

**SHAMANARCHY:  
THE LIFE AND WORK OF JAMIE MACGREGOR REID**

**VOLUME I**

**VICKI MAGUIRE**

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the  
requirements of Liverpool John Moores University  
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## **Abstract**

Jamie Reid (b.1947) is a British artist most commonly known as art director for the iconic Punk group the Sex Pistols during the mid to late 1970s. In recognition of Reid's continuing influence on contemporary artists and designers, my PhD study is the first and most comprehensive attempt to contextualise Reid's post-1970s practice and to provide a thorough, objective account and overview of his life and work. Drawing on a series of in-depth interviews with Reid, this critical biography will examine Reid's family history and subsequent artistic career, in order to document and analyse the artist's varied influences along with his creative, social and political choices and concerns.

Drawing on a rich and varied artistic career spanning over forty years – encompassing painting, drawing, artwork for the music industry, interior design and immersive environments – this study aims to deconstruct Reid's familiar identity as art director for the Sex Pistols during a relatively brief period during the mid to late 1970s. This will be achieved through an in-depth analysis of the artist's career from the mid-1960s to the present day, with a particular focus on key works produced both before 1976, and from 1980 onwards. The artist's unique working methods will remain a key focus throughout this study, which will trace Reid's development of an idiosyncratic visual vocabulary involving the reuse, recycling and transformation of a collection of techniques, visual motifs and slogans developed over the past forty-five years.

Conventional studies of Reid's work have also tended to locate his practice, involving the use of montage and the amalgamation of text and image, firmly within the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Despite the artist citing his ancestral heritage, particularly his great uncle George Watson McGregor Reid (1862-1946) – post-Edwardian social reformer and head of the Druid Order in England at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century - as a major influence, the impact of this influence upon his practice has so far largely remained undocumented. Demonstrated by projects such as the *Eight Fold Year* and interior design at the Strongroom, East London, it is clear that Reid's work has been significantly influenced by the universal themes of Druidism and the forces of nature. This study therefore seeks to locate Reid's practice within the tradition of English alternative dissent, exploring the influence of George Watson MacGregor Reid and other significant family members, as well as radical figures from the field of art such as William Blake (1757-1827) and William Morris (1834-1896). This study will unearth the enduring themes and concepts underlying Reid's practice, with the artist's spiritual concerns being used to explore alternative directions for the future.

# **Shamanarchy: The Life and Work of Jamie MacGregor Reid**

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**SHAMANARCHY:  
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# Shamanarchy: The Life and Work of Jamie MacGregor Reid

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**PART 2 OF THIS THESIS**

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## Introduction

Despite a rich and varied career spanning over forty years, the British artist Jamie Reid, born in 1947 in Croydon, Surrey, remains inescapably defined by his iconic work produced for the Sex Pistols during a relatively brief period in the late 1970s. Reid is perhaps best known for his appropriation of a Cecil Beaton photograph of Queen Elizabeth II, used to promote the Sex Pistols' single *God Save the Queen* which was released on 27<sup>th</sup> May 1977 to coincide with the Queen's Silver Jubilee celebrations. With technological advances rendering record cover design a dying art, Reid's Sex Pistols artwork is increasingly celebrated and perhaps also fetishised by both design historians and record collectors as iconic works, thus isolating Reid in relation to a cultural moment in history, which in turn reinforces his status as a commercial graphic designer rather than an artist.

With Punk nostalgia showing no signs of abating after more than thirty years, Reid's artistic practice - encompassing painting, drawing, sculpture, interior design, immersive environments, and artwork for political causes – remains in danger of becoming sidelined. Drawing upon a series of four original, in-depth first-hand interviews with the artist, as well as the wealth of archived material from *England's Dreaming: The Jon Savage Archive*, located in the Special Collections of Liverpool John Moores University, this study has sought to deconstruct the identity of Reid as art director for the Sex Pistols, analysing his practice as one body of work from the early 1960s up until the present day and repositioning him within the context of English radical dissent, where both the political and spiritual aspects of Reid's practice may be viewed as attempts to explore positive alternative directions for the future. or the most part, critical

analysis of Reid's practice has lacked any significant discussion of Reid's visual vocabulary, in which Reid's commercial work such as his output for the Sex Pistols does not stand alone but represents part of a greater idiosyncratic artistic language or vocabulary in which certain motifs are reconfigured, reconstructed and applied in turn to new projects. This study seeks to document this highly important aspect of Reid's methodology.

Cultural historians such as Jon Savage, writing in *England's Dreaming* (1991), have also tended to locate Reid's practice and his use of montage and détournement firmly within the 20<sup>th</sup> century. However, as demonstrated by projects such as the *Eight Fold Year* project and interior design at the Strongroom, East London, it is clear that Reid's work has also been influenced by the enduring themes of Druidism and the forces of nature. Despite the artist himself citing his ancestral heritage, particularly his great uncle George Watson McGregor Reid – post-Edwardian social reformer and head of the Druid Order in England at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century - as a major influence, the impact of this influence upon his practice has so far largely remained undocumented. The aim of my first chapter therefore, is to reassess Reid's body of work from the past forty years, locating it within the framework of a politicised practice that can be traced back to Reid's family background and attitudes towards politics and religion, suggesting that there are enduring themes and concepts underlying Reid's practice.

Chapter Two explores the theme of 1960s left-wing radicalism and counterculture in relation to its impact upon Reid's practice, focussing in particular on the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND), including a discussion of Reid's brother Bruce's role as press officer for the Committee of



100. The chapter then moves on to examine the cultural and social aspects of CND, in particular the role played by contemporary popular music in the anti-nuclear movement. The emergence of early rock 'n' roll music is then discussed in relation to its impact upon the teenage years of both Reid and Malcolm McLaren, and how this influence manifested itself within the Sex Pistols project.

Chapter Three moves on to document Reid's time spent at art college during the 1960s; namely Wimbledon College of Art (1962 to 1964) and Croydon College of Art (1964 to 1968), tracing the emergence of many of Reid's reoccurring themes and visual motifs. This chapter will place Reid's practice within the context of radical British painting of the 1960s, including the work of ex-Croydon fine art tutors Bridget Riley and John Hoyland. The chapter then goes on to explore the friendship between Reid and Malcolm McLaren and the sit-in they organised at Croydon in 1968, placing it within the context of British student occupation and the influence of the Situationist International.

Chapter Four will explore how Reid and McLaren's art school training, along with their experience of radical politics and student revolt at Croydon during the late 1960s, led to the two friends exploring different modes of creative resistance in the years that followed. The chapter will discuss the founding of Suburban Press in 1970 by Reid, Jeremy Brook and Nigel Edwards, along with an examination of some of Reid's most important projects and visual imagery from this time, which provides a critique of new British suburban towns and the corrupt nature of local government. This will be followed by an investigation into McLaren and Westwood's series of influential and iconic clothing shops created during the 1970s, a project which would eventually lead to the formation of a new band named the Sex Pistols.

Chapter Five analyses the essential part Reid played as art director for the Sex Pistols from 1976 to 1979. This chapter will examine Reid's role in detail, tracing the beginnings of the Sex Pistols project and the development of Reid's distinctive cut-and-paste technique and ransom note lettering that became synonymous with the band, including many examples of visual motifs and slogans drawn from Reid's days at Suburban Press (1970-1975). The chapter will also bring to light a number of the artist's earliest works for the band as well as preliminary or working versions of iconic single and album covers, and will also explore some examples of how the music industry and national press reacted to both the band and Reid's accompanying promotional material.

Finally, Chapter Six shall provide a thorough analysis of Reid's post-Sex Pistols work from the early 1980s to the present day - including commercial projects, artwork produced for the music industry, solo and group exhibitions and artwork for political causes - in which the reuse and recycling of past motifs, images and phrases is continuously evident, illustrating Reid's prolific output during this period and providing evidence of his continuing relevance as a visual artist in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## Literature Review

Whilst any writer is yet to produce a definitive survey of Reid's artistic career, at present one book, Jon Savage's *Up They Rise: The Incomplete Works of Jamie Reid* (1987), remains the standard guide for researchers in this field. Written in collaboration with Reid, the book contains useful biographical information which provided a starting point for more in-depth research and a series of original interviews with the artist. However, the most obvious limitation of *Up They Rise* is the fact that it was written 23 years ago; Reid's practice from 1987 to the present day remains largely undocumented, a situation which my study seeks to rectify. Therefore it is important to regard *Up They Rise* not as a definitive survey, but merely a snapshot of Reid's practice both pre- and post-Sex Pistols, spanning work produced during art college in the late 1960s to collaborations with former partner Margi Clarke in the early 1980s.

This study makes the claim that the artist's desire for social and political change - epitomised by his work for the Sex Pistols – is part of a wider story, intrinsically linked to the need for spiritual change explored in the rest of his practice. This approach has required research into Reid's ancestral links with Druidism, most notably an examination of the life of his great uncle George Watson MacGregor Reid. Primary research was conducted in the form of original interviews with the artist on this subject. An original poem entitled *The Shrine*, written by MacGregor Reid in 1922, was also located, going some way towards illustrating his spiritual beliefs.

Aside from this, the most detailed source relating to MacGregor Reid is the biography *Universal Majesty, Verity and Love Infinite* (2005) written by Adam Stout, a Research Fellow in Archaeology at the University of Wales,

Lampeter. An edited version of the biography appeared again in Stout's *Creating Prehistory: Druids, Ley Hunters and Archaeologists in Pre-war Britain* (2008), a book which places MacGregor Reid within the wider context of pre-war Britain's fascination with the ancient past and the creation of the discipline of archaeology. Stout's *Creating Prehistory* (2008), along with *The Druids* (2007) which is written by the Professor of History Ronald Hutton, also provided reproductions of original photographs of MacGregor Reid at Stonehenge. A significant primary source used in this chapter was the book *In the Heart of Democracy*, written by Reid's maternal grandfather Robert Gardner in 1909, which illustrates how the themes of socialist politics and alternative religion have manifested themselves over subsequent generations of the Reid family.

My research into Reid's influences from the realms of art and political history such as William Blake and William Morris - cited by Reid in interviews - has been aided by books such as Geoffrey Ashe's *The Offbeat Radicals* (2007), which discusses both Blake and Morris in the context of British radical dissent, and Peter Ackroyd's *Blake* (1995) which links the work of Blake to the 18<sup>th</sup> century Druid Revival.

When documenting Reid's links to CND and the Aldermaston marches as a child during the late 1950s and early 1960s, new interviews with the artist were supplemented with sources which contained first-hand accounts from key figures of the period wherever possible. Most notably these included Jonathon Green's *Days in the Life: Voices from the English Underground 1961-1971* (1988), an extensive collection of original interviews with important countercultural figures of the 1960s. *Guardian* journalist Christopher Driver's *The Disarmers: A Study in Protest* (1964) was also notable in providing an account of the purpose of

Bruce Reid's visit to Moscow as press officer for the Committee of 100 in 1962. Lindsay Anderson's Free Cinema documentary film *March to Aldermaston* (1959) provided original footage with which to compare secondary accounts of the events, as well as bringing to life the social and cultural aspects of the anti-nuclear movement. Other sources to do this were Jeff Nuttall's *Bomb Culture* (1968), George McKay's *Circular Breathing: The Cultural Politics of Jazz in Britain* (2005) and Colin Irwin's *Observer Music Monthly* article 'Power to the People' (2008), which documents the role played by folk music within the anti-nuclear movement. With regards to McLaren and Reid's interest in early rock 'n' roll music, Nik Cohn's *Awopbopalooobop Alopbamboom: Pop from the Beginning* (2004) [1969], though criticised at the time of publication for its lack of supporting evidence, remains significant in the fact that it represents one of the first major examples of rock criticism.

Reid's art school experience of 1962 to 1968 was explored through my original interviews with the artist. These were supported by an overview of British art school teaching of the 1960s, sourced from first-hand accounts such as those in Green's *Days in the Life: Voices from the English Underground 1961-1971* (1988), as well as John A. Walker's *Cross-Overs: Art into Pop, Pop into Art* (1987). Jon Savage's *England's Dreaming* (2005) [1991], along with the interviews contained within *The England's Dreaming Tapes* (2009), were also instrumental in providing key accounts of Reid and McLaren's 1968 student occupation at Croydon College of Art. My background knowledge of the theories of the Situationist International, acquired during the completion of my MRes thesis *The Impact and Legacy of the Situationist International in Britain and the US* in 2007, was developed through a familiarisation with key Situationist texts,

conducted using sources such as Guy Debord's *Society of the Spectacle* (1992) [1967], Ken Knabb's *Situationist International Anthology* (1981) and Christopher Gray's *Leaving the 20<sup>th</sup> Century* (1974), the latter being the first English language anthology of Situationist texts.

The founding of Suburban Press in 1970 was documented through original interviews with the artist, coupled with those found in Savage's *The England's Dreaming Tapes* (2009), which contain a rare interview with Sophie Richmond. Instrumental to this chapter was my access to a set of six original issues of *Suburban Press* magazine (1970-1975) through *England's Dreaming: The Jon Savage Archive*, which provided vital first appearances of important motifs from Reid's own visual vocabulary. I was able to cross-reference Reid's images from *Suburban Press* with those featured in the original edition of Gray's *Leaving the 20<sup>th</sup> Century* (1974) and in an original copy of the Sex Pistols' *Anarchy in the UK* magazine (1976), for which Reid designed the layout. With reference to McLaren and Westwood's activities at 430 Kings Road, Savage's *England's Dreaming* (2005) [1991] and essays by Savage and Jane Withers in Taylor, Paul (ed.) *Impresario: Malcolm McLaren & the British New Wave* (1988) provided key first-hand accounts, whilst Colegrave & Sullivan's *Punk: A Life Apart* (2001) contained important photographic documentation of the period.

The essential role Reid played as art director for the Sex Pistols was explored through original interviews with the artist, taking as their starting point the information included in Reid & Savage's *Up They Rise* (1987), which features reproductions of early and discarded versions of Reid's Sex Pistols artwork. Wherever possible, the original versions of such images were sourced in *England's Dreaming: The Jon Savage Archive*, which also proved instrumental

in providing other primary source material including the original transcript for the *Never Mind The Bollocks* court case of November 1977. As in previous chapters, Savage's *England's Dreaming* (2005) [1991] and *The England's Dreaming Tapes* (2009) provided detailed documentation of the Sex Pistols' releases and Reid's accompanying artwork, as well as management disputes and line-up changes. As a cultural historian, Savage approaches the subject almost anthropologically. This approach can be contrasted with that of another key source in relation to this chapter, Fred & Judy Vermorel's *Sex Pistols: The Inside Story* (1978), of which Sophie Richmond's personal diary formed the narrative spine. The book was one of the very first definitive guides to the Sex Pistols formed from first-hand interviews and accounts, written in 1978 when the band were still in existence. The authors' methodology can be said to differ from that of Savage; *Sex Pistols: The Inside Story* (1978) can be viewed as a vital example of contemporary reportage, rather than an historical survey. The wealth of journal articles located in *England's Dreaming: The Jon Savage Archive* from the period 1975 to 1980 has helped to position Reid's Sex Pistols artwork within the wider context of the Punk era.

Whilst an extremely valuable resource, the large number of articles relating to the Sex Pistols and Punk located within *England's Dreaming: The Jon Savage Archive* simultaneously served to indicate the distinct lack of detailed documentation relating to all other facets of the artist's practice over the past 40 years. This hurdle was overcome in a number of ways, first by conducting a detailed search for exhibition catalogues produced over this time, for either solo or group exhibitions involving the artist; most notably *Celtic Surveyor: More Incomplete Works of Jamie Reid* (1989) which accompanied the touring

exhibition of the same name. My final chapter was also the one in which my series original interviews with Reid proved most vital. As the artist does not keep any significant record of his past activities, my interviews have enabled me to compile a detailed chronology of key exhibitions, collaborations and other projects relating to the artist from the period 1980 to 2010, building upon the chronology provided by Stuart Borthwick and Brian Jones on the website of John Marchant's Isis Gallery (<http://www.isigallery.org>). My final chapter in particular draws upon a wide selection of journal articles, particularly exhibition reviews from critics such as Neil Mulholland ('Guaranteed Disappointment: Punk Graphic Design at the Festival Hall' in *Variant*, Issue 5, Vol. 2, Spring 1998, p. 4-6), Teal Triggs ('Safety Pins and Letraset', in *Eye*, Vol. 2, no. 6, 1992, p. 82-83) and Meyer Raphael Rubinstein ('A Countercultural Didacticism and Partnership of Noise: John Cage and Jamie Reid', in *Arts Magazine*, v. 61, Dec 1986, p.48 -49), some of the only existing reviews of Reid's work in a gallery setting.

My documentation of Reid's exhibitions taking place during the 1980s and 1990s was greatly assisted by the archives of both the Brixton Art Gallery (<http://www.brixton50.co.uk>) and Jump Ship Rat (<http://www.jumpshiprat.org>), as well as by original exhibition proposals sourced in *England's Dreaming: The Jon Savage Archive*. Information relating to Reid's collaborations with galleries during the period 2000-2010, along with related exhibitions, was provided by the websites of both the Aquarium Gallery (now L-13) (<http://www.l-13.org>) and the Isis Gallery (<http://www.isigallery.org>). I was also greatly assisted in the compilation of my chronology by Reid's website *The Art of Jamie Reid*, archived on <http://www.chipwork.com>, which also contains images of rarely-seen works



and ephemera from Reid's time with the Sex Pistols, including a great number of items from Reid's personal collection. Further discussion of my series of original interviews with Reid, along with the significance of *England's Dreaming: The Jon Savage Archive* in relation to this study, can be found in the methodology.

## **Methodology**

With the exception of Reid and Jon Savage's 1987 book entitled *Up They Rise: The Incomplete Works of Jamie Reid* and a limited number of journal articles, Reid's work of the past 23 years remains largely undocumented and the artist is more commonly referenced in the context of his role as art director for the Sex Pistols during the mid to late 1970s. Considering the prolific amount of work he still produces and the significant influence he continues to exert over British cultural life, the need for a new, updated dialogue with Reid's practice which acknowledges this fact and which brings Reid's rich and varied pre- and post-1970s career under analysis is a vital one.

In recognition of Reid's continuing influence on contemporary artists, my PhD study is the first and most comprehensive attempt to contextualise Reid's post-1970s practice and to provide a thorough, objective chronological account and overview of his work, including his initial involvement with student politics in the 1960s and his present day engagement with alternative spirituality. Taking into account Reid's long-standing relationship with researchers at the Liverpool School of Art and Design and the city of Liverpool itself, having resided in the city since the early 1980s, it is fitting that this valuable research be undertaken in a location that continues to play such an important part in Reid's life and career. The research provides a standard reference for future researchers in the field.

My 2007 MRes thesis, entitled *The Impact and Legacy of the Situationist International in Britain and the US*, has provided a sound basis for doctoral study. The Situationist International was a European avant-garde group of intellectuals whose approach to media and politics exerted a great

influence on Reid's work. This MRes research formed a starting point from which to explore the artist's pre-Sex Pistols artwork and initial engagement with Situationist concepts – a vital component of the critical biography.

This study draws upon a series of four original, in-depth, first-hand interviews with the artist, conducted in August 2007, January 2008, June 2008 and December 2009. My August 2007 interview was conducted at the Hahnemann Building, Liverpool School of Art and Design, whilst subsequent interviews were conducted at Reid's home in Toxteth, Liverpool. Each interview lasted approximately one to one and a half hours. My interviews have crucially enabled me to identify key themes, trends and concerns within Reid's work, establishing new areas of research to be explored and supported with additional primary and secondary source material. These have including the influence of Reid's socialist family background and its links to Druidism, and an in-depth discussion of a number of Reid's previously undocumented projects from the late 1980s to the present day.

In preparation for these interviews, background research on recording oral history was necessary in order to improve skills such as listening critically, understanding motivation, bias and strategies, and building an awareness of the process of mythmaking in the context of biographical writing. This process was aided by book such as Paul Thompson's *The Voice of the Past: Oral History* (2000) and V.R. Yow's *Recording Oral History: A Practical Guide for Social Scientists* (1994). This series of new interviews with Reid have enabled me to gain an overview of his career to date, allowing me to create an extensive chronology of past artwork, exhibitions and other projects. I have placed this chronology within a timeline of events [See Appendix 1] which

places Reid's practice within a wider framework of contemporary world events and key moments in cultural and social history.

Another significant primary source was my correspondence with an original member of King Mob, David Wise, who sent me a number of original articles written specifically for me with the aim of dispelling some of the myths surrounding King Mob and the Situationist International – most notably an account of Malcolm McLaren's involvement in the King Mob Selfridges incident of 1968 [See Appendices 10-12].

In addition to my original interviews with Reid, and the books, journal articles and other secondary sources documented in my literature review, I shall also be drawing upon a wealth of primary source materials from *England's Dreaming: The Jon Savage Archive*, which forms part of the Special Collections at Liverpool John Moores University. As a researcher I have had privileged unlimited access to the archive, with the majority of its contents having never before been utilised by researchers. The archive contains original posters, flyers, fanzines, letters, and photographs, as well as magazines, articles, and other documents relating to Reid and the Sex Pistols. The archive also contains source material which places the Sex Pistols in the context of the Punk era as a whole, and which refers to Reid's later projects from the early 1980s. In addition, the archive contains source material relating to the Situationist International, a vital influence on both Reid and McLaren. Some of these sources, including exhibition proposals and court case transcripts, appear here for the very first time. These sources include rare original copies of Reid's *Suburban Press* magazine (1970-75) which, along with my first-hand interviews, have proved one of the most significant resources relating to Reid.

This study has also been assisted by my research for *The Art School Dance: Art into Pop, Pop into Art*, a symposium hosted by Tate Liverpool in collaboration with the Liverpool School of Art & Design from 21<sup>st</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2007. I appeared in conversation with Jamie Reid, discussing his collaborations with musicians and his designs for the interior of the Strongroom in East London. This discussion served as an introduction to key themes within the artist's work. Over the course of this study I have been in dialogue with Reid's London gallerists John Marchant and Steve Lowe, to keep informed of Reid's latest projects. My research has also been supplemented with visits to key London sites such as the Strongroom, the Aquarium Gallery and Isis Gallery in order to view a number of Reid's solo exhibitions. In addition I have also visited Reid's own studio at his home in Toxteth, Liverpool, in order to take documentary photographs.

Throughout the study I have revisited key texts including my 2007 MRes research material, and online resources including Reid's archived website at <http://www.chipwork.com>, constantly liaising with the artist to ensure accuracy whilst also maintaining a critical approach to the biography. The thesis is accompanied by my own collection of original interview transcripts and a comprehensive chronology of Reid's career to date. In addition, the transcripts and chronology are complemented by an extensive visual reference containing every image of Reid's work featured in the thesis, the most comprehensive attempt to document Reid's practice from the mid-1960s to the present day. The thesis and accompanying visual materials provide a standard reference for future researchers in the field.

## **Chapter 1**

### **Time for Magic**

“The world may hate, -  
But what of that?  
The Spirit Sings.”

(George Watson MacGregor Reid, undated.)

Conventional studies of the artist Jamie Reid have tended to locate his practice, involving the use of montage and détournement, firmly within the 20<sup>th</sup> century. However, drawing on a series of new interviews conducted with the artist over the last three years as part of this study, this chapter argues that Reid’s practice as a whole is in fact the product of a range of influences, encompassing alternative belief systems - namely Druidism - and radical political views held by a number of the artist’s ancestors. As Reid explained to Savage in 1987:

Both my parents have given me so much. The whole family is steeped in a kind of spiritual socialism, and the older I get, the more I realise how much they have given and are still giving me: a love of people, especially, and their huge potential (of which we still have only an inkling) and a great love of nature and the environment.  
(Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 7).

At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Reid’s great uncle George Watson MacGregor Reid would become enamoured with Druidism, becoming leader of the Druid Order in England in the period directly preceding the First World War. Druidism was believed to have been the ancient British representation or embodiment of the biblical concept of an original true and universal faith, a stance taken up by many 19<sup>th</sup> century writers (Hutton, 2007). Druidism has its roots in the culture and mythology of Western Europe, particularly those cultures

known as Celtic<sup>1</sup>, and according to Philip Carr-Gomm was first recorded in the writings of Julius Caesar around 50 BCE (Carr-Gomm, 2006).

The Druid faith had undergone a revival in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, a process which may be attributed to the iconic Welsh neo-Druid Iolo Morganwg<sup>2</sup>, whose writings drawn from Welsh folklore and literature - particularly the *Gorsedd* or *Druid's Prayer* [See fig. 1.1] - can be said to have provided much of the inspiration for Druidism as it exists in the modern era (Carr-Gomm, 2006). The Druid Revival, according to Carr-Gomm, “began as the influence of the Enlightenment encouraged enquiry and diminished the necessity to conform with Church doctrines” (Carr-Gomm, 2006, p. 16). This was aided by the development of printing, which made classical texts on the ancient Druids more readily accessible. Eighteenth century scholars saw the ancient Druids as the elite guardians of an indigenous pre-Christian religion, which soon became associated with the many mysterious ancient monuments scattered around the British Isles (Carr-Gomm, 2006); this association was carried on by MacGregor Reid’s decision to worship at Stonehenge in Wiltshire with the Universal Bond from 1912 onwards, more of which is discussed later in this chapter.

Unlike many other religions, Druidism can be defined by a lack of any fixed doctrines, practices or sacred texts. However, all Druids can be said to

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<sup>1</sup> Celtic is a term used to describe territories in North-West Europe in which that area's own Celtic languages and cultural traits have survived. These stretch from Ireland and parts of Portugal in the west to France, Switzerland and Austria in the east. The six territories recognised as Celtic nations are Brittany (Breizh), Cornwall (Kernow), Ireland (Éire), Isle of Man (Mannin), Scotland (Alba), and Wales (Cymru). Limitation to these six is sometimes disputed by people from Asturias and Galicia. Until the expansions of the Roman Republic and Germanic tribes, a large part of Europe was mainly Celtic.

<sup>2</sup> Edward Williams (1747-1826) was and remains better known by his bardic name, Iolo Morganwg. As his bardic name suggests, Iolo was a native of Glamorgan, and it is this county and its history that became the focal point of his bardic vision. He is also considered an architect of the Welsh nation on the strength of his contribution to the 18<sup>th</sup> century cultural renaissance. He upheld Wales's reputation as a civil nation in Bardism and the *Gorsedd* of the Bards. He was also the first to suggest that Wales should have its own national institutions: a Library, Academy, Museum and Folk Museum.

share a belief in the fundamentally spiritual nature of life, a tolerance for diversity, and a sense of the natural world as divine or sacred (Hutton, 2007). As Carr-Gomm, leader of the order of Bards, Ovates & Druids, explains:

At the heart of Druidism lies a love of Nature and her changing face as the seasons turn. Eight times a year, once every six weeks or so, Druids participate in a celebration that expresses this devotion to the natural world... The purpose of celebrating the eight seasonal festivals is to create a pattern or rhythm in our year...so we can open to the magic of being alive on earth at this special time.  
(Carr-Gomm, 2006, p. 66-70).

Much of the modern Pagan<sup>3</sup> movement, including Druidism, can be said have been influenced by Robert Graves' book *The White Goddess* (1948), which claimed to have discovered a Druidic calendar based around the cycle of nature. Graves attempts to deconstruct the earliest religions, especially those dealing with the mother-goddess and nature worship, primarily through ancient poetic stories. Graves admitted he was not a medieval historian, but a poet, and thus stated:

My thesis is that the language of poetic myth anciently current in the Mediterranean and Northern Europe was a magical language bound up with popular religious ceremonies in honour of the Moon-goddess, or Muse, some of them dating from the Old Stone Age, and that this remains the language of true poetry...  
(Graves, 1959 [1948], p. 9).

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<sup>3</sup> Paganism describes a group of contemporary religions based on a reverence for nature. These faiths draw on the traditional religions of indigenous peoples throughout the world. Paganism encompasses a diverse community, which includes Wiccans, Druids, Shamans, Sacred Ecologists, Odinists and Heathens. Some groups concentrate on specific traditions or practices such as ecology, witchcraft, Celtic traditions or certain gods. Most Pagans share an ecological vision that comes from the Pagan belief in the organic vitality and spirituality of the natural world. Due to persecution and misrepresentation it is necessary to define what Pagans are not as well as what they are. Pagans are not sexual deviants, do not worship the devil, are not evil, do not practice 'black magic' and their practices do not involve harming people or animals. The Pagan Federation of Great Britain have no precise figures but estimate that the number of Pagans in the British Isles is between 50,000 and 200,000 (2002).



An early (undated) work by Reid [See fig. 1.2] references Graves' book directly, and depicts the White Goddess playing the violin, lamenting the skyscrapers and office blocks of the newly-redeveloped Croydon which have destroyed the natural environment. This indicates that the artist's interest in Druidic folklore and what he calls our "wonderful planet" (<http://www.isisgallery.org>) has proved integral to his practice throughout the decades. As Reid explains:

I suppose on one level there is that element in the majority of my stuff which tends to be around painting of photography...There's an appreciation...a great element of beauty in it, just seeing the magnificence of things. And there's obviously that other element, the political element ... I don't see any contradiction in the two. (<http://www.isisgallery.org>).

This quote illustrates the fact that the emphasis of Reid's work fluctuates between the spiritual to the political, signifying that Reid views his practice as one body of work which attempts to explore alternative directions for the future; the tensions between the spiritual and the political in Reid's practice are explored further in Chapter 6.

The "wheel of existence" (Graves, 1959 [1948], p. 193) referenced by Graves in *The White Goddess* (1959) [1948] was developed by modern Druids into the Wheel of the Year [See fig. 1.3]. According to the Druid belief system there are eight festivals which divide the Wheel of the Year, each with its own celebration, with occurrences approximately every six weeks. These include solstices, equinoxes, and the four major points in the turning of the Wheel, (Autumn, Winter, Spring, & Summer). The four elements - Earth, Air, Fire, and Water - are also celebrated individually throughout the year at the various festivals (Carr-Gomm, 2006).

These Druidic cycles are often referenced by Reid, as in his interior design for the Strongroom [See figs. 6.42 to 6.46] and in a 1998 series of paintings entitled *The Four Elements* [See figs. 1.4 to 1.7]. A solo exhibition entitled *Peace is Tough*, held at Jump Ship Rat in Parr Street, Liverpool in 2001, featured paintings, sculptures and installations inspired by his Druidic ancestry, some from as far back as 1968. As illustrated by figs. 6.60 to 6.64, the majority of Reid's paintings in this exhibition are heavily influenced by the natural world and often feature references to the Druidic Wheel of the Year, in particular through Reid's use of eight-point stars and circular motifs [See fig. 6.61].

These themes and influences are repeated in a number of Reid's other major projects, most notably the *Eight Fold Year*, a massive body of work representing an ongoing exploration of the Druid Wheel of the Year and the four elements through a series of 365 paintings [See figs. 1.8 to 1.10], as well as drawings and photographs [See fig. 1.11] taken by Jamie and his wife Maria on their many journeys throughout the British Isles and beyond, undertaken at various key times of year. The images range from depictions of birds, trees, mountains, rivers and the geometry of the natural world, to more abstract motifs of primal expression. They are described on Reid's archived website as representing

Themes that resonate and echo those of William Blake, amongst others; life looked at from the cellular or organic level, to the universal and spiritual heights - themes that have occupied the human state for literally, thousands of years.  
(<http://www.chipwork.com>).

The influence of the radical 18<sup>th</sup> century artist and poet William Blake (1757-1827) is one acknowledged by the artist, who in a 2008 interview describes the

inspiration for his paintings as “like with Blake: ‘See the world in a grain of sand<sup>4</sup>...’ sort of syndrome” (Maguire, Dec 2008). Reid also talks about the profound effect “all the Blakes at Millbank in the Tate” had on him on his first visit to the gallery as a teenager, intrigued by the mystical worlds they depicted (Maguire, June 2008).

Aside from his prophetic books such as *Songs of Innocence* (1789) and *Songs of Experience* (1794) [See fig. 1.12] in which his poetry and artwork exist together, Blake is perhaps most commonly known as the author of the untitled poem (c.1804) which was set to music by Hubert Parry in 1916 and became known as *Jerusalem*. As Geoffrey Ashe explains in *The Offbeat Radicals: The British Tradition of Alternative Dissent* (2007), Blake’s lifetime coincided with the 18<sup>th</sup> Century Antiquarian speculation about Britain’s ancient past and the newly-fashionable status bestowed upon Druidism by 18<sup>th</sup> century scholars. As Ashe notes, “Over the years, Blake made use of their theories in his invented mythology, which, under scrutiny, explains the rest of the ‘Jerusalem’ poem. It also reveals his highly original radicalism” (Ashe, 2007, p. 47). The influence of the Druid Revival on Blake is explicitly evident in the 1804 poem known as *Jerusalem*, which contains the line “All Things Begin & End in Albion’s Ancient Druid Rocky Shore” (Blake, c.1804). In addition, Peter Ackroyd notes that the figure of Joseph of Arimathea depicted in Blake’s earliest piece of apprentice work was taken in part from the image of a Druid to be found in William Stukeley’s *Stonehenge: A Temple Restored to the British Druids* (1740)

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<sup>4</sup> To see a World in a Grain of Sand,  
And heaven in a Wild Flower,  
Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand.  
And Eternity in an hour.  
Blake, William (1789) *Auguries of Innocence*.

(Ackroyd, 1995). Ackroyd also explains that in 1781 a London carpenter and builder named Henry Hurle had founded the Ancient Order of Druids in a London ale-house just a few yards from Blake's future home at No. 28 Poland Street<sup>5</sup>, Soho (Ackroyd, 1995).

Reid picks up on this connection between Blake and the Druid Order<sup>6</sup> in a 2008 interview; he explains: "That was the thing then with the Druid Order, it was very politically involved as well. It touches on such deep things in English traditions - people like Thomas Paine, William Blake..." (Maguire, Jan 2008). Both Ashe's *Offbeat Radicals* (2007) and Peter Marshall's essay *William Blake: Revolutionary Romantic* (1999) attempt to recontextualise Blake within the tradition of British radical dissent, bringing to light the significance of his social roots and political commitment. As Marshall explains, "it is the main argument of this essay that the social and the spiritual aspects of Blake are inextricably woven... Indeed, his unique attraction lies precisely in the fact that he combined the spiritual and political with what we would today call the ecological" (Marshall in Blechman, 1999, p. 40).

It is Blake's combination of the political, spiritual and ecological which has proved to be an attraction for many contemporary artists, musicians and writers including the author Philip Pullman, who contributed an article on Blake, entitled 'An English Visionary', to the *New Statesman* in 1996 (Pullman, 1996, p.

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<sup>5</sup> William and Catherine Blake lived at 28 Poland Street from 1785 to 1791. The street also has a connection to the Sex Pistols; in 1975 Siouxsie Sioux introduced the band to Louise's, a lesbian nightclub situated on 61 Poland Street. As Marco Pirroni recalls, "This was the real underground; these were the real misfits. It was extremely decadent. It reminded me of Berlin in the '30s..." (Pirroni in Colegrave & Sullivan, 2001, p. 145).

<sup>6</sup> This connection is also discussed in Ziegelman, Lois (1983) 'Blake, The Druids and the Regeneration of Generation', in *Studies in Literature* (West Harvard CT), Vol. 15 Part 1, 1983, p. 13-32; Fisher, Peter F. (1959) 'Blake and the Druids', in *Journal of English & Germanic Philology*, Vol. 58, 1959, p. 589-612 and Adlard, John (1967) 'The Annandale Druids: A Blake Crux', in *Notes and Queries*, Vol. 14, January 1967, pp. 19-20.

70-72). Pullman's article also featured contributions from others who have drawn on Blake as a source of inspiration. These included the musician Patti Smith, who became a highly influential component of the New York Punk movement with her 1975 debut album *Horses*. She states, "Responding to injustice in the world through songs is something I learnt from a Blake at a very early age. That's one debt I owe him..." (Smith in Pullman, 2006, p. 70). Since the 1960s, Blake has come to be identified as a radical incarnation of liberation, most notably by the poet Allen Ginsberg<sup>7</sup>, whose 1955 poem *Sunflower Sutra* contained the lines:

I rushed up enchanted – it was my first  
Sunflower, memories of Blake – my visions...  
(Ginsberg, 1955).

The poem was inspired in part by Blake's *Ah, Sunflower* (1793). As Colin Trodd explains, musicians such as Jah Wobble "have identified [Blake] as a global spirit of the imagination, a sign of creative freedom standing outside and against all systems of authority and control" (Trodd, 2008, p. 18). Jah Wobble, otherwise known as John Wardle, is a long-time friend of the Sex Pistols' John Lydon and was the original bass player in the band Public Image Limited. In 1996 he released *The Inspiration of William Blake*, which featured Blake's words against an atmospheric soundscape (<http://www.30hertzrecords.com>). The Kinks' Ray Davies, who enrolled at Croydon College of Art in 1963 - a year before Reid – also cites Blake as a major influence, with Blake's *God Writing upon the Tables*

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<sup>7</sup> Allen Ginsberg (1926-1997) was an American poet and a leading figure of the 1950s Beat Generation, a group depicted in his epic poem *Howl* (1956) which is regarded as one of the seminal works of the era. Ginsberg vigorously opposed militarism, materialism and sexual repression. *Howl* was originally written as a performance piece, but it was later published by poet Lawrence Ferlinghetti of City Lights Books. The poem was originally considered to be obscene, and Ferlinghetti was arrested and charged with its publication.

*of the Covenant* (1805) [See fig. 1.13] forming the cover design for the 2009 album *The Kinks Choral Collection* [See fig. 1.14], featuring Davies and the Crouch End Festival Chorus (<http://www.avclub.com>). Davies explains his choice of cover art, stating:

As the record was all made in North London, around Hampstead and Highgate and Muswell Hill, it was a natural inclusion, William Blake. I've referred to him in other work I've done in the past. In "20th Century Man," I sang about what has become of the green pleasant fields of Jerusalem. I'm a bit of a fan of him. He was wacky, slightly oddball, considered to be mad, even today. So I thought he was appropriate for this project.  
(<http://www.avclub.com>).

The influence of William Blake on Ray Davies is explored further by Michael J. Kraus in his 2006 article for *Popular Music and Society*, 'The Greatest Rock Star of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century: Ray Davies, Romanticism, and the Art of Being English'. Kraus explains: "If Blake pairs lambs and tygers, Davies pairs purely pastoral village greens with corrupt industrialized zones. Both writers, in effect, compose songs of innocence and experience" (Kraus, 2006, p. 204). He goes on to explain why Davies may be regarded as "the greatest rock star of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century" (Kraus, 2006, p. 201), drawing similarities between Blake and Davies' development of a personal mythology in order to escape from systems of convention. I would suggest that, like the lyricist Davies, Reid also "ultimately exists in a world of his own making" (Kraus, 2006, p. 204), and similarly defies classification.

It is Davies' interpretation of Blake as a combination of mystical seer and anti-establishment activist that appears to have drawn such 20<sup>th</sup> century figures to his life and work, not least Reid. Reid also acknowledges the fact that the political aspect of Blake's life and work has often been overlooked, stating:

“That’s the thing with William Blake, you know. He’s seen as this sort of mad prophet, but in fact he was incredibly involved with all sorts of different people” (Maguire, Jan 2008). These included Thomas Paine<sup>8</sup>, an international revolutionary seen as personifying the political currents that linked American independence, the French Revolution, and British radicalism. In Britain, Paine earned the distinction of being the most widely-read of the radical pamphleteers of the 1790s, as well as being the one whose works were most often prosecuted. According to Ackroyd, it has been suggested that Blake warned Paine “to leave the country at the height of the Jacobin<sup>9</sup> scares of the 1790s” (Ackroyd, 1995, p. 86).

Reid appears to hold a particular interest in figures such as Blake and Paine, as well as the Romantic<sup>10</sup> poets, whom he sees as having been compartmentalised by history. As he explains in a 2008 interview:

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<sup>8</sup> Thomas Paine (1737-1809) was a driving force in the ‘Atlantic-Democratic revolution’ of the late 18th century. His *Common Sense* (1776) was the most widely-read pamphlet of the American Revolution, whilst his *Rights of Man* (1791-2) became the most famous defence of the French Revolution. Its success, coupled with the rise of a popular movement for political reform in Britain and Paine’s unrepentant *Letter Addressed to the Addressers* (1792) resulted in his being outlawed. A year later, as a deputy to the National Convention in France, he fell foul of the Jacobins and was imprisoned. He was released at the end of 1794 and went on to write *Dissertation on the First Principles of Government* (1795) and *Agrarian Justice* (1796), which develop still further his earlier arguments for an egalitarian yet liberal democratic order.

<sup>9</sup> The Jacobins were members of the Société des Jacobins, which acted as a parliamentary pressure group, agreeing on the line which should be followed in the Assembly. From late 1792 the club was dominated by the left, and became intimately associated with the Terror, the period of violence that occurred for one year and one month after the onset of the French Revolution, incited by conflict between rival political factions. The term ‘jacobin’ was deployed by British loyalists as a slur on English radicals from early in 1793.

<sup>10</sup> The generation of Romantic poets who came after Blake, principally among them Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834) and William Wordsworth (1770-1850), helped to redefine the concept of nature as a healing and spiritual force. They were the first to recognise the redemptive powers of the natural world, and were truly the pioneers in what has since become the ‘back to nature’ movement. Coleridge also looked inward, as well as outward, and in his meditative poetry he enlarged the boundaries of the individual sensibility; he introduced into his verse all the nightmare and drama of his opium-induced visions, so that human nature itself was enlarged and redefined as the subject of poetry. Together Wordsworth and Coleridge helped to create a new definition of the sublime and the beautiful. In the late 1960s, the Romantic poets were also a

...it's the same with what we regard as the Romantic poets, like Wordsworth and Coleridge. They were really radical people at the time. It's so true of what history does to people though isn't it; it just puts them in a completely different light and takes away the real situations of the times they lived in.

(Maguire, Jan 2008).

Reid also mentions William Morris<sup>11</sup>, the English textile designer, artist, writer and socialist commonly associated with the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood<sup>12</sup> and the Arts & Crafts Movement<sup>13</sup>. In *Suburban Press* No. 1 (1970), Reid states:

William Morris could see 100 years ago a need for some aspects of technology to be curbed and others encouraged. Read his "Utopia". He sees into a future where technology serves mankind but he also realises an environment with the spirituality of the "golden age". The best taken from all ages...

(Reid, *Suburban Press* No. 1, 1970, p. 2).

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significant influence on the British revolutionary Situationist group King Mob, who would graffiti quotes from Wordsworth and Coleridge around Notting Hill in London (See Chapter 3).

<sup>11</sup> William Morris (1834-1896) was an artist, designer and writer known for a wide range of achievements and the forthright nature of his politics. Born into an affluent family in Walthamstow, London, in 1834 and educated at Marlborough College, his original aim was to become an Anglican minister. In 1861 Morris founded a design firm, Morris, Marshall, Faulkner & Co. with Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Edward Burne-Jones, Ford Madox Brown and Philip Webb as partners, together with Charles Faulkner and P. P. Marshall, which had a profound impact on the decoration of churches and houses into the early 20th century. In 1883 Morris became a Socialist and in 1890 he published his Utopian fantasy *News From Nowhere*, in which he envisaged a society based upon common ownership and democratic control of the means of production, where all work is pleasurable and creative.

<sup>12</sup> The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood was formed in 1848, the year of revolutions across Europe. The three principal members were John Everett Millais, Dante Gabriel Rossetti and William Holman Hunt. They wanted to challenge the dominance of the Royal Academy and give back to British art something of the originality and freshness they saw in Italian painting before Raphael (1480-1520).

<sup>13</sup> The English Arts & Crafts movement (c. 1860-1910) was made up of English designers and writers who wanted a return to well-made, handcrafted goods instead of mass-produced, poor quality machine-made items. Inspired by socialist principles and led by William Morris, the members of the movement used the medieval system of trades and guilds to set up their own companies to sell their goods. Unfortunately, it had the reverse effect and, apart from the wealthy middle classes, hardly anyone could afford their designs. Visually, the style has much in common with its contemporary art nouveau and it played a role in the founding of Bauhaus and modernism.



Reid recognises Morris not only as an important figure in the arts but also as a pioneer of socialism, referring to his Utopian fantasy *News From Nowhere* (1890). In a 2008 interview he expresses his dismay that “we see [Morris solely] as this sort of romantic wallpavery, flowery sort of guy” (Maguire, Jan 2008).

Reid appears to be able to identify with such figures, drawing a parallel between the narrow categorisation of their life and work, and critics’ interpretation of his own artistic practice. As Reid stated in 2006: “It’s something that I do suffer from as an artist, in terms of the people who run culture. I don’t fit into one category. I would’ve thought that the whole idea of an artist is to be expansive, like an explorer going forward. Not stuck in a rut.” (<http://www.isisgallery.org>).

Reid’s view of his artistic career as a journey is an idea that can also be linked back to Druidism. Reid’s archived website describes his *Eight Fold Year* project as “a personal journey in a shamanic sense, in that they explore the living world through dismemberment, and re-assembly” (<http://www.chipwork.com>). Shamanism is a concept related to the Druid belief in the Otherworld, a realm which exists beyond the reach of the physical senses, but which can be reached through dreams, under hypnosis, or by ‘journeying’ whilst in a shamanic trance. According to Carr-Gomm this trance is induced in order to connect on a deep spiritual level with the Deity or deities, or Otherworldly spirits or guardians (Carr-Gomm, 2006). The role of the shaman was explored in Rogan Taylor’s book *The Death and Resurrection Show: From Shaman to Superstar* (1983); Taylor appeared as one of the speakers at Reid’s *Celtic Surveyor* exhibition at the 051 Media Centre, Liverpool in 1991, where he gave a lecture on “shamanism, nomadic rituals and early religions, and how they manifest themselves in 20<sup>th</sup>

century popular entertainment” (*Celtic Surveyor* promotional flyer, 1991, *England’s Dreaming: The Jon Savage Archive*). Reid’s heritage of Druidism and Punk is perhaps best illustrated by his cover design for the Evolution Records compilation album *Shamanarchy in the UK* (1992) [See fig. 6.90] (See Chapter 6), the title of which highlights the dual esoteric and political nature of his practice and which also provided the inspiration for the title of this study.

As discussed in the introduction to this chapter, one could suggest that far from standing alone, Reid’s exploration into alternative spiritual and political directions for the future, along with a deeply-held respect for the natural world and its innate power, has a number of ancestral precedents in a family steeped in the kind of spiritual socialism which flourished due to the new freedoms afforded by the end of the Victorian era. Reid’s grandparents appear to be the first relatives that could be said to embody this somewhat unconventional approach to life; a lack of existing information on earlier generations may be attributed to factors such as the family’s lack of written genealogical records. Reid expresses a desire to delve deeper into the family’s history “because there are such big gaps”, explaining that by the time he and his brother Bruce were born, his grandparents had already passed away (Maguire, Jan 2008).

In Reid and Jon Savage’s 1987 collaborative book *Up They Rise*, the artist discusses the fact that his sea-faring paternal grandfather Robert was a gun-runner for the Chinese during the Boxer Rebellion (Reid & Savage, 1987). This uprising of the Chinese secret society I Ho Ch’uan (Righteous Harmonious Fists), known to Westerners as Boxers, lasted from November 1899 to September 1901. It saw the world’s eight most significant military powers – Austria-Hungary, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Japan, Russia and the

United States – join forces against this common enemy who claimed to be under the protection of ancient Chinese gods in their fight against the influence of foreign ‘devils’, and whose followers used incantations and magic rituals performed by shamans in order to create a ‘shield’ of protection. By the spring of 1901 the Boxers were out of control; missionaries were killed, churches burned and railroads destroyed as a protest against foreign rule. Numerous Boxers were either executed or exiled to placate the allies, and peace returned on 7<sup>th</sup> September of that year (Bodin & Warner, 1979). Reid’s grandfather later died in France from wounds received during this time. His young son John Finlay MacGregor-Reid – Reid’s father, born in 1908 - was to be cared for by his uncle George, described by Ronald Hutton in his 2007 book *The Druids* as a “tall, massively-built man with a luxuriant moustache” (Hutton, 2007, p. 172) [See fig. 1.15]. The artist describes his great-uncle as an individual shrouded in mystery (Reid & Savage, 1987).

The hopeful fusion of alternative politics and spirituality was a key feature of the Druid order – a belief system which would later prove attractive to Reid’s great uncle George Watson MacGregor Reid, the kind of intriguing and dynamic individual that historians and biographers often describe with the now-clichéd phrase “a colourful character” (Piggott, 1968, p. 181). Even though 64 years have now passed since his death in 1946, much mystery, myth and rumour still envelops the life of this Chief Druid and social reformer of the post-Edwardian period, a significant amount of it having being generated by the man himself. In his 1968 book *The Druids*, Stuart Piggott also lists MacGregor Reid as a friend of the Irish writer George Bernard Shaw as well as the reputed inspiration behind the Australian novelist Guy Boothby’s occultist anti-hero Dr

Nikola, though the concrete evidence for these claims appears to be lacking (Piggott, 1968). Even most detailed and intellectually rigorous study of MacGregor Reid's life to date - entitled *Universal Majesty, Verity and Love Infinite* and written by Dr Adam Stout in 2005 – recognises that MacGregor Reid was guilty of “constantly shaking up the kaleidoscope, creating wild and contradictory claims about his past that might have been designed to throw all wannabe biographers off the scent” (Stout, 2005, p. 4).

However, given the fact that a large body of Jamie Reid's work draws directly upon this heritage of socialist politics, mysticism and spiritual engagement with the natural world - when questioned in interviews, the artist has been known to describe himself at various times as a “socialist Druid” or “lapsed Druid” (<http://www.3ammagazine.com>) amongst other things - it is therefore important to have an awareness of and look beyond the myth and contradiction surrounding George Watson MacGregor Reid in an attempt to decipher and document the activities of this significantly inspirational figure.

Even his date and place of birth is uncertain. According to the Scottish registry, a male by the name of George Watson Reid was born to a nautical family in 1862 in Anderston, Lanarkshire (Stout, 2005, p. 5). This appears plausible, as the town of Anderston is in close proximity to the docks on the River Clyde and was an area which saw the growth of industries such as ship-building, engineering and iron-founding during the 19<sup>th</sup> century (<http://www.anderston.ukpals.com>). However, the man himself never confirmed this during his lifetime, instead causing confusion by claiming at various stages of his life to have been born on the Isle of Skye or in India, in years ranging from 1850 to 1854/5 (Stout, 2005). MacGregor Reid's childhood and early career

remain similarly obscured; Stout traces Reid's path from fisherman to seaman to docker, though yet again exact dates and other such details have proven elusive for researchers (Stout, 2005). This as a fact in itself, although problematic, also proves useful as it goes some way towards revealing the very nature of MacGregor Reid's personality and his desire to perpetuate a certain image and maintain an air of intrigue - an approach to life which, at its worst, may raise accusations of charlatanism (Hutton, 2007).

In any case, MacGregor Reid first appears in the public consciousness around 1890 in his first incarnation as a radical political figure, agitator and trade unionist campaigning for dockers' rights at ports in both Britain and America as a delegate of the National Amalgamated Sailors' and Firemen's Union. After spending six months in Hull, MacGregor Reid established branches in both New York and Boston before internal Union wranglings brought an abrupt end to his career. He talks about being "badly wounded in battle" sometime around the beginning of the 1890s, which Stout interprets as alluding to a mental scar rather than the physical one MacGregor Reid later attributes to the time he supposedly spent serving as a "medical officer to Chilean revolutionaries" – perhaps one early example of his tendency to embellish or recreate past events in order to disguise any personal shortcomings or humiliations (Stout, 2005, p. 8).

Moving on from this experience, MacGregor Reid's commitment to radical politics gained intensity and he would later become one of only a handful of people to have attempted to stand for both the House of Representatives in the USA and the House of Commons in Britain (Piggott, 1968). In 1892, he stood for election as candidate for the People's Party (or 'Populists') in New York, an organisation who declared war on the rich and wished to place government back

in the hands of ordinary American citizens – an obvious choice for a trade unionist (Stout, 2005). However, his bid was unsuccessful as Populist support was essentially confined to rural areas. His time in New York was not altogether unproductive, as it is also thought that he became a minister of the Universalist Church during this period. Universalism, formed in the mid-18th century, was an optimistic and tolerant belief system which focused on the divine order of the universe, its ultimate beneficent nature and the triumph of good over evil. Despite having all but died out in Britain by this time, it retained a significant following in New England (Stout, 2005). This shift from radical politics to radical spirituality was a process which, according to Hutton, was more a change in emphasis rather than an abrupt change in beliefs or principles (Hutton, 2007).

MacGregor Reid appears to have returned to England soon after this election defeat. Evidence of what Stout called his “small-u universalism” to be found in a Populist/Anarchist pamphlet written by MacGregor Reid, entitled *The Natural Basis of Civilisation* and published by the Proletarian Publishing Company of Clerkenwell, London (Stout, 2005, p. 13). According to Hutton, this was the first written testament of MacGregor Reid’s three enduring beliefs:

...in socialism (with sympathy for anarchism), in natural lifestyles and medicine, and in a universal religion of pacifism, equality and mutual love that blended elements of all the world’s great faiths. All were aimed against exploitation, privilege, established and inherited authority, and the ability of the rich and powerful to abuse or use the poor and vulnerable (Hutton, 2007, p. 172-3).

This approach, as well as highlighting the way in which politics, spirituality and an exploration of alternative lifestyles became very much entwined during the final years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, also echoes the dual esoteric and political nature of Jamie Reid’s own practice in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

After vanishing from any known records between 1893 and 1906, MacGregor Reid emerged back into public consciousness in September 1906 accompanied by a wife and young son, a private fortune, and a desire to pursue an interest in Naturopathy, a method of physical healing involving natural approaches to health and wellbeing (Carr-Gomm, 2006). He appears to have discovered Naturopathy in New York through Emmet and Helen Densmore, a husband-and-wife team of doctors who specialised in treating obesity and who were also authors of an influential 1892 book entitled *How Nature Cures* (Stout, 2005). Naturopathy involved a progressive attitude to many unconventional issues and beliefs which remain just as topical and relevant to contemporary society, including vegetarianism, homeopathy, nutrition and whole foods, outdoor living and animal rights (Hutton, 2007). These issues were discussed under the umbrella of MacGregor Reid's British Nature Cure Association, in its flagship journal *The Nature Cure* – a monthly magazine with high production values, including a front cover printed in colour [See fig. 1.16]. Having returned in 1906 newly-married and with newly-acquired riches, it could be claimed that the cost of such production values was covered by MacGregor Reid's wife, however Stout also offers up the suggestion that

...like those too-prosperous ex-colonials who turn up in Sherlock Holmes stories, living comfortably but fearfully in Home Counties mansions, MacGregor Reid truly had a shady past, and was now living off gains ill-gotten during those thirteen silent years...  
(Stout, 2005, p. 18).

Despite the half-humorous tone of this throwaway comment, along with his stated commitment to presenting the “bone-dry ‘facts’”, it could be said that Stout - perhaps unknowingly – is in fact going some way to perpetuate certain

myths surrounding MacGregor Reid's life (Stout, 2005, p. 4). The fact that Stout has chosen to make such a romantic claim, despite having some evidence of a decidedly more plausible yet mundane explanation, hints at the way in which some biographers still find it difficult to resist what Ira Bruce Nadel describes as "the effect of an arresting image replacing a tedious detail" (Nadel, 1984, p. 163).

At this point it may also be fitting to mention the fact that MacGregor Reid's illustrious name is also thought to have been a partly artificial construct. As previously mentioned, records show that a male by the name George Watson Reid - likely to be the man himself - was born in Lanarkshire in 1862. It was only after his re-emergence in 1906 that George Watson Reid had acquired the extra name of 'MacGregor' (Stout, 2005). Research conducted by Stout has shown that the addition of the name MacGregor may have been a result of his developing interest in the occult, in particular his involvement with one of the many mysterious esoteric societies which started to emerge in Britain towards the end of the nineteenth century – a group of organisations which included the oriental mysticism of Madame Blavatsky's Theosophical Society, formed in 1875 by the Russian Helena Petrovna Blavatsky who, incidentally, was a close friend of MacGregor Reid's acquaintance Dr Helen Densmore. (Stout, 2005). Though critics would later accuse the society of being nothing more than a personality cult, it started out with honourable aims including the desire to form "a universal brotherhood of humanity" and to "investigate the unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers latent in man" (Ashe, 2007, p. 206).

Set up partly as a Western-centred response to this society, The Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn was a closed group specifically concerned with the



study of ritual magic; Hutton describes them as the “greatest society of ceremonial magicians in nineteenth-century Britain” (Hutton, 2007, p. 173). The name ‘MacGregor’ had already been adopted by at least four Golden Dawn members including joint founder and leader Samuel Liddell MacGregor Mathers, praised for his 1887 translation of Knorr von Rosenroth’s *The Kaballah Unveiled* (1684) (<http://www.hogd.co.uk>). [See fig. 1.17].

Mathers himself was an individual who was not adverse to applying creative license to his own biographical details. Although born in London in humble circumstances, Mathers later claimed to be a descendent of Alasdair MacGregor of Glenstrae, chief of the Clan Gregor who led his men to victory in the Battle of Glen Fruin (1603) and was murdered later that year (<http://www.esotericgoldendawn.com>).

Mathers also took to regularly wearing Highland dress and changed his wife’s first name from ‘Mina’ to the more Gaelic ‘Moina’; Mathers was nothing if not thorough in his embracement of his supposed Celtic heritage (Stout, 2005, p. 15). Despite speculation as to whether Mathers and MacGregor Reid ever met in person, it seems that MacGregor Reid held Mathers in extremely high regard as a master of cabbalistic teaching and adopted the name ‘MacGregor’ in honour of this spiritual influence (Hutton, 2007). This was occasionally changed into the double-barrelled MacGregor-Reid, and - after developing an interest in Naturopathy – often brazenly preceded by the word ‘Doctor’ (Stout, 2005).

September 1906 saw the launch of MacGregor Reid’s journal *The Nature Cure*, a publication which aimed to appeal to “all Food Reformers, Vegetarians, Temperance Enthusiasts, Anti-Vivisectionists, Anti-Vaccinists and believers in Simple Life ideals” (Nature Cure Annual, 1907-8, p. xiii). It featured a range of

articles on contemporary issues concerning alternative lifestyles written by individuals such as Richard Metcalfe, who ran the London Hydropathic Establishment. Each issue also contained one of MacGregor Reid's idiosyncratic, increasingly bizarre editorials, as well as many advertisements for Naturopathic products. A *Nature Cure* annual was also published during the autumn of 1907. (Carr-Gomm, 2006).

To begin with, *The Nature Cure* showed all the signs of becoming a success; a limited-liability company was set up by MacGregor Reid and Business Manager John Shaw, and the offices of the magazine soon moved from Burgess Hill to an illustrious Fleet Street address, although it is unclear as to how this move was funded (Stout, 2005). Even though *The Nature Cure* appeared to cater for the burgeoning interest in alternative lifestyles, it seems that readership was small and did not live up to MacGregor Reid's grand expectations which included plans for a horse-drawn caravan which would spread his message through British towns and cities. John Shaw eventually pulled out of the venture; perhaps feeling disillusioned after a number of such appeals for funds produced little response from readers (Stout, 2005).

Within three years, MacGregor Reid's focus – both journalistically and personally – had shifted from healthy living and Naturopathy to healing of a more spiritual nature (Hutton, 2007). *The Nature Cure's* content had become increasingly esoteric, with most of this eccentricity being penned by MacGregor Reid. The British Nature Cure Association had now become The Universal Bond of the Sons of Men, an organisation with bases in both Clapham and Leamington Spa (Hutton, 2007). The Universal Bond reflected MacGregor Reid's personal and ever-changing spiritual interests, which ran from esoteric Christianity and

Druidry to Eastern religions such as Buddhism and Zoroastrianism. Members of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn had also supported the cause of the Senussi tribespeople, a group of Muslim mystics living in the Libyan desert who were then under attack as a result of Italian colonial expansion (Carr-Gomm, 2006).

Most of these spiritual interests appear to have been cultivated as a result of the influence of particular individuals such as ‘The Mahatma’ Sri Agamya Guru Paramahansa, a Hindu who had visited London from India and extolled the virtues of Yoga. However, deeper research indicates that MacGregor Reid may have been somewhat naïve or haphazard in his choice of spiritual inspiration, and he would often quickly discard influences in favour of new projects. This was perhaps a positive approach in the case of Sri Agamya Guru Paramahansa; the headline of a *New York Times* article dated July 12<sup>th</sup> 1908 proclaims ‘Mahatma Goes to Prison’, and describes how the guru had been sentenced to four months in prison, “charged with attacking girls who had been lured to his place by advertisements for typewriters” (Anon, 1908). [See fig. 1.18].

However, as Stout explains, MacGregor Reid “was not one to sit for long in someone else’s congregation” (Stout, 2005, p. 21). The Universal Bond or Brotherhood introduced readers of *The Nature Cure* to MacGregor Reid’s “Holy Book of UMVALI”, standing for “Universal Majesty, Verity and Love Infinite” (Stout, 2005, p. 21). This invocation was also used by Jamie Reid as the title of a 1999 painting [See fig. 1.19].

Though Piggot unequivocally states that MacGregor Reid was “Chief Druid from 1909...” (Piggot, 1968, p. 183), it could be claimed that his conversion to the Druid path was more of a gradual, organic process taking place

from around 1908 to 1912 (Stout, 2005). In 1909 *The Nature Cure* journal appears to have folded, along with the British Nature Cure Association; both the result, suggests Stout, of MacGregor Reid's increasing devotion to spiritual matters rather than a lack of funds (Stout, 2005). The offices of the British Nature Cure Association became the home of The Tribune Publishing Company, which appears to have been set up in order to enable MacGregor Reid to continue his output of idiosyncratic esoterica. This included *The Path that is Light* - a lengthy tract published in 1910 under MacGregor Reid's Buddhist nom de plume Ayu Subhadra – and a journal entitled *The New Life*, which entirely replaced the alternative health and lifestyle content of *The Nature Cure* with musings on spirituality and contemporary world politics. According to Stout, MacGregor Reid's journal particularly championed the cause of the oppressed “Islamic peoples of the Balkans and North Africa” (Stout, 2005, p. 26).

Taking the place of the British Nature Cure Association was the South London Temple of the Universal Bond, which by 1913 had taken as its headquarters a large villa just south of Clapham Common (Stout, 2005). This was to become the new centre of MacGregor Reid's Universalism; at the same time he also became the founding minister of the South London Universalist Church (<http://www.druidry.org>). It could be suggested that, after much exploration of world religion and various associations with often dubious spiritual figures, MacGregor Reid had finally reaffirmed his belief in the kind of liberal, universal religion he had discovered earlier in life. This may have been - as Stout suggests – around the time he was organising dock workers in the USA around 1890, although Alistair Bate believes that he may have come across Universalism “as a young man living in Glasgow, during the last days of the

ministry of the Reverend Caroline Soule, who ministered in both Dundee and Glasgow” (<http://www.druidry.org>).

Hutton explains that “the biblical tradition had been given a recent post-Christian restatement by Sir Norman Lockyer’s assertion that astronomy proved the existence of a uniform archaic faith focused on the sun” (Hutton, 2007, p. 174). Like many world religions – not least Christianity - MacGregor Reid’s own Universalism equated light with divine knowledge and the search for truth. This was echoed in the Druid celebration of the summer and winter solstices, and the Awen symbol created by the iconic Welsh neo-Druid Iolo Morganwg, the creator of the late 18<sup>th</sup> century Druid Revival (<http://www.icons.org.uk>). The symbol features three rays of light emanating from three separate points, surrounded by a circle or series of circles, and is said to represent illumination, inspiration and wisdom (Carr-Gomm, 2006) [See fig. 1.20].

Thus for MacGregor Reid and his followers, there was nowhere more fitting to congregate and celebrate their religious beliefs than Stonehenge, a prehistoric monument in the county of Wiltshire with a growing national profile based upon its believed ancient function as a solar temple (Carr-Gomm, 2006). In the latter decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, large and good-natured crowds would gather there annually in order to watch the midsummer sunrise. As a result of this growing reputation, what was once an isolated and little-visited site which was open to all had been transformed from around 1900 onwards to an iconic location actively explored by groups of tourists who were now forced to pay an admission charge to a custodian (Hutton, 2007). This coincided with a change in ownership from private hands to landowner Sir Edward Antrobus, whose implementation of an admission fee in 1900 may have also been a result of the fall of one of the

upright stones as well as the Government's refusal to purchase the site (Piggott, 1968).

The neo-Druid association with Stonehenge pre-dated any involvement from MacGregor Reid, though this earlier society started off without any overt religious connotations; it is described by Ackroyd as “a convivial society, not a religious assembly” (Ackroyd, 1995, p. 98). In 1781 a London carpenter and builder by the name of Henry Hurle had founded the Ancient Order of Druids in Poland Street, London, a secret society inspired by the Freemasons with many privileged and titled members (Piggott, 1968). According to Ackroyd, the Order had been established in 1781 in a London ale-house just a few yards from the house of William Blake in Poland Street (Ackroyd, 1995). Hurle's Ancient Order of Druids was just one result of the 18<sup>th</sup> century popular and scholarly interest in ancient British history and religion – the context in which William Blake was operating as an artist and poet. According to Ackroyd, this “new antiquarianism” was

actively rewriting British history – from Cooke's *The Patriarchal and Druidical Religion* to Stukeley's *Stonehenge: A Temple Restored to the British Druids*. Welsh ‘bards’ met on Primrose Hill (there was supposed to be a tribe of Welsh-speaking Indians descended from lost patriarchs) and parodies of ‘Druid’ literature were already appearing. (Ackroyd, 1995, p. 98).

In 1833, a breakaway charitable institution – The United Ancient Order of Druids - was formed after internal wranglings over the Order's purpose. After this split, the original Ancient Order of Druids continued along the path of mysticism, incidentally accepting a young Winston Churchill as an initiate in August 1908 (Piggott, 1968) [See fig. 1.21].

In 1905 - seven years before MacGregor Reid and the Universal Bond descended upon the Stones - the Ancient Order of Druids held their first grand ceremony there [See fig. 1.22]. This was an initiation of 259 people, with around 700 members present in total. This was carried out in what had now become the full ritual Druid dress of flowing white robes and bushy white false beards (<http://www.icons.org.uk>). Members also carried wands and staves, with those of officers being topped with golden sickles. This seems to have been a sedate and well-organised affair, with luncheon being served in a marquee beforehand accompanied by the strains of a Druid brass band. Tea was also served afterwards, with the Druids being treated to “four kinds of the best cake” (Hutton, 2007, p. 151). The ceremony was conducted with the full support of owner Sir Edmund Antrobus (Hutton, 2007). Hutton explains that the Order had

carefully applied in advance for permission to use Stonehenge, avoided the turbulent and crowded period of the summer solstice, incorporated and flattered Antrobus in the course of its rites and (to judge from its later recorded practice) made the occasion handsomely worth his while in financial terms.

(Hutton, 2007, p. 175).

This rational approach could not have been more at odds with how MacGregor Reid would conduct proceedings. As mentioned previously, MacGregor Reid’s transformation from Universalist minister to Druid figurehead was a gradual one. In 1912, he took four members of the Universal Bond to the Stones to celebrate the midsummer solstice under his pseudonym Ayu Subhadra, robed in a distinctly Eastern style and wearing a white turban as shown in a series of photographs from the time. This unconventional-looking group held two services - which at this time still contained references to Zoroastrianism and Islam - and gave themselves Persian, Turkish and Sanskrit titles (Hutton, 2007).

True to form, MacGregor Reid had not warned Antrobus about his arrival but instead attempted to win favour with the journalists present, relishing the publicity his group were generating and using this opportunity to hand out copies of the Universal Bond's declaration (Hutton, 2007).

MacGregor Reid returned with nine followers in 1913, this time in the guise of another spiritual hybrid, the Dastur Tuatha de Dinaan (Stout, 2005) [See figs. 1.23 to 1.25]. Despite being informed that Sir Edmund Antrobus would no longer tolerate any political or religious meetings at Stonehenge, MacGregor Reid managed to force admission and hold his service; albeit after a fracas with both caretakers and police [See figs. 1.26 to 1.28]. After a successful and inspiring meeting, he promptly brought down the first of many thunderous curses on the head of Antrobus, proclaiming "In grief and sorrow I call down the curse of Almighty God, and of the tyrannical...Response is sure" (Stout, 2005).

Similar scenes occurred in both 1914 and 1915, when MacGregor Reid demanded his money back from Antrobus and was forcibly removed from the site by police. According to Hutton these episodes were well-documented by newspapers of the time, though unfortunately for MacGregor Reid reports were mostly unsympathetic, with one journalist labelling the group a "brawling party of cranks" (Stout, 2005, p. 34). Despite this, when Antrobus died of natural causes soon afterwards at the age of 66, MacGregor Reid and his followers claimed victory and declared their curses a success (<http://www.icons.org.uk>)

It was around this time that MacGregor Reid began to identify directly with Druidism, calling himself "The Last of the Druids" (Stout, 2005, p. 32). However, it is evident from research that there appears to be no clear point at which the Universal Bond mutated into The Ancient Order of Druids; the process



seems to have been an evolution taking place over a number of years and a definitive documentation of this process is lacking. Carr-Gomm states that this did not take place until the 1940s or 1950s (Carr-Gomm, 2006). Stout goes as far as to say that "...there was little love lost between the two orders", and that the Ancient Order of Druids "took great pains to distance itself from the Universal Bond when the latter's activities generated bad publicity" (Stout, 2008, p. 144).

