

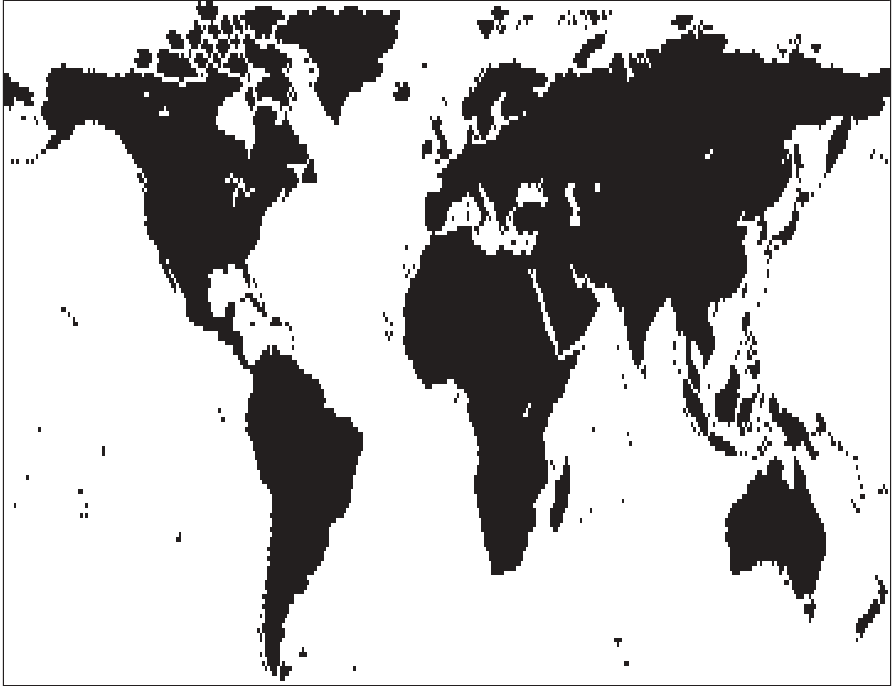
# RETROFUTURISM

March 1992

Sporadically Appearing

Number 16

ONE WORLD



ONE VIRUS

**IN THIS ISSUE:** The group **NEGATIVLAND** presents **THE CASE FROM OUR SIDE** in their dispute with Island Records; The **IMMEDIAS** **UNDERGROUND** unveils its plans for **SEIZING THE MEDIA**; Stephen Perkins and Mark Palmer offer new insights concerning the subject of **PLAGIARISM**: is it a **BASTARD CHILD**, or is there some **TRUTH IN DOUBLING**? And, of course, the usual columns, reviews, and listings of other marginalia from around the world. **RETROFUTURISM**, the sporadic quarterly, uses only the finest ingredients, and encourages your input into the process

AROUND THE POINT OF A BREAST  
THE UNIVERSE  
REVEALS



*Retrofuturism* (Photostatic Archive no. 46) is a magazine edited by Lloyd Dunn and the Tapebeats, and sponsored by the Drawing Legion, a non-profit performance and intermedia company based in Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

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Submissions of writing and graphic work are welcome and encouraged. No submitted work will be returned unless it arrives here accompanied by a self-addressed stamped return envelope.

Everyone who contributes in some way to *Retrofuturism*, whether they send a letter to the editor, or a work to be reviewed, or work to be published, will receive a copy of the issue of *Retrofuturism* in which their contribution appears. Send all editorial mail to: [psrf@detritus.net](mailto:psrf@detritus.net).

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# C O N T a c T S

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# THE IMMEDIAST

**Revolution is the overthrow of government by its forced subjects;**

Synesthesia is a mixing of the senses. Colors evoke tastes, sounds produce smells, and touch triggers visions.

Several tracts in *Retrofuturism no. 15* confront the daily problem of spectator media and dominant culture. The sharpest of these critiques target the conditioning and stupor that result from our immersion in the news, images, infotainment, and the pus of coercive images that we all wallow in daily. All of the *Rf* critiques seem to presume that a sudden

outburst of free thinking and artistic disruption will somehow wheedle, cajole, or enlighten the snakes coming out of the media Medusa. With even less telos are those left in the Left who devote their academic scrutiny to media watch-dog activity, vulturing over the lies and propaganda as our history is diswritten. Significant as their efforts, newsletters, and intent are, media reform in response to special interest pressure (nunspeak for *the public*) will never and *can never* reorient the media's fundamental activity of preparing and commodifying public attention for penetration by corporate advertisers. Alternative viewpoints find airtime only if the fat cats are convinced they've found a new angle to hit up Joe TV for a little more cash, if they're convinced there's a new public sector to captivate. While diligent media activism can and eventually *will* alter media representations of misogyny, racism, homophobia, and displays of violence, sisyphian is the hope that any *merely* intellectual, artistic, or activist effort will ever advance us an inch toward completely silencing the ecology of coercion systemic to spectacle culture and a Security State. Because advertising is persuasion and propaganda is news, "challenging the conditioning that makes people susceptible to media manipulation"—to quote Ken Knabb's tract in *Rf15*—is like challenging the air to reject pollutants. We believe that McDonald's and Burger King, republicans and democrats, coke and pepsi, are actually alternatives to one another because the ecology of coercion commodifies choice, operates

through *immersion* and totalizes public perception. There is no escape, no sanctuary, no retreat. Only deluge and bombardment, and the desire and addiction that come with imbeds left by long term over-exposures.

Immediast tactics are not against *challenging the conditioning*, but with allowing our

Methods  
of the  
Media

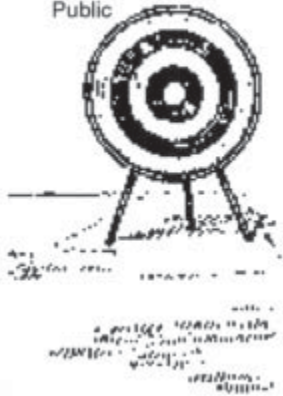


# UNDERGROUND

**Immediaism is the overthrow of media by its captive audiences.**

projects to stop at personal immunization, which is a defensive position, really. The time has come for a counter-offensive, to exert tactics that direct the spectacle against *itself*. Our rage and disgust are rooted in our bondage as captive audience and forced spectators. Every billboard is a repulsion to encounter. Ever commercial that rapes our attention is no less defiling an experience than the tourniquet of yellow ribbons that strangled out American information and scrutiny during the 42 days that the US slaughtered Iraqis.

The Mind  
of the  
Public



Challenging the conditioning that makes people susceptible to media manipulation is as hopeful a project for the 90s as bringing peace to El Salvador through creative visualization. Immediast tactics play on the immediacy of information systems and experiment with ways to direct them against themselves. Staggering as our situation has become, it is still only people and machines that maintain it; the first we will overcome, the second we will seize.

New age tactics don't work here like they do in California. Stopping the spectacle involves engaging directly with it. Our preliminary work must neutralize the key images and methods of coercion repeated through the media and spectacle politics, while our final job is to *silence* commercial media completely. The Immediast International exists to provide these basic public services.

The insurgent tactics of the Sits, Earth First!, the Weathermen, and Act Up are rich with lessons. We see now that in a spectacle society, consummate cultural, economic, and social change need not be spearheaded by revolution or even physical violence. What we do need to do is reorient our connections, critiques, cultural production, and collective action toward a complete public takeover of all State and corporate media.

Insightful, artistic or illuminating as our discourse may otherwise be, without advancing the verve and insurgency to take over the media, our discourse will be the banter of the myopic.

Synesthesia mixes the senses.

[Immediast Underground, N©

**Postscript:** The Immediast Underground actively advances the projects specific to the International Year of the Networker. Our working paper, which appears in this issue of *Retrofuturism*, is also available as a 20-page pamphlet called *Seizing the Media*, is available for \$2. Our journal, *Noospapers* (avail-

able for \$4 ppd), is accepting insurgent critiques of coercive culture, collages, movement tracts, graphics, strategies, documentation, and other public service statements. Write: The Immediast International, c/o Noospapers, P.O. Box 2726, Westfield NJ 07091, USA.



**MAIL-ART QUESTIONNAIRE**

**INSTRUCTIONS:** For each question please mark an "X" in ONE of the boxes, answering YES or NO for the best answer to each question. Do not skip any questions, and do not mark both boxes please. Comments may be included at the end-section of this survey. Thankyou.

**SECTION 1 - COMPLETE THE SENTENCE "MAIL-ART IS..."**

- |  | YES | NO |
|--|-----|----|
| 1. A paper tiger .....                       |     |    |
| 2. Sanctuary .....                           |     |    |
| 3. Cheap to do .....                         |     |    |
| 4. Anti-bourgeoise .....                     |     |    |
| 5. A relationship of trust .....             |     |    |
| 6. Always reciprocal .....                   |     |    |
| 7. An invitation to read an invitation ..... |     |    |

**SECTION 2 - COMPLETE THE SENTENCE "MAIL-ART DOES..."**

- |                                  | YES | NO |
|----------------------------------|-----|----|
| 1. Bring people together .....   |     |    |
| 2. Challenge distances .....     |     |    |
| 3. Chase its tail .....          |     |    |
| 4. Catch its tail .....          |     |    |
| 5. Always excite .....           |     |    |
| 6. Always disappoint .....       |     |    |
| 7. Succeed where art fails ..... |     |    |

**SECTION 1 - COMPLETE THE SENTENCE "MAIL-ART DIFFERES FROM ART, BECAUSE..."**

- |                                     | YES | NO |
|-------------------------------------|-----|----|
| 1. There are no barriers .....      |     |    |
| 2. There is no discrimination ..... |     |    |
| 3. Ego is not a factor .....        |     |    |
| 4. It is revolutionary .....        |     |    |
| 5. Artists want galleries .....     |     |    |
| 6. It happens in the mail .....     |     |    |
| 7. It's not a commodity .....       |     |    |

**SECTION 4 - COMMENTS:** Please feel free to write down any fruther remarks you wish to express.

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**Thank you for completing this Cultural Survey.**

Form B11-1983

## PLAGIARISM: THE BASTARD CHILD

**I**n pre-technological societies the concept of plagiarism did not exist. A particular culture's history, poems, myths, etc., existed and evolved in the collective memory of its peoples and its music was a site-specific act, transmissible only by the physical presence of the musicians or played from memory by its peoples. Memory is the original tape recorder.

The invention of an electronic apparatus that allowed infinite decentralized duplication of these sounds and facilitated their transmission across temporal and geographic space was a development with far-reaching implications. Everyone now had access to the assembly line in the factory of sound.

A melody once played, an idea once spoken, becomes the common property of all who have heard it, and all who will hear of it later. If you don't want your ideas or music plagiarized, don't speak it, don't play it. Silence is the only defense against plagiarism.

The boss in the factory of sound is profit, and her jealous lover, capital. Their investment in your music and the conjugation that takes place gives birth to a child called product, and since the incubation takes place in their factory, they

have all the parental rights. The game plan is clear from the moment of conception.

To insist otherwise is to go up against a ruthless philosophical and economic system that knows no bounds when its paternity is called into question (just ask the members of Negativland for a most recent example). Plagiarism is the twin of capital, cast out as the bastard child at the moment of birth.

This obscene coupling of technology and profit (with capital as midwife), has reached its apotheosis now that all our collective memories are copyrighted. Plagiarism (despite the powers arraigned against it), offers us the only hope for re-inserting back into the public domain what was rightfully ours in the first place. The tape recorder is the liberator of culture, not its suppressor.

