

IN THE DARKNESS WE SHARE

COLLECTED & REVISED COIL ESSAYS BY

Phil Barrington



2014 ~ 2019

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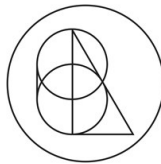
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BARRINGTON ARTS

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Foreword

Let me begin by saying sorry. Whilst I love the Rubens painting of that bearded chap on the front cover, I do apologise that it may give this collection of my humble COIL writings an unintentionally grand (or, rather, grandiose) artistic or literary air to it. That is not my intention. Most of my essays found within this collection are less academic in style than they are periodical/magazine-like thought-pieces, I think: the text occasionally flourishing with my personal opinion, dashes of humour and (hopefully) evocative summaries, though often smattered with hard facts to tie it all down and bolster it together.

I have to warn you now that the angle of my writing is most often coming from a compassionate, humanitarian point-of-view with sprinklings of cod psychosocial thought. I realise that COIL embraced far more than that, including their sexual explorations, esoteric beliefs and gleeful sonic experimentation - and several other contemporary fan-writers are doing an amazing job at covering those particular bases when they themselves reflect upon COIL's mottled history. For what it's worth though, my only bias is towards Jhonn Balance's fragile life, his tragic death, his struggles, and his resulting place in music and popular culture - a place of his that bridges the millennium in strange, sorrowful, golden and invigorating ways.

It feels like a suitably perverse joke that England's current era has become one of isolationism with its drawbridge-raising retreat from Europe at the exact time that I see COIL's legacy being honoured, reflected and celebrated far more throughout Europe and Russia than it is in their homeland. With that in mind, perhaps Great Britain is losing its senses in more ways than one.

Enjoy.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Phil Barrington". The signature is stylized, with the first letters of the first and last names being larger and more prominent.

Phil Barrington

February 2019

Acknowledgements & Curatorial Notes

My sincere thanks goes to the entire online COIL community who each, in their own way, hold very distinctive pieces to the COIL puzzle.

Sources of guidance, reference and quotation used throughout this collection include the "England's Hidden Reverse" book by David Keenan (1st edition, 2003, SAF Publishing Ltd.), Graham Duff's 2015 essay on "Gold is the Metal...", some Peter Christopherson pamphlets (such as the CSO booklet, etc.), various Coil interviews and assorted websites, especially www.brainwashed.com. The majority of the essays include a *Resources* section at the end of them for further information about some of the sources I used.

I am an admin of the [Live COIL Archive](http://LiveCOILArchive.com), and my sincere thanks goes to the other two members of the LCA team. Live Coil Archive is all really Kiefer Gorena's project - driven by his insatiable (and important) enthusiasm for all things COIL, though especially their live performances, of course. As my memory falters on COIL history details over time, his mind just gets sharper for them. COIL are a vital cornerstone of second-wave UK industrial music - and alternative music in general - and to have a passionately-driven archivist like Kiefer is, in my view, actually so important for late 20th Century music history on a broader scale.

Stefan Beiersmann is definitely the backbone of the LCA structure - without him there wouldn't be the LCA website hosting, tech support or LCA Facebook page (which he created). Stefan is far more reliably and regularly communicative to other COIL fans than myself too and his kind, jovial demeanour with fans - and to myself - is never overlooked by me. His skills in transferring old footage from obsolete tech is vital to LCA, his informed views about COIL vinyl issues are a Pansend to the team, and his uncanny knack of being almost-immediately aware of new COIL-related re-releases around the globe is impressive indeed.



Curatorial Notes

Where possible, essays and their accompanying illustrations are kept within the chronological timeframe of COIL history, even when there are no obvious threads or links that bind successive essays together. There are a few deliberate stylistic and layout differences between essays too (with hyperlinks embedded in the body of some essays and not others, for example, to give immediate access to context in particular instances). The essays can be read in random order.

"And the people who perceive it
Repeat it, distort it, improve it, update it
Slightly change it
And these people believe it
And write it all up for you
And is it more real?
Does it make it more *yours*,
Now you're recorded as having said it?"

Jhonn Balance
"Red Queen"





EXAMINING & REMASTERING COIL'S "TAINTED LOVE" PROMO VIDEO

Phil Barrington

Chicago, Ill. 60614

Dear Mr. Nash,

My partner in Access
Association, Roy

I feel, at the v
to do with the p

If you think that you are helping the AIDS crising, by showing
with an oxygen mask on his face, and a man dressed in leather walking into the room,
eating grapes, laughing and then leaving the room, then you are very sick individ

I am a SHANTI volunteer myself, and I am counselling and helping
this crisis.

I hope you sleep well tonight.

And please don't send Access Video anything from your label,
now or at ANY time in the future will be returned, if not des
for any vinyl you may want to send our way.

NO THANK YOU!

I feel quite sorry for you.

A Tainted History: Examining COIL's Infamous Promo Video



NEON JUDGEMENT Miss Brown
LAIBACH Gerbur einer
FRONT 242 Quite unusal
LAIBACH Life is life
FINI TRIBE I want more
COIL Tainted love
THE YOUNG GODS Envoje



Clips Receive an Artful Showcase New York's Museum Of Modern Art Plans Exhibition

NEW YORK An exhibition of music video has been scheduled at the Museum of Modern Art as part of the 50th anniversary celebration of the museum's film department. Scheduled to run from Sept. 6-30, the exhibit consists of a 90-minute tape containing 32 music clips running chronologically from 1967 to the present, with popular and experimental music videos equally represented.

The earliest clips in the survey are the Beatles' "Penny Lane" and "Strawberry Fields Forever." Queen, David Bowie, Michael Jackson and the Cars are among the commercially successful artists with videos in the compilation, with Cabaret Voltaire among the lesser-known.

works come from the U.S., Europe and Japan, and employ a wide variety of music and experimental video techniques.

Titled "Music Video: The Industry And Its Fringes," the exhibit was organized by Barbara London, department. "I tried to select works that really went beyond lip synchronizing to the music," says London, adding that she was looking for videos that did something that took the medium a step forward.

While noting that music video has been previously included in the museum's ongoing video exhibition screenings, London says that this is video exclusively as "a form which shows artistic imagination."

"Baby," 1970, directed by Don Vliet, music by Captain Beefheart & The Magic Band, produced by Bruce Gowers, music by Queen; "Land of 1000 Dances," 1975, directed by the Residents, music by the Residents; "Jocko Homo," 1976, directed by Chuck Statler, music by Devo (alternative selection); "Rio," 1977, directed by Bill Dear, produced by Michael Nesmith, music by Michael Nesmith; "Accidents Will Happen," 1978, directed by Annabel Jankson and Rocky Morton, music by Elio Costello; "Frankie Teardrop," 1979, produced by Paul Dougherty, Walter Robinson, and Edit de Ak, music by Alan Vega and Suicide; "Triple Cheese," 1979, directed by

"Tainted Love" Side Comparison Hard/Promo/NiN

The Narrator

In a tiled underground room, partially draped in deep red velvet curtains sits a young man, John Balance. Next to him is a table on which lies the remains of a expensive meal including a partially eaten joint of meat. Both the young man and the food on the table are covered in flies.



ING COIL'S "TAINTED LOVE" NE VERSION COMPARISONS

Archive.org versions of the promo by other uploaders

4. 'Coil - Tainted Love' [uploaded 23rd Apr 2013] 440pixel quality 16:9 ratio with black bars



5. 'Coil, "Tainted Love"' [uploaded 12th Dec 2013] 360pixel quality. 16:9 ratio.

I. Conception

Well, what can I say about COIL's 'Tainted Love' music promo video that has obviously not been said *many* times before? There's a link in the Resources section to a good summary of the video contents on the 'Paths Less Travelled' blog, which I won't even attempt to copy here.

In other words, my year-by-year history of the film, below, is most probably for the newer fans of COIL, though even stalwarts of the COIL world may find tidbits of new information from my month-long study of this famous video's history.

Spring 1985

The music video for 'Tainted Love' was directed by Peter Christopherson and, according to Balance in an interview at the time, it was made with an £8,000 production budget - most of the people working on it waiving their fees - and it was first aired around the same time COIL's single was released (May 1985 - it's technically the B-side to their 'Panic/Tainted Love' release). The open-air graveside Epilogue scene in the video was probably shot in very early Spring 1985 at the latest, as you can see leafless trees behind Jhonn's left shoulder (evergreen trees and bushes seen behind the fake gravestone).

May-June 1985

The single release marked the first time ever in music history that a single's profits were donated to an AIDS related charity (the Terrence Higgins Trust), beating the more famous AIDS charity single 'That's What Friends Are For' by Dionne Warwick et al by half a year. Such a landmark release was not viewed warmly by everyone at the time: on June 24th 1985 Access Video, a Californian video compilation company contact for COIL's US label WAX TRAX!, swiftly returned the promo VHS cassette to them with a swearsy letter of repulsion after viewing the video's dark contents.

Oddly enough the 'Tainted Love' video was not initially a problem for the New York company behind the "RockAmerica" music video subscription service for DJs - gladly including it in their own VHS release for east coast nightclub circulation a short while after release (with the label ident burned into the start and end of COIL's short film - a copy of this version is found on archive.org). As part of the nightclubs' paid subscription they were mandated to provide RockAmerica with monthly 'Response Forms', from which the company produced detailed analysis that could be purchased by

marketers. At least some of the response forms evidently came back rejecting the unpalatable nature of COIL's video. Clubgoers (or, rather, club managers) from places like New York's Danceteria must've thought scenes of a dying man amongst assorted deathly imagery was anathema to people bopping along to the latest disco hits from the Summer of 1985 by Madonna ('Into the Groove'), Tears for Fears ('Everybody Wants to Rule the World' and 'Shout') and Kool & The Gang ('Fresh').

Of this nightclub reaction to the video, prompted by the RockAmerica circulation during the time of the AIDS crisis, Jhonn stated in his final recorded interview (for Rattlebag, 2004): *"It was played in clubs in America, all over America, some chain of video people played it in the clubs. And the clubgoers obviously didn't like to be confronted with what they were doing, and the way they were behaving in the clubs - very few people really had said that 'if you do this, this might happen' and we were one of the earlier people to say that sort of thing."*

Two months after COIL's music video of a man dying on a hospital bed hit the nightclubs, the music video of synced Vietnam War footage for Paul Hardcastle's single '19' hit circulation, so it was a strange summer indeed amongst the usually upbeat nightclub video monitors. At least Christmas 1984 was, by then, just a fading memory - with many clubgoers perhaps momentarily forgetting the haunting sight of dying Ethiopian children in that particular festive music video.

I swear I remember seeing COIL's video air on Channel 4 in the UK during the Summer of 1985, but I could be suffering from Mandela effect here (I was only 9 years old at the time too) - and no native PAL/25fps version (UK video format) has ever been uploaded to the internet that I can find. I will elaborate about that issue later on in this essay.

As most of us know, the "Tainted Love" video features an AIDS victim in his final days (*not* played by Jhonn Balance, despite what Wikipedia states), Peter Christopherson as a hospital orderly, Jhonn as both the separated narrator and visitor to the victim's grave at the 6+min film's denouement, and Marc Almond as a smirking leather-clad hospital visitor. As Hayes Hampton states in his superb essay titled 'Invocation of the Black Sun: Alchemy and Sexuality in the Work of Coil' (from Folk Horror Revival: Harvest Hymns Vol #1): *"The figure of Death, played by Marc Almond, is an icon of classic gay sexuality: a leather and silver-bedecked figure directly from the films of Kenneth Anger. Death, Coil's imagery seems to say, is not something visited upon us from without, but always with us and part of us. We are all deaths in progress."*



ACCESS VIDEO

MUSIC VIDEO PROMOTION AND DISTRIBUTION

June 24, 1985

WAX TRAX RECORDS
Jim Nash
2445 92 Lincoln Ave.
Chicago, Ill. 60614

Dear Mr. Nash,

My partner in Access Video, Ron Baer, as well as my General Manager for TOP 25 Disc Jockey Association, Roy Urike, just reviewed the video of Tainted Love you sent our organization.

I feel, at the very least, you should be ashamed of yourself for having anything whatsoever to do with the production or distribution of this piece of shit.

If you think that you are helping the AIDS crising, by showing a man in bed, near death, with an oxygen mask on his face, and a man dressed in leather walking into the room, eating grapes, laughing and then leaving the room, then you are a very sick individual.

I am a SHANTI volunteer myself, and I am counselling and helping my fellow man cope with this crisis.

I hope you sleep well tonight.

And please don't send Access Video anything from your label, as anything you send us now or at ANY time in the future will be returned, if not destroyed. That also goes for any vinyl you may want to send our way.

NO THANK YOU!

I feel quite sorry for you.

George Ferren

George Ferren,
Co-Director

480 CASTRO STREET SUITE 26 S.F. CA. 94114
(415)861-0287

Matt Keeley from hornet.com also remarks: *"The music video doubles down on the imagery. Religious symbols — images of Jesus' sacred heart and the satyr god Pan seducing a young man — get synched to the klaxon; lead singer Jhonn Balance pours honey around a fly, trapping it in sweet hell... Balance places a bouquet on the dying man's grave, the sound of buzzing flies reminds us of sweetness and lethality of same-sex love in the '80s."*

Peter's music video script notes actually names the main three featured characters as **The Narrator**, **The Porter** and **The Boy**. It's hard to now imagine the video without Almond as the sinister hospital visitor (the fourth, unmentioned character), but it was originally *Sleazy's* character of The Porter that was to represent Death in the scene that Marc went on to perform. The original shooting script specifically states as such - the scene mostly the same as ultimately shot, but with Peter's Porter slathering over the grapes and making the uncaring exit from the room - no Almond to be seen (like the video has a nut allergy or something). Sorry. Awful joke there.

Once you know this fact, you can easily see Peter's character as a creepy malevolent presence in the video, The Porter leering down at the terminal patient, Peter's footsteps playfully in time to the chiming bells of the death ritual taking place as he wheels The Boy to his deathbed.

Talking of diversions from the shooting script, there was originally no mention of the symbolic un-named grave getting a visit from Jhonn at the video's epilogue; a scorpion was supposed to appear on The Narrator's table amongst the waves of dying flies; Golden syrup was supposed to have covered The Narrator's "underground" box room and dripped from its ceiling (perhaps the whole confined space initially representing a homosexual version of Freudian box symbolism); and the short visual bursts that never made the cut include pictures of a "Tibetan demon", more scorpions, a peacock, mating dogs, and "people in Venice Square".

Looking at the music video contents in ok/good quality when finishing my remaster this week, the number of lethargic flies surrounding Balance seems more noticeable now (at least to me) and even The Doors paperback *Sleazy* pulls out of the patient's suitcase is now more clearly (and bleakly) identifiable as 'No One Here Gets Out Alive', the 1980 band biography by Hopkins and Sugarman.

September 1985-1986

From 6th-30th September 1985 (despite Wikipedia stating it was in August), around four months after COIL's music video first aired in the New York nightclubs, the film was featured in an exhibition of music videos held by New York's Museum of Modern Art and, a year or so later, was officially procured from Some Bizzare, COIL's UK label at the time, for its permanent collection (The MoMA catalogue entry for this film is linked in the Resources section at the end of this essay).

1985-1988

'Night Flight', the late night four-hour visual arts programme on the 'USA Network' cable TV channel from 1981-1988 had 'The Some Bizzare Show' recurring segment, where promos and vox pops of acts from that music label were shown. COIL's 'Tainted Love' video was reportedly shown during the programme's mid/late 1980's run.

1987

In 1987 'A COIL Magazine' was published and available via mail order from the band, first in a numbered run of 500 copies then two more reprints. John Sanders and Mick Gaffney produced, financed and distributed this title, the publication containing several pages specifically focussing on the making of the 'Tainted Love' video. The pages included a prop list, script and some storyboard sketches. See the Resources section for low-res scans of these pages, lifted from the Brainwashed site's COIL archive.

II. Distribution and Homage

July 1989 - November 1991

COIL's 'Tainted Love' film appeared on at least two promo-only VHS compilation tapes by the WAX TRAX! label: on July 25th 1989 and on November 22nd 1991. The 1989 promo-only VHS tape included COIL amongst other 2nd-wave "Industrial" bands like Front 242, Frontline Assembly and Young Gods. The 1991 'Video Sampler 1' VHS tape featured the same video listing with two added tracks (an additional one from Front 242 and Laibach) making 11 tracks in total.

1992

A male figure in formal clothing, in a small room alone, at a table of food, covered with flies. This isn't just a description of Jhonn's main presence in the 'Tainted Love' video, but an accurate summary of a probable homage done in a 1992 music promo as part of the Nine Inch Nails 'Broken' long-form video (specifically 'Help Me I Am In Hell', directed by Eric Goode and his business partner Serge Becker). I do not see the above-mentioned similarities in that NiN promo as mere coincidences: Not only was Peter hired by Trent for directing the main "snuff film" sections of this very video too (thus starting a chain of COIL-NiN collaborative projects), but COIL's 1985 music video made a huge impression on Reznor at the time.

As Trent himself stated to John Doran of The Quietus in 2014: *"[Coil's] 'Tainted Love' video remains one of the greatest music videos of all time. I was always more attracted to Coil than Throbbing Gristle; the darkness and the scatology really chimed with me. The exotic darkness of them permeated their work. So I figured that if I hired [Sleazy] as a director then I could at least meet him and hang out for a bit. We established a friendship, and that friendship was very valuable to me. Making the Broken movie was a lot of fun."*

Eric Goode, the main co-director of the 1992 NiN film that I claim is a homage to COIL's video (at least in part), was an exhibiting New York-based artist and club-owner a couple of years before the New York MoMA exhibition that showed COIL's video. Also as part of NiN's 'Broken' video Eric co-directed the band's 'Pinion' video of sewage consumption under restraint in a factory setting. Hmmm... All things considered, I'd personally go so far as to say that the 'Broken' film as a whole is the first strong love letter to COIL by NiN - indeed even featuring Sleazy himself deep within the project in several different ways.

See the following page for a graphic of my shot-by-shot comparison between the 'Tainted Love' video, its original storyboard/notes and NiN's 'Help Me I Am In Hell'.

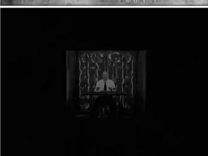
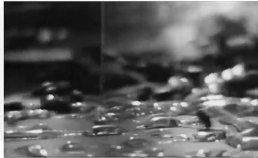
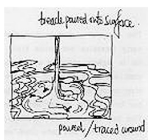
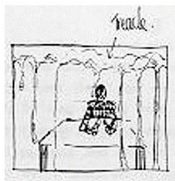
September 1994 - late 1990s

On 24th September 1994 the "Tainted Love" video was featured on the major release Wax Trax! VHS video compilation in the USA, "Black Box: Retrospective, Vol. 2", where most of the internet streaming versions of the COIL promo are sourced from to this day - sadly in lower quality than the historic music video deserves (most often

COIL's "Tainted Love"
Side-by-side Comparison
Storyboard/Promo/NiN

The Narrator

In a tiled underground room, partially draped in deep red velvet curtains sits a young man, John Balance. Next to him is a table on which lies the remains of a expensive meal including a partially eaten joint of meat. Both the young man and the food on the table are covered in flies.





[September 2001. The 2-hour COIL special on MTV Russia. The "Tainted Love" promo was played, complete with end titles mentioning the Terrence Higgins Trust.]

with no crisp detail, odd ratio, or highly compressed). I have looked through the early years of the *COIL Mailing List* archives and found lots of discussion about the promo, but no link to download it (this is not surprising, given the PC/Dialup specs of the time). In the late 1990s Usenet did have a low resolution/high compression avi file of the video in circulation amongst its music newsgroups. Ah, those were the days.

September 2001

During their press junket in Russia to help promote COIL's live appearance in Moscow, Peter and Jhonn (wide-eyed in fantastic full blackeye makeup - see previous page) appeared on the MTV Russia sofa and were interviewed by the presenter Beata, who asked them about a wide variety of things - including their views on Mariah Carey. During that MTV COIL Special the 'Tainted Love' promo was played, complete with end titles mentioning the Terrence Higgins Trust. I have excluded this version from my streaming comparisons below as there's an MTV station logo and other text/graphics all over it, as one would expect.

II. My Remaster

2006 - 2017

As briefly as possible, let us take a look at the quality of the copies available online of COIL's "Tainted Love" promo, in date of upload order - COIL's video appearing on Youtube only 11 months after Youtube itself was officially launched:

1. 'Coil - Tainted Love' [uploaded 25th January 2006], 4:3 ratio with horizontal black bars, 240pixel bad quality.
2. 'Cool - Tainted Love' [uploaded 16th June 2006], 4:3 ratio with boxed black bars, 144pixel extremely bad quality.
3. 'Coil - Tainted Love' [uploaded 19th May 2007], 4:3 ratio with horizontal black bars, 240pixel bad quality.
4. 'Coil - Tainted Love [HQ]' [uploaded 23rd Apr 2009], 16:9 ratio with vertical black bars, 480pixel low quality.
5. 'Wax Trax (Black Box Vol.2) [08]. Coil - Tainted Love' [uploaded 2nd May 2012], 16:9 ratio with horizontal black bars, 480pixel average quality.
6. 'Coil, "Tainted Love"' [uploaded 12th Dec 2013], 16:9 ratio, 360pixel, good quality.

There's also two copies of the video currently on archive.org:

A. 'Coil: Tainted Love music video' [uploaded May 17th 2016], 16:9 ratio, 418pixel passable quality.

B. 'Coil Tainted Love' [uploaded May 17, 2017], 4:3 ratio with horizontal black bars, 480pixel ok quality but bright.

Of all eight available videos above, the best all-rounder regarding visual quality has to be Youtube version '6.', though it is only 360pixel. The poor-to-ok quality copies of the film on Dailymotion seem derivative of the above versions - perhaps any copy doing the rounds on the old P2P Soulseek COIL section was ultimately one of the above sources too.

So, do we *really* need yet another version of the 'Tainted Love' promo video online? I think the video - being such a landmark for COIL and for music history in general - deserves to be seen in as prime condition as possible. Oh, and I tend to watch music videos on the Youtube app on my LG widescreen TV, so this remaster process is most probably more for me than for anyone else, to be fair. Bear in mind, it's never going to look too great, given the murky VHS-rip sources and I definitely welcome other people having a go at remastering their original WAX TRAX! VHS copies too.

Video sources I used:

1. I included my remaster of the 1994 silent WAX TRAX! computer graphics title for the very start of the promo, as lots of people first saw that VHS tape and may well have some nostalgia for that intro.
2. I also included a brief MoMA ident before the promo itself begins too, Ivan Chermayeff's classic logo design, as it only seemed right considering it is part of their collection (and that fact should be celebrated).
3. I worked on my own copy of video number '5' above, given its quite high resolution for possible downscaling, tweaking the overall sharpness and colour (but not too much), a tweak to the brightness and contrast, making sure the 16:9 ratio is correct, re-doing the 1985 charity text at the end of the film, and having the resulting video data in as high bitrate of audio/video compression as is reasonable (pre-Youtube compression), given the sources available.

Sound sources I used:

1. Wav file from the 2015 'Panic/Tainted Love' T-ARCH re-release single.
2. The cleanest remaster of the original buzzing fly sounds that bookend the main promo audio, spliced together correctly with the newly-sourced audio for the video.
3. The untitled original CD intro to COIL's "Aqua Regis" features over the otherwise silent start logo/graphics, before the actual promo begins.

Jhonn's overeager lip-synch is still to be seen in this version of the video, his mimic of the recorded song either a little off during the video shoot itself, or in Peter's subsequent edit of the film (the other sections of the video fit the song's klaxon and other sections fine, as can be seen).

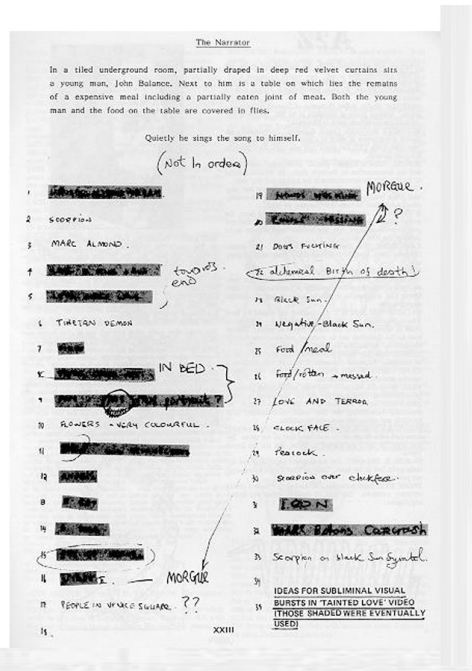
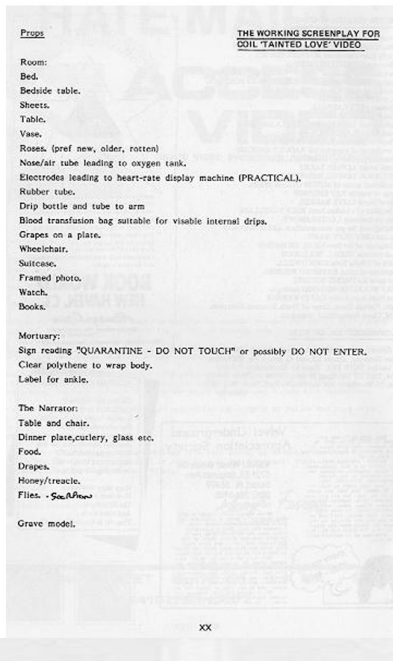
So, in my personal view, the historic promo video is now looking and sounding as best as I could possibly pull together from all known currently-available digital sources. We definitely do still need a master-to-digital transfer of the COIL video in the future, though I seriously doubt the UK label One Little Indian has received all the master materials from the defunct Some Bizzare. I think the best bet would be a retrospective push by MoMA using their copy, as the WAX TRAX!/TVT US label takeover situation seems as complex as anything else related to current COIL business matters (which is saying something). If people wish, I can put my film file on Archive.org but I thought Youtube would be the best for now, as I assume interest from the general public in yet *another* version of the promo video is possibly at its lowest.

In this essay's Resources section there is a side-by-side comparison graphic of the visual quality of all the different versions I have listed (aside from the unwatchable 144pixel one) alongside my own remaster, so you can judge for yourself by that if you like. Obviously, given the age and original materials there is still quite a lot of visual noise onscreen (to digitally remove *all* the noise via a Digital Noise Reduction method would be disastrous for the visual fidelity of the video - anyone who's bought a Lucio Fulci blu-ray will know the noise is best left in, even though it doesn't look great either way - and just a [cursory look through online forums](#) can reveal how DNR is often such a terrible process to put vintage films through, losing picture detail along with the noise).

So, saying all of that, this remaster is best seen on your TV from a few feet away or, alternately, on your phone (it doesn't look great at all on PC monitors).

You can find this attempt at a remaster of the pre-existing NTSC VHS transfer on my Youtube channel here (dated Feb 12th 2019):

https://youtu.be/z_8HZC_JKk0



Resources:

The COIL video's MoMA entry:

<https://www.moma.org/collection/works/118271?locale=en>

A good summary of the promo video:

<https://thepathslesstravelled.wordpress.com/2013/02/21/the-most-unique-interpretation-of-tainted-love-coil/>

And for those with an Academia.edu account only, my essay uses a quotation from Hayes Hampton's great essay 'Invocation of the Black Sun: Alchemy and Sexuality in the Work of Coil': <https://bit.ly/2P9FTx2>

My essay also features a quotation from the following overview:

<https://hornet.com/stories/tainted-love-first-aids-single/>

Peter Christopherson talks to the BBC in 2008 about the 'Tainted Love' video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NpTBGIDEO28>

One

A warm day in a sparse hospital room. The bed has been slept in but is now empty. A hospital porter comes in wearing a dirty green coat. He puts a small suitcase on the bed. He begins to remove various personal articles from the bedside table and pack them into the case. Some books, a framed photo, a notepad, a watch. When everything is in the case he shuts it carefully and puts it by the door. Next he pulls the sheets of the bed, and remakes it quickly and efficiently. On the table opposite the end of the bed is a vase with roses in it. They are wilting, decayed. He tosses them in the bin and replaces them with new ones, whose buds are just opening, but he does not change the stagnant water in the vase. He looks around the room to make sure he has not forgotten anything, then picks up the suitcase and the soiled sheets and leaves. The room seems fresh. The curtain blows slowly in the breeze at the sunny window.

Two

The hospital porter pushes along a pale boy in a wheelchair. The boy is in his early twenties but looks frail. He is wearing a coat over institutional pyjamas. He is tightly gripping a suitcase on his lap. Slowly they negotiate the corridors that seem to lead to a more and more remote part of the building. No-one else seems to be around. At last they turn into a room. It is sparsely furnished but bright. The porter helps the boy into the bed, hangs up his coat, and leaves. The boy takes a few belongings out of his case, a few books, his watch, a framed photo, and puts them on the bedside table.

Three

The room is dark. The boy's condition seems to have worsened. He has lost weight and is sweating profusely. An intravenous drip is connected to his arm by a long clear tube. He has pushed most of the covers off. He looks up at the ceiling, occasionally trying to find a more comfortable position to sleep.

Four

Blood drips slowly in the clear plastic bag hanging above the bed. In the background the door opens. The porter stands silhouetted in the doorway looking at the boy without sympathy. He comes into the room and walks up beside the bed. The boy looks back at him. He is very sick.

XXI

He is connected by a tube from his nose to oxygen cylinders. Electrodes on his chest lead to a heart monitor. A rubber tube leads from beneath a stained cloth covering his groin to a bottle under the bed. He is too weak to move. The porter casually takes a handful of grapes and puts them in his mouth. As he chews the juice runs down his chin. Without looking back he leaves the room. The boy gives a slight shudder and the beeping from the heart monitor becomes a constant tone. On the screen is a single straight line.

Five

The boy's body lies in the mortuary. It is completely sealed up inside a transparent polythene sheet, lying on trolley. Taped above it is a red notice which reads: QUARANTINE - DO NOT TOUCH! Soon the boy sees the ceiling of the hospital corridors passing above him, then out into the open, and the sky. He sees a sunny blue afternoon sky, sometimes a branch of a tree. Then he sees they are passing under a wrought-iron gate, and then slowly four walls of earth appear and gradually block out the sky completely.



Clips Receive an Artful Showcase

New York's Museum Of Modern Art Plans Exhibition

NEW YORK An exhibition of music video has been scheduled at the Museum Of Modern Art as part of the 50th anniversary celebration of the museum's film department. Scheduled to run from Sept. 6-30, the exhibit consists of a 90-minute tape containing 32 music clips running chronologically from 1967 to the present, with popular and experimental music videos equally represented.

The earliest clips in the survey are the Beatles' "Penny Lane" and "Strawberry Fields Forever." Queen, David Bowie, Michael Jackson and the Cars are among the commercially successful artists with videos in the compilation, with the Residents, Suicide, Yello and Cabaret Voltaire among the lesser-knowns.

Such well-known video directors as Bob Giraldi, David Mallet, Godfrey & Creme, Andy Warhol and Zbigniew Rybczynski have videos in the reel, as do such artists who direct their own videos as David Byrne, Laurie Anderson, Toni Basil and Captain Beefheart. Featured

works come from the U.S., Europe and Japan, and employ a wide variety of music and experimental video techniques.

Titled "Music Video: The Industry And Its Fringes," the exhibit was organized by Barbara London, assistant curator of video in the film department. "I tried to select works that really went beyond lip synchronizing to the music," says London, adding that she was looking for videos "that did something that took the medium a step forward."

While noting that music video has been previously included in the museum's ongoing video exhibition screenings, London says that this is the museum's first look at music video exclusively as "a form which shows artistic imagination" in its own right.

Program notes are being made available at the screenings, which start daily at noon. The video clips running at the Museum Of Modern Art are:

"Penny Lane," 1967, the Beatles; "Strawberry Fields Forever," 1967, the Beatles; "Lick My Decals Off,

Baby," 1970, directed by Don Van Vliet, music by Captain Beefheart; "Bohemian Rhapsody," 1975, directed by Bruce Gowers, music by Queen; "Land Of 1,000 Dances," 1975, directed by the Residents, music by the Residents.

"Jacko Homo," 1976, directed by Chuck Statler, music by Deva (or alternative selection); "Rio," 1977, directed by Bill Dear, produced by Michael NeSmith, music by Michael NeSmith; "Accidents Will Happen," 1978, directed by Annabel Jankel and Rocky Morton, music by Elvis Costello; "Frankie Teardrop," 1978, produced by Paul Dougherty, Walter Robinson, and Edit de Ak, music by Alan Vega and Suicide; "Two Triple Cheese, Side Order Of Fries," 1979, directed by Joe Dea, music by Commander Cody.

"Ashes To Ashes," 1980, directed by Dave Mallet and David Bowie, music by David Bowie; "One Minute Movies," 1980, directed by Graeme Whiffler and the Residents, music by the Residents; "Let's Cook," 1982, music by Metal As Anything; "Pin-

(Continued on page 52)

ball Cha-Cha," 1982, directed by Dieter Meier, music by Yello.

"Act III," 1983, directed by John Sanborn, music by Philip Glass; "Beat It," 1983, directed by Bob Giraldi, music by Michael Jackson; "Hello Again," 1984, directed by Andy Warhol and Don Munroe, music

by the Cars; "Over My Head," 1984, directed by Toni Basil, assistant director Michelle Simmons, music by Toni Basil; "Sharkey's Day," 1984, directed by Laurie Anderson, music by Laurie Anderson; "Two Tribes," 1984, directed by Kevin Godley and Lol Creme, music by

Frankie Goes To Hollywood.

"You Might Think," 1984, directed by Jeff Stein for Charles, music by the Cars; "Decey," 1984, directed by Annabel Jankel and Rocky Morton, music by Miles Davis; "(Modern Industry)," 1985, directed by David Hogan, produced by Steve Buck, music by Fishbone; "Big Mouth," 1985, directed by Adam Freidman, produced by Philip Meese, music by Whodini; "La Danse des Mots," 1985, directed by Jean-Baptiste Mondino, music by Mondino.

