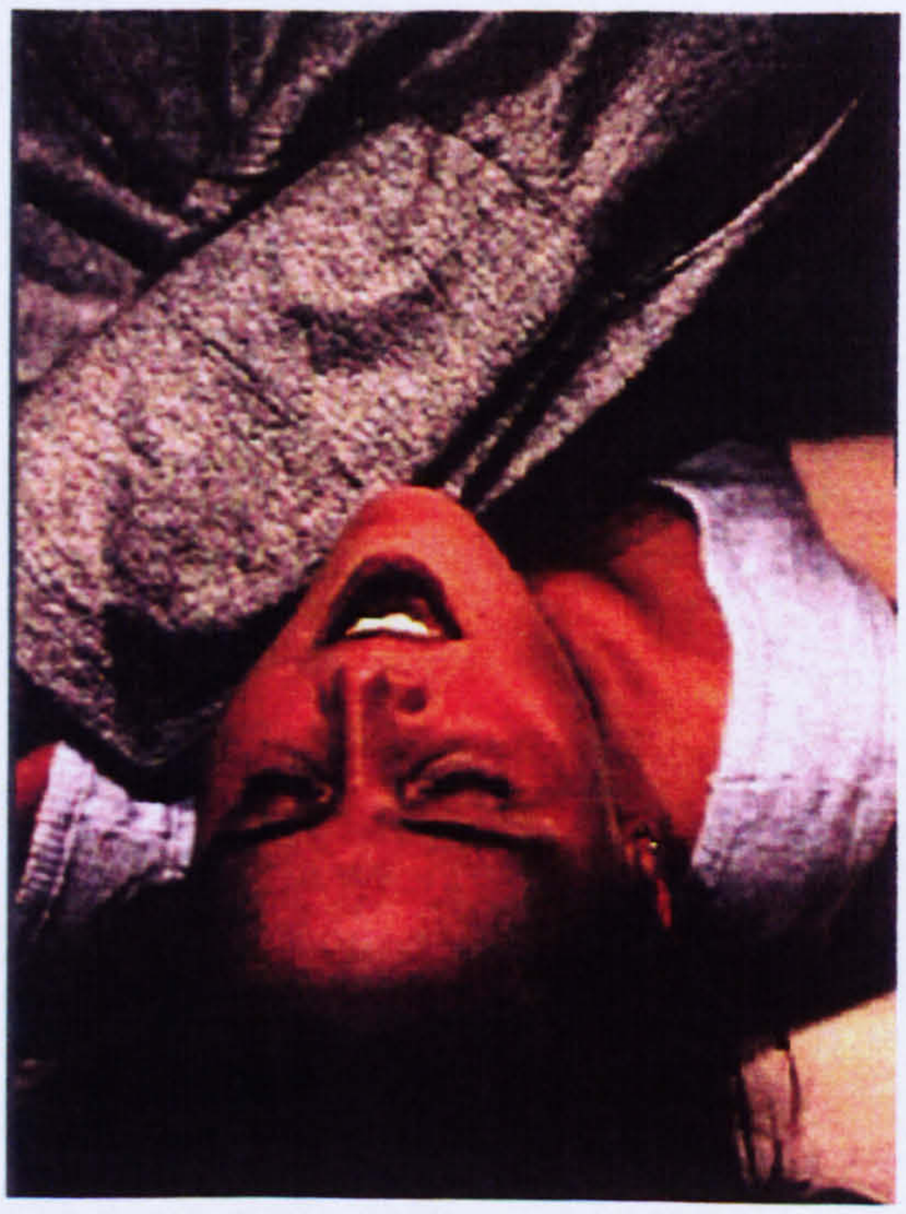
Number 2 of the chorus pours egg yolk over Esos. Esos exits to change his clothes. He throws the soiled clothes onto the stage so that they can be handed around and examined by the audience. The last person to receive the clothes gives them back to Esos (who has not re-entered). He immerses the clothes in vinegar, lymph and hot water and then gives them back to the audience. When he receives the clothes again, he puts them on over his clean clothes. Esos then tears off the wet clothes. He cuts them into small pieces with a sharp instrument; while he is doing so the chorus shouts loudly for 2 minutes.

This develops into obscene shouting; the chorus make rude gestures to the audience - their activities on stage become absurd. A bed / stretcher is brought onto the stage. Esos (Oedipus) and his mother (Number 4 of the chorus) gets onto the bed and simulate sexual intercourse. The bed is lifted and carried 3 times around the performance space. The bed is replaced on the stage.

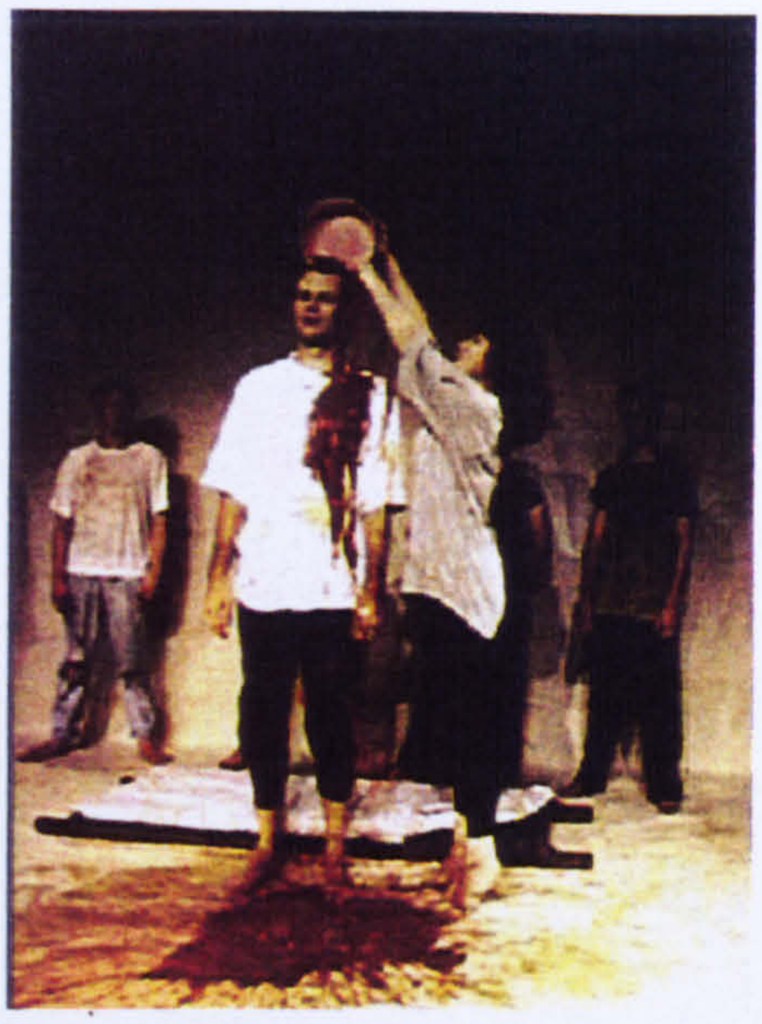
Seizing Esos, Number 4 (his mother) puts her fingers in his mouth and shouts for 15 seconds; she then exits. Esos steps off the bed, shouts loudly while putting his thumbs into his eye sockets (Castration Gesture) for 60 seconds. He then exits.

The chorus shouts for 25 seconds, Esos and his mother enter holding hands after 25 seconds, the chorus whistles, stamps its feet and applauds for 30 seconds. There is a silence for 15 seconds as Esos and his mother exit. This sequences is repeated 3 times.

Noise from the orchestra is followed by short sung interchanges between Esos and the chorus for 2 minutes this develops into a 10 minute abreaction in which the chorus 'unburdens' itself by shouting, screaming and physical release. During the sequence Esos and Number 6 of the chorus stand face to face at the front of the stage and engage in a shouting match which degenerates into obscene posturing. During this abreaction the orchestra moves onto the stage and interacts with the chorus.



At the end of the abreaction sequence Esos goes to the centre of the stage and makes a castration gesture by putting his thumbs into his eye sockets. He gives a short shout which is reciprocated by the chorus which utters a brief shout. Noise from the orchestra for 1 minute, during which Esos goes to the centre of the stage and lies down on the bed.



The lights in the theatre are turned off for 6 minutes. (The theatre is plunged into total darkness).

The lights are switched back on. There is random shouting for 50 seconds, the orchestra plays flutes and whistles.

Esos stands on, or in front of, the bed, Number 7 pours blood / dye over Esos, Esos shouts and the orchestra cheers and shouts for 1.5 minutes during which time Esos lies down on the bed again. There is a 5 second pause and the sequence is repeated.

30 seconds of random shouting from the chorus is accompanied by noise from the orchestra. Esos attempts to shout over the top of this. After 30 seconds Esos continues to shout alone for 15 seconds. There is a pause for 5 seconds and the sequence is repeated twice. This is followed by 15 seconds of shrill cries; Esos makes obscene gestures to the chorus after which there is 1.5 minutes of complete silence. Esos lies down on the bed again.

Burlesque:

The chorus engages in obscene and degrading behaviour while shouting. This degenerates into absurdity and clowning - burlesque pantomime for 4 minutes, accompanied by the orchestra.

The burlesque is followed by rhythmic shouting.

Number 6 steps forward, Esos stands up on the bed, 6 pours blood / dye over Esos. This sequence is repeated 7 times.

On the seventh occasion the action is followed by cathartic and lusty cheering plus noise from the orchestra for 2 minutes.

.

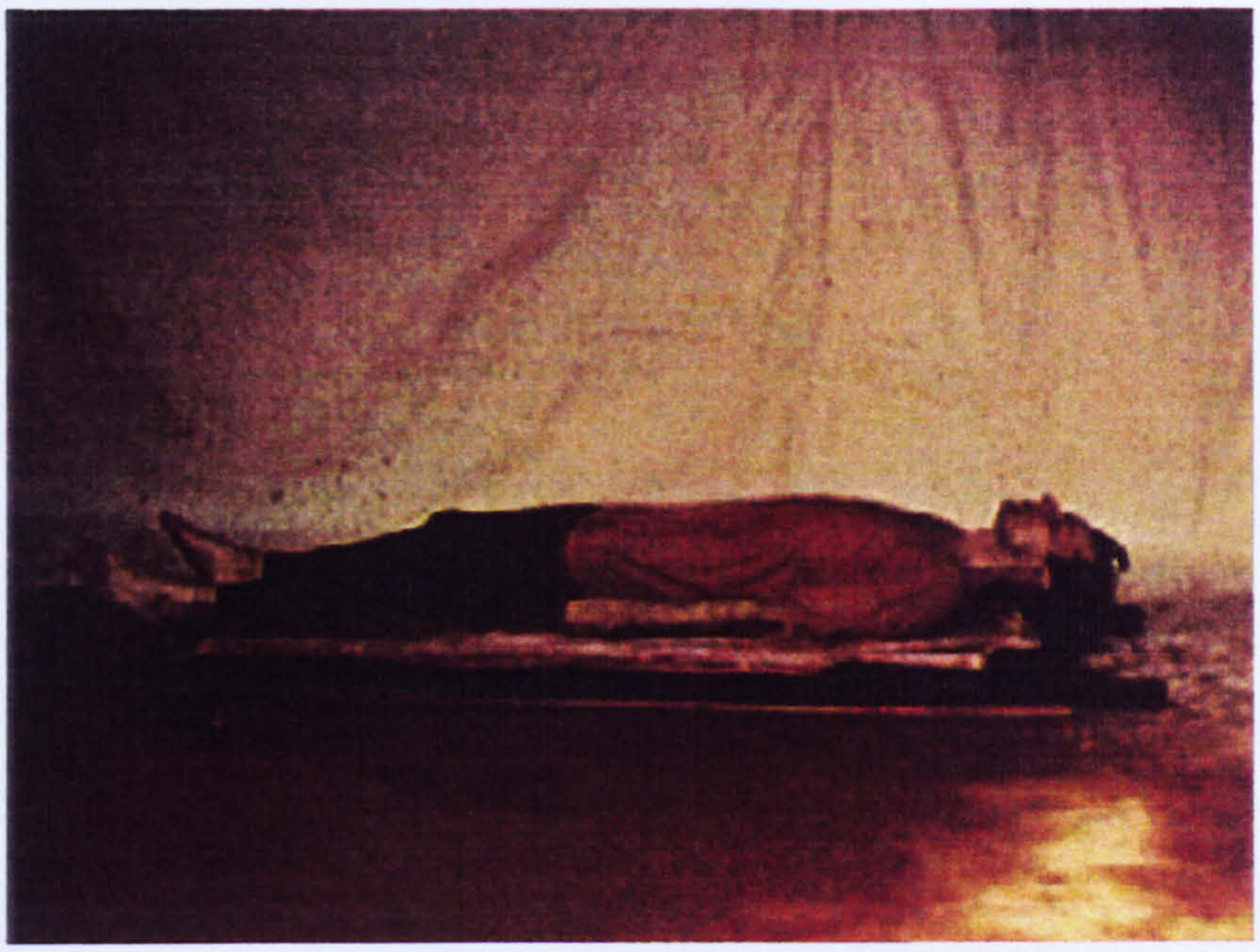
Procession

At the end of this sequence of cheering and noise the chorus forms into a procession. Number 6 caries a piece of meat in his hands at the front of the procession which moves off anti-clockwise around the auditorium. Number 6 sings "Ah" while the rest of the chorus utter brief shouts one after the other. Number 6 throws the meat onto the floor seven times over the course of 4 minutes.

The procession comes to a halt and there is no action for 1 minute.

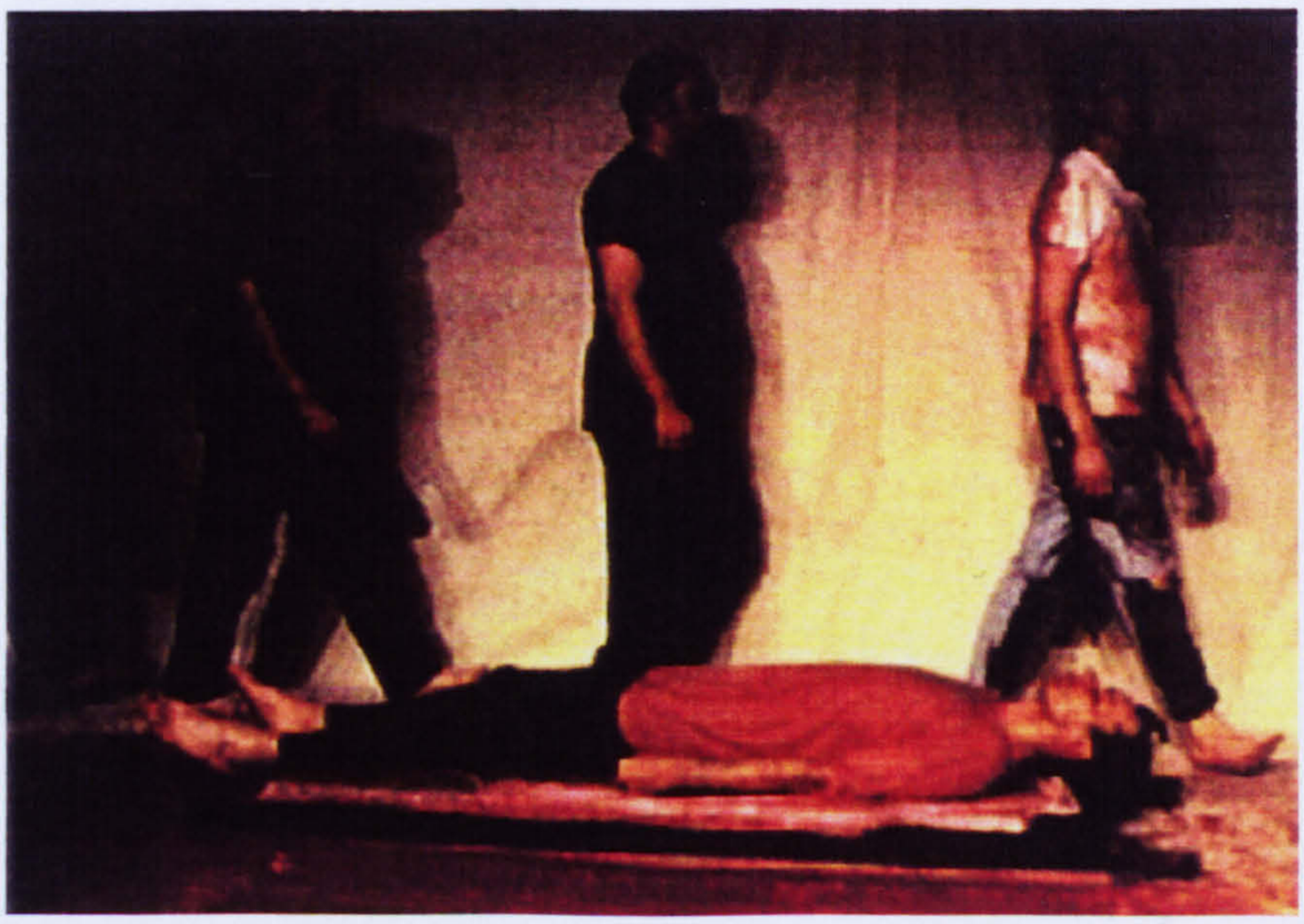
1 minute of ecstatic cries of abreaction.

The procession moves off on an anti-clockwise circuit of the auditorium; this time in silence for 1 minute.



6 gives the meat to 7 who shouts "Ah", accompanied by brief shouts from the chorus one after the other for 3 minutes,

7 gives the meat to a member of the orchestra.



The procession comes to a halt for 30 seconds, followed by 1 minute of Abreaction without the orchestra.

The chorus forms into a procession again. They move off around the auditorium singing "Ah" (monotonous). After 30 seconds they are joined by two members of the orchestra who play pan lids. They process around the auditorium for 3 minutes.

The procession stops behind the audience where it is joined by the rest of the orchestra. both sing and make noise. The chorus singing develops into free shouting after 50 minutes. This sequence of singing to shouting is repeated 6 times. The orchestra returns to its normal position on the side of the stage. Members of the chorus run silently around the auditorium, each comes to the front and utters a brief shout during the course of 3 minutes.

The running procession comes to a halt. Silence for 1 minute.

The chorus engages in unison rhythmic shouting for 7 minutes.

It moves off in procession, anti clockwise and then clockwise around the auditorium. This time brief cries are uttered in unison. As before the chorus is joined by two members of the orchestra who play pan lids.

At the end of this sequence, the chorus forms a line in front of the audience and makes the castration gesture - thumbs in eye sockets. No action for 3 minutes.

Esos stands up on the bed Number 7 pours blood / dye over Esos. Each time that the bucket is emptied the chorus cheers. This is repeated 9 times. On the 9th occasion the chorus cheers and shouts for 45 seconds accompanied by a penetrating sound from the orchestra. After 45 seconds the orchestra walks onto the stage.

Orchestra and chorus process around the audience 3 times, shouting and making noises and then exit through the public entrance.

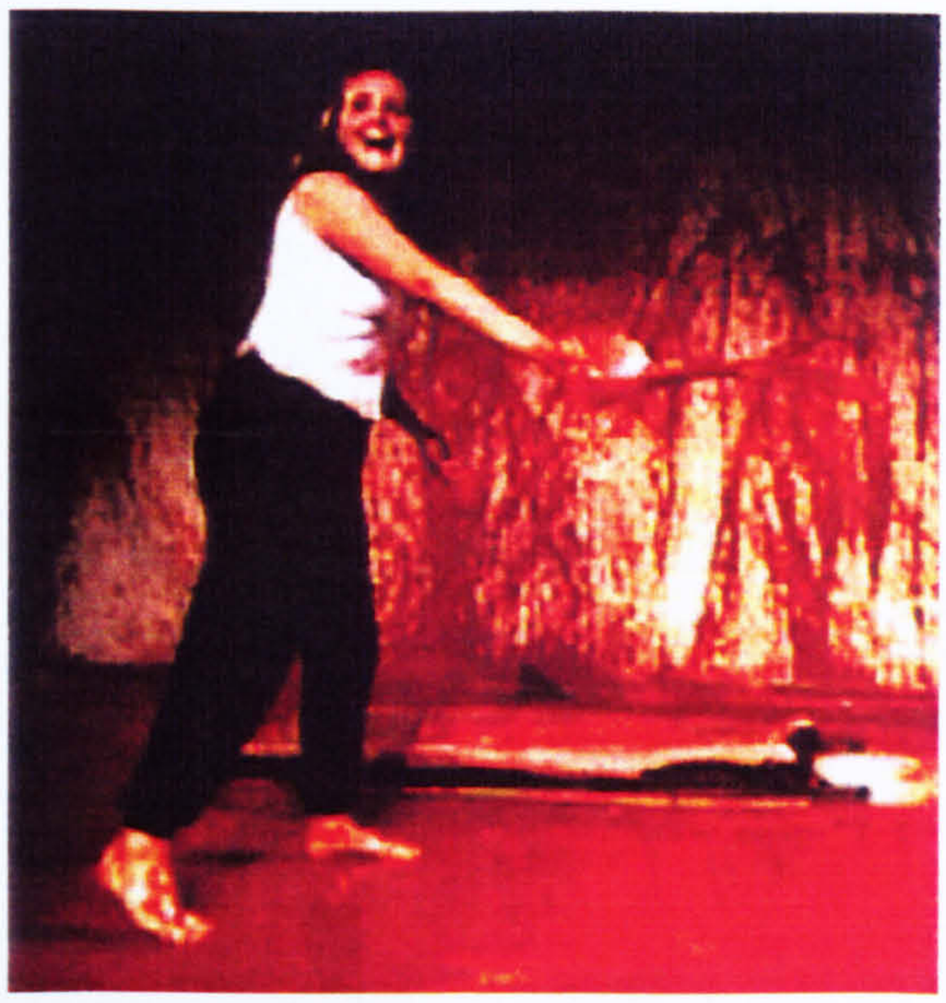
3 minutes without action.

The orchestra re-enters the auditorium. It takes up position behind the audience.

Numbers 1 - 4 caries the bed off stage right. Numbers 5 & 6 carry the carcass of the lamb in procession three times around the auditorium accompanied by a penetrating sound from the orchestra. The lamb is hung on the back wall (up stage left).

30 seconds without action.

(Here our production deviates from the original score. The Lamb should be eviscerated at this point. Because of legal restriction we are not able to present this part of the play)



Painting Aktion

Over the course to 10 minutes Number 1 throws, pours, splatters and spills red dye over the entire performance space (the floor and the back wall).

Choric Singing

The chorus and orchestra take up positions behind the audience.

Esos enters via the public entrance, he sings "Ah" for 15 seconds, the chorus replies with a 15 second shout of "Ah". This is repeated 5 times.

Esos sings castrato for 25 seconds the chorus replies with shouts for 20 seconds. This is repeated 6 times.

Esos sings "Ah" for 15 seconds then the orchestra replies with a penetrating sound for 20 seconds. This is repeated 6 times.

Esos sings for 15 seconds and the chorus and orchestra replies with shouts and noises for 20 seconds. This is repeated 5 times.

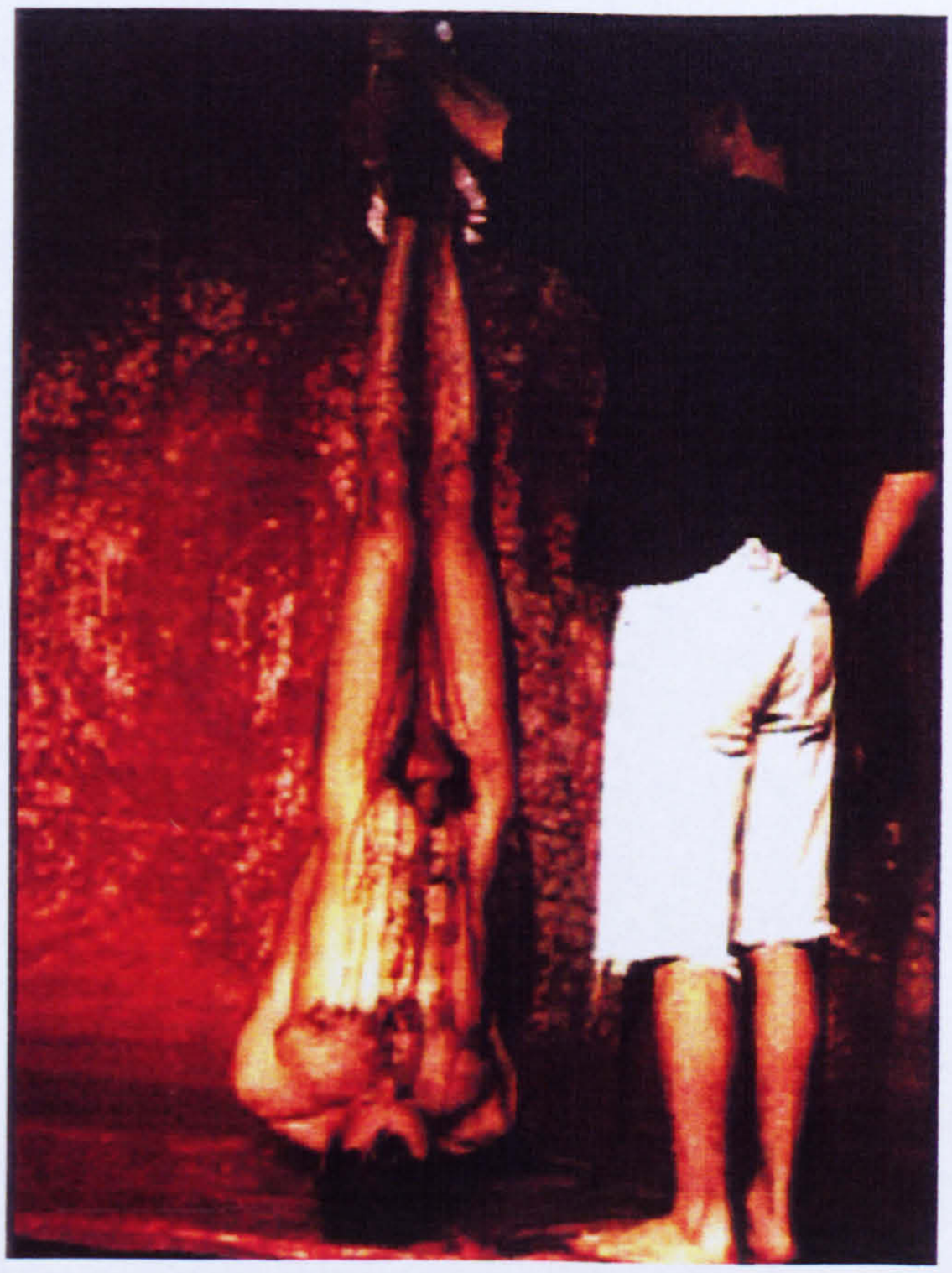
At the end of this sequence a whistle is blown and Esos shouts "catch me!" All the members of the chorus attempt to capture him. When they do he is held by the wrists as Number 3 of the orchestra steps forward to pour egg white over him.

Esos leaves the stage to change into new clothes. He throws his soiled clothes back onto the stage. The clothes are passed around the members of the audience. When the clothes are returned to the stage they are dipped into a bow l of urine. Esos enters and tears the clothes soaked in urine into 15 x 15 cm pieces which are again passed around the audience. The pieces are collected in a bucket which is also passed around the auditorium. Exit Esos.

The bed is brought back onto the stage.

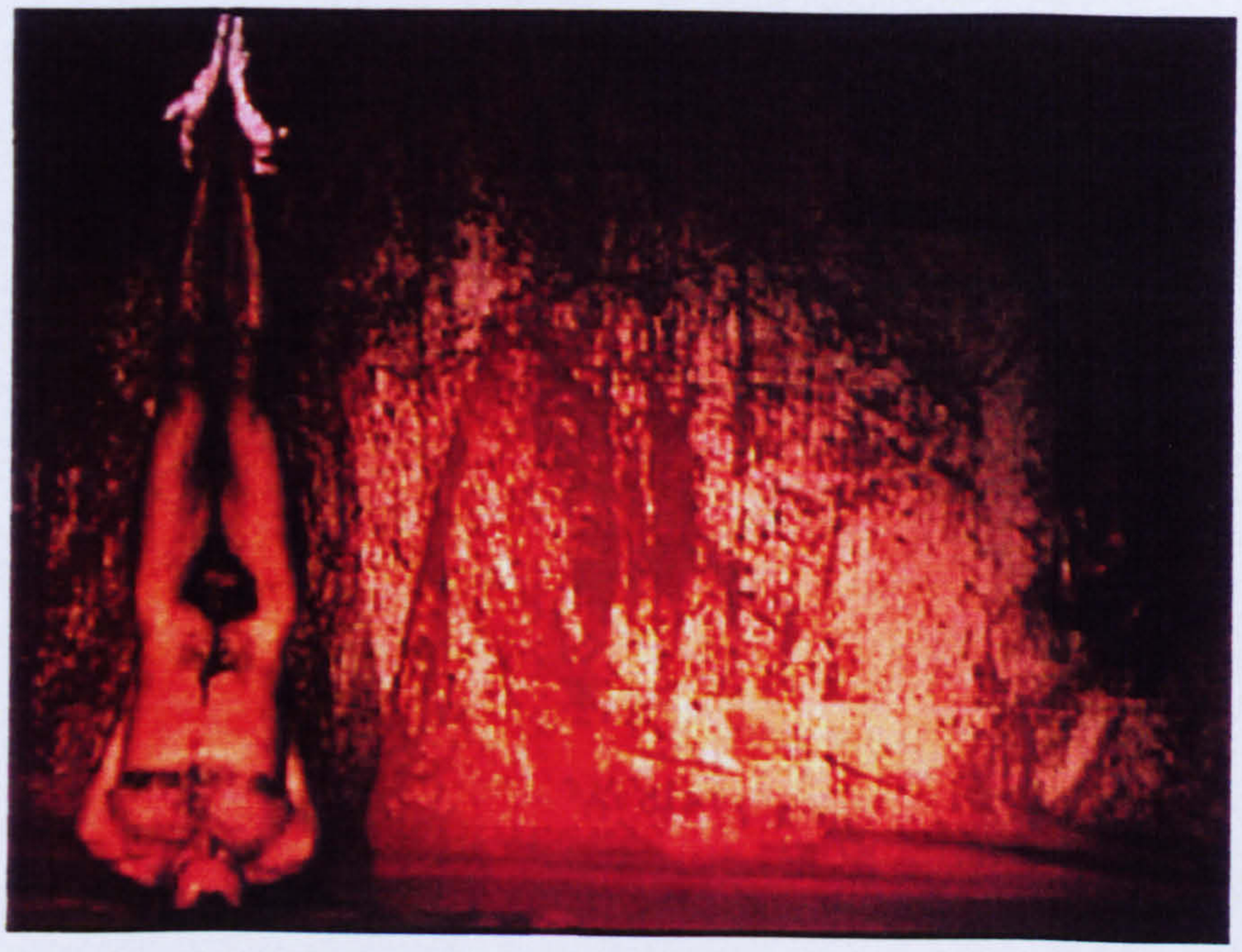
There is a whistle and again Esos enters (naked) and shouts "catch me!"

The members of the chorus run around the auditorium trying to catch him. When they do his hands are tied behind his back and he is hung upside down on a rope which is tied around his ankles. His head is supported by the bed beneath him.



Number 3 of the orchestra steps forward to pour red dye over him.

There is no action for 30 seconds.



Esos is let down by a member of the chorus. There is no action for 1 minute.

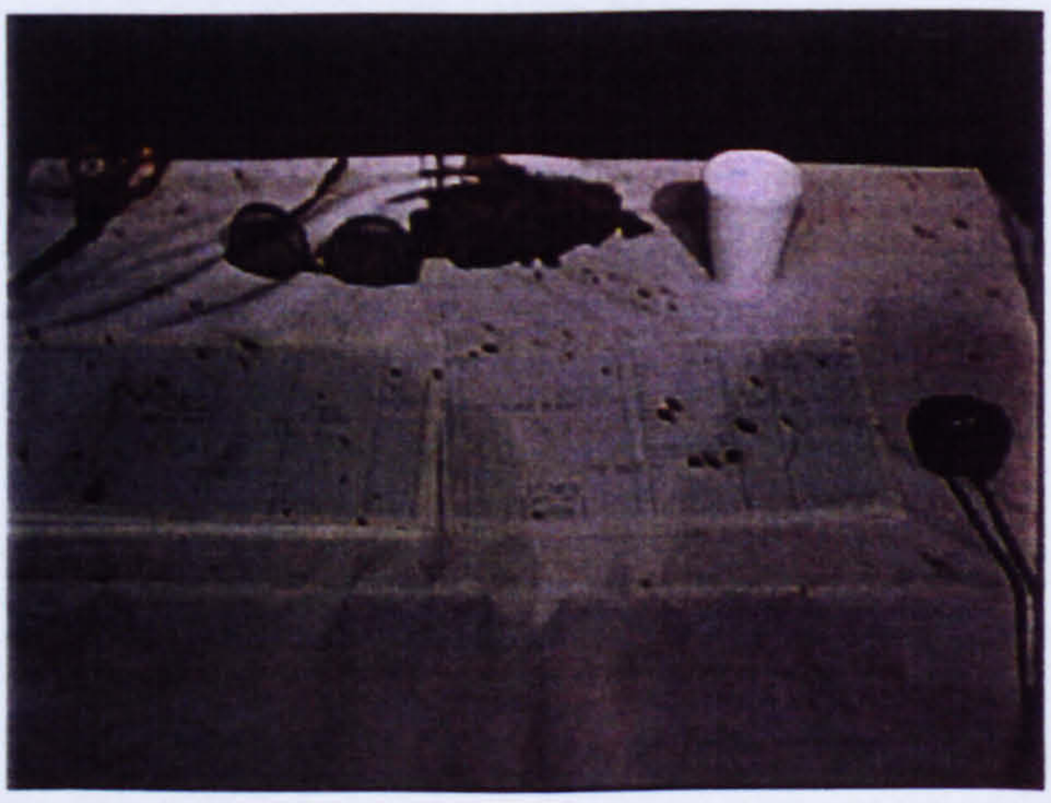
The orchestra takes up positions on the stage with the chorus. Abreaction for 3 minutes.

1 minute without action

The chorus takes up positions facing the audience, the orchestra stand behind. Esos goes off stage to change into clean clothes; he re-enters and takes up a position in front of the chorus facing the audience.

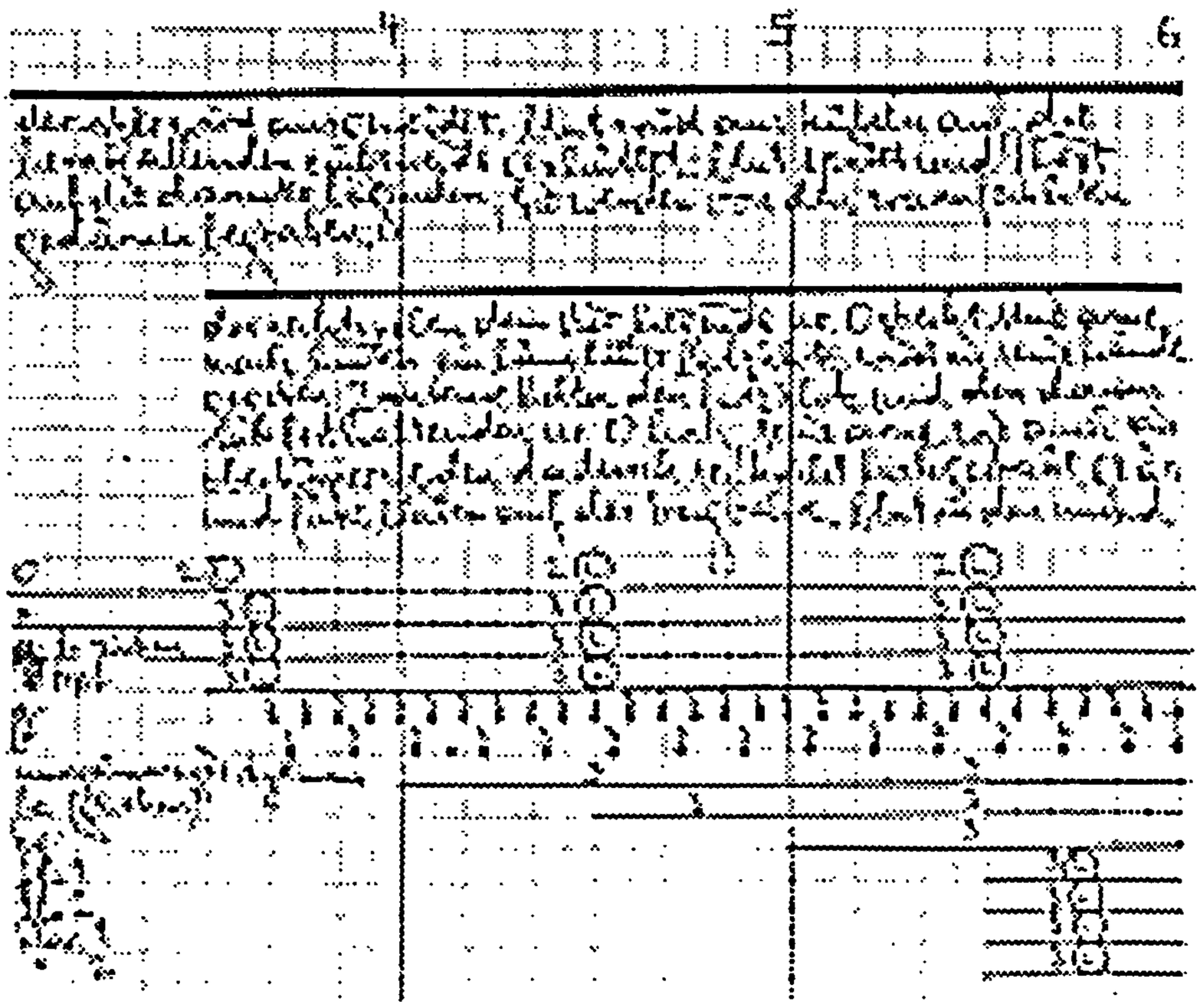
The chorus and Esos sing "Ah", accompanied by a penetrating sound from the orchestra for 3 minutes.

The company exits through the public doors.
The following are pictures of the stage as it is left after the performance.



The Scoring of Nitsch's Large Scale Aktions

The following is a brief guide to reading the score of the 80th Aktion and the reconstructed score of the 1st Abreaction Play (shouts, noises and the evisceration of the lamb). The graph paper represents real time in seconds and minutes. Here it is given in minutes; 4 - 6



These are the stage directions for two groups of chorus / passive actors written in long hand.

Orchestra

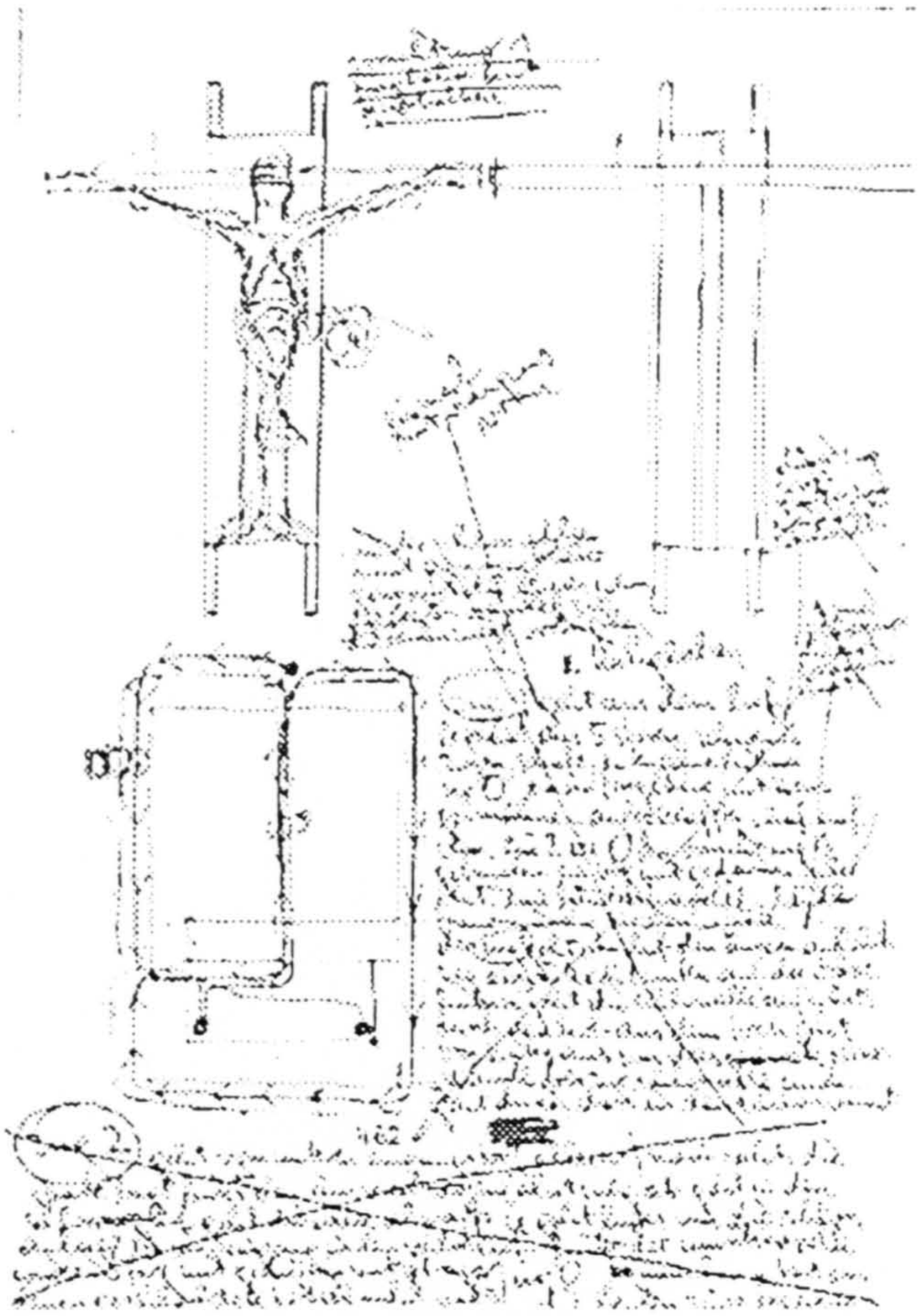
Percussion

Staggered entrance of instruments in real time.

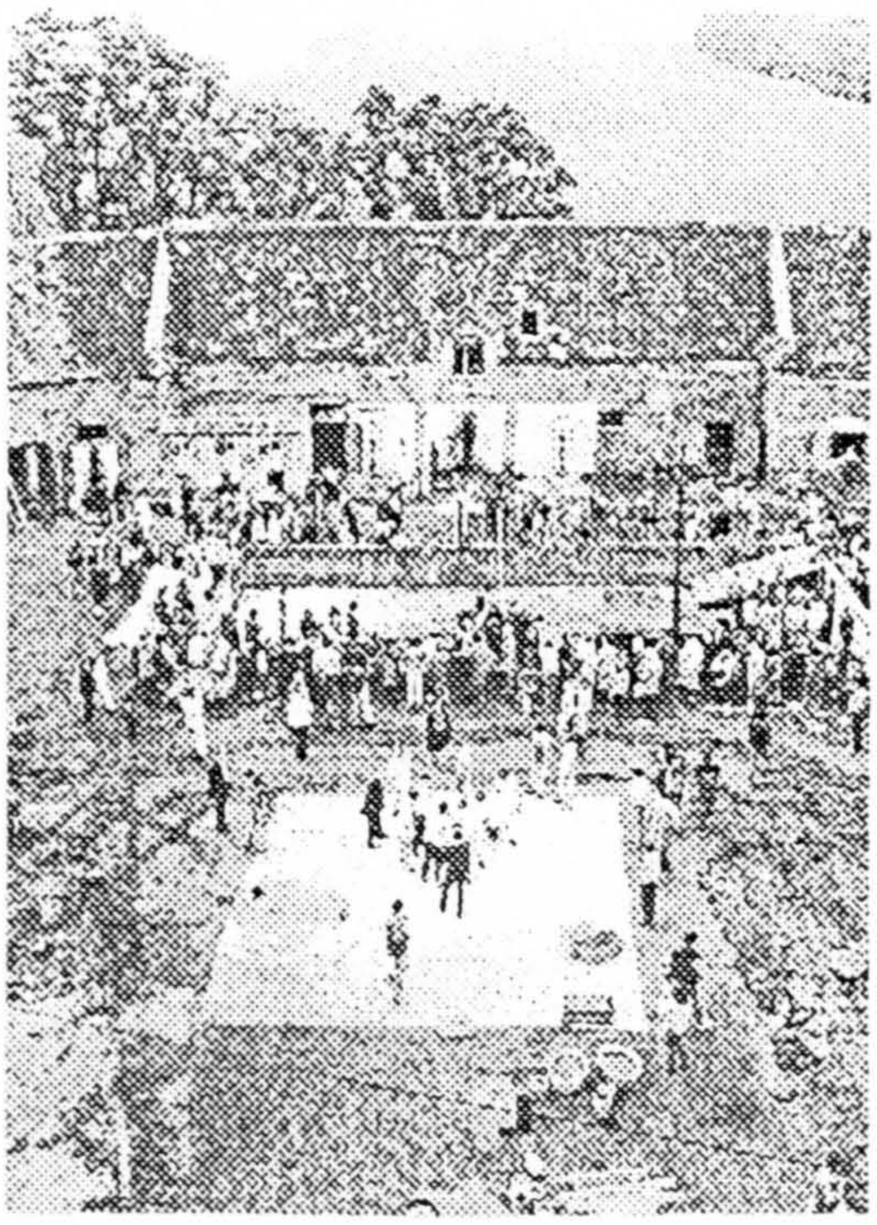
The instrumental notation provides information concerning the duration of the sound of instruments in seconds and minutes and their loudness which is written as a number from 1 to 3. A level horizontal line indicates a constant loudness held over a certain duration of time, while a shallow rising line indicates an increase in sound over a given duration.

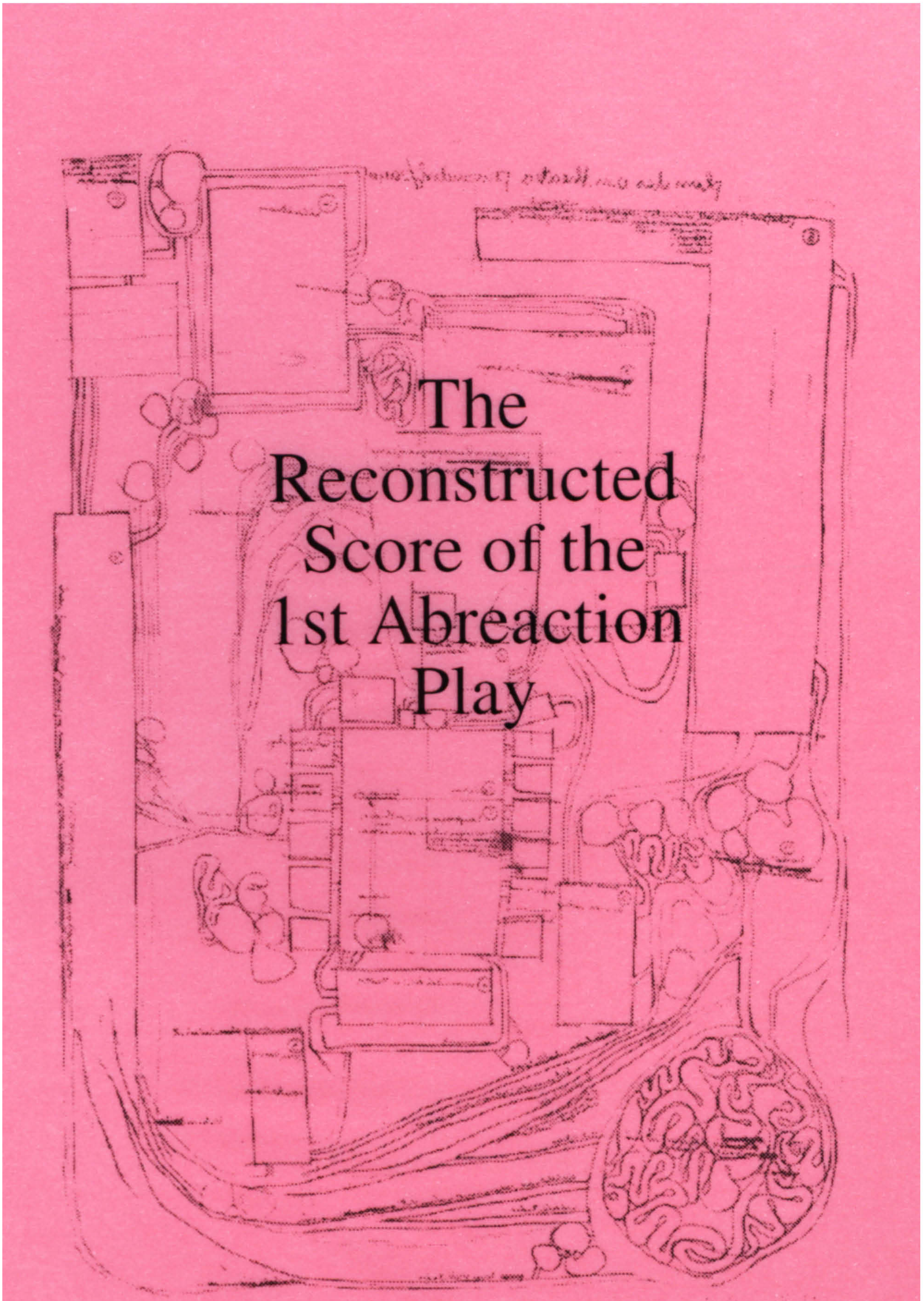
Rhythmic sections (percussion) are written in more conventional music notation again it is written in real time.

The score of the **1st Abreaction Play** was reconstructed from Nitsch's long-hand written account. A score was constructed using the notation conventions illustrated above for the passages of choric singing. The notion system was not used for the orchestra because in the **1st Abreaction Play** the orchestral participation is not definined in terms of velocity, only in duration. It was not until the 21st Aktion that Nitsch began to develop ideas of scoring and therefore manipulating and organising the sound more precisely. In the reconstructed score the actions are sometimes given in long hand and sometimes represented graphically for speed of reading during the performance.



A page from Nitsch's note book included in the score of the **80th Aktion** shows how Nitsch uses graphics as well as hand written accounts of various aspects of the Aktion. Nitsch also shows the floor patterns of the processions in and out of the main arena.





