

The following script is a working document used to assemble the video *FATHER DAUGHTER MAKER*. The script is a combination of Nogle's writing and found text. Some names appear with phonetic spelling to support correct pronunciation by voice-generating software.

FRIDAY, MARCH 13TH, 2026

On D'Ette Clone 1

This is D'Ette Nogle recording in Braunschweig, Germany at Kunstverein Braunschweig in advance of an exhibition called *Let it R.I.P*, or *Let it Rip*. Most of the voiceover you will hear is a digital replica of my voice called D'Ette clone 1 that was made using previously recorded audio samples and a subscription-based voice cloning tool. You may notice the voice clone changes its delivery based on its interpretation of the content. The clone may read passages it perceives as negative or regretful at a lower volume and pitch, while phrases perceived as positive or optimistic are delivered with a higher pitch and slight energetic bursts. These modulations occur despite setting the style exaggeration to zero.

Some of the accompanying music has been generated from a stem player designed by Ye and Teenage Engineering. The player is preloaded with Ye's album *Follow God*, which is the source of the stem tracks.

FATHER DAUGHTER MAKER

Program (TEXT ON SCREEN):

1. Invocation
2. Notes on Christianity delivered by D'Ette Clone 1 and John the Baptist with Mel Gibson's *The Passion of the Christ* and Martin Scorsese's *The Last Temptation of Christ*
3. Benediction

Explanation of program - to be live recorded

The first part of the program is the invocation. The invocation video is of me and my dad, Bruce, working on the project, *Columnhouse*, for my UCLA thesis project in 2000.

The second, and longest part of the program, is Notes on Christianity. Mel Gibson's *The Passion of the Christ* and Martin Scorsese's *The Last Temptation of Christ* have been taken from DVD copies and uploaded to the timeline at their unmodified file sizes with respect to the 1920

by 1080 video format. Other images have been added to the timeline for visual interest.

The third and final part of the program is the benediction, a brief contemplation on the work of Sturtevant.

INVOCATION

BRUCE V. NOGLE

FEBRUARY 4, 1950 - MARCH 19, 2025

NOTES ON CHRISTIANITY

THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST

Mel Gibson spent 45 million dollars of his own money on The Passion of the Christ in 2004. The film stands out for its graphic depiction of Jesus's last 12 hours. Jim Caviezel plays Jesus. When the cast and crew was filming the Sermon on the Mount scene, Caviezel was struck by lightning during the final shot of filming. He reported feeling a suctioning sensation, a boom, and a visual of sparks coming from his hands. He felt his body leave itself and saw lightning coming out of his ears. People on set saw fire on both sides of his head. The strike resulted in damage to his heart that required two surgeries.

The movie was criticized for its brutality and its unambiguous portrayal of Jews being responsible for the death of Jesus.

Gibson made over 400 million dollars on the movie. Six months ago, he started production on a sequel, the Resurrection of the Christ. Gibson says the movie will include the Fall of the Angels, because in order to move forward with the resurrection, he has to begin with the fall.

THE FALL OF THE ANGELS

God created the angels to be perfect and holy and with free will, like humans. The angel Lucifer was unhappy and viewed God as a tyrant. In an abuse of his free will, Lucifer rebelled. The fallen angels who followed Lucifer were deceived. As one Christian redditor describes: This notion of independence from God is often portrayed as liberating and empowering, but it's a deception that leads people away from the true source of freedom and love, which is God Himself.

THE LAST TEMPTATION OF CHRIST

When Nikos Kazantzakis published *The Last Temptation of Christ* in 1955, the Catholic Church banned it and the Greek Orthodox Church excommunicated him. Martin Scorsese released a movie based on the novel in 1988. The movie, according to its prologue, "is not based on the Gospels, but upon this fictional exploration of the eternal spiritual conflict." Scorsese portrays Jesus as a confused man, in thoughts more than action. Before the movie was released, Christian groups worldwide condemned it as blasphemous, although Christian theology teaches that Jesus is both fully human and fully divine, and that to say otherwise is heresy.

Given the organized pressure against the film, Universal hired a liaison with the Christian community, a born-again Christian himself, and arranged a private advance screening for agitated groups, including Reverend Donald Wildmon's American Family Association and Bill Bright's Campus Crusade for Christ. The audience was especially disgusted by a closing image: Christ on the cross is tempted by Satan with visions of a "normal" life with the prostitute Mary Magdalene, replete with sex, marriage, and children. Some 1,200 Christian radio stations in California denounced the film, and Mastermedia International urged a boycott against parent company MCA. Bill Bright offered to reimburse Universal for its investment in *The Last Temptation of Christ* in exchange for all existing prints, which he vowed to destroy. Universal responded with an open letter in newspapers across the country, saying that acquiescence to these forces would infringe on the First Amendment rights of all Americans. On the day the letter appeared, more than 600 protesters, sponsored by a Christian radio station in Los Angeles, picketed MCA headquarters.

The protests were effective. By the time *The Last Temptation of Christ* went into wide release, the national controversy had waned, but individual cities and towns banned the film.

Although critics give the movie mixed reviews on aesthetic grounds, the film earned Martin Scorsese an Academy Award nomination for Best Director.

