

**THE SCORPION’S STING
A CADAVRE EXQUIS BASED ON LUIS BUÑUEL’S “L’ÂGE D’OR”**

**TOBIAS ZIELONY
CHICKS ON SPEED**

**M+M
KEREN CYTTER
JULIAN ROSEFELDT
JOHN BOCK**

RALF BEIL, MICHAEL BUHRS, M+M (EDS.)

**HATJE
CANTZ**



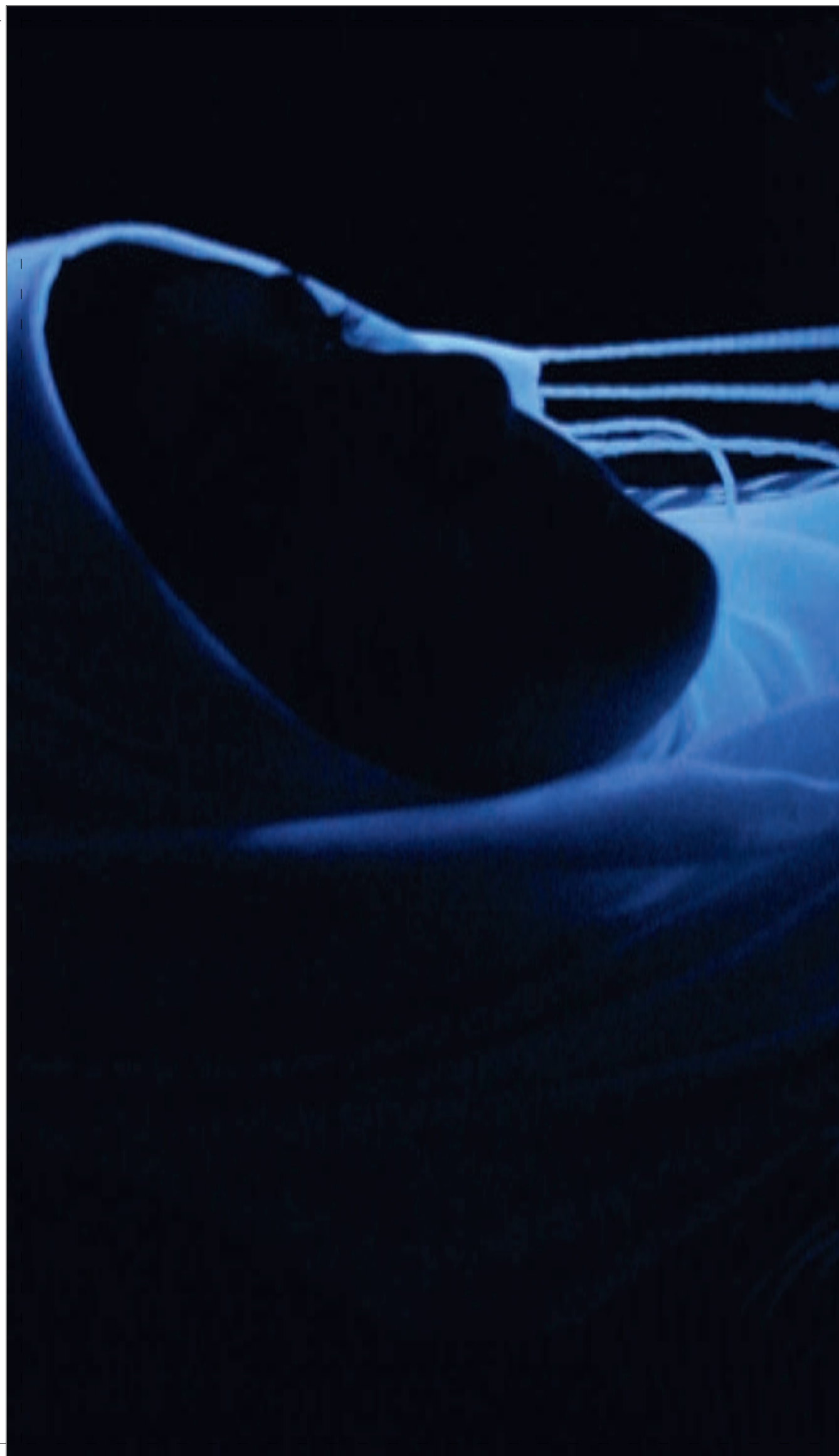
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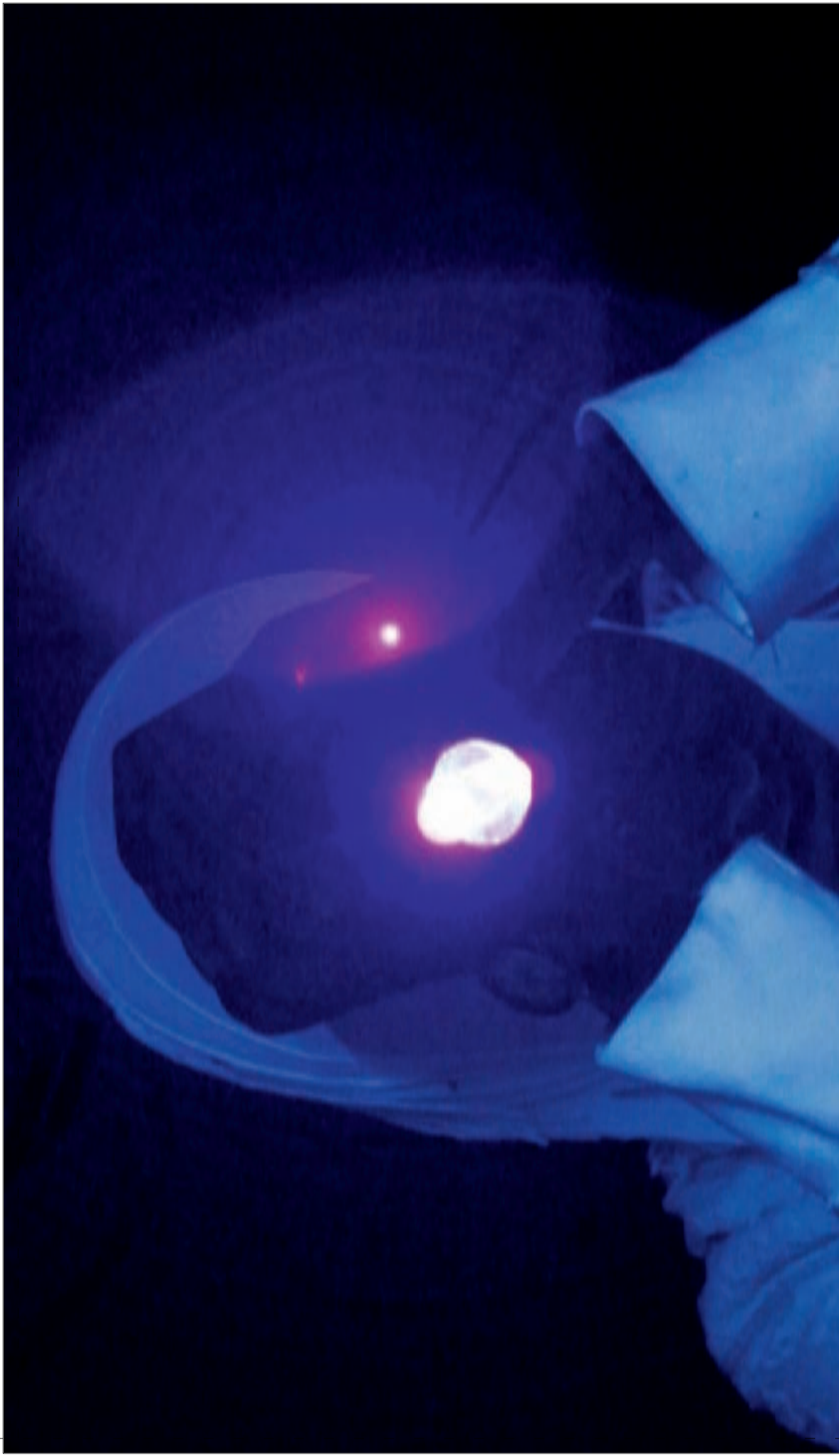


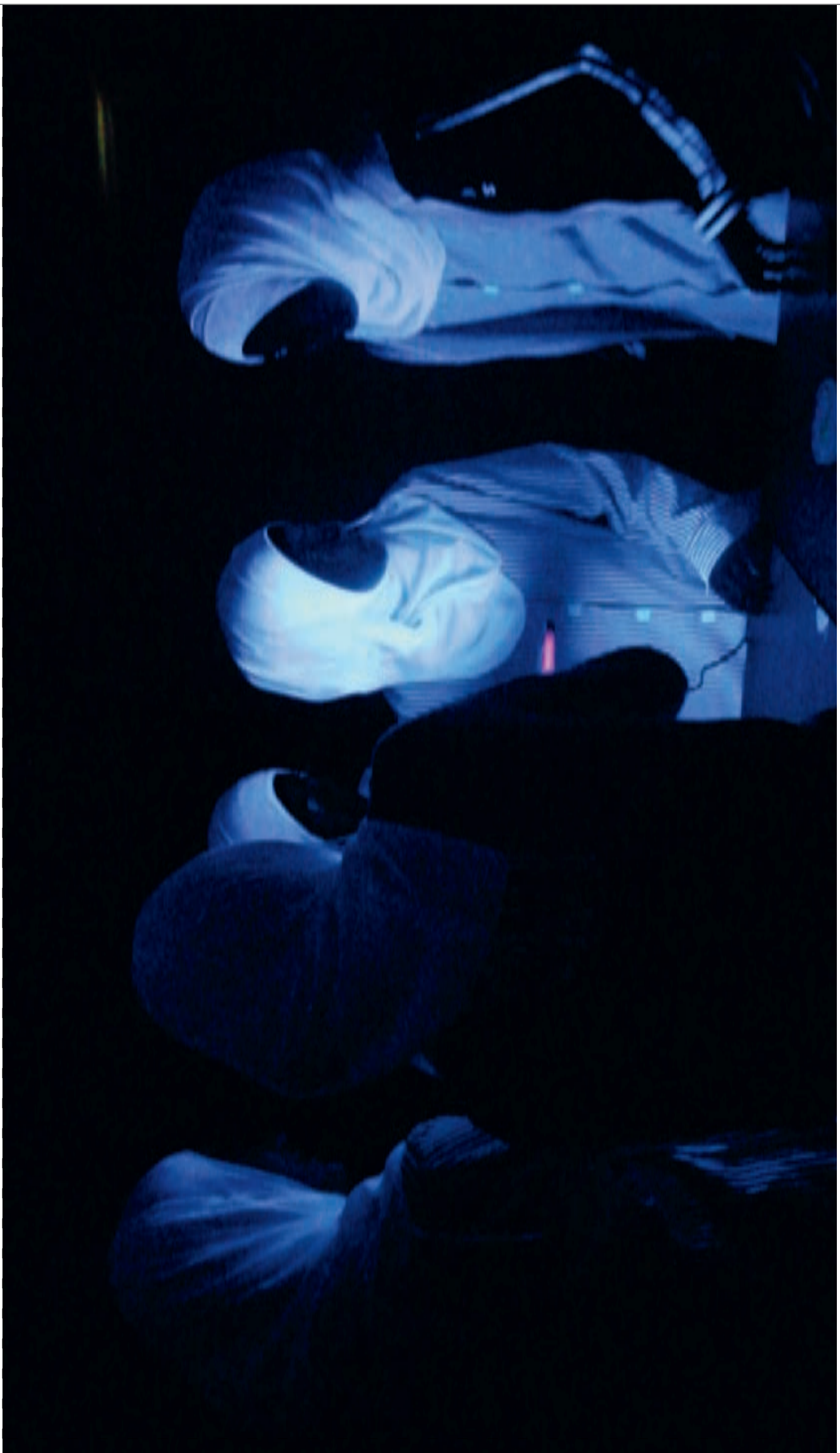


TOBIAS ZIELONY





























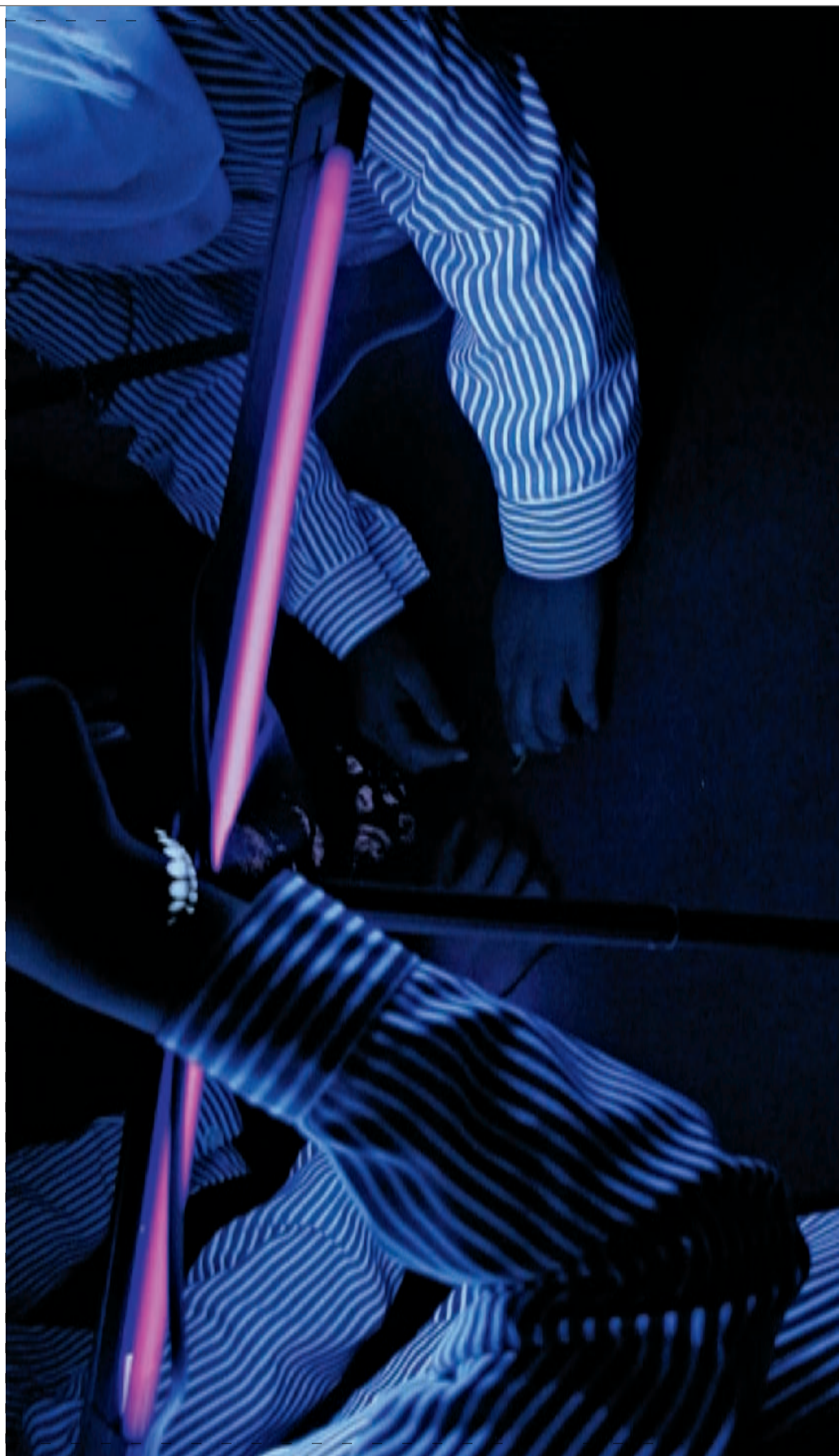
















CHICKS ON SPEED







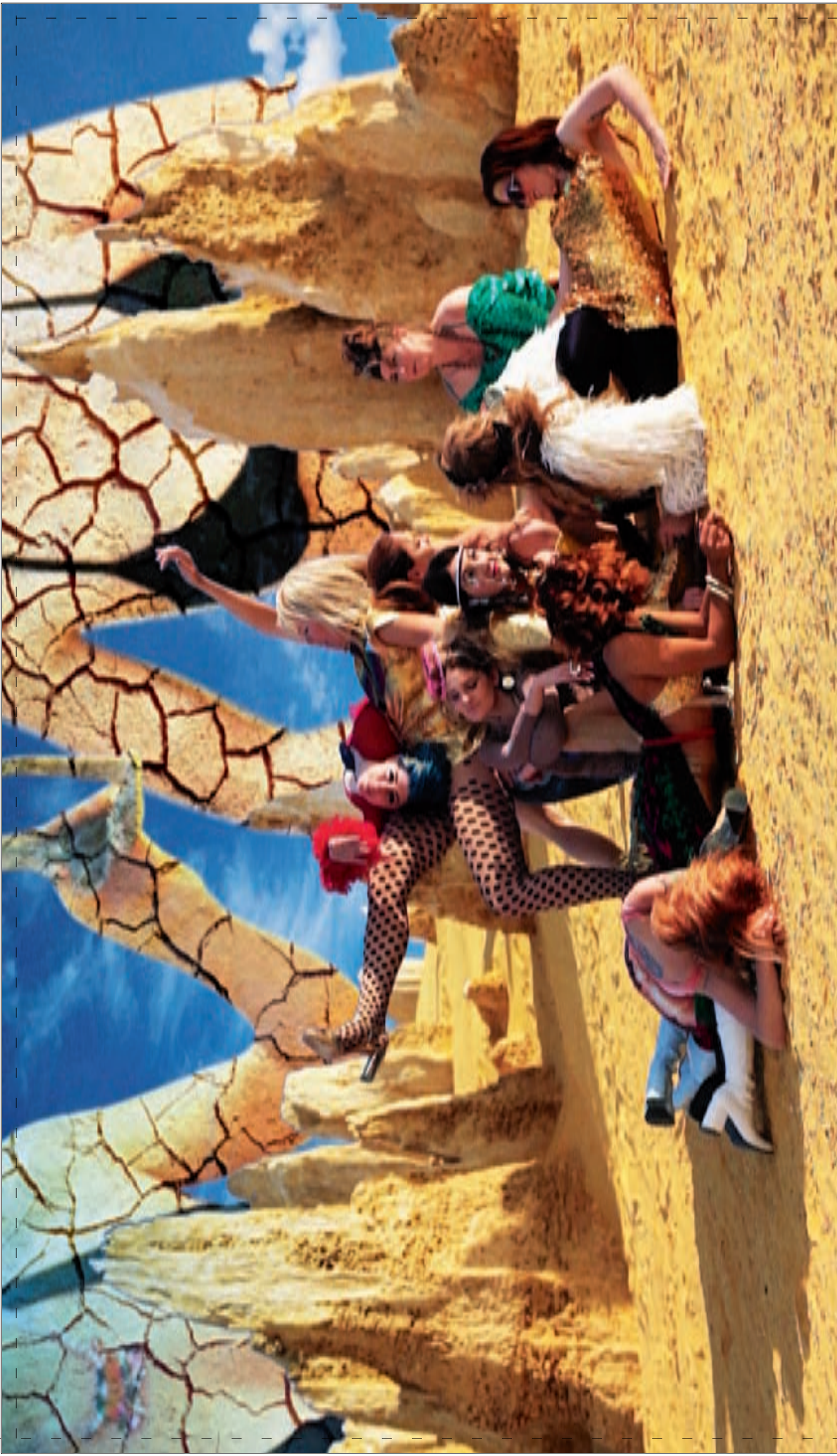


































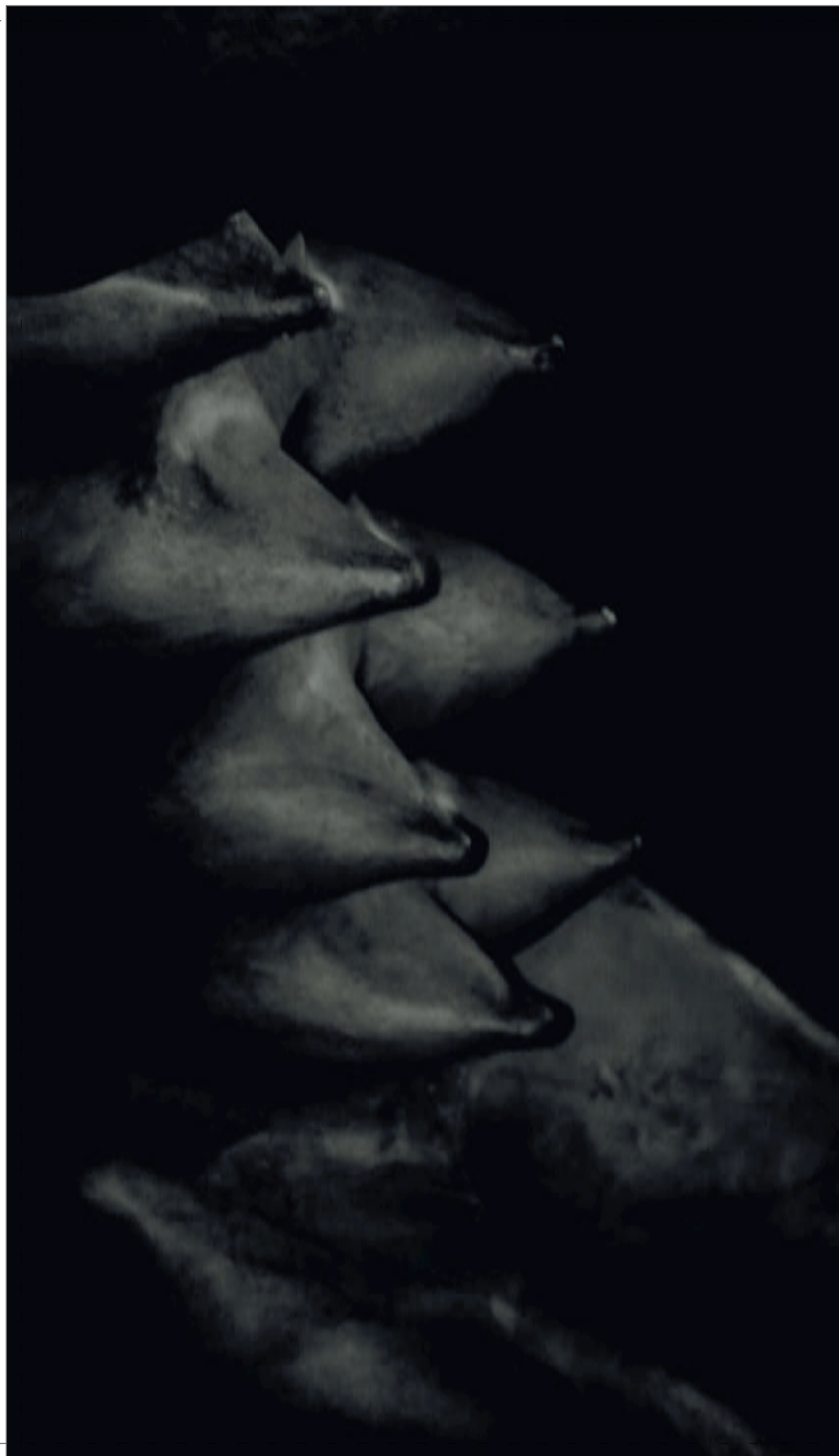








M+M

















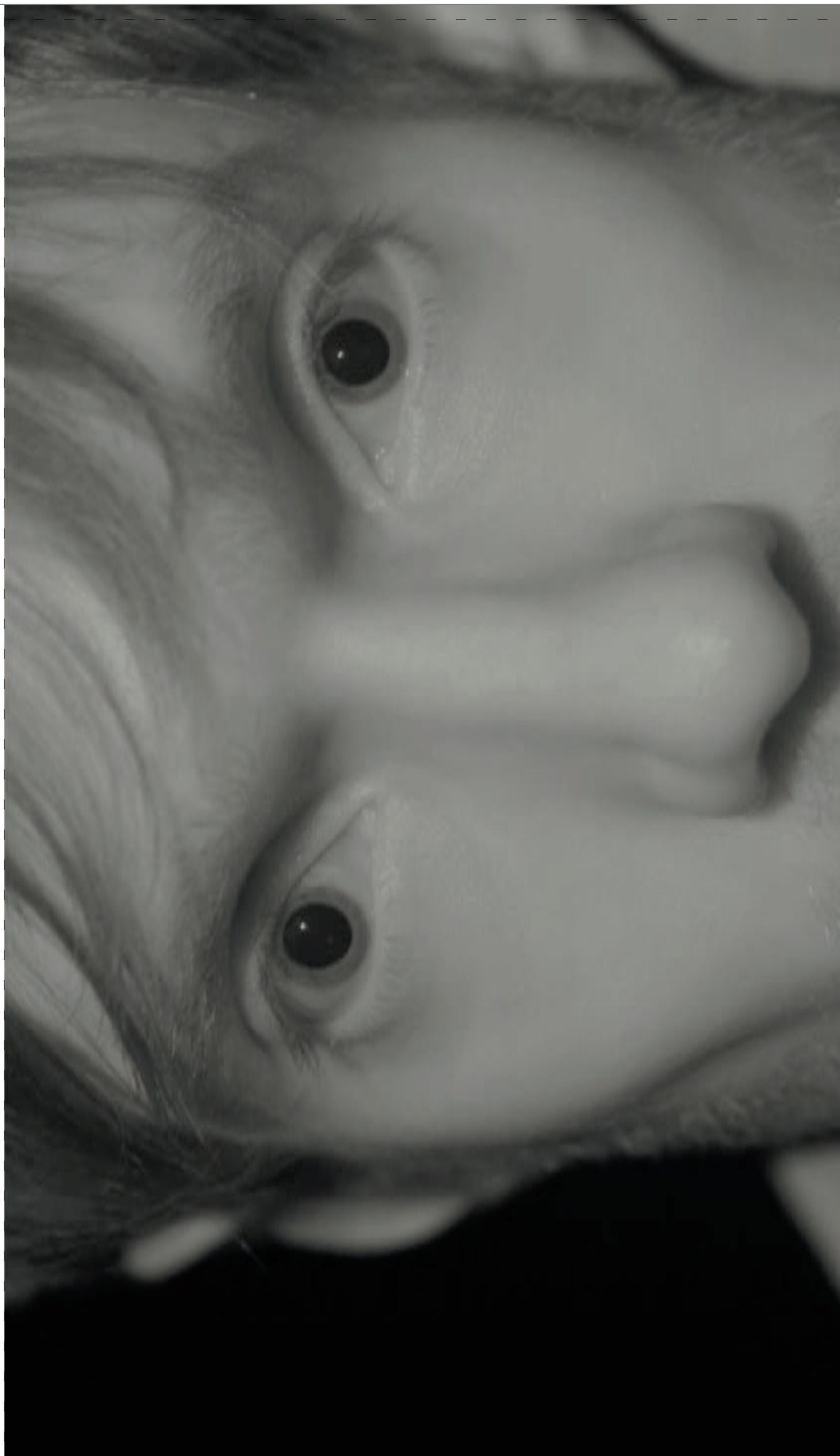












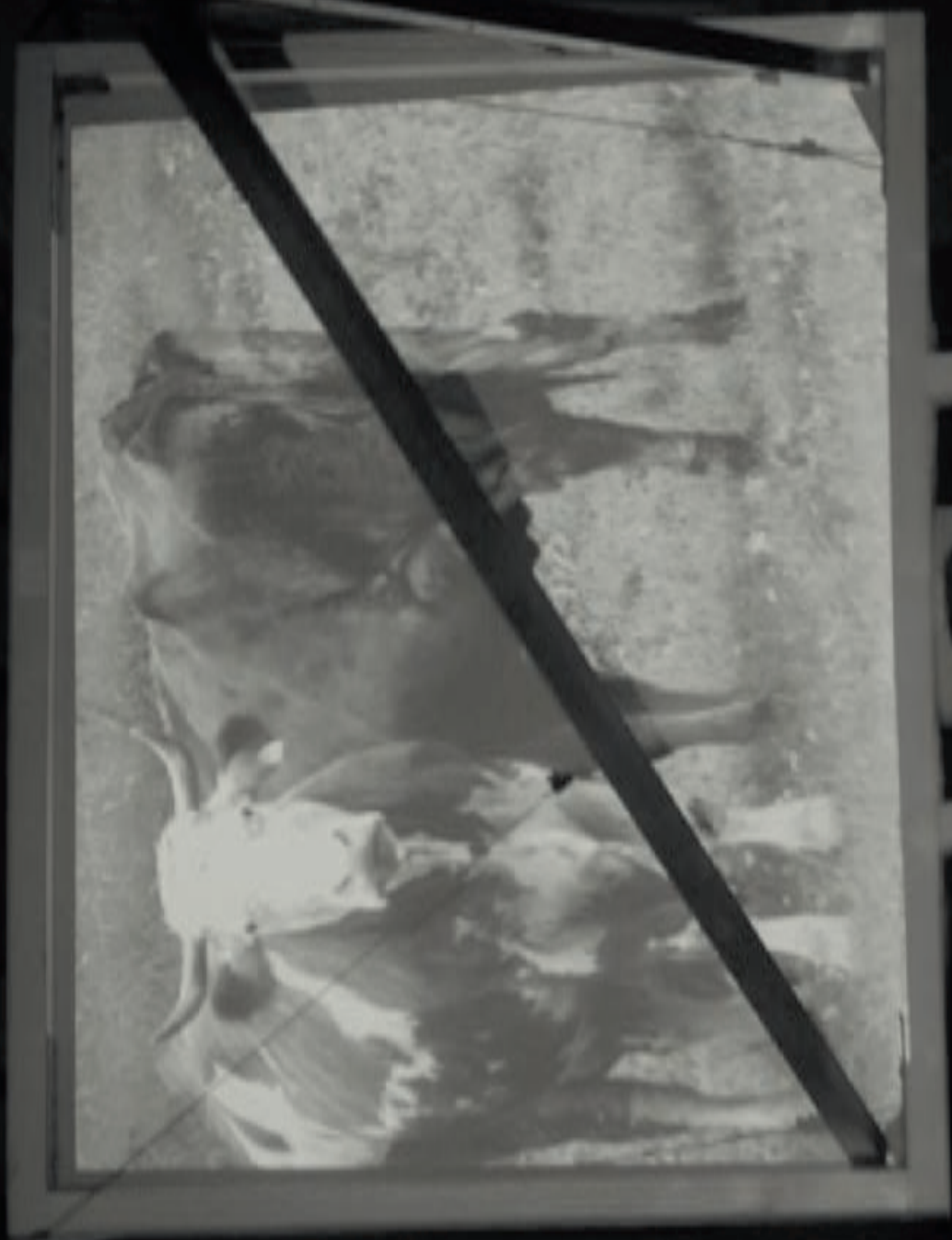




















KEREN CYTTER

















































JULIAN ROSEFFELDT

















































JOHN BOCK















































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Dear Mr. Gregoretti,

We are currently preparing a cinematic exhibition titled *The Scorpion's Sting*, which involves six artists and artist groups who each reinterpret one of the six episodes of the Luis Buñuel film *L'Âge d'or*.

