

IN-SPHERE

a world behind curtains | may 2011

FEATURING



J. SANTERINEROSS



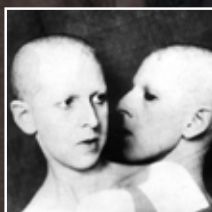
FÉLICIEN ROPS



PEEPING TOM



ALLERSELEN



PERFORMATIVE IDENTITIES



CURRENT 93

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N-SPHERE

MAY 2011

EDITORIAL

TRANQUILIZERS

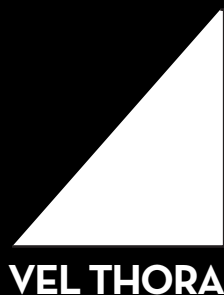
I hold a beast, an angel and a madman in me«. The gate to things inside, the shape of things outside, the memory of the future and the prediction of the past, all subside in the entanglement of neural pathways that one calls a mind. The human psyche and the human brain are mere shovels, should one try and dig deep inside. However, the more delicate way to look through is to gaze upon, as there are always outlets for the beasts and the angels and the madmen.

Axiomatically, one's body is the most efficient tool of expression for what resides within, in that deep, organic, primeval way. The limits of the shapes outside, however stretched indefinitely they might be, are bound by the limits of the human body. *John Santer-ineross'* work dwells on the palisades of physical distortion, as bodies shape the beasts inside. Alongside the ambit, there are shards of mirror which hold frailly the obsessions of the soul. Slowly sifting through them, the voyeur of ages makes way from the *Peeping Tom's* celluloid into a deform paste meant to hold together the outer limits of comprehension.

»In the depths of winter I finally learned there was in me an invincible summer.« When one blends into any medium, the only way out is the dichotomy with the shapes outside. To learn the chasm is to conquer the beast, to meet the self is to dive into the outward realm. The organic connection with the unseen nature, the single point in space and time when one can exist within the same brims of consciousness as the myths - this charming reality has been captured by *Allerseelen's* and *Current 93's* works. However, the self inside might shape the self outside through what is called performative identity; the human and its shelter thrive symbiotically.

»I feel it now... there's a power in me to grasp and give shape to my world. I know that nothing has ever been real without my beholding it.« Either to let out the beast, or nourish it inside, the human and the universe are fused... disconnecting is not an option.

Quotes | Dylan Thomas. Albert Camus. Rainer Maria Rilke



VEL THORA

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JOHN SAN

GLASS
SHOWCASE
TERINEROSS

»BETWEEN THIS REALITY AND THE ONE IN MY HEAD«

Name:

John Santerineross

Location:

Athens, Georgia, USA

Occupation:

Photographer

Definition of personal sphere:

Somewhere between this reality and the one in my head I share with my demons.

Artwork in 4 words:

Primal, introspective, exposing, honest.

What is inspirational for you:

The world around me, the people in this world, the interaction of one human being to another, the way we perceive who we are, what we believe, why we believe it and the conflict that comes in trying to rectify these.

Currently favourite artists:

My inspirations are Jan Saudek and Irina Lonesco, but I have many artist friends around the world who I respect such as: Saturno Butto from Italy; Ken-Ichi Murata, Japan; Alessandro Bavari, Italy; Derek Caballero, USA.

Tools of trade:

At this moment Nikon D7000 camera.

Current obsessions:

At this moment I have become very obsessed with firearms and building a bomb shelter, but that is just right now.

Personal temptation:

Beautiful women, coffee, cheesecake, Beer, Humus.



photo | *John Santerineross. Dream. Courtesy of the artist*

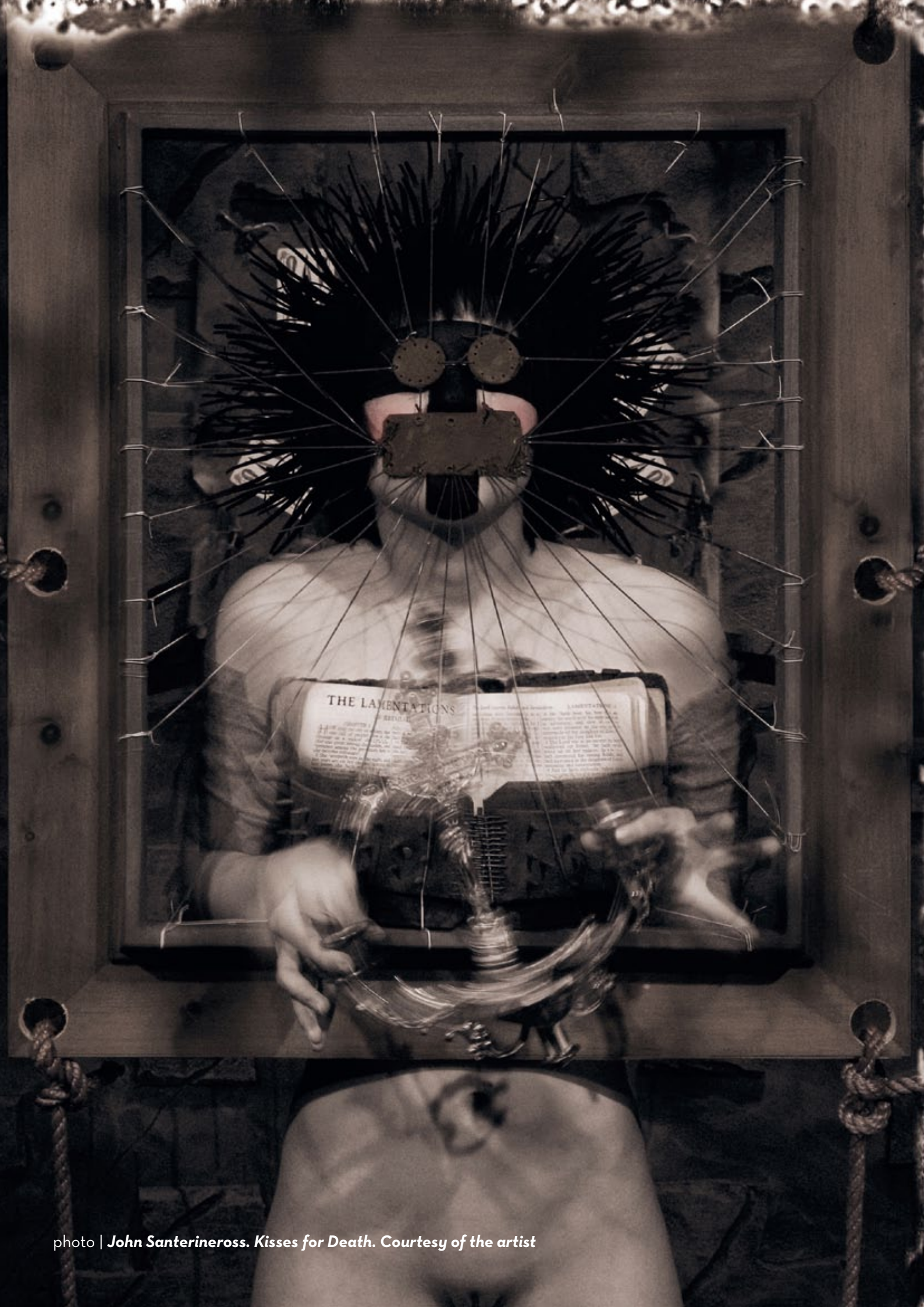


photo | John Santerineross. *Kisses for Death*. Courtesy of the artist



photo | John Santerineross. *Pursuing the White Stain*. Courtesy of the artist



photo | **John Santerineross**. *Attis Driven To Insanity*. Courtesy of the artist

