

How I Became Invisible

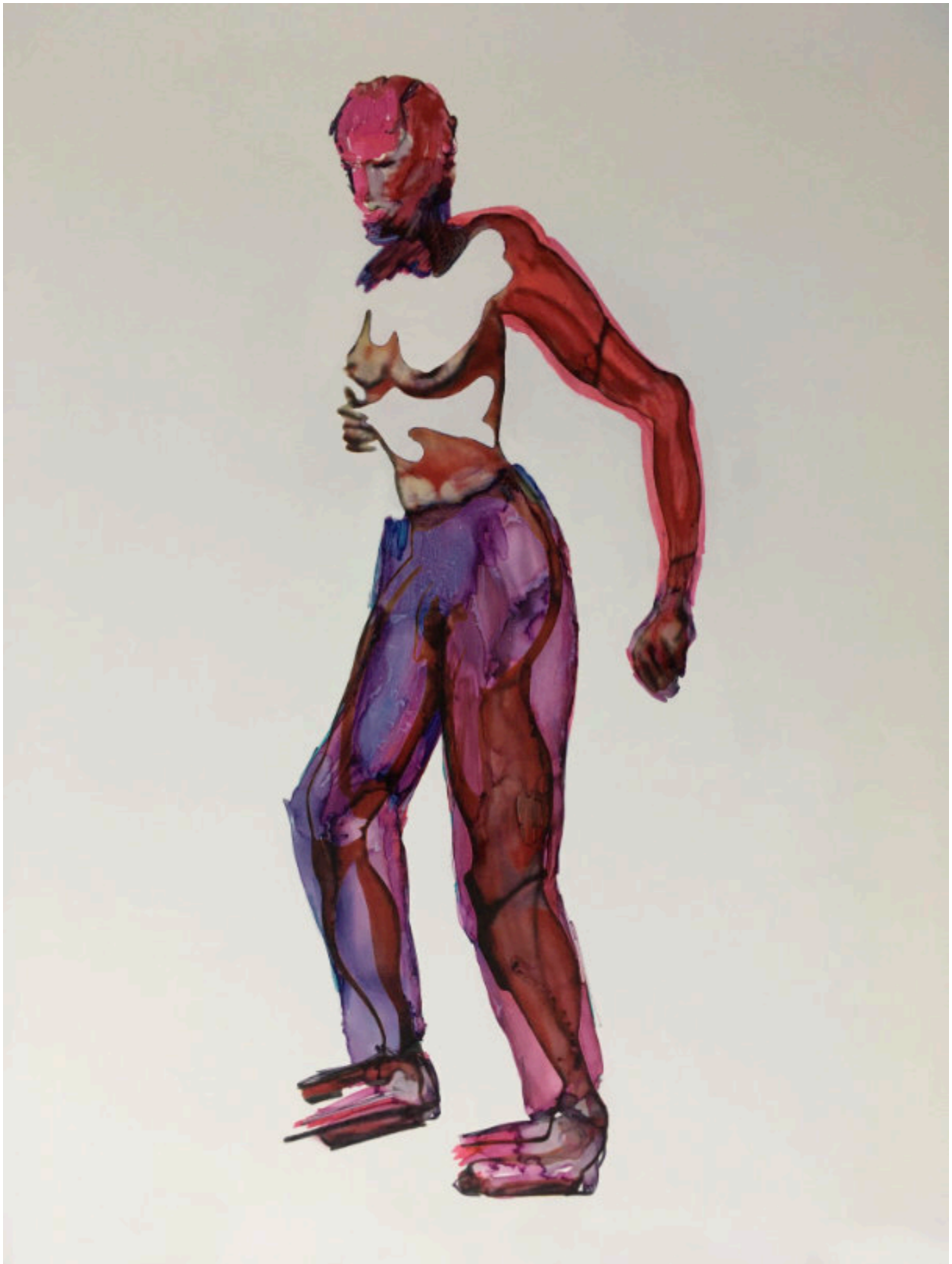


Proceedings of the Invisible College
Including Glimpses of the Invisible Tarot
October 2019 - July 2021



The Invisible Salon first met in London, late 2019, to mark the 25th anniversary of Grant Morrison's Invisibles comic. Further meetings took place until the pandemic forced the group to move to meeting online. The group has produced both music projects (<https://theinvisiblesalon.bandcamp.com/>) and videos (<https://vimeo.com/495968335>). This zine collects writing and art produced by the group, as well as submissions received from outside.

