

— The Happy Hypocrite —

LINGUISTIC  
HARDCORE

for and about experimental art writing

## The Happy Hypocrite

Linguistic Hardcore

Issue 1, Spring 2008

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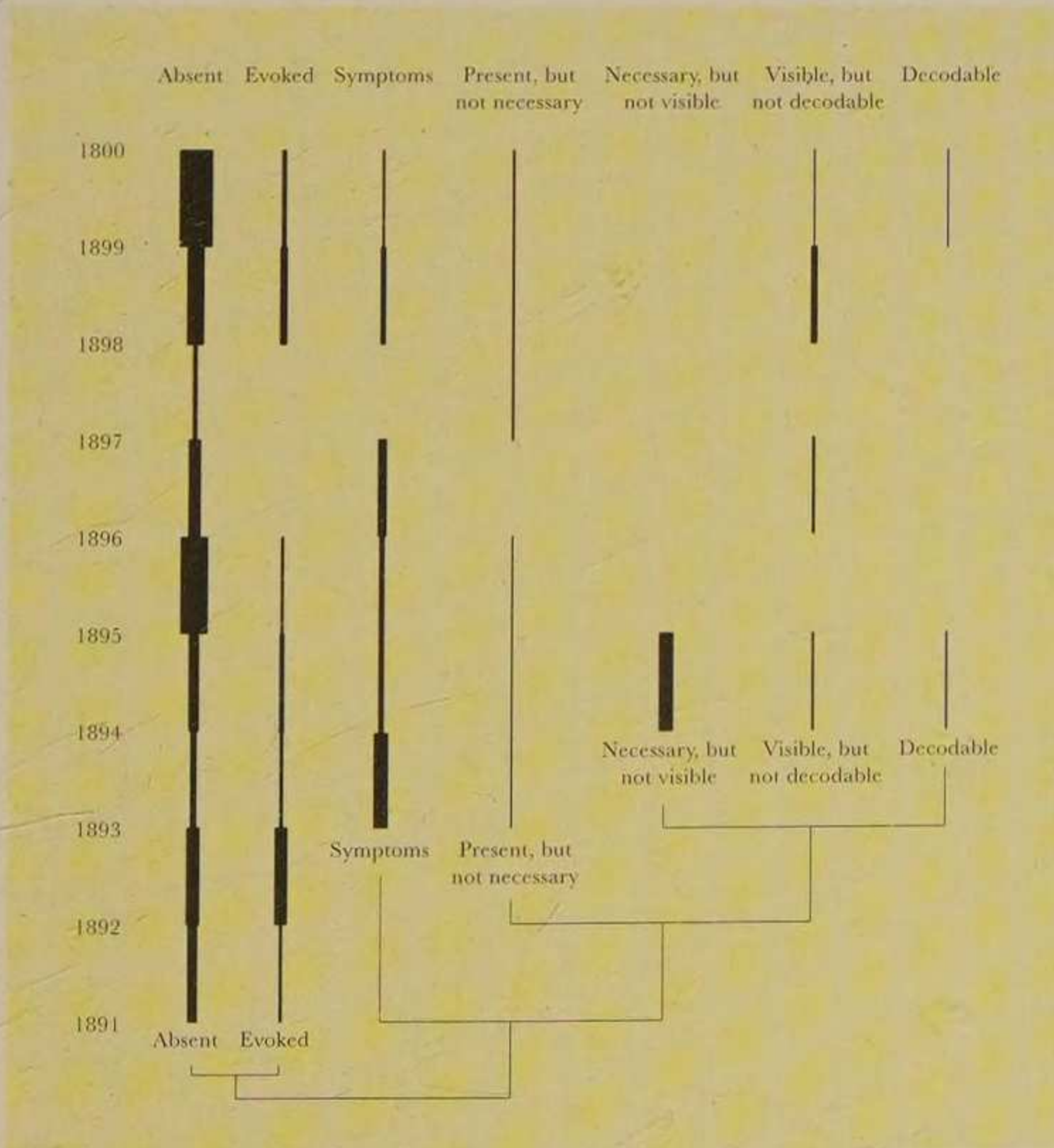
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# Welcome to the First Issue of The Happy Hypocrite

This journal started off life as a book. Undeterred, it began to grow. As I write, it continues to expand. Thanks to you, it will breed well into the future.



*More Like This*



*Less Like This*

Don't squeeze it. Poke it.  
Be present in the present rather than  
wondering what will happen at the end.  
The Voice From the Back of the Hall.

— Maria Fusco

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Nick Thurston

**Say what  
you see**

This was mailed to me from San Leandro in California. It carries the web address of a Brazilian company, which a little research revealed as having no real connection to it. The actual parts from which this is made might have been fabricated almost anywhere in the world, although given its nominal country of origin and the extremely unstable state of the Brazilian currency (singular real or reais plural, R\$ in shortened form), one might guess – I think incorrectly – that it was assembled outside the overdeveloped world. The packaging I'm describing is aimed at English rather than Portuguese speakers and clearly indicates in various ways, that this item originated in the Americas rather than Europe. This cheap mass-produced product appears aimed at an export market, but since it didn't actually originate in Brazil, it is in reality pitched at a domestic audience for imported cultural items in the United States. The URL and company name appear to be a ruse on the part of a boot-legger, who presumably hoped that the English language audience for this illicit product wouldn't investigate a website in Portuguese, and thus come to realise this item is not legitimate.

The packaging is lurid: an artist's full colour impression of a screaming woman with her right hand raised in self-defence is juxtaposed against a bloodstained brick wall. One might expect to find the term 'murder' among the jumble of English words used to sell this product, but it isn't there. As a consequence, the object I'm holding feels every bit as truncated as the life expectancy of a serial killer's victim. It reminds me of a book issued by the Italian artists Vittore Baroni and Piermario Ciani, that was designed to look like a typical Italian thriller but all the pages inside were blank. The blurb on the back invited the reader to solve the mystery of the story that had gone missing from this particular folio. In Italy, thrillers are typically printed on yellow paper in a genre called giallo or gialli. This term is taken from the Italian word for yellow and is also applied to films of the 1970s and 1980s by directors such as Dario Argento and Michele Soavi.

However, the mystery I'm addressing is very different to the kind woven around the black-gloved killer one might find in a film such as *Twitch of the Death Nerve* or *What Are Those Strange Drops of Blood Doing on Jennifer's Body?*

The object in my hand is 130 x 175 x 10 millimetres. It weighs about 2.5kg and is made of plastic around which there is a wrap of paper covered with a colloidal system of fine pigment particles that were dispersed in a solvent (in other words ink). Much of the paper (which is only printed on one side, the reverse is plain white) is covered in a sludgy light yellowy-green ink, against which some blood-red lettering garishly stands out, as does the brownish face and hand of the menaced woman in the illustration. This commodity represents an enormous amount of intellectual labour, not by just one person but on the part of many. However, what really interests me is what happens when one opens the slip-case. The inside of this object takes me back to my school days when among the punishments I received for bad behaviour (after corporal punishment failed to tame me) was being ordered to write a 500 word essay for which I was given the title: 'On The Inside of a Ping Pong Ball'. If only I had known then, as I know now, the foundation of Hegel's philosophical system: starting at first principles means addressing nothing, but to have nothing one must also know its opposite which is something, and if one has something and nothing, then becoming must necessarily exist to mediate between them... and so on. Thus the killer in a giallo (whose identity is a mystery until the end of the film) might stand in for the whole world, and in particular provides a fine representation of the inside of this box.

*Stewart Home's Psychic will be revealed in the next issue.*

# Cosey and Maria talk about Linguistic Hardcore

MF (Maria Fusco): For you what's Linguistic Hardcore?

CFT (Cosey Fanni Tutti): I take it as it is. Hardcore first means more to me than linguistics, in that it has to be brutally honest. If you want to express that linguistically, visually whatever, it must be very honest. Brutal honesty could be expressed in sentimentality too though, not just violence. It doesn't have to be shocking in that respect, just very, very direct. It should just hit the part of you that more subtle methods might allow you to escape from, there's no way out, you have to connect with it. So Linguistic Hardcore would be something that forces you to connect with the message, deal with it and assimilate it.

MF: I'm sure you're really fed up talking about your name, but...

CFT: How I came to be called Cosey Fanni Tutti? I was first called... well, my christened name is Carol and when I first met Genesis years ago, he didn't know my name and he called me Cosmosis, and that was shortened to Cosey. I sent a postcard, a Mail Art postcard to a friend of ours, Robin Klassnick, and he wrote back and nicknamed me, Cosey Fanni Tutti, that was it.

Later on, when I found out what it means, 'as all women should be', to me it was great. Not because I'd have to live up to it, but because I thought it was a nice idea because the name was actually given to me, as something that described me, by someone who knew me. So, it was a flattering thing to have said about me and then to be translated like that – both in terms of the language and the meaning – I've always kept it. I tend to write Cosey F. Tutti sometimes now, you know.

MF: Are you known by more than one name now?

CFT: I've kept Cosey as my legal name, but not the Fanni Tutti bit. I do have a bank account that's named Cosey Fanni Tutti. It's my artist's name, I use it for all my music and everything else. When I'm getting paid people often write cheques out assuming Cosey Fanni Tutti is my legal name, so I've been forced into keeping it like a business account, which is weird. Funny though isn't it?

MF: Your name's not quite a 'brand' but it does have a separate life from yourself.

CFT: Yeah, totally, yeah. Cosey is a concept.



**THE HIGHWAYS  
AND BYWAYS OF SEX**

**Chapter 3: The Symbolism Of Chains**

MF: I like that. Paraphrasing a quote from *Finnegans Wake* Joyce writes, 'Who gave you that numb?' with the idea of being struck by your own name, that well, I suppose it petrifies you, or maybe it's that you're just stuck with it.

CFT: Very important. You either connect with what someone else has called you, or you don't. When I was christened (I was actually christened Christine Carol) my father was hoping for a boy – he would have been called Christopher. I don't know if my father couldn't face the fact that I wasn't Christopher or what, so he always called me Carol. My name has always had a kind of like weird thing about it for me, so when I was called Cosey I just didn't even think about it, I just thought, 'Yeah, okay'.

MF: Did you feel Cosey was numbing in a good way, rather than numbing in a bad way?

CFT: Good way, because it came, it tied in with, with me leaving... well, getting thrown out of home. So it was almost like a new life for me if you like, a new identity and one I was more comfortable with. It was, well it was free of everything that I felt I was sort of chained down by. Even when I look back to my childhood my closest friend, who's like my brother really, he was called Lesley and we always changed his name to either Lez with a Z or Lilly when he decided he was gay and he wanted to be a bit softer. So we've always messed with names, I've always messed with names, even from being under ten years old. It was always Caz for me, not Carol, Caz and Lez – he still calls me Caz. Then it got to Cosey, and when I was stripping it was Scarlet. I'm Carol to my sister, she does know me as Cosey, but she just still calls me Carol. I did a talk on my magazine work and everything in Hull, she came along to it and that was quite a revelation for her and a big thing for me. I warned her what would be there, because she's older than me, and she's not in the arts or anything. But she was like totally blown away by it. But it still didn't make her call me Cosey. Some days I wake up and I forget who I am!

MF: Must have allowed you a nice ordering system in a way too, when it works well, because you can decide who are on any particular day. Do you think that names make you freer? I'm obsessed by class you know, an important aspect of what we're discussing is about your nomenclature – it's outside of, it exists outside of class, because it's not, well there's nothing average about it, is there? Cosey doesn't exist outside of language, it's not a squiggle, it has a form and can be written down (even on cheques!), but still it's outside of normal naming structures. A weird existence all of its own. Very direct.

CFT: It is who I am and what I do. It's not just my name. It's something totally different.

MF: I have a quote for you from Elaine Showalter from her essay, 'Towards a Feminist Poetics', on what she called Gynocriticism, I think it could be interesting here: 'A woman is producer of textual meaning and in that including the psycho-dynamics of female creativity, linguistics and the problem of female language.' I don't know if everybody feels like this, I certainly do – does Showalter mean that one feels constricted or fixed in that place that your name is a representation of?

CFT: It's funny because I don't, I don't feel fixed anywhere now, even when I go back to Hull, if I go back I have all the smells and the physical structure of the place is still there, it's all still

there, so that is familiar to me and it has certain... it evokes certain feelings in me, but I can't relate to who I was then.

MF: Let's talk about your music a wee bit now. Am I pronouncing this properly: Luchtbal?

CFT: Ah, Luchtbal yes.

MF: There are some tracks in there from *Music Fantastique*, is that right?

CFT: We pulled together some of the classic tracks for that album, because we were moving from one place to another, that name thing again. We had been Chris and Cosey, but we were becoming CARTER TUTTI.

People had got to know us with certain song structures and sounds and everything else, and we felt that we'd moved so far away from that, you know, that we could... it was quite dishonest to put Chris and Cosey on something that really wasn't Chris and Cosey, it was definitely something else now and we just felt it would be good to have to CARTER TUTTI not because the work had matured exactly, that's the wrong word for it, but it had gone to a different level completely.

MF: And it needed a new name...

CFT: And it needed a new... yeah, a new umbrella name for it, so that people knew immediately what they were getting.

MF: I love some of the track titles – Apocalipzo, Spectrofeelya, Fantasteek – the sound of them, freaky aggregates of words and spellings...

CFT: That's right, we've always done it, because we've had *Exotica* and we did – what was the one you just said on there? Spectrofeelya, yeah and we had a thing about doing that, that was from the Martin Denny sort of thing that we like, you know, he did all those sort of things. It twists the idea of the word, Apocalipzo, an apocalypse is something really drastic and if you just put that on the end you can have more fun with it.

We like to put things together that conflict, that's what basically represents our music, because we put a swing in it but the lyrics can be quite hard although they sound simple, when you actually read them you think, 'Oh that's not very nice'. A pretty icing on the top so that you get seduced into it, while what we're really saying is hardcore, Linguistic Hardcore really. You have to go in, you go into it and then you're suddenly dealing with something different. You might think it's a love song, but in fact it's about rape. Because in life that's what things are like, isn't it? You get seduced into situations you can't deal with, or you just get thrown into them against your will – that's what the music's like for us.

MF: Then both you and your audience have the chance to come round to another type of understanding later on.

CFT: Well, we did a track called Misunderstandings, and Illusion was all about that too. It's not a literal thing of course, it's taken at face value or you can start getting inside it. I know that

a friend of mine, a Japanese scientist, is researching how our eyes can actually see more than we see now, it's just that the way we've evolved we don't see what's between me and you in the air. You know, well you might see it if you're on acid...

MF: Ezra Pound talks about how accuracy of meaning is the sole morality of writing, taking morality very loosely here. Thinking about that in relation to the new words you've created for your songs, finding the right tools for the job. So you might have the actual track as an entity, a very carefully crafted entity, but one that doesn't have a name to it. The title both opens and closes it to the audience? I find that interesting, thinking about not only how you're using the titles based on what you've said there, but also in terms of thinking... thinking across your range of practice. How do you choose what form is right for which ideas, they must share a lot in common?

CFT: Well, depending on whether it's the obvious thing, visual or sound, that's the first thing to consider. But even then that crosses over because we do, we do visuals to go with the sound that we make, and when we play live we have visuals behind us. What I don't actually impose on myself is any kind of method, so when ideas come through, I let them sort of run themselves through me and then out into whatever...

MF: Do you produce quickly or does it percolate about a bit and then come back to you?

CFT: With music sometimes it's really quick, other times it can take a couple of weeks just because the kind of sound that we want, like you were saying, the accuracy is really important, sounds have their own kind of language, like names. There are so many presets that people use to make music that as a maker you can get bombarded, if you're familiar with a certain kind of sound, even if it's a violin, there's a certain kind of sample of violin that you hear a lot. That's not right for us, we prefer to find different sounds so that they're unique to what we do. I know it's quite anal but that's just the way we work.

MF: Well, it's precision isn't it?

CFT: It is precision. I don't want a kind of sound that's on an advert for a Volkswagen Beetle on my album...

MF: Unless of course you want...

CFT: Unless I want that reference, yeah. So I would change it and that's why we never use presets for that reason. Our music has its own language.

MF: Presets aren't precise enough.

CFT: No. They're not our language or what we want to say.

So going back to how, how I decide about how my work should find form. When I work with the photographs that Szabo took of me, I'll be scanning his slides and then doing some prints and see which size works, and I'll get the right feel – which selection of images work well together



leather dog-collar right through to illustration 10 presenting a detailed presentation of the contrasts between the softness of vaginal flesh and the glittering hard steel of the chains, we are talking about *adornment* not sex-under-duress.

The male partner will derive more pleasure from looking at the lady posed in, say, illustrations 3 and 9, than from actually doing anything about

it.

And the subsequent consummation of their foreplay might well be all the more mutually satisfying for the pantomime presented by his willing partner.

Of course it is not merely the chains that provide the pantomime for they are ably supported by the skilfully worn erotic apparel so prominent and provocative in illustrations 5

and 8.

Likewise the wise woman eager to please (and conscious of the greater sexual joy that might lie in store for her as a result of her efforts) will only too rapidly acquire the skill of *posing* well to highlight the 'charms of chains'. Illustrations 7 and 2 provide particularly good examples of the pose being almost as important as the props!



Ever since cave men have been depicted dragging womenfolk off the scene by their hair, the *idea* of domination and sexual enslavement have haunted both male and female minds.

Chains, since they were very first forged, in particular have always played a big part in creating this type of fantasy. In modern times, one only has to be a regular cinema goer to know

that literally thousands of memorable scenes are based on this particular theme, and image.

The reason is fairly obvious. There is undoubtedly something ▶



or in conflict with one another that kind of thing. So there has to be a conversation, I don't want a definitive response or meaning to anything, that's one thing I definitely don't want, I've never had that in my life and I don't agree with that, because everybody's different, but I would like to give off the... if I give off the genuine feeling of how it really was then, maybe people will receive that, assimilate and understand it and give meaning to the work in their own way. Then I'm happy, because I've given them something that is honest, my work is based on total honesty, people can run with that, you know.

MF: Does that honesty ever drain you?

CFT: No, the opposite, I find it very hard to conceal things from people. I have real difficulty playing games, I've never ever subscribed to that because I just think it's a waste of time and energy and emotion, you know.

MF: [LAUGHS] On that note, I've a flyer here for a performance that you did at the Zap Club in 1986, you wrote: 'There was a time when all images crossed and pursued their separate lives. From the one person came many, one 'being' to some and a totally different perception to others. Now is the time for all to realise the many sides were indeed the one person and it is this person who needs to be seen as a whole and not as a fragment of her personality.' There's a cousin quote to go with it, from Hélène Cixous' book *Coming to Writing*, have you read it? It's brilliant, I'm trying to get her to do something for the next issue, someone told me that she only likes to communicate via wee handwritten letters.

CFT: Oh I've got... a friend of mine does that and I save all these envelopes he sends me, because they're really nice. It's like that red envelope there, can you reach over?

MF: This one? Oh yeah, where does he live?

CFT: Lincolnshire. So he addresses it like that, all over the envelope... And his return address is like that.

MF: Oh that's lovely.

CFT: It's Robert Wyatt, you know Robert Wyatt?

MF: Yes! Do you know, I went to see him a couple of weeks ago at the Purcell Rooms, I was actually thinking about him when you were talking about compounding song names... But I digress, back to Cixous, 'The text is always written under the sweet pressure of love. My only torment, my only fear, is of failing to write as high up as the Other, my only chagrin is of failing to write as beautifully as Love. The text always comes to me in connection with the Source. If the source were dammed up, I would not write. And the source is given to me. It is not me. One cannot be one's own source. Source: always there.' So she's got this idea of vacillation between self as source and material but also self as other. 'The source is given to me it is not me' and your words 'a person who needs to be seen as a whole and not a fragment' has a direct relationship...?

CFT: Well, it's very relevant actually. The name Cosey Fanni Tutti had become synonymous with nudity and a certain kind of performance. I wrote that flyer text because I wanted to challenge all that, I wanted to start saying, you better forget about it, because I'm not going to continue, you know, with this kind of work forever. I hadn't found a formula that I was going to stick with, like a lot of artists, I wanted to move forward, I wanted to say that if it's only the nudity you're into, then forget it. I can't remember what I did in that performance, I don't think I stripped off in that one. I think that was one of the first ones I didn't strip off in.

I can't remember which venue it was, but I had a lot of the images of myself that were known, from the ICA and so on, from Chris and Cosey and all those things, they were all hung up around me and I destroyed them all. I wanted to show the audience that this is literally what was happening then, what to connect with. It was as simple as that.

MF: You were talking earlier about how over time one creates new significance or works are reinvigorated in different ways. Thinking about time, certainly maybe when we're reading or listening to music, on one hand it's so very experiential, the maker is asking the reader or the listener for their personal time, a very precious commodity. But on the other hand, it's not about the moment at all is it? We're asking our audience to travel across time in some way, to bring their own material to our material. Now thinking about that in relation to your track Driving Blind, the sounds on that are so elongated and striated, the song feels like someone got hold of it and stretched-pulled it, it seems to suggest a long journey, because of its textual surface. There's also an idea of a bigger time-frame set around sound somehow, how is it remembered? Does that make sense?

CFT: I know what you mean, this is why working with sound is really, really good fun. You can make it do, express all kinds of things that you can't express visually, it has a universality about it, so you can trigger responses in people with sounds. I'm not talking about subliminals, which we have done before, but just regular sounds and tones and that sort of thing.

Because neither me or Chris write music anyway, it's all done, you know, just as we feel it. So we feel our way through everything and in that respect we're our own guinea pigs, you know. Because you know, when a sound is wrong it doesn't give you that feeling, it's not quite right – not low enough, it's too high, it's got a little bit of a waver in it – after three seconds it just does that little thing that's really irritating and every three seconds that will drive you nuts. People listen to things in different ways.

MF: So it's listening habits as well, isn't it? It's like how some people, well my partner you know, has always listened to a lot of music and he listens to the same track over and over and over and over and over and over again, like he's trying to learn it, in a way. I think people maybe try to learn the one track for that reason that you've just expressed. Perhaps they have an intuitive knowledge or memory of it that is activated in the act of listening. Then after listening that knowledge will brew for a while, maybe popping up again later. I wonder if this is how creativity functions too?

CFT: Interesting, creativity is something that you just can't explain. I have an artist friend of mine come to see me and she said – she's a lot younger than I am, only a few years older than our son –

and she asked me 'What's your practice?' I didn't know what she meant at first. I suddenly thought, well that's quite an alright question, but it's not something that's part of my vocabulary, because I don't have a practice, well, I've not labelled it as such, but I suppose there is that kind of thing with a lot of people where they have a specific methodology. When I have an idea, I have to research it, then take it through these different stages before it becomes manifest, but sometimes, suddenly it's there, within 30 minutes it's there. So methodology is useless to me because it's completely always changing.

MF: Isn't that a problem sometimes?

CFT: I wouldn't want a methodology, I really wouldn't want it. And yet sometimes if something has to be precise, I suppose there is an argument to say there should be some kind of methodology imposed on form, but only in so much as when it comes down to fine tweaking. But not at the beginning, not in the actual creating, not at all.

MF: Thinking about methodology in relation to your work *Magazine Actions*, along with these ideas of experiential time-lines and histories and again textual editing. That piece pulled all these strands together. I like the materiality of paper, I like the idea of the transportable nature of magazines and books, moving across time, if you see what I mean. There's a different kind of space in there though, a sensuous text (when I say text here I'm not just thinking about words, *Driving Blind*, is text too in this context) can you tell me about the ordering structures you put in place for *Magazine Actions*, after all you must have so much material, and you're not into methodology as such.

CFT: I didn't want to make any sense out of it, not my sense anyway, because the whole point of the project, was that it was what had made sense to the sex industry. I surrendered myself into that industry to be used as they use any other girl, but I didn't let them know who I was or anything or why I was doing it, otherwise it would be pointless, because I wouldn't be treated the same way. What I wanted to reveal was the, the thinking of the industry and how different magazines were for different markets. Like you were saying, magazines are so portable, little pocket-size, so people can potentially have them with them all the time, this gives the industry a head start. What was exciting to me, and what I wanted to show, was the differences and the different kind of varied customer-led images that the publishers wanted, even down to the certain positions, the clothing... You'd get the top end, very glamorous ones, like *Men Only* and *Penthouse*, which remove a lot of reality away, so that it becomes very much fantasy. But in a different way to the fantasy of the small pocket-size book that's in black and white with just a couple of colour pages, more or less 'Readers Wives' kind of photographs, as if it was the woman next door and the reader is looking through the keyhole. If that was what they were going for, then they'd bring someone who looked like that in and put you together, to do whatever you do together, you know. So that interested me a lot, very specific.

MF: A vernacular in a way?

CFT: Absolutely, even in so much as each genre of the sex magazines had their own kind of advertisers in them, because they fed a particular readership. So you would have sports cars and expensive things in *Penthouse*, cheap hardcore films or like soiled pants in the more downmarket one and in the middle, it would sort of crossover in between into sort of like massage parlours... when you think about it it's quite class based, isn't it?

MF: Yes, yes, yes.

CFT: The language in some of those magazines was sometimes quite shocking. There was one phrase in a magazine I did some work in *The Piccadilly*. So the whole 80 odd pages were framed up in three frames, a real eye-opener, at the end of one of the magazines and it said 'Does she stink?' and then there was like an open crotch shot. To me was just like so insulting and really what they were saying, I mean it was a double meaning obviously, but what they were saying was, 'Is she any good or is this one better, whichever one you decide we'll put here in the magazine next month.' But to see it, 'Does she stink?' it was just absolutely horrible, and it wasn't like the lowest of the lowest genre by any means.

MF: Maybe the opposite of Linguistic Hardcore then?

CFT: Maybe. That's the base kind of instinct they're publishing for their readership, tells you exactly how they feel about the girls.

Cosey and myself had an interesting chat on the way to her house (before the Dictaphone was recording) about how much we both love swearing. We agreed that it was a treasured part of our own idiolects, culturally specific of course, Cosey is from Hull and I'm from Belfast.

**Tous les Chevaux du Roi**  
— **Michèle Bernstein**

**translated by Lisa Robertson**



For Guy

'This mixture of blue military sashes, of ladies, of plated armour, of violins playing in the room, and trumpets out in the square, provided a spectacle seen more often in historical novels than anywhere else.' —The Cardinal of Retz

I

I don't know how, but I knew right away that Carole pleased us. I had only just heard about her the night before, in a small gallery stuffed with that crowd that always comes to the openings of painters destined to remain unknown. The few old friends I ran into there were exactly the ones I would rather not have seen again. In a loud voice that tried hard to sound worldly, the gallerist talked about her shoes so that anyone important would understand that she was already disengaging herself from the failure she felt coming. Contrary to form, there was no bar, so we had nothing to drink.

When I looked around for Gilles, I saw that the painter was talking to him with excitement. A little group had already formed around them. He was a bad painter but a charming old guy, a fossil of an obsolete modernism. Gilles responded without showing his weariness, and I admired his ease. The old painter was already lost among the generation before ours, but he didn't let that discourage him. He liked us. Our youth confirmed his, I guess.

And me, I was stuck in a conversation with his wife.

– I should really bring my daughter to meet you, she was saying. She's almost your age, but she's not very mature. Your company would do her a lot of good.

Indulgence rarely accompanies boredom. I considered the polite blandness of this lady. A girl like her, outdated on top of everything else.

– I didn't want to imagine her upbringing. But one ought to take an interest in people. I asked what the girl did.

– She paints. I think she has some talent, but she hasn't found herself yet.

– Like her father, I say rudely. Then I find out

that she's not François-Joseph's daughter, but that she's from a previous marriage... By the end of a sentence I'm warmly assuring her mother that I really want to meet her. Was my eagerness convincing? I'd rather Gilles was in my shoes. He always seems nicer than me.

Finally, after she had also talked about Béatrice, her daughter's best friend, who wrote pretty good poems for her age, and to whom she'd give a copy of Rimbaud that she'd just picked up, she invited me for dinner the next day, with my husband.

The meal was pleasant. François-Joseph, not thinking now of the fate of his canvases, was at ease. His friends trotted out in fine form thirty-year old ideas, which was amusing. People of that era appreciated black humour; even their nonsense could take on a certain ambiguity. When, typically Gallic, they evoked the charms of the woman who sold paintings without even offering finger food, François-Joseph defended her ample hips.

– Not like yours, Carole, he said, you don't have much yet to offer the gentlemen.

– I'll have my day, François-Joseph, she replied as she coiled obligingly in her chair.

François-Joseph was so visibly sensitive to this possibility that I hesitated to assist him in his awkward efforts to help Carole loosen up. He'd obviously been digging himself into this hole for quite a while. Maybe I observed Carole because she was the subject of this annoying attention.

A girl of twenty can quite easily make fifty year old men understand that she finds them decrepit, and this girl better than any. I took advantage of the moment when she got up to make coffee. I went to the kitchen to help her.

I felt half-hearted suddenly.

At first, she seemed quite tiny and incredibly slender. The tousled fringe, the cropped blond hair, the childish outfit – white collar, blue pullover – she didn't look her age. But her awkwardness was studied: Carole didn't make coffee, she created chaos, ostensibly. I would lose if I showed

even the slightest sign of domestic ability, or if I was foolish enough to try and give her advice.

There's nothing like a trap avoided. When I run water or look for cups, I'm capable of an indifference that could cunningly dissociate me from this group, who were speaking about rare editions. We served a black liquid that caused friendly indignation. Objects now of a general disapproval, it was inevitable that we felt like accomplices. To take advantage of this, I trained a lightly ironic conversation about Carole, speaking to her parents as their equal. François-Joseph, happy to focus on her, babbled on. Disconcerted, she kept quiet. I was informed that she lived quite far from there, in the 16th arrondissement, and that she played the guitar. Gilles also remained silent and looked at us with an interest that I recognised.

But it was me who suggested we take the girl home in a taxi. And when Gilles joined me later in the corridor and teasingly asked what we were going to do, I replied:

– Win her, of course.

I don't remember having any more to say in the taxi. I felt good, I was tired. It was natural for Gilles to take the opportunity to make some off-hand remark, if only out of politeness, but this affair didn't seem to require it. We went via Pigalle, where there was a late night grocery store. We got wine and some salted almonds. We wanted to give the night some festivity. Carole asked for some gherkins – as a favour – registering our surprise. Gilles bought an extravagant amount together with pickled onions, capers and so on, to offer to her ceremoniously. I added some red and green peppers as my gift, not bad to look at, and, as an added bonus, unpalatable.

Each in our role, charming, charmed, we climbed eight flights of stairs, winding through many corridors. We arrived at an attic. Carole lived in a top floor maid's room that she paid for by giving lessons to some friends' children. She enjoyed total freedom, she said. Her

parents would undoubtedly not have minded had she stayed at home, but then she wouldn't have been able to display, for herself and others, this passionate statement of independence.

We were sitting on the floor, Sioux-style, in the little room. Gilles showed Carole how to open a bottle by tapping it gently and regularly against a wall. We started to drink again. Carole played the guitar well. Right away, yet quite discreetly, she had changed from her pleated skirt into jeans: 'I bought these in the boys' department,' she said. She was sitting cross-legged on her narrow bed, facing us. Carole sang classic songs well: Girls who are beautiful at fifteen, with boyfriends at war. Girls who lose a gold ring by the river, crying over the change of seasons, not wanting love to fade. Girls who go into the woods, who are later missed by those at sea on endless journeys.

I told myself that she wasn't dull, and congratulated myself for finding such a charming pet.

Anyway, Gilles liked her, buying so many gherkins, and speaking to her in a gorgeous low voice. I liked her too. My feelings rarely went further.

For a twenty-year old, this girl really knew how to drink. Sometimes, even from the bottle, to show she was free. She looked at me from the corner of her eye, doubtlessly waiting for the moment when I could no longer hide the signs of my jealousy. She lowered her singing voice, childishly, saying it was the cigarettes, but I knew it was from the desire to attract. And to please us, she also told touching little stories, meant to show how young she still was, how naïve, how she trusted poetic types. Her guitar was a faithful pet that followed her everywhere. She understood nothing and loved nothing but painting and the sea. Really quite beddable.

Around three in the morning someone knocked on the door. The racket we were making would have justified a complaint from the neighbours. But it wasn't the neighbours. Another Carole emerged. Same size, same age, same allure of the very skinny and not very innocent adolescent. Same blond hair cropped close to the head.

This doppelganger came in, glanced at us without warmth, and in no time at all exchanged her skirt for jeans – surely bought at the same boy's department. And so Béatrice introduced herself. I assured her that I had already heard a lot about her. She seemed happy to meet me. Up close she didn't look like Carole. Their shared blondness and fragility was striking, but Béatrice's face was closed, determined, in short, not very likeable. As much as Carole visibly wanted to please us, to please precisely by being disarming, Béatrice was all defensive and aggressive good manners. Finally she took up another guitar and started playing too, while weighing us with her gaze.

When Gilles and I left they were still playing, but Gilles had made a date with Carole for the next afternoon.

It's a pleasure, when you're tired and a bit drunk, to get into a big white bed and to sleep in it with the boy that you love. Wasn't that one of the things that the girl in question had sung to us? We were happy and totally in love. In love with ourselves, in love with Carole, in love in a hazy kind of way and we were lucky.

– Are you happy? I asked Gilles.

He nodded yes and put his arm around my neck. I was happy too.

– Do you love her? I added.

I got the same answer. It didn't surprise me. After all, if Gilles no longer loved the same girls I loved, a wedge would have slipped between us.

Michèle Bernstein has avoided the media proliferation of autobiographical detritus typical to post-war artists and writers, resisting as thoroughly the spectacle of publicity as her once-husband, Guy Debord, seemed to attract it. Her relation to the media seems to have been conditioned by a canny restraint: she used it to make a living at the same time as her work with the Situationists mounted a multi-dimensional

analysis of the hegemonic effects of mass media, and mass market culture and urbanism. It has been said that for a time she supported her ménage with Debord by writing the horoscopes of racehorses. She also wrote art and book criticism for the mainstream press (writing regularly for *Liberation* and the *TLS*) co-edited the Situationist bulletin *Potlatch*, and produced, in quick succession, two novels, *Tous les Chevaux du Roi*, in 1960, and in 1961, *La Nuit*.

Although the novels are loosely autobiographical in frame, sketching with detached amusement the experimental protocols of an open marriage between artists, the impetus seems less psychological or confessional than stylistic. Loosely contemporaneous with the work of Violette Leduc and Albertine Sarrasin, Bernstein's prose does not share the confessional prolixity, the expansively over-wrought descriptive stance that admittedly makes Leduc's and Sarrasin's autobiographical novels a continued pleasure to read. Rather, I'd locate an important precedent to Bernstein's novelistic work in the French 18th Century tradition of Libertine prose. Sade, to be sure (though Bernstein entirely avoids Sade's gregarious philosophising and never permits her prose to become pedantic) but also the crisper, more sociologically poised eroticism of Laclos or even Voltaire.

An important part of 20th Century French popular novel writing continues this Libertine thread. There is the deliciously sceptical pornography of Pierre Louy's *Manuel de Civilité*, an erotic handbook for spoiled, tongue-in-cheek girls, but that is arguably a more specialised branch of the genre. Colette comes to mind, definitely, but most pertinent to Bernstein I think, was the popular success in the 1950s of two extremes of the Libertine lineage. On one hand, Pauline Réage's *Story of O*, published in a privately distributed edition of 600 in 1954 by a small literary press and awarded the prestigious Prix des Deux Magots in 1955. The pseudonymous Réage didn't reveal her identity for four decades, while in the meantime her novel went through an obscenity trial and continuous reprintings, selling

in the millions. On the other hand, there are the mildly racy little novels by Françoise Sagan. Sagan's *Bonjour Tristesse*, published in 1954 when she was just nineteen, was immediately as successful as it was scandalous, and she went on to write nine more in a similar vein. You could say that triangulation was her trademark. When Sagan died in Paris in 2004, the kiosks were filled with glossy special souvenir editions of women's magazines commemorating her racy life, her penchants for casual sex and fast cars, her refusal to pay taxes, her honed life-long garçonette style. By the time of her death, Sagan had become the bad girl's Lady Di. Already in 1960 she was fabulously rich, bought and crashed fancy sports cars at will, slummed on the Côte d'Azur, and grinned impishly into the cameras of a million paparazzi.

