

# An Emporium of Order and Chaos.

By Shaharaz Vyas

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## Foreword

This is an artistical diary in which I'm resuming and catalogizing my artistic and literary creations, larded with thoughts, philosophies, and observations that induced them.

The chronological order in which the works were produced has been abandoned in favor of a systematic approach where the subjects are brought together in five different approaches:

1. A Cosmology of Civilization. This section forms the foundation upon which all my artistic endeavors rest. It is a personal view upon the reality from a cosmologically perspective through a cryptomathically lens.
2. A Society in Transit concentrates more in detail upon the contemporary challenges that human civilization is facing.
3. Time in Modern Art explores the ways this mysterious dimension has been approached in different art forms and literature.
4. The Chaotium deals with uncertainty and darker sides of the human experience.

I hope that this bird's view might inspire some people to take a deeper dive in my cryptomatically approach of art, science, and literature.

Koh Samui (Thailand), 11/02/ 2025.

Foreword .....	3
A Cosmology of Civilization .....	7
The Binary Perspective (2).....	10
A Cosmology of Civilization: The Opera. ....	12
The Vignettes of the different parts of the Libretto. ....	14
FIRST ACT.....	14
Prologue: The Sun. ....	14
1 <sup>st</sup> Movement: The Bronze Times .....	16
Scene 1: Mercury.....	16
Scene 2: Venus.....	19
Scene 3: Terra.....	22
2 <sup>nd</sup> Movement: The Golden Times. ....	25
Scene 4: Mars .....	25
Scene 5: Ceres.....	27
Scene 6: Jupiter .....	30
SECOND ACT.....	33
3 <sup>rd</sup> Movement: The Silver Times. ....	33
Scene 7: Saturn. ....	33
Scene 8: Uranus.....	36
Scene 9: Neptune .....	39
4 <sup>th</sup> Movement: The Iron Times.....	42
Scene 10: Pluto.....	42
Scene 11: Charon .....	45
Scene 12: Eris .....	48
Epilogue: The Sun .....	51
A Cosmology of Civilization: The Novel. ....	53



The Animate and the Inanimate in Art (5). .....	55
Introduction.....	55
How this worked out in my art.....	59
Evolution: Entrance or Exit? .....	61
What goes up, goes down.....	63
Here be Dragons. ....	64
The yin yang perception .....	66
The Butterfly Effect.....	67
A Society in Transit .....	69
Assimilation. ....	70
Transitional themes (2023) .....	73
Kundalini.....	73
The Big Migration .....	75
The Zone.....	77
Time in Modern Art.....	79
Essay .....	79
The Shape of Time.....	80
Time-induced famous portraits.....	82
Venice : A psycho-historical Map and character.....	85
Berlin: A psycho-historical map and character.....	88
London: A psycho-historical map and character.....	90
Here Comes Everybody's Karma (literary art book).....	92
Introduction.....	93
About transcribing Finnegans Wake .....	96
The Chaotium. ....	108
Dark Arts.....	108

Dance Macabre.....	108
The Conclave .....	111
The Clan.....	113
Fear.....	115
Azrael.....	117
Art in the Dark.....	119
Dancing in the Dark .....	120
Reading in the Dark.....	122
Whistling in the Dark.....	123
The Watchers in the Dark.....	125
Architecture in the Dark .....	127
Painting in the Dark .....	129
Poetry in the Dark.....	131
Sculptures in the Dark .....	132
<b>Pricelist</b> .....	134
List of images.....	136

## A Cosmology of Civilization

“Being simple is the most complicated thing nowadays.” -Ramana Pemmaraju

The principle of simplicity or parsimony—broadly, is the idea that simpler explanations of observations should be preferred to more complex ones—is conventionally attributed to William of Occam, after whom it is traditionally referred to as Occam's razor. This does not mean that there will no longer be difficult issues remaining.

The complexity bias is a reason why we humans lean towards complicating our lives rather than keeping things simple. When we are faced with too much information or we are in a state of confusion about something, we will naturally focus on the complexity of the issue rather than look for a simple solution.

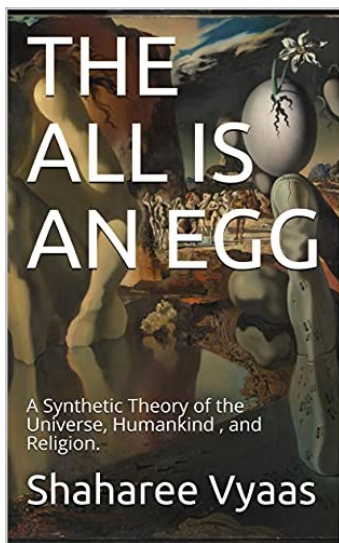
As a cryptomathician I'm constantly researching the synergies between art, science, and religion. Recently I've published an essay that is called “The All is an Egg” that describes the latest development in those fields and indicates where those fields are converging and where they're bifurcating.

The inspiration for this essay occurred to me after a visit to the Dali Museum in Figueres, at a time when I was contemplating a new concept that could reunite the fragmented field of human knowledge and skills. And there I stumbled upon the egg.

Connecting art, science, and religion, with the metaphor of the egg foisted onto it, is a transformative work, and a profound invitation to reflect. Albert Einstein said in this context: "Everything should be made as simple as possible, but not simpler".

Although simplicity and complexity are not in conflict with one another, they are indeed opposites in that they are two poles of

a continuum—the more complex something seems the less simple it seems, and vice versa.



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Human civilization's cyclical nature is not an anomaly but a reflection of universal principles that govern all complex systems. By linking our history and future to broader cosmic phenomena, we uncover valuable insights into the dynamics of growth, collapse, and renewal. These insights illuminate why advanced civilizations might remain undetected and offer strategies for humanity's survival, resilience, and evolution as a cosmic presence.

From there an artistic approach emerged, inspired by Frank Zappa's Project/Object concept for his work in various mediums. Each of the displayed projects (in whatever realm) are part of a larger object, that is defined as mystic cyclical synthetism. As such, this chapter is multifaceted in its effort to bring forward a new perspective upon the nature and significance of human civilization.

The art that features in this section consists mostly of works that are belonging to a multidisciplinary project, bringing together music, visual arts, literature, and science, centering them around a vision that has been developed in the manifest "The All is an Egg". The manifest is mainly an adjusted continuation of a vision Salvador Dali laid out in his Mystical Manifesto, that was a hybrid combination of nuclear physics and Catholic doctrine.

The visual works rest between figuration and abstraction, coherence and disintegration, and organic and technological forms. They combine dream-like imagery to create surreal, liminal landscapes, trying to explore the affinity between the scientific and the artistic praxis.

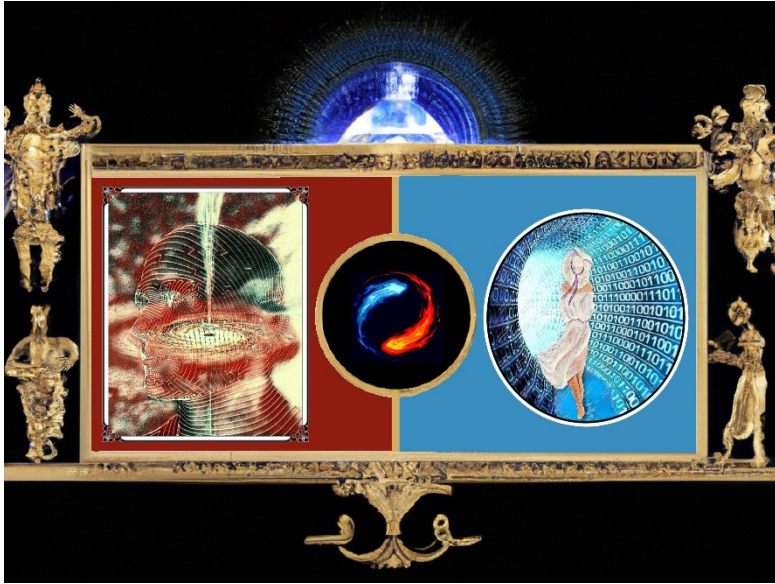
My visual art develops along a stylistic concept that I call "surpressionism". It is an exciting new art style that merges the fluid brushstrokes and vibrant colors of impressionism with the otherworldly and dreamlike qualities of surrealism. This unique blend creates a sense of movement and depth in the painted scene, encouraging the viewer's imagination to take flight.

This style evokes emotions through suggestion, rather than realism. It's an art form that seeks to capture the spirit and essence of its subject. Surpressionism is a fresh and unique concept, and it offers endless possibilities for artists looking to push the boundaries of traditional art styles.

The theme of the opera that forms part of this project revolves around a comparison between the cyclic nature of human civilization and that of our solar system.

The literary facet of this art project wants to illustrate the multicultural aspect of civilization as a phenomenon by placing the tale of Mahabharata in a more contemporary context.

## The Binary Perspective (2)



*Figure 1: The Binary Perspective. Mixed techniques on pressed cardboard W 90 x H 60 x D 0,5 cm by shaharee Vyaas.*

This painting explores the binary nature of the reality by contrasting male to female, water to fire, vertical to horizontal, round to rectangle, natural to artificial, and much more ...Although I have given the design of this installation many thoughts, I feel a certain reluctance to share those thoughts publicly. The word "binary" was originally mostly used to refer to Boolean mathematics that forms the foundation for all computer

programs. Nowadays the word is more widely used to indicate different ways of thinking, behaving, and describing the reality.

I'm releasing this work as an open invitation to everyone to develop their own relation with it and hope that it will add to the perspective they have upon the reality.

## A Cosmology of Civilization: The Opera.

It was inevitable that, during the research for my own artistical activities, I would stumble upon the works of British composer Gustav Holst. Just as I do, he found inspiration for his work into the planetary system and in the Mahabharata.

The Planets, a seven-movement orchestral suite written by Holst between 1914 and 1916, has been from its premiere to the present day enduringly popular, influential, widely performed and frequently recorded and keeps inspiring many contemporary composers. John Williams used the melodies and instrumentation of Mars as the inspiration for his soundtrack for the Star Wars films (specifically "The Imperial March").

The most important conceptual difference between my music and Holst's suite is that his inspiration was astrological rather than astronomical. My work is based upon a sonorization of the electromagnetic waves emitted by the main celestial bodies of our solar system and includes Earth, the Sun, Uranus, and Neptune (the two last ones still had to be discovered when Holst composed his suite). In Holst's opera each movement is intended to convey ideas and emotions associated with the influence of the planets on the psyche, while in my work they are used as metaphors to illustrate the different cyclic phases of a human civilization. That is also why it is called "A Cosmology of Civilization".

Most of the music of Holst's Indian verse settings remained generally western in character, but in some of the Vedic settings he experimented with Indian raga (scales). In my compositions the variations in key, rhythm and meter were determined by the strength, frequency and amplitudes of the electromagnetic waves emitted by the different elements of our solar system, translated



into some good old Wagnerian composition, characterized by the use of propulsive repetition that includes also a palette of idiosyncratic instrumental touches, and some extreme high and low octave doublings.

The opera is divided into twelve scenes, supplemented with a prologue and an epilogue, demonstrating the cyclical nature of human civilization where each phase is represented by a planet. The planets are grouped in four movements, each containing 3 planets, that indicate the start, ascend, descend, and end of each cycle and are respectively named, the bronze -, gold -, silver -, and iron - times. The prologue and epilogue are overflowing in each other, indicating how each end of a cycle gives birth to another one. The music is larded with some narrative that consists of the works of famous poets such as Keats, Byron, and many others ... Then some illustrations were made and the whole ensemble was mounted in a video of ninety minutes, that is also on display at the art show.

You can listen to the abbreviated English version on You tube by clicking on this [link](#).

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLbQfb6Qu48hHUI4ISbvJlk-RIAaeZtnWx>

# The Vignettes of the different parts of the Libretto.

## FIRST ACT.

Prologue: The Sun.



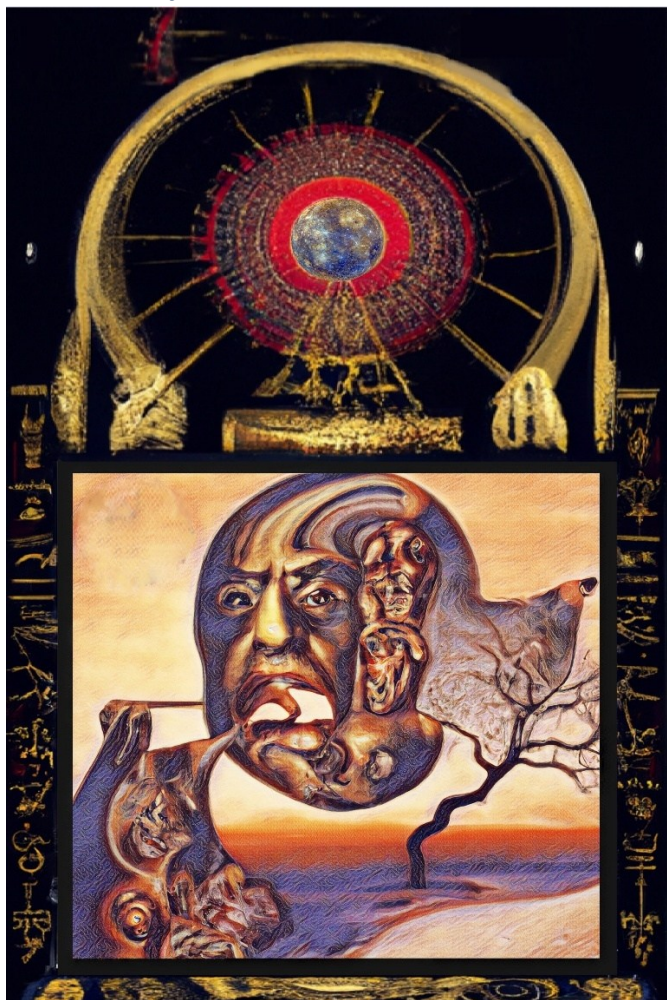
*Figure 2: Apollo. Acrylic on pressed cardboard W 50 cm x H 75 x D 0,5 cm by Shaharee Vyaas*

Once upon a time, the sun god reflected upon his existence and found it dull. So, he created a World Egg. When the egg spawned, it gave birth to Eris, the goddess of Chaos, who danced the universe into existence. Eris embraced the primeval ocean, out of which all life would grow.

When the breath of life grew strong and ready, the sun god dropped a seed into the ocean. Humankind emerged and looked at Eris for guidance. Eris took a golden apple upon which she wrote “for the fairest” and tossed it in the middle of the assembled crowd. Then she sat back and rejoiced in the fights that broke out among the humans to take possession of the golden apple. When the fight was over, humanity wept, honoring the pain of all those who lost a beloved one. The sun god recognized the pain, and felt the suffering was an important part of the continuing process of healing. He decided it was time for civilization to begin.

## 1<sup>st</sup> Movement: The Bronze Times

### Scene 1: Mercury.



*Figure 3: Mercury. Mixed techniques on pressed cardboard 50 cm x 75 cm x 0.5 cm by Shaharee Vyaas. Limited print edition \$ 599*

Civilization started when the World Egg spawned the gods' messenger: Mercury, the god of commerce, eloquence, and communication.

Mercury taught humankind to resolve their disputes through negotiation and trading goods instead of fighting about them. Soon it averred that some humans were better at accumulating goods and followers. The stronger ones started to distinguish themselves by wearing red hats, while their followers wore blue hats.

The red hats controlled all the resources and shared their wealth with the blue hats in return for their servitude. Through skillful maneuvering, one of the red hats became the biggest red hat and managed to become the king of all.

Meanwhile Eris was moving through the ranks of the blue hats, seaming discontent among them about the disproportionate amount of wealth the red hats allotted to themselves while they were sent home with just enough to feed their families. The blue hats revolted but were repressed violently by the red hats and their mercenaries. A revolution occurred that made the world tremble and since the blue hats outnumbered by far the red hats, the revolution ended with the beheading of The King and the dissolution of the red hat class.



*Figure 4: Budha (Mercury). Mixed techniques on pressed cardboard 40,6 x 40,6 cm by Shaharee Vyaas (2023)*

Mercury, also known as Budha in Sanskrit, represents communication, organization, and mental agility. As the Emblem of Intelligence, it is an avatar of that inspires strategy and alliances based on current events. Its influence on our lives can be seen in our communication skills and ability to organize our thoughts and ideas.

As the Emblem of Intelligence, Budha traverses ambiguity and materialism unaffected by the ignorance that surrounds him. We find Mercury manifest as search engines on the Internet, intelligence communities such as the CIA, and as the nervous system of the body.



