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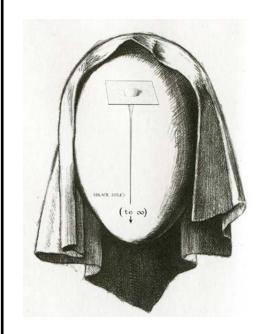
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EDITOR'S NOTE

Dear readers,

It is with great pleasure that I present to you the first issue of *All the Thunder*. We have worked for many months to assemble this collection of contributors, and I feel very proud to share their talents with you here.

We call ourselves a magazine for the myth and the mind, because we hope to nourish the creative seed in both. By our definition, a myth is an idea born of a people's need to explain certain indefinable elements of the human experience. What else is art, or music, or poetry, than an attempt to capture for just one moment the wonder of being? Our greatest desire is to bring that wonder to your doorstep, to spread it across your table, to fill you up.

But inspiration is not enough. The mind craves too. Though in later issues we will expound upon more complex topics in our Astronomy section, the aim of this first issue is to bring your gorgeous brains up to date with a basic overview of human accomplishment in Space during 2012. We admire these accomplishments because they were achieved by the greatest thinkers on the planet, and that's important. After all, scientists are the ultimate artists, and in many ways, the most skillful mythologists.

Your time is precious; we're so honored that you've chosen to spend it with us. On behalf of everyone at *All the Thunder*, thank you.

Aubrey Sanders, Editor-in-Chief, *All the Thunder Magazine*

ON GOOD FAITH

Matthew Kosinski

4

I am trying to know your heart & I love the river underneath our car. The Raritan. New Jersey, the first day of July 2012.

Driving back to Queens after a weekend in Monmouth County Where the eye doctor told me, "Your optic nerve looks healthy. I'm happy about that" & I smelled him,

he was so close to me.

Tired, we touch shoulders in the manner of two strangers asleep on a bus: no tenderness; no talk of how to raise the children; with an intimacy

like Adam, like Eve the first night in the garden, smelling fruit and skin. Taking one another on good faith.

ICEWATER-TO-GO

Joshua Robert Long

we all feel the midnight sun even though we know it's on the other side of it

we feel the midnight sun

occasionally life calls on a fact that we need to sing about it.

maybe on certain occasions we do

maybe other occasions remind us of why we need each other

for now, there are things I could say, but I don't.

I know the mercy of God I met her once.

\$BODHISATTVA\$

Oskar Peacock

6

Thinking about grabbing pork bun on fifth avenue, I was looking dusty, red pinned to a drugstore, in denim and soot. A monk handed me a paper amulet — monks always look ancient next to cabs, more so in Tevas.

Work Lifetime Smoothly Peace.

I smiled because I loved it — under the robe, his left hand's shoving a little notebook up my nose, and he was saying "Peace"— but I was hearing "Please" because next to names on each line was \$20.

He got two dollars: I, smelling pulp; he, saying "twenty"; the fingers in my mouth screaming PORK BUN;

and his eyes on my wallet saying "\$10".
What kind of monk are you?

BACK TO OUR WATCH WE CREEP

[A CENTO] jsk

I still feel /it/, the substance of the soul, the libidinal terrible whatever, I haven't another trip around the sun left in me.

it is a form of praying, he claimed, to walk out to the very edge of your life.

And the Pellegrino bubbles rise to the surface and dismember.

dead to the world I have failed you, these rows on rows of distant faces staring out at me from cardboard boxes.

you'll find labels describing what is gone.

AT A WEDDING, WHICH YOU ARE UNHAPPY TO BE ATTENDING

Matthew Kosinski

There are only a few things we can know with any certainty, but one of those things is that champagne and roses go well together —

Look here!: I would know that spine of yours anywhere. Just because it is right now in a white dress does not mean it was not once the subject of some very filthy documentaries with me.

I rode in on a pink bicycle because to me men on pink bicycles are the most ecstatic of villains: I would gladly hand my wallet or virginity to them. Both if asked nicely.

I was hoping that the same could be said for you.

Now who am I to sleep with, when I have already damned my soul against the fine edges of your hipbones in cotton panties? The split panting seam of your cunt would be a siren if it were not for the fact that I somehow survived it, open ears and all in-perfect-tact. I was going to make a toast, but I am thinking from the meanness

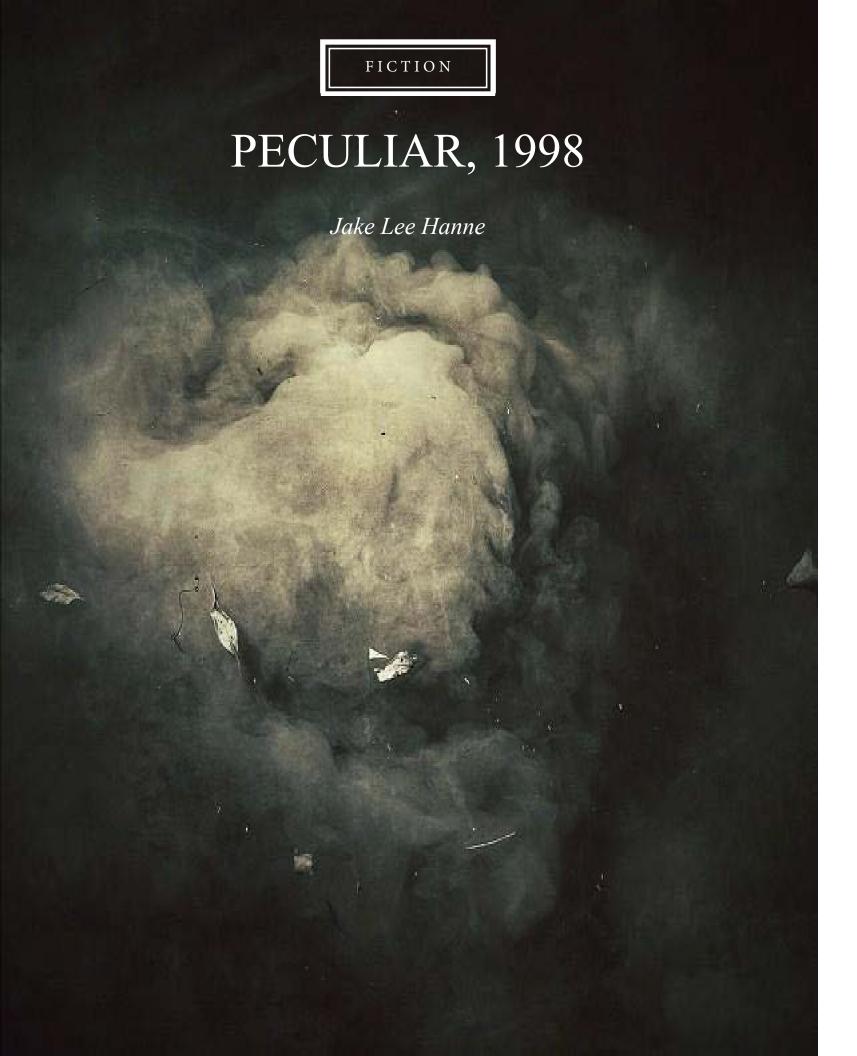
8

in your eyes that it is no longer necessary.

[continued]

It is a shame to think it is the case but it is! It is indeed!:

Poetry is just one of the ruses perpetrated by the gods on a terrified population; most of the others are too horrible to name, but the one we are taking part in right here is jealous love, which is not so much an oxymoron as it is a misnomer: it is in fact wounded narcissism which keeps one woman biting at the lips of another woman who repeatedly says no! in no uncertain terms. Your husband is I think a perfect imbecile. But he is handsome. I will give you that.



