





NOTES ON THE PRE-CITY

Gean Moreno - Ernesto Oroza

Excluding a few churches and the German Club, Miller Drive between 117th Avenue and 127th Avenue [in Miami] is a strip of plant nurseries. In a city in which weeds proliferate unchecked, hedges constantly threaten to violate their neat orders, and grass reclaims terrain at an amazing pace, there is something perverse in having these “boutiques” of greenery. The abundance of local plant life makes them seemingly redundant. But, of course, the opposite is the case. These nurseries are not perverse; they are strictly necessary. They are the only option for orderly or decorative arrangements, repeatable to where they acquire identitary value, to counter the wild proliferations that characterize the vegetation of the region. It is important, then, to keep in mind the distinction between plants, as these relate to ecosystems that maintain themselves independent of human intervention, and greenery. It is as a producer of the latter

that plant nurseries belong to what we call the *pre-city*--a kind of abstract plane or pliable region made up of the different shapes and materials that determine what the city will look like.

The city is always already compressed in the range of materials, repeating objects and standard metrics found in plant nurseries and the other businesses that constitute this *pre-city*--construction material depots, lumber yards, roofing companies, tile distributors, home improvement stores, and even pet stores. The *pre-city* is a series of codes that have yet to be arranged and coupled into larger assemblages. The *terra cotta roof tiles* will one day be coupled with the *bougainvillea* that climbs along the side of the house which will be coupled with the imported *Bahamas grass* which will be coupled with the decorative *faux stone with the house numbers (in Helvetica)* on it which will be coupled with the *faux-wood white picket fence* which will be coupled with the *golden retriever*. Treat all the objects in italics as variables, switch them for whatever is available in the nurseries and home improvements stores and pet stores of the city in which you happen to live, and you will see how the morphologies of that city are already present in the artifacts available in the spaces that we are



Isaac Morton

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

In four seasons with the Milwaukee Brewers, a span of 614 games and 2, 421 trips to the plate, Isaac Morton swung the bat only 304 times. He retired after the 1988 season with a .125 batting average, a .418 on-base percentage, and 303 homeruns.

When he didn't swing, he stood perfectly still in the batter's box with his bat perched high in the air behind him like an executioner's ax. He didn't step out between pitches. He didn't adjust his batting gloves. He didn't pound the plate. And then he walked (710) or struck out looking (1,429 times). But once every eight at-bats, with absolutely unpredictable irregularity, his muscles twitched into a hyper-smooth rotation, the bat dropped into its groove, and Isaac Morton hit a homerun. He hit them to left field most often (171), but he also hit them the opposite-way (42) and straight out to center field (90). There wasn't any single pitch he preferred. He hit fastballs up. He hit sliders away. He hit hanging curves. He hit splitters in the dirt. He hit four-seamers at his chin. He hit knuckleballs, and he hit screwballs. He even once hit a homerun when the pitcher was trying to intentionally walk him.

When reporters asked him, given his rate of success, why he didn't swing more, he said, "I was waiting for my pitch."

When reporters asked him if he was always trying to hit homeruns, he said "No. Just trying to get a hit."

When reporters asked him how many other pitches he saw that he thought he could have

single or knocked into the gap or banged off the wall or looped over the shortstop's head, he said, "None."

At the end of the 1988 season, after years of ineptitude, the Brewers were embroiled in a four-team division race. With Molitor in his prime, Yount still productive, and a solid rotation led by Higuera and Nieves, the '88 Brewers went 17-13 in August and won their first five games in September. On Friday, September 23, they began a homestand against the AL-leading A's on a four-game win streak. They were four games back with eight to play. They'd gone 20-9 in September the year previous but had never got within six games. Manager Tom Trebelhorn said before the game that the club was as confident as he'd ever seen it.

With the score tied 8-8 in the bottom of the thirteenth inning, Isaac Morton was up. Sheffield was on second with no outs; the top of the order—Molitor, Gantner, Yount—was due up next. The third-base coach gave Morton the sign to lay down a bunt. He ignored it, watching the count go full before swinging and missing a fastball that sailed a foot-and-a-half outside the zone. It was the only time he'd ever swung and missed. When he came back to the bench, teammate Greg Brock punched him in the nose so hard that Morton fell momentarily unconscious. After he got stitched up, he cleaned out his locker and was in a cab by the time the A's pushed one across in the fourteenth, leaving Milwaukee to finish two games back of Boston.