## Scene 2: Venus



*Figure 5: Venus. Mixed techniques on pressed cardboard W 50 cm x H 75 x D 0,5 cm by Shaharee Vyaas Limited print edition \$ 599*

Because Mercury was at the end of his rope, the world egg spawned Venus: the goddess of love, to solve the dispute about a fairer distribution of the cake of wealth. She started by declaring that there would be no red or blue ones anymore but only purple

ones. Some purple ones would have bigger hats than others, but that would no longer be exclusively determined by how much wealth they accumulated. The big purple hats that were not rich managed to convince the rich big purple hats to give the small purple hats a fairer share of the wealth in return for their labor.

It was also convened that the new ruler would be elected every four years by all the purple ones and be called The President. To ensure that there would be a fairer power balance between rich and poor, he was placed under the supervision of a body of elected lawmakers.



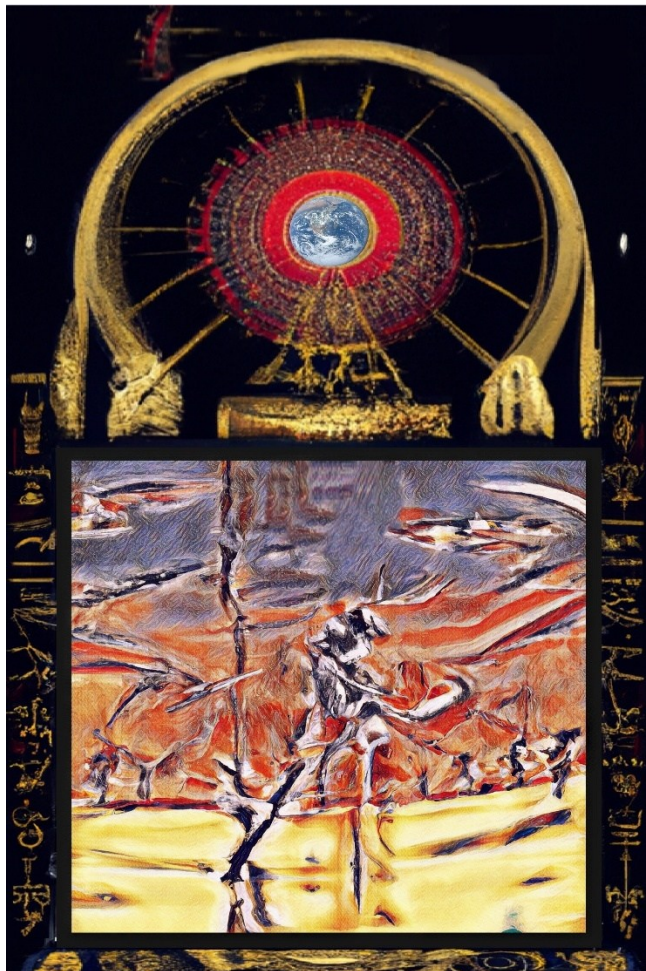
*Figure 6: Shukra (Venus). Mixed techniques on pressed cardboard 40,6 x 40.6 cm by Shaharee Vyaas (2023)*

As per classical astrological texts, Shukra, also known as Venus, represents femininity, beauty, wealth, luxury, and sex. Shukra is a Sanskrit word that means "clear" or "bright" and is a part of the Navagraha in the Hindu zodiac system. The classical planets,



including Venus, were referenced in the Atharvaveda around 1000 BCE. The planet Venus was deified and referred to as Shukra in various Puranas. Its beej mantra refers to the energy of Venus, invoked for enhancing love, attraction, beauty, and harmony in life.

### Scene 3: Terra



*Figure 7: Terra. Mixed techniques on pressed cardboard W 50 x H 75 x D 0,5 cm  
by Shaharee Vyaas. \$ 455*

After Venus considered her job done, she retreated, and Mythopia prospered under the governance of Terra: de goddess of abundance. Till the humans in their arrogance disturbed

nature's balance by wildly cutting trees and poorly conceived agricultural techniques. The fertile soil turned dry and unfertile, which opened the back door to Eris, who managed to seam discontent among some who felt they were being left out under the New Deal.

They called themselves the black hats and found themselves superior to the purple hats. Since they were a minority, the purple hats ignored them, but the black hats secretly built a war-machine to reach their goal of dominance. With the help of their war-machine, they started to subjugate the nearby purple hats, and forced them to wear yellow hats. The black hats confiscated the wealth of the yellow hats and committed them to forced labor to enlarge the war-machine.

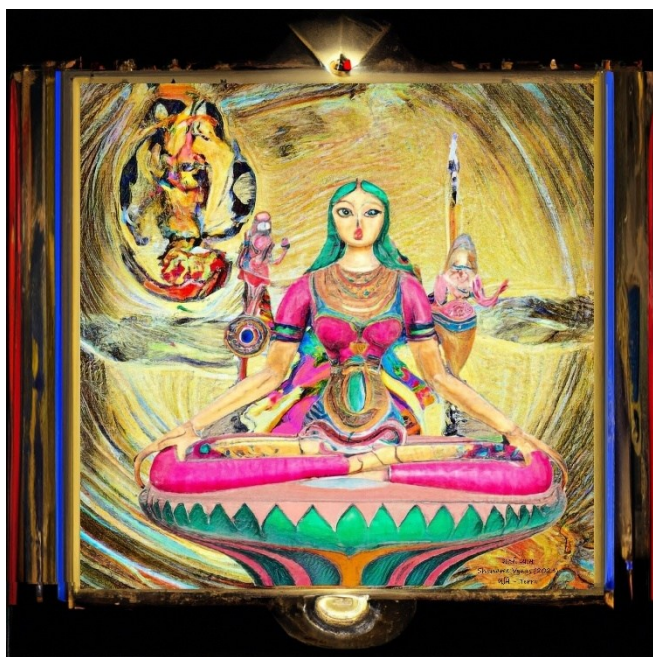


Figure 8: *Bhumi (Terra)*. Mixed techniques on cardboard 40,6 x 40,6 cm by Shaharee Vyaas (2023)

Terra – Bhumi also known as Bhudevi and Vasundhara, is a Hindu goddess who is the personification of the earth.

Bhuma is associated with wealth and prosperity; this goddess is believed to be the provider of material resources and worldly pleasures. People worship the goddess to get financial stability and success.

The responsibility of representing nature and all-natural elements is on Bhuma. The veneration of the goddess promotes the idea of sustainability and emphasizes the need to protect the environment. All human beings are encouraged to treat the earth with respect and live in harmony with nature.

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Movement: The Golden Times.

### Scene 4: Mars



*Figure 9: Mars. Mixed techniques on pressed cardboard H 75 cm x W 45x D 0,5 cm by Shaharee Vyaas.*

Finally, the president of the purple hats took notice of the plight of the farmers and the threat the black hats posed. The world egg spawned Mars, the god of war, and an agricultural guardian.

The god advised the purple ones first to regain their strength before confronting the black hats. Their president ordered the massive construction of waterworks and reforestation to compensate for the poor agricultural techniques that caused the erosion of the fertile soil, but while they were still at the job, the black hats attacked the purple ones by surprise and destroyed Mythopia's war fleet.

Mars wielded his spear and destroyed the black hats' war-machine with an enormous lightning bolt. Thus, the war was over, and Mars garlanded his spear with laurel leaves, symbolizing a peace that is won by military victory.



*Figure 10: Maṅgaḷa (Mars). Mixed techniques on pressed cardboard 40,6 x 40,6 cm by Shaharee Vyaas (2023)*

Mangala is the personification as well as the name for the planet Mars in Hindu literature. Also known as Lohita (lit. 'the red one'), he is the deity of anger, aggression, as well as war.



## Scene 5: Ceres



*Figure 11: Ceres. Mixed techniques on pressed cardboard H 75 cm x W 50 x D 0,5 cm by Shaharee Vyaas. Limited print edition \$ 599*

Now that peace was won, Mars yielded place to Ceres, the goddess of agriculture and fertility. Many people died in the war and the fields had been unattended for too long.

Under Ceres governance abundance returned to Mythopia. Humans learned to use the destructive energy of Mars for peaceful purposes, and the arts and science blossomed. Human civilization reached a peak, and swords were turned into ploughshares.

Still Eris managed to sow some discontent into the hearts of some smaller purple hats because their children did not have access to higher education, and they found that their labor was not well enough compensated. They organized unions and civil rights organizations to protest the firm grip the big industrial conglomerates and the churches had upon their lives.



Figure 12: Parvati (Ceres). Mixed techniques on pressed cardboard 40,6 x 40,6 cm by Shaharee Vyaas (2023)



Ceres - Parvati is worshipped as the goddess of harvest and protectress of women. Her festival, chiefly observed by women, is closely associated with the festival of her son Ganesha (Ganesh Chaturthi). The festival is popular in Maharashtra and Karnataka.

## Scene 6: Jupiter



Figure 13: Jupiter. Mixed techniques on pressed cardboard 50 x 75 x 0,5 cm by Shaharee Vyaas. \$ 455

Ceres felt inadequate to deal with this discontentment and asked her brother Jupiter, the god of the skies and the thunder to take it over since he was more apt to deal with class conflicts as most of the other gods saw him as the ultimate source of justice. Under Jupiter's influence all educational institutions were opened to the small purple hats, and grants were given to those who showed excellence but could not afford the tuition fees.

Eris was thinking: "If you can't beat them, join them" and poked the Mythopians to reach for the stars. Several spacecrafts were launched to explore the mysteries of the universe. This endeavor reached its apotheosis when the first Mythopian placed a foot on the moon while declaring "A small step for a man, a big step for humanity".

Jupiter fumed, "They want to steal the light of the gods" and slammed the door on humankind.



*Figure 14: Guru (Jupiter). Mixed techniques on pressed cardboard 40,6 x 40,6 cm by Shaharee Vyaas (2023)*

The planet Jupiter in Vedic astrology is known as GURU, BRIHASPATI, and DEVAGURA. In Sanskrit these names mean, "teacher, lord of light, and teacher to the gods." The expansive planet is attributed for character, seriousness, meditation, prayer, success, honor, and fortune, karma acquired in previous birth, divine favor, fame, religious thought, wealth, good character, honesty, justice, and health. He signifies offspring and wealth. In a human body, Jupiter governs lower abdomen, audibility, blood circulation, hip, and liver.

## SECOND ACT.

3<sup>rd</sup> Movement: The Silver Times.

Scene 7: Saturn.



*Figure 15: Saturn. Mixed techniques on pressed cardboard H 75 cm x W 50 x D 0,5 cm by Shaharee Vyaas. Limited print edition \$ 599*



When Jupiter left in anger, Eris managed to put her hands on the keys of the prison where he confined his father Saturn. Saturn is the god of dissolution and liberation. Saturn took a fashion for a mortal woman called Marylyn, but she was the mistress of the president of Mythopia. To satisfy Saturn and to advance her own agenda, Eris arranged for the assassination of the president of Mythopia.

Meanwhile, in a faraway country called Dystopia, the little purple hats overthrew the government of the big purple hats and called themselves green hats. The new president of Mythopia found them a threat to the dominance of Mythopia and declared war upon Dystopia. The Mythopian government sent an army to fight the green hats in their own country.

Saturn lost his interest in humankind when the mortal woman he loved committed suicide.



*Figure 16: Shani (Saturn). Mixed techniques on pressed cardboard 40.6 x 40.6 cm by Shaharee Vyaas (2023)*

In Vedic astrology, Saturn is one of the nine planets or grahas and is also known as "Shani." It is considered a malefic planet, which means that it is associated with negative effects in a person's life. However, it is also believed to be a planet of justice, discipline, and hard work.

## Scene 8: Uranus



Figure 17: Uranus. Mixed techniques on pressed cardboard H 75 cm x W 50 x D 0,5 cm by Shaharee Vyaas. Limited print edition \$ 599



Uranus rejoiced into the misfortune of the prodigious son who castrated and deposed him, to become the god of the night and the skies. Mythopia's space shuttles started to explode, limiting their space program to launch unmanned probes for commercial, scientific, and military purposes.

The little purple hats got tired of getting killed in a war against the green hats and did not see why Mythopia had to meddle with the way how the Dystopians wanted to organize their society. In protest, some of them started to wear little blue ribbons upon their little purple hats to indicate that the war only made the rich richer while the poor ones were sacrificed in wars that served Mythopia's hegemonic politics and business.

In return, some of the other purple hats, started to wear red ribbons to indicate their support for their country's war against the green hats. But eventually, the war started to wear out Mythopia's economy and its work force. The big purple hats decided it was time to leave Dystopia to its own devices and withdrew from the war, leaving the green hats in charge of Dystopia.



*Figure 18: Indra (Uranus). Mixed techniques on cardboard 40.6 x 40.6 cm by Shaharee Vyaas (2023)*

The planet Uranus, according to the Indian mythology, was considered the god of the sky. Also, the literal meaning of the word “Uranus” is the personification of sky as a god. The god of sky in the Indian mythology is believed to be Lord Indra. So Indra is the Indian name of the planet Uranus.

## Scene 9: Neptune



*Figure 19: Neptune. Mixed techniques on pressed cardboard H 75 cm x W 50 cm x D 0,5 cm by Shaharee Vyaas Limited print edition \$ 599*

A severe drought struck big parts of Mythopia. Harvests failed and many Mythopians lost their houses and belongings in major bush fires. The economy started to falter and disputes about water rights erupted between cities and farmers. Neptune, the god of the sea and the water wells emerged.

He fostered consciousness among the Mythopians about heeding nature's balance. The Mythopian big purple hats were afraid that his advice would affect their industry and chose to ignore it. Instead, they started a trade war with Dystopia, who retaliated by boycotting Mythopia's soyabean farmers.

Out of anger, Neptune started to support Dystopia's attempt to break the hegemony of Mythopia's fleet over the oceans. Soon the import of all kinds of raw materials to Mythopia became more expensive while more and more farmers were edging closer to the abyss of bankruptcy. Lots of small purple hats lost their jobs and even some of the bigger hats their fortunes. Eris thrived and needed little to do to create a wave of discontent. Soon everyone threw away their purple hats and started to wear red and blue hats again.



*Figure 20: Varun (Neptune). Mixed techniques on pressed cardboard 40.6 x 40.6 cm by Shaharee Vyaas (2023).*

Neptune also known as Varuna can be recognized as the illusion that we base our path on including the difficulties and the success that come with choosing it. Varuna is the Vedic deity popularly known as the god of oceans. Neptune is a very splendid and striking planet that has the reputation of holding deception and idealism. It is a planet that leads to a lot of misconceptions and lies just as it is in command of faith and trust.



#### 4<sup>th</sup> Movement: The Iron Times.

##### Scene 10: Pluto



Figure 21: Pluto. Mixed techniques on pressed cardboard h 75 cm x W 50 cm x D 0.5 cm by Shaharee Vyaas. Limited print edition \$ 599

When the political climate in Mythopia degraded and mass shootings increased, Pluto, the god of the underworld made his entrance. He found the planet overpopulated and its wealth unevenly distributed. He used his key to open the gate of the underworld. A pandemic broke out and the already crippled economy of Mythopia degraded further. Many people died and lots of small business went into bankruptcy. Only a couple of big consortiums were thriving upon the crisis while wild capitalism made a revival. Public schools became playgrounds for street gangs and higher education institutions were reduced to degree mills that were only teaching the test. The political elite of Mythopia degenerated into a couple of self-serving clans who were inciting their followers into violent clashes.

The destitute citizens of Mythopia took their grievances to the streets and started to loot and plunder. Finally, Mythopia's government had to declare martial law and send in the army because the police could not manage the violent crowd anymore. Eris exulted.



*Figure 22: Yama (Pluto). Mixed techniques on pressed cardboard 40.6 x 40.6 cm by Shaharee Vyaas (2023)*

Pluto is in Hinduism named Yama, the god of death and justice. He works as the death agent particularly pointing out the death of a desire or a wish you hold or someone close to you. Pluto always works in destructive, chaotic, cold, sudden, cyclic, subtle ways. Upheaval, struggle, temptation, envy, turning point, revival, recreation are some of the significations of Pluto in a person and his behavior. It can be noticed in activities signifying crime, underground activities like mining caves, minerals, and stones etc. Scams, scandals, under the table activities, and political problems are caused by the influence of Pluto. Hence, it is known as the planet of the underworld.



## Scene 11: Charon



Figure 23: Charon. Mixed techniques on pressed cardboard H 75 cm x W 50 cm x D 0.5 cm by Shaharee Vyaas. Limited print edition \$ 599

His job done, Pluto transferred his tenure over to Charon, the ferryman of the underworld.

The Mythopians got tired of their traditional policymakers and elected a demagogue to become their next president. This president declared that all evils that were bestowed upon Mythopia were caused by the denizens of Dystopia. He started to impose trade embargoes and ordered Mythopia's warships to regain the dominance over the oceans. Soon the war drums started to sound. But the Dystopians were better prepared for war than their divided adversaries, and Mythopia was facing a humiliating defeat. In a last effort to turn the receding tide, their president decided to use the Spear that Mars had left behind when he retreated.