The trees screamed with them, the ■ dead and the dying, the insects that had come by the millions. The summer air smelled of them. A scent of many, of the wet iron earth from which they came. Nobody had seen them like this, and spoke of them as an omen. Regardless of their meaning, they came. They came in great numbers. They ran spigots brackish. Transformers snapped blueflame where they gathered on the poles. Children collared them with butcher's twine and leashed them about town as pets. Men climbed roofs to choke the chimneys with newsprint, while women locked themselves indoors, their faces hidden behind veils of cheesecloth.

For once the weather was a secondary conversation in the small town of Peculiar, Missouri. The feedstore talk of corn futures falling and red wheat on the rebound took its place behind the pestilence. Mainstreet stores tacked canvas and tarpaulin over doorways. Netted gutters with chickenwire. Windows pattered with their flying bodies. They never

ceased. They clung like paperwasps to gables. Woodsmoke perfumed the air around

town from farm fires burning to smoke their numbers out of the fields. But it cured nothing. Thousands of them popping and hissing like burning osage. They still came. Their numbers never quit. Cottonwoods and elms hung heavy with them, some limbs snapped as if jeweled in January ice, others drooped in parody of willows. Above all it was the noise, a buzzing caterwaul that looped into octaves and harmonics as it rose and fell. The earblood pulse of them growing louder the lower the sun sank.

Not since the American Revolution had so many cicadas sung in these trees and now once again they filled the coulees and floodplains and hills with a noise unremembered.

Two boys picked their way down a deerpath of broken shale two miles from Peculiar. In the distance they could see the steeple and courthouse through a sour summer haze. The trees over them hung heavy with bugs. Both carried shotguns with walnut stocks. Atwood carried his broken over an arm at the breech. The shorter of the two boys, Irish, handled his shotgun like a cadet, passing it from shoulder to shoulder when the weight of it bothered him.

They shouted to each other over the cicadas, visoring their eyes from sun. Irish pointed out droppings along the path, postulating their origins. Atwood agreed whether he did or not. It was too loud to hold a conversation, much less an argument.

Irish led the way, using a greenwood switch to clear spiderwebs and swat cicadas from clumps of fescue. Atwood followed, walking out onto a bleached hillside of twisted hickory stumps and locust thorn. Here the shale became sandstone and then sand and fell off to the mudflats of a lake ringed in cattail and watercress.

Irish stopped and studied the water. He turned to Atwood, shouting: "Look at 'em... they bathing." Irish followed his words with the blued barrel of his shotgun, pointing it like an awkward appendage.

Atwood sleeved his brow and nod-ded.

"Carp?" asked Irish "Carp."

"They rolling all around in that mud. Just look at 'em." Irish grinned at the water. "Goddamn," he said. "What you think, they for eating?" Irish stared at the brown backwater watching the carp make coronets where they surfaced.

"Wouldn't think much," said Atwood. "M'grandpa ate em."

"Really?"

Atwood laughed at the thought of it himself. "Yeah, cured them in mason jars of ketchup and vinegar—"

"How'd it taste."
Atwood frowned at the sun. "Like shit he

said."

"Then why'd he eat em?"
"Cause the Depression."

"The Depression..." he repeated. Irish wrinkled a nose at the carp, the dollarpiece scales washing brassorange, with red fins bright as Chinese lanternskin off the water. "I wouldn't think I would eat no carp."

Atwood clapped shut the breech of his shotgun, setting it on a floodstacked sheaf of tinderwood. "Nah, I wouldn't think it too good," he said, scissoring out a softpack of Winstons from his breast-pocket. Feeling the softpack he remembered conjuring the courage to swipe them from the dash of his father's Ford Comanche. "Smoke?" he asked.

But Irish didn't reply.

Slapping them out as he'd seen smokers do, Atwood teethed one from the pack as he produced a matchbook from his backpocket. He broke back the bookspine and clipped off a match, jerking it through the sandstrip. The match seethed a phosphorous white fire which grew yellow then orange, expiring before the cigarette could inherit the flame. He tried again. The fire leapt and this time ran the paperwick toward his fingers. Atwood was pouting the cigarette forward, when the concussion hit him like a trumpet blast.

The shotgun barked against Irish's shoulder, producing a footlong powder-flash. The mudwater broke upward in

Title Photo, Page 10

Matthew Addington, DuckDuck Collective

a column. A white column. The brassy carpscales confettied in a shower of pale meatchunks as blood laced in high arcs. The lake rocked with waves. Water lapped and licked among the reeds, spooking leopard frogs and tipping turtles off logs like wet stones.

"Jesus...Christ!" screamed Atwood, the lack of sound causing him to jaw the air. Scales still floated on the laketop, lighting upon the water like metal lilies.

Irish turned, grinning with guilt. "I got one!"

The cicadas silenced, holding their song. Slowly they started up again like a tired old loom.

"Sure as shit, I got one," repeated Irish.

Atwood looked down at his cigarette, finding it bit through. "Tell me next time, huh." He massaged his ears. "That was too close, Irish." He shook his head. "Too close."

"Sorry." Irish ejected a smoking shell. "That was a crack shot though, right. Gotta admit that. That was a crack shot."

"I can't hear."

Raising his voice. "I say: That was a crack—"

"Yeah, I heard." Atwood waved him

off. Irish turned back to the lake to admire his work, the muddy water settling back to a brown glass. He reached up and adjusted the barrelchoke with care.

"Come on," said Atwood. "They ain't coming back."

Irish fed the breech another shell, sealing it with a snap of the walnut. "Making carp soup over here, cousin."

"Oh, I've noticed."

This time Irish followed Atwood as they climbed pale crumblerock back into the trees. As he went, Irish scoured the western ridgeline for more possibilities, bending down to skylight the horizon for movement. Irish wore his red hair short like a fighter, to compensate for a face anything but pugilistic, splashed cheek to cheek with cinnamon freckles.

"That fish cut in half," said Irish.
"That buckshot be a mean menace." He spoke in long vowels and short participles, like most of Missouri. Irish considered none of this as he carried his gun like a king.

They climbed the grade and used roots for rungs. A black skink raced over a rock frieze of trilobites. Sweat flies followed the boys. Turkey vultures circled. The trees screamed.

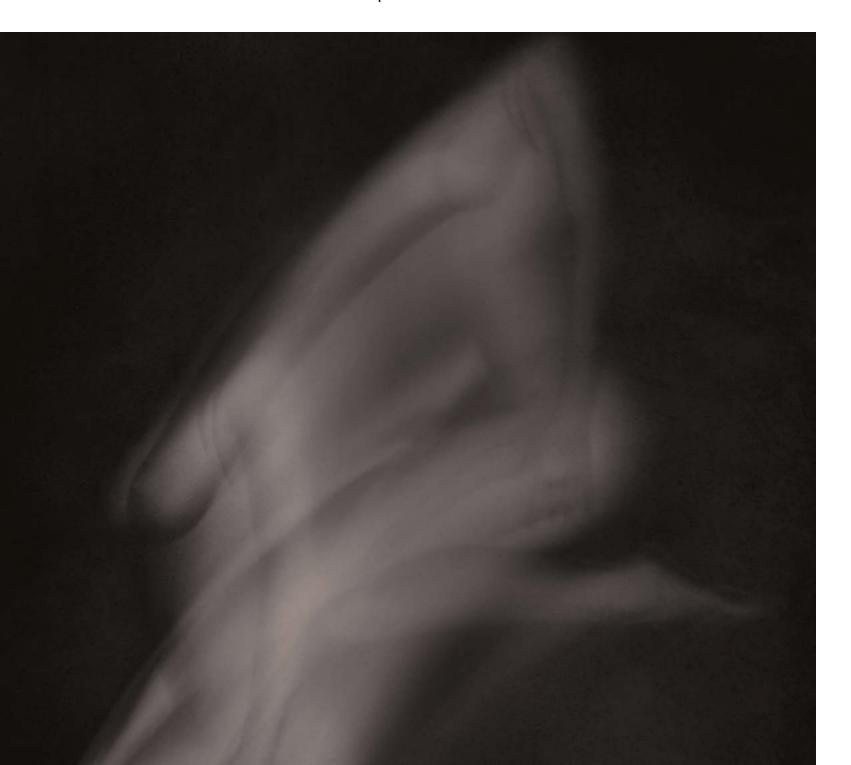
Near the top, Irish saw Atwood anchor himself to a clump of bromegrass and pull himself up and over the crest.