As Hutton explains, "The true story of the development of the Universal Bond between 1906 and 1912 was obliterated – at least to outsiders – to be replaced by a claim that it was the heir to a continuously existing Druid tradition that had come down from ancient times" (Hutton, 2007, p. 180); the Universal Bond now claimed to have been in existence since the 17<sup>th</sup> Century. From a period of around ten years from the mid-1910s to the mid-1920s the number of members had increased to around 50, their eastern dress had been replaced by more conventional white robes, and members were now organised into lodges similar to those of the Druids and Freemasons (Hutton, 2007). In 1918, MacGregor Reid told a large congregation that "Faith in the Druid God will...make wars cease" (Stout, 2005, p. 34). Around this time MacGregor Reid's followers also began to call themselves 'An Druidh Uileach Braithreachas', translated as The Universal Druid Brotherhood (Stout, 2005). It was obvious that, despite their differences, Universal Bond and the Ancient Order of Druids were becoming increasingly aligned in both ideology and appearance.

Between 1916 and 1918 the Bond held a number of peaceful ceremonies aided by the kindly nature of local businessman Cecil Chubb, Stonehenge's new owner. However, later on in 1918 Chubb donated Stonehenge to the nation and it

was brought under control of the Government's Office of Works, who retained both the admission fee and the problematic former caretaker of Sir Edmund Antrobus (Stout, 2008). Despite the government's Inspector of Ancient Monuments allowing the Universal Bond to continue to worship at Stonehenge, they were not exempt from payment of the admission charge or the wrath of the aforementioned caretaker and others who shared his stance. The years that followed would be a difficult and dramatic period for MacGregor Reid, who at times proved to be somewhat of a thorn in the side of Lloyd George's government. Similar clashes followed from 1924 onwards with the next Prime Minister Ramsey MacDonald, this time in relation to recent archaeological explorations of the site (Stout, 2008).

During the years of the First World War, MacGregor Reid had also returned to his socialist roots, becoming a pioneer Labour Party supporter and leader of his local Clapham division (Hutton, 2007). His speeches were aimed firmly at working people, who welcomed his denouncement of the rich and powerful in the era of the Great Depression and the General Strike. Logically he believed that this would win the Universal Bond favour with the new Labour Government. However, their hopes were shattered when in 1925 there was another admission fee dispute. MacGregor Reid, now accompanied by his son Robert, incited the 3000-strong crowd to charge the entrance gate which yet again led to the involvement of the police (Stout, 2008).

A change in custodian led to another peaceful interlude which lasted until 1932, when the Office of Works denied the Universal Bond the right to distribute its journal – now entitled *The New Life and Druid Journal* – as a response to the official Stonehenge guidebook, written by a local museum-keeper who was keen

to disprove the connection between the Druids and Stonehenge (Hutton, 2007).

Many of the power struggles and arguments occurring over this period have been documented in detail by both Ronald Hutton, and in particular Dr Adam Stout (Stout, 2008).

With the Universal Bond not being able to defend themselves against official propaganda, it seems that the indomitable MacGregor Reid finally admitted defeat or lost interest in his role as Chief Druid. In any case, the Universal Bond never returned to Stonehenge after 1932 and left the dwindling members of the original Ancient Druid Order and other similar groups as the only regular worshippers – a surprisingly uneventful and uncharacteristic end to MacGregor Reid’s Druidic associations (Hutton, 2007).

According to Hutton, by the mid-1930s MacGregor Reid had ceased to speak of Druidism. His beliefs were becoming increasingly conventional, and he gradually realigned his religious attitudes with Christianity (Hutton, 2007). MacGregor Reid’s organisation quietly dropped all references to Druidism, becoming ‘The Universalist Church’ and working to forge links with like-minded American churches. Indicators of a return to a more traditional Christian belief system is evident in a lengthy poem by MacGregor Reid entitled *The Shrine* [See appendix 3], published by The Tribune Publishing Company of High Holborn, London in 1922. The Shrine tells the story of God’s command to those on earth, both rich and poor, to build Him a fitting shrine and records the actions and responses of a range of individuals to the request, from princes, priests and lawyers, to the artisan, seamstress, “fallen sister” and “child of penury” (MacGregor Reid, 1922, p. 6). The poem ends with God casting aside “the

shrines of wealth, magnificence and gold” into the flames of Hell, in favour of the offerings of the humble:

“THIS IS MY SHRINE!” said God.  
“All other shrines are shadows of desire  
That are consumed within delusion’s fire.  
The simple mind, the contrite heart, are more to me  
Than all wealth, glitter and veneer –  
Concealing much that mortals cannot see,  
Til woe and disappointment give them strength to peer  
Beneath the shadow lines of vanity.  
Wisdom and faith will ever onward plod,  
Leaving behind them heavens for the poor  
And all such heavens ever shall endure  
Around this shrine that love and faith have built to me.  
THIS IS MY SHRINE!” said God.  
(MacGregor Reid, 1922, p. 11).

As well as highlighting Reid’s spiritual agenda at this time, *The Shrine* (1922) - and in particular this quotation - hints at MacGregor Reid’s socialist background, a political stance which would come to characterise the Reid family and from which the artist would draw much of his inspiration; as Reid states in a 2008 interview, “My dad was, without being in any particular order - it was just the way we were brought up. But it was very much harking back...it was very tied in with socialism...” (Maguire, Jan 2008).

Paradoxically, the later years of MacGregor Reid’s life were taken over with one of his earliest preoccupations – Naturopathy. Both the British Nature Cure Association and *The Nature Cure* journal enjoyed short-lived revivals, taking their cue from Stanley Leif’s highly-successful magazine *Health for All*, launched in 1927. Lief also created what was believed to have been the first Health Farm at Champneys, a grand stately home near Tring, Hertfordshire (Stout, 2005). This appears to have been one of the inspirations for MacGregor Reid’s Royhill Nature Camp at Blackboys in Lewes, Sussex, which functioned

from sometime in the 1930s until 1957. By this time MacGregor Reid had married his second wife Alice Biffin, who is also believed to have funded the venture (Stout, 2005).

Royhill consisted of communal halls, dormitories, kitchens and gardens that attempted some form of self-sufficiency. The camp was described as a place where “men and women in the vanguard movement of politics and religion might come for rest and recuperation” (Stout, 2005, p. 50). This was achieved partly through a series of baths and other water therapies. Recent research conducted by Carr-Gomm has also hinted at a Naturist element, with elderly members of the Blackboys & district Historical Society claimed to have spotted “holidaymakers in their birthday suits” before the war

(<http://www.philipcarrgomm.wordpress.com>). However, the unearthing of original Royhill promotional material by Stout shows that there was an official requirement for bathing suits. At times, MacGregor Reid’s principles of healthy living also appear to have been sidelined in pursuit of profit, with meat being served at most meals and cigarettes being stocked in the canteen (Stout, 2005). MacGregor Reid and his wife moved to Royhill permanently in 1939 and continued to live there despite the British Army requisitioning it for military use later that year (Stout, 2005). He resided at Royhill until his death in 1946.

George Watson MacGregor Reid left a rich and varied legacy. He handed over his mantle of the ministry of The Universalist Church to the politician and journalist Arthur Peacock, and in the 1950s the church became part of the Unitarians. Others who wished to keep the Druid links alive gathered around a Londoner named George W. Smith, whom MacGregor Reid had previously given his blessing (Hutton, 2007). However, MacGregor Reid’s son Robert also

believed himself to be his father's rightful successor, and claimed the name of the Ancient Druid Order for his group of followers; this claim was eventually approved by the Office of Works (Stout, 2005). After Smith's death in 1954, Robert's Order continued to celebrate the solstice at Stonehenge, aided by his diplomatic and genial nature [See figs. 1.29 & 1.30]. By the time of his sudden death from a heart attack in 1964, Robert MacGregor-Reid (note the now-hyphenated surname) had done much to establish Druid worship of the summer solstice at Stonehenge as a traditional and part of British heritage (Hutton, 2007).

Though Freud once stated that "Anyone who writes a biography is committed to lies, concealments, hypocrisy, flattery and even to hiding his own lack of understanding" (Freud in Nadel, 1984, p. 178), it would not be outlandish to suggest that similar accusations may also be applied to George Watson MacGregor Reid – a factor which has made the writer's task of dissecting the life of this charismatic and eccentric individual even more difficult. In any case, it seems that the creation and perpetuation of myth and rumour has been one enduring theme of MacGregor Reid's life and work; to acknowledge this fact both before and during this research was the most important task.

Both Hutton and Stout have discussed the contradictory nature of MacGregor Reid's character; despite both writers having a personal interest in the subject of Druidism they have also been partial enough to admit that many of MacGregor Reid's most positive characteristics were often counterbalanced by less appealing personality traits. He believed strongly in peace between nations, yet at the same time did little to reconcile differences closer to home – in particular the thorny and antagonistic relationship between the Universal Order and Stonehenge owner Sir Edmund Antrobus. Many individuals including Arthur

Peacock and George W. Smith would become loyal and devoted followers, yet according to Stout MacGregor Reid was “not at all a team player” (Stout, 2005, p. 60), and Hutton goes so far as to label him a “bully” (Hutton, 2007, p. 181).

Despite a tendency to construct fantasies and alternative mystical personas which often led to accusations of charlatanism, MacGregor Reid also seems to have been an individual with generous and charitable ideals. He promoted a doctrine of pacifism, equality and love, and did much to highlight the unity between world religions both Eastern and Western. Significantly, the Universal Bond may also be regarded as the group responsible for placing Druidism at the heart of the Stonehenge summer solstice (Stout, 2007).

MacGregor Reid campaigned for social justice both as an individual and as a member of the Clapham Labour Party. He championed an alternative lifestyle which promoted vegetarianism, homeopathic medicine and a simple, natural approach to all aspects of living (often described as ‘naturist’ or ‘simplicitarian’), at a time when such concerns were still regarded as radical, and often ridiculed (Stout, 2005). Ever resistant to the expectations and conventions of mainstream society, MacGregor Reid may be regarded as a countercultural icon, much in the same way as his great-nephew Jamie Reid so many decades later.

Building upon the study of the Druidic activities of Reid’s great uncle George Watson MacGregor Reid in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, this study will now go on to explore the significance of Reid’s radical, unconventional family background, encompassing an introduction to Reid’s parents Jack John Finlay MacGregor-Reid and Nora Gardner, both born in the late 1900s. It could be suggested that they inherited their ancestors’ political and spiritual ethos

through their participation in the General Strike of 1926 and Reid's father's fifty year Fleet Street career, including time spent as the City Editor of the *Daily Sketch*.

Reid's father John Finlay MacGregor-Reid - described by Reid as "a man of mystery" (Maguire, Jan 2008) who would leave the house at 7am for work and return late at night - also made the daily commute from Croydon to London's Fleet Street, where he would go on to build a 50 year career in journalism. This included a time spent as City editor of the *Daily Sketch*, a newspaper founded in 1909 in Manchester by Edward George Hulton. Owned by Harmsworth Publications, the *Daily Sketch* was a sister paper to the *Daily Mail*. At its peak, readership reached 1.3 million, although numbers gradually declined and it eventually folded in 1971. The paper's popularity at its peak may have owed something to its picture scoops, which included photographs of the sinking of the Titanic, and the death of suffragette Emily Davison at the Derby in June 1913 [See fig. 1.31]. The *Daily Sketch* photographer William Gore was responsible for taking important photographs during the Battle of Mons in Belgium in 1914, and the newspaper was also the first to publish pictures of the Battle of the Falklands that same year (<http://www.bl.uk>). However, the paper's articles, like any, were not immune to criticism and some could even be accused of being biased or sensationalist; the British Library online exhibition *Front Page: The British Newspaper 1906 – 2006* documents how the *Daily Sketch*'s reports on the Battle of the Somme in 1916 were "loaded with propaganda", claiming that British soldiers "went into battle with a smile and a cheer" (<http://www.bl.uk>).

As City editor, John Finlay MacGregor-Reid gave advice on finance, and Reid explains the irony that "he never invested any money himself – and he had



access to make fortunes, because he got inside information on business deals...” (Maguire, Jan 2008). Described by Reid as “quite a Fleet Street character”, John Finlay MacGregor-Reid had also previously worked at the Oxford University Press during the 1920s, until he lost his job due to his involvement in the General Strike of 1926 (Maguire, Jan 2008). The General Strike, which lasted ten days from the 3<sup>rd</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> May 1926, was called by the Trade Union Congress (TUC) in an unsuccessful attempt to persuade the government to act in defence of miners’ wages and hours.<sup>14</sup> (Laybourn, 1993).

It appears that the General Strike was fought with almost as aggressively with propaganda as with army and police action. The national press became involved in the dispute when workers at the *Daily Mail* refused to print a leading article attacking the proposed strike. Both sides in the dispute produced their own newspapers during the strike action, with Winston Churchill supervising the production of government newspaper the *British Gazette* from the offices of the *Morning Post*. Other newspapers continued to be published during the strike in

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<sup>14</sup> The strike followed a period of industrial unrest and Trade Union militancy which culminated in a day known as Black Friday - 15<sup>th</sup> April 1921 – when both the railway and transport unions who also made up the Triple Alliance failed to support the miners when their wages were decreased and their hours of work extended. Post-war economic depression, occurring when the government returned to the gold standard, also led to a reduction in exports, and exports of coal were particularly affected. The 1920s also witnessed a number of setbacks within the coal industry itself, with the implementation of modern technology being eschewed in favour of the low wages and increased working hours which led to Black Friday.

In 1925, the Triple Alliance threatened a general strike which was prevented when the government propped up miners’ wages with a nine month subsidy on 31<sup>st</sup> July 1925, a day known as Red Friday. Events culminated in a general strike being called by the TUC to start on 3<sup>rd</sup> May 1926. On the day in question there were approximately four million workers out on strike in Britain willing to fight for the cause, leading to the government declaring a state of emergency in which food, coal and petrol were stockpiled, army and navy leave was cancelled and the transport system crippled, especially in London. Those on strike included builders, printers, dockers, iron, steel, metal, heavy chemical, transport and railway workers. Clashes occurred between police and strikers across the country in cities including Liverpool, Newcastle, Glasgow, Edinburgh and London, leading conservative Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin to declare the strike an attack on Britain’s democracy and the Roman Catholic Church to label it “a sin”. The government had spent the months since Red Friday preparing for the strike, and the Organisation for the Maintenance of Supplies (OMS) was set up under Winston Churchill to defeat it. (Laybourn, 1993).

truncated form, using non-union labour. The government's combination of police action and propaganda eventually succeeded.<sup>15</sup> On Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> May the TUC, led by J.H. Thomas, called off the strike, leading millions to drift back to work. (<http://www.bl.uk>).

For the working classes, and in particular the miners<sup>16</sup>, the consequences of the General Strike thus appear to have been largely negative. After losing his job at Oxford University Press as a result of his involvement in the General Strike, Reid's father John Finlay MacGregor-Reid – at this time still residing with his uncle George Watson MacGregor Reid, head of what would later become the Druid Order in England – would go on to directly aid the plight of the striking miners, hosting up to 100 of them in the Universal Bond's headquarters in Clapham Common before they returned to work in November 1926, as well as organising demonstrations and other forms of support.

Reid goes on to explain the relationship between the striking miners and George Watson MacGregor Reid's Druid Order in a 2008 interview, explaining that

the Druid Order then were so politically involved in different things – in trade unionism, the Suffragettes, all sorts of stuff. And it was that thing of society denying you all your basic rights, and it still does. There wasn't a split – you know there was a need for political change as much as there was for spiritual change.  
(Maguire, Jan 2008).

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<sup>15</sup> This result was aided by the fact that a significant number of Labour Party and TUC leaders were intimidated by the rioting and other events which had occurred over the previous few days, and that the middle classes also generally opposed the strike action. The General Strike of 1926 led to a significant drop in TUC membership, from 5.5 million in 1925 to only 3.75 million in 1930. In 1927, Baldwin passed the Trades Disputes Act, which made general strikes illegal.

<sup>16</sup> The defeated miners struggled on alone until November 1926, when they too were forced to return to work, albeit for less pay and longer hours.

Hutton describes how thousands of local, mainly working class people would gather annually at Stonehenge during the 1920s to hear George Watson MacGregor Reid's set-piece orations at the Universal Bond's midsummer celebrations. For Hutton the Bond's appeal to the working classes is an obvious one, and he states that

...it is easy to see why working folk, many reared in a tradition of dissenting religion, would have warmed to these [speeches] in the era of the General Strike and the Great Depression... He denounced the crimes of the rich and powerful, and predicted the coming of a new era in which the true message of Christ would prevail, and equality and mutual love prevail across the earth.  
(Hutton, 2007, p. 180).

The Universal Bond's relationship with the striking miners of 1926 is one concrete example of how, in the words of Reid, this was a period in time where "the occult, spirituality and socialism were waving one flag" (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 6). Parallels can also be made between both George Watson MacGregor Reid and his nephew John Finlay MacGregor-Reid's support of the miners in the Great Strike of 1926, and Reid's own involvement with the National Union of Mineworkers during the miners' strike and the 'three-day week' of December 1973 and January 1974. This was a period which echoed the economic instability – including a sterling crisis and industrial action caused by an intensification of the class struggle – of fifty years previously, with neither Edward Heath's ruling Conservative government nor their Labour counterparts seeming capable of devising any long-term solutions (Walker, 2002).

Reid's skill for using design to successfully and immediately convey a political message – in this case anti-government images in support of the miners' strike of December 1973 – is a recurring theme of the artist's practice, a creative

evolution which would perhaps not have been possible without Reid's early immersion into socialism and left-wing politics through his parents John and Nora – a link made particularly explicit through the example of George Watson MacGregor-Reid and John Finlay MacGregor-Reid's support for striking miners during the Great Strike of 1926.

Meanwhile the artist's maternal grandfather, Robert Gardner, brought up his daughter Nora in a Naturist environment – a term not to be understood in the narrow way it is today, but in the sense of being closely attuned to the natural world (Reid & Savage, 1987). According to Reid, his mother Nora was raised in Sussex before the family made a later move to London (Maguire, Jan 2008). Nora's father had a strong interest in both the Socialist movement and contemporary literature, writing a book entitled *In the Heart of Democracy* in 1909 which was published by The New Age Press, 140 Fleet Street, London. The book draws heavily on the themes of Christianity, socialism and the work of the American poet Walt Whitman<sup>17</sup> (1819-1892), as Gardner's foreword illustrates:

Camerado, this is no book, who touches this touches a man, sung Whitman of his poems. To touch that cosmic Man in the Heart of Democracy, whom Whitman celebrated in his verse, whom he himself was, whom Jesus the carpenter was, is also the theme of this work. (Gardner, 1909, v.).

The book goes on to explore these key interests further, with chapters such as *The Church Over the Water*, *The Art of Life* and *Pay Day* demonstrating Gardner's notion that life, art, politics and religion are inextricably intertwined. In a chapter entitled *The Real Christ*, Gardner denounces the dawning "spirit of

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<sup>17</sup> Walt Whitman (1819-1892) was an American poet, essayist, journalist, and humanist. He was a part of the transition between Transcendentalism and realism, incorporating both views in his works. Whitman is among the most influential poets in the American canon, often called the father of free verse. His work was very controversial in its time, particularly his poetry collection *Leaves of Grass* (1855), which was described as obscene for its overt sexuality.

commercialism”, which he views as “preparing the ground for the new epoch, absorbing the predatory lusts of the old social and political ideals into its larger synthesis, creating a Hell of degradation and suffering more stupendous than before” (Gardner, 1909, p.46-47). Echoing the sentiments Reid conveyed with much of his work for *Suburban Press* during the early 1970s (See Chapter 4), albeit with overtly Christian overtones, Gardner also pours scorn upon “the financiers organising their great trusts to dominate the markets of the world” and “the lusts...which pour out the blood of the many to serve the interests of the few” (Gardner, 1909, p. 52).

Gardner also addresses the relationship between art and the natural world, explaining that

Even the forest trees and flowers, devoid of brain consciousness, can attain a standard of grace and beauty which is so sadly lacking in the life of the majority of civilised mortals. And man, at war with himself and his fellows, finds comfort and solace in the creations of Art which express and perpetuate this consciousness of beauty.  
(Gardner, 1909, p. 103).

Such an attitude has been a key, enduring facet of Reid’s practice, as demonstrated by exhibitions such as the *Eight Fold Year* at the Aquarium Gallery, London in 2006, featuring 365 hand-painted works which according to John Marchant represented “the progression of birth, life, decline and death, as experienced in human lives, and echoed in the progression of the seasons” (<http://www.isigallery.org>). Gardner’s attitude towards nature is echoed by Reid in a 2008 interview, in which he discusses “the wonderment of planting things and growing things...and the sheer beauty of what surrounds us”, and expresses his dismay at the majority of the population being closed off to the beauty of the natural world (Maguire, Jan 2008).

The radical views detailed in Gardner's *In the Heart of Democracy* (1909), along with his family's lifestyle choices, could be said to have been representative of the spirit of the age. For example, other available titles listed in the back of Gardner's book under the heading *Some New Age Press Books for Socialists* include Edwin Pugh's *Charles Dickens: The Apostle of the People*, which presents Dickens as an early pioneer of socialism, and *Woman: Her Position Today* by Miss Constance Smedley (Gardner, 1909). The period directly preceding the First World War could be regarded as a time when political issues such as women's rights, trade unionism and the working classes' access to education very much intertwined with alternative approaches to spirituality, medicine and nutrition which drew heavily upon the natural world, as well as a burgeoning interest in the occult.

The influence of Nora Gardner's English/Irish heritage – Reid's maternal grandmother hailed from Ireland – could also be said to have impacted upon Reid's life and work, particularly when combined with the Druidic influences of his great-uncle. From childhood Reid has made regular trips to Ireland, Wales and Scotland, and Reid discusses how the British Isles have influenced his practice in a 2008 interview, explaining:

I'm always going up and down to Scotland. And there is that sort of Celtic root to a lot of stuff I do as well. I just find it so weird that this tiny island can be so diverse. I've spent a lot of time in North Wales as well; in fact I've done quite a lot of work in North Wales and Ireland as well. I'm always quite drawn to Ireland. I think the most enjoyable work I've ever done has been in Ireland in many ways.  
(Maguire, Jan 2008).

The theme of Celtic mysticism appears to be integral to a large majority of the artist's later work from the 1980s onwards, not least the *Celtic Surveyor* and

*Peace is Tough* projects which took place during the 1990s (See Chapter 6).

During 1991 to 1992, Reid's retrospective exhibition *Celtic Surveyor* visited the Britannia Hall, Derry, Manchester's Cornerhouse and the Kunsthaus, Berlin, as well as taking up residence in the 051 Media Centre in Liverpool (November 4<sup>th</sup> – December 7<sup>th</sup> 1991). A flyer for the Liverpool exhibition asks, "And if Art could see, for what would it search? ...The gentle rhythmic patterns of nature's swirling beauty? ...The sunsets, the moonrises, the seas of tranquillity that lap the polluted city subtopia...?", and also states that "From his legendary Sex Pistols graphics, to his wild, multi-coloured mantras for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, his work is reeling with a respect for the planet and fellow human beings" (Anonymous, *Celtic Surveyor* promotional flyer, 051 Media Centre, Liverpool, 1991), demonstrating the ways in which Reid has taken on board the dual political and spiritual ethos of both his father Jack John Finlay MacGregor-Reid, and his mother Nora Gardner, and utilised them explicitly in his artistic practice.

This chapter has sought to document a range of Reid's influences, focusing in particular on Reid's great uncle George Watson MacGregor Reid and his involvement with the Druid Order in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The influence of Druidism on Reid's practice was discussed in relation to William Blake, who could also be said to have been influenced by the 18<sup>th</sup> Century Druid Revival. The chapter then went on to explore how George Watson MacGregor Reid's political and spiritual beliefs impacted upon Reid's father, as well as analysing the themes of Christianity and socialism contained within *In the Heart of Democracy* (1909), written by Robert Gardner, Reid's maternal grandfather. This chapter demonstrates that both the spiritual and political aspects of Reid's practice can be largely attributed to the spiritual socialism of his family heritage.

Chapter Two will go on to explore the impact of 1960s left-wing radicalism and counterculture on Reid and his family, with particular reference to both the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) and the emergence of early rock 'n' roll music.



## Chapter 2

### A Playground for the Juggler

“WE BELIEVE THAT CONFLICT SITUATIONS ARE OUR RESPONSIBILITY. We are proceeding beyond moral protest to take constructive action in their solution.”

The policy of the Committee of 100, printed in *Resistance*, early 1960s.

The aim of this chapter is to explore the themes of 1960s left-wing radicalism and counterculture by discussing the direct influence it had on Reid; this will be done by exploring his family’s involvement in the Aldermaston marches beginning in 1958 and in particular, his brother Bruce’s role as Press Officer for the Committee of 100 and as a member of the Spies for Peace, and Bruce’s time spent in Russia during 1963. These activities act as important precedents for Reid’s work *Peace is Tough* (1991) [See fig. 2.2] and influence on the subsequent organisation of an international peace conference in Derry, Northern Ireland, as well as his involvement with organisations such as War Child and exhibitions including the group show *Pax Britannica* at the Aquarium Gallery, London in 2004 organised on behalf of the Stop the War Coalition, documented in Chapter Six.

The chapter then moves on to examine the significance of the cultural and social aspects of the Aldermaston marches, in particular the role played by contemporary popular music. Such music - in particular the songs of early rock ‘n’ roll stars such as Bill Haley and Chuck Berry - is discussed in relation to the impact it had on Reid and McLaren’s teenage years, and how this influence manifested itself within the Sex Pistols. The events of Reid’s childhood and

teenage years shall be placed within the cultural and political climate of the time, providing a solid contextual framework for the reader.

Born on 16<sup>th</sup> January 1947, Reid grew up in Shirley, a town in the leafy suburb of Croydon, Surrey, which is situated on the Southwest fringe of London. Once a semi-rural settlement, Croydon had undergone massive expansion in the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, becoming a popular commuter belt for Victorians working in London. Croydon was also home to an airport which predated both Gatwick and Heathrow, from which the aviator Amy Johnson took off on her epic flight to Australia in May 1930 (<http://www.independent.co.uk>). According to Jon Savage, Shirley was situated close to the district of Selsdon, “immortalised in the Fifties phrase “Selsdon Man” as the average ideal of the good life” (Savage, 1983, p. 7), and the theme of suburban living is a reoccurring one in the work of Reid. His love-hate relationship with his childhood surroundings are explored directly in a variety of images and articles produced for *Suburban Press* during the early 1970s (See Chapter 4), some of which later resurfaced in the context of the Sex Pistols (See Chapter 5).

It was in suburban Croydon that Reid’s parents would eventually settle after meeting at a Labour Party rally in the 1920s, with Reid’s father John Finlay MacGregor-Reid commuting to Fleet Street after taking a job at the *Daily Sketch* following the Great Strike of 1926, as discussed in Chapter One. Described by Reid in *Up They Rise* (1987) as a friendly, energetic and often very forthright woman, Reid also recalls how his mother Nora defended the Sex Pistols “to the hilt against Tory neighbours – at suburban bus stops and supermarket queues” (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 7). Reid’s parents had moved to Shirley, Croydon to escape the grime and smog of inner-city London in 1930; a time when the

popularity of British suburbia was still at its peak and the decay and disillusionment which would later become associated with this aspirational lifestyle - echoed in Reid's *Suburban Press* magazine of 1970-1975 - had yet to manifest itself. As Michael Bracewell explains in his 1997 book *England Is Mine: Pop Life in Albion from Wilde to Goldie*,

The suburbs, as yet another new Eden, promised the whole package: status, moral standing, a selective sense of community, the chance to avoid other people's misery and the all-important English ability to define yourself through your property.

(Bracewell, 1997, p. 110).

On the surface, it could be suggested that Reid's comfortable, semi-detached suburban childhood home – bought by his parents for around two hundred pounds in 1930 – was an embodiment of the utopian ideal of London's greenest and most desirable borough (Maguire, 2008). However, for many future key figures of English popular culture the English suburbs – and in this context particularly the Bromley, Croydon and Surrey belt – also became synonymous with a peculiar feeling of nostalgia, wasted potential and suffocating regularity and routine; a place to call home which also became somewhere in which to plot an escape (Bracewell, 2007). As Bracewell goes on to explain,

The fact that suburban life, particularly for teenagers, can be a vicious cocktail of boredom, compromise and frustration was deeply sympathetic to pop culture and to punk culture especially.  
(Bracewell, 1997, p. 126).

Thus the suburban nature of Reid's upbringing can also of course be assimilated into the well-worn tradition of what *The Independent's* Louise Jury calls suburbia's "curtain-twitching tedium" going on to provide the fuel for the post-war generation's later Punk reposte against the stultifying and hegemonic nature

of middle-class existence (Jury, 2006, p. 22).

In fact, Reid's suburban childhood belies a highly politicised upbringing which can be traced back through three or four generations of the Reid family, as discussed in Chapter One with particular reference to Reid's great uncle George Watson MacGregor Reid. Reid's parents John and Nora would go on to instil their sons Bruce and Jamie with this same ancestral tradition of radical political dissent and alternative approaches to spirituality and religion from a very early age. Though Reid's father did not ever become overly-involved with the rituals and traditions of the Druid Order, he appears to have retained the essence of the Order's belief in the positive power of spiritual and social development. When asked in a 2008 interview if his parents ever considered becoming members of the Druid Order, Reid answers, "No, it was always there though. My dad was, without being in any particular order – it was just the way we were brought up." (Maguire, Jan 2008). Though Druidic rituals may not have been carried out explicitly within the family, the Druid Order's "purity of spirit" remained (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 6), as demonstrated by John Finlay MacGregor-Reid's aforementioned involvement in the General Strike of 1926 for example.

The family continued to involve their sons in political activity throughout their childhood, the most significant example of this being the family's participation in protest marches in aid of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND). Reid acknowledges the significance of these events in relation to their influence on his subsequent artistic practice, explaining in a 2007 interview:

My family were always very socialist, always involved in different political campaigns - particularly the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, CND. So at a very early age I was dragged off on all the Aldermaston marches, which were fantastic actually...the anti-war movement... So I blame my family! (Maguire, Aug 2007).

Reid reiterates this statement in 2008, stating that his parents had “a really big influence on me as well, particularly because of their politics. I was dragged off on all the Aldermaston marches, because they were part of the CND movement” (Maguire, Jan 2008).

The Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) was founded in response to an issue which threatened to destroy the stability and optimism of post-war Britain and its new leafy suburbs; the ever-increasing possibility of nuclear war. On 6<sup>th</sup> August 1945 the United States dropped the first atomic bomb on the Japanese city of Hiroshima, with a second being dropped on Nagasaki three days later. Despite this subsequently leading to the surrender of the Japanese and the end of the Second World War, America had unleashed a new and arguably more terrifying force on the world; the so-called Atomic Age had begun.<sup>18</sup>

The prospect of nuclear war became one catalyst of a new radicalism which took root during the late 1950s and which can be traced through the rise – and later frustration – of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament<sup>19</sup>, one of the

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<sup>18</sup> During the late 1940s and 1950s, the US, followed by Russia and Britain, began to develop and test new atomic weapons with alarming frequency. As Michael McCarthy explains in the 2005 Independent article *Whatever happened to CND?*, by the mid-1950s the United States and the Soviet Union faced each other in the Cold War, a long-running stand-off between “two systems implacably hostile to each other and each possessing the first modern Weapons of Mass Destruction, hydrogen bombs on the end of intercontinental ballistic missiles” (<http://www.independent.co.uk>). In addition, Britain carried out its first H-bomb test at Christmas Island in the Pacific in 1957, bringing the reality of nuclear conflict even closer to home.

<sup>19</sup> Angered by Shadow Foreign Secretary Aneurin Bevan’s dismissal of the idea of unilateral nuclear disarmament and the declaration that he did not want to have to go “naked into the conference chamber”, The Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament - or CND – was launched with a public meeting in London in February 1958, chaired by the radical Canon John Collins of St. Paul’s Cathedral (<http://www.independent.co.uk>). Canon Collins would also go on to chair the organisation for its first eight years. Other key figures in its founding included such varied individuals as Michael Foot, the philosopher Bertrand Russell, the writer JB Priestley, then-editor of *New Statesman* magazine Kingsley Martin, as well as The Society of Friends (otherwise known as the Quakers), the majority of Labour Party members and trade unionists and an increasing number of other academics, musicians, writers, actors and journalists.

According to Jeff Nuttall writing in *Bomb Culture* (1968) - an account of his own personal experiences of underground culture and involvement with the anti-nuclear movement in particular - much of the organisation which led to the emergence of CND took place from the Partisan Coffee House, set under the library and office of the Universities and Left Review. This

first mass movements of the postwar era and an organisation for which Reid's own parents would go on to demonstrate their support. As the then-Labour MP Michael Foot explains,

For many of us of that period and generation, it was CND that best expressed the response which the human race must make to the bomb: the moral outrage that such an instrument should never have been invented, the awareness that a new kind of politics would be needed to bring it under control, the determination to act together at once, whatever the cynics or skeptics might say.  
(Foot in Irwin, 2008, p. 52).

This determination manifested itself in an iconic protest, in which the Reid family took part. On Good Friday 1958, less than two months after its first meeting, several thousand people – up to 10,000 depending on the source – gathered in Trafalgar Square for CND's first official protest march (Irwin, 2008). This was to be a four-day, 58-mile journey to the Berkshire town of Aldermaston, the location of the Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE) where Trident submarine-launched nuclear intercontinental ballistic missiles were manufactured and which also had close links with United States nuclear weapon laboratories (<http://www.scienceandsociety.co.uk>). The marchers carried emotive banners which heralded the first public appearance of RCA graduate Gerald Holtom's now-iconic circular CND logo [See fig. 2.1]. The logo makes an appearance in Reid's work *Peace is Tough* (1991) [See fig. 2.2], where it can be seen decorating the hat and pin badge worn by a lipsticked John Wayne. The image

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was to become a social base for many of the aforementioned radical intellectuals and a nucleus of earlier protests including Peggy Duff's London March of Women, and eighteen-year-old Mike Randle and thirteen-year-old April Carter's Operation Gandhi, which back in 1952 had already held a War Office sit-down (Nuttall, 1968). After a meeting held at the YMCA on Great Russell Street, attended by Peace News' Hugh Brock, Bertrand Russell and Spike Milligan amongst others, a march was decided upon as the most effective course of action (Nuttall, 1968). This event was organised by a group of individuals whose impetus came from Operation Gandhi; it would eventually become known as the Direct Action Committee (Nuttall, 1968).

proved to be one of the catalysts for an international peace conference of the same name, held in Derry, Northern Ireland in 2002 (See Chapter 6).

During the preparations for the first Aldermaston march in 1958, RCA graduate, artist and designer Gerald Holtom entered the North London offices of CND journal *Peace News* with preliminary sketches for what he thought might be a useful symbol for the event – a circle in which was contained an amalgamation of the semaphore signals for the letters N and D, signifying nuclear disarmament [See fig. 2.3]. In a letter to *American Notes & Queries* in 1969, CND General Secretary Peggy Duff explains that “the broken cross represents the death of man, and the circle the unborn child. This is a reference to the genetic effects of nuclear weapons” (Duff, 1969, p. 51). Shortly before the march, Holtom’s insignia was adopted as the official logo of CND. Duff goes on to add that Holtom insisted that the symbol was to be reproduced solely in black and white; and CND appears to have adhered to this request for a time, with most early representations of the symbol appearing in these colours (Duff, 1969). However, Holtom’s original sketch actually features the symbol in either red, blue or green on white as well as black [See fig. 2.4], though in the early years of the movement at least, most appear to have remained faithful to the symbol’s original colour scheme (<http://www.cnduk.org>).

According to the official CND website, five hundred “cardboard lollipops on sticks” featuring the logo were produced for the 1958 Aldermaston march, with half being black on white and the other half white on green. As the march took place over the Easter weekend, the black and white signs were to be displayed on Good Friday and Saturday, with the green and white on Easter Sunday and Monday (<http://www.cnduk.org>). As Holtom noted, the logo “was

easy for any individual who can write to draw it for himself either with a line, a brush or a chalk” (Holtom in Vanderbilt, 2003, p. 96), and this is evidenced in the abundance of hand-drawn logos featured on homemade banners and signs carried on subsequent marches as well as on newsletters, posters and flyers promoting the cause [See fig. 2.5]. Marchers also incorporated the CND logo onto badges and items of clothing, adding to the first black and white clay badges made by Eric Austin of Kensington CND, which were accompanied by a note describing how these fired pottery items would be one of the only surviving human artefacts after a nuclear war [See fig. 2.6] (<http://www.cnduk.org>).

After appearing in countless newspaper photographs and TV reports over the next few days, the now ubiquitous logo became familiar to the public both nationally and internationally, aided by the American activist Bayard Rustin who brought the symbol home to the growing civil rights movement, which was also based around non-violent protest. It was later also adopted by protesters against the Vietnam War who found that the logo was an ideal and succinct way in which to express the anti-war sentiment [See fig. 2.7], and from this time onwards Holtom’s official CND symbol began to evolve organically from its original purpose into an icon for countercultural activities in general. As Richard Lacayo summarises in his 2008 article ‘A Piece of Our Time’ in *Time* magazine, “Hippies made it a sort of all-purpose symbol of peacefulness. The environmental group Greenpeace, the militant wing of flower power, adopted it for its eco-defense campaigns. And inevitably, the market found it” (Lacayo, 2008, p. 64). It now appeared in such diverse locations as the cover of the influential hip-hop trio De La Soul’s debut album *3 Feet High and Rising* (1989)



[See fig. 2.8] and in the work of street artist Banksy [See fig. 2.9], signifying the symbol's transcendence into popular culture.

As Tim Vanderbilt discusses in his 2003 article 'Glide on the Peace Train' for *PRINT* magazine, Holtom's CND logo has now become a kind of visual culture freeware regularly appropriated for commercial, advertising and fashion purposes, some of which may be classed as distasteful to CND and the peace movement (Vanderbilt, 2003). However, CND stress the importance of the logo remaining without copyright, in line with its significance as a symbol of freedom. Despite being widely recognised in the USA and much of the rest of the world as the 'peace symbol', Holtom's design will forever, in Britain at least, also be regarded as the CND symbol that conquered the world.

In 1958, marchers to Aldermaston – including Reid and his family - braved the coldest Good Friday for 41 years, first standing in silence to dedicate the march to the people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki before listening to a number of speeches including that of American civil rights activist Bayard Rustin, who would later go on to organise the Civil Rights 'March of 100,000' on Washington in 1963 (Driver, 1964). Many sources indicate that the marchers were atypical of those usually present at such an event, with documentary photographs showing people with pushchairs mingling with beatniks and politicians. A 1958 sketch by *Daily Mail* cartoonist Leslie Illingworth also depicts a group of marchers as 'ordinary' members of the community, young and old, wrapped up warm against the bracing weather [See fig. 2.10].

In Jonathon Green's *Days in the Life* (1988), witnesses to the event including Jeff Nuttall and Barry and Sue Miles stress the diversity of those present, recalling pacifists, Quakers and a West Indian presence (Green, 1988).

Patrick Russell, Senior Curator for non-fiction film with the National Film Archive, makes the valid suggestion that “CND emerged from Aldermaston as a campaign uniting disparate wings of the political left with other wise apolitical citizens” (<http://www.screenline.org.uk>).

In 2008, on a march to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the original Aldermaston march, *Guardian* journalist Rachel Williams encounters three sisters whose parents took them along as young children back in 1958. Jessica Richardson, the youngest of the three, was aged just two when her parents Bill and Hilda took her along to the march in her pram, returning to Notting Hill every evening to wash the children’s nappies. She explains, “They were wonderfully radical, ordinary working-class socialists. We’ve carried on marching ever since. They sent us off this morning with a cup of coffee.” (Williams, 2008, p. 5). This story echoes Reid’s own experience; he explains:

Oh it was ever so mixed, all sorts of different people. A whole new generation of beatniks and early hippies and this that and the other. But my biggest memories really were going to the Aldermaston Marches as a really young kid. I just thought it was absolutely fucking fantastic. Just sleeping out, and loads of traditional jazz and music and bands playing at night. And just a fantastic feeling of hope and solidarity.  
(Maguire, June 2008).

Both stories clearly provide evidence that there were a number of suburban, Socialist families taking part in the marches, eager to show their support for CND and instil their offspring with similar values.

The 1959 short film *March to Aldermaston* - a collaborative effort involving Free Cinema practitioners Lindsay Anderson and Karel Reisz, and featuring actor Richard Burton reading Christopher Logue’s commentary – attempted to portray the broad sectors of society taking part by featuring

soundbites from students, young mothers, middle-aged couples, a vicar and one older man who had taken part in a similar march as part of the Great Strike in 1926. As Logue's commentary explained, "Yes, these were ordinary people. Not frivolous or eccentric. But ordinary people with a point of view..." (Anderson, 1959) [See fig. 2.11].

Despite Logue's claim, it could be suggested that March to Aldermaston unintentionally succeeds in documenting the reality of the movement's largely middle-class demographic. Although the marches constituted nearly a complete cross-section of ages, it is clearly evident after viewing the film that Logue's "ordinary people with a point of view" tended to belong to the middle classes, and possessed what Patrick Russell describes as a 'cut-glass' accent (<http://www.screenonline.org.uk>). *Daily Mail* journalist Alan Brien provides his own account of the Aldermaston marchers on April 8<sup>th</sup> 1958 which appears to support this:

The marchers were mainly middle-class and professional people. They were the sort of people who would normally spend Easter listening to a Beethoven concert on the Home Service, pouring dry sherry from a decanter for the neighbours, painting Picasso designs on hardboiled eggs, attempting the literary competitions in the weekly papers, or going to church with the children. Instead they were walking through the streets in their own clothes. They were behaving entirely against the normal tradition of their class, their neighbourhood, and their upbringing... The quiet suburbanites were on the march.  
(Brien in Driver, 1964, p. 55)

Sue Miles claims that "if you look at the clips, it's very across the board" (Green, 1988, p. 23), and whilst this may have been true for the appearance of the Aldermaston marchers, the reality was that CND as a whole failed to attract sufficient working-class support.

Jeff Nuttall admits to Green in *Days in the Life* (1988) that the pacifists, Quakers, and conscientious objectors were “mostly from the middle class”, as were the newly-emerging beatniks whose usual haunts were Soho coffee bars and jazz clubs (Green, 1988, p. 7). Old guard critics such as the literary and political writer Anthony Hartley – credited with coining the phrase ‘Angry Young Man’ – picked up on the fact that for many young CND supporters,

banning the Bomb, Socialism, good modern architecture and the accoutrements of Bohemianism all take on something of an equivalent importance as gestures against everyday conformity (Hartley, 1963, p. 166).

Hartley appears to be making the link between moral choices and matters of taste, and in particular between young people’s support for CND and a distinctly middle-class student experience. This view is supported by David Widgery, who in his 1976 book *The Left in Britain* describes the Aldermaston marches as

a student movement before its time, mobile sit-in or marching pop festival; in its midst could be found the first embers of the hashish underground and premature members of the Love Generation...” (Widgery, 1976, p. 104).

As Green’s *Days in the Life* (1988) illustrates extensively, the amalgamation of subculture and protest on Aldermaston marches gave students and future countercultural protagonists such as Barry and Sue Miles, Jeff Nuttall, Michael Horovitz and Christopher Logue one of their first political experiences as well as a taste of what an alternative society might be like (Green, 1988). Many of those involved in Aldermaston went on to play a significant role in British countercultural activities of the 1960s. For example, Nuttall moved directly from playing the cornet on Aldermaston marches [See fig. 2.12] to an involvement

with The People Show, a theatre group who combined techniques from “music hall, happening, straight drama, cabaret, funhouse and children’s party” (Nuttall, 1968, p. 210) and went on to found *My Own Mag: A Super-Absorbent Periodical* in 1963, inspired by William Burroughs’ cut-up techniques. Barry Miles published his first magazine, *Tree*, in 1959 whilst still an art student in Cheltenham and would later go on to become one of the editors of underground newspaper International Times (Hewison, 1986).

In contrast, Robert Hewison explains that the British working class apparently failed to live up to the expectations held of it by New Left thinkers such as Richard Hoggart and E.P Thompson, as demonstrated by a general lack of working class support for CND. Hewison goes as far as to describe the majority of the British working class at this time as “culturally backward, socially conservative, nationalistic and racially prejudiced” (Hewison, 1986, p. 14). Several unions had supported the unilateral disarmament motion passed by Labour in 1960, but for many this was largely as a reaction to Hugh Gaitskill’s attempt to go back on the Party’s commitment to nationalisation. The trade unions then reversed their decision when Gaitskill threatened to split the party over the issue of disarmament. Despite this lack of mass support from the working classes, Robert Hewison suggests that CND did succeed in providing a focus for radical intellectuals in the late 1950s and also became a springboard for later countercultural activities in Britain (Hewison, 1986).

In 1960 there were significant internal disagreements within the CND, primarily concerning the issue of direct action, which led the organisation to split within itself. This led to Bertrand Russell’s resignation as president of CND and the development of a breakaway, more militant resistant organisation called the

Committee of 100 which had been formed that year and eschewed the legal protest marches of CND in favour of mass civil disobedience and direct action (Hewison, 1986). The Committee of 100 would go on to attract Reid's brother Bruce, who later acted as press officer for the militant breakaway group Spies for Peace, more of which shall be discussed later in this chapter.

The policy statement of the Committee of 100 - printed in the West Midlands branch's bulletin *Resistance* - explains "WE STAND FOR NON-VIOLENT DIRECT ACTION...IT IS NOT ENOUGH TO BE MERELY ANTI-WAR. We are interested in the problems of building a new non-violent society. We think it essential to undertake this even under the shadow of war and war preparations" [See fig. 2.13] (<http://www.bl.uk>). This policy statement places the Committee of 100 within the tradition of non-violent direct action as utilised by both Mahatma Ghandi in the Indian Independence movement, and Martin Luther King Jr. in the American Civil Rights movement.

The Committee of 100 attracted a stock of well-known names, particularly those associated with the Royal Court Theatre on Sloane Square. Though the Committee would later regard them as more of a liability than an asset, Driver explains that the fact that a great number high-profile names such as John Osborne, Arnold Wesker, Lindsay Anderson, John Arden, Shelagh Delaney and Vanessa Redgrave "were prepared to risk prison for their beliefs undoubtedly created the necessary confidence in hundreds, even thousands of others" (Driver, 1964, p. 118). One of the Committee of 100's most frequently-used forms of protest was the sit-in, a type of disruption in which protesters "occupy an area, sit down, and remain seated until their demands are met or until they are removed by force" (<http://www.bl.uk>).

The first Committee of 100 sit-in took place in February 1961, when 4000 protesters sat down outside Ministry of Defence headquarters in Whitehall to protest against the arrival of the US Polaris depot ship at Holy Loch in Scotland [See fig. 2.14]. No arrests were made at this event, however later in the same year Committee of 100 organisers including Bertrand and Lady Russell themselves were arrested and charged under the Defence of the Realm Act of 1361 for inciting civil disobedience by publicising an illegal sit-down at Trafalgar Square later that year. Some were jailed for up to two months; however the Russells were released after one week on medical grounds. Strong public feeling surrounding these high-profile arrests led to 12,000 people gathering for a mass demonstration at Trafalgar Square in September 1961, during which 1314 arrests were made. Despite the success of the event in terms of attendance, the large number of both participants and police arrests meant that the Trafalgar Square demonstration became the catalyst for a new radical approach to the organisation's tactics, one which its founders had perhaps not originally envisaged or could implement successfully.

Further arrests and sentencing of the main organisers under the Official Secrets Act in December 1961 would further stifle the Committee and support for the organisation outside of London generally began to wane from this point onwards. Many members dropped out after the Trafalgar Square sit-in, perhaps intimidated by the increasingly brutal nature of the police. This is suggested by Reid, who recalls: "To start with it wasn't [violent], but as it progressed with the Committee of 100...there was lots of direct action and protests... it got quite heavy" (Maguire, June 2008). This view is supported by Frank E. Myers in an article entitled 'Civil Disobedience and Organisational Change: The British

Committee of 100', published in *Political Science Quarterly* in 1971, in which he explains,

Many Committee members, particularly the well-known ones, felt that with this demonstration and arrest they had done their duty for the cause of unilateralism. This notion was reinforced by the manner of some of the arrests; in certain instances the London police performed their functions brutally and succeeded in intimidating the protesters, who had not expected such treatment.  
(Myers, 1971, p. 96).

This is reiterated by Driver in his 1964 book *The Disarmers: A Study in Protest* when he mentions the fact that "For the first time serious allegations of police brutality were made, and indeed, after midnight, the demonstration got somewhat out of hand" (Driver, 1964, p. 122).

In addition to Reid accompanying his parents on a number of marches to Aldermaston, his older brother Bruce was actually an active member of a direct action subcommittee named Spies for Peace, along with others including the British anarchist and journalist Nicolas Walter. Spies For Peace, believing that sit-ins had failed to make a significant enough impact on government policy, advocated infiltration of military bases and sought to investigate secret government plans and documents (<http://www.bl.co.uk>). They launched themselves into public consciousness on the 1963 Aldermaston March, distributing a duplicated pamphlet bearing the title *Danger! Official Secret: RSG-6* as the marchers made their way through the Berkshire woods [See fig. 2.15 ]; the same piece also appeared on the back page of the 1963 Aldermaston issue of the CND bulletin *Sanity* and was also sent to the national press, politicians and activists. As Press Officer for Spies for Peace, Reid's brother Bruce would have played a significant part in the process of disseminating



The purpose of the pamphlet *Danger! Official Secret: RSG-6* was to expose and make public government preparations and emergency procedures to be carried out in the event of nuclear war, namely the existence of planned RSGs (Regional Seats of Government) which were small-scale governments that would be installed to manage the remaining population and maintain law and order within each region of Britain immediately after a nuclear attack. In February 1963, the Spies for Peace had broken into RSG-6, photographing and making copies of as many government documents as they could find. Their pamphlet *Danger! Official Secret RSG-6* presented these findings to the general public; it explained that the RSGs would be “above the Army, the Police, the Ministries or Civil Defence” and would be “based in fourteen secret headquarters, each ruled by a Regional Commissioner with absolute power over millions of people” (Driver, 1964, p. 149). Through their actions, Spies for Peace alerted the public to the fact that for the British government, thermonuclear war was an accepted possibility for which contingency plans had already been consciously devised.

Secrecy was of paramount importance, and Nicolas Walter’s daughter Natasha explains in a 2002 foreword to her father’s book *On Anarchism* (2002) [1969] that the Spies for Peace wore gloves to stuff leaflets into envelopes during the night, burnt their own documents and even threw their typewriter into the river when their task had been carried out (Walter, 2002). Such actions were vital if the young activists - Walter was 29 at the time of the RSG-6 break-in, his wife Ruth and Spies for Peace press officer Bruce Reid both 21 – were to avoid being imprisoned. As Natasha Walter stresses, “Telling it now, it sounds rather like a game, but to those eight individuals it meant rather more. All young, all with

their lives ahead of them, they were running the risk of long prison sentences for what they believed” (Walter, 2002 [1969], p. 20).

The activities of Spies for Peace made front page news, as the newspapers defied a D-notice implemented by the government regarding any disclosure of the RSG system. The distribution of the pamphlet *Danger! Official Secret RSG-6* led to demonstrations at the site at Warren Row, Reading, as well as others in Cambridge and Edinburgh. The RSGs, no longer shrouded in secrecy, were eventually abandoned by the government. Though tangible results of the Spies for Peace incident were few – the government held onto its original stance regarding the survival of nuclear war - its main achievement was to help to break down the British public’s unquestioning trust and respect for their government. (Walter, 2002 [1969], p. 21).

An account of the activities of Spies for Peace was later documented as ‘The Spies for Peace Story’ and featured in *Anarchy* 29 in July 1963. Though the identities of all Spies for Peace members were never fully revealed, ‘The Spies for Peace Story’ was attributed in *Anarchy* to “members of the Solidarity group, the Syndicalist Workers’ Federation, the London Federation of Anarchists, the Independent Labour Party and the London Committee of 100” (*Anarchy* 29, Vol. 3, No. 7, July 1963). According to David Goodway, editor of Walter’s *The Anarchist Past and Other Essays* (2007), the author of this piece was in fact Walter himself. In 1968, he declared himself publicly as one of the Spies for Peace, the only member of the group ever to do so (Goodway, 2007). Walter later went on to a prolific career in mainstream journalism, as well as continuing to write for anarchist publications.

Though Walter wrote 25 years later: “A secret had escaped, and so had Spies for Peace” (Walter, 2002 [1969], p. 20), some arrests were later made. Reid admits that he is uncertain as to whether his brother was actually present with Walter at the RSG-6 break-in, he explains that Bruce was arrested for treason along with the others “in his position as Press Officer” (Maguire, June 2008). According to Reid, Bruce also travelled to Russia during this time. Though in *Up They Rise* (1987) Reid claims that the events in question occurred in 1963 (Reid & Savage, 1987), further research indicates that the most likely context for his brother’s visit to Russia was the World Council of Peace Congress, taking place in July 1962 in Moscow, organised by the World Council of Peace (Driver, 1964).

According to Driver’s 1964 book *The Disarmers: A Study in Protest*, there were 12 CND and Committee of 100 members amongst the 145 Britons who were flown to Moscow for the event on July 8<sup>th</sup> 1962. Inspired by Lord Russell’s recent comment that the Committee of 100’s struggle must be extended by taking part in the Moscow Congress, Committee delegates in Moscow took this commitment further by distancing themselves publicly from CND through a number of activities including the distribution of a controversial leaflet printed in Russian and a planned demonstration in Red Square to take place the following Friday (Driver, 1964).

Though CND distributed 5000 printed leaflets without remark, the 2000 leaflets handed out by the Committee of 100’s delegates in Gorki Street and in the suburbs of Moscow caught the attention of the Russian authorities, combining total opposition to nuclear warfare with what Driver describes as “a Trotskyist political critique of the Soviet Union’s social and economic structure”

(Driver, 1964, p. 137). When the Committee of 100 delegates declared their intention to hand out more of the leaflets in Red Square on July 13<sup>th</sup>, the authorities made it clear that the group would be in danger of possible deportation. Despite this, the demonstration went ahead with 20 delegates from Britain, America, Canada and Scandinavia forming the very first illicit Western peace demonstration in Moscow (Driver, 1964).

The Soviet newspaper *Pravda* accused the protesters of doing their best to get themselves beaten up or arrested, and labelled their actions slanderous. However, back in Britain *Guardian* journalist Victor Zorza described the actions of the Committee of 100 in Russia as “the most direct challenge to official Soviet policies and ideas to have been presented to the Soviet man in the street since freedom of speech died under Stalin” (Zorza in Driver, 1964, p. 134). The delegates managed to escape deportation, but arrived home to a far from rapturous welcome from CND members; by this point the organisation’s decline from serious influence had begun (Driver, 1964). Despite light-heartedly claiming that the highlight of his brother’s trip to Russia was “meeting Yuri Gagarin” (Maguire, 2008), Reid admits to Savage in *Up They Rise* (1987) that he was profoundly influenced by what happened to Bruce during this period, particularly with regards to his role as Press Officer for Spies for Peace, and the experience apparently had a significant effect on both of them. As Reid explained in 1987, “he rode it, but has never again entered the snake-pit” (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 7).

Russia aside, the actions of the Spies for Peace in 1963 would prove to be the last real flare of activity for the Committee of 100, and the organisation was eventually wound up in 1968. According to Hewison’s 1986 book *Too Much: Art*

*and Society in the Sixties 1960-75*, by the late 1960s CND itself had become virtually defunct as a political force at least, due to both the successful resolution of the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis and the introduction of the Partial Test Treaty ban, which succeeded in allaying the public's most immediate concerns on the affect of nuclear testing on human health (Hewison, 1986). This view is supported by the current CND chairperson Kate Hudson, who regards this particular period in history as spelling "the end of the first phase of [CND's] activism" (Hudson, 2005, p. 86).

However, the impact of CND's yearly Aldermaston marches, particularly in a social and cultural context, must not be underestimated. Perhaps the most fitting tribute to Aldermaston was made by journalist Alan Brien in the *Spectator* of 12<sup>th</sup> April 1960, who described it as

a tremendous stimulation of ideas and arguments and witticisms and friendships and love affairs. Perhaps it would be more tactful to keep this revelation a secret – but the Aldermaston March is the rare phenomenon of a physical and social pleasure which yet has an intellectual and moral justification.

(Brien in Hewison, 1981, p. 165).

For the young Reid, this magical revelation of the existence of pleasure with moral purpose and the "fantastic feeling of hope and solidarity" (Maguire, June 2008) that so characterised the Aldermaston marches, perhaps leading to the realisation that the duality of art and politics was a viable option would go on to shape both his personal outlook and artistic practice.

Reid states in the 1987 book *Up They Rise* that he firmly believes art and politics "can exist together" (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 38). This is no more evident than in the annual Aldermaston marches Reid attended between 1958 and 1965, which had a distinctly carnival-like atmosphere. Canon Collins had called

for silence on the first march in 1958 due to it taking place over the Easter weekend. However, as the marchers set off with their knapsacks, duffle coats and hobnail boots towards their first planned stop in Hounslow, there was little evidence of the sombre and muted atmosphere one might have predicted after such solemn proceedings in Trafalgar Square (Hewison, 1986).

For Reid, the experience of being immersed in the sounds of CND jazz bands at such a young age was “a big influence” (Maguire, June 2008), and his love of jazz developed further during his time spent at art college as a teenager. Reid goes on to explain how this interest has endured until the present day:

A lot of it was sort of – in quotes – “new wave jazz”, so it was people like John Coltrane, Charlie Mingus, Ornette Coleman, Archie Shepp, Pharoah Sanders...I actually saw Pharaoh Sanders in the Phil<sup>20</sup> about a year ago, he’s still absolutely fantastic. It warms my heart as well, cos there was a period when it almost got lost. I think it’s probably the zenith of 20<sup>th</sup> Century music now. If you look at the history of...black music and jazz, it’s quite amazing...Still listen to a lot of John Coltrane and Charlie Mingus as well.  
(Maguire, June 2008).

This love of jazz also led Reid and fellow Wimbledon student Jeremy Brooks – who would later go on to co-found Suburban Press – to create “a very sort of free-form, sort of mad, screaming jazz sort of band”, in which Reid played piano (Maguire, 2008). This influence is also present in some of Reid’s early work for *The Cat Book*, started in 1969 and telling the tale of “a frustrated suburban moggie” called Poot, “and her attempts to find the big time and then enlightenment” (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 17), during which she teams up with a “hipster sax-playing frog” named Jimmy, [See fig. 2.16]. There is no doubt that Reid’s early exposure to what CND campaign secretary Peggy Duff calls the

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<sup>20</sup> The “Phil” refers to the Liverpool Philharmonic Hall, located on Hope Street in Liverpool City Centre.

“crazy mix-up of jazz and folk and farce, and colour...” of the Aldermaston marches (Duff, 1971, p.210) made a lasting impression on the artist, and proved to be a significant influence on the artist’s later work.

The first CND march to Aldermaston in 1958 coincided with a time when the young people of Britain became enamored by the guitar. Inspired by both British ‘King of Skiffle’ Lonnie Donegan<sup>21</sup> and makeshift American skiffle bands of the 1920s, the Aldermaston generation would be the first to realise that they could become empowered by making music themselves instead of just passively listening to their idols. This musical influence was clearly in evidence during the marches, as this photograph of two young dancers on the 1958 Aldermaston march demonstrates [See fig. 2.17]. The skiffle craze - represented by hits such as Donegan’s *Rock Island Line* (1956) - was followed by the so-called trad boom, which took its cue from the jazz music emerging from New Orleans before the First World War. The trad boom saw bandleaders such as Acker Bilk and Chris Barber riding high in the charts on both sides of the Atlantic, and for a while the commercial success of traditional jazz rivaled that of rock ‘n’ roll (McKay, 2005).

Jazz musicians also lent their support to CND, and some also played a direct part in campaign events and marches, adding to their distinctly carnival-esque atmosphere. In his 2005 book *Circular Breathing: The Cultural Politics of Jazz in Britain*, George McKay explains that the trumpeter, critic and broadcaster Humphrey Lyttelton, who had started out in the 1940s as a member of George Webb’s New Orleans revival band, was also a member of Barnet CND [See fig. 2.18]. Jazz singer George Melly would also go on to be arrested and fined at a

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<sup>21</sup> In the late 1950s Lonnie Donegan also publicly spoke out against the White Defence League, along with other British musicians of the day including John Dankworth and Cleo Laine.

mass sit-in in central London as one of the original members of the breakaway direct action group Committee of 100, discussed earlier in this chapter (McKay, 2005).

Britain's leading New Orleans-styled trumpeter Ken Colyer and his Omega Brass Band joined the 1958 Aldermaston March, leading the protesters into Hounslow to strains of *When The Saints Go Marching In*, *High Society* and *Lady Be Good* and livening up both that year's and subsequent marches with a wide repertoire played by ear. Nuttall gives the reader a taste of what Colyer and his followers brought to the atmosphere at Aldermaston as he explains:

The Colyer fans, by now dubbed beatniks...appeared from nowhere in their grime and tatters...hammering their banjos, strumming aggressively on their guitars, blowing their antiquated cornets and sousaphones, capering out in front of the march...Protest was associated with festivity. (Nuttall, 1968, p. 51).

Despite the Omega Brass Band making an early effort to add some authentic New Orleans touches - particularly in terms of costume - these were always second in importance to the music itself, and as a result the band's appearances at such events took on a peculiarly British tone [See fig. 2.19]. As the original Omega snare drummer Colin Bowden explains,

The uniform was basically black trousers, white shirt and tie and a peaked cap. Ken [Colyer] worked for London Transport at the time, and he managed to get a load of London bus drivers' or conductors' caps, and we used them for the uniform [Laughs]. (Bowden in McKay, 2005, p.62).

This curious juxtaposition of cultures may, as McKay goes on to suggest, stand as a visual signifier of the way in which jazz came to be consumed, interpreted and played in Britain:



The terrifically mundane combination of signifiers recalled by Bowden – New Orleans parade band topped by something from a red double-decker bus – may stand as an emblematic moment in transatlantic cultural exchange of jazz in Britain, not unlike the English bowler hat adopted by the “pre-atomic” Acker Bilk and identified by Philip Larkin as curiously iconic.

(McKay, 2005, p. 62).

Such bowler hats also became a staple fashion item on the 1960 Aldermaston march, due to Acker Bilk being No. 1 in the charts at the time [See fig. 2.20].

The frequent appearances by Ken Colyer’s Omega Brass Band and other groups of musicians at left-wing demonstrations follow a long lineage of music and mobilisation in Britain, a relationship which brings to mind the largely northern industrial working class brass band tradition dating back to Victorian England, though Omega and other New Orleans-inspired bands did not seek to emulate this tradition (McKay, 2005). McKay also acknowledges the possibility of conflicting readings of New Orleans jazz within a socio-political context, discussing its ambivalent existence as both an anti-elitist and conservative genre – a fact which McKay believes has contributed to trad jazz being treated suspiciously by cultural theorists<sup>22</sup> (McKay, 2005).

McKay explains that in their version of American music, CND marchers paradoxically found attributes that were lacking in American society: “not speed but walking, continuity, tradition, community, anti-commercialism” (McKay,

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<sup>22</sup> For example, Robert Hewison explains that writers including Kingsley Amis and Philip Larkin were also jazz critics, and that the critical conservatism of their poetry coloured their taste for traditional jazz (Hewison, 1981). However, despite an obvious anti-American sentiment that was linked, amongst other things, to the country’s development of nuclear weapons and also exemplified by TV programmes such as *Gangs in New York*, an episode of the BBC’s *Panorama* on New York street crime presented by Richard Dimbleby in June 1959, in the context of this study the genre is investigated through a loosely left-wing prism.

2005, p. 68). Nuttall captures this feeling surrounding New Orleans jazz when he explains in his 1968 book *Bomb Culture*:

The world was evil, governed by Mammon and Moloch. New Orleans jazz was a music straight from the heart and the swamp, unclouded by the corrupting touch of civilization. It would refertilize the world. (Nuttall, 1968, p. 42).

The marchers were also rallied further by the presence of numerous other professional and amateur jazz bands, skiffle groups and church choirs dotted throughout the line, singing or playing a mixture of traditional and popular songs, chants (“1-2-3-4-5 keep the human race alive...”) and compositions written specifically for the occasion – particularly within the folk movement (Irwin, 2008). With the dawning of the Atomic Age, many young musicians chose to utilise their skills to write and play fiercely political songs of protest that called for nuclear disarmament.

Despite the directors of the 1958 film *March to Aldermaston* emphasising the abundance of jazz musicians present at the event, McKay observes that it is folk music which seems to have become more readily associated with the anti-nuclear movement (McKay, 2005). Eric Winter, founder of Britain’s first folk magazine, came up with a theme song entitled *The H-Bomb’s Thunder* – a poem by future science fiction novelist John Brunner set to the tune of *The Miner’s Lifeguard*, an American trade unionists’ song from the 1900. However, the most significant voice of this folk movement was that of songwriter, singer and committed socialist Ewan McColl, a key figure in the emerging folk movement and founder of the Ballads and Blues Club in the Holborn district of London (<http://www.enotes.com>). By the 1950s, McColl was writing songs such as *The*

*Ballad of Ho Chi Minh*. His attentions turned to the threat of nuclear warfare; the most notable of his compositions from this time was a song called *Against the Atom Bomb*. A song sheet published by Winter's *Sing* magazine [See fig. 2.21] featured the words to many of McColl's songs including *Song of Hiroshima*, which was sung on the Aldermaston marches by the London Youth Choir. It featured the line "Deadly the harvest of two atom bombs", after which the film of the 1960 march *Deadly the Harvest* was titled (<http://www.wcml.org.uk>). McColl also wrote a song for Aldermaston entitled *That Bomb Has Got To Go*, for which lyric sheets were passed around on the march itself. McColl's future partner, the American singer and musician Peggy Seeger, was also present at Aldermaston. She perfectly describes the atmosphere of communal joy which managed to cancel out thoughts of bad weather and physical discomfort:

It was an adventure. Every 100 yards or so you had a different kind of band – jazz, blues, skiffle, West Indian. And of course people made up their own songs. You didn't just shuffle along in misery. They were hopeful days and Aldermaston marches had a sense of optimism later marches didn't have. We were fighting for something – peace – rather than fighting against something. Peace was like a big red balloon and we were heading towards it. We really felt that if we marched we could shut this bloody place down.  
(Seeger in Irwin, 2008, p. 53).

Seeger's quote also illustrates CND's commitment to peaceful, non-violent protest, as well as quashing claims that such musical accompaniments indicated a lack of maturity and conviction to the cause.

The late 1950s was also the period in which touring rock n roll bands from America crossed the Atlantic for the very first time. Bill Haley and His Comets toured Britain in February 1957, and Reid can remember hearing about the event as a ten-year-old, and having a brief flirtation with Teddy Boy style as

a youth, though doesn't elaborate as to what extent he was involved in Teds' juvenile delinquency; what the music writer Nik Cohn describes in his 1969 book *Awopbopalooop Alopbamboom* as the "brawling and smashing at random" and the breaking of "windows and locks and bones" (Cohn, 2004 [1969], p. 8).

Interestingly, in Reid's mind the memory of Bill Haley's visit to Croydon is tied up with the 1952 case of local teenagers Christopher Craig and Derek Bentley, in which Bentley - the victim of a gross miscarriage of justice - was convicted and hanged for shooting and killing PC Sidney Miles in a bungled break-in at a Croydon warehouse (<http://www.bbc.co.uk>). Reid explains,

...I had a little flirtation with being a bit of a teddy boy. You know, all the early rock n roll. And in fact living in Croydon, it was really affected by that whole Craig and Bentley case with the kids, which was in *Suburban Press*, but also really at that period you had the first touring rock n roll bands from America...Bill Haley, who played the Odeon in Croydon and all the seats got ripped up, there was a riot... (Maguire, 2008).

Though according to Cohn, Haley was already past his peak in America, in Britain his arrival was much anticipated and he "rode from Southampton to London in state on the Bill Haley Special, laid on for him by the *Daily Mirror* and, at Waterloo, he was met by three thousand fans, many of whom had waited all day for him" (Cohn, 2004 [1969], p. 13). Haley played at the Dominion at Tottenham Court Road, a concert in which the music was drowned out completely by the "screaming, whistling, stamping, roaring..." (Cohn, 2004 [1969], p. 14).

Fights and seat-slashing incidents also ensued in some British cinemas when Haley contributed his 1954 song *Rock Around The Clock* – originally recorded in 1952 by Sunny Dae & the Knights – to a controversial 1955 film

entitled *Blackboard Jungle*, based on the theme of teenage debauchery. Starring Sidney Poitier, Glenn Ford and Anne Francis, the film was the first history to feature a rock n roll song as its theme and the placing of *Rock Around The Clock* at four strategic points by director Richard Brooks was the point at which some would argue led to the explosion of rock 'n' roll as not only a musical phenomenon but also a social and cultural one (<http://www.billhaley.co.uk>). In Green's 1988 book *Days in the Life*, Laura Mulvey offers the opinion that the emergence of American rock n roll music in the 1950s could perhaps in some way be linked to a new sense of political awareness and cultural freedom, in other words contributing to the zeitgeist of the era. Mulvey explains:

This always seemed to have some kind of political significance which I could never put my finger on and can't to this day. But it seemed no accident that Suez and Bill Haley's first tour of Britain happened at the same time. I wasn't consciously listening to rock'n'roll as a political statement, but it was the pleasure side of this pre-60s revolution, and I see it as the first big shift which allowed the 60s to take off with a big bang. (Mulvey in Green, 1988, p. 11).