The group continues to meet and collaborate. We can be contacted via invisibles@groups.io



“Are You Ready To Wear The Blank Badge?”

It took me a while to get into the Invisibles.

It was the 1990s. I was newly arrived at university and had started following comic books again. There was a new book coming from the guy who'd done Zenith in 2000AD. It was part of the Vertigo line, along with Hellblazer and Sandman, and was getting written up in the music press. It looked worth a try.

I read through the first few issues. It seemed nice enough, but I didn't have the money for a bad impression of Neil Gaiman. I figured there were more exciting comics I could be spending my money on.

The following year, the comic found its feet again, and I signed back up. The book was a whirlwind of every bit of 90s counterculture, fusing Lovecraftian horror, 60s spies, magic, UFO sci-fi, entheobotany and situationism. It came close to cancellation but boosted its sales with a chaos magic ritual.

The story is introduced through the character of Dane, a bored Liverpool kid. Arrested by the authorities, he is sent to a re-education centre - and is busted out by a time-traveling assassin wearing fetish gear. This leads him to be recruited by an underground counter-cultural resistance. The Invisibles fits into that classic fantasy narrative, where a young person is brought into a more exciting world hidden behind our own.

I was waiting for a rescue myself. I'd been obsessed about both science and the supernatural as a kid, and was sure there was a more exciting world hidden behind the mundane one. I just needed someone to introduce me. I was waiting for a start to the story, for the call to action, but it never came.

It's 1997. I am working in the records department of a psychiatric hospital. It's 1998 I am working as a database programmer for a bank. It's 1999, and I am working in New Jersey. I share a flat with one of my colleagues in Hoboken, a small town on the edge of the Hudson. Manhattan is a short distance away.

It was the summer of the Matrix, Omega and the Mechanical Animals were touring the US, and the Invisibles was starting its third volume. My life had grown stale and repetitive. My own personality seemed crudely fashioned, and often ill-fitting. I was thoroughly sick of chronic vague depression. My life felt as washed out as the filtered scenes where Thomas Anderson labours in his programming job in the Matrix. Due to corporate politics, the company I am consulting for would not give us anything to do. I had a hardback notebook I used notes on my job. On the front was taped a colour print-out of Mason Lang's mansion exploding.

I wanted to be abducted, but the aliens never came.

Maybe Dane is the wrong character to follow. After all, Dane is born special, just like any other heroic character in a fantasy novel. It never goes as far as his father secretly being a powerful wizard, but there's nothing in Dane as a protagonist that suggests a way to liberate yourself. In a way Dane is an aristocrat, same as Luke Skywalker.

In 2012, Grant Morrison is made an MBE, a Member of the British Empire. He has joined the establishment. Among those at the investiture is the smirking figure of Sir Miles Delacourt.

2012, and I have lurched deep into my thirties. If I live the traditional three-score-years and ten, I'm half way through my life. I am living in a room in a friend's house. My bed is under an eave and has to be crawled into. It's not a bad life, and my depression is mostly under control. But I'm still wondering when my life will start. All these offices are wearing me down.

I seem to live as a lurker. I know people who've had amazing adventures through message boards like the Warren Ellis Forum or Whitechapel. I had an account on the Barbelith board but rarely posted. I never felt interesting, had nothing to say. I should have done more.

There is a BARBELITH account on twitter, that has very little on it. I follow it anyway.

On December 16th 2012, the account comes alive: "Try to wake up."

And a few days later, on the 21st December, the day the super context opened, the account tweets the messages from Barbelith in the comic.

GOODBYE

REMEMBER TO BREATHE
YOU ARE ONLY BEING BORN
Things have really not worked out as planned.

April 2019. I quit my job and, the day after, I set out on a magical expedition. A couple of days later I am standing in a field above the centre of the large hadron collider, one of 69 people performing a magic ritual to immanantise the eschaton. The day before, I was being taken through a series of secret underground temples where I was taught a sacred dance language. The next day I am heading to a mythic tower. And it turns out, my best friend is a time-traveller. Things are looking a lot rosier: this is the sort of thing I expected from my life. I even have a magical alias, a secret identity.

You've all heard the quote. Someone asked Leary what to do once you've turned on, tuned in and dropped out. He said: "Find the others". But, really, that bit comes first.

