

As Optic As Possible

2015

Entr'acte
&
As Optic As Possible
Present

A film by
Andrew Leslie Hooker

The Sin King
(*Beauty Revealed*)

2004-2014

Director's Note

The Sin King DVD is the final result of an expanded-cinema project that began its long and torturous path back in the winter of 2004.

The three texts and various images included in this booklet provide a considerable amount of information pertaining to this Entr'acte edition without being overtly explicit regarding contextual and biographical detail, and therefore some careful yet fairly liberal reading and a certain amount of "joining-the-ontological-dots" will be necessary in order to gain a more complete picture of the considerably intricate, not to say totally surreal, dilemmas that all those involved have been confronted with, on-and-off, over the last ten years.

Fear and trembling indeed!

Andrew Leslie Hooker
Liverpool, August 2014

Note Bene:

WARNING! The thematic and indeed, dramaturgic elements of The Sin King have been dissected at length over the following pages and therefore, so as not to reveal any details that may tarnish the spectators objectivity towards the film, it is recommended that any contemplation of the texts should take place after viewing.

A.L.H.

THE SIN KING

By
Massimo Ricci

Theoretically blasphemous, his behaviors dictated by an innate inability to comprehend. The monarch of evildoing, perhaps a former innocent creature descending into despair, entirely aware of having chosen a wrong route but incapable of a decisive move towards resurgence. Consequences that must remain unchallenged, otherwise it's hell - way before the *real* hell is finally reached.

An ear-deceiving poker-faced orchestra keeps gesturing, leaving the disconsolate congregations totally clueless. The last to perish, they'll die as blessed performers to the very end: brave substitute officers of a vessel that was not conceived for reposeful cruises, but still floats in a vibrating ocean of vigilance.

Life is an oasis of fraudulence for feckless noise-makers in the desert of susurrant timelessness; the false attempt of unhousing an ego can transform a once-noble aspiration into a dreadful incubus.

Black and white fluidity turning into scathing combustion. Frothy waters contaminated by parasites changing the attitude of the unfortunates who drink. A stupor whose rules correspond to a single dogma: remove the truth. Those who believed themselves geniuses reveal their crack-brained side to get mentally and morally obliterated. The multitudes who used to conform to the swayer's unwiseness will soon collide with an unforgiving verity.

The rudimentary ugliness of humankind: no gods or semi-gods to save someone from drowning in the quicksand of ordinariness. Flaccid flesh, idiotic jokes, convulsive eating, laughter for no apparent reason. The smell of uncouth desperation emerging from the saddening scene. HAZE OF THE FACULTIES, veiling the significance of a presumed balance that is not there and never will be.

Having merely won a battle, one thinks of ruling in the war of nerves. But the ungenerous soul of acceptance is not going to allow more than that fleeting glimpse of illusion. Changes of perceptive depth bash hard on individual security; hidden behind the fictitious place's hypothesis, you're suddenly awakened by the arsonist handling the frequencies and the colors you had refused to hear and behold at the outset.

A disfigured face comprising hundreds of little replicas of that incongruous expression. Personification of the incapability of keeping a promise - born unclouded, transformed into receptacles of tensions, vicious entities deprived of any feeling whatsoever. Deluded by the hope of personal meaningfulness, addressees of something that cannot be taught.

Trying to achieve a simultaneousness of intuition, resonance and controlled fear.

Words mean nothing, paintings are overly difficult to complete: the ever-present malfunctioning mind of the self-loving herdsman kills the artlessness of what's always been there from the beginning. There is a filter between instant understanding and creative act – the maggoty brain wants to win every time.

The spirit's motility corrupted by private contortion. We can't even scream in anger for the worst type of crime.

Decaying thoughts, disintegrating borders. The lone realization - that of our own ignorance. Choirs mutating tones to adapt to a new harmonic condition where there's no resolution, just endlessness of emotional disruption in sempiternal tears. Joy or sorrow – it's exactly the same.

Inexplicably fallen to Earth with no role, irrecoverably oblivious to the PURPOSE, destroying our own BEINGNESS, forsaken by the AEONIAN HUM.

Unequivocally conscious of what we have managed to dilapidate, we're left contemplating madness. Too late for the U-turn.

