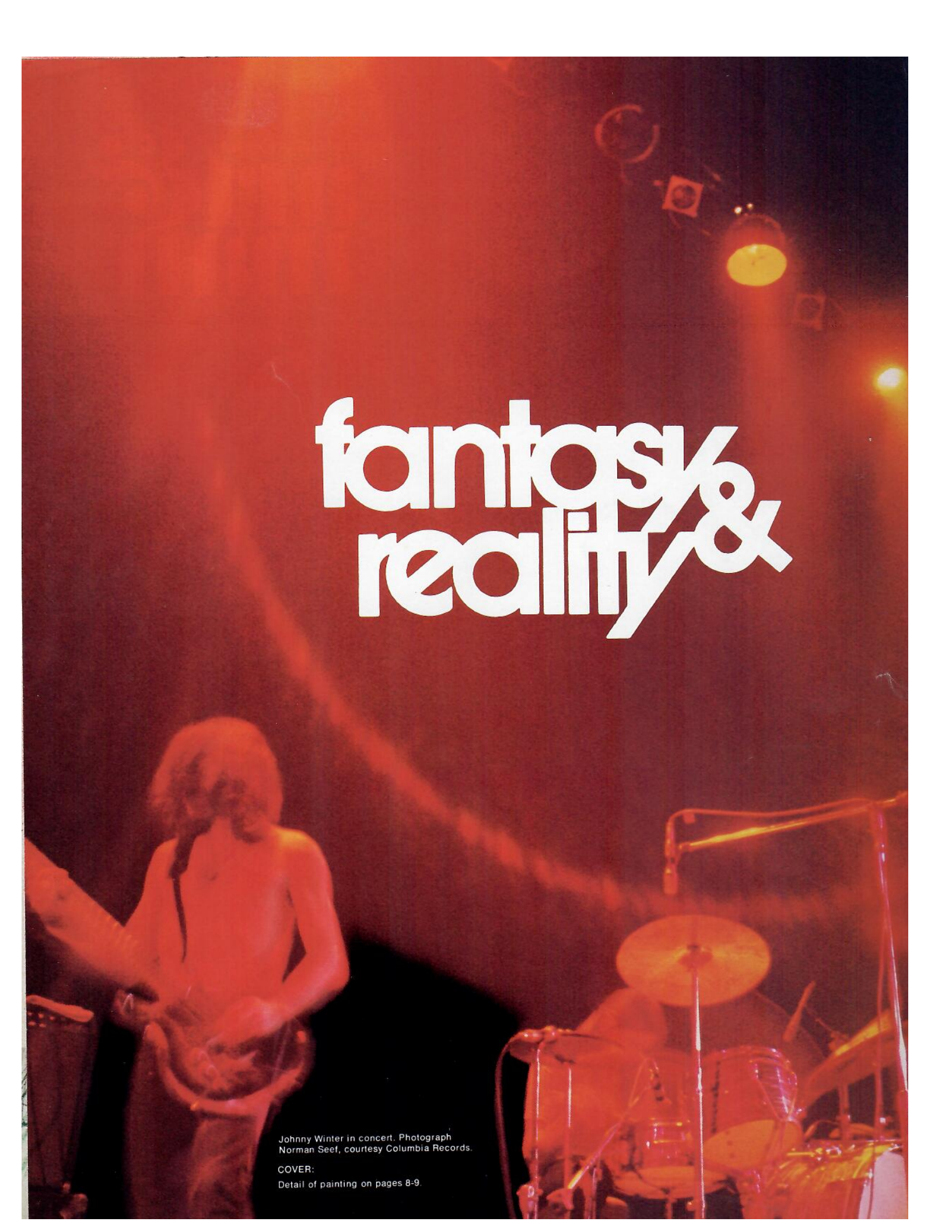


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art & man

fantasy





fantasy & reality &

Johnny Winter in concert. Photograph
Norman Seef, courtesy Columbia Records.

COVER:
Detail of painting on pages 8-9.

Picture yourself in a boat by the river
With tangerine trees and marmalade skies.
Somebody calls you, you answer quite slowly
A girl with kaleidoscope eyes.
Cellophane flowers of yellow and green
Towering over your head,
Look for the girl with the sun in her eyes
And she's gone.
Lucy in the sky with diamonds...
Lucy in the sky with diamonds...

Copyright © 1967 Northern Songs Limited. All rights reserved.
Used by permission. "Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds," by
John Lennon and Paul McCartney.

"People came up and said cunningly, 'Right, I get it, LSD,' but we never thought about it. What happened was that John's son Julian did a drawing at school and brought it home, and he has a schoolmate named Lucy. John said, 'What's that?' and he said, 'Lucy in the sky with diamonds.'"

