



# N-SPHERE

a world behind curtains | december 2009

## FEATURING:



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C. J. LAUGHLIN | us



INLAND EMPIRE | us



ROMA AMOR | IT

## EYE TEASER:



MURAT HARMANLIKLI | TR



# N-SPHERE

## DEC. 2009

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### TRANQUILIZERS

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Passenger dearest,

Last night I dreamt of souls, passing quietly and calmly inside the warmth of bright abysses. I got taken by the hand and dragged along the narrow paths winding above a sea of stone and cold whispers. As the horizon tightened, shards of glass crept in slow motion through the air. And faster, and faster, faster... until only light remains of them.

The shapes are falling again into place. In a embryonic chaos, ruptured from effervescent solitudes, the galaxies implode. Crisp lines that cut visions into halves, a mix of forms never to be recognized, a fractal stretching under

bare feet, all exhale into the abyss its life, its essence and its sigh.

And yet, as dawn draws closer, the sky darkens and the abyss loses its majestic presence, folding into itself, until the tiniest black box remains. I place it in my pocket and follow through with the days, holding in my hand the fingers of one which was never meant to pass through me.

For now, only light awaits the new chaos and reverberates into stolen pieces of breath.

:: thora

# GLASS SHOWCASE CYRIL BERTHAULT



**Name:**  
Cyril Berthault-Jacquier

**Location:**  
Brussels/ Paris

**Occupation:**  
Picture maker

**Definition of personal sphere:**  
A sweet cocoon

**Artwork in 4 words:**  
Inspiration, emotion, poetry,  
atmosphere

**What is inspirational for you:** Daily  
Life is a great source of  
inspiration

**Currently favourite artists:**  
Patrick Le Borgne, Sébastien Redon-  
Lévigne, Gilles Maselli, Emmanuel  
Knibbe, Nathan Duarte and so many  
others...

**Tools of trade:**  
The tool does not matter, only the  
outcome is important

**Current obsessions:**  
Death

**Personal temptation:**  
To jump and fly to the moon



"City Trip"

# STONE SHOWCASE CLARENCE LAUGHLIN

*<<In our society, most of us wear protective masks of various kinds and for various reasons. Very often the end result is that the masks grow to us, displacing our original characters with our assumed characters.>>*

**Name:**

Clarence John Laughlin

**Lived:**

1905 - 2 January 1985

**Location:**

United States

**Occupation:**

Surrealist and architectural photographer, writer

**Influences:**

Eugène Atget, Charles Hoy Fort, Charles Baudelaire, Edgar Allan Poe, Claude Bragdon, fairy stories and fantasy books

**Associated with:**

Surrealism in America, avantgarde photography

**Worked with:**

Edward Steichen

**Tools of Trade:**

2 1/2 by 2 1/4 view camera

**Obsessions:**

Ghosts, allegories, a mythology of "fears and frustrations, our desires and dilemmas", nostalgia, southern myths & mythmaking, distortion of time, fragments between sleep and waking





"The Masks grow to us". 1948



# MOVING SHOWCASE INLAND EMPIRE

**Director:**

David Lynch

**Cast:**

Laura Dern (Nikki/Sue/Foul Mouthed Whore)

Justin Theroux (Billy/Devon)

Jeremy Irons (Kingsley)

Peter J Lucas (Piotrek/M2/Whore's husband)

Grace Zabriskie (Neighbor)

Karolina Gruszka (The Lost Girl)

Harry Dean Stanton (Freddy)

**Country:**

France/Poland/USA





Rabbit holes. You might be familiar with them as you might be familiar with Alice as well. Rabbit holes sometimes unravel stories and sometimes those stories are linked to each other by certain particularities. Movies unravel stories as well, but they usually unravel one story at a time. But what happens if they unravel more than one story and if those stories are not connected by an in-line plot?

Do not be fooled – this review is not intended to explain *INLAND EMPIRE*. I do not agree with explaining things thoroughly, because then I would deprive the dedicated viewers of the satisfaction they may have when they find out certain things by themselves. In my previous article I summarized David Lynch's work, underlining some of his trademarks, pointing out some of his ideas and arguing that his work is like a map. Bear this thought in mind. Now let us return to where we were...

