

The **UFO** Show

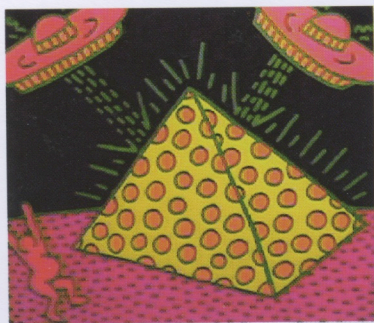
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Foreword

Barry Blinderman

In the summer of 1998, within the span of days, I saw a voluptuous sequined **UFO sculpture** by Sharon Englestein in Houston, received a reproduction of one of Claire Jervert's video-derived sci-fi saucer photographs, and was sent slides of pancake-shaped sculptures with glass bubble protrusions by Jeremy Kidd, a Brit living in Los Angeles. When such "meaningful" coincidences occur, I'm curious to investigate why certain themes appear in clusters in different artists' work. I began to wonder why the image of the flying saucer, whether rendered by a five-year-old child, non-artist, or artist, always seemed to have the same ovoid shape. Was it because we all have seen the same 50s sci-fi movies or their spinoffs—whether in toys or on TV—or did it have to do with some primal image that predates film, or for that matter was hardwired to our psyches before the dawn of the earliest civilization? Appearances of blinking ellipsoids, whirling orbs, and hovering illuminations have been reported and recorded since biblical times, and especially following the onset of atomic warfare and subsequent testing. Whether based in empirical reality, paranoiac projection, false memories, or an innate desire to realize an archetype of wholeness, UFOs have captivated the popular and artistic imagination. I am told—but have not verified the statistics—that UFO sites get the third most frequent hits on the Internet, eclipsed only by shopping and sex sites.

The term UFO was first used by the military to define any unidentified object in the sky, but it has been widely adopted by post 1950s society as a synonym for the image of the flying saucer popularized by science-fiction books and movies. Paradoxically, the mystery of the "unidentified" in the term is automatically equated with the identification of an extraterrestrial Other, while the "flying object" is as swiftly likened to the very terrestrial image of any saucer-shaped thing. (Just place two tea saucers face to face and you'll see immediately what I'm talking about.) The contradiction between the "unidentified" and the identified Other it represents—whether real or imagined—has provided fertile territory for artists fascinated by a sublime form shuttling between the atavistic and media-generated chambers of the collective unconscious.



Keith Haring, **Untitled (Fertility Suite)**. Silk-screen on paper, 1983. Courtesy Shafrazi Gallery.



Opening reception for The UFO Show, with detail of Sharon Englestein's **Flying Saucer**.

While I'm busy throwing around Jungian terms like "collective unconscious" and "archetype"—words that might have labelled me as very

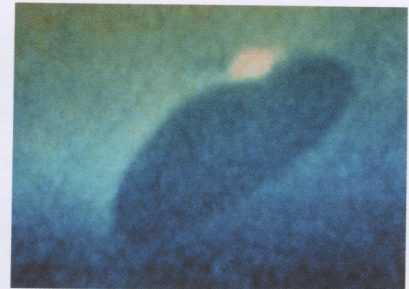
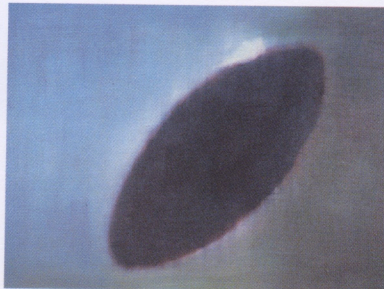
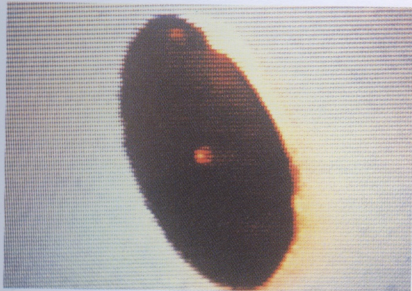


Drawing by Gabriel Nordholm Blinderman, ca. 1995.

unhip during the French theory-bound 80s—I should mention that I came across a catchy reprint of Carl Jung's *Flying Saucers* (1958) in a bargain bin at Barnes & Noble shortly after my encounter with the UFO art. Jung postulated that regardless if flying saucers actually exist, people have reported seeing them throughout history—with a particular spate of sightings during the Cold War—because they seek an image of wholeness in times of social and spiritual rupture. The flying saucer's shape is—beyond that of a comforting breast or a protective womb—a mandala, a timeless and universal image of opposing forces converging. Perhaps Jung's concept of the collective unconscious needs to be reevaluated to account for the extent to

which movies, TV and computers have superseded the function of dreams: Initially film served to reflect and make visible our innermost fears and desires. Now, the electronic media are projecting and implanting new archetypes in the collective psyche with a success rate that makes it impossible to guess at this time whether the chicken preceded the egg or vice-versa.

In the midst of widespread museum mega-surveys of the 20th century, [The UFO Show](#) began as a desire to address the new millennium in a lighthearted yet symbolic way. If there was one image that seemed to me to embody the wondrous intersection of the past and the future—or “future primeval”—it was the flying saucer. Late-night college screenings of 50s films like the sci-fi quasi-biblical classic *The Day the Earth Stood Still* left an indelible impression on me in the early 70s. Ten years later, I was equally entranced by the telegraphic expediency of Keith Haring's subway drawings with [sombbrero-like flying saucers](#) zapping animals, pyramids and people alike, investing them with strange powers.



Claire Jervet, [4/1998oz-1](#). Cibachrome print on honeycomb aluminum, 1998. Courtesy Steffany Martz Gallery, New York.

Joy Garnett, [Scud](#). Oil on canvas, 1996. Courtesy the artist and Debs & Co., New York.