They wouldn't make the playoffs again until 2008. They wouldn't win their division until 2019. They wouldn't win a World Series until 2031. After retiring, Isaac Morton became an air conditioning repair man in Miami, FL. He died of throat cancer on December 5, 2030. ■

P. Scott Cunningham

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Milutin Gubash, *Tito My Friend*, 2010. Courtesy of the artist.

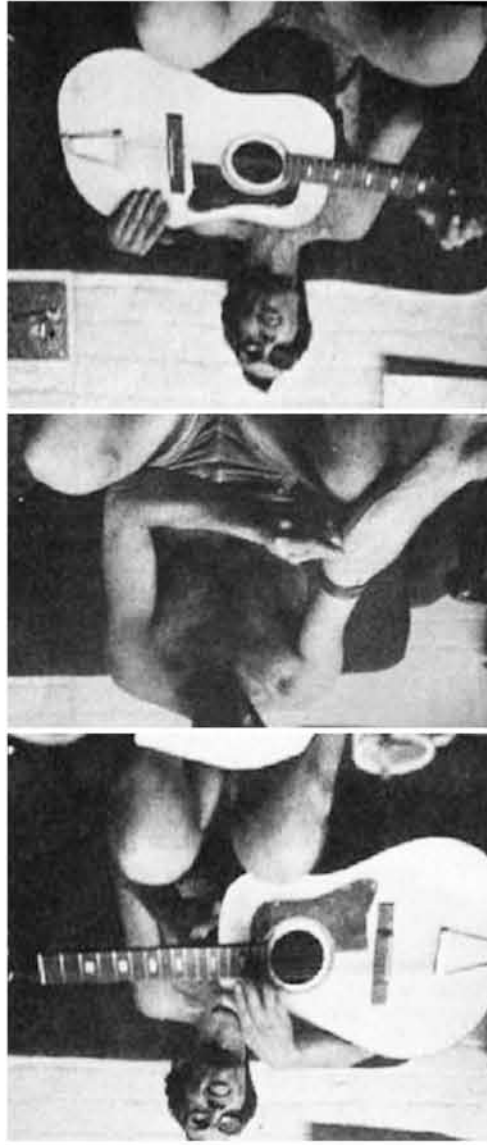
TITO MY FRIEND BY MILUTIN GUBASH (GRANDSON OF MILUTIN GUBASH)



A baby is better than a poem.
 She laughs at me thrilling to her every move,
 Thrilling me.
 She names me creator,
 creating me.
 New as now,
 Her lips reveal
 she is older than I,
 Enlightening me.
 The wonder! The wonder!
 The chilling warmth!
 The frightening grace!
 That pain's fruit is joy,
 Love a light grown from darkness,
 Life the harvest of death.
 And death,
 Is
 Impossible.
 A baby is infinitely better than a poet.

A. BABY

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THE AMPHETAMINE MANIFESTO
 THE AMPHETAMINE MANIFESTO
 THE AMPHETAMINE MANIFESTO



Lost & Found
 Do Something Press (cover)
 Circa 1992

"Delicate petals sprang without warning
 came to deliver the blessings of morning
 street flowers decorate the city
 ...blooming in the valleys of concrete and steel
 driven by the power that turns every wheel
 And the flowers reveal
 it is the power to feel."



Top:
Lionel Goldbart and Damian Rojo
Artifacts Tuesday Evening
Poetry Party & Reading
FIRE & ICE Miami Design District
circa 1985



Kevin Arrow and Lionel Goldbart
Miami Beach circa 1990
Washington Avenue in front of Tamara
Hendershot's Vanity Novelty Garden



Feel Free Champion of Jeopardy

"Riding his bike
down Washington Avenue
at full speed,
"Look No Hands!"

Crystal gazing,
double-edged
razor chanteur -
"Look No Eyes!"

Lullaby Beckoner
gurglar of the free
running river:
"Look No Ears!"

Potently phrase
harmonica words,
sweet eloquence.
"Look No Taste!"

Intimate friend
of the rising
sun and moon ~
"Look No Thought"

Intermittent One,
plucking on guitar,
a sacrifice of sound:
"Come In, Please!"



Toasting the Ram in the
Ramalamadingdong ~
You write and we'll listen harder...
within the walls of No Mind.

To the languid rhymes of our tymes,
responding in the form of a question,
whose answer is 'Gate Gate Paragate
Parasamgate Bodhi Soha'.