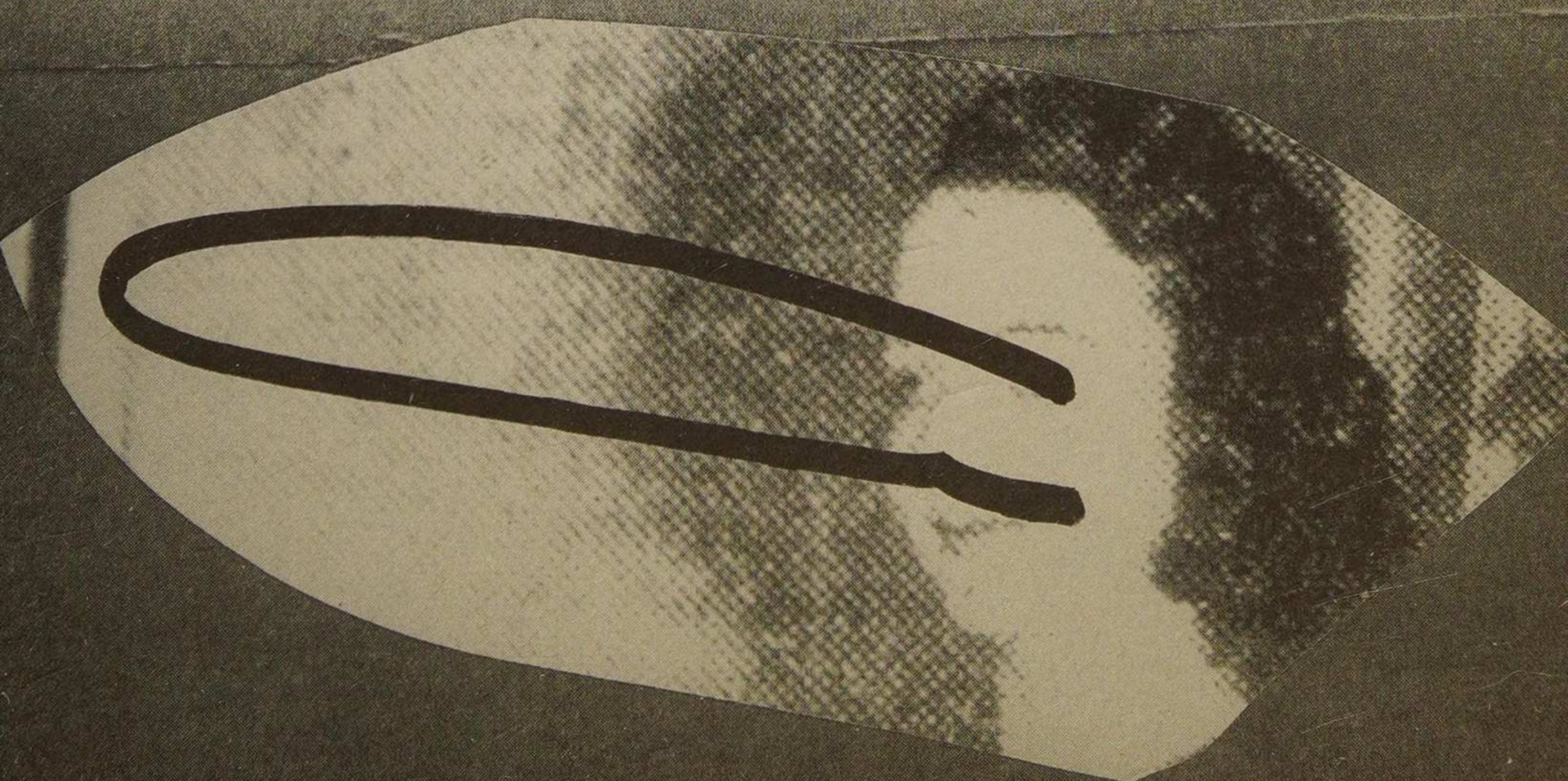
Bernstein had a style and she recognised a market. Why not détourner Sagan and make some housekeeping money at the same time? Both novels narrate the summertime frolics of open relationships, between Paris and the hot South, and involve prematurely sophisticated gamines. But the startling thing about Bernstein's novel, the quality that hooked me right away, is the sentimental reserve buoyed by a deadpan humour, entirely at the expense of the marginal art scenes the couple frequented. The scenarios and conversations she describes could be taking place right now in East Vancouver, East London, somewhere in Brooklyn, or the 19th arrondissement – if, that is, such conversations were framed by Godard, say, the Godard of *À bout de souffle*, pinioning the disingenuous Jean Seberg.

From the middle of the novel, a scrap of conversation between the avant-garde couple and their shared girl-toy Carole:

- What do you do anyways? I don't really know.
- Reification, Gilles replied.
- It's serious work, I added.
- Yes, he said.
- I see, Carole said with admiration. It's very serious work with thick books and a lot of papers on a big table.
- No, Gilles said. I walk. Principally I walk.

Here is a crisply worked opportunity to laugh at ourselves, to feel just slightly outside the scrawl of theories and complications we use to decorate the fiscal and popular marginalism of a freelance life in poetry and art. Bernstein's prose is slight in the best way, showing a stylistic restraint in its refusal of flourish, accessory, or psychological embellishment. The text turns rather on the excellence of the well-cut phrase, the poise of the dryly observed detail, the quickly sketched erotic geometries of margin, the bracingly haughty savoir-faire of the saloniste. I began to translate as soon as I had finished reading the novel.





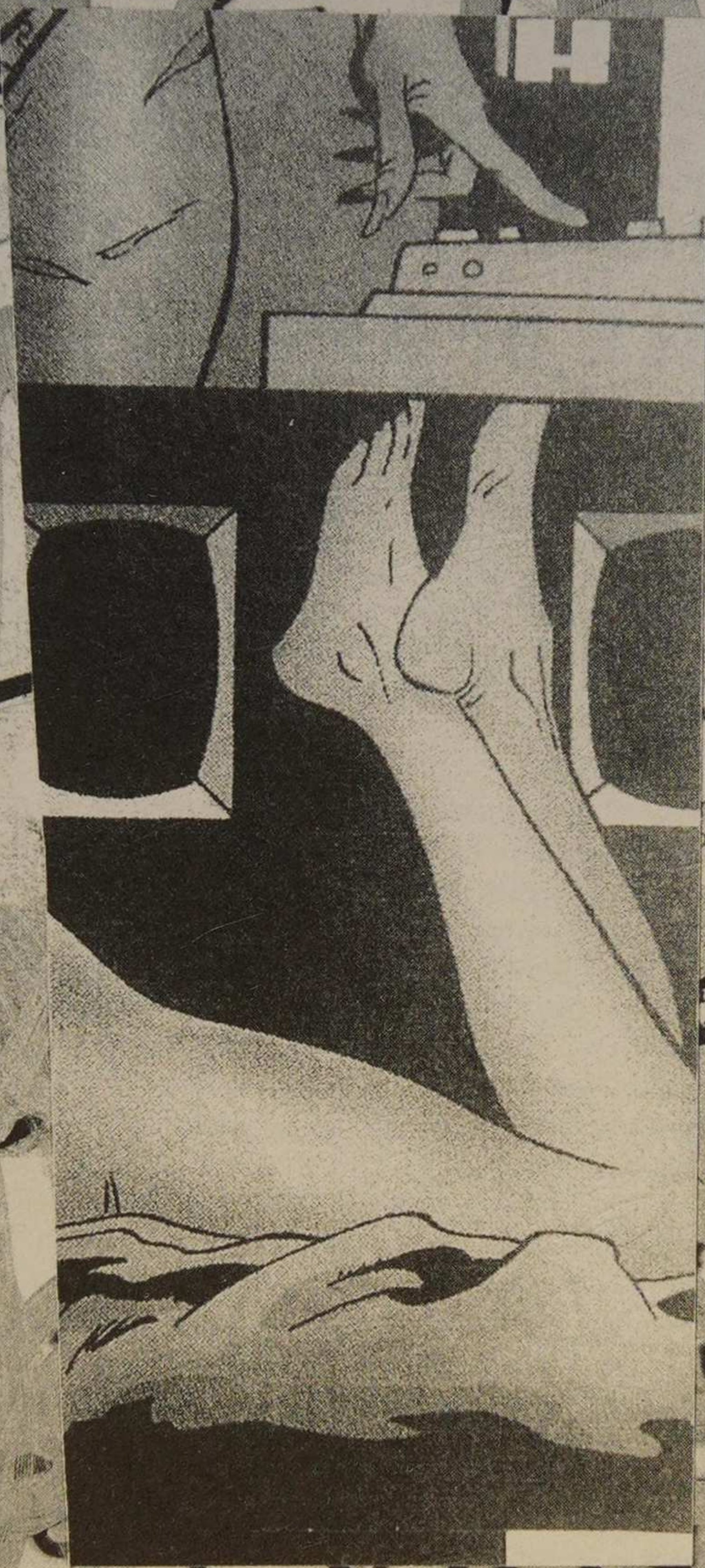
YOUR

FACE

WON'T

FOCUS

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...empty galleries he noticed Goul  
...the central divan, surveying  
...posure the surrealist's flaccid  
...omical monstrosities. With his  
...et and long hair in a knot, Gou  
...a doctor than a middle-aged hel  
...on the divan were three canvases  
...the walls, and which he later  
...brate his hotel rooms.  
...“They’re a little too close  
...me,” Forrester commented.  
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...s they . . . .  
...is one in about  
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# A THOUSAND AND ONE KNIGHTS OF THE ROUND TABLE OF KNOTTINGHAM

ALEXANDRE SINGH

FADE IN:

In the forest, the INDIAN TRIBES steal from the rich to give to the poor. Swinging through the trees, their leader TARZAN vows to rescue the GIANT APE that many a knight has in valiant vain also attempted to rescue.

SCENE ONE: THE SCULPTURE

A smoke machine causes the light in the forest to dapple, expressing the volume of the air above the rotting leaves of the forest floor. Beneath the floor is a swirling carpet. Walking through the forest is our HERO. He is dressed in 20th Century clothing. His suit is cut to the tribal pattern, his skin is daubed with blue and green paint. His bowler hat sports the feathers of his tribe. He limps slightly, carrying with him a walking cane. The end has been sharpened into a fearsome point. Suddenly he stops, hearing something.

Before we realise it, he has melted into the bushes. Coming round the trail we see a band of men. They are a raucous bunch. A dozen MONKS, some walking, others on DONKEYS. All virulently drunk. At the head of the procession is the CHIEF ABBOT. He is near the conclusion of a dirty little story about a King, a Bear and a Handmaiden. The tale has the whole train so amused that they splutter into their wine, one or two even choking on it in their glee. However it is not nearly as amusing to the racontees as to the raconteur. Upon finishing the sordid tale he catches a fit of hysterics. Laughing so hard now he begins to lose his breath. His face passes from that gleeful look to an aghast one. Clutching his chest he falls from the DONKEY into the mud. This results in even larger cries of delight from the procession. It is a moment before they realise the seriousness of the situation.

ABBOT'S PAGE

(Crying out)

Oh sir, what is the matter? Can you not breathe our holy air? Has Satan cursed your chest so that it may never rise and fall again? (He begins to weep).

Weeping, the PAGE beats the ground in counterpoint to his ABBOT, who beats the ground in demented short giggles. It is at this point that our HERO melts out of the bushes. Startled, the MONKS step back. Our HERO holds his hands out, palms spread, motioning for calm.

HERO

(Quietly)

I can help this man.

He puts down his cane and leans down into the mud on one knee. He cups his hands together and begins to whisper quietly into the ABBOT's ear. Though the ABBOT still laughs dementedly, his face changes to another calmer expression. The MONKS all lean in with interest to hear the HERO's words. Only the ABBOT'S PAGE is close enough to overhear mutterings of the tale the HERO is about to tell.

SCENE TWO: WHAT THE PAGE HEARD.

The sculpture is known as THE JEWEL. THE JEWEL has all surfaces inside it and outside of it. All dimensions are expressed within it and beyond it. Wood, gold, cloth, air and water are its lines, curves and mass. It has no width and all width. It is surrounded by hard surfaces that have no weight. It is the centre and edge of the universe.

(beat)

Looking into THE JEWEL one looks back into oneself, experiencing the whole universe at the same time. All that has been. All that will be. All that could be. All that could not be.

At this moment THE JEWEL is sitting in a crate. It rattles around the cavernous insides of the DC-1968 BDF900 four-engine cargo plane. The aircraft glides high over the canopy of the jungle. It is a clear day. Inside the steel hull is completely empty save for the plywood crate that contains our object.

(CONT.)

We perceive it inside the confines of the crate. Cushioned in the straw. THE JEWEL is constructed from pine. Two by one inch, milky acrylic sheets. One quarter inch construction adhesive. Five-eighths width sheet-rock. Foam board. Three and a quarter nails. From the manner in which it was put together we know it is not intended to be disassembled. In the cockpit the two PILOTS lean in to talk to each other. Their faces are in profile leaning into the centre of the frame. In the space between their noses lies the crate. Deep in the background is THE JEWEL.

(Rack focus to the deep field.)

The roar of the propellers makes the PILOTS' banter inaudible.

Down below in the jungle a dozen orange eyes track the flight of the silver bird in the cloudless sky. They raise their quivering hands up to the sky and then snap them down suddenly.

The SHAMANS begin a slow shuffling dance. As their feet kick up the dry earth their arms repeat this motion. Throughout the clearing, arranged in a loose, formal structure are various buckets filled with Pepsi and Sprite. As each man passes by a bucket he anoints the priest in front of him, flicking the sugary water onto his body.

Gathering pace they holler up to the plane.

This bird is heavy with cargo. It is time to reap the harvest of the freight.

The six SHAMANS snake round into a perfect circle. Inside the ring the dust is being whipped into spasmodic contortions. In a gap in the dust we see YVES KLEIN. His suit is dark and immaculate. He holds a long blowpipe fashioned from green paper currency. Each paper bill is wrapped over the next one, forming a slender cylinder.

Breathing out, YVES pushes projectiles through the air into his enemies. Breathing in, he inhales the compound psychotropes, manufactured by his cartel deep in the unexplored regions of the forest.

(V.O.)

The leader of this motorcycle gang.  
His name. Yves Klein.  
Yves Klein and the Shamans.  
In the distant past they once  
drove dirtbikes.  
As they circle the bikes kick up  
a ring of dust.

Swinging his paper pipe up in a slow arc, YVES advances on a tree stump in the centre of the clearing. It is an ancient tree. Many thousands of years old. We know this because its cross section depicts many dark bands. Summers of growth and winters of famine. The freshly cut tree weeps a spermy resin.

YVES deftly carves out a spiralling line of cocaine on the stump. It curves through every year of the tree's life right to the centre where everything becomes fluid. The knot at the centre of the tree. The murky time. YVES places the paper cylinder at the head of the line and the other end to his flared nostril. He begins a steady powerful inhale.

The tug of gravity holds the white crystals for an instant. And then in a moment of capitulation they dance up through the pipe. The SHAMANS' dancing reaches a new dementia. The artist slides the pipe around the rings more and more quickly, sucking in old time.

(pause)

In the deep sky. The deep of the infinite. In the steel ellipse. The dials of the instrument panels rise and rise. Down below, YVES has reached the time before aeroplanes. Now the time before steel. Now the time before man.

(pause)

The altometer spins wildly. The oil pressure gauge cracks. The SHAMANS cry up to their prey their dream of hijackings and bird accidents.

(beat)

YVES' snort reaches the centre of the stump. The blurry time. And suddenly the forest reaches up to meet the silver bird.

And so at this moment the tale is interrupted.

The engine from the DC cargo craft, 900 horse power, stainless steel rivet construction, manufactured in Hamburg, Wisconsin, crashes through the forest canopy, landing on the ABBOT'S DONKEY leaving not a trace of the humble beast. As if it had never existed. Were it not for the ABBOT'S earlier fall his fate would have been the same.

In a moment of realisation the ABBOT'S hiccups cease. His face becomes pale. Then ashen. Then a jaundiced colour. The inside of his stomach spews the red wine over his fine clothes, into the earth of the forest floor. Unable to stop vomiting, he retches beyond the content of his stomach into a continuous dry heave.

The engine smoulders. It smells of ham.

The retinue leap forward as one to try to aid the old man but only seem to make things worse.

HERO

(shouting)

Let him get some air.

He pushes the others aside.

HERO

Now let me continue my story.

SCENE THREE: ABOVE THE SKIES OF HANOVER THE AIR IS THICK WITH BLACK ELLIPSES

Above the skies of Hanover the air is thick with black ellipses. The UFOs strafe the buildings with their death rays cutting bright arcs into the city. The bombs drop incessantly over ground, shattering the air. Deep underground their presence is merely an ominous rumble. A larger explosion reverberates around KURT SCHWITTERS' basement, loosening dust and rubble that collects in his hair. Oblivious to it all he feels around in the semi-light for his Bosch eighteen volt cordless drill. Within the labyrinth under his house he is building his largest and most ambitious sculpture yet.

Rooms and tunnels. Corridors intersect. Staircases lead to nowhere. Rooms within rooms within rooms within rooms within a corner.

(beat)

Within weeks of starting the construction he finds himself lost in his own creation. Unable to recall the passage back to the outside world even if it still exists. He scurries in the darkness, gathering supplies.

(pause)

A pump. Pine, two by four, eight foot lengths. Three-inch metal studs, six-foot lengths. Five three-inch coarse construction screws. Liquid nails construction adhesive. Black high heat enamel paint, one quart. Slant joist structural connector. Five-eighths four by six drywall. The construction begins to take shape. The flickering light from his electric torch illuminates another human form in the obscurity. The GOLEM-SCHWITTERS looks strikingly similar to its creator.

KURT SCHWITTERS

(whispering to the GOLEM-SCHWITTERS)

I dreamt last night that you were a real boy.  
That you went into the world to represent me.  
Bought all my supplies. Carried out my most  
mundane tasks. And then you summoned aid to  
rescue me from these catacombs.

Though the GOLEM-SCHWITTERS looks very much like KURT, he is constructed from different materials. Wood, insulation foam, foam board, construction adhesive, plaster and canvas. His surfaces are hard and geometric.

KURT controls the robot without wires. By magic.

We notice that KURT walks with a limp. He has only one foot. The other is attached to the creature's leg. KURT believes that the soul of man lies in his foot. After all, is it not his feet that constantly ground him?

Figuratively and statically. I meant static as in speaking. Are they not his most constant form of contact with the great earth, gluing him to its flank as it rotates at furious speed through the cosmos?

(pause)

Having imbued the creature with a soul, the artist is forced to use a staff to aid his walking. Its end has been sharpened into a fearsome point.

(pause)

The work is complete. Finally KURT is able to psychically connect with the sculpture. He steps back. At last he can see through the robot's eyes. During the time that he controls the beast his own body remains dumb and lifeless. But it matters not since soon he will be able to send the creature up to the surface to purchase supplies for its master.

It is at this moment that a DC aircraft engine, high in the skies over Germany, detaches from its bearer, falling through a battery of UFO fire. It lands in KURT's house. It crashes through the roof. Through the second floor. Through the living room. Through the basement. Through the first level of the Merzbau. Through the second. Deeper and deeper. Finally crashing into the corridor that separates KURT from his mechanical self.

It brings down the ceiling. There is an insurmountable pile of rock and debris between them. Cursing, the GOLEM-SCHWITTERS expels an angular shout. KURT thinks this has all been for naught if he cannot feed his mortal self. Then the GOLEM-SCHWITTERS too will die.

(pause)

With the adrenaline rushing through his wooden joints KURT's mind achieves an unusual clarity. He remembers a certain passageway. A long connection of corridors and rooms and tunnels that would allow him to circumvent the obstruction and save his physical self.

(pause)

And so the GOLEM-SCHWITTERS sets out to find his master. The tunnels under KURT's house are dark and maze-like. He is not alone in the obscurity. Many KNIGHTS are in valiant vain searching for the Holy Grail in KURT's house. Legend tells of a glass of KURT's urine that under shards of the sun takes on the appearance of a golden goblet. The GOLEM-SCHWITTERS is forced to slay each knight as it encounters them. Always thinking it a foul monster the KNIGHTS rush to it, swords aloft. They are cut down by a shot from its nail gun.

(pause)

After days of searching, nervous and weary the GOLEM-SCHWITTERS reaches the end of a corridor, swinging the door open. It is startled to see a human form in the half-light. Instinctively its finger squeezes the trigger of the nail gun, knowing even as it fires that the decrepit form in front of it is itself.

KURT and the GOLEM-SCHWITTERS collapse into each other's arms. As the life empties from one, it leaves the other.

As the PAGE listens, the ABBOT'S wrenching transitions to a quiet sobbing. Tears run down his face, collecting in the folds of his beard. Our HERO continues.

They lie there for many centuries until they are discovered by grave robbers. The skeleton they deem worthless. But the statue, perhaps it could have a certain value.

They take the GOLEM-SCHWITTERS to a dealer in antiquities. An American. He cannot discern that it has any worth. Inspecting the creature's head with his monocle, he notices a glimmer. THE JEWEL.

Inside the cavity of the GOLEM-SCHWITTERS' skull THE JEWEL notices the ANTIQUITOR peering at it.

A queer feeling overcomes the man as he cuts open the head and extracts this assemblage of raw materials. Maybe this has some value...

(pause)

And so in a matter of weeks THE JEWEL is collected by a representative of the museum. Also an American. He places it in a crate where it will join more loot being acquired by the government of the island of Manhattan.

(beat)

It changes hands from one courier to another. From a postal worker to a flight attendant. It sits quietly in the cavern of the aircraft hull until, in a wonderful moment, it is set free. Tumbling through the sky. It lands in the canopy of a tree. A MAN with a bowler hat reaches up and lowers it to his brethren on the ground.

YVES takes the crate from the SHAMANS and straps it to his back. He makes his way through the jungle to the safety of the French-Indian fort. Without interrupting his story our HERO takes out a green paper currency cylinder.

And unbeknownst to him he happens to walk by a quiet retinue of MONKS. MONKS who but a moment ago had been raucous and loud. Who YVES would have surely noticed.

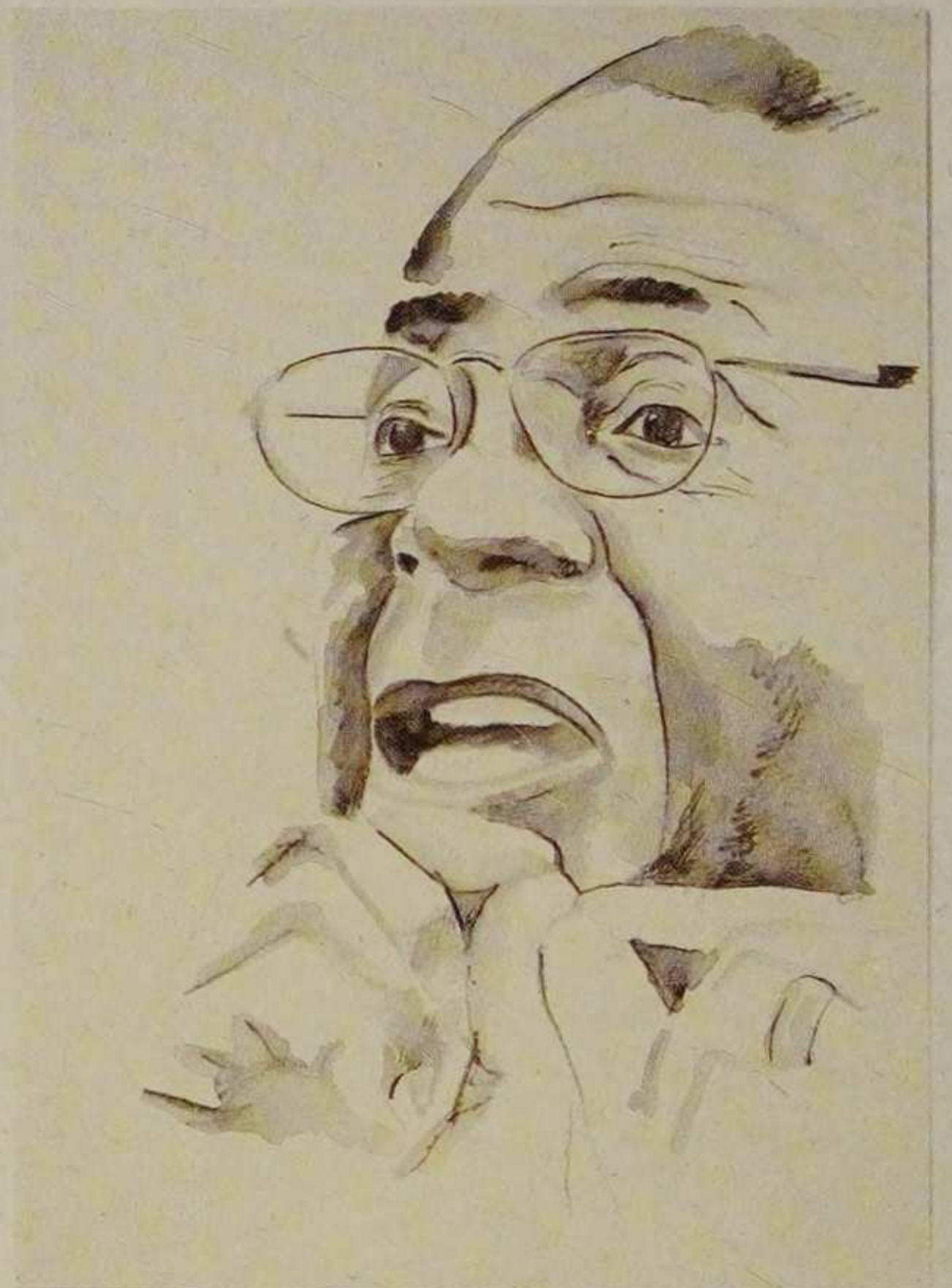
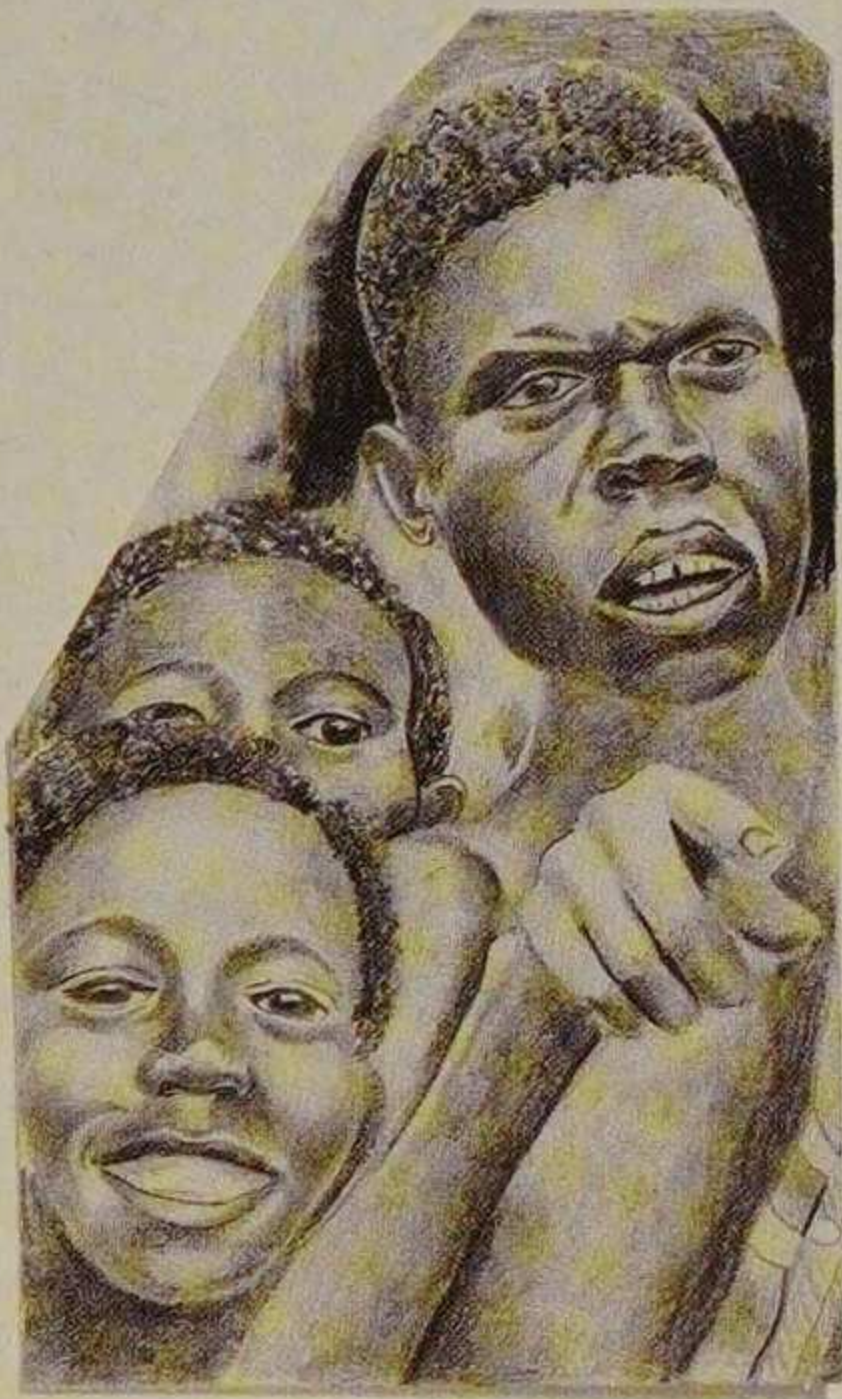
The HERO brings the cylinder to his mouth, sweeping the line of bushes. He spits a poison dart into the green. We hear a quiet thud. The group gather together and they walk to where they hear the sound. They gasp. A MAN is lying on the ground. From his backpack bulges a plywood crate. But it is not this that causes the wonder.

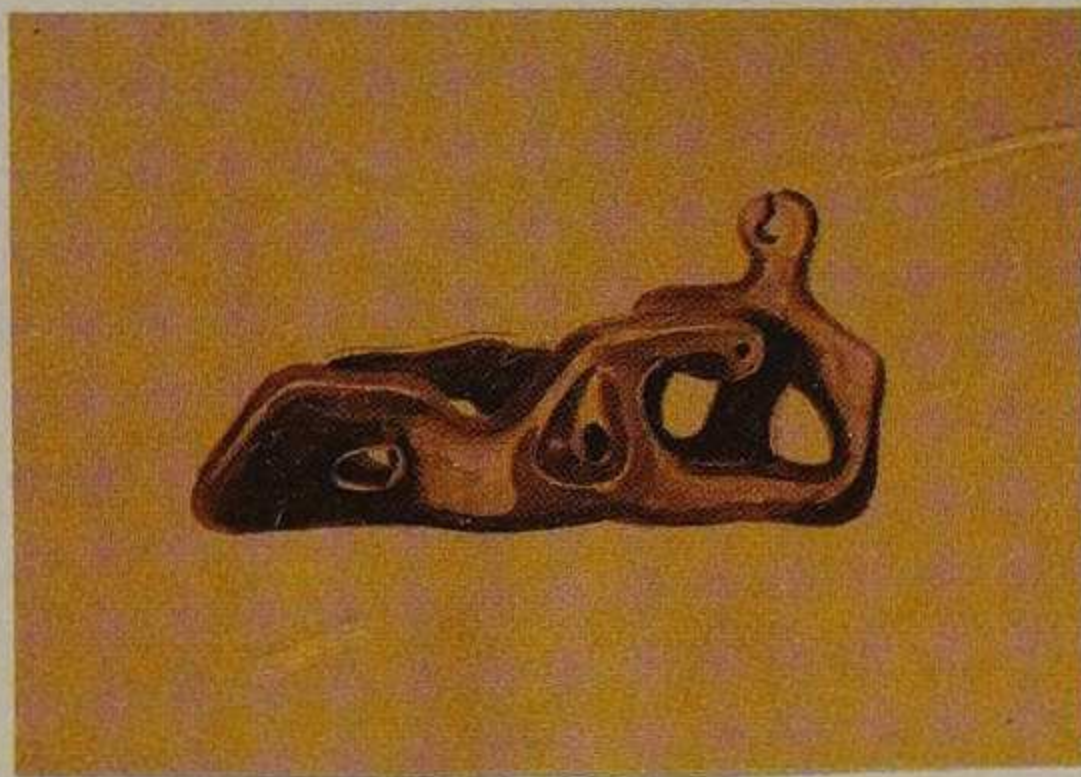
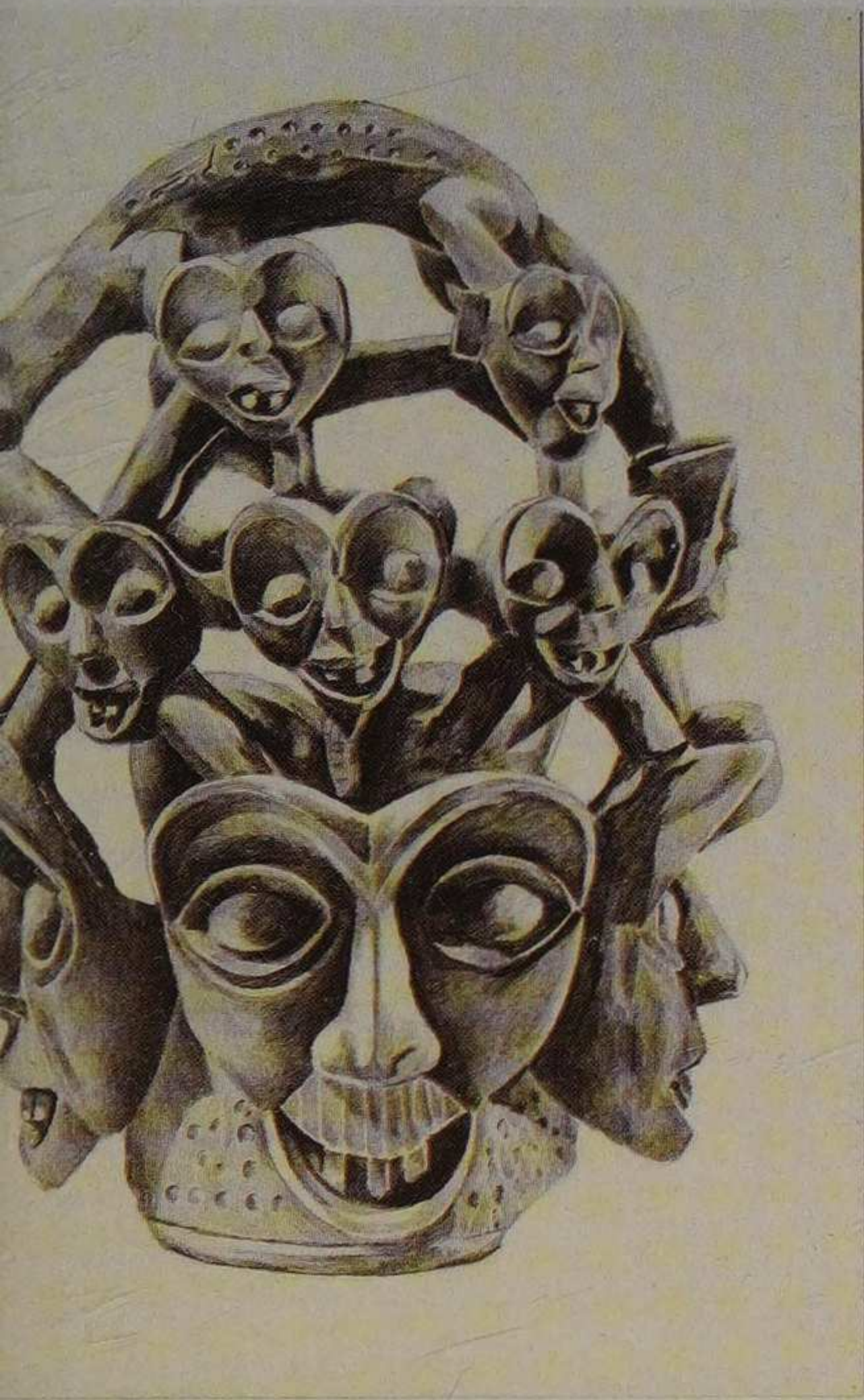
The MAN has exactly the same features as the HERO. They could be twins. The GOLEM-SCHWITTERS lifts the crate containing THE JEWEL and bids farewell to the MONKS. He disappears into the same bush from which he emerged. He limps slightly.