Oliver Wasow, [Untitled #169](#) (detail). Iris print, 1986. Courtesy Janet Borden Gallery, New York.



Still from *Galaxy Quest*, 1999.

But what this project really comes down to is the question of belief and the absence of absolute truth in the postmodern era. Given that the two main image banks for UFOs are either Hollywood stage sets involving elaborately constructed models, or widely circulated “documentary” shots by photographers like **Billy Meier** and **George Adamski**, we are dealing with a concept that—at least for those who haven’t yet seen a saucer—exists purely on film. It’s a modernization of the Shroud of Turin proving Christ’s existence, only this time around the sacred artifacts are not imprints of blood on cloth, but light captured on emulsion. Today, about as many people believe in Christ as those who believe in flying saucers. Political candidates flaunting their family values pander to the former as reasonable law-abiding citizens, while the latter are dismissed as nuts.

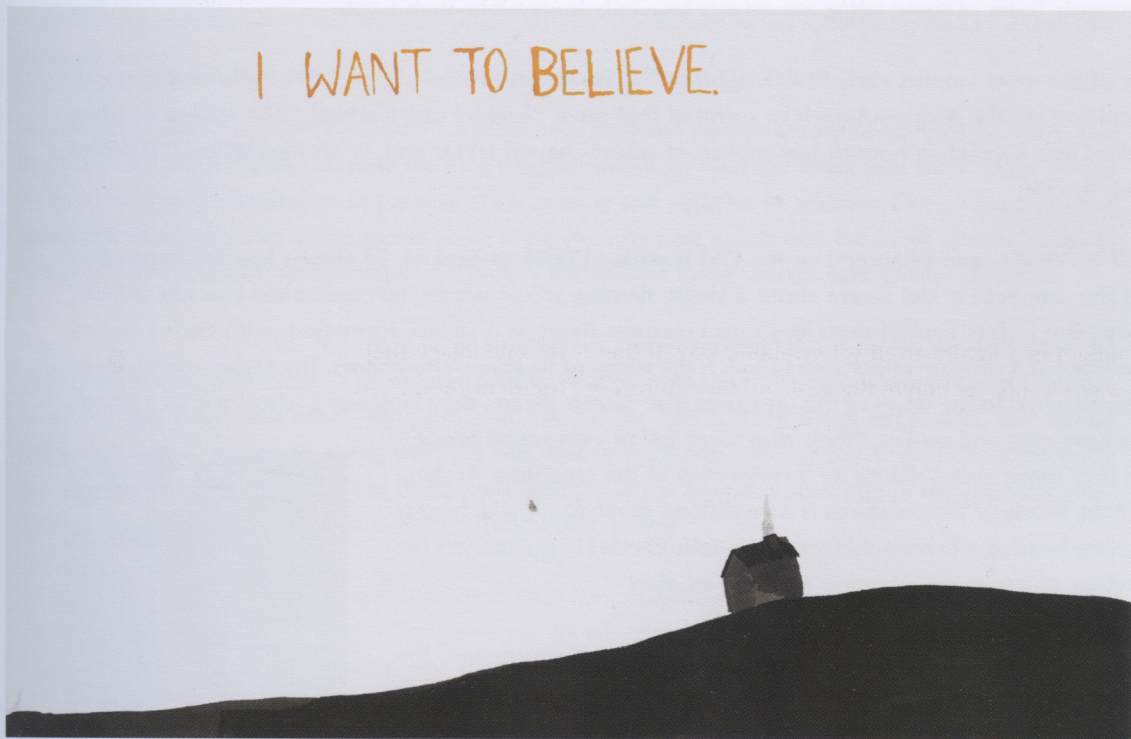
In a parallel vein of reality-seeking, the recent sci-fi spoof *Galaxy Quest* has as its premise a childlike but techno-advanced band of extraterrestrials who have modelled their spacecraft and behavior on broadcasts of a Star Trek-type TV show they mistook for “historical documents.” They transport the show’s actors from a Trekkie convention to their starship, and the aging and disillusioned crew save the day by “believing in themselves,” emulating their characters’ strategies and bravery, operating “real” ship equipment designed after mere studio props. And of course what we, the viewers, are looking at are fancy but inoperative instrument panels representing ones that really work but are in turn based on props.

The flying saucer is the contemporary manifestation of the halo—a radiant circle indicating the presence of supernatural beings. With drawings, paintings, prints, sculptures, video and essays relating to discs, saucers and other phenomena associated with UFOs, the artists and writers in *The UFO Show* variously confront an historically ingrained and commercially reinforced locus of millennial obsession.



Left: George Adamski photo of a “Venusian mother ship and smaller scout vessels.”
Right: Billy Meier website image.
(See plates on pages 46 and 92)





Amy Wilson, **I Want to Believe**. Ink and gouache on paper, 1999. Courtesy the artist.

A History Of Ufology: Notes Towards *Saucer Wisdom*

Rudy Rucker

Throughout history people have reported seeing unusual things in the sky: moving lights at night, odd shapes in the daytime. These heavenly portents were generally taken to be signs put there by God or the gods. Occasionally there was some suspicion that odd things seen in the sky were caused by human sorcerers, for instance witches on broomsticks. But at no time did people think of attributing the celestial anomalies to interplanetary travelers. For most of human history people did not commonly think of there being life on any heavenly body other than Earth.

One of the most famous early “UFO sightings” is known as **Ezekiel’s Wheel**. It’s enshrined in popular culture via the African-American spiritual that goes, “Ezekiel saw a wheel.” The Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan himself has spoken of wheel-shaped UFOs and a “Mother-Wheel.” [Peebles 1994, p, 290]

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Until I recently read Chapter 1 of the Old Testament Book of Ezekiel, I’d always had the impression that the prophet Ezekiel wrote about a single flaming wheel which hovered above him like a flying saucer. But in fact Ezekiel describes four creatures flying in a square formation, with each creature reaching out a wing on either side to touch the wings of its nearest neighbors. The fabled wheels seem to be attached to the bases of the creatures. The wheels gleam, they look like a wheel within a wheel, they have rims and spokes, “their rims were full of eyes round about,” and they move about strictly as if connected to the creatures. Arching over the heads of the creatures is a crystalline dome upon which rests a throne bearing a humanoid form, who tells Ezekiel to go and tell the Israelites to pay more attention to God—or else!