Stories. Stories and meta-narratives. There is a remake (*On high In Blue Tomorrows* – directed by Kingsley) of a "cursed" film (47), one based on a gypsy folk tale. In the film, the protagonists (Billy and Sue) are about to engage themselves in a "forbidden-relationship". At the same time, the actors (Nikki and Devon) themselves kind of fall for one another and at one point Nikki mistakes Devon with Billy. There

is a Polish side of the film in which a man (M1) and a woman (W1) start a confrontation, the man hits her and then walks out. In the meantime, we see another man and another woman (the man looks like Piotrek, Nikki's husband) and the woman is telling him that she can't give him children. The man walks out and meets with another man and asks him what time it is. He finds out that it is 9:45, which is linked to the beginning of the film in which a supposedly Russian neighbor tells Nikki that perhaps if it had been 9:45 she would have thought that it is past midnight. There are more of these similarities.

The main difference between *INLAND EMPIRE* and, let's say, *Mulholland Dr.* is that *Mulholland* offers a simple key, a key linked to our logic or, better said, to the traditional narrative's logic. *INLAND* doesn't. Whereas *Mulholland* relied on a simple artifice of switching places of two layers while maintaining each one's characteristics (if you saw the film, you'd know what I'm talking about and which are the two layers), *INLAND* puts each layer side by side, without creating priority rules.

Now let us return to the rabbit holes a little, to holes, to be more precise. Holes as gateways. Rabbit holes as gateways. In the beginning of the film we see two people, one of them being M1. M1 asks for an entrance. By the time the scene closes, as the lights go out we see the shadow of a rabbit.

At another point of the film, one of Laura Dern's characters learns that if she wears the watch and burns – with a cigarette – a hole through a silken piece of clothing and then looks through it, she will enter in another world. The next scene we see is the one I mentioned earlier with M1 and W1. There are also those doors with *AXXON N* written on them ("AXXON N the longest running radio play in the history tonight continuing in the Baltic region...") which act as holes/ gateways as well.

Speaking of time and the man in the green coat that "has something to do with the telling of time", there are some scenes which are replayed, for example the one in which a hooker (played also by Laura Dern) meets a shrink, a scene we see after the first 30 minutes and then we see again in the movie's final part. In the beginning, the scene occurs to unravel a part of the character's history and then to unravel the context. The same pattern occurs again in the earlier stages of the film, when the actors rehearse and Freddy (Kingsley's agent) notices that someone entered their stage ("Someone's there"). Devon goes to see who is it, but comes back saying that "he disappeared where it's very hard to disappear". Later, when Nikki and Devon have sex, Nikki tells her that one day ago she did a scene where she was supposed to buy groceries for him with his car and she parked the car in a place she knew there is always a vacant parking space. When she got out



of the car she saw a door which had "AXXON N" written on it and when she opened it she saw herself having that first rehearsal and it was that moment when Freddy realized that "someone's there". Again, the scene - context pair.

However, what is linking all of these stories? On the one hand there is a common ground, but we can tell that about many random events and yet they still remain vaguely related.

Bergson stated that we do not perceive things/ideas entirely, but only fragments of them, depending on what is in our area of interest. In other terms, we perceive only that part that fits to our outer design. Henceforth, we perceive something that is already formalized to fit our own design, henceforth we may perceive what we are processed to perceive.

But this happens when the context in which a certain idea occurs fits with our design. Lynch rarely gives the viewer this comfort. If we look back at his films, we can see that the plot is simple, but what makes it difficult to sit through for many viewers is the manner in which the plot is developed. Even here, the stories are common, but Lynch manages to create a background that is bizarre and yet hard to dismiss.

How is he doing that, more precisely? By partially replacing the Figurative, with the Figure. For those unfamiliar with these two terms, they emerge from Gilles Deleuze's work, according to whom the Figurative implies narrative/representation, while the Figure implies sensation. I say partially, because Lynch still uses fragments of classic narrative, followed by abstractions. Here the narration and the sensation are blended together. He have the film ("In a high on blue tomorrows") as a gateway itself. Because, when we are to look at the story inside, from the end to the beginning we can easily see that some things are wrong. We see the husband playing a role for one, and he was not in the film. The film's tone, at the beginning is that of a soap opera more-like, the "end" of the film is disturbing.

There is another aspect, that I found - again - particularly interesting, an aspect that I noticed in the first part of the film: the moments of silence between some pieces of dialogues. The expressions on the characters' faces. They looked as if they were hypnotized or their thoughts wandered somewhere else. It vaguely reminded me of Werner Herzog's "Herz aus glas".