Accordingly, the exhibition itself is conceived as an anthology film of sorts.

During preparations for the project we noticed that the genre of the anthology or omnibus film rose to particular prominence in the sixties, something to which you yourself, along with other internationally renowned directors such as Jean-Luc Godard, Pier Paolo Pasolini and Roman Polanski, contributed with now legendary projects such as *Ro.Go.Pa.G.* (1963) and *The World's Most Beautiful Swindlers* (1964).

We would therefore like to ask you a few questions:

How did you come to get involved in the genre of the anthology film?

Did social and political considerations inform the decision to collaborate?

Did you coordinate with one another on the structures, contents and intentions of the joint project, for instance, regarding a continuous meta-level or a thematic focus on particular subjects such as religion or a critique of consumerism?

Which common aesthetic and social expectations did the directors and producers associate with the genre?

Could it be argued that you viewed the joint artistic project as a way to cast off the prevailing standards and conventions of film in order to develop a new cinematic language?

And finally: how did the public respond to this phenomenon?

We would be delighted if you would give us the opportunity to incorporate your thoughts on the anthology film during the heyday of European auteur filmmaking into our preparations for the project.

Thanking you in anticipation of your kind support.

Sincerely,

M+M

Dear M+M,

Thank you for your letter. Your interest in the genre of the anthology film prompted a conversation between me and Tanja Leigemann that is reproduced below.

Kind regards and best wishes for your project,

Ugo Gregoretti

Tanja Leigemann: How did you come to get involved in the genre of the anthology film?

Ugo Gregoretti: It is difficult to say exactly what led to this involvement. I am not sure whether it was a decision that was based on a particular concept or one that was prompted by the analogy with other forms of expression, such as theater, painting and literature. The anthology film can be described as a "quadriptych" of sorts. I don't know if the term "quadriptych" officially exists; at any rate, it is a triptych plus another picture, because usually there are four episodes. And in this way you find a connection to the tradition of painting, to the nomenclature of painting. One day when I was shooting my segment of the anthology film *Ro.Go.Pa.G.*, called *Il Pollo Ruspante*, [Alberto] Arbasino came into the producer's office and was asked to contribute to a piece reflecting on the genre of the anthology film. I remember that he proposed a definition based on the analogy between feature-length films, anthology and medium-length films on the one hand and the painting of large frescoes and easel paintings on the other. Based on this definition, one could say that an anthology film is a compressed collection of pictures as opposed to a self-contained fresco. And there are similar analogies that one could make, if required.

TL: Why did it become popular in the early sixties to make anthology films?

UG: I don't believe the real reasons that led to the emergence of the anthology or omnibus film were particularly noble. In a way, it was not about the search for new forms of expression and a new language, but rather about the producer hoping that by inventing a less cost-intensive film genre that would gross higher than average—higher than conventional movies, that is—it would be possible to achieve higher earnings. And why did an anthology film cost less and gross higher? Because actors, even famous ones, need to be hired, even for short periods. Hence less money had to be spent on actors' salaries and the budget needed for the film was lower compared with other, conventional films. This also allowed producers to afford top actors who, in fact, were interested in this kind of film themselves. After all, the project lasted just three to four weeks instead of ten or twelve, an arrangement which meant that they could accept more projects and work more.

TL: And what was it like to make an anthology film from the perspective of the directors?

UG: The director had two options: be part of an anthology film as one of four directors or make an anthology film with any number of episodes that were all shot by one and the same director. In the latter case the director was, as it were, a writer writing a novel and novellas at the same time—the comparison is actually quite appropriate in this case. Sure, what I am saying is trivial, but it is also spot-on if one aims to broadly classify the anthology film and the other forms of expression it reflects. In my first anthology movie, I was the author of one episode.

TL: Did social and political considerations inform the decision to collaborate?

UG: I would say that the format of the anthology film, at least in Italy, was not guided by ideological claims or the requirements of thematic coherence. I would like to jump far ahead in time here: the last Italian anthology film to which I contributed was shot in 2009. The project was then delayed a bit, but the occasion was the anniversary of the Messina earthquake which—in 2008, to be precise—celebrated its 100th anniversary. The film was called *Scossa* [Earth Tremor]. Since the film had been commissioned by the film boards of the regions of Calabria and Sicily and a number of other institutions, it was a monothematic movie, meaning it had only one theme, albeit one that was treated from different perspectives by each of the four directors. Since all we could do was to tell a short story, I did something for my contribution that could not in any way be described as resembling a feature-length film. A feature-length film, after all, is either a documentary or a feature film, and making a feature film about the earthquake would have been something different. My aim was to make a film of a journalistic investigation that had been undertaken at the time by an Italian writer called Giovanni Cena. When Cena learned about the disaster, he too took the next train to Calabria with his partner, the renowned Italian writer Sibilla Aleramo, and stayed there for ten days. For in spite of the terrible calamity that had hit the city, Messina was also the epicenter of attention and information. Allegedly, one hundred thousand people died in just five minutes. People either died from their wounds or because they could not be rescued from the rubble, and were buried alive. It was an attempt to visualize a dramatic historical event photographically, iconographically, and as if a television report had been done in 1908. It was an episode, in other words, that had actually happened and that was reinvented by some of my colleagues.

TL: But who decided on the subject for your first anthology film, *Ro.Go.Pa.G.* (1963)?

Did you work with one another on the structures, contents and intentions of the joint project, or did you focus on particular subjects, such as a critique of consumerism?

UG: *Ro.Go.Pa.G.* came about as the result of the encounter of four directors who—in a way also coincidentally—met through a film producer. At the time this producer was one of the most courageous and original entrepreneurs in the film industry, and his legacy to film has been substantial. His greatest legacy, I would say, is that he recognized the exceptional talent of [Pier Paolo] Pasolini as an auteur filmmaker. Pasolini had previously contributed to screenplays, was already a famous novelist, poet and essayist and had made his first film, *Accattone*, in 1961. That same year the producer Alfredo Bini, founder of the production company Arco Film, used the same team and the same technicians to produce back first Pasolini's and then my first film. And because our films, Pasolini's *Accattone* and my *I Nuovi Angeli* [The New Angels], were very successful, we were his poster child, his poster children: Pasolini with all the fame he had already acquired, and I, a nobody, a fledgling, a TV news editor, which is why hardly anyone knew me and what I did for TV. Because of that my debut caused a bit of a stir and *I Nuovi Angeli* established me as a director. Alfredo Bini was thus, in a way, the father of the pair, the she-wolf if you like, and we were the twins.

TL: Did the producer also suggest the subject?

UG: He had the rather vague idea that we should look at the new developments that were a subject of great discussion in Italian society at the time, especially the economic miracle,

industrialization, rural flight, modernization—the leap into modernity that Italy was in the process of making during the years of the so-called boom. But beyond that Bini offered no further ideas. Yet his band of directors kept growing bigger. There was Pasolini, me, [Roberto] Rossellini, a busy and curious person who liked to make new relationships. He had met Bini through I don't know what channels and the two had contemplated making a film together one day. The duo Pasolini-Gregoretti became a trio, and along with Rossellini came, quasi like his shadow, Godard. Back then Godard was almost like the Dalai Lama of the Rossellini liturgy. And then Bini asked Rossellini to come up with something, and Rossellini had the idea to do something about consumerism and especially about the hidden persuaders, the manipulation of desires and the creation of unnecessary wants through more or less imperceptible temptation. That is how that project was born, but except for me none of the four stuck to it. Not even Rossellini who apparently had another idea. To say nothing of Pasolini; after all, his segment of the film, *La Ricotta*, is considered perhaps his best work. Yet Pasolini at that time was a thorn in the side of the conformist circles of Italian society. Even the press tried to claim that what he did was harmful for society's well-being. At a press conference I was able to point out—even though by doing so I was treading on thin ice—that this was not the truth and thus, at least partly, nothing but a distortion. The main protagonist dies because having eaten too little he then eats too much, which causes his system to collapse. So I suppose there was a grain of truth in the accusation, but probably not even Pasolini himself was aware of it.

TL: How did the title come about?

UG: The film was called *Ro.Go.Pa.G.*, because until the end of production nobody knew what title to give it since there was no connection between the individual episodes. At some point, Rossellini was browsing through the accounts and discovered that the rather unimaginative accountant had labeled a file with an approval request addressed to the ministry with the first syllables of the directors' names, Ro.Go.Pa.G. And that is how *Ro.Go.Pa.G.* came up, and because Rossellini felt that it was a terrific title, it was adopted.

TL: How did the public respond to the phenomenon of the anthology film?

UG: There are anthology films that were extremely successful. Anthology films were appreciated by the public if they were well made and they were less well received when only partly well-made.

TL: Which common aesthetic and social expectations did the directors and producers associate with the genre? Could it be argued that you viewed the joint artistic project as a way to cast off the prevailing standards and conventions of film in order to develop a new cinematic language?

UG: In a way it was a liberation from conventions. My episode in *Ro.Go.Pa.G.* could not have lasted ninety minutes—even thirty minutes would have been way too much; some things really lend themselves to the smaller format of a medium-length film and not to that of a feature-length film. In this regard, with respect to its concision, the episode was like a miniaturized film of sorts, and we were looking for a language that was appropriate to the duration, for shorter, more compressed episodes—it was in way a bit like a film abstract. However, it was not about breaking away completely from the feature-length film but rather about minimizing its modalities and thus enabling an experimental form of expression to be produced.

Dear Michel Houellebecq,

We are writing to you once again—having not been in contact for a while—with a question that has fired our curiosity during preparations for the project *The Scorpion's Sting*.

For this exhibition *parcours*, six different artists and artist groups will realize film installations that each reference one of the six episodes of Luis Buñuel's film *L'Âge d'or*. The result will be an accessible six-part film.

The Spanish director put an *amour fou* at the center of his Surrealist film, which at the time created an enormous scandal. In 1930, the film was banned shortly after its first screening in Paris and remained banned for almost half a century.

In Buñuel's film, instinctual love and actual sexuality are thwarted by a restrictive society, by family, state and church. This is in sharp contrast to the fate of the protagonists of your novels, who live today in a time of sexual liberation and whose love withers like a primrose on account of the—often joyless—ease with which sexual satisfaction can be achieved and consumed. Yet your mélange of sexuality and bourgeoisie has also created its share of remarkable scandals in France. And just as Buñuel caricatures nothing less than a radical change of the times, we read in your book *The Elementary Particles*: "Today / For the first time / We can revisit the end of the old order."

Our question is connected to this: to what extent do you sense an affinity to the view of the Spanish filmmaker and one-time student of entomology when targeting, in your typical cynicism, the peculiarities of contemporary society by reference to the individual desires, sexual frustration and isolation of our protagonists? To what extent do you sympathize with Buñuel's view and his almost scientifically distanced observation, following the impulses and convolutions of the souls like insects in a terrarium? In the prologue to your novel, *The Elementary Particles*, a more pure, genetically improved species looks down on—or back at—us in a similar way, that is, from a spatially as well as temporally distanced perspective. Does the almost resigned detachment of your biologist, Michel Djerzinski, hide a dormant longing for a true *amour fou*, whose loss and existence resembles a contrast medium, which makes it possible to roentgenize our society in its bourgeois narrow-mindedness? Does society fly off the handle most tempestuously when it is observed from the greatest possible distance in the ways it deals with love?

We very much look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

M+M

Dear Dr. John Forbes Nash,

Your game theory has had a major impact on the social and economic sciences as well as on military and political strategies. In the world of art, on the other hand, game theory so far has had little to no effect.

You yourself explain that the Nash Equilibrium refers to non-cooperative games with rational players, such as a poker game or the competition between commercial enterprises. The art world faces the dilemma that it eludes a clear classification as either a cooperative or a non-cooperative game. Similarly, doubts may be cast on the rationality of the players and on whether the game has a clear objective. However, since game theories are said to serve a better understanding of conflict and cooperation, we would like to call on you from the realm of art for suggestions.

We are currently endeavoring to reach an optimal balance of forces in a game setup that falls between individual and collective art production and in which all participants are supposed to win. Together with five other artists and artist groups we are developing a film project where each participant contributes one of six consecutive episodes to the whole. The participants each have very limited knowledge of the plans of the other artists, even though they all make reference to one of the six episodes of Luis Buñuel's film *L'Âge d'or*. Among the six artists there is only minimal exchange of information about a few individual motifs or objects that are passed along. Thus the project can be compared to the parlor game *cadavre exquis* (exquisite corpse) through which the Surrealists tried to eliminate traditional art production and arrive, through the combination of random elements, at unconscious images. According to André Breton's definition, *cadavre exquis* is "a game of folded paper that consists of having several people compose a phrase or drawing collectively, none of the participants having any idea of the nature of the preceding contribution or contributions." This is more or less consistent with the parameters for your game setups, which you define as follows: "The players (artists) are thus on their own. Each imagines what the others are doing and eventually an equilibrium results."

Do you think the mathematical equations of game theory can also be applied to seemingly more complex, arbitrary and emotional contexts such as the joint art project described above? Are there special rules that should be applied to it? Is it possible then to apply your famous case example—of a man and woman who, without being able to arrange for a meeting by phone, want to get together and have to each independently choose the most likely place—to the cooperation of several different individuals/artists? Is it thus possible to calculate the optimal combination of such individuals willing to meet? And can their collective utterances in turn be placed in a context of economic and political events? For surely it is not a coincidence that *L'Âge d'or* created a huge scandal when it was first shown in 1930, a year after the worldwide economic crisis erupted. Does such presumptuous logical thought eventually lead one to plunge into the most superb irrationality, which you indeed experienced in a special way—as we were able to witness in the movie *A Beautiful Mind*?

Sincerely,

M+M

Dear Prof. Dr. Raue,

You are regarded as one of Germany's most experienced lawyers in legal matters pertaining to the freedom of the press and of the arts. Based on Luis Buñuel's film *L'Âge d'or*, we would therefore like to ask you a few questions about how censorship is handled today.

In the late nineteen-thirties, *L'Âge d'or* created a huge scandal. After initially having been approved by the censor board of the French "Ministry of Public Education and the Fine Arts," one of the very first screenings of the film caused turmoil: patriotic groups destroyed the "Studio 28" film theater, launched a smear campaign in the press and reported the film to the police. The Surrealists themselves added in their way fuel to the fire through publications of their own and physical resistance. *L'Âge d'or* was banned from further exhibition and the film reels were seized. For half a century the film remained officially banned.

The reasons for the scandal were manifold, ranging from the accusation of *lèse-majesté*—a runtish bearded dignitary with a giant spouse appeared like a caricature of Victor Emmanuel III, the then King of Italy (*"Re tappo"*)—to blasphemy. Yet the aggression directed against the film was also triggered by its disturbing, unpredictable blend of specific attacks against the pillars of society and erotically charged imagery seemingly springing from the depths of the subconscious.

Obviously, the Surrealists deliberately aimed to upset and felt confirmed in their revolutionary intentions by the public outcry, the ban and confiscation of the film copies. In this context one feels reminded again of André Breton's abysmal sadness when he explained to Buñuel in 1955: "It is no longer possible to scandalize anybody."

And yet when *L'Âge d'or* was shown at the Munich Kunstverein in 1970 it was, after the very first screening, once again banned from public exhibition by the Bavarian Ministry of Culture. How was that possible? At that time the French ban dated back as much as forty years to the pre-war period. Is this not a case where, in Germany, the freedom of art according to Article 5 of the constitution could have been asserted?! Or does the fear of a threat to public order override in such cases and create the need to enforce paragraph 166 of the criminal code, which makes insulting creeds, religious communities and groups with common world views a punishable offense?

To avoid such conflicts today, a renowned critic of the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* recently suggested that curators should pay attention to their provocative artists, lest their work brings them up before court. Controversial art, moreover, was said to require careful moderation, especially in public. It seems that artists who cause trouble, though living at a time of legally guaranteed artistic freedom, are still forced to surrender their autonomy to agents or curators—on the very terrain that was fundamental to Buñuel's surrealistic experience: "That I discovered inside myself an intense conflict between the principles of general morality and my own morality, which springs from my instinct and my personal experience.... And I believe this conflict is essential to any life."

Have you, Dr. Raue, noticed in recent times, which have seen an increase in private, public and religious sensitivities and in which provocative statements are registered globally, an accumulation of restrictions, bans and scandals? Could you briefly outline the topics against which our society is currently most aggressively litigating? Could a film such as *L'Âge d'or* be banned again and, if so, for which legally valid reasons?

We would be very grateful to hear your opinion.

Yours sincerely,

M+M

Dear M+M,

Your question opens up a broad field. The history of art scandals (and bans) is infinitely old, and any scandal from the past that is brought up today causes head-shaking. The fact that Georg Grosz had to stand trial because of his *Christ in a Gas Mask*; that Arthur Schnitzler's *La Ronde* resulted in the writer being charged with pornography in Berlin (the charges were eventually dismissed); that Jonathan Meese's Hitler salute in a theater production prompted a crazy prosecutor to indict the artist; that Lars von Trier could only prevent police seizure of his haunting opus *Nymphomaniac*—even in Denmark—by creating a cut version: all this shows how much courts and authorities struggle with the plain recognition of the fathers of the constitution (hardly any mothers were involved), according to which Article 5, paragraph 3 of the Basic Law states: "The arts shall be free." While all other basic rights (with the exception of Article 1, paragraph 1 of the Basic Law, which guarantees human dignity) have their limits ("...in the provisions of general laws, in provisions for the protection of young persons, and in the right to personal honor ..."), the freedom of the arts is conceived to be unconditional. This means—irrefutably in legal terms—that the arts are subject to limitations only when they violate basic principles of human coexistence (human dignity, personal honor).

This concise preface also readily yields an answer to your question: I consider it no longer conceivable today that a public prosecutor would dare to ban *L'Âge d'or*. The film is, of course, still scandalous today, but it is armor-clad with the blessings of the freedom of the arts and unassailable.

Today, the freedom of the arts is, in my opinion, much more likely to be jeopardized by Internet shitstorms than by government intervention. The Danish cartoons of Allah and Islamists' response to them; the feigned global outrage over a dumbass somewhere in Florida who oversaw the burning of a Koran; the Edathy affair which has led the German daily *BILD* to ask if it is acceptable to display oil paintings in a city hall when one of the paintings features a naked four year-old boy, as this could lead to the perpetration of pedophile acts: this is the real danger, the real assault on the freedom of the arts.

I do not know who the renowned art critic of the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* is that you refer to as advising curators to become their own censors before going about their work and to protect the poor provocative artists from causing their works to "bring them up before court." I, for one, do not recall, as I rummage through the rag bag of my memory, any case in the past twenty years that led a court to ban a work of art.

Thus, I really have to answer your question whether I am noticing an "accumulation of restrictions, bans and scandals in the arts" in the negative. I do not think that governmental restrictions—which Article 5, paragraph 1 of the Basic Law, in particular, is intended to protect against—exist on any significant scale. Nowadays, a raging, clamoring Internet community is a greater danger to the arts and their freedom than judges and public prosecutors.

Sincerely,

Peter Raue

FOREWORDS

Human civilization began with a scorpion. At least from the Egyptian point of view: one of the first pharaohs in the fourth century BC was called Scorpion I; he created irrigation systems and introduced writing. Thousands of years later the arachnid is once again at the center of a primal scene; this time it dominates the opening sequence of the film *L'Âge d'or* (The Golden Age) with which Luis Buñuel, Salvador Dalí, Max Ernst and other Surrealists marked the birth of the artistic film.

We see skeletonized bishops, a stormy sky in a mirror; we see a first floor window and, successively, a burning tree, a robed priest, a plow and a giraffe being thrown out through it. These scenes all bear the unmistakable hallmark of the Surrealist masters. Repeated over and over, their works have lodged themselves in our collective cultural memory and grouped themselves in ever new imaginary constellations. It is therefore only logical that this film—which from the outset oscillated between cinema and art—has now become an “actual” exhibition. The Surrealists viewed film as a revolutionary total work of art that allowed them to erase the boundaries between “fine art” and “mass culture,” between politically engaged art and bourgeois art for art’s sake. Today, in the context of rapidly changing conditions of production and reception due to digitalization and globalization, these questions arise once again, emphatically.

The Kulturstiftung des Bundes (Federal Culture Foundation) would like to thank the curators, the artist duo M+M, who invited other artists to reflect on *L'Âge d'or* from a present-day perspective in order to put together this exhibition. We would also like to thank the Museum Villa Stuck and its director, Michael Buhrs, as well as the Institut Mathildenhöhe Darmstadt and its director, Ralf Beil. Buñuel’s mordant mockery of church, bourgeoisie, state and army earned the film a half-century-long ban. As late as 1970, a screening of the film at the Munich Kunstverein was prohibited by decree. We hope the official response to this exhibition will be a little less drastic, yet its success in art no less sweeping.

Hortensia Völckers, *Chairwoman / Artistic Director*
Alexander Farenholtz, *Chairman / Administrative Director*
Kulturstiftung des Bundes, Halle an der Saale

Following the success of the exhibition *Total Artwork Expressionism*, the Deutsches Filminstitut and the Mathildenhöhe Darmstadt decided to join forces again to work on two multimedia-based exhibition projects—one in Darmstadt and one in Frankfurt—for their 2014 *Summer of Surrealism*. Luis Buñuel’s enigmatic, episodic film *L'Âge d'or* provides not just the thematic starting point, but also the structural lodestar for the exhibition at the Mathildenhöhe Darmstadt. In the show, contemporary artists reflect on Buñuel’s classic film episode by episode, in the process asking about the importance of cinematic Surrealism for contemporary (cinematic) artistic practices. Together with the exhibition in Frankfurt, which focuses on the international genesis of cinematic Surrealism, the exhibition thus provides an overall picture of this major movement of European art.

In the context of the special themes *Phänomen Expressionismus* (“The Phenomenon of Expressionism”) and *Impuls Romantik* (“Stimulus of Romanticism”) the Kulturfonds Frankfurt RheinMain has already encouraged numerous cooperations. The Kulturfonds is particularly pleased about the present cooperation—one half of which is documented in this catalogue—as it takes its motivation from its own subject. Cinematic Surrealism lends itself to being brought to life in a cross-art and cross-institutional format. The German Film Museum and the Mathildenhöhe jointly bring the beginnings of Surrealism in the nineteen-twenties and thirties to the Rhine Main Area, showing in Darmstadt how it can become contemporary.

The survey, which was also sponsored by the Kulturstiftung des Bundes, will undoubtedly attract attention beyond the region and thus improve the region’s image in the long term. The Institut Mathildenhöhe and the Deutsches Filminstitut show once again, with the support of the Kulturfonds, that they are among the major exhibition venues of the region and beyond. Moreover, the cooperation of the Mathildenhöhe Darmstadt with the Villa Stuck in Munich has created a national network that will include additional partners after the exhibition in Darmstadt closes. Special presentation spaces were configured for this purpose in the open-air area of Mathildenhöhe—the public can thus look forward to something exciting.

Helmut G. Müller, *Chief Executive*
Kulturfonds Frankfurt RheinMain

Illustration top:
Le monde aux temps des Surréalistes,
1929, appeared in the *Variétés* cultural
journal, published by André Breton

PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



Eighty-five years ago the Belgian cultural journal *Variétés* published a map entitled “The World at the Time of the Surrealists.” The map illustrates the political and aesthetic ideas of the group around André Breton. The Eurocentric view fades into the background; instead, the fringe areas which are usually overlooked dominate the scene. The Pacific Ocean occupies almost the entire center, the USA is completely missing and so is France, while Germany, which was well regarded by the Surrealists, is still allowed to exist. Russia and China are the leading superpowers in the Surrealist map of the world. This map is not the first instance of the Surrealists turning the world topsy-turvy. Nor is it the last, although the subversive imagination of the group rarely expressed itself as unequivocally as it did here.

The look at our world that six contemporary artists take in their work is radical for very different reasons. The microcosms of each of their works confront us with the grand themes of life and death, love and violence, sexuality and morality—themes that are timeless and at the same time relentlessly contemporary.

Eighty-five years later, the Surrealist map of the world has turned into a map of human aggregate states that can be walked from the West Bank via Australia and Texas all the way into the absurdly placeless fetish chamber of the Marquis de Sade. We are deeply grateful to the artists for enthusiastically supporting the project from the start. They are, in the order of the film episodes they contributed: Tobias Zielony, Chicks on Speed, M+M, Keren Cyter, Julian Rosefeldt, and John Bock. The exhibition was, as all those involved will surely agree, an unusual experiment, yet one that, certainly after the first weekend together in Barcelona in the late summer of 2012, we would not have wanted to miss.

The project’s initiators were Marc Weis and Martin De Mattia who make up the Munich-based artist duo M+M. We are grateful to both of them for their amicable and highly professional collaboration which, indeed, distinguishes this project as a whole.