In particular, it was this subversive energy of 1950s rock 'n' roll and the sharp sartorial finery of the Ted subculture which became associated with it that future Sex Pistols manager Malcolm McLaren would later go on to exploit with the help of Vivienne Westwood in their 1972 shop Let It Rock, as discussed in Chapter Four.

At this time Reid was attending John Ruskin Grammar School in his home town of Shirley, Croydon - in his opinion a "glorified secondary modern with pretensions to being a public school", where he was suspended for breaking school uniform rules by wearing winklepickers, "shorty overcoats" and skull-and-crossbones rings (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 11). Apart from the time spent in

the art department, on the sports pitch or with friends, Reid's experience of secondary school was generally a negative one, though perhaps slightly more enjoyable than his brother Bruce's school years spent at Dulwich College, a public school in south-east London. After Bruce passed his 11-plus and won a scholarship, Reid explains that he didn't think his brother "ever really enjoyed it one single bit" (Maguire, Jan 2008).

However, as previously mentioned Reid did excel in both art and sport in particular during his time spent at John Ruskin Grammar School, with his talent for the latter - in both football and cricket - one of the only reasons he escaped expulsion. In fact, at one point Reid was seriously considering a career as a professional footballer. As he explains in *Up They Rise* (1987), before the World Cup of 1966 football was still very much a working-class game – "not the thing for a middle-class boy to do" (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 11). Reid would later return to football in his mid-20s, going on to play for both Tonbridge and Redhill in the Southern League, however his talent for art would go on to take precedence (Maguire, Jan 2008).

Meanwhile, in North London the future Sex Pistols manager Malcolm McLaren was also exacting his own teenaged rebellion. McLaren was born in Stoke Newington, North London in 1946, the son of Peter McLaren, a Scottish engineer, and his wife, Emily Isaacs. He had a somewhat unconventional childhood; his father left home when he was two and McLaren was raised by his grandmother, Rose Corré, who refused to send him to school until the age of 10. Corré became an overwhelmingly dominant figure in the young McLaren's life, favouring him over his older brother Stuart. As McLaren explains:

She made me challenge every notion of the established viewpoint because

that's what *she* wanted to do. I think Stuart must have felt pretty bad because I was lavished upon and he was starved. But I was never allowed to play or to have friends... We had no idea what family unity was. But my grandmother had such a strong alternative world that I could exist by creating my own in the same fashion.  
(McLaren in Savage, 2005 [1991], p. 15-16).

Corré was not perturbed by McLaren's bad behaviour at school, signing letters to the headmaster with the phrase "Boys will be boys"; as a result McLaren began to use rebellions to gain his grandmother's attention and approval (Savage, 2005 [1991], p. 16).

Though McLaren – who along with Reid was slightly too young to have participated in any significant way to what Bromberg describes as "the Golden Age of the Teenager" (Bromberg, 1989, p.10) – was also having his first encounters with rock 'n' roll. In 1957- a year before Reid was taken along by his parents to the very first Aldermaston march and a year before Elvis Presley entered the army - McLaren was admitted as a pupil of the Whitechapel Foundation, a secondary school in London's East End. When his maths teacher, who also moonlighted as a jazz pianist, took to the stage to play Jerry Lee Lewis's *Great Balls of Fire*, McLaren was awestruck. He explains, "I'd never seen anything like it, I thought my head was gonna come off" (Bromberg, 1989, p. 9). Bromberg also explains that Malcolm may also have been influenced by his brother Stuart, who listened to the American Top Ten on Radio Luxembourg and took Malcolm to see Buddy Holly at the Finsbury Park Astoria (Bromberg, 1989, p. 9). Stuart was also an avid fan of Eddie Cochran, a young guitar virtuoso and rock n roll rebel born in Oklahoma City in 1938. Cochran managed to crystallise the atmosphere of the period into a handful of hit songs including *Summertime Blues* (1958) and *C'mon Everybody* (1959), the latter of which

charted higher in Britain than the USA, reaching No. 6. Nik Cohn singles out Cochran as a particular influence on later musicians, from Billy Fury to The Beatles and The Who. He explains that Cochran was

...the first major American rocker to do a full, unaborted tour here and his impact was tremendous. He was the starting point from which British pop really began to get better...he was something solid happening. (Cohn, 2004 [1969], p. 57).

In fact, it could be suggested that Cochran's influence managed to reach beyond the Beatles generation and even as far as the punk era of the late 1970s. For example, Savage writes in the essay 'The Great Rock 'n' Roll Swindle', featured in Taylor, Paul (ed.) *Impresario: Malcolm McLaren and the New Wave* (1988) that McLaren's psychogeographical Oxford Street film - produced whilst at Goldsmiths' College - included interviews with Gene Vincent and Billy Fury (Savage in Taylor, 1988, p. 46); Siouxi and the Banshees/Adam and the Ants guitarist Marco Pirroni even claims that Malcolm believed Billy Fury to be "more important than Bob Dylan" (Colegrave & Sullivan, 2001, p. 84).

McLaren's early interest in rock n roll music and the Teddy Boy style would later manifest itself in the retail ventures he started up with his partner Vivienne Westwood, in particular a shop called Let It Rock which they opened on the Kings Road, London, in 1972, which sold T-shirts printed with the words 'Buddy Holly' [See fig. 2.22] and 'Rock 'n' Roll Lives' [See fig. 2.23].

McLaren's particular fixation during this period was a man named Larry Parnes, the flamboyant prototype rock'n'roll manager and impresario of the late 1950s and early 1960s who had both packaged and controlled a stable of young English rock 'n' roll singers, bestowing them with outlandish pop names such as



Billy Fury<sup>23</sup>, Marty Wilde, Vince Eager, Duffy Power and Dickie Pride. Parnes perfected the concept of the package tour, in which his stable of stars toured the country in a bus, playing one-night concerts at theatres wherever an audience could be packed in. These tours became a major event in the early 1960s British rock 'n' roll calendar. According to Savage, Parnes can be credited as a key creator of what we now know as the English music industry (Savage, 2005 [1991]).

McLaren regarded Parnes as the perfect 1950s pop manager, admiring his shrewdness, quick wit and natural publicity flair, as well as his ability to make money and to avoid mistakes; Parnes would become known by the nickname 'Parnes, Shillings and Pence' (Cohn, 2004 [1969]). As music journalist Nick Kent recalls, "[McLaren] wanted to know about everything that had happened between 1963 and 1974. For him, Billy Fury was the archetype. Malcolm was obsessed with Larry Parnes; he adored him." (Kent in Savage, 2005 [1991], p. 65). Kent goes on to explain: "Malcolm baldly stated to me that Johnny Kidd was more of an influence on his generation than Bob Dylan." (Savage, 2005 [1991], p. 71).

McLaren slowly built up his Jewishness in emulation of Parnes; as Barry Miles explains:

...all Malcolm really wanted to be was Larry Parnes basically. He wanted to be an old Denmark Street Jewish manager. That was his scene, you know, but with a modern twist on it. He loved all of that, that's why his early shops were all this '50s rock 'n' roll stuff.  
(Maguire, 2007).

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<sup>23</sup> Born in Liverpool, Billy Fury (1940-1983) was an internationally successful British pop singer from the late 1950s to the early 1960s, managed by Larry Parnes. His hits included the 1961 singles *Halfway to Paradise* and *Jealousy*. He remained an active songwriter until the 1980s.

McLaren would also later work with Parnes' idea of what Kent describes as "the myth of the working-class, barely articulate Rock star" (Savage, 2005 [1991], p. 71) in relation to the Sex Pistols. Despite the fact that they were not devised by McLaren, the names Johnny Rotten<sup>24</sup> and Sid Vicious<sup>25</sup> can also be regarded as twisted, provocative versions of Parnes' combinations of prosaic Christian names and surnames with vitality and panache, such as Billy Fury or Vince Eager, highlighting the way in which McLaren had updated Parnes' managerial style for a new era.

McLaren had achieved this with added aggression and imagination, coupled with the ability to imbue the Sex Pistols project with certain artistic, political and philosophical concepts. In the words of Savage: "In a more innocent pop era, Parnes had instilled 'showbiz values' into his protégés; McLaren would inculcate ideas" (Savage, 2005 [1991], p. 83). The most obvious similarity between Parnes and McLaren is the way in which they exploited the media for their own purposes. In 2009, McLaren made public his interest in the career of Parnes by presenting the radio programme *Parnes' People*, which was broadcast on BBC Radio 2 on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> February 2009 (<http://www.bbc.co.uk>).

The Sex Pistols' ties to early rock 'n' roll music were made even more explicit with the release of *The Great Rock 'n' Roll Swindle* soundtrack album in February 1979, which saw McLaren attempt to turn earlier disputes with two major record companies to his advantage and which became a product of the

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<sup>24</sup> It is claimed that Lydon was given the name Johnny Rotten in the mid-1970s, when his neglect of oral hygiene turned his teeth green (<http://www.independent.co.uk>). Another story says the name was given to him by Sex Pistols guitarist Steve Jones, who saw Lydon's teeth and exclaimed, "You're rotten, you are!" (Strongman, 2008, p. 105).

<sup>25</sup> Born John Simon Ritchie, it is believed that Sid Vicious was given his name by Lydon. Lydon recalls, "I called Sid Sid after my pet hamster. It's true! It's the most useless, stupid answer in the world! Vicious came later, after the Lou Reed song." (Lydon in Savage, 2005 [1991], p. 116).

pantomime of the relationship between Glitterbest and Virgin, with a film of the same name being released in 1980 (See Chapter 5).<sup>26</sup> The title of the album and film – *The Great Rock 'n' Roll Swindle* – was taken from a 1950s *Melody Maker* article by Lonnie Donegan, entitled 'Rock 'n' Roll - It's a Swindle!' [See fig. 2.24].

The 24 tracks on the Sex Pistols' *The Great Rock 'n' Roll Swindle* album included versions of Chuck Berry's *Johnny B. Goode*<sup>27</sup> and Jonathan Richman's *Roadrunner*<sup>28</sup>, whilst Sid Vicious ran through covers of the Eddie Cochran songs *Somethin' Else*<sup>29</sup> and *C'Mon Everybody*<sup>30</sup>. Guest band Ten Pole Tudor featured in an offbeat rendition of *Rock Around The Clock*, originally released by Bill Haley and His Comets in 1954. Reid's visuals for the album and later film promotion echoed the theme of the project. As an accompaniment to the planned inclusion of Ten Pole Tudor's version of *Rock Around The Clock* as an A-Side to the March 1979 release of the Sex Pistols' *Who Killed Bambi*, Reid visited his parents' house and rummaged around in his old collection of 78s, unearthing an original Bill Haley sleeve for the same song (Reid & Savage, 1987). This was directly appropriated for the Sex Pistols, the only changes being the addition of new lettering ('Featuring Ten Pole Tudor, direct descendant of Henry VIII') to

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<sup>26</sup> A full documentation of the disputes between Glitterbest and Virgin Records can be found in Jon Savage's *England's Dreaming* (1991).

<sup>27</sup> *Johnny B. Goode* was released by Chuck Berry in March 1958, and reached No. 8 on the Billboard pop chart.

<sup>28</sup> *Roadrunner* Richman's band The Modern Lovers first recorded *Roadrunner* with producer John Cale (previously of the Velvet Underground) in 1972. This version was first released as single and in 1976 on The Modern Lovers' long-delayed but highly acclaimed debut album.

<sup>29</sup> *Somethin' Else* was released by rockabilly musician Eddie Cochran in July 1959.

<sup>30</sup> *C'mon Everybody* is a 1958 song by Eddie Cochran and Jerry Capehart, originally released as single b-side.

cover up the original band name of Bill Haley and His Comets<sup>31</sup> [See fig. 2.25], (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 91).

British Punk also had a direct antecedent in what became known as ‘pub rock’, a genre which is described in Stuart Borthwick and Ron Moy’s 2004 book *Popular Music Genres: An Introduction* as “a precursor to Punk’s objection to progressive rock, with bands playing stripped-down rock ‘n’ roll and country rock in a network of pubs and clubs”, often performing covers of popular rock ‘n’ roll songs (Borthwick & Moy, 2004, p. 82). Borthwick and Moy also note the fact that the success of small-scale pub-rock record labels such as Chiswick and Stiff proved to later punk entrepreneurs that it was still possible for independent ventures to make a profit (Borthwick & Moy, 2004). Pub rock venues also played a more direct part in the developing Punk scene, with bands such as The Stranglers, The Damned and the Sex Pistols playing early gigs at The Nashville on North End Road, West London (Borthwick & Moy, 2004) – a pub frequented by publicist and ex-freelance music journalist Alan Edwards. In Fred and Judy Vermorel’s *Sex Pistols: The Inside Story* (1981) he explains,

Rock ‘n’ roll had got very boring...But I think it was at the Nashville I noticed the first changes...The Sex Pistols played there, the Stranglers played there. And they were radically different to anything I’d ever seen. (Edwards in Vermorel, 1981 [1978], p. 7).

Though pub rock was significant as the first major backlash against the spectacle of 1970s glam rock, it is clear that for some it lacked excitement, and was described by journalist Roy Carr in the *NME* of 29<sup>th</sup> October 1977 as

primarily a traditionalist movement restricted to Greater London with some overspill into the Home Counties, and, at its genesis, a means of

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<sup>31</sup> The song was later discarded in favour of Paul Cook and Steve Jones’s song *Silly Thing*.

sporadic 'employment' for musicians beached by loser '60s bands. Later it became evident that pub rock was a geographical reality rather than an artistic one...

(<http://www.punk77.co.uk>).

Nevertheless, the influence of rock n roll filtered through into the band itself; according to Stephen Colegrave and Chris Sullivan, the set list of the Sex Pistols' first gig at St. Martin's Art College in late 1975 featured covers of the Who's *Substitute* and the Small Faces' *Whatcha Gonna Do About It?* (Colegrave & Sullivan, 2001). References to McLaren describing his new band as the next Bay City Rollers are frequent, perhaps in the context of a similar style of managerial control (Colegrave & Sullivan, 2001). McLaren was drawn to the Scottish pop band, who by early 1975 were one of the highest-selling acts in Britain. As Savage explains, the Bay City Rollers were made up of "five working-class teens, a manipulative, gay manager, cute sartorial gimmicks and music that was tepid but effective" (Savage, 2005 [1991], p. 99). McLaren viewed the band as an updated version of the late 1950s pop mode as orchestrated by his idol Parnes (Savage, 2005 [1991]).

Sex Pistols' guitarist Steve Jones declares, "When we started out, we liked the [New York] Dolls and the [Small] Faces. In fact, we wanted to BE the Faces" (Colegrave & Sullivan, 2001, p. 103), indicating that the band members themselves also brought with them certain musical influences and tastes which were to be built upon and moulded by those around them. In a November 1977 article for *Sounds* magazine, featured in the 1997 book *Time Travel: From the Sex Pistols to Nirvana - Pop, Media and Sexuality 1977-96*, Savage argues that

...none of this would have been taken seriously at all if they didn't play classic rock 'n' roll and weren't one of the best and most consistent recording bands this year. Look again at those advance orders – like the

Beatles/Stones in their heyday. Or near enough... As rock 'n' roll, can't be faulted.

(Savage, 1997 [1977], p. 33-34).

According to Savage, the song choices for the soundtrack to *The Great Rock 'n' Roll Swindle* “merely reinforce the hint that the Sex Pistols are very much an update, 20 complex, accelerated years on, of the primal two-fingered rebellion that rock 'n' roll ever was” (Savage, 1997, p. 91). Savage goes on to suggest that whereas the 1960s generation had filtered out the anarchic aspects of pop music, the Sex Pistols and in particular *The Great Rock 'n' Roll Swindle* album (1979) and film (1980) were an attempt to redress the balance, going so far as to celebrate pop's disposability and expose the industry as a con in itself (Savage, 1997). This view is supported by Sex Pistols bass player Glen Matlock in Fred and Judy Vermorel's *Sex Pistols: The Inside Story* (1981) [1978], where he explains:

Anything that was slightly exciting was a very contrived, very poseurish way of going about things, very arty. As though someone had sat down and thought out an idea and thought, oh, I'm going to be like that. All like David Bowie and Roxy Music which are very contrived things. And it was just good to go out and, like, rock out. Cos there was no rock 'n' roll then at all.

(Vermorel, 1981 [1978], p. 14).

This quote demonstrates how - despite McLaren's art school background and obviously significant influence – Matlock personally sought to position himself against the self-conscious posturing of acts like Roxy Music by playing music he regarded as having more in common with earlier rock 'n' roll. This is at odds with the commonly-held belief that every aspect of the Sex Pistols project represented a clean break with the past. As Savage summarises:

Musically, the Sex pistols synthesized various elements from the sixties and the seventies. Despite being presented as a radical break, it was cobbled together from tough London mod music – the Small Faces, early era Who – and riffs stolen from Glam rockers like Mud and renegade hippies like Hawkwind.  
(Savage in Taylor, 1988, p. 51).

The evidence gathered in this study demonstrates the fact that although the Sex Pistols and the Punk genre in general is primarily viewed as making a clean break with the popular music of the past, there are in fact a number of crossovers with earlier forms of British rock ‘n’ roll in particular - as evidenced by some of the early influences and tastes of Reid, McLaren and the band themselves - which also demonstrate a clear continuation of this lineage.

This chapter has explored the Reid family’s participation in the Aldermaston marches, organised by the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) from 1958 to 1965, and its impact on the artist in terms of political views – as demonstrated by Reid’s involvement with the Stop the War Coalition and the peace movement in Northern Ireland for example, both documented in Chapter Six. The Aldermaston marches also played a key role in terms of popular culture, and it was during these events that the young Reid was first exposed to contemporary popular music including jazz, which has proved to be a life-long passion for the artist.

Both Reid and McLaren were also exposed to early rock ‘n’ roll music as teenagers. This influence is explicitly referenced in some of McLaren’s choices for the Sex Pistols, most notable in the cover versions performed at their early gigs, and the film *The Great Rock ‘n’ Roll Swindle* (1980), the title of which was inspired by the aforementioned article by Lonnie Donegan [See fig. 2.23]. Rock ‘n’ roll also formed the main concept of McLaren and Westwood’s shop Let It

Rock, opened in 1972, which shall be explored in greater detail in Chapter Four.

To conclude, both the CND's Aldermaston marches and the sexual immorality and rebellious spirit of early rock 'n' roll music are just two examples which, for the young Reid and McLaren, brought to life the potent combination of politics and popular culture – a relationship which would be essential to the success of the Sex Pistols (See Chapter 5). Chapter Three documents the art school training of both Reid and McLaren, a period where the two friends would explore these ideas further within the context of student occupation and the theories of the Situationist International.



## **Chapter 3**

### **Demand the Impossible**

“Sous les pavés, la plage” (Beneath the paving stones, the beach) – Situationist graffiti, Paris, May 1968.

The aim of this chapter is to document Reid’s time spent at art college during the 1960s; namely Wimbledon College of Art (1962 to 1964) and Croydon College of Art (1964 to 1968), deconstructing the commonly-held belief that Reid’s artistic career began with his role as art director for the Sex Pistols in the late 1970s and tracing the emergence of many of Reid’s reoccurring themes and visual motifs. This chapter will place Reid’s practice within the context of radical British painting of the 1960s, including the work of ex-Croydon fine art tutors Bridget Riley and John Hoyland. The chapter then goes on to explore the friendship between Reid and Malcolm McLaren and the sit-in they organised at Croydon in 1968, placing it within the context of British student occupation and the influence of the Situationist International.

Greatly inspired and encouraged by his “alcoholic art teacher, a total cynic” (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 11) to avoid sixth-form and pursue his interest in art and design further, and swayed further by his older girlfriend who was already in attendance, a sixteen-year-old Reid enrolled on a Foundation course at Wimbledon College of Art in 1962. Foundation courses were usually experimental in nature and exposed students to a wide variety of media, materials and techniques, allowing them to develop and hone their artistic skills and identify any particular strengths and abilities whilst having the freedom to work independently (Walker, 1987).

Despite the decade witnessing innovations in art school teaching which built upon the Bauhaus and American Expressionist-inspired progressive art school courses of the 1950s, Wimbledon College of Art was – according to Reid – “the old guard’s last retreat before everything went pop” (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 12), retaining an emphasis on the more traditional art forms of painting, sculpture and printmaking. Reid enrolled at Wimbledon in 1962, making the journey by train from the family home in Croydon. Reid explains how the usually-empty trains filled up with tourists in summer. He recalls:

It was very bizarre this time of year. Usually you’d be on a train and there’d be nobody on it, and suddenly there’d be all these rich toffs on the train going to watch the tennis (laughs). I used to spend a lot of time walking around Wimbledon Common.  
(Maguire, June 2008).

Reid admits to rebelling against the “tweed jackets, brogues and monacles” (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 12) by missing classes to walk on Wimbledon Common and also to attend local gigs by bands that also contained a number of ex-art students such as the Rolling Stones, the Pretty Things and the Yardbirds<sup>32</sup> (Maguire, 2008). Both the Rolling Stones and the Pretty Things had a Sunday residency at the Crawdaddy Club, initially inside the Station Hotel in Richmond, Surrey and later at the larger Richmond Athletic Association. The Rolling Stones also played at the Red Lion pub in Sutton, Surrey during 1962 and 1963, whilst the Yardbirds played both Croydon’s ABC Cinema and Fairfield Hall during 1965 (<http://www.thebluestrail.com>).

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<sup>32</sup> The Rolling Stones: Charlie Watts – Harrow; Keith Richards – Sidcup; Ronnie Wood – Ealing.  
The Pretty Things: Dick Taylor – Royal College, Sidcup.  
The Yardbirds: Eric Clapton – Kingston; Jeff Beck – Wimbledon; Jimmy Page – Sutton.

Although occasionally missing classes, Reid also talks about gaining a certain respect for his art tutors' traditional methods which involved regular life classes and the execution of fastidious still life drawings including minutely-detailed images of natural objects such as rocks and shells. (Reid & Savage, 1987). In particular Reid enjoyed producing realistic portraits of jazz idols such as Charles Mingus and John Coltrane; at this time he had also formed a free-form jazz band with fellow Wimbledon student Jeremy Brook, a future co-founder of Suburban Press. (Maguire, June 2008).

According to John A. Walker's 1987 book *Cross-Overs: Art Into Pop, Pop Into Art*, the 1960s were the "heyday of the British art school" (Walker, 1987, p. 16); a period in which both the number of British art schools and the number of working class applicants to those schools increased significantly. Whilst Walker admits that the mere fact that a pop star once attended art school "is no guarantee that the experience benefitted their musical career" (Walker, 1987, p. 15), it is fair to say that British art schools have exerted a significant influence on the character of pop music from the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century onwards, and Walker provides an extensive list of famous art school alumni.

Former art student and graphic designer Pearce Marchbank, interviewed in Green's 1988 book *Days in the Life: Voices from the English Underground 1961-1971*, confirms the importance of art schools in shaping the career of future rock musicians, going so far as to state:

If you want to try to find somewhere from which you could say the whole 60s culture comes from, it was the art schools. Art schools in the 1960s really were the laboratories that were making rock musicians and designers and painters, they were the real universities of the 60s. Hundreds of rock stars started off as art students: Lennon, Townshend, Clapton...loads.  
(Marchbank in Green, 1988, p. 32-33).

The art school environment offered an alternative to the repetitiveness of the nine-to-five workday or unemployment, welcomed eccentrics and non-conformists and encouraged individual expression, as well as importantly also providing a readymade physical performance space and audience for student-led bands as well as outside acts playing one-off gigs. It is therefore no coincidence that two of the Sex Pistols' first performances were at St. Martin's College of Art and the Central School of Art in London in November 1975 (Walker, 1987). As Mick Farren, former editor of *IT* and leader of the English proto-punk band The Deviants explains,

When I went to art school I thought it would lead to being a rock star. Art school is a good place to rehearse a band, as many of us discovered in that generation... Basically, we knew at St. Martin's what was going on up in Hornsey, which had just lost Ray Davies, and we knew there was a hotbed of vice down in Ealing, with Pete Townshend and Michael English and people coming out of there... there were about four or five main schools and we all went to each other's dances... (Farren in Green, 1988, p. 33).

Farren's quote emphasises the fact that far from operating in isolation, individual art schools - particularly those in the capital but also schools in northern cities such as Leeds and Manchester - were engaged in a nationwide exchange of ideas and information, a relationship which later led to a number of student revolts and sit-ins during 1968, more of which will be discussed later in this chapter. In the words of Simon Frith and Howard Horne, writing in their 1987 book *Art into Pop*, "Art schools are the natural setting for ideas of counter-culture" (Frith & Horne, 1987, p. 48).

Away from the restrained and methodical style of drawing taking place at Wimbledon, Reid became captivated by the work of the American Expressionist artist Jackson Pollock through an exhibition which Reid describes as

brehtaking (Reid and Savage, 1987). Through research into the exhibition history of Pollock, aided by Frank G. Spicer's doctoral thesis *Just What Was It That Made U.S. Art So Different, So Appealing?: Case Studies of the Critical Reception of American Avant-garde Painting in London, 1950-1964*, submitted to Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland in 2009, the Tate Gallery exhibition Reid is most likely to have visited is *54-64: Painting and Sculpture of a Decade*, a major survey of trends in contemporary art of the previous ten years which featured works by Pollock, Mark Rothko, Jasper Johns and Robert Rauschenberg [See fig. 3.1] (Spicer, 2009). The exhibition was held from 22<sup>nd</sup> April to 28<sup>th</sup> June 1964, which would make Reid seventeen at the time and ties in with his final year at Wimbledon College of Art.<sup>33</sup>

British art in the 1960s had witnessed a revolutionary shift due to the influence of Abstract Expressionism and the action painting and colour-field techniques developed by American artists such as Pollock and Mark Rothko respectively during the 1940s and 1950s. The energy, inventiveness, spontaneity and sheer scale of their work changed the landscape of British painting and sculpture throughout the 1960s, as British artists also began to challenge convention and overturn assumptions about the subject matter, appearance and status of art. At this time Reid was not familiar with American Abstract expressionists such as Jackson Pollock, their style or its own particular significance within the art historical canon. He explains,

...I was pretty art history ignorant really...And as I say I didn't really know who Pollock was, or anything about the history of American

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<sup>33</sup> Earlier exhibitions showcasing new developments in American painting included Tate's *The New American Painting* (1959) and the Whitechapel Gallery's *Vanguard American Painting* (1962), the latter being the first London exhibition to feature all four artists (Pollock, Rothko, Johns and Rauschenberg).

modern art. So I was seeing them quite fresh in a way, quite innocent....I didn't know it was 'action painting' 'til later.'  
(Maguire, June 2008).

Approaching the work without these preconceptions, Reid interpreted Pollock's paint-splattered canvases such as *Frieze* (1953-55) [See fig. 3.2] as figurative landscapes, awestruck by both the sophistication and discipline of the work at a time when its immediacy was interpreted by many critics as a signifier of a lack of artistic skill. He describes the work at Tate's Pollock show as possessing "a terrific power and magic" (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 12), and in a later interview explains that he found the paintings "fantastic, like a whole sort of labyrinth of fantasy worlds" (Maguire, June 2008). Many of Reid's own paintings appear to utilise similar gestural techniques, including those featured in the *Celtic Surveyor* exhibition held at the Parco Gallery, Tokyo in 1990, as well as the Britannia Hall, Derry, the 051 Media Centre in Liverpool, the Cornerhouse in Manchester, and Kunsthaus, Berlin, in 1992.

This influence is particularly evident in Reid's sleeve designs for bands such as Pink Industry's album *New Beginnings* (1985) [See fig. 3.3] as well as in the multi-coloured stage backdrop and screen prints created during the 1980s as part of a collaborative performance project with partner Margi Clarke, entitled *How to Become Invisible* [See fig. 3.4]. In his August 1983 article for *The Face*, entitled 'Guerilla Graphics: The Tactics of Agit Pop Art', Savage explains that Reid and Clarke's project was "in many ways a summation of past graphics and a return to the fine-art disciplines of his art-school training" (Savage, 1983, p. 29). This fine art influence is discussed directly by Reid in *Up They Rise* (1987), where he discusses the fact that his abstract canvases "explain the grids and disciplines that I always admired, say, in Jackson Pollock, and try to cross the

ludicrous barriers between science and art” (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 124); evidence that the action painting of Pollock first viewed by Reid as a teenage art student during the mid-1960s has proved to be a long-lasting, if little-known, influence on the artist.

The work Reid selects for public display in exhibitions such as his 1990-1992 retrospective *Celtic Surveyor* [See figs. 3.5 & 3.6] tend to emphasise his origins as a painter – origins that are often overlooked by those who primarily associate Reid with his role as art director for the Sex Pistols during the late 1970s and the discipline of graphic design. In his essay ‘Too Low to be Low: Art Pop and the Sex Pistols’, featured in Roger Sabin’s 1999 book *Punk Rock: So What*, Robert Garnett states that Reid “turned to art” after the demise of Punk as “there was nowhere else for him to go if he did not want to become a pop industry professional” (Garnett in Sabin, 1999, p. 18), overlooking the fact that Reid had in fact been painting and drawing for many years previously and already had a fine art training – a common mistake made by writers and critics when discussing Reid’s career as an artist, and one which this study seeks to counterbalance.

Reid completed his Foundation course at Wimbledon College of Art in 1964. Attracted by the locality, government grant and lack of academic entry requirements, Reid chose to pursue his love of painting further by enrolling at Croydon College of Art later that year where he would forge a friendship with future Sex Pistols manager Malcolm McLaren. Inspired by the ideas of the Situationist International - the notorious avant-garde group of European intellectuals whose aim was to create an alternative to the spectacle of capitalism and integrate art with everyday life - the two would go on to conduct their own

student sit-in at Croydon, contributing to the atmosphere of national student occupation and rebellion that manifested itself in England around the time of the May 1968 riots in places such as Paris and the Watts district of Los Angeles.

In the autumn of 1964 Reid enrolled on a vocational painting course at Croydon, where he is described by fellow student Robin Scott as being “very preoccupied with being a painter, very serious about what he was doing...I appreciated that he was attracting attention with his work, he was thought of as a serious student” (Savage, 2009, p. 21). Reid continued to experiment with a variety of styles before his encounter with the work of Jackson Pollock at the Tate Gallery’s blockbuster 1964 exhibition *54-64: Painting and Sculpture of a Decade* whilst a student at Wimbledon College of Art again returned to exert a significant influence over his technique. Reid explains that he “started painting abstract gouaches. Quite Pollocky”, two of which he worked on sporadically over a period of twenty years from 1966 to 1986 (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 13). These two canvases appear to correspond with the first two paintings reproduced in Reid’s 1989 catalogue *Celtic Surveyor*. Entitled *Organisms* and *Through the Looking Glass* [See figs. 3.5 & 3.6], these large-scale paintings in acrylic (5’ x 5’ and 6’ x 4’ respectively) can be said to epitomise Reid’s pre-Sex Pistols painting practice, which sat alongside his forays into Situationist-inspired détournement (See Suburban Press, Chapter 4) from the late 1960s onwards.

Executed in rich earth tones, these abstract paintings - though acknowledging the work of Pollock via a tangled web of splattered drips and zigzagged brushstrokes – also evoke the earth’s cyclic nature, with the vibrant, blazing sense of life and movement offering the viewer a surprisingly reflective encounter. As Marchant explained in 2008, Reid’s painting practice



...is a meditative experience, but it's a mistake to imagine that meditation is necessarily reflectively/internally silent. There's so much going on in these abstract and deeply contemplative pieces though they are in binary opposition to the meditative silence of say Ad Reinhardt or Barnett Newman.

(Marchant, 'More Light More Power' essay for 'Art or science, ancient or modern, spiritual or political: Stained glass and paintings' exhibition, The Aquarium L-13, 2008).

Reid has continued to produce a prolific number of vibrant canvases, both figurative and abstract, through his recent relationships with Steve Lowe's Aquarium Gallery and John Marchant's Isis Gallery, London (See Chapter 6). Reid works from his home in Toxteth, Liverpool, which he shares with his wife Maria Hughes. His studio, formerly the bedroom of his daughter Rowan, is testament to the artist's prolific nature, crammed full of finished paintings and drawings related to a number of different projects including the ongoing *Eight Fold Year* project. Documentary photographs show the artist at work, his studio and materials [See figs. 3.7 to 3.10] (Maguire, Dec 2009).

In 2004, Reid held an exhibition entitled *Slated* at the Aquarium Gallery in London, displaying a series of abstract paintings and screen-prints on slates in bright acrylic paints [See fig. 3.11] which *Design Week's* Hannah Booth described as "bright primary colours with splashes of gold – some reminiscent of Jackson Pollock, others nodding to Howard Hodgkin or Patrick Heron" (Booth, 2004, p. 36). [See fig. 3.12]. It is also possible to apply Marchant's comments on Reid's relationship to American Abstract Expressionists such as Newman and Reinhardt to the work of some of the *Situation* artists of 1960, who - in contrast to the American critic Clement Greenberg's claim that the validity of a work related to how much it had to say about the limits of its own technical procedures than it did about the outside world – would not resolve their paintings into a

purely 'optical' experience for the viewer (Crow, 1996). As Thomas Crow argues:

In contrast to the New York scene, abstract painters in London were able to think of disciplined painting as a way-station where currents from any quarter of the urban environment might pass through and move on... The environmental aesthetic despised by Greenberg (but embraced by London's abstract painters in the *Place and Situation* exhibitions) emerged out of what seemed to be the most uncompromising limitation of painting to matters of surface and edge. (Crow, 1996, p. 58/62).

Comments such as those of Marchant and Booth, which attempt to place Reid's work within certain art historical traditions, are rare, with most writers instead choosing to focus on the apparent contrast between Reid's savage Punk experimentalism and his later paintings – often a combination of pure abstraction, astrological symbols and features of the natural landscape. For example in 2001, *Guardian* journalist Elisabeth Mahoney, in her article 'A Hippy Ending', describes Reid's post-Sex Pistols work as "distinctly unthreatening and trippy Celtic-tinged wall hangings and paintings" (Mahoney, 2001, p. 16). Such comments appear to suggest that the highly idiosyncratic nature of Reid's work does not allow it to be assimilated into an art historical canon, with the New Age mysticism of his painting practice standing alone as an anomalous postscript to his iconic photomontages and Situationist-inspired *détournement* produced for the Sex Pistols in the late 1970s, an interpretation which this study aims to deconstruct.

I believe that it is also possible to align Reid's painting practice with radical British painting of the 1960s, particularly those artists - most notably John Hoyland, a tutor at Croydon College of Art from 1962 to 1963 - who took part in the iconic *Situation* exhibition at the RBA (Royal Society of British

Artists) Galleries in London in August 1960. A number of iconic exhibitions which took place in London during the early 1960s sought to document recent British developments in abstract art, the most notable being the *Situation* exhibitions of 1960 and 1961, held at the RBA Galleries, which traced the impact of certain aspects of American painting on British abstract painters<sup>34</sup>. The 1960 *Situation* exhibition featured artists such as John Hoyland, Robyn Denny, Richard Smith, William Turnbull and Gillian Ayres (Gooding, 1990).

Hoyland taught on the painting course at Croydon from 1962 to 1963, one of a number of teaching staff regularly employed by the college who were painters and artists in their own right. For Hoyland, teaching was more of a necessity than an aid to development as an artist – by the time he began teaching at Croydon he had already been married for two years and was father to a young son (Gooding, 1990). It is Hoyland in particular whose development as a painter can initially be placed in relation to the *Situation* group, being the only artist to show in both the 1960 and 1961 exhibitions. Hoyland had visited New York in the early part of the decade to meet with several of the leading American painters; however like Reid, he had started out as a student with little or no knowledge of abstract art. The paintings he exhibited in *Situation* were some of his earliest abstract works (Gooding, 1990).

Both Reid and Hoyland share a particular painterly freedom, with natural processes and effects of chance shaping a painting's final appearance whilst simultaneously, the application of colour is guided intuitively by the artist; chance and control are applied in equal measure. Mel Gooding describes

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<sup>34</sup> According to Roger Coleman writing in the exhibition catalogue these included a new conception of space in painting and with it a new conception of the spectator's relationship to a painting which related to an environmental experience of colour (Coleman, 1960).

Hoyland's mature work as "...a complex structured non-figuration which was open to associative readings, that might admit allusion to natural objects and analogy with natural processes" (Gooding, 1990, p. 17). Though Hoyland does not allude to these natural objects as explicitly as Reid, whose work has always tended to have been a combination of the figurative and the abstract, the subjects and images Hoyland lists as his sources of inspiration are surprisingly similar to Reid's, with mentions of music, ancient cultures, the mystical and the natural world:

Shields, masks, tools, artefacts, mirrors, Avebury Circle, swimming underwater, snorkeling, views from planes, volcanoes, mountains, waterfalls, rocks, graffiti, stains, damp walls, pavements, puddles, the cosmos inside the human body,...food, drinks, being drunk, sex, music, dancing, relentless rhythm, the Caribbean, the tropical light, the northern light, the oceanic light. Primitive art, peasant art, Indian art, Japanese and Chinese art, musical instruments, jazz, the spectacle of sport, the colour of sport, magic realism...Borges the metaphysical, dawns, sunsets, trees, flowers, seas, atolls...The Book of Imaginary Beings, the Dictionary of Angels, heraldry, North American Indian blankets, Rio de Janeiro, Rotterdam!  
(Gooding, 1990, p. 21).

Hoyland's allusions to the mystical are made even more explicit in works such as *Quas* (1986) [See fig. 3.16], the title of which is the name of a mythological fallen angel and an illusion to the mystical and cosmic elements which are ingrained within his later work, much of which was painted at around the same period as the work contained within Reid's *Celtic Surveyor* exhibition of 1990 and 1992. Paintings such as Hoyland's *Quas* (1986) [See fig. 3.16], *Kumari* (1986) [See fig. 3.13] and *Swift Days, Moons and Suns* (1987) [See fig. 3.14] are ablaze with light and an almost other-worldly use of colour, which dissolving and melting in washes as forms interact through natural processes such as pouring, splashing, gravity and resistance.

These same techniques are evident in some of Reid's earliest figurative works, including *Monster on Nice Roof* (1972) [See fig. 3.15], with melding washes of paint forming the backdrop to a range of imagined characters. However, it is in Reid's later work - particularly the 365 paintings that form the *Eight Fold Year* project based upon Druidic celebrations of the four seasons, solstices and equinoxes - that the same techniques take centre stage, as the use of stains and washes of paint allow adjacent colours and forms to bleed into one another, creating organic or cellular forms that hint at earthly landscapes, mystical creatures or other worlds. In a 2009 interview Reid discusses his painting techniques further, saying: "A lot of that is just painting into it while it's wet and seeing where it goes, one thing leads to the next thing, leads to the next thing.... it's controlled chance (laughs)." (Maguire, Dec 2009).

The blazing golden and pink hues of Reid's *Eight Fold Year* painting No. 148<sup>35</sup> [See fig. 3.17] for example, are reminiscent of those used in Hoyland's *Quas 23.1.86* (1986) [See fig. 3.16]. Echoes of Hoyland's wash technique, seen in the shadowy edges of his painting *Broken Bride 13.6.82* [See fig. 3.18], can be found repeatedly in Reid's work, and is a recurring feature of the *Eight Fold Year* paintings. The triangle is also a recurring motif in both the artists' work, retaining an abstract or semi-abstract form whilst also alluding to figurative objects; according to Gooding the sail-like forms in Hoyland's *Broken Bride 13.6.82* were derived in part "from post-cards of crowded boats in Hong Kong harbour" (Gooding, 1990, p. 19), whilst Reid's use of the triangle in *Eight Fold Year* paintings such as No's 12 and 15 [See figs. 3.19 & 3.20] alludes to features of the natural landscape such as the hills and mountains of the British Isles,

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<sup>35</sup> Reid's *Eight Fold Year* paintings are untitled and undated, but for the purpose of categorisation both in this study and on the artist's archived website are numbered from 1 to 365.

photographed by Reid and his wife Maria on a series of visits to “sacred sites or places of ancient beauty and spirit” to conjunct with the Eight Fold Year paintings, sketches and drawings (<http://www.chipwork.com>).

The similarities between both the form and content of Reid and Hoyland’s paintings are perhaps best illustrated by two quotes from Marchant and Gooding respectively. Marchant describes the work featured in Reid’s exhibition ‘Art or science, ancient or modern, spiritual or political: Stained glass and paintings’ at The Aquarium L-13 in 2008 in the following manner:

This particularly alchemical meditative practice has manifested in a kind of synaesthetic phizziochromatic blitz, rendered in topographic planes of translucence. Of course, the works are thematically indeterminate and occult; refractive, blazing and hard, yet they are born of flowers (Marchant, essay for ‘Art or science, ancient or modern, spiritual or political: Stained glass and paintings’, The Aquarium L-13, 2008).

It is interesting to note that Marchant’s description of the intensity of Reid’s paintings and stained glass works is remarkably similar to Gooding’s evocative reading of Hoyland’s paintings from the 1980s:

These paintings are acts of enthralled witness, to what is seen in the mind’s eye, remembered from childhood, dreams and drunkenness, felt in the spirit, and experienced in the flesh. They are images of joy: Kumari, Quas (1986) and Moon Dance (1987) are explosive images of plasmic matter, of ecstatic liquefaction and deliquescence, of the melt-down of the individual personality into oceanic formlessness in dance, in sexual passion, in the diver’s moment of immersion. (Gooding, 1990. p. 21).

According to Gooding, Hoyland’s work signifies “a life of sharpened sight and generous receptivity” (Gooding, 1990, p. 21), a description which could undoubtedly be applied to both artists.

During Reid’s time at Croydon College of Art, the young Scottish artist Bruce McLean – then in his early twenties – took up his first academic post there,

teaching sculpture part-time on the college's Foundation Course. McLean viewed his time at Croydon as a creative activity and an important opportunity for collaborative projects and mutual development; a number of McLean's former students and colleagues continued to be amongst his closest collaborators.<sup>36</sup> In 1968, McLean began teaching on the new Environmental Studies course, which attempted to build new relationships between artists and other individuals from a wide range of other fields including ergonomics, psychology and ecology, clarifying the conception of art as one of many dynamic interactions between human beings and the world around them (Gooding, 1990). McLean's radical approach to sculpture and his collaborative working methods, or as Gooding describes it: "a process of stimulating and motivating" rather than instruction (Gooding, 1990, p. 29), epitomises the new approaches to teaching adopted by art schools of the 1960s. In the words of Reid's fellow student Robin Scott, perhaps best known for his band M and their 1979 hit single *Pop Muzik*:

My course was full of people who had broken ground in some way or were mature students. It was pretty broad in its possibilities, but rather vague, we were left to our own devices, and that was attractive to me. There was not much actual teaching: the presence of people like John Hoyland and Barry Fantoni and various other people, Bruce McLean was there. Painters in their own right, it was an obligatory role for them. Bread and butter.  
(Scott in Savage, 2009, p. 20).

This approach to art school teaching in the 1960s, an approach where, as John A. Walker describes it, "individualism rules" and "students determine their own rates of work, their own directions" (Walker, 1987, p. 17) is in stark contrast to how Reid views the art school of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the decline of which he

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<sup>36</sup> The composer Gavin Bryars, who taught alongside McLean on the Environmental Studies course at Croydon in 1968, later worked with McLean and David Ward on a series of performances at the Albert Dock in Liverpool in 1987.

describes as “...something to do with competition, administration, bureaucracy. There’s no sort of freedom to create really. Everything’s got to be accountable in education now” (Maguire, Aug 2007). Reid recalls that the staff at Croydon was to a certain extent very accommodating of what he wanted to achieve as an artist, with the course offering a great deal of freedom (Maguire, Aug 2007).

Influenced by emerging currents such as Fluxus, Land Art, Conceptual Art and Arte Povera, all of which sought to challenge common assumptions on the nature and purpose of artistic practice at a time of social and political idealism, McLean began to work with found materials to produce sculptures on the undeveloped sites around Croydon’s studios in Albert Road, bringing into question the concepts of permanence and impermanence and their implications. These included *Found Steel Girder and Scrap Sculpture, on curved pavement and gutter site* (1968), created from a collection of scrap metal [See fig. 3.21]. In the late 1960s, McLean again addressed the idea of impermanence by producing a series of works in Largiebeg on the Isle of Arran – the artist’s childhood holiday destination - in which long rolls of paper were splattered with water-based paint and strewn along the shores of the island, to be shaped and eventually destroyed by nature, as in *Shorescape* (1969) [See fig. 3.22]. It is possible to draw a parallel with Reid in this instance; due to his family’s Celtic heritage Reid was also a regular visitor to the Scottish islands as a child, and lived on the Isle of Lewis in the Outer Hebrides from 1975 until 1976. He remains a regular visitor to Scotland (Reid & Savage, 1987). McLean taught at Croydon until 1970, the year of his first major one-man show, *King for a Day*, at the Nova Scotia College of Art Gallery in Halifax (Gooding, 1990).



During the four years Reid attended, other tutors at Croydon College of Art included Barry Fantoni, a painter, illustrator, poet, playwright and musician. Perhaps best known as the most famous of *Private Eye*<sup>37</sup>'s cartoonists, Fantoni was also at the forefront of the British Pop Art movement and had mixed with artists such as David Hockney and Peter Blake during his earlier studies at the Slade School of Fine Art in London. Fantoni began to produce paintings such as *Portrait of the Duke of Edinburgh* (1963) [See fig. 3.23]. Fantoni also began teaching at Croydon in 1963, the same year he started working for the fledgling publication *Private Eye*, producing illustrations ridiculing the Conservative Party of the day. In the Beatles era, Fantoni hosted a teenage television magazine show called *A Whole Scene Going*, and later went on to write plays, detective novels and pop songs, as well as becoming an art and music critic; another example of an artist who, like Reid, has continually sought to defy classification (Burrell, 2009).

Also teaching at Croydon at this time were Richard Allen, David Leverett, and Bridget Riley, three artists whose work came to be associated with 1960s Op Art. Reid recounts his own experience of the course, explaining that

...compared to Wimbledon it was much more sort of trendy. You had people like Bridget Riley who was one of the visiting lecturers. In fact she was funny because she used to go to the pub and get students to do all her Op Art stuff! You had a lot of staff in there who were like not much older than you, who were fresh from the Royal College, like Barry Fantoni and various other people. It was trying to be a bit trendy. But it

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<sup>37</sup> *Private Eye* is a fortnightly British satirical and current affairs magazine, currently edited by Ian Hislop. Since its first publication in 1961, *Private Eye* has been a prominent critic of public figures deemed incompetent, inefficient or corrupt, and has become a self-styled "thorn in the side" of the British establishment, though it also receives much criticism and ire, both for its style and for its willingness to print defamatory and controversial stories. This was reflected in its once prominent libel lawsuits, for which it became notorious. As the UK's best-selling current affairs magazine, such is its long-term popularity and significance that many jokes and cultural miscellanea from its pages have entered popular culture.

was a very free course... That's when I started painting, did a lot of painting there.

(Maguire, June 2008).

Riley taught painting at Croydon College of Art from 1961 to 1964, whilst simultaneously creating numerous black and white paintings such as *Movement in Squares* (1961) and *Fall* (1963) [See figs. 3.24 & 3.25], in which she built up a formal vocabulary of intricate geometric patterns that were used to create a flickering, pulsating picture plane that destabilised the viewer and led to unsettling visual disruptions.

Whilst teaching at Croydon, Bridget also gained her first critical recognition. In the spring of 1962 she had her first solo show, at Gallery One in London, a defining moment. In 1963 she won the Open Prize in the John Moores exhibition at the Walker Art Gallery in Liverpool, and took the AICA Critic's Prize in London. This was followed by an invitation in 1965 to show in the prestigious *New Generation* exhibition at the Whitechapel Gallery in London alongside David Hockney and fellow Croydon tutor Allen Jones. In the same year Riley also participated in a group show, *Nouvelle Tendance*, at the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in Paris (<http://www.greenonredgallery.com>).

Riley's use of assistants in the execution of her paintings - as described earlier by Reid - is well documented, and is explained by the artist as a deliberate rejection of the handmade aesthetic of the American Abstract Expressionists, and a way of remaining objective by becoming a spectator of her own work.

However, her use of assistants has often garnered negative reactions, and in a 2008 article for *The Independent* entitled 'Read between the lines: are Bridget Riley's paintings really fine art?', Will Self asks, "But why not simply say: It's boring painting all those geometric shapes and I can't be bothered – an

explanation that everyone would understand”, echoing the sentiment of Reid’s earlier comment about Riley leaving to go to the pub whilst Croydon art students completed her work during the mid 1960s (<http://www.independent.co.uk>).

Though Riley was only present at Croydon for the first year of Reid’s course in 1964, certain similarities can be drawn between these two artists, particularly with regards to their enduring responsiveness to natural phenomena and acute sense of wonder at the effects of colour and light on the landscape – developed by Riley through her childhood spent in Cornwall, and by Reid’s Celtic and Druidic heritage. Riley’s 1984 essay ‘The Pleasures of Sight’ documents the joy she derived in childhood from exploring the landscape of Cornwall and witnessing the changing nature of light and weather upon her surroundings - she recalls, for example “looking directly into the sun over a foreshore of rocks exposed by the tide – all reduced to a violent black and white contrast, interspersed, here and there, by the glitter of water” (Riley in Kudielka, 2009, p. 33). These vivid descriptions of Riley’s childhood encounters with nature, along with the title of the essay itself - ‘The Pleasures of Sight’ – go some way to indicate Riley’s intentions as an artist: to “make visible” the moment of alchemy in which the commonplace is momentarily transformed into the ravishing (Riley in Kudielka, 2009, p. 34).

The relationship between Riley’s abstract paintings and the natural world is made explicit in early figurative works such as *Pink Landscape* (1960), based on studies made in the sun-drenched hills south of the Tuscan city of Sienna [See fig. 3.26]. This link is also evident in the titles of abstract works from the 1960s onwards, including *Late Morning* (1967), *Reef 2* (1977), *To a Summer’s Day* (1980) and *High Sky 2* (1992). Similarities can be drawn with Reid’s approach to

painting; in a 2006 interview with John Marchant of the Isis Gallery, London, he explains:

A few years ago I was doing a lot of geometrical paintings. I tend to do them and then find the source... You can see it reveal itself in front of your eyes in the landscape. You just immerse yourself in it – it's just a total experience where you completely lose yourself.  
(<http://www.isisgallery.org>).

Though Riley's work is abstract, like that of both Reid and Hoyland it can also be said to hold some connection to nature and the fundamental human experience of sight. As Riley defines it: "I wanted to bring about some fresh way of seeing again what had already almost certainly been experienced, but which had been either dismissed or buried by the passage of time; that thrill of pleasure which sight itself reveals" (Riley in Kudielka, 2009, p. 34) – again, like Reid and Hoyland, giving form to an abstract sensation of joy and wonderment inspired by the natural world.

A significant contemporary of Reid's was the painter Sean Scully, a student with "very unusual empathy, passion, and sincerity" (Carrier, 2004, p. 48) who attended Croydon from 1965 to 1967 after being turned down by eleven other art schools. Like Reid, Scully was aware of the frequent exhibitions of American abstract painting in London during the early 1960s. In 1967, the discovery of the catalogue of Mark Rothko's 1961 exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, combined with the experience of daily teenage visits to the Tate Gallery, eventually led Scully to abandon figuration completely, moving from expressionist images of figures such as *Untitled* (1967) created during his final year at Croydon [See fig. 3.27], to abstract grid paintings such as *Soft Ending* (1969) [See fig. 3.28].

This move to abstraction can be seen partly as the influence of certain Croydon tutors including art history teacher Ron Howard, who according to Scully, asked students to focus on the surface of paintings rather than the picture spaces. Scully also discusses the importance of painting classes at Croydon with Barry Hirst, who emphasised the importance of colour and encouraged his students to look closely at both Fauvist and German Expressionist artists. Scully also states his enduring admiration for a number of English abstract painters, mentioning former Croydon tutor John Hoyland as a figure he particularly respects. (Carrier, 2004).

These influences are apparent in one of Scully's most important works, the *Wall of Light* series, which the artist embarked upon in the 1990s and originated from a trip to Mexico in 1983. As with the work of Reid, Hoyland and Riley, paintings from the *Wall of Light* series related to specific times or places in Scully's life – *Chelsea Wall I* (1999), for example, reflects the urban landscape of Chelsea<sup>38</sup>. *Wall of Light Desert Night* (1999) [See fig. 3.29] was inspired by a night-time drive in the Nevada desert and suggests the mystery of the encroaching darkness, the desert's infinity and the weight of its silence, hinting at Scully's involvement with spirituality and his desire for a spiritually ambitious art. As the critic Sue Hubbard of *The Independent* writes,

...it affirms the struggle of the human spirit in a world overloaded with technology and mechanisation for it has been painted with the body and heart and not just the head. As with Mondrian, who spoke of his restricted forms as a mystical pursuit of the Absolute, which he justified in terms of his theosophical beliefs, Scully's painting has its own profound spirituality.  
(<http://www.independent.co.uk>).

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<sup>38</sup> Scully taught at the Chelsea College of Art in London from 1973-1975.

Like Reid, Scully's progress has been distinguished by a remarkable and sometimes unfashionable commitment to painting, and to different extents the two can be viewed as outsiders - as Reid tells Savage in 1983, "There are ideas that are always current, and you live in an age where you tend to have to think the opposite" (Reid in Savage, 1983, p. 30). In Scully's case in particular this attitude has manifested itself in an adhesion to the fundamental concerns of spiritually ambitious abstract art. As Scully explains to João Ribas, "I hold to a very Romantic ideal of what's possible in art, and I hold to the idea of the 'personal universal.' This is a complex agenda. My project is complicated in this way, and in that sense I'm out of fashion" (<http://www.artinfo.com>). He further explains his agenda as a painter as such:

I want my paintings to express the sentiment that things are more than one way. It's not a question of making something perfect, it's a question of making something true. Something that can reflect the dimensionality of the human spirit within the grid of our world. We have more than one soul.  
(Scully in Carrier, 2004, p. 146).

In a 2009 interview, Reid criticises Scully's grid paintings, observing, "He doesn't seem to change much" (Maguire, Dec 2009). Despite this, it is still possible to make a link between Reid and his Croydon contemporary Scully, and in fact the former Croydon tutors and artists John Hoyland and Bridget Riley: namely a heightened awareness of the sacred and spiritual, as well as an overwhelmingly positive, celebratory approach to both creating and living.

Due to a lack of formal entry requirements, Reid explains that "there was a very odd combination of people" at Croydon (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 13). Being a technical college as well as an art school, meaning Reid also came into regular contact with individuals undertaking apprenticeships in engineering and

other vocational subjects. He would often use the college's sports facilities, keeping alive his teenage love for football, a talent which had been sidelined in favour of art school. As Reid explains to Marchant, "There was always art and sport. As you know I was going to play professional football or cricket" (<http://www.isisgallery.org>). In fact he would return to football in his mid-twenties, playing semi-professionally for teams such as Tonbridge and Redhill in Surrey (Maguire, 2008). During his time at Croydon Reid also maintained a great interest in music, particularly jazz, and moved from the "free-form...mad, screaming jazz sort of band" he had with Jeremy Brooks at Wimbledon to playing saxophone during his lunch breaks (Maguire, June 2008); or in the words of fellow student Robin Scott, "...he used to take over the common room and make a hell of a din every lunch hour" (Scott in Savage, 2009, p. 21).

Contemporaries of Reid's also included Ray Davies of The Kinks. Davies joined Croydon from Hornsey at the end of 1963, enrolling in its film and theatre programme, whilst at the same time laying down some of the band's first recordings and in January 1964 releasing their first single *Long Tall Sally* (Kraus, 2006). Despite being best known for hits including *You Really Got Me* (1964) and *All Day and All of the Night* (1964) along with 1970's *Lola*, The Kinks also released what *ARCHITECT* magazine's Amanda Kolsun Hurley describes as their "quiet masterpiece" *The Kinks Are the Village Green Preservation Society* in 1968, the first of Davies' commentaries on the built environment of postwar Britain (Kolsun Hurley, 2009, p. 39). This was a subject close to the heart of Davies, later inspiring him to write a follow-up album - *Arthur* - in 1969, and a rock opera, *Preservation (Acts 1 and 2)*, released in 1973-74. As Kolsun Hurley explains,

While things were swinging on London's Carnaby Street, Davies stuck around the north London suburb of Muswell Hill, where he'd grown up, to write songs about strawberry jam and Tudor houses... When listened to carefully, Village Green and Arthur prove that Davies' surface nostalgia is really something deeper—it's a conviction that beloved places, and the memories they hold, must be sheltered from the sweep of conformity; and it's an indictment of the British class system that literally puts people in their place.  
(Kolsun Hurley, 2009, p. 39).

This is a sentiment shared by Reid, who two years after leaving Croydon Art College started up the community magazine *Suburban Press*, which Reid has described as settling into a “shit-stirring format, with thorough research into local politics and council corruption... jobs for the boys, construction jobs for big office blocks...all the usual things that have gone on and always will” (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 35-37).

Both Reid and Davies<sup>39</sup> appear to have an enduring love-hate relationship with their suburban surroundings, with Reid explaining in 1987, “In principle I think it's a very good system: why shouldn't everyone have their own garden? ...I hate what it's become” (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 7). This attitude is expressed by Reid in *SONG (To the tune of JERUSALEM) 'Songs for the Suburbs'*, which appeared in *Suburban Press* No. 1:

Suburbia Suburbia  
Padded cell of society  
A haven of isolation  
Tasteful restplace for the bourgeoisie

Lemon pink and lurid green  
While mothers and children play.  
Lemon pink and lurid green  
While daddies away.  
Away earning £££'s

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<sup>39</sup> Chapter 1 also discusses the influence of William Blake on both Davies and Reid.



To nurture the suburban dream.  
(Reid, *Suburban Press* No. 1, p. 13).

This sentiment is echoed in the lyrics of The Kinks' song *Shangri-La* from their 1969 album *Arthur*, which simultaneously affirm and undermine the protagonist's situation:

Here's your reward for working so hard  
Gone are the lavatories in the back yard  
Gone are the days when you dreamed of that car  
You just want to sit in your Shangri-la  
Put on your slippers and sit by the fire  
You've reached your top and you just can't get any higher  
You're in your place and you know where you are  
In your Shangri-la.  
(Davies, 1969.)

Reid and Davies appear to hold extremely similar attitudes towards urban renewal, both choosing to react against the suburban obsession for visual conformity and the homogenisation of culture within their own local environments through a variety of media. Such ideas were perhaps first assimilated during their time spent at Croydon, a period in which students became part of a cultural subset of the 1960s which Green describes as "springing from an eclectic fusion of beats, mods, the New Left, black music and white teenagers" (Green, 1988, p. ix) which clashed with Establishment politics and began to challenge the traditions and conventions of post-war British society. The themes of suburban living and local government corruption were explored further by Reid in *Suburban Press* (1970-1795) (See Chapter 4).

The most significant of all Reid's experiences at Croydon was undoubtedly his meeting with fellow student Malcolm McLaren, who joined the college in the autumn of 1967 after passing through a number of other art schools

and polytechnics including Reigate, Walthamstow and Chelsea under a series of false names in order to obtain grants – one early sign of McLaren’s ingrained ingenuity and penchant for deception which would eventually lead him to the creation of the Sex Pistols.

McLaren had left school in 1962 and spent the best part of the next decade as a professional student, enrolling first at Central St Martin’s College of Art, London (1963), then Harrow Art College (1964), followed by South East Essex College (from which he was expelled in 1965), Chiswick Polytechnic (1966) and, in 1968, Croydon College of Art. Meanwhile, he had met Vivienne Westwood at a club night run by her then-husband Derek, whom she had married in 1962. Westwood was born in 1941 in Derbyshire, the first child of Gordon and Dora Swire. She had led a sheltered adolescence, very much influenced by a Calvinist work ethos, before marrying Westwood and giving birth to a son, Ben. The pair divorced in 1966, by which time Westwood and McLaren, who had since met at Harrow Art College, were living together. Their son, Joseph, was born in 1967 (Savage, 2005 [1991]).

Reid’s student colleague Robin Scott, who had lived with the pair in 1969, describes the dynamics of their relationship, noting:

She appeared more warm and in a sense more practical and maternal and stable and I think those were the attributes that attracted Malcolm...Vivienne helped to wean him off that strange relationship with his grandmother. I always saw Vivienne as the woman behind the man. (Scott in Savage, 2005 [1991], p. 21).

Savage elaborates on the significance of the partnership in terms of future projects, stating:

Vivienne provided a backbone built out of her insistence on hard work, and her extreme commitment to a variety of beliefs, not the least of which, initially, was in Malcolm himself. She entered his fantasy world: her strength enabled them both to turn fantasy into reality. (Savage, 2005 [1991], p. 21).

McLaren's fantasy world was initially created within the context of the art schools he attended. After taking over the now-defunct Kingly Street Gallery - situated off Carnaby Street - in the spring of 1966 with a 48-hour happening involving mazes of corrugated cardboard, films and spotlights, McLaren turned to exploring the shapes and colours of Pop Art packaging. During his time at Croydon College of Art this was combined with an investigation into the post-war urban development of Croydon, manifested in black and white drawings of tower blocks and a series of disturbing, angular sculptures hung in concrete environments [See fig. 3.30] (Savage, 2005 [1991]).

It is possible to suggest that the work of the British artist and former Croydon tutor Allen Jones exerted a significant influence on McLaren during his time at Croydon and in the years that followed. Jones taught lithography at Croydon from 1961 to 1963. While McLaren did not attend the college until 1967, it is extremely likely that he was aware of the work of Jones, who by 1967 had already held a number of solo exhibitions in London as well as appearing in the *New Generation* exhibition of 1964 at London's Whitechapel Art Gallery. Influenced in part by sexually-motivated popular illustrations featured in magazines and mail-order catalogues of the 1940s and 1950s, Jones produced works such as *Wet Seal* (1966), *Desire Me* (1968) [See fig. 3.31] and *Thrill Me* (1969) [See fig. 3.32] featuring fetish-style clothing, the tactility of which was emphasised by his precise linear style. In 1969 Jones also created a series of sculptures - including *Table* (1969), *Chair* (1969) and *Hat Stand* (1969) [See fig.

3.33], – featuring hand-painted, fiberglass female figures clothed in leather fetish-wear made by John Sutcliffe’s company Atomage, which made clothing for underground fetish enthusiasts.

As documented by Savage and other writers, this world was brought into the public arena and made more readily available by McLaren and Vivienne Westwood’s shop SEX, opening in 1974 with a commercial base of fetish and bondage clothing in rubber, leather and vinyl. A photograph of Westwood pictured in the shop in 1975 wearing a rubber durex cat suit [See fig. 3.34] is remarkably similar to the costumes Jones designed for *Männer, Wir Kommen*, a “television video fantasy” directed by Bob Royans for WDR Television, Germany in 1973 [See fig. 3.35] (Jones, 1971). Both Atomage and SEX were featured in John Samson’s 1977 documentary film *Dressing for Pleasure*, which was banned by London Weekend Television.

Bromberg describes SEX as “like A Clockwork Orange gone Fredericks of Hollywood crazy” (Bromberg, 1989, p. 56), a description which may also be applied to the costumes which the director of the aforementioned film, Stanley Kubrick, invited Jones to design in January 1970. Though the project was later abandoned, Jones did produce a prototype of a rubber waitress outfit for *A Clockwork Orange*’s Korova Milk Bar which served both decorative and social functions [See fig. 3.33]. As Jones explained,

With hindsight you can make connections between my work and the film...I wanted to create sculptures that commented on the figure, and confronted anyone who saw it with a new experience. But I didn't quite realise what I was getting myself into, especially since I viewed myself as a feminist. I can see why Kubrick liked them.  
(<http://www.arts.guardian.co.uk>).

Jones also made a poster for the film that featured a photograph of the Croydon

underpass with a blood blot painted by Ed Ruscha [See fig. 3.37], hinting at the oppressive nature of the town's post-war urban regeneration. Similar images of Croydon would later be used by Reid in issues of *Suburban Press*, including a montage featuring Eugène Delacroix's *Liberty Leading the People* (1830) [See figs. 3.38 & 3.39] (See Chapter 6).

According to Reid, he and McLaren met at the beginning of the course in the autumn of 1967 - Reid's third year at Croydon - and to some extent the two struck up "an immediate rapport" (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 13), with Reid making McLaren the subject of his 1968 work *Up They Rise: A Playground for the Juggler* [See fig. 3.40]. Reid describes the work as "Very prophetic...A gouache of a real imp. Malcolm McLaren in his late teens. An inspired guess at things to come" (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 14); a depiction of McLaren as a 'juggler' or manipulator of the new urban environment.

The friendship between Reid and McLaren would be cemented by what Reid describes as "the spirit of '68" (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 13), when the two became the main instigators of a sit-in at Croydon during the summer term in which the young student body, opposed to formal education, tore down the partitions between student and staff workspaces as a protest against the individualisation and specialisation they embodied. Reid, McLaren, Scott and others barricaded themselves in the annex at South Norwood, issuing a series of impossible demands, creating press releases and answering the telephones in what would become as much a media event as a protest; Scott was singled out to talk to represent the student interest when the sit-in made it to *The Times* on June 12<sup>th</sup> and also appeared on the local BBC TV programme *Town Around* (Savage, 2009).

According to Scott, staff at Croydon did not associate the sit-in with serious political upheaval, generally regarding the students taking part as troublemakers or “upstarts” (Scott in Savage, 2009, p. 21). This may have been due to the fact that, according to Scott, “Most of the demands were directed at the staff; we weren’t looking to do anything constructive like affiliating ourselves with any political or educational objectives. It was very provincial” (Scott in Savage, 2009, p. 22). Despite a negative reaction from most Croydon staff due to the disruption of what Scott calls their “very comfortable situation” (Scott in Savage, 2009, p. 22), there were some who did show some support. As Reid notes,

What was funny though with the sit-in was the roles taken on by the staff there, because the young trendy ones who you’d think would be really on it were the ones who weren’t, because they were probably on their first wage, protecting their jobs. But the old guard, who tended to be more ex-Marxists or Communists were really supportive, which I think is really ironic.  
(Maguire, June 2008).

Despite support from the older members of staff, and genuine contact with universities such as the Sorbonne in Paris and Hornsey School of Art in England, the sit-in was brought to an abrupt end, according to Reid, when most students went home at the end of the summer term (Reid & Savage, 1987), giving weight to Scott’s argument that the Croydon sit-in had been little more than “a weekend picnic” (Scott in Savage, 2009, p. 22). Reid recalls a similar approach to events at Hornsey, where workers from the Electricity Board offered to illegally reconnect the college’s power but were turned down by the students, who claimed the sit-in was more about education and network structures than politics. As Reid explains,

...these guys offered to go into Hornsey and get the power back on, totally illegally. Quite a heavy number actually, and Hornsey turned them down because they didn't want any involvement with them, these trade union sort-of Marxists, which I thought was a bit typical really. Which is why it never happened here – because we're still so...snobby and elitist – and why it happened in France where I don't think you got quite the same barriers between workers and students...  
(Maguire, June 2008).

This anecdote is perhaps one illustration of the differences between such occupations in Britain and France.

Though Reid states that the idea of conducting a sit-in was a spontaneous one, and that he had started organising the event before hearing what had occurred previously in colleges such as Hornsey and the London School of Economics (LSE), he also states that “what was happening in Paris was also an influence” (Maguire, Aug 2008), referring to the notorious series of wildcat strikes and student occupations occurring in May 1968, fuelled in part by the avant-garde group of intellectuals known as the Situationist International (SI), a group with whose ideas Reid and McLaren would later become enamoured.

The Croydon sit-in occurred against an explosion of student rebellion in universities across Britain, ignited by the action at the London School of Economics (LSE) in 1967. A student had been disciplined for writing a letter to *The Times*, leading to a one-hour sit in and march featuring a banner with the words Down with the Pedagogic Gerontocracy (Green, 1988, p. 248). Tensions were raised after it was announced that Dr Walter Adams, then head of University College, Rhodesia, had been appointed as the next LSE Chancellor (Green, 1988). Adams was accused of assisting the illegal and racist Rhodesian Government in their arrest of students and tutors at the university. The furore caused by the appointment of Adams provided the fuel for a number of more

general demonstrations. A riot erupted in January 1967 when an anti-Adams meeting was banned, coinciding with a porter dying of a heart attack. Students responded to disciplinary action by staging a nine-day sit-in which eventually led to an occupation of the whole building, the first out of sixteen such examples of students demanding a say in their own syllabus and organisation that would take place in British academic institutions - including Croydon College of Art - by June 1968 (Hewison, 1986).

To some extent riots such as that occurring at the LSE owed much to the writings of the Situationist International (SI), a small group of European avant-garde intellectuals led by the Frenchman Guy Debord who were formed in 1957 as an amalgamation of the International Movement for an Imaginist Bauhaus, the Lettriste International and the newly-created London Psychogeographical Association. Though the groups and individuals who came together to form the SI were united by their experimental thinking in the artistic field, it is interesting to note that Situationist theory lacks the conventional vocabulary for art theory and criticism one would normally expect from a European avant-garde movement. In fact, it can be said to rely strongly on terms and concepts drawn from Marxism and the revolutionary labour movement it created (Home, 1988). This fact, coupled with Debord's belief that the conditions of capitalism had resulted in a loss of directly lived experiences – as detailed in his seminal 1967 text *Society of a Spectacle* - led to a rejection of the spectacle of mass media, advertising, entertainment, passive consumption of information and in the end, art itself. Although the SI never had more than twenty to forty members at any one time and was once an elite and relatively obscure organisation, by the late 1960s it had emerged into the forefront of public consciousness by capturing



both newspaper headlines and the imagination of a whole generation of students, including both Reid and McLaren (Ford, 2005).