(C) April Dolkar
11/09/10
(For Lionel Goldbart)



Lionel Goldbart Jeopardy Contestant

1993 10th Anniversary Tournament semifinalist: \$5,000.
1990 Super Jeopardy! quarterfinalist: \$5,000.
1986 Tournament of Champions semifinalist: \$5,000.
Season 2 4-time champion: \$34,997.



part-time
newsstand clerk from Miami Beach, Florida

COOL: COOL

"carrier-witted, I am bold to boast . . ."
Gerard Manley Hopkins

Bird minded,
I would fly;
Bird-hearted,
I cannot;
Wordbrained,
I write.





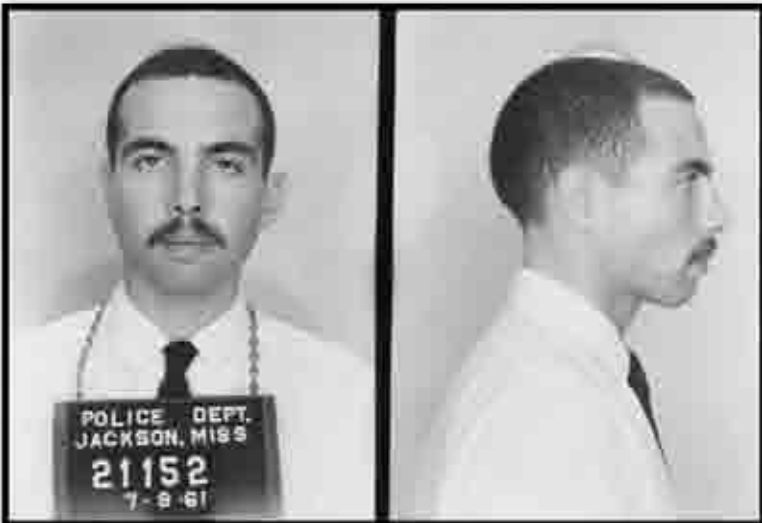
Ararat, Ararat,
Where is that Arab at?
That Pharaoh! That Sahara rati!
Views vary, are as disparate
As asshole and aristocrat
And maybe even more than that.
Ararat.
Ararat, Ararat,
Fey phantom of the Fatimate:
Is he on Mount Ararat
Or is he in some laundromat?
Would he dare go as far as that,
Whose head has handkerchief as hat?
Where is that Arab at?

ARAFAT


Lionel Goldbart is most famously known for writing the songs WIDE, WIDE RIVER (of shit) and DIRTY OLD MAN for NYC ProtoPunk band the FUGS whose first LP was recorded by legendary ethnomusicologist and film maker Harry Smith. \$3.14 Uncashed Royalty Check.



FREEDOM RIDER, POET, ACTIVIST



Lionel Goldbart was a twenty-seven year old laborer and poet when he was arrested for his participation in the Freedom Rides. Goldbart was arrested in the Trailways terminal in Jackson, Mississippi on 9 July 1961 after he and seven others rode a bus from Montgomery, Alabama to Jackson, Mississippi.



**Buddha was a
HINDU**

**Jesus was a
JEW**

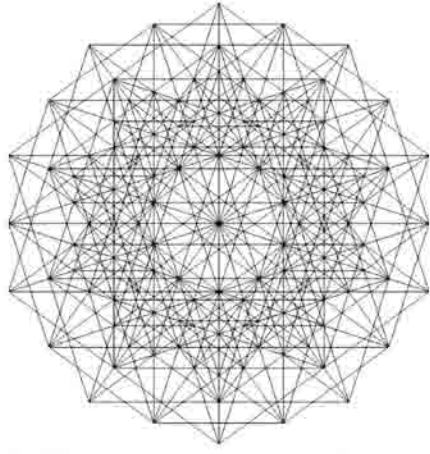
**Mohammed was
GODS
MESSENGER**

**Who the Fuck
are YOU?**



THANK YOU

- LIONEL GOLDBART
- Howard Davis
- Stephen Malagodi
- Mary Luft
- Tiger Tail Productions
- George Alexander
- "Alex" Trebek
- Dina Knapp
- Jeffrey Knapp
- Damian Rojo
- Ed Saunders
- Tuli Kupferberg
- The FUGS
- Wendy Blazier
- Bill Orcutt
- Gean Moreno
- Ernesto Oroza
- Jose "Tree" Garcia
- Robert Price
- Priya Ray
- Kreamy 'Lectric Santa
- Dave Kudzma
- Janese Weingarten
- April Dolkar
- Andrew Yeomanson
- DJ Le Spam