This consideration, however, is a standalone one. It is not linked with the rest of the article. Now going back to where we left, there is another aspect, that every Lynch connoisseur knows: in his films, the identity is mutable. However in his previous work the mutability had been rather simulated, and dictated by a narrative device. Here it is not. What he have more likely is a rhizomatic structure which connects

any point to any other point regardless of its nature. Digging deeper, there is another notion that describes a structure in which all points are connected: logic. But what we - in most cases perceive as logic - is linked again to formalisms. In fact, a logic is a closed system in which all points are connected. Since I used "a logic" and not "logic", I also imply that there might be different logics applied to different individuals. There might be some things in common between some of them, but all in all they are different entities.

## <<THIS HAPPENS WHEN THE CONTEXT IN WHICH A CERTAIN IDEA OCCURS FITS WITH OUR DESIGN. LYNCH RARELY GIVES THE VIEWER THIS COMFORT >>

The confusion is generated by mistaking logic with science. Whereas logic may deal with scientific aspects as well, it is not reduced to doing only that. Which brings us to the next step. The existence of multiple logical systems, rules out objectivity. Science doesn't.

People expect an objective view when it comes to film, a single and correct explanation, a single story or a set of stories that can be grouped around a category. But the objectivity is not something mandatory, because, in life, objectivity exists only when it comes to things that are cold. You can be objective when it comes to medicine, biology, physics etc. But what about the human mind, what about the human MO? Or the relationship between humans, their actions? The only objectivity there exists as long we exist, which is somewhat a contradiction.

The difficulty that critics encountered when they encountered INLAND EMPIRE, was the absence of an objective view (translated here, by a readable structure that controls the whole film). In art there is no objectivity, in senses there is no objectivity and in some of people's actions there is no objectivity. There are no rights and wrongs excepts the ones stated by a finite and - ironically - subjective entity. On a lighter note, the last sentence is not to be taken ad-litteram.

Another issue is the director's choice to step into digital. On one way, it offers the result a more immediate tone, one that is easier to sense and on another way, the whole language is different. However, this film doesn't resemble with the DOGME 95 films, neither does it resemble with films such as "Collateral", for example. There is, especially in the first part, a strong contrast between the cinematography and the sound (the scene where the two INOBT have a drink, for example).

Since we talked about rhizomatic structures we may as well talk about causal symmetries. Since identity is

mutable, the classical principles of causality do not apply anymore. We are taught that the Thing No. 1 causes thing No. 2 and not the other way around. Here, due to the rhizomatic structure, it happens. And since the plans are aligned horizontally, something from a plan, may cause something from the other plan. And if we add to the equation that Lynch talked a lot about the unified field I think it is clear where the last part of the sentence was heading, clear enough for me not having to write it down.

To sum things up a little, INLAND EMPIRE is a film to be experienced, rather than deciphered in a standard manner. There are some ideas attached to it, but none of them directly linked to the plot itself, and it reminded me of Sadegh Hedayat's "The Blind Owl" by means of scenes and motifs repeating themselves regularly. Its rhizomatic structure may confuse some of the viewers, but it also gives the whole films some sort of a strange unity. In spite it's dismembered "narratives", actors playing multiple characters, subplots that go haywire, the movie never feels incomplete, nor can it be dismissed since, on one hand there is no other film to relate to, and on the other, the only grounds for dismissal would be the traditional ones and the movie rejects them from start.

There are similarities with some of his other films, but this time there is no standard key to unlock it. However, there are traces such as failed marriages, loss, cursed films even, but, whereas in other films characters talk about it, we read them, here we watch them like in a movie theater, unconnected to what we were used to.

Bear in mind, that film is a standalone environment and should be treated likewise. Films are not real life, or, more precisely, films are not what we encounter in real life. Here, there is a difference between something that is depicted to happen - happening as depiction - and something that IS happening and we watch it in its hole, unlinked - again - with what we were taught or what we liked to perceive.

This certainly is not a film that would appeal to many and more than that, for the time being, I would prefer not to even call it a film, because it barely has anything to do with what film was like. It may be called, in more familiar terms, an experiment.

But for those who liked "Eraserhead" and who are willing to see what is beyond that in terms of visual experience then you may very well "have to be wearing the watch. You light a cigarette you push and turn right through the silk. You fold the silk over and then you look through the hole".

That's it for tonight, see you on the next AXXON N transmission.

