



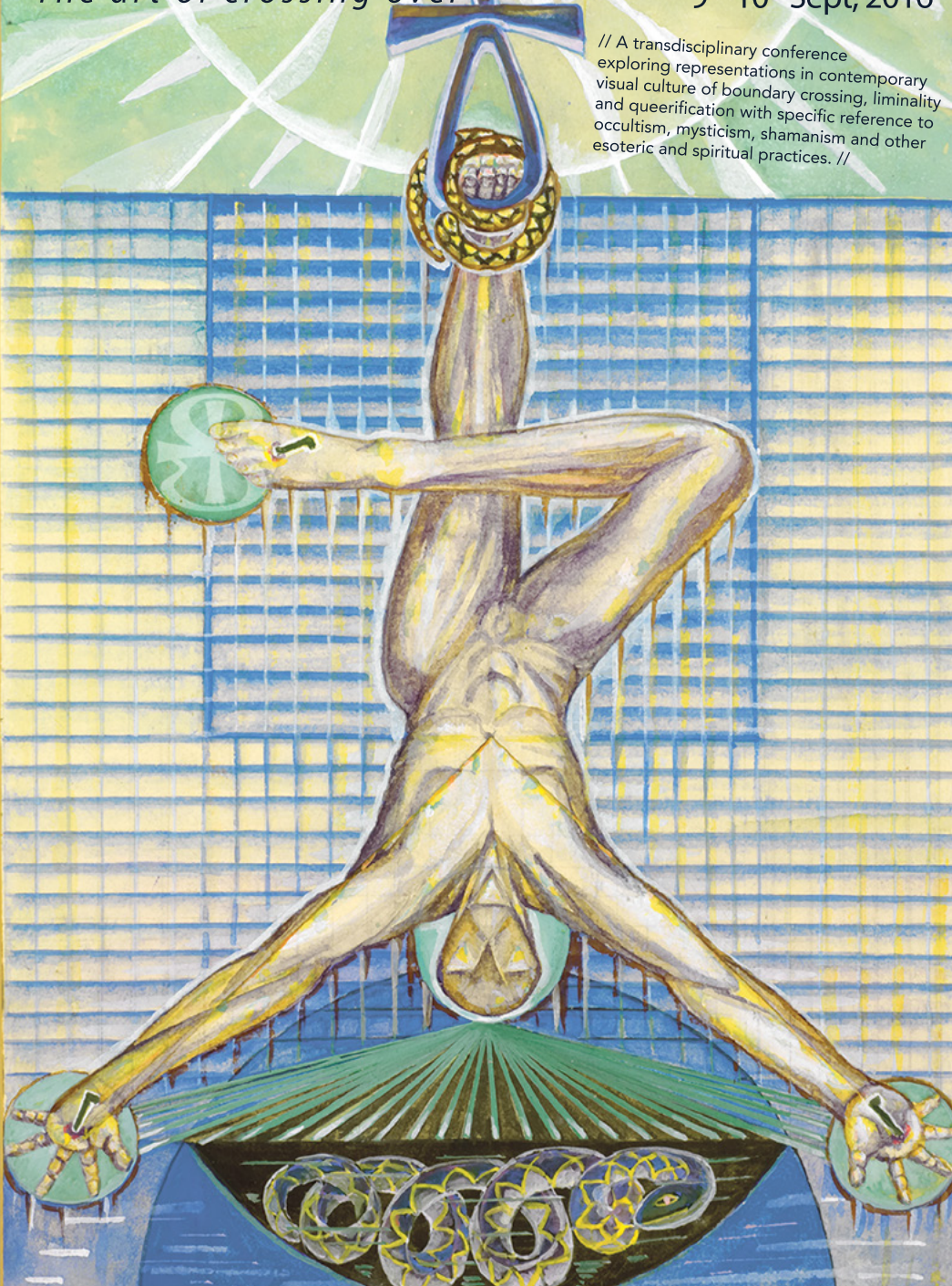
# Trans-States

*The art of crossing over*

9<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> Sept, 2016

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// A transdisciplinary conference exploring representations in contemporary visual culture of boundary crossing, liminality and queerification with specific reference to occultism, mysticism, shamanism and other esoteric and spiritual practices. //



## **Trans- States: The art of crossing over**

University of Northampton 9-10<sup>th</sup> September

This conference has been hosted by the University of Northampton and is sponsored by the European Society for the Study of Western Esotericism (ESSWE).

### **Conference Committee:**

Conference Organiser  
Cavan McLaughlin

Conference Coordinator  
Roy Wallace

Curator  
Stefan Gant

Illustrations: *Aries Lunation 3* and *Aries Lunation 4* by  
Carlos Ruiz Brussain.

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## Day One: Friday 9<sup>th</sup>, September

9.00-9.45	<b>Registration &amp; coffee</b>	W13
9.45-10.00	<b>Opening remarks</b>	W13
10.00-11.00	<b>First Keynote: Richard Kaczynski</b> Chair: Charmaine Sonnex	W13
11.00-12.30	<b>Panel 1A &amp; 1B</b>	
1A	<b>Blood and Ordeal</b> Chair: Jasmine Shadrack	W13
11.00	Becoming No-Man: The Blooded Path to Babalon Peter Grey	
11.30	Bleed for the Devil: Self-injury as Transgressive Practice in Contemporary Satanism, and the Re-enchantment of Late Modernity Per Faxneld	
12.00	The Sweat Lodge: Ancient Technology in Modern Context Geoff Greentree	
1B	<b>Artistic Practice and the Other</b> Chair: Roy Wallace	W10
11.00	Within the Hyperdream Magic Circle: Manifesting the Unconscious through Illustration Play and Games Carlos Ruiz Brussain	
11.30	Transgender Characters and Otherworldly States of Mind in Sci-Fi and Fantasy Fiction Sophie Sparham	
12.00	Of Shadows: Reflections on an artist residency at the Museum of Witchcraft and Magic in Cornwall Sara Hannant	
12.30-14.00	<b>Lunch</b>	
14.00-15.30	<b>Panel 2A &amp; 2B</b>	
2A	<b>Artistic Practice and Transformation</b> Chair: Simon Magus	W13

14.00	Treasure House of Images: Mysticism and Transcendence in the Art of J.F.C. Fuller Krzysztof Azarewicz	
14.30	Curating Trans- States Benedetta d'Ettorre	
15.00	Saving the Lives of Angels: Joséphin Péladan's Vision for Redemption Through the Arts Sasha Chaitow	
2B	<b>Transnormativity</b> Chair: Yoshe Watson	W10
14.00	Queer Sex Magic, Transindividual Affect, and Nonrepresentational Criticism Rebekah Sheldon	
14.30	Tantric Transhumanism: An Esoteric History of Human Enhancement Scott Jeffery	
15.30-16.00	<b>Break</b>	
16.00-17.30	<b>Plenary Panel</b> Chair: Vanessa Sinclair  <b>Austin Osman Spare</b>	W13
16.00	The Tarot Deck of Austin Osman Spare Jonathan Allen	
16.45	Androgyny, Biology and Latent Memory in the Work of Austin Osman Spare Robert Ansell	
17.30-18.30	<b>Second Keynote: Patricia MacCormack</b> Chair: Christina Oakley Harrington	W13
18.30	<b>Wine Reception &amp; Dance Performance</b> Performance by Alkistis Dimech	W13

## Day Two: Saturday 10<sup>th</sup>, September

8.30-9.00	<b>Registration &amp; coffee</b>	W13
9.00-10.00	<b>Third Keynote: Marco Pasi</b> Chair: Lorna Jowett	W13
10.00-11.30	<b>Panel 3A &amp; 3B</b>	
3A	<b>Liminal Spaces</b> Chair: Per Faxneld	W13
10.00	Kenneth Grant's Borderland of Mystic Horror Alistair Coombs	
10.30	Ritual Occultation and the Space between Worlds: Exploring the Application of the "Flow" State in Pagan and Black Metal Performance Practice Jasmine Shadrack & Charmaine Sonnex	
11.00	Where the Daimon Dwells: A Chorography of the Space Between Alkistis Dimech	
3B	<b>Transdermality / The Cinematic</b> Chair: David Simmons	W10
10.00	Modern Angels: A Documentary Exploration of Transdermal, Body Art and Body Modification in the Kingdom of Belgium Roy Wallace	
10.30	Written in Skin: Flesh as a Language Frontier Stefanie Elrick	
11.00	Cinematic Possession: Trance in Films by Maya Deren, Jean Rouch, and Andrzej Żuławski Kristoffer Noheden	
11.30-12.00	<b>Break</b>	
12.00-13.30	<b>Panel 4A &amp; 4B</b>	
4A	<b>The Mind and Magic</b> Chair: Sasha Chaitow	W13

12.00	Third Mind work and Pandrogeny Vanessa Sinclair	
12.30	The Place of Snakes or Seraphs?: Schizotypy, Esoteric Hermeneutics and Παράνοια Simon Magus	
13.00	Epistemology of Magic. A Transdisciplinary Approach to the Quest for Results in <i>Ars Magica</i> . Ana Belén González-Pérez	
4B	<b>Transnatural Culture</b> Chair: Scott Jeffery	W10
12.00	Asemic Occultism: Hélène Smith's Martian Writing Riikka Ala-Hakula	
12.30	The Ghetto Tarot Georgia van Raalte	
13.00	Edward Bulwer-Lytton and the Art of the Dream Jonah Locksley	
13.30-15.00	<b>Lunch</b>	
15.00-16.30	<b>Discussion Panel</b> Chair: Robert Ansell	W13
	<b>Black Mirror: Journal &amp; Research Network</b>  Anne Crossey, Marco Pasi and Judith Noble	
16.30-17.30	<b>Fourth Keynote: Alan Moore</b> Chair: Cavan McLaughlin	W13
17.30-17.45	<b>Closing remarks</b>	W13

