

A
P A S T I C H E
o n *D O C U M E N T A T I O N*
o f **A R T I S T I C R E S E A R C H**
by BJØRN JØRUND BLIKSTAD

The Dawkins-Kardashian Stela

Documentation of artistic research / KUF in the form of bas relief by Bjørn Jørund Blikstad, as part of a phd project, Level Up, on design from Oslo National Academy of the Arts 2019.

Materials:

Sipo/utile head and base
Birch body
Ultramarine surface, linseed oil paint
Turned and chrome painted wooden ufo insert
Eckart Bleichgold

Made in 2019 from March to October by BJB at locations:
Oslo National Academy of the Arts
Tune Handel, Tørberget
Ormelett, Tjøme

Studio photography of stela 17.10.2019 by BJB & Olympus self timer

Other images:

Page 10: Furrysaken, Universitas 17.10.2018 (Henrik Follesø Egeland)
Page 11: T-Shaped pilars from the excavation site at Göbekli Tepe, Turkey 2011. (Creative Commons)
Page 12: Retouched kartouche, Karnak, Luxor 2011 (BJB)
Page 13: Herma of Dionysos. Attributed to the Workshop of Boëthos of Kalchedon. Greek, active about 200 - 100 B.C. (J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles)
Page 14: Neues Reich. Dynastie XVIII. Pyramiden von Giseh. Stele vor dem grossen Sphinx. Litography by Ernst Weidenbach. (C C)
Page 15: Illustration by Charles Eisen for The Devil of Pope-Fig Island by Jean de la Fontaine: Tales and Novels in Verse. London 1896. (C C)

Standard fonts & formats
ISBN: 978-82-7038-400-6

KUNSTHØGSKOLEN I OSLO
OSLO NATIONAL ACADEMY OF THE ARTS



TO THE READER

Don't read the introduction to ufology first. Jump straight to the explanations of the constituent elements of the Stela ⊕ (page 32) before continuing to the introduction, maybe just after you've read the Summary in the end. I am trying to point at a cognitive problem in our collective and interconnected world view through ridiculous examples in an attempt to be funny and provoking at the same time, a proper *TWAT*. Maybe better to start where you find the emblem for *Semjase Silver Star Centre*. You'll find it you flip through the pages. For those of you who are interested in Bruno Latour, I am trying to understand his essay *Crisis* (We have never been modern, 1991) through my own experiences of making and teaching design students *to make* in art school. Experiences I believe should be thought of as processes through the Jungian concept of individuation.

The language of Latour's essay, translated from French, from a constitutional and judiciary style, is hard to penetrate. I acquired the book during my MA-studies, but the text was just not available to me at that time. What I want to understand is the meaning and implications behind this sentence:

My hypothesis – which, like the previous one is too coarse – is that we are going to have to slow down, reorient and regulate the proliferation of monsters by representing their existence officially.

This has everything do to with the epistemological premise of artistic research in post-art-school, because of the 'post-truth era in which society as a whole is presently condemned to live' (Kofman, 2018). But to understand what Latour is meaning by "monsters" is difficult for a designer. We can read from the essay that a *Latourian* monster is a hybrid construction breaching the dichotomies separating nature from culture, and between works of purification and works of translation, and get a sense that it precludes the present 'contemplations' on subjectivity and objectivity. Simultaneously, I think we're waking up to an understanding of the world being manufactured by our collective subjectivity. This does not mean that there is no objectivity, only that it is very hard to understand all the monsters popping up from each new locality that mess things up.

The recent attacks on 'post-modernists' and 'culture relativist', which Mr. Latour is supposed to be one of, isn't directed towards the proponents but at the support networks surrounding them, *us*, in the way that the previous mess needs to be cleaned up before new mess is seen when it is added. Understanding Mr. Latour is part of cleaning up - when Michael Schwab (JAR), on a lecture given on AR-Week 2019 at Oslo National Academy of the Arts, talks about the rear guard of art, instead of the avant-garde, he makes a point in this direction; It is a conservative care for order - which seems equally reasonable and inconceivable.

We should include thinking of Latourian monsters when thinking of "grotesques as a crucial, and potentially universal anthropological device that societies

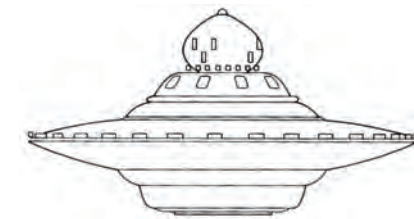
have used to conceptualize alterity and change" (Astruc, 2010). By doing that, we discover a predicament. However, this predicament only appear if we accept, that in the absence of conceptual domains for ornamentation, people in our society have no other possibility than *becoming* their grotesques. In our *post-times*, post-artistic-post-truth, it is strange that we still adhere to the Ibsenesque, or *heroic*, image of consistency between "theory and practice". This *grotesque-monster-hybrid* appears, with the call for the abandonment of experts and the de-colonialization of academia, on the demand for this consistency.

Before the modern abandonment of ornamentation, Augustus Welby Pugin said this, in 1863:

Ornament, in the true and proper meaning of the word, signifies the embellishment of that which is in itself useful, in an appropriate manner. Yet by perversion of the term, it is frequently applied to mere enrichment which deserves no other name than that of unmeaning detail, dictated by no rule but that of individual fancy and caprice. Every ornament, to deserve the name, must possess an appropriate meaning, and be introduced with an intelligent purpose, and on reasonable grounds. The symbolic associations of each ornament must be understood and considered: otherwise things beautiful in themselves will be rendered absurd by their application.

It is to the neglect of these principles that we may trace half the blunders and monstrosities that have disgraced modern art. Ornaments have been regarded as mere matters of whim

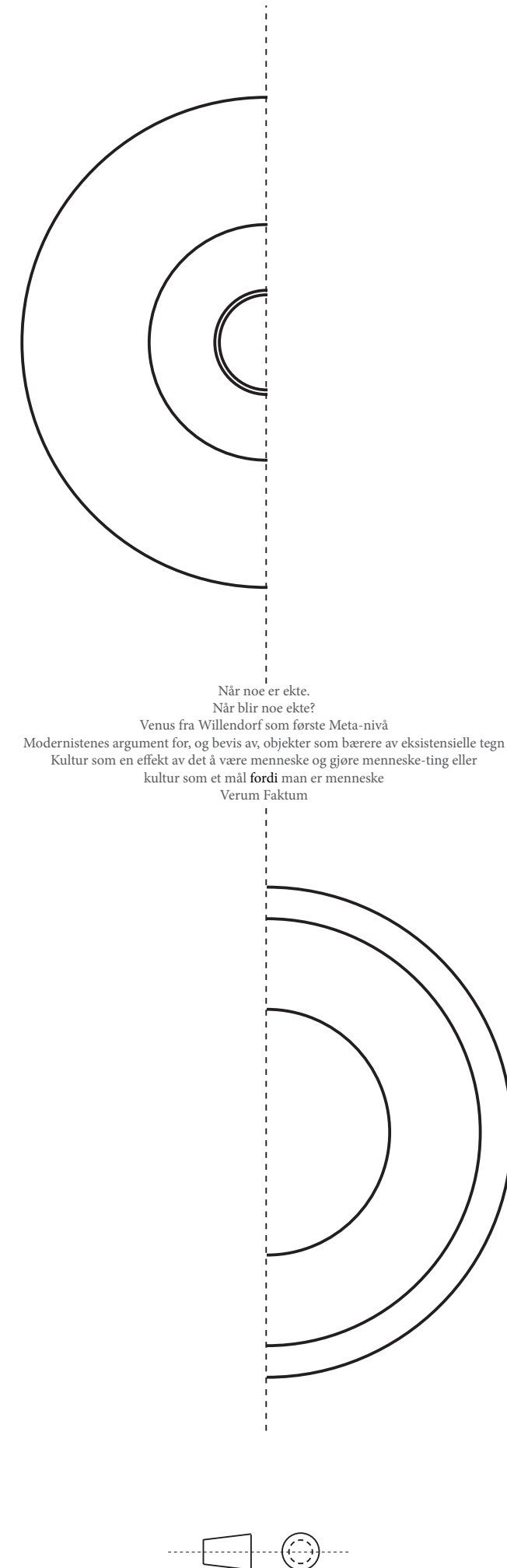
Ornaments can be precise, exactly, how writig cannot, and vice versa. It is on those terms that I wonder if the essay by Adolf Loos, *Ornament und Verbrechen*, is a grotesque, a monster og a grotesque monster hybrid?



T

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Når noe er ekte.
Når blir noe ekte?
Venus fra Willendorf som første Meta-nivå
Modernistenes argument for, og bevis av, objekter som bærere av eksistensielle tegn
Kultur som en effekt av det å være menneske og gjøre menneske-ting eller
kultur som et mål **fordi** man er menneske
Verum Faktum







Pyramiden von Giseh.
Stele vor dem großen Sphinx.





AN INTRODUCTION TO UFOLOGY

Or TWAT, Teleological Wisdom of Art and Technology

Or why have design education at art school,
Or, better still, why have art school?

I have read a book written in 1997 by the now deceased Bigfoot researcher and keeper of the Starchild skull Lloyd Pye: *Everything you Know is Wrong!*

A book I am reading now, *After God* by philosopher of religion, cultural critic and professor at Columbia University, Mark C. Taylor, from 2009, opens with these lines:

You cannot understand the world today if you don't understand religion. Never before has religion been so powerful and so dangerous. No longer confined to [...]

Coming from Norway, it is perhaps no surprise that I have met few people who do. Neither persons from the evangelical Lutheran church and pentecostal congregation or the normal rest from my childhood seemed to have any real understanding of religion. Belief yes, passionate and intensive on both sides, but little understanding. It is therefore with great interest I continue to read:

First, all to often critics [do] not appreciate the intricate relation between secularity and the western religious and theological tradition. As we shall see, religion and secularity are not opposites; to the contrary, Western secularity is a religious phenomenon. Second [...] the critics who advanced secularization theory usually had a simplistic understanding of religion, which tended to restrict its scope in a way that limited its importance. Secularist misinterpret religion as much as believers misinterpret secularism. Religion is not a separate domain but pervades all culture and has important impact on every aspect of society.



