

## Searching for the *object*

Brett Jones

'I mistake myself'<sup>1</sup> reveals a quaint belief in the single unified subject, yet when the 'I' is shifted to the listener this unified subject is fragmented, for the listener could be forgiven for mistaking the singer as an enactment of any character, including the listener. The author is not singular, privileged.

Fitzroy Street, St.Kilda begins as an extension of The Esplanade as it sweeps away from Port Phillip Bay. There is little to demarcate the beginning of Fitzroy Street except traffic lights designating a point of entry from Beaconsfield Parade and Beach Road.

There are a multitude of character positions attributed to the signifier *Nick Cave*. The listener/viewer/reader can embrace whichever ones their imago cathects. The many deaths of *Nick Cave* allow us to constantly invent new personas for this mortal figure constructed by popular culture. Or is the *Nick Cave* image-repertoire so multilayered that he is already dead and immortal like L, the woman who dies, disappears, is doubled and reappears in Alain Robbe-Grillet's *L'Immortelle*<sup>2</sup>, or the character N in the same film who can never be sure that L is an illusion or fantasy, a palimpsest of his own desire?

And so I went looking for *Nick Cave* in many different forms and passages, different personas and subject types. I sought him in my past as I imagined him in the present, all the while piquing unknown future possibilities. I desire to ascertain the grain of his voice and reconcile some of the illusions he has signified as I connect threads of my image-repertoire.

I have wandered those clandestine streets looking for his shadow. Stains of the drives, remnants of surplus energy and desire, a scrap of something that can lead to a different subject position, another realm of longing and loss. I have transferred all the misgivings and regrets into my box full of dirt<sup>3</sup> only to find it full of excrement. So I smirk at the stupid box and kick it over, spreading that shit all over the floor while howling in unison. Thanks for getting it out on my behalf, I cannot yell lest shout or scream. You vociferated from deep cavities, up murky passageways, through the secret burrow, bouncing off the ceiling and floor. That persona released, so generously bequeathed to an *other*.

I went walking down that street, around that triangle. All I found was a lane signed Roland S Howard, numerous shops for lease and the nostalgic optimism of a once grand Victorian hotel with something added on top. Nothingness is all that can be found, and ultimately what I was looking for; the affirmation that the traces are all constructed by the imaginary. Your sound has permeated the surfaces; no need for signs or symbols. And it was funny thinking about the cultivation of the masks with nothing behind, it was joyful walking the streets, recording details of buildings, surfaces and light while a fragmented Nick Cave soundtrack faded in and out. I fill that 'Nick Cave' vessel with all the images I wish to conjure; all that never was.

In my scenes there are no characters, no desperate lovelorn junkies, no scenesters on the prowl, no industry movers on the make, no performers perpetually performing. There are no people in any shape or form. But their traces are abundant in all the detritus; the

new and historical buildings as well as the modified, bastardised and gentrified; the surfaces with their abrasions, distortions, parallaxes, protrusions and allusions; and, the light that shears the sea and makes the pavement scuttle and glisten. It is the details of objects and images I absorb as though the world of people operates on another plane.

No.1 Fitzroy Street; Lady Grange. BAR-KITCHEN-FUNCTIONS. Sunday Roast. Traditional home cooked with all the trimmings. Bluestone crazy paving leading to an entry surrounded by rectangular concrete terrazzo pavers. Chipped corner of low concrete barrier to right of entry. No.3–9 row of two level Victorian era buildings crowned by classical triangular pediments with street level shop fronts. No. 3-5 empty shops on street level. Old signage; Sapore. Interior cleaned out. Horizontal rebates in façade on protruding vertical sections commonly used in Victorian buildings. Lower level shopfronts with large glass panes, one beside entry has several cracks running in front of adverting adhered from the inside. Lease Irreplaceable Restaurant Opportunity. Fitzroys.