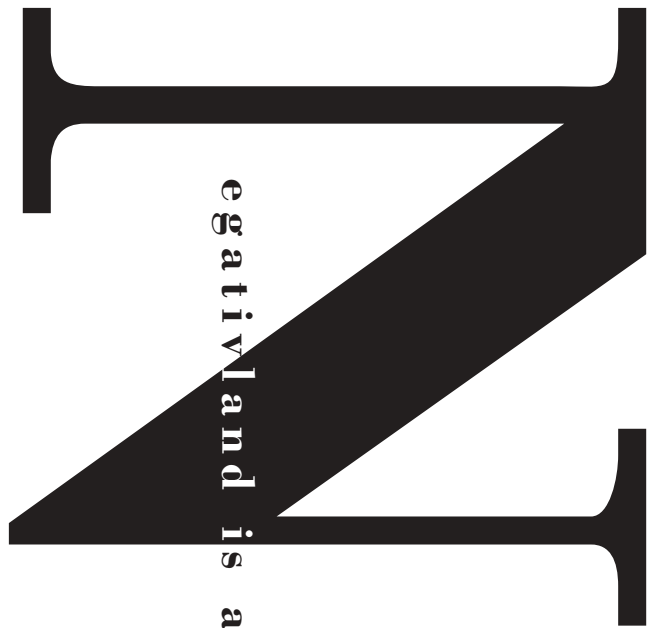
*Stephen Perkins, N© 1992*

# THE CASE FROM OUR SIDE

**TAPE COLLAGE  
BAND SAYS  
MONEY IS NOT  
THE ONLY  
REASON  
TO MAKE  
RECORDS**

consistent with, and a continuation of, the artistic viewpoint we have been espousing toward the world of media for the last ten years.

Island Records and music publisher Warner-Chappell Music, presumably acting on behalf of their group U2, have instigated legal action against our single and have suc-



Negativland is a small,

dedicated group of musicians who, since 1980, have released five albums, four cassette-only releases, one video, and now a single. This single, which is entitled "U2," was created as parody, satire, social commentary, and cultural criticism. As a work of art, it is



ceeded not only in removing it from circulation, but ensuring that it cannot ever be released again. It is clear that their preference is that the record never even be *heard* again. The terms of the settlement that was forced on us include:

- Everyone who received a copy of the record—record distributors and stores (6951 copies), and radio stations, writers,



etc. (692 copies)—is being notified to return it, and that if they don't do so, or if they engage in "distributing, selling, advertising, promoting, or otherwise exploiting" the record, they may be subject to penalties "which may include imprisonment and fines." Once returned, the records will be forwarded to Island for destruction.

- All of SST's on-hand stock of the record, in vinyl, cassette, and CD (5357 copies total), is to be delivered to Island, where it will be destroyed.
- All mechanical parts used to prepare and manufacture the record are to be delivered to Island, presumably also for destruction. This includes "all tapes, stampers, molds, lacquers and other parts used in the manufacturing," and "all artwork, labels, packaging, promotional, marketing, and advertising or similar material."

- Our copyrights on the recordings themselves have been assigned to Island and Warner-Chappell. This means we no longer own two of our better works.

- Payment of \$25,000 and half the wholesale proceeds from the copies of the record that were sold and not returned. We estimate the total cost to us, including legal fees and the cost of the destroyed records, cassettes, and CDs, at \$70,000—more money than we've made in our ten years of existence.

Our single deals, in part, with our perception of the group U2 as an international cultural phenomenon, and therefore particularly worthy of artistic comment and criticism. Island's legal action thoroughly ignores the possibility that any such artistic right or inclination might exist. Apparently Island's sole concern in this act of censorship is their determination to control the marketplace, as if the only reason to make records is to make money.

This issue is not a contest among equals. U2 records are among the most popular in history: *The Joshua Tree* sold over 5 million copies. Negativland releases usually sell about 10,000 to 15,000 copies each. Our label, SST Records, is a relatively small, independent label interested in alternative music. Neither of us could afford the tremendous costs involved in fighting for our rights in court. Island could. What we *can* do is try to bring as much publicity and attention to Island's actions as possible. This statement, we hope, is a more humane attempt at reasonable discourse about artistic integrity than the artless, humorless legalism that controls corporate music today.

We've been sent a large stack of legal documents that arrived from Island's attorneys dripping with the unyielding intimidation of money and power. That

preliminary stack of documents, 180 pages in all, cost Island approximately \$10,000 to produce (they ultimately spent \$55,000 to stop us). Preferring retreat to total annihilation, Negativland and SST had no choice but to comply completely with these demands.

Companies like Island depend on this kind of economic inevitability to bully their way over all lesser forms of opposition. Thus, Island easily wipes us off the

According to their legal documents, Island is able to bring certain existing laws to bear against our work under the assumption that any infringement of those laws is done for purposes of diverting their monetary return. Our question is: how and why should these laws apply when the infringement is not done for economic gain? For the law to claim that this alleged motive is the sole criterion for legal deliberation is to admit that music itself is not to be taken

seriously. Culture is more than commerce.

It may actually have something to say about commerce. It may even use examples of commerce to comment upon it.

We suggest that the law should begin to acknowledge the artistic domain of various creative techniques

which may actually conflict with what others claim to be their economic domain. Any serious observer of modern music can cite a multitude of examples, from Buchanan and Goodman's humorous collages of song fragments in the 50s to today's canonization of James Brown samples, wherein artists have incorporated the actual property of others into their own unique creations. This is a 20th century mode of artistic operation that is now nothing short of dramatic in its proliferation, in spite of all the marketplace laws designed to prohibit it. We believe that art is what artists do. We hope for laws that recognize this, just as the dictionary recognizes new words (even slang) that come into common usage.

At this late date in the mass distribution of capturing technology (audio tape recorders, samplers, xerox machines,

*We think there are issues to stand up for here, but Island can spend their way out of ever having to face them in a court of law. So some important ideas about what constitutes art, and whether those ideas can supersede product constraints, will not reach a forum of precedent.*

face of their earth purely on the basis of how much more money they can afford to waste than we can. We think there are issues to stand up for here, but Island can spend their way out of ever having to face them in a court of law. So some important ideas about what constitutes art, and whether those ideas can supersede product constraints, will not reach a forum of precedent. In this culture, the market rules and money *is* power. They can own the law, and no one who is still interested in the supremacy of a vital and free-wheeling art can afford to challenge this aspect of our decline. It is a telling tribute to this culture corporation's crass obsessions that Island's whole approach to our work automatically assumed its goal was to siphon off their rightful profits. These people lost their ability to appreciate the very nature of what they're selling a long time ago.

camcorders, VCRs, computers, etc.) there should be no need to prove the cultural legitimacy of what we do with sound. And this is even more obvious when you look further back. We pursue audio works in the tradition of found-image collage which originated in the visual arts—from Schwitters and Braque to Rauschenberg to Warhol. In music, we refer you to the whole histories of folk music and the blues, both of which have always had creative theft as their *modus operandi*. Jazz and rock are full of this, too. The music business can try to reach the end of this century pretending that there is something wrong with this, or they can begin to acknowledge the truth and make way for reality.

Perceptually and philosophically, it is an uncomfortable wrenching of common sense to deny that once something hits the airwaves, it is literally in the public domain. The fact that the owners of culture and its material distribution are able to claim this isn't true belies their total immersion in a reality-on-paper. Artists have always approached the entire world around them as both inspiration to act and as raw material to mold and remold. Other art is just more raw material to us and to many, many others we could point to. When it comes to cultural influences, ownership is the point of fools. Copycats will shrink in the light of comparison. Bootlegging exact duplicates of another's product should be prosecuted, but we see no significant harm in anything else artists care to do with anything available to them in our "free" marketplace. We claim the right to create

with mirrors. This is our working philosophy.

Negativland occupies itself with recontextualizing captured fragments to create something entirely new—a psychological impact based on a new juxtaposition of diverse elements, ripped from their usual context, chewed up, and spit out as a new form of hearing the world around us. One of Negativland's artistic obsessions involves the media itself as source and

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subject for much of our work. We respond (as artists always have) to our environment. An environment increasingly filled with artificial ideas, images, and sound. Television, billboards, newspapers, advertisements, and music/muzak being blasted at us everywhere we go (and that background hum of everyday life certainly includes top-forty bands like U2). We follow our working philosophy as best we can amid the proprietary restrictions of a self-serving marketing system that has imposed itself on culture. In reality, that system of ownership is today's emperor's clothes, now casually subverted by every kid with a tape recorder. However, it is crucial to note that, as we plunder the ocean of media we all swim in, we believe in artistic responsibility. We do not duplicate existing work or bootleg others' products. We believe every artist is due what-

# NEGATIVLAND U2 ALBUM WILL NOT BE CENSORED!

The **Copyright Violation Squad**, a division of the **Aggressive School of Cultural Workers, Iowa Chapter**, is called into action once again as the satirical *U2* album by **Negativland**, loaded with strong social significance, is suppressed by the Entertainment-Military Establishment.

It is obvious by now that the real motive behind banning recordings such as this, or John Oswald's *Plunderphonic*, is not the money these artists are supposedly keeping the "owners" of the work from "legally earning." It is the suppression of a very well-guarded secret: NO ONE can own the Electronic Environment; one can only own the means by which to produce it. The music industry sure would like you to believe they do—money talks—but really, pay no attention to the man behind the curtain. Works of art that have been praised the world over are now banned from existence. Nobody has the right to abolish ideas, and recorded music is only organized thoughts and sounds.

Therefore, the Copyright Violation Squad makes available, on cassette, copies of Negativland's *U2*, free of charge, upon request. Just send a blank tape, 15 minutes or longer, along with a self-addressed mailer with sufficient return postage. The same goes for getting a dub of the original *Plunderphonic* CD, except you must submit a 90-minute tape for it.

This is only a temporary solution. The perpetrators of these archaic notions of censorship must be convinced to reverse their decisions. The contacts can be found at right. Tell them they should stop letting their fantasies of control from getting in the way of true cultural expression.



☛ *For cassette dubs, contact:*

Copyright Violation Squad, P.O. Box  
162, Oakdale IA 52319, USA  
In Canada: 2 Bloor St W #100-159,  
Toronto, Ontario M4W 3E2, Canada

☛ *For information on Negativland:*

1920 Monument Blvd MF-1, Concord  
CA 94520, USA; Fax 510 654 1133  
Eric Levine and Ian Moss, Island  
Records New York, 14 E. 4th St., 3rd  
Floor, New York NY 10012, USA;  
Tel. 212 477 8000; Fax 212 475 8254  
Chris Blackwell, Island Records UK,  
Fax 081 748 1998

Don Blederman, Warner/Chappell  
Music, 1290 6th Ave., 9th Floor, New  
York NY 10005, USA; Tel. 212 399  
6910; Fax 212 315 5590

Karen Kaplan and Sheila Roach/  
Principal Management (U2's  
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57th St. #1502, New York NY 10019,  
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Dublin 2 Ireland; Tel. 353 1 777 330,  
Fax 353 1 777 276

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ever rewards he or she can reap from his or her own products. The question that must rise to the surface of legal consciousness now is: at what point in the process of found sound incorporation does the new creation attain its own unique identity which supersedes the sum of its parts, thus gaining artistic licence? One of Island's objections to our record is the unauthorized use of a sample from the U2 song that formed the basis for both our pieces: "I Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For." We believe that what we did is legally protected fair use of the segment, as it was used for purposes of fair comment, parody, and cultural criticism, which the copyright law specifically allows. A relevant precedent was set earlier this year in 2 Live Crew's "Pretty Woman" case. The fact is that today there is no operationally workable way to reuse existing sound recordings in collage-based work and see that the original artists are paid for the use of their work. Those artists who only use a few samples and have the time, money, and inclination can have their record companies negotiate payments for "sampling clearances" to the labels that originally released the records containing the desired snippets. But this is cumbersome, arbitrary, and expensive enough to discourage advanced sound collage work where there might be anywhere from one to a dozen found sound elements present at any instant, dozens or hundreds over the duration of a record.

So much for content. It is clear that the more significant objection to our single was Island's concern about our cover graphics, which they claimed would cause "mas-

sive confusion," resulting in millions of U2 fans buying the wrong record. Does our packaging look like a new release by the group U2? *Yes, of course it does...* at first. But upon closer inspection it reveals itself to be something else. Closer inspection is one of the things we like to promote, while Island appears resigned to the entrenchment of stupidity and the inability of their audience to notice subtle cues such as

*The question that must rise to the surface of legal consciousness now is: at what point in the process of found sound incorporation does the new creation attain its own unique identity which supersedes the sum of its parts, thus gaining artistic licence?*

our name on the cover or our label's logo on the back.

Further, the context in which any potential confusion would take place is a retail record store. The first clue to record store employees would be that our single arrives from SST, not Island, and in small quantities, not the hundreds Island would send. Ours would be located in the "Indies" bins common to most outlets, not the general "Rock" bins where U2 records are found. Ours would be filed under "N," not "U." These logistics aside, let's assume someone does buy our record thinking it's theirs. Does Island really believe that the U2 fan will be satisfied with such a mistake and, returning ours or not, not proceed to buy U2's new record? Accusing us of trying to make money off their name is one thing, but claiming that the money we would make would be money they would not make is not very realistic. Island's infer-

ence that U2 fans might actually assume that we are them upon hearing our record is simply ridiculous on the face of it, and another indication of their lack of respect for their own audience. We hope you are able to locate a copy of the record and hear it for yourself.

