

**The Periscope & the Labyrinth**

by

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**A U T H O R ' S D E C L A R A T I O N**

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

I understand that my thesis may be made electronically available to the public.

## A B S T R A C T

*The Periscope and the Labyrinth* is an investigation into cultural identity, consciousness and landscape rooted in the body's experience of the city. The modern phenomenon of *flânerie* is used as a means of examining various sites of particular interest to queer mythology within New York and Rome via the device of personal 'derives' or drifts inspired by a legacy of city writing, whereby the particular relationship between identity, place and space becomes clear. The *flâneur* has been essential to previous writings on the topic of 'queer space' in that he is one who 'relies on the ambiguities of the modern city, and the uncertainties that linger in the fleeting experience of a backward glance.' It is these very ambiguities that associate the *flâneur* as the quintessential 'cruiser.' Yet the potential of the *flâneur* lies in his 'alchemical' abilities. A contemporary interpretation of alchemy is used through out the thesis as both a psychological method for understanding the 'union of opposites', as well as a reading of the parallels between individual and collective identity as they relate to particular sites. These archetypal opposites are typified by the Greek gods Apollo and Dionysus; the duality of their characteristics exemplified by the metaphor of the title in which the conscience of the 'Apollonian eye' of the *flâneur* within the labyrinth of the Dionysian underworld' describing the alchemical teachings which underpin this work.

## A C K N O W L E D G M E N T S

For my brothers : Scott, Tom, John O, Ian, Amir, Andrew, Daniel, Ben & Scott

Thank you to my committee.

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**PART I**

**INTRODUCTION + METHODOLOGY**

**“[Aleister] Crowley defined magick as “the science and art of causing change to occur in conformity with will.” If that’s true, then this is the single best and simplest magickal tool I’ve ever come across for manufacturing the kind of reality you want to live in: SIGILS.. A sigil, which rhymes with ‘vigil’, takes two of the best elements of youth culture and combines them into a source of wish-fulfillment: making cut ‘n’ paste collages and jerking off. Like a logo, a cross or a pentacle, a sigil acts as a point of focus for the compounded, single expression of a particular desire. I first learned about sigils from the visionary writings of divine pandrogyné, Genesis P-Orridge (Throbbing Gristle, Psychic TV).”<sup>1</sup>**

Drawing on the method of collage favored by contemporary artists from the Surrealists and post-modernists to the recent generation of young artists, what follows is a collection of text and images exploring the relationship of alchemy to the urban landscape.<sup>2</sup> Yet rather than aim to create a work of post-modernism, an age which is behind us, the objective is to create a work more suited to the concept of what art critic and curator Nicolas Bourriaud terms ‘altermodern’:

**“Alter refers to multiplicity and otherness. . . . Altermodern is in a way a kind of dream catcher, trying to capture the characteristics of this modernity to come. This modernity . . . will be specific to the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Postmodern meant that we were after modernism. It is related to history, and history as a kind of arrow, in a way. Today we are more living in a maze, and we have to get meanings out of this maze. . . . Modernism in the 20<sup>th</sup> century was actually quite Western based. The new modernity to come has to be global from scratch.”<sup>3</sup>**

The concept of the ‘altermodern’, as employed in this thesis, seeks a new description of our current modernity by exploring ideas of ‘Other-ness’ in the urban spaces once appropriated by queer men. Although these urban spaces have to a large degree been replicated in, and replaced by, the vir

tual realm of internet cruising sites, which serve as ‘electronic labyrinths’ (to borrow the original title from George Lucas’ film THX11-38) [Fig. 1], what emerges from an exploration of the topos as a whole is a ‘dream catcher’ as Bourriaud describes it, influenced primarily by Walter Benjamin’s *The Arcades Project* [Fig. 2], which is itself comprised of reflections and quotations from literary criticism, history and art theory that document the emergence of a new form of modernity. And, in accordance with Benjamin’s model, it is the figure of the flâneur, walking the city and absorbing the experience it offers through his bodily senses, that provides the lens through which we view these spaces of ‘Other-ness’.

Though not particularly queer, the flâneur [Fig. 3] is prevalent in much of the writing on the ‘queering’ of urban spaces because of his ability to transgress boundaries between the individual and the collective and, as a result of these transgressions, alter both his own character and the character of the sites he explores. He therefore possesses a ‘magical’ quality in both his ‘alchemical’ abilities and mythological status. The flâneur’s inhabitation and experience of this urban terrain allows for his own personal metamorphosis as well as the metamorphosis of these sites. In his book *Warped Space: Art, Architecture, and Anxiety in Modern Culture*, architecture professor Anthony Vidler explains:

**“Such a pathological reading of the city [takes] on a critical aspect . . . as [the flâneur seeks] to recapture the primal resonances of natural paths in the urban labyrinth. Only a dreamlike state of suspension might enable the wanderer to cross between physical surroundings and their mental contents. . . . Viewed through these lenses, the urban street regained something of the original terror of the nomadic route . . . embedded in the mythical consciousness of the tribes, the street engendered a new form of terror . . . buried in the subterranean ways of the of**



**the modern city, was the figure of the labyrinth, site of endless wandering.”<sup>4</sup>**

In contemporary terms the labyrinthine nature of the internet, with its endless possibilities for surfing, playing, social interaction, and experiencing of music & video symbolizes a new kind of ‘underworld’ once characterized by conceptual, once avant-garde urban designs such as Constant’s New Babylon [Fig. 1]. This ‘Situationist City’ was a series of models, maquettes and drawings meant to represent a labyrinthine underground city of play where desire was constantly at the forefront of shaping both the urban form and atmosphere, and within which the *flâneur* figured as a sort of counter-cultural ‘anti-hero’. The designs of New Babylon were prefigured by the psycho-geographies [Fig. 2] of Guy Debord, which were:

**“A whole toy box full of playful, inventive strategies for exploring cities . . . just about anything that takes pedestrians off their predictable paths and jolts them into a new awareness of the urban landscape. . . . By definition, psychogeography combines subjective and objective knowledge and studies. Debord struggled to stipulate the finer points of this theoretical paradox, ultimately producing “Theory of the Dérive” in 1958, a document which essentially serves as an instruction manual for the psychogeographic procedure, executed through the act of *dérive* (a mode of drifting). . . . The erotic charge of psychogeography was undeniable, the rousing sexual conquest of having fully explored and overcome the exoticism of the city – this was accentuated by a famous piece of Situationist graffiti, “I came in the cobblestones”. . . . The connection between psychogeography and sexuality may be one of the reasons Jorn and Debord chose to title their famous topographic collage as *The Naked City*, one of their two famous psychogeographic situationist maps, alongside *Guide psychographique de Paris*. Both maps served as reconstructed guides to Paris, focusing exclusively on areas that Jorn and Debord felt had not yet been spoiled by capitalist-motivated redevelopments, areas still worth visiting; these**

conclusions were, of course, based on the result of a *dérive*. The arrows drawn on the collaged map were used to demonstrate the psychogeographic “flow” between each locale – true to psychogeographic form, the “flow” could not be objectively deconstructed to common terms, remaining merely as an abstraction. . . . The Situationists’ response was to create designs of new urbanized space, promising better opportunities for experimenting through mundane expression. . . . Debord’s vision was a combination of the two realms of opposing ambiance, where the play of the soft [light, sound, time, the association of ideas] ambiance was actively considered in the rendering of the hard [the actual physical constructions].<sup>5</sup>

This excerpt from the online encyclopedia Wikipedia, not generally considered academically credible, is used here specifically for its ‘trashy’ character, and because surfing the internet is an encapsulation of Debord and the Situationists’ notion of *dérive* or ‘drifting’. However, these Surrealist inspired collages of Debord’s provide a cultural mapping of urban space in 1950s and 60s bohemian Paris inform this work figuratively, in that they represent the relationship between culture and the urban landscape, as well as literally as in the psychogeography attached at the back.

Debord’s vision of combining the two realms of opposing ambiance embodies a ‘union of opposites’ as well as conveying a sense of otherworldliness in the banality of the everyday, often in the erotic territories of the city. The manner in which queers and outsiders (personified by the *flâneur*) have annexed, inhabited, appropriated and re-coded both public and private domains, and have managed to construct a social identity through this ‘queering’ and transformation of certain parts of the city, form the particular focus of this thesis. A reciprocal relationship emerges between the identities of the community and the city itself.

Conceived as a personal *dérive* through two particular cities, New York and Rome, as well as distinct urban ‘landscapes’ within them, this work aims to conflate an academic reading of queer urban history and mythology with a more romantic, conceptual exploration of ideas concerning the artistic, spiritual and mystical experience of cities. In my mind the flâneur, [Fig. 1] like the ‘rag-picker’, [Fig. 2] has the magical ability to salvage the detritus of society and transform it into art, like an alchemist. The intention of the ensuing stream of consciousness is to emulate the flâneur’s alchemical qualities in examples of literature that range in content from the ridiculous to the sublime, charting the relationship between the shaping of an identity within a community of ‘outsiders’ and the city.

This interpretation of the city as a landscape of sexual spaces describes how the transformative nature of cruising and public sex lies in its power to create a space of momentary sensuality within the voids of the city via the sexual act – liberating the vacant city from itself. What is demonstrated here is how a culture is able to reclaim, misuse, appropriate and pervert both urban public spaces, and the abandoned portions of the city in order to form an artistic expression of a cultural identity. It is this expression that I see as being imbued, ultimately, with an alchemical nature in that these disused and broken-down spaces of the city are thereby transformed by not only those who inhabit these spaces in various ways, but also in the particular way these spaces are appropriated for sexual purposes. The idea that this lends a sense of a mythologized identity to queer culture is evident in

the cultural and artistic production in which these landscapes are depicted. Therefore the tradition of works carried out by the Surrealists to the Situationists to contemporary queer artists help to define and describe this interpretation aesthetically and visually.

The metaphor of alchemy informs this process in that its goal is ultimately that of achieving individuation (identity making) and is concerned with transforming the prima materia into a more refined, higher state of consciousness. This is exemplified by the power of Andy Warhol's work to elevate lowly pop and celebrity culture into the realm of high art. Here we can trace a direct influence from the image and iconography of the iconostasis found in his childhood church to his silkscreened portraits particularly Gold Marilyn [Fig. 3]. It is this very act of transubstantiation that ultimately imbues the *flâneur* with the metaphorical powers of an alchemist. A correlation is drawn between alchemy and queer spaces where cruising elevates derelict or neglected spaces into sensual spaces of intimate encounters and connections. The 'quest' for sexual fulfillment, though physical, is not unlike the quest for enlightenment. Carl Jung speaks of alchemy as not only "the mother of chemistry" but as "the forerunner of our modern psychology of the unconscious,"<sup>6</sup> whose aim is not the transubstantiation of lead into gold, but rather a metaphor for a spiritual quest for "inner gold." This metaphor informs the pursuit of this work, which as we shall see, is to acquire an understanding as to the '*genius loci*' (or spirit-of-place) of certain queer sites, for, as Vidler Explains:

**"The flâneur is the priest of the *genius loci*. This discreet passerby with his priesthood and his detective's flair... the dandified figure of the stroller was complemented in Benjamin by another, more subver**

**sive image: that of the vagabond who alone, criminal and exiled, possessed the marginal vision that transgressed boundaries and turned them into thresholds, a way of looking that engendered what Benjamin called the “peddling [colportage] of space.”<sup>7</sup>**

*The Periscope and the Labyrinth* refers to the opposing ‘forces’ of Apollo and Dionysus: the cool, ‘Apollonian’ gaze of the *flâneur* who cruises and explores the ‘Dionysian’ underworld of the city. The Greek gods are also prevalent in the archetypal imagery of alchemy, signifying opposites of good and evil, light and darkness, male and female, upper and lower. [Fig. 1]. Together they form an androgynous entity, a vision which, as Gaston Bachelard writes, “is in front of us, available to any dreamer who dreams to realize the sur-feminine as well as the sur-masculine. The day dreamings in terms of animus and anima are thus psychologically forward looking.”<sup>7</sup>

#### NOTES ON INTERPRETATION

To an academic:

The following work aims to build upon the general subject of sexuality and ‘queer space’ which is a field of study in academia with a number of essays, books and various other material produced from the 1990s onward. My goal is to essentially take what I find as the more interesting aspect of these studies, mainly the ideas that relate to the transformative acts of appropriation of the urban landscape, and to further interpret what I see as the mythological and ‘mystical’ implications of experiencing this urban realm by queers as it relates to alchemy as a means of interpreting and giving structure to this hallucination of life. What follows is a collection of text and images I’ve edited that demonstrates

my own exploration of this area of architectural theory. In this sense the work may be read in 'formal' manner of an essay on one's experience of the urban realm that draws on previous generations work which one may or may not be familiar with. I see this as an appropriate thesis topic in that it is a somewhat substantial area of academic discourse which I have sought to expand on and remark on more contemporary issues surrounding the topic of queer space, while also providing a dense collection of visual material from film stills, paintings, photography and other modes of cultural production.

To a queer youth:

As someone who has grown up in the age of electronic media, this thesis aims to provide my own interpretation of a body of work that demonstrates the significance of 'queerness' to art, architecture and writing. My intention is not to claim any sort of gay movement as such, but rather to express my own fascination with the subject matter. There is much history and work in the lives of those represented here that has informed much of my own outlooks, beliefs and sense of self. Hopefully you will be inspired by the artists and writers represented here. This collection of images and text also aims to demonstrate what I see as a certain sensibility that you may either find interesting or outright reject. What is most important is the sense of community and freedom that is offered queer people in various cities, and I have no doubt that you will also find and be drawn to these people as I have, and that reciprocally, they will be drawn to you.

interesting conversations with other queers you may meet along your journey. Lastly, I encourage you to get offline and interact with people more in the real – make eye contact, start conversations and you will find many opportunities for encounter and connection.

. . .

#### **FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS**

The accompanying video piece, *The Periscope & the Labyrinth* should be looped when viewed in Quicktime. The psycho-geography attached at the back of the work is meant to describe and illustrate the interconnectedness of the images used and throughout the making of the thesis, as well as a means of mapping my own psychological voyage. Lastly, the order of images starting at Fig. 92 do not directly relate to the order of images listed in the text. This is to allow the images to appear in a certain order in the plates section.

PART II

ALCHEMY, ART + ARCHITECTURE



**It is true without lie, certain and without doubt, that what is below is like what is above, and what is above is like what is below, to accomplish the miracles of the One thing.**

**– The Emerald Tablet of Hermes**

**The goal of Alchemy is called the Great Work. It is the purification of the lesser and gross and its elevation to the greater and more refined, whether in metals or in consciousness.**

Today the American Pavilion on Montreal's Expo Island stands as a monument to retro-futurism; its ruinous, vine-engulfed character able to evoke and conjure images in the manner of a crystal ball. The cage-like space frame of the geodesic dome allows for the projection of a million desires within its enclosure. It was during a visit to Expo Island one summer that a vision of innumerable canaries being freed from this 'prison' of their artificial enclosure of acrylic bubbles as they melted off of the spaceframe as occurred in the fire of 1976, that started during a renovation<sup>10</sup>. The significance of this idea took root in the apparition of Andy Warhol among his self-portraits that were exhibited during Expo '67. The canary [Fig. 10] (represented here by the canary yellow of the cover of *A Rebours*) comes to embody the freedom that the union of opposites, and the consequential shift in consciousness it allows: at once a symbol of a caged bird used to alert coal miners to the presence of carbon monoxide underground, and also one of spiritualization, and as poet, art critic and mythologist J. E. Cirlot describes in *The Dictionary of Symbols*, is: "according to Jung, [a] beneficent animal representing spirits or angels, supernatural aid, thoughts and flights of fancy."<sup>11</sup> This metaphor of the canary in a coalmine is significant within the queer imagination, and is used by Ian Young in *The Stonewall Experiment: A Queer Psychohistory* to describe the experience of gay men as cultural outsiders, recreational drug users and the consequential onslaught of AIDS that shocked both the queer community and the world. Buckminster Fuller's geodesic dome at Montreal's Expo Island [Fig. 11] is perhaps one of the best examples in which an alchemical 'union of opposites' occurs within a single architec-

tural form, a structure of triangles framing the inhabitable sphere of the pavilion (where, appropriately, an Apollo spacecraft was hung from the dome) elevating this inherently iconic work of art to a work of 'magic'. In the article "The Geodesic Dome as a Metaphor for Expanding Consciousness", writer Christine Macy describes the geodesic dome as an icon of both the counter-culture of the 1960s and expanding consciousness, a concept inherent to alchemy:

**"It is well-known that Buckminster Fuller's geodesic domes were a ubiquitous feature of the 'countercultural' society or, as it is often called, the 'hippie' culture of the 1960s in North America. Fuller's ideas, and his geodesic domes in particular, represented simultaneously a global, communal and personal ethos to many in the youth of that generation. . . . [The geodesic dome] was also interpreted as an egalitarian architecture, both person-centered and community-centered, and as an ecological way of building which enclosed to the most space with the least amount of materials."<sup>12</sup>**

The power of architecture as a form of 'white astral magic' underlies this union of 'light' and 'dark' forms evidenced in the dome itself. The light is signified by the triangle, an iconic 'Apollonian' shape, like the prism which refracts light into a kaleidoscope of colours, the arrow, the sword, the pyramid, and obelisk. The 'dark' is evoked within the circular shape of the sphere, a 'Dionysian' form related to the labyrinth, [Fig. 12] the ouroboros (a depiction of a snake swallowing its tail), [Fig. 13] and the bound whip, [Fig. 14] the Jeremy Bentham's utilitarian pan-opticon prison, [Fig. 15] Dante Allighieri's Inferno [Fig. 16] and the ancient Egyptian hieroglyph for 'town'. [Fig. 17] As cultural critic Camille Paglia describes in her extensive work, *Sexual Personae*, the ouroboros has a symbolic relationship to alchemy as well as the androgyne:

**“The self-contained magnum opus of alchemical process was symbolized by the ouroboros, the self-begetting, self-devouring serpent. The synthesis of contraries in the . . . opus was a hierogamos or conjunction (“sacred marriage” or “union”), a “chymical wedding” of male and female. [Fig. 18] Alchemy is the ultimate symbolic description of the transformation from the leaden physicality of earthbound consciousness to the refined gold of the spiritually illuminated being, strictly concerned with inner dynamics resulting in the purification of the body, mind, and soul. “<sup>13</sup>**

The relationship of the dome as an efficient, elegant architectural form to alchemy and expanding consciousness is evident in the union of opposites I’ve described briefly above; whereby two dissimilar shapes are unified in order to create one of the most powerful pieces of architecture of the last century – forever lodged within the mythic imagination of Canada’s collective unconscious.

