

1996

Peter Gabriel's global performance aesthetic

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**PETER GABRIEL'S
GLOBAL PERFORMANCE AESTHETIC**

A Thesis

Presented to

The Faculty of the Department of Theater Arts
San Jose State University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

by

Glynis E. Lumley

August 1996

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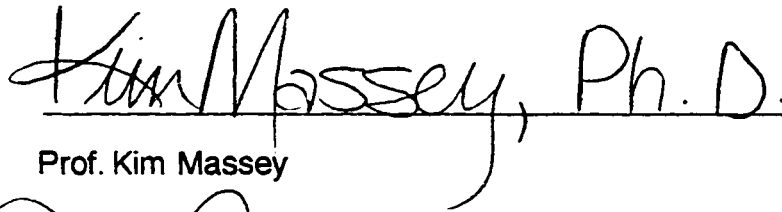
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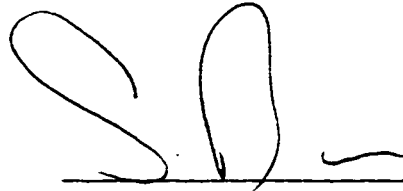
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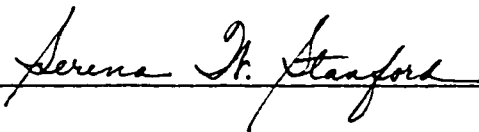
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ABSTRACT

PETER GABRIEL'S GLOBAL PERFORMANCE AESTHETIC

by Glynis E. Lumley

This thesis exemplifies Peter Gabriel in the context of a postmodern global performance aesthetic. A system is designed that explores the features of signification which define and contribute to this aesthetic. The various features examined include the appropriation of non-western musical traditions, incorporation of advanced technology and concerns with global, political or social issues. These features are discovered through an examination of Peter Gabriel's work in various media.

Research revealed that Peter Gabriel's work in video and CD-ROM as well as his development of WOMAD, Real World Studios and the proposed "Experience Park" all contained elements that contributed to the aesthetic. It was discovered that the combination of non-western features with traditional pop/rock conventions and older traditions with postmodern technology, created environments, dissolved barriers and built alternative social constructions of reality. All of these features illustrate how Peter Gabriel exemplifies a postmodern global performance aesthetic.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank my advisor Professor Karl Toepfer for his encouragement, patience and ability to always steer me in the right direction. My bewilderment at his enthusiasm for research has finally changed to an appreciation and understanding! Many thanks to Professor Kim Massey for her contribution to my 'Real World' research and for her insightful criticism. I would also like to thank Professor Stanley Baran for his perceptive comments and for his willingness to sit down and go through all the fine details. My appreciation goes to Annie Parsons from Real World Studios and Gayle Fine from Kathy Schenker & Associates for providing me with interviews, biographies and other crucial information.

My warmest thanks go out to my family. To my mother whose unbelievable dedication and passion for the theater always inspired me. To my father whose optimism, humor and hard work taught me to always look for the silver lining. To both of them for continuously trusting and supporting my decisions and always "being there" for me. To my brother Colin for proving that perseverance in education does indeed pay off. Finally my thanks go to my husband David for his love, encouragement and patience with my dramatic disposition! He provided the scientific perspective to my artistic inclination. Thanks must also go to my two beautiful children Brianne and Mariah for their unconditional love, incredible imagination and enthusiasm for life that always gives me joy.

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INTRODUCTION

In post-modern society, "performance" as a whole has the technical capacity to expand our sensory perceptions, create multiple levels of meaning and to incorporate multi-cultural influences, all of which encourage the formation of a post-modern global performance aesthetic. What are the definitions of a global performance aesthetic, and how does a specific artist appropriate this category?

Peter Gabriel, British singer, songwriter and social activist has been credited with the development of a "world music," a form of cross-cultural composition in which textures and rhythms of music from African, Asian, Middle-eastern and other countries are combined with traditional forms of Western pop and rock. Upon the release of Martin Scorsese's controversial film, *The Last Temptation of Christ* (1988), for which Gabriel wrote the musical score, John Rockwell from The New York Times called it , "A landmark in the synthesis of world music into a coherent art" (Rockwell).

It is significant to note that although Peter Gabriel has been recognized with the development of world music, his own works are rarely if ever, found in the "world music" section of a record store. We do find however, traditional Gamelon music from Indonesia and Shakuhachi flute from Japan as well as Sheila Chandra or Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan under "India." This presents an interesting problem in the classification of a so called "world music." Peter Gabriel himself acknowledges the conflict stating, "world music has a bit of an in-built problem in the name itself" (Sandall,4).

Part of the problem may be attributed to the domination of the western recording/marketing industry. Classifications of music have been standardized for years from a "western" perspective. The flute player from Japan probably does not consider his music "world music"; he would most likely consider it to be simply traditional Japanese and in Japan it would perhaps be classified as such. Sheila Chandra's works are a synthesis of traditional Indian and western, yet she is still classified in a "foreign" category, unlike Peter Gabriel's collaborations which are "pop / rock."

This method of classification seems to suggest that a "western" musician appropriating foreign sounds is somehow unique to a "foreign" musician appropriating western sounds. I find this system of categorization to be ineffectual and it would appear more constructive to define these performers by their conventions of signification rather than by the boundaries of their ethnicity.

An important feature of post-modern society is the erosion of distinct boundaries and the awareness that all ideas about human reality are social constructions. The boundaries of race, class and culture are slowly becoming gray areas with a struggle ensuing between those who accept this concept and those who are fighting to maintain the sharp lines of division. This breakdown of the former social constructions has led to the creation of a "multiple-identity" society, in which most people find it inadequate to be identified simply by one term. This is especially true in the United States where there are Hispanic-Americans, African-Americans, Asian-Americans and others. The recording industry is then to some extent attempting to

preserve the former social construct by refusing to acknowledge this new reality.

If we subscribe to the postmodern belief that all ideas about human reality are social constructions, this would suggest that music / performance are social constructions as well. Our society or culture determines what constitutes "music" and what constitutes a "performance." The ethnomusicologist John Blacking has defined music as "humanly organized sound" (Titan, 2). However, within this definition there exists a multitude of cultural distinctions. What is considered aesthetically pleasing to one culture (for instance the nasal, shrill tones of Peking Opera) may be considered disturbing and unpleasant to another. The avant-garde composer John Cage created a performance with typewriters where the audience observed the typists and heard only the sound of tapping keys and the bell to signal the end of the line. Most people in the audience were confused and were unsure how they should respond to this "performance." However, what it did convey was society's pre-determined concepts of "music."

Over the last several years "world-music," which was once considered alternative, is becoming more mainstream, in part due to the upsurge in ethnic awareness. People are struggling to find their identities in a world that is changing at a furious pace and music is one of its most tenacious cultural elements. Jeff Todd Titan states in *Worlds of Music* that, "Music symbolizes a people's way of life; it represents a distillation of cultural style" (Titan, xxi).

Over the last fifteen years, Peter Gabriel's work often reflects his tendency to appropriate features from non western musical traditions. Gabriel was previously associated with the British pop group Genesis. However, when

Phil Collins joined Genesis shortly after its formation, Gabriel focused on the group's stage presentation. He drew inspiration from primitive mythology as well as from avante garde performance art. Just as Genesis was on the verge of mass recognition to a large extent because of the spectacular visuals, Gabriel quit and has been working solo since 1975.

One of the main reasons for his departure from the group was that he felt "disturbed by an incipient staleness in the group's conceptual approach to music" and "distressed by the growing sameness of the Genesis sound." He has explained that "conventional rock rhythms tend to lead to conventional rock writing which is why I look to other cultures for inspiration" (Moritz, 253-254).

After focusing for several years on establishing his own personal musical style by combining musical sounds and textures from other cultures, Gabriel once again felt comfortable experimenting with the visual aspects of his performance. The visual aspects of his work have now become an integral part of his performance. He creates new dimensions of interpretation and multiple layers of meaning by incorporating the latest technological advances in video and live performances.

One of his most widely recognized videos, *Sledgehammer*, has received much critical acclaim for its technical skill and innovative use of claymation. He uses expressive body language, incorporates ethnic dance and depicts images that often confront volatile political situations. He is also immersed in the exploration of interactive video and released the CD ROM *Xplora*. All of these elements combined with his multicultural musical emphasis have determined that he would best exemplify a global performance aesthetic.

Through an examination of Peter Gabriel's work in various media, I will attempt to exemplify a global performance aesthetic. I will define the term "global aesthetic" and how it applies to postmodern rock performance. I will explore the conventions of signification that define this mode of performance and find to what extent the artist is expected to conform or deviate from these conventions.

In the first chapter I will explore how Peter Gabriel's videos contribute to the definition of a global aesthetic. What images or characteristics does he utilize and how do they function in this capacity? How does the addition of visuals to a musical performance change the meaning of the lyrical content? It is also apparent that although in much of his music Peter Gabriel consistently applies multicultural tendencies which contribute to a global aesthetic, in some videos that accompany the music, it is unclear as to what, if any, multicultural context the visuals are contributing to.

The second chapter will focus on the aspects of his live performance, primarily focusing on his "Secret World" tour. What similarities or differences are there between the conventions of signification used here as opposed to his performance in video or CD ROM? Within his performance he has also incorporated specific stylized dance movements that he has been perfecting for several years. What cultures has he appropriated these movements from and how is this significant to a global performance aesthetic?

In the third chapter I will study the technological aspects of Peter Gabriel's work using his CD ROM *Xplora*. How has he applied the CD ROM format to his musical performance and how has his aesthetic evolved? To what extent has this enabled him to challenge existing boundaries within the confines of

his art and how has it changed the focus of his work? What is he now able to achieve visually in this multi-media approach that before was unavailable?

The fourth chapter will cover Peter Gabriel's development of *Real World Studios* (Peter Gabriel's own label / recording studio complex) and the *WOMAD* (World of Music, Art and Dance) organization, which he founded in 1982. Gabriel formed *Real World* in conjunction with *WOMAD* in order to introduce Third World musicians to a wider, more diverse audience. What are the primary goals of this organization and what has been achieved? What allows the artists in *WOMAD* to participate? Is there a selection process?

Although the basis for developing *WOMAD* and *Real World* was conceived with the idea to expose musicians to a wider audience and to introduce audiences to a wider cultural diversity of music, the question must be asked, who is this audience? One of the peculiarities of pop/rock music is the necessity to perform live, as if to verify the reality of its existence. The consumer oriented goal of live performance = CD sales becomes an issue in a "third world audience" where the audience is financially incapable of purchasing the end product.

Many musical performers have devoted a tremendous amount of time and energy to political, sociological and now, environmental concerns that are integral to their performance. Peter Gabriel has been an active supporter of *Amnesty International* and the *Witness* program which supply video cameras for human rights groups to record abuses. How these political motives and concerns contribute to a global aesthetic in their performance will also be a factor in my analysis.

The final chapter will summarize the aspects that I have covered and attempt to conclude the definitions of a global performance aesthetic as exemplified by Peter Gabriel. We will need to take into account what other artists have achieved. Is Peter Gabriel a leading figure in this area or have others gone further in their explorations? Have they incorporated similar strategies and how successful have the results been?

Some of the other musicians who will be used in a comparative analysis are Todd Rundgren, Sting and Paul Simon. I will focus on what they have included musically as well as visually in their work. Are there specific cultures from which all artists derive their material? Do these artists have similar musical backgrounds that have been influential in shaping their recent efforts? Are these artists striving to reach a specific audience or does cultural diversity place them in a position to be more accessible to a larger number of people?

I will also discuss the implications of his aesthetic on the future of global performance. Peter Gabriel has also announced plans to develop an "experience park" which is conceived to be a music and arts based version of Disneyland. A tentative site is apparently fixed in Barcelona, Spain. I will attempt to discover what the intentions are behind such a proposal and how and if this fits into a global performance aesthetic.

CHAPTER ONE

To exemplify Peter Gabriel as a performer in the context of a postmodern global aesthetic we need a system which defines specific conventions of signification associated with that aesthetic. These signifiers are essential to the system. However, because of the "global" context, the system should ideally be able to expand or contract depending on the current reality or perception of what is "global." As global performance is a dynamic form of expression, one that is constantly evolving, to impose strict boundaries would be counter-productive as it would not recognize the fluidity of the elements necessary to create this aesthetic. W. T. Anderson states in "Reality Isn't What It Used To Be" that, "For the foreseeable future, the global culture is going to be one with a thin, fragile and ever shifting web of common ideas and values, and within that, incredible diversity - more diversity than there has ever been" (Anderson, 25).

It is necessary to establish that the "signifiers" within the system will be identified and interpreted in the context of a western perspective. The intention will be to reveal "global" features concealed within the layers of ethnicity. However the signifiers encoded in gesture, image, text or sound will always be defined by the experiences of my "western" symbolic associations.

Postmodern society, with its impact of electronic media, radio and television upon countries previously isolated, has introduced several factors relevant to defining a global aesthetic. One of the challenges associated with this interaction from a musical standpoint, is the difficulty of isolating what

was once considered the "traditional " music of a culture. We can safely assume there has always been a moderate level of exchange throughout time. For example in *Worlds of Music* David Reck points out the influences that were brought into India with the Islamic conquests of the twelfth century (ragas or music/expressive modes) and the British influence between the seventeenth and twentieth centuries (European violin, clarinet and harmonium) (Tilton,211). However, it is the speed and accessibility of this process which has changed and enabled artists to incorporate a multitude of "foreign" sounds into their own.