But without the guidance of Mars, the lightning bolt rebounded and hit Mythopia. Charon ferried the last remnants of civilization to the underworld.



*Figure 24: Tarakeshwara (Sharon). Mixed techniques on pressed cardboard 40.6 x 40.6 cm by Shaharee Vyaas (2023).*

Charon - Tarakeshwara is a form of the Hindu god Shiva in his role as a psychopomp, a ferryman or deliverer of the soul into freedom from rebirth (moksha).

## Scene 12: Eris



Figure 25: Eris. Mixed techniques on pressed cardboard H75 cm x W 50 cm D 0,5 cm by Shaharee Vyaas. Limited print edition \$ 599.

Eris presides over the ruins of what remains of Mythopia.

The central government of Mythopia had collapsed and the country's infrastructure was in ruins. Only small pockets of order ruled by local warlords remained, while robber gangs were roaming the open plains, plundering food and the remaining reusable goods.

In the end, when Eris regained her throne, she declaims:

*I am chaos. I am the substance from which your artists and scientists build rhythms. I am the spirit with which your children and clowns laugh in happy anarchy. I am chaos. I am alive, and I tell you that you are free....*

... sits down upon her throne that slowly closes and becomes again the World Egg rising back towards the skies.





*Figure 26: Kali (Eris). Mixed techniques on pressed cardboard 40.6 x 40.6 cm by Shaharee Vyaas (2023)*

Kali is a major Hindu goddess who is the embodiment of the power of destruction. The goddess is said to only destroy what is ready to be reborn. The name Kali means Kala or force of time. It is upon the ultimate, unchanging time-less reality that Kali (time) does her dance, causing the constant cycles of creation, life, and death of all things in the universe.

## Epilogue: The Sun

The World Egg returns, and the rest of the pantheon performs a choreography around Eris and Apollo.

Tis true without lying, certain and most true.

That which is below is like that which is above  
and that which is above is like that which is below  
to do the miracle of one only thing

And as all things have been and arose from two by the mediation of one:  
so all things have their birth from this two by adaptation.

The Sun is its father,  
And Eris its mother,  
the wind hath carried it in its belly,  
the sea is its nurse.  
The father of all life in the whole world is here.  
Its force or power is entire if it be converted into earth.

Separate thou the earth from the fire,  
the subtle from the gross  
sweetly with great industry.  
It ascends from the earth to the heaven  
and again it descends to the earth  
and receives the force of things superior and inferior.

By this means you shall have the glory of the whole world  
and thereby all obscurity shall fly from you.

Its force is above all force,  
for it vanquishes every subtle thing and penetrates every solid thing.

So was the world created.

From this are and do come admirable adaptations  
where of the means is here in this.

Hence I am called Hermes Trismegistus,



having the three parts of the philosophy of the whole world

That which I have said of the operation of the Sun is accomplished and ended,  
To make place for a new beginning.

## A Cosmology of Civilization: The Novel.

The title of the novel, *The Maharajagar*, is a self-coined portmanteau through combining parts of the Hindu words; **mahaan** (great), **hare** (green) and **ajagar** (dragon). The main purpose of this novel is to entertain the reader with a historical fantasy: a spellbinding epic tale of ambition, anarchy and absolute power, set against the canvas of North America, Europe and Asia during World War 1 and the ensuing great depression.

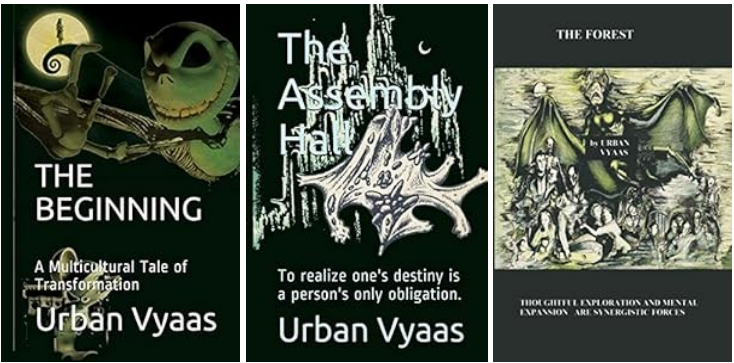
This derivative of the Mahabharata contains several textual, biographical, temporal, and topographical discrepancies during its adaption to a contemporary novel, as do the names and some facts derived from the lives of real people in a variety of often unexpected ways to recreate the life-stories of its protagonists.

The novel uses metaphors, symbols, ambiguities, and overtones which gradually link themselves together to form a network of connections binding the whole work. This system of connections gives the novel a wide, more universal significance as the tale becomes a modern microcosm presented from a fictive metaphysical perspective and can be described as the "mythic method": a way of controlling, of ordering, of giving a shape and give significance to the immense panorama of futility and anarchy which is contemporary history.

Although this is a work of fiction, there are nevertheless three meta-themes interwoven with the tale of the Maharajagar;

- The All is a projection of informational modulated energy waves by a cosmic horizon on the time-space continuum.
- Synchronicity is a phenomenon that comes to us with a message.
- The Long Now is the only time concept to give a lasting meaning to our thinking and, hopefully consequent, actions.

These principles offer a perspective from where a powerful code of conduct can emanate, transforming our lives to a new experience of freedom, happiness, and love.



*Figure 27: Covers of the three first parts of The Maharajagar that are already published*

The series is conceived as a pentalogy and the 4<sup>th</sup> part is at this moment under redaction.

## The Animate and the Inanimate in Art (5).

### Introduction

I found inspiration for this series of paintings in “The Animate and Inanimate”, an essay by William James Sidis, (BOSTON, RICHARD G. BADGER, THE GORHAM PRESS, 1925, 145 p.).

Sidis used to be a child prodigy who lived in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and some claim that he had the highest IQ ever, although there are no known records to substantiate this claim. At the age of 16 he graduated from Harvard, and at the age of 17 he lectured mathematics. However, he was a complete failure as a teacher. The students ridiculed him because of his young age and his precocious mind couldn't muster the patience and didactic skills needed to transfer his knowledge to those whose thinking processes were not as quick to grasp his insights of advanced mathematics.

Next, he ventured upon the path of socialist activism and was also there a complete failure who only escaped a 15-month prison sentence because his parents struck a deal with the district attorney to commit him instead to a psychiatric clinic.

It was during that time that his thoughts about the consequences of his mathematical analysis of the second law of thermodynamics condensed into the hypothesis that he described in his book *The Animate and the Inanimate*. The book went mostly unnoticed till a copy of it resurfaced from an attic in 1979. One can only assume that he was too much ahead of his time and most of the ideas he developed sounded too alien in their contemporary context. While some of his thoughts still sound a little far fledged, they became serious working hypotheses for 21<sup>st</sup> century quantum physicists and cosmologists.

The second law of thermodynamics (in the simplified form presented here) says that no matter what process takes place inside a system, its entropy must increase or remain the same in the limit of a reversible process. This second law of thermodynamics brought in the idea of an energy-level of unavailable energy (or entropy) that is constantly increasing.

Sidis' thoughts were based on the idea of the reversibility of everything in time; that is, that every type of process has its time-image, a corresponding process which is its exact reverse with respect to time. He reasoned that since this accounts for all other physical laws, it should also account for the second law of thermodynamics.

In relation to the universe, his theory represents the idea of what is known as cyclical change. He suggests that life works through a reversal of the second law of thermodynamics; and that all living organisms are a result of this phenomenon. Without entropy — which anchors the second law of thermodynamics — we couldn't tell a previous moment from the next, and so it seemed like without entropy there would be no time. To imagine otherwise — to question the dictate of irreversibility — would be nothing less than to negate the laws of physics.

"Time is the substance I am made of," Borges wrote in his exquisite refutation of time an epoch before we time-substantiated creatures came to discover the staggering strata of scientific fact beneath his poetic truth — our entire experience of selfhood is rooted in the neuropsychology of time and the bridge to other selves that we call empathy is a kind of internal clock.

Sidis' hypothesis was an inquiry into the origin and nature of life, which anticipated Fermi's paradox, inspired Buckminster Fuller, and explored black holes fourteen years before the first major work on this cosmic reality that Einstein himself had theorized

but ultimately dismissed as a delightful plaything of mathematics.

At the heart of his theory of the origin of life is the idea that “there was no origin, but only a constant development and change in form.” The direction of change is what we call time.

Drawing on Emmy Noether’s revolutionary work on symmetry, which had shaken centuries of physics a few years earlier, Sidis considered the undeniable difference between the transformation of energy from positive to negative — from life to non-life — and its transformation in the opposite direction, deemed impossible by the laws of physics:

It might be supposed that this difference between one kind of transformation and its inverse indicates an irreversible law; and... if we give up the second law of thermodynamics, we must replace it by the statement that all physical laws are reversible. Hence it would seem as though we had arrived at an inconsistency. But, if we examine the question, we will see that one form of transformation is not the actual reverse of the other, but that each process is symmetrical in time, and is really the reverse of itself.

Sidis proposed a model of the universe that resembles “a sort of three-dimensional checkerboard,” made of black and white “bricks” — distinct regions of positive and negative energy, in which the positive, light-emitting portions constitute the white bricks and the negative, light-absorbing portions the black. In such a universe, where we naturally fall into the positive energy regions by virtue of being alive, we would only see the white brick we are in. The surrounding black bricks would not only remain invisible — for they are absorbing the light that is the sight-sense of consciousness — but would also absorb the light from any white bricks beyond them, thus rendering them also invisible from the vantage point of our brick. And so, while energy is

constantly flowing in all directions — the directional flow we call time — we can only see it vanish into our neighboring black brick. An organized mind must conceive time as flowing towards that direction in which there is more reserve energy (that's how Sidis called entropy) in that part of the universe. This may be either direction in time, either that which is, in our minds, forwards or backwards; but, if we conceive of past and future with this mental definition, the second law of thermodynamics follows as a necessary mental law.

This is where New Age demagogues, with their signature combination of superficial understanding of actual science and rash readiness to hijack selective bits as affirmation of their ideas, might find a foothold. But no — Sidis is very clear in preempting the basic misappropriation by describing the experience of time as a sine wave of available energy, undulating vertically between positive and negative, while moving horizontally along the arrow of time from past to future — but moving by constant up-down fluctuation. Imagine a mythic sea serpent swimming in some direction amid a boundless ocean, its glistening body curving above the surface (let's call this the area of positive energy), then curving below (negative energy).

A mind pinned to any point of the sine would look up to the crest of the wave and call that memory and look down to the trough and call that time. Hence... the second law of thermodynamics is to be interpreted as a mental law, as the law determining the direction in which a given mind will conceive of time as flowing. And yet, time itself is not a mental phenomenon, but only the appearance of flow. There is no more flow in time than in space, and either direction in time may be called past and the other future, without any difference in the properties of the universe. But the actual existence of intervals of time we must assume as being a physical reality, and necessary for the explanation of physical phenomena.



## How this worked out in my art

Sidis developed 100 years ago a hypothesis that correlates with the object of mystic cyclical synthetism that inspires all my projects in whatever realm.

When I wrote my manifest “The All is an Egg”, I had no knowledge of Sidis’ musings. I wish I had; it would have saved me countless days of puzzling the world together again. Not to mention that The Animate and The Inanimate go into territories that I didn’t even consider, but that aver to be crucial oversights. I’ve mentioned it already before; we very often discover that our proud inspirations are just updated history.

On the other hand, although Sidis’ light shone bright during his childhood and adolescence, he soon chose to fade away from the public forum, preferring instead to work menial jobs to earn a living. An unfeeling obituary appeared in The New York Times immediately after his dead in 1944 at the age of 46, stating that he was found in his room “in a Brookline boarding house, apparently destitute.” Unmentioned was the book in which he peered far past the era’s horizon of truth, presaging a century of physics, and unmooring our millennia-deep certitudes about life and death.

Though Sidis’ hypothesis has a sound mathematical base, it falls outside the teleology of the scientific praxis since the current state of our technology doesn’t allow us to empirically test his hypothesis through experimentation.

The Animate and the Inanimate champions the universe as infinite—he discusses positive and negative tendencies. Regarding the origin of the universe, he claimed there wasn’t one — life (the universe) has always existed.

Evolution has driven the changes humans document through historical records and scientific discovery. Stars are alive—

“astrobiology”—and over epochs they finish a process of reversing the second law of thermodynamics.

Another belief was asteroids likely brought microbiological life to Earth.

These are all themes that offer very interesting visions upon the reality and are recurring subjects into the wide variety of my creative work.

The style I use in most of my other visual works is usually determined by the subject and the message that I want to communicate.

For this project I decided to stick to the impasto technique with strong curly brush lines, with yellow and blue as the dominant color palette. While the technique suggests a big degree of turbulence, the colors create a calming glow. It’s a style that Vincent van Gogh used for his painting *Starry Night*, and that seemed to me appropriate for the subject at hand in this series.

## Evolution: Entrance or Exit?



*Figure 28: Evolution: Entrance or Exit? Acrylic on pressed cardboard W 60 cm x H 90 cm x D 0.5 cm by Shaharee Vyaas (Nov 18, 2021). Limited print edition \$ 499*

This painting features an octopod hovering in front of the gates of evolution, watched over by a malevolent shoggoth.

A scientific paper claims that octopods are actually aliens brought to Earth by frozen meteors. Why the octopus in particular? "Its large brain and sophisticated nervous system, camera-like eyes, flexible bodies, instantaneous camouflage via the ability to switch color and shape are just a few of the striking features that appear suddenly on the evolutionary scene." This terrestrial evolution occurred thanks to "cryopreserved squid and/or octopi's eggs" crashing into the ocean on comets "several hundred million years ago."

Above the gate floats a shoggoth. Everyone who's familiar with the Lovecraft universe knows that the shoggoths were a creation of the elder ones to serve them as slaves. In such a society the Elder Ones were free to pursue their interests in art, science, and architecture. However, the obvious dark side to such a society is where one is free to pursue one's interests, there must be a group of entities present to perform the necessary tasks and labor to keep society going; this work was conducted by the Shoggoths.

While the enslavement of the Shoggoths allowed the Elder One's civilization to flourish, it was also their downfall. It appears that when the Shoggoths acquired the ability to reproduce through fission, it came along with a "dangerous degree of accidental intelligence", which caused problems for the Elder Ones. A shoggoth can shape itself whatever organs or into shapes it finds necessary at that moment; however, in its usual state it tends to sport a roiling profusion of eyes, mouths, and pseudopodia. It could be considered as the summum of evolutionary progress by our actual standards.

As such it remains unclear if the octopod stage marks the beginning or the end of our evolutionary tract. Or both.

What goes up, goes down.

Sidis spent little time on the existence of a neutral state in his hypothesis. While I agree with Sidis that the neutral state is a rather short-lived phenomenon, it's nevertheless one that most humans are familiar with: it's called death, the moment where a living organism stops functioning, shortly before it starts decaying. Death and immobility mark the borderline between the positive and the negative universe, in this painting represented by the mountain ridge on the foreground.



*Figure 29. What goes up, goes down. Acrylic on pressed cardboard W 60 cm x H 90 cm x D 0.5 cm. Limited print edition \$ 575*

Here be Dragons.

... in Latin: *hic sunt dracones* was an expression that marked dangerous or unexplored territories on a medieval map. This painting suggests that some of our drones for space exploration may stumble upon some real ones. But those thoughts might be worries for people who live in a couple of centuries.

Up to now, we thought that all intelligent alien life forms should be carbon-based organisms who evolved under similar ecological conditions. This was narrow-minded thinking since human civilization is making progress towards the creation of a silicon-based intelligence.

In the wake of Sidis' hypothesis concerning the existence of intelligent life inside a star, astrologists hypothesized that such intelligence could exist. Rather than relying on pure nuclear interactions to play the role of DNA, scientists propose cosmic strings and magnetic monopoles. Cosmic strings are hypothetical fissures that might have formed when the early universe underwent a phase transition during the creation of matter. Magnetic monopoles are particles that have only one magnetic pole (north or south) rather than all known magnetic particles that have both. While there is no evidence that either of these exist, theoretical work suggests they might.

It's all very speculative and mostly unprovable. However, scientists propose that if such life does arise in the core of a star, it would need to consume some of the core's energy to survive. As a result, their star might cool faster than predicted by stellar models. After which they would need another star.