—Paul McCartney

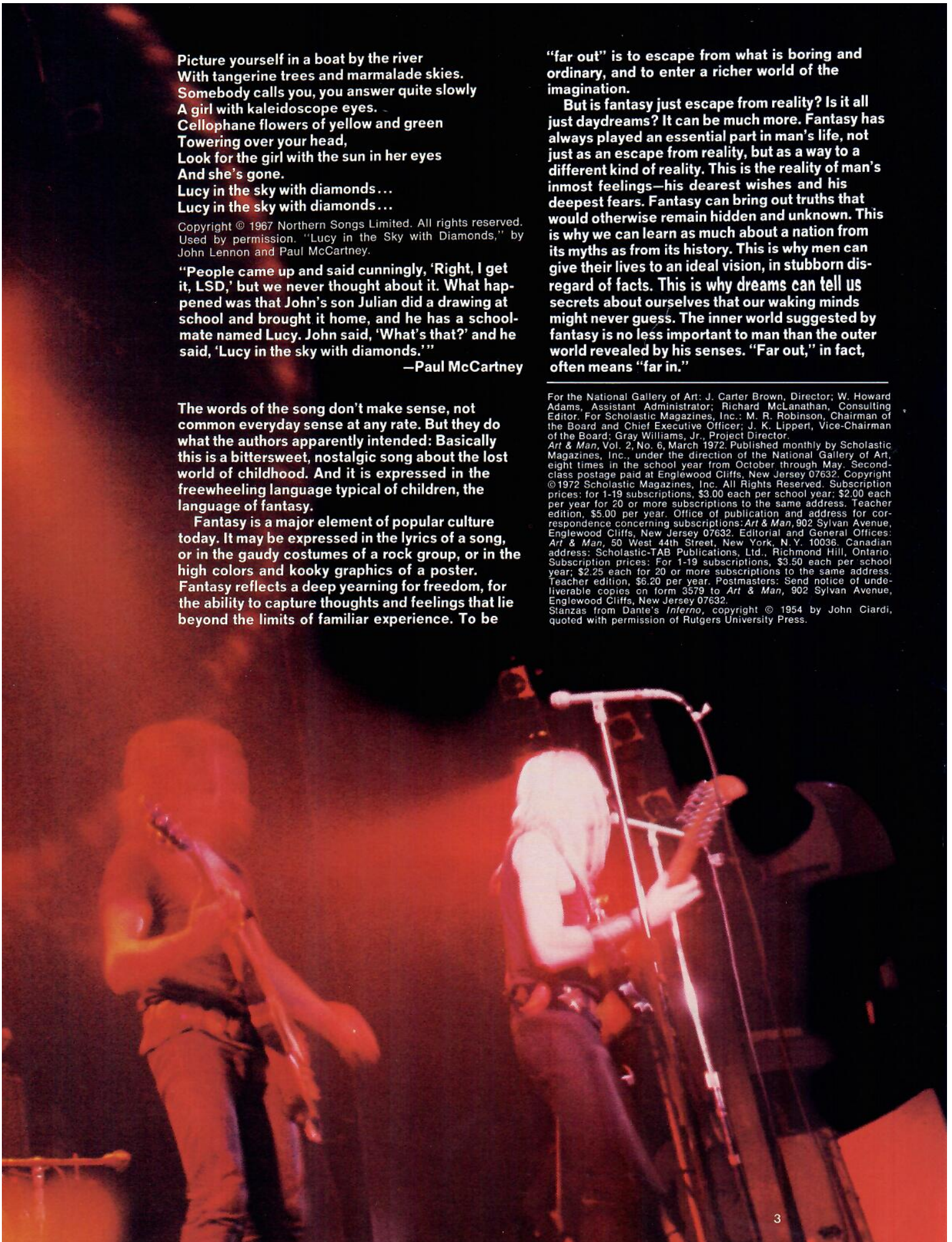
The words of the song don't make sense, not common everyday sense at any rate. But they do what the authors apparently intended: Basically this is a bittersweet, nostalgic song about the lost world of childhood. And it is expressed in the freewheeling language typical of children, the language of fantasy.

