



## Construction

- 1: First, fold each sheet in half along the vertical axis.
- 2: Using a craft knife or scalpel, cut a horizontal slot along the centre dotted line of the first sheet. (pages 1/2/9/10)
- 3: Then cut along the dotted lines on all the other sheets. Make sure to cut to the very edges of the paper.
- 4: Stack the folded sheets in ascending order with the even numbers at the top. Curl the bottom half of the second page (pages 3/4/15/16).
- 5: Thread the curled page through the centre slot of the first page. Repeat this process with the third (pages 5/6/13/14) and fourth sheet (pages 7/8/11/12) with the even pages in ascending order.
- 6: When all the pages have been threaded through, check the pagination. Finally, fold the booklets in half along the horizontal axis.

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Which battlegrounds will you choose to stand upon, or be forced to stand upon? How will you 'fit in'? By bowing and scrapping, cap in hand, hoping the 'flaws' won't be noticed; or by boldly going where angels dare not tread? Will you fall prey to the assumption 'people are the same everywhere' (whereby we return to the Eternal 24 hour relay race of mobility, blood and death compelling your every move)? Or will you fall prey to the loop of musical chairs, trophies notwithstanding?

Where will you buy your milk? Pleasure your body? Rest your eye? Share your joke? The problem of the nomad. Any nomad.

But something else is at stake, today. I am not just speaking about nomadism 'in general'; rather I am pointing to the condition of the artist/philosopher who, in the grey light of a post-post-modern 'condition' – which belches out a whole series of neither/nor identities movements and ethics – inscribes and is folded back not only onto the particular set of specificities as outlined above, but in that 'fold' produces, inscribes and enacts a particular code. This 'code' is the operating fold of the event itself, one that is mired in 'processing', 'timing', 'moving', 'splicing'. That is, the 'ing's' of life and form. Nomad as graphic 'editor', visual, audio, or otherwise.

Let's put it like this: We are no longer speaking about an 'is' (or worse, the 'nomad' as the 'is'), which so often gets named as 'the concealed' (or revealed) 'excluded middle', ie, as a 'that' which is 'excess' to the either/or boundary or limit of any concept or its representation, symbolic, metaphorical or real. Nor are we speaking about a 'concealed' or 'unavoidable' silence which makes meaning 'stick' or, in more sophisticated usages, is the very weave of meaning itself. Nomads, here, remarkably, are more vampiric, voracious, whorish. They

**Last set of questions:** How will you be able to read/interpret the rules of the game, if and when you 'arrive' (wherever that 'arrival point' may be), irrespective of whether the language spoken appears (or even is) the 'same', language, say 'international english' or even 'art' for example. What codes of identity or identities must you somehow embody or occupy, or be seen to occupy, in order to 'communicate'? What will be lost in translation? Or found by way of rose-tinted spectacles? How will the differences already encountered in your life, surface as explanatory nodal points or clusters of meanings (say around race, sex, age, nationality, eating habits, drug use or varying dislocations within and between these islands of identity and difference).

**Third set of questions:** And how do you get to where you want to go (assuming there is no direct gun to your head or cattle car waiting)? How do you get to where you want to go especially if you are not certain where you wish to go, or for some other reason, cannot get there, say, because you may be suffering from a certain degree of short-sightedness. (Because in that case, you cannot say to yourself, "Look at the church tower ten miles away and go in that direction",.)

**Second set of questions:** Where do you go? Do you run ahead as a herdsman?, asks Nietzsche, Or turn into a pillar of salt, as did Lot's wife? A strong pair of shoes? Water? mobile phone or your computer laptop (should you have one): extra batteries? That which is close to hand or that which holds the most sentimental/memory value? or that which is lightest (or all three)? Some kind of technical equipment, say, a can be broken down by way of the following set of interrogations: What do you grab at the very moment of decisive indecision and chaos? That which is close to hand or that which holds the most sentimental/memory value? or that which is lightest (or all three)? Some kind of technical equipment, say, a mobile phone or your computer laptop (should you have one): extra batteries? A strong pair of shoes? Water?

