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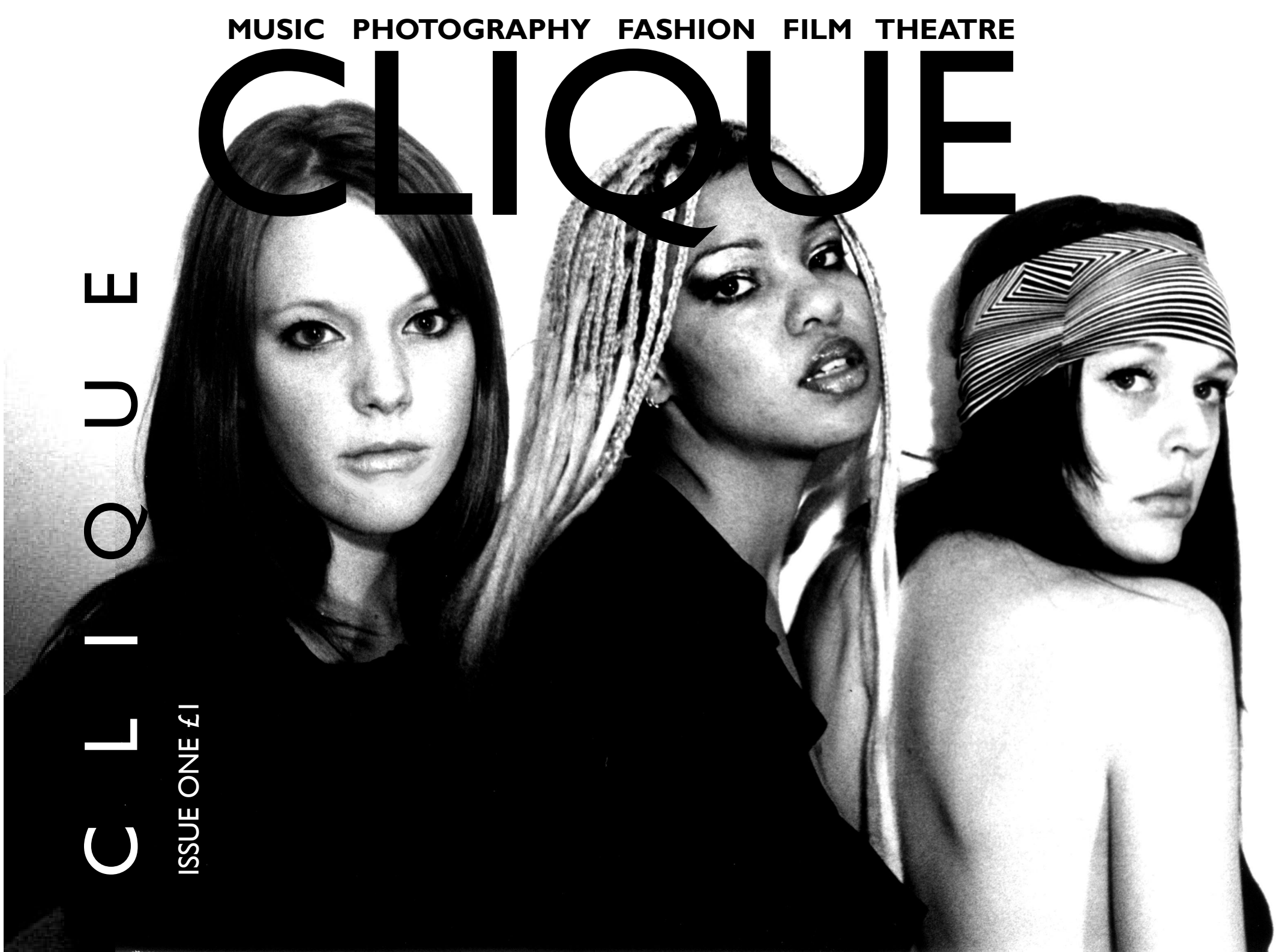
CLIQUE

CLIQUE

ISSUE ONE £1

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FOREWORD

We're all in a clique. This new magazine is one, consisting of me and several other people who wanted to make it. We're just one of many, there are millions of them, existing, forming, dying off right now. Whether we like it or not, we are all members of several at any one moment.

Cliques are social groups with common beliefs, values and activities, that's the theory at least. We're all "Warwick University Students" but thank God, we belong to other groups outside the landscaped parkland. On a basic level it's groups of friends, but you could equally say that religions and cultures are cliques, as are nations. When it gets to such large-scale identification, our relationship with it naturally gets complicated. We've recently become part of a new cosy little clique of nice, good, righteous nations fighting a war on terror, whatever that is. I guess that's an end to Gloria Hunniford's career then.

For many people, they're part of a clique that they passively exist within. You can be defined by it but have had little opportunity to define its beliefs. It doesn't stop you getting emotive about it, or angry.

That's what this magazine is all about. Expressing feelings about belonging to these groups, whatever they are. Perhaps more importantly, we want to explore the culture cliques that we all become part of through our lifestyle, our taste in music, clothes and art.

I hope you enjoy the efforts contained in this first issue, (I say, nothing much really, just a few thoughts scribbled on the back of a menu whilst at a tea dance) but the important thing is that Clique needs YOU! Get pen to paper on the things that interest you, and have them expressed on our glamorous platform. Don't bleat about them in your living room, make people take notice, and hopefully we'll soon have a postbag that pisses all over the one at Points of View.

Thomas Callagher.

Editor in Chief.

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Photograph by Adam Skuse

OH, WHAT A LOVELY WAR!

The recent war on terrorism is a campaign littered with contradictions and ambiguities, argues Tom Callagher. But it is a prime example of how wars are presented to us, and as a result our changed expectations of war in the modern world.

There is no such thing as a war on terror. You may as well declare war on greed or hatred. Terrorism, what it's actually supposed to mean in this context, is an equally ambiguous concept. Its meaning has resonance on so many different levels, from global to domestic. Political terrorists can intimidate people in places such as Northern Ireland and Spain, and likewise we are capable of emotional terrorism of each other. Declaring a "war on terrorism" has however been one of the key phrases in a campaign where in the absence of bombs, words and sound bites have assumed specific importance. Operation Infinite Justice embodied the vengeful feelings of an outraged America, and indeed world, as a name for the Allied response - this was to be a settling of scores for Uncle Sam and his friends. Yet the Rambo-style retribution this promised was seen as rather bloodthirsty and distasteful, and so the optimistic and liberal sounding "Enduring Freedom" was used to replace it. George W. Bush made several speeches on September 11th to reassure his people of his anger at the attack, and Tony Blair won the Oscar™ for best performance of magnanimous moral outrage by a political leader when he pledged our support to America for the entirety of the operation.

Opposition has intensified towards the handling of the war since the first ultimatum was issued to the Taliban leaders in Kabul. There seems to be no consensus, even within Mr. Bush's staff, as to the correct approach to handling Afghanistan and its prize, Osama Bin Laden. There has been a consistent effort

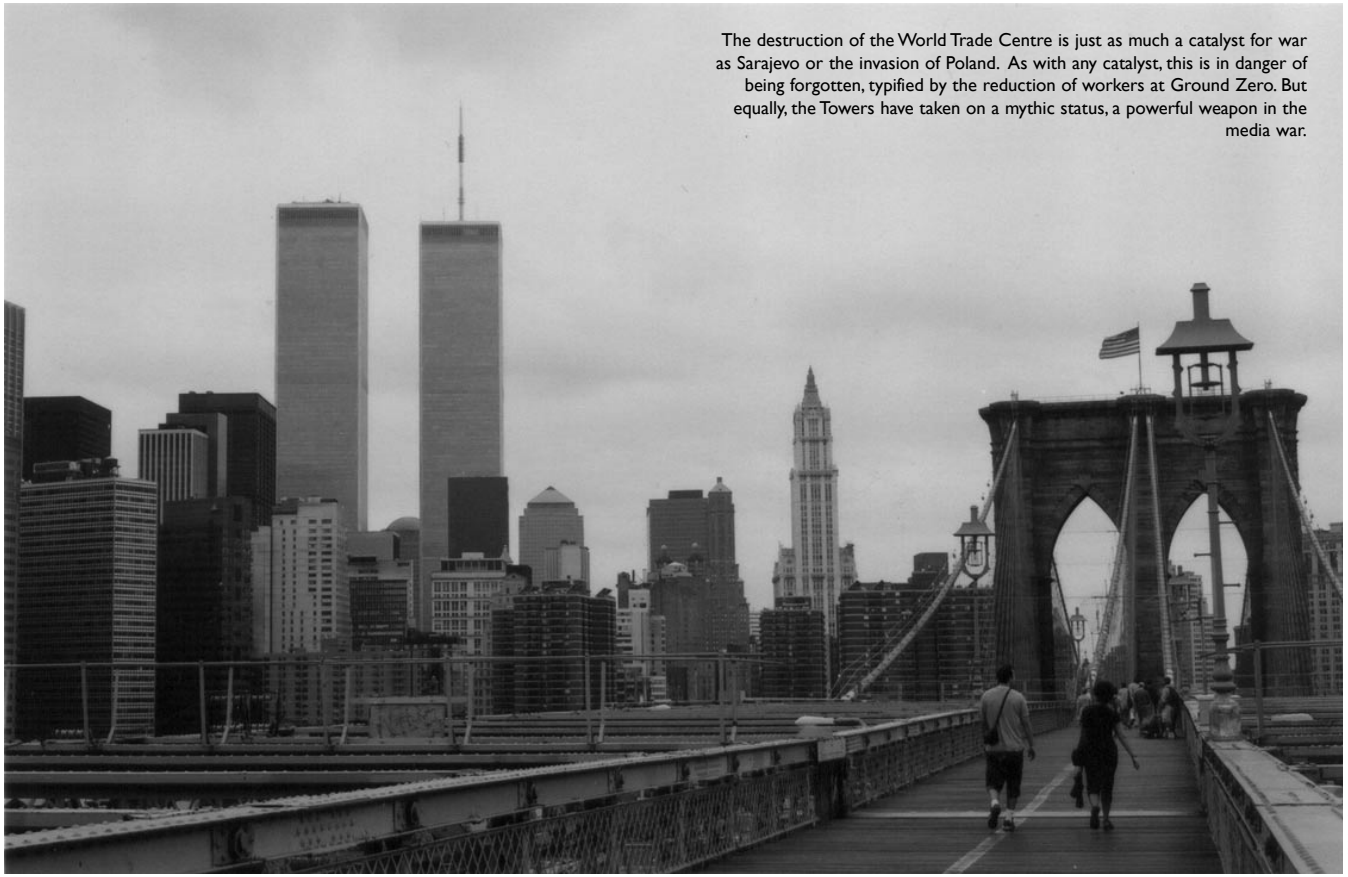
The ghosts of two world wars lie heavily on our collective conscious

to justify the approach that has been taken in order to avoid the fierce and divisive opposition generated by another ideological war, Vietnam. The American involvement in Vietnam was motivated by the post-war hysteria of the "evils" of Communism and the prospect of its rash-like spread throughout Asia. America invaded a country to stop an evil regime advancing further in the world. Sound familiar? Well, doubtless many people have noticed the coincidence, but Vietnam has taught politicians many lessons in how to present a war to the public in the post WWII world. Photojournalists and camera crews had access during the Vietnam campaign that would seem astonishing today, producing unforgettable images that still resonate. When it came to the Gulf War, the predominant images on offer were of clinical, precision bombing, filmed miles away from the target. The human element was effectively removed in favour of showcasing the technological arsenal of the Allied forces. Likewise in the present conflict we have been shown repeatedly images of clouds of dust where bombs have hit their target, or bewildered Afghanis wandering around buildings reduced to rubble. Initial footage released from Afghanistan of people injured by the bombings in hospital was accused of being a cheap stunt, although it has now been acknowledged that bombs have gone off-target and hit civilians. Any evidence of death, destruction, human suffering is kept to a minimum. This concern, above any is paramount in the way we are allowed to see this war. In a perverse way the Gulf War was the most acceptable war of the twentieth century, an efficient brief conflict where we didn't see at any rate people hideously burned by napalm, disfigured by atomic bombs or suffocated by firestorms. But this in itself is surprisingly telling of the way we wish to see conflict ourselves.