As to Island's point about scheduling our single to coincide with U2's new release, we must plead to interesting coincidence. Island should come to grips with the fact that not everybody in the world



avidly soaks up every promo blurb that Island feeds to the mainstream rock press. We don't generally read that press and neither knew nor cared that U2 was about to release another chart-busting epic. Our single was scheduled for fall release because our market stems primarily from college radio airplay, and that's when school resumes and the listening population is largest. Fall is also a prime time to release throughout the record industry,

which is probably why U2's new record was also scheduled for fall. It seems clear that both Island and SST were attempting to take advantage of the same situation, not each other. As it turns out, U2's release has been delayed until January of 1992, four months after our release date, making any potential confusion even less likely.\*

So why would we want to simulate a U2 cover if not to swipe some of the big money that this big band attracts? Our real reasons are actually so reflective that they

would never cross the corporate legal mind. The image on our cover was U2's namesake, the U-2: a high-altitude espionage plane which, prophetically enough, was shot down over the now-defunct Soviet Union in 1960 causing a huge, meaningless international flap. The only point of light in those dark days was that it gave a self-righteous and complacent America its first clear photo opportunity to catch its own president telling a blatant lie which the CIA assured him was a plausible deniability. Our U2 was a spy full of secrets intruding into the self-righteous and complacent image-world of polite pop. We did it as an example of some-

thing not being what it seems to be. We did it because we're all subject to too much media image mongering. We did it because tricksters and jesters are the last best hope against the corporate music bureaucracies of good grooming and have all but killed the most interesting thing in popular music—grass roots inspiration. We did it

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\*EDITOR'S NOTE: U2's latest release, *Achtung, Baby!*, appeared in record stores early in December, 1991.

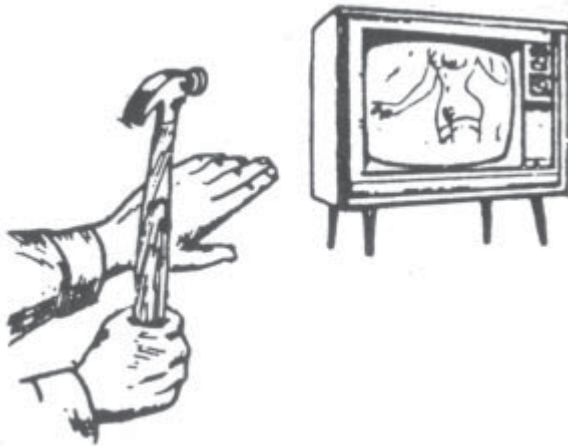


for laughs—listen to it and try not to. We did it so you could read this. The fact that Island Records can't understand all this, or if they can, they can't appreciate it, or if they can appreciate it they can't allow themselves to acknowledge it, is precisely why they should not have the right to control the life of other people's art.

One basic failing of the US legal system is that it treats the plaintiff and the defendant as though they are equally powerful entities, regardless of the actual resources each may have. Further, it disregards the fact that the cost of preparing a legal defense for a trial is prohibitively high—unthinkable for any entity other than a wealthy individual or a good-sized corporation. Thus, when a corporation goes after a small business or low-income individuals, the conflict automatically rolls outside of the court system because of the defendant's inability to pay the costs of mounting a proper defense. The matter is resolved by the more powerful organization threatening to press the suit back into the courts unless the smaller party agrees to their terms unconditionally. The powerful crush the weak. Note that all of this

is purely a *power* relationship, essentially without regard to the legality of the issue, let alone the morality.

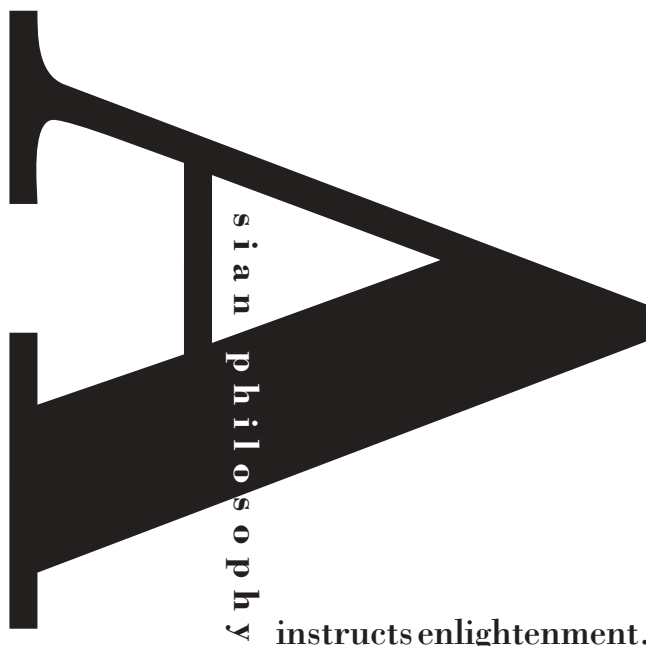
What would be the solution to prevent the cruel squashing of interesting jokes such as ours? How about a thorough re-vamping of the antique copyright, publishing, and cultural property laws to bring them into comfortable accord with modern technology and a healthy respect for the artist's impulse to incorporate public influences? Marketer's constraints should be restrained in cases of valid artistic commentary. This is a huge and complex Congressional undertaking and would inevitably result in sticky legal decisions akin to deciding whether or not a particular work of art is pornographic. So be it. Art needs to begin to acquire an equal footing with marketers in court. We can even imagine such changes extending all the way to recording contracts which, strange as it may seem, might actually be written so as to allow the artist, rather than the marketer, to own and control his or her own work. You might as well start thinking about these problems now because they're not going to go away. [end



[Sabotage, destroy any form of seduction and abstraction.]

**THE  
IMMEDIAT  
UNDER  
GROUND**

**SEIZING  
THE  
MEDIA**



**IT IS STILL  
POSSIBLE TO TAKE  
ADVANTAGE OF  
THE FACT THAT  
RADIO AND  
TELEVISION  
STATIONS ARE  
NOT YET GUARDED  
BY TROOPS**

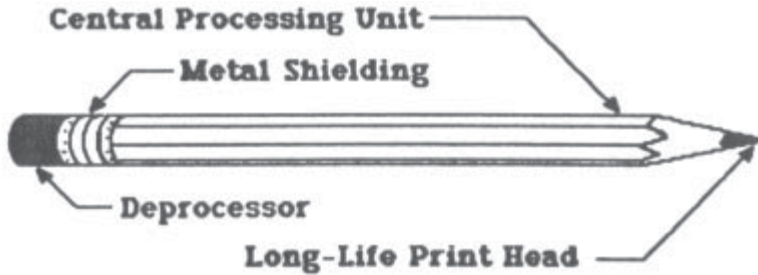
instructs enlightenment. But given our daily exposure to a barrage of persuasive messages, monologues, sales pitches, come-ons, and uninformative hyper-sensational news, common sense and sanity are tough enough a struggle to maintain.

We each see how extended exposure to television and mass media dulls people with a sense of numbness and nausea. At every turn a monologue of coercion penetrates our senses and rapes our attention. Wherever we look, wherever we listen, wherever we go: the pornography of billboards, bus-side placards, subway cards, glaring storefront signs and displays, the glut of junk mail, stupid fly-by beach planes and blimps, coupons, obnoxious bumper stickers and breast pins, embarrassing service uniforms,



plastic banners and ribbons, absurd parades, streetcorner handouts, windshield wiper flyers, matchbook ads, business cards, screaming radios, the daily papers, every nanosecond of television, the package wrapped around everything we buy—from the label in our underwear to the

we reflect on the reality of lives—we will continue to be forced to see fun-house mirror distortions of ourselves projected onto a dumpster of products that promise to make us each desirable, sophisticated, and correct. At every turn we are under attack.



robot computer that calls us in our homes—only the upper atmosphere and the ocean floor offer any sanctuary from America’s ecology of coercion. And at every turn the monologues drone on, imbedding the psychological mutagens that coax us to become pathetic customers and unquestioning flag wavers. At every turn, we are under subtle attack.

The media serve the interests of the State and other corporations, but never the interests of the public. The media’s screen of aggression and seduction is designed to mesmerize and captivate the largest possible sector of a population whose attention is then sold like scrap metal to advertisers and gang raped by their slogans, jingles, and manic images. Protected by an uncrossable media moat, agents of the State profit from war and relax behind a web of information laws, censorship powers, and vapid explanations that swat the public of detailed intelligence and mass resistance.

So long as we do not control our own government, our own state, and our own broadcast media—the mirror with which

### **Incest of Corporations and the State**

THE STATE CONTROLS information, debt, and violence and targets collective identity. Corporations control commodification, work, and media and target individual identity. Both deploy the same psychological strategies for imbedding the public with their messages and directives. Never were their common strategies more transparent than when US disinformation and propaganda service, the infamous USIA, decided to step up its psy-warfare campaign against the people of Cuba in the Spring of 1989. Until then, attempts to psychologically destabilize the Cuban people were concentrated in the broadcasts of Radio Martí, the Florida-based, Government-owned pirate radio station that to this day illegally transmits propaganda and disinformation into domestic Cuban radios. In the Spring of 1989, the USIA added images to their psy-war arsenal and began transmitting tele-broadcasts from a hot air balloon controlled from the Key West signals station. Sibling of Radio Martí, the project was dubbed TV Martí.

## TOWARDS AN ECOLOGY OF INFORMATION: THE IMMEDIAT APPROACH

0. Participating in the proliferation, cross-pollination, and consolidation of counter-commercial print, audio, visual, modem, activist, and correspondence media.
1. Documenting the basic sources, dynamics, and affects of corporate and State media control. Exposing methods of mind control, behavior modification, and image imbedding.
2. Openly discussing tools and methods that strengthen immunization and freedom from deceptive, disinforming, and subliminal media exposures. Upgrading public media literacy to decode, produce, and broadcast in all communications media.
3. Open cultural expressions, education, networking, and resistance.
4. Reclaiming public sovereignty of the airwaves.
5. The liberation of all public space from government, corporate, and business messages.
6. Public takeover of all commercial broadcast media and the creation of public production libraries.
7. Liberation as glasnost : the emergence of democratic public communications and media networks.

*The assault of spectacle media is twofold: while immersing the public in a barrage of coercive messages, spectacle media serves as an accomplice to political felony, murder, and treason by censoring the details and dimensions of State activity from democratic processes and public intelligence. Culture, awareness, and democratic power are what we surrender for an internal economy that is dependent on the relentless preparation and sale of public attention for penetration by corporate and State advertising. The Immediasts stand in solidarity with all groups and individuals who act in opposition to this situation and whose work assists omnicultural vocality, public production libraries, public media and an open state.*

A few things are to be held in mind here. First, after the Creel Commission saturated Americans with pro-war propaganda during World War I, the level of public disgust was so intense that laws were enacted forbidding the State from ever subjecting the public to its propaganda again. Thus, the USIA's Voice of America propaganda broadcasts that we can hear today in Amsterdam, Berlin, and Prague, we are protected against hearing here on our own turf. Propaganda is so disorienting and confusing that Americans have actually passed laws forbidding it here in its crude verifiable forms.

The fact that we must now face and destroy is that advertising, entertainment, and news have become the government's Trojan horse into the psyche of the public. What was TV Mart's first propaganda broadcast aimed at destabilizing the minds of Cuban people? MTV! Think about it: The USIA's first broadcast of tele-propaganda delivered MTV's corporate rock videos! At every turn we are under attack.

### Methods of Mind Control

IMMEDIAS T RESEARCH has turned up two invaluable sources revealing State tactics of behavior modification, subliminal manipulation, and mind control. The first is the psychological warfare manual authored

and distributed by the CIA to the Nicarau-gan terrorists, the Contras. The instruction manual directives state:

In effect, the human being should be considered the priority objective in a political war. And conceived as the military target of guerrilla war, the human being has his most critical point in his mind. Once his mind has been reached, the "political animal" has been defeated, without necessarily receiving bullets...