To no longer be conditioned by a pair of opposites is to have ultimate freedom in that in transgressing these opposites one acquires their true, eternal self. Alchemy provides a connective metaphor linking various works, cultural figures and concepts regarding the transformation of self in relation to the urban landscape and its architecture: from the geodesic dome and androgynous counter cultural ‘heroes’ Andy Warhol and David Bowie, queer spaces within the urban condition as they are transformed vis a vis human activities such as sex, art making, and politics. Alchemy, its teachings, and principles are also prevalent in the work of many artists including visionary poet Arthur Rimbaud, [Fig. 19] Marcel Duchamp,[Fig. 20]Joseph

Beuys, [Fig. 21] Andy Warhol, [Fig. 22] and Joseph Cornell, [Fig. 23] all artists interested in the relation between their work and the lineages of art history, and all radical in their outputs. Rimbaud is perhaps the most radical of them all, inventing a new form of poetry that would come to stand as an emblem of global modernism before he reached the age of eighteen. The ‘outsider sensibility’ that he engendered provided a model for the modern reinventions of both language and self, as well as a radical, new way of life. The work of Rimbaud and the French Symbolist poets ultimately set out to describe a “new set of metaphors as a *sorcellerie evocatoire* – a magical operation – or an *alchimie du verbe*. In one instance, he destroyed both the identity we find in language and the language we find in identity.”<sup>14</sup> As an example of this *alchimie du verbe*, Rimbaud’s attempt to transform reality via art and poetry, is “Faun’s Head”, in which a fleeting encounter with a faun draws us into a mystical, unknown landscape:

**Among the foliage, green casket flecked with gold,  
In the uncertain foliage that blossoms  
With gorgeous flowers where sleeps the kiss,  
Vivid and bursting through the sumptuous tapestry,  
A startled faun shows his two eyes  
And bites the crimson flowers with his white teeth.  
Stained and ensanguined like mellow wine  
His mouth bursts out in laughter beneath the  
branches.  
And when he has fled - like a squirrel -  
His laughter still vibrates on every leaf  
And you can see, startled by a bullfinch  
The Golden Kiss of the Wood, gathering itself  
together again.<sup>15</sup>**

A contemporary interpretation of alchemy sees it as a metaphor for one's journey of self. The figure of the faun, satyr or, in contemporary terms, cyborg, is significant to the hero's passage into the mythological, transformative realm of the untamed, Dionysian forest symbolic of the unconscious. The image of the satyr is also present in architecture critic Aaron Betsky's description of 'queer space' [Fig. 59] as a third space for the third sex – a landscape of myth, ruins and fragments:

**"The third scene is more difficult to describe. It is the scene of myth, of stories of which you do not know whether they are true or not, where the everyday and the miraculous mix. It takes place in a mixture of the man-made and the natural, the real and the imagined. Ruins and trees create a framework that shows us our own society in a mirror that reveals both its temporality and its order, its natural beauty and its artifice, all wrapped around nymphs, satyrs, and other hybrid creatures. . . . I will propose queer space as a kind of third scene, a third place for the third sex, that functions as a counterarchitecture, appropriating, subverting, mirroring, and choreographing the orders of everyday life in new and liberating ways."<sup>16</sup>**

The proliferation of queer material produced in the 1990s brought with it a reassessment of queer culture's own association with mythology through film, novels, critical essays and anthologies as well as cultural, political and mythological surveys such as Yamake Highwater's provocative and engaging discussion in *The Mythology of Transgression: Homosexuality as Metaphor*. Considered by many to be the 'intellectual heir' of comparative mythologist Joseph Campbell,

Highwater sets out to describe the hero's journey as an act of revelation:

**“The entire mythic adventure of the hero has tremendous cultural and psychological significance, but the crucial turning point of any adventure is that moment when a man or woman breaks away from the commonplace world in order to act out a sense of self. It is this decisive act of disjunction from the commonplace, of departure from the known world, that represents the essential act of crossing the line, of breaking rules and trespassing beyond the familiar world. That trespass expresses the hero's willingness to pierce the protective walls of the community. It represents the daring to make a precarious passage beyond the walls by doing that “one thing” that is forbidden.**

**In short, the adventure of the hero depends on transgression. “<sup>17</sup>**

This need for transgression and rebellion in youth, carried out via the quest for revelation and transcendence is further discussed in an article in the journal *Leonardo* by art historian Arturo Schwarz titled, “Alchemy, Androgyny and Visual Artists”, where Schwarz accounts for the permanent revolution sought by the rebellious alchemist as the most evolved form of youth:

**“In the same way as Prometheus is the mythological archetype of the rebel, and Lucifer (Luci-fer- bringer of light) is the theological archetype of the rebel, the alchemist is their human reflection: Prometheus, Lucifer, the alchemist all strive to equal the feats of the gods to reconquer the two complementary qualities: immortality and creativity. The alchemist's desire for an ‘uninterrupted’ youth implies a permanent revolution (biological and hence psychical). The alchemist, like the artist, is the archetype of the rebel not only because he seeks the youth of the gods and their power to create, but because he has understood that youth is a creator, and hence that revolution and youth are two aspects of the same matter. Just as the mind is the most evolved form of matter (Engels), so revolution is the most evolved form of youth. Revolution is man's youth, and vice versa-both at the collective and phylogenetic level and at the individual and ontogenetic level. Breton was hardly wrong when he put all his hopes in youth: ‘Surrealism, I repeat, was born of an affirmation of a boundless faith in**

the genius of youth' . He recalled the examples of [qualification, first name] Lautreamont (who died aged 24), [playwright Alfred] Jarry (who wrote *Ubu Roi* when he was 15 years old), Rimbaud (who had completed his life's work at the age of 18), Novalis (who died at 30) and [revolutionary Louis de] Saint-Just (guillotined at the age of 27) . . .

The alchemist is a dreamer who knows what he wants: to transform the world to change life, and hence liberate man to transform the world. The alchemist anticipates these words with which Andre Breton closed his address at the Convention of Revolutionary Writers in Paris in 1935: 'Marx has said "transform the world", Rimbaud asked us to "change life": for us these two watchwords are but one'. This attempt to attain the aurea apprehensio led the alchemist to anticipate the discoveries of Freud and Jung concerning the bisexual nature of the human being. Let us not forget that one of the names of the Philosopher's Stone was Rebis, that is to say the res-bis, the double thing, male and female at the same time. The Rebis is not the hermaphrodite, which constitutes a biological monstrosity, a static synthesis of the female and male elements, but the mythical androgyne, the double thing ('I is another', Rimbaud reminded us) where the male and female elements do not neutralize each other, but on the contrary, exalt each other, being in a state of 'conflictual equilibrium'. " <sup>18</sup>

The decadent French poet would also prove to be an inspiration to queer artists a century later, particularly the punk rock poet Patti Smith [Fig. 24] , photographers Ryan McGinley [Fig. 25] and Nan Goldin [Fig. 26] and writer/artist David Wojnarowicz [Fig. 27] whose photographic series *Rimbaud in New York (1978-79)* [Fig. 28] is perhaps one of the most significant artistic works of the period in that it transposes the visage of the child poet from belle-époque France to the decayed ruins



and landscapes of burnt out, 1970s New York, an equally mythological and decadent era now famously known as a particularly creative time in the city's history in part because of the urban exodus of the white middle class and the consequentially cheap rents downtown.

. . .

## T H E R A G P I C K E R S

**“Here we have a man whose job it is to gather the day's refuse in the capital. Everything that the big city has thrown away, everything it has lost, everything it has scorned, everything it has crushed underfoot he catalogues and collects. He collates the annals of intemperance, the capharnaum of waste. He sorts things out and selects judiciously: he collects like a miser guarding a treasure, refuse which will assume the shape of useful or gratifying objects between the jaws of the goddess of Industry.” This description is one extended metaphor for the poetic method, as Baudelaire practiced it. Raggpicker and poet: both are concerned with refuse.**<sup>19</sup>

Recognizing the role of alchemy in the works of an artist like Andy Warhol allows for a greater interpretation and understanding of both the artist's role in society, his discovery of his 'self' and the subsequent projection of his constructed persona onto the wider public in a unabashed desire and pursuit of fame and subsequent immortality. What is at play ultimately in Warhol's work is the act of transubstantiation, of redeeming the garbage of society by way of elevating it to the level of high art. Marcel Duchamp's Fountain (1917) is precedent, in this regard. [Fig. 29] And of course public urinals [Fig. 30] were once notorious cruising sites for queer men, a fact alluded to in the work of queer London based photographer Wolfgang Tillmans. [Fig. 31]

Warhol's use of found and appropriated images from tabloid newspapers, crime

scenes, celebrity publicity shots and film stills comprise a trove of prima materia gathered from the detritus of society. His elevation of this base material to the level of high art via silkscreen, and the manner in which he allows the subject matter and the idea to operate through him by removing himself from the production of the art itself, demonstrates the ultimate power with which he was imbued, in a way similar to the alchemist or sorcerer (“nothing up my sleeves”). This technique, consistent throughout his work, finds its most perverse expression in the oxidized, sometimes called ‘piss’, portrait of his protégé, painter Jean-Michel Basquiat. The use of urine, splashed across the image’s copper surface, [Fig. 32] recalls the alchemical operation of the *flâneur* / ragpicker, transforming detritus into a work of art, the warm passing of the ‘Dionysian’ fluids enables a chemical reaction between the metallic copper paint and the urine: a golden shower crowning the ‘Radiant Child’<sup>20</sup> in Apollonian goldenness. [Fig. 33 & 34] . The poet and cultural critic Wayne Koestenbaum expounds on this aspect of Warhol’s in the film *Andy Warhol: A Documentary Film* by Ric Burns:

**“The thing I feel when I look at Warhol is maximum redemption of lost material. He puts meaning back where there is deadness. Its not that he reproduces a banalized, commodified experience, but that he puts something back into it. . . . He puts that back into human experience, and art took that out a long time ago when it separated the artists from the non-artists**

. . . . You can be a non-artist who is the world's greatest artist. And that's why he's controversial. He is a non-artist. " 21

The artist Jeff Koons, a contemporary of Basquiat, continues this line of reasoning:

**"I think that it's about playing God, it's about creating life, it's about that spark of trying to, in the most economical means, to just get a little bit ahead of life itself. . . . The art in Andy's work is about sharing where we are, you know, giving us our parameters, and giving us more. It's that increase of really the possibilities, and for that moment - you know he's a great alchemist - at that moment, we are greater than we have ever been. "**22

This alchemical aspect of Warhol's work has informed *The Periscope and the Labyrinth*, a digital video work partly inspired by avant-garde filmmaker Kenneth Anger's early film *Fireworks*, as well as Warhol's self-portrait [Fig. 63] taken in front of a mirror using a Polaroid camera, with its reflection of the camera's flash, showing his bandaged chest and the scars that were the result of an assassination attempt in June 1968 by crazed lesbian activist/writer Valerie Solonas. This image provides the starting photo for the accompanying video piece of this thesis. The video is comprised of a series of digital images collected over a number of years while cruising the annals of the internet. Pre-dating heteronormative social networking sites such as Facebook and Myspace, these almost requisite shots of the urban queer male in front of the mirror taking his own photo (usually bare chested or nude) with the flash of the camera either whiting-out his face, or positioned just to the left or right of his face, provides the 'prima materia' for the alchemical nature of the work. In this case the most base image of an internet sub-culture is promoted to a work of art that carries with it the connotations of the fragment, alienation, self-reflection, desire,

and ultimately pure Apollonian light of the camera's flash balanced with the sensual Dionysian aspect of the flesh depicted in the images. The void left by the camera's flash also provides the viewer with multiple metaphorical implications: strobe light, the 'void' of both queer and cyberspaces, a miner's helmet light (alluding to the proverbial canary in a coalmine). According to cultural critic Susan Sontag in her seminal work *On Photography* the *flâneur* and the camera are closely allied:

**“Gazing on other people’s reality with curiosity, with detachment, with professionalism, the ubiquitous photographer operates as if that activity transcends class interests, as if its perspective is universal. In fact, photography first came into its own as an extension of the eye of the ... *flâneur*, whose sensibility was so accurately charted by Baudelaire. The photographer is an armed version of the solitary walker reconnoitering, stalking, cruising the urban inferno, the voyeuristic stroller who discovers the city as a landscape of voluptuous extremes. Adept at the joys of watching, connoisseur of empathy, the *flâneur* finds the world “picturesque.” The findings of Baudelaire’s *flâneur* are variously exemplified by the candid snapshots taken in the 1890s by Paul Martin in London streets and at the seaside and by Arnold Genthe in San Francisco’s Chinatown (both using a concealed camera), by Atget’s twilight Paris of shabby streets and decaying trades, by the dramas of sex and loneliness depicted in Brassai’s book *Paris du nuit* (1933), by the image of the city as a theater of disaster in Weegee’s *Naked City* (1945). The *flâneur* is not attracted to the city’s official realities but to its dark seamy corners, its neglected populations - and**

**unofficial reality behind the facade of bourgeois life that the photographer “apprehends,” as a detective apprehends a criminal.”<sup>23</sup>**

Sontag may have well been talking of David Wojnarowicz’s mentor, the photographer Peter Hujar whose portrait of her [Fig. 35] and other cultural luminaries, as well as other similar images of the abandoned city of night and its inhabitants one could recall from John Rechy novels. Sontag’s observations essentially associate the *flâneur* with the cool detachment of camera, which in our mythological reading of these figures is represented by the Apollonian. The body of work produced by photographer Nan Goldin throughout the 1970s of 80s [Fig. 36] provides, along with that of people such as Diane Arbus, Francis Bacon [Fig. 37] and Andy Warhol a view into what I would characterize as the space of the ‘Other’ which Michel Foucault describes in his essay “Of Other Spaces: Heterotopias” which find an artistic depiction in these photographic images as well as films such as *Love is the Devil* [Fig. 38] and *Cabaret* [Fig. 39] This urban underworld of motley acolytes, outsiders, drag queens and drug users finds its extreme representation in Warhol’s studio known as the Factory [Fig. 40] of the 1960s, which was as a queer space of the highest degree. Here Warhol’s requirement for new ideas fed an anything-goes scene of drugs, androgyny, and polymorphous perversity. The silver-foiled walls recall a great, giant mirror, which is exactly what Warhol functioned as essentially. As he recalls the era of the 1960s, his use of silver held poetic significance as well:

**“It was the perfect time to think silver, silver was the future, it was spacey, astronauts wore silver-suits, and their equipment was silver too. And silver was also the past. The silver screen. Hollywood actresses photographed on silver sets, and maybe more than anything else, silver was narcissism. Mirrors were**

**backed with silver.”<sup>24</sup>**

The denizens of this urban underworld whom Warhol identified, associated and surrounded himself with represent a mythical world of ‘Bohemia’ which art critic Thierry du Duve describes in a passage from his critical reading of Joseph Beuys’ work in the essay “Joseph Beuys, or the Last of the Proletariats”:

**“a mythical country peopled with all the romantic incarnations of the excluded as bearers of social truth. The name of this country - where strollers and dandies cross paths with peddlers and rag pickers; where art students and medical students thumb their noses at philistines; where the sins of the streetwalker are redeemed by the love of a young poet; where humanity is more humane in the brothel than in the church or palace; where the underworld is the true aristocracy, tuberculosis the pardon of syphilis, and talent the only riches - the name of this country is of course Bohemia. It is a literary and imaginary country where in a deformed image at once tragic and ideal, there was dreamed a humanity to replace the real humankind that peopled the Europe of the nineteenth century, and that industrial capitalism had pitilessly set against itself by dividing it into two new antagonistic classes, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. . . . Bohemia functions all the more as the figure of a humanity of replacement in that it is a suffering humanity, such that nothing but true human values - liberty, justice, compassion - can survive there, and such that it contains the seeds of a promise of reconciliation.”<sup>25</sup>**

in Le Corbusier's design of Charles de Beistegui's penthouse in Paris, [Fig. 41] and describes the advantage of distance the periscope [Fig. 42] allows, as well as the prefigured relationship of the rationalized 20<sup>th</sup> century city and that of the existing, menacing urban fabric [labyrinth] as architecture professor Arie Graafland explains in *Architectural Bodies*:

**"The point from which we are departing is our own human body – it is in and of the city – as a metaphor for the city. [Architectural theorist] Beatriz Colomina, [in describing the periscope on Charles de Beistegui's penthouse on the Champs Elysees, by le Corbusier] has shown that the periscope is a necessary artificial device used to keep the city at a distance. . . . On the bright white walls of the roof garden Le Corbusier suggestively attached a plaster profile of a mantelpiece in Louis XV style. Of the city skyline, only the Arc de Triomphe was to be seen, which was included in the arrangement of the roof garden as an objet de luxe. . . . The city of Paris was made visible by an artificial device, a periscope which scripted one's view of the urban scene. Distance was thus guaranteed by a technological device. Indeed, like the fenetre en longueur, which functions as a camera lens, the periscope is there to frame and keep at a distance the menacing character of the existing urban fabric.**

**But what is this urban threat?**

**The organizing spirit keeps a distance (abstraction) from the festering misery, just as a lancet cuts through the tumor. What do these chaotic neighbourhoods represent? What do they look like? What kind of places are they? They are the places where the proletariat live."** <sup>26</sup>

The juxtaposition of the rationalized urban designs of modernist utopias, to that of the decayed and disarrayed fabric of the older quarters of the city is further explored in urban geographer and professor Abraham Akkerman essay "Femininity and Masculinity in City-Form: Philosophical Urbanism as a History of Consciousness" in which he describes the relationship

of the Apollonian and Dionysian to city myths in a way that relates the modernist, highly rationalized Corbusian model to the ‘post-modern’ city of ruins:

“Both myths [of the Citadel and the Garden] correspond to Jung’s feminine and masculine collective subconscious [the anima and animus], as well as to Nietzsche’s premise of Apollonian and Dionysian impulses in art. Nietzsche’s premise suggests, furthermore, that the feminine myth of the Garden is time-bound whereas the masculine myth of the Citadel, or the Ideal City, constitutes a spatial deportment. Throughout history the two myths have continually molded the built environment and thought, but the myth of the Ideal City – from Plato to Descartes to modernity – came to dominate city-form and ensuing aspects of contemplation. This relationship seems to have shifted during the twentieth century. Intellectual dispositions have begun to be largely nurtured by an incongruous city-form emerging from the gap between the incessant promise for an automated, well-functioning city, on the one hand, and looming alienation, coupled with the factual, malfunctioning city, on the other hand. Urban decay, a persisting and time-bound urban event that is a byproduct of this configuration, suggests the ascent of the Garden myth in post-modern city-form...

Intuitively, the Citadel is perceived as representing severance as well as stability, solitude, and solidity, whereas the Garden represents the respectively opposite traits of ingathering and change, multitude and softness. In physical space, and as an aesthetic pedigree, the Garden symbolizes concealment and surprise, while the Citadel is the epitome of



surveillance and lucidity. Throughout the history of civilization, at least in the West, the Garden and the Citadel, as attributes of the collective subconscious, have come to represent the deliberate fashioning of human environments, and so have also continued to define culture. But in the design of cities over the last two or three millennia it was primarily the Citadel that has taken the dominant role. In the history of the city, the Myth of the Garden has been interwoven within the myth of the Ideal City only as a secondary feature. Since antiquity, the urban environment has been mainly an expression of the masculine myth of the Ideal City, forging conquest across geographic space.<sup>27</sup>

A good example of this post-modern city which Akkerman describes made real is Field Operations and Diller Scofidio + Renfro's recently opened project for the redevelopment of the Highline elevated park on New York's far west side. The design of the new public space marries the disused ruin of the elevated train track gracefully appropriates with clever seating and paving between salvaged bits of abandoned tracks and plantings which mimic the wild grasses and plant life that grew over the years the highline was not used. Taking its cues from urban decay and post-modern city form, The Highline project absorbs the Myth of the Garden as one of its most important characteristics. Of course Diller Scofidio + Renfro's are no strangers to queerness, spectacle and surveillance. Their work often incorporates video and surveillance technology ranging from art installations and restaurants to large-scale, anti-spectacle machines such as the Blur building – their work speaking to our culture's cyborg obsession. The description Akkerman gives elegantly synthesizes what I hope to express as the alchemical relationship between the city, the identity of its public spaces and those who occupy them. What the above series of quotations from a range of authors, mythologists, psychologists and art critics reveal is alchemy's relationship to

a wide range of matters that pertain to architecture and the arts – particularly their concern with individuation, spirituality, mythology, rebellion and the androgyny resulting from the ‘union of opposites’ exemplified by the Apollonian and Dionysian. These descriptions help to set up an understanding of these ideas and will also help us navigate the urban landscape as the quest for individuation, adventure and enlightenment unfolds. In this, what I essentially aim to describe is my interpretation of the reciprocal relationship between individual and cultural identities and their mythological landscapes in which Rome is viewed as the archetypal ancient city of ruins and modern and post modern New York as the scene where this relationship ultimately is expressed not only in the mythology of the city but through literature, art and other modes of cultural production.



PART III

ROME: FRATRICIDE + THE VOID

**CONDUCTOR:** Good morning ladies and gentleman, this train originating from New York's Grand Central Station is back in service. Next stop will be New Canaan, Connecticut. New Canaan, Connecticut, next stop.