AN UNHOLY MARRIAGE

From the hundreds of ufo documentaries, online interviews with ‘contactees’, articles and images and videos on subjects related to UFOs I have consumed, five examples stand out: 1) the Billy Meier case, 2) the Bob Lazar case, 3) the disclosure project lead by Dr. Steven Greer and 4) the alien abduction phenomenon reported by university professors John E. Mack or David M. Jacobs together with artist Budd Hopkins. The last being 5) the ancient astronaut theory.

Modern ufology is beginning to look like a religion, not only with a compelling grand narrative tethered to compelling testimonies from experts and testimonies by interesting people, but with the complimentary polemic discussion between sceptic and believer that sharpen and propel the research and culture forward. What everyone seems to agree upon, however, is the existence of advanced civilisations elsewhere in the universe being more plausible than mankind being alone in the universe. Whether or not the abandonment of expert culture [Stephen Wright, *Toward a lexicon of usership*] is a good tool to use here are very hard to figure out; That is if anything from the contemporary art scene is applicable to anything else.

My fascination with the subject of UFOs are manifold. As entertainment, nothing is more exciting than to entertain the notion that something so radical can be true; consuming conspiracies as intricate as crime novels, something similar to a true crime TV-series. Documentaries have found their form and it is surprising what I end up considering to be true, at least for a while. Often quite briefly, before I come to my senses. As an artistic researcher and a designer, however, the field of ufology is a gold mine, respectively, for source criticism and consensus opinions, trying to get a grip on the polemics between sceptics and believers. Still, where my heart truly lies is in this idea of *just a while - before I come to my senses*. How long is a while and what are my senses?

More precisely I believe the *big five* personality trait *openness to experience; inventive and curious*, is, or should be, common in art school, and are therefore interested in how we handle cognitive dissonances. Are we equally open to experiences from all our various senses? Do some senses trump others? How do we solve our internal differences? This again is based on the premise of artistic autonomy as important for the validity of proposed art and design projects; speculation and cynicism breeds only speculation and cynicism. If we were to use Stephen Wright’s *Lexicon of Usership* to evaluate the five examples from the field of ufology as art projects, most of his entries would fit quite well. But I do not want to do that...

1) Billy Meier (b. 1937) is a one-armed man with a diverse background who has taken photos of UFOs coming to his hillside in Switzerland. His telepathic communication with the extra-terrestrials, The Tall Whites or Nordic aliens, which is a result of contact from early childhood, led him out in the fields when they were nearby for photo opportunities. Over the years, Billy met a number of representatives of this Pleiadian alien race. The most famous being Sfath’s granddaughter Semjase, from which Meier’s organisations borrows its name: The Semajse Silver Star Centre. The



name Semjase is very similar to the name of a fallen angel from the apocryphal Book of Enoch. Meier is also the last reincarnation in a long line of prophets common to Judaism, Christianity, and Islam: Enoch, Elijah, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Immanuel (Jesus), and Mohammed. The poster Fox Mulder has in his office stating, "I want to believe" is clearly a variant of Billy's photographs.

Apart from taking an interest in the discussions between the believers and the debunkers, which is still going on regarding Billy Meier's claims, the outer design of Semajse's beamships is an important reason behind this project. Initially the project was to be called U-FoU (a pun over the Norwegian name for research and development), where I was to harvest online UFO-shapes allegedly from different parts of the galaxy or different galaxies, under the guise of lack of intergalactic property rights. I could therefore freely copy the designs of the shapes and use them for my own royalty reasons. Eventual disputes in copyrights would have to be settled between me and a representative of the Pleiadians. Many of the designs would make excellent modern pendulum lamps.

«Så la vi det på is» - synger Ylvis.

2) M. D. Steven M. Greer (b. 1955) began his public career in ufology in 2001 with a presentation at The National Press Club in Washington under the name *The Disclosure Project*. He had collected a host of both retired and employed witnesses and whistle-blowers from almost all branches and ranks of the US military. Apollo 14 astronaut Edgar Mitchell and an original member of the *Mercury Seven*, NASA's first space travellers, Gordon Cooper, have joined Steven on different briefing sessions to the US Congress previous to the 2001 event in the National Press club. The goal of *The Disclosure Project* is the disclosure of secretly classified American UFO information and the release of zero point technologies to the public, thus ending the ecological crisis on the planet. The idea of shadow governments and black budgets is a very important backdrop to the whole project.

3) The story of the disclosure project is very much different from stories like that of Billy Meier or Bob Lazar (b. 1959). The disclosure project appear almost like a response to sceptics who debunk controversies by questioning the credibility of the witnesses. The story of Bob Lazar is very much like that. Artists' renderings of the UFO seen by Bob in the early 80's are quite similar to those of Billy Meier. Bob did not have the photo-opportunities of Billy, working at a secret military and intelligence base in the dessert of Nevada, namely the 'S4' base close to *Area 51* and *Groom Lake* testing grounds, north of Las Vegas. His first incognito interview on television, was quickly turned to a full disclosure of his identity as an insurance policy; He feared for his life because of what he was about to talk about. A few years prior to the interview he had been employed as a physicist, what he later became aware of, was to reverse-



engineer an alien spacecraft. His job in particular was involved in understanding the inner workings of the propulsion system of the intergalactic space travel technology. The critics, including other UFO-researchers, could not find evidence for his claims of educational degrees and he was quickly labelled a hoax, in it only for the fame. Bob Lazar attracted much interest for the secret military bases, of which existence the government of USA just recently confirmed.

4) Dr. John E. Mack (1929-2004), head of the Harvard department of psychiatry and Dr. David Jacobs (b. 1942), history professor at Temple University, brought the full weight of academia to the battle. Their cooperation with artist Budd Hopkins (1931 – 2011) was based on the artist's already large collection of abduction stories for his book *Missing Time* from 1981. An interesting fact from Budd Hopkins childhood was the psychological scars left by the radio program *War of the Worlds* in 1938 by George Orwell.

The team became known for first making the case for the abduction phenomenon to be a real psychological phenomenon by interviewing thousands of 'abductees'. In 1991 they authored a popular and disputed poll in a report by the Roper Organisation coming to the conclusion that several millions of American people were regularly affected by alien abductions. Based on the large amount of information they collected the three eventually developed different interpretations of the phenomenon. The team noticed a development in the reported stories. The earliest abduction stories' climax was at an 'operating table' in the UFOs, where abductees were examined and probed by instruments in the 'lower abdomen' and 'genitalia'. Later they were brought up to meet and nurture small alien babies, who over time became more and more human looking. Today the reports are more about interacting with what is known as fully grown hybrids that look like human beings. The 'abduction syndrome', it seems, even runs in the family. Early on people reported paralysis and fear, now it is more love and light. Regarding the alien agenda, even though they all agree now on the interpretation of the abduction phenomenon being a genetic experiment, Dr. Jacobs and Budd hold the dire view, John Mack the positive.

5) Finally the ancient astronaut theory. An early and very popular proponent of this idea was Zechariah Sitchin (1922-2010) through his layman's research of Sumerian culture. Many are familiar with the Sumerian epic of Gilgamesh, but Sitchin's ideas came from his self-taught ability to read Sumerian writing and his interpretations of other Sumerian myths through symbolism and iconography. Other specialists in the Sumerian language dispute some of his interpretations. One cylinder seal in particular have attracted much attention. The gods of the Sumerian Empire, the Annunaki, an alien race coming from the planet Nibiru, an 'undiscovered' large planet orbiting the Sun in a very elongated 3600 year elliptical period, created the human race; Their trouble at home with a dying atmosphere led them to Earth to mine gold for a shield. Tired of the hard work they eventually created a slave race to do it for them, us.



Authors and researcher, like Erik von Dänniken and Immanuel Velikovsky, both international best sellers, continue to elaborate on the ancient astronaut theory. Today it even seems the theory has its own TV channel, H2 (History2, H² or H₂), where Erik is regularly interviewed. The yearly 'Megalithomania' conventions and seminars around the world supports the ancient alien theory, based on ancient constructions shrouded in mystery. Like the megalithic stones of Baalbeck in Libanon, the Younaguni Monument on the east coast of Japan, sunken cities in the Indian Ocean and many others. From our contemporary point of view, everything is based on the idea that mythologies are attempts to recollect something early human beings did not quite understand at the time, and that the aliens' technologies would seem godlike to Neolithic peoples.

I NEED A HERO

There are so many ways you can 'want to believe' in UFOs and modern or old mythologies, but there is no way you can, by methodological rigour, identify from your side of the screen what is true and what is not, what is good research and what is bad. Even though The Billy Meier story has very obvious hoaxes, e.g. his laser gun and his photos of dinosaurs from his travels back in time with Sfath from the 70's, our judgement of eccentric characters, through screens always leaves room for doubts, foul play or bad debunking. For some, the argument that one-armed Billy would not be able to hoax it all, is good enough. But the real power of the stories that cannot be easily dismissed by experts, or where you sense that the experts have weaker cases or perhaps when two experts of equal merit hold opposite views, is when your only tool left are you own emotional discriminations, your prejudicial judgement, and your belief in what you call common sense.

For a long time I took the position of believing everything equally because who am I to question the authority of anyone? Particularly people's opinions through screens. Maybe that was a way to experiment with the abandonment of expert culture. Believing everything is believing nothing? However, it backfires and contaminates everything else with ambiguity and doubt.