The ghosts of two world wars lie heavily on our collective conscious even now, almost sixty years after victory in Europe and Japan. In a sense they have never gone away. Every year since 1919, Britain, its Empire and later its Commonwealth have remembered the dead, the waste of human life in barbaric conflict. We hold silence for two minutes every eleventh of November as a mark of respect, are encouraged to wear poppies in our lapel, and are

expected to "Never Forget". It is the most solemn of our national rites, and similar practices occur in every other nation involved in these conflicts. It is a commitment to peace sanctioned by the entire establishment.

On an international level, this commitment is manifest in the United Nations, an opportunity for difficulties to be resolved through discussion, although its capacity to do so has not always been successful. The act of remembrance, and the knowledge of the horror of war means that it is almost impossible to now justify taking up arms once more, whatever the cause. This of course does not stop nations doing so. But instead, what appears to happen is that people do not accept war but instead tolerate it for the duration. We experience the trappings of war: the anxiety, the images on television, the speeches of politicians, a state of emergency declared and laws introduced to protect national security even though we have not been attacked yet. Despite the real horror of the atrocities committed in America, the occasional threat that Britain will be next, and the paranoia of biological warfare in the post, we are by-and-large disenfranchised and therefore desensitised to this war. If we are to be poisoned by anthrax, it will be by slow sickness rather than by falling incendiaries. The fact that for the present this war on terror has become a war on Afghanistan seems only to compound the feeling, to paraphrase Neville Chamberlain, that this has become a conflict happening thousands of miles away concerning people of which we know nothing. For the time being this conflict is localised, the main aim of the allies to topple the Taliban. What happens next will be another matter, dependent more than any conflict in history on the public's patience with a war that appears to have no specific plan, nor any clear definition of what terrorism means. While writing this article the images on the news were of the residents of Kabul rejoicing as the Taliban leaders took flight. The mood in both Washington and London was up-beat, suggesting a quick, clean war was soon to come to an end. Yet even if Osama Bin Laden is captured, where will the allies go next on their zealous mission to eradicate terrorism? Politics will play the biggest part in this decision, as depending on your allegiance, a terrorist act can turn into a fight for freedom. Terrorists in Northern Ireland, Israel and Spain are both cursed and blessed by people within their own country and abroad. With arguments so strong on both sides, intervention is going to cause trouble as much as praise for the allies wherever they go. The path that the war on terror must now take is littered with dangerous pit-falls.



The destruction of the World Trade Centre is just as much a catalyst for war as Sarajevo or the invasion of Poland. As with any catalyst, this is in danger of being forgotten, typified by the reduction of workers at Ground Zero. But equally, the Towers have taken on a mythic status, a powerful weapon in the media war.

Ben Cote

MUSIC

Hello there. The scene is easily imaginable: you get on the Net, download your favourite tunes, burn off a CD and bob's your uncle. Everyone's happy, right? Er, no, actually, not quite. That's why the first editorial of this section concerns an increasingly important topic: MP3-swapping.

You've heard it all before with Napster, you're thinking. A debate on MP3 has already been played out. Artists such as Dr.Dre and Metallica have voiced loud complaints (outside of their music, just to make that clear) about people being able to just turn on, tune in, and download music from artists for no charge whatsoever. Blahblahblah.

But the situation is taking a new turn. Since Napster got effectively shut down in July and then changed tack to a subscription-based service, a new breed of free-music machinery has been cobbled together for Netheads. Gone are the days of central lists of available MP3s – something which featured regularly in criticisms of Napster – now websites offer software enabling web-users to swap music and videos on their hard-drives with one another. These sites, such as MusicCity and KaZaa, are rapidly gaining in popularity due to their ease of use and the fact that no conclusions have yet been reached in the lawsuits already pending against them.

It is now all about people using other people's data to complete their music collection. So where's the problem? Surely these sites simply allow people to share music with one another, in the same way as friends have always lent you that album of theirs you were after so you could copy it? Well, not so according to the Recording Industry Association of America, who, it was reported last month, are now seeking to try and gain access directly to the PCs of people swapping files so as to target accurately the 'troublemakers'. This comes amongst attempts by record companies to encode CDs so as to make any computer recordings an inferior quality as well as the declarations by certain media experts that MP3 will change in format because no-one has a financial interest in keeping it alive in its current form.

Make what you will of MP3 as it is right now. You can quite easily foresee an interesting (read turbulent) future for the most infamous file format in the world.

Simon Deeble

TAKING OVER THE WORLD...

Photographs courtesy of Simon Deeble

(SLOWLY)

Easy. Get up from where you're currently expecting to read this and find some horizontal furniture to slowly drape yourself on. Why not pull the curtains while you're at it. You see, only under these conditions could you even begin to concern yourself, (in a relaxed way of course,) with the burgeoning global chillout scene.

The what? Well, whether you realise it or not, records stores right around this country and beyond are being slowly overwhelmed by a glut of chillout compilations – all 'Sunset this', 'Ibiza that'. 2001 has seen the chillout album become part of the mainstream, with the Chilled Euphoria and the two Ministry of Sound Chillout Session albums truly dominating the compilation album chart. But how come these albums are now taking over the musical marketplace? Don't stress yourself out - maybe by tracing the roots of the scene everything will be explained.

Let's start with the music. Which may be a confusing place to start, because no one can really pin down what is 'chillout' and what is not. Elements of soul, hip hop, electronica, and reggae jazz all combine to make what we might now call 'chillout.' For this reason, some believe it is a lazy tag for music; others say the inability to pinpoint exactly what 'chillout' means is the real beauty of it. But anyway, let's look at the roots of it all and not waffle on too much, eh?

It was Brian Eno was first forged a concept for ambient music – it was to be music that could be used as background music or instead be listened to very carefully. This sort of idea has formed the backbone of music which has become chillout. As unfashionable as it may be, the fact

is that the influences of prog-rock groups like Pink Floyd and German electronica act Tangerine Dream developed rock music from The Beatles' inventive pop to something far more cosmic - less emphasis on vocals, more emphasis on atmosphere. Atmosphere then became something different again once electronics had been used in the way that Kraftwerk used them. Using synthesisers and drum pads that they had developed themselves, percussive electronic rhythms gave the rock-dominated world of the 1970s a good shaking.

Since then… well, electronica and chillout music have been strongly linked together – a good example being the Aphex Twin's Selected Ambient Works albums – and not just in musical elements, either. Chillout as a label grew out of the sort of ambient music that would typically soundtrack post-club early morning comedowns. Whatever had been and gone the night before, there was music to soothe your ears and mind once you had got home, stuck the stereo on, and lit up a fat one. Which was nice.

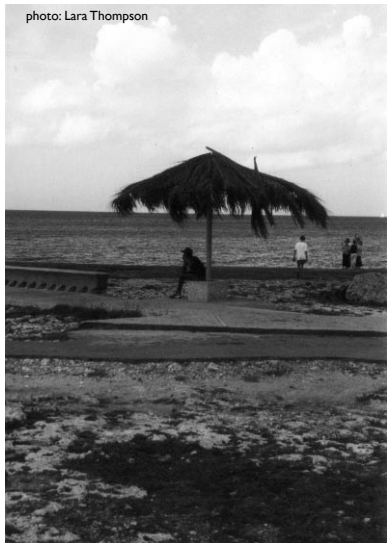


photo: Lara Thompson

But it is by growing out of this functional early-morning niche that chillout has propelled itself onto a global stage. About twenty years ago, one Jose Padilla began playing some records in between making coffee in Café del Mar, Ibiza. The island's hippy and alternative population, as well as its clubbers, lapped up the atmospherics Señor Padilla produced on San Antonio's sunset strip. That you will probably have heard of the café is because of the success of the legendary eponymous compilation series that it has exported all around the world (the first six volumes of which Padilla mixed; the current volume is number nine and other series have been recently started alongside the main one). It is Padilla more than anyone else who is credited with helping create a global chillout scene. In the midst of repeated warnings about global warming, we are in fact, to use the name of an Amsterdam coffee-shop/lounge, experiencing global chillage.

A global scene it truly is, as is reflected by the name of the World Chill compilation series. But chillout is now about more than music. Seven years ago, Claude Calle founded the Buddha Bar in Paris. The bar has become internationally famed for the deliciously chilled music which majestically emanates from its speakers; the bar also enjoyed success off the back of branded compilations. No better example of the rise from music for the few to worldwide lifestyle choice is there than that of the Big Chill. 1994 saw Pete Lawrence and Katrina Larkin put on a small one-day event in a chapel in London. Skip through a few years of nodding and smiling from those in the know, and this year will have seen the Big Chill put on three festivals in the UK, as well as events in Greece, Tokyo, Australia, New Zealand and France. The Big Chill wishes people to take the vibes of its events into day-to-day goings on; you can understand hence why the Big Chill say they are more about a way of life than just festivals.

As the world get faster, busier, more stressful, it seems that more and more people are using their spare time, quite simply, to take a breather and relax in their own personal space. This, coupled with the increasing culture of consumerism, means that the chilling method of choice is to invest in a collection of down-tempo music. Providing it is not merely a fashion fad – which is a possibility given some of the scene's present 'chicness' - chillout can only get bigger and bigger and bigger. But only by growing nice and slowly, of course.

Simon Deeble

You can check out Big Chill's ethos and events at www.bigchill.net

KING OR UNDERLING?

Courtesy of Epic UK

Given the legacy of success that Michael Jackson has to consider every time he records a new album, it is small wonder that he hires the world's best producers and spends millions in its making.

The result this time is an album typical of a high budget R&B artist, but with few signs of the magic seen in the earlier work of the creator of 'Thriller', 'Off The Wall' etc. Gone are the infectious upbeat riffs that characterised his superlative eighties output. Instead, 'Invincible' is a collection of catchy, yet slightly mundane, repetitive songs that really could have been recorded by any number of artists. Except for his voice.

It is a joy to see that time, skin colour or musical sensibilities have not affected the distinctive singing that sets Michael Jackson apart from any other voice. He sounds fantastic throughout the album, whether in the slow ballady "Heaven Can Wait" or the punchy "Unbreakable". There is no end of trademark screams, quivering whispers or satisfying yells; the music may have changed but there is still something exceptional in the way he approaches every song.

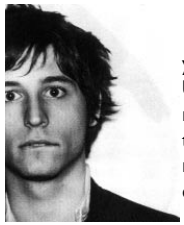
'Invincible' is a disappointment musically; Jackson performs all the 'instruments' on a synthesiser with star producer, Rodney Jerkins. There is no torrential guitar solo by Van Halen to be found here - in its place are simple, mostly unchanging looped grooves that seem to go on and on, leaving any sense of climax or atmosphere up to the singer.

