

THE PRAYER





Figure 1: Prayer Candle



Figure 2: Prayer Candle

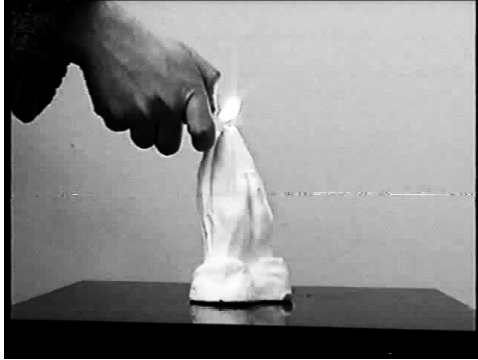


Figure 3: Prayer Candle



Figure 4: Prayer Candle

**I begin by lighting a prayer candle –
a passive gesture in lieu of action.**

The candle flickers:

1. **I document the process of its melt from
multiple perspectives.**
2. **The candle burns.**
3. **The 3D scanner documents the candle.
Now, we can rotate and manipulate it within
a digital horizon.**

**The data captured was solely determined
by observable characteristics.**

But what was lost in the process?

This new digital object is not a direct copy. It is a replica based on tentative data. The facets of the rendered model only convey a likeness of the authentic object. The limitations of the scanner can be likened to our own phenomenological limitations. If the careless user isn't mindful of the data that they are capturing, this representation becomes nothing more than an abstraction.

The instruments that augment and mediate our world are inherently lossy. Our spacial relationship with the replica is fully reliant on the cartesian grid.

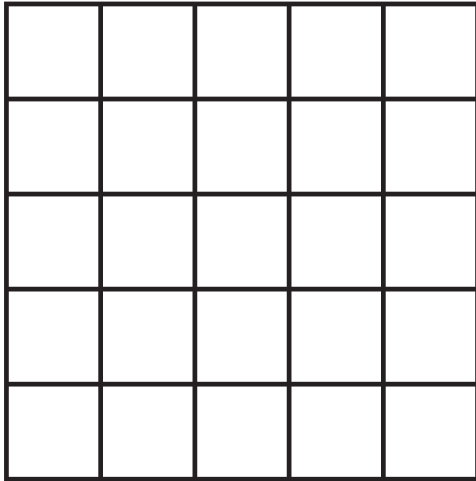


Figure 5: A Grid

We dwell within a vast grid of interconnected systems. And those systems have innate aesthetic qualities. The utopian future was represented by the grid. The characteristics of the inhuman brought about by the technological innovation of mass production. The future saw beyond the anthropocene. The sleek framework of glass and steel represented utopia. These are now materials and structures that we associate with the inner-city financial district:

- 1. the sterility of power**
- 2. the strength of imagery within the branded symbols that we associate with this power**
- 3. the branded power symbols of our corporate systems**

The grid functions as an icon within this system of hegemony.

The grid is a religion. The grid is a city.

As we move further from the city-center, we discover the aesthetics of neglect – the visual characteristics of the grid's decay. This is where the oppressed populace dwells. These are not chosen aesthetics. They are applied aesthetics. Yet, the gestures of subversion utilize this appearance as a symbol of the proletariat and the protest therein.

Our systems of resistance are stylized. They are aestheticized.

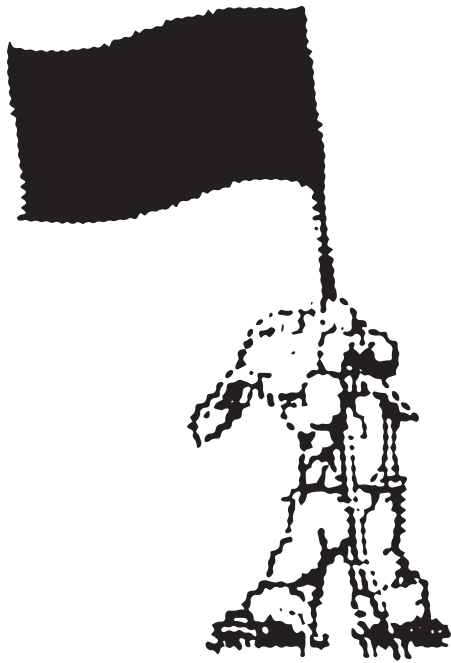


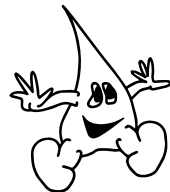
Figure 6: Working Class Rabbit Raising the Anarchist Black Flag

What are the aesthetics of dissent?