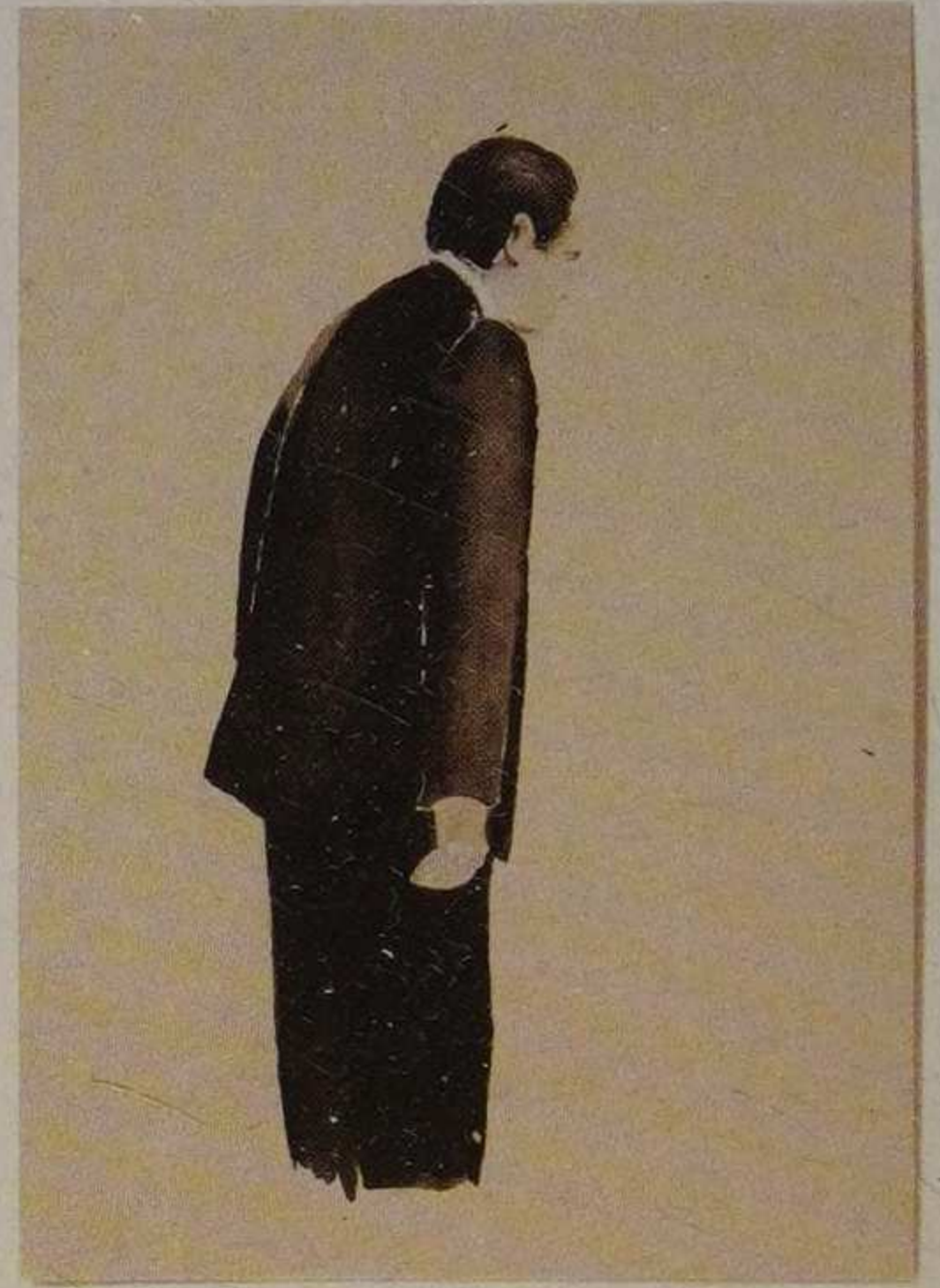
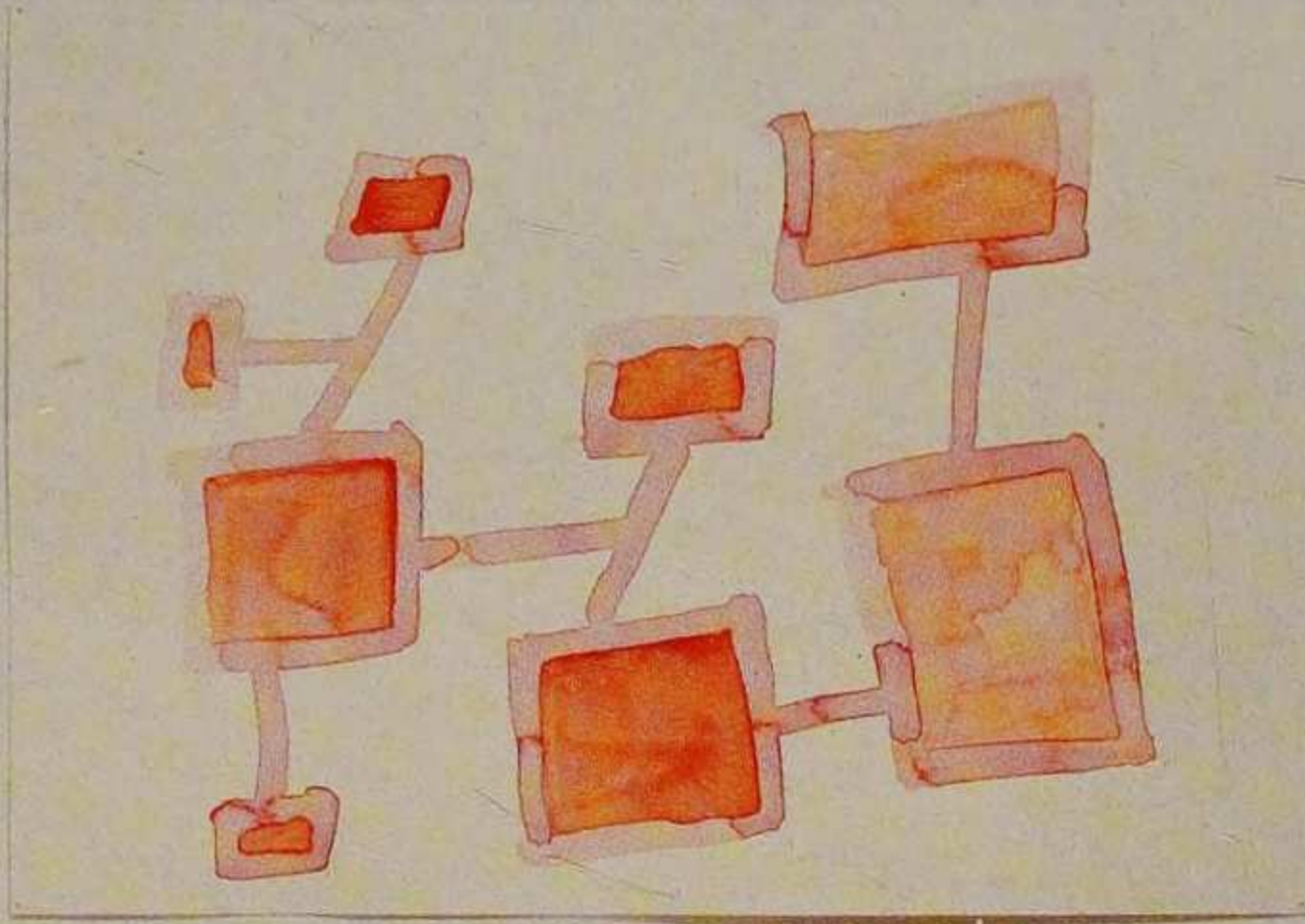
He must hurry if he wants to take the place of his creator.

FADE OUT.

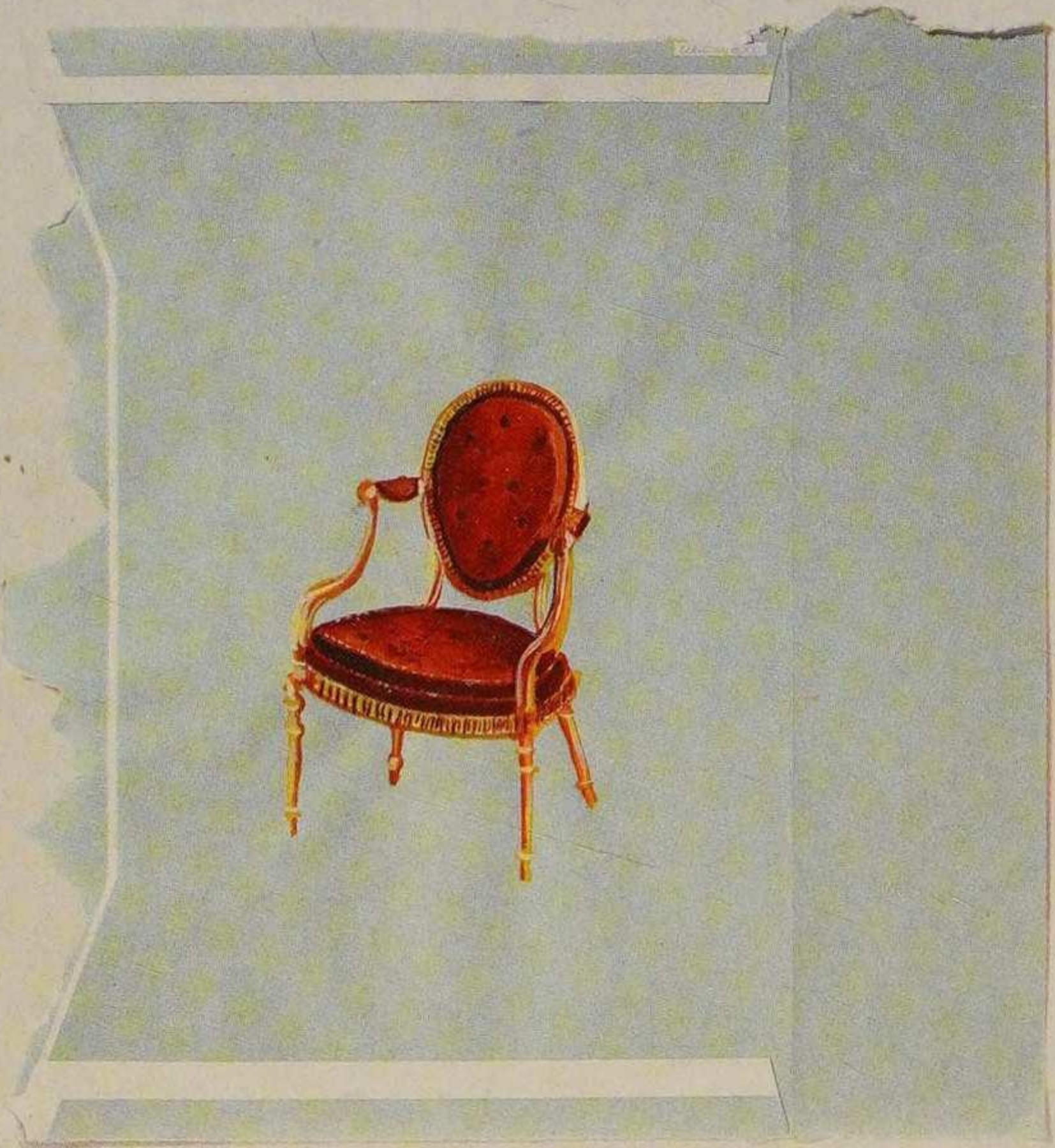
THE END











# LIKE THE TOAD, UGLY AND VENOMOUS

ANDREA MASON

I have arrived in this town called Milton Keynes. It is a good town. A new town. Several of us have been called, from all over. There is great excitement on account of a new discovery; some rare footage of a film called *Sodom*. Apparently it was made by a small movement of artists and film-makers who lived on the fringe of San Francisco in the late sixties.

My belly is full of gas.

It is not a good time for this. I am due to attend a meeting at the University Film Archive Centre. We will be pouring over individual film cells, squashed together in the tiny storeroom, bent over a light box. I will have to do my best to hold in the gas - glorious triumph of mastication and digestion though it may be. And the odour! Oh no! Dear me. I know it too well already: slightly rank; almost sweet; gaseous; making all who smell it, surely, bilious. I am getting cramps as I walk. The best plan would be to let out as much of the evil air as I can persuade to go now. The insides of my bum cheeks become moist as I force it, like pressing all the air out of a pair of bellows. I see a blackbird peck a worm from the wet grass. Crocuses are in full bloom. Trees have begun to bud. Beauty and nature surround me as I walk, cloaked now by a fug of odious vapour.

At the Film Centre, Professor Krakovsky, a visiting archive specialist from Moscow, greets me. 'Dr Kulotta.' (I too am an exotic being.) 'You are looking very smart. And this is Professor Kantansky, my esteemed and trusted colleague.' My hand is taken up by a grizzled, austere looking gentleman, who views me through hooded eyes. From this point on the leakage must be contained.

We examine the strips of film, trying to determine whether it's in a decent enough condition to withstand a screening. A chain gang of male torsos, engaged in the act which names the film, stretches for what seems like miles. Shot from the front, faces bob up and down and from side to side behind the first, the second, the third man, and so on. The scene is then viewed from above. The line of men moves and shakes and shivers like a giant caterpillar; occasionally it breaks as one or other of the men comes, interrupting the otherwise pliant fluidity of a muscular conga.

Men appear to be in the act of bestial pursuits. A variety of animals, it seems, are employed. Several men have come together and climbed, one on top of the other, to provide the framework for a tall, graceful

giraffe, whose head disappears from view. It is stroked and hung upon. Men delight in bouncing each other up by cupped hands onto the supposed animal's back. The scenes are comic, vaudeville. One man is dressed as a donkey wearing a starched white collar and black bow-tie. He rears up onto his hind legs (just as a large, ape-like fellow arrives to grapple with his behind) and delivers a jet of steaming piss onto a ball of indecipherable arms, legs, backs and heads.

'The film is greatly scratched.' I observe the movements of Professor Krakovsky's lips. The ring of lines extending from their pursed extrusion, surrounded by the neatly clipped thatch of his beard, and the warm puff of air blown out across my cheeks as he turns his face towards me only serve to enhance the scene now at my fingertips of a man's bent over cheeks being pulled apart by the paws of a monkey, though closer inspection reveals the clumsy plasticity of fake hands inhabited by a man. A glistening crop of curly black pubic hair surrounds the pink-brown orifice. This man might have wanted to speak to Professor Krakovsky about the techniques and merits of keeping one's extraneous hair in check.

The wind in my bowels is bubbling up again. I lean over further to give the impression of intently inspecting the film, all the time squeezing tight my sphincter muscles. Eager as I am to see the next scene unfold before me, I turn nevertheless to catch the oral droplets falling from the mouth of Professor Kantansky - 'One must handle the thing with care.'

Standing to my left, he is one stage behind me as we feed the film from right to left, we both now bend over the light box, observing what appears to be a tiny monkey in a bus boy's suit. I am dealt an inadvertent dig in my ribs as Professor Kantansky bends his elbow to scratch his crotch. This forces a sharp intake of my breath as I squeeze and squeeze again to prevent unwanted anal emissions.

We really are cramped together.

Professor Kantansky's lips pull back to reveal a set of yellowed gnashers as he turns to look at me, if not apologetically, then at least bashfully; his fingers are stained nicotine brown, I note, as he raises them to his nose to sniff, 'The edges, too, are frayed.' He strokes his top lip with the fingers of his right hand, takes hold of his chin, bends closer into the footage and sniffs his fingers once more. There are flakes of dandruff on the back collar of his tweed jacket; frail white wafers, each little more than the size of a pinhead.

'I suggest we transfer it to another medium.'

'But this would be to lose the quality of the film.'

Professor Krakovsky turns his head in my direction, being as I am in the middle.

'No doubt, but we cannot risk, for instance, that it will burn up.'

'Then there must be one exclusive showing. A great event. Dr Kulotta, we would like to hear from you.'

Both men's heads are turned towards me. I feel as if my cheeks are full of air. To speak now would be to let forth a burst of frothing spit and bubbles. I turn to face Professor Kantansky on my left, pull my eyebrows down and nod, conveying, I believe, that I share his concerns. I turn then to my right, to face Professor Krakovsky, pulling my eyebrows back up into my forehead and smile and nod, expressing, I am sure, my level of enthusiasm for his proposal. I turn my attention once more to the film, wondering how much more my stomach can take. I have shooting pains of heartburn for not giving in to the building bag of gas.

There are men performing yoga tricks, their legs wrapped around their heads as they gobble on their own penises. Little birdies come and settle on pulled back thighs and begin to peck and nibble at exposed hairy balls. This was no doubt an unforeseen coup. One man, held aloft in a perfect forward bend, is observed by a short stocky man chomping on an unpeeled banana.

I can't hold on any longer. Shooting pains and uncontrollable mirth attack me equally. I am forced to relinquish the controlling grip of my lower abdomen and sphincter muscles. There is a noise like the hiss of steam escaping from a boiler as the offensive vapour snakes around the room. Professor Krakovsky is the first to go. His face clouds as he succumbs to the effects of the hideous gas. I see surprise and disappointment in the turns and creases of his face as he slides down, pulling his end of the filmstrip with him. As his legs buckle his head falls with quite a crack onto the floor. Jerome, the technician, hits the deck next. He is, at that moment, about to leave the room, and would no doubt have dissipated the worst of the rank-smelling odour were he allowed to go, but the smell is too strong and takes him out suddenly, turning his face a sickly green. He falls with an arm outstretched, eyes open wide and staring. Professor Kantansky holds on longer until I am forced to push out a further pop of air to relieve the cramp inside my stomach. He lets out a startled 'Oh!', slithers and creases down, his head and upper body folding first, revealing a shiny bald crown as he goes.

I allow myself to gorge on the images of the film before me. I am forced to take hold of Professor Krakovsky's hand and open it out, so that he relinquishes his grip upon the end of the roll. I slide the film along to view these last scenes. I am enthralled. The filmmaking is of such a quality that I cannot deny it delights and entertains me. The shadows thrown out by the acts being committed perform their own ballet. The yogic feats of the men are indeed amazing; their poise and dexterity, the suppleness of their joints are surely to be admired.

I give way finally to a wave of uncontrollable laughter, which, in my letting go is accompanied by a tremendous rasping blow of the final breaths from my bum. Were my companions to come round they would be slain afresh by this final wave of desecrating stink. I can no longer look at the images of the film, and let it slip from my fingers as I crease up and fall to the floor, doubling up with laughter, tears making my vision a blur.



# Tehran Journal

TEHRAN JOURNAL, JUNE 12, 1969

## On with the show BY MAGGIE LETT

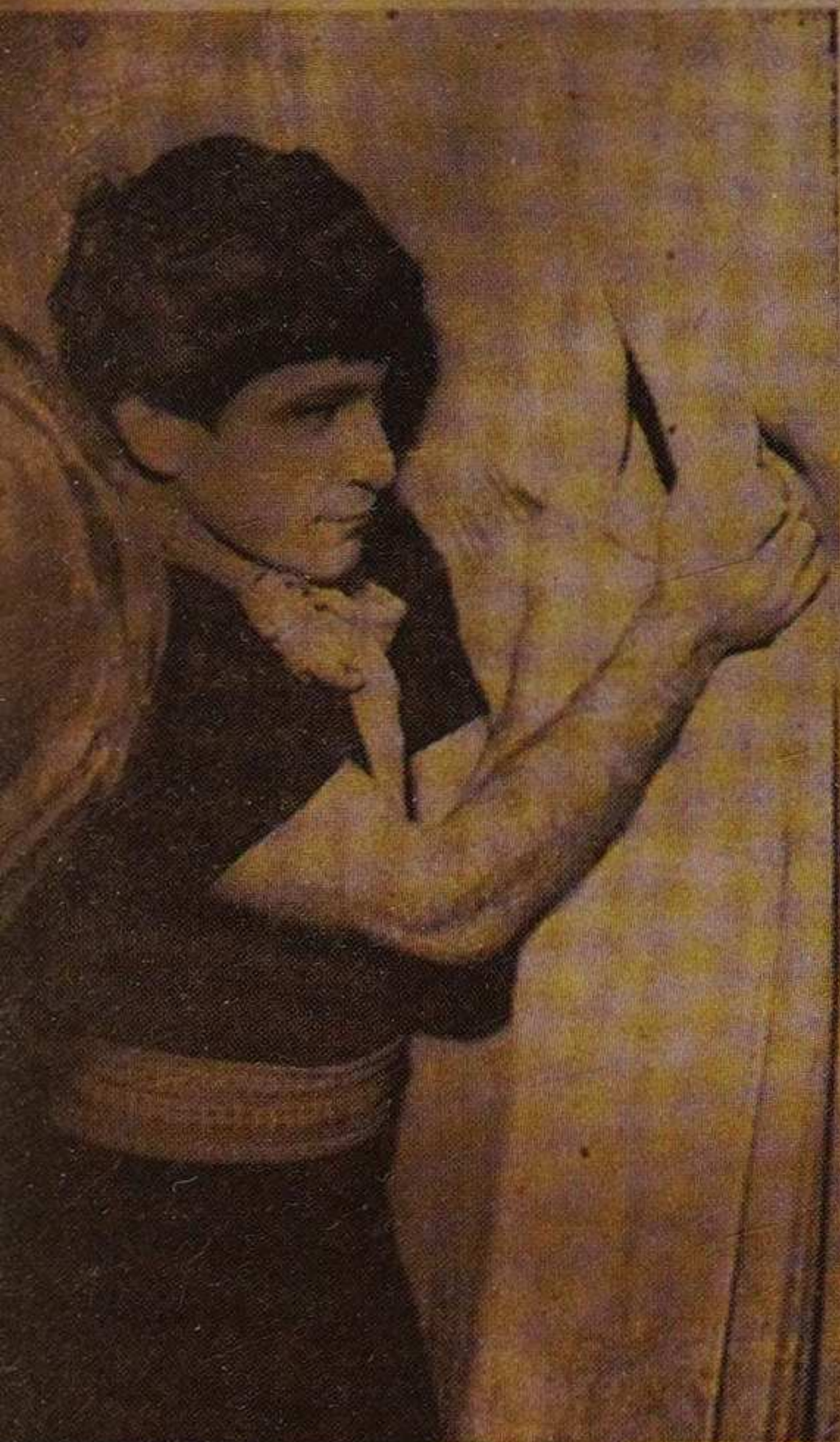
*... or what  
goes on behind  
the scenes*

Late-middle-aged women, with wrinkled show-biz faces and lips painted thickly with bright pink lipstick, wait in the sun for the performance to start. A colorful man with straight combed-back ginger hair, in red, black and blue shorts and Pixie green shoes, plays on the saxophone. Voices argue or just talk; a trumpet goes up and down the scales; an accordion strains through its few confined keys. And getting ready for the afternoon's show, the artistes at the Russian circus ground are surrounded by the flies buzzing round as one of the unavoidable drawbacks of life on the road.

**STOP ME**

**AND**

**BUY ONE**



Willy peeps through the curtain before the show

BY MAGGIE LETT

The acrobats are still rehearsing on the ring to be prepared. When they appear will mean that the Russian circus visiting up its two month performing headquarters alone ready to throw open the tent flaps to the crowds the struts freshly painted, and all that remains and the costumes to be aired.

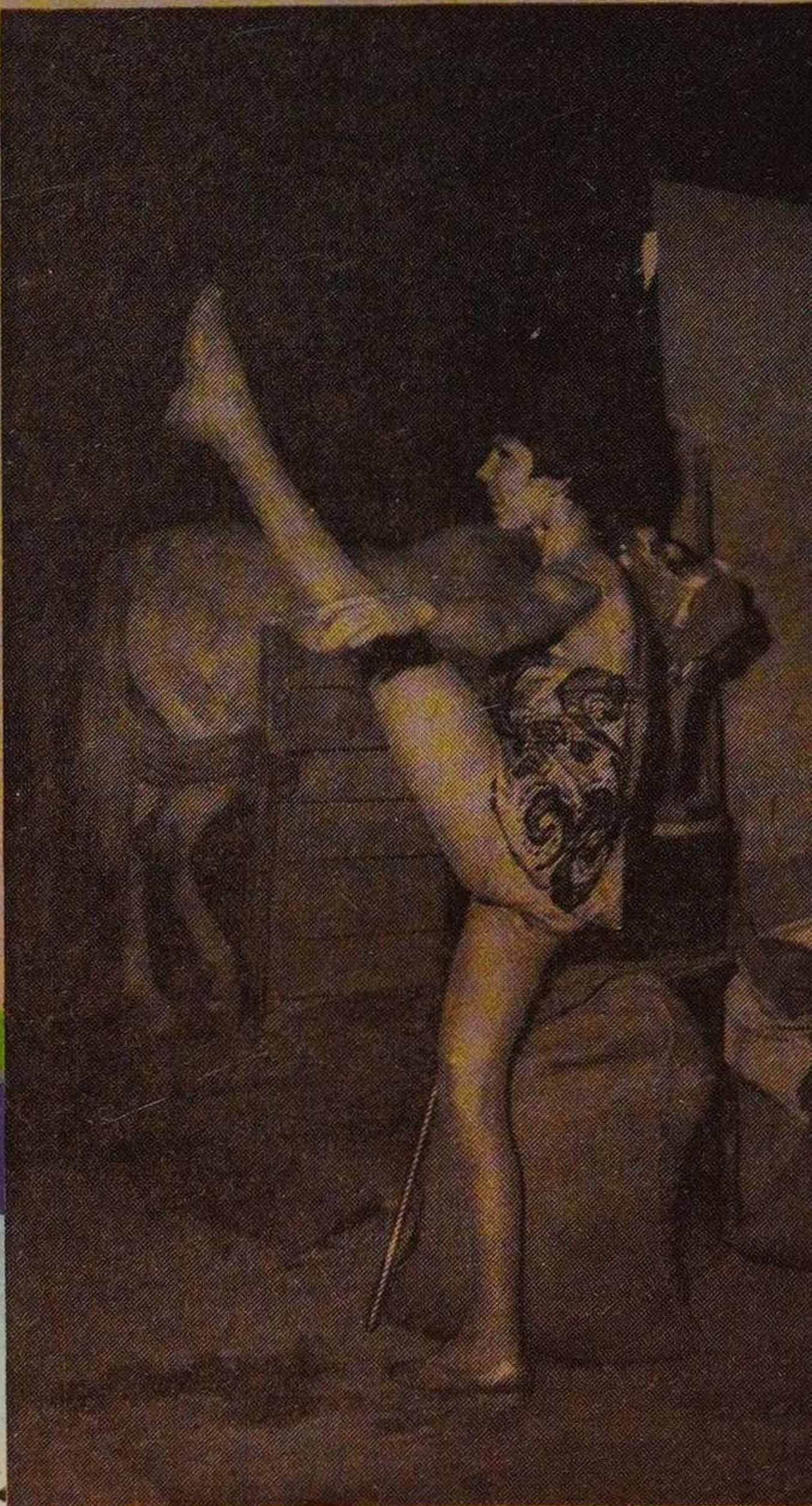
The problems the circus had to face on arrival arrangements which might seem far removed from lack of ground support below the high fliers. Etc found. With special lighting required for illuminating spotlights ready to move into action for maximum electric power is one of the main technical considerations show can get underway. The lack of clay becoming horses take their turn. A loose stone sent flying dangerous for an unfortunate member of the audience.

**The circus**

**comes**

**to town**

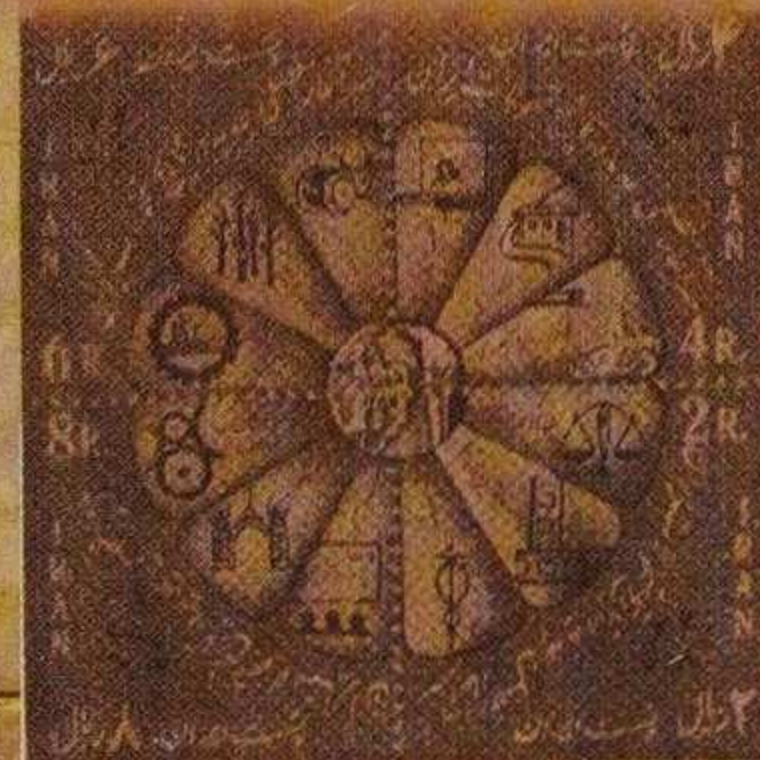
HIS IMPERIAL Majesty the Shahanshah is scheduled to attend the first performance of the Russian Circus in Tehran on Saturday. The circus is here at the special invitation of the Center for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults.



Maya Kostiuk limbers up away from the glamor of the ring.



Acrobatic feats are Zamotkin's group's specialty.

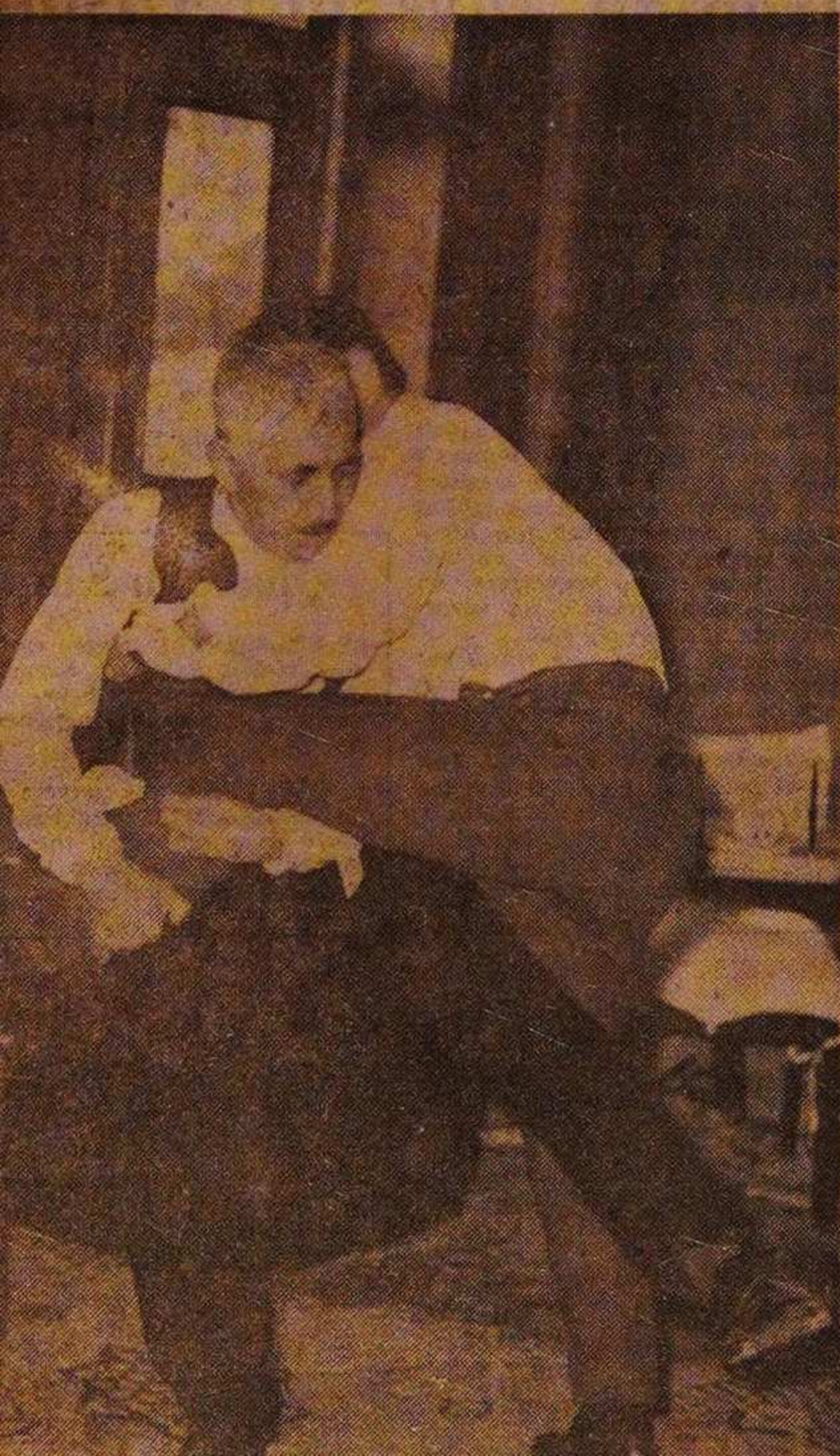


ran at a nostalgic glance



He is concerned  
with seeing

By  
Margaret  
Lett



## Iran on U.N. body

IRAN was elected yesterday as a member of the U.N. Council for In-



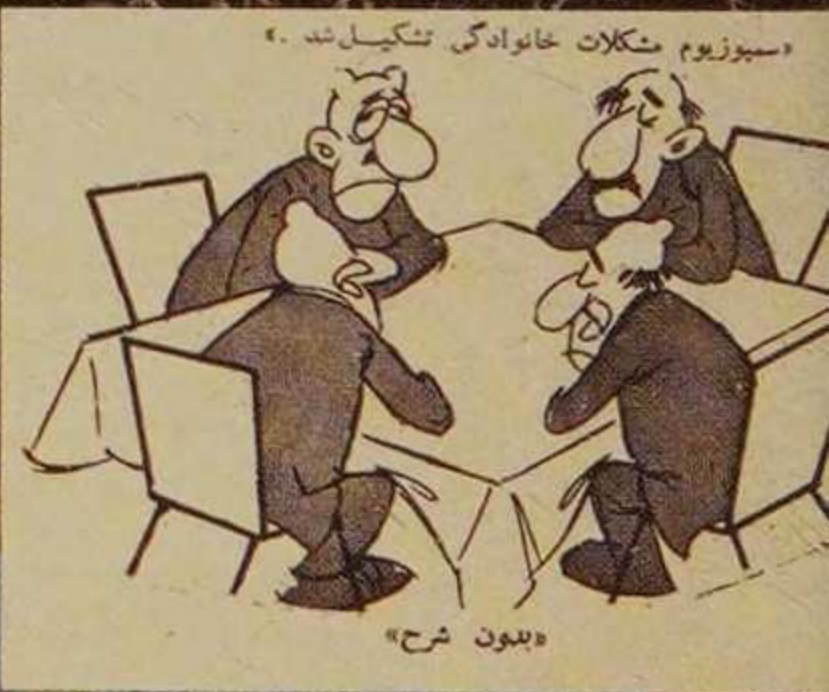
Provincial  
and  
City News

### One-way traffic planned

Taxi drivers  
to be taught  
good manners

ONE-WAY traffic is to be definitely introduced on central Tehran avenues shortly, under a plan approved by the traffic council and aimed at improving traffic conditions in the capital.

