

# EGREGORE

An exhibition by the  
Atlanta Surrealist Group

October 21-31 2021  
The Bakery - Atlanta, Georgia



Published by  
Peculiar Mormyrid  
peculiarmormyrid.com

photography by  
Juli Maria Kearns,

# THE CALL

**Egregore—a very strange beast.**

A spectral entity created inside the alchemical furnace of true collectivity, an external spirit which surpasses all its individual components. It is the “something more than”, it is the “space between”, which haunts all our activity. A trickster child that, once birthed, immediately overshadows its parents, creating a paradoxical new reality, a third invisible other. A  $1 + 1$  which, quite inexplicably, is seen equaling 3. And so we draw our magic surrealist circle here, and we summon. Against the miserable capitalist world which we inhabit, so dominated by online fragmentation, individual narcissism, and personal compromise, we raise this phantom—the answer to all our dilemmas. Surrealism brought us many new paths to liberation, but none quite so potent as this. This present exhibit will be a document of its wanderings among us during the past five years of surrealist collective activity in the belly of old Atlanta. An incomplete document, as it must be. This exhibit is a call to play, too. A call to find and join The Others. For if the future affords us any hope, it is a hope that is only to be found together. In the eclipse of Me within We, a marvelous Egregore waits. *Don't keep it waiting.*

# PARTICIPANTS

Hazel Cline, Steven Cline, Aaron Dylan Kearns,  
Juli Maria Kearns, Martin Kearns, Megan Leach,  
and Steve Morrison.



*The Child Experiments with Being a Minotaur, 2006*  
*From the series "Portraits of The Child Experiments with Being"*  
*A collaborative project with Aaron Dylan Kearns as model*  
*Digital photo with post processing*



*The Child Experiments with Being a Bag Man in a Hat, 2006*  
*From the series "Portraits of The Child Experiments with Being"*  
*A collaborative project with Aaron Dylan Kearns as model*  
*Digital photo with post processing*

## JULI MARIA KEARNS

### **This is a rather artless piece of writing about a piece of art**

and perhaps it should be even more artless. Of course it will be difficult to write about a piece of art that was sculpted, my intellectual experience of which was in part transformed by the physical experience of filming it, which is another art work in itself, however based on the sculpture. I've tried for a couple of months to form the introductory, involving paragraph that would append to a short piece I'd begun during The Egregore Exhibition in Atlanta, consequent my experience filming the centerpiece of the exhibit, The Egregore Throne, conceived by Steven Cline and Hazel Cline. My introduction to the work was in stages. When I'd entered the exhibit space the Sunday before the exhibit was to open, the sculpture, already formed, was being painted black, finishing touches applied. A soundscape by Hazel Cline, with Martin Kearns producing, was to complement, but I'd not heard this yet, but I already appreciated it for the thing that I was seeing thus far. The fact that the large centerpiece was structured with the purpose of visitors being able to take a seat on the throne seemed, at the time, to simply add the element of an immersive attraction. What I didn't comprehend yet was how radically this piece would unify the exhibit, a realization that wasn't going to happen until the exhibit's opening night, because that unity didn't coalesce until the sculpture began to be treated as a throne, and the sound environment was added. I'm going to now shift from past tense to the present tense, as if the throne is still there, and which, having the experience of it, one could count as still metaphysically active (plus I have on my desk the "Have a Seat, Join the Egregore" sign that was beside the sculpture, and which my son grabbed for me when the sculpture was broken down at the end of the exhibit. At first hearing, apart from the exhibit, the sound environment--noise synthesized from a variety of textures, bird twitters dominating--may be comprehended only as painterly accompaniment. The big magic happens when the Egregore throne, at the exhibit's center, is combined with the sound environment that fills the space, and an individual takes their place on the seat of the throne. Suddenly, Egregore constellates as a world, initially via the throne and the environment built of the soundscape, the bird song manifesting the woods aspect of the throne with its denuded branches that sprout out of and above its back, as though its home is a stand of trees, while at the enthroned person's feet are pieces that some might consider to be invasive human garbage and pollution. There certainly can be had that dystopian read as one of its many possible perspectives, and I took advantage of this when filming a couple of video portraits of Aaron Dylan Kearns, another surrealist artist, in his opening night costume reminiscent of WWI. To stop there would be, however, missing a more remarkable synthesis. Surrealism existed before WWI. Surrealism has been around as long as we have populated the landscape. However,

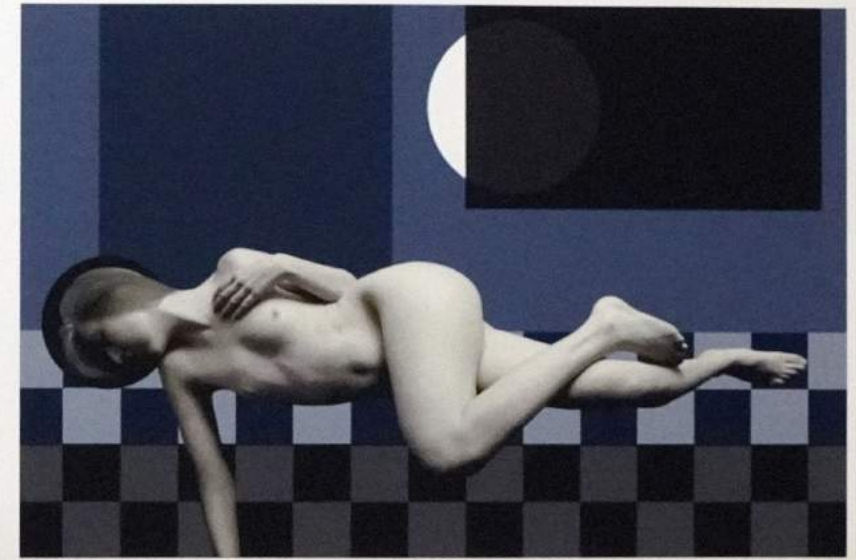
WWI is what birthed it as a communal movement, a vision of revolution. I had already, coincidentally, the day before the opening, been exploring how WWI was expressed in the film "The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari", this prompted by my hearing a discussion in which the movie was being argued down to only an intellectual product of genre and marketing, concept a thing apart from any initiating experience translating into art. An individual was aggressively denying that WWI had anything to do with the film. I chose not to become involved in the discussion, not a part of the group, but due it I returned to screengrabs I'd made of the film, in which I had believed I'd seen in the film's artistic design the influence of the war's trenches and "no man's land" devastation between enemy encampments that seems so unique to our photographic record of WWI, the blasted black and white landscape measured by leaning posts bound with barbed wire, the occasional devastated tree left to remind that this was a "place" that was something else before war time. WWI was also a mustard gas and pandemic war so we are accustomed to seeing the trenches in company with masks, and sometimes the civilian population in masks as well, which resonates with the last couple of years of isolation and alienation courtesy our Covid-19 pandemic. Though different from war, we have experienced the communal aspects of not only grief and hardship but our all being bound together by the same threat, and the positive communal response that has occurred and the knowledge of how that response could have potentially been even more impactful in addressing a number of societal challenges and ills that have always been there but were so exposed by the pandemic (in America, lack of nationalized health care and housing protections etcetera). Woven though all this is the global impact of climate change, humans behaving irresponsibly, but also corralled and pushed around by the great corporate beasts of business for whom wealth is a matter of illogical numbers that wildly grow dependent on spoils. Seated in the throne, one may be reminded of all this. That is all harshly present, and one can feel the angst and anguish, the compulsion toward confrontation with societal and personal responsibilities that emerged in the post WWI surrealists and their wedding of art and politics as a means of decisive expression that must deny the aggrandizing wealth aspect of the arts. Coincidentally, we had filmed the surrealist-absurd short film "Box Men" just a couple months before the pandemic broke loose, in which a man lives in a gas mask, afraid to go without it, and with Aaron dressed in this gas mask from the film and an old military coat he'd just acquired, when he sat in the Egregore throne I suddenly and surprisingly felt constellated all around the surrealists of WWI, their radicalization, in our present circumstances. But there is more. Because from the throne, in company with its sound environment, with the individual taking their place on its seat, there radiated invisible threads to all the art work surrounding, constellating a universe of individual and communal creativity and the fundamental riches of conscious and unconscious imagination in the exploration of that predicament which is life. There was nothing about the exhibit that is dystopian or nihilistically inclined. It is instead a magic spot into which one could

step and experience the drama of the great web of all our relationships, in serious play and playful seriousness, absent the rewards that traditionally define the inhabitant of the throne as ruler. The throne, in the Egregore environment, was transformed from a position of dominance to a seat in which one could and must experience being “a part” and the responsibility that comes of that humility. And this is where the absurd and theatrical element enters. In general, I have tended to stay away from self-declaring myself a surrealist or absurdist specifically as I see the surreal and the absurd in everything, but of course this does not address the political element of the surrealists as a movement. My interest and work as an artist and author of the absurd and surreal has been life-long. When I was in college part of my pursuit of a dual degree included translating French surrealist poetry under the tutelage of my Parisian professor. She said I did the best translations she’d read—and I’m now taking for granted this wasn’t true and means very little, but I continued the project through my mid 20s with translating surrealist and absurd plays. My early efforts at novels were surrealist, and later, writing for theater, I naturally went to surrealism and absurdism, flip sides of the same coin, as far as I’m concerned—dependent on one another, Yin and Yang. A problem, of course, with theater, with art, is not simply engaging the audience member (spectacle engages, nostalgia engages) but provoking the opening of a door onto a new consciousness, an experience that disturbs and reorients. This is, of course, the Theater of Cruelty, a subject too involved to address here and I feel as though I may sound naive even bringing it up. The reason I raise it is because as I stood and watched people take a seat in the Egregore throne, as the sound environment enveloped, and the tendrils to all the works in the exhibit unfolded and wrapped around, I appreciated how this was a very successful theater piece, one unannounced, which quietly invites a person to sit, and, just as in the theater, maybe the experience will happen for individuals and maybe not, but it is an environment dedicated to the opportunity, without critical explanation, constructed as a potential place for that engagement. Language alone is generally door-keeping in its intellectual engagement (which does not mean it is “intellectual”), and a theater of experience means somehow slipping past the way language can act as a barrier. The public still tends to think of “theater” as language oriented, which need not be, even despite films instructing on how story and engagement can proceed without language, just as with music. With the inclusion of the Egregore throne, and the invitation for individuals to take their seat upon it. the surrealist exhibit moved out of being an exhibit to being an inclusive act of surrealist theater. I thought of two young men who had wandered into the gallery, who had asked repeatedly if this was a theater piece and when it would start. No doubt they asked because the Clines and Aaron were costumed. They were righter than they knew.



*Megan Leach*

*a table was laid*



*in horus' junkyard, entrails always vocalize*



## EXHIBIT DREAM **Aaron Dylan Kearns**

### ASH AND SNOW 1978

The following dream was reconstructed solely through archival materials. The events had long since passed, and all that exists now are archival images and private contemporary accounts. In the winter of 1978, the body of an adolescent boy was found face-down on a secluded road in the Okayama area. Practically naked, aside from the layers of ice and snow caked on top of his body, and covered with bruises and open lacerations, he appeared to be dead, then authorities realized he was still breathing. Hospitalized for hypothermia, doctors were still left confused about his vitals when it was realized that he showed no sign of a pulse. Even when he started to become lucid again, doctors couldn't detect a heartbeat and his body remained unusually cold. Three days into intensive care, the boy's body began to undergo a rapid state of decay. His limbs turned more brittle, and when attempting to give him injections doctors would find that any sort of abrasion to the boy's skin would cause coats of soot to scrape off, like his skin was a burnt surface. It became an issue of concern when the boy's fingers started to crack and break up like used cigarette butts. It was from here that doctors realized that the boy was rapidly turning into ash from the inside out, and that soon enough his whole body would eventually disintegrate. His organs had already fully crumbled away, but he was inexplicably still alive and loosely maintaining his physical structure. The focus of the doctors from here shifted to attempting to rationalize his unusual anatomical state. Surgeries were first suggested, but only one was performed, and it was considered a failure. They were barely able to lightly lacerate the boy's back before a substantial portion of his shoulder crumbled in on itself. Through this though they were able to recover a small paper pamphlet that was forcibly lodged into him. The pamphlet was a grainy black and white print that showed various images of the child from before he was found. It had cryptic ideographic writings that vaguely resembled a crossing of katakana and Cyrillic. Years after the incident, various linguists were brought in to inspect the writings, but no conclusions could be drawn. At the center of the pamphlet, a strange primitively-drawn anatomical diagram-styled image of the then-popular children's character Astro Boy is shown with various arrows pointing to parts of his body. The phrase "use for reference in cases of discomfort" was written underneath in English. The paper was spotless when it was extracted, with only a light coat of dust on top. Despite the paper having distinct images of the boy, it was found to be made from paper that would have been made decades before the boy was even born. The boy eventually died the following January. His structure had become brittle enough that his own hospital bed and smocks crushed his body in, leaving behind a multi-shaded ashy dust pool. Where his torso would've been, doctors found a cassette tape. The contents

of the tape were the sounds of someone recording a news broadcast off their television. The broadcast focused on the disappearance of a young boy who matched the description of the child they found, with a prominent focus being an interview with the boy's mother, who was audibly crying between scattered sentence fragments. Despite the levels of detail extracted from the broadcast, neither the boy or the boy's mother could be identified, with police across the neighboring prefectures claiming to have no knowledge of the case. It was claimed that the boy's ashes were left in the hospital bed for a week until they were mistakenly swept up and thrown out as garbage.