Trading hours

7 lunches

Dinners

Just as Nick Cave eschews any serious discussion of religion in his work, I align the word 'faith' with the subject's desire, that is the subject's search for the cause of his/her desire. The ordinary pleasure in this search can be obtained through the act of production, that is the process of making, of realizing creative ideas. Yet, this search for desire—sometimes inaccurately described as a search for satisfaction—must be sustained; the desire to search for desire is the cause of the desire itself. In other words, desire is a byproduct of the search to which the search cannot continue without; desire is self-perpetuating. Without this search for something else, this continuation of desire, we are dead. As Cave notes in *The Sick Bag Song*, 'It's our *lack of longing* that gets us in the end'.<sup>4</sup>

No.7 empty, an old sign; Bar Santo. Full height glass shop front lower level with black and grey plastic window coverings hanging on the inside. Little pot plant with red leaves sitting on the exterior window sill of upper level. No.9 Luja. Smoke Fusion Restaurant, Cocktail & Whisky Bar. Recessed tessellated tile entry with a marble threshold and double doors. Marble threshold significantly worn on the right side—the side used for entry—where a crack also runs through its width.

Something interesting about this search for desire is that it immediately supersedes the desire that has gone before; desire can never be satisfied because it is the cause that is the driver not the physical object/subject. Enjoyment derived from desire if pursued beyond the pleasure principle produces a surplus where marks of the real may be glimpsed. These traces of the real are circled by the subject, glanced, deflected; the risk of their embodiment would be catastrophic. Attempts to capture or articulate these traces of the real render them into the symbolic, into language, the sociolect.

No.15 three shop fronts. Shop to right is disused; a former club or bar. No signage only an A4 piece of paper—All patrons must leave in a quiet and orderly manner—pinned to a board on the inside. Black drapes conceal the rest of the interior. Awning extends about five metres from the building façade. On its underside in front of the former club or bar

entrance a square lighting fixture is located in disrepair. An 80cm square piece of black acrylic with four fluorescent tubes around the perimeter. Two tubes are on, one is out and one is missing. There is no cover and something appears to have been located in the centre fixed to a metal plate where tape and wires dangle. The whole fixture is slightly askew. The moment language is disrupted, circumvented where the body is pierced, undone, punctured, exposed in its material uselessness. The apartment entry to the left of the building with the black steel gate identifies seven apartments from the intercom buttons.

No.17-27 Summerland Mansions. Built in the early 1920s containing several shop fronts on the street level; To our loyal and valued customers We ARE Closing. For Sale Prime Retail 60sqm Includes fitted bar. No. 21-23 with sign located beneath awning Miss Fitzy's. Large adhesive signs on glass façade For Lease. Fully Licenced restaurant / café. Terrazzo concrete pavers, palm trees, basalt barriers, succulents in stone garden bed. But this experience is completely subjective and non-transferable. It also cannot be commuted, constituted or translated. As it evaporates, the artist attempts to inscribe it with language and therefore it enters back into the symbolic as that which it never was.

The guttural growl and howl of Nick Cave fronting the Birthday Party takes me simultaneously back to the mirror phase (as an imago) and forward to death. Cave's death, my death, all the dead we have known, and all the dead we shall never know. It pierces me with an unintended ferocity for what the body can signify with its pulsions and unconstituted longings, with that which cannot be obtained or reified. And yet not without irony, the Birthday Party music now seems tame and accessible, as though one needs it to relax, to feel comfortable. Is this the shape of death? When we return to what was once risky, inchoate and unassimilable now giving us the feeling of familiarity and warmth? Recuperation hinges on reverie and happiness.

No.25 Former Santa Ana Tapas Bar Restaurant. Sale/Lease Fitted restaurant ready to go! Creating worth [CVA]. Black plastic hanging on inside of front window. No.27 Summerland Mansions Convenience Store metal numerals '27' above the door of the period shop front. Four'n Twenty. Monster Energy. Around corner of shop on Acland: This plaque marks the site of the first block of land sold in the first crown land sales in St.Kilda 7<sup>th</sup> December 1942. The buyer Lieut. James Ross Lawrence, RN., Captain of Schooner 'Lady of St.Kilda'. He named Acland Street after Sir Thomas Dyke Acland owner of the 'Lady of St.Kilda'. The plaque was unveiled by command R.S Veale R.A.N (Retd), C.M.G for St. Kilda City Council 24 March, 1985. The artist may attempt to describe the outlines of the real through jouissance, to push the barriers of pleasure into realms that are inexplicable, unregulated, unconstituted and precarious.