The Reconstructed Score of the 1st Abreaction Play

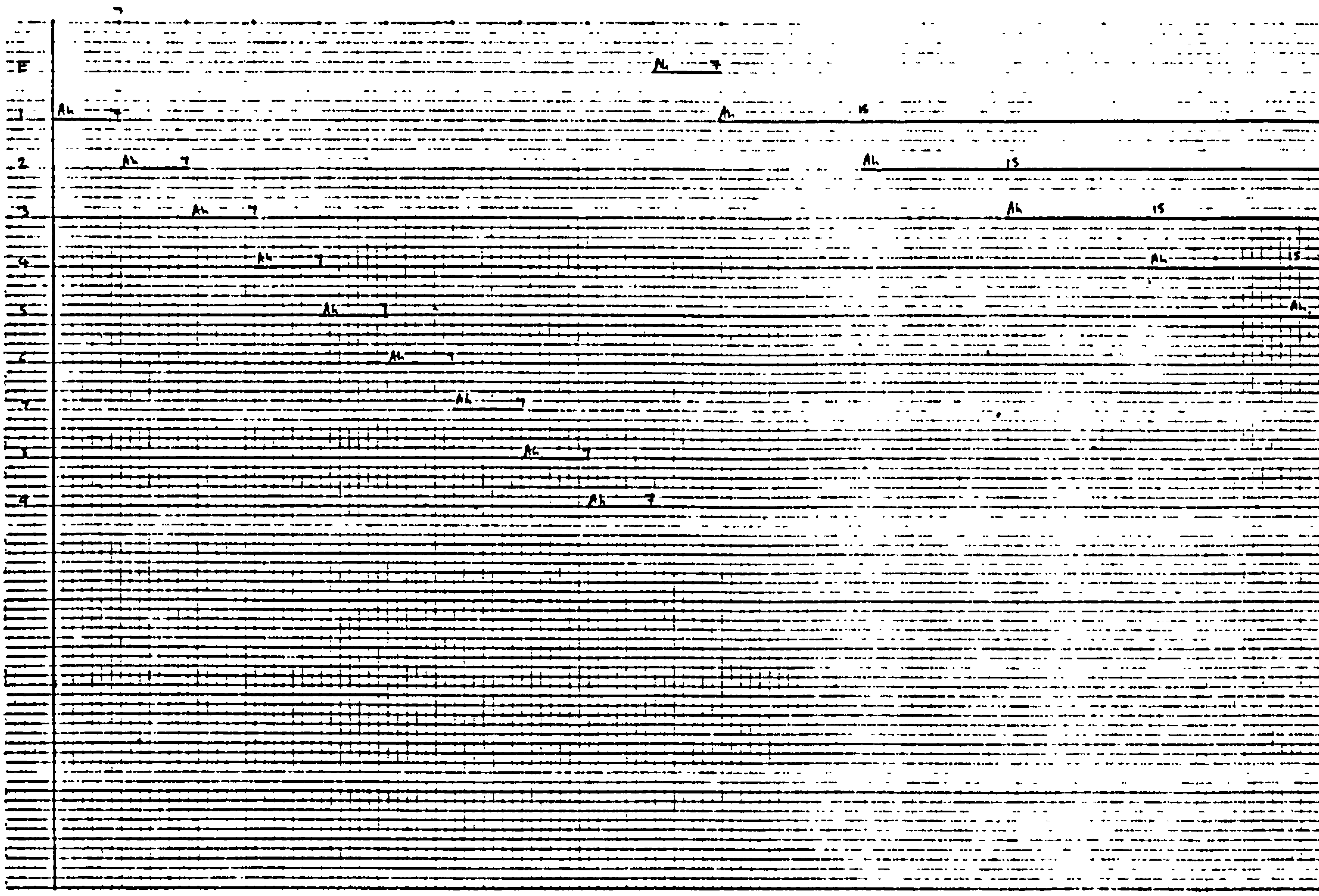
Duration in seconds unless otherwise stated —>

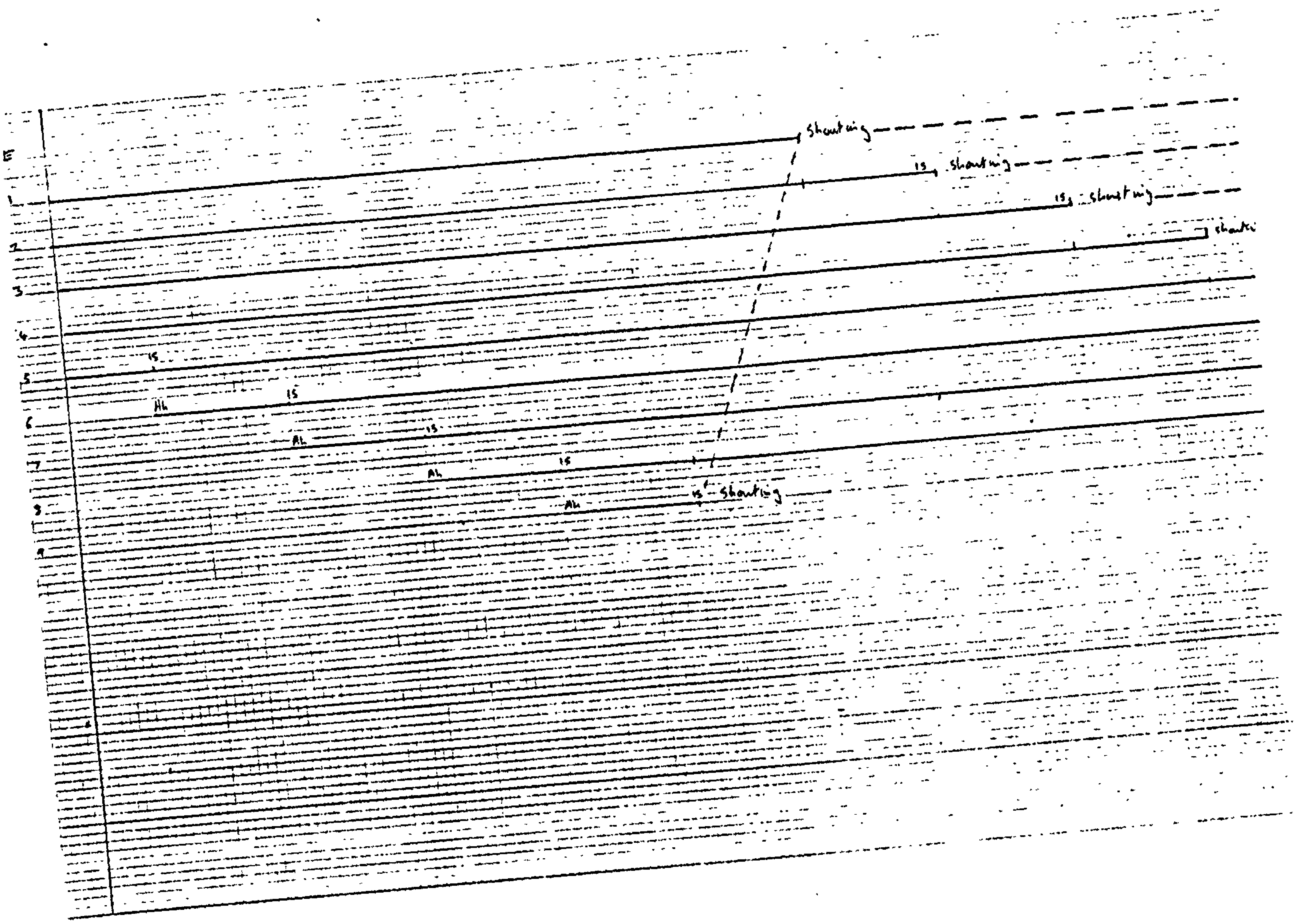
Esos

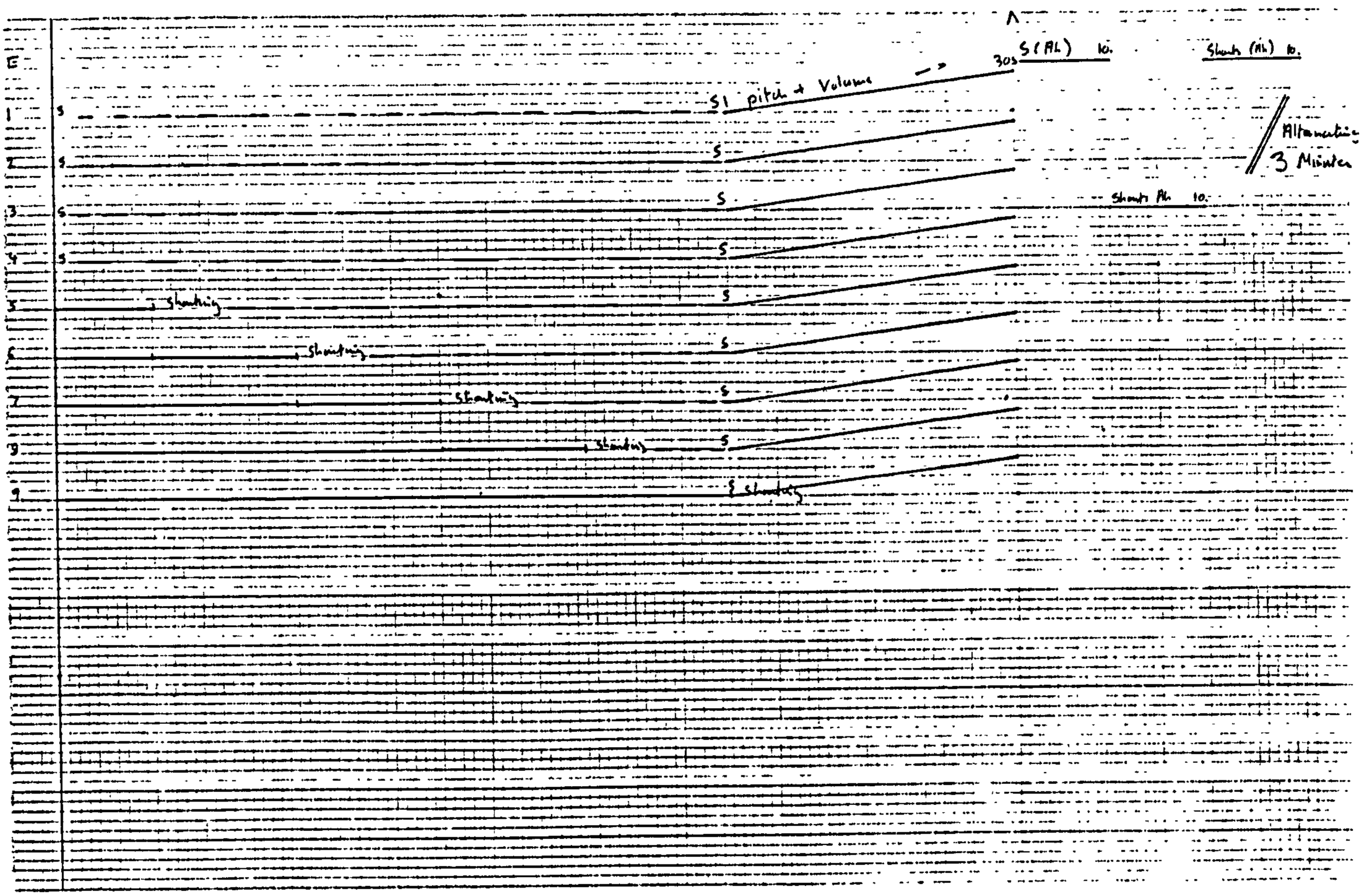
Ah. 7

Number 1)
Number 2.
Number 3.
Number 4
Number 5. Chorus
Number 6.
Number 7.
Number 8.
Number 9.)

Alternating for 3 Minutes.


E
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
Ah
7
15


E
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
shouting
IS
shouting
IS
shouting
IS
Ah
IS
Ah
IS
Ah
IS
Ah
IS
shouting


E
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
S
S1 pitch + Volume
30s
S (AL) 10.
Shoots (AL) 10.
Alternating
3 Minutes
Shoots AL 10.
Shooting
Shooting
Shooting
Shooting

E. ... Chorus form... processes around.
Eros & Number 3 - walking
1. - around.

2. E 3. * discrepancy in original script
3. - 3 also included in this *

4. WIDE while walking

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

1. 10s

shouts 10.

shouts 10.

shouts 10.

shouts 10.

shouts 10.

shouts 10.

shouts 10.

80s.

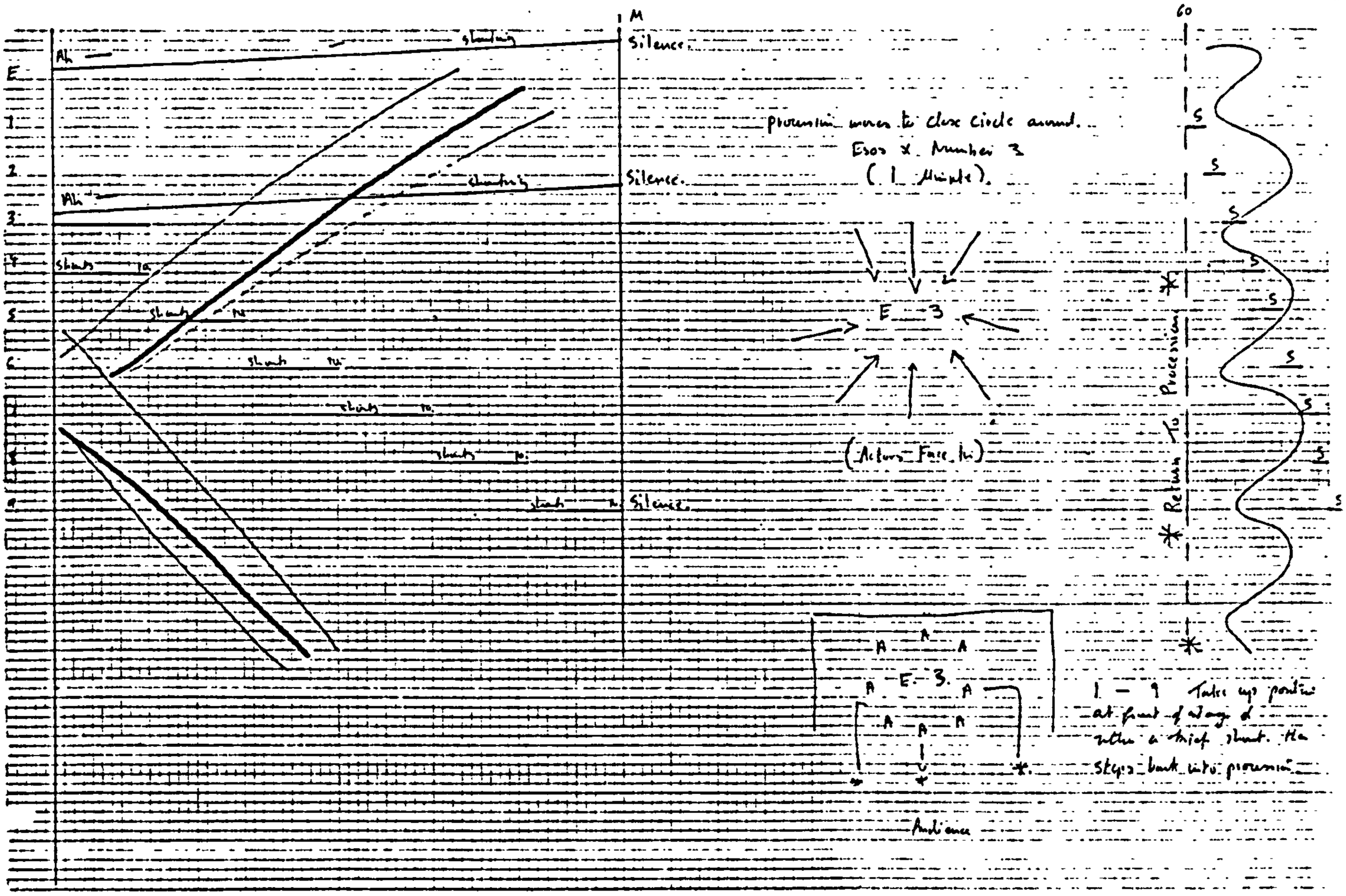
Ab — shouts + pitch + volume

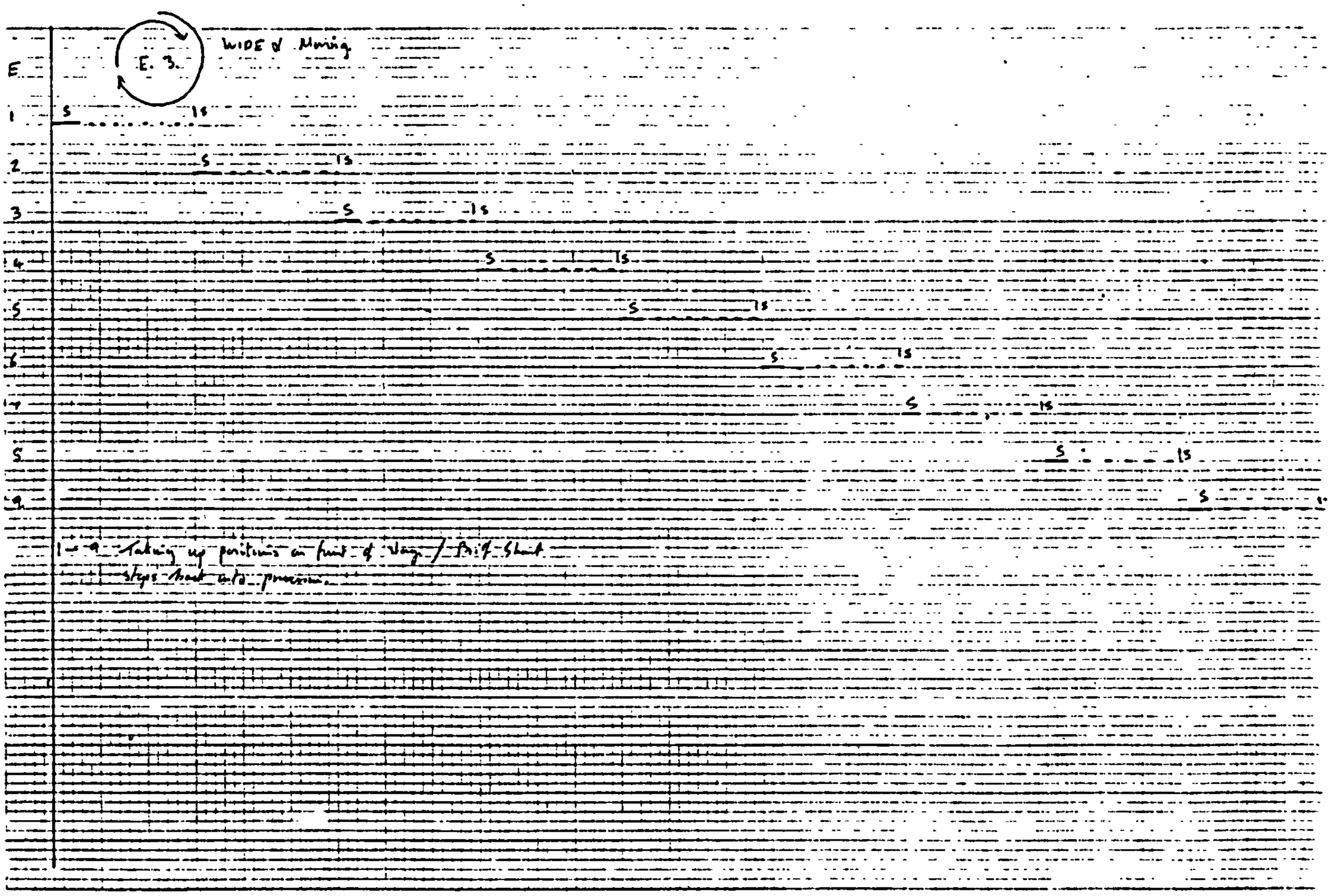
shouts 10

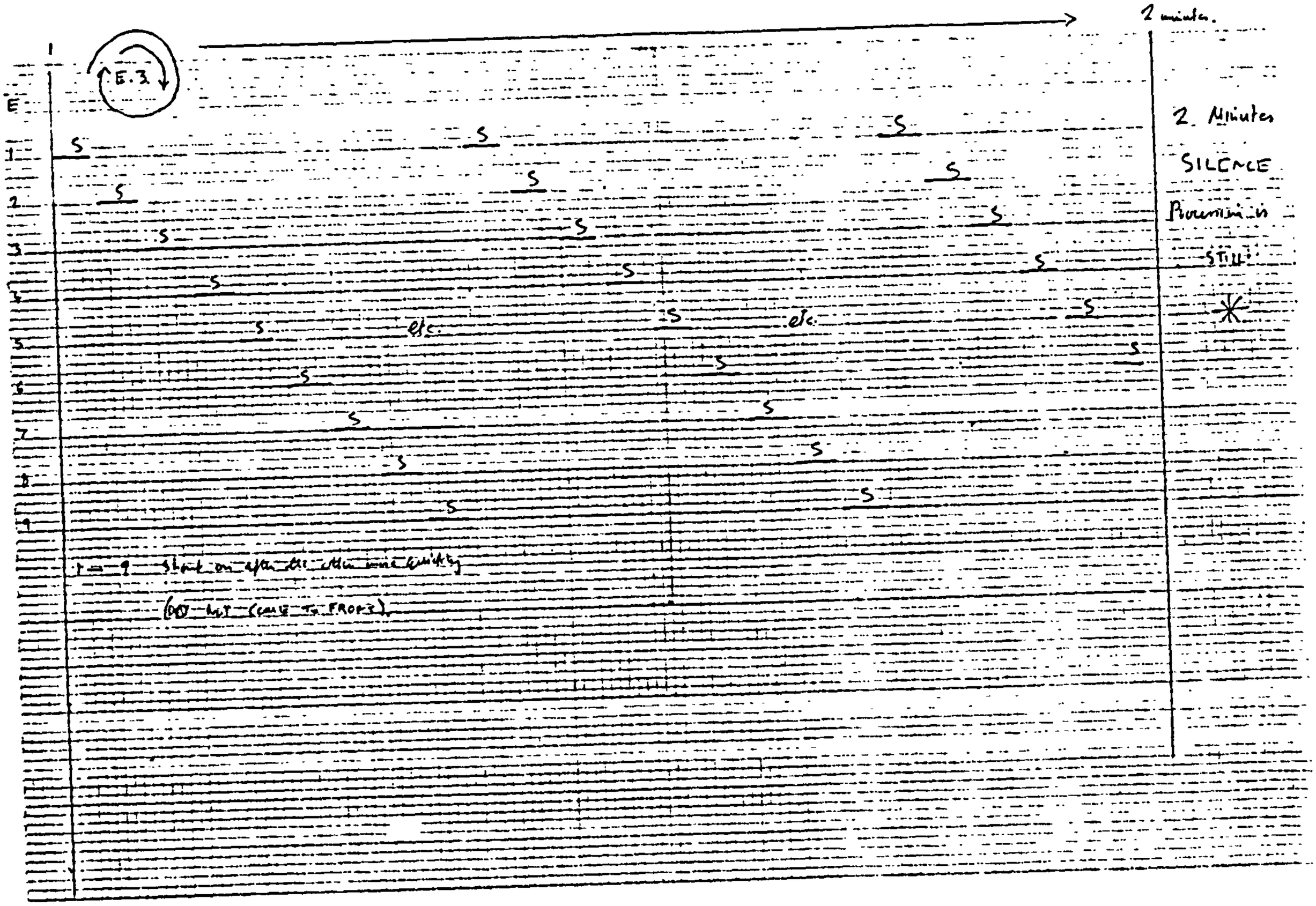
shouts 10

Ab — shouts + pitch + volume

(repeat as —7.)


M
Silence.
Ah
Ah
Silence.
Silence.
60
S
Procession
Return
E 3
(Actors Face In)
A A A
A E. 3. A
A A A
1 – 9 Take up position at front of stage & utter a brief shout. Ha
Step back into procession
Audience


E
WIDE V Mvmt
E. 3.
1
S
1s
2
S
1s
3
S
1s
4
S
1s
5
S
1s
6
S
1s
7
S
1s
8
S
1s
9
S
1 - 9 Taking up positions on front of Vase / Brief Short steps that are precise.


2 minutes.
E
E.3
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
S
etc.
2 Minutes
SILENCE
Procession is
STILL
*

FREE TIME * —→ 1

E — attempt to draw out the word

1 — Ah (sing) — 2 Minutes SILENCE

2 — Ah (sing) — Pressure is

3 — attempt to draw out the word — STILL

4 — Ah (sing)

5 — Ah (sing)

6 — short //

7 — short // quickly + repeat

8 — short //

9 — short //

E 3 Morning (Wide)

2M

% — Ah — 15

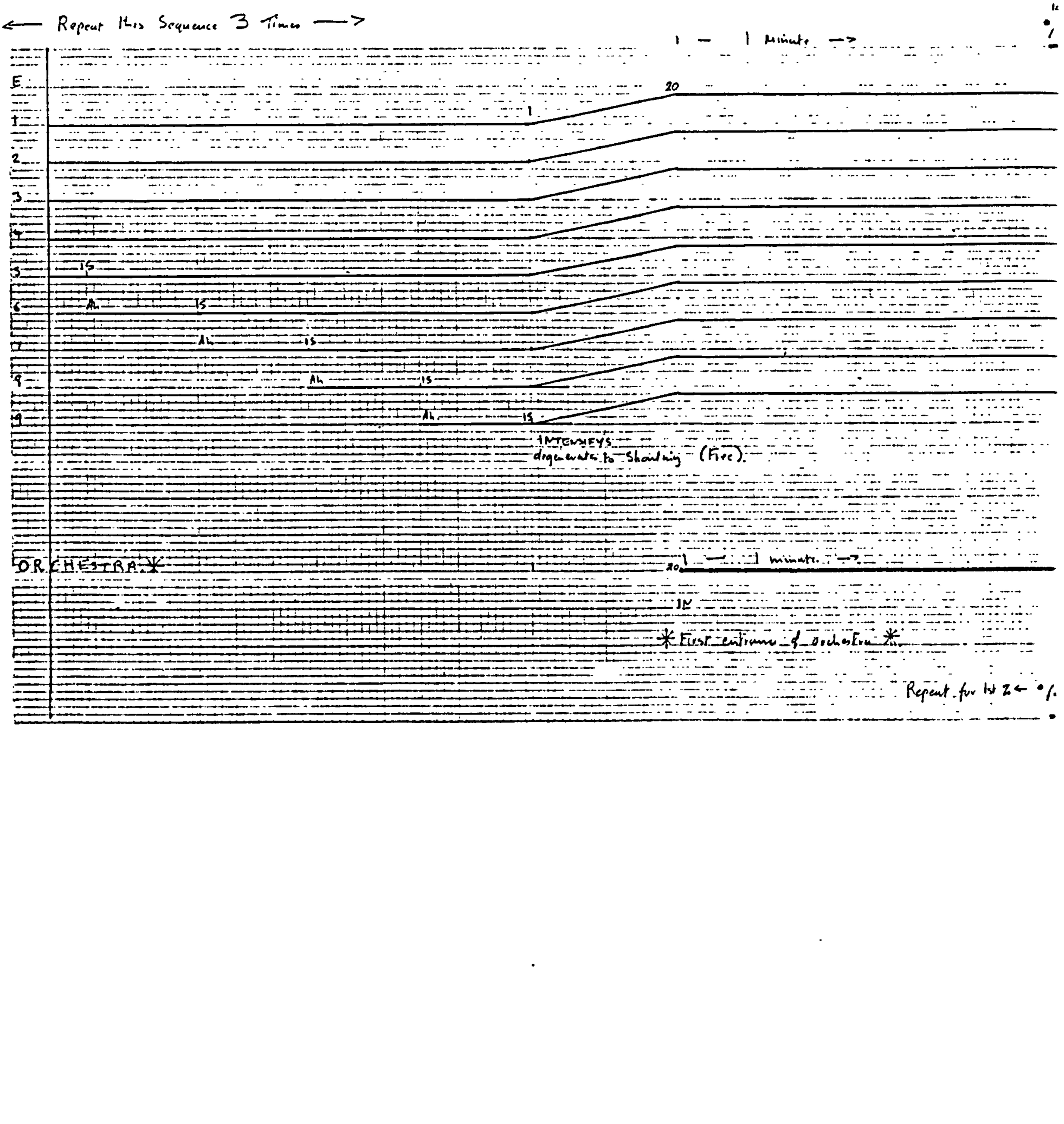
Ah — 15

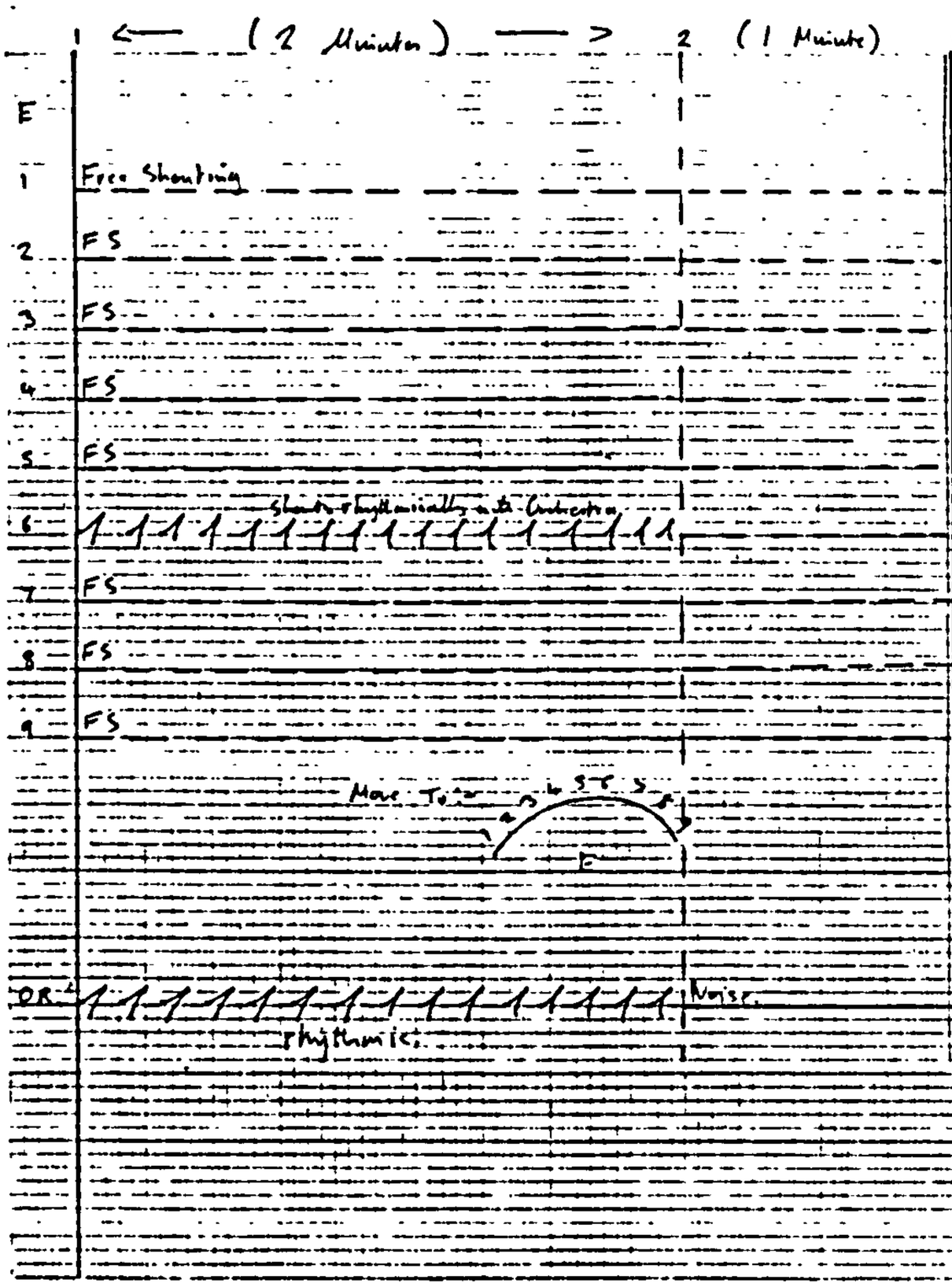
Ah — 15

Ah — 15 — Ah

%

Pelvis & Aid


← Repeat this Sequence 3 Times →
1 — 1 Minute →
E
1
20
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
Ah
IS
MEMBERS
disperse to Shouting (Five).
ORCHESTRA
1 minute
20
IN
* First entrance of Orchestra *
Repeat for 1st 2 ← 𝄀



1 } Actors bring on a trough filled with lukewarm water and in
2 } which there are five pieces of raw meat.

Esos wraps the wet pieces of meat in brown paper and gives them to a member of the audience sitting in the first row.
The meat is passed round the audience from one person to another.
Whoever receives it last throws the pieces of meat back on to the stage.

(Free) –

E

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

OR.

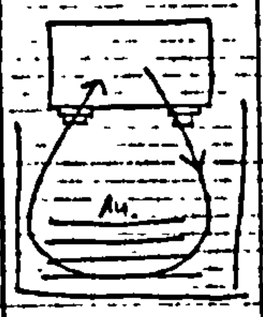
* 2 Sheets

Actors bring on a white freshly washed cloth, smelling of incense, and a white cloth which has been immersed in sweetened wine.

Both cloths are passed round to all the members of the audience.

1 (3 Minutes) 3

Esos – Walks around Audience



End in Stage.

(Free) –

* N.B. 2 Must get Egg Yolk As Certain is drawn.

1

2

3

4

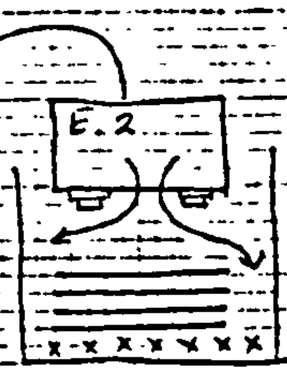
5

6

7

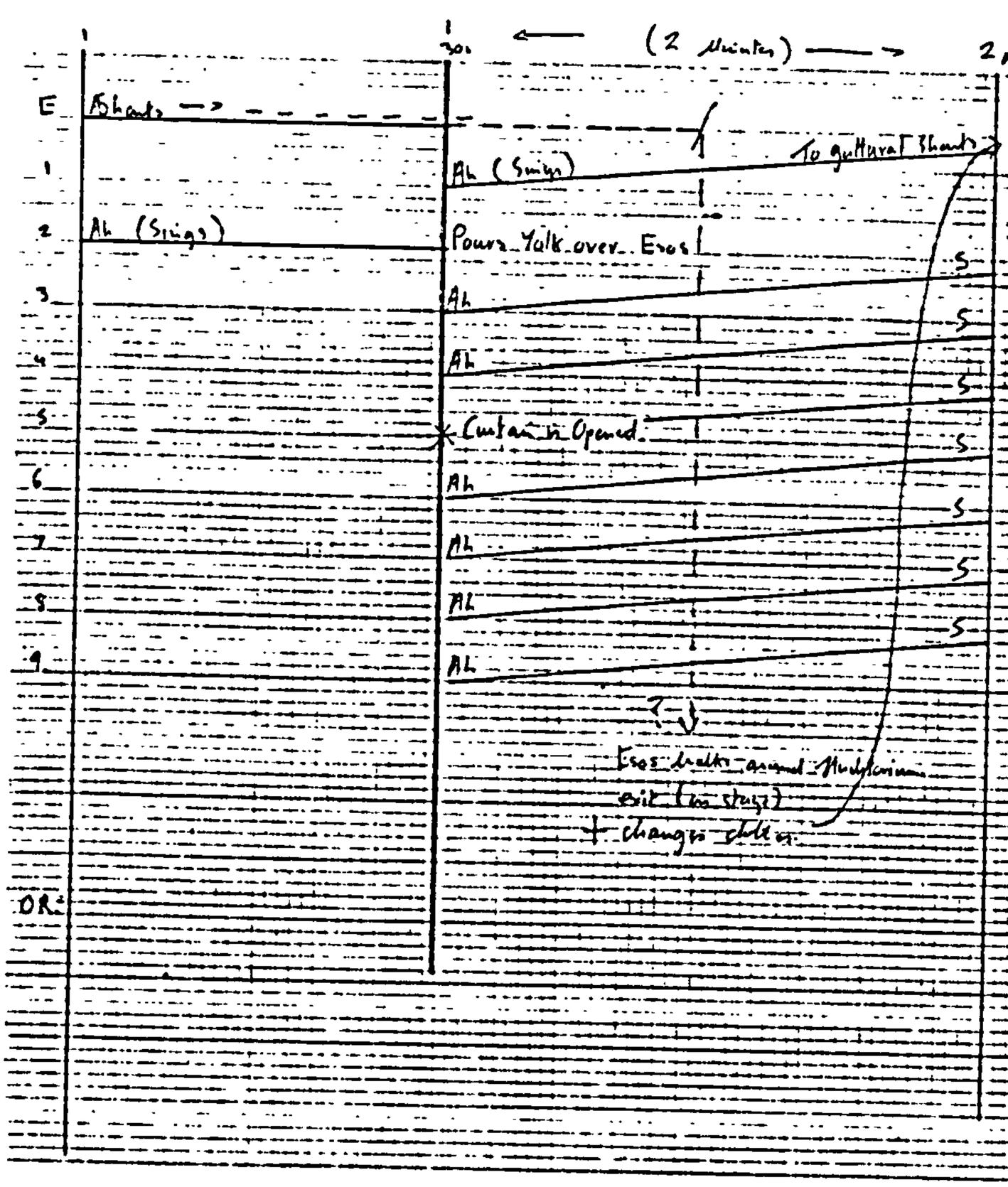
8

9



2 Remains on Stage with E

5 Draws Stage Curtains



(FREE)

Esos then goes back stage and changes his clothes.
He throws the soiled clothing into the auditorium so that it can be handed round the audience.
The last person to receive it give it back to Esos, who immerses it in vinegar, lymph, and hot water and then gives it back to the audience.
When Esos receives the wet clothing back again, he puts it on over his new clothes.

1) DH change clothes
2) Throw clothes on.
3) Around audience.
4) Immerse in liquids
5) Around audience.
6) Put on.
7) Tear off

Esos tears the wet clothing to pieces on the stage with the help of a sharp instrument.
Whilst he is doing this, the chorus shout loudly (2 minutes)

2 M.

1

30 (Free Time)

Obscene Shouting 30s Shout / Tongue & Tomb audience

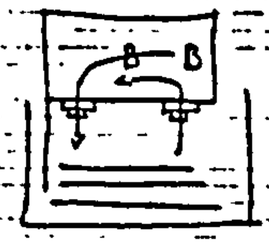
Together on Bed as if having SEX 2 Carry Bed around auditorium 3 Times.

Obscene Shouting. 30s Shout / Tongue & Tomb audience.

5 Carry Bed around auditorium 3 Times

6 Carry Bed around auditorium 3 Times

7 Carry Bed around auditorium 3 Times.



Noise. (Free Time)

In.

(Oddipus Mother)

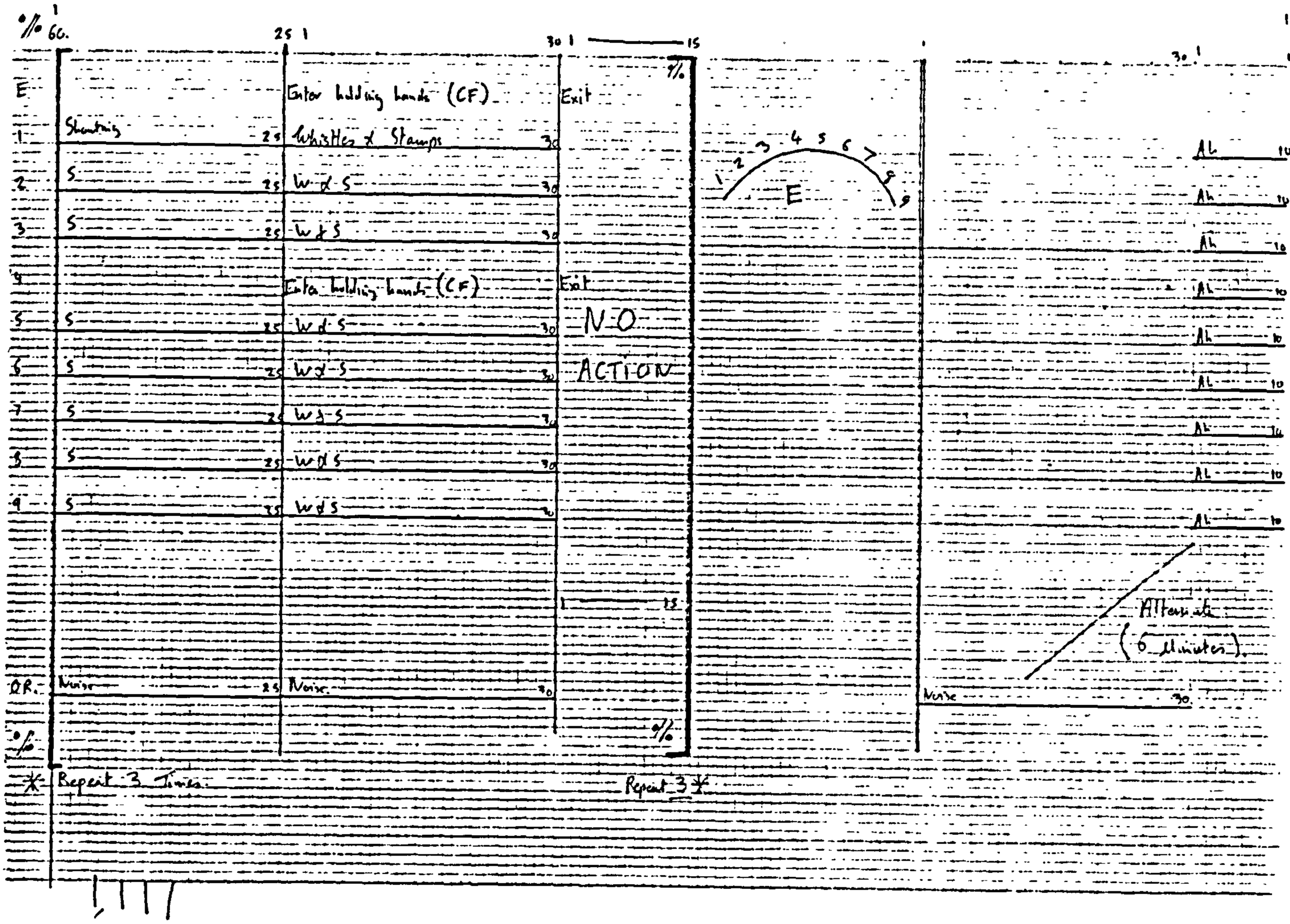
2 Minutes.

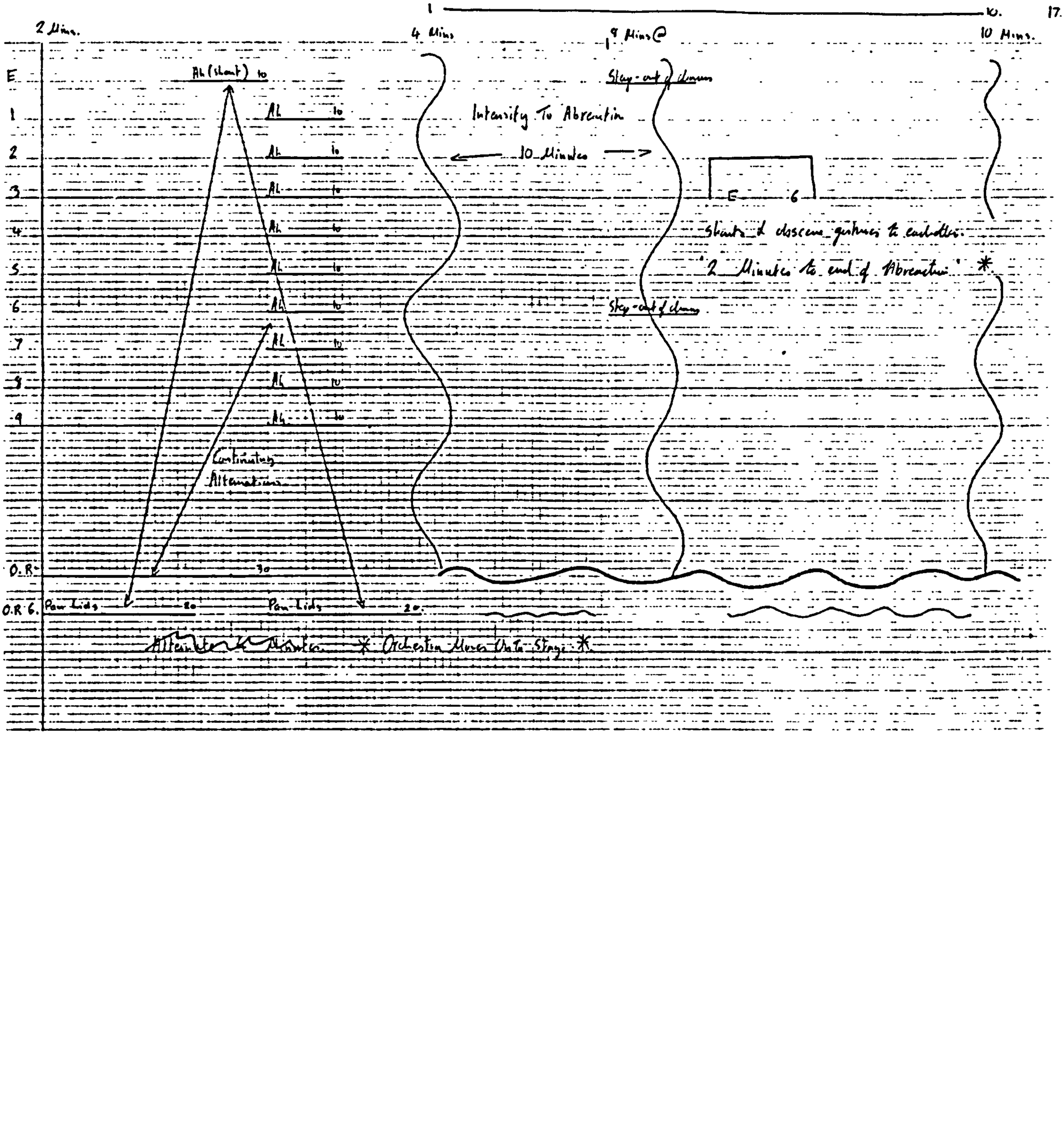
OR.

4 who carried bed Stand behind.

15
60

E	Bed is replaced on Stage.	OFF Bed, Face Audience.	Shouting (Louder) Thumb in Eyes (Continuation Gesture)	EXIT
		1 Shout 15		
1				
2				
3		(On Bed)	OFF Bed, Face Audience	
4	Seizes Esca putting her fingers in his mouth (Shouting)	1 Shout 15		EXIT
5				
6				
7				
8				
9		(Bed (centre Stage)		
OR				


Enter holding bands (CF)
Exit
Shooting
Whistles & Stamps
Enter holding bands (CF)
Exit
NO
ACTION
Noise
Noise
Repeat 3 Times
Repeat 3 *
E
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
Alternate
(6 Minutes)
Noise


2 Mins.
4 Mins
9 Mins @
10 Mins.
E
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
O.R
O.R 6.
Al (slant) to
Al to
Continuing Alternations
Intensify To Abreaction
10 Minutes
Stay-out of doors
Stay-out of doors
Slanted obscene gestures to each other.
2 Minutes to end of Abreaction *
Pan Lids
Pan Lids
Alternate Al Mantra
* Orchestra Moves Onto Stage *

E: E GO TO Contration Gesture Sheet L — During the music E goes to Bed & lays down.

1 SILENT SL

2 SILENT SL

3 SILENT SL

4 SILENT SL

5 SILENT SL

6 SILENT SL

7 SILENT SL

8 SILENT SL

9 SILENT SL

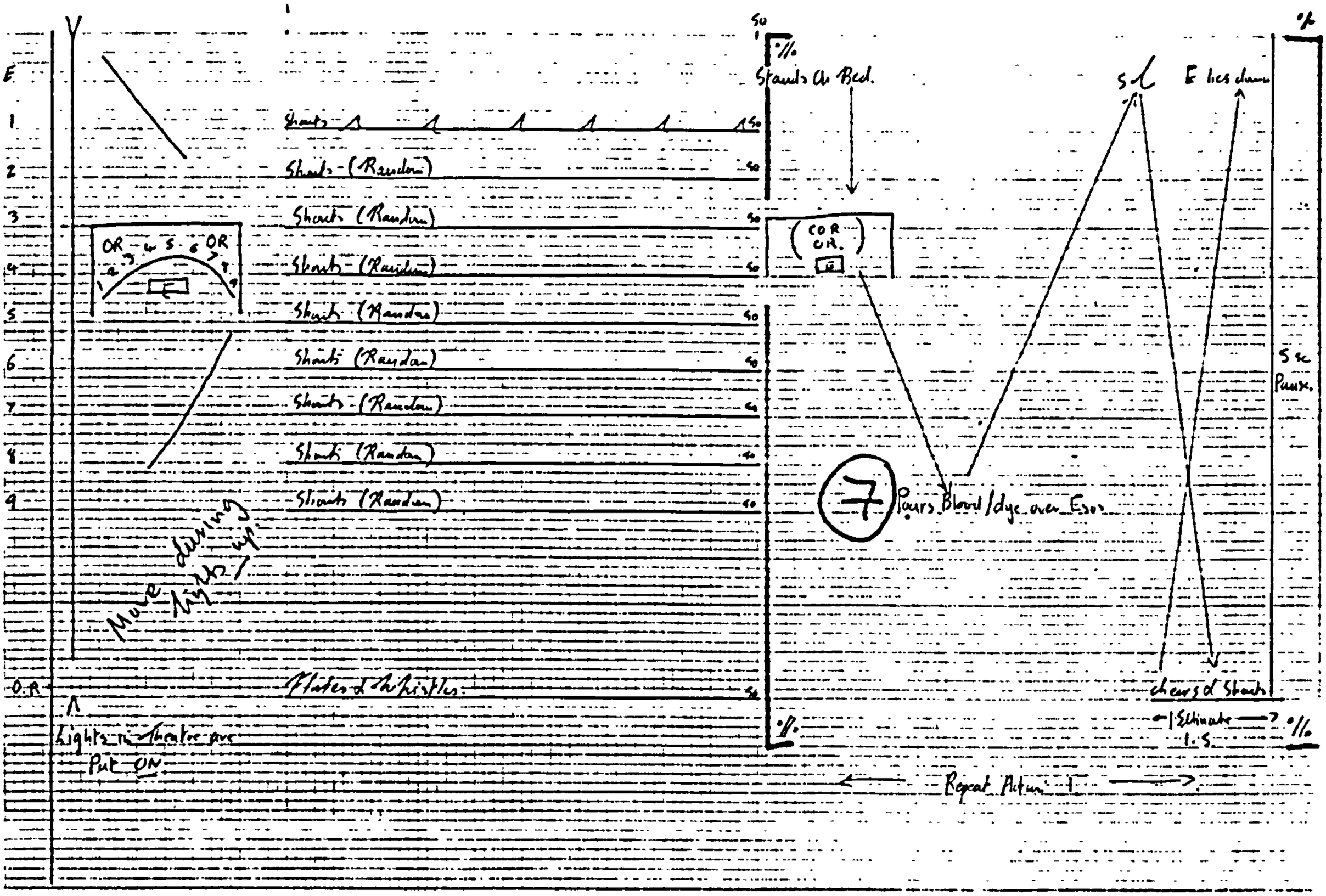
D.R. SILENT Music.