**NARRATION:** In issue number 141 of the Fantastic Four published in November 1973 Reed Richards has to use his anti-matter weapon on his own son who Annihilus has turned into a human atom bomb. It was a typical predicament for the Fantastic Four because they weren't like other super heroes. They were more like a family, and the more power they had the more harm they could do to each other without even knowing it. That was the meaning of the fantastic Four that a family is like your own personal anti-matter, your family is the void you emerge from and the place you return to when you die. And that's the paradox: the closer you're drawn back in the deeper into the void you go.

The Ice Storm by Rick Moody

The queer experience has never been, until relatively recently, realized as a coherent whole; instead it is remembered as fragments and traces.<sup>29</sup> With the emergence of Christianity, and the outlawing of homosexual sex in the 6<sup>th</sup> century AD much of history has, if not ignored, relegated the queer experience to the marginal edges of the discourse on culture, art, politics and urban life. It is only within the last 150 years, with the emergence of queer voices that these experiences of the marginalized and the unseen have been represented and documented in literature, photography, art, film, and various other media including architecture.<sup>30</sup> I do not remember exactly where or when I first became aware of stories that the ruins of the Roman Forum, the Coliseum and the Campus Maximus,

were used as places of assignation for queer<sup>31</sup> men, but it is these obscure accounts, or traces, that inspire this work.

Cruising is defined by Mark Turner as “a moment of visual exchange that occurs on the streets and in other places in the city, which constitutes an act of mutual recognition among the alienating effects of the anonymous crowd.”<sup>32</sup> Cruising may also refer to a more explicit intention of seeking out a sexual encounter in specific, known sites. The space of cruising is one that allows for such activity to occur under the veil of anonymity. It finds and appropriates the places where the urban fabric has begun to unravel, such as dark alleyways, abandoned buildings, or places in the city itself that allow for relief and respite, such as parks, public squares, and bathhouses. Though cruising relies on anonymity and is born out of alienation, it is ultimately a transformative act that attempts to make whole both the alienated self and the city, if only for a moment. As Aaron Betsky makes clear “This queer space appears through an act of transformation that turns separation into its opposite, which is connection.”<sup>33</sup> It makes an invisible space real and brings a community that would otherwise be invisible briefly into the light. If the ambition of the city is to heal the alienation inherent in its nature, the value of the urban space of the forum in the contemporary city is as space for connection and exchange experienced through cruising – much more than as an archeological or tourist site.

As a public space, the Roman Forum is rather ambiguous – queer even. My approach in this next section is to conceptualize a connection between ‘the idlers’ of the ancient Roman Forum, and modern queer individuals who inhabited the ruins of the forum as a site for cruising. It is my position that through the once

subversive acts of this sub-culture renews the site, given that cruising is a visceral attempt to mend the inherent alienating nature of the city through the rituals of encounter and connection. For this reason Rome is viewed as the archetypal City where the metaphor of the void is inherent in the site of its founding. The connection between the void of the Forum and the void of Ground Zero further bond these two cities as sites of literal and metaphorical fratricides. The fratricide that was at the founding of Rome created a culture and society founded on disconnection, and disaffection. According to historian, literary critic and philosopher René Girard, in his examination of collective murder in the book *The Scapegoat*, he effectively describes the myth of Remus' death by his brother Romulus' hand was due to his mocking the symbolic boundaries of the city:

**“Romulus alone is the murderer. Ask any of your cultured friends and they will tell you that this is**



**so. Romulus kills his brother in a moment of anger because that brother mockingly leaped over the symbolic boundaries of the city of Rome which Romulus had just finished tracing.**<sup>433</sup>

As civility is synonymous with fracture, the polis is an attempt to heal the rift inherent in its foundation. It is in the taking of risks necessary to overcome this through both the city's architecture, and the connection made available in its dark interstices, that its inhabitants begin to do so. Yet while the city somehow promises unity, it remains the locus of alienation, a paradox rendering the city magical. This condition is perhaps even truer for the queer outsider. The act of 'cruising' is a way queers in the modern city can begin to locate themselves by identifying one another, relating and connecting with otherwise anonymous, hitherto invisible, people. Much of the discourse on cruising has focused on the modern city. The unique position of Rome is that it is simultaneously both ancient and modern, and it is therefore interesting to consider the ways in which people have occupied public space in both the ancient and modern times.

**"THE QUEEREST SPACE OF ALL IS THE VOID"**<sup>36</sup>

At one time in modern Rome, in the darkness and the even darker shadows cast by the columns of the Temple of Saturn and what remains of the House of the Vestals, a new kind of life was given to an otherwise desolate site – a void. The word "forum" is derived from the Latin word - meaning hole. That the name of the centre of the roman state, and the city of Rome itself carries with it the connotation of the void, emptiness and the negativity of space is central to the conceptual character of the Forum as a queer space. Not only is the Forum a void in the topography of the city – but is also a void in that its comprised of

what is essentially 'disused and abandoned' architecture. Cruising finds the voids in the city and fills it with life. And so the transformative nature of cruising also lies in its power to create a space of momentary sensuality within this void via the sexual act – liberating the vacant city from itself to a sensual world of desire, gesture and encounter.

It is interesting that the very centre of the city – the site of its founding really – is the very place in the city where this sub cultural appropriation of space for sexual purposes has thrived. But for what was once –and still is in a certain way - the most public of urban spaces, the Forum is the perfect cruising ground at night. The space of cruising has a certain amount of rather distinguishing qualities that it shares with the Forum. The ruins of 'unused and abandoned' buildings at night

themselves form a labyrinth which provide a number of obstructions to interruption and detection. This labyrinth of space also allows for aimless wandering where the exchange of a gaze and gestures between individuals can occur. The spaces created by the ruins either unfold to reveal what is otherwise hidden – or form a division between the self and what is desired, only to allow for connection when the time is right. The Forum as a cruising ground mirrors the public spaces of the city. The choreographed gestures and movements of the bodies within this situation form a perverse parallel to both the city outside this world, as well as the Forum of ancient Rome – tracing the forgotten contours of the city through cruising<sup>36</sup>. It is easy then to imagine the many individuals who once claimed this space as their own night after night – blurring and distorting the notions of the public self and the private act seeking connection in an otherwise alienating position – as being truly transformative in their actions.

**ANCIENT ROME AS A MODERN CITY  
FROM IDLER TO *FLANEUR* TO CRUISER**

The queer cruiser of modern Rome finds its foil in the idler of ancient Rome. In this sense, the cruiser is like a queered version of the idler, inhabiting a parallel situation to that of his ancient alter-ego, a city that has dissolved with time so that it offers only traces and suggestions of its former self. Both are individuals who are drawn to the essential character of the forum as an agora, and a place of exchange. Thus the idler lends a certain quality of modernity to the ancient Forum as architect and writer Aldo Rossi in one of the seminal postmodern texts *The Architecture of the City*: “People passed by without having

any specific purpose, without doing anything; it was like the modern city, where the man in the crowd, the idler, participates in the mechanism of the city without knowing it...The Roman Forum thus was an urban artifact of extraordinary modernity. In it was everything that is inexpressible in the modern city.”<sup>37</sup> [Fig. 43] Yet, whereas the idler has seemingly no particular intentions beyond the absorption of the world around him, like the *flâneur*, the cruiser invests his nocturnal walkabout with, at least, the many levels of “fantasy that exist in the idea of the possible, the potential, but the wholly unrealized encounter.”<sup>38</sup>

That the cruiser seems to have occupied the territory of the forum in way similar to his ancient counterpart, demonstrates that the intrinsic character of a place and its architecture can draw people to a site

for certain purposes over an expanse of time. Despite changes made to the Forum by various Emperors and even after the fall of the Roman Empire, the Forum had never lost this essential character as the centre of Rome – becoming instead a “specific artifact . . . a part that epitomized the whole”<sup>39</sup>.

**“*Genius loci* is a Roman concept. According to ancient Roman belief every “independent” being has its genius, its guardian spirit. This spirit gives life to people and places, accompanies them from birth to death, and determines their character or essence. Even the gods had their genius, a fact which illustrates the fundamental nature of the concept. The genius thus denotes what a thing is, or what it “wants to be,” to use a word of Louis Kahn. <sup>40</sup>**

Rossi, who describes *locus* as a “relationship between a certain specific location and the buildings that are in it[,] at once singular and universal,”<sup>41</sup> asks, “What tied the idler to the Forum, why did he intimately participate in this world, why did he become identified in the city through the city itself?” <sup>42</sup>It is this mystery that allows for the romantic idea that there is something intrinsic in the site that holds us, and those who populate it must somehow make right what had initially alienated the whole of a society. This description of Rome provides an archetypal reading of urbanity and its public space as sites with intrinsic characteristics that inform both the character and spirit of the place. This concept of *genius loci* further relates to alchemy and the main concern of the thesis in that both are concerned with spirit, which denotes character in both people and sites. This aspect of the ancient city’s archetypal and mythological characteristics which we find in its foundation myth as well as the way in which its inhabitants occupy its various landscapes provides a deeper understanding of the mystical implications of our place in our homes, communities and in the universe.



## **A N E C D O T E**

Shortly after returning to New York after graduation, I had the pleasure of spending time with a friend and his former professor, Gary Brown from UC Santa Barbara. Gary had grown up in Santa Barbara and was once best friends of Lance Loud while he was on *An American Family*, the 1973 PBS documentary that is credited as being the first reality TV program as well as featuring the first openly gay character on television. Lance eventually moved to New York where he befriended Andy Warhol, performed in a punk band *The Mumps* who were popular with the *Max's/CBGB* circuit. Gary told me the story of finding a rare coin with the image of Antinous of Eleusis, the beautiful young lover of the Roman Emperor Hadrian, whose drowning in the Nile is reminiscent of the Myth of Narcissus. (It is not known whether his death was the result of accident, suicide, murder, or religious sacrifice.) These coins are among the most sought after items by gay collectors, Gary told me, and knowing this, he had the ring melted down and made into a ring for Lance. Lance, being a free spirited kind of person, lost the ring. What is most interesting to me is the connections that bound these queer figures and the transmutation of the gold coin into a ring.

PART IV

NEW YORK CITY



CITY of orgies, walks and JOYS !

City whom that I have lived and sung in your midst  
will one day make you illustrious,

Not the pageants of you—not your shifting tableaux,  
your spectacles, repay me;

Not the interminable rows of your houses—nor the  
ships at the wharves,

Nor the processions in the streets, nor the bright  
windows, with goods in them;

Nor to converse with learn'd persons, or bear my  
share in the soiree or feast;

Not those—but, as I pass, O Manhattan! your  
frequent and swift flash of eyes offering me love,

Offering response to my own—these repay me;

Lovers, continual lovers, only repay me.

Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass*

Cities are capable of expressing their psychology and character in their planning, layout, architecture and urban spaces but what ultimately gives cities their character is the way their inhabitants occupy those spaces. Drift is inherently a part of New York's 'psychic' structure, effectively 'cutting through' the 'straight' rational 'matrix' of Capitalist desire and land speculation

while at the same time bound to it. The layout of Manhattan's streets is dominated by a grid of numbered, one-way streets. Below 14th Street – the psychological threshold between 'bourgeois' uptown and 'bohemian' downtown (the site of the mythologized era of the hedonistic late 1970s early 1980s downtown new wave, punk art scene) and especially south of Houston, a mish mash of patterns make up blocks of a fragmented nature in which one is allowed to lose themselves within a labyrinthine-like 'underworld' full of desires. Here and all along Broadway the triangular square develops as a type born from this snaking, frenzied street. This world below Fourteenth street and now areas of Brooklyn and Queens is occupied mostly by downtown bohemians and artists, a world that has more recently been depicted in the work of photographers such as Ryan McGinley [Fig. 44] and Paul Mpagi-Sepuya [Fig. 45] who have come to prominence in post IX XI New York, and are noted for forming close-knit relationships with their subjects. Sepuya's personalized portraits of his young male friends as well as the 'landscape' photographs [Fig. 46] of his bed (which recall the untitled billboard pieces by Felix Gonzales-Torres) [Fig. 47] and provide an interesting counter-image to the harsher realities of urban life – demonstrating both the warmth with which he holds his subjects and the expression of a community that reads through his art.

The city has always been central to modern queer life and culture, offering freedom and anonymity while providing the liberating possibility for building non-conventional communities outside the ties of family and family-based morality. It is through a sophisticated network of routes, codes, and signals that gay men began to occupy the streets and public spaces in a covert way,

claiming a space for themselves in the face of oppressive laws and ‘informal practices designed to exclude them from urban space altogether’. By mapping these spaces of male desire across an urban landscape of streets and parks, sex clubs and theatres [Fig. 48] piers, [Fig. 49] bathrooms, [Fig. 50] bars, [Fig. 51] abandoned warehouses,

[Fig. 52] backrooms, buddy booths, [Fig. 53] rooftops, [Fig. 54] and alleyways, [Fig. 55] and the ways in which gay men have annexed, inhabited, appropriated and recoded these public domains, the emergence of a gay social identity becomes clear. It is by ‘queering’<sup>1</sup> and transforming these parts of the city that a community, and a city, are born. In examining these landscapes within New York City – the rambles of Central Park as an idyllic cruising paradise, Times Square and the streets of the city as a sexually charged public space of commodity and exchange, the meat packing district as the fetishizing and appropriation of a post-industrial landscape as a theatre of sexual acts, and finally Ground Zero as the ultimate ‘void’ – that the reciprocal relationship of both construction and transformation that exists between a particular culture and its landscape emerges. (In this discussion on New York a series of images are centered on the void of Ground Zero [Fig. 56] as its ‘queerness’ as a site is compared to other ‘queer spaces’ such as the arcades, [Fig. 57] the Roman Forum, [Fig. 58] the Satyric Scene by Sebastiano Serlio, [Fig. 59] the rambles of Central Park, [Fig. 60] the allegorical Tower of Babel, [Fig. 61] contemporary artist Terence Koh’s untitled installation at the Whitney Museum, [Fig. 62] the flash of Warhol’s Polaroid captured in his self-portrait, [Fig. 63] and The Mall in Washington D.C. [Fig. 64]. This relationship between these images is seen in the psychogeography attached, as well as the series of overlaid images on vellum in the plates section.)

CENTRAL PARK: QUEERING  
OLMSTEAD & HIS  
‘WOODLAND FOR STROLLING’

As places where men gathered regularly to meet friends and to cruise for potential sex partners, the city's numerous parks and squares were among the most popular – and secure – of New York's gay meeting places. Since the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century

Central Park [Fig. 65] was well known within gay circles as a social centre and cruising ground, due largely to its location, the vast stretches of unsupervised, wooded land, and its high volume of visitors.<sup>2</sup> Central Park was conceived during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century as a massive public work in order to alleviate the ills of urban life in an increasingly dense city of overcrowded, unhealthy working class neighbourhoods; a place for social transformation that “would act as a civilizing force in society.”<sup>3</sup> It is born of the notion that the city itself is immoral, and antagonistic to a humane way of living, as well as from the perception of nature as sacred in that it is the only true way to direct us to proper moral acts. The park and other public squares of the city offered all citizens respite from the tumult of city life, a place where people could wander aimlessly and enjoy nature: providing a useful cover for men wandering in search of others.

These men who have gathered here for over a century, have in effect ‘queered’ the sacred realm of this idealized, social project, transforming it into a place of assignation that is conceivably the direct opposite of its original, moralistic intentions. During certain periods, particular areas of the park have been known as specific meeting places for queer men as writer George Chauncey describes: “next to the Belvedere Castle, on the west lawn near 63<sup>rd</sup> street, and in other secluded spots, [Fig. 66] according to trial records, and by the 1910s the benches at the southwest corner of the park at Columbus Circle...had become a pick up site. In the 1920s so many men met on the open lawn at the north end of the Ramble that they nicknamed it the Fruited Plain.”<sup>4</sup> But none of these sites have been as infamous and prevalent as the Rambles: “an intricately designed woodland for strolling”<sup>5</sup> At night,

and especially on summer nights, these thirty-eight acres of wilderness north of the Lake, who's unpredictable, interlaced paths, with countless trees, shrubs, meadows,



hills and rock outcroppings have formed an incredible landscape for the realization of the transformative acts of cruising and sex. Interestingly, it is the very design elements (secluded woodlands, hidden coves, paths that curve and dip from sight, and flowering shrubs)<sup>6</sup> used by Olmstead and Veux in the realization of the Rambles as a ‘wild garden’, calling to mind Hieronymus Bosch’s triptych painting *The Garden of Earthly Delights*, [Fig. 67] offering refuge from the city, that allow for the subversion, and perversion of the idyllic public realm since they make the park hard to protect and patrol. The element of danger inherent in outdoor cruising was central to the thrill of the act since gay men not only faced police entrapment, but also the threat of violent, homophobic attacks and muggings. It is through the transformative methods of inhabitation and appropriation of this landscape that these men have helped in re-creating, shaping and associating a ‘medieval’ perception of the wilderness as evil and dangerous, with what is an really an artificial, manipulated and constructed wilderness.

“Parks are Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hydes in ecological form. There, in the daytime, you see children, the elderly and young mothers with infants. At night, they are haunted by shadowy silhouettes drawing together and moving apart like moths engaged in a strange ballet. Sometimes the silhouettes merge in ephemeral couplings screened by a bush, from which a soft moan rises into the coolness of night.”<sup>7</sup>

It is this relationship between the pre-existing conditions of the city and its spaces, and the sub-cultural claiming of them that a new understanding of the unconventional methods queer men have used in the forging of a social identity within a particular landscape: challenging traditional modes and ideas of how cultural landscapes are created, constructed and inhabited. [Fig. 68]

TIMES SQUARE & THE STREET  
PUBLIC SPACE OF COMMODITY

& EXCHANGE

Looking down 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue from Central Park, one can view the lights and energy of Times Square, at the intersection of Broadway and 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Times Square, and the streets of New York in general, have always been a space of commodity and exchange and in these spaces that sex becomes just one other thing for sale, whether in the products and movies sold in the sex stores and cinemas, or the body of young hustlers and prostitutes sold on the street. The story of the ‘Disneyfication’ of Times Square is, by now, a famous one.

This regeneration has been heralded by some (mostly politicians, tourists and middle class families) as a triumph over turpitude of the 1970s and 80s but for many New Yorkers, the corporatization and privatization of Times Square symbolizes the decline of one of the greatest cities in the world. After being a part of the porn cinema culture for over 30 years, science fiction writer Samuel Delaney views the wiping out of the hustlers, prostitutes, cinemas, sex shops and adult bookstores around Times Square as representing the loss of the complex social relationships that developed there, specifically as a point of contact between people of different classes and races. In his work, *Times Square Red*, *Times Square Blue*, Delaney makes a case for why densely treed parks, public restrooms, and red light districts like Times Square are essential to a city’s physical and psychological landscape:

“Contact is the conversation that starts in the line at the grocery counter with the person behind you. . . . Very importantly, contact is also the intercourse – physical and conversational – that blooms in and as ‘casual’ sex in public restrooms, sex movies, public parks, singles bars, sex clubs on street corners with heavy hustling traffic, and in the adjoining motels or the apartments of one or another participant, from which nonsexual friendships and/or acquaintances

lasting for a decade or a lifetime may spring, not to mention the conversation of a john with a prostitute

or hustler encountered on one or another street corner or in a bar - a relation that, a decade later, has devolved into a smile or a nod, even when (to quote Swinburne) 'You have forgotten my kisses, / And I have forgotten your name'. “<sup>8</sup>

For Delaney, it is the inter-class, inter-race connections made in these public spaces that are a vital form of social contact and intimacy within the neglected space of a city. The queer use of this urban realm gives a specific character to the place, giving it an intrinsic value as a site of encounter and connection within the metropolis. Reciprocally, this landscape has helped to shape the identity of a gay social culture, in particular the romantic image of the outsider, queer and street hustler as artist. It is this reciprocal relationship between the culture and its landscape that is essential to a new understanding of nontraditional ways in which a culture can shape and invent its own mythology within a society that has traditionally sought to ignore them. Whether due to gentrification or the advent of online cruising or police crackdowns, recently a buddie-booth location has gone out of business at 14th Street and 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave – around the corner from another old porn theatre long closed once frequented by East Village artists such as Hujar and Wojnarowicz.