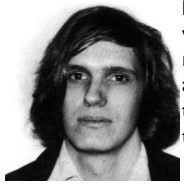
Jackson and Jerkins have certainly found success in creating an album that fits in with today's class of popular music - indeed it is a masterful study of it. It is, however, an unconvincing vehicle for Jackson himself; nobody made music like him in the eighties, and it seems a shame and a waste that he should now want to create music like everyone else.

Alex Attwood

THE ULTIMATE BOY-BAND:

THE STROKES





Courtesy of RCA Records

We've all heard of them (No ? Where have you been ?) The 21st century's answer to the Velvet Underground, a rather unfortunate similarity in rhythm, dress sense and Julian Casablancas' vocals, the faint echo of the pages of rock history being ripped out (or off) and plastered onto the front of every magazine and music newspaper around.

The Strokes are here, putting charity shop chic back into the mainstream and getting the backs up of any pretty boy quintet kicking themselves for not getting there first; a revival has been imminent for the last thirty years boys, shame on you. On the other hand, praise be to The Strokes for adopting a fail safe formula and tricking us all into thinking they are the antithesis of bands such as the like of Westlife, N-sync, Backstreet Boys, Blue, Blah, Blah, Blah etc. A boy band in disguise, whatever next? The intense popularity of The Strokes saw their slot at The Carling Weekend (Leeds and Reading) being revised to the main stage, to a welcome reception from, amongst others, lust-infested women (me being one of them) thankful that at last someone has had the initiative to combine downright sexiness with a tune not likely to send you into a coma, or running to the portaloos feeling you've had just about enough whipped cream-topped candyfloss that you can stomach, from 'men' who would make the 12 year old boy down the road look sexy.

Boy bands make me want to vomit. I feel cheated that I was born into an era where apparently good looking men sit on chairs singing ballads, groomed to perfection and making middle-aged women swoon, reminding them of the days they used to shriek and throw their knickers on stage. I want to swoon and throw my knickers on stage. You might be able to take Westlife home to meet your mum but do they really inspire you to think of ravaging them senseless all night? No, no, no, no. The Strokes on the other hand look like that's exactly what they've been doing, and boy doesn't that make me like them more.

Finally for all us ladies who've had to renounce our feminine desires to fancy popstars rotten because of the sheer banality of what's on offer, we can be smug in the knowledge that sexiness and coolness can be mixed in varying degrees and not risk chastisement from our male counterparts for being airheadded and girly. I think I'll be taking down my posters of Slipknot now, thank you very much. The Strokes are the thinking woman's band….Mmmmm Nick Valensi and whipped cream topped candyfloss……..

Emma Franklin

SOFT STEPS & BROKEN BEATS

Stephen Haren on the progression of rising star David Kitt …

"Who??"

The first time I saw Irish singer-songwriter David Kitt play was at the Empire Music Hall Belfast about two years ago, supporting fellow Dubliners The Frames. All I remember is some guy, acoustic in hand, a synthesiser by his side emanating little midi beats. It was pretty unimpressive: he seemed overwhelmed by the surroundings and his quiet sound got lost in that large crowd. I later found out it was his first gig.

Flash-forward to Sunday the eleventh of November 2001 and we're at Ronnie Scott's, Birmingham. By this point his long-player, The Big Romance, has been released to generally superlative reviews and I've realised that Kitt's music demands a more intimate environment. Fitting then that only 30 or so people have turned up. He's now accompanied by two others: one on clarinet and sax, the other on keyboards. And Kitt's sound is exactly the same. But now it blows everyone in the room away.

It takes a certain lack of business-sense to sing without a false American accent in today's derivative and anodyne musical climate. Kitt's voice, then, with its distinct and unashamed Irish lilt, is something to be admired. At times he sounds like Elliot Smith and Christy Moore combined. This sense of crossover and combination permeates both Kitt's music and his performance tonight. One can feel a wealth of influences swirling around this room.

Billie Holliday and Louis Armstrong cover the walls around the stage. Armstrong's inflated mouth against trumpet towers over Kitt's clarinet player, who, at one point, dives into Bitches Brew-style improvisation. That same little keyboard is there, providing a backing track of broken beats while Kitt drops in bits of Roots Manuva. Smooth sax is followed by a Bill Withers refrain. The stoned look of the keyboard player is met by a couple of Harry Nillson lines. And it is only after a few lines of a chorus that you realise you're listening to a cover of "When Doves Cry."

Yet the inclusion of these secondary sources seems to be more of an explanation of texture than an acknowledgement of theft. The texture of Kitt's sound is one of great contrasts and divergences, the music having a central smoothness framed by rough edges. Kitt, similarly to someone like Tori Amos, combines quasi-hip-hop beats with lush atmosphere sounds and pristine harmonies. A sense of enjoyed imperfection pervades his live performance. For how many other musicians would pause between songs to tune his guitar himself, rejecting a streamlined gig for a closer, more familiar experience?

This is a musician who, after all, records most of his music in his bedroom. Someone who has become such an integral part of the Dublin music scene that he is known affectionately by all as 'the Kitster'. He spends most of his time signing copies of his music in a minor independent music store in that city. He is such a familiar face that he can appear on the cover of Homage magazine with no article inside. So, while I hope that Kitt goes on to gain greater and wider recognition, there's also a part of me that wants him to stay small, a well-kept secret. Get the album. But don't tell anyone.

PHOTOGRAPHY

All photographs are fake and all photographers are liars. It's as simple as that.

Since its conception in the early 19th Century, photography has done nothing but deceive us all. At least with any other art form, you know that what you're getting is either the artist's representation of the 'real', or their representation of the imaginary; either way, it's a representation that you are engaging with, and the art acknowledges itself as such. Photography, on the other hand, proclaims to capture the 'real', and all of us are gullibly sucked in by this fallacy. Perhaps we are so eager to believe in the visual facts of a photograph because in the western world, sight is the most trusted sense. Phrases such as 'I'll believe it when I see it' and 'seeing is believing' perpetuate this myth, just as we are taught as children to 'stop and look' before we 'listen and think'. If you see it, it's definitely real; if you hear it/smell it/taste it/touch it, it might not be. This elevation of sight over the other four senses means that in discussions of realism, photography, (as well as its successor, cinema,) is upheld as the primary, and thus most truthful, art-form.

This is a lie.

Photography is instant-art for lazy people, like me, who can't be bothered to paint a landscape or sculpt a nude, so we click a switch instead and hope for the best.

It's chemical-art for loners like me, with nothing better to do than lock themselves away in a darkened room that smells of piss, and other ammonia based substances, that make your head swoon and your pupils dilate.

It's perception-altering-art that makes you think history really was lived in black and white.

It's all these things, but most importantly it's free-art – art that knows no race, class or age barriers, art that your Gran can try along with your younger sister, art that can indulge anyone's story, anyone's lie.

If you're a good liar, people believe the lies – it's hard to tell if it's the truth or not. If you're a bad liar, it's obviously fake and you'll get found out: it's the same with photography. The skill is either in capturing Cartier-Bresson's 'decisive moment' – finding beauty in reality, in chance encounters and fleeting instants, or in digitally manipulating the image so that it appears that you have done so. That's why I love Nick Utt, Martin Parr and Corinne Day: because I believe their lies; and why I hate the digital images of Pedro Meyer, John Gotto and Norbert Schoerner, whose virtue lies in the digital rather than in the image, whose photos proclaim their inability to lie convincingly.

Reality can never be captured, it can only ever be lied about and nothing lies as truthfully as a photo.

Lara Thompson

CLICK:

ALL SEEING EYE

Photographs and text by Lara Thompson

Paris. Spring '99. My 18th birthday. To Waterloo, the Eurostar, then Paris. Spring '99. I loved it. The minute I got there I loved it. You don't just go to Paris, you absorb it. Onto your skin, through your pores, into your bloodstream and straight to your soul. There it is, stuck inside forever, like the best memory you ever had. Paris. Spring '99. Just 18.

I'd got a camera the year before last, an old Pentax M.E Super that I

had to tie up with a black shoe lace to stop the back from opening up and the film from falling out. So there I was, with my Pentax, standing in Paris, spring '99, just 18, wandering what to shoot. I'm not sure when I decided to ignore the main sites, perhaps I did shoot them and I've just lost the film, and somewhere in one of my messy drawers at home, are a load of negatives of the Eiffel Tower, Notre Damme and the Arc de Triomphe, waiting to be developed. Anyway, what you see here are some of my first attempts at travel photography, of an old woman waiting for Le Metro, of graffiti on a poster, and of the interior of the Louvre.

Fragments and shapes of the most creatively and intellectually inspiring city I ever visited, disjointed pieces that make up Paris, spring '99 when I was just 18.

But before Paris, there was…

Havana. Winter '97. Only 16. To Gatwick, an aeroplane, then Havana.

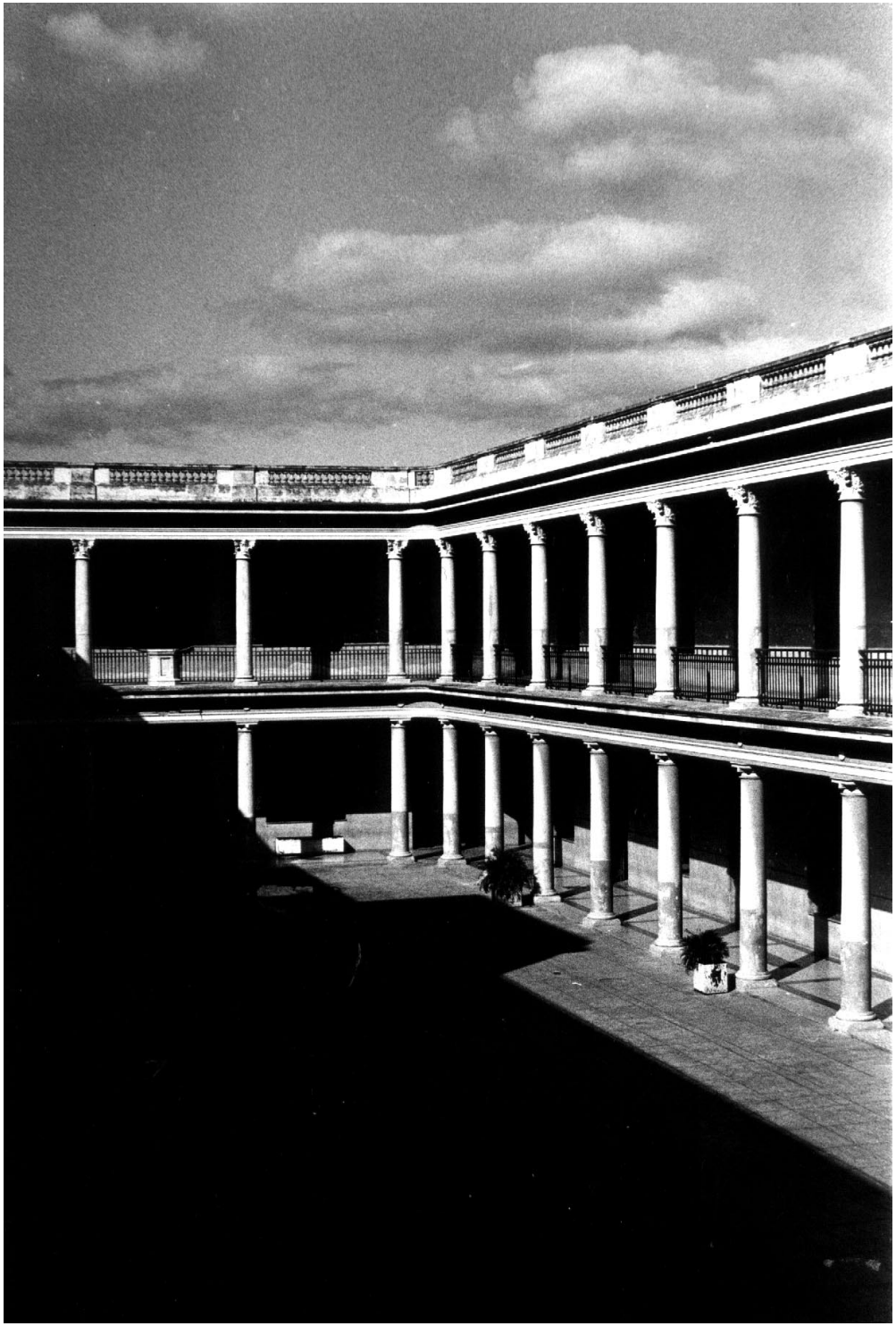
It was my first year at sixth-form college, my first time on a plane, my first holiday away from home, the first time I'd met all these insane second year students, and I was absolutely petrified. It was freezing at Gatwick, real mittens and ear-muff weather, but once on the plane, I was soon warmed by the complimentary glasses of Cuba libre's that were being handed around by the overly made-up stewardesses, (somehow all the lecturers had forgotten I was only 16,) and it wasn't long before I'd settled down into the warm-fuzziness that comes from drinking too much rum in a cabin that has a fixed temperature of 21 degrees Celsius. I couldn't believe it, I was going to Havana, it was winter '97 and I was only 16.