The plan, which will probably be introduced on an experimental basis before being finally approved, provides for traffic to run in one direction along every other avenue between Ministry in the west and Bazaar and Bakhsh in the east.



# Persian is no easy language

READING IRANIAN history, investigating its civilization and reading the intricate cuneiform writings dating back thousands of years, is no easy job for foreign analogists. The difficulty lies in reading the complicated Persian script—an art which few Iranologists and few Iranians gain proficiency in despite hard labor.

## زندگی روزمره



# in modern isolation

## مردم امریکا

### WHAT TO DO, WHERE TO GO

FOR those who want to spend Christmas out and away from home, Tehran has a lot more to offer than you might expect. A white Christmas is only half an hour's drive away, along the Abe-Ali Road. Or if you prefer to stay in town there are movies, nightclubs, a Christmas ballet performed by the National Iranian Ballet Company at Rudaki Hall, the new controversial play in Farsi at the Iran-America Society by ex-newspaper seller, Abbas Nalbandian called "A Modern, Profound and Important Research into the Fossils of the 25th Geological Era" and for children tomorrow an ice skating party at the Ice Palace on Pahlavi Avenue.

FOR those who like the idea of having someone else cook Christmas dinner for them, a number of Tehran restaurants are serving the meal in traditional style. It might be wise to phone and reserve a table:

- Hilton Hotel Bar Room: 623051
- International Hotel: 770620
- Lanterne Restaurant: 46287
- Marmar Hotel: 611521
- Tehran Palace Hotel: 611851
- Xanadu Restaurant: 40812
- Iran-America Society: 625545
- German Club: 83940
- French Club: 40038
- Tehran Club: 305598

The following nightclubs are featuring special Christmas floor-shows:

- Lido: 334771
- Miami: 620200
- Moulin Rouge: 339337
- Shokoufeh Now: 20468

#### TODAY

##### THEATER:

Iran-America Society: "Research..." presented by the Shaheen Sarkisian Group at 8 p.m.

#### TOMORROW

##### SKATING:

Ice Palace: Christmas Ice Skating Party for children 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. Skating, dancing, jazz, competitions and prizes, tea and cakes.

##### BALLET:

Rudaki Hall: Cinderella by Prokofiev danced by the National Iranian Ballet Com-

pany at 3:30 p.m. and 8:30 p.m.

##### THEATER:

Iran-America Society: "Research..." presented by the Shaheen Sarkisian Group at 8 p.m.

##### CHILDREN'S PROGRAM:

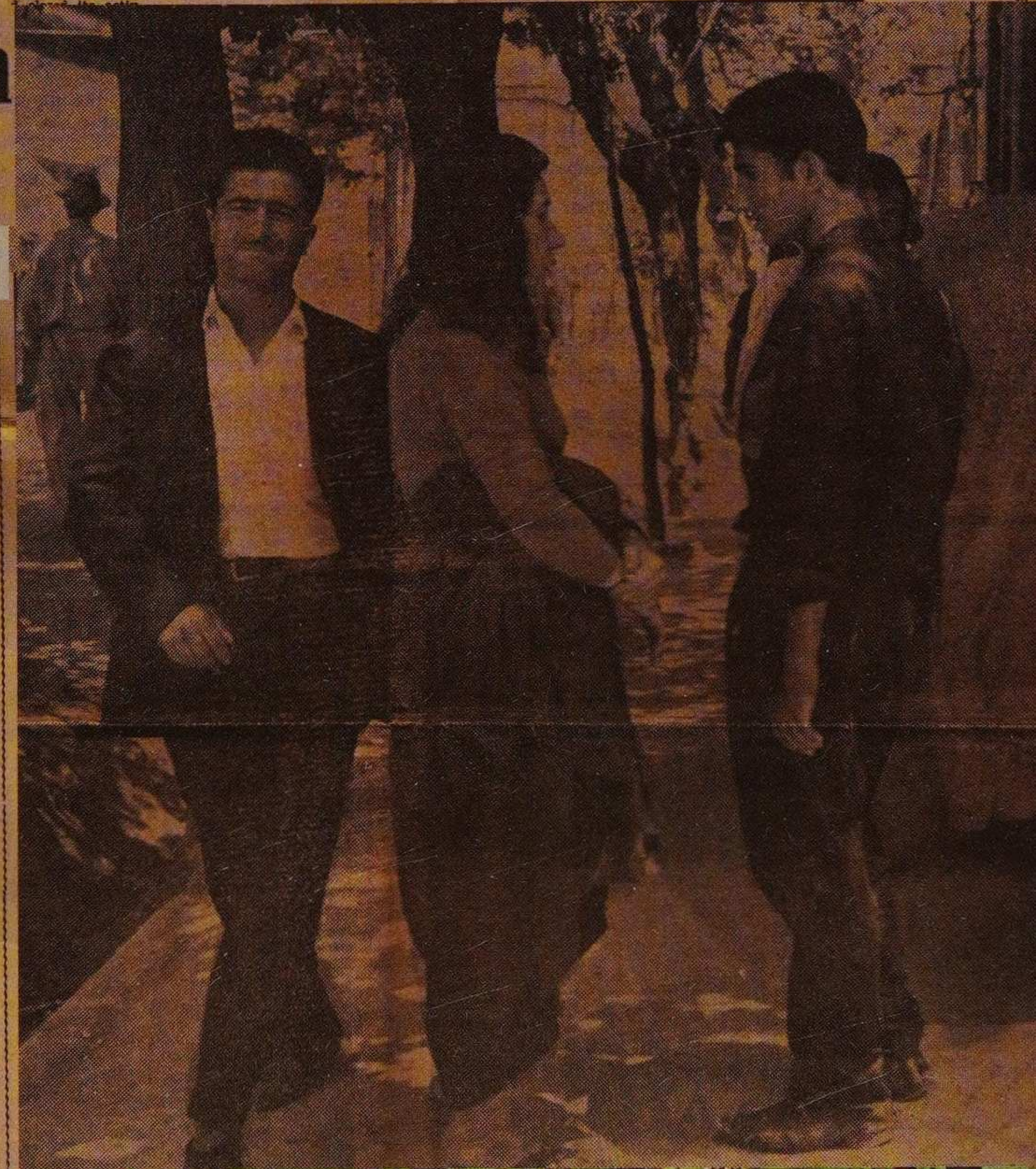
Iran-America Society: 5 p.m.



FOR movies, exhibitions and your Friday What's On see Page 4 of the Tehran Journal.

of money. For e to pay 200 rials kings which would 0. And they have es — they have to inside the district. are to keep them papers for things imulate debts as rials. How can ?"

our years ago, the uted in a rented orking area of the ready to provide a financial difficul-urpose behind its s to give the wo-ty to receive some cation, and possibly change their job. anized in reading, ing, until trouble



# Labors of love yield

## jeweled

## prostitution

### TARGET—The words game

HOW many words of four letters or more can you make from the letters shown here? In making a word, each letter may be used once only. Each word must contain the large letter, and there must be at least one eight-letter word in the list. No plurals; no foreign words; no proper names. TARGET: 38 words, good: 48 words, very good: 58 words, excellent. Solution on Page 8

D	O	T
A	C	
E	R	E



# Poster design

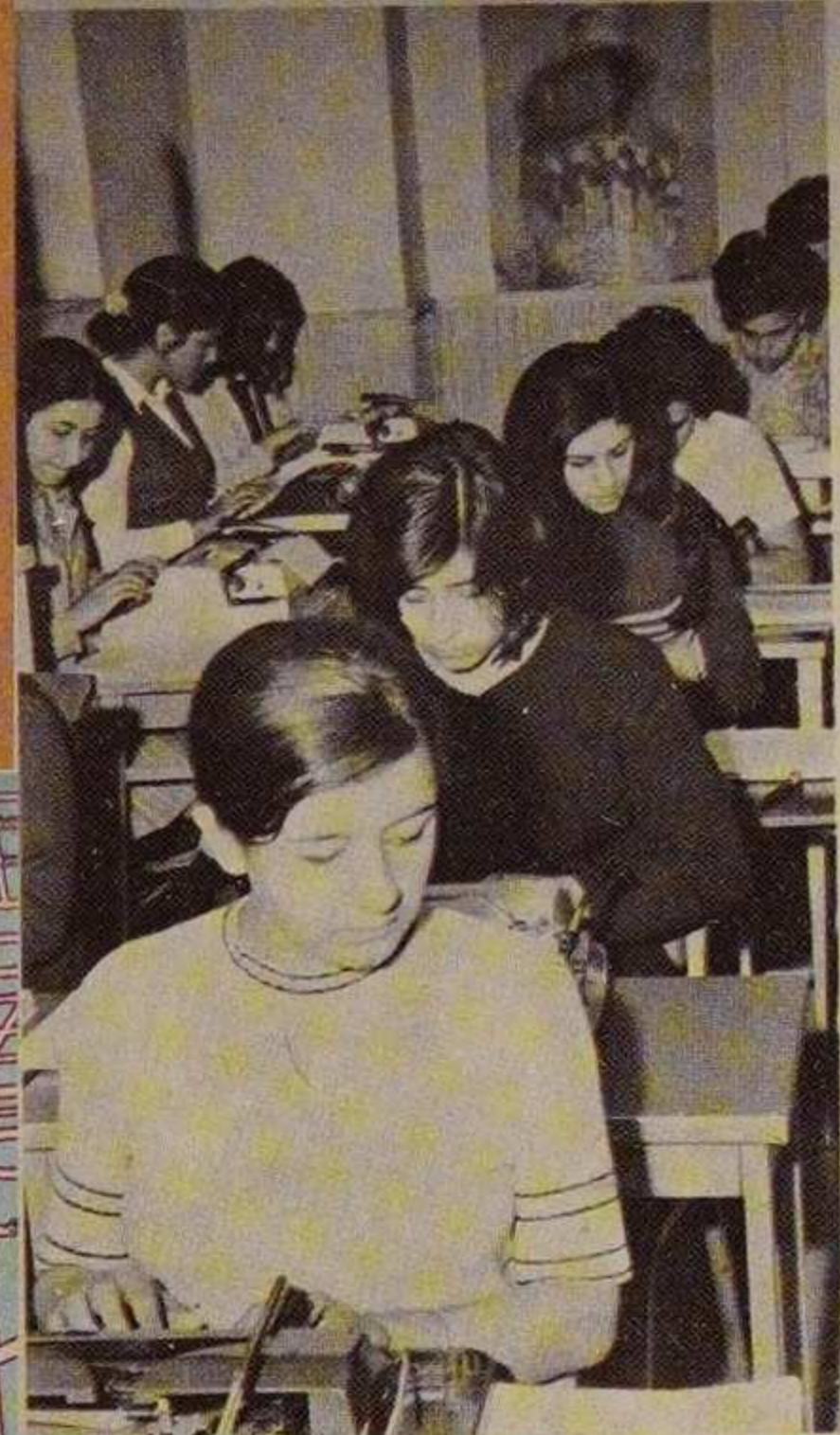


1979, PUNN—Cats with ebony claws and alluring, judging eyes are introduced into several of the paintings. This one in isolation forms a diagonal arch across the picture format.

GARET LETT  
 has an exhibition  
 of paintings by Italian  
 Anselmo cur-  
 showing at the  
 University  
 of Fine Arts.

## Seductive hints and artistic experiment

TEHRAN  
 PREPARES  
 FOR JUMBO  
 JETS



## boosts contraception

April 1974-79

With modern science and social behavior steadily focusing more and more detailed attention on the processes of reproduction and contraception, good design is equally



family unity by holding hands, proclaiming that this particular controlled group is a closed shop with no room for more children.

### PLANNING NEED

FAMILY PLANNING ACCEPTORS IN SIDO CLINICS

Year	Total Patients	Pill	IUD	Condoms	Foam Tablets
1967	27,187	5,373	2,415	489	112
1968	19,219	4,303	1,006	193	163
1969	32,965	13,650	503	222	452



fertility Surveys must play an important role in planning future programs

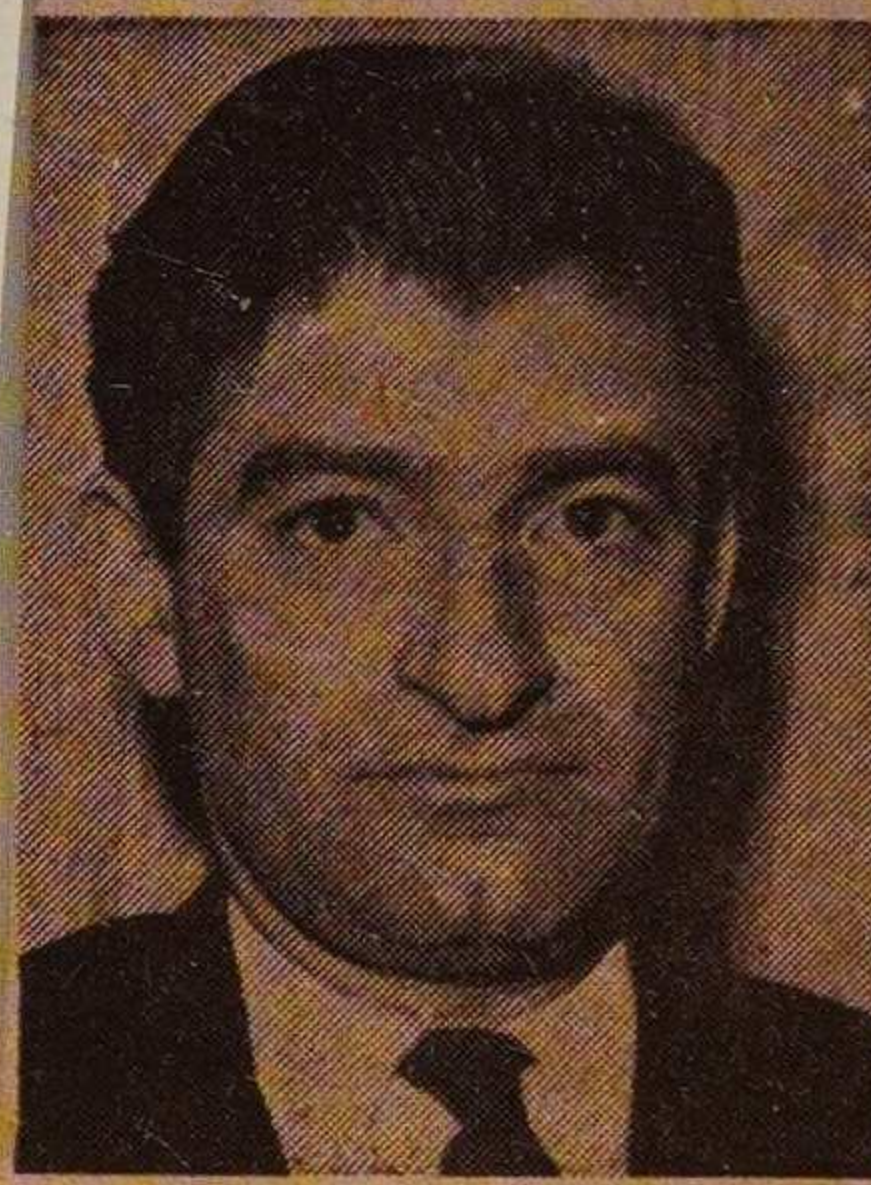
#### The main findings of the survey

- the average number of children per family is 4.66
- the mean interval between births is 2.75 years
- 30.5% of the patients have had abortions in the past
- 1 in 5 women would like more children than they already have
- 59.7% had received their information about family planning from friends.
- 80.2% of the patients prefer pills to other contraceptive methods
- the ideal number of children for the majority of patients was 2
- husbands were consulted by 87% of the wives.

smart hostess  
 should know about  
**SHAHREZA**  
**CONFECTIONERY**  
 Depend your holiday cooking? Let  
**SHAHREZA CONFECTIONERY** cook for  
 your Xmas dinner table will be the  
 talk of the town!



a delightful variety of tasty  
 foreign or Iranian pastries and  
 sweets, try Shahreza  
 Confectionery specializing in  
 cakes for all occasions, such  
 as birthdays, weddings and  
 anniversaries



Mayor Nikpay

## Mayor to wear ceremonial robe

TEHRAN Mayor Gholam Reza Nikpay will soon appear in a new ceremonial robe whenever attending official events and ceremonies. The cashmere robe will be patterned after ceremonial garments worn by 19th century Iranian dignitaries.

Now...  
 Canon Breaks Photography's Oldest Rule



# Melting snow causes havoc, traffic jams

**S**TREAMS of water from melting snow threatened a number of districts in the southern parts of Tehran yesterday and municipal and Fire Department teams were summoned to assist the residents in fighting the danger.

Heavy duty pumps had to be used to free the lower sections of the Amir Kabir Avenue from water threatening to flood the neighboring houses.

Traffic jams and accidents were also reported from various areas of the capital as the snow, which began falling Monday, continued intermittently throughout yesterday.

Municipal units were busy working from early hours yesterday clearing the streets in the Shemiran area to allow traffic to move with-

also reported from the area. Fifty centimeters of snow have covered the Maras road, while the road to Shemshak is closed to traffic completely.

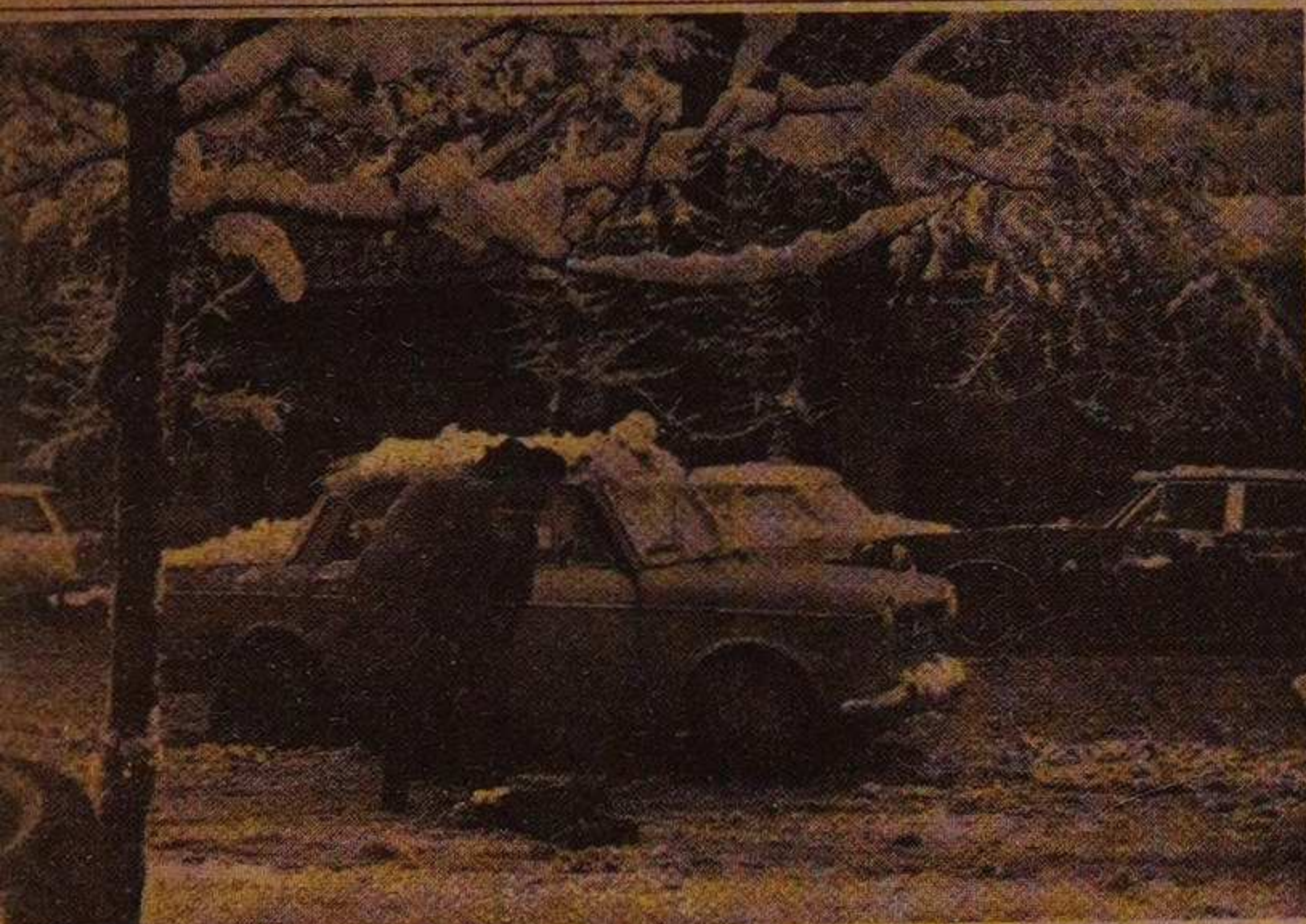
Melting snow caused the collapse of a store in one of Tehran's western districts.

Heavy snow falls and strong winds, with their intensity reaching 84 kilometers an hour, were reported from East and West Azerbaijan. In the Sarashad area, a farmer on his way to a neighboring village froze to death having been caught in a snowstorm.

In the same area a bus driver lost direction because of a heavy snowfall and the passengers had to be rescued by local villagers. Two of the rescued passengers were suffering from frost bites and were given emergency treatment by local Development Corps members.

## Villagers

**SNOW**—The first heavy snow of the season fell in Tehran Monday bringing delight to many, including these girls, and municipal officials and motorists.

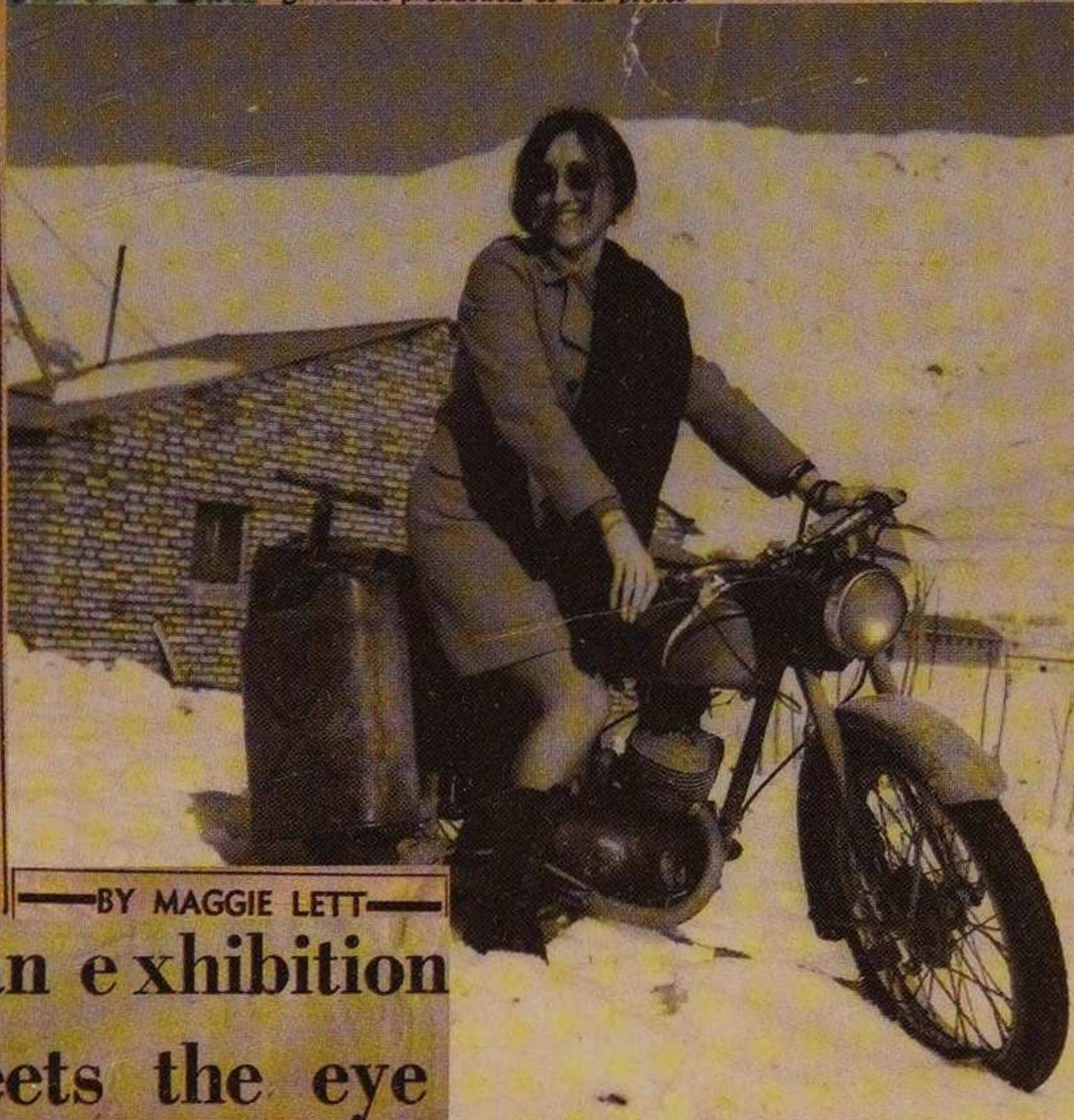


**NOT UNPREPARED**—Scenes like this one were frequent in the northern parts of Tehran yesterday as snow caught many motorists unprepared. Prices of snow chains have reportedly jumped as the dealers to take advantage of the emergency situation.



# to fill spaces on the wall...

**GALLERIES** here are kept busy with a seemingly limitless supply of artists only too anxious to hang their works for public assessment. From the student level at its most elementary, to the devotedly personal creations of the dedicated artists, and across the scale to the glib mass-production of the profes-



—BY MAGGIE LETT—

## ACCARA

Middle East's Number One Night Spot  
With a star-spangled cabaret

HANDEL

and a sterling act

★  
**MIKE BRAND**  
Singing rival to Tom Jones



**WILLIAN & JOURDAN**  
Dancing stars of French T.V.

**AN BASILIO YVETTE**  
One of the craziest of funny men  
Preserving the Eastern Flavor

Please reserve your table in advance at 627780  
Cinema Atlantic Building, Pahlavi Avenue.

There's more to an exhibition than meets the eye

up now or do you want to hang the  
first. In the meantime why don't



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## Artistic cacophony

**L**iterature is as much a part of the visual arts as it is of the written word, and not just as a means of inspiration. Art has its own literature. Witness exhibition catalogues. Witness the jargon used in art reviews. Witness that a movement has been underway for some time in which the most visually mundane paintings are given

only adds

confusion

# Tehran Journal

3 — New Year supplement,

## The dusty years have passed

## in new Tehran

ALONE IN A cloud of dust Mount Towchal, foothills heavy under the burden of man's bricks and mortar, today watched the decade of the disappearing desert pass. Ten years ago it was more



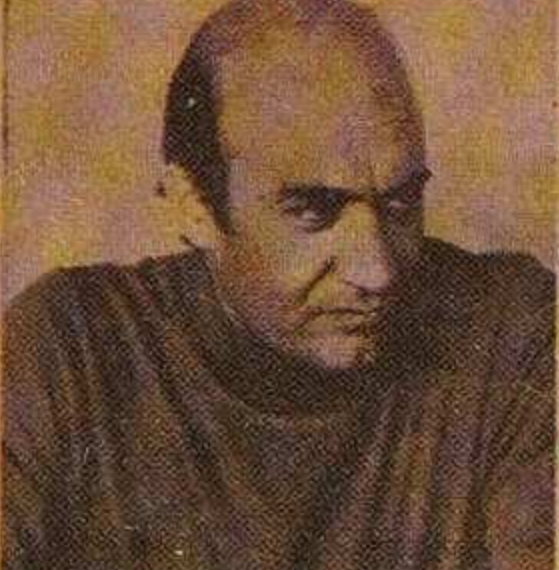
festivals form main feature of the concluding decade

## International culture

## centered on Iran

g of fes-  
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l cultiva-  
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festival of  
l of Arts  
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anian artist  
els the story  
in his work



**PARS DIAM**  
VISCOSITY INDEX 13

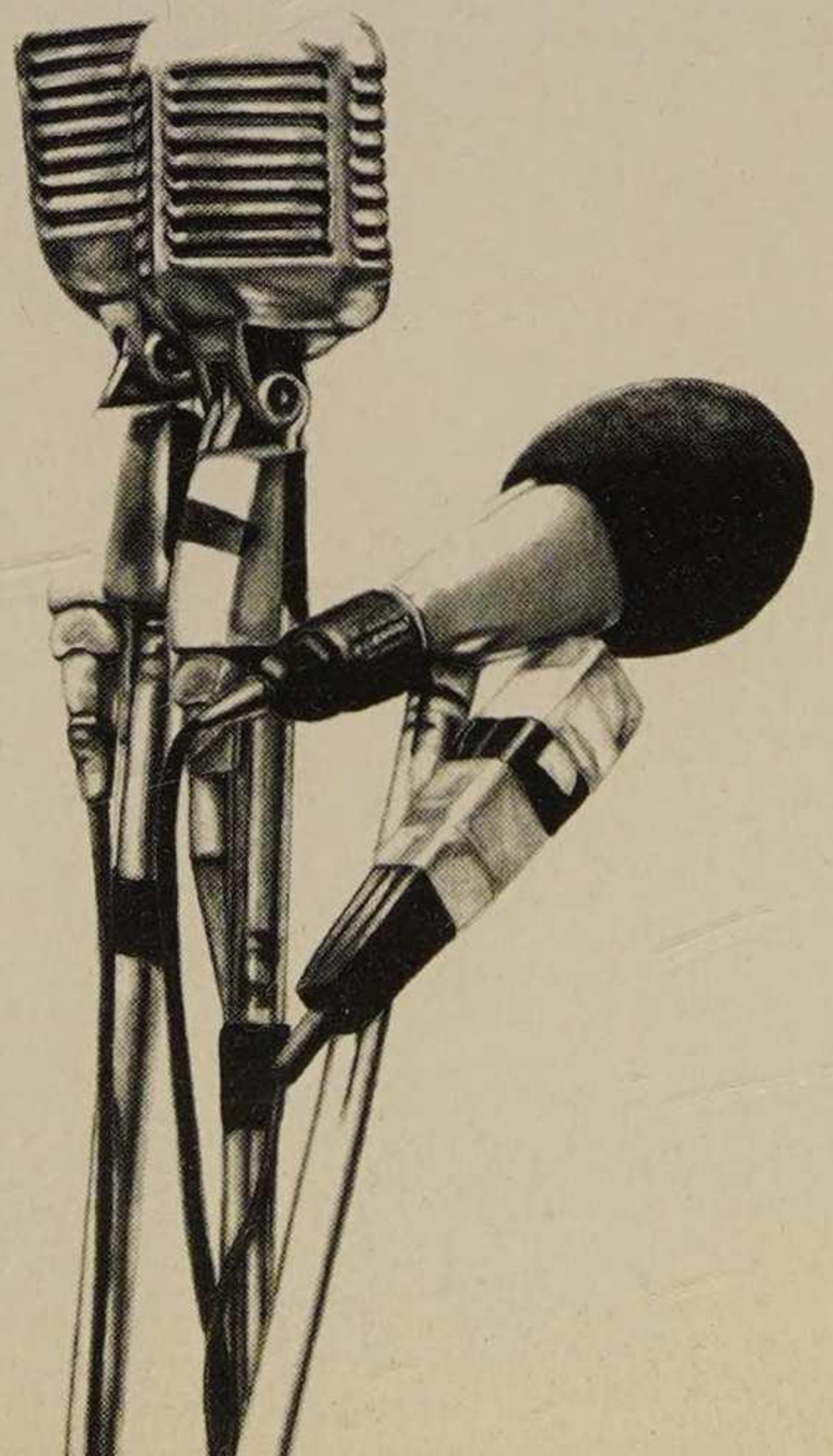
AM MULTIGRADE — PARS DIAM — VISCOSITY INDEX 13

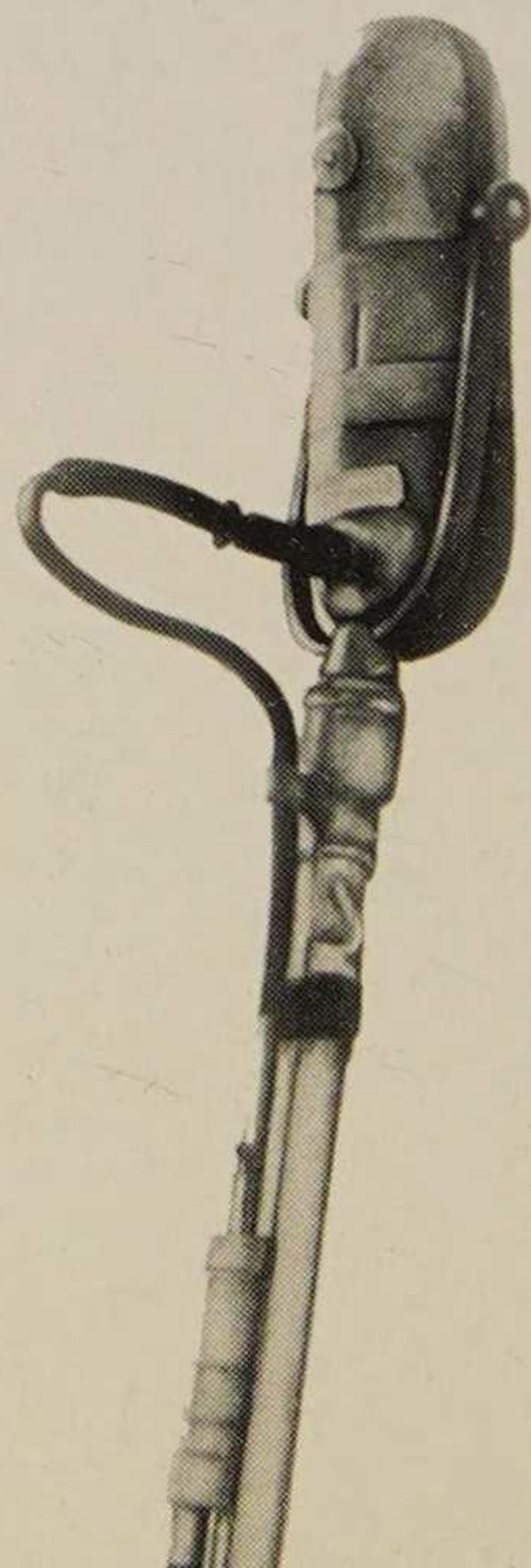
ARS DIAM YOUR ENGINE RUNS WITH THE PRECISION OF



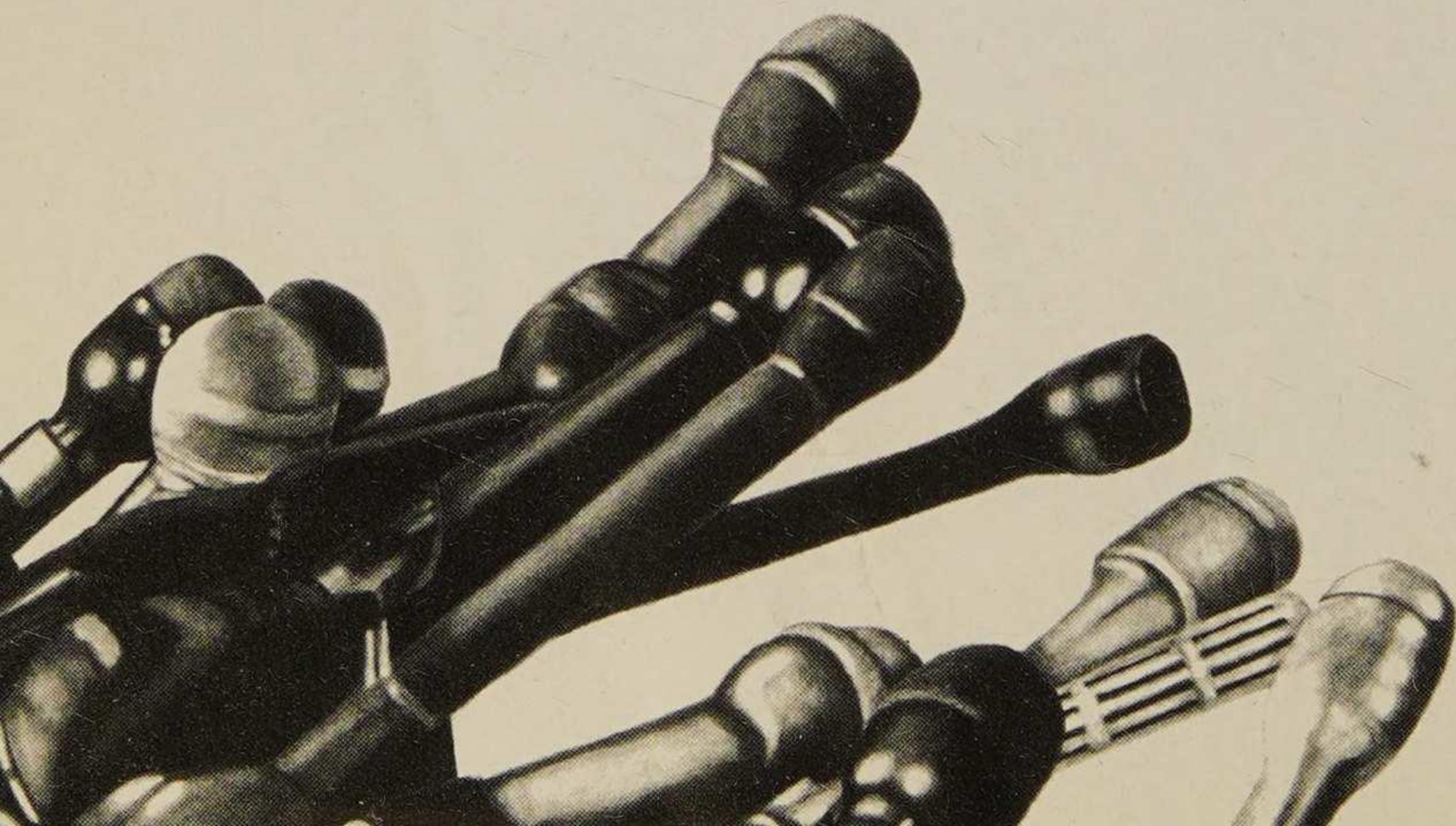
NG THE tea-house traditions and mottled  
of his native Iran. Manouchehr Yektai left  
study painting in the Ecole des Beaux  
a. His tutor was Ozenfant, a close friend  
of Le Corbusier, but for the last  
ektai) has been traveling between the Uni-  
and Europe animating and discerning  
art today. His recent works will be on  
at the Iran-America Society until March

returned to Tehran a year ago to paint  
renewal of his home town, but after this  
he will leave again for London and Zurich.  
of painting, he feels, doesn't comply with  
school. Technically he classifies himself  
not with both abstract expressionists like