Fantasy is a major element of popular culture today. It may be expressed in the lyrics of a song, or in the gaudy costumes of a rock group, or in the high colors and kooky graphics of a poster. Fantasy reflects a deep yearning for freedom, for the ability to capture thoughts and feelings that lie beyond the limits of familiar experience. To be

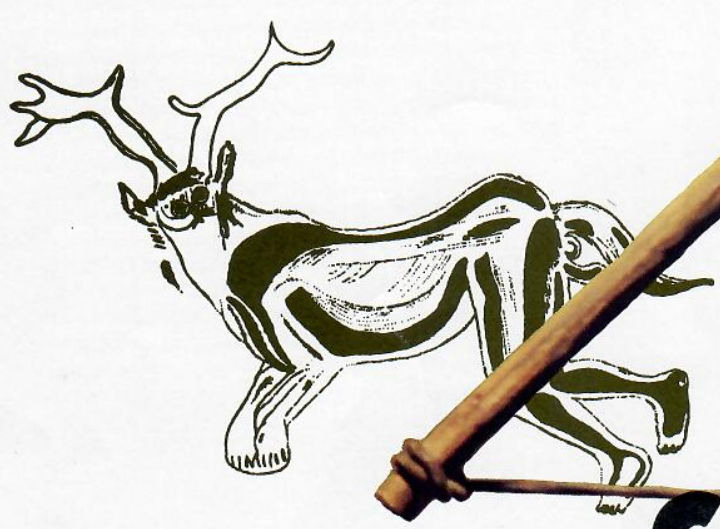
"far out" is to escape from what is boring and ordinary, and to enter a richer world of the imagination.

But is fantasy just escape from reality? Is it all just daydreams? It can be much more. Fantasy has always played an essential part in man's life, not just as an escape from reality, but as a way to a different kind of reality. This is the reality of man's inmost feelings—his dearest wishes and his deepest fears. Fantasy can bring out truths that would otherwise remain hidden and unknown. This is why we can learn as much about a nation from its myths as from its history. This is why men can give their lives to an ideal vision, in stubborn disregard of facts. This is why dreams can tell us secrets about ourselves that our waking minds might never guess. The inner world suggested by fantasy is no less important to man than the outer world revealed by his senses. "Far out," in fact, often means "far in."

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shamans



Spirits & Masks

On the wall of a cave in southern France is a faint drawing (reproduced twice above), which is well over 10,000 years old. It shows a weird, staring figure of a man, dressed in skins and wearing the antlers of a deer. His arms are partly raised, and his legs are bent—clearly he is dancing. It is generally agreed that he is a shaman, or medicine man, engaged in a magic dance to bring success to the hunters of his tribe. Taking on the form of a deer, he became a deer, spirits of the living animals.

For as long, apparently, and thus gained power over the fantasy has been central, as man has been able to think, important in primitive societies, where man is especially by natural in hunting or battle, and to give him comes to rely on invisible spirit helpers, to protect him greater dangers he can't control or understand. He form in a dreamlike trance, and then carved it as his personal emblem. He believed it brought him powers from the supernatural world, whereas we might think it simply helped him summon up his own inner strengths. But we carry a rabbit's foot or more enlightened, so long as we need him superior to the door, or watch our step on Friday the 13th. As any shaman can tell you, charms work—and only work—if you believe in them.

PAGE 4:

Copy of drawing from Trois Frères cave, southern France, before 10,000 B.C.

LEFT:

Eskimo mask, Lower Yukon, Louisa Museum of Anthropology, University of California, Berkeley.



"a famish'd eagle raging in the vast ex



In the sooty midst of England's Industrial Revolution, William Blake, poet, painter, and printer by trade, unleashed the "wild furies" of his art against the materialism of the new machine age. What inspired this sublime revolutionary? He looked around. He saw people brutally exploited in the "dark satanic mills" of the new factory system, and many other impoverished casualties of so-called human progress. Blake was so incensed by these abuses that he became a recluse from society, calling himself "mad, as a refuge from unbelief." His soul became an altar for a marriage of Love and Rage. Its offspring was an imagination that soared "like a famish'd eagle raging in the vast expanse."

Of the many literary works Blake illustrated, the visionary books of the Bible were among his favorites. In an illustration for Revelation (left), the dragon, or Satan, is shown hovering above the woman clothed with the sun, about to devour her child as it is born. In the ensuing Bible passage, there is a great battle in heaven. The dragon is beaten and cast down to earth, and the woman gives birth to a Savior. For Blake, the dragon symbolized the devilish "spectre" of materialism, which manacled man's imagination and destroyed his liberty. The woman was for him the opposing force of imagination and inspiration.