Ambiguity and self-doubt can work in the studios but does not work at all in e.g. the wood workshop, both for actual work to be done or for safety reasons. It is my analysis of my own working habits and the student-phenomenon of workshop recalcitrance at the furniture design department of Oslo National Academy of the Arts, a hesitation to enter the workshop, in stark contrast to the potential of its equipment. In order to build you need some kind of conviction. It is hard to question one and believe the other. There are probably more factors to the equation of the workshop-hesitation, both known and unknown, one known being fear of cutting off your fingers. However, what I want to address is the possibility of cognitive dissonances, self-doubt and conflicting world views being the main cause of this negative feedback loop. This is somewhat paralleling an anecdote from *Crisis*, even, upside down, somehow:



[Those who] are unable to settle for the scepticism of the postmoderns, decide to carry on as if nothing had changed: they intend to remain resolutely modern. They continue to believe in the promise of the sciences, or in those of emancipation, or both. Yet their faith in modernization no longer rings quite true in art, or economics, or politics, or science, or technology. In art galleries and concert halls, along the façades of apartment buildings and inside international organizations, you can feel that the heart is gone. The will to be modern seems hesitant, sometimes even outmoded.

Building in the workshops require decision-making on many internal levels simultaneously. The hardest work for students of design in art school, it seems, is done internally to negate internal conflicts into to a comparatively working whole, just in order to be able to deliver and represent the work. Some lie and that works too. But the battle in the minds of honest students are symptoms of unresolved and conflicting values of ethics at a personal level, at an institutional level and at a societal level. A battle we encourage but are not ready to handle the result of yet. The projects that works today are project shrouded in so many meta-levels and are able to navigate a landscape of traps, just elusive enough not to trigger any.

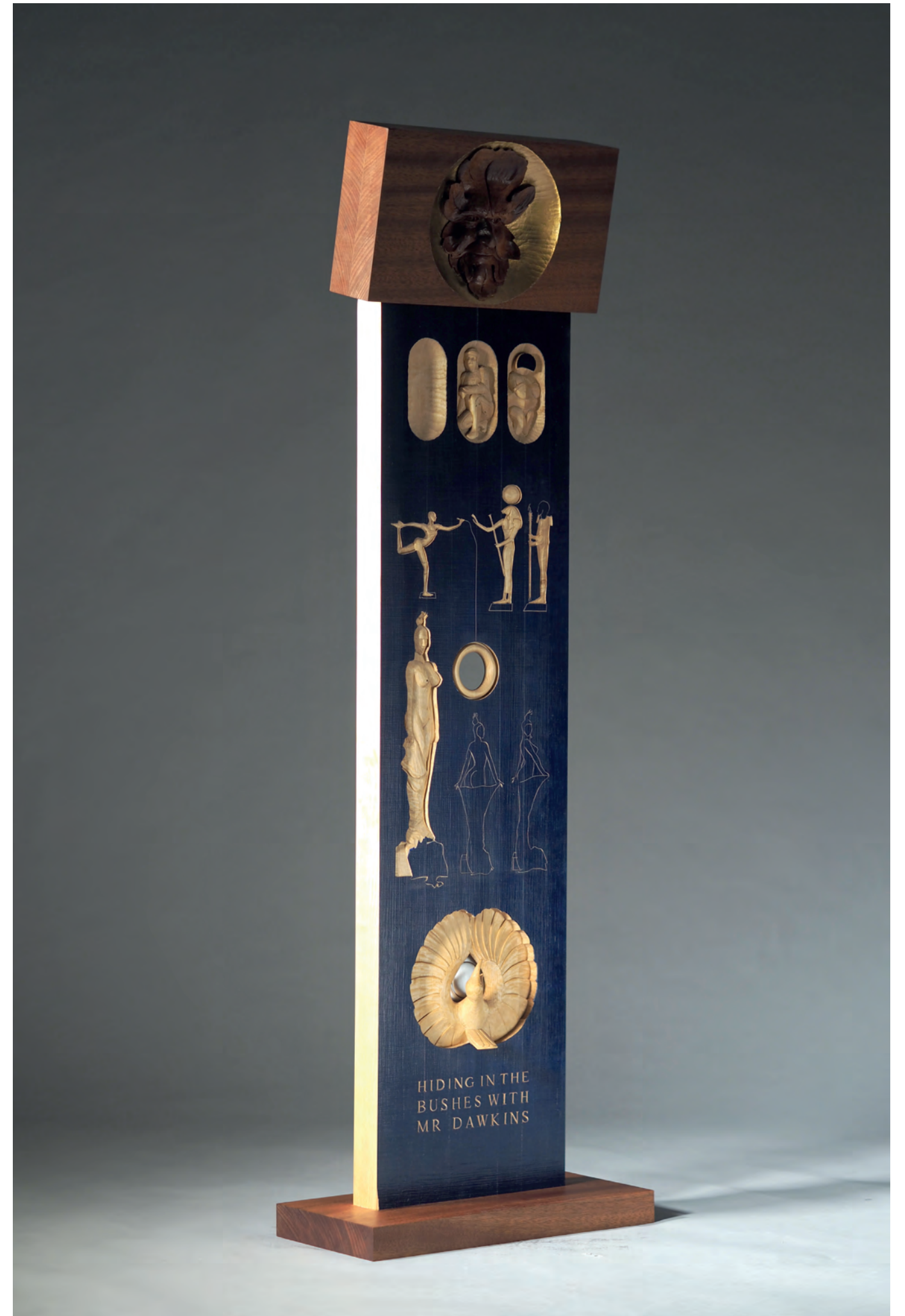
NAUSEA

Charles Darwin wrote in his autobiography, intended only for his children and not for distribution, about his previous love for poetry. A love that had turned sour in his later years: “Now for many years I cannot endure to read a line of poetry: I have tried lately to read Shakespeare, and found it so intolerably dull that it nauseated me”. Even though John Milton’s *Paradise Lost* and works of Shakespeare accompanied Darwin on his travel with HMS Beagle to the Islands of Galapagos, his rigorous research and “grinding general laws out of large collection of facts” eventually killed of the love for these “higher tastes”. He also warned his children: “The loss of these tastes is a loss of happiness, and may possibly be injurious to the intellect, and more probably to the moral character”.

Even though the use of neurological simplifications seldom give credit to the research behind the science, it is tempting to bracket Darwin’s Nausea with ideas about the right and left hemispheres of the brain: his analytical and sceptical **left** had rigorously silenced his emotional **right**. It is also tempting to use Darwin’s Rottweiler, Richard Dawkins’ own theory of *cultural genes*, the meme, to understand how we all have *inherited* this devastating loss of taste/heart.

Darwin’s Nausea and the ‘KHIO-Hesitation’ are different aspect of the same cultural processes, an ontological, epistemological and phenomenological virus of not being willing to believe in the authority or validity of emotions. A virus who’s antibodies are becoming ineffective.

What I find extra problematic is, as scientific research continues to devalue



the human condition, spiritual teachers profess the notion that the self is an illusion. How is art, or any field of research historically emergent through people with an openness to experiences going to operate in a landscape like this? To paraphrase a metaphor from Polynesian mythology: the space between Mother Earth and Father Sky is getting very small, indeed.

In order to relate to things like this - to come to our senses after we have entertained a wild idea for a while - I think creative people, of the arts in particular, turn of or suppress their senses because it might be the same sense that lets you entertain an idea, like the Apollo Moon landing as an elaborate hoax, that are responsible for artistic choices. A doubt in which, eventually, lend credibility to the persuasiveness of the extraordinary claim we are unwilling to acknowledge.

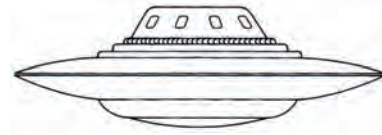
ORNAMENTATION & SINGULARITIES

I think ufology is one result of the unholy marriage between science and ornamentation, perhaps similar to fooling around with Bruno Latours model of the dichotomies between nature and culture, and between works of purification and works of translation. It is the belief in a beginning and an end. Ultimate disclosure or objective truths. It is what compels us forward to where there cannot be answers, which we at the moment, it seems, do not have the wisdom to understand.

One way of thinking about ornamentation, is through palindromes or verse: the ability to render words and letters into a coherent form in collusion with the content, is somewhat related to formulae of physics - Or perhaps exactly the same? It is when abstraction and symbolism revert in on it self and make the whole tight; proving the both the validity of the effort and the result. The symbol of which being the orobouros. When stuff adds up and it is impossible to separate the form from the content, or the content from the container, or the form from its function. Traditional examples of ornamentation is the search for when a particular system of forms and rules adds up on its self. When it do, or if it does, you have a systemic proof. When the whole is greater than the sum of its parts, a kind of (temporary) singularity has happened. A proper Latourian monster is perhaps to believe systemic evidence can point to something outside the system. Believing it to be *true*, when it is just *magic*.

This goes for both art, science and religion. What we can learn from the history of ornamentation is that art, science and religion without acknowledgement of magical systemic evidence, becomes linear. Art, science and religion after ornamentation can never be modern, because ornamental desire is the force that creates all hybrids. Not all hybrids are monstrous, the trouble starts when this becomes an internal thinking monster, when the opportunity of externalizing and scrutinize them by looking at them from a distance becomes impossible - when the monsters has possessed your ideas of consistency and logic, when it is no longer possible to separate the drive from the result, the intent from the agent - because if we adhere to the concept of *artistic* they can never be the same.





THE CONSTITUENT PARTS OF THE DAWKINS-KARDASHIAN STELA

For convenience, this text offers online quotes regarding the bas relief figures and the other elements of the stela. The first convenience is for the reader: that there should not be necessary to re-search online regarding the reasons for the selection. Each element and relief figure is selected on the premise of what “wikipedia” has to say and what images google provides. There are monsters somewhere between the scholarly reluctance of quoting wikipedia and the hopes we all have for internet. The second convenience is for me: I am neither capable of nor willing to write a story that is paralleling the stela. There are so many things that can go wrong when writing a text. Things that go wrong in making stuff, e.g. material choices, compositions, logistics, technique, and efficiency, operate by different and more flexible rules and will be touched upon briefly in the discussion. Suffice to say at this point, if the internet in this case is ultra-marine, why are the head and base in sipo mahogany?