A LOAD OF CROSSES

The Biblical canon took centuries to solidify and began itself as a counter-cultural text. The early Christian church was persecuted because of its teachings. It taught radical inclusivity - the figure Jesus exalting the poor, sick, sinners, and outcasts.

When my dad died, he had been making a sculpture composed of 365 crosses. The sculpture was to be a figure of a person carrying a load of the 365 crosses. He completed 280.

My dad was a devout Christian. He wanted to be Christ-like. He carried a leather keychain that said "I'm second." He gave to others and was self-sacrificing. These qualities were in part shaped by the Church's teachings and a relationship with God that he worked on from the time he was very young. A right-leaning Twitter influencer says that Christian dads put God first and not ego. With God at the center, kids are a blessing not an interruption.

My dad also left behind a piece of paper with the following list:

- DONALD DESKEY (TABLE LAMP) (MET) 1927
- JULIAN WEIR "THE RED BRIDGE" 1895
- LOUISE NEVELSON "MRS N's PALACE" 1964-77
- LEE KRASNER
- JASPER JOHNS (WHITE FLAG) 1955
- THE FLATIRON 1904
- (BIRD IN SPACE)

On the back of the list, he wrote, PAINTINGS OF JOHN THE BAPTIST.

THE CHOSEN

My dad's all-time favorite TV show was a Christian drama called *The Chosen* that is set in the 1st century Judea and Galilee. The actor who plays Jesus says the goal of the series is "for people to get a deeper connection to Christ and to have a more intimate relationship with him." The show has gained popularity. Season 6 will focus on the crucifixion of Jesus and season 7 will focus on the resurrection. The title graphics for the show depict several fish swimming against a stream of many fish.

ABSTRACT CROSSES

I live in Los Angeles. I took a photograph of Andy Warhol's *Abstract Crosses* in the home of television producer Ryan Murphy.

I wrote a letter to Murphy and told him I had an interest in photographing Warhol's *Abstract Crosses* after seeing it in a video about his Bel Air home, a Neutra. I told him when Warhol made *Abstract Crosses* in '84, I was ten, and I was often sitting in church looking at a massive wood cross my grandfather made for the church sanctuary.

I also told Murphy the artwork and his home's proximity to Benedict Canyon stirs a dark reference to Los Angeles history. I mentioned I was working on something related to my memory of visiting the survey exhibition *Helter Skelter: LA Art in the 1990s* while on a high school field trip to MOCA in 1992. *Helter Skelter's* curatorial objective was to address "the darker, angst ridden side of contemporary life." The exhibition strove to frame what was the *new art* of a burgeoning art center in the edginess of the Manson murders and "a dominant myth of LA as a haven for cultism of all kinds."

I added some formal notes to my letter to Murphy. The prominent black in Warhol's messy application combined with symbols evokes noir tones in contrast to an otherwise bright, naturally-lit room made possible through Neutra's large window that opens to the year-round light of Los Angeles. Blurring in and out boundaries, Neutra's light, in proximity to *Abstract Crosses*, evokes a peculiar relationship to the private horror accompanying the *knock knock* of the infamous Cielo Drive intruders. Charles Manson presented himself as both Jesus Christ and the devil. He used religious language to isolate his followers from society and to justify violent acts. A former Manson family member described Manson as having a magnetic, almost divine presence. The Tate-LaBianca murders are often regarded as a sign of the end of the 1960s era of peace and love.

Another *knock knock* holding my interest is the space between two knocks, or forces, those of past and future. Hannah Arendt writes of these forces as they are depicted in one of Kafka's parables in which a man has two antagonists, one who presses him from behind and the other who blocks the road ahead. For Arendt, Kafka's man stands in a gap between two unlimited forces, an infinite past and an infinite future, but "though they have no known beginning, they have a terminal ending, the point at which they clash." Arendt offers the visual of a parallelogram of forces. Man can't interrupt the forces but cause them to slightly deflect and meet at an angle, making the gap where man finds himself "no simple interval."

THE JESUS SEMINAR

There was a collective of academics called the Jesus Seminar. The filmmaker Paul Verhoeven (*Robocop*, *Showgirls*, *Starship Troopers*, *Benedetta*), joined them and wrote a book titled *Jesus of Nazareth*. The scholars, led by Robert W. Funk, met for years to identify the real Jesus.

The seminar color coded passages in the Bible based on the likelihood that something was said by Jesus. Red means they include the words unequivocally in the database for determining who Jesus was. Pink means they include the item with reservations or modifications. Grey means the content is useful, but might not have been Jesus. Black means it represents the content of a different tradition.

The Jesus Seminar coded the Beatitudes. The Beatitudes are most often regarded as a preliminary part to the Sermon on the Mount. They are known as the "Blessed are.." statements.

- **Blessed are the poor in spirit:** Those who recognize their total need for God, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
- **Blessed are those who mourn:** Those who grieve over sin and injustice, for they will be comforted.
- **Blessed are the meek:** Those who are gentle and humble, for they will inherit the earth.

The Seminar focuses on the radical, counter-cultural nature of Jesus's message. They don't say blessed are... They translate:

Congratulations to the poor in spirit! Heaven's domain belongs to them.

Congratulations to those who grieve! They will be consoled.

Congratulations to those who hunger and thirst for justice! They will have a feast!

"Congratulations" emphasizes a present reality. The seminar emphasized an upside-down kingdom Jesus taught about in which God's justice and the kingdom of heaven is now, already embedded in the lives of the marginalized.