Corner Fitzroy and Acland Streets, Prince of Wales Hotel. TAB. Friday Night Footy. Four levels, outdoor dining. Square black glossy tiles 10x10cm from ground to window sill. POW Kitchen and Bandroom. Open most of the time. Black three metre tall sign; Bigger than Prince. Fleetwood Mac 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration. Locals Nights Tuesday. No. 29 Three shop fronts on ground level of contemporary apartment building 4-5 levels. No.29/a The Apartment. Classic thin base 14" Pizza. Black velvet curtain lining interior of full glass shop front. No.29/b Lease Full Kitchen fitout. LET. I Love Dumplings Opening Soon. No.29/c Restaurant closed M. Postage letters spilling inside solid glass entry door.

Granite bricks on lower section of façade either side of door below windows. Electric strip heaters attached beneath awning. The first kind is an elementary kind where pleasure as enjoyment sets the scene through immersion and concentration. The scene is constructed around an immersive work production, where everything the subject embodies is channeled into the productivity as action, whereupon suddenly without intention or control everything drops away, the subject no longer senses his/herself through normal conscious mechanisms. Everything is viewed on the exterior, there is no interior subject. This is a kind of 'object jouissance', where signification concerns matter.

The birthday party keeps the drives in play as we move towards a finality that holds no reward. This eruption of desire reconstructed as the human voice traces life from birth to death, past to future without present, outlines what is always glanced and missed. Jouissance so lightly held in those vocal sounds supported by an abrasive musical accompaniment that floats away from the author, from the producer, to be reproduced for whoever and whenever the need arises. This howl perpetually returning the subject to the breast, to where some small comfort lies in the isolated blackness of night as one searches for what can never be returned or found.

No.31 Café Di Stasio – Bar Di Stasio. Black steel gate to right. No.33 For Lease call Jenny 0410619620. Empty shop formally Punchinello's on Fitzroy Street. Flattened out cardboard box placed on ground in recess of entrance. No.35 – 39 Rydges St.Kilda Hotel Apartments entry between two shop fronts. Hub Café. Eggs Your Way. Patterned square tiles on façade of sea blue and white designs. Second Act – Wine Bar, St.Kilda. Prawn and crab fritters. Lamb Kofta. Outside timber tables in black square steel. Pot plants bordering street in timber barriers. Gas heaters mounted on awning ceiling. No.41 Chemist Warehouse. Is this Australia's Cheapest Chemist? Automatic sliding entry door keeps opening and closing with irregular movement. Fragrances up to 85% off. Open 7 days. Entry to left to F45 Functional 45 Training level two. No.43 Solly Lew Chemist. Open 9am – 5pm everyday. Scripts from \$5.20 Health Savings Everyday. Ask Solly. No.45 St.Kilda Cellars International. Fine Wine Merchant and Deli. No Public Toilets. Victoria Bitter. Metal Round tables with assortment of different chairs on sidewalk. Brick façade with large semi-circular window-entrance. Drink here or takeaway.

The second type of jouissance is much more troubling with the ecstatic moment being more akin to a surrender or suffering. This is a moment, where the subject is cogniscent of their body, but a body that is at risk, danger or peril. This is a kind of excess jouissance where the subject desires something beyond pleasure. This is where the subject seeks the unknown in a manner to which they may not return. Yet the subject still takes a kind of nourishment from this suffering as he/she can see a glimpse of the limits of their bodily functioning; the real.

Object jouissance is so important to the creative practitioner because it provides a little light in the depths of the forest. It is a kind of validation of their journey and pursuit. This is the endless quest for *objet petit a*. I am sure the Singer regularly experiences object jouissance, and possibly on occasion excess jouissance (Birthday Party performances?). Jouissance is sometimes described as pleasure derived from pain, the pleasure we seek in order to know the limits of human subjectivity. But for the creative practitioner, the pain is more like a loss; a repetition. It is the loss to which we carry, rising to the surface,

reminding us of our mortality and our debt. Jouissance is unpredictable, unascrivable and unlocatable. It cannot be called on, asked for, sought out, contrived, pushed, stalked or prompted.