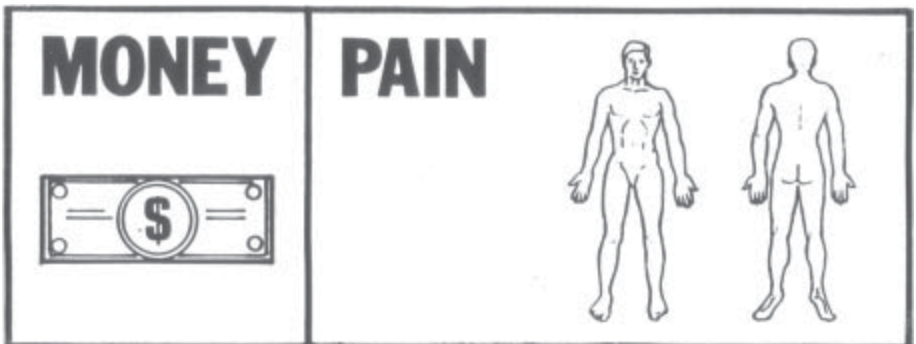
This conception of guerrilla warfare as political war turns Psychological Operations into the decisive factor of the results. The target, then, is the minds of the population, all the population: our troops, the enemy troops and the civilian population...

Communication is a way to ask and give the answer to the same question.

The manual goes on to instruct its readers how to effectively deceive, blackmail, and assassinate individuals antagonistic to the imperatives of the State.

### The Semantic Differential

OUR SECOND SOURCE of documentation exposing State-led programs of media subversion is found in the video documentaries and published articles of Fred Landis. Landis first discovered the presence of mind control tactics in commercial broad-



cast media by monitoring daily newspapers produced by the CIA in Chile in 1973. His resulting Ph.D. dissertation outlined CIA tactics of subliminal manipulation and mind control and was used against the CIA in Volume 7 of the 1975 Hearings of the Senate Church Committee; “The CIA and the Media,” and in the 1977–1978 Hearings of the House Intelligence Committee. Landis’ observations and research exposed a now easily identifiable method

## **S T A T E**

- 1. Representation is reality.*
- 2. Secrecy is security.*
- 3. Violence empowers the violent.*

deployed by the State to psychologically destabilize and subliminally coerce a given population. Based on the crosscultural linguistic theory and research generated by Charles Osgood (funded by the CIA), the government deploys the following method, called the *Semantic Differential*:

- First, media Agents identify cultural symbols which have deep emotional associations within a target population’s everyday domestic, cultural, and spiritual lives. Agents then use these symbols as inroads to the people’s unconscious and manipulate these symbols as subliminal imbeds which can be antagonized or resonated in accordance with situations being manufactured by the CIA:

Indirect attacks on government ministers employ the juxtaposition of photos of the targeted official with unrelated headlines, subliminal propaganda, and pre-selected word associations. By simply placing the key word near a photo of government leaders, a crude behaviorist attempt is made to condition new associations and new values

to familiar personalities.

The combined effect of word associations (derived from the semantic differential) with subliminal imbeds is so strong that it displaces any other message,...

—even ones which disprove the connotations and meaning of the effect.

State tactics of media control deliver subliminal and disinforming directives in the guise of news. Targeting deep psychological imbeds present in every culture, the State instills shock, terror, confusion, sexual arousal, awe or uncertainty by antagonizing or coupling these imbeds with sensational headlines associating such things as Satanism with enemies, and religious miracles and

good luck with leaders implanted or puppeted by the State. The symbols change from culture to culture. During the US Supreme Court Nomination Hearings of Clarence Thomas, *The New York Times* ran a cover photo (Sunday, October 13, 1991) of Senator Hatch holding up a copy of *The Exorcist* and associating it with Anita Hill! This was not an accusation, it was a psychological tactic. According to the semantic differential, the deep and negative feelings experienced in people by such associations outlast evidence which demonstrates their falsehood and perversion.

## **Immediast Tactics**

ASIAN PHILOSOPHY INSTRUCTS self-realization and awakening, but when under attack, Asian philosophy also instructs methods for overpowering an assailant with the force of his own assault. We herald this approach. Immediast tactics aim to neutralize the key images and text being imbedded into the public by the media and the State. Our work is the liberation of public

space from the broadcasts of corporations, businesses, and departments of the State; and the abolition of public captivity as spectators to the ceaseless barrage of billboards, manipulative images, State constructed news and propaganda. The question is, how we can lockjaw the spectacle with its own force?

Returning all airborne commercial broadcast media to public direction, access, and control will naturally release cultural forces difficult at present to imagine—the mind turned inside out won't be a viral image slogan on a Gannet billboard. It will be living people on the airwaves and in the streets.

We interpret Freedom of Speech to mean the facilitated ability to both access and produce information and cultural material through the development of public production libraries where we can each and all produce cultural print, radio, television, and radio broadcast materials in library studios equipped with desktop publishing facilities, graphics technology, multi-track audio recorders, film and video cameras, and editing equipment. Freedom to broadcast can be in the power of the public. Corporations can be evicted from the airwaves. We can charge them staggering rent for the low-end frequencies if we want to. The State, under relentless public scrutiny, can be kept nude of its power to hide from, indebt, and subvert the public. Democracy can be as open and dynamic as our public libraries.

Of course we anticipate struggle on the part of the State and corporations. Let them struggle, Doing so opens up new fissures and points of access. In the meantime, we call on you to engage in your own actions. We call on artists, writers, posterists, activists, and networkers from

all countries to assist with our project. Vocalize your disgust. Speak up. Fight back. Liberate the public spaces in the zones that most need it—the ones in your everyday life. Organize indigenous Immediast groups. Organize Networker Congresses. Strike. Send to our journal, *Noospapers*, your statements, manifestoes, critiques, tracts, tactics, poetry, posters, collages, documentation, graphics and art. Together we can begin the liberation of

## PRIVATE MEDIA

1. *Representation is reality.*
2. *Ownership is identity.*
3. *To consume is to connect.*

public spaces and end our forced captivity in a spectator democracy.

### Revolution and Insurgence

REVOLUTION IS THE OVERTHROW of government; our aim is to overthrow the media. Armed insurrection is unnecessary in so far as it is words and images which are shot at us, not bullets. But the words and images which keep us in bondage, which inundate us with the political muzak of disinformation, half-baked scandals shock, empty desires, and subliminal imbeds are what enable State and corporate men to shoot bullets at people outside our borders, slaughtering people like you and me by the thousands in Iraq, in Panama, in Grenada, in El Salvador, in Libya, in Nicaragua, in Africa. With the media in the hands of the public, State agents who order secret wars, election riggings, destabilization programs and other covert actions will be forced into open view and the democratic control of the public.

# CREATING PUBLIC PRODUCTION LIBRARIES

AN IMMEDIASST PROJECT



If literacy measures people's ability to read and write, people living in information societies are media illiterate—unequipped to decode the affects of media on intelligence and intimacy and unable to write in the

language of broadcasting. While the media's ecology of coercion assuages public desire to participate in the media by emphasizing the bottom-line significance of public polls, Gallup & its pathetic epigones merely totalize a few public neurons into the status of a collective brain. How many of your comrades and kin have ever participated in a Gallup poll, anyway?

Public seizure of all commercial broadcast media establishes what public production libraries nurture: liberation from advertising, the decommodification of public attention, the upgrade of public intelligence, the development of media literacy, the documentation of public productions, facilitated cultural expression, the termination of covert State action, violence, propaganda, and media control, and the inviolable ground for a public media and open state. Such are the aims of all Immediast plans and projects.

Public production libraries will be built in sisterhood with the public libraries that now exist. Within each production library will be the facilities to produce print, audio, visual, and database material. "Librarians" will serve as technicians, maintenance, and repair people. Production libraries will give people a larynx through which to speak. The media seized, corporations silenced, and the State under relentless scrutiny, we will reconnect and celebrate who we are.

## The New Servant Class

ESTABLISHING DEMOCRATIC LEGITIMACY in America begins not with overthrowing our governments, but with diminishing them to the role of public servants. After all, in America, State agents are still employees of the public. The Immediast goal is to

make government officials the only servants in our society, the audience of public expressions, the assistants of public cultures, economy, and the archivists of public histories. The legitimization of democratic government will come from multicultural public movements, not State initi-



atives. The airwaves are public domain to be used by and for the public—and public movements will converge through the establishment of national public media—liberation of the airwaves. This is our work for the nineties.

## **The Case of USA vs. John Poindexter**

The outcome of the federal court case *USA vs. John Poindexter* has pushed us from long-standing civilian silence to insurgent Immediast action. Look carefully: North and Poindexter reversed their felonies by proving that extended media exposure destroyed case witnesses' ability to think independently of the words and images the media had saturated them with. This is now American history, a legal precedent. Admitting the mind-control action of mass media protected State felons from public law. The precedent of *USA vs. John Poindexter* thus establishes that:

1. Spectacle representations derived from actual public events manipulate perception and control the natural outcome of our events.
2. Spectacle media disables the public to think and perceive freely of the biases imbedded by exposure to mass media noise and images.

Spectacle media serves as a moat protecting the National Security State from public participation and democratic scrutiny. Meanwhile, North and Poindexter, both felons, are back on the streets again.

These crimes and their accomplices in the White House, CIA, NSA, CNN, DOD, ABC, USIA, MTV, CBS, etc., are too much to tolerate given the increasing violence, debt, recession, and systemic deception forced upon us every day by the government and consumer media.

Our drive to connect, to create, to love and make love, to play, to communicate, to

share, to live freely, to participate or be left in peace, to represent our own desires and author our own cultures and live with meaning that we together create are under relentless invasion and constant assault. The time to change has come.

We no longer tolerate being besieged with manipulative messages that we don't want to hear and cannot respond to. We no longer tolerate an inaccessible State that censors, blocks, and denies information to the public. We no longer tolerate the spectacle that ultimately serves to absolve criminals like Poindexter, Bush, North and their lickspittles from crimes of international violence and domestic debt. The time has come to turn the ecology of coercion in on itself. The time has come to veto, overwhelm, and subvert the messages of all airborne commercial broadcast media until they are returned to complete public direction, access, and control. How long should we wait to liberate public spaces from the blister of billboards and advertisements? The air is public domain, and the airwaves are ours to hear our own voices, see our own colors, enjoy our own conversations, and celebrate in the vast community of our cultures. Remember: dialogue offsets the hegemony, and intimacy empowers.

The time has come to restore the democratic power and public space that have been coopted and colonized by commercial media.

Celebrate public culture. Reconnect. Seize the media. The air is yours.

In 1992 we begin the work that needs to be done. Asian philosophy instructs enlightenment [v. 1.1, March 1992]

*The Immediast Underground* and *Noospapers magazine* will accept your correspondence and submissions at P.O. Box 2726, Westfield NJ 07091.

# What are the Imm

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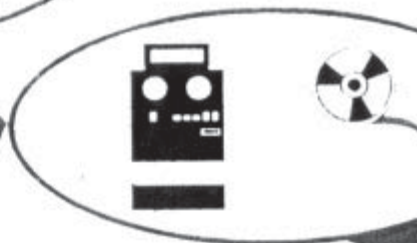


Correspondence, Mail  
Art, and Exchange

Hacking



Seizing the Medi



Routing the Spectacle  
against Itself



# Mediaists Doing?

Use:  
Technology of Coercion

Enjoying Public Media  
and an Open State



Creating Public  
Production Libraries

# PLAGIARISM

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# THE TRUTH I N DOUBLING

BY MARK PALMER

**A COLLECTION OF  
APHORISMS  
ON THE ROLE  
O F T H E  
SUPPLEMENT**

our illusions. We do not want to be left alone without a guide to excuse our blindness, to be shown all our fears in a handful of dust.

The double is believed to be purely parasitic. It cannot exist without the object to which it has attached itself and from which it feeds. The presumably impossible pure autonomy of the double is a recurrent theme in horror fiction.



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authority. We are drawn

to our leaders as the embodiment of our ideals. To seek to copy such an indomitable presence is an idea wholly alien to us. We believe there can be only one whom we love, one whom we revere. We reject the duplicate as a duplicity, a masquerade. We arm ourselves in defense of

We fear the double that is no longer slave to our mastery.