# NOMADIC CODES: SKIN, TASTE, BURN.

## JOHNNY DE PHILO (SUE GOLDING)

DIFFUSION

I speak here of migration in a specific way – as a transitive mutation, a 'transculturating', in the strongest sense of the verb 'to trans' or 'to traverse', especially with respect to ethics and aesthetics. Moreover, I speak here of a specific migration/trans-movement/translocating of bodies directly linked to (or made manifest by) the impact of the digital age. This impact is radical; its consequences severe. For in its wake is the birth of a nomadic, multi-dimensional and fluid 'culture' (closer to the type found in experimental petri dishes and left over rotten food, rather than in the dry atmosphere of museums, per se). It smells – despite its parentage from mathematics, computer technology and television. It bleeds – perhaps because the beings who play its game are recruited from that grey area called "those who cannot easily be identified in this or that category". Sexualities, and in particular a libidinous, queer, kind of whoring is involved. It belongs to no one and resides nowhere, thus confounding copyright laws, not to mention sovereign nations. This is a culture, a 'virtual' landscape, wherein symbol, signs and signifiers are exchanged, mixed metaphors and all, for a strange kind of geography, a kind of 'groundless', mobile, rootless, geography, whose nomadic citizens might well be called artists and/or philosophers, but could equally well be called audio-visual 'djs', techno-cyber sculptors, splatter-comix receptors.

These nomadic inhabitants play with and against differing types of movement [closer to rhythm and beat], differing forms of representation, taste and judgment [closer to gesture, slice and nod], differing forms of space and time [closer to a curved cluster of speed and space-timings (in the plural) than the time lines of history or Temporality writ large]. It massifies as it multiplies.

### Prequel to the code

Ah, but this a *dirty* theory.

the cinematic/techno promise of *projection* and *repetition* to tell a 'little story' – not just in terms of combining relentlessly image and word around trans-gender or daddy-boy/son incest or mommy-girl/daughter sadism or gay cyborg dandyism – but by way of using music, colour, pixel, dimension in exactly the same way as word-images, in the same way as, say, sometimes to produce speed, and sometimes to produce an image, and a computer understands zeroes and ones, sometimes to produce sound, and sometimes to produce all three. This new art form, clearly having its roots in dada, surrealism, actionism and pop, makes the first 'gesture' to leave the 20th century behind – without falling into the trap of abstractionism or loosening the pornographic blood-beat of what it means to say 'there is no depth to the 'is' of life: just deal with it'. For in in these nomadic skins and tastes, the gesture is the 'little story' – and the appropriation of the gesture, ie, the *strategy of the linking* of the gesture(s), whether by accident or deeply intentional (as gesture rather than as event, narration, metaphor) is its politics, aesthetic re-mark of the here, there, now, gone, space-times of our time. We can name this new form: metonymic art in all its glory and infinite decay, but the non-academic term for this 'curved space-repetitive projection-screen-time' metonymy of our times has a far simpler name: no, not nomadism but: Jelly vision.



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NONADIC CODES: SKIN, TASTE, BURN  
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But it is a massification, a voracious kind of conformism (or copying or reproduction), which maintains a kind of 'originality', precisely in the very processing of multiplicity itself. Like its modern, industrial forebearer, it takes 'change' as a given; but unlike its early enlightenment form, it does so as paradox and play as distinct from 'contradiction', Logos and Law. This does not make nomadism and the codes of its operation, any less violent, transgressive or less political. It is certainly not Utopian, though it bears out forms of movement that may allow for a different set of emancipatory politics to emerge [one that may or may not become more 'democratic' in the best sense of the word: to empower and create at the level of a "me-self and a we-self" a series of cityscapes varying in identities and degree, rather than as 'communities' per se]. If it is 'transgressive', its transgression lies more in the fact of presenting a decapitated mastery, a quasi-authored authorship; an ethics without morals or what I have elsewhere called a "blood poetics". In its wake, a different kind of humanism is born, a kind of 'quasi-humanism', ripped, as it were, from its early enlightenment moorings of "state, community and individualism", public and private reason and rationality. This is not to say that this form of migration, nomadism, is without reason. Treading far beyond the old binaric/systematic logic of "good and evil", the nomadic 'code' still 'makes sense': ask any truly homeless traveller.

These conjectures will be examined in more detail in the following way: First I will examine what is the modernist notion of 'equality', 'judgment' and 'humanism' in terms of 'movement' and 'mobility'. From this short exegesis, the specificity of the nomadic code in its 'post' post-modern (that is to say 'digital age') bearings will come to light. This will form the 'groundless' ground, ie, the 'event' upon which memory/forgetting will be reinscribed as a kind of route or 'skin' for the nomad and its 'code'; where splices of experience,

Let us begin. Again.