## **EXHIBIT DREAMS** Hazel Cline

**12/8/2021**

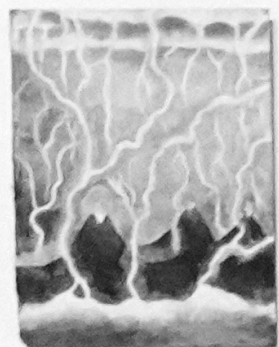
Steven and I are riding in the back seat of a car driving away from the Egregore exhibit. At the show, I had been letting the Egregore speak through me, and as we sit in the car, I continue lapsing back into Egregore talk. Steven remarks that maybe it wasn't a good idea to go messing with Egregores when the edges of the self are fuzzy to begin with. The driver says, "Nah, it's all good. We'll just call you Lieutenant Happy Egregore from now on." I ask if I can be First Mate instead, and they say that Lieutenant was better and that from now on I'd be Lieutenant Happy Egregore. We get out of the car and walk into a grocery store.

**12/15/2021**

Steven and I are kissing on a mattress in our dining room. Steven moves a metallic object out of the way, but cuts his finger on a part of it. He holds his hand up and asks if it looks bad. It starts bleeding profusely and blood soon saturates my clothes, the bed, and objects that are scattered around us. We go to the hospital so Steven can get stitches and a blood transfusion. But when we get back, the dining room sliding glass doors are completely open, and a bunch of stuff including Egregore exhibit bits are strewn about the yard. Steven and I sit in the dining room and look out at the yard. A piece of the Egregore, which is long and has a gold doll head on the end, starts to move. Steven and I watch, transfixed, as the object moves through the yard and up onto the porch, headed in our direction. It pauses behind a bucket that is on the porch and then peeks over it directly at us. Unable to take it any longer, I rush out and grab it by the neck. I call to Steven to come quickly and look. Reluctantly, he comes over to where I am holding the Egregore piece with the doll face. I ask, "Is it evil?" But by now, both of us can tell that the Egregore piece is now empty of life. Turning to look in the driveway, Steven says that the car has gone crazy. We run towards it in time to see it drive off on its own. We realize that what had been in the Egregore piece had transferred into the car, and has gone off into the world to do whatever it is an Egregore does.







## EXHIBIT DREAMS **Steven Cline**

**11/01/2021**

Dreamed I was in a strange floating version of Atlanta, which existed high above the earth. It was laid out in a kind of “U” shape, and when one looked over the edges, one could see only the clouds. The left part of the “U” was where the underclass lived, and it was at a slightly higher elevation than the upperclass section on the right side of the “U”. It was filled with old strip clubs, abandoned shops, etc. At the very top of the left side of the “U” was Attica Prison, and on the roof of Attica was a tower for the WRAS radio station. I remembered vaguely that something unpleasant had happened there many years ago, and that this event was related in some way to another well-known Atlanta disaster wherein a comet hit the football stadium during a game and killed everyone inside. The only Atlanta sports team that had not died off in a natural disaster was the hockey team.

**10/22/2021**

Dreamed I was tracking down a secret society called “The Sisters of Mercy”. In the middle of an old cemetery I finally found their lair, noticing the little symbol from the band Einstürzende Neubauten scrawled along the bottom of a wall as I walked through the door. Inside, I met Meret Becker and Blixa Bargeld, looking as though they’d just stepped out of their Stella Maris music video from 1996. They were conspiring, through some complex magical working, to raise the fallen Atlantis back up from the ocean depths.





*Moonface*  
Steven Cline



*Megan Leach*

# ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS ABOUT ATLANTA

1. *What color does it correspond to?*
2. *Is it nocturnal or diurnal?*
3. *What animal is it?*
4. *How was it born?*
5. *What could it do?*
6. *Where is it on a scale from credulous to incredulous?*
7. *Does it have a gender? Is so, what is it?*
8. *Why did it find us?*
9. *Is it aquatic or land-based?*
10. *What does it taste like?*

## ANSWERS

### 1. *What color does it correspond to?*

- Red (3)
- Green (3)
- Silver
- Bright yellow fading to light grey
- Orange
- Purple
- Sky blue

### 2. *Is it nocturnal or diurnal?*

- Diurnal (4)
- Crepuscular (2)
- Nocturnal (3)
- Nocturnal wannabe

### 3. *What animal is it?*

- Raccoon (2)
- Possum (2)
- Armadillo
- Robin
- Cat
- Hen
- Crab

### 4. *How was it born?*

- Fell off a truck
- From an ostrich egg
- Through fire (3)
- By shelter and fear
- Extraterrestrial comet crash landed
- Osmosis
- In the ashes of the previous

### 5. *What could it do?*

- Remake itself
- Birth trees
- Anything
- Connect
- Change Georgia
- Slice bacon
- Go to the top of the world
- Change, evolve
- Juggle

### 6. *Is it credulous or incredulous?*

- Credulous (5)
- Incredulous (4)

### 7. *Does it have a gender?*

*Is so, what is it?*

- Female (4)
- Non-binary (6)

### 8. *Why did it find us?*

- It's lost too, asking for directions
- To share its love
- Relationships
- To help us, and bring us down
- She knew we needed a place to incubate
- To make its nest
- To guard it while it laid its eggs
- It was always among us
- We found *it*

### 9. *Is it aquatic or land-based?*

- Land-based (7)
- Aquatic
- Born in water, transformed into land-based mammal at puberty

### 10. *What does it taste like?*

- Gamey
- Moss
- Hot chicken
- Spicy Trash
- Raw sugar
- Weed & Laughter
- Incense sticks
- Anise
- Grits



# CUBE GAME

1. Choose your partner (2)

2. Begin by creating your collective poem.

Place down cubes as quickly as possible, competing with your partner(s) for speed.

If possible, try to keep your sentences grammatical.

3. When finished, you can also flip each cube over, in order to discover a new under-poem.

This is your poem's unconscious.

## POEM

A regret about  
dreaming  
sucker for resason  
ran pregnant, glowing, desperate  
please waste the night

## UNDER POEM

A tirade about  
eats partner  
shiver wicked flesh quickly  
leave fire a sister





## ETYMOLOGICAL EGREGORES

*“What the devil could that mean, being a ‘human egregore’? I vainly turned up all the soil in the garden of Greek roots, without being able to unearth the onion I was after. I sometimes wonder with fear whether I myself might not be a ‘human egregore’ without knowing it. What consoles me is that I won’t be the only one not to understand it.”*

*-Clair Tisseur, Modest Observations on the Art of Versifying (1893).*

What is this strange thing, this word that sounds like so much... Is it an omelette, a demon, a method of some ritual slaughter, or the onomatopoeic name of some sleeping giant? Where does it come from? What does it want with us?

The term “egregore” derives from a Greek word ἐγρήγορος, meaning “awake”, “vigilant” or “watcher”. It seems to emerge as a translation of terms found in original Hebrew and Biblical texts, and is especially significant to the apocalyptic Book of Enoch, where it describes the children of the so-called Nephilim (giants or sometimes fallen angels). These are the mysterious “watchers”, creepy beings of fate and ominous destiny that have some ambiguous, uncomfortable relationship to angels and human destiny...

At some point in the 19th century, the term becomes, if not a fixture, at least an occasional feature in occult, theological and esoteric texts. A 1998 article by L.S. Bernstein entitled “Egregor” chases the linguistic and conceptual origins of the term through a number of these philological byways, to the notionally original Hebrew term irim. He makes further speculative links to John Dee, H.P. Lovecraft and leaves many other fascinating hints, ultimately tying together the term egregor with Enochian “watchers”, “angels”, Kabbalistic “giants”, the Baphomet statue of the Templars, the famed city of Irem of Arabian Nights fame and the “Governors” of Enochian magic.

It seems like, while taking into account the complex origins of the term, and any number of fanciful associations, some core characteristics accumulate over time:

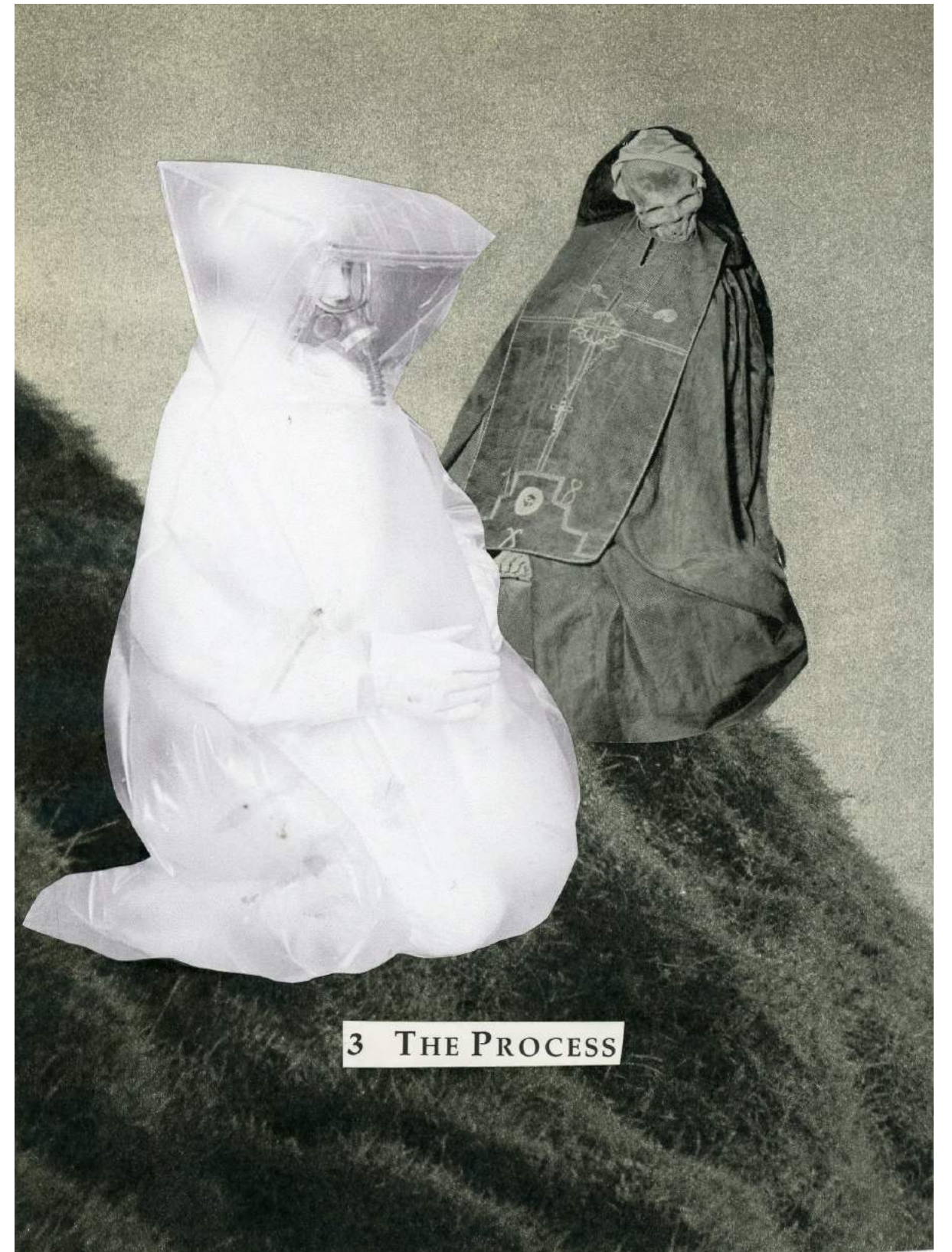
- Egregores are watchful superior entities, sometimes equated with gods, angels, demons, sometimes with forms of thought;
- Egregores are linked or generated in some way via a group, host, or individual;
- Egregores have special, possibly malevolent, powers over and above their constituent parts, and that collective body to which it is bound.