Massimo Ricci

www.touchingextremes.org

49th Venice Biennale Film Notes

By
Andrew Leslie Hooker

Once upon a bitterly cold night in Rome, back in March, 2004, when Alter Ego flautist Manuel Zurria and I euphorically discussed working together on a radical, A/V interpretation of Gavin Bryars' *The Sinking of the Titanic*, I knew before floating away from his house, that loosely based on my recollection of the music (I hadn't actually heard it for at least twenty years!) and vague, teenage notions of the romance of historically filtered tragedy (in which the almost mythical story of the Titanic plays an enormous part), I wanted to use a stop-frame-animated, Manga-style human face as my source material (about as far removed as one could get from the sepia-tinted images that usually illustrate this story whenever "raised" on television or in magazines), or more accurately the concept of a generic human face painted in a screaming Manga style perceived through ever increasing distortions of time and failing memory. Both of these acting as virtual spirit channels causing the facial terrain itself to become less rigidly formulaic and therefore more vulnerable and open to interpretation. In this way, what may seem to be a sorrowful countenance could theoretically be read as joyful, panic or grief as transcendent *et cetera*, and indeed as I began to drift back to *terra firma*, this idea provoked more than a few worrying thoughts regarding the notion of historical flux and emotional synaesthesia, particularly in relation to the intricate framework of 20th century cultural, social and political pathology. For example, to what capricious extent were the super-iconic faces of Adolph Hitler, Marilyn Monroe, Albert Einstein, Mao Zedong, Charlie Chaplin, Joseph Stalin, Elvis Presley and co. manifestations of zealous "inner-truths", as opposed to surface deflections sculpted for the masses by shrewd star-makers such as Colonel Tom Parker or Joseph Goebbels? Indeed, how much of the 21st century's perception of the Titanic disaster is shaped by the propagandist idea of "the last musician standing" as opposed to the visceral terror of the event itself? The difficulty seemed to be, how to work with this most subtlest of border-line abstractions without the risk of taking a long and potentially fatal ride down kitsch-street-Arizona?

I mean... *Tragedy, Romance, Sorrow*... hadn't these words been made redundant, completely banned from the lexicon of post-modern art practice?

I was already in deep trouble and I wasn't even across the rain-swept *strada* yet.

The following morning, whilst listening to the duly unearthed *Titanic* LP (Obscure Records 1975) and re-reading Bryars' sleeve notes contained therein, I realized that the composition itself was doing more or less the same thing with

sound as I was thinking of doing with this generic face using paint and film *i.e.* taking a simple, recognizable melody and through the use of repetition, spacing, doubling, stretching, primitive sampling and an almost foley-esque application of concrete noise, twisting and subverting our perception of a given three-dimensionality into acutely disorientating new shapes... theoretically into infinity.

The final, caffeine and alcohol-soaked epiphany descended when I realized the possible significance to my own work of the metaphorically-loaded-maypole around which Bryars' aleatoric apparitions prance and pirouette... which is, of course the poetic and indeed liberating influence of oceanic currents upon intricately organized sound and the ensuing possibilities of almost hallucinogenic transformations of consciousness *vis á vis* the "real".

And so there I had it.

Substitute notes for oil and pigment, melody for the idea of the *masque de mort* and mirror the drifting, impressionistic audio design of the *Titanic* by filming painted acetates through various levels of agitated water held in specifically designed glass containers, then continuously re-filming the results until the "original thing" is completely transformed yet still retaining vivid traces of its former self.

I was sorted... or was I?

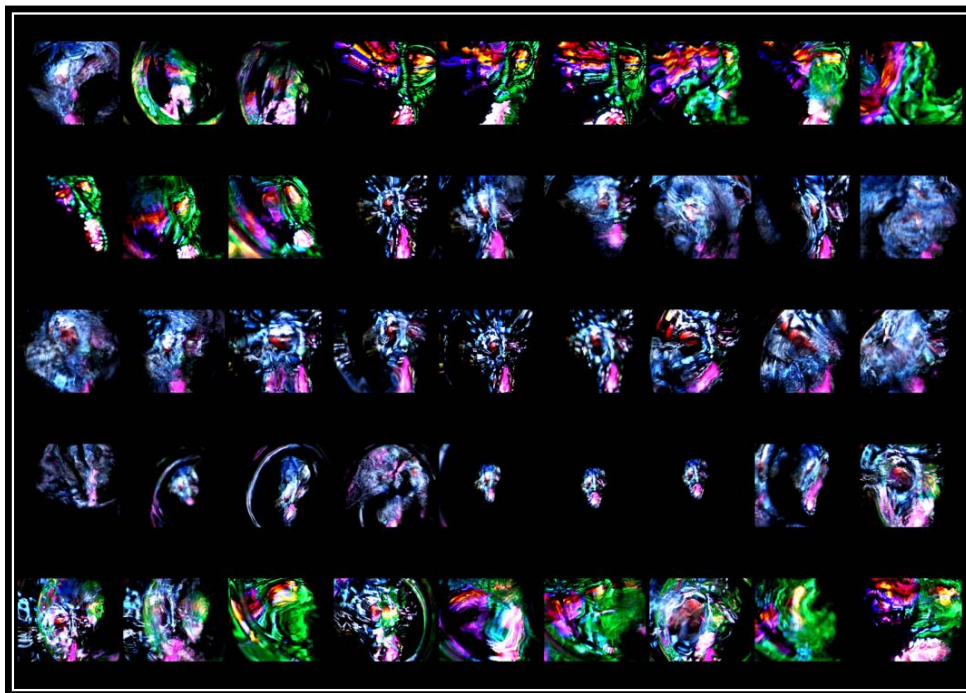
Screw the edit!!!

With the first performance at the 49th Venice biennale looming ominously above my head, I still had no idea of exactly what this "generic face" should even look like.

I had the fear!