Ragged Robin is a far more interesting character than Dane. She starts out as an aspiring writer who doses herself with Sky until she goes insane, leading to her encounter with Mason Lang. In my twenties, I too wanted to be a writer, and wondered why I was not living a life like my favourite novel (and Robin's), *The Invisibles*. I just needed to bump into the right people.

A friend suggested that, if I wanted to be a writer, I should do a course. I wasn't not sure about being around aspiring writers, but I ended up in a room of amazing people. I did another course, and ended up hanging out with yet more interesting people. Some of them are rappers, poets and burlesque artists who have stage names, which are like the code names in my favourite comic.

I started performing spoken word, which led to giving talks, one on the memetic entities loose on the Internet. Part of the research on this involved Slenderman, and I ended up corresponding with the UK expert on the subject, who I later met in London. This expert was a practising cunning man, who introduced me to some more interesting people. That evening, I complained about how nothing weird ever happened to me. "Just wait," he told me. And slowly it snowballed. Before long, I was organising rituals, learning about magic, and cursing the British government.

Well, I ain't passed the abyss, but I know a little bit. I'm still working in an office, but now (like with Big Malkie) it's part of a larger more interesting plan. And, it turns out, I have something of a knack as a magical project manager (email me if you need my services).

I never planned to be so old when this all took off. But initiations are funny things, and mine was a lot longer than expected. And it's happening just as *The King of All Tears* runs rampant on our world. But finally, I feel like I have become Invisible; and there is work to be done.

Namu amida butsu.

Sally Down The Plug Hole
Jowonder

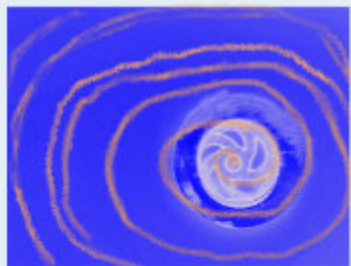
See also: <https://youtu.be/zMeHwXZHku4>



When Sally washes with soap...



And in the bath she doth float...



The water leaving turning like a screen



Makes her completely invisible!



She arrives at a place beyond the one we know



Where the moon can sit on her toe

BECOMING INVISIBLE:

Transmutation of the Fool into the Magician in this Age of Endarkenment

“Maybe if I write it down I can sort it in my head”.

- Boy

News Flash: ‘The other side won.’ The Archon took the throne and all of our worst conspiratorial nightmares are seeping into this reality. We are currently trapped in a surreal eschaton in which we are essentially destroying the natural world and mindlessly consuming without conscience of consequence; a world where increasingly militarised police force murders its citizens and restrict movements; where the poor and the needy are sacrificed into the soulless machinery of corporations; and where the rich get richer and the poor become fodder for bureaucratic machineries of death.

We inhabit a universe of pulverising pointlessness, the sheer weight of which crushes hopes and dreams. It is a universe in which there is no room to act (nor even to breath). We are in a state of ever-increasing and ever-expanding ‘Lockdown’. We hide from a ‘virus’ and are ordered by the Authorities to socially isolate. Your elusive gods and chaos majick will not free you now.

The unconscious yearning for freedom (spiritual, economic, (meta)physical, psychical, etc.) is suppressed as the ennui of existence in the concrete jungles becomes heavier each day, especially during the Lockdown. What is freedom anyway?! What is it we are fighting? And what for? We all die in the end. Or do we?

So how does one become ‘Invisible’? How can one ‘Resist’ and attain ‘Freedom’? We can educate ourselves to obtain the requisite vocabulary and understanding. We can try to create a “KALI” (Kabalistic Alien Language Initiator) or something to crack the Conditioning and Control. Aim to learn the art of psychic and meme warfare such as working spells, shifting realities, and invoking God-forms to disrupt alien attempts at controlling human consciousness.

Shall we follow King Mob’s example and dose enemy agents with Logoplasm/Key 64 which was created by a logonaut from the twisted language of the angels and ‘put a bullet in the right place’? Do we fear being labelled as occult anarchist terrorists?

THE SUPERCONTEXT: 2012 to PRESENT

Humanity supposedly enters into a 5th dimensional space called the ‘Supercontext’ at the end of the narrative of the hypersigil we know as ‘The Invisibles’.

“Deep breaths. You’re all right. We’re complexifying into the Supercontext, eh.”