Irish shouldered his shotgun and followed. In an hour he would be dead.

To be continued.

BODYLANGUAGE

Photographer Kalliope Amorphous discusses her latest foray into abstract self-portraiture



Tell us a little bit about how you captured the images in this series. What materials and processes did you work with?

The effects for this series were primarily created with long exposure and a mechanical stroboscope. I also used fabric to interrupt some of the shots and to create more abstraction, movement, and texture.

Who and what inspires you?

I am most inspired by poetry and music and the emotional landscapes that they evoke. I like to get lost in that lanscape when I am working. If I had to pick one thing that inspires or drives my work, it would be the concept of duende.

Where do you think this project falls within the full body of your work?

Most of my self portraits have been literal portraits in regard to composition. With this project I am conveying the stories through the body alone, which is new for me. I would like to work more with nudes in the future, possibly combining the distortion techniques that I have used in my *Glass Houses* series.

Title Photo
Rise

Next Spread: Left
Three
Next Spread: Right
Grief

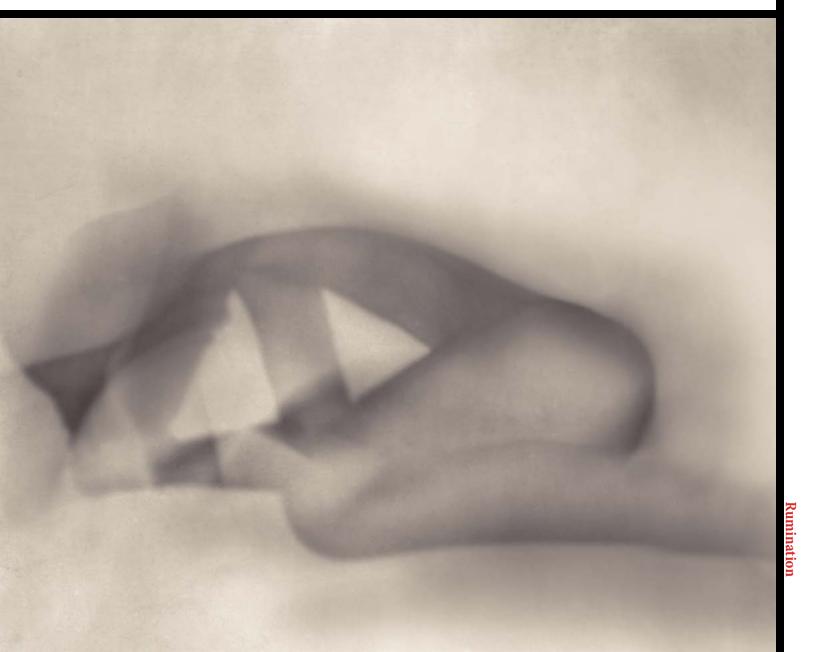
Pages 20-21 It's Over



You style, model, and shoot your collections. Why do you gravitate towards self-portraiture?

I am impulsive and when I have an idea, I like to be able to try and manifest it immediately. Because of this, self-portraiture began as a matter of convenience. I never imagined that I would be shooting self portraits permanently, yet over time it morphed into the best vehicle of expression for me.

Playing all of these roles also gives me a level of creative control that I could not have otherwise. It has evolved into a vital therapeutic process for me because I am learning to exorcise a lot of demons through this work.





What does the word "myth" mean to you?

I think that Mythology is as real or illusory as whoever doing the interpreting deems it to be. Creatively, I don't separate mythfrom "reality." Most myths and legends originate in metaphor and in this sense they are an elaborate and universal poetic language.

What are you currently working on, and what are your short-term goals?

I am currently experimenting with different in-camera distortion techniques. This is what interests me most because we are living in a digital age. I am constantly fascinated and fixated on the possibilities for creating in-camera effects because they create a mood that digital processing cannot.

For more of Kalliope's work, visit www.kalliopeamorphous.com.









Title Photo: Sophia, vest by Zara

Page 23: Jessica

Previous spread, left: Erika of June 66

Previous spread, right: Aisha

Left: Jessi, skirt by Nastygal

Right: Heidi

Next page: Teresa





Previous page: Alyssa • Page 33: Dani Below: Agnes of Triana Park Page 34: Maggie, sunglasses from boohoo.com Page 35: Gina, shawl from SXSW street vendor Page 32: Lana





ASTRONOMY

SPACE

2012: A Year in Review

Article by Greg Ginnan

2012 was a busy year for humans in Space.

From landing the largest and most sophisticated rover on Mars to seeing farther into the cosmos than ever before, organizations like NASA, the European Space Agency, and SpaceX spent the year exploring the solar system and beyond in order to better grasp the boundless complexities of the Universe. While missions from previous years continued to provide novel insights into the cosmos, new projects pushed the frontiers of human knowledge even farther. Despite the Mayan prediction of the world's imminent doom (or, more accurately, our misreading of an old calendar that gave us both an excuse to party and a really anticlimactic Saturday), 2012 set an optimistic tone for a discovery-filled 2013*. In our first issue, we explore some of the year's greatest accomplishments and advances in Astronomy.

PROBES

MUCH OF WHAT we know about the Universe has been learned from a distance. As you read this, over twenty probes are flying around the solar system at thousands of miles per hour, using a variety of instruments to gather enormous amounts of data without ever landing on a surface. The accuracy with which these tiny vehicles are sent soaring is astounding. For instance, the launch of the spacecraft **Juno** was timed so as to precisely coincide with the motion of planets and moons, using their gravity to slingshot the vehicle along its trajectory to Jupiter at a greater velocity than could otherwise be achieved.

Far Flung

uring 2012, several probes and orbiters sent back information that has helped astronomers piece together the grand mechanics of our solar system. **Voyager I**, the first of two probes launched in the late 1970s, is approaching the edges of our solar system over *11 billion miles*

away at 11 miles per second (38,000 mph), making it the most distant manmade object. Even though Voyager 1 is over 35 years old, it continues to make significant contributions to our understanding of regions that lie beyond our tiny neighborhood in the Milky Way. In July 2012, the vehicle began to paint a more detailed picture of what space outside our solar system might look like when it entered what scientists call the "magnetic highway", a region where the lines of the Sun's magnetic field connect to those in the space between stars. Eventually, Voyager 1 will exit the solar system and continue indefinitely, all the while carrying Carl Sagan's golden record.

Moon Mapping

GRAIL mission spent 2012 mapping the Moon's interior by measuring minute changes—as small as the diameter of a red blood cell—in its gravitational

^{*}By the way, while people were preoccupied with the possibility of a Michael Bay-esque apocalyptic hellfire of a solstice, astronomers at the Lowell Observatory were still trying to determine whether a much more viable cause for terrestrial chaos à la asteroid would make its appearance in 2036, essentially wiping out the West Coast. It most likely won't, don't worry.

pull. Scientists hope that data gathered by GRAIL will lead to a better understanding of our closest space neighbor, and perhaps a more precise idea of how it formed in relation to Earth.

