

15 Discernments on the Great Game

July 12 – August 12, 2017

**René Daumal, Roger Vailland, Robert
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Le Grand Jeu, I. Été, 1928

Printed journal

13 x 8 inches

64 pages

On a pedestal, next to two closed journals, an opened original edition of the first issue of *Le Grand Jeu*, published in the summer of 1928. It is 64 pages long, paperbacked in brick red. The paper is tea-brown and smells of moisture, its edges brittle. In this first issue, the members of the group delineate the terms of pataphysics – the science of imaginary solutions. It is opened to page 26, a drawing by Josef Sima, and page 27, an erotic poem that begins, in French, “The eye of reason / Capsizes and waltzes / And the sign between the legs of women / Opens”.

The Grand Jeu group published three issues of the journal between 1928 and 1932; texts and drawings for *IV. Automne, 1932*, were compiled, but never released.

The Grand Jeu group posed unanswerable questions and explored slippery ideas around which one can dance or ignite fires; coincidence, chance, necromancy; absurdity as an existential adhesive.

In *Through The Looking Glass*, Alice tries to walk directly from a house to a hill, only to find that she has re-walked back to the house; only once, on the advice of a rose bud, she walks in the opposite direction of the hill does she finally reach it.

The mind adopts the habit of saying “This is not important” to everything the body does or experiences.” (René Daumal)

Jean-Luc Moulène

Bubu (Paris, May 2017), 2017

Bronze

11 3/4 x 6 7/8 x 3 7/8 inches

A figure is hand-formed with wax, squeezed into shape while the wax is still warm, but not liquid – a brief juncture of less than five minutes. Once it has cooled, he is cast in bronze and held erect by a pole.

For the Grand Jeu group, a “bubu” was a household god. Taking the various forms of a grotesque infant or gnome, the doll-god was modeled after and named for Alfred Jarry’s Père Ubu. This figure would reside over social gatherings, experiments with mind-altering substances, rituals, and shared spaces. The group’s first publication, while they still lived in Reims, was called Bubu-Magazine.

Ernest Trova

Study/Falling Man (Carman), 1966

Polished bronze and enamel

21 x 78 1/2 x 31 inches

A smoothly-contoured humanoid body of polished bronze. Two axles run through its neck and ankles, with four wide wheels attached. The head is constructed like a helmet, with a circular grill at its tip and a thin red enamel stripe running down its center. The whole body is a phallus; a phallus that is a machine; with the material authority of a building.

Lycanthropy describes either the phenomenon of or the delusion that one is physically transforming

into an animal, particularly a wolf. Coherence is only verifiable by the senses.

Ernest Trova

Study/Falling Man Diptych, 1964

Acrylic and pencil on linen

74 x 74 inches

An acrylic painting on primed linen canvas. Concentric archways, navy blue or black, provide a backdrop for two rows of silhouetted figures in profile, lined up one after the other, aligned with the contours of the arches. Do they march in opposite directions?

In Trova’s work, body is grammar.

Nina Canell

Gum Drag, 2017

Tree resin, steel

Dimensions variable

Pale pink, Iranian pistachio tree resin cast into minimal cuboids of varying heights appear

to stand erect; they stand on bases built from aluminum hardware, from which a pole is driven upwards into the shaft of each resin column. As time passes, the resin reacts to the environment, and articulates gravity and time by drooping, collapsing, melting down. The gum's texture retards the pace of this collapse, making it imperceptible; at a glance, they appear static. The works age faster than we do, but slower than we can see.

The lycanthropic body is never static, always in transit.

Jean Dupuy

Cone Pyramid, 1990

Acrylic on canvas

83 x 57 ½ inches

Primed canvas fastened at either end between wood slats. Descriptive words painted in acrylic; seemingly nonsensical words; "BEET BEET BEET BLACKS BLACKS BLACKS BONE BLUE" – followed by a paragraph describing the artist's work Heart Beats Dust, using all the letters

from the nonsense words in the paragraph that precedes it.

Jean Dupuy

Who is She, 1981

Acrylic on canvas

76 ¾ x 61 inches

A stanza comprised of acrylic painted descriptive words, followed by an anagram of the letters in that paragraph transformed into a narrative passage.

Absalon

Cellule No. 5 (modèle), 1991

Cardboard, velum, white dispersion paint

12 x 6 7/8 x 8 ¼ inches

A cardboard model of a cylindrical architectural space, open on both ends, painted in white, "furnished" in white interlocking pieces, with a velum skylight in its ceiling. An enclosure for a single being, which other beings can only visit temporarily. A body. A white cell.

Absalon

Untitled, 1990

8 drawings, ball pen, pencil, ink
& correction pen on Bristol paper
13 x 9 ½ inches

8 drawings, with notation in Hebrew script, of proposed household objects constructed from modular shapes.

Juan Antonio Olivares

Fermi Paradox, 2017

Cassis madagascariensis shell, nylon string,
metal hardware, micro-speaker, iPod nano,
audio file (7:31 loop)
Dimensions variable

A deep voice from inside the folds of a large conch shell growls, “I relieved myself from the body I was in before, to end the insufferable weight, but it didn’t help. Eternity is unavoidable. You think you kicked me out of paradise? Ha! It’s what I wanted!”

René Daumal believed and hoped that moments

before death, the mind and body entered a revelatory state. Obsessed by his conception of near-death, and determined to bring his body to death’s brink, Daumal frequently inhaled the vapors of strychnine and carbon tetrachloride. His immune system and constitution badly weakened, he found death by tuberculosis at the age of 36.

Jean-Luc Moulène

Grappe, 2017

Asphalt and plastic
13 x 14 x 12 inches

Multiple balloons are inflated through holes in a 5-liter plastic bottle. Cluster of balloons and bottle are coated in epoxy and asphaltum. The work’s title, *Grappe*, means “cluster”.

Tabula rasa: everything is true.

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