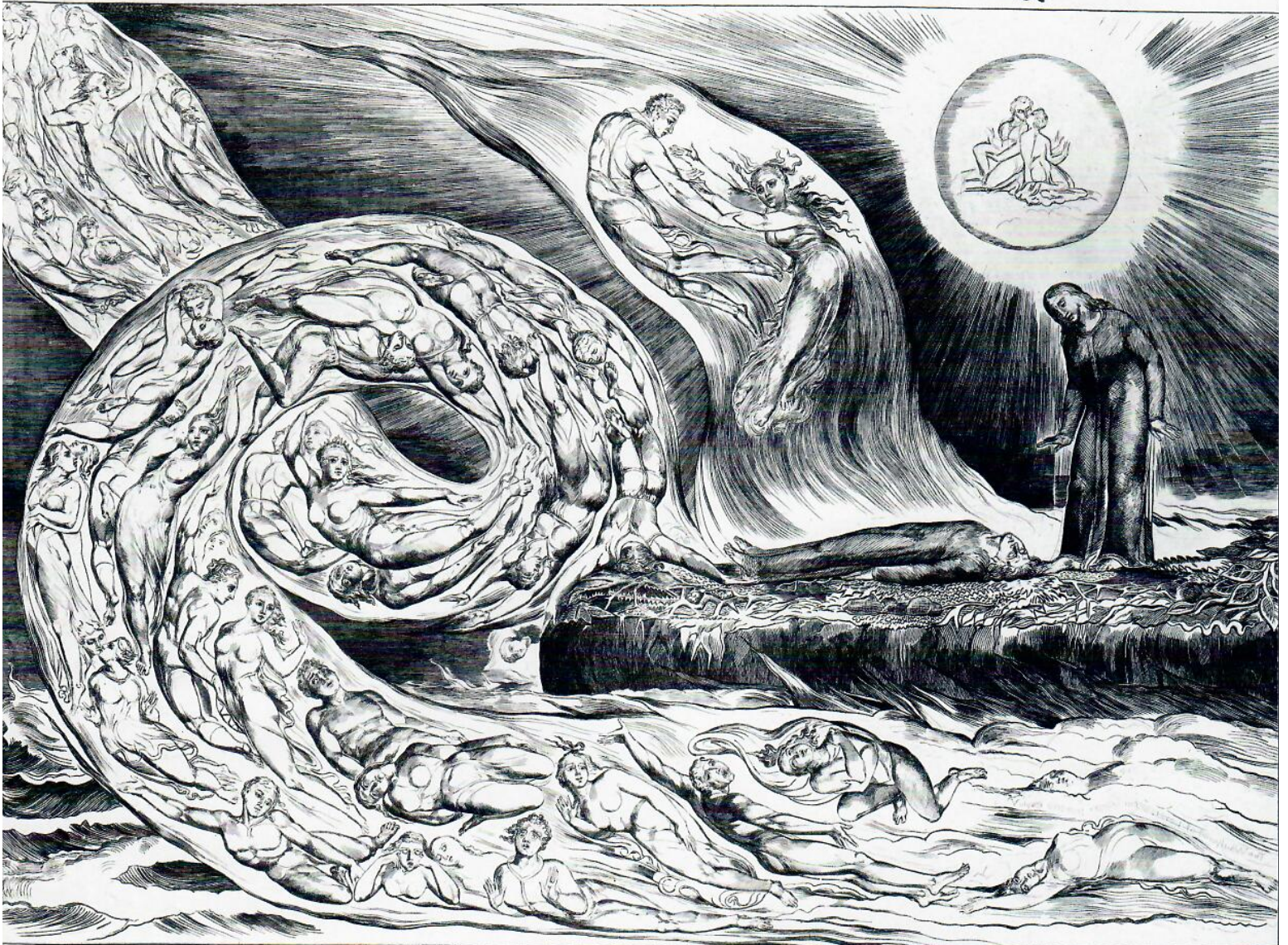
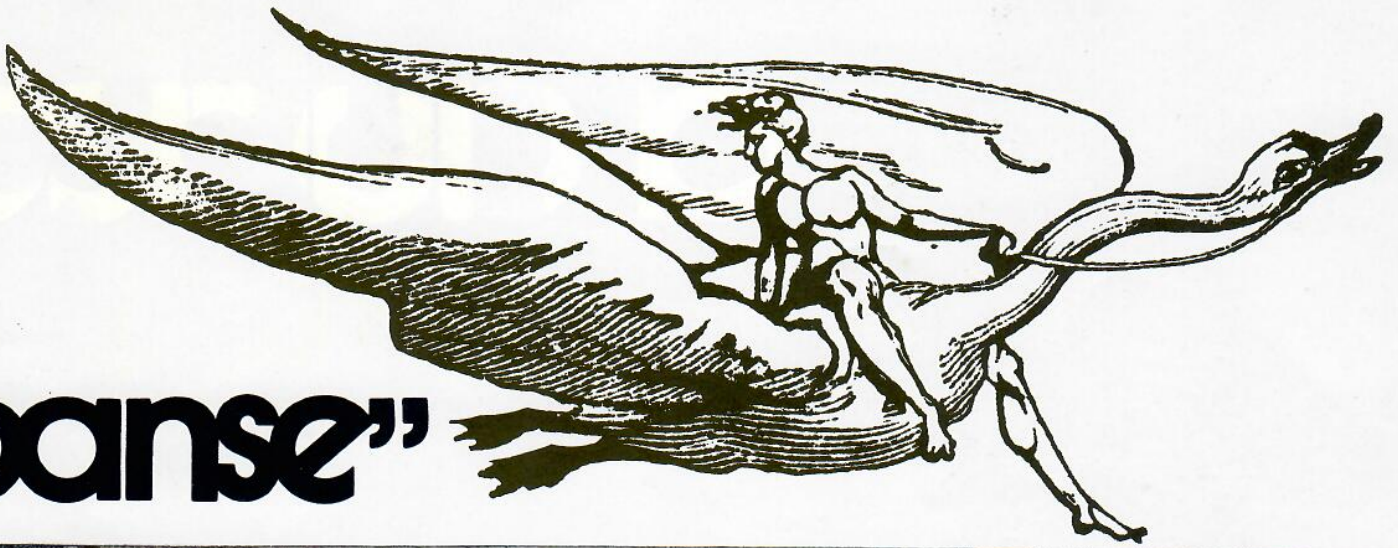
Blake also illustrated many scenes from Dante's *Inferno*. But his own ideas of evil were quite different. He showed where his sympathies lay in his dynamic vision of the story of Paolo and Francesca. Dante is shown in a dead faint, while the lovers, who have sown the wind with their passion, reap the whirlwind and steal the show.