We also want to thank the staff of the two museums in Munich and Darmstadt, for they were the ones who put M+M’s complex installation scheme into practice—under very different conditions at the two venues, yet both equally exquisite and convincing in terms of quality.

In 1930, Mr. and Mrs. de Noailles were the ones who funded the film *L’Âge d’or* by Salvador Dalí and Luis Buñuel, which is at the heart of the artists’ project *The Scorpion’s Sting*.

We are extremely pleased that also in the case of this exhibition generous funding made the production of new

works by the participating artists possible. This time, however, the funding was not private, but rather provided by the German Kulturstiftung des Bundes (Federal Culture Foundation). We would like to take this opportunity to thank the foundation’s chairwoman and artistic director, Hortensia Völckers, and its chairman and administrative director, Alexander Farenholtz, for their generous support. “To reevaluate in a concentrated manner present-day socio-dynamic developments by back-referencing an icon of Surrealism”—that is how M+M put it. This potential was convincing, as it was for the Kulturstiftung des Bundes, and made it possible for two municipal institutions with national appeal, the Museum Villa Stuck and the Institut Mathildenhöhe Darmstadt, to initiate the production of the six artists’ films.

Through the cooperation between the Institut Mathildenhöhe Darmstadt and the Deutsches Filmmuseum Frankfurt under the heading 2014 Summer of Surrealism the Kulturfonds Frankfurt RheinMain also came on board with generous funding. We would like to express our gratitude to its chief executive, Dr. Helmut Müller, and the curator and deputy chief executive, Dr. Julia Cloot, who likewise enthusiastically supported the project in combination with another exhibition at the Deutsches Filmmuseum in Frankfurt.

From the outset, the present publication was part of the discussion. The primary challenge was to make the artists’ filmic works “readable,” yet without neglecting the need to have the exhibition accompanied by texts providing an intellectual bridge between *L’Âge d’Or* and *The Scorpion’s Sting*. We thank Ugo Gregoretti, M+M, Peter Raue and Marcus Steinweg for their contributions, hope with some certainty that Jean-Henri Fabre is comfortable in the company of Luis Buñuel and thank in particular the artists for their trust and the permission to publish in this volume the illuminating manuscripts linked to their filmic works.

Cristina Steingraber of Hatje Cantz Verlag supported the publication from the beginning and for that we are very grateful to her. M+M and the two participating museums serve as editors of the book, while Stefanie Adam and Sarah Trenker were responsible for copyediting the texts. We would like to thank Pauline Cumbers, Barbara Holle, Bram Opstelten, Martine Passelaigue, Nikolaus G. Schneider, and John Tittensor for their wonderful translations of the texts. The Berlin firm Heimann und Schwantes did the graphic design of the book and we thank Hendrik Schwantes, Michael Heimann and Haig Walta for their congenial graphic translation of the complex subject, which almost makes us forget that it is about cinematic art.

Chapeau, Monsieur Buñuel, cheers everyone, especially to the artists of this powerful sting. We raise the inevitable glass of martini: here’s to you!

Ralf Beil, *Director, Institut Mathildenhöhe Darmstadt*
Michael Buhrs, *Director, Museum Villa Stuck, Munich*



Top: Barcelona, September 2012
Bottom: Movie theater seats, Salach,
District of Göppingen, March 2013

M+M

A FEW HOURS LATER...

Concept and Realization of *The Scorpion's Sting*

When we saw Luis Buñuel's *L'Âge d'or* in our early student days, its fifty-year ban had been lifted just a few years earlier. Suddenly, 1930 seemed very close. The film again unfurled its incredible inconsistency, mustering deadly seriousness and comicality, sexuality and social satire, individually idiosyncratic and surrealist collective expression, love and destructiveness, documentary material and somnambulistic content onto one territory: a sixty-minute explosive cocktail that caused a scandal right after it premiered and led to the destruction of Studio 28 by radical right-wing groups and, indeed, to it being banned from public exhibition.

L'Âge d'or ignores the neat distinctions between conceptual, figurative, abstract, political, symbolist and narrative art that started to establish themselves at the time and within which academic artists today tend to seek their niches. The film calls for an expansion of the artistic combat zone.

Its thematic thrust as well as the new operating strategies it tried out instantly fascinated us and appeared astoundingly contemporary. *L'Âge d'or* carries out an attack on societal and moral incrustations in polity, religion and family, using radical and sometimes potentially scandalous means—and allowing, in particular, for a concept of reality that is expanded to include the imagination. In the process, the work opens up the potential of the newly developed medium of the sound film for the visual arts—in flagrant opposition to commercial

movies.¹ An expansion or a pushing of social genre and perceptual boundaries once again characterizes crucial practices in the visual arts today. We started thinking about an artistic project involving *L'Âge d'or*.

The “state of euphoria, enthusiasm and destructive frenzy” Buñuel experienced when shooting the film was also borne by the pulsating resonance in the group of Surrealists that had just accepted the Spanish director in its midst. A wealth of new impressions, subjects and combinatorial devices thus informed the film's conception. The specific blend of structure and freedom that defines *L'Âge d'or* was surely modeled on a creative parlor game of the Surrealists: the *cadavre exquis*, or exquisite corpse, “a game of folded paper that consists of having several people compose a phrase or drawing collectively, none of the participants having any idea of the nature of the preceding contribution or contributions.”²

A drawn *cadavre exquis* tends to consist of several limbs or body parts that build on one another and combine to form a grotesque figure.³ Buñuel himself implicitly pointed to this construction principle for *L'Âge d'or* in the film's opening sequence. In this seemingly documentary prolog about scorpions the six segments of the scorpion's tail are described in detail, with particular emphasis on the last segment, the venomous sting (“l'humeur venimeuse”). The described structure corresponds exactly to the six-part structure of his

1 See also Henry Miller: “I want to repeat: *L'Âge d'or* is the only film I know of which reveals the possibilities of the cinema!” Miller in “The Golden Age,” in Daniel Talbot, *Film: An Anthology* (Berkeley et al., 1966), p. 383.

2 André Breton, “Dictionnaire abrégé du surréalisme. Paris 1938,” in *Œuvre complètes II* (Paris, 1992), pp. 787–865, here p. 796.

3 Cf. “Dans leur volonté préexistante de composition en personnage, les dessins obéissant à la technique du *Cadavre exquis* ont, par définition, pour effet

de porter l'anthropomorphisme à son comble et d'accentuer prodigieusement la vie de relation qui unit le monde extérieur et le monde intérieur” (Due to their given disposition to compose figures, drawings complying with the technique of the *cadavre exquis*, by definition, tend to carry the anthropomorphism to the extreme and to reinforce in the most wonderful ways the dynamic connections between the outer and inner worlds); André Breton, *Le surréalisme et la peinture* (Paris, 1965), p. 290.

film with its poisonous/humorous final de Sade scene. Unlike a *cadavre exquis*, though, *L'Âge d'or* is not a product of multiple authorship, although the differences between the segments in terms of content and style do almost suggest this.

The idea of a collective narrative in the manner of a *cadavre exquis* provided the initial impetus for *The Scorpion's Sting* and led, as a logical consequence, to a collaborative engagement with *L'Âge d'or*: six new, interrelated film episodes by different artists were supposed to reflect the distinct and, in each case, congenial episodes of Buñuel's film. On the one hand we conceived of this working principle as a palimpsest—that is, as an overwritten text, a transcription or a continuation of the filmic source from a present-day perspective. On the other hand we wanted to further radicalize the playful and collective quality in the form of a cinematic *cadavre exquis*.

The perceived affinity of the individual artistic practices to the specific designated film scenes served as the key criterion for the selection of the participants. In keeping with the six episodes of *L'Âge d'or* the artistic features of the six approaches had to be distinct. At the same time a certain productive atmosphere among the participants was equally essential for the collective project.

We invited Tobias Zielony, whose photographs subtly vacillate between documentation and subjective involvement, to reflect on the seemingly documentary, yet ambiguous scorpion scene at the beginning of the film. The Australian/American music and art group Chicks on Speed was asked to develop its version of a present-day group self-portrayal as a counterpart to the retarded bandit scene with Max Ernst as surrealist bandit chief. We ourselves were especially interested in the separation and leading away of the lovers and interferers by mainstream society during the founding of Imperial Rome as a central theme of the third episode. We recognized an affinity between the works of Israeli video artist Keren Cyttter and the harsh shifts between everyday, erotic and violent themes that manifest themselves at Buñuel's lordly reception. Along the same lines we asked the Berlin-based artist Julian Rosefeldt to respond to the strangely failed reunion of the lovers and the pang of jealousy felt by the abandoned male protagonist. John Bock was to be the last participant—the venomous sting, as it were—and provide a variation on Buñuel's satire on *120 Days of Sodom*.

Yet for anything to actually happen, it was first necessary to create the proper general conditions for the project, including the financial ones. Buñuel had found unorthodox and very personal solutions to realize his first two films: *Un Chien Andalou* was funded by his mother, and *L'Âge d'or* was produced by Marie-Laure und Charles de Noailles, aristocratic patrons of the arts. These and similar sources were naturally out of the question for us. We found two museums, the Institut Mathildenhöhe Darmstadt and the Museum Villa Stuck in Munich, that uncompromisingly supported the realization of *The Scorpion's Sting*. Both historical exhibition venues, moreover, were built around the turn of the century and therefore provide an excellent setting for the project, since *L'Âge d'or* (The Golden Age) also deliberately undermines the veneer of the Belle Époque. In the end, Germany's Federal Cultural Foundation closed the funding gap with a project grant. The historical irony here is that artistic engagement with a film that took a potshot at public order and that was banned

for decades was now, more than eighty years later, made possible by the joint commitment of three public institutions!

We—that is, the artists and the two directors of the hosting museums—first met for a few days in Barcelona, in close proximity to the Spanish shooting locations for the original film, in order to jointly analyze and reflect on Buñuel's film, to explore the cliff scenery near Cadaqués and, of course, to foster the aforesaid productive atmosphere.⁴ Alex Murray-Leslie of Chicks on Speed, who currently lives in Barcelona, opened the doors of the night for us.

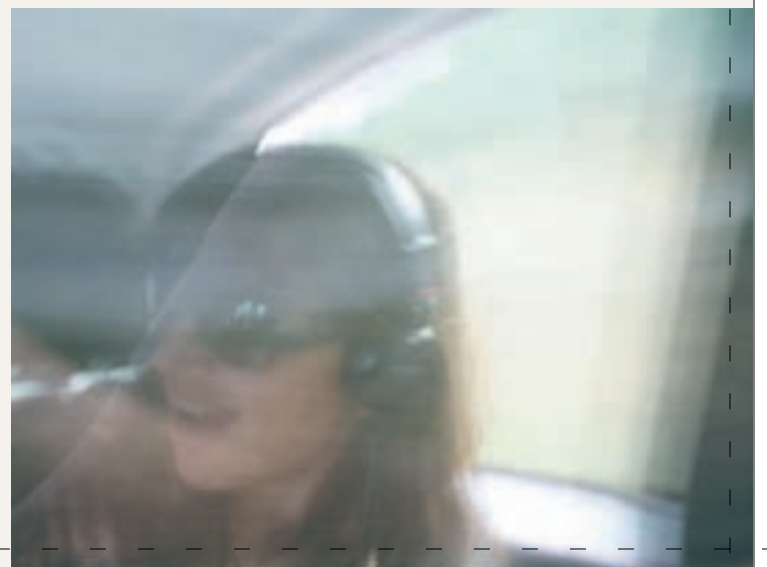
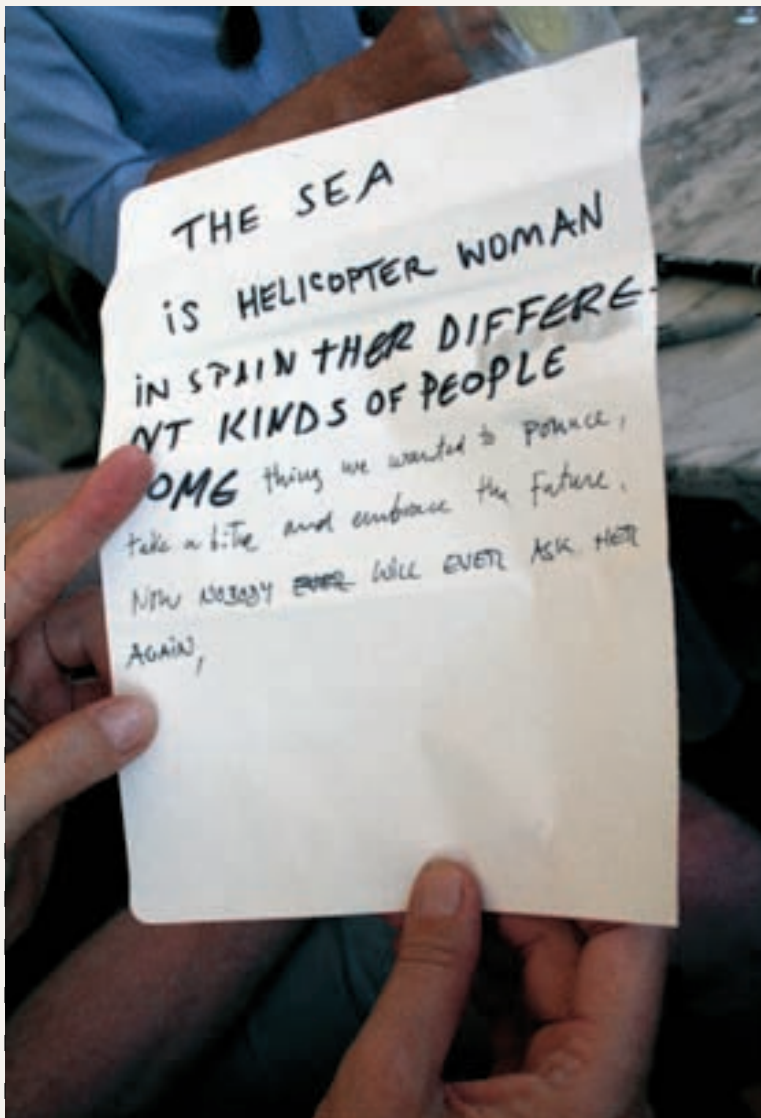
Taking back with us our common impressions and now knowing who our episode neighbors were and which segment of *L'Âge d'or* the various participants were going to reference, we parted ways again for the time being. Considering the intense travel activity of the individual participants, it almost seems like a miracle that our meeting in Barcelona actually materialized. During the following period we stayed in close touch through phone calls, e-mails and sporadic meetings. Over time, fetish-like motifs were thus passed along from one episode to another: golden boots, a Roman she-wolf, guns, disco balls, priests, snow ... We also agreed upon intertitles to serve as transition points between episodes, playful connected threads between contrasting sequences. The six films were eventually produced independently at different locations, in some cases thousands of miles apart.

Tobias Zielony shot the opening scene in Palestine. With its allusions to the documentary, indeed almost scientific footage of the scorpions in *L'Âge d'or* it represented the quiet prelude to the series of episodes. In a windowless room, several young women busy themselves in a focused and calm manner at a table lit by black light. Their faces are dark, their headscarves and clothes glow. Gradually one recognizes that there are scorpions on the table. Some are dead, others are moving. Using their hands, the women push one scorpion along, one millimeter at a time. Eventually we see the animal, animated by stop motion technique, move. Observed reservedly, this opening sequence turns out to be the making of an animated film. It melds the set, the female film crew and the scorpion into a powerful, almost psychedelic image, while at the same time sensitizing the viewer to the conditions of cinematic illusion.

In the second episode, the illusion moves into the shimmering light of the Australian desert. In the former British penal colony, Chicks on Speed found a dreamlike landscape equivalent to Cadaqués for their outlaw scene based on the bandit sequence featuring Max Ernst. And as if that were not enough, this shimmering colorful panorama disintegrates and splits and is demonstratively superimposed, by means of digital manipulation, with hovering accessories, gold-spewing women or giantesses made of cracked earth. The surrealism of Dalí with its effects on music videos and advertising mania is evoked and at the same time ironically deconstructed: “dream parts / this is film / is this surreal enough? / this lived experience.”⁵ A girl gang roams the endless landscape in futuristic costumes and comes across aborigines and a kangaroo paraphrasing Noam Chomsky. Land appropriation and neocolonialism, combined with a clumsy search for gold, are guiding themes. After a bizarre fight with words and bodies a magical-seeming aborigine standing with his legs apart prevails over the two dressed-in-gold chicks who fall into a

4 Only John Bock was forced to cancel at the last minute.

5 Chicks on Speed in their episode titled *Golden Gang*.



Top: Barcelona, September 2012
 Middle: Cadavre Exquis, Barcelona, September 2012
 Bottom: Keren Cyttar in Barcelona, September 2012

crater: "What are you gold chicks doing in my gold mine? Hey, get away! You can't touch this, get away ...!"

The third episode takes places in the deepest night. The setting: perhaps Rome, an old garden. A pair of lovers lying hidden is picked up by two strong bearded figures (plain-clothes officers? guardians of public morals?), torn apart and individually led away by the men. Their steps, glances and gestures run parallel and interlock. In Buñuel's film, too, the lovers are captured at the time of the city's foundation and dragged off. Again and again the authorities try to assert their authority against the *amour fou*. We pursue a similar motif in our segment that was shot with infrared cameras at different night-time locations, including a scene in the garden of the Villa Stuck. Certain aspects of movement and impressions call to mind contemporary instances of people being detained and led away: protesters; Femen activists; Lindsay Lohan; Klaus Zumwinkel, the ex-CEO of Deutsche Post convicted of tax fraud; Pussy Riot; German neo-Nazi terrorist Beate Zschäpe; or the former Russian oligarch Khodorkovsky. People are constantly led away in ways that attract media attention, though they are then transported only a short way in front of the camera from one place to another, say, in a vehicle. This episode of *The Scorpion's Sting* involves continuous leading-off. One has to come to terms with this. Being led off is the state. On the way through the empty, dark streets of the city the man and woman intone a litany that invokes secular contemporaries rather than saints: "... smart Nash, think for us; smart Luxemburg, die for us; brilliant Carlson, think for us; smart Oshima, torture for us; beautiful Cobain, die for us; smart Butler, think for us. ..."

In Keren Cytter's contribution raw brutality for the first time breaks in upon the scenery. Everyday life and violence form an alliance in the glaringly illuminated images of the fourth episode. Here at the latest the *amour fou* of the two protagonists in *L'Âge d'or* is doomed: a popular bar called "Rose Garden," somewhere in the U.S., probably in Texas. A couple (again) enters the room, platitudes are exchanged, a seemingly quiet evening begins. But soon ominous dialogues unfold, a man flirts with the woman bartender, later whispering lustful words to her through the pay phone in the bar while standing just a few feet away from her. Dialogues and actions increasingly condense into an explosive, inescapable atmosphere. Weapons are drawn, jealousies suddenly turn into fights, a woman dies by the gun of her lover in the arms of a stranger who, aghast and bewildered, holds the lifeless body in his arms. In the end a child dies, as in Buñuel's film, senselessly shot from behind by its own father.

With dreamlike confidence and in black and white, Julian Rosefeldt takes up Cytter's colorful theme of death (the death of the boy) in the front garden by having his hero fall out of the window. This is an explicit reference to the end of Buñuel's second final episode where the male protagonist, driven by jealousy, throws a disparate series of objects, animals and individuals out of the window. In Rosefeldt's variation, the hero jumps right after them and dies, only to arise again after just a few seconds and to wander post mortem through the nineteen-twenties big-city bustle, filled with wonder. Julian Rosefeldt: "There he again finds a world of sexual license that Modot, on behalf of Buñuel, had called for in *L'Âge d'or*. ..."

This scene was largely written in the mode of a favorite Surrealist practice, the *écriture automatique*." At the actual end of the episode there is a terrific unbridled tracking shot that takes us out through the backdoor of the Deep Gold nightclub, exposing the cinematic illusion as it shows catering, a technical equipment truck, a costume designer and set construction, then soars above the houses only to descend again on the historical street side toward a shop window behind which a sinister miniature castle in the snow looms: the setting of the next episode. ...

There, at long last, we find ourselves smack in the world of the Marquis de Sade, or rather in the drastic imagination of his end-of-life orgy that John Bock offers us. Bock enters the interior of the Château de Selligny which in Buñuel's film is only seen from the outside. In it, he finds the old Marquis de Sade himself, still clearly lecherous, on his deathbed. In *L'Âge d'or*, the short final scene was devoted to the Marquis's *120 Days of Sodom*. A lengthy title card invoked the outrageous actions that had taken place in the castle. The crimes were just named briefly, thus leaving it to the excited imagination of the viewers to divine their actual nature. In Buñuel's film, extreme violence, sexual perversion and blasphemous acts were hidden behind walls, yet at the same time evoked in all their unimaginable egregiousness. These implicit imaginings become decidedly explicit in Bock's episode. Instead of the four "monsters" committing unspeakable acts in *120 Days of Sodom*, however, we encounter only a bedridden, infantile patient surrounded by strange instruments and prostheses in *Little Hair with Momsen*. This member of the old aristocracy still feels enough of a sadistic atheistic urge to rise from his feculent bed toward a quite confident whore, to impregnate a placenta that subsequently turns out to be John Bock, and to hurl blasphemous phrases at the buffoonish priest. As Bock says about his reinterpretation: "My film deals with the action inside the castle that is hinted at just before the appearance of Jesus.⁶ I am filming mainly in my studio. We are building several stages and sets in which puppets and actors perform."

The radical principle of lust that the Surrealist Buñuel considered synonymous with individual freedom and an antipode of society and that found itself ultimately personified in the figure of de Sade has taken on a putrid flavor in Bock's film. Just like the dead scorpion in Tobias Zielony's opening scene moved around only due to the animation, the instinctively aggressive, though in terms of their actions often trance-like protagonists of Buñuel are now, in *The Scorpion's Sting*, subdued, led away, traumatized, self-murdered and, indeed, tended.

The product of this collaborative roundelay is a weird construct, a six-part narrative scorpion tail, folded in and out in the temporal dimension and alternately reduced and excessive in terms of colors and motifs. A collective project, not a slogan chorused in unison, but rather a multilayered distorting mirror of our time. In the internal body of the sting the contradictory germ cells of Buñuel's source resulted in a variety of outgrowths, in a magic of the minimal (Zielony), in a comically grotesque affirmation of neo-liberalist phenomena in mass and pop culture (Chicks), in the pending dilemma of identities and their alleged freedom (M+M), in the shock of violence and its repression (Cytter), in the amazement

6 Bock is referring to the Duke of Blangis, one of the four cruel initiators of the orgy of Sodom who in Buñuel's film appears in the guise of Christ.

vis-à-vis the strange effects produced by bourgeois society (Rosefeldt) and in the spectacle of festering instincts and the offspring of a furuncle (Bock).

Viewers of the exhibition explore a parcours that spreads out like a fragmented six-screen movie theater across the open dark museum galleries. From time to time they can have a seat in one of the old movie seats that are arranged on broadly rising platforms in front of the six screens, in order for them to become timelessly engrossed in the individual looped films. Thus they tour at their own discretion the sequence of

the six episodes and undertake a virtual journey to the episodes' settings that, crisis-ridden, bizarrely natural or entirely artificial, are spread across four continents. At its seams this cinematic *cadavre exquis* grinds and sparks fly. Yet surprisingly, even to us, *The Scorpion's Sting* develops a climactic overall dramaturgy that starts out quietly and succinctly, continues fancifully and hypnotically and is then increasingly drawn into the vortex of sex and violence, ending inevitably in a new, abysmal grotesque.



Luis Buñuel, *L'Âge d'or*, 1930, film stills

Jean-Henri Fabre

THE LANGUEDOC SCORPION

Selected Extracts from *Souvenirs Entomologiques*
(Entomological Memoirs), 1905, vol. IX

HABITAT Chapter 17

He is the uncommunicative kind, inscrutable in his habits and not especially nice to know: so much so that his history, apart from the anatomical details, adds up to little more than nothing. The masters' scalpels have shown us what he is made of, but as far as I know no observer has ever really tried to get to the bottom of his private life. Guttured after maceration in alcohol, he is a familiar figure; but as someone going instinctively about his business he is a virtual unknown. And yet no segmented animal is more deserving of a detailed biography. Throughout history he has stimulated the human imagination, even earning himself a listing in the zodiac. Fear engendered the gods, said Lucretius. Deified by awe, the scorpion is glorified in the heavens by a constellation and in our almanacs by the symbol for the month of October. Let us see if we can get him talking.

...

Found in most parts of southern Europe, the common black scorpion (*Scorpio europaeus*) needs no introduction. He frequents dark places close to our houses and on rainy fall days he slips inside, sometimes even taking refuge in our beds. This spooky creature alarms more than he harms. Although he makes regular incursions into my current home, the consequences have never been the least bit serious. Too notorious for his own good, this wretched beast is more repellent than dangerous.

Much more to be feared and much less well known, the Languedoc scorpion is restricted to the Mediterranean. Far from seeking out our dwellings, he keeps his distance in dark corners of unfrequented wildernesses. Compared with the black scorpion he is a giant who, fully grown, is eight or nine centimeters long. He has the light blond coloring of faded straw.

His tail—in reality his stomach—comprises a series of five multifaceted segments like strung beads, sorts of small barrels whose staves join up in wavy ridges. Similar long, faceted segments make up the arms and forearms of the claws. Others curve across the back like the joints of a breastplate whose pieces have been assembled with an unpredictable stamping device. Their granular ridges form the robustly primitive armor that characterizes the Languedoc scorpion, an animal that looks as though it has been fashioned with an adze.

The tail ends in a sixth, smooth articulation. This is the vesicle, in which the venom—a highly dangerous, aqueous liquid—is made and stored. At the end is a curved sting, dark in color and very sharp; a little way from its tip is a cavity visible only under a magnifying glass, through which the venom is injected into the wound. The sting is very tough and so sharp that, holding one between my fingertips, I pierced a piece of cardboard as easily as if I had been using a needle.

Its pronounced curve means that the tip of the sting is pointing downwards when the tail is laid flat and straight. To use it, then, the scorpion must raise the sting, turn it round and strike upwards. This is its invariable tactic. The tail curves up over the back and thrusts forward, repeatedly striking the foe that is gripped by the claws. The animal almost always adopts this posture: whether walking or at rest he curves his tail back over his spine. It is only very rarely that he drags it behind him, flat and slack.

The claws, which are actually part of the mouth and resemble those of the crayfish, are both weapons and organs of information. When moving, the scorpion feels his way forward with the two pincers open. Should he come upon a prey, the pincers seize it and hold it immobile while the sting is brought into play over the back. If a particular morsel takes a long time to consume the pincers work as hands, keeping it near the mouth. They are never used for walking, maintaining balance or digging.

These latter functions are carried out by the legs. Each of these abruptly truncated limbs ends in a set of small, curved, movable claws, opposite which is situated a short, slender spike that works as a kind of thumb. Coarse hairs cover this stump. The result is an excellent grapnel, which explains the scorpion's ability to get about on the wire mesh of my cloches, to hang upside down there for long periods and also to climb up a wall despite its weight and ungainliness.

Underneath, immediately after the legs are the pectens, strange appendages possessed only by scorpions. They owe their name to their structure, being made up of a long, close row of lamellae like the teeth of a comb—*pecten* in Latin. Suspicious anatomists see them as a device for keeping the male and female firmly locked together during courtship; let us settle for this until a better idea comes along—if, for example, the creatures I intend to raise give up their secret.

PRELUDE Chapter 21

In April, when the swallow returns and the cuckoo sounds its first note, a revolution takes place in the hitherto peaceful community of the enclosure. Come nightfall various creatures leave their shelters and set out on their pilgrimages—never to return. More seriously, though, often two scorpions are to be found under the same stone, one devouring the other. Is this a matter of thievery between fellow creatures that, seized by spring wanderlust, thoughtlessly enter their neighbors' abodes and come to a bad end if they are not the strongest? This is certainly the impression we have when we see the intruder being slowly, calmly consumed as the days go by, just like any other prey.