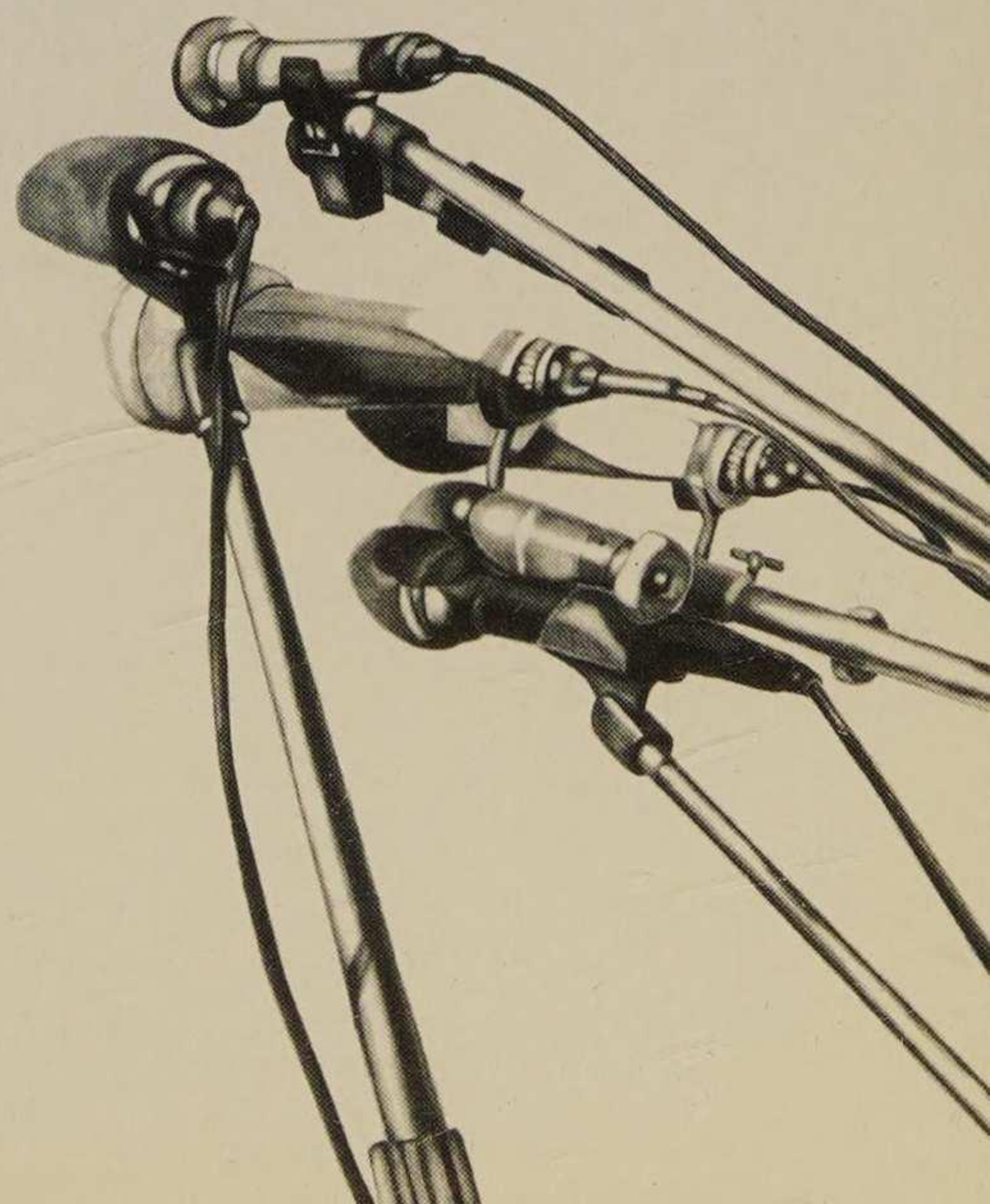














**NOTES  
ON  
TIME**

Douglas Coupland

\*

## DOES TIME FEEL LONGER TO PEOPLE WHO CAN'T READ?

\*

Over the years I've learned that fiction written in the first person voice is 'suspect' – the more retrograde among us considering it the stylistic equivalent of strobe lights and Marshall amps cranked to ten – a devious ploy to manipulate a reader into confusing immediacy with profundity. But then I remember the high I got reading *Less Than Zero* on a beach in Oahu in 1985, or a similar high reading Joan Didion's *Play It As It Lays* in the early 1990s. The present tense is a wonderful tool to convey the essence of the modern world: the absence of a future or past, nothing but a relentless seductive present.

Most people learned to read at a certain speed and once they reach their cruising speed, they stay there for life. I read at the exact same speed I did when I was twelve.

I like radio better than TV because on the radio, you're instantly inside the other person's head. When you're on TV people look at your skin and your make-up and your hair and your clothes, and by the time they're finished doing that, your clip's over and they didn't hear a thing you said. In the same spirit, I prefer books to radio because not only are you in the other person's head, you're in there laying eggs.

But the thing is, when you ask a person to read your book, you're asking them to put the kids to bed, to not have sex, to go somewhere comfortable while ignoring the phone and TV and other stimuli – and even then, it takes people forty pages or so to decide whether they want to continue with you. I get jealous of painting because if you have a good eye, you can see a painting for one millionth of a second and know if it works for you or not, or if it's any good. Books take ages and that cuts both ways.

Skimming is a waste of time. In fiction it obviously kills nuance and mood; in non-fiction it kills the ability to absorb factual information, let alone savour prose style. I think that the biggest scam in the academic world is the yellow and pink highlighter pens people use for studying. Nobody ever goes back and rereads something they've highlighted. All those pens do is give you absolution of guilt for the fact that you have no plans whatsoever to go return to what you've highlighted. It's skim enablement and a fraudulent way of giving people the illusion of saving time.

Most people between 25 and 45 read only a fraction of the books they buy, assuming they bought books in the first place. A dirty secret of the publishing world is that, with only a few exceptions, men stop reading fiction altogether in their thirties and forties, women less so. Reason? No time.

A few years ago I had to give a speech at the Vienna Literary Festival. Its theme that year was money, so that's what I talked about. I started out by saying that it was a pleasure to

be in Vienna, 'The place where the subconscious was invented.' I let that sink in for a second, and then I said, 'Excuse me, I meant to say that it's a pleasure to visit the place where the subconscious was discovered.' I like to think of the subconscious as being very much like Antarctica. It was only really approached and explored in the late 19th Century. It's very difficult and expensive to visit, and even then we're unsure of its long-term value or even if it was worth the visit. It only seems to create worry and trouble: ozone holes; Oedipus complexes.

As for money, I said that the thing that makes human beings different from any other thing in the universe is that we have a perception of time's passing and we have free will. I think that money is simply this device we've created that allows us to crystallise those two specifically human attributes. Free will without time in which to exercise it is pointless. Time without free will is a universe without hope.

I began to think about life, and about how our lives can seem so plotless and formless, and how this makes us desperately feel the need to be part of a grander story. And I got thinking about writers – how all writers know when they're about to finish a book – the last chapter, the last paragraph, the penultimate sentence, the final sentence and then the final words,

THE END.

And then I got to thinking that there has to be some sort of psychic compression that happens in a writer's brain when they know they're about to hit that final wall. Surely all writers must crystallise something out of themselves that they hadn't expected – a diamond has to be left behind, even a microscopic diamond.

And so I drove to the library. I went into the fiction section, got a book cart and I selected a hundred novels at random. I took them to the photocopier and copied the final two pages of each. I stapled them together and then took them home and I read them all.

Did I find any diamonds at the end of all those books? I don't know. I did find that the one thing many story endings have in common is that when they end, the narrator is moving either towards or away from light or darkness – literally – carrying candles into dark rooms or running a red light at an intersection.

### GLOVE POND: STEVE

Steve walked towards the light of the main commercial strip — speed-walked, really — past a cluster of teen thugs igniting Roman candles, then around a street corner, where he found a car on fire, a Hyundai, its burning core so bright that the coloured houses surrounding it shone white. The night was still, and the smoke from the car rose in a perfect column, its flames almost silent, sounding like a balloon with a slow leak. Steve followed the plume upwards with his eyes, and behind it he saw klieg lights from a theatre a half-mile away — a premiere! What better place to find Gloria? As he walked to the theatre, dozens of police cars raced past him, their cherries flashing, their sirens muted.

By the time he reached the theatre the premiere was over and the klieg lights had been switched off with a volley of electrical poundings. The street was dark. Steve decided to continue his search into the centre of town. When his eyes readjusted to the night, they were filled with saturated neons from store signage and a continuous stream of car lights, those sturdy white and red beacons. Inside a restaurant, he saw tables covered in white linen and burning votive candles, and a set of triplets sharing a birthday cake that was alive with dozens of blazing white sparklers. He looked to his right, and there was Gloria, standing there too, watching the triplets and their cake and their white light. She was crying, but Steve said, “Gloria, don’t cry. There’s no need to cry at all.” He put his arm around her and said, “Come with me. I want to take you somewhere.”

“Where?”

“It’s a surprise.”

Steve took Gloria around the corner, where a fountain was shimmering with candy-coloured lighting, and said, “Over there, across the plaza —” and Gloria asked, “What’s that?” and Steve replied, “Let’s find out.”

It was a white building, lit from below like a cake in a movie, a cake from which a titanic chorus girl might at any moment explode.

“Come inside,” said Steve.

Gloria looked over and saw a plaque indicating that they were entering a planetarium. “Steve,” she said, “what is this about?”

“Shush.” He took her by the shoulder and, while the staff wasn’t

looking, they slipped past a burgundy velvet cord and down into a long, dark, muffled hallway. "Through here," he said, and they opened a door and walked into a universe pure and clean, the stars like puddles of baby formula spilled across the heavens. They were the only two people in the planetarium, and Steve asked Gloria to sit down beside him, and so she did. From within the planetarium's central apparatus a cog whirred and a lens twirled and the central projectors sprang to life. Steve took Gloria's hand, felt how cold the rings were on her fingers. Together, they watched a swath of northern lights dash across the universe.

Steve turned to Gloria and said, "What if it turned out that you and I weren't even human — what if it turned out that you and I came from some other planet, far away? What if it turned out that you and I were aliens, different from everyone else on the planet, and that everything we did was thus supernatural and profound — even the smallest of our daily acts would be filled with grace and wonder and hope — wouldn't that be something!"

"It would," said Gloria.

"And what if we threw away everything we have now — our house, our books, our stove, our carpets, our *dust* — and we started again somewhere new, cut ourselves away from the past and headed into the unknown like a space rocket — wouldn't that be something?"

"I'd like that very much, Steve. That *would* be something."

Steve heard only his breathing and Gloria's. The stars kept their silence. Steve nudged Gloria, "Look, it's the Big Dipper."

"It is."

"And over there — Orion."

"Yes, it is."

"You know, Gloria —"

"Hush, Steve."

"Why, my love?"

"Because sometimes words can kill what it is we have right now."

"But, Gloria, I don't think I've ever told you this as such, but I think you're very ... *beautiful*."

Gloria squeezed Steve's hand, and then Steve remembered something he'd kept in his trouser pocket all day but had forgotten. "Good God, how could I forget something so simple?" He reached into his pocket and removed a small package, and then held an offering up to Gloria. "Gloria, my dear — *gum*?"

\*

## AND WHAT ABOUT THE UNIVERSE?

\*

Sometimes the future really does feel like the future. I was in Austin, Texas a few months ago and there were people driving along the streets in Segways like it was nothing. They were stopping at red lights and driving alongside cars and I thought, *Yes! 2007 feels the way 2007 ought to feel like!*

Last week I was at a colleague's house writing a TV script with a group of people. I drowsed off on the couch and when I opened my eyes, everybody was using wireless Macs to go online, they were checking messages and talking on PDAs and there was a plasma TV on mute above the fireplace. It felt futuristic in the right way. Futuristic actually seems like a dumb word. It felt *futuric*.

I remember visiting the Rocky Mountains and seeing Banff and these huge slabs and tusks popping out from the prairie – a magnificent achievement in itself – but then also seeing the tusks being made by layers of sediment. So, basically, before the billions of years it took to pop the Rockies out of nowhere, another few billion years of sedimentation were required. California will join together with Alaska in a hundred million years. I have heard that if you pointed a camera at Los Angeles and took one frame every thousand years, it would look as if the ground was boiling like water.

\*

In high school in the 1970s I worked at the Chevron off the Trans-Canada freeway in West Vancouver. That was back when cars were simpler and we could easily take them apart and reassemble them. The engine of my current car resembles a photocopier. I have no idea what's going on inside.

I used to always enjoy working weekends, Sunday in particular, because while everybody else was out there doing nothing, I got to work. Working on Sundays was for me a repudiation of all the religious nonsense that had kept the world a disaster since year zero.

Nearly 30 years later I bought a house not far from the Chevron. In those intervening years, the gas station has remained almost entirely unchanged, except the service bays are now a car wash, and bottled water and snack foods are sold up front. I find this lack of change disturbing. I think it's because the stasis implies that once I'm gone, the pumps will still be there, and they'll be there for long after that. So what ended up being a form of secular communion – gassing up the cars and replacing a gasket on a Chevy Malibu on Sunday afternoons – ended up being a backward trap that forced me to face death. I can't drive by the place now without thinking of my own mortality, or of light bulbs being replaced in the year 2056 and maybe a logo change in the year 2102. I think I'd unwittingly used modernism (in the form of corporate ownership and politely maintained retail apparatus) as a foil against facing the inevitable.

The Hope Landslide. In January of 1965, a rockslide of millions of tons of rock fell onto a stretch of the Trans-Canada highway just east of the BC town of Hope. It covered an area the size of a medium-sized city 60 meters deep and buried three kilometers of the highway below. Five years later while on a hunting trip with my father we circumvented the slide on the new road built around the bottom perimeter, and I remember asking him, 'Were there people on the highway?'

'Yes.'

'And were they buried?'

'Yes.'

'And were they ever found?'

'No. Not all of them.'

'Is anybody going to try?'

'No. They're basically inside the mountain now.'

So in my head, there are these people who've been trapped inside crushed campers or Cutlasses or Volkswagens – a vast parking lot of vehicles, even though the real number was four. These people will remain crushed inside those vehicles, in all probability (and a very scientific sense of the term) until the end of time.

I sometimes wonder what thoughts must have past through the heads of the early European settlers when they confronted this new landscape. More likely than not, they were the unwanted discards of their own homeland's social history. Maybe they thought they'd escaped history once and for all – coming to a world they thought was brand new, only to arrive and find that the New World was actually far older than anything they could have ever bargained for back home.

I also wonder what the Canadian landscape will look like in a billion years. People will be long gone by then. Life, too, I suspect. Most every human trace will have been crushed or eroded – cities and canals and every coffin on the planet. But those skeletons inside their Volkswagens or Cutlasses or camper vans will still be there, exactly where they are right now. They bind us to the future. They're time made frozen.

The local shopping mall where I grew up is called Park Royal. It was Canada's first mall in 1950, and is possibly Canada's ugliest mall. Every decade since its inception, Park Royal has clumsily tacked on an already dated chunk of new mall onto the old mall, with no regard for beauty. Modernism meets brutalism meets postmodernism meets Disney. It's an abortion. It's a *Frankenmall*. One of the stores in the mall is called Future Shop and was once owned by a guy who lived nearby. Because of this he somehow (and we'll never know how) managed to get several massive red signs saying Future Shop stuck onto the mall, so that the first thing you get when you cross the bridge into West Vancouver is a fist full of ugliness punching you in the face. I was driving Pierre Huyghe across the bridge into West Van a few years back and he thought it fascinating that the single biggest thing he's seen in Vancouver was a group of signs saying Future Shop. I was embarrassed for my city. It was like we had a chance to select a utopian future and instead we chose the stupid ugly awful future.

I remember when Mount Saint Helens erupted in 1980 – what was so weird about the event wasn't so much that a volcano erupted, but rather, that a volcano erupted *while human beings were around to see and record it*. As with the Hope Slide, it's so rare to have geological time and human time overlap so neatly.

Geological time is something Canadians have to confront more aggressively than most other countries. Other countries have volcanoes and earthquakes, which are, in one sense, brief Earth-pimples. In Canada, geological time works the other way. In Canada, time has been around forever. Canadians flying over the land see lakes scoured into its surface by countless ice-ages and granite tongues of lava left over from the birth of the world. Canadians fly over the Rockies and see a billion years of time crystallised, then smashed in the form of jagged mountains. A friend of my family runs a ranch in Alberta, and when he tills his fields, dinosaur bones come up from the blades. Europe and China may have castles and the Great Wall, but Canada has all this evidence of raw bulk time – time before history, and time before life itself. The scale of geological time's sweep across the nation is so vast and unremitting that it can really render human time depressingly minute in comparison.

I have trouble with Europe because the very old and the very new are forced to coexist. I come from a scorched earth New World mentality where virgin nature is modernised into submission, or where anything emitting a faint whiff of age is demolished and replaced with something that will also become quickly forgotten when *it* is demolished further down the road.

The New World versus the Old World is a theme I've always found interesting. People in the Old World see human history as a continuum in which they, as living beings, participate for a short while, with the full knowledge that the continuum will go on long after them. The New Worlders see human history as a glamorous ever-steepening slope in which they are constantly being elevated into some great, glorious, unprecedented unknown that may, at any moment, explode in a thrilling, Armageddon-ish explosion. *Woohoo!*

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At the very least I get very jealous and angry when I think of the fact that I'll never see the future play out much past 2037. I want to know how it all ends! And notice how I instinctively used the phrase, 'how it all ends'? I'm a New Worlder.

\*

**DOES TIME FEEL LONGER TO ANIMALS BECAUSE THEY  
DON'T HAVE WORDS TO ORGANISE THEIR EXPERIENCES?**

\*

Humans are also the only animals that count and use numbers. And while it seems second nature to us now, it took thousands of years for counting to evolve, and if you were to take a tribe of humans, put them on an island and form a clan and a culture, chances are they'd never invent counting. Out of all of human history it's taken a few rare and influential geeks to get the rest of us counting. I once did a book where I did twenty solid pages of random numbers and another twenty pages of  $\pi$ . I was surprised when I spoke with adult interviewees, male and female equally, who said they hated and resented numbers and did everything they could in life to avoid using them. I found this shocking.

$\pi$  wallpaper

Everything we count as progress in this world – pharmaceuticals, computing – comes from understanding what happens to very very very tiny things: atoms, viruses and increments of time.

Jet travel is a wonderful laboratory into time. A ten hour flight forces you to deal with a finite unalterable chunk of time. With military efficiency it forces you to confront your feeding cycle, your sleep cycle and your brain's need for stimulus.

I think everyone has their time idiosyncrasies. Mine is my inability to adjust for jet lag when flying eastward.

I've read of studies where people were put in underground caves for months without being told anything of what's going on up above. It turns out humans are built with a 25-hour clock, not a 24-hour clock, and every day of our lives is like daylight saving as we try and go to sleep on time to get to work on time.

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If I lose even one hour of sleep a night, I might as well not wake up the next day. I'm underwater, I make bad decisions, I can't enjoy anything I do and the day seems endless. In fact, it's a wasted day that counts as a blank in the scheme of life.

I think your age ought to be based on how much you sleep. People like me who take every possible minute of sleep they can, are losing out on a lot of life to the tune of nine hours a day. By the calendar I'm 46, but in real time I'm not even 29. Here's the math:

$$(24-9) \times 46 = 28.$$

People like Picasso who only slept for four hours a night got much more time value for their life.

I've always thought that the best pills scientists could ever invent would be pills called TimePlus and TimeMinus. If you took TimePlus, there'd be no immediate effect, but at

the end of a year you'd say to yourself, 'Hot damn! That year really felt like a year! The way time did when I was a kid!' Conversely, TimeMinus would accelerate your perception of time's passage. 'Is it Christmas already?' People in prison could take TimeMinus daily. People having a good time of things could take TimePlus.

I suppose that alcohol is a very primitive form of TimeMinus, but I don't think we have even the most primitive approximation of TimePlus.

One quirky aspect of time is 'the coincidence'. We've all had them, and most people usually remember two or three in their lives that defy explanation. My way of thinking is that given the infinite number of coincidences that could happen, it's sort of odd that we get as few coincidences as we do. Maybe a better way of looking at it, is to understand that every single moment of time is itself a coincidence, and those events that we label coincidences are merely those moments when the peaks and troughs of time's architecture managed to puncture our consciousness.

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Whenever I fill up a tank of gas I like to pretend that four digit price indicator is actually a widget on the dashboard of a cosmic time machine. You start out at 0 BC/AD and zoom through the Dark Ages, the Renaissance, the Industrial Revolution, The Beatles, eBay and then *fwingggg!* you're catapulted into the unknown of tomorrow courtesy of Chevron.

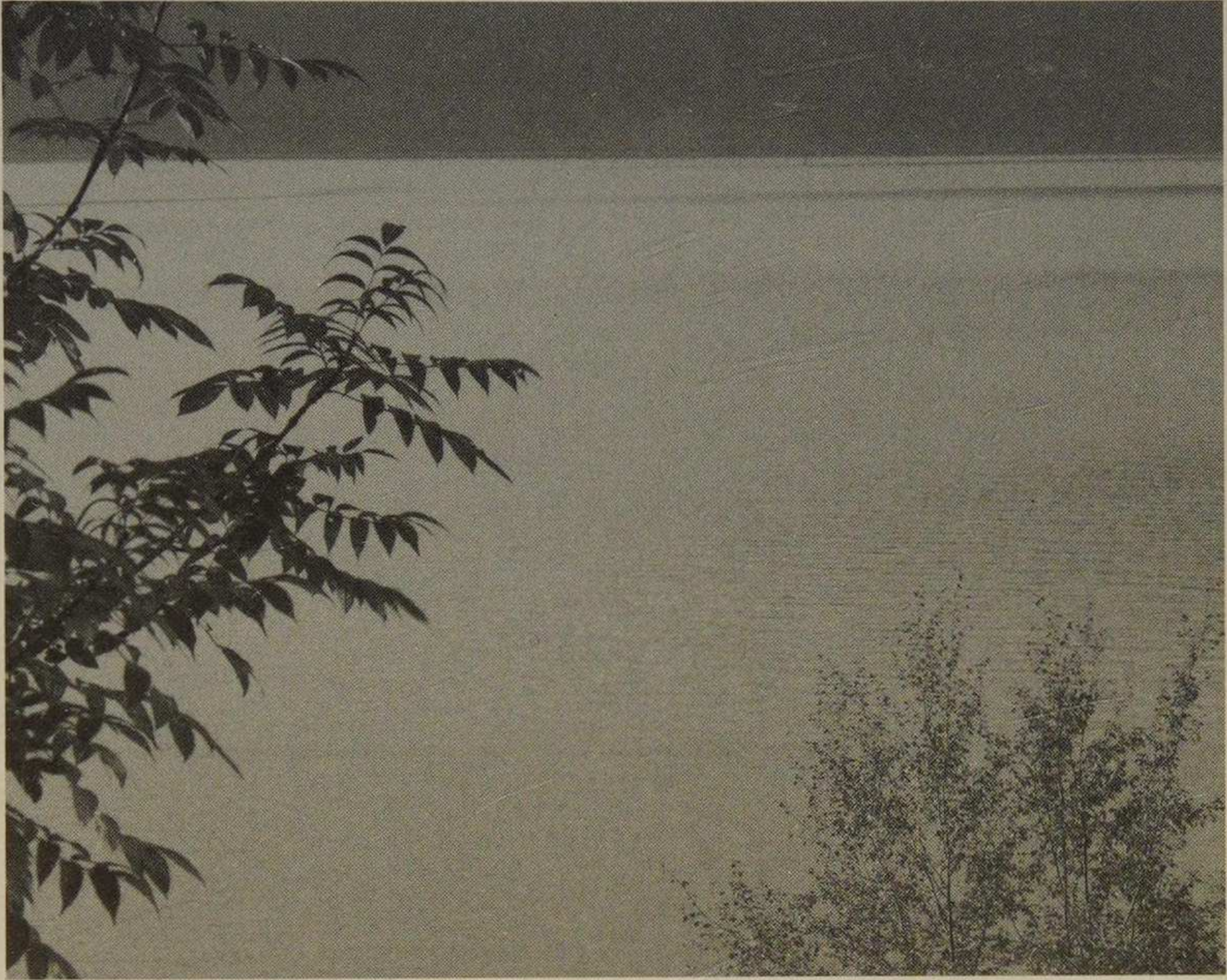
Before gas prices started sky-rocketing in 2005, the price of gas to fill the Audi's tank was near to \$20.37... Or the year 2037, the year I decided on, at the age of ten, that I would die in. Every fill-up was a game of chicken with fate, with death. I once read that Michael Jackson did the same thing as me when he was young – except he decided that he was going to die in 1998, not 2037. So whenever I see his face now, in a small part I see the face of someone who is genuinely baffled by still being alive, the face of someone who had no Plan B on hand to cope with mortal existence.

Sometimes when I'm throwing trash into the trash can I'll take an apple core and put it into a Ziploc bag, seal the bag, and then throw it all away. In my head I'm seeing two visions of the future: one in with the apple decomposed shortly after being tossed – and another where the Ziploc bag becomes a time capsule, the core inside mummifying rather than decomposing – cheating time. I feel guilty doing this. I feel guilty throwing away

anything that I know is going to take millions of years to disintegrate. I think it's weird people get buried in coffins. Coffins are like Ziploc bags – unnecessary time thwarting devices.

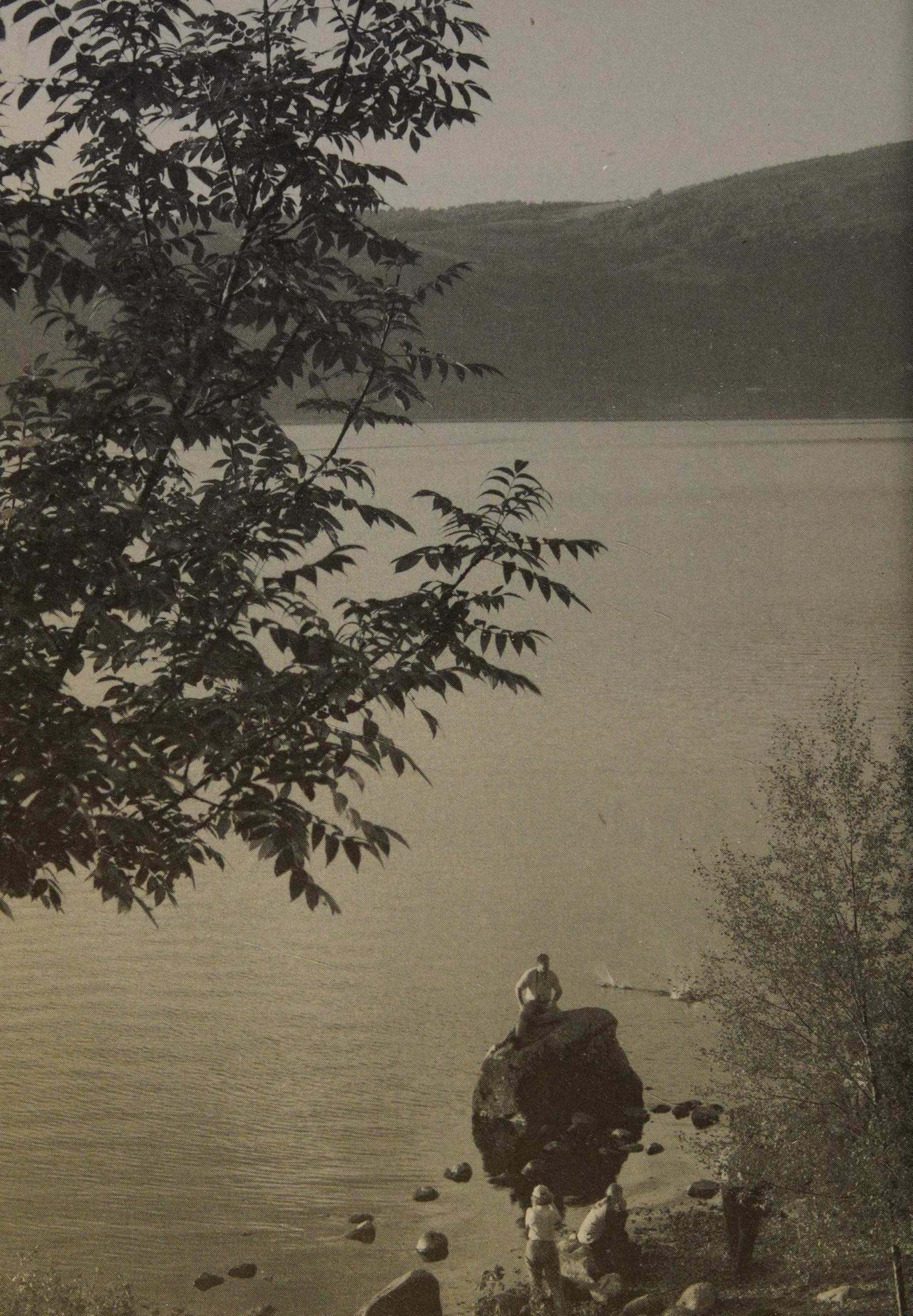
It's hard to watch the really big movie stars age and die. It's bizarre when the stars of one's youth become old, have children, and then the children get old and they all make messes of their lives. It's hard to grow old in a modern world where everything remains shiny and sleek and fresh while you don't.

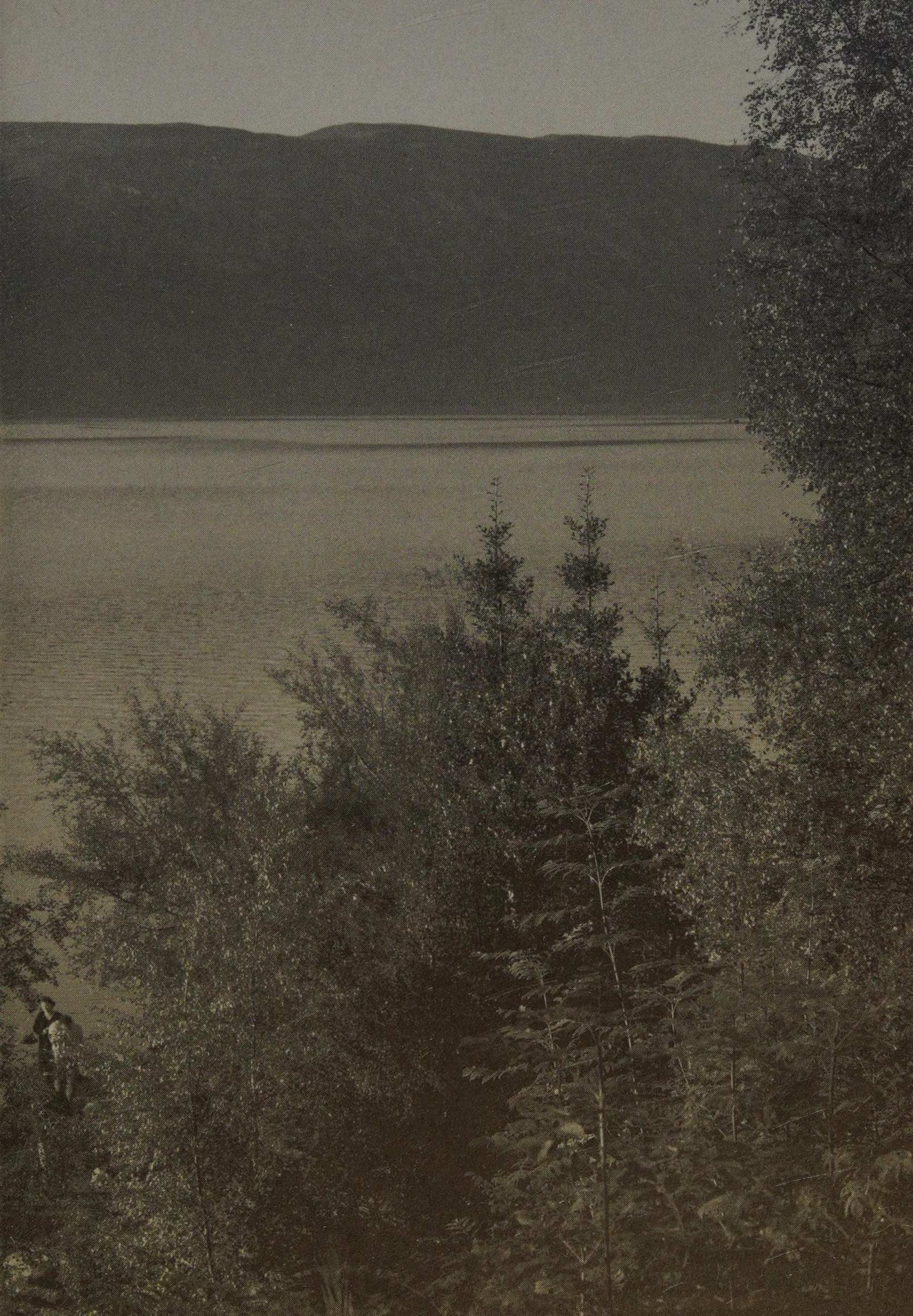
Talking about your own death creates a small time rupture inside your head. It forces you to contemplate a time when you'll no longer be anywhere. For example, will I be dead or alive as you, dear reader, read these words? Will this very paragraph have tricked you into contemplating the fact that you will, within a relatively tiny number of years, also be dead? Whoops! Our culture, to me, seems designed precisely to avoid asking this specific question.