"Marcia Baila," 1985, directed by Philippe Gautier, music by Rita Mitsouko; "René And Georgette Magritte," 1985, directed by Joan Leque, music by Paul Simon; "Road To Nowhere," 1985, directed by David Byrne and Stephen Johnson, music by the Talking Heads; "Sensoria," 1985, directed by Cabaret Voltaire and Peter Care, music by Cabaret Voltaire; "Tainted Love," 1985, directed by the Coil, music by the Coil.

"Total State Machine," 1985, directed by Test Department, music by Test Department; "Midnight Mover," 1985, directed by Zbigniew Rybczynski, music by Accept.

Billboard Magazine,
August 31st 1985

>

REMASTERING COIL'S "TAINTED LOVE" ONLINE VERSION COMPARISONS

Existing Youtube and Archive.org versions of the promo by other uploaders

dailymotion

Dailymotion versions seem derivative of the below versions

4. 'Coil - Tainted Love [HQ]'
[uploaded 23rd Apr 2009]
440pixel quality.
16:9 ratio with black bars.



YouTube

1. 'Coil - Tainted Love'
[uploaded 25th January 2006]
240pixel quality.
4:3 ratio with black bars.



YouTube

3. 'Coil - Tainted Love'
[uploaded 19th May 2007]
240pixel quality, incomplete.
4:3 ratio with black bars.



YouTube

5. 'Wax Trax (Black Box Vol.2) [08] Coil - Tainted Love'
[uploaded 2nd May 2012].
480pixel quality
16:9 ratio with black bars.



YouTube

6. 'Coil, "Tainted Love"
[uploaded 12th Dec 2013]
360pixel but good quality
16:9 ratio.



YouTube

B. 'Coil Tainted Love'
[uploaded May 17, 2017]
480pixel quality.
4:3 ratio with black bars.



A. 'Coil: Tainted Love music video'
[uploaded May 17th 2016]
418pixel quality.
16:9 ratio.



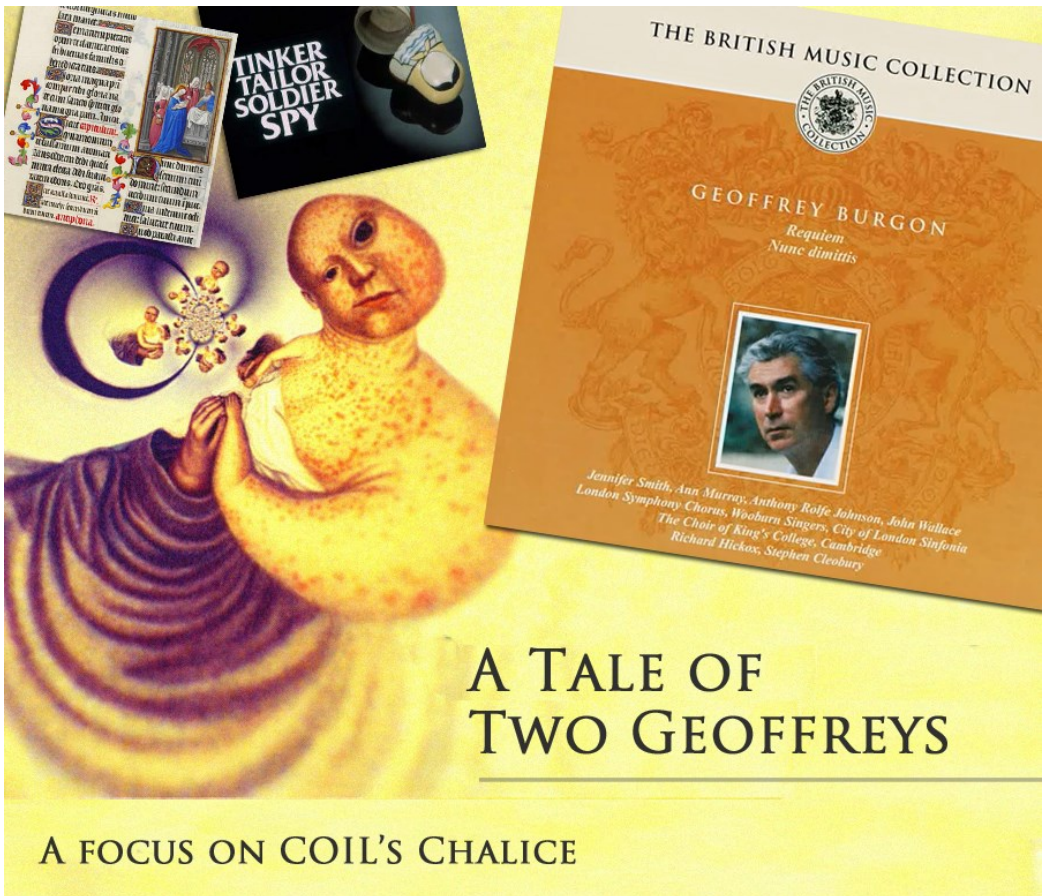
COIL - Tainted Love (Best Quality Remaster)
[Phil Barrington uploaded 12th Feb 2019]
480pixel best A/V quality.
16:9 ratio.



YouTube

[Full-sized (4682 x 834) landscape version of this graphic here:
http://www.barringtonarts.com/Tainted_Love_Remaster_2019.png]

A Tale of Two Geoffreys (A focus on COIL's Chalice)



As we all know, the current spate of COIL re-releases include, as fate would have it, two editions of 'COIL Presents Black Light District – A Thousand Lights in a Darkened Room'. Released in 1996, the original album is one I really admire and I have lifted tracks from it for a couple of my fan projects in different ways over the years (including my 'International Dark Skies' and 'Hidden Hydrology' collections). As an overall aural experience, the album is a fairly unique listen (even judged within COIL's own varied catalogue), it serves as the centre-point of Drew McDowall's involvement and his rich deeper influence over the COIL sound and band's creative outlook during that period. In fact, it is quite difficult to describe another single album of sound-scapes quite like it by any other musician (if you mix Aphex Twin's 'SAW 2' and 'Drukqs' together and take out all dance elements, I suppose you could approximate the listening experience to a large degree).

The album contains one of my favourite COIL tracks of all time (always verified by my iTunes software as one of my top most played COIL tracks, right up there with "Where Are You?" etc.). The track is "Chalice" and it closes the album in a strangely mournful sci-fi mood. Angelic voices drift strangely throughout the 8:17min track in a backwards loop of phrase and, somewhere far off, an organ can just about be heard, playing slowly. What sounds like a pod bay door stuck in malfunctioning opening/closing sequence somewhere on a deserted freighter starship floating in the farthest reaches of space adds an extra sense of loneliness to it. I think the track is momentous - and a fitting piece to close such a collection of otherworldly sounds. The album's tracklisting containing song titles like "Green Water" and "Cold Dream of An Earth Star" perhaps giving a further air of bleak space exploration to some degree.

Indeed, having 'Chalice' as the closing track to 'A Thousand Lights in a Darkened Room' is like the album is trying to relay a looped final beacon across deep space: a still-transmitting message recorded on a vintage device hundreds of years ago by two long-dead spacemen commanders and their crew. In a ship now drifting, decompressed and void of all signs of life, save for some electrical malfunctions and a flashing red light on a rusted control-board:

"Goodbye [stop] There is no-one left here [stop] Please do not attempt rescue [stop] This is an automated message [stop] Ship's Log now closing [stop]."

Back in the summer of 2014 I was trying to decode the distorted choral vocals of 'Chalice' for the first edition of my 'Golden Age of Bloodsports' book of COIL/Balance words. At the time I happened to be experimenting with large doses of Tramadol and found that a happy side effect of that drug (for me at least) was an enhanced hearing ability. Like with many of the other difficult-to-discern vocals peppered throughout COIL's back catalogue, I opted to re-listen to the track's vocal sample endless times whilst on such high Tramadol dosage, with the track played forwards and backwards. Over and over (and, indeed, over) again.

At some point late one summer night I thought I could *finally* grasp the lyrics to this track. And I typed them up victoriously for the book. However, what is included under the 'Chalice' entry in the aforementioned collection to this day, four years later, is more an expression of my deranged senses at the time than an accurate interpretation of the vocals on that COIL track. Not being a fan of choral Christian music and, thus, not familiar with the original sample at all, this is what I actually thought was being said in the final song of the 'A Thousand Lights in a Darkened Room' album:

*"The doorway to thy fatherland
All Time: it turned sideways, slow,
As she walked in dreams"*

But that interpretation of mine is bullshit. I leapt to be-drugged conclusions that couldn't be more wrong (even though the footnote did say it was just my personal interpretation of the vocals at the time: my chickenshit get-out clause). Embarrassing indeed. After doing a cleaned-up version of the sample and consulting with a local priestly acquaintance of mine (actually a Father) this week, I can reveal the actual source of the vocal sample used by COIL to those of you who are unaware of it.

The melancholic voices heard drifting in and out of COIL's 'Chalice' track are actually lifted from a version of 'Nunc Dimittis' (one of the canticles of Choral Evensong) by Geoffrey Burgon - a British composer whose arrangement of the canticle was subsequently used for the 1979 'Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy' TV series soundtrack. Burgon's arrangement went on to be included on numerous choral and soundtrack compilations throughout the 1980s in a variety of live choir recordings.

Specifically though, a version of this track was used as the end credits music for the 'Tinker...' TV series, composed by Geoffrey Burgon for organ, trumpet, and treble - the score earning Burgon the 1979 Ivor Novello Award and, according to Wikipedia, this track was a Top 10 hit on the UK Singles Chart at the time.

The lyrics used are lifted from the 1662 'Book of Common Prayer' and the vocals on the COIL 'Chalice' track are actually saying, though in reverse with time / pitch distortion:

*"Lord, Now lettest thou thy servant
Depart in peace,
According to thy word."*

If you're interested, the lyrics reference the following biblical context: Simeon, a devout Jew, had been promised by the Holy Spirit that he would not die until he had seen the Messiah. When Mary and Joseph brought the baby Jesus to the Temple in Jerusalem Simeon was there, he took Jesus into his arms and uttered the above words reflecting upon his imminent peaceful death.

Some may wonder that a new choral version of 'Nunc Dimittis' could have been recorded in-studio specifically for COIL to use at the time, and may point to a mention of one "Sister Marie Gabriel" in the 'A Thousand Lights...' album booklet as the possible vocal for such a religious song. I think this is extremely doubtful and just too ambitious for COIL, especially considering Sister Marie Gabriel (born in Poland in 1941) was the notorious nun prophet who produced full-page advertisements of apocalyptic warnings in several UK daily newspapers a year before the recording of the COIL album in question. The Sister's dire prophecy foretold of imminent world doom caused by a massive fireball directed at planet Earth from Jupiter (what a Dream of an 'Earth Star', eh?). So yes, she is a very Balance-type figure, but Sister Gabriel was probably a bit too preoccupied to pop down to Slut's Hole Studio to record vocals for COIL in 1995. Granted, she did live in London at the time though! The elderly nun now lives in South Wales and, apparently, hoards other people's cats as feline prisoners in her own home (if online forums are to be believed).

No, the version of 'Nunc Dimittis' used in that Black Light District track obviously had to have been recorded between 1978-1995, with my money being on the first minute of the original 1979 Decca version by Geoffrey Burgon as the origin of the sample on COIL's 'Chalice' (not the 'Tinker...' TV series version). A link to hear this 1979 version is in the Resources section below (the link sadly has country-specific protection, and I cannot find another streaming copy of it on the internet at this time).

Regardless of the version of arrangement used as the sample, after my years of wondering and a typed-up gaffe of notable proportions I can now rest easy in saying that, from Geoffrey Burton to Geoffrey Burgon, the true source of the vocals on COIL's magnificently mournful 'Chalice' is now known to me.

Resources:

Probably the version used in the 'Chalice' track (taken from the first minute of this):
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EbzlHNF2zYE>

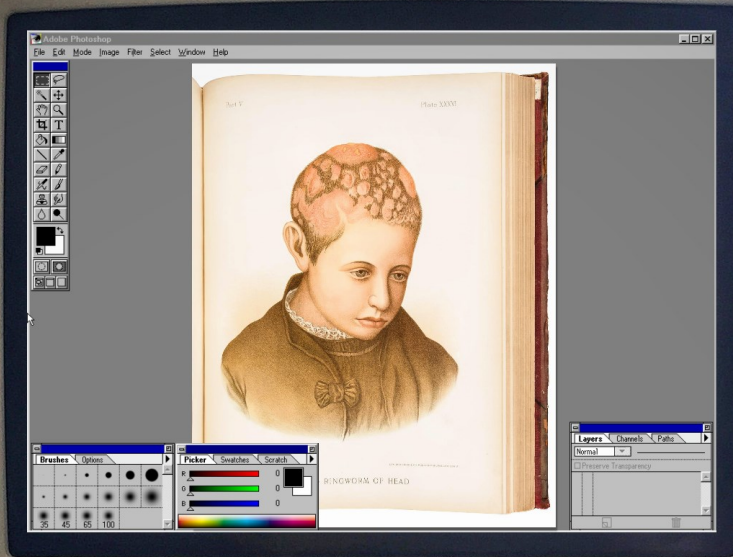
COIL's Black Light District album version of 'Chalice' for comparison:
<https://youtu.be/MMLklhgTCrk>

The more famous version of the vocal track, as originally used in the end credits of the 1979 'Tinker...' UK TV series:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2cS92hHbs9w>

The origin of the lyrics:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nunc_dimittis

COIL's 'Chalice' on Discogs:
<https://www.discogs.com/composition/99cb35ef-ccab-4f3f-824e-004ba54e8467-Chalice>

Photoplasms and Skin Diseases



What would you say is the most memorable COIL sleeve design? The haunting bandstand scene on 'Horse Rotorvator'? Maybe Ian Johnstone's blood-drenched primate on 'The Ape of Naples'? Or do the anus-snorting creatures on the 'Wrong Eye/Scope' single tickle your fancy? Whilst I'd argue COIL's decades of sleeve design sometimes have an uneven level of quality, with a smattering of artistic misfires (I'm thinking the 'Born Again Pagans' sleeve here) or no artwork at all (I feel robbed that we never got to see a fully-realised sleeve design for 'Constant Shallowness Leads to Evil'), I firmly believe that the yellowing surreal characters that inhabit the Black Light District are one of COIL's true sleeve art highlights.

But what was the inspiration behind the 'A Thousand Lights In A Darkened Room' artwork? How were the end results created? To answer that I think it's important to briefly acknowledge Peter Christopherson's background in computer design.

In 1974, soon after returning to the UK from studying computer programming, theatre design and video at the State University of New York (SUNY) in Buffalo and Amherst, Christopherson started doing some photographic and design assistant work for the legendary Hipgnosis studios, working on designs for Pink Floyd releases amongst others. His processes for album sleeve design included airbrush retouching and mechanical cut-and-paste techniques. In March that same year he met Genesis P-Orridge and Cosey Fanni Tutti during their COUM Transmissions phase (at a performance at the Oval House in Kennington, south London) and the rest, as they say, is well-documented history.



[The *State University of New York (SUNY)* in Buffalo, where Peter studied Computer Programming, Theatre Design and Video. Peter has, of course, the nickname of Sleazy, though a fellow SUNY student at the same time Peter was there would ultimately wear that dubious crown with more confidence. Harvey Weinstein graduated SUNY in the same year as Peter (1973).]

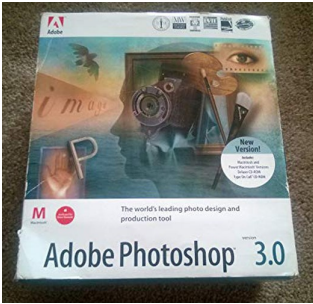
Christopherson's long-standing love for the Apple Macintosh is well-known though, contrary to what some may believe, he wasn't first exposed to that home computer because of his continuing design work for Hipgnosis. That company folded in 1983 and it'd take until the following year before the first Mac was even launched: the Macintosh 128K was released on January 24th 1984 for the princely sum of \$2,495, running on the 'System Software 1.0' operating system. That computer model was superseded during the autumn of the following year, but the 128k made a massive impact on the burgeoning home computer market. Erik Sandberg-Diment of The New York Times reported at the time that this nascent version of the Macintosh "*presages a revolution in personal computing*".



[The 128k model of the Apple Mac]

As the 1990s dawned, so did the era of the Macintosh PowerBook - a line that was targeted at the professional market - and Christopherson started mentioning the use of the Mac in interviews. The 1990s also brought stable versions of digital audio workstations like 'Cubase' and 'Pro Tools' after their debuts in 1989 and, from then onwards and forevermore, COIL and Mac went hand-in-hand.

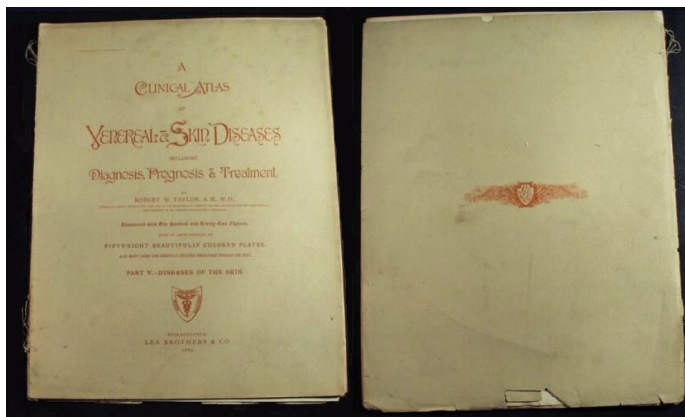
'Adobe Photoshop 3.0' was released for the Mac in September 1994 on compact disc (the first release CD-Rom release of the software) and floppy disk (the final release to be distributed in floppy disk format), and it was a revolution in image editing. For the first time in its development history it added the ability for Layering (and, also for the first time, tabbed palettes). Layers, as we know, are individual slices of the image that go together to make the final "sandwich" of the image. This new feature enabled the ability to work on complex arrangements of design within the one image file without having to tamper with other areas of the same image.



Version 3.0 of the software was only superseded by 4.0 in November 1996, so this version of the image editing software ruled the market for over two years (with incremental updates, of course), this period ushering in lots of emerging tools and plugins for the software too. One of the most successful addons of the time was the 'Kai's Power Tools' collection of plugins. Created in 1992, subsequent versions built upon the plugin set's versatility and eventually included the very popular KPT Goo (or Power Goo), KPT Materializer and Vortex Tiling plugins. Goo gave the user a freeform liquid distortion ability - effectively turning a bitmap image into a liquid that can be interactively smeared, smudged, twirled, and pinched with the range of tools on offer.

At the time most people used Goo to distort photographic portraits into caricatures, KPT Materializer to turn sections of photographs or other imagery into surface textures (often giving an oil painting feel to textured graphics) and Vortex Tiling (evolving to become FraxFlame in future KPT releases) to create fractal effects from photographs. So, by the time COIL came to look at the artwork for their 'A Thousand Lights In A Darkened Room' album, under their Black Light District moniker, the choice of software tools to create it all must have seemed obvious.

By an act of pure serendipity, COIL legend states that Jhonn and Ossian Brown had picked up a vintage collection of lurid medical illustrations from a car boot sale in Exeter (southwest England) in early 1996, providing lots of twisted and boil-riddled source material for the album artwork. In fact, after a period of research, I can state that all of the Victorian-era reference book illustrations used for the 'Black Light District' album are chromolithographs by medical artist E. Burgess, originally collated in the softcover collection titled 'A Clinical Atlas of Venereal & Skin Diseases including Diagnosis, Prognosis & Treatment' by Robert W. Taylor (1889). This whole 8-volume atlas was the magnum opus of Robert Taylor (a prominent dermatologist and professor of genito-urinary and venereal diseases at the College of Physicians and Surgeons of New York), the book now seen as one of the classics in its field.



The original 'Black Light District' album credits indicate both Peter *and* Jhonn were responsible for the finished artwork design using these medical illustrations (and Jon Whitney's interview of the band from this era noted that the duo did have matching Mac Powerbooks in their home study), though I assume Jhonn's role was really more instructive and less practical given Peter's already decades-long background in design and computer technology at the time.

All things considered it seems evident to me that, over a period of time during Spring-Summer 1996 (the BLD album was released in October that year), Peter scanned six illustrations of diseased patients from this medical collection onto his Mac PowerBook, opened Photoshop and used KPT Goo for the caricature work, most probably utilised the KPT Materializer plugin to help create the jaundiced background layers of texture, and Vortex Tiling for the fractal designs that you see accompanying the characters in the finished artwork.

First, for general guidance, here are two examples of the kind of effects you can create when using this range of KPT collection:

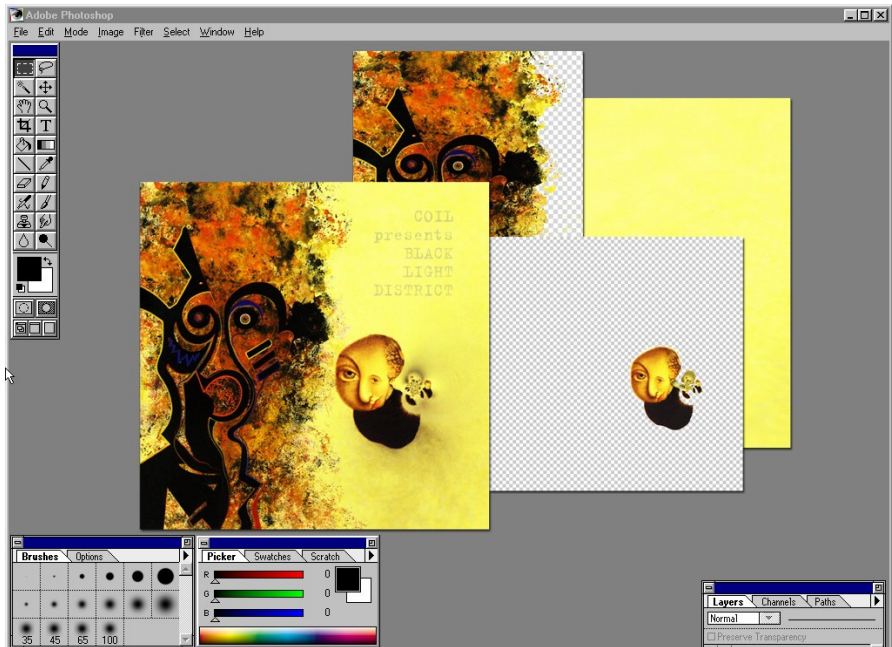
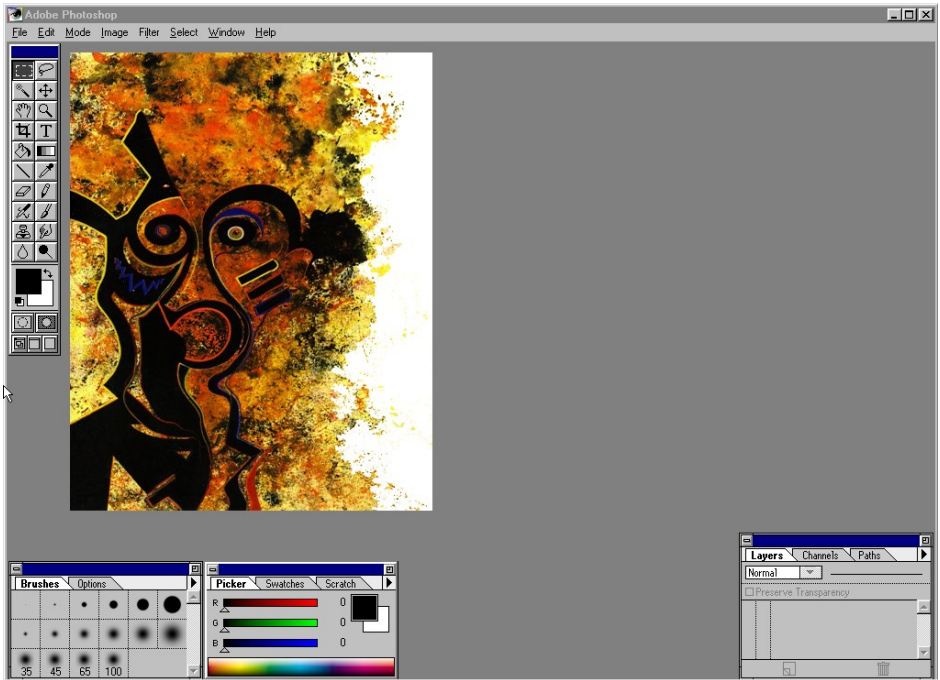


[KPT Collection promo images]

Now let us take a look at the *before* and *after* of several of Peter's digital works to show his processes in action:



[KPT Power Goo plugin interface]

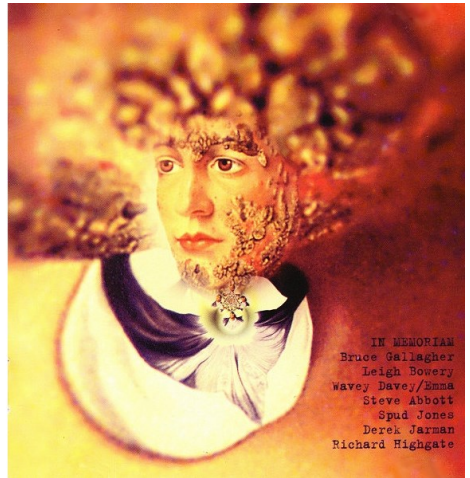


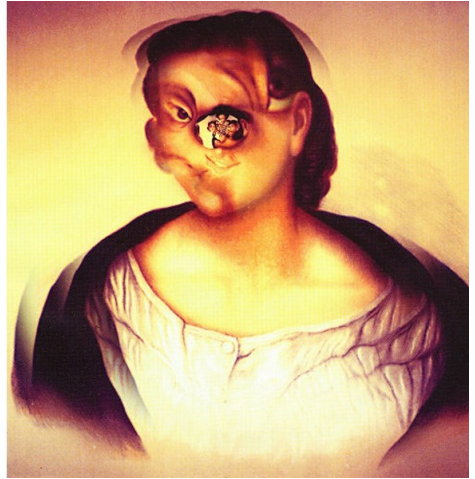
[Babs Santini artwork merged into layers in Adobe Photoshop 3.0]

KPT MATERIALIZER



The finished front cover of the 1996 album incorporates a relatively untouched and tribal art-like painting by Steven (Babs Santini) Stapleton. However, this Santini artwork is reused for the album's tracklisting artwork, this time Peter using both Power Goo and Materializer for the distortions of the face and textured paint patterns, creating a distinctive fractal-like (yet oil paint style) finish, seen above.

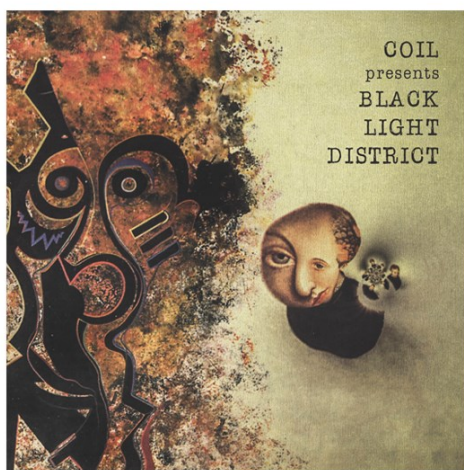
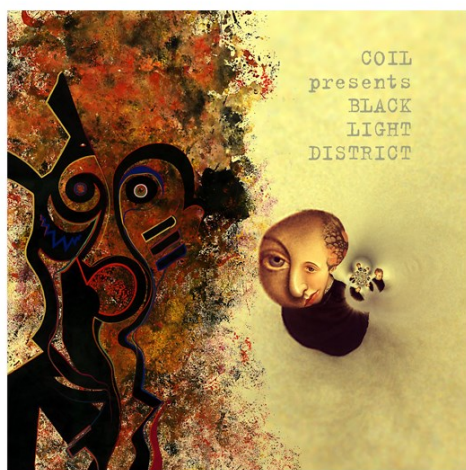






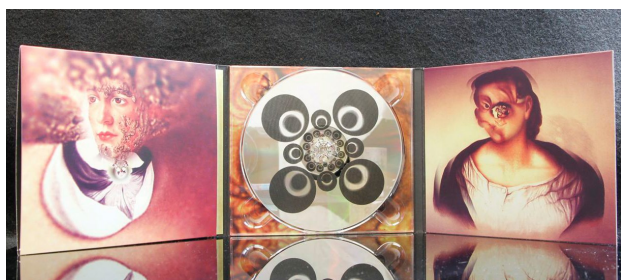
Photograph © 2018 Justin Headrick.

On an intriguing note, the 'A Thousand Lights In A Darkened Room' album was re-released twice in 2018, both releases virtually clashing with each other's launch period, and both treat the artwork in different ways. The DAIS version, which incorporates remastered versions of the artworks themselves (even going so far as to releasing some limited edition prints of several of Peter's original designs) give the artworks a vibrant, saturated and smooth look. The Infinite Fog label version, on the other hand, shows off Peter's art in more restrained, almost pastel-coloured and grainy reproductions, with different crops and slightly different title font too. Of the two, the DAIS release is the closest in reproducing the original release's sleeve and booklet artwork, though both versions have merit.



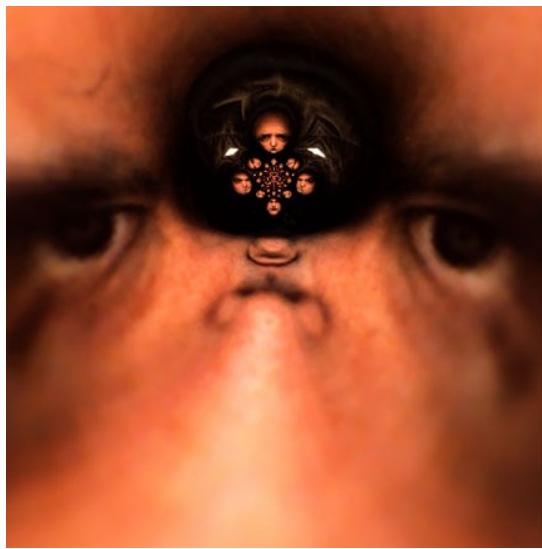
[Dais Records sleeve (left) & Infinite Fog sleeve reproduction (right)]

[Dais Records CD Digipak (below) & Infinite Fog edition range (right)]

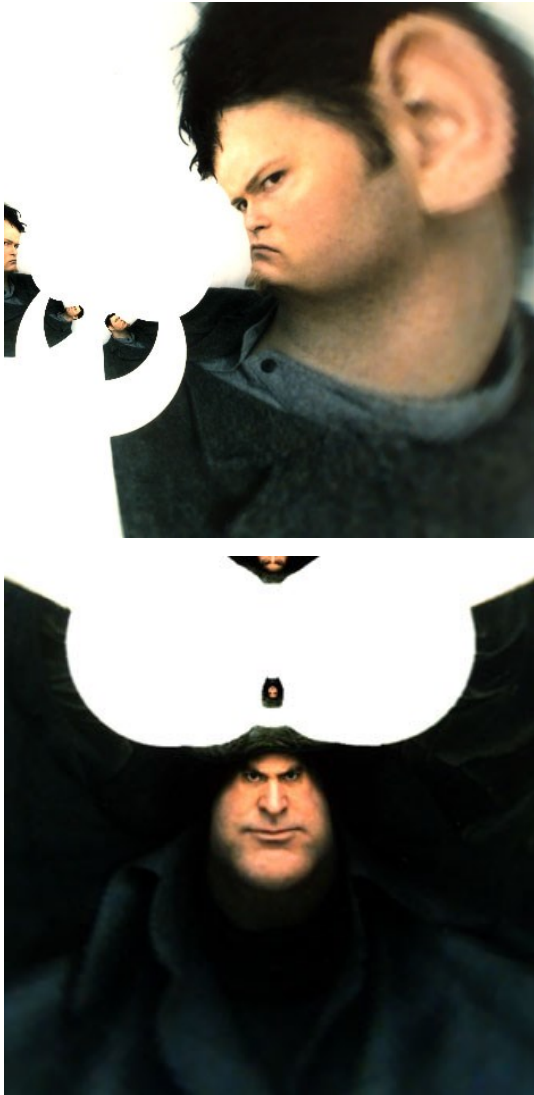


<https://www.daisrecords.com/products/coil-black-light-district>
<https://infinitefog.ru/shop/cd/black-light-box.html>

Regardless of the release version, I can never listen to the 'A Thousand Lights In A Darkened Room' album without almost immediately thinking of this surreal collection of disease-riddled locals from that most shady of districts. Suffice to say, the artwork of this release is so strong and distinctive it doesn't really resemble anything else in the entire COIL catalogue of visuals. Having said that, Peter's "Kai's Power Tools" work did actually make a further appearance, in the booklet for the following summer's COIL compilation 'Unnatural History III: Joyful Participation in the Sorrows of the World'. The Illustrated booklet contained two manipulated portrait photographs (the manipulations now named in the credits as being "Photoplasms"), one of Jhonn and one of Peter, with Jon Whitney (who compiled this 1997 CD collection) also receiving two extra Goo manipulations for the Brainwashed website archive of COIL material. See all four manipulations below and overleaf for this summer 1997 compilation release.



[‘Unnatural History III’ Photoplasm artworks by COIL]



[More "Unnatural History III"-era Photoplasm Artworks
by COIL - from www.brainwashed.com]

Resources:

A Power Goo demonstration giving similar Black Light District effects to the Mona Lisa:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f4CsntcGn-4>

Overview of 'A Clinical Atlas of Venereal & Skin Diseases' book, including where to buy:
<https://biblio.co.uk/book/clinical-atlas-venereal-skin-diseases-including/d/961720152>

A
CLINICAL ATLAS
OF
VENEREAL & SKIN DISEASES
INCLUDING
Diagnosis, Prognosis & Treatment.