With the passage of time it becomes more and more difficult to distinguish a culturally authentic composition. This by no means implies that the latter product is inferior, but simply recognizes the need to be cautious in making assumptions about the origins of a composition. The exchange and incorporation of "foreign" sounds into one's own traditional sound is one of the most significant features of the global aesthetic.

Another element typical of a postmodern aesthetic is the tendency to create a performance which to some extent deconstructs the narrative form. The incorporation of film clips, animation and other various media has the capacity to transport the viewer from the present, to the past and to the future. This technique of manipulating time distorts the viewer's reality. This distortion of time combined with the sometimes incongruous images displayed, provides the viewer with complex associations and innumerable levels of interpretation. It is now of course even possible for the viewer to actually participate in the creative process (using CD ROM), altering the final

product to suit his/her wishes. This aspect will be covered more thoroughly in the ensuing chapters.

As discussed earlier, it appears the most effective way to define a global performance aesthetic, is to construct a system that distinguishes particular signifying practices. I have divided Peter Gabriel's performances into two main categories: video and CD ROM which both incorporate, to some extent "live performance." These main categories are then split into two divisions, one of music and the other of visuals. Each of these two divisions is then separated into categories of signification.

In the music division the key signifying practices involve instruments, voice, text and additional musicians. In the visual division, we find animation, claymation, dance-movement, additional actors or performers, film clips of historic or political events, live performance and miscellaneous visuals. In the analysis of the CD-ROM the signifiers are identical to the video category but there will be the added feature of interactivity.

Now that the categories have been determined it is necessary to identify the features which specifically contribute to a global aesthetic. In the analysis of the music, we will take into account the types of instruments used that are not traditionally "western." The inclusion of these instruments in the composition will be an element of the aesthetic. Western instruments played in a non-traditional style, and especially the combination of western and non-western instruments played together, will be a factor.

The voice will be the next category taken into consideration. Specific features such as the quality, timbre, tone, or pitch of the voice that are not typically western will be included in the aesthetic. For example the Japanese

scales of "In" and "Yo" include unpitched sounds which are not representative of a western style. Once again it is the combination of traditional and non-traditional features that are the significant factors.

The text of the performance will be examined in terms of specific references to cultural, political or social concerns. What do the lyrics suggest or imply and what are the resulting images that the audience associates with this text? Although lyrics often contain personal experiences of pain, joy or revelation with which everyone can identify, global concerns or issues that are outside "western" boundaries will be preferred elements necessary to a global aesthetic. The inclusion of non-western issues is important as it is another indication of how the boundaries of race, class and culture are dissolving and merging into a global framework.

This merging process can be compared to the earlier discussion of "musical" exchange through time when we determined that advances in technology accelerated the process. Technology has also had an enormous impact on western society's awareness of political or social issues effecting non-western cultures. This can be seen with computers or television and also with the accessibility of air travel and immigration. As people immigrate from non-western countries to western, they may bring with them, customs, philosophies, music or art and of course their political or social experiences. All of these features slowly enter the consciousness of western society and gradually become "global" concerns. For an artist to incorporate non-western issues within a performance, indicates their role in the formation of a global society and a global performance aesthetic.

The inclusion of non-western musicians and singers in a performance is a feature indicative of a global aesthetic. It is the creative collaboration of various artists, western and non-western, which is especially significant. What is the non-western artists' specific contribution to the performance? Do they use non-western instruments or do they use western instruments but perform in a manner stylistically consistent with their country of origin?

Continuing on into the "Visual" category we will examine the incorporation of animation (more specifically claymation) as a component of the aesthetic. Animation has been in use at least since 1928 when the Walt Disney Company produced *Steamboat Willie*. Claymation was a later development most widely recognized in the popular children's series *Gumby*. Claymation in itself is not an indicator of postmodernism or even necessarily global. It is the application of the technique within the medium that is the critical factor.

Dance, movement and / or gesture will be a signifier of the aesthetic by the indication of its non western qualities. It will be necessary to identify if possible where the movement originated or what culture it has been appropriated from. Has the dance been altered in any way to conform to the expectations of the audience?

The inclusion of other non western actors or musicians in the performance will be an important feature of the aesthetic. What cultures are represented amongst the performers and to what extent have they influenced the final product? Does it appear that one culture contributes more consistently than any other or is there a wide variety of contributors? Once again it is the collaboration of the various artists which is the most significant element.

Within the videos or live performances there may be projections of political or social situations. It will be necessary to focus on three areas that are relevant to this analysis. First, the lyrical content of the song; what are some of the political/social concerns apparent in the lyrics? Next, I will focus on the visuals that are incorporated into the performance. Do they consistently reflect the nature of the lyrics and political/social concerns or is another image represented? Last, where are these performances occurring and how does the site of the performance contribute to the political nature of a global aesthetic?

As with most artists Peter Gabriel's style evolved over time and with this evolution we can see his gradual progression towards a global aesthetic. *Big Time*, (1986) the first example from Peter Gabriel's "Compilation Video," appears to fall into some, but not all of the categories identified in the aesthetic. Within the music there is in fact very little to indicate its association since the instruments, the vocals and the musicians appear to apply singularly western techniques. However, upon closer examination we can see that it is the text which places it in a postmodern context by being "socially conscious" and it is the advanced technical features of the visuals which contribute to the "global" association.

The video is a humorous comment on peoples' obsession with the accumulation of wealth and their frivolous concern for flaunting it. Since Gabriel uses his own image to convey the message, the satire is especially ironic. His usual "image" (gathered from interviews and articles) projects an unassuming or humble quality. Gabriel has a tendency to reject the "flashy" characteristics more typical of pop stars. For example in *Rolling Stone* David

Sinclair writes about Gabriel's use of an old fashioned granny trolley to carry his suitcases. He explains that "It's not the kind of device you would imagine Axl Rose or Mick Jagger trundling about, but then Gabriel is not a personality much given to the usual rock star vanities" (Sinclair, 9-10). Although it appears Gabriel has rejected the traditional pop star tendency to construct a glamorous "image" of himself, he has used his position as a performer to convey and or construct particular social or political realities (as we shall see in *Big Time* and *Biko*).

W.T. Anderson contends that the postmodern phenomenon of "constructing" reality through political performance, can actually be compared to psychiatrist, J.L. Moreno's creation of the *Living Newspaper* . The *Living Newspaper* formed out of his *Spontaneity Theater* in Vienna sometime during the period between the two world wars. Moreno wrote that people had a need to act out events that were unfolding around them and this need later developed into what is now called "sociodrama." People would play social roles, debate issues or even take the part of one of the world's political leaders. Moreno found that people could *discover* or *create* themselves by participating in these events and could fulfill their desire to participate in ever expanding global issues (Anderson, 121).

Although it seems unlikely that Gabriel created his videos for this specific purpose, we can see a relationship to the "construction" of a social reality. As we have already pointed out, a feature of postmodern society is the creation of different social realities. With "Big Time," Gabriel has contributed his interpretation of the "excess equals success" mentality, adding another perspective to the layers of social construction.

The symbolism in the video could just as easily have reflected components of British pomposity or ostentation but instead the choice was made to utilize American images. For example, he could have used an image of a British one pound note where he used the American dollar bill or he could have depicted Buckingham Palace instead of the Whitehouse. Although Gabriel appropriated images outside the U.K., they are of course still indicative of "western" culture. If we presume that videos are most successful when produced for predominantly western audiences (most visibly through sources such as MTV), we may find that the use of western symbolism could be a consistent feature throughout the "video" analysis.

Other features of the video that conform to the "global" aesthetic are the creative technical elements. The video is so jammed with images that are continuously transforming that it is almost impossible to grasp all of the concepts without resorting to stopping, rewinding and playing it back (on a VCR). This transformative quality in itself, is a reflection of a postmodern world view. As Anderson says, "It is a world coming together-a global civilization, the first that has ever existed, emerging into being before our very eyes-but one that seems to be, at the same time, in the process of falling apart. It is doing neither and both..." (Anderson, 232.)

The video begins with the clay representation of a clock that opens to reveal Peter Gabriel decked out in a bow tie and jacket, gloriously proclaiming "I'm on my way I'm making it. " The "loud" jacket and corny bow tie (typical of the "ugly" American) are the first hints of humorous, yet distasteful American images. This transforms into animated, fluorescent, microscopic images of bugs as he states, "I've got to make it show, yeah."

The next shot, while Gabriel sings, "So much larger than life I'm going to watch it growing," uses claymation techniques and shows images of bubbling liquids that break up and change into grass and rocks which further mutate into grotesque facial forms. These images appear to establish the imminent transformative capabilities of "success" rather than indicate any specific cultural appropriation.

A castle, reminiscent of something from *Pee Wee's Playhouse*, appears and Peter Gabriel's large face, disproportionate to his small body, emerges from a window stating "The place where I come from is a small town, they think so small, they use small words." The next shot is a clear indication of the intent to depict the United States as a metaphor for financial excess as we see the pyramid with the eye from the American dollar bill and hear "But not me - I'm smarter than that - I worked it out."

A series of animated arms throwing silly putty precedes a very literal translation of the text with the animated representation of Peter Gabriel (stretching his mouth) claiming that, "I've been stretching my mouth to let those big words come right out ." Presumably this mocks the "big talking" Americans. We next see once again the large face (this time supported on a spring-like device from his neck) with the small body, driving an American car through a montage of gray buildings with the lyrics, "I've had enough, I'm getting out - to the city - the big, big city ."

Two cartoon men with enormous stomachs appear on either side of Peter Gabriel during which time the screen fills up with an over-abundance of material possessions. This technique of bombarding the viewer with an excess of images enhances the "accumulative" quality that prevails

throughout the entire piece. This accumulation metamorphoses into a slot machine with missiles protruding from several areas. As these images progress we hear, " I'll be a big noise with all the big boys - there's so much stuff I will own."

As the United States government is renowned worldwide for its frequent military interventions, this particular representation provides a global signifier that conveys the destructive connection between America's need for control and the never-ending supply of money and greed to support this endeavor. We see to what extent America "worships" this freedom to gamble their morals with the depiction of Peter Gabriel's esteemed position in front of the slot machine as we hear him sing, " I will pray to a big god - as I kneel in the big church. " Throughout the chorus the scenes that are shown reflect the progression to power with Peter Gabriel's image depicted in various " larger than life " forms. We see more claymation techniques with objects transforming into distorted figures and by the end of the chorus, we see Gabriel emerging unscathed and invincible after a ton of bricks crushes the previous inhabitant.

The next verse begins with Peter Gabriel exclaiming, " My parties have all the big names and I greet them with the widest smile. " The scene opens with a huge open air ballroom surrounded by Roman columns with a black and white checkered floor. However, instead of the usual figurines representative of "chess," high profile celebrities or political figures are depicted on pedestals, such as Elvis, JFK, Princess Diana, Marilyn Monroe and Michael Jackson. Peter Gabriel is one of the figures as well except that his image is constant, where as the other figures are continually changing into someone

else. It is difficult to recognize all of the people represented because of the extremely rapid succession of alterations, but it is clear that figures from Britain as well as America are being utilized.

By representing these people as game pieces, we may conclude that for Gabriel's *character*, there is no concern for sincere relationships, but rather their personal value is derived from their ability to facilitate "Peter Gabriel's" success. This segment becomes even more humorous as we hear, "Tell them how my life is one big adventure - and always they're amazed " while we watch Peter Gabriel being transformed into an "action - figure" wrestling snakes and brandishing guns in order to impress his guests.

The representation of people's obsession to show off and flaunt wealth is further magnified in the next scene again using claymation. We see Gabriel display his bed as he, "Had it made like a mountain range" then cutting to a realistic image of him we hear, "With a snow white pillow for my big fat head ." We observe how his ego has swelled to unbelievable proportions as the camera pans up to reveal a painting on the ceiling (highly reminiscent of Andrea Mantegna's *Camera delgi sposi* 1474) that includes such works as Botticelli's *Birth of Venus* 1482, and we hear, "And my heaven will be a big heaven, and I will walk through the front door ."

The video concludes with the chorus repeating "Big Time" with insertions of objects progressively getting bigger, such as a car expanding from a Volkswagen to a limousine and an outhouse transforming into the Whitehouse. At the conclusion we see multiple groups of missiles and airplanes dropping down from the sky onto Peter Gabriel's image in a mirror which then proceeds to break apart.

If we apply the "system" developed for this analysis, but only focus on the non western indicators, we may conclude that there *appears* to be very little to indicate its significance in a "global" performance aesthetic. As we noted at the beginning of this chapter, in this video the music includes only western components. There appear to be no instruments, musicians or singers that are non-western or that apply any distinctive non-western techniques. Within the visuals we have a similar situation. All the images are appropriated from American traditions.

There are two examples that depart briefly from a western into a European category with the use of the Roman columns and fifteenth century Italian art. However, this does not appear to be a substantial quantity to justify its categorization into a global aesthetic. However, what we need to establish, and as W.T. Anderson aptly suggests, is that, "Postmodernism *is* globalism" (Anderson, 231). This doesn't imply that *anything* created in the postmodern era is "global," but it does suggest that there are specific features which may be applied within this context.