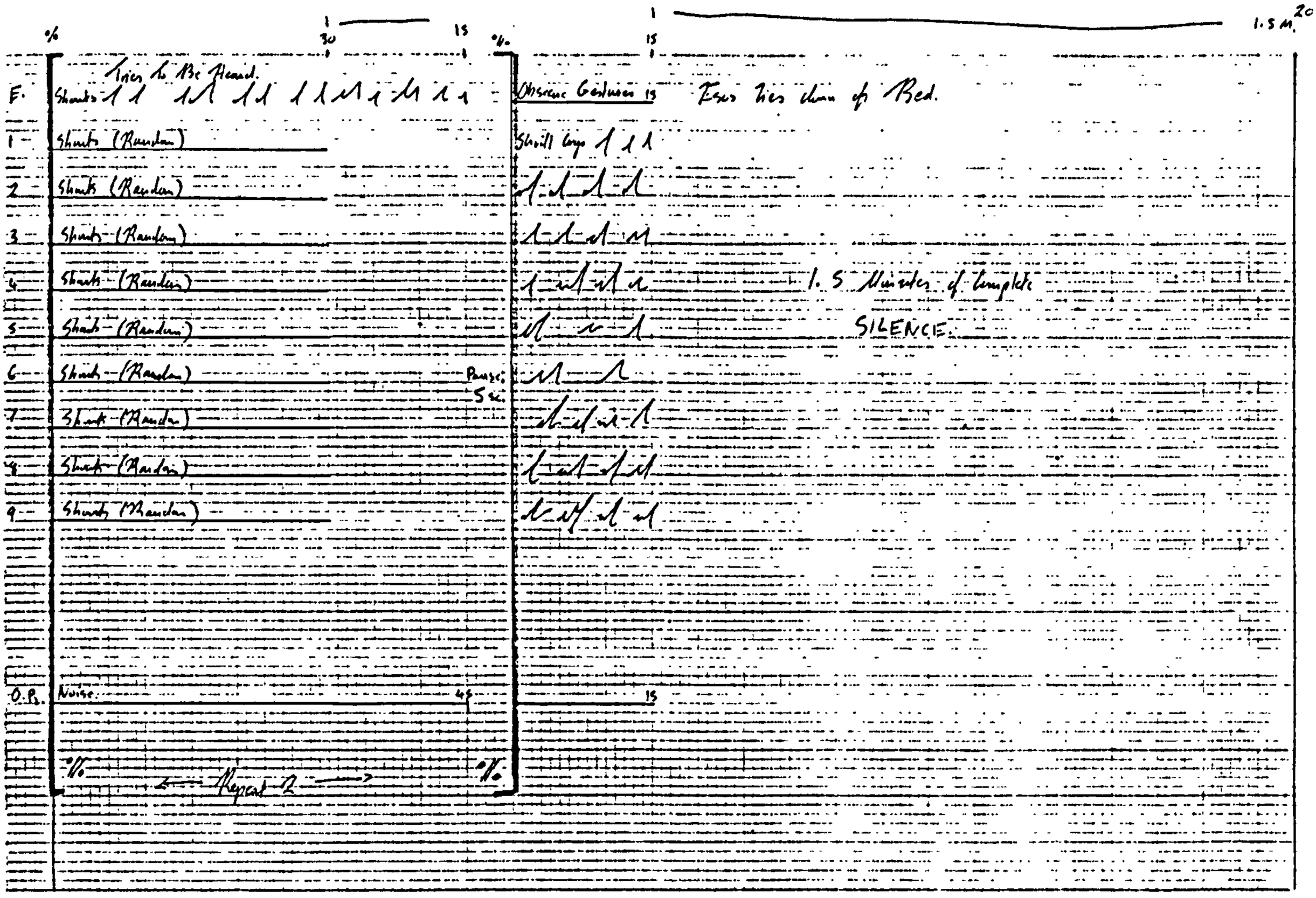
60"

← 6 Minutes for audience to Absent →

Λ

Lights in theatre are turned OFF.


E
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
OR
Shoots (Random)
OR 2 3 4 5 6 OR 7 8 9
Move during lights up
Plates & Whistles
Lights in Theatre are Put ON
Stands Or Bed.
(COR OR.)
7 Pours Blood/dye over Eson
Sk
E lies down
Sc Pans.
Cheers & Shouts
Eliminate
1.S.
Repeat Action


%
1
30
15
%
1
15
1.5 M.
20
Tries to Be Heard.
F.
Shouts
Obscene Gestures
15
Exes Ties down of Bed.
1
Shouts (Random)
Shrill Cry
2
Shouts (Random)
3
Shouts (Random)
4
Shouts (Random)
1.5 Minutes of Complete
5
Shouts (Random)
SILENCE.
6
Shouts (Random)
Pause: 5 sec.
7
Shouts (Random)
8
Shouts (Random)
9
Shouts (Random)
O.P.
Noise.
45
15
%
%
Repeat 2

E — 2 Minutes →

1 — Stands up on Bed. / Lady down. Hers Now

2 — All. — 7th stroke Obscene.

3 — 7th stroke "

4 — 7th stroke "

5 — 7th time "

6 — Free Shouts & Quips Obscene Regarding Absurd Burlesque — (6) Pours Blood / dips over Eyes (Repeat 7 times)

7 — 7th time "

8 — 7th time "

9 — 7th time "

Le Maestro

Q.R. — All. — Noise. — 7th time. Noise

← 2 Minutes →

PROCESSIONS:- (Liturgy.) 1 ——— 4 Minutes ——— 22

E — Lies on Bed. Throughout

1 — Shouts = one after the other.

2 — Repeat for 4 Minutes.

3 — Torn into Pieces

4 —

5 —

6 — 6 carries a piece of meat

7 — at front of Procession

8 — Ahh (Sings) 3 Shouts of Ahh Repeat for 4 Minutes.

9 — Throws meat in five several times

O.R —

(2)

E	1	60. 1	60
1			
2			
3			
4	Pronunciamento.		
5	NO ACTION — 1 Minute →	Ecstatic cries of abreaction - 1 Minute →	In Silence.
6			Around Audience
7			3 Times.
8			Anti-clockwise.
9			
O.R.			

3 Mins.

E

Provincial Halls

2

3 Short-cut as after Alto

4 Repeat for 3 Minutes

5

6 6 Government 4 7.

7 Alt. 10 Short-cut Repeat for 3 Minutes

8

9

(Morning Hymn - continue as Audience)

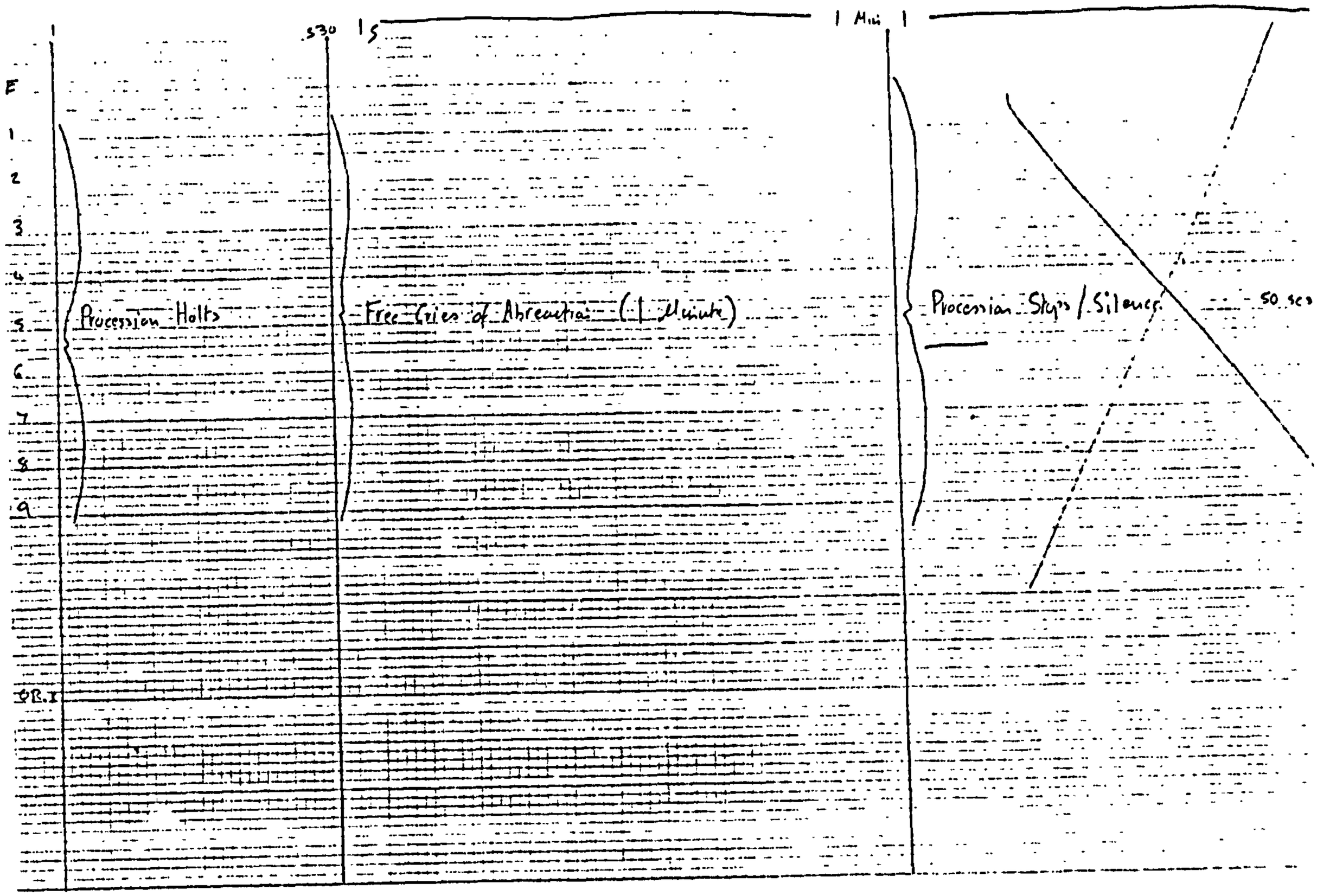
15

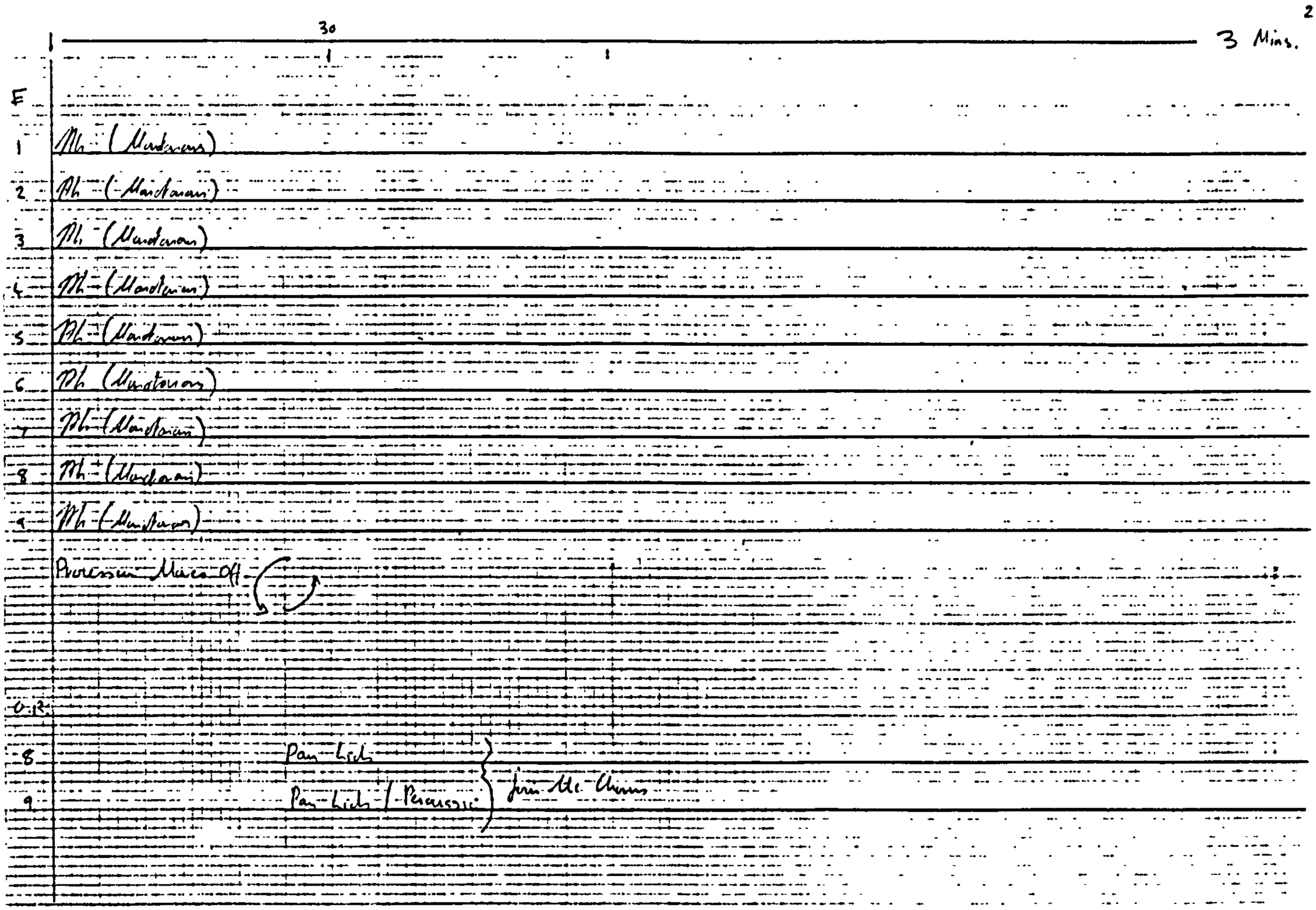
7. Ingwe: Incat to Man
ii Orchestra

D.R.

OR

or


1
.530
15
1 Min
1
2
E
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
Procession Halts
Free Cries of Abreaction (1 Minute)
Procession Steps / Silence
50 secs


30
1
1
3 Mins.
2
E
1
Ph (Mardarian)
2
Ph (Mardarian)
3
Ph (Mardarian)
4
Ph (Mardarian)
5
Ph (Mardarian)
6
Ph (Mardarian)
7
Ph (Mardarian)
8
Ph (Mardarian)
9
Ph (Mardarian)
Processin Music Off
0.12
8
Pan-Lich
9
Pan-Lich / Percussie
Jim McClure

E.

// Procession Stop

1 Ah (Sing) 30 Free Cries 30 Silent / Run

2 Ah (Sing) 30 Free Cries 30 Silent / Run

3 Ah (Sing) 30 Free Cries 30 Silent / Run

4 Ah (Sing) 30 Free Cries 30 Silent / Run

5 Ah (Sing) 30 Free Cries 30 Silent / Run — Individuals come to front

6 Ah (Sing) 30 Free Cries 30 Silent / Run — & Shout one after

7 Ah (Sing) 30 Free Cries Silent / Run — the

8 Ah (Sing) 30 Free Cries Silent / Run — 3 Minutes

9 Ah (Sing) 30 Free Cries Silent / Run — (2.)

// (Repeat 6 times) //

(3) (1) (4)

OR (Rest of Orchestra at back of audience SILENT)

Pan Pipes → Singing

(1 or 2 Choirs)

Percussion → Singing

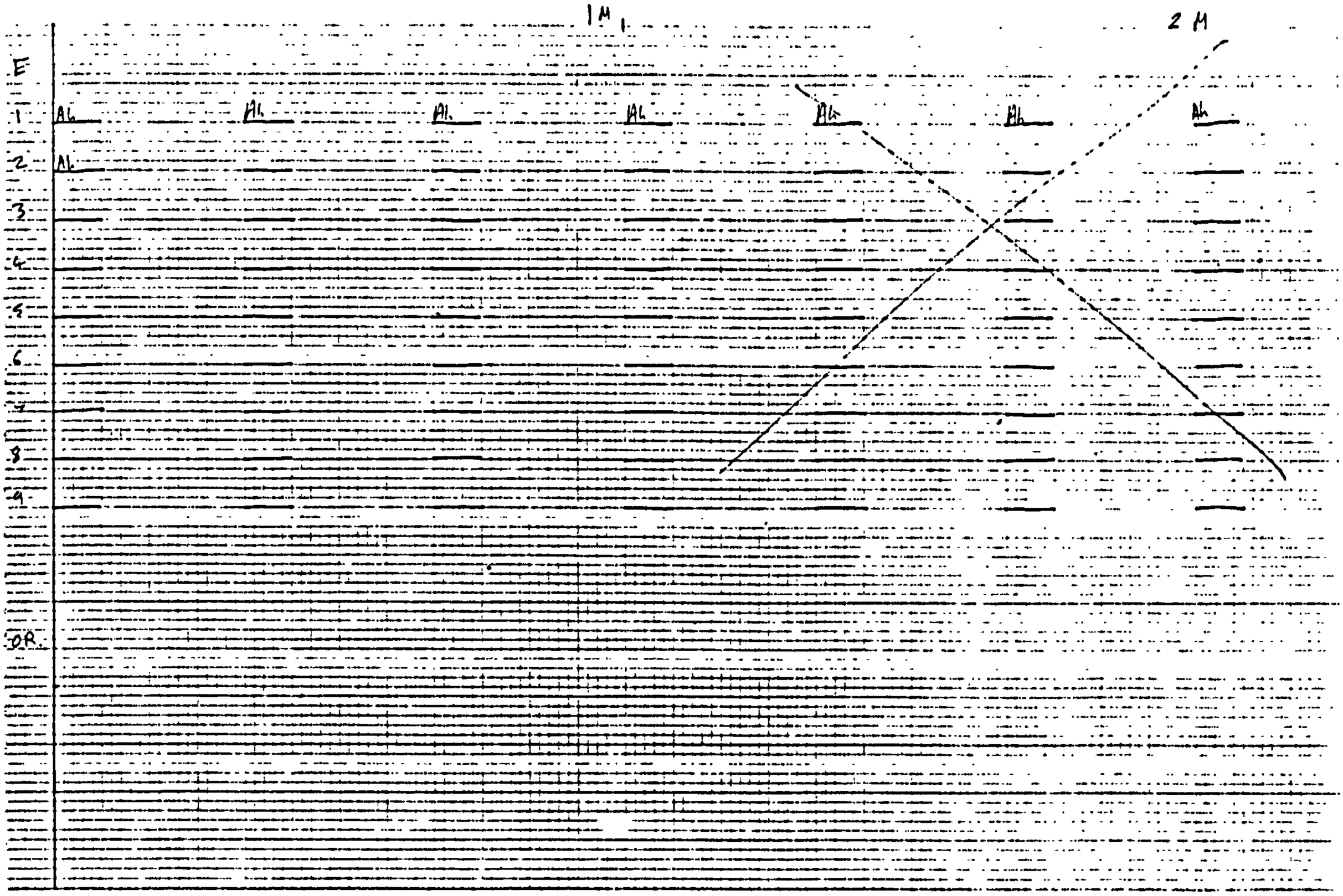
Return to Orchestra

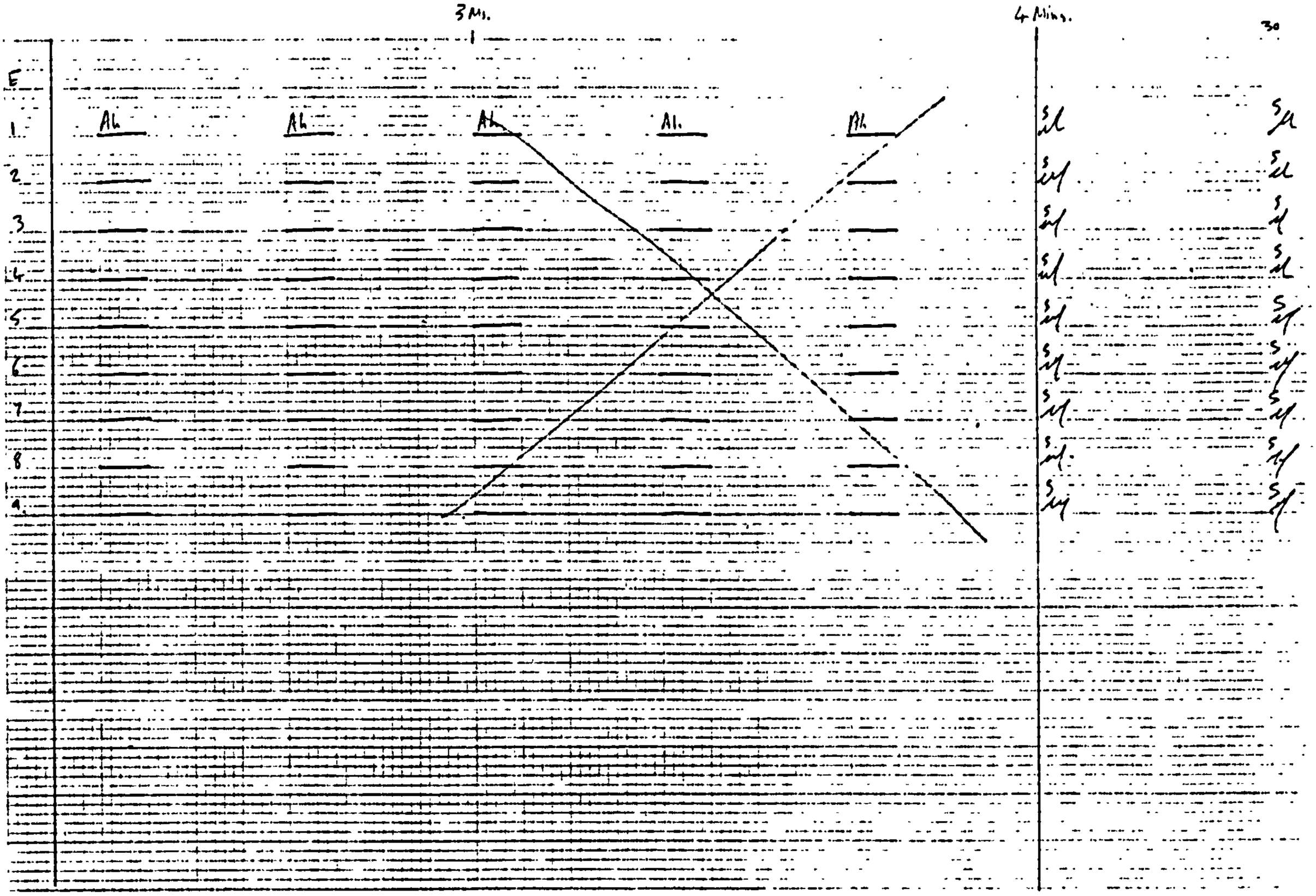
3 Minutes

Procession Halts

SILENCE

Minute →


1 M
2 M
E
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
OR.


3 Mi.
4 Mins.
30
E
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
Al.
Al.
Al.
Al.
Al.
S
S
S
S
S
S
S
S
S

30 1 Min. 30 30 2 30 3

E

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

Provenzer-Motiv
(1 Minute)

Provenzer-Mais-OH-Hyan

O.R

2

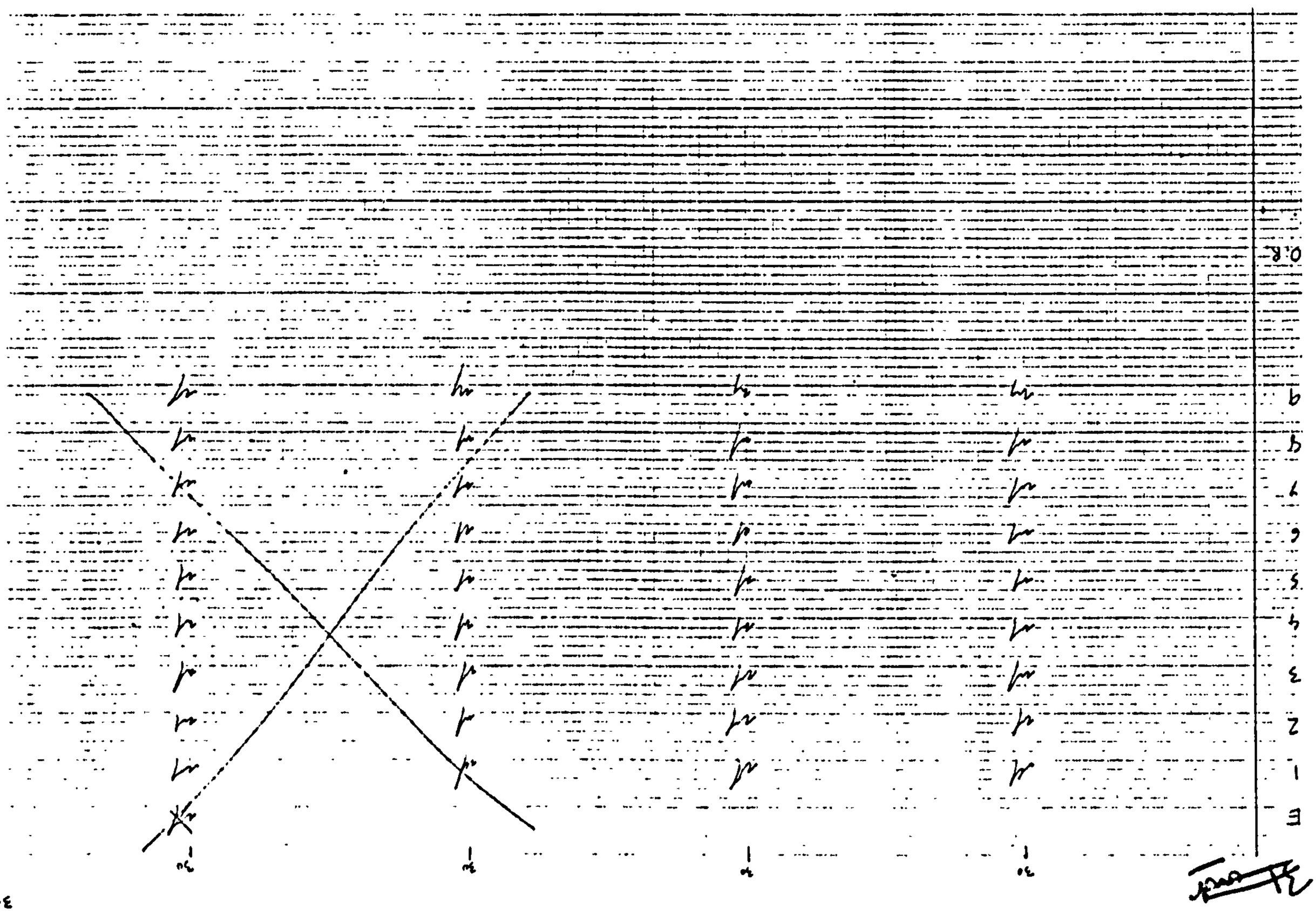
4

Im Unisono

Pa-kids

Pa-kids.

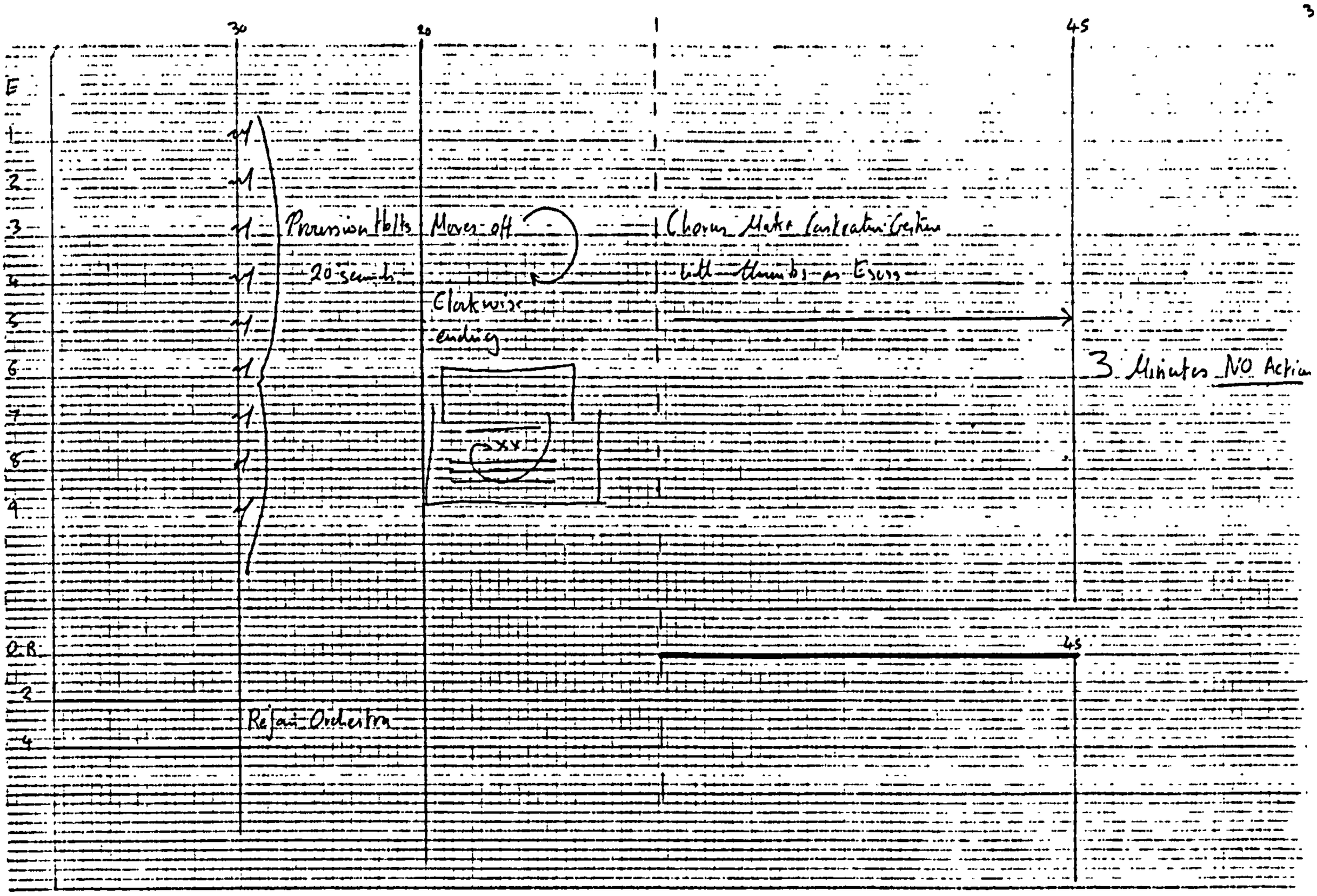
30



3 cont

	30	30	30	30
E				✓
1	✓	✓	✓	✓
2	✓	✓	✓	✓
3	✓	✓	✓	✓
4	✓	✓	✓	✓
5	✓	✓	✓	✓
6	✓	✓	✓	✓
7	✓	✓	✓	✓
8	✓	✓	✓	✓
9	✓	✓	✓	✓
O.R.				

3.


30
20
1
45
3
E
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
Provision Hdlts
20 seconds
Move off
Clockwise
ending
Chorus Make Contrary Gesture
with thumbs as Escort
3 Minutes NO Action
O.R.
2
4
45
Refer Orders

15

E

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

O.B

Eso's Stands-up on Bed.

Stands ↗ ↑

Points Around Bed. Right of Bed

Proceeds Moves off Clockwise

-4 Minutes →

Castrating Gesture.

Noise (Penetrating) — 15

7H | Shouts & Cheering - Lusty & Triumphant

7H | " " "

7H | " " "

Each time bucket is emptied | " " "

Chorus Cheer. 7H | " " "

7H | " " "

7H | " " "

7H. | " " "

(9 Pours bucket of dye over Eso's head) | " "

✳ Repeat 6 Times ✳

Penetrating Noise

@45.

E — Esca gets out of Bed / walks around audience

1 — Shaking & Cleaning — dusty & Twinging hurt

2 — " " "

3 — " " "

4 — " " "

5 — " " " — Will Jnr. walk around audience 3 times. Exit via public entrance

6 — " " "

7 — " " "

8 — " " "

9 — " " "

D.R — Runs up onto stage while mates have

3 Minutes For Audience To Abreact.

Continuous Grey outside

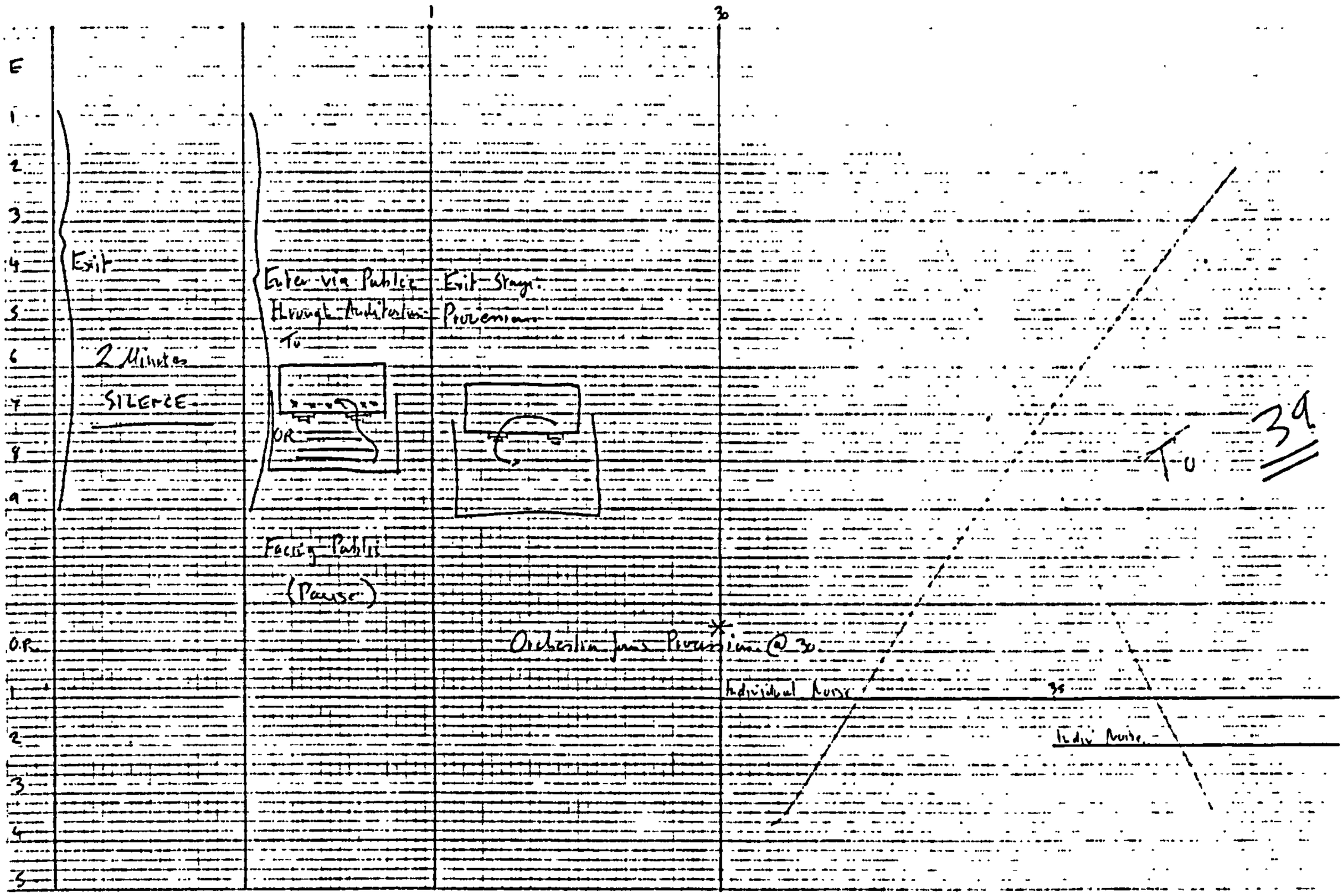
	E			
1.		Stage R.		
2		Carry off Red.		
3				
4				
5.		Brings on Lumb.	These entries During 90 sec.	30 Seconds No Action.
6		Stage L		
7		Helps with Lumb's		
8		spread White		
9		Sheet Under		
O.R.		Take up Position @	Penetrating Noise	90 secs.
		back of Audience		

1 ⟶ 10 Mins

E — Enter E via Public — Discontinuous bomb / Fears & Shouts // — Exit Eros (Centre Gangway)

1 — Carry Innards of lamb — and the audien 3 times — Pours Dyi. over Back Cloth & Steps.
2 — on white Sheet. / Then — Then Turn and a Step —
3
4
5 — The All rush with Step & — Chorus for giving at Banks — Ah (Sing) one after the.
Fear at the meat. of Auditorium.
6 — Stamp of — Ah (Sing)
Persecution
7 — Ah (Sing)
8 — Jubilation — Ah (Sing)
9 — Ah (Sing)

O.R. — Noise (Penetrating)

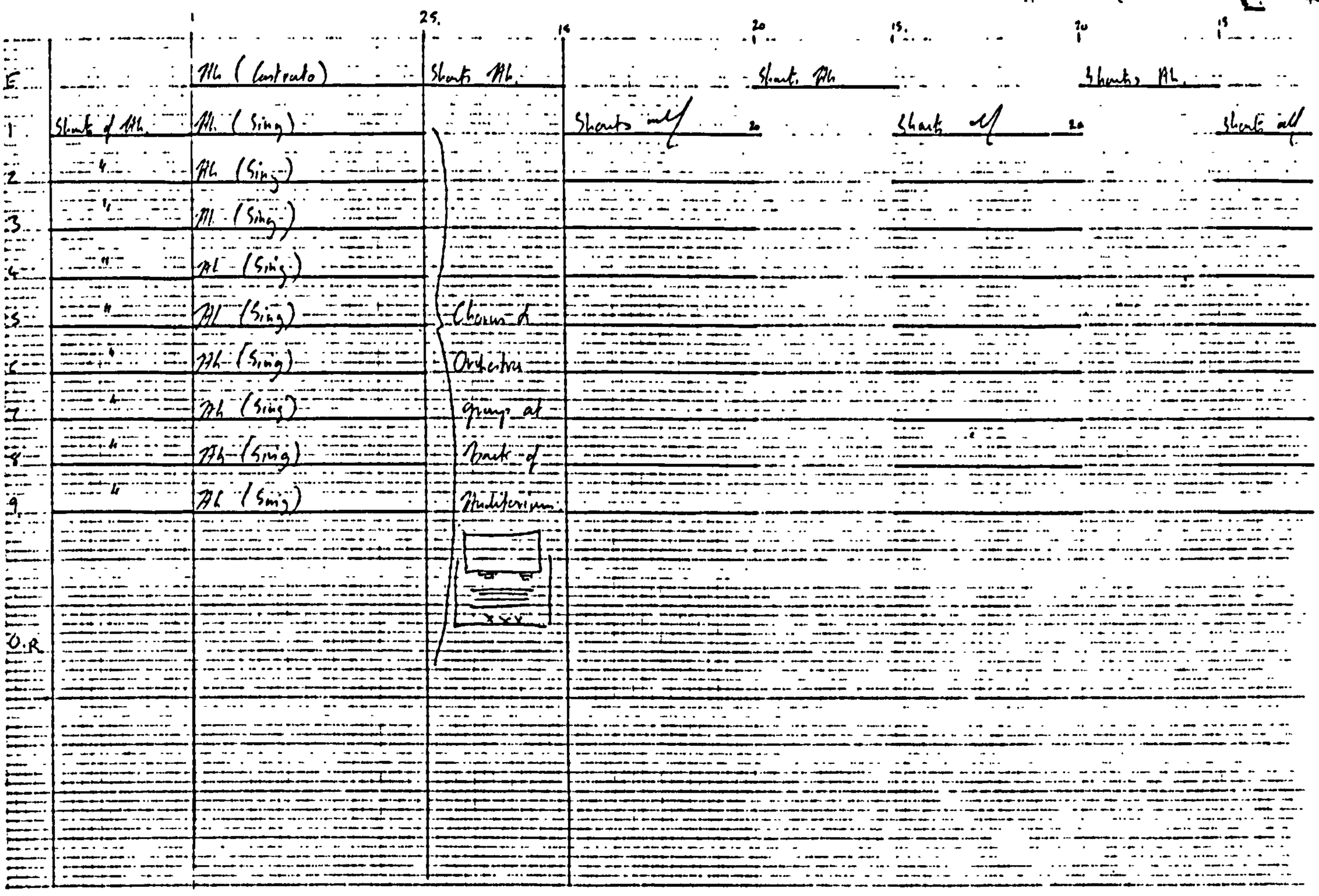

1
30
E
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
O.R
1
2
3
4
5
Exit
2 Minutes
SILENCE
Enter via Public
Through Auditorium
To
OR
Facing Public
(Pause)
Exit Stage
Proscenium
To
39
Orchestra pass Proscenium @ 30
Individual Music
35
Individual Music

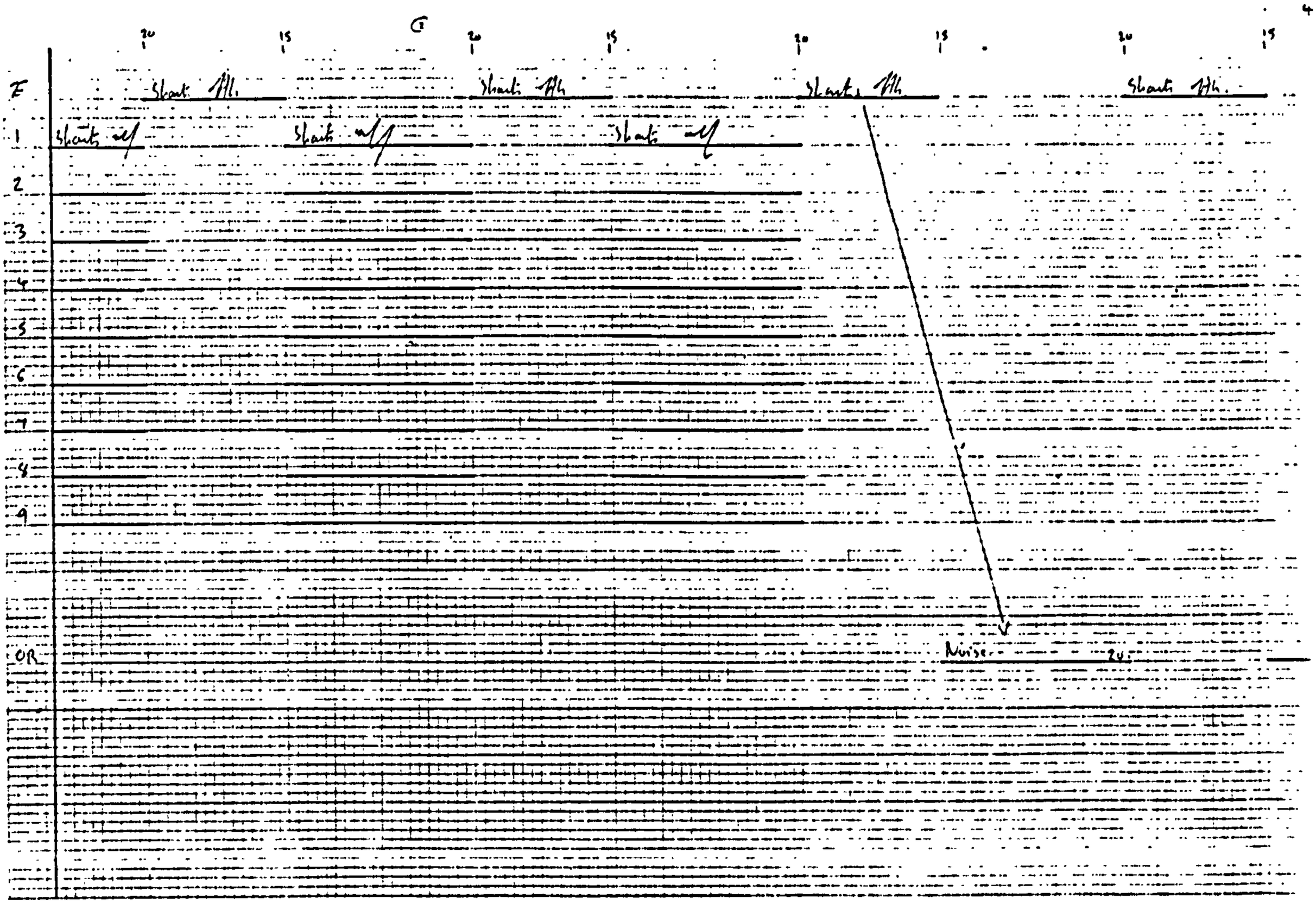
15

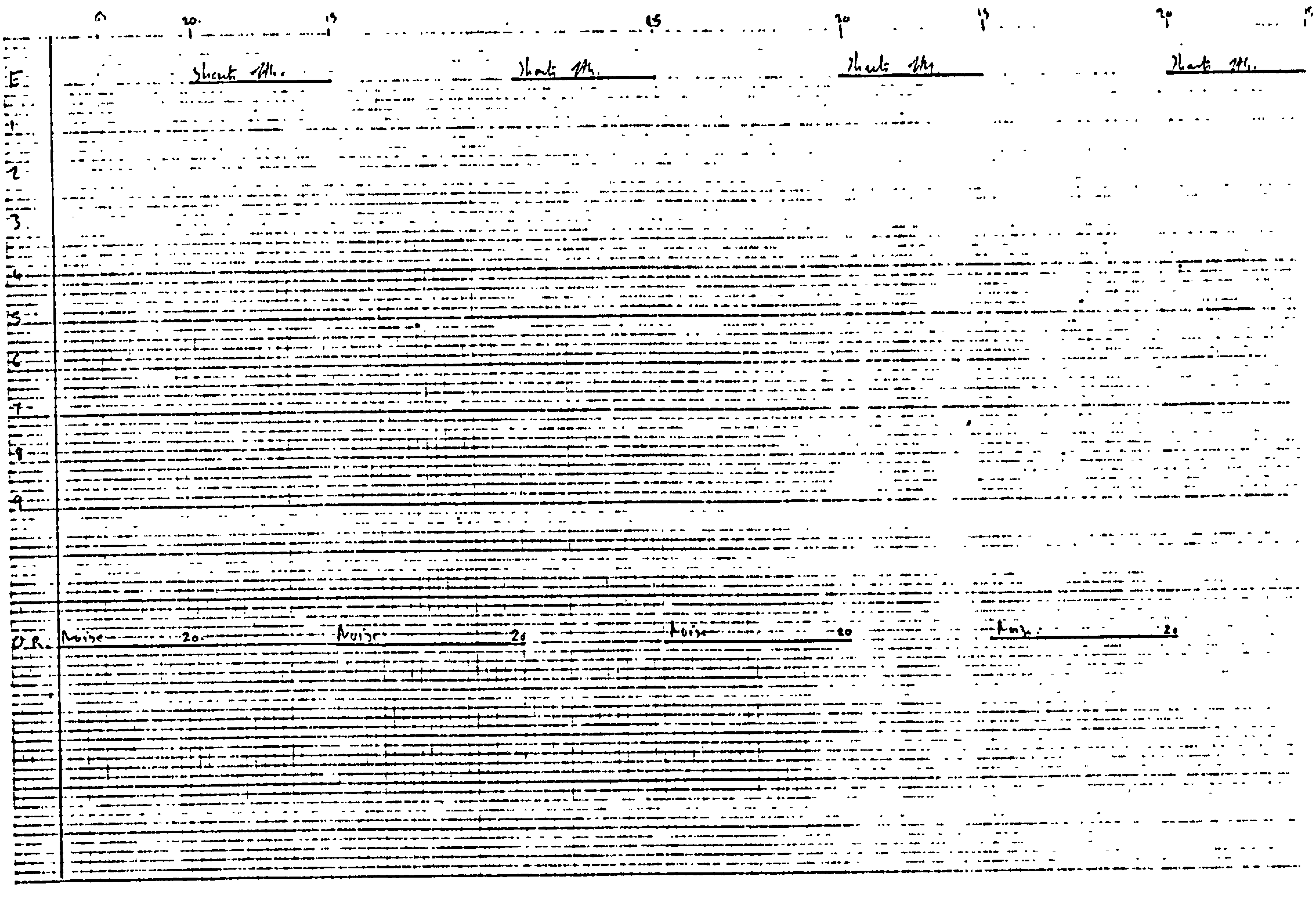
E Ah (Sing) — Ah (Sing) — Ah (Sing) — Ah (Sing) — Ah (Sing)

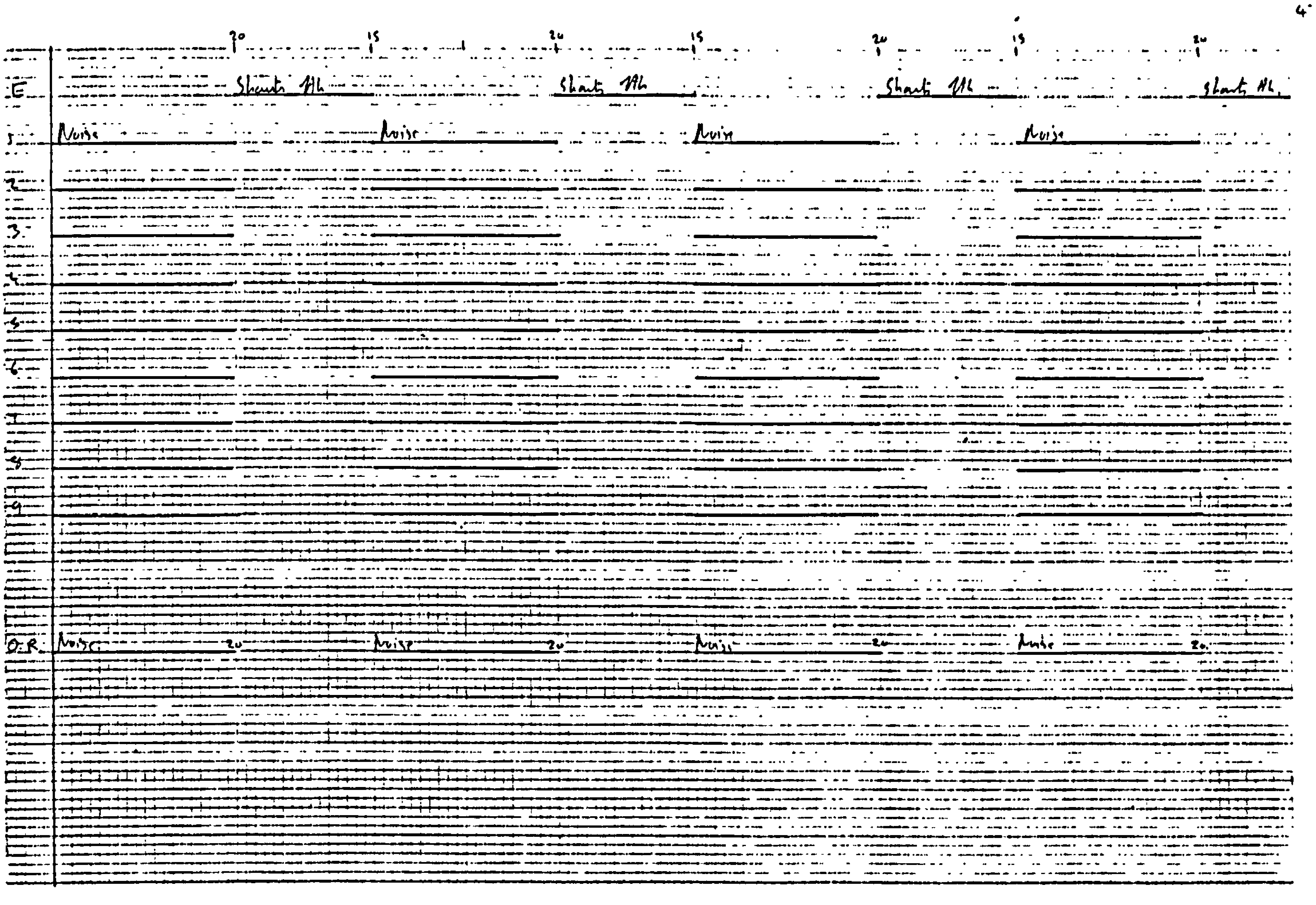
Shouts of Ah — Shouts of Ah — Shouts of Ah — Shouts of Ah

OR.


E
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
O.R
Alt (Contralto)
Alt. (Sing.)
Alt (Sing.)
Alt (Sing.)
Alt (Sing.)
Alt (Sing.)
Alt (Sing.)
Alt (Sing.)
Alt (Sing.)
Shouts Alt.
Shouts of Alt.
Shouts Alt
Shouts Alt.
Shouts all
Shouts all
Shouts all
Chorus of
Orchestra
group at
back of
Auditorium


E
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
OR
Short 16th
Short 16th
Short 16th
Short 16th
Short mf
Short mf
Short mf
Noise


20.
15
Shouts Ah.
E
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
9
O.R.
Noise
20.
Noise
25


4'
Shouts Ah
Shouts Ah
Shouts Ah
Shouts Ah
E
Noise
Noise
Noise
Noise
O.R.

15 20 15

E — Shouts 1st. — Exeu Runs into Auditorium.

1 — Noise 20 — Shouts "Catch Me"

2 — All Chorus Say it

3 — Catch him

4 — Actors & Chorus walk into auditorium

5

6

7

8

9

O.R. — Noise 20 — Noise.

3 — O.R.(3) Pours Cooked Egg Yolk over him

T.K. — Whistle

Exeu goes backstage — changes clothing — chitty clothes Returns into auditorium for audience to examine — goes back to Exeu.

(FREE TIME)

E Enter ... Pan vocat. to audience ... Exit: dips clothes in Maine. = Pan to audience. - Recovers et bends

1 } Brings on bowl of Maine. ... sits at front Fences the cloth into squares (15 x 15 cm)

2 } ... Paces: pieces to audience. = audience: pan. the pieces - to end of row.