In his extensively researched book, *Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture, and the Making of the Gay Male World 1890-1940* (which relies mostly on records from sodomy trials and criminal arrest records, both of which indicate prevalent cruising areas), author George Chancey intimates the connection between *flânerie* and street cruising in the chapter “Privacy Could Only Be Had in Public: Forging a Gay World in the Streets”.

**“[Just as] the elaborate display windows that department stores began installing in the late**

nineteenth century quickly became the locus of one

of the few acceptable street cultures for middle-class women, who could stroll down the street looking at them and conversing with other browsers, “their loitering in public space,” as [historian Susan Porter] Benson notes, “legitimized by its association with consumption.” As men, gay men had less need to justify their presence on the streets, but they took advantage of the same legitimizing conventions. One man who had indicated his interest in meeting another might stop before a window and gaze at the display; the second could then join him at the window without attracting undue attention and strike up a conversation in which they could determine whether they wanted to spend more time together.”<sup>9</sup>

This experience of reflective gazing at one’s object of desire through the looking glass of the shop window exposes the connection between *flânerie*, narcissism, commodity fetishism and transparency. As Anthony Vidler explains in *Warped Space: Art, Anxiety and Modern Culture*:

“The ideology of transparency, the battle cry of modernism, was, as Benjamin recognized, the agent of a spatial dissolution to which only the *flâneur* was privy: the sensation of the entirely new, of the absolutely modern, is a form of becoming as oneiric as the eternal return itself. The perception of space that corresponds to this conception of time is the transparency of the world of the *flâneur*.”<sup>10</sup>

Diane Chisholm further expands on the method of street walking, *flânerie*, and its quasi-religious and mythological aspects in her academic survey of subcultural space, *Queer Constellations: Subcultural Space in the Wake of the City*:

“In the footsteps of the surrealists, Benjamin walks the streets of 1920s Paris, fascinated by the ruins of just a century ago. Unlike the surrealists, he focuses on the historical nature of commodity space, its built in obsolescence and accelerated decay, its devastating construction, innovation and expansion. For Benjamin, the dilapidation, or demolition and grandiose renovation, of the arcades signifies the betrayal of industrial utopia. . . .

Benjamin uses Baudelaire’s allegory as antidote to Aragon’s intoxicating impressionism and modernist mythology. The dissolution of mythology into the space of history entails a radical epistemology.





Allegory is its primary weapon. Allegory destroys the façade of totality, homogeneity, universality, eternity: all faces of myth. Where myth symbolizes transcendence, allegory signals immanence, materiality, and destructibility – in short ruin. Myth is the medium of religious illumination, allegory of profane illusion. In the latter is revealed not the divinity of things but the fallenness of all creation. Allegorical vision is devastatingly sober . . . Myths wherein the city is cast as a monument to enlightenment are not seriously challenged by surrealism's countermyths wherein it figures as labyrinth of the unconscious. Nor can the pretentiousness of bourgeois romanticism be subverted by the narcotic flâneries of amour fou. Revolutionary impulses are diffused, not detonated, in myth – whether those of capitalism or surrealism. They must be liberated from phantasmagoria to complete the work of history and retrieve the city for the people. Allegory serves the revolution by acting as anti-myth.”<sup>11</sup>

The physical and psychological landscape of this bygone New York is captured with devastating effect in the artist David Wojnarowicz's series, *Rimbaud in New York 1978-79*. [Fig. 69] During these years Wojnarowicz “took a series of photographs of a man wearing a paper mask bearing the visage of Arthur Rimbaud, the French poet equally known for his fervid verse and his dramatic life . . . for Rimbaud was the instantiation, and perhaps the inventor, of the idea of the young gay hustler of genius.”<sup>12</sup> Wojnarowicz's world represents a very specific moment in the history of New York City, a brief period of both innocence and raunch. It is the city after the Stonewall uprising but before the onslaught of AIDS: a wonderland of sex and drugs, of art and love, material poverty and overwhelming emotional richness. The figure in the photographs appears in various situations of public and semi-private urban life, representing an extreme condition of this way of occupying the streets and other parts of the city where the urban fabric has begun to fall apart.

## THE MEAT-PACKING DISTRICT



THE POST INDUSTRIAL LANDSCAPE  
AS A THEATRE OF PLEASURE

One such part of the city in the 1970s was the Meat Packing District [Fig. 70] an area anchoring the northwest corner of Greenwich Village (home to many bohemians, artists and queer people since the beginning of the century and the birth place of the modern gay rights movement) from West 14<sup>th</sup> Street on the north to Ganesvoort Street to the South. The neighborhood “consists of a dozen city blocks that have functioned as a wholesale market for more than 150 years. Buildings, awnings and streetscapes from its entire life span still exist...creat[ing] a powerful sense of place—a gritty, working neighborhood.”<sup>14</sup> At the time the area was largely deserted at night with the processing plants shuttered, scraps of meat and fat laying on greasy streets and sharp hooks swaying empty on tracks used during the day to transport carcasses from trucks into the shops for disassembly. Burning trash cans, industrial buildings and the shadow of the abandoned highline all added to the sense of adventure and potential violence.<sup>15</sup>

This element of danger has all but disappeared from this post-industrial landscape with the ever-increasing gentrification of these few city blocks. High fashion boutiques, restaurants, lounges, and expensive lofts now occupy spaces which were once home to theatres of extreme sexual exploration that took the form of sadomasochism and leather-sex that represented “the most extreme expansion from traditional American sexual behavior...”<sup>16</sup> S/M sex clubs [Fig. 71] once epitomized this sexual frontier, [Fig. 72] operated within close proximity to the west side piers and trucks parked on the West Side Highway; which while they were abandoned during the night,



became well known sites of assignation for gay men, helping to shape the mythology of these sites through the reclaiming and “appropriation of the buildings and codes of the city for perverse purposes”<sup>17</sup>. It was here that a subculture was formed, allowing participants to act out rituals while being observed by fellow participants:

**“The clubs used the conceptual apparatus of the theatre and spectacle in order to form space and facilitate activity...With self sustaining and self defined codes, posture and clothing, men acted by themselves or with the crowd. By playing with their appearance, they changed self perception and stretched their limits”<sup>18</sup>**

Locations along the West Side Highway such as the ruins of disused piers, documented throughout the height of the gay cruising years 1975-1986 by photographer Alvin Baltrop, [Fig. 73 a, b, c, d] [Fig. 74] abandoned warehouses, spaces between parked transport trucks, as well as the basements of certain buildings provided queer men with a vast landscape of spaces which they could appropriate for sexual liaisons, particularly during the late 1970s which have provided recent generations of queers with ample material for both nostalgic reflection and artistic material for cultural and artistic production that effectively demonstrates the relationship between landscape, culture and identity. This S/M underworld and its denizens has been famously documented by photographer Robert Mapplethorpe [Fig. 75] whose work continued to draw controversy after his death from AIDS related illness in 1989. The bond between these marginalized spaces of the city and a once marginalized people is evident in the act of appropriation:

**“Appropriated space” is a key term of historiographical interventions. It not only opposes the dominant view of urban renewal but also exposes the technology and bureaucracy of dominated space with a battery of oppositional practices...**



Revolutionary appropriation combines spatial and sexual appropriative activity. 'Any revolutionary 'project' today must,' [Henri] Lefebvre asserts, 'make the reappropriation of the body, in association with the reappropriation of space, into a non-negotiable part of its agenda.' Sexual appropriation finds space for pleasure, separated from the goals and institutions of heterosexual reproduction."<sup>19</sup>

As an explorer of the urban terrain, the sexual *flâneur* has the capability and opportunity during his leisurely drifts of finding those spaces within the city that are no longer of use to the wider public, and hence lend themselves easily to appropriation. Chisholm explains the influence of this technique in the collages of Wojnarowicz:

**"Looking back on this technique that was central to his survival as a queer/artist, Wojnarowicz testifies that 'all my life I've made things that are like fragmented mirrors of what I perceive to be the world.' Close to the Knives demonstrates this cut-up technique, underlining the installation of mimesis and collage to subvert mass media's dominated space. Using material from national headlines and corporate television, together with remnants of queer existence excised from public view, it illustrates how identity is constructed inside the commodity as a transformative production – a production that uses the contradictory strategies of what Gluck means by "autobiography": "the self as collaboration, the self as disintegration.**

**"Wojnarowicz's city in Close to the Knives incorporates past strategies of flânerie in which the city's refuse enter his collage as agents of insurgency. This is the maligned queer populace, who are either doomed or dead, victims of epidemiological conspiracy – the trash of recent American history. It is their collective memory that Wojnarowicz writes into remembrance. "<sup>20</sup>**

Another artist who used the west side piers as a site for art was Gordon Matta-Clark, whose 'anarchitectural' 'Day's End' [Fig. 76] on pier 52 provided him with the persona of an outlaw artist. In the completion of the work which consisted of removing parts of the floor and outer wall, the territorial aspect of the piers became





an issue between the fugitive artist and the gay cruisers who normally inhabited the disused space. As is recalled in his essay, Thomas Crown describes the nature of this contest:

**“The waterfront was probably never anything but tough and dangerous [he continued] but now with this long slow transition period has become a veritable muggers’ playground, both for people who go only to enjoy walking there and for a recently popularized sado-masochistic fringe. Since most or all the terminals that are not still in use are standing wide open without no-trespassing signs or public warnings of any kind so that it would seem a state of city condoned anarchy reigns there. If in the midst of this state of affairs it would seem within the rights of an artist or any other person for that matter to enter such a premises with a desire to improve the property, to transform the structure in the midst of its ugly criminal state into a place of interest, fascination and value.**

To the police, he presented himself as something of a benefactor to the sexual cruisers - though - it is doubtful how many of them really wanted great floods of light admitted to the space, not to mention hazardous chasms gaping in the floor. To Becker, he casually acknowledged (in a way that would find little favor in artistic circles today) his being in competition for the space with “the teaming [sic] S & M renaissance that cruises the abandoned waterfront.” To some friends in Texas, he described his temporary conquest in even more jocularly combative terms: “I simply appropriated the pier by keeping my crew of henchmen boarding and barb-wiring up all the alternative entrances except for the front door in which I substituted my own lock and bold.” He was also highly conscious of the theatrical potential that lay in the enterprise....”<sup>21</sup>

Soon after starting work in New York, I decided to walk up Hudson from the office at West Broadway and Murray until I found myself among the cobblestone streets of the Meat Packing District. Although it had become a kind of case study for post-Giuliani NY, the spirit of the place still



held a certain fierceness in the architectural and infrastructural remnants of its past, the injection of high style, and the trannie-hookers who still worked its streets. This is the New York I met my first term here—chic & glamorous and still a bit raw, but lacking the real elegance of Peter Hujar’s shots of these same streets at night, [Fig. 77] or of the spaces that sheltered the blank expression of the child poet whose gaze one meets in David Wojnarowicz’s series *Rimbaud in New York*—images offering visions of art & sex among the ruins of a Capitalist Pompeii.

But which of these new, elegantly detailed, pivoting glass doors have replaced the shadowy thresholds of Hujar’s photographs? Blank doorways that once hid stairways descending into what’s best been described as the 9th circle.<sup>22</sup> Places with names like *The Ramrod*, *The Mineshaft* & *The Anvil* [Fig. 78] —at once dark & powerful enough to draw the likes of Andy Warhol, Victor Hugo, & Bianca Jagger, who (in a dark foil to her fabled entrance on a white horse for the opening of *Studio 54*) dressed as a man to gain entrance in order to appease the equally strict door policy.

And inside, behind these dark, blank facades? Other men, writhing to the dark, electric disco beat beneath synchronized flashes of light. The temperature and the smell of these men, pot, and amyl lingering—just enough to get you high by the time you reached the bottom of the stairs. [Fig. 79] Glimpses of patterned hankies in ass pockets [Fig. 80] signaled what these men were after. These were spaces that epitomize the sexual frontier, forming themselves within proximity to the west side piers and the trucks parked on the West Side Highway. Here, at the margins of the city a sub-culture was forged in these



asylums – where the decayed, decidedly non-architecture of its setting represented everything, yet had the ability to fall away in an instance. [Fig. 81] Where, through the complete construction of a new identity through their own means and artifice, and the appropriation of urban space for means of sexual shelter, these men were able to create a shift in self- perception, while simultaneously expanding the limits of a culture.

This is an interpretation of the city as a landscape of sexual spaces: spaces of desire, spectacle, consumption, dance, and obscenity. [Fig. 82] The sexual activities that went on in these hollowed out, cavernous, industrial piers, trucks and warehouses sought to expand ideas of human connection, sexuality and urban inhabitation. The transformative nature of cruising and public sex lies in its power to create a space of momentary sensuality within the voids of the city via the sexual act – liberating the vacant city from itself into a sensual world of desire, gesture and encounter. It is this ability to transform the otherwise mundane, urban landscape through the sub-cultural claiming of its public spaces where the fascinating and evocative relationship between history, humanity, culture and landscape converges. What queer people have done in these three distinct sites, as well as many throughout this and other cities and rural areas, has been to challenge, or ‘queer’, traditional ideas about intention and design in the forming, construction and inhabitation of the landscape in whatever form it takes. What is demonstrated here is how a culture is able to reclaim, misuse, appropriate and pervert both urban public spaces,



and the abandoned portions of the city in order to form an artistic expression of a cultural identity. It is this expression that I see as being imbued, ultimately, with an alchemical nature in that these disused and broken-down spaces of the city are thereby transformed by not only those who inhabit these spaces in various ways, but also in the particular way these spaces are appropriated for sexual purposes. The idea that this lends a sense of a mythologized identity to queer culture is evident in the cultural and artistic production in which these landscapes are depicted which has had significant influence on my own sensibility.

## G R O U N D     Z E R O

The progression from the subject of mythological, sexualized spaces of ‘otherness’ in the city to the site of the destruction of the World Trade Center [Fig. 83] may seem like a stretch of the imagination, but I feel the sacredness of the landscapes tie them together on a number of levels. What I am interested in are some of the aspects that relate Ground Zero to the queer subject matter of the thesis, particularly the mythological, magical and ‘poetic’ aspects. Concluding the thesis on IX XI puts forth the idea that the events of that day, and their aftermath, forced the wider population into the position of the ‘other’ by subjecting them to the void left from the tower’s destruction.

The site of Ground Zero is viewed as another landscape within the larger whole





of New York, a desolate void. While I was living in New York, one year after the attacks, there was a resurgence of ‘underground’ sex parties, which I would argue was a direct hedonistic reaction to the events. The Dionysian expression found in these parties mirrors that of the events themselves. In his Jungian study of queer male relationships *The Secret Lore of Gardening: Patterns of Male Intimacy*, Graham Jackson describes the trend in recent analytical psychology to associate homosexual phenomena with expressions of Dionysus and gives a warning of the mad embrace of Dionysian forces and the consequences of, for lack of a better word, commodified sexual experiences.

**“That movement, understandable enough in light of decades of puritanical repression, was as abusive and exploitative of the green power as what preceded it, only in a different way. Dionysian erotic madness was after all a sacred affair; glinting behind orgies in bathhouses and back-room bars was only the gold toothed leer of that old god, Capital – soul was sold for instant gratification.”<sup>24</sup>**

This Dionysian aspect of city myths is contained within the poem “Howl” by beat poet and counter-cultural spiritual leader Allen Ginsberg. As writer of the social aspect and design of cities Richard Sennett, in his book *The Conscience of the Eye* describes the poem’s Dionysian expression in terms of Nietzsche’s reading of the Apollonian and Dionysian in *The Birth of Tragedy*:

**“In the famous essay he wrote as a young man, *The Birth of Tragedy*, Friedrich Nietzsche drew a distinction between Apollo and Dionysus as gods presiding over contrary forms of nature. Dionysus presided over a community of people sharing**



disruption, releasing themselves by drinking, making love, and fighting. Apollo presided over a calmer, more formal, and more balanced life. The arts of exposure and displacement might seem Dionysian expressions. But I believe they might instead serve the ends of a more balanced, Apollonian life.

Allen Ginsburg's poem "Howl" might be the voice of Dionysus in modern New York, as Nietzsche heard him. It is a poem of frenzied erotic bonding and ritual among strangers in the slums and shadows of the city:

I saw the best minds of my generation destroyed by  
madness, starving hysterical naked,  
dragging themselves through the negro streets at  
dawn looking for an angry fix,  
angelheaded hipsters burning for the ancient  
heavenly connection to the starry dynamo in the  
machinery of night, who poverty and tatters and  
hollow-eyed and high sat up smoking in the  
supernatural darkness of cold-water flats floating  
across the tops of cities contemplating jazz,  
who bared their brains to Heaven under the El and  
saw Mohammedan angels staggering on tenement  
roofs illuminated, who passed through universities  
with radiant cool eyes hallucinating Arkansas and  
Blake-light tragedy among the scholars of war,  
who were expelled from the academies for crazy &  
publishing obscene odes on the windows of the  
skull, who cowered in unshaven rooms in  
underwear, burning their money in wastebaskets



and listening to the Terror through the walls  
who got busted in their pubic beards returning  
through Laredo with a belt of marijuana for New  
York, who ate fire in paint hotels or drank  
turpentine in Paradise Alley, death, or purgatoried  
their torsos night after night  
with dreams, with drugs, with waking nightmares,  
alcohol and cock and endless balls,

... ..

who bit detectives in the neck and shrieked with  
delight in policecars for committing no crime but  
their own wild cooking pederasty and intoxication,  
who howled on their knees in the subway and were  
dragged off the roof waving genitals and  
manuscripts,

Nietzsche imagined wild release, however, as no permanent way of life. The exhausted celebrants end, like the ancient silenus, heavy and disgusted with life...The first third of "Howl" is a proclamation of the Dionysiac City; the acolytes declare their free souls are dangerous, but never that, in freedom, they are in danger. Even when arrested, they keep it up. In the second part of "Howl" the poet promises his electro-numbed friend to set him free, but the poet can release him only in dreams.

It was in exhaustion Nietzsche believed the knowledge of tragedy to begin; men and women at last empty of desire could look around themselves clear sighted. Though in later years Nietzsche renounced much of the youthful exaggeration in *The Birth of Tragedy*, he never gave up the idea that the revelation of



tragic limits comes as a result of the shared, terrible experience of going wild. Those who have passed through the rite wanted nothing more – and so they could see. This is Dionysiac exposure. “Howl” ends with weakened, exhausted celebrants submitting to the controlling hands of authorities who don’t drink or smoke themselves.

Nietzsche thought that civilization masks such tragic knowledge. The masks shows the visage of a calm god, perfectly formed, untroubled, the image of Apollo. Echoing the attacks on civilized masks and the equilibrium of politeness made in the eighteenth century, Nietzsche believed this deity presides over a beautiful illusion. Nietzsche took his image of Apollo from a famous line in Schopenhauer: ‘Just as in a stormy sea that, unbounded in all directions, raises and drops mountainous waves, howling, a sailor sits in a boat and trusts in his frail bark, so in midst of a world of torments the individual human being sits quietly.’ Apollonian calm and order derive, Nietzsche thought, from that self-sufficiency. Nietzsche suspected the human capacity to create whole, harmonious form; it was more superficial than of the experience of exposure, which was fraught by catastrophe like that recounted in “Howl.”