Despite the absence of non western features in "Big Time," we can conclude that it is still able to be situated within the global aesthetic due to its social content and technical elements. The social content reveals Gabriel's "social construction of reality," indicative of a postmodern world view, and the technical features present the transformative quality predominant within an ever-changing global perspective.

The next video to be examined (also included in the Compilation Video) , is *Shock the Monkey* (1982). Although various interpretations circulated as to the "meaning" of the piece (including Current Biography Yearbook's

explanation that it was specifically a comment on the laboratory experimentation of animals), Peter Gabriel introduces the song in his POV video (1990) as, "a song about jealousy. " The video begins with Peter Gabriel entering an extremely inhospitable room that functions vaguely as an office. He walks over to the desk, wearing a business suit and carrying a briefcase. We see a close up of a bronze bust that has been shattered and then partially filled with debris. The next image is that of a live Rhesus monkey (native of India) in a cage.

When the lyrics begin we see a piece of paper with Arabic, French and English writing stating "shock the monkey. " (There is one more line of symbols or words that I am unable to identify). We hear, "Cover me when I run. Cover me through the fire. " We see another shot composed of the monkey swinging in a tree, a film projectors wheels moving, and the words, "Something knocked me out of the trees. Now I'm on my knees ." The film projectors' continuous revolving throughout the video can reasonably be seen as a metaphor for "life." Assuming jealousy is the underlying theme, we can begin to explore why some of these images have been appropriated.

The bust gives us the impression that the video is symbolic for some kind of inner turmoil, rather than a literal comment on the laboratory experimentation of animals. However the image of a monkey may have several associations. For this video it seems that three relationships are applicable. The first connection can be made to laboratory experimentation since the Rhesus Monkey in particular has been used for this purpose. However, the "experiment " in this instance seems to relate more to the victim's feelings of anguish over being unable to control certain emotions or

situations. The second parallel is the symbolism of a monkey to man's primal instincts. Jealousy is considered an unacceptable primitive emotion that is meant to be contained. The third association is to the use of drugs since a "monkey on your back" is a term used for drug addiction. This connection will be explained further in the analysis.

The writing on the paper of *Shock The Monkey* in various languages is a little more difficult to interpret. It could be trying to suggest that these feelings of jealousy are a universal concept, or it could just as easily imply that the people involved in this situation are somehow connected with these cultures. The line "Something knocked me out of the trees, now I'm on my knees," seems to suggest that perhaps he is comparing his own ignorance of the situation to an animal's lack of complex human emotions. In other words, a drastic turn of events was needed in order for him to be conscious of an area that had been previously neglected. "Cover me when I run, cover me through the fire" then implies that these primitive emotions have been used as a shield against reality where it would be necessary to confront the problems. , One construction of reality has attempted to suppress the other.

The next significant image we see is that of Peter Gabriel's face. His face has been made up with white paint and selectively designed with black shapes or symbols. These markings are features reminiscent of some African tribes (not specifically identified at this point). The appropriation of these features signals an association with primal or spiritual connections. Many African tribes perform rituals in which they seek to communicate with their spiritual ancestors. Often masks or elaborate face paints are used within these ceremonies. The paint also reveals (by its application technique) facial

similarities between the human and animal primates. This is most apparent during the final shot of the video where the monkey's face is super-imposed on Peter Gabriel's.

When we see Peter Gabriel's painted face we hear "Fox the fox, rat on the rat, you can ape the ape, I know about that." We also see on the desk in front of him, a large circle of seeds which appears to resemble peyote, an hallucinogenic derivative of mescal. Although this interpretation may appear unlikely, when it is placed in context with the video's psychological/emotional components (inner turmoil or jealousy for example) and Gabriel's own statements it becomes a probable explanation. Gabriel stated in an interview with Steve Pond that he was, "fearful of letting go of control" if he used drugs (Moritz, 254). Peyote is most commonly associated historically with religious practices of the Mexican Indians. Like some of the African tribal uses of masks or face paint, the use of peyote was a method by which one could experience spiritual enlightenment.

We next see an image of Peter Gabriel sitting cross-legged in a circle of fire using two rhythm sticks. This is intercut with shots of him running through the forest (without the face paint) and shots of the film projector. We hear that, "There is one thing you can be sure of, I can't take anymore, Darling don't you monkey with the monkey." The lyrics "You throw your pearls before the swine, make the monkey blind" continue to convey his struggle with jealousy and his anger towards the person or events responsible.

The next image we see as we hear, "Too much at stake," is that of Peter Gabriel struggling with three small men. The symbolism here is difficult to interpret other than using them as a metaphor for the struggle within himself.

Because of their small stature it could imply that a problem or feeling once considered small now could be overwhelming. The next verse seems to confirm this feeling with a shot of him hitting the table and the seeds flying as we hear, "Ground beneath me shake." In other words, something (a relationship ?) that he felt was secure has now become unstable.

In the last scene we hear, "And the news is breaking, watch the monkey get hurt, monkey" as we see Peter Gabriel (with his face painted) flipping a coin on the desk. The next shot places the viewer behind the camera racing through the hallways to an office with "gabriel" marked on the door, where it opens to reveal Peter Gabriel, without face paint, sitting on his desk once again flipping a coin. A coin toss usually signifies that a choice or decision must be made, and by tossing a coin one leaves the decision to chance. As the video comes to a close, we see various shots of Peter Gabriel, the monkey and the film projector. One shot shows him immersed in water up to his shoulders with what looks like papers floating all around. The last image we see is the monkey's face superimposed on Peter Gabriel's.

This video, as in *Big Time* , has appropriated no musical features that are significant to a global aesthetic. However we do find visual features that are applicable. It is interesting to note that while *Big Time* is a comment on "society" we see more cultural appropriation from *Shock the Monkey* which is on much more of a "personal" level. As we progress through the analysis, this could be an issue that we need to address more fully.

The most significant characteristics which have been appropriated from other cultures have been identified as the monkey (India), the letter (Arabic, French and one unidentified as yet), the face paint (Africa), and the peyote

(Mexico). Although these features appear distinctive and unrelated, within the context of the video they seem able to function collectively. The reason for their success may be attributed to the mystical, spiritual or exotic (to a western viewer) quality contained within each feature. For example in some non-western cultures, face paint (as used in this video) is a common occurrence applied in ceremonies or rituals. However in western cultures this tradition is far less common and therefore it contains an "exotic" appeal.

The various interpretations of a performance will always be dependent upon the inherited symbolic associations of the viewer. These specific images that I have isolated are subject to the same principle. Often within post modern performance (specifically pop/rock videos) images are randomly flashed at the viewer with no attempt to attach any significant "meaning" to the image. In this context any "cultural" appropriation would not be categorized in a global aesthetic. However, *Shock the Monkey* employs these images consistently throughout the video. This technique of consistently applying specific cultural features indicates that there is a deliberate attempt to convey the meaning through these indicators. The nature of this video relies upon these features for its performance. This enables it to be applied into the global performance aesthetic.

In Your Eyes is included on Peter Gabriel's POV video which offers live concert footage. However, before POV's distribution some of the songs were edited to include images not presented at the actual concert. These "visual additions" to specific songs allow the viewer to explore them in the same context in which they were performed. *In Your Eyes* is an excerpt from the first WOMAD festival (approx. 1982). The video begins with an aerial shot of

the WOMAD grounds and leads into visual clips of African and Asian dancers and drummers. Then we hear Indonesian Gamelon which gradually changes into *A Different Drum* a selection from *Passion* (recordings from *The Last Temptation of Christ*).

Peter Gabriel introduces the song by announcing that, "Now we get some help from our friends from Dakar (Les Super Etoiles de Dakar). On percussion; Babacar and Assane and the king of Dakar himself, the incredible voice of Youssou N' Dour!" Both Peter Gabriel and Youssou N'Dour are wearing similar brightly colored vests which may be traditional Senegalese. The performance begins with Peter Gabriel and Youssou N' Dour dancing briefly before the song begins.

The lyrics in this performance have an added verse which is not present in the text from the *So* CD. The song begins instead with, "Accepting all I've done and said, I want to stand and stare again till there's nothing left out. It remains there in your eyes. Whatever comes and goes, I will hear your silent call. I will touch this tender wall till I know I'm home again." At the end of this addition, Youssou N' Dour sings individually in Senegalese.

Gabriel now begins the text which is referred to from *So* with, "Love I get so lost sometimes, Days pass and this emptiness fills my heart...Without a noise, without my pride, I reach out from the inside." Before the chorus begins the audience is encouraged to participate briefly by raising their arms and singing along. The chorus begins with, "In your eyes, The light the heat, In your eyes, I am complete, In your eyes, I see the doorway to a thousand churches, In your eyes, The resolution of all the fruitless searches...I want to touch the light, The heat I see In your eyes."

Youssou once again sings individually in Senegalese until Peter Gabriel begins the next two verses with, "Love I don't like to see so much pain...I reach out from the inside." The chorus begins again and at the end of the chorus Youssou and Peter move the microphones upstage as a dancer, (Marietou Kote) appears. While she is dancing, both Gabriel and Youssou are both singing in Senegalese. Gabriel repeats the first two lines of the song and then some members of the band, including Gabriel and Youssou, begin to dance with Marietou Kote. The performance ends with Gabriel and Youssou joining hands and walking downstage where they turn together, back to back, until Gabriel ends the song with, "I want to stand and stare again, It's in your eyes."

In Your Eyes is perhaps one of the clearest examples of how Gabriel appropriates music, language and dance from other cultures. The images and music that are first presented in the video are an indication of what can be expected from the ensuing performance. The shots of African and Asian performers, combined with the music, directly inform the viewer that this is to be a multi-cultural event. When Peter Gabriel introduces the performers he acknowledges their ethnicity, and by donning indigenous attire identical to Youssou and Marietou, he places value to their traditions.

The incorporation of Senegalese into the text exhibits a determination to merge cultures and is particularly significant as there is no attempt to provide the audience with any direct lyrical translation. For many listeners, part of the fascination of world music lies in its exotic appeal, and as Peter Gabriel has stated; "World music is fresh, wonderful, more alive and spiritual than most pop" (Parales, NYT).

The inclusion of non-western artists and instruments as a feature of the aesthetic is provided in this performance with the addition of Youssou N' Dour on vocals, Assane Thiam on Tama drum, Babacar Faye on Gembe drums and Marietou Kote dancing. The interweaving of African rhythms, vocals and dance and the collective participation of the non western band members combine to illustrate that *In Your Eyes* is an exemplary model of cultural appropriation within the global performance aesthetic.

Biko is one of Peter Gabriel's most politically charged songs inspired by the murder of Steven Biko, a political activist in South Africa. The video opens with graphic images of a man being beaten and Peter Gabriel stating, "This song is for a brave man who was arrested, tortured and killed in a jail in South Africa-Steven Biko." We see footage of debris and houses burning, Africans running by with the "black-power" fist and white government troops marching through.

The coffin of Steven Biko is shown being carried as the people watch and armed guards are patrolling. A black and white photograph of Steven Biko is shown and underneath the caption reads: "Steven Biko/ died 1977/ from 'brain injury' in custody of Security Police." All these images are gradually scrolled across the screen alternating with live shots of Peter Gabriel before he begins to sing. We hear the somber insistent rhythm of drums accompanied at times with synthesizers, bagpipes and guitars.

Gabriel moves slowly out to the front stage and begins to sing, "September '77, Port Elizabeth weather fine, It was business as usual, In Police Room 619. Oh Biko, Biko, because Biko...Yihla Moja, Yihla Moja-The man is dead." The performance is very powerful and is intended to move the viewer to

empathize with the abhorrent conditions of South Africa. (This song was written in approximately 1980 before the gradual dismantling of apartheid had begun in 1989 under F. W. De Klerk).

The song continues with, "When I try to sleep at night, I can only dream in red. The outside world is black and white, With only one color dead. Oh Biko...Yihla Moja-the man is dead." These lyrics continue to express the injustice and feelings of despair at a system that insists upon racial discrimination with only death as an alternative.

The performance leads up to something more inspirational in the next verse, "You can blow out a candle, But you can't blow out a fire, Once the flames begin to catch, The wind will blow it higher. Oh Biko...Yihla Moja...The man is dead. And the eyes of the world are watching now." This verse picks up the threads of hope and possibility of change for an oppressed people that require radical changes to bring them towards any kind of humane system of government.

The video concludes with Peter Gabriel raising his fist to the air, "For all those still in jail in South Africa. For all those still being tortured. For all prisoners of conscience. For Steven Biko! " The audience participates by joining him in raising their fists. Before Peter Gabriel walks off the stage he says, "What happens now is up to you."

Through this exploration we can assess that *Biko* is an example of the global aesthetic for several reasons. The most obvious reason is the subject matter itself, since South Africa is a non western country. Their racial policies have been a "global" concern and drastic measures were taken to implement change within the system. For instance, in 1961 South Africa was forced to

withdraw from the Commonwealth and in the mid 1980's economic sanctions were imposed.