But there's something worrisome here. Those devoured are invariably middle-sized. Their lighter coloring and smaller bellies signal males, always males. The others, plumper, paunchier and slightly darker-toned do not meet this squalid end. So these are not brawls between neighbors jealously defending their solitude, attacking visitors then eating them as an ironclad way of making sure this does not happen again; no, these are nuptial rites tragically consummated by the matron once the courtship is over. To verify this suspicion I shall have to wait until next year; I am still too poorly equipped.

...
April 25, 1904: Hey, what's this? Ever on the lookout, I am nonetheless seeing something for the first time. Two scorpions opposite each other, their pincers merging, their fingers interlaced. Amicable handshakes, these, and not preludes to battle, for the pair of them could not be behaving more peaceably towards each other. Here we have the two sexes: one dark and potbellied, the female; the other relatively slim and pale, the male. Their tails forming pretty spirals, the couple stroll sedately alongside the glass. The male is leading, moving backwards smoothly with no resistance to overcome: the female is following obediently, held by the fingertips and facing her escort.

The occasional halts in their promenade bring no change to the relationship; there are fresh starts, now in this direction, now in that, from one end of the glass enclosure to the other, but with no indication of what their purpose might be. The scorpions meander, they dilly-dally, and doubtless swap sentimental glances. Just as after Sunday vespers in my village the young people stroll along the hedgerows, two by two.

Often they take a fresh tack. It is always the male who decides on this change of direction. Without letting go of her hands, he makes a graceful half-turn, lines up side by side with his loved one and caresses her spine with the flat of his outstretched tail. She remains motionless, impassive.

A good hour of this and I'm still not bored with these endless comings and goings. My family's there with me, watching this weird performance that nobody—nobody with a trained eye, anyway—has ever seen before. We are not used to working this late, but we are all concentrating and not missing a thing.

At last, around ten, things come to a head. The male has found a tile that seems to suit him as a potential shelter. He lets go of one of her hands and still holding tight with the other, scratches with his feet and brushes with his tail. A cave opens up. In he goes and gently, little by little, draws his patient partner after him. Soon there is nothing to be seen. Heaped-up sand closes off the residence. They are home.

It would be tactless to disturb them. If I tried to see what is going on in there right now it would be too soon, the wrong

moment. The foreplay's maybe going to last most of the night and waiting up is getting harder for me now that I'm eighty. Pain behind the knees, sand under the eyelids. Time for bed.

All night long I dream of scorpions. They are running round under my blankets, scuttling over my face, and it does not bother me at all because such amazing things are happening in my imagination. Wasting no time, at daybreak I lift the tile. The female is alone. No trace of the male, in their house or anywhere roundabout. The first disappointment, with plenty more to follow.

May 10: It's almost seven in the evening and the sky is veiled with the clouds of an impending shower. Under one of the tiles in the glass cage a scorpion couple are facing each other, immobile and holding hands. Cautiously I lift the tile, leaving the occupants in full view so I can observe the upshot of their tête-à-tête. Darkness falls and nothing, it seems to me, will disturb the peace of this roofless abode. A heavy down-pour drives me indoors, but they, under their glass lid, have nothing to fear from the rain. What will they do now, left to their own affairs but with no canopy for their love nest?

An hour later the rain stops and I head back to my scorpions. They have gone. They have taken up residence under another tile close by, still holding hands, the female outside and the male inside preparing their dwelling. Every ten minutes another family member takes over the watch; the courtship ritual seems imminent and we do not want to miss it. All for nothing, though: around eight o'clock, with darkness well set in, the dissatisfied couple have set off hand in hand on a fresh pilgrimage. Walking backwards, the male is showing the way: he will choose and the female follows docilely. It is an exact replica of what I saw on April 25.

At last a suitable tile is found. The male goes in first, but this time without letting go of either of his companion's hands for a second. A few strokes with his tail and the nuptial suite is ready. Gently drawn in his wake, the lady scorpion enters after him.

A couple of hours later I call by, thinking that I have given them enough time to have concluded their foreplay. I lift the tile. They are still in the same position, facing each other and holding hands. Today I do not get to see any more than that.

And not the next day either. Facing each other in meditative mode, not moving in the slightest, the hand-holding accomplices continue their interminable tête-à-tête beneath the tile. That evening at sunset, after bonding for twenty-four hours, they separate. He leaves, she stays, and things have not progressed one iota.

This session has taught us two things. After the betrothal promenade these couples need the mystery and tranquility of a shelter. Their nuptials will never culminate in the open air, amid the madding crowd and in full view. Day or night, and however discreetly the roof of their abode is removed, the partners apparently lost in thought set off in search of another location. What is more, the wait can be long: we have just seen it spun out over twenty-four hours, with no decisive outcome.

May 12: What will tonight's session have to teach us? The weather is windless and warm, just right for nocturnal lovemaking. There is a new couple, whose initial encounter I missed. This time the male is much smaller than his big-bellied lady friend, but although he is puny he is performing valiantly. Moving backwards as protocol requires, and with his tail turned up, he is promenading Her Plumpness around the glass ramparts. Lap following lap, in the same or the opposite direction.

Stops are frequent. Then the two brows make contact, tilting a little right and left as if exchanging whispered confidences. The little front legs are wiggling in feverish caresses. What are our scorpions telling each other? How to put into words their mute epithalamium?

The whole family is there to watch as the curious coupling continues, unaffected by our presence. We find it graceful and not at all overstated. Semi-translucent and gleaming in the light of the lantern, our scorpions seem sculpted in amber. Arms outstretched and tails curled in pretty spirals, they continue their peregrinations with slow, measured steps.

Nothing disturbs them. Perhaps along the way some wanderer out taking the night air crosses their path, also staying close to the wall; but he is sensitive in these matters and moves aside to let them by. Finally a tile shelter welcomes the strollers in, the male first and proceeding backwards, of course. It is nine o'clock.

This evening idyll is followed, during the night, by the ghastly tragedy. The next morning the female is still there under the tile. The little male is beside her, but slain and partially devoured. He's missing his head, a claw and a pair of legs. I put the corpse outside on the threshold; all day the female remains indoors, leaving it untouched. When

night comes again she emerges and, encountering the deceased along the way, carries him off to offer him the burial he is entitled to: that is to say, she finishes making a meal of him.

This act of cannibalism fits with what the open-air community revealed last year. From time to time under stones I found a female easefully savoring the ritual dish that had been her overnight companion. I suspected then that the male, should he fail to make a quick getaway once he has fulfilled his function, is eaten completely or partially, depending on how hungry the matron is. Now the irrefutable proof was before my eyes. Yesterday I saw the couple enter their abode after the customary formal outing; and when I paid my visit this morning, the bride was consuming her partner under the same tile.

It would seem that the unfortunate had served his purpose. Were he still necessary to his race, he would not have been eaten yet. So this couple had got down to cases quickly; I had seen other pairs fail after teasings and meditations lasting twice round the clock. To a considerable extent, certain imponderables—atmospherics, electrical tension, temperature, individual ardor—speed up or delay the courtship's finale; and this is the major difficulty for the observer keen to know exactly at which point the continuing mystery of the pectens might be elucidated. ...

PROGRAMME

PARIS-BESTIAUX

film de D. ABRIC et M. GOREL

UN FILM COMIQUE

Au Village

film de montage
de Leonid MOGUY

UN DESSIN ANIMÉ SONORE

et

L'ÂGE D'OR

film parlant surréaliste

de Luis BUNUEL

Scénario de Luis BUNUEL & LALI

interprété par

GASTON MODOT

LYA LYS

Caridad de LABERDESQUE

Lionel SALEM

Max ERNST

Madame NOIZET

Liorens ARTRYAS

DUCHANGE

IBANEZ



La queue se termine
par un sixième article
vésiculaire,
réservoir à venin.
Un dard courbé et aigu
déverse dans la piqure
l'humeur venimeuse.

























Luis Buñuel in Madrid, 1932

Ralf Beil

DON'T EULOGIZE A DEAD WRITER: MAKE A FILM!

A Conversation with Luis Buñuel
about Music, Morality, and Dry Martini

Ralf Beil Dear Buñuel, is there something you miss at what is, after all, your quite advanced age?

Luis Buñuel One of the greatest tragedies of my life is my deafness, for it's been over twenty years now since I've been able to hear notes. When I listen to music, it's as if the letters in a text were changing places with one another, rendering the words unintelligible and muddying the lines. I'd consider my old age redeemed if my hearing were to come back, for music would be the gentlest opiate, calming my fears as I move toward death. In any case, I suppose the only chance I have for that kind of miracle involves nothing short of a visit to Lourdes.

Beil That is indeed tragic, especially since in your very first sound film, *L'Âge d'or*, you already used music and sounds in such brilliant ways ...! Do you still remember the first sounds that left a mark on you?

Buñuel ... bells. ... They tolled for Masses, vespers, and the Angelus, as well as for certain critical, and more secular, events—the tocsin that signaled fire, and the glorious chimes which rang only for mayor Sunday festivals. There was also a special *toque de agonía*, a deep, somber bell that tolled slowly when someone had begun his final combat, and a lighter bronze bell that rang for a dying child. In the fields, on the roads, in the streets of the town, everyone stopped whatever he was doing to ask who was about to die.

Beil As much as it would interest me to know whether the cow bells which you made such striking use of in an image and sound collage in *L'Âge d'or* are also a surreal reminiscence of those childhood bells, let us return to your deafness: how and when did you actually lose your hearing?

Buñuel ... there's my lifelong love of firearms, most of which I sold in 1964, the year I was convinced I was going to die. I've practiced shooting in all sorts of places, including my office, where I fire at a metal box on the bookshelf opposite my desk. One should never shoot in a closed room. That's how I lost the hearing in one ear in Saragossa.

Beil You have been dubbed the “eye of the century” because of your film oeuvre. You were born in 1900: when did you first go to the movies?

Buñuel I think I was about eight years old when I discovered the cinema. ... I remember how enthralled I was by my first cartoon; it was about a pig who wore a tricolor sash around its waist, and sang. The sound came from a record player hidden behind the screen. I'm quite sure that it was a color film, which at that time meant that each image had been painted by hand.

Beil Just before the beginning of the era of sound films you also played music offscreen to accompany *Un Chien Andalou*, the short film you created together with Salvador Dalí that marked the birth of Surrealist film ...

Buñuel I hid behind the screen with the record player, alternating Argentinian tangos with *Tristan and Isolde*.

Beil Why *Tristan und Isolde*?

Buñuel I adored Wagner, whose music I used in several films, from *Un Chien Andalou* to *That Obscure Object of Desire*.

Beil Were there any other composers that were important to you? And did you yourself play an instrument?

Buñuel When I was young, I played the violin, and later, in Paris, the banjo. Beethoven, César Franck, Schumann, and Debussy, to name just a few, were among my favorite composers.

Beil The violin of all things, the same instrument that is destroyed in *L'Âge d'or* ... You always did very creative things acoustically, even accompanying, again in *L'Âge d'or*, footage of bubbling lava with the sound of a flushing toilet. Is there a sound that you would like to hear or use one more time?

Buñuel No sound is lovelier than that of the rain. There are times when I can hear it, if I wear my hearing aid, but it's not quite the same, of course.

Beil You have always been a man of the senses, very much a visual and auditory person. Are there also books you have read that impressed and inspired you?

Buñuel I loved, for example, [Jean-Henri] Fabre's *Souvenirs Entomologiques*, which I found infinitely superior to the Bible when it comes to passion for observation and a boundless love of living things.

Reading Darwin's *The Origin of Species* was so dazzling that I lost what little faith I had left—at the same time that I lost my virginity in a small brothel in Saragossa.

Beil Speaking about losing your virginity, we need to broach the subject of de Sade ...

Buñuel I also loved de Sade. I was about twenty-five when I read *The 120 Days of Sodom* for the first time, and I must admit I found it far more shocking than Darwin. One day, when I was visiting Roland Tual, I saw a priceless copy in his library that had originally belonged to Marcel Proust. Despite its rarity, Tual lent it to me. It was a revelation. Up until then, I'd known nothing of de Sade, although the professors at the University of Madrid prided themselves on the fact that they never hid anything from their students. We read Dante, Camöens, Homer, Cervantes, so how was it that I knew nothing about this systematic and magistral exploration of society, this proposal for such a sweeping annihilation of culture?

When I could bring myself to admit that the university had lied, I found that next to de Sade, all other masterpieces paled. ... Why hadn't someone made me read de Sade instead of all these other useless things?

Beil Did de Sade specifically influence you in your filmic work?

Buñuel His ideas have influenced me in many ways, particularly in *L'Âge d'or*. Maurice Heine once wrote a devastating critique in which he declared that de Sade would roll over in his grave if he knew what I'd done with his ideas; my only response was that my motivation was not to eulogize a dead writer, but to make a movie.

Beil You never thought much of respect. What was your and your Surrealist friends' take on morality ...?

Buñuel It was an aggressive morality based on the complete rejection of all existing values. We had other criteria: we exalted passion, mystification, black humor, the insult, and the call of the abyss. Inside this new territory, all our thoughts and actions seemed justifiable; there was simply no room for doubt. Everything made sense. Our morality may have been more demanding and more dangerous than the prevailing order, but it was also stronger, richer, and more coherent.

Beil Did this particular morality and irreverence prompt you to use the drums of Calanda as the sound track for the scene

in *L'Âge d'or* where Jesus leaves the castle after 120 days of sexual excess? What is the original meaning of those drums?

Buñuel The drums of Calanda beat almost without pause from noon on Good Friday until noon on Saturday, in recognition of the shadows that covered the earth at the moment Christ died, as well as the earthquakes, the falling rocks, and the rending of the temple veil. It's a powerful and strangely moving communal ceremony which I heard for the first time in my cradle.

Beil What exactly is so fascinating about it for you?

Buñuel I don't really know what evokes this emotion, which resembles the kind of feeling often aroused when one listens to music. It seems to echo some secret rhythm in the outside world, and provokes a real physical shiver that defies the rational mind. ...

This drumming—an incredible, powerful, cosmic phenomenon that moves the collective unconscious—makes the earth quiver under your feet. Through the entire night nature pulsates to the rhythm of the drums. When you place your hand on the wall of a house, you can feel it tremble. If someone falls asleep during the drumming, that person wakes up again when it dies away and leaves him behind. By the end of the night the skin on the drums is stained with blood: the hands become sore and bloody from the drumming.

Beil As sore and bloody as the face of the lover in *L'Âge d'or* who shortly afterwards staggers away to those very drum beats when his mistress throws herself at the aged conductor ...

Buñuel For me, it was a film about passion, *l'amour fou*, the irresistible force that thrusts two people together, and about the impossibility of their ever becoming one ...

Beil You are clearly fascinated with the archaic. Beyond this cinematic message that keeps reminding us we are first and foremost bodies and irrational beings: how do you assess the human condition after all the devastating wars of the twentieth century? Do you believe there is a progress of civilization?

Buñuel The trumpets of the apocalypse have been sounding at our gates for years now, but we still stop up our ears. We do, however, have four new horsemen: overpopulation—the leader, the one waving the black flag—science, technology, and the media. All the other evils in the world are merely consequences of these. ...

The demographic explosion ... strikes me as so terrifying that I still dream of a cosmic catastrophe that would wipe out two million of us.

In the name of Hippocrates, doctors have invented the most exquisite form of torture ever known to man: survival.

Beil Given your fundamental skepticism about how our civilization is developing, what sentiments does the thought of your own death evoke in you?

Buñuel Only one regret. I hate to leave while there's so much going on. It's like quitting in the middle of a serial. I doubt there was so much curiosity about the world after death in the past, since in those days the world didn't change quite so rapidly or so much. Frankly, despite my horror of the press, I'd love to rise from the grave every ten years or so and go buy a few newspapers. Ghostly pale, sliding silently along the walls, my papers under my arm, I'd return to the cemetery and read about all the disasters in the world before falling back to sleep, safe and secure in my tomb.

Beil This talk about being in the grave to me seems, with all due respect, somewhat premature. Let us return to your art and creativity: a good thirty years before Fluxus and Korean artist Nam June Paik, you had a man kick a violin through the streets and destroy it in *L'Âge d'or*. As early as 1933 you drew up conceptual instructions that artists such as George Brecht and John Baldessari would become known for much later: "In a basement an orchestra consisting of one hundred musicians intonates the first beats of *Die Walküre*." And even the actions in the late nineties involving the tattoos of your fellow countryman and artist, Santiago Sierra, which oscillate between radical critique of capitalism and sheer cynicism in the face of human corruptibility seem to be prefigured by you. Could you once again tell the story about Luis Alcoriza that you included in *My Last Sigh*, your memoirs?

Buñuel I'm eating in a restaurant with Alcoriza when a beautiful woman sits down at the next table, alone. Luis can't take his eyes off her. ... Then, later, just before dessert, his eyes stray once more in her direction. He smiles. She smiles back. ... Alcoriza calms down, finishes his dessert, and of course joins his beautiful neighbor for coffee. They introduce themselves, talk a bit; then Alcoriza takes his conquest to his room, undresses her tenderly, and discovers, tattooed on her belly "*Cortésia de Luis Buñuel!*" The woman is an elegant call girl from Mexico City whom I bring to San José at enormous expense and who follows my instructions to the letter.

Beil Buñuel, you are incredible! Looking back, how do you yourself assess your irreverent creativity and your role as a pioneer—both in life and in twentieth-century art? Where do you get all those ideas from?

Buñuel All my life I have been harassed by questions: Why is something this way and not another?

Now I need to talk about what I drink. Because that is something I can hold forth about forever. ... My preferred drink is dry martini. It is composed essentially of gin and a few drops of vermouth, preferably Noilly Prat. Connoisseurs who like their martini very dry suggest simply allowing a ray of sunlight to shine through a bottle of Noilly Prat before it hits the bottle of gin. At a certain period in America it was said that the making of a dry martini should resemble the Immaculate Conception, for, as St. Thomas Aquinas once

noted, the generative power of the Holy Ghost pierced the Virgin's hymen "like a ray of sunlight through a window—leaving it unbroken."

Beil So could you tell us your personal recipe for a perfect dry martini?

Buñuel A crucial recommendation is that the ice be so cold and hard that it won't melt, since nothing's worse than a watery martini. ...

The day before your guests arrive, put all the ingredients—glasses, gin, and shaker—in the refrigerator. Use the thermometer to make sure the ice is about twenty degrees below zero. Don't take anything out until your friends arrive; then pour a few drops of Noilly Prat and half a demitasse spoon of Angostura bitters over the ice. Shake it, then pour it out, keeping only the ice, which retains a faint taste of both. Then pour straight gin over the ice, shake it again, and serve. It goes without saying that alcohol and tobacco are excellent accompaniments to lovemaking—the alcohol first, then the cigarettes. ...

I can still see the nun's black cotton stockings which ended just above the knee. ...

Beil I think we need to bring our conversation to a conclusion; it seems to be taking its toll on you after all. Thank you very much, Luis Buñuel. ...

Buñuel I'm relieved. If I had to list all the benefits derived from alcohol, it would be endless.

This interview took place on the 114th anniversary of Luis Buñuel's birth, on February 22, 2014. It is based on a vivid encounter with the memories of the filmmaker who died in 1983. The answers of the irreverent pioneer of modernity are all taken verbatim from Buñuel's memoir: *My Last Sigh*, which was written with the assistance of Jean-Claude Carrière and translated into English by Abigail Israel.

The chapter and page references of the responses are, in the order of their appearance in the first edition of Luis Buñuel, *My Last Sigh* (New York, 1983): Pro and Con, p. 219 / Remembrances from the Middle Ages, p. 8 / Pro and Con, p. 226 / Saragossa, p. 31 / Surrealism (1929–1933), p. 106 / Pro and Con, p. 219 / Pro and Con, p. 220 / Pro and Con, p. 217 / Saragossa, p. 30 / Pro and Con, p. 217–8 / Pro and Con, p. 219 / Surrealism (1929–1933), p. 107 / The Drums of Calanda, p. 19 / The Drums of Calanda, p. 20 / Surrealism (1929–1933), p. 117 / Swan Song, pp. 251, 252 and 256 / Swan Song, p. 256 / Dreams and Reveries, p. 100 / Still an Atheist ... Thank God!, p. 174 / Earthly Delights, p. 44 / Earthly Delights, pp. 45, 48 and 49 / Earthly Delights, pp. 49 and 46.



Steven Soderbergh, *Ocean's Eleven*, 2001 (from left to right: George Clooney, Brad Pitt, Matt Damon, Elliott Gould, Don Cheadle)



Salvador Dalí, Federico García Lorca, Pepín Bello (from left to right), Madrid, 1926

Michael Buhrs

SAFECRACKERS: THE PHENOMENON OF ARTIST COLLECTIVES

CHAPTER 1: BANDITS

A group of thieves, each one of them having their own special talents that, combined, allow a near-perfect interlocking division of tasks, thus putting the big heist within reach.

In recent years, Hollywood has brought this film genre in many different forms into movie theaters, the most famous example surely being the *Ocean* film series, starting with *Ocean's Eleven* (2001, directed by Steven Soderbergh, screenplay by Ted Griffin).

Max Ernst, the leader of a rather disheveled group of bandits living in a hideout, as can be seen in the first scenes of *L'Âge d'or*, provides the greatest possible contrast to the stylish gentlemen gangsters listening to the smart directives of George Clooney and Brad Pitt.

In one of the episodes of *The Scorpion's Sting*, it is the Golden (Girls') Gang of Chicks on Speed that constitutes the feminist counterpart to Max Ernst and to George Clooney, in a landscape in Australia, dressed and made up like Amazons, which makes them seem alien, other-worldly.

Leader Enough ... stop it!

First Bandit I fell, by accident, perhaps?

Leader No, nobody saw anything. Any news yet, yes or no?

First Bandit Yes, yes, the Mallorcans have arrived.

Leader Quick, to arms ... Back ...

Leader Estéban! Estéban!

Sick Bandit I am done for!

Leader So are we, yet we are still going.

Sick Bandit Yes, yes. But you have accordions, hippopotami, keys, mountain goats, and ...

Leader Nonsense! ... Alright, let's go!

Sick Bandit ... and paintbrushes.¹

The dialogue Buñuel spins between the bandits suggests, if anything, a group riddled with despair and exhaustion. Is it that crime ultimately does not pay? Not even as part of a group? The collective versus the individual; gang of crooks versus master thief; girl gang versus Superwoman. And in the end having to split the haul, how is that supposed to work? Time, in other words, to take a closer look at the phenomenon of the group.

1 *L'Âge d'or*, playbill for the screening of the film on November 28, 1930, at Studio 28, 10 rue Tholozé in Paris.

CHAPTER 2: “A COMMUNITY OF LONERS, A FELLOWSHIP OF INDEPENDENTS.”²

The point of departure for the exhibition *The Scorpion's Sting* is the film *L'Âge d'or* that was based on a screenplay co-authored by Luis Buñuel and Salvador Dalí and shot by the two artists at various locations in Spain and France between the summer of 1929 and June 1930. (Even this collaboration did not go well, as Buñuel would later omit Dalí from the credits without consulting him, prompting the latter to write furious letters that came to nothing.) The initiators of this exhibition, the Munich artist duo M+M, describe the adaptation of the original film as a *cadavre exquis*, or exquisite corpse, that is, a collaboration on one and the same object, yet without the individual parties having any knowledge of the work done by their colleagues. In most cases, *cadavre exquis* refers to the principle of adding to an existing drawing or text; *The Scorpion's Sting*, however, is a cinematic collaboration. Elsewhere, M+M use the term palimpsest instead of *cadavre exquis*, in the sense of overwriting existing textual material. One of the best known historical palimpsests is an unknown work by Archimedes of Syracuse that was overwritten with Christian religious text by thirteenth-century monks. The process of overwriting can be observed in artistic practice as well.³ Those invited to participate in the project included Tobias Zielony, Keren Cytter, Julian Rosefeldt and John Bock, artists who primarily work by themselves, and the artist collective Chicks on Speed; the artist duo M+M themselves also shot an episode.

There are few precedents for a cinematic exquisite corpse. *Dreams That Money Can Buy*, an experimental feature film conceived and directed by Hans Richter in 1947, can be considered a historical reference. Born in Berlin in 1888, Richter created some of the most influential artist films of the early twentieth century. For *Dreams That Money Can Buy* he invited six artists—Max Ernst, Marcel Duchamp, Man Ray, Alexander Calder, Darius Milhaud and Fernand Léger—to create surreal dream sequences in collaboration with him.⁴ For a budget of \$25,000 the film was shot in a loft in Manhattan and received an award for Best Camera at the 1947 Venice Film Festival.

Both in the case of Richter's film and in that of the exhibition *The Scorpion's Sting* based on an idea by M+M, collectives emerged to collaboratively realize the project. Everyone participating in the project is aware of the basic conditions, from the organizational structure to the timeline and to funding. Even in terms of content, the basic framework was predetermined: dreams as sales objects in the case *Dreams That*

Money Can Buy, and contemporary adaptation of the subject matter of a Surrealist film in that of *The Scorpion's Sting*.

But why and how do artist groups form when such a clear structure is not provided? What needs to happen to make it possible to combine corresponding artistic strategies, common aspirations to effect social change and/or shared political beliefs into a group strategy? Christoph Wilhelmi has published a multi-volume survey of artist groups in the German-speaking world and throughout Europe. One of his basic definitions reads like this: “As opposed to the mercantile approach underlying the [group] exhibitions—especially in the case of the Secessions—a non-material impetus is typical of a large number of artist groups in the twentieth century, in the sense of ‘counter projects.’ This applies primarily to the ideologically oriented groups ranging from the ‘para-clerical brotherhoods’ to the champions of radical political change in the aftermath of World War I, as well as to a significant number of groups that actually did without exhibitions, because they engaged in (media-based) activism (‘Aktivistenbund’ et al.), or explicitly ‘anti-capitalist’ groups such as ‘Wir.’”⁵

In 2005, Angelika Nollert and René Block curated the exhibition *Kollektive Kreativität/Collective Creativity* in Kassel. In the accompanying catalogue Nollert notes: “Creative collectives in the visual arts ... consistently have positive connotations, for they are formed out of free will; hence they are often described in seemingly more neutral terms as, say, ‘artists’ communities’ or ‘artist teams’ and their activities as ‘collaboration’ or ‘co-production.’ Ideally, such collective efforts involve pooling individual forces in order to assert common interests or achieve a common result.”⁶

Do the artists collaborating on *The Scorpion's Sting* already constitute a collective? On a joint trip to Barcelona and the Spanish coast near Cadaqués and Figueres they discussed the project and decided on how to divide Buñuel's episodes; the loot was shared to the apparent satisfaction of all.⁷ Subsequently, there were also exchanges between back-to-back episodes and props were swapped by mail.

Two exquisite corpses serve as a manifesto, a meager yield considering that the Surrealists, like the artists of the Fluxus movement later on, published journals over a period of several years.⁸ And yet it is a collective act, even if one of the key features of an artist community is missing altogether: a common location. For the Nazarenes in Rome, for the artists who jointly established the School of Barbizon, or for those who created an entire artist colony in Worpswede—an essential component for groups such as these was daily interaction,

2 Albert Schulze-Vellinghausen, *Deutsche Kunst nach Baumeister* (Recklinghausen, 1958).

3 See for this Reviel Netz, William Noel, *Der Kodex des Archimedes* (Munich, 2008). There are interesting links to Pierre Alechinsky, a member of the artist group CoBrA. Alechinsky often uses randomly collected documents as ground for his drawings. During a visit to André Breton's apartment in 1969, Alechinsky was inspired to create works of his own: “For a substantial part of his graphic oeuvre, Alechinsky made use of old, used papers, invoices, brief papers, letters. Yellowed, their content forgotten, these were obsolete, outdated documents without value. Taking the wrinkled, sometimes even torn papers that had survived just by accident, Alechinsky added drawings that could refer or cancel out their old content as well as respond to formal accents in the papers, thereby lending a new liveliness to what was dead and forgotten.” Ernst-Eberhard Güse, “Verwandlungen. Zu den Zeichnungen Pierre Alechinskys,” in *Pierre Alechinsky. Zwischen den Zeilen*, exh. cat. Saarlandmuseum, Saarbrücken, ed. by Ernst-Eberhard Güse (Stuttgart, 1993), p. 33.