By contrast, the composer Igor Stravinsky celebrated the human being as a maker of form. In his view, the conflict between Dionysus and Apollo represents the ‘eternal conflict in art between the Apollonian and the Dionysian Principles. The latter assumes ecstasy to be the final goal – that is to say, the losing of oneself – whereas art demands above all the full consciousness of the artist’ “<sup>25</sup>

As Duchamp elucidates: “To all appearances,





**the artist acts like a mediumistic being who, from the labyrinth beyond time and space, seeks his way out to a clearing. “ 26**

This ‘Dionysian expression’ of the labyrinthine nature of this experience of the urban underground has informed a sculptural exploration of form meant to draw on this cultural reference as well as speak to issues such as those described above, but also to the idea that the art and architecture worlds act essentially as a ‘cult of desire’. This sculptural object is intended as an experimental exercise in creating a hyper-stylized, flesh-like, protean surface [Fig. 84]. Inspired also by 3d prototyping [Fig. 85], the World Trade Center façade [Fig. 86], fungi [Fig. 87], the ruin associated with madness, eccentricity and the ‘Uncanny’, as in the film *Grey Gardens* [Fig. 88], anatomical drawings such as *Gray’s Anatomy*, [Fig. 89] and again, Francis Bacon [Fig. 90]. The Dionysian reference is evident but also draws on my reading of architecture and cultural critics Sanford Kwinter, Friedrich Nietzsche, Rene Girard, Tom Breidenbach, Camille Paglia and Terry Eagleton. Cultural critic and professor of cultural studies Terry Eagleton gives further insight into mythological interpretations of Dionysus in his book *Holy Terror*:

**“Dionysus is the god of wine, song, ecstasy, theatre, fertility, excess, and inspiration, qualities which most of us are likely to find more endearing than estranging. Most of us would prefer a spree with Dionysus**



to a seminar with Apollo. Protean, playful, diffuse, erotic, deviant, hedonistic, transgressive, sexually ambiguous, marginal, and anti-linear, this Bacchic divinity could almost be a postmodern invention. Yet he is also an unbearable horror, and for much the same reasons. If he is the god of wine, milk, and honey, he is also the god of blood. Like an excess of alcohol, he warms the blood to chilling effect. He is brutal, rapacious, and monolithically hostile to difference - and all this quite inseparably from his more alluring aspects. . . . What makes for bliss also makes for butchery. To dissolve the ego ecstatically into Nature, as Dionysus does, is to fall prey to an atrocious violence. If there can be no unflawed happiness with the ego, neither can there be without it . . . . Dionysus himself is a shameless populist whose appeals to custom and instinct are among other things a smack at the impiousness of intellectual critique.

If Dionysus has all the fathomless vitality of the unconscious, then, he also has its implacable malevolence and aggression. He is the god of what Slavoj Žižek, after Jacques Lacan, has called 'obscene enjoyment' or horrific *jouissance* . . . . The orgy dissolves distinctions between bodies, and thus prefigures the indifferent leveling of death. Indeed, in the terms of Freud's *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* this god of ease and self-gratification represents a pure culture of the death drive - of the merciless imperative which commands us to reap joy from our own dismemberment. Dionysus is the patron saint of life-in-death, a connoisseur of the kind of energy we reap through reckless self-abandonment. The vitality he offers his disciples has the hectic flush of death about it. In his mysterious rites, self-affirmation and self-dissolution are interwoven.

Both kinds of events [the orgy and the terrorist attack] exemplify the abstract logic of modernity. Dio-



**nysus is all about identity, but only in the sense of merging individuals indifferently into one. This god signifies the death of difference.”<sup>27</sup>**

The dismemberment Eagleton writes about carries with it a strong connotation as to the dismembering of the victims of IX XI . As this thesis is an investigation into the connection between cultural identity, consciousness and landscape that is rooted in the experience of the body it is obliging to enter the subject of these events via these thoughts of dismemberment as they relate to architectural theory. Anthony Vidler’s writings *The Architectural Uncanny* and *Warped Space* pre and post IX XI respectively are thus informative here in describing this relationship and provide an interesting meditation on issues of architectural thought regarding the body in the years leading up to the events:

**“...[the] appeal to corporeal metaphors is evidently based on a “body” radically different from that at the center of the humanist tradition. As described in architectural form, it seems to be a body in pieces, fragmented, if not deliberately torn apart and mutilated almost beyond recognition. Further, this “body” is advanced, paradoxically enough, precisely as a sign of a radical departure from classical humanism, a fundamental break from all theories of architecture that pretend to accommodation and domestic harmony. Evoked as referent and as**



generator of an architecture that stands, as Coop Himmelblau has insisted since the late '60s, against "Palladian" humanism and Corbusian modernism alike, this body no longer serves to center, to fix, or to stabilize. Rather, its limits, interior or exterior, seem infinitely ambiguous and extensive; its forms, literal or metaphorical, are no longer confined to the recognizably human but embrace all biological existence from the embryonic to the monstrous; its power lies no longer in the model of unity but in the intimation of the fragmentary, the morselated, the broken."<sup>28</sup>

The notion of Freud's Uncanny as it relates architectural theory that Vidler explores throughout his book is initiated by what he sees as the unsettling qualities of contemporary, avant-garde architecture which mimics fragmented, neo-constructivist forms, and dismembered bodies. The Uncanny is an instance where something can be familiar, yet foreign at the same time, resulting in a feeling of it being uncomfortably strange. The theme of the uncanny as it has been characterized in literature, philosophy, psychology and architecture have been intimately linked since the end of the eighteenth century. As he describes in *Warped Space*:

"At one level, the house has provided a site of





endless representations of haunting, doubling, dismembering, and other terrors in literature and art. At another level, the labyrinthine spaces of the modern city have been construed as the sources of modern anxiety, from revolution and epidemic to phobia and alienation; the genre of the detective novel owes its existence to such fears – ‘the unsolved murder is uncanny,’ wrote the psychoanalyst Theodor Reik...As articulated theoretically by Freud, the uncanny or *unheimlich* is rooted by etymology and usage in the environment of the domestic, or the *heimlich*, thereby opening up problems of identity around the self, the other, the body and its absence: thence its force in interpreting the relations between the psyche and the dwelling, the body and the house, the individual and the metropolis. Linked by Freud to the death drive, to fear of castration, to the impossible desire to return to the womb, the uncanny has been interpreted as a dominant constituent of modern nostalgia, with a corresponding spatiality that touches all aspects of social life.”<sup>29</sup>

Akkerman goes further in explaining the Uncanny’s relation to the ruin and urban decay as necessary aspects of the city’s life cycle. The ruin, the fragment, and the death of architecture (what can be termed ‘anti-architecture’) that has come to represent Ground Zero in the aftermath of the attacks, has also engendered, to some, a ‘romance of the ruin’ due to the



sexual connotation that the ruin holds on account of the appropriation of these types of spaces described throughout this thesis. The sublime nature of the void left by the destruction of these two phallic icons can also be said to be an extreme conclusion to the concept of the void of queer space left behind by the devastations of AIDS, in the sense described by architecture critic Aaron Betsky in the book *Queer Space*:

**“Queer space was a heavily guarded and decorated void. It was this emptiness that defeated queer culture, and AIDS was no more than a reminder of this emptiness: ‘AIDS, it has been discovered, is a plague of absence. Absence opened in the blood. Absence condensed into the fluid of passing emotion. Absence shot through opalescent tugs of semen to deflower the city. . . . The queerest space of all is the void, and AIDS has made us live that emptiness, that absence, that loss. More than any war or epidemic, more than any crime or social in justice, AIDS has revealed the open space at the heart of American society.”**<sup>30</sup>

The connotation of fratricide that the destruction of the twin towers embody, on certain levels, is significant within a



queer psychology making the connection between AIDS and IX XI resonate even more strongly in that AIDS carries with it a strong fratricidal element for gay men. Being gay is often seen as a sort of brotherhood [Fig. 91] with its requisite initiatory rites of passage. What AIDS does (in the case of gay men at least) is engage gay men in an act of fratricide, uniting both Rome and New York mythologically as sites of symbolic and literal sacrifices.

These darker implications of urban, modern life are conveyed throughout the work of many queer artists from the painter Francis Bacon [Fig. 92] to experimental filmmaker Stephen Kent Jusick's short film *Sodom on the Hudson*, [Fig. 93] a super 8 film comprised of footage of the New York skyline in which the World Trade Center [Fig. 94] still dominated, over-laid and spliced with classic imagery of S/M pornography and various ruins, to comprise



an homage to the city. What is striking about the piece is the way in which the super-8 footage is over-laid on top of each other; conveying a sense of the ‘Dionysian’ qualities of both the architecture and the sexual performances through the iconography of the images. The shots of abandoned buildings of the old New York Lunatic Asylum and Smallpox Hospital on Roosevelt Island, a man wearing what appears to be a gas mask, gay S/M sex acts and the twin towers are all somehow appropriate and in my mind somehow each becomes a allegory for the other: the ruins of the buildings foreshadow or allude to the subsequent destruction of the World Trade Center whose remains provide a resonating, unrelenting symbol of our age. What is worthy of note about the ‘symbol’ of the architectural fragment in relation to





IX XI and the phenomena of ‘conspiracy theories’ surrounding it (in this case dust collected 10 minutes after the North tower collapsed) is that these dust fragments have become essential in proving whether or not the collapse of the towers was heavily aided by the use of high tech explosive/incendiary materials – which would effectively refute the ‘official’ government sanctioned story of IX XI.

A recently released peer-reviewed article titled “Active Thermitic Material Discovered in Dust from the 9/11 World Trade Center Catastrophe” published in The Open Chemical Physics Journal outlining the results of analysis of samples that resulted from IX XI found high concentrations of



“highly energetic” / “unreacted thermic materials” [Fig. 95]. The red/gray chips examined in the dust samples found to contain explosive elements that essentially have no business being there and the results of this article resonate deeply within the 9/11 Truth Movement. This ‘spell’ that IX XI has cast over the wider public in order to channel passions into an epochal, never ending ‘war on terror’ as well as numerous expensive and radical changes in domestic and foreign policy (including state sanctioned torture as occurred at Abu Ghraib Prison) [Fig. 96] , effectively paralyzing the citizenry of the country into a condition similar to the circumstances Constantine Cavafy describes in his poem



“Waiting for the Barbarians”:

What are we waiting for, assembled in the public  
forum?

The barbarians are to arrive today.

Why such inaction in the Senate?

Why do the Senators sit and pass no laws?

Because the barbarians are to arrive today.

What further laws can the Senators pass?

When the barbarians come they will make the laws.

Why did our emperor wake up so early,  
and sits at the principal gate of the city,  
on the throne, in state, wearing his crown?

Because the barbarians are to arrive today.

And the emperor waits to receive

their chief. Indeed he has prepared

to give him a scroll. Therein he engraved

many titles and names of honor.

Why have our two consuls and the praetors come  
out

today in their red, embroidered togas;

why do they wear amethyst-studded bracelets,

and rings with brilliant glittering emeralds;

why are they carrying costly canes today,

superbly carved with silver and gold?

Because the barbarians are to arrive today,

and such things dazzle the barbarians.

Why don't the worthy orators come as usual

to make their speeches, to have their say?

Because the barbarians are to arrive today;

and they get bored with eloquence and orations.

Why this sudden unrest and confusion?

(How solemn their faces have become.)

Why are the streets and squares clearing quickly,

And all return to their homes, so deep in thought?

Because night is here but the barbarians have not  
come.

Some people arrived from the frontiers,

And they said that there are no longer any

barbarians.

And now what shall become of us without any  
barbarians?



**Those people were a kind of solution.<sup>31</sup>**

Perhaps the lasting result of the event is that it has cast Americans as the 'other' to the rest of the world, inhabiting a void that is, from certain perspectives, of their own making. As art provides a means of dealing with this trauma, this situation is examined in a series of collages meant to address the themes presented here via artistic expression. [Fig. 97 a, b, c, d] & [Fig. 98 ]

This examination of landscape or *topos*  
- shows how our discovery of self goes





beyond issues of sexual orientation when we as a civilization are forced to confront that which they wish to conceal. In looking at various works of art, architecture, public spaces, and other modes of artistic production as they pertain to these issues, the *flâneur* allows us to interpret these sites as repositories of collective memory vis a vis urban history, artistic and written work, as he charts the unofficial realities that the city offers. The ‘magical’ and sacred qualities these places retain provide us with a deeper understanding of the power



of the urban realm to operate as a place for transcendence and transformation. Encompassing a variety of work by counter-cultural luminaries from Arthur Rimbaud, Andy Warhol, David Wojnarowicz, and Nan Goldin, what emerges is a collection of fragments comprising a cultural iconography that aims to be reminiscent of this experience of the urban unconscious. This *dérive* through the various urban 1 1 0



'landscapes' examines urban history, works of architecture, art and mythology within a romantic, conceptual exploration of ideas concerning the artistic, spiritual and mystical experience of these cities.

From the islands of Montreal and the



void of the Roman Forum, to the various  
landscapes of New York City, the process  
of examining this relationship between  
alchemy, city myths, cultural identity and





landscape provides a reading of numerous environments which the figure of the *flâneur* experiences as a means of understanding that the pursuit of the ideal city is ultimately



seen as an illusive quest for immortality,  
transcendence and transformation.



[ P L A T E S ]

I	01
II	02
III	03
IV	04
V	05
VI	06
VII	07
VIII	08
IX	09
X	10
XI	11
XII	12
XIII	13
XIV	14
XV	15
XVI	16
XVII	17
XVIII	18
XIX	19
XX	20

XXI	21
XXII	22
XXIII	23
XXIV	24
XXV	25
XXVI	26
XXVII	27
XXVIII	28
XXIX	29
XXX	30
XXXI	31
XXXII	32
XXXIII	33
XXXIV	34
XXXV	35
XXXVI	36
XXXVII	37
XXXVIII	38
XXXIX	39
XL	40

XLI	41
XLII	42
XLIII	43
XLIV	44
XLV	45
XLVI	46
XLVII	47
XLVIII	48
XLIX	49
XLX	50
XLXI	51
XLXII	52
XLXIII	53
XLXIV	54
XLXV	55
XLXVI	56
XLXVII	57
XLXVIII	58
XLXIX	59
LX	60

LXI	61
LXII	62
LXIII	63
LXIV	64
LXV	65
LXVI	66
LXVII	67
LXVIII	68
LXIX	69
LXX	70
LXXI	71
LXXII	72
LXXIII	73
LXXIV	74
LXXV	75
LXXVI	76
LXXVII	77
LXXVIII	78
LXXIX	79
LXXX	80

LXXXI	81
LXXXII	82
LXXXIII	83
LXXXIV	84
LXXXV	85
LXXXVI	86
LXXXVII	87
LXXXVIII	88
LXXXIX	89
XC	90
XCI	91
XCII	92
XCIII	93
XCIV	94
XCV	95
XCVI	96
XCVII	97
XCVIII	98
XCIX	99
C	100

FIG. 1

---

George Lucas, *Still from THX 1138* [1970]  
DVD screen grab



[ FIG . 1 ]



FIG. LVII

---

Gerald Forster, *Paris Arcade*, [1822-1823]

*The Arcades Project*

Source: Phototeque de Musees de la Ville de Paris



[ FIG. II ]

FIG. III

---

Vignette illustrating Louis Huart's *Physiologie du flâneur* [1841]  
*Backward Glances: Cruising the Queer Streets of London and New York* (62)



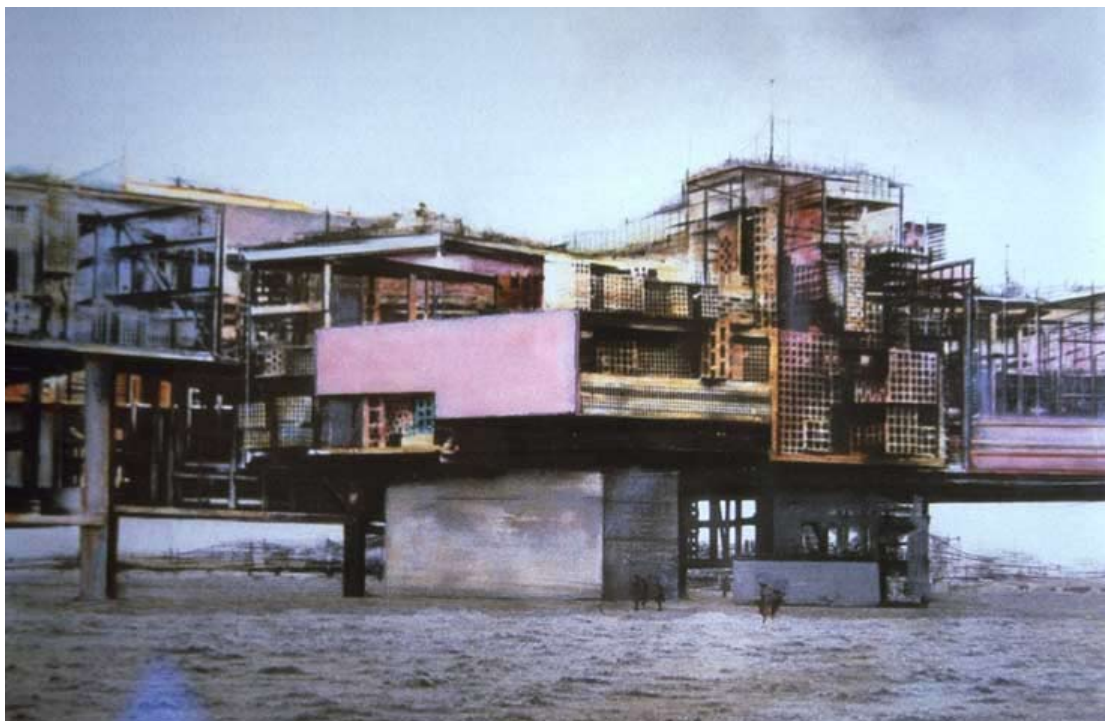
[FIG. 111]

FIG. IV

---

Constant, *New Babylon* [c. 1950]

[http://janedark.com/453164092\\_fb4ece306c\\_o.jpg](http://janedark.com/453164092_fb4ece306c_o.jpg)



[ FIG. IV ]

FIG. V

---

Guy Debord, *Map of Paris* [1957]

<http://www.vulgare.net/wp-content/uploads/paris-1957.jpg>





FIG. VI

---

Dir. Julian Schnabel, *Still from Basquiat* [1996]  
*DVD screen grab*



[FIG. VI]

FIG. VII

---

Dir. Bernardo Bertolucci, Still from *The Dreamers* [2003]  
*DVD screen grab*



[FIG. VII]

FIG. VIII a

---

Andy Warhol, *Gold Marilyn (detail)* [1962]  
DVD Screen grab from *Andy Warhol: A Documentary Film*  
Dir. Ric Burns



[FIG. VIIIa]

FIG. VIIIb

---

Andy Warhol, *Gold Marilyn (detail)* [1962]  
DVD Screen grab from *Andy Warhol: A Documentary Film*  
Dir. Ric Burns



[FIG. VIIIБ]



FIG. VIII c

---

Andy Warhol, *Gold Marilyn (detail)* [1962]  
DVD Screen grab from *Andy Warhol: A Documentary Film*  
Dir. Ric Burns



[FIG. VIIIc]

FIG. VIII d

---

Andy Warhol, *Gold Marilyn (detail)* [1962]  
DVD Screen grab from *Andy Warhol: A Documentary Film*  
Dir. Ric Burns



[FIG. VIII d]

FIG. VIII e

---

Andy Warhol, *Gold Marilyn (detail)* [1962]  
DVD Screen grab from *Andy Warhol: A Documentary Film*  
Dir. Ric Burns