All the images that have been discussed are derived from South African sources or are at least visually meant to lead the viewer to this conclusion. The images that have been edited *into* this live performance serve to enhance Gabriel's political message and also deconstruct South Africa's social construction of apartheid. One of the features of postmodernism is the difficulty of governments to maintain a single reality structure (like apartheid) because every society now functions within a global society that is subject to the scrutiny of a world view.

Peter Gabriel appropriates non western musicians and instruments within this performance, as once again Assane Thiam plays tama drum, Babacar Faye plays gembe drums and Youssou N'Dour joins him vocally. The juxtaposition of bagpipes against traditional African rhythms calls up the issues of British and European powers predominating over traditional African culture. The inclusion of indigenous African dialect within the lyrics also contributes to the aesthetic. Although in *Biko* a relatively small portion of the text includes indigenous dialect, it is important to recognize this feature because of its relevance within South Africa's political history. Some of the most turbulent riots in South Africa's history were due to the protest of "Afrikaans" (the "national" language derived from Dutch sources) being taught in schools. The employment of these lyrics reinforces the performances political stance against apartheid.

With this examination of Gabriel's early performances, we are able to reveal his progression towards a global aesthetic and establish several

features which contribute to this assertion. "Big Time" reveals Gabriel's construction of a social reality within postmodern society and the technical elements reflect the transformative qualities present within a global structure. "Shock The Monkey" reveals some of the visual elements of cultural appropriation and "In Your Eyes" establishes his tendency to appropriate music, language and dance from other cultures. "Biko" exposes a political construction of reality (apartheid) and attempts to alter that reality through his own performance techniques.

In the second chapter through an analysis of Gabriel's *Secret World* tour, we will examine his more recent live performances. This examination will reveal the features that more firmly establish his position in a postmodern global performance aesthetic.

CHAPTER TWO

In one review of Peter Gabriel's *Secret World* tour, a journalist asks, "Can introspection be reborn as spectacle?" (Parales, 9). The question refers to the extremely intimate and personal nature of the *US* CD on which the production is based. The success of the tour should put to rest this concern. Peter Gabriel worked with French Canadian Robert Lepage to create a stage design and production that would reflect individual emotions while simultaneously exploring the plurality of relationships. "The emotions on *US* are very complex going from the solitary notion of oneself, to the relationship of the couple and out into the wider context of the world, *US*, everyone" (Ladly, 12).

David Sinclair from *Rolling Stone* suggests, "Gabriel has designed a live music experience with a visual and dramatic richness not witnessed since Pink Floyd's colossal *Momentary Lapse of Reason* tour of 1987-88...From the revolutionary landscaping of the stage to the startling use of the latest micro-video technology, everything about this unique extravaganza combines the unexpected with the spectacular" (Sinclair, 9).

Although the production was designed around the *US* CD, the addition of several numbers from previous recordings are presented as well. The only songs not included from the *US* CD are *Love to be Loved*, *Only Us* and *Fourteen Black Paintings*. Many concerts have a certain element of spontaneous additions or improvisations so these selections may at some point have been included in the tour. However, for the purpose of this

analysis the "Secret World Live" video taped in Modena, Italy will be the source referred to. Because of the practicalities of touring, some of the songs are different from the original recordings. This will be noted in the individual analyses as necessary.

One of the problems associated with applying a previously recorded "live" performance in an analysis is the inability to fully experience all of the visual elements created for the live audience. There may have been features in the live performance that were omitted from the video. One of the features not *always* visible in "The Secret World" tour is the revolving screen on the square stage. As we have seen in the previous analysis, additional footage was specifically edited *into* the subsequent video. Therefore, footage edited *out of* or passed by would be considered intentional as well. The final video, like the original performance, can be manipulated to produce specific results.

The first song of the performance is *Come Talk to Me*, which opens with bagpipes as it does on the CD. However, we don't see the musician and there is no acknowledgment in the credits so this may be pre-recorded for the performance. The music builds more gradually in this live performance than it does on the *US* CD. As the stage lights up, the screen at the back revolves. The band and a British telephone booth surface from under the stage with Peter Gabriel inside singing lyrics from the chorus into the mouthpiece. Some reviews were critical towards the literalistic nature of the images. Jon Parales stated in the New York Times that "Many of the gimmicks are literalistic, virtual study guides for the lyrics..." (Parales, 9). However, these images are only a fragment of the many levels of representation within Gabriel's performance.

As Peter Gabriel stated in an interview provided by Geffen Records, *Come Talk To Me* has "the most dreamlike imagery in the verses" (and is the most) "direct 'come talk to me' in the chorus" (Geffen, 4). The first verse opens with, "The wretched desert takes its form, the jackal proud and right, In search of you I feel my way, through the slowest heaving night, Whatever fear invents I swear it makes no sense, I reach out through the border fence, Come down, come talk to me." The text presents these desert images as a metaphor for a relationship that has ceased to extend beyond the turmoil of rigid emotional boundaries and the ensuing struggle to restore some form of communication. So, in fact the telephone booth is only "literal" in that it represents an obvious form of communication but it doesn't explicitly encode the metaphors embodied within the text.

The next verse begins, "In the swirling, curling storm of desire unuttered words hold fast, With reptile tongue, the lightening lashes towers built to last. Darkness creeps in like a thief and offers no relief, Why are you shaking like a leaf? Come on, come talk to me." This verse reveals how even the overwhelming forces of physical desire cannot weaken the stronger emotional barriers and also how the refusal to confront these issues only perpetuate the pain. With Gabriel still physically confined within the small enclosure of the booth during this second verse, we are reminded of the stifling effects of non-communication and when he bursts through the door at the opening of the chorus his release conveys the urgency to re-establish a connection.

Martha Ladly, the editor of *Xplora's* (Gabriel's CD-ROM) supplemental book, explains that, "The square stage represents the male and the round

domed stage the female, the walkway between them providing communication and the link between the sexes" (See figure 1 page 46). As the performance progresses the utilization of this theme unfolds. Paula Cole, who sings back-up vocals, is situated down on the round stage as Gabriel proceeds slowly towards her from the square stage forcefully pulling on the telephone cord.

As he strains to lengthen the cord, Gabriel sings, "Please talk to me, Won't you please talk to me, We can unlock this misery, Come on come talk to me." Paula Cole has her arm extended towards Gabriel as she accompanies him vocally. The cord extends all the way out onto the circular stage where they eventually meet but are never close enough to physically touch.

Upon the last line of the chorus, "Come talk to me," Gabriel raises the receiver to the air and we hear a chorus of what appears to be an ensemble although they are not visually present. These vocals are probably pre-recorded and may be attributed to the Dmitri Pokrovsky Ensemble who are acknowledged on the *US* CD. The next verse begins with, "The earthly power sucks shadowed milk from sleepy tears undone, From nipped skin as smooth as silk the bugles blown as one. You lie there with your eyes half closed like there's no one there at all, There's a tension pulling on your face, Come on come talk to me."

The imagery here may imply that the negativity between the callers is contributing to this repressed pain and feeds the uncommunicative atmosphere. In several interviews Gabriel has confirmed the relationship-based nature of the lyrics mentioning his marriage, a subsequent relationship and a daughter as inspiration. This appears to suggest that the next line,

(from nipped skin ...) refers to the issue of *communication* as a common problem among his deepest relationships.

After this verse there is a softer edge to the music and the imagery of reconciliation is evoked with the verse, "I can imagine the moment, Breaking out through the silence, All the things that we both might say. And the heart it will not be denied, 'Til we're both on the same damn side, All the barriers blown away." However the calm is only momentary as the music escalates and their voices return to their former pleading tones. Peter Gabriel is now being pulled back by the cord as he struggles to maintain the connection but inevitably is forced to return to the telephone booth where the song concludes.

Although the *US* CD is filled with very personal, intimate emotions and the "Secret World" tour is a reflection of this, it does succeed in externalizing enough of the emotions to create an accessible performance. Gabriel realizes the risks in presenting this format, "I think I'm slightly conscious that it's not currently in vogue as a style of writing. People are on the whole, fed up with yet another broken hearted song. But if there's something which is powerful and important and alive for you, then it's right to write about it" (Geffen, 5).

Throughout *Come Talk To Me* the music reinforces both the dream-like quality and directness combined in the visual aspects of the performance. The slow emergence of the band and the telephone booth evolving out of the square stage provide an almost surreal effect and the extension of the telephone cord out to the circular stage is like a bizarre scene from an unpredictable dream. The music escalates as it moves into the chorus

becoming stronger and more direct with Paula Cole's additional vocals and then subsides gradually as the verses project a more ethereal quality.

One of the elements that distinguishes this tour from other pop/rock performances is Peter Gabriel's ability to create an "environment," much like a traditional theatrical performance strives to provide surroundings that complement or illuminate specific aspects of a play. Where other pop/rock performers may rely solely on "posturing" or blinding laser shows to dazzle their audience, Gabriel seems intent upon providing an "experience" that is purposeful, that enhances rather than detracts from the integrity of the music.

When Gabriel spoke of the various artists that he had commissioned to work on the album sleeve, songbook and the tour he said that, "...an artist would work on a particular song and they would be able to change the environment around the music so each song had its own personality. The evening would be a sort of collage of sound and image" (Geffen, 8).

The incorporation of these artists into the tour is an extraordinary concept which also contributes to the features of the global aesthetic. The artists featured come from Ethiopia, Cameroon, Germany and Israel as well as Great Britain and the United States. The willingness to incorporate and exhibit these artists' work continues Gabriel's mission to embrace and expose the talent of many diverse cultures.

In the tour the art-works are mainly incorporated onto the rear screen and within the lighting design. As Martha Ladly states, "There is much about water and about fire in the music and these images are also projected on-screen. The lighting design has been used to effect fire and water. The result is a platform for music, theatre, movement and emotion" (Ladly, 12). The

contributions of the specific artists are even more predominant within the *Xplora* CD ROM and will be expanded upon during that analysis.

Besides the lyrical allusions (jackals, vast deserts) to non-western features in "Come Talk To Me" and the spatial "environment" mentioned above, the most solid non-western aspects are present within the musical composition. As David Sinclair notes in *Rolling Stone*, Manu Katche's drumming is "imbued with the rolling polyrhythmic inflections of African percussion playing" (Sinclair, 85). There is also the addition of Sabar Drums by the Babacar Faye drummers, a drum loop by Doudou N'Diaye Rose the Doudouk played by Levon Minassian and the chorus of the Dmitri Pokrovsky Ensemble.

Peter Gabriel opens *Across the River* stating that, "This song was written for a woman I first fell in love with twelve years ago. I worked with David Rhodes, Stuart Copeland and Shankar to create *Across The River* ." The screen now projects a rippling body of water and the lights have transformed the stage into a bluish haze. The effect is captivating as Shankar begins a slow, eastern melody on his double violin and Gabriel joins him on keyboards. Gabriel and Shankar then begin singing, incorporating the exotic vocal inflections representative of India or the Mid-East which involve the prolonged sustention of a particular sound as one vacillates between upper and lower octaves.

This vocal style comes from a cultural tradition where artists are extremely disciplined towards their music. In an excerpt from *Worlds of Music*, one of the concepts of India's musical traditions is revealed. "The guru, one's principal teacher, is remembered and venerated for a musician's entire lifetime. The reason for this respect is that-unlike the West where most of our

knowledge exists in books and computers-in India, the guru is the ultimate source of all the student's musical knowledge. He holds within him a whole musical tradition stretching into the past, as well as compositions, improvisatory skills and vocal or instrumental techniques" (Titan, 221-222).

In an interview with Robert Sandall, Peter Gabriel recognizes these traditions and reveals the influence they have had upon his own work. "...some of these musicians come from incredibly skilled backgrounds where all their lives they've been working on their vocals or their instrument or whatever it is. There is a different type of history than an average rock musician would have and I think that gives it a richness and power sometimes which I love to listen to and we try to have as a brief for our music that there should be a passion in the music so that you should be able to soak yourself in it... Youssou, Nusrat, Sheila Chandra, Geoffrey Oryema, Ayub who we saw earlier, they do extraordinary things with their voices and definitely that has helped me with and given me a consciousness of where I could go" (Sandall, 5).

After the vocal piece the music begins to pick up with the bass, drums, guitar and keyboards becoming more prominent. The screen displays the water moving at a furious pace until it is almost a blur of blue-silver streaks. Gabriel and the band sing "Hey, hey" in unison three times then, as the music softens, Gabriel sings slowly, "Across the river, across the river, across the river...I go." The projection now reveals the body of water has become still with a moon glowing above.

The music is soft as Gabriel moves out to the connecting ramp and picks up a rafting pole. The conveyor belt built within the ramp (see fig.1.c) moves him

forward to the circular stage as he mimics the actions of pushing a raft through the water. This image evokes primitive associations, yet the juxtaposition of this image against all the technological aspects places this performance into a postmodern category. The other musicians gradually step onto the belt and they are also propelled towards the circular stage. The impression is given that this song has been a metaphor for a relationship flowing through different stages in its development. In fact, Martha Lady stated in her comments about the stage design that, "The link also becomes a road or a river, a place of travel and transformation, from one stage literally to another" (Lady, 12).