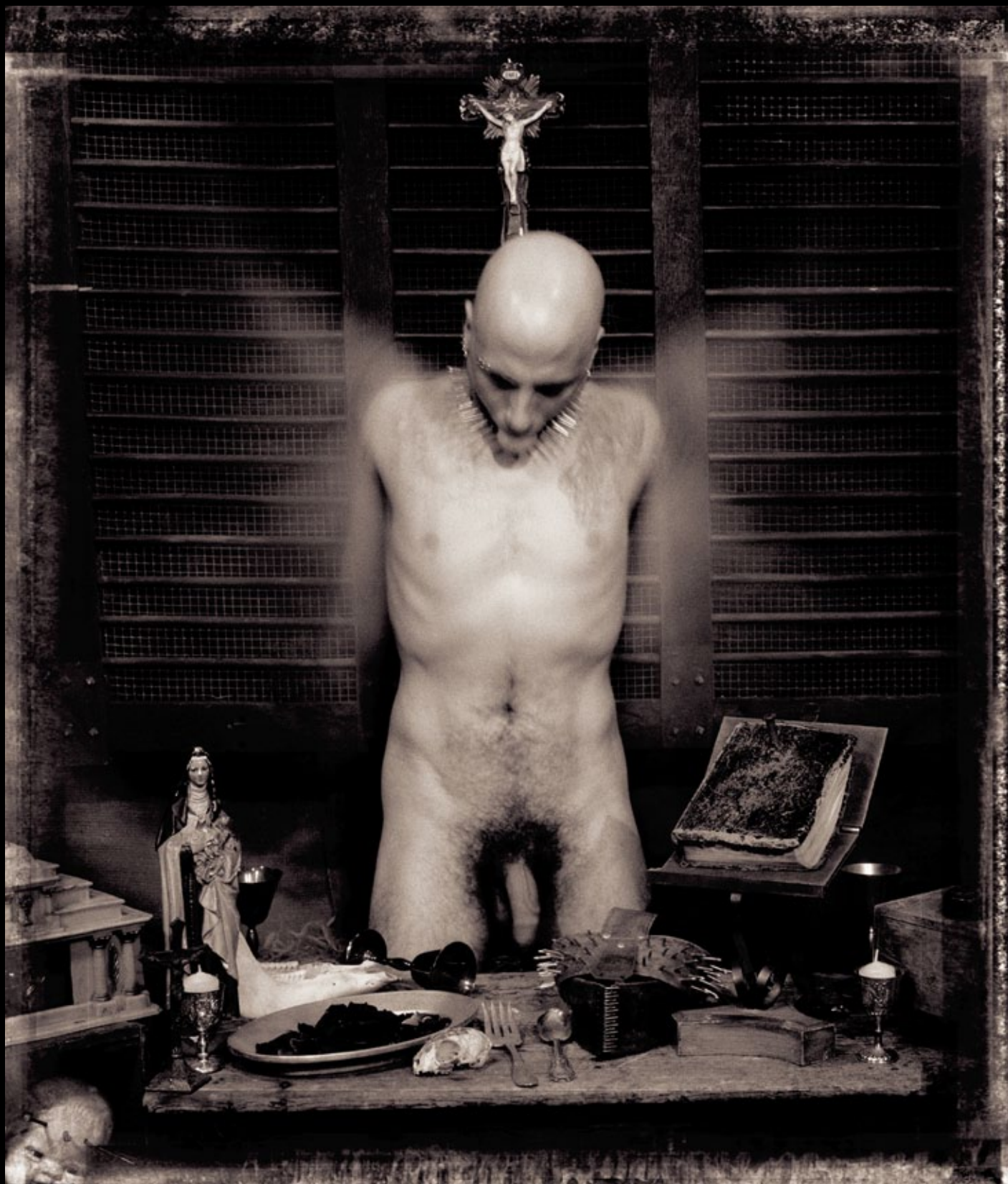


photo | *John Santerineross. The Sacristan. Courtesy of the artist*



photo | **John Santerineross.** *The Animus.* Courtesy of the artist



photo | **John Santerineross. Renunciation of Al-Basir. Courtesy of the artist**



photo | John Santerineross. *Three Lifetimes Spread*. Courtesy of the artist



photo | **John Santerineros**. *Holding Hands With My Best Friend*. Courtesy of the artist



photo | **John Santerineross.** *Cicada.* Courtesy of the artist

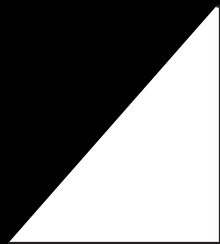


photo | **John Santerineross**. *The Symbolism of the Elements*. Courtesy of the artist

FÉL

STONE
SHOWCASE
ICIEN ROPS

»DISAPPEAR IN THE FOREST... SILENT AS DESIRE, SILENT AS MYSELF«



DIANA DAIA

Name:

Félicien Rops

Lived:

7th July 1833 - 23rd August 1898

Location:

Namur, Belgium

Occupation:

Painter, Caricaturist, Printmaker

Influences:

Charles Baudelaire

Influenced:

Joséphin Péladan

Connections:

Charles Baudelaire, Théophile Gautier, Alfred de Musset, Stéphane Mallarmé, Jules Barbey d'Aurevilly,

Puvis de Chavannes, Gustave Moreau, Joris-Karl Huysmans

Technique:

From lithographs to etchings

Associated with:

Symbolist Movement, Decadent Movement, Grand Orient of Belgium, Uylenspiege, Société Libre des Beaux-Arts de Brussels, Society of Etchers, Les XX

Obsessions:

Sex, Death, Satanism, Freemasonry, Skeletons, Prostitutes, Parisian Life, Catholicism, Egyptian Pyramids