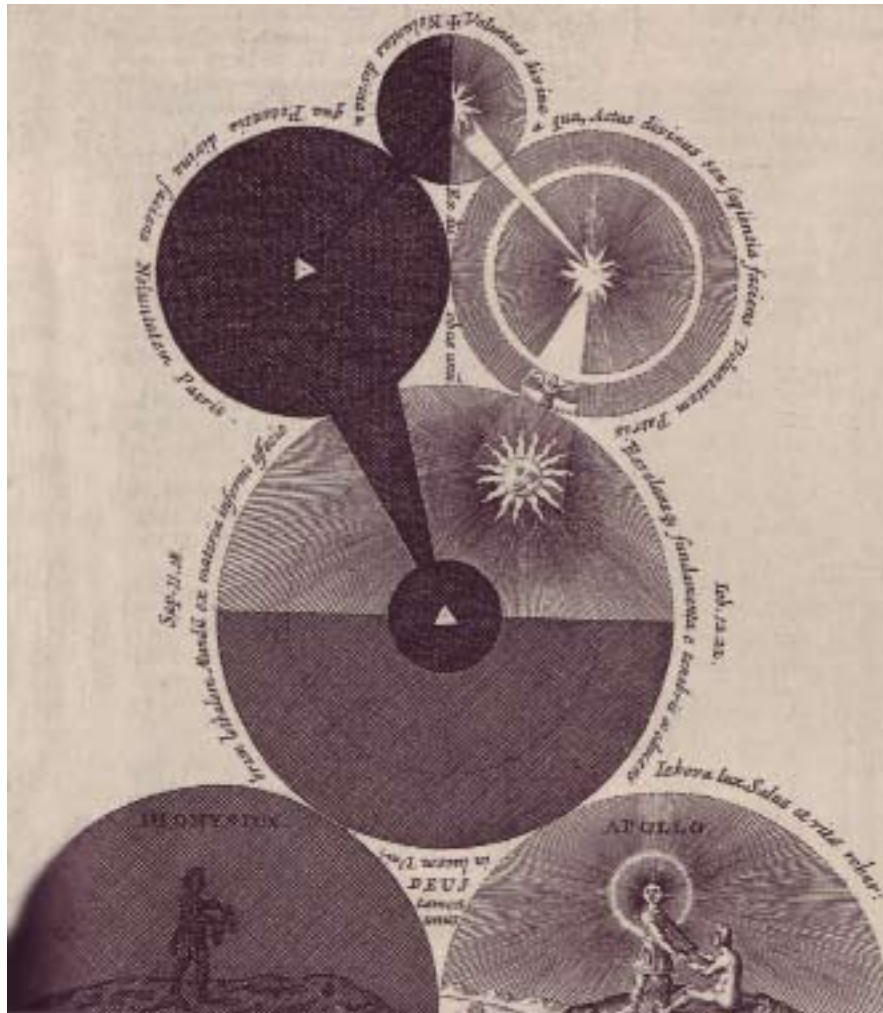


[FIG. VIIIe]

FIG. IX

---

R. Fludd, *Philosophia Moysaica, Gouda* [1638]  
Alchemy & Mysticims (233)



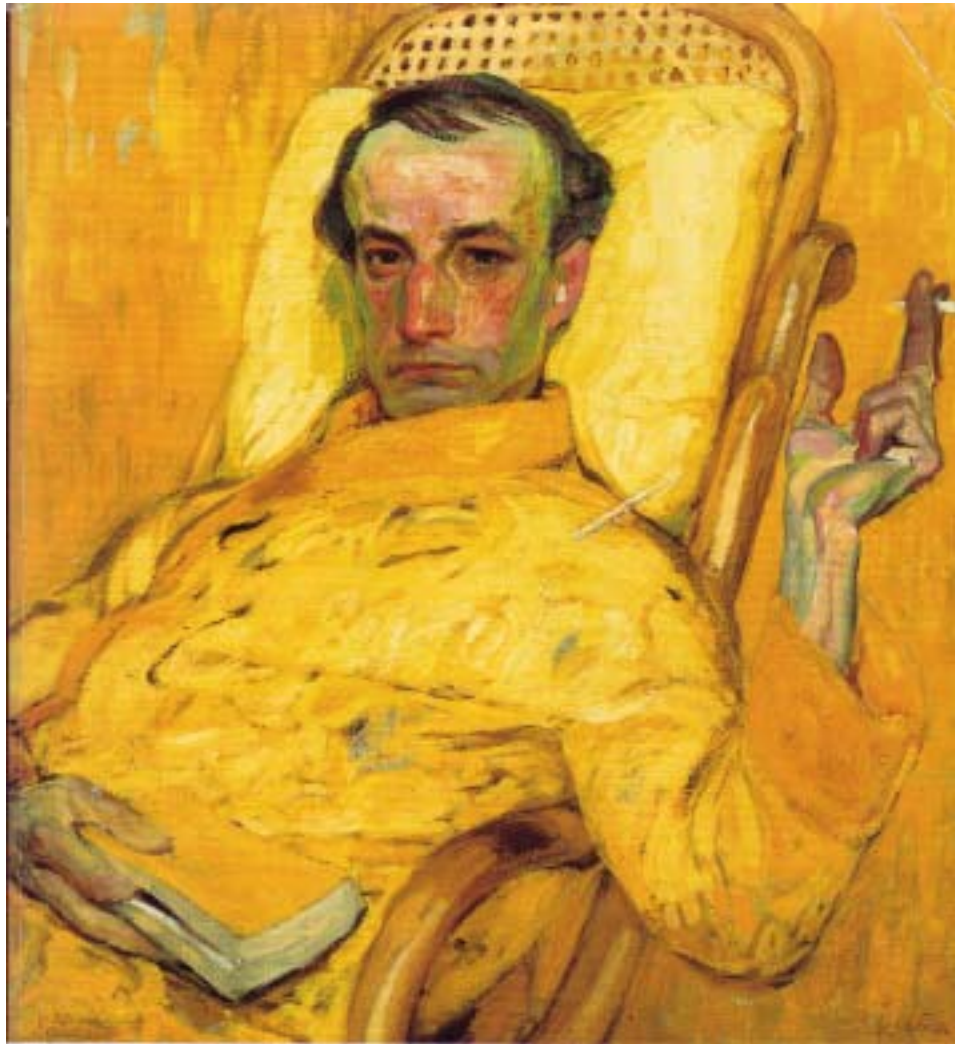
[ FIG. IX ]



FIG. X

---

Franz Kupka, *The Yellow Scale*, [1907]  
Cover of *A Rebours - Against Nature*



[ FIG. X ]

FIG. XI

---

R. Buckminster Fuller, *American Pavilion*, Montreal [1967]  
Metropolitan Home Magazine



[ FIG. XI ]

FIG. XII

---

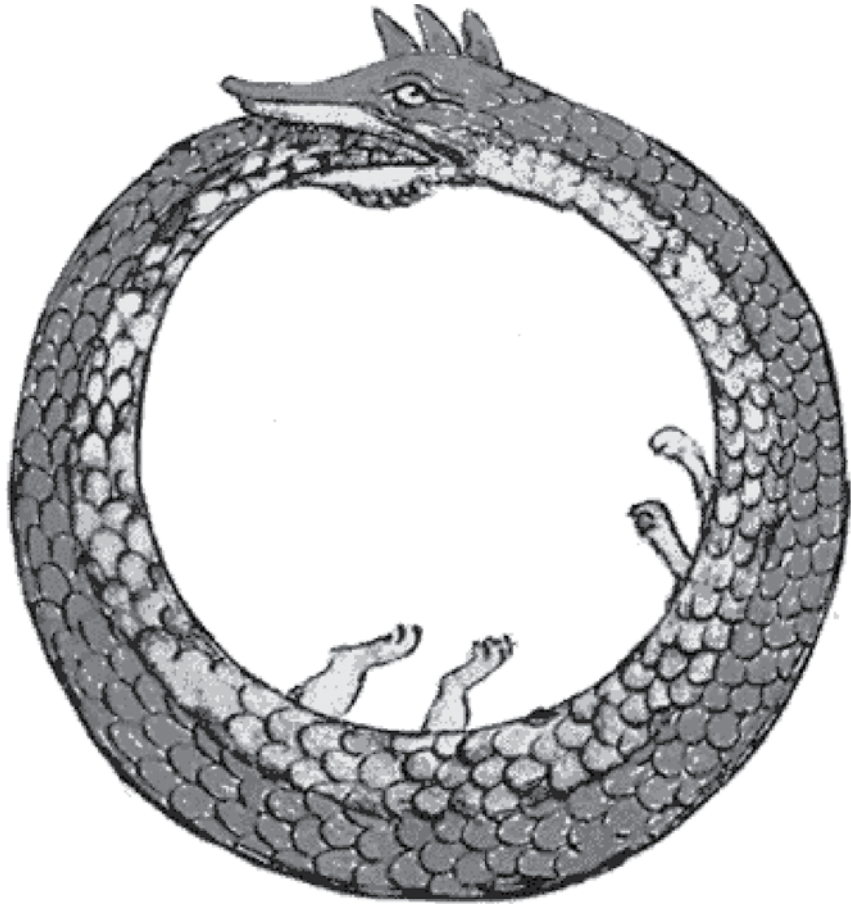
Author Unknown, *Chartres Labyrinth*, [c. 1201]

<http://chrysalis1witchesjourney.files.wordpress.com/2009/04/labyrinth.jpg>



[FIG. XII]

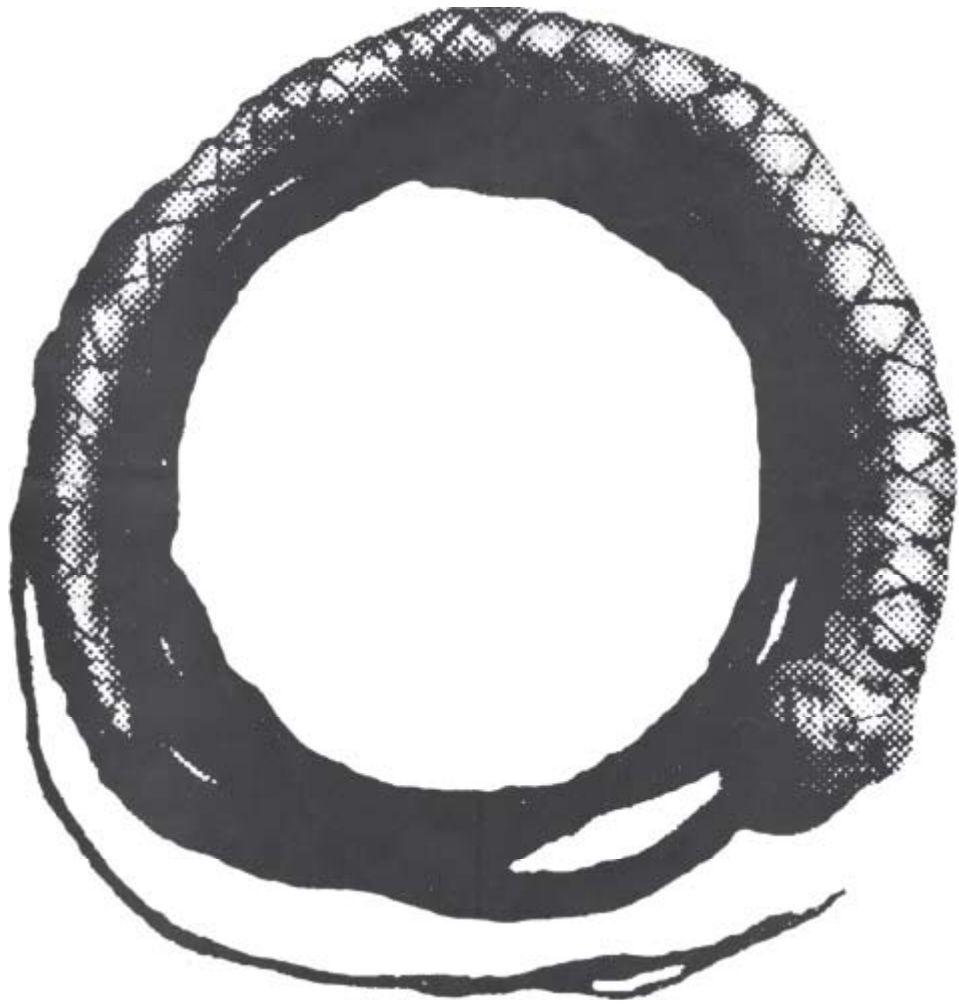




[FIG. XIII]

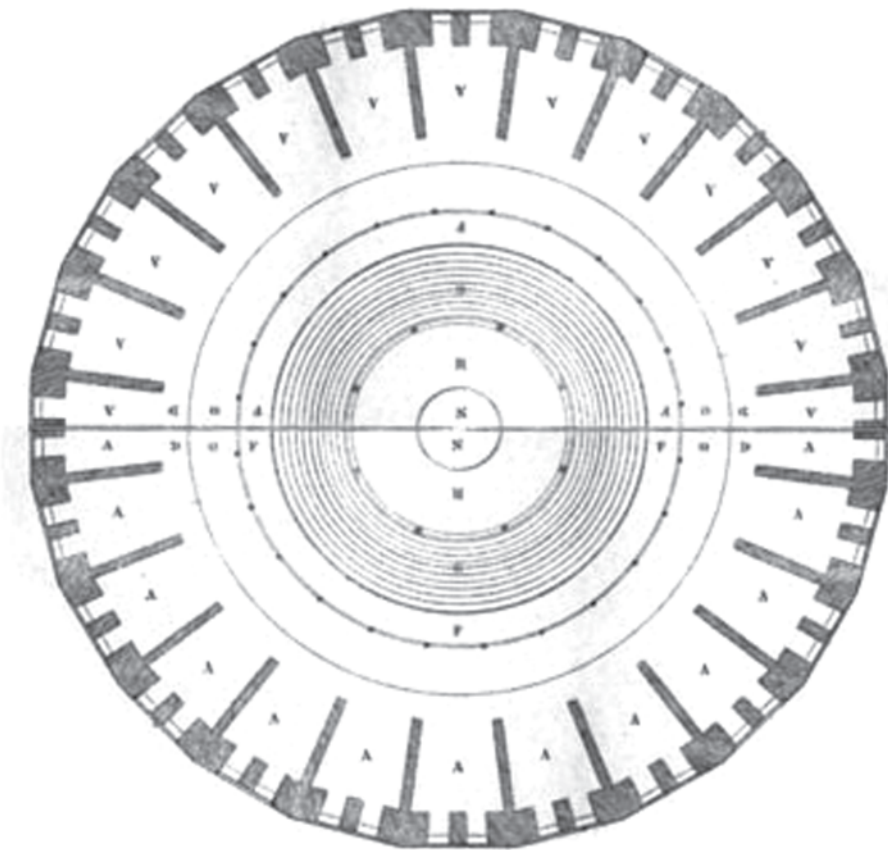






[FIG. XIV]



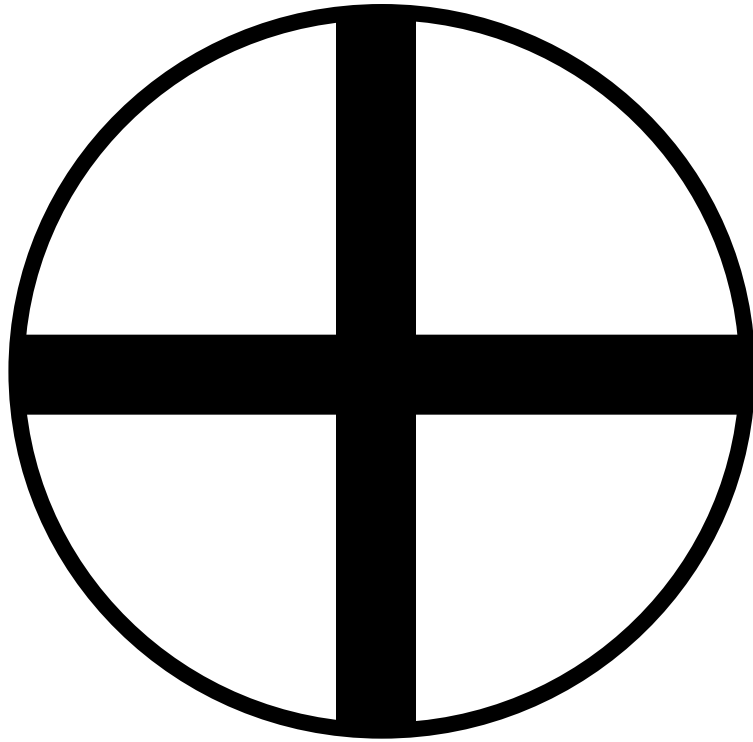


[FIG. XV]









[FIG. XVII]



FIG. XVIII

---

Paolo Veronese *Venus and Mars United by Love* [1576]  
*Art and Symbols of the Occult* (86)



[FIG. XVIII]

FIG. XIX

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David Wojnarowicz, *Mask of Arthur Rimbaud* [1977]  
Book cover of Arthur Rimbaud in New York (1977-1978)



[ FIG. XIX ]

FIG. XX

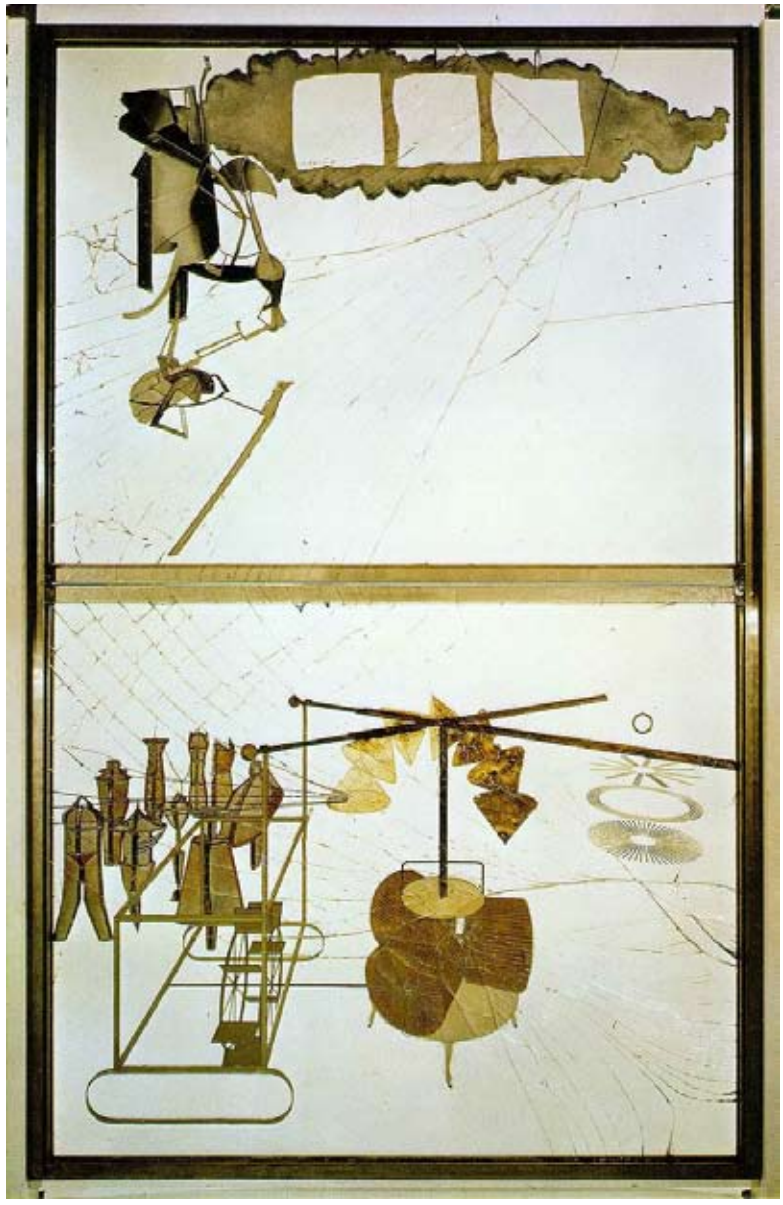
---

Marcel Duchamp, *The Bride Stripped Bare by Her Bachelors, Even*  
(*The Large Glass*) 109 1/4" x 69 1/4" [1915-1923]

Oil, varnish, lead foil, lead wire, and dust on two glass panels.