I'm laughing all over.
 I'm millions of pieces
 of nothing
 But increasing numbers
 Of pieces of nothing.
 I'm dying--
 It tickles.
 I'm breaking
 From thinking
 It's all just
 A movie I'm seeing,
 That I am
 A light show
 I'm watching by feeling:
 It's groovy!
 I'm pictures
 Of patterns
 Of flowers
 I'm painting
 By sucking
 My smile in
 Through concentric circles:
 My eyeballs.
 I'm laughing all over.
 I'm turned on.

(AN INTRODUCTION TO THE SPACE-TIME CONTINUUM)
 IN YOUR LIVES

In your first life
 You were an orange
 Hanging on a tree
 And you were happy
 When you were an orange
 In your first life.

In your next life
 You were an egg
 Yolk, albumen, shell
 And you were well
 When you were an egg
 In your next life.

In your third life
 You were a cat
 Sovereign of the night
 And you were all right
 When you were a cat
 In your third life.

In your twelfth life
 You were a moon
 Satellite of Mars
 And you were smart
 When you were a moon
 In your twelfth life.

In your past life
 You were a child
 Playing in the sun
 And you had fun
 When you were a child
 In your past life.

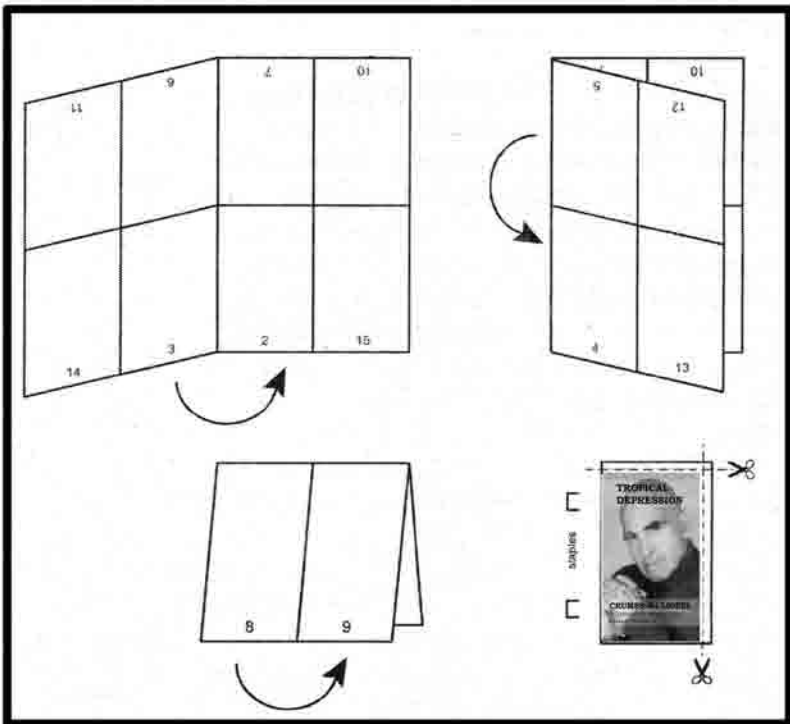
In your last life
 You were a flame
 Lighting up a tomb
 But you met your doom
 When you were a flame
 In your last life.

In your new life
 You are a ghost
 Floating free in space
 But you have no place
 When you are a ghost
 In your new life.