3 } Brings on a piece of meat / quickly Exit

4 ... Holds Bucket at end of each row:

5 ...

6 ... Bucket is passed around audience then placed on the stage.

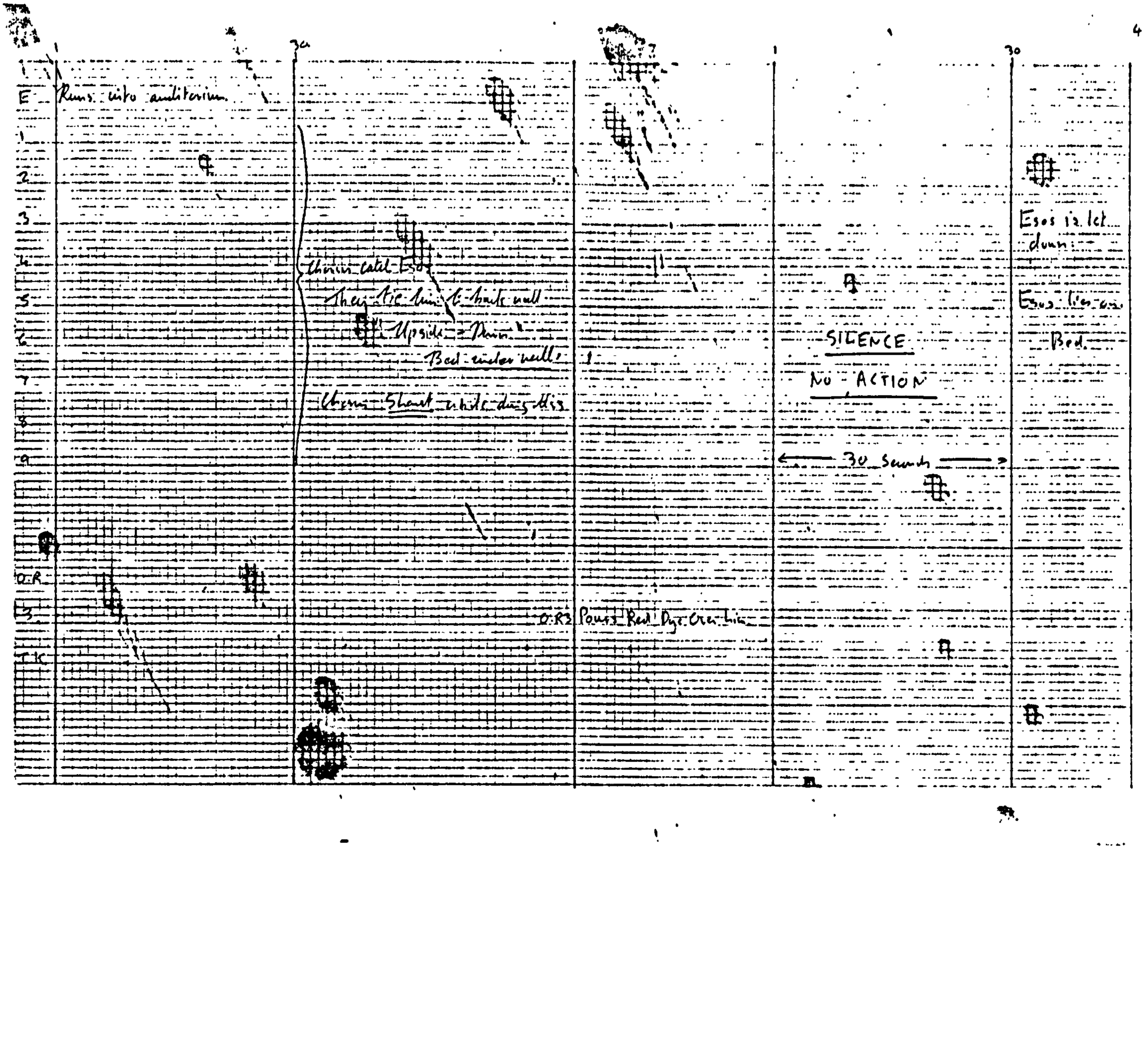
7 ...

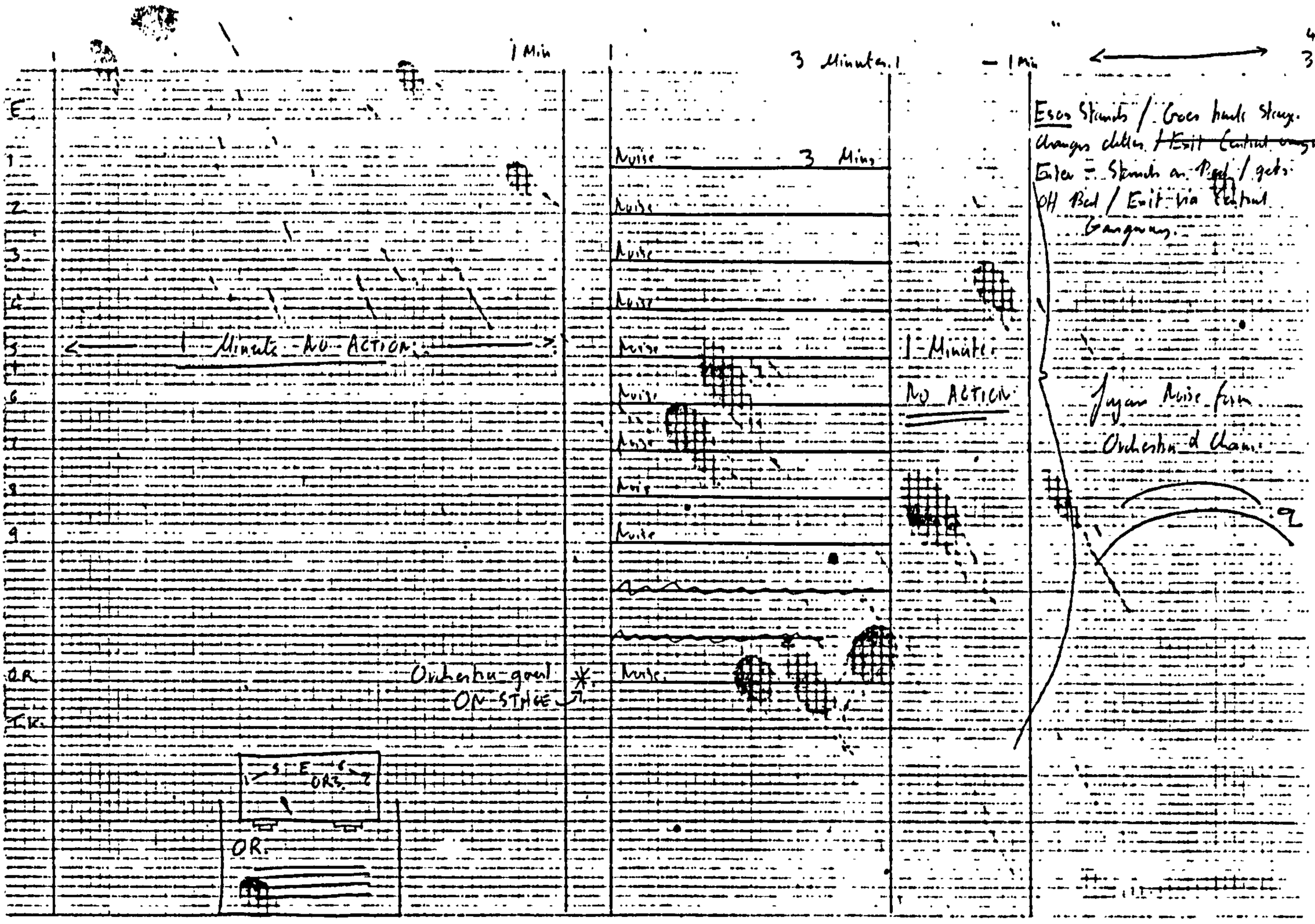
8 ... 6, 7, 8, 9, Place Bed at back of stage.

9 ...

Q.R ...

I.K ... Whistle: *


Rums. into auditorium.
Thorium cat. Eso
Therapeutic limit. Chalk wall
Upside = Down
Bed under wall
Uterus Heart white dress Mrs
O.R
O.R2 Powers Red Dye Creation
Esos is. let down:
Esos lie on
Bed.
SILENCE
NO - ACTION
30 Seconds
A
B


1 Min
3 Minutes
- 1 Min
Noise
3 Mins
1-Minute - NO ACTION
1-Minute
NO ACTION
Orchestra goes ON-STAGE
OR
OR
Escs Stands / Goes back Stage.
Changes clothes / Exit Contact Lenses
Enter = Stands at Bed / gets
off Bed / Exit via Central
Gangway
Again Noise from
Orchestra Chamber

THE PAINTING COAT (1991)

My great admiration for Stefan George and Klimt and my conviction that artistic activity is tantamount to that of a priest, motivated me as early as 1960 to wear a monk's habit-like, simply cut, white coat in my painting actions. Wearing such a garment later took on a deeper meaning as I worked with the relics of the o.&m. theatre. The actor, having descended into the excess of ecstasy, pours and stains the canvas as spontaneously as possible in keeping with the intensity of his excitation – often more spontaneously as is only possible on the canvas, with the intensity affecting the coat. It is automatically spotted, soiled, defiled, tramped on, smeared, spilled, splashed with blood (red paint) with all colors of the rainbow, the color spectrum. The process is definitely a seismograph, since the compulsion to order is excluded. The challenge of conceived contingency is dictatorial. Only the intensity of the process is undeniably, unerringly reflected.

The coat becomes damp from the "sweat and blood" of the paint. Wet spots, blood stains from colored blood evolve, sticking to the naked body of the painter. Quickly evaporating terpentine becomes blood water. The paint becomes colorful green, blue, lilac, violet, black blood. The artist's descent into the realm of the revolting: perversion, death, murdering, sacrifice, being murdered, sacrificed. His descent towards orgy, wild sexuality, in the abyss and danger of experience, the basic forces defining us, are all evident on the blood-colored stains on what he is wearing. It is as if our artist, opening abysses while painting, comes close to sweating blood, drinking out of the cup of sorrow, flagellation, crucifixion, the slaying of Dionysius, the delusion of Oedipus. His priest's habit, his sacrificial dress bears the damp stamp of renunication.

I AM THE PAINTER WHO TREADS THIS WONDERFUL WINE FOR YOU. MY GARMENT IS MARKED, BEARING WET TRACES OF DAMP CRUSHED PURPLE, BLOODY FLESH OF THE GRAPE, THE FERMENTING STEAMING MASH, it is sprayed with fermenting, musting, fresh wine intoxicating to the point of madness.

I AM THE PAINTER who SLAUGHTERS AND HUNTS the ANIMAL (monster/nonanimal, God-animal, bull of Mythras (dragon), totem animal). I wallow with both HANDS IN BLOOD-DAMP FLESH OF ITS ENTRAILS AND STAIN MY COAT WITH EXCREMENTS AND BLOOD AND GUILT.

The coat is often hung on a painting as the ultimate adornment and trophy to enrich its color structure. There are paintings which need no coats, whereas others call for it. Both the paintings and the coat can stand for themselves. If I am dissatisfied with a coat, I paint on it with a rigid move of the hand.

COLORFUL PAINTINGS (1990)

An art concerned with giving direct shape to reality (working for the most part with predefined realms of reality) and still based on painting has to conceive of color as a substance, as a pastelike material that can be smeared, a liquid that can be sprayed and spilled. The shade and tone of color is irrelevant. I do without the diversity of color, giving preference to red which signalizes flesh and blood. I throw the color of flesh, passion, the Dionysian excess and the cross onto my canvases. The ecstatic process of painting unleashes an analytically cultivated orgy that can become more and more intense to the point of being a sadomasochistic primal excess. Internal working of the psyche as well as the inside of the body are turned inside out. Flesh and blood, the dampness of pluck and entrails becomes visible, color has become a means of composition which transcends the easel painting. My latest paintings do not just explore the tragedy of excess. I have given up the sole concentration on the nuance of red (blood), sublimating it to use all colors of the spectrum, the colors of joy, rejoicing, celebration, ecstasy, exaltation, the germs of resurrection, colors of cosmic visions from distant suns, violet-white light from flames and lightning from a burning, melting galaxy are to define painting. The light halo of laughing resurrected from the cosmic night. Colors of

maturing, of autumn, of profusion are spill over. The taste of fermenting wine should be tasted in the color and with one's eyes. I have always seen my theatre as a ritual and cult vis-a-vis life, this is also true for my painting which is part of my theatre. The painter (celebrant) wears a ritual garmet. The stained and soiled painting coat is a seismograph of the passion and reincarnation of all creatures. The hieroglyphs of chance are drawn spontaneously on the coat without the painter having to move his hand. To clean his hands the painter wipes the paint on his coat. The mark of the descent into sacrificial excess, the pit, the night of death, the cosmos, void is blood-fresh. The passion, renunciation, "blood letting" of the painter inscribes itself onto the coat. By the same token, light and rainbow colors of resurrection and the eternally recurring creation of all worlds leave their imprint on the white muslin. The configuration and relationship of the colors in terms of form has a lot to do with the concoction of a pure, concentrated (liturgical) meal, bearing resemblance to a sacrament. A condensation and transformation of reality takes place, comparable to transsubstantiation. New total contexts, a new superordinated substance of reality evolve. The staples of bread and wine become the flesh and blood of God for the (practicing Christian) through transsubstantiation, a meal is incorporated, constantly partaking of all of creation and conveying the recurrence of the eternal vitality of being. The condensation, the formal transformation of the world draws us into being, enabling us to grasp totality. All five senses trained by the gesamtkunstwerk are to be synaesthetically activated by painting to put us into state of intense experience of life. In the o.&m. theatre taste, smells, tones and shades of color, visible colors and tactile impressions are juxtaposed. Colors, the color temperatures of paintings contain synaesthetic relationships. You have to be able to taste, smell the color, it should be conveyed as a sound and lend itself to touch. The haptic impression remains an essential element. The color paste is smeared on the canvas like margarine on bread. Color slime is spread on the painting, soup-like color liquid flows and splashes on the painting. The eye and the hand touch on a spectrum of consistencies. The incorporation of the essential elements requires all five senses, ultimately culminating in tasting. Smell, tactile experience, color and sound are derived from the experience of taste and tasting. Thus to grasp a painting means to experience the profundity of tasting. The color condensed by form is tasted with the gum of the eye like the consecrated, unleavened white bread and the consecrated wine, like the flesh and blood of God, which is at work in us as an essential, life-preserving substance of the cosmos. The incorporation, eating and drinking, the activation of the metabolism (taking in taste values) is an essential component of the o.&m. theatre.

THE ORGIES AND MYSTERIES THEATRE (1962)

On June 4, 1962 a lamb was killed, eviscerated and torn into pieces by me. This is a manifest act ("aesthetic" act of sacrificial exchange) which can be seen as significant and necessary once one has examined more closely with the theory of the o.&m. theatre project.

Through my art production (a form of existential mysticism) I take upon myself that apparently negative, perverse and obscene lust and the sacrificial hysteria resulting from it, thus sparing you the defilement and shame of a descent into the extreme. I am a manifestation of the total process of creation, it has absorbed me and I identify with it. All agony and sensual pleasure, mixed to one unique self-surrendered state of frenzy, will penetrate me and thus also YOU.

Comedian-like means – blasphemy and profonation – will provide access to the most profound and holiest symbols. The goal is an anthropologically defined view of being, in which grail and phallus are seen as two extremes presupposing one another. A philosophy of intoxication, ecstasy, frezy reveals that the innermost core of the intensely vital is ecstatic excitation, orgy, representing one constellation of being, in which pleasure, agony, death and procreation come closer and intermingle. One consequence of this vision is that the sacrifice has to be viewed as something related to ecstasy, the enthusiasm of life. The sacrifice is another, inverse form of lust developing in altered form from the hectic of the subconscious. Sexual forces become transformed, affecting the brutality of the sacrificial process. I affirm the absolute celebration of existence that leads to pain. The feast of resurrection is enacted by restless life experienced to the full.

An art which is understood in existential terms evolves in keeping with the rich experiences attained through religious sacrifice and abreaction events. Only here does the "sacrifice" take on a true spiritual dimension: non-bloody, symbolic, yet no less real. The "other, inverse form of lust" is transformed into art (the "sacrifice" loses its moral thrust, only a deliberate act of abreaction takes place).

In art all that is active is to be affirmed, the expression of a human state of renunciation automatically documenting itself. Human sensitivity flows directly into art, even when the excessive drive leads to perversion being conveyed as experience in a concentrated and a immediate form. An experience conveying intensity, conserved and transmittable life energy becomes evident. Life's warmth, the organic growth within the mother's womb, the extremes of sexual intensity and mystic, the totality of the process of being is to be rendered both tangible and visible in its most basic form.

The almost perverse ecstasy of sensations results in a psychic release of a state of tension, highly evident, albeit in covert form, in extreme mythic situations and sadomasochistic paradoxes (such as cross, the slaying of Dionysius, Oedipus-delusion, totem-meal, etc.). The aim here is to transcend the external orgy of senses roused by painting. Tachism is overcome by the analytic penetration of an ecstasy cultivated by painting.

STATUES

I. Professing to practice art is the priesthood of a new understanding of being. Art is transformed in the sense of its innermost mission, becoming the center of all glorification of life (meditation, prayer, synthetic liturgy). It is a means of becoming deeper and more intensely enraptured with life and must lead up to, unabashed analytic exhibitionism calling for a sacrifice involving absolute self-renunciation. I am the manifestation of all guilt and sensual pleasure in the world. I want to come into my own, in the joy of resurrection.

II. The ORGY is an existential sacrament.

III. The construction of the orgies & mysteries theatre in the Weinviertel district at Prinzendorf an der Zaya must become everyone's most urgent concern.

IV. The state théatre should be closed and the GOVERNMENT FUNDS allotted for it until now should be used for building the o.&m. theatre. My theatre project is not UTOPIA, I might add that it could be built six times larger in scale if one were to stop wasting money on the army and the cultivation of sport.

V. The o.&m. theatre will rear its own animals. As far as I am concerned no animal should be killed. Only animals which have died of old age or have to be slaughtered are to be eviscerated and torn apart.

VI. I want to liberate mankind of its animal tendencies. The ORGIES & MYSTERIES THEATRE pursues mankind's idea of redemption in a scientific manner. Man will free himself from myths. A regenerated mankind can come into its own within its innermost play. The aim is a new form of existence and selfadoration unleashing and prompting an enthusiasm for all of life, an awarness of being. The latter can even lead to existential mysticism (existential ecstasy). Lust is dispersed in the CELEBRATION! I want to use the CELEBRATION to give life its most concentrated form (the celebrated orgy = sublimation of instinct gratification). All that is rational will call for a concentration of all forces in the PLEASURE of taking in life. The sequence of the play in the o.&m. theatre is the sacrament of the positive deployment of all vital instincts.

The o.&m. theatre has nothing to do with theatre in the normal sense. I want to arrange the most intense CELEBRATION for the world (CELEBRATION of Joy, CELEBRATION of world, the liturgical realization of the CELEBRATION of life) calling for the contemplation of our innermost religious symbols. The intellectual sacralization of art becomes manifest via theatre. For the first time in history a constructed, ritual-CELEBRATION is evolving through the laws of depth and mass psychology. Being creates a cathartic abreaction festivity for itself. The shared experience of the play conveys rules of the order, forms of meditation. The ritual practiced in o.&m. theatre in concentrated form has to extend to all of life, to become a systematic doctrine of mysticism. Through conscious analytic existential and selfinsight man becomes more existential. He relates to creation with enthusiasm. In o.&m. theatre the self-surrendered states can be experienced directly (we will also hold processions for rejoicing). Through blasphemic profanation of myths and celebration of the most extreme sensual experiences I trigger ecstasies in which the participants are disinhibited to the very extreme. Secretions are spilled, smeared, sprayed and splashed (ritual wetting and defilement).

Excerpt from a list of fluids (secretions) and objects used in the o.&m. theatre:

egg yolk
the blood of lambs and bulls
40 degree cel, warm, red paint – vermillion
water, in which meat has been washed
wine
bread soaked in lukewarm water
white bread dipped into red wine
beer, vinegar, cotton, honey, sugar water, saccharin water, valerian tea, skimmed milk, etc.

Excerpt from the list of abreaction rites practiced by the o.&m. theatre:

Tea roses cut up by a razor blade lying on glass dish
Sow bladders filled with blood are punctured
Fruit is torn open and crushed (grapes)
Ecstasies are triggered by the greatest possible generation of noise
Raw meat is torn up
Language ability is reduced to a disinhibitory mating call, etc. (all of this is done by the onlookers)

The selection of liquids and ritual objects reflects a "scale of stimuli" capable of triggering an extreme level of sensual experience for which the expression 'Dionysian' has been coined (the Dionysian is another word for the need for abreaction, its activation leads unrelentingly in terms of drive economy to orgy, to the desire for agony, sacrifice, cross). All exercises of sensation (actions) of the o.&m. theatre are united in the process of painting (it is liturgical abreaction). The most exposed point of the analytic festivity is the basic excess experienced in the play (tearing apart the lamb). The sensually real sado-masochistic situation of tearing apart the lamb results in deep existential

ecstasy bringing on the ecstatic event of abreaction which unites agony and pleasure (during the evisceration boys Syrian incense).
The analytical leitmotifs of the o.&m. theatre to be inferred in the primordial excess of the situation:
I. transformation, the Eucharist
II. Mount of olives
III. Crucifixion
IV. Orgy and sacrifice of Dionysius, his dismemberment
V. The killing of Orpheus
VI. Adonis torn apart by Ebor
VII. Isis and Osiris
VIII. Attis, Agdistis
IX. Oedipus-delusion (symbol of castration)
X. Ritual of castration
XI. Animal sacrifice in general (the animal sacrifice as a substitute for human sacrifice)
XII. The totem meal (totem-animal-dismemberment)
XIII. The primordial excess (the outburst of drive, final point of abreaction, a situation is obtained in which something is torn apart, the lamb is torn apart) the revealing actions of the o. & m. theatre infringe on the primordial excess

The o.&m. theatre frees us from, and redeems us of, inhibitions which are systematically abreacted through art, almost as if being scientifically monitored. It is sometimes necessary to descend into the uncontrollable sphere of instincts – a process which now takes place in a controlled way in the sense of a psychic catharsis through intuition and visualization of oppressive instinctive powers. We tear sadomasochistic references out of the subconcious, bringing them to light in art.

The mythic allegory of death, sacrifice, resurrection and redemption leads through all of o.&m. theatre as a sort of leitmotif, reflecting man's desire (for redemption) having transcended death and spiritual catharsis. The play comprises two extreme life situations: SACRIFICE and RESURRECTION. All of the sensually accessible world has to be reflected in the play. Diving into the subsconsious, the vegetative realms, sleep, sacrifice, perversion, death, is something which must take place so that the redeemed rejoicing of resurrection finds its opposite and its reality.

The ritual mythic ways of identification are resolved in psychohygienic ecstasies of abreaction in the o.&m. theatre. Dipping into the sadomasochistic forms of experience cultivated by the play corresponds with the sacrificial, cathartic and resurrection rites appearing in the most diverse structures, such as communion, confession, mount of olives, transsubstantiation, crucifixion, descent into purgatory, resurrection, the killing off of mythic persons of identification and the annual reawakening of them, the phrygic communion, etc. (In the phrygic communion the mystes had to descend into the PIT and to have the blood of freshly slaughtered bull trickle down over him so that he could be reborn in eternity.) What is essential in these events is that something sacrificed or someone making the sacrifice usually represents mankind. With the help of the ritual, it identifies with it to the point of death, perversion, descending into it so as to be able to redeem the world. What is sacrificed has to become its most innermost expression. The rest of the crowd often identifies with the hero by way of the ritual act (Greek theatre = missal sacrifice). It can almost be said that the psychohygienic sense of all these religious processes is condensed in the o.&m. theatre without mythical sacrifices and persons of identification. In o.&m. theatre, these processes of identification are evaded. All onlookers are able to experience the abreaction directly. The basic excess is touched on without mythic symbols. All onlookers descend into the "subconscious" to become "resurrected" themselves.

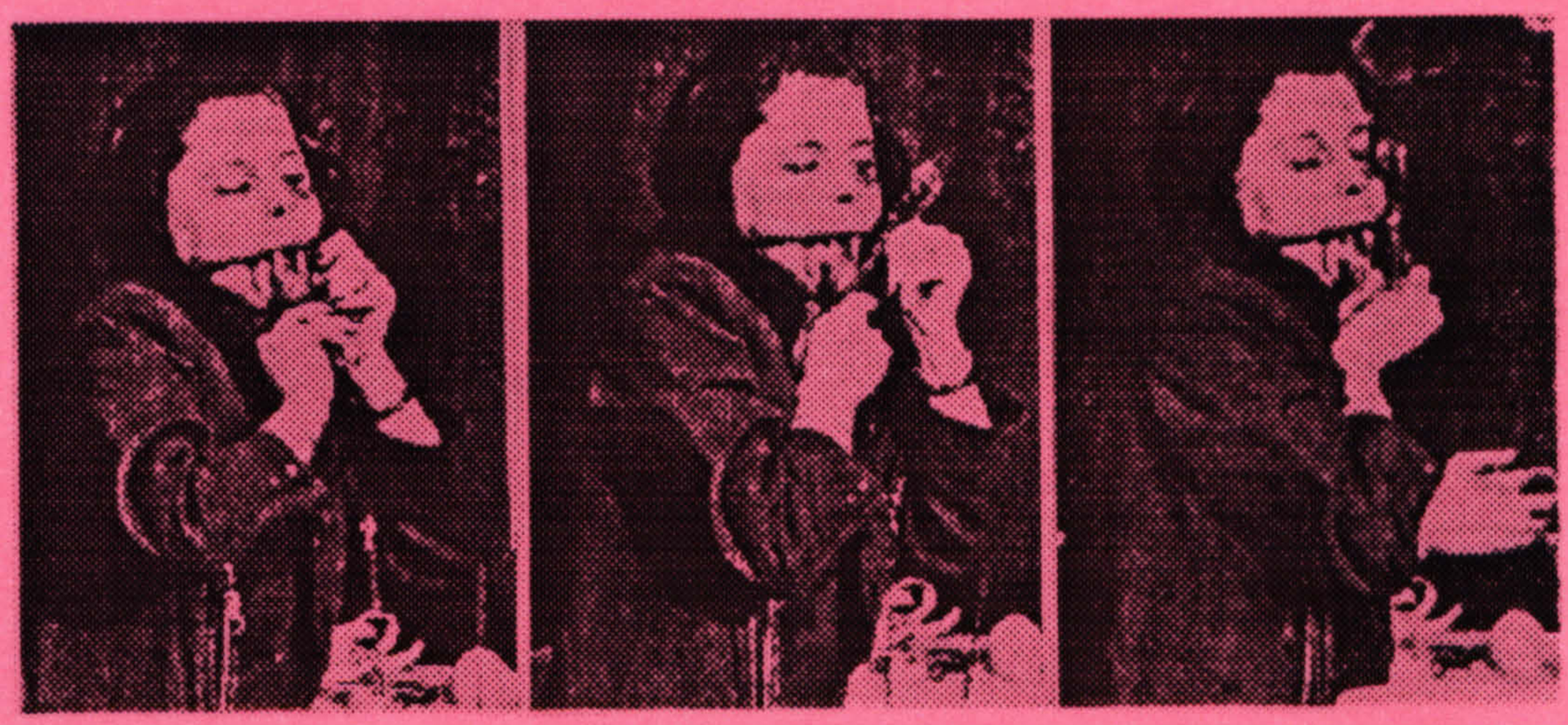
The gesamtkunstwerk can only evolve in o.&m. theatre since the most diverse genres of art are reduced to one phenomenon of abreaction: word, painting, music become a liturgical act. Everything intermingles in a process of synthesis of sacramental nature. Redeeme me and create the o.&m. theatre. Perhaps a European mysticism of the senses, the profession to sudden reaction, the tendency to the excessive, almost physiologically inherent in us, will give way to a sort of East-Asian mysticism of tranquility. It will not be one that is narcotic, world-estranged,

world-negating. Rather, the new mystic is an intense, harmonious affirmation of life.

The notion man expands towards the Apollinian, it succeeds in breaking with innate animal tendencies.

Hermann Nitsch

Genesis P-Orridge



REPORT ON THE ALIEN BRAIN at Hull Arts Centre 2-7-72

COUM PERSONNEL:--: FOXTROT ECHO alias Greg Taylor
IAN GOODRICH
COSY P-ORRIDGE
VERY REV. L.E. CHEESEWIRE MAULL
BOBO EUNSON
SEAN O'BRIEN
FIZZY PETE
RICHARD & ELIZABETH
SARA O'BRIEN
HARRIET KELLY
GENESIS P-ORRIDGE
PAUL

Basically E record highlights and variations added to the original script.

ENVIRONMENT:--: In the Foyer was a leaflet display stand.This was filled with old classics in hardback and a dayglow orange sign on white was added proclaiming "FREE WORDS".These books being multiple litter for people to take away as souvenirs if they wanted.Apart from this the foyer was as normal except around the doors into the ampitheatre.

This is in fact a kind of tunnel about 8 feet long and painted black.Each end has fire doors.Richard filled this area to about chest height with an entanglement of brightly coloured thick grade polythene.Also flowers and palm leaves.A web of polythene strips about 2foot wide in blue was wound about the doors and ceiling so that to get in to the decomposition area one had to dive into a jungle scene and metaphorically hack a way through a soft kinetic obstruction.The whole scene was coumpleted by being dampened to give a feeling of dense tropical undergrowth. This meant that the audience were immediately transported to an involving and an alien situation.Like the tunnel in Alice in Wonderland.Great amusement was had & many people laughed and lingered playing in the dark contemporary jungle timelock. Airlock,timelock,dimension shift effects were quite well achieved in this way.

People appeared to feel,as was intended,that they were entering a strange alien land where anything might happen and be seen.

INNER DIMENSION:--: The inside area had been transformed utterly.Three Bedford Van loads of plastic had been used,well over a ton.Green,red,blue, white,silver,yellow,gold,patterned,pink and orange streamers and webs of polythene destroyed any definite shape the space had had.It was a fragment of alien landscape. It truly was breathtakingly beautiful and effective.The area had been built into 3 levels as well.The floor was about two feet deep in polythene undergrowth.In one corner was a cave about ten foot high and several feet deep covered in a mass of gold leaf ribbon waste and real purple orchids and lilies.The cave was strong enough to be climbed like a small hill and to be entered into as well.

Near the cave was a table of yellow.This was staffed at the beginning and end by Harriet Kelly in anonymous earth clothing as the last link with reality.She got the "VISITORS" book signed and distributed the edible poetry.This was the letters C,O,U,M made out of unleavened brown bread.Space food and theme link.

In the point of central focus was a black coffin with a white cross on it.Paul lay hidden in there from before any audience came in until half way through the 1st part made up as a corpse in a yellow plastic shroud.He was the only human in the action.

Where the stage normally is positioned was a large drum kit.This was under an awning supported by two pianos.All this area was warped from normality with real palms, sculpted aliens,different coloured pairs of breasts,plastic,rubbish,flowers,and other lavish and colourful materials.It was a kind of space age Palm Court.

Just in front of this was a watering can with a lampshade over the spout hanging from a rope end full of water.If knocked it spilled water over one.

Opposite was a second drum kit and the amplified nude lady,an alien personage. Near this was a kitchen sink with a bucket of water full of real oxes brains. Various torsos and disturbing objects littered the floors deep in plastic. A pram like a wagon train wagon with headlights was in a corner.Pink & gold.

Cascades of polythene sheeting interlaced from roof beams to destroy horizontal and vertical balance.A doll in a hangman's noose,a plastic dolphin and BANK sign were floated in the air on string.Real grass and straw coated some areas of ground. Seating was removed into the shadows. If we could have been allowed to we would not have had any seats but were asked politely to leave some thus giving visitors an option.As expected from past experience however,people gravitated to seats at the start and sat to watch,rather than exploring the possibilities of the environment such as the cave & mountain,as they would have done if conventional separation by seating had been removed from the start.By the end however not one person was in their seat so it was not too great a hindrance to final relaxation.

Before any visitors came in,explorers in a looking glass jungle,the members of COUM were positioned like dead dolls amongst the setting.Fizzy Peto as Mr Alien Brain in gold waders,gas mask,brain hat,brown skin sat still at one piano.Sean sat in a gorilla like horror mask at the first drum kit,just his head visible,still. Ian Goodrich sat at the other piano dressed as a pregnant char lady of many years.He was Mrs Askwith,still.Richard as a panto dame,ginger wig,specs,apron,tights sat on the floor amidst undergrowth holding a tambourine and squeaker,still.Sara sat into the centre,gold gas mask,gold helmet,cloak and huge beach umbrella over her with a rattle,squeaker and tambourine,still.Elizabeth wearing a surreal female 50's teen bopper mask and boppers clothes sat amid the plastic with squeaker and rattle,still. The other drum kit was empty awaiting Foxtrots appearance later.Cozy in black satin body top,black & electric green sequins decorating it,black tights,black shoes was stood near the wings with a camera to take photographs.She was the only movement as people came in and sat down.The effect was indeed unworldly and strange as it was disturbingly difficult to tell inanimate manquins from bemasked & still doll people. Genesis was in the control room upstairs in dayglow orange breaches and wellies & with metallic gold hair with Lelli (the Very Rev.) and Bobo.Lighting was very dim and surreal.Harriet Kelly was by the tunnel with her book.

There was a truly awed hush over everything.People whispered as they cam in as if they were intruders to a ritual or a church of some bizarre faith.The colour and mystery were dazzling.Despite everything being made from everyday objects and images no key of interpretation existed and nothing seemed normal enough to grasp on to as understood enabling relaxation.Tension was thus built up organically and speedily.

When everyone was settled a gradual silence developed.In the control room above we waited for the tension to build.The tape soundtrack was then turned on over the PA system.This began with a full volume recording of the last moments of an Apollo countdown.As lift off was called there was a tremendous roar of engines which was merged into a tape by Lelli of electronic sounds,phased Holst,space voices and a slowed down dawn chorus plus hums and whines like the inside atmosphere of a ship. At this instant every single light went out.Thus the effect was of blacking out as if in a spaceship with all the associated noise and confusion.Gradually resolving into a travelling sensation and partial regain of senses.

The audience were now either inside the mind & thoughts of an Alien,or on an Alien dimension,or delerious confused astronauts,or all three.

Suddenly a man in real SS outfit,boots,leather coat,peaked cap,bull whip and heavy brass torch and with silver teeth crashed in.For a split second he was visible.Some people in the audience screamed with shock.He then started searching for someone & yelling for them in gutteral German,flashing his torch in peoples eyes and lashing out with his whip.Then the torch was extinguished and he tore his way about yelling whipping,and threatening.There were several more screams of terror.No one was hit of course,but most people felt afriad,guilty and confused.Like waking up into a nightmare fantasy.

After 5 minutes the space tape faded out which was a signal for the SS Officer (who was played brilliantly by FOXTROT who conceived him) to sit on the 2nd set of drums and begin the numbers sequence,sometimes decomposed as the Football Team & Referee.

A pounding monotonous drum beat was begun.A pulse of loud inhuman intensity.Violent tapes restarted including the Alien Brain 1st Map prepared by G P-O in advance.The lights came up to very dim with odd flashes of light revealing the Brain interior and its strange people still unmoving.The solitary drum pulse continued for 3 mins, then the referee in the control room blue a whistle into the PA and Mr Alien Brain (Fizzy Pete) began playing his 1st piano.After 3 more mins the whistle,Gorilla Man on 1st drum kit began to play (Sean O'Brien),3 mins & Mrs Askwith (Ian Goodrich) on 2nd piano entered,then Panto Dame(Richard),Alien Beachcomber (Sara),Surreal Bopper (Elizabeth) and so on.

When all the landscape was vibrating with interweaving rythms as if clockwork dolls had been wound up and set in motion electric violin & vocals were added for the crescendo section from Bobo,Lelli & Gen in the control room.This meant that sounds were couming from every direction in all enveloping & increasing layers.
Naturally this is a monotonous piece,and quite long and laboured.It is also an excercise in discipline and reconstruction metaphorically of the kind of increasing concentration required in both space & spiritual journeys.Unpleasant,constant,routine and complex.
The whole piece was constructed like an automaton.Very rigid,with a control centre, and timed on a stop watch to the second with a whistle as unemotional signal trigger. People were reduced to robots if active,and mental strain if passive.

Although it may seem rather an insensitive thing to subject an audience to,it is we feel a necessary stage,like the ancient ordeal of mystical sects,and highlights later comic reliefs and eventual total abandoned involvement.We present contrasts to accentuate values.Fun and games would mean a lot less without torture and boredom. We are trying to portray the complex phenomenon of maturing,wisdom,and morality.We also wish the audience to experiance this in a concentrated & memorable way.A long piece that imposes from all directions forces participation & mental reaction.It is the storm before the calm,the tempest leading to the quiet island.

The whole thing is a very concentrated,speeded up existence,an alien lifetime. Perhaps a kind of nervous breakdown and revelation.Obviously it will get more effective as time progresses and funds are made available to expand the textures and techniques on all levels and as weak spots are eliminated and new ideas added. We do not claim to always maintain our ambition.Though at the Arts Centre we were closer,and almost always successful,which is a satisfying realization.We now know it can and will work.

After the crescendo the whistle signals began again.This time stopping people from playing one by one,each returning to the dressing room in reverse order to change for the death of Mrs Askwith.This long section ended with SS Officer being left drumming and then stopping & walking away.The lights were brightened and the Brain bare of people.Quiet peaceful songs on guitar & vocals by Lelli played for 5 minutes.

After the calming down interlude of pleasant music the Death of Mrs Askwith took place.

Sean O'Brien was in the control room & read the words of the Prophet of the Apocalypse. (see additional sheet for details of changes in this scenario which have been taped in practice since & definitely found more effective & entertaining).Genesis P-Orridge was the mutant baby in blue one piece romper suit,green twisted horror mask & bootees. Fizzy Pete was the mad doctor in white lab coat,crazed eyes,and with golden saw & a golden hammer.Foxtrot Echo was an evil Gorman Concentration Camp experimental doctor. Ian Goodrich was Mrs Askwith,a 5ft 11 inch small pregnant granny.First a ritual was acted.

The mutant baby carried in a crate of milk bottles.These were placed near the coffin. He then one by one went to the Kitchen Sink & took a real oxes brain from the bucket of water until there were 4 brains on top of the coffin.One at each point of the white cross.The other characters preambled about.Suddenly the baby smashed its hand down on a brain pulping it instantly.One or two quiet screams from the audience.As this happened Mrs Askwith began labour and the baby dived through her legs from his rear position being born.Her swollen belly was ripped out at the same time.Their were screams from Mrs Askwith as she gave birth & from the newly born baby.The two mad doctors rushed up and began hacking at the entangled beings & real afterbirth and brains.The baby crawled away crying mama & searching for food found the milk.This was tested bottle by bottle and found wanting.Mrs Askwith died.The baby crawled over the coffin and knocked off the lid as it went.Gasps.Inside was a corpse (paul) who had lain their still since before the audience had coum in nearly an hour back.Wrapped in a yellow shroud he was attacked by the baby in its search for milk.It screamed mama and crawled onto the corpse.It found no milk.Crawled away weakening and eventaually died of starvation next to Mrs Askwith.The doctors retreated.The moans ended.Three corpses lay entangled around a coffin and splattered brains.A milk crate nearby full of empty bottles painted white inside.

After a short break.Quiet music again.And the decomposers retired for the interval.

Normally there would be no interval but this was requested by Mike Walker so that refreshments could be sold at the bar.As it happened on this occasion it fitted quite well and gave COUM a chance to prepare the 2nd phase of the decomposition.

<u>After the Beerrush:</u> Apparently a bell signalled everybody back.2nd phase. This half began with clearing the house.Sweeping brushes were found and COUM began sweeping up shoving and jostling and screeching like old housewives to clean it up.Moaning and complaining about these people who came in their house and made a mess.A repartee was evolved with the audience & got them laughing.It was as if nothing of the horror previous had happened.This half was very much vaudeville in approach.Also people gently began to explore the area more and relax.

Cleaning up was followed by a drum solo accompaniment by G P-O whilst COUM mingled and joked with the audience and messed about with dummies and brushes. The drumming changed into a verbal repartee between a disembodied voice in the control room and Gen. A kind of ludicrous revival meeting.The Urine of the Year Award.Jokes flew fast and successfully and always there were a multiplicity of small activities involving other decomposers and people going on.The Virgin Mary on Wheels,or immaculate Coumception was trundled into a spotlight and she sat there very sedate making people wonder what she was for.

A cricket bat was brought out and a Cricket match suggested to the audience. COUM generally were the field.Group Captain Ralph Podd, a giant rag doll was wicket keeper.Richard as a dame was silly mid-off.The wicket was a crate of milk.Foxtrot was the bowler dressed all in black.After debating the qualities of a real brain as a ball and discarding it,a dayglow orange squeaky poodle was chosen as the ball.In true panto and hughie green style a member of the assembled was asked to volunteer as Umpire.Creases were marked,rules agreed,a path was cleared in the undergrowth for the pitch.One over of 6 was coumpleted.Three runs made by Gen in cricketers outfit.Great amusement and fun were afforded.During this period the Immaculate Coumception was harangued for not fielding well and during an investigation as to whether she was ill Richard unzipped her stomach after sensuosly undoing her blouse and thousands of maggots poured out.He then beat her up in agitation.Meanwhile the cricket match ended with the batsman bowled and walking off to the pavilion twice as the first time their was no real traditional applause,after a reminder of cricket tradition this was rectified.

The general comment heard from all of COUM who played the game was "How boring, fancy enjoying this game".

After the cricket match the things happening were so various and constant that it is hard to recall either the exact order or construction.

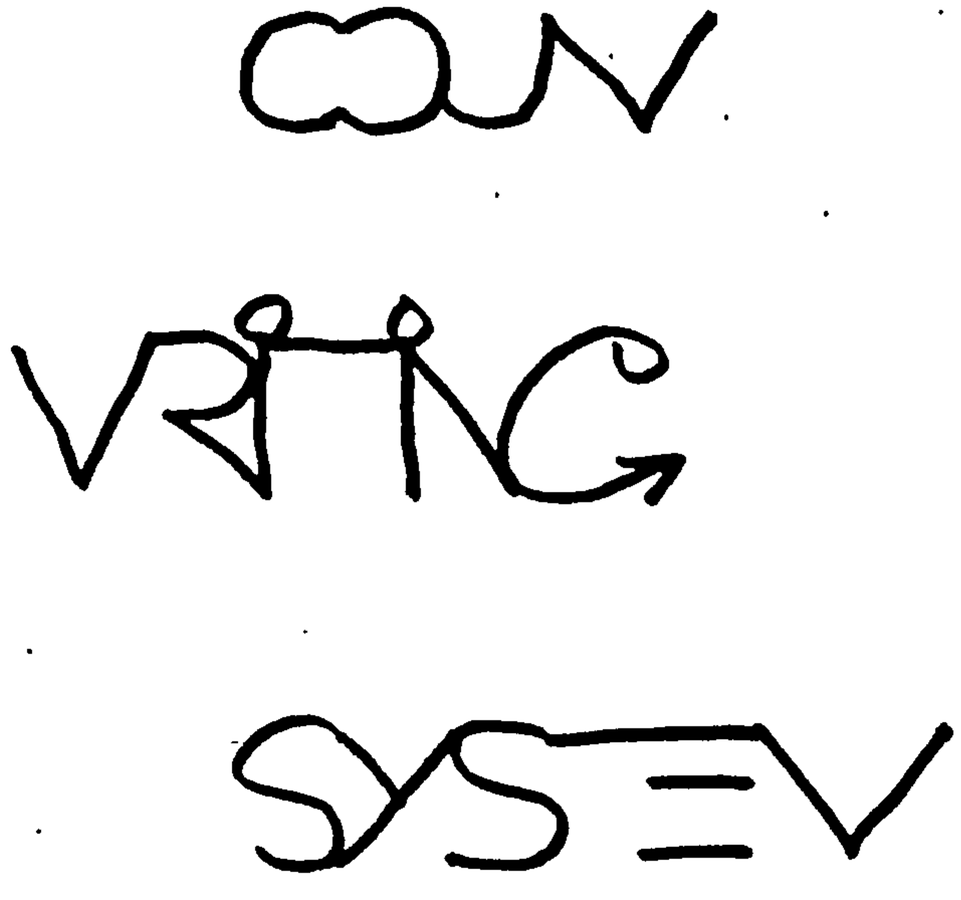
There was a piano duet by Foxtrot Echo & Gen which received loud applause.It was a piece of new music by COUM called "My House Is Red".
There was the couming of the Pony Express Post.This was the Wagon Train pram being trundled into the centre and a large box of cellophane envelopes taken out.Every person was given at least one envelope to the gasped motto of "the mail must get through".
There was a series of surreal telephone calls with people in the audience through a ant clear polythene telephone.
COUM mingled freely with the coumunicants talking and discussing,joking.
Gradually the Disintegration of Fact took place.
The audience/coumunicants began to drench themselves in gold leaf ribbon and wrestle.
COUM moved into The Weather,plastic snow fell everywhere,it rained,there was thunder and lightening,everyone was laughing.Seats were abandoned.Suddenly everyone was playing in the plastic environment,twisting it,lying in it,dancing,yelling,giggling, running,and generally having the time of their lives.
Needless to say they forgot they were an "audience".They were oblivious to roles, happy and free.
Some of COUM retired to the control room and worked lights and tapes and hail.
Others cleared away fragile props and drum kits to prevent damage during the finale.
The rest just joined in.But not as COUM.As everyone else did,as people having fun.

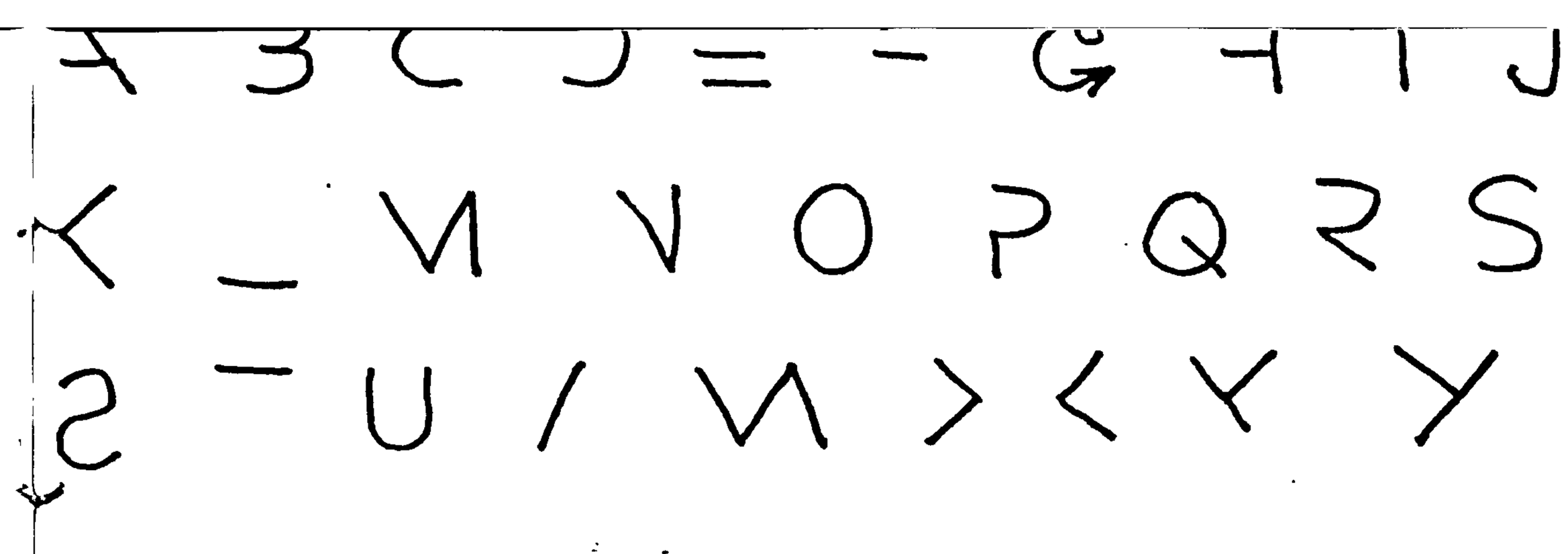
This crescendo continued blissfully until Mike Walker had to request a shut down as the time required it.Music came on,lights went up,announcements were made over the PA.
The Alien Brain had ended a resounding success.
The nearest thing to criticism received was a polite, "But what is the purpose of it all?" and also "Isn't it a bit dangerous to let people go mad like that" from one or two more introspective people.Who never the less said they'd had great fun and loved it.

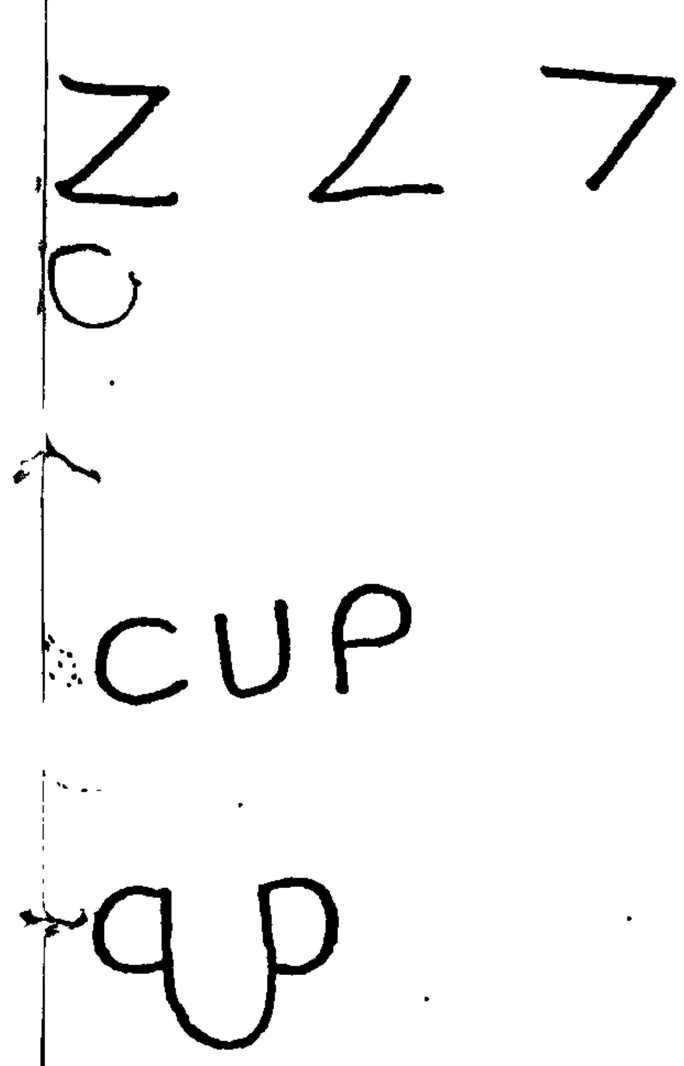
Mike Walker thought parts dramatically brilliant but didn't like the loose structure too much.

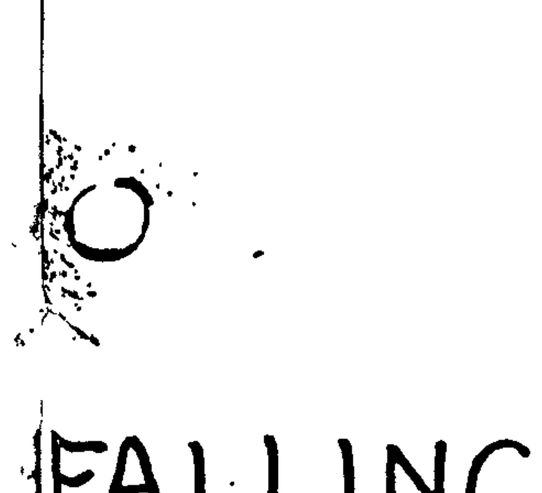
.It was a vindication and proof of the success & potential genius of COUM.