The stela is a pseudo-historical monument, combining, in shape, the ancient Greek *Herma* and the *T-shaped pillars of Göbekli Tepe*. These, rather unknown references, are complimented by other references, both known and unknown, both online and offline. The different parts create an intricate story, or the outline of one. I do not expect this story to be extracted from the symbolic representations alone, because their symbolic values are ambiguous and unclear. Rather, the story they constitute is a frame to evaluate them with, like a play, or a mythology. From top to bottom, these are: a haloed *Green Man* in the image of *Richard Dawkins*, who foliate into a mask of *fig leaves*. Three *kartouche*-like recesses, two of which are occupied by *Jay Maynard* and *Venus from Willendorf*. The contemporary currency of the arabesque of *Grace Jones* is there to open the stela for the possibility of carved bas-relief figures; she is faced by two Egyptian deities of the Memphite Triad, *Ptah & Sekhmet*. Guarding the *Black Hole*, is *Kim Kardashian's* famous poses from her attempt to *break the internet*. The *Paradise Bird* is a hint to both Eden and fascists' seemingly love for feathers, simultaneously, being a choice of composition: the bird cling to the bottom side of a Pleiadian beamship, defining its' scale (1:30), visible from the opposite side. The carved statement on the lower part is just a memetic catch phrase.



STELE

[wikipedia]

A stele (/ˈstiːli/ STEE-lee), or occasionally stela (plural stelas or stelæ), when derived from Latin, is a stone or wooden slab, generally taller than it is wide, erected in the ancient world as a monument. Grave stelae were often used for funerary or commemorative purposes. Stelae as slabs of stone would also be used as ancient Greek and Roman government notices or as boundary markers to mark borders or property lines. The surface of the stele usually has text, ornamentation, or both. The ornamentation may be inscribed, carved in relief, or painted.

Stelae are occasionally erected as memorials to battles. For example, along with other memorials, there are more than half-a-dozen stelae erected on the battlefield of Waterloo at the locations of notable actions by participants in battle.

HERMA

[wikipedia]

A herma (Ancient Greek: ἑρμῆς, pl. ἑρμαῖ hermai), commonly in English herm, is a sculpture with a head, and perhaps a torso, above a plain, usually squared lower section, on which male genitals may also be carved at the appropriate height. Hermae were so called either because the head of Hermes was most common or from their etymological connection with the Greek word ἑρματα (blocks of stone), which originally had no reference to Hermes at all. The form originated in Ancient Greece, and was adopted by the Romans, and revived at the Renaissance in the form of term figures and Atlantes.

GÖEBEKLI TEPE

[wikipedia]

Göbekli Tepe is an archaeological site in the Southeastern Anatolia Region of Turkey approximately 12 km northeast of the city of Şanlıurfa. The tell has a height of 15 m and is about 300 m in diameter. It is approximately 760 m above sea level.

The tell includes two phases of use, believed to be of a social or ritual nature by site discoverer and excavator Klaus Schmidt, dating back to the 10th–8th millennium BCE. During the first phase, belonging to the Pre-Pottery Neolithic A [ed. PPNA], circles of massive T-shaped stone pillars were erected – the world's oldest known megaliths.

More than 200 pillars in about 20 circles are currently known through geophysical surveys. Each pillar has a height of up to 6 m and weighs up to 10 tons. They are fitted into sockets that were hewn out of the bedrock. In the second phase, belonging to the Pre-Pottery Neolithic B, the erected pillars are smaller and stood in



rectangular rooms with floors of polished lime. The site was abandoned after the Pre-Pottery Neolithic B. Younger structures date to classical times.

The details of the structure's function remain a mystery. The excavations have been ongoing since 1996 by the German Archaeological Institute, but large parts still remain unexcavated. In 2018, the site was designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Chronological context

All statements about the site must be considered preliminary, as less than 5% of the site has been excavated, and Schmidt planned to leave much of it untouched to be explored by future generations when archaeological techniques will presumably have improved. While the site formally belongs to the earliest Neolithic (PPNA), to date no traces of domesticated plants or animals have been found. The inhabitants are presumed to have been hunters and gatherers who nevertheless lived in villages for at least part of the year. So far, very little evidence for residential use has been found. Through the radiocarbon method, the end of Layer III can be fixed at about 9000 BCE, but it is believed that the elevated location may have functioned as a spiritual center during 10,000 BCE or earlier, essentially, at the very end of the Pleistocene.

The surviving structures, then, not only predate pottery, metallurgy, and the invention of writing or the wheel, but were built before the so-called Neolithic Revolution, that marks the beginning of agriculture and animal husbandry, around 9000 BCE. The construction of Göbekli Tepe implies organization of an advanced order not hitherto associated with Paleolithic, PPNA, or PPNB societies, however. Archaeologists estimate that up to 500 persons were required to extract the heavy pillars from local quarries and move them 100–500 meters to the site. The pillars weigh 10–20 metric tons, with one still in the quarry weighing 50 tons.

Around the beginning of the 8th millennium BCE Göbekli Tepe lost its importance. The advent of agriculture and animal husbandry brought new realities to human life in the area, and the "Stone-age zoo" (Schmidt's phrase applied particularly to Layer III, Enclosure D) apparently lost whatever significance it had for the region's older, foraging communities. But the complex was not simply abandoned and forgotten to be gradually destroyed by the elements. Instead, each enclosure was buried quite deliberately under as much as 300 to 500 cubic meters of refuse, creating a tell consisting mainly of small limestone fragments, stone vessels, and stone tools. Many animal, and even human, bones have been identified in the fill. Why the enclosures were buried is unknown, but it preserved them for posterity.

Some researchers believe that the construction of Göbekli Tepe may have contributed to the later development of urban civilization, or, as excavator Klaus Schmidt put it, "First came the temple, then the city."



PTAH

[wikipedia]

Ptah is an Egyptian creator god who existed before all other things and, by his will, thought the world into existence. It was first conceived by Thought, and realized by the Word: Ptah conceives the world by the thought of his heart and gives life through the magic of his Word. That which Ptah commanded was created, with which the constituents of nature, fauna, and flora, are contained. He also plays a role in the preservation of the world and the permanence of the royal function.

Ptah is the patron of craftsmanship, metalworking, carpenters, shipbuilders, and sculpture.

SEKHMET

[wikipedia]

Sekhmet is a warrior goddess as well as goddess of healing. She is depicted as a lioness, the fiercest hunter known to the Egyptians. It was said that her breath formed the desert. She was seen as the protector of the Pharaohs and led them in warfare. Upon death, Sekhmet continued to protect them, bearing them to the afterlife. Sekhmet is also a solar deity, sometimes called the daughter of Ra and often associated with the goddesses Hathor and Bastet. She bears the Uraeus, which associates her with Wadjet and royalty, and the solar disk.

Sekhmet's name comes from the Ancient Egyptian word *s m*, which means "power or might". Sekhmet's name (...) is thus translated as "the (one who is) powerful or mighty". She also was given titles such as the "(One) Before Whom Evil Trembles", "Mistress of Dread", "Lady of Slaughter" and "She Who Mauls".

She was envisioned as a fierce lioness, and in art, was depicted as such, or as a woman with the head of a lioness, who was dressed in red, the color of blood. Sometimes the dress she wears exhibits a rosetta pattern over each breast, an ancient leonine motif, which can be traced to observation of the shoulder-knot hairs on lions. Occasionally, Sekhmet was also portrayed in her statuettes and engravings with minimal clothing or naked. Tame lions were kept in temples dedicated to Sekhmet at Leontopolis.

[BJB] Sekhmet is Ptah's consort. Together with their offspring Nefertem they make up the Memphite Triad. Ptah stands on the symbol of Ma'at, holding a sceptre that combines the ankh, the djed and the was. The Ma'at is a representation of truth, balance, order, harmony, law, morality, and justice. The sceptre combined the symbols indicating the three creative powers of the god: power (was), life (ankh) and stability (djed).



BLACK HOLES

[wikipedia]

A black hole is a region of spacetime exhibiting gravitational acceleration so strong that nothing—no particles or even electromagnetic radiation such as light—can escape from it. The theory of general relativity predicts that a sufficiently compact mass can deform spacetime to form a black hole. The boundary of the region from which no escape is possible is called the event horizon. Although the event horizon has an enormous effect on the fate and circumstances of an object crossing it, no locally detectable features appear to be observed. In many ways, a black hole acts like an ideal black body, as it reflects no light. Moreover, quantum field theory in curved spacetime predicts that event horizons emit Hawking radiation, with the same spectrum as a black body of a temperature inversely proportional to its mass. This temperature is on the order of billionths of a kelvin for black holes of stellar mass, making it essentially impossible to observe.

At the centre of a black hole, as described by general relativity, may lie a gravitational singularity, a region where the spacetime curvature becomes infinite. For a non-rotating black hole, this region takes the shape of a single point and for a rotating black hole, it is smeared out to form a ring singularity that lies in the plane of rotation. In both cases, the singular region has zero volume. It can also be shown that the singular region contains all the mass of the black hole solution. The singular region can thus be thought of as having infinite density. Observers falling into a Schwarzschild black hole (i.e., non-rotating and not charged) cannot avoid being carried into the singularity, once they cross the event horizon. They can prolong the experience by accelerating away to slow their descent, but only up to a limit. When they reach the singularity, they are crushed to infinite density and their mass is added to the total of the black hole. Before that happens, they will have been torn apart by the growing tidal forces in a process sometimes referred to as spaghettification or the "noodle effect".

The appearance of singularities in general relativity is commonly perceived as signalling the breakdown of the theory. This breakdown, however, is expected; it occurs in a situation where quantum effects should describe these actions, due to the extremely high density and therefore particle interactions. To date, it has not been possible to combine quantum and gravitational effects into a single theory, although there exist attempts to formulate such a theory of quantum gravity. It is generally expected that such a theory will not feature any singularities

RICHARD DAWKINS

[wikipedia]

The Simonyi Professorship for the Public Understanding of Science is a chair at the University of Oxford. The chair was established in 1995 for the ethologist Richard Dawkins by an endowment from Charles Simonyi [ed. father of Microsoft Office].



