

*Happy Accidents
of the Sacred
& Unclean*

THE SPECIAL DANGER

X



THE ECSTATIC EXPERIENCE

X

On the surface, Ecstasy is a corporeal situation that seemingly falls outside the sphere of the 'norm'. The most common attribute for this somewhat mystical experience is a sense of upliftment. Typically, mystics have used metaphorical phrases describing so-called 'up-feelings'; sensations that somehow transcend the interiority of the Body, accompanied by a burst of light, a revelation resulting in a radiant vision of cosmic mystery. Understandably, these experiences are commonly labeled as 'Ecstatic', relaying the experience of being outside One's Self. Concomitant with this 'loss-of-Self' is a necessary loss of awareness about Time and Space, accompanied by a gaining of experience about One's unity with infinity.

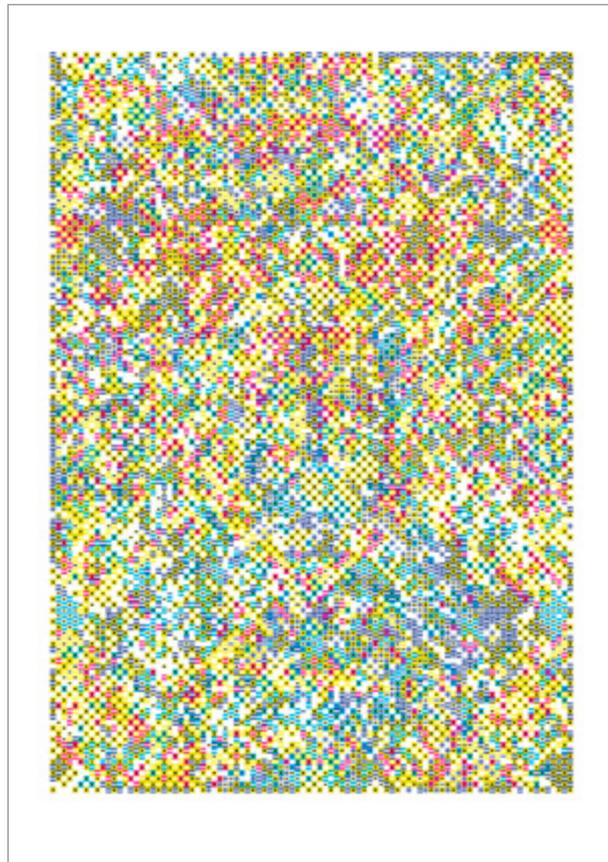
Such experiences are dramatically ulterior to the day-to-day resolution we perceive in our waking lives. The mystic being, the one whom perceives this 'ulteriority', will undoubtedly imbue the Ecstatic Experience with some manner of status and significance, whilst the uninitiated find it to be part of some strange or higher power, seeing the Ecstatic Experience as magical or supernatural. Early human beings understood this 'transcendental realm' to enshrine the notion of substance in the universe, forming the nucleus of animistic proto-religious systems. Dualism being the foundation of the Universe, splits everything that exists into either physical or non-physical spiritual forces, constructing the distinction between the metaphysical and the physical, the corporeal and the incorporeal.

But if the spiritual, transcendental realm is 'Unreal', as suggested by Modern Science, then all mystical practices involving worldly

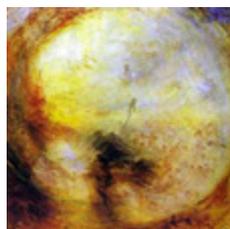
circumvention are essentially life negating and paradoxically nihilistic. To lose all cognizance of Self and One's worldly standing is to live Outside the context in which Human societies are commonly founded. Exclusively to follow such compulsions is to reach a point where:

***"The normal is evil: only the supremely abnormal is divine.
Religion is the reverse of all that is natural."***

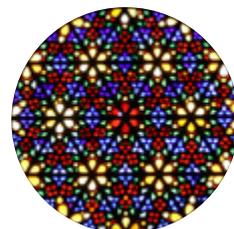
KENNETH E. KIRK , *The Vision of God*, 1932



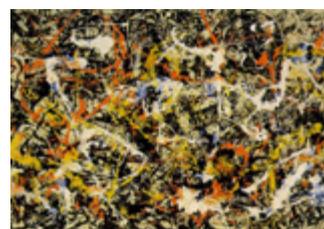
The Gush - GIVAN LÖTZ - Giclée Fiber-Print - 840mm x 1180mm



Light and Color (Goethe's theory)
— *The Morning after the Deluge* —
Moses Writing the Book of Genesis
JOSEPH MALLORD WILLIAM TURNER
1843