It’s worth noting that, one occasionally sees reference to the term being attributed to “old hermeticists” or “old alchemists” in a casual, mysterious way. René Guénon explicitly denies this and cites Éliphas Lévi (181-1875) as the modern originator of the term in the contemporary occult context. He claims the term egregore:

“...has nothing traditional about it, and represents one of the many linguistic fantasies of the modern occult... We know the term can be found in the Book of Enoch, where it refers to entities of a rather enigmatic character, but who nevertheless appear to belong to the ‘intermediary world’; this is all they have in common with the collective entities to which the name is applied today.”

Even if this is true, from the perspective of surrealist and poetic praxis, any such crime regarding the supposed misapplication of the term isn’t really germane to its potential. To use or develop terms in novel ways is part of the surrealist imperative towards language. Historic precedent has less relevance for contemporary use, so long as there remains some viable power, allure....

### J. ABDELHADI

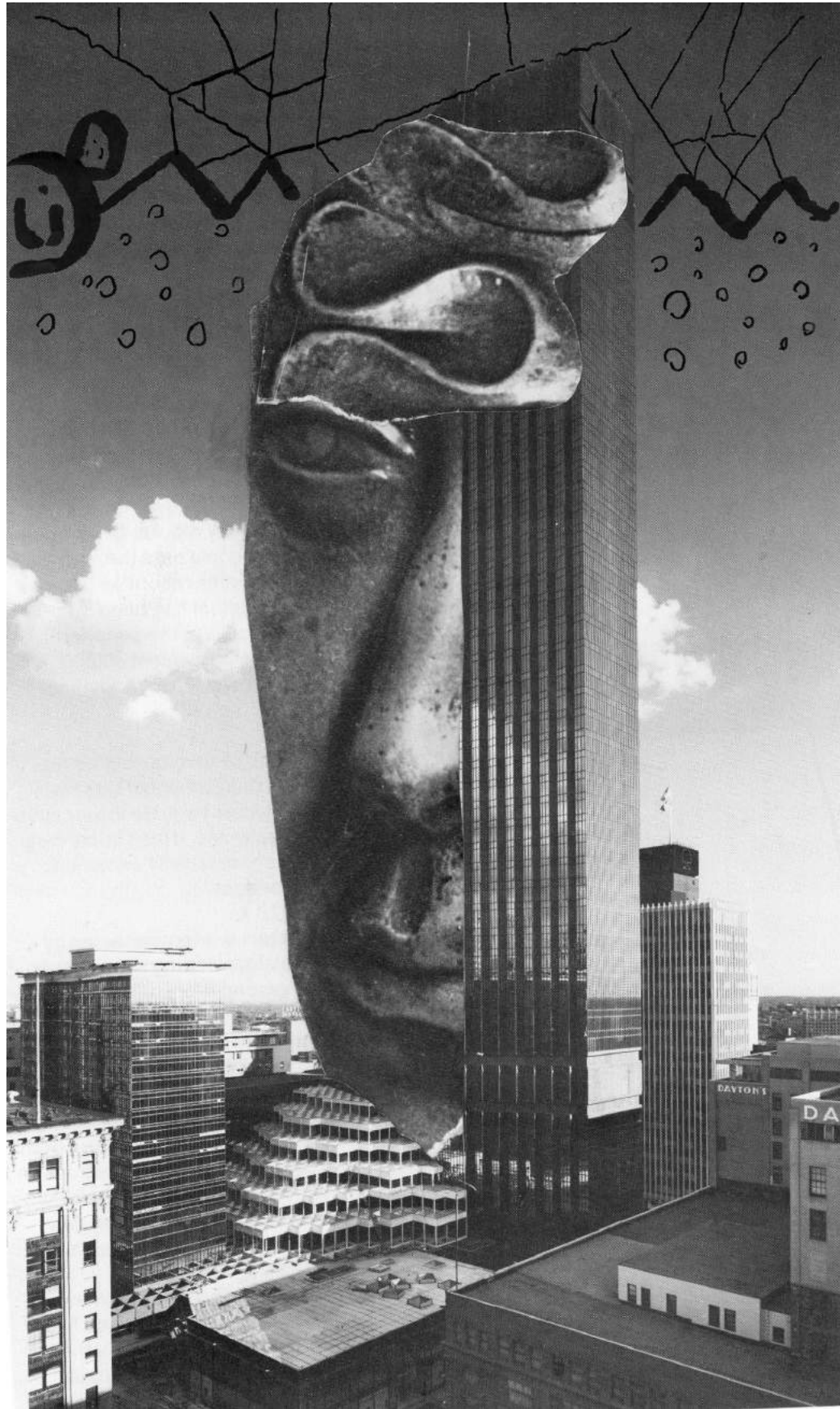


3 THE PROCESS

*Steven Cline, Aaron Dylan Kearns*







*Steven Cline, Aaron Dylan Kearns*



*a proud papa cradles his miraculous slime*





*Megan Leach*



*Window Shopping*  
Hazel Cline



Hazel Cline, Steven Cline, Aaron Dylan Kearns

The mad meteorologist

interact online,

The great gates were ajar,

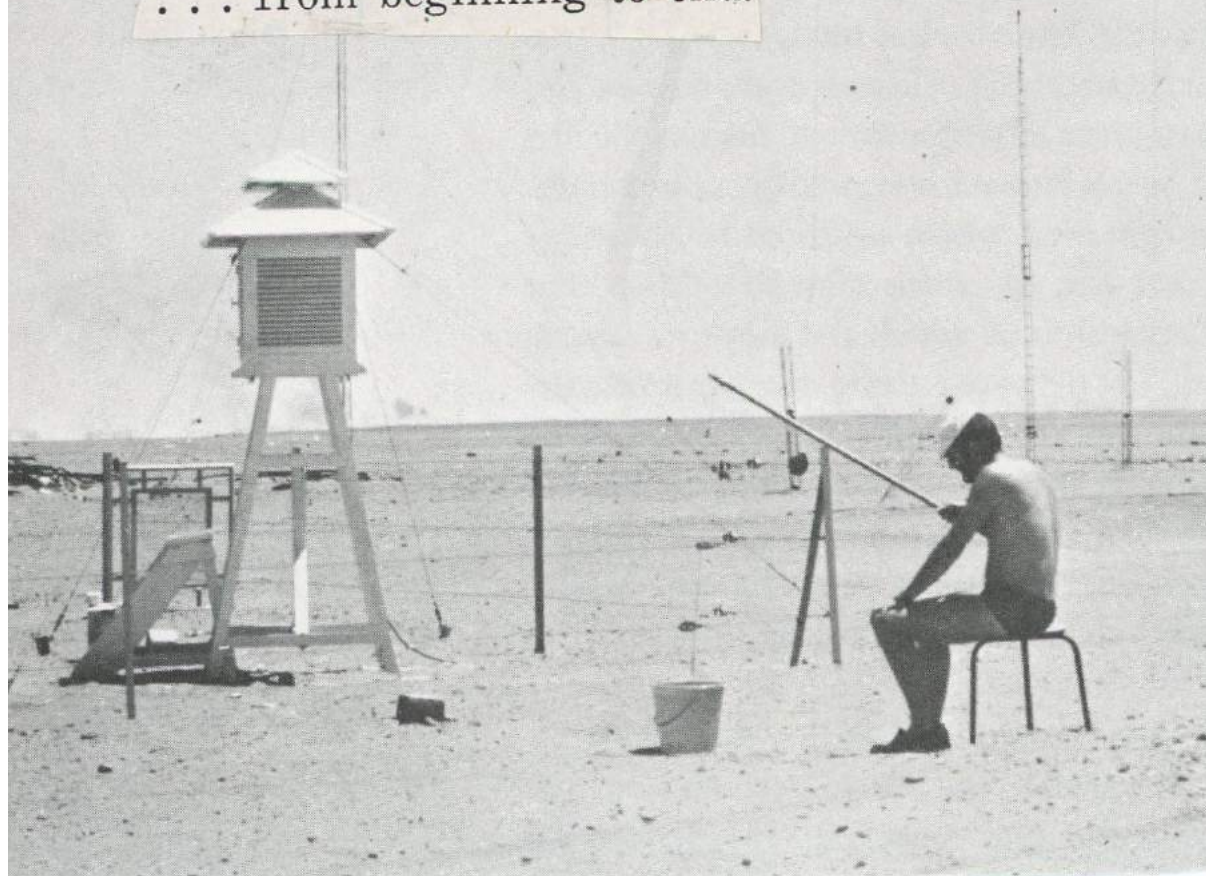
she didn't get the message sooner.

27 million people

Moreover

## Plum Pudding

... from beginning to end.



*Hazel Cline, Steven Cline, Aaron Dylan Kearns*

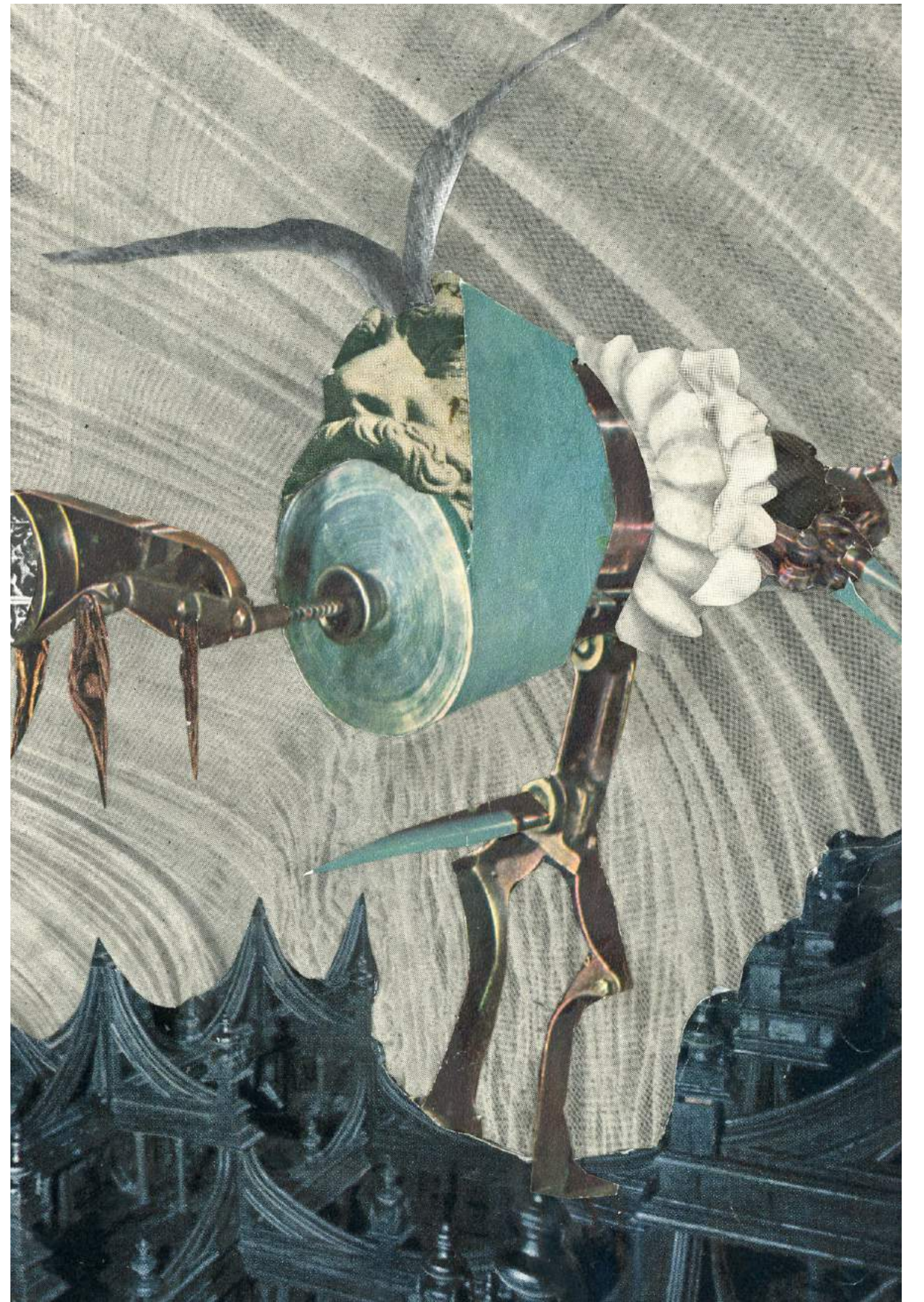


*opposite Hazel Cline, Steven Cline, Megan Leach*



*I mean by “Egregore”, a word previously used by the hermetic philosophers, a human group that is endowed with a personality that is different than that of the individuals which form it...*

*- Pierre Mabille, Egrégore, ou la vie des civilisations*



year 7371  
Steven Cline



*eyelimb*  
Hazel Cline



*Winter Sports*  
Aaron Dylan Kearns



*Kafka #1*  
Aaron Dylan Kearns



## EGREGORRHEA #2

# PATHOLOGICAL EGREGORES

Is the egregore also a sort of sickness?