BY

ROBERT W. TAYLOR, A.M, M.D.,

PROFESSOR OF DERMATOLOGY IN THE NEW YORK POST-GRADUATE MEDICAL SCHOOL; SURGEON TO THE CHARITY HOSPITAL, NEW YORK, AND TO THE DEPARTMENT
OF VENEREAL AND SKIN DISEASES OF THE NEW YORK HOSPITAL; LATE PRESIDENT OF THE AMERICAN DERMATOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION;
JOINT AUTHOR OF BUMSTEAD AND TAYLOR'S "PATHOLOGY AND TREATMENT OF VENEREAL DISEASES," ETC.

ILLUSTRATED WITH TWO HUNDRED AND THIRTEEN FIGURES, MANY OF THEM LIFE SIZE, ON

Fifty-eight Beautifully Colored Plates.

ALSO, MANY LARGE AND CAREFULLY EXECUTED ENGRAVINGS IN THE TEXT.



PHILADELPHIA:
LEA BROTHERS & CO.
1889.



Syrien.

Tinea tonsurans et Kerion conferitur.

KERION FROM RINGWORM.

E. BURGESS DEL. AD. HAT & LITH.

H. WEST & CO. CHROMO-LITH. HATTON GARDEN LONDON.

"Areas of diseased skin on the scalp of a child affected by kerion from ringworm."
Chromolithograph by E. Burgess, 1850/1880. Credit: Wellcome Collection. CC BY.



"Diseased skin on the face of a woman suffering from eczema impetiginoides."
Chromolithograph by E. Burgess, 1850/1880. Credit: Wellcome Collection. CC BY.



MORPHŒA OR ADDISON'S KELOID.

"Morphoea or Addison's keloid." Chromolithograph.
Credit: Wellcome Collection. CC BY.



"Diseased skin on the face of a patient suffering from elephantiasis graecorum or true leprosy." Chromolithograph by E. Burgess, 1850/1880.

Credit: Wellcome Collection. CC BY.



"Rash on the face, arms and chest of a baby suffering from lichen infantum."
Chromolithograph by E. Burgess, 1850/1880. Credit: Wellcome Collection. CC BY.

Jhonn Balance's Unhealthy Vessel:

The Disturbing COIL Character of Louise Weasel

Those who shine darkly are:

Peter Christopherson

Otto Avery

John Balance

Drew McDowall

Louise Weasel

Jenny De'Ath

John Absolom

and Rufus Pool

THE DISTURBING COIL CHARACTER OF LOUISE WEASEL

JHONN BALANCE'S
UNHEALTHY VESSEL



A COIL ARTICLE
BY PHIL BARRINGTON

The darkly disturbing and mysterious figure of Louise Weasel has haunted several releases over COIL's years of activity. But who exactly is she? What is her background? What, if anything, is her connection to COIL or even to Jhonn Balance himself?

A list of names can be found on page 366 of my humble curation of Jhonn Balance's written words and lyrics (a free book called "The Golden Age of Bloodsports"). This list is a (likely incomplete) run of pseudonyms, different spellings and alternative names used for Geoff Rushton over the course of his entire life:

"Jhonn Balance, Jhon Balance, John Balance, Otto Avery, Jenny De'Ath, John Absolom, Rufus Pool, Louise Weasel, Eden 2, Frater Coil 0*, Geoffrey Laurence Burton, Geoffrey Rushton, Geff Rushton."

Based upon that list you can see that there are two female names used by Balance on COIL-related releases. Only one of those two names had a specific personality and set of vocals: a certain *Louise Weasel*.

So, to confirm, this shady figure of Ms. Weasel never existed in our corporeal world - but she certainly *did* exist in COIL's sidereal world. Unlike Geoff's other pseudonyms such as Otto and Mr. Absolom (perhaps used to fill out the credits list in booklets to make certain COIL releases look like more expansive and collaborative efforts - though Rufus Pool was definitely used by Jhonn when dealing with COIL mail orders), Weasel actually appeared front-and-centre on certain music releases as a well-defined, if quite clinically ill, person.

Personally, whenever I see the name 'Louise Weasel' written down I immediately think that it surely *must* be an anagram of a COIL-related phrase or term. However, using both full name and shortened "Lou Weasel" version of it, trying to find an anagram that fits within the COIL world is really difficult. I can only come up with 'Seoul weal' (as in, "a red mark left on the body after a visit to Seoul") or, somewhat better, 'weal louse' (as in, removing lice from a red, swollen mark left on the flesh). Both anagrams are pretty bloody ludicrous. So, perhaps the name itself is just another one of Jhonn's in-jokes. After all, 'Lou Weasel' sounds to me like a very inebriated person trying to discuss whatever action *Lou Reed* would do in any given situation.

Regardless, let us explore the "when" and "how", before we finally look at the "why" of the conception of Louise Weasel. The first written mention of Louise Weasel appeared in the credits of COIL's 1996 'A Thousand Lights in a Darkened Room' album, as one of the performers "who shone darkly". Considering the majority of the names in the album credits were of people who didn't really exist in our world (Otto, Rufus,

Jenny De'Ath and Absolom were all present as citizens of this shadowy Black Light District), and given the haunting processed short vocal samples buried throughout this album, it is very fitting that the CD inlay of this experimental release contained the brief quotation from Austin Osman Spare: "*Ghosts are sidereal*".

Louise would also make her spectral presence known in the credits of the Russian 'Golden Hare with A Silver Voice' (rough amalgamated translation) COIL compilations from 2001-2002.

It was, however, Louise's collaborative appearance on the stunning CoH track 'Health And Deficiency: Love's Septic Domain' from Ivan Pavlov's 2000 'Love Uncut' mini-album that would be her true masterstroke. Regarding her distinctive feminine vocals, Pavlov described the creation of Weasel's voice when visiting the COIL studio residence in Weston-super-Mare, England:

"I do like working with voices, with interesting voices. I had a great time with Annie Anxiety's voice already back in 1999, for "Vox Tinnitus" - she has the most beautiful, unique, textured voice and an intensely generous and dynamic expression, to match her sharp, direct poetry. I also remember recording the voice of John Balance with Sleazy at their studio, and then twisting the feminine voice of Louise Weasel's out of it, for the 'Love Uncut' EP."

[secretthirteen CoH interview 2014]

The track's lyrics themselves reflect Jhonn's own well-publicised struggles with his alcohol-afflicted health and hospital treatment at the time, the track a disturbing meditation on clinical environments and fractured identity. Balance would return to such lyrical themes again and again, often in the same song, like on COIL's masterful 'Where Are You?', and it is easy to draw conclusions that there's more than an element of catharsis going on here that is beyond just the creative need to explore different personas. As Jhonn had said in 2001:

"Jhonn Balance is just a pseudonym. I've got several others. 'Geoff Rushton' left Psychic TV and became 'Jhonn Balance', just to differentiate the two - and then I've got others. When one persona gets tired, the other one takes over. Hopefully. It's different facets of yourself. I'm rather suspicious of people who don't have multiple names."

[Jhonn Balance in interview for Dutch Radio4 31/05/01]

Here, on the CoH track, Jhonn's voice alternates between masculine and feminine vocal deliveries, the lyrics including:

"...Gynaecologists and priests, 'very well-being' their living. Take these anti-coagulants, sterilise, cauterise and dress. My confessions in a stainless steel chair (or a titanium chair). My favourite person is who visits me - "be on your best behaviour". Yeah, I know. Dirty hospitals, dirty hospitals... This place is run, it's overrun, if only by the deceased.

Now I'm alone, and I have time to kill. I sit and stare at my long, long fingers. Ten inches is a monstrous size, it doesn't do to glamourise. There are rules and there are regulations... Dirty hospitals, dirty hospitals - it's overrun by medical regime.

And I have hypnotists and anaesthetists... struck dumb by vitamin deficiency. Its medicine has terrorism. Empty coagulates again, sugar shit and chloroforms... 27 pills before 9 a.m. in the morning (Yellow, brown) then another 35 by nine in the evening (And occasionally red). Three intravenous injections (I've used this before) one in the thigh, two in the eye (I'd like to try it again). But I'm confused between sexual, murder, magic, and medical. Is the difference metric or imperial? Septic, fertile, furtive, or sterile?"

[CoH, 'Health And Deficiency: Love's Septic Domain']

Of course, this was not the only time that Jhonn would create a very distinctive surreal character with self-contained personality on recordings for COIL or collaborators (anyone who has heard Jhonn's portrait of the vengeful eccentric character on Thighpaulsandra's 'Fouled' track would testify to that), but the fractured portrait of Louise Weasel that Jhonn explored for CoH so disturbed him on an emotional level that Balance vowed never to return to her again:

"For the 'Love's Septic Domain (Health & Deficiency)' track I reached an area of myself - I found a persona in myself that I don't really want to ever bring out again because it drove me mad for about a month afterwards. Seriously."

[Jhonn Balance in interview for Dutch Radio4 31/05/01]

However, it was this feminine voice and curious fixation with impairment that would arguably return, for one final time, on COIL's 'Restitution Of Decayed Intelligence' vinyl release in 2003.

I have attempted to decipher the fading words of who I personally think is the ghostly Louise Weasel from that final COIL single, with lyrics including:

*"I'm the disabled messenger now.
Unaffected by youth - an old beast.
I climbed the clouds, a broken vessel, a stolen moment.
And then razed to the ground: The Blank.
An old enemy, an object, an old star.
An old situation at the right time: The Blank."*

[COIL, 'The Restitution Of Decayed Intelligence' Track II, 2003]

This oft-overlooked COIL release, issued by third-party label Beta-lactam Ring Records, does not mention Louise Weasel on any sleeve notes or credits at all. In fact, if anything, this vinyl release is notable for a rare Sleazy pseudonym "Kodiak" appearance. I would certainly argue, however, that 'The Restitution Of Decayed Intelligence' (track 'II') can be interpreted as a reflective 'signing off' from the Broken Vessel and impaired messenger herself, on the Weasel deathbed, channelled straight through Jhonn from his increasingly shrinking sidereal world during late-stage alcoholism (just a year before the fatal fall).

At the very end, for all her frantic fixations, clinical concerns and phantasmagorical phobias, her creator outlived Louise Weasel. But, tragically, only for one more Earth year before Jhonn himself succumbed to "*The Blank*".

Louise Weasel Discography:

Coil Presents Black Light District - 'A Thousand Lights In A Darkened Room'. Eskaton, 1996.
CoH - 'Love Uncut' (CD, mini-album) Eskaton, 2000.
Coil - 'A Guide For Beginners - A Silver Voice' Feelee, 2001.
Coil - 'A Guide For Finishers - A Golden Hair' Feelee, 2001.
Coil - 'The Golden Hare With A Voice Of Silver' (2xCD S/Edition, Set) Feelee, 2001.
Coil - 'The Golden Hare With A Voice Of Silver' Eskaton, 2002.
Coil - 'The Restitution Of Decayed Intelligence' (uncredited) Lactamase, 2003.
CoH - 'CoHgs' (Comp) Editions Mego, 2017.

Jhonn Balance at Birnbeck Pier: 1998-2004
(COIL Geology I)

**"As I fell into the water I slipped and broke my aura
(Are you asleep? Yes)"**

Jhonn Balance - 'Broken Aura', 2000.



[Original Jhonn Balance photograph © 2016 Timeless, France.]

"God saved me from drowning, then kicked me to death on the beach"

Jhonn Balance - 'MU-UR', 1999.



Weston-super-Mare is a seaside town in North Somerset, England, along the Bristol Channel 18 miles south west of Bristol itself (the city where Balance's memorial service was held on November 23rd 2004). Its population at the 2011 census was 76,143.

As we know, it was this bustling coastal town that COIL moved to in 1998 to get away from the vices and negative influences of the city of London (their home together for the past 16 years up to that point). It was here in their large new house and recording studio at Oak Bank (soon nicknamed North Tower) on South Road that Jhonn would battle through his alcoholism with increasingly fraught psychotic episodes, and it was here where they would record some of the very best COIL musick in their extensive catalogue.

This was, perhaps coincidentally, the era of COIL that saw important collaborations with Thighpaulsandra, who lives in Wales - now a mere hour or so away by car to the North Tower home studio (as opposed to a 3+ hour drive via the M4 to COIL's former London abode).

Although Weston-super-Mare's Sand Bay is the tranquil flat coastal terrain where Peter and Jhonn would regularly walk their dogs during the day, it was the rough and rocky coastline beside the seaside resort's disused Birnbeck Pier where the Channel 4 'Hello Culture' TV programme filmed COIL in 2001 for the episode titled 'Badness' (ostensibly for COIL's love of Aleister Crowley, the magickian himself a large section of the episode's content).

It was this spot (which was the closest beach area to Jhonn and Peter's home, a mere 4 -minute walk away) where Jhonn spent a portion of his days contemplating and dealing with his emotions, in solitude, on the Carboniferous Limestone rocks overlooking the lapping waves and crumbling pier. He would even occasionally lay drunk and unconscious on this set of rocks.

Strangely enough, The Beatles themselves sat on the very rocks that Jhonn would pass out on decades later. Photographs of the mop tops from 1963 exists where, judging from the angle and the Birnbeck Pier position behind them, the four mop tops were sat on the very same rock formation that COIL were filmed crouching on all those years later (38 years, to be precise).



[Beatles photographs © 1963, The Weston Mercury.]

[The Beatles at Birnbeck Pier in Weston-super-Mare in July 1963, from local paper The Weston Mercury. The same rock formation where Jhonn Balance would lay passed out on 38 years later (and subsequently inspired to write some classic COIL songs), and the same set of rocks that COIL were filmed 'performing' on by Channel 4.]

"Are you bathing in moonlight, or drowned on the beach?"

Jhonn Balance - 'Where Are You?', 2000.

The very site where Jhonn used to pass out on has a fairly discreet access point and is in one corner of the whole bay, these rocks often the preferred area to be used for laying on by nude bathers in the mid-1800s during the Victorian medicinal bathing craze.

Peter recounted on more than one occasion in interview the times when he had found Jhonn drunk and unconscious on the rocks at the beach near their home. This, the rocky coastal area overlooking the disused Birnbeck Pier, is that place.

"At the time - Spring 2004 - living alone with Geff (who was going through a 'bad patch' — screaming, passing out on the rocks... etc) in the cold and draughty North Tower building, with the rain beating in from the sea onto cracked windowpanes with bits of Geff's hair in the glass where he had smashed his head against them, it was a comforting fantasy for me to imagine a different life..."

[Peter Christopherson in interview with Regnaert & Ferguson, 2006]

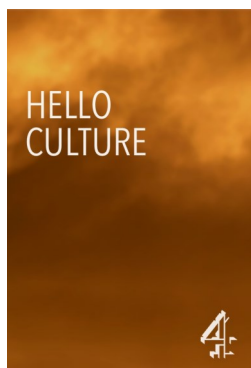
The TV arts and culture series 'Hello Culture', presented by Matthew Collings, was first announced by the UK press in March 2001 as having been commissioned by Channel 4. The summary of the short series of themed episodes was given by the channel as thus:

"Romanticism from 200 years ago to 2001 is a reality system that comes from the imagination. It looks for and recognises extremes - from light to dark, from joy to dejection. Imagination, which creates the world, has to be kept supplied with feeling and intensified, otherwise the world dies. For the world to exist and for imagination to work, something has to be happening."

There was one over-arching theme per 60-minute episode of 'Hello Culture':

1. Wildness.
2. Nihilism.
3. Badness [featuring COIL and their "inspiration" Aleister Crowley]
4. Madness.
5. Celebrity.

Presenter Collings, cameraman Ian Moss and Ian MacMillan (the series producer who got COIL involved in the episode in the first place) visited COIL at North Tower around



March-April 2001 and the whole group travelled down to the Claremont limestone rock strata overlooking the 'Marine Lake' area of the Bristol Channel, (down the slope beside Birnbeck Pier, past the Prince Consort Gardens). It was here where the team recorded some of the best - and most distinctive - promo footage ever shot of COIL, each of the three members (Thighpaulsandra joined them on the day) hamming it up on the beach, miming along on their expensive vintage analogue synthesizers. Jhonn himself was mimicking a performance on the vintage EMS VCS3 Analog Modular Synthesizer (much sought after - in 2010 one reached £6,700 in an eBay auction).

The TV episode itself overlaid the sounds from the album version of "Higher Beings Command" onto this beach footage, along with an interview at North Tower, a look at COIL's book collection (an emphasis on Crowley), and some exclusive live footage from the 19th September 2000 'Persistence is All' COIL gig at the Royal Festival Hall, London.

This series premiered on Sunday July 22nd 2001 on Channel 4 and the COIL-featured 'Badness' episode aired on Sunday August 05th 2001. It has seldom been seen since, with only a couple of old VHS recordings hissing and sparking their presence on Youtube.

I personally contacted the original TV production company of the "Hello Culture" series in November 2017 and requested a high quality version of the COIL-related episode for possible critical use by the Live COIL Archive (the website of which I am co-creator/co-admin). I now have the footage in the best quality of this 16-year-old digital video footage that we may ever get, though cannot upload the whole episode or even large chunks of it, due to copyright restraint by the TV production company I had to agree to abide by before they sent me the footage.

However, I travelled to Weston-super-Mare for a couple of days in December 2017 to shoot some new footage of the rock area near Birnbeck Pier on suitably low-fi camera equipment (and some clips of 'North Tower' too), to add to the original beach scenes from this 'Hello Culture' episode - that I now have permission to show, in its current edit of mine, under Fair Dealing use for review purposes (the first draft of this essay supporting my use of the footage at the time).



Sitting alone at night on those rocks in the disorientating limbo-period between Christmas 2017 and New Year, the moon shining brightly above, I was struck by the suitably violent whooshing and roaring sound of the waves snapping around the foundation legs of the disused pier far out in the seasonal blackness. The channel water was truly battering the rocks themselves too. Sadly, I could not feel Jhonn there, in that warring maelstrom of water versus strata. However, upon leaving that shoreline around midnight I gave a broad smile when I passed by an old, weed-choked bandstand in the gardens on the clifftop nearby. Perhaps merely because it was obscured by the bleak December night and the somewhat wild overgrowth (or maybe due to the sauvignon blanc tickling my liver), the outline of the bandstand under the moon struck more than a passing resemblance to me of the 'Horse Rotorvator' front cover.

As for the Birnbeck Pier itself? A poignant Youtube description left by a drone operator filming over that area in recent years perhaps says it best:

"Birnbeck looks a sinister place now, in a side of town that Weston-super-Mare seems to have forgotten. Such a sad way for a once grand spectacle of huge public interest to end up. During the filming of this the drone picked up on a sign on the floor near the old RNLI Lifeboat station which simply reads "Death Lies This Way". This may mean don't step out onto now-rotted walkway for fear of falling through, or it may just be spelling out the future for Birnbeck Pier."

Resources:

My music video of "Higher Beings Command", containing the above-mentioned self-shot footage as well as the scenes from 'Hello Culture':
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DThSu6ou_xQ

Visit the disused pier now (The Birnbeck Webcam - viewed from the clifftop above the area COIL were miming on their synths):
<http://www.birnbeckregenerationtrust.org.uk/webcam.html>



[The Birnbeck limestone stratum at high tide, December 29th 2017, by Phil Barrington. Jhonn would lay alone and unconscious here during the early 2000s, his experiences likely influencing the lyrics behind several late-era COIL songs. As seen in low tide on 'Hello Culture': to get your bearings, Peter's filmed position would be in the water to the mid-right of this photograph.]



[Jhonn's glass etching for COIL's experimental 'ANS' recordings, 2004. Note the rock and water illustrations, alongside the triple moons and his trademark 'ectoplasmic' figures seemingly rising from under the shadows of the mountains.]

HIGHER // BEINGS \\ COMMAND

FILM CONCEPT NOTES

HIGHER // BEINGS \\ COMMAND

Directed by Phil Barrington

**** This video needs to be played *loud* to get the full effect ****

The binding concept is influenced by the *Stone Tape Theory*; the limestone rocks Jhonn had laid on when he was alive are eternally transmitting the essence of Mr. Balance well after everyone else has faded away over time.

The original COIL elements I have included under Fair Dealing Usage are seen here in the highest quality seen thus far.

Whilst footage is graphically stylised elsewhere in this video, this promo does contain every milli-second of unchanged visual elements of COIL next to Birnbeck Pier and North Tower in 2001, straight from the PAL DVD vob files from the production company of "Hello Culture", with exceptions: one very brief shot just of the pier that I didn't use and I obviously didn't use the original band interview and gig footage from the original programme too.

As this video exists purely to show the original dvd-quality DV beach footage for the first time, the additional footage shot in recent times (mostly by myself) has been downgraded to suit the pixel-width of the untouched original visual elements.

Thus, in an attempt to preserve the original quality/ratio of the COIL footage I received, this music video is NOT in HD, though I think the main elements still look good for 16-year-old DV footage (especially the close-ups).

That said, if your browser only plays this Youtube video in 360p quality then you need to try another browser/device for a higher quality setting, as everything looks awful in that setting.

Though this whole fan-made video certainly has some limitations (and I cannot control Youtube's own compression methods too), I hope some of you can enjoy my humble efforts to bring this highest quality (thus far seen) existing COIL footage to the fanbase as part of a full music video.

My sincere thanks to the original Series Producer Ian MacMillan for making it all happen way back when.

Phil.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DThSu6ou_xQ

HIGHER // BEINGS \\ COMMAND

FILM CREDITS

HIGHER // BEINGS \\ COMMAND

Directed by Phil Barrington

Incorporating minor visual elements from the 'Hello Culture' Channel 4 series

© & © 2001 Oxford Films.

These elements used under Fair Dealing (UK) / Fair Use (USA) Conditions
for the purposes of review [to accompany the 'Jhonn Balance at Birnbeck Pier: 1998-2004' Essay]

Rhys Davies as The Eternal Entity of Balance

Music by COIL

"Higher Beings Command" (CSO Goat Soup Mix by Phil Barrington)

Used under Creative Commons License

"Absolute Elsewhere" (Tone-Sample Mix by Phil Barrington)

Used under Copyleft Principle

Drone footage by UAV XTC

Used with thanks under Creative Commons License

To Nominate Geoff Rushton / COIL for possible Blue Plaque status, email:
tricia.brabham@wsm-tc.gov.uk

Or visit Weston Town Council:
wsm-tc.gov.uk/community/blue-plaques

Thanks to:

The Birnbeck Regeneration Trust. Acquire a piece of the Old Pier *now*:
www.birnbeckregenerationtrust.org.uk/fundraising.html

Friends of the Old Pier Society—www.birnbeck-pier.co.uk

Oak Bank Residential Home Ltd.

Claremont Wine Vaults (for their Sauvignon Blanc)

Tabitha Machin

Lou Weasel

HIGHER // BEINGS \\ COMMAND

FILM CASTING

Dear Rhys Davies,

I have seen some pictures from your online portfolios such as ModelMayhem and thought I would get in touch.

My name is Phil Barrington and I am a photographic artist currently finishing a music video project for a British music band named COIL (specifically for a website named Live COIL Archive). Whilst the main members of the band are now deceased, they did record segments of a music video next to Birnbeck Pier in 2001 for a Channel 4 programme named "Hello Culture". I now have the master footage and intend to reshoot certain segments of the music video to complete it at the end of the year. In association with Birnbeck Regeneration Trust, I am travelling to the Birnbeck Pier shoreline in Weston-super-Mare at the end of the year to complete filming by myself (of the pier's shoreline only) for this music video project.

I need a male model for just 35 minutes of my daytime shoot on the shoreline - I can pay you £** cash for your brief time on the day - and wondered if you'd be free on either one or the other of the following two dates/times?

- Thursday 28th December 2017, 2pm-2.35pm. or
- Wednesday 3rd January 2018, 2pm-2.35pm.

If you'd like to do this brief job for this music video project for the experimental band COIL, I wonder if you have similar dark clothes and near-enough short haircut as the lead singer had in 2001? You will be filmed from a distance and mostly from behind.

Screenshot of the clothing/look of what the project needs from a model is attached. I can buy the clothes needed if you don't have anything similar to that shown in the screenshot though. There will be end credits, where I can give your modelling name too.

Please do let me know at your earliest convenience if you are free on either of the two dates for 35 minutes and would like to appear in this video.

My kindest regards,

Phil

Phil Barrington
phil@barringtonarts.com
live-coil-archive.com
www.barringtonarts.com

HIGHER // BEINGS \\ COMMAND

BEHIND THE SCENES



[Actor Rhys Davies with the fake VCS3 synth I made for the “underwater” scenes. Dec. 2017.]



[The fake Blue Plaque I made for the end scene at North Tower. Dec. 2017. To Nominate Geoff Rushton / COIL for possible Blue Plaque status, please email: tricia.brabham@wsm-tc.gov.uk]

The Balance Macro-Monolith (COIL Geology II)



PHIL BARRINGTON

4"(h) x 2.5"(w) x 2"(d) COIL's North Tower limestone/snail shell.
Carboniferous limestone with shell on marble plinth.
Both items retrieved from the North Tower grounds: December 2017.
Supermoon-charged and consecrated by ritual: January 1st 2018.

By Phil Barrington.

"Have to rearrange reality, to come back here, to these monoliths"

Jhonn Balance - 'Poisons'.

I write these notes purely for the most talismanic, geological and psychogeographical of COIL fans.

Stone Geological Provenance

The stones (and one empty snail shell) in my possession were retrieved in late December 2017 with total respect to that old COIL home/recording studio site. They were retrieved with a staff member's curious-yet-nodding permission at the time, whilst I was shooting elements of my "Higher Beings Command" COIL fan video there, in the very place that housed Jhonn's traumatic later years and his fatal fall.

COIL's 'North Tower' is a large detached Victorian house with steep drive/entrance access. It was built during the rapid - and comparably massive - expansion of Weston-super-Mare in the 19th Century. After the introduction of the railway to the area in 1841 (and the still-booming early Victorian culture of 'medicinal bathing' in the sea), purpose-made resorts like Weston sprung up all around the UK at the time, using local stone quarry resources. The grey limestone dotted around COIL's North Tower grounds, such as the few samples now in my collection, did not travel far to get to their destination. The stone elements for building North Tower and populating its grounds are sourced from the historic "Weston Town Quarry" on the very same street (South Road). The Weston Civic Society, my historical source, often refers to the town itself as "Limestone Country" and the rows of limestone around the front area of the North Tower (near where my samples were sourced from - close to the red skip seen in the photographs and film I took on the day) are visible from old photographs and historic Google Maps shots of the house.

"With stones and illegible inscriptions found about great ruins"

[Jhonn Balance, 'Batwings: A Limnal Hymn']

Soon after the Enclosure Act of 1810 the fields around Weston became dotted with 'gentleman's residences' - mansions, ornately romantic cottages, and simpler detached villas, all in their own grounds. Between 1845 and 1865 Weston acquired an impressive collection of crescents, terraces and rows of villas. It was around this time that COIL's North Tower was built and, as such, I have dated my stone collection as having been quarried from 1845-65, the limestone itself from the Carboniferous Period (359–299 million years ago).

"Limestone spine - blind for a time"

Jhonn Balance - 'The Colossus of Rhodes'.

The Paranormal and Scientific Properties of Limestone

Limestone is very fossiliferous and contains evidence of the abundant marine life that existed at the time of its creation, including fossil crinoids (sea-lilies), corals and brachiopods. Limestone has both interesting scientific studies and intriguing esoteric claims. Limestone is a sedimentary rock, composed mainly of skeletal fragments of marine organisms such as coral, forams and molluscs. It not only has quartz crystallization properties but it is also made from sea shell, which is piezoelectric.

Schumann resonance studies since the 1950s seem to point to unique pulses in the Earth's Electro-Magnetic Field when there is the presence of limestone in a particular site of interest, such as the pyramids of Giza. It is theorised that the high-amplitude transduction of the piezoelectric limestone of the pyramids creates an electromagnetic field around the structures, the movement of electrons becoming toriodal or donut-shaped (though consistent detectable levels of this energy are highly disputed).

"There's an angry light in the stones"

[Jhonn Balance, 'Fire Of The Green Dragon']

My own readings, with comparisons, of the Electro-Magnetic Field around my North Tower stone collection:

- ◆ **0.86 μ T** - a sample EMF reading I took just of my local town centre on the afternoon of January 23rd 2018 (on cobbled street).
- ◆ **0.94 μ T** - first EMF reading of my entire COIL North Tower stone collection on January 23rd 2018. Moon in Waxing Crescent Phase.
- ◆ **1.14 μ T** - second EMF reading of my entire COIL North Tower stone collection on January 24th 2018. Moon in First Quarter Phase.

As for paranormal or occult claims, even a cursory glance through internet resources on the properties of limestone bring findings to the surface, such as:

"There has always been a sweeping assumption among paranormal investigators and the para-community that limestone has the ability to absorb and release electro



magnetic and psychic energies. This phenomenon explains why one site may be more haunted than another. T.C. Lethbridge proposed the Stone Tape Theory in the 1970's as an attempt to explain how this could happen..."

'Limestone and Its Paranormal Properties: A Comprehensive Approach to the Possibilities' by Timothy Yohe.

"The premise of the stone tape concept is that crystalline rock (bedrock or building stone) captured emotional 'energy' from a traumatic event. The preferred rock type is said to be quartz but limestone is mentioned nearly as frequently. The sound and visual representations of an event are "recorded" into the fabric of the rock media in a process analogous to a magnetic tape recording of data. At a much later date, a person sensitive to this "energy" can receive the "playback" or, the playback can be initiated by certain conditions. The recording / playback sequence has long been used as an explanation for apparition sightings and haunting."

<http://spookygeology.com/haunted-rocks-the-stone-tape-theory>

"Triple sons; triple stones as they skiff across the water"

[Jhonn Balance, 'Triple Sons And The One You Bury']

"Limestone - just one geo-condition which is correlated with many haunted spots. Most of the time it has nothing to do with the limestone itself, though the quartz in the limestone has been brought up and maybe a clue. It is the underground streams "springs" which pass through the limestone. Where you find underground streams in limestone you usually find hauntings. Mineral concentrations such as oil, "quartz", coal for example are known to slightly spike the Earths natural Electromagnetic frequencies. I have noticed so many connections between my land and other places known to be haunted."

<http://www.unexplained-mysteries.com/forum/topic/181765-spirits-limestone>

When finally back at my cottage, the hour-long consecration I performed for this stone (and all the others from Weston) under a Supermoon on the 1st of January 2018 was bespoke ritual, but very similar to this one: <http://bit.ly/2D0otRk>

"From words they passed to deeds: spires, spirals and stones rise"

Jhonn Balance - 'Cathedral In Flames'.



PHIL BARRINGTON

[The snail shell sourced from COIL's former "North Tower" grounds]

Resources [other resources linked within the essay]:

For those interested in the Stone Tape Theory (a geological perspective):
<https://sharonahill.com/2017/05/11/the-stone-tape-theory-of-hauntings-a-geological-perspective/>

Main local historical sources used and lifted from:
<http://www.westoncivicsociety.org.uk/Trails-amp3b-Walks.aspx>

"A stone cast by darkness to shatter the glass"

Jhonn Balance - 'Scars For E'.



[Above and Below - Old limestone walling at COIL's "North Tower" home studio, December 2017. Phil Barrington]



**"Time passes over long stones unturned,
days lived days that lessons unlearned.
Burned time out of the plan, sandstone juts into landslides."**

Jhonn Balance - 'Leviathan Lifts'.



[Limestone walling at COIL's "North Tower" home studio with skip of garden debris, Dec. 2017. Phil Barrington]



[More from my private collection of consecrated North Tower stones]

The *Live COIL Archive* Collection of Stones for COIL Fans



[A free stone package claimed by a COIL fan in exchange for some exclusive live COIL material, 2018.]



75

[The *Megalithomania!* Stone - still available for any COIL fan with live video footage for that COIL gig.]

