

*The Cthulhu Club**Lupo Borgonovo,**Beatrice Brovia,**David Douard,**Piero Gilardi,**Andrei Koschmieder**11 January – 9 February 2013**Opening: 10 January 2013, 6:30 pm*

During the season when the story that I am going to tell took place the countryside thereabouts was populated by stray dogs. Men who are still alive can recall when, while crossing the meadow at twilight, they were surrounded by those animals that, always uncannily grouped in herds of five, arranged themselves as in a pentagonal shape, and snarling they encircled the poor man, until he was able to wriggle out and break that ill-omened geometry.

Eons have gone by since that land witnessed the growth of the last gold-colored and vigorous ear of wheat growing up... The only one to grow was the sea: year after year, it had eroded the cliffs like a tumor erodes an organ. The many, vehement sea squalls prevented the Trepangers from going ashore on that coastline, so that nobody among the last-born had ever tasted the sappy holothurians. Rarely a lucky few found some stranded ones; but the old men discouraged the people from eating them since there these had a reptile-like skin, unlike unlike those they remembered from their childhood.

Just as I was about to take my last examination at the Warwick University, I found out the correspondence between Captain Peter Vysparov and Dr Echidna Stillwell, in which it was discussed the inauguration of the Cthulhu Club. My days and my nights were the same. Anyway, the night before the finding was restless, animated by dreams of exotic women wearing relics of Uruk's soldiers as jewelry.

I was familiar with the Myth of Cthulhu through the reading of the *Necronomicon*, which I had been given a copy of by Wilbur Whateley years before. In the old Café Aguila we were often debating the birth of the myth; and those among us who were more prone to the study of geogony, were reading the rising of Cthulhu from under the sea as the advent of a new order in the physical structure of the planet.

Someone was invoking the thesis according to which, 4.5 billion years ago, the accretion of the Earth—the retraction of its molten outer surface and its subsequent segregation into a burning iron core—symbolized an aboriginal trauma, whose scars are inscribed throughout terrestrial matter, from the human body's cells to the stones of river beds... Another member of the group was saying further that that trauma instituted a register of unconscious pain coextensive with the domain of stratified materiality as such...

I must inform the reader that those stack of letters will be sought in vain. After a man, who was known in town as the Gentleman from Providence, attempted to

steal it, I understood that I couldn't hide it anymore among the several English Bibles within my dwelling. Summer was drawing to a close, and I realized that those letters were monstrous. It was cold consolation to think that I, who looked upon them with my eyes and fondled them with my ten flesh-and-bone fingers, was no less monstrous than them. I felt they were obscene things.

Somewhere I recalled reading that the best place to hide a leaf is in a forest. I went to the National Library, which contained nine hundred thousand books, and descended into the shadow of the basement, where the maps and the periodicals are kept. I took advantage of the libraries' distraction to hide the bundle on one of the library's damp shelves; I tried not to notice how high up, or how far from the door.

This is meant to be a general history of the Cthulhu Club, not mine, but the former takes in the latter, just as it takes in all other histories. My older brother, when we were boys he made me swear that between the two of us we'd hack away at the woods, on threshold of which our house was, till there wasn't a tree left standing. They say these woods go on and on, right to the ocean that surrounds the entire world.

I had to head out on a long journey to Macau. Before going back to Minneapolis, I had promised a former lover, Beth Emhoff, to meet her in Chicago. I brought with me a copy of *Le monde du silence*: I was invited to join that convention precisely thanks to a long article I had published on the *Yale Monthly* on the Nitrogen narcosis—for purists: *ivresse des grandes profondeurs*.

A paper slipped out of the book; I immediately recognized it, while I fell into the most excruciating agony. It was a letter to Peter Vysparov by Echidna Sillwell, dating 28th of May, 1949, inexplicably escaped away from the bundle I had abandoned within the National Library. I couldn't but read again the message:

“It is with some trepidation that I congratulate you on the inauguration of your Cthulhu Club, if I may call it such. Whilst not in any way accusing you of frivolity, I feel bound to state the obvious warning: Cthulhu is not to be approached lightly.