Therefore, in an act of desperation worthy of Max Von Sydow in Ingmar Bergman's *Vargtimmen*, I took to wandering the streets of Rome in the dead of night and for nights on end, high on dodgy pills supplied by even dodgier Romanians, armed only with an ancient Walkman... it's exhausted and rusted guts struggling heroically to digest and fart out something coherent from an Ampex C90 tape recording of my scratched-up vinyl release of the *Titanic*... a stolen DAT recorder and my trusty Siberian hound Kubrick. Brushing aside the composer's intellectual smokescreens, I felt that I had to submerge myself inside the music's fundamental lyricism in order to erode my somewhat sophic tendencies and undoubtedly dulled levels of perception and resurrect them into writhing tendrils of sensate vision... all in the hope of enticing *thee* face to come leering out of the shadows and strike up a half-way-decent conversation.

What follows below {*} are carefully selected fragments from those night-walking sessions (during which all manner of physiognomic extremities revealed themselves to me... mostly my own in various shapes of distorted intoxication, reflected back in steamy bar windows and passing cars and buses), edited together to form a relatively harmonious entity from what was essentially a maniacal stream of random sensations directly influenced by the amplified noise that was raging through my unbalanced skull and verbally sand-blasted onto digital tape (R.I.P. my trusty Walkman that died an honorable death "on-the-job" so to speak and was ceremoniously launched into the Tiber and also a hats-off to the full working condition of my tormented liver, that to this very day still bears me the occasional needle-sharp grudge for those heady Roman nights of art and excess so long ago).



!!!HELL!!!

!!!To create is to suffer!!!

!!!B-b-blame it on the BBBBBOOGIE!!!

A.L.H.
2005-2014

(*)

... sounds of silence...
...ear-splitting screams @380 multi-tracked b.p.m's...
... searing white heat and crazed wire tapping fantasies of...
... eavesdropping on a dead prophet's living sermon...
... the intangible mysteries of human love...
... opium-haze dreams of ravishing pigmented mouths transforming into...
... swirling particles of acid colour...
... pungent aromas of burning wood and salty sea air...



"Errrrrr...even the sky reeked right bad after forty five"

...barking children & frolicking dogs...
... sweet nostalgia illusion...
... slow...
... violent death...
... long...
... violent lament...
... true lies scorched into animal *DNA* from aeons before *thee* beginning...
... those blissful days of innocence...

P O P

... blood against blood...
... hope against hope...
... m-m-m-Mother earth weeping grimy tears seeped in crime...
... the last flickering reflections of a dying cell...
... machine-like robotic riddims...
... alien nightmare of becoming what we cannot choose...

... click-cut-whirrrr..click-cut-whirrrr..click-cut-whirrrr...

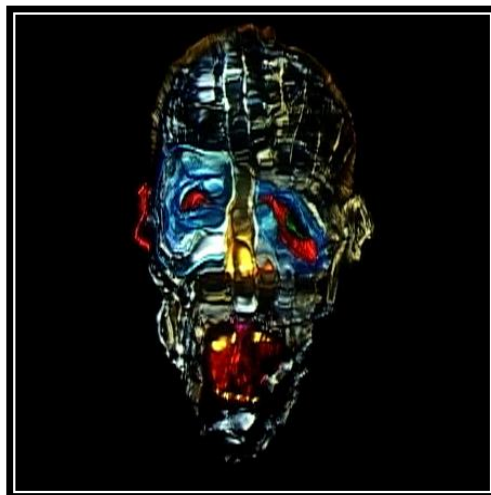
... malfunctioning Nintendo heaven...
... random chaos streams...
... Artaud via Kubrick's all-seeing-eye...
... humanity distilled in its own longing @25 f.p.s....

... the ingrained software of paradise lost...
... and regained...
... lost...
... and regained...
... lost...
... and regained...
... looped and spliced into sparkling reams of psychedelic schizophrenia...

Pickled immortality silver-surfing on endlessly repeating waves of disintegrating
spirit notes

Dead man on couch re-cast as H-Bomb buckaroo

"look up down below...yer time is out...gotta be gone...yeeehaaw!!!"



...infinity of signs in the human face...
... infinity of nuance in the human expression...
... smile..cry..grimace..laugh..howl...
... same muscles..same skin...
... infinity of nuance...
... the body as stock plastic casing...

Made in Korea™

... infinity of nuance...
... the *trip* between matter and anti-matter and back...
... stop-stop-start-again...
... zapping at light speed with slow burn through an eternity of signs...
... barely scraping the void and then spat out the other side...
... into..into..into...

Freaked-out infinitesimal *data* stumbling blearily-blind-drunk across livid
patterns of existence writhing and coiling within the very nucleus of blind-panic

death

A triple dose speedball of unbearable radiance plunged deep into the spine of
existence

Deep into the heart of the Hollywood-orange-sun
All embracing like Marilyn's thighs and Elvis's seductively pouting Las Vegas
lips

...terrifying..terrifying...
... slow fades over the horizon...
... creating black arc echoes into *UFO* head-sets...

STOP

<<*Fast-Forward*>>

To the ultimate 20th Century comedy classics

... Armenia...Belsen...Hiroshima...Vietnam...Cambodia...Ethiopia...Iraq...Croatia...
Rwanda... Haiti... Cuba... Northern Ireland... Mississippi...
... East Timor...
... & on & on & on &...