No.45a Empty Takeaway food store. Entire Menu Fixed Price \$3. 3-to-go. Bi-Fold door aluminium shop front. For Lease Beller Commercial. No.47 Chook Bar – Free range Char-grill chicken. Black square tiles with vertical design on a 45 degree angle. Pressed metal on awning ceiling in art deco geometric pattern. Several sections with patched pieces of sheet metal. One section leaking water has rusted the metal, both the original and replaced sections. Another spot where the pressed metal has rusted right through, cardboard boxes have been stuffed into the cavity in an attempt to close it off. Pieces of rusted pressed metal hang like torn fabric. Jouissance is a surplus of pleasure that the subject has no control when or how it occurs.

Below this hole in the awning and to the left of the chicken shop is an entrance 'THE BONCAP' in metal letters over the double doors with four horizontal glass panels. Doors and moulding are all faced with electroplated copper sheet. Wrought iron in wave-like curves fills the space above the double doors backed with a piece of warped old Masonite where once was glass. The step up to the doors terrazzo concrete with three black imbedded lines running across the step edge.

There is a large room that stretches from one side of the house to the other containing a large formal lounge area, a formal dining area (for dinner parties) and a mini-bar tucked into the corner. This was the main area of a typical open plan outer suburban house from the 1970s with its exposed dark brick feature walls, and orange to mission brown hues. The large floor standing Rank Arena colour TV was on one side of the room positioned for viewing from the lounge suite, while the stereo system in the built-in wall unit was adjacent to the dining setting. Due to the TV and the stereo system being in the same large room they were never used at the same time. I was having this conversation with Nick Cave about what to play on the stereo while seated on the lounge chairs, asking what he wanted to hear. If real time is accorded this dream, I would have been 18-19 years of age in 1986-87 and Cave was writing, recording and performing *Your Funeral...My Trial*.<sup>5</sup>

No.49 Vegietime Vegetarian Shop front to the left of the apartment entrance. Outdoor tables and chairs. No fish sauce. No msg. No broth. No shrimp paste. No.55 Leo's Spaghetti Bar. Since 1956. Pizza. Pasta. Steak. Seafood. Hostaria. Brick façade painted dark grey. Awning to street with strip heater panels mounted beneath. Large concrete pavers, some with different textures having been replaced at different times. Steel frames tables with timber slats on top each with a metal number fixed on the surface. Job Vacancy. Waiting staff required. No.57 Double level Edwardian building with convenience store in shop front. 7 Eleven St.Kilda #1216B Xiaofen Pty Ltd. Bands of orange, green, red and white across shop front above entrance and across lower section of glass front. Laneway to left of 7 Eleven with gate that is open. Garage at end. No Parking.

All drives including libidinal drives are the manifestation of the death drive. This seems obviously played out in the obsessions with some of Cave's characters as they pursue their object cause of desire (to the death), not without parody. But what is more

interesting is Cave's insistence on repeating (repetition is also a characteristic of the death drive) these same general narratives in many variations, as if he is unable to reconcile his desire with the mundanity of everyday reality. However, scraps, glances, shadow elements evade the listener, and in a way cannot be communicated. These are the marks that foreshadowed death for Roland Barthes as he is pierced by small unintentional elements of a photograph, or Derrida's 'trace' that is a dangerous surplus to that which maintains a seemingly irrefutable yet impossible presentness.

No. 61b Casablanca Kebab. Bar and restaurant in yellow 1920s style typography on black background. Bi-fold front doors fully open. Two 1980s table-top computer games inside open front doors. Outside seating with weathered moulded plastic top tables with aluminium legs. Left of Casablanca Kebab in same building, entry to Manhattan Lounge. Double grey steel doors with circular sunray relief motif across both doors. Sign above; For Lease. Prime retail tenancy. Available now. Rare and enviable opportunity. 390sq m across 2 levels. Licenced 24 venue suitable for Restaurant Nightclub Live music venue No.61a Lord of the Kebab. Same bi-fold opening front window as Casablanca Kebab (also open). Steel framed tables on sidewalk with homemade laminate tops in a flecked subdued light green.

I believe I saw Nick Cave at a gallery opening in mid-January 1995. A couple of references make it seem plausible. But then we can make anything seem believable if we want to believe it (why do we so carefully protect belief in our beliefs?). So I will imagine that it was him, leaning against the wall near the entrance, observing without engaging, alone in the gallery space as the party to which he belonged socialised in the next room. I like this image for it has no voice attached to it, no words, no sound. It is just a figure there alone without being paid any attention in a social situation where something is going on but seemingly ambivalent to this subject. What gives this scene a type of unrequited charm is a lack of recognition accorded to this *loverman*, the devil waiting at the door.