Philadelphia Museum of Art

[http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/en/b/be/Duchamp\\_LargeGlass.jpg](http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/en/b/be/Duchamp_LargeGlass.jpg)

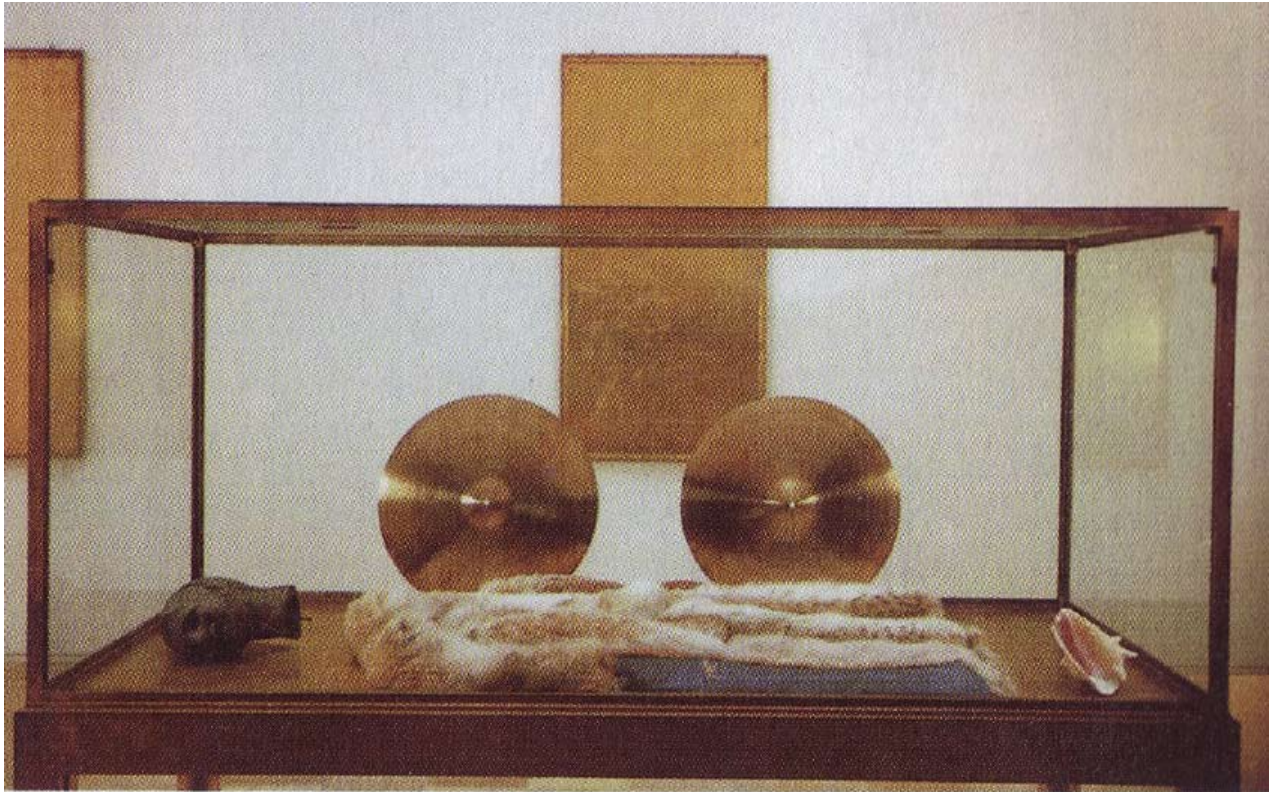


[ FIG. XX ]

FIG. XXI

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Joseph Beuys, *Palazzo Regale* [1985]  
Alchemy & Mysticism (565)



[ FIG. XXI ]



FIG. XXII

---

David McCabe, *Andy at Phillip Johnson's Glass House* [c. 1965]  
<http://arts.guardian.co.uk/pictures/image/0,8543,-10204805966,00.html>



[ FIG. XXII ]

FIG. XXIII

---

Joseph Cornell, *Untitled (Soap Bubble Set)* [c. 1936]  
15 3/4" x 14 1/4" x 5 7/16", Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford, CT  
Joseph Cornell



[ FIG. XXIII ]

FIG. XXIV

---

Robert Mapplethorpe, *Patti Smith* [c. 1976]



[ FIG. XXIV ]

FIG. XXV

---

Ryan McGinley, (*Ryan McGinley, Dash Snow and Dan Colen*) [c. 2007 ]  
Source: Ryan McGinley's Facebook page



[ FIG. XXV ]



FIG. XXVI

---

Nan Goldin, *Getting High New York City* [1986]  
The Ballad of Sexual Dependency



[ FIG. XXVI ]

FIG. XXVII

---

Amir Mogharabi, *David Wojnarowicz in Paris* [2008]  
Image courtesy of the artist



[ FIG. XXVII ]

FIG. XXVIII

---

David Wojnarowicz, *Arthur Rimbaud in New York (Duchamp)* [1978-79]  
Image courtesy of P.P.O.W.



[ FIG. XXVIII ]

FIG. XXIX

---

Marcel Duchamp, *Fountain* [1917]

[http://arthistorian.files.wordpress.com/2007/08/duchamp\\_fountain.jpg](http://arthistorian.files.wordpress.com/2007/08/duchamp_fountain.jpg)



[ FIG. XXIX ]



FIG. XXX

---

Six-Place Urinal, Place de la Bourse, Paris, [c. 1875-8]  
*Queer Sites: Gay Urban Histories Since 1600.* (p.20)  
*Source: Bib. Hist. de la ville de Paris.*



[ FIG. XXX ]

FIG. XXXI

---

Vignette illustrating Louis Huart's *Physiologie du flâneur* [1841]  
*Backward Glances: Cruising the Queer Streets of London and New York* (62)



[ FIG. XXXI ]

FIG. XXXII

---

Dir. Julian Schnabel, *Still from Basquiat* [1996]  
*DVD screen grab*



[ FIG. XXXII ]

FIG. XXXIII

---

Andy Warhol, Untitled (Portrait of Jean-Michel Basquiat) [c. 1982]  
Acrylic, silkscreen ink, copper pigment and urine on canvas, 40 x 40 inches  
Pittsburg, Andy Warhol Museum  
© Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts



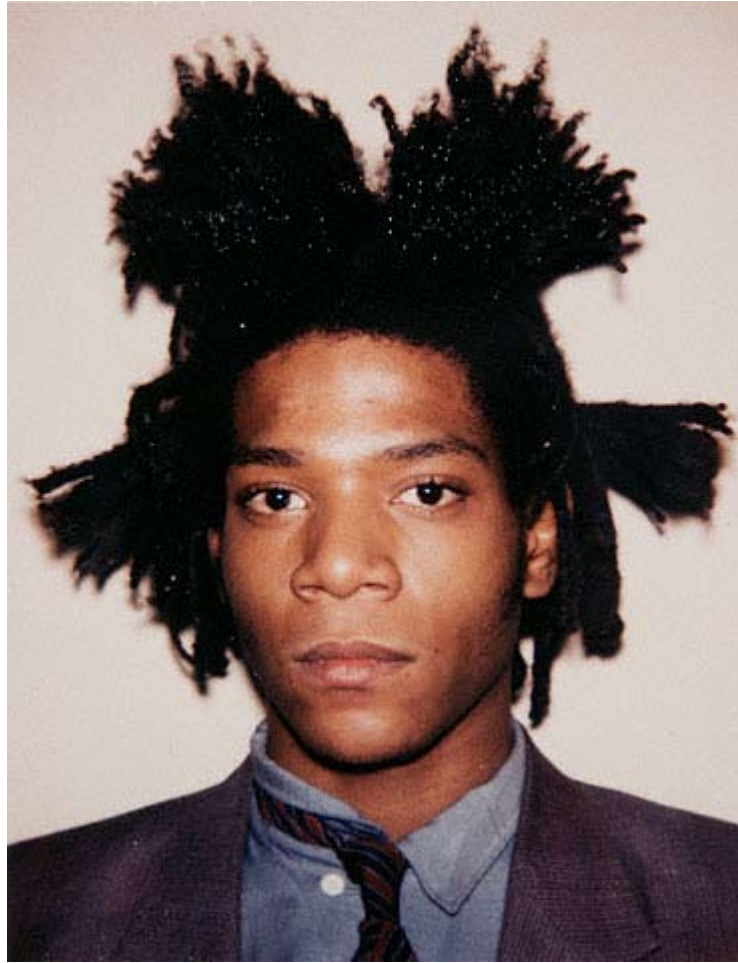
[ FIG. XXXIII ]



FIG. XXXIV

---

Andy Warhol, *Polaroid Source image for Basquiat portrait* [c. 1982]



[ FIG. XXXIV ]

FIG. XXXV

---

Peter Hujar, *Susan Sontag* [1975]  
Gelatin silver print  
<http://twi-ny.com/onphotography.jpg>



[ FIG. XXXV ]

FIG. XXXVI

---

Nan Goldin, Self Portrait in Bed 1986 [1986]  
*The Ballad of Sexual Dependency*

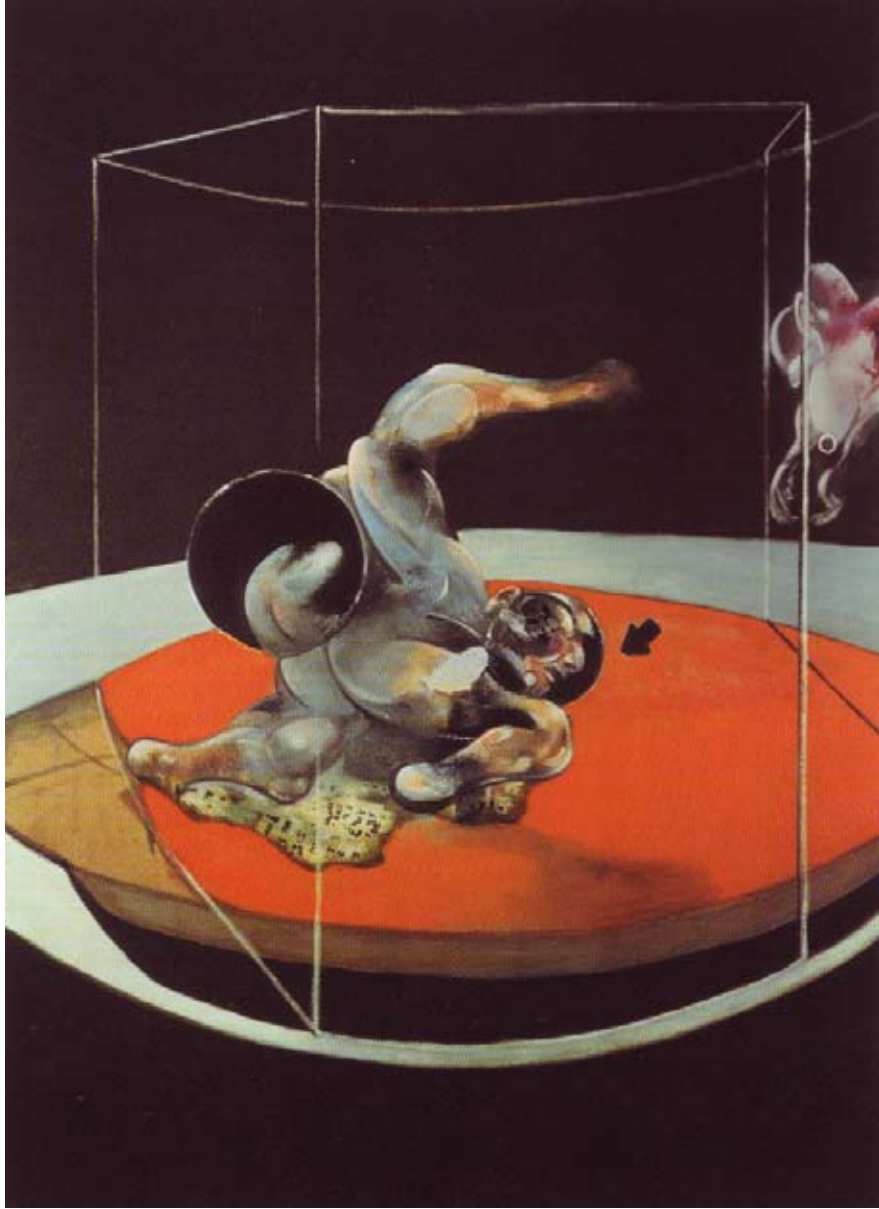


[ FIG. XXXVI ]

FIG. XXXVII

---

Francis Bacon, *Figure in Movement* [1985]  
Oil on Canvas  
*Francis Bacon*



[ FIG. XXXVII ]



FIG. XXXVIII

---

Dir. John Maybury, *Still from Love is the Devil: Study for a Portrait of Francis Bacon* [1998]  
DVD Screen grab



[ FIG. XXXVIII ]

FIG. XXXIX

---

Dir. Bob Fosse, *Still from Cabaret* [1972]  
DVD Screen grab



[ FIG. XXXIX ]

FIG. XL

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*Andy Warhol's Factory* [c. 1963]  
Source Unknown



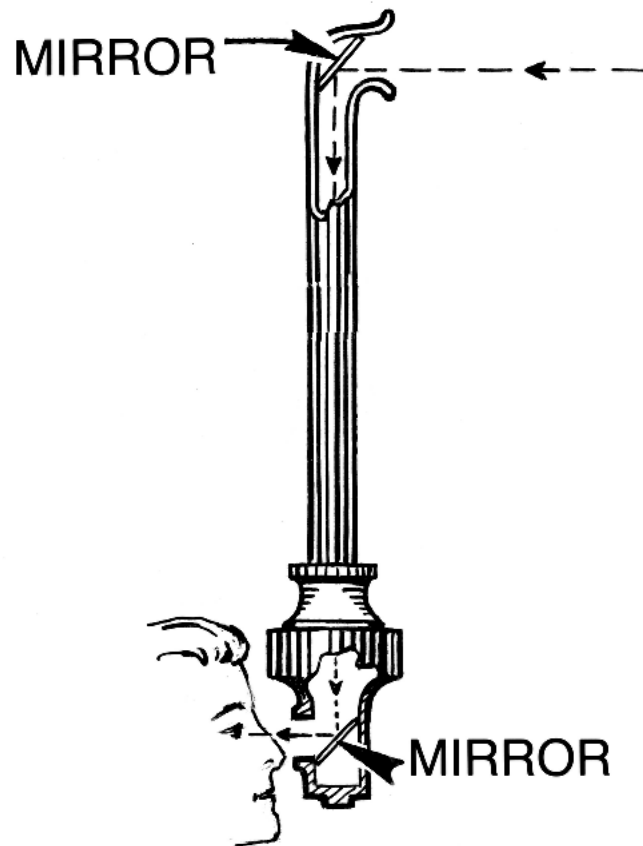
[ FIG. XL ]

FIG. XLII

---

Principle of the Periscope

*[http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Periscope\\_\(PSF\).png](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Periscope_(PSF).png)*



[ FIG. XLII ]



FIG. XLIII

---

Berenice Abbott, *Night View, New York* [1932]  
*Peter Hujar: Night*



[ FIG. XLIII ]

FIG. XLIV

---

Ryan McGinley, *Sam at Ground Zero* [2002]

<http://andrewmcmullen.com/blog/wp-content/uploads/2009/01/picture-7.png>



[ FIG. XLIV ]

FIG. XLV

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Paul Mpagi-Sepuya, *Woodrow* [2006]  
<http://www.paulsepuya.com/portraits/index.html>



[ FIG. XLV ]

FIG. XLVI

---

Paul Mpagi-Sepuya, *Untitled (Landscape)* [2008]  
[www.paulsepuya.com](http://www.paulsepuya.com)



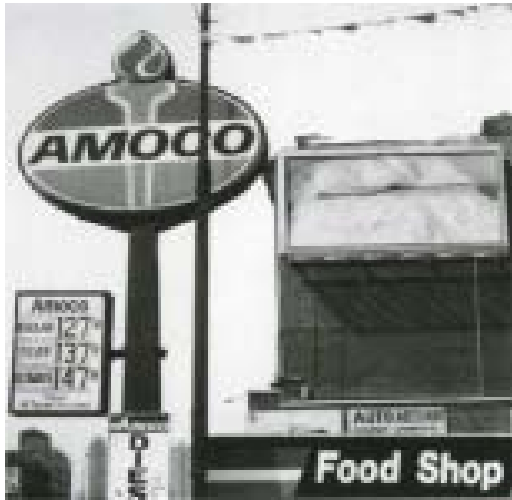
[ FIG. XLVI ]



FIG. XLVII

---

Felix Gonzales-Torres (*Untitled*) [1841]  
*Felix Gonzales-Torres*



[ FIG. XLVII ]

FIG. XLVIII

---

James Swain, *Untitled (Playpen)* [2007]  
Author's Own



[ FIG. XLVIII ]

FIG. XLVIX

---

James Swain, *Untitled (Pier Ruin)* [2006]  
Author's Own



[ FIG . XLVIX ]

FIG. L

---

James Swain, still from the film *Untitled, (Low Library Men's Room)* [2006]  
Author's Own



[ FIG. L ]



FIG. LI

---

Dir. William Friedkin, still from the film *Cruising* [1980]  
DVD screen grab



[ FIG. LI ]

FIG. LII

---

Alvin Baltrop, *Pier Photographs* [c. 1975-1986]  
*Gay Sex in the 70s DVD screen grab* [2005]



[FIG. LII]

FIG. LIII

---

Dir. William Friedkin, still from the film *Cruising* [1980]  
DVD screen grab



[FIG. LIII]

FIG. LIV

---

Gerald Forster, *Nocturnal* [2006]  
Spread Magazine (p. 53)



[ FIG. LIV ]



FIG. LV

---

Gerald Forster, *Nocturnal* [2006]  
Spread Magazine Issue 1 Vol. 1 (p. 52)



[ FIG. LV ]

FOLLOWING PAGES :

FIG. LVI

---

Photo taken by NOAA, *Ground Zero* [Sept. 23, 2001]  
<http://www.capohio.us/oh197/pictures/groundzero.jpg>

FIG. LVII

---

Gerald Forster, *The Passage de l'Opera*, [1822-1823]  
*The Arcades Project*, (p. 49)  
Source: Phototeque de Musees de la Ville de Paris

FIG. LVIII

---

Author Unknown, *The Roman Forum* [date unknown]  
Unknown source

FIG. LVIX

---

Sabastiano Serlio, *The Satyric Scene* [c. 1537]  
*Queer Space: Architecture and Same - Sex Desire* (p. 25)

FIG. LX

---

Unknown Author, *The Ramble, Central Park NY* [2006]  
*Queer Space: Architecture and Same - Sex Desire* (p. 144)

FIG. LXI

---

Pieter Bruegel, *Tower of Babel* [1563]  
<http://www.eikongraphia.com/wordpress/wp-content/Tower%20of%20Babel.jpg>

FIG. LXII

---

Terence Koh, *Untitled* [2006]  
Installation at the Whitney Museum of American Art, NY

FIG. LXIII

---

Andy Warhol, *Self-portrait* [c. 1968]

FIG. LXIV

---

R. Fludd, *Washington Monument* [1638]  
<http://www.starsstripes.org/photos/Flag%20Pictures/washington%20monument.jpg>



[ FIG. LVI ]





[ FIG. LVII ]





[FIG. LVIII]







[FIG. LVIX]





[ FIG. LX ]





[ FIG . LXI ]





[ FIG. LXII ]







[ FIG. LXIII ]





“Americans love to fill up their spaces with crap, and for all its flaws I love the mall because it’s a great big void.”

[ FIG. LXIV ]

FIG. LXV

---

Dir. William Friedkin, still from the film *Cruising* [1980]  
DVD screen grab



[ FIG. LXV ]

FIG. LXVI

---

Dir. William Friedkin, still from the film *Cruising* [1980]  
DVD screen grab



[FIG. LXVI]



FIG. LXVII a

---

Hieronymus Bosch, *The Garden of Earthly Delights* [1503-1504]  
Oil-on-wood triptych  
220 cm × 389 cm  
[http://smerdulak.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/02/earthly\\_delights.jpeg](http://smerdulak.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/02/earthly_delights.jpeg)



[ FIG. LXVIIa ]

FIG. LXVII b

---

Bosch, *The Garden of Earthly Delights (Detail)* [1503-1504]

Oil-on-wood triptych

Joseph Campbell, *The Power of Myth*



[FIG. LXVII B]

FIG. LXVIII

---

James Swain, *Untitled (Cock Destroyed)* [2007]  
Author's Own



[ FIG. LXVIII ]

FIG. LXIX

---

David Wojnarowicz, *Arthur Rimbaud in New York (Times Square)* [1978-79]  
Image courtesy of P.P.O.W.