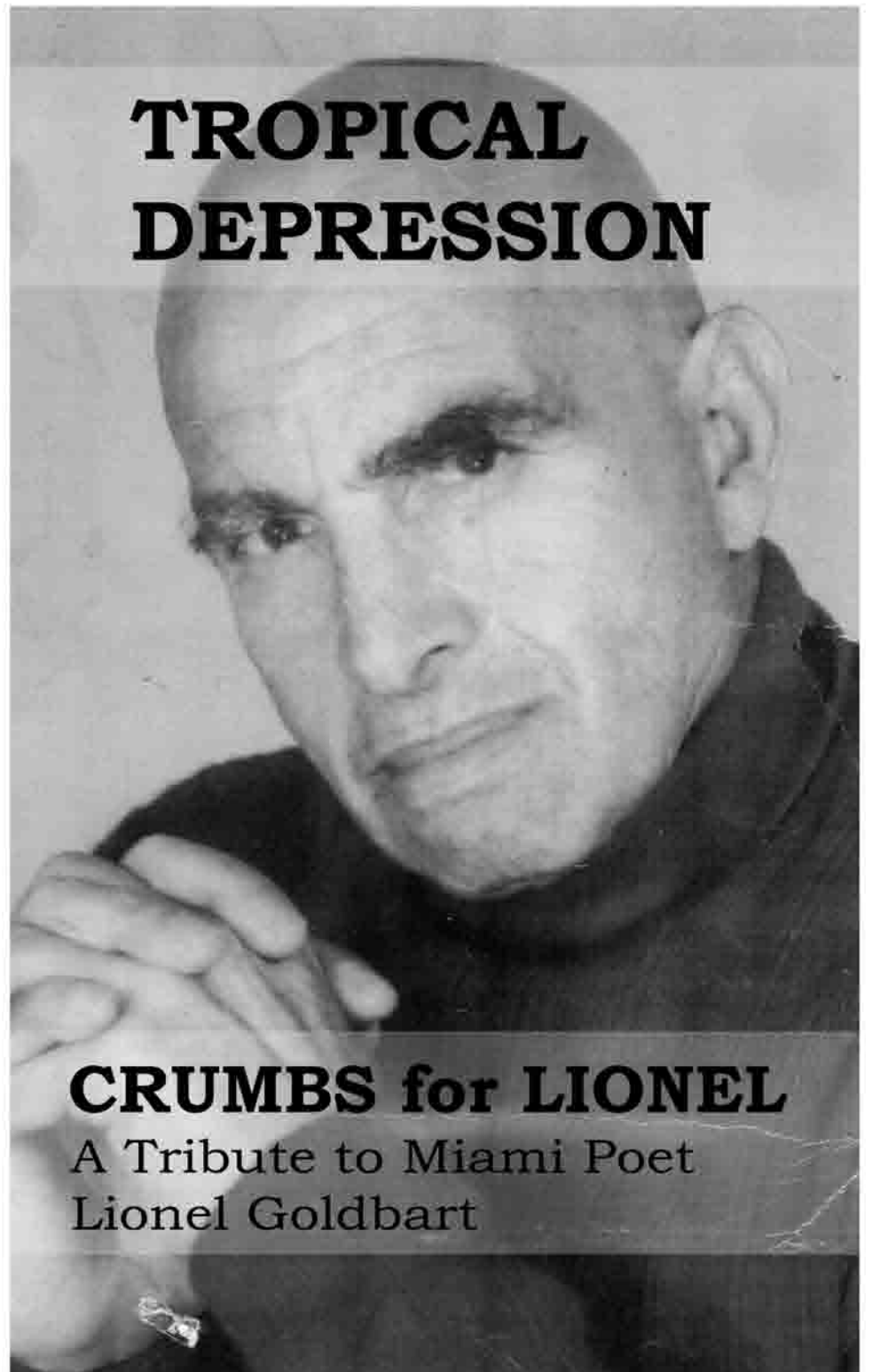
In your true life
 You are a star
 Giant in the sky
 And you never die
 When you are a star
 In your true life.

Tropical Depression: Crumbs for Lionel
 Edited & Designed by Kevin Arrow
 All poems copyright Lionel Goldbart, 2010
 5000 edition

drawn inward.



FOLDING INSTRUCTIONS



INTERVIEW WITH GODARD (EXCERPT)

Jean-Marc LALANNE: Why the title *Film Socialisme*?

GODARD: I've always had the titles in advance — they give me some indication of the films that I might make.

A title coming before every idea for a film is a little bit like 'setting the tone' in music. I have a whole list of them. Like titles in the sense of nobility, or titles in the sense of a bank. More like titles in the sense of a bank. I started out with *Socialisme*, but as the film started taking shape, it seemed less and less satisfactory. The film could just as well have been called *Communisme* or *Capitalisme*. But there was a funny coincidence: Jean-Paul Curnier [a philosopher. —JML], while reading a little presentational brochure I'd sent around, where the name of the production company Vega Film came before the title, read it as "Film Socialisme" and thought that was the title. He wrote me a twelve-page letter telling me how happy this made him. I said to myself that he must be right, and I decided to keep *Film* in front of *Socialisme*. It lends the word a little dignity.