For some years I felt guilt for not showing this imaginary Nick Cave hospitality in my role as gallery director through acknowledgment of his presence, as normal social conventions would inscribe. But now as fact blends with the imagination I cannot even be one hundred per cent sure it was Nick Cave. But more importantly, if it was him, I prefer the image without voice or contact so as not to disrupt that still of him nonchalantly leaning against the gallery wall near the entrance with the light washing him clean without vociferation. No soundtrack.

No.63 Easy Stay apartments with six shops on street level two levels of apartments above. Bakery Hot Bread. Aussie and French Bakehouse. Open 24 hours. We must learn to enjoy a natural and healthy diet that respects the earth's resources and offers us the best opportunity to enjoy life. We are open. Glass window façade with imitation marble tiles. To left of Bakery with same glass window shopfront, except shop is unoccupied with blue plastic covering inside of window stuck down with white cloth tape. Entry to left 24 hr access to Easy Stay apartments. Next shop Lease sensational retail opportunities Shops 1, 4 & 5 Areas 60 – 90sqm Grease trap Suit variety of uses. Strong foot traffic Old 'Bakery' sign suspended beneath awning. Empty shop for lease. Easy Stay advertising with apartment images fixed on inside of window. Old sign suspended under awning: Cold Rock Ice Creamery. Choose it. Mix it. Smash it. Front entrance covered in construction ply

as though front glass door has been smashed. Pizza Hut. The home of stuffed crust. Double automatic sliding doors. Former entry to upper levels to left of Pizza Hut with fixed glass panel in front of double aluminium commercial doors. 'Entrance' in adhesive vinyl on doors. St.Kilda Ink Tattoo parlour. Concertina metal screen contracted to the left Entrance door on the right with the large glass window largely covered with an internal sun-blind obscuring the interior except for the stainless steel base of an adjustable chair with green and red wire dangling towards the floor.

I have come to regard Cave's music as a kind of melodramatic black comedy where the author really does have a persecution complex<sup>6</sup> that provokes him to keep changing costumes as he avoids too close scrutiny from the fawning listener or the melting music critic. The drama always unfolds then repeats itself in slight shifts like a scene from a Robbe-Grillet book or film with each song, each album, each performance citing, referring back to another scene, another line. Mixing up the black hair-dye paste again and again so that the image is consistent, but the dramas all have variations so as to reclaim the well-scouted territory.

No.73 All Vending Store

Shop in Privacy

Personal items

Non-prescription analgesics

Vitamins

Pay & Go

Fragrances

Cosmetics

Stop paying too much!

Australia's first vending store

All items refrigerated

Up to 80% cheaper

Yellow blue and red typography. Badly cracked glass to left on entry door largely concealed by adhesive advertising material.

No.75 Triple shop front in 1930s apartment building of three levels. 7 Eleven St.Kilda Store #1311B Gans Trading Pty Ltd. Bands of orange, green, red and white across shop front above entrance and across lower section of glass front. Crazy paving in basalt on street side up to curved timber barrier with two small timber seats with single timber armrests. No.75a Side entry on Jackson St to The Warrick apartments. Timber sash windows replaced with aluminium including small squares in upper sash. No.77 Corner Jackson Street, two story 1970s building. Empty shop; Russell Frajman Pharmacy. Open 6 days. Painted out signs in dark grey paint. Paper signs on entrance door: We have moved 100M. Lets blow fossil Fuels away! Fujifilm image plus.

The Birthday Party sound traces the death drive better than anything Nick Cave has produced since, and perhaps why that energy had to disperse in different directions after a few years. The urgency to get the sound out, grasping/gasping for the right tone and affect, the desperation of howling on the floor, all now seem to be about a reaction to the symbolic order: screaming into the face of the father/law/God. Getting it all out; the words and their signifieds, the spit and bile, the pathos and trauma, the longing and lust,

the complexes and anxieties, the vomit and blood, the black comedy and catharsis. Spewing it all out onto the floor, giving it to the listener to fill their own void (or box of dirt).