[ FIG. LXIX ]



FIG. LXX

---

Dir. William Friedkin, still from the film *Cruising* [1980]  
DVD screen grab



[ FIG. LXX ]

FIG. LXXI

---

Dir. William Friedkin, still from the film *Cruising* [1980]  
DVD screen grab



[FIG. LXXI]

FIG. LXXII

---

Dir. William Friedkin, still from the film *Cruising* [1980]  
DVD screen grab



[FIG. LXXII]

FIG. LX XIII b

---

Alvin Baltrop, *Pier Photographs* [c. 1975-1986]  
*Gay Sex in the 70s* DVD screen grab [2005]



[FIG. LXXIIIb]



FIG. LXXIII c

---

Alvin Baltrop, *Pier Photographs* [c. 1975-1986]  
*Gay Sex in the 70s* DVD screen grab [2005]



[FIG. LXXIIIc]

FIG. LXXIII e

---

Alvin Baltrop, *Pier Photographs* [c. 1975-1986]  
*Gay Sex in the 70s* DVD screen grab [2005]



[FIG. LXXIIIe]

FIG. LXXIV

---

Unknown, *Pier 52, New York* [1977]

*Queer Space: Architecture and Same-Sex Desire* (p. 146)

Source: National Archive of Lesbian and Gay History



[FIG. LXXIV]

FIG. LXXV

---

Robert Mapplethorpe, *Self-Portrait with Whip* [1978]  
DVD screen grab from *Black White + Gray: A Portrait of  
Sam Wagstaff and Robert Mapplethorpe*



[ FIG. LXXV ]



FIG. LXXVI

---

Gordon Matta-Clark, *Day's End* [1972]  
*Gordon Matta Clark*



[ FIG. LXXVI ]

FIG. LXXVII

---

Peter Hujar, *Night Shot* [1975]  
*Peter Hujar: Night*



[FIG. LXXVII]

FIG. LXXVIII

---

Dir. William Friedkin, still from the film *Cruising* [1980]  
DVD screen grab



[FIG. LXXVIII]

FIG. LXXVIX

---

Dir. William Friedkin, still from the film *Cruising* [1980]  
DVD screen grab



[ FIG. LXXVIX ]



FIG. LXXX

---

Dir. William Friedkin, still from the film *Cruising* [1980]  
DVD screen grab



[ FIG. LXXX ]

FIG. LXXXI

---

Dir. William Friedkin, still from the film *Cruising* [1980]  
DVD screen grab



[ FIG. LXXXI ]

FIG. LXXXII

---

Dir. William Friedkin, still from the film *Cruising* [1980]  
DVD screen grab



[ FIG. LXXXII ]

FIG. LXXXIII

---

Author Unknown, image of the destroyed WTC [2001]  
<http://image.pathfinder.com/time/photoessays/shattered/ash.jpg>



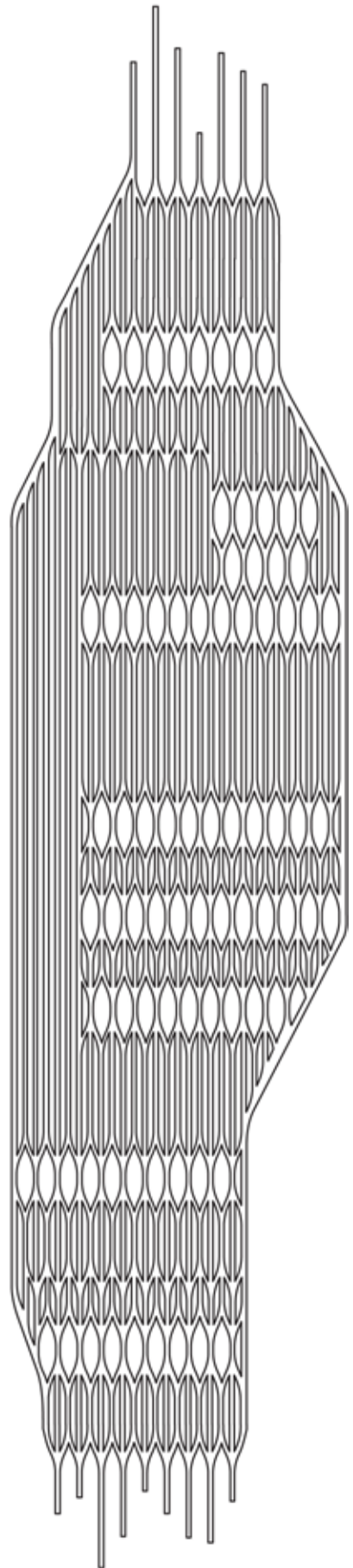
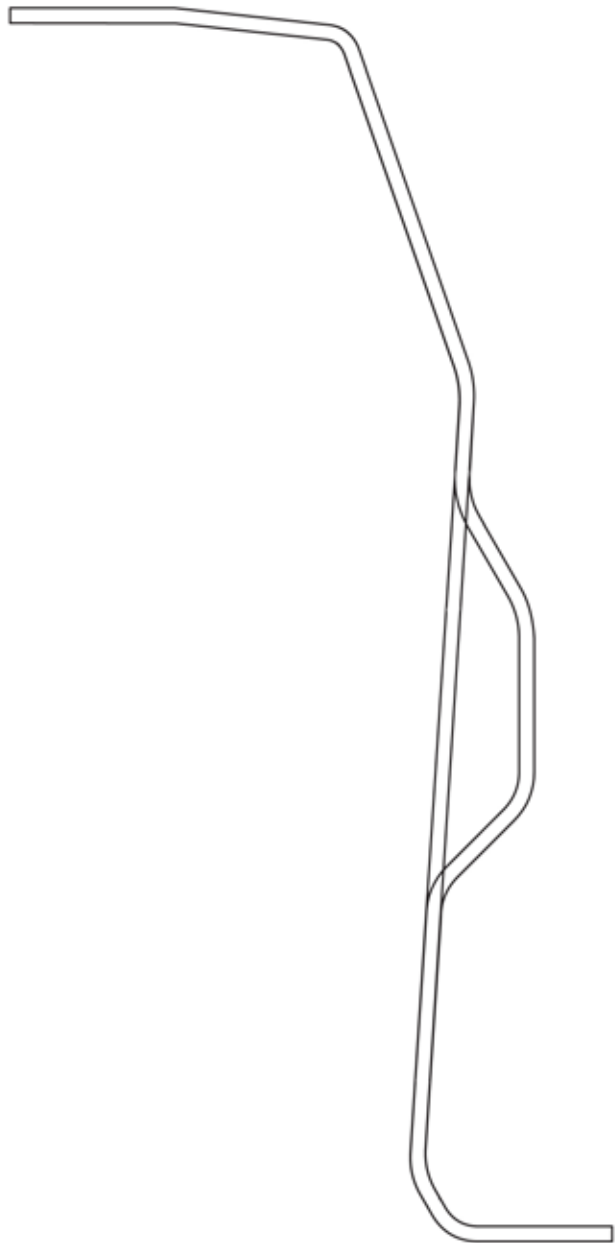
[ FIG. LXXXIII ]



FIG. LXXXIV

---

James Swain, *Untitled* (Sculpture elevations) [2009]  
Author's Own



[ FIG. LXXXIV ]

FIG. LXXXV

---

Example of 3d Printing  
Unknown Image Source



[ FIG. LXXXV ]

FIG. LXXXVI

---

World Trade Centre Facade  
Unknown Source



[ FIG. LXXXVI ]

FIG. LXXXVII

---

still from the film BBC : *Planet Earth* [2006]  
DVD screen grab



[ FIG. LXXXVII ]



FIG. LXXXVIII

---

Dir. Albert and David Maysles, still from the film *Grey Gardens* [1972]  
DVD screen grab



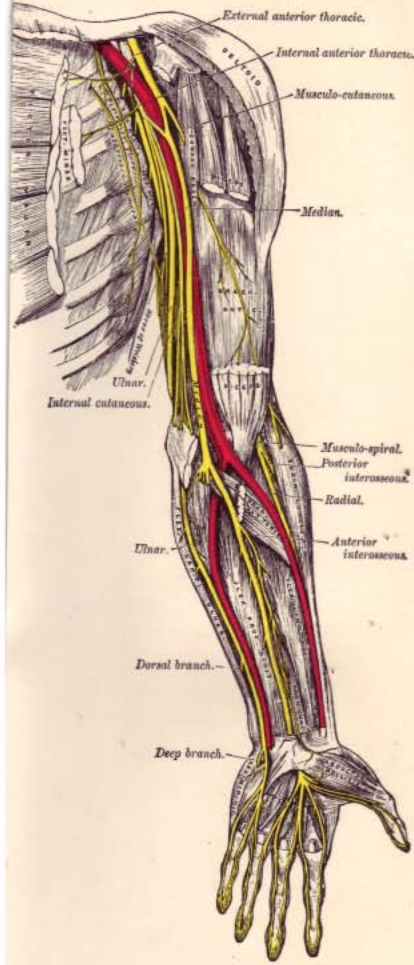
[ FIG. LXXXVIII ]

FIG. LXXXIX

---

Author Unknown, dwg. of arm tissue and arteries from *Gray's Anatomy*  
Scan of the inside dust jacket of Gray's Anatomy

THE BRACHIAL PLEXUS.



[ FIG. LXXXIX ]

FIG. XC

---

Francis Bacon, *Figure with Meat* [1954]  
Source; Francis Bacon



[ FIG. XC ]

FIG. XCI

---

Life in the British Forces, East Mounted Rifles [1921]  
*The Secret Lore of Gardening* (p. 102)



[ FIG. XCI ]



FIG. XCIV

---

Peter Hujar, *The World Trade Center, Twilight* [1976]  
*Peter Hujar: Night*



[ FIG. XCIV ]

FIG. XCVI

---

Author Unknown, Artist rendered images from Abu Ghraib Prison  
*Inside cover of A Good War is Hard To Find: The Art of Violence in America*



Copyrighted material

[ FIG. XCVI ]

FIG. XCII

---

Francis Bacon, *Painting* [1946]

MoMA

[http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/en/4/44/Painting\\_1946.jpg](http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/en/4/44/Painting_1946.jpg)



[FIG. XCII]

FIG. XCIII a

---

Dir. Stephen K. Jusik, still from the film *Sodom on the Hudson* [2002]  
DVD screen grab



[FIG. XCIIIa]



FIG. XCIIIb

---

Dir. Stephen K. Jusik, still from the film *Sodom on the Hudson* [2002]  
DVD screen grab



[FIG. XCIIIb]

FIG. XCIII c

---

Dir. Stephen K. Jusik, still from the film *Sodom on the Hudson* [2002]  
DVD screen grab



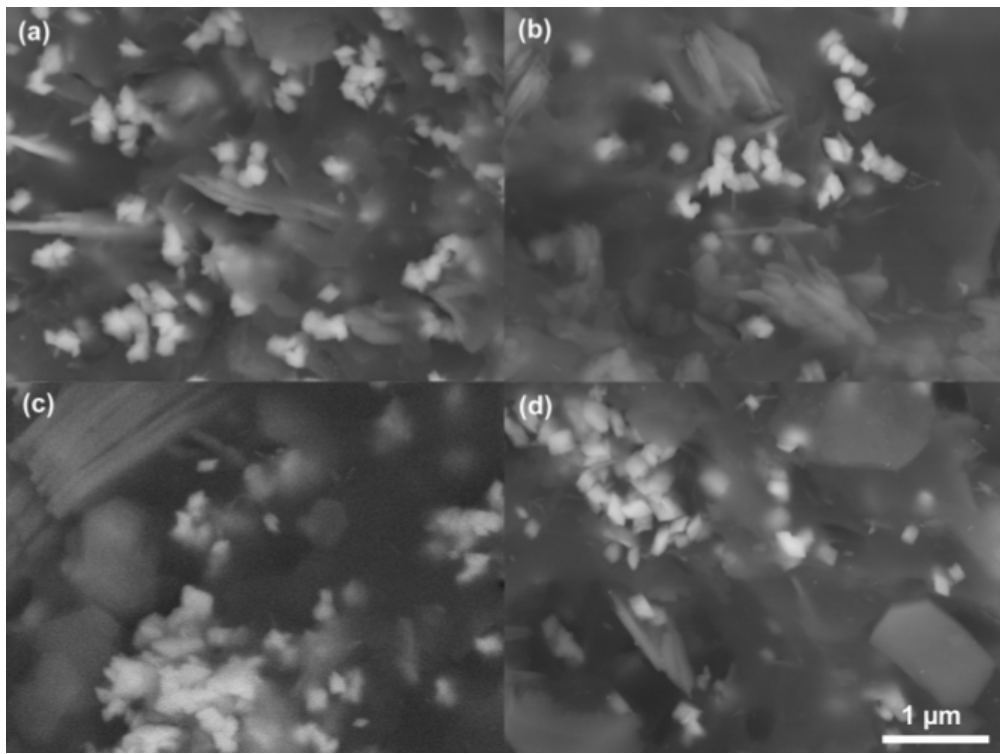
[FIG. XCIIIc]

FIG. XCV

---

BSE images of cross sections of the red layer from each of the dust samples 1-4 shown in (a)-(d) respectively.

*Active Thermite Material Found in WTC Dust* in *The Open Chemical Physics Journal*, 2009, Volume 2 (p. 15)

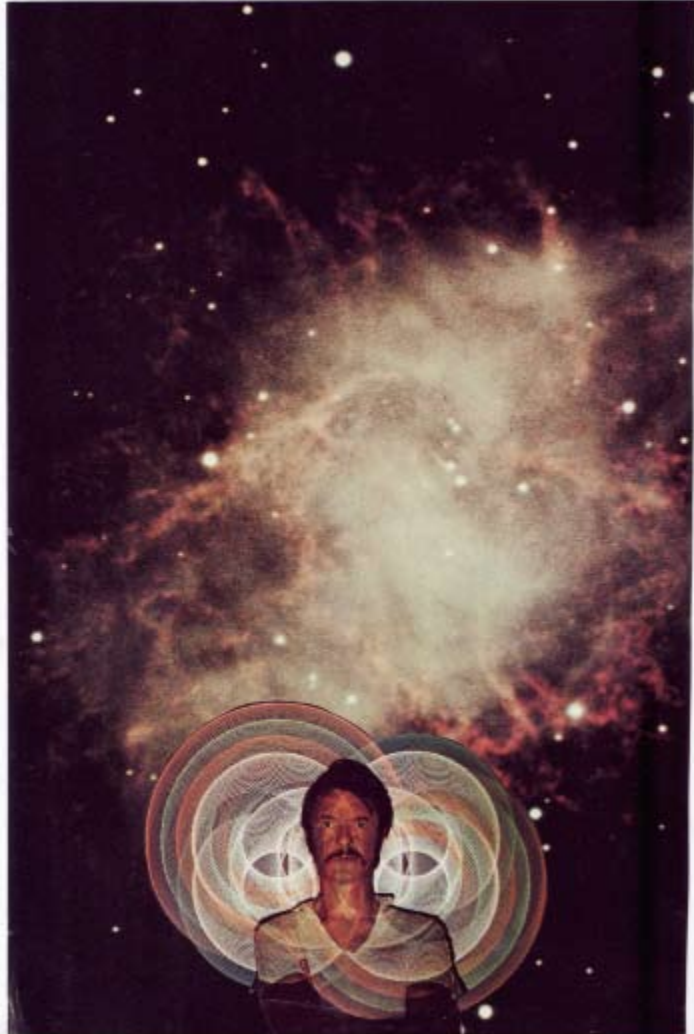


[ FIG . XCV ]

FIG. XCVII a

---

James Swain, *Untitled* [2009]  
Mixed media collage  
Author's Own



[FIG. XCVIIa]



FIG. XCVIIb

---

James Swain, *Untitled* [2009]  
Mixed media collage  
Author's Own



[FIG. XCVIIB]

FIG. XCVIIc

---

James Swain, *Untitled* [2009]  
Mixed media collage  
Author's Own



[FIG. XCVIIc]

FIG. XCVII d

---

James Swain, *Untitled* [2009]  
Mixed media collage  
Author's Own



[FIG. XCVIIId]

FIG. XCVII d

---

James Swain, *Untitled* [2009]  
Mixed media collage  
Author's Own



[FIG. XCVIIId]



FIG. XCVIII

---

James Swain, *Untitled (WTC Memorial)* [2009]  
Mixed media collage  
Author's Own



[FIG. XCVIII]

## NOTES

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- ii Nicolas Bourriard, *Altermodern Manifesto* <http://blog.tate.org.uk/turnerprize2008/?p=74> [Feb. 26 2009]
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- iv <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Psychogeography>
- v Camille Paglia, *Sexual Personae: Art and Decadence from Nefertiti to Emily Dickinson*. [New York, 1991] p. 198.
- vi Anthony Vidler, *Warped Space: Art Architecture and Anxiety in Modern Culture*. [Cambridge, 2001] p. 76.
- vii G. Bachelard, *La Poétique de la Reverie* (1960) (Paris: Presses Univ. de France, 1965) p. 73]
- viii James Wasserman, *Art and Symbols of the Occult: Images of Power and Wisdom* [Rochester, 1993] p. 92.
- ix [http://www.biosphere.ec.gc.ca/The\\_United\\_States\\_Pavilion\\_at\\_Expo\\_'67-WS17BEA3C8-1\\_En.htm](http://www.biosphere.ec.gc.ca/The_United_States_Pavilion_at_Expo_'67-WS17BEA3C8-1_En.htm)
- x J.E. Cirlot, *A Dictionary of Symbols*. [New York, 1962 ] p. 27.
- xi Christine Macy, "The Geodesic Dome as a Metaphor for Expanding Consciousness".
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- xiii Yamake Highwater, *The Mythology of Transgression: Homosexuality as Metaphor*. [New York, 1997] p. 159.
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- xix To borrow the title from Rene Ricard’s Art Forum review of the young artist.
- xx Wayne Kostenbaum in *Andy Warhol: A Documentary Film* dir. by Ric Burns [2006]
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- xxii Susan Sontag, *On Photography*. [New York, 1970] p. 55.
- xxiii Andy Warhol as quoted in the film *Andy Warhol: A Documentary Film*.
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- xxxiii Rene Girard, *The Scapegoat*
- xxxiv *ibid*, p.182
- xxxv *ibid*, 148
- xxxvi Rossi, p.119
- xxxvii Turner, p. 61

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- xxxviii Aldo Rossi , *The Architecture of the City*, [Cambridge ] p.119
- xxxix Christian Norburg-Schulz, “The Phenomenon of Place” in *Theorizing a New Agenda for Architecture: An Anthology of Architectural Theory*. [New York, 1996] p. 422 .
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- xlviii Michael D. Sibalis, “Paris”, in *Queer Sites Gay Urban Histories Since 1600*, p. 22.
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- lii Dianne Chisolm, *Queer Constellations: Subcultural Space in the Wake of the City*. [Minneapolis, 2005] p. 84-85
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- lvi Patrick Moore, *Beyond Shame: Reclaiming The Abandoned History of Radical Gay Sexuality* [Boston, 2004] p. 21
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- lviii Betsky, p. 143
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- lxi       ibid. p. 58-59
- lxii       [Thomas Crow: Gordan Matta Clark page 14-15]
- lxiii      Ira Tattleman
- lxiv      Moore, p.
- lxv        Graham Jackson, *The Secret Lore of Gardening: Patterns of Male Intimacy*  
[Toronto , 1991] p. 148.
- lxvi       Richard Sennett, *The Conscience of the Eye: The Design and Social Life of Cities.* “  
[Boston, 1992] p. 237-239.
- lxvii      Marcel Duchamp, The Creative Act.
- lxviii     Terry Eagleton, *Holy Terror* p.2-4.
- lxix      Vidler, *The Architectural Uncanny* 69-70
- lxx        Vidler Preface ix – x
- lxxi      Betsky p. 179 - 182
- lxxii      <http://www9.georgetown.edu/faculty/jod/texts/cavafy.html>

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## A P P E N D I X    A

### Multimedia Appendix

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