Quote | Félicien Rops



photo | Félicien Rops. 1878. Pornokratès. Courtesy of the artist

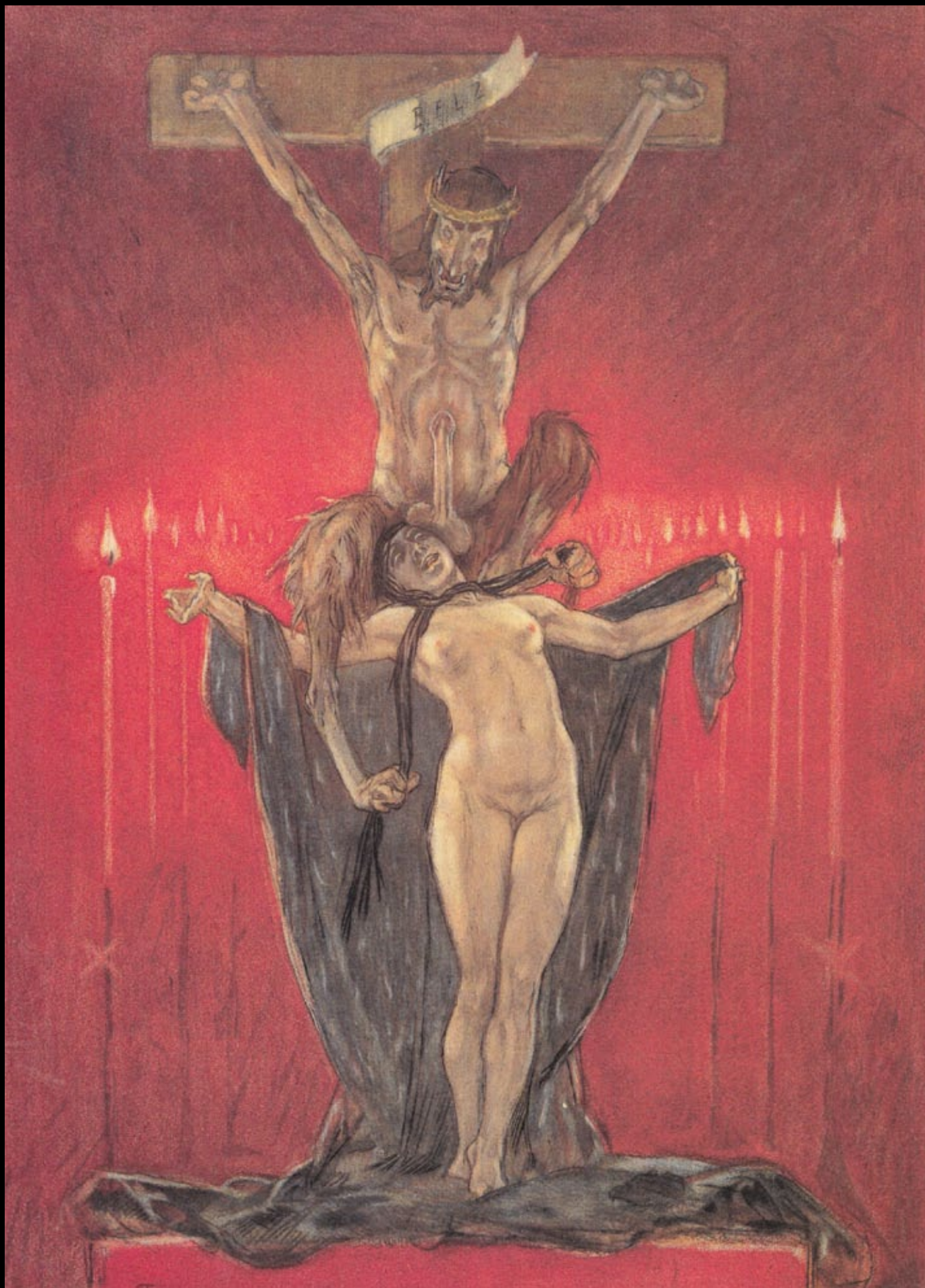


photo | **Félicien Rops. 1882. Les Sataniques. Le calvaire. Courtesy of the artist**

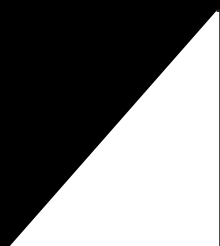


photo | **Félicien Rops. 1878. La tentation de Saint Antoine. Courtesy of the artist**

PE
THE UNM

MOVING
SHOWCASE
EPING TOM
ASKED FEAR

»DO YOU
KNOW WHAT
THE MOST
FRIGHTENING
THING IN THE
WORLD IS? IT'S
FEAR.«



VEL THORA

Peeping Tom shapes the story of a young man with a delight in photography... or so it seems. The film embarks on a journey that is never finished and leaves behind a frustration that is never resolved. Reeking of selfishness, the story is told dominantly through the eyes of one man, and making assumptions about the outcome of the

true protagonist of this film is what is left at the bitter end, while standing up and dredging the feet on dirty cinema theatre carpets.

Released in 1960 and directed by Michael Powell, *Peeping Tom* employs a rather delicate sense of observation. Instead of wreaking havoc in military

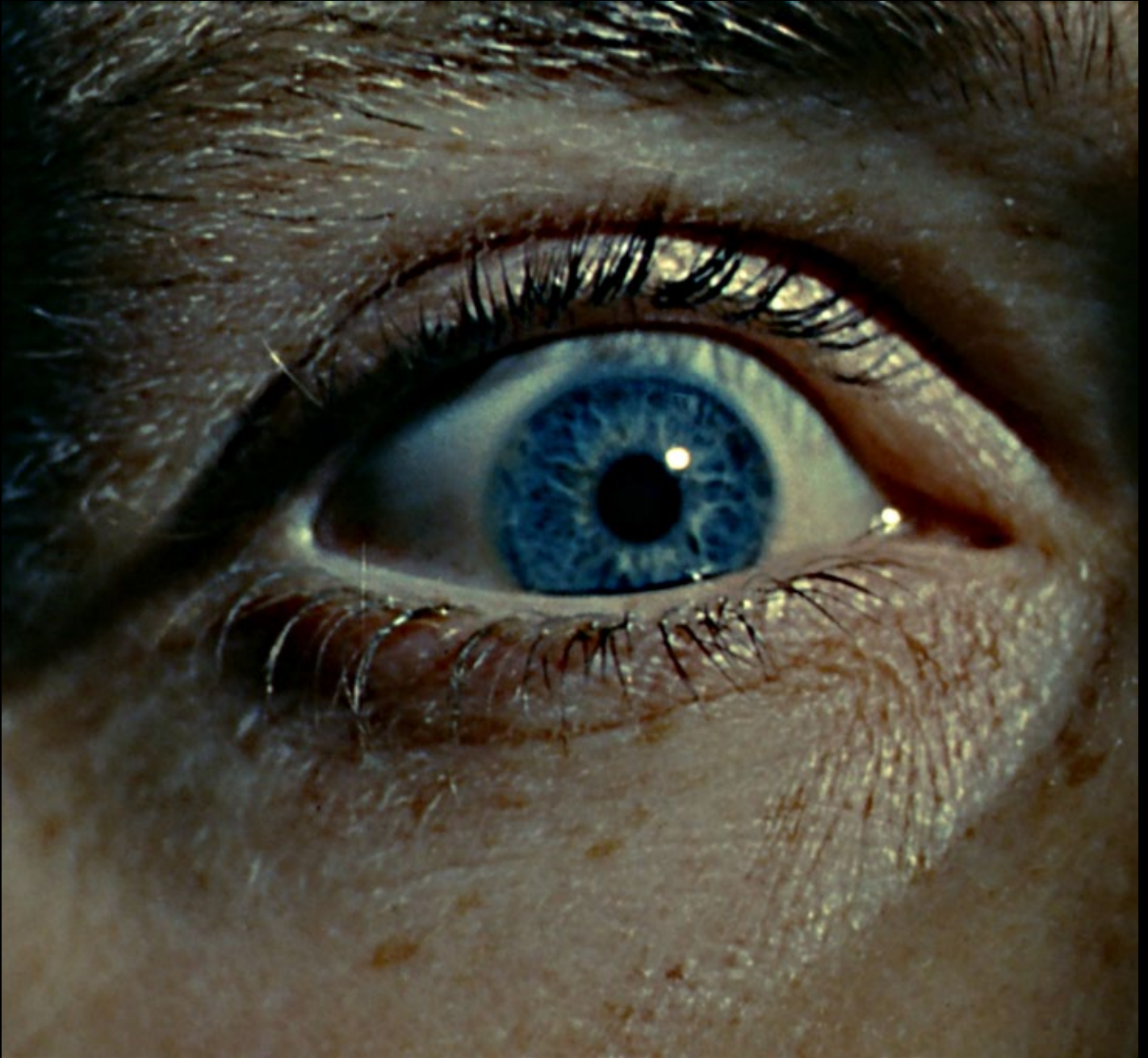


photo | *Peeping Tom*. 1960. Screenshot

boots, the viewers might find themselves wearing fluffy bunny slippers... made of actual bunnies, with blood and other things leaving imprints behind; at least that is how critics have perceived this piece of cinematography for years. From almost puritan views, to shy interpretations from the perspective of banality infused masses, the point of the film eludes the decades. Not surprising, since the mask of deformity that this film carries has been analysed, discussed, dissected, tortured, poked and pierced, but never removed.