The finality of the relationship is depicted when Gabriel slams the pole onto its end simultaneously with a loud strike of the drums. He then places the pole above his head into a rhythm as the music moves into *Shaking The Tree*. The "eastern" qualities present in the music of *Across the River* have departed and a distinctly African rhythm emerges. Most the band is now on the circular stage moving around it and singing the chorus, "Bokolai hai, bokolai hi, Bokolai hai, bokolai hi " (correct spelling for this song is undetermined as I was unable to obtain a textual reference). All the band stops and encourages the audience to participate by physically raising their arms on the next line "Sumaya gam, suya gam, we are shaking the tree."

One of the features predominant in traditional African music is the level of participation. It is rare that anyone ever passively watches a performance, there is always some form of participation, whether it is dancing, clapping or singing. As James T. Koetting notes in *Worlds of Music* , "In most situations where music is performed in our culture (western) it is not difficult to distinguish the audience from the performers, but such is often not the case in

Africa. Alban Ayipaga, a Kasena semi-professional musician from northern Ghana, says that when his flute and drum ensemble is performing, 'Anyone can take part'...and so the lines between the performing nucleus and the additional performers, active onlookers and passive onlookers may be difficult to draw from our point of view" (Titon, 70-71).

By integrating the rhythms, language and participatory nature of African performance into his own, Gabriel appears to cross over some of the barriers imposed by the rules of western performance. The appropriation of ancient or ritualistic customs from other cultures into the advanced technological context of postmodern pop/rock performance, displays important features integral to exemplifying Peter Gabriel as a postmodern global performer.

After the chorus Gabriel moves into the verse with, "Waiting your time, dreaming of a better life. Waiting your time you're more than just a wife. You don't have to do what your mother has done, she has done. This is your life it's begun. It's your day, a woman's day." These lyrics appear to give guidance and emotional support to a woman that is oppressed in her current environment, a woman who needs to change her situation to achieve a better life. Another verse continues after the chorus with, "Turning the tide you were on the incoming wave. Turning the tide, know you are nobody's slave. Find your sisters and brothers who can hear all the truth in what you say. They can support you when you're on your way."

This verse encourages the woman to take action since she has all the necessary support and it also appears to specifically represent the "African" woman's experience since the text calls up "slavery" and "brothers and sisters." The chorus is repeated once again and then Paula Cole starts the

next verse with, "Changing your ways, changing those around you. Changing your ways more than any man can do. Open your heart show him the anger and pain so you heal. Maybe he's looking for his womanly side." Then Gabriel joins in, "And you feel you have to be so strong, and you did nothing wrong. And you will break it down, we're going to shake it down, shake it all around."

These lyrics clearly show an empathy towards women's obstacles encountered within the structure of a patriarchal society. For a male performer, specifically a pop/rock performer, to take a "feminist" stance is highly unusual yet this example displays the progressive attitude and often sensitive nature imbedded within the layers of Gabriel's work. The line, "Maybe he's looking for his womanly side" indicates an awareness of the co-existing masculine and feminine traits present within both sexes.

Gabriel has openly commented on his positive experiences with individual and group therapy which enabled him to confront and deal with emotions that would otherwise have been repressed. This openness to the public in exalting the benefits of therapy is consistent with his tendency to explore the psychological aspects of his own personality and transform them into the more accessible forms of his performance. However, the significant feature that emerges from this aspect of his work is his lack of concern for projecting the "macho" or testosterone-laden images so prevalent within the genres of postmodern video i.e.: MTV. If anything, he "mocks" the notions of human perfection by creating exaggerated caricatures within his own work. We will explore this feature further in our analysis of Gabriel's video *Steam* .

Another one of the most unique and exemplary qualities inherent within all of Gabriel's work is the absence of any overt sexual exploitation. This is not to say he doesn't explore the issues of sexuality or sexism. Those ideas run through several of his songs, notably "Steam," "Blood of Eden" and "Kiss That Frog". However, it is unique that he does not resort to ensnaring or engaging an audience through explicit sexual imagery (particularly female) as many pop/rock performers do.

Gabriel opens "Secret World" with a projection of himself on the screen saying, "Sometimes when you look around everything seems still and calm on the surface and then you detect a little disturbance, (whereupon there is a slight ripple through the image) and you know for sure that underneath the surface, (another stronger interference occurs) lies some other secret world."

Gabriel appears from behind the square stage and begins to speak in Italian to introduce the song. He had done a much more lengthy introduction (also in Italian) earlier in the performance when he introduced *Steam*. Gabriel's inclination to articulate his message through the indigenous language represented in his audience, supports his continued efforts to absorb, respect and communicate with the people and customs of another culture.

He has been accused of simply stealing from other cultures. However, as Gabriel points out in an article by Sheila Rule in *The New York Times* "There've been accusations of cultural imperialism and neo-colonialism. It's certainly true that we take a lot from music and musicians all over the world, but it's a two way relationship and always has been. There's no such thing as pure music. I think artists that are open have always taken from things that

interest and excite them. The only problem occurs when there's no acknowledgment and the money flows in one direction" (Rule, C-15).

After the introduction, the screen turns a crimson red and the surrounding lighting imparts a bluish-purple glow. Gabriel begins singing with, "I stood in this unsheltered place, 'Til I could see the face behind the face, all that had gone before had left no trace. Down by the railroad siding, In our secret world we were colliding. All the places we were hiding love . What was it we were thinking of?" Gabriel explains the message behind "Secret World," "It was a private world thing, both the private world that two people occupy, and the private world they occupy as individuals within that space and the overlap of dreams and desires" (Geffen, 4).

During the last portion of the song, the conveyer belt has sent down a continuous stream of suitcases which disappear into the square stage until the last one remains which is larger than the rest. Gabriel comes out from behind the keyboards, puts on an overcoat and proceeds to carry the suitcase down to the circular stage. He then opens the suitcase as the rest of the band begin to slowly glide towards him on the conveyer belt. There is no music except for the "drum loop" credited to Doudou N' Diaye Rose. One by one, each of the band members steps into the suitcase and disappears (hydraulic lifts, raise and lower equipment and performers into the center of both stages; see fig 1). There is a humorous moment as Tony Levin joyfully pops out again but Gabriel pushes him back down.

Once the band has all stepped into the suitcase, Gabriel closes it up and carries it to the center of the circular stage. He stops and arches his back to look up as an enormous dome (weighing one ton and deconstructing into 70

separate pieces) slowly lowers and encompasses the entire circular stage. When the dome raises up momentarily, all the band is revealed, including Manu Katche's drum set, and they start into the song, *Don't Give Up* from Gabriel's *So* CD (1986).

What this spectacular disappearing act creates is a colossal metaphor for our most private and personal emotions. It employs what some may call the "magic" of the theater as well as applying the "suspension of disbelief" concept. Everyone knows that the suitcase could not possibly contain all of the band members and that they couldn't have just magically "appeared" under the dome. Yet this kind of theatrical device is accepted by the audience and evokes the "mystery" necessary to emphasize the themes of concealment and secrecy.

Through this examination of Gabriel's "Secret World" tour, we are able to produce more evidence to position him in the postmodern global performance aesthetic. We establish Gabriel's successful attempt to portray internal emotions through external postmodern methods. The entire tour displays postmodern concerns with the "construction" of an environment, employing artists from all over the world to create it. *Come Talk To Me* specifically confronts the issues of communication and construction of emotional boundaries.

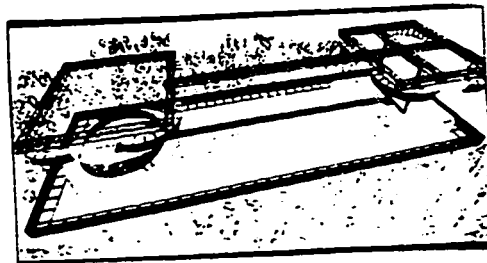
Across The River points out Gabriel's concern for respecting the musical traditions of another culture while appropriating it into his own format. It also reveals Gabriel's ability to visually combine the ancient almost ritualistic traditions with postmodern technology. *Shaking The Tree* exposes the participatory nature of other musical traditions which he appropriates and

reveals his unique position as a male performer taking a feminist and non sexist stance. *Secret World* shows Gabriel's employment of traditional theatrical conventions while utilizing the technology developed within a postmodern era. In the third chapter we will examine how Peter Gabriel's CD-ROM *Xplora* , continues to strengthen his position in a global performance aesthetic.

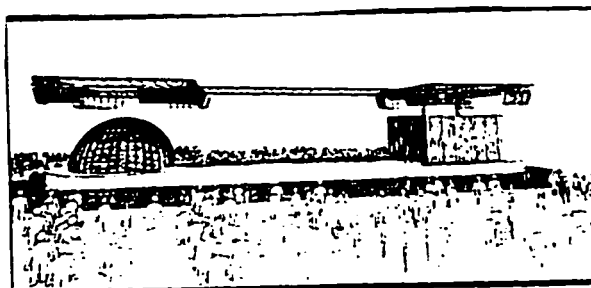
Figure 1. Stage Design for "Secret World" tour.

(Illustration from *Xplora's* supplementary book)

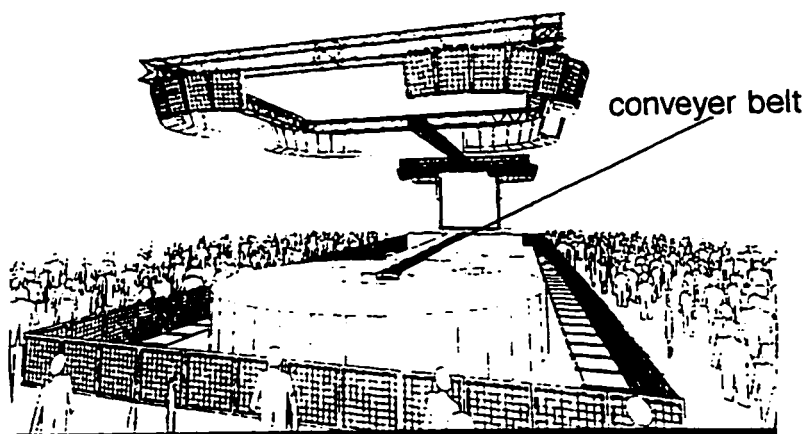
a)



b)



c)



CHAPTER THREE

Peter Gabriel was one of the first pop/rock performers to release an interactive CD ROM and feels it is one of the first steps in becoming what he calls an "experience designer" rather than just a musician. He states that, "multi-media is exactly right for someone like me who in a sense loves visual things, audio things, graphic elements and ideas" (Perkins, 2). One of its most compelling features for Gabriel is the ability for others to "shape" their artistic experience with this medium. Gabriel says,

Traditionally, the artist has been the final arbiter of his work, He delivered it and it stood on its own. In the interactive world artists will also be the suppliers of information and collage material which people can either accept as is, or manipulate to create their own art. It's part of the shift from skill based work to decision making and editing work, where choices become as important as the actual construction of the piece of work. That's what's so exciting, the fluidity and the flexibility of technology is a good complement to the human artistic spirit. In other societies it's just assumed that all people are born artists who can express themselves through visual art, music or language (Perkins, 2).

Xplora has four main categories within its structure. There is the "US" section which lets you explore the music, the videos and technical and artistic creators behind the *US* CD. There is the "World Music" section where you can play non-western instruments, hear snippets of music from other countries, observe a WOMAD festival and hear selections from Real World artists. "Behind the Scenes" takes you on a tour of "Real World Studios" which allows you to see "works in progress," play with a mixing board and explore the various "jam sessions" hosted by Brian Eno. The "Personal"

section informs you about "Amnesty International" and the "Witness" program. It also shows Gabriel's other releases (with one sample song from each) and provides a photo album that opens to reveal bits of home movies made when Gabriel was a child.

Throughout this particular analysis we will examine the features that tend to breach conventional boundaries associated with multi-media as well as reveal some of its limitations. Anthony Perkins, from *The Red Herring Magazine*, remarked to Gabriel that, "Some would argue that CD ROM technology is a rough medium, that it is difficult to leverage as an art form..." Gabriel responded, "...I would agree that CD-Rom technology still has certain limitations. I think it is only an intermediate technology until online fully develops. But we think a lot more can be done...and we've only scratched the surface of its capability so far" (Perkins, 2).

When Robert Sandall questioned Gabriel on the validity of CD-ROM if one already has a video player and a CD-player, Gabriel again focused on the consumer's role of "participation" but also brings up the possibility of creating a personal database. He compares the database to one's home where there is an accumulation of personal memorabilia, photos, work and leisure materials. He says that multi-media may be able to reflect that by pulling in information, "...whether it be visual images, video, music, educational, whatever stuff they feel a particular intellectual, physical or emotional relationship to. They can start pulling in and manipulating it so that it's like a big collage environment..." (Sandall, 7).

One of the features created within Gabriel's *Xplora* involves using one's skills of strategy and perception to broaden the "experience." The first of

these involves selecting the proper pieces of Peter Gabriel's face, rather like constructing a puzzle before you are even introduced into the main categories of selection. All through the CD-ROM there are hidden items which you may accumulate in your suitcase, given to you at the beginning of your journey, that enable you to explore other specific areas. If you haven't found the correct item, you are unable to enter these areas.

In the *Digging In The Dirt* track, there is even a game of Tic-Tac-Toe in which the participant plays against the computer. In this game and elsewhere in the CD-ROM, Gabriel may appear in the top left of the screen encouraging or guiding your progress, explaining your options and occasionally prompting you with, "You can do better than that." All of these elements combine to create a kind of competitive edge to the CD that encourages the participant to delve further into the "experience."