The spacecraft **Cassini** has been studying Saturn and its moons for close to ten years. Many people assume that if we are to find extraterrestrial life, it would inevitably be on another planet. Cassini, however, has provided us with vital infor-

mation that suggests the possibility of lunar life. Two of Saturn's sixty moons appear to harbor favorible conditions, such as thick atmospheres and liquid oceans beneath icy surfaces. Throughout 2012, Cassini made a number of lunar and planetary flybys, gathering more information about atmospheric conditions, the nature of the moons' surfaces, and Saturn's magnetosphere.

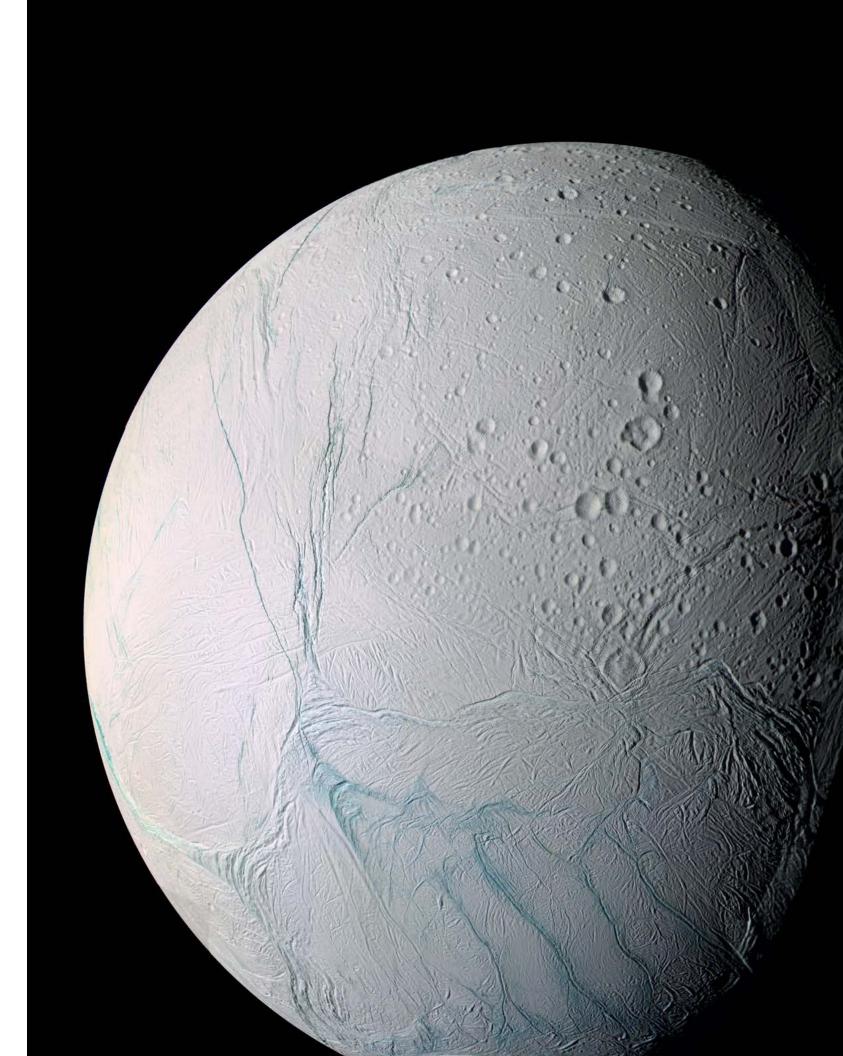
OBSERVATORIES

AS IMPRESSIVE as flying probes are, they are not suited for exploration outside of our solar system. Because of the unimaginably vast distances that lie between our planet and other star systems (traveling at 11 miles per second, it would still take the Voyager 1 spacecraft 73,000 years to reach the *closest* star, Alpha Centauri), our observation of the cosmos and the search for life is much more practically conducted with high-powered telescopes and photometers. The **Hubble Space Telescope**, the **Kepler Photometer**, and the **Chan-**

dra X-ray Observatory operate outside of Earth's atmosphere, which enables continuous observation and bypasses atmospheric interference.

How Deep is Deep?

The **Hubble Space Telescope** has been providing the public with dazzling images of stars, nebulae, and galaxies since its launch in 1990. Named after the astronomer credited with discovering the expansion of our universe, Edwin Hubble,



PREVIOUS PAGE: Saturn's icy moon Enceladus as seen by the Cassini probe.

Enceladus is believed to host immense oceans of water, and is the subject of ongoing study in astronomers' search for extraterrestrial life.

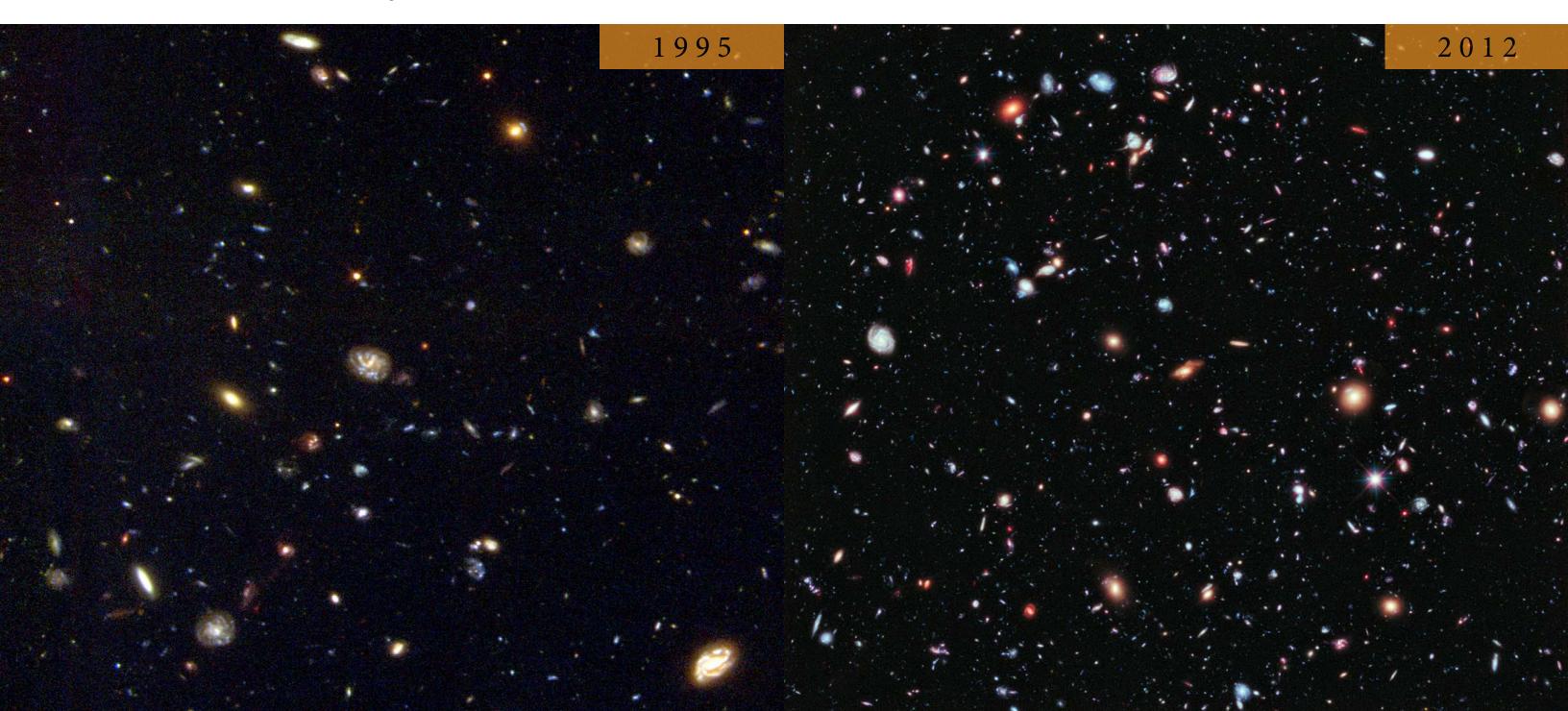
image credit: NASA/JPL-Caltech

the telescope is best known for the famous 1995 Hubble Deep Field photo, in which 3,000 galaxies were revealed to reside within a tiny area of the sky. When published, the Hubble Deep Field was a groundbreaking image, displaying some of the youngest galaxies yet observed, up to 12 billion light years away. In 2004, the telescope looked another billion light years farther, observing over 10,000 galaxies.