Interestingly, an 1895 definition from the *Revue universelle: recueil documentaire universel et illustré* defines the term as both “awake” (from the original Greek meaning) and also with its apparent opposite, “somnambulist”.

Is the egregore a sleepwalker or an insomniac, or does it draw from both? A 19th century medical term, “egregorsis”, is defined as a kind of “morbid watchfulness”. Whether asleep or awake, one gets the sense that the egregore is tied to a kind of sickness of observation. It reminds one of the phenomenon of waking up suddenly and seeing strange shadowy beings above one’s bed, only to realize slowly that they are just the various silhouettes shapes of everyday objects given that special nocturnal treatment. Or perhaps a kind of paranoid worrying, a focus on the potential of the outside world, or the future, or some fateful doom. The “watcher” does not sleep.

**J. ABDELHADI**



*Kafka #2*  
Aaron Dylan Kearns



Steve Morrison

### EGREGORRHEA #3

## GORY EGREGORES

In 19th century France, the term “egregore” came to have some meaning, if obscure, beyond specialist occult circles; in general usage it referred to a kind of monster or haunting. One comes across uses in certain texts of the phrase “homme égrégore”, which could be translated as something like “human egregore”, or maybe even “living egregore” (or, why not, in the same sense as “living dead”?) When used in this way, the creature is associated with a number of “scary things” skirting the boundary between life and death: the vampire, the succubus, the undead, the dybbuk etc. A kind of possession or curse that is inflicted on a living person, from some entity in the beyond. So Victor Hugo uses the word in his poem *La Légende des siècles* (1859), invoking the demonic nature of the thing, and possibly exploiting its obscure provenance and potential for a good rhyme in a bit of poetic mystification:

“...He knows the art  
Of invoking the demon, the Styрге, the Egregore;  
He taints his dagger with the sap of the mandragore...”

Likewise, J. Strada asks in an 1897 theological article: “But is there really such a thing as the ferocious Egregore, thirsty for human blood? Incontestably, yes.” It would seem that egregores, in the popular imagination of the time, fit somewhere in-between demonic possession and bloodthirsty vampire.

Attempting to fix it poetically among the known hierarchy of horrors, the decadent feuilletonist Jean Lorrain gives the creature a full treatment in his strange story “L’Égrégore”. His description invokes classic horror tropes and creatures, and ties egregores specifically to a kind of drive or obsession towards art, madness or love:

“The incubus marries and kills the lovers of its mistress; the succubus sucks in and drinks the life of its lover... But the Egregore, oh! That’s something totally different: it is the undetectable and deleterious influence of a being of the shadows, of a dead person taking up occupation near you under the aspect of someone living. It insinuates itself into your life and your habits, mixes in with your heart, your admirations, and takes an odious root. With its damned mouth it infects you with a fatal passion, a madness of some kind, an artistic or erotic madness, and step by step, through its hallucinating and fascinating obsession, it buries you one fine night in a cold grave...”

*doll dialectics*



*symbiotic twisty pretzel*



*miraculous dawn; aeon of the egregore*



*atlantean portal*





*Man in a Forest*  
Aaron Dylan Kearns



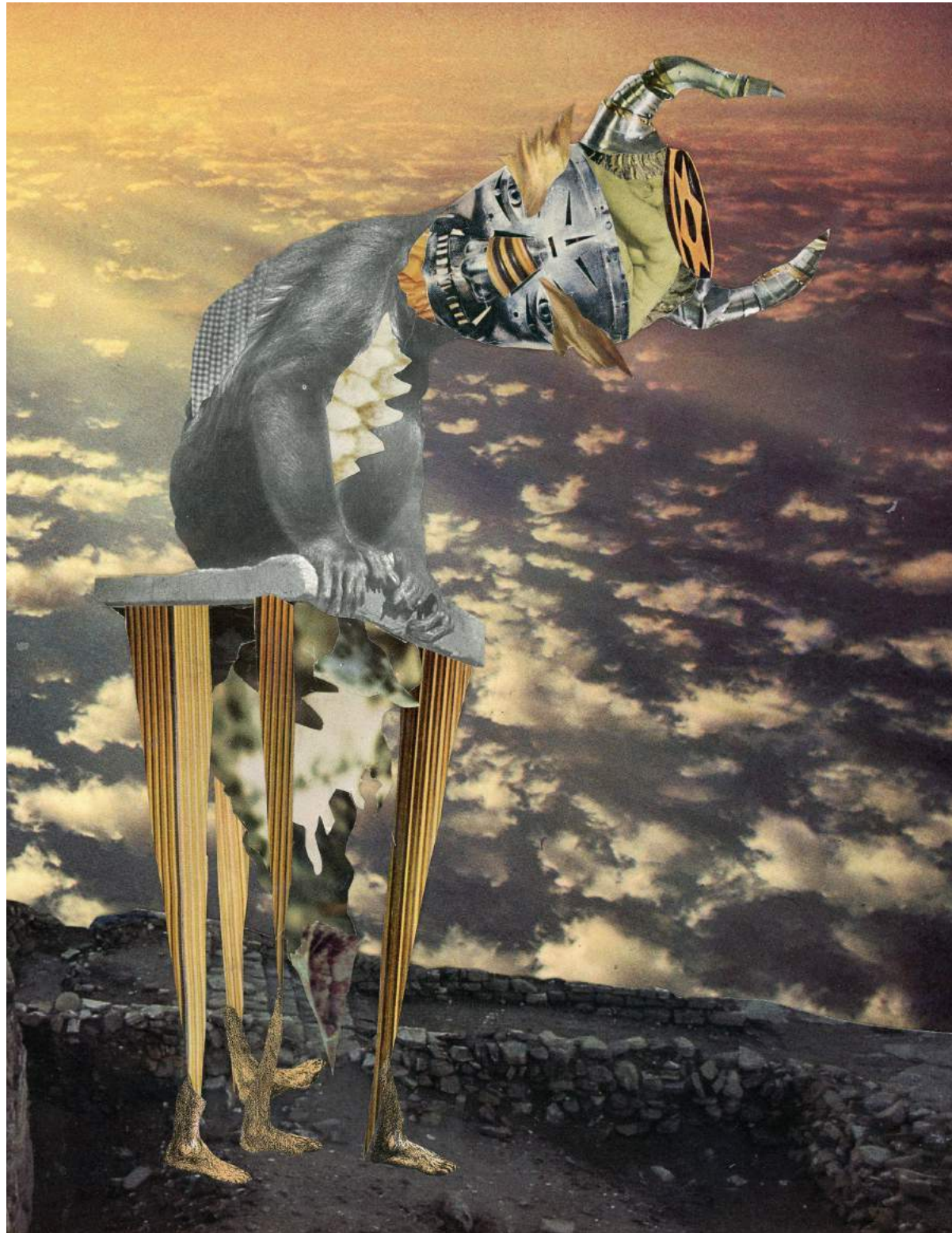
*Wolfman*  
Aaron Dylan Kearns



*Stuck in Time, 2018*  
*Digital Painting*  
*Juli Maria Kearns*



*Steven Cline, Megan Leach*



*Io Pan*  
*Steven Cline*



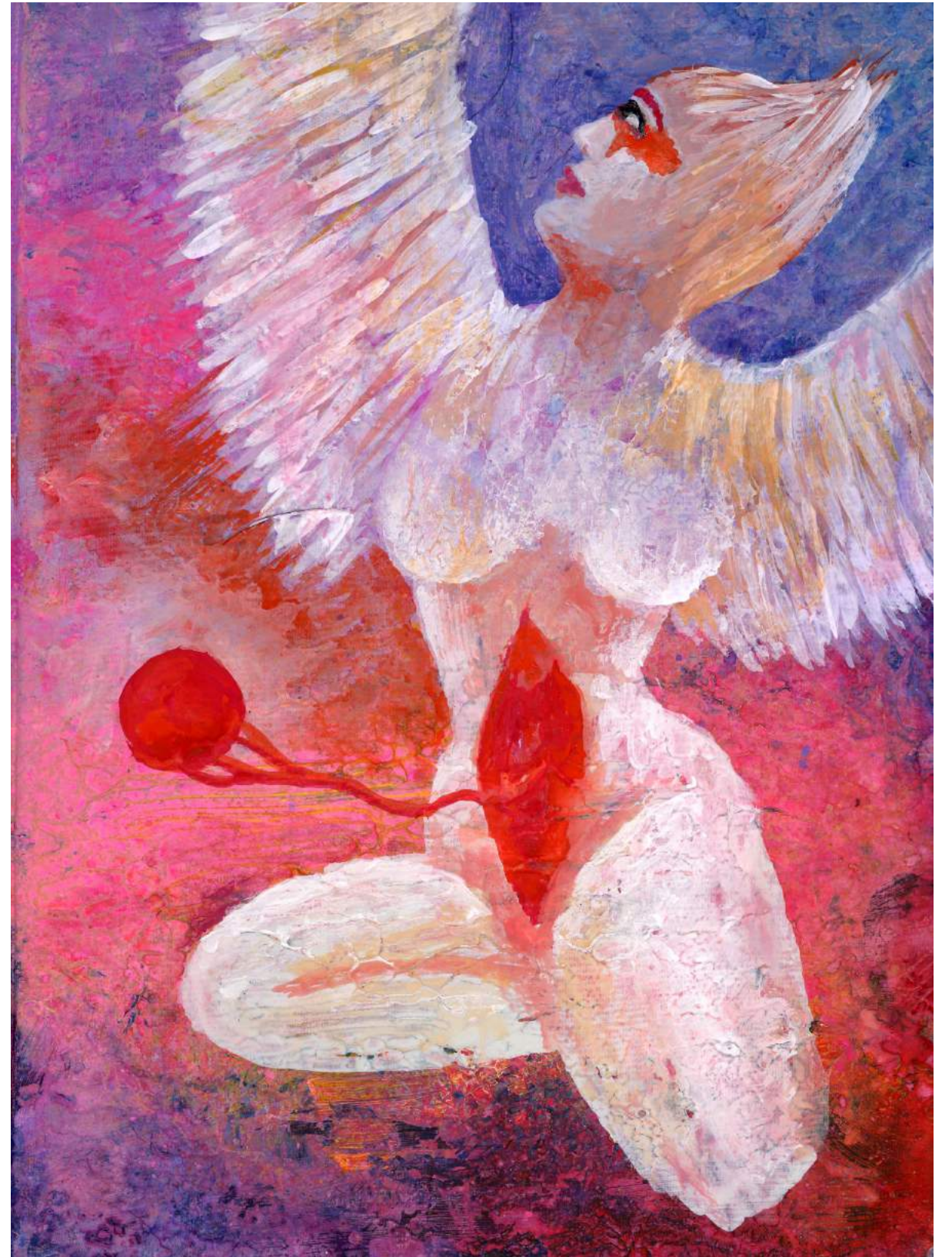
*Megan Leach*



*Woman with Striped Chair, 2017*  
*Digital Painting*  
*Model reference, Danika of Deviant Art*  
*Juli Maria Kearns*



*unu*  
Hazel Cline



*ma*  
Hazel Cline

*alchemist-man drifting towards the allcolor eggplant undersea*



*an exhibit housed on the edge of a black hole*



*hidden footnotes of the artist*



*some visitors remained spectral*





## NECRONOMICAL EGREGORES

Egregores, however alien and violent, also come to invoke a conception of magic or ritual collectivity, enthusiasm, or purpose. Sometimes this applies to the group of humans which invoke or are protected by the egregore; other times the egregore itself is defined as a kind of demonic host. Sometimes the degree of abstraction and sense of the numeric unfathomable is so greatly stressed that it seems almost like an unwitting precursor to Lovecraft's mythos. The egregore behaves like an "Old One", having little to no personal relationship to their charges, but able to devour them in some uncaring and unpredictable manner from a great spiritual distance. Humans are to them as microbes, at least in the way that the 19th century occultist Éliphas Lévi describes them in *The Great Secret Or Occultism Unveiled* (1898):

These colossal forces have sometimes taken a shape and have appeared in the guise of giants: these are the egregors of the book of Enoch; terrible beings to whom we resemble the infusoria or microscopic insects which breed between our teeth and on our epidermis. The egregors crush us without pity because they are unaware of our existence; they are too big to see us and too limited to guess that we are there.