The aim of the Professorship is 'to communicate science to the public without, in doing so, losing those elements of scholarship which constitute the essence of true understanding'. It is a position that had been endowed by Charles Simonyi with the express intention that the holder "be expected to make important contributions to the public understanding of some scientific field", and that its first holder should be Richard Dawkins.

Dawkins is known as an outspoken atheist. He is well known for his criticism of creationism and intelligent design. In *The Blind Watchmaker* (1986), he argues against the watchmaker analogy, an argument for the existence of a supernatural creator based upon the complexity of living organisms. Instead, he describes evolutionary processes as analogous to a blind watchmaker, in that reproduction, mutation, and selection are unguided by any designer. In *The God Delusion* (2006), Dawkins contends that a supernatural creator almost certainly does not exist and that religious faith is a delusion.

THE GREEN MAN

[wikipedia & thegreenmanenigma.com]

[wikipedia] The Green Man is primarily interpreted as a symbol of rebirth, represented in the cycle of growth each spring. It is most commonly depicted as a sculpture or other representation of a face surrounded by, or made from, leaves. The Green Man motif has many variations. Branches or vines may sprout from the mouth, nostrils, or other parts of the face and these shoots may bear flowers or fruit. Found in many cultures from many ages around the world, the Green Man is often related to natural vegetative deities. Often used as decorative architectural ornaments, Green Men are frequently found in carvings on both secular and ecclesiastical buildings. "The Green Man" is also a popular name for English public houses and various interpretations of the name appear on inn signs, which sometimes show a full figure rather than just the head.

Some speculate that the mythology of the Green Man developed independently in the traditions of separate ancient cultures and evolved into the wide variety of examples found throughout history.

For many modern Pagans, the Green Man is used as a symbol of seasonal renewal and ecological awareness. In Wicca, the Green Man has often been used as a representation of the Horned God, a syncretic deity that appropriates aspects of, among others, the Celtic Cernunnos and the Greek Pan

[thegreenmanenigma.com] The label "Green Man", perhaps surprisingly, dates back only to 1939, when it was used by Lady Raglan (wife of the scholar and soldier Major Fitzroy Somerset, 4th Baron Raglan) in her article "The Green Man in Church Architecture", published in the "Folklore" journal of March 1939. Prior to this, they were just known as "foliate heads", and few people took much interest in them. Lady Raglan's interest was piqued by her discovery of the Green Men in St.



Jerome's Church in the village of Llangwn in Monmouthshire (Gwent), Wales. The "Folklore" article was Lady Raglan's sole foray into folklore study, and it is clearly much influenced by Sir James Frazer's seminal 1922 book on mythology, religion and folklore, "The Golden Bough". The article concluded: "This figure I am convinced, is neither a figment of the imagination nor a symbol, but is taken from real life, and the question is whether there was any figure in real life from which it could have been taken. The answer, I think, is that there is but one of sufficient importance, the figure variously known as the Green Man, Jack-in-the-Green, Robin Hood, the King of May and the Garland King, who is the central figure in the May Day celebrations throughout Northern and Central Europe."

FIG LEAFS

[wikipedia]

The expression "fig leaf" is widely used figuratively to convey the covering up of an act or an object that is embarrassing or distasteful with something of innocuous appearance, a metaphorical reference to the Biblical Book of Genesis in which Adam and Eve used fig leaves to cover their nudity after eating the forbidden fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

JAY MAYNARD

[wikipedia]

Jay Maynard (born July 27, 1960) is an American computer programmer, system administrator and the volunteer project maintainer for Hercules, a free emulator of IBM mainframe hardware. He is known for his self-made electroluminescent costume based on the film Tron, which resulted in his nickname Tron Guy.

Maynard created a revealing electroluminescent costume, inspired by the film Tron, which he could wear at the science fiction convention Penguicon in 2004. He has said that he "hasn't missed a Penguicon, and doesn't intend to". He created a web page of photos of the costume, and of himself wearing it. His page of photos quickly gained a lot of attention on the Internet, after it was posted on Slashdot and Fark.

In 2010, Maynard was banned from seeing the film Tron: Legacy in his iconic Tron suit in his local movie theatre because of the illuminating lights on his suit.

On June 8, 2011, Maynard appeared on America's Got Talent. He received a "no" vote from all of the three judges and did not make it past the audition round. Howie Mandel had him restart his introductory speech over several times, so it was left unclear what his act was going to be.



VENUS FROM WILLENDORF

[wikipedia]

The Venus of Willendorf is an 11.1-centimetre-tall (4.4 in) Venus figurine estimated to have been made 30,000 BCE. It was found on August 7, 1908 by a workman named Johann Veran or Josef Veram during excavations conducted by archaeologists Josef Szombathy, Hugo Obermaier and Josef Bayer at a paleolithic site near Willendorf, a village in Lower Austria near the town of Krems. It is carved from an oolitic limestone that is not local to the area, and tinted with red ochre.

GRACE JONES

[wikipedia]

Island Life is a compilation album by Grace Jones released in December 1985, summing up the first nine years of her musical career. The album sits among Jones' best-selling works. The cover picture is one of the most famous images of Grace Jones and was created by her then-partner Jean-Paul Goude. The impossibly graceful arabesque is actually a montage of separate images, following Goude's ideas on creating credible illusions with his cut-and-paint technique. The body position is "anatomically unlikely". The picture was originally published in New York magazine in 1978 and subsequently used in the music video for Jones' hit single "La Vie en rose". It has been since described as "one of pop culture's most famous photographs". Also included in the album sleeve are other iconic images of Jones, among them the "twins" photograph, Grace Jones in a cage and wearing a "maternity" dress.

BREAK THE INTERNET: KIM KARDASHIAN

[papermag.com]

The cover of Paper Magazine November 12th 2014.

Story by Amanda Fortini.

Photography by Jean-Paul Goude.

If you know nothing else about Kim Kardashian, you know that she is very, very famous. Some would say that's all you need to know. At press time, she has 25 million Twitter followers, about a million less than Oprah Winfrey and nearly 5 million more than CNN Breaking News. Her Instagram account, where she is a prolific purveyor of selfies, is the site's third most popular. You can't walk through a supermarket without glimpsing her on a multitude of tabloids whose headlines holler about her relationships, her parenting style and the vicissitudes of her ample curves. But she has also graced the covers of highbrow fashion bibles like W and



Vogue; with her now-husband, Kanye West, she appeared on the latter above the hashtag #worldsmosttalkedaboutcouple, creating a furor that made it perhaps the #worldsmostcontroversialcover.

Her millions-strong popularity and inescapable media presence have made her grist for think pieces galore. She is variously seen as a feminist-entrepreneur-pop-culture-icon or a late-stage symptom of our society's myriad ills: narcissism, opportunism, unbridled ambition, unchecked capitalism. But behind all the hoopla, there is an actual woman — a physical body where the forces of fame and wealth converge. Who isn't at least a tad curious about the flesh that carries the myth?

Unlike most people, she looks exactly the same in person as she does in photographs or on television, with one exception: she is smaller than she appears in images, with tiny, almost doll-like ears and feet and hands. Everything else about her seems amplified, tumescent. Her black hair is thicker than any you have ever seen, her lips fuller, her giant Bambi-eyes larger, their whites whiter, and the lashes that frame them longer. If some of this is the result of artificial enhancement — does anyone else have eyelashes that resemble miniature feather dusters? — none of it seems obviously ersatz. But that's not to say it looks real, either. She is like a beautiful anime character come to life.

[...]

I ask her whether Kim Kardashian would exist without social media. "I don't think so..." she says, slowly, then reconsiders. "I don't think social media was that heavy when we started our show, but I think we really evolved with social media." The next day, as I scroll through Instagram, I come across a photograph of her, taken the night of our interview, wearing the champagne getup at a restaurant in Venice. I also find two photos of North toddling around the pumpkin patch in a tiny fringed cape and Baby Vans. One of these pictures has more than a million likes. "I love sharing my world with people," Kardashian tells me, and I detect no hint of falseness. "That's just who I am." No more, no less.

PARADISE BIRD

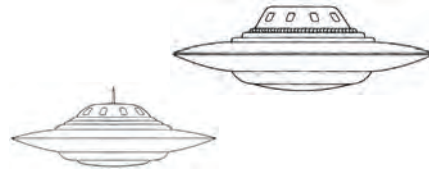
[wikipedia]

The birds-of-paradise are members of the family Paradisaeidae of the order Passeriformes. The majority of species are found in eastern Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, and eastern Australia. The family has 42 species in 15 genera. The members of this family are perhaps best known for the plumage of the males of the sexually dimorphic species, in particular the highly elongated and elaborate feathers extending from the beak, wings, tail or head. For the most part they are confined to dense rainforest habitat. The diet of all species is dominated by fruit and to a lesser extent arthropods. The birds-of-paradise have a variety of breeding systems, ranging from monogamy to lek-type polygamy.

[BJB] Clinging to the bottom side of Semajse's beamship, is a bird of paradise, a male Victoria riflebird in his full display of courtship. The naming of this group



of birds brings us to the conclusion with Augustine of Hippo, the Adamites, and the Apotropaic effect of Anasyrma



AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO, THE ADAMITES, AND THE APOTROPAIC EFFECT OF ANASYRMA

I can only speculate in the naming of the birds of paradise, by Irish zoologist Nicholas Aylward Vigors in 1825 - he must have thought their life or habitat to be *edenic*. The highly informative book “The rise and fall of Adam and Eve – The story that created us” from 2017, by Stephen Greenblatt, in a way tracks how this can have happened.