However, in September of 2012, NASA released the even more refined eXtreme Deep Field image. With an exposure of 23 days and the help of infrared imaging, this picture contains an additional 5,500 galaxies, some of which have a brightness of one ten-billionth of what the human eye can detect.

BOTTOM LEFT: The 1995 Hubble Deep Field photo reveals thousands of galaxies within 1/24,000,000th of the night sky.

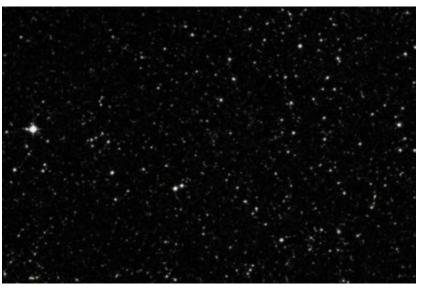
BOTTOM RIGHT: The 2012 eXtreme Deep Field marks a noticable advance in Hubble's capacities.



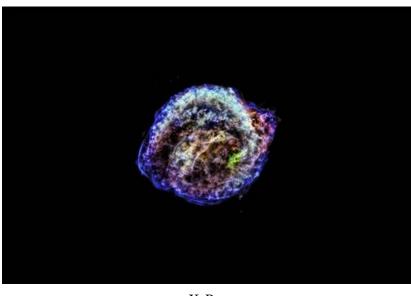
Faster than Blue

hereas the Hubble Space Telescope deals mainly with visible light, other telescopes like the **Chandra X-ray Observatory** monitor wavelengths in the X-ray part of the spectrum. The advantage of looking around the cosmos for X-rays is that many celestial phenomena such as supernovae, black holes, neutron stars, and stellar coronae eject incredibly high amounts of energy, sending photons hurtling through space at shorter wavelengths than our eyes can register—i.e. faster than blue.

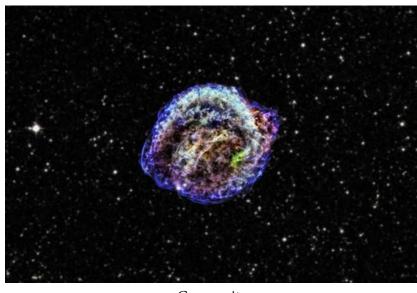
Chandra, launched in 1999, is the strongest X-ray telescope in existence. It has made such revolutionary discoveries as the black hole and neutron star cores of supernovae, X-ray emissions from the black hole at the center of the Milky Way, and the deepest note ever recorded in the cosmos—a B flat fifty-seven octaves below middle C. In 2012, Chandra continued to contribute to one of the most perplexing areas of astrophysics: the search for dark matter. While observing the collisions of clusters of galaxies, Chandra has shown that there appears to be more gravity at work than can be accounted for by the matter we can see.



Visible Light



X-Ray



Composite

This series of images, taken by the Chandra X-Ray Observatory, demonstrates the incredible value of X-ray imaging.

The first image is taken in the spectrum of visible light, showing the sky as you might see it through a normal telescope.

The second image reveals a massive supernova remnant, shown here by its X-ray emissions.

The final image is a composite of the two. Without the use of Chandra, astronomers might have missed this enormous object that spans roughly 45 light years.

The Search for Life

Thanks in large part to space-based observatories, 2012 saw huge developments in the field of planet finding. The **Kepler spacecraft** is blazing the way, having discovered at least 2,700 possible planets in our galactic neighborhood within the last three years. Astronomers at the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics have used Kepler's data to estimate that at least 17 billion Earth-sized exoplanets reside in the Milky Way Galaxy alone.

Detecting distant planets is difficult enough, but Kepler's task is even more daunting: to locate Earth-sized bodies that lie within the habitable zone of their star. This "Goldilocks zone" is a specific region within which a planet must orbit so as to allow for the existence of liquid water. Carl Sagan would probably be quick to remind us that we cannot assume that extraterrestrial life requires water. However, it is much harder to search for life forms whose prerequisites we cannot conceive of, so for now, we abide by the parameters we know.

Scientists have high hopes for Kepler's on-going search; just two months after its launch, the photometer discovered a planet that is just 2.5 times larger than Earth, and whose orbit suggests the possibility of habitable conditions. Such discoveries could force humanity to reevaluate its position within the vast expanse of the cosmos.



EXPLORATION

ONE OF THE most popular space stories from 2012 was the successful landing of the newest rover on Mars, the Mars Science Laboratory, also called **Curiosity**. Launched in November of 2011, the rover reached the red planet just over eight months later. Why has Curiosity received so much attention, given that humans have already successfully landed three rovers on Mars? How is it important?

I. Size

The Curiosity rover weighs 2,000 pounds, which is more than twice the weight of the three previous rovers combined. The technical implications of this additional mass affected everything from the launch to the landing. Once the spacecraft carrying the rover entered the Martian atmosphere, it had only seven minutes to decelerate from 3.7 miles per second and to land gently on the surface. The successful landing of Curiosity should itself be admired as an extraordinary feat of engineering and astrophysics.

II. Payload

uriosity's scientific equipment is significantly more sophisticated than that of any previous vehicle on Mars. The gear ranges from complex instruments such as the Alpha Particle X-ray Spectrometer, which fires particles into soil and rock and then maps the X-rays that are emitted from the collisions, to what scientists call the DRT. Which stands for Dust Removal Tool. Which is a brush.

III. Objective

hough much of Curiosity's work consists of tedious investigation of the Martian geology and climate, the longterm mission is to determine the past or future habitability of the planet. Within the first eight months of its exploration, Curiosity has already uncovered evidence that liquid water once flowed over the Martian surface, clean enough to be potable for humans. The original Mars Pathfinder rover was sent to Mars to demonstrate that it could be done. By contrast, Curiosity is a serious and capable scout, a harbinger of increased human activity on our planetary neighbor, and a precursor for the first manned mission in a not-so-distant future.

Image Credits:

TITLE PAGE: NASA/JPL-Caltech

1995 HUBBLE DEEP FIELD: R. Williams (STScI), the HDF-S Team, and NASA

2012 EXTREME DEEP FIELD: NASA, ESA, G. Illingworth, D. Magee, and P. Oesch (University of California, Santa Cruz), R. Bouwens (Leiden University), and the HUDF09 Team

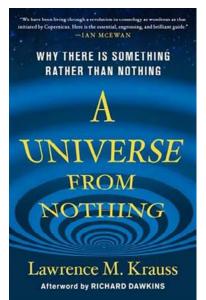
CHANDRA SERIES: X-ray: NASA/CXC/ NCSU/M.Burkey et al; Optical: DSS

MARS BANNER: NASA/JPL-Caltech

REVIEW

We want everyone to read as much about the cosmos as we do, but we understand that sometimes it's hard to know where to start. Who has the time to read three-hundred pages and walk away without getting a word of it?