LALANNE: Where does the idea of the cruise through the Mediterranean come from? Homer?

GODARD: At first I was thinking of a story that would take place in Serbia, but it didn't work. So I had the idea of a family in a garage, the Martin family. But it didn't work for a feature-length film, because then the people would turn into characters, and whatever took place would turn into a narrative. The story of a mother and her children, a film that might be made in France, with lines of dialogue, and 'moods'.

LALANNE: Indeed, the members of this family almost resemble characters of an ordinary fiction. It's been a very long time since this has taken place in your cinema...

GODARD: Yes, maybe... Not quite, though. The scenes get interrupted before anyone turns into characters. Instead, they're statues. Statues that speak. If one speaks of statues, it's said that "it comes from another time." And if one says "another time," then one takes off on a voyage; one sets off upon the Mediterranean. Where the cruise comes in. I'd read a book by Léon Daudet, the polemicist from the beginning of the century, called *Le Voyage de Shakespeare* [1927]. The course of a boat was followed over the Mediterranean that carried the young Shakespeare, who still hadn't written anything. So all of it started coming together, little by little.

LALANNE: How did you go about arranging all this?

GODARD: There aren't any rules. The same applies to poetry, or to painting, or to mathematics. Especially to ancient geometry. The urge to compose figures, to put a circle around a square, to plot a tangent. It's elementary geometry. If it's elementary, there are elements. So I show the sea... Voilà, it can't really be described — it's associations. And if we're saying "association," we might be saying "socialism." If we're saying "socialism," we might be speaking about politics.

LALANNE: The HADOPI law, for example, or the matter of prosecuting downloads, or the property of images...

GODARD: I'm against HADOPI, of course. There's no intellectual property. I'm against estates, for example. That the children of an artist might enjoy the rights of their parents' body of work, why not, until they come of age. But afterward — I see no evidence that Ravel's children are getting their hands on the rights for the *Boléro*...

LALANNE: You don't claim any rights over the images that any artists might be lifting from your films?

GODARD: Of course not. Besides, people are doing it, putting them up on the Internet, and for the most part they don't look very good... But I don't have

the feeling that they're taking something away from me. I don't have the Internet. Anne-Marie [Miéville, his partner, and a filmmaker —JML] uses it. But in my film, there are images that come from the Internet, like those images of the two cats together.

LALANNE: For you, there's no difference in status between those anonymous images of cats that circulate on the Internet, and the shot from John Ford's *Cheyenne Autumn* that you're also making use of in *Film Socialisme*?

GODARD: Statutorily, I don't see why I'd be differentiating between the two. If I had to plead in a court of law against charges of filching images for my films, I'd hire two lawyers, with two different systems. The one would defend the right of quotation, which barely exists for the cinema. In literature, you can quote extensively. In the Miller [Genius and Lust: A Journey Through the Major Writings of Henry Miller, 1976 —JML] by Norman Mailer, there's 80% Henry Miller, and 20% Norman Mailer. In the sciences, no scientist pays a fee to use a formula established by a conference. That's quotation, and cinema doesn't allow it. I read Marie Darrieussecq's book, *Rapport de police* [Rapport de police, accusations de plagiat et autres modes de surveillance de la fiction / Police Report: Accusations of Plagiarism and Other Modes of Surveillance in Fiction, 2010], and I thought it was very good, because she went into a historical inquiry of this issue. The right of the author — it's really not possible. An author has no right. I have no right. I have only duties. And then in my film, there's another type of "loan" — not quotations, but just excerpts. Like a shot, when a blood-sample gets taken for analysis. That would be the defense of my second lawyer. He'd defend, for example, my use of the shots of the trapeze artists that come from *Les Plages d'Agnes*. This shot isn't a quotation — I'm not quoting Agnès Varda's film: I'm benefiting from her work. I'm taking an excerpt, which I'm incorporating somewhere else, where it takes on another meaning: in this case, symbolizing peace between Israel and Palestine. I didn't pay for that shot. But if Agnès asked me for money, I figure it would be for a reasonable price. Which is to say, a price in proportion with the economy of the film, the number of spectators that it reaches...

LALANNE: In order to metaphorically express peace in the Middle East, why do you prefer to sample one of Agnès Varda's images instead of shooting one on your own?

GODARD: I thought the metaphor in Agnès' film was excellent.

LALANNE: But it has nothing to do with that, in her film...