:: shade



# HANGING CAGES THEATRE

I boldly stepped into the thick snow laying before me, and took a deep breath. I felt the taste of poison running through my veins, and the incandescent barbed wire gently mixing with the fiber of my being. And then, I saw the warm feeling attracting you there, luring you out of your self-absorbed hideout. After that, the pain came swiftly and merciless.

"Last night you invited me into your dizziness, and I was a bit surprised that you would share that view with me. We have known each other since I can remember but never dignified me with such an introspection." "You're kidding me?" "No, not really. See the reflexes on the blade that's sticking out of my back making it almost impossible for me to feel?" "Yes, I noticed them. Do you want me to remove only the reflexes or also that blade?" "Being yours, I think you might want to use it again in the future. So please carry on with this domestic surgery. The wounds never heal anyway, no matter how good your sewing skills are, or how many antibiotics for the peptides in my brain you pump inside me."

I watched the patterns of your discontent, and they bear some resemblance with the flying of the birds I see outside my window. I think I'm outside at least, although I do not see any difference whatsoever. The sky is still burning red, your grasp still annoys me. "What do you say we leave this place. Too big of a mess after your attempt to reconstruct the figures of your dying speech." "Perhaps you're right. Time to split." "Wait. Here's a drop of blood for your trip. I know you like it so... I thought it will please your ego to have this." "My... You left me speechless."

I contemplated the gleaming eyes take off into the dark, and felt brutal chills down the leftovers of my spine. The thin lair of snow patched me enough so that the irony of the moment doesn't suffocate me. Again. Still...



**BAHAK.B**







# ABUSE SHOWCASE ROMA AMOR

**Band:**

*Roma Amor*

**Location:**

*Italy*

**Genre:**

*Folk / Neo-Cabaret*

**Band Members:**

*Euski*

*(voce, chitarra, chord organ,  
sintetizzatore, tastiera, cori)*

*Candela*

*(fisarmonica, basso, glockenspiel, nacchere,  
marranzano, cucchiari e sedia)*

**Site:**

*[myspace.com/romamorensemble](http://myspace.com/romamorensemble)*

To begin with, for the ones who are not familiarized with who Roma Amor is: when and how did your musical project come into being?

Our musical project started two years ago, when Candela convinced Euski to stop playing alone at home and to think about putting some of her passions together, among which cabaret, chanson française and folklore.

And the commonly found "describe Roma Amor in no more than 3 words" (you could also choose between colours or symbols, if needed).

Amor Vincit Omnia.

Who had the idea of the band name? "RomA" and "AmoR" at the same time, mirrored words.

In Roma Amor music is energetic and sombre, romantic and angry, accurate and rough, in other words it is something and its contrary at the same time: "Roma Amor" mainly conveys

this meaning, being a two faced word. The idea came into our heads while reading historical researches about the esoteric name of Rome. Some scholars wrote about Amor, the Latin word for love and palindrome of the city name itself, as the mystical name of Rome. Isn't it fascinating? Rome may have gained its empire through brilliant military planning, but it was able to keep it thanks to the promise of Amor (or at least that's an hypothesis of some scholars).

R	O	M	A
O	L	I	M
M	I	L	O
A	M	O	R





Do any of the band members have former (or formal) musical experience in solo projects or other bands?

Maybe it could sound strange, but some of us come from punk 77-new wave bands. Actually, our music has a noir-cabaret taste that is strongly influenced by our listenings of new wave and dark records, such as the ones by Virgin Prunes, Marc Almond, Tuxedomoon, Japan...

You've already signed to the Italian label Old Europa Cafe so worldwide acknowledgement is getting nearer. How did that collaboration start?

We already knew some of the productions of Old Europa Cafe that we liked very much; so when the boss label, Rodolfo, showed interest in some of our tracks on line we were very honoured with it. Since then a new interesting collaboration started and it is still based on a reciprocal esteem.

How does the creative process of a Roma Amor song develop, both lyrically and instrumentally?

We usually think of an idea first: it could be just an atmosphere or a general topic. Then we write down free compositions or record some musical fragments that come into our heads with a little old recorder that we always bring with us. Recently, for example, we thought of bringing into music some characters of the Italian folklore, intriguing magic and scary figures almost forgotten by the contemporary society.

While listening to the songs on your album, the mix of "old school" instruments (such as the accordion) becomes obvious. How does that contribute to conveying the Roma Amor sound?