The primary visual characteristic of protest is also that of happenstance – reliant on the lossy quality brought about by the speed of replicability:

- 1. the bleeding edges of the screen-printed icon**
- 2. the fuzzy mask of the spray painted stencil**
- 3. the lossy black and white image derived from the limitations of the Xerox and Risograph**

These are the characteristics of the zine, the protestor's signage, and the graffiti. And these same qualities were applied to the early fliers to promote rave parties.



100%
SAT. MARCH 27TH



?
(213)8969644

Figure 7: Set of Rave and Abstract Iconography

Absolutely Savage in Wonderland

STOP THE BEAT
HOLD THE BEAT
DROP THE BEAT



THIS CLUB IS NOT FOR EVERYBODY JUST YOUR BODY

DRUM



August 02, 1997 • Rockford, IL

life

STOOO!



TUESDAYS



pure



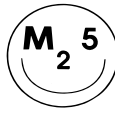
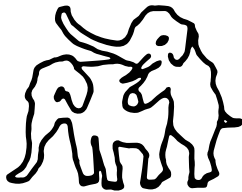
space



PRIZE



Figure 8: Set of Rave, Anarchy, and Abstract Iconography



presents
MELODIC HOUSE &
BALEARIC BEATS
SAT. 31st AUG.
10pm - 8am

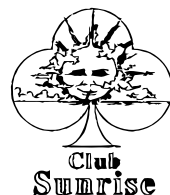


Figure 9: Set of Rave, Anarchy, and Abstract Iconography

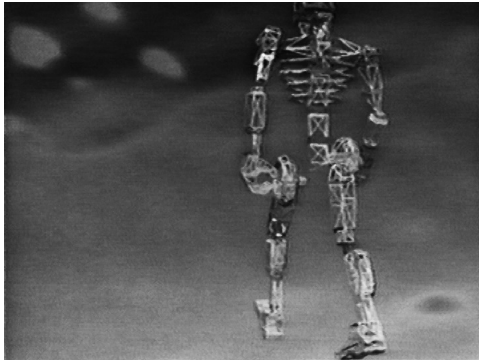


Figure 10: Still from
Rave VHS Tape

Here, the black and white image is derived from the early consumer-grade computer clipart. Within this vernacular, there is the iconography of peace, love, unity, and respect (the tenets for which they fought). In this ideology, the rave was also a gesture of protest. The symbols of the flier were a postmodern ideal characteristically referent of the branded icon – all unified by the simple black line drawing. In the daffy eyes of a cartoon character resembling the drug-induced ecstasy of the rave’s participants, sometimes these icons were mistaken for a different ideology altogether. And as the culture progressed into the 90’s, the fliers and iconography took on another techno-optimist style of the utopian post-human.

THE PRAYER



AND



TRUTH

10'

Presents

RELIGION

Genesis

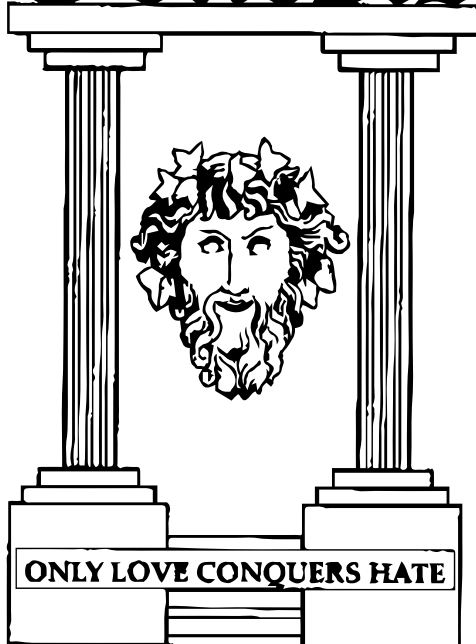


Figure 11: Set of Rave Iconography

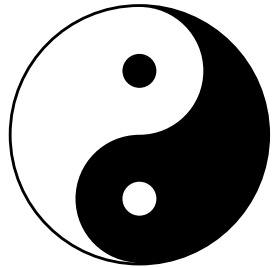
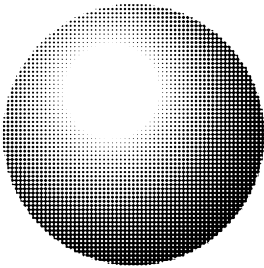


Figure 12: Set of Rave and Abstract Iconography

Now, the rave revival is a meta-narrative based on replica. This is inspired both by the nostalgias and failures inherent in this new technological sphere. We already live, partly, in a digital sphere and contextualize our sense of self within that realm. And we have learned that the digital is not utopian. It functions within the broader sphere of hegemony. The contemporary rave represents the liminal – the waiting room between political discontent and actionable response. Is it a gesture of dissent? Is it an action of community?