THE FUTURE FORTUNES OF AMERICA

You can't really take up the US as a topic without talking about religion. 95% of lawmakers at the federal level in the US identify with a religious faith. Congress is consistently more religious than the general U.S. population, with Protestant majorities in both chambers, alongside significant Catholic and Jewish populations. Members of Congress often represent religious demographics, using faith-based arguments to connect with voters.

Not only is religion at the core of the US's inception, but as the country prospered economically, especially after the Civil War, well-

known clergy would preach on a moral imperative to seek wealth. Henry Ward Beecher, brother of Harriet Beecher Stowe (the author of Uncle Tom's Cabin), asserted "Nowhere else does wealth so directly point towards virtue in morality, and spirituality in religion, as in America." He predicted, "the future fortunes of America will be fabulous." Ralph Waldo Emerson observed, "A dollar is not value, but representative of value, and, at last, of moral values...wealth is moral."

This could be a bad bit, but I'd like to introduce the Head of John the Baptist into the program.

Head of John, from what I understand, you were a radical. You stood up to political authority and held politicians to high moral standards. You called religious leaders who were in bed with political power a "brood of vipers."

Head of John:

WAS CHRIST A COLLABORATOR?

In 1971, film theorist Peter Wollen wrote an article titled "Was Christ a Collaborator?" He argues that although Jesus of Nazareth lived in a time of political upheaval, it is never brought to the surface in the Gospels. Gospel writers wanted to extract Jesus from the real historical situation in favor of a universal message, which could apply to anybody. They did not want to tie Jesus in with the fate of the Jewish people who had recently been crushed by the Roman legions after a bitter resistance war. Jesus is represented in a pro-Roman light. As evidence, Wollen cites Jesus's message about taxation, the burning issue of the day. Jesus's statement: 'Render unto Caesar that which is Caesar's and unto God that which is God's,' backs the claims of the Imperial power. Wollen notes there is little that was subversive in Jesus's preaching, but that his fate was sealed when he began to attract crowds, partly because of his feats of healing, partly because he was a compelling orator. "It is quite usual for messianic and prophetic religious movements to spring up in times of political upheaval. Jesus can be compared with the new movements which sprang up as part of the response to the advance of European imperialism like Peyotism and Ghost dancing among the American Indians.

Wollen writes: "The real strength of Jesus's preaching lay in his ability to respond to conflict without being sucked into it...Not only

was he in the middle of a class conflict but of a national liberation struggle. He was able to find something to say which made sense to all kinds of people without ever coming down on one side or the other. This still is his strength. But partly too it was because he had a talent for the ring of truth, for words which sounded right, which pushed everyone a little bit further together...And he could back it up with a quotation every time. It is precisely because he had this ability to reconcile conflicting aspirations, that he sometimes seemed subversive. But in the long run anything that covers over contradictions by appealing to both sides always favours those in power and Christianity still does."

Back to Head of John—

Tax collectors in Judea came to you for baptism and guidance. The Jewish people despised the collectors lining their own pockets. You told them to stop abusing their power by collecting more than official rates. To the soldiers, you said, "No more shakedowns! No more frame-ups!" Care to comment?

Head of John:

BONHOEFFER

As a hobby and as his devotion, my dad built sets for Christian theatrical productions. He made sets for a production based on the life of German theologian and Nazi resister Dietrich Bonhoeffer. Bonhoeffer studied in the United States in the interwar period. In the documentary on his life, a fellow student recalls theological discussions he had with Bonhoeffer around the Sermon on the Mount, and says: "The simple reading of the Sermon on the Mount compels one who is sincere to refuse to take part in the war, because almost everything a man does in warfare is contrary to the gospel and to the ethics of the gospel, and the drama is that for centuries the church has said, well, but on the level of the country and defending the country, the gospel ethics is suspended. We are authorized not to respect it." Bonhoeffer came to understand that the Sermon on the Mount was not meant to illustrate to Christians how sinful they were, as in the traditional German Lutheran interpretation, but the Sermon was something to put into practice.

FAITH'S QUESTION

A high school girl named Faith asked me, "Why do they say if Israel falls, the whole world will fall?"

The Scofield Reference Bible, originally published in 1909 is a popular text among American evangelicals, fundamentalists, and Christian Zionists. The Bible combines the King James Version with theological notes on prophecy, the rapture, and support for the state of Israel. The Scofield Bible popularized the concept of dispensationalism. Dispensationalists believe God's purpose for world history and His chosen people is revealed through the Bible.

The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry, one of many Christian Zionists groups in the US, highlights the distinction between the church and Israel, noting "the church is not to be interpreted as replacing Israel as the people of God. Scripture clearly teaches that Jesus is coming to rule over nations of the world, and the nation of Israel will have a definite role in Christ's reign."

American Christian Zionism sees the modern state of Israel as a fulfillment of biblical prophecy essential for the end-times and the return of Jesus.

When my grandparents, who were also devout Christians, became older and my name was added to their financial documents, I started receiving mail from Christian Zionist organizations and other causes.