On arrival at Havana airport, I was still petrified. As I stepped out of the plane, I touched the hand-rail to steady myself as the wet, tropical heat of Cuba stuck to me and refused to let go. I instantly felt grimy; like Paris, Havana got into my pores and under my skin, but it had a hard time getting to my soul as its essence was so sticky, like freshly-laid tarmac on a hot day.

The airport only made me feel more uneasy. Prostitutes were pointing, shouting, lounging and pouting all over the place, pushing their peep-hole bras, and ample buttocks in everyone's faces, eager for the money of a rich and desperate foreigner. Even the lecturers looked worried, and we were rushed to our hotel by coach, through the seething, sweating city. I couldn't believe it, I was in Havana, it was winter '97 and I was only 16.

None of this I photographed, I was too shocked to move, let alone get my camera out, and anyway I was still petrified. I didn't even touch my camera until the second or third day, and then it was only to check that it hadn't been stolen.

When I did start shooting, again I didn't get any of the major land marks, no Che memorials or massive colonial houses, or women with cigars.



Instead I went for angles and shadows, for the shape of a palm tree on the sand, for the sun on a school in the afternoon and for an old American car that I loved. These objects felt like pieces of a jigsaw, scattered all over the city, each one hinting at Che's communist fight, at the damage America has done, and at the hope and beauty which still exists in this exuberant, intoxicating city that I hope will remain stuck to me for years to come.

FASHION (VICTIM)

I like looking good. No, scrap that. I LOVE looking good. The best part of an evening for me, is getting dolled up in my glad rags and discovering an alcoholic friend in a bottle of wine with the gals. This is not without making it a certainty that my outfit changes will average out at three per hour, only to end up making that oh, so hard choice to wear the exact outfit I had on when I arrived at my mate's house four hours earlier! Sounds familiar?!

My arrival at the party destination is the high point for me, the moment when all my peers clock my sassy and, of course, highly fashionable outfit, but then discovering in horror, that the girl standing next to me is wearing that exact same top I spent ages choosing to wear.
Count to ten….and breathe.

Fashion Trends...the bane of our lives. So why are we slaves to fashion?
I could be negative here, and list you a load of ominous and, quite frankly, boring words as reasons why we keep on spending our hard-earned money, (or in the case of us students, the bank manager's money,) on clothes and accessories, (status, peer pressure, and outward projection being just a few,) but I believe there is a much more positive way to understand our passion for fashion.

In fact, it's simple. As I've already pointed out, we all love looking good and we all enjoy dressing up to go out. This makes the vast majority of us part of a clique - an 'elite' gang whose wardrobes are governed by the latest look in Vogue or Tatler or the newest outfit worn by the likes of Cat Deeley, Kylie Minogue and friends.
But it's fun. And harmless.
And so you only really ever become a real fashion victim if status, peer pressure and outward projection become reasons why you chose to start wearing certain clothes. Fashion isn't there to dominate your personality, its here to define it. And even the likes of the lovely Kylie and her outfits can't argue with that.

And so this part of Clique is here to indulge your fashion victim side, and to offer ideas and inspiration for what's hot and what's not in the fashion world. And if you don't agree with me, do agree with me, or have some fashion inspirations of your own to share, here is your very own window through which to let us fashion victims feed on your dose of chic and style.

Rebecca Hall

MODEL'S OWN

Fashion editor: Rebecca Hall
Photographs: Lara Thompson and Rebecca Hall
Models: Thomas Hall, Emma Franklin, CeCe Smith-Williams

Photo 1

Photo 2

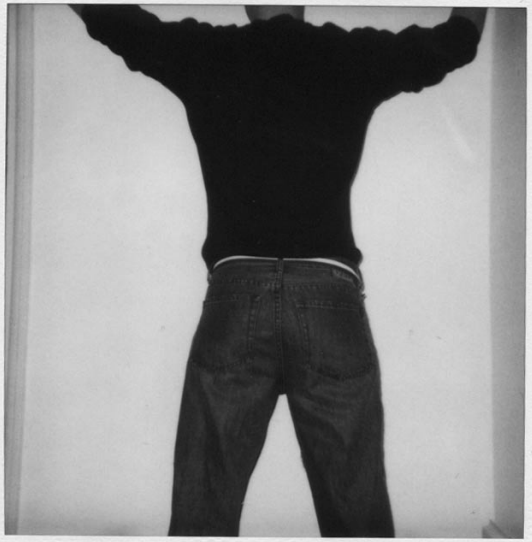


Photo 3

Photo 4

Tom wears:
Photo 1 - Shirt, H&M
Photo 2 - Woollen Top, French Connection
Photo 3 - Jeans, Diesel
Photo 4 - Watch, 'Spoon' by Pulsar; Belt, Gap

Photo 1

Photo 2

Photo 3

Emma wears:

Photo 1 - Stripy Top, Warwick Union Clothes Sale
Photo 2 - Skirt, Top Shop; Shoes, Clarks; Beads, Tribal Voice
Photo 3 - Bag, Burberry; Glasses, Gucci
Photo 4 - Top, Warehouse; Bangle, Oxfam

Photo 4

Photo 1

CeCe wears:

Photo 1 - Jumper, Pilot;
Photo 2 - Handbag, H&M; Shoes, Miss Selfridge
Photo 3 - Top, H&M; Fishnets, Top Shop; Boots, River Island
Photo 4 - Top: Miss Sixty

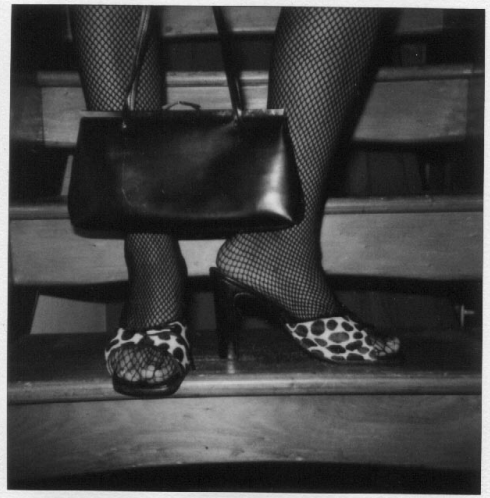


Photo 2

Photo 3

Photo 4

MODELS WANTED

Fancy Yourself?

Look good in black and white?

Send us your details together with a photo to union pigeonhole no. 450, or email us at:

thepeopleatclique@hotmail.com

HANDBAG HEAVEN

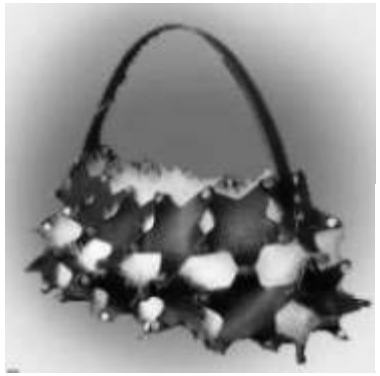
You may not have heard of Nuria Gambau, but with her eye-catching bag designs it won't be long before the Barcelona-born designer's name strikes fear in the heart of the likes of Lulu Guinness. By Sophie Bruce.

Nuria Gambau spent last week hard at work manning Stand 91 at the first week of the Chelsea Craft Fair. It may not be the most glamorous event in the fashion calendar, but for the Spanish handbag designer it marked the culmination of her first year of real recognition and retail success. Her company, Nuria London Design, has occupied a coveted space in London's trendy Oxo Tower Wharf for the past ten months, her website attracts regular customers from as far away as Japan and the USA, and she has been commissioned to make special designs for the film industry.

All this is a far cry from Gambau's low-key arrival in the capital three years ago, with only a suitcase, a sewing machine and a design portfolio overflowing with ideas. 'I can't believe how brave I was!' laughs Nuria, although the move was obviously fuelled by the burning ambition to design that has been with her since the age of 8. At school in her native Barcelona in the Seventies, Gambau sold things she had made to other pupils. Her first success was with handmade hippy peace pendants, displaying the excellent market judgement that keeps her cutting-edge designs unique today.

Gambau first knew her bags would fit in to the unique London fashion scene when she and her friends were repeatedly stopped in the street whilst carrying them. 'People were always stopping us and asking where they could buy the bags. I knew then that my designs were right, I just needed an outlet', she says. She found that in December last year when she applied for a high profile workspace in the Oxo Tower Wharf between Blackfriars and Westminster bridges on London's South Bank. To win the space, she had to gain the respect of the Craft Council and attend several meetings where a panel assessed her work. 'It was daunting, but I got through and my business is now going well', she says. Her shop, on the second floor southside of the tower, welcomes visitors from Britain and around the world. 'Working there I meet people from all over the world, which is educational and inspiring. I love my work and luckily other people seem to like it too', says the modest Spaniard.

Courtesy of nurialondon.com



Courtesy of nurialondon.com

Nuria London Design was initially a couture range, making one-off pieces 'for the serious handbag collector'. Gambau uses a blend of exotic and luxurious materials, including silk and hand-made ceramics to make themed bags that are 'simply mobile works of art'. However, recently she has launched a ready-to-wear range using the finest materials such as angora, kid leather, velvet and beaded fabrics, with 'an eye-catching bag to suit every occasion'. The best way to see this range, with prices from £40 to £160, is to visit her shop, as her website, www.nurialondon.com, only showcases her couture designs. 'My ready-to-wear range is fluid and simple and I fear others trying to copy it!' she explains. She has many regular cyber shoppers, no doubt attracted by her offer of free UK delivery. Although the shop is her main focus, she also continues to exhibit her designs at events such as last week's Chelsea fair.

'I really enjoyed the fair and had a lot of interest in my bags, although there were more admirers than buyers', she says. That is sure to change with the quality and range of her designs and Nuria is tipped as a serious contender to the throne of quirky handbag queen Lulu Guinness. However, Guinness has enjoyed a mainly unrivalled reign for over half a decade and is unlikely to surrender without a fight. Following the website's enticing claim that 'when you carry a handbag by Nuria, you'll never be the same and especially you'll never be like anyone else', it's sure to be handbags at dawn…

CONFESSIONS OF A SHOE

When does a love of shoes become a retail therapy habit? After ten pairs? Twenty? Or maybe when you just have to buy a pair to match a new haircut.

