a world behind curtains | october 2011 FEATURING Valerie a Týden Divů OCCULTA PHILOSOPHIA WESTBLOCK

N-SPHERE OCTOBER 2011

EDITORIAL TRANQUILIZERS

Knowledge, by its defining features, is the representation of reality into perceived static and dynamic entities. The factual apprehension turning into information turning into knowledge turning into actions lays at the roots of evolution. However, the predicament globalization has thrown civilization into is the flight from knowing and the embrace of being bestowed upon with easy to comprehend, sticky data. If the dark ages suffered from mass induced paranoia against heresy, the third millennium is bent over for the sake if mass induced »tasty« crap.

Dare to know the origins of truth. Sometime long ago, at the dawn of civilizations, art was born. There is no mental progress without art. Even science embraces it, in various forms. The most abstruse truths still lie inside its realms, brought forth by Santiago Caruso's dreams of surreal realities and Dylan XVX's incursions into myths.

Dare to know the origins of freedom. The nowadays' ability of making one's choices regarding one's life is the most taken for granted thing in the world. The observation is not made lightly, as the exuberance of youth laughs in the face of reminiscing old figures that point our lack of such freedoms not so long ago. In *Valerie, Jaromil Jireš* taps into the distortions of perceiving freedom, and therefore the lack of it.

Dare to know the origins of thought. Unlike other societies along the ages, the 3M (third millennium) generations currently populating the cities have infinite and unrestricted access to history, mostly to the ideologies built by predecessors. More importantly, the freedom of choice exists, as one might embrace whatever they want to, in lines of philosophies. The question that arises, though, is whether or not the 3M minds are open enough and curious enough to reach and gather knowledge of the past. In *Iván Elvira*'s *De Occulta Philosophia* a small portal into the origins of some thoughts is opened.

Dare to know. Dare to evolve. »The reason why the universe is eternal is that it does not live for itself; it gives life to others as it transforms.«

Quote | Lao Tzu



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HANGING CAGES

String Desire

SANTIA

GLASS SHOWCASE GOCARUSO

SYNTHESIS ATMOSPHERES FATALITIES

Name:

Santiago Caruso

Location:

Quilmes City, Buenos Aires, Argentina

Occupation:

Artist, illustrator

Definition of personal sphere:

I am dark, ironic and dramatic. Luminous, sensitive and humorous.

Artwork in 4 words:

Decadent, speaking silently poetry.

What is inspirational for you:

My inspiration is the occult, the mystery of life, the fatalities, the oppression of the world system, the grotesque, the marginalized people.

Currently favourite artists:

Gustave Moreau, Odilon Redon, Alfred Kubin, Alphonse Mucha, Gustav Klimt, Goya, Giuseppe Ribera and many others.

Tools of trade:

4B Pencil, ink and cutter, watercolors and brushes, sponge, paper, patience, constancy, time. Scanner.

Current obsessions:

Synthesis, Atmospheres, Different compositions, less details.

Personal temptation:

To have my own Press title and to publish what I want without deal with market limitations or publisher's limitation.