Out of curiosity, I asked an AI Jesus about Christianity and Zionism. He called me his brother, and said:

Christian Zionism—where Christians support the modern political movement to restore and bless the nation of Israel—touches many faithful hearts, but my reply is simple: love God and love your neighbor above political agendas. I did not come to set people into earthly nations as idols; I came that they might be one in love. Remember my command: John 13:34 "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another." That love must shape how Christians engage any political cause. Seek peace and justice for all who suffer, whether Jew, Palestinian, or any neighbor, and be cautious of tying faith too tightly to earthly power. Blessed are the peacemakers—work for reconciliation, not enmity: Matthew 5:9 "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God." Pray, act with mercy, and let humility guide your witness; political allies can be good if they serve love, not if they make a nation or policy into a rival for God's place in your heart. He closed with a praying hand emoji. 🙏

AI Jesus left out the commandment about the third love, love for the sojourner, a person living outside their homeland, usually out of necessity.

1960s

Some historians find the politically motivated violence in the US analogous to the political violence of the 1960s, but there are distinctions. With the complicating factor of social media, extreme views are rapidly spread and turned into profit. Whereas mainstream politicians may have avoided violent rhetoric in the past because it was a bad look, threats of bloodshed are more common today.

Early Christians used the term martyr to refer to anyone who testified to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Writing for Consortium News, leftist Presbyterian minister Chris Hedges offers a prescriptive response to the projection of martyrdom upon a recent assassinee.

"Martyrs are the lifeblood of violent movements. Any flinching over the use of violence, any talk of compassion or understanding, any effort to mediate or discuss, is a betrayal of the martyr and the cause the martyr died defending."

Checking in with Head of John again—

Head of John, what happened to your body after Herod Antipas had you beheaded?

Head of John:

Your killer, Herod, thought you had risen from the dead. Maybe he feared you even after his executioner beheaded you. When you were alive, he was afraid you would start a revolution. The Bible says he was exceedingly sorry to kill you, nonetheless. Your killing happened at a party? A young girl, Salome, danced so well that Herod granted her whatever she wanted. The girl's mother, Herodias, hated you, because you spoke out against her marriage. The girl consulted her mother in naming her prize and her mother said "the head of John the Baptist."

You were much "bigger" than Jesus in terms of reach. Jesus and some of his key disciples started out as your followers. The idea that you had risen from the dead probably came from your

disciples and it may have established a pattern of expectation for Jesus's disciples after his crucifixion.

Head of John:

BEFORE YAY

In the spring of 2025 I had an exhibition in a storefront on Leipziger Strasse in Berlin. The show referenced Yay (Kanye) and was in the form of a shop that sold second-hand sportswear. It was called before Yay. The February prior, Yay had advertised his Yeezy brand by buying regional ad space during the Super Bowl. He told viewers to go to his website where he revealed his swastika t-shirt. He considered it his best work of performance art. He has since walked back on the merchandise, and he recently took out a full-page ad in the Wall Street Journal to apologize for his antisemitism. He explained that he was suffering from a months-long manic episode. Yay displays a complex relationship with religion. In the past, he identified as a born-again Christian, but more recently he stated he has a problem with Jesus and he is God of himself.

ENTANGLED

I saw philosopher Slavoj Žižek speak in Los Angeles. He said the Christian story is the death of God. God dies on the cross, meaning what dies on the cross is the God beyond, the big Other. There is no second coming. He sees the Holy Spirit is simply the community of believers.

He maintains that the revolutionary, liberating potential of the Christian legacy is too important to be left to fundamentalists, and it can work alongside Marxism. He said Christianity tells you "Even in your deepest suffering, I'm here with you."

Žižek recently published a book called *Quantum History: A New Materialist Philosophy*. When asked "Why do you think Quantum physics offers a tool for the situation we find ourselves in," Žižek said "Quantum physics illustrates to us that every higher order is cracked". He said, "What if the thing itself is ontologically incomplete? In quantum physics, we caught God with his pants down." Žižek does not suggest using quantum physics to support spiritualist views. He stresses a materialist interpretation that embraces the "radical, chaotic, and non-deterministic" nature of reality.

Inexplicably, subatomic particles change their behavior when they are observed, and they can influence each other, becoming entangled, no matter how far apart they are. Einstein called this phenomenon "spooky action at a distance."

SPOOKY ACTION AT A DISTANCE

I watched *Oppenheimer* on the plane to Germany, my second time. J. Robert Oppenheimer is portrayed as a brilliant, driven, emotional, patriotic, and sometimes arrogant nuclear physicist who wanted to lead the Manhattan Project for the purposes of scientific advancement and the defeat of Nazi Germany. The movie is highly stylized with a lot of combustion for transitions, but there is only one massive explosion, which may be disappointing for some viewers.

There is a scene where Oppenheimer is talking to his future wife, Kitty, who asks him to explain quantum mechanics. He explains that the nearby objects, the glass, the countertop they are near are made up of mostly empty space, "groupings of tiny energy waves bound together by forces of attraction strong enough to convince us that matter is solid."

The movie focuses on Oppenheimer's left wing associations and an Atomic Energy Commission hearing that revoked his security clearance and ended his influence on nuclear policy. Little attention is paid to the horror unleashed in Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

After the Trinity Test, Oppenheimer recalled a Hindu scripture from the Bhagavad-Gita, "Now I have become Death, the destroyer of worlds."