We've got your back. In each issue, we will briefly review one or two books by prominent minds to help you navigate the dense world of science writing.



Title: A Universe from Nothing: Why There is Something Rather Than Nothing

Author: Dr. Lawrence M. Krauss, particle physicist turned cosmologist

What's it About?

In his latest book, Krauss provides an entertaining account of the newest cosmological theories regarding the origins of our Universe. With evidence rooted in observational data and the latest

measurements on both quantum and galactic scales, he argues that the Universe, along with all of the matter and energy contained therein, arose from nothing.

Why we like it: Krauss's discourse is clear and comical, making it possible for readers like us, who don't have the most intimate understanding of quantum fluctuations within a vacuum, to come away from the book with a solid grasp of complex—and seemingly impossible—phenomena.

Despite the fact that the cover looks like a Dr. Seussian black hole threw up the credits from Star Wars, *A Universe from Nothing* is a fascinating read that will stretch your mind like silly putty—and we're into that kind of thing. Do yourself a favor and check it out. The paperback edition includes a preface in which Krauss discusses the discovery of the Higgs boson, and an afterword contributed by the sassiest evolutionary biologist around, Richard Dawkins.





AVERY MCCARTHY

The photographer, visual artist, and burgeoning philosopher sits down to discuss his new digital collage series, space travel, and the meaning of life.

Feature by Aubrey Sanders

Let's start with *This is Knowledge*. How did the title of the series come about?

I was having a hard time naming this project, because I usually like to start with a concept and work backwards in a sort of reverse discovery. One day, I was showing the project to my friend and explaining, "These are atoms smashing together, this is how tiles are divided in a printing press, this is a visualization of volume, this is an equation from a math textbook," et cetera. As I was pointing through, he said, "You realize that this is knowledge." And right then I knew that that had to be the name of it.

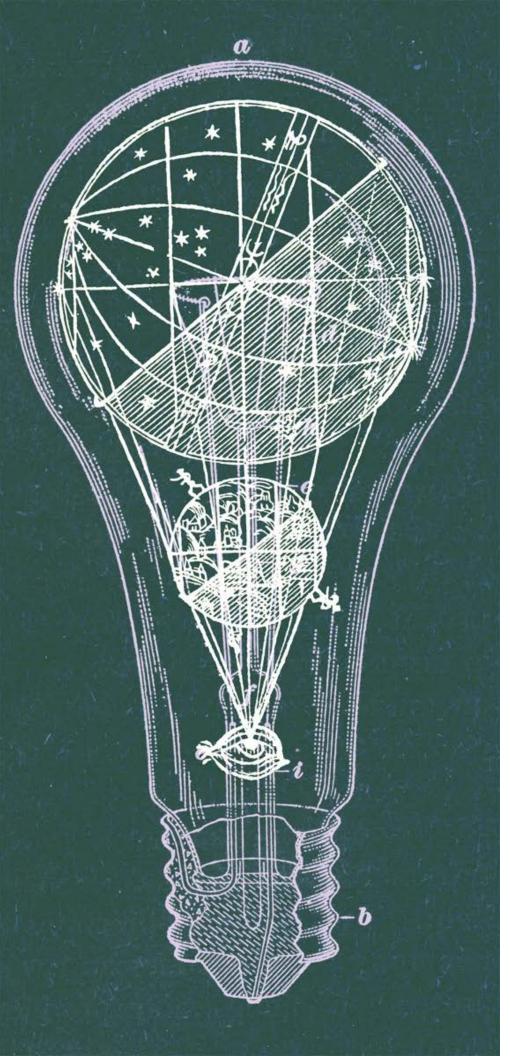
It's elements of things that are true, stacked on top of each other and juxta-

posed. The criteria, with only a few exceptions, ended up being about knowledge and looking at things that were designed to explain the world.

Which actually falls into line quite well with your previous body of work.

Yeah! I think that I've always seen art almost as an educational tool. I have a really hard time with art that doesn't teach me something or make me want to teach myself something.

Really, it all started with photography, which is at its base a way of saying: "I was wandering around the world and I thought that you all should look at this thing that I think is cool, so I'm gonna



make you look at it. And I'm going to tightly control and manipulate the way you see it." And so, for a long time, I've looked at my surroundings in that way, and felt the need to show them to others through my own lens.

Whatever I'm interested in at the moment, that's what I make art about. When I was interested in architecture, that's what it was. When I was interested in quantum physics, that's what it was. I started off on a very abstract end of things, where it was all about drawing people into the aesthetic. As I learned more about conceptual art, I moved into making work that drew people into the aesthetic, but that ultimately had something to say. That's what This is *Knowledge* is about.

LEFT: Illuminate

PAGE 53: See

PAGE 54: Perceive

PAGE 59: Illustrate

PAGE 61: Perfect

How did you go about creating each individual piece in the series?

It started with combing through old books that I owned and scanning the illustrations. As you travel around Brooklyn, these line illustrations are very much in vogue to cut out of books and frame and sell at a Williamsburg flea market. It's definitely something that is becoming an individual lexicon. But it's more about the object fetishism of being able to say, This is an old thing repurposed, and look at my taste, that I found this from an old book and had the sense to show it off. I realized that people are paying attention to these aesthetics because there's a craftsmanship and a weight to them that is less commonly found today.

So, I scanned a group of images from my old books with the idea that I would print them and paint on them. One day I opened two at once and began to play around with color, overlapping, layers, the quality of the opacity, the texture of the paper. Once I did that I couldn't stop making them. I made tons of them. It was this process of opening one, scanning the index for another that might work well, and bringing to light a new idea through the relationship between the two.

So it was more instinctual than method-based, the way you paired the images?

Oh yeah, because they were all preselected for content from books about very niche topics, such as drawing and physics. Those were the kinds of images I had available to me, so the content was very structured.

Previously, you released a video series called the *What is Project*, in which you attempted to catalog answers to fundamental questions such as "What is Love?" and "What is God?". What did you learn through your survey?

I learned a few things. One, I learned that that project was more than I was able to bite off at that point in my life. On a structural level, it was the first project I hit a wall with and said, *Not only can I not do this myself, I can't even apply for a grant that would allow me to do this the way I want to do it.*

Second, there are twenty-two questions and everyone says something brilliant at least once in the interview. The whole basis for the project is that all of the answers are opinions. Those very personal topics are usually argued about or worse,

explained by someone who has more "knowledge" than someone else. God is a really important one there. I think God is an opinion. Who am I to say that my definition of love is any more correct than yours? Who am I to say that my definition of God is any more correct than yours? One of the problems that people get into is that they try to argue someone else into modifying their definition of one of those things. I've heard people give some extremely aggressive answers to those questions, convinced that they are right.

I just don't think anyone's right. I think everyone is probably equally wrong.

Did you come any closer to learning what Time or God is?

No! [laughs] No, no, no. What I actually learned was how not to shut off my critical brain when people are trying to convince me of something. After listening to a wide variety of these opinions, whenever someone goes into that preachy-guru-cult-leader thing that people do when they're trying to impart a world view, my eyes glaze over and my brain shouts, *Danger zone! Listen and categorize as one of the many opinions about a very diverse and nebulous subject*.

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...I just don't think anyone's right. I think everyone is probably equally wrong.

Are you still working on figuring out the meaning of life?