photo | Santiago Caruso. Innsmouth 1. Courtesy of the artist



photo | Santiago Caruso. Five of Cups. Courtesy of the artist

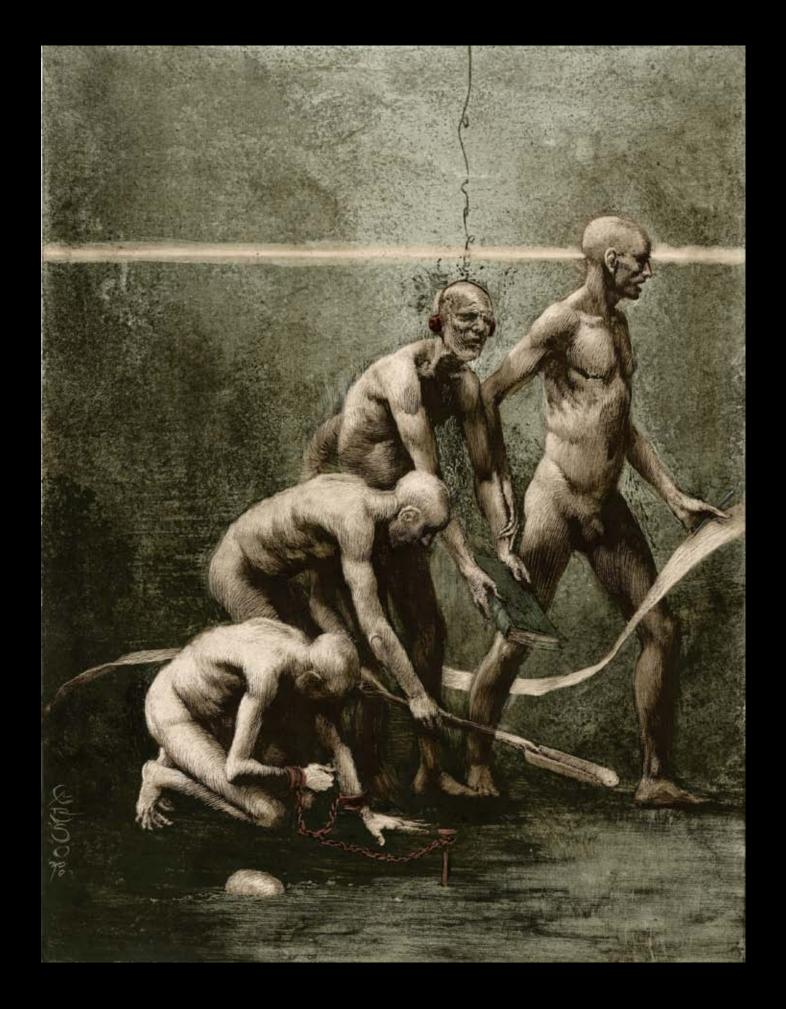


photo | Santiago Caruso. Sembraron Futuro. Courtesy of the artist

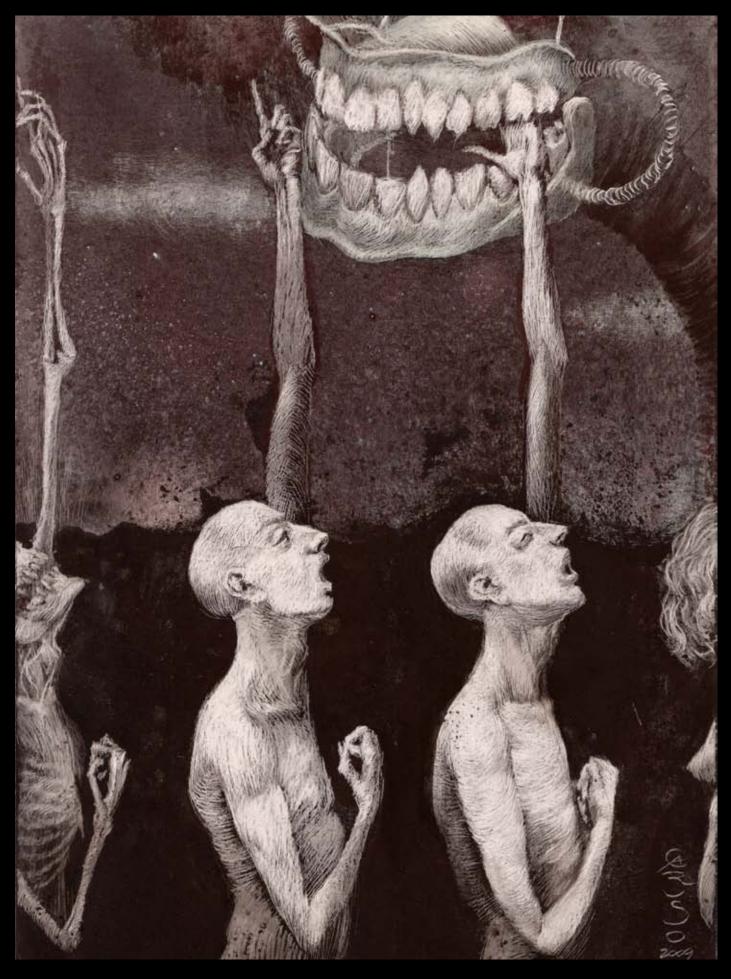


photo | Santiago Caruso. Cordobazo. Courtesy of the artist



photo | Santiago Caruso. Retrato del Delito. Courtesy of the artist



photo | Santiago Caruso. La Voz del Amo. Courtesy of the artist

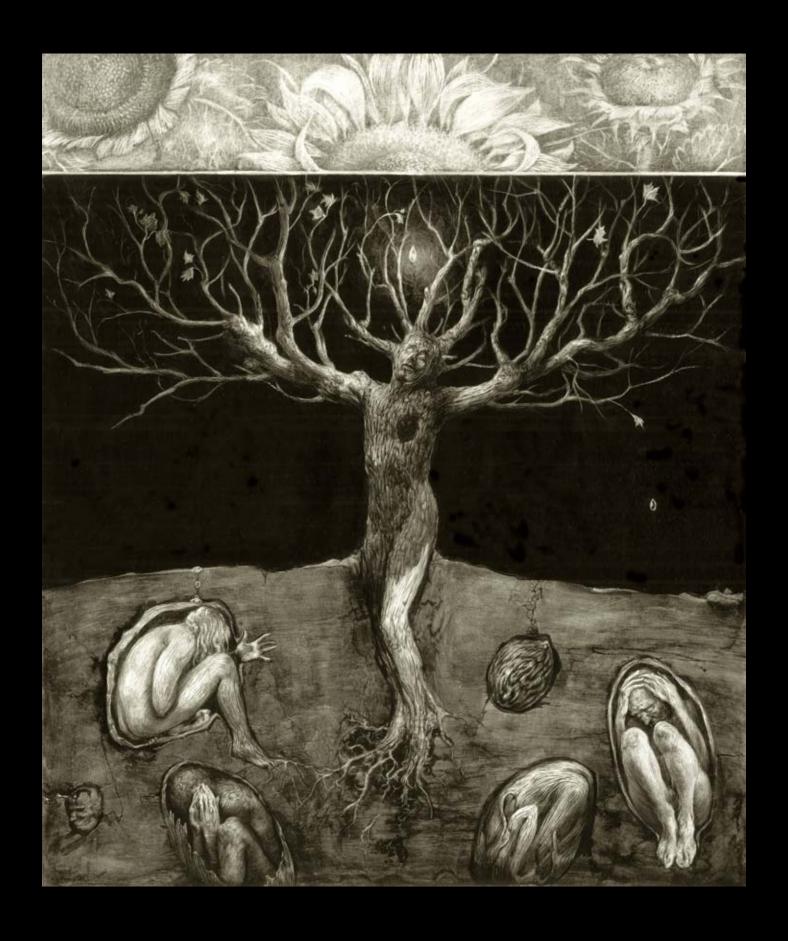


photo | **Santiago Caruso. La Gota. Courtesy of the artist**



photo | **Santiago Caruso. Conduccion. Courtesy of the artist**

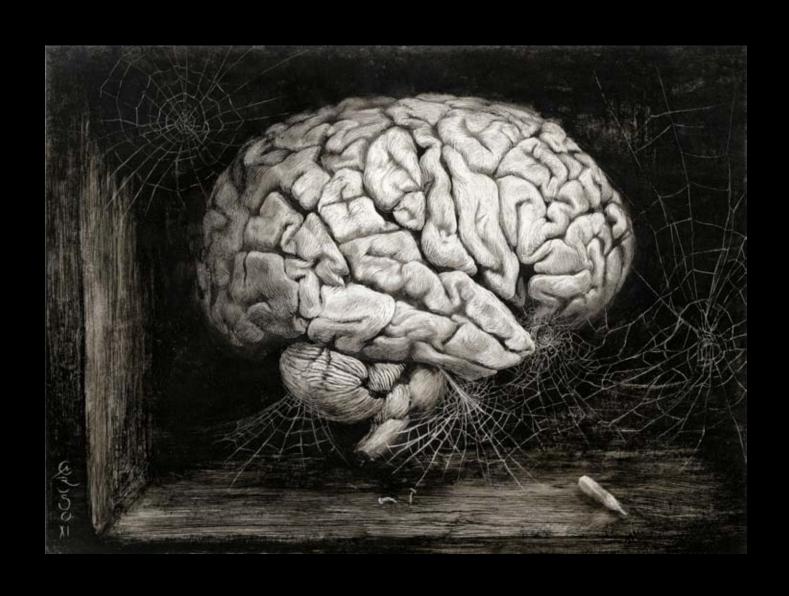


photo | Santiago Caruso. Olvidado. Courtesy of the artist





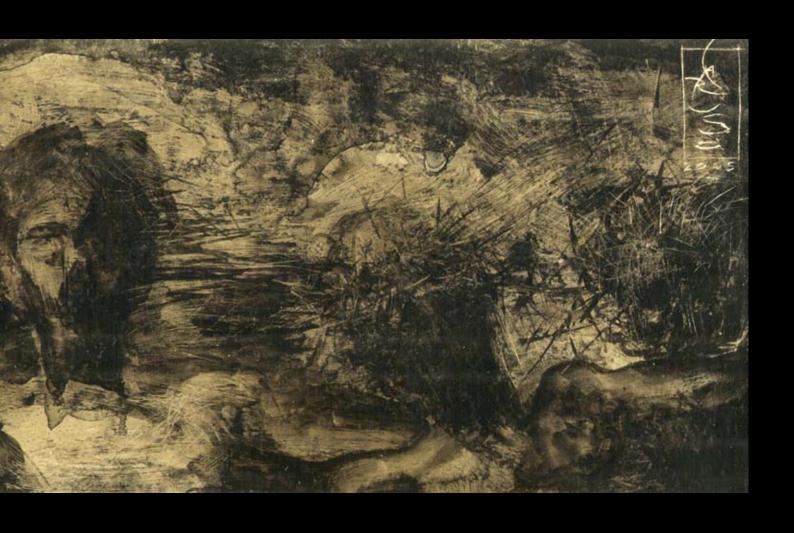


photo | Santiago Caruso. Resurreccion. Courtesy of the artist



STONE SHOWCASE LIAM BLAKE

»HOLD INFINITY IN THE PALMS OF YOUR HAND«

Name:

William Blake

Lived:

28th November 1757 - 12th August 1827

Location:

England

Occupation:

Artist, Mystic, Poet, Painter, Printmaker

Influences:

The French and American revolutions, Jakob Böhme, Emanuel Swedenborg, Raphael, Michelangelo, Marten Heemskerk, Albrecht Dürer

Associated with:

Romantic and Pre-Romantic Movements, Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley, Percy Bysshe Shelley, Thomas Paine, Joseph Priestley, Richard Price, John Henry Fuseli, William Wordsworth, William Godwin

Technique:

Relief etching or illuminated printing, decorative margins, hand-coloured

print, pre-colored plates for printing, intaglio engraving

Interests:

Metaphorical themes, fantastic creatures, complex mythological symbolism, rejection of dogmatic religion, merging of body and soul

Influenced:

Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Algernon Charles Swinburne, S. Foster Damon, Geoffrey Keynes, Northrop Frye, David V. Erdman, G. E. Bentley Jr, Paul Nash, Graham Sutherland, Benjamin Britten, Ralph Vaughan Williams, John Tavener, Allen Ginsberg, Bob Dylan, Jim Morrison, Aldous Huxley, Phillip Pullman

Obsessions:

Perception, sexual and racial equality, justice

Quote | William Blake. Fragment from Auguries of Innocence





photo | William Blake. 1824-1827. The Lovers' Whirlwind, Francesca da Rimini and Paolo Malatesta, Inferno, Canto V, 37-138. Courtesy of the artist

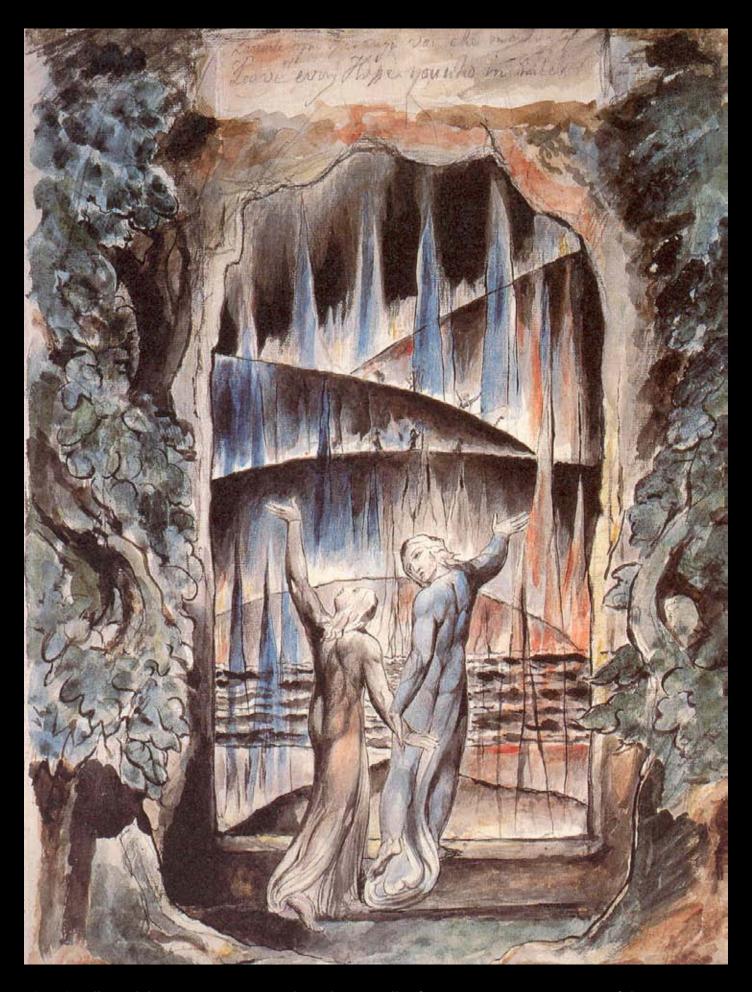


photo | William Blake. 1824-1827. Dante and Virgil enter Hell, Inferno, Canto III, 1-10. Courtesy of the artist



photo | William Blake. c.1800. Jacob's Ladder. Courtesy of the artist

VALER WEEKO

MOVING SHOWCASE IE AND HER F WONDERS

»IT'S NOTHING, JUST A HANGED MAN.«

I. THE CZECHOSLOVAK NEW WAVE



The Czechoslovak New Wave was an artistic movement in cinema that pretty much covered the early 60s and was represented, among others by directors such as: Miloš Forman, Jirí Menzel, Vera Chytilová, Jaromil Jireš and Juraj Herz. However, its roots go four decades back when Devetsil – an association of Czech Avantgardists was formed (Prague, 1920).

When the Communist regime has taken over in Czechoslovakia in 1948, students of FAMU (Film and TV School of the Academy of Performing Arts In Prague) took notice of the unwelcoming changes that this regime brought and wanted to make people aware that "they were participants in a system of oppression and incompetence which had brutalized them all«.



Having said that, it is easy to hint that some its trademarks were long unscripted dialogues, dark and absurd humour and topics that regard the misguided youths of their society, or the misguided ethic which leads people to blindly condemn what others are born with (and I am not talking about rage, violence, greed, or other things that one should overcome).

II. VALERIE

Valerie and her week of wonders is one falling mostly in the latter category. On the surface, the film is a surreal fantasy revolving around a young girl's maturation into womanhood. Beyond that, the film can also be seen as a violent and cheerful reaction against the way some systems may deprive people of what they really are. And while this is not depicted in a traditional fashion, there are enough scenes/pieces of dialogue clearly suggesting that.

For example:

Grandmother: Hedvika is marrying Valerie: Poor Hedvika

The marriage here is not seen as an act that is consented by both parties, but as something that is enforced, as a form of mutilation inflicted upon a woman so that she, in turn, can inflict it on others. A form of sustained and organized disease, if you may. One can think of arranged marriages of enforced submission or other related things.

As many may expect, church figures are not left out of the equation either. Priests here, and men generally, are either barbaric figures, either hypocritical ones with an edge for incest.

Also, another aspect that is not to be neglected is the erotic one. But where other movies, use a more organic approach, relying on what we know and have experienced, Valerie and her week of wonders devoids its eroticism of nearly every carnal aspect and while flesh is still present, it is undermined by emotion. The film barely looks erotic, but feels erotic. There are some scenes that may stir anger in those who feel strong about old-fashioned ethical values, but because they are born out of the purest imaginings, they cannot really be held as an affront to... anything. Besides, those very scenes, form a reaction to a system that is overly concerned with numbers and empty standards instead of human beings (I figure that the New Wave Of Czechoslovak Film members were aware of it, and were pretty much against it.)