# A photograph and some possible captions

Gerard Byrne





11.45am on the 22 June 1971<sup>1</sup>  
30 September 1965 at about 6.45am<sup>2</sup>  
a solitary black hump, moving slowly through the water.<sup>3</sup>  
He said it was no motor boat  
the day was calm and clear  
mechanically created noise would have been obvious  
  
yet no such noise was heard.<sup>4</sup>  
Some kind of large fish<sup>5</sup>  
Large black hump<sup>6</sup>  
a living object and not a mechanically propelled vessel<sup>7</sup>  
The shock caused her to scream  
the animal instantly submerged.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Claimed time of a sighting by Mr and Mrs William Dewar, whilst driving on the A82 towards Fort Augustus.

<sup>2</sup> Claimed time at which Vivianne and Edward Elliot noticed a mysteriously large wash on the Loch surface.

<sup>3</sup> Description of John Cameron, a local farmer, 25 December 1933.

<sup>4</sup> Interpretation of events of Kenneth Cottier, whilst driving with others, near Drumnadrochit, Good Friday, 4 April 1947.

<sup>5</sup> Considered opinion of Dom Dieckhoff, Russian émigré Monk at Fort Augustus Benedictine Monastery.

<sup>6</sup> From the account of Jimmy Burnett and a party of schoolchildren, 7 March 1996.

<sup>7</sup> Dom Dieckhoff's account of his first sighting, 30 August 1934.

<sup>8</sup> From the chronology of events recounted by Lena Holmgren, that took place around 10.30am, on 20 June 1966.

About 12 noon  
on the 13 November 1951<sup>1</sup>, at a distance of about 200 yards  
two distinct humps<sup>2</sup>  
something like a couple of ducks<sup>3</sup>  
not anything like a porpoise or a walrus or a whale,  
which have been suggested.<sup>4</sup>

For all the world like a submarine submerging<sup>5</sup>  
without warning  
the black-coloured humps sank from view<sup>6</sup>  
black and smooth<sup>7</sup>  
dark brown to black in colour.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Alleged time of a sighting by Colonel Patrick Grant, owner of Knockie Lodge, whilst driving North from Fort Augustus.

<sup>2</sup> As recollected by Dale Bussell OBE, Director of Contracts for the Admiralty, whilst driving with S. Hunter Gordon along the shoreline at Brachla, June 1939.

<sup>3</sup> Initial impressions of the Lowrie family, whilst cruising on the yacht Finola near Aldourie, 4.15pm, 7 August 1960.

<sup>4</sup> Clarification of William Urwick Goodbody, proprietor of the Invergarry House Hotel and member of the Ness Fishing District Board, of his reported sighting, whilst driving with his daughters along the North Shore about two miles East of Fort Augustus, around noon, 30 December 1933.

<sup>5</sup> Analogy of Andrew Gordon, of what he saw near Urquhart Castle, just after 8pm, 5 August 1934.

<sup>6</sup> Eye-witness report of Master James Dawson, 9 August 1964.

<sup>7</sup> Interpretation provided by Mr and Mrs Grummet, of what they perceived, at around 11.20am, 4 September 1968.

<sup>8</sup> Description by William Campbell, of the second of three alleged sightings he had in July 1934. This one was around 12 noon, 25 July 1934.

At a distance of about 200 yards, two distinct humps<sup>1</sup>  
single  
motionless,  
dark-coloured<sup>2</sup>  
misperception of a young roe deer.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Recollection of Dale Bussell, OBE, Director of Contracts for the Admiralty, June 1939.

<sup>2</sup> Description given by Mr and Mrs Roland Eames, 17 May 1964.

<sup>3</sup> Explanation of the sighting of Greta Family, August 1952.

Inconclusive because of the distance of the object  
from the camera: 3,864 feet<sup>1</sup>  
goat-like in appearance  
two stumps resembling a sheeps broken horns  
the eyes  
mere slits, similar to the eye of a darning needle  
a swelling  
resembling a fowl with a full crop.<sup>2</sup>  
It had the gait of an elephant  
but looked like a cross  
between a very large horse  
and a camel.<sup>3</sup>  
What she filmed  
was not  
a man-made object.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Excerpt from the JARIC report analysing the nine seconds of 16mm film footage shot by Elizabeth Hall of the Loch Ness Investigation Bureau at Achnahannet, 1 August 1965.

<sup>2</sup> Descriptive analysis of Patrick Grant, one of 20 unemployed local men recruited to form an expedition under the direction of Sir Edward Mountain, Chairman of the Eagle Star and British Dominion Insurance Company, and Captain James Fraser of Inverness, the Company's publicity manager. The 20 men stood watch at the Loch-side from 9am to 5pm five days a week for five weeks, in an attempted blanket saturation of the area.

<sup>3</sup> L. Fordyce's testimony of an encounter whilst driving between Foyers and Fort Augustus, sometime in April 1932. Fordyce's study was published *Scots Magazine*, in 1981.

<sup>4</sup> Avowal of Margaret Edwards, an Inverness housewife, who filmed something large and solid in the waters near Abriachan, sometime in 1966.

The evening of 30 January 1934<sup>1</sup>  
9.20am, on 6 August 1969<sup>2</sup>  
28 February 1960, at about 3.30pm<sup>3</sup>  
a floating island<sup>4</sup>  
at least as big as a coach<sup>5</sup>  
this was no whale  
because  
just beyond the foremost hump was another and  
no whale on earth ever had two distinct humps<sup>6</sup>  
a camel<sup>7</sup>  
a hedgehog<sup>8</sup>  
a serpent with a horses head<sup>9</sup>  
a large lump of water-logged peat floating around  
the Loch.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Around 6.25pm, claimed time of a sighting by Howard Carson, engineer, whilst walking on the hills above Dores, Inverness.

<sup>2</sup> Claimed time of a sighting by Mr and Mrs Geoffrey Craven.

<sup>3</sup> Claimed time of a sighting by Torquil Mcleod, whilst driving his car from Invermoriston to Fort Augustus.

<sup>4</sup> Richard Franck, *Northern Memoirs, Calculated for the Meridian of Scotland*. Wherein most or all of the Cities, Citadels, Seaports, Castles, Forts, Fortresses, Rivers and Rivulets are compendiously described. Together with choice collections of various discoveries, remarkable observations, theological notions, political axioms, national intrigues, polemick inferences, contemplations, speculations, and several curious and industrious inspections, lineally drawn from antiquaries, and other noted and intelligible persons of honour and eminency. To which is added, the Contemplative and Practical Angler, by way of diversion. With a narrative of that dextrous and mysterious art experimented in England, and perfected in more remote and solitary parts of Scotland. By way of dialogue. Writ in the year 1658, but not till now made publick, by Richard Franck, Philanthorpus. Plures mecat gula quam gladius. London, Printed for the Author. To be sold by Henry Mortclock, at the Phenix, in St. Paul's Church-yard. 1694. pp. xxxix. 304. 80; then Edinburgh: Archibald Constable. 1821.

<sup>5</sup> Account of Mr Forbes, Manager of the National Bank, Inverness, reported in the *Inverness Courier*, July 1957.

<sup>6</sup> Account of Captain William Brodie of Leith, Scotland, Skipper of the Arrow. Reported in *The Scotsman*, 30 August 1938.

<sup>7</sup> Description of Mrs Margaret Cameron, aged 15, 1919.

<sup>8</sup> Account of Mr William Campbell, 25 July 1934.

<sup>9</sup> Commentary of Andy Call, Inverness County Council employee.

<sup>10</sup> Proposed elucidation of Professor D.M.Watson, University College London, 1933.

Three dark humps in the water at a distance of 300 yards<sup>1</sup>  
single motionless, dark-coloured  
15 foot hump<sup>2</sup>  
dark-brown shade, lighter underneath<sup>3</sup>  
9 foot by 3 foot  
rough texture<sup>4</sup>  
tubular shaped  
about 3 feet long and 2 feet tall  
black and smooth<sup>5</sup>  
its size and shape  
did not correspond with anything they had  
previously ever recorded.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A report from the *Glasgow Sunday Post*, cites Mr Andrew McAfee's initial perception of a phenomenon, that on subsequent inspection with binoculars, proved to be the animated appearance of shadows cast on rippling water, 27 July 1952.

<sup>2</sup> The spectacle witnessed by Mr & Mrs Roland Eames, at about 400 yards, 17 May 1964.

<sup>3</sup> At about 5.15am, 25 May 1943, whilst on duty with the Royal Observer Corps monitoring for enemy bombers, C.B.Farrel observed the above on the Loch.

<sup>4</sup> Reported analysis of an object observed by Dennis Bland on 20 September 1967.

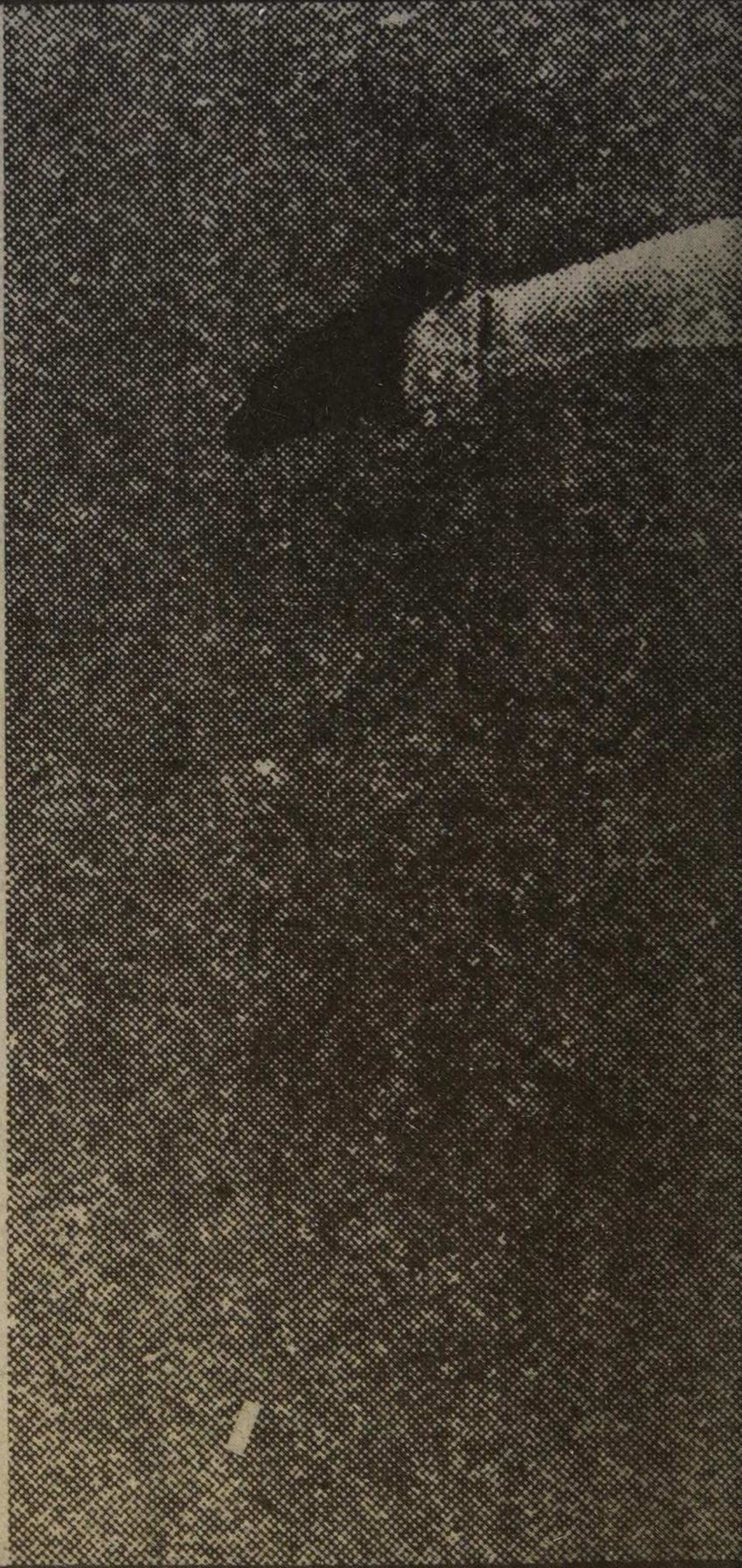
<sup>5</sup> Comparative description of Mr and Mrs Grummet, at around 11.20am, 4 September 1968.

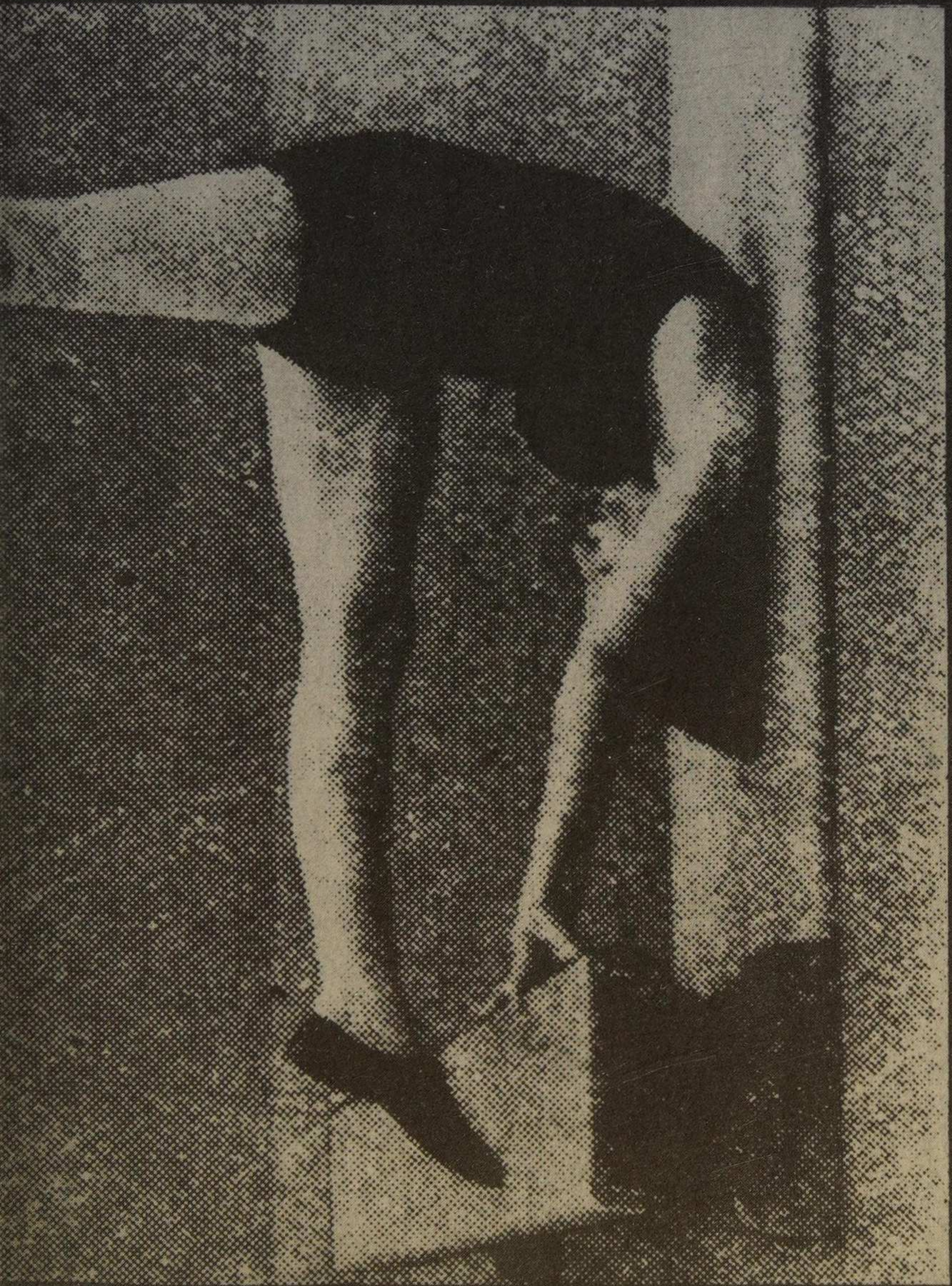
<sup>6</sup> Categorical conclusion of the crew of the Ha-burn, skippered by James Runcie, upon tracking unusual signals of an apparently animated object with their on-board echo sounder, April 1969.

NO. 2 50P  
EARLY  
SUMMER  
1975

# B A N A N A S

BALLARD (EROTOMANIA) BAINBRIDGE (BALLS) BURROUGHS  
(GUNS) COCKBURN (BABBIT) COLETTE & CORTAZAR (LOVE) NAIRN (THE  
ORANGE & THE GREEN) + SYLVIA PLATH, JOHN SLADEK, PETER WOLLEN





# Fellow Teachers

PHILIP RIEFF

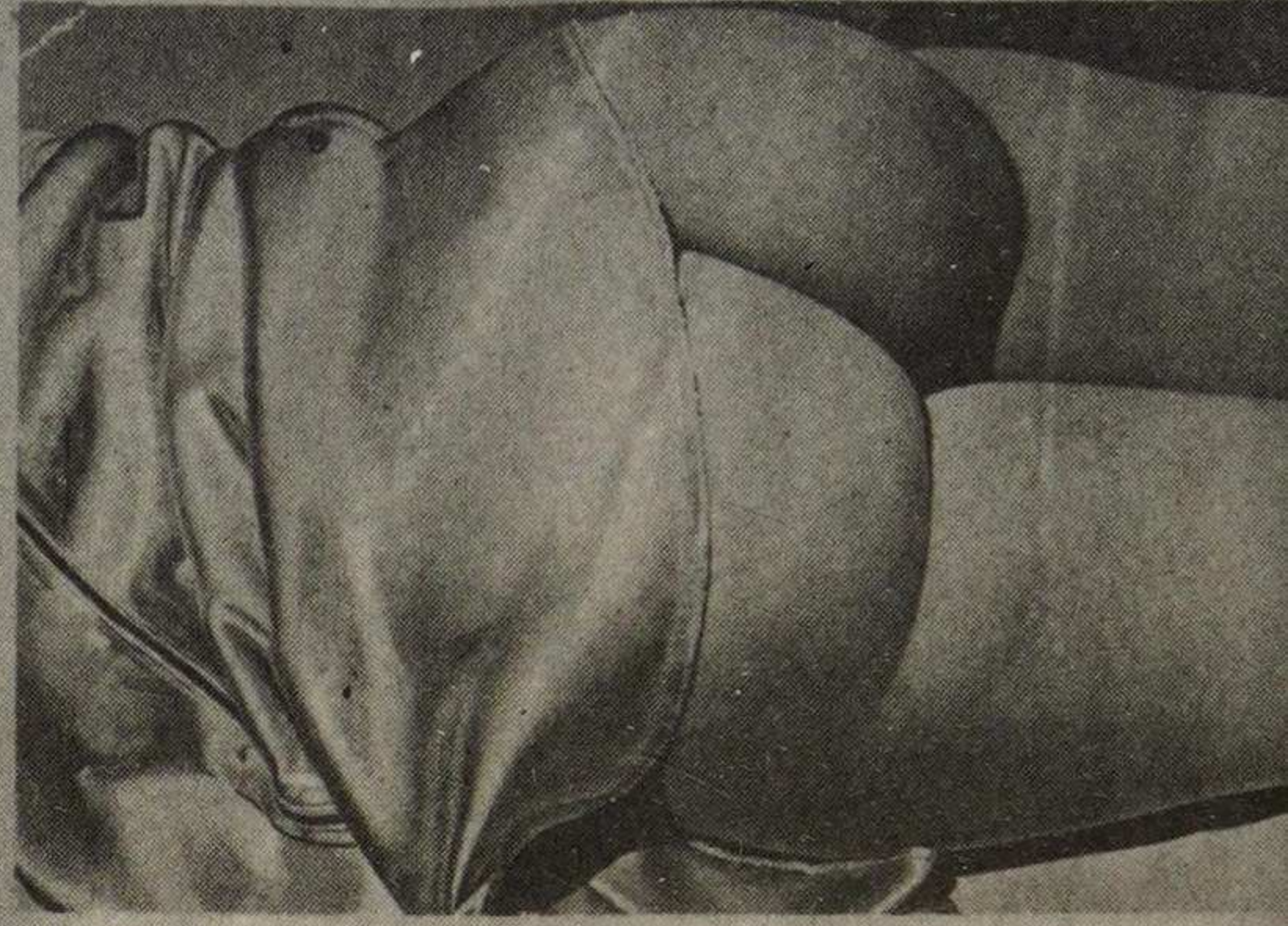
*Fellow Teachers* is at once a personal statement and a work in social theory. Philip Rieff advances the unfashionable truth that a society without credible orthodoxies needs the recognition at a deep level of inescapable limits. If there can be no forced or false return to the orthodoxies of the past, neither can the teacher take refuge in the new pedagogic principle that denies the existence of all authority. In what Rieff calls the culture of the therapeutic – a culture that imposes no sacred prohibitions, regards immobility as the terminal sin, and growth as the one virtue – he tells us that the best course is a studied hanging-back, so that the teacher continues to offer the security of what has long been known.

As analogues to the social reality, Philip Rieff uses characters from literature – Conrad's Mr. Kurtz, Pirandello's Leone Gala, John Barth's Jake Horner – as well as from the film, from politics, from the history of the church and of the university. Not a book on teaching, but returning always to the condition of the teacher in our time, *Fellow Teachers* is an attempt at a general theory of culture, society and moral character that is not a crabbed 'system', but which is itself a work of art.

**FABER & FABER** £3.75

# Fellow Preachers

BANANAS



orthodoxes needs the recognition at a deep level of inescapable limits (see photo inset). If there can be no forced or false return to the orthodoxies of the past, neither can BANANAS take refuge in the new pedagogic principle that denies the existence of all authorship. In what BANANAS calls the culture of the therapeutic — a culture that imposes no sacred prohibitions, regards immobility as the terminal sin (see photo, inset), and growth as the one virtue (see photo inset) — they tell us that the best course is a studied hanging of the backside (see photo), so that BANANAS continues to offer the security of what has long been known.

As analogues to the social reality, BANANAS uses characters from literature — J.G. Ballard, Colette, Monique Wittig, Claud Cockburn — as well as from the film, from politics, from the history of the church and of the university. Not a magazine about fruit, but returning always to the condition of BANANAS in our time, BANANAS is an attempt at a general theory of culture, society and moral character that is not a 'crabbed' system (see photo), but which is itself a work of art.



There was a young woman of Truro  
Who entered an employment bureau.  
When they said, Temp or Nurse,  
She uttered a curse  
And ran off with the Marquess of Douro.  
*Robina Arroll*

# Dear Bananas,

'All the World knows your Bananas' *Gore Vidal*

'I loved Bananas. Please send me more' *Joseph Donoso*

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'The best magazine in England' *Adrian Mitchell*

'A raunchy flavour . . . orthodox intellectualism with a kinky skin grafted on the top. A magazine of its time' *Ian Hamilton, New Review*

'Much of it drivel' *Martin Seymour-Smith*

'My husband had alternating erections and apoplexy' *Wendy Perriam*

'In my view the typical readers are High Tories and Housewives' *Herbert Butterfield*

'Bananas around the house glowing in the dark for three days — PHOW! It brushes you harshly and so tender . . .' *Udo Breger (Expanded media editions)*

'Very interesting and well put together' *Ed Victor*

'Fingerlickin' good that fancy tickle ah-peel! Me sure lick it' *W. Hartmann, West Germany*

'Bananas could be the new arts magazine we've all been waiting for but please could we have some editorial to let the readers feel involved . . . a commentary would be nice' *Simon Thirsk (Yes, see Fellow Preachers. Ed.)*

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"The man's playing some sort of deranged game with himself."

From their balcony on the tenth floor of the empty hotel, Forrester and his wife watched the light aircraft taking off from the runway at Ampuriabrava, half a mile down the beach. A converted crop-sprayer with a silver fuselage and open cockpits, the bi-plane was lining up at the end of the concrete air-strip. Its rotary engine blared across the deserted resort like a demented fan.

"One of these days he's not going to make it — I'm certain that's what he's waiting for . . . ." Without thinking, Forrester climbed from his deck chair and pushed past the drinks trolley to the balcony rail. The aircraft was now moving rapidly along the runway, tail-wheel still touching the tarmac marker line. Little more than two hundred feet of concrete lay in front of it. The runway had been built thirty years earlier for the well-to-do Swiss and Germans bringing their private aircraft to this vacation complex on the Costa Brava. By now, in the absence of any maintenance, the concrete pier jutting into the sea had been cut to a third of its original length by the strong off-shore currents.

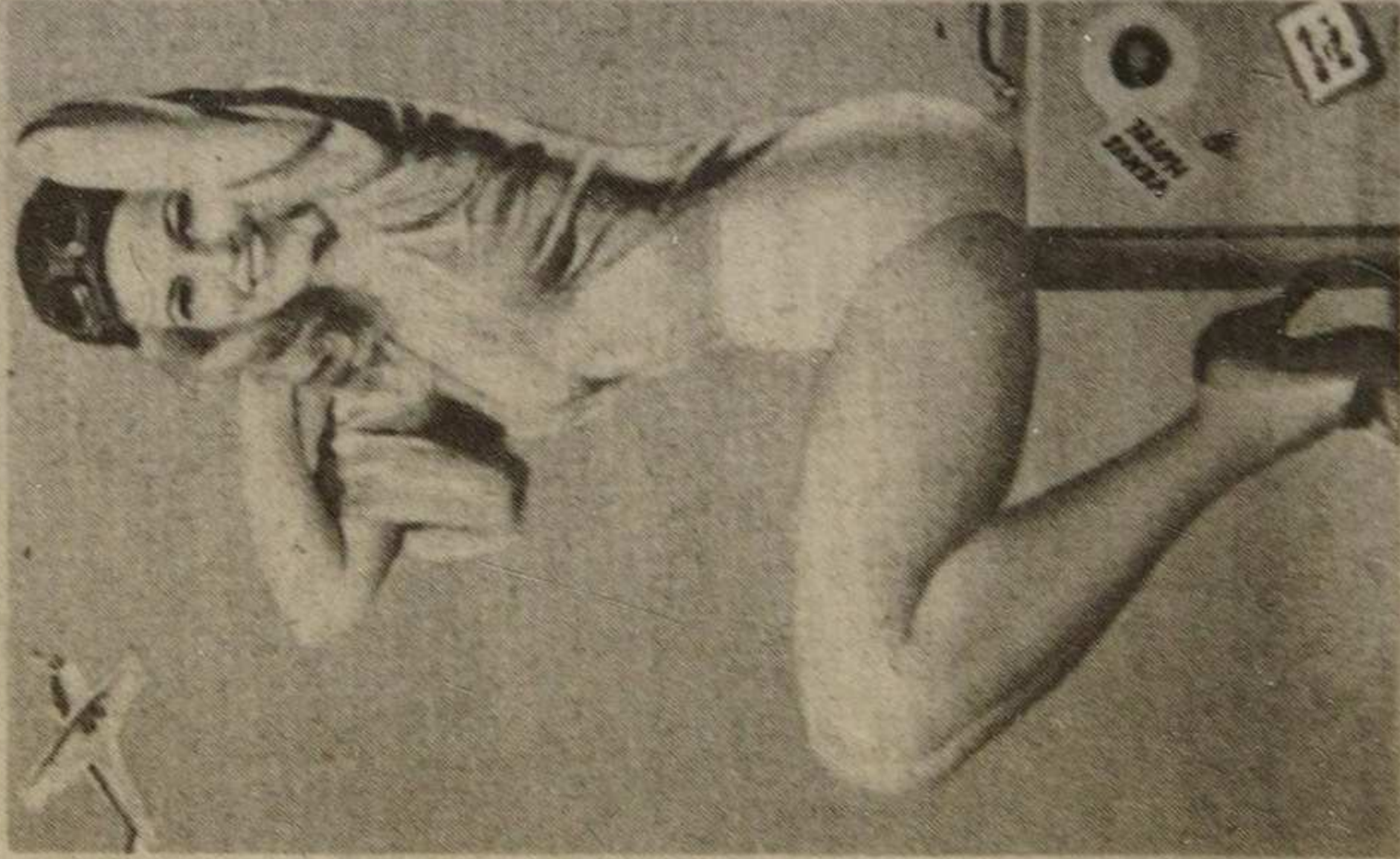
However, the pilot seemed unconcerned, his bony forehead exposed above his goggles, long hair tied in a brigand's knot. Forrester waited, hands gripping the rail in a confusion of emotions — he wanted to see this reclusive and standoffish doctor plunge onto the rocks, but at the same time his complicated rivalry with Gould made him shout out a warning.

At the last moment, with a bare twenty feet of runway left, Gould sat back sharply in his seat, almost pulling the aircraft into the air. It rose steeply over the broken concrete causeway, banked and made a low circuit of the sea before setting off inland.

Forrester looked up as it crossed their heads. Sometimes he thought that Gould was deliberately trying to provoke him — or Judith, more likely. There was some kind of unstated bond that linked them.

"Did you watch the take-off?" he asked. "There won't be many more of those."

Judith lay back in her sun-seat, staring



## Low-Flying Aircraft J.G. BALLARD

drink a toast to me." Judith pulled the trolley over to her chair. She sat up, animating herself like a toy. Seeing their reflections in the bedroom mirror, Forrester thought of their resemblance to a pair of latter-day Scott Fitzgeralds — their handsome and

a potent vision of this solitary doctor, piloting his light aircraft in a ceaseless search of the Mediterranean littoral, building up a stockpile of art treasures in case the world opened up for business again.

Forrester's last meeting with Gould, in the Dali museum at Figueras, seemed to confirm these suspicions. He had dropped Judith off at the ante-natal clinic, where the amniotic scanning would hopefully confirm the absence of any abnormalities in the foetus, and by an error of judgement strolled into this museum dedicated by the town to its most illustrious native artist. As he walked quickly through the empty galleries he noticed Gould lounging back on the central divan, surveying with amiable composure the surrealist's flaccid embryos and anatomical monstrosities. With his silver-flecked jacket and long hair in a knot, Gould looked less like a doctor than a middle-aged hell's angel. Beside him on the divan were three canvases he had selected from the walls, and which he later took back to decorate his hotel rooms.

"They're a little too close to the knuckle for me," Forrester commented. "A collection of newsreels from Hell."

"A sharp guess at the future, all right." Gould agreed. "The ultimate dystopia is the inside of one's own head."

As they left the museum Forrester said, "Judith's baby is due in about three weeks. We wondered if you'd care to attend her?"

Gould made no reply. Shifting the canvases from one arm to the other, he scowled at the trees in the deserted rambla. His eyes seemed to be waiting for something. Not for the first time, Forrester realised how tired the man was, the nervousness underlying his bony features.

"What about the practicante? He's probably better qualified than I am."

"I wasn't thinking of the birth, so much as the . . . ."

"As the death?"

"Well . . ." Unsettled by Gould's combative tone, Forrester searched through his stock of euphemisms. "We're full of hope, of course, but we've had to learn to be realistic."

"That's admirable of you both

was no longer necessary, even today, when they were waiting for the practicante to bring the results of the amniotic scan from Figueras. After the next summer storm had done its worst to the crumbling runway, Gould was certain to crash. Curiously, he could have avoided all this by clearing a section of any one of a hundred abandoned roads.

"It's almost too quiet now," Judith said. "Have you seen the practicante? He was supposed to come this morning."

"He'll be here — the clinic is only open one day a week." Forrester took his wife's small foot and held it between his hands, openly admiring, without any guile or calculation, her pale legs. "Don't worry, this time it's going to be good news."

"I know. It's strange, but I'm absolutely certain of it too. I've never had any doubts, all these months."

Forrester listened to the drone of the light aircraft as it disappeared above the hills behind the deserted resort. In the street below him the sand blown up from the beach formed a series of encroaching dunes that had buried many of the cars to their windows. Fittingly, the few tyre tracks led to the hotel entrance all belonged to the practicante's Honda. The clacking engine of this serious-faced male nurse sounded its melancholy tocsin across the town. He had tended Judith since their arrival two months earlier, with elaborate care but a total lack of emotional tone, as if he were certain already of the pregnancy's ultimate outcome.

Nonetheless, Forrester found himself still clinging to hope. Once he had feared these fruitless pregnancies, the enforced trips from Geneva, and the endless circuit of empty Mediterranean resorts as they waited for yet another seriously deformed foetus to make its appearance. But he had looked forward to this last pregnancy, seeing it almost as a challenge, a game played against enormous odds for the greatest possible prize. When Judith had first told him, six months earlier, that she had conceived again he had immediately made arrangements for their drive to Spain. Judith conceived so easily — the paradox was bitter, this vigorous and unquenched sexuality, this enormous fertility, even if of a questionable kind, at full flood in an almost depopulated world.

"Richard — come on. You look dead. Let's

Benidorm."

"It's a huge place," Forrester pointed out. "There might be fifteen or twenty people there for the summer."

"That's what I mean. We ought to meet other people, share the good news with them."

"Well . . . ." They had come to this quiet resort at the northern end of the Costa Brava specifically to get away from everyone — in fact, Forrester had resented finding Gould here, this hippified doctor who lived in one of the abandoned hotels on the playa and unexpectedly turned up in his aircraft after a weekend's absence.

Forrester surveyed the lines of deserted hotels and apartment houses, the long-shuttered rotisseries and supermarkets. There was something reassuring about the emptiness. He felt more at ease here, almost alone in this forgotten town.

As they stood together by the rail, sipping their drinks and gazing at the silent bay, Forrester held his wife around her full waist. For weeks now he had barely been able to take his hands off her. Once Gould had gone it would be pleasant here. They would lie around for the rest of the summer, making love all the time and playing with the baby — a rare arrival now, the average for normal births was less than one in a thousand. Already he could visualise a few elderly peasants coming down from the hills holding some sort of primitive earth festival on the beach.

Behind them the aircraft had reappeared over the town. For a moment he caught sight of the doctor's silver helmet — one of Gould's irritating affectations was to paint stripes on his helmet and flying jacket, and on the fenders of his old Mercedes, a sophomore conceit rather out of character. Forrester had come across traces of the paint at various points around the town — on the footbridge over the canal dividing the marina and airstrip at Ampuriabrava from the beach hotels in Rosas, at the corners of the streets leading to Gould's hotel. These marks, apparently made at random, were elements of a cryptic private language. For some time now Forrester had been certain that Gould was up to some nefarious game in the mountains. He was probably pillaging the abandoned monasteries, looting their icons and gold plate. Forrester had

Whatever the outcome.

Forrester had been genuinely shocked by this. Surprised by the doctor's aggression, he watched him swing away with an unpleasant gesture, the lurid paintings under his arm, and stride back to his Mercedes.


Judith was asleep in the bedroom. From her loose palm Forrester removed the Valium she had been too tired to take. He replaced them in the capsule, and then sat unsteadily on the bed. For the last hour he had been drinking alone in the sun on the balcony, partly out of boredom — the timescale of the human pregnancy was a major evolutionary blunder, he decided — and partly out of confused fear and hope.

Where the hell was the practicante? Forrester walked onto the balcony again and scanned the road to Figueras, past the abandoned nightclubs and motor-boat rental offices. The aircraft had gone, disappearing into the mountains. As he searched the airstrip Forrester noticed the dark-robed figure of a young woman in the doorway of Gould's hangar. He had seen her mooning around there several times before, and openly admitted to himself that he felt a slight pang of envy at the assumed sexual liaison between her and Gould. There was something secretive about the relationship that intrigued him. Careful not to move, he waited for the young woman to step into the sun. Already, thanks to the alcohol and an over-scrupulous monogamy, he could feel his loins thickening. For all his need to be alone, the thought that there was another young woman within half a mile of him almost derailed Forrester's mind.