No.79 Closed bar/café. All signs removed except a vertical one beside the entrance; Maxim. Entrance door with graphic snow flakes in different sizes interspersed. Across three shop fronts large glass windows tinted with black film. Strip heaters suspended beneath awning. No.81 Claypots Seafood Express. Frames around window and doors painted orange. Dark grey façade. No.83a Fish and chips. Hamburgers. Kebab. Charcoal Chicken. No. 83b Archies Pizza. Pizza slices. Pasta snacks. No Eftpos cash only. Stainless steel sheet fixed to façade. No.85 Topolinos Licenced restaurant. Seafood. Pizza. No.89 Strathmore 1930s double story apartment building with three shops on ground level. Cone Heads, Fritz Gelato, Cignal Specialist Tabacconist. Entrance to apartments to left of Tabacconist. Façade of Cone Heads and Fritz Gelato covered in small square black glossy tiles. No.91 Empty shop. For Sale or lease. Entrance to left with tall double wrought iron gates leading to entry of Victorian mansion converted into apartments. No.97 Embassy @ 97. Bistro France. Blue white and red painted flags with red canvas awning to which little French flags are attached in a row across the front. No.93 Cushion bar café closed for renovation. 1970s building with apartments or offices above. No parking 24 Hr Access Required. Do not block Driveway. Spitroast Sundays. No.95 Boarded up construction site on ground level. Victorian building of three levels with loggias on upper two levels. Billposters pasted on hoarding. Future of Work. Actions Speak Louder than Words. Big Mouth Live Music. Live n Local.

Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds, 27 February, 1988 The Venue, St.Kilda (demolished in the early 1990s)—formally Earl's Court Ballroom (1928) and prior, Lyric Theatre (1913)—next door to St.Moritz Ice Rink (destroyed by fire in 1982). My memory of the performance has been taken by time, but there is a remainder/reminder of Cave's bodily condition at the event (as depicted in photographs and video). I'm Gonna Kill That Woman/ From Her To Eternity/ Your Funeral...My Trial/ Long Time Man/ Sugar Sugar Sugar/ Sad Waters/ Jack's Shadow/ Stranger Than Kindness/ City Of Refuge/ Saint Huck/ The Singer/ Knockin' On Joe/ She Fell Away/ By The Time I Get To Phoenix.

No.97 Robarta. Seductive sounds. Superb new menu. Creative cocktails. Fabulous functions. 7 days till late. Timber bi-fold front windows. Double level Victorian building. No.113 News agency/post office. Faded signs on front of awning; Herald Sun. The Australian. The Age. No.113 level 1 entrance to right of News Agency. Play Lounge. Licenced Function Venue. Black steel gate padlocked in matt black painted entrance. No.117-119 Michael Danby MP. Federal Minister for Melbourne Ports. Double level 1970s building with bronze anodised aluminium shop front. Dark brown brick and mission brown timber fascia. Australian flag on pole protruding from upper left of façade, hanging limply, no wind. No.121 Letsave Convenience Store. Double level Victorian building with triple arched loggia on upper level. Electronic billboard mounted on top. Tobacconist. Groceries. Internet. International Phone card. No.123 PharmaSave. Bain & Co. Pharmacy. Ground level shop front of three level Victorian building. White tiled façade. Open 7 days 9am – 9pm.



Popular music is inimically repetitious in its form and structure, its citations and references, in its mass reproduction as recorded and transmitted product. It's melodic and rhythmic structures, note patterns, voicings, chord progressions, key centres, time signatures, instrumentation all pick up precedents literally without concealment. That familiarity, the churning back beat, and the everyday ubiquitous nature of popular music allows us to make it personal and subjective, for us to read it and interpret it with whatever meanings we chose. And though these meanings are derived through a doxa of form and listening pleasure, they help us bind our imaginary identification with the world. Rock music will not change the world but it may affect an individual subject.

No.125–129 The George Hotel. Corner Grey Street. Italianate Victorian hotel of four levels with something added on top much later. Corner entry with decorative round marble columns to Freddie Wimpoles. Marble columns with a hexagonal spacer (a nut form) at the base of the column. The column base echoes the hexagonal shape before flaring out into a square form with curved corners. The basalt bases have received a natural weathering and discolouration associated with being connected to the sidewalk. THIS FOUNDATION STONE WAS LAID BY JAMES HINGSTON, FRGS, APRIL 29<sup>th</sup> 1885 HARRY B GIBBS ARCHITECT. SAMUEL JONES CONTRACTOR. A few meters up another entrance with red double doors SALOON BAR SALOON. Granite surfacing on lower level.