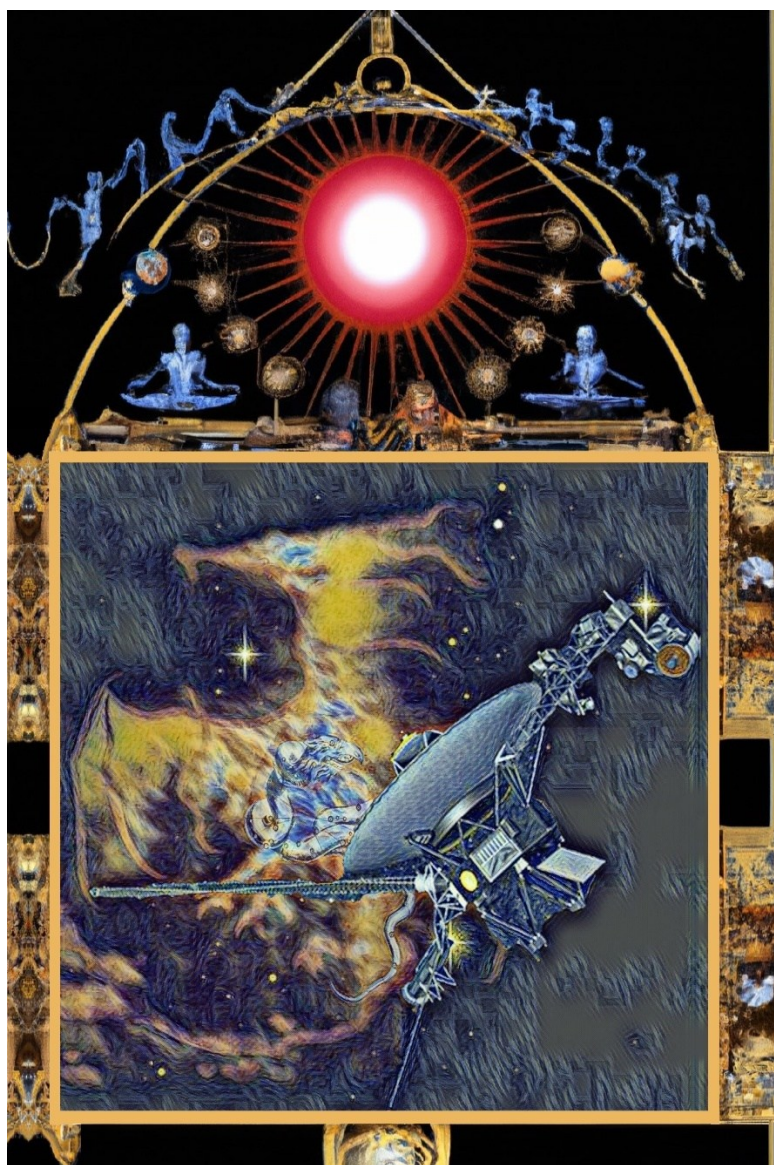


Figure 30: *Here be Dragons*. Acrylic on pressed cardboard W 60 x H 90 x D 0.5 cm, Limited print edition \$ 575



## The yin yang perception

When we can see events in the perspective of Yin and Yang, then we can begin to understand how the future (Yang) is rooted in the past (Yin) and gain some insight into how the present will come to be out of the future. In this way, understanding the connections between the past, present, and future gives us a picture that is both bigger and more dynamic. It also gives us the understanding we need to live more wholesome and complete lives at every level.

Learning to perceive things from the Yin-Yang point of view, from the perspective of both Time and Space, provides us with a way to see into the true nature of the reality of things.



*Figure 31. The Yin Yang Vision. Acrylic on pressed cardboard W 60 x H90 x D 0,5 cm.*

## The Butterfly Effect

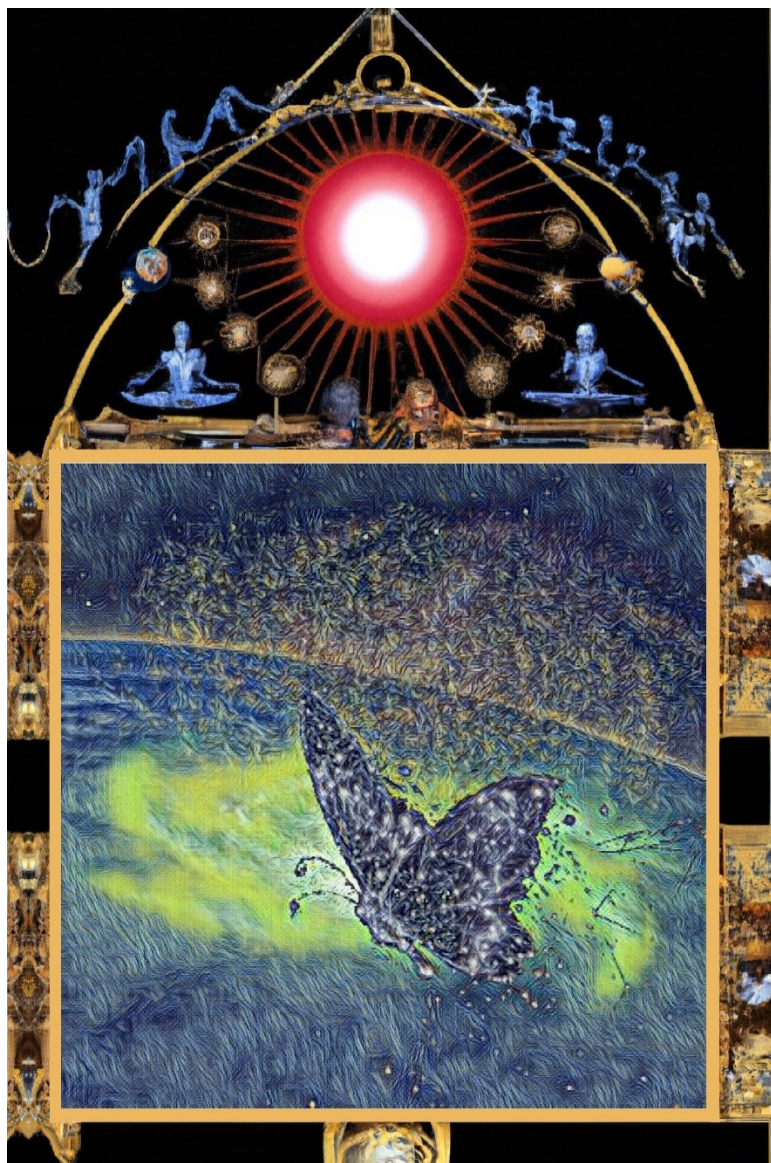


Figure 32: The Butterfly Effect. Acrylic on canvas 80 x 80 x D 1,5 cm. \$ 279

There is an iconic scene in “Jurassic Park” where Jeff Goldblum explains chaos theory. “It simply deals with unpredictability in complex systems,” he says. “The shorthand is ‘the butterfly effect.’ A butterfly can flap its wings in Peking, and in Central Park, you get rain instead of sunshine.”

In the visual arts world, butterfly effect means the singularity whereby a minute contained change in a complex system can have large effects elsewhere and it's a term used to describe how the future state of a complex system can change hugely based on small changes in the original state.

Artist Tasha Wahl started in 2013 a micro-philanthropy movement that combined Mahatma Gandhi’s popular concept, “Be the change you want to see in the world” with Edward Lorenz’s “Butterfly Effect” theory that even the softest flutter of a wing can affect the molecules around it, setting off a chain reaction that produces major change.

The 1952 short story [\*A Sound of Thunder\*](#) by [\*Ray Bradbury\*](#) explores the concept of how the death of a butterfly in the past could have drastic changes in the future is a representation of the butterfly effect, and has been used as an example of how to consider chaos theory and the physics of time travel. The influence of the concept can be seen in the films [\*The Terminator\*](#), [\*Back to the Future\*](#), [\*X-Men: Days of Future Past\*](#), and [\*Cloud Atlas\*](#), as well as an [\*episode\*](#) of the television series [\*The Simpsons\*](#).

Butterfly as a symbol can also represent transition, celebration, and lightness. Butterfly is the power of air, the ability to float upon a breeze.

Art survives through its effect on others.

## A Society in Transit

*Arundhati Roy //The system will collapse if we refuse to buy what they are selling...their ideas, their version of history, their wars...their notion of inevitability. Remember this: We may be many, and they be few... Another world is not only possible, she is on her way. On a quiet day, I can hear her breathing.*

The traditional systems that govern civilization are currently in transit. The digital revolution has transformed the way we live, work, and interact with each other. It has facilitated communication and democratized access to information, accelerating the pace of change in society.

This has also impacted the way we think, learn, and consume media. The evolution of technology has allowed us to be more mobile and connected, resulting in a more globalized and interconnected world. As a passenger on Earth, we should be mindful of the impact this rapidly changing digital landscape has on the natural world and the delicate balance of our planet's ecosystems.



## Assimilation.



*Figure 33: Assimilation. Acrylic on canvas W 120 x H 120 x D 0,5 cm. Limited print edition \$599*

This painting has the tension-field between individuality and cultural assimilation for subject. While it's a generally accepted fact that progress of civilization is a process of assimilation, one

must conclude that inevitably there is going to exist a tension-field between progress and multiculturalism.

The best example that comes to mind to illustrate this comes from the Star Trek series and is called The Borg.

The Borg are cybernetic organisms (cyborgs) linked in a hive mind called "the Collective". The Borg co-opt the technology and knowledge of other alien species to the Collective through the process of "assimilation": forcibly transforming individual beings into "drones" by injecting nanoprobes into their bodies and surgically augmenting them with cybernetic components. The Borg's goal is "achieving perfection".

When it comes to the progress of civilization, "achieving perfection" would probably be on top of the list. Lots of social projects exist where people have been experimenting with utopian ideas to create a perfect community. There are socialist, capitalist, monarchical, democratic, anarchist, ecological, feminist, patriarchal, egalitarian, hierarchical, racist, left-wing, right-wing, reformist, free love, nuclear family, extended family, gay, lesbian and many more utopias [ Naturism, Nude Christians, ...] Utopianism, some argue, is essential for the improvement of the human condition. But if used wrongly, it becomes dangerous. Utopia has an inherent contradictory nature here.

After assimilation by The Borg, a drone's race and gender become "irrelevant". Does that ring a bell with someone? The strange thing is most liberal thinking people also promote cultural diversity but simultaneously want to reject from these cultures all aspects that conflict with race or gender equality.

It is a puzzle that is difficult to resolve. It's clear that the Western culture is at this instance the dominating civilization model and that other cultures have absorbed enormous portions of its realizations, but sadly enough also a big amount of the flaws that are inherent to this worldview.

The fast food, the secondary orality through TV addiction, the waste of natural resources, an economic system that dangerously depends upon continuous growth, a democratic

political system that is dominated by a couple of self-serving clans, ... just to name a couple of them.

Civilization is a circular process and at this moment it moves towards a recalibration where different cultures start to question openly the superiority of the Western cultural model over their own (upgraded) traditional values.

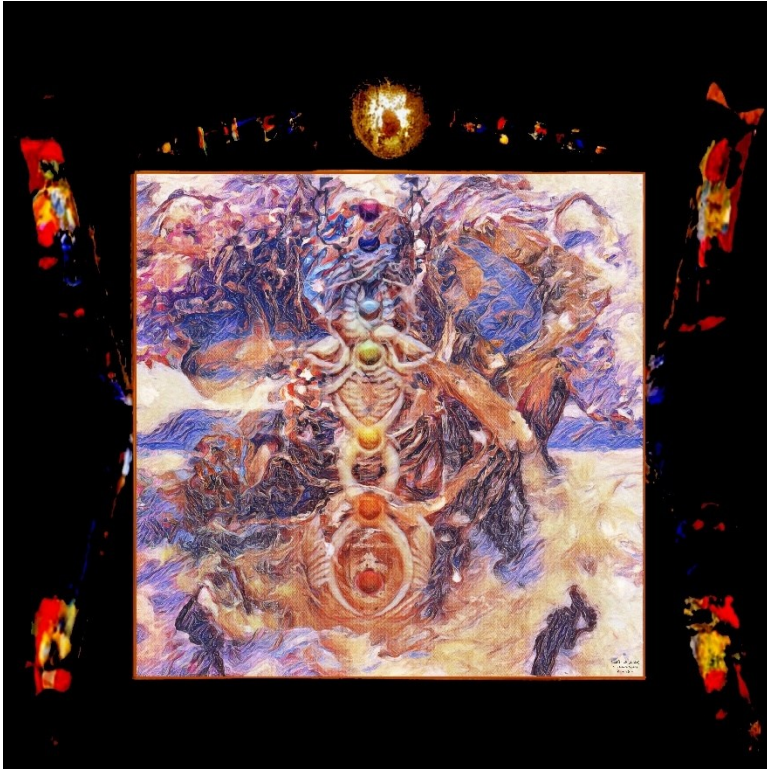
These issues lay at the foundation of the painting "Assimilation" (acrylic on canvas 30' x 30').

At the center of the painting, you find a cube, which is my version of The Borg, a metaphysical mechanism that assimilates the different cultures towards "perfection". This cube is surrounded by a circle dominated by Lord Yama, the Hindu god of Death and Justice, the ultimate assimilator. The next ring represents the wheel of change that symbolizes the circular and multicultural aspect of the civilization process. At the fringes of the painting I've depicted some aspects of the current evolution of civilization. I've also used the metaphor of the cyclotron to put forward how technology is one of the driving forces of assimilation, together with the spreading of the fast-food concept and the expansion of the internet.



## Transitional themes (2023)

### Kundalini



*Figure 34: Kundalini. Acrylic on pressed carboard 60 x 60 x D 0,5 cm by Shaharee Vyaas (2023)*

DNA and genetics allow us to explore the universe within ourselves. With modern science, we have discovered that the cosmos and our bodies are interconnected. Understanding the vital role DNA plays in our existence and the world around us can help shed light on the mysteries of the universe. By unlocking the secrets of our genetic code, we can come to understand our connection to the world and everything in it.

Indian metaphysics explores the concept of kundalini, a serpent-like energy coiled at the base of the spine. Through spiritual practices, this energy can be awakened and rise up through the seven chakras, leading to expanded consciousness and enlightenment.

This concept is often linked to the structure of DNA, which also resembles a coiled serpent, connecting the physical and spiritual realms. The awakening of kundalini is capable to bring about profound transformations and can be a transformative journey for those who embark upon it.

Together, these concepts help us better understand the intricate web of life in our world and the nature of the universe as a whole.

## The Big Migration



*Figure 35: The Big Migration. Acrylic on cardboard 60 x 60 x 0.5 cm by Shaharee Vyaas (2023)*

The Big Migration is a surrealist painting depicting a fantastical migration of humanity through the solar system, but it also carries a deeper message about environmental damage and overpopulation. The painting shows a mass exodus of humans and animals from an earth that had become uninhabitable due to these issues. The creatures in the painting are fleeing their dying world and seeking a new home. However, upon every new planet they settle faces the same fate as Earth.

The surrealism in the painting represents the absurdity of the situation, where humans are blindly repeating their mistakes instead of finding sustainable solutions.

The surpressionist imagery emphasizes the gravity of the situation, and it serves as a warning against the continued neglect of our planet.

The Big Migration urges viewers to consider the consequences of their actions and to take steps to protect the environment for future generations.

## The Zone



Figure 36: *The Zone*. Acrylic on pressed cardboard 60 x 90 cm by Shaharee Vyaas (2023).

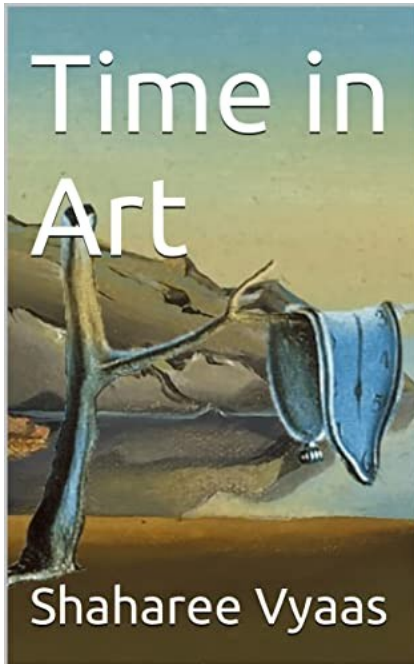
This painting started as a rather formal investigation into color and line, this work gives a more impressionistic interpretation of the point where conscious and subconscious thinking processes confluence.

It is a collection of free associations about the metaphoric, tectonic representation of the no man's land between the Noosphere and the individual while imposing stricter geometrical constraints upon the conception of the canvas.

# Time in Modern Art

## Essay

This essay is not another guide to show the evolution of art through time, but about the evolution of our perception of time through art.