Five minutes later he saw the girl again, standing on the observation roof of the Club Nautico, gazing inland as if waiting for Gould's silver aircraft to return.

As Forrester let himself out of the suite his wife was still asleep. Only two of the suites on the tenth floor were now maintained. The other rooms had been locked and shuttered, time capsules that contained their melancholy cargo, the aerosols, douche-bags, hairpins and sun-oil tubes left behind by the thousands of vanished tourists.

The waiters' service elevator, powered by a small gasoline engine in the basement, carried him



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down to the lobby. There was no electric current now to run the air-conditioning system, but the hotel was cool. In the two basketwork chairs by the steps, below the postcard rack with its peeling holiday views of Rosas in its tourist heyday, sat the elderly manager and his wife. Signor Cervera had been a linotype operator for a Barcelona newspaper during the years when the population slide had first revealed itself, and even now was a mine of information about the world-wide decline.

"Mrs Forrester is asleep — if the practicante comes send him up to her."

"I hope it's good news. You've waited a long time."

"If it is we'll certainly celebrate tonight. Judith wants to open up all the nightclubs."

Forrester walked into the sunlight, climbing over the first of the dunes that filled the street. He stood on the roof of a submerged car and looked up at the line of empty hotels. He had come here once as a child, when the resort was still half-filled with tourists. Already, though, many of the hotels were closing, but his parents had told him that thirty years earlier the town had been so crowded that they could barely see the sand on the beach. Forrester could remember the Club Nautico, presiding like an aircraft carrier over the bars and nightclubs of Ampuriabrava, packed with people enjoying themselves with a frantic fin de siècle gaiety. Already the first of the so-called 'Venus hotels' were being built, and coachloads of deranged young couples were coming in from the airport at Gerona.

Forrester jumped from the roof of the car and set off along the beach road towards Ampuriabrava. The immaculate sand ran down to the water, free at last of cigarette ends and bottle tops, as clean and soft as milled bone. As he moved past the empty hotels it struck Forrester as strange that he felt no sense of panic at the thought of these vanished people. Like Judith and everyone else he knew, like the old linotype operator and his wife sitting alone in the lobby of their hotel, he calmly accepted the terrifying logic of this reductive nightmare as if it were a wholly natural and peaceful event.

Forty years earlier, by contrast, there had been an uncontrolled epidemic of fear as everyone

years before. Through the salt-stained windows he could see the rows of bottles against the mirror behind the bar, chairs stacked on tables.

Forrester pushed back the door. The interior of the restaurant was like a museum tableau. Nothing had been moved for years. Despite the unlocked door there had been no vandalism. From the footprints visible in the fine sand blown across the floor it was clear that over the years a few passing travellers had refreshed themselves at the bar and left without doing any damage. This was true of everywhere Forrester had visited. They had vacated a hundred cities and airports as if leaving them in serviceable condition for their successors.

The air in the restaurant was stale but cool. Seated behind the bar, Forrester helped himself to a bottle of Fundador, drinking quietly as he waited for the young woman to reappear. As he gazed across the canal he noticed that Gould had painted two continuous marker lines in fluorescent silver across the metal slats and wire railing of the footbridge. From the door he could see the same marker lines crossing the road and climbing the steps to Gould's hotel, where they disappeared into the lobby.

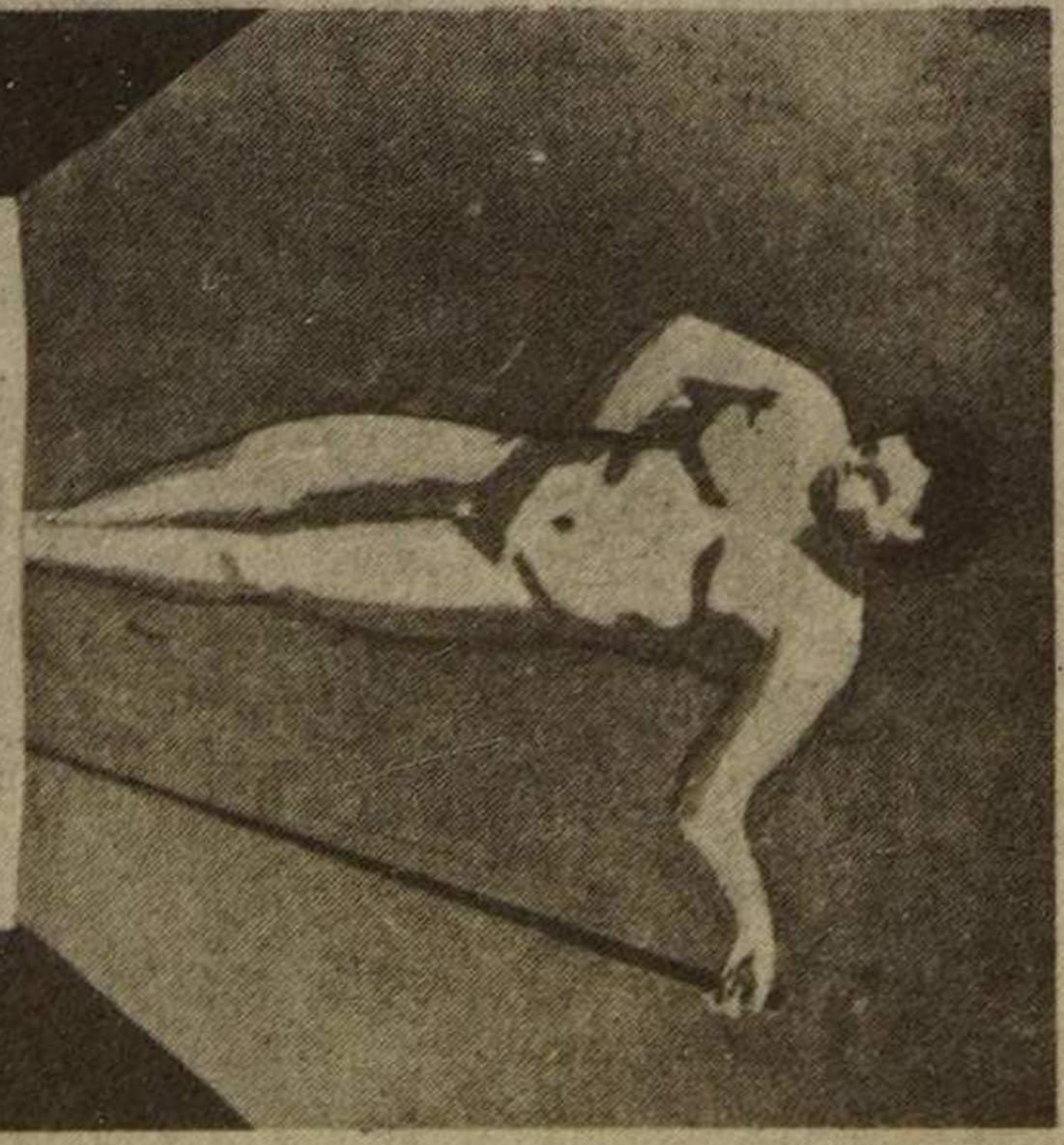
Standing unsteadily in the road, Forrester frowned up at the garish facade of the hotel, which had been designed in a crudely erotic Graecian style. Naked caryatids three storeys high supported a sham portico emblazoned with satyrs and nymphs. Why had Gould chosen to live in this hotel, out of all those standing empty in Rosas? Here in what amounted to the red-light quarter of the town, it was one of a group known euphemistically all over the world as the 'Venus hotels', but which Judith more accurately referred to as 'the sex-hotels'. From Waikiki to Glyfada Beach, Rio to Recife these hotel complexes had sprung up in the first years of the depopulation crisis. A flood of government-subsidised tourists had poured in, urged on into a last frantic festival of erotomania. In a misguided attempt to rekindle their fertility, every conceivable kind of deviant sexual activity had been encouraged. Pornographic hotel decor, lobbies crammed with aids and appliances, ceaseless sex-films shown on closed circuit television, all these reflected an unhappy awareness by everyone that their sex no longer mattered. The sense of obligation, however residual,

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## Jonathan Cape

# NEW WORLDS

NEW FICTION, CRITICISM AND ORIGINAL ILLUSTRATIONS IN PAPERBACK  
NEW WORLDS 81 M. JOHN HARRISON'S 'RUNNING DOWN'; MICHAEL MOORCOCK'S 'ANCIENT SHADOWS'; KEITH ROBERTS, JOHN SLADEK AND MANY OTHERS. OUT NOVEMBER.



alone on this once-crowded Costa Brava beach, the results were dramatic and irreversible. At its present rate of decline Europe's population of 200,000 people, and the United States' population of 150,000 were headed for oblivion within a generation.

At the same time, by an unhappy paradox, there had been no fall in fertility, either in man or in the few animal species also affected. In fact, birth rates had soared, but almost all the offspring were seriously deformed. Forrester remembered the first of Judith's children, with their defective eyes, in which the optic nerves were exposed, and even more disturbing, their deformed sexual organs - these grim parodies of human genitalia tapped all kinds of nervousness and loathing.

Forrester stopped at the end of the beach, where the line of hotels turned at right angles along the entrance channel of the marina. Looking back at the town, he realised that he was almost certainly its last visitor. The continued break-down of the European road-systems would soon rule out any future journeys to Spain. For the past five years he and Judith had lived in Geneva. Working for a United Nations agency, he moved from city to city across Europe, in charge of a team making inventories of the huge stockpiles of foodstuffs, pharmaceuticals, consumer durables and industrial raw materials that lay about in warehouses and rail terminals, in empty supermarkets and stalled production lines - enough merchandise to keep the dwindling population going for a thousand years. Although the population of Geneva was some 2000, most of Europe's urban areas were deserted altogether, including, surprisingly, some of its great cathedral cities - Chartres, Cologne and Canterbury were empty shells. For some reason the consolations of religion meant nothing to anyone. On the other hand, despite the initial panic, there had never been any real despair. For thirty years they had been matter-of-factly slaughtering their children and closing down the western hemisphere like a group of circus workers dismantling their tents and killing their animals at the season's end.

From the bank of the canal Forrester peered up at the white hull of the Club Nautico. There were no signs of the young woman. Behind him, facing the airstrip, was a roadside restaurant abandoned

...baby obscenely retouched.

Judith and her husband had been too young to take part in these despairing orgies, and by the time of their marriage there had been a general revulsion against perverse sex of every kind. Chastity and romantic love, pre-marital celibacy and all the restraints of monogamy came back in force. As the world's populations continued to fall, the last married couples sat dutifully together like characters from a Vermeer interior.

And all the while the sexual drive continued unabated. Feeling the alcohol surge through him, Forrester swayed through the hot sunlight. Somewhere around the hangar beside the airstrip the young woman was waiting for him, perhaps watching him at this moment from its dark interior. Obviously she knew what he was thinking, and almost seemed to be encouraging him with her flirtatious dartings to and fro.

Forrester stepped onto the bridge. Behind him the line of garish hotels was silent, a stage set designed for just this adventure. The metal rungs of the bridge rang softly under his feet. Tapping them like the keys of a xylophone, Forrester stumbled against the rail, smearing his hands against the still-wet stripe of silver paint.

Without thinking, he wiped his hands on his shirt. The lines of fluorescent paint continued across the bridge, winding in and out of the abandoned cars in the parking lot beside the airstrip. Following Gould's illuminated pathway, Forrester crossed the canal. When he reached the fuel store he saw that the young woman had emerged from the hangar. She stood in the open doorway, her feet well within the rectangle of sunlight. Her intelligent but somehow mongoloid face was hidden as usual behind heavy sunglasses - a squat chin and high forehead fronted by a carapace of black glass. For all this concealment, Forrester was certain that she had been expecting him, and even more that she had been hoping for him to appear. Inside her black shawl she was moving her hands about like a schoolgirl - no doubt she was aware that he was the only man in the resort, apart from Gould, away on his endless solo flying, and the old linotype operator.

The sweat rose from Forrester's skin, a hot

pelt across his forehead. Standing beside the fuel hydrant, he wiped away the sweat with his hands. The young woman seemed to respond to these gestures. Her own hands emerged from the shawl, moving about in a complex code, a semaphore signalling Forrester to her. Responding in turn, he touched his face again, ignoring the silver paint on his hands. As if to ingratiate himself, he smeared the paint over his cheeks and nose, wiping the tacky metal stains across his mouth.

When he reached the young woman and touched her shoulder she looked with sudden alarm at these luminous contours, as if aware that she had been forming the elements of the wrong man from these painted fragments — his hands, chest and features.

Too late, she let herself be bundled backwards into the darkness of the hangar. The sunglasses fell from her hands to the floor. Forrester's luminous face shone back at him like a chromiomed mask from the flight-office windows. He looked down at the sightless young woman scrabbling at his feet for her sunglasses, one hand trying to hide her eyes from him. Then he heard the drone of a light aircraft flying over the town.

Gould's aircraft circled the Club Nautico, the panels of its silver fuselage reflecting the sun like a faceted mirror. Forrester turned from the young woman lying against the rear wall of the hangar, the glasses with their fractured lenses once more over her face. He stepped into the afternoon light and ran across the runway as the aircraft came in to land.

Two hours later, when he had crossed the deserted streets to his hotel, he found Signor Cervera standing on the dune below the steps, hands cupped to his eyes. He waved Forrester towards him, greeting him with relief. Forrester had spent the interval in one of the hotels in the centre of Rosas, moving restlessly from one bathroom to the next as he tried to clean the paint off his face and hands. He had slept for half an hour in a bedroom, hoping to shake off his hang-over.

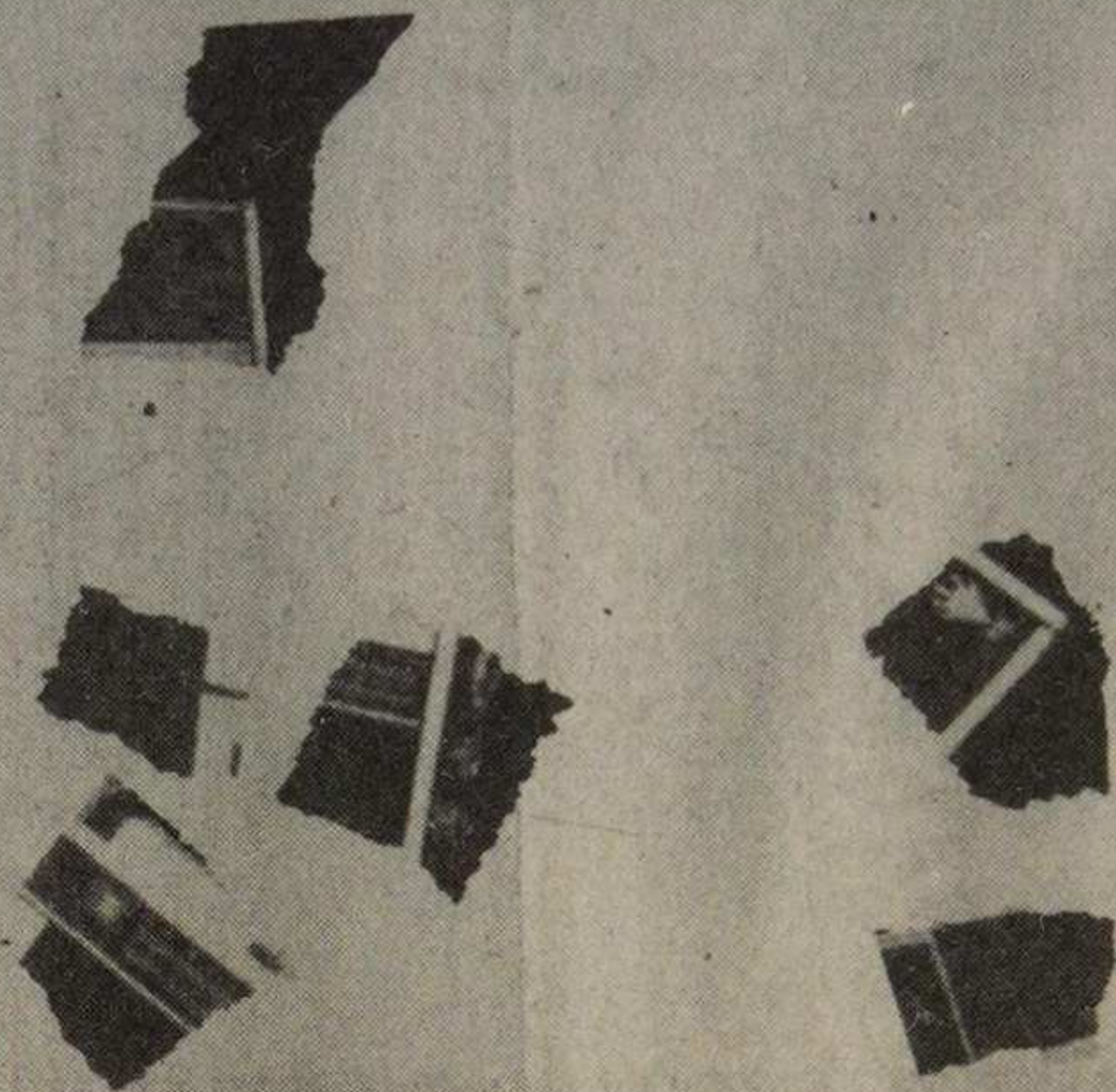
"Mrs Forrester —" The old man gestured helplessly.

"Where is she?" Forrester followed Cervera to the hotel steps. His wife was hovering in an



*Ballard illustration*

*Dali? Venus  
Valium? Hotel*



At dusk, when Gould and Forrester had taken the distraught woman back to the hotel, the two men stood by the entrance in the dusk.

In an unexpected gesture of concern, Gould touched Forrester's shoulder. Apart from this, his face remained without expression. "She'll sleep till morning. Ask the practicante to give you some thalidomide for her. You'll need to sedate her through the next three weeks."

He pointed to the silver stains on Forrester's face. "These days we're all wearing our war paint. You were over at the hangar, just before I landed. Carmen told me that you'd accidentally stepped on her glasses."

They took off at 10 o'clock the following morning. Sitting in the front cockpit, with the draught from the propeller full in the face, Forrester was convinced that they would crash. At full throttle they moved swiftly along the runway, the freshly broken concrete slabs already visible. Forrester looked over his shoulder, hoping that Gould would somehow manage to stop the aircraft before they were killed, but the doctor's face was hidden behind his goggles, as if he was unaware of the danger. At the last moment, when the cataract of concrete blocks was almost below the wheels, Gould pulled back on the stick. The small aircraft rose steeply, as if jerked into the air by a huge hand.

left. The old man paused to examine the traces of silver paint that still covered Forrester's face. With a wave of the hand, as if dismissing them as another minor detail of this aberrant day, he said, "He brought the result to Mrs Forrester . . ."

"Is she all right? What's going on?" Forrester started towards the elevator but the old woman waved him back. "She went out — I tried to stop her. She was all dressed up."

"Dressed? How?" "In . . . in a very extravagant way. She was upset."

"Oh my God . . ." Forrester caught his breath. "Poor Judith — where did she go?" "To the hotels." Cervera raised a hand and pointed reluctantly towards the Venus hotels.

Forrester found her within half an hour, in the bridal suite on the third floor of one of the hotels. As he ran along the canal road, shouting out Judith's name, Gould was walking slowly across the footbridge, flying helmet in hand. The dark figure of the young woman, the lenses of her fractured sunglasses like black suns, followed him sightlessly from the door of the hangar as Gould moved along the painted corridor.

When at last he heard Judith's cry Forrester entered the hotel. In the principal suite on the third floor he discovered her stretched out on the bridal bed, surrounded by the obscene murals and bas-reliefs. She lay back on the dusty lame bedspread, dressed in a whore's finery she had put together from her own wardrobe. Like a drunken courtesan in the last hours of her pregnancy, she stared glassily at Forrester as if not wanting to recognise him. As he approached she picked up the harness beside her on the bed and tried to strike him with it. Forrester pulled it from her hands. He held her shoulders, hoping to calm her, but his feet slipped in the vibrators and film cassettes strewn about the bed. When he regained his balance Judith was at the door. He ran after her down the corridor, kicking aside the display stands of pornographic magazines outside each bedroom. Judith was fleeing down the staircase, stripping off pieces of her costume. Then, thankfully, he saw Gould waiting for her on the landing below, arms raised to catch her.

wished that you were over."

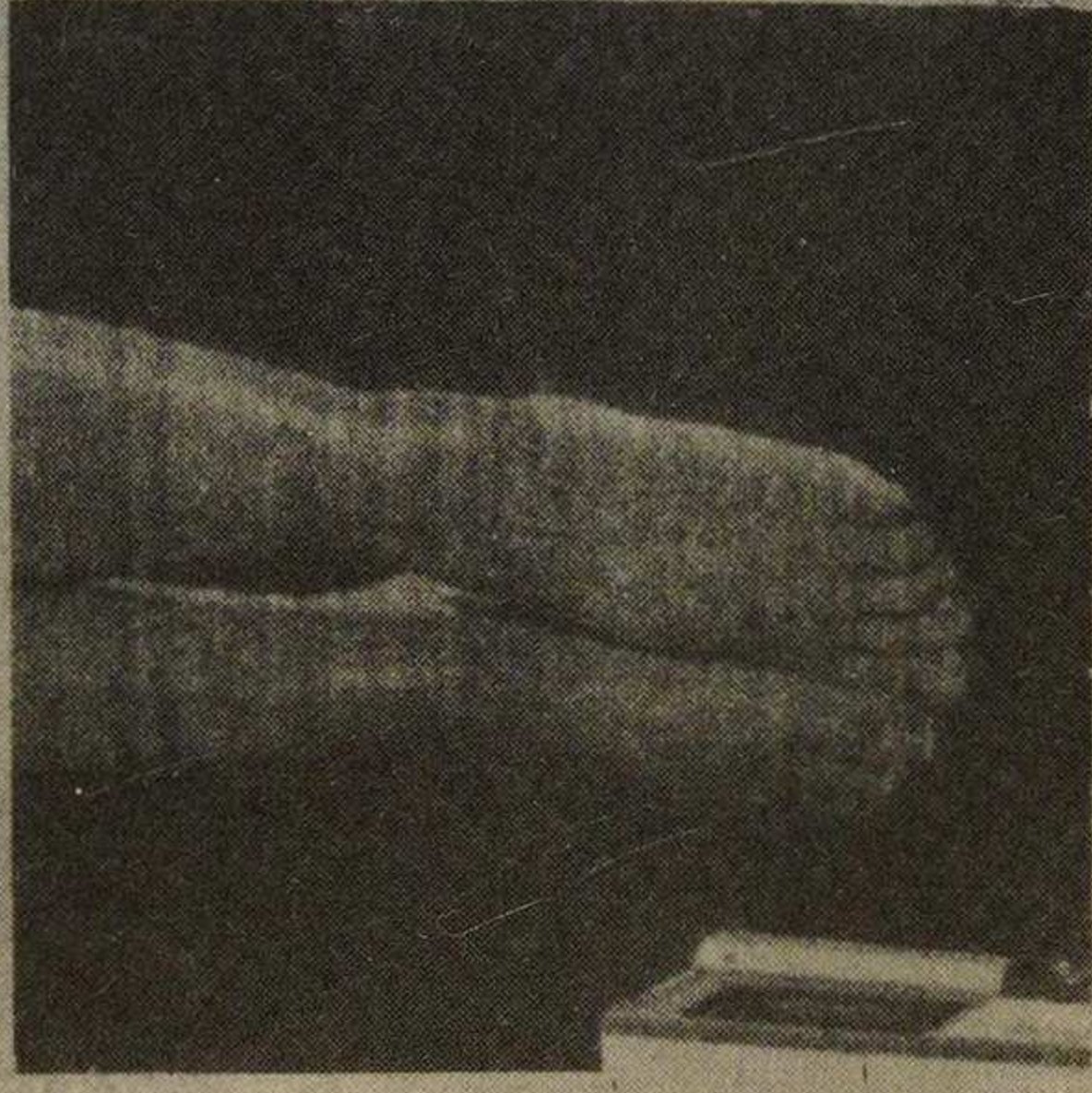
"I'm having to fly further inland now. She's nervous when I'm not around." "I hadn't realised that she was . . . blind." Forrester said as they walked down the street towards the canal. "It's good of you to look after her. The Spaniards would kill her out of hand if they found her here. What happens when you leave?"

"She'll be all right by then." Gould stopped and gazed through the fading light at the causeway of the airstrip. A section of the porous concrete seemed to have collapsed into the sea. Gould nodded to himself, as if working out the time left to him by this fragmenting pier. "Now, what about this baby?"

"It's another one — the same defects. I'll get the practicante to deal with it?"

"Why?" Before Forrester could reply, Gould took his arm. "Forrester, it's a fair question. Which of us can really decide who has the defects?"

"The mothers seem to know." "But are they right? I'm beginning to think that a massacre of the innocents has taken place that literally out-Herod's Herod. Look, come up with me tomorrow — the Cerveras can look after your wife, she'll sleep all day. You'll find it an interesting flight."



phosphorescent paint in the hills above Rosas. Before the take-off, while Forrester sat uncomfortably in the cockpit, wondering why he had accepted this challenge, the young woman had wheeled a drum of liquid over to the aircraft. Gould pumped the contents into the tank which Forrester could see below his feet. As he waited, the young woman walked round to the cockpit and stared up at Forrester, clearly hoping to see something in his face. There was something grotesque, almost comic, about this mongoloid girl surveying the world with her distorted vision through these cracked sunglasses. Perhaps she was disappointed that he was no longer interested in her. Forrester turned away from her sightless stare, thinking of Judith asleep in the darkened room, and the small and unwelcome tenant of her body.

Eight hundred feet below them was a valley that led inland towards the foothills of the Pyrenees. The line of low mountains marked the northern wall of the plain of Ampurdan, a rich farming area where even now there were small areas of cultivation. But all the cattle had gone, slaughtered years beforehand.

As they followed the course of the valley, Forrester could see that sections of the pathways and farm tracks which climbed the hills had been sprayed with phosphorescent paint. Panels of silver criss-crossed the sides of the valley.

So this was what Gould had been doing on his flights, painting sections of the mountainside in a huge pop art display. The doctor was waving down at the valley floor, where a small, shaggy-haired bullock, like a miniature bison, stood in an apparent daze on an isolated promontory. Cutting back the engine, Gould banked the aircraft and flew low over the valley floor, no more than twenty feet above the creature. Forrester was speculating on how this sightless creature, clearly a mutant, had managed to survive, when there was a sudden jolt below his feet. The ventral spraying head had been lowered, and a moment later a huge gust of silver paint was vented into the air and fanned out behind them. It hung there in a luminescent cloud, and then settled to form a narrow brush-stroke down the side of the mountain. Retracting the spraying head, Gould made a steep circuit of the valley. He throttled up his engine and dove over the head of the bullock,

driving it down the mountainside from its promontory. As it stumbled left and right, unable to get its bearings, it crossed the silver pathway. Immediately it gathered its legs together and set off at a brisk trot along this private roadway.

For the next hour they flew up the valley, and Forrester saw that these lines of paint sprayed from the air were part of an elaborate series of trails leading into the safety of the mountains. When they finally turned back, circling a remote gorge above a small lake, Forrester was not surprised to see that a herd of several hundred of the creatures had made their home here. Lifting their heads, they seemed to follow Gould as he flew past them. Tirelessly, he laid down more marker lines wherever they were needed, driving any errant cattle back onto the illuminated pathways.

When they landed at Ampuriabrava he waited on the runway as Gould shut down the aircraft. The young woman came out from the darkness inside the hangar, and stood with her arms folded inside her shawl. Forrester noticed that the sides of the aircraft fuselage and tailplane were a brilliant silver, bathed in the metallic spray through which they had endlessly circled. Gould's helmet and flying suit, and his own face and shoulders, shone like mirrors as if they had just alighted from the sun. Curiously, only their eyes, protected by their goggles, were free from paint, dark orbits into which the young woman gazed as if hoping to find someone of her own kind.

Gould greeted her, handing over his helmet. He stripped off his flying jacket and ushered her into the hangar.

He pointed across the canal. "We'll have a drink in your bar." He led the way diagonally across the car park, ignoring the painted pathways. "I think there's enough on us for Carmen to know where we are. It gives her a sense of security."

"How long have you been herding the cattle?" Forrester asked when they were seated behind the bar.

"Since the winter. Somehow one herd escaped the farmers' machetes. Flying down from Perpignan through the Col de Parthus I noticed them following the aircraft. In some way they could see me, using a different section of the electro-

recovered from the birth of her son, she and Forrester left Rosas to return to Geneva. After they had made their farewells to Signor Cervera and his wife, Forrester drove the car along the beach road. It was 11 am, but Gould's aircraft still stood on the airstrip. For some reason the doctor was late. "It's a long drive - are you going to be well enough?" he asked Judith.

"Of course - I've never felt better." She settled herself in the seat. It seemed to Forrester that a kind of shutter had been lowered across her mind, hiding away all memories of the past months. She looked composed and relaxed again, but with the amiable and fixed expression of a display window mannequin.

"Did you pay off the practicante?" she asked. "They expect something extra for . . ."

Forrester was gazing up at the facades of the Venus hotels. He remembered the evening of the birth, and the practicante carrying his son away from Signor Cervera. The district nurse had taken it for granted that he would be given the task of destroying the child. As Forrester stopped the Spaniard by the elevator he found himself wondering where the man would have killed it - in some alley behind the cheaper hotels at the rear of the town, or in any one of a thousand vacant bathrooms. But when Forrester had taken the child, careful not to look at its eyes, the practicante had not objected, only offering Forrester his surgical bag.

Forrester had declined. After the practicante had left, and before Signora Cervera returned to the lobby, he set off through the dark streets to the canal. He had put on again the silver jacket he had worn on the day when Gould had flown him into the mountains. As he crossed the bridge the young woman emerged from the hangar, almost invisible in her dark shawl. Forrester walked towards her, listening to the faint clicking and murmurs of the strong child. He pressed the infant into her hands and turned back to the canal, throwing away his jacket as he ran.

While they drove along the line of hotels to the Figueras road Forrester heard the sounds of the aircraft. Gould was climbing into the cockpit, about to warm up the engine before take-off.



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## Elaine Feinstein

### SONG

I can only give you my December city  
 this sodium-lit terrace and cold rain  
 while night flows overhead and black trees bend in  
 the  
 flow: the birds sit heavily alone like leather sails.

"Not true — in fact, they're extremely hardy. By next winter they'll be able to out-run and out-think everything else around here. Like Carmen — she's a very bright girl. She's managed to keep herself going here for years, without being able to see a thing. When I started getting all this paint over me I think I was the first person she'd ever seen."

Thinking again of Judith's baby, Forrester shook his head. "She looks like a mongol to me — that swollen head."

"You're wrong. I've found out a lot about her. Do you know that she has a huge collection of watches with luminous dials, hundreds of them, that she's been filching for years from the shops? She's got them all working together but to different times, it's some sort of gigantic computer. God only knows what overlit world nature is preparing her for, but I suppose we won't be around to see it."

Forrester gazed disagreeably into his glass of brandy. For once the Fundador made him feel ill. "Gould, are you saying in effect that the child Judith is carrying at this moment is *not* deformed?"

Gould nodded encouragingly. "It's not deformed at all — any more than Carmen. It's like the so-called population decline that we've all accepted as an obvious truth. In fact, there hasn't been a decline — except in the sense that we've been slaughtering our offspring. Over the past fifty years the birth-rate has gone up, not down." Before Forrester could protest, he went on, "Try for a moment to retain an open mind — we have this vastly increased sexuality, and an unprecedented fertility. Even your wife has had — what — seven children. Why? Isn't it obvious that we were intended to embark on a huge replacement programme, though sadly the people we're replacing turn out to be ourselves. Our job is simply to repopulate the world with our successors. As for our need to be alone, this intense enjoyment of our own company, and the absence of any sense of despair, I suppose they're all nature's way of saying goodbye."

"And the runway?" Forrester asked. "Is that your way of saying goodbye?"

A month later, as soon as Judith had

Forrester knew that Gould would go on flying to the end, driving his herd higher into the mountains, until they no longer needed him and the day had come to take off for the last time. □

Will it be in time for us, my love, in time for us?

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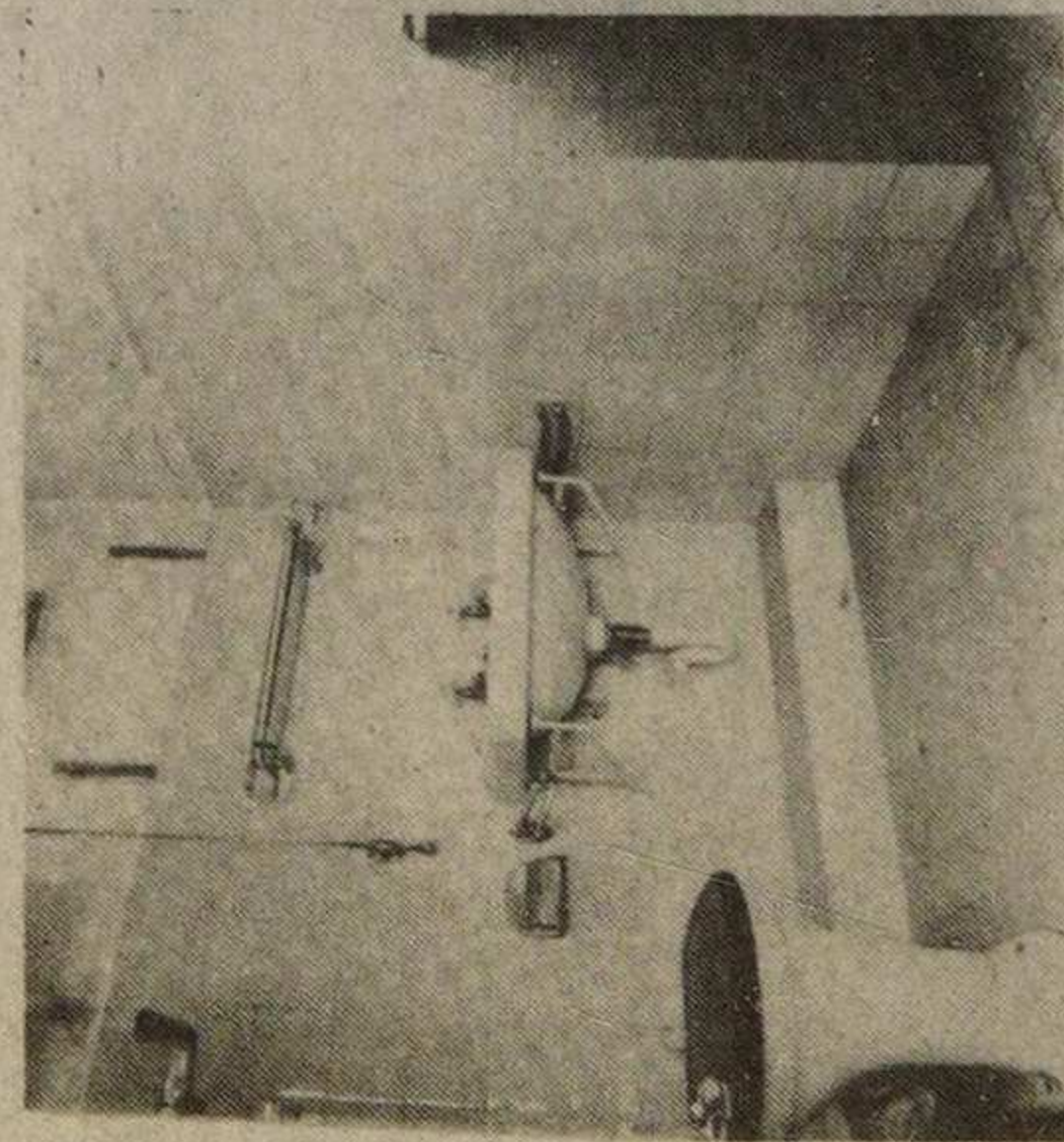
# BURROUGHS ON GUNS

As I explained on p.27 of Bananas One, I wrote these journal notes in Burroughs' bathroom, slipping out for a furtive scribble between whiskies in 1971.