Whether we believe in the story of Adam and Eve or regard it as an absurd fiction, we have been made in its image. Over many centuries the story has shaped the way we think about crime and punishment, moral responsibility, death, pain, work, leisure, companionship, marriage, gender, curiosity, sexuality, and our shared humanness. Had history developed in a different direction, the Enuma Elish, the Atrahasis, and the epic of Gilgamesh might have served as our own bundle of origin stories and would undoubtedly have shaped us other than as we are. That it did not work out this way had consequences

He then continues to relate the polemic debates between, what later became the early Church Fathers of Christianity, in this case Augustine of Hippo and Julian of Eclanum, around 400 A.D. Their differences originates from elaborations of the reading of the story of the fall of man as either literal or symbolic. Greenblatt’s recount of these debates, through a wide range of sources, are surprisingly similar to our contemporary ethical disputes on gender, sexuality, marriage and transhumanism:

Julian argued that by Augustine’s mad logic, all parents were murderers, since the very act that brought forth their children also doomed them to destruction. What the gloomy bishop of Hippo condemned as a sin is simply the “vital fire” that is, by God’s own design, our natural way of reproducing.

Augustine countered that our way of reproducing was corrupted by Adam and Eve and has remained corrupted ever since. It is impossible, even for the most pious married couple determined to restrain their sexual intercourse within the narrowest approved boundaries,



to get anywhere at all “without the ardor of lust” (*On Marriage*). And this ardor, to which Augustine gives the name “concupiscence”, was not simply a natural endowment or a divine blessing; it was a curse, a mark of punishment, a touch of evil. The action of a married man and woman intend to beget a child is not evil, Augustine insisted: it is good. “But the action is not performed without evil” (*Against Julian*). How much better it would be if there were no need for sexual desire, if it were possible to bring children into the world in some other way than through the pleasurable stirring of the genitals by lust.

[...] Augustine’s obsessive and tormented recognition of the fact – of the inescapable presence of arousal not only in conjugal love-making but also in what he calls the “very movements which it causes, to our sorrow, even in sleep, and even in the bodies of chaste men” – shaped his most influential idea, one that weighed down the centuries that followed and from which we his heirs have only partially freed ourselves: *originale peccatum*, Original Sin.

[...] No trace of this idea is found in the reported words of Jesus, nor does it exist as a significant theme in the vast body of rabbinical writing that followed into the *Midrash Rabbah* and the *Talmud* or in the comparably vast Islamic tradition.

[...] no one before Augustine had ventured to offer such proof, the proof that makes itself felt in the stirrings of sexual arousal and in our knowledge that all of us come into the world only through this arousal. We originate in sin, and sin never ceases to manifest its hold over us.

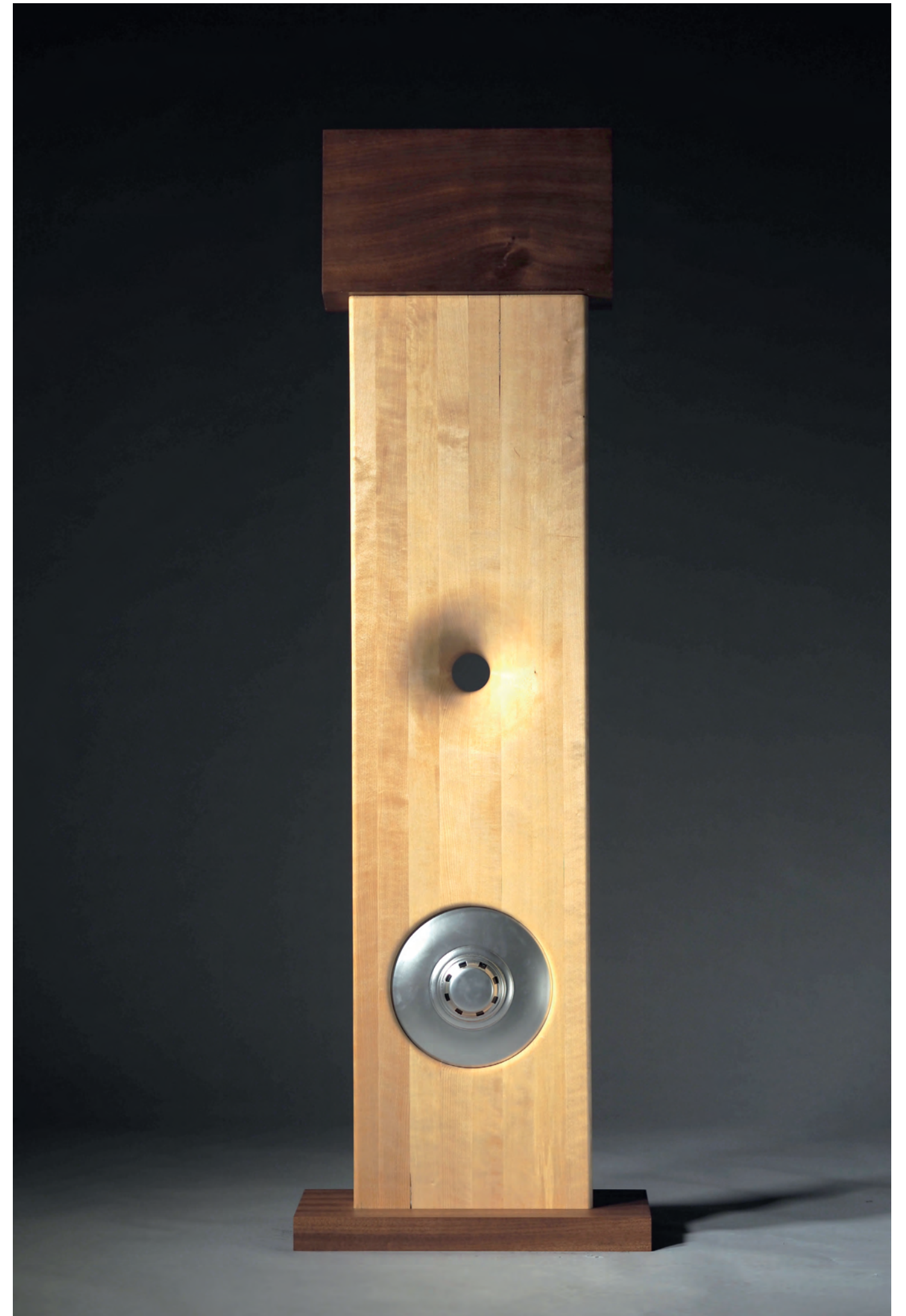
Julian and the other Pelagians cried foul: Augustine, they said, was simply reverting to the old Manichaean belief that the flesh was the creation and the possession of a wicked god. Surely this was a betrayal of Christianity, with its faith in a messiah who became flesh.

This eventually ended for Augustine in a 40 year long period, brooding on the subject of freedom, because of his previous work *On Genesis: A refutation of the Manichees*, long before his encounter with the Pelagians. He became convinced that the way forward was to take the word of Genesis literally true. “In the end it defeated him, and he knew it.” The rest of the book continues to recount how theology and art history evolved together, contributing to a literal reading of the Genesis story through ever more convincing paintings of the couple by improved techniques and focus on their bodies and how they must have felt during the expulsion (Bernward doors 1015, Masaccio 1424-28, van Eyck 1432, Dürer 1504). The project coming full circle with *Paradise Lost*, where John Milton finished, in 1667, what Augustine could not. Adam and Eve had finally become living human beings.

ADAMITES

[wikipedia]

St. Epiphanius [ed. another Church Father] and Augustine of Hippo mention the Adamites by name, and describe their practices. They called their church “Paradise”, claiming that its members were re-established in Adam and Eve’s state of original innocence. Accordingly, they practiced “holy nudism”, rejected the form of marriage



as foreign to Eden, saying it would never have existed but for sin, lived in absolute lawlessness, holding that, whatever they did, their actions could be neither good nor bad and stripped themselves naked while engaged in common worship.

ANASYRMA

[wikipedia]

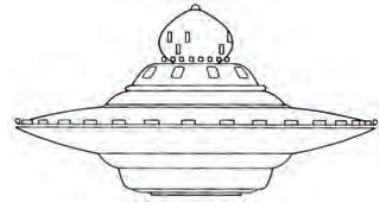
Anasyrma (Ancient Greek: ἀνάσυρμα) composed of ἀνά ana “up, against, back”, and σύρμα syrma “skirt”; plural: anasyrmata (ἀνασύρματα), also called anasyrmos (ἀνασυρμός), is the gesture of lifting the skirt or kilt. It is used in connection with certain religious rituals, eroticism, and lewd jokes (see, for example, Baubo). The term is used in describing corresponding works of art. Anasyrma differs from “flashing”, a physically similar gesture as an act of exhibitionism, in that an exhibitionist has an implied purpose of his/her own sexual arousal, while anasyrma is done only for the effect on the onlookers.

Anasyrma is effectively “the exposing of the genitals”. This is a form of exhibitionism found in religion or artwork, rather than a display for arousal, and it always refers to the act of a woman exposing herself. The act of lifting up one’s skirt to display the genitals can be an apotropaic device; it can, in circumstances of war, evoke the fear of the enemy. It can also be an act that evokes surprise and subsequent laughter and a letting go of sadness. What is significant about anasyrma is that it reflects the numinous quality of the female genitals and the genital region through which birth ensues. In several cultures, there is a myth of anasyrma used for emotional healing.

Anasyrma may be a deliberately provocative self-exposing of one’s naked genitals or buttocks. The famous example of the latter case is Aphrodite Kallipygos (“Aphrodite of the beautiful buttocks”). In many traditions, this gesture also has an apotropaic character, as a mockery or means to ward off a supernatural enemy, analogous to mooning.

[BJB] In the context of this project, the power of public nakedness can be thought of as an influx of the story with the *evil* snake tricking the innocent human pair to eat the forbidden *epistemological* good-from-evil-fruit; learning self consciousness. The boldness of flashing your junk, is perhaps proportional to the believed *evil* what prevents you from doing it. Or, as long as there is something that prevents you from doing it, courage is needed to overcome this force. However, the courage is testament to the strenght of the preventive force. Wheather Kim Kardashian broke the internet in 2014 depends solely on your ability to read her expression from Jean-Paul Goude’s photo session and what you would think breaking it actually means..