- Jack Frost

The world however did not end in 2012. The universe’s alpha to its omega is happening right NOW. Where is ‘now’ anyway?

“It’s a problem of geometry... In our subjective universe we experience three dimensions of space and one of time. However I believe time, like space, has more than one dimension. Think of timespace as a multi-dimensional, self-perfecting system in which everything that has ever, or will ever, occur, occurs simultaneously. I believe timespace is a kind of object, a geometrical supersolid.” -Takashi Satoh

The age of Endarkenment has commenced. Language and ideas in viral and bacterial terms spread and contaminated human consciousness. The Myrmidons, the Outer Church's earthly agents, have been busy building elaborate conceptual palaces erected by the faithful. They can often be seen wearing red MAGA hats.

"Hear this: When our masters' work is done, every living thing will have the status of a machine. There will be no creativity, only productivity. Instead of love there will be fear and distrust, instead of surrender there will be submission. We will replace contact with isolation, and joy with shame. Hope will cease to exist as a concept. We will cover the earth with steel and with concrete, this planet will be a factory farm producing morons to fuel and maintain the factory engines and feed our masters. There will be an electronic policeman in every head. Your children will be born in chains, live only to serve and die in anguish and ignorance. Look around you, the process is already in its final stages. And you, like everyone else, will take your place on the production line."

-Colonel Friday

Religion and politicks in the age of the Endarkenment are not only viruses, but highly adaptive super-resistant meme strains. These petulant thought-viruses destroy free will, an individual's ability to maintain an integral 'self', and most importantly the instinctive compulsion to 'resist' monotony and hegemony.

"If our words are circles, theirs are bubbles." - Jack Frost

Shall we look to the Tarot for Insights about the evolutionary path of the Fool to the Magician by way of the Tower?

The FOOL: INNOCENCE

The journey of the Fool begins with a (usually misguided) step. The Fool has a name but not a number. He represents boundless energy, total freedom, madness, disorder, chaos, creativity, lightness, adventure, and/or innocence.

"Fizzing sherbertstorms of light particles . . . Bumper tilt eggman hologram blizzards . . . The head the oracle head speaks in rhyming sounds hammerchime fuzztone piano . . . Let me take you down . . . Say the word . . . it is not dying . . . Reborn be light go and come again . . . Rise from the grave of himself . . . Bonny jock lennon is did and goon . . . It is not dying . . . The born again beautiful boy beautiful boy . . . It is not dying".

We are born (again?).

The journey of Dane's transfiguration into the bodhisattva Jack Frost spans the narrative of the Invisibles. Dane sets out on a fool's quest after his awakening during a guided fall from the Tower in Canary Wharf, London. This traumatic experience sets the stage for events which subsequently lead to Dane's contact with Barbelith, the "placenta" for humanity and also a satellite-like object located on the dark side of the moon.

THE TOWER: COLLAPSE OR REVELATION?

The Tower represents ephemeral constructions: a sudden event, change, liberation, and/or fall. It is traditionally associated with unforeseen events. This card could be interpreted as a release from something that held us prisoner, such as Archons or repressive paradigms. It could also represent a collapse: one of illusions, a relationship, a dogmatic situation, and/or a misheld belief. It represents a situation so great in magnitude that we are forced to change. The catastrophic event could turn out to be a positive event if the collapse manifests in an evolution.

The paradigm has shifted. The world as we knew it no longer exists. The Tower has fallen. The world will not return to the 'status quo'. The Authorities have had a taste of Total Power during the Lockdown. Any relinquishment of Power by the Authorities is unlikely to occur without a fight from this time forward.

“Everything is true, nothing is permitted.”

- The inverted creed of Hassan Sabbah and The Invisibles

Now is the time for the emergence of what was once imprisoned. The Fool (the seeker on the quest) is free to wander and to evolve. The fall of the Tower permits the hero to commence his journey. It could be the birth of a movement (whether telluric or hypnagogic depends upon the seeker).



THINGS FALL APART

THE MAGICIAN: NEW BEGINNING – REVOLUTION OR NOVUS ORDO SECLORUM?

The Magician contains the whole potential: all is possible. He has a series of tools at his disposal which he may use as he pleases. In this collaged card the items are a Molotov cocktail, a gun, a grenade, and a can of beer. The Magician's meditative pose confirms his insouciance. "As above, so below" is mirrored in Infinity. King Mob represents shrewdness, initiation, dexterity, potentiality, malice, verve, and talent. King Mob is the Magician.