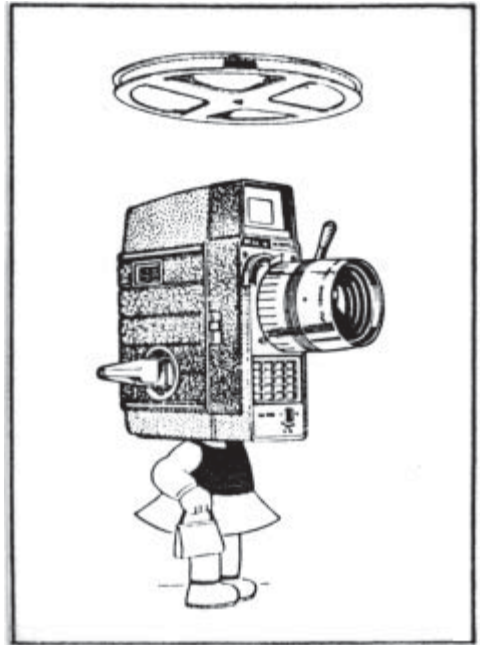
Satan is God's dark denied double. And each of us is in (the) possession of a double: the reflection in the mirror, and the shadow that follows us around.

A vampire cannot see his reflection in the mirror because he is a reflection—a reflection in constant need of a source. The vampire is that double of the night that awakens only when we dream and that seeks to drain us of our spirit. Dracula was a plagiarist, a stealer of souls in order that he, too, could maintain his semblance of soulhood within the world of man.

Death feeds us of our double, liberates us from its entrainment. The shadow is swallowed by the night.

The Golem. Frankenstein's monster. Pygmalion. So many Others. Human-kind cannot stop inventing idealizations of itself, if only in order to renew its own corruption.

The thief is one who performs his work outside of society's self-imposed structures for the production and consumption of property. By his acts of independent abduction, the thief threatens the socially sanctioned bond that the owner assumes to hold fast between the object and himself. In addition, the thief liberates himself from society's proprietary hold on him, dispossesses himself of its influence and establishes his own realm of values. The thief asserts his sovereignty within the world even when he does not have the sanctioned authority to do so: "It is mine because I say it is so; and I, not he, am king. I do not leave it up to others to permit me the right to my possessions. I take now what I deserve and leave the law behind to make up the difference later." In just this way does the thief upset the natural order of the marketplace, and turn commodity fetishism on its head.



The thief shatters memories, stampedes history like the chinashop bull.

How much of what I write do I know is drawn from others? Not even I can tell—especially not I. De Man points to the essential blindness that prohibits us from knowing every source of our understanding. We all have a weak link in us somewhere that cripples our claim to absolute authority.

Homer was the first Karen Eliot.

Can we plagiarize from nature? Certainly nature plagiarizes itself: one gene replicates another, insects and animals of all sorts disguise themselves with the patterns and colors of the objects of their environments. The difference between this and the term as it is understood in reference to cultural intentions is that in nature there is no concept of an "original" (that is, any animal may copy from any other insofar as it suits each one's self-preservational needs); rather, what is involved in nature is

a cycle of reproduction and conflict that has no singular point of conception. Hierarchy is an illusion, since those at the top of the cycle are eventually fed upon by those at the bottom. This perpetual recycling of information is what present copy culture seeks to restore, this notion of the eternal return of the same.

Nature is not only prior to culture, but it is meant also to be included as a part of culture, a part that is essential to its existence and cannot be denied.

Unlike in present commodity culture where the difference between the qualities of the various products is fairly minor, art still seeks to impose strict hierarchies of influence and effect (high/low, etc.) upon itself; and this is why it always fails to find a secure and proper place within the more flexible structure of the free market. Paradoxically, however, it is only when art has fully decommodified itself that it will fit within consumption culture as an adequate critique.

Hermes the thief (I must reread Norman O. Brown) is the symbol of the current aspirations of the subculture. In too simply dichotomizing all cultural effects into the polarized influences of Apollo and Dionysius, Nietzsche mistakenly leaves out of his equation Hermes' crafty, subversive role.\* It was this unfortunate absence in his philosophy that caused Nietzsche, and, later for a time, the entire German race, to go mad.

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\*The first act Hermes conducted as an infant—indeed, he was barely a few hours out of his mother's womb!—was to steal a number of oxen from Apollo. One of the major roles Hermes assumed in his maturity was to conduct the shades from Heaven into the Underworld. Hermes does not respect the borderlines of propriety; he leaves traces of his dirty shoe prints everywhere he roams.

The German critic Walter Benjamin envisioned a book composed entirely of assembled quotations from other authors. Several centuries earlier, Richard Burton, in his voluminous, thoroughly plagiaristic *Anatomy of Melancholy*, nearly wrote such a book. In the film *Bande à part*, which is constructed on the notions of thievery, kidnapping and plagiarism, Godard quotes T.S. Eliot as having written (I paraphrase): “To be new is automatically to be traditional.”

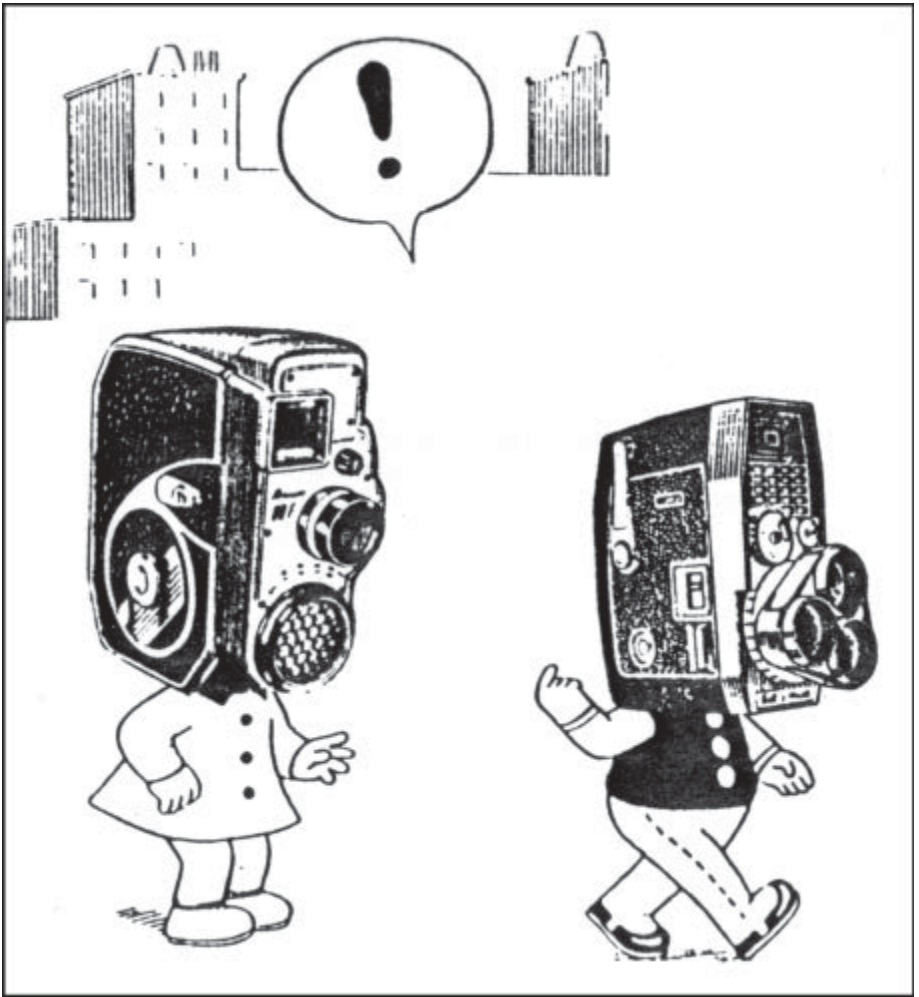
Plagiarism is viewed as an act committed in one's intellectual infancy, out of which one eventually is supposed to develop ideas of one's own. Those committed to plagiarism are hence considered immature, ill-informed. Plagiarism is an impulse we seek to grow out of, in anticipation of an identity of our own.

A landmark in the history of plagiarism: The computer virus. Perhaps the purest form of copy technique to date, since it is entirely self-replicative in nature. Once introduced, a virus functions and spreads invisibly and manifests itself in its host in relation to its own will.

The virus defines its own host environment rather than having one imposed upon it from above. Similarly, rather than merely accepting the pre-determinate context of the gallery space, the copy artist seeks other venues, other host environments within which to spread his wares. The object is not necessarily to kill the host, but to take control of his movements.

The “individual” of the Romantics is dead—the masses have killed him. Guttled and spoiled, atomized and scattered, his body has become reduced to particles in a void. Authority cannot withstand the plunders of those beneath it. Its self-erected castle crumbles into dust and each of its subjects takes back a stone as their victory.

The author is merely the one who signs



the text. (Handwritten:) “*This is not my signature.*”

Plagiarism is a sin of omission. It is a failure to take heed of authority’s demand to hold onto his crown.

Surface versus depth. Is it plagiarism if I take the notes of a known musical composition and translate them all literally and exhaustively into color-points in a painting? Is it plagiarism if I create an exact replication of UNIX but with my own source code commands (as the Free Software Foundation did with GNU)?

GNU: “This (GNU) is Not UNIX.”

In order lawfully to copy Mickey Mouse or some such prefabricated character for one’s own purposes, one is required to alter something like 30% of its features—the rest can be left intact. 30% freedom, 70% slave? Or: 70% slavery, 30% free?

The white of the page that confronts the writer (the same applies to the blank canvas of the painter, etc.) supports the illusion that his words are born out of nothing, that his conception is immaculate, is devoid of external resources. But *every* text

is to some extent a palimpsest. Only with modernism has there come to be a notion of the return to a “zero level” of history from which one may build anew a room of one’s own. The contemporary postmodern consciousness is an admission that the past can never be fully obliterated from one’s work, that pure presence is a deception. Speech does not precede writing; speech *is* a writing.

The past cannot merely be erased back to the point of the blank slate (Klee, Kandinsky), transcendentalized out of existence (Mondrian), ravaged like a whore (Picasso). The past is here to stay, whether we like it or not.

(Speech; writing. Nature; culture. Origin; supplement. Need I copy even more from Derrida to point out his essential connection to my enterprise?)

We live amidst the shardheaps of misbegotten histories. Those who would seek to assert their authority within such a context are left to reconstruct pattern out of loss. Best perhaps instead to take the loss for what it is and build from there, like the spider that spins its web across the void.

Essential Texts for a library of Plagiarism and Copy Culture: Freud: *Das Unheimliche*; Erich Auerbach: *Mimesis*; Otto Rank: *The Double, Beyond Psychology*; Michel Schneider: *Voleurs de mots*; Jean Baudrillard: *Xerox and Infinity*; Michel Serres: *The Parasite*; Ulric de Lazie: *Dreams within Dreams*.

...And finally, a joke: Why did the plagiarist cross the road? To get to the other side. [end



# CODES AND CHAOS

BY THOMAS WILCOH

## *Divided Attention*

In an old book of magic tricks written by Harry Blackstone (but ghostwritten, I suspect, by Walter B. Gibson, noted writer on stage magic and creator of the pulp hero the Shadow), I find the following quotation: “We know that a person’s attention can only be centered upon one thing at a time. Divided attention is never close.”

For the stage magician, this quotation is of much value, for it makes clear how a magician hoodwinks his audience. He di-

vides their attention between two simultaneous actions so they are unable to see what he does not want them to see—they are unable to see closely.

Those in other arts can do the same by simultaneously presenting two items/facts/images to the audience. In music, two words can be spoken at the same time—overdubbed—to heighten an effect or slip something past the censors. In theatre, any number of actions can be performed at the same time at different point on the stage. In writing, a single sentence can mean several different things if filled with metaphorical language.

Only the stage magician, however, desires to distract his audience in order to slip something past them. Only the stage magician needs to do this. A playwright does not want his audience to miss an action or his play might become confused or meaningless. A writer does not want to distract his reader from one meaning of his sentence while emphasizing another. Either

both/all meanings are clear to the reader or one of the meanings is missed entirely. And if it is missed, then there has been no effect produced. A double entendre does not “work” if the sexual connotation is not recognized, for example.