The first half of *Peeping Tom* sets the scene and brings forth all elements necessary for understanding the real implications of the entities engaged in the story, while the second part makes way into not resolving anything - neither the plot, nor the emotional issues priorly brazed upon. The link between all these is Mark Lewis, a focus puller at a film studio and part time pornographer. Quasi-childish, Mark oscillates between highly emotional states of mind, when he seems to regress to a frightened little boy, to tense moments when he becomes deeply dominant and eager to appease his obsession. Mark films from around corners, he is not getting directly involved. His persona is enveloped in a sense of detachment that, as it will be discovered later, makes him not a part of this world, but an object manipulated by the true protagonist of this film.

Watching through the first part of *Peeping Tom*, a myriad of obvious hints are given in order to construct Mark's personality and obsessions. There is utter loneliness sifting through each frame and a high level of shyness when talking face to face with women. His closeness to them can only be achieved through the reels, and only inside the personal space detached from the rest of the world, a special studio hidden from the part of





the room that is visible to others. Intrigued by the imperfections in women, he needs to relive the moments he films, watching them at home over and over again. Slowly, Helen makes her way into Mark's world, not as a watched upon neighbour, but as a possible witness to the unseen face behind the mask. She demands and he gives in, she asks and he answers; Helen becomes a shallow duplicate of the entity driving him forth, but still unable to overcome the deeply rooted obsession. At the same time, the viewer is introduced to childhood trauma Mark has suffered. On the one hand, these revelations try to explain Helen's behaviour, adding another layer to the mask. On the other hand, they subtly and ingeniously open the curtain towards the true protagonist of this film. During childhood, he was borderline tortured by his father in the name of science, a father interested in studying fear in children. Mark was always filmed, never had a moment of privacy, was awoken during the night by the cold touch of lizards or was even forced to hold his dead mother's hand, generating repercussions into his view of women later on. Fear has become for him a way to view his surrounding, and thus, other women; the lenses have become his eyes, as he shifted from the role of the frightened to the role of his father. A very important piece of the narrative, and one easily passed upon, is Mark's dedication to his father's house and his father's books. These books that he holds in a shelf, together with the films his father took of him and the audio tapes that hold his screams and tears, represent the outcome of his suffering, they have a life of their own. They exist into eternity, not frail, not mortal. The image of Mark's father fades away, but his work remains. Looking closer, the father is suffering from a special form of voyeurism in itself - filming his son. While his obsession



is materialized into books, Mark's obsession should be transformed into a documentary, revealing a repetitive cycle.

Not searching for sexual gratification, but instead looking from afar at what he can't ever have, Mark doesn't care that he could be caught. He enjoys the scared looks of people when they surprise him basically staring,

either when seeing couples kiss in the shadow of a wall or while looking through the window of his tenant party. Mark's interest in the investigation taking place around him is pathological. He needs to capture everything on camera, he even expresses his desires openly. That's why his interest in scopophilia and whether or not it can be cured is not a valid inquiry, but a way to move the interest of the



police towards him. But why, why be caught? To break a cycle, to catch his father in his infamous actions, too.

The one question left to answer is: who is the true protagonist of this film? The answer is clear the moment Mark receives his first kiss. He transfers the kiss to his camera, defining himself through it, pledging his eternal submission to the entity holding

him captive: the documentary. All Mark's actions are driven by the documentary, all his thoughts go to it, even when Helen appears in sight, but she is no match for this primal being deeply lodged into his essence.

The world has its heroes, the world has its foes. By subtle impositions over the definitions of both, the borderline between right and wrong,

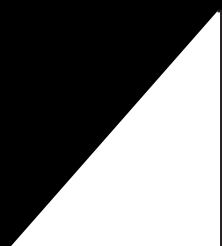
art and perdition fades abruptly. As perspectives change from outside to the ones inside the lens, the camera bonds together a hidden, quintessential, congenital peeping tom: film itself.

photos | **Peeping Tom. 1960.**
Screencapture

AL

ABUSE
SHOWCASE!
LERSEELEN
INTERVIEW

»IF I WANT TO
DISAPPEAR
ONE DAY
COMPLETELY
WITHOUT
LEAVING ANY
TRACES I KNOW
EXACTLY WHERE
TO GO«



DIANA DAIA

:: Gerhard, you have recently returned from a stimulating trip to Catalunya, where you spent a couple of weeks with friends and fellow musicians. This could be a fitting trigger to our conversation - how did you find this experience, considering it was not your first visit there?

I like Catalunya very much, it is full of beautiful and also wild, adventurous landscapes. Some of its mountains like Montserrat and some coasts like Cap de Creus where Salvador Dali lived look very surrealistic with some of their geological features - and I think that this special genius



photo | *Diana Daia. Photo of Gerhard Hallstatt. Wien. Courtesy of the artist*

loci of the nature inspired very much the art of Surrealism of artists like Salvador Dali, Antoni Gaudi and others in Catalunya. The artists just imitated the nature. I have some close friends in this area – *Arnica*, *Narsilion*, *Ô Paradis* and others, and all of them seem to be inspired very much by magical Catalunya too. The ritual folklore project *Arnica* invited me to be on stage with them for some songs in February 2011 in an open air concert in the Serra de Collserola woods close to Barcelona. This was a special experience, it was raining, we performed in the grass, and there were two fires, one for meat and one for flesh – in the second one the head of a dead wild boar was slowly burning down during the concert. I spent a lot of time with *Arnica* and visited with my friends of *Narsilion* the magical mountain Pedraforca with its twin peaks. It was a great magical mystery tour – and I also found time to explore some great places in Barcelona, for example the wonderful Art Gothic collection in the museum MNAC which was quite impressive with all its bloody and cruel iconography from mediaeval Catholicism.

:: You have worked on your language skills in both Spanish and Catalan during your recent visit. Both those languages are considered very mixed, would you describe *Allerseelen* as a cultural blend, mapping different parts on the globe?