We particularly enjoy the emphasis he puts on the minute creatures that crawl on our skin with what seems to be an excessively visceral amount of detail, as if to emphasize the revolting body-horror aspect of the egregore. The greatness of the egregore is an alien magnitude, terrible in its indifference, and yet somehow still able to tragically crush our individuality by mistake or without a care.

The occultist Stanislas de Guaita in his *La Clef de la Magie Noire* (Key to Black Magic) defines the egregore in terms of magical alienation, an entity over and above the wills of its component individuals, but one that, far from being their slaves, feeds upon them and plays with them as if they were toys:

The Egregore has its own will; it exploits and uses, without their consent, the individuals that make up its grouping. It plays with their sufferings and their joys, and juggles capriciously with their very existence. But, in return, these insignificant individual wills can invoke the Egregore and make use of it—in a kind of reversible magical solidarity.

The French mason Charles Imbert likewise notes their distinct powers of personality: "Although inspired, nurtured, and animated by a group, the egregore is in

fact profoundly archetypal and trans-personal in nature." The egregore thus stands apart, away from or in some ways threateningly above its charges.

By the time the Victorian occultists of the Golden Dawn have gotten hold of the term, drawn primarily from Éliphas Lévi, it has already begun to reflect a more formal ritualistic and ceremonial group form, fitting in with that group's eclectic and aggregationist approach to building an occult system. The Egregore thus becomes a piece of the ritual magic puzzle. Thus Ithell Colquhoun, surrealist and occultist, uses the term in *Sword of Wisdom*, her text on Golden Dawn member Mathers MacGregor. In this text she names the Golden Dawn explicitly as an egregore, referring to "the GD [Golden Dawn] *égrégoire* as a reservoir of arcane talent." She further elaborates in the same text:

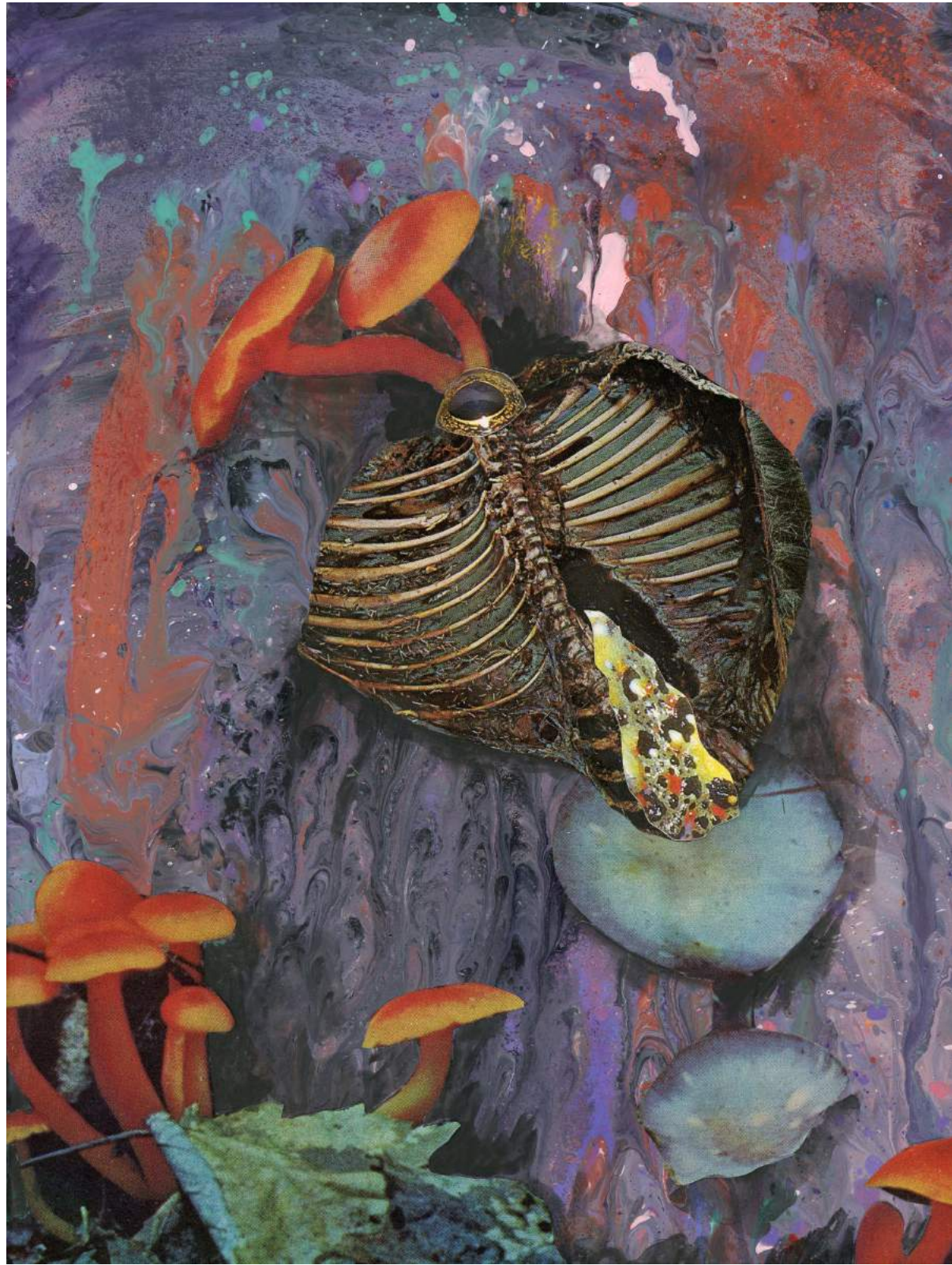
"The dedicatory names of the various Temples usually emphasized Egyptian tradition with the object of building up an appropriate *égrégoire* or group-soul among their members, the invocation of the tutelary deity vitalising the sodality's aura.

Thus the Egregore comes to adapt its formal role to the system of ceremonial magical practices under which it is invoked. Indeed seems to be the very essence or "group soul" of such systems in their entirety. W.E. Butler summarizes in *The Magician, his training and his work* a definition that highlights the aspect of the egregore as a reservoir of ceremonial magical experience in a similar way:

A clear idea of the nature of the magical Egregore, or group form, should be built up in the mind in order that the aspirant may understand what part he plays in the whole complex scheme, and thereby may know how closely he is guided and aided in his chosen work.

Thus the contemporary "esoteric" definition of the egregore crystallizes away from haunting and more around core magical concepts of summoning or collective creation in a ritual context. It is given extensive treatment in groups and texts associated with contemporary "Rosicrucian" practice. In *Meditations on the Tarot*, the egregore is defined as "an artificial being who owes his existence to collective generation from below." This kind of definition seems to be the basis for contemporary use among contemporary occultists, Chaos magick practitioners and others.

### J. ABDELHADI



*Hazel Cline, Steven Cline, Aaron Dylan Kearns*



*the pink room  
Steven Cline*



*wasteland pastoral*  
Steven Cline



*Megan Leach*



*Hazel Cline, Steven Cline, Aaron Dylan Kearns*



*the slapstickman  
Steven Cline*



*Woman on Blue Rug, 2017*  
*Digital painting*  
*Model reference, Danika of Deviant Art*  
*Juli Maria Kearns*



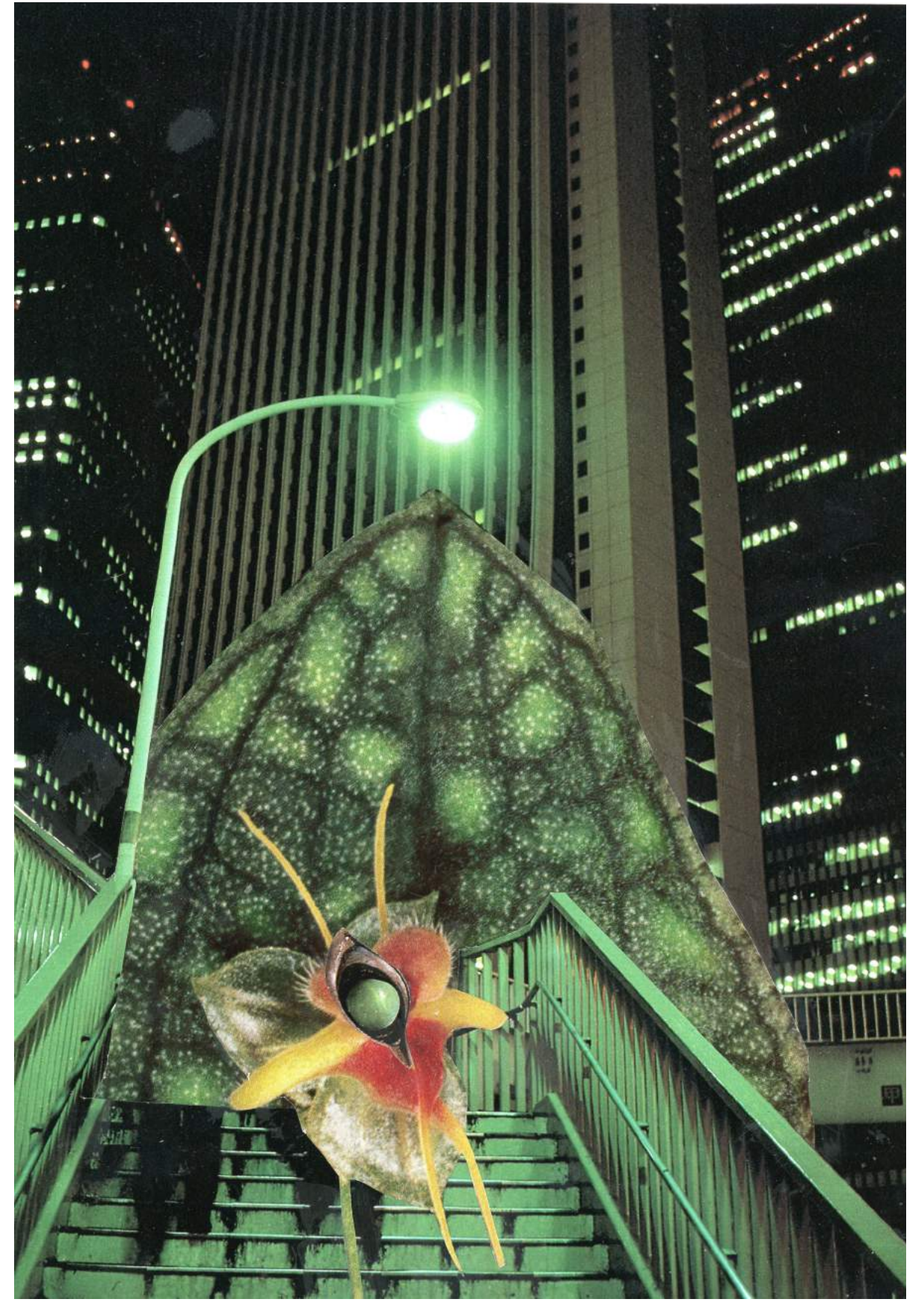
*nite flights*  
*Steven Cline*

*Egregore — a collective  
psychic being that permits  
each active participant to  
surpass his own subjectivity  
by intensifying it to the  
maximum possible extent,  
in order to attain a radical  
state of intersubjectivity.*





*Steven Cline, Megan Leach*



*lamp lighter  
Hazel Cline*

## (ANTI) SOCIAL EGREGORES

There is an aspect to egregores which seem to expand their reach beyond that of an anthropomorphic demon or ritual magic group form and towards something closer to a collective idea, movement, or societal level activity. Thus the occultist and theorist of *Franc-maçonnerie* Robert Ambelain expands the definition from “a force generated by a powerful spiritual current and then nourished at regular intervals, according to a rhythm in harmony with the universal life of the cosmos, or to a union of entities united by a common characteristic nature”. As cited in translation in *Meditations on the Tarot*, he expands this definition to also include things like major religions (Catholicism, Buddhism), churches, social movements, etc. as examples of egregores. Any collective grouping or activity generated by sufficient “devotion, enthusiasm, and fanaticism” can be included:

The Mystical Church, Heavenly Jerusalem, the Body of Christ and all these synonymous names are the epithets that one commonly gives to the egregore of Catholicism. Freemasonry, Protestantism, Islam, Buddhism are egregores. Great political ideologies are other egregores.

Perhaps it is rather a demonic lens taken to observing societal aggregations of any sort, Any great event or movement in history, art, mythology, or philosophy can thus be said to partake in an egregore. This is certainly similar to how Pierre Mabilie makes use of the term in his treatment on the subject, focusing on egregore of Christian civilisation, its growth and decay, and the upcoming birth of some new social form to replace it. Is the egregore just an esoteric term for the over-individual, personality-infused aspects of any collective endeavor? One that can be socially progressive, or destructive, demonic, right wing, communistic?