Lara Thompson

Well I've faced up to my addiction. I am a shoe addict. I love shoes.

A fetish for some, a useful height addi-

ADDICT

tion for others, shoes can be articles of perfection. Take my beautiful new heels, still fresh in the box, objects worthy of adoration. Pointed front and elegant heel in contrast stitch leather. A caramel and chocolate 20s diva style, they are my tribute to Jordan Baker. To those not in the literary know, she is a style heroine in F. Scott Fitzgerald's The Great Gatsby, a glimmering jewel of a novel, set in New York in the 1920s. Baker is a 21-year-old golf champion who is first introduced lazily arranged on a chaise-longue with a permanent attitude (sounds like many a modern diva).

Everybody should be known for something, hopefully worth enough to be remembered in the vast scheme of history. You'd hope it would be for a skill, stunning beauty or vast intelligence. Well involuntarily, I'm known for my shoes.

Whether it's for my Dorothy of Oz red heels, the ostrich leather with very necessary matching bag or the Jordan Bakers, I still don't think my infamous collection will be complete until I've spent the rest of my student loan on my first elusive pair of Manolo Blahniks.

I still don't think I'm at the Imelda Marcos limits of addiction yet, but give me time (and a Canary Wharf scale salary…)

Cathy Clarke

I'm a (straight) bloke right, so I don't know anything about fashion.

But this is probably because when I do think about clothes I think about necessity; when I think of style I think of my girlfriend; when I think of fashionable I think of mass-produced Topshop knockoffs; when I think of catwalks I think of Abfab types wearing Prada and sitting next to minor British celebrities. Frankly, when I see fashion I look at the women and not the clothes.

Maybe if I thought of fashion as high art I might be more interested. And this is what Radical Fashion at the V&A made me do. It's an exhibition with pieces by designers such as Vivienne Westwood and Issey Miyake; but it's also more of an experience in style, with music by Bjork and others, with video installations and ambient lighting and the feeling that you might be in a trendy art gallery. Because all the work exhibited is supported by such great ideas. It made me see in the work of Azzedine Alaia the sculpted beauty of the cut, in Junya Watanabe at Comme Des Garcons, the delicate perfection of complex fabric structures, in Jean Paul Gaultier an essential simplicity in the heart of extravagance, elegance in sheer glamour. I didn't like Martin Margiela's experiments with scale; but I loved Alexander McQueen's slow motion exploding glass tank, revealing a shock finale. And Yohji Yamamoto's dresses that are first of all chair covers or tables before they are put on by models as full-length dresses, just made me want to applaud.

It was the first time I have actually wanted to read every museum-style information board, to know something about that which I knew absolutely nothing. One of the first that you see is a quotation from Virginia Woolf's Orlando: 'vain trifles as they seem, clothes… change our view of the world and the world's view of us'. Radical Fashion entirely transformed the way I look at fashion, fostering a fascination for this high art, and is strongly recommended.

Radical Fashion is showing at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London until the 6th of January. Entrance is £5 for adults and £2.50 for students with NUS. Nearest tube is South Kensington.

Charlie Russell

courtesy of Commes des Garcons

Copyright Chris Moore

FILM

If a photograph in a newspaper, (or a magazine,) is worth a thousand words, then why do we bother with words? Because images are unreliable. The caption at the bottom of a picture seeks to remedy that unreliability, to tell us exactly what that image signifies, for the purpose of clarity. It works to control the meaning of the photograph, to contextually locate our understanding of it. To eliminate imagination, so that every reader's experience, at least of a newspaper, is the same. So that a universal truth can be identified. I don't like the idea of this. It suggests that the newspaper functions like a window. The form of the newspaper implies its own reliability, its own power to tell the truth, letting us easily view the rest of the world, letting the unseeable be seen. But as conflicting reports of the same event can be read in different newspapers, it is easy to see that each functions as a certain sort of mirror, slightly distorting 'objective reality' in the subjective reflection it constructs. Seeing should never be believing, since everyone looks from different sets of eyes.

Equally, you can tell a story in many different ways. The pre-eminent French film critic, Andre Bazin, believed that the history of cinema was one that was progressing towards a perfect reflection of reality. He believed that technological advancement – the introduction of sound and colour – created a film form that was closer to our everyday experiencing of reality, since life is, for most of us, in sound and in colour. When widescreen processes came along to change the shape of the cinematic image, making it visually different to the television image, Bazin saw this as an opening-up of reality. He argued that cutting in the widescreen format was disruptive to the eye, and that with the added space, directors would be free to shoot scenes in as few shots as possible, staged in deep focus and undisrupted by the cut. Later, surround-sound and the Steadicam would bring the cinematic experience even closer to subjective experience, and allow for almost continuous time, relegating the role of editing to an ever more basic function. Reality, under Bazin's highly influential terms, would triumph. But with it would come an implicit but often ignored control of that 'reality' by the dominant powers of the American film industry.

I think that another way of telling the story of cinema's development would be to start with the uncertainty of the emerging artform in the early days of silent cinema. As with all new media, film began without a decided language. Often what were shown were a series of unrelated pieces of film, ordered by the exhibitor, so that control was arbitrary. As the novelty of watching moving images wore off, and the medium evolved into a means to tell stories, there was a need to ensure comprehensibility, so that the audience could understand the actions they were watching within the framework of a narrative. Here men like Porter and Griffith gradually developed a filmic language of shots and reverse shots, of eyeline matches and cuts on action, of establishing shots and close-ups, of the 180° line rule. What was at stake with this system of continuity was control. What these men were creating was a language which would decide the meaning of images, confound their essential abstractness, and create a single, certain response in the eyes and minds of their audiences. The intertitles of silent cinema thus worked in a similar way to the captions beneath newspaper photographs – they reinforce for us the story, what is happening, what characters' reactions are, that when characters speak they do say something, instead of an abstract silence of nothing. When sound was introduced, it was a novelty, it was more real, but it was also a way of furthermore confirming the images, grounding them in a reality, interweaving disparate images more strongly together. Colour furthermore linked cinematic images to 'reality', but it did more than this. Perhaps the reason that most film canons are comprised of films from the first half of the twentieth century is that black and white is seen as more artistic, more painterly in its compositions, more abstract in its juxtapositions, more ambiguous about what it says about life because it starts from a point immediately distanced from life. Colour is brash and obvious in all but the hands of a few. And this also makes me think that perhaps part of the reason that mainstream film culture, (rather than criticism,) so consistently devalues silent cinema, paying only token lipservice to a thirty year period, is precisely because it contains a wealth of possibilities, of uncertainties, of potential alternatives to the dominant, self-perpetuating but ultimately quite fragile contemporary form of film.

The few times when control has been threatened, (say for instance in the period of the movie brats during the 1970s,) and when experimentation has occurred, the results have subsequently been reabsorbed into the mainstream. Hollywood always asserts its power to influence all, to control meaning, to simplify film and determine singular truth. But I think that this power is waning. Over the summer I watched Tim Burton's Planet of The Apes (2001) and I was acutely aware of the extent to which the continuity system has evolved beyond itself, to the point where the rapid cutting and quick pans seem to actively work against clarity. There were moments in my viewing where I could no longer work out the basic relationships – spatial and temporal – between shots, so that the immensely simplistic narrative, built around entirely one-dimensional character types, could not even make itself understood clearly to me. It was as if Burton, now so wholly subsumed by the Hollywood production machine, had deigned to take the whole system crumbling down with him.

My mother always asks me what's happening in a film before it has happened, and I get annoyed with her nervous uncertainty, her need at all times to know, to exert her own form of control over the film; but I get more annoyed at why we have a mainstream film culture obsessed with simplicity, with narrative, with the power of the film over the individual. Part of what we will be doing with the film section of this magazine is to return power to the individual, to let people say what they think about films, to let people disagree; and to think about films in new ways, to challenge dominant conceptions of what films mean, what films are good, and exactly why. The only thing we ask is that you don't trust us, or what other people say, that you don't always go along with the clique; but that you think about films in new ways, about images in ways that their accompanying words might not necessarily suggest at first. What I have proposed in this piece is only an idea, a half-formed theory scratched tentatively into a notebook whilst driving half the way through Spain; but it is a start at least.

Charlie Russell

ALL YOU NEED IS LOVE

All stills: Sue Adler

Spectacle and meaning (almost) combine in Baz Luhrmann's Moulin Rouge, an emotive epic musical for the post-modern post-MTV generation that overwhelms the critics, (and at times the director,) as much as it does the senses.

For Clique**, Lara Thompson holds her breath and falls in love.**

And so the cinema-lover's routine begins. As usual you select a film, read the hype, disagree, buy your ticket anyway, queue for over-priced popcorn, and find a good seat, (avoiding half-chewed gum,) somewhere in the first four rows. You think you know what to expect, after all you've read all the reviews. You think it might not be that great. You think you're passed being surprised. This time however, you're wrong, for this will be the most electrifying, awe-inspiring and heart rending 128mins of your year. This is Moulin Rouge and it takes no emotional prisoners.

Baz Luhrmann's eclectic musical collage of popular culture, Greek tragedy and breathtaking editing received widely conflicting reviews from both American and British critics when it was released earlier this year, (whilst Luhrmann's fellow Australians universally adored the movie,) so that interest in the film unusually soared because of indecisive critical opinion as much as Luhrmann's unconventional cinematic style.

This seeming confusion over Moulin Rouge as either artistic masterpiece or directorial excess is, however, somewhat unimportant. Luhrmann's daring attempt to combine technical originality and an emotive plot within a musical brimming with eighties pop classics, and the subsequent effect on the viewer's overworked senses, is far more intriguing. But what happens after the critics stop arguing and start analysing? And with hindsight, what long-term effect, if any, will Moulin Rouge have on our perceptions of cinema itself?

Truth, **Beauty**, **Freedom**, **Love**: the four cornerstones of bohemian existence are upheld in this film with verve and conviction by a director who appears to believe in the message behind the tale he weaves. As such, Luhrmann's personal life is tinged with bohemian references: from a commitment to his own 'Red Curtain' style, to his wilder theatrical days with his wife, (the film's production designer Catherine Martin,) when, as Luhrmann states, 'doing art, taking a lot of drugs and being completely fucking out of control' was often the norm. **Freedom** it seems is as key within Luhrmann's life as it is within the hearts and minds of those at the Moulin Rouge.

Unfortunately, for Luhrmann, too much freedom is a bad thing. The cinematic daring, and sheer balls of steel that it took to attempt the rejuvenation of the musical for a western audience seem to overwhelm the director at times, as if the testosterone overtakes him and he lets the editing run away with itself. Luhrmann's apparent need to push his audience's visual and aural senses to their limits, (and beyond,) suggests a director who is not only willing, but finds it necessary to thrust our archaic ideas of spectacle into the twenty-first century, and he doesn't care who gets blown away in the process. Gone are the perfectly timed dance routines and silver-tongued voices of Kelly, Astaire and Rogers; instead we stare at the film itself, at the bawdy colour, the emotive lighting and the gut-churning editing.

Moulin Rouge is intoxicating, exhilarating and at times extreme, but more than anything else, the beauty of the movie shines through

Working within any other genre, this heavy-handed, fast-paced approach to what is essentially a tragic love story just wouldn't work. With the musical, Luhrmann can get away with so much; humour and anguish can be cut side to side without jarring; and cheesy, tacky pop love songs can be sung with more meaning and true feeling than anywhere else.