And there appeared a great wonder in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown with twelve stars.

...And behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads.

The Book of Revelation

panse”



ABOVE:

William Blake (1757-1827). *Illustration for Dante's "The Whirlwind of Lovers."* National Gallery of Art, Rosenwald Collection.

LEFT:

William Blake (1757-1827). *The Great Red Dragon and the Woman Clothed with the Sun.* National Gallery of Art, Rosenwald Collection.

And this, I learned, was the never-ending flight of those who sinned in the flesh, the carnal and lusty, who betrayed reason to their appetite.

As cranes go over sounding their harsh cry, leaving the long streak of their flight in air, so come these spirits, wailing as they fly.

Dante, *Inferno*, translated by John Ciardi

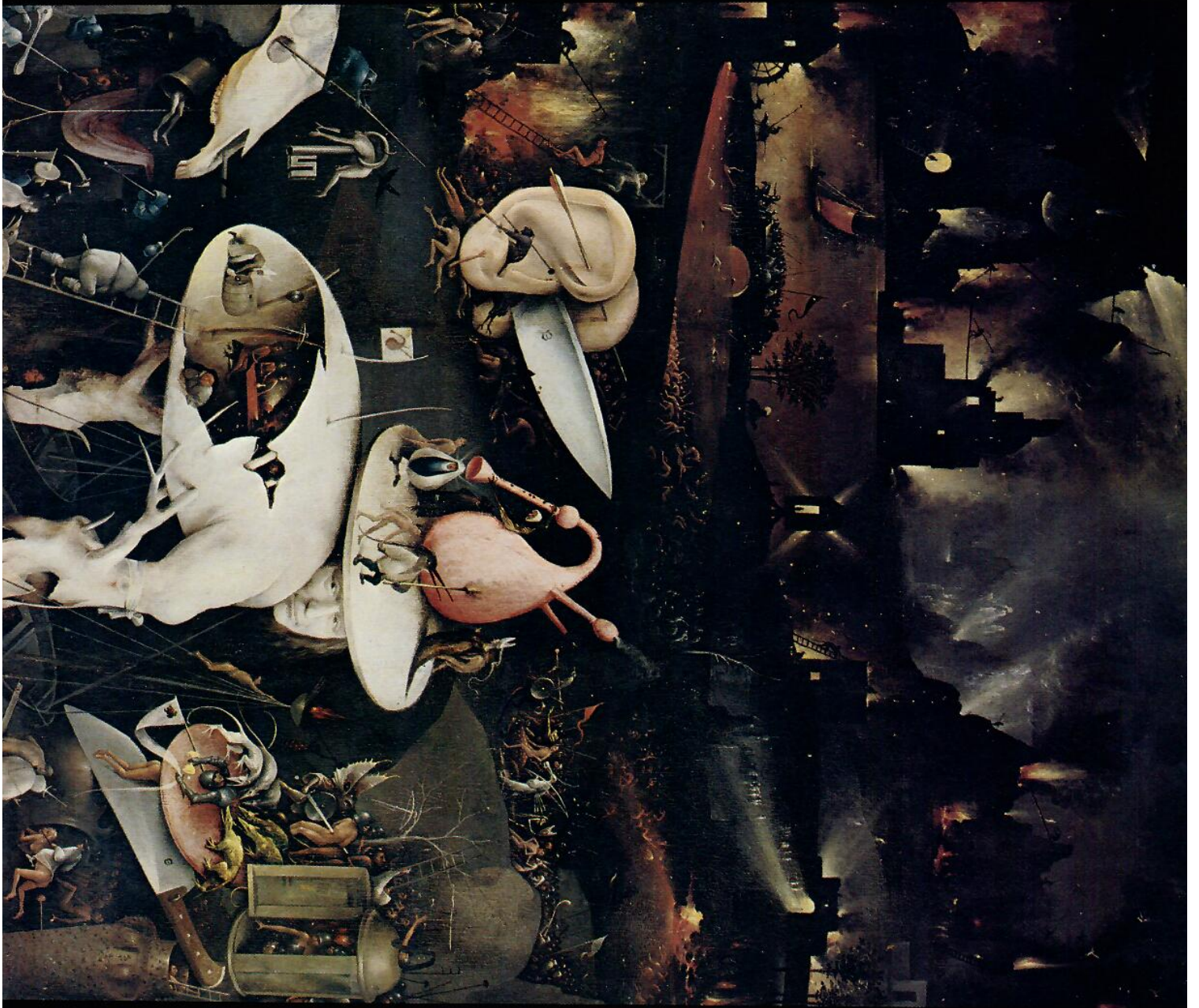
a guided