4 The protagonist in *Dreams That Money Can Buy* is Joe Narcissus (Jack Bittner). While still wondering how to pay the rent for the room he had recently moved into, he discovers when looking into the mirror that he can make

his thoughts become reality. Joe establishes a business in his room that sells customized dreams to anyone interested, especially frustrated and neurotic fellow men. *Dreams That Money Can Buy*, directed by Hans Richter, produced by Kenneth Macpherson and Hans Richter, screenplay by Josh White, Man Ray, Hans Rehfisch, Hans Richter and David Vern, September 1947.

5 Christoph Wilhelmi, *Künstlergruppen in Deutschland, Österreich und der Schweiz seit 1900* (Stuttgart, 1996), p. 3.

6 Angelika Nollert, “Kunst ist Leben und Leben ist Kunst,” in *Kollektive Kreativität/Collective Creativity*, exh. cat. Kassel, Kunsthalle Fridericianum, ed. by René Block (Frankfurt/Main, 2005), p. 19.

7 Only John Bock was not able to come along on that trip; on the other hand, the directors of the two museums showing *The Scorpion's Sting*, the Museum Villa Stuck and the Institut Mathildenhöhe in Darmstadt, did join. Whereas in the case of Buñuel, production of the film was made possible by Marie-Laure and Charles de Noailles, aristocrats and patrons of the artist in early twentieth-century Paris, this time two municipal institutions, as well as the Kulturstiftung des Bundes and the Kulturfonds Frankfurt RheinMain facilitated the creation of the individual films.



The bandits in Luis Buñuel's *L'Âge d'or*, 1930, film still



Break during the shooting of *L'Âge d'or*, Cap Creus, April 1930



Kraftwerk



SPUR Group, Munich, 1958 (from left to right: Helmut Sturm, Hans Peter Zimmer, Lothar Fischer, Heimrad Prem)



Cap Creus, September 2012 (from left to right: Alex Murray-Leslie and Melissa Logan [Chicks on Speed], Martin De Mattia and Marc Weis [M+M], Tobias Zielony, Keren Cytter, Ralf Beil, Julian Rosefeldt)

working together in the same place for an extended period of time, the collective experience.⁹

Speaking about places linked to Luis Buñuel that were crucial for his artistic career and his role within the group of the Surrealists, mention must be made of the Residencia de Estudiantes in Madrid, which Buñuel attended from 1917 until 1925 and where he met Pepin Bello, Salvador Dalí and Federico García Lorca. Later, in the twenties, it was the Café Cyrano in Paris, as well as André Breton's apartment on rue Fontaine. In *My Last Sigh*, his autobiography, Buñuel writes about the Surrealists: "All of us were supporters of a certain concept of revolution, and although the Surrealists didn't consider themselves terrorists, they were constantly fighting a society they despised. Their principal weapon wasn't guns, of course; it was scandal. Scandal was a potent agent of revelation, capable of exposing such social crimes as the exploitation of one man by another, colonialist imperialism, religious tyranny—in sum, all the secret and odious underpinnings of a system that had to be destroyed. The real purpose of Surrealism was not to create a new literary, artistic, or even philosophical movement, but to explode the social order, to transform life itself. Soon after the founding of the movement, however, several members rejected this strategy and went into 'legitimate' politics, especially the Communist party, which seemed to be the only organization worthy of the epithet 'revolutionary.'"¹⁰

Within groups, and especially within associations of artists, debate and controversy about common goals and the strategies to achieve them are inevitable. They invariably involve a clash between individual vision and pseudo-democratic group dynamics. The "one grand idea": can it really be committed to paper, let alone be realized, by several minds? Doubts may not be misplaced: "And what is the yield of the group's collectivity itself? Does the ghost train of the 'movement,' driving into the unknown with the projectile of the founding idea, produce a different kind of communal inspiration, of collaborative weaving and writing? Oddly, mostly just in the group's confrontation with the outside world, with other groups and forces of order, in actions and discussions and in preparations for them, and only very rarely in the obligatory meetings of the members. Even the public statements of the groups were regularly written by a single person."¹¹

CHAPTER 3: WHY ARE THEY COLLABORATING WITH OTHERS IN A GROUP?

AA Bronson Working in a group, GENERAL IDEA explained, frees us from the tyranny of the individual genius.

Collective Actions For technical reasons. (Andrei Monastyrsky)

B+B For the fun of being in a group!

Art & Language We do our work collaboratively, work taking the form of projects. There is no grand oeuvre, unified by romantic personality.

Freud's Dreams Museum Collaboration opens up new epistemological, ethical and imaginative horizons. (Viktor Mazin)¹²

Below is a—rather subjective—survey of the main artist collectives of the past two centuries:

The Rome-based NAZARENES (a group formed as The Brotherhood of St. Luke in Vienna in 1809) are considered the first modern artist community. The School of BARBIZON (ca. 1830–1870) and the WORPSWEDE artists' colony (established in 1889) are movements with strong regional roots.

When Paris became predominant as a hub of pioneering artistic developments in the early twentieth century, many new groups emerged there; others did so in Italy, Switzerland and within Germany in Munich and Berlin: the FAUVES (1905–1907), the CUBISTS (ca. 1907–1914), the FUTURISTS (1909/10–1944, Turin), the BLAUER REITER (1911–1914, Munich), DADA / Cabaret Voltaire (1916–1919, Zürich) / Club Dada (1918–1920, Berlin), the SURREALISTS (first Surrealist manifesto by André Breton, 1924), DE STIJL (1917–1931, Leiden), BAUHAUS (1919–1933).

Among the groups worth mentioning after World War II are CoBrA (1948–1951, Paris), QUADRIGA (1952–1953, Frankfurt/Main), SPUR (1957–1965, Munich)¹³ and ZERO (1957–1966/67, Düsseldorf). More loosely organized groups included The WIENER GRUPPE (1951/52–1964), or Viennese Actionists (1958 – ca. 1968, Vienna), the SITUATIONIST INTERNATIONAL (1957–1972, established in Cosío d'Arroscia, Northern Italy), FLUXUS (1962 – ca. 1978, Wiesbaden, Cologne)¹⁴ and the Free International University for Creativity and Interdisciplinary Research (Joseph Beuys with Klaus Staack, Georg Meistermann and Willi Bongard, 1973–1988, Düsseldorf).

Three groups on today's art scene are the RAQS MEDIA COLLECTIVE (1992, New Delhi), WOINA (2006, Moscow) and, representing a special form of collaborative work, the Internet platform E-FLUX¹⁵ (established in 1998 in New York).

8 "A key novelty of artist groups in the twentieth century is their publishing activity. In this sense the 'Blaue Reiter' is exemplary, their almanac being the first instance. Publications can take different forms, though, and the frequency of publication is not essential. Rather, it is about the printed publication as an instrument of artistic propaganda. A new characteristic of twentieth-century artist groups is the tendency to flank exhibited objects with publications. The explosion of manifestoes that erupted in the period from 1905 until 1933, in the case of some groups even eclipsing their other activities (notably in the case of the Surrealists), must be seen in this context." Wilhelmi 1996 (see note 5), p. 16).

9 An early form of this local concentration of creative potential is William Morris's Red House to which the artist invited artist friends and fellow artists, in particular from the Pre-Raphaelite circle, in order to work together on the re-creation of artistic values and, indeed, social ideals. Cf. Julius Bryant, "William Morris. Red House, Bexleyheath. England," in *In the Temple of the Self. The Artist's Residence as a Total Work of Art. Europe and America 1800–1946*, exh. cat. Munich, Villa Stuck, ed. by Margot Th. Brandlhuber and Michael Buhrs (Ostfildern, 2013), pp. 54–73.

10 Luis Buñuel, *My Last Sigh* (New York, 1983), pp. 107.

11 Frank Böckelmann, "Anfänge. Situationisten, Subversive und ihre Vorgänger," in *Kunstforum International*, vol. 116 (Wetzlar, 1991), p. 213f.

12 Q&A, in *Kollektive Kreativität*, exh. cat. Kassel, Kunsthalle Fridericianum, ed. by René Block (Frankfurt/Main, 2005), pp. 266f.

13 "The tired, the angry generation, they are all over. Now it is the turn of the critical generation. We demand kitsch, dirt, primordial mud, desert," quoted from the first manifesto of the SPUR group, Lothar Fischer, Heimrad Prem, Helmut Sturm, HP Zimmer, with guests Stephan Britt, Erwin Eisch, Asger Jorn, Dieter Rempt and Gretel Stadler in Wilhelmi 1996 (see note 5), pp. 331f.

14 "The Fluxus group (if one can indeed call it a group) formed because La Monte Young and Jackson Mac Lew had published an anthology that was primarily devoted to contemporary poetry and music and that was designed by George Maciunas who was thus introduced to the movement and got enthusiastic about it. George Maciunas . . . managed to rally a lot of artists from all over the world round himself. And that is how Fluxus emerged." Milan Knížák, in Wilhelmi 1996 (see note 5), p. 129.

Many of today's artist collectives active are professionally operated networks, with electronic communication allowing collaborative work at different locations in the world. Globalization has had its—probably positive—impact on this field, too: artistic strategies flow side by side with economic information and pictures of cats in the data stream around the globe. At the same time the quasi romantic view of wild accusations among the Surrealists, base jealousies at the Bauhaus and competitive pressure between the protagonists of Fluxus may be due to an idealizing retrospective perception of the early and mid-twentieth century. There was in-fighting then and there is in-fighting today; at least collective creative processes are not subject to a business plan.

CHAPTER 4: THE SCORPION'S STING AS A COLLABORATIVE PROJECT

The artists participating in *The Scorpion's Sting* quickly agreed to participate and all of them indicated that the opportunity to be part of a group experiment had been decisive for their positive response. Thus Keren Cytter writes: "I find it challenging to try and personalize that ultimate classic, and considering other contemporary artists as unseen collaborators is something I haven't done before and I would like to try."¹⁶ And M+M note: "Since starting to work together, we have come to believe in the surprising potential of group projects. Surely this is also related to the—perhaps mythicized—image of artist groups such as the Surrealists. The idea of applying a surrealist creative technique such as the *cadavre exquis* to a film project and involve other artists has tremendous appeal."¹⁷ As Julian Rosefeldt puts it: "I enthusiastically accept your invitation to reinterpret and reenact a part of *L'Âge d'or* together with the other artists. I think it is a terrific idea to disassemble the film into its individual components, to dissect it and then have it patched up again by a team of contemporary surgeons. This respectful irreverence would certainly have pleased the Master and great Eye Slicer."¹⁸

The participating artists communicated through M+M, who served as artistic directors and hence as a communication center for the project, as well as directly with one another. The initial idea to integrate the individual contributions through the use of common actors was abandoned because of organizational problems in favor of a subtle use of individual set pieces that are passed on from one episode to another. This may be the adoption of individual scenes in terms of theme or props, or the use of a clip from the previous film.

The work the project is based on is a masterpiece of Surrealist cinema; artists whose formal approaches to the project assignment are as different as can be: there are six different screenplays and footage shot in Texas and Australia,

in Palestine, in studios in Munich and Berlin and in the historic artist's garden of the Villa Stuck. How is all this going to work? In the catalogue accompanying the 2005 exhibition *Kollektive Kreativität*, Charles Esche describes one of the main motivations behind forming an artist group: "In the current situation, setting out to do something always comes with the risk of being accused of naiveté or worse. Working as part of a collective provides the strength to overcome such opposition and offers opportunities to develop comprehensive approaches to researching and analyzing the existing state of affairs, so as to ground the work both in external necessities and in imagination.... One could argue that collective creativity is the normal artistic response to a development informed by extreme individualism."¹⁹

CHAPTER 5 AND CONCLUSION: INDIVIDUALITY IS JUST WISHFUL THINKING²⁰

"Yes, FLUXUS is a movement, just like FUTURISM, DADAISM, CONSTRUCTIVISM, SURREALISM and so on were movements. Each movement has its ups and downs, and of course there are often gray areas, influences, imitators, renegades, pioneers, imposters and nonstarters, but each movement has to have a particular objective, a reason, a compelling need for its existence. The classical components of an artistic movement can actually be itemized:

A movement is launched by an individual (or a small group of individuals), by visionaries with a particular goal who vehemently fight the status quo, who are brilliant and highly motivated, who believe in their ideas and act selflessly with respect to the group that they form around themselves.

DADA: Hugo Ball, Emmy Hennings, Richard Huelsenbeck, Tristan Tzara ...

FUTURISM: Filippo Tommasi Marinetti ...

SURREALISM: André Breton ...

CONSTRUCTIVISM: Kazimir Malevich, Naum Gabo and Antoine Pevsner, later also Vladimir Tatlin, Alexander Rodchenko, Varvara Stepanova, Vladimir Mayakovsky ...

FLUXUS: George Maciunas ..."²¹

One is invariably dominant. Does this also apply to the artist group, the artist collective? In the case of *The Scorpion's Sting* this is unlikely: the fact that the production processes ran parallel made exchange necessary, but the exertion of influence by an individual or a subgroup impossible. Some coordination was required and this was the responsibility of the artistic direction, for which M+M were responsible (who as artists, in turn, were part of the group). On the one hand there was, in fact, a functioning collective process within well-defined parameters in terms of content and technology and on the other it was completely open what the collaborative

15 "E-flux began after an artist party at a Holiday Inn in Chinatown in 1998 that was organized through e-mail—at a time when e-mail was as new as the Google Glass is today. The party was a success and what remained after that was ... the motivation to draw attention by email to art that is not created in the centers of capital and power, such as New York, London, Paris or Berlin.... E-flux would not be that exciting, though, if the collective would not make art as well, in addition to the announcements. Along with numerous joint projects such as the United Nations Plaza mini art academy in Berlin or the Video Rental Service for video art, Time/Bank is probably the most important collective work. In 2012, they opened a branch of Time/Bank at the documenta 13 in Kassel's Ständehaus." Daniel

Boese, *E-Flux. Kollektive Kreativität. Das mächtigste Netzwerk der Kunstwelt*, <http://www.art-magazin.de/szene/67508/e-flux-kollektive-kreativitaet> (accessed January 13, 2014).

16 Keren Cytter, in unpublished manuscript, M+M, 2012–13.

17 M+M, in *ibid.*

18 Julian Rosefeldt, in *ibid.*

19 Charles Esche, "Kollektivität, bescheidene Vorhaben und unvernünftiger Optimismus," in *Block 2005* (see note 12), p. 94.

20 Ralf Hutter, in *ibid.*, p. 314f.

21 Jon Hendricks, "FLUXUS. Vorwort!" in *ibid.*, p. 119.

artist product would be. It will be clear only at the opening of the exhibition whether the deliberately open experiment has been a success. In case of a failure, would there be accusations that too few specific instructions were given with regard to content? Provide nothing but the historical reference, *L'Âge d'or*, and then rely on the conceptual ingenuity of all those involved, what can that lead to? To this: "As a group we always hover between two threats that are both equally dangerous and can destroy the concept: on the one hand ... using prohibitive rules, rigorous tablets of law, to construct an ideology, to 'mold individuals,' so they 'fit inside the box'; and on the other atomization, the justified fear that without any arrangement, without rules of the game, things will break up and take many different directions, while the group is only every now and then able to provide nest warmth."²²

In the twenty-first century we witness a rejection of the idealization of the individual that prevailed in the nineties. Instead what is gaining major acceptance in present-day society are group dynamics, collective organizational structures, team spirit. Yet individual artists such as Jeff Koons, Gerhard Richter and Marina Abramović still top art market

rankings, and it is highly unlikely that a group or collective will ever make it to the top of such lists. That said, artist groups are an increasingly important factor on an institutional level and in curatorial practice. In the exhibition *Forensis*, on show at the Berlin Haus der Kulturen der Welt in the spring of 2014, twenty artists are joined by as many as eight artist groups.²³

While in the early twentieth century the ideas underlying artist groups were primarily sociopolitical if not subversive in nature, today we see an increasing professionalization of structures—not surprisingly considering the developments in other professional areas, be it in the creative sector or in more economically oriented fields. Is there reason to fear, then, that the much-acclaimed creative industries and their "creative teams" will replace the artist group? Commerce instead of idealism? In that case: better hide, as KRAFTWERK already anticipated: "Individuality has been exaggerated in the twentieth century. Everybody wants to be different, but individuality is just wishful thinking. It is a sales argument, designed to stimulate commerce ... we want something more corporate. We cultivate anonymity."²⁴

²² Letter from Heino Naujoks to G. Fries, March 19, 1967, in *Die Gruppe Geflecht. Antiobjekt. 1965–1968*. exh. cat. Kiel, Kunsthalle/Mannheim, Städtische Kunsthalle, ed. by Stephan Schmidt-Wulffen (Munich, 1991), p. 170f.

²³ <http://www.hkw.de/de/programm/projekte/2014/forensis/ausstellung-forensis/forensis.php> (accessed March 5, 2014).

²⁴ Ralf Hutter, in Block 2005 (see note 12), pp. 314f.

Marcus Steinweg

ONTOLOGICAL FEVER

- | | | | |
|----|--|-----|--|
| 1. | Ignited by forces that transcend and bound it, the animal called man is an inflamed subject. | 7. | Going somewhere with the other in order to eventually go somewhere else than the other is what could be called intersubjective life. |
| 2. | The inflammation is neither random nor sporadic. | 8. | Life comes out of its shell to constitute itself in the encounter, not as a substance and immutable ego but as an intersection with the contingency called <i>exterior</i> . |
| 3. | It indicates a contamination by everything that it is not. | 9. | Life as an experience of contingency and affirmation of all that neither controls nor knows. |
| 4. | It moves along a line that both connects it to the exterior and separates it from it. | 10. | Life as a path or as becoming, rather than as narcissistic self-affirmation. |
| 5. | In a text on Walt Whitman, Gilles Deleuze has described the “encounter with the Outside” as “a march of souls in the open air.” ¹ | 11. | The exterior has long been within the subject. |
| 6. | It is the shared experience of inchoate subjects that voluntarily get together for moments to jointly follow the line until each strikes a new path. | 12. | Alien, it is part of it, without belonging to it. |

13. One could call it ghostly cohabitation or phantomatic presence.
14. In any case, it inhabits the subject with obstinate presence.
15. It besets it from the beginning.
16. Of course, it is too much of an imposition, but one that could be called natural.
17. It strains the subject and pushes it beyond itself.
18. That is the only significance of the subject: to be incommensurable rather than identical with itself.
19. Hence its fever, hence its edginess and restlessness.
20. Hence its lack of ontological balance.
21. Hence its being beside itself and its hysterical disposition.
22. The only subject we are able to conceive of is this exile from itself.
23. An exterior-subject, as Jean-Luc Nancy would say, following Maurice Blanchot.
24. An intimacy exiled from itself.
25. Lacan would have called it “extimate”: in its interior dominated by the exterior.
26. By an exterior that marks its interior.
27. It is part of its nature not to possess an—unspoiled—nature.
28. The contamination is primordial (this is the basic postulate of Derrida’s deconstruction).
29. It is always already in touch with the other, as contact with the other is part of its normalcy.
30. This contact is what constitutes it as a subject.
31. The purpose of thought would be to leave the subject in its fever.
32. To think of it as a feverish entity.
33. “Thought,” Nancy writes with Hegel in mind, “must take the self out of itself; it must extract it from its simple being-in-itself: thought is itself such an extraction, along with the speech in which thinking takes itself out of itself and exposes itself.”²
34. The self-exposure of thought describes its openness to its exterior, that is, to the domain of a non-home that originally disrupts the phantasm of the self-possession of an ego balanced in its identity.
35. This original hyperbolism and excess is part of the subject.
36. It is unstable from the start.
37. Nancy seems to think of this instability when writing that it is all about “opening mere reason up to the limitlessness that constitutes its truth.”³

38. The possibilities of reason and its acts are not limitless.
39. On the contrary: reason is bound by limitlessness.
40. In this sense, limitlessness denotes a closure.
41. It extends as closure—which can be linked to Heidegger’s *lethe* = concealment—into the innermost reaches of the subject.
42. It constitutes that area by delimiting it.
43. Delimited by limitlessness, the rational subject is long beyond its competence.
44. Hence its fever, hence its restlessness.
45. Hence the pain that causes its identity to glow.
46. It marks the fissure that runs through it in order to compromise its self-identity.
47. The fissure opens up the space of its problematic self-encounter or ghostly identity.
48. Like a border it divides a territory.
49. It cleaves its unity.
50. It causes the subject to explode.
51. Thus it falls apart, because it is, after all, nothing but its falling-apart or the process of permanent self-deconstruction.
52. It could be called it an excess, a turbulence and experience of inconsistency.
53. One could also refer to an original disunity or a primordial distraction.
54. Clearly, Adorno’s concept of non-identity, Lacan’s split subject, Derrida’s *différance*, Deleuze’s chaos etc. point—beyond the massive differences between their philosophical constructs—to this fissure.
55. It is yet another name for the inexistence of God.
56. Nietzsche’s thinking of this inexistence opens up the unrest-room of thought.
57. It is itself restless and feverish.
58. It constitutes “a work that therefore ceaselessly goes beside itself out of anger or excitement, teetering precariously between exaggeration and pain.”⁴
59. Therefore Deleuze is correct in saying that Nietzsche is a thinker who “dramatizes” ideas (the quotation marks are his); after all, it is, on “various levels of tension,”⁵ about a dead God.
60. The death of God leaves a void that is hard to fill, which does not mean that the subject is not willing to do everything to replace God with some other good.
61. Perhaps religion is just that: replacing, rather than affirming, God.
62. Nothing seems more difficult today than being non-religious, especially for the attitude branding itself as atheistic.

63. Contemporary atheisms follow a logic of substitution that is about finding a replacement for the authority formerly called God.
64. As long as something—success in the symbolic fabric, money, power, as well as spiritual fetishes, esoterisms, moralisms etc.—takes his place, his inexistence can be tolerated, that is, until one starts thinking.
65. In *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, Deleuze writes: “The places of thought are the tropical zones frequented by the tropical man, not the temperate zones or the moral, methodical or moderate man.”⁶
66. The tropical fever causes man to border on his borders.
67. It confronts him with the ontological inconsistency of his reality.
68. Man recognizes that there is no transcendental, no absolute meaning.
69. He understands himself as a subject reeling in the desert of his ontological desolation.
70. He is a tropical vagabond.
71. Cold waves pass through his body.
72. Incommensurable impulses flash through him.
73. Fever-stricken, he faces the truth of both his body and his thought.
74. It is the truth of an inconsistent agent whose activities result from passive affects.
75. Beset by it, the subject hits the wall of his impotence.
76. It recognizes that it is inhabited by forces that dominate his being.
77. It is the setting of this experience.
78. It loses and deconcentrates itself in it.
79. It does not dissolve.
80. It conglobates by enfolding, like a clenched fist, its emptiness.
81. Yet this embrace of nothingness is not nothing. Nothing is not nothing.
82. It marks the act of a well-nigh powerless self-affection.
83. The self that affects itself is an agent of its emptiness.
84. It identifies itself, as Heidegger put it, as “the lieutenant of the nothing.”⁷
85. At the point of its highest density—at the moment of rigorous self-concentration—it comprehends itself as a subject without subjectivity.
86. Which also means that it is a subject without God, without nature and without essence, without a formulated *telos* and program.
87. It is neither a sovereign conceptual operator nor a self-assured cogito, neither a know-all nor a can-do-all.

88. It is the setting of the feverish self-communication with the nothing that Lacan calls the real and that is called chaos or desert by Nietzsche.
89. It all comes down to limiting the reeling, without denying it by declaring it a deficiency.
90. Often the subject reels in the most precise way.
91. One could call this philosophy: this precise dizziness which keeps it open to contingency, to the indefiniteness and inconsistency of his reality.
92. There is an acrobatics of thought that lets it move towards its incompetencies and entrusts it to an experience of failure that can hardly be avoided.
93. In its failure the subject encounters itself.
94. Not that every self-encounter remains illusory.
95. On the contrary: the subject is what one may call that which brushes itself in failure mode.
96. Self-affection as hetero-affection.
97. Experience of the other as self-experience.
98. It is only in excess or in self-transcendence that subject touches itself.
99. This self-touching is not narcissism.
100. While the narcissist aims for self-affirmation, the subject without subjectivity gets lost in the desert of this without.
101. It transcends itself toward a beyond of itself, instead of clinging to an ideal projection of itself, as the narcissistic subject does.
102. There is no self-affirmation in excess.
103. There is only self-infringement which implies self-failure.
104. Nancy writes: "Man sets out (time and again) to infinitely transcend man (this—and nothing else—is what the reference to the 'death of God' means, no matter how one interprets it)."⁸
105. That means: the loss of man, his disappearance and reappearance, is part of man.
106. That is his feverish fate.
107. He arrives at himself and does not come to rest in himself.
108. He is not transparent to himself.
109. He never was.
110. "God is dead means," as Badiou writes, "that He is no longer the living being who can be encountered when existence breaks the ice of its own transparency."⁹
111. One does not encounter God by encountering oneself; one does not even encounter oneself.

112. That is why the excess called fever can be described, following Nancy, as touching the untouchable: “L’excès est un access à l’inaccessible / Excess is an access to the inaccessible.”¹⁰
113. Like Maurice Blanchots *pas au-delà*, it is a (non-)step into the beyond (of the strideable).¹¹
114. There is no absolute beyond, which is why it is tangible, while remaining intangible.
115. It is the name of this logical contradiction.
116. In it, presence coalesces with absence, consistency with inconsistency, being with nothingness.
117. Experiencing the fever is experiencing this indissolubility.

1 Gilles Deleuze, *Essays Critical and Clinical*, trans. Daniel W. Smith and Michael A. Greco (Minneapolis, 1997), p. 60
 2 Jean-Luc Nancy, *Hegel: The Restlessness of the Negative*, trans. Jason Smith and Steven Miller (Minneapolis, 2002), p. 40.
 3 Jean-Luc Nancy, *Dis-Enclosure: The Deconstruction of Christianity*, trans. Bettina Bergo, Gabriel Malenfant and Michael B. Smith (New York, 2008), p. 1.
 4 Nancy 2002 (see note 2), p. 3
 5 Gilles Deleuze, *Nietzsche* (Paris, 1965), p. 38
 6 Gilles Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy* (New York, 1983), trans. Hugh Tomlinson, p. 110.

7 Martin Heidegger, *What is Metaphysics?* Heidegger, Pathmarks, ed. by William McNeill, trans. David Farrell Krell (Cambridge, 1998), p. 93.
 8 Jean-Luc Nancy, *L’Intrus* (Paris, 2000), p. 45.
 9 Alain Badiou, *Court traité d’ontologie transitoire* (Paris, 1998), pp. 11–13.
 10 Jean-Luc Nancy, *Ivresse* (Paris, 2013), p. 40.
 11 Cf. Maurice Blanchot, *Le pas au-delà* (Paris, 1973). It is a beyond that is on this side. Cf. Jean-Luc Nancy, *Adoration: The Deconstruction of Christianity II* (New York, 2012); and Marcus Steinweg, *Philosophie der Überstürzung* (Berlin, Merve), 2013, pp. 76–79.