GODARD: No, of course not. I'm the one who builds it, by moving the image. I'm not thinking of harming the image. I thought it was perfect for what I wanted to say. If the Palestinians and the Israelis put on a circus and brought together a bunch of trapeze artists, things would be different in the Middle East. For me this image shows a perfect agreement — exactly what I wanted to express. So I'm taking the image, since it exists. The socialism of the film is the undermining of the idea of property, beginning with that of artworks... There shouldn't be any property over artworks. Beaumarchais only wanted to enjoy a portion of the receipts from *Le Mariage de Figaro*. He might say, "I'm the one who wrote Figaro." But I don't think he would have said, "Figaro is mine." This feeling of property over artworks came later on. These days, a guy attaches lighting to the Eiffel Tower — he gets paid for it; but if you film the Eiffel Tower, you have to pay this guy something on top of it.

LALANNE: Your film's going up online via FilmoTV at the same time as we'll be able to go see it in a theater...

GODARD: That wasn't my idea. When the film-trailers were made, which is to say the whole film speeded-up, I proposed putting them up on YouTube because it's a good way of getting things out there. Putting the film up online was

the distributor's idea. They put money up for the film, so I'm doing what they request. If it was up to me, I wouldn't have released it this way. It took four years to make this film. In production terms, it was very atypical. It was shot in quarters, divided equally with Battaglia, Arragno, and Grivas. Each one set off and brought back images. Grivas went off alone to Egypt, and brought back hours of footage... A lot of time went into it. I think the film would have benefited from a similar relationship, duration-wise, to its distribution.

LALANNE: What does that mean, in concrete terms?

GODARD: I really would have liked to have a boy and a girl be involved, a couple who had the urge to show things, who were kind of involved with the cinema, the sort of young people you might meet at small festivals. They'd be given a copy of the film on DVD, then be asked to train as skydivers. After that, places would be randomly chosen on a map of France, and they'd parachute down into those locations. They'd have to show the film wherever they landed. In a café, at a hotel... they'd manage. People would pay 3 or 4 euros to get in — no more than that. They might film this adventure, and sell it later on. Thanks to them, you get a sense of what it means to distribute a film. Afterwards, only you can make the decision, to find out whether or not it's able to be projected in regular theaters. But not before having investigated everything for a year or two. Because beforehand, you're just like me: you don't know what the film is, you don't know what might be interesting about it. You've gone a little outside the whole media space.

LALANNE: In the 1980s, we saw you in the press, on TV, more often...

GODARD: Yes, it bothers me now. I'm no longer looking to subvert a certain process of television. At the time, I believed in that, a little. I didn't think that it would change anything, but that it might get people interested in doing things differently. It interests them for three minutes. There are still things I'm interested in about television: programs about animals, history channels. I really like House, too. Somebody's injured, everybody gathers around him, the characters express themselves in hyper-technical jargon — I really like it. But I couldn't watch ten episodes in a row.

LALANNE: Why did you invite Alain Badiou and Patti Smith to be in your latest film, but ended up filming them so little?

GODARD: Patti Smith was there, so I filmed her. I don't see why I should have filmed her for any length of time greater than I would, say, a waitress.

LALANNE: Why did you ask her to be involved?

GODARD: So that there would be

one good American. Someone who embodies something other than imperialism.

LALANNE: And Alain Badiou?

GODARD: I wanted to quote a text about geometry by Husserl, and I wanted someone to develop something of his own from that. It interested him.

LALANNE: Why film him in front of an empty auditorium?