The day-to-day life of the elderly, like that of the magician, is filled with an extraordinarily high level of coincidence. - Lady Edith Manning

Dane's evolution and transformation into Jack Frost enables him to perceive the truth behind time, the creation of the universe, and to possibly conceive of his place in it. Dane eventually manifests his powers, starts his own cell, and oversees the end of the physical world as foreseen. Although King Mob is depicted as the 'Magician' in this collaged Tarot, Jack Frost is destined to take his place.

TABULA RASA: GLITTERDAMMERUNG!

All of us meet the forgotten, each to his kind... When fear is all there is, there is no fear. Eternal pain is no longer pain. When we remember them recognise them for what they are, they no longer enslave us. - John-a-Dreams

Shall we gather to expand and to destroy consensus reality? Should we seek a universe where all binaries are dissolved into meaninglessness?

Let's meditate on the twisted eternal language of angels and dreams and invoke Barbelith's

meta-language utilising the primal tongue of fire. Teach me the Ubersprech and the 64-lettered alphabet so that I may the wield the tool of ultimate cognitive manipulation and resist the dark forces of constraint and conformity.

“We made gods and jailers because we felt small and alone. We let them try us and sentence us and, like sheep to the slaughter, we allowed ourselves to be sentenced....
SEE! NOW! OUR SENTENCE IS UP.” - Jack Frost

NOW IS THE TIME TO ACT: IMMANENTISE THE ESCHATON.

“Nothing ends that isn’t something else starting. So which side are you on? Do you know yet?
- Jack Frost



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How We Are Invisible

My existence has always been pretty static, I've never moved around much, and major changes have always been rare, in terms of love and friendship I have gained and lost so much, and both loss and gain remain within me, inside I change, slowly, I evolve, I am becoming.....

But outside, there is no evidence of this, my life has barely changed, if you pan out far enough and see the whole thing spread out, it would be flat grey matte, like belly button fluff, or that ghastly stuff you get in tumble dryers, so many different threads, tossed and turned by living into all pretty much the same thing, mulched to flat blank grey anti life, but that's not my life, that's my existence, if you zoom in its static, not like something that's stable, but like TV static, harsh black and white, fragmentary full of the maddening noise of constant movement, zoom in further and it's all still there, every fibre every thread, woven tightly, intertwined so thoroughly you can forget about them.

We imagine the threads of our life going together to form some marvelous tapestry, but maybe we just haven't zoomed out far enough, maybe our flat matte grey square of life is part of a larger gradient sweep that itself is just one brushstroke in a painting too large to conceive, and maybe the painting is God, a god that swallows our material existence to make themselves anew each moment, and maybe I'm just wittering away, so much cognitive noise and nonsense.

But I'll carry on anyway.

When I remember my life, not my existence, my life, my life so far that is, it's fragmentary, it's a set of stories, individual events, some join up, some don't and that's OK. Let's look at dreams, most dreams I can't remember more than the most fleeting vaporous idea of them but for the many that I do, some continue in other dreams, like a TV series that you revisit, but most don't and my life is the same (and how can I tell the difference anyway) if there is a novel in my life, it's made out of short story collections, tales of various interwoven themes, there are recurring characters and one character who is always there but isn't always the central figure, and he has my name, a massive fragmentary meta narrative, but lacking the over arching narrative thrust of an actual novel.

The idea of narrative is given physical form as narrativium by Terry Pratchett in his Discworld novels,

"narrativium, the elemental substance of Story. Nothing on the Disc can exist without a Story first existing to mould its destiny and determine its form"

"On the Disc, if a story or legend is told often enough and believed by enough people, it becomes true. This is known as the law of narrative causality"

Wikipedia

Pratchett imagines narrativium as an actual element, as in a chemical element, a physical thing, the sort of object seen on a periodic table, a sub atomic brick that goes together with others of its kind to build the actual physical properties of story, story which in turn drives the world, or at least the motivations of those that live in it.

Whether narrativium exists in the so called real world or not, people behave as if it does, if they are not actively searching for the tapestry of their life they certainly base a lot of their decisions on stories; stories in the form of laws and guidelines, ideas and intentions, mantras and principles, promises, political and corporate agendas, these are all just stories, stories we are told and stories we tell ourselves, stories held in systems like books, and books can be burnt, books can be closed, some can even be locked, and suddenly the motivational wave that swept you forward collapses, and you either swim for yourself or you get crushed and drowned.