Indeed, one can argue that the film suffers from submitting to a struggle that ended too long ago, for the viewer to relate to it. After all, these days, in the majority of countries, the old-fashioned moral concerns are no longer upheld in such an oppressive manner, so one is free to choose living his life the way he or she wants as long as he/she is not harming others ('course, if you decide to go on a killing spree to have some fun, you'll still have to suffer the consequences). And, in this favor, it is the no-smallaspect that the film plays more like a »dream tale«, so there is not a strong relationship between all characters and not a very well-developed plot either. However, if there was one thing to learn from the evident failure of totalitarian systems, is that there are not many things that can be applied to everyone and sometimes even some things, apply to very few people. And as long as they are not harmful in a relevant way (I am pretty sure that a child won't end up being traumatized by this film and he won't start killing priests because he'll assume all of them are pedophiles), I don't see any problem.



Cinema is not a big popularity contest, but a form of communication, in the end. If you wanna appear on TV, you will definitely need a certain type of speech (sadly, in some of the cases, one you won't be quite fond of), but regardless of how much money this speech brings you, it doesn't mean that it holds some depths or truth and it definitely doesn't make it better



(sometimes not worse either) that the one some country teacher is holding to his pupils.

Art doesn't offer guarantees, you are not better or worse if you read a critically acclaimed novel, or went to some opera or watched a more »special« movie. Artists are not responsible for your well-being, you are.

I said all these things, because they are surprisingly related to the movement, because if we are to look beyond that, it is not Communism itself, but the forced marriage between an individual and a foreign set of conventions he either does not understand, or does not believe in. When something like this happens, one is entitled to backfire in some fashion, not for his pride's sake,

or to prove that the system "is wrong", but to prove that others are equally deserving of what feels right to them (again, as long as it is not firebombing, businesses that sell drugs to children or encourage people to blindly rage against others and so forth).

There is also a constant sense of menace in this film, but it never unravels a real horror, it is also seen through a child's eyes - a child playing. There are no real dangers here, because there is a distance between the protagonist and the world unraveling before her eyes. She can always escape every peril.

III OTHER NOTES

Valerie's faithful companion is Orlík »Eagle«, In translation. He is the one who stole her earrings, only to give them back to her (the earrings made Valerie see the world as it is) and also, he is the one who gives her the pearls that protected her from... death.

There are no physically elder women in this film. It is only the appearance, that pale face which gives old age a specific meaning - that of being drained out of energy, of life.

There is also the presence of the vampire, as the one who drains, and makes others drain. These two combined give the idea that this oldness is in fact the marriage with the material, the artificial, with the blind desire to consume and make others consume (in the "incest scene", the reverend's face is pale as well.).

All in all, the film appeals mostly to those with a sweet eye for avantgarde stuff (Sedmikrásky, anyone) or for those who like to have a fantasy story told in an eerie way. For the rest, it may be a challenge, it may be a bore, or anything else in between.

Sweet Valeries, children.

Photos | Valerie and her Week of Wonders. 1970. Jaromil Jireš. Filmstills





NOX SHOWCASE DYLANXYX

NAME:

DYLAN XVX

LOCATION:

BETHLEHEM, PA. UNITED STATES

OCCUPATION:

ARTIST/PRINTMAKER

WEBSITE:

DYLANXVX.COM



photo | Dylan XVX. Belial. Courtesy of the artist



photo | Dylan XVX. The Pope. Courtesy of the artist

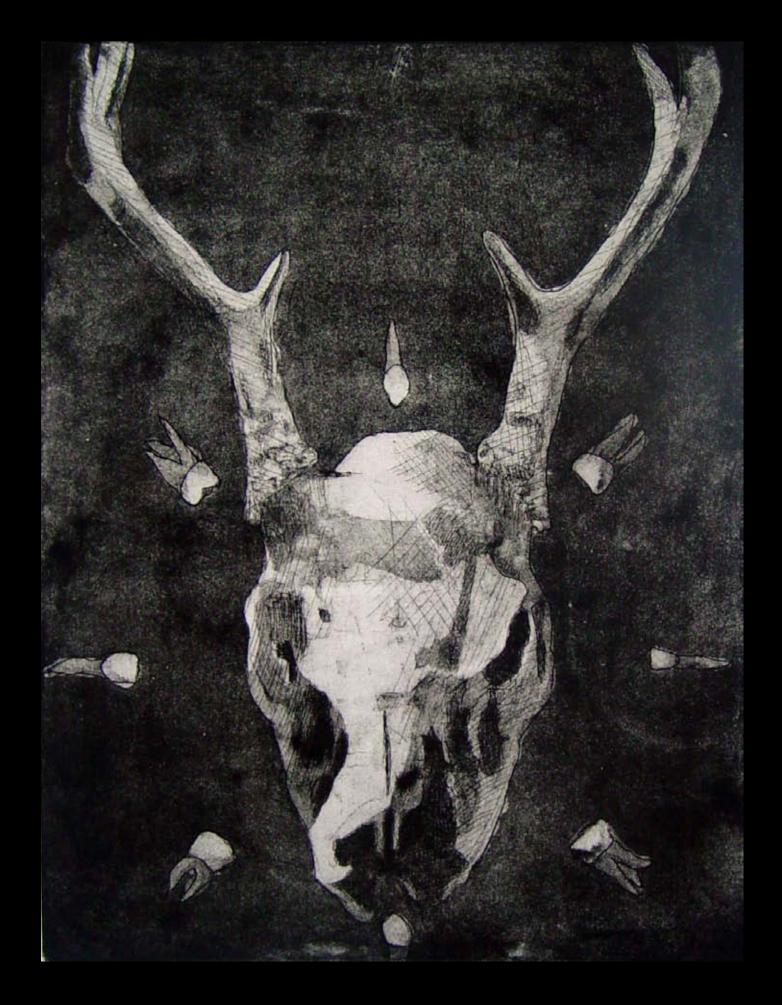


photo | Dylan XVX. Savages. Etching. Courtesy of the artist

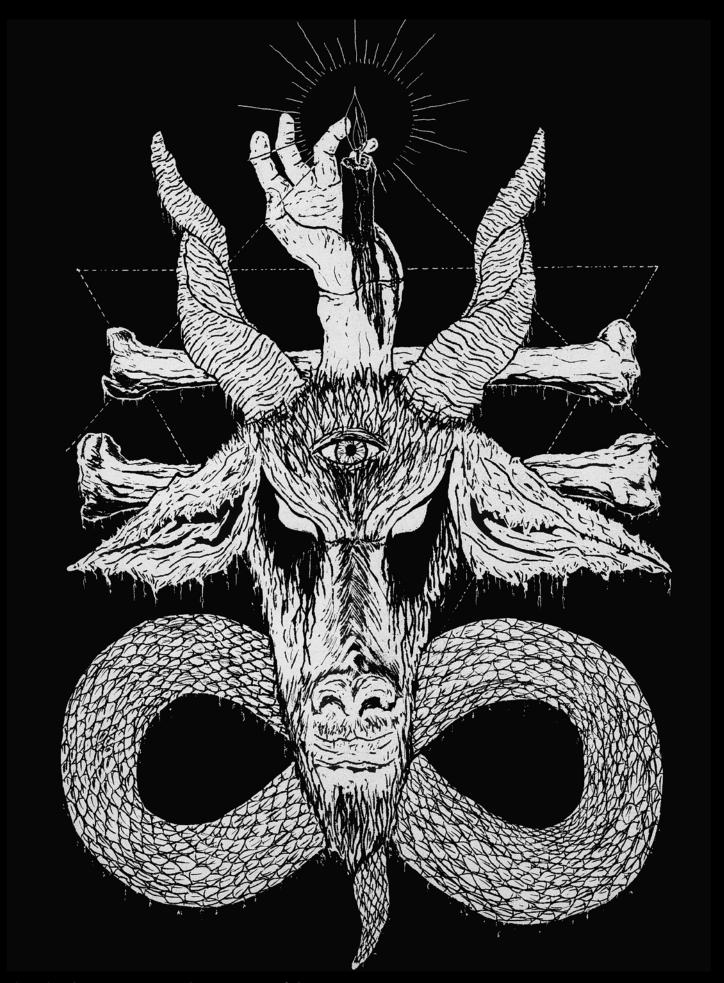


photo | Dylan XVX. Anti-Sweden. Courtesy of the artist



photo | Dylan XVX. Skull Feather Black. Courtesy of the artist

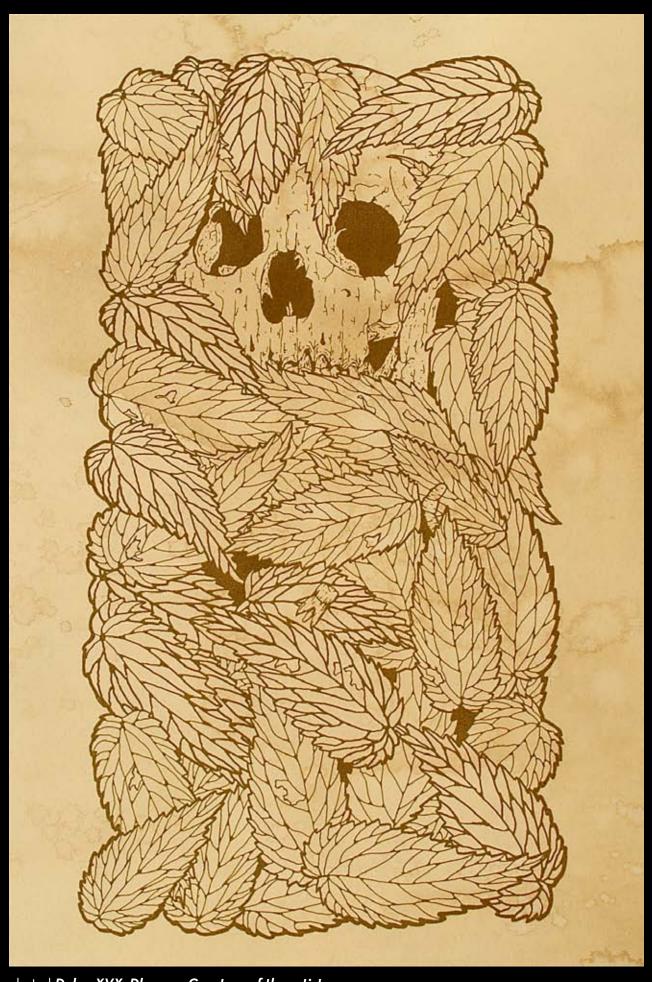


photo | Dylan XVX. Dhegem. Courtesy of the artist



photo | Dylan XVX. The Eyes of Man are Never Satisfied. Courtesy of the artist

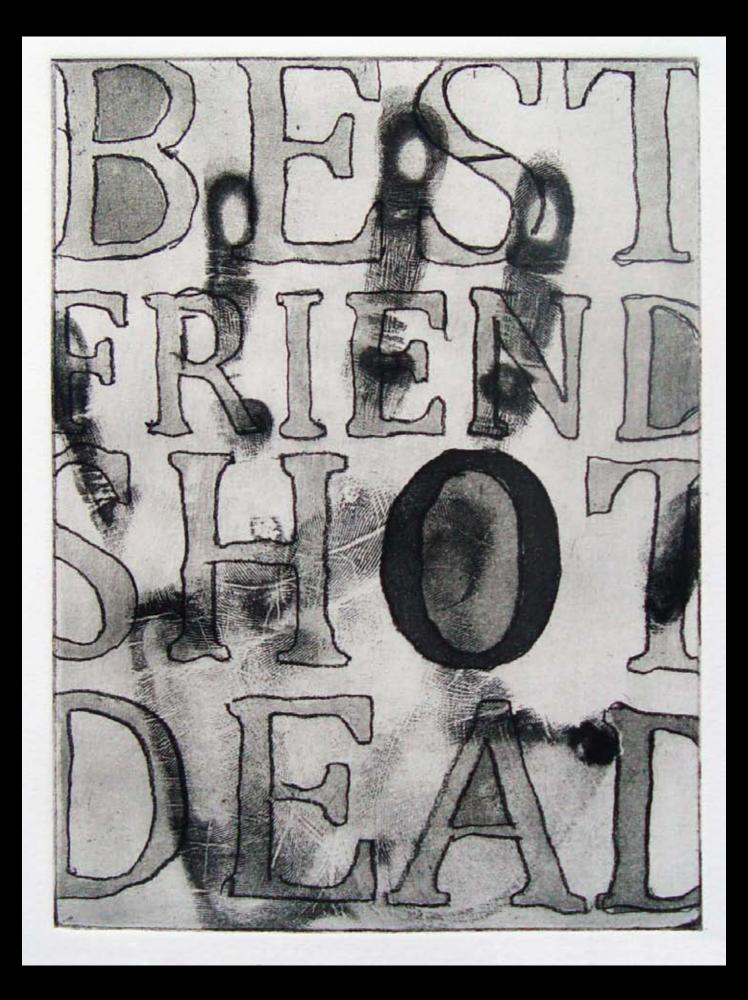


photo | Dylan XVX. Best Friend Shot Dead. Courtesy of the artist



photo | Dylan XVX. Extinct. Courtesy of the artist



photo | Dylan XVX. Ram Skull Palm. Courtesy of the artist



photo | Dylan XVX. Fingers. Etching. Courtesy of the artist



ABUSE SHOWCASE ESTBLOCK PE SONATA

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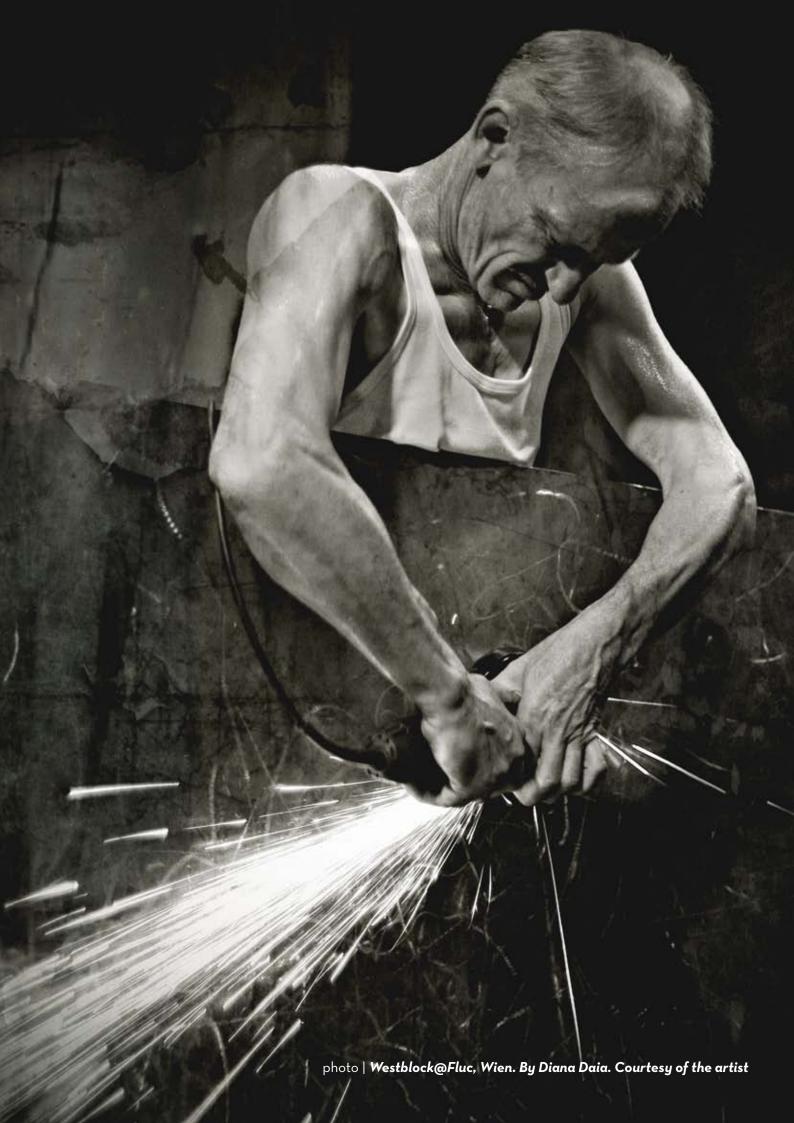
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FLUC. WIEN, AUSTRIA

WHEN

20TH OF AUGUST 2011

































PHILOSO

SHOWCASE EOCCULTA PHAPART

LITERATURE AND OCCULTISM IN THE VICTORIAN ERA

Editor's Note. The following is a two-part feature, spanning over the October 2011 and November 2011 Clockwork Showcases.



In this brief essay about the problematic and striking relationship between the particular and curious philosophy often called occultisme and the literature inscribed in this dilated period of English History (1837-1901), normally associated to her most powerful sovereign, the Queen Victoria, firstly we should take account of the complexity and depth of such relation through the ages. Certainly, it's rather known that our contemporary sense of the concept of »occult« necessarily has no relation with the Ancient

or Modern uses of that term. Regardless of this fact, obviously it has not been significant changes within human inner condition from the Ancient Mediterranean World to our current days, and their preoccupations and weaknesses are in great part similar to ours, which implies that the astonishing references on occult phenomena including, verbi gratia, in the Ancient phovel Metamorphoses of Apuleius and the nineteenth ghost stories by E. F. Benson, are more closer in essence than we are willing to affirm as histo-





1806. Astrology

in the act of invoking the Spirit of

Ames Sculp

a - Desceased Person.

rians. Surely we can conceive those similarities almost as an exercise of Anthropology, but it's more than this: something in our hidden nature claims for emerge and give sense to the nonsense using »irrational« or »magical« methods and arguments, and sometimes the writers' speech is directed with the intention of explain or unveil those mysteries, but most times their purpose is to veil or hide those supposed symbols which lies beneath the written pages.

Obviously, the common and scientific conceptions of »supernatural« or »irrational« have suffered many changes through its long journey across the centuries and the authors, but undoubtedly the psychological mechanism which encourages them stills intact. at least in our Western Civilization. On the other hand, we have chosen the nineteenth century's approach on the matter precisely because of the fine and inquisitive perspective supported by the wide range of writers, occultists, philosophers and scientists who dealt with the Esoteric matter in that period.