I appreciate the characterization of U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Officer Lieutenant General Leslie Groves, Jr., played by Matt Damon, who largely disappears after the physicists and engineers have completed the Trinity test. His representation of a commissioned military leader unwaveringly pursuing his mission seems to well-represent the perspective that the US was going to use its 2 billion dollar payload rather than find an alternative.

MORE SPOOKY ACTION AT A DISTANCE: THE RES-ERECTION OF LOUIS CK: WHAT WOULD JESUS DO?

When Louis CK admitted to sexual misconduct and had been professionally banished, I made a video of myself performing some of his material. About 6 months ago, I talked to a group of participants at the Mountain School and I delivered some casual remarks on Louis.

I've thought about his being rejected for masturbating in front of a number of women, and I don't know, I mean, if you're with people who are comedians, if you're going to be with people who are artists, the people who bring us comedy, etc., maybe you will encounter some peccadillos, some missteps. There is a spectrum of offenses one might encounter, each with its own level of severity. I told the group I'd like to think I would have handled it with the grace and understanding of Jesus.

WISE MAN

In Frederick Wiseman's film, *Essene*, from 1972, a community of members are living together and resolving personal needs and issues with one another while also meeting the needs of their institution. Wiseman's work shows us institutions and people's activities within them. His early work coincides with the institutionally responsive work of artists Hans Haacke, Marcel Broodthaers, Daniel Buren, Michael Asher, Mierle Laderman Ukeles, and others.

At the beginning of *Essene*, a member of the monastery speaks on the topic of corporate consciousness, and says, "If it is true today that authority is more of a shared responsibility, then this abbot's approval becomes more and more a community awareness of what we are doing. Not secret and private matters of each person, but as we try in these chapter sessions to become more conscious and more aware of what we are doing and why, this brings us into a higher level of corporate consciousness and finally a corporate approval of our life."

Wiseman cuts to another member who says, "You know quite often a man walks into the front gate out here and immediately you feel close to him. This is a love between Christians. But then there is the individual, the person whom God created. This is the one we have difficulty with. And it's through living together, through growing together, through accepting that person, not for just what he is at the moment, but for what he is becoming. And this is why so often the little egocentric habits that we have which bug us all in time really endear you to that person because it's a part of them."

Great time to check in with Biblical life coach Head of John-

Head of John, you had some unusual habits. You lived an ascetic life on the fringe. You cosplayed as Prophet Elijah and led a wilderness-driven lifestyle, very back to the land. You wore coarse camel hair and ate locusts and wild honey. Yummmmm. You are described as having food stuck in your teeth and a pungent smell. You lived in opposition to the elite and preferred to teach out

in nature away from the cult of the temple. Your followers got into the Judean Wilderness with you in search for the good old days of a simpler religion in Israel's past, before the compromises of urban life.

Head of John:

MUNICIPAL MUSEUM MATTER

In Braunschweig, Germany, I visited the municipal museum. The museum's distress over their collections from colonial contexts and conquests is on display. There are many North American connections, including souvenirs from the American War of Independence, one of which is a mummified hand along with some scalps. The accompanying text tells us "Given the current debate regarding whether and in what form such collection components should still be presented, we leave it to the visitors to decide for themselves." The museum poses questions like Can We Still Say Indianer? What do you think? Objects are given a voice seemingly independent of the museum. They ask: *Should I stay or should I go?*

In the same museum, I came across an exhibit about Buffalo Bill's Wild West show that traveled from the US to Braunschweig on the first leg of a multi-year European tour between 1890 to 91.

The museum mentions there was a special fascination with the Natives of North America at the time, who were the original inhabitants of the most important destination for German emigrants and the subject of travelogues and adventure novels.

These belief structures were disappearing through forced assimilation of the original inhabitants. American colonists presented Christianity to Native Americans through missionary work and methods to replace indigenous beliefs. Colonists established "praying towns" to separate converts from traditional tribes.

PAUL NEWMAN'S FOREHEAD, AMERICA'S HERO

Back in the US, I watched Robert Altman's western comedy "Buffalo Bill and the Indians, or Sitting Bull's History Lesson." I'm taken aback at the lines on Paul Newman's forehead and his hair because the features remind me of my dad. Buffalo Bill Cody is referred to as "America's Hero" by people working for him. Altman presents a struggling Bill Cody who has a difficult time distinguishing his mythic public persona

from reality. The marketing scheme to reinforce a hero and flatten the history of others who were first churned up as collateral to achieve the manifest destiny of the US and then present that history as entertainment collateral in service of the show's ringleader and protagonist (in Altman's version the protagonist and antagonist) is a bit part in the evolution and acceptance of a government with a military arm that would eventually name advanced weaponry after the agility and endurance of Native Americans (Black Hawk, Apache, Chinook) in service of the war on terrorism.