When David Stephen, the new CEO of *Real World*, was asked what it would take to create successful multi-media products, he stated that one of the reasons is, "We want each product to have elements of game play. And good game play involves interacting and competing with others be they sprites, characters, or, at a more basic and exciting level, with the mind of the program designer" (Perkins, 6).

In the "US" section, we are presented with the ten songs selected from the *US* CD. Unfortunately only four of the ten choices offer a significant encounter with the selection. The remaining six provide the lyrics, the art images from the CD and an approximately thirty second musical loop. Although Gabriel never claims that *Xplora* is *singularly* an interactive musical CD-ROM, Michele DiLorenzo, senior vice-president of Viacom New Media

and corporate sibling of MTV, says, "Most so-called interactive music titles are really reference material about music and shouldn't really be considered interactive music" (Davis, 87). Gabriel's attempts to provide the interactive element to his music will be expanded upon during the "World of Music" section and "Behind the Scenes."

The four more complex selections from the "US" section include *Blood of Eden*, *Steam*, *Digging In The Dirt* and *Kiss That Frog*. *Blood of Eden* exemplifies Gabriel's efforts to let the viewer explore his particular process of building up the collective ideas of himself and his associates to create the final product. Gabriel explained how he wanted to use the biblical image of Eden, a time when "men and women were in one body and in a sense maybe in a relationship" (Geffen, 3). He wanted to explore the merging of boundaries, the creation of a powerful union and the obstacles involved in this process.

The explanation from the artist involved in the visual interpretations of the song, *Zadok Ben-David*, deepens our understanding. The written text explains his personal and artistic inspirations from his birth in the desert into a family of Yemeni Jews to the ancient background of songs and stories that fertilize his creativity. They present him as an artist/magician who often depicts situations that balance the impossible, at first mystifying but eventually becoming clear. There is also a movie of *Zadok* talking about the formation of the sculpture which was the inspiration for the ensuing video. He discusses the importance of portraying something universal yet intimate, choosing the egg shape as a metaphor for a beginning.

Another movie at Real World explains Gabriel's involvement, citing the project as more of a team working together to illustrate his ideas. While Michael DiLorenzo elaborates that, "In some cases...the original artists have zero involvement with the project - the result is mostly re-purposed from existing documentary materials" (Davis, 87). However, Steve Nelson from San Francisco's *Brilliant Media* who worked with Gabriel on *Xplora* confirms Gabriel's desire to actively participate in the creative process, "Peter is very involved with the content of this project...we're really just here to help implement his ideas" (Davis, 87).

All these features within *Blood of Eden* combine to form a satisfying element of discovery or revelation that fulfill Gabriel's requirement for a broader understanding of the creative process. *Steam* follows the same format as *Blood of Eden* in that one is able to discover the processes that constructed the video. However, whereas *Blood of Eden* focused more on the organic inspirations, *Steam* reveals the technical layering involved within the work.

Stephen Johnson, the director of *Steam*, felt there wasn't any illusion that couldn't be created on video. There isn't a scene in the video that doesn't have layers of computer animated or generated material; every scene is a composite image. Within *Xplora's* textual information Bruce Steele, head of computer graphics for *Steam*, says that the video was "...an absolute tour de force of computer generated visual effects." The computer graphic artists' used two "Harry's" (computer animation/effects generator), a symbolics machine (3-D image generator) and an editing team working around the clock (*Xplora*, 20).

Although the layering techniques provide a rich and textured medium, there are some critics like Tim Byers (producer and programmer for *Motley Crue*) who complain that, "The Peter Gabriel thing is a mammoth layer upon layer upon layer project...it may take you 30 minutes to find what you just saw yesterday" (Davis, 88). Although Byers highly exaggerates the time frame needed to access specific areas, and Gabriel's specific intent is to provide these layers, he does make a relevant point in regard to the consumers' need for both increased enjoyment and accessibility.

Todd Rundgren, who released the *No World Order* CD-ROM, contends that, "Music in people's lives is not an intellectual experience; it's a transcendental experience. The first major step is trying to convey to people that interactive is an expanded way of listening to music. They should not think that it changes their responsibilities in terms of music. People buy music because it brings them pleasure and enjoyment. It's not a job" (Davis, 86).

The textured layers within *Steam* convey Gabriel's tendency to provide multiple concepts and varied associations. He discussed the inspiration for *Steam* as resulting from, "...an idea which I actually started on the third album and never got to finish. It was a sort of relationship, where the woman is very bright, sophisticated, cultured...knows everything about everything...and the man knows nothing about everything. What he does know is about her, and she doesn't know a lot about herself" (Geffen, 3). This is exemplified directly in the lyrics, "You know your culture from your trash, You know your plastic from your cash. When I lose sight of the track, You know your way back, But I know you."

One of the other levels to *Steam* concerns the ridicule of sexist stereotypes, both male and female. As one of the people involved with the project explained (within one of the CD-ROM clips) "*Steam* is about the sex act, it's cut like the sex act and it mimics the pace." In one scene Gabriel's head is superimposed onto a "Chippendale" dancer's body. Women are dancing around him and eventually begin to actually take parts of his body. Another computer-altered scene shows Gabriel pulling down a nun's habit to expose revealing lingerie. The woman then pulls up another set of clothing and pushes Gabriel away. All of these images combine to humorously illustrate how both men and women contribute to the perpetuation of sexual stereotypes.

In one of the supplemental features, Gabriel has a bit of fun with the inferences a psychologist makes towards the British phenomenon of "train spotting" (a harmless pastime of counting and or identifying specific trains). The head of a psychologist is seen on a swirling colored background while he (the psychologist) expounds on the proclivity of eccentric or fanatical people to transfer their obsessions to sexual preferences or behavior.

The insights into the artist's rendition for *Steam*, Ian Hughes from Scotland, continue the theme of psychological issues. His biography in *Steam* explains that, "Ian Hughes' experience as a staff nurse in a psychiatric hospital brings him into contact with people who are mentally and physically ill, and it is the compassion he feels for them that fuels his work." He also explains in the movie supplement that he wanted to capture the essence of fire and heat for *Steam* without being too literal, which is why he chose to incorporate exotic animals and plants derived from tropical regions.

With *Digging In The Dirt* Gabriel reveals the darker side of one's personality while simultaneously stretching the boundaries of the "politically correct" attitude pervasive within society. The director of the video John Downer explained "He was trying to illustrate the violent emotions that reside in all of us; it's what the song is all about." Downer was in fact "very concerned that the film might be construed as condoning violence towards women" (Ladly, 19). As it turned out, not everyone agreed that Gabriel's ideas were acceptable. The video was not shown in Great Britain and as the director continued, "The video delves into the depths of Peter's psyche and explores the darker side of his personality. I think it was the scenes in which Peter was buried alive that made people feel most uncomfortable; the associations with death and decay were seen to be unacceptable in a pop video" (Ladly, 19).

The "dark side" is revealed in such verses as, "Something in me, dark and sticky. All the time it's getting strong. No way of dealing, with this feeling. Can't go on like this too long." During this verse, Gabriel is portrayed laying down in the grass as a real snail inches its way across his mouth and eyes. Gabriel intended this image to convey the necessity for people to confront the offensive aspects of their personality. The confrontation is necessary in order to reveal the more attractive qualities. As Gabriel says, "...that by acknowledging and going through the dark side of yourself, you can actually come to terms with it and accept it and in a sense have it neutralized a little bit" (Geffen, 6).

The violence is conveyed within part of the chorus, "Don't talk back, just drive the car. Shut your mouth, I know what you are. Don't say nothing, keep

your hands on the wheel. Don't turn around, this is for real." Gabriel is portrayed attempting to kill a wasp, although it first appears as though he is attacking the woman. However, through an examination of the lyrics it becomes clear that Gabriel is using this scene as a metaphor for the tendency of people, especially the British, notorious for their reservation and stiff upper lip attitude, to repress painful emotions. When the emotions emerge later, they are often more difficult to deal with.

One reason Gabriel was attracted to Downer's particular style was his previous work in time-lapse imagery. Gabriel wanted to explore the possibilities of manipulating time through non-linear, multi-layering techniques. The manipulation of time places Gabriel's work in a postmodern context but is also central to Gabriel's theme of uncovering trauma from the past and re-experiencing it in the present.

The radical and non-conformist attitude are further exemplified by Gabriel's use of Zush, an artist who was convicted of marijuana possession in Barcelona, Spain, 1968 under the "Franco" government. He was sent to a mental hospital where he changed his name from Alberto Porta to Zush and decided to create his own state called Evrugo. "This state has its own language, money, flag and communications systems. It is a world where the laws and politics of this planet do not apply" (Ladly, 52).

Zush tried to communicate the relationship of two people, *US*, by representing their emotions literally forming around their heads and bodies. The artist who was responsible for the claymation effects of the video needed to somehow keep the essence of Zush's very graphic, two dimensional style with primitive elements, yet transfer this into the three dimensional medium of

clay. She did this by forming out of clay representative demons, who dwell under the earth representing the subconscious.

Kiss That Frog represents Gabriel's ability of taking mythological parables and transforming them into an allegorical postmodern performance. Gabriel was inspired by Bruce Betelheim's book, *The Uses of Enchantment*, which looked at fairy stories from a psychological point of view. Gabriel explained that in the mythological story of *The Frog Prince*, Betelheim discussed, "...how there were certain parts to the Victorian approach to sex education that were quite interesting in the sense that in modern sex education it's very matter of fact...sex would be seen as something that goes alongside love and it's clean, bright and cheerful. Whereas in the fairy story there is some room for horror, some sense of disgust and some sort of physical repulsion to be integrated by putting in the mythical characters of the ugly, slimy frog alongside the princess" (Geffen, 6-7).

Gabriel focuses on first sexual encounters where there may be some of these negative feelings and how once you accept them, the "prince" will eventually emerge. The lyrics are wonderfully full of double entendres describing the princess' startling encounter with "the frog": "Splash, dash heard your call, bring you back your golden ball. He's gonna dive down in the deep end, he's gonna be just like your best friend. So what's one little kiss, one tiny little touch, aah he's wanting it so much. I swear that this is royal blood running through my skin, oh can you see the state I'm in. Kiss it better."

The visual images are extraordinary, combining rich colors and textures with a surprisingly smooth flow of three dimensional images since it is the first music video to be completely computer generated. The intricate details and

surreal quality of the video are explained by the director, Brett Leonard. "With our direction she (Fine Artist, A.E. Bunker) created 152 pieces of flat artwork (hand-drawn) which were then texture mapped by computer...We both wanted to get away from the computer graphic feel and move towards something rich and organic" (Ladly, 22).

The music also contributes to the sense of intimidation with its menacing quality. Gabriel attributes the inspiration for the music to something he was working on in the soundtrack for *Birdy*. He also acknowledges influences from Latin sources and adds loops from the Adzido Drummers. *Kiss That Frog* is a consummate example of how Gabriel combines both musically and visually a harmonious balance between older traditions and the newest technological developments.

Kiss That Frog was also used for the "Mindblender Rock Motion Theatre," which is the first music-driven ride. "Mindblender" was created as an experiment for Gabriel's forthcoming "Experience Park." Gabriel's *Real World Multi-Media* wanted to "test the waters" before they went to the great expense of permanently "sticking them into concrete" (Sandall, 8). "Mindblender" uses flight simulator technology, quadraphonic sound, high definition TV screens and hydraulic seats. The seats move up, down, forward and backwards etc. so that it simulates motion and convinces the brain that they are actually participating in the experience.

Kiss That Frog concludes the "US" section of the CD-ROM and we move on now to the "World of Music" section. This section is basically an opportunity to expose the viewers to the music of non-western artists and enable them to try for themselves some of the instruments representative of

these cultures. There are four different divisions in this section. One section lets you listen to short segments of music chosen from different areas of the world. For instance if one chooses India, excerpts from artists such as the Sabri Brothers, Sridhar and Shivakumar or Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan are produced.

Another section displays numerous CD cover art of Real World artists. A brief movie appears which discusses the origins of Real World, explaining its partnership between WOMAD and Peter Gabriel and its policy of exposing a wide range of traditional and modern artists. Once you enter one of the selections it gives you a short history of the artist or artists and produces a small segment of the recording. For instance, on one cut entitled *Mahabarata* it explains the collaboration between artists from Japan, Iran, Turkey, India and Denmark. It also mentions Peter Brooks' endeavor to transform the stage production (of the same name) to the screen and Philip Eidel's work to create a soundtrack from the original music.

The "World of Music" section enables the viewer to acquire a somewhat limited experience of the WOMAD festival by presenting a few short movies of the different areas; the dance workshop, children's area, *Amnesty International* booth, food stalls and three stages to hear a bit of the music.

The final section is more interactive in that it allows you to play a non-western instrument as well as learn about how and where it is made. One major drawback is that it only allows a person to play a couple of notes or sounds and doesn't provide any context in which to truly experiment with the possibilities of rhythm, melody or tone.