The egregore can, it seems, work for forces of both progress and destruction, and has been popular with elitist, nationalist, and similarly problematic occult organizations. It is also in this aspect that some will emphasize its ungovernable character. In his consideration of egregores in the contemporary rise of extreme right wing political movements, Gary Lachman stresses their uncontrollable nature: “once brought into existence, an egregore is difficult to control and much harder to put down than to raise up”. He also cites the esoteric historian Joscelyn Godwin who refers to the egregore’s “unlimited appetite for their future devotion”. With a similar note of foreboding, contemporary surrealist author Merl Fluin summarizes the inherent dangers of collective entities from

a surrealist and occultist perspective concept in a 2020 post from her *Gorgon in Furs* blog, entitled “Demons of Science”:

As I’ve said here before, summoning entities is (for the most part) a dumb thing to do. Demons, gods and other magickal entities aren’t just cute pop-psychology metaphors for parts of your own psyche. Obviously, they’re not simply “out there” in the material world either. No, they have both subjective and objective existence simultaneously. That’s the point: that’s magick. And that’s also why they can be dangerous.

This applies to egregores at least as much as to other entities. Once you’ve conjured that sucker, it’ll be raring to go. It’s bad enough when you’ve conjured it on purpose. I’ve conjured a few in my time, and it’s always got out of hand one way or another. You have to be incredibly clear and focused, not just individually but collectively, to keep that puppy in check.

### J. ABDELHADI





*Steven Cline, Megan Leach*



*Steven Cline, Megan Leach*



*all hallow's' pumpkin*  
Hazel Cline



*Megan Leach*



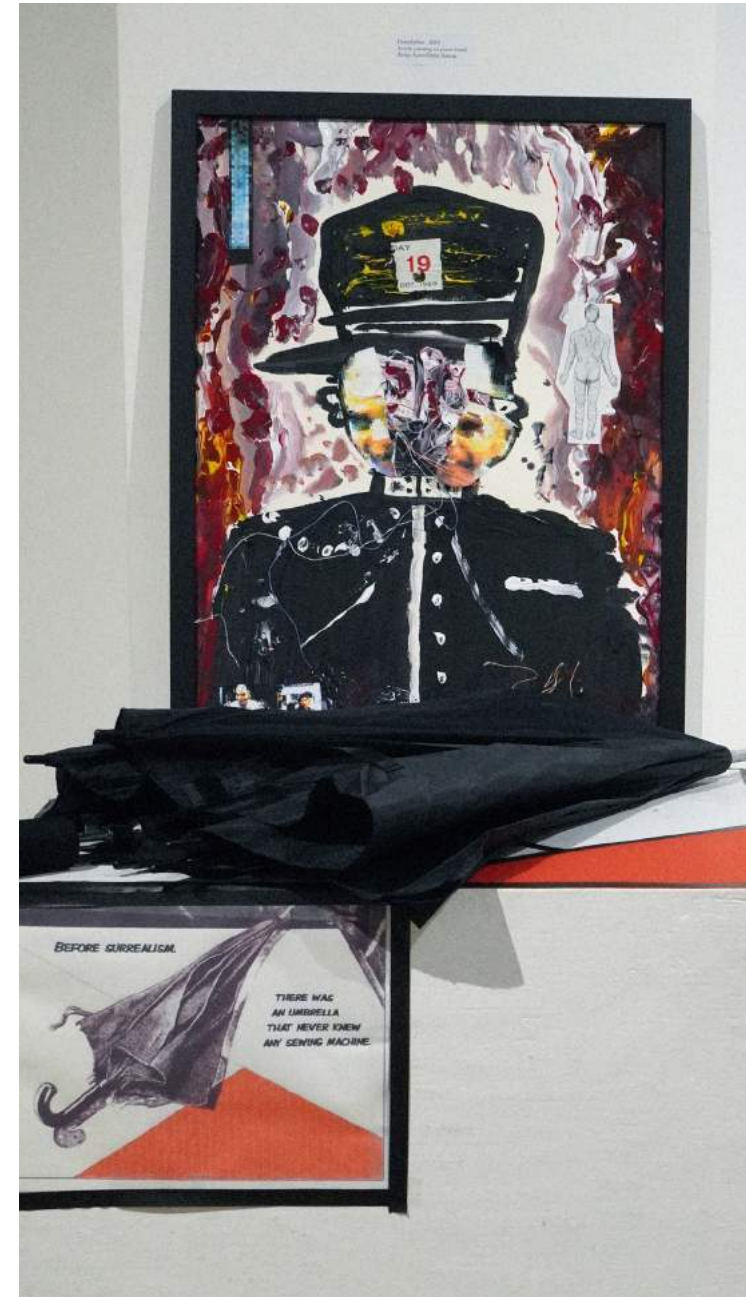
*Megan Leach & Steven Cline*



*Hazel Cline*



*Vital Motor  
Aaron Dylan Kearns*



*In Homage to Suehiro Maruo  
Aaron Dylan Kearns*



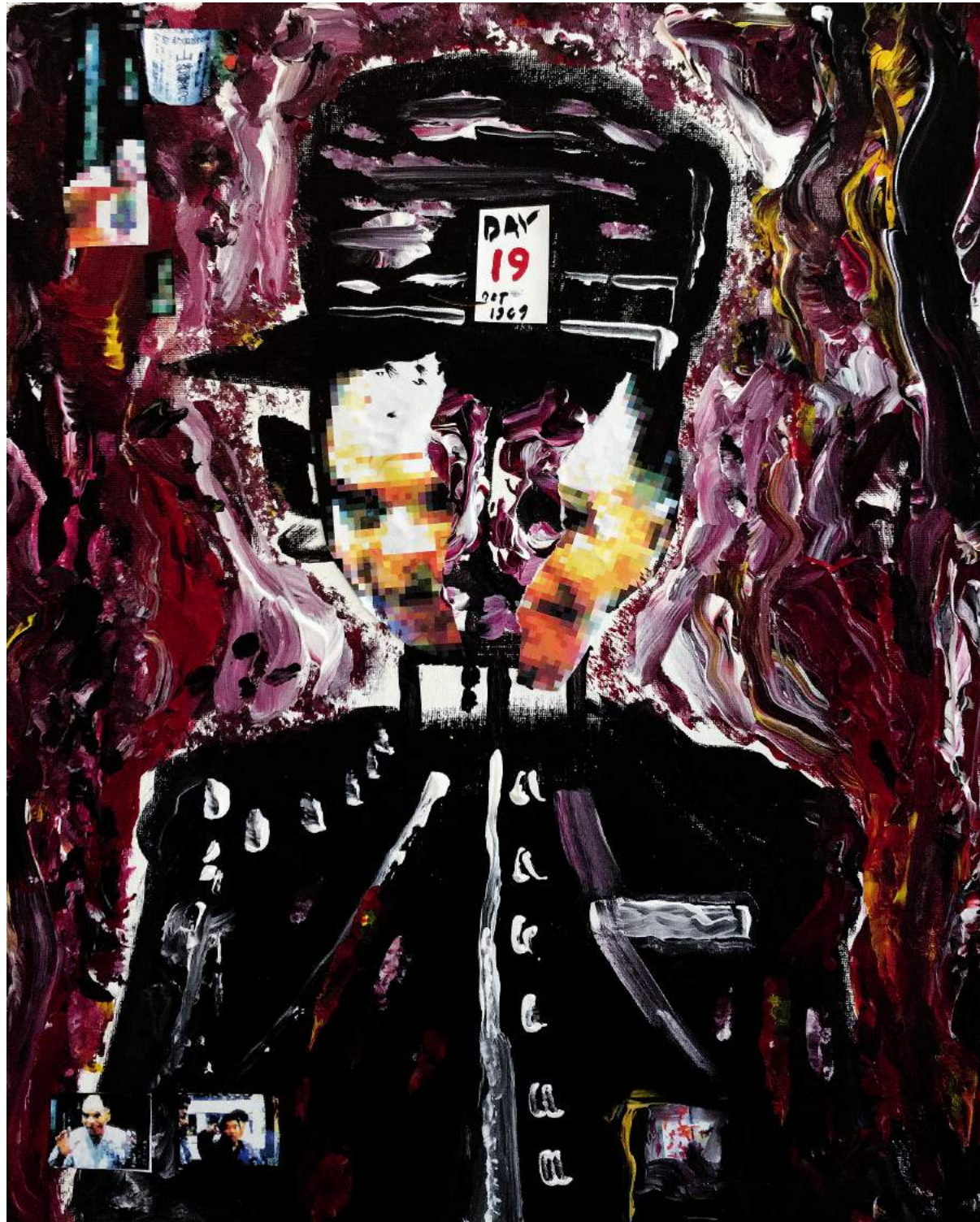
*Deaf Wind Chimes  
Aaron Dylan Kearns*

## NIGHT MAGIC Nimoz

night magic is  
the dark corners  
behind your eyes  
it is the sleeplessness inside  
it's in internal caverns'  
echoing sighs  
it is the moon and  
all her children  
it is blackening skies  
and black branches dripping  
down into the stars  
it is golden, shining  
planetary light  
trapped by moth-flutter eyes  
it is a dear wood where  
spirits live  
and a dear heart  
where planets sing  
and a dweller  
in the heartwood  
as pure in being  
as the melodies they drink  
it is night magic  
a magic left undone  
it is night magic  
a magic of being as one

## MIRROR MAGIC Steven Cline

the world, the all  
is a river made white white  
is all thick, & cummy, & slow  
insideofwhich  
there now swims  
a tiny  
little  
newt  
(the me—the I)  
a newt of heaviest,  
of most intractable black  
newt traverses  
he ducks he spins he plays  
he alwaysorbits  
he alwaysinterpenetrates  
with river  
& ad infinitum  
& ad infinitum  
Multiplicity  
desires Unity  
& Unity  
desires Multiplicity  
& newt  
becomes spotted  
as riverflow  
becomes cut  
by a thousand  
tinysharp fins  
1  
possible  
model  
for the universe?  
a thousand a million  
black & white  
stripes  
covering the face  
of a sad  
yet very happy  
clown(s)



*Grandfather*  
Aaron Dylan Kearns



*Family Life, The Hall, 2018*  
Digital art based on scene from Ken Loach's film  
"Family Life"  
Juli Maria Kearns



*Family Life, The Window, 2018*  
Digital art based on a scene from Ken Loach's film "Family Life"  
Juli Maria Kearns