ROSE WINDOW
Catedral de Santa María
de Palma de Mallorca



Convergence
JACKSON POLLOCK
1952

DEATH & DANGER

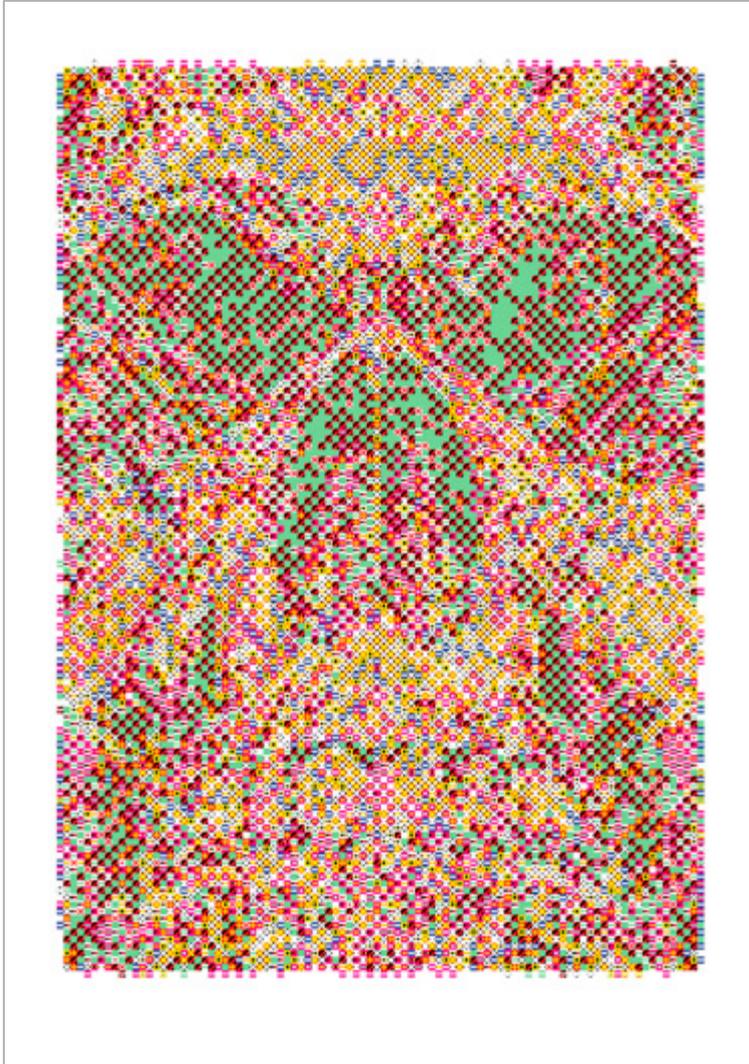
X

Human Beings, like all living things, are born, reproduce and die. The Fear of Death is a principal anxiety and prime motivator in the Life of a self-conscious, sentient being. Taboos stem from the Universalist attributes of Human Nature to Prohibit actions commonly perceived to be Dangerous. As opposed to today's dominant morals, early Human Beings did not have distinctions between something sacred and something unclean; awe and fear went hand-in-hand. Reverence had no compulsion towards the binary systemization, such as 'good and evil'. All Taboos are simply systems that hold a special potency; they are regulated constructs that are distinguished by their special relevance to the Fear of Death.

The repeated attempts by Human Beings to distinguish between appearance and reality in Philosophy, Science, and Religion derive from the experience of Change, loss, and Death, willed by the construction of absolutes and constants that somehow explain the inconsistency of life. The Human need to control life's inconsistencies only reveals the ceaseless and uncontrollable processes of Change governed by constant, churning flux, intrinsically connected to the instinctual Fear of Death disguised as the desire to live. The Ecstatic Experience delivers a dubious promise that transcends the physical and the mutable, tolerating the idea that Beauty exists beyond the surface appearance of things.

"It is the search for something not subject to change, that leads the soul up to God"

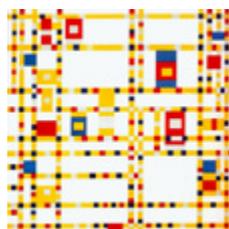
DOM CUTHBERT BUTLER, 1922



Breathe Taker - GIVAN LÖTZ - Giclée Fiber-Print - 840mm x 1180mm



Still-Life with a Skull
PHILIPPE DE CHAMPAIGNE
1671



Broadway Boogie Woogie
PIET MONDRIAN
1942-1943



THE LANGUAGE OF CAUTION
authoritative prohibition

X

The pleasure of sexual orgasm is an experience so potent that it obliterates all common sense; a swooning destruction that in some way enacts death, poetically described by the popular French phrase “la petite mort” (the little death). Moreover, descriptions of Ecstatic Experiences induced by sexual orgasm bear remarkable resemblance to accounts of religious sanctity and mystical transcendentalism; Reverence and Revelation. The way Human Beings commonly describe the act as a sexual “union”, in which we ‘lose our-Selves’, says enough to connect it to a philosophical reading of the Ecstatic Experience.