And Luhrmann weaves other get-out clauses into Moulin Rouge also. The appearance of Kylie Minogue at the start of the film in the guise of the Absinthe Fairy, and the copious amounts of that same substance that are then consumed by the characters give Luhrmann a narrative excuse for the opulent and excessive images, colours and sound that follow. The assumption is made that everyone is in fact drunk and hallucinating, to the point where even cinema-goers on leaving their seats feel under the effects, over the limit and a little bit queasy – 'Kylie was in it, wasn't she?', 'what happens at the start again?', 'where am I?' etc, etc.

Moulin Rouge is undoubtedly intoxicating, exhilarating and at times extreme, but more than anything else, the **beauty** of the movie shines through. Luhrmann's use of lighting to colour mood, and accentuate character trait, his attention to set detail and seeming addiction to vibrant colour combine in a film that you can't take your eyes away from; it's that old blink-and-you'll-miss-it cliché all over again.

Female beauty appears in many forms in the film, from the alabaster, translucent and classic Satine, (Nicole Kidman,) to the clown-like whores of the Moulin Rouge, and on to Kylie – a vision of C.G.I loveliness. Throughout, however, it's not the women at the Moulin that one remembers for visual beauty, it's the opening few minutes of the film that sticks in the mind, when you are swept into

the sweating, seething, whore-infested Paris of the past. Here the real beauty lies – in the decaying underworld of Montmartre and in the camera trickery that takes you there.

Because the 'real beauty' lies in the Computer Generated Images, the digitally enhanced colours and the near stream-of-consciousness editing, it becomes apparent that Luhrmann's aim with this relatively new technology, is not the pursuit of a '**Truth'**, the 'truth' or even 'truths', but in the begetting of a fallacy. The fallacy of cinema itself.

Luhrmann uses C.G.I to push the boundaries of on-screen fantasy, rather than reality, (as films such as Final Fantasy: The Spirits Within (Sakaguchi, 2001) and Shrek (Adamson & Jenson, 2001) have already attempted this year, with varying success). With C.G.I, Moulin Rouge is not concerned with trying to make fantasy more believable, (and thus more realistic); rather, the film seeks to create a more fantastical fantasy – a 'Spectacular, Spectacular', that highlights its own artifice.

Thus, Moulin Rouge cannot be accused of being hollow and artificial because this is the major theme, perhaps, the key discussion point of the film. It talks about shallowness, but it is not, as Jose Arroyo states in Sight & Sound, a 'cliché' itself. This determination to point out the 'unreality' of the cinema, can be seen in a number of instances within the film. Perhaps the 'fakeness' of what we are seeing is most evocatively reinforced through the theatre show 'Spectacular, Spectacular' that the characters in the film are producing and starring in. Their play, it seems, is based on their reality, and the story they perform is their own, (thus the illicit love affair between Satine and Christian behind the Duke's back becomes the play's love triangle between a handsome sitar-player, beautiful courtesan and evil Maharajah; indeed the characters are aware of this, manipulating this plot as they would like their own to turn out,) so that attention is drawn to the fallacy of the film's own plot-line. And this it seems was Luhrmann intention from the start of the movie, as a small conductor appears at the bottom of the screen, and tunes up his orchestra, before the curtain opens to the sound of the 20th Century Fox fanfare and the film/story/fairytale begins.

Satine's disbelief and cringing reaction to Christian's, (McGregor,) singing of popular, yet clichéd love songs, (such as 'all you need is love' and 'love is a many splendoured thing',) echoes the audience's reaction, and she does not fully respond to his amorous intentions until he sings 'we could be heroes', the point at which the two embrace their roles as stars in the film, as they sing together, not against each other. Perhaps to read the film along conventional lines, (as The Face has done – 'Satine says she doesn't love Christian. Satine says she does. Satine says she doesn't. Satine says she does. Now that's the plot over with, what else can you say about Moulin Rouge?',) is to entirely miss the point.

All **love**, it seems, begins from a point of cliché, where love letters are written, romantic films are watched and where normally cheesy pop love songs are listened to with a tear in the eye. All that happens in Moulin Rouge is that Satine dies before the pair have had a chance to go into the 'realistic' stage of their relationship, before the fireworks have ended, before the beauty of youth has been extinguished and before the visual loveliness of romance has worn off.

I believe that the love depicted in Moulin Rouge is realistic in its fantastical deployment; the only problem with it is that most of us only experience this love for a short space of time, (if at all,) and therefore have forgotten what it feels like for a corny love song to feel romantic, or for love to overwhelm us into dance. Any film that makes us remember this is worth remembering, and in my opinion, Moulin Rouge is such a film.

STOP SLEEPING, START DREAMING

In 1968 Stanley Kubrick released 2001: A Space Odyssey to mixed critical reception. Almost thirty years later the director made his last film, Eyes Wide Shut, seen by many as 'an unfortunate misstep at the end of a dazzling career', (Michiko Kakutani in The New York Times). 'The first reviews of 2001 were insulting, let alone bad', Kubrick said in 1987, 'But critical opinion on my films has always been salvaged by what I would call subsequent critical opinion'. Here Clique begins the reassessment of the great director's final masterpiece.

By Charlie Russell.

The thing with Kubrick, especially after his death, is that he is a myth. He is more stories than he ever filmed. He is every story he ever filmed. Everyone knows that he was a recluse, a tyrant to Shelly Duvall whilst filming The Shining (1980), becoming much like the character Jack Nicholson plays, and a man who reputably made Tom Cruise do ninety-five takes of walking through a door. But I wholeheartedly denied this Kubrick. Fame distorts everyone, making their persona a bizarre mix of something like them, and something very much unlike them. Stanley Kubrick was a man. Kubrick is only films.

The very last of these films is, no doubt like Kubrick himself, largely misunderstood. And although we will never know the director of Eyes Wide Shut (1999), I believe that we can come to know the film a little bit better.

The problem with Kubrick is that although he was a great film-maker, and arguably one who worked within a tradition of art cinema, he was also a great promoter of the commercial potential of his films. He differs from Spielberg in that Spielberg makes commercial films more intelligent, (and here I don't want to get into the mess that is A.I.); Kubrick makes intelligent films more commercial. Thus since Eyes Wide Shut was very cleverly sold as a sex film, promising nudity from high profile stars, (and with the result that it made more money than any of his other films, and was seen on release by a wider audience,) it has often been received as such.

Eyes Wide Shut is not a sex film. It is not sexy, or titillating, or erotic; it is not meant to be. Unfortunately, another Kubrick myth went into the perceived identity of the film. It has been widely reported that Kubrick had always wanted to make a mainstream porno, maybe entitled Blue Movie, and as such many took Eyes Wide Shut to be that film. But to my mind the film is almost purposefully unerotic. Its protagonist Bill Harford is a doctor. Early on in the film there is a sequence in which he examines a number of patients, the first of whom is a topless woman whose breasts he examines. This nudity is dealt with in the same coldly detached style that the sight of Nicole Kidman dropping her dress at the beginning of the film elucidates. Of course such a scene is not without its own level of voyeuristic spectacle for the audience, but Kubrick attempts to normalise his star's nudity, (to show Kidman on the toilet for example,) right from the first frame. Thus when the viewer arrives at the infamous orgy scenes we are aligned with Harford's own sense of fear and bewilderment. There is excitement for him only at seeing something out of the ordinary and socially subversive; for the audience there is the excitement of seeing such explicitness in so mainstream a movie.

Perhaps then the treatment of the female nude so everywhere apparent in Kubrick's film - from the over-dosed hooker that Harford attends to for Ziegler at the party, to the ceremonial circle of women, clad only in masks and high heels - points to a myth of the director's misogyny, where they are objectified as images that inspire fear and danger. Indeed, the whole film seems to be about the reassertion of the male protagonist's masculinity. Threatened by the revelations of his wife and the destruction of gender values that this creates for him, (Alice confesses that she would have left him and their child in an instant for one hour with the Naval officer,) Cruise's Dr. Harford wanders the streets, engaging in encounters with a prostitute, a father who comes to an agreement about his daughter and two paedophiles, and a gang of young men who call him a queer and threaten to beat him up.

Eyes Wide Shut wasn't entirely badly received on its release. Larry Gross writing in Sight & Sound favourably compared it to Resnais' Last Year In Marienbad (1961), Bergman's Persona (1966), Bunuel's Belle Du Jour (1967) and Antonioni's Blow-Up (1966). This is because Eyes Wide Shut has been interpreted for its dream-like qualities, a result of the film being viewed in relation to its source:

Courtesy of Stanley Kubrick's Scrap-book

Schnitzler's Dream Story. Indeed, the film's narrative follows the logic and pattern of a dream, led by a protagonist who is most likely drunk and high, from initially bizarre situations - the grieving daughter who throws herself at him despite her boyfriend being nearby - into increasingly ludicrous scenarios, culminating in the orgy.

This, and the fact that Harford seems caught in a web of manipulation towards the end of the film, not sure what is real and what is merely the play-acting of the unseen organisers of the orgy, that may or may not include Ziegler, concerning a girl he may or may not know, points to the fact that Gross' comparisons are also with films that are about the act of looking, and more importantly the unreliability of both our own sight and that of the cinema. And it is in changing the name of the work from 'Dream Story' to 'Eyes Wide Shut' that Kubrick makes this connection. Schnitzler's novella is interesting for the way it blurs the lines between fantasy and reality so that the reader is not quite sure where storytelling and, implicitly linked to it, dreaming begin. Its opening lines are a fairytale a little girl is reading to her parents, cut off mid-flow, (and significantly, after the word 'gaze',) when quite suddenly, 'her eyes closed'. Kubrick's ending to his film is set in a toyshop at Christmas, the family somewhat reunited, the emphasis on the child, devoid of sexuality, reasserted. Thus in many ways Eyes Wide Shut is a fairytale. It is what is considered child-like and simple in cinema from the perspective of a realism-dominated era. It foregrounds artifice.

Early on, Kubrick's use of natural light sources works in fact to create dream-like yellows and blues in the Harford's apartment. When they arrive at the ball Alice encounters an extremely cliched Hungarian - she says 'Umm, I... I think that's my glass', and he makes us cringe with the reply 'I'm absolutely certain of it', before going on to ask her 'Did you ever read the Latin poet Ovid on the art of Love?'. Equally, Bill Harford encounters two models seemingly intent on taking him to bed with them, and perhaps then Kubrick's film is about the artifice of modern sexuality, with all emphasis on looking, where the critically-derided device of the Naval Officer, images of whom haunt Harford throughout his journey, point to the essentially limited nature of his, and maybe also our, imagination. It is a sexuality that is cliched and empty, as hollow as the discarded mask that takes Bill's place beside Alice as she sleeps, as cold as the naked prostitutes of the masked ceremony, and one that is only interrupted by the revelation of the threat of AIDS, that shatters Harford's male fantasy of the beautiful hooker he meets on the street.

Indeed I think it is possible to counter any misogynistic myth of Kubrick with the fact that this film criticises modern masculinity, struggling to reassert itself, by showing the artifice of its own construction. From the first instance of non-normalised nudity, the spectacle of the hooker stretched out in Ziegler's bathroom that gives the audience no where else to look, Kubrick juxtaposes this image with another in the frame, that of a painting of a nude, intrinsically linking our act of voyeurism with a larger comment on how western society aesthetically views the female always as a nude, mystifying and at the same time objectifying her; in Laura Mulvey's terms, making the female the passive object of the male gaze. It is this that Kidman's Alice objects to – 'because I'm a beautiful woman the only reason any man wants to talk to me is because he wants to fuck me. Is that what you're saying?' she asks, to which Cruise, perhaps embodying the difficult position of Kubrick, says, 'Well, I don't think it's quite that black and white, but I think we both know what men are like', and it is his 'black and white' that essentially recalls the basis of the cinema, that, in its modern colour post-feminist form, continues to promote a society which is self-perpetuating, in Marxist terms diverting the oppressed from the knowledge that they are oppressed, and keeping their eyes firmly wide shut.