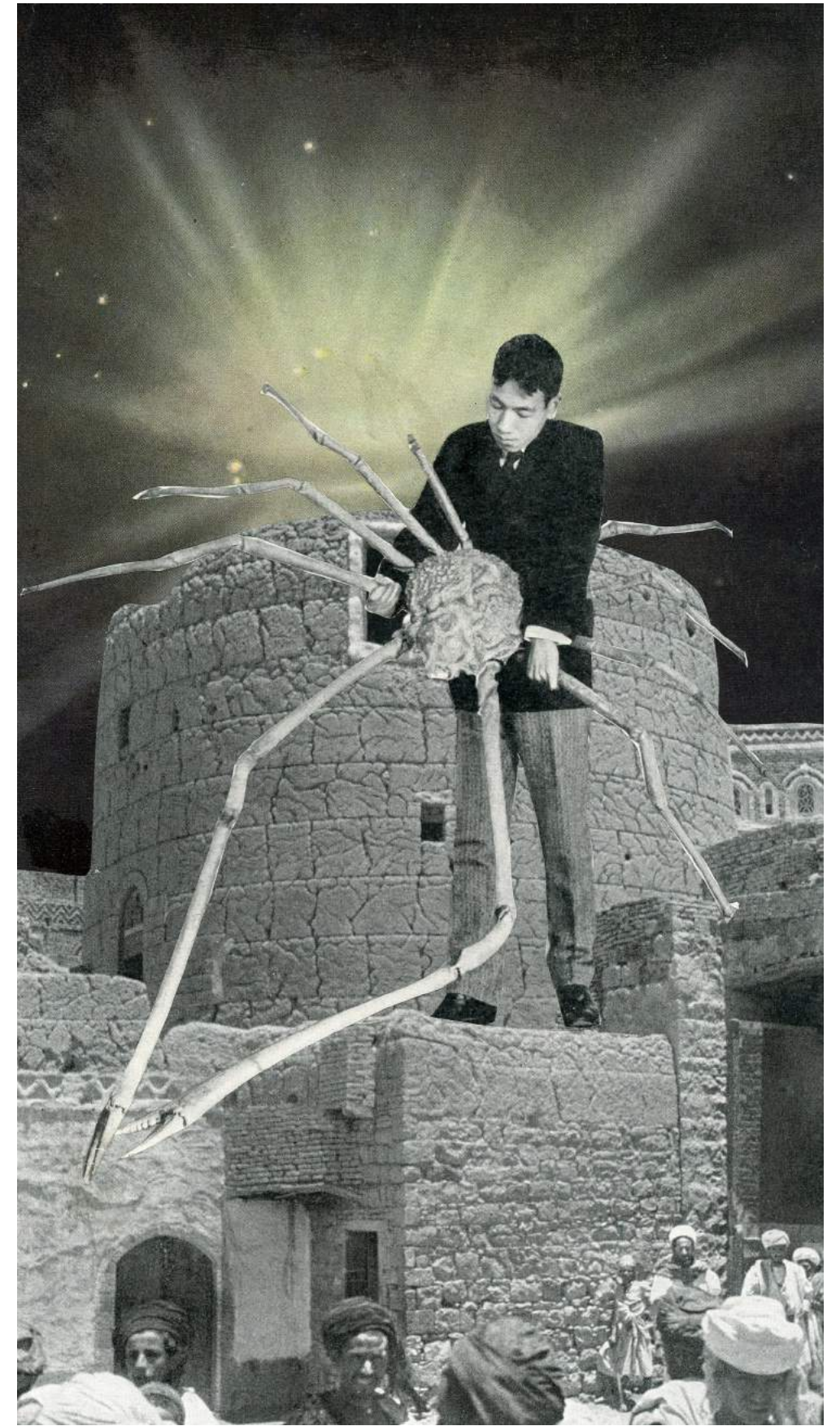
*bosom friends*  
Hazel Cline



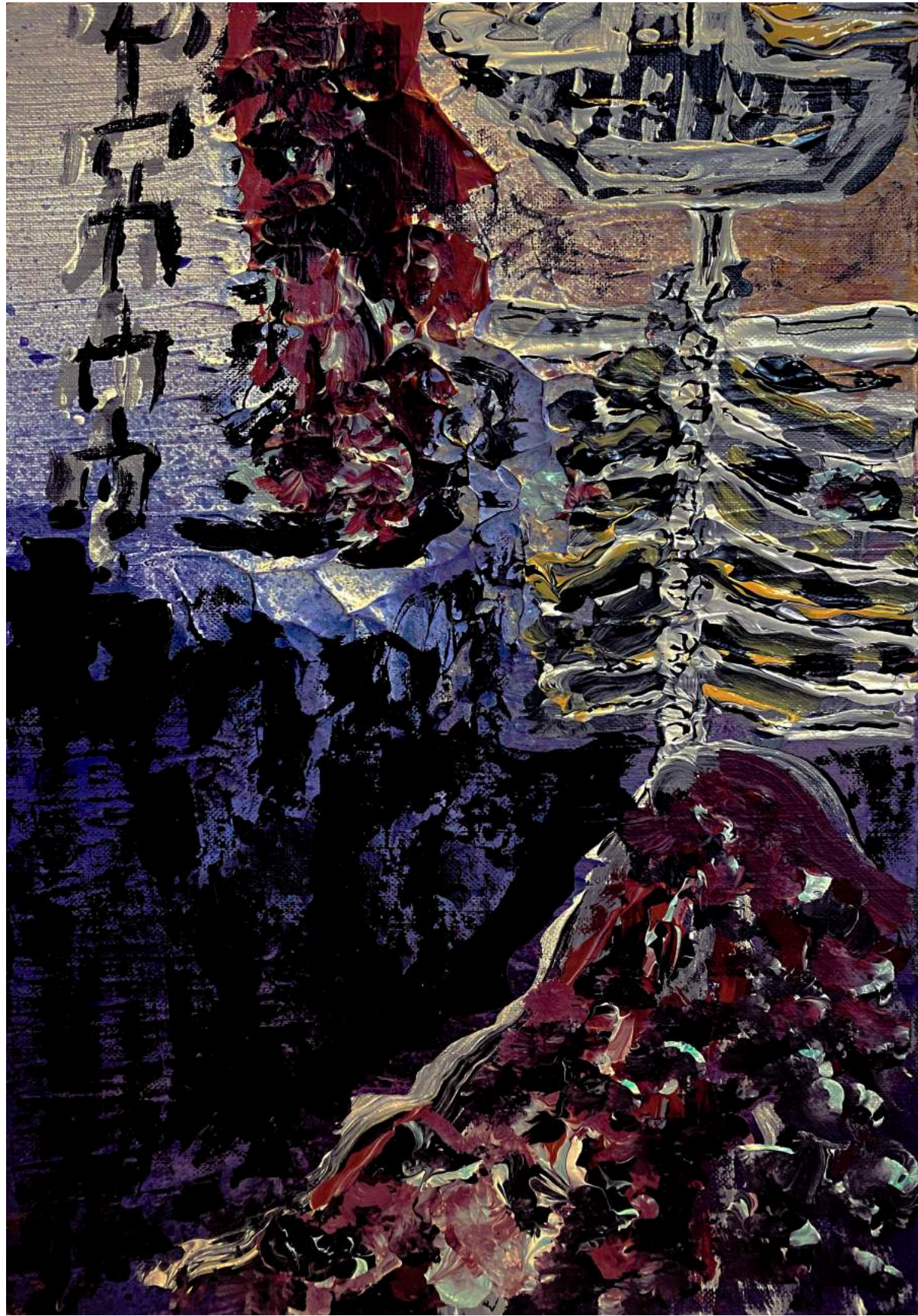
*Woman with Striped Chair, 2017*  
Digital Painting  
Model reference, Danika of Deviant Art  
Juli Maria Kearns



*Megan Leach*



*Steven Cline, Megan Leach*



*Dreams Of A Blue Butcher's Shop*  
Aaron Dylan Kearns



*softness of the universe*  
Hazel Cline



*Megan Leach and Hazel Cline*



## SURREALIST EGREGORES, OR, HOW TO TAKE A COLLECT CALL COLLECTIVELY

Of course the question is, how to make surrealist use of something so evocative, strange, dangerous, and confusing? Or is it more a question of how a collective can be helpfully, and not destructively, used by an egregore? We can understand how the convergence of the occult, the heretical-unorthodox, and the popular horror conceptions of this enigmatic creature coalesces into an appealing sigil for the surrealist movement itself, in all its danger-seeking and thrill chasing obsessiveness. Accordingly the term comes to have quite an influence on some of surrealism's better known thinkers and organizers, and still has lots of currency today.

The occultist, mythographer and doctor Pierre Mabilie seems to have been the primary introducer of the term to surrealist circles. His definition provided in his 1938 book *Egregores, ou la vie des civilisations* has become something of the classic definition as traditionally drawn upon by surrealists, tying together core surrealist enthusiasms for eroticism, collective poetry, profane magic, passion and over-personal power. He furthermore describes egregores as comprising various levels of complexity and organization:

I mean by "Egregore", a word previously used by the hermetic philosophers, a human group that is endowed with a personality that is different than that of the individuals which form it... The simplest egregore is created between a man and a woman. Certainly these two beings could get mixed up only with each other and keep their personal lives intact, and they could likewise end up with a mere equilibrium of forces like in the mechanical "couple" so similar to the marriage of convenience. But as soon as love is present and achieves its ceremonial magic in the physical act, a new reality is born that profoundly transforms each partner. It is nevertheless not a question of adding or subtracting or equilibrium of being, but its multiplication, an access to a different state entirely...

In other circumstances, more complex collective entities are formed. For a room built in such a way, at the locus of an artistic, political or religious gathering, thanks to the operative magical power of the actor, orator, or priest, individualities suddenly disappear; their personality transforms. While it entails the creation of transitory creations, nevertheless, it marks those who have participated in it.

In order that the entity may endure, the emotional drive must encounter favourable circumstances. Geographic locations, circumstances of population, economic necessities, come to complete the passional factor.

Mabilie then goes on to apply the term in a mytho-historical way, looking at the egregore of western/Christian civilization and charting its course, prognosticating its end etc. Despite this, surrealists tend to gravitate towards the more general use of the term, applicable to their own activities in surrealist groups or collectives. Mabilie himself gives a more general formulation in his "Notes on Symbolism" from the surrealist occupied journal *Minotaure* in 1936: "...certain human groups of common persuasion [could] constitute a dynamic aggregation capable of subduing outside forces."

One gets the sense that, in some cases, the egregore is a passionate synonym of the activities and ethos of the surrealist group itself. Certainly this is how one characterization of the term from André Breton, quoted by Durozoi, reads: "Each Egregore is in essence far from renouncing its autonomy, and it defends it jealously whenever it is attacked."

The Quebecois surrealist Claude Gavreau also invested significant worth in the idea. Patrick Lepetit cites him defining the egregore as a specifically surrealist incarnation of collectivity: "...The surrealist egregore, meaning the collective gathering in a synthesis that was foreign to all that was scattered or random," even though he adds "the only egregore that now exists is the romantic egregore."

The Chicago surrealist Franklin Rosemont focuses on the term in his 2003 book *An Open Entrance To The Shut Palace Of Wrong Numbers*. He invokes and defines the idea in order to explain the potential for his discovery, the secret "Society for the Friends of the Wrong Number", a hidden collective drawn across all sorts of different telephone users, who have the same passion for chance and mystery of wrong calls. For Rosemont, the term Egregore comes to define any number of significant, influential emancipatory and creative movements throughout history that operate in a similar cross-cutting way:

...Such groups originate in a powerful emotive shock, embody a highly intensified consciousness, and exert an influence disproportionate to their numbers and the physical means at their disposal. P.V. Piobb, Mabilie's friend and mentor in the magic arts, regarded the Egregore as a collective psychical being, a "materialization" of a group's thought as it comes to life on its own. This collective being assumes greater power and clarity as the group itself expands its relations to the world and acquires ever greater possibilities for action.

Among the Egregores that have changed the course of history are the German Romantics, the Young Hegelians, the New England Transcendentalists, the Chicago Anarchists of the 1880s, the founders of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), the Surrealist Movement, and the world of jazz—especially bop, post-bop, and groups such as the Association for the Advancement of Creative

Musicians (AACM).

The Rosemont definition may come closest to how many contemporary surrealists use the term with regards to their current activities. It sheds, or at least sidesteps, a lot of the religious, folkloric / vampiric and overtly metaphysical aspects and instead adapts it to a “materialist” surrealist outlook. The egregore becomes a kind of mythic embodiment to surrealist innovation and ecstasy, almost a synonym to Breton’s concept of the Great Invisibles. One could argue that he frames it entirely in positive, revolutionary and progressive terms, and that this does not tell the whole story. Alternative definitions, as we have seen, refer to more destructive, ambiguous aspects of the idea that in no way suggest exclusive access to those progressive, surrealist-friendly forces and groups that Rosemont lists. Nevertheless, to make surrealist use of a thing is to see it and adapt it, or maybe select from it, those aspects which precisely resonate with the surrealist tradition, and to fearlessly discard the remnants.

The *Egregore* exhibition by the Atlanta surrealist group draws on the history, the ethos and the hidden, ludic implications of this concept, as well as celebrating its role within the surrealist movement itself. Much in the same way that surrealists can celebrate the anniversary of the “discovery of hysteria” by Charcot, the story of the egregore can have its own festive atmosphere. In summoning not just an egregore, but the egregore of the idea of egregores, the group brings together the energies of surrealist and fellow-traveler *egregore enthusiasts* throughout history into a highly curious club... Or maybe better, a support group? Given the increasing rarity of and difficulty organizing around such passionate forms of action, or at least, the many subtle and precarious dangers that stand in the way today, it is not surprising that the egregore concept and its collective potential remain a fringe area of interest. Perhaps it is a form of “occultation” by default, preserving this kind of secret power for those who are willing to take it seriously. The difficulties of acting collectively and “in the flesh” in a society hell-bent on supplementing all real experiences with digital equivalents, and all qualitative poetic sensations with quantifiable data substitutions, leaves little room for the potential of the egregore to make itself felt unless a special esoteric effort is made on its behalf by devoted fans. In that sense, the Egregore exhibit can be read as a kind of *Egregore Convention* or maybe even the beginnings of an “SPE - Society for the Protection of Egregores”? And is it they, or we, who need protecting?

## J. ABDELHADI

## Egregorrhea Bibliography

Robert Ambelain. *La Kabbale pratique* (Paris: Editions Niclaus: 1951), 175.

Anonymous. *Meditations on the Tarot* (New York: Tarcher / Putnam, 2002), 153-154.

L.S. Bernstein. “Eggor” (1998) from *The Rosicrucian Archive. Confraternity of the Rose Cross*. Archived from the original on January 8, 2012.