Or is it simply a prayer – a hope for things to get better?

From another perspective, the candle still appears whole.



Figure 13: Prayer Candle



Figure 14: "The Stanford Dish" $37^{\circ}24'30''\text{N}$ $122^{\circ}10'44''\text{W}$

We are a community of dissent brought together by the hopefulness that our contemporary sphere can improve. But within the gesture of aestheticized activism, we are met not with acknowledgement of that dissent, but with silence. By stylizing the revolution, we assume that it will be broadcast, but we cannot guarantee that it will be heard. We are not in control of how it will be represented and dispersed to the populace.

We must face this paradox of our representational aesthetics. We are a community of passive dissent. We are a community of passive dissent stemming from a separation of actionability and accountability. We are a community of dissent via atrophy and excision.

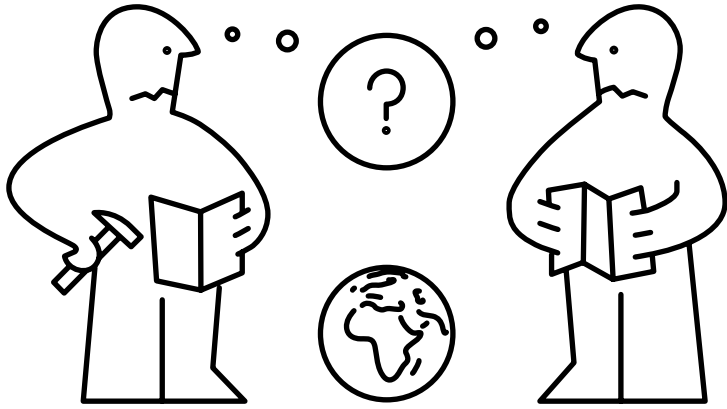


Figure 15: Logojam of IKEA Man

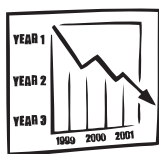
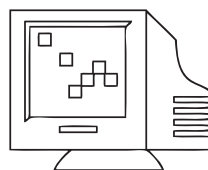


Figure 16: Set of Clipart



Figure 17: Prayer Hand Clipart



Figure 18: Set of Clipart and Rave Iconography

The gesture of prayer is embodied not only as a meditative coping, but as mourning. And our relationship to the grid is not one of mourning its death, but one of mourning its pitfalls.

We are now faced with the collapse of our relationship with its structure. And in doing so, we must ask ourselves the same question that plagues the end of every relationship:

“Was it worth it? Knowing what I know now, would I do it all over again?”

We are forced to apply a false, simplified narrative of the events – the real catastrophe of capitalistic motivations.

The grid requires constant maintenance.

The cause and effect relationship of this maintenance is partly intangible:

- 1. the ongoing surveillance of populace**
- 2. the asserted dominance of techno-optimistic futures**
- 3. the failing attempts to assign a streamlined narrative to an interconnected web of complexities**

There is no “order” beyond the grid.

Natural order lies in entropy. Perhaps this is why the aesthetics of rebellion are that of disorganization and unpredictability.

Or perhaps it is the suffocating plastic cling-wrap veneer that attempts to preserve a decaying element.

The natural world unknowingly breaks the grid's confines – amplifies its failures. And as we apply this formulated structure, we seem to do so in a one-size-fits-all manner. Our gridded world is modular. Our mass-produced grid is symptomatic of our accelerated world. Under the guise of “progress,” we misapply faulty ideologies that are not representative of reality, but of our constructed, simulated reality.

If we live in the age of the dossier, we are forced to love in the age of the drone perspective.

There is no grand conspiracy of simulacrum.

There is no “normal.”

There are varying degrees of scandal and effect, and everything else functions as harm reduction. And worse: it functions to validate an abstract concept of normalcy... to placate an indoctrinated populace.

We are living within the sphere of the warning label. We can only function as a caution for future generations.



Figure 19: Warning Label



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