Whereas Gabriel's focus on the CD-Rom was providing the tools to create an "experience," Todd Rundgren's *New World Order* focuses primarily on the audio aspect. Rundgren's CD contains a database of more than 1500 musical segments and phrases which you can rearrange to create your own composition. You may set controls specifying your preference in mood, rhythm or mix. "Then the disc plunders its data-base of musical bits and pieces and assembles a version of itself to your specifications" (Rosenberg, B-13).

The main musical limitation with both *Xplora* and *New World Order* is that the musical experience depends solely on pre-programmed data. To be truly "interactive," one should be able to build up their own musical data-base, selecting specific instruments, tones, rhythms and eventually bringing it all together to create an individual composition. Rundgren's CD is closer to this concept, since you can actually create an arrangement. However, it only allows you to "re-create" Rundgren's sound, not develop anything on your own.

Of course, as Scott Rosenberg aptly points out, "a true music lover will probably own an instrument already" or at least divert themselves with programs like *Rock, Rap 'n' Roll* (Rosenberg, B-14). This CD-ROM from *Paramount Interactive* lets you choose backing tracks and assemble a sequence of them into a song. You are then able to choose individual instruments and start soloing from the keyboard. Apparently the main problem with this program is the lag-time between hitting the key and the sound emission.

The third area of Gabriel's *Xplora* takes us "Behind The Scenes." There are small movie segments to see of the Brit Awards and the Grammy's (if you have collected the proper "passes" in other areas of *Xplora*), a brief history of "The Box" (a magazine produced by Real World), video segments which show the making of individual videos (the same videos which are included within the US section), and a tour through various areas of Real World Studios. We will focus briefly on "The Box" and then move on to the tour of Real World Studios since the other segments have already been examined.

"The Box" was formed at the end of 1992 in response to numerous requests for more information about the events at Real World. Martha Ladly, the editor of "The Box," explains in *Xplora's* supplementary book that the format and layout always contain a combination of high-tech imagery with hand-made elements. Perhaps this is an appropriate metaphor to Gabriel's own work. She says, "The magazine uses Peter Gabriel's persona and interests as the vehicle to inspire exciting and innovative work, primarily in the areas of world music and multimedia" (Ladly, 8).

The ironic aspect to "The Box's" incorporation into *Xplora's* format, is that we are given very little information in the CD-Rom, compared to the information given in the supplement. The supplement contains four very interesting articles on such varied subjects as Fog Farming, Japanese Pleasure Parks and Telemedicine. Perhaps the answer can be found in Ladly's explanation for including a supplement with the CD-Rom. "We hope and believe that the electronic media will not replace printed media and that the digital/print-based relationship of words and images will continue to exist and complement one another" (Ladly, 8).

The tour of Real World Studios has a bit of a rough, home-made quality as it was filmed with a hand held video camera. You hear the crunching of gravel beneath the camera-persons feet as they walk through the grounds and experience the jostling of the lens as it moves from place to place. This technique provides a contrast to the smoother flowing methods contained within the rest of *Xplora* and is designed to give participants a sense that they are getting, "the real thing."

As you travel through the grounds you are able to go into different rooms to see what is, or has been going on. Various people who work at Real World introduce themselves and then take you into the room. In the "Big Room" the viewer is able to see how Gabriel worked on the track, *Come Talk To Me* and in another room we see Gabriel working on the composition of *The Blood of Eden*. In the "Production Room" we are invited to work on creating our own version of *Digging In The Dirt*. This is where the limitations of Gabriel's attempts at enabling the viewer to interact are more clearly apparent. The mixing board has four slide controls. One each is designated for the bass, guitar, percussion and Gabriel's vocals. Once the track begins you are able to adjust the sound levels for each of the slides from zero to ten which either raises or lowers the volume. However, this is all you are able to do.

One of the advantages to the interactive aspect of music based CD-ROM's is expressed by Edgar Winter, who finds creating an album stimulating only until decisions have to be made about "what stays on the album" and "what goes." Winter often experiments with different solos on several instruments and finds it difficult to choose because he appreciates all of them. He says, "With the power of computers there's no reason why you can't let the listener

select among the different musical ideas and use them to create their own arrangements. I feel like computers will help people experience the albums' creative possibilities more the way I did when I was working on it (Davis, 86-87).

One of the more humorous aspects to the tour of Real World Studios is when we are guided from a dog's point of view. A lightweight video camera has been mounted on the head of the dog and we travel through a room accompanied by the sounds of sniffing and panting. Our host changes once again when we enter the last room. Brian Eno introduces himself and explains the process for accessing the musical segments pictured. The strategy is to choose a selection of artists, hoping that your chosen combination is one that will produce a previously recorded jam session. There are approximately fifty combinations to choose from and, fortunately, they are unlike the previous selections contained within the rest of *Xplora*. There are also some new film segments of individual musicians that discuss details of their work.

The last segment of *Xplora* to be examined is the "Personal Section" which has four areas to explore. If you enter one area it opens up into a suitcase. This contains a passport that depicts a photograph of Gabriel "aging" through time, a photo album with five black and white photos that change into short film clips, and a brief description of Amnesty International. Gabriel has been involved with Amnesty since 1979 and was part of the "Conspiracy of Hope" tour in 1986 and put together the "Human Rights Now" tour in 1989. Amnesty members work together to seek the release of prisoners of conscience:

people imprisoned solely for their beliefs, color, ethnic origin, sex, language or religion.

However, the most compelling feature of the "Personal File" is the segment devoted to "Witness," a program to help the world's human rights organizations join the communications revolution. The *Lawyers Committee for Human Rights*, The *Reebok Foundation* and Peter Gabriel formed "Witness" in March of 1992. The segment opens with Gabriel stating, "this film footage speaks for itself." A short film begins that displays graphic shots of bodies burning in South Africa, the Rodney King beating, Tiananmen Square and other examples, alternating them with the following excerpt: "You can say a story was fabricated, you can say a document is false, you can say a person is lying, you can even say you don't trust newspapers, but you can't say what you just saw never happened..."

The most significant and convincing feature of Gabriel's advocacy for "Witness" is that he promotes the utilization and application of modern communication tools within the context of *Xplora*, which is in itself a product of advanced technology.

"Witness" will distribute equipment (mainly hand-held video cameras) and facilitate the broad distribution of documentation and evidence (with the support of fax machines and computers) to help put a stop to human rights abuses. The executive director of "Witness," Michael Posner, acknowledges this "global" potential: "Timely, accurate and impartial information is the most powerful weapon individuals and groups have to ensure that governments everywhere, protect and promote the fundamental human rights of their citizens." (text from *Xplora's* "Witness" segment).

Although Gabriel's work has often had a political or social agenda, the intangible quality of music or performance makes it difficult to determine what impact it may have made on the issues it presented. However, with a program like "Witness," one of the most critical factors of its success has been its "global" impact. Gabriel stated that "Witness" has given out at least 150 inexpensive, easy to operate video cameras to local activists around the world, and that they have received film footage back (Sandall, 10). The film footage provides powerful evidence to inform the public and potentially serve to assist the victims. As Gabriel states in a portion of *Xplora's* text, "Technology transcends all borders. Information is power."

Gabriel's *Xplora* is a manifestation and a product of postmodern society. The technical development of this medium proposes to enable people to create their own social constructions of reality. *Steam* reveals the technical layering of ideas and communicates the belief that both men and women take part in the construction of sexist stereotypes. *Digging In The Dirt's* content, crosses the boundaries of normal acceptance and incorporates the manipulation of time typical of a postmodern video.

Kiss That Frog reveals Gabriel's extraordinary ability to take mythological tales and transform them into allegorical postmodern performances. The *Mindblender* ride is a further step in constructing experiences and the tour of Real World Studios contains participatory elements necessary to an interactive experience. "Witness" sums up Gabriel's ability to use technology as a means of truly connecting with, and changing global constructions of reality. In the final chapter we will reveal how Gabriel's participation in the development of WOMAD and Real World as well as his plans for an

"Experience Park" continue to strengthen his position in a global performance aesthetic.

Chapter Four

W.T. Anderson believes that one of the features of postmodern society is the gradual erosion of boundaries. He states, "We live in the age of the fading boundary, the twilight of a mind-set that structured reality with sharp lines. The boundaries between nations, races, classes, cultures, species - all become less distinct" (Anderson, 256). Gabriel's involvement with WOMAD and his subsequent creation of Real World Studios are a reflection of this postmodern manifestation. As Gabriel stated in *Xplora's* supplement, "In essence, we are aiming to create a new cultural territory..." (Lady, 34).

WOMAD (World of Art, Music and Dance) was first introduced to audiences in England in 1982. Gabriel enlisted the aid of Thomas Brooman, WOMAD'S artistic director, to help establish a platform for non-western and western musicians to be able to play together and expose audiences to a wider range of musical styles. There were more than fifty acts on two main outdoor stages, two big top stages, workshop tents and evening shows that included bigger names like Gabriel, Simple Minds, The Beat and Echo & The Bunnymen. One journalist described it as, "An astonishing heterophony of Arabian horns, West African drums, Indonesian xylophones, American synthesizers and British electric guitars" (Lambert, 6).

However, just as some people in society have opposed the merging of religion, race or culture, the WOMAD festivals have also encountered mixed responses. The first festival experienced serious financial setbacks and ironically ended up recruiting the help of Genesis and their management.

They arranged a benefit concert with Gabriel (the first time they had shared a stage since Gabriel quit the band six years earlier) and managed to pay the bills. As Stu Lambert observes regarding the term "World Music," "Predictably the term has come to evoke images that its inventors - the small record companies like Earthworks, Globestyle and Real World-never intended: a hair shirt purism and slavishness to authenticity. Music that doesn't obey the rules, makes foreign sounds and sings a foreign tongue is difficult turf for uncommitted listeners" (Lambert, 6).

Although Real World claims that, "WOMAD is a festival with no headliners and no support groups" (Ladly, 34) so far (at least in the United States) its financial success appears to depend upon the addition of headliners to draw the larger crowds . WOMAD's first North American tour in 1993 headlined Gabriel, Sinead O' Connor, Crowded House and P.M. Dawn. However, the necessity for using more established pop stars to draw the crowds does not undermine the contribution of the other lesser known artists. Nor does it weaken the organization's premise to expose audiences to a wide array of musical styles. As Thomas Brooman maintained, "...This is all about music enabling people to speak to each other across cultures. It feels worthwhile supporting great artists and taking them to new audiences, standing for musical eclecticism in the face of narrowness" (Snyder, 31).

Although WOMAD's entire organization is built upon the desire to bring people and music together in a harmonious and stimulating environment, not all countries operate under this philosophy. An attempt to have a festival at the Egyptian Red Sea resort of Taba was canceled after Egyptian officials refused to allow the necessary equipment across the border. Gabriel had

hoped to perform in Egypt as a gesture of support for the Arab-Israeli peace process. The concert was moved to the Israeli port of Eilat, but there was little hope that ticket holders from Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates would be able to attend.

In 1989, Real World Studios was formed in conjunction with WOMAD to provide musicians with state of the art recording facilities that would enable them to reach audiences beyond their geographic regions. The Real World recording weeks were established in 1991 when 75 international artists and producers from more than 20 countries arrived to exchange musical ideas and material. Since then the Real World label has become associated with higher quality products and has been praised for maintaining its musical diversity.

Ayub Ogada, a Nyatiti musician, was born in Mombasa and is a member of the Luo people from Western Kenya. His experiences at Real World's recording week clarify how Gabriel's policy of cultural diversity contributes to the exchange of ideas during the recording process. "You can't throw a stone in the water without making waves. Each new personality you meet affects your life, because you always hear, see, or get something from them. It's given me the chance to try some of my songs in a different light and see how other people interpret what they hear from me. It's part of the learning process just being there; it's just an incredible atmosphere" (Ladly, 37).

Besides all of the artistic elements that contribute to Gabriel's work, Gabriel has wisely recognized the need for financial stability within the business component. When Anthony Perkins asked David Stephen (the CEO for Real World) what motivated Gabriel to hire him, David responded, "Peter was

looking for someone with a business and entertainment background who could help develop the right corporate culture at Real World. The company was headed lots of different directions. So we spent a lot of time talking about what the new mandate should be" (Perkins, 4).

Stephen was accurate in pointing out the expansion of Real World's business. Besides Real World Studios and the Real World Record label, Real World has taken over the management and production of WOMAD and has established Real World Multimedia and Real World Productions. There is Real World Trading (the merchandising division that sells T-shirts, jackets, records etc.) and the publication of "The Box" and most recently "Real World Notes." Stephen's focus will be on the overall financial management, marketing and distribution side of the business as well as eventually making each part of the company financially and creatively independent of Gabriel.

David Stephen points out the two main reasons why smaller companies like Real World are able to expand and become more profitable. "First, distribution channels have become far more diffused and blurred. I can now go to the record shop and also buy games, videos, books and tapes. So the small guy doesn't have to worry about setting up so many separate sales channels. Second, the ability to digitize video, sound and graphic information has made it much easier to repurpose creative content across different mediums. For example we can have the same person who shoots Peter's video's also perform work for one of our interactive CD's. You don't need the huge spread of skill sets you used to in the past" (Perkins, 5).

He compared Real World's multi-faceted operations to the Hollywood Studios like Disney who were able to control their different media like the

soundtracks and books. He also suggested the direction that Real World is headed by comparing the organization to Virgin, how it began as a record company and then expanded to include games and airlines and eventually the name (of Virgin) became associated with a symbol of quality and value.