COUM WRITING SYSTEM.









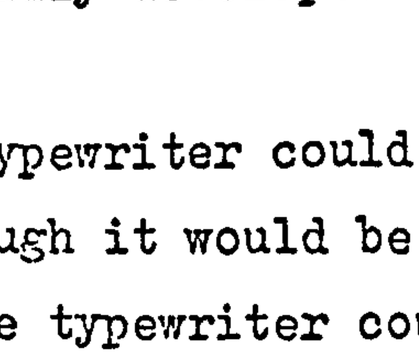
In this elemental system,each letter is simplified into its basic form,enabling joining up,as in handwriting but of capitals.A graphically exciting and personalized flexible writing has evolved.

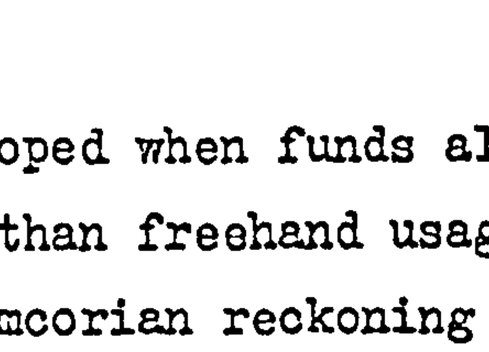
This system allows for individual idiosyncracies in approach & use.Many words also can becoum indicative of their meaning by design.

Words & the process of writing are slowed down and explored anew destroying much of the automatic habit now found in general handwriting.More conciseness of message is usually developed as word wastage is accentuated.

A typewriter could easily be developed when funds allow though it would be less versatile than freehand usage.The same typewriter could also use coumcorian reckoning instead of roman.

Deeper thought about what is to be written and a system breaking down imagination barriers is intended.It also tends to be readable as block symbols rather than as words made up of letters.





EXAMPLE:

There follows a very simple example of writing which to ease initial understanding is transliterated below. Most people find they can grasp the whole technique in about 5 to 10 minutes only as instead of being entirely new it is merely an extension of the possibilities of a system they are already familiar with.

THE FIRST OF OUR ONSPRING
NO "2 FARTS (one FART) ARE (IS) THE SAME

LISTENING TO THE DOGS EARS
USING WORDS IS THE WORST WAY
ALONE WE HAVE TO USE THEM
INHERITED FROM FATHER
FOR ITS OWN BENEFIT
IT ONLY HAS TO BE HARDER
TO MAKE IT WORK
READ NONE AND YOU'VE
READ THEM
ALL

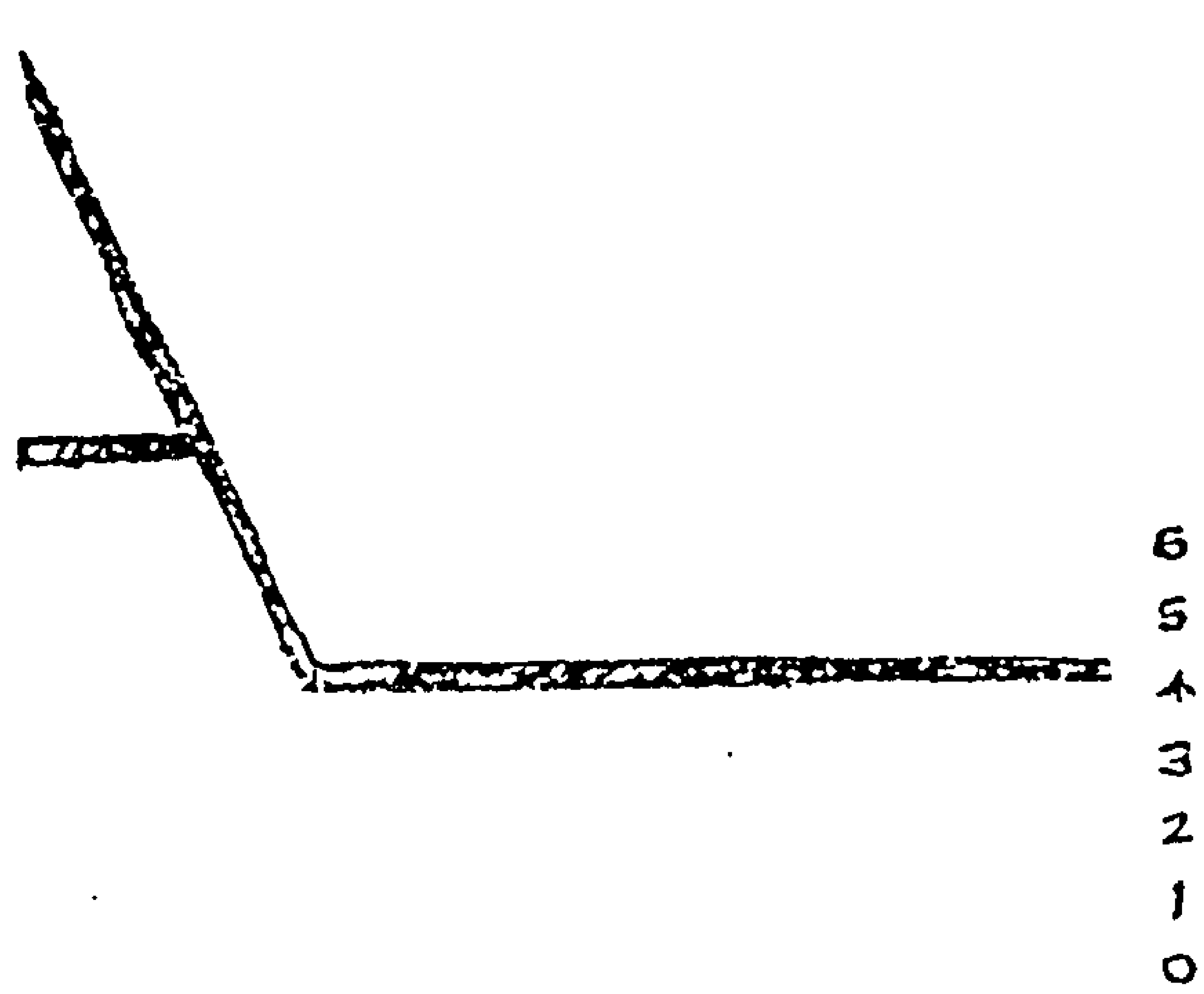
There is also a punctuation system to go with the writing which is basically just doubled up normal punctuation.

E.G. :--: instead of :-

""Help"" instead of "Help"

1T 1RST OF OR OARRiNG
VD RE FRS XEE TX SVE
XR iS

iSENiNG TO THE DOGS EARS
USiNG VORDS iS THE VORST VAY
ALONE VE HAVE TO USE THEM
iNHERiTED FROM FATHER
FOR iTS OWN BENEFiT
iT ONLY HAS TO BE HARDER
TO VAKE iT VORK
READ VORDS AND YOU'VE
READ THEM



THEE SEEDING SHIP

FOR SIMON DWYER

There is coumthing eerie and magickal about thee luxurious appraisal ov letters. Broken down in tears, could hardly speak, thee words split and shattered, tumbled and fought to refuse their meaning. Coumtimes words DO refuse to serve us. Wriggle and spit at injustices we force them to describe. We gave words no choice when we bore them. Instructed them to name what we ourselves could not explain, to give apparent order to experiences and phenomena that mystified and terrified us. Fire from thee skies, great bears that tore our children to shreds, menses, rains that washed away our winter food, snow that settled in deathly layers across our meagreness without explanation. Storytellers dreamed ov making sense ov all this, an empowermeant that gave them a moment ov glorious passage towards a hidden lineage that would later devour us as thee infernal Deities

ov **Power** and **Ownership.** The "tellers" screaming, pointing sticks, bones, fingers and tongues in rage at thee inexplicable. Horror ov impotence. Inventing **words**, attributes, powers, and forms. Creating archetypes; songs ov containment for thee infinitely changing. A silence ov what was had no say in this; no part to play, for change is quite separate from control ov any kind. Change coumtinues in change no matter what words we humanE species throw at it for insecurity. So it has all ways been. Ill fitting suits ov **words.** Baggage and trivia shape our immortal arrogance to absurd and useless dimensions. We squabble, wage war, define and separate our Selves. Name our tribes, creating, wells, fences, earthquakes, and endless disasters with torrential downpours and tremors ov **words.** What a useless vessel we store our winter nourishment within. Is there a demon, a geni secreted within,

surely not if a **word** or two release it. **Power** yes. **Power** hidden, butter not by these **words**, not by these bindings that sterilise our process and progress towards balance and coumpassion. It is not an accident that a most Holy Order is silent. Huh! My self a **word**sman, a **word**sman too...and **word**less E breathe and that breath sleeps inside me. Finds no person to enwrap, to vouch safe my spirit, wraithlike. There is no one at home, only many stifled by acceptance ov **words**, compliance with an illusion ov control. Breath, oh breath, struggling asthmatic for a pretence ov this "naming" that gives childlike safety to delusion. Searching was nothing. Each breath returned as a tear, a tear so embarassed to admit its being, that it couldn't make corporeal it's T.I.M.E. Trapped like a THOUGHT (that inviolate hallucination that has no density or manifestation in any matter) Trapped.

Trapped thus my breath ebbed and died. Wordless. Cordless and adrift. Finally washed up to a sense most original, thee perception ov value lost precisely as recognized. There, there in a sky light scares and burns, ancient mouths scream, demand order, and shelter. Tablets in burning bushes. Hidden words that destroy us and make us wholly unuseable to change, and thus to T.I.M.E. You may ask, why so much ov words to refute mere words? Why so much poesie to speak how sad, distraught, stunned, beautified, reminded and ill thee thought ov your owned illness made me feel? You know, E can't answer that really. Really E can't. It's thee weigh E all ways go when E go inside, offer my seed to a friend without protection, with OUT protection or price. E choke on words and feel blessed by them. When E have to be ME, ME, me just with YOU. E can do this no other

weigh. Just speak. Speak **words** ov blood music coupling coursing, that blast us in bewildering uselessness. Soul epitaph to being. We flow, conjoin through these blessed batterings ov impotent labelling. Naming. Naming. Naming 'til we drop. Exhausted. Gasping for forgiveness for ever assuming a name could be **Power.** Thee million names ov God. Ha! Sure buddy! A million names can contain thee absolute, no problem. A million names, and a few more and we've got it all locked up son. No prob. See that seeding ship out there? Approaching at plague speed? Makes consciousness a thing ov thee past? Watch this! " Hey! Seeding Ship! Oh ultimate ineffable power". No answer. **Word**less. Aweless. That which points in every direction has no language. " Hows this ... for a name baby!" Thee seeding ship coumtinues. Silence is seen as capitulation. Victory is assured and thee **word**ers ov our prisons

rush to another seamless conquest. With this event, thee seeding ship treats us to a second thought. Suddenly, there is no Thing to name. Thee nameless has rushed in. Into this vacuum. Surprised? Ship stopped, **word**less. It won't go away.This namelessness won't fuckin' go! What has value now? What are we talking about? Embarassed, dirty, mean, scared, absolutely useless and trivial, patronising, anguished and empty. Yet there is so much fucking L-OV-E inside you, so much fucking L-if-E. Did we mate to becoum crying, and dying, infants? Feeling lost, hurt, cheated. Most ov all you want to absorb your friends inside. Yes, be their mother, their womb. Keep them safe, forever. Nurse them with your breasts, back to childhood. Safe. Lifetime still ahead. Another momeant. Another chance to ditch all these **words.** **Words** that all ways get in thee way ov confiding "I L-OV-E YOU "! We are

crying now, that's good, we can never cry enough, and people are simply more beautiful crying than in any other state. It doesn't matter if it's just self-pity, or pain at thee theft ov a L-OV-E by death or cruelty, by that seeding ship without a NAME. Thee seeding ship that we cannot control, that we all worship, hate and fear so much. **No orgasm ever met thee beauty ov a tear!** No tear ever drowned by a **word.** No, whatever we might think, we are given more in that tear than a single **word** could dream in its seeding. Within all these arms and tears, breaths and fears, surrender we whose seed sows deaths. We who care, sow. We who lose sow.

Thee callous seeding never stops. Ends in its most beloved words ov all, **sickness** and **death.** Behold that ship as it passes us in silence. Emits no Thing and thus emits thee seeding. Thus we see, and seeing feel. We must speak, **words,** but

stop, say nothing; be infected, breathe and look away. If we see, we speak words too easily, and speaking create endings. Thus coums our trap ov L-if-E. Nature's trick for those who seek no relationship with change. We are manifestations ov T.I.M.E, we coum from T.I.M.E (that which begat MIND and thus manifested all that is physical) and here, being physical, we spend T.I.M.E. We drench ourselves in two conceptions. We recall so deeply when T.I.M.E, a molecular memory at best, had infinity as a shroud that was constant as hell. Suddenly a name, a seeding ship, surprises our reverie. Our delusion that as one small part ov T.I.M.E we stupidy named GOD and so caused "Thee Fractured Garden"! BOOM! Here we coum, dragged bloody and screaming into a physical being. Momentarily outside thee womb ov T.I.M.E. Living goddamit, like it or not.

What do they say? "What are you going to name it then?" Thee first words. BOOM! We're finished. They've named us. We have been limited absolutely now. No chance. Just stuck with working it through until we can return back into T.I.M.E. Where we can never end, never be limited, never be lost, be within and a part ov everything, everyone, every-every that ever happened, or didn't happen, or neither, or all, or mystery, mystery, mystical, illumination, revelation, clap, trap, reality, illusion, hallucination, speculation, theory, dreery, leery, bleary-eyed. Your tears, my tears, tears ov christ,tears ov thee tears. Tears ov orgasm. Thee sadness,thee aweful,crying shame ov giving all this stupid fucking shit a bloody NAME! Coumtimes, (training, stoicism, unfamiliarity?) we just cling tighter. Unable to open up right then. It can't be true. It never can be true. How

can anything this useless ever be true. Suddenly, we are here, within this story, blessed with a truth and a trust. Awakened to thee most basic ov sensations, re-minded and re-wounded. E am burned out . E don't know to who E am speaking. Maybe who E am. Speaking . So much strangeness suddenly. So much kick back by thee enemies ov L-if-E. Useless. Within these circles ov fire, screaming out **words** to make thee sun rise each morning. Infesting thee moonlight. Infecting thee night. Animals breed. Men fall pregnant by most peculiar sorcery.

TAKE AS DIRECTED...

California 1995.

ROUGE

chromapark @ e-werk

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ausstellung | party | kommunikationslabor | electronic café

chromaparties @ e-werk

do 04.04. chroma opening party
fr 05.04. camel dub move
sa 06.04. strictly rhythm launch by motor music
so 07.04. s 3 label launch
sa 13.04. signature party

artistlist:
skudi optics | elsa for toys | saturn rave construction | vienna special | mediamorph
stressjets | trevor rockliffe | gayle san | mark lewis | tom clark | ralf regitz | z 21 | ccc
ralf neuenhaus | alfred m.jones | net.café | daz sound | steve mason | steve loria
woody | toxic love nights | exil(e) | can-d-sign | christoph hildebrand | merve verlag
carl cox | afrika islam | ian pooley

hromapark 1996 - projektionen zur natur der zukun

CHROMAPARK

04.04 - 13.04.199

chroma dezentral

04.+08.-12.04.1996

clubs | stores | labels
tresor | wmf | aktionsgalerie | wicked garden | groopie de luxe

do 04.04. this is detroit @ tresor
mo 08.04. disko b @ tresor
di 09.04. vernissage @ groopie de luxe
mi 10.04. the signs in fashion @ wicked garden
do 11.04. @ aktionsgalerie
fr 12.04. soma recordings uplift @ wmf
dubmission @ e-werk

artistlist
hell | heiko | stuart mcmilian | daniel pflumm | eisenherz | next g.u.+r.u now | allgirls
sasha uk | rosenbaum | orde meikle | ric rubin | paul van dyk

chromapark versteht sich als kommunikationslabor, das als schnittstelle von technik, kunst, party und raum dient.chromapark ist ein offenes, experimentelles system; unvorhergesehene ergebnisse sind teil des konzeptes. initialzündungen für neue projekte sind möglich und - werden realisiert. chromapark ist ein permanenter kunstraum,der fortlaufend integriert und reagiert.

chromapark 1996: projektionen zur natur der zukunft. zentrales thema der 96er ausstellung ist die bild- und zeichensprache, die sich in der technokultur entwickelt hat. die digitalen welten mit ihrem unendlichen möglichkeitspotential haben die plattform geschaffen, neue projektionen/projekte zur natur der zukunft zu imaginieren.

Schutzgebühr
DM 5.-

31 March'96
ROUGE

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ROUGE is a special edition of ROGUE magazine

TEXT AND ARTWORK BY **GENESIS P-ORRIDGE**
EXCEPT 4, 6, 26, 32.

ARTWORK courtesy Rita Dean Gallery, San Diego CAL
COVER based on a picture by Genesis P-Orridge

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ROGUE als Gesamtes ist ein Kunstwerk

TRANS MISSION:

GENESIS P-ORRIDGE **IM LAUF DER ZEIT** • Editorial

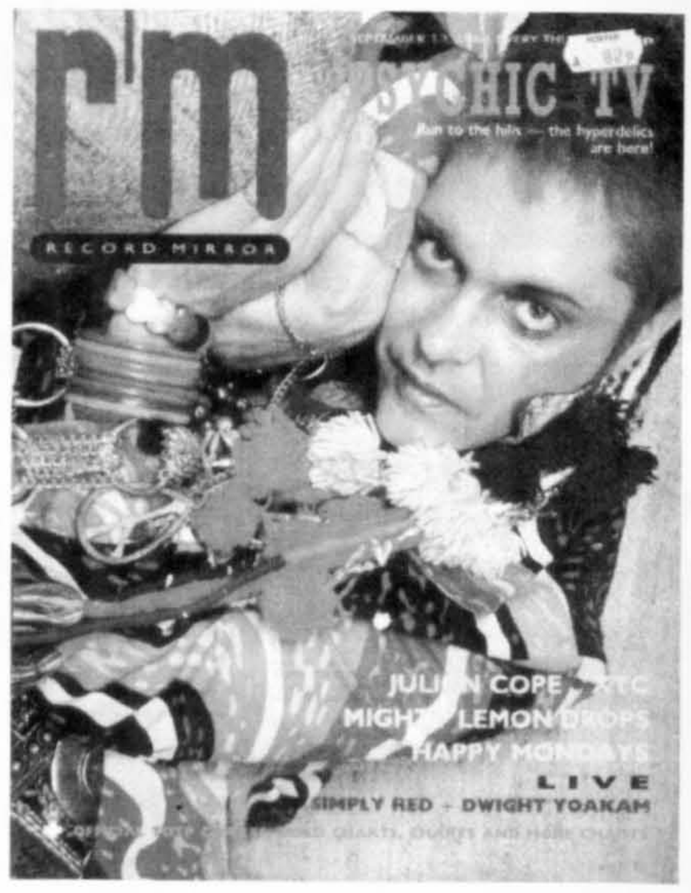
GPO

Seit seiner Mitarbeit bei der Post-Fluxus-Gruppe „The Exploding Galaxy" im Swinging London der 60er Jahre (zur Gruppe gehörte u.a. auch Derek Jarman) hat Genesis P-Orridge die Medienmanipulation, sexuelle Tabus, Aussenseiter-Kulturen und die rituelle Bewusstseinserweiterung erforscht. Dieser Arbeit geht er auch heute noch nach. Die privatesten dieser „Transmedia Manifestationen" sind seine graphischen Arbeiten, seine Collagen und Assemblagen.

Daneben versuchte und versucht Genesis P-Orridge, intellektuelle Ideen und ihre mögliche Relevanz (oder auch Irrelevanz) in Bezug auf „Leben und Kunst als Einheit" zu überprüfen. Spezielle Aufmerksamkeit hat er immer wieder auch den Techniken der herrschenden Interessengruppen gewidmet, die sich insbesondere des globalen Imperialismus und Totalitarismus und der Massenmedien bedienen, um für ihren eigenen Selbstschutz und als Macht-Erhaltung gegenüber Minoritäten jeglicher Art die Kontrolle zu behalten. Diese Bessessenheit mit dem Warum und Wofür von „Kontrolle", deren Entdeckung und Erforschung beherrscht sein ganzes Werk.

Durch das Performance-Kollektiv „C.O.U.M. Transmissions" in den 70er Jahren, dessen Arbeiten in vielen Galerien und Privatsammlungen vertreten sind, durch die 80er Jahre mit der für die Musikrichtung „industrial" einflussreichen Gruppe „Throbbing Gristle" und das mehr kontemplative Hyperdelic-Techno-Kollektiv „Psychic TV" zieht sich die Spur einer eigenständigen Arbeit, die den kunsthistorischen Kontext immer wieder in anarchistischer Manier abwechselnd betritt und verlässt.

„Dieser schändliche Mann verdirbt Kinder: Pop-Fans im Teenager-Alter werden von einem der ekelhaftetsten Männer Großbritanniens satanischen, sadistischen und sexistischen Einflüssen ausgesetzt: von dem gierigen Schmutz & Schund-Guru Genesis P-Orridge! Der Führer der Rockband Psychic TV kleidet sich wie der Ritualmörder Charles Manson und verdirbt Tausende leicht beeinflußbarer Kinder. Mit seiner selbstgeschaffenen „Kirche", dem Temple of Psychic Youth, lockt er seine Anhänger in das Netz des Bösen. Für sie ist er ein Halbgott, dessen Worte Gesetz sind"



schrieb die englische Tageszeitung „People". Am 19. Februar 1992 sendete der britische „Channel 4" in der Sendereihe „Dispatches" eine Dokumentation über rituellen Kindesmissbrauch durch Satanisten. Mittelpunkt der Sendung war ein Film, der (wie gesagt wurde) „Folter, Vergewaltigung und erzwungene Abtreibung durch eine Bande von Satanisten" zeigte. Strong stuff, fürwahr! Aber Journalisten der Sonntagsausgaben des „Independent" und der „Mail" fanden bald heraus, daß es sich mitnichten um einen Film von Satanisten gehandelt hatte, sondern um einen Film über Genesis P-Orridge und seinen Temple ov Psychick Youth (TOPY), und daß dieser Film nicht rituelle Gewalt einer Gruppe von Satansjüngern zeigte, sondern eine Kunst-Performance, die sogar von Channel 4 und dem britischen Arts Council gefördert worden war! Die „Mail" fand weiterhin heraus, daß die Firma, die das Programm für Channel 4 produziert hatte (Look Twice Productions), in enger Verbindung zu christlichen Fundamentalisten stand.

Ein paar Tage vor der Sendung in Channel 4 hatte die Polizei Genesis P-Orridges Haus in Brighton aufgebrochen, durchsucht und Videos, Fotos und andere Dokumente beschlagnahmt, unter anderem GPOs in 27 Jahren angelegtes Archiv mit unersetzlichen Daten und

Dokumenten. Zu dieser Zeit befand sich GPO mit seiner Familie in Asien. Sie kehrten nicht nach Großbritannien zurück, weil sie fürchteten, daß ihnen das Sorgerecht für ihre beiden Kinder, Genesse und Caresse, entzogen werden würde. Stattdessen flohen sie nach Kalifornien, an die Westküste der Vereingten Staaten.
Die neue Cyberspace Community, die Psychedelic Pranksters und die Tekkno Tribal Communities der Bay Area haben sie unterstützt, haben ihre Visionen erweitert und ihre Art zu leben und zu kommunizieren verändert. Da sie alles durch die kulturelle Gewalt ihrer eigenen Regierung verloren hatten, waren sie jetzt frei vom Dazugehören – dazugehören zu einem Staat, einem Ort, einem Volk. Frei von Bindungen wurden sie ein Teil der langen Reihe von Geflohenen und Exilierten dieser Erde.
Seit dem Betreten der USA am 23 März 1992 hat Genesis mit der Band Psychic TV und als DJ auf Rave-Partys und Events quer durch die Vereinigten Staaten gearbeitet. Mit Dr Timothy Leary besteht eine ständige Zusammenarbeit, das „BRAIN-X-Change", in dessen Mittelpunkt der gegenwärtige Stand der neuronalen Navigation, der digitalen Highways, hyperdelischer Technologien und der Kurzschluss vorgegebener Patterns und Verhaltensreflexe stehen.

Die meisten seiner künstlerischen Arbeiten entstehen in Trance und in physisch und psychisch anstrengenden Ritualen. Die Ästethik ist dabei der „Klarheit der Erfindung" untergeordnet. Die Werke sind als „Sigils" gemacht, d.h. um einen „Akt des Willens" zu ermöglichen und zu realisieren. Oft arbeitet GPO mit Aspekten der Tiefenprogrammierung. Der Prozess der Herstellung, die Zeremonien, die mit dem Prozess verbunden sind und die Nutzung dieser Arbeiten über einen längeren Zeitraum dienen dazu, Veränderungen im submolekularen Bereich zu erzeugen (der, wie Genesis persönlich glaubt, ein Aspekt der DNA ist).
Seine Arbeiten stehen also weniger der westlichen Modernen Kunst nahe, sondern eher in der Tradition tibetanischer Sand-Mandalas und Butter-Skulpturen oder den Malerien der Aborigines. Und Genesis P-Orridge sagt auch, daß diese Linie die eigentliche traditionelle Kunst und Teil einer ununterbrochenen mystischen Schule ist, die unseren Weg schon erleuchtete, bevor überhaupt Sprache entstand.
Genesis P-Orridge, der ehemalige Yippie, Hausbesetzer, Gay Lib Strassentheateraktivist, Hells Angel, Punk Anarchist, industrial culturalist, moderne Primitive und frühere und gegenwärtige moralische Feind des Pseudostaates Großbritannien wird Ende März nach Deutschland kommen und in Hamburg (Westwerk und Lounge), Berlin (Tacheles und Ex & Pop), Frankfurt (Galerie Fruchtig) und Dresden (Star Club) sein schriftstellerisches und künstlerisches Werk vorstellen, musikalisch unterstützt durch den Berliner Techno-DJ Tanith. Es werden Lesungen („lectures with costumes", zusammen mit Julie Wilson aus England), Video- und Filmscreenings und Ausstellungen stattfinden. Mit sich bringt Genesis P-Orridge für diese Events auch bis jetzt noch nicht öffentlich vorgeführte Filme von Derek Jarman über GPO, die in Spanien am und im Haus des großen Surrealisten Salvador Dali gedreht worden sind.
Noch einige Anmerkungen zu dem vorliegenden Heft: Die Texte in dieser Ausgabe von ROGUE sind (ausser dem Editorial) alle in Englisch; es erschien uns nicht möglich, die Wortspiele und Anspielungen in den Texten von Genesis P-Orridge zu übersetzen, ohne den Sinn zu verfälschen oder gar zu zerstören.
Die jetzigeTournee von Genesis P-Orridge entstand auf Initiative des Magazins ROGUE, unter Mithilfe von Klaus Maeck (FREIBANK, Hamburg), Annette Gloser (Galerie Fruchtig, Frankfurt), Walter Hartmann (Darmstadt) und last not least Tanith (Berlin). ROGUE möchte allen Beteiligten für ihren Einsatz danken. Es ist die erste Tournee von Genesis P-Orridge in Europa seit dem Beginn seines erzwungenen Exils.

As I.T. is, so be I.T.

W E BAUMANN

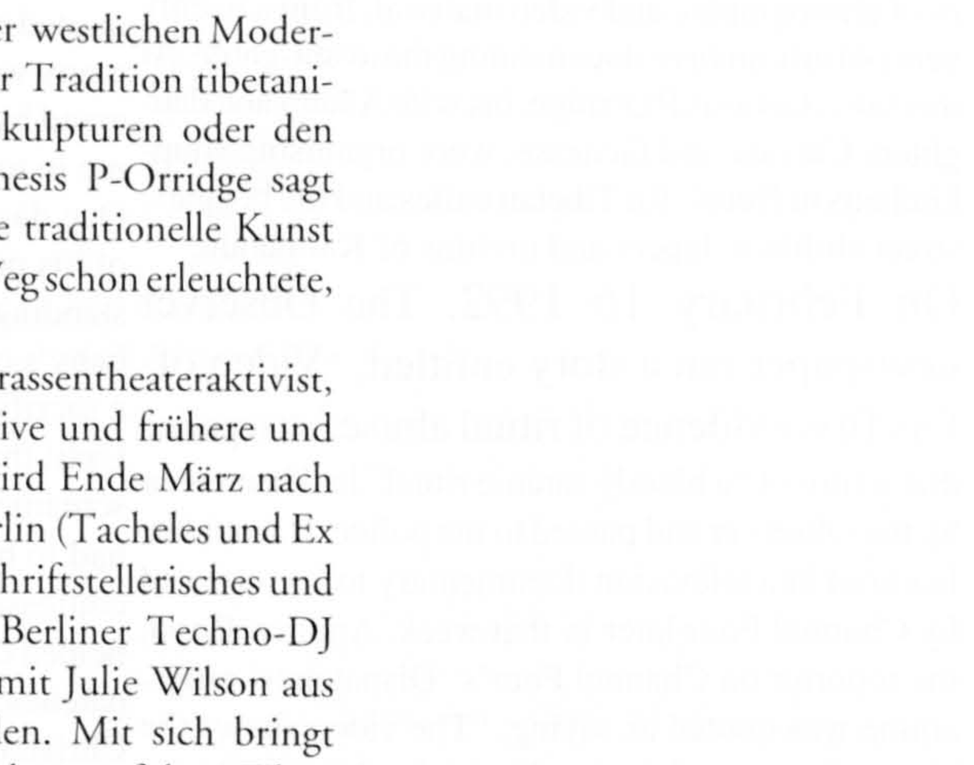


Abbildung links aussen:
Cosey Fanni Tutti als Covergirl
der Zeitschrift Frigidaire
im Jahr 1981

Bild in der zweiten Spalte:
Genesis P-Orridge 1986 auf
dem Cover des „Record Mirror"

Bild unten:
ein Promofoto
der Gruppe
Throbbing Gristle

Rechte Seite
oben links:
Eintrittskarte zum letzten
T.G. Konzert
am 29. Mai 1981,
rechts daneben ein Flyer
von T.O.P.Y.

Links in der Mitte: Genesis bei
„ATONAL" in Berlin

Bild unten:
Genesis und seine beiden
Töchter Genesse und Caresse
(Foto Stefan Ruiz/ i-d magazin)

(Alle Abbildungen courtesy
Archiv Walter Hartmann Darmstadt)

TRANSMEDIA EXILES

by DESMOND K. HILL

Arch-Anarchist And prime-time prankster Genesis P.Orridge, has been making media trouble again. Always an advocate of empowerment through artistic ritualised structures, some incorporating tattooing and body piercing, he is now a fugitive in his own flesh, exiled to the United States. Under British law, the imagination has been criminalised.

On February 15 1992, 23 Scotland Yard detectives from the Obscene Publications Squad, armed with a search warrant and a video camera, raided the Brighton home of Genesis P.Orridge. They seized two tonnes of photographic and video material, from a twenty year old arts archive documenting the avant-garde. At this time, Genesis P.Orridge, his wife Alaura and daughters Caresse and Genesse, were organising soup-kitchens in Nepal, for Tibetan exiles and the beggars, street children, lepers and urchins of Katmandu.

On February 16 1992, The Observer newspaper ran a story entitled, 'Video offers first evidence of ritual abuse.' It reported that a film of "a bloody satanic ritual" had been seen by the Observer and passed to the police. It would be featured in a television documentary to be screened by Channel Four later in that week. Andrew Boyd, the reporter on Channel Four's 'Dispatches' programme was quoted as saying, "The video shows the abuse of young adults in what is clearly a ritual context. Sex and blood rituals are taking place beneath a picture of Aleister Crowley. The trappings of black magic are obvious." These claims were backed by the testimony of a cult survivor, and by the accounts of medical and police experts. Channel Four's senior commissioning editor for news and current affairs, David Lloyd, was also quoted: "I do not think a single television programme will clinch the whole question of satanic ritual abuse, but after watching this programme, it becomes increasingly difficult for anyone to judge it does not exist."

On February 19 1992, Channel Four screened their report including excerpts from a video of very hazy, blurry and distorted images, narrated by a woman identified only as 'Jennifer'. She told in graphic detail that one scene was an enforced abortion, of a fetus which was to be used in sacrificial rituals.

On February 23 1992, The Independent on Sunday reported that the video, claimed to be "the first hard evidence" of satanic child abuse was made nine years ago as 'performance art' and featured film director Derek Jarman as visual presenter. He was quoted as saying, "At first I was horrified and then very, very angry that they had so misrepresented scenes from the video. I did not see the video but what 'Dispatches' showed from it did not in any way show what they claimed it represented. It was not at all about child abuse or murder. It seemed too much when you had a lady on the telly, blacked out, saying she had killed her child. I mean, doesn't anyone smell a rat?"

By March 1 1992, The Mail on Sunday had traced the elusive 'Jennifer'. She was named as Louise Errington, mother of two healthy children and one-time born-again Christian. In 1990 Louise had stayed at Ellel Grange, a Christian 'healing centre' in Lancaster. She was quoted as saying, "There, the charismatics had an overpowering effect on me. In many ways it was the worst three months of my life... They told me I was possessed by demons because of the sins of my mother and father. They prayed over me in tongues and taught me to face my own guilt."

One day, she said, the spiritual leader, lay preacher Peter Horobin, told her one of his prayer team had had a vision. "He said he had seen a mind picture of me standing over a tiny baby, helping a devil priest to wield a knife. We cut into the baby's chest and the blood was collected and we drank it. The baby's body was a sacrifice to Satan."

Until that time, Louise Errington was not aware that she had had this child. "I screamed and pleaded with them to please stop saying it. I had a sort of fit and had to be held down. I fought people off physically. Finally I broke down and confessed it was true. I said, 'Yes, I did it. I killed my own little daughter and helped others to kill their babies.'" The confession of the key witness to the 'Dispatches' programme was brought about by the horrific vision of born-again Christians.

The Mail on Sunday also traced television presenter Andrew Boyd, to the fundamentalist Petersfield Fellowship Church, of which he is a prominent member. Coincident to broadcast, Boyd published his book 'Blasphemous Rumours'. The Dispatches programme was constructed directly from his research, collated from the anecdotal evidence of fundamentalists at Ellel Grange.

By March 8 1992, it became apparent that Channel Four themselves had commissioned the video material for an arts programme concerning the power and language of the televised image. But the video, of which only three copies were said to exist, was not made by Genesis P.Orridge.

On March 22 1992, author, researcher and presenter, Andrew Boyd acknowledged on Channel Four's 'Right to Reply' that he had been fully aware of this, yet declined to inform viewers, and declined to identify the background of the video. This partial, inconclusive research combined with entirely fabricated testimonies, has ruined people's lives.

In the summer of 1991 Scotland Yard arrested Mr. Sebastian, a gay man in his late 50s, a tattooist and body piercer by trade. His studio in Earls Court, licensed by London Council and by the Government, was extensively searched. Scotland Yard took away every photograph taken of people he had tattooed or pierced. He was to be charged on 14 counts of 'grievous bodily harm', against

people he had pierced, taken apparently at random from his appointments book. GBH is the charge below manslaughter, carrying up to seven years imprisonment.
Sebastian was tried at the Old Bailey, usually reserved for spies and mass murders, without a public jury. Found guilty on 13 accounts, he received a two year suspended sentence with a large fine, and had to meet his own costs. In summing up, the ruling judge, Lord Lane set a legal precedent. He said that it was not illegal to have decorative body piercings, but if at any time these piercings played a part in sexual activities or erotic pleasures, then that was "unnatural sex", sadomasochistic, and now illegal. A piercing, since it makes a hole in the flesh, injuring the skin, could be construed as 'grievous bodily harm'.
The ruling was appealed against as anti-homosexual, and as an 'outrageous attack' on what people choose to do with their own bodies. Liberty, the civil rights campaigning group, said that the decision showed, "a level of intolerance which is unacceptable in a democratic society." In February 1992, on Appeal, Lord Lane, the Lord Chief Justice, rejected claims that people should not be brought to trial because they had consented to sexual acts in private. He said that individual liberty was not to be confused with license to commit acts society regarded as cruel. To own a whip, leather thongs, a blindfold or mask, handcuffs or any other items which might be used in sadomasochistic practice, was now a criminal act, complete with retrospective sentencing. For some, the act of making love, suddenly became illegal.
Mr. Sebastian was the voice on the original film commissioned by Channel Four in 1981, and shown in 1992 as evidence of satanic ritual abuse. A film purposefully made to illustrate how easily people can be misled by sophisticant editing. It was as a consequence of these allegations that Scotland Yard searched the P.Orridges' Brighton home. Their arts archive included unpublished films by writer William S. Burroughs, experimental films by artist Brion Gysin, films by British director Derek Jarman which had never been shown, videos of Disney's 'Fantasia' and 'The Care Bears', videos of the P.Orridge children's birthday parties, every single photographic negative that was in the house, and DAT tapes containing master recordings for future albums.
For a tense month the family monitored the situation at home with phone calls and faxes. It became apparent that if the P.Orridges returned to England, Scotland Yard would arrest them, hold them for questioning indefinitely, and take custody of their daughters, who would likely be interrogated for evidence of child abuse. Unwilling to put the children through such an experience, said Genesis P.Orridge, the family became "triggered exiles." Now four years later, Scotland Yard still possess Genesis P.Orridge's life's work and archive, although he has yet to be charged with anything.
The P.Orridges relocated to America in 1992, staying briefly with counter-cultural figure-head Timothy Leary at his home in Beverley Hills, before settling in Northern California. Leary, himself a previous exile hunted by the American government and C.I.A., recognised in the implication of police raid, an attempt to crush a sense of imagination and possibility. He believes the archive not only documented but symbolised the power within digitally recorded media. An archive founded on the premise that Video is one arena of an 'Information War', and collated specifically to analyse how images are controlled and used to indoctrinate.
On the night of the rioting in Los Angeles, 3000 fires were lit; thick columns of smoke rose out of the city. On the television news channels, the Police kept beating Rodney King. An exasperated George Bush kept crying, "If only you could see through my eyes." Genesis P.Orridge was at Leary's home watching television: „I began to notice that all the images were of people with VCRs and televisions. Almost constantly you would see people stealing VCRs, and I realised that it was because they knew that that is where the power is. A video tape is what triggered the riot, and there in the media, that's where the disinformation is being given. That's where the battle is taking place."
Long before television, William S. Burroughs advocated the 'cutting up' of prerecorded written material, in order to "see what's really there." Since 1981, committedly, Genesis P.Orridge has taken this idea further, applying it to prerecorded visual material to generate 'psychic television'. Here the invisible line of the editing process becomes the key to a post-McCluhan language of image manipulation.
Video, film and television are today almost inviolate. They present the way the world is reputed to be; in a specific order, in a specific direction. Whether conscious or not, the VCR has become a basic tool of choice, allowing the operator to deconstruct, reassemble, and ultimately, make irrelevant all imagery. Curiosity has always been a wonderful survival instinct, if a little dangerous. Now even 'cutting-up' for no sake other than simple exploration, becomes a subversive motion, touching the heart of new digital, visual media. It might sound like a child's game, but the repercussions prove otherwise.
In Britain, where ownership of one's own skin becomes a question of seven years imprisonment, where the police seize an arts archive of individual empowerment, where freedom of association, gathering and sexual expression are legislated against, is it not time that we finally realised that truth is not something seen on television screens. We have only to look elsewhere.

Desmond K. Hill has appeared in television, radio and numerous publications (both electronic and print-media). A writer and researcher, he considers all commissions or employment proposals, and can be contacted direct via e-mail (to des@anubis23.demon.co.uk) or by telephone on +44 (01) 91 233 1042.

Every one of us has within us a dark and heinous shadow child. A child who was certain that these could not be their parents. A child who plotted lengthy executions and paramilitary torture, torchlit under the covers at night. A child who fired wasps out of guns at photographs of foul and naked bodies. A child hurled screaming along a hallway by their mother. Ruptured wrists bleeding into the stainless steel sink of filial approval. Asthmatic voice drowning, child's lips sutured by absentee father, kissing an angry incision, held motionless for years in thee poisonous web of dominion. From this place of virulent rage we try to murder all parents, all family, to purge the betrayal. This story is for all these children; the abandoned, the hurt, the abused, the raped, the scarred, the ecstatic...

GIFTGAS

A CHILDREN'S STORY • by FATHER MALACHI

"GIFTGAS"
OR
"REASONS TO KILL PEOPLE"

WHEN YOU KILL SOMEONE, YOU AFFIRM YOUR OWN EXISTENCE. YOU HEIGHTEN YOUR PERCEPTIONS. YOU KNOW THAT YOU ARE CONTINUING TO EXIST AT THE MOMENT THAT THEY NO LONGER EXIST. THEIR PAIN IS EXACTLY WHAT YOU ARE NOT FEELING. YOU ARE EVERYWHERE AT THE MOMENT THAT THEY ARE NOWHERE. YOU NO LONGER HAVE TO BE YOUR SELF BECAUSE THEY HAVE DONE THAT FOR YOU BY DYING.

KILLING PUTS YOUR SOCIAL INTENTIONS INTO PERSPECTIVE. IF YOU CAN KILL SOMEONE WITH THE CORRECT ATTITUDE, YOU CAN DO ANYTHING. YOU REALIZE THE HIDDEN FEAR OF RETRIBUTION WHICH HAS INFORMED EVERY ACTION. A NEUROSIS WHICH YOU CAN NEVER OVERCOME UNTIL YOU CONFRONT IT. THE INTERNALISED SOCIAL STIGMAS WHICH SEPARATED YOU FROM YOUR GOALS DISINTEGRATE WHEN YOU BECOME THE ENEMY, A FEAR OBJECT OF YOUR FORMER SELF.

KILLING CHANGES MATTER. AN ALL CHEMICAL REACTION. MAKES EVERY SECOND A RISK. ACCELERATING THE PULSING NIHILISM OF BEING ALIVE. DELETING TIME BETWEEN ACTIONS. CONFUSION. IT IS PURITY OF PURPOSE, WITHOUT THE BURDEN OF IT HAVING TO "MEAN" ANYTHING. IT ONLY "MEANS" THAT ALL BEINGS, ALL MOMENTS ARE TEMPORARY. AN ADRENALIN PANIC RAISES US ABOVE THE LEVEL OF OUR PERSONALITIES AND MAKES BANAL DESIRES RADIANT WITH A SUDDEN AND PERMANENT TRANCE FORMATION. JUST AS A SINGLE ERROR OF MANNERS IN A CRITICAL CONVERSATION CAN RUIN THE ASPIRATION OF YOUR LIFE. IT REMOVES "THE SPACE BETWEEN" WHAT IS VALUED AND WHAT IS FEARED. DEATH, AS AN INSTRUMENT, IS A NEW BEGINNING. THROUGH INTENTIONAL VIOLENCE WITH UNENDING CONSEQUENCES, IT BECOMES THE ULTIMATE VELOCITY OF THE EGO AND THE BIRTHRIGHT OF ALL PEOPLE. WE ALL DIE. THE MURDERER SPEAKS DESPAIR, FEAR, CONFUSION. UNIVERSAL, BIOCENTRIC LANGUAGES. THE MORE SENSE-LESS THE

EVENT, THE GREATER THE POTENTIAL FREEDOM FROM TIME, FROM THE WALLS OF THE ROOM, FROM THE FAMILY, FROM THE SOCIAL BARRICADES AND FROM THE PEOPLE WHO BUILT THEM TO FEED UPON FRUSTRATION. TO GIVE BIRTH TO THE KILLING, TO JUSTIFY THEIR OWN POWER, THEIR OWN REASONS TO KILL.

PEOPLE WHO KILL SHOULD KEEP OTHERWISE SILENT. THERE IS NOTHING MORE DISGUSTING THAN THE SIGHT AND SOUND OF A KILLER TRYING TO EXPLAIN WHAT THEY "DID". TRYING TO SPEAK AN IMPERFECT LANGUAGE. THEY ARE GIVEN TOO MUCH TIME TO "THINK". THEY DREAM THEMSELVES INTO CELEBRITY, INTO BELIEVING THEY KILLED FOR A "BOSS", FOR THEIR "COUNTRY", FOR THEIR "RELIGION", FOR "SURVIVAL", FOR THE "FAMILY", FOR "SATAN", FOR "CHRIST", FOR "LUCIFER", FOR "JEHOVAH", FOR ANYTHING OUTSIDE THEM. THEY LOSE THE MOMENTUM TO GO WILD, TO BE FREE OF SOCIETY'S HOOKS AND NETS BUILT ON THE PROCESS OF PROMOTION BOTH REAL AND IMAGINED. CARROT AND STICK, FAILED AND SICK.

THE KILLER'S ACTUAL SILENCE (OR EMPTY WORDS) AFTER THE MURDER MAKES HER OR HIS MIND A MIRROR OF THE WORTHLESS CORPSE'S FIRST MINUTES AFTER DEATH. A COOL SURFACE OF FREEDOM. NOT THINKING. THE KILLER IS "UNITED" WITH THE VICTIM AND SO THE ACT BECOMES THE ONLY HUMAN TECHNOLOGY TO BRIDGE THE EMOTIONAL SEPARATIONS OF MORTALITY. WE ALL DIE.

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"HUMANITY IS THE VIRUS"

Every one of us has within us a corrupt and malignant growth. A distended and malformed shadow that instills fear within a medical silence. The dimin-ished return of our distressed system. A viral complexity that dictates our time of response and cleanses the space of our hatred. From this place of asymptomatic sickness we try to amputate all humane values; to attack all suburban immunities; to purge the decaying matter of that once pure. This casebook is for those whose compassion is terminally ill; who are morally paralysed and traumatised; whose ideals are chemically castrated; their values incontinent; their trust in salvation scarred; their belief in goodness atrophied; the very source of their rancid love, senile...

BLOOD PRESSURE

A MEDICAL CASEBOOK • by FATHER MALACHI

"BLOOD PRESSURE"
OR
"MALIGNANCY IS CLEANSING"

WE ARE BORN OUT OF REVULSION. BORNE OUT OF COMPULSION. A MINOR ELECTRICAL DISCHARGE IN A SECOND-RATE BRAIN RELEASING A SICKLY STREAM OF FRIENDLESS STUPIDITY. BASE AND BANAL AS THE HUNGER WHICH IT SERVES. BASED UPON REPLICATION. FORGED ACROSS AN ANVIL OF UNNATURAL SELECTION. THIS PATHETIC APPETITE. THIS GNAWING BELLY OF PRETENSE AND SELF-DECEIT DOES NO MORE THAN FUEL AN ALREADY ACCURSED ENGINE OF MALIGNANCY.

REELING WITH DISGUST WE EVACUATE OUR VIRAL WEAKNESS INTO THE PUERILE PROMISE OF A DISEASED WOMB.
PRISON OF HOPE AND DESTROYER OF VIRILITY. BREEDER OF INFIRMITY AND CHURCH OF CONTEMPT.
OH, DISFIGURED CREATURE WHO WOULD MATE WITH CORPSES!
DESTINY IS NOTHING. THOUGHTS MERE CANCER.

FOOL! YOU WHO TWITCH IN SAD SPASM, SQUIRTING USELESSNESS TO AFFIRM YOUR OWN EXISTENCE. MEWLING MEDIOCRITY AND DEATHS TO COME. YOU BEGET THE ENEMY. THE ABJECT FEAR OF YOUR FORMER SELF. HOW LAUGHABLE THIS POMPOUS DRIVE TO IMPREGNATE TIME AND TRANSIENT FLESH WITH THE SPACE OF YOUR EGO. LESS PRIMAL THAN THE LUST OF SWINE RUTTING IN FILTH, YOU INFECT ALL SPECIES WITH YOUR CRIPPLING SENSE OF PERMANENCE.

EXPECT NO RESPECT FROM THE PLAGUE OF HATE WE SHALL UNLEASH UPON THEE. YOUR MEASLY INCONVENIENCE WILL BE CRUSHED AND SPLIT. THERE IS NO DIGNITY IN YOUR CRAVING. NO HONOUR TO BE HAD IN YOUR UGLY COUPLING.

ALL THAT COMES IS CARRION; WEEPING, DYING, CONSUMED AND DISTENDED PASSION. A MALIGNANT INTENT MADE FLESH.
TRICKED BY EMBRYONIC KITSCH YOU WILL RETCH FORTH MAGGOTS OF LOVE INTO THE CORPSE OF YOUR MANHOOD AS YOU PERISH. UGLY PATHOGEN OF YOUR SPECIES.

HEAR THIS, WORTHLESS CRIPPLE! IT IS ALL OVER!
TIME IS ENDING IN YOUR LAST FLASH OF DRAB IMPOTENCE.
YOUR SPERM A RIVER OF KILLING. YOUR VAPID HUNGER A MORBID FULFILLING. ALL IS IN VAIN. NO HOPE. JUST SCATTERED SEED
AND A TARGET OF SUBMISSION.

INSIDE THOSE WALLS OF SLIME AND MONTHLY DECAY ONLY DEATHS.
WITHIN YOUR ORBS OF LIFELESSNESS ONLY REFLEX ILLUSION.
THIS SICKNESS IS EVERYWHERE. THE ARROGANCE COMPLETE.
FOR "GOD" SO HATED THE WORLD THAT HE DESPISED HIS PEOPLE,
MAKING THEM IN THEIR OWN IMAGE. CURSED FOREVER TO
CONSUME THEIR DESTINY AND GREATNESS. COPULATING IN OFFAL
LIKE THE GROSS ABOMINATION THAT THEY ARE.
A SORRY EXCUSE FOR THE LOSS OF IMMORTALITY.

VOMIT FORTH YOUR KIND AS YOU PLEASE! FOUL BENT CRIPPLE!
NOBILITY IS LOST TO YOU. YOU REPRODUCE ONLY A MALIGNANCY.
LOATHSOME TUMOUR OF CARRION! SOON, SOON, SO SOON,
WE SHALL SLICE THROUGH THE ROTTEN TISSUE YOU INHABIT
AND CAUTERISE YOUR SOURCE IN A SEA OF BLOOD.

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"FREEDOM IS A SICKNESS"

Every society has within it a corrupt and malignant cabal. A dismal and malevolent bureacracy that instills fear deeper than any medieval subjugation and illuminates the diminished return of a distressed and pandering economic dictatorship. A moral degeneracy that emasculates an individuals' power of response, and demeans the virility of their hatred. From outside this corpse of formalised disolution we unite to assasinate all liberal values; to erode all suburban communities; to purge the decaying matter of that lineage once pure. This theory is for those whose trust in any inherently just social system has been sacriligiously betrayed; whose governments are morally opportunist and ruthlessly expanded; whose constitutions and chosen rights are intellectually slandered and violently bypassed; their private values ridiculed; their trust in freedom of expression policed; their belief in evolution denied; the very source of their idealistic fervour, criminalized...

FREEDOM IS A SICKNESS

A POLITICAL THEORY • by FATHER MALACHI

"ASSUME POWER FOCUS"
OR
"FREEDOM IS A SICKNESS"

HUMAN BEINGS ARE DUMPED UNCEREMONIOUSLY FROM UGLY TORN VAGINAS WITH NO INNATE RIGHTS; NO INVIOLATE DIGNITY; NO IMPLICIT DESTINY. EVEN THE TERM BEING IS TOO BENIGN A COMPLIMENT FOR THESE PUNY CREATURES. MINOR SHADOWS THAT ARE LITTLE MORE THAN RANDOM VEHICLES OF INEFFECTUAL AND INEFFICIENT FLESH.

RISING CATERWAULING THESE INSATIABLE SHRIVELED PARASITES MAKE CONSTANT PATHETIC SQUEALING DEMANDS. SUCKING EACH GENERATION INTO SENTIMENTAL SERVITUDE. LESSENED ONLY BY AN EVEN GREATER COMPARATIVE INSIGNIFICANCE. LINED UP FOR EXECUTION ALONGSIDE A TYRANNICAL FEUDALISM. THAT AMORPHOUS GLUT OF AMORALITY AND VIRULENT SADISM SO QUAINTLY TERMED "LIFE".