In his stimulating survey of UFOs, *Anatomy Of A Phenomenon*, the French ufologist Jacques Vallee suggests that the creatures-and-wheels assemblage was a machine (perhaps the wheels are the nozzles of saucer-drive engines?) and goes so far as to speak of “the Ezekiel incident” as being a “detailed account of a landing.” [Vallee 1965. p. 29] But, when you look at text in the context of other biblical writings, Ezekiel’s report seems to be just another prophet’s bombastic rant, unlikely to have had any foundation in physical fact.

There are any number of other historical UFO reports. In his book *Flying Saucers*, C. G. Jung cites two interesting examples of people seeing UFOs: in Nuremberg in 1561, and in Basel in 1566. These

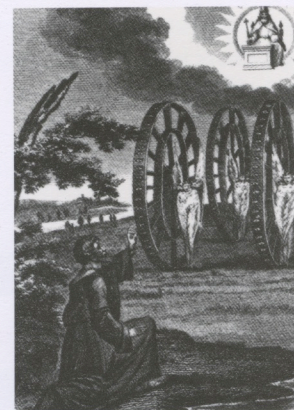


Figure 1: Ezekiel's "father-ship."



Figures 2 and 3:
 Left: Nuremberg Broadsheet, 1561.
 Right: Basel Broadsheet, 1566.



events were recorded in “broadsheets” of the time, a broadsheet being something akin to a one-shot newspaper.

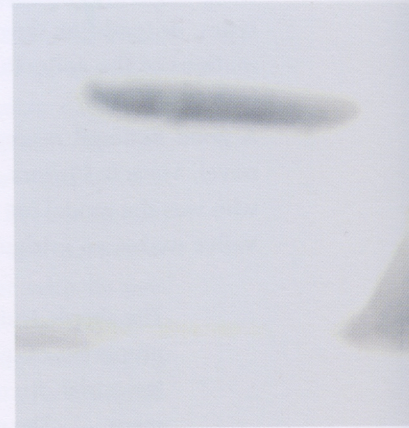
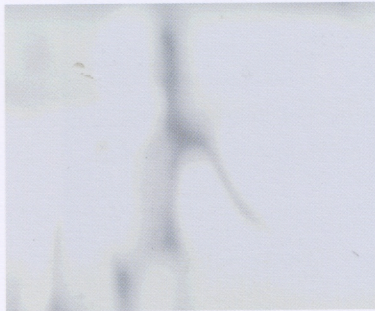
According to the **Nuremberg broadsheet**, a number of men and women at sunrise on April 14, 1561, saw red, blue and black globes and disks flocking together in the sky near the rising sun. Some of the shapes seemed to arrange themselves in patterns such as rows and squares. In addition there were two great tubes within which more of the globes were to be seen. As Jung points out, the tubes are analogous to the notion of cylindrical motherships which carry the smaller flying saucers over greater distances.

The **Basel broadsheet** also reports a large number of globes moving about in the air; this time the globes are black, with some of them later turning red. In both cases the globes were thought to have been fighting with each other. Jung remarks that “if the UFOs were living organisms, one would think of a swarm of insects rising with the sun, not to fight one another but to mate and celebrate the marriage flight,” and that “The militaristic interpretation is as characteristic of the sixteenth century as the technological one is of ours.” [Jung 1958, p. 96]

In the November, 1896, a number of people near Sacramento, California, reported seeing a mysterious airship: a glowing gas bag in the sky driven by whirring propellers and equipped with a searchlight. Sightings of the “California Great Airship” spread across the country for the next six months.

In 1946 (which is the year in which, ahem, I was born) thousands of Swedish citizens spotted ghostly cigar-shaped objects in the sky; they were understandably concerned that they might be seeing German rockets. The ghost rockets sometimes seemed to explode, but no debris was ever found on the ground.

During the Second World War, bomber and fighter pilots from both sides reported seeing glowing objects that flew along next to their aircraft. There was no speculation at this time that the unidentified objects might be aliens. These lights were known as “**foo fighters**,” either because (1) “foo” is a lot like the French word “feu” for “fire,” or (2) because of the popularity of a comic strip called



Going back to our historical timeline, a TV movie called *The UFO Incident*, based on the abduction stories of Betty and Barney Hill account was shown on October 20, 1975. This film was of key historical significance, as it was the first time that aliens were depicted in the canonical modern way: as short, gray-skinned, hairless, and with big, almond-shaped eyes. The excellent 1977 Steven Spielberg film clinched this image of the aliens. In the 1980s ufologists began referring to these kinds of aliens as Grays.

Grays are always depicted as about the size of children, thin and spindly, with big bald heads and enormous slanting eyes. Their noses, ears and mouths are rudimentary. It is as if they think and see, but do not taste, smell, speak, or listen. They look like creatures ideally evolved for watching—which is perhaps not too far wrong, although it is certainly fallacious to imagine the saucer aliens as actual flesh-and-blood humanoids. **The slanted-eye alien image** has become so pervasive that it is hard to really grasp that the icon is only some twenty years old.

Regarding the title of the Spielberg movie, a close encounter of the first kind is the sighting of a UFO that is near enough to you so that you can make it out as a detailed object. This is as opposed to seeing lights or flashes in the sky.

A close encounter of the second kind involves finding or experiencing some physical evidence of the UFOs. Evidence might include burnt vegetation or pad prints on the ground, the sudden stopping of electrical machinery (such as your car's ignition), or a strange sunburn. Showing up with odd parts of your body burnt bright red is a tried and true way to get attention at a UFO conference.