Entry to The George Ballroom, The George White Room (to right), Day of the Dead Bar (to left) and The George apartments. Veranda extends to the street where it is supported by two square columns. It is lined in copper sheet and contains decorative art deco motifs in square-diamond shapes. Ceiling of square panels with textured surfaces all painted white. Recently restored. A portico with marble steps with several cracks up to double doors. The steps have added traction strips on the front edges, but otherwise are original. Many feet have traversed, pranced, stumbled, eloped, skipped, stalked these steps into the accommodation, bars, clubs, galleries. The Ballroom. The Crystal Ballroom. The Birthday Party. Ceiling of recessed panels framed in decorative mouldings with a circular floral relief element in the centre of each square.

Nick Cave's portraits on all those album covers track some of his many personas, while simultaeneously rehearsing and tracing the void. The film and video footage of interviews interjects a time when these documents will be truly archival and historical. It's true we all look back on photographs or videos of our past with a certain discomfort for what time makes brutally apparent: they remind us of the remainder. But especially in the case of the popular artist, these fixed mass produced images generate an implacable sense of loss for the reader as they see their own past reflected.

No.133–135 George apartments over seven levels. Contemporary building with square windows, loggias and projecting balconies in half hexagonal shape referencing neighbouring architecture of the George Hotel. Entrance to Alex Theatre St.Kilda. Comedy Drama Music Dance Cinema. Shops on ground level. Biggin & Scott Real Estate Agents We deliver... Grocerie Bar with outside dining (no heaters). Hair by Malarie Cox. No.143 Double level Victorian building inscribed on pediment: Rivoli Buildings. Two ground level shops Danish Blue Adult Centre Now Open neon sign in window. St.Kilda Fish & Chips. Large veranda extending to street reconstructed in Victorian style.

No.145 The Banff apartment building. Four levels light brown brick early 1950s modernist building with courtyard garden including palms. Gated entry to apartments. Banff Café. Banff in home pizzas \$7. No Parking 24 hour residential access required.

No.149 The Regal Apartment Building. Four original levels from 1920s with two levels added on top. Entry with original leadlight. Baker d.Chirico. Dark grey painted façade with loggias on original upper levels. No.151-153. Majestic Apartments. 1930s building. Portico entry to apartments, terrazzo stairs with two black lines imbedded across front of step. Shops on ground level of building. 151a For Lease Biggin & Scott Commercial. No.151b No.18 Ramen St.Kilda Sake Bar. No.151c For Lease – Retail Space on Bustling Fitzroy Street. No.155 Waldorf Apartments. Edwardian apartment building with entrance in centre. Large arched entry glassed in with sign to right; Fancy Film Est. 2002. Nine apartments over three levels. Contemporary structures added in front. Fitzrovia Fine Food Republic Café. Black shop front with floor to ceiling glass. Outside dining. Whiting & Co. The Professionals Real Estate Agents.

The music of the Birthday Party provides this channel of energy and drive that allows us to individually and collectively lament upon desire and death; it allows us to traverse our subjectivity with the meanings that construct our particular and shared versions of reality. At the same time this nostalgia for a past through recorded material is a lament on death; literally the past that cannot be resurrected and the ciphers of our end in waiting. Paying so much attention to a music of its particular time and context represents a fixation on this debt we ultimately owe, and perhaps why Nick Cave does not listen to his records once released. It cannot not seem strange to him that some listeners chose to dwell in this early period of his creative output, resulting in its transposition to another sign system as a kind of future mourning.

No.157 Adina Apartments contemporary building over seven levels with shops on ground level. Second level Nourish Body + Skin. Shops on street level. Milk the Cow Licenced Fromagerie. Outside dining with portable gas heaters. Supernormal Japanese style restaurant. Araliya Modern Sri Lankan and Asian. Mrs Hopper – popping into Araliya soon.

No.161-163 Contemporary apartment building. Two shop fronts on street level occupied by Scout Home Goods and Anytime Fitness. Awning with coloured geometric design.