It was great to be back in magical Catalunya. *Allerseelen* have a certain connection to this country as we already recorded some years ago two songs with the Catalan singer Rosa Solé. We got to know her some years ago at the festival *Arcana Europa* in Segobriga. One of these two songs is *Canço de somni*, *Dream Song*, and the other one is *Marques de Púbol*, a song about the love affair between *Amanda Lear* and *Salvador Dali* that

I had written inspired by the wonderful book by *Amanda Lear*: *My Life with Dali* who was a muse and maybe more, almost a goddess, for *Salvador Dali*. My Spanish is ele-

»THERE IS A VISIBLE REALITY AND AN INVISIBLE REALITY, AND WE ARE LIVING IN THE HEART OF A TERRA INCOGNITA OR MAYBE MANY TERRAE INCOGNITAE«

mentary, and my Catalan is not existing at all, I just understand the words that are close to Spanish. *Allerseelen* is definitely a very polychrome cultural blend – a wild range of maybe too many inspirations from maybe too many countries. We even have a

Flamenco song in our programme – the song *Spanische Tänzerin* written by *Rainer Maria Rilke* in Toledo. And there are also some compositions in our oeuvre that could be considered as certain slow motion Tango compositions in the sense of *Astor Piazzolla* whom I like very much too. For several years now, *Allerseelen* have been very colourful whereas the very early recordings that were inspired by alchemy and shamanism were quite monochrome with their loops of kettledrums, violins, bones, raven choirs. In some way I feel like a technosophical troubadour, and all these travels, with or without concerts, are for me wonderful sources of inspiration.

:: Judging from the photos you took there, Catalunya possesses almost a mystical quality, in the vein of the *Allerseelen* song – *Caja de Pandora* (Pandora's Box). What would be some of the interesting items coming out of that box? A nice blend of both Christian and pagan motifs is noticeable in the paintings you've seen in this Art Gothic exhibition... Do you think we could still refer to places in Europe as containing secrets, considering the strong tendency for demythologization nowadays? I have in mind the name for the future *Allerseelen* album – *Terra Incognita*, which we'll approach later on.

I think that all landscapes possess a certain mystical quality and aura. I love fairy tales about caves, mountains, woods. They tell a lot about the character of a landscape and are sometimes full of occult and surreal elements. And even if I know a lot about the history of a place, there are still a lot of secrets – there is a visible reality and an invisible reality, and we are living in the heart of a *terra incognita* or maybe many *terrae incognitae*. The Austrian occultist *Guido von List* wrote a book named *Mythologische Landschafts-*



photo | Gerhard Hallstatt. 2011. Art Gothic, Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya, Barcelona. Courtesy of the artist

bilder – this is an expression that I like very much. Even very touristic places like Kutná Hora in Bohemia, Montserrat in Catalunya, Montsegur in Southern France or Venezia still preserve some of their mysteries. Everything in our life is at the same time surface and symbol, that is why I like so much a certain quotation by Oscar Wilde in his novel *Dorian Grey*: »All art is at once surface and symbol. Those who go beneath the

surface do so at their peril.« This song, *Caja de Pandora*, was written by Rosa Solé for *Allerseelen* for the special CD release *Edelweiss*. For me *Pandora's Box* is a strong symbol – maybe it is the mankind of the iron age, the modern world with their darkness, diseases, with death and destruction coming out of this box.

:: *These days, I stumbled again upon this fragment written by Roland*

Barthes: »Myth hides nothing and flaunts nothing, it distorts; myth is neither a lie nor a confession: it is an inflexion.« So, deconstruction, a tendency to get away from myth and create new frameworks, and yet a »love-hate« relationship towards it. What is your take on this, and how important is mythology for your musical project, *Allerseelen*?

I see everything with the eyes of an artist, so for me the colourful world



photo | Gerhard Hallstatt. 2007. Hallstatt, Upper Austria. Courtesy of the artist

of mythology is like a Grail that never may be empty - it is a vessel full of significances, symbols that are inspiring and nourishing my imagination again and again. And maybe my imagination is nourishing this Grail too. It is a dynamic world without stagnation, the world of mythology never may become boring - even if allegories and myths remain the same, I am experiencing them some time later in a different way. C. G.

Jung wrote a lot about this in his works. You cannot climb the same mountain twice as you changed in the meantime - and very probably you cannot look at the same symbol twice as you changed in the meantime too. Maybe mythology is at the same time a medicine and a poison - a Grail full of precious things and a Pandora's Box full of poisons. Anyway, I am in love with these medicines and poisons of mythology and

like to play with them to create new configurations, constellations - and maybe new realities which are playing later with me. In my music I am working with sounds like a child with toys or a worker with tools, in some way an alchemical process and a sacred science, a certain quest in a mythological sense - but at the same time it is also very much a joyful game and play.



photo | **Gerhard Hallstatt. Schädel und Edelweiss.** Courtesy of the artist

:: I believe that myth can become »dangerous« when placed in direct connection to history, and consequently politics. Once one acknowledges that history intrinsically implies fragmentation and mystification, they are able to detach themselves completely from facts and years. In a sense, this is something that Allerseelen pursues, right? Although linked to the neofolk / industrial scene, you are not interested in

portraying WW2 scenarios, for example.

I think that history and politics are always dangerous, also without myths. They are always blood-stained. Both, *Ludwig II* and *Adolf Hitler* were Wagnerians, the first one was very peaceful, the second one very martial. Both were inspired very much by all the myths that *Richard Wagner* used in his work. This is for me a fascinating example

for the power of art - a powerful medicine or powerful poison. I have ideas for an *Allerseelen* concept CD that may be called *Neuschwanstein*, inspired by *Ludwig II* and his magical life. In some way, the *Allerseelen* CD *Neuschwabenland* that we published some years ago contains some utopic poison from the *Pandora's Box* of the Twentieth century named totalitarianism: It was inspired by a terra incognita named *Neuschwa-*

benland, a territory in Antarctica, that combines reality and myth, politics and utopy, technology and occultism. Sometimes this release by *Allerseelen* had been misunderstood and also created some minor problems for us – so I agree, certain myths and symbols definitely may be dangerous, especially for the artists playing with them. But this special release was also inspired by various other things, for example by J. G. Ballard's amazing novel *Crystal World*. Two years ago we published on *Ahnstern of Neuschwabenland* a beautiful vinyl edition with additional songs that one may find only on vinyl.

:: You've described your concerts as magical mystery tours, which convey a certain atmosphere for *Allerseelen*. How important is to be consistent with that narrative and to induce a similar trance state in your listeners? I do not consider the concerts themselves as magical mystery tours but the way of travelling with all its experiences in another city or country when we perform somewhere – this is sometimes like a microcosm of life. I love concert travels that are a wonderful combination of culture and nature and like to return home with dozens or hundreds of new impressions of previously unknown wonderful artworks, legends, places, people. The actual live performance is only a part of many wonderful experiences, some kind of peak experience – like the peak of a mountain that becomes much more worthwhile because it took some time and efforts to climb it. I really love this special kind of travelling, *Allerseelen* always have avoided to perform somewhere without having time for the place where we are invited. *Allerseelen* was in the beginning very close to ritual music – but nowadays, *Allerseelen* are too much song-oriented, and the songs that

we usually perform on stage, are probably also too short to induce states of trance in the audience. To achieve this gain, it would be better to avoid vocals and to concentrate on long and hypnotic soundscapes – like in the very early recordings of *Allerseelen*.

**»ALL ART
IS AT ONCE
SURFACE
AND
SYMBOL.
THOSE WHO
GO BENEATH
THE
SURFACE
DO SO AT
THEIR PERIL«**

:: Mountains seem to play a special role for you, starting from your trips in Europe and continuing to depicting them on many *Allerseelen* albums. One image I have in mind when picturing high peaks is the scene from

Das Blaue Licht, where *Riefenstahl* is at the threshold: between splendour and danger. And yet, she consciously portrays herself as an outcast. Do you think this outsider position is (generally) weakened or strengthened by the alpine scenery?