McLaren's friend Fred Vermorel was studying at the Sorbonne in Paris when, in May 1968, Situationist-inspired student riots culminated in a General Strike across France involving not only students but millions of workers, immigrants and racial minorities (Rosemont & Radcliffe, 2005). A group of students at the recently-built University of Nanterre, known as Les Enragés, could be described as an autonomous group with exposure to Situationist ideas - supporters or fans, so to speak. They began to disrupt university life, inspiring similar rebellions at the Sorbonne and beyond (Robertson, 1988). Members of Les Enragés, along with members of the Situationist International including Debord, Vaneigem and Khayati, formed the nucleus of the Council for the Maintenance of the Occupations, or CMDO, a group of around forty people (Home, 1988). The CMDO did much to spread the occupations outside of academia and into the workplace (Robertson, 1988).

The extent of Situationist input into the events of May '68 has been disputed and discussed extensively in recent years. Home gives his opinion in his 1988 book *Assault on Culture*: "When it's considered that millions of workers and students participated in the May events, such a minuscule grouping cannot be deemed of much significance" (Home, 1988, p. 48). Simon Ford embodies the opposing view, believing that the SI were the only group to have predicted such a turn in events, even if their hopes for a total revolution resulted in failure due to the capability of capitalist states to repress such attacks (Ford, 2005).

The events of May '68 would come to shape the lives of many of those involved in the British counterculture of the 1960s. For example, David Robins -

then a student of London University - travelled to Paris in May 1968 whilst at the same time playing a leading role in *IT* (Green, 1988). Other key players in the English underground describe their involvement in Green's *Days in the Life* (1988). The young art student Malcolm McLaren - who would later come to be known as the infamous manager of the Sex Pistols - was also eager to get to the thick of the action in Paris and visit his friend Vermorel, but was prevented by rail, sea and air strikes.

It was at the LSE takeover that other students and key countercultural protagonists such as the future *Friends*<sup>40</sup> founder Alan Marcuson and future *Friends* writer Dick Pountain first encountered the English Situationist members Christopher Gray and Donald Nicholson-Smith, and started to spend time at Gray's Notting Hill abode (Green, 1988). As Marcuson explains, they found the Situationists immediately attractive:

The Situationists were the first people ever to provide me with a rational explanation of our irresponsible behaviour and urges to see everything, absolutely everything, in terms of political activity. They were much more fun, their writings were more fun, they were a more interesting group of people...than the boring fucking Trots...  
(Green, 1988, p. 250).

It was Pountain who became most enamoured with Situationist ideas; according to Barry Miles he was one of those involved in the fly-posting of the *International Times (IT)*<sup>41</sup> offices in 1968, in which the entire front of the

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<sup>40</sup> *Friends* magazine was launched in London in winter 1969 as a direct result of the closure by its US parent of the short-lived UK edition of *Rolling Stone*. The magazine was first published by Alan Marcuson in December, 1969 as *Friends of Rolling Stone*. It was later re-titled *Friends* and, from May 1971, *Frendz*. *Friends* was intimately connected with UK underground media such as *Oz* and *Time Out*, and had many contributors who were part of the London underground or avant-garde scene in the 1960s, including prominent English Situationist Charles Radcliffe.

<sup>41</sup> *International Times (it or IT)* was an underground paper founded in London in 1966. Editors included John Hopkins, David Mairowitz, Pete Stansill, Barry Miles, Jim Haynes and playwright Tom McGrath. Jack Moore, avant-garde writer Bill Levy and Mick Farren, singer of the The

building at 22 Betterton Street was covered with copies of a Situationist comic strip entitled *In Our Spectacular Society*<sup>42</sup> [See fig. 3.41]. One of the posters was rescued by Miles and later used as a front cover for Issue 26 of *IT* [See fig. 3.42] (Vague, 2000).

By this point the interests of English Situationists Charles Radcliffe and Christopher Gray had started to diverge. Gray had linked up with the UK-based Wise twins and others to form a group of radicals known as King Mob. Dave and Stuart Wise had been members of the Icteric group based at Newcastle University, gathered around university librarian and theoretician Ronald Hunt (Henri, 1974). Along with Chris McConway and John Myers amongst others, the group formulated a re-evaluation of a dissident European past that was similar to the position later taken up by the New York-based Black Mask/Up Against The Wall, Motherfuckers! group, a 'street gang with an analysis.' (Vague, 2000).

In 1967 the Icteric group mounted a travelling exhibition, entitled *Descent into the Street*, as well as promoting and unearthing revolutionary art activities and creating a number of happenings (Henri, 1974). They published two issues of *Icteric* magazine, the first issue of which contained musings on figures such as Giorgio de Chirico and Marcel Duchamp. Radcliffe believed that David and Stuart Wise were much closer to Gray's way of thinking and so watched the development of King Mob from the sidelines, not being able to work up much interest in their activities (Rosemont & Radcliffe, 2005).

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Deviants, also edited at various periods. Within a short time of the first issue, the name *International Times* was changed to *IT* after litigation threats from the *London Times*.

<sup>42</sup> Raoul Vaneigem and André Bertrand's *In Our Spectacular Society* originally appeared in *Internationale Situationniste* 11.

The loose affiliation of King Mob was apparently named after graffiti daubed onto the wall of Newgate Prison during the 1780 Gordon Riots, which occurred in London and around the country from the 2<sup>nd</sup> to the 7<sup>th</sup> June 1780 – an anti-Catholic uprising against the Papists Act of 1778.<sup>43</sup> Savage states that King Mob took their name from Christopher Hibbert’s 1958 book on the event, then the only one available<sup>44</sup> (Savage, 2005 [1991]). They launched themselves and their agenda through *King Mob Echo*, a magazine that ran for six issues, from April 1968 to 1970<sup>45</sup> [See fig. 3.44] (Savage, 2005, [1991]).

Though based around the Notting Hill Gate area, King Mob were intensely focused on the New York activities of Black Mask and the Motherfuckers, and the 1960s freak scene in general; more so than the SI’s heavy theorising (Ford, 2005). This is illustrated by a poster advertising *King Mob Echo* No. 2, in which a figure that David Caute describes as a “muscular barbarian” yells “Up against the wall motherfucker” alongside the caption “Reich, Geronimo, Dada: American revolutionaries with a message for England” [See fig. 3.45] (Caute, 1988, p. 273). Slogans such as “We’re looking for people who like to draw” highlight King Mob’s support for the creative violence of their American counterparts, whether Futurist or contemporary (Robertson, 1988). Vermorel claims that the group used to smash up branches of Wimpy burger bars and deface the work of artists (Vermorel, 1981 [1978]).

They also issued a flyer that publicly celebrated the shooting of Andy

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<sup>43</sup> William Blake's first biographer Alexander Gilchrist records that in June 1780, Blake becomes part of a rampaging mob that storms Newgate Prison.

<sup>44</sup> Christopher Hibbert’s book *King Mob: The story of Lord George Gordon and the riots of 1780* was published in 1958.

<sup>45</sup> The final issue of *King Mob Echo*, entitled *Work - Notes from the Underground*, was published sometime during 1970.

Warhol by Valerie Solanas, a well-known militant of S.C.U.M (Society for Cutting Up Men) [See fig. 3.46] (Vague, 2000). King Mob's hit-list included such well-known figures as Yoko Ono, Bob Dylan, Richard Hamilton and Twiggy. Miles was also most surprised and slightly worried to find himself on the list, stating that the people associated with Indica and *IT* "were hardly living high on the hog and moving in great capitalist circles" (Maguire, 2007). Ironically, *IT* No. 42 promotes a King Mob flyer ("Art Schools are dead"), along with mentions for the Motherfuckers and Valerie Solanas (Vague, 2000, p. 47).

King Mob's support for the actions of Solanas highlight their tendency to celebrate and glamorise society's deviants, whether it be skinheads, junkies, Hells Angels, football hooligans, criminals or the mentally unstable (Robertson, 1988).

This nihilism and fetishisation of violence was coupled with a peculiarly English Romanticism (Robertson, 1988). According to Vermorel, the members of King Mob were all highly educated; Dave Wise, for example, "could argue persuasively about the critique of art implicit in the aesthetic of the British Romantics. Or discourse learnedly on the subversive aspects of William Blake's poetry" (Vermorel, 1981 [1978], p.224). This influence was most evident from graffiti attributed to King Mob. Lines from Blake ("The Road of Excess leads to the Palace of Wisdom") and Coleridge ("A grief Without a Pang, Void, Dark, Drear, a Stifled, Drowsy Unimpassioned Grief") could be found on the walls around Notting Hill Gate [See fig. 3.47] (Robertson, 1988, p. 51). This Romanticism is also evident in some of the illustrations in *King Mob Echo*, including a drawing in the style of 19<sup>th</sup> century French cartoons which features Death holding a torch of fire and a banner which reads "Mob Law. Paris Burns.

Henry Returns, Tonite, St Marx Pl.” [See fig. 3.48] (Caute, 1988, p. 273).

Savage explains that this interest in the English Romantics and the Gordon Riots was an attempt to rediscover the chaotic, disordered side of Britain which had remained consigned to the periphery of history (Savage, 2005, [1991]).

King Mob’s presence was felt at the LSE takeover, where they helped break down the gates restricting access throughout the college with sledgehammers, stuck up obscene posters and sprayed graffiti denouncing the university authorities [See fig. 3.49] (Vermorel, 1981 [1978]). Following the LSE sit-in, King Mob were involved in another sit-in at the University of London Union (ULU) - an event at which they won the support of two impoverished art students from Goldsmith’s. As Pountain explains in Green’s *Days in the Life* (1988),

The whole thing was very fraught because you’d got this mass of students, the New Left people telling them to be serious and responsible, and King Mob telling them to get their rocks off, let it hang out, etc. It was very iffy, because the great mass in the middle were swaying both ways. Only a minority supported us; the majority wanted to be quiet and respectable, but these two guys came out of the crowd and joined in with us and said “We’re with you”...One was called Fred Vermorel and the other was called Malcolm Edwards.  
(Pountain in Green, 1988, p. 251).

Attracted by King Mob’s attempts to bridge to gap between popular culture and revolutionary theory, McLaren would later draw on the group as a source of inspiration for the creation of the infamous Sex Pistols the following decade, particularly in relation to *The Great Rock ‘n’ Roll Swindle* (1980) (See Chapter 5). However, the extent of McLaren’s direct involvement with King Mob has been widely disputed by both writers and pro-situ groups. The focus of this debate appears to be King Mob’s infamous December 1968 appropriation of

Black Mask's 'Mill-in at Macy's'. King Mob's intervention saw a number of King Mob members, including one dressed as Santa Claus, handing out toys to startled children and parents in Selfridges toy department. Others handed out anonymous one-page manifestos decorated with drawings of holly leaves proclaiming, "Christmas: It's meant to be great but it's horrible. Let's smash the great deception. Light up Oxford Street, dance around the fire" [See fig. 3.50] (Savage, 2005 [1991], p. 34). According to King Mob member David Wise, McLaren also utilised the text of King Mob's Christmas manifesto as a voiceover to his Oxford Street film the following year.

McLaren gives his version of events in an *Observer* article of January 2008 entitled 'These Were the Days that Shook the World', styling himself as one of the event's key instigators. He states:

At year's end we decided there would be 26 Father Christmases in Selfridges. So we all changed in the toilets and moved into the toy department and started to give away all of the toys to these kids. I'll never forget one little kid had tears flooding down his cheeks because he couldn't actually hold all of these toys and take them away. (<http://www.guardian.co.uk>).

Wise can recall informing McLaren and his friend Vermorel about King Mob's intentions after some rudimentary planning in early December 1968, urging them to get as many people as they could to Oxford Street. At this time Wise was very friendly with both of them, who listened intently to his theories of "English romanticism, English philistinism conjoined to British imperialism, Yorkshire and the northeast, plus my knowledge of Russian Constructivism, Surrealism, International Lettrism and the like" (Letter from Dave Wise to Vicki Maguire, 2008, Appendix 6). He also admits that McLaren "had dash and audacity and proved to be very plucky and imaginative darting here, there and everywhere

during the battle for Selfridges” (Letter from Dave Wise to Vicki Maguire, 2008, Appendix 6).

However, according to Wise, McLaren was never dressed as Santa Claus, and was only one individual out of many to play a part in the proceedings. Wise disagrees with McLaren’s perspective on events in the *Observer*, explaining:

The Selfridges intervention was really a disparate, collective effort. No one at the time really thought it was something to be claimed, something to be copyrighted for in any case, that was the enlightened no property spirit of the times. Later MM (Malcolm McLaren) was to say he was dressed as Santa Claus which wasn’t true. A good friend, Peter ‘Ben’ Trueman, out of his head on speed, did that!

(Letter from Dave Wise to Vicki Maguire, 2008, Appendix 6).

Despite the disputes over the extent of McLaren’s direct contact with King Mob, it was evident that McLaren’s had been captivated by the ideas of the Situationist International. On his return to London, Vermorel showed a fascinated McLaren his collection of newly-acquired Situationist literature; McLaren, not able to read French, required Vermorel to translate (Vermorel, 1981, [1978]). Despite his attempts to engage with Situationist texts, McLaren does admit that he was drawn to the SI’s journals due to their exclusiveness, intriguing pictures and brightly-coloured covers rather than the text itself. He explains,

You had to go up to Compendium Books. When you asked for the literature, you had to pass an eyeball test. Then you got these beautiful magazines with reflecting covers in various colours: gold, green mauve. The text was in French: you tried to read it, but it was so difficult. Just when you were getting bored, there were always these wonderful pictures and they broke the whole thing up. They were what I bought them for: not the theory.

(McLaren in Savage, 2005 [1991], p. 30).

McLaren, along with Westwood, would go on to use Situationist slogans on clothes sold in his shop *Seditionaries*, more of which will be discussed the next



chapter. For example, a striped orange Anarchy shirt from 1977 is covered in such slogans, including 'Be Reasonable Demand the Impossible' and 'Believe in the Ruins' [See fig. 3.51] (Stopler & Wilson, 2004, p. 75). The walls of the shop were also covered in quotes from diverse sources, including Trocchi and Theodore Adorno (Burn, 1991).

Meanwhile, Reid had also become enamoured by the immediacy and classlessness of Situationist slogans, preferring them to the heavy theoretical texts, and was attracted to the way in which the SI approached media and politics (Reid & Savage, 1987). In later work for both *Suburban Press* and the Sex Pistols Reid recycled such slogans for his own purposes and attempted to distil the essence of Situationist theory into single images, explaining that he "was trying to put over the waffle in a visual form; trying, say, to summarise a whole chapter of a book in one image" (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 38). Reid was also involved in designing the layout for Christopher Grey's 1974 book *Leaving the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*, which at the time was the only source of translated Situationist texts available in the UK<sup>46</sup> (See Chapter 4). Even so, Reid admits that he never actually read all of *Leaving the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*, but that he "loved the one-liners like the 'corpse' metaphor" [See fig. 3.52] (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 40).

There are many incidences of Reid recycling Situationist slogans and images for the Sex Pistols, numerous examples of which are explored in Chapter Five. As Fred and Judy Vermorel explain,

Malcolm and Jamie exacted an artist's revenge of which Courbet himself would have been proud. For a while...they flung news values, pictures and factoids back at the media with the concentration of Pollock hurling paint into his enormous canvases.

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<sup>46</sup> *Leaving the 20<sup>th</sup> Century* was published by Free Fall Press in 1974. Members of Suburban Press and pro-situ group Wicked Messengers were involved in the printing and typesetting.

(Vermorel, 1981 [1978], p. 260).

Reid's aesthetics and McLaren's tactics as manager of the Sex Pistols could be said to combine the Situationist concept of *détournement* with a critique of modern consumer society. Many writers on the subject would no doubt view McLaren, Reid and the members of the Sex Pistols as the walking embodiment of Situationist theory; a neat package that provides a convenient cultural link from one decade to the next. As Home describes it, historians have "set to work on their task of simplifying the past" (Home, 1995, p. 24). The truth surrounding the relationship between the SI and Punk, however, is slightly more complex, as discussed earlier in this chapter.

Described in turn as a charlatan, rogue, thief, pop-music Svengali and cold-blooded opportunist, McLaren created his own Situationist legend and routinely exaggerated his involvement with the group; according to Gordon Burn: "To hear him tell it, however, you would think he had been in the thick of the *événements* in Paris, and he tirelessly projected himself as a would-be anarchist provocateur" (Burn, 1991, p. 17). Walker provides a list of Situationist ideas employed by McLaren; "the construction of situations" (the stage-managing of events), "*détournement*" (Reid's graphics and Punk style in general), "demolition of the work ethic" (attitude of Punk; epitomised by Bow Wow Wow's song W.O.R.K.), "society of the spectacle" (Punk's DIY approach and the Sex Pistol's scorn of package holidays and fast food products), and a "critique of bourgeois attitudes and values" (television scandals and exposing pop music as a 'swindle') (Walker, 1987, p. 120). Robertson explains that McLaren

...knew that the more he refused incorporation, the more they would try to recuperate him (here 'they' are the entertainment and leisure industries, 'he' stands for the Punk project). In his role as the artist-as-businessman, McLaren used the insights and analysis of the SI to do 'good business'. (Robertson, 1988, p.53).

It could be said that McLaren employed the SI's key concepts to successful ends.

Later in 1968 McLaren moved from Croydon to Goldsmiths, and collaborated with Reid and fellow students Helen Mininberg (later Wallington-Lloyd) and Patrick Casey on a film about Oxford Street, funded by money swindled from London University. Described by Savage as "a piece of pro-situ psychogeography", the film weaved in an account of the 1780 Gordon Riots that had already been celebrated by King Mob, thus establishing another link with the English Situationist or pro-Situ scene (Savage, 2005 [1991], p. 40). This motif would be re-visited for a third time in McLaren's Sex Pistols film *The Great Rock 'N' Roll Swindle* (1980). Reid was also aware of the Gordon Riots and explains that they were responsible for the subsequent redesigning of Oxford Street itself, which prevented "the populace getting easy access into the important parts of the city" (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 17); one indication of Reid's lifelong fascination with social and political history.

Preliminary versions of the film traced the history of Oxford Street from Tyburn at Marble Arch on the Western End, where the spectacle of public hangings had given way first to middle class amusement palaces and then to seductive department stores. Later treatments of the film concentrated on the alienating and dehumanising effect of Oxford Street's shops and department stores, a Situationist-inspired critique of consumer society featuring rows of mannequins [See fig. 3.53] and ending with an apocalyptic scene involving smoke coming from a building and a restaurant on fire (Savage, 2005 [1991]).

According to Reid this image may have represented a real incident, as the group had once arrived to film a blazing McDonald's on Oxford Street after receiving a tip-off that it had been firebombed. Reid recalls,

So we were filming and the firemen arrived. We missed something – they do this thing where they go through the plate-glass windows holding arms, and we missed it on the film. So we were talking to the firemen, and they said 'It's no problem, we'll do it again!' Which I thought was funny, because around that period you'd just had the fireman strikes which were a big thing as well, so they were in quite a bolshy mood. (Maguire, June 2008).

Reid also remembers discussing The Beatles with Liverpool builders who were working on Paul McCartney and John Lennon's new Apple<sup>47</sup> shop in Oxford Street, who apparently regarded the stars as "these snobs who'd come down once a month to check out the work and try and be matey" (Maguire, June 2008).

Unfortunately, Reid explains that it is unlikely that any of this footage still exists.

A final shooting schedule provides evidence of McLaren's enduring interest in British rock 'n' roll, with footage of Billy Fury in performance and the fashions worn by his fans. However, both time and money were running out and in June 1971, McLaren abandoned the project.

After the Oxford Street film the two students went in different directions, with McLaren leaving Goldsmiths and famously entering the fashion business along with Vivienne Westwood as meticulously documented in Savage's *England's Dreaming: Sex Pistols and Punk Rock* (1991). As Frith and Horne explain in *Art into Pop* (1987):

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47 Apple Corps Ltd. is a multi-armed multimedia corporation founded in January 1968 by British rock band The Beatles to replace their earlier company (Beatles Ltd.) and to form a conglomerate. Its name (pronounced "apple core") is a pun. Its chief division is Apple Records, which was launched in the same year. Other divisions included Apple Electronics, Apple Films, Apple Publishing, and Apple Retail, whose most notable venture was the ill-fated Apple Boutique in London. Apple's headquarters, in the late-1960s, was at 3 Savile Row in London, known as the Apple Building, which was also home to the Apple Studio.

McLaren never thought much of Punk as a community work and had little sympathy with the hippie/political Punk patrons like Caroline Coon and John Peel, Rough Trade Records and Rock Against Racism. His radical reading of the Punk look came from an argument about style; and its origins lay in design studios not unemployment lines. (Frith & Horne, 1987, p. 138).

This move from radical student activity into fashion helps to indicate the ideological differences between the two men. This view is supported by Robin Scott, who describes McLaren's attitude towards the sit-in at Croydon. He recalls:

...when it came to the crunch, he had nothing to say. Indeed, when the opportunity arose to change the system, or do anything about Croydon School of Art, he fucked off. All the time he was creating a position for himself elsewhere, at Goldsmiths. It was the other Malcolm coming out... (Savage, 2009, p. 22).

In contrast, the failed Croydon sit-in had not deterred Reid, and the desire to control one's own life and environment - epitomised by the Paris riots in May 1968 - had a lasting effect (Reid & Savage, 1987). Despite these differences, it was through the Situationist International that both Reid and McLaren were able to formulate a new language to represent their angers and ideals. As Savage explains,

It was largely through the SI's influence that they developed a taste for a new media practice – manifestos, broadsheets, montages, pranks, disinformation – which would give form to their gut feeling that things could be moved, if not irreversibly changed. (Savage, 2005 [1991], p. 36).

This new media practice would go on to manifest itself in a number of ways, playing a significant part in McLaren and Vivienne Westwood's clothing shops such as SEX and Seditonaries, and of course, the creation of the Sex Pistols later

in the same decade. First of all, it led Reid to found the Croydon-based Suburban Press, more of which shall be discussed in the next chapter.

## Chapter 4

### Fresh from the Suburbs

“Ello Joe, Been anywhere lately Nah, it’s all played aht Bill, Getting to [sic] straight”

– ‘Two Cowboys’ T-shirt, Malcolm McLaren and Vivienne Westwood, 1975.

This chapter will explore how Reid and McLaren’s art school training, along with their experience of radical politics and student revolt at Croydon during the late 1960s (as documented in Chapter 3) led to the two friends exploring different modes of creative resistance in the years that followed. The chapter will discuss the founding of *Suburban Press* in 1970 by Reid, Jeremy Brook and Nigel Edwards, along with an examination of some of Reid’s most important projects and visual imagery from this time, which provides a critique of new British suburban towns and the corrupt nature of local government. Many of the visual motifs and slogans which Reid later used in artwork for the Sex Pistols were first produced for *Suburban Press* magazine, and this chapter will aim to locate the first appearance of such images. This will be followed by an investigation into McLaren and Westwood’s series of influential and iconic clothing shops created during the 1970s, a project which would eventually lead to the formation of a new band named the Sex Pistols.

By the early 1970s, the playful optimism of Situationist politics which had fuelled both the May ’68 Paris riots and Reid and McLaren’s Croydon sit-in had descended into violence. Situationist slogans such as “Soyez réalistes, demandez l'impossible!” (“Be realistic – demand the impossible!”) (Gray, 1974) had given way to the arrest and sentencing of a number of members of the Angry

Brigade<sup>48</sup> – a group of young radicals who had been responsible for a string of terrorist bomb attacks against the heart of the British Establishment. The Situationist International itself was dissolved in 1972, by which time only Guy Debord and the Italian writer Gianfranco Sanguinetti remained; together they wrote *The Veritable Split in the International* (1972), a book detailing the rise and fall of the organisation.

In some ways the Angry Brigade trial of 1972 could be viewed as a symbol of the final dissolution of 1960s utopianism, a dissolution which was reflected in the emerging economic and political climate. The Conservative Party, led by Edward Heath, were elected in 1970 for the first time in six years as worsening economic problems - including high rates of inflation and unemployment, a sterling crisis and industrial disputes, as well as the struggle for civil rights in Northern Ireland - took its toll on daily British life. By 1972, unemployment in Britain had reached one million, and the Industrial Relations Act introduced by Heath in 1971 led to strikes by miners, dockers and builders, including a national coal strike which placed the country into a state of emergency (Walker, 2002). As Walker explains in *Left Shift: Radical Art in 1970s Britain* (2002), those who had thought fascism had been eradicated during the Second World War also had to come to terms with the emergence of new neo-Nazi organisations and the beginnings of a more polarised society, as

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<sup>48</sup> Between 1970 and 1972 the Angry Brigade used guns and bombs in a series of symbolic attacks against property. A series of communiqués accompanied the actions, explaining the choice of targets and the Angry Brigade philosophy: autonomous organisation and attacks on property alongside other forms of militant working class action. Targets included the embassies of repressive regimes, police stations and army barracks, boutiques and factories, government departments and the homes of Cabinet ministers, the Attorney General and the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police. These attacks on the homes of senior political figures increased the pressure for results and brought an avalanche of police raids.



epitomised by Enoch Powell's Rivers of Blood<sup>49</sup> speech of April 1968 (Walker, 2002). Walker goes on to summarise this shift from optimism to pessimism by stating:

While the 1960s attracted the positive adjectives 'affluent', 'euphoric', 'liberated' and 'swinging', the 1970s have been judged 'bleak', 'cynical', 'difficult', 'dismal', 'down-at-heel', 'dreary', 'dysfunctional', 'miserablist', 'retrogressive', 'savage', 'seedy', 'shabby', 'tired', 'violent' and a decade of 'disillusionment, of uncertainty, fragmentation and polarisation'.

(Walker, 2002, p. 12).

This change in mood could be attributed to the failure of so many of the hopes and ideals of the previous decade, a situation which Richard Neville attempts to capture in his 1970 book *Play Power*:

As the sixties sizzled to a close, 'revolution' was on everybody's lips, which in many cases was where it remained...Omar Sharif played Che Guevara in a 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox wide screen quickie...and the Beatles, Rolling Stones and even Elvis Presley pressed the switch marked 'Social Conscience' on their Moog electric sound synthesisers."

(Neville, 1970, p. 57).

The transformation of the 'swinging' 1960s into the 'bleak' 1970s and the assimilation of revolution into products of mass media also had a profound effect on many key countercultural figures. The early 1970s saw the underground community disperse, in some cases their lives taking radically different directions as many new roles and ideas created during the idealistic 1960s became co-opted and institutionalised (Savage, 2005 [1991]). As Savage

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<sup>49</sup> Powell was a member of Edward Heath's Shadow Cabinet when he made the Rivers of Blood speech in 1968, so-called because he quoted the Roman poet Virgil's prophesy: "I see the Tiber foaming with much blood". He was immediately sacked, but not before sparking furious debate, with his words dividing the nation. The fact that London dockers had marched in support of Powell was a warning to left-wingers against uncritical support of workerism.

explains, “Squatters became homeowners; local activists became adventure playground leaders; utopians joined the Labour Party” (Savage, 2005 [1991], pg 43); Neville recalls how “banks advertised vacancies for bearded accountants (‘although long hair might be vetoed on the grounds that it gets caught in our computers’)” (Neville, 1970, p. 57). Colleagues of Reid and McLaren also chose new paths; Scott’s “talent for writing topical songs” brought him to the BBC and also led to his first LP, *Woman From The Warm Grass*, which was released on the small independent label Head Records in 1969 (<http://www.robinscott.org>). McLaren’s friend Helen Mininberg married a gay man, whilst Vermorel continued in higher education (Savage, 2005 [1991]).

In contrast, the failed Croydon sit-in, dissolution of the Situationist International and the dour economic and political climate of the early 1970s had not deterred Reid, and the desire to control one’s own life and environment – epitomised by the riots in Paris and Watts – had a lasting effect, perhaps more so than on most of his fellow Croydon alumni (Reid & Savage, 1987). Reid’s interest in urbanism and the Situationist International drew him into the political sphere, and in 1970 Reid created the Suburban Press, operating from the basement of 9 Sidney Road in West Croydon, along with Jeremy Brook and Nigel Edwards; Brook had attended Wimbledon Art School with Reid during the period 1962 to 1964 (Reid & Savage, 1987). Described by Reid himself as “one of the first community-cum-libertarian-cum-anarchist presses in Britain” (Savage, 1983, p. 28), Suburban Press had been founded to enable Reid, Brook and Edwards to print their own magazine of the same name. *Suburban Press* ran

for six issues from 1970 to 1975, and reached a circulation of 5000 at its peak<sup>50</sup> [See fig. 4.1]. The magazine combined sound journalism - local politics and incidents of local council corruption was thoroughly researched - with Reid's graphics and visual interpretations of Situationist ideas (Reid & Savage, 1987). In order to keep the press running, they took in work from other political and anarchist groups including the Black Panthers, PROP (Preservation of the Rights of Prisoners), and the Liverpool-based socialist organisation Big Flame, According to Reid Suburban Press also printed the first book on Watergate<sup>51</sup> ever to be released in the UK, as well as *Terrapin* - the magazine of the unofficial Syd Barrett fan club. Reid recalls these collaborations in a 2007 interview, stating:

It was initially a group of us who were involved with the sit-ins at the art school, and a year or two afterwards we decided to set up Suburban Press - initially to produce our own pamphlets and the actual newspaper Suburban Press, but in the course of that we also had our own printing facilities, did all our own printing. We would do loads of printing for radical groups, anarchist groups, all sorts of people...Black groups in Brixton, the women's movement, prisoners' rights, all sorts of stuff. We'd do lots of leaflets - we were very involved with the squatting movement as well.  
(Maguire, Aug 2007).

Reid also describes how Suburban Press did not exist in isolation, but became affiliated with other community presses such as the People's Press in Moss Side, Manchester, and John and Carola Bell's Crest Press in Notting Hill, London; as Walker explains:

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<sup>50</sup> The six issues of *Suburban Press* are undated; all were published between the years 1970 to 1975.

<sup>51</sup> Watergate is a general term used to describe a complex web of political scandals between 1972 and 1974. The word refers to the Watergate Hotel in Washington D.C. In addition to the hotel, the Watergate complex houses many business offices. It was here that the office of the Democratic National Committee was burgled on June 17th, 1972. The burglary and subsequent cover-up eventually led to moves to impeach President Richard Nixon. Nixon resigned the presidency on 8 August 1974.

Reid's activities during the first half of the 1970s can be considered part of the community arts movement that was then gathering momentum having started in the 1960s. The Suburban Press was only one of many such small, alternative printing presses, photography and poster workshops (Walker, 2002, p. 42-43).

As Reid declared in *Suburban Press* No. 3, "The growth of the alternative press in this country has accelerated far beyond most people's predictions" (Reid, *Suburban Press* No. 3, p. 1). Reid also claims that Suburban Press was one of the very first community presses to organise as a worker's collective (Reid & Savage, 1987).

By this point Reid was creating collages that mixed newspaper cuttings, magazine images, watercolour and ink drawings and lettering, an immediate precursor to the style later associated with Punk; as Reid explains: "A lot of the work that came to the public eye with the Sex Pistols was a result of what I'd learnt on that press" (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 37). Such invaluable techniques were honed through Reid's familiarisation with the printing press, "a Multilith 1250 – basically an office duplicator turned into a litho machine by having a bigger drum" (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 37), for which Reid and his colleagues did most of the servicing, as well as through the process of camera processing, and the production of negatives and plates (Reid & Savage, 1987). The Multilith 1250 taught Reid "the possibilities of a supposedly unsophisticated machine" (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 37), and he soon gained a sense of what would be most successful in a visual sense.

In the words of Reid:

Sometimes you could have the most beautiful, intricate artwork which, by the very nature of the process, would lose quality by the time of the final product. Other original artwork that seemed simpler – like collage, torn

edges, felt-tip, wash-point work, and bold black and white images – would gain quality and impact through the process. (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 38).

Such DIY techniques, including the détournement of newspaper headlines and photographs and illustrations from advertising campaigns in montages such as Reid's *From School to the Scrap-heap* image from *Suburban Press* No. 2 [See fig. 4.2], were in part formulated by Reid out of necessity. At this time, Reid, Brook and Edwards were unable to afford Letraset<sup>52</sup>, a range of original display typefaces and other graphic elements available to designers, which could be transferred one by one to the artwork being prepared [See fig. 4.3]. This was a widespread technique before the advent of the computer-based techniques of word processing and desktop publishing (Reid & Savage, 1987). Reid describes his cut-up technique as “necessity being the mother of invention” (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 38).

In addition to using these techniques to overcome the obstacles of limited resources and the loss of impact of more intricate artwork caused by the nature of the printing process, Reid's use of cut-up newspaper headlines and photographs can also be linked to his articulation of Situationist theory, including a similar critique of contemporary consumer society to that first put forward in Situationist texts such as Guy Debord's *Society of the Spectacle* (1967). Reid had found such original texts confusing, and was more enamoured by the immediate, classless nature of Situationist slogans such as the May '68 graffiti 'Prenez vos desirs pour la réalité ('Take your desires for reality') and 'Vivre au présent' ('Live now') (Grey, 1974), which he applied to his local area. He explains:

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<sup>52</sup> Letraset is a company originally formed in 1961 to manufacture sheets of transferable artwork elements. However, the name Letraset was often used to refer generically to sheets of dry transferable lettering of any brand.

...I found it almost impossible to read half the Situationist texts and stuff. It was almost like you needed an academic university head to understand the language. So a lot of the stuff I did, particularly the *Suburban Press* stuff and to some extent the *Pistols* was to try and simplify the ideas...just to put them across really immediately and quickly and simply - to demystify it a bit. Again did lot of piss-taking of ourselves, because it was who was the most radical left, who was the most Situationist, who was the most right-on - I found it all a bit elitist. To some extent, I got much more involved with community politics and things that were much more on your doorstep and real to the situation that I was in really, in Croydon.

(Maguire, Aug 2007).

Reid used the cut-up technique, as well as his original ink and watercolour drawings, in a highly politicised manner, using the Situationist technique of turning the media back on itself through *détournement* in order to expose local government corruption in Croydon as well as to explore the darker side of suburban living.

In Reid's opinion, the location of *Suburban Press* was ideal, with the town recently having

changed very quickly from its pre-office boom days into a city centre where there were, and still are, rows and rows of office blocks which house government administration... You go to Croydon on a Monday morning and you see thousands of people sitting in horrible buildings like *Apollo* and *Lunar House*.

(Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 35).

The attitude of Reid, Brook and Edwards to such oppressive buildings was laid out in an article which featured in *Suburban Press* No. 3, accompanied by one of Reid's line drawings of a huge lizard with a backdrop of Croydon skyscrapers

[See fig. 4.4]:

We aim to develop a critical awareness of our housing and physical environment, together with wider political analysis of what's happening

in society. This particular issue is very much concerned with the ways in which we feel the urban/human qualities of city life are being threatened by capitalist minority planning interests.  
(*Suburban Press* No. 3, p. 3).

The soullessness of Croydon's architecture was explored further by Reid in *Suburban Press* articles such as 'Concerning the Role of the Arts in the Preservation of the Environment' (*Suburban Press* No. 1, p. 16-17) and 'The City is Dying' (*Suburban Press* No. 3, p. 5), the latter of which contained a direct quote from the Situationist Debord: "For the first time a new architecture, which in all previous epochs had been reserved for the satisfaction of the dominant classes, is directly aimed at the poor" (Debord quoted in *Suburban Press* No. 3, p. 6). Reid's lizard image reappeared later in the same issue, in a poster which featured London architect Richard Seifert<sup>53</sup> and the wording "Beware Politicians, Architects, Planners, Industrialists, Technocrats. We the oppressed will not be put down" [See fig. 4.5] (Reid, *Suburban Press* No. 3, p. 7).

This critique of Croydon's redevelopment was consolidated in *Suburban Press* No. 5, the front cover of which featured an image of the town's roads and skyscrapers entitled "Croydon Redevelopment (1956-1972)" under the handwritten headline "Lo! A Monster Is Born" [See fig. 4.6] (*Suburban Press* No. 5, front cover). The issue contained examples of thorough research into the subject, with extensive information on the GLDP (Greater London Development Plan) Enquiry, a timeline of Croydon redevelopment, and a detailed list of Croydon buildings owned by the millionaire property developer Harry Hyams (*Suburban Press* No. 5). Reid's desire for a radical overhaul of urban planning echoes the

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<sup>53</sup> *Suburban Press* described Seifert as having had as much effect on the shape of London as Christopher Wren. He designed Centre Point and The Royal Garden Hotel in London, amongst many other buildings.

SI's own theory of Unitary Urbanism<sup>54</sup> - also explored by the radical Situationist urbanists Constant Nieuwenhuys<sup>55</sup> and Ivan Chtcheglov<sup>56</sup> - which declares:

... 'town-planning' is on much the same level as the barrage of advertising surrounding Coca-Cola – pure spectacular ideology... Development of the urban environment is the capitalist education of space...in relation to its purely architectural aspects, its characteristic feature is its insistence on popular consent, on individual integration in the world of bureaucratic conditioning.  
(Gray, 1974, p. 28).

and which sets forth a new way of living, Unitary Urbanism, described as a “living criticism, fed by all the tensions of the whole of everyday life, of this manipulation of cities and their inhabitants,: living criticism means the setting up of bases for an experimental life..” (Gray, 1974, p. 30). Reid's visual interpretation of these theories can be evidenced in his interior design for the Strongroom recording studios, London, which began in the late 1990s (See Chapter 6).

*Suburban Press* also linked this critique of urban planning to an investigation into local council and government corruption; as Reid stated in 1987:

We uncovered an amazing amount of information about prominent local

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<sup>54</sup> The article *Unitary Urbanism* was originally written by the Situationists Attila Kotanyi and Raoul Vaneigem. It first appeared in *Internationale Situationniste* No. 6 in 1961.

<sup>55</sup> Constant Nieuwenhuys (21 July 1920 – 1 August 2005) was a Dutch painter, and one of the foremost innovators of a concept known as Unitary Urbanism. He was well known for his life-long work *New Babylon*, a series of models, collages, writings and other projects related to his theories of urban development and social interaction.

<sup>56</sup> Ivan Chtcheglov (16 January 1933–April 21 1998) was a French political theorist, activist and poet, born in Paris of Russian parents. He wrote *Formulaire pour un urbanisme nouveau* (*Formulary for a New Urbanism*) in 1953, at age nineteen under the name Gilles Ivain, which was an inspiration to the Lettrist International and Situationist International. It included the phrase "the hacienda must be built", which influenced Tony Wilson of Factory Records in naming his Manchester night-club, The Hacienda.



councillors and MPs...Because of the libel law, I can't go into the personalities here, but there was a lot of wheeling and dealing: jobs for the boys, construction jobs for big office blocks that they were chairmen of, all the usual things that have always gone on and always will. (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 37).

To highlight this corruption, Reid created a series of images based upon a magazine-based advertising campaign for the National Savings Bank, which featured a man holding out money [See fig. 4.7]. According to Reid, "He was cut out and transformed into the Instigator", a figure whom Reid created as a critique of capitalism and man's obsession with profit: "a modern deity who is both worshipped and whose principle underlies everything" (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 32). Reid's Instigator appeared in a number of guises, the first examples of which being the *Grey Gentle Instigator* and *Be Reasonable, Take It* images in *Suburban Press* No. 1 [See figs. 4.8 & 4.9], the latter of which later reappeared in the Sex Pistols' *Anarchy in the UK* magazine, produced for the band's Anarchy in the UK tour of December 1976 [See fig. 4.10]. At a time when the Sex Pistols had signed to EMI Records for £40,000, a move which some viewed as the band being bought off, Reid's choice of visual was an extremely fitting one (Reid & Savage, 1987). Another version of Reid's Instigator image also featured on the back cover of *Suburban Press* No. 3 [See fig. 4.11].

Coupled with this focus on local council and government, a major theme of *Suburban Press* was the suburban lifestyle experienced by those living in Croydon; this included Reid, whose parents had moved to the town of Shirley in the 1930s to escape the smog and grime of London. An article entitled 'Suburbia' from *Suburban Press* No. 1 highlights Reid, Brook and Edwards' opinion towards the suburbs, exposing a darker side to the post-war ideal of new communities, individual freedom and recreational space for the working man:

At home, neat and well-dressed women, with their barbituates and agoraphobia. At the office, pink-shirted, flowery-tied husbands, with their “fantasy” jobs, beery lunches and leery glances. The weekend, car cleaning, dog walking, sherry drinking, family outing, break. The nice kiddies who grow up in this “pleasant fantasy”. ALL living secure lives in this hypnotic unreality. Nothing nasty, nothing emotional. Just neurotic silence and isolation.

(‘Suburbia’, *Suburban Press* No. 1, p. 8).

Reid’s artwork from this time reflects this dark description, and includes the drawing *Monster on Nice Roof*, which first appears in *Suburban Press* No. 1. The drawing is accompanied by a short story about “A winged portent of doom” who “settles on the roof of a pleasant suburban home” [See fig. 4.12] (Reid, *Suburban Press* No. 1, p. 9).

The *Monster* image first appeared in *The Cat Book*, a project started by Reid in 1969 about the life of a frustrated suburban cat named Poot, who had been inspired by Reid’s own pet cat (Maguire, 2009) [See fig. 4.13]. Illustrations from *The Cat Book* were also included by Reid in issues of *Suburban Press*: one example of this is the *Mr Frog* image which appeared in *Suburban Press* No. 2 [See fig. 4.14], which highlights Reid’s love of jazz - an interest which can be traced back to Reid’s student days (see Chapter 3). Such images are mostly ink and gouache drawings, and *The Cat Book* is a project which can be seen to develop the more painterly aspect of Reid’s practice, which sits alongside his cut-and-paste, collage technique more readily associated with *Suburban Press* and subsequently, the Sex Pistols.

Between 1972 and 1973 *Suburban Press* produced a series of stickers featuring slogans such as ‘Save Petrol, Burn Cars’, ‘This Store Welcomes Shoplifters’, ‘Lies’ and ‘Keep Warm This Winter, Make Trouble’, which were stuck up anonymously and surreptitiously around London by Reid and a group of

associates [See fig. 4.15]. According to Reid, the stickers bearing the slogan 'This Store Welcomes Shoplifters' - one of a series stuck up in supermarkets to increase the panic of the hoarding prompted by the three-day working week, caused by a rise in oil prices and a ban on overtime for miners - were placed in the windows of Oxford Street department stores late one Sunday night, and Reid goes as far as to claim that some friends even managed to escape prosecution for openly shoplifting as a result (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 43).

This project is another example of Reid's interest in Situationist-style anti-consumerist tactics and in London's Oxford Street in particular, as explored in the Oxford Street film he collaborated on with Malcolm McLaren from 1968 to 1971. The fact that the stickers proved to be so convincing was perhaps due to the fact that they were printed on garish fluorescent paper, in a direct emulation of the stores' own 'Sale' signs. This idea was later revisited by Reid as part of the artwork for the Sex Pistols film *The Great Rock 'n' Roll Swindle* (1980) directed by Julien Temple, and the 1979 soundtrack of the same name. Both were marketed with fluorescent stickers, fliers and banners which proclaimed 'Never Trust a Hippie', 'The Only Notes That Matter Are The Ones That Come In Wads', and 'They Swindled Their Way To The Top' [See fig. 4.16]; Reid explains that these "carried on the original Suburban Press 'shoplifting' idea and style" (Reid & Savage, 1987, p.89). This is just one of many examples of Reid's Suburban Press imagery being directly reused or else providing the inspiration for some of the Sex Pistols' most iconic artwork, a process which can be described by the term *bricolage*, meaning the construction or creation of a work through the reuse and transformation of a diverse range of existing elements (Hebdige, 1979).

In late 1973 Suburban Press also produced a sticker which was made unofficially for the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM), featuring a cartoon of a grinning light bulb framed by one of two slogans: 'Switch on Something...Light Up The State' or 'Switch On Something For The Miners' [See figs. 4.17 & 4.18] (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 44). Reid explains that the catalyst for this image was the government's campaign to persuade the public to 'Switch Off Something' ('SOS') in order to conserve dwindling fuel stocks during the crisis. This involved the broadcasting of a Public Information Film entitled *Switch Off Some Power*, created by the Central Office of Information of HM Government in 1973 (<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk>) Reid explains how this campaign was interpreted by Suburban Press: "The government was using its propaganda machine to tell the populace to switch something OFF: save power and beat the miners' strike. So we did a counter campaign urging people to switch something ON" (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 44). Although the NUM officially rejected Reid's light bulb image, the organisation quietly paid Suburban Press for it with petty cash, and according to Reid the image eventually ended up on the front page of a West German daily newspaper labelled as the NUM's official image of the strike, showing "how far a well-placed graphic could penetrate" (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 44).

In 1974, Reid joined forces with Gray and the Liverpool-based pro-situ group Wicked Messengers to produce *Leaving the 20<sup>th</sup> Century: The Incomplete Work of the Situationist International*, the first example of Reid making a direct connection with the Situationist International. Ken Knabb describes Gray's translations as "particularly bad", a comment echoed by various other critics through the years (Knabb, 1981, p. ix). Nevertheless, his work must surely be

given the credit it deserves as the very first English-language anthology of Situationist texts. Gray's translations are enlivened by Reid's layout and graphic design, which combines black and white comic strips and photographs of French Situationist graffiti with many of Reid's own images. Reid sought to distil the essence of Situationist theory into single images, as in the *Teddy Bear/Corpse* drawing [See fig. 4.19].

Many images appearing in Gray's *Leaving the 20<sup>th</sup> Century* (1974) were first seen in *The Cat Book* and/or *Suburban Press*, and some also later reappeared in Reid's artwork for the Sex Pistols in the late 1970s. Supermarkets and comfortable suburban homes were a recurring target, as in *The Nice Drawing* (1973) [See fig. 4.20] which appeared not only in *Leaving the 20<sup>th</sup> Century* (1974) [See fig. 4.21] but also in *Suburban Press* No. 6, the *Suburban Press* poster book of 1974, and finally in 1977 as the back sleeve of the fourth Sex Pistols single *Holidays In The Sun/Satellite* [See fig. 4.22] (See Chapter 5).

Also included in *Leaving the 20<sup>th</sup> Century* (1974) was a photograph of a skeleton next to a branch of Army Careers Information [See fig. 4.23] (Gray, 1974). An image based on the latter was later used by Reid in the Sex Pistols magazine *Anarchy in the UK* in December 1976 [See fig. 4.24], just one of many incidences of Reid's artwork being recycled for the Sex Pistols (See Chapter 5). Other significant graphics include an image by Max Peintner entitled *Nature Still Draws a Crowd* which had previously accompanied an early translation of Debord's *Society of the Spectacle* (1967); it was first used by Reid in *Suburban Press* No. 5 [See fig. 4.25].

By this time Reid had been joined by Sophie Richmond, who had moved to London in late 1972 after attending university in Warwick. She first met Reid

at a conference in Sheffield, where he had been selling copies of *Suburban Press* (Savage, 2009). The pair met again a while later through mutual friends, and the two moved in together in Croydon in 1973. As Richmond recalls, “I learnt to print, then quite soon after, I suppose a year later, Jeremy [Brook] went off to Hastings, so it was just Jamie and me really.” (Savage, 2009, p. 426). Richmond did not assist Reid with the *Suburban Press* magazine; however she did play a role in the publication of many other commissions, including political and theoretical pamphlets, and the book on Watergate mentioned previously by Reid (Savage, 2009, p. 427). The two would remain together in the immediate years that followed, selling up *Suburban Press* to live in Scotland, before returning to London to embark on a new project with McLaren and the Sex Pistols (See Chapter 5).

Meanwhile, as Savage documents in *England's Dreaming* (2005) [1991], McLaren and Westwood moved into fashion, “still searching for a revolutionary metaphor, if not subculture” (Savage, 2005 [1991], p. 47). McLaren persuaded Westwood to leave her teaching post and become a partner, and they opened a succession of iconic boutiques at 430 Kings Road in London which reflected their changing interests and stylistic concerns; *Let It Rock* (1972), *Too Fast To Live Too Young To Die* (1973), *SEX* (1974), *Seditionaries* (1977) and *World's End* (1980). McLaren and Westwood's shops also provided a hang-out for many of Punk's key players, including future members of the Sex Pistols.

An important precedent for McLaren and Westwood's involvement in cult style was the concept of the ‘pop boutique’ emerging in London during the late 1950s and early 1960s, particularly on Carnaby Street and King's Road, the latter being the chosen location for McLaren and Westwood's new venture. As

Jane Withers notes in her 1988 essay 'From Let it Rock to World's End: 430 King's Road', shops such as Mary Quant's Bazaar, opened in 1955, established the boutique as a forum for both subcultural style and cult activity [See fig. 4.26] (Withers in Taylor, 1988, p. 32). Withers goes on to state that the boutique

...played a cathartic role by providing a stage for pop culture's characteristic synthesis of the mutually sustaining iconographies of Pop Art, pop music and pop fashions. For an emergent generation of artistic activators, the boutique environment presented a vehicle for effecting the artist's transfer, as Marshal McLuhan observed, from "the ivory tower to the control tower of society". (Withers in Taylor, 1988, p. 33).

With the emergence of the 'Swinging Sixties', boutiques became more flamboyant, with the extravagant psychedelia of shops such as Granny Takes A Trip on the King's Road - visited by a string of celebrities including the Beatles and the Rolling Stones<sup>57</sup> - representing what Withers describes as "a fusion of studio and gallery, court and stage" [See fig. 4.27] (Withers in Taylor, 1988, p. 33).

McLaren viewed this approach to shop-keeping as a natural progression from his art school days at Croydon and Goldsmiths, and explains, "[The shop] was a replacement for being an artist in another way. You didn't want to paint pictures in 1970. You'd come out of the whole environmental school of thinking, that whole conceptual art" (McLaren in Taylor, 1988, p.33). Although McLaren and Westwood's ventures into retail were in one sense far removed from the decadence of the Hippie era and 'Swinging London', they could also be viewed as playing an equivalent role in the radical subcultural milieu of the 1970s.

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<sup>57</sup> The Beatles and the Rolling Stones were amongst the first customers of Granny Takes a Trip after it opened in 1965. They wore the boutique's clothes on the album sleeves for *Revolver* (1965) and *Between the Buttons* (1965) respectively.

In 1972 McLaren and Westwood acquired 430 King's Road and opened Let It Rock, a shrine to the music and sartorial style of the 1950s Teddy Boy (or 'Ted') and named after a song by Chuck Berry<sup>58</sup>. They had previously rented out part of the shop's previous incarnation, Paradise Garage [See fig. 4.28], where owner Trevor Myles had sold cheap denim jeans, Hawaiian shirts, bowling jackets and other such items that epitomised the British fantasy of American youth culture (Bromberg, 1989). When financial difficulties led to Paradise Garage's closure, McLaren and Westwood took the reins, painting the shop's corrugated iron facade black, and constructing a sign for Let It Rock out of pink fluorescent paper [See fig. 4.29].

The first half of the 1970s witnessed resurgence in popularity of the Teddy Boy style, this time updated with elements of glam rock influenced by current artists such as David Bowie and Marc Bolan. As Chris Sullivan, author and founder of Soho's Wag Club (formerly the Whiskey-A-Go-Go) explains,

At the time there were certain rumblings that were inherently '50s in character. Bryan Ferry and Andy [Mackay] of Roxy Music both sported quiffs and '50s attire on the inner cover of their first album, albeit somewhat glam. Let It Rock and Too Fast to Live Too Young to Die brought a definite authentic street edge to the '50s look... In 1971 the whole concept of '50s clothing in the midst of hippie nonsense was totally radical, and Let It Rock was the shop that defined and perfected the look.

(Colegrave & Sullivan, 2001, p. 87).

Despite these small pastiches of 1950s rock n roll style, by the early 1970s the original Teds were still viewed by most as curious museum pieces, or as Neil Nehring describes them, "ageing patriots" (Nehring, 1993, p.219). The success of

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<sup>58</sup> *Let It Rock* is a song by Chuck Berry from his 1960 album *Rockin' at the Hops*. The same year, it was released as the B-side of the single *Too Pooped to Pop (Casey)* and reached Number 64 in the USA on the Billboard Hot 100 chart and Number 6 in the UK. The song is about working on a train track as a train is headed toward the workers.



Let It Rock, which catered to these “walking dinosaurs of street style” (Bromberg, 1989, p. 42) at a time when the fading Hippie style of dress was still being sold to the public, can be attributed to McLaren’s knack of recognising and reacting to a particular gap in the market, whether in the context of fashion, music, or film. As Bromberg explains,

...you’ll find yourself balancing McLaren’s retrospective alibis – political motives construed in the vocabulary of style – against the sheer fortuity of his situation. For...acquiring 430 Kings Road wasn’t part of any master plan so much as it was the result of this lucky entrepreneur’s strange instinct for finding the golden egg in markets everyone else had always assumed to be saturated.  
(Bromberg, 1989, p. 42).

Alongside the Teds, Let It Rock was also frequented by what Savage describes as “a few Chelsea sophisticates and disaffected teenagers” (Savage, 2005 [1991], p. 49), the latter of which included Siouxsie and the Banshees bass player Steve Severin, who explains that the shop provided a new outlet for individual youth style, a welcome relief from the “cheap and nasty” items purchased at jumble sales, as well as an alternative to the unattainable, other-worldly glamour of current icons such as David Bowie (Severin in Colegrave & Sullivan, 2001, p. 86).

The interior décor of Let It Rock reflected McLaren’s interest in both the music and sartorial style of the Teddy Boy, with the front half of the shop styled as a replica of a 1950s sitting room, complete with period wallpaper and utility furniture including a glass cocktail cabinet containing plastic earrings, Brylcreem and other ornaments and accessories. On top of the cabinet was a picture of

Screaming Lord Sutch<sup>59</sup>, an early patron, and hung on the walls were photographs of rock n roll idols such as Billy Fury, as well as cinema posters and guitar-shaped mirrors. This shrine-like recreation of a Ted's domestic space provided the ideal backdrop to display McLaren's stock – an extensive collection of period records and a wealth of music and cinema ephemera. Eager to make the venture into a 'hang-out' rather than just a place for retail transactions, McLaren installed a jukebox, left out stacks of 1950s magazines and occasionally provided customers with refreshments. A photograph of McLaren and Westwood in *Let It Rock* in 1972 shows them sitting in this hyper-real interior, with McLaren in full Teddy Boy attire [See fig. 4.30].

In contrast, the back area of the shop had been painted black, an ideal backdrop to showcase Westwood's mixture of vintage and reconstructed Ted drape suits from the early 1950s – the jackets made by the East End tailor Sid Green - which were hung on an antique stand, surrounded by blue and silver pegged pants, scarlet shirts and accessories including brothel creeper shoes, hand-painted ties and dayglo socks [See fig. 4.31]. When Ted customers expressed a desire for clothes to be made up, McLaren and Westwood moved into made-to-measure. Whilst McLaren and Westwood visited New York in the summer of 1973, attending a boutique fair and meeting the New York Dolls, a young art student named Glen Matlock, who later became bass player for the Sex Pistols, had been recruited to help out at *Let It Rock* on Saturdays. Matlock recalls in Colegrave and Sullivan's *Punk: A Life Apart* (2001) that this made-to-

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<sup>59</sup> Screaming Lord Sutch (1940-1999), also known as the 3rd Earl of Harrow or simply Screaming Lord Sutch, was an English musician and aspirant politician. He was the founder of the Official Monster Raving Loony Party.

measure service included "...what Malcolm called 'Alan Ladd'<sup>60</sup> suits, sort of early '50s two-button, wide-lapelled jackets with big shoulders made in beautiful pale gabardine" (Matlock in Colegrave & Sullivan, 2001, p. 86).

Let It Rock was noticed by the international press, and reviews appeared in the *London Evening Standard*, the *Daily Mirror*, certain Japanese magazines, and perhaps more importantly - in context - in *Rolling Stone*. Chris Sullivan also recalls that he first came across pictures of Let It Rock in "a girlie magazine called *Club International*, and they literally changed my life...It affected me so much that I've spent my life collecting these clothes" (Colegrave & Sullivan, 2001, p. 87). As time went on, the rock 'n' roll revival peddled by McLaren and Westwood began to be assimilated into 1970s popular culture and the shop became more well-known, due in part to the aforementioned press coverage. In late 1972, Let It Rock was commissioned to produce the costumes for Ray Connolly's film *That'll Be the Day*, which according to Savage was the first major British film to reflect on the era [See fig. 4.32] (Savage, 2005 [1991]). Teddy Boy outfits from Let It Rock, including drapes and leopardskin jackets, were worn by stars such as David Essex and Ringo Starr. This resurgence of 1950s nostalgia, inspired in part by the failure of many of society's idealistic hopes and dreams of the 1960s, began to manifest itself in the mainstream media. It was becoming clear to McLaren and Westwood that the shop would struggle to compete with this mass market cooptation.

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<sup>60</sup> Alan Ladd (1913-1964) was an American film actor. Ladd's early film work consisted of mostly minor parts, such as the role of a reporter in Orson Welles' 1941 classic, *Citizen Kane*. Through the 1940s and 1950s, films like *The Blue Dahlia* (1946) established him as a great noir actor and *Shane* (1953) became an American classic. Ladd continued to make films up until his early death, aged 51, in 1964.

The media's new love affair with 1950s style was also coupled with McLaren and Westwood's increasing disillusionment with their Teddy Boy customers; although McLaren had been enamoured by Ted style as an expression of revolt against society, in reality the Teds themselves seemed more concerned with obtaining free clothes and giveaways from record companies. Their main priority was a rigid adherence to their own set of sartorial rules rather than to bring about any sort of change in social attitude or behaviour. More seriously, McLaren began to abhor the narrow-mindedness of the Teds, who represented the traditionalist, conservative society from which he was trying to escape. As Savage notes, "...they were not true marginals but mildly extravagant examples of a deep strain of English conservatism" (Savage, 2005 [1991], p. 50); or as Neville states in *Play Power* (1970), "Rockaphiles can be fascists (Hell's Angels, Teddy Boys, Skinheads, Rockers, Maoists)" (Neville, 1970, p. 104). The Teds' desire to conform to their own rock 'n' roll 'cult' signified a deeper and more violent dislike of difference which often manifested itself in racism.

As Matlock explains, McLaren and Westwood then "...moved onto these single-breasted zoot suits that Malcolm called jazz suits, with the sharp, nipped-in waist and peg trousers that ballooned right out. For the time it was totally new" (Matlock in Colegrave & Sullivan, 2001, p. 86). McLaren and Westwood's refined version of the 1940s zoot suit, which as Savage explains had risen to prominence as a minority badge of American negroes and Mexican immigrants, was an attempt to escape the negative connotations of Ted style and push the shop's boundaries even further (Savage, 2005 [1991]). In the words of Westwood:

The surface of the Teddy Boy was full of racism, that's why we went

through to the black roots that lay behind. We started to tailor really generously cut trousers, padded shoulders and double-breasted jackets, but we did it with feeling. It was almost more than authentic. (Westwood in Savage, 2005 [1991], p. 55).

In another attempt to attract a new clientele, McLaren and Westwood turned to another British cult of the late 1950s – the bikers or ‘ton-up boys’, now known as Rockers. The shop’s name was changed to Too Fast To Live Too Young To Die, a slogan taken up by American biker gangs after the death of James Dean, and they began to produce clothing to match which emphasised the sexual and nihilistic connotations of the Rockers’ leather jackets and other items [See fig. 4.33]. In keeping with McLaren’s entrepreneurial nature, Too Fast To Live Too Young To Die kept the Let It Rock range on sale, as well as retaining it as the brand name for their own designs during this time. However, McLaren’s conviction in the subversive nature of retro style was dwindling; in McLaren’s own words, “I didn’t want to be a haberdasher to pop stars” (McLaren in BBC2 *British Style Genius*, 2008).

In April 1974 the shop closed down again and after a total refurbishment it reopened as SEX, the shocking pink, tactile letters of its façade making its intentions clear [See fig. 4.34]. As Andrew Wilson explains,

The recognition of the Teds’ racism and incipient conservatism encouraged McLaren and Westwood to open SEX: rather than market a retro version of a rehashed youth cult, they looked to a history that might be embodied in the formation of an urban playground in which repressive taboos could be heroically embraced. (Stolper & Wilson, 2004, p. 42).

The spirit of SEX is perhaps best summed up by McLaren and Westwood’s previous choice of an alternative name for the shop: *Modernity Killed Every Night*. Wilson explains that this was a phrase attributed to the French nihilist

dandy Jacques Vaché, who took his own life in 1919 (Stolper & Wilson, 2004). It was this spirit, coupled with the inflammatory and contradictory nature of the semiotics behind the fetish and bondage clothes and highly confrontational T-shirts on sale, which McLaren wanted to project with SEX.

The décor of SEX - re-named Seditious in December 1976 - drew in part upon McLaren's knowledge of King Mob and the Situationist International; in the shop's windows he exhibited paintings of the Left Bank in Paris during the 1950s, with references to the Lettrists<sup>61</sup> and beatniks. Carefully chosen phrases from fetish books such as the English Situationist Alexander Trocchi's *School for Wives* (1955), along with quotes from King Mob heroine Valerie Solanas, were spray-painted on the soft, grey, sponge-like material with which McLaren had covered the shop's walls and ceiling (Savage, 2005, [1991]). The appearance of the shop was designed to mimic the sleazy appearance of authentic sex shops, from the boxed in windows and titillating display cases to the hardcore bondage wear, studded jackets and explicit T-shirts that were displayed on mannequin torsos or hung on gym-like bars attached to the tactile walls. As Withers notes, the overall effect "created a dark and dangerous-looking interior that drew vicarious energy from its apparent associations with a fetishist's torture chamber" [See fig. 4.35] (Withers in Taylor, 1988, p. 38).

SEX promoted leather and PVC fetish and bondage clothing as a form of alternative streetwear, bringing it from specialist mail order catalogues into the

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<sup>61</sup> The Lettrist International were the first breakaway group from Isidore Isou's Lettriste Movement, which was founded in early 1946 by Isidore Isou and Frenchman Gabriel Pomerand. Other members included Jean-Louis Brau, Gil J. Wolman and Guy Debord (then known as Guy-Ernest Debord). Isou's key theory involved 'chiselling' words into their component parts, and using letters as the basic subject of aesthetic contemplation. The works of the group can be seen as a precursor of Concrete Poetry.

mainstream. Such clothing was supplied to McLaren and Westwood by London Leatherman in Battersea, and by John Sutcliffe's Atomage, a specialist supplier of rubber and leatherwear. As detailed in Chapter Three, Atomage had also collaborated with the artist and former Croydon tutor Allen Jones on a number of projects, including costume designs for Stanley Kubrick's 1971 film adaptation of Anthony Burgess's *A Clockwork Orange* (1962). Both Atomage and SEX (in its later reincarnation as Seditious) were featured in John Samson's<sup>62</sup> 1977 documentary film *Dressing for Pleasure*, which was banned by London Weekend Television. Westwood later showed this unique documentary during her retrospective exhibition at the V&A in London in 2004 (<http://www.telegraph.co.uk>). As McLaren explains in the 2008 BBC2 series *British Style Genius*:

I struck gold...with fetishwear. [I thought] If I can get those girls in the bank on the corner wearing rubber skirts and dog collars I will have achieved something. If I can get those people ambling down the King's Road with a strap between their legs, looking like they can't move, I will have achieved something. If I can create a T-shirt that will get people immediately arrested as soon as they walk out of the store, I will have achieved something.  
(McLaren in BBC2 *British Style Genius*, 2008).

Both John Samson's film and McLaren's quote illustrate how, with the opening of SEX in 1974, the wearing of fetish clothing moved from behind suburban curtains to the streets, challenging established values and notions of decency.

Though the shop's commercial base was its hardcore rubber, leather and vinyl fetish clothing, its fashion staple was the T-shirt, simply constructed by

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<sup>62</sup> John Samson (1946 – 2004) was a British filmmaker. He directed a mere five documentaries before his death at the age of 58 in 2004. His films – *Tattoo* (1975), *Dressing for Pleasure* (1977), *Arrows* (1979), *Britannia* (1979) and *The Skin Horse* (1983) - offered strange, dreamy insights into the lives of outsiders and eccentrics including tattooists, steam-train enthusiasts, darts players and suburban rubber fetishists. *The Skin Horse*, a remarkable exploration of the sex lives of disabled people, won him a Bafta in 1984.

Westwood from two squares of cloth to produce an androgynous, sleeveless garment which made an ideal base on which to print McLaren and Westwood's intentionally provocative images and slogans, some of which again drew on McLaren's knowledge of the Situationist International. The 'Rape' T-shirt (1974) for example, was customised with zips across the chest and featured a woodblock-printed text taken from Trocchi's *School for Wives* (1955) [See fig. 4.36]. The homoerotic 'Two Cowboys' shirt (1975) featured two semi-naked cowboys<sup>63</sup> accompanied by a legend of boredom: "Ello Joe, Been anywhere lately Nah, it's all played aht Bill, Getting to [sic] straight" (Stolper & Wilson, 2004, p. 52) [See fig. 4.37]. The power of McLaren and Westwood's clothing was demonstrated in August 1975, when SEX shop assistant Alan Jones was arrested and charged under the 1824 Vagrancy Act for wearing the 'Two Cowboys' design in Piccadilly Circus (Colegrave & Sullivan, 2001).

The customers of SEX fell into two different categories. According to shop assistant Jordan, the suburban fetishwear buyers who, used to purchasing such items through mail order in the privacy of their own homes, disliked the presence of the young customers who frequented the shop. These youngsters purchased such items in order to create a new, confrontational persona and often loitered around outside the store on Saturday afternoons, using it as a place to hang out and find out about parties taking place that evening (Savage, 2005 [1991]).

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<sup>63</sup> The motif of the two cowboys can be linked directly to the Situationist International. An image of two cowboys on horseback featured in Andre Bertrand's 4-page détourned comic strip *Le Retour de la Colonne Durutti* (*The Return of the Durutti Column*), given away at Strasbourg University in October 1966. During the late 1970s the same motif was reused by Factory Records founder Tony Wilson, who named his first signing The Durutti Column in 1978. The label's very first release, *A Factory Sampler*, included a sheet of four stickers. One of these was entitled *The Return of the Durutti Column 1967*, and featured Bertrand's two cowboys on horseback ("I drift. Mainly, I drift"). The cowboys' regular reappearances throughout the decades are tracked by Greil Marcus in his 1986 *Artforum* article 'The Cowboy Philosopher', March 1986, pp. 85-91.



Even the younger clientele of SEX were often intimidated by the shop's menacing interior and equally menacing staff; Boy George, who would visit the Kings Road on Saturdays with friends to parade his latest outfits, recalls Jordan as a "psycho-hived manageress" who dressed like "a sadistic tiller girl", carrying a whip and hissing at customers who had plucked up the courage to enter SEX's oppressive interior (Boy George in Colegrave & Sullivan, 2001, p. 95). Other customers included Chrissie Hynde - later of the Pretenders – who briefly worked in the shop during 1974. Hynde can be seen in an iconic photograph in which she, along with Westwood, Alan Jones, Jordan and another unidentified girl bare their bottoms to the camera, spelling out the word SEX [See fig. 4.38] (Colegrave & Sullivan, 2001). As detailed by Wilson, SEX attracted a hardcore group of fans, including those who worked in or hung around the shop (Jordan, Alan Jones, Marco Pirroni, Sue Catwoman, Debbie Juvenile, Tracey O'Keefe, Linda Ashby) and what became known as the Bromley Contingent (Berlin, Billy Idol, Simon Barker, Siouxsie Sioux, Steve Severin) many of whom would later become associated with the Sex Pistols (Wilson in Slade, 2007).

McLaren and Westwood's combination of potent combination of violence, overt eroticism, forbidden identity and the politics of boredom continued when SEX became Seditonaries in 1977, exchanging rubber and fetishwear for the restraint of movement provided by the bondage strap. In the words of Withers, "Seditonaries was designed as a stage for punk's anarchic celebration of chaos and destruction as creative principles" (Withers in Taylor, 1988, p. 39). The wares of SEX and Seditonaries would later be modelled by members of the Sex Pistols and those such as the Bromley Contingent who surrounded them (Savage, 2005 [1991]).

At this point, McLaren was becoming increasingly frustrated by SEX's financial problems, with the day-to-day running of the shop and with the love-hate relationship he had built with 'Them' - decadent aesthetes such as Andrew Logan<sup>64</sup> and Zandra Rhodes<sup>65</sup> who had become closely associated with the shop – and he was faced with the prospect that his project had reached its pinnacle. Encouraged by teenagers such as Steve Jones and Glen Matlock, McLaren's thoughts turned to music and the creation of a band that epitomised the principles of the shop – a potential project which would take his concept to new heights. As Savage explains,

In just over two years, McLaren and Westwood had learned through their trading and their travelling how subcultures work, both culturally and commercially...In 1973, they'd seen how those subcultures interacted with the media, music and fashion industries. Though they didn't analyse it, both felt that it was time to begin marrying this experience with their fundamental politics.  
(Savage, 2005 [1991], p. 69).