## Performance Art, Workshops & Screenings

### Friday 9<sup>th</sup>, September

- 14.00-14.45 Modern Angels  
Film Screening - Roy Wallace W5
- 14.45-15.30 Chess Symbolism and the Alchemical Marriage  
Screening and Performance - Orryelle Defenestrade W5
- 15.30-17.00 ReInState  
Performance Art – Stefanie Elrick W25a

### Saturday 10<sup>th</sup>, September

- 11.00-12.30 Lucid Dream Chamber  
Surrealist Performance Art/Magickal Working  
- Aepril Schaile W13
- 15.00-16.30 Experimental Séance: Writing and Performing a  
Fictional Disembodied Entity  
Workshop - Julia Moore & Nicolas Morgan W25b



## The Trans- States Exhibition

A collection of works specially selected for exhibition at the Trans- States conference:

### **Carlos Ruiz Brussain**

Aries Lunation 3

Illustration

Aries Lunation 4

Illustration

### **Orryelle Defenestrade**

Alchemical Chess Set

Bronze, glass & clay figures (16), chess board oils on canvas

Menstruum

Oils, egg tempera and acrylics on canvas

Tunnel of Ingress

Oils, egg tempera, copper leaf on canvas

### **Sara Hannant**

Baphomet

Photograph from the publication *Of Shadows: One Hundred Objects from the Museum of Witchcraft and Magic*

Mandrake

Photograph from *Museum of Witchcraft and Magic*

### **Cavan McLaughlin**

Kyrie Eleison by Denigrata

Video art/music video, S16mm film

### **Alexander Small**

Excarnation (2015)

Oil and Acrylic

The Divels Privihouse (talking shit) (the metaphysics of shit) (2015)

Oil and Acrylic on canvas



## The Passing (the metaphysics of shit) (2015)

Oil and Acrylic

And featuring:

A collection of original oil paintings by **Sasha Chaitow**, created especially for the Trans-States Conference.

### Saving the Lives of Angels

This collection of artwork is inspired by the legend of the angelic and human fall from grace, as told by Josephin Péladan (1858-1918), a forgotten enfant terrible of the French occult revival.

According to Péladan's retelling of Genesis, mankind was created by the angels, who then fell because they sought to initiate their beloved creations into the divine mysteries. The angels' punishment was to guide humanity until they became conscious of their divine origins.

Once awoken, the task of mankind was to liberate both the angels and themselves from matter, allowing a reunification with each other and with the divine. The only way to do this, according to Péladan, was through becoming creators themselves. The only way to redeem the fall of both angels and men was through art.

#### I. Rewriting Genesis

And on the sixth day  
On the seventh day was the Fall  
Genesis 3:24  
Lost in the Light  
Perfect Union

#### II. Life embedded in matter

Ghost of Plato  
Vives Unguibus et Morsu  
The Unforgiving Sphinx  
Revenge of the tall poppy

#### III. Theodicy: Three ways to God

Theodicy: Way of Prometheus  
Art: Way of the children of angels  
Science: Way of Mankind

All works, oil on canvas board. Handprinted mount on canvas board.



Lost in the Light, (Black and white reproduction) oil on canvas board. Handpainted mount on canvas board. **Sasha Chaitow.**

**Riikka Ala-Hakula** is writing a doctoral thesis on asemic writing at the University of Jyväskylä. She is working on developing methods for analyzing asemic writing in the context of literary theory. In addition, she is translating an anthology of Henri Michaux's aphorisms, poems and essays from French into Finnish.

### Asemic Occultism: Hélène Smith's Martian Writing

Hélène Smith\* (1861–1929) was a famous late nineteenth century medium who produced "Martian writing" at her seances. She wrote Martian automatically during somnambulatory trances and was known as 'the Muse of Automatic Writing' by the Surrealist. In the context of the linguistic theory, Smith's Martian alphabets can be classified as a constructed language. A Swiss psychologist, Théorode Flournoy, explored Smith's Martian language and noticed that it had a strong resemblance to French, which was Smith's mother tongue. He suggested that her automatic writing was "romances of the subliminal imagination, derived largely from forgotten sources (for example, books read as a child)." Anyone other than Smith could not read Martian before she translated it into French. I suggest that this was part of the compelling nature of her writing. The Martian text was 'asemic', it did not express verbal meanings until Smith revealed them. In my presentation, I analyze Martian alphabets and two examples of Smith's writings in the point of view of asemic writing.

(\*Her real name was Catherine-Elise Müller.)

**Jonathan Allen** (London, England) is an artist and writer, and a curator at The Magic Circle Museum where, in 2013, he rediscovered Austin Spare's forgotten tarot deck. His subsequent book *Lost*

*Envoy – The Tarot Deck of Austin Osman Spare* is published by Strange Attractor Press (2016). Allen's writing has featured elsewhere recently in *Truth is Concrete – A Handbook For Artistic Strategies in Real Politics* (Sternberg Press, 2014), *Notes on The Magic of the State* (Lisson Gallery & Beirut, 2013), and *Curiosity and Method: Ten Years of Cabinet Magazine* (Cabinet Books, 2012). He has exhibited and performed widely in the UK and internationally since the early 1990s, including at Singapore Biennale (2006), Frankfurter Kunstverein (2008), Arnolfini in Bristol (2013), and currently in *Explode Ever Day* at the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art. In 2009, he initiated and co-curated the Hayward Gallery touring exhibition *Magic Show*. [www.jonathanallen.info](http://www.jonathanallen.info)

### The Tarot Deck of Austin Osman Spare

In *Two Tracts on Cartomancy* by Austin Osman Spare (Fulgur, 1997), Gavin W. Semple examined the English mystic and artist's lifelong interest in fortune-telling cards. Semple described Spare's translation of the "rational meanings" of divination cards into "cryptic symbols [that] by their chance alignments and juxtapositions ... reveal their positions as connective media." In 2013 a deck of 79 hand-painted tarot cards constructed by Austin Spare c.1906 was discovered in the archives of London's Magic Circle Museum. This previously unknown relic of the British occult revival is conspicuous for a number of reasons, not least for the interconnecting images and texts that are formed between cards when two or more are placed contiguously alongside one another. Across this unfixed region – one never before activated within the context of cartomancy – Spare drew and wrote freely, as if articulating the oracular responses of his deck through a miscellany

of fractured motifs. This presentation introduces Spare's tarot deck, tracing its provenance through the related artworks and writing of its creator, and through the records of The Magic Circle Museum, the cards' home since 1944. As well as examining the deck's unprecedented structure and variant iconography, I will focus in particular on its experimental system of "connective media", and draw parallels with contemporary modes of interstitiality and montage.

**Robert Ansell** is a publisher, curator and scholar. His field of expertise is esoteric art of the 20th century with a specific focus on Austin Osman Spare. Through his company FULGUR he has represented esoteric artists in book form since 1992. In recent years he has also gained note as an independent art curator specializing in the esoteric. Robert is also the publisher and art editor of *Abraxas Journal*, which has been described as 'today's pre-eminent voice for the serious study of occult and esoteric expression.' He has been interviewed for the BBC Culture Show, the blog Boing Boing, and Dazed and Confused.

### Androgyny, Biology and Latent Memory in the Work of Austin Osman Spare

Austin Osman Spare (1886-1956) was one of the first 20th century artists to explicitly express an interest in the occult. From an early age he excelled as a draughtsman and subsequently received a formal art education, attending Lambeth School of Art and the RCA. Over a professional life of fifty years he produced in excess of 2500 finished works (including many self-portraits) and employed a variety of approaches and styles to his occult subjects. Common among them was a predilection for the grotesque and an often-latent sexualisation. Despite these interests, for the majority of his life Spare

did not integrate with contemporary occult groups. As early as 1904 he began developing 'a religion of my own' and this found expression in a handful of books, largely self-published. In *The Book of Pleasure (Self-Love)* *The Psychology of Ecstasy* (1913) he advocated the use of automatic drawing and magical sigils as means for accessing the subconscious. In *The Focus of Life* (1921) he employed an abstract narrative style to express a personal ontology founded on his 'Neither-Neither' principle. In 1949 Spare was introduced to Kenneth Grant (1924-2011) who served as his confidante and amanuensis until the artist's death in 1956. This paper will explore the visual treatment of androgyny in Spare's work between 1904-1921. It will illustrate how the symbol of the androgyne evolved for the artist, with a particular focus on his self-portraiture. It will also explore Spare's ontological position with regards to androgyny; his ideas toward identity, biology and latent memory, and how these correspond with select published works of the day. It will also discuss Spare's concept of 'the Neither-Neither I' and his idea of 'Self-Love' as a means to creativity, ecstasy and spiritual wholeness. My aim is to demonstrate that Spare was attempting to integrate a developed visual aesthetic with philosophical and magical intents.

**Krzysztof Azarewicz** is a Polish-born traveller, publisher, psychonaut and explorer of magical realms of existence. A founder and director of Lashtal Press that publishes books by Aleister Crowley, Austin O. Spare and others in Polish, Krzysztof has also written several essays on Thelema, Magick, Tarot and Alchemy that were translated into English, French and Spanish.