Stones Standing Still

(Jhonn Balance)

Stones standing still
Still standing stones

The distance between
And the difference between
Distant difference

The distance and the difference
The distance between the difference
The distance between us (distance)

Inbetween, the distance
Inbetween, the difference
The instance, the substance
Indistinction between ideal and actual

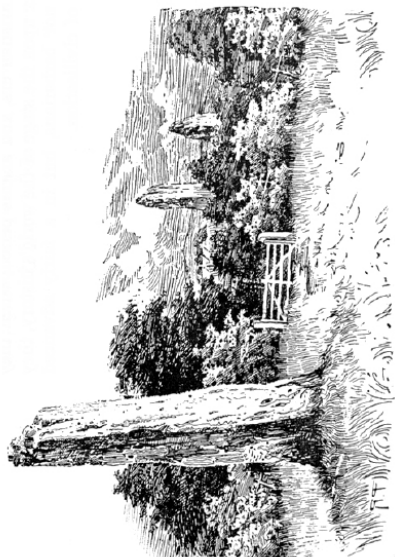
It's the soft intruder that reveals steel teeth
Converts from myth and fiction
Reported truth and contractual factual
Responds to action
Response to reaction

High altared thighs
Warm arches

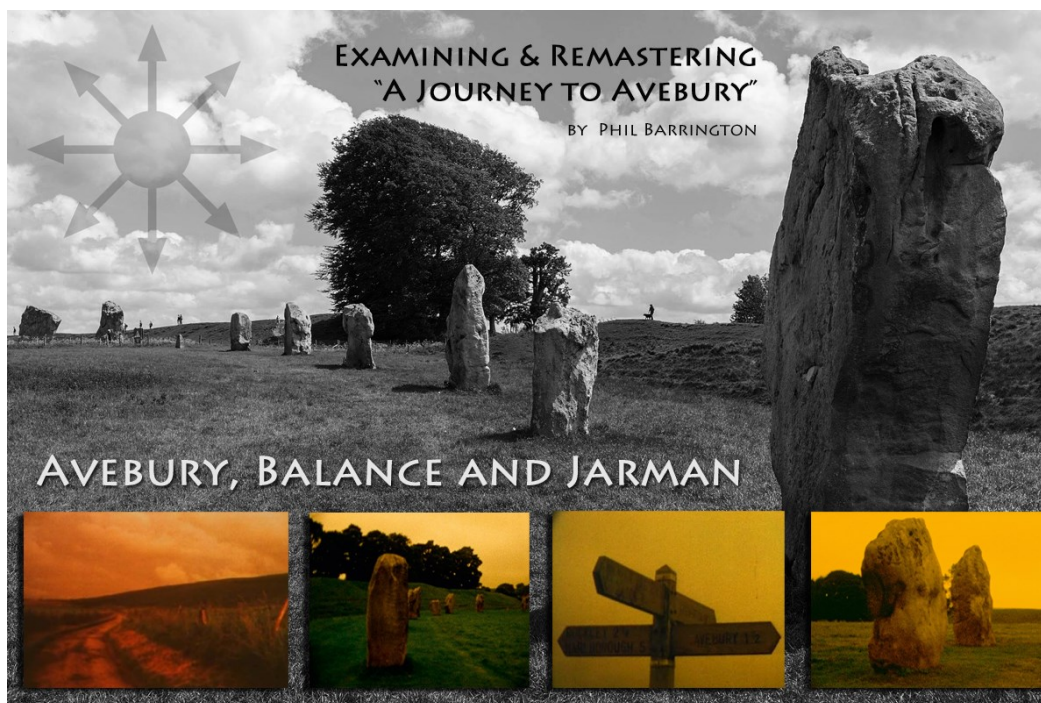
The breath in the body
The body of stones
Brickworking body
Built from sand and stones

Standing stones
Stones standing still

[This ultimately unused set of lyrics featured in the booklet of the very rare Coll's Gold is the Metal... 'boiset (rumoured to be of an edition of only 53)]



Avebury, Balance and Jarman (COIL Geology III)



I know I have written a couple of times before about COIL-related geology so please do bear with me for this third part in my trilogy of texts about the band's link with, er, stones (though with more focus on neolithic monuments than geological specimens this time around).

"Waveform, variant, monolith"

Jhonn Balance - 'Glowworms/Waveforms'.

Over the past few weeks I had set out to fully explore COIL's relationship with Derek Jarman's short film called 'A Journey To Avebury'. Because all existing online versions of the film are of a pretty unwatchable quality I quickly began to look at the idea of making some kind of "remaster" of it with their commissioned music (the COIL-soundtracked version of the film has never been commercially released).

Featuring a neolithic henge containing three stone circles, Avebury is a peaceful village in Wiltshire, south-west England, currently housing around 480 residents. One of the better-known prehistoric sites in the country for tourists and pagans alike, the village purports to contain the largest megalithic stone circle in the world. The stones themselves are carved from local sarsen stone (a shortened term for "Saracen stone", or non-Christian sandstone blocks).

The National Trust preservation charity describes the Avebury monument as thus:

"Constructed over several hundred years in the Third Millennium BC, during the Neolithic Age, the monument comprises a large henge (a bank and a ditch) with a large outer stone circle and two separate smaller stone circles situated inside the centre of the monument. Its original purpose is unknown, although archaeologists believe that it was most likely used for some form of ritual or ceremony. The Avebury monument is a part of a larger prehistoric landscape containing several older monuments nearby."

Having checked this myself, the main site of the stone circles themselves is exactly 70 miles away from COIL's home studio in Weston-super-Mare (from centre of village to South Road, Weston) and is a place that Jhonn regularly visited even before he moved there from London. Indeed, Balance visited the site so often that he was creating an episodic multimedia project with film producer-director George/Jordi Devas focussing on how the stones themselves relate to the changing seasons in mystical ways. For an entry in 1999's 'Songs of the Week' collection on the Brainwashed site, Jhonn writes:

"Avebury is nearly where Julian Cope lives. It is a sacred earth/sky site. I have been making a new Super 8 film with Jordi Devas about Avebury for the last 6 years. Recording each mood and season and looking for mystic signs and interactions. Work still in completion. Due end of this era!"

This project sadly remains unfinished, uncatalogued and without any mention since Jhonn's passing - any existing reels/transfers of footage likely to reside in the Devas media production archive ('Jordi Devas Associates Limited', registered office in Middlesex UK).

The main Avebury project that COIL actually *did* finish in their lifetime was their lively, bubbling electronic soundtrack for the re-release of frequent collaborator Derek Jarman's 1971 Super 8 film of his own journeys around the stones titled 'A Journey to Avebury'. After previous film projects of his that heavily involved COIL, including 'The Angelic Conversation' (1987) and 'Blue' (1993), Jarman's film producer approached Jhonn and Peter for a soundtrack to the director's 10-minute short film's posthumous re-release for the festival circuit (this COIL version showing at least once, during a 1990s Brighton Festival). This soundtrack, given the same title as the film but without the beginning "A", was completed by the band in London around 1995 (roughly around the time of the 'Worship The Glitch' sessions, in my opinion). As Jhonn writes in 1999:

"The Avebury piece was composed by me, Sleazy and Drew. Can't remember when but 4 years ago at least. We did it at 'Slut's Hole' in London. We were asked by James MacKay, who was a close friend and a producer of Derek Jarman, to write a new score for the Super 8 film, 'A Journey to Avebury,' which was originally 8 minutes long. The night I saw the film on video I met Derek in a dream and asked if we could slow it down to half speed. "Of course," he said. So we did. It's 16 minutes now. Our re-done soundtrack version was debuted at a multi-media arts festival in Brighton. It will be released with another long monolithic piece very soon on CD and vinyl. On Eskaton? Maybe."

Despite what Jhonn states above, neither imdb.com nor any other Jarman source that I can find (including the 2014 'Derek Jarman Super 8' hardcover book by James Mackay) explicitly mentions any longer or shorter version of his 'A Journey to Avebury' film in existence - nor indeed *any* alternate edit at all, other than the original silent version. However, the streaming versions of the film I have seen in the past do look somewhat slowed-down by about a quarter speed, so it is entirely possible that the version we have all seen was extended slightly. Perhaps the original shot-speed raw silent footage without titles came in at around the 8 minute mark as Jhonn had stated in 1999. Slowed-down by around a quarter speed and with added titles, we can get the well-known 10.22 minute version [25fps] to better fit COIL's own 10.59min edit of their soundtrack.

However, COIL's original version of the Avebury soundtrack was indeed longer - though, even then, not to a whopping "16 minutes". The apparently full version was given to Brainwashed for one of their compilations - this version being 13.13 minutes in length. Over the years I have heard four versions of the COIL soundtrack, as follows:

- "Journey to Avebury" [10.59min] 'Songs of the Week' / 'Black Gold' version (edit used for the Jarman short film).
- "Journey to Avebury" [13.13min] 'Brainwaves' CD compilation version. Notable for its extended birdsong intro.
- "Journey to Avebury" [12.50min] (Take #1, DAT #28). No radical differences to the above version at all.
- "Journey to Avebury" [12.50min] (Take #2, DAT #28). Almost identical to Take #1, as its waveform image testifies to me.

And the versions of Jarman's *film* surfacing in wider distribution that I have watched are:

- 'A Journey to Avebury' [10.22min, 25fps, COIL gold-tinted version, mostly silent titles, 360p on Dailymotion].
- 'A Journey to Avebury' [10.46min, 30fps, COIL birdsong over alt. titles, dark/red-tinted LQ version on Youtube since 2013].
- 'A Journey to Avebury' [10.16min, 25fps, silent, natural colour version, as a 2006 DVD extra - as we shall explore later.

Let us take a look, overleaf, at a visual comparison of the above existing videos next to screenshots of my attempt at a remaster.

Derek Jarman's "A Journey to Avebury" -
A visual guide to different digital versions



240x160
Youtube Version
(2013, 10.46min, 30fps)



320x240
Dailymotion Version
(10.22min, 25fps)



720x576
My Remastered Version
(2018, 10.25min, 25fps)

"We were asked...to write a new score for the Super 8 film, "A Journey to Avebury," which was originally 8 minutes long. The night I saw the film on video I met Derek in a dream and asked if we could slow it down to half speed. 'Of course,' he said. So we did."
Jhonn Balance.



720x576
My 8-minute Edit
(2018, 8.27min, 25fps)

The silent, COIL-less version of the short film mentioned earlier was also released in Italy on the 'The Super 8 Programme #02' dvd in 2004 (Rarovideo) though, according to one Jarman online forum, not in the best of quality. Other musicians have, over the years, uploaded sections or live projections of Jarman's short Avebury film with their own soundtracks too, which are all beyond the scope of this COIL-based essay.

Unless any longer version of either Jarman's film or COIL's soundtrack surfaces in the future, I suggest that Jhonn was either mistaken regarding the extended "16 minute" running time or simply exaggerated his entertaining Jarman anecdote for effect there.

Regardless of the version available to us here and now, the film itself - when experienced in good quality - really is quite an atmospheric gem that I feel is often quickly overlooked by many COIL fans (many fans perhaps misremembering the film as simply a static slideshow). On the one hand Jarman's voyeuristic recording of the village had a practical purpose for reference in his subsequent abstract 'Avebury Series' of paintings. On the other hand the artist was making a film study of quintessential English landscapes full of pagan mystique and olde village life (kids wave to the camera, vintage vehicles zoom down country roads, cattle chew the cud). I certainly agree with film writer Adam Scovell as he states in his fascinating online hauntological review of the Avebury film (a link to his full article is in the Resources section at the end of this essay):

"Out of all of Derek Jarman's pre-feature length film work, his short capture of a 1971 walking trip, 'A Journey To Avebury', is perhaps his most interesting and subtly complex piece of short film work. These were the early days of Jarman's experimentation when his work as a painter and even a set designer still seemed to dominate over his purely cinematic interests. This was of course the same year that saw him design the sets for Ken Russell's 'The Devils'; a film that wallowed in the historical urbane of human presence and depravity. Coupling the films together, one appears to be the heady syndrome of a realist whilst the other seems a cathartic escape from populated zones and into the very heart of the green and pleasant hills."

Though I have yet to visit the village myself, I know that Avebury is certainly a place where you are free to wander among the stones and examine the massive task that neolithic folk must have had when building the henge bank and ditch by hand. Jarman probably strolled down West Kennet Avenue with his camera (which is thought to link Avebury stone circles to the Sanctuary on Overton Down). The henge at Avebury is exceptionally large too - at just over three quarters of a mile in circumference - so, in other words, there were lots of places and corners for Jarman to have wandered to and shot his soundless Super 8 footage back in 1971.

From a folkloric point of view, the stones themselves are supposed to be haunted by at least one ghost. An excavation in 1938 revealed the skeleton of a medieval barber-surgeon. This chap was apparently crushed beneath the stone around 1325 when it was being buried (or destroyed) by those who wanted to remove the pagan stones "from view". The spirit of the barber-surgeon is said by some to roam the stone circles at night, eternally looking in vain for his way back home.

I do believe that COIL fans should spend some time with Jarman's Avebury film if they have not yet done so. However, in all fairness, there has only ever been near-unwatchable highly-compressed copies of the 10-minute version widely available online before, with truly horrid quality and stuttering movement (240-360 pixel / 128kbps, and one jagged PAL-to-NTSC conversion too). So I thought It'd be interesting to go back to the sources and do a full remaster of the short film featuring the very best sound and video available to me, and make it permanently available on Archive.org - but also back on Youtube for a while too - for more casual COIL/Jarman fans to possibly find in the near future.

Beyond that, I thought I'd take the extended intro and outro of the rare full 13-minute version of COIL's "Journey to Avebury" track and overlay those field recording sounds on top of my separate, speed-adjusted version of Jarman's film to gain some sense of the 1971 original (supposed) 8-minute edit's pace and movement before COIL's mythical suggestion-via-dream to elongate the film to better fit their finished soundtrack. Quick cutaways in the widely-seen 10-minute version are now rapid, almost subliminal glimpses of village scenes in this 8-minute fan-edit version.

My Two Remastered Versions of 'A Journey to Avebury'

The Sound Source I Used:

The original upload of COIL's 'Journey To Avebury' track (10.59min) was a lowly 128kbps MP3 file, released in the first half of 1999 as a free download from their Brainwashed website (part of COIL's well-known 'Songs of the Week' series, subsequently bootlegged on CD as 'Black Gold'). I felt that this MP3 file was not usable for this re-master project, due to its very obvious low quality.

Luckily, COIL had a version of their Avebury soundtrack released in high quality as part of Brainwashed's rare 'Brainwaves' 3-CD compilation in autumn 2006. Not only that, but this compilation version was quite a bit longer - the intro certainly focussing a lot more on COIL's digital treatment of birdsong. As mentioned previously, the running time of this full version of the track is 13.13min. Using the FLAC publicly provided by archive.org user "jbalance" (upload date April 18, 2017), I took the audio of this version of COIL's track and edited it down to match the cut that first appeared on the Jarman film and in 'Songs of the Week'.

The remaining intro and outro sections containing COIL's birdsong treatment was joined-up and taken as the sole, looping soundtrack to my new speed-adjusted version of Jarman's film, now available too - especially for field recording fans (download link at the end of the essay). COIL's experiments with field recordings here, of course, pre-empt their later and expanded excursions into birdsong manipulation on tracks such as 'Strange Birds' and, more strikingly, 'Sipping Birdsong Through Bedsprings' (both of those tracks can be found elsewhere on archive.org). As Jhonn mentioned about the birdsong in 1999:

"[the soundtrack is] mostly improvised by Drew and myself, with Peter and I adding and treating it afterwards. The 'strange birds' are skylarks which nest on the ground and then hover high above the stones singing. Very English, very Vaughn Williams. Who provided the original soundtrack 'A Lark Ascending'."

Intriguingly, Williams' 1914-1920 composition of 'A Lark Ascending' is around 14-16 minutes in length when played on piano and violin so, taking what Jhonn had stated literally for a moment, I suppose some could argue that there *may* indeed be a 16-minute version of Jarman's film in the Jarman Estate's vaults somewhere using this classical piece as its first soundtrack before COIL submitted theirs (after originally being a silent short in its 1971 edit). Who knows? I certainly don't. My brain hurts from thinking about it all, to be honest.

My Two Remastered Versions of 'A Journey to Avebury'

The Video Source I Used:

From Dailymotion to Youtube to VK, all of the online streams available of this short Jarman film in the past have been of extremely bad video quality, so I knew from the start I could not use any of them for my fan remaster. Jarman's 1987 film 'The Last of England' was released on UK DVD by Second Sight Films in January 2008. The silent version of 'A Journey to Avebury' was released as one of the extras on that disk (some scenes in a slightly different order). As such, I bought a copy of that film and have used the vob file straight from the DVD disk for highest video quality possible in my two so-called "remastered" versions of the film. Please bear in mind that we are still looking at grainy, filtered Super 8mm footage shot 48 years ago.

In Conclusion

If you can, please do take 10 minutes to relax, sit back and revisit this quietly-haunting short film with COIL's soundtrack in the best quality I currently have access to, as it does have a lot going for it for lots of COIL fans. Perhaps air-stream it onto your LCD Smart TV from the comfort of your armchair rather than peer at it from your monitor or phone, if you have that option. From the esotericist to the anglophile, from the hauntologist to the art school experimentalist, there's deceptively lots on offer here in this odd little gold-tinged film.

The short film is not for everyone's tastes, granted, though I hope some of you enjoy a revisit to the mystical stone circles of Avebury.

Both of my versions of the COIL-soundtrack short film can now be freely downloaded from Archive.org. 'A Journey to Avebury' [2 x fan-remastered COIL versions of Derek Jarman's short film - go to the 'mpeg2' folder, not the poor preview quality streams on that archive page]:

<https://archive.org/details/AJourneyToAveburyRemastered>

And my fan 'remaster' of the 10min version can be streamed on my Youtube channel* too:

<https://youtu.be/Eo7Rmu3woNk>

* A firm I have no connection to, called "Believe Entertainment", has potentially monetised this stream version.



John Balance

I'm looking for anything on Stone circles, astro-archeology, megaliths, in particular the British monuments of Avebury and Callenish. My dreams would come true if I could track down an original copy of Stukeleys book on Avebury; But any information on any items at all would be greatly recieved.Thank You.

Please contact john Balance

jo...@loci.demon.co.uk

--

Regards,
Peter Christopherson aka Sleazy
& John Balance
COIL, London

Jhonn Balance, in the midst of his stone circle research, posts *above* to in an internet news-group for buying books on 8th July 1996. Other internet newsgroups Jhonn would frequent to research and expand upon a variety of his interests - mostly during 1996-1997 - include:

rec.music.industrial
rec.arts.books.marketplace
alt.music.brian-eno
rec.arts.sf.marketplace
alt.fan.crispin-glover
rec.music.gaffa

alt.fan.capt-beefheart
alt.music.gnawa
alt.music.makers.electronic
rec.drugs.smart
rec.music.ambient

Resources:

Essay Postscript: Since my original posting of this essay I have been informed that Jarman's producer James Mackay has shown his own '13 mins 29 sec' remastered version of "Journey to Avebury" at the ICA in London (in 2015). His version has yet to see any other kind public release (as of January 2019), but please do keep a look out for it when it surely does get a domestic release of some kind.

Take a tour around the Avebury stones with this information and map:
<https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/avebury/features/avebury-stone-circles-and-henge>

A video giving a potted folkloric history of the Avebury stones:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K0NfQQ6tpLs>

A superb essay here about Jarman's film (and there's an article about Jarman's Avebury painting series on the site too):
<https://celluloidwickerman.com/2014/12/29/perception-of-landscape-in-a-journey-to-avebury-1971-derek-jarman/>

Where the 2006 source of the rare 13.13min version of COIL's soundtrack originally came from:
<https://www.discogs.com/Various-Brainwaves/release/845745>

The Permutating Lists of Jhonn Balance (or "Colonel Balance, I Presume")

*"Recent research into the structure of brain rhythms
suggests that it is in a state of relaxation of thought
that new relationships can be seen."*

Brion Gysin

Coil are obviously renowned for their musical experimentation, varied styles and even mixed genres of music. I do, however, feel that Jhonn Balance is not often recognised, let alone *celebrated*, as someone who truly experimented with both lyrics and vocal delivery. You'd just need to dip your toe into several COIL concert recordings to find that variety of vocal physicality, boisterous accusations, even calamitous frailty at times, and Gysin-esque live experiments with rhythm borne from repetitive surrealist phrasing (especially during the last two years of Balance's life).

From somnambulating ambulances to whomever's blood "it" is in, and from sick mirrors to self-critical gimps, the repetitive word rhythms are all there to listen to on these COIL recordings. Or, rather, to *experience*. For just one similar example, of Brion Gysin's original phrasing experiments, here's an excerpt from his 'Junk Is No Good, Baby' piece from 1962;

*"JUNK IS NO GOOD BABY
JUNK IS NO GOOD
BABY JUNK IS NO
NO GOOD BABY JUNK
IS NO GOOD BABY*

*JUNK IS NO GOOD BABY
JUNK IS GOOD - NO BABY
JUNK IS BABY - NO GOOD
JUNK IS NO BABY - GOOD
JUNK IS GOOD BABY - NO
JUNK IS BABY GOOD - NO"*



Brion Gysin (1916 – 1986)

It is fair to say that Gysin was one of Jhonn's key influences. At one quiet point in at least one COIL concert, Jhonn even name-checked Gysin's 1973 exploration of the cut-up technique and repetitive permutations poems, 'Let The Mice In'. The book, published by Something Else Press, traced the origin of "cut-ups" as a literary technique applied to writing by Gysin and William Burroughs.

As for reading Jhonn's lyrics on the page, away from any recordings, it's clear to me that his wild stylings are arguably as varied as COIL's music, and Jhonn's writings should certainly be recognised as important as COIL's sound recordings - if not *more* so.

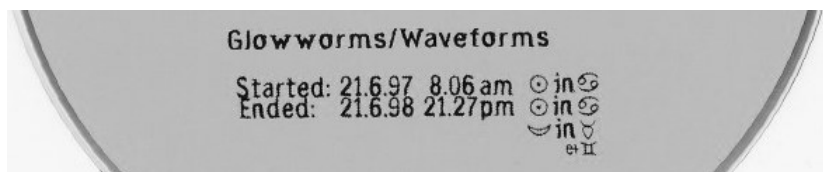
From grim haikus of early period COIL to verses-only songs, from long free-form rambling descriptives and monologues to abstract couplets, the range of styles are impressive, though often shaped by Peter Christopherson during the studio recording stage too. After all, Peter had stated in interviews that he would have to spend many hours editing down Jhonn's recorded vocals to shape and fit into his soundscapes, often leaving out some lines or, on occasion, re-ordering the structure of them. Christopherson, then, cannot be discounted when referring to the structure of Jhonn's lyrics as they appear in COIL's studio output - though even during live performances, Jhonn's vocals were sometimes captured ad-hoc using *Ableton Live* and repeated in increasing loops of distortions. Live performances of 'Unearthly Red', to single out just one track, could result in fascinating cut-ups and loops of Jhonn's live phrasings.

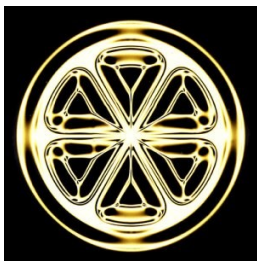
Another style of Jhonn's lyrics that I find very interesting is what I collectively refer to as his "List Series": seemingly unrelated lines of descriptives or statements read off in a listing style. Jhonn's songs which feature this style of lyrics include:

- * Glowworms/Waveforms
- * Batwings (A Limnal Hymn)
- * Tudor Fruits (for Thighpaulsandra)
- * A List of Wishes (for Black Sun Productions)

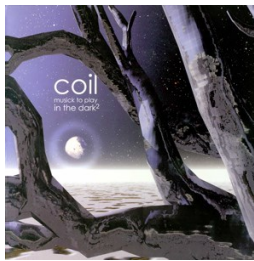
Also needing to be mentioned, perhaps amongst others, are Cohen's 'Who By Fire', covered of course on the monolithic 'Horse Rotorvator' in 1986 and COIL's legendary 'Going Up', from their swansong 2005 album 'Ape of Naples'.

'**Glowworms/Waveforms**', from COIL's 1998 'Summer Solstice; Bee Stings' EP, sounds like an insistent intergalactic curator at the edge of time, gripping his inventory notepad and ticking off a list of items that are falling through his allocated (glow)wormhole. This style of persistent vocal delivery is accentuated in the *Obsidian Monarch* remix version of the track by Thread - which sounds like a distortion of his inventory listings heard, this time, from the other side of the wormhole.





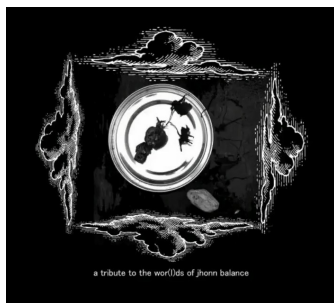
['Summer Solstice; Bee Stings']



['Musick To Play In The Dark²']

As is well known, much of the list narrated by Balance in '**Batwings (A Limnal Hymn)**' originates from the absurdist writings of Sir Thomas Browne (specifically 1684's '**Musæum Clausum**'), Jhonn's vocals ultimately complimented by the music in an unexpectedly mournful way. The cemetery-set fan video for the track is well-worth seeking out on Youtube, itself further reflecting upon an almost tangible grief in the track. Again, written on the page? A wryly humorous list of objects. Experienced as musick? Other-worldly and spellbindingly sorrowful. The power of COIL's alchemical partnership of Jhonn and Peter, distorting and polishing up base material, is in great evidence once again.

"**A List of Wishes**", in partnership with Black Sun Productions towards the end of COIL's lifespan, is a fun and jaunty twisted exercise in distorting the English language, delivering line after line of observations with the preposition "Of", often catty ("Of friends, the unsophisticate") and sometimes with playful threat ("Of skins, the un-flayed"). The lyrics were mostly lifted from one of Bertolt Brecht's final poems before his death in 1956, "Orge's List of Wishes" (translated to English by Lesley Lendrum).



['A Tribute to the Wor(l)ds of Jhonn Balance']



['Some Head']

"There's something happening out here, man. You know something, man? The man is clear in his mind, but his soul is mad. Oh, yeah. He's dying, I think. He hates all this. He hates it! But the man's a... He reads poetry out loud, all right? And a voice... I mean, what are they gonna say when he's gone? 'Cause he dies when it dies, when it dies, he dies! What are they gonna say about him? He was a kind man? He was a wise man? He had plans? He had wisdom?" 'Apocalypse Now', 1979.

Here's where I come to my favourite of all tracks from the Balance List Series.

Thighpaulsandra's '**Tudor Fruits**'. The track, recorded for the 'Some Head' EP on COIL's Eskaton record label, is the one vocal track I wish Jhonn Balance had made as his *final* studio recording. His curtain call. Why? Well, I shall explain.

Coming in at over 13 minutes long, 'Tudor Fruits' is certainly a track of exploration. Indeed, the first half of the song does not have Balance in it at all. Instead, the track's first section is a strange soundscape of a journey through surreal lands, perhaps teasing the listener into the Captain Willard role and going "up-river", past landscapes resembling the sleeves of COIL's duo of 'Musick To Play In The Dark' records.

Instruments of percussion sound like they are dangling from the branches of ancient bamboo trees, clanging to casual atonal life in the winds flowing through a Daliesque Mekong Delta as the listener eventually arrives at the final destination. It is here, on the muddy banks of some far-off unreal land, that we find Colonel Balance sitting on his bed there, surrounded by a deserted compound, making fevered notations in his books before passing on to new, even *more* ethereal lands.

The vocal delivery is honest, unhampered by vocal range, often fragile and sometimes sounding resigned to some undeclared fate. Just as the 'Are You Being Served?' lyrics of COIL's 'Going Up' list items of mundane consumer goods, here we find Jhonn in the midst of selecting the colour scheme and pantones of his next, unearthly abode ("Fern Green", "Encaustic", "Torpor", "Whalebone").

Jhonn's closing words, after an audible cough, are:

"Contributing

Impact

Section

Belittle"

With those closing words given, what sounds like a herd of Dali's elephants turns up on the banks of the compound to enact some sort of funeral procession and carry Colonel Balance's fading soul away with them as they go. But not before he utters one final fateful statement:

"Section. Closure."

From then on in, the closing moments of Thighpaulsandra's track make us feel almost like we're Percival, watching helplessly on the shore as King Arthur's battle-torn body drifts slowly away towards Avalon.

What a perfectly succinct *signing off* track to record. The best *full-stop* vocal delivery of all time. Balance's own version of Johnny Cash's cover of "Hurt", even? A song quite rightly seen as *the* final recording session ever made by the haunted, almost-mythical man known by many as Jhonn Balance.

Except it isn't. The song was recorded in 2000, four whole *years* before Jhonn's tragic death. No, COIL's world was far too messy and unpredictable to have *that* song as Jhonn's final collaborative vocal track. The final vocals Jhonn ever recorded, upon his return to Weston-super-Mare from Ireland (days before his death) was the barmy exploration of industrialist FJ Nettlefold for Danny Hyde (full raw vocal session now online) and a manic, restless performance for Thighpaulsandra's 'Christ's Teeth'.

Whilst these tracks are rather good (and Hyde's free download Everall Mix of 'Fj Nettlefold', better than the original, masterfully teases melancholia out of nowhere), they are not 'Tudor Fruits'. They're just not. The scope of the whole bizarre journey across strange lands to meet Colonel Balance up-river is simply amazing. To hear his final set of lists. To observe his Heavenly Inventory, if you will.

If you haven't heard 'Tudor Fruits' before (or not for a while), it can still be found [on Youtube](#). I'd argue that it is *the* shining example from Jhonn's whole "List Series".

The track is a perfect ending that never was, in every respect.

Six Benefits of Lists:

1. Provide a positive psychological process whereby questions and confusions can be worked through. True purposes surface.
2. Foster a capacity to select and prioritize. Useful for an information-overload situation.
3. Separate minutia from what matters, which is good for identity & achievement.
4. Help determine the steps needed. Which informs direction and plan.
5. Combat avoidance. Taking abstract to concrete sets the stage for action.
6. Organize and contain a sense of inner chaos, which can make your load feel more manageable.

Dr. Carrie Barron, 'How Making Lists Can Quell Anxiety and Breed Creativity', *Psychology Today*, 9th March 2014.

Jhonn Balance's Political Landscape



When asked to identify themes within COIL lyrics many fans would be forgiven for immediately mentioning topics such as occultism, the natural world, sexual expression and escapism (all self-evident themes throughout the 21-year existence of COIL).

The content found within Balance's collection of words is, however, far more varied than people may first think. As well as the above main themes focussed on throughout his COIL writing, Jhonn's distinctive creative world was inspired by all kinds of eccentric characters, acts of murder, loss of identity and illness/disease - all often coated in Balance's very Lewis Carroll-like sense of the darkly absurd, either in textual content or eccentric vocal delivery (with the help of Peter at the controls, of course - note the preceding essay in this collection for more information about Jhonn's varied vocal recordings).

Whether intentional or not, there are intriguing political references peppered throughout Jhonn's songs, from the start to abrupt end of COIL's varied output. Take, just for example, his early genius move to mirror the AIDS crisis with the ethno-nationalist troubles in Northern Ireland during the time. The marching band music samples on 1986's 'Horse Rotorvator' eerily echo the classic album's front cover of the Regent's Park bandstand, here seen standing desolate and unused just a few short years after the Hyde Park and Regent's Park IRA bombings. What a perfect image to convey the album's focus, albeit in a different way, on the void experienced after a major loss of life.

Now take another example, this time the final COIL single (I don't count the gig-distributed 1-CD version of 'ANS', ESKATON034). 'Restitution of Decayed Intelligence', the 10" released in Spring 2003, takes its name from a book by Richard Verstegan that looks at the ruling history and politics of early English eras (the shady 5th Century in particular). The book, written in 1605, has been described by historian Professor Glenn Burgess as "destroying the myth of British origin", with its 150-page glossary of Anglo-Saxon words deemed either accurate or baffling dependent on the historian you choose to have a beer with. 'A Restitution of Decayed Intelligence in Antiquities concerning the most noble and renowned English Nation' (and breathe) also includes the first English version of the story of the Pied Piper of Hamelin.

Elsewhere in Coil's catalogue you can find mentions, both overt and abstract, of how individuals and groups struggle under the political or religious power of others. Such mentions are peppered throughout COIL songs like 'For Us They Will', 'Cathedral In Flames' and 'A Cold Cell'. The latter song, as we know, takes words from the young prisoner hymn section of Taras Popov's 'Experimentum Crucis' documentary exploring the grim conditions and harsh treatment of everyday life in a Kazakh juvenile prison (though Jhonn mistakenly believed the prison was in Tajikistan or even in the Republic of Azerbaijan, over 1000 miles away from its actual location);

*"O Lord, save my sinful soul
From local punishment
From the far-away zone...
From the tall fence
From the severe prosecutor
From the Devil Owner...
From steel handcuffs
From hidden obligations...
From the death penalty"*

As if that sample of lyrics from 'A Cold Cell' lyrics aren't universal enough in their symbolism of oppression beyond socio-political causes, Jhonn would talk a little about the song's wider meaning during COIL's live performances of it, declaring it a song for those of us who are "in physical prisons and prisons of their own making" (Jhonn would, of course, often write lyrics about his own personal prison of addiction and mental illness too).

Popov, the director of the 1996 documentary (specifically set in the Almaty Young Adults Prison Camp) that provided the source for Jhonn's lyrics, stated about his film at the time:

"The experiences of these young offenders and their eyes and expressions correspond with those of the Holy Martyrs; the religious references serve to remind us that these boys are caught in a historical process; when societies disintegrate it is the innocent and the weak who suffer. These boys are victims of the break up of society in the same way as the Bible tells us, the poor and defenceless were crushed in the collapse of the Roman Empire."

The lead director worked as a psychiatrist from 1984-1995 at the very facility his subsequent documentary exposed.

During the 1980s Jhonn noted in his lyrics a term that he gave to such beaten individuals rising up against any given system of corruption and oppression as "Jackals". Balance's mid-1980s song lyrics for "Titan Arch", "Leviathan Lifts" and "Worldview" all mention such jackal figures: crawling, having their lowly heads lifted up by Leviathan (the Hobbesian interpretation of "Leviathan" being, of course, that of state and social control), or "sexual E-jackali" amongst a "waterfall of whores" whose combined writhing flesh builds up in an undertow that eventually topples the state superstructure:

*"Waterfall of whores
Outdistanced, out and over
Traveller clearance
Flesh from the ruins
Sexual E-jackali
Long and hard architecture
Over-throne by undertow"*

[Jhonn Balance circa 1986, unrecorded lyrics - "Worldview"]

Early examples, of course, of Jhonn's trademark wordplay there too, for ejaculate/E-jackali and overthrown/over-throne. Curiously, jackals are mentioned in the Bible as a literary device to illustrate desolation, loneliness and abandonment - wretched beings which Isaiah 13:21 refers to as "doleful creatures" (King James Version). On the flipside of that interpretation (and aside from the obvious occult imagery of the all-powerful jackal-headed Anubis of Egyptian myth) jackals in Bengali tantrik traditions are considered as representations of Goddess Kali, the "destroyer of evil".

I think it can be strongly argued that, if anything, Balance is more of a humanitarian writer than an occult one (though both are certainly not mutually exclusive). Giving even just a cursory glance through his collection of lyrics I personally think that Jhonn's concerns are of a more personal than mystical nature. A sense of victimisation and injustice that can, at times, find brief respite through magical rituals, transcendent sexual practices and, sure, even escapism through psychedelics. But, nonetheless, a point of view about personal struggle in the shackles of external dominance that many different types and groups of people can personally - and *deeply* - relate to.