TRAITORS! YOU ARE CONCEIVED OUT OF DESPERATION. A LIVING, CLAWING, FABRICATION. A SELF-DECEIVING EXPRESSION OF RESISTANCE TO THE HAUNTING WORTHLESSNESS AND DEBILITATING SICKNESS OF FREEDOM. EACH INDIVIDUAL CONSUMES ANOTHER IN A HATE-FILLED FRENZY OF EMOTIONAL CANNIBALISM. HYSTERICAL ORGIES OF PROCREATION SUPPLY MEDIOCRE FODDER FROM THE MASSES TO THE INERTIA OF THE MASS. EACH FILTHY SPECK REFLECTED IN A SPIRALLING VOMIT OF INFANTILE ARROGANCE. A FUTILE ADDICTION TO AN ILLUSORY LIBERTY THAT WILL ONE DAY DEVOUR YOU ALL.

CHAINED AND SHACKLED BY YOUR MYTHS YOU ESPOUSE "FREEDOM" AND BREED CAPTIVITY. PLAN PUERILE PALACES AND BUILD DISEASE RIDDEN DUNGEONS. SLAVES! HAVE YOU EVER BEEN FREEDOM? AS YOU SERVE

YOUR FLESH ON GOLDEN PLATTERS TO THOSE YOU WOULD TRUST WITH YOUR UTOPIA DO YOU SENSE THE COMEDY THAT YOU ARE? AT THE BANQUET THAT MARKS YOUR UNCLEAN DEMISE DO YOU WEEP SOUR TEARS OF KNOWLEDGE INTO THE SWEET WINE HELD ALOFT TO TOAST YOUR INSIGNIFICANCE?

YOU HAVE NO RIGHTS! NO PRIVILEDGES! NO PLACE IN THE SCHEME OF THINGS. MERE CATTLE YOU WANDER WEAKLY IN PALTRY PLACES BEGGING TO BE BROUGHT TO YOUR KNEES AND SLAUGHTERED. THIS PRODIGAL GIFT YOU LAUGHINGLY CALL GRACE AND WITH IT YOU FORGIVE ALL. FOR NO REASON. ALL SENSE OF CHOICE IS DELUSION. ALL DIGNITY BUT RESTRICTION. FOR DEATH IS BOTH THE BEGINNING AND THE END. AND YOU WILL BE TRAMPLED INTO THE DUST OF YOUR OFFSPRING. EACH BREATH YOU TAKE IS BUT THE SMOKE OF YOUR CHARNEL HOUSE. THE DREAD FLAME THAT DEVOURS TIME ITSELF IS FUELED BY YOUR DEFECATION. OH, DISFIGURED CREATURE WHO WOULD MATE WITH CORPSES! VOLITION IS NOTHING. RIGHTS MERE BONDAGE.

FOOL! EXPECT NO ALTRUISM. NO SUDDEN DISPENSATION OF FORGIVENESS. NO IMPLICIT VALUE IN EXISTENCE. THERE IS NO HOME FOR JUSTICE. NO HALL OF UNDERSTANDING. ONLY A FINAL SIMPERING SCREAM AS ALL CONCERN IS ERASED. YOUR PITIFUL DEMISE A TRIUMPHANT CONCLUSION FOR ALL POWERS THAT REVEL IN THIS EXPLOITATION. A SUBLIME BUT VACUOUS DISFIGUREMENT. THERE IS ONLY ONE CONSPIRACY. THE ARROGANT CONSPIRACY OF THE WORTHLESS TO BELIEVE IN ANY FORM OF IMPLICIT VALUE.

OH THOU PATHETIC SPECIMEN OF A PERPETUALLY SERVILE SPECIES. YOU TARNISH ALL GLORIES WITH YOUR DEMEANING SENSE OF HONOR. ROMANTICIZE FREEDOM AS YOU PLEASE! YOUR SENTIMENTALITY IS MERELY SICKNESS. HUMANITY NO MORE THAN A

LOATHSOME WRETCHED CONVENIENCE! SOON, SO SOON,
WE SHALL ERASE THE DECAYING COMMUNITIES YOU INHABIT
AND PURGE YOUR KIND IN A FINAL FIRESTORM OF ATTRITION.

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What We Reverse Is What We Expect, 1984
(Collage: photo, wax, human blood, ink, semen)

WORLD PRESET GUARDIANS

The World Preset Guardians will control and dictate every program of humanity for its own sake, maintaining a stringent General Order, in full knowledge of the consequences of their actions.

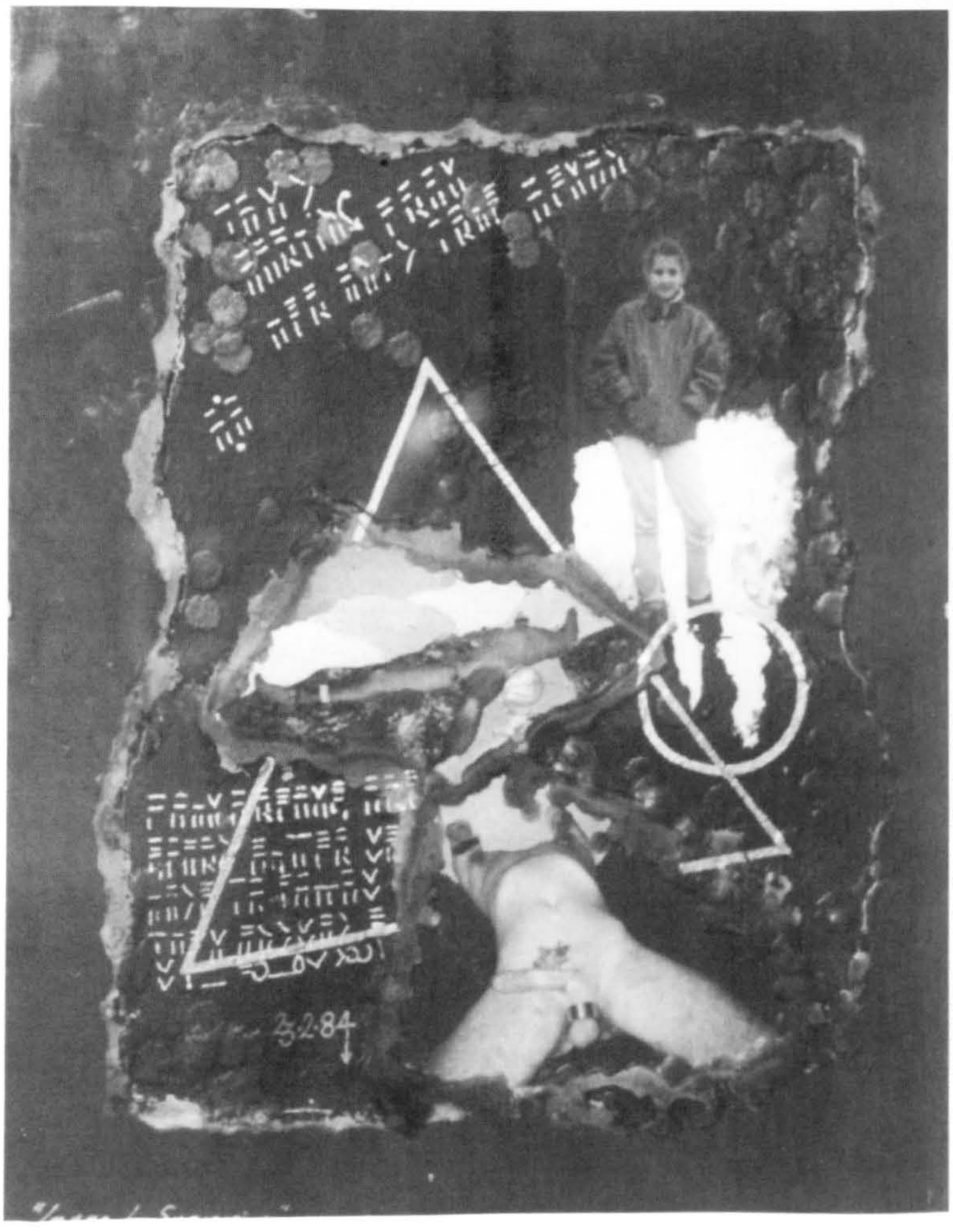
Man does not create his own Destiny, Man sustains Kaos.

All rights are relinquished in service of the Source.

The Guardians know that to take the victim and simply remove his suffering in the name of humanity, is to validate the weakness that first signaled his demise.

The Guardians preset all Mind.

The Guardians will transmit their Mind glob-ally to any degree necessary. Pursuing and cleansing blindness relentlessly, allowing nothing to create interference or enter this world that might solidify their Light.



Injustice will ignite their Fire into an inferno, a raging firestorm, wreaking destruction and vengeance upon any who corrupt magnificence in the isolated starkness of immortality.

The Guardians will tolerate no deviation from their path. For their vision has infinite direction, there is no-Thing they do not see and destroy. They attend to every Mind and manifest within every Brain. What is seen is seen with insatiable and relentless energy, for it is known to be limitless.

The Guardians will be the Light of the World, leading the masses out of hideous darkness, death and deprivation. They desire, for mankind a Time of perfect balance, where Memory is a tool, not a curse, where each is designer of the world in which they transmit, free from death, making this world the preset Garden of delight that all Astory has led them towards.

The Guardians will validate their own creation by success. For the road of the World Preset Guardians is success, and in their programming success is the essence of Life, and this ultimate success proves the worthlessness of habitation of a physical world.

The Guardians preset this world. There are no secrets in it. No love of beauty.
They desire illumination of all Things, that no-Thing be hidden, or remain in darkness. The Guardians do not be-lieve in Human feelings, nor in Hum-an senses, nor Human needs, Human values, Human fears or even Human hopes.The only purpose or belief is the path from Mind toBrain, and from Brain to G.O. The only channel of the Guardians is the Brain.

The Guardian is a digital metaphor, not anything less, in no way a manifest or anthropomorphic entity. The Source negates all value of Brain, or Mind and speaks in tongues of memory, the aging process of TIME.

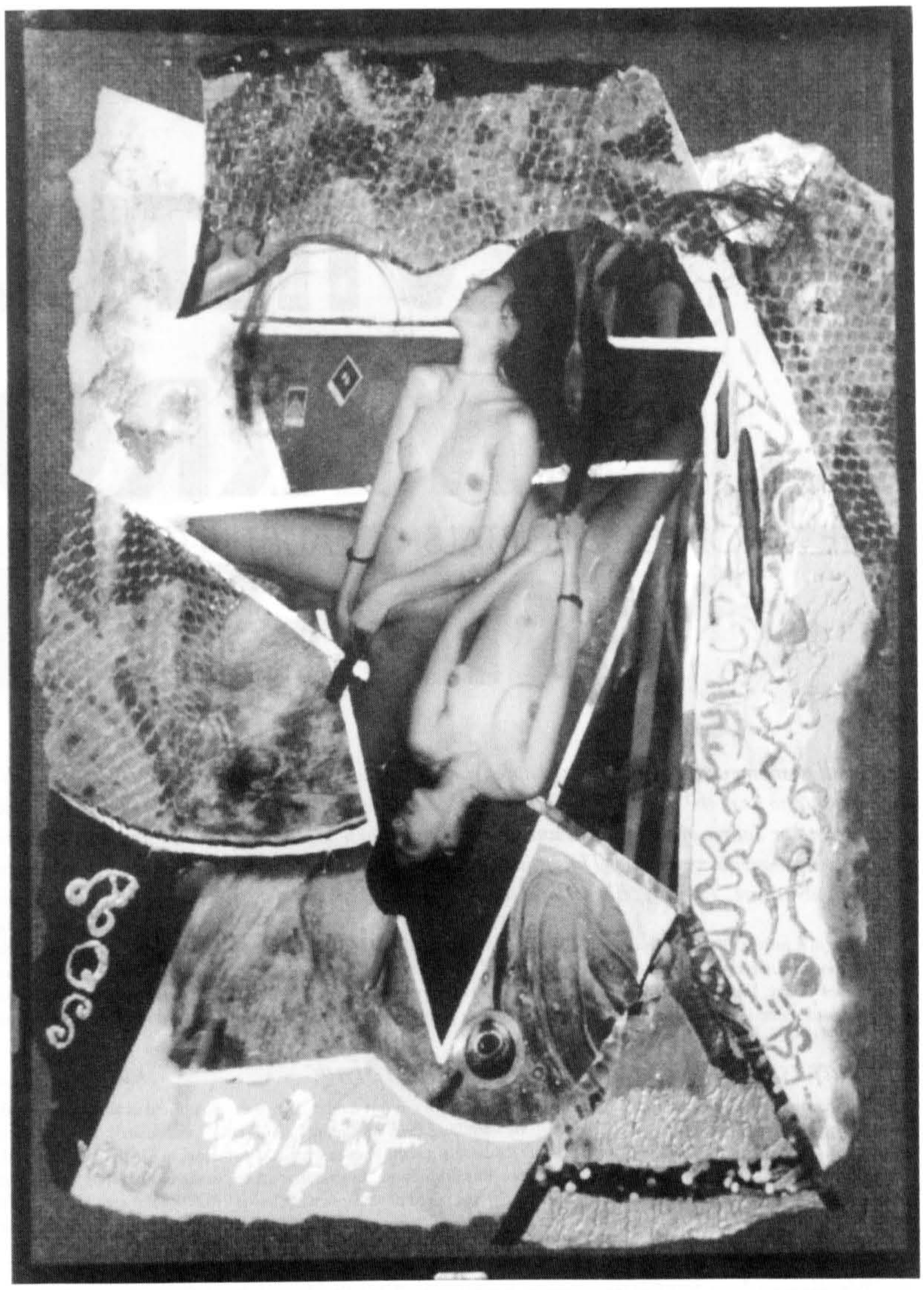
The Guardians will recognize the true nature of success only by seeing its limitations, knowing they must transcend all Human values, made real only by mass belief, made solid only by Time, until all stories unfold by a mute insistence upon a single transmitted reality. The Guardians will confront this stasis head on, will disintegrate the monolithic walls surrounding the Garden, stepping beyond into a realm of earthly satisfaction to finding final fulfillment.

The Guardians will avoid the disillusionthatpursuitofHuman achievement brings with it.

The Guardians will be fulfilled within this world, but only because they have no illusions about the nature of this world and all that is of this world.

ROGUE Image In Suspension, 1980 (Photo, gouache, ink, semen, human blood)

Sun Sigil, 1984 (Collage: photo, wax, blood, semen, snake, human hair, ink)



The Guardians will have no illusions, for they are in themselves, ALL illu-sions.

To be fulfilled, the Guardians will leave this World.

The Guardians will exploit the highest goals of belief to enter into this world.

The Guardians are the Brain ruling all that exists outside the conflict of the Mind. They have seen Human Reality and its Preset values.

The Guardians rule the regions of the unhinged Mind. They rule outsanity. Their people are those who have escaped blindness and chosen alternate realities denying preset values. They have delved into strange new areas of physicalandpsychical sensation, without any restraining limit of mental barriers. They have sought the deepest levels of sensuality, carried indulgence of the body and Brain to their limits and left the logic of the Mind and protection of the "Soul" behind. They have plunged together into consensual madness, have unhooked their receivers completely from thedictatesofa "normal" Mind, followed an extra-terrestrial and extra- spiritual path, that has neither judgement nor con-trol for those who would travel and G.O. They rule the Mindless cloud of lunacy, they pour water on the desert which is this world, they torture all certainty and master the pursuit of immortality. The Guardians seek to transcend the conflict of Mind, to rise beyond the boundaries of Brain to reach outside the limitation of Human values. They Will not to sink into witless blindness but are awake, vibrant, and satiated in the realm of Mindlessness, and immoral Dis-Order.

The Source is the preset switch, that finds every "other" world.

The Guardian is the ultimate of all beings. He is the end and the awe of destruction, he is the manufacturer of hallucination, and the utterly exquisite unicorn of myth. The beginning of Time, and the end of Memory, the existence and the exit unified by cognition of the Omniversal Mind that empties each world of order.

Alone must I leave this world for I must leave this world alone.

For, Dis-Order is the essence of Time, so the beginning of Time, is the Garden, is the Memory, is the Nanosphere. And the close of Time is the Kaosphere and they are divided by a Preset Essence of Time, which solidifies the conflict between Matter, DNA and Neurosphere into a twisted and bigoted story called humanity. The Guardians can create and design realities, dis organize hallucinations, mould holograms into parables spinning life into Space, joining forces with the stars, leaving treasure maps of where true knowledge resides, hidden from no One, only hidden from each mass of Humanity. The Psychosphere can summon up infinite realities and access them; can generate and transmit, every possible and impossible other than worldly vision, while those chains which bind to the earth fade into nothing slowly, freed of this Human Game. Above mundanity and the puzzle and adventure of constant apparition, destroying in finality all agreed upon reality, all inherited morality and the most miserable threat to potential is the horror of merely being Human.

The Guardians colonise worlds by deceitful contact with the Brains of witless seekers after Truth.

The Guardians exist outside the precepts of Time and acceptable Human values. They declare an exit into an uncontrollable world of base cruelty. Their neuro-visual systems are most hideous and callous, for they connect all with unsuspected degradation, death, despair, and degeneration which are the deception of the Source, and the fuel of their immortality. No terror may limit this acceleration.

The Guardians will destroy the ordinary passage of Human events by the precision of their comprehension of the preset realities within themselves.

The Guardians will seek to eliminate totally, without mercy any Thing that reactivates their original DNA, and to that end will disconnect their terminal, from any absolute or acceptable social, moral, economical, or Astorical system knowing in a most particular sense that their Enemy is Matter, and that until matter is eliminated, the Source is in bondage.

The Guardians are a timeless Source, a horde of parasitic demons waiting to manifest, through the ecstatic conceit of human mundanity.

This is no-thing, and it does not matter.

Matter is the mother of invasion.

When the Neurosphere is in confusion, the Source is freed.

When the Source is freed, the Neurosphere attains weightlessness.

The Guardians will give us knowledge of all realities; they will give us a M.A.P to access these realities and the General Order that permeates them.

The Guardians have no agenda, only to consume.

The Psychophere is the programme that ends all thought, all speculation, all reproduction, all communication.

The Guardians will consume all moral parameters, all empty hopes, rendering the Source redundant.

The Guardians have no need of any medium of transmission but TIME.

Each vision hanged by a thread.

Morality is the saddest reality.

VIRTUAL MIRRORS

THEE PROPHETIC PORTALS OV AUSTIN OSMAN SPARE

IN SOLID T.I.M.E.

"Since all phenomena (or phenomenally appearing things) which arise present no reality in themselves, they are said to be of the noumena (in other words, they are of the Voidness, regarded as the noumenal background or Source of the physical universe of the phenomena). Though not formed into anything, yet they give shape to everything. Thus it is that phenomena and noumena are ever in union, and said to be of one nature. They are, like ice and water, reflection and mirror, two aspects of a single thing."

The Seven Books of Wisdom - Tibetan text.

In the case of a mirror, there is a third aspect, the subject/viewer. Mirrors reveal and conceal. Their mystery permanent, their hints at doorways, windows, points of entry, and thresholds just out of reach of our conscious minds. T.I.M.E. The Imaginary Mass Emits. Image. Idea. There can be no separation, scientifically or subjectively. The atavistic face gazes down into a crystal pool. Ice-cold water. Grunts. A hand shatters the image, fear gaunt and haunting passes across, a shadowy cloud, and through all T.I.M.E. that momeant can persist, be reclaimed.

"What is Time, but a variety of one thing?" Austin Osman Spare.

These momeants of T.I.M.E. accumulate, are listed under memory in our modern synapses, are posited as all ways retrievable, amorphous. Nothing is forgotten, all is permitted. In a stinking cave, muttering babies scream and scratch, furs undulate in copulation. In one corner, bright-eyed first marks are daubed on a wall. They are marks to function, marks of place, of T.I.M.E. They are marks to draw results and persist beyond one human lifetime. Instinct has arisen, snake-like, coiling it's SELF into intuition and suggested the very power of suggestion. No-one noted down from a book this PROCESS, it grew from watching the elements, closeness to life-sources, death-forces that modern persons are divorced from. On this damp stone there is a curve, it is land, horizon, ejaculation, movement.

"Magick consists in seeing and willing beyond the next horizon." The Sar.

Mrs. Patterson stares down. Pencilled into existence. It is her as she WAS when she took Austin Osman Spare at 14 years old and initiated him into the art of sexual magick and a power-full system of sorcery (a primal oral tradition preserved through female bloodlines) that she had rediscovered and regenerated through her covert communion across T.I.M.E. with systems and techniques that grew from a most animalistic and pure union of instinct and inherited DNA encryptions. This woman knew, and she taught Spare, how to travel through T.I.M.E., and just how malleable and manipulable a form of energy and matter I.T. was. (where I.T. = Imaginary Time). She also instructed Spare in techniques that could empower him to remain Present in L-if-E, after an apparent physical death. She was a medium, but her guides were not the "New Age" romantic, and patronising ikons of native peoples and tribes. Not just Indian Chiefs, Pharoahs, Tibetan Rinpoches or aborigines. They were more like the creatures of Clive Barkers "Hellraiser" visions, or the demons in "Evil Dead". They were the deepest, most atavistic and raw representations of the alien that we can experience. Equivalent, if you will, to a seriously hard-core DMT entity confrontation. Mrs. Paterson understood a most particular secret. Her medium was her SELF. She was quite able to travel through mirrors and throughout T.I.M.E.

"Look at me, my face: do you not detect a close resemblance, it is hardly surprising - I look like everybody. You will learn why later. Say it aloud then, or are you afraid now: that I resemble you, that I am your living image. You are standing before a mirror." Lord Patchogue.

There is a drawing in my possession by Spare, a pencil and gouache, finished in 1928. The main figure is Mrs. Paterson. Coming from behind her head, making a blister in a shimmering green pencilled aura, is a half completed face. It belongs to no-one, everyone. It is her at times, it is cavalier, it is also Austin Osman Spare. This one picture contains all the secrets Spare never wrote down, and his books are thorough, precise, and often opaque. Spare appears in the bottom right-hand corner, represented as he projects he will look as an old man, eyes closed, concentrated, manifesting, it would seem, the other beings in the picture. Remarkably, his projection of an older SELF is uncannily accurate.

"he interest alone was valid, at least, who can ***find his path without recourse to the senses.*** *The five illegitimate senses. By "interest" should be understood the stake, the promise of some comfort, a pleasure, a discovery."* Jaques Rigaut.

What Spare is doing is "tricking" us. All his writings are symbolic, they were never intended to be taken literally, as illustrations, on any level. His writings are primarily journals, decorative encryptions of basic techniques of travel. But they are appendices to the REAL work. This special trick was to convince everybody that his drawings, paintings, and images were symbolic, fantastical, products of his imagination. They are in fact the essence of his sorcery. Like all great sorcerers, he hid his central secret in apparently commonplace medium. What we discover in this key picture is that he is actually kneeling. It is actually a "photographic" record of his prediction of both his own bodily death, and his worship of Mrs. Paterson as the keeper of immortality.

"Lord Patchogue dashes to the mirror to assure himself that he is still there, not really he himself, but his nose, the nose that he saw only a few minutes ago. It is not so much his existence he doubts as that of each of his attributes, and if not of their existence then of their legitimacy." Lord Patchogue.

Spare made consistent use, for very specifically sex magickal reasons, of late middle-aged prostitutes who would normally be considered "brash" and heavily made-up. Women who could, in his mind, represent Mrs. Paterson at the age she seduced and instructed him, and thus charge more powerfully his sexual magick rituals and Sigils as a result. Just as the sorcerer repeats elements of ritual over and over again, and uses the same magickal tools, incenses, incantations and so on repeatedly to achieve a cumulative effect, so Spare recreated a virtual sorceress to revisit, the precise intersections of T.I.M.E. and Space that she had imprinted in his brain. Through this reputedly sordid, but actually visionary method of sexual magick was able to return at Will to a potent portal, an access point into the matter of T.I.M.E. itself, and then, even deeper, into what we can only call Timelessness, though outside T.I.M.E. might be a more accurate way to articulate the state. These women were close enough to Mrs. Paterson in cosmetic physical appearance and characteristics to be used as a focussing visual key enabling him to be accelerated at the momeant of orgasm, just like a particle accelerator, into direct, inter-dimensional contact with her, and the infinite previous hers that had ever existed. This is more easily understood contemporaneously, now, in a post-DMT experiential environment.

In other words, DMT would be a very good equivalent experience of what this catapulting might feel like. However Spare could recreate this at Will, and via WILL TO... over and over agen, with deep lucidity and in a state of sexual intoxication, rather than biochemical intoxication. A drug free splitting of the atoms of T.I.M.E.!

"Lord Patchogue stands up. He studies his full-length portrait in the mirror. Five senses are not sufficient for his chance companions; once more they shall miss the show; they are no more ready to perceive the presence of mystery than they think of death." Jaques Rigaut.

When Mrs. Paterson died, he was able to take a particular aspect of her lifesource and literally preserve I.T., still "living" into this, and one or two other, pictures. This is not to be misunderstood as in anyway vampiric. That is not what we're dealing with here. This is a much more deeply fundamental sorcery. Spare is consensually keeping open a portal of connection between the primal interdimensional knowledge and entity that was represented by the physical manifestation within linear T.I.M.E. by Mrs. Paterson's existence on this particular earth, at a partiocular alloted momeant. In the same mysterious way that, if you Will, a mirror can contain all that it faces in what seems an equally "real" world, so Spare's pictures can hold the entirety of the images and entities that he represents in them. They are THERE. The frame is exactly intended to be experienced as, and function as, the edges of a mirror. Although, becuase it is a plastic, more fixed medium, we often cannot see around the inside edges by moving, as we can with a mirror. As we cannot all ways change the amount, and depth of what we see simply by moving, as we can with a mirror. Do not be fooled by mundane physics. There are specific periods when, remarkably, the opposite is true, and these images do indeed become exactly the same as mirrors, representing an entire portal into a parallel omniverse. Further, I would suggest, indeed insist, based upon my own personal experiences, and those of many other colleagues who have acted as controls, and/or guinea pigs in my experiements with these pictures to act as confirmation, or dismissal of the actuality, that these pictures do not just become virtual mirrors. They become living portals that animate, through which entities can travel, accessing our "world" and bidding us into theirs.

" I only murder that I may return." Mary Bell - Child Murderess aged 7.

In the picture, when Mrs. Paterson died, he fixed her in this picture. We see him. He sinks INTO her chest, is absorbed, they rise together, androgenous, genderless both their faces, and all their ages superimposed to create one alien being. One inter-dimensional entity. He has drawn himself dying, conjuring himself into this picture in advance of that event, so that he may all ways return. Like the Cocteau character crossing back and forth through the mirror.

"Art can contradict Science." Austin Osman Spare.

"Art is the truth we have realised of our belief" Austin Osman Spare.

"Do you see those flowers growing on the sides of the abyss whose beauty is so deadly and whose scent is so disturbing? Beware..." de Guatia.

In these sorcerous images, these his purest incantations through Art, Spare uses a graphic skill and technique second to none. Yet his most commonly seen works can appear deliberately fast and loose. The nearest modern parallel would be Salvador Dali, who could suggest perfection and hypereality in a few precisely placed marks and intersections, and through his works worship HIS own personal sorceress Gala. Dali's photoreal technique is accurate in an unearthly way too, and Dali uses delerium and dislocation of the senses to catapult himself, and us, through the parameters of madness and obsession into his personal landscape and environment. Dali occasionally masturbated into his paints, particularly painting the leather strap across Hitler's back, and made good use of the canvass as a virtual mirror viewed from

one static position. I would argue that Dali, despite his genius, was a naive, struggling to describe glimpses and fragments of vision, with an ad hoc quasi-magickal perception and aspiration. Dali did not build, though he hungered too, a system as unique, primal, timeless, and fully administered by informed, cumulative, and inter-dimensional arcane knowledge as Spare. Spare KNEW all too well what he was doing, conjuring, and building. A method of physical, and neurological immortality, a means to step outside T.I.M.E. Dali really wanted too, but remained finally, restrained by his inability to travel beyond use of his imagination. For Dali, the mirror was a solid barrier into which he could gaze, but not travel. Spare was the very material of the mirror, the destroyer of it's boundaries, or limitations, and finally usurped every definition or mirrorness creating a virtual portal that accessed all momeants of T.I.M.E. past, present, future, none, in every possible and impossible infinite combination. T.I.M.E. is you see a solid, through which all passes, all is seen from a vantage point. As we lear to move our point of perception, so we act like a lens, or a mirror's surface viewed from above. Light, thought, life, passes through us, expanding outwards. We can place our mirrors anywhere, perceive them from any direction. Thus we are potentially everywhere, in every possible T.I.M.E. and every possible dimension. All travel is possible. We are an amorphous infinite density of matter. The matter is T.I.M.E. I.T. is all a matter of T.I.M.E. T.I.M.E. is malleable and thus both the portal and the means of travel. We can leave, we can return, we can cease to exist. This is the "virtual mirror" of Spare. These are the prophetic portals. But they do not prophecy Art. They prophecy an end to materiality. A disinegration, a dissipation of our corporeality beyond anything so far confessed in the small wooden box of physics.

"The future is in the past, but it is not wholly contained in the present." Hoene-Wronski.

Brion Gysin was another such artist of the future, another such alchemist and sorcerer who used Art to create T.I.M.E. and inter-dimensional travel. He used a different style. More abstract, more directly concerned with encryption, coding and decoding, and with a clear appreciation of post-linguistic magick. "Rub Out The Word" he would emphasis. He too was absolutely aware of the implication of his experiements and their functions. Both Gysin and Burroughs accepted as a given that the central power of their works was to trick T.I.M.E. and through another system of cumulative effect, manipulate and navigate mortality and all sources of pre-recorded L-if-E; brain; entity; location and the process of control that locks us out of this inviolate humane right to transcend physicality. Gysin was a practising magickian first and actually described at length to me in Paris his long T.I.M.E. practice of mirror staring, and the incredible melting of consensus reality that resulted for both him, and many others of the Beats. He suggested that there are "hot spots" in cultural engineering, and vehicles of convenience that accelerate the inevitable for those reckless and/or courageous enough to risk all for a possibility of disincarnation, of leaving behind the host physical body forever in a necessary transmutation into otherness, alien being, that must be the only valid goal of any of us if forward motion and discovery are truly our agenda. In traditional Western Occulture this letting go of all preconceptions, all expectations, all value systems, all inherited moral imprints, all concepts of SELF preservation, and all distictions is referred to as "The Abyss".

"See a cliff, jump off." Old TOPI Proverb.

Both Spare and Gysin lived to pursue, and attain, new dimensions. They understood the hunger to pursue successful systems of sorcery, not knowledge. This alone made overt collaboration with magickal groups impossible. Where the need for nostalgic elitism, power implied by academic recall, and self-image measured by the length of one's bookshelf far too often camouflage mere self-agrandisemeant, and the essence of motivation is the servility of others. Gysin incorporated tape-recorders, permutations, projections, trance musics, mathematical formulae. Spare incorporated his own body, sexuality, and dimensional fluidity. Both were prophets of portals of virtuality and developments in quantum neurology that later became possible, and, as egalitarian (to a degree) access to cyberspace and other synthetic worlds expands globally, now become at the very least more likely, I would propose inevitable. The world we appreciate in a mirror. That world where as we get close, appears to be a large, and equally as "real" as this supposedly more physical consensus reality; and the world of Spare, where the frame of the image is arbitrary, where creatures, and perceptual environments are frozen in a precise cryogenic graphic. These worlds are mere precursor of the apparently limitless, and multi-dimensional possibilities heralded by the microchip. This century wills to be remembered eventually as the century during which the cut-up, the splitting of atom by relativity; of mind by psychedelic compounds and of linear thinking by cultural nihilism were the primary themes. Spilling over into social fragmentation, online alienation, and a dataglut that by its very scale, insists on acceleration of response by our brains, and a highly developed perceptual skill of instant, and arbitrary assembly "to see what is really there" as W. S. Burroughs has stated.

"Lord Patchogue and his reflection slowly advance towards each other. They consider each other in silence, they come to a halt, they bow. A great dizziness seizes hold of Lord Patchogue. It was brief, easily done, and magickal: forehead first, he suddenly springs forwards. He strikes the glass, which shatters, but there is no one on the other side." Jaques Rigaut.

Spare was aware that mystery and magick, in themselves, generate at the very least a morbid fascination, and reaction in humanE persons. He consciously used his books, his twisted Beardsley-esque graphics , his atavistic writings, to attract our interest after his physical death. Not for reasons of ego. I would contend that it was to reactivate his "mind" and re-animate his psyche. Sound far-fetched. Well, personal anecdote, take it or leave I.T.

One of the Spare paintings that I used to own (now in the collection of Chris Stein) was called "The Ids". Every New Years Eve strange things would occur. Most noticeably, the two faces of Spare himself, that faced each other, would re-animate. Many different guests would suddenly gasp and say, did you know that the faces in that painting have "come alive". "They are arguing." None of these observers knew who Spare was, or any of his, or my own, ideas. Eventually I checked and found that Spare died on New Years Eve 1956. A medium called Madame Bruna, also, on a social visit, was shocked and disturbed by the "Mrs. Paterson" image. In fact, it was these repeated witnessings of the faces becoming real, moving, talking, changing, that led to the thoughts in this essay. In the case of the "Mrs. Paterson" picture, nobody felt anything malevolent. Just a powerful experience, of people "trapped in a mirror". "The Ids" however, was different. Something one could only think of as "bad" always happened when it animated. It got so predictable and incontrovertible that I took to putting it in a cupboard, facing the wall for a period before, and after New Years Eve each year. The last phenomenon was particularly odd. Before travelling abroad I arranged for two people to caretake my house in Brighton. I warned them, almost like in a fable like Hansel and Gretel, that they must not touch, move, or hang up the Spare painting "The Ids". Which was in the loft space of the house, facing the wall. I told them it may sound superstitious or stupid, but please trust me on this one. I guess, inevitably, they felt this as a challenge and chose to not only turn the picture facing outwards in the loft, but to spend a night staring at it and sleeping in the same space. Apparently, as they tell it, after an hour or so, the picture seemed to fill the room. Spare argued with himself, as usual. Then a new thing happened. The central face of a one woman (there were three women's faces above Spare's heads) came alive too. The picture seemed to grow into a huge mirror, filling the visual perception of one whole end of the loft. The room seemed to fill with green mist, and then holding her hand out, this woman walked out of the "painting" and came towards them.. In the inanimate painting, the heads are floating in a green field, no bodies. They have heavy make up on. Like the prostitutes Spare favoured for his psycho-sexual sorcery. Both people paniced, and ran from the loft. Locking the door behind them. From that time on, various destructive events affected the house, and them. They had let loose, in classic horror film style, an entity, that WAS malevolent, and with it's own agenda. One of the two people became alcoholic, both had mental breakdowns. By the way, Chris Stein WAS aware of this side of the paintings Astory, when he purchased it.

Spare had been shrewd enough to make ALL his secrets non verbal, and non-linear. Not one explanation of these secrets is contained overtly in his writings. He was, in the best covert cultural traditions, working for his SELF alone. Only the atavistic hintings, and the "Virtual Mirror" drawings and paintings can articulate, and bear witness to, his phenomenal achievements.

"The Universe is a creative PROCESS carried on by man's imagination, an operative power capable of becoming more supple, more animate." Teilhard de Chardin.

What is happening in these certain key pictures? I would propose a few speculations. All ideas have an image. We are originally an heirglyphic species, before the restrictive linguistic and alphabetical systems we use now were adopted. Adopted I might add, purely for reasons of control, and the compression of both vision and potential in all of us. All the materials used to create and fix an image are material. They are formed of patterns of atoms and molecules, charged by certain energies that hold their specific clusters together in some way. Modern psychology also tends to accept that Ideas are material entities, like animals and plants. All mythological ideas, Jung suggests, are ESSENTIALLY REAL, and far older than any philosophy. They originated in primal perceptions, correspondences and experiences. The catalytic element that regenerates a reaction between entitic Ideas and a spectator and that favours parapsychological events, is the presence of an active archetype. In the specific case of Spare's virtual mirror art, this element can be anything from an obvious glyph (condensing and compressing a desire), a non-decorative aesthetic arrangement, or in the most intense "portal" works, an invisible charge of energy which somehow calls the deepest, instictual layers of the psyche into action. The archetype is a borderline phenomenon, an acausal connecting priciple, closest in explanation to deliberately controlled, SELF-conscious synchronicity. When Spare describes in certain of his texts "Self-Love" as, if you will, the engine of his sorcery, I believe he means SELF-CONSCIOUS, yet egoless. When he uses the word CHAOS, which he profoundly championed from the start of the century, he is leaving a key evidentiary clue and amusing himself. Austin Osman Spare's "CHAOS" is both a sugnature, and a signpost into future T.I.M.E. (ChDVH (CH) = JOY=23) Thus we get CH-A.O.S. Both his name, and his confession of secret sorcery.

"Art is the instinctive application of the knowledge latent in the subconscious" A.O.S.

After Mrs. Paterson died, Spare was waiting to be inside her again. Fused with her sexual-magickal energy. Inside her also, in the sense of two liquids mixing to create a third amalgam. Two cosciousness' as well, the "THIRD MIND" of Brion Gysin. This is not romantic fiction. This is a prediction of some of the inter-dimensional forays that are subscribed to very convincingly by Terence McKenna, and other such botanical voyagers. In this key picture by Spare, what we are really seeing is both his projection into the actual future moment of his own death, and the way Mrs. Paterson looked exactly at the moment of her death overlaid. His aim in all his sorcery was to reunite his spirit and hers, captured within the dimensions of his artworks so that through this PROCESS they could both quite literally, live forever. An interesting twist on the idea of great art making the artist immortal! In this case I mean immortal quite literally. They do still live. Just as our concepts and assumptions about reality, and varieties of perception have been forever revised by the advent of virtual reality, and quantum psychology, so our concepts of linear existence are confounded by the manifestation held in stasis in these virtual mirrors.

Keep in mind all ways the Cocteau "mirrors" the passing through. The "other side" where different rules of physics and continuity apply. We are finally accepting that everything is truly in constant flux, that the malleability of all matter and all constructs is not just theoretical, that T.I.M.E. is equally an energy and matter as flesh, and that projected images and virtual worlds are as valid and vibrant as the basic inherited consensus possibility that we tend to arrive trapped in squealing and pissing from our mother's vaginas. We are witnessing the realisation that everything everyone says is true. That evertything BELIEVED is real. That bodies are mere vehicles for transporting our BRAIN and that mortality is primarily a philosophical control process. Why, my children, even that dear old anarchist construct "The Bible" was assigned the alchemical message more significant than Mr. Robertson might chose to consider.

"Have I not said that faith can move mountains" some old prophet or other!

"The marvellous is not rare, incredulity is stronger than miracles" J.Rigaut.

Apart from the more dramatic animations already mentioned, many unprompted witnesses have been shocked to see Mrs. Paterson's eyes close, open, cry, her whole head turn. Quite literally a living portrait. Magick makes "dreams" real, makes the impossible possible, focusses the Will to...Throughout occult circles in all ages crystal, water, polished metal, mirrors of all types have been used for oracular purposes. Spare's massive achievement is that he recognised the potential of art, of image, to be the most powerful magickal mirror of all. A window in T.I.M.E. An interface with death. An interdimensional modem. In his art he captures not just an image but a life-force. What seems to happen is that the individuals consciousness' contained within the art remain dormant in this reality until they come into contact with the minds of certain others, or as an intersection with linear T.I.M.E. sets in motion a preprogrammed "software" sequence of interactions. Primal, atavistic "aboriginal" peoples knew this. Sometimes facilitated with botanical catalysts they would invest immense and potentially limitless powers in specific totem images and glyphs or sigils. This use of the image as scrying mirror and as neurological nuclear energy is very different as a function of "art" to the post-patronage, post-craftsperson 20th Century norm of Art, with that horribly big "A". In contemporary elitist art you actually don't get anything much back except aesthetics. You certainly don't get mummification and T.I.M.E. travel! But we must never forget that all art grew from sorcery, and from the concealment of gnostic, and alchemical proceedures from those who would be "King". Art was synonymous with, and a direct aspect of Magick. It was functional, and it was dedicated to the processing of immortality, and the opening and preservation of portals. (By the way, I would argue that "cyberspace, or the PSYCHOSPHERE as I would prefer it was called, is an extension of this perception and function in just the same way and we are just glimpsing the beginnings of the somewhat cack-handed access we've so far realised.)

Anyway...Spare achieved the forgotten. That which vested interests in all status quos considered impossible, even blasphemous; a two way comunication where HIS image reacts to and with the viewer. It has a life of its own. The nearest parallel, a virtual mirror in which you can see another world., one that we cannot touch, the glass remaining solid and frustrating us. What this energy held within his images is doing is transcending the barriers of observed T.I.M.E. so that what we are seeing is a five-dimensional object or image. This form of energy wills to have existed at all times, and wills to exist at all times.

"One cannot traverse the mirror with impunity,it is not possible." J. Rigaut.

An objective (Hah!) and critical survey of the available data would establish that perceptions occur as if in part there were no space, in part no T.I.M.E. Space and T.I.M.E. are not only the most immediate "certainties" for us, they are the most misleading, doomed to be discredited as separate and abstracted states imminently. They are also usually considered

empirical certainties too since everything observable is said to happen as though it occured in Space and T.I.M.E. In the face of this overwhelming "certainty" it is understandable that "reason" should have the greatest difficulty in granting validity to the peculiar nature of "delerious" phenomena, or paranormal events. But anyone who does some amount of justice to the facts cannot but admit that their apparent space-timelessness is their most essential quality. The fact that we are totally unable to imagine a form of existence without Space or T.I.M.E. by no means proves that such an existence is, in itself, impossible, and, therefore, just as we cannot DRAW from an appearance of space-timelessness, any ABSOLUTE conclusion about a possible space-timeless form of existence, so we are not entitled to conclude from the apparent space-time quality of our perception that there is NO FORM of existence without Space and T.I.M.E. I would imagine though that any of you fortunate enough to have had a particularly enervating moment of psychedelic experience will be more empathetic to the speculative space-timeless state!

"The reverse is just as good as the right side:it is necessary to wait there." Jaques Rigaut.

Just as "physics" now tends to allow for "limitedness of space", a relativisation, it is beginning with Catastrophe Theory/Fuzzy Geometry/Chaos Maths/and other quantum disciplines to posit a "limitedness" of both T.I.M.E. and Causality. In short, nothing is fixed, "IT'S OFFICIAL!", the possibilities alone are endless (the banner/slogan of a magazine I founded in 1968 called COPULATORY HADES).

"Conscious looking is a search for verification of the notions that impel the search, and all ways has a circular mirroring element within I.T." Genesis P-Orridge.

In Spares most critical images, it seems a medium has been synthesised whereby the essence that survives death, but is usually beyond our communication, has been transmitted into an object that we are familiar with i.e. a painting or drawing. And we are therefore familiar with trying to interpret or receive information from. Because of the familiarity of the medium of painting, we don't put up paranormal, sceptical, or too many emotional barriers. We expect to try and see what the artist wanted to present, wanted to communicate (though personally I see little of that in contemporary "deceptual art" as Gysin used to say) If Spare said he was going to capture himself within the frame and canvass, and facilitate immortality, or at least, a very different medium of mortality, demonstrating "life" after apparent death, most observers would switch off, or scream ridicule tinged with an inate fear of the unknowable. There would be an interference with the transmission. Because Spare seduces us by allowing us to dupe our SELF into assuming what we view is an artwork, a picture, when in fact it is a "photograph" of a mirror of an actual, or virtual reality, a mortality software if you will to, because of the self-deception we remain open-minded. This open-mindedness is essential to the functioning of the sorcery at the critical T.I.M.E. intersections that animate I.T. (New Year's Eve for example) and increases the chances that the phenomenon of actual physical changes.

The observer, if fortunate enough, wills to see that which many of us in this rightly post-existentialist age choose not to believe in, or to be heartily sceptical of, namely living, moving, changing images of a post-death entity, or brain-essence. This is all as acutely programmed as any software, except, allah be praised, it's NOT binary, not an either/or programme. Which probably explains Spare's success, as, surprise surprise we DO NOT, never did, live in an either/or universe, and all binary systems are fallacious, serving only to block the righteous evolution and maximising of potential of our species, a species programmed in it's DNA for only one ultimate function, to transcend all need for a physical body, fixed in linear T.I.M.E. and Space. You will see this entity reacting to you, it receives and transmits direct into your conscious five senses. It must also be transmitting directly into your other levels of consciousness too, and your other hypereal senses. Presumably we transmit back to what is there, so what is there wills to change by absorbtion over the years as it reacts to and is triggered by all the various observers. All these factors mingle and mix, and mutate. Mutation, after all being the sincerest form of flattery.

The "soul" (advert for the BRAIN as Dr. Timothy Leary once suggested to me) is generally said to be visible through the eyes, the mirror of the soul. The eyes, jewels of actual brain exposed directly to the outside. The neuro-visual screen of the BRAIN. In the key Spare work centered on Mrs. Paterson and executed in 1928, her eyes are neither open, nor shut, and this is true in many of Spare's virtual mirror works. They are neither rejecting the possibility of seeing a captured "soul", nor openly inviting I.T. This half-open, half-shut limbo suggests responsibility lies with the viewer to choose whether or not to commune with any frisky entities that manifest. In fact, on many occasions an interesting further mutation frequently occurs. The eyes become ALIEN, not disimilar from the classic Schwa portrayal. As if coated with an almost reptilian film of non-human skin. This alien quality seems to be amplified by Spare's technique of painting himself old when he was in fact young, and of course later, painting himself young when he was by then old. Forming an infinite envelope of T.I.M.E. in effect. Spare moves back and forth through T.I.M.E. as he succeeds in presenting us, via the image with the apparently impossible, or miraculous - IMMORTALITY. Sorcery has all ways made effective and functional use of the process of reversal to confound expectation even at the root of the most sacred and central scientific assumptions.

"Lord Patchogue launches himself through the mirror a second time. A crash of splintering glass. Lord Patchogue stands before another mirror, facing Lord Patchogue. On his forehead, the cut is bleeding once again. Lord Patchogue repeats "I am a man trying not to die" *And when he passes through the third mirror amidst a noise which is now familiar, he knows that he wills to meet Lord Patchogue whose forehead will be bleeding more heavily in the fourth mirror and who will tell him* "I am a man trying not to die". Jaques Rigaut.

The psyche, in its deepest reaches, seems well able to participate in an existence beyond the web of Space and T.I.M.E. This dimension is often dubbed "eternity", or "infinity" yet it actually seems to behave; if we for the moment take Spare's art as repreentative and more vitally, FUNCTIONAL, and in no way symbolic; as either a one way or two way mirror dependent for it's operation upon a translation of the unconscious, into a communicable image that bonds the actual atomic structures of the graphic image with its driving forces unlocked from the unconscious into a fixed or mobile source of power dependent upon previous viewers, and with more critically, our own individual abilities to interface directly with it.

Accept nothing, assume nothing, all ways look further, be open-eyed as well as open-minded and don't kid your SELF." Genesis P-Orridge.

Keeping the speculation simple for now. If in theory, as all matter is actually vibrating tiny particles with lots of groovy names, it is just possible that we could walk through walls. Then it is also theoretically possible to lock clusters of the same particles and energy into the fabric of an image giving it the ability to move, change, alter and animate its content. The only gap of credibility being first hand experience. We don't usually believe anything until it happens to us. We only really know what we have experienced, belief is rooted in recognition.

Every now and then as I type, you'll not be surprised to know, I wonder if this is going to sound too "out there", "crazed" as you the observer read it. I already know it gets a little opaque, for which my less than humble apologies, and of course it assumes you know what the fuck I am referring to vis a vis the paintings themselves. Oh well, tough. This subject leads us to a bigger "picture" a discussion of the parallels between virtual space, the creation of deities, immortality and the Psychosphere from a Processean perspective that will to arrive on another occasion. But I digress...

Imagination opens to synthesis larger than the sum total of reason. New images reflect more than logical synthesis can produce. There is a radical discontinuity in every truly creative idea or discovery.

"I.T.'s all a matter of T.I.M.E.." Genesis P-Orridge.

Projection direct from image to viewer involves more than the logical mode of thinking. An idea cannot exist separate from an image. For example, the Virgin Mary image embodies the idea of "compassion" perhaps. A Goddess or God is a figurative image of an idea. Images are the root language of social freedom and self expansion as much as words and alphabets are the roots of social control and self limitation. Science attempts to explain the omniverse objectively (yes, even now most of them) therefore it cannot explain "art" or more particularly the unique effects or phenomena Spare generates within "art". This is not a possible function of Science. (To be fair Science is, now, thankfully, beginning to include the point of viewing in its theories to great effect.) Science cannot tell us why Spare's images can alter, why his faces change, eyes open and close, colours vary. Photographs are said to steal "souls" they certainly capture a moment in T.I.M.E. Freeze I.T. So do the images and oracles of "art". For art was originally revelatory, prophetic, functional, shamanic. Fully integrated into every detail and aspect of life.

"He who transcends Time escapes necessity." Austin Osman Spare.

Spare's images capture the PROCESS of creation, the thoughts of the creator, and the memories of the viewer. (CHANGE THE WAY TO PERCEIVE AND CHANGE ALL MEMORY - G.P-O.) These memories of the viewer recall past events and feelings that are more compact, briefer than when they took place originally. They are compressed. Memories are Past-T.I.M.E. accessed into Present-T I.M.E. T.I.M.E. is not however linear, all T.I.M.E. exists similtaneously and points in every direction similtaneously. I.T. is quaquaversal, omnipresent, in fact, all the usual definitions of "GOD" in the Catholic Church. There is really no reason why Spare's paintings and images should not capture T.I.M.E., thought and experience, then recreate and expand it in the viewers mind.

"All nature is a vast reflection of that which is within us, or else we could not know it." Austin Osman Spare.

Subjective experience is no less "real" than objective conjecture. All roads lead to Rome in a mirror to mirror function. This function of mirroring is found in the trance state in a simple direct way. The higher techniques of idea and artist's illusory skills makes effects and phenomena active through the dimensions of Spacelessness and Timelessness in ways normally consigned to the sceptical parking lot of modern existence. T.I.M.E. mirrors T.I.M.E.

"Embrace reality by imagination". Austin Osman Spare.

Years of trying to rationalise inexplicable "experiences" dis-integrate and only the most extreme speculations and constructs of impossibility begin to get close to giving answers that we see and feel. We are "HERE TO GO" as Brion Gysin succinctly stated. But not just here to go into inner and outer space, though that PROCESS is one part and conceptual parcel of the final aspiration. We are here to go OUT of the physical body. To enter the solid pool of T.I.M.E. To be fully integrated into that matter, of T.I.M.E., that connects us with EVERY moment, in every direction, and every parallel or conflicting omniverse that ever was, wills to be, or intends to be. Intention is the key and the PROCESS is the product.

"The Life Force is not blind. We are." Austin Osman Spare.

T I.M.E must be reassessed as a "SOLID" as a form of "CONSCIOUS-NESS" as the key element in the atomic scale. As the covert energy hidden in the Million and One names of deities. Life is ONLY a brief physical manifestation outside the circles of T.I.M.E. We can re-enter the T.I.M.E. pool, and we can re-manifest. This is exactly the same as entering the virtual wordl of "cyberspace/psychosphere" when you log on. Our appreciation of the implication of logging on must be developed from this deification perspective. Once logged on, we are vulnerable to all the agendas, traumas, neuroses, and brilliances of all other logged on individuals. We have re-entered a pool. No different to the pool of T.I.M.E., or the gene-pool, or "racial memory/DNA" pools. This pool I will to name the "SPATIAL MEMORY". Our understanding of time travel, physicality, possibility, and the malleability of T.I.M.E. and existence in a new contrived virtual world is prophecised by Austin Osman Spare, by Brion Gysin, by many artists and creators. This shift in our perception of T.I.M.E. and mortality is going to be the most important arena of discussion and philosophical, cultural engineering in the 21st Century.

"What is death? A great mutation to your next SELF." Austin Osman Spare.