Yeah! Did you ever listen to James Taylor?

Unfortunately, not too much, no.

OK, well there's only one thing I have to share on that subject. He has a really good song that says, "The secret of life is enjoying the passage of time."

Maybe for some people it's James Taylor, and for others it's Nutella.

At least just that song! I actually have a list of people I want to continue that proj-



ect with and James Taylor is one of them.

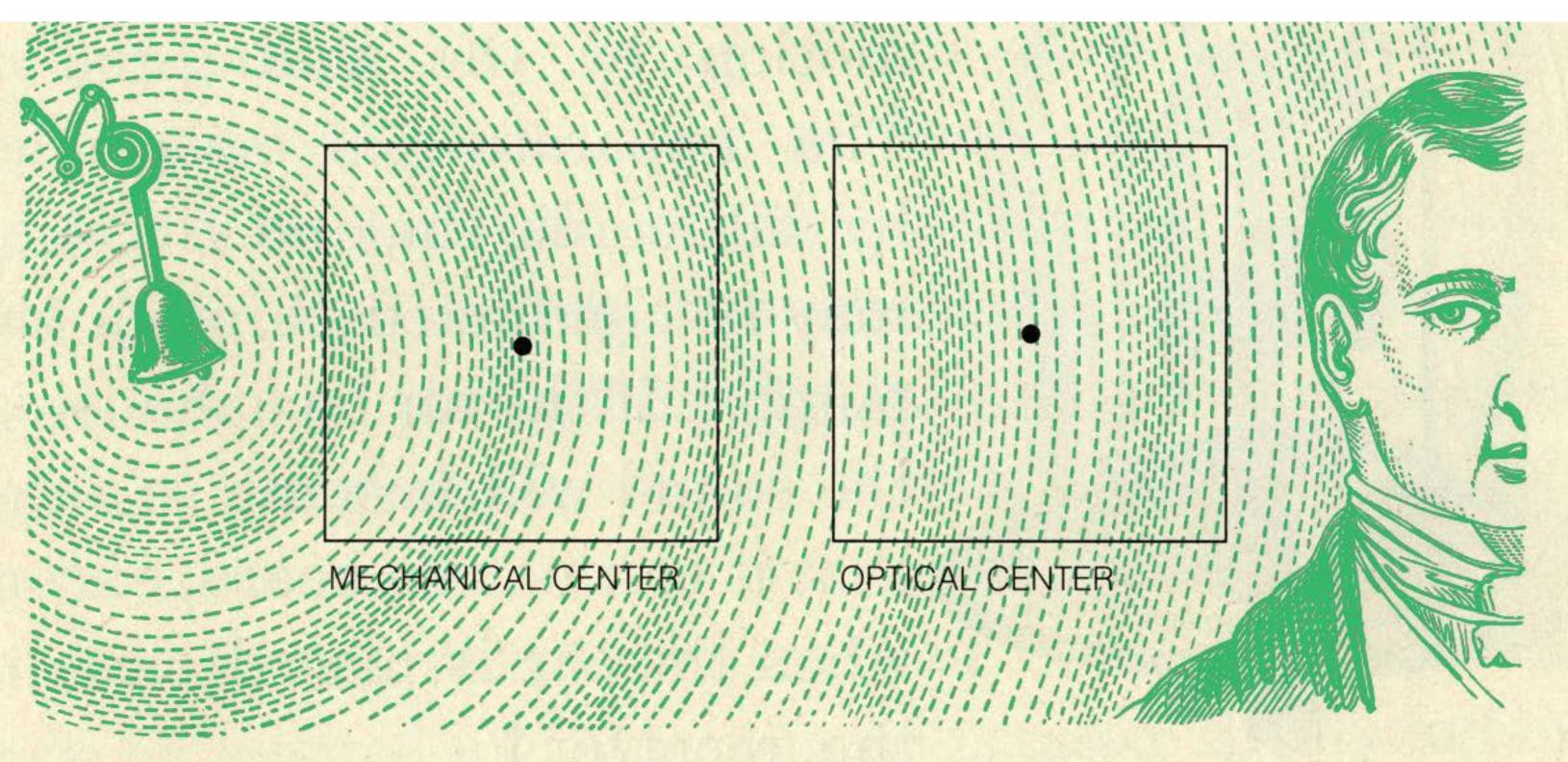
Who else is on that list?

The pope, [laughs] well, he's not the pope anymore. I guess the next pope. I think I'm interested in doing that interview with re-

ligious leaders, with political figures, with prominent artists, with people in extreme positions within society—the very old, the very young, the very rich, the very poor—people in cultures that are very far from Western thought.

I see a documentary happening...

Well, the full concept for the project and the reason why I can't actually complete it right now is because what I really would like to do is treat it like a systematic poll, but do it with a scientifically accurate sample size of the entire world. For every demographic that exists. If it was actually done correctly, it would be a worldwide database of thought on the most important subjects for humankind. It would end up being this incredible, diverse collection of thought and I think it would be an



invaluable thing to have exist. The scope and scale that I'd have to execute that on is just enormous. But I'm going to try to get there.

Do these big questions inform or inspire your art in any way outside of the *What*

Is Project?

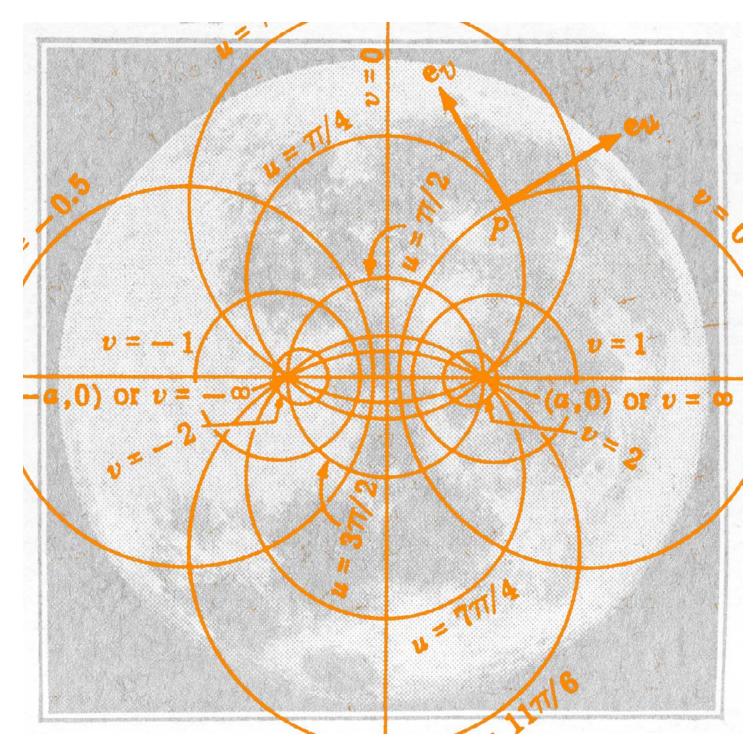
Is it Candide who decides to grow tomatoes in his garden?

Yep.