Left to right: John Brill
Material Image AH71151
Material Image AG38531
Material Image BH00100
Material Image SR09041
Material Image AH71552
All selenium-toned silver prints, 1991.
Courtesy Kent Gallery, New York.

A close encounter of the third kind involves seeing the aliens themselves. Since the 1970s, the Center For UFO Studies has extended the classification schema to include close encounters of the fourth kind: these are the abduction experiences. I think it might make sense to speak of Frank Shook's experiences as close encounters of a fifth kind. He gets aboard the saucers, but rather than being treated like some masochistic lab-rat abductee, he is used as a kind of guide through Earth's time.

As the 1970s wore into the 1980s, people all but stopped reporting seeing UFOs. The most common UFO reports became the filthy abduction tales. This trend was marked in 1981 by the first big book on abductions, *Missing Time* by Budd Hopkins. Hopkins suggested that aliens needed sperm and ova from humans, perhaps for breeding experiments. The abduction experiences he describes are cold, clinical rape. To make things worse, the abductees commonly believe that the aliens had put implants into them so as to be able to control them. This is of course a standard schizophrenic delusion.

Keep in mind that most abductees only remember their experiences under hypnosis, and that these alleged experiences are to have happened while they were asleep. Abductees' accounts are, in other words, hypnotically induced memories of dreams. Nevertheless, Frank says that a small number of these accounts are true. He somewhat heatedly argues that the rubber-gloves dreariness of the abductees' accounts is a result of neuroses among the abductees—rather than being a result of cruelty on the part of the aliens. Frank says



Figure 5: Gways wuv oo!
yeah, yeah, yeah.

Disco Volante

Paul Laffoley

I saw my first “foreign film” in 1951. It was not playing at The Telepix, The Translux or The Brattle Theatre, but at Boston’s widest screen of the day—The RKO Keith Memorial Theatre on Tremont Street, halfway between Park and Boylston. The director was not Vittorio De Sica, Fritz Lang, Jean Cocteau, or Ingmar Bergman, but an American, Robert Wise, a Virgo born on September 10, 1914. What I am referring to is the classic flying saucer movie of the atomic age, *The Day the Earth Stood Still*, direct from the film studios of 20th Century Fox.

Having been regaled since 1947 by stories of riding in flying saucers by the man who came to cut our bushes at my family home in Belmont Massachusetts (he had been a recent emigrant from Belmonte, a small town in Italy near Naples), I was uniquely prepared to see this visionary and truly foreign film. Our gardener spoke of how he and his autistic son had been lifted by beams of light into a “disco volante” (Italian for flying saucer or disk), and then shown new devices, new worlds, and glowing people hundreds of Earth years old. He claimed seventeen rides in all. The “people” gave him the symbol of “The Order of Melchizedek,” showing to the rest of Earth that one is worthy to aid in the development of the “The Cosmic Task.” On the day he left for good, with trembling hand outstretched, he offered me the medallion. Seeing it safely in my grip, he extended a forefinger to my brow and uttered in broken English: “For the sake of the Almighty Spirit, astound this world.” What he handed me was a coin-like object slightly larger in diameter than $2 \frac{7}{16}$ ” and a fraction over $\frac{3}{32}$ ” in thickness. Each side bore the image of a Mogen-David with a Swastika inside it, only with the opposite orientation. When I held the dark green medallion in my hand, it seemed to be composed of the lightest metal I have ever felt.

At mid-century, there were basically three major film genres: (1) Hollywood—the world is a light, bubbly, colorful fairy tale; (2) Slavic Despair—life is the shards remaining after the spectacular but necessarily tragic battle between free will and fate; and (3) Foreign (origin Western Europe)—life is in exceedingly bad taste, but by means of grace, charm and wit, in the end we will outclass reality itself. Robert Wise chose the Foreign genre within which to couch his film because he was delivering a barbed message to an ideologically divided world beset with sentimentality but lacking humor. He was saying what people knew but were afraid to admit: the Cold War could suddenly become very hot, ending in an atomic holocaust. The Hollywood genre would be too optimistic, the Slavic Despair too hopeless. In choosing the Foreign genre, he rode the high ground between aristocratic distancing and the pop culture of his day, keeping the tension alive.



The Day the Earth Stood Still movie poster (1951).

“Spacemen From Mars.” Prominent radio and TV reporters of the day appear in cameo, playing themselves: Elmer Davis and Drew Pearson—who never took his hat off after age 35—spit staccato warnings, and H.B. Carltonborn’s “there’s good news tonight” optimism is offset by Gabriel Heatter’s blithering paranoia.

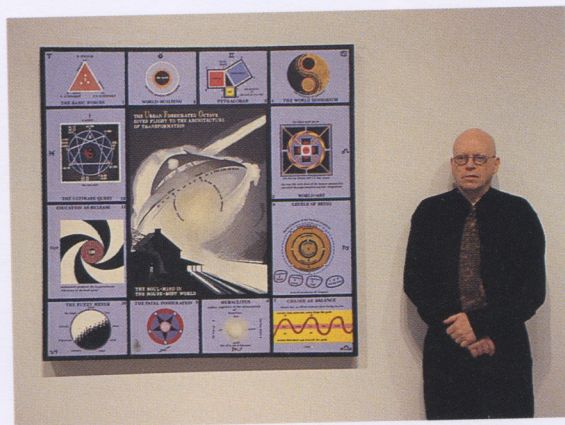
In the eyes of a mid-century European, American culture was populated with the hopelessly monolingual and the artistically inferior. Wise, knowing that America no longer conformed to the image held by most Europeans that we are a naive world whose culture is exemplified by the Western or the Jerry Lewis movie, took the language theories of the Austrian philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889-1951) to heart. He directed a Foreign film without subtitles. We hear English spoken (both Posh and Cockney), American (Midwestern and New England), Hindi, French, Russian, and, of course, the language of Klaatu: Aporue. Also, according to Harry Bates, author of the story, Klaatu’s home “planet” was Europa, one of the four largest moons of Jupiter, one-fourth the diameter of the Earth—smooth and icy, containing water. Klaatu, therefore, is a “Cosmic European.”