McLaren and Westwood would attempt this with the Sex Pistols, recruiting Reid as the band's art director. The band would come to be regarded as one of the

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<sup>64</sup> Andrew Logan (b. 1945) is an English sculptor, performance artist, jewellery-maker, portraitist and painter. He was educated as an architect at the Oxford School of Architecture, graduating in 1970. As the founder of the Alternative Miss World in 1972 (which he continues to run) he became a key figure in London's cultural and fashion life. He notably influenced film-maker Derek Jarman, whose early film-making work documented the social scene around Andrew Logan and his studios at Butler's Wharf, London. His studios were also where Malcolm McLaren and Vivienne Westwood staged the notorious Valentine's Ball in 1976, at which the Sex Pistols first came to media attention.

<sup>65</sup> Zandra Rhodes (b. 1940) is a British fashion designer. She was introduced to the world of fashion by her mother, who was a fitter in a Paris fashion house and a teacher at Medway College of Art. Rhodes studied first at Medway and then at the Royal College of Art in London. Her major area of study was printed textile design. Rhodes was one of the new wave of British designers who put London at the forefront of the international fashion scene in the 1970s. Her designs are considered clear, creative statements, dramatic but graceful, bold but feminine. Rhodes' inspiration has been from organic material and nature. Her approach to the construction of garments can be seen in her use of reversed exposed seams and in her use of jewelled safety pins and tears during the punk era.

most influential acts in the history of popular music, making an unprecedented impact on both the music industry and most significantly, the media. Chapter Five will examine the Sex Pistols project from its inception in relation to the iconic artwork and key promotional campaigns created by Reid, which played an essential part in propelling the band to its legendary status.

## Chapter 5

### The Great Rock 'n' Roll Swindle

“The media was our lover and our helper and that in effect was the Sex Pistols’ success. As today to control the media is to have the power of government, God, or both.”

Malcolm McLaren and Jamie Reid, reverse sleeve of C’Mon Everybody, released 22<sup>nd</sup> June 1979.

The aim of this chapter is to explore the essential part Reid played as art director for the Sex Pistols from 1976 to 1979. Fred Vermorel, author of the first book about the band, *Sex Pistols: The Inside Story* (1978), discusses the significance of Reid’s contribution to the Sex Pistols, stating:

Jamie’s a modest fellow. With his shambling airs, mumbling and mysterious disclosures it’s easy to overlook his very solid, indeed crucial, contribution to the Sex Pistols. After all, the *look* of the Pistols, the all important logos, T-shirts, backdrops and accessories, the graphic and visual style of the posters, records sleeves and badges, much of this is Jamie’s work. Malcolm sold it but Jamie *did* it. I can no more imagine the Sex Pistols without Jamie Reid’s scalding images than without Rotten’s popeyed leer.

(Vermorel, 1981 [1978], p. 268-9).

This chapter will examine this role in detail, tracing the beginnings of the project and the development of Reid’s distinctive cut-and-paste technique and ransom-note lettering that became synonymous with the Sex Pistols, including many examples of visual motifs and slogans drawn from Reid’s days at Suburban Press (1970-1975). The chapter will also bring to light a number of the artist’s earliest works for the band as well as preliminary or working versions of iconic single and album covers, and will also explore some examples of how the music industry and national press reacted to both the band and Reid’s accompanying promotional material.

By the time of the 1974 miners strike<sup>66</sup>, Reid and Richmond had begun to contemplate the future of *Suburban Press*. According to Reid, the press was at its most successful and viable, but by this time the pair had become “...disillusioned at how jargonistic and non-committal left-wing policies had become” in what was to be the immediate period before the arrival of the Thatcher government (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 55). Reid refers in particular to Big Flame, a Liverpool-based revolutionary socialist organisation with members in the Ford plants in Dagenham and Halewood, Liverpool, with whom *Suburban Press* had worked in 1974; Reid critiques the fact that by this time Big Flame had started to employ “a very narrow specialist rhetoric” (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 55). He elaborates on the situation further in a 2007 interview, stating that *Suburban Press*

...sort of just ran its course really...Probably also a sense of disillusionment with things as well. Through that whole ‘60s and early ‘70s thing you really did think you could affect change, and to some extent people did affect change. I think everything was getting up its own arse a bit, people were more involved in being more ‘right-on’ than each other rather than taking direct action.  
(Maguire, Aug 2007).

Reid and Richmond had also come to acknowledge the limitations of *Suburban Press*’s small circulation, and were tiring of their additional roles as “unpaid social workers – helping to organise squatters’ and claimants’ unions” (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 45). However, the pair were very much still enamoured with the sense of community and collaboration surrounding *Suburban Press* and the organisations it worked with, as illustrated by the food co-ops, crèches and other self-help organisations which proliferated during this time (Maguire, Aug 2007).

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<sup>66</sup> On 4<sup>th</sup> February 1974, 81% of miners voted to strike. The strike lasted for 16 weeks, with coal production eventually coming to a complete standstill. It was called off on 6<sup>th</sup> March 1974, just 48 hours after Edward Heath’s Conservative Party was voted out of power, following a 35% pay offer from the new Labour government.

Inspired by similarly disillusioned friends John and Carola Bell, who had recently given up their Notting Hill printing press, Crest Press, in order to take on a croft on the Isle of Lewis in the Outer Hebrides, Reid sold Suburban Press and moved to the island with Richmond in 1975 (Reid & Savage, 1987). As Reid explains,

Different presses all over the place we were affiliated with, all involved in community politics. John and Carola had decided to get out of the rat race and move out of the city; to try and find somewhere remote to live. After various places they tried, they ended up living on the Isle of Lewis. I actually went up there just to see them, and ended up staying over a year up there!  
(Maguire, Aug 2007).

Reid and Richmond lived with the Bells - the first individuals outside of the Isle of Lewis to ever be given a croft there – helping to set up the land ready for farming (Maguire, 2007).

It was during this time on the Isle of Lewis that Reid received an invitation via telegram<sup>67</sup> from his old college friend McLaren, inviting him to work on a new project. Reid had last collaborated with McLaren on his Oxford Street film from 1968 to 1971, and had last seen him in person during the set-up of McLaren and Westwood's shop SEX in 1974. The two had kept in touch sporadically throughout this period (Savage, 2009). According to Reid, McLaren's telegram simply read: "Got these guys, interested in working with you again" (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 55); "these guys" were Paul Cook, Steve Jones, John Lydon (known as Johnny Rotten) and Glen Matlock, who together were the members of a new band McLaren had named the Sex Pistols<sup>68</sup>. As

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<sup>68</sup> As McLaren explains in Jon Savage's *England's Dreaming* (2005) [1991]: "If it wasn't for Steve Jones, there wouldn't be any group." Savage elaborates on this further by stating: "The accepted view of the Sex Pistols is that McLaren, Svengali-like, hoisted a group of no-hopers to

discussed previously, both Reid and Richmond – despite the disillusionment which had caused them to dissolve Suburban Press – had by no means abandoned their original motivation for the project; Reid’s invitation immediately appealed. As Reid explains:

Sophie and I were still very much inflamed with the sort of spirit which was always there and which had attracted us to left-wing politics in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The Sex Pistols seemed very much a perfect vehicle to communicate the ideas that had been formulated during that period, and to get them across very directly to people who weren’t getting the message out of the left-wing politics of the time.  
(Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 55).

From then on, Reid and Richmond moved slowly towards working full-time with the Sex Pistols. Reid moved from the Isle of Lewis to London to specifically stay in touch with McLaren, living for a while with his brother Bruce and his wife Marion, whilst Richmond went to work for the Aberdeen Free Press where she stayed until September 1976 (Savage, 2009). During the summer of 1976, Reid attended many of the Sex Pistols’ early concerts, touring the country with the group’s new road manager Nils Stevenson, also hired by McLaren. Richmond met up with Reid on 21<sup>st</sup> May 1976 at the band’s Middlesbrough gig, and again on 29<sup>th</sup> August 1976 for another at the Screen on the Green Cinema in Islington, London (Savage, 2009). The pair then moved in together and took jobs on the Labour Party press – the Rye Express – based in Peckham, before working full-time for McLaren and the band (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 55). As Reid told *The*

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international prominence, that he is the group’s alpha and omega. In fact, it was Steve Jones who first had the idea of putting the group, or any group, together with McLaren, not vice versa. It was Jones’s persistence, and ultimately, his presence, which convinced this restless yet ambitious shop owner to commit himself to the group that would become the Sex Pistols” (Savage, 2005 [1991], p. 70-71). This chapter of my study takes as its focus the artwork produced for the band by Jamie Reid. For a definitive account of the band’s formation, including early line-up changes, please see Jon Savage’s *England’s Dreaming: Sex Pistols and Punk Rock* (1991) and *The England’s Dreaming Tapes* (2009), as well as Fred and Judy Vermorel’s *Sex Pistols: The Inside Story* (1978).

*Sunday Herald*'s Peter Ross in 2001, "So there I was going from crofting on the Isle of Lewis to working with the Pistols in Soho - quite a culture jump. It was like a rolling ball and it just went massive" (Ross, 2001, p. 16).

For a time in the spring of 1976, the Sex Pistols office was located in the flat of Helen Wellington-Lloyd, who had moved to the UK from South Africa and who had been a close friend of McLaren's since the late 1960s, also working with McLaren and Reid on his Oxford Street film (Savage, 2009). In the autumn of 1976 McLaren, Reid and Richmond moved into Dryden Chambers, off Oxford Street, in order to establish the full-time office of Glitterbest, the Sex Pistols' management company. Though the only shareholders were McLaren and his lawyer Stephen Fisher, a number of other individuals joined Glitterbest's payroll in the months that followed, most notably after October 1976 when the group signed to EMI Records (Savage, 2009). As Savage explains in *The England's Dreaming Tapes* (2009):

While the actual musicians in the Sex Pistols made the music, played the shows and bore the brunt of disapproval, many of the people in and around Glitterbest provided the support that helped to make the group resonate so powerfully. This assistance was qualified by the management style that McLaren had learnt from the situationist movement: scission and expulsion.  
(Savage, 2009, p. 396).

Reid confirms this, explaining: "In the early days, there weren't that many people involved and it was very much a case of everybody mucking in" (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 55).

Reid's earliest Sex Pistols artworks from this period mainly take the form of promotional flyers and posters. His very first piece, like a number of other early works, was printed at the Aberdeen Free Press in Scotland in March 1976



when Richmond was still employed there. The design, a crude sketch, was never used, however Reid describes it as “a good likeness of Steve Jones” [See fig. 5.1] (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 50). This earliest design is something of an anomaly when placed in the context of Reid’s later Sex Pistols artwork, bearing little resemblance to the sleeves, posters flyers and other promotional items covered in ransom-note lettering and controversial détourned images; as Reid explains, it “sticks out like a sore thumb, it’s nothing like the stuff I did later” (Savage, 2009, p. 441). In fact, this image appears to have more in common with the drawings and paintings Reid produced in both the early 1970s for *Suburban Press*, such as *Two Simple Words* (1970), and in the early 1980s with Clarke as part of their *Leaving the 20<sup>th</sup> Century* project, such as *She Came, She Saw, She Conquered* (1982) [See figs. 5.2 & 5.3].

It was only after producing the Steve Jones image that Reid realised he could return to the techniques and visual motifs of his previous project, *Suburban Press*, techniques which, due to financial limitations, had been created out of necessity. Reid now found himself in a similar situation, limited in both money and time; he explains, “There was hardly any time to think about developing a new style for the Sex Pistols” (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 55). As Danny Freidman of the Victoria & Albert Museum notes, “One thing that’s worth remembering is that in some of his early Sex Pistols designs Reid was doing a completely different style from the eventual cut-up one. And you know, it did look like at some point something went click in his mind... and it all came right” (Vermorel, 1981 [1978], p. 257). In Reid’s own words:

The answer was staring me in the face because I’d already done it. A lot of the images came from the stuff done in the early seventies. Again, that

was to do with what was at hand at Suburban Press. Xerox and cheap printing, rips and blackmail lettering.  
(Reid in Savage, 2009, p. 441).

The evocation of ransom notes and criminality was also integral to the band's image; this is the reading of Reid's cut-up technique given by Savage, who explains, "Ransom-note lettering is typically used by criminals or freedom fighters because printed letters avoid the 'fingerprint' of the typewriter or handwriting. Like communiqués, the Sex Pistols' handbills spoke in codes to the initiated only" (Savage, 2005 [1991], p. 201). The inclusion of détourned newspaper headlines at this early stage also indicates the management's strong desire to involve the mass media (Savage, 2005 [1991]).

However, it is also possible to place Reid's use of montage and détournement in an art historical context, tracing it back to Italian Futurist<sup>69</sup> typography, in particular the theories set out by Filippo Tommaso Marinetti in his *Technical Manifesto of Futurist Literature (Manifesto Technico della letteratura futuristica)* (1912) and *After Free Verse - Words in Freedom (Dopo il verso libero - le parole in libertà)* (1913) (Cundy, 1981). As David Cundy notes, it was through Marinetti's willingness to challenge graphic conventions in parole

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<sup>69</sup> Futurism was founded in Italy by F. T. Marinetti in 1909 with the publication of the *Futurist Manifesto (Manifesto del Futurismo)* in the Parisian newspaper *Le Figaro*. In radically provocative language, the manifesto proclaimed the birth of a new literary and social movement which exalted movement, change and technological advancement, whilst also appealing to Italian pride. This inspired the Futurist group to penetrate all aspects of modern life, including theatre, fashion design, and music to photography, architecture and typography. With staged events, poetry tournaments, rallies, riots and theatrical spectacles amongst other things, the Futurists showed the world that art was no longer an exercise to be carried out in the sterile, bourgeois environment of the museum or academy, but that it could become an essential force operating in the very midst of society. Apart from what one might think of individual Futurist artists, for example the negative connotations of the connection between Marinetti and fascist leader Benito Mussolini, it is hard to dispute the radical nature of the great number of Futurist manifestos and their enduring relevance to contemporary art and design.

in libertà and tavole parolibere<sup>70</sup> that modern graphic concepts took shape” (Cundy, 1981, p. 351). Marinetti’s parole in libertà was groundbreaking in that it utilised typography as a visual element in its own right. The most iconic example of Marinetti’s parole in libertà is the sound poem entitled *Zang Tumb Tumb*, written in 1912 and noted for Marinetti’s use of onomatopoeia to evoke the noises and sounds of battle<sup>71</sup>. It was published in book form in 1914 [See fig. 5.4], in which the poetic and literary impressions of explosions and other such war sounds are shown graphically. This was accomplished with different typefaces of various sizes, some of them hand-drawn, as in the inner spread *pallone frenato turco (Turkish captive balloon)* [See fig. 5.5]. Marinetti describes the purpose of these innovations in *After Free Verse – Words in Freedom*, stating:

The typographic revolution was initiated by me and directed especially against the so-called typographical harmony of the page... We use in an average page... twenty diverse fonts: for example, italic for a series of similar and rapid sensations... With this typographical revolution and a multi-coloured variety of fonts, I am able to augment the expressive voice of words.

(F.T. Marinetti, *Dopo il verso libero – le parole in libertà*, *Lacerba*, vol. 1 (1913), p. 253, in Cundy, 1981, p. 349).

One of the richest examples of this genre is Marinetti’s *Assemblèa politica tumultuosa (Tumultuous political assembly)* (1919) [See fig. 5.6], a complex and richly-textured work which evokes comparisons with collage and which helps to illustrate Marinetti’s exploration of “the typographically pictorial possibilities of the page” (F.T. Marinetti, ‘*L’immaginazione senza fili e le parole in libertà*, *Lacerba*, Vol. 1 (1913), p. 123 in Cundy, 1981). As Cundy observes, “It was this

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<sup>70</sup> The tavole parolibere, or ‘free-word tableaux’, which appeared in the Futurist magazine *L’Italia Futurista*, first published in 1916.

<sup>71</sup> The book is an account of the battle of Adrianopolis (Turkey) in 1912 in which the author volunteered as a Futurist-soldier.

aspect of Futurist literature which most profoundly influenced subsequent visual/verbal communications” (Cundy, 1981, p. 349).

After the First World War, it was primarily the artists associated with Dada that carried on Marinetti’s graphic revolution and continued to challenge typographical conventions. The Dada movement was founded in Zurich<sup>72</sup>, in neutral Switzerland, during the First World War by the writer Hugo Ball and his partner Emmy Hennings. Other founding members were Marcel Janco, Richard Huelsenbeck, Tristan Tzara and Jean Arp. Dada can be seen as a reaction by artists to what they saw as the unprecedented horror and absurdity of the war. They felt that the war called into question every aspect of society, including its art, and thus aimed to destroy traditional values in art and to create a new art to replace the old.

In 1918, Dada was founded in Berlin, where artists such as Johannes Baader, Raoul Hausmann, John Heartfield<sup>73</sup>, George Grosz, Hannah Höch and Kurt Schwitters produced provocative imagery that responded to the cruel absurdities of life in war-time Berlin, where contesting ideologies on the left and

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<sup>72</sup> In his 1965 book *Dada: Art and Anti-art*, Hans Richter discusses some of the confusion surrounding the exact details of the birth of Dada. To clarify, he explains: “In 1915, soon after the outbreak of the First World War, a rather undernourished, slightly pock-marked, very tall and thin writer and producer came to Switzerland. It was Hugo Ball, with his mistress Emmy Hennings who was a singer and poetry reader. He belonged to the ‘nation of thinkers and poets’, which was engaged, at that time, in quite different activities. Ball however, had remained both a thinker and a poet: he was a philosopher, novelist, cabaret performer, journalist and mystic. .. On 1<sup>st</sup> February 1916, Ball founded the Cabaret Voltaire. He had come to an arrangement with Herr Ephraim, the owner of the Meierei, a bar in Niederdorf, a slightly disreputable quarter of the highly reputable town of Zurich. He promised Herr Ephraim that he would increase his sales of beer, sausage and rolls by means of a literary cabaret. Emmy Hennings sang *chansons*, accompanied by Ball at the piano. Ball’s personality soon attracted a group of artists and kindred spirits who fulfilled all the expectations of the owner of the Meierei” (Richter, 2001 [1965], p. 12-13). These individuals included Tristan Tzara, Marcel Janco, Richard Huelsenbeck and Hans Arp (Richter, 2001 [1965]).

<sup>73</sup> Heartfield changed his name from Johann Herzfelde in 1916 to criticise the rabid nationalism and anti-British sentiment prevalent in Germany during the First World War.

the right fought each other with almost religious fervour. As the Dada artist Hans Richter explains in *Dada: Art and Anti-art* (1965):

In Berlin they had a real revolution and they decided to join in. There was the sound of firing in the streets and on the rooftops... Whilst in one corner of Berlin, sailors were defending the imperial stables against troops loyal to the Kaiser, the Dadaists were laying their plans in another corner... Soldiers' councils and workers' councils, meetings, fraternal unions – a new age had dawned! Dada felt called upon to put the new age into perspective – and the old one out of joint.  
(Richter, 2001 [1965], p. 101.)

At the same time commercial life in Berlin was marked by high expectations in mass production and industrial and scientific progress, and the city had an exciting, experimental atmosphere in which fashions and political positions changed almost daily. The ever-changing newspapers, colourful illustrated magazines and advertising hoardings and posters on display around the city provided a rich kaleidoscope of source material. As Richter notes:

They cut up photographs, stuck them together in provocative ways, added drawings, cut these up too, paste in bits of newspaper, or old letters, or whatever happened to be lying around - to confront a crazy world with its own image. The objects thus produced were called photomontages. In this way they produced flysheets, poems and political obscenities or portraits; they created inflammatory book-jacket and a new typography which gave the individual letter, word or sentence a freedom it had never possessed (outside the Futurist and Zurich Dada movement) since Gutenberg.  
(Richter, 2001 [1965], p. 114).

In other words, the Berlin Dada artists drew upon these sources to make a significant impact upon typographical conventions, expanding the print medium by adopting, mixing and extending texts and fragments of newsprint with found photographic images in order to voice their rejection of old social hierarchies and bourgeois values.

In 1916, at the height of the war, Heartfield and Grosz produced their first montages, which contained painting and photographic components, and established the method of photomontage and its terminology. Their montages, first published in the magazine *Neue Jugend (New Youth)*, lampooned political enemies in ways that ranged from charmingly humorous and anarchistic to aggressively controversial. The cover of a satirical periodical produced by Malik Verlag (the publishing house of Heartfield's brother Wieland Herzfelde) in 1919, for example, features Herzfelde's head on top of a football-man in the top left of the piece, whilst six members of the Ebert Scheidemann government appear on a fan below. Above this the text reads "Contest! Who's the prettiest?" [See fig. 5.7]. The typeface and layout used satirised contemporary trends in conservative German newspaper design, and the periodical was banned after the first issue (Richter, 2001 [1965]). Heartfield is perhaps best known for his later photomontages which satirised Adolf Hitler and the Nazis, often subverting the Nazis' propaganda messages, as in *Hurrah, die Butter ist Alle! (Hurrah, the Butter is Finished!)* (1935) [See fig. 5.8]. A direct link can be drawn between Heartfield and Reid, with Reid's work featuring in a John Heartfield exhibition at the Bluecoat Arts Centre, Liverpool, which ran from 1<sup>st</sup> July to 5<sup>th</sup> August 1989. (<http://www.chipwork.com>).

Another significant Berlin Dada artist was Hannah Höch, whose photomontage entitled *Schnitt mit dem Küchenmesser DADA durch die letzte weimarer Bierbauchkulturepoche Deutschlands (Cut with the Dada Kitchen Knife through the Last Weimar Beer-Belly Cultural Epoch in Germany)* (1919) [See fig. 5.9] condemns Weimer culture, whilst also making references to Dada and the role of the female in society (Richter, 2001 [1965]). Many early Dada

photomontages were collaborative works, such as Grosz and Heartfield's *Leben und trieben im Universal-City, 12 Uhr 5 Mittags (Life and Work in Universal City, 12:05 Noon)* (1919) [See fig. 5.10].

Raoul Hausmann, the self-styled inventor<sup>74</sup> of the photomontage technique, predicts in his article 'Definition der Foto-Montage (Definition of Photomontage)': "The ability to manage the most striking contrasts, to the achievement of perfect states of equilibrium, in other words the formal dialectic qualities which are inherent in photomontage, ensures the medium a long and richly productive life." (Hausmann in Richter, 2001 [1965], p. 116). This statement held fast, and Dada and its predecessor Futurism, came to be regarded as two of the most radical and iconic movements of 20<sup>th</sup> century art history, proving integral to the art school syllabus in the decades that followed and having a particular influence of Reid and his contemporaries<sup>75</sup>.

The influence of art historical movements such as Futurism and Dada is particularly evident in the photomontage work of the artist Linder Sterling, otherwise known as Linder. Active in the late 1970s and early 1980s Manchester Punk and Post-Punk scenes, some Linder's earliest work included promotional material for bands like the Buzzcocks and Magazine, in which she juxtaposed magazine images of domestic appliances with those of women's bodies.

(Schwendener, 2007). The most well-known example of this is perhaps Linder's

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<sup>74</sup> According to Richter, this was disputed by Grosz and Heartfield (Richter, 2001 [1965]).

<sup>75</sup> Here it is worthy to mention the designer and art director Peter Saville, who studied graphic design at Manchester Polytechnic from 1975 to 1978, along with Malcolm Garrett. He is most famous for the design of record sleeves for Tony Wilson's Factory Records, in particular for the bands Joy Division and New Order. Saville lists one of his main sources of inspiration as Jan Tschichold, chief propagandist for Die neue Typographie (The New Typography). In the 1920s and 1930s, the so-called New Typography movement brought graphics and information design to the forefront of the artistic avant-garde in Central Europe. Rejecting traditional arrangement of type in symmetrical columns, modernist designers organised the printed page or poster as a blank field in which blocks of type and illustration (frequently photomontage) could be arranged in harmonious, strikingly asymmetrical compositions.

sleeve design for the Buzzcocks' single *Orgasm Addict* (1977), which featured a female pin-up whose head has been replaced with a clothes iron [See fig. 5.11]. The piece was produced in collaboration with fellow Manchester Polytechnic student Malcolm Garrett; Reid would later work with Garrett at his Assorted iMaGes design studio (Jones, 2002).

Several of Linder's photomontages appeared in the Punk collage fanzine *The Secret Public*, which she co-founded in 1978 with Savage, who explains:

...here was a chance, such as would not be found in hierarchical London, to let rip with the imagery of Dawn Ades' Photomontage: the accumulating skyscraper stacks of Fritz Lang and Walter Ruttmann, the dismembering done by Max Ernst and Hannah Hoch, the political savagery of John Heartfield – whose summer 1977 exhibition at the ICA was a major stimulus.  
(<http://www.newhormonesinfo.com>).

As Peter Jones notes in his essay *Anxious Images: Linder's Fem-Punk Photomontages* (2002):

Linder's work represents a small yet noteworthy feminist-inflected contribution to punk visual culture. Although it has been argued that punk is marked by 'a strong female presence'...discussions of punk imagery are generally confined to the more well-known work of male protagonists, such as Jamie Reid...  
(Jones, 2002, p. 161).

In *England's Dreaming* (1991), it could be said that Savage perpetuates this to a certain extent, in regards to the fact that he discusses the work of Reid's contemporaries such as Linder in the briefest of terms, despite his past connection with the artist in the form of *The Secret Public* fanzine. As mentioned previously, Savage's book also neglects to place Reid's Sex Pistols artwork within any sort of art historical context (Savage, 2005 [1991]). With Reid stating in a 2009 interview that Dada is "always something you're aware of, I mean it all



rub off doesn't it. I've always found that the influences I've had are things immediately around me really" (Maguire, 2009), it was vital to make visible in this chapter these important art historical connections.

Echoing the collaborative Dada method of working, McLaren has also suggested that his friend Helen Wallington-Lloyd played a significant part in the creation of Reid's ransom-note style of lettering; as McLaren recalls in Savage's *England's Dreaming* (2005 [1991]), "You know who invented that? It was Helen: I remember her sitting on the floor of the Bell Street flat cutting up the Evening Standard" (Savage, 2005 [1991], p. 201). McLaren also writes in the catalogue for the 1988 exhibition *Impresario: Malcolm McLaren & the British New Wave* at the Museum of Contemporary Art in New York, that during 1975 Wallington-Lloyd "designs Sex Pistols leaflets, cutting up letters from newspapers to resemble ransom notes (a technique later refined by Jamie Reid)" (McLaren in Taylor, 1988, p. 72). This is disputed by Reid, who expresses his frustration at McLaren and Wellington-Lloyd claiming authorship of his work; in a 2008 interview he says of McLaren:

He is full of bullshit. The Observer did a little fold-up insert mag about pop music, and they had things about record sleeves, and they had Never Mind The Bollocks, and it said 'Designed by Malcolm McLaren, Helen and Jamie Reid'! (laughs). Well, fucking hell! He had nothing to do with it whatsoever.

(Maguire, Jan 2008).

Reid returns to the subject in an interview the following year, explaining that Wallington-Lloyd's contribution was in fact limited to the handwriting on early flyers such as the one advertising a concert at the Nashville, West Kensington, London, on 29<sup>th</sup> April 1976 [See fig. 5.12] (Maguire, Dec 2009).

The development of a recognisable, coherent look for the band's artwork can be traced through a number of Reid's other early designs, including a poster advertising the Sex Pistols' gig at The Screen on the Green in Islington, 29<sup>th</sup> August 1976 [See fig. 5.13], which was handwritten in black marker pen and decorated with photographs of the band. An early version of Reid's final style is evident, with the words 'Sex Pistols', printed in black on white paper, being cut out – in one whole piece rather than in the later ransom-note style - and placed upon the main image.

Reid followed this with a series of three Sex Pistols concert posters, in which further developments of his distinctive look were manifested. The first, a poster promoting a Sex Pistols concert at the 100 Club, Oxford Street on 31<sup>st</sup> August 1976, contains the first ever appearance of what would become the Sex Pistols' logo – the band's name, put together from individual letters of different sizes torn out of newspaper headlines [See fig. 5.14]. The poster also contained a list of several of the band's song titles, also appearing in the same style. Similar blackmail-style lettering, this time spelling out the words 'Anarchy in the UK', was featured on the poster for a "Punk Special" with the Clash, Subway Sect and the Stinky Toys, held at the 100 Club on 20<sup>th</sup> September 1976, with a photograph of the band taken by Nils Stevenson's brother, Ray [See fig. 5.15]. The lettering reappeared the following month in a poster for another concert to be held on 15<sup>th</sup> October 1976 at the Notre Dame Hall, Leicester Place, London [See fig. 5.16], organised to celebrate the band's signing to EMI and filmed for LWT's *Weekend* programme (Reid & Savage, 1987).

Another factor which differentiates Reid's early posters from his subsequent Sex Pistols artwork is the use of images of the band members

themselves, something which all of the pieces discussed so far have in common.

Reid quickly came to realise that the proliferation of newspaper stories on the band meant that the need to illustrate posters with their image became redundant.

He recalls,

One thing that became very clear was that there wasn't any need to have pictures of the band on any of the graphics. What's the point when you're already on the front of the *Daily Mirror* and the *Sun* – it's just tarding up the sleeve and they were ugly anyway. I wanted the graphics to articulate what the attitude of the songs was, what the attitude of the whole band was, and what Glitterbest was".

(Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 57).

To capitalise on the nationwide press the band were receiving after their controversial appearance on Bill Grundy's *Thames Today* programme on the evening of 1<sup>st</sup> December 1976<sup>76</sup>, Richmond quickly put together a series of Xeroxed Sex Pistols montages or bulletins featuring articles clipped out of national newspapers, such as 'The Filth and the Fury!', which first appeared on the front page of the *Daily Mirror* on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 1976, the day after the Bill Grundy appearance [See fig. 5.17] (Reid & Savage, 1987). Richmond's montages, printed by Reid at the Rye Express in Peckham in a variety of colours such as blue, green and ochre [See fig. 5.18], were included in the Sex Pistols' press packs, to be sent out to journalists and record companies. The press packs are described by Savage as "a montage of vitriol, praise and indifference, reflecting both the confused response to the group and the group's wish not to be defined" (Savage, 2005 [1991], p. 202). The pack was added to until it eventually

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<sup>76</sup> On the 1 December the Sex Pistols were booked to appear on Thames TV's *Today* programme, which aired live at 6.25pm. The group were a replacement for Queen, who had pulled out. The resulting encounter between presenter Bill Grundy, The Sex Pistols and an entourage who included Siouxsie Sioux lapsed into a slanging match that included the use of four letter words. The resulting media frenzy and public outrage turned the Sex Pistols into a household name overnight.

became more like a magazine, a method of promotion which was later developed by Reid, Richmond and Westwood into the Sex Pistols magazine *Anarchy in the UK*, which was sold on the band's December 1976 tour [See fig. 5.19]. The magazine, which featured the Sex Pistols associate Sue Catwoman on the cover, also contained several graphics and slogans taken from Reid's *Suburban Press* (See Chapter 4).

As the band's public profile grew, Reid progressed from the initial experimentation of individual concert posters and handbills and began to devise what would become a series of fully integrated promotional campaigns for the band's singles and albums, incorporating the carefully cultivated and distinctive lettering style he had now perfected, and which were designed to achieve maximum impact on the music industry and most importantly, the media. As Reid explains,

As things started to snowball, everybody got more ambitious. In our various ways, Glitterbest and the group were playing for very high stakes. I can't really speak for the others, but as far as I was concerned there was certainly every intention of making the band front-page news, and taking on the media and the music industry. There was very little discussion as far as actual decisions went. It was just assumed that everybody was doing what they did and that it was right for the time.  
(Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 55).

For Reid, this meant creating a cohesive look for the Sex Pistols' promotional material that would not only cement the band and its management as icons within the pop music industry, but more importantly would also propel the Sex Pistols into a being social force with its own political agenda.

The Sex Pistols' first single was to be *Anarchy in the UK/ I Wanna Be Me*, to be released on 4<sup>th</sup> November 1976 on EMI Records, and as such its promotional material had to make an immediate and extremely powerful impact

on the music industry, media and general public. Reid's first idea was to rework his *Monster* drawing which had first appeared in *Suburban Press* [See fig. 5.20], overlaying it with hand-drawn text [See fig. 5.21], however McLaren deemed the image "too romantic" (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 57). Eventually, the pair settled on a plain black picture sleeve, without any lettering or form of identification – a concept used more frequently by recording artists in the decades that followed, but which at the time was thought to signify either arrogance or "commercial suicide" (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 57).

The campaign for *Anarchy in the UK* as a whole continued the theme of criminality and the deliberately torn and jumbled DIY appearance of Reid's previous Sex Pistols artwork which, as Savage explains, succeeded in adding "to the atmosphere of secrecy and conspiracy that surrounded the Sex Pistols at this point" (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 57). Reid achieved this with his concept for a key promotional poster for *Anarchy in the UK*, which would controversially feature the deliberate misuse and defacement of the national flag of the United Kingdom; the Union Jack [See fig. 5.22]. Reid's final image was created from an old 8" x 4" souvenir flag [See fig. 5.23], which Reid knew would create an impact when blown up to a large size (Reid & Savage, 1987).

Reid ripped up the flag into separate parts, creating a gaping hole in the middle, and pinned the whole thing back together with safety pins. On top of this, he added the wording 'Anarchy in the UK' and 'Sex Pistols' in black and white détourned lettering, attaching them to the defaced flag with bulldog clips. A preliminary version shows the words 'Sex Pistols' in a slightly earlier style [See fig. 5.24], in the same font that appears on Reid's poster for the band's concert at the Screen on the Green in Islington on August 29<sup>th</sup> 1976 [See fig. 5.13]. The

final version of the image, in which the words 'Sex Pistols' appear in the style of the band's logo, and have been placed in the centre of the flag, was printed as a large-scale promotional poster [See fig. 5.25]. All photographs were taken by Ray Stevenson, who became the band's photographer and undercover publicist (<http://www.raystevenson.co.uk>). The flag also appeared on Reid's promotional poster for the Sex Pistols' Anarchy in the UK Tour, which was to take place from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> December 1976<sup>77</sup> [See fig. 5.26].

Reid's choice of image for the campaign can be seen to reflect the deliberately inflammatory lyrics of the song itself, particularly the opening two lines sang by Lydon: 'I am an anti-christ/I am an anarchist', the wording of which is dissected by Savage in *England's Dreaming* (2005 [1991]). He explains that the word 'antichrist' "goes back directly to the pseudo-messiah of Revelation", and that "even in 1976, the word carried a clear threat of apocalypse" (Savage, 2005 [1991], p. 204). Savage goes on to state that the word 'anarchist' "carried associations of riot and of anonymous, lethal disorder", evoking events such as the Gordon Riots of 1780 (See Chapter 3) and the Angry Brigade bombings of 1970-1972 (See Chapter 4).

Reid was undoubtedly familiar with such events, in part due to his interest in 19<sup>th</sup> Century Romanticism and events such as the French Revolution of 1830, the writings of the Situationist International, and his immersion in the writings of British individuals such as William Morris and Digger Gerrard Winstanley<sup>78</sup>, who championed anarchist thought (Savage, 2005 [1991]). Reid

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<sup>77</sup> The reaction of the national press to the band's antics and the constant pressure of this publicity meant the cancellation of most dates on the Anarchy Tour in December 1976.

<sup>78</sup> The Diggers were an English group of Protestant Christian agrarian communists, begun by Gerrard Winstanley as True Levellers in 1649, who became known as 'Diggers' due to their activities. Their original name came from their belief in economic equality based upon a specific

recalls, “We used to talk to John a lot about the Situationists, about Suburban Press...” (Savage, 2005 [1991], p. 204-5). He also explained to Peter Ross of *The Sunday Herald* in 2001, “...I used to have lots of talks with John. It was a much more collective situation than probably John Lydon or Malcolm McLaren would like to say. People like to take the credit for everything don't they? ” (Ross, 2001, p. 16). There is little doubt that although Lydon was the author of the lyrics for *Anarchy in the UK*, he was drawing upon ideas and concepts he had first heard about from McLaren, Reid and Westwood.

Reid's détournement of the Union Jack can be viewed as an indication of both his and the band's ambition at this stage, and the first major example of Reid's desire to imbue the band with an overtly political agenda – in this case, a critique of the role of government and the monarchy. This is supported by Richard Boon - artist, writer and former manager of the Buzzcocks - who states:

Yes, it was pretty obvious. At least, if one had been exposed to the material it was. It was engaging to see it. Jamie's graphics were definitely rooted there... If every act is political, having fun is political too... It was interesting, the commodification of anarchy was quite fascinating, and there was a fairly oblique attempt to make that propaganda move, so that maybe people would go out and get their Woodcock Anarchy out of the library, or steal it from WH Smith.  
(Boon in Savage, 2009, p. 560).

According to Reid, his influence on the band members was not particularly welcomed by McLaren and Westwood. He recalls:

I had arguments with Malcolm who initially wanted the Sex Pistols to promote his 'SEX' shop and tried to milk the Bay City Rollers phenomenon. That obviously wasn't on, given the people that were in the band. In fact, Vivienne Westwood and Malcolm weren't happy with the

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passage in the Book of Acts. The Diggers tried to reform (by 'levelling' real property) the existing social order with an agrarian lifestyle based on their ideas for the creation of small egalitarian rural communities. They were one of a number of nonconformist dissenting groups that emerged around this time.

band being political, and didn't particularly respond to the 'Anarchy' flag, or to anything much until 'God Save The Queen'. I just kept quiet and got the artwork in to the fucking printers.  
(Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 55).

Despite this mixture of disapproval and indifference from McLaren, Reid continued to develop his critique of the roles of government and the monarchy and communicate it through the Sex Pistols' promotional artwork, this time in the integrated campaign for *God Save The Queen/Do Me No Wrong*, released on 27<sup>th</sup> May 1977 to coincide with the Queen's official Silver Jubilee celebrations, which were to begin on 7<sup>th</sup> June of that year. Verses of *God Save The Queen* written by Lydon, such as:

God save the Queen,  
A fascist regime  
Made you a moron  
A Potential H-bomb

God save the Queen,  
She ain't no human being  
There ain't no future in  
England's dreaming.

Lydon's scathing lyrics contrasted heavily with the Queen's own Silver Jubilee address of 4<sup>th</sup> May 1977, in which she stated:

Perhaps this Jubilee is a time to remind ourselves of the benefits which union has conferred, at home and in our international dealings, on the inhabitants of all parts of this United Kingdom.... A Jubilee is also a time to look forward! We should certainly do this with determination and I believe we can also do so with hope.  
(<http://www.bbc.co.uk>).

Lydon later claimed in Julien Temple's documentary film *The Filth and the Fury* (2000): "You don't write 'God Save The Queen' because you hate the English race, you write a song like that because you love them; and you're fed up with



them being mistreated..." (*The Filth and the Fury*, 2000). However, it is important to view this as Lydon's retrospective interpretation of past events, an interpretation which formed part of a documentary which, as Savage explains, had

reunited director Julien Temple and the group to re-tell the McLaren-inspired *The Great Rock 'n' Roll Swindle* from Lydon's point of view... It's as though the whole scandal that the Sex Pistols went through during 1976 and 1977 have so marked the participants, Lydon in particular, that they have never got over it.  
(Savage, 2005 [1991], p. xi-xii).

One could view Lydon's mature interpretation of the lyrics to *God Save The Queen* as almost an apology for the extreme shock tactics used by the band and their management team in their heyday.

Lydon's lyrics also summed up Reid, McLaren and Westwood's own attitude towards the monarchy; in a 1977 interview Westwood states:

If you took away the Queen, the army and all those people wouldn't have this figurehead to look up to that smiles at them and pretends everything's alright...She's prevented from being some kind of wild, crazy, intelligent, creative human being and has to be some kind of a zombie instead. She's an A-1 example of what this country is all about.  
(Westwood in Vermorel, 1981 [1978], p. 98).

Reid reiterates this view in 1987, describing *God Save The Queen* as "...probably the last public protest against the monarchy" and expressing his opposition to the Royal Family, explaining: "We now know all their ins and outs, all their activities. We know that they remain the biggest landowners in the country... We have no constitution" (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 57). At a time when the majority of the country were celebrating the occasion by tuning into the official Jubilee celebrations on television and holding their own street parties, the Sex Pistols' single – accompanied by Reid's controversial campaign – raised the question of

the purpose of the monarchy and the role the Royal Family now played in British society, launching an assault on its respected institutions, morality and sense of common decency that was intended to provide maximum shock value. It was this attitude which Reid sought to convey with the single's accompanying promotional campaign.

The campaign for *God Save The Queen* had begun in March 1977, when the Sex Pistols were still signed to A&M Records. The single, at this point backed by the song *No Feelings*, had already been pressed when the label suddenly paid the Sex Pistols and Glitterbest £25,000 to terminate their contract (Vermorel, 1981 [1978]). In May 1977 the band then signed to Virgin Records, who at that time were a smaller record company. Virgin had been interested in the Sex Pistols all along, but had lost out in the bidding against the larger companies. *God Save The Queen* was eventually released two months late on 27<sup>th</sup> May 1977 (Reid & Savage, 1987). According to Savage, Reid came up with a wide-ranging campaign, costing over £5,000, that included: 1,000 double-crown posters for use on London buses; 3,000 quad-sized posters for flyposting; 6,000 stickers; 3,000 streamers; transfers; T-shirts; as well as TV, radio and press advertisements. Also mapped out was a detailed campaign for individual retailers and small chains" (Savage, 2005 [1991], p. 349).

The A&M version of the single had been accompanied by the record label's own cover roughs, which according to Savage had depicted the band "in front of Buckingham Palace with sentries clutching signing-on cards" (Savage, 2005 [1991], p. 315). However, in the meantime Reid had formulated his own designs for the accompanying media, in a carefully orchestrated campaign which was to draw upon all aspects of his previous experience. Reid took as his starting

point an official Silver Jubilee photographic portrait of the Queen by court photographer to the British Royal Family, Cecil Beaton, a copy of which he had found in one of the national tabloid newspapers [See fig. 5.27].

Reid used the found Cecil Beaton image as the basis for a two-day photoshoot with photographer Carol Moss, in which he created hundreds of détourned variations; he recalls:

I did a whole series of them – I must have done about a hundred different images – but using that photo, which was actually just cut out of the Sunday People as an official Jubilee photo. And I did all sorts of different versions, with different safety pins, different slashes across it, cups of tea on it, all sorts of different things.  
(<http://www.chipwork.com>).

Some of these variations later made an appearance in the campaign, with the ‘cup of tea’ image being used on a flyer [See fig. 5.28] and as an advertisement for the single which featured in the music press [See fig. 5.29]. Reid discusses other variations on the Cecil Beaton image, recalling:

We had roses growing through and a knife stuck in the jugular vein: Poor Queen! There was no point in beating around the bush: in many ways you use the same tactics that you know are going to get thrown back in your face from the likes of the Mirror and the Sun.  
(Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 65).

However, Reid finally settled on images for the single sleeve and the majority of other promotional items that he believed would make the maximum impact, including a safety pin inserted through the Queen’s mouth (Savage, 2005 [1991]). Another of Reid’s design’s contained the words ‘God Save The Queen’ and ‘Sex Pistols’ in Reid’s now-familiar ransom note style, which obscured the Queen’s eyes and mouth [See fig. 5.30]. This collage formed the basis for the *God Save The Queen* single sleeve, which was issued in the colours of royal blue

and silver [See figs. 5.31 & 5.32]. Slight variations on the collage appeared as handbills, flyers, badges and T-shirts [See figs. 5.33 to 5.36]. One particular image, depicting the Queen with swastika symbols in her eyes [See fig. 5.37], was banned by A&M Records, a decision which Reid finds particularly amusing in the sense that after the ban the image was increasingly featured in the national press, thus increasing the strength of the single's campaign:

And interestingly enough, it was only actually banned as an image when the band was signed to A&M, and that was because I did a version which was making a link to the German Royal family, it had swastika eyeballs. And you know, with all that controversy what made me laugh is that you can get a banned image, and then millions and millions more people see it because it's splashed all across the front page of the Daily Mirror, it was on television, so it got seen by more people by being banned.  
(<http://www.chipwork.com>).

In addition to the Cecil Beaton safety pin image Reid returned to the motif of the Union Jack, combining it with the collage to produce a large poster that echoed the *Anarchy in the UK* campaign, conveyed the artist's opinion that "that there was another England not mentioned in the worldwide media coverage of the Jubilee jamboree" [See fig. 5.38] (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 65). Making reference to the proliferation of Silver Jubilee commemorative items on sale such as mugs and other tableware [See fig. 5.39], the flag design was also produced as a mug-sized sticker [See fig. 5.40].

*God Save The Queen* reached number two in the charts in Jubilee Week (on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> June), or more correctly is believed to have been artificially kept from number one position after being banned by the BBC (<http://www.bbc.co.uk>). On 7<sup>th</sup> June 1977, the first day of the Queen's official Silver Jubilee celebrations, the band played *God Save The Queen* on the Queen Elizabeth River Boat as it sailed down the River Thames in London, pursued by

police boats. Also amongst those on board were Reid, McLaren, Richmond, Westwood and Virgin's Richard Branson, as documented by the Sex Pistols' official photographer at that time, Dennis Morris [See figs. 5.41 to 5.43]. The group, along with Reid and McLaren, were arrested when the boat docked [See fig. 5.44] but had achieved their aim of distracting people from the main celebrations (<http://www.guardian.co.uk>). As Sophie Richmond documented in her personal diary<sup>79</sup> on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> June:

...Very peaceful sailing down the river with reggae...Everyone got quite calm and relaxed. Band played a few numbers & got the river police going...Hordes of police on the pier...Barbara [Harwood] rolled up & told me Jamie had been arrested. I gave Sid & John a fiver each to split with & was wondering what to do when I saw Malcolm getting roughed up. Next thing I know I was in a police van too. The entire management except for Boogie [John Tiberi] was there...Took ages to get booked & put away...A night in the cells.

(Richmond in Vermorel, 1981 [1978], p. 94-95).

The situation did not appear to perturb either Richmond or the band, and she goes on to note, "Not to worry. We were all out in time for lunch. Back to the office. Congratulatory calls from music press & band. Suddenly Malcolm is a nice guy because he got arrested" (Richmond in Vermorel, 1981 [1978], p. 95). However, the incident affected Reid more than the others, and Richmond writes that "Jamie really got pissed – freaked out by his charge, assault. Drag." (Richmond in Vermorel, 1981 [1978], p. 95).

This period was something of a turning point for Reid, who saw the project as having reached its pinnacle as a pop music phenomenon. This situation was exacerbated by the fact that Reid, Lydon and Cook<sup>80</sup> had been attacked in

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<sup>79</sup> Richmond's detailed diary forms the narrative spine of Fred and Judy Vermorel's *Sex Pistols: The Inside Story* (1978).

<sup>80</sup> Violent attacks on punk fans were on the rise at this time. In mid-June John Lydon himself was assaulted by a knife-wielding gang outside Islington's Pegasus pub, causing tendon damage to his

separate incidents, with Reid beaten up outside the London rockabilly pub the Hole in the apparently for wearing one of his own *God Save The Queen* T-shirts (Reid & Savage, 1987). Reid received a broken nose and leg, as documented by Richmond in her diary on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> June: “Got home all right in a cab...Found...a very bloodstained battered Jamie...Thanked M & V, made loads of sweet tea & debated whether to go hospital. Eventually we did – a good thing, his right leg is cracked & his nose broken” (Richmond in Vermorel, 1981 [1978], p. 103). Richmond says of the attacks: “We all lose our cool a little” ((Richmond in Vermorel, 1981 [1978], p. 103). A photograph of Reid, McLaren and Westwood from around this time shows Reid with a walking stick [See fig. 5.45].

It was after these incidents, says Reid, “that things started to come apart”, and he suggested to McLaren: “Wouldn’t it be great to just disappear. Just be a hit and run” (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 57). However, the pair continued with the intention of broadening out many of their original ideas and concepts for the Sex Pistols project. For Reid, this involved making public the band’s link to the Situationist International in a hastily-organised campaign - thanks to the short notice given to Reid by McLaren - for the Sex Pistols’ next single, *Pretty Vacant/No Fun*, to be released on 1<sup>st</sup> July 1977 on Virgin Records. As McLaren had only decided upon *Pretty Vacant* as a single choice the night before the artwork was due, Reid was forced to create a campaign that same morning. Reid drew upon an early Suburban Press image of two buses labelled ‘Boredom’ and ‘Nowhere’<sup>81</sup>, which he had printed in 1973 and sent to Point Blank, a San Francisco pro-Situ collective, in 1975 for use in a pamphlet about city transit

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left arm. A few days later Paul Cook was attacked by five men outside Shepherd’s Bush underground station, receiving knife wounds and being clubbed on the back of the head with an iron bar.

<sup>81</sup> At the funeral of Malcolm McLaren in April 2010, the hearse was drawn by four black horses and followed by a Routemaster bus, the destination sign reading ‘Nowhere’.

policy [See fig. 5.46], Before their use in the campaign for *Pretty Vacant*, the buses image had also appeared in the Sex Pistols' *Anarchy in the UK* magazine, published in December 1977 [See fig. 5.47] (Reid & Savage, 1987).

Reid had worked the buses into two different promotional posters for *Pretty Vacant* [See figs. 5.48 & 5.49], and the image also appeared on the back cover of the single sleeve and on promotional badges [See figs. 5.50 & 5.51]. However, Reid did not consider the Suburban Press buses strong enough to make the front cover of the single sleeve. In a stroke of luck, on the way to the Virgin offices Reid came across a small gold picture frame in the window of an art shop on Portobello Road, which he adorned with the lettering from the Sex Pistols' 100 Club flyer of the previous year [See fig. 5.14] and presented to Virgin's Art Department beneath smashed glass [See fig. 5.52] (Reid & Savage, 1987). As Reid explains, "It was necessity being the mother of invention again. I was incredibly lucky: the frame was almost exactly 7 inches by 7 inches, in the right ratio for a single sleeve. We didn't have to scale it down at all" (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 68). Reid's stroke of luck and his ability to work under constraints of both time and available materials helps to illustrate Reid's strength as a visual artist and designer; as Danny Friedman of the Victoria & Albert Museum explains:

I think the most important influence on his work was expediency. That may sound silly but I mean he churned out an awful lot over a very short period. And I think, somehow, he managed to evolve a style so that he could do impressive things fast and without, you know, relying too much on the very heavy duty technology that a lot of photo studios and designers rely on. And that's probably the basis of his strength in fact. (Friedman in Vermorel, 1981 [1978], p. 258).

Savage sums up the appeal of the *Pretty Vacant* campaign in particular; it is possible to contrast the DIY, last-minute creation of the sleeve with the complexity of the ideas the release conveys. As Savage notes:

Despite the haste with which it was planned, 'Pretty Vacant' was a charged, complicated package, from the Situ picture sleeve through to the searing, ridiculous version of 'No Fun' on the B-side. The song still resonated: a good description of the group's status (vacant, or a blank slate), a rallying call for new Punk converts, a nice put-on (we're not as stupid as you think we are) and a great chorus ('vay-cunt') with which to annoy parents" (Savage, 2005 [1991], p. 379).

The complex layers of meaning which can be unearthed from both the single and Reid's accompanying artwork demonstrate an increasing level of sophistication, especially when contrasted with Reid's earliest Sex Pistols artwork [See fig. 5.1]. Savage notes that his sophistication was almost a necessity, due to the fact that at this time most other media were now closed down due to the controversy of the band's previous tours and single releases<sup>82</sup> (Savage, 2005 [1991]). According to Savage, "This was the heyday of the Sex Pistols' graphic image" (Savage, 2005 [1991], p. 410), and the band's next single release was to illustrate this, drawing upon many aspects of Reid's previous experience and in some ways providing a summarised trajectory of his artistic career.

*Holidays In The Sun/Satellite* was released on 14<sup>th</sup> October 1977 on Virgin Records, and Reid again used his sleeve designs as an opportunity to explicitly declare his Situationist influences, aware that the weakness of the single meant that it needed a particularly eye-catching graphic for its front cover (Reid & Savage, 1987). This was provided by the front page of a holiday

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<sup>82</sup> For full documentation of these events, please refer to Jon Savage's *England's Dreaming* (1991) and Fred & Judy Vermorel's *Sex Pistols: The Inside Story* (1978).



brochure from the Belgian Travel Service featuring brightly-coloured comic strip-style illustrations and speech bubbles [See fig. 5.53], into which Reid had inserted the lyrics to the song [See fig. 5.54]. The design evokes similar comic strips created by the Situationist International, which had been détourned from 1940s detective comics [See fig. 5.55] (Savage, 2005). A single frame from the Belgian travel brochure was also used on promotional postcards for the single [See fig. 5.56].

For the reverse of the sleeve, Reid again returned to *Suburban Press* magazine and an image entitled *Nice Drawing* (1973) [See figs. 5.57 & 5.58] (See Chapter 4). Reid included the family photograph from *Nice Drawing* and adding the *Satellite* lettering from the same 100 Club flyer used for *Pretty Vacant* [See fig. 5.4], reiterating the Situationist critique of the mindlessness of consumer society detailed in Debord's *Society of the Spectacle* (1967). Reid reused another graphic he had contributed to Grey's *Leaving the 20<sup>th</sup> Century* (1974) as the basis for both music press advertisements and large-scale posters, the image of a beach packed full of holidaymakers [See fig. 5.59]. On top of this he layered hand-drawn speech bubbles containing the lyrics to *Holidays In The Sun*, a frame from the Belgian Travel Service brochure declaring 'A cheap holiday in other people's misery', and a *Suburban Press* sticker proclaiming 'Keep warm this winter, make trouble', originally produced between 1972 to 1973 as part of the *Suburban Press* sticker series [See fig. 5.60] (Reid & Savage, 1987). As Savage explains, the artwork had to be pulped due to the threat of legal action against Virgin by the Belgian Travel Service due to breach of copyright. As Reid explained earlier in relation to the *God Save the Queen* swastika image

[See fig. 5.37], this only created more free publicity for the band (Reid & Savage, 1987).

Even more controversy would be caused by the Sex Pistols' subsequent album release, culminating in a court case over the allegedly obscene nature of the album's title, more of which shall be discussed later. *Never Mind the Bollocks (Here's The Sex Pistols)* was released on 4<sup>th</sup> November 1977 on Virgin Records, its creation having been a problematic experience for both the band and its management team. As Reid states: "The saga of the first Sex Pistols LP was torturous in the extreme. Everybody concerned – the band, Glitterbest, and Virgin Records – fought about the track listing, the release date, indeed about whether the Sex Pistols should release an album at all" (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 79). This uncertainty was reflected in the album's title and artwork, with the initial title of *God Save Sex Pistols* becoming known as *Never Mind The Bollocks*, a contribution by Steve Jones (Savage, 2005 [1991]).

In keeping with Reid's previous campaigns the album sleeve<sup>83</sup> was devoid of a group photograph, instead containing only crudely-finished cut-out lettering declaring 'Never Mind The Bollocks Here's The Sex Pistols' [See fig. 5.61] on a garish fluorescent yellow background, a design which was also replicated on promotional posters [See fig. 5.62]. Reid had chosen the colours of fluorescent pink and yellow as they were associated with "supermarket stuff and sales signs...like the shoplifting stickers [of Suburban Press]" (Maguire, 2009).

The simplicity of Reid's stark, fluorescent design belies its complex printing

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<sup>83</sup> The original UK album (Virgin V2086) contained only eleven tracks, before the group changed their mind and decided to include *Submission*. The twelve-track UK version began appearing in early November 1977. As a result of the track listing confusion, several variants of the UK back sleeve exist: completely blank; omitting *Submission*; including *Submission*; and a misprint including *Belsen Was A Gas* and omitting several other tracks, based on artwork for an earlier rejected track listing.

process, with a number of initial proofs being printed up by the artist. As Savage explains,

It took Jamie many goes to get the final product right, partly because of difficulties in the actual printing process. Yellow is a notoriously bad colour to print as it shows up any impurities in the process very clearly. And, although the sleeve gives the impression of being simple, it uses a series of complex overlays. Fluorescent colours are hard to print as well, which doubled the difficulty... In fact, it was a feature of the finished sleeve that it deteriorated very quickly: if left out in the sunlight, the yellow and the pink faded, just leaving the black of the overlays.” (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 79).

It is partly this potential for deterioration which has made the original posters for *Never Mind The Bollocks* so collectible; as Paul Stolper explains in John Windsor’s 1998 article for *The Independent* “Never Mind the Critics, This Is Art; Collect to Invest”: “Reid’s “Never Mind The Bollocks” poster looks simple but it is a tour de force of printing. He used pink and yellow, colours that don’t sit together and that are fugitive – they fade” (Windsor, 1998, p. 3). Reid’s distinctive sleeve design was copied in 1978 by the band’s former photographer Ray Stevenson, for the cover of the first Sex Pistols photo book *No Future* (1978), leading to the threat of legal action from Glitterbest. Stevenson explains:

The cover was bright yellow, with the Pistols’ logo on it. I got a writ, saying they were going to injunct the book, on the grounds that the distinctive yellow colour was owned by Glitterbest! The Pistols logo they probably had a case for, assuming that they actually paid Jamie for it anyway... The colour yellow was easy. That cost me £350 and I never heard from Glitterbest at all after that... (Savage, 2009, p. 419).

This was not to be the last legal problem for Reid and Glitterbest; *Never Mind The Bollocks* was met by a hail of controversy in the UK upon its release, leading to a high-profile court case at Nottingham Magistrates’ Court on 24 November

1977, involving the alleged obscenity of the album's title. The Nottingham record shop owner Christopher Seale, along with label owner Richard Branson, were also prosecuted under Section 28 of the Town Police Clauses Act 1847<sup>84</sup> for displaying the album in a shop window (Reid & Savage, 1987).

Branson had brought in John Mortimer Q.C. to defend the pair, a barrister who rose to prominence in the 1960s as a defender of free speech and human rights, taking up cases that he regarded as testing the barriers of tolerance. The most notable of these was the *Oz* obscenity trial of 1971. *Oz* was an independently-published satirical, underground magazine which was founded by Richard Neville in Sydney, Australia in 1963 and ran there until 1969. Its second, more well-known incarnation was as a London-based countercultural magazine, which ran from 1967 to 1973. In 1971, the editors of the London edition of *Oz* - Neville, Jim Anderson and Felix Dennis - were prosecuted at the Old Bailey under the Obscene Publications Act in relation to their *Schoolkids* issue of May 1970 [See fig. 5.63], which featured a number of anti-authoritarian contributions from a group of teenaged schoolchildren (<http://www.bl.uk>). The most offensive of these contributions in the eyes of the prosecution was a détourned cartoon put together by the 15-year-old schoolboy Vivian Berger, which placed the head of children's character Rupert Bear over that of a rapist figure in a sexually explicit comic strip by the American artist and illustrator Robert Crumb [See fig. 5.64] (Neville, 2009 [1996]). The three accused *Oz* editors had turned to Mortimer, who was at that time appearing in defence of *The Little Red Schoolbook*<sup>85</sup> and

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<sup>84</sup> Since replaced by the Indecent Displays (Control) Act 1981.

<sup>85</sup> A sexually explicit guide to challenging authority for children, also prosecuted for obscenity in 1971.

who Neville regarded as “a charming literateur<sup>86</sup>, a champion of free speech” (Neville, 2009 [1996], p. 276). Neville explains that Mortimer had no reservations about taking on the case, even after taking into account such issues as “the tenor of our defence, my plan to defend myself, the antics of our supporters” (Neville, 2009 [1996], p. 280). As Mortimer explains in a 2008 interview with *Index* magazine, “We were defending a principle I suppose – that you shouldn’t have any censorship, that nobody should tell you what to read or write. It’s entirely your own business” (Mortimer, 2008, p. 35). It was this principle which Mortimer sought to defend in what turned out to be the longest obscenity trial in English legal history (Neville, 2009 [1996]).

Anderson, Dennis and Neville were charged under the Obscene Publication Act with the archaic offence of corrupting public morals, which theoretically had an unlimited punishment. The prosecuting counsel, Brian Leary, summed up the case by addressing the jury:

Ask yourself, what good ever came out of *Oz* 28? What lesson is there for us to learn? Members of the jury, there is none, is there? Save that sex is a God to be worshipped for its own sake... That doing one’s own thing is an ideal to be looked up to – by young and old alike – no matter how selfish that ideal may be. That a police officer can be called a pig, that cannabis is harmless and the law against it is silly.  
(Leary in Neville, 2009 [1996], p. 319).

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<sup>86</sup> Mortimer is best remembered for creating a barrister named Horace Rumpole, whose specialty is defending those accused of crime in London’s Old Bailey. Mortimer created Rumpole for *Rumpole of the Bailey*, based on a chance Court encounter with James Burge QC, as a 1975 contribution to the BBC’s *Play For Today* anthology series. The idea was developed into a series *Rumpole of the Bailey* for Thames Television and a series of books (all written by Mortimer). In September-October 2003, BBC Radio 4 broadcast four new 45-minute Rumpole dramatisations by Mortimer starring Timothy West in the title role. He also dramatised many of the real-life cases of the barrister Edward Marshall-Hall in a radio series starring ex-*Doctor Who* star Tom Baker.

In response Mortimer spoke of the “many alternative societies” contained within the country, and stated:

The most important thing is that we should all live with each other, that we should be tolerant of alternative ideas and not seek to stifle other people’s lifestyles... And if, in putting forth their feelings... children find our reaction is to trundle out the law, to attack and suppress and censor... Then we shall indeed be a lonely generation, because we shall have lost them forever.

(Mortimer in Neville, 2009 [1996], p. 321).

Despite this defence, the three editors were found guilty; Anderson and Neville received 15 months, with less for Dennis. However, the appeal showed that Justice Argyle had grossly misdirected the jury on a number of occasions, and one of the witnesses had suffered police harassment and assault. The convictions were overturned, and the debacle of the *Oz* trial - in part due to Mortimer’s outstanding defence - made prosecutions under the Obscene Publications Act almost non-existent. (<http://www.bl.uk>).

During the Sex Pistols’ *Never Mind The Bollocks* trial of 1977, Mortimer brought in a series of witnesses such as the music journalist Caroline Coon and a Professor of English from Leicester University, who was able to successfully demonstrate that the word ‘bollocks’ was not obscene, and was actually a legitimate Old English term originally used to refer to a priest, and which, in the context of the title, meant ‘nonsense’ (Robertson, 1998). In summing up the case for the defence, Mortimer stated:

One wonders why a word which has been dignified by writers from the Middle Ages in the translation of the Bible to the works of Dylan Thomas and George Orwell, and which you may find in the dictionary, should be singled out as criminal because it is on a record sleeve by the Sex Pistols... One wonders what the world is to think about a judicial system which had to spend its time to consider a word that is used to describe a load of nonsense, balderdash.... What do we want? Do we want blanks and

asterisks and exclamation marks which people can fill in with their own imaginations, or are we prepared and strong enough to support and tolerate, even if we don't approve, the strong Anglo-Saxon, realistic and vivid language?

(Bollocks court case transcript, 24<sup>th</sup> November 1977. *England's Dreaming: The Jon Savage Archive*).

The chairman of the bench was forced to conclude:

Much as my colleagues and I wholeheartedly deplore the vulgar exploitation of the worst instincts of human nature for the purchases of commercial profits by both you and your company, we must reluctantly find you not guilty of each of the four charges.

(Bollocks court case transcript, 24<sup>th</sup> November 1977. *England's Dreaming: The Jon Savage Archive*).

Reid has fond memories of the case, branding it “hysterical”, and stating:

...in many ways it might have been in our interests to have lost it, it could have been quite interesting. But Virgin and Branson got in John Mortimer to defend us, who brought in experts on old English and Saxon language from the Open University to say in fact that ‘bollocks’ is a word that as Anglo-Saxons we should be extremely proud of, it's a very old, emotive word. And we won the court case! But it was hysterical seeing all the window displays brought into court. And I think it went on and on, as these things do, and they actually found it in our favour. The funniest thing was coming down the court steps in Nottingham, and hearing the local guy selling the evening paper just screaming out ‘Bollocks now legal!’, which I thought was great...”Bollocks now legal” – it's a fucking good title!”

(<http://www.chipwork.com>).

Despite the jubilation that followed the court case, the release of *Never Mind The*

*Bollocks* on 4<sup>th</sup> November 1977 would signify the final time the Sex Pistols

would ever record together in its current line-up. In many ways the court case

was a high point for the band and for Glitterbest; this level of assault on the

music industry and national media proved unsustainable. As the Virgin Records

Press Officer Al Clarke viewed the situation in 1978:

It was just a period of eventfulness which can't continue to be that eventful for that long because that's just not the way things are. Once they'd turned the music business upside down as they supposedly had... you've got to have something else to do. There wasn't anything else it seemed...

(Clarke in Vermorel, 1981 [1979], p. 147).

In January 1978, at the end of a turbulent US tour, Lydon left the band and announced its breakup. McLaren continued with the three other band members, including Sid Vicious who had replaced Glen Matlock in early 1977. Vicious died of a heroin overdose in February 1979; however McLaren kept the Sex Pistols project alive with Paul Cook and Steve Jones after this point, releasing further singles for which Reid again supplied the artwork (Reid & Savage, 1987).

After Lydon left the band, the three other band members recorded songs for McLaren's film version of the Sex Pistols' story, *The Great Rock 'n' Roll Swindle* (1980), a complicated project with which McLaren was increasingly preoccupied to the detriment of the band, and which was becoming increasingly over-budget and behind schedule (Savage, 2005 [1991]). As Reid explains, "The ideas were valid, but the group weren't writing songs, the film had been taken out of our hands, and the director didn't know what he was doing" (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 85). Reid saw the film as the ultimate Sex Pistols product, a grand critique of the music industry and another example of holding up a mirror to the media – in his opinion however, this was "perhaps too perfect an example, as many people tended to take what was intended as a polemic as gospel truth" (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 89). The film was held up until 1980 due to legal action between Lydon and Glitterbest, but the soundtrack album was rushed out on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 1979, exactly one month after the death of Vicious (Reid & Savage, 1987).



Despite internal management problems, Reid managed to create a high-impact promotional campaign for *The Great Rock 'n' Roll Swindle* album which included posters, stickers and fliers such as a set of six banners or streamers with slogans such as 'They Swindled Their Way To The Top', 'The Only Notes That Matter Are The Ones That Come In Wads' and 'Cash From Chaos'<sup>87</sup>, which reiterated the Swindle theme [See fig. 5.65] (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 89). The album cover itself contained an image from a photoshoot with Helen Wallington-Lloyd, whilst the back cover of the sleeve featured a photograph of a dead deer with the title '*Who Killed Bambi*' in Walt Disney-style lettering [See figs. 5.66 & 5.67]. In Reid & Savage's *Up They Rise* (1987), Reid describes the sleeve as one he's "really proud of. There's an awful lot on it; it's not a fast sleeve. It's just jam-packed with lots of little notions and ideas" (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 88). Reid also produced a great deal of accompanying material, including props, for *The Great Rock 'n' Roll Swindle* film, including a series of six posters featuring criminals such as Myra Hindley, Dick Turpin, Jack the Ripper and Ronnie Biggs [See fig. 5.68]. In 1987, Reid describes these images as "hugely humanitarian" in that they expressed the notion that there is some good in everyone, even criminals and outlaws (Reid & Savage, 1987). However, it is important to view this statement as a retrospective interpretation, in which Reid neglects to acknowledge the deliberate use of shock tactics and the almost guaranteed controversy that would be caused by the use of images of infamous criminals,

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<sup>87</sup> The slogans 'The Only Notes That Matter Are The Ones That Come In Wads' and 'Cash From Chaos' were taken from the headline of a highly critical article about the Sex Pistols and the music industry written by Shaun Usher in the *Daily Mail*, 3<sup>rd</sup> December 1976.

especially those from very recent history such as Myra Hindley and Ronnie Biggs.<sup>88</sup>

Reid's output at this time was certainly prolific; however such artwork bears little resemblance to the directness and vitality of Reid's integrated campaigns for *Anarchy in the UK*, *God Save The Queen*, *Pretty Vacant*, *Holidays in the Sun* and *Never Mind The Bollocks*, as discussed previously in this chapter. In addition, the growing animosity between Glitterbest and Virgin Records was beginning to make the situation problematic, and despite continuing to supply Virgin with a steady stream of promotional material for the Sex Pistols as they now existed, the artwork produced by Reid from this point onwards can be said to reflect this hostility. Savage gives the opinion that "Reid became consumed by the extremity of the time", observing that the artwork produced after *Never Mind The Bollocks* (1977) contains "constant attacks on Virgin ... the use of swastika and ... personal vituperation of Branson himself. It was bitter..." (Savage, 2005 [1991], p. 538).

Examples of Reid's work from mid-1978 onwards include a series of advertisements featuring Branson [See fig. 5.69] to advertise the single *No One Is Innocent/My Way*, released on 30<sup>th</sup> June 1978 and featuring two new singers,

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<sup>88</sup> Myra Hindley (1942-2002) was for many years depicted by the tabloid press as 'the most hated woman in Britain'. The crimes committed by Hindley and her lover, Ian Brady, shocked the nation and became the benchmark by which other acts of evil came to be measured. On 6 May 1966, at Chester Assizes, Hindley and Brady were jailed for life after a 15-day trial. They were convicted of the murders of Lesley Ann Downey, aged 10, in 1964, and Edward Evans, aged 17, in 1965. Brady was also convicted of the murder of 12-year-old John Kilbride, and Hindley was found guilty of being an accessory. The killings soon became known as the "Moors murders" because the bodies had been buried on Saddleworth Moor, near Manchester. In 1987, Brady and Hindley confessed to two further murders - those of Pauline Reade, aged 16, and 12-year-old Keith Bennett.