SUMMARY

Venus from Willendorf, if you like, can be seen as the worlds' first meta-level. The earliest result and proof of someone's process of individuation. A process of which, through a curious and inquisitive mind set, cannot avoid questions of shame and doubt (workshopo recalitrance). Even though it is probably not the first, something has to be that can explain the creative explosion of the Neolithic period. Sometime and somewhere, a change in anatomically modern hominids happened that is responsible for all the discovered objects we today interpret as representations of self-consciousness - works of art and symbolism. However, from outside the traditional fields of research working methodically with these issues, it seems that the list of traits used to describe what defines Homo sapiens apart from other animal species, is continuously revised and refined by new discoveries and understandings of the animal and plant kingdoms. To me this would seem like attempts of negotiating *exactly* where Latour's dichotomies should cross, i.e. it is almost impossible to avoid translating, or at least, juxtaposing or mirroring structures found elsewhere in nature to bracket our own culture and conduct. Medieval bestiaries, e.g. *The Physiologus*, would do the same, only using mythic and, what modern readers would read, as misunderstood animal behaviour to forward Christian morality. Said bestiaries is interpreted by modern scholars to 'represent a conscious and highly organized encyclopaedic drive' (Dorofeeva 2017), driven perhaps by different combinations of curiosity and power.

Today we patronize those who translated thus and those who still do, adhering either to the objectivity of the scientific method or the wisened belief of neither-objectivity-nor-subjectivity of relativist culture construction. Sometimes both, but still the boarders continue to be re-drawn and each time it is, we readjust so the lines do not blur completely - because they cannot, and if they would, we would be back in Eden in blissful ignorance. It would be the ultimate mockery of our cognitive capabilities. Whether our cognitive abilities came about by mysterious or natural causes, either abruptly or slowly, the constant re-drawing of the lines that separates nature from human culture is testament to the fact that each separation also gorges the split between reason and our other human sensibilities..

I am frankly flabbergasted by the fact that one of the first physical examples of this existential problem, being different than any written cosmogony, is a naked and fat female figurine without facial features. And if we find that offensive, thinking we have evolved passed such primitive modes of expression, the trouble only deepens. I believe the unavailable essay *Crisis* by Bruno Latour can shed light on why. We continue to do what we allways done in Europe; separating *undesired* parts of human culture and human conduct by relocating it over one of the Latourian dichotomies, from the Human Culture-side to the Nonhumans Nature-side, and create new



ideological hybrids - unaware of our denial of monsters. I believe, rather silly perhaps, that this Latourian super-monster only can be held in check by a system of world views that allow for ornamentation to be externalized and scrutinized, preventing at least in a small sense, ornamental desire to run amok internally.

As transhumanist science seek to discover, and have found, ways to hijack the inter-connectedness of the brain, to enhance our possibilities of perceiving the world, to alter our cognition, a cognition that has enabled us with powers to enhance our cognitive abilities, thus changing world as we know it - without reverence for the fact that this cognition is both what made the whole idea possible, and is also being capable of much deeper contemplation over these issues than we officially do today - would be akin to the quest for understanding the cosmos without the need for singularities.

THE REAR GUARD

Many of us would be inclined to first think of documentation as a form of diary, a step-stone path to a given result, with chronological order and historicity. But this method tells only one part of the process of what it is meant to document: what we really are after when talking about documentation of artistic research, is the discovery and dissemination of the \propto of artistic sensibilities so that we can learn more about what constitutes culture/knowledge. I believe this \propto is in danger of neglect and are becoming extinct in post-artistic times, when the belief in artistic autonomy no longer rings true. The reasons for this is manifold, but the beauty of artistic research is that transpositions of art-working, which documentation is thought to operate as, brings it forth again. However, not by default and it may not even be welcome.

Documentation forces an intellectual self-awareness upon your work and working habits. This in turn, I think, is believed to force a level of professionalism on the artistic researchers. It may not work out that way, because documentation has agency like every other material. Many of us would start this off at the wrong foot, because we would initially think of documentation as akin to objectivity. (Part of my plan is to translate AR-speak to rearguard, with present danger of translating to newspeak). In the introduction to *Transpositions - Aestetic-epistemic Operators in Artistic Research*, Michael Schwab shares his insight:

Since these notions suggest a functional identity between two things, for instance, a score and a performance or a sitter and his or her portrait, the change of position that a transposition affords cannot be so potent that it disturbs this identity. Conversely, if the change of position affects what something is—that is, if an identity does not underlie a difference but may emerge from it—a new non-representational, transpositional logic is required in which something at its previous position is not easily reconciled with what appears at its new position, altered as it is by the move



This could be paraphrased as: “Documentation of artistic research based in artistic practice, might be an oxymoron - But that’s OK, the documentation itself may become artistic - If this happens there is work to do”.

Enter the rear guard.

I have spent most of my time making the stela and planing what goes where. Time spent in proportion to what I would like to address. The work is a build-up of momentum to talk about what I think is most important, because I know that the weight of the words are intrinsically linked to the reception of the work. However, I expect no discourse in the way of how this effort relates to my choices of techniques, materiality, composition or skill. If I am lucky, a random corridor encounter will render the subject open even though the official discourse is non-present; Material agency is officially only a question of conceptual consistency or context. I will miss out on any discussion over the effect that the head of Mr. Dawkins is modelled better than the smaller ultramarine reliefs, or the reason for all the miss colourings of the painted surfaces, the marks, the cracks, the mediocre surface job. Or the likeness to Mr. Dawkins, for that matter. I spent a lot of time on it, got better as it came along, started to regret many choices from the beginning but continued with the bliss of reaching new levels. At the same time no one will have any trouble commenting the text. What I would like to talk about is this, and is where the paradise bird comes into play: would it matter if the stela were ‘perf’, both why and how? If not, what is the reason for wanting it to be? I wonder if our main problem is linked to the asymmetry of precision, not only in the discourse of the presented art-work and its companion text (which I think is talking to Schwab’s problem of a non-representational and transpositional logic between mismatching transpositions) but also in the production of it? E.g.: when writing, or trying to make coherent the inner discourse you want to express clearly, Charles Simony (p. 40) is immediately commenting every mistake in grammar, syntax, even style. Long builds have auto-communication too, only without external corrections. ‘No one will ever notice’ we say to ourselves...

The desire to document your own artistic practice necessarily creates a feedback loop, between the drive that feed the practice and the attempt to document, understand or measure, because documentation has agency to artistic sensitivity like all other materials. The only thing that can happen is that something new or unexpected can emerge from the effort. Which has very little to do with documentation, even though the attempt was to document. The attempt to triangulate with more transpositions is clever and beautiful, and will strengthen the discovery that there is no *new* knowledge to extrapolate from the triangulation itself either, only *old* knowledge that aestetico-epistemic emergence happens. This is not talking to the abandonment of ‘extra-artistic’ efforts, on the contrary, it attempts to bridge our time with previous times, and reopens questions, I think, of form, style, taste and aesthetics. Defining this as documentation in tandem or parallel with definitions of knowledge from objective science, smuggles in a view of us, on a world in cosmos, as static, external and reducible to laws. This is precisely what Bruno means by hybrids. My hypothesis is that this is ornamentation, that it is the best we’ve got, that it could



be very good and it speaks to me in möebius: the universe is emergent and creative - there is no *knowledge* to extract from it, and it will not explain it self. Knowledge is a choice and you change with it.

Knowledge of the emergent epistemological potential of art-working is not new knowledge, but perhaps forgotten. How this project turns to a 'documentation' of the aestetico-epistemic operators of the project, a testament to what changed between March and October 2019, and what I have learned, is by reading Harold Bloom: it is obvious to me that I suffered, an perhaps still suffer from *anxiety of influence*, have graduated from the *school of resentment* with a *passive-agressive* degree, and are afraid of the rise of a new theocracy. My ornamental desire, the desire for consistency, has trouble making a coherent image of both being afraid of the agency of the aesthetic epistemic operators, and the aggression as a result of this resistance to uncertain change. To accept the conflicting views would be in denial of the ornamental desire.

NON-FINISHED

If Jung's concept of the archetype forms the structural basis for his psychology, it is nevertheless for sake of the concept of individuation that the entire system was built. Individuation, for Jung, means a lifelong process of combining into union with one's own being – a conscious (and very often also unconscious) striving to bring into realization a character which is mysteriously present from the very beginning as a potential embodied in the self. (Nagy, M. 1991)

Learning to make, in the ideological climate of art school, simultaneously facing absolutes in craftsmanship and in workshops, synchronously accelerate and subvert this process of individuation. A problem usually overcome by underplaying the importance of finish, both the technical meaning of the term as well as the state of something being *finished*, with a combination of speculation. Any combination of which, through Jungian filters, divide rather than bring into union.

Kwame Anthony Appiah brings to light, in an article in the Guardian on November 9th 2016 "There is no such thing as western civilisation", an overview of the two opposing ideas to the concept of "culture" that spawned the field of anthropology in end of the 19th century. These two opposing ideas continue to thrive in ambiguous concepts of high and low culture, as e.g. *Mass Indie*, *Acting Basic* or *Normcore*. (Bandlien, C.B. 2019).