There are many alpinists in the mountains today, and I think that only a minority of them may be considered as outsiders. There are however some hermits and outcasts, and maybe I am one of them as I am quite often experiencing alone the beauties and dangers of the mountains. The quality of a beautiful or dangerous experience in the mountains is usually much more intense if I am there on my own without being able to share my emotions with a comrade or friend. There is just the mountain and me. And maybe a god or gods and a devil or devils. Basically I know my limits and usually I do not risk too much as I have a certain vision: I like to survive, I like to return with dozens of photographs and diary pages – like a harvest. Quite often the paths are more important to me than the peaks. I do not have to stand at any price on the peak of a mountain – in this context I am not similar to impatient *Ikarus* but closer to the patient *Daedalus*. Sometimes mountains are like psychoactive drugs. It happened various times that I saw somewhere a photo of a peak or read a certain name of a mountain – and suddenly I was in love with this mountain and had to travel there. Mountains and volcanoes definitely have a certain magnetism. *Leni Riefenstahl* definitely was an outcast, as woman in a very male world of actors, alpinists, politicians, and in her beautiful film *Das Blaue Licht* she in some way already foresaw in some way her fate and fights after the second world war. Unfortunately I never met this adventurous woman. But I had sent to her one day a text that I had writ-



photo | **Gerhard Hallstatt. 2009. Steinernes Meer, Salzburg Land, Austria. Courtesy of the artist**

ten on her movie *The Blue Light* and received a very friendly answer. I also visited her tomb some years ago in winter and spent there some time.

:: In connection to mountains, why does the Edelweiss become such a powerful symbol?

The *Edelweiss* could be considered as a symbol for the triumph of the will, spirit over matter, a spiritual-

ity that overcomes gravitation. It is a special and wild plant that is not beautiful at all in the average sense of the word. In some way it even does not look like a flower, its blossoms with their white fur look like the claws of a lynx or mountain lion. For me this white fur is a white vlies compared to the golden vlies of the argonauts. The *Edelweiss* symbolizes at the same time a romantic idea but is also a symbol of reality, of realism.

Too much romanticism in the mountains might become dangerous. Each alpinist needs apart from his love and passion for the mountains a certain realistic attitude, some reason - otherwise his beloved mountains might embrace him forever. I simply like this little white entity. It is an essential part of my private mythology, and I am collecting everything in connection with the *Edelweiss*. In the *Allerseelen* CD *Edelweiss* there

is also the Edelweiss cross on the peak of the Kehlstein in the Berchtesgadener Land which is famous or infamous because of the Eagle's Nest.

:: The backcover of Hallstatt also includes the passage »the songs are dedicated to those who decided to disappear forever in the mountains«. What's the story behind that?

There is always a certain danger in the mountains. And the beautiful mountains and landscapes are more dangerous than the less impressive ones. Beauty and danger are close to each other. As I love beautiful mountains too, I am also a bit in danger. This passage refers to various things, for example also to the fate of the Grail researcher and troubadour Otto Rahn who wrote so much about the Cathars and their mystical suicide Endura - and then committed suicide close to a dangerous mountain with the beautiful name Totenkirchl, Chapel of the Dead, in the mountains of Tyrol. Maybe one day I will also disappear forever in my beloved mountains - like Tannhäuser who returned to the mountain Hörselberg. I have a favourite place in the Julian Alps in Slovenija that I discovered some years ago - if I want to disappear one day completely without leaving any traces I know exactly where to go.

:: Allerseelen is definitely operating within imaginary realms, what insights could you give us on your future album Terra Incognita? Two songs have already been partly revealed so far: Schwarzes Vinyl and Ikarus. Concerning the latter, there's definitely an interesting myth behind it, which focuses on flight/falling/frailty, almost like a complete trip-tych. However, one could also sense a certain Geworfenheit condition there, being thrown in the world. What made you choose that repre-

sentation and how do you appropriate it for this track?

Regarding Schwarzes Vinyl, there's almost an alchemical quality to it, also suggested by the lyrics. Makes one think of Robert Fludd's illustrations, an ad astra state which also links back to Ein Ganzes Jahr, for

»THE EDELWEISS IS AN ESSENTIAL PART OF MY PRIVATE MYTHOLOGY, AND I AM COLLECTING EVERYTHING IN CONNECTION WITH IT«

ex. However, Fludd is not new for Allerseelen..Could you share more thoughts on that?

I do not know very much about Terra Incognita. I just started working on some songs, and I have no idea how the final Terra Incognita may look like. I invited some well-known mu-

sicians from Sweden, Catalunya and Italy to accompany me in this travel to Terra Incognita. Yes, Ikarus and Schwarzes Vinyl might be on Terra Incognita. I have been fascinated by the hero Ikarus for a long time. While working on the song, I thought of the Japanese writer Yukio Mishima who died in some way very Ikarus-like too - his vision brought him definitely too close to the utopic sun of Japanese traditionalism. I opened his book *Sun and Steel* and suddenly discovered an Ikarus poem written by Yukio Mishima. There is a lot of magnetism in art. Ikarus is full of significances - and maybe all of these meanings make this myth so heavy that the hero had to fall. I like to combine various elements in a surrealist way - and suddenly something brand-new and colourful may arise, a certain private mythology. Actually the life and work of Robert Fludd is for me *terra incognita* too. I saw some of his drawings in a book about alchemy and magic, I liked them and decided to use one of his diagrams for the now sold-out Allerseelen CD *Sturmlieder*. *Schwarzes Vinyl* is actual the black sky at night that slowly rotates - and the stars are little pieces of dust on this black vinyl.

:: Böses Blut is another song I am looking forward to. Pertinent title, what is the story behind it? Where is it going to be included?

The song Böses Blut or Evil Blood was inspired by Atropa belladonna. Böses Blut is the black blood of belladonna - I took one of these incredibly sweet and beautiful cherries last summer during a magical mystery tour with Allerseelen to the Netherlands and Germany. Belladonna, like all drugs, is definitely a Pandora's Box too - one should be careful with opening it. If one risks too much, one might get to know a certain terra incognita named death, so also in the realms of natural psychoactive drugs



photo | **Gerhard Hallstatt. Kehlstein, Berchtesgadener Land.** Courtesy of the artist

I am behaving more like Daedalus. Otherwise probably I would not be able to answer your questions. But maybe the most dangerous of all psychoactive drugs is music.

:: *Böses Blut* has also been performed in your tour with Agalloch and Waldteufel in America in December 2010. Many were interested to see how a live collaboration between Allerseelen and Agalloch would be like,

considering that the musical »styles« seem to be different. What were your expectations and how were the performances received by the audience? These were great events, and we were also glad to be able to present to the public a brand-new compilation named *Oak Folk* that featured Agalloch, Allerseelen and many others groups. Allerseelen love Agalloch, and Agalloch love Allerseelen, so they decided to invite us to tour

with them at the Pacific West Coast. I already knew some members of Agalloch as they had attended the first Allerseelen concert in Portland in June 2003. Agalloch also had asked me in summer 2010 to remix two of their songs – these remixes were released two months ago on a very limited vinyl edition named *Whitedivisiongrey*. Allerseelen performed with Agalloch in Seattle, Portland, San Francisco and Los