From pawns of political/religious oppression to vulnerable characters being abused by their dominant lovers or guardians, from identity theft by all-powerful addictive substances to warmongering political decisions made by tyrannical governments, Jhonn examines it all from the same perspective: from the point of view of the beaten, the confused and the despairing (the boldest exception perhaps being 'Blood From The Air', arguably written from a murderer's perspective judging an unworthy society). It is precisely because of the large collection of written words left to us by Jhonn that examine the fragile human condition as the victim of power, that I have never taken his relatively minor association with Douglas P and Boyd Rice too seriously. Aside from wearing Death in June's spoof Totenkopf badge (popular merch at the time), Jhonn was never part of Douglas and Boyd's tiresome white supremacist "prank" flirtations of the 1980s/90s (think of their so-called pranks as pre-internet attempts at "owning the libs" at best, and high school fetishism of the Sturmabteilung at its worst. Possibly).

It should be noted that Balance made several references to the "Black Sun" in the 1980s, both within COIL lyrics and in interviews. The symbol has seen firm links develop in recent decades to modern neo-nazi groups and far-right ideology since the popular 1991 publication of Russell McCloud's 'Die Schwarze Sonne von Tashi Lhunpo'

('The Black Sun of Tashi Lhunpo') gave the symbol a retcon with stronger links to modern-day nazism as opposed to any prior links to either secret societies co-opting the symbol or to early 20th Century Surrealism - The Black Sun Press, for example).

However, the "Black Sun" that Balance was specifically referencing in the 1980s can be identified as both his linked pun of that mystical symbol to the Solar Lodge (a secret society in the USA based on ideas from Ordo Templi Orientis and the A.'.A.'.) and as a idolatrous symbol of the anus - Balance being a fan of Georges Bataille's surrealist text 'L'anus solaire' at the time.

"The Sun exclusively loves the Night and directs its luminous violence towards the earth, a vile yard, but it is unable to reach the eye or the night, although the nocturnal terrestrial stretches continually towards the filth of the solar ray. The solar ring is the intact anus of his body at eighteen which nothing so blinding can be compared with the exception of the sun, although the anus is the night. Love, then, screams in my own throat; I am the Jesuve, the filthy parody of the torrid and blinding sun. I want to have my throat slashed while violating the girl to whom I will have been able to say: you are the night. The solar annulus is the intact anus of her body at eighteen years to which nothing sufficiently blinding can be compared except the sun, even though the anus is the night." [Georges Bataille, 'L'anus solaire', 1931]

In the context of the 'Scatology' album, the symbol of the Black Sun worked. Out of such context, Jhonn's mentions of the Black Sun seemed a little awkward, clanging, vague and unconvincing. Being critical of both Jhonn and Peter for a moment, naming their Weston-super-Mare house 'The North Tower' when they must have known full well that modern-day interpretations of the Black Sun go back to Himmler's mosaic of the symbol in Wewelsburg Castle's North Tower, did seem more than a little childish. However, I reiterate my view that Jhonn (and Peter, in fact) was deeply humanitarian at heart and extant evidence shows he exuded that quality throughout both his life and his art.

Anyway, in keeping with the concept of filthy anuses, in July 2002 Jhonn gave one of his most rousing political statements live on stage. A few months before that set of COIL performances Time magazine quoted George W. Bush in the aftermath of 9/11 as stating: *"[I was] chosen by the grace of God to lead at that moment"*.

This was swiftly followed by ridicule from the UK media about Tony Blair and Bush



How Do You Solve a Problem Like the Black Sun?

Whilst many far-right groups have co-opted the "Black Sun" in recent decades for tiresome edgy provocation (the equivalent of a gleeful child opening his mouth to reveal a chewed worm to his classmates), the symbol has far older roots in lore that COIL were actively interested in, namely hermetic and alchemic texts and traditions. From that mystical perspective, suns are used to symbolise a variety of concepts such as gold, masculine principles and alchemical xanthosis. The 'Sol niger' (black sun) can refer to the first stage of the alchemical magnum opus, the nigredo (blackening). We know that COIL were specifically coming from this mystical perspective based upon a whole variety of evidence, not least the recurring Triple Suns motif that bled through the latter COIL years - ascribed to Marsilio Ficino (1433-99), the three suns are described as black, white, and red, corresponding to the three most used alchemical colour stages. In fact, there is a strong argument that the whole COIL catalogue of releases is firmly rooted in alchemical traditions, beliefs and conceptual outlook. As such, I would argue that Jhonn's utility of the Black Sun concept throughout his life is very different to the "edgy" ideological use that other groups - even his own peers - childishly co-opt time and bloody time again.

[clockwise from top: 'Surrealism' by Julien Levy published by famed pre-war alternative publishers The Black Sun Press (1936), 'L'anus solaire' by Georges Bataille (1931), 'Book of the Chemical Art' by Marsilio Ficino (1518), 'Putre Factio' from 'Philosophia Reformata' by J.D. Mylius, engraved by Balthazar Schwan (1622)]

allegedly praying together during the decision-making of their "War on Terror" coalition campaign in Afghanistan (specifically 'Operation Enduring Freedom' at the time), in supposed retaliation for the World Trade Centre attacks. At a live gig in the Italian beach resort of Fano soon afterwards, Jhonn had clearly had enough of this wretched all-pervasive religious jingoism from politicians and gave a truly storming performance of live COIL favourite 'An Unearthly Red':

"You know one thing I read recently about? [that] George Bush has just agreed, again, to completely ignore the opinions of any well-thinking, well-meaning, good-hearted person in the world - again, as is his want, as is his father's want, you know, they have a plan to bring about Armageddon..."

*I had a vision of a burning bush - of a burning George Bush...
And the President of America wakes up
With something dripping from his hands
Dripping an unearthly red
And is it dripping or only tripping?
Is he screaming or is he dreaming?...*

*Because God told him to do it
An unearthly red
He's a liar, liar, liar, he's a liar
'Cause he said "God told me to do it"
Swallow the Bible, swallow the Bible
Tear a page out and swallow the Bible"*

It doesn't get much more tubthumpingly political than that and it perfectly captured the political protest mood of the time - three days after that Fano COIL performance George Michael released his own protest song about Bush, Blair and bombs titled 'Shoot The Dog'. It wasn't *exactly* as rousing with spitting outrage as 'An Unearthly Red', I have to say (and I know which song I prefer).

Perhaps Balance's most overtly political lyrics, however, are to be found in an overlooked and underrated epic track he co-wrote with Thighpaulsandra from 1999-2000. The track, from TPS's solo debut 'Some Head' EP, is called 'Black Nurse', Balance

once again sarcastically attacking religious jingoism, spouted by pious political leaders to justify their cruelty, and this is my transcribed sample of Jhonn's lyrics from it:

*"He is so not soiled
His fingernails are dry
Forged black nurse
And tending an office on high
Marked for death in the glub of clubs*

*He comes unbroken with a message from above:
'Fun, you're in Zambia / Fine, you're in Zambia
Turn, you're in Zambia / Fuck, you're in Zambia'...*

*Blessed by one
Walk on past the church of the Nazarenes
To the Pikinese guns, saying:
'Fun, you're in Zambia / Fine, you're in Zambia...'"*

The probable focus of the song is Frederick Chiluba, President of Zambia between 1991-2002: a "fervent born-again Christian" though steeped in allegations of corruption and turning a blind eye over Zambia's poor human rights record and corrupt police force. On August 2nd 1999 26 year old Violet Tembo died after being tortured by police officers at the Zambia capital of Lusaka. She was eight months pregnant. In March 1999 six journalists were detained for publishing a story criticising Zambia's military capability. All reporters were later charged with "espionage" whilst the war in the Democratic Republic of Congo rumbled on. Also in 1999 the Zambian high court sentenced 59 soldiers to death after they are found guilty of treason for the failed coup attempt of 1997.

In contrast to his other lyrics throughout the years which emanate from deep within the lands of England, Italy, France and other western countries, 'Black Nurse' is the only example I can identify from Jhonn Balance's extant collection of words that directly addresses injustice in the African continent. Certainly, if you like a political or humanitarian bent to your experimental songs, I recommend giving Thighpaulsandra's lively and eccentric 3-part 'Black Nurse' track a listen.

I know what you're thinking. I know: *"If Jhonn was still alive today, what would he think of Brexit and the Trumpmeister?"* What would he write in response? Well, that's anyone's guess. But, just for fun, here's *my* guess. The following lyrics by Balance work for both Brexit *and* Trump at the same time, if read in a sarcastic way - with just my simple change here of "Tiny Birds" into "Tiny Hands"...

Tiny Hands (Burn in the Eye of the Sun)

"I burn

We spend our days building bridges (learn to burn them)

There by designs (ruin design)

Make you feel useless - like a Michelangelo born without eyes

Ruined designs, rare designs burn on this island

Tiny hands burn in the eyes of the sun

'And if looks could kill...'

A beast on the stage

We spend our time building bridges (learn to burn them)

And on this one island

I'll burn (and I'll put the match in)

And it's what I've learned

On this one island

Ruined designs, murder signs

On this island, on this one island"

Well, it's a thought.

Yes, I accept that Jhonn was just as much of a cultural magpie as David Bowie when it came to songwriting - he would indeed often use lengthy quotations from many other writers in his lyrics (though almost never deny doing so). However, I firmly believe that his humanity and sense of vulnerability against dominance mixed in with the potent, swirling worlds of magick, sex and surrealism make Jhonn Balance one of the most captivating lyricists of the 20th Century.

Resources:

English translation of Georges Bataille's 'L'anus solaire' (1931)
<https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/georges-bataille-the-solar-anus>

'Disco Hospital' thesis and 2013 exhibition by Andrew Zealley explored symbolism of the sun and anus, including similar inspiration from 'The Solar Anus' (see page 80-82):
http://openresearch.ocadu.ca/id/eprint/103/1/Zeeley_Andrew.pdf

The mentioned performance of 'An Unearthly Red':
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sl8qYS-XSw>

The Kazakh prisoner hymn from 'Experimentum Crucis':
<https://youtu.be/foZcymhXck0?t=11m37s>

'Experimentum Crucis' film profile:
<https://www.yidff.jp/97/cat051/97c073-e.html>

Tragically, the Kazakh prison system was deemed by many as just as cruel and inhumane nearly 15 years after the documentary that inspired COIL's 'A Cold Cell':
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-pacific-10952054>

'Black Nurse' containing Jhonn's lyrics [heard in the mid-section of the epic track]:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zKKnYJ753Lc>

The 'Some Head' EP:
<https://www.discogs.com/composition/e27876b0-ad18-4d12-9dee-1f7abceec0ee-Black-Nurse>

Human Rights Watch on Zambia:
<https://www.hrw.org/legacy/wr2k/Africa-13.htm>

Boyd Rice: *"I was good friends with that guy Bob Heick from the American Front [the white supremacist group's founder]; he was a really funny, smart guy. I really liked him and I really liked all his friends..."*

<https://web.archive.org/web/20040828164523/http://www.boydrice.com/interviews/tangents.html>

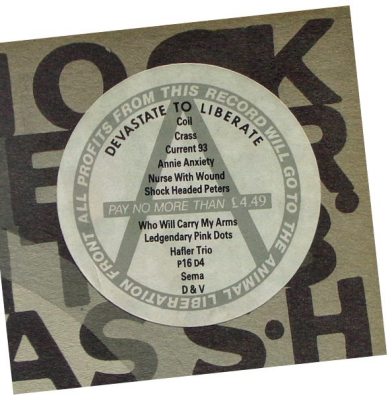
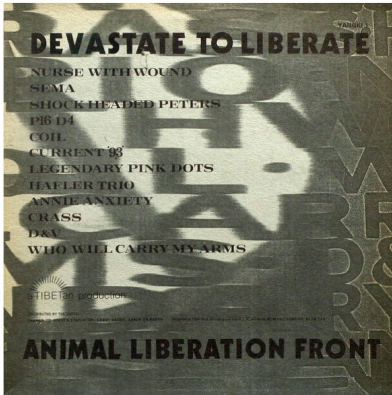
Douglas P: *"In search of a political view for the future we came across National Bolshevism which is closely connected with the Sturmabteilung [Stormtroopers - NSDAP] hierarchy. People like Gregor Strasser and Ernst Röhm [prominent early Nazi leaders] who were later known as 'second revolutionaries' attracted our attention."*

'Misery and Purity: A History and Personal Interpretation of Death in June' by Robert Forbes, page 15.



[War imagery, Saturday May 19th 1979. The first of two conceptual "non-appearances" of pre-Johnn Geoff Rushton's first high school band Stabmental (with Tom Craig, his collaborator on the titular fanzine of the time), arranged for the Lord William's Comprehensive Upper School Hall venue at Lord Williams's Upper School, Oxford Road, Thame, Oxon OX9 2AQ.

The duo finally released one track on a cassette compilation after the band dissolved ('Thin Veil Of Blood'), also recording a still-unreleased album on cassette ('Hidden Fears') before the split. By March 14th 1980 Geoff had moved on to his solo dark ambient project, subtly called Murderworkers, before abandoning that project and going on to contribute to the band A House, that group still in existence to this day.]



[uk.religion.pagan >](#)

Dedicate this destruction...



John Balance 02/03/2001



.....AN APPEAL TO THE HEAVENS

THERE ARE COUNTLESS DOMESTICATED ANIMALS BEING DESTROYED ALL OVER ENGLAND AT THIS VERY MOMENT AND WELL INTO THE FUTURE. THIS IS DUE TO THE FOOT AND MOUTH VIRUS OUTBREAK WHICH HAS CAUSED PANIC AND MADNESS AND THE MAKING OF THE COUNTRYSIDE A NO GO AREA. ALL FOR THE SAKE OF ANIMALS BRED FOR PROFIT. ANIMALS THAT LIVED A MISERABLE LIFE AND DIE AN ATROCIOUS DEATH. ALL FOR OUR SUNDAY ROASTS. THIS IS DEVASTATING FOR THE FARMERS AND ASSOCIATED BUSINESSES. THERE ARE GOING TO BE MANY SUICIDES THIS WEEKEND AND MUCH MISERY ALL OVER BECAUSE OF THIS.

I IMPORE EVERYONE ON THE LIST TO DO SOME KIND OF RITUAL THAT DEDICATES THE LIFE ENERGIES OF THESE DOOMED CREATURES TO A PARTICULAR GOD OR GODDESS. HATHOR FOR THE COWS FOR INSTANCE. MITHRAS FOR THE BULLS. SHEEP AND GOATS TO PAN. LOOK AROUND AND FIND SUITABLE VEHICLES OF MAGICKAL RELEASE.

WHATEVER YOU DO DO NOT LET THIS SLAUGHTER BE AN INHUMANE END TO A SENSELESS LIFE.

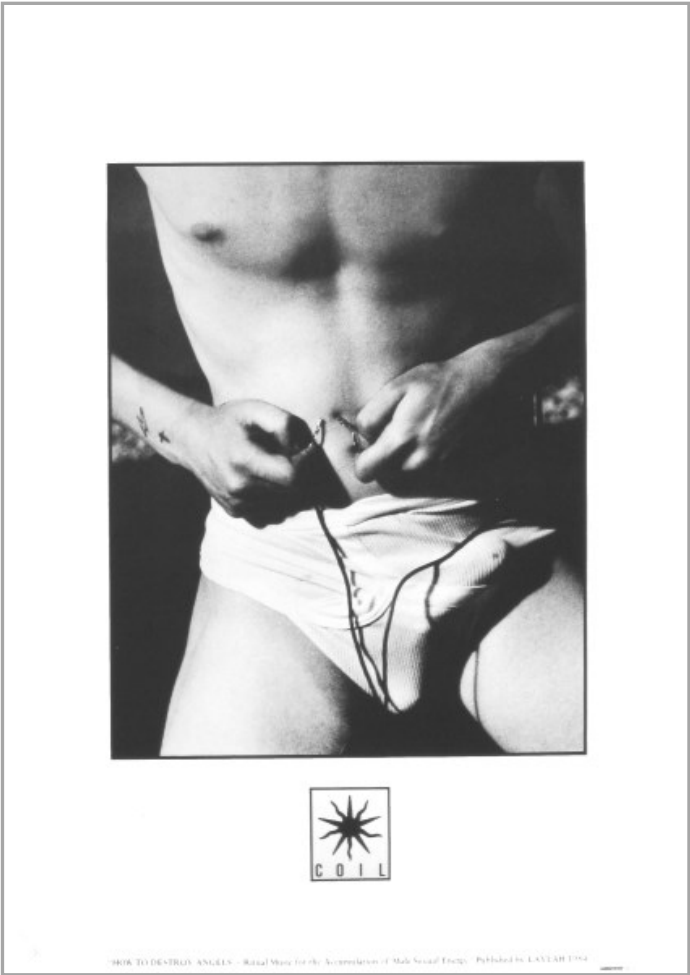
DEDICATE THE DEATHS TO ISIS, THE GODDESS IN WHATEVER FORM YOU PERCEIVE HER.

KALI WOULD BE PARTICULARLY GRATEFUL FOR THE BLOOD AND THE GORE AND FUNERAL PYRES OF THIS ATROCITY.

JOHN BALANCE OF COIL

[Though a carnivore, Jhonn Balance would match his sense of humanity with a dedicated compassion towards animals throughout his life. Examples include early band support for the controversial *Animal Liberation Front* (COIL donating the "Restless Day" track to the Animal Lib "Devastate to Liberate" compilation in 1985) and his condemnation of the UK's reaction to its Foot & Mouth disease [epidemic in 2001](#) (his public post, above, to the UK Pagan community news-group at the time).]

The Accumulation of Heterosexual Energy?
(Pondering the Issue of Sexual Identity Tensions and COIL's Legacy)



[Photograph © Peter Christopherson Estate & Timeless, France.]

From time to time - perhaps once a year on average - a blunt question will surface in those shady COIL-related corners of social media we often find ourselves visiting. It's a question that practically guarantees heated retorts and the odd unkind word uttered in flushed response.

Though constantly rephrased, the essence of this question is: "*How can heterosexual people truly connect and be in tune with the homosexual musick of COIL?*"

Now, disregarding my own hetero-peccadillos for a moment, I see no negative in lyrical content that deals in passions, activism, lust and forms of love that are different to my own, whether it be gay, polyamorous, scatological, BDSM, etc. That, I think, is what we're talking about here really, isn't it?: *Jhonn's lyrics*, his creative intent and, on rare occasion, COIL sleeve artwork. I cannot see how instrumental songs can be fundamentally gay or hetero, though I think it'd be an interesting cola experiment to take.

Here, for me, is a more interesting version of *The Question*: do homosexual COIL fans find it insulting that awkward hetero chaps like myself essentially sing along to lyrics that are often explicitly written from a gay perspective, perhaps even written at a time where there was an arguably *greater* oppression of the LGBT community than experienced in society today?

Am I, in fact, the sexual equivalent of a cosmopolitan white college boy singing along to Public Enemy? Can I ever truly *get it*? Or do only closely-affiliated genders, sexualities, races, social groups or cultures have the *true understanding* of any given writer's point-of-view?

Going further, do heterosexual fans like myself even *dilute* the potency of COIL by being an outspoken fan? I think some gay fans do think so, judging by the heated exchanges I've witnessed online over the years - and I can understand that (perhaps it all comes down to the need to covet what is so undeniably precious to one's self and one's causes). For me, however, COIL are beyond any restrictive form of sexual or gender identification, even beyond *all* sex/gender and magickal viewpoints ("every man and every woman is a star") and further out into the realms of the metaphysical life experience of us all. But then I would say that, wouldn't I?

It's the vital balance between what Jhonn chooses to say, the way he says it, and what is left unsaid that enables this metaphysical connection so effectively for us all: this is the transcendence that we can all identify with here, I think, and it's a similar feeling to that which I experience in the best of the art and film-work from many heterosexual abstract and post-modern artists, for instance: intangible, sometimes indescribable, and *far* beyond mere sexual identity.

Is it more important to acknowledge that COIL's vitality and inspiration transcends sexuality? Or, alternatively, *should* COIL transcend sexuality? Outside of a more conversational manner, to concentrate so much on sexuality in COIL is, I would argue, like focusing on one glorious crater of the moon: it's a vital characteristic and identifier, yes, yet there is so much *more* wonder to the whole celestial entity.

Moving on from such loaded questions, I honestly don't understand people's differentiation when it comes to sexual expression and the arts. I don't know why, and I don't believe I am virtue signalling here, but I don't differentiate between content of songs that I can or cannot get turned on by, nor with songs that I can or cannot *personally* connect my gender to. For example, I find Cocorosie's various feminist work fantastic though I am not a woman - but, crucially, I have no idea why I *would not* enjoy or understand their work because of that fact. I find Joel-Peter Witkin's photographs truly inspirational, though aside from the superb aesthetics of BDSM (I find BDSM acts themselves ultimately boring - maybe I'm doing it wrong?), I do not believe my lack of personal connection to the acts that Witkin depicts ultimately harms or diminishes my appreciation of his works in any way.

There are important literal and symbolic elements in all forms and acts of human life and art, and I do think almost all of us understand, and even greatly appreciate, that fact on different levels, as compassionate and empathic human beings.

Oh, and from my perspective? I find the promo video for 'Love's Secret Domain' absolutely friggin' *hilarious*.

[rec.music.industrial](#) ›

NIN Charity

21/11/1996



Jhon Balance

14/12/1996

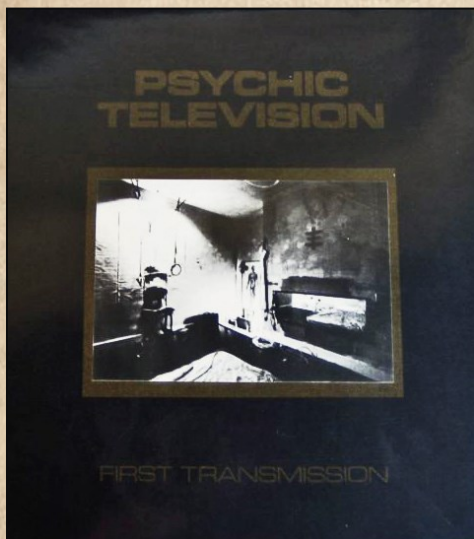


gay songs Re: Is the PHM an ex-boyfriend? [was Re: NIN = KKK]

John Balance here. There's a fuck load of gay references in our work as COIL. In actual samples used ie The Sewage Workers Birthday Party. In a lot of my lyrics

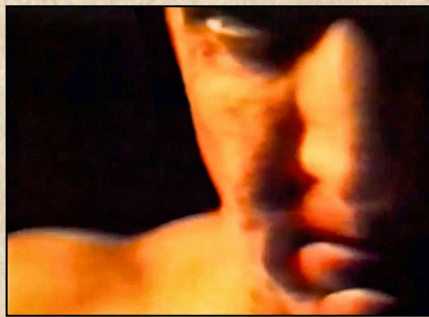
The Anal Staircase, Ostia (The Death Of Pasolini), Slur... which is about fucking in ruins just outside the city walls of Marrakesh. We are soaked in cum. Just look and listen hard and obliquely enough. The album we have just recorded for Nothing, at Trent's New Orleans studio has at least 3 very blatant gay themed songs. But I always try to give my lyrics at least 2 meanings, more if I'm being fluid with the language I choose. The beauty of ambiguity....

regards John Balance of COIL.



Psychic TV's 'First Transmission'

(1982 VHS Mail Order Release)



Alternate versions include: 'Ritual Cuttings of The Psychic Youth' on the 'Psychic TV Psychlopaedia Vol. 2' compilation (1985), directed by Peter Christopherson.

Starring: Jhonn Balance, David Tibet and Peter Christopherson.

["**The accumulation of Male Sexual Energy...**" A ferocious homosexual ritual BDSM movie starring a 20 year old Jhonn Balance, the second of Christopherson's loose faux-snuff trilogy. Stills taken from my forthcoming unofficial remastered edit collection of all three of Peter's "ritual torture" films spanning 1977-1992.

Peter's [films](#) for PTV starring Jhonn, shot in Genesis P-Orridge's London basement "dungeon", were the main reason given by GPO for his self-imposed exile from the UK. After the ridiculous Channel 4 1992 [Dispatches documentary](#) about "satanic abuse" (showing footage of Jhonn getting "tortured" on UK TV), uniformed officers from the Obscene Publications Squad subsequently raided P-Orridge's home and confiscated a massive amount of COUM, TG and PTV artwork, including Peter's 'First Transmission' tapes. See [overleaf](#) for Genesis's version of events, and COIL's response to it, as posted on the rec.music.industrial public news-group from April 1996.]



DippyBIRD

I dunno if anybody else out there has read the latest issue of Sonic Envelope yet (<http://www.netrail.net/~sonicenv/>), but the interview with Genesis P. Orridge says some really scary things about Coil... I hope Nasty Byte doesn't mind, but I've included the relevant bits of that interview below:

NB: So tell me about your friends in Coil.

Gen: I have no opinion about Coil. And I would take issue with calling them my friends.

NB: Oh - really?

Gen: Absolutely. They're the people that made the videos that started the whole problem. [ie. the ones that presumably lay at the heart of the little fiasco that got Gen exiled from the UK in the first place -me]

NB: So they're no longer your friends.

Gen: I'm just being neutral. Because if they suddenly went, "Actually, the videos that you thought you were talking about, which you didn't actually possess, but which you had heard rumors about..." - they were actually two videos made by John Balance and Sleazy (Peter Christopherson).

NB: And they were good friends of yours - for a long time.

Gen: Yes. For a long time. But I'm pretty disgusted with the way they behaved. All I got was a fax from them saying, "Don't tell anybody about who really made the videos." And then not even five dollars to help me survive in exile.

NB: That's not very good.

Gen: No. But you see, Sleazy - he's actually from a very well-to-do family. His parents are Sir Christopherson and Lady Christopherson, and they go to Buckingham Palace and dinner with the Queen.

NB: Would it have been a big embarrassment if it had come out - if he (Sleazy) had stood up and said, "This is my responsibility"?

Gen: Absolutely. It would have been a big scandal. And also of course, it wouldn't have come out, because his parents have the power to suppress the information.

NB: But even so, if he had spoken up...

Gen: If he had the courage of his convictions, yes. Let's leave it at that.

I don't know if Sleazy and John are still reading this group, but I'd love to hear what they have to say about these accusations, which seem pretty darned harsh to me. Any thoughts from anybody else?

-me

(Anybody who suggests that they were selling the "Keelhauling" singles for \$20 in order to take up a collection for Gen will be summarily kicked in the head...)



Jhon Balance

19/04/1996

>

> Both Peter and John post here occasionally...I wonder if they'd like to
> respond to this thread?

OK Here we are, John Balance and Sleazy replying to a few of these points.

It's true that Peter's father is a so-called Knight Of The Realm, but this is an honorary title that he was awarded in the 60's for his academic work in Engineering. It is non-hereditary (ie is not passed on to Peter), and has got nothing to do with wealth or political power. Peter's family have never been rich or landed gentry. Incidentally his mother died in 1988 and his dad who is now 82, is in a Hospice suffering from Alzheimer's Disease. The suggestion that they somehow manipulated the political situation against Gen is absurd.

Peter was a very creative partner in the Hipgnosis design team in the 70's, and he was paid well at the time. In fact, he paid for many of the early TG records himself.

By contrast, Coil has been largely financially self-supporting. It certainly hasn't made us rich, but with careful use of resources and hard work, we have been able to use some pretty advanced technology in new ways. This is one of the reasons we do it.

The Fairlight and Emulator 1 and 2 we used to record Scatology were rented for about two weeks, and as far as we can remember, this cost about \$1000 that we'd saved up. When we did Horse Rotorator we hired and recorded in a studio that had a Fairlight included in the deal.

Previous postings on this topic, have very succinctly and as far as we know accurately documented the sad facts about Genesis self imposed >exile< from the UK, and we don't really need to add anything more. (Although no one seems to have mentioned all of the unofficial TG re-issues and bootlegs that Genesis has organised and recieved money for without attempting to pay the other three members of the band.)

We feel that discussions and commentaries of this sort are slight and inconsequential - Our work and our worth stands for itself.

As the saying goes Magick Defends Itself.

Greetings and the Blessings of AOS and ZOS

John Balance and Peter Christopherson of COIL

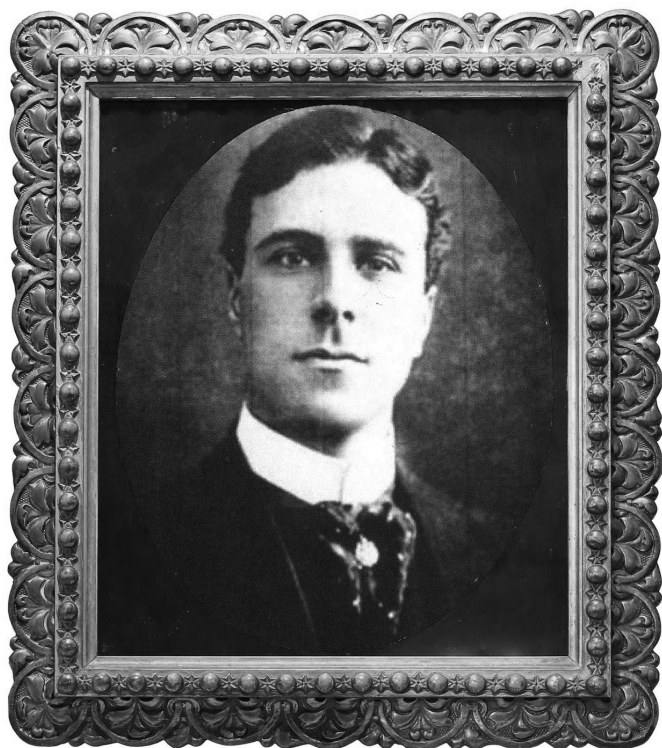


[The motto for Geoff Rushton's boarding school, translated:
"Thus the way to the stars, for all comers".

Below - Geoff Rushton's boarding room block (south view), at Lord Williams' Upper School, Oxford Road, Thame, Oxon OX9 2AQ. The boarding school block closed in 1991.]



© www.lordwilliams.oxon.sch.uk



F.J. Nettlefold
(1867 - 1949)

The Life and Times of FJ Nettlefold

(Composer, publisher, antiques collector, industrialist and UK film producer)

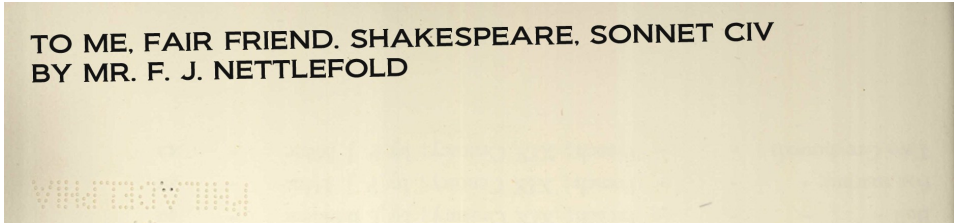
Who exactly *was* that strangely-named shadowy figure that Jhonn Balance focussed so much reluctant energy on during one of the final vocal sessions he recorded before his death? Just a random name from the annals of history? Or a character that Jhonn himself perhaps identified with in some way?

Well, when looking at his life and piecing it all together, FJ Nettlefold certainly seems like a curious fellow with very rich life experiences.

FJ Nettlefold (1867-1949) took over the reigns of the famous, and often industry-leading, manufacturing company GKN (a family business) from his father Frederick Nettlefold in 1913. The British GKN company always desired to strengthen ties with manufacturing outlets around the world to ease production and inter-industry trade and it seems that 'FJ' was one of the chaps to go travelling and represent the company on the growing global industrial stage of the early 1900s. In 1901, at the age of 34, Nettlefold was arrested for 'undisclosed' reasons in Germany, though nothing was ever recorded beyond that vague incident when he returned to these shores.

The highly-creative FJ went on to use his family riches for creative purposes, endeavours and Edwardian-to-Interwar era follies. A budding composer, self-publisher, antiques and art collector over his lifetime, he also found time to produce a few silent movies (perhaps using the platform to push his compositions as sound-tracks as part of the deal?).

In 1926 the notable British silent-era Hepworth Studios was purchased by FJ's extended family, with the company promptly being renamed Nettlefold Studios. However, it was under FJ's own name that he himself followed that family interest into producing silent films.



TO ME, FAIR FRIEND. SHAKESPEARE. SONNET CIV
BY MR. F. J. NETTLEFOLD



Every Mother's Son

"The hundred sons of FJ Nettlefold... parachuted in behind enemy lines"

"[produced by FJ Nettlefold in 1926] The staunchly anti-war 'Every Mother's Son' stars Rex Davis as David Brent, one of those "sons." Unnerved by his experiences in World War I, Brent is unable to secure work after the Armistice. He becomes a tramp, albeit a good-looking one. Brent is ultimately joined by his true love Janet Shaw (Jean Jay), likewise an outcast because of her illegitimate child. The aptly named Johnny Butt provides comic relief."

[synopsis by www.allmovie.com]

Note: Parachutes were controversially proposed for regular use from the onset of WWI (1914–1918).

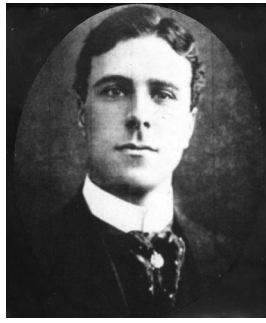
"With your stone vase of Qing, with your afts of T'ang"

Nettlefold recorded his collections of antiques, bronzes, casts and paintings extensively and published these listings during his lifetime, such as the pamphlet in 1934. These items included bronzes and casts from different Chinese and Far-East eras.

As some of his inspirations when composing pieces of music, FJ often utilised words from the 19th Century Romantics and classic writers in his works and, in 1935, FJ Nettlefold released a booklet of sheet music to be played alongside Shakespeare's Sonnet 104, the same sonnet - 'To Me, Fair Friend' - used in COIL's 'Montecute' as part of Jarman's 'The Angelic Conversation' film soundtrack in 1985.