The major problem with the written word, in particular, is that it exists outside of time. Unlike a stage performance or a film, the written word can be enjoyed at any speed. The reader can even go back and reread sections of the text or skim paragraphs or underline significant passages. The reader is in command of how the text will be read; the writer merely creates it. He can suggest, with sentence length and structure, how the words should be read, at what pace, but there is no way to force a reader to read any text in any particular way. The writer is therefore in a weaker position than are the stage magician or filmmaker, who can control exactly how their work is perceived and experienced. The writer has less control over his material and over his audience.

The only trick the written word has is the same trick it has always had. It guides the reader into an interior world where the writer’s voice is speaking. The writer’s voice, the text as it is read, then becomes the silent thoughts of the reader. And so, in the act of reading, the reader becomes an unwitting hypnotic subject of the writer, controlled by him, led along from word to word, paragraph to paragraph, until, finally, the end of the text is reached and the writer allows him to go free.

But even then, I cannot prevent you from rereading the above words. [n°13

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## *Nature as Artist*

When the volcano exploded at ancient Pompeii, it did more than destroy a city

and 2,000 of its inhabitants. It created a huge outdoor sculpture display unmatched anywhere in the world.

On August 24, 79 A.D., Mount Vesuvius erupted and buried Pompeii in twelve feet of rock and ash. So gentle was the fall of deadly material that even loaves of bread, fruit, fish and eggs were preserved within its casing. The city’s inhabitants were likewise preserved. Bodies were found where they fell in the street. Others were found crouched fearfully in corners or rooms. A chained dog, unable to escape the hot ash, was forever preserved in a frantic effort to free himself from his chain.

The bodies were preserved as hollows within the layers of fallen ash. Archaeologists poured liquid plaster into the hollows to create casts of the bodies. Even small details—the hair, facial expressions, clothing—can be seen in these casts.

Just as a photograph captures for eternity a moment of time, so the volcanic eruption captures the last desperate moments of Pompeii’s inhabitants. In a brief flash of spontaneous creation, life was turned into art, whether it wanted to be or not.

Think of the lives at Pompeii as so much found art. Marcel Duchamp took a common urinal, labeled it art, and it became art. It became art because an artist said it was art. In like manner, Mount Vesuvius took human beings and, through a similar act of creative will, made art from the common.

Ashes to ashes, indeed.

Pompeii teaches us an important lesson: All of us are raw material for the artists around us, all of them waiting to pounce upon us, fashion us, transform us into something greater than we are.

At any moment we may be called upon to serve the noble cause. [n°14



# PRINTED MATTER OVERVIEW

EXCERPTS FROM  
PUBLICATIONS  
RECEIVED AT  
THIS ADDRESS

C  
o n s u m p t i o n i s n o w  
a public issue,  
needing free de-  
bate as much as  
welfare or de-  
fense. In fact the  
last time con-

sumption became a public issue was during the rationing of the Second World War. Today the battle against pollution has hit the home front.

“To shift metaphors, the supermarket checkout line is now a ballot box. Edward Filene of the Boston department store family argued, back in the 1920s, that through their purchases Americans elect their ‘industrial government.’ Now they are deciding such issues as whether the air will be clean enough to breathe.

“The problem is, North America has a virtual one-party system in this respect. That party is the Pro-Consumption Party. Like political elections, checkout line campaigns are waged primarily through mass media advertising. The only side that gets time in the debate that matters is the Pro-Consumption Party....”

From “The Tyranny of the Airwaves” by Jonathan Rowe, from *Adbusters Quarterly*, “A magazine of media and environmental strategies,” Fall/Winter 1991, Vol. 2, no. 1. Subscriptions are US\$16 for 4 issues from The Media Foundation, 1243 West 7th Ave, Vancouver, British Columbia, V6H 1B7, Canada; Tel. 604 736 9401.

“”

“i could shout for joy that i am so alone with the wild rough wind drenching my body. i’d like to be on a raft, standing upright above the grey river whose hurrying water the wind cannot disturb. i’d like to stand there and shout that i am so gloriously alone. the wind tears the blue sky open, and the sun comes out and kissed me tenderly. i’d like to kiss it back, but i forget my wish immediately because now the wind has leaped upon me. i sense the wonderful firmness of my body. i laugh aloud for joy, because i am a resistance to the wind. i feel all strength within me.’ — *entry in the diary of sophie scholl, executed for scattering leaflets at the university of munich expressing opposition to nazism.*”

From *The postcard review*, no. 1. Write: 124 Ninth Ave, Pitman NJ 08071.

“”

“The U.S. government made Puerto Ricans citizens [in 1917] so that they could fight and die for US interests. Since then



more than 250,000 Puerto Ricans have participated in wars and military interventions around the world. This includes the Second World War, where the first Puerto Rican regiment was created (the 65th infantry), and the Korean War. In both wars thousands of Puerto Ricans were killed and wounded. In the Vietnam War about 2,500 Puerto Ricans were killed. In proportion to the population Puerto Ricans had a higher percentage of casualties than any other ethnic group. Thousands returned injured, crippled, and emotionally disturbed.”

From “Puerto Ricans in U.S. Wars,” first appearing in *El Pitirre*, but here excerpted

from *Worm* no. 25, September 1991. One year/12 issues is \$10 from: WORM, 115 Grand St, Brooklyn NY 11211.

““

“A Spectre is haunting the world—the spectre of estrangement, making us strangers to men and environment. From time immemorial intellectuals have been aware of it and all the greatest powers have entered into a holy alliance to exorcise this spectre. Pope and Presidents, Secret Services and Humanitarian Committees, Euro-American Christians and Afro-Asian Communists. Where is the man of free spirit who has not been decried as a stranger by his own pseudo-friends? Where’s the party



that hasn't hurled back the branding reproach of estrangement against its adversaries?

“Three things result from this fact:



“1. Even though the largest (ignorant) part of humanity is not aware of it, estrangement has become a widely diffused attitude.



## THE STRANGER

“2. Estrangement is already acknowledged by all powers to be itself a power.

“3. It is high time that a manifest of estrangement be published....”

Excerpted from Part One of “The



Stranger's Manifesto” by Ignazio Corsaro, from *Lo Straniero (The Stranger)*, vol. 6, no. 11. Request from: Ignazio Corsaro, via Chiaia 149, 80121 Napoli, Italy; tel. 0039 81 426 052.

“”

“A woman complained recently in a letter-to-an-editor to a 'zine that only about 30% of the small-press publications she ordered were worth what she paid; the rest, she said, were overpriced and/or lacking in content. Who is to blame for that? The latest issue of *Communiqué After Dark* examines the quality of

'zines and 'zine reviews—focusing primarily on *Factsheet Five*—and concludes that reviewers need to be more critical of inadequate work....”

From “Zine Publishing: A Concern About Quality” from *Obscure Publications & Video* no. 12. In addition, issue no. 13 of *OP&V* includes a transcript of a 1988 complaint brought against Jeffrey Dahmer for sexually molesting a teenage boy. \$5 for 5 issues from: Jim Romenesko, P.O. Box 1334, Milwaukee WI 53201.

“”

“Because the subject [of copyright] includes some paradoxes, careful analysis of the different concepts is necessary. First we will define the term “information” broadly as a set of perceivable forms of matter in space and time (in the case of music) or energy. As such any form is transferable to any material or knowledge; it simply means that I can tell you something I know, write it down, record it on tape or store it in a computer. The basic characterization of information seems to be that its transfer and multiplication is possible without taking away anything from the source. When I'm telling you something, I don't lose anything myself. This implies that information can't be owned. Property after

all is something you can lose. If you can't lose it, it can't be your property.... Thus the whole notion of the property of ideas appears to be nonsensical. Not for ideological reasons, but merely for reasons of logic...."

From "The Absurdity of Copyright" by Godfried Willem Raes., from *Vital*, Magazine for Electronic and Electroacoustic Music, no. 22, December 1991. Subscriptions: fl 20,00 cash or IMO payable to Frans de Waard, Opaalstraat 19, 6534 XK Nijmegen, Netherlands.

“”



## BE CRUEL WITH YOUR PAST

“...the best kind of citizen a government can have is someone vaguely dissatisfied, distrustful no matter what—but apathetic. A person whose apathy blinds them to any change, radical or incremental. Who says, ‘what can you do?’ Who trades increased working time and stress for goods and services. Who thinks hey rat, get out of the race, only to feel more weak and worthless—but I’m so chained to my debts, my rent, my blah blah blah.”

From “The Best Kind of Citizen,” anon., from *The Stranger*, vol. 1, no. 2, November 1991. This anonymous, no copyright publication is available for \$3 for 3 issues from: P.O. Box 31848, Seattle WA 98103.

“”

“Beginning with the invention of the telegraph and extending through television into Virtual Reality, we have been, for over a century, experiencing a terrifying erosion in our sense of both body and place. As we begin to realize the enormity of what is happening to us, all but the most courageous have gotten scared.

“And everyone, regardless of his psychic resilience, feels this overwhelming sense of strangeness. The world, once so certain and tangible and legally precise, has become an infinite layering of opinions, perception, litigation, camera-angles, data, white noise, and, most of all, ambiguities. Those of us who are of the fearful persuasion do not like ambiguities. Indeed, if one were a little jumpy to

start with, he may now be fairly humming with nameless dread. Since no one likes his dread to be nameless, the first order of business is to find it some names....”

From “The Fear of White Noise” by John Perry Barlow, from *Underground Beat* no. 2, Spring/Summer 1991. Four quarterly issues for \$5 (a *steal*) from Beat Club Productions, 1718 M Street NW, Suite 154, Washington DC 20036.

“”

“Women, we have been told that our crotches stink, that they are dirty and hold some lurking evil. We have been taught that to be whole members of society—and even to be liked or loved—we must change our natural scent and reduce the amount of our vaginal discharge. Don’t believe the hype! Those so-called ‘feminine’ sprays and washes, those douches of all chemical concoctions, and even those baby powder tampons; they are developed by our capitalistic society in order to convince us that we need to purge or disguise the evil of our vaginas. They are designed to create insecurities in order to exploit them for profits.”

From “Douche: To? or Not To?” by Amy Schnieder. Excerpted from *Blue Ryder* no. 21, December 1991, who reprinted it from *Flux*, P.O. Box 20397, Tallahassee FL 32316. *Blue Ryder* is available for \$2.25 a copy from P.O. Box 587, Olean NY 14760.

“”

“It happened in 1970, half-way through my high school years, that I fell from grace with the tube. I remember someone asking me if I’d ever seen a white Siberian tiger.

And I proceeded to describe their movements and habitat, until all of a sudden I had a crisis of conscience and *I did not know* if I’d ever seen a white tiger in a zoo or if everything I thought I knew came through the TV Wild Kingdom.

“And that really scared me. I was only fifteen and already I couldn’t clearly distinguish between the experiences I’d had in real life and those I’d voyeured on TV. I was experiencing contamination of reality by industrially produced fantasy. I figured it’d only get worse.

“So I quit watching....”

From “Television True Confession” by Pat Fish. Taken from *Salon: A Journal of Aesthetics* no. 15; \$5 from: 305 W. Magnolia St., Suite 386, Fort Collins CO 80521.

“”

“The Crash Network brings together fellow travelers who want to see the world



**AND THOSE WHO WOULD  
HOLD YOU THERE**

and meet people along the way. Twice a year, we publish a directory of the Crash Network members, which includes contact information, interests, types of 'crashes' available, etc. We also publish the Crash Update every two months. In it, you'll find articles and letters about traveling—places to go, adventures that people have had..."

Write: The Crash Network, 519 Castro St #7, San Francisco CA 94114.

“”

“9. Charlie Chaplin, the last ten minutes of *The Great Dictator*, 1940.

“For a very long time now, since at least 1952, when the

Lettrist International disrupted one of his press conferences, Charlie Chaplin hasn't been a legend of freedom. Instead, he's been seen as a spectacle of freedom; as an obstacle to freedom; even as a 'fascist insect.' There is, of course, some truth to these views of Chaplin, once seen as the advocate, even the very embodiment, of freedom for the lumpenproletariat, the 'tramps.' Or, rather, there is some value (if you are the L.I., for example) in making these observations and accusations. It indicates the degree of freedom one has in mind; the length to which one is willing and able to go to achieve this freedom.