several times with gloomy relish. The version shown here is a virtual carnival of tortures. It is so densely packed that it offers the eye no rest. The center, for example (see detail on cover), features the huge trunk of a man—a real trunk, with arm branches ending in rocking sailboats: Inside, a demonic party is in progress, while on the head is a platter surmounted by a fat bagpipe. To the left a monstrous knife rolls by, mounted like a cannon between giant ears. All around,imps cavort, and naked sinners ingeniously suffer.

But what does it all mean? Experts disagree, and no one really knows. And no explanation can account for the hypnotic power of such a picture. Whether Bosch had specific, symbolic ideas in his mind or not, the force of his imagination struck a deep chord. The hell he invented evokes the hell that lurks deep in everyone: the hell of regret, the hell of anxiety, the hell of terror and despair.

tour of hell

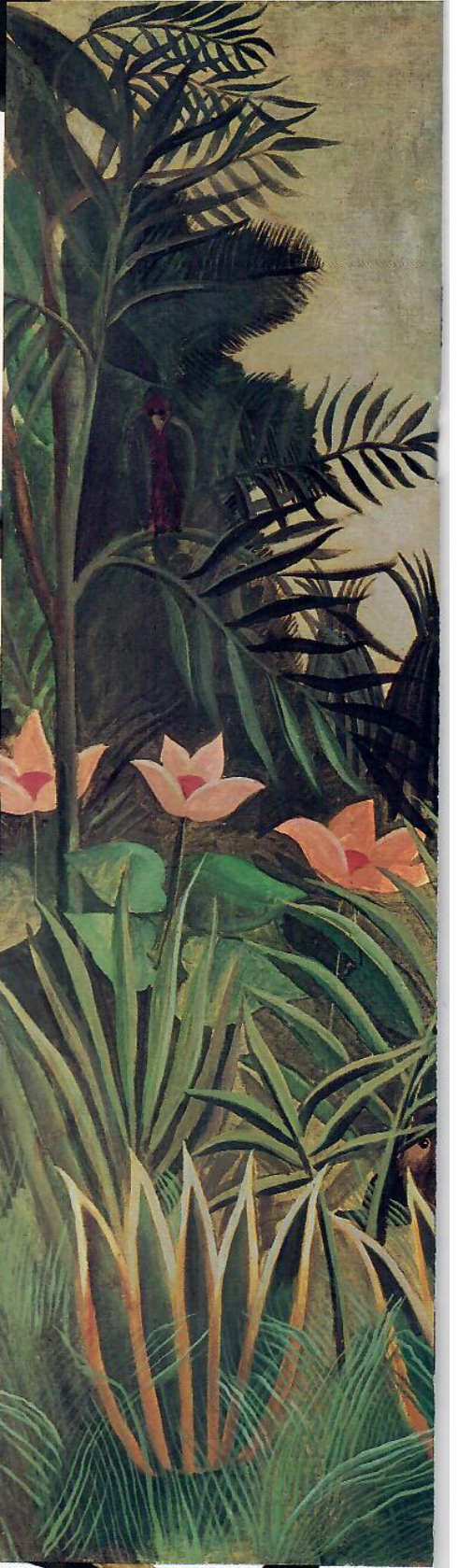


Hieronymus Bosch (about 1450-1516). *The Garden of Delights*, about 1500. Right panel, Prado, Madrid.