He holds a M.A. in Political Science.

He travels extensively with his wife, Ania, exploring magical realms of existence from Tibetan plateau, through pyramids and deserts of Northern Africa, to occult scenes of Berlin, London and New York.

### **Treasure House of Images: Mysticism and Transcendence in the Art of J.F.C. Fuller**

J.F.C. Fuller (1878 – 1966) was a British Army officer, military historian, strategist, early theorist of modern armoured warfare, whose analysis helped to develop a tactics called blitzkrieg. He was also a student of Aleister Crowley and a member of his magical order called AA. Not much attention is put on his career as an artist. He created extraordinary mystical paintings and drawings used by Crowley to illustrate his periodical of scientific illuminism, "The Equinox". Fuller's paintings were also supposed to decorate walls of the AA temples in order to create a specific mystical atmosphere allowing aspirants to transcend everyday state of mind and enter the state of Gnosis. Similar experimental attitude was adopted by Paul Gauguin in his House of Pleasure and Aleister Crowley in his Abbey of Thelema.

In this richly illustrated presentation Krzysztof will discuss symbolism of Fuller's artwork and also will share his experiences from magical workings conducted in the modern temple decorated with murals inspired by Fuller.

**Carlos Ruiz Brussain** is an artist and a lecturer. His practice is in the fields of drawing, illustration, concept art and painting. He lectures in illustration, creative methodologies and creative techniques at ERAM Escola Universitaria-University of Girona (Spain). He holds a Master's degree in Design from the University of Lincoln (UK) and a Postgraduate Diploma in Art Therapy from the University of Girona.

He is a member of the Drawing Research Network; the Archive for Research in Archetypal Symbolism; the Teaching Innovation Network: Play and Learning (University of Girona); and the research group Play and New Technologies Applied to Teaching Innovation (University of Girona).

### **Within the Hyperdream Magic Circle: Manifesting the Unconscious through Illustration Play and Games**

During the last decades a number of academic studies explored the relationships between play and creativity (Winnicott, 1971; Csikszentmihalyi, 1975; Landau, 1984; Martin and Bateson, 2013).

Still, the link between play, creativity and magic; the thought processes involved; and, the creative rituals that predispose artists for their "shamanic journeys" has been almost neglected. Beyond the isolated cases of A. O. Spare, X. Solar, and J. Pollock, Dadaists and Surrealists were the most important antecedent in the conjoint practice of the three disciplines but, even there is some literature on their ludic activities (Brotchie & Gooding, 1995; Laxton, 2003; Dickerman, 2005; Malone et al., 2009), and some that analyses the link between both avant-gardes and magic (Balakian, 1971; Choucha, 1992; Warlick, 2001; Moffitt, 2003; Rabinovitch, 2003; Lepetit, 2012; Bauduin, 2012), formal investigation about the relationship between games, magic and art is scarce. Additionally, fantasy thinking and rituals cannot be separated from ludic nor magic activity, but within the arts they have not been studied with the attention they deserve.

My practice-led research analyses the development of a play-based creative framework for visionary and fantastic

illustration practice. It is inspired by the world of dreams, reverie states, and fantasies and explores how fantasy thinking might be increased by the use of active imagination and play dynamics for their value as motivators for creativity. It encompasses different ludic approaches, techniques, and tools designed to provoke motivation through randomness and unexpectedness, which allows the emergence of raw archetypal and symbolic material.

I have been using Surrealist games, the theory of flow introduced by Csikszentmihalyi, and depth psychology as key references.

In conclusion, I argue that the thought processes involved in the creation of visionary and fantastic illustration should be related to fantasy thinking, which can be provoked by playful activities practiced as magical rituals.

**Sasha Chaitow, Ph.D.** is a British-Greek scholar, author, and artist. She completed her doctoral research on Joséphin Péladan's life and work in 2014 at the University of Essex. She initially trained in figurative art at Vakalo College of Art (Athens, Greece), and she holds two MAs in Western Esotericism (University of Exeter, 2008), and English Literature (University of Indianapolis, 2004).

Now an independent scholar, she is interested in the interdisciplinary study of the intersection between esotericism and art and is currently exploring the symbolism of Greek icons, both artistically and from a scholarly perspective. She has published a monograph on Péladan (Salonica, 2013), several academic articles on Péladan and other topics in Western Esotericism for international academic journals, and has published internationally on related topics

for the general reader. She has delivered numerous academic and public lectures on related subjects, and is currently revising her PhD dissertation for publication with Brill Academic Press in 2017.

Sasha is also a prolific visual artist and runs a gallery specialising in sacred art and heraldry in Corfu, Greece, representing over 30 artists as well as some of her own work. Since 2000 she has exhibited in Greece, the UK, Sweden and Spain, and her artwork has been included in international cultural publications. Her work is found in private collections worldwide.

### **Saving the Lives of Angels: Joséphin Péladan's Vision for Redemption Through the Arts**

#### **Abstract**

During the artistic explosion marking the Parisian Belle Époque, the Salons de la Rose et Croix (1892-1897), though short-lived, were perhaps one of the most ambitious artistic undertakings seen by 19th century French art world. They sought to unite the arts into a revival of initiatory drama, with philosophical foundations rooted in Western occultism and idealist thought.

The Salons were the brainchild of one of the enfants terribles of the French Occult Revival; esoteric philosopher and author Joséphin Péladan (Sâr Merodack, 1858-1918), a key figure in the inception and development of fin-de-siècle French Symbolism. His ultimate goal was a revolution against realism and the re-enchancement and spiritual regeneration of what he saw as a disintegrating and decadent society. Influenced by Platonic philosophy and Luciferian theology, his grand vision comprised an imaginal world in which artist-initiates would form the inner circle, designed to ignite a collective

awakening in society and replace religion with art. The artist-initiates would raise the souls of the masses to ecstasy through aesthetic bombardment with symbolic images that would simultaneously stimulate the intellect and the soul. The ultimate end of this awakening would be restitution for the Fall of man and angels through human creativity.

Péladan's work attempts to dissolve boundaries on several levels. He broke with esoteric "secrecy" and published self-initiation manuals proclaiming his message; he used every artistic communication channel available to disseminate his message; inspired scores of artists to take up his cause; and produced a vast literary oeuvre to support and explain his philosophy. Very much the product of his time, his work reflects the birth of Modernism and the growing social turmoil during the early 20th century.

After a brief introduction to Péladan's life and times and a contextualisation of his core message, this paper focuses on his concept of the role of art and artists and their power to effect individual and social change according to his esoteric-aesthetic philosophy.

### Art exhibit

One of Péladan's key premises was that art should speak to both the intellect and the soul, spurring viewers to cultivate their understanding of the underlying symbolic messages, and to grasp esoteric truths that could not be as effectively expressed in words.

This collection of original oil paintings by Sasha Chaitow, created especially for the Trans-States Conference, illustrates key esoteric concepts from Péladan's work that are also discussed in the conference paper. Using Peladan's

own symbolic stories and concepts, she builds symbolic compositions encapsulating various aspects of his esoteric philosophy, demonstrating how he intended art to become a portal into self-awareness and esoteric awakening.

**Alistair Coombs** is writing his Ph.D. on fire and light symbolism within Buddhist consciousness, from fire ritual, mediation and cosmology (University of Kent). His writings have otherwise appeared in *Darklore*, *Nexus* and *New Dawn*.

### Kenneth Grant's Borderland of Mystic Horror

Grant's symbolic and perplexing universe is deeply embroidered with fictions selectively sourced from the genre of supernatural horror. His alternative vision, or one might say, siderealisation of Thelema, therefore follows a highly visual narrative that unites eastern mysticism with images of the literary nightmarish, and more besides. The strange and super-exotic figures of his iconography inhabit a hidden borderland or netherworld between wakefulness and sleep, between inner consciousness and outer space. The nodules between wakefulness and sleep are emphasized as portals accessing such realms wrought from surrealistic design and a host of unearthly, hypnagogic encounter. Located beyond rigid objective categories and limited perception, this world is a playhouse of imaginative transformation that has coloured and informed the western esoteric tradition.

**Benedetta d'Ettorre** is a current Curating Contemporary Art student at the Royal College of Art. One of her first greatest interests was a research on the life and the political and religious thinking of the French philosopher and mystic Simone Weil. This led to a one yearlong research

exploring the cyclical peaks and downs of faith in Western culture, through arts and the process of secularism (with selected examples from literature, visual arts, theatre and philosophy), from Zoroastrianism up to the twentieth century. Weil's religious attitude is contrasted with the one of another philosopher, Emil Cioran. They are taken as symbols of the two religious sentiments left to Europeans after World War Two.

Her interest around art has then turned, during her previous cycle of studies, into a focus around alternative practices and organisations like artist-run spaces and art-squats. In particular, she explored defining and contrasting elements among these spaces, suggesting that their sustainable set of practices may represent an option for developing management structures in arts organisations. She presented her research paper on the topic at the 2015 edition of the international Journal of Arts and Design Education conference. At the moment, she is interested in alternative curatorial approaches and their cultural implications.