Wittgenstein claimed that no language can really be translated. There are only “family resemblances” of meaning, and no private languages either. Language is a game, therefore, which is known only by inventing a new language. The intellectual bewitchment of the “untranslatable” is over, and the world according to Wise is seen as truly international. In fact, he realized that the U.S. was becoming the entertainment capital of the world. America was willing to be the audience for the rest of the world and itself, as our view that reality is divided between the subjective and the objective began to blur and fade out.

The Day the Earth Stood Still has all the earmarks of the Foreign film, particularly its sub-genre, the Film Noir: black-and-white high contrast photography, creating malevolent shadows accompanied by the foreboding background music by Bernard Herrmann and augmented by the otherworldly sounds of the Theremin—the first electronic instrument. The plot is structured in cinema verité to convey candid or newsreel realism. There are scene cuts from Calcutta, Moscow, Paris, London, a pool room, a gas station, an amusement park, a draw bridge, and, of course, many scenes from downtown Washington D.C. Mock tabloids fill the screen with descriptions of

Near the climax of the action, Klaatu delivers his most famous line in his native tongue, the phrase everyone knows by heart: "Gort Klaatu Barada Nikto." Because of the circumstances surrounding the absolute necessity of these words being said to Gort by widow Helen Benson (played by Patricia Neal, who is a brunette in the movie and looks and acts like Donna Reed with permanent P.M.S.), an exact translation is impossible. Klaatu is instructing her to say the phonemes correctly as they ride together in the back seat of a cab. He has reached a point of desperation and isn't interested in giving her a foreign language lesson.

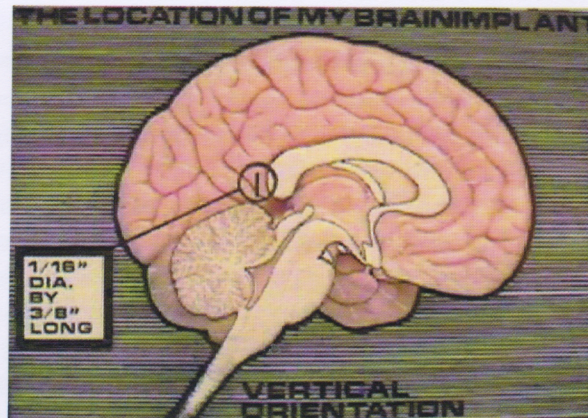
Klaatu first meets Helen when he rents a room in the same boarding house where she and her young son, Bobby, live. In fact, he ends up in the room next to hers. The town house is at 1412 Harvard Street North West—in the fashionable Georgetown section of the city, right off Massachusetts Avenue. It is Bobby, played by Billy Grey, who discovers that Klaatu has no "Earth money"—he brought only per-



Paul Laffoley and **The Urban Fossickated Octave**. Oil, acrylic, ink, and lettering on canvas, 1968. Private collection, New York.

fect diamonds ("they are easy to carry and they don't wear out") as money. He cannot exchange them without revealing his true identity. He does, however, take two dollar bills from Bobby in exchange for two diamonds ("I want to take you to the movies"). Klaatu, for the few days he lives incognito at Mrs. Crockette's (played by Frances Bavier) rooming house, lives like a homeless person on the charity of others. Apparently this is fine with Mrs. Crockette, a middle aged widow who is agog with pride and possessiveness when she realizes that "Mr. Carpenter" wants to stay. His tall, handsome appearance and aristocratic demeanor, plus his use of language (Mrs. Crockette believes from his accent that he comes from a location a long way from Washington D.C., that is, New England!) convinces her that he outclasses all the rest of her boring boarders. Not once does she suspect who or what he really is.

Klaatu is played by Michael Rennie, who, as a British repertory actor, puts on a performance that makes the rest of the cast look like soap-opera regulars, walk-ons, or just rank amateurs. This contrast is what gives Klaatu his otherworldly ambiance. Robert Wise, of course, planned this carefully. He presented Klaatu as a role model for human evolution: physically, intellectually, morally, and culturally superior to Earthlings. He comes from a planet that has no wars (“gee . . . that’s a good idea,” says Bobby). But as the “Earthman” Mr. Carpenter, he is shown stealing, mooching, littering, moving about in disguise, lying to children, making technical errors (he claims to be staying in room 309 at Walter Reed when the number on the door is 306). To top it off, he offers the Earth an Hobson’s Choice: either the Earth accepts the system of peace loving planets or it will be eliminated. But aside from these Earth-like imperfections, Wise moulds the character of Klaatu in direct contrast to the images of aliens most audiences are familiar with—warmongering, bloodthirsty, slimy mutants (“with square heads, three big



Paul Laffoley, *Thanaton* (detail). Ink, lettering acrylic on board, 1996. Collection Peter Giblin.

eyes and tentacles”) bent on non-negotiable carnage and dedicated to the ultimate obliteration of all human life, and, of course, all depicted within architectural movie environments of eye-drugging fantasies of destruction, bolting action, bleeding color, special effects and monster budgets. Neither the images of aliens from the *Buck Rogers* or *Flash Gordon* serials of the 1930’s, nor those depicted as soon as two years after the making of *The Day the Earth Stood Still*—as in Byron Haskins’ rendition of H.G. Wells’ *The War of the Worlds*—ever went off tradition as the image of Klaatu did.