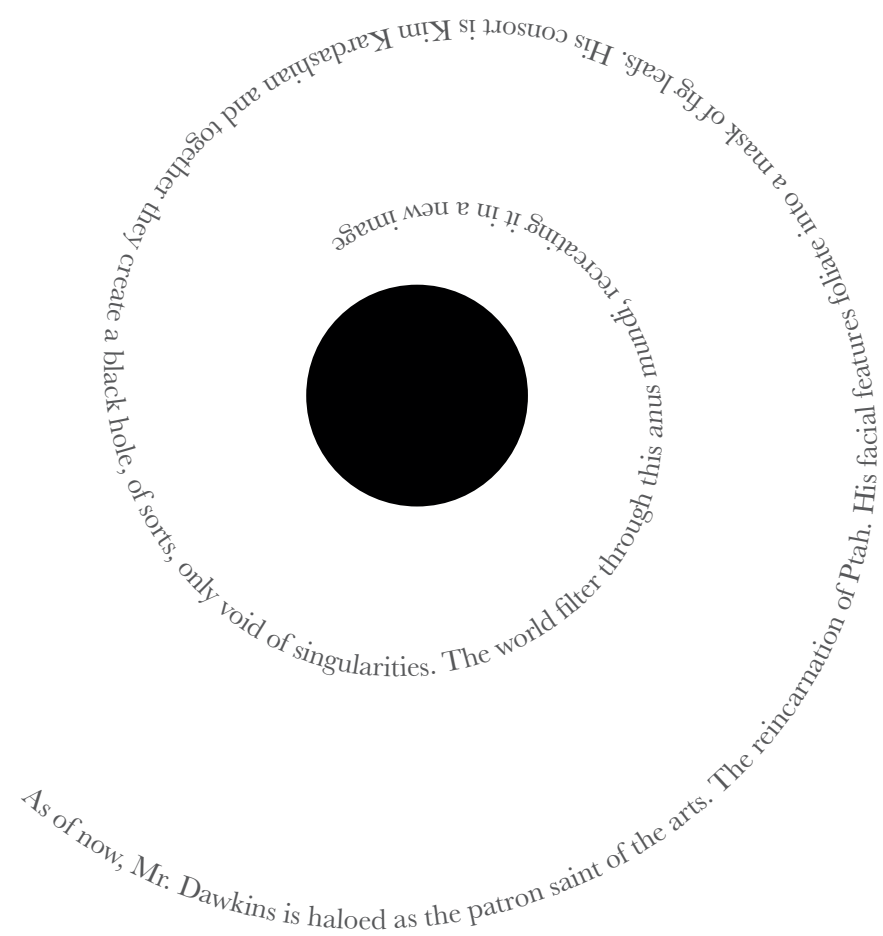
Whether we believe that "culture" is, through Edward B. Taylor, the cumulative effect and result of human endeavours, or through Matthew Arnold, that culture can only happen when people are trying their absolute best, the question remains how meaning can be discovered through either. Let's propose a third category, for the sake of argument, that western culture is best produced without human choices at all, either conscious or unconscious; simply because we have stopped believing in our own abilities to make them, and we're now better off with algorithms doing the job for us. My expressed concern is when we, through transhumanism, artificial intelligence and new materialism, are trying to overcome the



delusions of certainty in western humanist traditions, which seems to be a logical and rational way forward, make a cultivated pastiche of genuine customs. Human errors, choices and responsibilities are undermined by ideology, technology, and out-sourcing where hegemonic power games still are maintained by a quasi-occult speculation of cultural appropriations.

How this applies to a designer doing artistic research is through the creeping notion that I mysteriously cannot avoid doing it myself. It seems to be accelerating in the direction where it is all pastiche and parody. However, I learn something through Mr. Blooms concept of the *autonomy of the aesthetic*: the sense of never being quite finished is as genuine as the short euphoric moments of discovery and revelation. It does not take very long to discover that your notions of mastery, when trying to do it, change with the effort.

The Dawkins-Kardashian stela is trying to document that *documentation* of artistic research only documents the agency of the documentation; that agency happens, because it is epistemologically emergent. One dogmatic solution, however, to avoid going where this leads, is *passive-artistic* research.



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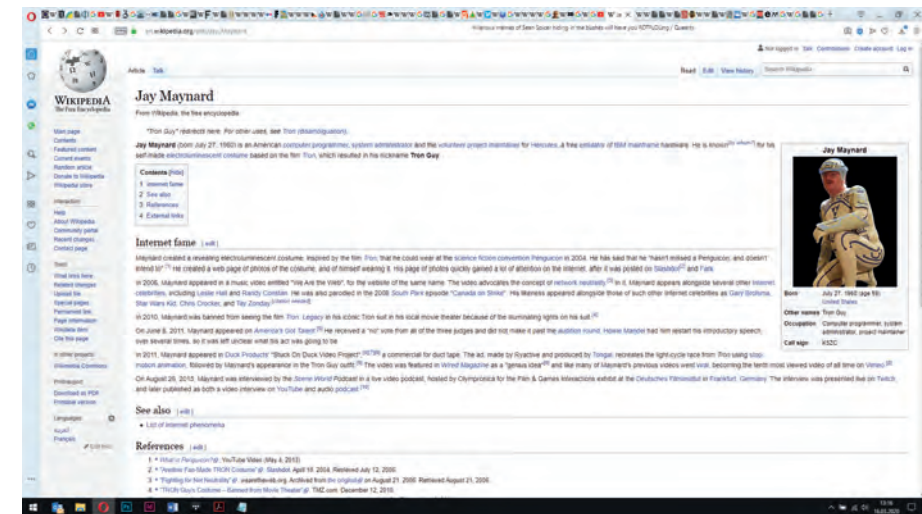
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TABS FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: 'Squatter man' Archetype; Paul Tillich - Wikipedia; Inferno 1 - Digital Dante; The gentlman and cabinetmaker's director; Transgressing the boundaries: Toward a Transformative Hermeneutics of Quantum Gravity; Vico Giambattista | Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy; Giorgio de Chirico - Google-søk; Neurophilosophy and free will - Patricia Churchland - Youtube; Herculaneum - Wikipedia; Anders L. Smith: en norsk billedskjærer fra 1600 årene | Nationalbiblioteket; Stereogram Images, Games, Videos and Software. All Free!; billy meier - Google-søk; UFO-Prophet: Billy Meier's Outer space pictures: Apollo-Soyuz docking & Others - Part 1/3; Ufo | Tall White Aliens - Part 5; billymeiertranslations.com - billymeiertranslations Ressurser og informasjon; Jim Nichols UFO Art; Who controls the agreed upon reality through the mainstream media and why they fear disclosing the truth about extraterrestrial reality; Maria Orsic - Google-søk; Viktor Frankl - Wikipedia; Suley Rolnik: The Geopolitics of Pimping | eipcp.net; Karl Popper - Wikipedia; Anthropology Between Art and Science: An Essay on the Meaning of Research | Field; Vivieksjon -Wikipedia; A Conversation over Saucers; Quote by Douglas Adams: "In the end it was the Sunday afternoons he cou..."; Asger Jorn - Wikipedia; International Movement for an Imaginist Bauhaus - Wikipedia; Gothic Art - Wikipedia; International Gothic - Wikipedia; Apollo 11 Magazine 36/N | Flickr; W1siZiIsjlyMzgwNSJdLFscCIsmNvbnZlenQlLCItemVzaXplIDlwMDBB4MjAwMFxiMDAzZSJdXQ.jpg(2000x1034), Crosses and Crucifixes: Historical Study; Serapeum of Alexandria - Wikipedia; Jacob Burckhartr - Wikipedia; Geb - Wikipedia; How to Read Egyptian Hieroglyphics - World Mysteries Blog; Villard de Honnecourt - Wikimedia Commons; Manuel de Codage - Wikipedia; Term (architecture) - Wikipedia; Atlas(architecture) - Wikipedia; monopod medieval - Google-søk; The Unexpected Relevance of Medieval Monsters; blemmyae - Google-søk; Teknikkens hemmelighet | morgenbladet; The Second Comming by William Butler Yeats | Poetry Foundation; Confessions (Augustine) - Wikipedia; William Woodsworth - Wikipedia; Jean-Batiste de Lamarck - Wikipedia; Unless the Lord builds the house Volume 2 - Arthur Eedle - Google Bøker; Ptaħ - Sesh Kemet Egyptian Scribe; ENiM - Une revue d'egyptologie sur internet; enneade - Google søk; Grand Ennead; Hephæstus - Wikipédia; Hilarious memes of Sean Spence hiding the the bushes will have you ROTFL0ing / Queerty; Plato - Phaedrus - The First Critique of Writing - Ammon - Thoth - Becoming Borealis; Certainty - Wikipedia; The experiment at La Rosacita: Uncut File Footage on Vimeo; William Morris - Wikipedia; Review of Steve Fuller, *Humanity 2.0: What it Means to be Human Past, Present, Future*, David C. Winyard - Social Epistemology Review and Reply Collective; Randy Constan - Google søk; Relationship between religion and science - Wikipedia; Conflict thesis - Wikipedia; Mark C. Taylor - Wikipedia; Rudolf Otto - Wikipedia; jonathan z smith - Google søk; "Aperspectival Madness", Why and How AQAL Grossly Overestimates Your Level of Development, Joseph Dillard; History of agriculture - Wikipedia; BBC - Culture - How a rouge squad of designers invented ideal modern living; Weissenhof estate - Google søk; Peter Sloterdijk - Wikipedia; ordet dreyer - Google-søk; The Turin Horse Trailer - YouTube; Jay Maynard - Wikipedia; Venus of Willendorf - Wikipedia; Augustine of Hippo - Wikipedia; Internatioal Center for Abduction Research; Unusual personal experience: an analysis of the data from three national surveys conducted by the Roper Organization.(Book,1992)[WorldCat.org]; Behavioral modernity - Wikipedia; Kim Kardashian on the Cover of Paper Break the Internet - Paper; A Deconstructionist Manifesto: Mark C. Taylor's "Erring" on JSTOR; The Enigma of the Green Man - Theories and Interpretations; Green Man - Wikipedia; Anasyrma - Wikipedia; anasyrma--skirt raising; Nausca (novel) - Wikipedia; "Furry"-studentene bruker storstipendet på dyrekostymer - Vi biter ikke | Kultur | Universitas.no; 'Cracking open the natural teleology; Walter Benjamin, Charles Fourier and the figure of the child; Pedagogy, Culture & Society: Vol 24, No 4; Carlo Ginzburg - Wikipedia; t-shaped pillar - Google søk; Bryson of Edinburgh/Grandfather Clock C.1825 - Bryson/19/LA158653 | LoveAntiques.com; "Considering Monoculture" - Announcements - e-flux; How to Cite Sources in Harvard Citation Format; Psychology and Alchemy - C.G.Jung - Google Bøker; Avgudenes skumringstid eller hvordan man filosoferer med hammeren - Wikipedia; knossos chair - Google søk; ... | ...; Post Luxury: - ArtEZ Platform for Research Interventions of the Arts; indesign spiral text - Google-søk.

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