Narrative reality is the reverse of life, narrative reality sweeps you forward, but life you must move forward yourself.

The vast majority of our existence is invisible. Our existence is big, it is always the precise size and shape of our entire time spent alive, it is the entirety of our life plus all the moments when we only just exist, when we are unconscious, not dreaming but when we have spaced out and disassociated, when we are not doing anything, either actively or passively, when we are not even thinking and afterwards we find that time seems to have passed rather quickly and if asked to describe that time we wouldn't be able to, we'd draw a very literal blank, just a blank black space where we would imagine memory and life would go but it doesn't, we are for the most part invisible even from ourselves.

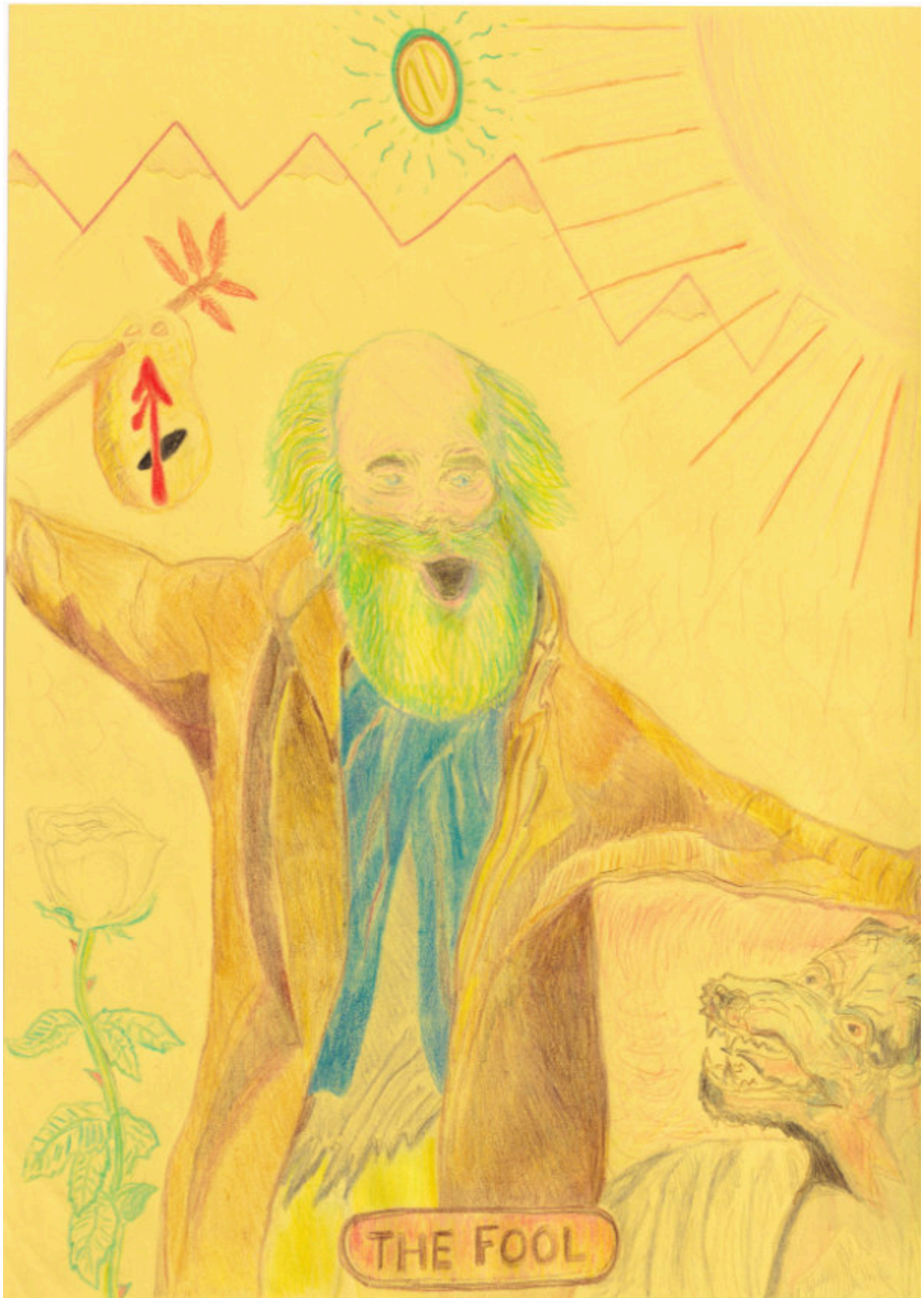
Let's imagine a model for this, 3 circles within and around one another, an inner, middle and outer circle, the outermost circle is marked "outer life" when the outside world is aware of us and our life, the middle circle is marked "inner life" when only we are aware of ourselves and our life, and finally "non life" when no one, not even ourselves has any awareness of our life, full invisibility.