### Curating Trans- States

Can an exhibition be a medium to reach "trans-states"? Exhibitions are the medium for curatorial experimentation and a relative new discursive space around artistic practice. Curators use exhibitions as a medium to present works, convey knowledge, challenge ideas and conform to specific discourses, but what happens when the curator is also a shaman? The exhibition takes on the curatorial project, re-positioning the exhibition space in the contingency. "Return to Normalcy: Birth of a New Museum", Grace Nditiru's show at the Glasgow School of Art, challenges the desynchronised space of exhibition, where boundaries are actively

transgressed. She curated the exhibition following her artistic practice, infused with her own shamanic experiences and based on 16 years of research on alternative and nomadic communities. The exhibition assumes a high degree of performativity where visitors can re-enact the shaman's journey of death and re-birth. The show is based around a commissioned film, for which she decided to do a shamanic ritual. She summoned spirits from the Upper and Under Worlds to help the 're-birth' of the Mackintosh building, historic building of the Glasgow School of Art, damaged in the 2014 fire. The process of re-birth is inherent in the exhibition space itself. It strives to cross over to the museum's state condensing Nditiru's research on ways to bring museums back to life. Finally, what significance can have this exhibition and "non-logical" curating in the context of the art school in inspiring young artists?

**Orryelle Defenestrade-Bascule** is an esoteric artist in many media, including painting, writing, sculpture, sound, video and performance art. His 'Tela Quadrivium' series of alchemical art books are published by Fulgur Limited (Conjunctio 2008, Coagula 2010, Solve 2011, Distillatio June 2015); his text-based book 'Time Fate and Spider Magic' by Avalonia Books (UK), and The Book of Kaos Tarot (iNSPIRALink.Multimedia Press); in addition to contributions to several esoteric collections and journals such as XVI (Scarlet Imprint), Mandragora (Scarlet Imprint), Abraxas 2 CD (Fulgur), Atua (Fulgur), Hekate: Her Sacred Fires (Avalonia), Fenris Wolf #8 (Edda, imminent).

He is the writer-director of Australian-based Metamorphic Ritual Theatre Company ([www.crossroads.wild.net.au/morph.htm](http://www.crossroads.wild.net.au/morph.htm)) who have presented many major original productions based in (and updating/ mutating) various ancient mythos, and



he often performs (solo and with others) and exhibits internationally (UK, Belgium, Australia, USA, Italy, Norway, Austria...), and has given several presentations at the Esoteric Book Conference in Seattle.

His work engages with connecting the subconscious and conscious through employment of magical and mythical symbols and archetypes, as a part of the vanguard of current resurgence in esoteric arts balanced between the conceptual and the aesthetic.

### **Chess Symbolism and the Alchemical Marriage**

Orryelle will be performing live at Trans-States, using voice and violin with loop and FX pedals in conjunction with the screening of his new Alchemical Chess film. The actual Alchemical Chess set (crafted of bronze, glass and clay) he will be using in the performance will also be on exhibit for closer inspection. Orryelle will introduce the concepts and symbolism involved in a brief talk preceding the performance.

There is a lot of Alchemical and Magical symbolism inherent in the game of Chess. It is my intent to bring out these esoteric undertones, and by making them more extant also transform the game itself and its metaphorical context in relation to our civilisation. It seems that modern western chess has become primarily a game of war — it is based on strategies derived from battles and is highly competitive. It does however have deep philosophical subtexts and was originally devised in India by a sage to give a king new insight into the profundities underlying social roles and interactions. The form of the game and many of the pieces has changed considerably since then. Here I aim not to change it back, rather return some of the magical symbolism but within a western

as well as eastern esoteric context. The most obvious parallel between the game of chess and the quest of Alchemy is that it deals with opposites and duality, and ultimately transcendence thereof. What I discovered when applying alchemical symbolism to the set is that it transforms into a game of Love rather than a game of War. In alchemy the aim is to unite rather than conquer opposites, so all the dualities in the game are resolved and dissolved in sacred Conjunction.

**Alkistis Dimech** is a dancer/choreographer, whose practice is principally grounded in the *ankoku* butoh of Hijikata Tatsumi, a discipline/philosophy of dance that she has trained in and performed since 2002. Sabbathic dance is her progression of this 'dance of darkness,' a project exploring the intersection of the dancing, affective body, consciousness and practices associated with magic, witchcraft and shamanism. With Peter Grey she co-founded Scarlet Imprint in 2007. Her essays will be gathered in *The Brazen Vessel* later this year.

### **Where the Daimon Dwells: A Chorography of the Space Between**

I will explore the liminality of performer and performance space, and their relationship in presencing the invisible reality – the other, sacred or daimonic.

In his final extant letter, written on 24th February 1948, Artaud resolved to devote himself to:

a theatre of blood  
a theatre which with each performance  
will have done something  
*bodily* to the one who performs as well as  
the one who comes to see others perform  
but actually  
the actors are not performing

they are doing.

The theatre is in reality the genesis of creation.

Performance potentially generates a space for materialisation, for transformation and for the dissolving of boundaries. Movement itself engenders this transfigured space, and makes it visible to the eye and tangible to the senses. In this presentation I will trace the relation of this interstitial space with the dancing body, grounded in an aesthetics and kinetics of the interval. I will discuss the techniques of trance and transformation as a method of presencing the Other, in space and in the body; and chor(e)ography as an art of crossing the threshold, where the daimon dwells.

Alkistis Dimech will giving an exclusive solo performance. She has written a short piece that contextualises her performance here: <http://sabbaticdance.com/corpus/arax-scorning-bridges/>

**Stefanie Elrick** is a writer, artist and performer with an MA in Performance, Screen and Visual Studies from Manchester University. In her 20's she toured fantasy stage shows with Hawkwind, The Levellers, The Age of Glass, Peaches Christ, Zsa Zsa Noir and others and devised the immersive LABOLIS theatre series. In collaboration with Loren Fetterman, she's blood-lined poetry into her skin during 'Written in Skin' and been strapped to a 12ft spinning timepiece for 'KAİROS'. She's published in Martain Migraine Press's "Cthulhusattva : Tales of the Black Gnosis" and has lectured at Manchester University and Wimbledon Art College. She's fascinated by hybrids, shape-shifting, the languages of the flesh and rites of passage.

**Written in Skin: Flesh as a Language Frontier**

In May 2014 a live art piece *Written in Skin* was held in Manchester, executed in five stages over six months it explored the exchange meaning through verbal, visual and visceral discourses. This paper explores the construction of a multifaceted female identity within the project as the poetry of strangers was blood-lined into skin and the healing process documented.

Using Hélène Cixous's essay *The Laugh of the Medusa* and her concept of l'écriture féminine, I'll argue why I believe performance art is the most potent way to articulate transcendental identities. I also argue that the presence of duality was crucial to the project's success. *Written in Skin* was essentially an act of protest in response to our cultural notions of beauty, sexuality and our fear of and reluctance to expose ourselves to pain. Through the act of embodiment, with the understanding of flesh as an alternate language frontier, notions of passivity, strength, beauty, vulnerability, expression, regeneration and the rigidity of gender stereotypes themselves were unravelled.

So if the skin can fully regenerate after undergoing such a process, are our interior worlds capable of similar transformation? Is pain, whether emotional or physical, a positive and necessary catalyst towards self-realisation?

**Per Faxneld, Ph.D.** obtained his Ph.D. in the History of Religions at Stockholm University in 2014. Currently, he is pursuing a post-doc at Mid-Sweden University, and has been a visiting scholar at Cambridge University (Fall term 2015). He is the author of two monographs on the history of Satanism, co-editor of two books on the same topic for OUP, and has published more than 30 peer-reviewed articles and book chapters on various matters related

to Western esotericism. 2010-2015 he served as editor of the ESSWE Newsletter.

### **Bleed for the Devil: Self-injury as Transgressive Practice in Contemporary Satanism, and the Re-enchantment of Late Modernity**

Using ethnographic method combined with analysis of primary sources like mass media appearances, song lyrics and websites, the paper examines ritualized self-injury in the Black Metal milieu. It is shown that this type of ascetic mortification is no aberration in the history of religions at large, yet diverges from older forms of Satanism. Self-injury functions in Black Metal Satanism as a symbol of transgression and virile bravado, and as a means to display allegiance to the Satanic cause by permanently marking the body. It is typically described by practitioners as a blood sacrifice to Satan. This ritualization of self-injury, where it is explicitly framed as a practice completely different from anything occurring in a secular context, is part of a broader endeavor in the milieu, which seeks to re-enchant a late modernity perceived to be devoid of spiritual values. Increasing mass media attention to self-injury, there postulated as a (secular) mental health problem among adolescent girls, has therefore lessened its usefulness as a sacralized and masculine transgressive symbol. This, it is argued, explains the declining emphasis on it in the Satanic milieu in recent years.

**Ana Belén González-Pérez** has a five year Degree in Philosophy at UNED, Madrid. She also has a DEA (equivalent to a master) in Philosophy of XXth century, with a final work on "The Pragmatism of William James" at the University of Malaga. She has specialized her philosophical research in Philosophy of Science, Pragmatism, and Epistemology.

She did a three months research period on Pragmatism in the University of Sheffield. She started and abandoned a Ph.D. in Susan Haack in the University of Málaga.

She has been a student and practitioner of Magic and Astrology for more than fifteen years. She is a writer, with four novels for children published and a historical novel in progress. She teaches Philosophy at the high school level in Spain. She is planning to do a Ph.D. in Western Esotericism to join her passions, Philosophy, Esotericism, and Teaching into an academic career.