And first of all, we're obeying to define what we understand when we apply the term »Occultism« to these nineteenth currents of thought and literary masterpieces, because its definition is in most cases vague and mistakenly assimilable to related concepts such esoterism and hermetism. In fact, we ought to delimit this term to those opuses inspired in a pristine hermetic tradition, which appeared for the first time in our century, and invariably based in a confuse joint of philosophies mainly inherited from the eighteenth theosophists. Naturally, our »occultists« tried hard to support their authority in more noble and ancient sources, but honestly their approach to the previous authors normally involved in the so called Western Esotericism was derisory in most

"OR LET MY LAMP AT **MIDNIGHT HOUR BE SEEN IN SOME HIGH** LONELY TOWER. WHERE I MAY OFT OUTWATCH THE BEAR WITH THRICE **GREAT** HERMES.«

Quote | John Milton. Il Penseroso

cases. In short, the Occultism is an obscure philosophy which claims to be a »new« way to face the physical reality and a resource capable to unveil the spiritual dimension. In some cases, this new approach was positioned against the Christian churches and the modern parameters of the society and the positive science, but it does not work in the same manner in all cases, as we will see. Anyway, it's suggestive the opinion of Nelly Emont when she alluded to une crise [z] performed during the latter years of the nineteenth century to explain the apparition in stage of these occultist currents.

At first glance, we can observe in the occultist literature of the period, some tendencies at the time to tackle the esoteric phenomena, and surely will be useful the accurate appreciation of the erudite and Victorian writer M. R. James, who warned us about the risk of ruin a good ghost story using the technical jargon constructed by the occultists; in other words, if our purpose is to perform an optimal climax for the terror, we should occult the mechanism which support the fiction, trying to avoid any sort of murky and esoteric lucubration. Certainly, we agree with Dr. James in regards to the horror genre, but during our period we can identify many other incursions in the esoteric phenomenon, and aimed by different mottos. Fully inscribed in the nineteenth occult currents of thought, we find the work and philosophical backgrounds of some writers like A. Blackwood, G. Meyrink, H. Jennings, C. Flammarion, A. Machen, C. Maturin, Bulwer-Lytton, A. Conan Doyle, H. de Balzac or B. Stoker. Likewise, those personalities found egregious precedents in German quills like Goethe and Novalis, or in the magnificent visionary creation of William Blake. In addition, there's a large list of writers integrated in the supernatural horror tales, gothic, symbolist and ghost stories, and other related fiction

genres which merely catch a glimpse of the occult, with no other intention but to create an atmosphere of horror, mystery or restlessness. Finally we will mention some writers inscribed in non-related literary genres who deal with the occult obliquely.