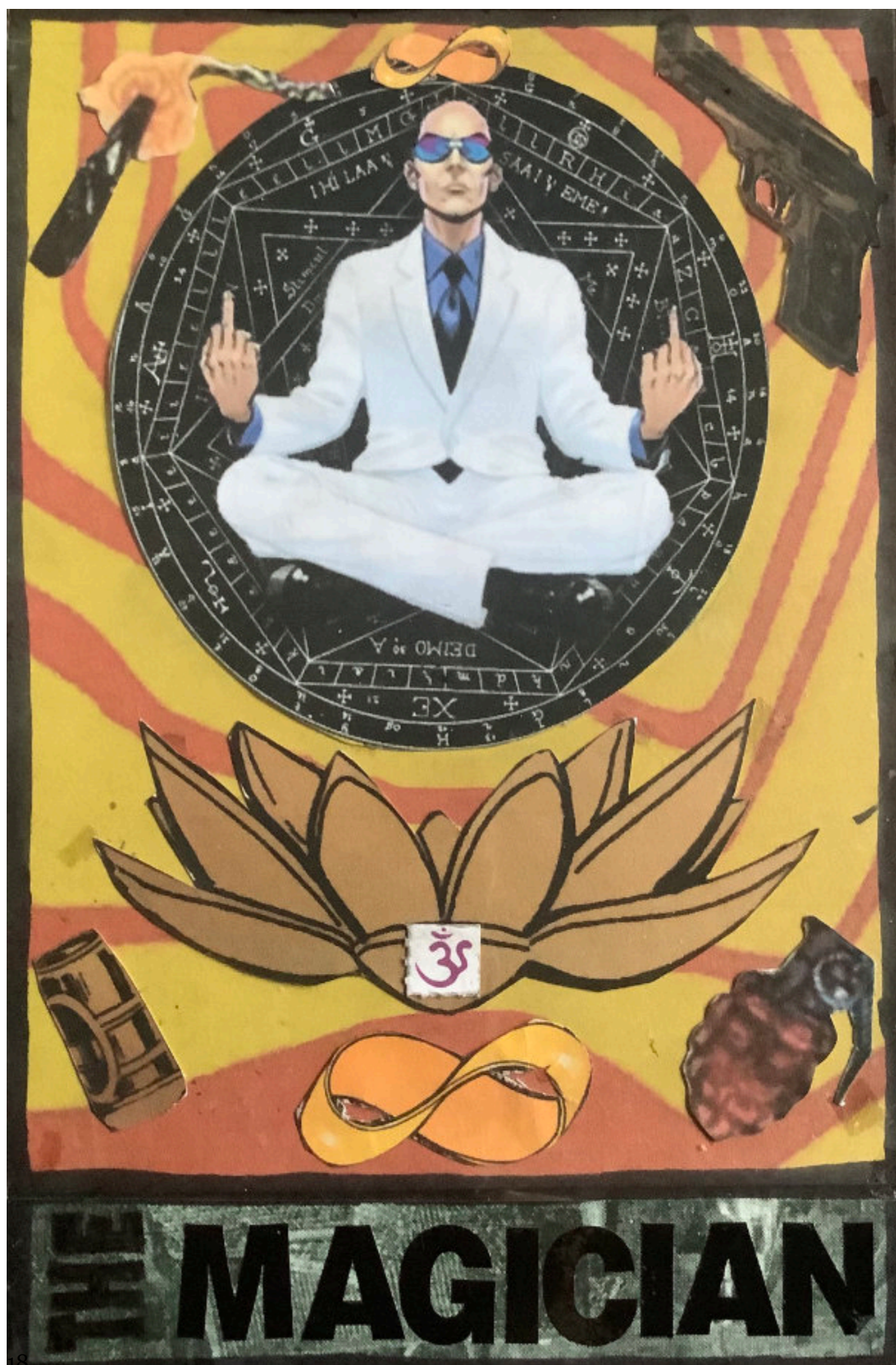
Now let's render that model in a different way, as a line graph, 3 lines each with their own peaks and troughs, the largest peaks go into outer life, other people's awareness of us, the smaller ones go only into inner life, our own awareness of ourselves and finally the bottom line has inverse peaks going into our non cognizant existence. Now imagine that it's just one line, in 3 dimensions, with peaks penetrating into these different zones of visibility and invisibility... Those times when we just exist, with no memory of it, is it just our memory that goes after the fact, or does our mind go with it, during it? Where does our consciousness go..... And if it doesn't go, if it's just a case of a loss of memory, for a period that we were in fact aware of when we were living it then what happened then, when we were made invisible? Is that it, are we made invisible? An attribute we have thrust on us, and later taken away?