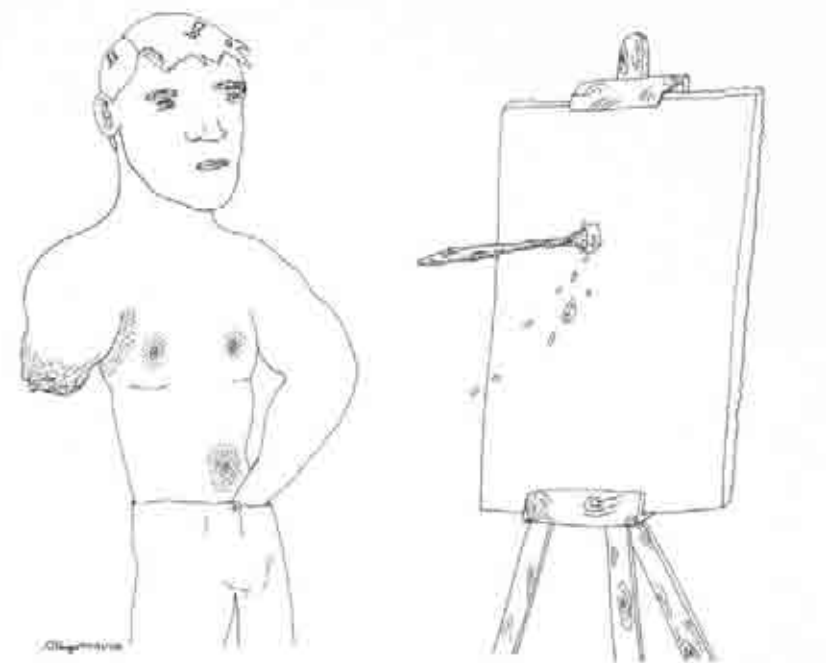
GODARD: Because none of the tourists on the cruise had any interest in his lecture. It was announced that there would be a lecture about Husserl, and no-one showed up. When Badiou was brought into this empty auditorium, he was really happy. He said: "Finally, I get to speak in front of nobody." [laughs] I could have framed it closer, not for the sake of filming the empty auditorium, but to show that it was words in a desert, that we're in the desert. It made me think of Jean Genet's phrase: "You have to go looking for images because they're in the desert." In my cinema, there are never any intentions. It's not me inventing this empty auditorium. I don't want to say anything, I try to show, or to get feeling across, or to allow something else to be said after the fact. When you hear: "Today the assholes are sincere — they believe in Europe," what else is there to say? That one can't believe in Europe without being an asshole? It's a phrase that came to me while reading some passages from *La Nausée*. In those times, the asshole wasn't sincere. A torturer knew he wasn't being honest. These days, the asshole is sincere. As for Europe, it's existed a long time; there's no need to make it into something other than it is. I find it hard to understand, say, how anyone could be a parliamentarian for it — like Dany [Daniel Cohn-Bendit —JML]. Isn't it odd?

LALANNE: A political party shouldn't consist of ecology?

GODARD: You know parties... Parties are always committed [to one thing]. Even their names, sometimes. De Gaulle was against parties. During the Liberation, though, he brought the parties to the Conseil de la Résistance in order to swing some weight around in front of the Americans. The National Front was even there. Except it wasn't the same thing as it is today. At the time, it was one of the Communist Party's endeavors. I don't really know why the other ones held onto that name afterward. A committed party...

LALANNE: The second-to-last quotation in the film is: "If the law is unjust, justice proceeds past the law..."

GODARD: It ties back in with the right of the author. Every DVD starts off with a title from the FBI criminalizing copies. I went for Pascal. But you might take something else away from that phrase. ■



Tonel, *Ambidextrus (del pincel que pinta solo)*, 2010. Courtesy of the artist.





calling the pre-city. All they need is to be coupled together to articulate a metropolis.

The *pre-city*, then, is not the historical precondition of the city as we know it. The pre-city is a series of materials and shapes that seep into it at the level of the detail, the ornament, the roof tiles, the decorative landscaping, the size of the walls, the front doors, the mailboxes. It's the hard and repeating elements that are hinged by the "organic" elements of the city. We'd call the things found in the pre-city raw materials, but they don't necessarily have to be what we usually associate as raw materials--bricks, mortar, plywood, etc. (Although, of course, these too are part of the pre-city.) The pre-city is, rather, materials or objects that function as *information* that affects the coding of the city, much in the same way that a gene is information within a DNA sequence and helps determine the shape of a larger body. These "objects" can range from the metric standardization of building materials--the 8' x 4' module is rather significant in American cities--to the vegetation sold at the local plant nurseries. In the Royal palms and the annuals and perennials selection in the Florida Home Depot's outdoor garden section, in the limited range of

metal fonts that are available to screw the house number over the front door, in the finite styles of bathroom tile, in the range of colors for roof shingles, in the selection displays at the local paint store--in all of these things we can already see a prelude to the city. These stocks are often determined by local weather conditions, precedent that after crossing a certain statistical threshold we call taste, and city codes, of course, but they exceed this. Once areca palms begin to populate every corporate lobby, where the temperature is artificially controlled year round, we see how the elements of the pre-city seep into areas in which they are not *necessary*. They reveal the city as a construction, as a coded artifact, as organized data.