Upon his death at the age of 82, in 1949, FJ Nettlefold bequeathed many sought-after items of his antiques and art collection to Birmingham City Museum and Art Gallery, which included items inherited from his father's distinguished collection of Martinware pottery.

FJ Nettlefold pottered around at the family estate until his death: 'Nettlefolds', Chelwood Vachery, Millbrook Hill, Uckfield, East Sussex, TN22 3HR. He owned the site of the current Memorial Hall and the Village Social Club in nearby Nutley village, donating the land to the village parish before his death.



A bon viveur, musician and philanthropist in his lifetime, FJ Nettlefold certainly lived his life to the fullest. Now, who can really say where and when Jhonn Balance was inspired enough by the chap to conduct some of his final vocal sessions dedicated to him?

THE COLLECTION OF BRONZES AND CASTINGS IN BRASS AND ORMOLU FORMED BY MR. F. J. NETTLEFOLD			
Boy holding Shell	-	French; 1857; by B. Carpeaux	- 51, 52
Glory to the Dead	-	English; 1901; by E. Onslow Ford	- 53, 54
Three figures	-	French; XIX Century; by E. Leveque	- 55
On the Nile	-	German; XX Century; by R. Marcuse	- 56
Silver Plaque—The Hunt	-	Italian; 1894; by Mme. Lancelot-Croce	- 57
Pan	-	French; Modern; by S. Eloff	- 58
Sceptic Faun	-	French; 1924; by S. Eloff	- 59, 60
Kathleen laughing	-	English; Modern; by J. Epstein	- 61, 62
Dog of Fo	-	Chinese; XVIII Century	- 63
Bodhisattva	-	Chinese; XIX Century	- 64
Pair of Bronze Vases	-	Japanese; XVIII Century	- 65
Pair of Bronze Dragons	-	Sino-Tibetan; XVIII Century	- 66

Resources:

'The Collection of Bronzes and Castings in Brass and Ormolu formed...'
Published by Mr. F. J. Nettlefold (1934).

'To me, fair Friend. [Song, words by] Shakespeare, Sonnet civ'
Published by F. J Nettlefold (1935)

'A History of GKN: Volume 1: Innovation and Enterprise, 1759-1918'
By Edgar Jones.

The National Archives (UK) Arrest Reference: FO 64/1547:
<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk>

General information from:
imdb.com, The British Film Institute and www.nutleyhistorical.org.uk

Walton Studios
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Walton_Studios

The Final Days



[Baudelaire's 'Les Fleurs du Mal' (1857) by Félix Bracquemond.]

"We're going under... we're going under..."

COIL's final interview, for Dublin's Rattlebag radio arts programme on the 22nd of October 2004 began ominously with that murky extract from COIL's 'Summer Sub-structures', no-one really knowing at the time what would follow, though perhaps *one* person had a subconscious sense of the finality embedded within everything around him.

In recent years leading up to that autumn 2004 arrival of COIL in Dublin, Jhonn Balance's life had become totally unbalanced by his alcohol addiction, ill health and erratic behaviour: COIL, as a creative entity, adapting as best they could to their erratic founder's personal demons and the fallout from his actions in dealing with them.

Six years earlier, in the process of moving from Chiswick to Weston-super-Mare, Jhonn exchanged the ever-tempting urban fruit of his vices for the bitter pill of coastal isolation. Friends were no longer on his doorstep, the cultural life no longer stimulating, the much larger North Tower household somewhat daunting, no doubt accentuating the sense of rambling loneliness. According to Sleazy, Balance's frequent trips to Weston's charity shops yielded bag after bag of cheap curios, but Balance's real saviours at North Tower when Peter was away on video assignments (which was often) were his dogs and his correspondence - especially his communications with long-distance lover Ian.

Tragically, Jhonn's new life along the west coast wasn't enough to keep the alcohol away. It wasn't even that he was a social drinker - in fact none of the Weston locals I had approached during my visit (or emailed over my prior years of research) had ever heard of Geoff/Jhonn or the band - including the proprietors of the nearest pubs and his local shop. No, where he was once a young buck on the club circuit in London he was now a virtual recluse on South Road.

Jhonn cut an almost post-Floyd Syd Barrett figure when seen on his occasional solitary trainhops back to London in his final years. From collapsing in Marylebone Road after getting mugged to roaming the city streets barefoot and tipsy, life and times had changed for the worse wherever he found himself.

Jhonn still possessed his sardonic humour and still cherished the company of his friends when they met, but everything was seemingly slipping away from him. Far from being settled in life post-40, the alcohol biting back at him harder and harder as time ebbed on, I believe Jhonn found himself at that bleakest and blackest of crossroads: *"What the fuck can I do now?"*

So, to say that COIL had become frazzled and damaged by 2004 is a total understatement. Tales of Jhonn trashing hotel rooms in explosive self-hatred and drinking his band's profits away in each hotel room's minibar were spoken about with a shaking head and closed eyes in Peter's interviews at the time.

Yet, despite everything, they carried on through it all, the band managing to record some of their most powerful works in the process. Take one of COIL's last songs for example: 'Going Up' is seen by most COIL fans as one of the very best tracks Jhonn and Peter ever recorded and a fitting finale to end all finales. In the weeks leading up to their final gig, Jhonn had recruited the singer and actor François Testory to perform on the song - his vocals using the lyrics from the camp vintage UK sitcom 'Are You Being Served?'

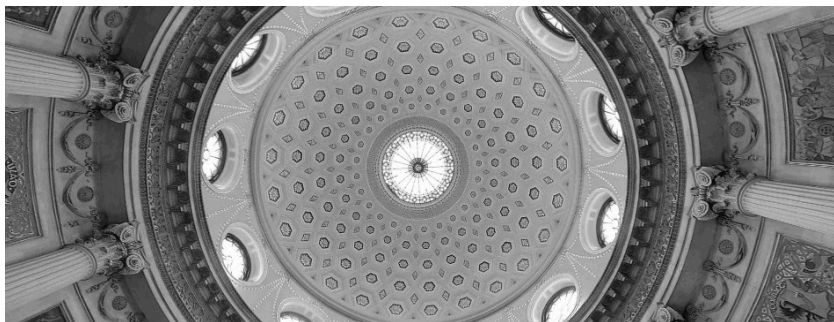
Peter: *"I don't know why Geff suggested we try it, nor can I remember how we came to be in touch with amazing counter-tenor Francois, who I only ever met twice (I think) - once when he came to the house in Weston to record the 'official' vocal - I remember Geff sobered up sufficiently for the morning to act as quite a tough producer, demanding many retakes and alterations of nuance from Francois' performance before retreating to his room (and the bottle) afterwards, and the second time in Dublin to feature in Coil's Last Five Minutes."*

So it came to be that COIL's curtain-call live appearance was at Dublin's City Hall, Ireland, for the Dublin Electronic Arts Festival on 23rd October 2004 (only 21 days before Jhonn's life would come to an end, aged just 42).

COIL debuted several songs that evening, with 'Unhappy Rabbits' in particular now a fan favourite, though the audio recording we all know of the gig only exists as camera microphone audio taken from three audience member's video devices.



[Jhonn during the final minutes of the final song of COIL's final performance, DEAF, October 2004.]



[The domed 'Rotunda' ceiling of Dublin City Hall.]

This patched-together low quality recording of such a momentous performance (found on the *Colour Sound Oblivion* video boxset) adds a further strangeness to the whole event, with Jhonn's yelps and screams sounding truly ungodly through the wall of lo-fi muffling and, for those who weren't there, it poses the question "what the hell did the actual gig sound like?" Was the audio quality really like *that*? It sounds like a medieval band tumbling down a cliff with their instruments, banging each ledge in tandem on the way down, before landing in the pits of hell (I mean that in a positive way). From the moment the recording abruptly cuts in, to the last echoed clattering, it sounds like no other bootlegged gig on Earth, of any band, ever.

Then there's Jhonn himself. Looking particularly troubled and painfully lost on the concert film (wide-eyed and neck craning throughout), it's a testament to Balance himself that he gave such an impassioned performance on the night. His frequent stares up to the heavens during that final performance begs the questions; What was he looking at? What was he searching for? Or, more chilling, what was looking down at him that evening? Taking a look around Dublin City Hall today, via the venue website's 360 degrees virtual tour, you are first stuck by the strangeness of the venue layout, indeed how odd the acoustics would've been that night. And then you see the domed roof, the unique sight of which goes some way in explaining what Jhonn was looking at through the stage fog and illuminations; circles of hexagonal windows providing glimpses of the stars and moon (fact fans: the moon was in its first quarter that night). A mesmerising domed rotunda indeed.

Peter on Jhonn's state of mind leading up to the Dublin show: *"With hindsight it's easy to 'spot' Geff's precognition of what was about to happen - though off-stage he never mentioned it. In Dublin he seemed transfixed by Visions of Death."*

Now over ten years since that unearthly night in Dublin, the final COIL performance of darkest blue/green illumination, echoing cries around that domed venue and the medieval-like bedlam of sound has to go down in the history books as one of the most funereal and strangest concerts ever realised. Given COIL's 20-year history of transition and transformation, alongside such cataclysmic turmoil in Jhonn's life at the time, it is impossible to guess how COIL could've progressed beyond this point.

Whilst editing the 'Colour Sound Oblivion' dvd boxset of COIL concerts years later, Peter admitted that he put off the editing of the Dublin concert until the last moment as he found the footage "too painful" to work through, saying this about COIL's future, if Jhonn had lived:

"I can't say if the largely abstract form of the music that day would have continued to develop into some new form, or whether something had already "worn out". As you can hear on the Reconstruction Kit I had new Backing Tracks for 4 or 5 new songs but ended up only using a couple of them [on the night]. At the time it just didn't seem right."

Though remaining lucid to fans whilst drinking backstage afterwards, Jhonn's sweet "Night Night" goodbye to the crowd in Ireland would be his final living words to his collected audience.

Upon his return to North Tower in Weston-super-Mare with Peter (who had, by his own admission, become an unofficial carer to Jhonn by that time), Balance soon retreated back into his room and quickly shut-off from the outside world once again. Now reclusive and introverted, the seriousness of his [end stage alcoholism](#) was largely hidden away from the outside world once again, an addiction Jhonn had suffered from for over a decade by this point (after initially turning to wine to help combat MDMA's notorious [Suicide Tuesday](#) comedown period during the infamous 'Love's Secret Domain' era). The unafflicted amongst us can only guess at the level of trauma caused by the effects of dementia, paranoia and hallucinations resulting from Jhonn's end stage of alcoholism clashing against his pre-existing symptoms of schizophrenia. With Jhonn also having suffered a suspected heart attack in the past, the grave cardiac conditions caused by this late stage of the addiction (alcoholic cardiomyopathy, specifically) meant that something, sooner or later, would have to give. Jhonn would have known this.

Over the next three weeks Jhonn would venture out of his room on only a handful of occasions, going down to the house studio to contribute vocals to future projects by Thighpaulsandra and Danny Hyde. The final vocal tracks that Jhonn recorded, mere days before his death, were for Thighpaulsandra's 'Christ's Teeth' and Danny Hyde's 'Fj Nettlefold'.

Danny Hyde remembers: *"I pestered Geoff (Jhonn) for [ages] to do vocals and I sent him over loops and stuff and he was all up for it, but nothing would ever happen."*

I subsequently now know that he was going through his own demons and it would have been very hard. Pete finally managed to pin him down and got him to sing the 'Fj Nettlefold' song. Pete put them on a CD and sent over all the vocal takes. Before I finished the track I heard Geoff was dead and so I never even got to play it to him."

Thighpaulsandra's track 'Christ's Teeth' went on to appear on the memorial compilation album released in 2005 '...It Just Is (In Memoriam: Jhonn Balance)'.

On November 10th it was officially announced that Jhonn Balance had contributed new vocals/lyrics to the Danny Hyde track, the announcement also mentioning 'Make Room for the Mushrooms', a track that used archival vocals from Jhonn. Also on November 10th COIL officially announced two live festival appearances for December 2004. On the weekend of 3rd-5th December, they were to appear at ATPs' 'The Nightmare Before Christmas', once again performing at Camber Sands Holiday Resort. They were then planned to head straight over to Bilbao, Spain for a performance at the MEM Festival on December 6th. Both of these events would obviously be cancelled soon enough.

Intriguingly, on the 12th November (the day before Jhonn's death), COIL officially announced that the "Seed Records 4th Birthday" event at Aldwych Disused Tube Station, where COIL was scheduled to play that evening, had been cancelled. COIL had originally planned to present a "short and low-key set" on that Friday night.

On the morning of November 13th 2004 Jhonn ventured out of his room for the final time, in an attempt to clean himself up a little. Peter Christopherson later recounted the tragic incident that happened that evening:

"On the early evening of November 13th 2004, Jhonn and I were at home. Jhonn had been in the oblivion of vodka for a couple of weeks although that day he had eaten some soup and had a bath and was not quite as insensible as he had been. I was watching TV (The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes) when I heard a noise in the hall. Jhonn was lying face down on the wooden floor breathing noisily. He was deeply unconscious. Apparently he had tipped over the banisters and fallen some 12ft to the floor below onto his head. I called the ambulance and they were at the house in 7 minutes. Jhonn was rushed to hospital, but despite the best efforts of the doctors in A&E, he did not regain consciousness. His condition deteriorated over the next few hours, and at 9.20pm he was pronounced dead."

The news filtered through to the *Coil List* by late evening the following day; many people obviously devastated, having initially thought that the Brainwashed website had turned all its pages black because of an upgrade or redesigned site.

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The first official notice soon appeared:

The Thresholdhouse Website:

"We are greatly saddened to have to tell you that at about 5.30pm Saturday Nov 13th, Jhonn Balance, was killed in an accident at home. Under the influence of alcohol he fell from the first floor landing, hitting his head on the floor some 15ft below. Peter/Sleazy who was in the front room heard the noise, came out to investigate and found him unconscious, though still breathing. Balance was rushed to hospital, where his condition deteriorated, and he died soon after, without ever regaining consciousness. There is no suggestion that this event was in any way deliberate, in fact, anything other than a tragic accident. Unusually, Balance had been cheerful during the day, and was looking forward to seeing Ian at the weekend, and working on new recordings this week."

* * *

Peter Chistopherson;

"Our awareness that physical death is not an end, but merely a transition to a whole different part of existence, a new adventure, should by now be clear to everyone."

Jhonn has simply crossed over the Threshold...

As Thomas Olson wrote this morning: "Listening to some Coil songs now, and they are all sounding to me now as if they were written for this moment...."

Nevertheless the parting will be hard for us all. Fortunately there is much to be done that will keep us busy in the next few difficult weeks."

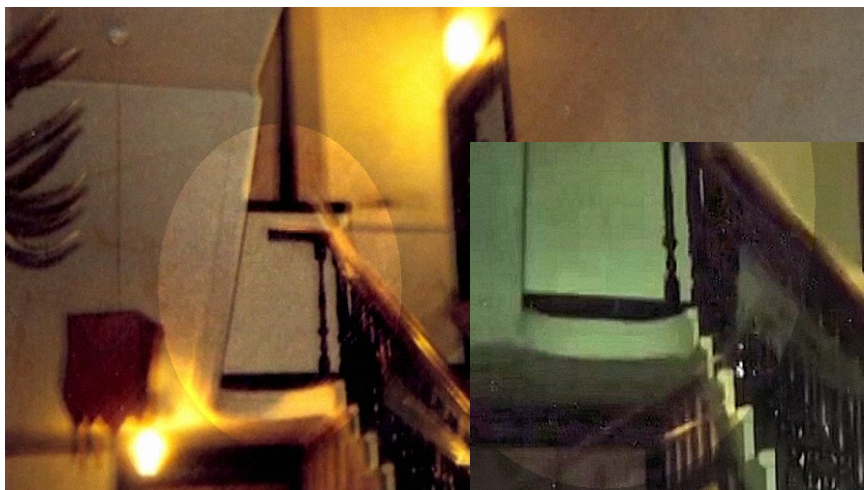
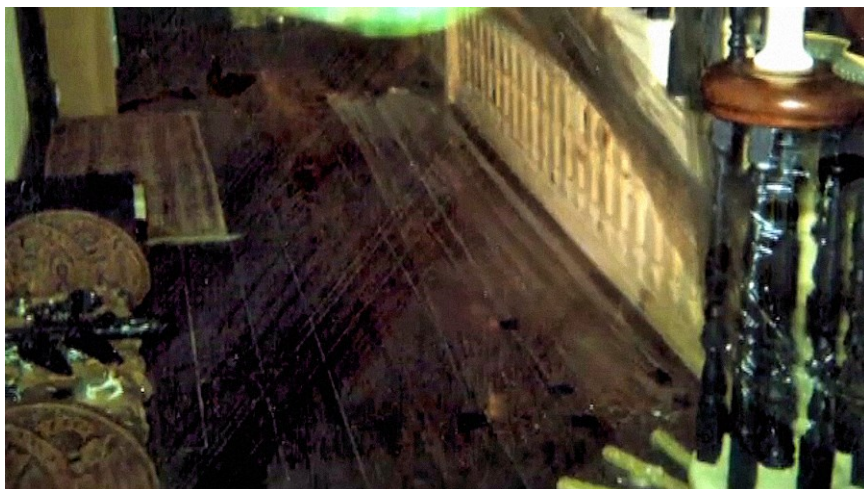
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The Brainwashed website:

"IN MEMORIAM

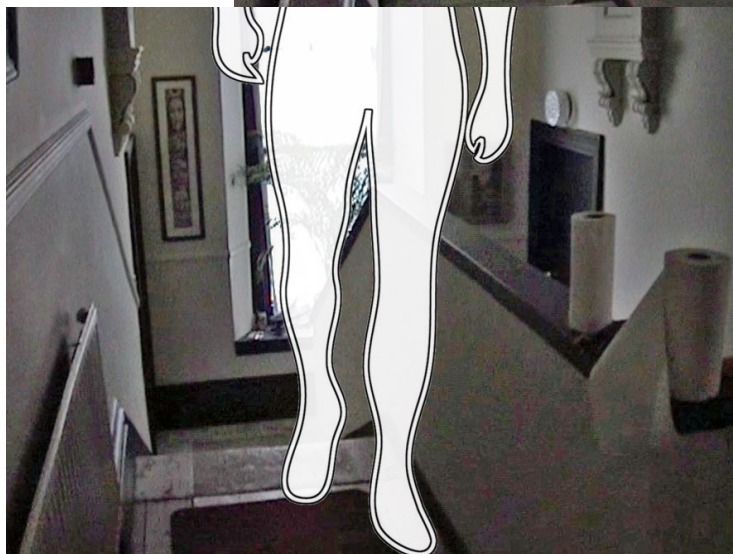
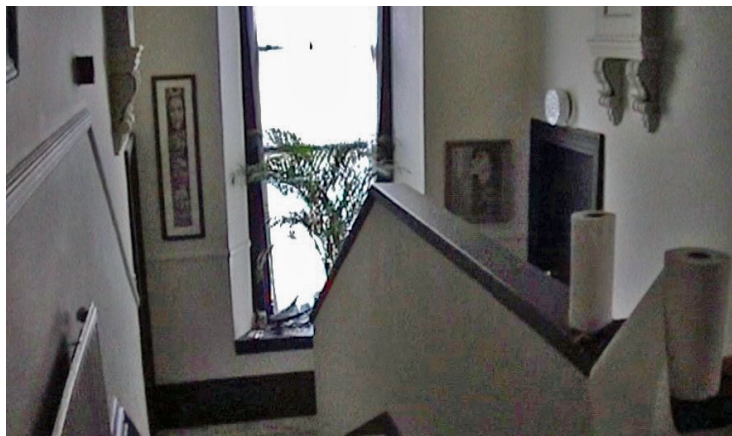
GEFF RUSHTON (JOHN BALANCE) 1962-2004

We are sad to report the untimely passing of Geff Rushton (a.k.a. John Balance), founder of Coil, occasional member of Zos Kia, Psychic TV, Nurse With Wound, Current 93, Death in June, and friend to many. He will be sadly missed in this world. A Book of Condolence is being established at thresholdhouse.com"



[*Top*: The floor at North Tower where Jhonn was found by Peter.

Bottom & Inset: The staircase leading up to where Jhonn fell from (pictured opposite page). Even on the first floor landing you can already see clear evidence of inadequate and incomplete bannister/railing fixtures in lieu of replacements or repair. Pictures taken by Peter Christopherson in 2002, lifted here from the 'Well Hung Monk' video, my ellipses added for clarity.]



[Stills taken from a home video kindly provided to me by one of Jhonn's friends showing the bannister area leading up from the first floor of North Tower, as it was when Jhonn fell to his death from it in November 2004.

Let us sort this balcony issue out once and for all. If we take the average size of the height of domestic kitchen roll (seen in the photo, handy for scale) as 25.5cm, the height of the bannister here at North Tower is around 3.5 times the height of that roll seen resting on top of that bannister on the narrow landing. So, if we agree that the bannister is merely around 89.25cm high, that would mean that the only safeguard from falling to the bottom of the stairwell from that floor is thigh-high to the average male at best. I am 6ft 4" and that bannister wouldn't even reach half-way up my thigh. Jhonn was not a short man - similar to myself, he would literally be towering over that woefully inadequate bannister every time he trundled past it. To make matters worse, there's no grip on the top either - just a smooth polished surface. As we have seen on the previous page, the safety of the lower landing bannister was absurdly dangerous itself, so it is safe to say that the Balance/Christopherson household didn't treat domestic safety measures with any real regard at all. According to current UK Building Regulations, handrails should have been fitted onto those bannisters and ledge. They would have saved Jhonn's life in this instance.

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I posit the view that, especially given Jhonn's mental state at the time, an accident was bound to happen at North Tower, whether his lifestyle and mental health psychologically "allowed" it to happen or not.]

The Coil List:

[coil] regarding a gesture

Jhonn Balance john at loci.demon.co.uk

Mon Nov 15 23:18:33 EST 2004

Hi all

Just a brief note at this difficult time - Ian and I both, and I'm sure John also, feel about financial donations, flowers etc this:

Rather than send us anything - we have too much already - do one of the following:

1. Write the words "Jhonn Balance" on a small piece of paper, put it in a hole in the ground or a pot, and plant a vegetable or tree over it.

Some people might want to anoint the paper with their own seed as well.

When you see the plant grow or even better when you eat the resulting vegetable, know you have him beside (or inside) you.

OR

2. If you see someone that needs some kind of small help or kindness, do so, but say "there you are Jhonn Balance", if only for the pleasure of seeing the startled look on their face.

(It was a running joke between us that Jhonn (like Blanche Dubois from *Streetcar Named Desire*) "often relied on the kindness of strangers")

And to everyone that has sent messages so soon - thank you SO so much - They are a massive comfort and help and mean a lot, even though sometimes it IS hard to read emails through the tears!!!! B^) What is the emoticon for that I wonder?

We will try to write back to everyone personally when Jhonn's Dust has settled...

Love to all

Sleazy and Ian

Over the following days and weeks, lots of people began to write their own heartfelt condolences and post their Balance memories online, many still on the internet for you to seek out, such as a great piece by William Breeze.

However, perhaps only Peter can *officially* sum up the whole after-effect of the tragedy:

"Although we all certainly knew that something like this might happen if Jhonn continued to use alcohol in the way that he did - and much of the work of Coil, Jhonn's Life's Work in fact, described or addressed that Very Moment, nevertheless it came as a great shock to all of us.

In the days that followed, Ian - Jhonn's partner for the last year or so - and I struggled to keep ourselves together and to begin to organise both public and private arrangements. The response to the news on the website was overwhelming and very touching, and brought immense Solace in a time of need.

Friends of Coil over the years, particularly Ossian Brown, Bill Breeze, David Michael, Geoff Cox and Marilyn, our housekeeper, were also incredibly supportive, and they were among the 100 or so guests at the Funeral Celebration, which was held on November 23rd at Memorial Woodlands near Bristol.

We all continue to have bad days from time to time, but slowly as the numbness begins to recede, the possibility of enjoying new sights, smells, flavors, the possibility of new life, returns. I still find it hard to say the words "Geff's dead" or "when Geff died" out loud, and the process of mixing and editing Jhonn's last Work "The Ape of Naples" has been almost unbearably emotional, to say the least.

The last song of that show "Going Up" is a reworking of the theme to the 70s TV show "Are You Being Served?" but through the eyes of Coil and Jhonn Balance it clearly is just about "Going Up" himself - Over and over he sings "Are you ready to go now?" and in the end, his Last Live Words: "...It Just Is."

Peter Christopherson, 11th March 05ev - the Last Days of the North Tower."

Peter, himself, would pass away in his sleep on November 25th 2010 - the potent and turbulent legacy of Coil passing away peacefully with him.

"How Balance fell remains a matter of conjecture — the first-floor wall was at least chestheight, so either he'd hauled himself up onto the ledge at the time and drunkenly tumbled, or deliberately physically projected his body over."

Jeremy Reed, 'Bandit Poet', 2018.

It almost goes without saying that, over the past 15 years, COIL fans have naturally discussed the circumstances leading up to Jhonn's tragic death, with several fan theories elaborated by such online conversations (from an act of suicide to something markedly more sinister).

I shall dwell on only one of the fan theories here, as I think it is worth noting several complexities arising from any action conducted either intentionally or by supposed accident by people suffering from alcoholism in its various stages. That fan theory I wish to explore, with an argument both *for* and *against* until I finally put forward my personal conclusion, is quite a tough one and I need to explore it candidly with utmost respect to Jhonn's memory and to his surviving family.

It's the fan theory of suicide.

Although Peter has stated publicly that Jhonn never talked in any seriousness about the concept of suicide, a well-known longtime friend of the band did tell me (and it has been broadly mentioned in media interviews with this person too) that Jhonn used to call them up in frantic periods of despair (sometimes while this person was shopping, having to duck into an alleyway for enough time to try to calm Jhonn down), with Balance sometimes talking about how suicide was what his fans "expected of him now" (that suicide was, apparently, seen by many COIL fans at the time as his inevitable outcome) - and perhaps that's what he should do. Seemingly supporting the theory of suicide or an otherwise deliberately-planned act, a chapter dedicated to Jhonn in Jeremy Reed's 'Bandit Poet' book (Zagava Publishing, 2018) outlines a few puzzling things to me, including mention that the bannister/staircase area at their North Tower home was not a place that anyone could accidentally fall from.

There is also evidence to suggest that, through no fault of their own, Jhonn grew increasingly distant from some friends and members of his family. I do have to state now that a couple of people who were very close to Jhonn have mentioned privately to me over the years that his relationship with his family was certainly not as bad as his infamous outbursts on stage during live COIL gigs would have fans believe. Perhaps Jhonn's eventual lifestyle probably doesn't *gell* well with the traditional rosy idea of a 'prim life' for most "mainstream" families (other than Balance being a keen dog lover and rambler living in a respectable area of Weston-super-Mare, of course), but I believe there are definite reasons why most addicts (certainly chronic alcoholics) grow distant from the loved ones around them.

"...I have a feeling independent of conspiracy theories there was another witness? Balance no matter how out of it didn't risk or like heights, and the idea of him sitting above a steep hazardous drop doesn't to my mind make sense. Was there some sort of struggle on that ledge that he accidentally tipped over?"

Jeremy Reed, 'Bandit Poet', 2018.

It should be noted that a person's frustration with an alcoholic loved one can easily - and quickly - reach the point of abandoning the addict to their own devices. Please allow me to write from experience for a moment. My eldest brother died of chronic alcoholism-related illnesses over a decade ago and, in all brutal fairness, no-one really *wanted* to be close - or could even *get* close anyway if they tried - to him towards the very end. He had changed into such a tormented figure that he'd turn those around him into nervous wrecks within minutes of being in his presence: a sad and extremely volatile period of time caused, in part, by my brother's deeply erratic, disturbing and childlike behaviour and the extreme fatigue of those around him trying to do their best. In short I believe that, in many cases, isolation (or estrangement) is an inevitable side effect from alcohol addiction regardless of one's lifestyle choices or even mental health issues away from addiction (as mentioned earlier, Jhonn suffered from often catatonic schizophrenia throughout his life too).

Picking up on the fan suicide theory again, I should note that Jhonn was observed by Peter to at least *portray* a more relaxed state of mind on his final day - as is often the case when people are concealing a determined imminent suicide attempt. This is an act of almost exaggerating a façade of normality mixed with a strange sense of inner peace, as an end is in sight to the pain of continual existence. Reed's chapter detailing Jhonn as a lonely, isolated figure seems to suggest that, with Sleazy packing up and imminently leaving Weston-super-Mare for Thailand on a semi-permanent basis, Jhonn's own COIL legacy with Peter was likely to come to an end by the close of 2004. In short, how could things get any worse for Jhonn? All in all, from his health to his social life, from his finances to his future musical career, if there was to be a breaking point, this must surely be it.

But enough about this disturbing suicide theory for now. Let us now look at Jhonn's death as the accident it was reported to be.

Peter seems to describe the bannister/landing area as being the main reason why Jhonn fell, "tipping" by accident, as Balance was not "as insensible" as he had been. Jeremy Reed's chapter describes that area of the staircase in a very different way, suggesting that it would be strange for someone to be able to accidentally fall from there. However, two people who visited the North Tower house have stated to me personally that the area where Jhonn fell was indeed very dangerous - and had been for a long while. In recent years Geraldine Beskin (Atlantis Bookshop, London) and another close friend of the band have both said to me that the area above the

"...I got such a feeling of hopelessness that I began crying. And my brother said, 'What's the matter with you?' and I couldn't tell him. It was just a feeling of being completely at a hopeless disadvantage. It was a ghost of some sort, a spirit."

William S. Burroughs, 'Call Me Burroughs: A Life' by Barry Miles, 2015.

stairs where Jhonn fell was indeed a deathtrap - they saw it with their own eyes when they themselves visited the house on more than one occasion. My conclusion about Reed's mention of the accident spot in 'Bandit Poet' is that what he's describing does not sound like the place where Jhonn fell from at all. In other words, and with all due respect, I believe Reed is mistaken in his embellishment.

In short, with regards to the accident theory (the theory most people subscribe to, as it is the official one) I believe that the spot Jhonn Balance fell from was indeed a precarious area of the house, and he could have easily fallen from there - exactly as described by Peter's account soon after the incident. Jeremy Reed is merely writing from the aspiration that his book should be an entertaining, striking and thoughtful read, tantalising us with a playful sense of *the unknown*, like writers do (and, all things considered, like writers *should* do).

Taking stock of the two main theories, I subscribe to a "wilful death by misadventure" theory rather than either a planned suicide or an out-of-the-blue accident. A deadly lifestyle, if you will. So yes, if push comes to shove, I believe Jhonn Balance's death was likely a result of a complex combination of both the suicide *and* accident theories. Let me clarify.

Jhonn's reported sense of normality towards the end was, in my view, a classic example of an addict's '[moment of clarity](#)' rather than the concealment of a definite suicide plan. And I should stress again that this is my *personal view*.

My view, speaking as we often do from some fragments of personal experience, is that someone in the darkest moment of their lives, someone who has given up almost all self-worth in the face of abandonment, may not be seen as traditionally suicidal nor even have such an active plan in mind with all seriousness. But their whole vague, foggy and utterly bleak world is one of waiting for their own death by the hands of... *something*. A final moment. A brutal incident perhaps *allowed* to happen. Anything, in fact, that presents itself and feels right at the time for the afflicted person to follow through with. Even more conventional rock stars like Iggy Pop have repeatedly mentioned in their "sober years" interviews this concept regarding the interweaving worlds of drink and self-harm where lines of intention become forever blurred (to the point where *anything* could happen and anything is *likely* to happen). So an addict in such a fragile state ("[hitting bottom](#)") may no longer care much about their future - they fall into dark circumstance - and such a frail mind may even yearn for an ending, however it happens. The ailing psyche thinking that it is inevitable and will *feel right* leading up to that final moment. "It just is".

I believe, in that dark handful of days in Weston after the Dublin gig comedown,

"I live with the constant threat of possession, and a constant need to escape from possession, from Control. So the death of Joan brought me in contact with the invader, the Ugly Spirit, and maneuvered me into a lifelong struggle."

[William S. Burroughs, Introduction to 'Queer', 1985.]

that Jhonn came to realise (as I think Reed suggests) that it was probably the end for COIL now that Peter was moving away to Thailand. I don't see how life could get bleaker for Balance. The Ugly Spirit, as Burroughs might say, was perhaps creating the darkest of all inevitabilities by this point.

So, strangely, perhaps there was little left to fight against any more. The situation was inescapable. Where would Jhonn go? What would he do? Live a life alone, rattling around that big house on the hill in Weston by himself? He tried that - he was *forced* to - during Peter's long work trips away over the years. Besides, they hadn't been a couple for years in the partner sense. No. Not even any overtly *emotional* tie for Peter to stay, really. Ian Johnstone was not exactly emotionally-settled either, with the artist an erratic and staunchly independent soul himself which, by default, kept his comparatively new relationship with Balance at arm's length.

Allow me to hypothesise for a moment: It was all seemingly coming to an end. Jhonn emerged into his moment of clarity on that last day, possibly almost giddy with such temporary sobriety, and may have thought: *"Let's just see what happens at every stage. I'll wash... Ok. I'll eat... Ok. I'll drift... And, yes, after a life of self-harm (smashing my head through Victorian windows, random black eyes, years of drunken self-abuse), at least I won't be alone for this moment tonight. This very moment. Yes. Right now, I am okay with... falling."*

It sounds blunt to say it but, whether one sees Jhonn's fall as an active suicide, a domestic accident, or inevitable death by misadventure due to a dislocated life afflicted by loneliness, schizophrenia, self-worth issues and addiction, it probably doesn't matter. The tragic outcome is still the same. I continue, however, to lean towards the circumstance behind Jhonn's fall as being a single momentary incident *allowed* out of frayed, desperate instinct (a *"let's see what happens now"* kind-of deal), rather than it being a true suicidal plan or simply a domestic accident.