Angeles, we also made three additional small concerts with *Waldteufel* in various places at the Pacific West Coast. *Allerseelen* consisted in North America of my bassist Joerg (*Der Blutharsch*, *Graumahd*), my drummer Axel (*Hekate*) and me. Joerg played a wonderful psychoactive bass, somewhere between *krautrock* and *metal* which fit perfect with the psychedelic metal of *Agalloch*. In one of the *Allerseelen* concerts our percussionists were all three members of *Waldteufel*. This was definitely a very special experience. And luckily almost all the concerts were filmed by Adam Torruella, we are thinking of releasing a limited DVD release with *Allerseelen* and *Waldteufel* and maybe *Agalloch* too. North America was again a wonderful experience, I really like the landscapes of Oregon and California and got to know amazing people, met old friends and got to know new ones. Again I spent a lot of time on the country-side and experienced again a beautiful organic North America. It was definitely a wonderful adventure and magical mystery tour and I am looking forward to the next North America experience that probably will take place in autumn 2012.

questions | *Diana Daia*
answers | *Gerhard Hallstatt*





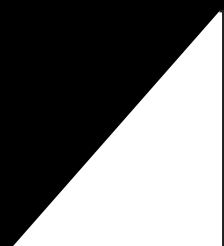
photo | *HaateKaate. Gerhard Hallstatt in Balchik, Bulgaria. Courtesy of the artist*

C

PER

LOCKWORK
SHOWCASE
FORMATIVE
IDENTITIES

»BESIDES,
I AM LYING;
I SCATTER
MYSELF TOO
MUCH FOR
THAT.«



IOANA STAN

Do we actually realize that every time we interact with someone we are playing a role, displaying a persona? When we are getting dressed, looking in the mirror, putting on make-up, we are using our bodies as subjects in a theatrical society, creating complex relationships within the environment. Performativity was brought in discussion by the philosopher of language John Langshaw Austin. He didn't use the

term per se, but he introduced the concept of "performative utterance", which refers to situations when saying something becomes more of doing something. For example the utterance »I name this ship dog/boat Jimmy/Queen Mary«. In this case, the act of naming is performed. In his book *How to do Things with Words*, Austin presents a new perspective regarding speech as a form of acting (being more of a practice) that can be used

**INDIVIDUALISM?
NARCISSISM?
OF COURSE.**

**IT IS
MY STRONGEST
TENDENCY,
THE ONLY
INTENTIONAL
CONSTANCY [FIDELITY]**

I AM CAPABLE OF...

BESIDES,

I AM LYING;

I SCATTER MYSELF

TOO MUCH

FOR THAT.

I'M SO

to alter/affect reality. Thus, a sentence can't be classified as true or false, but more like »happy« or »unfortunate« due to the context in which it was developed. The theory developed by J. L. Austin had a great significance in developing a large range of fields from economic science, feminism to queer theory. Therefore, in this essay I will use the work of Judith Butler, philosopher and feminist, and Claude Cahun, a French artist, to illustrate the concept of performative identity.

Judith Butler was influenced, among other things, by the philosophy of Michael Foucault, developing the idea of gender flexibility. In this case we can

talk about our identity as a social construct, as something that is fabricated rather than inherent. In her book *Undoing Gender*, she is questioning the idea of autonomy over the body in the social context. If we examine our identity from the perspective of something unconsciously performed for the other, we shall see that we are following a script. The social environment is governed by hetero-normativity, thereby we function in specific parameters. Therefore our personal acts are in fact conventions and ideologies. In her essay *Imitation and Gender Subordination*, Butler eliminates the categories of gender defining the concept of »drag«. We need to see that

gender is not a feature of one of the sexes, more precisely the »masculine« doesn't denote »male« and »feminine« doesn't mean »female«. That way, »drag« constitutes the everyday life in which genders are worn and made theatrical, implying that all gender imprinting is an approximation. There is no »proper« gender, therefore gender is a kind of imitation for which there is no original, being an imitation itself. To sum up, the theory of gender developed by Judith Butler redefines identity.

The French artist Claude Cahun is most recognized for her photographic work. Born in 1894, in the Nantes re-

IMAGINING MEONE ELSE

gion, under the name Lucy Renée Mathilde Schwob, she started to create her self-portraits around 1912. In 1919 she changed her name, to Claude Cahun, this one being more appropriate for her androgynous character. Her photographic imagery appeared in a controversial space and time, when women's social and cultural statuses were debated.

She started her career engaging with symbolist themes, using in one of her first self-portraits the image of Medusa. Embodying one of the most powerful examples of *femmes fatales* in history, she re-envisioned the social image attributed to women. The char-

acter which is interpreted here is a powerful woman, subverting in this way the stereotypes of femininity in that epoch. The 1914 photograph illustrates her in a chair on the floor with her body covered and her head resting on a pillow. The hair is arranged in a snake-like fashion highlighting disembodiment. This is not the only symbolic figure that she adopts, there is also a self-portrait in which she resembles Buddha.

In another piece of work, she embodied the figure of a glamorous male. Posing in front of a dark cloth pinned on a white wall, she approaches the viewer with a expressionless figure.

Useless to search here for a gender, the figure constructed is more of an androgynous individual rather than of a male, much less of a woman. Holding one hand on the hip and the other by her side with the fist clenched, she presents the same body in another form. Wearing a white scarf and a velvet suit we can assume (just assume) that this could be a fashion shoot. But with Claude Cahun we can never know, our single information is that this is another form of the persona of Lucy Renée Mathilde Schwob.

Another example of a performativity in the work of Claude Cahun is a photograph of extreme camouflage.

PLAYING FAVORITE PART

We can see a being covered in a black cloak with masks applied on it. The face is also hidden by a mask. We are not able to determine if the eyes belong of this entity behind the material or are fake, being painted on the mask. In this case we are facing the tension between looking, which is a form of knowledge, and appearance, feature of the meaning of things. We can see how masks are used to veil probably a form of alienation, but we cannot penetrate them. In her book of essays *Aveux non Avenus* she wrote: «Sous ce masque un autre masque. Je n'en finirai pas de soulever tous ces visages». In the same note we can say that

whenever we remove our make-up, we are reinventing ourselves, because along with the chemicals, we also remove the first layer of skin. In her work she tries to exemplify the relation between the visual alter-ego and the conceptual one. Her features enable her to play with an androgynous image, giving to each and every single image its own personality, making herself more of an artistic subject. Efrat Tseëlon defines masks as objects of transition, as rooted in a »metaphysics of ambivalence«, concept which perfectly suits Cahun's work, because she allows us to see her strategies of self-representation and the stage on

which she performs. François Leperlier quotes the artist in his book *Mise en scène* when she says »The happiest moments of my life? Dreaming. Imagining I'm someone else. Playing my favorite part.« She creates her own vocabulary in which she slips between the social categories that threatened to limit her.

I will use one more example of performativity, namely the mundane *carte de visite* or business card. First used in 1854 by the photographer A. A. E. Disdéri, it was a very accessible photographic portrait which could be handed out to friends and associates,

AF YM

having engraved on the back personal dates. At first, the photographers had a difficult task to teach the public to pose. Therefore, they put in their studios celebrity portraits, especially those of movie stars. This way the clients were encouraged to imagine a role, to shape a fantasy in which they could identify themselves. Countess de Castiglione is famous for posing in more than hundreds of outfits. Also, in their studios, the photographers constructed elaborated stages where any scenario could be played out for a small amount of money. Nowadays we are using *cartes de visite* to represent us in the social medium putting

our identity on a small piece of paper, creating an illusion for everyone else. That way it doesn't matter if it's a lie as long it is a good one.