Sid Vicious and Ronnie Biggs<sup>89</sup>; the designs were never used (Reid & Savage, 1987). By this time the Sex Pistols were just Paul Cook and Steve Jones. On 30<sup>th</sup> March 1979 they released *Silly Thing/Who Killed Bambi*, which featured a drawing of a punked-up Bambi by Reid on back cover, described by Reid in a 2009 interview as one of his favourite Sex Pistols works [See fig. 5.70] (Maguire, Dec 2009). According to Reid, the sleeve also “contained the usual slogans from the Swindle plus some pretty explicit bitches against Virgin and Branson in particular.” (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 90).

This release was followed on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 1979 by *C'Mon Everybody/The God Save The Queen Symphony/Watcha Gonna Do About It*, the second posthumous Sid Vicious single. Related to imaginary products created for *The Great Rock 'n' Roll Swindle* (1980), the single sleeve is described by Savage as being “amongst the Sex Pistols’ most explicit articulations” (Savage, 2005 [1991], p. 538), and features an image of a ‘Viciousburger’ [See fig. 5.71]. Reid compares this to the Situationist corpse metaphor<sup>90</sup>, and also refers back to a spoof fanzine Reid created with Wicked Messengers in the early 1970s which claimed that the body of Elvis Presley had been stolen and turned into a consumer product, i.e. hamburgers (Reid & Savage, 1987).

Reid had reached the end of his journey with the Sex Pistols with the release of *Flogging A Dead Horse* in October 1979, a hastily-made compilation

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<sup>89</sup> Ronnie Biggs (b. 1929) is an English criminal, known for his role in the Great Train Robbery of 1963, for his escape from prison in 1965, for living as a fugitive for 36 years and for his various publicity stunts while in exile, including his involvement with the Sex Pistols. In 2001, he voluntarily returned to the United Kingdom and spent several years in prison, where his health rapidly declined. On 6 August 2009, Biggs was released from prison on compassionate grounds.

<sup>90</sup> “People who talk about revolution and class struggle without referring explicitly to everyday life, without understanding what is subversive about love and what is positive in the refusal of constraints, such people have a corpse in their mouth”- Raoul Vaneigem, *The Revolution of Everyday Life* (1967).

of Sex Pistols singles. Reid's initial designs, which were rejected by Virgin, involved the artist scrawling the phrase 'Flogging A Dead Horse' over the original covers to *Never Mind The Bollocks* (1977) and *The Great Rock 'n' Roll Swindle* (1979) [See fig. 5.72]. Reid's replacement artwork featured an intentionally tacky agency photo of an anonymous model, which was accompanied by Letraset fonts [See fig. 5.73]. With the band out of existence at this point, and with the record company continuing to make money from Sex Pistols compilations and other re-issues, Reid describes the sleeve for *Flogging A Dead Horse* as "a final fuck-off to Virgin" (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 104). Reid recalls, "...in the end I was producing more and more imagery that Virgin were rejecting, and I was left feeling more and more isolated. It was a dreadful time..." (Reid in Savage, 2005 [1991], p. 538).

Reid finally gave up, disillusioned with the slow and painful demise of a project which had once been so successful. Richmond remained with Glitterbest until its dissolution in late 1979, continuing to act as secretary; she tells Savage that her responsibility at this stage "was to get everything neat and tidy so that the band could proceed with their lives"; Savage suggests that Reid once labelled her a turncoat for her loyalty to McLaren, whom Reid believed had treated the pair unkindly as the Sex Pistols project progressed (Richmond in Savage, 2009, p. 440): in any case, the Sex Pistols project, which Reid describes as "four years of total madness" (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 105), was now over.

Reid reflects on this time in *Up The Rise* (1987), regretting the fact that the management team failed to articulate their sophisticated ideas simply enough and that the band continued even after reaching their peak. However, Reid expresses his satisfaction at the band's political agenda, stating: "So much of

politics, like show-business, is to do with image. I know that we made an impact on a lot of the population, particularly working-class kids, and filled them up with a spirit and a belief in themselves” (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 105). As Vermorel summarises:

At a time when the Arts Council and other pious bodies were mounting endless John Heartfield retrospectives, and while a succession of John Heartfield lookalikes plied us with eager agit art (each item with as Ian Jeffrey noted ‘a ton weight of irony’), Jamie Reid’s *rage* was touching millions of impressionable youngsters, being collected by them, pinned up on bedroom walls, and also staring from walls in Margaret Thatcher’s own constituency...”  
(Vermorel, 1981 [1978], p. 270).

According to Reid, the success of his Sex Pistols artwork can be contributed to the fact that they were part of a larger ten-year process, emerging from the spirit of Suburban Press, more of which is discussed in Chapter 4.

The images which helped Reid achieve this political connection were themselves now beginning to receive attention from the contemporary art world. Vermorel describes the [pre-Sid Vicious] Sex Pistols project as reminiscent of Picasso’s *Guernica* (1937), in the sense that he views it as

...An epochal work, inextricably tangled with the fuss and politics it provoked. And beauty wrung from despair. If the Sex Pistols is a looser and more ambiguous work, which meanders into dead corners and mediocre brushwork, this is because its jagged explosion could not be frozen on canvas in a rectangular frame but was scattered through time as banner headlines, records, rumours and anecdotes, pin-ups, video and movie footage, posters, T-shirts and fashions, and (I almost forgot) live performances. Only the shockwaves remain, and the debris.  
(Vermorel, 1981 [1978], p. 260).

The art dealer Robert Fraser, who had risen briefly to fame in 1967 when he was arrested with Mick Jagger for drug possession, had already begun to realise the cultural significance of this debris, removing Sex Pistols posters from

public walls with a penknife whilst the band were still establishing themselves in the music press (Vermorel, 1981). According to Vermorel, “Sometime later, when they met, Jamie was astonished to find his posters decorating Robert’s Spartan bachelor flat amongst the Man Rays and Persian miniatures.” (Vermorel, 1981 [1978], p. 269). Fraser then introduced him to curators at the Victoria & Albert Museum, who purchased a collection of Reid’s Sex Pistols artwork and ephemera for £1,000 (Vermorel, 1981). As Vermorel explains, “So now we can examine Jamie’s work in four drawers at the V&A Theatre Museum. And odd it looks too, all that anger neat in folders and plastic wallets. Like exhibits at a murder trial.” (Vermorel, 1981 [1978], p. 269). Further analysis of Reid’s Sex Pistols artwork can be found in Chapter 6. This chapter will also explore Reid’s varied artistic career from 1980 onwards, which has so far remained obscured by the artist’s now-iconic Sex Pistols artworks previously discussed in this chapter.

## Chapter 6

### The Rise of the Phoenix

“It’s time to be brave and kindle the fires of hope for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century”  
– Jamie Reid, 1989.

The aim of this chapter is to examine in depth a number of Jamie Reid’s projects, commissions and exhibitions produced from the period 1980 to 2010, attempting to bring to light Reid’s post-Sex Pistols practice, which has tended to remain obscured and overshadowed by Reid’s Punk graphics of the mid-to-late 1970s. Critical analysis of Reid’s work, including that of writers such as Teal Triggs and curators such as Maria Beddoes and Paul Khera, has for the most part lacked any significant discussion of Reid’s visual vocabulary, in which Reid’s commercial work such as his output for the Sex Pistols does not stand alone, but represents part of a greater idiosyncratic artistic ‘language’ or vocabulary in which certain motifs are reconfigured, reconstructed and applied in turn to new projects.

This important aspect of Reid’s methodology shall be illustrated and investigated further in this chapter through an analysis of Reid’s post-Sex Pistols work from the early 1980s onwards, including commercial projects and exhibitions in which the reuse and recycling of past motifs, images and phrases is continuously evident. As Joseph Gallivan defined Reid’s post-Sex Pistols practice in *The Independent* in 1994, “OUT – fashion, money, bureaucracy, St George, London, 20 years of depressive fascistic government; IN – antifashion, Celts the Dragon, Wales, astrology, geosophy, communes, Liverpool” (Gallivan, 1994, p. 26). This chapter will also explore these supposed shifts in emphasis through close critical examination of a number of Reid’s key works from this period.

The artwork and sleeve designs Reid produced for McLaren and the Sex Pistols during this period have since achieved iconic status, with the covers for *God Save the Queen* (1977) and *Never Mind the Bollocks* (1977) [See figs. 5.21 & 5.50] in particular regarded as ‘design classics’. This status is evidenced with Reid’s cover designs regularly appearing in the top ten of a variety of cover art polls voted for by both readers and journalists – for example in 2001, *God Save the Queen* was voted number one in *Q Magazine*’s top ten record covers of all time (<http://www.bbc.co.uk>). The importance of Reid’s Sex Pistols cover art has arguably also increased with the advent of digital downloads, which according to Mike Alleyne in *Billboard* offer little in the way of innovative and enduring graphic design (Alleyne, 2009, p. 4). As Alleyne explains:

By the ‘60s, covers had also become a crucial part of an artistic statement, a key element in a sensory stimulus package...The 21<sup>st</sup> century won’t be like the ‘70s, which introduced some of the most iconic cover designs in the history of popular music. There are now more electronic distractions than ever, and the idea of playing an entire album while scrutinizing cover art...is becoming more archaic by the day...If a picture still paints a thousand words, then the growing absence of memorable cover imagery makes paupers of us all.  
(Alleyne, 2009, p. 4).

With such technological advances rendering record cover design as a dying art, Reid’s work produced for the Sex Pistols is increasingly celebrated and perhaps also fetishised by both design historians and record collectors as iconic works, thus isolating Reid in relation to a cultural moment in history and reinforcing his status as a commercial graphic designer rather than an artist. The curators of the 2007 exhibition *Panic Attack! Art in the Punk Years*, at the Barbican, London, could be said to have reinforced this iconographic status, using Reid’s *God Save the Queen* image as a starting point from which to explore the work of visual



artists from the 1970s such as Victor Burgin and Paul McCarthy who in their view shared the radical attitudes and aesthetics of Punk; Reid's own background as a visual artist was not explored any further than this one image (Slade, 2007).

As Teal Triggs noted in the 1991 article 'Safety Pins and Lettraset' for *Eye* magazine, "the work of several British graphic designers has been elevated from the realm of ephemera into what is generally understood to be the higher, more immutable realm of formal fine art..." as evidenced by "...the enhanced artistic recognition conferred on British graphic designers such as Neville Brody, Vaughan Oliver and Jamie Reid" (Triggs, 1991, p. 82). Reid's "enhanced artistic recognition" can be largely attributed to the breakdown of the traditional hierarchy between the arenas of graphic design and fine art in the last twenty years, rather than a significant re-evaluation of Reid's artistic career as a whole or an acknowledgement of how Reid applies fine art practice to the medium of design. In fact, Triggs still places Reid's work primarily within the context of graphic design, discussing his posters for films such as *Letter to Brezhnev* (1985) [See fig. 6.21] and his interiors for the Strongroom in London [See figs. 6.42 to 6.46] as "extensions of [his] own design activity" and labelling his work for Suburban Press as "technologically primitive graphics" (Triggs, 1991, p. 82).

According to Triggs, the breakdown in the hierarchy between graphic design and fine art can be demonstrated by the "increase of graphic design exhibitions in conventional fine art venues" (Triggs, 1991, p. 82). One of the first exhibitions to approach Reid's work in this way was *I groaned with pain: Sex, Seditonaries and the Sex Pistols*, organised by Paul Stolper and Andrew Wilson and taking place at the Eagle Gallery in London in December 1995. The show was described by *The Independent*'s John Windsor as "the first exhibition of

'punk art', which "framed as fine art Sex Pistols posters and T-shirts showing bare breasts and homosexual cowboys exposing themselves" (Windsor, 1998, p. 3). The phrase "framed as fine art" is significant here, as it serves to highlight yet again the fact that Reid's public profile has remained for the most part that of a graphic designer, when in reality Reid's work for the Sex Pistols was just one example of him applying fine art practice to the medium of design. Another version of Stolper and Wilson's exhibition, this time entitled *No Future: SEX, Seditious and the Sex Pistols*, took place at The Hospital in Covent Garden, London in 2004,. It travelled to Urbis in Manchester, where it ran from 27<sup>th</sup> May to 11<sup>th</sup> September 2005 (<http://www.urbis.org.uk>).

Another important exhibition in relation to the repositioning of Punk graphic design in a fine art context was *Destroy: Punk Graphic Design in Britain*, held at the Royal Festival Hall in 1998, which featured 400 Punk record sleeves, posters and fanzines. The exhibition received significant criticism from a number of reviewers - including Rick Poyner of *Frieze* and *Variant*'s Neil Mulholland - for its lack of in-depth analysis of the material, highlighted by the lack of an exhibition catalogue (Poyner, 1998). Mulholland attributes this in part to the pure graphic design background of the curators; he states that the exhibition

was not organised by anarcho-syndicalist employees of the Royal Festival Hall, but by Maria Beddoes and Paul Khera, a duet of sentimental graphic designers who, as students, had been inspired by punk to cast aside their airbrushes and set squares in revolutionary ferment: 'This is The Evening Standard. This is Fiesta. This is a pair of scissors. Now form an advertising Consultancy'. (Mulholland, 1998, p. 4).

In Mulholland's view, the background of the curators of *Destroy* led to them making "little concerted effort to locate punk's contributions within a heterodox

range of visual practices” (Mulholland, 1998, p. 4); in other words failing to address Punk’s fine art heritage including Reid and McLaren’s art school experience in Croydon (see Chapter 3), or the fact that Malcolm Garrett and Linder Sterling were influenced by fine art movements including Dada, Surrealism and Futurism while students of Manchester Polytechnic (Mulholland, 1998). Curators such as those of *Destroy* often fail to realise that Reid began working with the Sex Pistols largely as a result of his close friendship to Malcolm McLaren, rather than any official credentials as a trained graphic designer (For more on Reid’s art school training see Chapter 3).

Despite their individual curatorial agendas, it could be suggested that exhibitions such as *Destroy: Punk Graphic Design in Britain* (1998) and *Panic Attack! Art in the Punk Years* (2007) have also served to isolate Reid’s Sex Pistols artwork as iconic examples of graphic design, an accolade which has simultaneously and perhaps inadvertently led to an obscuring of rest of his practice and his personal methodology as a visual artist. Despite being commissioned to produce album and single artwork for a significant number of bands and musicians over a period of around 35 years - encompassing such diverse artists as the American hardcore punk band the Dead Kennedys in 1979 to collaborations with the Welsh-language punk band Anhrefn and the fusion group Afro Celt Sound System during the 1990s – Reid has remained defined and celebrated almost solely for the iconic work produced for the Sex Pistols during the mid-to-late 1970s, as discussed previously.

However, the fact that many of these musicians are often operating on the fringes or completely outside the mainstream commercial music industry, coupled with the enduring visual impact of Reid’s Punk artwork, has led to the

majority of Reid's other music-related artwork escaping the focus of design writers over the aforementioned time period. With many of these graphics exploring and developing the same concerns and ideas as the rest of Reid's practice, it is therefore vital to regard such projects as a key composite of Reid's lengthy career, constructed using Reid's personal methodology of a unique visual language.

Whilst producing the artwork and other promotional materials for the Sex Pistols feature film *The Great Rock 'n' Roll Swindle* in 1980 – their management's final major project – Reid was commissioned by the American hardcore punk band the Dead Kennedys to design a promotional poster for the UK release of their first single *California Uber Alles* [See fig. 6.1], which later appeared on their first album *Fresh Fruit for Rotting Vegetables* (1980). Reid's poster design for *California Uber Alles* demonstrates a continuation of his tendency to reuse examples of work from earlier projects – in this case his promotional artwork for the Sex Pistols, much of which was in turn recycled from *Suburban Press*. The poster featured a 'guitar swastika', a design which had previously appeared on the inner label of Virgin's Sex Pistols 'cheapie' release *Sid Sings* (1979). The poster also featured the phrase 'Never Trust a Hippie', a slogan which had originally featured on a series of posters allegedly aimed at Virgin Records owner Richard Branson as part of *The Great Rock 'n' Roll Swindle* campaign [See fig. 6.2], which in turn had been directly inspired by Reid's *Suburban Press* sticker series of 1972-73 [See fig. 6.3] (Reid & Savage, 1987).

During this time Reid also continued to work with McLaren, this time with his new protégés Bow Wow Wow, formed from ex-members of Adam and

the Ants and a fifteen-year-old Annabella Lwin. According to Reid the band, whose music involved a fusion of Burundi-inspired beats, also modelled Vivienne Westwood's "colourful, piratic World's End look", a new take by McLaren and Westwood on the Sex Pistols' relationship with SEX and Seditonaries and a reference to the Bow Wow Wow's advocacy of music piracy (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 108). Again, there was evidence of Reid drawing upon the aesthetics of the Sex Pistols with his cover design for Bow Wow Wow's first single *C30 C60 C90 C90 GO*, released by EMI in July 1980, which featured a yellow and black sleeve<sup>91</sup> [See fig. 6.4]. However, despite putting a great deal of effort and energy into the initial concepts and sleeve designs, Reid found the project frustrating due to EMI's refusal to promote the single, which featured a b-side which was completely blank, for the sole purpose of illegal taping. He states that "somehow it never gelled" (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 108), perhaps due to the proximity in time of the project to the Sex Pistols, and also due to the subversive ideology behind the band which emphasised the possibilities of blank cassette taping and home piracy – a concept which was in any case quickly superseded. As Reid told Savage in 1987 in an interview for the BBC documentary *Arena: Punk and the Pistols*, "...she'd sold enough copies to get into the top 5 of the hit parade, but for some mysterious reason she didn't. EMI just sort of – went into total panic" (Savage, 1987, p. 22). According to Mulholland, Bow Wow Wow's sources were "absurdly eclectic" (Mulholland, 1998, p. 4); after Reid ended his relationship with McLaren, Nick Egan<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>91</sup> According to Reid, "The idea of the black and yellow sleeve was to reiterate the EMI/Sex Pistols connection, 'Anarchy' having appeared (briefly) in a black bag". (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 109).

<sup>92</sup> Neil Mulholland describes Egan's work as "stirring up a superficiality that would often border on neurosis" (Mulholland, 1998, p. 4).

designed the cover for the 1981 album *See Jungle! See Jungle! Go Join Your Gang, Yeah. City All Over! Go Ape Crazy* [See fig. 6.5], controversially placing a naked fifteen-year-old Lwin in a reconstructed version of Édouard Manet's *Le Déjeuner sur L'Herbe*<sup>93</sup> (1863) [See fig. 6.6].

Reid's disillusioning experience led him to re-evaluate his practice and the parameters in which he operated as an artist and graphic designer; in 1987 he explained: "All of this left me feeling frustrated with working within the format of pop music; I needed to move on, and to find an outlet to operate without all these seemingly endless restrictions. It would take quite a long time" (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 108). Late in 1980, McLaren and Reid parted ways, signalling a new direction for Reid and a decade in which he embarked on a number of both commercial and distinctly personal projects which allowed the artist to explore his lifelong interest in Celtic mysticism as well as demonstrating his support for a number of key political issues and debates occurring under the backdrop of 1980s Thatcherite Britain.

In the summer of 1980, Reid met his future partner and artistic collaborator Margi Clarke – who was at that time known as the Liverpool punk presenter 'Margox' on the Granada local television programme *What's On* - after being introduced by Jon Savage in Manchester during a trip to see a gig by Bow Wow Wow (Reid & Savage, 1987). In a 1987 interview for the BBC

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<sup>93</sup> The French artist Édouard Manet (1832-1883) established a new kind of painting in the 1860s with a succession of extraordinarily original masterpieces including *Olympia* (1863), *Le Déjeuner sur L'Herbe* (1863), *The Execution of Emperor Maximilian* (1867), *The Railway* (1872) and *A Bar at the Folles-Bergère* (1882). Manet's painting signified a break with the past in terms of both style and subject matter, depicting contemporary subjects such as prostitutes, singers, gypsies and café-goers with loose brushstrokes and an abbreviated, sketch-like handling. His work *Le Déjeuner sur L'Herbe* (1863) created much controversy when exhibited at the Salon des Refusés in Paris in 1863, due to its juxtaposition of a naked woman and two fully-clothed men. Manet again stirred up controversy in polite society with *Olympia* (1863), a contemporary nude portrayed in a style reminiscent of early studio photographs, but whose pose was based on Titian's *Venus of Urbino* (1538). Both paintings raised the issue of prostitution and the role of women within contemporary French society (Fraschina, 1983).

documentary *Arena: Punk and the Pistols*, Reid discusses what attracted him to the Liverpool-born Clarke:

...I think people up north have a very different attitude, I think because of where they come from... [With] the Pistols, [they] understood it without loads of waffle in the music press and just loved it and saw an opportunity to actually articulate themselves and look great and have a loads of laughs, far more than in London... You know, Margi would go out for an evening, she'd take a kettle as a handbag – very surreal! ((Reid interviewed by Jon Savage, 1987, *England's Dreaming: The Jon Savage Archive*).

Reid's meeting with Clarke was to have an immense impact upon Reid's practice as an artist and the ventures he was to be involved in over the decade that followed. The couple also had a daughter, Rowan, born in 1993, who has assisted Reid on various projects including his 2008 commission for the fashion house *Comme des Garçons* (<http://www.isisgallery.org>) [See fig. 6.7].

In an attempt to escape Thatcherism and what Reid called Britain's "growing sense of total negativity and cynicism", Reid and Clarke moved to Paris where they had arranged some work with a Hungarian musician named Peter Ogi (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 111). Working closely with Ogi, Reid and Clarke drew upon past experiences in order to produce a project that was distinctly personal, and inherently positive and optimistic in tone. It was to be entitled *Leaving the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*, named after the 1974 English anthology of Situationist texts compiled by Christopher Gray, for which Reid had designed the graphics (See Chapter 4). It is described by Reid in the conclusion to *Up They Rise* (1987) as "...an ongoing tale, the heart of it stemming from our adventures, brawls and intrigues, scams and skulduggery, and lots of passion and loving. It learns from the past, looks to the future and lives in the present" (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 133).

One of Reid's key motifs and sources of inspiration from this period and earlier is the painting *Liberty Leading the People* (1830) by the French artist Eugène Delacroix [See fig. 6.8], which commemorates the July Revolution of 1830 in which King Charles X was removed from the throne<sup>94</sup>. *Guardian* journalist Jonathan Jones, in his 2005 article 'Cry Freedom', indicates why the image may have held such appeal for Reid, explaining:

Delacroix's political masterpiece does not depict the peaceful and eminently reasonable, not to say bourgeois, outcome of the 1830 Paris uprising but its moment of anarchic freedom, when anything seemed possible. It is the most enduring image of what revolution feels like, from within: ecstatic, violent, libidinal and murderous. (Jones, 2005, p. 18).

This description of Delacroix's *Liberty Leading the People* (1830) also conjures up the spirit of more recent revolutions and rebellions, from the Situationist International's revolution of everyday life and the May 1968 riots in Paris, to the anarchy and creative vitality of Punk.

Reid had first used the painting in a montage along with images of the many new Croydon skyscrapers in the 1974 *Suburban Press* poster book [See fig. 6.9]. It reappeared with the slogan 'I hate French Cooking' in 1976, when it was used as an 'out to lunch' sign at the Glitterbest office [See fig. 6.10] and also

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<sup>94</sup> The French artist Eugène Delacroix (1798-1863) was the leading exponent of Romanticism in French painting. He was trained by the Neo-classical painter Pierre Guérin, from 1816 to about 1823. Delacroix first exhibited at the Salon in 1822. In style his work shows the influence of painters he had studied, notably Rubens. He was an admirer of English painting, and visited England in 1825. After the Revolution of 1830 he was favoured by Louis-Philippe, and later by Napoleon III, with a long series of official commissions, beginning in 1833 with a series of decorations in the Palais Bourbon. Delacroix exhibited at the Salon for the last time in 1859. *Liberty Leading the People* (1830) commemorates the July Revolution of 1830 in which King Charles X of France was removed from the throne, and was described by the artist as an allegorical picture of the July events. The bare-breasted, robust female figure of Liberty has often been interpreted as symbolising the revolution of the masses. *Liberty Leading the People* (1830) is described by René Huyghe as contriving to convey the spirit of a particular moment in history; a work of art "in which the clamour of a generation on the march becomes a joyous and unanimous hymn" (Huyghe in Wright, 2001, p. 12). However, critics such as Alan B. Spitzer have highlighted the ambiguity of the painting in relation to the political indeterminacy of the event (Spitzer in Wright, 2001, p. 13).



appeared in the 'Paris spread' of the *Anarchy In The UK* magazine of 1976. It was later modified with the slogan 'Out Of The Dross And Into The Age Of Piracy' for a poster advertising Bow Wow Wow in 1980. Reid then returned to the painting as the basis for his *Leaving the 20<sup>th</sup> Century* logo. It also formed the basis for a mixed media painting, *She Came, She Stooped, She Conquered* (1982) [See fig. 6.11], featuring Margi Clarke "as Liberty, in front of Versailles and the Pompidou Centre" (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 137). Finally, it was to re-appear as the front cover of *Up They Rise: The Incomplete Works of Jamie Reid*, published by Faber and Faber in 1987 [See fig. 6.12]. Reid's appropriation of this iconic painting can be viewed as a continuation of Punk's links to 19<sup>th</sup> century Romanticism, illustrated for example by Reid's admiration of the work of William Blake (See Chapter 1). Sex Pistols manager McLaren also drew inspiration from past centuries, describing the band as "...Dickensian-like urchins who with ragged clothes and pock-marked faces roam the streets of foggy gas-lit London..." in a flyer advertising their last British concert in Huddersfield on 25<sup>th</sup> December 1977 [See fig. 6.13] (*England's Dreaming: The Jon Savage Archive*). These links to the past are confirmed by Andrew Wilson in the essay 'Modernity Killed the Night' featured in the catalogue for the 2007 exhibition *Panic Attack! Art in the Punk Years* at the Barbican, in which he states that

the scope of McLaren's quotation ranged from the eighteenth-century Gordon Riots in London...and a nineteenth-century Dickensian narrative populated by Fagins and Artful Dodgers to...William Burroughs's vision of Wild Boys, a guerilla gang of boys, a band of assassins dedicated to freedom, who battle with the organised armies of repressive police states. (Wilson in Slade, 2007, p. 147).

This influence can be traced back further to King Mob's use of quotations from Blake and Coleridge in graffiti around Notting Hill Gate, London and 19<sup>th</sup>

Century-style French cartoons featured in *King Mob Echo* during the late 1960s, as discussed in Chapter Three [See figs. 3.47 & 3.48].

Reid and Clarke's planned musical, named *Chaos in Cancerland* after "an obscure Twenties pamphlet written by a homeopath which was a spoof on Alice in Wonderland" (Savage, 1983, p. 27) and later re-titled as *Leaving the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*, was eventually brought to a standstill, and Reid partly attributes this to the music industry's aversion to risk-taking during the Conservatism of the early 1980s; as one record label executive told the pair: "We're on top now. We can sell sweet nothings to teenagers, Jamie, and the last thing we want is trouble. We don't need, or want, anything out of the ordinary" (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 113). This incident illustrates a contradiction with regards to Reid's relationship with the music industry during this period; despite his frustrations with the restrictions of working within the format of pop music, as demonstrated by his split with McLaren and Bow Wow Wow in 1980, Reid continued to seek funding for *Leaving the 20<sup>th</sup> Century* through the channel of mainstream record companies<sup>95</sup>.

Reid and Clarke tried various approaches and angles to launching their *Leaving the 20<sup>th</sup> Century* project, including songs, paintings, fiction, TV and film work. Despite failing to realise their original concept of a musical, *Leaving the 20<sup>th</sup> Century* proved to be a catalyst for a number of collaborative songs, artwork and performances, including the single *Beauty/Beauty and the Thief*, which was released by French Polydor in March 1982 under the name 'Margi MacGregor', drawing upon the name of Reid's great uncle George Watson MacGregor Reid (see Chapter 1). The single's cover featured a photographic portrait of Reid and Clarke, reworked by Reid, and with sleeve notes written by Clarke [See fig. 6.14].

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<sup>95</sup> Paradoxically, the late 1970s and early 1980s was a period which saw the growth of new independent record labels, including Rough Trade (1978), Backs Records (early 1980s) and Red Rhino Records (late 1970s).

In addition to Clarke's writing and recording, Reid continued to produce a series of visuals, set designs and small paintings for the project, most notably for the song and performance piece *How to Become Invisible*, which Reid claimed was inspired by "a dream Margi had about invisible wallpaper" (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 113). Reid's designs took the form of a large, multi-coloured stage backdrop which featured Jackson Pollock-esque splashes and drips of intensely coloured paint, in front of which Clarke would perform the song of the same name. The backdrops can be seen in images from a performance of *How To Become Invisible* at the Mardi Gras Club, Liverpool in February 1986 [See fig. 6.15]. Reid also produced a *Leaving the 20<sup>th</sup> Century* collage, which was later turned into a limited edition of 60 screen prints for an exhibition at Hamiltons Gallery, Mayfair, London in 1986<sup>96</sup>.

Reid continued to draw upon work produced for *Leaving the 20<sup>th</sup> Century* in the years that followed, and viewed the project as using "very early styles and techniques in a new context" (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 122). In *Up They Rise* (1987) Reid takes a positive approach to his time spent in Paris, viewing *Leaving the 20<sup>th</sup> Century* not as a failed venture, but a "melting pot" which proved to be an important catalyst for a significant and important body of new work. As he explained in a 2007 interview, "it never actually materialised, but a lot of ideas...came out of it" (Maguire, Aug 2007).

In 1981, funded by Polydor, Reid and Clarke briefly returned to Britain before settling back there permanently the following year. Reid, having been aware of the Brixton riots of April 1981, travelled back to Liverpool during the Toxteth Riots which took place in July of the same year. This was a turbulent

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<sup>96</sup> A limited edition of 60 screen prints were printed by Brad Faine at Coriander Studios and co-published by Hamish McAlpine (Reid & Savage, 1987).

period which saw outbreaks of civil disorder in British cities including Southall, Brixton, Toxteth and Moss Side, as thousands of people - most of them young and many of them black – struck out with violence, including the throwing of petrol bombs and paving stones, and extensive looting, as a response to long-standing tensions with the local police. The riots, which drew comparisons with the American ghetto rioting of Watts in the 1960s, were attributed in turn to racial tension and police harassment, coupled with issues of unemployment and social deprivation. Nearly 300 police officers and 65 civilians had been injured during three days of rioting in Brixton, while in Liverpool three months later, rising tensions related to the stopping and searching of black youths in Liverpool's inner-city area left a total of about 80 officers injured. This was also the first time that British police used CS gas to control civil unrest in mainland Britain ((Kettle & Hodges, 1982). In a 1983 interview in *The Face*, Reid contrasts the Toxteth riots with those occurring in Paris in 1968. He tells Savage:

I found them the most profoundly depressing experience. It was like rats in a trap; hopeless, directionless, as opposed to the riot situation in Paris in '68. There was a sense of moving forward then, of getting to terms with yourself and enjoying every day, whereas Toxteth was just like the police ringing a mile area off and seeing rats smash it up and eat themselves.  
(Savage, 1983, p. 28).

Reid's comparison between the hopelessness surrounding the riots of the early 1980s in Brixton and Liverpool, and the more optimistic nature of the May 1968 Paris riots, may also represent the essential difference between the two decades in socio-political terms.

After their turbulent period in Paris, where Reid describes the pair as “always in transit, staying with friends, overstaying our welcome, sleeping in

squats and on floors” (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 115), Reid and Clarke gravitated towards Brixton, where the pair again lived in a squat and Reid – though not formally employed – continued to produce work in a variety of media. An exhibition at the Brixton Gallery in February 1984 - also entitled *Leaving the 20<sup>th</sup> Century* - provided the artist with an ideal opportunity to assess both past work and future plans. The gallery was located under the railway arches along Atlantic Road, an area which had witnessed much of the rioting taking place in April 1981.

In an exhibition proposal form located in the Brixton Gallery Archive, Reid states, “I want to do this show in Brixton rather than ‘the West End’ because South London is where my political roots lie” (<http://www.brixton50.co.uk>). The artist elaborates on this further in *Up They Rise* (1987), where he explains: “Being a South London boy I felt at home there. The anarchists and various self-help groups that were active there, in squatting and the like, seemed in some ways proof of Thatcher’s grip” (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 115). Reid also explains in his proposal that the exhibition will be “of my work from 1968 – present day. In general terms the work is ‘political’ but ranges widely in form, i.e. stickers, posters, record sleeves, large paintings...” (<http://www.brixton50.co.uk>). Reid contributed a number of works to the show, one of which was a large canvas from *How to Become Invisible*. Reid’s second significant piece, which in many ways the artist viewed as a cathartic project, was a Sex Pistols mural [See fig. 6.16]. In describing how the piece was constructed, Reid states:

...at that time I had an enormous amount of Pistols stuff – flyers, leaflets, posters, record sleeves, interestingly as well a lot of correspondence, legal letters, lawyers’ letters, I even had a bouncing cheque...from when we got

taken over by the official receivers...So there was lots of text and information.

(<http://www.chipwork.com>).

Reid goes on to mention how the mural has evolved over time; after the exhibition at Brixton in 1983 the piece was shown in subsequent years, forming part of the 1989 exhibition *Sur le passage de quelques personnes à travers une assez courte unité de temps. A propos de l'Internationale Situationniste 1957-1972'*, at the Centre Pompidou in Paris:

It's interesting in certain exhibition situations people will actually spend a whole day looking at it, because it does actually within itself tell the whole visual story of the Pistols. It often gets a lot of graffiti put on it – funnily enough it got a lot of graffiti put on it when it was part of a Situationist exhibition in the Pompidou Centre, they had to restore it all. They had to spend weeks restoring it back. But a lot of the time I keep the graffiti on it, and I often add to it myself...so it's changed all the time as it's gone along.

(<http://www.chipwork.com>).

Reid's comments on the mural reiterate the fact that for a great number of people he will be enduringly intertwined with the Sex Pistols, with his Punk artwork being as affectionately regarded as the band.

*Leaving the 20<sup>th</sup> Century* was held alongside an exhibition of paintings by the self-taught Jamaican artist Tony Moo Young. The contrast in approaches and styles of the two artists is discussed by the Brixton Gallery's Andrew Hurman, who recalls:

Tony had all his subtle abstract paintings beautifully framed, labelled and hung ready for the preview whilst Jamie Reid...finally staggered in a few days later with a couple of binbags full of Pistols ephemera. Over the next couple of weeks – fuelled by a constant supply of Special Brew – he slowly managed to glue this collection of posters, flyers, and other scraps of paper directly onto the panels of one of the gallery's hardboard walls. (<http://www.brixton50.co.uk>).

This contrast can also be seen in the designs for a promotional flyer for the two exhibitions [See fig. 6.17]. Reid's improvisational, DIY approach to the working process and exhibition set-up during this time is also mentioned in the *New Musical Express* 'T-Zers' section of 17<sup>th</sup> March, 1984, which states:

Spotted by spies was Jamie Reid, former Sex Pistols graphic artist...who has an interesting exhibition at a Brixton gallery in Atlantic Road. All his goodies are stuck up with appealing casualness over the wall while Jamie sits beside amongst an array of Guinness cans and wallpaper.  
(Anon, *NME*, 1984, p. 55).

The *NME* journalist obviously found the exhibition an enjoyable experience, painting a picture of Reid as a 'loveable rogue', his style of presentation in keeping with his former Punk credentials. However, it is important to note that Reid's way of working was not always seen in an entirely positive light by those involved directly with both Reid and the exhibition. In another later interview, Reid again explains the process of constructing the mural he created using Sex Pistols artwork and ephemera - an incident which also serves to highlight the way in which the artist's interpretation or recollection of certain event differs from that of gallery owners and curators. Reid recalls:

So what happened was I had all this stuff, and there was one big long wall at the side of the gallery, and I just decided that everything I had I'd put on the one wall, like a mural. And kudos to the people who ran the gallery, they let me take the whole thing away in the end. So I had this sort of 20 foot by 8 foot mural...  
(<http://www.chipwork.com>).

Reid's quote can be contrasted with the recollection of the event given by Andrew Hurman of the Brixton Art Gallery, in which he explains:

There was an amazing exhibition closing party...and the next day the ageing punk and his actor wife ripped the hardboard panels off their fixings, loaded his vast collage into a van and drove away. As the motto says, never trust a punk. Jan Zalud and I had to go round to the timber yard in Station Road and buy a replacement set of wooden boards to put back the wall ready for the next exhibition. (<http://www.brixton50.co.uk>).

This incident is just one example of how Reid's recollection of a particular working relationship may differ from that of the other party, and how - despite the artist's contrary opinion - interaction with curators and other close collaborators have sometimes been fraught with underlying frictions, reinforcing the importance of gathering quotes and other evidence from such individuals for this study rather than relying solely on artist interviews. The problematic nature of some of Reid's relationships with gallerists and curators throughout the 1980s, including the difficulties Reid and Clarke experienced with the execution of their multidisciplinary *Leaving the 20<sup>th</sup> Century* project, may in part be attributed to a turbulent personal life during this time. This is hinted at by both the *NME* journalist and Brixton Gallery's Andrew Hurman, who make the point of explicitly mentioning the fact that during the exhibition in 1983, Reid was sat "amongst an array of Guinness cans" (Anon, *NME*, March 1984, p. 55) and was "fuelled by a constant supply of Special Brew" (<http://www.brixton50.co.uk>). The situation is hinted at obliquely by Reid in *Up They Rise* (1987), who says of the period directly following the break-up of the Sex Pistols: "I needed to move on, and to find an outlet to operate without all these seemingly endless restrictions. It would take quite a long time" (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 108). This quote helps to illustrate both the personal and professional crisis faced by Reid during this time.



By 1985, Reid and Clarke were spending a significant amount of time Clarke's home town of Liverpool. As Reid explains in a 2008 interview, "I was in Hartington Road [in Toxteth] a while, but I was up and down to London all the time as well, so I was in between London and Liverpool for quite a few years" (Maguire, Jan 2008). Reid's time spent in the politically-charged atmosphere of early 1980s Brixton had manifested itself explicitly in a number of works, including a sleeve design for a band named Jimmy the Hoover, formed by Simon Barker and Derek Dunbar, two of the earliest fans of the Sex Pistols. Reid's cover for their album *Wicked* - which was never actually released – featured a Molotov Cocktail-throwing angel inspired by both John Milton's *Paradise Lost* (1667) and the Brixton Riots of July 1981 [See fig. 6.18]. A second work of Reid's, entitled *Say It With Bricks* (1985), featured a graphic taken from a national newspaper photograph of a Curry's store taken during the Brixton riots in July 1985 [See fig. 6.19]. This work also references Reid's earlier Suburban Press 'Welcome' campaign (featuring the slogan "This Store Welcomes Shoplifters") of 1972-73 [See fig. 6.3], yet another example of Reid choosing to revisit earlier themes and motifs.

During their time spent in Liverpool Reid and Clarke also began to collaborate with a number of local bands including Pink Industry, who were formed by Jayne Casey after the break-up of Pink Military, a band in turn emerged after the disintegration in 1978 of one of the city's most notorious punk bands, Big In Japan. Big in Japan were just one Liverpool band with associations to Eric's club, which opened on 1<sup>st</sup> October 1976 on Mathew Street in Liverpool

City Centre.<sup>97</sup> In 1985, Reid designed the cover for Pink Industry's album *New Beginnings*, released in March of that year [See fig. 6.20]. The artwork, featuring astrological symbols represented by leisure/consumer items or appliances, was another example of Reid recycling and reiterating earlier key themes – in this instance, the consumerist critique of *Suburban Press* and the Situationist International. Reid also recognises this return to earlier themes and styles, describing his design for Pink Industry as mixing “collage techniques with some ink work that goes right back to my first abstracts and art school drawings” (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 127).

Reid's work with Pink Industry was interrupted later in 1985 by his involvement with Frank Clarke's film project, *Letter to Brezhnev*. The film, starring Margi Clarke, written by her brother Frank and directed by Chris Bernard, was released in October 1985 and told the story of two working class Liverpool girls looking for love – Clarke and Alexandra Pigg – who meet two Russian sailors amidst the backdrop of Margaret Thatcher's high-unemployment Liverpool. Reid was commissioned to produce the film's poster and other promotional material. His final design featured a sky filled with cupids around images of the hammer and sickle, above a skyline which juxtaposed the Liverpool waterfront with the Kremlin (Reid & Savage, 1987) [See fig. 6.21].

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<sup>97</sup> Eric's opened on 1st October 1976 on Mathew Street in Liverpool city centre. Despite closing its doors just four years later, its impact on the Merseyside music scene is legendary. The club, co-owned by Roger Eagle, Ken Testi and Pete Fulwell, provided a stage for talented local groups to explore their musical abilities and interests with like-minded people. The club staged music rarely heard in other city centre venues - everything from jazz, reggae and folk music to performance art and poetry, and especially punk; The Sex Pistols played Eric's on 15<sup>th</sup> October 1976. Eric's greatest influence was on local groups. OMD, Echo and the Bunnymen, The Teardrop Explodes and Wah! Heat all played their first gigs there. Big in Japan were an Eric's success story who still influence today's music scene. Often described as a reverse supergroup, band members later had links with The Lightning Seeds, Frankie goes to Hollywood, Siouxsie and the Banshees, the KLF and the Cream nightclub.

Like a number of other examples of Reid's commercial work, the striking design was never used, with Palace Pictures eventually using their own poster. Reid discusses his experience of working on *Letter to Brezhnev* in *Up They Rise*, explaining that aside from the practical difficulties the film met with regards to distribution,

The film, and the reaction to it, speak for themselves. It reminded me very much of working with the Sex Pistols early on. It was charged with the same intensity and one knew, even from its humble beginnings –when there was nothing but dogged faith – that it would get through and make its mark.

(Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 127).

In December 1985, Margi Clarke appeared on the BBC television programme *Wogan* to promote *Letter to Brezhnev* along with her co-star Alexandra Pigg. Clarke controversially wore a scarf screen printed with the slogan “Media Sickness – More Contagious Than Aids” [See fig. 6.22], a phrase which featured heavily in *Leaving the 20<sup>th</sup> Century* – according to Reid, “Wogan was a little nonplussed” (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 141). It was at this time that Reid had taken up a part-time teaching position at the Liverpool School of Art & Design at the invitation of Prof. Colin Fallows. Reid was working primarily with printed textile students, and it was at the Liverpool School of Art & Design that the Media Sickness scarf worn by Clarke on the *Wogan* show was screen printed.

Reid maintained his connection to the Liverpool School of Art and Design from the 1980s onwards, working closely with graphic designer and lecturer Steve Hardstaff to design the artwork for the Half Man Half Biscuit/Margi Clarke single *No Regrets* in 1990 [See fig. 6.23]. Half Man Half Biscuit, a four-piece post-punk outfit from Birkenhead, were championed by Radio 1 DJ John Peel after the release of their debut album *Back in the D.H.S.S.*

in 1986, and were also renowned for what *Guardian* journalist Ben Myers describes as their “fiercely intelligent but sardonic” songs, “suspicious of anything deemed too mainstream, full of pop-culture references” (<http://www.guardian.co.uk>). Steve Hardstaff discusses his collaboration with Reid on the *No Regrets* cover design in *Cover Versions* (2008), recalling:

The No Regrets sleeve for HMHB and Margie [sic] Clarke was done by myself and Jamie Reid. Jamie arrived at the Art School armed with a Polaroid camera and a pair of Margie’s old white shoes. He placed the shoes, which he had felt-tipped with the appropriate type, on the floor, climbed onto a desk and took a couple of shots. We rattled off some photocopies of the Polaroids and voilà – a cover. We then argued for about an hour about whose hand lettering looked best; I liked his, he liked mine, we used bits of both. (Hardstaff, 2008, p. 40).

Hardstaff’s quote provides yet another illustration of Reid’s idiosyncratic, DIY approach to working.

Maintaining his connection to the London arts scene during this period, Reid held a twenty-year retrospective exhibition at Hamiltons Gallery, Mayfair during the spring of 1986, entitled *Chaos in Cancerland*<sup>98</sup>. Founded in 1977, the commercial Hamiltons Gallery specialised in photography and since 1984 had been run by owner Tim Jefferies. The choice of a private commercial photographic gallery in Mayfair as the location for Reid’s next exhibition appears at odds with previous ventures; for example, in the exhibition plan for his 1983 show at the Brixton Art Gallery, Reid explains that “I want to do this show in Brixton rather than the ‘West End’ because South London is where my political roots lie” [See fig. 6.24] (<http://www.brixton50.co.uk>). Reid also goes on to express his wish for the exhibition to travel to Barbès, Paris and the Bronx

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<sup>98</sup> The private view for *Chaos in Cancerland* at Hamiltons Gallery, Mayfair took place on 25<sup>th</sup> March 1986.

in New York, both “similar areas to Brixton” (<http://www.brixton50.co.uk>).

Despite these claims which had been made only three years earlier, Reid – who had by this time built up a working relationship with Jon Savage – chose to exhibit his work in Mayfair, a fashionable, largely commercial district in the heart of London’s West End which has the largest concentration of London’s luxury hotels and is renowned for being designated the most expensive property on the British Monopoly set.

This surprising choice of location, as well as the juxtaposition of old and new work in Reid’s Hamiltons Gallery show of 1986 and that taking place at the Josh Baer Gallery, New York, in the same year – in which a selection of the artist’s work for the Sex Pistols was exhibited alongside pieces that Reid had worked on collaboratively with Margi Clarke as part of their *Leaving the 20<sup>th</sup> Century* project – was one that sat particularly uncomfortably for some reviewers. Reid had repeatedly stressed the “new, optimistic direction” (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 111) he and Clarke were taking with their music, paintings, writing and set design for *Leaving the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*, as well as discussing the fact that he “needed to move on” from working within the format of pop music ( Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 108). The exhibition was promoted by Jon Wozencroft’s independent music company Touch, founded in 1982, which creates both sonic and visual productions. In 1986 Reid had also taken part in a major exhibition at the Camden Arts Centre in London called *Interaction*, co-curated by Wozencroft, which covered the history of collaborations between artists and musicians. The exhibition featured material from Reid, Peter Blake, John Lennon and Yoko Ono, Russell Mills and Brian Eno amongst others (<http://www.touchmusic.org.uk>). Continuing this theme, Touch chose to promote Reid’s show at Hamiltons

Gallery with one of his iconic Sex Pistols images, entitled *Fuck Forever*, the original of which was produced by Reid in 1978 as a prop for McLaren's film *The Great Rock 'n' Roll Swindle* (1980) [See fig. 6.25]. Wozencroft's choice of such a recognisable Sex Pistols image to promote the Hamiltons show, even though it was also a prestigious opportunity to place newer and never-before seen projects directly in the spotlight in an upmarket Mayfair gallery, indicates that the curators and promoters were perhaps lacking confidence in his new ventures, and unwilling to take a chance on their ability to attract visitors to the gallery, particularly in terms of initially capturing their attention with a promotional poster or private view invite. Assessing his 1986 Hamilton Gallery exhibition in *Up They Rise* (1987), Reid admits that it was not as successful as expected; however, even retrospectively he does not appear to be aware of the problematic nature of the juxtaposition of Sex Pistols and *Leaving the 20<sup>th</sup> Century* work in relation to his desire for a sense of coherence and progression. Instead, Reid dwells on his inability to make money from the show, explaining:

We made several mistakes: the gallery was off the beaten fine art track, and we were over-ambitious as to the show's content, framing more than we could ever exhibit. Despite our valiant attempts to go upmarket, the exhibition ended up rather like the Brixton show: as a place to meet and exchange ideas rather than consume. At the end of it, I was hardly any better off than I had been at Brixton: a different colour on the Monopoly board but still a tramp.  
(Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 122).

Despite his acknowledgement that the exhibition acted as a meeting place for the exchange of ideas – the show reunited Reid with old art school colleagues such as Robin Scott - it is obvious from this quote that he wished for the Hamiltons Gallery show to be a success not only critically but also in financial terms. Curators found the pricing of Reid's works somewhat problematic; this can be

largely attributed to the fact that during the early 1980s, a market for such works did not exist as it does presently due to the close proximity in time to the Punk era. It was only when cultural theorists such as John A. Walker, Simon Frith and Howard Horne began to explore the deeper cultural significance of the Punk movement in the mid-to-late 1980s (See Frith & Horne's *Art into Pop* (1987) and Walker's *Cross-Overs: Art Into Pop, Pop into Art* (1987)) that Reid's artwork was elevated in the art market from the category of ephemera. As *The Independent*'s John Windsor explains in his 1998 article 'Never Mind the Critics, This is Art':

What a deeper understanding of Punk means in art market terms is that it confers upon it the gravitas of an art-historical movement. Once the art-buying intelligentsia realises that a full appreciation of it can be gained not just from back numbers of *The Sun* but from scholarly essays...they will begin to reach for their wallets"  
(Windsor, 1998, p.3).

Despite Reid's claim that the Hamiltons Gallery show did not leave him "better off" financially, some of the works were in fact purchased, primarily by musicians including Andy Taylor, drummer for the 1980s pop group Duran Duran. (Interview with Prof. Colin Fallows, 2010).

Similar issues are raised by critics of Reid's next show, (*Please Wash Your Hands Before) Leaving the 20<sup>th</sup> Century* at the Josh Baer Gallery in New York – a commercial gallery space - which ran from September to October 1986. Again, as illustrated by the re-use of Reid's *God Save the Queen* image for the Josh Baer private view invitation card [See fig. 6.26], the exhibition's emphasis appeared to be on Reid's Sex Pistols work produced ten years previously, with later paintings and other projects receiving little or no media attention. For example Gerald Marzorati, writing for *Vanity Fair*, states:

He had been to Paris in 1968; he knew the hair-trigger urgency that collage and disjunctive type could lend the simplest poster. Time and fashion have leeched the urgency – the politics too – but to see Reid’s graphics assembled is to sense how they once read as ransom notes. (Marzorati, 1986, p. 124).

Though acknowledging that Reid’s Punk graphics may have lost some of their impact due to the passing of time, Marzorati at least still regards their inclusion as valid. However, other writers are far more critical of Reid’s show, picking up on the emphasis placed on Reid’s Sex Pistols graphics to the detriment of later works. Interestingly, the exhibition is defined by Meyer Raphael Rubinstein, writing in *Arts Magazine*, as documenting Reid’s “tenure as Punk publicist, with some material from before and after thrown in” (Rubinstein, 1986, p. 48), perhaps providing more evidence of the artist’s reluctance – either consciously or unconsciously - to fully move on from his status as what Clare Monk calls “The Man Who Art-Directed Punk” (Monk, 1987). This reluctance to fully commit to *Leaving the 20<sup>th</sup> Century* and other new works as demonstrated by this exhibition – whether the result of choices made by either Reid or his curators - garnered further criticism from Rubinstein, who labels Reid’s Punk graphics as “survivors from a seemingly distant age” (Rubinstein, 1986, p. 48). Rubinstein then goes on to explain in more detail why he finds Reid’s exhibition so problematic, explaining:

...the truth is that Reid’s collages and silkscreens look out-of-place in a gallery. No doubt their status as artifacts will find them buyers but one can’t help feeling it is all wrong. The man who advised the citizens of Brixton to “say it with bricks” and adorned the Queen with swastikas and safety pins is ill-served by Soho exposure. The Sell-Out is not antithetical to the Punk ethic, but it must be naked and vulgar, a parody of greed. This show is altogether too polite for that; it lacks even the marketing savvy of Warhol or Haring. (Rubinstein, 1986, p.48).



This reviewer highlights the significant contradiction he finds in Reid selling work in a commercial New York gallery that was originally produced in the Punk spirit of anarchy and rebellion. Again the reviewer picks up on the fact that the curators seems to place greater emphasis on his work from the late 1970s and earlier, rather than current projects, viewing this as an obstacle to further career development. He states:

One might wish Reid a wider audience but the message of his work is now old news... You only get one shot at playing the Anti-Christ. Then you have to get on with your life, which is probably what Reid is trying to do by selling off his memorabilia.

(Rubinstein, 1986, p. 49).

The potentially problematic or contradictory nature of Reid both exhibiting and attempting to sell work, particularly that which takes such an obvious stance against the establishment, in exhibition spaces – whether in commercial ventures such as the Josh Baer Gallery in New York, or independent spaces such as the artist-led Brixton Art Gallery – is an issue which Reid appears to have been reluctant to discuss during this period.

In fact, despite significant evidence to the contrary, Reid claims in a 2008 interview “And it’s only now...I made an agreement with myself not to sell my work until I was 60, so it’s only now that I’m actually selling my work”

(Maguire, 2008). With this comment, Reid completely dismisses the fact that he has placed examples of his work up for sale in solo exhibitions from the early 1980s onwards. This is illustrated in Reid’s exhibition plan for his 1983 exhibition at the Brixton Art Gallery, under the heading ‘Suggested method of funding’, in which he states: “Most of work WILL sell. I can guarantee to put

Brixton Gallery on the map...” [See fig. 6.24] (<http://www.brixton50.co.uk>). The exhibition agreement for Reid’s 1986 Hamiltons Gallery show also contains the condition that “Hamiltons shall... On the sale of any works, posters or publications [the word ‘T-shirts’ has been added here] relating to the exhibition be entitled to a sales commission. The amount or percentage of the sales commission shall be as detailed in the attached schedule” [See fig. 6.27] (Hamilton’s exhibition agreement, 1986, *England’s Dreaming: The Jon Savage Archive*). Furthermore, a letter from Jon Savage to gallery owner Josh Baer dated July 31<sup>st</sup> 1986, discusses the fact that Savage and Reid would also be selling “a limited edition silk screen print of *How to Become Invisible* which “looks stunning in colour” at the show [See fig. 6.28] (Letter from Jon Savage to Josh Baer, 1986, *England’s Dreaming: The Jon Savage Archive*). Reid held two more solo exhibitions during the 1980s<sup>99</sup>, one at Chicago’s Feature Gallery in 1987, and another at the Art Workshop, Glasgow in 1989, another example of Reid building simultaneous relationships with commercial and independent spaces. The inherent and ongoing tension in Reid’s practice as a result of the artist operating both within and outside of the commercial art world and the traditional gallery system, particularly when contrasted with the do-it-yourself, anarchic ethos of work produced during the Punk era, is a key facet of Reid’s practice to be investigated from the early 1980s onwards. The contradictory nature of Reid’s complex relationship with the art world during the 1990s and beyond shall be explored in greater depth later on in this chapter, illustrated in part by Reid’s *Celtic Surveyor* and *Peace is Tough* touring solo exhibitions.

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<sup>99</sup> A chronology of Jamie Reid’s career can be found at <http://www.chipwork.com> and <http://www.isigallery.org>

In 1987 Reid cemented his professional relationship with Savage with the publication of *Up They Rise: The Incomplete Works of Jamie Reid* [See fig. 6.12], a book which was co-authored with the artist and which grew out of Reid's *Chaos in Cancerland* exhibition at Hamiltons Gallery, Mayfair, in 1986. Savage describes *Up They Rise* as embracing Reid's "whole range of...paintings, graphics and drawings, from the *Cat Book* to *Leaving the Twentieth Century*, and from *Anarchy in the UK* to *Letter to Brezhnev*" (Reid & Savage, 1987, back cover). During the early 1980s Savage was also responsible for preserving a great deal of Reid's work after it was left in a flat vacated by the artist in between the time of his Brixton Art Gallery exhibition (1984) and Hamiltons Gallery exhibition (1986) (Conversation with Prof. Colin Fallows, 2010).

From 1986 to 1990 Reid also worked out of Malcolm Garrett's Assorted iMaGes graphics studio in London. Garrett, the studio's design director, had previously produced artwork for the punk rock group Buzzcocks. His work for Assorted iMaGes included graphic identity, exhibition design, television graphics, and literature design. During this time Garrett produced artwork for musical artists included Magazine, Duran Duran, Boy George, Simple Minds and Peter Gabriel; Reid and Garrett's work for Boy George's *No Clause 28* (1988) is discussed later in this chapter.

Despite having been left feeling "frustrated with working within the format of pop music" after the less-than-successful outcome of his relationship with McLaren and Bow Wow Wow in 1980 and expressing a desire to "move on and find an outlet to operate without all these seemingly endless restrictions" (Reid & Savage, 1987, p. 108), Reid continued to work within the music industry during the 1980s. The attitude expressed by Reid in *Up They Rise* (1987)

as a reaction to McLaren's Bow Wow Wow project is perhaps one reason why Reid did not immediately seek out another long-term working relationship with a particular band during this time, instead choosing to pursue a range of commissions, producing one or two cover designs for a range of high-profile artists including those from his partner Clarke's home town of Liverpool.

In 1987, Reid collaborated with the popular British pop band Transvision Vamp, formed in London by Wendy James and her boyfriend and musical collaborator Nick Christian Sayer. In a 1987 interview with Savage for the BBC Arena documentary *Punk and the Pistols*, Reid explains the reasons behind the collaboration, explaining:

What excites me about it is I think, Nick and Wendy are two people, very young, who've learnt an awful lot of good lessons from the 60s, particularly from Punk, and have come up with something that's quite fresh and new. Which I think will create a dialogue for kids which I don't think they've had – probably since Punk....Hopefully learning lessons from what happened before as well. To create something new again. Transvision Vamp is a part of that. They may not realise it but I think they are.

(Reid interviewed by Jon Savage, 1987, *England's Dreaming: The Jon Savage Archive*).

Reid produced the cover art for Transvision Vamp's single *Revolution Baby* in 1987 [See fig. 6.29], followed by the design for *Tell That Girl* in 1988 [See fig. 6.30]. An early version of the artwork for *Revolution Baby* featured band member Wendy James stood aloft a series of corporate logos; this disturbed the record company who became nervous about breach of corporate copyright, and possible litigation (<http://www.chipwork.com>).

Reid discusses his designs for Transvision Vamp with Savage in 1987, expressing his desire to "create something very fresh and very new... It's not a sleeve that particularly articulates anything. But it's got a mood that's unique to

itself” (Reid interviewed by Jon Savage, 1987, *England’s Dreaming: The Jon Savage Archive*). This statement could be disputed with further examination of Reid’s sleeve designs for *Tell That Girl*; the back cover of the single featured Reid’s mock-up of an American dollar with the face of Wendy James in the centre, accompanied by the slogan ‘God Save the Royalties’, which was also the title of the single’s b-side [See fig. 6.31]. It is obvious that Reid is drawing directly upon his iconic *God Save the Queen* image originally produced for the Sex Pistols in 1977; the Transvision Vamp cover featured strikingly similar ransom note lettering. The use of the American dollar also brings to mind the mock-up of an American Express credit card produced by Reid as part of a Sex Pistols promotion for *The Great Rock ‘n’ Roll Swindle* (1980) [See fig. 6.32]. Paradoxically Reid is creating “something very fresh and very new” (Reid interviewed by Jon Savage, 1987, *England’s Dreaming: The Jon Savage Archive*) for Transvision Vamp by recycling both his original Sex Pistols ransom-note technique, and the recurring theme of a music industry ‘swindle’ – another case of Reid drawing upon his methodology of selecting images, styles and concepts from the unique visual vocabulary he has built up since attending art school in the mid-to late 1960s.

In 1988, Reid made another venture into the music industry, this time with a more politically aware agenda. Reid began work with Boy George, a pop musician who had once made a weekly pilgrimage to the Kings Road in London during the 1970s, hanging out with friends outside McLaren and Westwood’s SEX boutique (Colegrave & Sullivan, 2001). Reid collaborated with Boy George (real name George O’Dowd) - along with designers Joe Ewart and Malcolm Garrett - on designs for his 1988 single *No Clause 28*, which was released in

opposition to the Conservative government's notoriously anti-gay Clause 28, or Section 28 of the Local Government Act 1988<sup>100</sup>. Clause 28 controversially banned the "promotion" of homosexuality in schools as a normal family relationship, provoking outrage amongst gay rights activists and many teachers. Reid's front cover for *No Clause 28* (1988), produced in collaboration with Joe Ewart, featured Boy George as Enid Blyton's Noddy character [See fig. 6.33]. A promotional poster for the same single contained an image produced by Reid and Joe Ewart; the overall design was executed by Reid and Malcolm Garrett [See fig. 6.34].

In another example of Reid recycling previous themes and images, the back cover of Boy George's *No Clause 28* single was a controversial image of the Conservative Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher in a rapist mask [See fig. 6.35], a motif which Reid first explored in promotional material for the Sex Pistols film *The Great Rock 'n' Roll Swindle* (1980) [See fig. 6.36]. Continuing this theme, a similar portrait – this time featuring Virgin owner Richard Branson – appeared on the front cover of Issue 21 of Tom Vague's Situationist-inspired *VAGUE*<sup>101</sup> magazine, also published in 1988 [See fig. 6.37]. This image of Branson recalls Reid and McLaren's ongoing feud with Virgin during the days of the Sex Pistols; interestingly however, Boy George's *No Clause 28* (1988) was also released on Virgin Records. The image of Margaret Thatcher from *No Clause 28* (1988) also reappears in black and white on the inside back cover of the magazine alongside a manifesto entitled *Rape of the Language* [See fig. 6.38],

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<sup>100</sup> The Act was repealed on 21st June 2000 in Scotland, and on 18th November 2003 in the rest of the UK by section 122 of the Local Government Act 2003.

<sup>101</sup> Tom Vague is a cultural historian, psychogeographer and author who produced *VAGUE* during the 1980s, a fanzine/magazine which mixed Punk with the philosophies of the Situationist International.

in which Reid objects to the way in which he feels that “the language of progressive thought has effectively been captured (raped) by the New Right...” (Reid in Vague, 1988, p. 115). In this piece, Reid refers directly to the Situationist International, describing their activities during the 1960 as a “foreshadowing of the society of the spectacle which is manifesting itself in the Eighties and Nineties” (Reid in Vague, 1988, p. 115), highlighting Reid’s continued regard for the Situationist movement which had first inspired his student sit-in at Croydon and other such activity during the late 1960s (See Chapter 3).

This life-long influence also led Reid to take part in an exhibition centred around the Situationist International, entitled *Sur le passage de quelques personnes à travers une assez courte unité de temps. A propos de l'Internationale Situationniste 1957-197'*, at the Centre Pompidou, Paris (February 21<sup>st</sup> to April 9th, 1989), realised by Mark Francis and Peter Wollen. The exhibition travelled to the ICA in London (June 23<sup>rd</sup> to August 13th, 1989) and to Boston ICA (October 20th, 1989 to January 7th, 1990). The London leg of the exhibition, entitled *On the Passage of A Few People Through A Brief Period of Time*, was accompanied by a catalogue entitled *An endless adventure...an endless passion...an endless banquet: A Situationist Scrapbook* (1989), which highlighted Reid’s explicit use of “Situationist tactics and diversions” (Francis in Blaswick, 1989, p. 7). The front covers of Reid’s *Suburban Press* (1970-75) were featured in a section of the exhibition entitled *FallOut: a British inheritance 1966-1988*, along with work from Reid’s Sex Pistols days, including the cover designs for *God Save the Queen* (1977) and *Pretty Vacant* (1977), and the Sex Pistols mural first constructed for the artist’s Brixton Art Gallery show in 1983.

In a 2007 interview Reid discusses the Pompidou show, calling it “quite an interesting exhibition” and also touching upon the much-debated question of “whether it [Situationist material] should actually be in art galleries or not...” (Maguire, Aug 2007). The exhibition made public the link between Reid’s *Suburban Press* and Sex Pistols work and the influence of the Situationist International. In 1996, Reid also took part in a Situationist conference held at the Hacienda in Manchester, entitled *The Hacienda Must Be Built: On the Legacy of the Situationist Revolt*<sup>102</sup>.

At the same time as reflecting upon past influences and experiences such as his links to the Situationist International, Reid also continued to involve himself in current political campaigns and protests during this decade, one example being the campaign against the controversial Clause 28 mentioned previously in this chapter. As the decade came to a close, Reid became involved in another pressing political issue, this time a campaign against the Poll Tax. The Community Charge or Poll Tax was introduced in 1990. It was a flat local tax on every adult and was levied instead of taxing property. Its introduction led to the Poll Tax riots - some of the country's worst mass disturbances in recent history in London and other parts of the country.

In 1990, Reid designed the front cover for a compilation album entitled *Rise of the Phoenix*, which featured a range of artists including Beats International, Anhrefn, The Levellers, The Farm, The Proclaimers and Cactus Rain, all of whom stood in opposition to the Poll Tax. The cover featured a painting by Reid, based on the mythical Liver Bird [See fig. 6.39], along with the phrase ‘Artists against the Poll Tax’ (<http://www.chipwork.com>). It is clear that

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<sup>102</sup> The conference took place from 27th-28th January 1996.



Reid views his participation in such campaigns not as stand-alone actions, but – like Punk – part of an age-old struggle for social justice. In a 1998 interview with Bob Nickas of *Index Magazine*, Reid explains: “...for me, it’s just part of the continuing story...the Clause 28 thing...the fight against the Poll Tax...But the Pistols thing, it’s become so iconized. I mean, it’s really part of a much larger thing” (<http://www.indexmagazine.com>). In a 2001 interview in *The Guardian*, Reid reiterated this view, telling Elisabeth Mahoney:

Punk was part of a story that had been going on for the whole of the century, if not longer - it was no more than an important bit of that story in Britain. I came to it through community-based anarchism and situationist theories, and they came out of Surrealism and Dadaism. And punk continues...  
(Mahoney, 2001, p. 16).

Reid cites one example of this continuation of Punk as the anti-Poll Tax demonstrations in Trafalgar Square, where 10,000 people were wearing T-shirts with the same ransom-note lettering as *Never Mind the Bollocks* but saying ‘Bollocks to the Poll Tax’ (Mahoney, 2001). Reid has discussed this event further, saying:

It was all very cloak and dagger, didn’t see anyone and then get to Trafalgar Square and there’s 50,000 people wearing a T-shirt saying Bollocks to the Poll Tax in the same lettering as *Never Mind the Bollocks*. It’s a continuing story. I mean the work then had as much to do with the world conferences going on in Nice now and Seattle, it’s pretty much part of the whole agitprop movement, which interests me more than pop music.  
(<http://www.chipwork.com>).

Reid continued to make his political views publicly known in the decades that followed, designing a cover for *The Times’ T2* magazine in 2004 which included an original artwork, *Lies Lies Lies (2)* (2004) featuring Tony Blair and George

Bush. The image was intended to declare his opposition to the ongoing war against Iraq [See fig. 6.40]. Reid says of his cover design:

The starting point was a black and white image I did for the Anti-War Coalition. I adapted it and brought colour into it. I wanted to give it the look of a Hammer House of Horror film. I think that's probably where Bush and Blair belong.  
(Capuano, 2004, p. 6).

In 2007, *Lies Lies Lies (2)* also formed the basis of Reid's cover design for The Factory's album *Couldn't Love You More (2007)* [See fig. 6.41]. In 2008 Reid also donated a print of his *Up They Rise* image to the Labour Party's Ken Livingstone, who had organised an auction of work by high-profile artists including Reid, Peter Kennard and Peter Kalkhof at the Aquarium Gallery, London, in order to raise funds for his mayoral re-election campaign (Crerar, 2008). It is clear that Reid has always regarded his involvement with campaigns such as those against Clause 28, the Poll Tax and the war in Iraq as a continuation of the long struggle for social justice in Britain, of which the Punk movement – though obviously also an iconic 20<sup>th</sup> century phenomena in the field of arts and culture – can be viewed as one important milestone.

In the context of Reid's practice, the 1980s may be viewed in hindsight as a period of reflection, in which the artist attempted to deal, both professionally and personally – with the end of his working relationship with both the Sex Pistols and McLaren. This process involved the publication of *Up They Rise* (1987), which looked back over the past 20 years of Reid's practice. This process of reflection and reassessment is also manifested in the work Reid exhibited in national and international exhibitions such as those at the Brixton Art Gallery in 1983, and the Josh Baer Gallery in New York in 1986, in which Reid's Sex

Pistols artwork, including the newly-created Sex Pistols mural, were positioned at times uncomfortably with new projects such as paintings and set designs for *Leaving the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*, and often given greater precedence by curators. A turbulent personal life during this period may have contributed to certain professional decisions and approaches to making, including an unsuccessful attempt to launch the musical project *Chaos in Cancerland* with his then-partner Margi Clarke.

The 1990s saw Reid's practice enter a new phase, with his Druidic and Celtic family heritage again taking centre stage and providing a significant source of inspiration for paintings, music graphics and other projects. In 1989, Reid started on a ten year commission to revisualise and reinvent the interior spaces of both the recording and resting areas of the Strongroom, London - a recording studio which was opened by Richard Boote as a single studio in Curtain Road, Shoreditch in 1984. This small studio was followed by Strongroom 2, which opened in 1989. As well as being technologically groundbreaking – it was the first commercial studio to fully integrate MIDI with traditional analogue equipment – Strongroom 2 was also revolutionary in terms of its interior design. According to the Strongroom website, Boote wanted to reinforce his “passion for creating a creative atmosphere distinct from the functional approach of other studios” (<http://www.strongroom.com>). Reid, whom Boote knew as an associate of Malcolm Garrett's Assorted iMaGes design studio, was brought in to inject Strongroom 2 with a colourful interior that “furthered Strongroom's reputation for radical and innovative thinking” (<http://www.strongroom.com>).