W. E. Butler. *The Magician, his training and his work* (Wellingborough, Northamptonshire: Aquarian Press, 1982), 155.

Ithell Colquhoun. *Sword of Wisdom: MacGregor Mathers and the Golden Dawn* (New York: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1975), 132, 145.

Gérard Durozoi. *Le surréalisme : théories, thèmes, techniques* (Paris: Larousse, 1972), 44.

Merl Fluin. “Demons of Science” (2020) from *Gorgon in Furs*. Accessed on January 23, 2021 at: <https://gorgoninfurs.com/2020/05/25/demons-of-science/>

Joscelyn Godwin. *The Golden Thread: The Ageless Wisdom of the Western Mystery Traditions* (Quest Books, 2014).

René Guénon, “Influences spirituelles et Égrégores”, in *Revue les Éditions Traditionnelles* no 259, april-may 1947 and re-published posthumously in *Initiation et Réalisation Spirituelle*, (Paris: Éditions Traditionnelles, 2008), 59-64.

Stanislas de Guaita. 1897. “La Clef de La Magie Noire” in *Essais de sciences mandées* 3 (1897), 440.

Charles Aaron Harris. *A Dictionary of Dental Science, Biography, Bibliography and Medical Terminology* (Philadelphia: P. Blakstone, Son & Co, 1882), 239.

Victor Hugo. *La Légende des siècles* (Paris: L’Imprimerie Nationale, 1906), 382.

Gary Lachman. *Dark Start Rising: Magick and Power in the Age of Trump* (New York: Tarcher Perigree, 2018), 92-93.

Patrick Lepetit. *The Esoteric Secrets of Surrealism: Origins, Magic, and Secret Societies* (Rochester, Vermont: Inner Traditions, 2014), 47-48.

Eliphas Levi. *The Great Secret Or Occultism Unveiled* (York Beach: Samuel Weiser, 2000), 130.

Jean Lorrain. “L’Égrégores”. From *Sonyeuse: Soirs de Paris* (Paris: Bibliothèque Charpentier, 1891), 202-204.

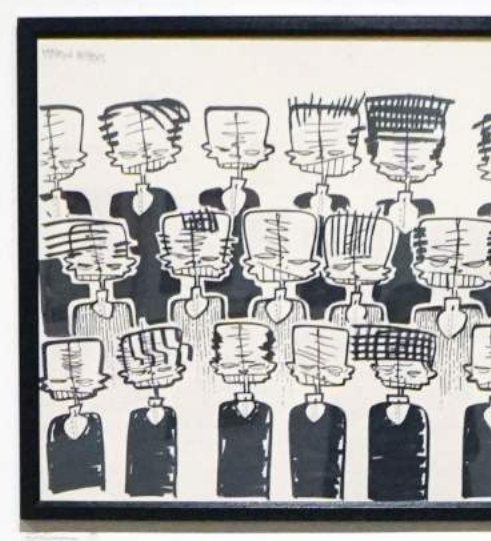
Pierre Mabille, “Notes sur le Symbolisme” in *Minotaure*, no 8, June 1936: 1-3.

M. Georges Moreau. “Mots et Locutions” in *Revue universelle: recueil documentaire universel et illustré* (Librairie Larousse, Paris: 1895), 243.

Franklin Rosemont. *An Open Entrance To The Shut Palace Of Wrong Numbers* (Chicago: Surrealist Editions, 2003), 135-136

J. Strada. “Les catastrophes et le sacrifice: vie de sainte Christine l’amirable.” *L’initiation ; hypnotisme, théosophie, kabbale, science occulte, franc-maçonnerie* 37 (1897), 145.

Clair Tisseur. *Modest Observations on the Art of Versifying* (Lyon: Bernoux et Cumin, 1893), 214.



# EXHIBIT CATALOG



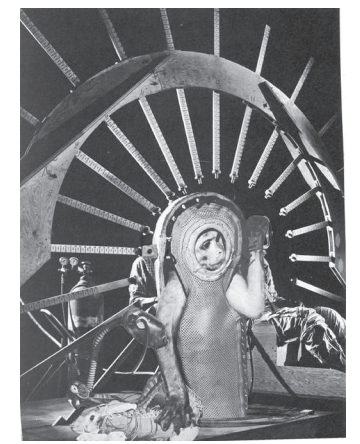
# HAZEL CLINE



*beach combing, 2021*



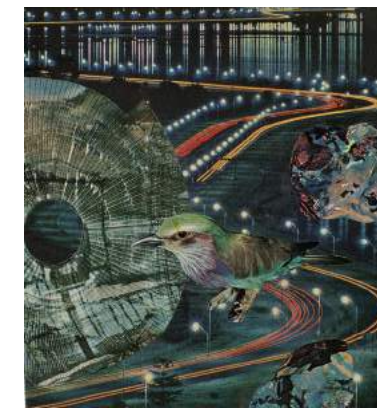
*all hallows' pumpkin, 2021*



*monkey wrenching, 2021*



*future bouquet, 2019*



*air ways, 2021*



*a mantis is a woman's best friend, 2021*



*bosom friends, 2019*



*window shopping, 2020*



*dial of lost limbs, 2020*

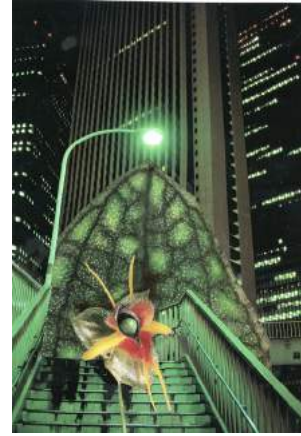
# HAZEL CLINE



*human nature, 2019*



*weaver of dreams, 2020*



*lamp lighter, 2019*



*eyelimb, 2020*



*unu, 2021*



*ma, 2021*



*softness of the universe, 2021*



*wind body, 2021*



*angel plane, 2021*

# STEVEN CLINE



*the slapstickman, 2020*



*the pink room, 2020*



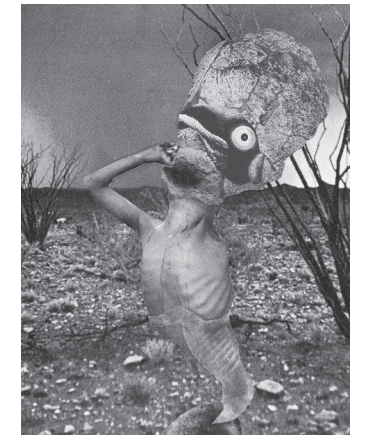
*happy travels, 2020*



*reception, 2018*



*untitled collage, 2020*



*wasteland pastoral, 2021*



*year 7371, 2021*

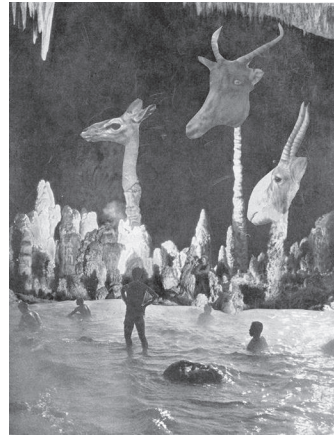


*Io Pan, 2021*



*at world's end, 2021*

# STEVEN CLINE



*the undergods, 2019*



*nite flights, 2019*



*Moonface, 2019*

# AARON DYLAN KEARNS



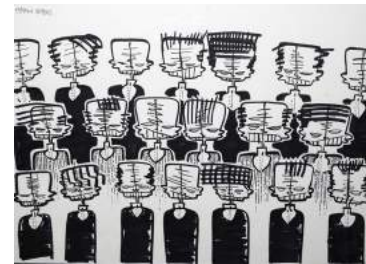
*Kafka #1, 2019*  
*Acrylic painting on poster board*



*Kafka #2, 2019*  
*Acrylic painting on poster board*



*Night, 2020*  
*Acrylic painting on book cover*



*Untitled, 2019*  
*Pen and ink on mixed media paper*



*Man in A Forest, 2020*  
*Acrylic painting on poster board*



*Wolfman, 2020*  
*Acrylic painting on poster board*



*Winter Sports, 2020*  
*Acrylic painting on canvas*



*Kafka #3, 2019*  
*Acrylic painting on poster board*



*Grandfather, 2019*  
*Acrylic painting on poster board*

# AARON DYLAN KEARNS



*Dreams Of A Blue Butcher's Shop, 2021*  
Acrylic painting on book cover



*Junkyard Phantom Riot, 2021*  
Acrylic painting on book cover



*Darkroom Explosion, 2021*  
Acrylic painting on book cover



*Vital Motor, 2021*  
Found objects sculpture with animal bones



*In Homage to Suehiro Maruo, 2021*  
Readymade



*Deaf Wind Chimes, 2021*  
Found objects sculpture with animal bones

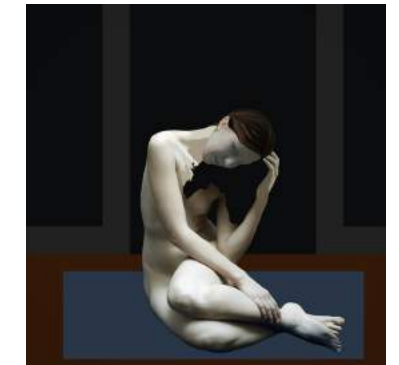
# JULI MARIA KEARNS



*Gradient Scale Madonna, 2017*  
Digital painting  
Model reference, Danika of Deviant Art



*Woman with Striped Chair, 2017*  
Digital Painting  
Model reference, Danika of Deviant Art



*Woman on Blue Rug, 2017*  
Digital painting  
Model reference, Danika of Deviant Art



*Stuck in Time, 2018*  
Digital Painting



*Woman with Striped Chair, 2017*  
Digital Painting  
Model reference, Danika of Deviant Art



*Family Life, The Window, 2018*  
Digital art based on a scene from Ken Loach's film "Family Life"



*Family Life, The Hall, 2018*  
Digital art based on scene from Ken Loach's film "Family Life"



*The Child Experiments with Being a Bag Man in a Hat, 2006*  
From the series "Portraits of The Child Experiments with Being"  
A collaborative project with Aaron Dylan Kearns as model  
Digital photo with post processing

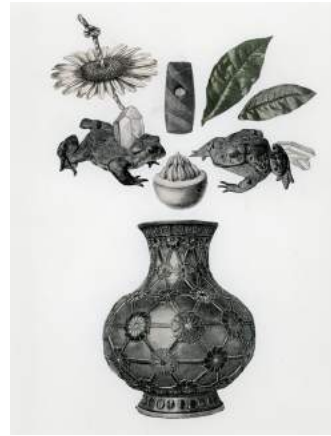


*The Child Experiments with Being a Minotaur, 2006*  
From the series "Portraits of The Child Experiments with Being"  
A collaborative project with Aaron Dylan Kearns as model  
Digital photo with post processing

# MEGAN LEACH



*untitled collage, 2021*



*untitled collage, 2021*



*untitled collage, 2021*



*untitled collage, 2021*



*untitled collage, 2021*



*untitled collage, 2021*



*untitled collage, 2021*

# STEVE MORRISON



*untitled painting, year unknown*



*untitled painting, year unknown*

# COLLABORATIVE



aaron dylan kearns, steven cline, hazel cline



hazel cline, megan leach



hazel cline, megan leach



steven cline, megan leach



steven cline, megan leach



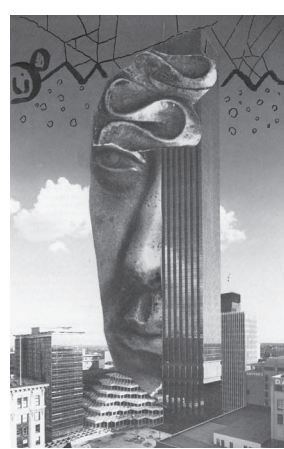
steven cline, megan leach



steven cline, megan leach



steven cline, megan leach



steven cline, aaron dylan kearns

# COLLABORATIVE



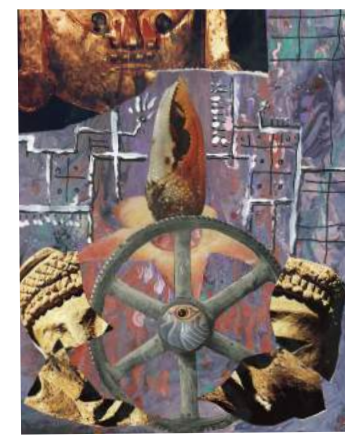
steven cline, aaron dylan kearns



steven cline, megan leach



aaron dylan kearns, steven cline, hazel cline



aaron dylan kearns, steven cline, hazel cline



steven cline, megan leach



steven cline, megan leach



hazel cline, megan leach