### **Epistemology of Magic. A Transdisciplinary Approach to the Quest for Results in *Ars Magica***

The magical theory is based upon the idea of modifying consciousness and the environment through non-causal actions. From an emic perspective, magic works. From an etic perspective, scientific analysis deems magic as refutable. Either we suppose magic and science live in parallel worlds or one of them is wrong.

In this paper, I try to explain why traditional science has no tools to evaluate if magic obtains valuable results, and to outline a pragmatist approximation to the methods of evaluation used by magic. For that purpose, I will mention Marco Pasi's attempts to define magic. I will also distinguish the subjective from the objective effects of magical work.

With respect to subjective effects, I will mention the current crisis of the psychology attempts for mathematizing its results. I will set the thesis that the human being cannot be seen as a finished creature that is ruled by eternal rules, and this is the source of the problems psychological investigation is facing. From this perspective, magic considers

the human being a creature in transition which purpose is precisely the change. I will mention some esoteric authors like Don Webb or Stephen Flowers, and some literary works like "The Neverending Story" by Michael Ende and "Promethea" by Alan Moore.

To deal with the objective effects, I will develop a pragmatist concept of truth that is not limited by the positivist view which considers the only truth is scientific truth. I will define a concept of reality based on the "Innocent Realism" of Susan Haack and the perspective on Parmenides by Peter Kingsley. I will plant some doubts about the existence of eternal laws and the reproducibility of any event. I will mention Hume and Goodman's paradox.

To conclude, I will formulate my thesis of Magic as the discipline of the Unique Events.

**Geoff Greentree** has travelled extensively, visiting many remote areas in Africa and the Middle East initially in the early 80's while working on irrigation projects and subsequently studying tribal beliefs in Darfur, Upper Egypt and Madagascar. This led on to an interest in Native American practises and a desire to bring these into a modern context. After qualifying as a Shiatsu practitioner (he also teaches) in the late 80's, he was based in Northern California working with HIV positive people in Chinese medicine practises and discovered a Lakota Shamanka running Sweatlodges for HIV positive people with incredible results.

### The Sweat Lodge: Ancient Technology in Modern Context

I propose to present an illustrated talk on The Sweat Lodge; it's history, uses and how it works in a modern social

context. Starting with the evidence of heat treatments from natural thermal springs and historical antecedents from Parmenides, Imhotep, Hippocrates et al in the near East city-states; looking at the evidence for use of hot stones for cleansing and purification in long barrows in Europe and elsewhere; re-appraising our archaeological view on group ceremonies of transcendence and transformation.

Some details, will be given, on the suppression of the Lodges in Native American post-colonial culture and how the ceremonies have re-emerged and are now being shared with other cultures.

I will explain how the Lodge is built and how its structure and symbolism are intrinsic to one another; how ceremonies can be adapted to the modern need for transcendence in a supportive group context. How important for us moderns to re-connect on the earth as equals and how the blend of elements enables us to transform our everyday perception to be outside ourselves and modern time. Connecting with ancestral practices.

**Peter Grey** is a writer and co-founder of occult publisher Scarlet Imprint. He is the author of three books, *The Red Goddess*, *Apocalyptic Witchcraft* and *Lucifer: Princeps*. His essays have been disseminated widely in print and online, and he has lectured internationally. An exponent of low witchcraft and high ritual; he is particularly noted for his work on eschatology, ecology and Babalon.

### Becoming No-Man: The Blooded Path to Babalon

The transformation of the male erotic landscape through magical and witchcraft practices as constellated about the female mysteries of Babalon.

Special attention is given to the pact of transformative blood rituals: menstruation, modification, ordeal and the meaning of animal sacrifice. An account of ongoing magical work by a modern practitioner following the skein of menstrual magic anticipated in such partnerships as Marjorie Cameron and Jack Parsons, Penelope Shuttle and Peter Redgrove.

**Sara Hannant** is a photographer and author whose work over the last ten years has explored magical belief, seasonal cycles and folklore. Her first book *Mummers, Maypoles and Milkmaids: A Journey through the English Ritual Year* (2011) received the runner-up Katharine Briggs Folklore Award in 2012. Sara has exhibited widely including at The Royal Society of Arts, The Horniman Museum, The South Bank Centre and Towner Art Gallery. Her photographs have been featured on the BBC, and in The Guardian and The Sunday Times among others. Since 2010, she has lectured in photography at City University in London.

### **Of Shadows: Reflections on an artist residency at the Museum of Witchcraft and Magic in Cornwall**

In this presentation I will show images from my recent artist residency at the Museum of Witchcraft and Magic, and consider object biographies of the artefacts depicted. I photographed a wide range of objects including wax dolls, wands, statues, daggers, pendants, robes, and amulets, all used in the practice of witchcraft. I chose to photograph at night, enabling the objects to emerge from the darkness, where it is said magic begins. Reflecting on this process, I found parallels with photographic practice. Superstition and magic have encircled photography from the beginning. In many cultures, the word for photography/photographer translates

as 'soul taker', 'shadow catcher', or 'face stealer'. The camera itself was perceived as a magical object, and photographs were thought to possess supernatural powers, or be amenable to witchcraft.

In witchcraft, magic is practiced to bring about transformation and sometimes objects are made or charged with magical intent for this purpose. Similarly, the photographic process can transform objects, images and ideas that contribute to its meaning. I became fascinated to explore how light and darkness define and articulate our relationship to enchantment and if this mechanism can be employed to suggest narrative and significance. *Of Shadows: One Hundred Objects from the Museum of Witchcraft and Magic* will be published by Strange Attractor Press in 2016.

**Scott Jeffery, Ph.D.** The human Scott Jeffery received his Ph.D. from the School of Applied Social Science at Stirling University in 2013. His time is currently divided between lecturing in Sociology between Perth College, UHI and Stirling University. When not teaching he can be found performing stand-up comedy and updating his blogs, including the main hub *Nth Mind* which covers many topics related to Post/Humanism, comics studies, film and the esoteric. His first book, entitled *The Posthuman Body in Superhero Comics: Human, Superhuman, Transhuman, Post/Human* will be published by Palgrave in the spring of 2016.

### **Tantric Transhumanism: An Esoteric History of Human Enhancement**

This paper proposes a model of *Tantric Transhumanism* as a counterpoint to the dominant intellectual frameworks underlying much Transhumanist philosophy. Though it is concerned with

the proactive enhancement of human bodies and minds with technology many argue that Transhumanism is an ideological descendent of the Enlightenment with its roots in rational humanism. Viewed this way, Transhumanism lends itself easily to both utilitarian and neo-liberal economic visions. While both the European Utilitarian model and the American Libertarian model both present as rational, materialist philosophies (albeit differing along ideological lines) there remain strands of Transhumanist thought that have a more problematic relationship with these very same Enlightenment ideals of rationalism and materialism. Never the less, a second strain of “irrational” Transhumanism which appears to betray a metaphysical or even mystical streak can be discerned.

This strain of Transhumanism runs through the Western occult tradition (indeed, the founder of Theosophy Madame H.P. Blavatsky was writing of the ‘post-Human’ as early as 1888). An alternative history of Transhumanism, which might be dubbed “*Tantric Transhumanism*” presents itself; one which takes in Crowley and contemporary chaos magick, as well as the transpersonal psychologies of Maslow, Groff and Timothy Leary. *Tantric Transhumanism* merges modern science and new technologies and archaic spiritualities in a matrix of mutual influences that cultural theorist Erik Davis attempts to capture with the term ‘technosis’. *Tantric Transhumanism* may be said to focus more on the transformation of consciousness rather than the body or linear, ‘rational’, intelligence. As in the Human Potential Movement of the 1960s, which found archetypal expressions in the Esalen Institute, emphasis is placed on transpersonal and spiritual experience. Contemporary ‘trans-spirit’ research including a renewed scientific interest in psychedelics, meditation and the emerging

field of neuro-theology all speak of the need to rediscover Transhumanism’s hidden history, with the hope of providing a corrective to the rational-libertarian discourse that currently marks its territory.

**Richard Kaczynski Ph.D.** is the author of *Perdurabo: The Life of Aleister Crowley* (2002; rev. exp. ed. 2010)—widely considered the definitive biography of the Great Beast—along with *Forgotten Templars: The Untold Origins of Ordo Templi Orientis* (2012) and *The Billionth Monkey* (2015). He has spoken internationally on the creation and cultural impact of the *Thoth Tarot*, with papers on the subject published in *Tarot in Culture* (2014), *Mathematics in Popular Culture* (2012), and *Tarosophist International* (2009). He maintains the *Thoth Sightings* webpage, which tracks appearances of the *Thoth Tarot* in popular media including movies, television, graphic novels, and record covers. Richard’s other books include *The Weiser Concise Guide to Aleister Crowley* (2009), *Panic in Detroit: The Magician and the Motor City* (2006), and *Perdurabo Outtakes* (2005), as well as contributions to the anthologies *A Rose Veiled in Black* (2016), *Success Is Your Proof* (2015), and *Aleister Crowley and Western Esotericism* (2012), among others. He has appeared in the television documentaries *Secrets of the Occult* (2006) and *Aleister Crowley: The Beast 666* (2007).

**Jonah Locksley** is a cultural historian and writer. Some of his essays have appeared in *Abraxas Journal*, *Atlas Obscura*, *Disinformation*, and *Ultraculture*. He has also appeared on The Hermetic Library. Jonah curates The Thinker’s Garden, an educational venture which seeks to encourage speculative thought through explorations of the sublime and arcane aspects of art, history, and literature. He is broadly interested in the *longue durée*

evolution and interplay of philosophical-religious ideas in Europe from Antiquity to the Renaissance, but is primarily a fancier of occult and supernaturalist fiction.