After Strongroom 1 experienced a flood in 1990, the studio was refitted and Reid returned once again as artistic director, continuing and developing the theme he had established in Strongroom 2. Reid also expanded his unique vision into the Strongroom's two other studios, as well as its leisure rooms, offices, stairwells and bar [See figs. 6.42 to 6.46], leading to the creation of a unique, coherent and instantly recognisable identity for the studio which has also made an impact on the musicians who have worked there. For example Keith Flint, member of the British dance act Prodigy, describes Strongroom 1 as “totally inspirational to the brain” and explains that “the colours and lighting can wake you up, but can totally chill you out - it's quite strange” (<http://www.chipwork.com>).

Reid worked on the Strongroom from 1989 to 2000, creating a vivid yet serene interior setting including murals, collages and wall hangings inspired by his Celtic and Druidic roots, centred around the Druidic Eight Fold Year (See Chapter 1). *Guardian* journalist Imogen O'Rorke, in her 1998 article 'Never Mind the Pollocks...' explains that Reid “describes the act of painting as ‘white magic’ – spreading positive vibes to the music with astrological symbols and Celtic amulets” (O'Rorke, 1998, p. 9). Whilst working on the Strongroom interiors Reid also began to work with slate, a natural material which the artist found to have “incredible acoustic properties and sound-proofing properties” (Booth, 2004, p. 36); Reid explored this further in his solo exhibition *Slated*, held at the Aquarium Gallery, London, in 2004 which featured a series of abstract acrylic paintings and screen-prints on slates, inspired by his travels to Ireland, Scotland and Wales over the previous ten years. Stephen Kingston describes Reid's work for the Strongroom as follows:

Silk-screened canvasses, marble, etched bronze, and slate carry Reid's imagery across the twenty room complex, characterised by a cacophony of colour and symbols...It is a kind of Temple to Sound, which, now completed, is a pop cultural monument for the new millennium. (<http://www.chipwork.com>).

The phrase “Temple to Sound” is a fitting one in relation to Reid’s interior design work for the Strongroom, hinting at the artist’s desire to move beyond pure decoration and use architecture and interior design as a positive socio-political force.

Reid relates this concept back to a Situationist critique of the city, as explored by the theory of Unitary Urbanism (See Chapter 4). In a 2008 interview he explains,

You know, a lot of that sort of initial Situationist critique, as you probably know, came out of a lot of architecture students who were very involved at the start, and it came out of that concept. If you actually look at a lot of 20<sup>th</sup> century cities, they’re all about power control and getting people to perform functions like... rats in a box really. And it could be so the opposite. Which is why I don’t see a contradiction between the spiritual and the political. (Maguire, 2008).

Reid’s ideology in relation to architecture and the impact of his interior design in a practical sense stands in direct opposition to critics such as *The Guardian’s* Elisabeth Mahoney, who in her 2001 article ‘A Hippy Ending’ labels Reid’s later work as “distinctly unthreatening and trippy Celtic-tinged wall hangings and large paintings” which she finds difficult to reconcile with the “savage experimentalism of the 1970s” (Mahoney, 2001, p. 16). Mahoney also suggests that cynics may see in Reid’s Druidic-inspired work “yet another angry young man who has turned artistically soft” (Mahoney, 2001, p. 16). In contrast, Reid argues that his preoccupation with abstract and esoteric concepts such as

shamanism, astrology and magic can in fact be harnessed in order to make a practical and measurable impact on the world around us. As he explains in a 2004 interview with Richard Cabut:

Magic, to me, is a matter of being practical. I mean, to try and create something with it...One example is the Strongroom, where...I've painted a series of big canvases using colour symbolism, astrological symbolism...I just wanted to use that element of magic, for want of another word, in a solid way, in a real situation, actually creating an environment. Over the past two millennia, architecture has attempted to dominate people, make them feel inferior, servile. I wanted to create an environment that's an inspiration.  
(<http://www.3ammagazine.com>).

Building on this approach, Reid also invited aromatherapists and acupuncturists into the Strongroom to try and create a vibrant working situation that encouraged creativity (<http://cluas.com>). In another interview in 2008, Reid also critiques the submissive nature of the architecture of modern-day workplaces, stating: "It's all about enslavement, all about controlling people..." and citing architects such as Gaudi and Charles Rennie Mackintosh as visionaries and "wonderful exceptions" who have strived to reverse this dominant ideology (Maguire, Jan 2008). As Reid explains to Amanda DeAngeles in 2006, "Particularly with modern architecture, you can tell the architecture is just from the computer, not from the spirit"  
(<http://www.catalystmedia.org.uk>).

Reid also expresses his wish to venture further into the field of architecture and interior design, explaining that he hoped to move on to similar projects after his collaboration with the Strongroom, particularly in his adopted home city of Liverpool (Maguire, 2008). Expressing his opposition to the massive redevelopment of the city centre in time for Liverpool's 2008 Capital of Culture status, Reid discusses his desire for the construction of a unique space

which represents community and democracy rather than consumerism and hedonism, telling the *Liverpool Echo*'s Paddy Shennan in 2006:

Our city centre should have fantastic gardens and open spaces. And something I've always wanted to see is a big resource centre, surrounded by a healing garden. It would include a café, rehearsal space and offer people computer and library access and the chance to make films and grow their own food.  
(Shennan, 2006, p. 12).

In a 2006 interview with John Marchant, Reid explains that this interest in landscape sculpture and gardening stems from the five years he spent as a landscape gardener during his youth (<http://www.isisgallery.org>). Despite his desire to create community-based, immersive environments, Reid does not appear to have encountered a suitable project or else has not been commissioned or approached to design one. Interestingly, Reid's only other foray into interior design was a purely commercial venture. In 1999 he was commissioned by Brighton's Hotel Pelirocco - described as Britain's first "Rock 'n' Roll hotel" - to design one of its nineteen themed rooms, with other rooms designed according to classic British youth cults and pop icons such as the Mods, Glam, and a 'Love Boudoir' dedicated to 50s pin-up Betty Page. Reid was called in to decorate 'The Magic Room', which he describes as "a lot of punky, agit-prop, political stuff combined with shamanistic, Druidic, esoteric things" [See figs. 6.47 to 6.49] (Reid in Ross, 2001, p. 16). The room featured some of Reid's familiar motifs, including 'Shell' images similar to those which appear in the Strongroom, and the Sex Pistols phrase 'No Future' screen-printed onto the wall and curtains, yet another example of Reid placing familiar aspects of his unique visual language into new contexts (<http://www.chipwork.com>).

During the 1990s, Reid continued to work prolifically with a number of musicians and bands who for the main part have chosen to operate on the fringes of the mainstream commercial music industry, again recycling and revisualising the familiar motifs which over time have come to form part of his personal methodology as a visual artist, in order to create sleeve designs and posters that successfully convey the unique ethos and spirit of a particular recording artist. Paradoxically, in order to achieve this Reid has drawn upon much of his Druidic and shamanic-inspired work from the 1980s onwards, again putting forward an argument for the continuing relevance of his artistic practice. A reviewer of Reid's *Peace is Tough* exhibition at the New York gallery Artificial in 1997 agrees, explaining:

I suppose it is terribly ironic and all that one of Reid's images proclaims "Never Trust A Hippie!" but I'd much prefer Reid's 'backsliding' into hippie-ish mysticism to the Sex Pistols' head-long rush into cultural insignificance. The simple reason for this is that hippie-ish mysticism has enabled Reid to do something that neither John Lydon nor Malcolm McLaren has done since the 1980s, which is stay in meaningful touch with the politically-engaged musical subcurrents that trace their inspiration (if not their sound, look or style) to punk. (<http://www.notbored.org/reid.html>).

The band that Reid refers to most frequently in interviews is Afro Celt Sound System; as a result of his ten year collaboration with the Strongroom, Reid also spent five years as visual co-ordinator with the band. Formed in 1996 following a visit to the Strongroom, Imogen O'Rorke describes Afro Celt as "a fusion of Irish musicians with the Senagalese sound of Baaba Maal" (O.Rorke, 1998, p. 9). According to Reid, the band "sold 20,000 copies of their last album and have never had a write-up", claiming that they have actually outsold the Sex Pistols (O'Rorke, 1998, p. 9). Reid worked extremely closely with Afro Celt Sound



System, designing not only album and single sleeves for the band but also collaborating with them on live performances; he tells Bob Nickas in 1998, “Technically I’m a band member. I’m the art director. I do hangings, paintings, film shows, slides.” (<http://www.indexmagazine.com>).

In 1996 the band released their first album *Volume 1: Sound Magic*, with Reid designing the album sleeve. The source for the sleeve was Reid’s 7’ by 7’ canvas *OVA* (1988) [See fig. 6.50]. The cover was one of three works derived from earlier works produced for the Strongroom in London, strengthening the band’s identity with Reid’s particular brand of Celtic mysticism. The image used on the back cover of the CD booklet reclaims two animals which were appropriated by the monarchy as part of the Royal Arms [See fig. 6.51]. According to [chipwork.com](http://www.chipwork.com), “this piece re-instates these heraldic 'beasts', re-presenting them as the symbols of Summer (lion), and Winter (unicorn) respectively” (<http://www.chipwork.com>). The unicorn is another recurring motif in Reid’s practice, appearing in drawings related to the finale of *Leaving the 20<sup>th</sup> Century* [See fig. 6.52] (Reid & Savage, 1987). As Reid explains, “it represents rebirth” (Reid & Savage, 1987, pp. 135). The reclaiming of the unicorn from its appropriation by the monarchy also serves as a reminder of Reid’s previous Punk graphics, particularly his *God Save the Queen* image (1977). Reid designed two further album covers for Afro Celt Sound System – *Volume 2: Release* (1999) which featured the 'starship' design developed for the band, over-laid with the recurring motif of the Druid OVA [See fig. 6.53], and *Volume 3: Further in Time* (2000), which featured the ‘Axis’, a culmination of a whole year’s work centred around the theme of stars [See figs. 6.54 & 6.55]. Like cover for *Volume 1:*

*Sound Magic*, Reid's later cover designs were also derived from earlier works for the interior design of the Strongroom (<http://www.chipwork.com>).

Reid also worked with the band on live performances, and it was during this time that he began a new collaboration with the Russian laser artist Alexei Blinov, founder of the interactive electronic media design collective Raylab (<http://www.raylab.com>). In 1996, Reid collaborated with Blinov and Afro Celt Sound System on laser projections on a water screen for the opening of the Camden Mix music festival in London; Blinov later worked with Reid on a series of large outdoor laser projections in Hackney Town Hall Square, London as part of the HTH2 Public Ideas Forum in 1999, and on laser projections and interactive audio-visual installations for his touring exhibition *Peace is Tough* in Dublin and Liverpool from 2001 to 2002 (<http://www.raylab.com>). It was during his time with Afro Celt Sound System that Reid also came into contact with the Liverpool-based arts collective Visual Stress. As a photograph from a 1995 live performance shows [See fig. 6.56], the band – here performing against a backdrop of Reid's artwork - had originally included members of Visual Stress, as well as members of the Welsh band Land of my Mothers, more of which shall be discussed later in the chapter.

In addition to his work for Afro Celt Sound System, Reid also worked closely with Visual Stress on an exhibition held at the Bluecoat in 1995 entitled *Trophies of Empire*, which... Reid produced a skull and crossed 'slave hooks' image as a Visual Stress logo [See fig. 6.57]; the 'slave-hook' motif had previously appeared on the cover of Afro Celt Sounds System's first album *Volume 1: Sound Magic* (1995) [See fig. 6.58]. Both Visual Stress and Afro Celt Sound System were involved in a collaborative project with the Liverpool artist

Nina Edge as part of *Trophies of Empire*. The project involved the parading of a giant wicker man through Liverpool city centre, intended as an ‘Exorcism of Slavery’, and attracted large crowds, spontaneously turning into a “pied-piper-like procession” [See fig. 6.59] (<http://www.chipwork.com>).

In a 2008 interview with *Catalyst Media*’s Madeline Fuller, Reid describes his work with Visual Stress during this period as one of the most radical, exciting projects with which he has ever been involved, stressing that the collective “was never supported” financially (<http://www.catalystmedia.org>). In an earlier *Catalyst Media* interview with Amanda DeAngeles, he explains that this lack of official funding has typified his work in Liverpool over the past 25 years, with many venues including Quiggins, Jump Ship Rat and the Irish Centre – places “not rigged with the stigma of galleries and museums” – closing down, leading to a decline in truly independent locations and opportunities for creative free thinking (<http://www.catalystmedia.org>).

It was in locations such as the 051 Media Centre in Liverpool (1991), along with similar venues in Kyoto and Tokyo, Japan (1989-90), the Britannia Hall, Derry (1992), the Cornerhouse, Manchester (1992) and the Kunsthaus, Berlin (1992) that Reid chose to exhibit his first major retrospective exhibition, entitled *Celtic Surveyor*, during the late 1980s and early 1990s. The exhibition was accompanied by a catalogue entitled *Celtic Surveyor: More Incomplete Works of Jamie Reid*, published by Assorted iMaGes in 1989, which contained an illustrated list of the mainly large-scale Druidic and astrological-themed paintings, both figurative and abstract, that defined his practice over this period.

The exhibition appears to have been little-documented, with its first appearance at the Dixon Bate Gallery in Manchester slipping below the radar of

both the local and national press. *Celtic Surveyor*'s appearance at Liverpool's 051 Media Centre from November to December 1991 appears to have attracted the most coverage. Reid appears to have selected the 051 Media Centre as an example of a truly independent space run by individuals without conventional artistic training. As he explains to Matthew D'Ancona of *The Times* in 1991: "I do not think there is a degree in here. It is run by people who probably left school at 16 and found their way into art and film and music and dance. It is part of the whole rebirth of Liverpool, this place" (Reid in D'Ancona, 1991, 6<sup>th</sup> Nov, Features.). Funding for the exhibition is attributed to "Produce, The Farm, Zoo and Merseyside Arts" (*Celtic Surveyor* promotional flyer, *England's Dreaming: The Jon Savage Archive*).

Advertised as "Celtic Surveyor V – The Rise of the Phoenix – The first major retrospective exhibition of Jamie Reid's art", the photocopied exhibition flyer contains a characteristic call to arms from Reid, who proclaims:

We've almost ended up with the Stalinism that Russia's trying to get rid of – we can't party; we can't go out on the streets; we can't go to football matches...The role of the Arts is to liberate the imagination to create the new counterculture...ROLL UP, ROLL UP!!!  
(*Celtic Surveyor* promotional flyer, 1991, *England's Dreaming: The Jon Savage Archive*).

The *Celtic Surveyor* exhibition was also accompanied by a varied range of organised events, including live music, fashion shows and a programme of talks and lectures, including regular "walking/talking tours" of the exhibition by the artist. Other events included guest lectures by Savage, billed as "author of the recently published *England's Dreaming*, the authoritative story of the Sex Pistols and the development of Punk". Lecturer and cultural historian Rogan Taylor also appeared, giving a lecture on "shamanism, nomadic rituals and early religions,

and how they manifest themselves in late 20<sup>th</sup> century popular entertainment". Savage and Taylor were joined by Jeff Nuttall – “Performance artist, actor, musician, historian and orator extraordinaire. Author of *Documents* and *Bomb Culture*” (Celtic Surveyor promotional flyer, 1991, *England’s Dreaming: The Jon Savage Archive*). Then head of Fine Art at the Liverpool School of Art & Design, Nuttall had once been involved in the Aldermaston marches of the late 1950s and early 1960s as part of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND), events that Reid had attended as a young child – more of which is discussed in Chapter 2 of this study.

Reid’s touring *Celtic Surveyor* exhibition received little media attention. However, the one review located of the exhibition at the 051 Media Centre in Liverpool, by Matthew D’Ancona of *The Times*, is a largely positive one. D’Ancona conveys his enthusiasm for all aspects of Reid’s practice, stating:

A retrospective of Reid's painting and graphic design has just opened at the 051 Media Centre in Liverpool and provides a rare opportunity to appraise the career of an influential artist... Reid's parodies of consumerism and media language, from his beginnings as a Croydon agent provocateur to the designs he created for the Sex Pistols, are as arresting as ever. More startling, however, is the sheer eclecticism of theme and technique which emerges in his lesser-known canvas work, and particularly the recent *Celtic Surveyor* series and the *Leaving the 20th Century* project, which he undertook in the early 80s. The exhibition fully justifies substantiates Reid's claim to be a multi-media artist "with punk rock written on my forehead". (D’Ancona, 1991, 6<sup>th</sup> Nov, Features).

D’Ancona also picks up on the fact that *Celtic Surveyor* appears to highlight the intrinsic paradox of Punk, in that its anarchy and nihilism have also created an extraordinary burst of creativity, the legacy of which is still unfolding, particularly in terms of Reid’s own practice (D’Ancona, 1991). D’Ancona’s approach to Reid’s later work appears to be a rare one – *The Guardian’s*

Elisabeth Mahoney for example, states in her 2001 article ‘A Hippie Ending’ that Reid’s astrologically-inspired wall hangings and paintings are hard to reconcile “with the savage experimentalism of the 1970s” (Mahoney, 2001, p. 16).

Problematically, Mahoney is unable to make a link between the two. The critical reception of Reid’s later exhibitions shall be discussed further on in this chapter.

Following on from *Celtic Surveyor*, Reid began work on the solo retrospective *Peace is Tough*, the title of which is based up on a reworking of an iconic image of John Wayne which Reid produced in 1991 in response to the Gulf War [See fig. 6.65], and which was also used on the cover for Greil Marcus’s book *In the Fascist Bathroom* (1993) [See fig. 6.66]; this image shall be discussed in greater detail later in the chapter. *Peace is Tough* has remained the title of Reid’s solo retrospective exhibitions since 1997, and since this date the exhibition has opened in New York, Tokyo, Dublin, Athens, Glasgow and Liverpool, including a prolific amount of Reid’s collage, painting and photography, produced during the period 1968 to 2001.

As with *Celtic Surveyor*, *Peace is Tough* was documented most extensively during its visit to Reid’s adopted home city of Liverpool, in this case appearing at Jump Ship Rat, Parr Street, Liverpool from 1<sup>st</sup> December 2001 to 31<sup>st</sup> January 2002. In keeping with Reid’s preference to move outside of the traditional gallery system in order to create an immersive, interactive environment, the artist chose to exhibit *Peace is Tough* at the independent, Liverpool-based arts organisation and arts collective Jump Ship Rat, founded by the artists Miriam Tahir, Ben Parry and Caf McCafferty in 2001 (Massey, 2002). Reid explains his choice of exhibition venue on the Jump Ship Rat website, stating:

I have spent 30 years as a practicing artist exhibiting in numerous countries and different and varied venues in Britain. But I have never really had the opportunity to exhibit in an unrestricted and complete way in the town where I live, Liverpool. Jump Ship Rat are a team of people who actually encourage exciting possibilities, that things can be done; not the 'NO' - 'CANT' - 'DON'T' mentality of the establishment galleries. In its time as a functioning space it has put locally based, but also artists and performers from different parts of the world. All have been "accessible to the public.

(<http://www.jumpshiprat.org>).

Reid's approach to exhibiting, involving the creation of immersive, ever-evolving spaces which encourage new human interactions and exchanges, is also explained further on the Jump Ship Rat website, which states:

For this 'hometown' show in Reid's adopted city, he will be taking an "arts lab" approach which will see the exhibition progress and evolve organically from beginning to end. This falls happily in tandem with JSR's ethos and tradition of encouraging the artist presence in the space during exhibitions. Featuring predominantly new painted works (including those from the Afro Celt Sound System), the show will contain selective pieces from his extensive thirty year archive. Additionally, a number of groups, performers will stage events in the space for the duration of the exhibition.

(<http://www.jumpshiprat.org>).

Reid elaborates on the importance of such a unique, creative social space within the heart of Liverpool city centre, stressing that Jump Ship Rat

has provided the space and willingness for me to do what I see as being my best exhibition/event so far. It has provided a platform for numerous DJs would otherwise have no venues to perform in. This combination of art, music, video and performance encourages experimentation and creativity in an environment that is friendly and stimulating. It is a place where you can "hang out", relax, enjoy and celebrate... Jump Ship Rat is part of the true spirit of Liverpool's creative heart - long may it flourish.

(<http://www.jumpshiprat.org>).

Reid also discusses Jump Ship Rat's struggle for funding, expressing his concern that Liverpool's independent creative community may be sidelined as a result of

the city's Capital of Culture bid:

It is essential that within Liverpool's City of Culture bid, those in a position of financial backing put their money in places that reflect the true spirit of Liverpool, places like Jump Ship Rat, and not in the safe redundant options of "nice superficial middle-class art". They should look to their own and not what people from the outside would like to see. (<http://www.jumpshiprat.org>).

This concern was not unfounded; ironically it was Reid's *Peace is Tough* exhibition which, according to the *Daily Post*'s Diane Massey, "wiped out the last of JSR's reserves" (Massey, 2002, p. 12), and the gallery struggled to survive in Parr Street during the years that followed. It managed to stay open for the 2002 Liverpool Biennial, where Reid took part in a group show entitled *The Free Market*, which featured works by 15 artists from across Europe. The exhibition ran from 14th September 2002 on the upper level of St. John's Market, Liverpool, where Reid's space was entitled the *Bizarre Bazaar* [See fig. 6.60] (<http://www.jumpshiprat.org>).<sup>103</sup>

*Peace is Tough* was documented by Jump Ship Rat with an extensive photographic archive, which shows the main gallery packed out with Reid's intensely-coloured fabric wall hangings and large abstract canvases, some mounted on bamboo poles, which Diane Massey of the *Daily Post* describes as "gorgeously coloured, decorated with mandala motifs, the Eastern aid to meditation and healing" (Massey, 2001, p. 12) [See figs. 6.61 to 6.63]. The central focal point of the exhibition is a large tepee - again decorated with Reid's vibrant fabric wall hangings and astrological symbols - inside of which are candles, cushions and a vase of flowers, encouraging visitors to use the gallery as

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<sup>103</sup> For more detailed information on Jump Ship Rat's funding issues and later projects, see [www.jumpshiprat.org](http://www.jumpshiprat.org)



a meditative, reflective space. This is also done with the inclusion of a bench to listen to the decorative wind-chimes which Reid also places around the gallery space. A second major installation utilises Jump Ship Rat's inspection pit – the gallery was a former garage – filling it with water and positioning a fountain below a throne-like chair carved from a solid log. Reid has filled the space with criss-crossed leafless branches, dotting them with red and white lilies [See fig. 6.64] (Massey, 2002, p. 12).

Reid's wish to create a meditative space appears to have been successful, with Diane Massey describing the work as "so restful, so, dare I say it, pretty that you could easily spend an afternoon, if not a lifetime, in its company" (Massey, 2002, p. 12). However, other reviewers reacted more negatively towards *Peace is Tough*, with Peter Ross of *The Sunday Herald* in particular taking issue with the decorative nature of Reid's paintings executed from the 1980s onwards. Ross states:

He is incredibly prolific and passionate...but to be honest, his new work seems bland and clumsily executed. Given that he is dealing with themes which are key to his Druidic religion, the paintings are certainly not vacant but are perhaps just that little bit too pretty.  
(Ross, 2001, p. 16.)

This view is supported by *The Guardian's* Imogen O'Rorke, who expresses her disappointment at seeing "...not the sabotage art that has become his signature but Celtic-style tapestries that would not look out of place in Habitat" (O'Rorke, 1998, p. 9).

However, such opinions – including Mahoney's concern that the content of *Peace is Tough* indicates "yet another angry young man who has turned artistically soft" (Mahoney, 2001, p. 16) - may be challenged by a closer analysis

of the image which provided the exhibition's title. Produced in 1991 as a response to the Gulf War, *Peace is Tough* features an iconic image of the infamously right-wing actor John Wayne; Reid has adorned his mouth with red lipstick and placed a badge proclaiming 'Peace is Tough' on his waistcoat [See fig. 6.65]. The badge also features a number of hand-drawn CND (Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament) symbols, a reference which can be traced back to Reid's childhood experiences of the Aldermaston marches (See Chapter 2). In 1993 it featured on the front cover of Greil Marcus's book *In the Fascist Bathroom* (1993) [See fig. 6.66]. In 1994 Reid donated a copy of the piece to the charity War Child, and in 2003 it was made into a poster, along with works from Peter Kennard and the political cartoonist Steve Bell, to be sold in support of the Stop the War Coalition (Morrison, 2003).

*Peace is Tough* (1991) received a brief mention from local Liverpool exhibition reviewers such as Diane Massey and Joe Riley, who preferred to dwell on Reid's "celebration of holistic health and lifestyle" which takes up the majority of the exhibition space in *Jump Ship Rat* (Massey, 2001, p. 12). However, *Peace is Tough* (1991) had a significantly more controversial effect when it was exhibited as part of *Peace is Tough* at the Waterside Theatre in Derry, Northern Ireland, in 2001. Working with the Russian laser artist Alexei Blinov, Reid was to have laser beamed his lipsticked John Wayne image between the west and east banks of the River Foyle during the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> November 2001. However, the proposed projections were cancelled by the event organisers in respect of the September 11<sup>th</sup> terrorist attacks. As a spokesman for the event explained:

The intentions behind the proposed projections of 'Peace is Tough' and John Wayne image were to address a serious and poignant issue in a non-confrontational way and to extend the hand of friendship to both communities... In light of recent world events, it was felt that now is not an appropriate time to proceed with this aspect of the exhibition, as the artist would not wish to cause offence, or injury, through possible misinterpretation or any other reason.

(Anon, Belfast News Letter, 2001, p. 17).

However, in a 2007 interview Reid talks about the piece being "banned", rather than him agreeing to cancel the proposed laser projections. He goes on to say, "...But what they do is put it on the front page of the Northern Ireland papers, so more people actually see it than would have seen it...", an outcome with which Reid seems particularly pleased (Maguire, Aug 2007). In October 2001, *Peace is Tough* (1991) appeared as a full colour reproduction on the front page of the *Derry Journal*, which was curiously distorted rendering the message of the artwork, 'Peace is Tough', unreadable, and failing to include the phrase at all in the text of the article, wither in reference to the image's title, or the exhibition in which it was featured (<http://www.chipwork.com>). *Peace is Tough* (1991) was also heavily criticised by the Foyle DUP Assemblyman William Hay, who claimed that the image of John Wayne was offensive to Londonderry's Protestant community, due to Reid's defamation of the Queen during the Punk era as well as Wayne's significant following in the Londonderry area (Anon, *Belfast News Letter*, 2001). Hay expressed his dismay at Reid's project, telling the press:

The image most people have of John Wayne is that of a cowboy, always on the side of law and order. John Wayne is a very highly-respected figure. He always stood for the weaker people and I think it's wrong for anyone to misuse that character, which is undoubtedly the case here. John Wayne has served as a role model to generations and was a brilliant actor. For his memory to be desecrated in such as blasé fashion is a disgrace. Whoever thought that this was the right way to put forward the image of peace should think again.

(Anon, Belfast News Letter, 2001, p.17).

Reid expressed his bemusement at Hay's comments to Declan Magee of the *Belfast Telegraph*, explaining, "I was really surprised, as he is an American cultural icon. The whole thing with the John Wayne thing was that it was supposed to make you laugh. When I played cowboys and Indians a kid, I was the Indian" (Magee, 2001).

In fact, Reid had worked extensively in Northern Ireland over the past decade, his first project there being exhibition produced in collaboration with The Nerve Centre from 14<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> October 1991. The Nerve Centre was established in 1990 as a focal point for youth culture in Derry, by bringing together popular music, film, video, animation and interactive multimedia in order to provide a cultural outlet for young people traditionally excluded from the creative arts sector (<http://www.nerve-centre.org.uk>). Reid describes The Nerve Centre as "...in the very best sense of the word a community centre. It was just so vibrant, it's had big effects on education in Ireland, they do fantastic stuff" (Maguire, Aug 2007). Reid's exhibition involved both talks and workshops with the local community, as well as performances from Rhys Mwyn's Welsh language band Land of My Mothers<sup>104</sup>, for whom Reid had designed a number of album sleeves [See fig. 6.67] (Maguire, Aug 2007). One significant and unexpected outcome of Reid's two major exhibitions in Derry was the organisation of an international peace conference, also entitled *Peace is Tough*, which was organised by the Towards Understanding and Healing

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<sup>104</sup> Land of My Mothers were founded in 1995 by the brothers Rhys Mwyn and Sion Sebon of the Welsh-language punk rock band Anrhefn (Disorder). Along with bands such as Datblygu and Llwybr Llaethog, they can be said to have played an important part in the promotion of Welsh language music in the 1980s and beyond. In 1994, Anrhefn collaborated with Margi Clarke on the 3-track CD single *Clutter From the Gutter*, the cover of which was also designed by Reid.

Project in partnership with To Reflect and Trust, from 9<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> August 2002. The conference brought together around 200 politicians and community activists from around the world, from Israel/Palestine, South Africa, Germany, the United States of America, and Northern Ireland to explore the relationship between those at the decision-making and policy-making level and activists working at the grassroots level. It explored issues such as the compromises made towards the attainment of peace, what is meant by peace, and the relationship between peace and human rights (<http://www.4ni.co.uk>). The conference was attended by OFMDFM (Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister) ministers Denis Haughey and James Leslie, who according to the 4NI website “stressed some of the steps being taken by the devolved administration towards the development of a peaceful society within Northern Ireland” (<http://www.4ni.co.uk>).

As Reid explains,

...I did the exhibition, and it was successful, I came back, but then a few months later I got this big massive documentation through the post. And they'd actually organised a massive international peace conference in Northern Ireland called Peace is Tough, and actually acknowledged and thanked us for what we were trying to do, what we were trying to say. So you don't think they do, but things do have an effect. But that's an effect that's got nothing to do with art or culture, or Brit Art...it's a very different situation.  
(Maguire, 2007).

It could be suggested that Reid's work in Derry, and the international peace conference which was in part inspired by the exhibitions, demonstrates the continuing relevance of Reid's artistic practice; in the words of the *Liverpool Echo*'s Joe Riley, “Jamie Reid, the Liverpool artist who put the safety pin through the Queen's nose...is still making waves” (Riley, 2001, p. 6).

According to *The Guardian*'s Elisabeth Mahoney, Reid has done this by retaining the core values and DIY ethos of Punk; she states:

...it is his passion for this underground which indicates that Reid has retained more of the punk ethos than many of his peers. He prefers festivals and clubs to precious galleries, is more at home with collaborative, 'organic' ways of working rather than commissions, and he has a deep concern for the harm global capitalism is doing. (Mahoney, 2001, p. 16).

This approach is discussed further by Reid in a 2007 interview; however he also acknowledges a change in his method of exhibiting after the 1990s, referring to the relationship he has built with the London-based Aquarium Gallery. Reid explains:

I mean, it's only in the last few years that I've really been showing and doing exhibitions. Purely because I feel really comfortable working with The Aquarium Gallery...it's just a great place. But I mean, exhibitions and stuff I've done before were always more event-based. And they're really hard to explain because they don't bear any relationship to what happens in established galleries. They're usually done quite eclectically, where you put your work in a space but there's a lot of mixed media, and you actually encourage people in a particular area to come into the space and do their own performances and have discussions and parties...it's a 24 hour thing. And I suppose in this country I've tended to do them on the fringes. (Maguire, Aug 2007).

Mahoney's suggestion that Reid prefers an 'underground' approach to making and exhibiting may at times sit uncomfortably when juxtaposed with the artist's more commercial ventures, collaborations and commissions – particularly over the past decade - which often make Reid difficult to pigeonhole or classify within the contemporary art world. This chapter will now go on to explore how Reid's passion for the underground and esoteric is reconciled with the development of important professional relationships with commercial galleries during the past

decade, one indication of the ever-growing complexity of his relationship with the contemporary art world, of which Reid could be said to simultaneously operate in the centre and on the periphery.

In 2001, Reid took part in *Art Tube 01*, a project organised by the Canadian artist Gordon McHarg, a long-term resident of West London who had previously experimented with public art on public buses in Vancouver. The exhibition, implemented by London Transport as part of its *Platform for Art Series*, was the world's first public art exhibition to take place on a tube train. *Art Tube 01* ran for six weeks on the Piccadilly Line in the lead-up to Christmas 2001, and was re-shown at the London Transport Museum for a further six weeks, from 27<sup>th</sup> March to the first week in May 2002. The project involved the replacement of all advertising spaces on a Piccadilly Line tube train with 84 newly-created works by 42 different artists, including Reid, Vivienne Westwood, John Dunbar, John Cooper Clarke, Yoko Ono, Juergen Teller, Gavin Turk and Damien Hirst. In fact a number of individuals with links to Reid had taken part; as *The Telegraph's* Alannah Weston explains,

In the Sixties, John Dunbar's Indica Gallery was backed by Paul McCartney, and it was Dunbar who suggested the Art-TUBE project to Yoko Ono. There is also a tidy little Sex Pistols connection. The poet John Cooper Clarke used to open for them; another contributor, fashion designer Vivienne Westwood, was married to their manager Malcolm McLaren, and Jamie Reid...has reworked an image from their 'Pretty Vacant' promotional poster for the show.  
(Weston, 2001, p. 25-27.)

As McHarg explains, "I put a concerted effort into thinking about who was around in the living past..." (Weston, 2001, p. 26). *Art Tube 01* could be seen as interesting exhibition choice for Reid, in relation to the fact that it also featured a

number of contemporary artists – including Damien Hirst and Gavin Turk<sup>105</sup> - primarily known for being part of the YBA (Young British Artist) movement which originated in the 1980s, taking as its starting point the exhibition *Freeze*, organised by Hirst whilst still a student at Goldsmiths College in London in 1988 (<http://www.tate.org.uk>). Reid has often publicly expressed his dislike for the movement, telling *The Times*' Thomas Capuano in 2004 that Britart

...came out of the Saatchi stable. I find it Thatcherite. It's about empty gestures – it has far more to do with the corporate advertising world than it has to do with soul. It's got no soul to it. I'm not saying there are no good artists within it – I really like the Chapman brothers and a few others but Britart is like a PR/advertising stunt.  
(Reid in Capuano, 2004, p. 6).

Reid has also commented negatively on a number of individual YBAs, such as Rachael Whiteread and Tracey Emin. In 2006, Reid discussed the controversy surrounding the £60,000 of licence-fee money the BBC paid for a sculpture of a bird on a branch by Tracey Emin situated near the Anglican Cathedral in Reid's adopted city of Liverpool, explaining to the *Liverpool Echo*'s Paddy Shennan, "There are probably 1,000 local artists who would have jumped at the opportunity to do something for a tenth of that money." (Reid in Shennan, 2006, p. 12). In a 2007 interview Reid also expressed his delight at the actions of Bill Drummond and The K Foundation (formerly KLF<sup>106</sup>), who in 1993 awarded

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<sup>105</sup> One of the most renowned works of Gavin Turk (b. 1967) is a sculpture which depicts Turk as a life-size waxwork in which he adopts the identity of the Sex Pistols' Sid Vicious singing *My Way*, in the pose of Elvis Presley, as depicted by Andy Warhol.

<sup>106</sup> The KLF (Kopyright Liberation Front) were a band from the British acid house movement during the late 1980s and early 1990s. Beginning in 1987, Bill Drummond (alias King Boy D) and Jimmy Cauty (alias Rockman Rock) released hip hop-inspired and sample-heavy records as The Justified Ancients of Mu Mu, and on one occasion (the British number one hit single *Doctorin' the Tardis*) as The Timelords. With The KLF's profits, Drummond and Cauty established the K Foundation and sought to subvert the art world, staging an alternative art award for the worst artist of the year and burning one million pounds sterling. Although Drummond and Cauty remained true to their word of May 1992 - the KLF Communications catalogue remains



Rachel Whiteread - who had just won the Turner Prize with the cast of a Victorian dwelling in East London entitled *House* (1993) – the title of ‘worst British artist’, attempting to make it official with a prize of £40,000. As Reid gleefully recalls, “...she refused it!” (Maguire, Aug 2007).

Reid’s two works for *Art Tube 01* were titled *Time for Magic* and *Nowhere/Boredom* [See figs. 6.68 & 6.69], a juxtaposition of Reid’s Druid ancestry and his links to the Sex Pistols and the Situationist International. Reid’s *Nowhere/Boredom* image was produced in collaboration with a Liverpool-born artist using the pseudonym Brian Jones. The past decade has included a number of collaborations with Jones, an artist who describes himself as “Twisted through Pop, subverted by Punk and born in Liverpool”, and whose politically suggestive work plays with well-known images of popular culture and celebrity (<http://www.eyestorm.com>). Jones had been tutored by both Reid and Jeff Nuttall at the Liverpool School of Art and Design, Liverpool Polytechnic during the 1980s; as Jones recalls, “The new head brought Jamie in to tutor the ‘problem students’. I asked if I could be put on the list and was told my name was already at the top!” (<http://www.eyestorm.com>).

This marked the beginning of a twenty year working relationship between the two artists, with Jones collaborating with Reid on a number of exhibitions, projects and events, including promotional items for Reid’s touring solo exhibition *Celtic Surveyor* during the early 1990s. These included a poster advertising a live music event at Reid’s exhibition at the 051 Media Centre, Liverpool in 1991, in which Jones utilised Reid’s ransom note-style lettering

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deleted in the UK - they have released a small number of new tracks since then, as the K Foundation, The One World Orchestra and most recently, in 1997, as 2K.

along with one of his Celtic-themed designs and an image of the Liver Buildings [See fig. 6.70]; as Jones explains on his website, “Jamie was busy, so he asked me to design the poster...” (<http://www.artofbrianjones.com>). Jones also designed the front cover for Reid’s promotional newspaper *Ova & Out* in the same year, which formed the exhibition brochure [See fig. 6.71]. It featured what Jones describes as “the ‘Spectacle’ shot, a well-known image of cinema-goers wearing 3-D glasses that was also used for the front cover of Debord’s *Society of the Spectacle* (1967) [See fig. 6.72], again reiterating Reid’s link to the Situationist International. Jones also reworked Reid’s *God Save the Queen* image of 1976 to promote *Celtic Surveyor* at the Kunsthaus, Berlin, re-naming it *God Save DT64* due to its sponsorship by a local radio station of the same name [See fig. 6.73]. In the words of Jones, “At the age of 13, I was copying Jamie’s artwork; 25 years later, I was asked to alter it!” (<http://www.artofbrianjones.com>).

Jones’ collaboration with Reid has continued into the current decade; in 2002 he was commissioned by Reid’s Arcova Studios to produce a ‘Jamie Reid’ logo [See fig. 6.74], again featuring Reid’s iconic Punk lettering style. The logo was used on original Sex Pistols artwork for licence to Japan, and also appeared on additional promotional items including T-shirts, bags and wallets (<http://www.artofbrianjones.com>). Reid and Jones took part in a number of group exhibitions during this period including the aforementioned *Art Tube 01*; Reid’s *Nowhere/Boredom* panel is listed as being “produced collaboratively by Reid and his assistant Brian Jones” (<http://www.art-tube.com>). Other exhibitions involving both Reid and Jones included *Golden* at the Britart Gallery in June 2002 and *Up Front and Personal: Three Decades of UK Political Graphics*, which showed at

the Korea Design Centre, Seoul, Korea from 20<sup>th</sup> November 2002 before embarking upon a two year tour of the Far East (<http://www.chipwork.com>).

In 2002, both Reid and Jones took part in an exhibition entitled *Viva La Republique!: Pagan images of the last Queen of the British Isles by her indigenous subjects*, which took place at the non-profit Centre of Attention gallery in Shoreditch, London, 2002<sup>107</sup>. The show was an attempt to address the curators' perceived lack of anti-establishment art in Britain, and was described as "Bringing together for the first time seminal graphic and fine artists in a show to mark the Golden Jubilee of HRH QEII and the Silver Jubilee of Punk. Monarchy is dead, punk still alive" (<http://www.thecentreofattention.org>). Brian Jones' contribution was an image entitled *Norma Queen* (2002) [See fig. 6.75], an homage to Andy Warhol's Pop portraits which was described as "bringing out the Marilyn in the Queen" (<http://www.thecentreofattention.org>). Reid's piece was his *God Save the Queen* flag (1995) [1977] [See fig. 6.76], copies of which had previously sold in great numbers in Australia during the Republican campaign to remove 'the Queen of England' as the country's figurehead. According to the gallery's website, "they were also spotted atop of Stonehenge during the many attempts to hold Summer Solstice gatherings at this ancient site" (<http://www.thecentreofattention.org>).

*Viva La Republique!* also featured a number of new portraits including an image of the Queen as a chimp in a tiara by the graffiti artist, Banksy, inspired by Reid's *God Save The Queen* (1977). This was juxtaposed with repeated images of a 1970s punk [See fig. 6.77] (<http://www.thecentreofattention.org>). Reid has a

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<sup>107</sup> *Viva La Republique!* ran at the Centre of Attention in Shoreditch from 4<sup>th</sup> May to 1<sup>st</sup> June 2002. The exhibition was extended to the Window Gallery, Central St. Martins School of Art & Design, from 12<sup>th</sup> July to 9<sup>th</sup> August 2002.

mixed opinion of the infamous street artist, and in a 2008 interview expresses his disapproval at the city of Liverpool “making token gestures to people like Banksy”<sup>108</sup>, whilst also stating, “You know I’m not necessarily 100% against people like Banksy actually because it keeps things in the frame and picture. But I always thought that with the millions he gets he should be paying all the fines for graffiti artists” (Maguire, 2008). In 2001, Banksy exhibited a number of new works alongside Reid’s *Peace is Tough* exhibition at The Aches in Glasgow, although it is unclear as to whether the two actually met. Reid’s statement, coupled with the fact that he has also participated in shows such as *Art Tube 01* along with Damien Hirst and Gavin Turk amongst others, is just one indication that it is no longer adequate to view Reid purely as an anti-establishment artist that positions himself solely and firmly outside of the mainstream art world, or as Mahoney puts it, an artist who prefers “festivals and clubs to precious galleries” (Mahoney, 2001, p. 16).

As demonstrated by the previous examples, it could be suggested that the past decade has witnessed a raise in Reid’s public profile through the forging of a number of relationships with commercial galleries, as well as his participation in charity campaigns such as the Stop The War Coalition, public art projects including *Art Tube 01* and the 2002 Liverpool Biennial, and TV programmes such as the four-part BBC documentary *Designing the Decades* (2003). However, this chapter will also examine whether Reid’s continued participation in large-scale touring ‘Punk-themed’ exhibitions during this time, the continued exhibition and sale of his Sex Pistols work through commercial London-based galleries such as the Aquarium and Isis, and his collaboration with the fashion

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<sup>108</sup> As part of the Liverpool Biennial 2004, Banksy spray-painted one of his giant rats onto the side of the derelict former White House pub in Berry Street in the city centre. In February 2010, the building was sold to a local businessman at auction for £114,000.

design house Commes des Garçons which premiered in Paris in 2008, whilst strengthening Reid's public profile and providing a degree of financial security, have also served to obscure and overshadow the production and exhibition of new works such as the *Eight Fold Year* project and others discussed in the previous chapter, as well as new exhibitions such as *Slated and Stained Glass: 'Art or science, ancient or modern...'*, held at the Aquarium Gallery in London in 2004 and 2008 respectively.

For example, in 2003 Reid took part in *Plunder*, a group exhibition based on the art of collage, held at Dundee Contemporary Arts and described by *The Sunday Herald's* Catriona Black as "a brief journey through Paolozzi's Pop Art magazine cut-outs of the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, an album covers of the 1970s and '80s such as Jamie Reid's iconic *God Save the Queen*, all of which prepares us for around 50 contemporary works in the genre" (<http://www.artandphilosophy.com>). The fact that Reid's *God Save the Queen* (1977) is viewed by curators as preparation for more contemporary works means that the artist's current practice is largely ignored. As Black goes on to observe, "Like a collage itself, *Plunder* is a cut and paste collection of very different works whose recontextualisation obscures their own, very individual, agendas" (<http://www.artandphilosophy.com>). It could be argued that this problem was caused by the curators' straightforward chronological approach to documenting the development of collage, isolating and framing certain artists – including Reid – in a particular cultural moment in time. As evidenced in the enduring visual vocabulary contained within Reid's early art school work, *Suburban Press* illustrations and graphics, and post-Sex Pistols practice, it is clear that it is no

longer possible to define the artist solely in terms of Punk. As Reid explains in a 2004 interview with Tomaso Capuano of *The Times*,

In many ways, I don't personally see it as being punk. There's work I was doing before in that vein, and there's work that's been continuing since. It moves on....The whole punk issue is like a millstone around my neck. In this country, once you're pigeonholed, you're pigeonholed for life...I'm remembered as the Pistols guy.  
(Reid in Capuano, 2004, p. 6).

However as discussed previously, Reid has also continued to be a keen and regular contributor over the past thirty years to major touring exhibitions which seek to document either the history of Punk or the evolution of graphic design for popular music, including *Images of Rock*, which visited Denmark, Sweden and Germany during 1990 and 1991, and *Sound Design*, which toured Japan, Korea, Indonesia, Hong Kong and Thailand from 2000 to 2001. Reid's contribution to such exhibitions has continued well into the present decade, as demonstrated by the artist's involvement in shows such as the Barbican's *Panic Attack! Art in the Punk Years* in 2007 (as discussed earlier in this chapter), *Rock My Religion* at DA2 in Salamanca, Spain and *Punk: No-one is Innocent* at the Kunstalle, Vienna, both taking place in 2008.

In contrast to such 'blockbuster' Punk exhibitions, Reid's newer, esoteric painterly work has been represented for the last decade by small, independently-run commercial galleries in London, namely Steve Lowe's Aquarium Gallery and later L-13, and John Marchant's Isis Gallery. In 2004 Reid contributed a copy of his work *Peace is Tough* (1991) [See fig. 6.65] to a group exhibition entitled *Pax Britannica: A Hellish Peace* organised on behalf of the Stop The War Coalition at the Aquarium Gallery, which at the time was situated in Woburn Walk, near to Euston Station in London. The exhibition also featured

artists such as Anthony Caro, Richard Hamilton and Ralph Steadman. On sale during the exhibition was a box set of prints comprising three of Reid's prints, along with works by Banksy, Steve Bell, James Boswell, Alexander de Cadanet, Sir Anthony Caro, James Cauty, Billy Childish, David Gentleman, Richard Hamilton, Clifford Harper, Brian Jones, John Keane, Peter Kennard, Alan Kitching, Jenny Matthews, Paul Mattson, Antonio Pacitti, Martin Rowson, three prints by Ralph Steadman, STOT21stC and two prints by Gee Vaucher, along with a press release and a burnt page from the Hutton Report<sup>109</sup> (<http://www.l-13.org>). A *Pax Britannica* box set was sold at auction at Bonhams in Knightsbridge, London in October 2008 for £9,840 (<http://www.bonhams.com>).

Reid's participation in the exhibition led to him forging a long-term working relationship with the Aquarium, including publishing of prints. The gallery is described by Sean Cosgrove as "happily haphazard", who goes on to explain:

Your first job is to find it. No-one, even one hundred yards away, knows where the tiny street is. If you can find Upper Woburn Place, bang opposite Euston station, Woburn Walk is between two hotels, The Ambassadors in Bloomsbury and The County. Once inside, you may still be unsure you've found it. Unlike most venues, where space is everything, the tiny Aquarium is crammed with art. (<http://www.morningstaronline.co.uk>).

The Aquarium's founder Steve Lowe gives some indication as to why Reid chose to be represented by the gallery, stating that they are

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109 The Hutton Inquiry was a British judicial inquiry chaired by Lord Hutton, appointed by the United Kingdom Labour government to conduct an investigation into the circumstances surrounding the death of Dr David Kelly, an employee of the Ministry of Defence who was found dead on 18th July 2003 after being named by BBC journalist Andrew Gilligan as the source of quotes claiming that Tony Blair had "sexed up" a dossier on weapons of mass destruction in Iraq.

...all about doing events, exhibits, and art - but not in the normal sense; poncey and clean. We're not dead like Cork Street<sup>110</sup>; we're very much alive. It's a place where, if someone's got an idea, something to show, and needs a space, give us a ring. We're not too formal, poncey or arty - although if you are arty, we'll still let you in...  
(<http://www.3ammagazine.com>).

Reid's first solo exhibition *Slated*, featuring a number of new works on slate, was held at The Aquarium from 3rd September to 9th October 2004. Reid had first produced works on slate as part of his interior design for the Strongroom as discussed earlier in this chapter, favouring the material for its unique properties; in a 2004 interview with Childish he describes slate as having "this incredible quality to it... to paint on because it's like when you put paint on it, it goes into a sort of time zone. It doesn't dry, and you can actually manipulate it and it just stays where you leave it and you can push it about" (<http://www.bbc.co.uk>). Like the majority of Reid's past exhibitions, *Slated* was an amalgamation of Reid's Sex Pistols and Suburban Press imagery, and newer acrylic paintings and screen-prints. This juxtaposition was one which some reviewers found surprising; as Hannah Booth of *Design Week* describes it:

The repeat patterns papered on the Aquarium's walls are a collage of old images, such as his French Revolution motif, alongside new ones, including a large 'V' with the cut-out words 'Fuck Forever'. But the walls are just a backdrop to the real, unexpected stars of the show - a series of abstract paintings and screen-prints on slates, in bright acrylic paints... The contrast between the newsprint on the walls and the slates is stark.  
(Booth, 2004, p. 36).

A collectible box of Reid's slates was also produced by the Aquarium and placed on sale during the exhibition [See fig. 6.78].

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<sup>110</sup> Cork Street is a street in Mayfair in the West End of London. It is very well-known in the British art world for the commercial art galleries that dominate the street, including the Victoria Miro Gallery (now moved), Messum's, The Gallery in Cork Street and the associated Gallery 27, the Adam Gallery, and Beaux Arts London.



It could be suggested that Reid's "rebel chic" image was strengthened further with another Aquarium exhibition entitled *May Day May Day*, which ran from 1<sup>st</sup> May 2007 and offered for sale a selection of primary archive pieces from Reid's own collection, ranging from *Suburban Press* collage and gouache works to new abstract canvases. The exhibition ran in parallel with an event known as *X Marks the Spot*, which also began on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2007 in Shoreditch, London. The event was organised to celebrate the life and work of Reid, and included several locations where his current work could be viewed as well as a comprehensive flyposting of the area with over 35 years worth of work.

In addition to retrospective surveys such as *May Day May Day*, the Aquarium has also been keen to showcase Reid's newer, painterly work, as demonstrated by 2004's *Slated*, as well as an exhibition entitled *Eight Fold Year*, taking place in 2006 and described by Isis Gallery's John Marchant as "featuring 365 hand-painted works representing the progression of birth, life, decline and death, as experienced in human lives and echoed in the progression of the seasons" (<http://www.isisgallery.org>) (See Chapter 3). The majority of Reid's paintings from the 1980s onwards are heavily influenced by the natural world and often feature references to the Druidic Wheel of the Year. According to the Druid belief system there are eight festivals which divide the Wheel of the Year, each with its own celebration, with occurrences approximately every six weeks. These include solstices, equinoxes, and the four major points in the turning of the Wheel, (Autumn, Winter, Spring, & Summer). The Four Elements - Earth, Air, Fire, and Water - are also celebrated individually throughout the year at the various festivals, and are often referenced by Reid.

These themes and influences are repeated in a number of major projects, most notably the *Eight Fold Year*, a massive body of work representing an ongoing exploration of the Eight Fold Year, and the Four Elements, through a series of 365 paintings, as well as time and drawings and photographs taken by Jamie and his wife Maria Hughes on their many journeys throughout the British Isles and beyond, undertaken at various key times of year. Reid met Hughes in 1996, and the two were married in 1999; Hughes claims that Reid “came to her in a dream” (<http://www.catalystmedia.co.uk>). Of the partnership, Hughes explains:

I couldn't get used to signing another name. I'm not a feminist, but if he needs sorting out I'll sort him out! I agreed to marry, as long as he never asked where I was going or what time I'd be back. He never has. I once hopped on a train headed for Scotland instead of paying the gas bill, it was great! He spends hours painting. We give each other space and it works.  
(<http://www.catalystmedia.org.uk>).

Hughes, who has a background in photography, is an integral part of the *Eight Fold Year* project, accompanying Reid on trips around the country and taking the majority of their photographs. Hughes held an exhibition of her work at the Egg Café in Liverpool in 2006; she explains:

I have given so many photographs away over the years – like that one with the terraced houses, “The Interloper” - the one with the bird. I take pictures like that, and give them away to my neighbours and friends as Christmas cards. Most of my pictures are of the sky and are taken from my kitchen window. They follow in sequence and have a panoramic quality.  
(<http://www.catalystmedia.org.uk>).

Reid's *Eight Fold Year* project is explored in more detail in Chapter 1 in relation to Druidism and spirituality, and Chapter 3 in relation to painting style and process.

Though at first glance such images appear to be firmly at odds with the ethos of Punk, it may be suggested Reid's practice as a whole can represent the artist's desire for both political and spiritual change, and the exploration of alternative directions for the future. Evidence of this attitude can be found in the Aquarium's press release for another of Reid's exhibitions of new paintings, entitled *Out There: Contemplative and Mystic Paintings by Jamie Reid* and held from 6<sup>th</sup> September to 7<sup>th</sup> October 2006. A description of the exhibition appearing alongside the price list compares Reid's work to that of significant painters of the past, seeking to reposition the artist within a canon of contemplative, spiritual abstraction:

Imagination is real, and self realisation can come by illumination, accident, or in an induced state' This quote from Maurice Tuchman<sup>111</sup> illustrates Reid's methods and philosophy. He paints in a mediumistic trance, and these intense, spontaneous paintings are comparative to Kandinsky and Hilma af Klint, whose esoteric works are products of treating painting as ritual. These paintings are observations of nature, from landscapes to microscopic fractals. They are alive with a spiritual life force; conveying kinetic movement and Jamie Reid's greatest weapon, beauty.

(Price list, *Out There: Contemplative and Mystic Paintings by Jamie Reid*, Aquarium Gallery, 2006).

This theme is reiterated by the Aquarium in another of Reid's solo exhibitions featuring new glass works and paintings, *Stained Glass, 'Art or science, ancient or modern, macro or micro, spiritual or political...*, which ran from 1<sup>st</sup> August to

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<sup>111</sup> Maurice Tuchman is a writer and curator who formed the collection of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art over 35 years ago. He is the author of books such as *The Spiritual in Art: Abstract Painting 1890-1985* (1986) and *Parallel Visions: Outsider Artists and Modern Art* (1992).

20<sup>th</sup> September 2008. Reid's venture into stained glass was a collaboration with Jen Barker and Gary Burgess of Melt Designs, a Liverpool-based glass art company [See figs. 6.79 & 6.80]. Prices for Reid's works ranged from £195 for "cast bowls and shapes of fused coloured glass, signed by the artist", to £6,500 for large "fused coloured glass in steel frames". An exhibition catalogue was also available in a limited edition of 50, signed by the artist and priced at £30 (<http://www.l-13.org>). Again, John Marchant makes bold claims for Reid as a spiritual descendant of Kandinsky, stating:

Counter to Wassily Kandinsky's expectations, a century of abstract art has leached the spiritual from its agenda, and much contemporary art practice deceives with hidden shallows... Thankfully, encountering Jamie Reid's creative practice give hope, and a rare green light to metaphysical thinking – a light in pretty damned bleak times.... What has been gained is a shift into third and fourth dimensions as these pieces have both depth of plane and shifting refraction of light as the sun and moon plot their courses.

(Aquarium, exhibition guide for Reid's *Stained Glass...* exhibition, 2008).

In the exhibition's press release, the Aquarium curators also launch an attack on the prevailing fashion for so-called 'street art', claiming that Reid "has always avoided being pigeonholed, and with the growing scourge of 'urban art' posturing, his paintings and glass works offer a true 'alternative' vision" (Gleadell, 2008, p. 24). Jessica Berens of *The Times* agrees, stating that "...his recent show at the Aquarium Gallery in London failed to receive a review in any national newspaper. He embodies the truth that, in the end, punk was and is a sensibility, embraced by those who distrust the mainstream and must work from the outside" (Berens, 2004, p. 4).

However, these claims are disputed by *The Daily Telegraph's* Colin Gleadell, who offers the interesting opinion that Reid is in fact "more

mainstream than he was during his Sex Pistols days, with work in the Tate collection and a fashion collaboration with Comme des Garçons due to be launched this summer” (Gleadell, 2008, p. 24). Though it is true that the use of the terms ‘alternative’ and ‘mainstream’ may lay itself open to accusations of being overly-simplistic and reductive, allowing little room for ambiguity, it is clear that many of Reid’s critics feel that in selling his original works and reproduction prints, the artist has in some way ‘sold out’, betraying his Punk credentials. This feeling may also be exacerbated by the sale of accompanying items with a distinctly ‘souvenir’ feel such as solid silver ‘Time for Magic’ pendants and made-to-order rings, on sale at the Aquarium in 2008 for £45 and £150 respectively, as well as bedding sets designed by Reid with the title ‘Dirty Linen’ Rolls of Reid’s printed wallpaper were also placed on sale by the Aquarium, priced at £100 per 3 metre roll. As Steve Lowe, the gallery’s founder wryly proclaimed in 2004, “Wallpaper is the new rock ‘n’ roll” (Booth, 2004, p. 36). Reid elaborates on this situation further, explaining:

...the prints I did with Steve [Lowe] ...seemed to piss the fine art world off loads. And you can’t win in those situations, because you’ve got people saying ‘oh you’re selling out, selling the prints’, and other people saying ‘well, you’re ruining yourself cos you’re selling everything too cheap - you’re ruining yourself in the art market’.  
(Maguire, Jan 2008).

It is clear in any case that the both the artist and gallery are provided with a degree of financial security from what Lowe describes as Reid’s “rebel chic”, a fact which may be treated negatively by some individuals (Booth, 2004, p. 36).

However, it may be argued that Reid’s earnings from the sale of older works, prints and other limited edition items, though often heavily criticised, may be one reason why the artist has been able to devote the majority of his time to painting

and developing new projects such as the *Eight Fold Year* over the past twenty years, and one of the main reasons why he has been so prolific as an artist during this period. As *The Sunday Herald's* Peter Ross observed in 2001, Reid

...is considering a commission to design faces for Nokia phones. Those sorts of projects, and the fact that the likes of Kate Moss, Madonna, Alan McGee and Noel Gallagher are willing to pay big money for prints of his Sex Pistols work, keep Reid financially secure and allow him to spend his time painting.

(Ross, 2001, p. 16).

Reid, who says he now paints every day, asks *Design Week's* Hannah Booth, "What is it worth? How do you put a price on it? I've earned it; I've been working hard for 40 years. And it's a lot better than any of this Brit Art shite." (Reid in Booth, 2004, p. 36).

Reid describes his approach to painting as "...obsessive. I just completely lose myself, it is like having a muse. And one just leads to the next, to the next, to the next, and I've gone on and on and on" (Maguire, Dec 2009). Whilst it could be suggested that the sale of Reid's older work, along with new commissions and commercial offers, currently allows him this artistic freedom, one must also take into account the commission earned by his London gallerists John Marchant and Steve Lowe.

The extent of Reid's love-hate relationship with the contemporary art world can be illustrated further with an exploration of his relationship to the Tate Gallery. Though the artist had sold some of his original Sex Pistols pieces to the Victoria & Albert Museum in London for £1,000 only a couple of years after the Sex Pistols had been in existence (Vermorel, 1978), Reid's attempts to sell work to the Tate Gallery during subsequent years, in order to become part of their permanent collection, had failed. As he explains in an interview in January 2008,

“...all the work I’ve had, I’ve offered to the Tate over the years through various people, and they’ve always, always turned it down” (Maguire, Jan 2008). Reid goes on to discuss his dealings with the American collector Michael Zilkha, founder of the innovative New York record company Ze Records and now the owner of the Houston-based company Zilkha Renewable Energy (<http://www.houston.bizjournals.com>). Reid notes the irony in the American Zilkha becoming a keen patron of his work, whilst at the same time receiving little or no recognition from British galleries such as the Tate. Despite Reid’s reputation as “the man who distilled the raw, angry, slash-and-burn attitude of punk” who is “still taking a swipe at the establishment” (Ross, 2001, p. 16), the artist appears to be extremely disappointed at this situation, saying:

But I mean it’s just ironic now that I’m selling the work in America. And that’s the irony as well, because if I was to make that public the art world would be all over me. They would - I know it. And I know they will be, eventually. And I know for a fact that if the people at the Tate were to know the prices he was buying it at, they’d consider it in a different market.  
(Maguire, Jan 2008).

In an interview conducted in June 2008 Reid goes on to explain:

...I offered all my stuff to the Tate [Liverpool] a few years back when Simon Groom had just come in. I thought, well the work needs major restoration. Why can’t you have it, restore it and have exclusivity to it? And it just wasn’t in their psyche to take it. But you know, they’ll be sorry in retrospect, it’s sad.  
(Maguire, June 2008).

However, in later on in the interview the artist reveals that Tate Modern have recently bought a small number of original works, including “a very early collage and...a Pistols thing – *No Feelings*, with Debbie [Juvenile]” (Maguire, June 2008). He states that “...it’s ironic now because the Tate have just bought some –

Tate Modern, eventually, for a pittance. But I wanted them to have it” (Maguire, June 2008). Through further discussion with Reid it could be suggested that what he resents most about the contemporary art world are the “social games” one is expected to play: “...you have to go to dinner with people, go to all these different fucking functions and openings, and it’s just a load of bullshit. And I’ve never really got on with anybody in the hierarchy in Liverpool” (Maguire, June 2008). It is perhaps for this reason that the artist has sought to be represented through small, independently-owned galleries such as The Aquarium over the past decade, though even in this case Reid expresses his frustration at the lack of reviews his shows have received (Maguire, Dec 2009).

It could be suggested that Reid’s desire for the Tate Gallery to own examples of his artwork sits somewhat uncomfortably with his involvement in National Art Hate Week, which took place from 13<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> July 2009. The event was organised by Billy Childish, Jimmy Cauty and Steve Lowe of L-13 Light Industrial Workshop (formerly the Aquarium), who styled themselves as members of the British Art Resistance movement (<http://www.arthate.com>). In the words of Childish, the movement was a “non-organisation” which began as a poster idea and eventually became a “loose week of events” (<http://www.guardian.co.uk>) organised to give UK art institutions “a necessary kicking” by calling on members of the public to stage a silent revolt or “Art Hate vigil” outside their nearest art gallery (<http://www.timeout.com>). A manifesto was launched which, in keeping with the trio’s countercultural subversiveness, explained that

**NATIONAL ART HATE WEEK is a call for direct action against the mass acceptance of art as a phantom economy for the smug manipulative**



elite and their ensuing grip of control over culture as a tool for mediated emotion, market-led non-critical homogeny, and boring populism. (<http://www.arthate.com>).

The main focus of this activity was the Tate Gallery in London, the location of a “morning Art Hate” inspired, says Childish, by George Orwell’s two-minute *Morning Hates in Nineteen-Eighty Four* (1949) (<http://www.guardian.co.uk>).

Childish’s Constructivist-inspired posters, including *Hate at Tate* (2009) [See fig. 6.81], were available for free download to distribute outside local galleries and were also placed on sale online at the Art Hate website (<http://www.arthate.com>).

Reid’s contribution to National Art Hate Week was a sleeve design for the limited edition 7” National Art Hate Anthem *God Save Marcel Duchamp* (2009) [See fig. 6.82], produced in collaboration with Adams, Cauty and Childish under the name Silent Revolt. The record featured two tracks, the A-side *God Save Marcel Duchamp*, and the B-side *Pretty Vacant Art Hate*, both of which were left completely blank “for creative and legal reasons” (<http://www.arthate.com>).

Reid’s cover design drew heavily on his work for the Sex Pistols, particularly the cover designs for *God Save the Queen* (1977) and *Pretty Vacant* (1977).

It is possible to compare Reid, who chose to take part in an event which publicly attacked a venerable UK art institution to whom he had recently sold work, to Billy Childish, who explains that “the anti-art stuff ends to be instigated when things get to comfortable around the painting but it’s about having fun. And it has to be gleeful” (<http://www.timeout.com>). Childish was the former founder of Stuckism, which championed a return to figurative painting and was best-known for protesting on the steps of Tate Modern, particularly around the time of the annual Turner Prize. In a 2010 interview with *Time Out*’s Helen Sumpter, Childish was asked, “When we first met, ten years ago, you were just

putting together the anti-establishment Stuckist manifesto. Yet now you're showing at the ICA and concurrently at White Columns in New York<sup>112</sup>. What happened?" (<http://www.timeout.com>). Like Reid, Childish displays a definite love-hate attitude towards the contemporary art establishment, answering:

People in the art world have said that I'd be accepted in 20 years' time, or when I'm dead. The ICA has just brought that forward a bit. I'm quite pleased. I don't really like gallery spaces – they're a bit antiseptic...but I've had an association with the ICA for a long time. I've read there, played there and was a judge on the Beck's Futures Prize – until, that is, I nominated myself, which didn't go down too well. (<http://www.timeout.com>).

The multi-faceted careers of both Reid and Childish, which as detailed above demonstrate their complex relationship with the contemporary art world, are just two examples of why it is currently no longer possible to easily define and classify such artists using the reductive and increasingly redundant labels of 'mainstream' or 'underground'.

In 2008, Reid forged a number of new commercial relationships, including that of John Marchant's Isis Gallery in London, which is now also home to around 400 of the artist's original works with viewing on appointment. This archive formed the basis of Reid's first exhibition at the gallery, entitled *Onwards and Upwards (Universal Majesty Verity Love Infinite)*, running from 24<sup>th</sup> March to 25<sup>th</sup> April 2009. This was followed by a group show, *Gone to Earth*, a "survey of artistic responses to the landscape including sculpture, painting, photography and video installation" which ran from 2<sup>nd</sup> May to 27<sup>th</sup> June 2009 (<http://www.isisgallery.org>). Reid continued to pursue other

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<sup>112</sup> Billy Childish's exhibition *Unknowable but Certain* was held at the ICA (Institute of Contemporary Arts), London, from 17<sup>th</sup> February to 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2010. His New York exhibition, entitled *Robert Walser Dead in the Snow and Other Depictions of Divine Mundanity*, was held at White Columns from 6<sup>th</sup> March to 24<sup>th</sup> April 2010.

commercial ventures during this time, licensing his work for carefully chosen projects including a collaboration with the designer Rei Kawakubo of fashion house Comme des Garçons which premiered in Paris in January 2008 and was subsequently launched worldwide. The Autumn/Winter 08 menswear collection for Comme des Garçons Homme Plus was entitled *Time for Magic* after Reid's 1995 painting of the same name, and featured a variety of motifs from 1972 to the present day [See fig. 6.83].

In Reid's press release for the collection, which was illustrated by his *Fuck Forever* image [See fig. 6.84], he explains the rationale behind the project, stating that he agreed to the collaboration after "Seeing all the rows upon rows of dreary, drab army-like mens clothes that proliferate most mens clothes shops and having seen my work used and abused by so many in fashion..."

(<http://www.stylecartel.files.wordpress.com>). Reid goes on to say that he was "delighted with the collaborative result, use of my images, and the whole working process of the project". He ends by saying that the clothes will "add a splash of style and colour with some ideas to ponder on..." and will "look great while I'm digging and delving down my allotment"

(<http://www.stylecartel.files.wordpress.com>).

In a 2008 interview Reid also explained that the main reason he agreed to the collaboration was because his "... artwork has been exploited and ripped off..." (Maguire, June 2008). As part of the collaboration, project-managed by John Marchant and Isis Gallery, Reid was commissioned by Comme des Garçons to create a work for the company's flagship store, Dover Street Market [See fig. 6.85], which Marchant describes as featuring "a multiplicity of images from Jamie's archive plus revisited works from the *Time for Magic* collection; pasted,

over-pasted, torn and repositioned in a manner that is beautiful, arresting and startling to encounter in the pristine environs of Mayfair”

(<http://www.isisgallery.org>) – an affluent area in which Reid actually held a solo exhibition back in 1986, at the Hamiltons Gallery, 13 Carlos Place (as discussed previously in this chapter).

Though Reid admits that his work has been endlessly copied without being reprimanded (Maguire, June 2008), in the sense that his ransom-note lettering has been emulated so many times that it is now advertising shorthand for rebellion, in 2009 one particular company was threatened with legal action by lawyers for the Sex Pistols over imagery which appeared to be directly lifted from Reid’s *God Save the Queen* single sleeve of 1977. The advertising campaign for the boutique ice-cream maker Icecreamists, who describe themselves as a “subversive ice-cream brand”, featured a black and fuchsia version of Reid’s iconic sleeve design on a Union Jack background, depicting the Queen with a spoon in her mouth and her eyes obscured by the phrase ‘God Save the Cream’ [See fig. 6.86] (<http://www.guardian.co.uk>). The brand, which launched a “guerrilla ice-cream installation” within the storefront of Selfridges on Oxford Street in September 2009, also placed on sale an ice-cream named The Sex Pistol, which was accompanied by a shot of absinthe. Matt O’Connor, founder of the Icecreamists, summed up the company’s reaction to the threatened legal action by saying, “We are a bit dumbfounded that a group that made its reputation for being banned is trying to ban one of our ice creams and claim copyright over the national anthem and the Queen,” (<http://www.guardian.co.uk>), summing up not only its anger at the seemingly contradictory situation, but perhaps also suggesting why Reid’s collaborations with carefully selected

companies such as Comme des Garçons may not be greeted with wholehearted approval by critics.