Even the recent blockbuster *Independence Day*, awash in sentimentality, special effects, and pumped up politically-correct patriotism, cannot come close to subsuming the brilliance and originality of what

What It Is!—The Mothership Connection

Bill McBride

Well, all right!

Starchild, Citizens of the Universe, Recording Angels.



Parliament *Mothership Connection* album cover.

We have returned to claim the Pyramids.

Partying on the Mothership.

I am the Mothership Connection.

Gettin' down in 3-D

Light year groovin' . . .

Doin' it up on the Chocolate Milky Way

What's up CC? Have you forgot me?

Are you hip to Easter Island? The Bermuda Triangle?

Heh heh! Well, all right. Ain't nothing but a party!

Starchild here, Citizens of the Universe

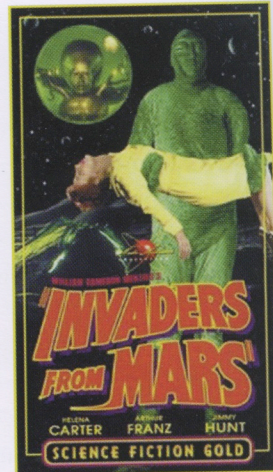
I bring forth to you the Good Time

On the Mothership.

Are you hip?

"Mothership Connection (Starchild)" (George Clinton, 1975) as recorded by Parliament.

Very near the end of my boyhood-favorite 50s flying saucer movie, the kid, David, wakes up again in his bedroom at 4:41 a.m.—as he had at the beginning of the film—to witness the same, cool UFO landing in his backyard, which we've just learned he didn't see . . . Ahah! Missing Time. It was all a prophetic dream—as was the entire film which displays: the zombification of his parents and most of the townspeople via back-of-the-neck cranial surgery; the freaky, wordless scenes of the Afro-coifed Femalien Head in a Jar who was recently dispatched from the Martian Mothership along with her "Big Ape" Zombie "mute-ant" henchmen; and Raoul Kraushaar's gloriously sumptuous chorus of disparate, pop-atonal voices striking an uncanny chord every time the Saucer's sand-pit landing site opens up with a corkscrew swoosh, sucking another earthling into the alien-run underground hive.¹ The boy goes back to sleep, his parents attribute the dream to "those trashy comic books he's been reading," and then, as a second saucer (though in reality, the first saucer) lands, the kid says a kid thing. He says: "Gee Whiz!" *Invaders from Mars* (William Cameron Menzies, 1953) manages to



Invaders from Mars movie poster.

My Ufology

Amy Wilson

I first started working with UFO and paranormal imagery about three years ago. It was an episode of the TV show “The X-Files” that really got me started; while I don’t remember the specifics, there is one scene that has stuck in my mind since then. The skeptical, female FBI agent Dana Scully was sent to interview a rather awkward man in his early twenties about a UFO experience he’d had. He described to her how he went out night after night, looking for aliens, and lo and behold, this one night he had actually seen one. He described the rush of white lights and the whirring noise of the saucer lowering down upon him and declared that he had stood his ground, waiting to be taken aboard. To his story, the agent declared something to the effect of, “You must have been terrified!” to which the young man replied, “Well, you don’t spend ten years playing Dungeons and Dragons without learning a little something about courage.”



Roswell, New Mexico. Photo by Amy Wilson.

This rather strange exchange between two television characters on a show I had never previously watched has kept me interested ever since. It implied a fundamental truth to me about sociology, psychology, and consciousness at the end of the 20th Century: that there are people out there who are living lives so dull and unrewarding that their fantasies provide challenges to them that they would never otherwise experience. I suspect that this has always been true, but we live in an era where retreating into your secret fantasy world is more aggressively marketed and acceptable than ever before, with the proliferation of role-playing games, reality-based video games, and cyber-relationships/sex as just a few examples.

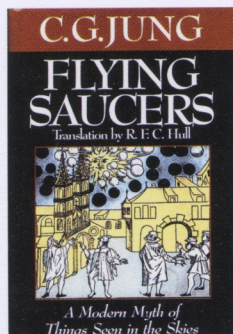
It also raised another interesting point to me: that in a time when nothing is presumed to be absolutely true, we are constantly encountering people whose version of reality is completely different than ours. Let me offer an extreme example—there are people on the fringes of even the most extreme conspiracy theorists who believe that our moon is actually a hollow, government-produced satellite, put into orbit to spy on us. Imagine how different those persons’ world-view is from yours or mine, and how that notion would cloud every action and thought they would have. We have for some time accepted that there are differences in how people from different racial, ethnic and religious backgrounds view the world, but what happens when you belong to a sub-group that is so marginalized, so different, that only a handful of other people across the world subscribe to your shared ideas?

Ufology

from "Another Nut?"—Chapter 1 of *Saucer Wisdom*

Rudy Rucker

In the 1950s there was a widespread feeling that the saucers were here to bring some kind of solution, perhaps to the then-paramount problem of the Cold War. As the great thinker Carl Jung wrote in 1958, "The UFOs . . . have become a living myth. We have here a golden opportunity of seeing how a legend is formed, and how in a difficult and dark time for humanity a miraculous tale grows up of an attempted intervention by extraterrestrial 'heavenly' powers"



Flying Saucers by Carl Jung

For Jung, the circular UFO is a mandala symbol, representing an integration of the individual psyche with the forces of the cosmos. The flying saucer is thus a projection of the human desire for wholeness and unity. This insight of Jung's is simple and deep. The fact is that it makes people feel good to look at images of flying saucers. There is a feeling of safety and completion in these round, hovering entities.

These positive feelings are undoubtedly connected to our very earliest life experiences. Look back to the dawn of your life, back when you were part of—or nearly part of—your mother. Your mother's breast is the very first "round, hovering entity" that you encounter. Your mother is the original whole of which you were a part. The common use of the phrase "mother ship" for large UFOs is no accident.