Victorian medical dictionary.  
Berg, Bernard Waissh, Vron Ware interspersed with some images from my  
Opie, Binky Palermo, Ed Ruskha, Hans Scheffl, Richard Serra, Clive van Den  
Pascal Brannan, Anthony Burke, A. Kiefer, Peter Kogler, Murillo, Catherine  
de St-Phalle, Francis Bacon, John Baldessari, Georg Baselitz, Bernini,  
Warhol, Johnny de philo, Pierre Bourgeois, Carl Andre, Niki  
particular order: the late Helen Chadwick, Annette Messager, Yoko Ono, Andy  
enlightenment ethics may have a chance to burn in the blue screen light of a  
montage and judgment will be 'edited' as taste: and, finally, where post-

## skin, taste, burn

The nomadic skin is but a route, a path, an economy, riddled with the legacies of debt, testimony, witnessing of how one re-remembers through splice and speed and odd little arrangements of 'the that which lies around us'. Mark this as a gestural nod, a 'metonymic signal' towards telling a story or even 'the story' – in slices and beats, and mutilated colours and tones and tempoed b/w's, split screens and surface projections, weaves and interactivities, repeated, back-tracked, spliced through, speeded forward in the middle of going nowhere, over and again, rewound to the beginning or the end or the half-way point, interrupting itself with itself more obsessive and disquieted and horny and wild and sleepy or bored, with obtrusive little genitals which keep spurting their spurt or stockings and hose on strangely doubled bodies or snippets from newspapers or directives on madness; or little girls with flowers in their hair or little boys with strings on their legs: closing its wounds with big gorey details or jokes of the joke or judgments on the judgments or timings on the time; with the melancholy of the melancholy and the humour of it all, where each and every sub-plot to the plot, and even the micro-slice of the slice, screams out at every turn and blip on the canvass or screen of one memory databank: 'and this is how it is, deal with it', folded and re-folded and folded some more.

Mark these obsessively repetitive actions, gestures, nods, signals, projections as an art form quite different from the usual metaphoric and symbolic 'demonstrations' so irritatingly typical of a modern and even post-modern narration or "politics of expression." And mark the artists who are being shown today, from Molinier to Hans Scheirl as the first able to take seriously

## nomadic codes: skin, taste, burn

A small question about mobility and its implications: why is it one can only go back or forwards 24 hours in time and space? No matter the speed or the curvature of the movement, the uncertainty of the destiny: even if one leaps thousands of light years forward and speeds through the wormholes of the galaxies with greater agility than even the inventors of Star Trek could imagine: even if one floats in a balloon, is delayed endlessly in airports or flies by the seat of their pants: even if one is gay or straight, muslim or Jew, a witch or a warlock: transgendered or binarily split into male or female: even if one comes from or surges toward the 'east' or the 'west', even if one is the target of racist attack or becomes its perpetrator: even if one is adorned in leather, piercing and tattoo: even if one is engaged in peculiar sex acts or non at all: still, at the moment – this very instantaneous moment of our contemporary moment – one gains or loses only 24 hours of bio-time, a 24 hour micro-memory slice of time at the best of times. It does not matter if it is a corrosive, nuclear, toxic time, twenty four hours is the limit to the forward or backward movement and mobility of time, at any given time.

Surprisingly (perhaps), this notion of movement – a kind of muscular Eternal Return relay race back and forth against (and buttressed by) the 24 hour festival of life and clocks – is the not-so-secret telos of modernity itself, the seemingly 'real' basis, the biological scientific, rational choice-within-a-small-parenthesis-of-choice, 'enlightened' basis for certain commonly held views. In particular, it underwrites a modernist notion about 'equality', and has similar implications for the 'commonality' or 'universality' of experience itself: to wit, this 24 hour rule is applicable to all and sundry, irrespective of nationality,

ground, chooses that 'otherwise' connection, as a path, a route, indeed, a 'skin', or better put, a 'screen' (not unlike the computer screen: the post-Lacanian 'mirror' of self and identity if ever there was one), only queasily linked to that 24 hour clock, though connected all the same. Very very messy, very 'dandyish' this nomad of the 21st century.