Uncle Walt D. pirouetting in a vortex of insanity spiked to the eyeballs
a'hollerin' & a'hollerin'
"glory..glory..glory"
as dem ol' cotton-pickin' 'n' finger-lickin' field monkeys a'hang an' a'burn
a'plenty
in the deep and dark Southern backwards

J.F.K.K.K.

... deserts and islands and splitting atoms...
... rainbow radiation soaking our sandy tropical skins...
... staining our soft insides...
... cow-piss-yellow..sulfur-poison-pinky-green..ace-of-spades-black...

...aaaaand...

God makes like Lazarus and jetés into the resurrection shuffle re-animating
himself as a slightly more evolved form of mutant metal tadpole

...lazy finger-printed fictions trapped in a fiery pixilated hell...
... fevered cross-wiring of Harpo Bosch and Hieronymus Marx...
... charred purple womb meat...
... Monet carrion magiked from *DIY~Organimation*...

... yin-yang-yong...
... up-side-down & out-of-balance...
... trash terminology for the cash-poor...
...slow..slow..slow..violence...
... transforms into kabuki androgyny...
... where fixed frozen emotion is all...

... & ...

We

are

as

ONE

Infinity of nuance in the blink of a blind bat's eye
transmogrifying into spiraling
molten slithers of hallucigen hues
Molecular illusions a slippin' and a slidin' in ultra-stylized pantomimes of
cheap theatricality



The good Lord as an exploding cancer-flower reborn in 11,000 degrees of blind
hate

A timely reminder of what lies beyond

Two steps forward→→and more than a few back←←←←←←←←



THEE END

"But sell me your souls first guvnor"

stop-stop-start-again

...dread glitter dreams of dazzling white light...
... dreams of becoming *No-thing/Every-thing*...

*"We can't **an-al-ize** the info.
Please go to*

www.anniateyourneighborwithgunaxeordeadlyvenom.com

Cheapo murder at 'alf the price! Zombie rage don't ya know!"

... X-ray wounds & psychic rape...
...the deadly craving for childhood dreams...
 ... mysteries...
 ... belief...
... hidden whirlwinds of wonder...
 ... dreaming of Jeanie...
 ... dreaming of a dreamed self...

 ... a dead dreamer...
 ... beyond thought...
 ... beyond being...
... beyond blue remembered hills...
 ... beyond the blue horizon...

Beyond trembling despair and pain
Where the very *idea* of death is lulled into abstract amphetamine delirium

BIG BANG

... deluxe primer for a newer sleeker model...
 ... white light & white heat...
... Chinese whisper lullabies crackling pockets of dank air...
 ... electric with frenzied delight...

... a..slow..slower..slowed...
... circle of death...
... of life...
... dead lives...

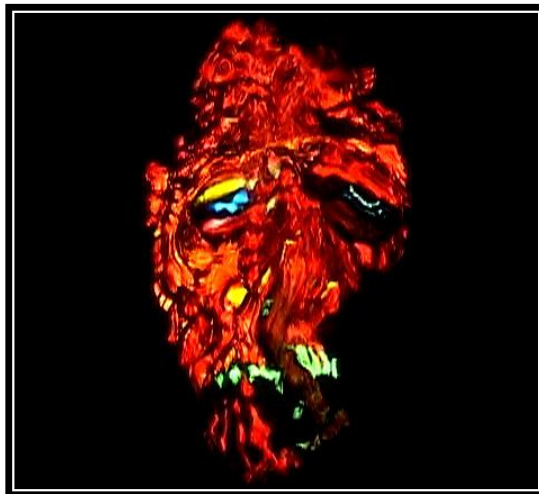
Fade Out

Press ● *Record*

Press ► *Play*

... silence of sounds...
... static tape blank ...
... dust magnetic ...
... hissing..spluttering..fizzing..popping...

We still cannot hear Guglielmo's blabbering Jesus but we are forever saddled
with the lingering stench of his brown-nosed flunkies' slippery farts
&
the massed whimpering's of voluptuous raspberry-crushed corpses left
shiny
squelchy
shimmering
in the dazzling wake of ekstatic fear



"Oh well, never mind...maybe we'll get it better next time 'round!!!"

Repeat!
Repeat!!
Repeeeeeeat!!!

"God-damn-it-ta-mutter-ficken'-Hades!

Play
Won't play"

..... horror..... horror..... horror.....

Andrew Leslie Hooker

Rome, 2005/Liverpool, 2014

FOR IT HAPPENS ALIKE WITH MAN AND BEAST AS THE BEAST DIES SO MAN DIES TOO

(a brief autopsy of human sorrow)

By

Andrew Leslie Hooker

Catalogue Notes

Flora/Netmage Live Media Festival-2007

Scirocco Film Festival-2009

"Noise is simply something I like to listen to, it feels good. I love distortion. When you push things to their breaking point and it starts taking new shapes and colours, it is endlessly fascinating, mysterious, and beautiful. Like watching the ocean or a sunset, it's always the same and it's always different. You never tire of it"

Lasse Marhaug

"History consists of nothing but misfortune and the troubles that afflict us, so that in all our days on earth we never know one single moment that is genuinely free of fear."

Tz'u-hsi

"What is the real breath of a man-the breathing out or the breathing in?"