But the cliched male sexual fantasy of the two models at the party also invites Harford to go 'Where the rainbow ends'. This isn't merely Kubrick and his scriptwriter Frederic Raphael at their most clunkingly obvious, nor is it simply to show the shallowness of middle class conversation. Instead, Harford later ends up at 'Rainbow Fashions' to rent a costume, suggesting that the seemingly random events of the evening - the sort of 'events' that populate contemporary mainstream film, a cinema which doesn't regularly dwell on Italian Neorealist scenes where nothing occurs, the French Nouvelle Vague's 'Temps Mortes' - are indeed connected. They are connected by the narrative of the film. And yet for Harford, the events of the evening are 'real'; they are his 'reality', interrupted for one evening, as if Kubrick were a master puppeteer, a God-like figure intervening in the lives of ordinary men. Because as Kubrick fights against the tide of mainstream cinema to normalise nudity, to show it in the context of getting dressed in the morning, an act of necessity for the narrative of everyday life, rather than an act of spectacle for the viewing public, Cruise's Harford works to mystify nudity, to keep it in the realm of male fascination, to uphold the power that the male gaze provides, since Cruise represents mainstream cinema, and Harford is an observer of scenes. I would argue that he is the second authorial voice in the film since it is his story we watch, and through his subjective perspective that we witness events, so that we feel fear when he does, or bewilderment when he does, but are able to distance ourselves from him as Kubrick does, and thus to align ourselves with the true author of the text. In doing so we reject the reality the actor constructs, (perhaps even the very authenticity of the images that his subjectivity produces - as Alex Cox has remarked, 'I don't think we're supposed to believe anything that we see',) and instead accept the artifice the director controls.

> What is at stake is the confusion between the dreams we have asleep, and the dreams and desires we have with our eyes open.

> Eyes Wide Shut is not a sex film. It is not sexy, or titillating, or erotic, it is not meant to be

The central image of the whole film is the one that Kubrick also used to publicise his film, that of Nicole Kidman looking at herself in the mirror whilst her husband Tom Cruise kisses her. It is about the characters they play inhabiting a world of middle-class contentment, of balls and beautiful surroundings, and it is also about the audience looking at Kidman and Cruise, about their star paranoia of always being looked at, (about the possible result of this intense experience being the end of their marriage,) and about realising that the characters they play are empty constructs waltzing around empty sets, walking down New York streets that were actually digitally inserted, since Kubrick the reluctant-flyer shot the whole film in England. Ziegler's revelation that the threat of the orgy and the punishment of the girl who seems to save Harford are part of a game seem to point to this. When he says, 'suppose I told you that... that everything that happened to you there, the threats, the girls... warnings, the last-minute interventions... suppose I said all of that was staged, that it was a kind of charade? That it was all fake?', I take the actor and director Sydney Pollack who plays Ziegler to mean that the film that we are watching is a film, a fake, a lie.

Does this self-awareness - I dislike the term self-reflexivity for it is used with regard to 'ironic' films like Scream (Wes Craven, 1997) that are reflexive in that they reference other films, are 'clever' and 'knowing' because the characters have been to the cinema and talk of the cinema - then equate to a destruction of the audience's suspension of disbelief, and as such, the end of any enjoyment that Eyes Wide Shut might provide? I don't believe so. Indeed, I think the film might only be properly enjoyed, properly understood, if it is accepted as a story, as not real, as the dream walk of a character who cannot quite believe the fantastic chain of events that occur, the sort of things that only happen in movies. Perhaps then Kubrick suggests in his film the danger of confusing fantasy and reality, where one girl may have ended up dead as a result of the dressing-up games played as an adult; or conversely, as a result of the reality of the sexual promiscuity of her prostitute's life. What is at stake is the confusion between the dreams we have asleep, and the dreams and desires we have with our eyes open; the difference between the imaginary nude and the normality of nudity; the dividing line between Kubrick as myth, and Kubrick as film-maker. This is why, with classic Kubrick humour, the film ends on Alice's suggestion that 'there is something very important we need to do as soon as possible'. 'What's that?', asks Bill, and Alice bluntly replies 'Fuck'. The characters, for the sake of their relationship, need the reality of normal sexual activity, rather than the fantasy scenarios Bill has engaged himself with; as the director Tony Palmer put it, 'That's what is the central quality of his films - He tells us about human beings as we are, not as we'd like to imagine that we are'. But for cinema, a film that questions the fantasy world we engage with, and the relationship this world holds with so-called reality, indeed, perhaps even this 'reality' itself, the very basis of western narrative cinema, the ramifications are immense. Kubrick remains one of the greatest, reinventing cinema to the last..

We fell in love, robbed a bank, watched a film and were critically inspired.

BONNIE

G H O S T W O R L D

director Terry Zwigoff

Ghost World is based on a comic, but there's no sign of superpowers or people dressed up in funny costumes. Instead, it's all cool weirdos and quasi-surreal moments, the likes of which underground comic artist Bob Crumb might have obsessed over, Zwigoff's subject for his previous documentary. As befitting this influence, Ghost World is episodic, more interested in its characters than the need for a strong story. We follow Enid (Thora Birch from American Beauty,) and Becky (Scarlett Johansson from the Coen's recent The Man Who Wasn't There,) as they follow various nutcases/freaks/satanists around their suburban American town, in a bid to fill the empty time of the summer after high school graduation. What is surprising about Ghost World is that it is in fact a teen movie, because it is miles away from American Pie or She's All That with their overtly attractive, shallow characters. The film works because their milieu is clunkingly horrible, but also because Enid and the people she meets are not particularly attractive.

What doesn't then work is Scarlett Johansson's natural beauty when compared with Enid's uncomfortably large breast and hips, her never looking quite right, but choosing to counteract this by plunging further into 'geek-chic', loving the tastelessness of all around her. But then this is a film about actual teenage relationships, and I think most of us can relate to the better-looking friend scenario. So Becky and Enid's friendship is an interesting one, and throughout the film they move slowly apart. Where Becky gets a job and starts thinking about a flat, Enid is stuck in high-school games. One of the weirdos she pursues turns out to be Seymour, (Steve Buscemi on trademark geeky form, but perhaps with a greater sense of resigned depth than we have seen before,) and older man obsessed with the records of an older time. The authenticity of his 1920s blues is in stark contrast to the vulgar decor of contemporary America.

And this surprised me. The comic by Daniel Clowes from which Ghost World derives is in stylish monochrome – black and white and mint green – and is highly recommended as a sort of existential work in uneasy pauses and ambiguous meanings; but this style hardly flows over into the film. Instead Zwigoff fills the film with the realistic detail of a teenage-girl's bedroom, the crass day-glow of a badly done '50s diner', the retro look of Buscemi's garage sales. Ghost World is a film about appearances and their (denied) importance to the teenager, who implicitly changes little throughout their life, but who is always wanting to change, to mature. Perhaps then Enid is our superhero, dressing to extremes to hide, (but actually ultimately display,) her immaturity, her emotional naivety; and costume changing – from punk to prim, dresses to fishnets – quicker than a schizophrenic Superman. And maybe she does even have special powers, (there's a scene at the end where the seemingly impossible occurs, albeit in the film's own small-time, suburban way, that made me question Enid as a reliable protagonist, made me think that the nicely-conclusive ending might only be in her head,) even if it is only in the way that a teenager locked up in her thoughts can do.

I'm not going to tell you that Ghost World is one of the greatest films ever made, and that you should rush off right now to see it; if only because to do so wouldn't be very cool.

Read us and weep say Clique's literary reincarnation of cinema's deadliest couple

& CLYDE

Ghost World isn't very funny. It's funny weird, occasionally funny laugh-at-other-people, but it's never funny Ha-ha, funny I've-just-told-a-joke. When Enid does tell jokes, or makes one of her deadpan quips at the losers that seem to populate both highschool and the small town she lives in, she just sounds like a teenager trying to be cool, and the remark falls flat. The 'Satanists' she and Becky mock are branded as such for their eccentric appearance; but this mockery tells us more about our central pair's nervous anxieties, their need to be cool by not being cool, than the oddballs who disappear in the film as quickly as they have been seen.

Strange then that the film has been sold in a kind of indie cool way. I'm not sure if the praise it has garnered, from Dazed & Confused for example – 'this may be the beginning of something new, like hearing Nirvana before the onset of Grunge', an article tellingly accompanied only by images from the effortlessly cool comic, and not the film – is entirely justified, although the film does provide a refreshingly realistic antidote to Harry Potter. Instead, I think Ghost World should be viewed in its own small way, where the interest lies in its multiple ambiguities and complex contradictions. There's Becky with her laconic, husky voice, who proclaims her want to sleep with weirdos, but in actual fact briefly hints at fancying a rather conventional, surfer-type. There's Seymour whose garage sales are redundant since anything anyone wants to buy suddenly evokes a possessive, sentimental response in him, with a love of the past that is at once understandable and misplaced. Perhaps his best scene, and a scene that is funny, is an impromptu date that Enid suddenly contrives. We share Seymour's appreciation of the blues guitarist over the obviously repugnant band 'Blues hammer', but then laugh at him for blowing his chances with the date when he starts boring her with actual definitions of 'blues', as opposed to jazz/ragtime/bluesgrass etc. Except really he's laughing too, aware of his own sad inability to engage with his contemporary reality, a culture that no longer understands Laurel and Hardy. The woman he starts dating asks 'Why does the fat one always make fun of the skinny one', and I think this is the essence of Ghost World's humour, its seemingly-subversive outlook, that in all truth is only what most of us might think in an increasingly politically-correct world.

Of course if you don't get Laurel and Hardy then may be you won't get Ghost World. Just as Seymour's love of the past is troubled by a racist artefact that engenders outrage amongst the local community, his relationship with Enid is not what we might call wholesome. Alternatively innocent, romantic and realistically sexual, it's not what you might expect. But then neither is the film. Key narrative occurrences are purposefully elided, (Seymour is sacked from his job for example, but Zwigoff seems uninterested, allowing this scene only momentary screen time,) and the film seems to refuse to deal with any major 'issue', or even sustain a note of seriousness. Whilst it mocks teenage angst in the very realistically awful paintings produced by Enid's summer camp class mates, it also makes a joke out of the art class teacher, and her need to make everything 'mean' something. It presents the drawings in Enid's sketchbook as the same sort of 'low art' as comics, that are mocked by an established the girls rebel against. Dan Clowes, the film's co-writer as well as the writer of the comic from which it is adapted, sees 'a beauty in [comics'] sleazy, disreputable history', their not needing to always mean something. Ghost World transcends this, creating meanings not so readily obvious as those to be found in your average American movie, and bringing out the sleaziness of the everyday, as well as the unnerving humour to be found in the local sex shop. It's funny, yeah; funny I could almost cry.

Ghost World is showing at the Warwick Arts Centre from Friday the 30th of November.

Clique recommends: The Piano Teacher, Lord Of The Rings and Storytelling; and if you still haven't seen: Amelie, The Others or The Man Who Wasn't There, well, you should do. Clique says don't go and see Harry Potter. You're a grown-up and it's a book/film for kids. Oh yeah and Roald Dahl never mass-merchandised his books until all the children were sick.