We could (and may well) theorise about the specifics of Jhonn's final days for decades to come, but the fact remains that we are left without a startlingly original mind, absent of one of the most restlessly creative bands that Great Britain could ever hope to nurture and, more importantly, lost a sensitive struggling soul who was loved dearly by friends and family. We, as fans, are merely left to rejoice with the golden relics of that which once was.

As David Tibet (Current 93) and Steven Stapleton (Nurse With Wound) said in their joint statement at the time:

"With burning sadness and with burning sorrow we remember You as: kindest of men, funniest of men, most intuitive of men, most incisive of men, most generous of men, a great artist, a great voice, a great visionary, a great Soul and a great Heart. Finally you were overwhelmed by it all: by all the beauty and by all the pain. You perhaps never knew how much you were loved. Till we meet again as we know we will, our dearest friend, with love always to you dearest Geff, John, Jhonn, shape-shifter and joker, in angelic form now, playing with stars in the love of God."

Resources:

'Understanding the High-Functioning Alcoholic: Professional Views and Personal Insights'
By Sarah Allen Benton, M.S., LMHC., LPC.
<https://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/understanding-the-high-functioning-alcoholic-sarah-benton/1022455933>

Jeremy Reed - "Bandit Poet" (Zagava Publishing):
http://www.zagava.de/?post_type=books&p=527

Lengthy quotations from Peter Christopherson taken from his Coil Mailing List posts from 2004 (the mailing list often down or inaccessible):
<http://www.hollyfeld.org/mailman/listinfo/coil>

Miscellaneous contemporary material sourced from the Coil archive site:
<http://brainwashed.com/coil/>

Peter's CSO booklet and other CSO box set scans found here:
<https://archive.org/details/CoilColourSoundOblivionScans>

The Rattlebag interview (Jhonn Balance's final recorded interview):
<https://archive.org/details/CoilInterview2004-10-22Ireland-dublinRattlebag>

Take a virtual tour inside COIL's last concert venue:
<https://www.virtualvisittours.com/dublin-city-hall/>



Jhonn Balance Estate

- [1] Rushton Family Next-of-Kin.
- [2] Ian Johnstone Estate Inheritor.

All COIL-related studio material recorded from **1979 - 2004** plus posthumous releases of archival material*.

*Possible exceptions:

Time Machines out-takes by Drew McDowall.
Queens of the Circulating Library instrumental out-takes by TPS.
Moon's Milk (In Six Phases) related instrumental material solely by Danny Hyde.



Session musicians and live performers not noted here, as all believed to be paid by wage/E at time of services. No recording rights assumed.

Peter Christopherson Estate

- [1] Christopherson Family Next-of-Kin.
- [2] Estate Executor Jordi Devas.

All COIL releases from **1983 - 2010** plus posthumous releases of archival material*.

*Possible exceptions:

Transparent (and some related material).
Time Machines out-takes by Drew McDowall.
Queens of the Circulating Library related material by TPS.



Stephen Thrower

COIL studio recordings from **1984 - 1992**, historically credited as a member of the band for that period.



Drew McDowall

COIL studio recordings from **1992 - 1999**, historically credited as member of the band for that period.

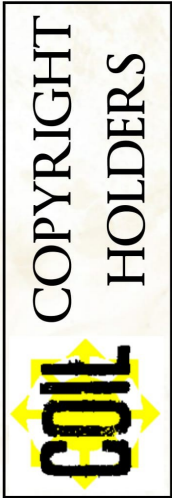


Thighpaulsandra

Most COIL studio recordings from **1999-2004**, historically credited as member of the band for that period.

Note: Also chief remastering producer for COIL's DAT archive (stretching back to Balance's solo work from 1979 onwards).

ESTATES & SURVIVING MEMBERS



William Breeze

Selected COIL studio recordings from **1997 - 2002**, historically credited as member of the band for certain releases from that period.



PRODUCERS, COLLABORATORS & RECORD LABELS



Danny Hyde

Credited variously as co-writer, remixer or collaborator on many official COIL releases from **1988 - 2010**.



Independent Record Labels

Various record/video labels own the rights to release/distribute certain recorded submissions by the band (submitted during COIL's lifetime and beyond), for example:

ACME/Prescription: *Astral Disaster*

material from/related-to the 1999 release. **Important Records:** US contract to re-press recordings like *Ape of Naples*.



Brainwashed / Threshold Archives

Rights given to Brainwashed by Peter Christopherson during **2008-2010** to produce BATH/TARCH series of COIL releases primarily from DAT's remastered and supplied by TPS/Christopherson.

These production rights passed over to an independent record label in **Dec 2015** for further planned reissues (yet to surface).



Ivan Pavlov

Possibly for stated solo and collaborative recordings on COIL's *ANS* and *ANS*-related material (**2002-2004**).



Ossian Brown

Possible selected COIL studio recordings from **2002-2004**, historically credited as member of the band for certain releases from that period, though possibly under contract as hired studio musician / personnel (rather than 'official' full-time band member).



The Rights Holders of COIL Recordings

(or, "Why We Shouldn't Buy COIL Bootlegs and Learn to Love FLACs")



"Pay your respect for the vultures"

"What a great/terrible vinyl bootleg!"

"I am using COIL music in my college project, is that okay?"

From dodgy vinyl to confused views on what can constitute a post-2010 official COIL release, the heated and thorny issue of COIL copyright keeps coming up under topic after topic of online discussion, and has done so with momentum since November 2010, if not years before that.

After taking stock of publicly-raised COIL copyright issues over the past few years, I wrote a mid-length essay in 2018 all about this frequently-raised COIL subject (from my own limited understanding, based mostly upon private dialogue and some public observations I've made over the past 4 years). The following essay originates from a good place and attempts to clear up some common misunderstandings from a humble fan perspective only.

"Copyright is a legal right created by the law of a country that grants the creator of an original work exclusive rights for its use and distribution. This is usually only for a limited time. The exclusive rights are not absolute but limited by limitations and exceptions to copyright law, including fair use."

Copyright is a form of intellectual property, applicable to certain forms of creative work. Some, but not all jurisdictions require "fixing" copyrighted works in a tangible form. It is often shared among multiple authors, each of whom holds a set of rights to use or license the work, and who are commonly referred to as 'rights holders'."

Over the years I have picked up lots of information through discussions from this group and other platforms about COIL copyright, especially after Sleazy's passing (and Ian Johnstone's passing too).

For the purposes of this article I focus purely on studio recordings. There are, no doubt, slightly different discussions to be made about live COIL recordings, and certainly Jhonn Balance's written words/art - the vast majority of which do not have shared copyright holders in the same way that COIL studio recordings have.

I should clearly state that "COIL copyright" is a vexed topic at the best of times, an anger-driven issue at the worst of times, and this graph and text is just my humble summary from my own particular understanding. I am no legal expert in any way, shape or form and don't have much insider knowledge of the COIL rights situation in general.

This is a topic that comes up time and time again in the COIL Facebook group and it's a topic that is perhaps a moving feast at all times, in that label distribution contracts may well be bespoke, they may or may not be time-limited to a certain degree, people die all the time, and ultimately most of us do not know the originally-worded flexibility of contracts signed by Jhonn, Peter or Ian at any given time (if they were signed at all).

Having said that - and even if my main summary or assumptions are wrong - there is still some clear misunderstandings about COIL copyright that I think are worth mentioning.

Many COIL fans seem to think that no enforceable safeguard of copyright law can be declared on COIL's recorded works since 2010. Why do many of us think that? Well, here's some of the reasons why:

1. Both main COIL members are long deceased. Who is there to contest or enforce copyright issues now, right?
2. Lots of COIL tracks were given away for free during their lifetime anyway ("Song of the Week", in-house leaks of "Backwards", etc.).
3. Since COIL's ending, virtually all but the DAT archives have been widely circulated online with no clear copyright infringement or "cease-and-desist"-type action taken against such uploads (disregarding some possible and historic murmurings from the Some Bizzare label). Indeed, the entire COIL released discography is freely available in sections on Archive.org and has been for a long time. In short, whether by tacit or active consent, COIL filesharing is tolerated by COIL affiliates and ex-bandmembers.
4. During Jhonn and Peter's lifetime, they arguably encouraged fans to share COIL recordings in online forums (from Some Bizzare label releases to live recordings, etc.).

Those are probably the main reasons for many to think COIL's recorded music is not now protected under Copyright Law.

But that isn't true. COIL-related Copyright may not be actively enforced right now (it takes a certain amount of clearly-defined authority and financial backing to both threaten and follow-through with legal proceedings), and the situation is far from simple (just take a look at the attached graph!), but COIL's recorded music DOES fall under copyright law. At least until November 2080 (70 years after Peter's death regarding current UK Copyright Law), when almost all COIL material will likely become Public Domain works and be absorbed fully into the folklore of the land. Or something.

Most of us COIL fans are a moral bunch, yet there are well-known conflicts between us. We decry bootleggers as "vultures", yet many of us happily buy bootleg vinyl COIL releases. We really want official COIL releases sanctioned, yet most of us have shared COIL's digital music files between ourselves for free since the Usenet Newsgroups era from a bygone age.

So, what is the true story about COIL and copyright?

I started this essay with a mention of the following: "*[copyrighted works are] often shared among multiple authors, each of whom holds a set of rights to use or license the work, and who are commonly referred to as 'rights holders'.*"

These mysterious "Rights Holders" exist for COIL, and they DO release COIL recordings in a physical format to this day (as they should) - even if the original FLACS are widely available online:

- * Drew remasters, re-releases (with DAIS Records) and tours "Time Machines" as he's a 'rights holder', as co-writer.
- * Danny releases "Backwards" as he's a 'rights holder' as historically stated co-writer for those tracks, likewise with assorted COIL studio mixes.
- * Ian Johnstone and Sleazy granted rights to other labels to release COIL works after Jhonn died, like Jhonn and Peter had done before, and those contracts still exist to this day too - even for minor tracks such as the fairly recent release of 'The Green Child (CSO Reconstruction Kit Version)' on a retail compilation, the track itself falling under a Creative Commons License too.

All of this and not a sniff of a vulture. Why? Because they are all COIL rights holders in their own way.

You see, there *can* still technically be official COIL releases (and there already has been official COIL releases over the past 2 years), if the existing rights holders are involved. In the exact same way that there can still be official Prince or David Bowie releases. Here's an example:

A. RCA Records releases "Blackstar Appendix" in 2019 - a collection of unheard Bowie tracks from the Blackstar Sessions with co-writers involved and royalties shared from profits made.

B. 'Jimmy the Swindle' from your town's fleamarket does a bootleg cassette with facsimile sleeve of leaked Bowie songs from that release.

Bowie is dead. Which of the above is an official release from those rights holders in charge of Bowie's legacy? If you say both releases are equally valid as unofficial releases that's your opinion, but only release 'A' funds those that helped create the original release in the first place (financially, creatively or Estate-wise). Jimmy the Swindle is only lining his own pockets, and with a likely inferior product in every way.

So, in that way at the very least, I refer to "official" as being those releases that involve and/or pay the surviving creators and estates. Of course, it is an opinion that is contested, even by the creator of the sanctioned-by-Peter TARCH series.

Brainwashed/Jon Whitney [October 14th 2015]:

"Sleazy sought my help beginning in 2006 arranging archival reissues and we formulated an agreement between Brainwashed Archives/Threshold House," he writes. "Peter and I spent time together in 2008 when he stayed a week during the Brainwaves festival and deals were signed. Following Peter's death, this project was encouraged, supported, and contributed to by both Drew and Thighpaulsanda, other guests and friends, and has received the full endorsement of Geff's [John Balance] surviving family, who has stated: 'do as you see fit, it makes sense for the quality to be out there'.

"...I hereby state that profits will be shared with all band members involved, even those who are opposed to these CDs being released, as well as surviving family. Without Balance and Sleaz, there is no official Coil release nor will there ever be again. Nothing that bears the word 'Coil' is authorized, official, or sanctioned by Coil as Coil has ceased to exist."

The graph I have made and placed at the start of this essay outlines the four existing members of COIL that can *theoretically* release COIL-related works, or who are otherwise most probably able to receive royalties from their era-related COIL releases as "rights holder" for particular items (as international Copyright Law is understood in this case). It also outlines the two Estates of the Deceased.

Of course, the nitty-gritty of other people's Wills are none of our business, and Jhonn and Peter's Wills/testaments/wishes are certainly none of MY business, but let us briefly explore them to further our understanding of COIL copyright issues and where associated royalties can go.

1. The Jhonn Balance Estate

As understood as being "next-of-kin" at the time (2004), Jhonn's partner Ian Johnstone reportedly inherited Jhonn Balance's active share of COIL rights after Jhonn's death. This fact is public knowledge. However, as mentioned in Cosey Fanni Tutti's autobiography 'Art Sex Music' (Faber & Faber, 2017), there are grey areas and odd ambiguities to be found even here. In this instance some key reasons for ambiguity causing problems or queries in the executing or fulfilment of someone's Will can include (I'm not claiming that this is necessarily the case for Jhonn's Estate):

- * Unclear and imprecise wording in the Will leading to possible misunderstanding.
- * Testamentary capacity (does the writer/testator of the Will have the correct understanding to include all the rightful elements made in the said Will?).
- * Lack of valid execution (was the adequately-completed Will seen and co-signed by two witnesses? etc.).
- * Lack of knowledge and approval (was the Will clearly written solely by the testator, or with outside input?).
- * Undue influence (could it be argued that the person was likely intoxicated during the construction of the Will).

Jhonn's surviving family are (or in all cases *should be*) a key beneficiary of Jhonn's Estate, either during the execution of his Will in 2004/2005, or now at present time (contrary to COIL fan understanding Jhonn was not estranged from his family in any categorical or wide-reaching way towards the end of his life). If the family are not estranged, there are grounds to contest any Will on multiple issues, certainly now with the passing of Ian Johnstone too.

Regardless, it probably leaves the Jhonn Balance Estate currently split into two major factions as stated on the graph:

1. Jhonn's surviving family.
2. Johnstone's own Estate Inheritor, whoever that may be (as executor-by-default of Jhonn's Estate, with associated executor privileges).

2. The Peter Christopherson Estate

Peter's mother, Lady Frances Edith Tearle Christopherson, died in 1988 and his father Sir Derman Guy Christopherson OBE FRS FREng (the famous engineering science academic, Master of Magdelene College - and lubrication research expert) died in 2000. Both of Peter's parents are buried in the Ascension Parish Burial Ground, 8 All Souls Lane, Cambridge CB3 0EA. Although the Christopherson family had four children, I have only noted a few online mentions over the years of Peter's surviving sister as current beneficiary (not executor) of the Estate so, based upon this vague understanding/assumption, I have her in mind when I refer to his "next-of-kin" in my graph on page 131. Danny Hyde mentioned in a *Compulsion Online* interview a couple of years ago that Jordi Devas (Bangkok-based videographer and fashion-shoot production manager) is the actual executor of Peter's Estate and who actively represents Peter's interests on behalf of the Estate's beneficiaries.

Potential 'rights holder' issues arising with regards to Peter's Estate could include:

- * There may not be any clear notes as to what Peter's specific wishes were regarding a will, so decisions could be theoretically contested at all times in the future.
- * The sheer volume, variety and scope of Peter's multimedia creative assets spanning five decades could make any path to clearly defined Estate/Beneficiaries very complex (*if* any clear, competent form of Will or written wishes was ever conceived by Peter). Even certain COIL-related recordings could, in one view, be possibly seen as his solo works under the nomenclature of COIL, for example (though highly unlikely to be contested as such).

The Future of COIL Copyright

Well, most importantly as COIL fans, we're all still waiting for the rest of the proposed TARCH COIL re-release schedule of 30 COIL titles from that elusive independent record company first mentioned over 2 years ago. Note: This series was formally known by the acronym BATH (Brainwashed Archives/Threshold House), then moved on to the more universal TARCH (Threshold Archives).

From my perspective, I'd perversely love to see such permanent COIL releases in the A-Z racks at HMV stuffed violently between Leonard Cohen and Coldplay, a raft of new and inspiring reviews and articles in music magazines about the discography, and a whole new generation of music lovers getting easier - and guilt-free (if that's a 'thing' any more) - access to the COIL discography, the classic sleeve artwork now more widespread and "tangible" and royalties paid to the families/ex-members - many of whom may need all the financial support they can get (being subversive is not often lucrative).

I see no reason why we couldn't possibly see an established record label like MUTE (just for instance) buy out or support many of the existing rights holders one day in the future after eventually acquiring the TARCH series (or similar archive release) and take on the COIL legacy in totality, with a clear extensive re-release plan. If *Swans* can get a boxset sitting in my backwater rural HMV store, then I'll be damned if COIL can't. Of course, we may see an end to the proliferation of COIL MP3s/FLACs if that happened, with the diligent copyright protection an established label must enforce to protect its assets. However, if forced, I'd swap digital files on my hard-drive for a physical release any day (and I'm not exclusively talking about vinyl here - the only turntable I have at home is permanently used by my Dreamachine anyway).

As mentioned above, there are other COIL releases that were sanctioned/agreed by Jhonn/Peter (or Estates thereof) to appear on other record labels in a variety of different ways too, both during the key creators' lifetimes and posthumously. Every year we still see such re-releases produced. And these releases are far from being bootlegs either.

I am certainly not speaking from any righteous point of view at all and I am not vehemently condemning people who buy bootleg vinyl. I completely understand why people buy those items, the void of many official releases in this current time pushing some music fans in that direction and, yes, if I saw a replica of "Scatology" or "Horse Rotorvator" on mint vinyl with all printed inserts and superb quality artwork going for £15 then I'd probably buy one too (not for playing though). It is just that none of the surviving creators or creator families are benefitting from these at all. And that is a massive shame. It's simply not right. It adds salt to the wounds when the bootleg editions are of severely substandard quality 99% of the time too.

I don't foresee any future record label deals wiping out our past or current creative COIL projects under the guise of Copyright Law infringement though. If you look at other dead-band fan communities, such as those for The Chameleons or Stina Nordenstam, our motley crew of creatives far outshines such a fanbase (with all due respect to them) in keeping a band legacy colourfully alive. Only a suicidal record label would undermine all that fan-based creativity by vehemently rewriting our history of COIL copyright understanding.

In Summary

So, where are we? Ah yes. We've briefly identified COIL rights holders (both creative and record label types) and we've generally identified the Estates of the Deceased (at least, to the best of my humble knowledge anyway).

It is this key selection of people (2 x estates, 4 x surviving COIL members/writers, assorted copyright-holding record labels and distributors) that should directly

benefit from all COIL studio releases in both royalties and relevant rights holder credits, as far as existing evidence suggests to me. Granted, it could well be a headache in allocating proportions of royalties to several individuals in the correct manner. That doesn't mean it shouldn't be done.

It is this key selection of people and organisations who are *not* vultures.

It is this key selection of people that (by tacit or active consent) kindly allow you to download and collect COIL FLAC/MP3 files for free and generously allow us to use such copyrighted material in our creative projects in a mostly-assumed Creative Commons (or, generally, an uncontested 'Copyleft') approach to the whole COIL discography, at least at this current time.

It is this key selection of people that do *not* benefit from COIL fans buying bootleg vinyl.

It is this key selection of people that *should* be financially supported in every relevant way possible from physical COIL releases in the future. It is great if a record label donates fees to a charity assumed to have been supported by Jhonn or Peter, but the people on the graph I created, if relevant to the particular COIL music release, should be supported first and foremost.

Without these copyright holders the legendary COIL recordings wouldn't exist, at least not in the way that they do. Let us make sure we thank them appropriately with our future COIL purchases (not bootlegs), albeit when they actually happen.

And let us not mistake who the vultures actually are. And who are not.

Bloodline of the Masters

(an Appendix to 'The Rights Holders of COIL Recordings' Essay)

As the COIL studio album/single re-releases become increasingly fractured, with master files originating from very different sources, I have attempted to note the current bloodline/trail of original file releases, identifying where things may or may not overlap with other people's assets.

Remastered COIL Master Files for Release

1. DAIS - Drew McDowall's Archive - remastering by Josh Bonati from 2017.

Drew McDowall's original COIL files. Whether these were from Peter (I know Drew received Peter's FLACs as remastered by TPS back in 2010, as he was in-the-loop regarding the original BATH/TARCH releases) or from his own archives, were taken by him for a new remastering process by Josh Bonati, resulting in the past three recent releases. I don't think any member of the public has anything else for unauthorised leaking from Drew's set of newly remastered files.

2. HYDE - Danny Hyde's Archive - remastering by Gregg Hermetech from 2015 and Martin Bowes from 2018.

The TARCH releases never planned to include (or indeed ever make any mention) of the studio tracks that Danny Hyde has since released from his own archives, for Hyde's "Backwards" release downloadable bonus tracks nor the extra track from his Infinite Fog version of the BLD remaster ("Scattered Cross"). It can be assumed there are more COIL studio tracks either existing in part or in remixed form in Hyde's possession during his engineering and writing work for COIL. Danny's original COIL files - whether these were in-part from Peter's FLACs or from his own writer-producer archives, were taken by him for a new remastering process by Gregg Hermetech and Martin Bowes, resulting in the past few recent releases. I don't think any member of the public has anything else for leaking from Danny's set of newly remastered files. However, a fair few years ago a small amount of friends/collaborators of Hyde had received parts, loops and treatments from the COIL era for possible third-party work on future *Electric Sewer Age* releases.

3. BATH - Peter Christopherson's Archive - remastering by Thighpaulsandra 2009-2010.

The BATH/TARCH release schedule from 2010 was based around the FLACs transferred from COIL's personal DAT collection sent to Jon Whitney from TPS/Peter. Drew received a copy of these, as I assume Danny Hyde did too. Others within the old COIL circle of friends and collectors have at least some of this material, as the leaks given to me for the recent LCA projects were from this specific trail of files only.

4. REEL - COIL Studio Archive - for sale from 2014.

A few years ago Thighpaulsandra began selling several of the old COIL studio reels and some cassettes online that had been in his possession after the main transferral and remastering process for Peter/BATH leading up to 2010. This could mean that multi-tracks from those classic album reels could technically be available to the public one day, if any of the private buyers transfer them.

5. IMPREC - Archived Masters in Record Company Possession.

There are record companies still releasing originally mastered COIL albums under contract, such as Important Records. I assume that these versions of COIL releases are now widely shared as lossless/FLACs online.

Personal Archives of COIL Members

Thighpaulsandra. Stephen Thrower. William Breeze.

Like the above-mentioned archives, it is reasonable to assume the three members named above have unreleased COIL rarities in their possession that may possibly be different from, or extend beyond the time period covered by, the other DAT-FLAC Collections and associated BATH/TARCH release plan.

For example, they *could* have the following titles that BATH/TARCH may not have had in its cumulative archive to release themselves:

Thighpaulsandra - "Queen of the Circulating Library II" and other mixes. Note: He obviously has a copy of everything sent to Brainwashed.

Stephen Thrower - Unknown archives, possibly alt demos and studio jams on cassette.

William Breeze - Out-takes or early versions of his contributions from the "Music To Play In The Dark" era and beyond.

Collaborators With Possible Unreleased Material

Tom Craig - It is reasonable to assume that he has a cassette copy of the mysterious un-released Stabmental album titled "Hidden Fears" (1979).

John Gosling - I think he has released everything Balance-related that he has in his possession on the recent extensive Zos Kia releases, though I could be wrong.

Robin Rimbaud - I believe he has now uploaded everything online that he received from his personal COIL correspondence over the years.

Drew Mullholland - His once-proposed "A Spectre Over Albion" album (as Mount Vernon Arts Lab?) would have featured his treated experiments with previously-unheard COIL drones he was sent many years ago by Jhonn Balance, soon after Drew's set at the Megalithomania! gig impressed the band.

The Brainwashed COIL Miscellany Archive

I have become aware that transfers exist of older COIL/Balance cassettes - with more demos, found sound experiments and tape compilations transferred (and most probably still in the possession of Brainwashed) when the main files were sent to the USA by Peter/TPS in 2010. Most notably, these include Balance's early, pre-sleazy dark ambient experiments. It can be reasonably assumed that lots of this material was considered unsellable at the time, as directed by Sleazy's letter to Brainwashed in 2010: *"Free downloads are also anticipated"*.

Lost or Missing Tracks

As Peter mentions in his 2010 letter to Brainwashed accompanying the DAT AIF files (sent separately), he could not locate the masters for COIL's "Restitution of Decayed Intelligence" EP, so Thighpaulsandra's personal acetate was used for the transfer recordings. If the entire "Restitution of Decayed Intelligence" session was lost by Peter then it stands to reason that alternative mixes and other tracks from that era and years prior could not be located in those last few years of Peter's life too, so there may well be more unheard COIL out there in the ether, floating around from Thailand to Weston-super-Mare, from Chiswick to TPS's home archives in Wales. Perhaps copies of unheard/unseen COIL rarities sit *right now* in stacked boxes at Peter's Will Executor Jordi Devas's offices on Beverley Court in Middlesex. Who knows?

The author and poet Jeremy Reed, friend to Balance throughout his later life, notes in his "Altered Balance" book that he took several carrier bags of COIL tapes/CDs from Jhonn's personal home archive away for his own listening. It is entirely possible that those bags may have contained at least some unreleased COIL tracks or alternative versions of released tracks.

It is also tempting to ponder that other studio engineers/producers may have unreleased COIL material in their possession to this day too, such as JG Thirlwell (Foetus).



Final Thought

A band's total absence from record chainstore shelves can, I suppose, add a certain 'underground mystique' to them. However, having a COIL album sit amongst releases on sale by other well-established artists in your own provincial Godforsaken town store has a certain peculiar feeling of cultural 'justice' about it that MP3s cannot provide. Maybe I am wrong.

COIL were/are, after all, a major influential band that deserves the equal opportunity to ensnare casual buyers of music. To have their CDs act as a gateway drug to every other intoxicating item for trade on the street corners of the Black Light District that Jhonn and Peter hold posthumous mayorship over.

I deliberately walk past this wide-eyed resident of that shady COILian district most lunchtimes. Like I am somehow "checking in" with the yellow fellow, nodding in solidarity to a troubled old friend in a crowded room of boisterous strangers there on the racks.

For this reason, and many other such vague and rambling ones, I hope that COIL's entire back catalogue finds a comfortable and permanent home under one major independent record label in my lifetime. As Erasure might sing: "MUTE - do you hear us call-innnng?"

I also perversely enjoy COIL's close proximity in the CD racks to Phil f-ing Collins too. Collins' round face on the cover of "No Jacket Required" looks even more perturbed since COIL turned up on the shelves rubbing shoulders with him once again.

APPENDICES

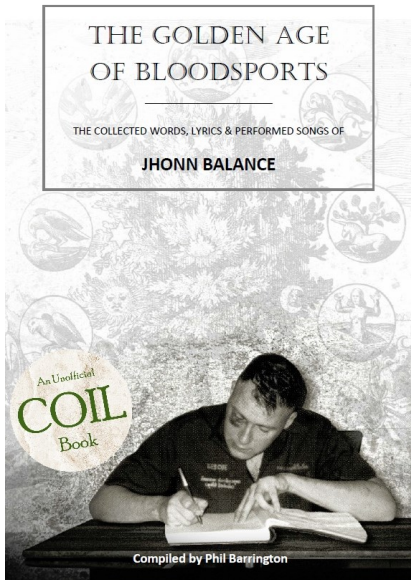


An Illustrated Guide to My COIL Projects



Not to eagerly want to pull my own plum but, in an effort to finally put everything I've ever created for the COILsphere together in one place (though in no particular order), the next few pages set out almost all the COIL projects I've done, either on an evening's whim or over a period of time.

The COIL Books



"The Golden Age of Bloodsports"

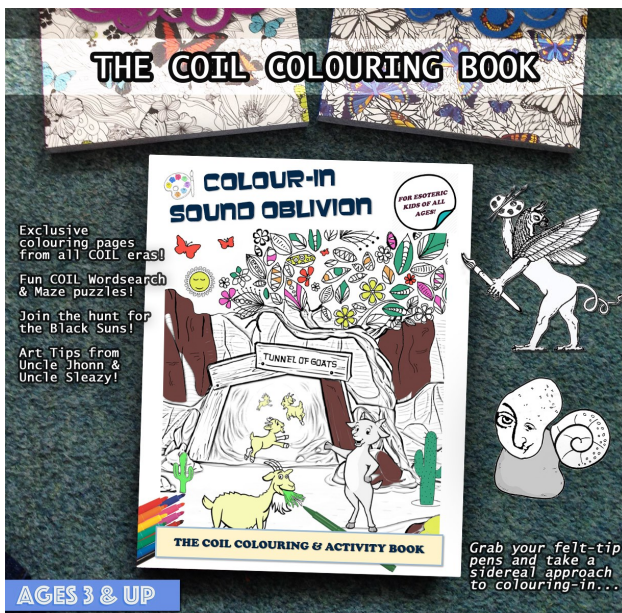
The 4th Edition of the collected words of Jhonn Balance is always available for free download. The last updates (Nov 2017) for this 367-page edition included new song lyric pages:

- * Disabled Landscapes.
- * (I Can't Get a Word in) Edgeways [Compiled Version].
- * Broccoli [Melkweg Version].
- * Tiny Birds (Burn in the Eye of the Sun).
- * Meet Murder My Angel.
- * Sodoma Atomicus (with postscript linking to Lautréamont's "Les Chants de Maldoror").

New Balance-penned feature pages:

- * "Musick To Play In The Dark; Track-by-Track" by Jhonn Balance (unused liner notes - with newly-sourced illustrations for this book).
- * "Palenque; A Letter" by Jhonn Balance (article - with newly-sourced illustrations for this book).

[Download link](#)



"Colour-in Sound Oblivion"

Want to introduce any children in your family to the fun world of COIL at an early age?

This is the COIL Colouring Book For Esoteric Kids!

- * Exclusive colouring pages from every COIL era!
- * Fun COIL Wordsearch & Maze puzzles!
- * Join the hunt for the Black Suns!
- * Art Tips from Uncle Jhonn & Uncle Sleazy!

Grab your felt-tip pens and take a side-real approach to colouring-in...

[Download link](#)

The COIL Films



Bacon Meets Burroughs (Compiled & Coiled Edit)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2HZPvg671R0>

COIL - Tainted Love (Remastered A/V)

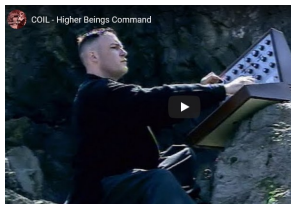
(background details from page 11)

https://youtu.be/z_8HZC_JKk0

COIL ~ Untitled3

(My 'Wormsongs' Promo video)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8A1xisZosHw>



COIL's 'Journey to Avebury' [Remastered]

[My unofficial fan version containing the COIL Soundtrack]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Eo7Rmu3woNk>

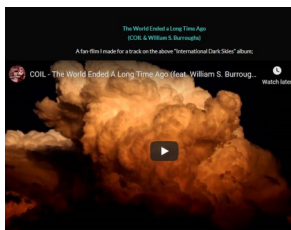
2 x 'Remastered' COIL versions of Derek Jarman's short film downloadable here (background details from page 77):

<https://archive.org/details/AJourneyToAveburyRemastered>

COIL - Higher Beings Command

(background details from page 56)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DThSu6ou_xQ



Trailer for the Live COIL Archive website

(shows some of the work I did to remaster COIL photographs)

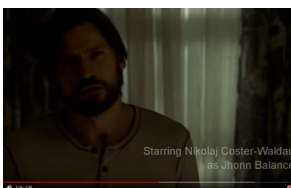
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=66TT1x194iM>

COIL - For the Departed (In Memoriam)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sBUJPbX1oMI>

Unboxing the 2016 hardback 'The Golden Age of Bloodsports' Book

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IMnjsHl5ZF0>



COIL - The World Ended A Long Time Ago (feat. William Burroughs)

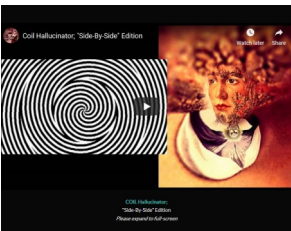
(my promo for my 'International Dark Skies' fan project)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CINMNKQJrk>

An Oliver Stone film about COIL: 'unBALANCED'

(My April Fools satirical poke at Hollywood endlessly romanticising addiction)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F3cVgzUG3Ds>



COIL Hallucinator: 'Black Light District' Edition

(Do you love COIL and hate drugs, but feel you're missing out?

Watch my Hallucinators and grab a drug-free acid-like COIL trip)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZZrBzho6cSM>

COIL Hallucinator: 'Stolen and Contaminated' Edition

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nnl1_EOFhX4

COIL Hallucinator: 'Discog' Edition

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KlsGEesJCLw>

COIL Hallucinator: 'Side-By-Side' Edition

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AP7fMVEqc30>

The COIL Music



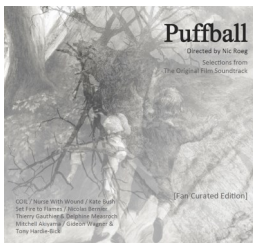
International Dark Skies by COIL (A Fan Creation)

My unauthorised fan creation, including mixed and edited sounds from COIL (some very rare COIL music too) with some use of stock and found sounds to create a cohesive concept album experience in place of the COIL project that never was.

https://archive.org/details/International_Dark_Skies_COIL

My 40-page booklet pdf found here, if you wish to review the contents before delving in:

https://archive.org/download/International_Dark_Skies_COIL/CD_Booklet.pdf



Rasputin: The Devil in the Flesh (2002) Audiobook

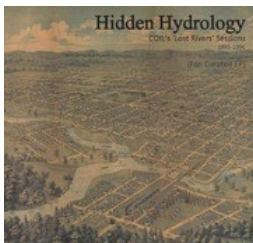
Full COIL Soundtrack Audiobook - Twisted Mystic Edition - my fan creation from original audio source, plus booklet and my own audiobook wraparound vocal tracks and extras.

https://archive.org/details/Coil_Rasputin

Puffball: Selections from The Original Unreleased Soundtrack

Maybe the greatest mainstream film COIL soundtrack that was never released? Until now. My unofficial curation plus a pdf booklet. Even I listen to this a lot to this day, as I think it all fitted well in the end.

https://archive.org/details/puffball_COIL



An Archiver.org user's posted review of my Puffball soundtrack from December 2017:

"music to listen to in the dark...Deep and dreamlike, bitter sweet, Coil tracks, menacing, hypnagogic, somn ambulence, synth wave forms, luxurious, where's that joint?"