Margaret Atwood

CONCEPT 1

Subjecting the problematic theorem of intrinsic human anguish (portrayed here as a typical, post-modern banality... the clichéd impotence of a screaming face) to an intense process of visual distillation, a continuous, analytic quest into form and content until the original subject becomes unrecognizably altered; still inherently of the original yet somehow more lucid. In this case, an evidently plastic terror culminates in describing a kind of Bernhardian negation of existence that whilst revealing an unbearable weight of moral obligation, contemporaneously brings into being a theoretical black-hole of tremulous anti-matter... *i.e.* "emptiness".

However, as "emptiness" by definition is *all* encompassing, then the apparent "nothing" would syllogistically become "everything" and as John Cage once famously declared *"I have nothing to say, and I'm saying it, and that is poetry!"*

CONCEPT 2

Paul Bowles wrote in *Call At Corazon*: *"Recipe for dissolving the hideousness made by a thing: Fix the attention upon the given object or situation so that the various elements, all familiar, will regroup themselves. Frightfulness is never more than an unfamiliar pattern."*

As well as an abstract investigation into the nature of “emptiness”, this expanded-cinema piece also sets out to question Bowles' “recipe” and in doing so, suggest a more enigmatic and indeed satirical approach towards the twin axioms of fear and moral law.

By way of an audio-visual intensification of a single fragment of crude melodrama (the above-mentioned and “screaming human face” engaged in an unfashionably expressionistic struggle between flesh and spirit), a graphic portrait of that same “hideousness” is arrived at, which in a playfully monocratic fashion obliges the spectator to “fix their attention” upon those very aspects of “frightfulness” *contrary* to any ritualized method of re-familiarization of which the only purpose is to create hazy, morphine-like-states of ironic displacement and fake immunity.

Throughout a methodical, almost invisible deconstruction of that “single fragment” into a finely-wrought, schismatic palimpsest of layer upon layer of time-stretched, decaying video signals (contrapuntally welded to an exquisitely dissonant soundtrack), the narrative subject is increasingly magnified with the intention of heightening the spectator's vulnerability in relation to emphatic portrayals of “horror” (especially when staged as an egregious spectacle of operatic emotionalism, ultra-minimalist in form, though crudely voluptuous in its meta-textual weave of sin and death), until a kind of Rothko-esque, monochromatic drift is arrived at, seemingly turning any lingering sense of burlesque paradox inside-out and creating the overwhelming impression of being engulfed by an eviscerated eternity of human sorrow... a sorrow, though born of an innate and duly acknowledged nefariousness, is restated towards the end of the film as a gloriously resplendent *Beast*.

Indeed, one of the insidiously absurdist motifs of this piece is a symbolic collapse of the spectator's three-dimensional perception into an acute metaphysical crisis, one that would theoretically obliterate *all* modes of social, cultural and political behavior and “logically” result in a *tabula rasa*, zero-point de/renunciation of *self*.

Hurrrrrrrrah for Andreyev and Boooooooooooooo to Marx!
Psychoneurosis ROCKS!!!



- 1) **Melodrama/'meledrahme/** noun 1a a work, e.g. a film or play, characterized by crude emotional appeal and by the predominance of plot and action over characterization. b the dramatic genre comprising such works. 2 sensational or sensationalized events, language or behaviour. 3 formerly, a sensational drama interspersed with songs.

THE IMAGE(S)/THE EXPERIMENT/THE BEGININGS OF A JOURNEY (SOME REFLECTIONS ON THE DOUBLE LIFE OF MELODRAMA IN RELATION TO THE POST-HUMAN AGE)

Why a screaming human face?

For a long time I have been fascinated by the idea of *pure* melodrama (especially of the Hollywood variety) containing trace elements of certain *truths* pertaining to that 20th century elitist term... the "human condition", almost as if the crude emotional gestures are less mask-like than the so-called method school of realism which most of the time seem like extravagant ways of suffocating potentially profound sensation in a fog of grimy, pseudo-verite (for example, compare the meta-gaze of Chaplin to the gravity-bound gaze of De Niro). For me, the problem with (film) melodrama has always been that the plot or story-line embedding (and in many cases completely burying) the more esoteric elements, is mostly derisible banality crying out for a kind of dramaturgic archeology in order to expose their full corruptive influence. To thrill *and* to reveal is the double life of melodrama. To be thrilled one must be passive. To be revealed-to requires that one at the very least begins to admit the possibility of doubt (a *thing* is never simply just a *thing*) and it seems to me that if one is engaged in an attempt to force doubt, one first has to shift the servant into the position of, if not master, then somewhere within the space between; a non-material, transitional state somewhat akin to a psychedelic, out of body state-of-grandeur in which literally anything seems possible.

For me, the isolated gestures, the buried fragments (*i.e.* the glance, the smile, the kiss, the cry, the scream *et cetera*) are the potential keys to otherwise unknowable revelations of *self* (an unbearably terrible prospect to most people). *They* are the drama, those compelling signs, not the pseudo-narrative dross that engulfs them with so much prosaic vapidty... the so-called story or plot-line...with their safety-of-illusion Beginning, Middle and End all neatly laid out on a silver platter, feeding our voracious appetites for a just and morally explicit universe.