William remembering Mexico City:

"A guy standing on a street corner and up comes this other person and asks him directions how to get somewhere. Well he doesn't know, but he thinks he ought to tell this other fellow something so he starts to tell him about all sorts of things, this and that, and then he realises, 'Why am I telling this bastard all these things for?' So he picks up a rock and beats the other fellow's brains in. That's the kind of city Mexico City is. "There was another case of this fellow who comes in from the country and he's standing there with his machete waiting for a bus. And along comes another guy and stands there waiting when suddenly, the first fellow up with his machete and cuts the other guy's head off. 'Well, he was looking at me so dirtie . . . ' It has the highest homicide rate of any city.

"I used to carry a gun in Mexico City, you never know when a bunch of guys are going to close in on you and beat you up. When you pull your gun they back away into the night . . ." He smiled, making a waving motion with his hand. "I was going into a pissoir in Mexico City when this guy tried to elbow his way in front of me. I just . . ." He



## Bathroom Notes

syringe or maybe by dipping cotton in it and placing it beneath the tongue. It was quite legal then, of course. Even in the 1920s every American town, even small towns, had an opium den. Those who couldn't afford it used to be given the opium ash left over from smoking as a free meal, so to speak. The ash of course has a high percentage of morphine in it. All the best people did it. Society ladies used to send each other jewel encrusted hypodermic syringes as gifts. Can't see anyone sharing a needle there. Get out your jewel-encrusted syringe and the morphine, 'Do come on in dear, and close the door!' Not going to pass it round. That was in the 1840s, they had very elaborate ones, very streamlined. Of course a lot of them didn't even know they were addicted. They would just feel ill and run down to the drugstore to get some morphine to make themselves feel better.

used to pronounce his endless conversation of Melville, Truman, Janis Joplin (who was a good friend of his), the Fugs, and so forth. Everything was in a muddle with books, dishes, jars of spices, even a large storage jar of dried peyote mushrooms, heaped together with piles of old newspapers and manuscripts. The window frames were written over with pencilled lists of ships and cargoes, long forgotten captains and custom duties paid. Long lists, fading in the sun, obscured by the thin film of dust. The living room, like a bookshop after a bomb,; bookcases all full to overflowing, bulging with coffee-ringed first editions, piles of magazines and journals reaching to table height with Charles' battered folding typewriter precariously balanced on top. During a conversation Charles pulled a book from the shelf to outline a point and discovered in it, used as a bookmark, a sheaf of original manuscripts sent to him by Ezra Pound.

Through to the bedroom and a strange feeling of lack of use, sun-warmed dust and musty air. The extreme cold outside meant the flat could not be ventilated. In the warm rooms it was strange to feel the freezing window panes. It was in the bedroom that we finally decided to make our recording. Charles sat in a chair which creaked alarmingly and, in the dead of night, the infrequent roar and crunch of snow as a truck passed by, came as a shock. The room was dominated by a huge trestle table covered two deep in books, largely on maritime history. They were stacked spine upwards so the table sagged under the formidable weight. I arranged a directional microphone amongst them, as close as I dared to Charles, who gesticulated while reading and who would certainly have turned away from, or knocked into it, had he been closely miked. I sat on the floor near the door with my Nagra, my headphones and a

"There was a family in St Louis and the

it was founded on the gun. When you are a child you get given your first air rifle at a certain age, then a .22 repeater. And all the time you get revolvers and pistols. I used to be able to shoot the flame on a candle out from across the room. I had a gun one inch long, and I had a .43 Russian pistol with a nine inch barrel at one point. Of course, there is a point when a pistol becomes a rifle, you understand. So I was brought up to know about these things, how to make a gun, how to make powder.

"Used to go out duck shooting with the old man and the President of the First National City Bank and the owner of the St. Louis Post Despatch. And you have to be up real early, 6 o'clock, to catch the ducks. All in hiding in this marshy ground, and we would put out decoys and then as the ducks came in all these fat old businessmen would stand up and blast away at them. We had a retriever dog to collect the ducks. I used to really enjoy it.

"Wyatt Earp had a special gun with a twelve inch barrel he used to shoot with. It came right down to his knee. He went after the terrible coward who had gunned down his brother and when he found him he caught him. The guy said, 'But they gave me \$25 to do it!' And Wyatt said, 'It was that \$25 that really burned me up, so I said, I'm going to count to three, real slow, and then fire. You can draw and fire anytime. 'Uno!' and the guy goes for his gun, 'Due!' and he's still fumbling with it, trying to get it out, 'Tres!' and Earp's first shot got him in the stomach, the second in the chest, and the third right between the eyes. 'Earp!' 'Earp!' 'Earp!' Remember, it's not who shoots first that counts, it's who hits first that's important."

"Jesse James was a morphine addict, they used it to kill the pain from gunshot wounds. Used to administer it by hypodermic

'Oh no, not the cannon again!' So I suggested to the boy that he should get some explosive shells so he could see where they landed on the other side of the valley and I went away thinking, 'Oh my, what if the shell explodes in the barrel, there'd be some nice casualties then!'" □

## CHARLES OLSON

"The first time I realised that I was larger than the ordinary was once when I was running down a hill in Boston to catch a bus, and as I passed a little black boy he said, 'My god, there goes Goliath!'" Charles Olson was over 6'7" and big in frame. In conversation the laughs came rumbling up from the depths of his barrel chest. He lived at night. His Black Mountain College classes often started at midnight or 1am. When I first got to know him, he was staying at Panna Grady's house in Regents Park. There he used to rise at 8pm, eat a breakfast of six or seven eggs and meet the first of the day's visitors. By 2 or 3am everyone had left, and Charles still had most of the night to work in. I had been asked to make a record of Charles reading his poetry and after some correspondence, flew to New York to await his phone call.

The call came at 3am. Charles Olson calling from Gloucester to say that he is prepared to be tape-recorded that day. The shuttle from La Guardia to Boston then, as no one will hire us a car, we take a taxi to Gloucester, Mass. It is the end of January, fields and pines covered in snow and 20° below.

Charles lived in a sort of railroad flat. Outdoor stairs led up to a large kitchen where, propped against a huge refrigerator, Charles

cocked to one side. We noted those words requiring more emphasis, lines which should be read faster or taken more slowly. In the book we used musical notations to indicate raising volume and I conducted with hand gestures to get him to pronounce certain words more specifically or to raise his voice from its rumbling bass into a less dry mid-range. The next day he was satisfied with his sound, we erased the previous day's tapes on his request and sailed through sets of poems very quickly, though he spent a lot of time discussing the recording and his voice tired very quickly.

He was not in good health. A note he left for me in case he was out when we arrived was scribbled on the back of a threatening hospital bill. Living by himself and somehow regarded as unapproachably famous had led to a certain loneliness. He said that his work output had been cut in half when his wife died twelve years before. During the five days we were there, he received only one phone call, that from his daughter. He had been in the same house for so long that he had stopped seeing it. We talked about the maritime charts and he talked at length about a map of Gloucester Harbour which he had annotated extensively. He sat on the bed and became a little irritable that I couldn't catch what he was saying. The chart in question was pinned on the wall behind his head. When he turned to indicate it, he realised it was blank. The sun had bleached it away forever, a sagging, yellowing sheet of flyspotted, dust-marked parchment attached at three corners only, hung out from the wall. This jolted him and he made a joke but I could see then that deep down, he knew he was dying. □

## MILES

# IRELAND: TOM WARREN

*Even the dead in their world of decay  
For you, if they could, would pray.  
But redder still your streets shall glow  
And in the gutters still, your lifeblood flow;  
Peace is sleeping.  
Few, few shall live to see the time  
When you my city cease to pine.  
God is weeping.*

'Belfast', anonymous poem in *Love Orange, Love Green: Poems of Living, Loving and Dying in Working-Class Ulster* (Whitcor Press, Belfast, no date).

The *Oxford English Dictionary* says that atavism is 'Recurrence of the disease or constitutional symptoms of an ancestor after the intermission of one or more generations . . . tendency to reproduce the ancestral type in plants and animals.' There is no doubt that this is the most popular diagnosis of the war in Ireland.

Indeed, this 'explanation' has itself recurred over several generations. God is always weeping over Ireland. Speaking in a House of Commons debate in 1922, Winston Churchill expressed the angry incredulity Englishmen still feel on the subject: 'Then came the great war. Every institution, almost, in the world was strained. Great empires have been overturned. The whole map of Europe has been changed . . . The modes of thought of men, the whole outlook on affairs, the grouping of parties, all have encountered violent and tremendous changes in the deluge of the world. But as the deluge subsides and the waters fall short we see the dreary steeples of Fermanagh and Tyrone emerging once again. The integrity of their quarrel is one of the few institutions that has been unaltered in the cataclysm which has swept the world . . .'

Fifty years on, after the rise and fall of European fascism, another world-deluge, and the mighty recovery of international capitalism, there they are still. Where God weeps, men must despair. If Ireland is a Holy Anachronism, there is nothing we modern people can do about it. The Irish war is a marginal aberration in European politics: a freak side-show for *la societe du spectacle*, as it

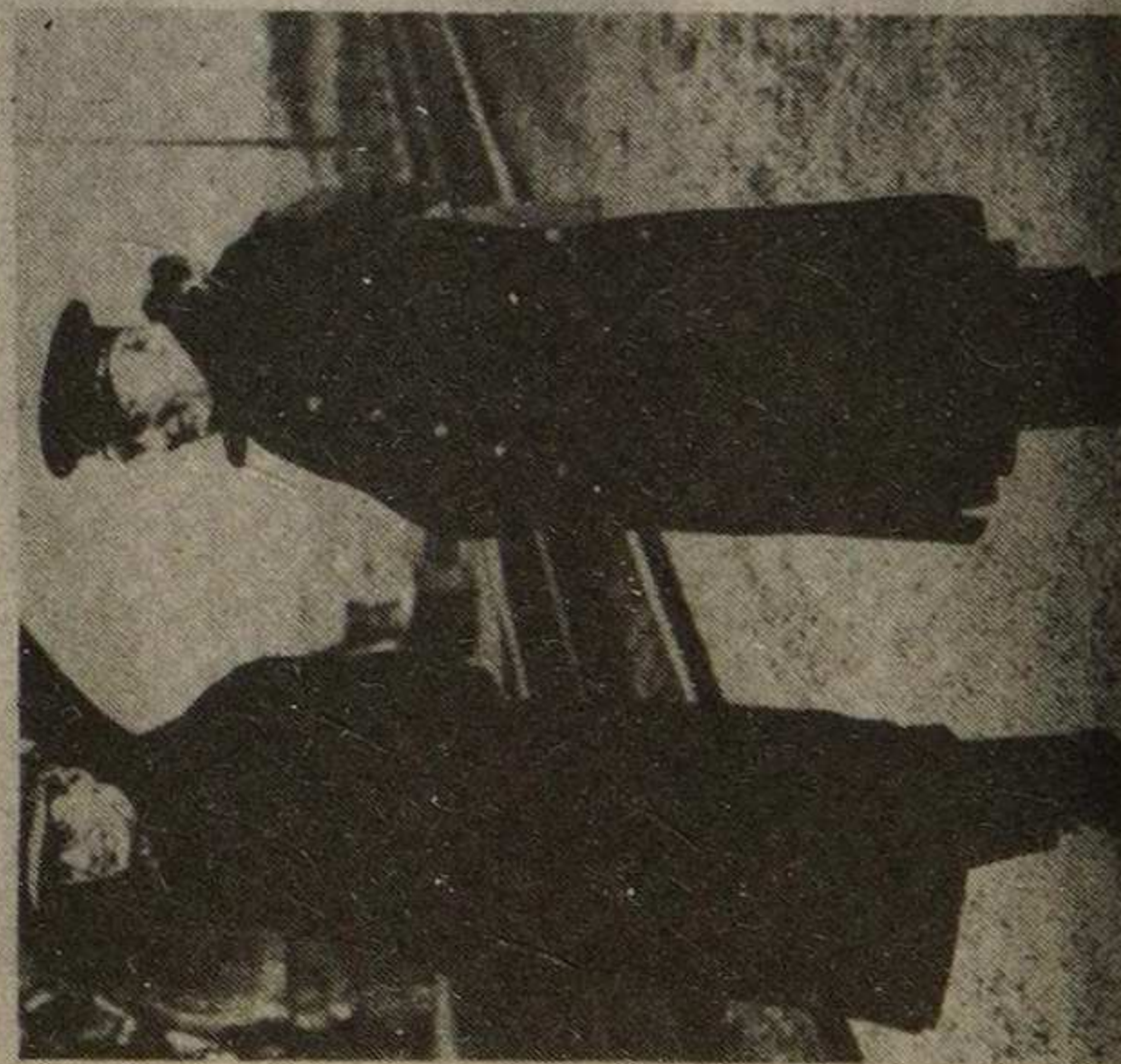
alternative way of resolving such 'archaic' nationality-questions? Why (therefore) are people still forced back to struggle in the old morasses of our history, murdering each other with the old 'traditions' of capitalist development?

The reason can only be that the world with which such regions are catching up has itself, in a certain fatal sense, stood still. It is unable to impose a more advanced, tolerable, humane settlement upon them — that is, the multi-ethnic or multi-national solution which the future cries out for. It is unable even to prevent them developing into virulent abscesses, putrid with old venoms and race-memories. Can the body which fails to neutralise such gangrenous extremities be itself so healthy? Can it be 'modern' in other than that superficial, rhetorical sense linked to the capitalist boom of the 1950s and 60s?

want him, says Crofter the Orangeman or Presbyterian.' (p. 438)

Ages of repression had made Catholicism into a profound popular force in Southern Ireland. This was why Southern nationalism could not avoid its initial regressive and obscurantist forms. But to this regression there was inevitably counterposed another: to the Counter-Reformation *redevivus* there was opposed a militant defence of the Reformation itself, in the more economically advanced and Protestant North-East. Here, an entire community had opted out of the Irish nationalist movement. It protected its identity — and eventually organised its own state — in conformity with the notorious 'siege-mentality'. Everything from its own past had to be dredged up to build these fortifications, in the usual manner of nationalist ideologies. Thus, the cults of King William, July 12th and the Protestant Ascendancy answered those of the Holy Virgin, Maynooth and the Gaelic League. To avoid becoming a helpless minority in Catholic Ireland, the Protestants built a (supposedly) 'British' statelet of their own, where they had a helpless minority of Catholics to dominate.

Ireland did not emerge from this era of hopelessness until the 1960s. Only then had modern capitalism penetrated the island sufficiently to force the break-up of these fossil patterns. The Republic abandoned economic nationalism, and moved from the first Programme for Economic Expansion (1958) to free trade with Britain, and eventually to membership of the Common Market. Politically it moved from de Valera to a new generation of Fianna Fail, and achieved its first genuinely modern bourgeois government in the Fine Gael-Labour coalition now in office. During the same period Northern Ireland embarked on a comparable programme of reform and economic modernisation. It too tried to alter the small-business, small-town foundation of its power. As even a hostile critic admits, Captain O'Neill's governments of the 1960s stood for . . . a much-vaunted modernism (with) enough basis in reality as far as the rhetoric of technocracy, public relations consciousness and obeisance to industrialism were concerned . . . (Owen Dudley Edwards, *The Sins of Our Fathers*, 1970, p. 18)



these are markedly ahistorical aspects to the conflict in Ulster, these are in no real sense its cause. Still less are they its political significance for Europe. Hence, the usual disproportionate emphasis on 'Irish atavism' hides several things. As to Ireland itself, it conceals the fact that the war arises from a crisis of capitalist social development — a crisis as typical of our own day as that of 1922 was of an earlier phase of history. Beyond this (and more significantly) it suppresses the real premise of those archaic forms the war has taken: that is, the general political barbarism and backwardness of Europe.

One may put this in another way. After seven years of war, the question anyone must ask is: why is no more civilised solution possible, or even in sight, for such an intolerable and murderous dilemma? And the answer is not only in Irish 'backwardness': it is also in European (and in the first place, English) 'backwardness', in a more general failure of civilisation which has accompanied and undermined the restoration of capitalist Europe since 1945. It is a fact that in Northern Ireland, as in Cyprus, so far no solution has emerged except the pitiable and terrifying ones of tradition: massacre, communal warfare, new frontiers, the transfer of whole populations. Is this wholly the fault of Greeks, Turks, and the two kinds of Irishmen? Does their dilemma not also point a finger of accusation at the larger state-system to which they belong?

In his poem 'Conversations in Hungary', the Ulster writer John Hewitt depicts the usual attempt to 'explain' Ireland to the foreigner:

*We tried to answer, spoke of Arab, Jew,  
of Turk and Greek in Cyprus, Pakistan  
and India; but no sense flickered through  
that offered reason to a modern man  
why Europeans, Christians, working-class,  
should thresh and struggle in that old morass.*

So, inevitably, the attention moves backwards: only a special historical curse, a luckless and predetermined fate, can account for the war:

*Falling there, we turned to history:  
the savage complications of our past;  
our luckless country where old wrongs outlast,  
in raging viruses of bigotry,  
their first infection.*

(Out of my Time, Belfast 1974)

In reality, one doubts whether the past is so much to blame. The British and European present bears a larger share of responsibility. Even granted that Ulster and Cyprus are 'backward' areas forced for peculiar historical reasons to 'catch up' with European norms belatedly, the question remains: why are these norms unchanged? Why — half a century after the destruction of Smyrna and the Irish civil wars of the 1920s — is there no new,

undeline'd by a remarkable paradox. Ireland has indeed passed through an era of something like atavism. That is, a period when its two communities did retreat into their respective pasts and proceed to cultivate everything most reactionary and obscurantist about them. This lasted from the mid-1920s until the mid-1960s. And what the new conflicts signify is above all the effort to escape from such fossilized backwardness — to leave behind forever the years when the dreary steeples towered over the island's landscape. So far from being a 'preordained return to ancestral type, they are exactly the opposite.

In the Republic, the generation now ended was that of de Valera's theocratic Constitution of 1937, where power was handed upwards from the British Emperor to the Holy Ghost himself: 'In the name of the Most Holy Trinity, from whom is all authority . . . and to whom all actions of states must be referred . . . Humbly acknowledging all our obligations to our Divine Lord Jesus Christ, who sustained our fathers through centuries of trial, and so on. It was the epoch of Counter-Reformation bigotry and small-farmer censorship, of that one-eyed Fenianism Joyce satirised in *Ulysses*: 'It's on the march, says the citizen. To hell with the bloody brutal Sassenachs and their patois . . . To hell with them! The curse of a goodfornothing God light sideways on the bloody thicklegged sons of whores' gets! No music and no art and no literature worthy of the name. Any civilisation they had they stole from us. Tonguetied sons of bastards' ghosts . . . ('Cyclops', pp.376-449). Economically, it was the time of *Sinn Fein* protectionism and isolation from the wider world. This futile and inward-looking stagnation was ended only when it had grown insupportable even to de Valera's nationalist ruling clique. When that is (in the words of a recent historian) 'A serious crisis of confidence had developed by the middle 1950s . . . and even more a widespread anxiety that the general performance of the economy was so poor that the country was falling behind Western European standards, not only in productivity but in the social benefits that productivity might be expected to confer . . .' (F.S.L. Lyons, *Ireland since the Famine*, 2nd edition, p.628).

In the partitioned North, meanwhile, an equally odious regime answered Catholic nationalism with its own variety of devout spite and discrimination. Its state power rested upon the revived archaism of the Protestant Orange Order. Damned by the Gaelic-League antics of the 'Citizen' in Barney Kiernan's pub, Leopold Bloom — the spirit of decency — is also rejected by the ambiguous Crofton-Crawford, an embodiment of Scotch-Irish Protestantism: 'Is he a Jew or gentile or a holy roman or a swaddler or what the hell is he? Says Ned. Or who is he? No offence, Crofton. — We don't

that happened next to me by-product of this advance. The new troubles' came not from ancient genes but from modern aspirations. Multi-national corporations and state subsidies reanimated the national struggle, not the shade of Finn MacCool.

This was in no way surprising. Ethnic conflicts do not arise naturally from the coexistence of different groups in one society. As long as society stays fixed in time-honoured customs and narrow expectations, like those of Ireland's long developmental sleep from the 20s to the 60s, they merely simmer on the level of village grudges and personal complaints. It is when conditions improve and horizons enlarge that they become intolerable.

For it is only then that the disadvantaged group feels the full constraints placed on it. Only then — as the prospect of a more decent modern existence is dangled before it — is an oppressed nationality thrust into clearer awareness of its character and fate, and compelled to act. In Ireland, this was true above all of the Catholic minority in the North.

The earlier history of Irish nationalism had made up a classic episode in the annals of self-determination. There was nothing 'peculiar' about it, except in the banal sense that all nationalisms involve the mobilisation or invention of numberless peculiarities for display and veneration. Behind *Cathleen ni Houlihan's* maudering there lay an ordinary dilemma of development, not some ineffable race-fate. And within this dilemma no aspect was more thoroughly typical than its result: the partition of Ireland.

In this standard tale of under-development, peasant Ireland was first dragged into modern existence by English industrialism and then forced to a nationalist self-mobilisation *against* these same forces. Backward countries have no other choice. The process of capitalist industrial development is so blind, so uneven in impact, and so metropolitan-centred that left unresisted it will crush all less-developed regions into a prolonged colonialism. The latter have to fight back, in order to 'develop' in any acceptable sense themselves. So Catholic Ireland did resist, in the same way as and at the same time as the rest of under-developed Central and Eastern Europe, obtaining its independence very shortly after the main settlement of nationality questions in 1919-21.

The new Irish boundary was one in the interminable list making up this settlement. Like most of them, it was crude surgery. Agreement on the carve-up of ethnically mixed areas was hardly ever obtainable, and the great powers enforcing the division were uninterested in such details. However, the Ulster-Eire frontier did express what was supposed to be the main *rationalité* of the new maps: separation of the new-nationalist under-developed peoples from

### The American Prison Business/Jessica Mitford

Here at last is a factual statement of how "social deviants" are treated by Western society; make no mistake, this book is not only an account of American penal institutions but of the prison system (as far as I can determine) throughout the Christian world. The differences between American and British prisons are simply numerical. The principle is the same: degrade, humiliate, and break the spirit of the prisoner by any means. Jessica Mitford has pointed to the fact that the bulk of the inmate population in American "Correction Centres" is drawn from the socially deprived - immigrant and black working-class people - and that white middle-class offenders are less liable to prosecution and conviction, while, if convicted, the "respectable" lawbreaker receives smaller sentences and is more often granted parole.

This is true of British prisons: we have overcrowded and outdated penal institutions where the middle-class is not represented. The few bourgeois offenders are contained in the new open prisons.

Anyone who reads this book and thinks that the American prison system has little in common with our cosy British institutions should take a closer look at the home situation. The callous cruelty of the indeterminate sentence, administrative indifference, legalised brutality under the euphemism "restraint", political sentences - we have them all. True, it is over forty years since the Dartmoor riot in which a prisoner was shot by the army, and prison conditions have improved slightly, but prison protests continue here, as in America, but mostly unreported. As Jessica Mitford quotes, "It is not to the advantage of a prison administration to let it be known that a riot has occurred."

Perhaps the most frightening aspect of this book is insight into the mental attitudes, not of the prisoners, but of the prison guards and administration officials. "To reform a criminal you must first break his spirit." This quotation from a former warden of Sing Sing would sum up the characteristic attitude of an American prison official, and his European colleagues, most of whom would not phrase it so bluntly. In the chapter titled "Clock-work Orange" is a list of behavioural control techniques commonly used in America: sensory deprivation, which means solitary confinement for months or years. Stress assessment, the opposite of solitary, living in dormitories, lack of privacy, continual questioning about the prisoner's personal life.

doubtful privilege of almost every method of behavioural control being applied to me, and seeing other men being rehabilitated in the prisons at Brixton, Wandsworth, Perth, Peterhead and Inverness. During these ten years my experience is that prisons do NOT need to be reformed: they should be scrapped.

For two years there has been a unique experiment here in Barlinnie Prison Special Unit. Six long-term prisoners have been living in a community setting and cooperating with prison staff in an effort to prove that prisoners and their guards can do something constructive together, in the hope that what is learned here can be applied to the prison system in general. The prisoners have served between seven and fourteen years of their sentences: two have records of extremely violent behaviour in prison and have further sentences for injuring prison guards in riots: the others are men who do not accept the prison norm of conduct and have been a source of embarrassment or trouble to the prison administration.

All the prisoners have changed their conduct, some prison staff have also changed, but the majority "linger . . . at the gates of correctional Valhalla", presumably proud that their job is done. Therapeutic segregation is enough. □ LARRY WINTERS

## Peter Washington

### WRONG SONNET

You changed overnight, Love's landscape  
Vanished: the snow-pale skin;  
Dark valleys. The taste  
Of a smoke-sweetened mouth. Only  
Waiting was left me, and words -  
That hopelessly gather, and rush  
To an absence they cannot acknowledge.

The spring is a rope, is a knife, is  
A green fire that holds me;  
Severs and purges, that swallows  
The world till what's left is all one.

You say I will come to myself,  
Will see everything new.  
But the eyes have different sights  
Filled with tears, with emptiness.

## Avi Hazak

### LORD OF THE UNIVERSE

I beseech thee: turn up the volume of your transmitter.  
Here, I  
Do not hear, do not know, if  
You have once more stuck an iron flower in the  
buttonhole

Of your aerial. You are so gentle. Why  
Are you so benign. Why are you always  
So polite. How do you read me? Over.  
Over. I hear you brokenly, as if  
You are wounded, you

In the surrounded valley. Different mountains  
Another Galilee. I beseech thee,  
Let me know the volume of your signals; your face  
won't focus

On the radar screen, why  
Aren't you tank-tracked, why aren't you  
Fighting, shall I send a motorized patrol. I am  
So full of faith  
That it would not reach you nor get back to me.  
Black

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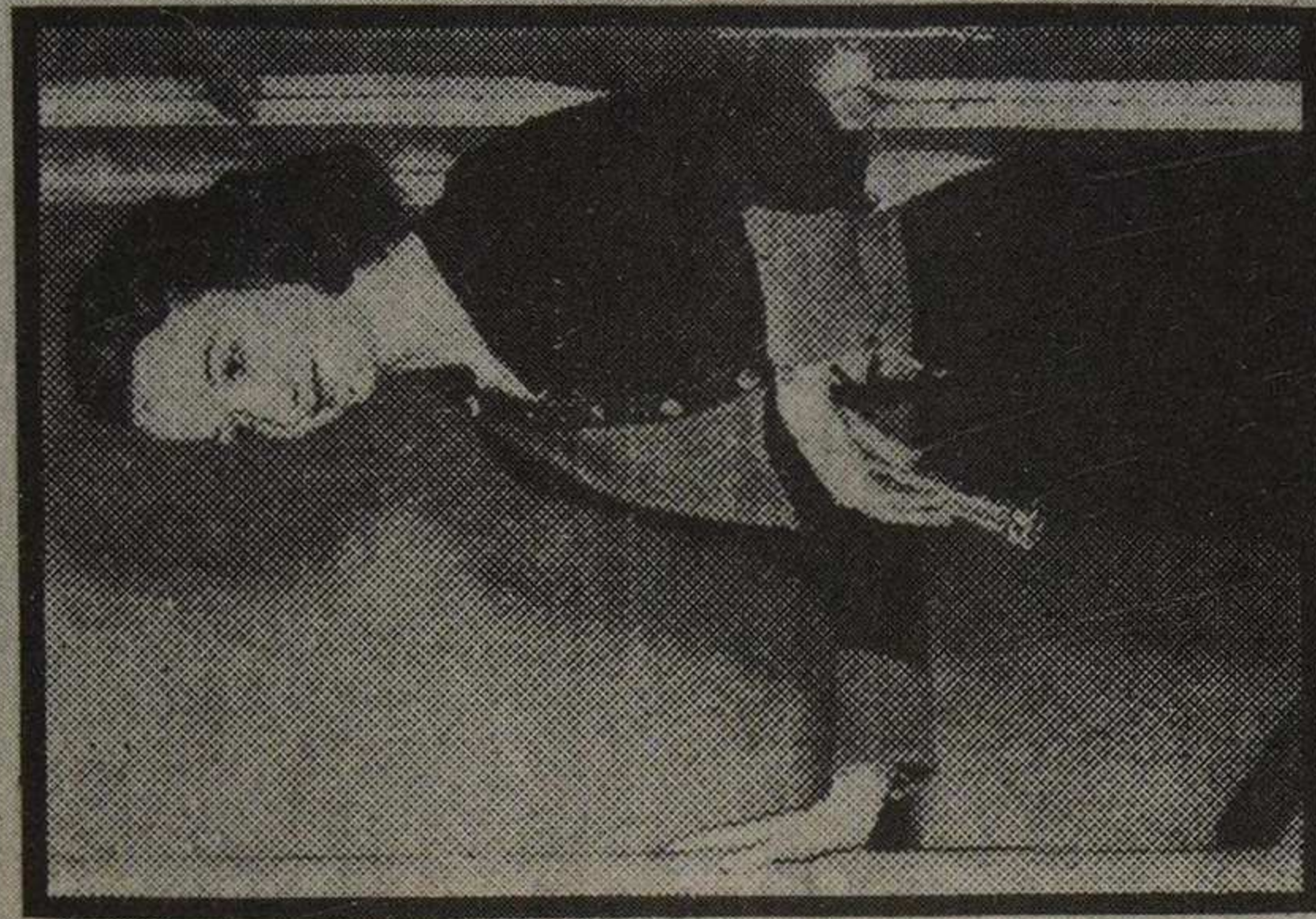
British prisons, apart from neurosurgery, which is practised only in mental hospitals. The other methods are modified in degree and terminology.

During the last ten years I have had the

Lionel Poles

Star guide your chariot host  
Where would it guide the —  
I beseech thee, close your eyes. I read you  
Now. Roger. You can die  
At last. Bereaved father, I already cease  
To feel.  
Winter tears will say Kaddish over you.

Translated by Alan Sillitoe



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—Note from Ted Hughes to Bananas' editor Emma Tennant when she was giving up the magazine, Autumn 1979.

Bananas was an avant-garde literary magazine, that ran from 1975 to 1980, housed at No.2 Blenheim Crescent in London.

**Farhad Ahrarnia**

is an artist whose practice is based on drawing from, appropriating, deconstructing and rearranging existing mass produced images, objects, sounds and texts. He examines and adopts a wide range of mediums and techniques for their inherent traditions, tensions, contradictions and histories. He has worked with numerous institutions such as Tate Modern, The British Museum, Victoria & Albert Museum and English Heritage as an attempt to question the role of an individual artist operating in contexts which offer in/variable complexities, possibilities and boundaries.

**Paolo Arao**

is an artist based in New York. Before pursuing art he was a classical pianist and his background in music has been a strong influence on his visual art practice. He shows his work internationally, with recent exhibitions at The Drawing Room, New York and Madder 139, London, and in 2005 was a recipient of a New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship. He is represented by Jeff Bailey Gallery in New York. [www.paoloarao.com](http://www.paoloarao.com)

**Gerard Byrne**

is an artist based in Dublin. His work has been shown at international biennials including the Lyon Biennale (2007), 3rd Tate Triennial (2006), and the 8th Istanbul Biennial (2003), as well as in major museums in Europe and the US. Recent solo exhibitions of his work in 2007 include: the Dusseldorf Kunstverein, the Charles H. Scott Gallery, Vancouver, and the Irish pavilion at the Venice Biennale. He is represented by the Lisson Gallery in London, and Green on Red Gallery in Dublin.

**Douglas Coupland**

is a writer based in Vancouver. His first novel, *Generation X*, was published in 1991. Since then he has published nine novels and several non-fiction books in 35 languages and most countries on earth. He has written and performed for the Royal Shakespeare Company in Stratford, England, and in 2001 resumed his practice as a visual artist, with exhibitions in North America, Europe and Asia. 2006 marked the launch of the feature film *Everything's Gone Green*, and a TV series based on his novel, *jPod* premiered on the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation in January 2008. His most recent novel is *The Gum Thief*. [www.coupland.com](http://www.coupland.com)

**Giles Eldridge**

is an artist and has been based in London since 1995. He was a finalist in both the Celeste Art Prize (2007) and Propects Drawing Prize (2004). Recent group exhibitions include Werketage, Berlin and Five Years Gallery, London. Having spent six months at the ECC Atelierhaus, Berlin (2006) he has plans to work on a series of drawings during a two month period in a summer house by the sea in a remote part of Denmark.

**Maria Fusco**

is the editor of *The Happy Hypocrite*. She is a Belfast-born writer working across fiction, critical and theoretical writing. She is Director of Art Writing at Goldsmiths College in London and contributes to a broad range of international publications including: books; catalogues; journals and magazines. She is the editor of *Put About: A Critical Anthology on Independent Publishing*, also convening an accompanying conference at Tate Modern.

### Stewart Home

is an artist, film-maker, writer, subcultural pamphleteer, underground art historian, and activist. Born in South London in 1962, after dabbling in rock journalism and music, in the early eighties, he switched his attention to the art world. Home now writes novels as well as cultural commentary, continuing to make films and exhibitions. He is the editor of the Book Works' Semina open submission fiction writing series. His twelfth novel *Memphis Underground* was published by Snowbooks (2007). [www.stewarthomesociety.org](http://www.stewarthomesociety.org)

### Andrea Mason

is an artist and writer based in London. From 1993 to 1999, she practised as Andrea + Philippe. Her publications include *Corporate Mentality* and *Frozen Tears III*, and she has contributed to a range of international magazines. In 2005 she founded King Street Rocks: The Salon, an ad-hoc literary salon, and has been involved in other salons including: The Musical One; The Girly One and Salon Saloon. In 2006 she was commissioned for Art U Need: An Outdoor Revolution, led by Bob and Roberta Smith.

### Clunie Reid

is an artist who lives and works in London. She was selected for East International 2007 and has had a recent solo show at MOT in London. Her work has been included in a number of international exhibitions including: Transmission Gallery, Glasgow; Neue Alte Brücke, Frankfurt; Ellen de Bruijne Gallery, Amsterdam; Cynthia Broan Gallery, New York and Jeffrey Charles Gallery in London. She is represented by MOT International.

### Lisa Robertson

is a writer currently teaching at California College of the Arts in San Francisco. Her six books of poetry include *Debbie: An Epic*, *The Weather* and *The Men*. Recently published is *Occasional Works and Seven Walks from the Office for Soft Architecture*, a linked series of prose essays on cities, architecture and ornament.

### Alexandre Singh

is an artist based in Brooklyn, New York. He was born in Bordeaux, France in 1980, and studied at the Ruskin School of Drawing and Fine Art in Oxford and the School of Visual Arts in New York. He has exhibited extensively in Europe and the United States, and has forthcoming shows at: The Ballroom, Marfa, Texas; Museu da Electricidade, Lisbon; Monitor Gallery, Rome and Jack Hanley Gallery in San Francisco. [www.preromanbritain.com](http://www.preromanbritain.com)

### Nick Thurston

is an artist based in West Yorkshire, UK. He is author of *Reading the Remove of Literature* (2006) and *Historia Abscondita (An Index of Joy)* (2007). He is also co-editor of the independent artist's book publisher information as material, based in York.

### Cosey Fanni Tutti

is an artist and musician. She co-founded Throbbing Gristle in 1976, also producing the infamous exhibition, *Prostitution* at the ICA, London in the same year. She worked in the sex industry between 1973 to 1984, exploring her experiences within her art practice. Recent exhibitions include Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (2007) and The Barbican, London (2007). She works collaboratively on music with her partner Chris Carter, performing and recording as CARTER TUTTI, releasing *Feral Vapours of the Silver Ether* in 2007. She is represented by Cabinet Gallery, London. [www.coseyfannitutti.com](http://www.coseyfannitutti.com)

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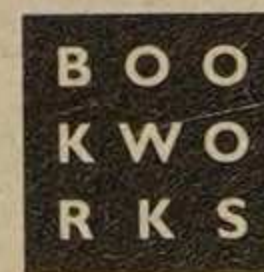
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