### **Edward Bulwer-Lytton and the Art of the Dream**

Edward Bulwer-Lytton was arguably the most influential English populariser of occultism in the Victorian era. His metaphysical romances, such as “Zanoni” and “The Coming Race”, are types of tropological compendiums of Western esoteric thought which offer novel interpretations of the psychic dimensions of human intelligence; touching on movements like Mesmerism, Spiritualism, and Rosicrucianism. This talk examines Bulwer-Lytton’s conception of the use and purpose of meditation, trance, and dreaming, mysterious techniques which feature prevalently in several of his works.

**Patricia MacCormack Ph.D.** has published extensively on feminism, the philosophies of Deleuze, Guattari, Lyotard, Serres and Bataille, posthuman theory, teratology, animal rights, European horror films, chaos magick, Lovecraft and other trajectories of alterity.

She is the author of *Cinesexuality* (2008) and *Posthuman Ethics* (2012), the co-editor of *Deleuze and the Schizoanalysis of Cinema* (2008) and *The Animal Catalyst: Toward Ahuman Theory* (2014)

**Simon Magus, MB BS** is a psychiatrist with a special interest in Early Intervention Psychosis. He studied medicine in London at Charing Cross and Westminster Medical School, now part of the Imperial College of Science, Technology and Medicine.

After qualifying, he taught Anatomy as the Royal College Prosector to the Royal

College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow, and as an associate lecturer in Anatomy and Embryology at the University of Glasgow. After initially following a neurosurgical path, he changed to psychiatry in 1996.

Simon’s interest in esotericism predates his medical studies by a number of years. He completed an MA in Western Esotericism at EXESES, The Exeter Centre for the Study of Esotericism, the University of Exeter in 2008/9. His thesis was entitled *Austin Osman Spare and the Conquest of the Imaginal: Paranoia, Metanoia and Phronesis of the Magical Mind*. He is interested in the interplay of descriptive psychopathology and the phenomenology of magical praxis, and spirituality and psychosis. During his MA studies he developed broad perspectives in esotericism on subjects including alchemy and its transmission to the Latin West, Alexandrian Hermetism, and Renaissance Kabbalah. His specialist field of enquiry now centres on Victorian and Edwardian literary expressions of occultism, and he is currently reading for a PhD at Exeter, his thesis entitled *Rider Haggard and the Imperial Occult: Hermetic Discourse and Romantic Contiguity*.

### **The Place of Snakes or Seraphs?: Schizotypy, Esoteric Hermeneutics and Παράνοια**

In 1902 William James enquired in *The Varieties of Religious Experience* as to the reasons why some individuals found the magical and mystical in their experience of alterations in consciousness, and why some found madness: the place of seraphs or the place of snakes respectively. In the following paper I shall explore the relationship of kinship between what I shall call for convenience the ‘magical’ mind-set and the ‘paranoid’ mind-set.

I shall deploy Antonie Faivre's original criteria for esotericism which although criticised for a long period in the Academy are now being re-evaluated in terms of the original notion of a 'mode of thought' – associated with his concept of *l'aire de famille* to denote the compass of esoteric literature – and compare these directly with the diagnostic criteria for Schizotypal Personality and Disorder as described in the DSM V and ICD10 classifications. Central to this discussion is Gordon Claridge's original concept of schizotypy in the normative personality, and its emphasis therefore explicitly avoids pathologisation. To illustrate my arguments empirically, I shall deploy a number of clinical vignettes of case studies to illustrate the commonalities and differences between the 'magical' mind and the 'paranoid' mind, without reducing one to the other in either direction. This is in keeping with the 'Trans' theme of the conference as it focuses on the importance of transdisciplinarity between psychiatric and esoteric studies: I shall employ imagistic representations of the 'mad' and the 'mystical' as an important emphasis of the presentation.

This approach attempts a comparative phenomenology of psychosis and quasi-psychotic phenomena as described in the language of descriptive psychopathology with that of the experience of magical and mystical praxis as documented by esoteric literature and hermeneutic methods.

**Cavan McLaughlin** is a broadcaster, creative media practitioner and Senior Lecturer in Media Production at the University of Northampton with research interests around the role of spirituality and occultism in contemporary visual culture. He is particularly fascinated by Western Esoteric symbolism and

themes found in popular, surrealist and avant-garde narrative film and promotional music videos.

He is a practicing freelance filmmaker, graphic designer, editor, producer and director. As a media professional of some 14 years, he has been involved in almost all aspects of audiovisual production, specialising in promotional music videos and album sleeve artwork. His music videos have been broadcast on various digital satellite channels including *Kerrang! TV*, *Scuzz* and *Redemption TV* (now *Rockworld TV*).

### **Exhibition Screening of *Kyrie Eleison* by *Denigrata***

Kyrie Eleison is the first single from Denigrata's compelling debut album. Denigrata know that their styling and their music speaks very much for itself and are wisely sparing, with their self-explication. What they do say packs a punch and likewise sets the entire tone for this collaborative audiovisual interpretation of their work, so it is worth repeating here: "Denigrata are an ambient, tech-fuelled black metal collective [...] born from nihilism, avant-garde darkness and filth." And so this film is an equally avant-garde, dark, visual exploration of these themes, fully grounded — in filth.

Featuring a cameo from author and magus, Alan Moore, the primary setting is the very peculiarly British natural surroundings of Delapré Abbey's public parks. The location is really one of the players, and plays the part of Wyrd Northampton's chthonic and earthy underbelly. The film focuses on contrast and interplay in all of its aspects. From the black and white grade, to the contrast of extreme close up (ECU) textural photography against the barren and bleak wide shots; the interplay



of long, slow, lingering shots and furiously rapid montages and jarring jump cuts. It is non-narrative and non-linear. Abstract and unconsciously meaningful.

In short, it is an experimental piece of collaborative audiovisual art that seeks to knowingly add to the occultural reservoir.

**Alan Moore** is a prolific and much-celebrated writer and artist, perhaps best known for his writing of comics and graphic novels. His many titles include *Promethea*, *Lost Girls*, *League of Extraordinary Gentlemen*, his long-awaited epic second novel *Jerusalem* and his upcoming co-authored book on magic, *The Moon and Serpent Bumper Book of Magic*.

A self-proclaimed practicing magician, Alan frequently speaks authoritatively on the subject of magic and Western Esotericism is a feature in a number of his creative works (perhaps most notably *From Hell* and *Promethea*). He directly associates magic with art and the writing process: "I believe that magic is art, and that art, whether that be music, writing, sculpture, or any other form, is literally magic. Art is, like magic, the science of manipulating symbols, words or images, to achieve changes in consciousness ... Indeed, to cast a spell is simply to spell, to manipulate words, to change people's consciousness, and this is why I believe that an artist or writer is the closest thing in the contemporary world to a shaman."

Born in Northampton, where he still resides, Alan has a very strong connection with the local area and we are delighted that he has agreed to come and speak for us.

**Julia Moore** is a Ph.D. researcher at Canterbury Christ Church University. Her research investigates the role of

intuitive methods inspired by mediumship development and surrealist games in academic practices of reading and writing. She is also an artist with a practice encompassing film and video, collaboration and automatic techniques. Recent works include *Experimental Séance* parts I and II (2014/2015).

**Nicholas Morgan** is an independent artist and curator based in London. He has performed self-written pieces at the Battersea Arts Centre (2014/2015), is co-creator of *Action Pulpeuse*, a monthly performance event, and (in 2003) performed at *What work does the artwork do*, a symposium with the conceptual art group *Art & Language*.

### **Experimental Séance: Writing and Performing a Fictional Disembodied Entity**

A participative workshop event inspired by mediumship research carried out by a group of Canadian researchers, led by George and Iris Owen in the 1970s. The Owens were interested in the entities encountered in séances. The group experimented with the séance format with little success until they decided to co-create a fictional character, 'Philip', developing a personality and life story for him, with the aim of contacting Philip through séances. Their experiment was successful: Philip took on a life of his own, communicating with the Owen's group through table movements, raps and noises.

Inspired by the Owen's experiments, this workshop leads participants through a series of group exercises designed to co-create and communicate with a fictional character, using drawing, writing, automatic techniques and roleplay. Exercises draw upon surrealist writing games, mediumship and séance strategies as well as experimental theatre techniques,

and are collaborative and open-ended.

The exercises are informed by a diverse set of theoretical concerns encompassing the ontology of thought forms, imaginary friends and other fictional entities; the status of nonsense (*delire*) in its various manifestations; the unconscious as it manifests itself through techniques drawn from art and psychotherapies, and the nature of imagination and play.

Participants need no formal expertise in art, creative writing or theatre, but an interest in theory is good, and a readiness to experiment as a group is essential. A belief in the reality of spirit entities is not required, although an open-minded attitude is encouraged.

The workshop addresses the conference themes of transformation (making a 'Philip' out of nothing); the transhuman (is 'Philip' as more, less or other than human?); the transpersonal (working to co-create a 'Philip' as a group) and the transdisciplinary (blending humanities research with techniques of performance and art).