No.165 1950s four level commercial building over four levels. Tilting sun deflector fins across the windows of the two middle levels no longer working. Entrance on right to upper level businesses Ooh! and Spinach. Small shop front on left Nice Garden Massage 0402149751 Open 7 days by appointment only. Mahjong Chinese Restaurant. Full height glass façade.

No.167 Former Wesleyan Church 1850s corner of Princes Street now apartments. Kebab Hut Gourmet Burgers. Entrance to church apartments in centre through black steel gates with low hedges in front. Church bluestone with sandstone quions some of which are disintegrating. No.169 Ritz Hotel built in 1920s of three levels. Cnr. Princes Street. The Ritz Backpackers. Elephant and Wheelbarrow Hotel, Traditional British Pub. Semi-circle windows leadlight with words Melbourne Ritz protected behind clear sheets of cracked glass. Entrance to Ritz Backpackers on left. Large security cameras. Guinness. Kilkenny Irish Beer. Where will you watch Mayweather Vs McGregor?

No. 171 Ritz Mansions apartment building built in 1920s pastiche of adjoining Ritz Hotel. Two shop fronts on street level 2<sup>nd</sup> Episode Café, second best coffee in St.Kilda. The Do Hair Salon. We do men too! No.179 - 191 Recently built or reconstructed building occupying several frontages and about nine levels of apartments. Shop fronts on ground level. Empty shop not fitted out. Entrance to apartments beside Just Pedal Bike Shop. To left The Bar.ber. Two burgundy Chesterfield sofas in front window. On left Staple Café. Glass veranda. Tables with timber tops and steel chairs on sidewalk (no heaters). Brick tile façade in different grey tones. No.193 modernist Apartment complex Lynbrae 1930s in light brown brick three levels. Entry in centre with block either side symmetrically positioned. Frontal curved stairwell element. No.199-203 Apartment and commercial building complex made of amalgam of buildings through additions and modification probably since 1950s. Up to nine levels. On right side entry with quartz terrazzo steps. Painted out sign, no identification. Contemporary commercial façade. Entry to apartments in centre up several steps. South Side Fitness Train to Attain. Fernwood Fitness and Melbourne Physiotherapy Pilates & Fitness Group. Granite tiled façade.

I attempt to recover some of that excess energy in the grain of Nick Cave's voice from another time, the surplus; the potential of jouissance. This surplus desire becomes a generator for other texts; the glances of bodily loss where the real peaks through are the drivers of our creative output.

There is a whole series of rooms in an old house (or any building with a series of small rooms i.e. hotel, old offices) to which the viewer meanders disorientated, transfixed by the objects that appear only to disappear then reappear. As if the distinction between a physical presence, a shadow or a ghost (visitation) bleed into each other and the strangeness of the dark environments. The viewer becomes increasingly conscious of their own body as the spaces unravel in impossible orders (returns and reruns), slight shifts and unforeseen detours. The objects themselves also continue to reappear with subtle shifts and relocations as the rooms also seem to dissolve the objects into the viewer's image-repertoire.

The viewing/writing subject is undone, spliced as they move through these rooms unable to fix a linear/logical time and space progression. The subject is dissolved into the objects they seek to fix as a traumatic bodily dislocation. I repeat this traumatic event over and over as I seek the object that I cannot find.

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- <sup>1</sup> *I mistake myself* from Boys Next Door, *Door Door*, Mushroom, Australia, 1979.
- <sup>2</sup> Alain Robbe-Grillet, *L'Immortelle*, 1963, Alain Robbe-Grillet: Six Films 1964-1974, British Film Institute, UK, 2014.
- <sup>3</sup> My life is a box full of dirt / we spend our life in a box full of dirt (Nick Cave), *Zoo Music Girl* from *Prayers on Fire*, The Birthday Party, Missing Link, Australia, 1981.
- <sup>4</sup> Nick Cave, *Sick Bag Song*, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, UK, 2016.
- <sup>5</sup> Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds, *Your Funeral...My Trial*, Mute, UK, 1986.
- <sup>6</sup> Reference to interview with Nick Cave in *Stranger in a Strange Land*, Dutch Television VPRO documentary, Netherlands, 1987.