“But, now, not only is the L.I. gone, but so is the Situationist International, the group that in some ways grew out of the L.I. Like Chaplin himself, these groups have been given up to history. But, perhaps counter to the L.I.'s and the S.I.'s expectations, Charlie Chaplin has crawled back out the trash can of history. Or, rather, a few minutes in one of Chaplin's greatest films, *The Great Dictator* (his parody of Adolf

Hitler), have crawled out. In particular, I have in mind the speech that concludes the film, the speech in which Chaplin, dressed up like Hitler to save his life, addresses 'his' followers. There is much in this speech

# NOT BORED!

that is worthy of memorization, of immediate action.... But one idea in particular seems to require underlining, even in—especially in—these days of the 'new world order.' And that line is 'Let us fight to free

## THE STRANGER

the world; to do away with national barriers; to do away with greed, hate and intolerance.”

From “Everybody is Makin' Like Greil Marcus and Comin' Out With These 'Real Life Top Ten' Lists... So Why Shouldn't I, Hmmm?”, excerpted from *Not Bored* no.

contemporary  
**VITAL**  
under ground

19. Write: P.O. Box 3421 Wayland Square, Providence RI 02906.

“”

*The above excerpts were taken from the publications sent to the editor since August, 1991. As such, they do not even begin to scratch the surface of what's out there, or even in any single publication. The reader is strongly encouraged to write to these addresses and make contact for themselves, if something seems interesting.*



# AUDIO REVIEWS

A LOOK AT  
SOUND AND  
MUSICAL  
WORKS  
RECEIVED AT  
THIS ADDRESS

“I

n August  
of 1990  
more than  
3 0 0  
alternative

radio broadcasters from  
50 countries got together

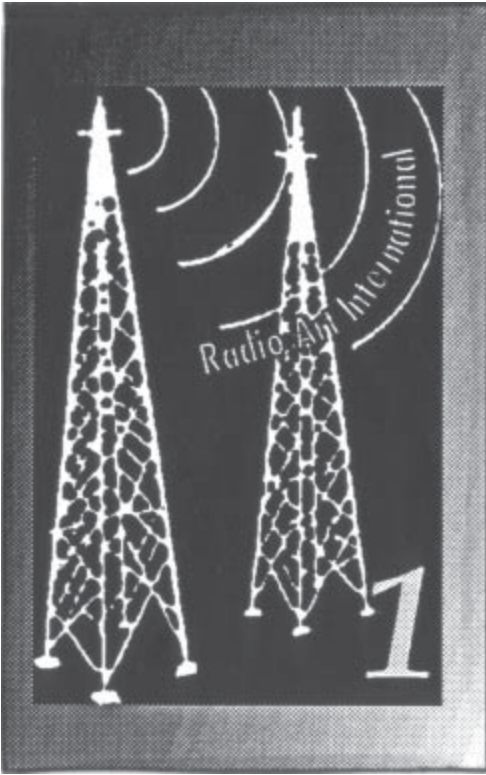
in Dublin, Ireland, to share their perspectives on radio and to address the theme of the 4th world conference of Community Radio AMARC. ‘The Right To Communicate,’ The 1st International Festival of Radio Art, sought to address the theme from the perspective of alternative broadcasters struggling to express themselves politically and creatively.”

*Art Radio Internacional* is a two-hour and 47-minute compilation of 17 artists’ work. Some pieces are long, dreary and make their point pedantically clear, while others are fun, bouncy and one can have just a whee of a time listening to them. There is not a lot of music here: most of the noises are heard-everyday-noises, and all tracks sound great.

Helen Thornington’s “In the Dark” is gorgeously crystalline, while Tony McAulay’s monologue “We were always illegal”—which is about experiences of broadcasting radio transmissions from a ship, storms at sea, and the corresponding faults of tape and vinyl—sounds perfect with its backing hum of static. The Tape-beatles’ excerpts from *The Big Broadcast*, especially “Microphone Burning in Flames” are, of course, hilarious.

Psychic Rally’s “The Right to Communication” is 22 minutes and 13 seconds of concise sounds of which only some are comprehensible, rigidly cut together to form a rather tepid presentation that celebrates only its abstract qualities. The single line that one cannot help but remember is the sluggish jackhammer of “da da, da da, da da.”

Some other standouts: Tim McLaughlin’s “What is Radio?,” which is a sarcastic contemplation of the radio gestalt. “*Radio is an interesting thing because there’s nothing really there.*” “*The revolution will not be televised, there will be no reruns, the revolution will be live.*” “*Think about it.*” Phillip Perkins’ “‘Remotitude’ 6:00 edit of ‘Berkeley Remote,’” which has some great sounds from something reminiscent of a Glenn Branca ensemble. There



is a beautiful piano movement and segments of subdued feedback. Jacki Apple and Bruce Fowler's 47-second "Prologue" makes a more powerful message in less than a minute while it takes other artists over a quarter of an hour to say absolutely nothing. "Prologue" is the predecessor for one of the more mesmerizing tracks, a synthetically induced white-hot dream-scape with a weave of demonic growls and chants not a lot unlike those of Lydia Lunch.

While the simplistic judgement "good" for a work so diverse is ultimately worthless, I would nevertheless assign that value to this compilation. Some of the tracks are half-baked and roll on with endless monotony. Some of the tracks are great—but more importantly, this is a genre of art that is important and it deserves to be heard. *Art*

*Radio Internacional* is a solid presentation of the works of today's better audio artists.

**Art Radio Internacional:** An International Collection of Radio Art. C90x2. Available through See///.saw Tapes, P.O. Box 203, Place du Parc, Montréal, Québec, H2W 2M9 Canada.



**Grav** by PGR/Merzbow/Asmus Tietchens. Compact disc. Silent Records, 540 Alabama, Suite 315, San Francisco CA 94110.

Very processed industrial noises permeate this Silent CD release. Lovely and harsh sounds swirl through my headphones and make me imagine things that I'd really rather not. I can see the internal mechanics of mammoth main-frame computers fighting and fucking as acid is poured on and around them, hissing and screaming with smoky, caustic fumes. Cyberspace jockeys hang with stretches of long black chrome barbed wire around

their necks as blood drips into a pool below, still warm to the touch.



**A Test in Patience** by Shrinkwrap. Cassette. Shrinkwrap Propaganda, P.O. Box 11831, Pittsburgh PA 15228.

This cassette sounds really muddy, which could be a fault of dubbing and not of the master, but it sounds poorly made and that makes it difficult to enjoy. Content-wise, these songs go nowhere. The sludge is plowed from one non-extreme to other non-extreme, and that is the worst thing about *A test in patience*: it's all too safe. Shrinkwrap never strays into uncharted area. The samples—some of the most hackneyed and reactionary catch-phrases of the last couple of years—are not at all compelling. "Homey don't play 'dat," "Don't you fuckin' look at me," and of course, "I've

## VIDA Y COLOR



## ESCUPEMETRALLA

ESCUPEMETRALLA



bursts of horn. Other tracks are filled with sound effects so utterly kitsch that they could have been lifted from *Plan 9 from Outer Space*. These effects, combined with what seem like real noises of orgasm and vomit, ride on a wave of nowhere white sound, breaking along a beach not really there. This one is candy, all around.

◆  
**Orange** by Mecca Normal. 7-inch vinyl.

I didn't find this as wonderful as I've heard it is. The music is quite nice; the guitar tone sounds great, and it is played with the intensity that lets one know the guy is for real. But it is not the type of guitar playing—that reckless abandon—that steers other guitarists into interestingly

fallen, and I can't get up" are used not even as integral parts of the songs, but simply layered over dead air guitar riffs. This material isn't presented in a fresh or enticing manner. Rather, it's the burden of song, repetition as pure monotony.

◆  
**Escupemetralla** by Vida y Color. C60. Clonaciones Petunio, Apartado 19106, 08080 Barcelona, Spain.

I speak not one word of Spanish but I didn't need to to thoroughly enjoy *Escupemetralla*. Everything sounds clear and bright and nicely-produced, and the material is diverse. Some of the tracks are wonderfully dancy—with pulsating drum-tracks, beat-mix record scratching, loud compressed guitar lines that sound more like a punk tuning up rather than actually playing, and terse, tightly-coiled hotwire

unexplored territory. It's the concept that I found bothersome; very minimalistic—but that minimalism is expensive. The lone whiny vocalist, that some critics have christened "a Patty Smith for the 90s," and that one guitar don't lend themselves to much diversity. It's an interesting, semi-daring concept to stray from the acoustic folk-duo format into an electric folk-duo format, but only if the product is worth that change. In the case of Mecca Normal, I don't think it is. Their music is band-oriented music played by a duo, that a band could play more effectively.

◆  
**Angel Talk c/w Gotta Go** by Pop Smear. 7-inch vinyl.

Well, as I listened to Pop Smear I looked at the record sleeve and through the experience the only thing I really noticed



was that these women used the exact photo of that doll that Babes in Toyland did, and that their music is spiritless and dead boring.

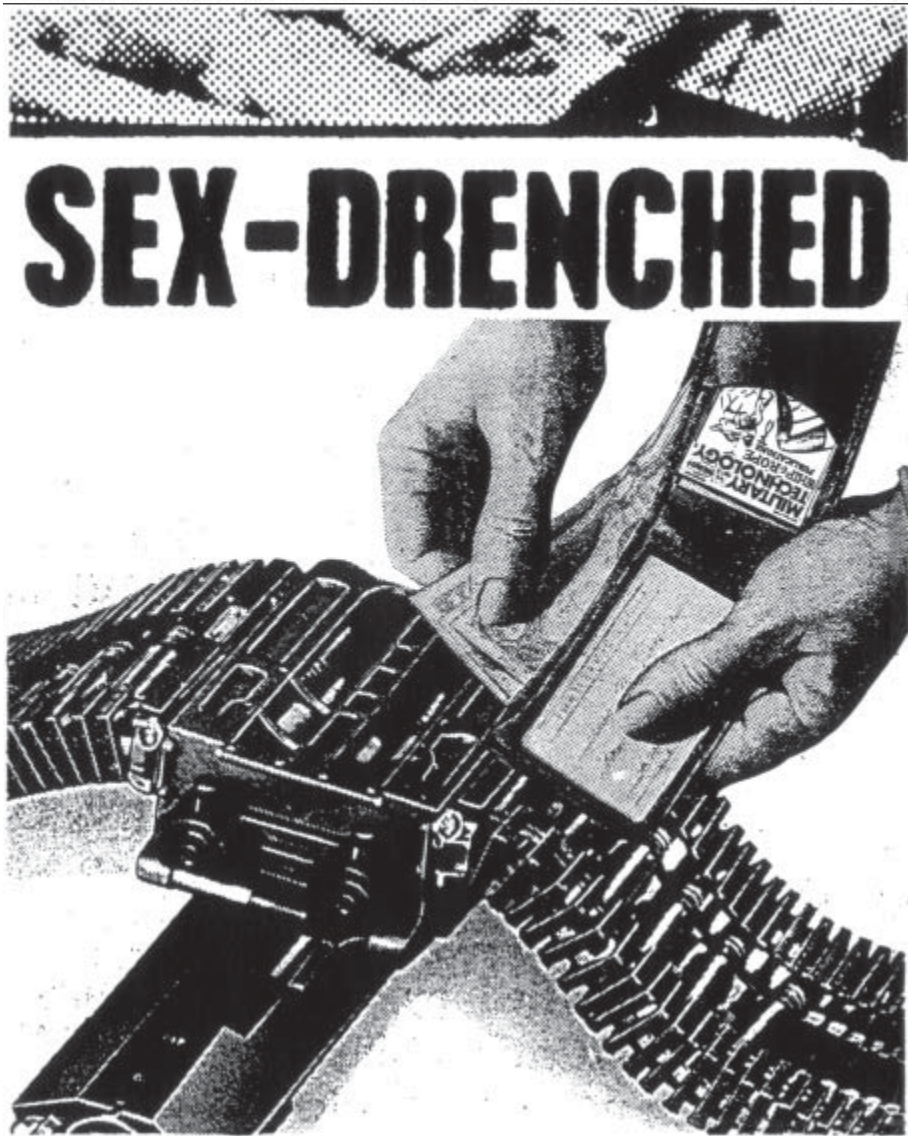
◆  
**Matchbox c/w Another King of the World/  
Green Stamp** by Crayon. 7-inch vinyl.