**Kristoffer Noheden** is a research fellow in cinema studies at Stockholm University. His research focuses on surrealism in relation to occultism, primitivism, and, most recently, animal studies. He has forthcoming book chapters in *Surrealism, Occultism, Politics* (Ashgate, 2016), *A Cultural History of the Avant-Garde in the Nordic Countries, 1925–1950* (Brill/Rodopi, 2016), *Black Mirror 1: Embodiment* (Fulgur, 2016), and *Occult Modernism: The Occult in Modernist Art, Literature, and Cinema* (Palgrave, 2017). He is currently working on two book manuscripts, tentatively titled *Haloed Objects on Mental Parade: Myth and Magic in Post-War Surrealist Cinema*, and *Imagination Against Anthropocentrism: Surrealism and Animals*.

Noheden is also a publisher and editor at Sphinx Press ([www.sphinxforlag.se](http://www.sphinxforlag.se)), and the translator into Swedish of books by William S. Burroughs, Leonora Carrington, Max Ernst, and Dorothea Tanning.

### **Cinematic Possession: Trance in Films by Maya Deren, Jean Rouch, and Andrzej Żuławski**

Andrzej Żuławski's 1981 feature film *Possession* features a scene that tends to stay with spectators. In a blue dress, Virgin Mary-style, the female protagonist Anna walks through a metro station; suddenly, her gaze becomes transfixed, her body tenses up, and she starts moan. Shaking and convulsing, Anna is launched into a several minutes long trance, during which she emits inhuman-sounding groans, smashes her groceries against the bare concrete walls, and milky-red fluids pour from various parts of her body. Żuławski claimed to have actually put the actress Isabella Adjani into a trance, with methods learned from "Haitian voodoo". Regardless of the truth value in this claim, the mentioned scene in *Possession* appears to break through the film's fictional frame, a documentary rupture of the diegesis. In this way, it can be related to earlier attempts at capturing trance and possession with the film camera. This paper places *Possession* in relation to the American avant-garde filmmaker Maya Deren's subjective take on trance in *Meshes of the Afternoon* and the ethnographic film-maker Jean Rouch's infamous depiction of a Hauka possession ritual in *Les Maîtres fous* (1955). These films depict states of trance as a solipsistic, shamanic descent into the self and as a collective, revolutionary manifestation of unconscious energies on the body, respectively. The paper examines how these different takes on trance resonate with Anna's state of possession. It looks to how Żuławski,

informed by Jerzy Grotowski's notion that theatre ought to confront established religion in order to regain a more acute sense of the sacred, lampoons both Christianity and new age throughout *Possession*, only to posit Anna's trance as a transformative, transgressive experience.

**Marco Pasi** is Associate Professor in History of Hermetic philosophy and related currents. He holds a Laurea degree in Philosophy from the University of Milan, and a DEA and a PhD in Religious studies from the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes (Sorbonne, Paris). He has focused his research mainly on the relationship between modern esotericism and politics, modern esotericism and art, the history of the idea of magic, and on methodological issues related to the study of western esotericism. He is the editor in chief of the *Aries Book Series* (Brill), founding member of the European Society for the Study of Western Esotericism (ESSWE), co-chair of the Western Esotericism Group at the American Academy of Religion (AAR). Since 2014 he is the General Secretary of the European Association for the Study of Religions (EASR).

**Aepril Schaile** is an internationally recognized performance artist/priestess/poet working through the ancient and ever-evolving art of Bellydance. Incarnating the epithet of "The Dark Goddess", Aepril shamanistically becomes Trickster, Warrior, Ghost, Storm, Grieving Mother, Killer, Graal, Seductress. Aepril draws on her experiences of lucid dream and astral travel, creating an experience of visceral/aetheral ritual theatre. She has taught and performed in Paris, London, Rome, New York, and throughout Europe and the US. She is also an astrologer and holds an MFA in Interdisciplinary Art.

**Lucid Dream Chamber: Surrealist**

## Performance Art/Transdisciplinary Magickal Working

An intimate, interactive, immersive space that is a "lucid dream". I act as the Dreamer; my presence in the room being an ongoing "performance piece". Dreamers enter the space one at a time, and have direct interaction with me, and with the environment. Each participant entering is being dreamed into my field of consciousness; that said, each participant coming into the room would also be the Dreamer, with me as a projection of her/his consciousness. The room itself is also being dreamed.

The intent behind this piece multi-layered:

First and foremost, it is play. It is an exploration of the subjective nature of reality; a transgressive challenge to assumptions.

Via this interactive performance/invitation, I endeavor to point out the Russian-doll-like, parallel nature of the physical and the astral planes; "copy planes" of one another; thinly veiled by perception. We will cross these boundaries and hold liminal space.

It is an exploration of the vibrational nature of consciousness on this plane; that the physical world, too, is a projection of consciousness—a lucid dream. Is there a line? What happens when its blurred?

It is an exploration of intimacy; the one-on-one nature of the piece brings two psyches into intimate, blurred contact in the co-creation/co-projection of the interior world. Two aspects of the One regarding one another, experiencing one another; the alchemy which transpires creating the tone and happenings in the room.

It is a challenge to assumptions

about the linearity and measurement of time perception.

**Jasmine Shadrack** is a Senior Lecturer in Popular Music at the University of Northampton and is in the final stage of her Ph.D. She is also the guitarist and front woman in an avant-garde black metal collective, Denigrata. Jasmine's research explores the ways in which women as performers are engaged with by black metal. The value and impact of this original research lays in its engagement and analysis of its gendered performance; there are few women black metal performers so by foregrounding female subjectivity as a fundamental of the research, her thesis seeks to investigate issues of identity, self-embodiment and musicality.

**Charmaine Sonnex** is an Associate Lecturer in Psychology at the University of Northampton and is in the final stages of her Ph.D. Her research interests include Transpersonal Psychology, non-contact healing, Paganism, and spirituality. Charmaine's thesis includes a comprehensive meta-analysis of the current empirical research into various form of non-contact healing, explores Pagan ritual workings through a psychological lens, and seeks to establish the efficacy of Pagan healing practices through a randomised controlled trial (RCT). This research makes an original contribution to a number of research fields; the meta-analysis is the most recent and comprehensive review of its kind, the application of psychological theory to investigation of Pagan praxis is unique and original as is the application of the RCT method to Pagan healing practices.

**Ritual Occultation and the Space between Worlds: Exploring the Application of the "Flow" State in Pagan and Black Metal Performance Practice**

This presentation examines the concept of the "flow" state and applies it to Pagan ritual workings and black metal performance. The flow state is "the holistic experience that people feel when they act with total involvement" (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975, p 36). It is a liminal state of consciousness (Turner, 1974), and is induced during ritualistic performance in Pagan and black metal contexts. These disparate praxes reveal through their shared aesthetics, a realm through which transcendental performativity is delivered.

The transformative powers offered by flow, advances a spiritual engagement with black metal. Pagan symbology when applied to black metal performance leads to adoption of the flow state. Pagan ritual workings are a mental operation where the practitioners raise energy, imbue it with a purpose, and then send it out to its intended target. This work cannot be conducted in an ordinary state of consciousness; an altered state must be realised to craft the singularity of intent necessary (Adler, 1986; Orion, 1995; Starhawk, (1986). Pagan ritual is understood as a form of performance (Butler, 2004; Hume, 1998; Roundtree, 2006) with emphasis on set and setting, and ritual tools considered as props. This staging aides the Pagan as performer to achieve and maintain the altered, liminal state of flow.

The ways this liminal state performs, demarcates a specificity of engagement within a black metal performance that uses Pagan ritual as a conduit. This means that the value of flow in Pagan ritual is equally as significant in black metal which consolidates the props in Paganism, consuming and excising them into black metal performance as key signifying practices. As it is in Pagan ritual, flow's singularity of intent becomes the crux

of the subject in process; the raising of energy through black metal performance in order to project it out seeks to access the flow state in order to achieve its purpose.

**Rebekah Sheldon** is Assistant Professor of English at Indiana University Bloomington. Her first book, *The Child to Come: Life After the Human Catastrophe*, is forthcoming from the University of Minnesota Press.

### **Queer Sex Magic, Transindividual Affect, and Nonrepresentational Criticism**

This presentation sketches a speculative ontology of magic through the rubric of the transindividual. It is a part of a broader investigation into 20th century Anglo-American queer magicians influenced by Aleister Crowley. In its fullest ambitions, the project looks to the nonrepresentational qualities of theurgic practice such as composition, movement, gesture, sound, and rhythm to unfold a theory of and method for nonrepresentational criticism. Ritual practices such as these are explicitly calibrated to produce future effects. I argue that they implicate a performative causality markedly distinct from either representational modes of persuasion commonly employed by scholarly exposition or the embodied performativities theorized by queer studies. My project is not to produce knowledge about esoteric or scholarly traditions but to generate new intuitions from out of existing philosophical, literary, theoretical, and aesthetic modes and schemas.

My more limited remit in this talk responds to the following questions: What ontological conditions are necessary for us to be able to affirm the productivity of magic (and its nonrepresentational qualities) on the unfolding of the future? With what notions of individual agency

and systemic causality? To think these things, I propose reconsidering the presumptive emptiness and passivity of the future. Rather than understanding the future as a necessary entelechy or as container for the present's consequences, I offer a conception of the future as an active plenum rippling with the forces of distortion, iteration, resonance, and distribution. To do so, I take up Kenneth Anger's short film "Invocation of my Demon Brother" as a case study in the aesthetic-cum-magical torquing of the future and as an apt location to make good on the title's promise to theorize the role of queer sex in ritual magic.