My research have let me to associate this Chthonian entity with the deep terrestrial intelligence inherent in the electromagnetic cauldron of the inner earth, in all of its intense reality, raw potentiality, and danger. According to the Nma she is the plane of Unlife, a veritable Cthell – who is trapped under the sea only acceding to a certain limited perspective – and those who set out to traffic with her do so with the very greatest respect and caution.

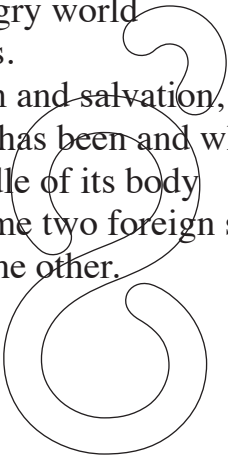
That her submerged Pacific city of R'lyeh is linked to a lemuro-muvian culture-strain seems most probable, but the assumption that she was ever a surface-dweller in a sense we would straightforwardly understand can only be an absurd misconstrual. It is much more likely that Cthulhu's rising – like that of Kundalini as it was once understood – is a drawing down and under, a restoration of contact with abysmal intensities. Why would Cthulhu ever surface? She does not need rescuing, for she has her own line of escape, trajected through profundity. Much of this relates to the occult teachings of the sub-chakras in zones of Indo-Lemurian influence...”

At the beginning, I showed the symptoms of a mere cold. Then, my body begun to gradually shrivel up and take on a yellowish complexion. When even Beth Emhoff died because of a virus which doctors had said to belong to the family of meningoencephalitis, the CDC sent an epidemiologist to Hong Kong in order to find out the patient zero. The virus was named MEV-1.

After having spent months in a village in the Chinese countryside, Doctor Leonora Orantes' report limited to these few sentences: a man knocks down a palm tree where a colony of bats has nested; the bats become disturbed and fly away. One of the bats flies onto a banana plant and eats a chunk of a fruit. The bat then roosts on a water supply pipe, over a pig pen. He drops the chunk of the banana into the pig pen, where a pig eats it. A Chinese chef collect a piglet from the same pen; he butchers and roasts it in his restaurant. The chef's cookery is praised, and the man is invited to meet his guests. He shakes hands with each of them.

On some afternoon or on some night or other, at the close of the a day exactly like all the rest, I read this poem:

“In danger, the holothurian cuts itself in two:
It abandons one self to a hungry world
and with the other self it flees.
It violently divides into doom and salvation,
retribution and reward, what has been and what will be.
An abyss appears in the middle of its body
between what instantly become two foreign shores.
Life on one shore, death on the other.
Here hope and there despair.
The abyss doesn't divide us.
The abyss surrounds us.”



[Ed. This text has been built through a cut-up of some literary references which inspired the exhibition “The Chtulhu Club;” among others: H.P. Lovecraft, *The Call of Cthulhu and Other Weird Stories* (Penguin Books, 1999); and Jorge Luis Borges, *The Book of Sand* (Penguin Books, 2001). The text features excerpt from Nick Land, *Fanged Noumena: Collected Writings 1987-2007* (Urbanomic/Sequence, 2011); while the poem which is mentioned is *Autotomy* (1972) by Wisława Szymborska. A cinematographic reference is the movie *Contagion* (2011), directed by Stephen Soderberg, and starring Marion Cotillard, Bryan Cranston, Matt Damon, Laurence Fishburne, Jude Law, Gwyneth Paltrow and Kate Winslet.

The exhibition “The Chtulhu Club” features five works by artists: Beatrice Brovia (b. 1985, Modena; lives in Stockholm); Lupo Borgonovo (b. 1985, Milano; lives in Milan); David Douard (b. 1983, Perpignan; lives in Paris); Piero Gilardi (b. 1942, Turin; lives in Turin); and Andrei Koschmieder (b. 1980 Frankfurt; lives in New York). It can be visited from January 11 to February 9, 2013; from Thursday to Saturday, from 11 am to 7 pm, or by appointment.]