In a healthy adult, the striving for wholeness is quite different from a return to the womb. Rather than longing to regress to infancy, we try instead to become capable of being parents ourselves. By an outward expansion of knowledge and compassion we become well-rounded, we learn to encompass multitudes, and if we are lucky we become parents or teachers who nurture and foster the young. One might say that in attaining emotional maturity, we *become* a womb rather than trying to reenter it. But this biological formulation leaves something out.

At the deepest level, our ultimate parent is the universe, or the God that underlies it. In maturing, we strive to become more at one with this pervasive divinity, to grow closer to the great ground of all being. This is a quest that is inherently religious, although "religion" can mean a pure spirituality rather than the adherence to the teachings of any particular human sect. And, as with the womb, the drive is not to annihilate oneself back to zero, but rather to expand one's circle of compassion out towards the infinite. In the words of the philosopher Blaise Pascal, the cosmos is a "sphere whose boundary is nowhere and whose center is everywhere."

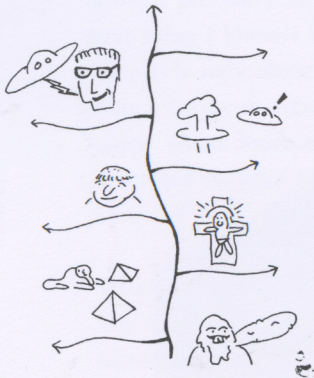


Figure 5: A History of Paratime

Paratime

from "Frank Shook Time"—Chapter 2, *Saucer Wisdom*
Rudy Rucker

"So, where to begin?" said Frank.

"Let's start with the aliens," I suggested, setting out my fountain pen and my paper. I like to use a good pen; it's a writer's little extravagance. The paper was an ordinary pad of blank unlined paper that I'd gotten from school. "What is it like when you see them?"

He smiled nervously. "I'm still getting used to the idea of telling you about this." His Adam's apple bobbed.

"You've never told anyone?"

"Oh, I've told lots of people, but never a scientist like you. A skeptic. Someone who's going to try and analyze the hell out of it. If I tell the average person in San Lorenzo that I've seen aliens, they're not all that excited. Usually they say they've seen aliens, too. But when I listen to their stories, I can tell that they only imagined it. I only know one other person who sees aliens like me. Peggy Sung. She's this very grasping, materialistic woman who lives just down the road in Benton. But for God's sake, let's not start in on her."

"So tell me how it is when you see the aliens."

Frank took a deep breath, looked around the room, exhaled. "Time stops. And they appear. I have my adventures with them, and then they put me back where I started and time starts up again."

"Time stops? Does anyone else notice?"

"My wife Mary can tell when it happens, but you probably wouldn't be able to. There's a tiny little glitch in the continuity, but you have to know how to look for it. They could come for me right now. I'd just be sitting here with you aaand—" He moved his right hand slowly through the air—"time would stop and I'd go away and then I'd be back here finishing up my sentence. At least I might finish my sentence. If I happened to remember what I'd been talking about. Which is not at all that likely. Some of my adventures are real doozies."

"I don't get what you mean. If time stops, then how can anything happen?"

"Time doesn't stop for me. The aliens can make my time axis run perpendicular to regular time. We get into what I call **paratime**. Here, let me draw you a

We Believe **Carlo McCormick**

Extraterrestrials, flying saucers, other worlds, intergalactic travel, alien visitations, abductions, seductions and psychosexual anatomical probes. Angels, space invaders, pod people, Chicken Little, Heaven's Gate and the prophesy of Scientology. We believe in so many things. Much like Atlantis and a living Elvis, we believe in what we cannot see but on the periphery of our imaginations, where desire, dread, the hallucinatory optics of faith, the spectacle of showbiz huckersterisms and the collective iconography of archetypal myths form a void of reason where all is possible. It is there, in the deep space of our mind's eye, where we can conjure and glimpse the enigmatic promise of the last true Other.

We believe, most particularly, because it is our national psyche to do so. The bizarre hybrid of science and fiction where space ships and quasi-humanoid ETs exist in utter suspension of belief is in fact a

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Members of the New Age Foundation join hands to create a "cosmic brain battery" to summon UFOs to land at the twentieth annual New Age Convention, Mount Rainier, Washington.

List of Works in the Exhibition

* denotes reproduced works

dimensions: height precedes width precedes depth

George Blaha

Pene-Umbra*

11 x 16 inches

From the Empty to the Void*

29 x 16 inches

Os

14 x 13 inches

Where the Mind's "I"s Moved*

15 x 21 inches

Unidentified Inner Phenomenon

11 x 13 inches

Taken Out of Context*

13 x 17 inches

All works ink jet on glossy film, 1999.

Courtesy the artist.

John Brill

Material Image AG38531*

15 x 16 inches

Material Image AH71151*

15 x 16 inches

Material Image SR09041*

15 x 16 inches

Material Image AH71552*

16 x 15 inches

Material Image BH00100*

19 x 18 inches

All works selenium-toned silver prints, 1991.

Courtesy Kent Gallery, New York.

Andrew Detskas

Forget SETI*, 1999

Mixed media, CD player, and CD

64 x 30 x 2 inches

Courtesy the artist.

Sharon Engelstein

Flying Saucer*, 1998

Sequins, foam, and plexiglass

54 x 72 inches diameter

Collection The International UFO Museum and Research Center, Roswell, NM.

Sampler, 1998

Mixed media

18 x 22 inches diameter

Courtesy the artist.

Joy Garnett

Scud*, 1999

Oil on canvas

36 x 48 inches

Massive Attack*, 1997

20-painting installation, dimensions variable

Oil on canvas

Pulse, 1997

Oil on canvas

48 x 48 inches

All works courtesy the artist and Debs & Co., New York.