Within this philosophical context, reflection upon notions of Sex that suggest such experiences pre-empt the ‘deresolution’ of the flesh after Death. Just as Death instigates the dissolution of the Body, so too individual boundaries are dissolved by ‘One-Another’ during Sex.

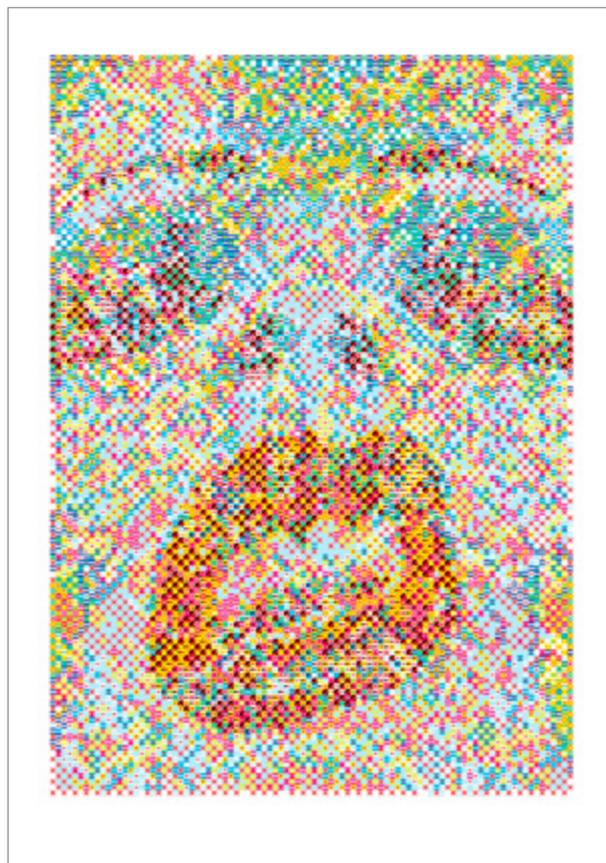
*“ I want to hide the throbbing of my head
In your perfume, under those petticoats,
And breathe the musky scent of our old love,
The fading fragrance of the dying rose.*

*I want to sleep! To sleep and not to live!
And in a sleep as sweet as death, to dream
Of spreading out my kisses without shame
On your smooth body, bright with copper sheen.*

*If I would swallow down my softened sobs
It must be in your bed’s profound abyss -
Forgetfulness is moistening your breathe,
Lethe itself runs smoothly in your kiss.”*

CHARLES BAUDELAIRE

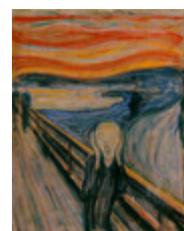
Lethe, The Flowers of Evil 1857



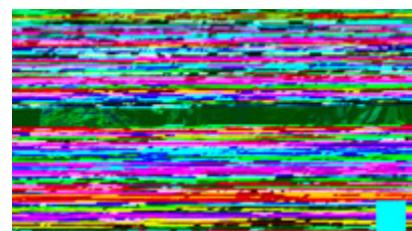
Last Gasp - GIVAN LÖTZ - Giclée Fiber-Print - 840mm x 1180mm



BEAUTIFUL AGONY
the face of pornography



The Scream
EDVARD MUNCH
1893



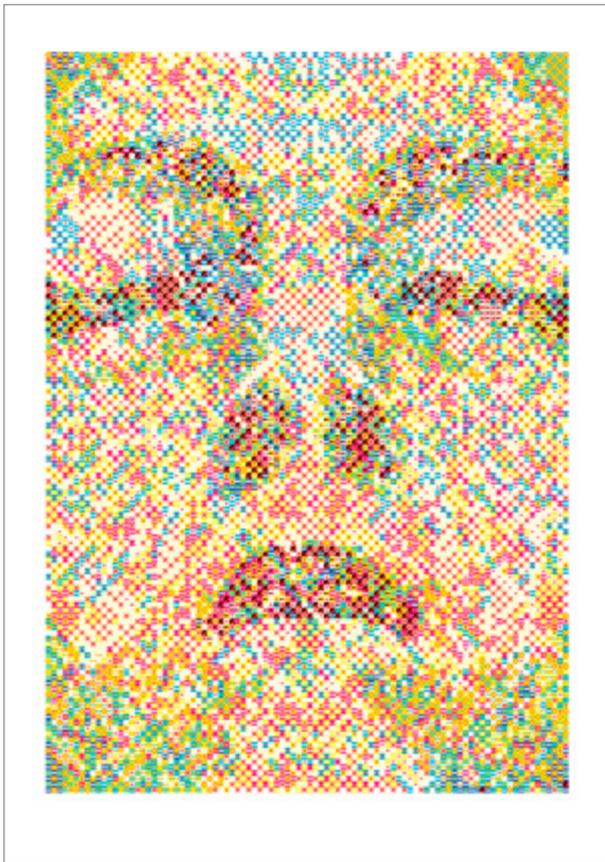
DIGITAL IMAGE CORRUPTION
technological transgression