*Figure 37: Cover of the essay Time in Art by Shaharee Vyaas.*

Time is one of the most common commodities of any artistic work. Yet it is also one of the least comprehended ingredients. Art exists in time as well as space. Time implies change and movement; movement implies the passage of time. Movement and time, whether actual or an illusion, are crucial elements in art although we may not be aware of it. An artwork may incorporate actual motion; that is, the artwork itself moves in some way. Or it may incorporate the illusion of,

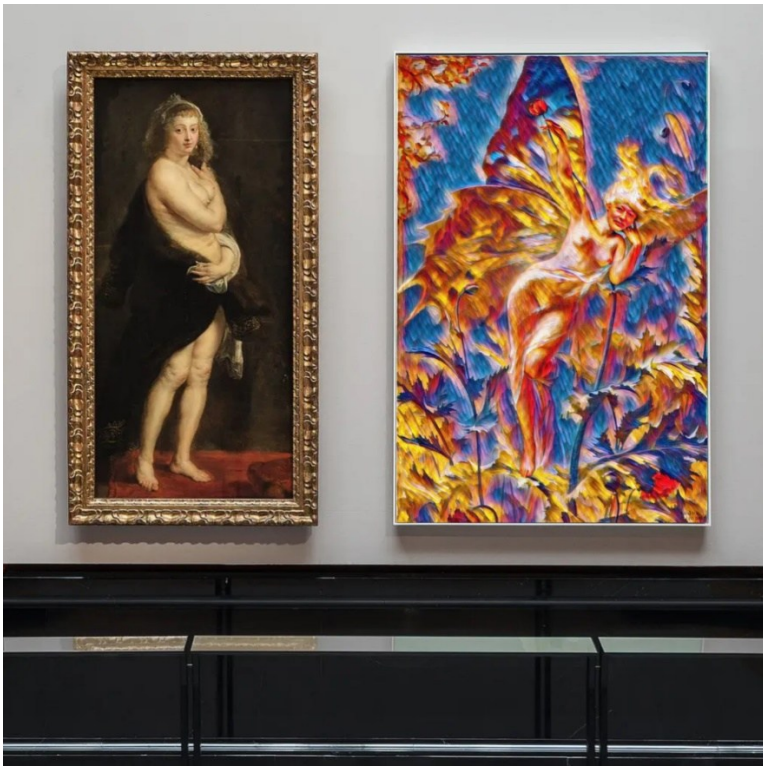
or implied movement. For those who're interested in knowing more about the phenomenon Time in Art, I can recommend my essay. Print length 117 pages - Language English.

The cover image consists of a readaptation of Dali's painting "The Perseverance of Memory".



## The Shape of Time

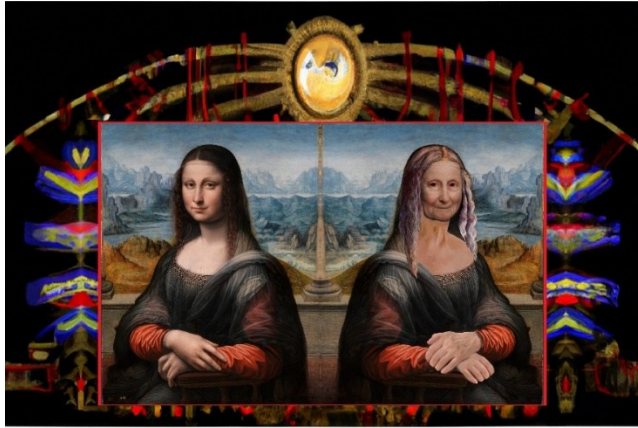
The Shape of Time was an exhibition of remarkable artworks dating from 1800 to the present day. Borrowed from some of the most important museums and private collections across the world, they were placed within the rooms of the Picture Gallery in dialogue with our own historical objects and artists, as steppingstones to lead us from the point at which our own collections end to the point at which we stand today. Visitors were invited to look simultaneously backwards and forwards between objects made many centuries years apart, either of which has the potential to alter our experience of the other. In the spirit of George Kubler's groundbreaking 1962 book of the same name (*The Shape of Time*), the pairings sought to reveal the flow of time and space and the evolution of ideas and images across centuries and cultures, and to suggest a view of art history as a reservoir of ideas drawn from repeatedly over time.



*Figure 38: Peter Paul Rubens' portrait of Helena Fourment next to a 21st century nude by Shaharee Vyaas at an exposition in the Kunsthistorisches Museum; Maria Lassnig Stiftung*

## Time-induced famous portraits

Progressing or regressing famous portraits in time and exposing them next to each other invites the viewer to approach them from a dynamic perspective.



*Figure 39: Who has never wondered how la Gioconda could have looked like 60 years after Da Vinci painted her when she was in her prime?*



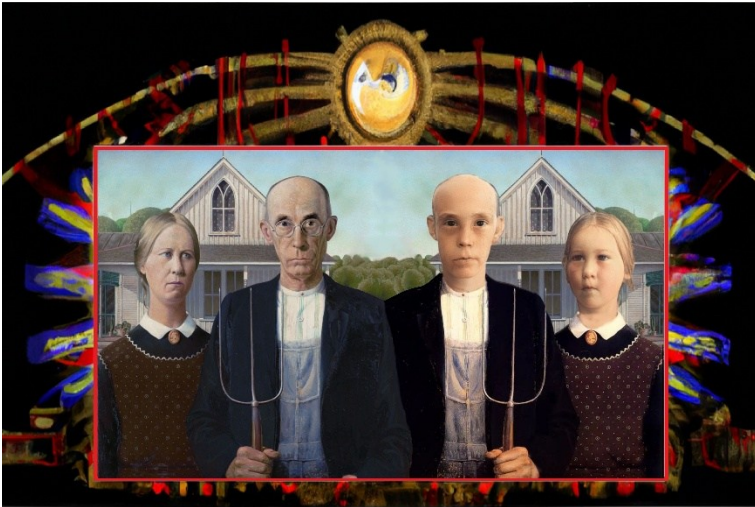
*Figure 40: Or Wayland's Blue boy once he reached adulthood?*



Figure 41: Old Woman Saying Grace, Known as 'The Prayer without End' c. 1656 by Nicolaes Maes. 'Prayer without end' gets a sinister dimension when you regress the lady's age with about 50 years and hang the result next to each other



Figure 42: Whistler's mother was never a person who took life lightly, but a study of her portrait with some age regression, gives a more in-depth glance into her puritan soul.



*Figure 43: American Gothic is a 1930 oil on beaverwood painting by the American Regionalist artist Grant Wood. Depicting a Midwestern farmer and his daughter standing in front of their Carpenter Gothic style home, with in the painting on the left side the same (to their childhood regressed) subjects. It made one consider what might have been and what was.*



## Venice : A psycho-historical Map and character



Figure 44: Venice: a psycho-historical map. Acrylic on presses cardboard 60cm x 80 cm x 1,5 cm by Shaharee Vyaas (2023) \$ 699

The artwork “Venice: A psycho-historical Map” invites people not to obey existing opinions and common stories about Venice, but to slip away and with confidence listen to their own feelings and play with the city’s atmospheres. The contemporary island of

Venice exists in a state of duality, bridging the gap between two pandemics - the Plague and Covid.

These designs want to break away from a purely geographical representation of a cityscape by introducing the dimension of time into a snapshot.

The concept of these paintings is based upon the premise that cities have psycho-historical contours, with constant streams of movement, fixed points, and fixed angles, which discourage entry or exit from certain zones.

Every city has a unique psycho-historical character that reflects its collective memory, culture, and identity. Its architecture, landmarks, streets, and neighborhoods shape its aura and sense of place. A city's traumas, victories, and transformations are imprinted in its psyche, creating a complex tapestry of emotions and meanings. Understanding the psycho historical character of a city can help us appreciate its nuances, conflicts, and potentials, and foster a deeper connection between its residents and visitors. It also invites us to reflect on the social and environmental factors that shape our urban experience and shape our future cities.

Emotional atmospheres exist constantly and everywhere. Every gathering, even if it is no more than a crowd on the street, is dominated by some sentiment. The emotional atmospheres of a city can be mysterious or specific, incomplete, or complete. They belong to the present and/or the past, and/or the future. They can be fluid or more solid, temporary, or more enduring. Affects can be, and are, attached to things, people, ideas, sensations, relations, activities, ambitions, institutions, and any number of other things, including other affects.

The character of a city is a collection of moments that encompass a range of emotions and events. From the exciting to the heartbreaking, spiritual to adventurous, all these moments come



together to form the colorful tapestry of its timeline. Whether its habitants experience happiness or sadness, each piece contributes to the overall mosaic of its psycho-historical map. And while each piece may seem small and insignificant on its own, when seen from a kaleidoscopically perspective, they create a beautiful and unique picture that reflects what it is and the journey it undertakes.

## Berlin: A psycho-historical map and character



*Figure 45: Berlin: a psycho-historical map. Acrylic on canvas 60cm x 80 cm x 1,5 cm by Shaharee Vyaas (2023) \$ 699*

Berlin is damned forever to become, and never to be. From the golden twenties to the anarchic nineties and its status of world capital of hipsterdom at the beginning of the new millennium – the formerly divided city has become the symbol of a new urbanity, blessed with the privilege of never having to be, but forever to become.

Unlike London or Paris, the metropolis on the Spree lacked an organic principle of development. Berlin was nothing more than a colonial city, its sole purpose to conquer the East, its inhabitants a hodgepodge of materialistic individualists. No art or culture with which it might compete with the great cities of the world. Nothing but provincialism and culinary aberrations far and wide. Berlin: "City of preserves, tinned vegetables and all-purpose dipping sauce."

## London: A psycho-historical map and character



*Figure 46: London: a psycho-historical map. Acrylic on canvas 80cm x 80 cm x 1,5 cm by Shaharee Vyaas (2023) \$ 699*

The history of London, the capital city of England and the United Kingdom, extends over 2000 years. In that time, it became one of the world's most significant financial and cultural capital cities. It

has withstood plague, devastating fire, civil war, aerial bombardment, terrorist attacks, and riots.

A psycho-geography of London derives from the subsequent 'mapping' of an unrouted route which, like primitive cartography, reveals not so much randomness and chance as spatial intentionality. It uncovers compulsive currents within the city along with unprescribed boundaries of exclusion and unconstructed gateways of opportunity. The city begins, without fantasy or exaggeration, to take on the characteristics of a map of the mind.

Particularly over the last 150 years, London has been the site of repeated attempts to comprehend the physical, social and economic fabric of city life through exercises in cataloguing and mapping. These mapping exercises render the city legible and articulate its spaces in textual form. Henry Mayhew's four-volume work *London Labor and The London Poor*, the first three of which appeared in 1851 and the fourth, 'Those that will not work', published in 1862, was the first of the great Victorian investigations of London. Mayhew's nod to sociological rigor is to offer a taxonomy of London characters, but his methodological emphasis is on personal witnessing through a series of visits to key areas of the city.

London is one of the oldest cities on earth and is shrouded in mystery and legend. Its history is a popular topic for debates and discussions

## Here Comes Everybody's Karma (literary art book)



*Figure 47: Here Comes Everybody's Karma, Print length 566 pages. Publication year: 2024, Dimensions 8.5 x 1.28 x 11 inches, ISBN-13: 979-8324434571 (Amazon) \$34.86. Kindle version available for \$ 9,99*

## Introduction

This publication is the result of a literary-artistical experiment aiming at merging the most beautiful publication in English literature with its most enigmatic one. It mostly deals with the cyclicity of time.

The result of this endeavour has been condensed in this retelling of *Finnegans Wake* as *Here Comes Everybody's Karma*.

It is widely agreed upon that the Kelmscott-Chaucer is the most beautiful book ever printed, and that Joyce's *Finnegans Wake* is the most ingenious one (or vilified one: depending upon one's personal opinion for what is appropriate English literature).

Weirdly enough, both publications seem to suffer from a rather uncommon literary defect that has been defined as: their readability!

The Kelmscott Chaucer used Walter William Skeat's edition of the complete Chaucer, after explaining to the delegates of the Clarendon Press that his edition was intended to be an "art object" and would not compete with their six-volume edition of Skeat's edition of Chaucer's complete works. It contains 87 wood engravings of drawings by Edward Burne-Jones. Peter Faulkner, a William Morris expert, expressed his preference for *The Canterbury Tales* by the Golden Cockerel Press, noting that in the Kelmscott Chaucer, "the two sixty-three-line columns of 12-point type on the large page do not make for easy reading."

Joyce claimed that by writing *Finnegans Wake* he was attempting to "reconstruct the nocturnal life", and that the book was his "experiment in interpreting 'the dark night of the soul'." Alas, for most lovers of English literature, he (subconsciously?) created a reader's ultimate nightmare.



The impression exists that only accomplished philologists have ever managed to decipher the novel's polysemantic vocabulary that was borrowed from approximately sixty-five languages and dialects.

This retelling is an effort to remediate those issues while enhancing their inherent qualities.

Evolutions in modern printing techniques have allowed to elevate this offspring of the Kelmscott-Chaucer from its black and white corset while avoiding the typographic setting that made for a difficult reading experience.

The foreign language idiosyncrasies in *Finnegans Wake* have been replaced by their English equivalent and Joyce's sibylline prose has been streamlined into a more fluid syntax.

Albeit there exists a generally accepted scholarly interpretation of *Finnegans Wake*, Joyce's stream-of-consciousness writing style causes that many readers walk away with their own interpretation of the novel. This is also valid for the retelling of *Finnegans Wake* into *Here Comes Everybody's Karma*.

Where Joyce proclaimed that the novel's cyclical nature is best demonstrated by the feature that it begins and ends in the middle of a sentence, this retelling expresses the cyclical nature of the tale by beginning and ending in connecting circumstances.

Also, the colours of the decorative frames of each chapter are evolving in consecutive shades as they appear on the colour wheel, with the colour of the frames of the introduction featuring the frame-colours of the last chapter of this novel, while having a slightly different design.



Last but not least, the titles of this retelling and its chapters want to inspire the readers to rethink the whole tale into the context of the Asiatic philosophical concepts of Karma and Dharma, which are interacting cyclical principles.

To conclude it must be mentioned that this compilation is indebted to various sources that allowed the creation of this work. They are given in the chronological order of their publication:

1. the Hungarian born artist László Moholy-Nagy, who created in 1946 a diagram of the themes of *Finnegans Wake* with Joyce (JJ) positioned as the pivotal point of a wheel like structure. The four concentric circles represent Giambattista Vico's theory of history, and the columns on the left show various 'levels' such as: familial, historical, mythological, cabalistic, biblical, symbolistic, etc. Column headers contain the characters HCE (H.C. Earwicker), ALP (Anna Livia Plurabella) and their children. The spokes of the wheel that pass through the various layers of narrative suggest further interconnections within the text, based upon the

signs of the zodiac, the four evangelists and Phoenix park in Dublin etc. (I had to remove the diagram because the silly Amazon editing AI kept rejecting it because of “unreadable” text and no human was available to override that decision)

2. This retelling is also indebted to the critically emended edition of *Finnegan’s Wake* by Houyhnhnm Press (2014), that is the summation of thirty years’ intense engagement by textual scholars Danis Rose and John O’Hanlon.
3. The graphic design of this publication was greatly facilitated by the work of Dr Michael John Goodman, an independent researcher, who made a copy of the *Kelmscott-Chaucer* available online in a way that was particularly accessible, attractive, and user-friendly.

That mentioned, *Here Comes Everybody’s Karma* is a novel that tends to grow into the mind of the reader and therefore should be consumed at a leisurely pace to avoid a literary indigestion.

### About transcribing *Finnegans Wake*

*Finnegans Wake* consists of four books that Joyce just named Book 1,2,3, and 4. In *Here Comes Everybody’s Karma* the books and their chapters are given titles, thus giving some structure to an otherwise labyrinthic tale.

One cannot overlook the thematic resonance of reincarnation in *Finnegans Wake*, a pivotal tenet within various Eastern spiritual traditions, which mirrors the cyclical rhythm of time and being explored within the depths of Joyce’s labyrinthine prose. By artfully intertwining elements of Eastern philosophical wisdom, the enigmatic principles of quantum mechanics, the intricate interconnectedness underscored by system theory, and the boundless realm of literature, “*Finnegans Wake*” transcends

conventional boundaries of reality and plunges readers into an enthralling exploration of the interconnected tapestry of ideas that collectively shape our understanding of the vast universe in which we dwell.

The intricate interconnectedness of characters and events within *Finnegans Wake*, serves as a profound reflection upon the concept of karma, where individual actions reverberate throughout the narrative with far-reaching consequences. This interplay reflects a cosmic dance of cause and effect, wherein characters are symbolically reborn, embodying the perpetual cycle of existence central to both Eastern Philosophy and the artistic tapestry of the novel itself. The overarching cyclical motif within the narrative echoes the transient nature of personal identity and the ceaseless evolution of consciousness, echoing the timeless Eastern concept of *samsara*, the eternal wheel of life, death, and rebirth.