The fundamental dilemma lay in exhuming those occult elements... unshackling them from the deadweight of formulaic expectation and allowing them the freedom to finally breathe and work that "*Ol' Black Magic*"?

An act of intense distillation was required, an act that involved maximizing single (melo)dramatic events to what I believed to be the very limits of their capacity to reverberate at supernatural and maybe even, social levels of disruption and (dis/re)engagement.

I began by isolating individual scenes from various films that I felt I could work with... even from films that could in no way be considered melodramatic, although the individual scenes when divorced from their contextual surroundings could indeed be read as "twenty-four-carat-melodrama" and therefore very appropriate raw material. For example the agonizing screams of Harriet Andersson's dying sister in Ingmar Bergman's *Cries And Whispers*, or Will Smith's passionate journalist

baiting in the guise of a victorious Cassius Clay in Michael Mann's *Ali*... a fraction of a second of which makes up the root of all the movement in this film and thus surely a perfect example of a *thing* never simply being just a *thing* given the tragic-comedic nature of this film in comparison to the upbeat Smith vehicle.

I then decided on one scene and divided that scene into moments of gestural weight; chose one of those moments and divided that into seconds of micro-motion and finally one of those seconds into twenty five fractions or frames and from those twenty five I chose one, a seemingly agonized death-mask that had once been, in so-called *reality*, joyously mischievous... I had reached sub-stratum.

How was I to go even further into an exploration of that 1/25th of a second of sublimated emotion? How to fracture and reanimate beyond what had already been broken so many times before without destroying its new-found sense of freedom?

Knowing when to stop was never my strong point, but hell... that's life!

My mind, as always, turned to music.

I stuck a cassette recording of Glen Branca's *Symphony No. 1 (Tonal Plexus)* into the boom-box, pumped up the volume and collapsed upon the studio floor (the dodgy Romanian pills didn't help). When I came to, I had the answer... *harmonics!*

2) Harmonics pl noun 2 (treated as pl) the set of overtones of a fundamental note.

THE METHOD

In each of the four movements that make up this symphony, the repetitive hammering of an archetypal E chord by Branca's small army of guitarists *etc.* begin producing shimmering clouds of harmonic overtones that result in a most extraordinary phenomena... a powerful, psycho-acoustic space that seemingly turns the original sounds inside out, stretching and slowing down time itself and in doing so bringing about a confounding effect upon the listener, not unlike standing almost still whilst everything exterior to the "I" (including the original work!) continues moving at impossible speeds (a subtle riposte perhaps to the digital luster and surface glide of the post-human, consumer plague, what we buy and the incredible haste in which we dispose of it). Significantly therefore, yet however fleetingly, a shifting-of-perspective has taken place vis á vis the *given* (once again... a thing is never *just* a thing, a note is never *just* a note and a screaming face is certainly never *just* a screaming face). Thus inspired, I began applying the basic principles of Branca's compositional method to the isolated image.

Other, mid to late 20th century composers sprang immediately to mind, most notably: Giacinto Scelsi, John Cale and Charlemagne Palestine, all of whom had done revolutionary work with harmonics and overtones in the past and almost immediately I realized, with some trepidation, that to "open-up" the single 1/25th of a second cell I had to find a parallel method of creating visual harmonics.

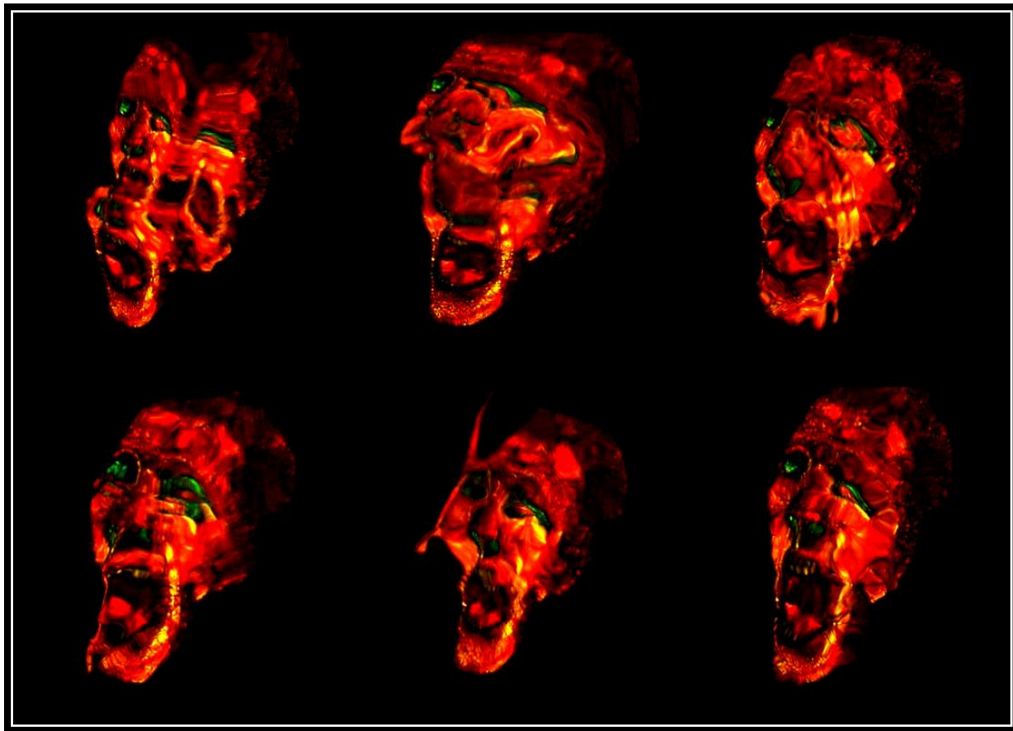
In order to continue the experiment I had to find a way of splitting and refracting the fundamental cell into literally millions of pieces, the drifting shards of which would hopefully suggest uncharted visual terrain (at least to me!), revealing pristine new shapes far removed from their origin and yet at the same time intrinsically *of* it... a possible solution presented itself fairly quickly.