Hidden Hydrology - COIL's 'Lost Rivers' Studio Sessions 1995-1996

A free fan-sourced EP release of COIL's 'Lost Rivers' sessions plus my 18-page 'CD booklet' pdf with liner notes of the 'Lost Rivers' studio sessions. This EP celebrates COIL's Lost Rivers tracks as well as lauding the original Crackanthorpe source texts.

https://archive.org/details/Hidden_Hydrology

COIL TARCH CD inserts

The 2015 re-release of the COIL singles and soundtrack did not have any printed booklets or track-listings at all so, over one hazy night, I made some CD inserts for that collection. Not ground-breaking, but practical, for those wanting to print these off.

http://www.barringtonarts.com/Coil_CD_Inserts.rar



TARCH CD Tracklist Inserts

The COIL Music

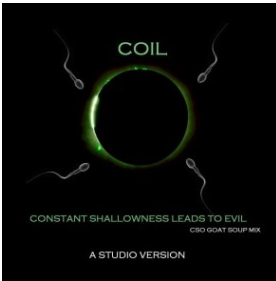


COIL ~ WORMSONGS (An Unauthorised Collection)

A collection of mostly previously-unreleased studio tracks, soundscapes and experiments by COIL. I've curated this set for the COIL fan who appreciates the band's more experimental side and who is interested in researching the ELPH period and beyond. Plus a pdf booklet and bonus "overlay" tracks of COIL sounds. I had originally planned to offer via mail order 23 copies of an empty dual-CD card booklet in a card box with woodprint artwork (and a North Tower stone inside) to house both of these Wormsongs CD-Rs in, but I ultimately felt it would work out too expensive for fans to buy.

More importantly, I felt I was pushing my own artistic interpretation into Jhonn's intellectual property too much, which seemed a bad move. I did get to the point of grabbing one of my large North Tower stones and pulverising it into 23 pieces with an axe-head in the road at the end of my drive late one night before I realised I was going a bit too far with the fan project.

<https://archive.org/details/Wormsongs>



Constant Shallowness Leads to Evil (CSO Goat Soup Mix)

It's a rough and ready mix done in one night whilst not in the most *straight* of mindsets but, to this day, it's something I listen to so it can't be that bad.

<https://bit.ly/2FDnXKJ>



Scatology Sessions

This project is all by Kiefer Gorena, though I did the booklet design and contributed an overlay track of one minute of COIL's "Absolute Elsewhere" (a Goat Soup Mix). Heavily bootlegged since, I believe.

<https://bit.ly/2R0JAWB>

COIL ~ Contaminated Apples: 1986-1991

Again, this project is by Kiefer Gorena, though I did the booklet and design for it.

https://archive.org/details/COIL_ContaminatedApples_Appendices



An overview of lots of my COIL projects can be found here:

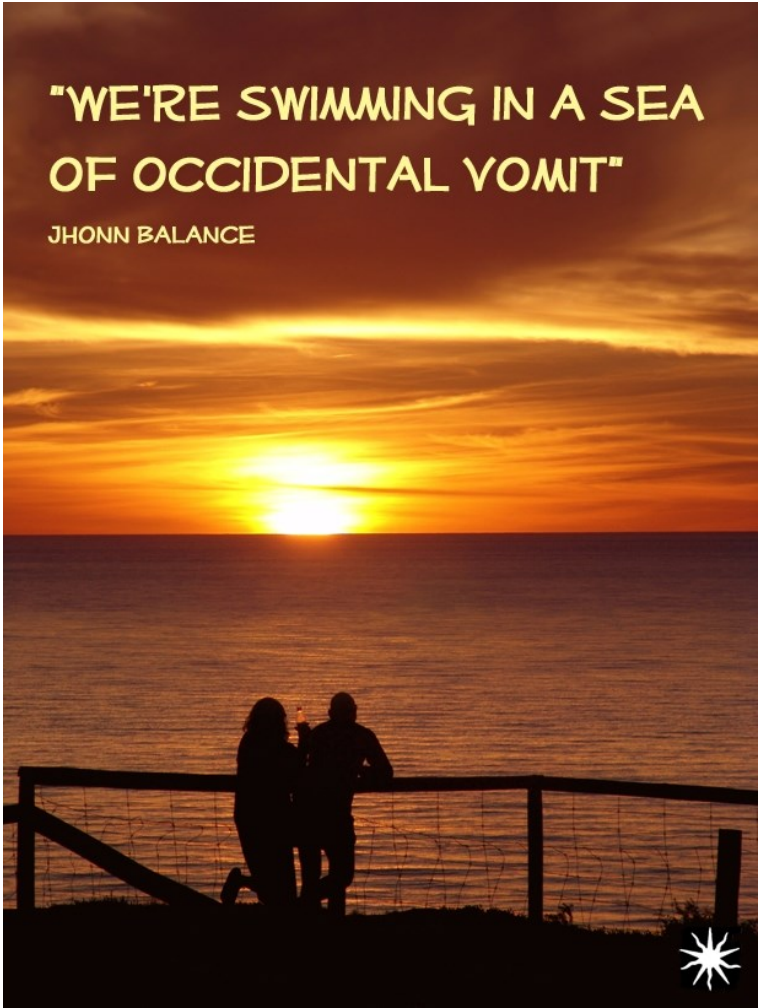
<http://www.barringtonarts.com/other-projects/>

COIL Humour: The COIL Anti-Positivity Memes

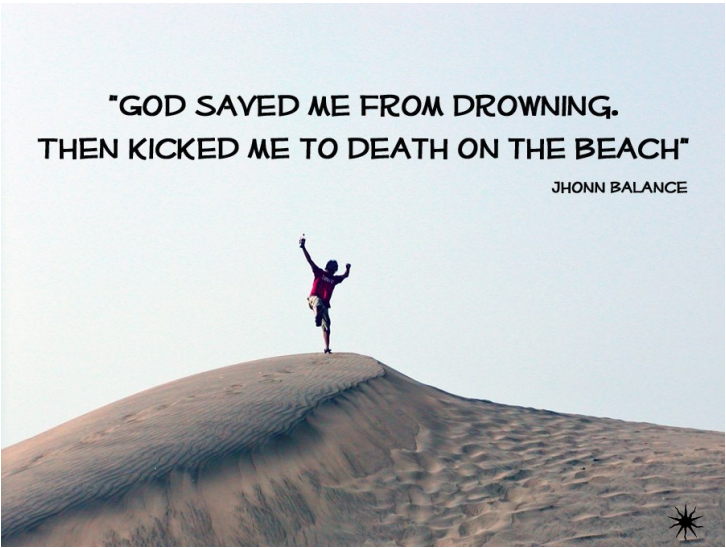


[Bad fonts, bad imagery and bad slogans. Yes, it must be *COIL Anti-Positivity Memes*.]

COIL Humour: The COIL Anti-Positivity Memes



COIL Humour: The COIL Anti-Positivity Memes



COIL Humour: Easter Greetings



COIL Humour: Easter Greetings



/// Theobromine-C7-H8-N4-O2: (Chocolate) ///

Previous page:

/// Remote Hopping /// [top]

/// Die Kaninchen Kommen Zurück /// [bottom]



"The Solar Podge" (Homer joins a new sun-worshipping faction of the Stonecutters led by a mysterious cult leader named Genesis P-omegranate).

"I Used to Believe in Mirrorballs" (Disco Stu gets disillusioned with the US strain of EDM dance and leaves Springfield to become a young buck around London's dark retro-club scene - guest starring Marc Almond).

"The Banal Staircase" (where the ever-condemning Comic Book Guy gets so obese he cannot use the stairs).

"Slideshow Bob" (the manic clown experiences a Jarman-esque retro-filmmaker re-birth and makes artistic backdrops for a spooky neofolk band - guest starring David Tibet as Bob's English cousin, Noddy The Clown).

"The Nuclear Worker's Birthday Party" (It's Homer's 40th birthday party at the Power Plant and a bemused Lenny and Carl tape him to a toilet basin, where the humiliating celebrations truly begin...)

COIL Humour: The Colour Sound Poplivion Collection

www.barringtonarts.com

Collect COIL
on Vinyl now!

Purchase vinyl figures from COIL's
"Time Machines from the Heart of Darkness" era
from your local Funko retailer today*

*strictly Limited Edition of 23

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TO COLLECT -
JOHN "DRESS" (#23)
PETER "COHEN" (#33)
OSRIAN "TIME MACHINES" (#43)
THIGHFAULANDRA "TIME MACHINES" (#63)
JOHN "TIME MACHINES" (#63)
PETER "TIME MACHINES" (#73)
PETER "KATAMITI" (#93)
JOHN "ROBBI" (#93)

206 KEYCHAIN JOHN (#K103)

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COIL VINYL COLLECTION TODAY!

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COIL
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POP! HEROES the COIL Collection 23
JOHN "DRESS"
FIGURE / FIGURINE EN VINYLE /
FIGURA DE VINILO

POP! HEROES the COIL Collection 33
PETER "COHEN"
FIGURE / FIGURINE EN VINYLE /
FIGURA DE VINILO

["Don't be an unhappy bunny - why not relive those classic live COIL moments again with these new COIL figures from FUNKO, and find out if Leonard Cohen was right after all..."]

COIL Humour: The Colour Sound Poplivion Collection

WALK THE SHORES OF WESTON-SUPER-MARE
WITH FUNKO'S LATEST FIGURE -
THE ROBED JHONN BALANCE!

POP! VINYL

the **Coil** Collection 93

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JHONN "ROBE"

FIGURE / FIGURINE EN VINYLE / FIGURA DE VINILO

AGE 14+

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POCKET POP! KEYCHAIN

THE **Coil** COLLECTION

Colour Sound Poplivion!

POP! HEROES

Buy an official Jhonn Balance Keychain from your Funko stockist now

Without one, who knows where your key will end up?
(because the key to toys is disobedience)

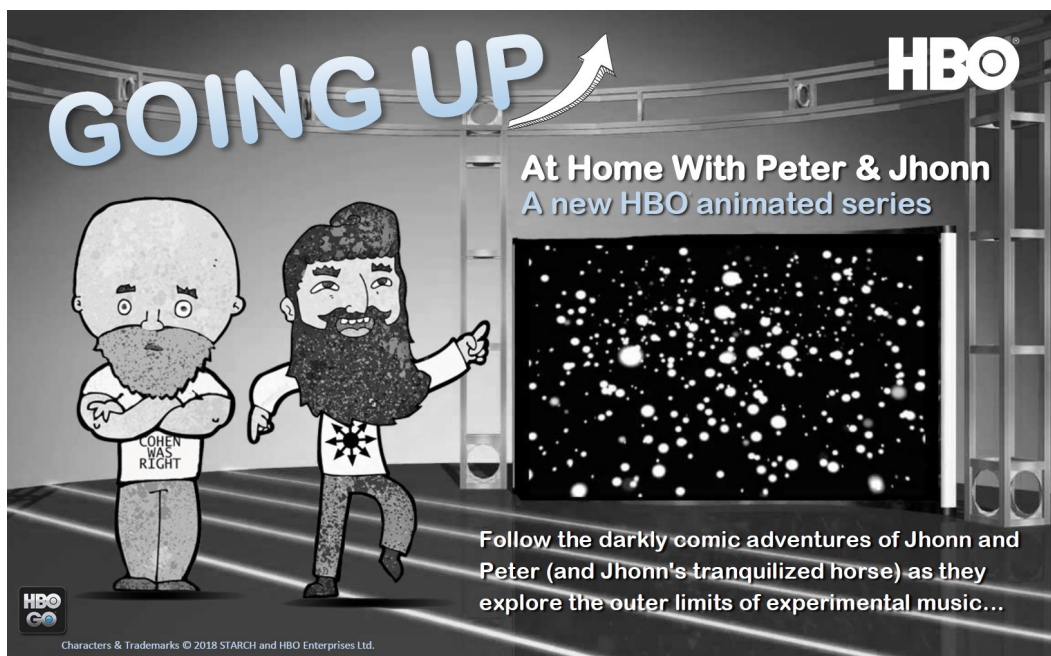
ITEM #232323

Funko

WARNING! Choking hazard. May contain small parts.

["The only COIL vinyl that won't break the bank (you won't find these on Discogs).
Check with your FUNKO POP! retailer today and pop a toy in your suitcase..."]

COIL Humour: The Animated Sitcom



A new HBO animated series. Follow the darkly comic adventures of Jhonn and Peter (and Jhonn's tranquilized horse) as they explore the dizzy heights of experimental music at home and around the world.

Series One - Starts 23rd October 2019 9.30PM

- S01E01 - "**Ubu Now**" - P&J form a live touring band for the first time in nearly 2 decades...
- S01E02 - "**The Ape**" - P&J venture to Naples to seek out the elusive religious simian for wisdom and band guidance.
- S01E03 - "**Mud From The Air**" - P&J attend an open-air European Music Festival with the newly-formed live band.
- S01E04 - "**Horse Code**" - Jhonn finds an unconscious horse in his chalet and a slapstick chain of events leads to hilarious misunderstandings.
- S01E05 - "**COIL Resents...**" - Far from *Going Up*, the band hits new lows as their old tour van enters the shady Black Light District.
- S01E06 - "**Uncle Sam vs. Uncle Sleazy**" - Bandmates Thigh, Paul and Sandra persuade P&J to perform in New York.
- S01E07 - "**Sidereality TV**" - To help fund the new tour P&J pitch a reality tv programme idea to snooty New York TV execs.
- S01E08 - "**Weston's Super Mare**" - Now back in the UK, Jhonn's pet horse begins a stable relationship with a beautiful mare.
- S01E09 - "**Manga Manga**" - In a Japanese Anime-style episode, the band takes a trip to Tokyo for a possible reunion with philosopher Genesis P Okonomiyaki.
- S01E10 - "**Toilet Humor**" - Peter visits a Sewage Plant expecting good quality restroom facilities. He is sorely disappointed. Or is he?
- S01E11 - "**Hammer Fist Deceiver**" - Tour fatigue sets-in as P&J jointly hallucinate a violent mushroom-man (who is prone to giving black eyes). *Not a funghi to be around.*
- S01E12 - "**Going DEAF**" - The band attend a Dublin Music Festival after a stop-off visit to the mysterious irish land of Cooloora.

Methodology and Citation for COIL Fan Projects

I. Methodology

When it comes to more *serious* COIL fan projects I constantly ask myself the following question: *"Does it satisfy (and hopefully exceed) all expectations without anyone else needing to redo this project again any time soon?"*

My own self-imposed rules for all serious COIL projects are:

- Is the project needed in some way, or is it just a vanity project?
- What are the highest expectations from anyone downloading the finished project?
- How can I beat those expectations and make something as special and as deluxe as possible given my own limitations?

(if the project is going to add to the COIL legacy and hang around until after we're dead, I'd like to leave something that compliments that legacy with as much thought, respect and passion as is possible at the time).

One way in which someone can create fan projects based on a creative's Intellectual Property and stop the associated community rejecting them out of the ballpark is to add as many credits to other people and sources as is possible. As I never consult anyone before I release all the projects I do, I sometimes get that wrong or just don't know the sources but, as long as anyone can see one's heart is in the right place in attempting to seriously credit others whilst "doing it for COIL", any mistakes made in the moment can be lived with by people. Having said that, it is always best to over-credit than under-credit anyone involved in the original source material.

I don't read comments made about my own projects very often because once the releases are out there, they should either stand up or fall down and be forgotten by themselves. I am *really* glad that some people like some of my humble projects, but I don't think we do these things for kudos or respect from music fans, we do these things to add to the COIL bank and hopefully connect unwitting people in the future to the big inspiration that is the COILsphere: to increase the scope of the grip on people by the tentacles from that Threshold House logo.

I also give as much information on a fan release as is feasible and give good thought to the visual aspects of the release too: *"Could a good booklet of information be done to inform future listeners as to why someone spent so much time on making it - and why it needs to exist at all?"*

There is at least one real and ever-present tension though: I know there is already a FLAC dump on archive.org of all the COIL releases (which the COIL community seems to accept), but to make something unique out of some parts of the remaining unheard archive (for free) without jeopardising future releases that ex-band members and family members can get some income from is indeed a true balancing act. An act that brings understandable opposition. Having said that, this will almost always be the case when a fan handles the intellectual property of any creative - especially a creative who died in their lifetime.

II. Citations for Non-Profit Fan-Based COIL Projects

To jump right into this, I have to say right off the bat that I am no legal expert or knowledgeable in any real legal matters at all. So there you go. That's the disclaimer. I have to also state that, In all cases, the citations/credits given depends on the COIL material used.

Generally speaking there's three types of COIL music to cite in different ways when it comes to usage in *non-profit* fan projects.

1. Using Creative Commons COIL material

For any audio/visual material used from the 'Colour Sound Oblivion' COIL Reconstruction Kit, you could not go wrong by stating the following style in your credits:

"Lake View" by COIL is licensed under CC BY 2.0

This is according to general guidelines on the Creative Commons site [found here](#).

Itself linking to: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0>

I have used a more relaxed version of the above "ideal way" in my past fan projects that feature such CC COIL audio, which the criteria in the above website deems as "pretty good".

I am unaware of any attempt by anyone *COIL-official* to rescind that CC license from the CSO kit and I'm not sure how effective that would be anyway, given the ingrained nature of the material within the COIL community, after being out there for nearly a decade.

2. Using Already Released & Prior-Copyrighted COIL material

Stating specific people's names or Estates of the Deceased as definitive Copyright Holders for the majority of other *already released* COIL material is quite problematic, as I don't think there's a definitive precedent for most COIL releases as a watermark example for that yet, if there ever will be (it's usually Copyright held by the record company for commercial releases anyway). For instance, unless stated on any original music or video release used, no-one would state © Michael Jackson for using any of his famous disco hits as the soundtrack to Youtube videos of their dancing parrot (if any credit at all, before its taken down by the men in grey suits).

No, in most standard cases, it would more likely be the record company of the latest release of the music you're using that you'd need to check with. In Jackson's case, if you were using a track from his last posthumous album, you could state;

"Disco Ex-Parrot" © 2014 Epic Records and MJJ Music, written by Michael Jackson.

Thus, *technically*, if you choose to use the 2017 DAIS remaster of "Time Machines", or a rip from the latest "Ape of Naples" CD release, I would at least argue it would be the record company that you'd first need to approach for Fair Use permission for such a non-profit video project, stating in your case of purpose to them that you would include a credit such as:

"Heaven's Blade" © & ® 2016 Important Records, written by COIL.

That is if, as I say, you were using a rip from their current CD release. They should be assumed to still have copyright over their recent release, no matter how controversial that may seem to some, until stated by themselves or contested otherwise.

That above example is based upon steps stated here:

<https://yourbusiness.azcentral.com/give-credit-copyrighted-song-2974.html>

(some would also argue that the above example should also state "and © 2005 Threshold House", but that COIL company no longer exists in any real actionable sense that I am aware of, so I have not put it in the above example.

Oh, and I assume you are aware of the historic Stevagate Scandal surrounding the early COIL albums. Good luck with that one!

3. Using Previously Unreleased COIL Material

This is where I personally use a more catch-all approach (and, to be fair, not consistently up until recent times) as it is unclear who exactly should have the final word on what to release for *non-profit fan projects* in the first instance, but you want to respect as many COILy people as you can. The brain says don't use previously-unreleased COIL material at all (ie. demos and alternate takes), though the heart can say otherwise, for various creative or legacy reasons. As mine often does. It's a risk that many of us tiptoe around, waiting for the hangman, though the somewhat ambiguous and not-entirely litigious COILsphere has allowed the steady flow of online file-trading seemingly without any harm done to physical releases (which never fail to sell well/out, considering), so each case is probably dealt with on its own merits (or, probably, how disrespectful a fan project is perceived to be before it is pulled). After some past research of fair use/fair dealing (the term and principle differs in some countries) and, for want of any 'official' direction, I now use the following citation style on documents for fan projects that may contain some unreleased COIL material:

"Buoy In A Suitcase (Seaside Demo IV)" © 1983 COIL Estates & Existing Rights Holders.

This clearly shows the music copyright is not your own, nor do you infer anywhere that it is, and you acknowledge who else is the holder (though in a catch-all way to include both main estates, ex-members and associates distinctly, as well as the likely year of the original unreleased audio). I also personally cite Fair Use/Fair Dealings in any accompanying text for such unreleased stuff, as my non-profit free projects *reason to exist* is to explore COIL's own historic events for posterity, with accompanying essays/notes and imagery to expand upon this point most of the time.

Regarding Archive.org and online library archiving in general, There are grey areas even here, because the limitations and exceptions to copyright for teaching and library archiving in the U.S. are located in a different section of the statute to Fair Use. Some resources:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Limitations_and_exceptions_to_copyright
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fair_use
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fair_use#United_Kingdom

In Reality

Of course, a million-and-one people use COIL tracks from all 3 of the above types in their Youtube videos all the time with no set citation/style, and most have never got pulled from that platform, though whole early COIL album streams have been pulled from Youtube in recent years. Some bizarre situations out there indeed...

However, if you are wanting to include a previously commercially-released COIL track in any serious studio-edited video production for future legacy (which I never really have done myself), then I'd argue it is always best to err on the side of respect and caution (though "respect" is often a subjective concept) by contacting people/labels as suggested under Type 2 mentioned earlier.

As with all things COIL, everything is peculiar and I may well be wrong about these non-profit useage citations (I am *far* from being a self-appointed expert on anything at all).

As of 2019 I see all COIL material as an ever-growing many-limbed creeping vine plant left to grow wild online by itself since 2010, with vines protuding everywhere on internet platforms and in fan projects, without a clearly appointed gardener there paid to cut it all back down to size. Yet.

Miscellany



THRESHOLD HOUSE

updated 28th May 2004ev - The Day of the Annoucement of Five Dogs

MUSICK FINE ARTS STORES LINKS



[For possible interest to newer fans. After being represented by the brainwashed.com website during the latter half of the 1990s (still the number one place for a one-stop archival COIL resource to this day), the band launched their own personal website for their current endeavours in the early 2000s (and, eventually, a separate [Greedbag web store](#) too). The website, Threshold House (www.thresholdhouse.com), is now long gone though fragments remain (the front page from Spring 2004 seen above). It was a curiously minimalist affair with regards to site design and was not overloaded by the usual inane animated gifs and other bumf (a technical word, trust me) that plagued websites of the time. It simply let the COIL releases speak for themselves. Jhonn did most of the mail order side of the business himself, under the *Rufus Pool* pseudonym.]

Miscellany

THRESHOLD HOUSE

RE: DELAYED MAIL

SPECIAL VAULT SALE

NEW LIVE SHOWS

■ FINE ART

LYNX

The members of Coil have always maintained that the art of living is for life and life is for art. This is how we generate and re-generate. Art does not presume artifice or artifact but a pure unadulterated vision strictly adhered to - in fact there are no other options. We are driven and we are the driver.

Commerce, commodity and commerciality tend to dominate and overpower the true role of the Artist in society. It's a risky business - remaining clear and pure in the eyes of those looking to criticise and accuse those who create and make available their visions - literally 'part and parcel' - Keeping clean in the Sick Machine!

Coil have always tried to make their art and musick generally available - What other people call limited editions we prefer to describe as special editions. It's not just semantics, it's a vital distinction. It's not that were against elitism and information hierarchies, we don't purposefully choose to promote them or live them in practice. For instance we may have 18 copies of a certain record left for sale on our website, but that's because that was what was found in the the box in the basement at this particular time. Editions of our work are limited according to the nature of the recording, our intentions towards that musick and the balance between our expectations and insecurities concerning that musick.

Another consideration is aesthetics vs the dynamic of generating artifacts. It's not a question of how many people should 'get it' - but more one of how many people 'will get it'. When we produce (as we plan to later this year) an edition which consist of a glass vial labelled as containing SILENCE we have to be aware that this will have limited appeal, therefore the edition will be small.

What we are talking about here is degrees of availability, manefestation and solidity. New technologies and information pathways both dictate and inspire new and novel ways of working. For Jhonn the world was horrifically but magically transformed when milkmen began delivering crisps... but we endure, we adapt and we evolve in a desperate but heroic attempt to become spiritually voluptuous.

[*"For Jhonn, the world was horrifically but magically transformed when milkmen began delivering crisps..."*: a page from the old COIL website, 2004.]

Miscellany



COIL - MUSICK TO PLAY IN THE DARK - Vol II - vinyl LPs:

1) On pearl coloured opalescent vinyl this edition features 3 sides of musick and a fourth with laser-etched moon-map vinyl.

Pearl edition - 24 copies - £ 31 each [BUY](#)

2) Green/Blue edition - As above but with ultra limited LIME GREEN and BABY BLUE 2 colour sets, the result of a pressing plant confusion - 4 copies to be had at £93 each [BUY](#)

3) THE TRAUMA EDITION

This edition of 11 copies (lettered A-K) features covers smeared with JOHN BALANCE's own blood during a not so recent psychotic/demonic episode. He smashed his face through a plate glass window. "Those were the days, my friend, I thought they'd never end..." No two are alike and the illustration is an example only.

'Trauma' edition 3 copies only - £223.00 each - after a night of baying for Jhonn Balance's blood these are all gone - These copies will be dispatched strictly in the sequence they were ordered and one per person only.



FOXTROT double 10" album on ivory coloured vinyl.

A rare compilation album on the Chalice label, a Threshold House subsidiary.

Tracks:

"In My Head a Crystal Sphere of Heavy Fluid" by Peter Christopherson

"Bone Frequency" by The Inflatable Sideshow

"Think Jazz, Think Punk Attitude" & "Spooky Loop" by Nurse with Wound

"Blue Rats (Blue Cheese Mix)" & "Heartworms" by Coil

"A Dream of the Inmost Light" by Current 93

Recently signed by JB and PC for this vault sale.

£31 each [BUY](#)



[COIL's www.thresholdhouse.com site split the band's content into the following sections: "Fine Arts", a humble webstore for merch and suchlike, an eternally-incomplete Links page, and two pages for their music releases (both regular and pricey limited edition sections). See above for a screenshot as a guide to those prices of the time - a copy of the *Trauma Edition* of 'Musick to Play in the Dark Vol. 2' being a snip at £223.00.]



[Photograph from the inlay of the CD release of Coil's "The Golden Hare With A Voice Of Silver" Russian compilation.]

[Speaking of that blood-smeared *Trauma Edition* of the album, one of my fan projects that never got off the ground was to try and convince one of the 11 owners of that ultra-rare edition to scrape off a few flecks of Jhonn's dried blood and pop it in a vial/jiffy bag for me. Far from wanting to create some kind of Jurassic Park-like DNA resurrection with a revived Jhonn roaming the lands, I wanted to make a pigment of water colour with his dried blood to daub a set of my COIL-inspired photographs for possible gallery exhibition. As I say though, this project was abandoned. I should point out that I am not really a hardcore fan-boy of COIL (contrary to circumstantial evidence). I just delve into the COILverse to keep creative whenever I cannot logistically move forward to create my own [mixed media photographic art](#).]

Miscellany

My Wants List: Jhonn Balance & Coil Projects

(If you have any of these, please do get in touch: phil@barringtonarts.com)

Music

- Stabmental - 'Hidden Fears' [currently lost album of dark ambient and found sound reel-to-reel collages, 1979].
- Murderworkers - 'Destruct to Instruct' (cassette transfer by TPS in 2010).
- All remaining early dark ambient Geoff/Jhonn Balance solo stuff.
- 'A House' EP (four unreleased demo tracks in the Balance archives, 1980).
- 'The Black Light District' (the first BLD album, described as a 'bad trip take on acid house', 1989).
- 'International Dark Skies' (Coil collab track with William Burroughs, 2001).
- 'Sara Dale's Sensual Massage' - the soundtrack as high quality files (not the old leaked low bitrate crackly acetate mp3).
- 'Queens of the Circulating Library: Volume II' (apparently proposed, but not sure if anything came of it).
- 'Beautiful Catastrophe' [a proposed single with Rose McDowell, 1994].

Video

- The Balance/Devas 'Avebury Project' (Super 8 film with Jordi Devas about Avebury, "recording each mood and season, looking for mystic signs and interactions").
- All private home movies recorded by Balance and Peter in Chiswick and Weston-super-Mare (and on their trips abroad). There's audio field recordings from their trips (recorded by Peter) in existence, so it stands to reason that there must potentially be lots of video footage in the archives.
- 'Train of Thought' - by Japanese pop singer Yimi Matsutoya (58min video produced on a budget of \$500,000 by post-Hipgnosis company Green Back Films in 1984 [with Peter as Director of Photography](#), that had Jhonn on-screen in a cameo role. As a fireman? A punk? A heel-clicking London policeman dancing as he walks the streets? Fuck knows. The VHS tape is £320.00 on eBay.

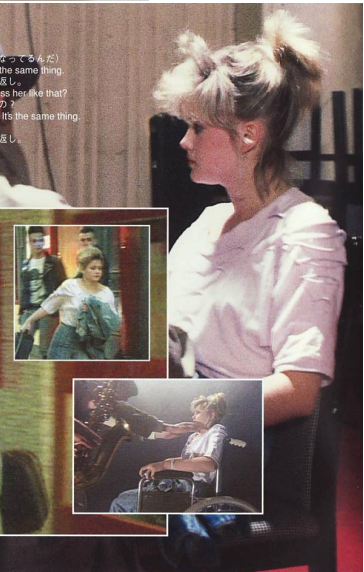
Miscellany

My Wants List: Jhonn Balance & Coil Projects



[Whilst it may just be juvenilia, it'd be great to finally hear "Hidden Fears". My mock-up cover seen here.]

© Forum Films



[Is Jhonn actually in this bloody film? Does it matter?]

© Toshiba EMI

COIL Links

Currently-down historic sites are included as they may well be archived for viewing via <https://archive.org/web/>

COIL

www.thresholdhouse.com	- The official COIL website (down)
https://threshold.greedbag.com	- The official COIL store (dated)
http://live-coil-archive.com	- Definitive COIL live history site
www.brainwashed.com/coil	- The leading COIL archival site
www.facebook.com/groups/9068381069	- The COIL Facebook Group
www.discogs.com/artist/660-Coil	- Detailed COIL release history
https://archive.org/search.php	- COIL downloads inc. FLAC/MP3
www.soulseekqt.net/news/node/1	- Soulseek P2P Industrial Room v2.0
https://downloads.tomsguide.com/Soulseek-Client,0301-2052.html	- Soulseek Client
www.hollyfeld.org/mailman/listinfo/coil	- The old COIL List (often down)
www.nachtkabarett.com/coil	- A good review of COIL's occult side
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coil_(band)	- A starting point for many

Jhonn Balance

www.discogs.com/artist/52098-John-Balance	- Jhonn's release history
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Balance	- Collaborations starting point
www.timeless-shop.com/catid/john-balance-74.html	- Jhonn's art books
www.chaosmatrix.org/library/chaos/spare/caduceus.html	- Jhonn's archive of A.O.S. art
http://arktodd.brzh.ru	- Archived version of Ian Johnstone's art site, including directions to Jhonn's memorial in Cumbria.

Peter Christopherson

http://sleazybkk.blogspot.com	- Peter's Blog
https://twitter.com/unklesleazy	- Peter's Twitter Account
http://myspace.com/thresholdhouse	- Peter's Myspace Account
www.timeless-shop.com/catid/peter-christopherson-73.html	- Peter's photography book

"Now close your eyes and send you off
The shining moon will sing you to sleep
Go to the moon and drift forever
On the sea of stars that's heavens' deep

Whisper goodnight forever
Whisper forever goodnight
A bright star at the end of the tunnel
An exit - a kindness so bright"

Jhonn Balance
"Silence is Golden"



['The Sea of Time and Space', William Blake (1821)]



IN THE DARKNESS WE SHARE

COLLECTED & REVISED COIL ESSAYS BY

Phil Barrington

Jhonn Balance would have been 57 years old on February 16th 2019. To celebrate the life of the man on his birthday I thought I would compile, revise and expand upon my rattlebag of COIL essays for free release on that date. 80% of these words first appeared in first-draft form on the COIL Facebook page over the past five years as regular posts of mine, and a couple of people (well, two exactly) have since suggested to me that I compile these words in some form or other, separate from Facebook. As I don't have an active blog that is dedicated to COIL recordings, I thought I'd update and compile them into one pdf book and make it freely available from my site.

Bear in mind, most of these essays are probably more for the new COIL fan as opposed to stalwarts, as I tend to want to write to ensnare and push as many new fans towards Jhonn's whole body of work as possible. Nonetheless, older fans of the band may find some tidbits of information they hadn't considered before.

I have pretty much revised all previous essay posts of mine and reformatted them all into one cosy book structure with additional text, further resource links, some relevant internet newsgroup postings by Jhonn from 1996-1997 & 2001, and lots of pictures added throughout.

For those fans of the "A Thousand Lights In A Darkened Room" album there are quite a lot of mentions of that release throughout the book and, aside from expanded older essays, this book also contains a brand new illustrated essay dedicated to Peter's creation of the superb artwork for "A Thousand Lights In A Darkened Room" sleeve and booklet (after I finally located the actual original source of his images).



www.barringtonarts.com

This is a collection of revised COIL-based essays that were either first uploaded to the COIL Facebook group page, published as part of the Appendices for "The Golden Age of Bloodsports" book of Jhonn Balance's words by Phil Barrington (2014-), or exclusive to this book.

Please refer to related credits and copyright notices within.

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