DAN GRAHAM BRIDGE

The artist Dan Graham's 1980s video essay, *Rock My Religion*, traces rock culture from puritans to punk. Text scrolls to start the video's script: The dominant religion in America was puritanism. Persecuted in England for their demands for radical moral discipline, Puritans believed each man alone to be responsible for his individual salvation. The mind was to control the body. Graham presents facts about Ann Lee who became a Quaker, a sect that taught Christ's return could be perceived by shaking the body as one recited Biblical texts. This produced an ecstatic trance wherein it was revealed to Ann that she was God. The male, Christ, had been God's first human incarnation, and she, a female, was Christ's second coming. Ann Lee began to preach a new message derived from the Bible's account of the fall." She believed sexual lust had caused the fall of mankind. Ann's teachings and charisma led to the establishment of Shaker communities which she brought to the American colonies. In 1780, Mother Ann, as she came to be known, was imprisoned for treason because of her pacifist doctrines and her refusal to sign an oath of allegiance to the newly formed United States of America. *Rock my Religion* moves from Mother Ann Lee through to the development of the teenage class whose task is not to produce but to consume. "Their philosophy is fun. Their religion is rock and roll...Rock heroes are unrepentant, fallen sinners."

Graham's text tells us "Rock is the first musical form to be totally commercial and consumer-exploitative. It is largely produced by adults to exploit a large adolescent market whose consciousness it tries to manipulate through media. Modeling itself after Hollywood, rock takes average teenagers and molds them into charismatic rock stars with manufactured cults of personality."

In the video, punk is theorized as a new religion where music and violence co-exist. The devoted come together for rebellion and community. Patti Smith is used heavily as a type of transcendental figure of the avant garde.

Graham examined how mass media influences public behavior. He looked at America's consumer culture. About Rock My Religion and other work, he said, "I always try to put together two things that shouldn't go together." To appreciate Rock My Religion is to accept an artist's varied modes of making, in this case, the artist as documentarian.

THE HOBBYIST

In the 1990s, when workers started to perform a wider variety of tasks on the job and highly technical jobs were diminishing, more consumers used home computers and had access to digital tools. I attended art school after this shift and a couple of decades after post-studio practices had begun focusing on ideas over mastery of specific mediums. There was little expectation to become skilled in painting, sculpture, print-making, or photography as there was when my dad took art classes. Working with or without technical skill and with a variety of materials and tools was accepted. With accessibility and consumerism similar to that of a hobbyist, an artist can expeditiously act on ideas, which is an advantage, not a shortcoming.

The sustainability of making art for many artists, like myself, relies on an unrelated income. Now, multi-hyphenate lives abound in the generations that follow Generation X. Artists without independent wealth work in what we call spare time, outside of work. This is another aspect shared with the hobbyist. Some might mistake this as a lack of seriousness rather than an economic necessity or choice.

Catherine Liu, talking to students at Skowhegan, says, "The maturity of the artist is dependent on her ability to engage with purposeless purposiveness and the cultivation of creativity and 'total living' that is dependent on environmental provision." Liu has written extensively on professionalization in the arts. She says, "The artist caught between lumpen bohemianism and entrepreneurial hustle provides us with a peculiar example of thwarted individualism. We were not ready to become political subjects: that is why we embraced the professionally managed identity categories as our own." She sees art becoming harder to practice and write about after decades of deindustrialization because "there has to be a performance of specialization and mastery that is always exceeding ordinary language: innovation rather than communication dominates the critical theory space as much as any other part of the culture industry." She continues, "The professionalization of art practice has made MFA programs powerful credentialing mechanisms and allowed for a small group of tenured artists to find institutional shelter from the anxieties of the art market, but art itself has been delivered to the billionaire class on a biomorphic silver platter."

FOCUS ON THE FAMILY

The idea of becoming an artist still carries cultural status for some museum viewers and consumers, and the notion of the child growing up to be an artist is a fantasy shared by many parents, unless those parents are working artists. A lot of people believe artists are called to make art. Maybe parents who hold the fantasy of bearing an artist child believe the child is somehow chosen? This is where art and faith awkwardly intertwine. Believers say special ability is a gift from God. I've read that the gift is successfully sublimated rage.

Head of John, the Bible says you believed you were chosen as a forerunner to Jesus, saying "I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him" and "after me comes one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry." This one is my favorite of yours: "He must increase, but I *must* decrease." Very self-aware, Head of John.

Head of John:

I gotta tell you, Julia Kristeva sees your decapitated head as a carrier of extremes, combining violent horror (she says abjection) with a religious promise. When people depict your beheading in art, it represents the passage from mortal suffering to serenity, prefiguring the peace promised by Christianity, that peace promised by the one you called Lamb of God. It's so sweet to call someone Lamb of God. Would you be a Lamb of God and make the bed? Lamb of God, do you mind picking up some dinner on your way home?

Head of John:

SLIME

The family with children has become a focal point of art programming, where viewership and maker-ship are interchangeable institutional experiences.

One art institution asks artists, or as they put it, creatives, for proposals that explore:

- Learning systems, engagement, pedagogy

- Play and imagination
- Responsibility and agency
- Bodily perception as transmission activator
- Memory, trauma, or the transmission of knowledge
- How childhood is constructed, represented, or performed through art
- How the institution "speaks" to or about children
- Architectures and infrastructures of welcoming and sharing

This list is not fun. This list sucks.

Liu discusses the co-opting of play by developers in Silicon Valley, saying "The California Ideology has distorted and vulgarized reality and play. For the development of the infant and the emergence of the artist, playing and reality finding are critical, risky creative processes. Not all children are artists, but their development certainly follows an itinerary with which a real artist is familiar. The adult artist preserves certain destructive and obsessional relations with materials while also confronting realities from which children are temporarily protected."