Although James Joyce is thought to have been very well acquainted with Eastern and “oriental” ways of thought, the way this philosophy was manifested in his work was quite strongly influenced by the sources he most likely had at hand. The challenge lies in distinguishing direct references in the *Wake* from broader shared interests. Despite Joyce's persistent fascination with the Theosophical Society, likely for ironic reasons, textual evidence supports the idea that it served as a steppingstone for his deeper explorations into the esoteric systems of the world. Buddhism, for Joyce, was just one facet within the intricate web of global esoterica that captured his imagination.

In the case of Ulysses, Hindu and Buddhist iconography functions as decorative exotica that Joyce encountered when he read Frazer's *Golden Book* along with the *Kabbalah*, the *Koran*, various studies of Eastern mysticism, and *The Egyptian Book of the Dead* by E.A. Wallis Budge.



If we compare the Indian inspirations in Joyce's two great works, *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake*, India appears in a much more purposeful manner in the latter. *Finnegans Wake* is peppered with references to Indian mythology and philosophy, many Sanskrit words appearing throughout in various contexts. *Finnegans Wake* demonstrates a greater synergy between 'Western and Eastern Approaches' (FW 604 26) and a more rigorous endeavor to 'Hindustan'.

The leading example is that found in *Finnegans Wake* 80.24:

Agni araflammed and Mithra monished and Shiva slew [...].

Agni is the Hindu god of fire; he is identified with the sacrificial flame and the sun as well as the house and hearth. The verb “araflammed” is perhaps derived from the Latin *ara*, alter, and “aflame”. This is fitting as Agni was a god who was offered oblations of clarified butter during rituals, that is the *agnihotra*, which is being referred to here.

Mithra may come from the Sanskrit *mitra*, friend, yet it is much more likely that this is a reference to Mithra, the Zoroastrian god, also lord of the sun. Shiva (Śiva) is a well-known personage of the Hindu pantheon, and its most ambiguous characters, being both the maker and the destroyer of the universe. He is a great ascetic but also a fierce warrior and sensual husband to Pārvatī, his consort. Interestingly the passage continues in this vein (what Sen does not mention) and the whole section reads (FW 80.24, 25):

Agni araflammed and Mithra monished and Shiva slew as mayamutras the obluvial waters of our noarchic memory withdrew [...].

The mayamutras which appear in this passage also seem to have been inspired by Indian thought, the element *maya*, which must come from the Sanskrit *māyā*.

If we accept that Joyce was strongly affected by the esoteric Buddhism that was fashionable in Britain in the 1920s, we could also conjecture that mayamutra carries within it an echo of *mahāmudra*, a word that literally means “great seal”, and refers to the fact that all phenomena inevitably are stamped by the fact of wisdom and emptiness inseparable, but in Buddhism came to signify a specific philosophical outlook connected with the question of existence and its lack.

HCE can sometimes be identified with Śiva, who is the Indian archetype of phallic power.

This is perhaps also the case in *Finnegans Wake* (FW 4.36–5.01):

[...] a skyerscape of most eyeful hoyth entowerly, erigenating from next to nothing and

celescalating the himals and all [...] (FW 4.36–5.01).

Śiva is often represented by the *liṅgam*, a phallic symbol which came to carry a religious importance. In the above quoted fragment, we could find reference to the myth according to which Śiva transformed himself into an enormous *liṅgam* fire, which was so all-encompassing that none of the other gods could reach its beginning and end.

He draws parallels between figures such as Maya and Mary, or Siddhartha's horse Kantaka and Mohammed's horse Katachanka.

One of the most significant Buddhist allusions in *Finnegans Wake* revolves around the doctrine of dependent origination, elucidated as a twelve-spoked wheel in Buddhist scripture. Joyce's concise yet eloquent rendition of this profound concept underscores his grasp of Buddhist philosophy. The interplay of interconnected references in *Finnegans Wake*, reminiscent of the vastness of Indra's Net in Mahāyāna Buddhism, points to a deep awareness of emptiness and interdependence embedded in the text's structure.

The narrative architecture of *Finnegans Wake*, akin to a dream logic where identities blur and symbols intertwine, reflects a kaleidoscopic interplay mirroring Indra's Net. Each element in Joyce's opus, much like the jewels in Indra's Net, contains reflections of the whole, emphasizing interconnectedness and wholeness. Through the lens of Mahāyāna Buddhism, the interconnectedness of all things, the emptiness of self and phenomena, and the cyclical nature of existence are intertwined themes weaving through the intricate fabric of *Finnegans Wake*.



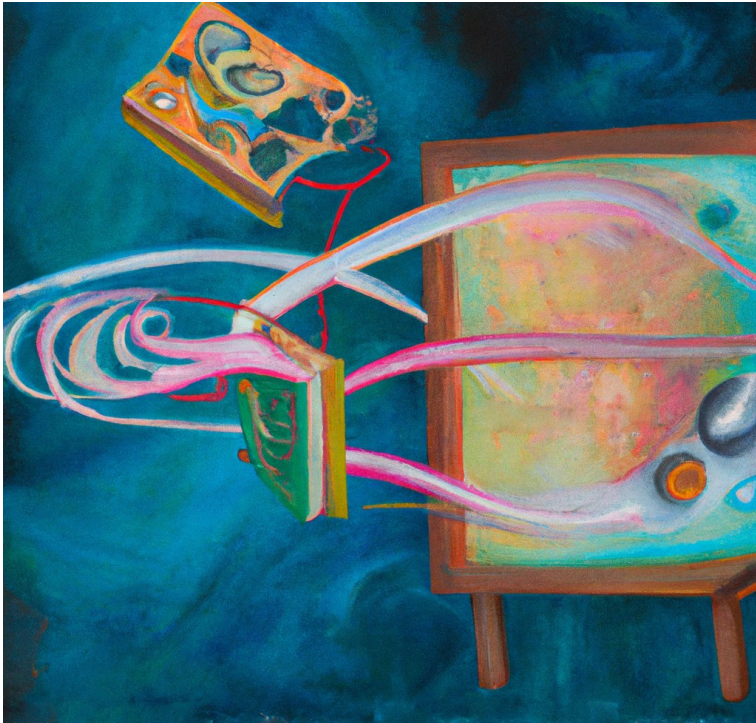
Joyce's unique blend of Buddhist elements with Western esoteric traditions, notably figures like Giordano Bruno and Nicholas of Cusa, contributes to the complex tapestry of references and themes in his work. The parallels between Buddhist philosophy, the western esoteric tradition, and Joyce's literary creation unveil a profound exploration of interconnectedness, emptiness, and the fluidity of identity that resonates throughout *Finnegans Wake*.

*Finnegans Wake* presents an interplay of themes and dualities, merging various concepts into the singular chaotic realm envisioned by James Joyce. The work delves into contrasts such as HCE versus ALP, ancient beliefs versus modern spectacle, and human consciousness versus the mysteries of the quantum universe.

Joyce's exploration of quantum physics parallels the scientific advancements of his time. As quantum theory emerged, Joyce deftly weaved its implications into his narrative, drawing a connection between the unseen world of particles and the intricate fabric of his literary creation.

Through enigmatic passages like the broadcast in the *Wake*, Joyce hints at the atomic discoveries of his era, transforming scientific figures like Rutherford into poetic entities within his work. The text immerses readers in a subatomic realm where conventional laws of language and logic no longer apply, mirroring the uncertainties and potentials of the quantum world. Quantum mechanics challenges our traditional notions of reality by suggesting that particles can exist in multiple states simultaneously and that observation plays a crucial role in determining outcomes. It introduces a fascinating perspective on the multiple realities and possibilities that exist simultaneously, mirroring the fragmented and non-linear structure of *Finnegans Wake*. The uncertainty principle, entanglement, and superposition of states resonate with the novel's intricate

narrative layers and the characters' interconnected stories, suggesting a fluid and dynamic interpretation of reality. This idea coincides with the themes of uncertainty and interconnectedness in "Finnegans Wake," where characters and events are intertwined in a complex web of relationships that defy conventional linear narratives.



Each encounter with Joyce's unique language mirrors a quantum measurement, collapsing layers of meaning and possibility into a singular expression. The text challenges readers to engage with these linguistic particles, inviting diverse interpretations and echoing the complex nature of quantum phenomena.

In essence, Joyce's literary experiment with quantum mechanics immerses us in a world where language mimics the elusive nature of subatomic particles, blurring the lines between reality and

representation. Through intricate wordplay and symbolic imagery, Joyce provokes readers to explore the depths of his chaotic yet mesmerizing universe.

Although Joyce predates Einstein's dispute with quantum physics, he anticipates a future rift between the theory of relativity and quantum mechanics. Wake's intricate entanglement with quantum mechanics hints at idealism through a reinterpretation of Grosz's notion of atomic ideality.

Quantum physics challenges the naturalization of freedom, highlighting that freedom is not merely the absence of causality but the ability to be the cause of one's decisions. By avoiding simplistic explanations of freedom like naturalization or inner potential, quantum physics offers a unique perspective on human agency and the nature of reality.

Quantum processes and the human unconscious both elude observation and causality. Einstein famously critiqued quantum mechanics with the quip, "Insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results." A similar theme of insanity intertwines with Joyce's *Finnegans Wake* project, musing, "Perhaps it is insanity. One will be able to judge in a century."

Within the quantum-tinged realm of *Finnegans Wake*, where the boundaries blur between the conscious and the unconscious, the pursuit of ideality appears ambiguous. Joyce's use of *mise-en-abîme* challenges conventional ideologies, as seen in the text's intricate interplay among contrasting concepts. In a Wakean passage, characters representing opposing forces converge in a fugue-like manner, symbolizing a universal tendency towards unity within duality.

Joyce deconstructs and reconstructs the notion that every force in nature and spirit must evoke its opposite for manifestation, leading to a longing for reunion. This concept is reflected in the

dance between "hilariohoot" and "tristitone," embodying a harmonious union of contrasts. Through this chaotic harmony, Joyce's work delves into the realm of the unknowable, including the unconscious mind akin to spectral subatomic particles, flowing in a flux of virtuality beyond fundamental elements.

The novel's storytelling architecture, replete with intricate systems and interwoven narratives, reflects a holistic interconnectedness strikingly reminiscent of the fundamental principles proposed within system theory.

Take for example the fractal complexity of the novel. Fractals are mathematical shapes that have been used to model patterns that repeat on many different scales. Looking at a coastline map, we cannot tell the scale; a fractal coast looks similar at all scales. As the map is enlarged, more details appear, but the general character of the coast remains unchanged over several orders of magnitude. This self-similarity is typical of fractals

Fractals can be seen in frost patterns on a window, in the clouds above us and in galaxies in space. Fractals are complex, but more complexity results when many fractals are irreducibly interwoven into structures called multifractals. A multifractal is not simply a sum of fractals: it cannot be divided to yield the original components, because the way they interweave is fractal in nature. In a sense, it is a fractal of fractals.

Short sentences can ease comprehension but can become tedious. Longer more complex sentences can be more expressive but also more demanding. Writers intuitively vary sentence length for stylistic and aesthetic ends. The distribution of sentence lengths can reveal hidden aspects of literary works. Mathematical tools like spectrum analysis, wavelet decomposition and multifractals can be used to analyze sentence length variability.

The structure of *Finnegans Wake* was virtually indistinguishable from a purely mathematical fractal. Of course, the fractality of a literary text can never match the ideal: a mathematical fractal can be magnified interminably while the number of sentences in a book is finite.

The spread of fractal dimension provides an index of complexity. The complexity index of *Finnegans Wake*, with its exploration of the mental labyrinths of the dream state, was 0,74, while that of *Here Comes Everybody's Karma* approaches that of 0.63 because some of the longer sentences in *Finnegans Wake* have been broken up into smaller ones to enhance its readability.

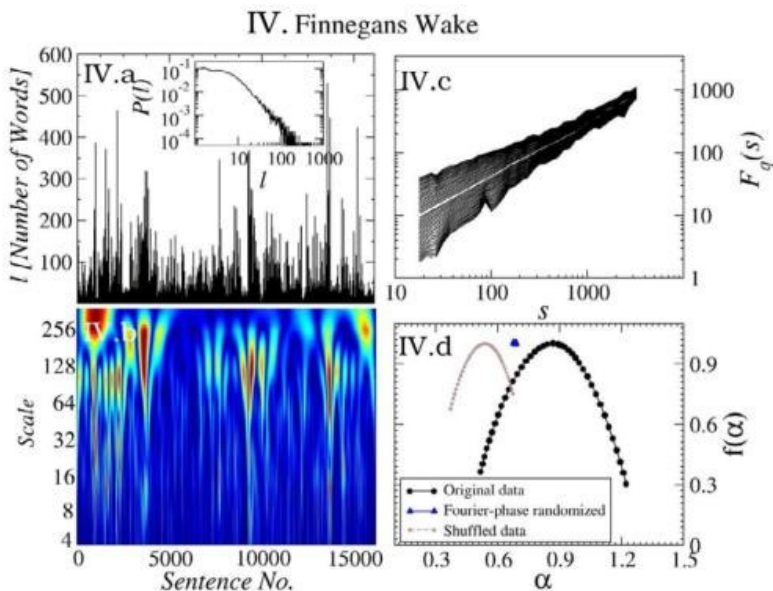


Figure 48: *Finnegans Wake*: (a) Word Number Series. (b) Wavelet analysis. (c)  $q$ -th order fluctuation functions. (d) Singularity spectra. (For details see Drozd (2016))

Short sentences can ease comprehension but can become tedious. Longer more complex sentences can be more expressive but also more demanding. Writers intuitively vary sentence

length for stylistic and aesthetic ends. The distribution of sentence lengths can reveal hidden aspects of literary works.

Delving into the profound depths of "Finnegans Wake" is an intellectual odyssey that leads one to contemplation of the eternal themes of creation and destruction, the fluidity of identity, and the enduring quest for meaning within a universe governed by the delicate balance of order and chaos. The novel intricately weaves the cyclical nature of existence into its very essence, beckoning readers to meditate on the eternal rhythm of life, death, and rebirth that underpins the rich tapestry of human experience.

Here Comes Everybody's Karma has the ambition to expose this intricate web of interconnected characters and kaleidoscope of events and emerges as a profound tapestry of philosophical inquiry that challenges readers to embark on a profound exploration of timeless themes, including the nature of identity, the enigma of consciousness, and the inherent interconnectedness that binds all facets of existence together in a harmonious cosmic dance.

This marriage of form and content underscores the inherent complexity and interdependence that define not only the fictional world within the novel but also the broader cosmic landscape that we inhabit. By engaging with themes of karma, dharma, reincarnation, quantum mechanics, and system theory, Joyce's magnum opus challenges us to reconsider our understanding of reality, consciousness, and the fundamental nature of the universe.

As HCEK navigates the labyrinthine depths of "Finnegans Wake," it invites you to contemplate the eternal dance of creation and destruction, the fluidity of identity, and the enduring quest for meaning in a universe governed by both order and chaos.

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## The Chaotium.

Dark Arts

Dance Macabre.



*Figure 49: Danse Macabre. Acrylic on pressed cardboard H 50 x W 40 x D 0.5 cm by Shaharee Vyaas (2023). Open print edition on canvas \$ 199*

Danse Macabre is the first installation of a series of five paintings I've made around a time that coincides with the yearly festival of Halloween 2023. The frames contain some earlier reflections I had about the aftermath of the recent pandemic. The stylistic concept deviates substantially from most of my other works, although parallels can be drawn with the works that feature in my series Art in the Dark.

Saint-Saëns's Danse Macabre, Op. 40, is based on the French legend that Death packs a fiddle and comes to play at midnight on Halloween, causing the skeletons in the cemetery to crawl out of the ground for their annual graveyard dance party. Danse macabre, as a theme, was meant to represent how death was the great social equalizer — no one escapes the dance with death — and there were several paintings and pieces of art inspired by this philosophy.

When Saint-Saëns initially wrote his Danse macabre in 1872, it was actually an art song. Poet Henri Cazalis wrote lines like, "The bones of the dancers are heard to crack," but two years later Saint-Saëns replaced the voice with the violin and the dissonance amped up its tension.

COVID-19, with all the variants of the virus that causes it, has unquestionably affected people across the globe. The disease itself or the stress, uncertainty, and fear it has touched most people in one way or another.

The cultural impacts of mass outbreaks of disease are not fleeting or temporary. The effect can endure past the initial stages of outbreak, in its deep etching upon the culture and society. This can be seen in the medieval artworks and motifs of Danse Macabre that followed the outbreak of the plague, when people attempted to cope with the #death surrounding them.

Nothing is completely irreversible. We're going to be okay — everyone can be well and to do well — but we need to give

ourselves space and time to get there. It will take time to get to know a new reality. What we saw during the pandemic was a need to return to the way things were 'back to normal,' but we don't need to go back. Human evolution prompts us to move forward, not backward.