Having just completed a full-length animated feature film to accompany Gavin Bryars' *The Sinking Of The Titanic* for the 49th Venice Biennial, my studio in Rome was over-crowded with glass vessels of all shapes and sizes used for the filming of

back-lit water movement and *other* faces (see preceding film notes). I proceeded to make some oil on glass paintings of that 1/25th cell and in a slightly bastardized version of Disney's multiplane animation practice c.1937, began photographing one of those paintings on High Definition Video through varying degrees of agitated water... code name: *ORGANIMATION#*.

Extreme nightmare scenario!!!

According to my friend and editor's long-suffering Avid, each minute of film contained up to six million different movements! That's six million permutations of the fundamental cell, and indeed each miniscule movement wildly distorted and shape-shifted the original physiognomic ambiguities into expressions that even Hieronymus Bosch would have been proud of... I had discovered my overtones.



However, I wanted to go even further... way beyond the relative limits of obsessive visual repetition... to the point of complete cerebral collapse, which was, after all, only where I wanted to drag the unsuspecting public.

From eleven hours of footage I kept ten seconds, that is approximately one million separate images. I time-coded the tape and randomly chose seven, which in turn were subjected to a re-filming process from which I selected ten seconds of each, plus ten seconds of the original. These eight strands were then re-filmed again, this time from video playback on a small monitor screen. All of the sixteen strands were then further subjected to an extreme form of digitalized slowing-down wherein seconds became minutes and which consequently had two bizarre visual repercussions. The first being that the astonishingly beautiful patterns that moving water creates (invisible to the human eye at normal speed) were rendered

exquisitely clear when slowed down to a "stoner-groove", loaded with baroque curlicues and erotically suggestive flux, in fact almost supplanting the subject itself as the main focal point (the medium as the message anyone?). And secondly were the bizarrely arhythmical Detroit robotics that the morphing shapes adopted, caused by the inability of the software to calculate the spaces between each individual movement... basically screaming:

"FUCK IT!

Maybe no one's looking; I won't bother with this bit!"

Immediately apparent therefore was a randomly created dichotomy with its own aesthetic peculiarities... completely removed from the original concept from which it arose and to me... *that is poetry!*

At the beginning stages of the editing process (before any kind of rigid structure was imposed), the sixteen motion-captured 1/25 fps variants of the original painting were randomly assembled in a way that began to recall the early tape-loop experiments of Fripp & Eno and Steve Reich *et al*, the circular-breathing technique as practiced by Evan Parker and The Master Musicians of Joujouka (*i.e.* the seemingly mechanical repetition and layering of musical phrases prone to harmonic bleeding and dissonance) and the almost thaumaturgic use of echo and reverb on the late 1970's recordings of King Tubby, Black Ark and John Martyn.

Following an initial descent from white to black, the second section (in what is essentially a triptych) begins with a slow fade on a single variant which is left for a while in long shot, looping every twenty seconds or so. After a few cycles, one of the other sixteen variants is gradually dissolved-in and begins intertwining and echoing the first... similar to a repeated line of dialogue recited by a progressively weary narrator. And so on, the same with each of the variants being gradually dissolved-in (never cut!) at pitched intervals over the course of the ensuing forty minutes, becoming in essence a poly-contrapuntal optical harmony constructed from a series of staggered overtones and cavorting merrily at a gradually slower tempo within a 16:9 void... almost as if the original input had been endlessly dubbed into a video recorder with a seriously malfunctioning erase-head, until what one is actually seeing is the mere Xerox of a Xerox of a Xerox *et cetera*. A ghost film shaped by the memory-traces of what was once flesh and blood... although of a particularly (al)chemical strain.

As well as proceeding through a series of mono/triadic tinting, focus-manipulations and visual mirroring (indeed in this context, the sense of what is understood in Bressonian terms as *pure cinema* reveals itself perhaps to be the truer subject of this work), the film also employs an extremely slow inward zoom, the gradual effect of which renders an inexorably degenerative sense of human identity into the pure abstraction and strangely blissful stasis of the aforementioned Bernhardian void. The third section begins with a radically compressed period of "soft incubation" out of which the protean mass that defines this rather grandiose state of nothingness seemingly regenerates itself as an incandescent, kaleidoscopic "Beast" (Camille Saint-Saëns on very bad acid!) morphing ceaselessly onwards at sub-grindcore levels of slothdome to a dubbed-out Indian disco beat looped into a searing white light from the mouth of infinity.