EROTICISM & PERVERSION

X

The most powerful and tenacious Taboos are those linked to Sex. The act of Sex has either been prolifically denounced as Unclean, or profusely exalted as Sacred, based upon its corporeal potency, allowing it to be perceived as possessing a Special Danger. The mysterious power of Sex contributed to the development of Taboos amongst early Civilizations. Two prominent reactions towards a Prohibition are avoidance and transgression, primarily connected to instinctive relations with Danger: flight or fight. In addition, the Human dread of anything Taboo is often accompanied by a feeling of fascination. Eroticism is not impeded by prohibition but created by it.

It is important to note that the perceived Danger from which Taboos originate may not be entirely 'real', perhaps stemming from fabricated, irrational or over-rationalized accounts. Whilst the 'Unreal' Danger is just as effective as the 'real' Danger when it comes to the construction of Taboos, and therefore the perception of Eroticism, reliable systems of morality cannot be founded on them. The 'real' Danger lies in actions that run counter to the proliferation of Life. Such actions do so by denying the inter-personal Nature of the Sex-act, finding release in a manner that avoids or abolishes the Other. Important cases of the Taboo in this sense are incest, rape, necrophilia, pedophilia, bestiality and extreme forms of sadomasochism, which can assertively be labeled as perverse. On account of the transgression of Prohibition, true Perversion is technically always Erotic. But, if we can speak of a line dividing moral action from immoral deviance, based on assessments of human and animal flourishing, Eroticism is not always Perverse. Perversion is then extreme Eroticism.



Full Blown - GIVAN LÖTZ - Giclée Fiber-Print - 840mm x 1180mm

The Modern age is built upon an aesthetic of Prohibition – the beauty of caution, in colour and shape. Ironically, Human Beings continually seek to transgress the 'hopeful' Prohibitions established as protective measures, which rise up against the inevitable forces of Nature.



THE LANGUAGE OF CAUTION
authoritative prohibition



BEAUTIFUL AGONY
the face of pornography



Ecstasy of Saint Teresa
GIOVANNI LORENZO BERNINI
1647-1652

SACRED BOUNDARIES & TRANSGRESSION

X



Mourning Glory - GIVAN LÖTZ

Animal Hide, Felt, Steel Pins, Wooden Dowels
1900mm x 700mm x 700mm

“as soon as human beings give rein to animal nature in some way we enter the world of transgression forming the synthesis between animal nature and humanity through the persistence of the taboo, we enter a sacred world.”

GEORGES BATAILLE
Eroticism 1954

In taking pleasure a certain amount of encroachment interferes with the Other from One's own sense of 'Boundary'. The perception of One's Self is simultaneously set Inside the Body and Outside the Other. The most obvious and seductive Boundary between One's Self and the Other is the skin coating the flesh. When this threshold is transgressed through sexual penetration, the Self is surrounded by the Other. The purity of the Self is put at 'risk' by the foreign Nature of the Other, merging Outside and Inside archetypes. From this basis, it seems 'Natural' that early Human Beings viewed the ubiquity and seeming iniquity of transgression and penetration as a powerful magical form of contamination.

Furthermore, every Sacred site has its Boundaries. Mountains are amongst the most prevalent Sacred sites owing to the symbolic aspect of the 'peak'. It is believed that the higher a mountain is, the closer it is to Heaven or any other celestial body, an attitude assisting the awe and fear in the aesthetic of the Sublime. Without boundaries, without prohibition, there can be no transgression and thus no eroticism.



PUNK FASHION
cultural transgression



CACTUS
natural prohibition



WARNING BEACON
authoritative prohibition



PHALLIC MONUMENT
Temple of Dionysos, Delos



SACRED MOUNTAIN
The Sublime



Traveller Looking Over the Sea of Fog
CASPAR DAVID FRIEDRICH
1818



In The Tepidarium
SIR LAWRENCE ALMA-TADEMA
1881