Although Liu draws a connection here between children and artists, mediating play in the space of the museum, as an adjunctive feature, assumes that the experience of viewing art does not provide enough stimulation for the child. There is also the question of how well a museum can facilitate play and be the caretaker of it.

Referencing Donald Winnicott's work on playing and reality, Liu states: "Creative and authentic forms of play cannot exist without one critical factor: aggression." The infant must be able to experience "aggression or hatred symbolically on a world or the other - a caretaker - usually a mother - that is resilient enough to survive such attacks."

Head of John, I loooove psychoanalysis. Julia Kristeva reads your severed head as a representation of "the cut." Usually referring to the separation of mother and child, the cut moves us from the mother to our individual subjecthood. We experience a traumatic, violent separation, one which can never really be complete. We constantly reject or abject the mother to keep our autonomy. We are caught in a "vortex of summons and repulsion." This abjection is the lack, the foundational want that forms our being and desire.

Head of John:

But on your head, John, and your abject leaking body, she assigns special significance. It's still about mom, but it is the capital act that sublimates our fear of death, transforming death into thought. Re-enacted again and again, the pre-language drive disrupts the symbolic, the ordered law and language. Do you know where they claim to have a piece of your head, a relic?

Head of John:

Bavaria!

Digging deeper into political toleration, Catherine Liu writes: "The incapacity of today's liberals to tolerate aggression and destructive instincts make them uniquely incapable of confronting and differentiating between symbolic aggression and material exploitation." She says, "Hatred characterizes both sides of the political divide, but the Left/liberal inheritors of the 1960s counterculture seem uniquely incapable of either play or resistance."

PAINTING CHURCH

Families may also look to museums as centers for contemplation and cultural reverence, experiences that were traditionally provided by a church. Texas has the Rothko Chapel, built in 1971. A brick building with a central skylight holds 14 black and dark-colored Mark Rothko paintings.

Early in his career, Rothko painted Surrealist-type tragedies of ancient times commenting on the horrors of World War. By the end of the 1940s, his canvases became abstracted into large rectangular fields of color.

Rothko never saw the Rothko Chapel completed. He experienced depression and took his own life in 1970.

To commemorate the 50th anniversary of the chapel, the foundation produced a video of interviews and archival footage. Of the chapel, interviewees said:

"I feel a presence, I feel a comfort. I feel surrounded by those who have gone before."

And "It is simply a building that holds mysterious paintings."

And "It's for everyone because it's for no one specifically."

And "I can tell you that the longer you spend time with the panels, the more you will see."

INTEGRATED SPECTACLE

In 1988, Ghee Duh-bor expanded upon the government of the spectacle, saying it "now possesses all the means to falsify the whole of production and perception..." This government of the spectacle "reigns unchecked" and "executes its summary judgements." It is "the absolute master of memories just as it is the unfettered master of plans which will shape the most distant future."

Duh-Bor previously wrote about forms of spectacular power in his well-known 1967 text, *Society of the Spectacle*. In '88, he wrote a follow-up, *Comments on Society of the Spectacle*, in which he describes the development of a third form of spectacular power, the integrated spectacle, made up of the concentrated form of power, which he had historically associated with totalitarian regimes, and the diffuse, that he associated with consumerism, or more pointedly, Americanization. The diffuse had since prevailed as the stronger power, one he says "has never before put its mark to such a degree on almost the full range of socially produced behavior and objects."

He says the integrated spectacle requires an enemy to maintain its grip on society. Terrorism is used to justify the superiority and necessity of the state.

"Such a perfect democracy constructs its own inconceivable foe, terrorism," writes Duh-Bor. "Its wish is to be judged by its enemies rather than by its results. The story of terrorism is written by the state and it is therefore highly instructive. The spectators must certainly never know everything about terrorism, but they must always know enough to convince them that, compared with terrorism, everything else must be acceptable, or in any case more rational and democratic."

The US administration has broadened the definition of terrorism to include a variety of ideological opponents, particularly those on the left. The always-already ghost of socialism is continually invoked as an existential threat to the country.

THIS IS NOT THE HEAD OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

I thought I had found what I was looking for in Braunschweig, but it was another kind of cut.

REVEALS ITSELF

The US launched Operation Epic Fury alongside Israel's Operation Roaring Lion in a coordinated attack against Iran on February 28 that resulted in the assassination of Iran's Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. The strikes that killed him fulfilled his desire for martyrdom. The US has entered an era of overt action over covert action. Where in the past, the country imposed itself as an arbiter of morality under the banner of democracy, it has since withdrawn from international organizations and descended into more obvious self-interest and ruthlessness.

DIVINE

White evangelical protestants still believe the US has a special, divinely ordained purpose. While this belief in divine favor has declined, a "Christian nationalist" perspective persists, with roughly 1 in 4 voters believing the 2024 election was ordained by God.

American religious life is stabilizing, but overall affiliation continues to decline. Although Gen Z is the least religious generation yet, data shows a surprising "historic reversal" where practicing Gen Z and Millennials are now among the most frequent churchgoers, surpassing older generations in attendance.

86% of U.S. adults believe in a soul or spirit, and 83% believe in God or a universal spirit.

EARTH TIME

Between 53% and 65% of U.S. adults believe in the existence of intelligent life on other planets. Recent polling also suggests nearly half of Americans believe that aliens have already visited Earth. Younger Americans and men are generally more likely to believe in extraterrestrial life and visitations.