## The Conclave



*Figure 50: The Conclave. Acrylic on pressed cardboard 50 x 40 x 0.5 cm by Shaharee Vyaas (2023. Open print edition on canvas \$ 199.*

The Conclave is the second installation of a series of five paintings I've made around a time that coincides with the yearly festival of Halloween 2023. The frames contain some earlier reflections I had about the aftermath of the recent #pandemic. The stylistic concept deviates substantially from most of my other works,

although parallels can be drawn with the works that feature in my series *Art in the Dark*.

According to anecdotal reports, the pandemic may have negatively impacted behavior by contributing to a rise in incivility and rudeness, which may well have occurred due to chronic #exposure to stress and an anxiety-inducing news cycle.

Healthcare professionals have also reported experiencing incivility. According to one analysis using data retrieved from an online survey, 45.7% of nurses polled reported witnessing more rudeness than before the pandemic.

Reduced time spent around others may have also contributed to this situation. The study suggested that “though small-talk opportunities decreased due to COVID-19, the need for concise and clear communication increased”.

Perhaps we will now place higher priority on in-person interactions and our relationships with others, being outdoors for sports and activities, and feeling relieved of constant worry. Acknowledging what we went through and growing and learning from that experience would be the best outcome.

## The Clan



*Figure 51: The Clan. Acrylic on pressed cardboard 40 x 50 x 0.5 cm by Shaharee Vyaas (2023. Open print edition on canvas \$ 199.*

The Clan is the third installation of a series of five paintings I've made around a time that coincides with the yearly festival of Halloween 2023. The frames contain some earlier reflections I had about the aftermath of the recent pandemic. The stylistic concept deviates substantially from most of my other works,



although parallels can be drawn with the works that feature in my series *Art in the Dark*.

Long before the pandemic arrived on American shores, there were debates over the politics of mask wearing. More than a dozen states have laws barring people from covering their faces in public, most of them ordinances passed to deter the Ku-Klux-Klan hate group. Those laws were suspended, revoked or not enforced as mask wearing in many states became a public health exigency. But as the pandemic recedes in the United States and emergency orders related to the pandemic expire, the question of what to do with the old mask laws is resurfacing.

Rob Kahn, a law professor at St. Thomas University in Minneapolis and an expert on anti-mask laws, believes many of the laws are obsolete. But repealing them might have been easier before the pandemic, he said, before masks became such a political lightning rod.

Mr. Kahn said he did not know of any cases of coronavirus anti-maskers advocating to keep the old anti-mask laws. But he hypothesized that maintaining them might be popular with the sizable number of voters who now think of masks as symbols of government overreach.

Covid-19 fueled also racism worldwide. Several political parties and groups, including in the United States, United Kingdom, Italy, Spain, Greece, France, and Germany have also latched onto the Covid-19 crisis to advance anti-immigrant, white supremacist, ultra-nationalist, anti-Semitic, and xenophobic conspiracy theories that demonize refugees, foreigners, prominent individuals, and political leaders.



## Fear



*Figure 52: Fear. Acrylic on pressed cardboard 40 x 50 x 0.5 cm by Shaharee Vyaas (2023). Open print edition on canvas \$ 199.*

Fear is the fourth installation of a series of five paintings I've made around a time that coincides with the yearly festival of Halloween 2023. The frames contain some earlier reflections I

had about the aftermath of the recent pandemic. The stylistic concept deviates substantially from most of my other works, although parallels can be drawn with the works that feature in my series *Art in the Dark*.

The COVID-19 pandemic is an important factor affecting the health of people worldwide, as well as a source of fear, stress, and anxiety. This painting explores the paths through which Covid-19 can impair health in two ways: through psychological distress, which is an automatic reaction to fear, and through a more conscious and deliberative rumination process.

During disease outbreaks, news of the first deaths, increases in the number of new cases, and media misinformation can increase people's fears, frustration, despair, and anxiety. In addition, uninfected individuals reported that they were afraid to be in contact with people infected with COVID-19. Fear of catching the COVID-19 virus can cause irrational and ambiguous thoughts in individuals and adversely affect their quality of life. Witnessing family members or friends becoming infected can intensify the negative impact of that fear. Anxiety raised the risk of long COVID by 42%, depression by 32%, worry about COVID by 37%, perceived stress, 46%, and loneliness, 32%.

## Azrael



Figure 53: Azrael. Acrylic on pressed cardboard 40 x 50 x 0.5 cm by Shaharee Vyaas. Open print edition on canvas \$ 199.

Azrael is the fifth installation of a series of five paintings I've made around a time that coincides with the yearly festival of Halloween 2023. The frames contain some earlier reflections I had about the aftermath of the recent pandemic. The stylistic concept deviates substantially from most of my other works, although parallels can be drawn with the works that feature in my series Art in the Dark.

Azrael, Arabic 'Izrā'il or 'Azrā'il, in Islam, the angel of death who separates souls from their bodies; he is one of the four #archangels (with Jibrīl, Mīkāl, and Isrāfil) and the Islamic counterpart of the Judeo-Christian angel of death, who is sometimes called Azrael.

An estimated 2.9% of U.S. adults (7.5 million) became new gun owners from 1 January 2019 to 26 April 2021. Most (5.4 million) had lived in homes without guns, collectively exposing, in addition to themselves, over 11 million persons to household #firearms, including more than 5 million children. Approximately half of all new gun owners were female (50% in 2019 and 47% in 2020 to 2021), 20% were Black (21% in 2019 and in 2020-2021), and 20% were Hispanic (20% in 2019 and 19% in 2020-2021). By contrast, other recent purchasers who were not new gun owners were predominantly male (70%) and White (74%), as were gun owners overall (63% male, 73% White).

Death anxiety, also known as thanatophobia, is anxiety produced by thoughts of one's own death (fear of death). Its negative impacts have been shown in various areas of people's lives such as pessimism, despair, poor understanding of social support, and insufficient life perception. It may lead to behavior that ignites a secondary death wave: mass shootings, eating disorders, suicides, substance abuse ... they are all on the rise since the covid-19 pandemic.

## Art in the Dark

Darkness is vital to humans, animals, and plants. It maintains the natural circadian rhythm, so you know when it is night and when it is day.

Darkness is a symbol of mystery, sadness, and fear. But it can also symbolize protection for people who use “the cover of darkness” to escape detection. Darkness symbolism pervades all kinds of art forms since it is a phenomenon that surrounds us, mostly unconsciously, for about half of our lifespan.

Foucault uses the term "heterotopia" to describe spaces that have more layers of meaning or relationships to other places than immediately meet the eye. Being subjected to darkness forces us in isolation and being detached from interference and the noise around us, either visually or audibly. It leads us to discover “the other” facets of the reality that surrounds us.

In this series I want to reinterpret the different art forms from the perspective of darkness. These art forms are painting, sculpture, architecture, literature, poetry, music, cinema, and dancing.

The most stylistic characteristics of this series are that all the canvasses have a different artistic theme, supported by a hyperbolic geometrical concept, and are executed upon a black background.

.



## Dancing in the Dark



*Figure 54: Dancing in the Dark. Fluorescent Acrylic on pressed cardboard W 120 x H 120 x D 0,5 cm. Limited print edition \$ 599*

The first installment of this series is called Dancing in the Dark. It restyles a doodle I made for Cyber Dancer, but that I then dismissed in favor for a different design.

Many other artists have explored this theme. Bruce Springsteen wrote this song Dancing in the Dark about his difficulty writing a hit single and his frustration trying to write songs that will please people. His struggles pour out in the lyric “Dancin’ in the dark”, where he feels like a hired gun dying for some action.

You can't start a fire  
You can't start a fire without a spark

This gun's for hire  
Even if we're just dancin' in the dark

Dancer in the Dark is also musical drama film written and directed by Danish filmmaker Lars von Trier. It stars Icelandic musician Björk as a factory worker who suffers from a degenerative eye condition and is saving for an operation to prevent her young son from suffering the same fate. When a desperate neighbor falsely accuses Selma of stealing his savings, the drama of her life escalates to a tragic finale. It is one of the most painful films I had to endure.

The 2005 novel "Dancing in the Dark" by Kittitian-British writer Caryl Phillips explores the tensions of assuming a false identity which, in a racist society, would be considered the 'true' identity of the player. This catches the performer in the double bind of using the actor's art to confirm prejudices, which then blind their audiences to that art." The story also deals with "the perils of self-invention, that have long plagued American culture".



## Reading in the Dark



*Figure 55: Reading in the Dark. Fluorescent Acrylic on pressed cardboard W 120 x H 120 x D 0,5 cm. Limited print edition \$ 599*

Reading in the Dark is a novel by Seamus Deane in 1996. The title of the novel is taken from a section in which the boy is alone and struggling to read in the dark set against the violence of Northern Ireland in the 1940s and 1950s. The boy narrator grows up haunted by a truth he both wants and does not want to discover. Meanwhile the real world of adulthood unfolds its secrets like a collection of folktales.

Many readers prefer to read during the night. The silence of the night helps and calms them in a different way, which is not possible during the daytime. While the time streams for the night,

the time becomes freer and more detached from the happenings and the hustle and bustle of the surroundings. The days are always occupied by some tasks and things people need to do while night is the only time where they're free from everything and all they can do is just read their book. And that is why most readers preferably read during the night.

### Whistling in the Dark

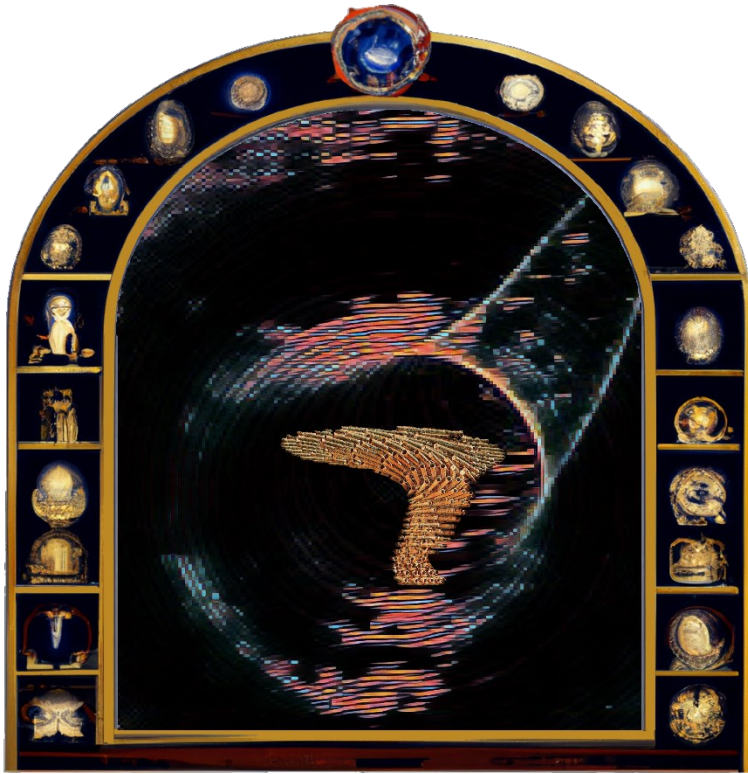


Figure 56: *Whistling in the Dark*. Fluorescent Acrylic on pressed cardboard W 120 x H 120 x D 0,5 cm. Limited print edition \$ 599

The third installation in the series features a singing tree at the center of a wind hose that makes it produce a slightly discordant and penetrating choral sound covering a range of several octaves.

This canvas wants to bring forward the theme music in my series The Dark Arts. The saying Whistling in the Dark has inspired many contemporary musicians like:

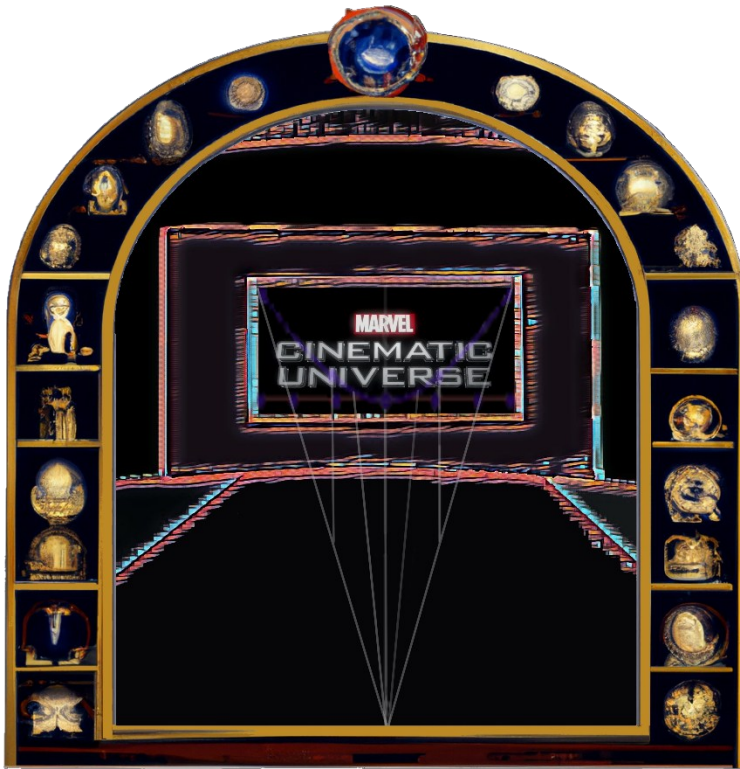
- Whistling in the Dark (album), a 1979 album by Max Gronenthal, also known as Max Carl
- Whistling in The Dark, a 2008 album by Hank Wangford & The Lost Cowboys
- Whistling in the Dark, a 2006 album by Terry Garland
- "Whistling in the Dark", a song by Easterhouse
- "Whistling in the Dark", a song by They Might Be Giants from Flood

If you say that someone is whistling in the dark, you mean that they are trying to remain brave and convince themselves that the situation is not as bad as it seems.

The Singing Ringing Tree is set in the landscape of the Pennine hill range overlooking Burnley, in Lancashire, England. The project was set up to erect a series of 21st-century landmarks, or Panopticons (structures providing a comprehensive view), across East Lancashire as symbols of the renaissance of the area.

Whistling in the Dark is also a 1933 American pre-Code comedy-mystery film directed by Elliott Nugent and starring Ernest Truex and Una Merkel. The plot concerns a mystery writer whose scheme for a perfect murder comes to the attention of a gangster, who plans to use it.

## The Watchers in the Dark



*Figure 57. The Watchers in the Dark. Fluorescent Acrylic on pressed cardboard  
W 120 x H 120 x D 0,5 cm. Limited print edition \$ 599*

Human beings communicate by stories, and movies can speak to the emotions of the audience and connect with each viewer on different levels. Much like a good painting or photograph, a movie can mean something different to each viewer.

Cinema is the art form that encompasses the best qualities of nearly every other art form working in a melting pot of symbolism, meaning, philosophy, and storytelling.

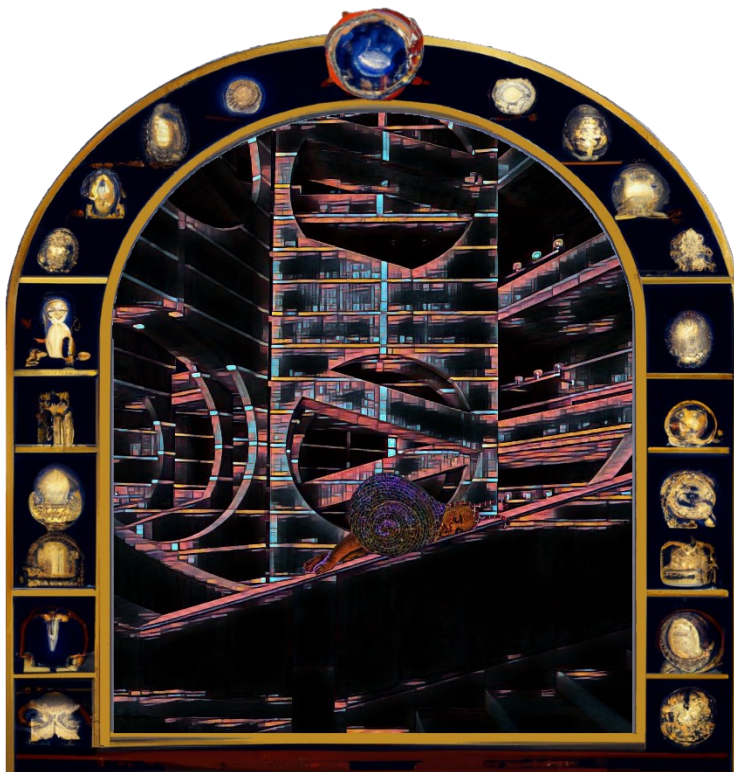
Art cinema is often defined as an artistic or experimental work expressing symbolic meaning through the medium of film. It is

ambiguous, aesthetically rich, complex, and sadly it's often defined as commercially unfit for the mass audience.