Undoubtedly when we think of arranging a new song, the use of the right instruments is necessary to convey the right atmosphere. The accordion and the classic guitar, typical instruments of the Italian tradition, seemed to fit perfectly in our songs that are musically rooted in our folklore. Other old school Italian and European instruments will play an important role in our next songs. Don't miss our next production if you want to discover what they are!

## DISCOGRAPHY:



### ROMA AMOR - s/t Old Europa Cafe (April, 2008)

1. A Cosa Pensi
2. Mother Fist
3. Next (raw)
4. La Nave dei miei Sogni
5. You Haven't Changed
6. Les Amants de Saint Jean
7. Your Kiss
8. Ferro e Fuoco
9. La Follia
10. Next
11. My Shadow in the Dark



### ROMA AMOR - Femmina Old Europa Cafe Out Now

1. La Guerriera
2. La Belda
3. La Zirinelda
4. La Borda
5. Lo Lo Lo
6. Settimane Spagnole
7. Azzurrina
8. Ela Vera
9. Femmina
10. Nightporter

Since some of your songs seem to be cut out of an intimate cafe, how important is musical improvisation to you, especially in concerts?

Our recordings have always focussed on emotion and spontaneity, so the quality of the resulting sound has inevitably to take inaccuracy into consideration (isn't life like that?).

An interesting pattern can be traced through your 2008 album: mainly the neo-cabaret feeling which blends nicely with the seductive female voice. Are you gonna try and keep that pattern for your future work as well or do you feel it is just a temporary phase?

Surely the tavern-ballad, the use of naif sound and folk melodies, all typical elements of cabaret music, will have a central role also in our future tracks. Another aspect of cabaret music that we would like to fully recover is the style of the lyrics, usually written about a story to be told or moulded into rhymes or lullabies. In a similar context a seductive and deep female voice couldn't be more appropriate.

By checking your myspace site, one can see some interesting composers in your list. Marc Almond, Jacques Brel and Nico, to name just a few of them. How have they been influential for your work?

We wanted to show our thanks to certain characters such as Almond and Brel through our songs because they have left a deep trace in our way to live music. Euski was shocked by the voice of Almond when she was only ten (that was so long ago!) and despite of her age she learnt what is the art of exploiting the voice and to move one's feelings. Brel is a maestro in telling stories and there's no need to go any further about him: his music talks for him. What to say about Nico? A way of expressing femininity through an unusual and original voice, far from any kind of stereotype.

Are there any other artists or things which influence Roma Amor?

Obviously other artists are of adamant importance in our sounds, but they are too many to be put in our my space site. Anyway we shouldn't forget Bowie, Scott Walker, De André, Yann Tiersen, Milva, Gavin Friday, Morricone...

What are your thoughts related to the contemporary neofolk / cabaret scene? Do you feel that Italy has some interesting projects to offer these days?

There are a lot of interesting bands in Italy that play neo-folk and neo-cabaret, we have several works of some of them (Spiritual Front, Ain Soph, Recondita Stirpe, Albireon, Division S...). One thing we like about this scene is that within the same genre each band is different from the other, and we think this is very enriching.

One of my favourite songs on this album is the cover version of Brel's - Next. Although "cover" is probably not a suitable word since your version is very different and "reworked" so to say. What do you think of the status of new bands who decide to do covers of inspiring tracks? Some say that there is a wide range of contemporary "cover bands", even if it is not at all the case for you.

In our album we put four covers and "Next" has had a particular importance for us but, as you say, it's not really the case of a cover as typically perceived. In fact we didn't copy the original version, but instead we tried to personalize it, making it ours by taking the original as inspiration. As our first album we wanted to use the cover songs as a "manifesto" of our musical intentions and feeling.

Any plans or collaborations for your future work?

We are in contact with several bands related to the industrial/neo-cabaret scene and we have a relationship of reciprocal esteem with them. So it is likeable that someday there will be the chance to start an interesting musical collaboration. As we have just started to create some new original tracks for our new work it is too early for us to think of a collaboration right now but...you never know!

Any words for the ones who are reading this and are interested in your work?

Roma Amor is for those who want to search deepness into the simple things of life, in an atmosphere made up with a good company, a sombre relaxing light and a good glass of wine.

interview :: [anemic.cinema](http://anemic.cinema)



Artwork: Antonella Piroli

# CHAINS + SCISSORS



thora.noir  
.remedy.

# CHAINS + SCISSORS



anemic.cinema  
antumbra.



# EYE TEASER

## MURAT HARMANLIKLI

### TURKEY

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