In conclusion, I would like to quote Claude Levi-Strauss from his essay *Split Representation in the Art of Asia and America* when he says: »the face is predestined to be decorated, since it is only by means of decoration that the face receives its social dignity and mystical significance. Decoration is conceived for the face, but the face itself exists only through decoration. In the final analysis, the dualism is that of the actor and the role, and the con-

cept of mask gives us the key to its interpretation.«

Further reading.

Gen Doy. *Claude Cahun A Sensual Politics of Photography*. 2007
Rice Shelley (edited by). *Inverted Odysseys: Claude Cahun, Maya Deren, Cindy Sherman*. 1999.

Quote:

Claude Cahun. *Aveux non avenues*. 1930.

Article Type Treatment:

Vel Thora

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ABUSE
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WHAT:

CURRENT 93
LIVE PERFORMANCE

WITH:

BABY DEE, JAMES BLACKSHAW,
ANDREW LILES

WHEN:

28TH OF MARCH 2011

WHERE:

VOLKSBÜHNE, BERLIN. GERMANY



photo | Diana Daia. Current 93. Live in Berlin. Courtesy of the artist





photo | *Diana Daia. Current 93. Live in Berlin. Courtesy of the artist*











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photo | *Diana Daia. Current 93. Live in Berlin. Courtesy of the artist*

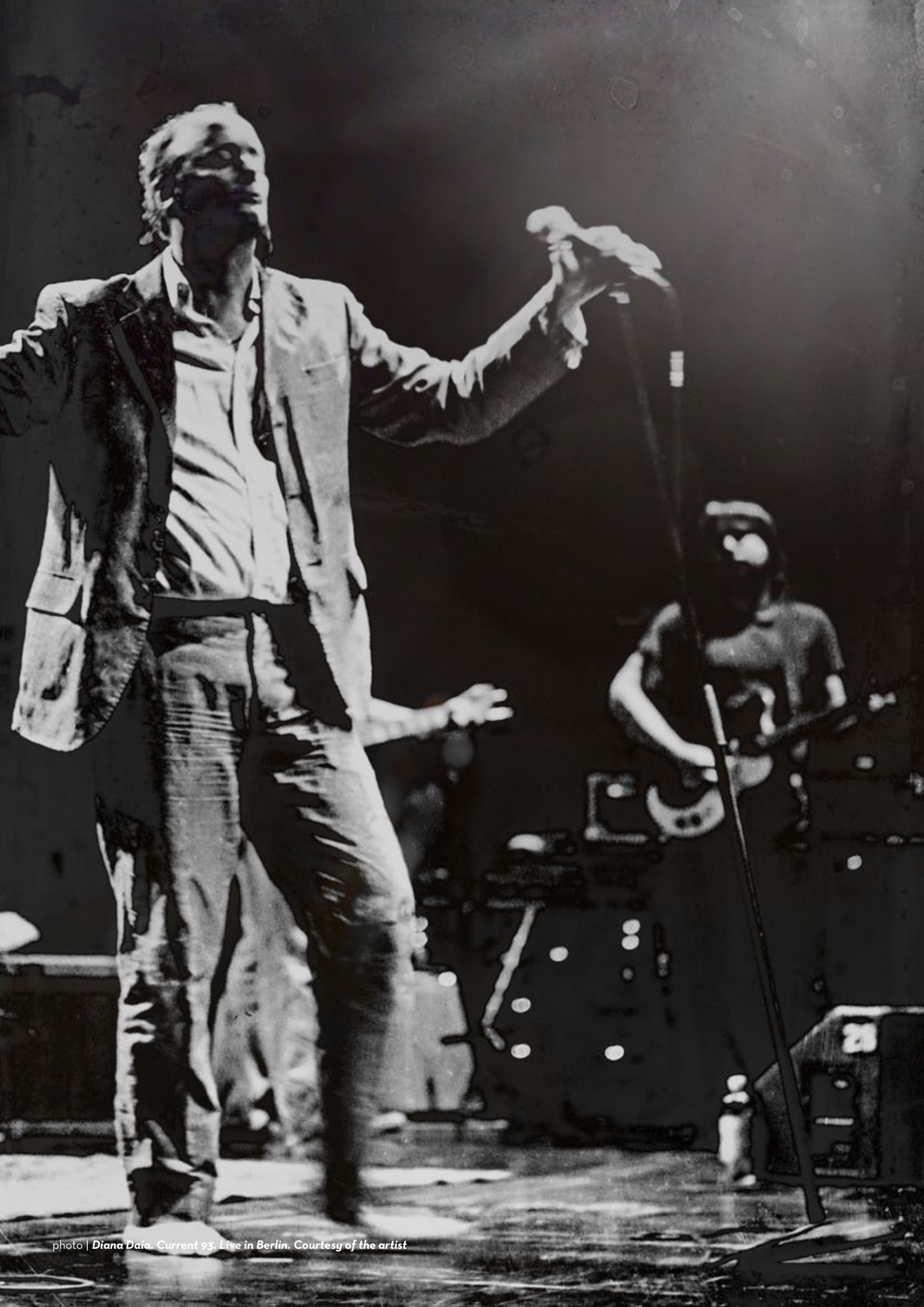


photo | *Diana Daia. Current 93. Live in Berlin. Courtesy of the artist*



photo | Diana Daia. Current 93. Live in Berlin. Courtesy of the artist

FEEDIN

HANGING
CAGES
G GROUNDS

» I AM OBLIVIOUS. I KNOW NO SHAME.«

I am oblivious. I choose to be. To what surrounds me, to the world. I do not want to have anything to do with it, its functions and purpose. I am the ultimate deceiving weapon, I use, abuse, consume and throw away anything that I find worthy of. I leave my mark and multiply by hate and anger, I enter souls and thoughts and crucify them in my gallery of trophies.

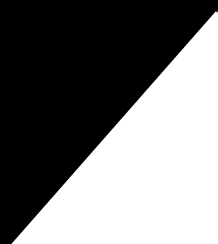
I know no shame. All pawns in my creepy game of life, I choose my victims by twisted standards, so that the damage inflicted rises to unknown heights. I possess minds and toy with them, freeze hearts in excruciating humility and regret, and leave them crippled for a long time, or even better, permanently. And all this I do according to my mood as I go through each day, with outstanding elegance and grace.

I have no heart. Break open my chest and you will see a deep and unforgiv-

ing pit. Come too close and you get a free ticket to the moment you will die silently inside, and I will indulge in feeling your pain as I did my own a long time ago. I will mark my skin with a fair warning for all the consumers of my body to know what should be expected. To let them know that beneath this sack of skin lies something dark and poisoned, that only can be used in small dosages. Anything else will take a toll few are willing to pay.

So pray that you don't cross my path by chance. And if you do it willingly, think twice before you take me on. Even if you think you know me better than anyone, even if you are mostly skilled, I'll always have an ace up my sleeve that'll hit you wherever and whenever I deem necessary.

I stood and watched the light inside your eyes fade away as the cruelty choked the hope out of you, as you realized it will be over soon.



BAHAK B



photo | **Bahak B.** *Courtesy of the artist*

CHAI

NZ CISSORS



Vel Thora | **Study No. 44.** *In dim light.* Courtesy of the artist



Diana Daia | *We Are The Dust*. Courtesy of the artist

EYE TEASER

LAURA WÄCHTER

Spain



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