When Robert Sandall questioned Gabriel about the ability of Real World to survive while so many other small labels have gone under, Gabriel also referred to the presence of quality. He explained that such talented artists as Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, Sheila Chandra and Geoffrey Oryema have contributed to the exceptional quality of the label and are beginning to break through to other countries, building a wider audience. He also attributed their success to keeping costs down, as well as to the positive support from radio stations and other record companies.

Since Real World is still a relatively small company, Gabriel explains that even 50,000 records sold can be seen as a success. Apparently they never made money but they never lost money either. Gabriel points to Reggae as an example of a style of music that has gone in and out of fashion, but has managed to keep its own hard core audience. He suggests that perhaps someone from Brazil, Africa, Asia or India will break through in a big way to affect the dominant position of English language music (Sandall, 4).

It appears that much of Gabriel's success with Real World and WOMAD may be attributed to his acceptance and motivation to incorporate state of the art technology. He is not intimidated by its complexity or power and is enthused about technology's impact on society. He is also able to incorporate this technology without producing material that some refer to as "techno-pop." Gabriel sees technology as just a tool to inspire people during

the creative process as his discovery of the drum machine was. He says that it "changed the way he wrote music" and helped him "become more sophisticated about his approach" (Perkins, 2).

He is also optimistic about the opportunities for Third World countries to benefit from new technology. He sees the possibilities of an agriculturally based economy to switch to an information economy without going through the troubles of industrialization. "If you could get a very reliable, low-budget, self-sufficient information mode with computers, solar power, and satellite up and down links that could be dropped on any point on the planet's surface and kids there could be trained within three to five years...they could then become information creators and processors able to compete equally with any other point on the globe" (Davis, 88).

Gabriel's "Experience Park" is his next endeavor to combine state of the art technology with the creative elements of art and music. Gabriel, with co-creators Brian Eno and Laurie Anderson, envision assembling an environment where people from multiple disciplines work together to create a fun, interesting and stimulating experience. He hopes collaborations with architects, sculptors, psychologists and film makers will be able to build both "adrenaline pumping thrilling experiences" and some with more of a "meditative and spiritual framework."

Real World Multi Media is the physical reality of this idea which was once just a rough concept. Just as the "Mindblender" ride was an experimental part of the "Experience Park's" future (in collaboration with Brilliant Media), *Xplora* was one of Real World Multimedia's experimental products. The people that work within the company represent Gabriel's vision of diversity. There are

actually scientists, architects, writers and psychologists as well as musicians and film makers continuing to progress with the development of the park. In fact in Gabriel's interview with Robert Sandall he confirmed that a site had already been allocated in the Vale de Hebron in Barcelona.

Real World Multi Media's products are built on the adherence to a "combination of handmade and high tech, natural and man made-experiences for the internal and external worlds" (Ladly, 28). This appears to reflect David Stephen's motto for all of Real World. He says that they have a "credo" for their brand, that it be "high-tech, handmade and worldwide." The handmade stands for, "...the emphasis on care and quality. The worldwide is that we draw inspiration from many sources from around the world and hopefully our products have a global appeal, and the high-tech is...high-tech!" (Perkins, 5).

In excerpts from discussions that Gabriel, Brian Eno and Laurie Anderson have had, we can grasp some idea of how innovative, eclectic and futuristic their visions for the park tend to be:

Peter: I've always pictured that it would be great to be able to be inside the work of other artists...It shouldn't be a place crammed with thrill rides, it should be a real centre for imagination, creativity and ideas.

Brian: The architecture should be dramatic and visionary, but shouldn't overwhelm the natural landscape. Exhibitions, films and information will keep everyone in the garden in touch with things as they happen...It's an anti-zoo. Instead of a place where you keep things in, its a place where you let things out. It's a visionary playground, an urban tom-tom.

Laurie: It will be a place where people can become artists. As you enter the park you'll enter a totally different world where art and nature have suddenly and mysteriously combined...It's an alarm clock, a nursery for hybrids (Ladly, 27).

Gabriel's development of Real World and WOMAD contribute to his placement within a global context. He specifically developed these organizations to cross boundaries, incorporate cultures and transform a people's view of what existed beyond the confines of their own social construct. Although he is able to construct these different realities, we discovered there are still some traditional conventions that are necessary to continue his progress and that not all people are willing to cooperate with his methods.

We discovered that even the business features of Real World contain the combined elements of older traditions and state of the art technology. The world's business structure has changed, blurring the lines of division that now enable smaller companies to expand beyond their previous limitations and postmodern technological advances enable Gabriel to establish a global environment.

What also must be mentioned in this chapter are a few of the other artists who tend to display some of these postmodern or global qualities. Todd Rundgren who was referred to earlier, appears to be as diverse as Gabriel in his technological and business ventures. Following his CD-ROM *No World Order*, he intends to work further on enhanced CD and interactive TV. He has developed computer-generated art with "Flow Phaser" and art books such as "Music For The Eye." Like Gabriel, he has formed his own company "Waking Dreams," in which he intends to develop creative software.

Rundgren's most recent project is a new web service which he says is "a new kind of service, not the same as Netscape. We are going to be building our own browser, our own immersive experience. And of course music's still

a big part of it " (Ganahl, C-13). He is concerned with finding new ways of *delivering* music to people which to him is just as important as *making* the music. Gabriel's concern with the erosion of boundaries or barriers is just as much a part of Rundgren's objective. He says that in the future "People will experience music directly, without having to go to the store, worry about whether the record store wants to buy it, and whether the radio station wants to play it. All these things are barriers between you and the audience" (Ganahl, C-13).

Gabriel's incorporation of non western music into western is not a "new" phenomenon. Perhaps the most obvious example would be Ravi Shankar's collaboration with the Beatles in the 1960's. In fact, George Harrison has been known to call Shankar "the godfather of world music." However, it is the consistency with which an artist appropriates these features that places him or her within the context of a global performance aesthetic.

Sting, another British musician, appears to adopt some of the musical strategies Gabriel employs, although there is little inspiration from non western traditions. He tends to "touch on" musical genres rather than imbed himself in their influences. He says he will, "...take a musical genre and stretch it until you can't really recognize it...I'm not digging deep in one trench, sort of flying everywhere. 'Mercurial' is the word" (Selvin, 28). His new CD, aptly entitled *Mercury Falling*, travels across several domains. He uses Celtic swing, gospel, Gallic bossa nova and even country and western. Gabriel has credited his experiences with the *Passion* CD for loosening up his idea of a song's structure and giving him a freer sense of composition. We were able to see a more recent example of that with *Blood of Eden*. Sting has also

experimented with this concept. For example the 9/8 beat of *I Hung My Head* which is common for jazz but more unusual when it is used within the pop/rock music format. He explains, "I love those meters, I find them very natural. Where are the rules that say all pop songs must be played in 4/4" (Selvin, 28-29).

Like Gabriel, who left Genesis when it was on the verge of mass recognition, Sting left The Police in 1984 when the group was at its peak. He felt that they had reached a place where they couldn't go any further and was intrigued with the idea of starting over. Although Sting hasn't expanded in a "business" sense of the word like Gabriel's ventures with Real World, he has participated in a number of projects outside of his own recordings. He has had a number of acting roles which included working in the movies *Quadrophenia* and *Dune*. He has also sung with the Chieftains, participated in the tribute record for Leonard Cohen and recorded soundtracks for *Leaving Las Vegas*.

Paul Simon is another musician noted for his appropriation of non western sounds. With his *Graceland* album he was inspired by the music of South Africa and worked with Joseph Shabalala of Ladysmith Black Mambazo, Tao Ea Matsekha, General M.D. Shirinda and the Gaza Sisters, and the Boyoyo Boys Band. Youssou N' Dour, Babacar Faye and Assane Thiam, who have also worked with Gabriel, contribute to the percussion on *Diamonds On The Soles Of Her Shoes*. Simon working with Joseph Shabalala created *Homeless* which is an especially interesting track. The melodies are from traditional Zulu wedding songs and the text contains both English and Zulu.

There seems to be a phenomenal amount of "benefits," "concerts" or "programs," that employ pop musicians and/or celebrities from film and television. Gabriel isn't alone in his efforts. These events most often raise money or contribute to an awareness of political or social injustice and encompass a wide range of concerns. Elton John and Sting participated in an AID's benefit at New York's Waldorf-Astoria and Neil Young holds his annual Bridge School benefit with performers such as Pearl Jam. Bonnie Raitt and Jackson Browne joined forces with Graham Nash and David Crosby at a No Nukes Rally and Natalie Merchant and Bruce Hornsby were part of a Voters for Choice benefit concert honoring the 23rd anniversary of Roe vs. Wade.

Besides Michael Jackson and Madonna, (who are both expanding into the interactive medium) some of the more unique approaches are developing from bands like Devo who are interested in using CD-ROM's as positive social forces. The founder of Devo Gerry Cosalis, suggests a comparison to the punk rockers of the 70's who could, "...turn an audience into a mutinous angry mob" (Davis, 89). Fortunately, Cosalis intends to yield more positive responses from the audience and is interested in reviving Devo as a "virtual band," one that exists only electronically in an interactive format.

The Residents, a San Francisco based rock/ performance group (whose work is also in the permanent collection of the Museum of Modern Art) has developed *The Freak Show* CD-Rom. Homer Flynn the band's manager says that the CD-Rom is more of an interactive book but uses graphics and music to supplement the text. Within the CD-Rom the "audience" will be interactive as well as the "freaks" on stage. You have the opportunity to

interact more intimately with the "freaks" when you enter their individual trailers. The Residents collaborated with Jim Ludtke, who is well known for his interactive work and who used a very surrealistic approach (inspired by Salvador Dali) in this particular work. Fred Davis who met with Ludtke, was extremely impressed with its interactive capabilities. He claims that, "...you feel as though you are actually encountering Wanda The Worm Woman" and appreciates his encounter with Harry The Head: "He's a freak with just a head-no body-so you have to enter his *mind* to understand him" (Davis, 91). As with Gabriel's *Xplora*, The Residents were very instrumental in the development of their CD-Rom, ensuring that it projected the qualities integral to their unique style.

Conclusion

Gabriel's expansion into multimedia experiences, incorporation of non western elements and concerns with humanitarian causes all contribute to his exemplification of a postmodern global performance aesthetic. In the first chapter we established Gabriel's ability to create his own social construction of reality through the medium of pop video performance. His technical creativity evoked the transformative qualities present within the emerging global society.

We were able to observe Gabriel's capacity for appropriating the visual and musical traditions of non western cultures and synthesizing them into a stimulating blend of sight and sound. His respect and appreciation of another culture's music, language or spiritual beliefs, weave their way into Gabriel's artistic process and reveal themselves in the features of his performance. Through his performance, Gabriel exposes negative political constructions of reality which inform the masses and contribute to the gradual construction of a *global* belief system.

In chapter two the "Secret World" tour enabled us to observe Gabriel's ability to externalize his internal emotions through the conventions of postmodern performance. We see the beginnings of Gabriel's intention to create an environment for his audience with the innovative stage design, lighting techniques and rear screen projections. He explores the boundaries of emotional communication, translating them through visual metaphors, revealing a mosaic of global talent through the addition of various artists.

We are able to perceive Gabriel's ability to somehow retain the primitive qualities of ancient tradition while employing the advanced technology of postmodern society. He applies the participatory elements indicative of some non western cultures and adopts a non sexist, feminist stance.

Gabriel's *Xplora* , analyzed in chapter three, attempts to dissolve some of the traditional boundaries between artist and observer. His intention is to allow the viewer to *shape* his or her own experience. Through this examination we found that Gabriel was somewhat successful in providing that *experience* . The limiting factor to the actual interactive or *shaping* capabilities of the user was the reliance on pre-programmed data.

We were able to observe the technical layering imbedded within the structure of the videos and the whole of the CD-Rom. This layering effect contributes to a complexity of meaning which reflects postmodern society's multiple constructions of reality. Gabriel broke free of some of the conventional subject matter within the pop video format and employed the postmodern tendency to manipulate time within a non-linear structure.

We were also able to recognize his ability to create a postmodern performance based on mythological legends and to successfully combine the high-tech with the hand-made. We established that Gabriel's *Mindblender* contained the elements necessary to provide a true multiple sensory experience and observed how Gabriel's humanitarian concerns motivated the formation of "Witness."

In the final chapter we saw how Gabriel's development of WOMAD and Real World transformed traditional cultural barriers while also conforming to many of the conventions of postmodern performance. We observed how

Gabriel's business evolved, how the constructs of a postmodern society enabled the business to stay successful and how the business contained features indicative of his own performance. Finally, we were able to compare some of the other artists who appropriate similar features within their work and to observe how Gabriel's future endeavors may culminate with the "Experience Park."

Gabriel appears committed in his tendencies to embrace and respect the features of non western traditions, and is extraordinary in his ability to combine the natural, organic and hand-made with the futuristic, high-tech and man-made. He creates environments, shapes experiences and forms textured layers of meaning. He is dissolving barriers, merging cultures and building new social constructions of reality. All of these features combine to illustrate how Peter Gabriel exemplifies a postmodern global performance aesthetic.

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