But before to achieve a recount of those occult writers inscribed in this passionate era, we should come a halt and highlight which are the main features attached to the literature inscribed in our century, some of them parallel to the Faivre's mainstream considerations affirmed in his renowned Accès de l'ésotérisme occidental, but in this case exclusively concerned to our period. In other words, we do consider this lavish amount or scientific literature as gifted by the following characteristics: Firstly, the exaltation of the so called »living nature«; secondly, the reconstruction of a holistic and esoteric conception of the religious experience; thirdly, the nostalgic attempt to recover a prescientific visions of the universe; and finally and fourthly, the rise of the Occultism as an established current of thought, along with other related currents such Spiritualism or Mesmerism. Certainly, and through the vision of these nineteenth hermetists, the modern science has failed at the time to comprehend the veritable essence of the cosmos, since it was considered as a dead, hazardous and nonsensical mechanism. And precisely was the astronomer Camille Flammarion (1842-1925) the champion of this beautiful consideration in the philosophical part of his opus Les Merveilles célestes: lectures du soir [y]:

»La philosophie doit aller plus loin. Elle ne doit pas se borner à voir sous une forme plus ou moins distincte le grand corps de la nature; mais, étendant la main, il doit sentir sous l'enveloppe matérielle la vie qui circule à grands flots. L'empire de Dieu



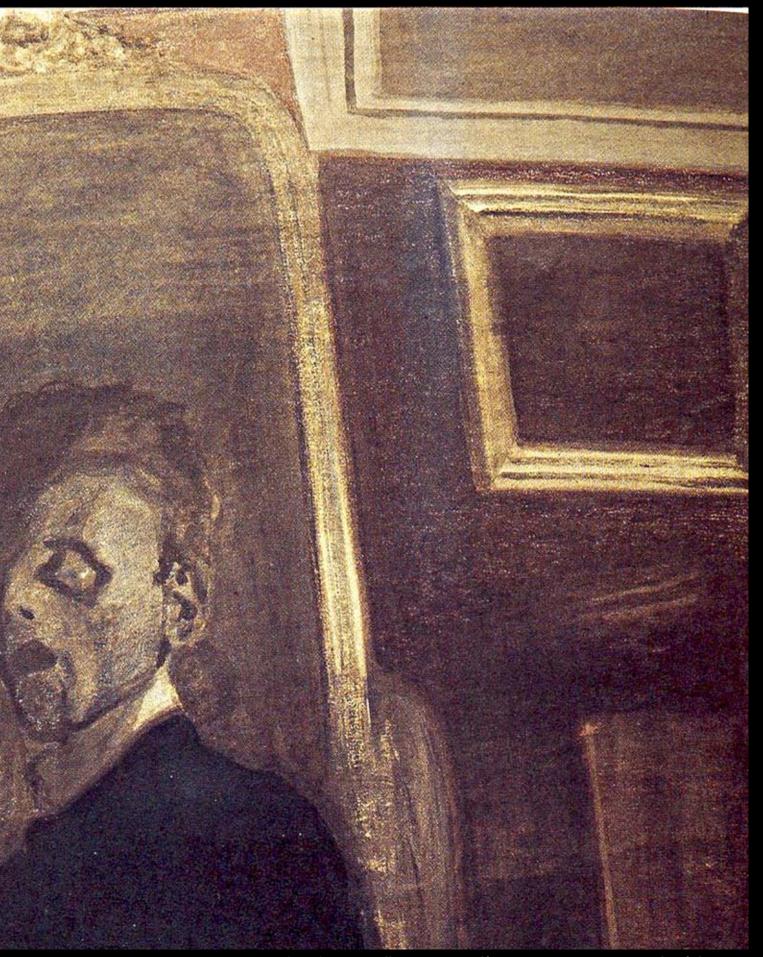
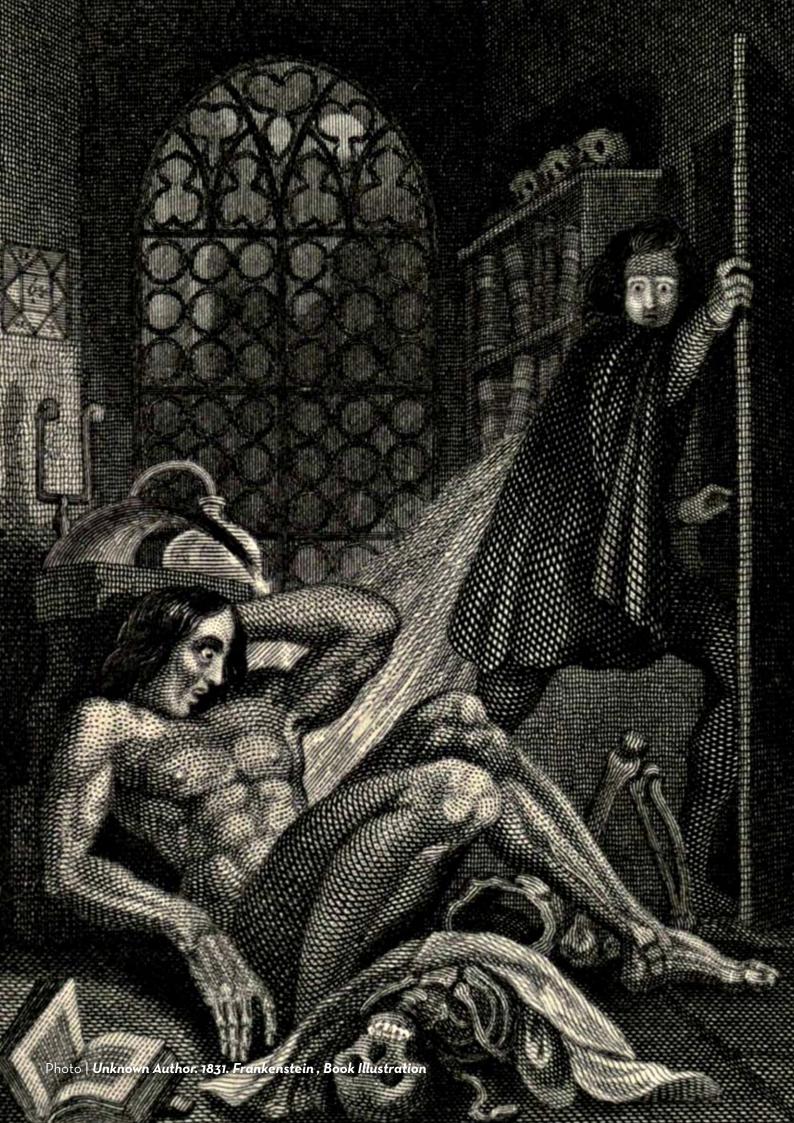


Photo | -Léon Spilliaert. 1908. Self portrait at mirror . Copyright of the artist



n'est pas l'empire de la mort: c'est l'empire de la vie«.

And that's the reason why a universe ruled by spiritual forces and beings was so attractive for those nineteenth minds, linking in this sense directly with the so called »magical thought«. In addition to this important feature, we easily identify a tendency of those new esoteric speculators to reinterpret the religious experience using heterodox and romantic terminology, and the exaltation of the artistic and spiritual dimension of Christian religion supported by Chateubriand, or the mystical experience constructed in Novalis or Blake's opuses, or vaguely in the case of Sade, Baudelaire, Lautréamont or Rimbaud's pagan and savage dimension in the pursuit of épater le bourgeois, bear out such theory. Even recent works have tried to elucidate the esoteric elements which inspired the background of writers like Balzac, inscribed a priori in the Realism [x].