And while it may be accurate to say that an infinitely regressive and endlessly multiplying series of questions, rules, quasi-universalisms, mutations, economies (libidinal or otherwise) circumscribe our nomad *qua* nomad, this 21st century animal/entity forms its identity precisely because he or she is not only *not quite* in, nor *not quite* out, to any game: s/he is also the lab technician, the experimenter; compelled to do 'it', 'it', 'it' on that very slim pre-meditated composition of a *curiosity* which asks, "supposing that?" "Supposing it could be otherwise? What would that otherwise look like? What would it be? Answer: it would be the beginning (or middle or end) of a remark, a gesture, a nod, a micro-slice of memory, marked and re-marked, edited and re-edited in the very instant 'a being-there' or being-with the very judgment games of life itself, encased in the slow-draw montage, or fast-forward beat, or endlessly repeating multiplicity of its timings. A nomad, ripped from the very ground of his or her

Nomads have a voice, or in any event make 'noise' in a way that belies traditional forms of thinking, doing, making (whatever 'tradition' may mean at this point), while simultaneously carrying bits and pieces of 'tradition' precisely as a 'bit' a 'piece' of an event, law, ideology, taste, judgment.

Sometimes it does not work at all; see rule #3.

are political – ie, not neutral. As 'graphic editors', they make 'connections', repetitive connections, slow-paced, or fast forwarded 'montages', sometimes displaying experience for all its worth; sometimes assassinating it with the stroke of a brush, a camera, a recorder, or a pen. They are techno-queens, acoustic-electro nerds, montage-painters, splicing together a this with a that, often for no other reason than that "it works"; has a beat, colour, grain, a certain geography or viral load.

ethnic origin, sexual orientation, religious belief or aesthetic inclination. You might prefer the shorter variant, which goes something like this: at the end of the day, as it were, we all *die*, irrespective of any other consideration. Earlier version: If I cut myself, do I not bleed?

Oh the vanity of the Grim Reaper and other scientific malpractices of an 'enlightenment' epoch so heavily steeped in industrial logic, euclidean geometry and newtonian physics! Oh the paradox of the revolutionary claim to universal personhood, still moored to its modernist roots! And yet, precisely because it is a paradox, there is something about this blood and limit of death not to be ignored. This paradox becomes an elemental slice of the nomadic code itself, a point to which I shall return shortly, but for now, a point to which I will simply bear witness.

Now picture this: picture a child's game, well-known in its immediate sense of dysfunctionality writ large: the game of 'musical chairs'. For purposes of establishing a common memory databank today, let's recap the game as follows: a series of chairs set in a line with one too many participants for the amount of given chairs inscribes our first rule. A gun goes off, the music begins and the children run round the chairs frantically attempting to be near this or that chair so that when the music stops – suddenly, and on the wrong beat – they must grab and sit defiantly on the chair. The game is already skewed, we all know this from the start: one player will always-already be caught without a chair. The one 'caught out' when silence descends, well, she must exit, stay at the sidelines, or go somewhere else. Get lost: Rule #2. The game is repeated, until there are only two participants and one isolated chair left. I never liked this game, whether or not I managed to be victorious with the one remaining trophy chair. Who cares about the chair? I was always more curious about the

which a decision must be taken and enacted. This flash/decision/enactment suddenly flash before you, with only micro-seconds to spare: micro-seconds in everyday problems of translocation, displacement and other forms of decay will of life (why? why me? and so on) for, quite remarkably, the natty, bitchy 'practical' another paradoxical aspect to the nomadic code: forget the existential questions obey, no matter how silly the game, given certain conditions slides into yet candidates, say: market mechanisms, imminent bad weather, morally questionable days; plausibly announced by bomb-squad police or other suitable "Everyone evacuate the premises immediately." Not an unusual statement

Beware the sneaky masquerades of judgment! Born of a particular language game of lie, solidified through the hegemony of rule-master and tradition... And therewith, like the steadfastness of the 24 hour timing of time, seemingly solid and unbreakable, eternally condemned to repeat the banality of evil, good, and musical chairs' (variations on the theme notwithstanding), unless and until one falls into that that unexceptional vat of dishonour, known also as: exile, *persona non grata*, loser, immigrant, 'the Other', refugee, militant, punk, whore, traveller. This list does not exhaust the list.

somewhere 'else'; This did not prevent me from playing, intensely and to the question of the game itself, though, cleverly disguised, once again, in the garments of a 'universal', a kind of humanism, with tiny and innocently posed before the limit of the Law. Indeed, posed as the limit / to / the Law.