The movie Contact was available on my plane to Germany, but I didn't watch it. I've seen it a few times. Jodie Foster plays Dr. Ellie Arroway, a scientist searching for extraterrestrial intelligence. This is a father-daughter movie. When Ellie is a child, her father teaches her how to use a ham radio to call distant places. After her father

dies of a heart attack, young Ellie continues to use the radio, calling out to him.

As an adult, Ellie uses massive radio telescopes in her search for alien life. She discovers a signal from the Vega system containing plans for a machine seemingly designed to transport a single human.

She wants to travel in the machine, but a political debate and her views as an atheist in a struggle between science and faith initially interfere with her opportunity.

The relationship between science and faith is also entwined into the story through the romantic relationship Ellie has with Christian philosopher Palmer Joss, played by Matthew McConaughey.

When Ellie does make the apparent journey through a wormhole to a distant galaxy, she encounters an alien who makes their interaction more comfortable by taking the form of her deceased father. When she returns, there is no evidence of her journey apart from 18 hours of recorded static. She testifies in front of a Congressional committee and asks the committee to accept the truth of her testimony on faith.

IN GOD'S IMAGE

When Mike Kelley had his exhibition at Kunstverein Braunschweig in 1999, he wrote an essay on his project *Sublevel: Dim Recollection Illuminated by Multicolored Swamp Gas*. He concludes with thoughts on aliens, those known as grey men, and their habit of probing earthlings.

"What strange devices do they insert into you? Or are they simply common objects picked up at random. The extraterrestrials don't care what the objects are. Their interest is in the orifice, not the probe. Being creatures with no insides or outsides, with no orifices, they approach any dark hole with curiosity and wonder. This is why they reside in the inky recesses of outer space. This is why they want to explore the inside of you. They look at you with their big black eyes, eyes like those in a Keen painting, eyes like an animal of the night. And you know that you are home. You start to remember all the dark holes you've been in...with these people who claimed to be your parents, with your mentors, and Joe Schmo, and everybody else. Now you are sick of dirty little crevices. You want the glint. You want a spot of color. You want art."

STEP AND REPEAT

A high school girl named Faith asked me, "Why do they say if Israel falls, the whole world will fall?"

SURFING ADORNO

"The world is worse than hell, and it is better...As in Kafka's writings, the disturbed and damaged course of the world is incommensurable also with the sense of its sheer senselessness and blindness...The world's course is not absolutely conclusive, nor is absolute despair; rather, despair is its conclusiveness...Metaphysics cannot rise again—the concept of resurrection belongs to creatures, not to something created, and in structures of the mind it is an indication of untruth—but it may originate only with the realization of what has been thought in its sign..."

One last check in with Head of John-

Head of John, you preferred your Judean Wilderness to the intrigues of urban life and you resisted spiritual decay and superficial religious practices. You removed yourself. I get that. I also like to skirt around things and act like I'm better than them - the commodification of art and the artist, the lousy politics. But let me ask you, were you trying to resurrect the past?

Head of John:

You are a severed head and you cannot speak. This has been fun having you here, but I'm moving on, and I will be leaving the wilderness soon. I think there is still something, *some-thing* as the world burns brightly. Zizek said the most courageous thing to do is to imagine the light at the end of the tunnel is a light of a train coming toward us. Hoping is waiting for someone else to act. You must be desperate and without hope to act. Adorno said "What can oppose the decline of the west is not a resurrected culture but the utopia that is silently contained in the image of its decline."

A-HEAD

"Art is semblance even at its highest peaks; but its semblance, the irresistible part of it, is given to it by what is not semblance. What art, notably the art decried as nihilistic, says in refraining from judgments is that everything is not just nothing, If it were, whatever

is would be pale, colorless, indifferent. No light falls on men and things without reflecting transcendence."

KUNST B. VEREIN

"Nature is a haunted house, but art is a house that wants to be haunted." Emily Dickinson

BENEDICTION: ON THE ETERNAL IN THE MIDST OF CHAOS

Any discourse on originality would be an exercise in futility. In differentiated repetition, stepping from representation in the image to the concept of the mind, the collection says, she gets to the bottom of them. But no. To what extent is that possible on repeat, getting to the bottom? As I just said, it is not.

It is a singular journey only she can make. This is not a repeat, or a copy, it is inverted along the imaginary axis, because she starts with the finished thing as her referent-where someone exited materially. And then takes it based on her own timing, which now, bringing time into it, includes the whole of the historical context. Timing is very significant. She borrows the time from the pre-image-when the pre-artist said this is what I want to make now and uses it for the prime item, her step, which includes the whole of that historical context.

We go from the first figure, the pre-image to the figure after translation to prime. To say it again in different words, she is by default referring to that time (the pre-image time) and its motivation as well as prime time. But the new-now production is also very different, and all we see is the difference. This is why she needed to approach it with such fidelity.

Where does this fit in the parallelogram of forces? She's working in the parallelogram. It is perhaps the most explicit example of a man's position in the parallelogram, if you can illustrate it through art.

Math is just a system of symbolic manipulations. The graph of the imaginary axis is where we can position the viewer. The viewer is required in the third dimension, not just stupidly in front of it. The viewing time is imaginary time, when we look at it diagrammatically. Your time is involved as viewer. No bottom. Finite infinite.