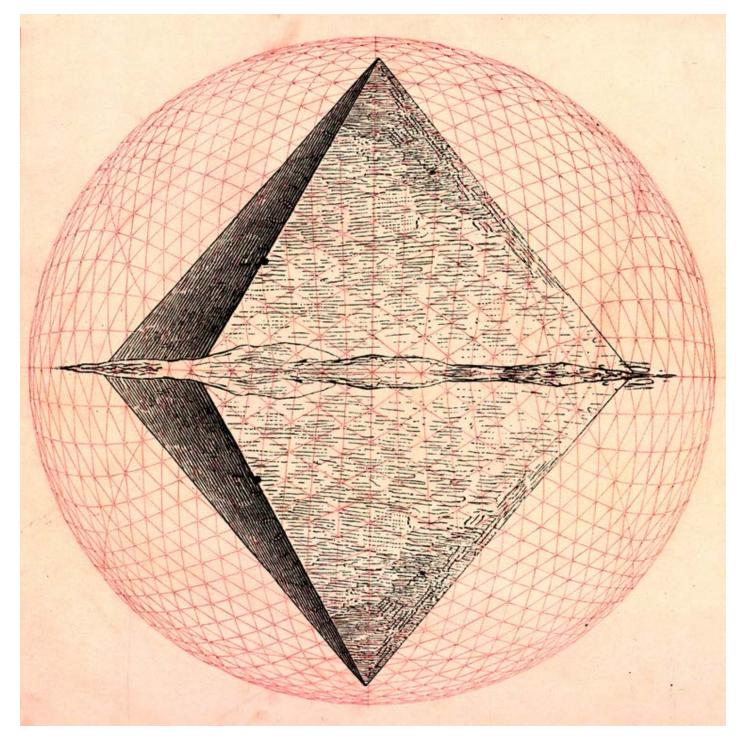
I think it's a bit like that. After that project I just wanted to do small things. I think I might have already found that one big thing that I'm going to do with my life on the art end of things and I just have to find out how to get it done.

BOTTOM LEFT: Connect

BOTTOM RIGHT: Moving



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You either make art for right now or you make art for the future. And if I'm going to make art for the future I want to make something that would be a humanity-defining piece.

Who are some of the artists inspiring you right now?

If we're talking about the experimental end of things: Yayoi Kusama, Anish Kapoor, Olifur Eliasson—especially Olifur Eliasson. I always am in love with Yves Klein.

On the newer end, I really love Hiroshi Sugimoto and Taryn Simon. If we're talking about that "artwork" that is accepted by the art community, I'd say The Clock, by Christian Marclay. It's an insanely ambitious, thorough piece that I respect.

If you were to ask me what do I think are the most important artworks that have been created in the last twenty years, I'd say Google and Facebook. There's a similar element of keeping an index and record

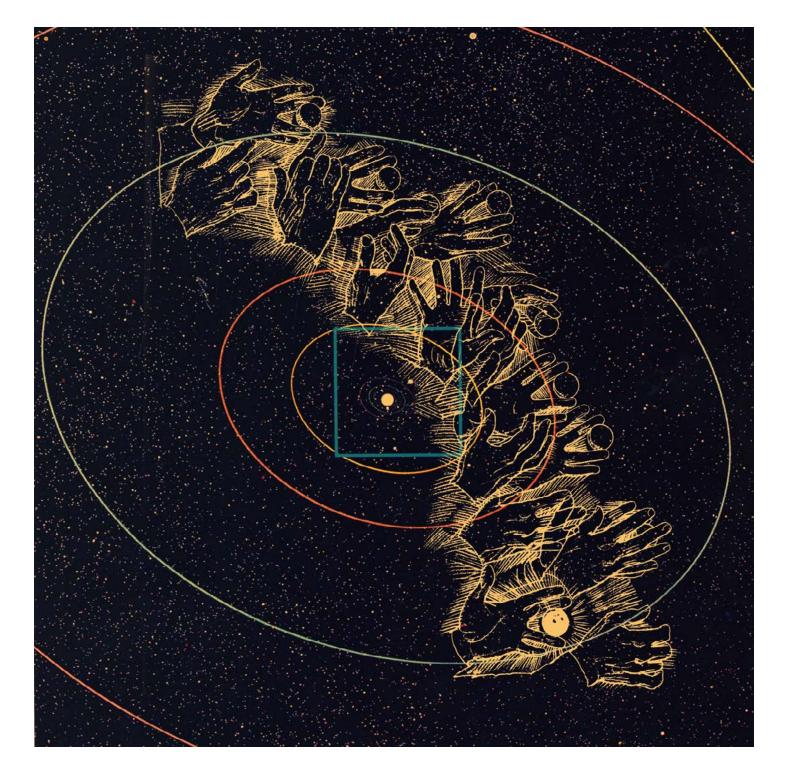
of society that aligns, at a core level, with what I ultimately want to do.

At the root of everything, I want to make art as a record of human civilization for the future—art as history book. There's a sacredness over the long term about preserving art; it's how we know anything about ancient cultures. That's why the *What is Project* might be the most important thing I ever do, because it would still be relevant in a thousand years. On the really out there end, I'd like to put a copy on the moon, in case of nuclear war...

Or like Voyager I, put it on a satellite and shoot it into Space.

Oh yeah, I could have a trigger where if anything ever happened on Earth there would be several copies shot off in different directions. I see it as falling into two categories: you either make art for right now or you make art for the future. And if I'm going to make art for the future I want to make something that would be a humanity-defining piece. If I'm going to make art for right now, it makes more sense to make a social sculpture, like a company or something that can impact a lot of people positively.

I had a teacher who was always saying that all art is a failure, and all you ever



learn to do is fail better. When it comes to stuff like *This is Knowledge* or the *What is Project*, they're failures in one way or another for me. I'm just trying to fail better.

You seem to be somewhat fascinated by Space. How have the cosmos affected your aesthetic?

So...[laughs] I'm a huge Star Trek fan.

You almost made it out of this interview alive!

Oh no, I knew it was gonna go here! I can't not go here. My initial interest in many of these things stemmed from a very early exposure to Star Trek, The Next Generation, which I was raised on. It's constructed in a world in which we as humanity have used technology to overcome our differences. There's an element of philosophy in there that I really gravitate towards: that as a society we figure it out eventually, and that "figuring it out" involves abolishing money, bettering ourselves, and pooling our intellectual capacities towards a greater end.

When I went to school and started photographing, at a certain point I realized I was photographing modernist architecture that looked like a spaceship. The first portfolio that I did was called *There are No Stars Here*, which was documenting abstract, colorful, artificial lighting in New York and Berlin that seemed inspired by the cosmos. I think there's always been and there should always be an interest in the stars.

There's a quote I love that goes like this: "Everything that needs to be said has already been said. But since no one was listening, everything must be said again." I think that the night sky, especially in New York, is one of those things. Most people forgot about it, so someone needs to say, HEY! LOOK UP.

So, the government contacts you tomorrow and says that you've been selected to take part in a human colonization effort in Space. Would you go?

I would probably say no, because my interest is about other people. Going to Space would be really fucking cool, but the point is to do things here, with the people here, for the people here. I could go out into Space, but I'd rather stay and create something that inspires people to do things with their lives that enable gigantic quantities of people to go out into Space. And if I don't ever get to go, it's better that I do stuff that gets us there as a society, rather than experiencing it myself. We're not there yet. We have a long way to go.

Avery recently showed work in the 2013 Armory Week and will soon be arranging a private exhibition of *This is Knowledge* in the Financial District. Look for more of his work at averymccarthy.com.



PLAYLIST

1	Retrograde		James Blake
2	Lay Your Cards Out		POLICA, Mike Noyce
3	Heavy Feet	Ьу	Local Natives
4	Full Circle		Half Moon Run
5	Taro		alt-J
6	The Suburbs		Mr Little Jeans
7	Twinkle Way		Cokiyu, Baths
8	Eclipse/Blue		Nosaj Thing
9	From Nowhere		Dan Croll
10	Gasoline		Alpine
11	Boreal		Hundred Waters
12	Mind Mischief		Tame Impala
13	White Water		High Highs

http://open.spotify.com/user/123039983/playlist/4VWlplxJwNFWXmYrUcQ1q1

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