Keith Haring

Untitled (Fertility Suite)*, 1983

Silkscreen ink on Rives BFK Paper

42 x 50 inches

Untitled*, 1982

Felt-tip marker on paper

9 1/2 x 8 inches

Untitled, 1982

Felt-tip marker on paper

9 1/2 x 8 inches

Collection George Horner, Brooklyn.

All courtesy Tony Shafrazi Gallery, New York.

The Blueprint Drawings*, 1990

Silkscreen

42 1/2 x 51 inches

Courtesy The Keith Haring Foundation.

Lance Horenbein

UFO,* 1995

Polaroid color print

14 x 11 inches

Courtesy Tricia Collins Contemporary Art, New York.

Claire Jervert

10/1998oz-1*

22/1998oz-2

3/1998oz-1

1/1998oz-1*

4/1998oz-1*

All cibachrome prints on honeycomb aluminum, 1998.

13 x 19 1/4 inches

Courtesy Steffany Martz Gallery, New York.

Christopher Johnson

Galena, Illinois, 1997

Oil on canvas

12 x 16 inches

Three Rivers, New Mexico,* 1996

Oil on canvas

20 x 16 inches

Route 20, Illinois, 1997

Oil on linen

16 x 20 inches

Rt. 97, Oregon (Mt. Shasta),* 1997

Oil on linen

18 x 26 inches

All works courtesy the artist.

Jeremy Kidd

Organitron,* 1998

Foam, acrylic flocking, resin, and moss

Pheranoid,* 1998

Foam, coral, and acrylic flocking

Both works courtesy the artist.

Paul Laffoley

The Urban Fossickated Octave,* 1968

Oil, acrylic, ink, and lettering on canvas

51 x 51 inches

Private collection, New York.

I, Robur, Master of the World,* 1968

Oil, acrylic, ink, and lettering on canvas

73 1/2 x 73 1/2 inches

Collection Peter C. Du Bois, New York.

Geochronmechane: The Time Machine from the Earth,* 1990

Ink and lettering on paper

32 x 32 inches

Private collection, New York.

The Thanaton,* 1996

Ink, lettering acrylic on board

23 x 23 inches

Collection Peter Giblin.

All works courtesy Kent Gallery, New York.

Mariko Mori

Miko No Inori,* 1996

Video, 29:23

Courtesy Gallery Koyanagi, Tokyo and Deitch Projects, New York.

Panarmarenko

D. Panamarenko, by Hans Theys, 1993

288 page cloth covered book

16 1/2 x 12 x 2 1/2 inches

Pool: Ruchsachflug Furka Pass, 1991

80 page sketchbook

12 1/2 x 10 1/4 inches

Magnetic Spaceship,* 1978

Scotch tape, pencil, collage on paper

16 1/4 x 13 1/2 inches

Courtesy Ronald Feldman Fine Arts, Inc., New York.

Cynthia Roberts

Departure, * 1998

Oil, silver, and silkscreen on canvas
84 x 60 inches

Courtesy Tricia Collins Contemporary Art, New York.

Kenny Scharf

Chiki, * 1983

Customized vacuum cleaner
16 x 8 inches diameter
Collection Min Sanchez.

Ionel Talpazan

Teory UFOs, 1995

Markers and pencil on paper
15 x 18 inches

Diagrama and Teory, * 1996

Markers and pencil on paper
8 1/2 x 11 inches

Propulsic Nucleara, * 1993

Markers and pencil on paper
8 1/2 x 11 inches

Orange UFO Diagram, 1995

Pen and markers on paper
10 x 8 inches

Courtesy American Primitive Gallery, New York.

Oliver Wasow

Untitled #326, 1998-1999

Digital cibachrome
27 x 23 inches

Untitled #296, 1994-1995

Cibachrome print
18 x 26 inches

Untitled #312, 1996

Iris print
18 x 22 inches

Untitled #169, * 1986

Cibachrome print
21 x 17 inches

Untitled #264, 1986

Cibachrome print
18 x 22 inches

Untitled #164, * 1987

Cibachrome print
17 x 21 inches

Untitled #107, 1983

Cibachrome print
17 x 21 inches

All courtesy Janet Borden Gallery, New York.

Ken Weaver

Abduction Series: Alien Theatrics, Var. 3

Abduction Series: Eternal Return Var. 4*

Abduction Series: Alien Theatrics, Var. 1*

All oil on canvas, 1998.

Courtesy Sixth@Prince, New York/Paris.

Amy Wilson

A Vision*

6 x 9 inches

A Miracle*

9 x 6 inches

A Message*

6 x 9 inches

I Want to Believe*

9 1/2 x 13 inches

I Will Be Your Receiver*

14 x 10 1/2 inches

All watercolor on paper, 1999.

Courtesy the artist.

The **UFO** Show was curated by Barry Blinderman and Bill Conger.

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The **UFO** Show

artists:

George Blaha, John Brill, Andrew Detskas, Sharon Engelstein, Joy Garnett, Keith Haring, Lance Horenhein, Claire Jervert, Christopher Johnson, Jeremy Kidd, Paul Laffoley, Mariko Mori, Panamarenko, Cynthia Roberts, Kenny Scharf, Ionel Talpazan, Oliver Wasow, Kenneth Weaver, and Amy Wilson

Curated by Barry Blinderman and Bill Conger

Writings by Barry Blinderman, Paul Laffoley, Bill McBride, Carlo McCormick, Rudy Rucker and Amy Wilson

Appearances of blinking ellipsoids, whirling orbs, and hovering illuminations have been reported and recorded since biblical times, and especially following the onset of atomic warfare and subsequent testing. Whether based in empirical reality, paranoid projection, false memories, or an innate desire to realize an archetype of wholeness, UFOs have captivated the popular and artistic imagination.

The flying saucer is the contemporary manifestation of the halo—a radiant circle indicating the presence of supernatural beings. The **UFO** Show addresses an historically ingrained and commercially reinforced locus of millennial obsession.

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