THEATRE

Far from dying out, theatre is a live art form that cannot and will not fade away. The emergent generation, weaned on the internet, television, CDs and a 'recorded culture', must crave live experience at some stage in their numbed existences. Theatre, like concerts, cabaret etc, can offer an immediate and exciting sensation, that works directly in relationship to an assembled audience.

My experiences of directing plays confirm my feelings vented above. This year I directed a Pinter Double Bill that we took to Bratislava, Slovakia and performed to locals. And, you know what, they loved it. And I felt strangely nationalistic for the first time. It showed me that culture is nothing if not shared. Even now, as director of Shakespeare's The Tempest, I have the strange situation of having a complete sell-out on my hands. Although part of this may be due to the production's commitment to reapplying Shakespeare to a modern age, it also reveals the still prevalent British love affair with Shakespeare.

This, my first edition for Clique, begins in some ways as it means to go on. First of all, I am paying tribute to the most radical Millennial playwright: Sarah Kane, who died of despair and horror. Secondly, I am recommending the capital's finest shows on offer at present. And finally, I am introducing a kind of bite-size theatre history section, called Mix and Match, which will compare two playwrights never before compared. I want this section to grow and grow and to swell with your theatrical imaginations. That's what the modern theatre AND this magazine needs: your input.

Johnny Heron

MIX & MATCH

Samuel Beckett & Athol Fugard

(1906-1989) (1932-)

'And then there is only emptiness left. But he doesn't want that. Because it's me. It's all that's left of me'. Fugard in Statements

'You cried for night; it falls: now cry in darkness'. Beckett in Endgame

Beckett and Fugard share, through technique and philosophy, the conception of theatre as a 'search for the self.' Both dramatists are concerned with personal statements; eternal subjectivities surviving in the void. Fugard wrote that he was striving to present 'a man without scenery'; and this is an ultimately Beckettian concern. One can draw comparisons between Beckett's Waiting for Godot, Endgame and Not I, and Fugard's The Island, Sizwe Bansi and Statements.

Historically, we know there is a link between them - they once met in London in a pub where they were said to discuss Fugard's Kapp and Peterson pipe and Cricket. Furthermore, Fugard staged Beckett plays throughout his career. Even more interestingly, Beckett broke the habit of a lifetime and allowed a play of his to double bill with a work by another playwright. That double-bill was the Royal Court's productions of Beckett's Not I and Fugard's Statements. Lastly, and most crucially, Both figures were heavily involved with politics at some stage in their lives: Beckett with the French Resistance and Fugard with the South African Anti-Apartheid movement.

Through an 'exquisite minimalism', a linguistic clarity, and a thematic unity, Beckett and Fugard create a beautiful theatrical perfection. Yet, their themes are imperfection. There is an indisputable Beckettian influence on Athol Fugard. I even e-mailed him about it, and he confirmed his love of Beckett's work. Beckett wrote 'Try again. Fail again. Fail better' (Worstward Ho); and Fugard almost responds to this with his Remark in his Notebook: 'What could be more exciting than to have to start again . . . to have the chance, the need to start again?'

‘I’m much fucking angrier

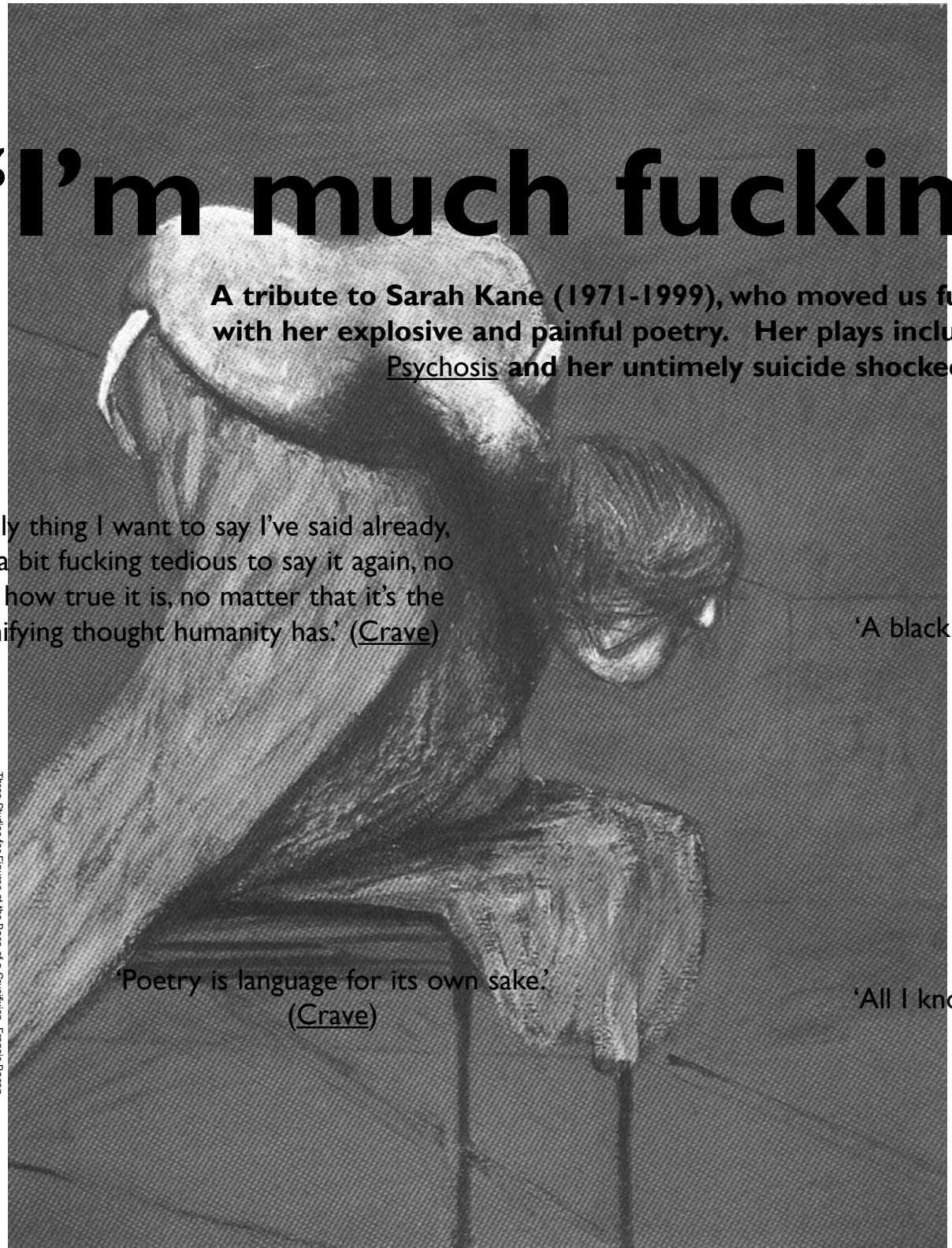
A tribute to Sarah Kane (1971-1999), who moved us further towards a theatre of despair with her explosive and painful poetry. Her plays included Blasted, Cleansed, Crave and 4.48 Psychosis and her untimely suicide shocked the theatrical world.

‘The only thing I want to say I’ve said already, and it’s a bit fucking tedious to say it again, no matter how true it is, no matter that it’s the one unifying thought humanity has.’ (Crave)

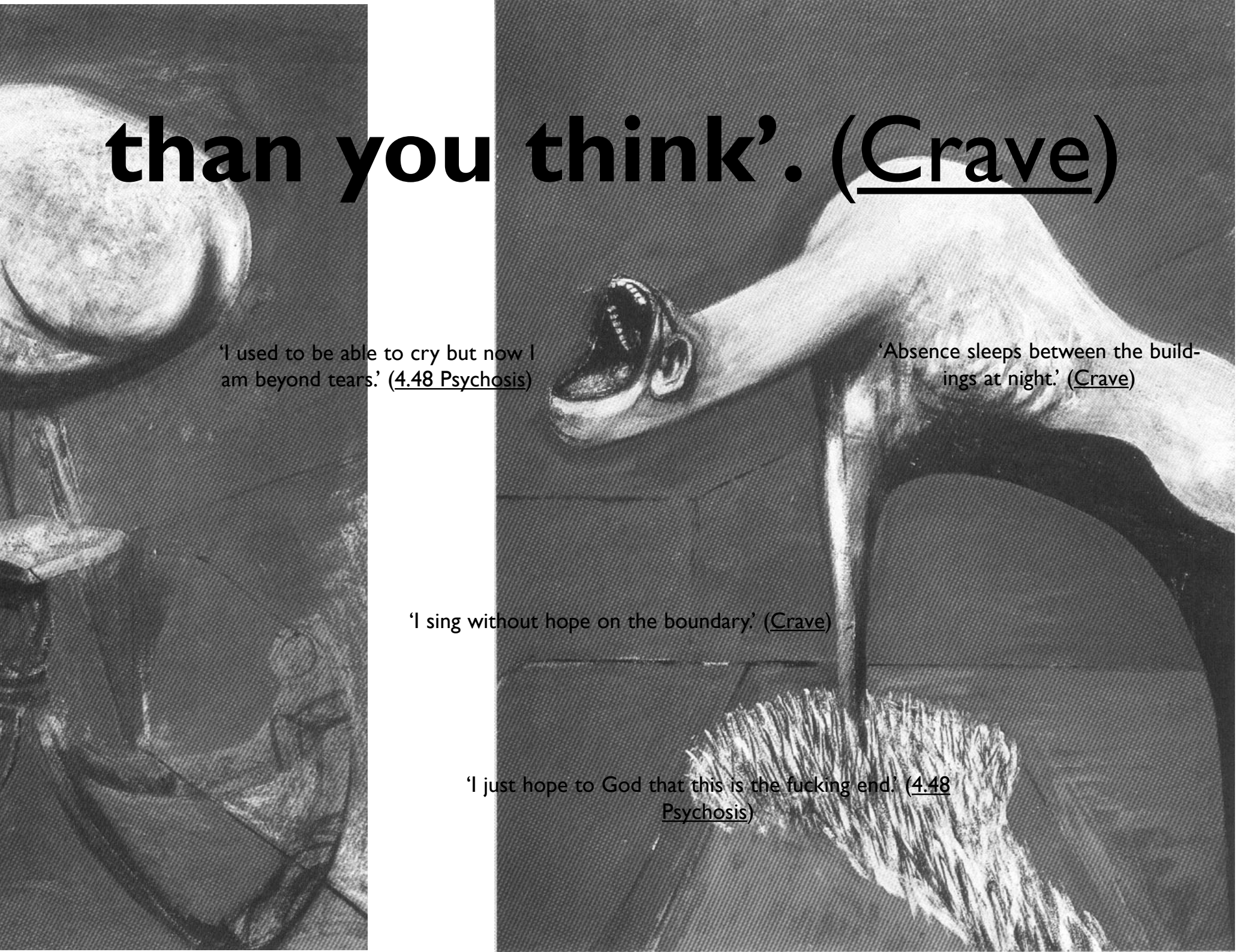
‘A black fucking hole of half love.’ (Crave)

‘Poetry is language for its own sake.’ (Crave)

‘All I know is snow and black despair.’ (4.48 Psychosis)



Three Studies for Figures at the Base of a Crucifixion. Francis Bacon



than you think'. (Crave)

'I used to be able to cry but now I am beyond tears.' (4.48 Psychosis)

'Absence sleeps between the buildings at night.' (Crave)

'I sing without hope on the boundary.' (Crave)

'I just hope to God that this is the fucking end.' (4.48 Psychosis)

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