Salvador Dalí, *The Phenomenon of Ecstasy*, 1933, Collage

Ralf Beil

STING IN THE EAR

Traces of Image and Sound in Buñuel's
L'Âge d'or and in *The Scorpion's Sting*

**"The best cinema is the kind that can
be perceived with your eyes closed."¹**

Salvador Dalí

Scorpions cannot hear a thing: no noises, no music.²

By contrast, Luis Buñuel was open to sounds of all kinds throughout his life—even in his later years, when he went deaf.³

In *L'Âge d'or*, one of the first sound films in France, Mendelssohn Bartholdy provides the buoyant prelude when a scorpion stings a rat. Shots resound, screams of pleasure echo, cowbells ring, a toilet flushes. Music from Wagner's opera *Tristan and Isolde* becomes part of the action, a large orchestra underscores the *amour fou* of the surrealist lovers, the head of the bandits, Max Ernst, shouts "Stop!"—and over and over again one hears the beat of the penetratingly monotonous drums of Calanda. The culmination of the film is the final scene in which Jesus is blasphemously presented as participating in sexual debauchery and violence—"The film dances a paso doble towards its shatteringly triumphant close. . . . After the Wagnerian orgasms, the death knell of the human species sounds, so to speak."⁴

Buñuel's sound track to *L'Âge d'or* is as suggestive as it is surreal.⁵ The wind howls, clouds appear in the mirror, in the room in front of it a woman's hair undulates to the sound of barking and bell-ringing.

Here Buñuel was already using sound, still something radically new in cinema around 1930, in a highly avant-garde manner: working directly with the disparity between image and sound, he collages and combines things that do not belong together, uses off-screen sound and sound that overarches scenes. The music that takes up three-quarters of the film's sound track serves to heighten the atmosphere, while at the same time functioning as a "subversive or blasphemous coupling of music and image, respectively action, in the sense of a surrealist collage. An elegant gentleman pushes a violin along in front of him with his feet, only to finally trample on it—what we hear is a theme from the first movement of Beethoven's violin concerto; Mozart's Ave verum corpus accompanies images of skeletons of archbishops . . ."⁶

1 Salvador Dalí, "Film-arte Fil antiartistico" in *La Gaceta Literaria*, no. 24, December 15, 1927, p. 5.

2 Scorpions sense the slightest earth movements: "A scorpion recognizes a cockroach digging at a distance of fifty centimeters from the vibrations. The scorpion's eyes are only suitable for rough orientation (using the position of the sun, moon shine, etc.)." *Skorpione* (Scorpions), quoted and translated from: <http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Skorpione> (accessed January 21, 2014). "Perception of sound waves is a special form of vibratory sensation." *Gliederfüßer* (Arthropods), quoted and translated from the German: <http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gliederfüßer> (accessed January 21, 2014).

3 Cf. in this publication: Ralf Beil, "Don't Eulogize a Dead Writer: Make a Film! A Conversation with Luis Buñuel about Music, Morality and Dry Martini," pp. 178–181.

4 Henry Miller quoted and translated from *Buñuel! Auge des Jahrhunderts*, exh.

cat. Kunst- und Ausstellungshalle der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, Bonn, ed. by the Kunst- und Ausstellungshalle der Bundesrepublik Deutschland (Munich, 1994), p. 212.

5 Significantly enough, the words *oreille* (ear) and *musique* (music) are missing in the *Dictionnaire abrégé du Surréalisme* of 1938. This is not surprising considering that André Breton and Paul Éluard were the editors. Buñuel had already indicated that the Surrealists, above all Breton, had no sense for music: "Like many of the Surrealists he abhorred music, especially opera. I wanted to rid him of this error. . . ." Quoted and translated from Luis Buñuel, *Mein letzter Seufzer. Erinnerungen* (Frankfurt a. M./Berlin, 1985), p. 103. From today's point of view, this is indeed curious given that music is especially capable of opening up the senses to the irrational and the unconscious.

6 Till Fellner, "Subversion und Stille. Luis Buñuel und die Musik," in *Neue Zürcher Zeitung, Literatur und Kunst*, April 6, 2013.

ALPHA AND OMEGA

Buñuel's "divine orgy" starts "with two scorpions fighting among rocks, and ends with a cross—on which are draped women's beautiful scalps. A certain Comte de Blangis appears as a devil in the guise of Jesus Christ . . ." ⁷

The Scorpion's Sting starts in the black light of a strange laboratory set-up: young women in brilliantly white headscarves, that make them hover somewhere between Muslim women and nuns, are playing around with live and dead scorpions glowing fluorescently in the ultra-violet light. ⁸ All we hear and see are soft murmurs and slight movements in the room. The *cadavre exquis* ends in a strangely spectacular way with a self-portrait of the artist John Bock as the "progeny of a furuncle." ⁹ A priest intones: "All that is good ends in the pietà pose." And the La La girl Lisa unmans the bedridden slobbering old man called de Sade with a set of "pussy dentures," an archaically mechanical *vagina dentata*. ¹⁰

For Bock, it is neither the satanic Christ nor the demonizing priest who is victorious in the end, but the autonomous woman: Lisa, introduced as a prostitute—"the monetary visitor"—intervenes in the final event with surgical acuity.

Did John Bock select his "cast"—the ailing man, the priest, the women—by orienting himself around the Marquis de Sade's *Dialogue between a Priest and a Dying Man*, expressly mentioned by Buñuel in his memoirs? ¹¹ With Bock there is a crucial difference: here, de Sade, the writer of (sexual) enlightenment, is himself the sick old man. A crude persiflage? In any case, it can no longer be a critique of religion, like in de Sade or Buñuel, as Eugen Drewermann established in 1994: "Even the sincerity of the engagement with Christianity no longer seems to be existentially necessary. . . . In our day, a passionate engagement with religious issues seems to be a thing of the past." ¹² John Bock's priest is merely a macabre amplifier of bad taste, the ultima ratio of the post-surrealist orgy of aversion. ¹³

A FLUTE, TWO TELEPHONES, ELEVEN FIREARMS

How do the artists behind this *cadavre exquis* handle sound, noises and music? Which music speaks for or against unfettered violence and sexuality? Tobias Zielony begins in strictly documentary fashion with minimal sounds in the dark of a laboratory. John Bock finishes off the scorpion's tail with voices engaged in excessive dialogue and ironic suspense-film music that combines aggressive electric guitar riffs, choral singing by Arvo Pärt and violin tremolos by Krzysztof Penderecki. ¹⁴

Female extremities emerge from behind strange rock formations to a cacophonic confusion of voices courtesy of Chicks on Speed. Hard beats and electro sounds flank the appearance on the horizon of large crumbling Dali-esque sculptures of the two female performers; their recitative includes fragmented sentences like "a million to one chance," "I can't stop dancing" or "avalanche uncover me." In a film made using a night vision camera, the artist duo M+M mainly rely on the echoing footsteps on dark streets of people being led away and of those leading them—and a surreal litany uttered in a conspiratorial whisper. ¹⁵

In Julian Rosefeldt's newly invented sequence of scenes about sexual liberty, freely adapted from Bunuel, ¹⁶ the artist works with Wagner's "Love-Death" aria sung by Isolde, Calanda drums and the unplugged version of the song "Shake Yer Dix" by Peaches in order to acoustically outline his eroto-feminism. ¹⁷ While M+M let the so-called Tristan-chord emerge in an alienated guitar riff, Rosefeldt brings Wagner's music into play as a swelling orchestral sound and an ironic duet between a vulva and a penis doll at the very moment when the street full of people wandering naked and the Deep Gold nightclub turn out, through a backstage tracking shot, to be a Babelsberg-Studio setting replete with beer tables and benches and a mobile toilet.

Keren Cytter—whose acoustic method comes closest to Buñuel, along with that of Julian Rosefeldt—lets the musician, the source of the piercing flute sounds in her film, come into view repeatedly in the course of her drastic sequence about violence and *amour fou*, while at the same time ascribing a key role to the detached contact between man and woman by means of two telephones in the one room. Erotic monologue and violent dialogue run parallel—the shots dramatically introduce a concert performance for eleven firearms, six steel guitar strings and one flute. And here too as in *L'Âge d'or*, at the end a telephone receiver dangles like the portent of a bloody deed. And the music dies before the boy with the glittering disco ball literally bites the dust.

7 Miller 1994 (see note 4), p. 211.

8 "The cuticulae of scorpions are fluorescent when lit by ultra-violet rays. . . . With the help of the appropriate lamps, the animals can be easily located in the dark. This effect continues even after the animals die." Scorpions, quoted from: <http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Skorpione> (accessed January 22, 2014). The film by Tobias Zielony was made while the artist was staying in Ramallah.

9 John Bock, *Little Hair with Momsen, The Scorpion's Sting*, sixth episode, film script.

10 Is John Bock again inadvertently taking up the scorpion theme here, after Fabre, with the castration of de Sade's poisonous "prick" full of "pus" (John Bock, *Little Hair with Momsen*, film script)? "The tail-end has a smooth bubbly section. That is the sac in which the poison is made and preserved, a frightful fluid . . ." Jean-Henri Fabre, *Der Skorpion von Sérignan* (Berlin/Munich, 1997), p. 11.

11 Cf. Buñuel (see note 5), p. 208.

12 Eugen Drewermann, "Über Luis Buñuel," in Buñuel 1994 (see note 4), p. 35.

13 The priest, who literally gouges his eyes out with glasses armed on the inside with fork teeth, wants in the end to neither sin nor pray. Instead he has just one existential need: "I want to live." This is the final statement in the final episode. John Bock, *Little Hair with Momsen*, film script.

14 Prior to John Bock, the expressive music of Polish composer Krzysztof Penderecki, born in 1933, already functioned as an image enhancer in films like *The Exorcist* (1973), *The Shining* (1980), *Inland Empire* (2006) or *Shutter Island* (2010).

15 This litany recited by a man and a woman, who are apparently being constantly led away on dark streets, is like a distant echo of an experience Buñuel had as a student in Toledo: "We wandered around reading poems out loud that echoed from the walls of the old Spanish capital." Buñuel 1985 (see note 5), p. 64. The homage made to Surrealism and its aesthetic and political revolt in this freely adapted intercession introduces exceptional figures like the Marquis de Sade and Rosa Luxemburg, Kurt Cobain, David Cronenberg and Edward Snowden—Luis Buñuel is also among them, needless to say. Cf. M+M, *Euphoria, The Scorpion's Sting*, third episode, film script.



John Bock, *The Scorpion's Sting*, sixth episode:
Little Hair with Momsen, 2013, storyboard drawing



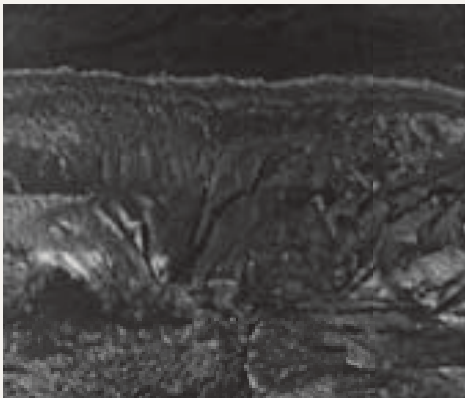
Julian Rosefeldt, *The Scorpion's Sting*, fifth episode: *Deep Gold*, 2013, film still

THE FLUSHING TOILET CLIMAX



Luis Buñuel, *L'Âge d'or*, 1930, film still

"It is superfluous to add that what we see as one of the high points of purity in this film is crystallized in the vision of the heroine on the toilet. Through the power of the spirit, a generally rather bizarre situation is transformed into a poetic expression of the purest nobility and the greatest solitude."¹⁸ The keen-eared and clear-sighted program for the premiere of *L'Âge d'or* in 1930 already sensed that the sound of flushing water, following the fade-in of the heroine, the toilet chain clearly visible in the background, and blended with bubbling lava, was a particular high point in the film¹⁹—both visually and acoustically compelling. According to Jean-Henri Fabre, the scorpion's five-membered tail with the sting at the end, the starting motif and the structural principle of the six-part film, is "in reality the animal's belly."²⁰ This scene, therefore, exemplifies the world's digestion, the earth's viscous to soft emission and its power to change.



Luis Buñuel, *L'Âge d'or*, 1930, film still

MADNESS AND TRUTH

"They call Buñuel everything. . . . Traitor, anarchist, pervert, defamer and iconoclast. But lunatic they do not call him. It is true it is lunacy he portrays, but it is not his lunacy. The stinking chaos which for a brief hour or so amalgamates under his wand, this is the lunacy of civilization, the record of man's achievement after ten thousand years of refinement."²¹ This was Henry Miller's summary of Buñuel's *L'Âge d'or*.



Luis Buñuel, *L'Âge d'or*, 1930, film still

Does this assessment also apply to the artistic new version, the *cadavre exquis* entitled *The Scorpion's Sting*, made eighty-four years later? Is what we see here, as it were, phantasmal natural science in the era of globalization (Tobias Zielony), the power and the helplessness of militant women²² (Chicks on Speed), ever-growing regimentation and surveillance (M+M), unfettered violence (Keren Cytter), liberated sexuality²³ (Julian Rosefeldt) and the polymorphous perversity (John Bock) of our society today?

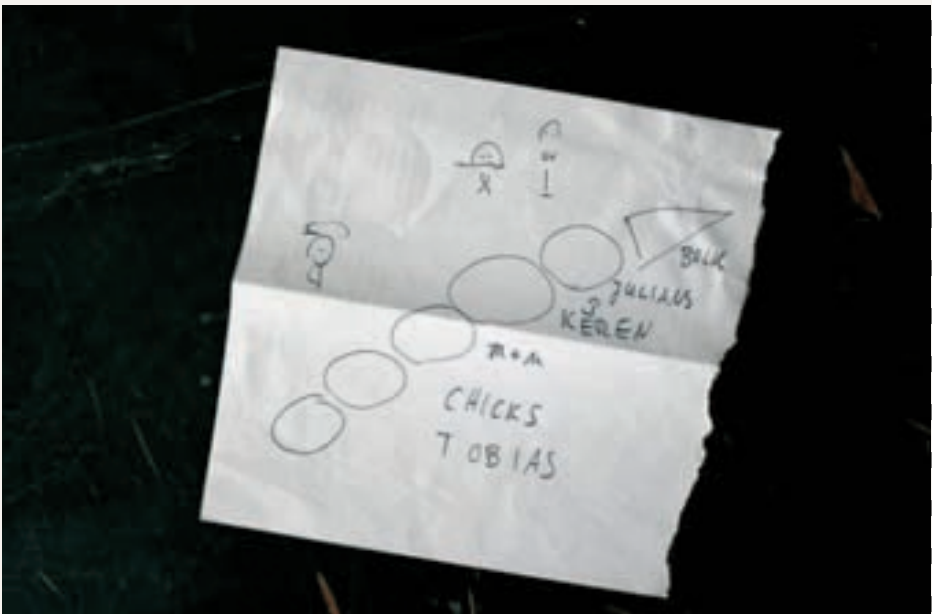
"Somewhere between chance and mystery, imagination sneaks in, the total freedom of man."²⁴

Luis Buñuel

- 16 Julian Rosefeldt's episode contains most of the film-historical citations and ironic references to Buñuel's *L'Âge d'or*: lying on the street, along with the protagonist who is soon to be overwhelmed by all the bare-bodied emancipation, are a fir tree and a plough; people are shot at random; the blind man appears (naked); the conductor holds his head in pain; Dalí reads *Gala* in the back room and in the display window of a toy shop, artificial snow falls on a model of Chateau de Saligny, the scene in Buñuel's scandalous film of that drastic-misogynous orgy involving Jesus Christ.
- 17 His feminism leaves Alice Schwarzer behind in favor of Meret Oppenheim, Anais Nin and Lara Croft; he is interested in strong and sexually liberated women. Is Julian Rosefeldt's orgy of nakedness inspired by the "Atelier Saint-Julien" which exposed both men and women, also mentioned by Buñuel in his memoirs? Cf. Buñuel 1985 (see note 5), p. 74.
- 18 *L'Âge d'or*, program for the first showing at Studio 28, Paris, 1930, p. 13. German translation quoted from: Miller 1994 (see note 4), p. 211.
- 19 This interest in bodily excretions and their pictorial potential is taken up by only two actors: in the second episode of *The Scorpion's Sting* the two Golden Gang Girls vomit and repeatedly spit gold into a deep ditch. And

in the sixth episode, filmed by John Bock, the place of the lava in the toilet is taken by the feces of de Sade ("brown turd"), news from the horse box ("Pieces of horse dung were loitering in the piss") and an anally-fixed priest ("I am canonizing the poo-poo turd. I will introduce it into my ass church").

- 20 "The tail, in reality the animal's belly, is a sequence of five prismatic sections . . ." Fabre 1997 (see note 10), p. 10.
- 21 Robert Ferguson, *Henry Miller: A Life* (London, 1992), p. 6.
- 22 The girl band presents itself, along with some other women, in the Australian outback as a futuristic clan of women: the "Golden Gang," literally beaten and conquered in the end by the mine owner, an Aborigine with a necklace bearing a swinging, phallic-like piece of fur. Are Chicks on Speed making an ironic reference to the final fate of the women in Buñuel's *L'Âge d'or*?
- 23 "Lust is the eternal battle never finally won. Lust is the act of creating. Lust is a force," says Valentine de Saint-Pont, quoted twice in Julian Rosefeldt's episode. Cf. Julian Rosefeldt, Deep Gold, *The Scorpion's Sting*, fifth episode, film script.
- 24 Buñuel 1985 (see note 5), p. 166.



TOBIAS ZIELONY

born in Wuppertal in 1973;
lives and works in Berlin

The Scorpion’s Sting,
First episode: Al Akrab
HD, video, shot with
black light, color, sound, 5'

WITH
Kareema Awad-Alla
Ibtisam Imad
Ashwaq Thaher
Ruba Zuhri
Hiba Hashim

CREW
Tobias Zielony
Concept, direction and camera

Kinga Kielczynska
Editor

Janina Herhoffer
Dramaturgical consultant

Thomas Wallmann
Sound editor

MANY THANKS TO
Joerg Schuhmacher
Ahmed Qatamesh
Katharin Ahrend
Ala Francis
Jan Caspers
Goethe Institute Ramallah
A.M. Qattan Foundation
Ramallah

CHICKS ON SPEED

Melissa Logan, born in Spring Valley,
New York, in 1970; lives and works
in Hamburg, and Alex Murray-Leslie,
born in Bowral, Australia, in 1970;
lives and works in Barcelona

The Scorpion’s Sting,
Second episode:
Golden Gang
HD, video, color, sound,
16' 42'

CAST
Richard Bell
Aborigine, land owner, artist
and gold digger

PERTH LYCRA LADIES
Cat Jones
Brenna Day
Marine Alouche
Ashleigh Haw
Zoe O’Neill
Dimity Magnus
Loren Kronemyer

Claude Cahoun scene
DREAM TALKER
Anat Ben David
Jet X
Kaffe Mathews
Shirley O’Loughlan
Ana da Silva and Gina Birch
from The Raincoats

CREW
Chicks on Speed
Concept, direction, and camera

Steven Aaron Hughes
Camera

Elfe Brandenburger
Editing

Jörg Schwanstecher
Visual effects

Michelle Newton
Production manager

GOLD COSTUMES AND SHOES
Chicks on Speed: design and
courtesy of Bruno Magli;
jewelry by Gabrielle
Auerbach

MUSIC
Golden Gang song by Chicks
on Speed: produced by
Chicks on Speed and Oliver
Horton
Spotlight Great Goddess song
by Chicks on Speed featuring
Ana da Silva—golden slide
guitar: produced by Chicks
on Speed and Oliver Horton

SOUND TRACK
Chicks on Speed and Oliver
Horton, produced at
Dreamtrak Studios, London;
additional recordings at Art-
space, Sydney

Live recording with the
ATMEGATRON synthesizer
of Soulsby Synthesizers

MANY THANKS TO
SymbioticA, University of
Western Australia, for their
support on site, and to CIBER
for the information they
provided on bee colonies

REFERENCES
Opening text as a sand
statue: Guy Mannes-Abbott,
GulfLabor and Guggenheim
Abu Dhabi, Boycott
ArtSpace, Sydney, March 5,
2014; Claude Cahun: *I extend
my Arms*, photograph,
1931–32

M+M

Marc Weis, born in Daun in 1965, Martin De Mattia; born in Duisburg in 1963; live and work in Munich

The Scorpion’s Sting,
Third episode: Euphoria
HD, video, shot with
infrared light, color, sound,
7'46"

CAST
Birgit Minichmayr
Woman

Christoph Luser
Man

Jörg Koopmann
First person leading off

René Landspersky
Second person leading off

SUPPORTING ACTORS
(in order of appearance):

Paula Pongratz
Moritz Matzner
Paul Kotter
Valentin Pongratz
Caspar Lesjak
Christian Landspersky

CREW
M+M
Concept and direction

Ralph Netzer
Director of photography

Robert F. Kellner
Sound

Uwe Wrobel
Editing

Albert Pöschl
Music

Laura Beikert
Production manager

Elisa-Christin Knüpfer
AC

Christopher Rüttger
Gaffer

Bastian Huber
Best boy (lighting)

Christian Weber
Grip

Alexander Hahn
Best boy (grip)

Susan Westphal
Make-up artist

Claudia Irro
Costume designer

Orlando Wanninger
Sound assistant

Christian Landspersky
DIT/Data wrangler

Jörg von Baczko

Colorist

Paula Pongratz
Set runner

Paul Kotter
Set runner

Moritz Matzner
Set runner

Generous support
provided by
ARRI Rental
Bavaria Film GmbH
Film Licht Krückl
Playtime

MANY THANKS TO
Reydan Weiss
Viktoria Sophie Conzelmann
What Remains Gallery
Markus Allmann
Roswitha Berger
Ines Wiskemann

KEREN CYTTER

born in Tel Aviv in 1977; lives and works in New York and Berlin

The Scorpion’s Sting,
Fourth episode:
Rose Garden
HD, video, color, sound, 8'45"

CAST
Winch Eagleton
Child

Sara Gaston
Mother

Chris Hutchison
Father

Otis Ike
Truck driver

Nick Meriwether
MFA

Emily Peacock
Young woman

John Gremillian
Lover boy

Wayne Gilbert
Customer B

Jack Burns
Customer C

Jim Hatchett
Flutist (Customer A)

CREW
Keren Cytter
Concept and direction

Ivete Lucas
Production

Jack Burns
Special effects

Pat Henderson
Armorer

MANY THANKS TO
Laura Lark
Toby Kamp

JULIAN ROSEFELDT

born in Munich, 1965; lives and works in Berlin

The Scorpion’s Sting, Fifth episode: Deep Gold
HD, video, b/w, sound, 18' 45"

CAST

Franz Hartwig
Gaston Modot

Street scene
(in order of appearance)

Claudia de Serpa Soares
Circus drummer

Dagmar Leibham
Peeing woman

Andrea Ventura
Man with cigar

Thomas Ahlers
Drunkard

Melissa Holroyd
Prostitute

Boris Eldagsen
John

Jakub Zaremba
Hustler

Mark Gisbourne
John

Eva-Maria May
Prostitute

Wassili Zygouris
Billposter

Grayson Millwood
Man with stroller

Davide Camplani
Man with stroller

Tommy Noonan
Man with stroller

Claudia de Serpa Soares
Baby in stroller

Lisa Densem
Naked shopper

Jule Böwe
Naked shopper

Erol Alexandrov
Naked man with half pig

Suse Wächter
Prostitute

Leon Magalhaes Schoyerer
Paperboy

Camila Rhodi
Topless partisan

Prudence Densem
Partisan

Dora Zygouri
Little match girl

Siegesmund Klee
Homeless man

Karl Robert Niehaus
Homeless man

Katja Scholz
Naked hippie girl

Janaina Pessoa
Naked hippie girl

Luanda Bem
Naked hippie girl

Santiago Ydñez
Priest

Sveva Castelli
Hippie girl

Tatjana Patzschke
Hippie girl

Mayra Magalhaes Sexauer
Hippie girl

Antonio Mesones
Partisan

Sanja Lukjancenکو
Naked shopper

Manolo Bautista
Man with cargo bike

Luis Rosefeldt
Street urchin

Alexander Spree
Naked blind man

Georgie Rowse
Can-Can partisan

Dorothea Günther
Can-Can partisan

Laura Matheson
Can-Can partisan

Lisa Jost
Can-Can partisan

Gesina von Schröder
Naked lady

Antonio de Palma
Naked gentleman

Mark Standley
Naked shopper

Paula Alamillo
Naked shopper

Christian Hölzke
Naked chauffeur

Steffi Niederzoll
Partisan with blimp

Dennis Grunow
Suicide bomber

Paula Faraco
Kissing woman

Florencia Rojas
Prostitute

Hans-Jörn Brandenburg
John with gunnysack

Bea Colonia Castano
Naked woman with dog

Bar scene

PERFORMERS
Janaina Pessoa
Singing compère

Suse Wächter
Puppet master

Ronni Maciel
as Josephine Baker

Peaches
as Peaches

Georgie Rowse
Can-Can dancer

Dorothea Günther
Can-Can dancer

Laura Matheson
Can-Can dancer

Coraline Arnaud
Can-Can dancer

La Rubinia
Burlesque dancer

Fräulein Pepper
Burlesque dancer

Nicola Mascia
Queer performer

Matan Zamir
Queer performer

Nile Koetting
Doggy

Sylvia Schmid
as Anita Berber

Joanna Hay
as Anita Berber

MUSICIANS
Hans-Jörn Brandenburg
Piano

Paul Brody
Trumpet

Valentin Butt
Accordion

Joe Bauer
Percussion

Elisabeth King
Piano

Tobias Fuchs
Percussion

Chico Mello
Guitar

GUESTS AND STAFF
Jule Böwe
Topless woman

Jakub Zaremba
Transvestite

Mark Standley
Barkeeper

Elisabeth Bigai
Waitress

Gesina von Schröder
Old naked dancing woman

Paula Alamillo
Young naked dancing woman

Klaus Biniok
Naked guest

Matthias Harder
Naked guest

Christian Hölzke
Naked guest

Antonio de Palma
Naked guest

Etienne Pixa
Naked guest

Alexandra Schicketanz
Partisan

Laura Tratnik
Partisan

Viktor Jakovleski
Partisan

Bea Colonia Castano
Partisan

Florencia Rojas
Prostitute

Nadja Zielke
Prostitute

Sabine Unglaube
Prostitute

Tobias Sirtl
Hustler

Cordelia Grebler
Lightly clad lady

Violetta von Pressburg
Dealer with vendor’s tray

Carsten Fiebeler
Man with needles

Antonio Mesones
Man doing cocaine

Anastasia Bain
Dancing woman

Maria Elisa Gerace
Dancing woman

Christina Landbrecht
Dancing woman

Helen Suhr
Dancing woman

Amélie Miloy
Dancing pregnant woman

Vinzeso Fesi
Dancing man

Rui Calçada Bastos
Dancing man

Marcus Steinberg
Dancing man

Santiago Ydñez
Dancing man

Juan Pedro Freyre
Dancing man

Annika Kuhlmann
Androgynous smoking woman

Alice Sheppan
Elegant lady

Julie Burchardi
Elegant lady

Miriam Schoofs
Elegant lady

Barbara Haubrok
Elegant lady

Ana Dugalic
Elegant lady

Ellen Hofmann
Elegant lady & Partisan

Mignon Gräsle
Lady with cigarillo

Ginger Synne
Lady with water wave hairdo

Kirsten Gerlach
Androgynous woman

Sanja Lukjancenko
Androgynous woman

Axel Haubrok
Elegant gentleman

Ivo Wessel
Elegant gentleman

Manolo Bautista
Elegant gentleman

Florian Günzel
Elegant gentleman

Mario Hoff
Elegant gentleman

Tim Jürgens
Elegant gentleman

Anita Walter
Student

Dagmar Leibham
Student

Patrick Walter
Student

Wille Zante
Student

Jeewi Lee
Woman doing cocaine

Sandra Meyerratken
Woman doing cocaine

Katrin Pfirrmann
Woman doing cocaine

Zemmoa
Transsexual

Victor Salgado
Transvestite

Olaf Stüber
Craftsman

Adrian Shephard
Worker

Del Keens
Worker

Wolfgang Schreiber
One-armed worker

Natalija Martinovic
Worker

Roswitha Rumpf-Dost
Lady with feather boa

Bernd Rumpf
Gentleman with metal-rimmed glasses

Michael Hansch
Elegant white-haired gentleman

Gerhard Mey
Conductor with headache

Andrea Ventura
as Salvador Dalí

Karl Robert Niehaus
Shoe polisher

Jana von dem Berge
Lavatory attendant

Andres Herwig
Man with top hat

Julia Schleichen-Ost
Stitching woman

CREW

Julian Rosefeldt
Book, direction & production

Wassili Zygoris
Line producer

Christoph Krauss
Director of photography

Alexander Wolf
Production designer

Birgitt Kilian
Costume designer

Julia Böhm
Hair & make-up designer

Suse Wächter
Puppets

Hans-Jörn Brandenburg
Musical direction

Bobby Good
Editor

Lisa Hauss
First AD

Maars van Haaften
Unit manager

Sven Jorden
Set manager

David Hilgers
Sound recordist

Fabian Schmidt
Sound design

Tschangis Chahrokh-Zadeh
Re-recording coordinator

Mathias Maydl
Re-recordist

Felix Kratzer
Foley artist

Alexander Würtz
Foley recordist

Lajos Wienkamp
Voice-over recordist

Julia Dobler
Postproduction supervisor

Sebastian Mietzner
VFX & online

Nico Hauter
Colorist

Carolina Ronzino
Assistant set manager

Juliane Walker
Second AD

Jan Filkorn
Second AD

Maria Friedemann
Extras coordinator

Sina Welle
Set decorator

Tino Knoche
Set decorator

Jana Barthel
Assistant set decorator

Kerstin Feldmann
First Assistant costume designer

Uta Müller
Second Assistant costume designer

Katharina Drescher
Wardrobe

Kerstin Griesshaber
Costume trainee

Julia Schleichen-Ost
Costume trainee

Katja Hamburger
Hair & make-up artist

Julia Serowski
Hair & make-up artist

Katja Schulze
Hair & make-up artist

Anna Evenkamp
Hair & make-up artist

Miriam Hübner
Hair & make-up artist

Sandra Strauhs
Hair & make-up artist

Josephine Otte
Hair & make-up artist

Gregor Grieshaber
First AC

Julian Rabus
Second AC

Sergio Gazzera
Steadicam operator

Matthias Biber
Steadicam operator

Lorenz Ackermann
Assistant steadicam operator

Dirk Domcke
Gaffer

Dirk Hilbert
Gaffer

Heiko Grund
Best boy

Sampo Lüttge
Electrician

Alexander Zielke
Key grip

Michl Scheibe
Grip

Oliver Göbel
Boom operator

Claudius Rauch
Special effects supervisor

Barbara Schmidt
Still photographer

Martin König
Still photographer

Maximilian Werkhausen
Making of

Eve Sussman
Making of

Tobias Pothmann
Driver

Daniel Bruss
Driver

Marcel Siegner
Driver

Car Motion Service GmbH
Cars

A Huber & Co. GmbH
Insurance

Block & Graphics GmbH
Location Service

N.L.C. Dienstleistungs
GmbH
Security

Stars Dinner Express GmbH
Catering

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Platz Berlin

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Wellenstein zeitgenössische
Kostüme

Blush Dessous

Die kleine Nachtrevue

Blue Sky Promotion

Delphi Stummfilmkino

Per Aspera Productions

Bohème Sauvage

Agentur Filmgesichter

Misfit Models

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Nefzers Babelsberg GmbH

Bernhard Mühlbauer

Oldtimervermietung

Lichtblick Bühnentechnik

Hotel Berlin, Berlin

Hotel Sylter Hof, Berlin

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MUSIC

Hans-Jörn Brandenburg
Deep Gold Tango, Ragtime
Nouveau, Can Can Gold,
Golden Opium
Peaches
Shake Yer Dix
Richard Wagner
Isoldes Liebestod, from Tristan
and Isolde, Daniel Barenboim
& The West Eastern Divan
Orchestra, Isolde:
Waltraud Meier.