Whatsoever, we should reevaluate the importance of the occult and mystical fashions which crawling in our period, and great Spanish novels such La Regenta (1884-85) and Fortunata y Jacinta (1886-87), by L. A. Clarín and B. P. Galdós respectively, bear testimony of that peculiar intellectual milieu which wandered in Europe. Moreover, the well-known philosophical assimilation between God and His Creation, frequently named with the terms of immanentism, pantheism or deism, found important defenders in literary lost characters and antiheroes like Fernando Ossorio (Camino de perfección, 1902), obviously against the catholic dogmas. On the other hand, is notorious the case of Jakob Böhme (ca.1575-1624) and Emanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772), and their literary influence in gloomy, thoughtful and tortured characters like Roderick Usher (The Fall of House Usher, 1839),

Gottfried Wolfgang (The adventure of the German student), and even in the out of period Harry Haller (Der Steppenwolf, 1927); and precisely such evocative, lonely and bizarre human conditions was extremely useful for Edgar Allan Poe to recreate the distinctive awe atmosphere which lies in great part of his masterpieces, and certainly in the very remote entrails of modern men.

Nevertheless, and accordingly with the clever perspective supported by W. Hanegraaff [w], we must try to avoid the wide-spread tendency of devaluate those occultist elements. focusing our attention on the irrational and conservative objectives and tenets which hypothetically aim these heterodox currents of thought. On the contrary, in many ways these esoteric conceptions have encouraged the birth of modern world in scientific terms. As a literary paradigm of such assumption, we can find in the immortal opus Frankenstein (1818) some references to the youthful flirtings of our Dr. Frankenstein with the old and dusty books written by Agrippa von Nettesheim (1486-1535), Albertus Magnus (ca.1200-1280) and Paracelsus (ca.1493-1541), which bear witness to the inclination of modern scientists to the so called »natural philosophers« from the Renaissance, in their pursuit to conceive a panvitalist vision of the whole universe and the rise of a scienza nuova.

Further reading:

- [z] EMONT, N., Thèmes du fantastique et de l'occultisme en France à la fin du XIXe siècle, in La littérature fantastique: colloque de Cérisy, Paris: A. Michel, 1991, pp. 137-156.
- [y] FLAMMARION, C., Les merveilles célestes: lectures du soir, Paris: Hachette, 1872, p. 346.
- [x] LOZANO SAMPEDRO, M. T., dissertation: El esoterismo en la obra de Balzac, Salamanca, 1990.

[w] Azogue Journal Resources at www.revistaazogue.com

STR

HANGING CAGES ING DESIRE

»FOR THE SENSES OF THE COMATOSE«

It suddenly occurred to me that my new kingdom may be more than the untameable creature I took it for. I realized the mixture lying behind the closed doors, tired grins and silenced whispers, and the basement of my consciousness started oozing poisonous fumes warning me of times ahead.

It gradually occurred to my new kingdom that I may be more than the fabled landlord it took me for. And as such it prepared endless barren discourses with which I'm supposed to be brought down to my knees and submit to a will I neither acknowledge nor condone.

Hence, Hence, beneath the cheap gloss of an idealistic future, the frustration of a not thought through deal is smouldering, and the fury of a bad business decision is piling up, as the blanks get harder and harder to fill; and, as the pressure grows, uneasy the mirrors slowly turn away, bathing in the ash of haunting visions, paying respects to the time when the pen glided away on the unseen paper in a perfect metamorphosis of unlucky beings.

A dire lack of everything eats away mercilessly at the whole, and the nonbelievers wait patiently in the shadows the happy hour of the crumbling of minds and bodies. But those who still have words of meaning to speak, things to ask forgiveness for, sins to shape and atone for, will always be admired and looked up to. The old puppeteer will once more be brought back to life, to reveal lost secrets of leading the inane and disoriented. The daily show will set itself in motion without remorse, no matter how ragged the stage and the curtains may be. A true feast for the senses of the comatose... the place all are headed for. Is this seat taken?...



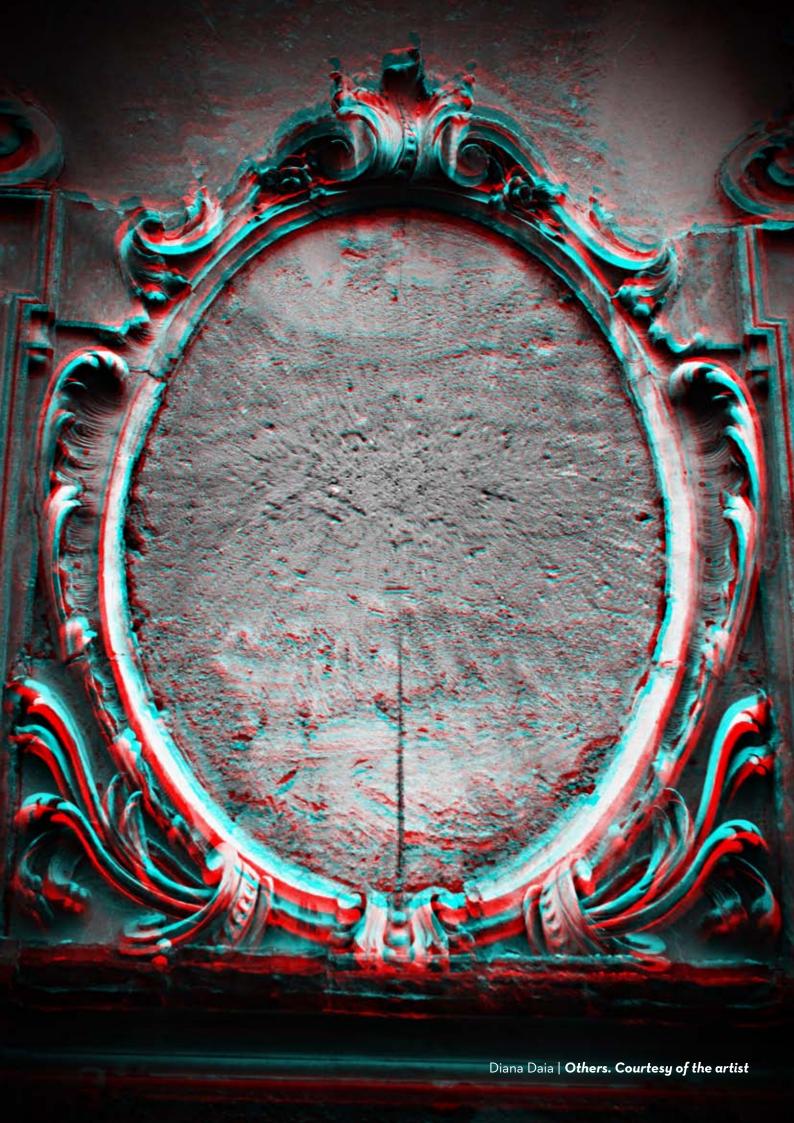


photo | Bahak B. Courtesy of the artist

CHAI

CISSORS





N-SPHERE E-BOOK COLLECTIONS COMING UP IN NOV

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