Pure guitar noise-pop that is about as blunt and painful as a dull-needle tattoo. I

found this pretty enjoyable as far as post-punk guitar bands go, but there is definitely nothing here that hasn't been done before. These guys are about fifteen years too late.

The above three singles are available from Harriet Records, P.O. Box 649, Cambridge MA 02238.

— *Reviews by Clint Simonson*



RADIO TANGERINE WAVE  
F.O.S.S. & ART  
Oleg Onoprienko & Sergey Tutov  
P.O. BOX 20  
Moscow 105425 Russia  
phone 164-17-48

Gentleman

Please allow us to introduce ourselves.

We are Oleg Onoprienko & Sergey Tutov. We are musicians, play electronic music in Edward Artemiev's group. Edward Artemiev is a well-known composer who wrote movie music for such outstanding directors as A. Tarkovsky and A. Mikhaikov-Konchalovsky.

In april 1990 we started producing and running the "TANGERINE WAVE" program for teenagers. Our program is one-hour long and is on the air every month. "TANGERINE WAVE" is unique and has not analogues programs on the soviet Radio/TV. It's broadcasted by the "SMENA" Radiostation within the All-Union Network. Our program has listeners all over the USSR. It introduces them to computer, electroacoustic, electronic, New Age, Progressive & Techno-Industrial Music, tells about it's comprising and modern trends available in it. In our educational activities we face a formidable obstacle comprising lack of foreign contact, extreme scantiness of information, but we have very limited possibilities to get it.

In the USSR by Union of composers founded association of Electroacoustic & Computer Music. But practically, they made only two parodies on concerts and all. Members of association to take part in competitions and festivals of EM (Electronic Music) abroad, but in our country them activities equal zero. In our large country, which fling pop/rock cultures of mass, millions people suspects nothing about existence serious music, which are in the world.

For popularisation EM we opened ourselves Company of EM "Fantastic O.S. Strangers & Art" and founded the USSR fan club of EM "Stellar Brotherhood". And maybe this no modestly from our side, but nowday in the USSR only our Company and "TANGERINE WAVE" devotes of problem popularisation of EM. Not worth enumerating large difficulties and imperfections of soviet economical system with which we clastling in our activities. Our job have many big problems. In the State House of Radio and Records, where we make our program, is have only one (!!!) CD player and we used it very limited.

In the struggle for quality our program we would use sounds on the air with CD, what better than LPs/MCs. For our job we used mostly CD's only, so as we have not normal cassette tape-deck neither at radiostation, neither at home.

We know about competitions and festives of EM. In our country nothing that kind is not going. (Visits of Didie Morruani and modest concerts of K.H. Stockhausen we don't think of event).

That's why we dare address You and ask for you kind help us to get periodic containing any information of this kind of music in particular, any possible printed information about EM, it's instruments, performers and composers, they creative activities as well as audio records on CDs (any



date publication). We would be very grateful to You, if You could help us with some identical photos with autographs by artists, any MCs & CDs any date publication, as super prizes for winners of competitions of our programs.

Maybe today soviet musical marked look for You not enough attractive. But You, probably as and we, understand what this situation change to soon. And then many Records companies and musical editions will hurl at the great soviet musical market, dozing in waiting of offers. Market competition. Who will be victor in it ? Why would already nowday don't begin to lay the foundations of achivement of future? With our modest possibilities today we already working on scrutiny of Soviet market of EM and scrutiny of demandes our people. We would to ask You legal permission on the publication Your materials in the our EM-magazine, which we would to produce. With cooperate with You we have an excellent "instrument" for serious investigate of Soviet market of EM. If those offers actually for You we are ready to find, to engage and discuss any acceptable forms of cooperate with You.

Expect existing RADIO JAMJERINE WAVE, since October 1991 we shall started to run & to produce a two new EM-programs :

1. Radiostation MAIYAK, located in Moscow, 2nd channel of All-Union Network; broadcast on the Middle, Short & Ultra Short Waves; embracing of the all terretory of USSR; we shall go to the air at 00:00 AM; we shall have a two programs at every month by 30 minutes long each.
2. Regional TV, city Donetsk, UKRAINE; approximate audience is 5 milliones of persones; we shall have the one (or two) TV-programs at every month by 30 minutes long each.

We would be very grateful and very appreciate to You for any possible help with any EM-video materials & EXPERIMENTAL & NEW AGE MUSIC for broadcasting on the format: C, 1 inch, SECAM system; or BETACAM; or Super UHS PAL system, or UHS PAL system, UCD's.

In our turn we are ready to supply a complete information about a Soviet composers & performers of EM and their MCs, LPs, and musical works composers who has not contracts and has author's a rights of himself works.

We would be glad to cooperate with You. Maybe, You have any interests of other sides musical life in the USSR ? We are ready to help You in Your problems. If You could help us, we would be grateful to You.

Thank You for Your time and attention.

Thank YOU.

We hope to hear from YOU soon.

Best wishes and kind regards to YOU from Russia.

Very truly YOURS  
Sergey Tutov & Oleg Onoprienko

Does the idea public  
insurgence make  
you happy?



# SEIZING THE MEDIA

MANIFESTO OF THE IMMEDIAT UNDERGROUND

A 26 page pamphlet calling for the liberation of public space from all forms of advertising & coercive communication



## ART • THEORY • ACTION

*The Immediat Underground* is a centerless network of artists, writers, hackers, pirate broadcasters, and posterists who connect with one another through information systems, mail art, and the underground press, and who communicate with the public through actions against all forms of coercive communication and manipulative images.

*The Immediats* envision liberating changes in society and believe that radical cultural restructuring can occur when all commercial broadcast media have been seized by the public.

*Seizing The Media* Version 1.1 is a 26 page pamphlet of theory, graphics, and plans, initiating discussions of: The Assault of Spectacle Media • The CIA • Mind Control • Immediat Counter Offensive • Ecologies of Information • Media Activism • Public Production Libraries • Revolution and Insurgence • The liberation of public space

WHEN OUR WORK IS DONE, ADVERTISING, PROPAGANDA, AND BILLBOARDS WILL FLY BESIDE THE SOVIET FLAG IN THE MUSEUM OF DEAD TOTALITARIAN EXPERIMENTS.

**Revolution** is the overthrow of government by its forced subjects;  
**Immediaism** is the overthrow of media by its captive audiences.

...Culture, awareness, and democratic power are what we surrender for an internal economy that is dependent on the relentless preparation and sale of public attention for penetration by corporate and State advertising. The *Immediats* stand in solidarity with all groups and individuals who act in opposition to this situation and whose work assists omnicultural vocality, public production libraries, public media and an open state...

• Version 1.0— Out of print.  
Released in Amsterdam Jan 92.  
Released in NYC & Seattle Feb 92.  
250 copies in circulation.

• Version 1.1—printed mid Feb 92  
250 copies in circulation.

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English Language Club  
L A T V I A

Dec. 25..., 1991

Greetings from LATVIA !

I'm the English language teacher and organizer of English Language Club there, also a mum to 5 children.

I saw Your nice adv. and got interested in it. We are looking for new forms of our further work and we'd be very glad to have more information in English here. So there is one request - maybe You can help us with some information? We'd be very grateful to You and keep Your issue at our English Language Club.

Thank You in advance!

Yours sincerely,

  
R. Liepina.

Our address:

Mrs. Liepina Rite  
English Language Club  
Riga Distr. 229044  
p.n. Raņana IO-7  
LATVIA-USSR-EUROPE

**S.P.A.M.**



Stupid People's Art Movement

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## Negation of Subversion: Subversion of Negation.

In his article "Plagerism" (1), John Berndt states that the plagiarist act will never be directed against art, since selecting the source is not less creative than the invention of an original. Plagiarism, if recognized as such at all, will be even amplifying when it shifts a forgotten original back into a collective consciousness. Suggesting what is in fact a deficiency, the subtitle of Stewart Home's "Plagiarism"-reader (2), "Art as Commodity and Strategies for its Negation", uncovers the weak point, since plagiarism is not a strategy, but a method. Trying to subvert less art than art ideology is an ill-defined business as long as it is founded rather on the fiction of a pragmatic status quo of art than on a reflected notion of what art is ("Kunstbegriff"). The art market this rhetoric actually aims at is however only a by-scene of an ongoing aesthetisation of the commodity environment, being nothing else but a secularized variant of the early-romanticist project of progressive universal poetry (3) which has perpetuated itself even into today's jurisdiction: art is necessarily what is declared or perceived as such. As Berndt remarks, plagiarism will always be caught up by art, even if the problem of its generation could be solved. His final statement, "only through complete inactivity can we purge ourselves of the capitalist values of 'originality' and 'creativity'", is however imprecise; inactivity in which respect? With regard to what was called the fictitious status quo of art, this project would be, like explained, a justification *ex negativo*, the thesis a circular conclusion. Considering a most capacious notion of art like Schlegel's on the other hand, there is the same result: "Complete inactivity" would then be death, but suicide as its prior condition again an "act", an art-work.

Neoism made intentional use of circular logic and turned it into rhetoric. The Art Strike is the most prominent example of this. The movement's strategy is sited herein, and not in plagiarism. This strategy is a blatantly artistic, because it creates a collective identity in plays of negation and affirmation of a commonly shared fiction.

An individual camouflage strategy is the only viable alternative. Since aesthetic perception is necessarily reflective — according to every non-transcendentalist definition —, and founded on the capability of setting up notions (4), it is at once manipulative, a grip into the significance of an object or process in its material or descriptive condition. An object becomes an artwork as soon as this manipulation is medialized and as the object enters a discourse. Camouflage therefore means to manipulate an object without the manipulation being obvious. If a situation is thus created or altered, *this is art*, but the subject involved is made believe to have accomplished the signification him- or herself, or he/she will attribute it to someone else while the factual manipulator will never uncover his or her involvement.

The appropriate method for this strategy is less plagiarism than fake. A first step could be to use names of really existing persons instead of multiple pseudonyms like Monty Cantsin and Karen Eliot (5). Conceiving further activities of this kind does not require much imaginative skill. (The strategy briefly described here is not declared as my own invention, but on the contrary as a common practice I intended to explore theoretically in the neoist context. The systematization of suitable techniques is of little interest for me.)

Florian Cramer a.k.a. Marty Canterel a.k.a. Keren Elyot

(1) SMILE issue 6/7, vol. 1, Baltimore 1986. (2) Stewart Home (editor), *Plagiarism*, London, Aporia Press 1988. (3) Friedrich Schlegel (*August Wilhelm Schlegel, Friedrich Schleiermacher, Novalis*), *Athenäum-Fragmente*, 1794. (4) Immanuel Kant, (*Critique of Judgement*, 1790, §23. (5) ©Felix Lott

Additional bibliography: Paul Watzlawick, *How Real Is Real?, Confusion, Disinformation, Communication*, New York 1976. — Ladislav Farago, *War of Wits*, 1956.

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It's those goddamned envelopes. Those Business Reply Envelopes. The ones that say No Postage Necessary. They're everywhere. In junk mail, on the street, even on busses and trains. So what you say? Well consider these items :

- \* An envelope stuffed with something interesting provides some mail worker out there with a ten minute break from work. "Hey, listen to this."
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- \* It can't be censored. You are the only censor. Since your letter arrives in the same envelope that all the other mail arrives in, it won't be weeded out. The boss's ability to control what can be in the work environment is eroded.
- \* The company pays for it. Every letter they receive in these envelopes costs them 39¢ postage due.
- \* No one owns this form of communication. There is no leader. There are no guidelines.
- \* The entire network can never be fully known. The mail arrives to a certain degree randomly. It can't be anthologized. It's not for sale. You can't buy it.
- \* The only way they can stop us is if they stop sending out all these envelopes. And that'd be great.
- \* This form of communication has a built in ending. When the government and corporations crumble, so will the mail rooms and these envelopes. We don't have to worry about this dragging on past its prime.
- \* It doesn't even have a name. You can name it but it will be different in different in different cities.
- \* No meetings.

You know, I haven't always been the President of the Tube Division of American Television, Inc. I worked myself up from the mail room. In those horrible wretched days, I always wished that an envelope I opened up would have something different inside. Something interesting. Well, it never happened for me. But now you and I can make that dream come true for the thousands of poor schleps across the country who have to work in the mail room of some corporation.

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