Shot at Filmstudio
Babelsberg and in Berlin,
November/December 2013

JOHN BOCK

born in Gribbohm in 1965; lives and
works in Berlin

The Scorpion’s Sting,
Sixth episode:
Little Hair with Momsen
HD, video, color, sound,
44’22”

CAST

Adrian Lohmüller
Marquis de Sade

Claire Vivianne Sobottke
Maid

Lisa Müller-Trede
La La Girl

Benjamin Quabeck
Priest

John Bock
Fetus God

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The Scorpion's Sting
A cadavre exquis based on Luis Buñuel's *L'Âge d'or*
John Bock, Chicks on Speed, Keren Cytter, M+M, Julian Rosefeldt, Tobias Zielony

A joint project by the Museum Villa Stuck, Munich, and the Institut Mathildenhöhe Darmstadt

Concept: M+M

Exhibition Museum Villa Stuck, Munich, March 28 – June 9, 2014

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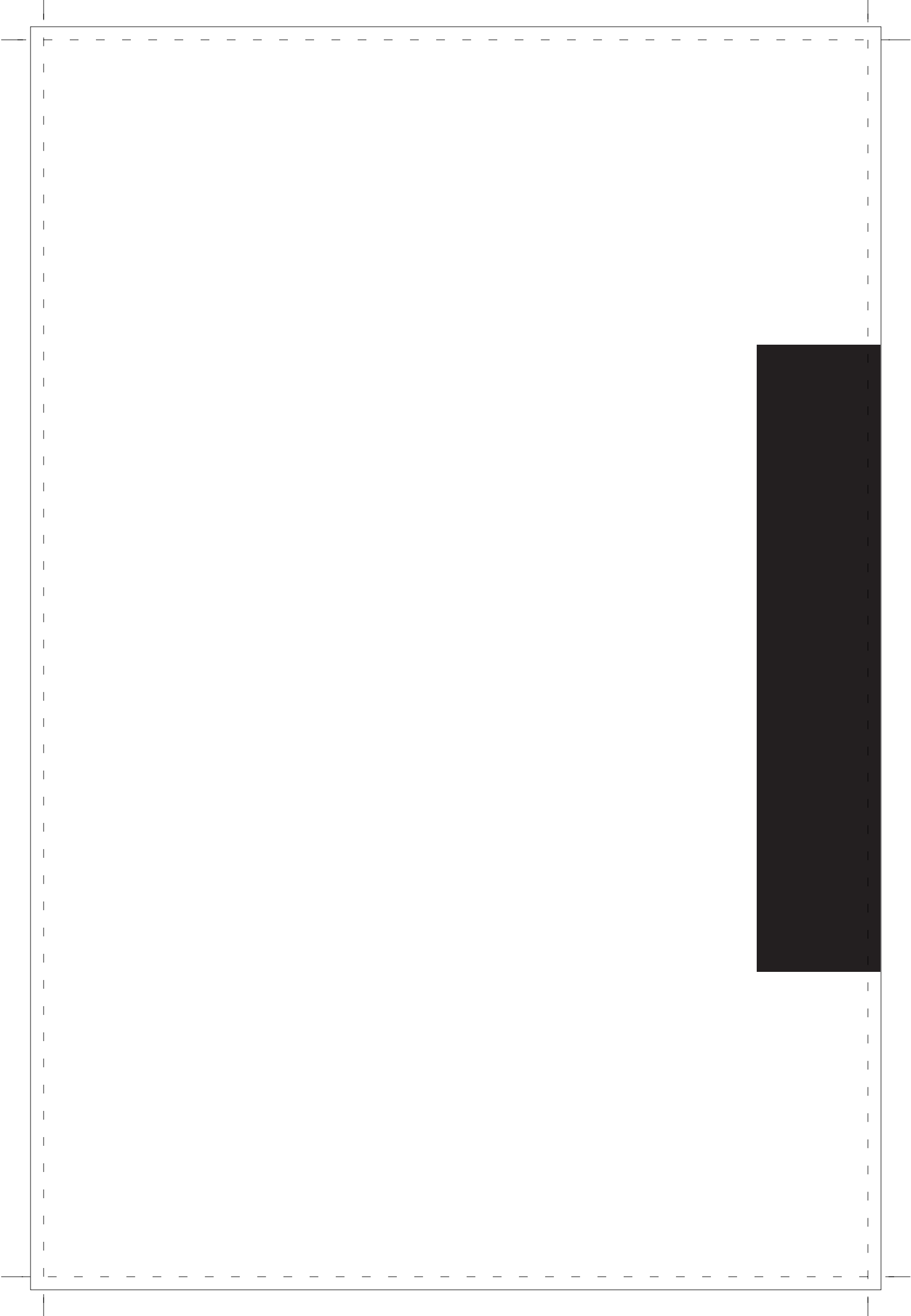
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TOBIAS ZIELONY

The space is lit by black light.

Five young women are standing around a table and are handling photographic devices.

They are animating a dead scorpion that, like their clothes, fluoresces under the black light.

a few hours later

CHICKS ON SPEED

SCENE 1: SAND STATUES

ALEX I can feel it coming. We can give birth to this huge cultural institution in the sand. Problem, throw money at it. The Guggenheim, yeah we'll get them too! You know, I think we have enough space. Zaha Hadid, yeah, we'll get her, and you know, she doesn't mind who builds her buildings. Because once you design, well you're just the designer. And the artists, going back to the artists, we'll pay them heaps of money. Just think of the future; you know, one day all this gold and iron ore will be gone. Show the show, let's all go to the show. This place will be a beacon of cultural values, right here in Kalgoorlie.

MELISSA Something is about to happen. Things appear further away, actually. Next thing, you know. It has to be what is about to happen. A tsunami is coming. Drones, like flies. Buzzing around, buzzing, buzzing, buzzing around. At least you have GLASS eye specs, you're all seeing. Not yet built in. My sister is always looking, recording as I'm thinking of death.

SCENE 2: SUPER PIT

Melissa/Alex/Richard Bell

RICHARD There should be more red, color theory; it is all about getting more red, a little bit of gold.

ALEX Filthy, dirty, fascist.

MELISSA But building up something, something that will stand for itself there. It can be red, or blue or any color really, but something that stands for itself, that stands for something. Just here, gone ..., the preoccupation to get what one does not have, cause that's always what one wants, and then one has to watch out because dreams come true so you have to watch out what you actually really want. You spend all your time getting over the fence and you think the fence is much bigger than it actually is.

ALEX It's the axis!

RICHARD Let's build a community.

MELISSA Right here?

ALEX Yeah!

RICHARD Wherever.

MELISSA We're in the middle of nowhere.

SCENE 3: GUM LEAVES POINT TO GOLD

Alex licking gum leaves

SCENE 4: THEREMIN TAPESTRY MUSICAL RITUAL

THEREMIN TAPESTRY EYE SPEAKS Oh so nice, yes come in.

Eye can see, EYE. Eye swallows the circus girl

SCENE 5: GUM TREE DESERT DREAM

ALEX I'm like the eye, listening to the world. My words have thoughts of critical theory, philosophy, sexy aye aye. Think of this two-dimensional space; it's got nothing to do with you or me. We just live here in this involuntary shared space, then you wake up. Do you live here? But you're not meant to

look at any of it. You want to help, but you don't know how to help, you're paralyzed! This is my surrealist exploration. Isn't it free and imaginative? Vive the unexpected, vive the imaginative, take a chance, take a chance, viva, viva, desire. Are my experiences so different to yours? Monologues and dialogues, it's just flowing and flowing and flowing. Aye aye, *das kann man nicht kaufen*. Aye aye, the female perspective will not be cut. No, the female perspective will not be cut. NO MORE! This inner substance, green, gross, this stuff. Is this film surreal? Mix of concoctions, it's got to come out, like collective vomiting Born again Surrealism ... in this traumatized space, just get it out! Oh, the exchange was, ohah, just really unpleasant *SURMONTAGE*, *SURMONTAGE* ... someone else's it's not mine though, I didn't do it. SURREALISM! I embody the contradiction! And then someone else is swallowing it, and swallowing it, and it keeps going and going, I embody, contradictions and creativity, I'm so unafraid, I'm not afraid! When's this going to stop? Can you stop it? Can you help us? The news, it's all in the news and the papers.

SCENE 6: CLAUDE CAHUN

Body parts growing on the pinnacles, gossiping rocks
Anat & Jet, Ana and Shirley, Kaffe Mathews

I don't like people telling me about their dream.
Get your hand out of my mouth. This visual stuff ...

SCENE 7: GOLDEN GANG—STOIC KANGAROOS

Dirty Gold Hole (song)

ALEX Like living artifacts stuck in the sand, the mother the father, the brother the sister, victim and accomplice. Red Dirt, Chocolate Brown, lightening strike. Crush it up, crush it up. It's a million to one chance, it's a million to one chance. I sucked the gold right out of the earth, like Cleopatra, a woman without secrets. It's an open wound. They're all high vis and I can't stop dancing, I can't stop dancing. A dirty gold hole. Avalanche uncover me, avalanche uncover me, avalanche uncover me.

SCENE 8: CHOMSKY & PILGER KANGAROO

MELISSA Give me everything, everything, everything. The advantages, the disadvantages, and we all have these carrots dangling in front of us. All of us, carrots.

CHOMSKY KANGAROO All over the place, from the popular culture to the propaganda system, there is constant pressure to make people feel that they are helpless, that the only role they can have is to ratify decisions and to consume.

MELISSA The things that we want, they are right on the other side of the fence.

CHOMSKY KANGAROO Instead of citizens, it produces consumers, instead of communities, it produces shopping malls. The net result is an atomized society of disengaged individuals who feel demoralized and socially powerless.

MELISSA It is just, where is the line of tolerance and intolerance. Where does rejection start, and then aggression, killing each other, eating each other, or loving each other, having a lot of sex with each other, that side or that side.

CHOMSKY KANGAROO The more you can increase fear of drugs, crime, welfare mothers, immigrants, wild animals and aliens, the more you can control all of the people.

ALEX Yeah they're like a mirror, they're a mirror to us. The way that they are born and they have a function. And they work and work and work and work. And then their job's done. And then they move on to the next. And it's like with the bees. We are like the bees. But it's like what Einstein said, no, no, no, forget about that, cause it's all going to be okay. We are going to fix the problem. We are going to look into their genes. We are going to remake them, rebuild them, so they are stronger. And they can handle the pesticides. And they can have Varroa mites all over, because it won't matter, because they will be resilient, because we will manipulate the genes, we will recreate the bee, the super-bee, the super-organism, we'll have huge Apinae everywhere. And then we will live together. I mean, at the moment they make our food. We could work together.

SCENE 9, GOLDEN GANG IN THE DISTANCE

CAT Where'd you all go?

SCENE 10, PROSPECTING

Synthesized metal detecting choreography

SCENE 11, GOLD CRACKS

SCENE 12, STRANGE FRUIT

Hanging from a tree, Melissa

SCENE 13, POWER PUKE

ALEX Horse racing vocal stint

SCENE 14, GRAND FINALE

Richard, indigenous gold mine owner, gets rid of gold chicks.

ALEX Oh we've come from Europe...

RICHARD What are you white chicks doing here?!

RICHARD What are you gold chicks doing in my gold mine?
Hay, get away, you can't touch this. Get away ...

Scuffle, gold is ripped off, Richard kicks Melissa down the ridge; Alex jumps on Richard's back,
Richard throws gold down the mine.

RICHARD Stay away you white witches and take your gold with ya.

Stands in the sunset

Chicks walk backwards on salt lake.
END

FINAL SONG: SPOTLIGHT VOODOO

ALEX

- Spotlight sisters
- Spotlight great goddesses
- Spotlight knowledge
- Spotlight shaman
- Spotlight effeminate
- Spotlight rioting
- Spotlight ritualizing
- Spotlight voodoo
- Spotlight community
- Spotlight inquisitive
- Spotlight goddess
- Spotlight radical activist
- Spotlight oblique
- Spotlight possession
- Spotlight effeminate
- Spotlight great goddess

- Spotlight proto feminist
- Spotlight female revolt
- Spotlight don't hunt us
- Spotlight we're free
- Spotlight persecution
- Spotlight genocide
- Spotlight violence

Wash away, wash away

Ana Da Silva on slide guitar

in the year of grace

M+M

Woman/man

OK.

You begin to feel a strange euphoria.

Man

*You know what I like best
about you?*

Woman

*You know what I like best
about you?*

Yes? Tell me?

Man

Yes? Tell me?

*Your softness,
your resignation.*

Woman

*Your softness,
your resignation.*

Man/woman

Did I perhaps fall by accident?

I am screwed.

Woman/man

*Beautiful Gala, love for us
Brilliant LaMotta, fight for us
Smart de Sade, torture for us
Beautiful Lohan, love for us
Smart Snowden, fight for us
Brilliant Woods, dream for us
Smart Breton, sleep for us
Smart Bartleby, sleep for us
Brilliant Lecter, torture for us
Smart Picabia, dream for us
Beautiful Croft, fight for us
Smart Fabre, think for us
Smart Luxemburg, die for us
Brilliant Gecko, think for us
Brilliant Carlson, think for us
Smart Oshima, torture for us
Beautiful Cobain, die for us
Smart Buñuel, dream for us
Smart Butler, think for us
Smart Cronenberg, dream for us*

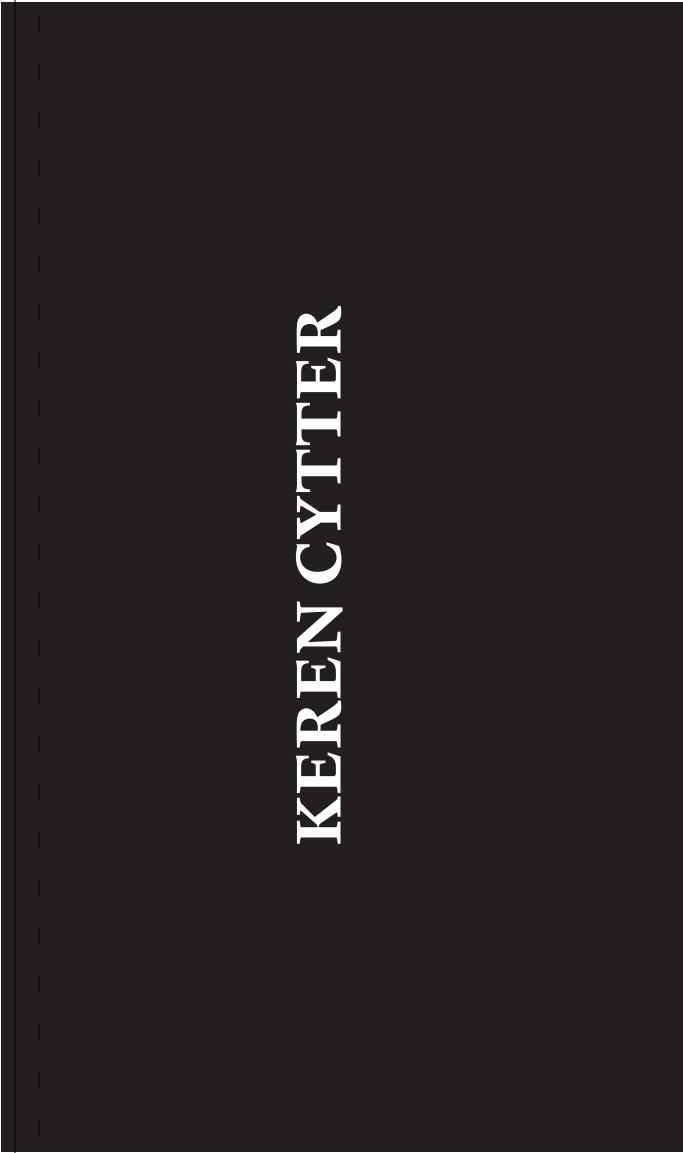
Man/woman

Asshole!

Sleazebag!

I'll punch you in the face.

at the glorious estates



KEREN CYTTER

Film opens with a black screen and a haunting melody.

FATHER (ALSO TRUCK DRIVER) offscreen

From day one, the day he was born. I told him: “I won’t stay here for long. The landscape, the skies, the pond and our house with all of it powers belong to you, my son.”

The first shot is of the Rose Garden pub from the outside. A man and woman walk into the picture and enter the building: a Master of Fine Arts (MFA) and his girlfriend. The camera focuses on their backs, then their shoes. There is a close-up from the front. The camera moves back to the shoes. Close-up. Then the view is of their faces from below. Their steps are in tune to the music.

MFA The camera is on his face ...I have just finished my MFA in...

GIRL Yeah, you told me...

More steps

MFA Hmmm...

GIRL Hmmm... yeah. They are calm.

The camera is behind their feet. The entrance is dark from the point of view (POV) of the feet.

Banjo music starts playing.

The mother is sharing a joke with three male customers. She is laughing heartily. One of the customers puts his drink on the counter. The camera pans from the drink to the rifles and pistols that are lying on the bar. There is the sound of a TV program about Villa Stuck in the background.

MOTHER offscreen The boys are back.

FATHER We are here.

TD Hello.

Close-up of the mother's face. Mother and father kiss. The camera moves round to the mother's face.

Her eyes wander in the direction of her husband's truck-driver friend (TD). While looking at him, she closes her eyes and kisses her husband more passionately. The camera is on the TD. He is looking at her.

MOTHER offscreen What would you like to drink?

TD Tonic.

MOTHER to the child, offscreen

Stock, stop looking at that. You are not going out tonight. Scott, I mean Scott.

In the background, Lover boy is looking at MFA's girlfriend. When MFA walks to the bar to order a drink, the boy approaches the girl.

LOVER BOY in the background

I saw you entering the place and I had to let you know that I have the feeling I've known you for a very long time—not like a sister or a friend but like death. Our climax is yet to come.

MFA turning towards the girl

Honey, what would you like to drink?

GIRL Whatever you are having.

MFA at the bar I need two drinks.

MOTHER offscreen One second.

CUSTOMER C And I need money.

CUSTOMER B I need some space. He laughs.

The audience hears two conversations as well as the program on the TV about Villa Stuck

“The Villa Stuck is one of Munich’s three municipal museums. Despite often being compared with the Lenbachhaus, the Villa Stuck distinguishes itself in at least one important way: the former was commissioned by Franz von Lenbach from a well-known architect, Gabriel von Seidl; the Villa Stuck, on the other hand, was designed by Franz von Stuck—including its interior and furniture—as a total work of art, called Gesamtkunstwerk in German. In other words, the building and its contents were the artwork. This is a tradition Franz von Stuck had adopted from other artists, such as William Morris and Henry van de Velde, who were not just painters but designers, architects and sculptors as well. It was not until after Stuck died that the building was transformed into a museum that is home to his works as well as those of other artists. Franz von Stuck was born in 1863 on the northern outskirts of Munich to a Catholic family of farmers and millers. By the time he was six years old he had already started sketching caricatures of local villagers.”

The MFA repeats his request for a drink. There are several conversations going on at the same time:

MFA I need two similar drinks.

MOTHER

I said a second—I didn’t see my man for more than a week. . . . Scott, can you please clean your gun.

As she speaks, she walks out of the frame. The camera is on the reflection of the MFA in the mirror. He turns his head in the direction of the girl and the boy.

The two truck drivers are talking.

FATHER

Remember Colorado?

LOVER BOY

I know you are my other half, the twin, the lover I never had. I’m talking too much.

The camera is on the boy and the girl from the point of view of the phone booth. It zooms in on the father and the TD who are sitting next to the bar.

Help me honey, I’m eating too much. Please save me from myself. I think you are the one that can

FRIEND

Best days of my life. Let's go back to Colorado.

FATHER

I wish I could. Without Scott, I would've been living there already.
I would do anything for him.

The friend is looking at the mother who is working in the bar. She is talking to Scott and asking him to clean the rifle.

He is the reason for all my compromises.

The camera is on the child who has picked up a rifle. The child looks at it, then raises his head and looks at the TV.

The camera is on the TV.

Customer B is standing with a beer in his hand. He is talking to the flute player (FP). He is watching the TV.

CC What?

FP ...

CC It's interesting, I didn't know...

FP ...

MFA to customer B and customer C

What is this thing? Where is it? Why do we need to watch these fucking perverts?

FATHER turns round. The camera is on the father and the MFA. The father slaps the MFA.

Shut the F up. My son is here.

help me make the most terrifying demon in my mind vanish. Look, you took away the silence from me. I'm talking now.

GIRL

I'm sorry, I...

LOVER BOY

Please let me finish if I can. I had a nightmare that I was watching my mother being eaten by wolves and I couldn't talk, I couldn't help her I couldn't move. I woke up screaming: "Eat me don't eat her, kill me."

His voice becomes audible:

Yes, it looked like that but ... I felt so helpless. I saw her collapsing in a puddle of her own blood and I held her hand. The wolves were looking at us, and I woke shouting "What are you looking at?" Change this fucking channel.

Shot is from the POV of the TV.

Where is the remote? Can't you see I'm sick?
I watched my mother's flesh and blood turning from soft iron to a liquid in a puddle—my own flesh and blood and I stood there in the shape of a cross (he imitates his position), and I shouted at the wolves, "Kill me Don't kill her, kill me." When I woke up screaming I understood what they'd promised..., and I had the feeling it would happen to me—the day that I'll lose all my words. (He looks at the TV.) I completely forgot, it's that wolf that reminded me... that warned me... Where is the remote? I'm trying to talk here...

FATHER continues

But still maybe we can go to Colorado. You know at the end of the day. You are my best friend, Ted. We've been through so much together, I'm surprised we are alive.

They laugh.

What can I say, I've learnt something from this danger.

The camera is on the child who is looking at the TV, holding the rifle. A hand snatches the rifle from his hands. It's the mother; she takes the rifle and aims it at the TV. Shot from the TV POV. She fires.

MOTHER F Europe.

FATHER offscreen

Life in the wild can be harmful as hell and you are the one that dictates its own silence. It's your neighborhood and friends that give you some comfort my son.
And strangers who bring the tension and horror are the reasons, my son, for holding a gun.

CC

I've never been to Europe. My wife died of cancer when I was twenty-five. I raised our son until he died too.

FP ...

CC What?

FP ...

CC

He was eaten by wild animals in the backyard of our house. It was tough to watch....

When the mother fires the gun, the camera focuses on the TV and the smoke coming out of the TV. A flute can be heard. Then the camera pans round to the POV of the TV. It zooms in on the row of people with their guns and focuses on a man that is playing the flute. He is sitting in the far corner of the bar. All the men are looking at the TV. The MFA is looking at the boy and the girl, and the TD is staring at the mother.
The mother has put the rifle down on the bar.
The camera zooms in on the flute player. The child enters the frame from the right side. The camera follows him. He walks slowly. His steps are part of the music. The camera is on his feet. The camera is behind him. A hand grabs his back. It's his father. The father catches him by his collar. Banjo music.
The MFA turns his head back to the bar.

MFA Hey service! Serve me the beer.

Two men are laughing at the corner of the bar. The camera focuses on the mother who is pouring a drink into a glass. The camera moves to the TD friend who is following the actions of the woman. She is in the foreground. The TD friend is looking at her. She is looking at him.

The father can be heard in the background.

FATHER offscreen

Come here little chick let me show you what you need.

SON offscreen

I want to have my mirror ball.

FATHER offscreen

Your mother said you can't go out tonight. So listen to your mother and enjoy my presence son. It's a spoonful of sugar that helps the medicine go down..., if you know what I mean. Let me show you how to swallow this pill. (He is cocking the gun.)

Camera is on the father Front sight. Barrel

Camera is on the rifle Fore-end

Camera is on the rifle (sound of a bullet inside) Ejection port.

The camera is on the TD. Magazine loading port.

The camera is focusing on the background of the TD.

Receiver

Trigger

The camera is on the child Stock.

He is walking away from the camera while the father keeps on explaining things. Scott is dragging his feet.

The TD pushes his drink and chair away and walks away to the other side of the room. The child passes in the foreground. The boy is following the child with his eyes.

In the background, the lover boy keeps on talking to the girl. The camera is frequently on him.

LOVER BOY

I'm finished, you saved my life.

GIRL

She saved your...