What is so spellbinding about the paintings of Hieronymus Bosch? They have fascinated people ever since the sixteenth century. Pretty they are not. They come from a dark imagination that saw little in the world but viciousness and folly.

The darkest of his fantasies was his vivid vision of

WOL



lds of their own



Henri Rousseau (1844-1910). *The Equatorial Jungle*, 1909. National Gallery of Art, Chester Dale Collection.

One was a toll collector for the French government. The other was an Italian immigrant in Los Angeles who worked as a tile setter and telephone repairman. Neither had much education, and none at all in art. Yet both Henri Rousseau and Simon Rodia, created works that went far beyond the limits of their everyday lives.

Once it was thought that Henri Rousseau might have visited the tropical jungles that turn up so often in his paintings (left). But it seems that he saw such exotic trees and plants only at botanical gardens or in books. Every leaf, branch, blossom, and fruit is individually and lovingly drawn, and a few wild animals peer gently from the underbrush. The impression is of serenity and innocence—a world in which you can freely enjoy your senses and feelings.

Simon Rodia never thought of himself as an artist at all. "I was a poor man," he once told a friend. "Nobody helped me. I think if I hire a man he don't know what to do. A million times I don't know what to do myself." Without preliminary plans, without materials except cement and castoff junk, he spent over thirty years building a group of open towers (far left), 100 feet high, on a tiny lot adjoining his house. He made their framework of steel rods and wires, which he encased in stucco. Then, while the stucco was still wet, he pressed into it bits of tile, old dishes, sea-shells, even broken bottles (7-Up and Phillips Milk of Magnesia were favorites).

The result is a light, airy fantasy, reaching into the sky and seeming to glow almost from inside with a brilliant glitter of color. It's a ship, a castle, a cathedral, a carnival—whatever your own fancy chooses.

Rousseau's paintings and the Watts Towers are eloquent testimony to the power of fantasy to transform the world. These two men, working alone, and without preconceived ideas, used the liberating force of art to turn their private visions into a gift to us all.

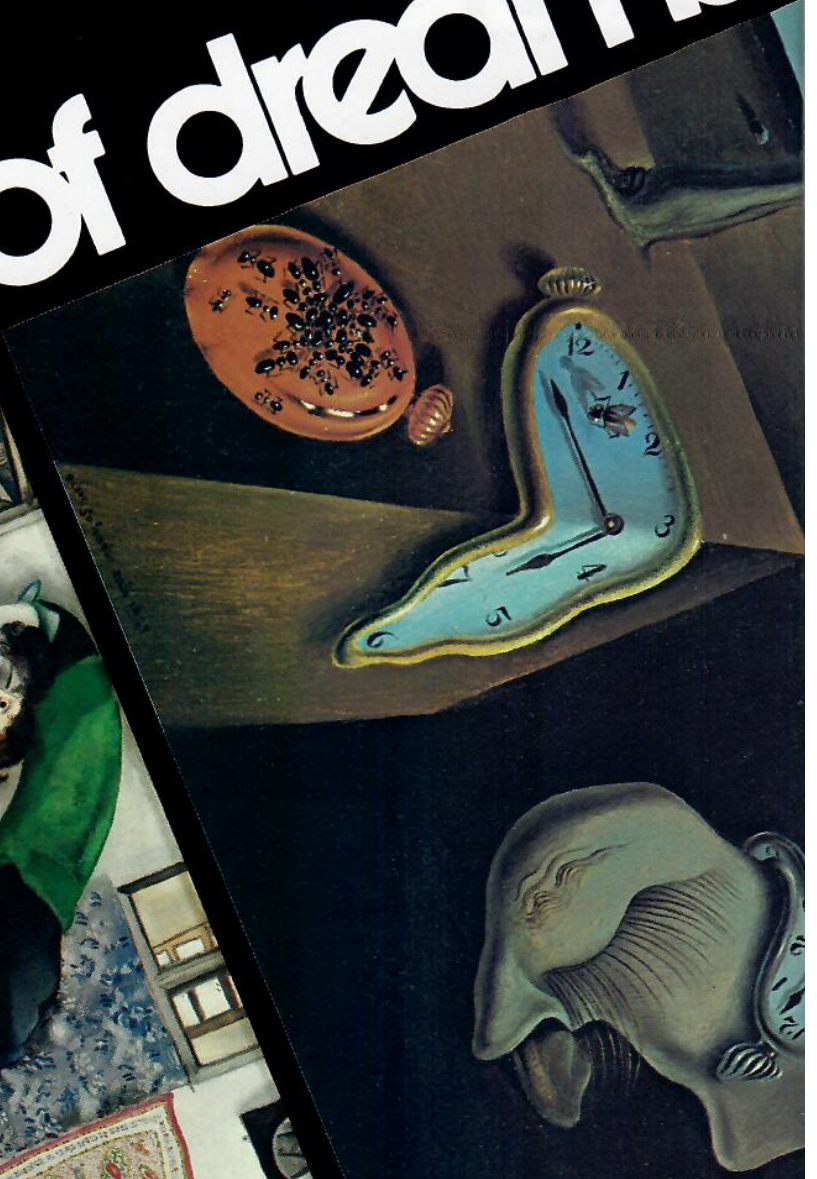
LEFT:

Simon Rodia (1879-about 1959). *Watts Towers*, about 1921-1954. Photograph Martin W. Vanderwall.

the stuff of dreams



LEFT:
Marc Chagall (b. 1887), *Birthday*, 1915,
Musée P. Blaes Bequest,
Museum of Modern Art.



ABOVE:
Salvador Dalí (b. 1904), *The Persistence
of Memory*, 1931, Museum of Modern Art.

PAGE 13:
Meret Oppenheim (b. 1913), *Objekt*, 1936,
Museum of Modern Art.

What shall we make of our dreams? The fantasies of sleep often appear to make no sense whatever, and are so absurd that we are embarrassed to recall them. Yet dreams seem just as vivid to us, while we are having them, as our personalities, revealing however fascinated into our personalities, and have used the weird images and thoughts and feelings of our century quite purposely into our personalities of our century. Some of their works with this insight, like Meret Oppenheim's fur-bearing unexpected juxtapositions of the mind. Some of their works explore the dark places of the mind. Some may be melancholy, and a rubbery and unsettling, like Meret Oppenheim's fur-bearing and saucer (right). Some may be warm and a haunting vision and ant-eaten watches and a rubbery containing limp and ant-eaten watches and a rubbery shapeless sea creature. Some may be melancholy, and a containing limp and ant-eaten watches and a rubbery romantic, such as Chagall's reverly up on his wife's birth-day gift (bottom), in which love seems to make the figures "light as air." Much of the power of such works lies in their mysteriousness. They have no single meaning, but suggest a number of associations, ideas, memories, emotions. Like dreams.





pointed comments

Lucas Samaras has created a really dangerous book. Its covers bristle with pins and needles, while from its pages protrude scissors and razor blades. Its air of zany menace seems to be a parody of the unfortunately widespread distrust of words and ideas that exists in the modern world.

The interest in fantasy, dreams, and the subconscious continues among many artists of today. Like Samaras, they often combine this interest with wry comment upon our society. For example, there are several artists who are particularly interested in ceramics, but do not employ the medium in the ordinary way, to make objects for use or decoration. For them, clay is a flexible material for making fantastic, satirical sculpture. Clayton Bailey's owl (right) still has traces of utility: It is wired as a table lamp. But the brooding scowl of its humanized features turn it into a kind of mock idol, dedicated to some mischievous god of the electric age.

If you were going to put up a monument to commemorate our times, what would you choose? Claes Oldenburg, with deadpan seriousness, has suggested a series of huge monuments for sites around the world, made in the form of familiar manufactured objects—the things we use every day, and never really look at. On the back cover is shown a design for that home of monuments, Washington, D.C. It would be a gigantic pair of scissors, its blades rhythmically gnashing together. The obvious spot for it, he thinks, is the one now inconveniently occupied by the Washington Monument.

These modern artists follow a long tradition, going back to the dawn of history, and occurring all over the world. They do not consider fantasy merely an escape, or an illusion, or a childish game. They know the power of imagination to explore the far edges of truth. Pursuing the seemingly unreal, they reach a new reality.



PAGE 14:

Lucas Samaras (b. 1936).
Untitled, 1962. Museum of Modern Art,
Gift of Philip Johnson.

LEFT:

Clayton Bailey (b. 1939).
Whoa Lamp, 1971.
Lee Nordness Galleries.

BACK COVER:

Claes Oldenburg (b. 1929).
*Proposed Colossal Monument to Replace
the Washington Obelisk, Washington, D.C.:
Scissors in Motion*, 1967.
Philip Johnson Collection.
Photograph Follett Publishing Company.

Dissonance

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