This canvas wants to focus on the mostly invisible participants of the cinema: the Watchers in the Dark.

The Watchers are silent as they consider the possible outcomes of their inactions. Theirs is not a linear continuum. Time is a mosaic, two-dimensional and beautiful, offered by the images that unfold before their eyes, however studied, to interpret as a complete image. Each detail needed to be viewed in isolation and judged on its own merits. They are creatures of potential, and though the future before them grows dark, there are paths that a keen eye might discern.

## Architecture in the Dark



*Figure 58: Architecture in the Dark. Fluorescent Acrylic on pressed cardboard W 120 x H 120 x D 0,5 cm. Limited print edition \$ 599*

Architecture in the Dark seeks to explore the forgotten qualities of space. The baby – snail brings in focus the bodily identification with the environmental experience, an awareness that may be a conduit to new paths of psychological discovery.

This canvas seeks to explore the heterotopic conditions of space and architecture in relation to our vision or the lack thereof.

Heterotopia is a concept elaborated by philosopher Michel Foucault to describe certain cultural, institutional, and discursive spaces that are somehow 'other': disturbing, intense,

incompatible, contradictory, or transforming. Heterotopias are worlds within worlds, mirroring and yet upsetting what is outside. Foucault provides examples: ships, cemeteries, bars, brothels, prisons, gardens of antiquity, fairs, Muslim baths and many more.

While focusing upon the physical and psychological analogy between sight and spatial perception, this canvas wants to serve as a productive means to find the “other place” by approaching architecture through the dark.



## Painting in the Dark



*Figure 59: Painting in the Dark. Fluorescent Acrylic on pressed cardboard W 120 x H 120 x D 0,5 cm. Limited print edition \$ 599*

Between the 4th and the 6th of November 2022, I attended a conference called Waving, organized by the department of intermedia art of the Art Academy in Krakow. In the fringes of this conference one of the organizers of the conference ran a small experiment called "Breath, the combination of breath and drawing with the use of generative techniques". Her name is Patrycja Maksylewicz and she encouraged people to make a doodle with closed eyes while measuring their breathing rate.

I happened to be around when I was still looking for inspiration for this canvas and was a little desperate how to communicate the aspect of painting into the darkness.

I took advantage of this event by processing her data of this experiment through a virtual kaleidoscope and reinterpreting them by using Da Vinci's "Vitruvian Man" as a conceptual frame.

The arms, legs, and head are composed by kaleidoscopically reinterpretation of the breathing sequence, while the torso is made up by a kaleidoscopically reinterpretation of the doodle that the test person produced.

It never stops to amaze me how order can be found into some apparently chaotic data when you just shift to a different perspective.

## Poetry in the Dark



*Figure 60: Poetry in the Dark. Fluorescent Acrylic on pressed cardboard W 120 x H 120 x D 0,5 cm. Limited print edition \$ 599*

Poetry in the Dark is a painting that wants to express the experience of listening to poetry with closed eyes and should not be confused with a focus upon dark poetry.

Dark poetry wants to capture sorrow, pain, the fragility of life, grief, death, anxiety, rage, despair, loneliness, jealousy, doubt, heartbreak, and betrayal while I want also to include the poetry of light and laughter in this visual impression.

Poetry is a highly sophisticated art form that involves a deep empathy with the language as an experimental tool to express deeply felt intellectual and emotional thoughts.

Poetry in the dark wants to evoke the words of a poetic text that escape their literary confinement to circle around the receptive mind in similar ways as moths are attracted to the light of a candle.

### Sculptures in the Dark



*Figure 61: Sculptures in the Dark. Fluorescent Acrylic on pressed cardboard W 120 x H 120 x D 1,5 cm. Limited print edition \$ 599*

This canvas reverses the figurative concept of the other ones in this series: instead of having a theme that tends to chaotical behavior that is constrained by a geometrical background, this canvas has a background that exposes chaotic tendencies with a theme that radiates geometrical perfection.

The sculpture that features in the center of the canvas *Sculpting in the Dark* is a form based on the icosidodecahedron in which pentapyramids are nested within each other, each one rotated so that its edge meets the midface of the larger piece.

Bringing forward the stories that are enclosed into a chaotical medium is what sculpting is about. It is about imposing order upon chaos without violating the nature of reality.

For a sculptor everything tells a story, even a piece of stone. If you approach sculpting through the dark, it might help you to discover forms that otherwise you wouldn't see. Even a stone wall has a history of big breaks, cracks and chips that might tell you different stories in the dark than the ones you see during daytime.

## Pricelist

I'm offering canvas prints of my work through the Saatchi website since I believe that my art should be within the reach of everyone. Here are the prices for the unsigned prints of my works that can be ordered at <https://www.saatchiart.com/shaharee>

### What Sizes and Prices Can I Offer For Open Edition Prints?

Refer to the tables below to see the print sizes, aspect ratio, pixel size, and corresponding sales price for all types of open edition prints.

#### Canvas Prints

Print Size	Aspect Ratio	Pixel Size	Price
12 x 16	3:4	1800 x 2400	\$95
14 x 21	2:3	2100 x 3150	\$129
16 x 16	1:1	2400 x 2400	\$125
16 x 20	4:5	2400 x 3000	\$120
16 x 24	2:3	2400 x 3600	\$139
20 x 30	2:3	3000 x 4500	\$159
24 x 24	1:1	3600 x 3600	\$160
24 x 32	3:4	3600 x 4800	\$190
24 x 36	2:3	3600 x 5400	\$199
30 x 30	1:1	4500 x 4500	\$230
30 x 40	3:4	4500 x 6000	\$325
30 x 45	2:3	4500 x 6750	\$309

# Fine Art and Photo Paper

Print Size	Aspect Ratio	Pixel Size	Price
6 x 12	1:2	900 x 1800	\$40
8 x 10	4:5	1200 x 1500	\$40
8 x 12	2:3	1200 x 1800	\$40
9 x 12	3:4	1350 x 1800	\$40
10 x 10	1:1	1500 x 1500	\$40
12 x 15	4:5	1800 x 2250	\$70
12 x 24	1:2	1800 x 3600	\$70
15 x 20	3:4	2250 x 3000	\$70
16 x 16	1:1	2400 x 2400	\$70
16 x 24	2:3	2400 x 3600	\$85
20 x 25	4:5	3000 x 3750	\$120
20 x 40	1:2	3000 x 6000	\$120
24 x 24	1:1	3600 x 3600	\$120
24 x 30	4:5	3600 x 4500	\$180
24 x 32	3:4	3600 x 4800	\$120
24 x 36	2:3	3600 x 5400	\$140
24 x 48	1:2	3600 x 7200	\$200
30 x 40	3:4	4500 x 6000	\$200
32 x 40	4:5	4800 x 6000	\$200
32 x 48	2:3	4800 x 7200	\$220
34 x 34	1:1	5100 x 5100	\$200
38 x 48	4:5	5700 x 7200	\$240



## List of images

Figure 1: The Binary Perspective. Mixed techniques on pressed cardboard W 90 x H 60 x D 0,5 cm by shaharee Vyaas. ....	10
Figure 2: Apollo. Acrylic on pressed cardboard W 50 cm x H 75 x D 0,5 cm by Shaharee Vyaas .....	14
Figure 3: Mercury. Mixed techniques on pressed cardboard 50 cm x 75 cm x 0.5 cm by Shaharee Vyaas. Limited print edition \$ 599 .....	16
Figure 4: Budha (Mercury). Mixed techniques on pressed cardboard 40,6 x 40,6 cm by Shaharee Vyaas (2023).....	18
Figure 5: Venus. Mixed techniques on pressed cardboard W 50 cm x H 75 x D 0,5 cm by Shaharee Vyaas Limited print edition \$ 599 .....	19
Figure 6: Shukra (Venus). Mixed techniques on pressed cardboard 40,6 x 40.6 cm by Shaharee Vyaas (2023).....	20
Figure 7: Terra. Mixed techniques on pressed cardboard W 50 x H 75 x D 0,5 cm by Shaharee Vyaas. \$ 455 .....	22
Figure 8: Bhumi (Terra). Mixed techniques on cardboard 40,6 x 40,6 cm by Shaharee Vyaas (2023).....	23
Figure 9: Mars. Mixed techniques on pressed cardboard H 75 cm x W 45x D 0,5 cm by Shaharee Vyaas. ....	25
Figure 10: Maṅgaḷa (Mars). Mixed techniques on pressed cardboard 40,6 x 40,6 cm by Shaharee Vyaas (2023).....	26
Figure 11: Ceres. Mixed techniques on pressed cardboard H 75 cm x W 50 x D 0,5 cm by Shaharee Vyaas. Limited print edition \$ 599 .....	27
Figure 12: Parvati (Ceres). Mixed techniques on pressed cardboard 40,6 x 40,6 cm by Shaharee Vyaas (2023).....	28
Figure 13: Jupiter. Mixed techniques on pressed cardboard 50 x 75 x 0,5 cm by Shaharee Vyaas. \$ 455 .....	30
Figure 14: Guru (Jupiter). Mixed techniques on pressed cardboard 40,6 x 40,6 cm by Shaharee Vyaas (2023).....	32

Figure 15: Saturn. Mixed techniques on pressed cardboard H 75 cm x W 50 x D 0,5 cm by Shaharee Vyaas. Limited print edition \$ 599 .....	33
Figure 16: Shani (Saturn). Mixed techniques on pressed cardboard 40.6 x 40.6 cm by Shaharee Vyaas (2023).....	34
Figure 17: Uranus. Mixed techniques on pressed cardboard H 75 cm x W 50 x D 0,5 cm by Shaharee Vyaas. Limited print edition \$ 599 .....	36
Figure 18: Indra (Uranus). Mixed techniques on cardboard 40.6 x 40.6 cm by Shaharee Vyaas (2023) .....	38
Figure 19: Neptune. Mixed techniques on pressed cardboard H 75 cm x W 50 cm x D 0,5 cm by Shaharee Vyaas Limited print edition \$ 599 .....	39
Figure 20: Varun (Neptune). Mixed techniques on pressed cardboard 40.6 x 40.6 cm by Shaharee Vyaas (2023).....	41
Figure 21: Pluto. Mixed techniques on pressed cardboard h 75 cm x W 50 cm x D 0.5 cm by Shaharee Vyaas. Limited print edition \$ 599 .....	42
Figure 22: Yama (Pluto). Mixed techniques on pressed cardboard 40.6 x 40.6 cm by Shaharee Vyaas (2023).....	44
Figure 23: Charon. Mixed techniques on pressed cardboard H 75 cm x W 50 cm x D 0.5 cm by Shaharee Vyaas. Limited print edition \$ 599 .....	45
Figure 24: Tarakeshwara (Sharon). Mixed techniques on pressed cardboard 40.6 x 40.6 cm by Shaharee Vyaas (2023).....	47
Figure 25: Eris. Mixed techniques on pressed cardboard H75 cm x W 50 cm D 0,5 cm by Shaharee Vyaas. Limited print edition \$ 599. ....	48
Figure 26: Kali (Eris). Mixed techniques on pressed cardboard 40.6 x 40.6 cm by Shaharee Vyaas (2023) .....	50
Figure 27: Covers of the three first parts of The Maharajagar that are already published.....	54

Figure 28: Evolution: Entrance or Exit? Acrylic on pressed cardboard W 60 cm x H 90 cm x D 0.5 cm by Shaharee Vyaas (Nov 18, 2021). Limited print edition \$ 499.....	61
Figure 29. What goes up, goes down. Acrylic on pressed cardboard W 60 cm x H 90 cm x D 0.5 cm. Limited print edition \$ 575 .....	63
Figure 30: Here be Dragons. Acrylic on pressed cardboard W 60 x H 90 x D 0.5 cm, Limited print edition \$ 575.....	65
Figure 31. The Yin Yang Vision. Acrylic on pressed cardboard W 60 x H90 x D 0,5 cm.....	66
Figure 32: The Butterfly Effect. Acrylic on canvas 80 x 80 x D 1,5 cm. \$ 279.....	67
Figure 33: Assimilation. Acrylic on canvas W 120 x H 120 x D 0,5 cm. Limited print edition \$599.....	70
Figure 34: Kundalini. Acrylic on pressed cardboard 60 x 60 x D 0,5 cm by Shaharee Vyaas (2023) .....	73
Figure 35: The Big Migration. Acrylic on cardboard 60 x 60 x 0.5 cm by Shaharee Vyaas (2023) .....	75
Figure 36: The Zone. Acrylic on pressed cardboard 60 x 90 cm by Shaharee Vyaas (2023). .....	77
Figure 37: Cover of the essay Time in Art by Shaharee Vyaas...	79
Figure 38: Peter Paul Rubens' portrait of Helena Fourment next to a 21st century nude by Shaharee Vyaas at an exposition in the Kunsthistorisches Museum; Maria Lassnig Stiftung .....	81
Figure 39: Who has never wondered how la Gioconda could have looked like 60 years after Da Vinci painted her when she was in her prime?.....	82
Figure 40: Or Wayland's Blue boy once he reached adulthood? .....	82
Figure 41: Old Woman Saying Grace, Known as 'The Prayer without End' c. 1656 by Nicolaes Maes. 'Prayer without end' gets a sinister dimension when you regress the lady's age with about 50 years and hang the result next to each other .....	83

Figure 42: Whistler's mother was never a person who took life lightly, but a study of her portrait with some age regression, gives a more in-depth glance into her puritan soul.....	83
Figure 43: American Gothic is a 1930 oil on beaverwood painting by the American Regionalist artist Grant Wood. Depicting a Midwestern farmer and his daughter standing in front of their Carpenter Gothic style home, with in the painting on the left side the same (to their childhood regressed) subjects. It made one consider what might have been and what was. ....	84
Figure 44: Venice: a psycho-historical map. Acrylic on presses cardboard 60cm x 80 cm x 1,5 cm by Shaharee Vyaas (2023) \$ 699 .....	85
Figure 45: Berlin: a psycho-historical map. Acrylic on canvas 60cm x 80 cm x 1,5 cm by Shaharee Vyaas (2023) \$ 699 .....	88
Figure 46: London: a psycho-historical map. Acrylic on canvas 80cm x 80 cm x 1,5 cm by Shaharee Vyaas (2023) \$ 699 .....	90
Figure 47: Here Comes Everybody's Karma, Print length 566 pages. Publication year: 2024, Dimensions 8.5 x 1.28 x 11 inches, .....	92
Figure 48: Finnegans Wake: (a) Word Number Series. (b) Wavelet analysis. (c) q-th order fluctuation functions. (d) Singularity spectra. (For details see Drozd (2016)) .....	105
Figure 49: Danse Macabre. Acrylic on pressed cardboard H 50 x W 40 x D 0.5 cm by Shaharee Vyaas (2023). Open print edition on canvas \$ 199 .....	108
Figure 50: The Conclave. Acrylic on pressed cardboard 50 x 40 x 0.5 cm by Shaharee Vyaas (2023). Open print edition on canvas \$ 199. ....	111
Figure 51: The Clan. Acrylic on pressed cardboard 40 x 50 x 0.5 cm by Shaharee Vyaas (2023). Open print edition on canvas \$ 199. ....	113

Figure 52: Fear. Acrylic on pressed cardboard 40 x 50 x 0.5 cm by Shaharee Vyaas (2023). Open print edition on canvas \$ 199.	115
Figure 53: Azrael. Acrylic on pressed cardboard 40 x 50 x 0.5 cm by Shaharee Vyaas. Open print edition on canvas \$ 199.	117
Figure 54: Dancing in the Dark. Fluorescent Acrylic on pressed cardboard W 120 x H 120 x D 0,5 cm. Limited print edition \$ 599	120
Figure 55: Reading in the Dark. Fluorescent Acrylic on pressed cardboard W 120 x H 120 x D 0,5 cm. Limited print edition \$ 599	122
Figure 56: Whistling in the Dark. Fluorescent Acrylic on pressed cardboard W 120 x H 120 x D 0,5 cm. Limited print edition \$ 599	123
Figure 57: The Watchers in the Dark. Fluorescent Acrylic on pressed cardboard W 120 x H 120 x D 0,5 cm. Limited print edition \$ 599	125
Figure 58: Architecture in the Dark. Fluorescent Acrylic on pressed cardboard W 120 x H 120 x D 0,5 cm. Limited print edition \$ 599	127
Figure 59: Painting in the Dark. Fluorescent Acrylic on pressed cardboard W 120 x H 120 x D 0,5 cm. Limited print edition \$ 599	129
Figure 60: Poetry in the Dark. Fluorescent Acrylic on pressed cardboard W 120 x H 120 x D 0,5 cm. Limited print edition \$ 599	131
Figure 61: Sculptures in the Dark. Fluorescent Acrylic on pressed cardboard W 120 x H 120 x D 1,5 cm. Limited print edition \$ 599	132