**Vanessa Sinclair, Psy.D.** is a psychoanalyst and clinical psychologist in private practice in New York City. She is a founding member of Das Unbehaben: A Free Association for Psychoanalysis, which facilitates psychoanalytic lectures, classes and events in and around New York City. She curates a series on Psychoanalysis, Art & the Occult at Morbid Anatomy Museum in Brooklyn, and contributes to a variety of publications including *The Fenris Wolf*, *DIVISION/Review: A Quarterly Psychoanalytic Forum*, *ERIS Magazine*, and the Brooklyn Rail.

### **Third Mind work and Pandrogeny**

The abstract to this presentation is presented as a cut-up. (See fig.1 overleaf)

**Alexander Small.** Based in Northampton, Alexander studied Art and Visual Culture in Bristol, Fine Art at the University of Northampton and has been a practicing artist for the past ten years completing his MA at Camberwell College of Art London in 2011. He has regularly exhibited around the UK, Europe, and North America and travelled to India researching traditional art forms. He has been a resident artist,

ourselves and      based on      you ever

identity/ ego is first formed during  
the child experiences he/r self and  
the mirror, the mirror image appears

Sexuality is a force of nature that  
yourself. Be possessed by

in New York City.

currently representing      via our bodies,      consider      object,

Gysin and Burroughs showed the cutting up of language creates the space for  
something

slowly      Third Being .      embodies      countless numbers

#### POLYMORPHOUS PERVERSITY

transsexual.

(p)androgeny is divine.  
a being possessed, repossess

As      These sites are      relaxation.

We are simply sexual.”

repression,

apparent

Vanessa Sinclair,

psychoanalysis.

the pores of the skin

We learn about  
as these are the      constricted to nor constructed  
penetrated and expel.      and biology are limited, how

anymore. Only

Figure 1. Cut-up (2015) by **Vanessa Sinclair**.

trustee and volunteer at the Artist Sanctuary in Northampton and a member of the Northampton Arts Collective as a voluntary board member. He received the Juliet Gompert's Trust Award in 2010, was selected for the Future Map 11 exhibition at the Zabłudowicz Collection and has completed an AIR mini residency at Archway London in 2012. Past projects include a collaborative practice 'Art ] iculating History' placing art concepts in historical contexts and Gallery S6X a pop up gallery in Northampton .

### **The Metaphysics of Shit: A Selection of Recent Paintings**

Referring to Jean Fischer's 2002 essay 'Towards a Metaphysics of Shit' this series of paintings examine ideas of the trickster not only as a potent symbol of the liminal state but also as a method for realising its re-creative potential. Using historic images as a starting point particularly images from European wood block print imagery portraying themes of defecation, time and de-individuation these images are re-presented as paintings. This process of translating the image from one media to another is an absurd act in itself, mocking both systems of representation known as painting and print.

Generally, Alexander's work occupies the space between ideas of the Dionysian and the Absurd, moving from one to the other exploring themes of futility, pointlessness, hopelessness, nuisance, de individuation, death, rebirth and the irrational.

**Sophie Sparham** is a sci-fi fantasy writer, spoken word artist and music journalist from Derby. She has released her first book, *Snow in Hell*, and is currently half way through penning her follow up, *God Sized to Go*. She's extremely passionate about the representation of LGBT+

characters and feminist issues within her genre of fiction and believes that they need to be more prevalent.

### **Transgender Characters and Otherworldly States of Mind in Sci-Fi and Fantasy Fiction**

I've always written a wide range of genders and sexualities into my work. Some would call it queer fantasy, I just believe it's the way I chose to write. In my next novel, 'God Sized to Go', my main character is a transgender female that ends up becoming trapped in her own mind and making friends with her conscience. Together, they battle a creature that's trying to create a new world for godly purposes. In my presentation, I plan to discuss how I visualised and wrote a transgender character; from the research to the representation and decisions made in print. As well as this, I want to discuss the concept of the mind being another world in a sci-fi and fantasy story and interpretation of this when creating the world.

The interpretation will include the choices made when deciding the aesthetics of the world and decisions taken of how to connect all the minds of beings together in one landscape. I will discuss how I used description and language to help my audience picture the world, despite it not being a physical entity. The whole concept of the book is about questioning the idea of a god, what it takes to become a god and perception of what a god's power is. Within my presentation, I intend to discuss this in relation to the world that I have created.

**Georgia van Raalte**. I completed an Undergraduate degree in Theological Studies at the University of St Andrews. I studied for my MA degree at the University

of Amsterdam, in the Western Esotericism track of their Religious Studies program. My thesis was titled "Tea, Scones and Socially Responsible Sex Magic: the Egalitarian Occultism of Dion Fortune", and explored how Fortune attempted to balance esoteric practice with normal social life. I have been accepted to begin my PhD studies at the University of Kent, Canterbury, in October. The working title of my thesis is "The Price of Magic: the mechanics of ritual magic and the effects of prolonged magical work." Focusing on a number of key esoteric practitioners in 20th century Britain, I will be exploring the modern practice of magic. The manipulation of esoteric symbolism and the ritual use of taboo-breaking acts will be particularly important as I consider whether it is possible to be both an occult 'adept' and a functioning member of normal society.

### The Ghetto Tarot

Belgian photographer Alice Smeets and Haitian art collective Atis Rezistans created the Ghetto Tarot deck in 2015. A photographic interpretation of the Rider-Waite tarot deck, the images were created in the Haitian slums using only material the artists were able to find locally. Smeets chose the name Ghetto Tarot, hoping to stimulate discussion about poverty and privilege. Without trivializing poverty, she argues that it is important to recognise that the ghetto can be a place of happiness, spirituality and creativity. Christian Liberation Theology has begun to recognise this, and it is time the study of esotericism does too, for it is in the social margins that we find the occult still alive and productive.

The cards use symbols from the Voodoo religion to embody the meaning of the Rider-Waite deck. Crossing the line

between Western and non-Western forms of occultism, the Ghetto Tarot confronts the colonial gaze. Taking the liminal political subject and projecting him to the realm of art, the Ghetto Tarot transforms an object of pity to one of enlightenment. As a performance of the occult, the Ghetto Tarot collapses the boundaries between art and life, between the sign and what is signified. In order to explore the boundary-breaking nature of the Ghetto Tarot I will follow the presentation of my paper on the deck a participatory tarot reading session, focusing on the theme of liminality and the collapse of the boundaries between art and life. An image of each card drawn will be projected for the audience to see, and I will ask audience members to contribute readings of the cards, based both on their prior knowledge and spontaneous intuition.

**Roy Wallace.** In 1998 he began work on *Modern Angels* as a video exploration and document of the body art scene in Belgium at the turn of the millennium. His most recent work includes, *The Day the Country Died* a documentary history of the Anarcho-punk scene in the UK during the early 1980's and *Bloody Bloody Belgium* an exploration of the subcultural activities of the underground music scenes in Northern Ireland, UK and Belgium.

His next project *I Believe in Buzzcock* is an experimental 'documentary art video' which explores concepts of identity. The work seeks to question and redefine relationships between concepts of video fiction and documentary, drawing upon staged and unreconstructed events which constructs a secondary narrative around the videographer's relationship with both character and band.

**Modern Angels: A Documentary**  
Exploration of Transdermal, Body Art



## and Body Modification in the Kingdom of Belgium


In this video essay, I will examine aspects of 'body ritual' as a means of expression and resistance to prevailing dominant cultural representation of the individual and how ancient ritualistic practices have evolved into mainstream art forms and anti-religious symbolic resistance at the second millennium of Christ. The work will explore issues of identity and religious/spiritual belief associated with such body art practices and their symbolic meaning across different ritualistic activities including, tattoo, piercing, branding, scarification, performance and within these particular elements to further explore the nuance of practice between different approaches.

The implicit theme underlying this work embraces occult practice as performance as seen through the eyes of a number of key participants active in the Belgian Underground scenes which cross-over and interconnect with a range of complimentary subcultural movements including, punk, goth, rockabilly and various sexually explicit transdermal groups who engage in 'performance' as both ritual and practice involving the 'spectator' and in my case the 'documenter' which poses a range of ethical and moral considerations when documenting and recording such activities, as acknowledged or unacknowledged participant.

The focus of my work is to help situate the individual within the 'universal' and to allow key voices to speak and represent the beliefs, values and customs of many in contemporary societies which are reflected by my particular chosen culture as a collective anarchist narrative in the Kingdom of Belgium and beyond. As McLaren (2002:106)

argues, Foucault suggests a view of the body as "oscillating between modes of inscription, internalization, and interpretation." Foucauldian terms such as 'marked and engraved' refer to bodily processes of inscription, while his use of 'moulded, shaped and trained' alludes to the body/power nexus, and finally when he references how bodies 'respond and increase their forces' he implies an active body (McLaren 2002:106). It is with this formulation in mind that I set out to explore the self-inflicted pain wrought on the body in the search for individualistic liberation from dominant real and imaginary forces that helps me step 'behind' the subject into other creative imaginings, beyond documentary.





**trans-** prefix meaning: across, beyond, through, on the other side of, to go beyond

**state:** a condition or way of being that exists at a particular time

An unabashed play on words, a trans- state is, among other things, a *coincidentia oppositorum*. An alchemical wedding that defines the fixed place, where boundaries are actively transgressed. In many ways, this very undertaking is where the role of the magician, mystic and artist collide. Down at the crossroads, where possibilities are collapsed into actualities, by the wondrous act of a conscious decision: there lies the place of suffering and surrender; of realisation and redemption.

**trans-states.org**