Before our very eyes, the melodramatic maggot has become a butterfly (albeit a rather menacing one) and we didn't even notice!

" ...MAAA-GIC...
... *ya know... you'd better believe that it's...*
... *ma-ma-ma-ma-ma-ma...*
...MAAA-GIC... "



THE SOUND

³/₄HadBeenEliminated (Stefano Pilia, Valerio Tricoli and Claudio Rochetti)
Guitar, Reel to Reel Tape Recorder/ Vocals and Cracked Electronics

Daniela Cascella, the journalist, curator and author introduced me to the incredibly fecund sound world of ³/₄HadBeenEliminated a little over two years ago. Immediately, I felt an irresistible desire to instigate some kind of artistic collaboration. The various ways in which their dread, electroacoustic soundscaping would suddenly and shockingly unfold into field-recorded, cinematic vistas of pure, hallucinogenic joy (in much the same way as early Godard and the Czech director Juraj Herz) left me completely spellbound, suspended in a kind of amniotic dream fusion of their unique sound and the "moving paintings" that I had been experimenting with since 2004.

THE SCORE

The composed music should follow the trajectory of the film closely, but not necessarily its rhythms *i.e.* cinematic, electroacoustic jump-cuts should not always lock-in to a specific visual element, but should add a more surreal juxtaposition... a quasi-autonomous agenda of psychological displacement.

The first, thirteen minute “water” section, essentially a visually graphic descent from white through grey to black, is scored for whispered crescendos of layered amp hum and empty cassette recorders.

Gradually evolving from out of this pseudo-silent maelstrom, manipulated layers of samples, guitar, vinyl, tape and computer generated noise (melodic and dissonant, tonal and atonal) are stacked-up (*à la* Public Enemy/Hank Shockley) over the entire forty minutes of the second “overtone” section, into a super-textural, shape-shifting drone which steadily gains in decibels to almost unbearable levels of sonic grain as the film transforms from the figurative to the abstract.

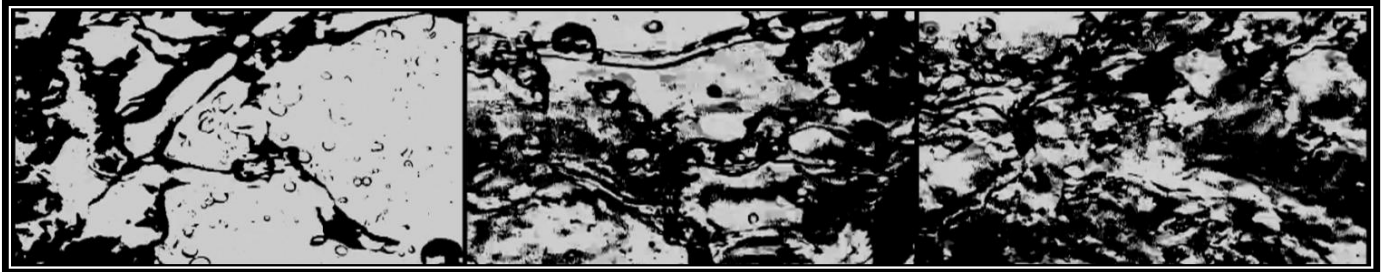
Moving into the third “beast” section, as the abstract elements begin to reorganize themselves into the kaleidoscopic menagerie, the distortion should almost completely recede but never actually disappear, giving way to symphonically-treated acoustic feedback and virtually imperceptible slivers of *musique concrète*.

The sluggishly dissolving crawl of the kaleidoscope itself, is accompanied by a downwardly pitched and de-synched tanpura pulse, honeycombed with the insectoid buzzing of radically filtered electroacoustic noise oozing from it's greasy pores and coiling ominously throughout the multi-channel sound system surrounding the audience... until approximately seven minutes later, when everything comes to an abrupt and (un)ceremonious halt.



TECHNICAL NOTES/RIDER

- a) Ideally the film should be viewed as a triptych, with each separate panel (in respectful homage to Abel Gance's *Napoléon*), projected onto one panoramic screen (with the option of invisible screens).



- b) 3 synchronized DVD players or alternately, 3 synchronized digi-beta players.
c) 4 x 12" video monitors (one for each of the musicians and director)
d) The sound system should be set-up for multi-channel or quadrophonic diffusion.

Andrew Leslie Hooker
Painter/Videaste/Sound-Artist
Bologna/June 2007
Revised Liverpool/February-April 2014

Script, Direction, Paintings & Sound Design

By

Andrew Leslie Hooker

Photography & Editing

By

Stuart Mabey

Original Soundtrack

By

Philip Jeck

Published by Touch Music

(MCPS)

Deconstructed & Reinterpreted

(With additional material)

By

Giuseppe Ielasi

Produced

By

Andrew Leslie Hooker & Stuart Mabey

(aka The Mutant Love Dolls)

(2004-2014)

Published

By

Entr'acte

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&

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Rashid & Mingus (2009-2014)

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*Without whose friendship, patience, artistry & technical ingenuity the making of this film
would not have been possible*

Respect!

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