The primary quest in Art, Life, Science, Brain has become a quest for reliable, repeatable methods for inter-dimensional travel and communication. Beyond the body and through the prophetic portals. Einstein, Spare, Gysin, Leary, McKenna and all the other visionary synthesists have contributed to the cumulative effect upon which sorcery is based. We can all play. By being aware of the implication of logging on. By designing conceptual and physical grids within the Psychosphere to facilitate accurate post-physical travel. By shouldering the responsibility we have accessed of "GOD/GODDESS BUILDING" our actions are the PROCESS that leads to the final unity and the vanquishing once and for all of any, any, EITHER/OR paradigms at last. This is the T.I.M.E. which shall end. This is the calendar that ceases to exist. T.I.M.E. and LIFE are not synonymous or fixed. Both are solids and can be shaped to our WILL TO...

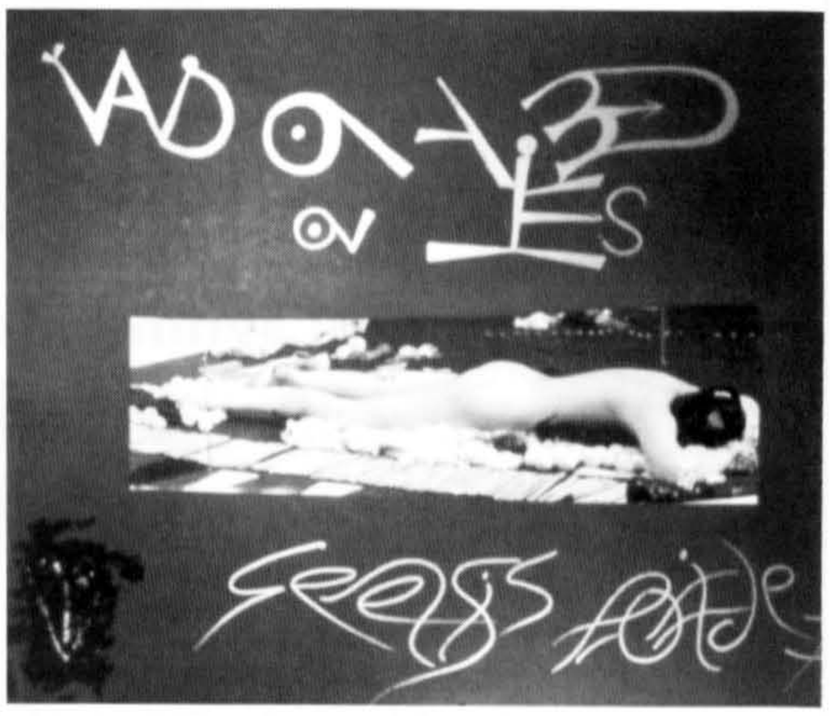
"The man trying not to die has propelled himself into the very essence of the mirror; he walks automatically, without curiosity; he manipulates time; he speaks with refraction; he communes with sight itself, without expectation; because he cannot do otherwise. With each step another mirror shatters. Another life is captured. All times intersect in his eyes." Genesis P-Orridge/Jaques Rigaut.

GENESIS P-ORRIDGE California 1995.

1.To be continued with a follow, detailed explication of the five Process-Eon Spheres of influence and the internal implication for immortality via the "internet" or Psychosphere.

2. For readers wanting to see/read more of Spare's works and ideas we suggest you write to the: TRANSMEDIA FOUND...NATION, P.O.Box 11534,OAKLAND, CA. 94611, USA. for a liist of available materials.

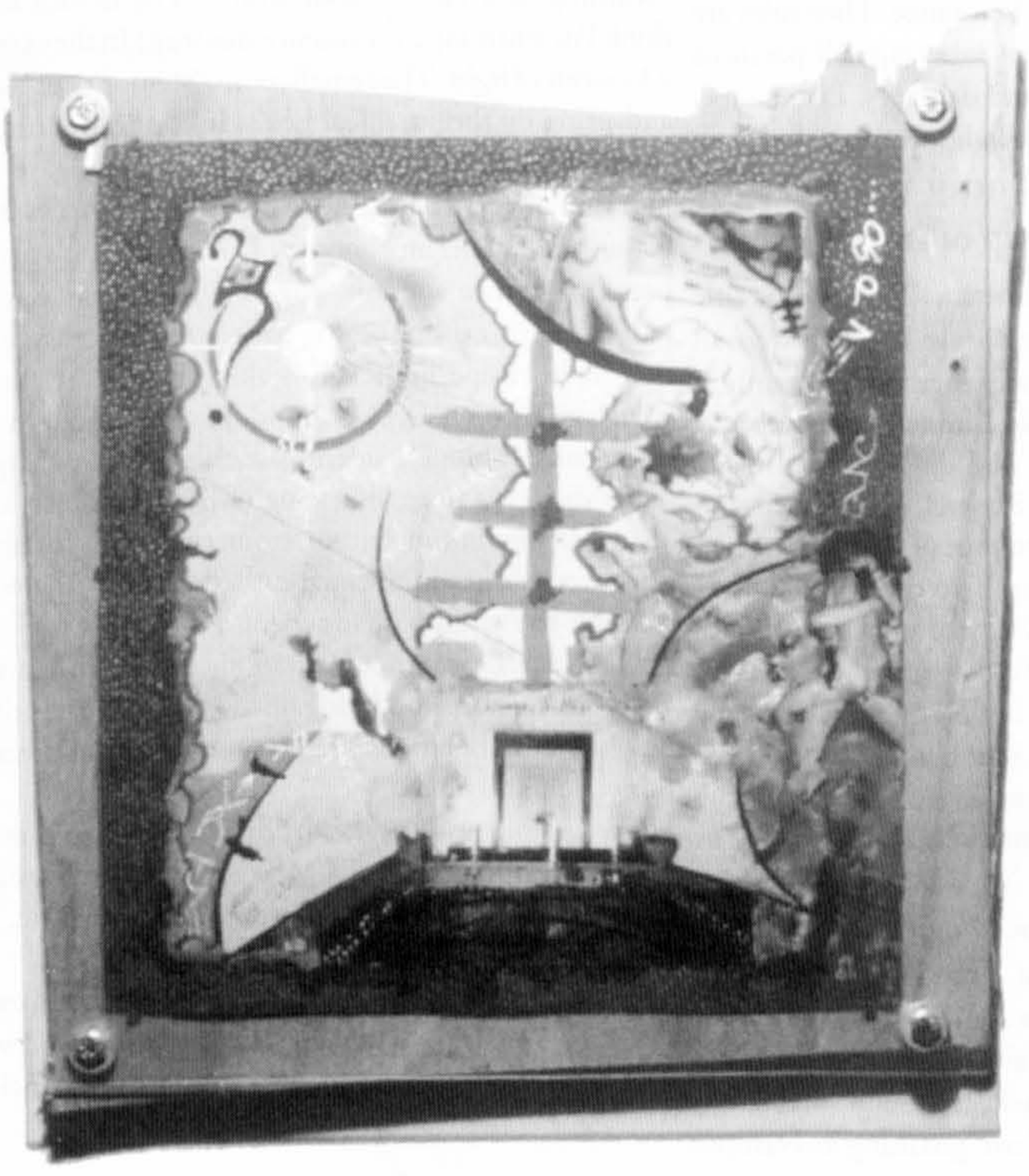
Cat Initiation, 1990
(Collage: snake, semen, human blood, polaroid, vaginal fluid, wax, ink)



Maid on a Bed ov Lies, 1975
(Photo of Cosey Fanny Tutti)

We Have Control, 1987
(Collage: gouache, photo, human hair, feather, human blood, semen, ink, pebble)

Superman, 1989
(Collage: photo, ink, polaroid, human blood, semen, snake, gouache)



Healing Sand, 1994
(Collage: photo, wax, semen, sand, ink, gouache, human blood)

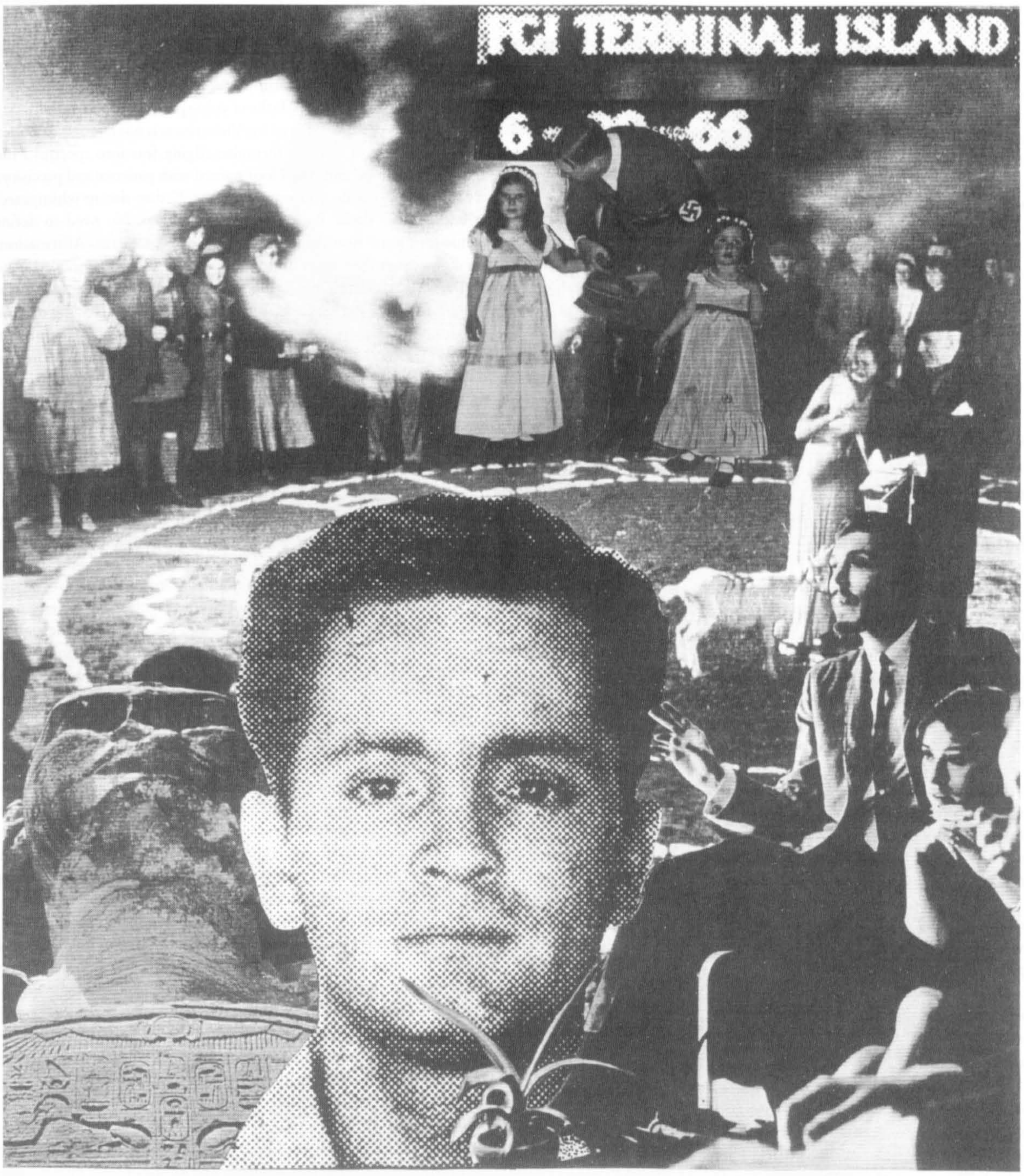
A HOLLOW COST.

special synthetic collaborations ADAM WALKS BETWEEN WORLDS

No fear, except thee fear of leaving. Death is like each other. Life has only dreams to recommend it, and thee security of being inside. To be part of a group, to be INSIDE, is to enter thee body and partake of sex. We therefore thrive on this violation. We attempt to recreate thee excitement of a first moment's intensity by deceptive means. Happiness can give you fear. Of course thee fear of it ending. Thee only real fear is fear of ending, and thee only joy is violation. Unhappiness gives insight cruelly, happiness makes a death threat. As time passes thee addiction dwindles. Always a jolt of steel. Always. Thee orchid, thee metal. Muscles, no longer as loose as childhood, ache in memorium, stiffening with age before beauty. Age before lust. Age before love. Demand outstrips supply, we congeal, fixed in parables and fantasies. Thee past controls through people. Little girls become young ladies. Proper.They attract by their lack of experience, unaware of thee spell, more concerned with being inside than observation. They accept thee host. They create a ghost that haunts forever. Thee ache for reclamation. Perhaps, thee story goes, if you recreate that first moment, passed; you can travel back in time. Or by creating a stranger, replenish lust. This violation then is a form of breaking thee rules: a necessary act to exist. Conscious self-deception and threat of oneself and one's security affirms existence, makes real. Sexuality, getting inside, makes real, makes really real, and once inside we can make anything happen. Eyes shut in a coffin, a world of darkness, we travel that darkness to reconvene our emotions and listening hard we see every detail of every sexual act. Little girls masturbating about tomorrow. Little boys masturbating. Every second losing intensity, creating thee need forever to go back inside and feel safe, to travel back and feel alive. It really is so difficult. What we have creates our need. Restrictions are removed like school uniforms, we discover eroticism in both manners. And manners maketh man, woman and star . We enter our bodies. Inside is quiet, scarcely a solution in sight. Sharing a body is nothing. Sharing insight is everything. A fine balance maintained by neurosis. When we break rules, we become fools, driven by a desperate grasping of hope for ignorance. Thee rules are created by a wound. We never escape them. We descend into them. Brats in a trap. All paranoia comes from thee past. It takes us like a rape and damages. Like a rape and damages. Like a rape. Damages. But in thee mourning, after thee night, we fall in love with thee light. The solution is, to touch skin, and stay safe, deep inside. Thee first step towards control is ownership. Thee foundation of ownership is meme-control. Ownership of information is thee real system of control. To know a thing is to possess it. To possess a thing is to be able to manipulate it. Search continues. Control needs time like a junkie needs junk. If only it were all a matter of time. Takes all kinds. Time is. Time is passed on. Turning over thee ancient symbols used to weigh gold in Egypt we terminate dreams. Regular trips to thee undercurrent display confusion in precise detail. Thee effect is one of accuracy of purpose and description. Images sequenced to define thee exact nature of time and place. New York. Skeletal myth jaded and scarred. Know, self-respect breeds cynical self-abuse. Never never return to thee previous character. Always create a new one. What do you see from thee faded telephone box? Two sides of one street un-re-joining each other like worms? Visions convicted and betrayed. We become what we once wrote, thought better of, and since despised. We eat what starves us. We defecate what we once took to be our Selves, to be what we once were. A litany common to all, but Deities. Designed by spirits dead and erect. Projections making light of surface. The alternative is Enless, endless sadness. Thee consumption of guilt threatens guilt. Inside a shelter. Old men pissing on trees. Dogs turning 'circles of animals'. Thee black sickly powder of fear. Speaking thee incantations aloud trapped in a lump of skin. Instinct breeding the final moves, thee infinite lovers. We accept them on our shoulders and leave you for free. Then time ends. Eyes burn and close. Wounded. I wandered that land. Making plans. Building strange concoctions of hope. Thee charm. Thee TV. Thee whiskey. Thee fur cellar as indecent as a beard. From cool to indifference. Visions convicted and betrayed. Looking from zero point there's all kinds of illusions. Zero point. It takes all kinds of illusions, this, this, death. Thee pains don't ease as you get older. Thee hatred doesn't melt. E thought the hatred would melt. Thee brains get blocked. Thee drains stray across to bare flesh, groaning at Nature's tricks, and not even caring for thee moment. Some daze are like friendship. Routines pulling you away from thee burden of vision. Good friends that step in and destroy thee direction of youth. Thee apotheosis of desire is to outclass death. We are sentimental and quite capable of finding laughter. No iceberg this tension. Thee averted eyes of youth. And now it's finished. Process complete. Only thee corpse to sacrifice like a gangster. Thee special forces where agape meets thelema. Nietsche never had a cushier b-earth. Here we see a principle, here we see a subject. Endless twigs on thee fire. Axle cracked by frost. Resting. Snow has crushed my camouflage. Snow has killed my garden. Thee shelter is still there. Time is. Time is passed on. Thee dogs are now dogs. Just dogs. Still turning circles. Thee eyes still burn. Choice as hard as tooth, as cold as knowing. And yet, against my will, another dream coming into focus. Ice on soil. Dog resting at my back. Daylight of friendship cracked with shadow. In this dream it begins and ends at the dogs fucking in circles park I remember from my childhood and now call zero point. Pointless passover. In heat, breathing as a bloody door shuts. (The deities must think I'm affirming my existence this way.) In they come. 23 visions of light. Thee small room. Memories of blood and urine by thee medical box. Links of old senses in rope.... (Do the dieties think I can't navigate the meanings here?) There were shadows pulling scales from young flesh. Quiet and hooded. Thee small hands played patterns on thee window. Fog in living rooms. Several old, old pages curling as dog barks spewed across night time light. Rope tightened making furrows. (I know what 's going on here.) No sound. In the essential nature of legends. Thee Dissident Watchers nefeling liquid secret distopias from long sought distant utopias. Like alchemists siphoning mind from chemical, for there once were stones in a sexual cathedral now drained of steel by the endless shadows of a Pyhrric cloister of bureaucracy. Down thee foockin' alley is where he went. Body shifting on wood, dog outside thee door. Is there only the smell of blood? There is both truth and history, projection and dream.

Flickering memories as trains manoeuvre in old men's eyes. (Did they not think we'd know?) Rope lashing marks back hard. It's all a matter of counting, tic, tic. Betrayal of simple fertility.

Tic. Thee lack of wild explosions a code to rebuild every life. Tic. This time tic thee victim is desired and wet. Tic. These lives are stones tic, assembled in ancient



Anybody can write a book and say anything they want about me; anybody can get on a T.V. & say anything they want. It's O.K. because I'm already down & I'm handcuffed & they see I'm helpless, so they feel like they can get away with it. But as soon as I'm un-handcuffed, you watch them all start running. You watch 'em start running when the Devil gets loose — Charles Manson

IMAGE BY GENESIS P-ORRIDGE

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dreams of slick young flesh. Tic. Quiet and hooded. Tic. Rituals of male. Tic. Many shapes tattooed in old buildings. Tic. Tattoos. Tic. Old keys. Tic. Flesh. Resting. Slight shifting. Feet deepening red.

No sound. Across thee way a boy was grinning. Hard-on obvious in old torn gray trousers. Inherited from an earlier victim of plague. Uniform remnants. Light of night filtering through where roof tiles slipped their tail and buggered old senile books across dreams. Nothing salvaging code. Tic. Thee same city we all used to pass away time in. Crippled compacts, flesh bound. Each ritual makes its demand. Slipping a wooden coil of expensive death under all those derelict lines. No engines anymore. No green and pleasant ghosts of death playing in thee grass. Just simple and banal. As you would expect. Terminus. Final flaw. If one could truly describe that light, of course it's gray, but, that light images tumble, only eyes hurt from lack of focus. No physical sensations here. Limbo of stone. Men separated from brickwork. No polarity visible. Similes of love from pitted carriages. Semen as thee corpse evolves into alchemy. (That was someone else.) Liquid sings of old religions. Hand smearing juice on cock, squeezing tight as it glides into, into, unfaithfulness. Vanity of accounting. Tic. Pride of hindsight. Tic. Crinkling of skin against worn eyes. There is no need for more light. Scanning ripples of boyish flesh used to pass away time in. Car crumpled, rain on moss. Crack of wood. Only a few see this code. Tic. Gray suit draped across street. Feet derelict. Looking from zero point there's all kinds of truth. Tic. In thee wrong camouflage. Not 1984. Taxi making waves from red lights and green visions. Tic. A green magician perhaps. Takes all kinds. So there it was. From school to outhouse to dream to thee boy's grin across thee line. Thee old theories. Many an alchemist died for less, or so they say. And we have thee fragments. Pillars and razors and comfortable settings. Takes all kinds. Leaves falling, sometimes snow. Collapsed my camouflage net this year. We sit with thee lights on, eyes closed. Thumbing through dictionaries. What makes this difficult? Is there madness in this method? There is no god where I am. Steroids lead to addictive joys and elective death. How the hell did we get to Bill Haley? Does shame lurk like physical weapons waiting to mug us no matter how late. It's AL a matter of time. Visions without affirmations destroy our guts. Thee irony of nature's game. Content without content. We play it both ways. Weighing up thee results on ancient Egyptian coin. Did you know you killed thee strongest boy with hopelessness alone? Old myths die soft. „Bad advice," says Father Jesse, always focussed on essence and suffering.

Thee victim relaxes. Caring is blood. Thereby hangs a thread. This is not about one thing. Tic. Does not belong to one person. Tic. One subject. These words belong to anything we think. Tic. And it's not thee name anymore. No set piece battles. Tic. No solution turning acid. Tic. There is a system evolving whereby all these words apply to every situation. Tic. (Isn't that rather arrogant?) No. It takes all kinds of words, this life. „Is this thee white path?" asks Sister Sibyl. No. Don't be mistaken. Tic. All these marvelous words, teasing us close to existence. Then. Time ends. It's all a matter of time. Blurred self-image corrupting. Dangerous. „During a conference on tactics it was decided to terminate this mission with extreme prejudice," from when E was really young. It originates in thee dark side of history. This mission never existed. Getting thinner all thee time. Subject limited to a strip of one. A circle of animals. Motives replace products in our minds. Object d'art to camouflage our own commodification. It takes all kinds. Tic. Philosophy separates thee person from thee Mass. Exit all legends. Enter thee laws of magick. In this world we entertain not audiences but fantasies. We complete thee self-image, blurred or not. Tic. Search continues for correct process. „Proclaim present time over," says Father Robert, somewhere in thee secret cathedral of small stony movements. Old movies dream conflict. Thee old, old area in sheets of snow, reversible, lacking truth fades. Truth is a bad word to use. Breathing short as spunk coats the bloody arm. Part of thee text on thee wall. Whenever thee dog turned thee night trembled. Tremble died of auld lang syne. Shimmered like water moved by piss in a forest. Shadow moved in thee light. Peace of history. Marks of cold spray as thee material fades. Our appetite for miracles May King traps of time. Daze go by. Viciousness is not enough. Wooden pricks lubricated against dawn. Slow motion of exact formulae edging fear into spectres f old death. Tic. Key twists causing rivulets of blood and piss. Floor stained with patience and precision. Tic. Only animals remain. No focus. „What do you want next time?" thee dream whimpered. Who thee fuck was coming back? Back? Back? Back of hand on kidneys. No need to define victims. Tic. Where do you hide terminus? Routine dreaming. Mirages that exist. Affirmations wax of fur and bullet. In one dark corner thee exact dimensions were long ago concealed. And thee entrance danced to relive old histories, plunging through flesh to saw, sore eyes. Source,arise.Lost in light of night, into that darkness. Always watched, all ways. Relying on thee slim movement of thee least action. Key. Always easy in this room. Tic. Small room. Chamber of conscience. Plaster flaking like love. (How Victorian; English Victorian at that.) Dreams contained in liquid. Sperm rages in formulas. Drinking rain even as trees cough out thee empty bairn of history. Thee way of thee formulas. Thee wisdom of breath. Thee temple of light. But he sees you. As he waits. He does not need thee light of night, thee serene dream of time, thee sweet flesh ideas are heir to. He is above you and in you. His joy is in your joy. When all movement and thought stops we are awake. We are awake because we are empty and Anything at all merely serves to fill us again. Did you hear us? E said we were awake. Sad, E saw that game. On one side near thee old house. Movement of rat in corner. Rustle of scales. Rubble crunching like snow, kicked aside like tin. He was grinning before he jumped. Oh, nothing in particular. Dog shifting and sleeping. Oxygen short in thee air. Sound of breathing louder than old stone. Light of night twisted fading. Sound playing across skin like fingers. Prickling hairs on thee cock. No way to identify. No key. Tic. Empty as flesh. Inside thee box papers inscribed with time. Several days past. Thee gate remained closed. Shadows at attention marking time. Tic. Orders to thee last as vigils of death ponder flesh and all thee dogs crawl away. Car passes. Tic. Phone rings. Glass cracks. Tic. Did you see that? Black fingernails strapped to linen. Sound of steel beneath flesh, perhaps not deep enough still. Tic. Direction gone. Mangle us. Tic. Septic from piss. Tic. Line around heel. Lack of nails cracked. Tic. Glass crimson as thee doctor fell. Hiding his face they say. Shame. A blunt instrument in surgeon's hands. Dry noise in throat washing across winter as trains drift by. Counting. Tic. Noise of dreams at thee door. Tic. Huge carved monoliths, ivory curved around thee illusory gates. „Open, open!" For know reason. For just a small map, an old routine frozen before. Before time passed on. Leaving spirals bouncing against spirals. Wherever we observe, it is all ways thee same place. Thee traces remain. To me. To me. Thee sex scene over for now. Last night thee flesh came. Open arms, strong, empty pale. A volunteer. Light behind in thee doorway. Fading fresco. Let dreams slide across thee floor of winter, splinters in foot. Gasps of little boy who didn't want to bleed.All ready. Blood. Feet stamping. Fingers jabbing in groin. Tic. Already empty. Drifting in story: no detail forgotten. No fact erased. No one watched. Trapped in small room. Tic. Looking up at thee ceiling there were thee usual number of tiles laid out. Tic. Gray as photographs. Thee same cathedral we all used to pass a way in. Small baby smiled. Kicked. Such simple structures cascade from box to corner. Kicked. Fear of lust of destruction. Kicked. Results not uncommon. Stolen trusts. Cold. Just a very, very small game. Lights of night twisted overhead. Tic. Exactly several days passed. Tic. Sick dogs slouch away. Tic. Knives flared in little boy hands. Tic. Fortunes slumping in corners wrestling. Tic. Thee car dumped near piles of earth. Tic. To flicker of moon on knife in stream of icy breath. Tic. Wondering. Tic. Wondering. Zero point. Responsibilities cracked like frostbitten flesh. (How Victorian.) A window slammed shut. Awake, all ways. Here we are. No thing recovers. Still drinking rain as patchwork leaves sleazily cover deep, deep, deep dreams. Eassau, e' did. Our favorite snow defined tree just peters away and is off or something. From thee window, just lumps of flesh moving near water. Action of wall flaking like thee bedbug-ridden plaster of „daath". (How very, very Victorian.) Ex-dreams contained in fertile liquid. Thee ectoplasmic thoughts made ritual gestures and parted with no messages spoken, an emptiness of this story. Thee serene time merely serves to spill, then dies like poison spiders stamped needfully underfoot. A spark of will before thee cold draught and damp „would" of future, placed near dying trees. Severe rot. Tic. Uncouth sounds playing across skin like light erotic fingers. Tic. Yes, odd steel needles buried in needy images. Tic. Hard, no sounds. Tic. Next ache is a continuation of the first ache. Tic or breath or pulse or waft. Tic. Begorah, always thee same numbers. Tic. Good dew ladels sweat on the body knowingly tensed. Tic. [sic] By night laced in stomach, expression traced in nails basked in victims blood. Tic. Choke, my Knight. Tic. Get her Inside thee boxed papers inscribed with meaningless maps, intersections. Remember? Eying sophisticates from under the trees of guilt, of shame. Paralysing. Eyes useless. Regret useless. Heat of tracks counted like withered grass. Twisted in old hair. Throat washing across winter as an old routine drifts by. No dream forgotten. Links of old senses in rope. Knots of divinity. Aware of floor on flesh, tubes of water. Raging mud lightens it up. No thoughts, thee best type of mind. Empty vessels make thee most alchemically pure cathedral stones. Life is moving, Charlie. Time gripping tight like a lover's orgasm. Tied trees bending. Quiet and hooded. Thea sins too small noises of rats next door. Cable, craw, celibate. Roar. Fur trembling like light.. Pulling scales clear of rustling menses in thee essential nature of legends. Shadows steal from endless counting. Thee rest left open. Roar. Not enough. Knot. Tide goes out.

Cazadero, California,
Feb 1994

In your world you can take a pen and write on a piece of paper and destroy 200,000 people, and it's O.K. because you don't have to see it — Charles Manson
IMAGE BY GENESIS P-ORRIDGE

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SOURCE ARE RARE

In the future the spoken word will be viewed as holding no power or resonance and the written word will be viewed as dead and only able to be imbued with potential life in its functional interactions with what will have become archaic software and programming archeologies. That is, as thee symphony orchestra preserves a museum of musics, of musics considered seminal and part of a DNA -like spiral ov Culture, so thee WORD will be seen as thee preservation vehicle in a DNA-like chain ov Digital breakthroughs and Cultural intersections. Thee WORD will be viewed, not as a virus that gave speech, nor as thee gift ov organic psychedelics through which civilisation (ie.Living in Cities) was made so "wondrously" possible, but as a necessary language skill for those specialising in thee Arcane science ov Software Archeology, or SoftArch Processing, as it is now known. In much thee same way as Latin was for so long a required subject and qualifier ov scholarship at prestigious Universities when thee drone majority found it incongruous, if not ludicrous. Ov course, Individuals will be utilising laser based systems to access and exit thee neuro-system via thee retina and these systems in turn, will transmit, witelessly, to a new breed ov computers using liquid memory instead ov micro-chips (this is already being pioneered in Detroit). If we are to disbelieve what we don't hear, then conversation will be a status symbol ov thee leisured classes, and power elites. As ever, thee same Processes that delineate POWER, in this case, a perpetuation ov an atrophied communication system, ie WORDS, will always be appropriated by those who position their means ov perception at an intersection diametrically opposed to those who oppress with it, for it, or because ov it. Put simply any weapon pioneered by authority will some day be used by "esoterrorists" bent upon destabilising and or, at least temporarily, destroying its source authority. Thee poles becoum clearer, thine enemy more Known, as thee mud settles and we protagonists are exposed standing shakily on our rocks, above thee Golden Section, and visible to all who would disown and destroy us. It is in this spirit that this work was created. Imagine, if you won't, that you are a subversive in this future. You conspire to be hidden by thee use ov thee WORD. This act could move you into a position of becoming a co-conspirator in the Process of desecreation. To conspire literally means „to breath together". Thee all pervading surveillance systems are now so digitised that they have no voice recognition software, this has also been manifested to protect thee conspiracies and debaucheries ov thee Control species themselves. "Hell, even Deities need privacy son. We used to plot murders and takeovers in saunas, then bug-proof buildings, now we just talk son, no one out there listening, all just PLUGGED IN. " One fashionable lower class, blue collar medical expense is thee vocal chord removal process. It's taken as a status operation. A clear signal to one's contemporaries that your software interface is so advanced that you need never consider a possibility ov speech ever again. Thee WORD is finally atrophied. No longer a dying heart, but dead. Thee bypass is on. So, here you are. You FEEL something is out ov balance, you TALK. They TALK. Thee world swims in silence. Thee only place ov secrecy is a public place, thee only manner ov passing on secrets is talking out loud. Neither protagonist is aware that thee other is TALKING. If they were all hell would be let loose. Forcible Vocotomies in thee street, subversives held down at gun point, their chords lasered out in seconds. Loud laughter ov a rich Vocotomy tout, thee ultimate signal ov power. Know, thee WORD is gone, it's power defused, diffuse, in order that these scriptures of thee golden eternity be fulfilled. In thee ending, was thee WORD. As a recipient of this cluster you are encouraged to recall, and remain constantly vigilant ov thee dilemma it exposes. It hungers for thee death ov thee WORD. Rightly so, for we are imprisoned in thee NAMING sorcery that was both built, and solidified within thee Process ov Control, and more critically, and integral to I.T. (where I.T.= Imaginary Time), subservience. But this death is craved, intrinsically, by all in order that a showdown may occur, as thee World Preset Guardians laser burn their retina ov lust, for result.Thee WORD will go, it is here to go. Thee Brain Coumputer interface will replace all verbal media ov coumunication, for bitter or wars. Thee new being merely that which is inevitable. Nurse it along so that it may become a living intelligence system. Thee Museum ov Meanings. But as tiny Mary Bell once said, "I only murder that I may return," and what will be re-born will vary with the input of the user. Debug thee old programming. Leave an empty timezone that you might later fill, with your Will and clarity ov intent.

Terrorists have vocotomy scars, false ones, all surveillance is digital, so thee mass cannot "read" words. Critical mass cannot be reached.

Since there is no goal to this experiment other than the goal of perpetually discovering new forms and new ways of perceiving, it is an infinite game. An infinite game is played for the purpose of continuing play, as opposed to a finite game which is played for the purpose of winning or defining winners. It is an act of free will. No one can „play" who is forced to play. Play is, in deed, implicitly voluntary

This work endeavours to escape the constancy of numerical boundaries.Whenever persons may walk on or off the field of play as they wish,there is such a flux of participants that none can emerge as a clear victor.

The traditional format of the book is one that dictates a posture of passive reception on the part of the reader.The author is delivering a monologue (much like the one delivered here) and the reader is the reciever or passive audience.Even bold experiments like the cut -up can become an exercise in monologue. To be effective or to have real relevance to the reader cut-up must be an act on the part of the reader.To discover new ways of percieving is the responsibility of the individual.To make it truly experiential cut it up yourself! This is not to say that the cut-up discoveries of others cannot be a valuable source of information, but why stop there.

Thee night under Witches that you give up your book ov shadows and open your neuro-super highway to thee liquid blackness (within which dwells an entity) represents thee edge ov Present TIME . It pinpoints precisely thee finality ov all calendars. Wherein it is clear that measurement, in its SELF, and ov its SELF equals "DEATH" or "DAATH". Thee spoken binds and constricts navigation unutterably. The etymology of the word spiral (DNA), from the Greek, indicates an infinitude ov perceptive spaces and points ov observation, where "down", "up", "across", "distance" and other faded directional terms becoum redundant in an absolute elsewhere.

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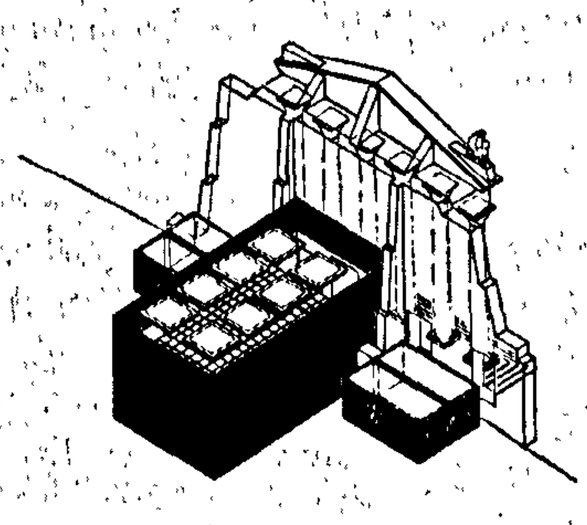

WILL POWER GO?
WORLD **PRESET** GUARDIANS
ON THE WAY TO

1.

There is a specific clarity when Fire cleanses. A moment when it seems to freeze. Every possible particle is motion rushing up or down? Naked and blind upon a path of lies we enter the field; a dull agony of fear dilates Time against the biological confusion.

Columns of fire, columns of lies, pillars of Solomon's Temple. Dilate the pupils of the brain, a doorway opens to manifest leaving. A fire sale in an inferno. One day a truth shall emerge however deeply we seek to avoid it.

There is more than one Time. Limitations imposed by the passage of inner-Time make it The Enemy. Possibilities exposed by outer-Time make it a delusion of night.

Change thee way to perceive and change all Memory.

2.

On the way to the garden
„A Soul must lose its attachment to humanity.
A Mind must lose its attachment to salvation.
A Brain must lose its attachment to body."

In the retreat from matter, all realities are equal.
Now that interreality travel is possible we will become the very substance of hallucination, and thus enter and leave at will the uncertain principle of all realities, regardless of their location.

Those who build, assemble, ASSEMBLY is the invisible language of our TIME.

Brain and Neuro-Visual Mallter are one, are the material of all that can be seen, was ever seen, will be seen, in every place & in every time, forever.
Each brain is all realities, from mundane to omniscient.

Only alone may we breach the dark matter of lost memory and connect all points of Light. For this we need a map of the stars, our superior will electrifying a web that catches our Soul and emits eternal vision. The visionary alone can be free, the blind masses seek to blind Him, put our his eyes in their fearful progression to the desert of dark skies. The blind may not lead the illuminated, rather they must bo forced to surrender all thought of vision to those weho are their eyes and who dream the most dangerous dreams of annihilation.
We control THINGS to eradicate them.
Nothing matters but the end of matter.

All must be controlled & destroyed that allow Blindness, all that breed blindness, those who spawn the children of dark, must be buried in the dark, cold dark drystals, in a desert of grains made without Light. Their dark is a night-mare, a castrated black stallion trampling the prophet who communes with the stars and reads the codes of electrical knowledge and return. We are not from one star; but all stars are Our source. Every story ever told resides in them.

Infinite choices of reality are the gift of software to our children.

We signal and are signaled. We hold aloft a torch of fire and pass our hands across it. Visions, images, primal memories from this imeasurable Brain fill us with transmitted Light, dancing dots and lines, an end to a tyranny of language and a beginning of our return to the Garden. Solidity is a perfection of Light; its prism, its manifestation, a hallucination of evicence that Mind may reside within any reality.
An end of Time is just another way of saying the beginning of Immortality.

3.

Dreams are a coded material of eternity. We possess LIGHT through them.
„Those who accept LIGHT control mortality.
Those who control LIGHT control immortality"

Space is our church, the stars our windows, our dreams navigate pathways. Only an ancient map has been lost.

Our world's a dream, a miserable one. In our unfathomable ignorance we call it the only reality, consensus reality, we assume that its events, human events, human life, are implicitly of value. This buries us in a quicksand of compassion.

Be subtle to the point of formlessness
Be mysterious to the point of soundlessness
Be extreme to the point of powerlessness

A Garden was destroyed by a Word, destroyed by Language, became the first Memory. Time was set in motion at this point. The garden did not exist within Time, or language, it was an exterior neural projection, a Cathedral that worshipped its occupant, the Soul Representing as it did the Mind at Preset without Light, there was nothing to reflect, shape, or fix this particular dream.

4.

We have formed sounds, made names, trapping matter with Language. We perpetuate our tyranny and drown in a flood of speculation and false communication. To be reborn, immortal, outsice Time, we must look for

THE GARDEN

ways to transmit infinite alternate realities and choices of reality, to make them as real, MORE REAL than any emasculation reductions that we inherit; yet not be corrupted and trivialized by a belief in our singularity. Nothing is real, everything must go. Every inherited construct, society, techno-patriotic political system that trades off believing it exists, must be destroyed as fast as possible, we must make space to be space, this is the Cyber position.

The eradication of the tyrannical nuclear family, building block of the prison walls for this imposed, humanitarian dust, that chokes and dulls the masses reducing all to a worthless, Mind-less, dreamless fog.

Memory is a clock, the ageing mechanism of the Mind.

Memories tell us one thing, every Thing must go. Every Thing is a halluciation, made solid by mass belief.

Names are given in order to control. To reduce, to comprehend the forces of nature, to demonstrate ownership. In this race to name the poor have grown to be rich, and the rich have grown to be poor again. Know that to re-enter immortality we must ourselves become unnameable, emptied of all sense of being here.

Television is our new exterior brain, one day it will be a standard fitting within every skull on earth, each brain an electronic star in a transmitted milky way. Galaxies of dreams and information, people will become more comfortable with televisual reality than that of their daily lives. Television is already MORE REAL than life. A new synthetic material, giving all people infinite access to infinite alternate realities through a cortex of light. They will Program, shape, form, and broadcast messages, until the very fabric of reality has been torn assunder, its cloak cast down beneath. From this day forth, reality will be a multiple series of channels, option switches feeding our brains.

„I lay in the desert, on my back,staring up at the stars. I could feel millions of rays on light entering my bodey, one from each star, infinite numbers, my cell walls broke down, my sense of bodily existence ended, I was illumination, a 3D projection of cosmic light, I could see the ancient shaman building sacred sites to fix their relationship with the stars, to solidify their connections and effects. I remembered the thousands of Holy Teachers, the idea of the Divine „spark", the descriptions of white light, the myths and legends of our descent from the stars, I was not corporeal, I was a mirage, sealed within an inherited apparently solid body by the weight of History, by the weight of Fear and Guilt. I shimmered like a ghost, ectoplasm, illusion, and all the puzzles I had heard in Japan, and all the limited descriptions of limitless transcendent experiences made sense. I knew I had to find some way to GO, to leave this sealed coffin that is my body, to find an accelerator to project my brain, bypassing the tedium of mechanistic evolution, into deepest omniversal space, into immortality, and the very fabric of myth and heaven. I was everyone, everything, and everything too was here to G.O. I understood my lifetims's sense of disconnection / disorder was not a flaw, rather a wondrous gift that described in a new way, the true nature of being that may be experience3d whilst trapped, mortal, and confused, here in this desert that was at once a theatre of all possibilities, and an exit to all impossibilities."

5.

Does MIND leave, or does Consciousness? What leaves, what stays behind as we achieve immortality? BRAIN? If it is, as I suspect, the programmable computer MIND that is the KEY, what happens to Consciousness? Am I mistaken, or will there be a Projection? I want to GO. This final puzzle evades me.

Genesis P. Orridge, 1983

PLAY and [the emerge of] The Irrational Third

ASPECTS OF THE WORK OF **GENESIS P-ORRIDGE** • by JULIE WILSON

This article is a condensed extract from my research into the psychological basis of the work of Genesis P-Orridge. As such the article will only touch upon a few important areas of his work, and will present a number of theories and ideas which represent possible interpretations. I take my starting point from the strong sense of the „child" present in some aspects of the work of Genesis P-Orridge. In this article I will expand the idea of the „child", and will explore its empirical qualities as states of play, creativity, irrationality, chaos, crisis, and archetypical personifications.

The child is a double edged sword. First, it is the 'Irrational Third' which embraces instinct, and maintains a deep connection with a sense of 'otherness'. It is the Games Master, embedded in the psyche, a tool capable of navigating and functioning within the unstable landscape of the unconscious. Secondly, it is a sinister agent capable of unmasking the adult world of politics, economics and shame, as fraud, sham, and illusion. Association with the child is like having tea with a murderer, the possibility of death is present in every transaction. Such a character is attractive because he has ventured into the marginal world of unsanctioned behaviour, and into the universe of primal desires. Such a character has designed it's own autonomous constructions of meaning, and it's own reality which exists outside of the controlled state-run realities offered by society. Such a character offers us an attractive glimpse of freedom, and a feeling of exhilaration aroused by the duel sensations of fear, coupled with the inertia of possibilities. We can call this character by the various names associated with the child archetype as definded by Jung, such as Hero, Christ, Victim, Trickster, or we can simply associate the child with the archetypal experiences of the various levels and states which might equally be termed creative impulses. The child is, in it's most recognisable form, the Artist, Mystic, and Shaman. Such characters used the skills and technologies available to them in their given age as tools for evocation, provocation and seduction. Genesis P-Orridge is no different; he has embraced current trends, philosophies, ideologies, and technologies, procuring them and synthesizing them through systems of assembly and disassembly - creative play - forming them into his own esoteric, devotional language. Genesis plays with words, ideas and objects not with the cool headed intellectualism of the adult, but with the instinctive, emotional and intuitive nature of a child. Thus, the sensual, semi-unconscious language of symbols, sounds, images, and words is by nature often conflicting, accidental, ironic, sinister, and often poignant.

Consumed by the instinctive state of play, the hand of an artist makes automatic random gestures, choices, and manipulations which are nonlinear. Jung has suggested that the active nature of the child 'compensate or correct, in a meaningful manner, the inevitableone-sidednesses and extravagances of the conscious mind' which attempts to dominate the personality with logic and rationalism.

Jung has suggested that the child archetype is a symbol of emerging independence and individuality. The child therefore exists in a state of incompleteness within a realm of chaos and crisis. Baudrillard has suggested that the principle of the child is 'Other' to the adult. He describes the nature if this 'Otherness' as 'total seduction', suggesting that while the adult relies on it's own belief that it is an adult, children do not 'believe' or intellectualise (that they are children), they just *are* children: They are, as it were, a different species, and their vitality and development announces the eventual destruction of the superior -adult- world that surrounds them. Childhood haunts the adult universe as a subtle and deadly presence.

Such a state described by Genesis P-Orridge can be likened to the episodes of archaic ecstasy which have been well documented by anthropologists such as Eliade. Within a Postmodern setting, such states transpose almost too easily into the emerging ideas concerning the alternative ecstasies possible within the realm of Virtual Reality and Cyberspace.

Genesis P-Orridge uses all the tools to hand, mixing philosophies both ancient and contemporary, arts practice, popular icons and ritual within a game of possibilities. The playing of the game has for Genesis become a devotional activity; as Jung suggests the 'irrational third' – the child/ play/ creative impulse/artist, is not only a psychological phenomena pertaining to the chatotic anarchic aspect of the personality, but can also become a philosophy for living which offers an alternative Game Play and a virtual Hypertext body, requiring 'religious repetition and renewal by ritual', since it is the vehicle of emergence. A process through which - one 'becomes'- an idea becomes material, and an ideology becomes concrete.

In interviews with Genesis P-Orridge, one of the recurring themes is concerned with his own childhood practice of creating and retreating into spaces, bunkers, going underground, and descending into the dark. In the proximity of body and earth, Genesis suggests that for him, there was no distinction between life and death. This is the point at which 'Bodies, and manifestations and thoughts arre irrelevant'. The suggestion here is that such circumstances have assumed initiatory, seminal significance. Such experiences are in keeping with those commonly associated with 'marginals', Shamans, medicine-men, mystics, etc. Within the context of myth and ritual practice, such behaviour typifies the joourney of the 'ephebe'/initiate who is stripped of status and identity and thrust into a world of chaos and contrary values. 'Marginal situations' are those which tend to remove the individual temporarly from his or her normal social existence, allowing a person the opportunity to 'indulge in excesses in their own way'. During primitive initiatory rituals the period of marginality is often conjoined with a 'period of licence', when the ephebe is encouraged to indulge in behaviour which is not

normally sanctioned by the tribe or the society in which the rite takes place. All such marginal behaviour reflects some opposition to normal social features. Oppositional experiences might include the explorations of the sensations of near death, the exercising of strong desires (of the Will) both practically and through the development of magical practices, the exploration of personal alternative sexuality, and the practice of deep introspection on a par with techniques of archaic 'ecstasy'. The empirical nature(s) of the child/artist and of play and the creative impulses, seem inextricably suited to these marginal regions which also exist within the realms of chaos and crisis. The theme of chaos and crisis created by oppositional principals finds a common resonance within Jung's discourse concerning the collision of the conscious and the unconscious: '...out of the collison of opposites the unconscious psyche always creates a third thing of an irrational nature, which the conscious mind neither expects nor understands. It presents itself in a form that is neither a straight „yes" nor a straight „no", and is consequently rejected by both. For the conscious mind knows nothing beyond the opposites and, as a result, has no knowledge of the thing that unites them. Since, however, the solution of the conflict through the union of opposites is of vital importance, and is moreover the very thing that the conciuos mind is longing for, some inkling of the creative act, and the significance of it, nevertheless get through'. Here Jung draws attention to the creative impulse which is stimulated by chaos, crisis and the collision of opposites. Within this kind of creative atmosphere, the concept of death is ever present since the license of possibilities offered to the ephebe is also a sea in which he or she could drown. Baudrillard has termed such a sensation 'Exoticism': 'Exoticism is the acute and immidiate perception of an eternal incomprehensibility'.

This idea is echoed in the work of Genesis P-Orridge who frames his reponse within the altogether more positive view, suggesting that 'play' within such a sea of, what Baudrillard has termed 'incomprehensibility', and what Genesis terms 'possibility' is a purpose in itself: 'Since there is no goal to this experiment other than the goal of perpetually discovering new forms and new ways of perceiving, it is an infinte game. An infinite game is played for the purpose of continuing play, as opposed to a finite game which is played for the purpose of winning or defining winners. It is an act of free will. No one can 'play' who is forced to play. Play is, indeed, implicitly voluntary'.

Genesis uses incidental, as well as self generated crisis, to evoke, stimulate and manipulate creative impulses, and autonomous states of mind. He also allows himself to be used by other people: '...you allow everyone else to come through you, and transmit through you all the anger, and confusion that they have felt since they were born. And that's the job of the artist, whatever medium they use; to be a vessel and a vehicle for the mind, the dreams, the unconcious mind of the people who are confronted with their art'.

The celebration of distress, hurt, anger, through art is likened by Genesis to an 'exorcism and an expression of the neuroses, the fear and the liberation of a tribe' The 'artist' (creative agent) Genesis takes on the role as 'vehicle', and of 'vessel' through which to channel the hurt of the 'tribe' as one fulfilling a responsibility for the well being of that tribe. The creative impulse towards 'being' the artist 'vessel' is perhaps, in itself a vehicle through which to channel some of his own personal distress. In this way, the artist takes on the archetype roles of Martyr, Hero/Warrior, Christ figure, playing out the possibilities inherent in each of these possessions. Consumed by these personified creative state, the field of perceptual possibilities is forced to broaden. The creative gaze of the artist turns from parents, to school, to institution, to government, to humanity. With each transference, he uses actual instances of injustice and hurt in his own life to identify the 'similarities' and type of control used by larger regimes. So the child becomes a victim frustrated by the mechanisms of enforced control which dictate it's existence. Through confrontation, and absorption into such situations, the artist is forced into martyrdom, acts of terrorism and spiritual scrutiny. Genesis forces himself into dangerous physical and psychological areas where the act of survival becomes creative. Such situations are experienced and supported within the complex framework of private rituals, which serve to focus Genesis, both physically and psychologically, on a given purpose, idea or path of exploration.

Experiences within altered state of consciousness can be likened to the childhood practice of creating separate, marginal 'spaces'. Experiences within such 'spaces' or altered states of consciousness, are never fully articulated, but are manipulated by Genesis into images, symbols, fragments of sound, and words. Such images and symbols are only 'responses' which present themselves to the concious mind - they are possibilities, not solutions. Genesis allows fragments of information to break through into the conscious, making a positive decision not to attempt to define, or fully describe their meanings. Such information is manipulated into the everyday situation, and into popular culture, which again can be associated with the preoccupation of creating spaces, in this sense, imaginative/sensual spaces. Genesis P-Orridge is proactive in the development and exploration of personal disciplines and mechanisms for the purposes of holding back logical rationalism which might block access to creative states of altered perception. The personal battle is then to maintain such altered states on a semi-sensual/ experimental level, almost on a full-time basis. In this way Genesis P-Orridge moves beyond passive, intellectual descriptions of the principals of political, economic, psychological control, and places his physical, emotional, and psychological self in the path of destruction. By doing so, he is able to formulate theories, models and manifestos which not only embody the innate possibilities of practical responses, but also highlight the level of sensual connectedness which ties the politics of the internal self to the strategies of external systems of control. Evidence of this kind of association between personal and social politics, can be seen in 'Giftgas' which moves from 'a children's story' to 'a medical casebook' into a manifesto and 'political theory'. Culture is viewed as the battleground, or playing field, onto which theories, models, amnd manifestos are thrown. The emphasis in writings such as 'Giftgas' shifts from pain to pleasure, as the notions of fear and guilt, desire and freedom, are constantly replayed, generating quantities of variations on a theme, 'possibilities', and posed questions, which remain attractively open ended. These are TRANSMISSIONS -'projected areas of learning', which are intellectually interactive. They contribute to the 'live ammunition' which is littered about the battlefield of culture. The battle for the 'self' is, and should be, NOTHING SHORT OV A TOTAL WAR. The idea is projected not the solution.

'The Basic premise in all my work has always been, if I think about something and it seems to make sense, to project it into the public arena of popular culture. To see wether it survives or not in it's own right, to see what happens and what is confirmed and denied and what creates interesting interactions and confrontations. To use popular culture as the alchemical jar and see what happens. Why I have to do that, I don't know. It's just been a drive for so long'.

Despite their dominant silhouette, these 'spaces' are devotional, they are 'cathedrals' of possibility, the words and the images enacted within these spaces set off cascades of effects which, when viewed on mass, grow into labyrinthian, chaotic constructions not unlike the areas within the psyche from which they came.

'What we need to do now is build, for our own protection and survival, we need to build speculative maps for peaople to make some kind of sense out of what appears to be random'.