LOVER BOY

Hush. (He puts his finger on her lips.) Don't talk. Not now. You are too good for this silly white noise your mouth is producing.

GIRL (looking at the child) Look at him, isn't he wonderful?

LOVER BOY He reminds me of the trip I made to Europe. I was nine years old.

LOVER BOY

It was the only time I left this town.

The TD walks past them toward the corner of the bar.

I know the roads like the lines in the palm of my hand. Let me read you the future. I'm quite good at it.

GIRL

I don't think I have a future.

LOVER BOY

You are right. All your lines are cut. Your destiny exists until this moment. Your love life too. It cannot be.

LOVER BOY

Don't go. He is holding her hand.

The camera is from the point of view of the TD.

FATHER

Develop your steady position and steady your handgrip son, with your non-firing hand. Place the butt of the rifle firmly in the pocket of your firing shoulder and grip the pistol grip with your firing hand. Keep your elbows down and in, relax your neck and let your cheek fall naturally to the stock.

Relax your body son.

Check your natural point of aim.

The camera is from the POV of the father. He is raising the gun and points it at the boy and the girl.

Align the rifle sight and focus your eye. Check your sight picture and control your breathing.

Silence

Pause on the boy and the girl

Squeeze the trigger and follow through...

Close-up of the father's movement.

The camera is on the girl. The camera is on her hand.

The camera is on the child who is starting to climb on a ladder. He is looking up.

The camera is on the mirror ball.

Camera is on the MFA

MFA Martha! I've got the drinks, come!

Camera is on the TD. He is looking at the scene in the bar and putting a coin in the phone. The sound of the coin is loud and clear. Close-up of his hand.

MFA Don't touch my girl. He pulls out a gun.

For a second, the camera is on the boy and the girl who are looking at him with surprise. The camera is then on the MFA from the TD's point of view. He shoots the girl. She falls dead on the floor. Whistle.

The scene is from the point of view of the bar. For a moment the action is almost slow motion. The camera focuses on the lover boy. His clothes are splattered with blood. In the background the MFA looks confused, and the father slowly puts down his gun. The camera moves to the bar. The phone rings and the mother answers it. She is listening, and the camera pans round the bar. One sees the flute player.

TD is talking to the woman on the phone.

I can't help myself when I see you dressed like that, acting for him.

MOTHER

What? Where...? She is looking at the father and gets a hold on herself. Yes.

The camera is on the TD leaning on the phone and talking. His face is hidden.

TD offscreen

Let's meet today, please before I leave. I want to touch your breasts to eat your face, you know... I remember your clothes from the last time we met in the station. Remember how I touched your thighs with my hands? Remember my hands?

He is looking at the bar. The mother raises her head to look at him. The music continues. The scene is clear, similar to a theater stage. The father and the MFA are standing still in shock. The child is seen in the background climbing on a ladder. The father starts walking toward the child. The camera is on the boy who is standing like a cross, his knees bent.

LOVER BOY

KILL ME! (Camera pans round to the front) Why her? Kill me.

It seems the father is walking in the direction of the boy and the girl, but he is actually running to rescue his child. Music continues. The father is seen holding his child in the air; his face expresses pure glee.

The TD's monologue continues.

The camera is on the MFA who is falling on his knees and crying. Someone puts a hand on his shoulder.

He is looking at the floor.

The camera is on the customer that put his hand on the MFA's shoulder. He addresses the mother who is on the phone.

CB I think this man needs a drink!

The camera is from the perspective of CB, focused on the mother who is talking on the phone.

The father puts the child on the bar and walks behind the bar.

FATHER Relax, can't you see she is busy, what do you want?

CB A lager for me and scotch for the fellow.

The camera focuses on the lover boy holding the dead girl in his arms and patting her face.

LOVER BOY

What was your...? (to the MFA) What was her name?

Camera is on the MFA

MFA

Martha.

He is slowly trying to stand up.

LOVER BOY

Shoot me—that's what you wanted, so kill me now. What a nightmare... It's what... it's morning. After my wife. Something. I didn't know... I don't know... why?... yes?... there is always a... what? Where... Where is she from? Like the wolves. Remember... I talked... I... Remember... What was the... Now it's not! It's not okay... No. Yes it's exactly the... no it isn't. I need to call my mother. I need a phone... Kill me. No. I won't... I hope... I never die. She's not. Help me you can't.

...Just kill me. Yes, shoot me. No. Yes. What? Let's fight I'm not going to die. Let's have a duel. Where is my phone... To the girl Do you think it's

TD offscreen

I remember your body. The heat of your body. My hands were so cold, and I felt the sound of your skin when I passed my hand under your coat. I removed the straps of the dress and I felt your breast, and I kissed your lips and held your neck with my right hand, and my left hand was tracing your body under the clothes.

The camera follows the boy who is crossing the screen toward the ladder.

The camera is on the TD. A coin appears in his hand.

He keeps on talking with his back to the camera. He taps the coin on the phone booth. The boy starts to climb the ladder to look at the mirror ball.

The camera is on the mother.

I remember you said you were actually mine. Do you remember you said it? The mother is silent. Do you remember the station?

MOTHER

Yes, I remember. I do.

CC

Hey, can I get some service here.

MOTHER

A second. Where is Stock?

Needs to be said without a stop.

okay...? To himself It's a disaster. To the MFA I need a gun. I need a... All I need is love. Holy cow.

The camera is on the MFA who is fixing the pistol.
His bullets are falling on the floor. Close-up of the bullets on the floor.
Close-up of his face from the POV of the bullets.

You are such a loser...She is such a...In a puddle of blood just like the...I'm going. I'm staying...
A duel... I need a PSG-90.7.62 mm. No. a 338 rifle will do the job. Yes, yes, just for the puddle of blood. I can't talk. I would like to have the AK-4-5-5B-C-D 47. It's a deal, 7.62 x 39 mm. USSR.
Let's go and get them. Alfa male. I was... combat. Let's start a dual. I'm an Alfa defender. I need an Alfa defender 9 x 19 mm Parabellum. No... Just like the dream. Nothing is moving. I...I...I...
You...I can't...I agree it's too little. Much. I mean many. No matter what I say. Mary my love.
CB turning his head to the boy
Martha.

LOVER BOY
I'll kill you... The weather. No. I see no weather.
The camera is on the boy and MFA with his pistol. Scott is almost passing out of the frame. POV of the TD.
Lover boy addresses Scott

Help me... I'm sick in my puddle of blood. I need explosives. Kid. What can you give me? A Caesar Guerini Ellipse Evo, light on the rocks. Behind the bar. I need explosives.
MFA is aiming his pistol at the lover boy. The kid looks confused and then runs back to the bar.

FATHER

Scott! Father leaves the bar to pick up Scott.

The camera is from the point of view of the mother.
Scott is near the mirror ball/the ladder. The camera is on the lover boy and the girl, then moves to the father by the ladder and behind them to the TD (in the foreground: the boy, a hand not in focus). The father and son pass the MFA.

FATHER

Your mother said no!

The father lifts his son onto the bar. The child is in the corner of the frame.

FATHER

Remind me how can I help you?

CB

I need a scotch for this guy.

The child gets off the bar.
The camera is on the father.

FATHER

Yes, this is my son. What a guy.

He's pouring draft beer. The camera is on the liquid.
In the background there is the flute player. He is starting to play the flute.

TD

So I'll see you tonight; you'll wear the same clothes you are wearing right now. I'll unbutton your dress without touching your skin, and after no fabric will stand in our way. I'll touch your thighs so slow and steady you'll need to sit on the edge of the bed, and you'll spread your legs to me. But I won't penetrate—I will tell you to stand and turn around, and I'll press my body to your body, and you will feel me on your lower back.
(Monologue continues)

The camera is on the TD with the coin. The camera zooms out to the mother who is on the phone. She is looking at the phone.

MOTHER Where is Stock?

(Monologue continues)

The mother gets shot. Smoke comes out of her clothes. She falls and drops the phone on the counter. The voice of the TD continues. The mother lands on the floor.

The camera is on the child still holding the rifle. There is smoke coming out of the rifle. He raises his eyes from his mother's dead body to his father's face (offscreen). The camera is on the phone from the bar's point of view. The viewer can still hear the TD talking. The lover boy is kneeling by the girl.

LOVER BOY

It's A Caesar Guerini Ellipse Evo light. No...No... He is coming to the rescue. I see the end. Don't shoot. I almost forgot the wolves ate my mother in a puddle of blood. It's so funny to think. Ah. Oh Mona my second and only... Yes, let's walk away from here. We don't need this trouble. This evil, evil man.

He attempts to pick the girl up. The MFA holds a gun to his head.

MFA

I shot my wife.

TD

And you'll get wet. I won't touch you too much. My hands will stay around your hips, and butterflies will mark your body with their wings if you know what I mean, and I know you do because you are getting wet right now, at this very moment.

The camera is on the blood that is dripping from the mother's body. The father kneels down beside her.

Let's meet tonight. I can't stand looking at you kissing this bulldog with your lips. Remember you called him the bear of the bar? Remember you said he's a clown in the shape of a clown? Don't tell me you love him; it just doesn't make sense. I want to feel your body now, imagine how I hold the phone right now? Imagine I'm untying

your bra, your dress. I'm now touching your thighs your hips and tummy to your breasts, and now you turn around I moving from the top... to the bottom...

The camera is on the hand of the father who has just hung up the phone. Slow. Flute. The camera returns to the TD who turns around, fear in his eyes as he realizes that he has been discovered. Wide shot. The father is holding a rifle. The MFA still has the pistol against his head.

FATHER'S VOICE offscreen, while he stands silently holding the rifle

There are moments, my son, that your judgment needs to be as clean as your clothes. I hand you my trust and hope your mind will be simple enough to tell right from wrong. I give you my son some pain and some sorrow that will run through your body like blood. Without them you won't learn to grow, you won't understand what it means to be a man...

MFA shoots himself in the head and drops dead. The camera is on the TD; he looks very scared. The father approaches him and aims the rifle at him. The flute player gets up and puts his instrument in his pocket—and then picks up a rifle and loads it. He throws some cash on the mother's dead body. The camera is behind the father—while he aims his rifle at the TD. He is cocking his gun—seen in the foreground. The child is seeing crossing the screen carrying the mirror ball.

TD

No, sorry no.

LOVER BOY (offscreen)

He took the mirror ball! He took the mirror ball.

FLUTE PLAYER

F-ing thief.

Close-up of the flute player's head. He fires the rifle at the boy. The boy falls flat on the grass.

Suddenly, the only sound to be heard is the birds

after the sounds of the shots trailed off

JULIAN ROSEFELD'T

(MEGAPHONE VOICE ON A TRUCK)

JUDITH BUTLER, NAOMI KLEIN, LARA CROFT,
SIMONE DE BEAUVOIR, MERET OPPENHEIM, LADY GAGA,
VIRGINIA WOOLF, CANDIDA ROYALLE, HANNAH ARENDT,
SUSAN SONTAG, COLETTE, ROSA LUXEMBURG,
ALICE SCHWARZER, ANNIE SPRINKLE, TRACEY EMIN,
VALÉRIE SOLANAS, POCAHONTAS, MINA LOY,
ANAÏS NIN, GEORGE SAND, VALIE EXPORT,
RITA MAE BROWN, REBECCA WALKER, ABIGAIL ADAMS,
MARGARETE MITSCHERLICH ...

(CONFÉRENCIER)

Lust is the painful joy
of wounded flesh

Lust is the joyous pain
of a flowering.

Lust is the quest of the flesh
for the unknown.

Lust is the act of creating.

Lust is a force.

Lust is the eternal battle
never finally won.

Lust is the act of creating.

Lust is a force.

Ladies and gentlemen: It is absurd to divide humanity
into men and women. Every person, no matter how epic,
how much of a genius, or how powerful, is composed
at once of feminine and masculine elements, of femininity
and masculinity ...

Lust is the eternal battle
never finally won.
Lust is the act of creating.
Lust is a force.

Women are Amazons, Joans of Arc, Cleopatras, Messalinas:
combative women who fight more ferociously than males,
lovers who arouse ...

(PEACHES)

Boys like the lips swinging in their face,
Lying back, it's taking their own space.
We're gonna kick it now and take your place,
C'mon and give us a taste.
I'm not the only one with a body to thrill,
I like to see just how you swing that thrill.
C'mon baby, baby, just use that thing,
You make my panties go ping.

Shake your dicks, shake your tits.
Shake your dicks, shake your tits.

Are the motherfuckers ready for the fatherfuckers?
Are the fatherfuckers ready for the motherfuckers?
Are the motherfuckers ready for the fatherfuckers?
No!

(CONFÉRENCIEUSE)

Woman, go back to your
sublime instinct,
to violence, to cruelty!
The next great moment
in history is ours!

(PEACHES)

Shake your dicks, shake your tits.
Shake your dicks, shake your tits.

(CONFÉRENCIEUSE)

Do you have a vagina?
Do you want to be in charge
of it?

(SINGER/WAGNER)

*Mild and softly he is smiling;
How his eyelids sweetly open!
See, oh comrades,
See you not*

*How he beameth ever brighter—
How he rises ever radiant
Steeped in starlight, borne above?
See you not*

*How his heart with lion zest,
Calmly happy, beats in his breast?
From his lips in heavenly rest
Sweetest breath he softly sends.*

*Harken, friends!
Hear and feel ye not?*

*Is it I alone am hearing
Strains so tender and endearing?
Passion swelling, all things telling,
Gently bounding, from him sounding,*

*In me pushes, upward rushes
Trumpet tone that round me gushes.
Brighter growing, o'er me flowing,
Are these breezes airy pillows?
Are they balmy beauteous billows?*

*How they rise and gleam and glisten!
Shall I breathe them? Shall I listen?
Shall I sip them, dive within them,
To my panting breathing win them?*

*In the breezes around,
In the harmony sound
In the world's driving
Whirlwind be drown'd—*

*And, sinking, be drinking—
In a kiss, highest bliss!*

at that very moment

JOHN BOCK

THE MAID

**How are we doing this morning? Everything OK in the House of Boogie Love?
And already better, already fine with fatty ointment on it? At one point the
corroded piece has to scent daylight.**

DE SADE

No. THE MAID **Yes.** DE SADE **No.**

THE MAID

**Ugh, yeck. What a bestial stench hits me full force in the stomach-mug. The pus
spunk eats away at the scarred flesh. Ammonia blood gases throb in the pus cavity.
There! The creamy pus schlonz flows through the flesh furrows. World is blood-pus
mass here.**

DE SADE

**Howdie has always served me well. I will not leave him alone in these difficult times.
There, there. Well, welcome! A new little baby boil has grown into the festered
furuncle family overnight. Its cutesy-pootsy face throbs bulging with pus.**

THE MAID

DE SADE

**Please don't. I can reflect myself in its pus-blister plumpness. I see myself—I exist.
I am self-existent.**

THE MAID

Let's go to work. That must huuurt like hell.

DE SADE

Nah. That's a piece of cake for my Howdie.

THE MAID

Oh, look, we have yet another small boil blooming in the shadow of the Scar Mountains. Probably tried to hide. I will snip that off just like that. Small but painful.

DE SADE

The bedpan, please, please could you empty it; it is so full it's spilling over.

THE MAID

Half of your brown turd is still hanging. You really need to push harder and not slacken midway and then forget about the whole thing. Squeeze harder, harder, press, press ...

DE SADE

Come on, grant me this pleasure.

THE MAID

... squeeze properly, please squeeze!

DE SADE

No. I don't want to squeeze.

THE PRIEST

What a gorgeous day. Everything is abloom outside. All over God's earth. It stinks here, though. And I am choosing my words carefully. I am not saying: "I notice an unpleasant smell." I am saying: it stinks horribly. You, sir, you besmirch the work of God. God is in everything. In the blooming flowers, in the green meadows in the magnificent stone mountains, in the woman's womb.

DE SADE

In the womb ...

THE PRIEST

You know. Not like that. No, like this: full of life, uh, uh, that wants to get out.

DE SADE

To what do I owe the honor, Your Triune Highness?

THE PRIEST

Doubt! You doubt! You are not God's servant! Your anguished soul: think of your anguished soul, after you pass away. Do penance! Do penance. Do penance. Do penance. Do penance. Do penance. Do penance. Release your soul; let it slide into the womb of the Virgin Mary. Your soul-fruit is trapped inside your stinking body. Shouldn't we open a window? The Holy Ghost, a kind of ambulance, takes your soul with screeching rubber into God's kingdom. The redeemer welcomes it with open stumps. Grab them. Bite them! You are sick. There you have it. It is your bad conscience in your existential bodily being. Let it go! Now don't puke here, that is inappropriate! Who is supposed to wipe away that muck? You pig, you pig, you there.

THE PRIEST

What on earth is that?

DE SADE

My Howdie is sick.

THE PRIEST

Sick? Your dong is rotting on your body. This is disgusting. It has to go.

DE SADF

No. If Howdie is gone I will get sick missing him.

THE PRIEST

Nonsense. You will not get to heaven that way. It is spick and span there. God indeed has a majestic one, made of an infinitely unknown material. The thing fully illuminates heaven. Or why did you think there is such radiance around God?

Pull yourself together, man. Your dork has to go.

No, it has always been such a good companion on the battlefield of lust optimization. I am tearing the thing off now. Or do you think the Virgin Mary will let you knock on her gates with that.

Dear Reverend Father, please excuse the whining disruption. The Reverend's monetary visitor has arrived.

What? Who dares to interrupt me in my inspired work of God? Women's work here underneath this roof. With this festered dork. By the way, there is a brown turd still peeping out from your buttocks. You need to push all the way, you know. Looking out into the light, only partly squeezed out, it looks so sad.

Come on, grant me this pleasure.

Despicable lowlife.

Now get lost, get out of my clinical picture. And be a good Christian and take the maid right along with you. Go, go.

Disgusting, sick pig.

Yes, begone. Well, come over. Yes, the egg ... Gammy leg. Gammy leg. You are my hop-scotch-honey-love. Ah, so nice and full.

When I was a little girl—from a well-to-do family, of course—I woke up fever-struck. The fever flooded through my little body. Half asleep I alighted from the bower and slid along the walnut spiral staircase which, with the characteristic pizzazz of every grand staircase, led down to the carpet-laden vestibule. And then outside into the dark.

Dark.

The fever drives me. Somnambulant into the horse barn. The horses stood dusty and warm in their wooden boxes. The horses' nostrils threw flabby waves into the ammoniac air. The straw smelled yellow-juicy. Pieces of horse dung were loitering in the piss. The neon light, covered by the droppings of one million flies or more, pulsed as it settled on the bales of straw. A pitchfork was standing next to a hay fork, indicating that things were in disarray in the barn. From the yellow dark emerged a figure, masculine, with a thick mustache and two full whiskers: the old groom who had tamed many an animal. Glowing feverishly, my face red, I stood barefoot in the straw. His rough callused hand softly and warmly grabbed my delicate hand. He bedded me in the straw bower. Opened my thighs and cross-light vibrated through my whey-milk cerebral matter. Neurons collapsed into light beams and exploded in the cabin of bodily being. Analytic febrile

DE SADE

THE PRIEST

THE MAID

THE PRIEST

DE SADE

THE PRIEST

DE SADE

THE MAID

DE SADE

LA LA GIRL

DE SADE

LA LA GIRL

THE MAID	Ah, oh yes, the cross.
THE PRIEST	Oh, oh, the cross, the cross.
THE MAID	You are a horrible, mean monster, Lord Father.
THE PRIEST	The cross. THE MAID Aaaah!
THE PRIEST	The cross, the cross is on my side, it is on my, on my side, the cross!
THE MAID	A terrible fear flashes through my small body. Can you protect me?
THE PRIEST	I am with you, I am with you!
THE MAID	That is good, Lord Father.
THE PRIEST	And the cross, the cross is with you.
THE MAID	Lord Father, I love you, I love you with my whole soul, I love you with my whole heart, my blood is boiling for you, Lord Father, oh, I love you!
THE PRIEST	I have a duty, I have only one duty and it is called God, it is called God!
THE MAID	No!
THE PRIEST	God is my wife. In my corporeality.
THE MAID	God wants people to love one another, Lord Father, God wants people to procreate, Lord Father, he also wants you to take me into your big heart.
THE PRIEST	But the womb of life, my child, is something different altogether. It is freed from desire. Desire must not exist in you corporeality.
THE MAID	Lord Father, but in India, in India, people there loved one another in every way imaginable.
THE PRIEST	In India? THE MAID Yes!
THE PRIEST	That is where the Indians live, my child! The Indians live there! They do lewd things at the campfire, in the jungle, on the trees, in the water. In India they copulate with the monkeys!
THE MAID	That's it. Was that it? That's it, was that it?
LA LA GIRL	I think I have to build a range of smoke mountains for a minute.
THE MAID	That is quite a challenge, because the coordinate system is instable.
LA LA GIRL	The range of smoke mountains is instable as well. When one thing fits, everything fits. This economically evident tenet defines the theory of the smoke mountain.
THE MAID	But how do you measure wet-gage liquidity?
LA LA GIRL	By means of the theory of infinite layering.
THE MAID	This very bold theoretical method of layering-based measurement only yields approximate values.
LA LA GIRL	That negative poppycock mechanism of yours batters me into a consumptive state.
	Down with protestant pessimism!

THE PRIEST	My God is absolute and everything else is shit.
THE PRIEST	What divine sounds are entering my pious auditory canals?
DE SADE	Get up—now! I have to tie into that, into the work of lust. What a pretty affair this is.
THE PRIEST	Disgusting. It's so disgusting. You are disgusting.
DE SADE	Now go. Bite into it! Brilliantly flowery with a trace of lemon.
THE MAID	A tad forward, my pretty child.
DE SADE	No, no, peppermint. Well, take the wedge, my dear. Yes, right at the butt.
THE MAID	Back! Back! DE SADE Come on, bite! THE MAID Deeper! DE SADE And bite! Deeper!
DE SADE	Um, yes, this one is juicier. Meat, I am smelling beef. Do you consume beef the day before, dear madam?
LA LA GIRL	I will not push a nice piece of beef off my plate.
DE SADE	Chocolate cake!
THE MAID	Oh, my beautiful child, move back a little!
DE SADE	Don't wedge it in. Let it float transcendently. Bite it with gusto. The scent, clover-like, squeezes split past the two chocolate walls. Chocolate fuses with clover. Whirls in a ring-a-ring-o'-roses chocolate style through the olfactory canals.
THE MAID	Back!
DE SADE	... and deviously crumbles into my dusty cerebral matter. Such sweaty lustiness drives my Howdie into full bloom.
DE SADE	I think that was it in Bergmann's <i>The Silence</i> .
THE PRIEST	The unknown being in white tests me, but I resist.
DE SADE	The ailing Ingrid Tulin. Primo in the process of dying.
THE PRIEST	Is it Beelzebub who blinds me. I am resisting his soft curvature.
THE MAID	In Scorsese's <i>Shutter Island</i> , Leonardo DiCaprio is suffering so profoundly black in bad weather. Delusion as ur-companion on his tail.
THE PRIEST	Mary, I am feeding myself orally, Christianly.
DE SADE	Tulin with a dry mouth in the white bed. Hand dug into the white softness.
THE MAID	The patients were wandering forlorn about the rotted asylum and ripped open ...
THE PRIEST	Save me.
THE MAID	... their fingers on the cerebral abyss.
THE PRIEST	(hysterical, gets tired) Save me: Joseph...

DE SADE	The spirits...	THE PRIEST	Mary ...	DE SADE	... in silence ...	THE PRIEST	Saul! Paul!
DE SADE	cannot save	THE PRIEST	John!	THE PRIEST	Abraham. Isaac. Esau.		
DE SADE	A spark of light ...	THE PRIEST	Peter!				
DE SADE	flows darkly and moldy into the under-empire.						
THE PRIEST	Jacob! Esau! Eve! I am metamorphosing in front of you. I am virgin. I am flowing consecration. I am luminous rosette window.						
THE MAID	Pietà-like, DiCaprio carries his drowned children out of the pond.						
THE PRIEST	I am <i>In nomine Patris</i>.						
DE SADE	Exactly.						
THE PRIEST	I am feasting on your goodness.						
DE SADE	And at the end the happy-end memory shines.						
THE PRIEST	I want to be good.						
DE SADE	Pietà-like ...						
THE PRIEST	I want to scorn the unbelievers.						
DE SADE	... in the black monochrome.						
THE PRIEST	I want to flagellate and castigate them and cut them into pieces and put them on display on the Internet.						
THE MAID	Hey, there are two Howdies now in the dirty underpants. They are naughtily lolling about.						
THE PRIEST	They are engaged in a dialogue about good and evil and about which of the two is economically and monetarily preferable.						
THE MAID	But where does the second Howdie come from? It wasn't there earlier.						
DE SADE	It grew from a boil wound. It stands firmly in the light. Proud!						
THE MAID	The other one is still disgustingly sick, though, and keeps on stinking. It has to leave the snuggery!						
THE PRIEST	Not so fast. Good needs evil, so it can fight it, until good becomes evil and evil good and then everything reciprocally.						
THE MAID	The turd has finally released itself. But what is that?						
THE PRIEST	The Holy Ghost has spun divine knitted gossamer around the lonely poo-poo turd. Do not inadvertently shake! I am canonizing the poo-poo turd. I will introduce it into my ass church and create a new Christian home for it. I will establish a new persuasion with the poo-poo turd.						
THE MAID	Oh shit. Put your religious mug somewhere else.						
DE SADE	Into the glass.						
THE PRIEST	So beautiful.						

DE SADE

**My Howdies make that Lili Marleen sound sweet, no? They play the soldier song so sweetly from the heart.
I was in the army.**

THE PRIEST

FETUS GOD

Cutting-edge light clinks in my body/visage. Flex sounds of all world runts cut up my whey-me-mind. I want to go back to the home. Home to the cozy, mushy home. I want to go back, back to my blooming sloshy, mushy placenta. Home, home, Placenta. Placenta mama. Home to the total monad parlor. Where is my mama? Where is my beautiful mama?

LA LA GIRL

LA LA GIRL

THE MAID

**Dis-gusting. THE MAID Dis-gusting.
What is that sliming towards us?**

LA LA GIRL

THE MAID

**An afterbirth. It belongs in the rubber vat.
No, there are small eyes peeking out of the flesh schlonz.**

FETUS GOD

**And this meatball grunts.
Mommy, mommy!**

LA LA GIRL

FETUS GOD

Piss off, mincemeat-mug vermin.

I don't want to live. My self is pure pain. In my inner realm bones crack and organs burst. Help me, you marvelous ones. Give me death. Let me slide back, back into the kingdom.

LA LA GIRL

LA LA GIRL + THE MAID

FETUS GOD

It seems to me that the ultimate good lies ahead of us namely ...

Fetus god.

Where is mommy? Is mommy pretty? And I am so ugly. I am disappointing my dear mommy. My pitiful bodily being cannot carve out any decent career. My pitiful something-flesh is not athletically suited for gold.

THE MAID

LA LA GIRL

THE MAID

Being good corrodes my vision ...

... and leaves a stale taste on the tongue.

It grosses me out.

LA LA GIRL

FETUS GOD

It has to go. THE MAID Away!

It saddens me to muddle around in this idyllic world as a mis-hybrid. I am the progeny of a furuncle.

THE PRIEST

DE SADE

All that is good ends in the pietà pose.

Now you are with your God. Blindly credulous, nice. And, and, and fuck the shit out of the Virgin Mary for me. That is good. Oh, the panties drop. Nice. Oh yes.

What nice thing did you bring along?

All that is good must be stamped out. The tools of a rebirth of the good must be eliminated. The root of all good must be torn out.

LA LA GIRL

DE SADE
LA LA GIRL

**No, come on.
The fruity Howdie growth that, much to all our surprise,
sowed the good in my womb, must be unceremoniously ...**

DE SADE
LA LA GIRL

**Nice and full.
... eradicated.**

DE SADE
THE PRIEST

**Not the precious piece.
I want to live.**