Or are we a being beyond consciousness, which penetrates into visibility and whose natural state is that of the invisible, and when invisible do we see the brush strokes, do we pan far out, is that what we are made to forget? And what we must now remember.....

















Credits and Contributors

Phillip Raymond Goodman (Cover image background, Fool With Molotov p15, Judgement p22)

V23 (cover grenade, Becoming Invisible p8-11, Fool p16, Magician p18 and Tower p20 collages)

Maryam Hashemi (p2)

CFK (How I Became Invisible p3)

Calum F Kerr, performing oddities - <http://www.vimeo.com/calumfkerr>

Mark Bell (p4 - Red Chem Figure)

Mark Bell lives and works in London, UK. He has a degrees in Fine Art and in English Literature. His work generally runs in distinct series, often influenced by the urban environment, expressing social and political concerns, or influenced by a love of the aesthetics of nature. He exhibits extensively, and his work is in private collections in the UK, Europe, Japan and the US.

Red Chem Figure. 2020. New media.

This piece is titled 'Red Chem Figure' (2020). It was created through a process of four stages. The original large painting on sheet aluminium by the artist was photographed digitally, which was then developed using digital software. This new image was then ink-jet pigment printed. The print was then finally further worked on using inks.

www.markbellart.com // www.flickr.com/markbellart/albums

orbific (text, p5-6)

Jo Wonder (Down the Plughole p7)

I have been writing and performing multimedia performance pieces that combine animation and storytelling for well over a decade. My table top stop frame animations, performance, literature and visual art have received notoriety: Animated film The Brooch Pin and the Sinful Clasp won the Grand Prize at Zagreb Animation Festival 1990, and both this and Sawdust for Brains and The Key of Wisdom, were broadcast by Channel 4 Television; my visual art is represented by the Kellie

Miller Gallery in Brighton and by Cartazini in Europe.

James Abele (Photo p11)

I'm an internet security sales geek by day, and a fire-juggling clown by night. I read X-men comics growing up and Vertigo books in college; The Invisibles hit me at just the right time in my self-awakening. I credit Grant's writing, along with the The Burning Man community and my Philosophy degree studies, with making me a happy, empathetic, and curious person. Try to remember: We are playing a game disguised as everything!

<http://www.blankbadge.com>

Twitter @greenmonk

pic taken at Dragon*Con - James as JackFrost, my wife Rhode as RaggedRobin. w/ our friends Wayne (King Mob), Lori (JollyRoger), and BJ (LordFanny)

Pope Hereticus Forgeticus (How We Are Invisible, p12-3)

CFK / The Evolution of the Calm (Tarot: Fool p17, Emperor p19, Moon p21)

Peter Horneland (Tom O'Bedlam back cover)

Peter Horneland, artist and vitki from Norway. Concerned with maps, ritual, atemporality, Kairos over Kronos, postnarrative society, fractals (in nature, culture or otherwise), recursiveness, public consciousness, initiation, exorcism, machine learning, and the ideas of the sacred, the liminal, and the negated. Agnostic mystic, (unaffiliated) hermetic kopimist, transcendental apophaticist, spin doctor, ba'al sham, open sourceror, root accessory, exec. sh.mgt, guerrilla ontologist. Registered member of no less than 33 granfalloon.

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