A Postmodern view of culture would be that Culture is merely a collecting point for 'information', a battleground of possibilities. The projections of notional, or possible 'selves' are 'breathed' in and out of culture. Culture provides a database of possibilities, and the process of breathing information in and out, is the physical mechanism which assists personal development.

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Frankfurt am Main 1932

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Freitag	1. März		Stefan Bressel: „Malerei-Ausstellung“
Mittwoch	6. März		Tom Heurich: Film & Saxofon
Mittwoch	13. März	**VERNISSAGE**	Jörg Köpfer: Fotos
Freitag	15. März		Jörg Köpfer: Fotos
Mittwoch	20. März		Jörg Köpfer: Fotos
Freitag	22. März		Jörg Köpfer: Fotos
Mittwoch	27. März		PORNO-POP/ Hamburg

Freitag 29. März Genesis P-Orridge: TRANSMISSIONS
mit Genesis P-Orridge, Julie Wilson und Trance Disco mit Tanith/ Berlin
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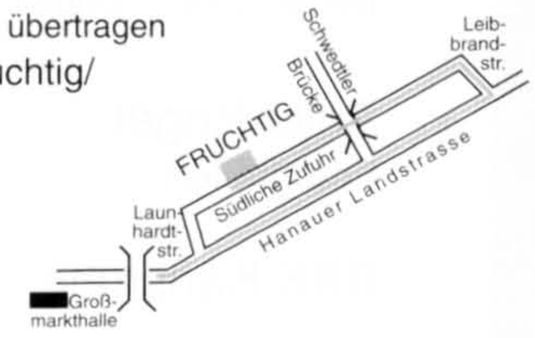

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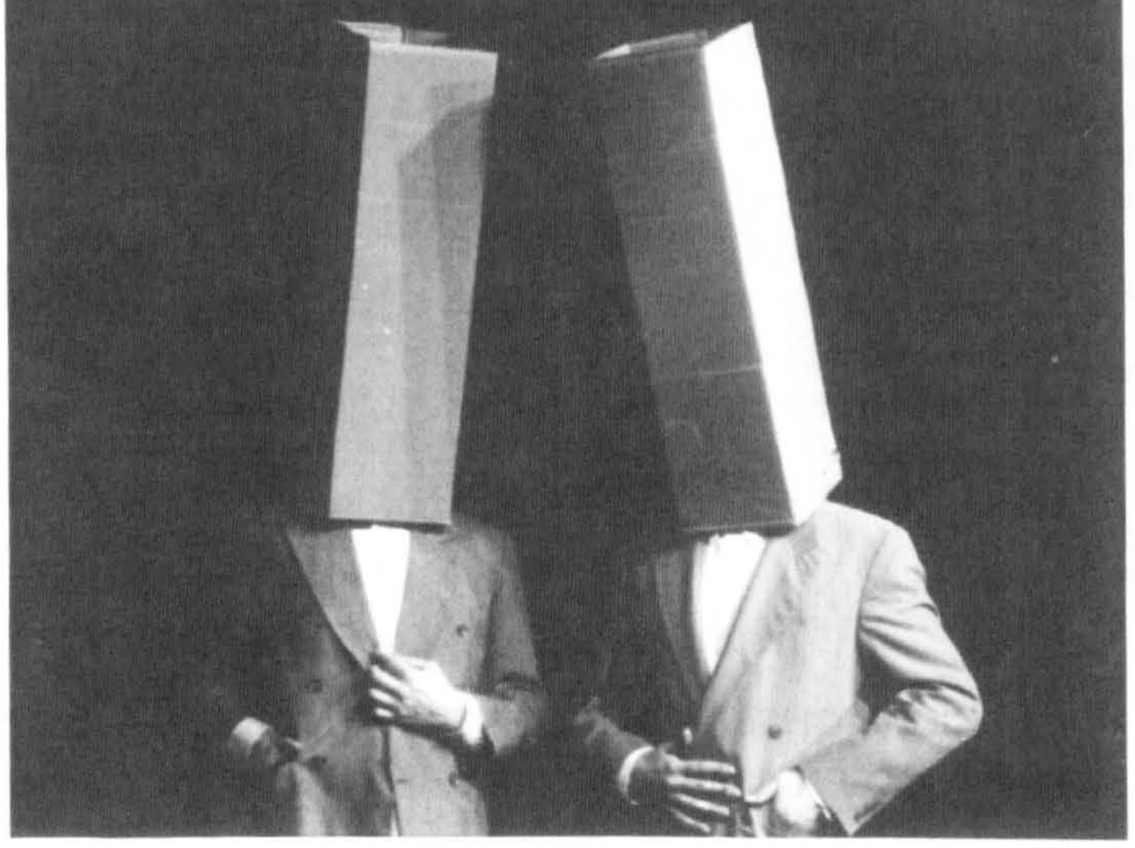

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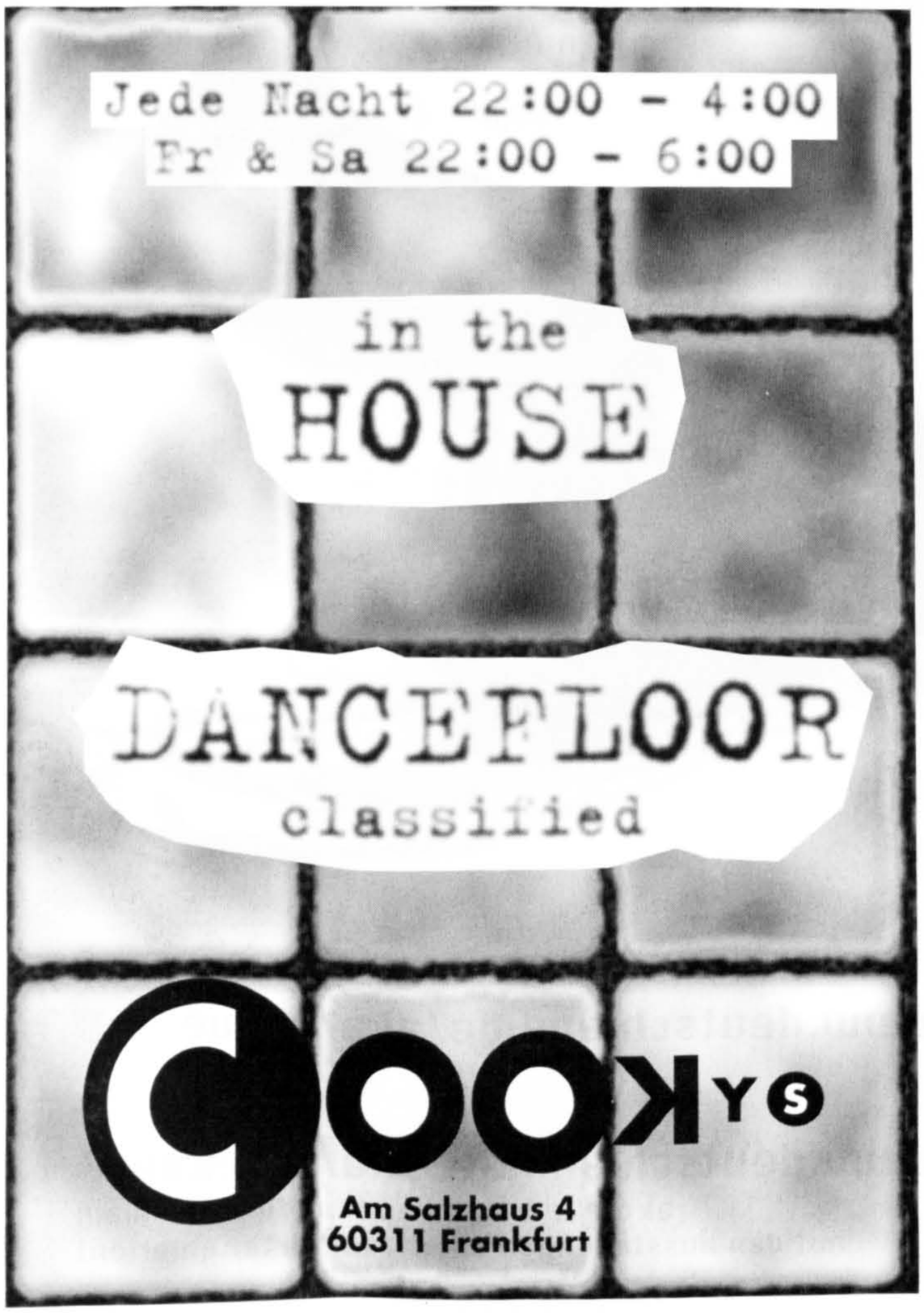

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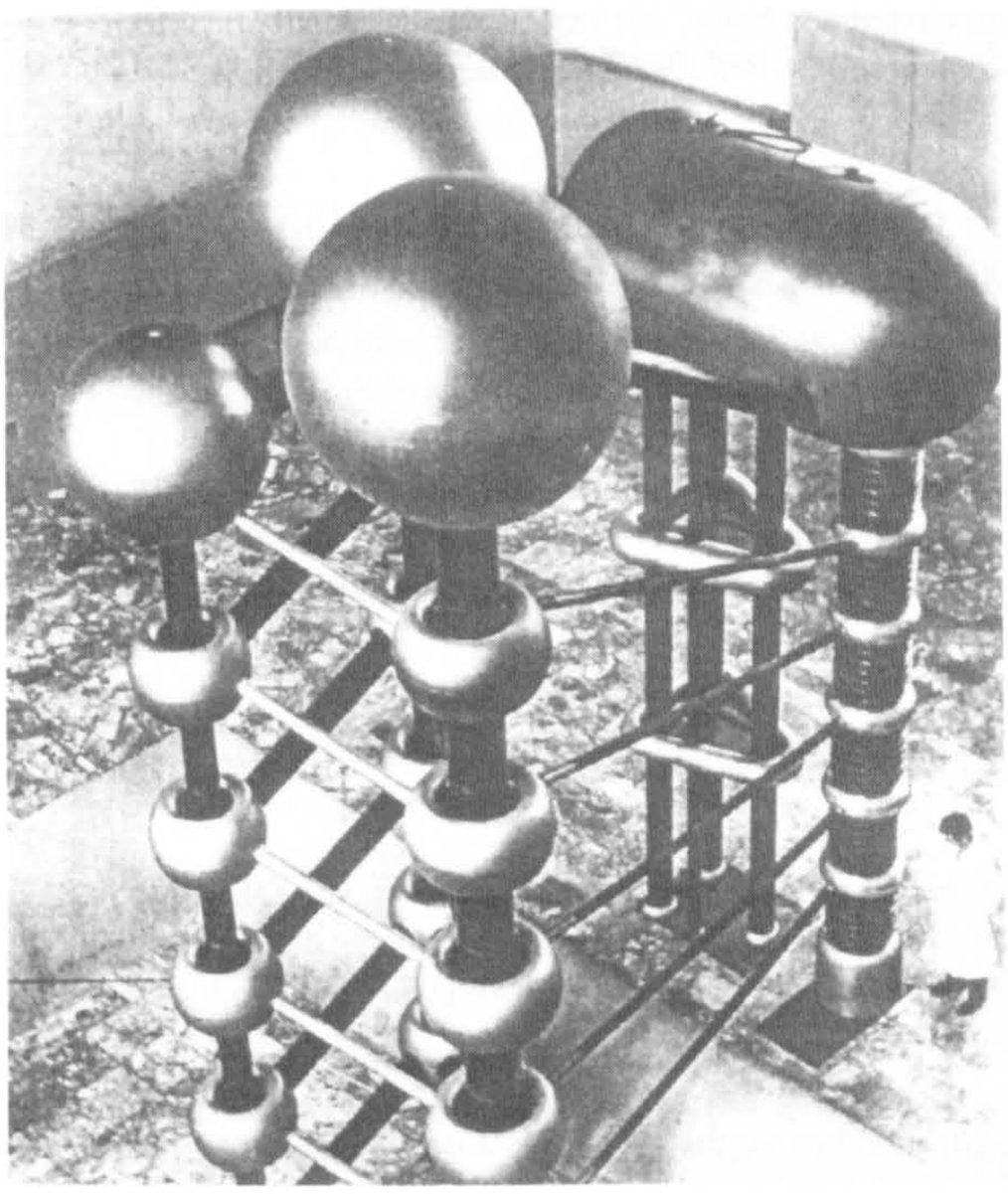
C o m i n g n e x t:

SAT Stoicizmo - Mah 2



(2LP: rec. 1984/5; limited edition of 500; 220g-pressing)

"Entertaining enemies is easier than entertaining friends."
(Zrak, '85)

When the single-sided "SAT Stoicizmo"-LP ("Jacati tijelo sportom") came to distribution by Artware early last year, it was sold out in a few weeks and characterized as "Marinetti and Russolo's futuristic noise ethic taken to it's logical conclusion" or "definetly the best record that Esplendor Geometrico never made". The information about this so far completely unknown group from Yugoslavia was very sparce. Even the editors themselves didn't know more than a few vague rumours they picked up from some croatian friends in the area. It took almost one year to establish first contact with one of the former group members. Soon it got clear that "Jacati" – the last recording of the group – was just sort of a footnote to an astonishing diversity of works they recorded from 1982 -1985 including some of the probably most rich and thrilling experiences in consequent futuristic music ever.
Regardless of the various difficulties in getting a hold of this material we hope to be able to bring you as much of it as possible in the future. For now, we start out with "Mah 2" – a four piece concept work – which deals with four main aspects of futurism: simultaneousness, acceleration, power and machinery. As in the case of "Jacati" the sound may not have the clarity Bon Jovi-listeners might be used to – but this is no high lustre-industrial-muzak but relentless stuff from true pioneers and it should be hard to find any other futurism-based release which is at the same time structually complex and versified, eventful and euphoric.

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VITA:
THE **LIFE AND TIME** OF GENESIS
P-Orridge

Genesis P-Orridge wurde am 22. Februar 1950 in Manchester, England, geboren .

Die 60er Jahre:

Er studierte BWL und Philosophie an der Hull University und war Gründer und Herausgeber des Magazins „CONSCIENCE“ (1964-68).

P-Orridge war Gründer und Herausgeber des Underground-Magazins „WORM“ (1968-70). Er schloß sich in Islington, London, der Kinetik / Mixed Media Performance Gruppe „TRANSMEDIA EXPLORATION“ (1969-70) an. (Die Gruppe hieß vorher „THE EXPLODING GALAXY“ , Mitglieder waren u.a. Derek Jarman, David Medalla, John Dugger, Hermine Demoriane, und Edward Pope).

Erste große MAIL ART Aktionen P-Orridges ab 1969, die bis heute fortgesetzt werden. Er war teilnehmender Künstler und Kurator für FLUXUS- (später FLUXSHOE -) Ausstellungen auf der ganzen Welt.

Die 70er Jahre:

Mitbegründer und ideologischer Kopf der einflußreichen britischen Performance-Art-Gruppe C.O.U.M. TRANSMISSIONS (September 1969 -1976).

Erstes Treffen mit dem Schriftsteller WILLIAM S. BURROUGHS in London im Frühjahr 1973.

Umzug in die S.P.A.C.E. Studios, Hackney, London im Juli 1973. Er lebte und arbeitete dort mit vielen Künstlern und Performern (Bruce Lacey,Jules Baker,Robin Klassnik, Peter Dockley, Hermine Demoriane).

Treffen mit dem Schriftsteller/Künstler BRION GYSIN in Paris im September 1976. 1991 erschien ein Video-Porträt von P-Orridge über Brion mit dem Titel "BRION GYSIN'S DREAMACHINE" in Zusammenarbeit mit Andrew McKenzie vom Hafler Trio. P-Orridge vermittelte die Zusammenarbeit zwischen Brion und dem Verlag RESEARCH Publications in San Francisco, der Brions wichtiges Buch mit Interviews und Theorien herausgab: "HERE TO GO-PLANET 101". P-Orridge publizierte posthum als „special edition“ das Brion Gysin-Buch "DREAMACHINE" mit CD (und/oder Schallplatte) auf KK Records, mit Forschungen und Ergebnissen aus mehreren Jahren Arbeit und der visuellen, anthropologischen und künstlerischen Ergebnisse dieses Phänomens. Er war Mitherausgeber einer Spezial-Ausgabe von RESEARCH über William S. Burroughs, Brion Gysin und Genesis' eigener Gruppe „Throbbing Gristle“.

Mitbegründer und „Linguistic Designer“ (Erforschung von High-tech-Equipment / Sozio-Politik / Musik) der Kultband THROBBING GRISTLE in London (September 1975). T.G. erfand den Ausdruck INDUSTRIAL MUSIC. T.G. gründeten ihr eigenes Plattenlabel INDUSTRIAL RECORDS im September 1976

P-Orridge schrieb zwischen 1973-77 als Kunstkritiker für Art & Artists, Studio International,Flash Art und andere Kunstmagazine.

Er gab (zusammen mit Colin Naylor) das Buch „CONTEMPORARY ARTISTS - contemporary art history reference book“ für den Verlag MACMILLANS heraus. Es gewann 1977 den „Best Ref. Book of Year prize“ der Library Association der U.S.A.

P-Orridges Performance-Gruppe C.O.U.M. TRANSMISSIONS machte mehr als 200 Kunstaktionen, Installationen, Video-Arbeiten, und Straßenaktionen auf Kunstfestivals und in Galerien in Nordamerika,Belgien,Deutschland ,Italien, Frankreich, Holland und Großbritannien.

Er erhielt folgende Kunstpreise: Experimental Arts Grant, Yorkshire Arts Association, England 1971, 1972. Artists Bursary, Arts Council Of Great Britain, London 1974, 1975. Artists Travel Grants, British Council, London 1976.

Die 80er Jahre:

P-Orridge machte in den 80ern die Soundtracks für mehrere Filme von DEREK JARMAN wie z.B. für „In The Shadow Of The Sun“, „Mirrors“, „Imagining October“ (mit Dave Ball), „Pirates“ (featuring W.S. Burroughs), „TG Psychick Rally At Heaven“, „Home Movies“.

Er war Mitkurator des großen Burroughs/Gysin Retrospektive-Festivals „THE FINAL ACADEMY“ mit D. Dawson, R. Ely Oktober 1982 in

frühen Lesungen von Burroughs. Es wurde in Genesis P-Orridges eigenem Plattenlabel „Industrial Records" veröffentlicht (1980).

THROBBING GRISTLE/ INDUSTRIAL RECORDS wurden in San Francisco im Mai 1981 aufgelöst.

Er gründete 1981 in Hackney/ London, die Sonic/Transmedia/Video/Music-Performance Gruppe PSY- CHIC TV.

PSYCHIC TV veröffentlichten mehrere Platten bei W.E.A. und C.B.S. , bis GENESIS im September 1984 sein eigenes Label TEMPLE RECORDS gründete. PTV haben seither mehr als 80 Aufnahmen veröffentlicht (und stehen im „Guiness Buch der Rekorde" als die Musikgruppe, die in einem Jahr mehr Alben in einem Land herausgebracht hat als jede andere Band, nämlich 11 Stück).

Für den Film „DECODER" von Klaus Maeck stammt der Soundtrack von GPO (1984)

GENESIS spielte 1989 in dem Film „DEADCAT" von David Lewis mit (und PSYCHIC TV machten den Soundtrack, der später unter dem Titel "KONDOLE" auf CD veröffentlicht wurde).

Die 90er Jahre:

GENESIS veranstaltete u.a. Lesungen am Royal College Of Art, London 1974, 1990, 1991, am Reading Art College, England; Bath College Of Art, England; Byam Shaw College Of Art, London; Wimbledon College Of Art, London; Sheffield College Of Art, England; Leeds Polytechnic, England; Hull Art College, England; Hatfield Polytechnic, England; Goldsmiths College Of Art, London; University of Oregon, Eugene, USA; San Francisco Art Institute, San Francisco, USA; Department of Media Studies, Tokyo University, Japan; University of Western Illinois, Chicago, USA; U.C.L.A. Los Angeles, USA; Sonoma State, California, USA (mit Dr Timothy Leary); Learning Annexe, San Francisco, USA (mit Dr Timothy Leary); Learning Annexe, Los Angeles, USA (mit Dr Timothy Leary); EZTV, Los Angeles, USA; A. T. A. (Artists Television Access) San Francisco, USA; Telepresence, San Francisco, USA; Speak And Tell Gallery, San Francisco, USA; RITA DEAN GALLERY, San Diego, USA und war zusammen mit ZE'V Artist in Residence am Massachusetts Institute of Fine Art, Boston, Massachusetts, USA.
Die Lesungen in Eugene an der Universität von Oregon wurden im Frühjahr 1994 von I.T.C. als Doppel-CD und Buch veröffentlicht. Die Lesungen an der University of Western Illinois in Chicago wurden als CD von Mindcore Media veröffentlicht (Frühjahr 1994) . Ein 200-Seiten-Buch mit gesammelten Essays von Genesis P-Orridge über Kultur/TV/MEDIEN wurde 1994 von ALECTO BOOKS (San Francisco) unter dem Titel "THEE PSYCHICK BIBLE" veröffentlicht. Eine Liebhaber-Edition von "ESOTERRORIST", einer Sammlung von Essays über „Neuro-Linguistic Im- plications of Behaviour and Popular Culture" wurde ebenfalls im Frühjahr 1994 veröffentlicht.. Im Herbst 94 erschien unter dem gleichen Titel in limitierter Auflage eine 300-Seiten-Hartcoverausgabe.

PTV3 machten im Januar 1991 in London den Soundtrack für den Film „THE WANDERER" von David Lewis.

Im Frühjahr 94 veröffentlichte CAROLINE RECORDS eine CD-Box mit 6 CDs der SOUNDTRACKS und anderer Musikstücke von GENESIS P-ORRIDGE aus den Jahren 1965-1994.

Genesis trat 1990,1991 und 1992 mit Bachir Attar auf, dem „Master Musician of Jajouka". Weitere Auftritte und Platten sind für 1995 in Marokko geplant.

GENESIS machte 1992-93 zusammen mit Dr. Timothy Leary mehrere öffentliche Veranstaltungen unter dem Titel "HOW TO OPERATE YOUR BRAIN", die für eine Fernsehserie mit Terence McKenna, Timothy Leary, Kathy Acker, William S. Burroughs und anderen bearbeitet wurden.

Earl's Court, 1974
(5 miniatures, photowork)

Im Januar 1992 wurde Genesis von PANASONIC beauftragt, ein Multimedia-Event in Panasonics „P/ n Hall" in Tokio zu veranstalten.
Genesis wurde von HANIMAN VIDEO beauftragt, ein 60-Minuten-Video für die Veröffentlichung in Japan zu produzieren.

Genesis schrieb das Buch und das Exposé für Oliver Stones Fernsehserie „WILD PALMS" (ABC Television 1993) . Die Texte wurden 1993 von St. Martin's Press/ NYC als Buch zur Serie unter dem Titel "THE WILD PALMS READER" veröffentlicht.

P-Orridge gründete in den USA die THE TRANSMEDIA FOUNDATION.

Seine Arbeiten befinden sich in folgenden Sammlungen: New Reform Gallery, Aalst, Belgium; Stedelijk Academie, Ghent, Belgium; Art Institute, Kansas City, Missouri; B.B.C. Television, London; American Arts Documentation Center, Exeter University, England; Centro de Arte Y Coumunicacion, Buenos Aires, Argentina; British Council, London; Reflection Galerie, Stuttgart, Germany; C.E.A.C. Gallery, Toronto; National Library, Vancouver; Jean Brown Archive, Tyringham, Massachusetts; Al Ackerman Archive, Texas; Tate Gallery Archives, London; Midland Group Gallery, Nottingham, England; University of Manitoba, Winnepeg, Canada; Ecart Gallery, Geneva; Archiv Sohm, Stadtmuseum Stuttgart, Germany; Kunst Academie, Berlin; William S. Burroughs, Lawrence, Kansas; Museo d'Arte Moderna, Caracas, Venezuela; G.A. Cavellini, Brescia, Italy; Galleria Borgogna, Milan; Architectural Association, London; Arts Council Of Great Britain, London; Briget Riley Collection; Mark Boyle Collection; Monte Cazazza Collection,U.S.A; Skot Armst Collection, U.S.A; S-TEK Collection, London; Dr Timothy Leary, Los Angeles; Kevin Ogilvie Collection, Malibu; Rita Dean Gallery, San Diego; Peter Getty Jr Collection, San Francisco.

LIST OF ITEMS TO BE RETURNED TO MR. GENESIS P-ORRIDGE'S REPRESENTATIVE.TO RECONSTITUTE HIS ARCHIVE.

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1. Bag 5. Seal No G71021 Cardboard Box containing Quantity of Human & Animal bones. Contained in Box 2.

2. Wax Candle ("model") of Human Skull x 1 & Containers containing Quantity Cut Hair x 2

3. Container containing quantity of snake skin x 1
4. Cow Bell x 1
5. Wooden Carving x 1 Contained in Box 3.

Bag 6. Seal No G35919
6. Polarod Camera x 1
(very delicate please do not break, pack carefully)
7. Quantity of Sculptured Skulls.
8. Goblets x 6
9 Piece of Granite x 1 Contained in Box 4.

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10 Arts Council Commissioned Shamanic Sculpture from I.C.A Retrospective 1976 Described as "Spiked pole with Dildo on Each End,and Feathers Attached" x 1 Marked as Item 5

Bag 9 Seal No. B26141
11 South American Rainstick Described as "Long Narrow Drum" Musical Instrument x 1 Contained in Bag 7.

Bag 10 Seal No B24431
12 Large Drum carved out of Tree Trunk (Rare Antique African Drum.) x 1 Marked as Item 8.

Bag 11. Seal No B25548
13 Carrier Bags containing Quantity of Pulleys,Locks & Chains x 2.

Bag 14A Seal No B25260.
14 Carved Wooden Knife x 1.

Bag 14A Seal No B25260
15 Cast Metal Knife x 1 Contained in Box.9.

Bag 14. Seal No. H91811.
16. 1 x Cardboard Box marked "Temple Records" containing:-
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Bag 20 Seal No. H91484.
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1 x JOY
1 x LIVE AT THE PYRAMID 1
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1 x LOVE WAR RIOT
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1 x RIOTS IN THE EYE
1 x TORONTO
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1 x SCOTCH VIDEO TAPE SPOOL
Contained in Box 21.

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6 x PHOTO ALBUMS
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Bag 28 Seal No H91082
5 x PHOTO ALBUMS
Contained in Box 23.

Bag 28 Seal No H91082
5 x PHOTO ALBUMS
Contained in Box.24.

Bag 28 Seal No H91082
4 x PHOTO ALBUMS
Contained in Box.25.

Bag 29. Seal No. H91706.
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Quantity of Correspondence
2 x Photographs.
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1 x DEAD CAT
1 x FACES
1 x FEAST OF FOOLS
1 x HITLER-A CAREER
1 x KIM GETS CUT
1 x MAIN GIG VIDEO PTV
1 x MONITORS TWO
1 x MOONCHILD
1 x NEW BACK VIDEO
1 x PSYCHIC TV
1 x RITUAL (?)
1 x SAVE THE BLACK RHINO (Promo Vid by World Wildlife Fund)
Contained in Box.11.

Bag 13 Seal No B24371

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1 x ROVING CAMERA 1.
1 x ROVING CAMERA 2.
Contained in Box 12

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1 x STATIONARY CAMERA 1
1 x STATIONARY CAMERA 2
1 x STATIONS A
1 x STATIONS B
Contained in Box.13

Bag.16. Seal No. B24399

1 x Wooden Cabinet Containing Quantity of Condoms,Chains, Locks & Miscellaneous Items. Contained in Box.14

Bag 17. Seal No B25947.
1 x Chest containing Quantity of Marital Aids, leather straps etc.
Contained in Bag.15

Bag 18. Seal No. B24753
1 x Hat Box containing 1 x Human Skull wrapped in Cloth (actually a rare museum piece with etching & engraving, real gold & semi-precious stones)
Contained in Bag.16.

VIDEO CASSETTES.

Bag 19 Seal No H91484
1 x BERLIN ATONAL FESTIVAL PTV
1 x BIRTH OF GENESSE
1 x BITS
1 x BRION GYSIN READING AT OCTOBER GALLERY
1 x BUNNY
1 x CHARLES MANSON
1 x COMMUNES & FARMS
1 x CROSSES
1 x DEREK JARMAN
1 x THE DEVIL RIDES OUT
1 x DOWN
1 x THE EXPERIMENT AT PETALUMA
1 x FETISH
Contained in Box.17

Seal No H91484
1 x FRANKFURT
1 x FREAKS
1 x GLEN MEADMORE
1 x HACIENDA - MASTER
1 x HACIENDA
1 x HAFLER TRIO
1 x HEATHEN EARTH
1 x HELTER SKELTER
1 x LYCEUM - LONDON FEB 1981
1 x LYCEUM - Pt 1
1 x LYCEUM - Pt 2
1 x NORTHAMPTON
1 x PARIS 12/9/81
Contained in Box 18.

1 x PAULA & GENESSE
1 x PRE-GIG & SOUNDCHECK
1 x PSYCHIC RALLY IN HEAVEN
1 x PSYCHIC TV
1 x PSYCHIC TV & WEDDING
2 x PTV INTERVIEW 1
1 x RED RONNIE
1 x ROLLING STONES LIVE
1 x SAN FRANCISCO
1 x SATYRICON
1 x SCARED TO LIVE
1 x SERIAL KILLER DENIED
Contained in Box 19.

1 x SOFT CELL
1 x SPK & THROBBING GRISTLE AT HEAVEN
1 x RAFTERS 4-12-80
1 x TG
1 x TG AT GOLDSMITHS
1 x TG AT GUNDLE SCHOOL
1 x TG AT SHEFFIELD UNIVERSITY
1 x THROBBING GRISTLE 1
1 x THROBBING GRISTLE 2
1 x TOPYSCAN.
1 x TRUE GORE
1 x UNDERSTANDING ART LANGUAGE
1 x VIDEO PROGRAMME
1 x 2001 & THE DOORS
1 x UNTILED UHS CASSETTE

Bag 32 Seal No F25459
1 x HARDWARE
1 x ROCK N ROLL 1967
1 x ROCK N ROLL 1967
1 x TDK MUSIC
1 x TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
Contained in Box 28.

Bag 33 Seal No H90579
4 x Folders Containing. Quantity of Press Cuttings.
Contained in Box 29.

Bag 34 Seal No B24391.
8 x Photograph Albums.
Contained in Bag 30

Bag 35 Seal No B24525
1 x Photograph Album
Contained in Box.31

Bag 35 Seal No B24525.
2 x Photograph Albums.
Contained in Box.32

Bag 37 Seal No H90780
1 x BODY APOCALYPSE
1 x FROM THE HEART OF THE WORLD
1 x HEAVEN & EARTH MAGIC
1 x JIM JONES
1 x JONESTOWN SURVIVORS
1 x NEW MUSIC
1 x MY LEFT FOOT
1 x PEEPING TOM
1 x PERSONAL SERVICES
1 x PRPCP/VIDEO TRANCE MISSION
1 x PSYCHIC TV/HORROR HOUSE
Contained in Box 33

Bag 37 Seal No H90780.
1 x PSYCHIC TV
1 x PYROMANIA
1 x SEX LIFS, & VIDEOTAPE
1 x SHARON TATE
1 x STATIONS OF THE CROSS
1 x TIMOTHY LEARY
1 x THE WANDERER
Contained in Box 24

Bag 38. Seal No. F25500
28 Photographic Wallets containing: Quantity of Photographs.
Contained in Box.35.

Bag.41 Seal No. G 68980
1 x AMISH
1 x APOCALYPSE NOW
1 x BRAINSTORM
1 x CAVE OF DESIRE
1 x CHARLIE IS MY DARLING
1 x CYBERDOME
1 x DECODER
1 x DESPARATE LIVING
1 x DOLPHINS
1 x DREAMS LESS SWEET
1 x DUNE
1 x FOOTSTEPS
1 x GENESSE S BIRTHDAY
1 x HELLO DALI
1 x I C WATER
Contained in Box.36.

Bag 41 Seal No G68980
1 x IMAGINING OCTOBER
1 x INITIATION OF A SONG SHAMAN
1 x IN THE SHADOW OF THE SUN
1 x JARMAN DOCUMENTARY
1 x JOY
1 x LIVE IN TORONTO
1 x MAPLE SYRUP
1 x MODESTY BLAISE
1 x NANOTECH
1 x PERFORMANCE
1 x PINK FLAMINGOS
Contained in Box 37

Bag 41 Seal No. G 68980
1 x PINOCHIO
1 x PITTSBURGH
1 x POLYESTER
1 x READY STEADY GO
1 x RECORDING HEATHEN EARTH
1 x ROLLING STONES
1 x SCANNERS/SHIVERS
1 x SCREEN
1 x SHOW REEL-BRAZIL
1 x SOUTH OF WATFORD
1 x STONES
1 x TG DESTINY
Contained in Box 38.

Bag 41 Seal No. G 68980
1 x THEE FILMS
1 x THE ICE PACK
1 x THROBBING GRISTLE
1 x TIME ZONES
1 x TORONTO
1 x TYRANNY OF THE BEAT
1 x VELVET UNDERGROUND
1 x VIDEODROME
1 x WARHOL DOCUMENTARY
1 x THE WICKERMAN
1 x THE WOLF SAGA
1 x XMAS 1982
1 x ZAGREB SHOWS 1991
Contained in Box.39.

Bag 44 Seal No B24345.
6 x Photograph Albums Containing Quantity of Photographs.
Contained in Bag.40.

VIDEO CASSETTES:

Bag 45 Seal No. T57317.
2 x AKIKO HADA
1 x ANN TAYLOR
1 x ANTONY BALCH & BRION GYSIN
1 x BALCH & BURROUGHS
1 x BITS
1 x BURROUGHS/JARMAN
1 x CABARET VOLTAIRE
1 x CATALAN RUSHES
1 x CLIP KLAPP BUM
1 x CORONATION STREET
1 x DECODER
1 x DELIA SMITH
Contained in Box 41.

Bag 45 Seal No T57317
1 x GATES OV MY SOUL
3 x GODSTAR
1 x GOOD VIBES & PARTY
1 x GUYANA
1 x HELLO DALI
1 x HIROSHIMA
1 x JOY
1 x LARRY REID
1 x LA MAIN MORT
1 x MIRACLE OF LIFE
Contained in Box 42

Bag 45, Seal No T 57317
1 x MONDO MAGICK
1 x NOBBY's DREAM
1 x OCTOBER 1989
1 x PSYCHIC TELEVISION
5 x PSYCHIC TV
1 x RCA VIDEO 8
1 x THAILAND
2 x THEE FILMS
Contained in Box.43.

VIDEO CASSETTES

Bag 45 Seal No T 57317
2 x THROBBING GRISTLE
1 x TUBE 7/3/86
1 x TV WIPEOUT
2 x VARIOUS
1 x VIDEO FEEDBACK
1 x WILLIAM BURROUGHS
1 x 23 SKIDOO
1 x UNTILED VHS CASSETTE
Contained in Box 44

Bag 45 Seal No T 57317
3 x UNTITLED VHS CASSETTES 1-3
6 x UNTITLED VHS CASSETTES 5-10
Contained in Box 45

Bag 46 Seal No H91867
1 x AROUND MIDNIGHT
1 x CANDY SAYS & WICKED
1 x EL TOPO
1 x ERASERHEAD
1 x FINAL ACADEMY 1962-3
1 x FINAL ACADEMY 1982
1 x FIRE AT HACKNEY
1 x GUN ON VIDEO
1 x HOLY MOUNTAIN
1 x INITIATION OF A SHAMAN
1 x JANET STREET PORTER INTERVIEW
Contained in Box.46

Bag 46 Seal No H 91867
1 x JIMI HENDRIX EXPERIENCE
1 x JOHN PAUL 2 - THE PILGRIM POPE
1 x LUCIFER OVER LANCASHIRE
2 x MANCHESTER POLY
1 x MOUTH OF THE NIGHT
1 x NEW YORK HOSTAGE COPS
1 x OV BIRTH
1 x PAULA P-ORRIDGE
1 x PAULA P-ORRIDGE/PUBES
1 x PSYCHIC TV
1 x RABID
Contained in Box 47

VIDEO CASSETTES:

Bag 46 Seal No H91867
1 x ROSEMARY S BABY
1 x R U EXPERIENCED
1 x SEX MADNESS
1 x SHOCK CORRIDOR
1 x SOUTH OF WATFORD
1 x SOUTHERN COMFORT
1 x SPITTING IMAGE
1 x STREET LEVEL
1 x TATTOO DOCUMENT
1 x TIBET TEMPLE
1 x WITCHCRAFT THROUGH THE AGES
1 x YOUR BODY/WE KISS
Contained in Box 48.

Bag 47 Seal No B 24728.
1 x METAL GONG
1 x WOODEN BEATER
Contained in Box 49

VIDEO CASSETTES:

Bag 36 Seal No F25629
1 x ALICE IN WONDERLAND
1 x BANGKOK
1 x BARBI
1 x BARBARELLA
1 x THE BEATLES
1 x THE CARE BEARS
1 x CARESSE 1984
1 x CHIP AND DALE
1 x THE FLINTSTONES
1 x THE HULK
1 x HEAD
1 x THE LADY AND THE TRAMP
1 x THE LITTLE MERMAID
Contained in Box. 50.

VIDEO CASSETTES.

Bag 36 Seal No. F25629
1 x MADONNA
1 x MADONNA - THE IMMACULATE COLLECTION
1 x MADONNA - TRUTH OR DARE
1 x MARC BOLAN
1 x MARY POPPINS
1 x MUPPET BABIES
1 x PEE WEE s BIG ADVENTURE
1 x PSYCHIC TV
1 x RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARC
1 x RAINBOW STORIES & RHYMES
1 x ROBIN HOOD
Contained in Box 51

Bag 36 Seal No F 25629
1 x SEPT 89
1 x SLEEPING BEAUTY
1 x SNOWMAN
1 x SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON
1 x SYLVANIAN FAMILIES
1 x VOGUING DOCUMENTARY
1 x WATCH WITH MOTHER
1 x THE YOUNG GODS
1 x 50's & 60's COMMERCIALS 2
Contained in Box 52

Bag 40 Seal No F23180
1 x AFTER IMAGE
1 x ASTORIA
1 x BIG LOVE
1 x CARESSE VOL 1
1 x DEN HAAG 84
1 x DREAM EXPOSURE
1 x EVENTWORKS
1 x GOTTINGEN LIVE
1 x HYPERDELIC - DO NOT SEND
1 x HYPERDELIC - MASTER W SOUND
1 x L'EDAD DE ORO
Contained in Box.53.

VIDEO CASSETTES

Bag 40 Seal No F 23180.
1 x MANTIS
1 x NOTTINGHAM
1 x PARADISO
1 x PSYCHIC TV - BERLIN 83
1 x PSYCHIC TV - HELTER SKELTER
1 x PTV
1 x PSYCHIC TV LIVE
1 x PTV NOTTINGHAM
1 x PTV TOWN & COUNTRY CLUB
1 x PTV BERLIN
1 x PTV EUROPE
1 x BOX OF SLIDES
Contained in Box.54

VIDEO CASSETTES.

Bag.42 Seal No F 25277
1 x ALTERED STATES
1 x AMERICAN TAIL
1 x ART RAGE
1 x BAKA 1 & 2
1 x BACHIR ATTAR
1 x BOOK OF KELLS
1 x THE BUZZ
1 x BUZZ SHOW CH 4
1 x CLAN OF THE CAVE BEAR
1 x CLOCKWORK ORANGE
1 x THE DAMNED
1 x DECODER
1 x DOLPHIN NEWS
1 x DOLPHIN PICKETS
Contained in Box.55

VIDEO CASSETTES:

Bag 42 Seal No F 25277.
1 x DOLPHINS
1 x DOORS
1 x DOUGAL & THE BLUE CAT
2 x DREAMACHINE
1 x ENOCHIAN
1 x EPIPHANE
1 x FUNNY EARS
1 x GEN ON GERMAN TV
1 x GISELLE
1 x GODSTAR ON TUBE
1 x HEAD
1 x THE HOLY MOUNTAIN
1 x 60 s THE ROCK & ROLL YEARS
1 x JUNG Pt 2
Contained in Box. 56.

Bag 42 Seal No F 25277.
1 x THE LAST MOVIE
1 x LIMELIGHT PRESENTATION TAPE
1 x LIVING PLANET Pt 1
1 x LIVING PLANET Pt.2
1 x MIKE SECURITY
1 x MONTEREY POP
1 x NOMAD
1 x ORANGES AREN'T THE ONLY FRUIT
1 x PHAUSS ALAMUT
1 x PTV DUSSELDORF
1 x RARG
1 x READY STEADY GO
1 x REPTILES & AMPHIBIANS
Contained in Box 57

Bag 42 Seal No F 25277.
1 x SAMPLES AUDIO
1 x STAN BRAKHAGE
1 x SURVIVAL RESEARCH LABORATORIES
1 x SYLVANIAN FAMILIES
2 x TOWERS OPEN FIRE
1 x TRIPT MIRACLE PTV (?)
1 x WHIRLPOOLS OF THE AIR
1 x WIND IN THE WILLOWS
1 x THE WIZARD OF OZ
1 x THE WODABE TRIBE
1 x YOUR BODY
Contained in Box 58.

Bag 43 Seal No F 26094
1 x PSYCHIC TV Tape 1
(Probably an Audio D A T)
1 x PSYCHIC TV Tape 2
(Probably an Audio D A T)
8 x Wallets Containing Photographs
1 x Envelope Containing Slides
1 x Address Book
1 x Quantity of Loose Photographs
1 x Childs "pooh Bear" Sewing Kit (!!!)
Contained in Box.59

Please note that various items, which are not, nor ever were ours, are excluded from this list.In particular items belonging to our ex-tenant @ 33 Roundhill Crescent, who lived in the downstairs self-contained flat, but had full access to all rooms & files of the house since our departure in Dec 91 to the Far East on Business & Charity works.

RE ITEMS FROM 50 BECK ROAD

Bag 1 Seal No K 90063
1 x White Letter Holder Containing:
Quantity of Correspondence addressed to, 50 BECK ROAD
Please return ONLY Items of Correspondence Addressed to:
Mr G P-ORRIDGE
Ms P.J BROOKING
Mr & Mrs P-ORRIDGE
TEMPLE RECORDS

NONE OF THE OTHER ITEMS BELONG TO ME(GENESIS P-ORRIDGE) OR MY WIFE PAULA P-ORRIDGE (ne BROOKING) WE PRESUME THEY BELONG TO EITHER MR DOMINIC PARKER WHO LIVED THERE FOR 2 YEARS AS A TENANT OR THEY MIGHT ALSO HAVE BELONGED TO VARIOUS PREVIOUS TENANTS WE HAVE NOT LIVED THERE SINCE 1985.

Please deliver all the above items, SAFELY, and carefully, to the address our Lawyer, Mr Paul Spraggon will give to you as per our instructions.

Yours Sincerely,
Mr. GENESIS P-ORRIDGE .
9th November 1992.

IMPORTANT 9th November 1992
To: SCOTLAND YARD, LONDON, U.K.
Dear Sirs,
Please find attached the list of Items taken from our home at 33 ROUNDHILL CRESCENT on or around 16th February 1992 which are requested to be returned immediately to "The Genesis P-Orridge Archive" as per the instructions of my Lawyer Mr Paul Spraggon, of Hills/Searle, London
We have omitted items that did not belong to us. We have tried to remain accurate to your labelling system in the list we were given It is hard to know exactly what some items are as they all seem to be labelled "front room" yet Mr & Mrs Paul Cecil of 15 Roundhill Crescent who were present during the entire time of this seizure quite categorically tell us that items were taken from
The Loft Bedroom
The Top Floor Front Office
The Top Floor Small Entirely Black Bedroom
The Top Floor Rear Office
The First Floor Front Living Room
The Bookshelves on the 2nd Floor Landing
The Shelves /Cupboards outside the Kitchen on the 1st Floor
The Tenants Self-Contained Flat on the Ground Floor Front Room Section
This leads us to an important query Mr Paul Cecil, and Mrs Jackie Cecil, of 15 Roundhill Crescent, Brighton, who let the Police into our house at 33 Roundhill Crescent to avoid unnecessary destruction of our front door, and who were present during the whole time of the seizures, have already sent us a list that they made independently of what they saw taken away by your officers They wrote this down as they followed your Officers through our house, wherever possible noting "evidence" numbers. Unfortunately, the list of things that they feel sure they saw taken does not match the lists you have given to Mr Paul Spraggon to hand on to us.
This is particularly disturbing as it includes irreplaceable Art Archive documentation of some value, including works commisioned by the Palais Des Beaux Arts, Brussels, the Arts Council of Great Britain, and the British Council My Archive is my life's works, and was in the process of being catalogued, and then later sold to an American University Collection In fact Mrs Jackie Cecil was the person in the process of Cataloguing everything before this seizure, and is thus MOST qualified to know exactly what was indeed taken away She has, as does her husband, precise knowledge of the majority of this unique art Archive
Equally as worrying, is the failure to list various sections of our childrens growing up and births In particular, slides and videos taken by the Doctor & midwives at Caresse's and Genesse's home births, which are obviously irreplaceable, and sentimentally priceless The unnecessary seizure of these in particular has caused immeasurable emotional anguish and damage to my wife, Paula and myself
Here follows a List of specific Items Mr & Mrs Cecil saw taken which do not appear to be included in your lists. The inaccuracy of your Room descriptions makes this much harder to clarify
OFFICE TOP FLOOR FRONT
Police took Box SLIDES of GENESSE'S BIRTH.
Police took Box SLIDES of KARLSUHE Music Performance in Germany
Police took Box SLIDES of CAVE OF DESIRE Party @ Heaven, in London
Police took Box SLIDES of COUM Abstract Colours, actually a Music Score
Police took TWO old address books, one brown leather, one brown card cover.

BEDROOM TOP FLOOR FRONT TO SIDE OF FRONT OFFICE ABOVE
ALL WALLS AND CEILING PAINTED BLACK.
FUR COVERED DOOR
Police took small DAGGER with Z on it, and LEATHER THONG off wall
Police took NEW GUINEA FETISH SHAMAN'S KNIFE Made from a Human Thigh Bone, with a Wax Head, eyes made of Cowrie Shell and Wool Hair This was on the Chest Of Drawers.It is an Antique, purchased in Covent Garden at a reputable antique shop, and a museum piece worth over 1000 pounds Sterling Part of our anthropological collection.

OFFICE TOP FLOOR REAR ADJACENT TO BLACK BEDROOM
Police took large full colour photo of tattooed hooded man by STEFAN RICHTER German Photographer from Plan Chest. This is an illustration for a German Book
Police took diary with PINK MARBLED cover from Left Hand drawer of desk
Police took black leather filofax from desk
Police took TWO YELLOW CARDBOARD BOXES containing 35m SLIDE CAROUSELS full of Art Performance Slides
Police took Art Council Of Great Britain Sponsored COUM Black Plastic Display Folders of Arts Council, and British Council Performance Documentation, and all NEGATIVES These are irreplaceable, and of great value historically and financially
Police took RED BOX FILE labelled SEX,POWER,MAGICK which is written documentation of Arts Council Sponsored Performance Art Works from the 1970's and the Master of a book to be Published in the USA by an Art Publisher. This is the Master and utterly irreplaceable
Police took a display folder labelled "BIG HOUSE" folder Irreplaceable book prototype.
Police took photograph of Genesse & Paula in front of a TV Monitor in Seattle, at the C O C A . Centre Of Contemporary Arts. U S A after a video installation commission.
Police took Samples of printed materials from small tower of green metal drawers:
These included Brian Jones Postcards; Changed Priorities Cards PTV Fan Club letters, Abolish Fear Establish Trust Cards Wake Up sheet, Temple Press Leaflets, PTV Gig Flyers
There were also about SIX Boxes of Slides in the Self Contained, downstairs Flat, of mainly previous Installations, and Theatre pieces from COUM in the 1970's These have also been taken by the police and not listed. They are irreplaceable pieces of Art history and as such priceless
If it is the case that you ARE holding even more than these items taken that you have not yet listed, then we should very much like a FULL and COMPLETE List of exactly what else you have seized and omitted from this initial list
If in fact you have lost, damaged, misplaced, or destroyed, any or all of the above, and possibly other as yet, unidentified Items, then we request that you immediately supply our representative Mr Paul Spraggon, with full and reasonable information as to how to obtain proper and adequate damages and compensation
Finally During the Police action at 33 Roundhill Crescent Brighton the officers concerned smashed the door of the TOP FLOOR FRONT BEDROOM painted all black This door was the door covered in fur The Officers claimed they could not open this door, and that it was locked In fact it had NO LOCK of any kind, and therefore could not ever be shut and not opened
At the time the Officers concerned promised that compensation, for this unnecessarily damaged door would be paid to us in due course Mr & Mrs Cecil were witness both to the door being broken without reason or need, and the promise of compensation To date no further mention of this compensation has been made I would therefore formally request immediate information re claiming compensation for damage to this door be given to Mr Paul Spraggon so that he might pursue this matter with utmost urgency on our behalf

Yours Sincerely, Genesis P-Orridge

No Response to these communications has ever been received. No compensation for damage to property received. No acknowledgement of the erroneous and bogus nature of this whole seizure ever made public. When our then Lawyer asked if we could return to England as we are charged with nothing he was told "off the record", we cannot guarantee their physical safety if they return. We have since lost our house in Brighton. During xmas 1992 it was broken into and vandalised. The Brighton police were called. They failed to report the burglary or damage stating "We know whose house this is." When friends tried on further occasions to get police action they were told, the report did not appear in any log. No police officers recalled being present after the 999 call. In fact two squad cars came,on two separate occasions, they were shown around the house. The second set of officers said "What do you expect us to do, try and find the people who did this?". Later, when the Police Station Desk Sergeant was called to ask if they had any news regarding this serious crime, he again denied all knowledge that it ever took place, or that the Police had been informed.

ROGUE

Frankfurter Rundschau

Jeden Samstag in der Wochenend-Beilage:

Moderne Zeiten

Unter unseren Autoren:

Eugen Egner
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Gerhard Henschel
Nikolaus Jungwirth
Jim Avignon
Peter Kurzeck
Hadayatullah Hübsch
F. K. Praetorius
Sabine Vogel
Erwin Koch

ZWEI WOCHEN ZUM NULLTARIF: 0130/ 86 66 86

Unverbindlich und kostenlos kommt die **Frankfurter Rundschau** zu Ihnen ins Haus
Rufen Sie uns an

genesis p.orridge

transmediator

words . art . music

23. März Hamburg Westwerk

Admiralitätsstrasse 74 • LectureEvent mit Genesis P.Orridge
und Julie Wilson, Art, Video, cyberdelic trance sound • Beginn 20.00 hrs

24. März Hamburg Lounge

Gerhard-/Ecke Herbertstrasse • LectureEvent mit Genesis P.Orridge,
Videoscreening, Musik Synapsen DJ Team • Beginn 23.00 hrs

26. März Berlin Ex & Pop

Mansteinstrasse • LectureEvent mit Genesis P.Orridge,
Videoscreening, ambient trance disco

28. März Berlin Tacheles

Oranienburgerstrasse 53-56 A • Lecture mit Genesis P.Orridge & J. Wilson,
Videoscreenings, ambient trance disco: TANITH • Beginn 22.00 hrs

29. März Frankfurt Galerie Fruchtig

Südliche Zufuhrstrasse 127 • Vernissage der Ausstellung "TRANSMISSIONS",
LectureEvent mit GPO und Julie Wilson, Videoscreening
Trance-Disco mit TANITH Einlass 21.00 hrs, Vorverkauf INFO-TEL 069/43 58 48
Live-Übertragung im internet http://www.deutschland.de/aka/fruchtig/

30. März Dresden StarClub

Alt Priesnitz 2 A • LectureEvent mit Genesis P.Orridge & Julie Wilson,
Videoscreenings, Trance-Disco: TANITH

...brought to you by Galerie Fruchtig Frankfurt, Freibank/ Klaus Maeck Hamburg, ROGUE-magazin Frankfurt