The previous example of lawyers for the Sex Pistols seeking to protect Reid's artwork from copyright infringement becomes even more interesting when juxtaposed with Reid's involvement with the artist collective Red Rag to a Bull, who in 2009 launched an orchestrated campaign to flout copyright law in order to provoke the Turner Prize winning multimillionaire artist Damien Hirst. The collective, which included Reid, Cauty, Childish and others related to Steve Lowe's L-13 Light Industrial Workshop, was formed after Hirst threatened to sue a teenager who included a reproduction of his diamond-encrusted skull, *For the Love of God* (2007) [See fig. 6.87], on a collage which he put up for sale on the internet [See fig. 6.88] (Akbar, 2009). The teenager – who styles himself as 'Cartrain' - received a letter from the Design and Artists Copyright Society, instigated by Hirst, who demanded that he remove the original works from sale, and hand over both the original collage designs and his £200 profit. The story appeared in a number of national newspapers, prompting the collective to defend Cartrain's actions. Cauty, writing to *The Independent*, explained: "Unlike Cartrain and his gallery, we are not intimidated by lawyers and if an injunction is issued, we will simply ignore it on the grounds of freedom of speech" (Cauty in Akbar, 2009, p. 2). In response to Hirst's intervention, Red Rag to a Bull created a series of works containing images of Hirst's 50 million pound artwork. Reid's contribution was an image entitled *God Save Damien Hirst: For the Love of* *Disruptive Strategies and Utopian Visions in Contemporary Art and Culture* (2009) [See fig. 6.89], which was produced as a deliberate variation on both the original Sex Pistols cover design, and the title of Hirst's original artwork

(<http://www.amuti23.com>). Reid labelled Hirst a “hypocritical and greedy art bully”, asking “Hasn’t he got enough?” (Reid in Akbar, 2009, p.2); Hirst’s company Science Ltd declined to comment. According to the website AMUTi 23, linked to L-13, Reid’s edition of *God Save Damien Hirst* prints sold out almost immediately, and the image is predicted to “become an important artefact and Hirst-related item” (<http://www.amuti23.com>).

Reid succeeds in summarising his attitude towards the relationship between art and commerce in a 2008 interview with Madeline Fuller of *Catalyst Media*. When asked about a 2005 exhibition of his work entitled *Culture My A\*\*e*, to take place in a store called Microzine on Bold Street in Liverpool City Centre, Reid states that the Microzine exhibition is the first time he has ever sold anything in Liverpool. He goes on to admit, “I find it quite honest showing art in shops rather than galleries. Many major exhibitions in Japan are at the top of department stores” (<http://www.catalystmedia.org.uk>). Fuller then asks “whether this represents commercialisation of art – a commercialisation that is the antithesis of his political stance?”, to which Reid replies: “Art is commercial” (<http://www.catalystmedia.org.uk>), again highlighting Reid’s ability to escape classification, with his oppositional stance to issues such as the Poll Tax, Clause 28 and the war in Iraq over the past three decades - a stance which can be seen as a direct continuation of Reid’s Punk ethos - co-existing with the artist’s commissions and commercial ventures; Reid acknowledges the fact that art and commerce are intrinsically linked, and embraces this.

Reid’s relationship with both Isis and L-13 Light Industrial Workshop continue to the present, with the artist’s latest solo exhibition of smaller painted works on canvas, paper and slate, entitled *Let It Grow*, taking place at L-13 from

14<sup>th</sup> May to 13<sup>th</sup> June 2010 [See fig. 6.90]. The exhibition was accompanied by the publication of a portfolio of new graphic works as limited edition prints (<http://www.l-13.org>). Reid and John Marchant also continue to plan for future museum tours abroad, with Reid expressing his wish to “organise a big retrospective exhibition and tour it around the world, but not to major cities. I’d like to take it to part of Africa, India, and Japan – places I feel an affinity with” (<http://www.catalystmedia.org.uk>), highlighting his continued desire to place a personal stamp on such ventures.

It is evident from this study that Reid continues to operate both at the centre and the margins of the contemporary art world, producing a prolific amount of artwork which, as this chapter shows, is placed in a variety of contexts ranging from solo exhibitions at small, independent artist-led galleries such as Jump Ship Rat, Liverpool to collaborations with the international fashion house Comme des Garçons. This juxtaposition of local independent projects and international commercial ventures has meant that Reid has so far escaped classification within the contemporary art world. This chapter has also demonstrated the fact that Reid’s commercial work, such as his output for the Sex Pistols, does not stand alone but represents part of a greater, idiosyncratic artistic ‘language’ or vocabulary in which certain motifs are reconfigured and applied in turn to new projects.

The overall aim of this chapter has been to examine in depth a significant number of Reid’s projects, commissions and exhibitions produced from the period 1980 to 2010 which have often remained overshadowed by the status of Reid’s Sex Pistols artwork at a ‘design classic’ amongst graphic designers and record collectors, thus aiming to deconstruct Reid’s persona as art director for the

Sex Pistols and shifting the focus towards his continuing relevance as a painter and practising artist in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.



## Conclusion

Jamie Reid is an artist who has so far escaped classification within the contemporary art world. With a rich and varied artistic career spanning over forty years - encompassing painting, drawing, sculpture, interior design, film, immersive environments and artwork for political causes - it is clear that Reid is no longer able to remain solely defined by his work for the Sex Pistols produced in the relatively short period of 1975 to 1979; a definition which this study has sought to deconstruct through an in-depth analysis of the artist's career as a whole, including key works produced from the period 1980 to 2010.

This study draws upon a series of four original, in-depth, first-hand interviews with the artist, conducted in August 2007, January 2008, June 2008 and December 2009. My August 2007 interview was conducted at the Hahnemann Building, the Liverpool School of Art and Design, whilst subsequent interviews were conducted at Reid's home in Toxteth, Liverpool. Each interview lasted approximately one to one and a half hours. In preparation for my interviews with Reid, background research on recording oral history was necessary in order to improve skills such as listening critically, understanding motivation, bias and strategies. An awareness of the process of mythmaking in the context of biographical writing was also developed during the interview preparation period. This process was aided by books such as Paul Thompson's *The Voice of the Past: Oral History* (2000) and V.R. Yow's *Recording Oral History: A Practical Guide for Social Scientists* (1994).

During the interview process I built a close relationship with Reid, who was at first nervous and slightly reticent about the process. I gave Reid the time

and space to discuss the aspects of his career he was most passionate about, and allowed him to recount any anecdotes that came to mind that day. I came to the conclusion that we would both gain much more from the interview process by taking this approach. The interviews took on a certain fluidity, Reid became more relaxed, and we struck up a rapport that meant he felt increasingly comfortable sharing personal opinions and experiences, some of which had never before been documented. My interviews have crucially enabled me to identify key themes, trends and concerns within Reid's work, establishing new areas of research to be explored and supported with additional primary and secondary source material. These have including the influence of Reid's socialist family background and its links to Druidism, and an in-depth discussion of a number of Reid's previously undocumented projects from the early 1980s to the present day.

I remained sensitive to each subject when conducting further interviews with Reid. I also ensured that the interview process was as comfortable and relaxed as possible in the hope that Reid would share more information on each period in subsequent meetings. I chose also to draw upon the wealth of primary source material in *England's Dreaming: The Jon Savage Archive*, including original exhibition proposals and promotional material relating to Reid's solo and collaborative projects from the early to mid 1980s. Such documents proved invaluable in documenting this problematic period in Reid's career, enabling me to avoid a sensationalist approach and to concentrate firmly on Reid's artistic output and working methods during this period, a key aim of my PhD study.

As documented in my literature review and methodology, this study has

been greatly assisted by the great wealth of invaluable primary source material located within *England's Dreaming: The Jon Savage Archive* at Liverpool John Moores University. As a researcher I had privileged unlimited access to the archive, with the majority of its contents having never before been utilised by researchers. The archive contains original posters, flyers, fanzines, letters, and photographs, as well as magazines, articles, and other documents relating to Reid and the Sex Pistols. Some of these sources, including exhibition proposals and court case transcripts, appear here for the very first time. These sources include rare original copies of Jamie Reid's *Suburban Press* magazine (1970-75) which, along with my first-hand interviews, have proved one of the most significant resources relating to the artist. As previously discussed, the material located within the archive played a vital role in documenting Reid's collaborative projects of the 1980s.

This study has also been assisted by my research for *The Art School Dance: Art into Pop, Pop into Art*, symposium convened and directed by Prof. Colin Fallows and hosted at Tate Liverpool in collaboration with the Liverpool School of Art & Design, Liverpool John Moores University from 21<sup>st</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2007. My research was also supplemented with visits to key London sites such as the Strongroom, the Aquarium Gallery and Isis Gallery in order to view a number of Reid's solo exhibitions. In addition I also visited Reid's own studio at his home in Toxteth, Liverpool, in order to take documentary photographs, a number of which form part of the accompanying visual resource.

Drawing upon my original series of interview and *England's Dreaming: The Jon Savage Archive*, I was able to analyse Reid's working methods over a

period of forty-five years, tracing the development of a unique collection of techniques, visual motifs and slogans, beginning during his years spent at art school on Wimbledon and Croydon during the mid-to-late 1960s. This process of appropriation, transformation and relocation in terms of visual imagery was traced through a series of in-depth studies ranging from Reid's time spent as a student of Wimbledon College of Art (1962 to 1964) and Croydon College of Art (1964 to 1968), the creation and output of Suburban Press (1970 to 1975), Reid's artwork for the Sex Pistols (1975 to 1979), and the artist's largely undocumented career from 1980 to 2010, which included a return to painting and to his Celtic roots, as manifested in such projects as his interior design for the Strongroom, East London from 1989 to 2000.

Conventional studies of Reid's work have tended to locate his practice, involving the use of montage and the amalgamation of text and image, firmly within the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Despite the artist citing his ancestral heritage, particularly his great uncle George Watson McGregor Reid (1862-1946) – post-Edwardian social reformer and head of the Druid Order in England at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century - as a major influence, the impact of this influence upon his practice had so far largely remained undocumented. Demonstrated by projects such as the *Eight Fold Year* and interior design at the Strongroom, East London, it is clear that Reid's work has been significantly influenced by the universal themes of Druidism and the forces of nature. Therefore a key aim of this study was to locate Reid's practice within the tradition of English alternative dissent, exploring the influence of George Watson MacGregor Reid and other significant family members, as well as radical figures from the field of art such as William Blake (1757-1827) and William Morris (1834-1896).

Reid's interest and affinity with such politicised figures from art history, as well as the artist's ongoing involvement in topical political issues such as campaigns against the Poll Tax and later, the Iraq War, embody his claim that Punk is a continuing story, illustrating the age-old struggle for social justice in Britain and suggesting an alternative reading of Reid as an artist following the tradition of British radical dissent. As the artist explained to Stephen Kingston in 2008,

...all that I've been doing is re-adapting my work from the late 1960s and early '70s into different contexts and continuing with the same themes and messages. They're the same messages that have been fought over for the last 2000 years, and I don't think they will ever go away or change. You have to keep redefining them and have a go again".  
(<http://www.chipwork.com>).

The work that perhaps best defines Reid's work from 1980 to the present day is his cover artwork for a 1992 compilation album for the London-based Evolution Records, entitled *Shamanarchy in the UK*. [See fig. 6.91]. The album design combines examples of Reid's iconic cut-and-paste ransom note lettering with some of his more esoteric motifs. The main image, *Boudicca Rising*, had previously been used by Reid on the cover for the anti-Criminal Justice Act fundraiser album *Taking Liberties* (1994) [See fig. 6.92]. One of Reid's more esoteric images, the *Astrological Clock*, had previously appeared in the Strongroom, and on the cover design for Cactus Rain's album *In Our Own Time* (1991) [See fig. 6.93]; both images had also featured on examples of Reid's small circular slate works (<http://www.chipwork.com>). Finally, the *Swastika Big Ben* image had first appeared on the back cover of issue 21 of *VAGUE* magazine in 1988 [See fig. 6.94]. The title of this album, *Shamanarchy in the UK*, succeeds

in summarising Reid's heritage of alternative spirituality and politics, and thus inspired the title of my study.

In recent years Reid has often been criticised for placing both original works and prints on sale through commercial galleries, which some individuals may view as a 'selling out' of the DIY, anarchic ethos of Punk; just one example of the artist's complex relationship with the contemporary art world. Many critics still find Reid's spiritual agenda - illustrated by the paintings in exhibitions such as *Celtic Surveyor* (1990-1992) - difficult to reconcile in relation to his involvement with Punk. However, this study has sought to deconstruct the identity of Reid as "The man who art-directed Punk" (Monk, 1987), repositioning him within the context of English radical dissent, where both aspects of Reid's practice may be viewed as attempts to explore positive alternative directions for the future.

The artist's practice from the 1980s to the present day, particularly his painting, continues to resonate with the same themes of a desire for positive spiritual and political change, coupled with a celebration of the innate power of the natural world; themes which, in the context of our current fragile political climate, can be said to provide evidence of Reid's continuing relevance as an artist in the 21st century.

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## **Appendix 1**

### **Timeline**

## Timeline

Year	Jamie Reid/Reid Family History	World Events
1603	Alasdair MacGregor of Glenstrae, chief of the clan Gregor and the individual who is believed to have inspired Reid Reid's great-uncle George Watson MacGregor Reid to adopt the MacGregor name, leads his men to victory in the Battle of Glen Fruin and is murdered later that year.	Accession of James I (James VI of Scotland), the first Stuart monarch of England. English explorer, writer and courtier Sir Walter Raleigh goes on trial for treason and is imprisoned.
1663	The English antiquary and writer John Aubrey visits Stonehenge at the King's command to conduct a detailed survey and compose a discourse on his findings. He suggests that Britain's megalithic remains had been built by the Druids.	The first Turnpike Trust is set up in Britain to collect tolls for road maintenance. The English Parliament passes the second Navigation Act, requiring that all goods bound for the American colonies have to be sent in English ships from English ports.
1695	A revised edition of Britannia, Camden's classic Elizabethan guide to Britain's history and monuments, is published with contributions from John Aubrey, winning high acclaim.	The English Parliament fails to renew the Licensing of the Press Act 1662, putting an end to Royal censorship of the printing presses.  Free from censorship, the English press erupts with a profusion of political and religious tracts, newspapers, satires, broadsides, illustrations and other types of printed matter.
1710	First known attempts to unify various Druid societies/groups in England. Druids slowly re-emerge from underground.	The first law regulating copyright is issued in Great Britain.
1717	The first known Druid revival ceremony is held by the Irish radical John Toland - known for his controversial attacks on established religion and as the originator of the term 'pantheist' - at Primrose Hill, London. It is from John Toland and the Primrose Hill gathering that the British Circle of the Church of the Universal Bond claims to be descended.	The Netherlands, Britain and France sign the Triple Alliance. The Freemasons' first Grand Lodge of England (GLE) is constituted in London.  Voltaire is sentenced to the Bastille for a year because of his satirical writings.
1719	One of the founding fathers of modern archeology, William Stukeley, makes his first visit to Stonehenge and for the next five years carries out a detailed study of both Stonehenge and Avebury.	The Principality of Liechtenstein declares its independence from the German Empire. The first Treaty of Stockholm is signed.  Sir John Hawkins, author of the first history of music in English, is born.
1726	John Toland publishes his History of the Druids.	Isaac Newton tells William Stukeley the story of how he developed his theory of gravity. Five men arrested during a raid on Mother Clap's molly house in London are executed at Tyburn.
1728		John Gay writes The Beggar's Opera, which is premiered at Lincoln's Inn Fields on 28 January 1728 and runs for 62 consecutive performances.

1732		William Hogarth paints <i>A Rake's Progress</i> (1732-3), a series of eight scenes depicting the dissolute life of a young heir and his descent into poverty and madness, and <i>A Harlot's Progress</i> , six pictures showing the path of a pretty country girl lured into a life of prostitution.
1735		Robert Walpole becomes the 1st British Prime Minister to live at 10 Downing Street.  William Hogarth paints <i>Marriage à-la-mode</i> - six satirical pictures commenting on fashionable society.
1737		Prince Frederick of Wales escapes English court.  Thomas Paine is born in Norfolk.
1740	William Stukeley publishes his iconic book <i>Stonehenge, A Temple Restored to the British Druids</i> which popularises the idea that the Druids had built Stonehenge and other ancient British monuments.	By an act of the Parliament of Great Britain, alien immigrants (including Huguenots and Jews) in the colonies receive British nationality. Thomas Arne's song <i>Rule Britannia</i> , which celebrates Britain's military and commercial prowess, is performed for the first time as part of his opera <i>Alfred</i> .
1747	Glamorganshire stone-mason Edward Williams - later known by his 'bardic' nom-de-plume Iolo Morganwg - is born. Morganwg was one of a group of Welshmen living in London in the 1770s who immersed themselves in Welsh culture, language, literature and folklore. He is a key figure in Druidic history, writing the 'Druid's Prayer' and making the (somewhat dubious) claim that the Glamorganshire bards had preserved, virtually intact, a continuous tradition of lore and wisdom going back to the original prehistoric Druids.	Simon Fraser, 12th baron Lovat (Jacobite), becomes the last man to be officially beheaded in England.  William Hogarth produces <i>Industry and Idleness</i> , a series of twelve pictures showing the divergent courses of the lives of two apprentices.  Samuel Foote, an English actor, wit and playwright known for his mimicry, presents a series of farcical entertainments entitled <i>Diversions of the Morning</i> , in which he ridicules other actors and celebrities of the day.
1750	Pembrokeshire Dissenter James Relly establishes what has come to be known as the first Universalist congregation.	Galley slavery is abolished in Europe.  William Hogarth produces designs for the tombstone of famous boxer and prize-fighter George Taylor, entitled <i>George Taylor Triumphant Over Death and Death Giving George Taylor a Cross-Buttock</i> .
1751		William Hogarth creates <i>Beer Street</i> , <i>Gin Lane</i> and <i>The Four Stages of Cruelty</i> as comments on the deterioration of society witnessed on the streets of London.



1757		<p>Thomas Colley is executed in England for drowning a supposed witch.</p> <p>William Blake is born on 28<sup>th</sup> November, at 28 Broad Street, Golden Square, London.</p>
1759		<p>The 'Year of Victories': naval victories over the French transform Britain's fortunes.</p> <p>British Museum opens in Montague House, London.</p>
1760		<p>Accession of George III.</p> <p>Industrial Revolution begins, setting the stage for advances in graphic design production.</p>
1770		<p>Captain Cooke's ship Endeavour reaches Australia. Boston Massacre, British troops kill 5 in crowd.</p> <p>William Wordsworth is born.</p> <p>Emanuel Swedenborg reports the completion of the Second Coming of Christ in his work True Christian Religion.</p>
1772		<p>Slavery is outlawed in England.</p> <p>Samuel Taylor Coleridge is born.</p>
1775		<p>1775-1783: War of American Independence.</p> <p>Samuel Johnson, sceptical of the new cult of sensibility (or sentiment) of the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century, defines the word 'Romantick' in his dictionary of 1755 as "Resembling the tales or romances; wild, improbable; false; fanciful; full of wild scenery".</p>
1776		<p>Declaration of Independence: USA gains independence from Britain.</p> <p>Thomas Paine's Common Sense is published.</p>
1779		<p>Spain declares war on the Kingdom of Great Britain, and the siege of Gibraltar begins (1779-83). American Revolution: Samuel Huntington is elected President of the Continental Congress, succeeding John Jay.</p> <p>William Blake enrolls as an 'engraver' at the drawing schools of the Royal Academy of Arts on 8<sup>th</sup> October. He starts producing a series of watercolours of scenes from British history and legend.</p>

1780		<p>The Gordon Riots occur in London and around the country from 2<sup>nd</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> June – an anti-Catholic uprising against the Papists Act of 1778. William Blake's first biographer Alexander Gilchrist records that in June 1780, Blake becomes part of a rampaging mob that storms Newgate Prison.</p> <p>The first London Sunday newspaper is published: (Mrs.) E. Johnson's British Gazette and Sunday Monitor.</p>
1781	<p>The Ancient Order of Druids (AOD) - England's first modern Druidic society - is founded by Henry Hurle at the King's Arms tavern on the corner of Poland Street and Oxford Street, London.</p>	<p>William Pitt the Younger, later Prime Minister, enters Parliament. American Revolution continues.</p> <p>William Blake first works as an independent engraver. He is employed by the publisher Joseph Johnson for the first time.</p>
1788		<p>Formation of the London Committee for the Abolition of the Slave Trade.</p> <p>Supposed date of William Blake's first experiments with relief etching. He engraves Hogarth's The Beggar's Opera for John Boydell.</p>
1789		<p>1789-93: The French Revolution.</p> <p>The date on the title pages of William Blake's The Book of Thel and Songs of Innocence.</p>
1790		<p>Parliamentary act for abolishing the slave trade fails. US President George Washington delivers 1st "State of the Union" address.</p>
1791		<p>The Observer is founded – the oldest surviving Sunday newspaper. Edmund Burke's Reflections on the Revolution in France is published, an impassioned warning of the dangers of political revolution.</p> <p>The first book of William Blake's The French Revolution is printed by Joseph Johnson. Thomas Paine's Rights of Man is published.</p>
1792	<p>Iolo Morganwg introduces his Druidic institution 'The Gorsedd', promoting Welsh creativity and culture, when he leads an Eisteddfod on London's Primrose Hill.</p>	<p>The guillotine is first used experimentally in France. George Washington is re-elected President of the United States.</p> <p>William Blake paints Los and Orc, and continues to write The Marriage of Heaven and Hell (1790-93).</p> <p>Mary Wollstonecraft's A Vindication of the Rights of Woman is published. Thomas Paine's Letter Addressed to the Addressers results in him being outlawed.</p>

1793		<p>'The Terror' begins, a period of terrifying state violence in France, which turns public opinion in Britain against the Revolution. Prime Minister William Pitt starts to introduce new laws aimed at wiping out radical political activity in Britain. 1793-1815: War with France. Execution of Louis XVI of France on 21<sup>st</sup> January 1793; Britain and France declare war.</p> <p>The date appearing on William Blake's America, A Prophecy, For Children, A Prophecy, Visions of the Daughters of Albion and Ah, Sunflower. An engraved 'Prospectus' is published, which lists works by Blake for sale and announces his invention of 'illuminated printing'.</p>
1794		<p>The Reign of Terror ends in France.</p> <p>The date appearing on William Blake's The First Book of Urizen, Europe, A Prophecy, and Songs of Experience. The Louvre opens to the public in Paris.</p>
1795		<p>The date appearing on the title pages of William Blake's The Book of Ahania, The Book of Los and The Song of Los. Date appearing on some of the 'large colour prints', including Newton.</p> <p>Thomas Paine publishes Dissertation on the First Principles of Government.</p>
1796		<p>Austrian author Aloys Senefelder develops lithography.</p> <p>Thomas Paine publishes Agrarian Justice.</p>
1798		<p>Bloody rebellion in Ireland.</p> <p>Samuel Taylor Coleridge writes The Rime of the Ancient Mariner. Coleridge and Wordsworth launch the Romantic Age in English literature with the joint publication Lyrical Ballads.</p>
1800	<p>Dr. William Price is born in Rudry, Wales. This eccentric figure proclaimed himself to be an archdruid, and was renowned for his radical interests which included vegetarianism, nudity and free love. He became prominent at eisteddfodau in the 1830s.</p>	<p>Great Britain passes the Act of Union to join Great Britain and Ireland into the United Kingdom. French Revolutionary Wars and Napoleonic Wars continue. US President John Adams becomes the first President of the United States to live in the Executive Mansion (later renamed the White House).</p> <p>Lord Stanhope invents first printing press made of all cast-iron parts, requiring 1/10 of the manual labour and doubling the possible paper size.</p>

1802		<p>Treaty of Amiens brings a temporary halt to Britain's war with France.</p> <p>Thomas Wedgwood publishes an account of his experiments in photography, along with Humphry Davy. Since they had no means of fixing the image, their photographs quickly faded.</p>
1804		<p>The first locomotive, Richard Trevithick's, runs for 1st time, in Wales.</p> <p>William Blake is tried for sedition in Chichester in January, following charges from a soldier that he had cursed the king during an incident in August 1803; with the help of William Haley's lawyer, Blake is acquitted. Date on the title page of Milton and Jerusalem.</p>
1805		<p>Death of Nelson at the Battle of Trafalgar on 21<sup>st</sup> October makes him a national hero.</p> <p>William Blake's God Writing upon the Tables of the Covenant.</p>
1807		<p>Parliamentary act abolishing the slave trade in the British Empire is passed; slavery itself is allowed to continue on the Caribbean plantations.</p>
1812		<p>1812-1815: War with the USA. Napoleonic Wars. John Bellingham assassinates British Prime Minister Spencer Perceval in the lobby of the British House of Commons.</p> <p>The first volume of Grimm's Fairy Tales is published.</p>
1815		<p>Vienna Settlement ends Britain's war with France.</p> <p>Rebuilding of Brighton Pavilion by John Nash begins.</p>
1819		<p>Peterloo Massacre in Manchester, a protest for radical political reform, is violently put down. The Panic of 1819, the first major financial crisis in the United States. Burlington Arcade opens in London.</p>
1820		<p>Accession of Prince Regent as George IV.</p> <p>William Blake completes Jerusalem.</p>
1821		<p>Emperor Napoléon I dies in exile on Saint Helena of arsenic poisoning.</p> <p>Manchester Guardian founded by John Edward Taylor.</p>

1822		<p>The last public whipping is carried out in Edinburgh.</p> <p>Charles Babbage proposes a Difference engine. The Stamp Office agrees to pass copies of all newspapers to British Museum.</p>
1827		<p>George Canning succeeds Lord Liverpool as British Prime Minister.</p> <p>William Blake dies at home in Fountain Court on 12<sup>th</sup> August.</p>
1830		<p>July: French Revolution.</p> <p>French artist Eugène Delacroix paints Liberty Leading the People.</p>
1832		<p>First Reform Bill, enfranchising city-dwellers and upper middle classes.</p> <p>First recorded British newspaper cartoon, published in Bell's New Weekly Messenger.</p>
1833	The United Ancient Order of Druids is formed – a breakaway charitable organisation from Hurle's Ancient Order of Druids (see entry for 1781)	<p>Britain retakes the Falkland Islands in the South Atlantic. Royal Commission on Municipal Corporations meets to investigate 'flagrant abuses' arising from the 'perversion of municipal privileges to political objects'.</p> <p>Honoré Daumier is released from prison after serving a 6-month term for caricaturing King Louis-Philippe of France as Gargantua in <i>La Caricature</i>.</p>
1834		<p>Poor Law Amendment Act establishes Boards of Guardians.</p> <p>William Morris is born.</p>
1835		<p>English becomes the official language of India. Municipal Corporations Act regularises municipal elections.</p> <p>Victor Cousin introduces the expression "L'art pour l'art" ("Art for art's sake").</p>
1836		<p>Samuel Colt receives an American patent for the Colt revolver, the first revolving barrel multishot firearm. Charles Darwin returns to Britain aboard the HMS <i>Beagle</i> with biological data he will later use to develop his theory of evolution.</p> <p>Charles Dickens' <i>Sketches by Boz, Illustrative of Every-day Life and Every-day People</i> is published.</p>

<b>1837</b>		<p>Accession of Queen Victoria. Queen Victoria announces she is officially moving from St. James's Palace to Buckingham Palace.</p> <p>Samuel Morse patents the telegraph. Charles Dickens' Oliver Twist is published (1837-39).</p>
<b>1838</b>		<p>People's Charter initiates the Chartist Movement; it calls for workers' aims such as the vote for all men over 21, equally sized constituencies, annual parliaments, and salaries for MPs.</p>
<b>1839</b>		<p>First Anglo-Chinese War, known as the First Opium War (1839-1842).</p>
<b>1841</b>		<p>The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland occupies Hong Kong.</p> <p>The satirical magazine Punch is founded. (Ceased publication in 1992; re-launched in 1996).</p>
<b>1842</b>		<p>Chartist demonstrations. Parliamentary 'blue books' on working conditions, sanitation and pauperism begin. The Mines Act 1842 becomes law, prohibiting underground work for all women and boys under 10 years old in England.</p>
<b>1843</b>		<p>The Economist is founded, to campaign for free trade. News of the World is founded by John Browne Bell at 3d. Newsagents at first refuse to handle it at such a low price.</p> <p>Thomas Hood's Song of a Shirt is published in Punch.</p>
<b>1844</b>		<p>Frederick Engels, Condition of the Working Classes in England. Foundation of the Liberation Society, working for Church disestablishment.</p> <p>The first electrical telegram is sent by Samuel F. B. Morse from the US Capitol in Washington, D.C. to the B&amp;O Railroad "outer depot" in Baltimore, Maryland, saying "What hath God wrought".</p>
<b>1845</b>		<p>Irish Famine (1845-50).</p> <p>In the British Museum, a drunken visitor smashes the Portland Vase, which takes months to repair.</p>

1846		<p>Repeal of the Corn Laws, instituting era of Free Trade. Mexican-American War (1846-48).</p> <p>Rotary printing press invented, making rapid printing of newspapers possible.</p>
1847		<p>Factory Act ('Ten Hours Bill') limits the working day for women and children. Evaporated milk invented. Band of Hope Temperance Organisation founded.</p> <p>Charlotte Brontë publishes Jane Eyre under the pen name of Currer Bell.</p>
1848		<p>Year of European Revolutions: Paris, Vienna, Berlin, Venice, Milan. Sequence of Public Health Acts begins. F.D. Maurice founds the Christian Socialist movement.</p> <p>The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood is founded.</p> <p>Karl Marx and Engels, The Communist Manifesto. Elizabeth Gaskell's Mary Barton is published.</p>
1849		<p>The Corn Laws are abolished in the United Kingdom (following legislation in 1846). Irish Potato Famine: 96 inmates of the overcrowded Ballinrobe Union Workhouse die over the course of the preceding week from illness and other famine-related conditions, a record high.</p> <p>Henry Mayhew writes on the London poor for the Morning Chronicle.</p>
1850		<p>Public Libraries Act; Factory Act. The Catholic hierarchy is re-established in England and Wales by Pope Pius IX.</p> <p>William Wordsworth's The Prelude is published.</p>
1851		<p>More Britons now live in towns and cities than in the countryside.</p> <p>Great Exhibition at the Crystal Palace. The New York Times is founded.</p>
1852	<p>At a midsummer ceremony at Pontypridd, the Welsh poet and preacher Evan Davies becomes the first known person in history to take the title of Archdruid of the Isle of Britain, with the name of Myfyr Morganwg.</p>	<p>Napoleon III becomes Emperor of the French. The new Palace of Westminster opens in Britain.</p> <p>The French replace semaphores with Morse telegraphs.</p>
1853		<p>Crimean War begins (1853-56).</p> <p>Charles Dickens' Bleak House is published.</p>

1854		The Ambrotype is introduced for photography. Charles Dickens' <i>Hard Times</i> is published.
1855		The Great Gold Robbery of 1855 occurs in England. Repeal of the Stamp Act opens the way for cheap, mass-circulation newspapers and modern newspaper design in terms of spacing and headlines.  Elizabeth Gaskell's <i>North and South</i> is published.
1856		British Country and Borough Police Act extends London police model to all of England and Wales.  Owen Jones publishes his seminal design sourcebook <i>The Grammar of Ornament</i> .
1857		Indian Mutiny. Irish Republican Brotherhood (Fenians) founded. France and the United Kingdom formally declare war on China in the Second Opium War (1856-1860).  Hollywood is founded in the USA.
1859		Ground is broken for the Suez Canal. The chimes of Big Ben ring for the first time in London.  Charles Darwin's <i>On the Origin of Species</i> , and Charles Dickens' <i>A Tale of Two Cities</i> are published.
1860		The English Arts and Crafts movement is founded (c.1860-1910).  French typesetter Edouard-Leon Scott de Martinville sings the French folk song "Au Clair de la Lune" to his phonograph; producing the world's earliest known sound recording (however, it is not rediscovered until 2008).
1861		American Civil War begins (1861-65).  William Morris founds a design firm, Morris, Marshall, Faulkner & Co. with Rossetti, Burne-Jones, Ford Madox Brown and Philip Webb as partners, together with Charles Faulkner and P. P. Marshall, which has a profound impact on the decoration of churches and houses into the early 20th century.  Mayhew's <i>London Labour and the London Poor</i> is published.
1862	According to research by Dr Adam Stout, Reid Reid's great-uncle George Watson MacGregor Reid is born around this time to a nautical family in Anderston, Lanarkshire.	Otto von Bismarck becomes prime minister of Prussia..



<b>1862</b>	The Druid Revival receives a further boost with the publication of Barddas, a collection of Iolo Morganwg's writings.	The International of 1862, or the Great London Exhibition, is held. Charles Dodgson (better known as Lewis Carroll) formulates the story that later becomes Alice's Adventures in Wonderland for 10-year-old Alice Liddell and her sisters, on a rowing boat trip on The Isis, from Oxford to Godstow.
<b>1863</b>		Lincoln issues the Emancipation Proclamation. The first section of the London Underground Railway (Paddington to Farringdon Street) opens.  Manet paints Le Déjeuner sur L'Herbe.
<b>1865</b>		The US Secret Service is founded. William Booth founds the Salvation Army.
<b>1867</b>		Second Reform Act, redistributing parliamentary seats in a more equitable manner; men living in cities and meeting a low property qualification enfranchised.  First volume of Marx's Das Kapital is published.
<b>1868</b>		The Press Association is formed. Parliamentary Committee on Scientific Education. Foundation of the Trade Union Congress.  Matthew Arnold's Culture and Anarchy is published.
<b>1869</b>		Disestablishment of the Church in Ireland. The British Parliament ends transportation to Australia as punishment for criminals. The co-operative Central Board (later Co-operatives UK) is founded in Manchester.  Newspapers are deposited directly with the British Museum by publishers.
<b>1870</b>		Forster's Education Act, introducing elementary education.  Birth of Robert Noonan in Dublin, author of The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists. Death of Charles Dickens. A political cartoon for the first time symbolises the United States Democratic Party with a donkey.
<b>1871</b>		Trade Unions legalised. German chancellor Otto von Bismarck tries to ban Catholics from the political stage by introducing harsh laws concerning the separation of church and state.  Darwin's The Descent of Man is published. The Royal Albert Hall is opened by Queen Victoria.

1873		<p>The US Congress enacts the Comstock Law, making it illegal to send any "obscene, lewd, or lascivious" books through the mail. Moody and Sankey begin their revivalist religious tours of Britain. In Chipping Norton, England rioters attempt to free the Ascott Martyrs – sixteen women sentenced to imprisonment for attempting to dissuade strikebreakers.</p>
1874		<p>Disraeli's new ministry promotes slum clearance and public health; fifty-six-and-a-half-hour working week established by the Factory Act. The Home Rule Movement is created to protest British Government control over Ireland.</p> <p>First Impressionist exhibition is held in a private studio outside the official Paris Salon.</p>
1875	<p>Helena Petrovna Blavatsky and Henry Steel Olcott form the Theosophical Society.</p>	<p>The Treaty of Saint Petersburg is signed between Japan and Russia. Food and Drug Act reinforces provisions against the adulteration of tea. Midland Railway abolishes Second Class passenger facilities, leaving First Class and Third Class. Other British Railway companies follow Midland's lead during the rest of the year (Third Class is renamed Second Class in 1956).</p>
1878		<p>Factories and Workshops Act. Anti-Russian demonstrations occur in Hyde Park, London.</p> <p>Paris Exhibition. The phonograph is patented by Thomas Edison.</p>
1879		<p>Zulu wars. Fulham F.C., the football club supported by Jamie Reid, is founded.</p> <p>Henry George's Progress and Poverty is published. Harold Evans' The Old Nobility is published by the Political Tract Society.</p>
1880		<p>Transvaal declares independence.</p> <p>Development of the halftone screen allows for first photo printed with a full range of tones.</p> <p>George Gissing's Workers in the Dawn is published. W.T. Stead succeeds John Morley on the Pall Mall Gazette and introduces 'new journalism', including the interview and gossip column, into Britain.</p>

1881		Hyndman's Democratic Federation is founded. William Edward Forster, the chief secretary for Ireland, introduces his Coercion Bill, which temporarily suspended habeas corpus so that those people suspected of committing an offence could be detained without trial; it goes through a long debate before it is accepted February 2nd. The Gunfight at the O.K. Corral occurs in Tombstone, Cochise County, Arizona, USA.
1882		Pasteur announces a connection between germs and disease. Royal Commission on Technical Education. The Triple Alliance is formed between Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy. The Married Women's Property Act 1882 in Britain enables women to buy, own and sell property and to keep their own earnings.
1883		Death of Marx. Factories and Workshops Act. The British Parliament considers a major bill to allow Indian judges to try Europeans in India. The British community rises in protest and defeats the measure.  William Morris becomes a Socialist. Edward Carpenter's Towards Socialism is published.
1884	An 83-year-old Dr William Price cremates the body of his dead 5-month-old son Iesu Grist Price (Jesus Christ Price), even though the practice is then illegal in Britain. Dr Price's success in a following court case paved the way for the Cremation Act of 1902.	Third Reform Act extends the same franchise to those living in the countryside on the same terms as those in towns. The cornerstone for the Statue of Liberty is laid on Bedloe's Island in New York Harbour.  The first edition of the Oxford English Dictionary is published.
1885		Death of General Gordon at Khartoum (Sudan).  William Morris's Chants for Socialism is published.
1886		Irish Home Rule Crisis. Pall Mall and Trafalgar Square protests. A general strike begins in the United States, which escalates into the Haymarket Riot and eventually wins the eight-hour workday in the USA  The Folies Bergère stages its first revue.
1887	Samuel Liddell MacGregor Mathers translates Knorr von Rosenroth's The Kaballah Unveiled [1684].	'Bloody Sunday' rioting in Trafalgar Square broken up by the Lifeguards. Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee.  Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show opens in London. The Gramophone is patented by Emile Berliner.

1888	The Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn is founded in London by Dr. William Wynn Westcott, William Robert Woodman and Samuel Liddell MacGregor Mathers.	Annie Besant organises the London matchgirls strike of 1888. Mary Ann Nichols is murdered - she is considered the first of Jack the Ripper's victims.  The Kodak camera increases the popularity of photography as a hobby.
1889		Great Dock Strike. Gas-Workers' strike wins an eight-hour working day. Technical instruction Act.  Henry Tate offers his collection of British art to the nation. Paris Exhibition. Early use of photographs: Cambridge and Oxford boat crews, in the Illustrated London News.
1890	George Watson MacGregor Reid first appears in the public consciousness during the 1890s as a radical political figure and trade unionist campaigning for dockers' rights in both Britain and America.  Welshman Owen Morgan - otherwise known by the Bardic name of 'Morien' - issues his daring book <i>Light in Britannia</i> , becoming the first writer to propose the idea of Druidism as a duotheistic fertility religion.	May Day rallies worldwide for an eight-hour working day. Wilhelm II of Germany fires Otto von Bismarck. At Auburn Prison in New York, William Kemmler becomes the first person to be executed in the electric chair.  Art Nouveau movement begins and changes design, making its way into all types of commercial design and utilising all types of arts. William Morris's <i>News From Nowhere</i> is published.  William Pickering becomes the publisher of the Chiswick Press, England. Chiswick concentrates on composition and illustration of books rather than printing process, and begins the distinction between printer and designer. <i>Daily Graphic</i> is launched, the very first daily illustrated paper. [Merged with <i>Daily Sketch</i> in 1926, the paper who later employed Reid Reid's father John Finlay MacGregor-Reid]. Ty Tolbert Lanston invents the Monotype machine, which controls typesetting by means of a perforated pattern.
1891		Robert Blatchford begins publishing the <i>Clarion</i> newspaper. Technical Instruction Act.
1892	George Watson MacGregor Reid stands unsuccessfully for election as a candidate for the People's Party (or 'Populists') in New York. Also becomes a minister of the Universalist Church. Husband-and-wife team of doctors Emmet and Helen Densmore publish their influential book <i>How Nature Cures</i> .	William Ewart Gladstone assumes British premiership at head of Liberal government. Keir Hardie and John Burns win parliamentary seats. Ellis Island begins accommodating immigrants to the USA.  Thomas Edison receives a patent for a two-way telegraph.

1893	<p>George Watson MacGregor Reid publishes his pamphlet <i>The Natural Basis of Civilisation</i>, the first written testament of his three enduring principles – socialism (with anarchist sympathies, alternative natural lifestyles, and a universal pacifist religion).</p> <p>[According to Dr Adam Stout, George Watson MacGregor Reid vanishes from all known records from 1893-1906].</p>	<p>Featherstone miners' strike; shootings by troops. The Independent Labour Party of the UK has its first meeting. Gandhi commits his first act of civil disobedience in India. New Zealand becomes the first country in the world to grant women the right to vote.</p> <p>Thomas A. Edison finishes construction of the first motion picture studio in West Orange, New Jersey.</p>
1895	<p>Guy Boothby's novel <i>Dr. Nikola's Vendetta</i> is published, the first in a series of 5 featuring the occult anti-hero Dr. Nikola published between 1895 and 1901; the character is reputed to have been inspired by George Watson MacGregor Reid.</p>	<p>Factory Act makes lead poisoning a notifiable disease. First practical system of wireless telegraphy is developed by Guglielmo Marconi in Italy.</p> <p>Oscar Wilde's last play <i>The Importance of Being Earnest</i> is first shown at St. James' Theatre in London. He is convicted of "sodomy and gross indecency" and is sentenced to serve 2 years in prison at Reading.</p>
1896		<p>Millennial celebrations in Hungary of the Magyars' settling in Central Europe inspire an unparalleled cultural boom.</p> <p>Alfred Jarry's play <i>Ubu Roi</i> premieres in Paris, one of the precursors to the Theatre of the Absurd and the greater surrealist art movement of the early twentieth century.</p>
1897		<p>Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee.</p> <p>Tate founded as 'National Gallery of British Art'.</p>
1899	<p>Reid Reid's paternal grandfather Robert becomes a gun-runner for the Chinese during the Boxer Rebellion (Nov 1899 – Sep 1901).</p>	<p>A large standing stone at Stonehenge falls over, the most recent time this has happened. Spanish rule ends in Cuba. The Second Boer War. School leaving age is raised to 12.</p> <p>Ragtime music enjoys mainstream popularity in the USA.</p>
1900	<p>Landowner Sir Edmund Antrobus implements an admission fee at Stonehenge.</p>	<p>Boxer Rebellion in China. Ramsay MacDonald is appointed secretary of the newly formed British Labour Party. India is in crisis as millions starve. Queen Victoria gives royal assent to the Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act.</p> <p>The Brownie camera is marketed by Eastman Kodak.</p>
1901		<p>Queen Victoria dies; accession of Edward VII. Guglielmo Marconi sends a wireless message from Cornwall to Newfoundland, Canada.</p> <p>The sale of the shellac phonograph disc begins. The first electric typewriter, the Blickensderfer, is marketed</p>

1902		<p>The South African ("Boer") War ends, with Boer acceptance of British sovereignty. Coronation of King Edward VII takes place. National Committee of Organised Labour for Old age Pensions founded.</p> <p>The Times Literary Supplement is launched. Zeiss invents the four-element camera lens. Etched zinc engravings begin to replace wood-blocks.</p>
1903		<p>Mrs Emmeline Pankhurst founds the Women's Social and Political Union, in Manchester. Lenin becomes leader of the Russian Bolsheviks. Joseph Chamberlain advances the Tariff Reform policies.</p> <p>The Daily Mirror uses only photographic illustrations. Arthur Korn transmits images by telegraph.</p>
1904		<p>Russo-Japanese War begins. Entente Cordiale between Great Britain and France.</p> <p>F.T. Marinetti lays the foundation for Futurism. Charles Rennie Macintosh's Scotland Street School: groundbreaking use of glass.</p> <p>Ira Rubel invents offset lithography. The first comic books appear.</p>
1905	<p>The Ancient Order of Druids hold their first grand ceremony at Stonehenge with full support from owner Sir Edmund Antrobus.</p>	<p>First Russian Revolution. Russia is defeated by Japan. Embryonic Sinn Fein is started, as the Dungannon Club, in Belfast. First Suffragette demonstration, Westminster, organised by Emily Pankhurst.</p> <p>Albert Einstein publishes his special theory of relativity in the journal <i>Annalen der Physik</i>.</p>
1906	<p>George Watson MacGregor Reid emerges back into public consciousness with a wife, young son (Robert), private fortune and new interest in Naturopathy. He has also added the name 'MacGregor', inspired by Samuel Liddell MacGregor Mathers, founder and leader of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn (see entries for 1603 and 1888). The first issue of his journal <i>The Nature Cure</i> is published.</p>	<p>Twenty-nine Labour MPs elected at a general election won by the Liberals. Marches of the unemployed in Hastings. Provision of School Meals Act. The Dreadnought battleship is launched. Election of the first Duma (Parliament) in Russia. Women get the vote in Finland (first in the world to be granted full national political rights).</p> <p>Screen printing is patented for use with photography in the USA. Experimental sound on motion pictures.</p>

1907	George Watson MacGregor Reid publishes The Nature Cure Annual.	Shooting of protesters during industrial action in Belfast. Economic depression in Britain severe. Guglielmo Marconi initiates commercial transatlantic radio communications.  Colour photography is invented by the Lumière brothers. Facsimile machine invented by Arthur Korn.
1908	Robert MacGregor Reid's son John Finlay MacGregor-Reid is born. After Robert's death in France (year unknown, believed to have been sometime close after the Boxer Rebellion) he is raised by Robert's brother (and Reid Reid's great-uncle) George Watson MacGregor Reid.  'The Mahatma' Sri Agamya Guru Parahansa, a Hindu who amongst other things extolled the virtues of yoga and is reputed to have been a source of spiritual inspiration for George Watson MacGregor Reid, visits London and is sentenced to four months in prison "charged with attacking girls who had been lured to his place by advertisements for typewriters" (New York Times, 1908).  The Ancient Order of Druids accepts a young Winston Churchill as an initiate.	SDF becomes the Social Democratic Party (SDP). Osborne judgement prevents trade unions using political levy to support MPs. Women's Sunday: 200,000 suffragettes take part in London demo. Henry Ford produces his first Model T automobile.
1909	Reid Reid's maternal grandfather, Robert Gardner, publishes a book entitled In the Heart of Democracy.  George Watson MacGregor Reid's Nature Cure journal folds, along with the British Nature Cure Association.	Revolution in Catalonia. Lloyd George's 'People's budget' means-tested old-age pensions introduced for the over-70s; increases in death duties and property taxes. 'Tragic Week' in Barcelona: a general strike leads to incendiarism. William Howard Taft succeeds Theodore Roosevelt as the 27th President of the United States.  Marinetti publishes the Futurist Manifesto in the Paris newspaper Le Figaró. Opening of the Victoria & Albert Museum in London.  Daily Sketch is launched. (Merged with the Daily Mail in 1971). [Reid's father John Finlay MacGregor-Reid would later be employed by the paper].
1910	George Watson MacGregor Reid adopts the nom-de-plume of 'Ayu Subhadra' and publishes an esoteric text entitled The Path that is Light.	Edward VII dies; succeed by George V (crowned in 1911). Tonyandy riots. Royal Commission on economic development of Britain meets.  Futurist evenings take place in Trieste, Milan, Turin, Venice.  Neon lighting is first displayed at the Paris Motor Show.

1911		<p>National unemployment and medical insurance is introduced. Parliament Act limits power of the house of Lords. MPS are paid salaries.</p> <p>Rotogravure is used in photographic reproduction. Daily Herald is founded. Hollywood's first film studio, Nestor Film Co., begins production.</p>
1912	<p>George Watson MacGregor Reid takes four members of the Universal Bond to the Stones to celebrate the midsummer solstice under his pseudonym Ayu Subhadra.</p>	<p>First Balkan War. Fall of Adrianople. First mail carried by aeroplane. Titanic strikes an iceberg in the northern Atlantic Ocean. The African National Congress is founded.</p> <p>Marinetti publishes Technical Manifesto of Futurist Literature.</p>
1913	<p>George Watson MacGregor Reid's South London Temple of the Universal Bond takes the place of the British Nature Cure Association. He returns to Stonehenge under the pseudonym of 'Dastur Tuatha de Dinaan' and forces admission after a fracas with police and caretakers.</p>	<p>Second Balkan War. Treaty of Bucharest. Riots in Alsace-Lorraine. Emily Davison, a British suffragette, is trampled by the King's horse, Anmer, at the Epsom Derby, and dies 4 days later in hospital. Woodrow Wilson succeeds William Howard Taft as the 28th President of the United States. Henry Ford creates the assembly line.</p> <p>The Vorticist group forms in London, and is the first to explore avant-garde typography in its 1914-1915 journal, Blast.</p> <p>Type-composition machines in production. 35mm camera is invented.</p>
1914	<p>George Watson MacGregor Reid and his followers are forcibly removed from Stonehenge by police (a similar event also occurs in 1915).</p>	<p>Start of World War I after the assassination of Austrian Archduke Franz Ferdinand in Sarajevo. First World War (1914-18).</p> <p>Suffragette Mary Richardson damages Velázquez' painting Rokeby Venus in London's National Gallery with a meat chopper. Marinetti publishes Zang Tumb Tumb, theory of 'words-in-freedom'.</p> <p>Charles Chaplin makes his film debut in the comedy short Making a Living. First, abridged edition of The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists published.</p>
1915		<p>Italy declares war on Austria. The Germans capture Warsaw.</p> <p>Teddy Tail – the first British comic strip – is published in the Daily Mail.</p>
1916	<p>George Watson MacGregor Reid holds the first of a number of peaceful ceremonies at Stonehenge – a rarity from this date onwards - thanks to the kindly nature of new owner, the local businessman Cecil Chubb.</p>	<p>Battle of the Somme. Battle of Verdun. Easter Rising in Ireland. Britain initiates daylight saving time. Grigori Rasputin is murdered by two Romanov family members.</p> <p>Tate Gallery closes (1916-21). Dada is founded in Zurich; Cabaret Voltaire, founded by Hugo Ball, opens and closes in six months.</p>



1916		Hubert Parry sets a number of verses of William Blake's 1804 poem to music; it becomes known as Jerusalem.
1917		<p>February and October revolutions in Russia. Battle of Passchendaele. Russian Civil War (1917-1920). James Montgomery Flagg designs famous "I Want YOU for the US Army" poster. USA enters the First World War.</p> <p>Tristan Tzara edits the periodical Dada; poets separate 'the word' from its language context, using it as a purely visual form. John Heartfield and his brother start the Weiland Herzfeld, a left-wing publishing house.</p>
1918	<p>George Watson MacGregor Reid tells a large congregation that "Faith in the Druids God will...make wars cease" (Stout, 2005, p. 34). Around this time MacGregor Reid's followers begin to call themselves 'The Universal Druid Brotherhood'.</p> <p>Businessman Cecil Chubb donates Stonehenge to the nation and it is brought under the control of the Government's Office of Works, who retain both the admission fee and the problematic former caretaker Sir Edmund Antrobus.</p>	<p>Treaty of Brest-Litovsk ends the Russia-Germany conflict. First World War Ends. Weimar Republic is proclaimed. Women over 30 and men over 21 obtain the vote. Communist Workers' Party is founded in Germany by Rosa Luxembourg and Karl Liebknecht.</p> <p>Tristan Tzara's 'Dada Manifesto' is published in Dada 3. Berlin Dada is founded by Richard Huelsenbeck, John Heartfield, George Grosz, and others.</p>
1919		<p>Treaty of Versailles. Establishment of the Ministry of Health. Murder of the Spartacists Rosa Luxembourg and Karl Liebknecht.</p> <p>The Bauhaus, a German school, is founded, eventually providing the framework for modern design.</p>
1920	<p>c.1920s: John Finlay MacGregor Reid and Nora Gardner meet at a Labour Party rally.</p> <p>Reid Reid's father John Finlay MacGregor-Reid is employed by the Oxford University Press.</p>	<p>Right-wing Kapp revolt suppressed in Berlin. Russia-Poland War. League of Nations meets.</p> <p>Alexander Rodchenko heads the First Working Group of Constructivists. Tate Gallery re-named 'National Gallery, Millbank'.</p>
1921		<p>Industrial unrest and Trade Union militancy culminates in 'Black Friday'.</p> <p>Marcel Duchamp and Man Ray publish the first and only issue of New York Dada. André Breton, poet, founds Surrealism in Paris. Man Ray creates the 'Rayogramme', a photograph that looks like an x-ray.</p>
1922	George Watson MacGregor Reid publishes his poem The Shrine.	<p>Economic Conference held in Genoa. Creation of the Soviet Union. Mussolini is appointed Italian premier.</p> <p>Surrealism emerges from Dada in Europe.</p>

1922		Two-colour Technicolour process is introduced for motion pictures. First cathode ray TV pictures.
1923		<p>Franco-Belgian contingent occupies Rhineland. Unsuccessful Nazi putsch in Munich. Primo de Rivera becomes Spanish dictator.</p> <p>Use of neon signs for advertising. 16mm home movie camera is introduced by Kodak.</p>
1924	Ramsay McDonald becomes the first Labour Prime Minister; George Watson MacGregor Reid continues to oppose the Stonehenge admission charge.	<p>Death of Lenin. Stalin achieves full power in Russia. The United Kingdom recognises the Soviet Union. Adolf Hitler begins dictating his book Mein Kampf while imprisoned in Bavaria. J. Edgar Hoover is appointed head of the FBI.</p> <p>Breton publishes his Surrealist Manifesto.</p>
1925	George Watson MacGregor Reid, now accompanied by his son Robert, incites the 3000-strong Stonehenge crowd to charge the entrance gate in yet another admission fee dispute.	<p>'Red Friday'; the government props up miners' wages with a 9 month subsidy, preventing a general strike. Stanley Baldwin heads the Conservative government. Benito Mussolini announces he is taking dictatorial powers over Italy. Adolf Hitler publishes Mein Kampf.</p> <p>John Logie Baird creates Britain's first television transmitter. Leica 35mm camera in production.</p>
1926	<p>Reid's father John Finlay MacGregor-Reid loses his job at the Oxford University Press due to his involvement in the General Strike.</p> <p>George Watson MacGregor Reid and John Finlay MacGregor Reid host up to 100 miners at the Universal Bond's headquarters in Clapham Common before they return to work in November 1926, as well as organising demonstrations and other forms of support.</p>	<p>General Strike. Most newspapers suspended during the General Strike. Government publishes British Gazette; TUC publishes British Worker. Military coup in Portugal. Pilsudki coup in Poland.</p> <p>Graphic formats standardised on A sizes, Germany. Herbet Bayer designs single-case Universal alphabet. First motion picture with synchronised musical score, Don Juan, is produced.</p>
1927	Stanley Leif launches his highly-successful magazine Health For All, inspiring a short-lived revival of George Watson MacGregor Reid's The Nature Cure.	<p>Stanley Baldwin passes the Trade Disputes Act, making general strikes illegal. Black Friday, German economic panic. Socialist riots in Vienna.</p> <p>Movietone newsreels with sound. Themerson's first photomontage films. First transatlantic telephone calls. First motion picture with dialogue, The Jazz Singer.</p>
1928		<p>Women over 21 obtain the vote in England. Leftist parties win French elections.</p> <p>Tschichold's Die neue Typografie is published.</p> <p>Motion pictures in colour.</p>

1929		<p>Wall Street Crash leads to worldwide recession. Local Government Act abolishes workhouse unions and Boards of Guardians. Yugoslavia is created from the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. Trotsky is expelled from Russia.</p> <p>Museum of Modern Art is founded in New York by Alfred Barr.</p>
1930	<p>Jamie Reid's parents John Finlay MacGregor-Reid and Nora Gardner move to a semi-detached suburban home in Croydon, Surrey, costing 300 pounds.</p>	<p>Ghandi's Salt March. Airship R101 crashes. End of Primo de Rivera dictatorship in Spain. Amy Johnson takes off on her epic flight to Australia from Croydon Airport.</p> <p>Marinetti publishes Parole in Libert� Futuriste, the definitive book of Futurist poetry.</p> <p>An early attempt is made in Britain at setting type photographically.</p>
1931		<p>Britain abandons the gold standard. Spanish republican constitution is adopted after revolution.</p> <p>Elsie Cohen opens the Academy Cinema, Oxford Street, London, with Pabst film. Electronic flash photography is invented.</p>
1932	<p>The Office of Works denies MacGregor Reid's Universal Bond the right to distribute its publication, The New Life and Druid Journal. Members of the Universal Bond make their last appearance at Stonehenge.</p> <p>c.1930s: Reid and his second wife Alice Biffin set up the Royhill Nature Camp at Blackboys in Lewes, Sussex, which continues to function until 1957.</p>	<p>In Britain the Archbishop of Canterbury forbids church remarriage of divorced persons. Franklin D. Roosevelt becomes president of the USA. USSR-Poland non-aggression pact. Amelia Earhart flies from the USA to Derry, Northern Ireland in 14 hours 54mins.</p> <p>Museum of Modern Art in New York adds architectural, industrial and graphic design to painting and sculpture. British Museum Newspaper Library opened at Colindale in North London.</p> <p>First stereo recording is made in the USA</p>
1933		<p>Hitler becomes chancellor of Germany. Roosevelt launches the New Deal. Reichstag fire. Weimar Republic ends and the Nazis seize control. Purge of Communist Party in the USSR.</p>
1935		<p>The Luftwaffe is created as Germany's air force and Germany announces rearmament in violation of the Versailles Treaty. President Roosevelt signs the US Social Security Act Providing Unemployment compensation and pensions for the elderly. The Swastika is declared the national emblem and flag of Germany.</p> <p>Eastman Kodak produce Kodachrome colour film. Penguin produces the first paperback books.</p>

1936		<p>Spanish Civil War begins. Show trials in USSR. Edward VIII abdicates. The Monotype Corporation is floated on the London Stock Exchange.</p> <p>Walter Benjamin's <i>The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction</i> is published.</p> <p>First transmission of regularly scheduled television programmes from London.</p>
1937		<p>King George VI is crowned at Westminster Abbey. Former King of England Edward VIII marries Wallis Simpson. Attack on Guernica. Sudeten crisis. Neville Chamberlain becomes the British Prime Minister.</p> <p>Photocopier invented by Carlson. John Betjeman writes his mournful poem <i>Croydon</i>.</p>
1938		<p>Germany begins its persecution of Jews. Munich crisis.</p> <p>Xerography is invented by Chester Carlson.</p>
1939	<p>George Watson MacGregor Reid and his wife Alice make a permanent move to their Royhill Nature Camp in Lewes, Sussex. The British Army requisition it for military use later that year.</p>	<p>Outbreak of the Second World War (1939-45). Last public execution in France - murderer Eugene Weidmann is decapitated by the guillotine.</p> <p>Regular television broadcasts begin in the US. FM broadcasting is developed by Edwin Armstrong.</p>
1940		<p>Battle of Britain. Trotsky assassinated. Winston Churchill becomes Prime Minister of the United Kingdom.</p> <p>Prehistoric wall drawings are discovered at the Lascaux caves in France.</p> <p>The first issue of <i>Print</i> magazine is published.</p>
1941	<p>Vivienne Isabel Swire is born on 8<sup>th</sup> April in Glossop, Derbyshire.</p>	<p>Japan attacks Pearl Harbour; USA enters war; Siege of Leningrad.</p> <p><i>Citizen Kane</i>, one of the films in the genre of film noir, premieres.</p>
1942		<p>Battle of Stalingrad. Beveridge Report, outlining the Welfare State.</p> <p>Kodacolor, the first colour roll film designed for colour prints, is commercially introduced by Kodak.</p>

1943		<p>The Dambuster Raids. Mussolini resigns in Italy and Surrender of Italy is announced. Warsaw Jewish ghetto uprising against the Nazis. Great Depression ends in the USA. Jackson Pollock has his first one-man show in New York.</p> <p>Zoot suits become popular in the USA</p>
1944		<p>D-Day commences with the landing of 155,000 Allied troops on the beaches of Normandy in France.</p> <p>Graphis magazine is founded in Zurich, Switzerland, and becomes the leading showcase international designers.</p> <p>First ballpoint pens are manufactured, solely for the Royal Air Force in England.</p>
1945		<p>Defeat of Germany; nuclear weapons used at Hiroshima and Nagasaki: defeat of Japan. United Nations founded. Labour landslide election victory: Clement Attlee becomes Prime Minister.</p> <p>Vannevar Bush develops the theory of hypermedia, a theory that in the 1980s becomes the cornerstone of interactive media.</p>
1946	<p>George Watson MacGregor Reid dies. After disputes with Reid's appointed successor George W. Smith, Reid's son Robert takes over the Druid mantle and continues to celebrate the solstice at Stonehenge.</p> <p>Malcolm Edwards (later McLaren) is born on 22<sup>nd</sup> January in London to Emily Isaacs and Peter McLaren and lives with grandmother Rose Corré.</p>	<p>The first meeting of the United Nations is held in London. Nationalisation policies implemented. Charles De Gaulle resigns as president of France. Juan Peron is elected president of Argentina. Nuremberg Trials. First underwater test of the atomic bomb, near Bikini Atoll in the Pacific Ocean, by the USA.</p> <p>The BBC begins broadcasting again. Bill Haley's professional musical career begins as a member of The Down Homers.</p>
1947	<p>Jamie Reid is born on 16<sup>th</sup> January in Shirley, a suburb of Croydon, Surrey to John Finlay MacGregor-Reid and Nora Reid (née Gardener).</p>	<p>The Cold War begins with the establishment of the Truman Doctrine. British coal mines are nationalised. Princess Elizabeth and Lieutenant Philip Mountbatten are married. India and Pakistan gain independence, initiating the era of decolonisation. International Monetary Fund begins operations.</p> <p>Jackson Pollock produces the first of his Drip Paintings, the series that brought him international acclaim, in the Springs, East Hampton, New York.</p> <p>A downed UFO is allegedly found in the Roswell UFO incident. In New York City, Edwin Land demonstrates the first 'instant camera', the Polaroid Land Camera.</p>

1948		<p>National Health Service is founded. Ghandi assassinated. USA inaugurates the Marshall Plan. Israel is established.</p> <p>The first LP records, developed at the Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS) Laboratories, are sold to the public. The first Polaroid camera is sold in the USA. The transistor is invented. Robert Graves' The White Goddess is published.</p>
1949		<p>Almost four years after the end of World War II, clothes rationing in Great Britain ends. The State of Vietnam is formed. Apartheid is established in South Africa. People's Republic of China is formed.</p> <p>Soviet Social Realism is imposed on art throughout Eastern Europe.</p> <p>RCA introduces the 45 RPM record. George Orwell publishes Nineteen Eighty-Four.</p>
1950		<p>Korean War begins (1950-53). Albert Einstein warns against the hydrogen bomb on national TV in the USA. The FBI began its "10 Most Wanted" list. The first transatlantic jet passenger trip was made.</p> <p>The first typesetting machine to dispense with metal type is exhibited. Development of CAD, or Computer-Aided Design program for architecture. The first copying machine is introduced by Xerox.</p>
1951	Malcolm McLaren enters school, but is then removed by his grandmother and taught at home.	<p>McCarthyism rife in the USA.</p> <p>Liverpool's Walker Art Gallery re-opens after the War. Gordon Fazakerley enrolls at Liverpool College of Art. In 1962 he becomes a founding member of the Bauhaus Situationists in Drakabygget, Sweden.</p>
1952		<p>The anti-nuclear organisation Operation Ghandi hold a War Office sit-down in London. Croydon teenagers Christopher Craig and Derek Bentley are involved in a bungled break-in at a local warehouse. Bentley is convicted and hanged for shooting and killing PC Sidney Miles.</p> <p>The song Rock Around the Clock is first recorded by Sunny Dae and the Knights. Polaroid Land Camera is produced by Edwin Land.</p>
1953		<p>Queen Elizabeth II is crowned Queen of England. The FBI rounds up communist leaders who were advocating overthrow of the government. Death of Stalin. Four million French workers go on strike.</p>

1953		<p>Ivan Chitchevlov writes Formulaire pour un urbanisme nouveau (Formulary for a New Urbanism).</p> <p>The first colour television sets go on sale in the USA.</p>
1954	<p>George W. Smith, the man originally appointed by George Watson MacGregor Reid to take over the Druid mantle, dies.</p>	<p>USA tests hydrogen bomb at Bikini Atoll, Pacific Ocean. USA Supreme Court declares school segregation unlawful. McCarthy hearings begin in the USA UK ends post-war rationing.</p> <p>Bill Haley and His Comets release the song Rock Around the Clock.</p>
1955	<p>Malcolm McLaren returns to school after being taught at home by his grandmother.</p>	<p>Winston Churchill resigns as Prime Minister, succeeded by Anthony Eden. Warsaw Pact established. Montgomery Bus Boycott incident begins in the US. French forces leave Vietnam.</p> <p>Jasper Johns paints Flag.</p> <p>Mary Quant's Bazaar boutique opens. James Dean is killed in a car crash and Rebel Without A Cause is released. The film Blackboard Jungle is released. Allen Ginsberg writes Sunflower Sutra. Bill Haley and His Comets release the album Rock Around the Clock.</p>
1956		<p>Nasser, Prime Minister of Egypt, seizes the Suez Canal. Arab-Israeli War.</p> <p>Jackson Pollock is killed in a car crash in the USA. Richard Hamilton composes the collage Just what is it that makes today's homes so different, so appealing?</p> <p>Video recorder is developed. British 'King of Skiffle' Lonnie Donegan releases Long Island Line. Elvis Presley records Heartbreak Hotel and Johnny Cash records I Walk the Line. John Osborne's Look Back in Anger is published. Allen Ginsberg writes Howl.</p>
1957	<p>Vivienne Swire moves with her family to London, aged 17, and attends Harrow Art School for one term.</p>	<p>Britain tests its first hydrogen bomb. British Prime Minister Anthony Eden resigns and is succeeded by Harold Macmillan. Gaza Strip comes under UN peacekeeping protection. Treaty of Rome establishes European Economic Community.</p> <p>The Situationist International (or SI) founded in Italy by a small group of avant-garde intellectuals influenced by Dada, Surrealism and Lettrism.</p> <p>The word 'beatnik' takes hold to describe the Beat Generation.</p>

<p><b>1958</b></p>	<p>The Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament is founded in London. The first of CND's marches to the government weapons base at Aldermaston, Berkshire, takes place, attended by Reid and his parents.</p>	<p>Cold War and Cuban Revolution continue. European Economic Community (EEC) is established. Charles de Gaulle becomes President of France. Mao Zedong announces Great Leap Forward. Munich air disaster occurs.</p> <p>A peace symbol is designed and completed by Gerald Holtom, commissioned by CND, in protest against the Atomic Weapons Research Establishment. Jackson Pollock at the Whitechapel Art Gallery, London.</p> <p>New Orleans-styled trumpeter Ken Colyer and his Omega Brass Band join CND's 1958 march to Aldermaston. The BBC Radiophonic Workshop is established. Eddie Cochran releases Summertime Blues. Chuck Berry releases Johnny B. Goode. Christopher Hibbert's book King Mob: The story of Lord George Gordon and the riots of 1780 is published.</p>
<p><b>1959</b></p>		<p>Resurgence of Basque separatist movement in Spain. Revolution in Cuba establishes Fidel Castro as Premier. Televised 'Kitchen Debate' between Soviet Premier Krushchev and US Vice-President Nixon.</p> <p>Tate Gallery holds an exhibition entitled The New American Painting.</p> <p>Manchester Guardian changes title to the Guardian, based in London. The Free Cinema documentary film March to Aldermaston is released, documenting CND's Aldermaston marches. Barry Miles publishes his first magazine, Tree, whilst still an art student in Cheltenham. Buddy Holly, Richie Valens, and the 'Big Bopper' are killed in an air crash. Eddie Cochran releases C'Mon Everybody.</p>
<p><b>1960</b></p>	<p>Bertrand Russell resigns as president of CND, leading to the development of breakaway militant organisation the Committee of 100.</p>	<p>John Kennedy elected US President (Democrats in power until 1968). Katanga Revolt begins in the Belgian Congo.</p> <p>Situation, RBA Galleries, London.</p> <p>Laser technology is invented in the USA. Chuck Berry releases the album Rockin' at the Hops, featuring the song Let It Rock.</p>
<p><b>1961</b></p>	<p>The first Committee of 100 sit-in takes place at the Ministry of Defence, Whitehall; another mass demonstration in Trafalgar Square leads to further arrests and sentencing under the Official Secrets Act.</p>	<p>Peace Corps established in the USA. Berlin Wall is erected in Germany. Amnesty International is founded. John Fitzgerald Kennedy becomes president of the USA. Bay of Pigs invasion (USA-Cuba). Yuri Gagarin becomes the first man in space (USSR).</p>



1961		<p>Bridget Riley starts teaching painting at Croydon College of Art (1961-64). Allen Jones starts teaching lithography (1961-63). Henry Flynt coins the term 'Concept Art'. The Situationists Attila Kotanyi and Raoul Vaneigem publish their writings on Unitary Urbanism.</p> <p>Billy Fury releases the singles Halfway to Paradise and Jealousy.</p>
1962	<p>Reid enrolls at the Wimbledon Art College, South London.</p> <p>Bruce Reid, as press officer for the Spies for Peace, visits Moscow with other members of the Committee of 100 for the World Council of Peace Congress.</p> <p>Vivienne Swire marries Derek Westwood. Aged 21, becomes a primary-school teacher in Willesden, North London.</p>	<p>Cuban Missile Crisis. South African leader Nelson Mandela is sent to jail on Robben Island for inciting a national strike; his initial sentence of 5 years. John Glenn is the first man to orbit earth (USA).</p> <p>Situation, Arts Council tour to 1963. The Whitechapel Gallery's Vanguard American Painting (1962), is the first London exhibition to feature Pollock, Rothko, Johns and Rauschenberg together. John Hoyland becomes a tutor of painting at Croydon College of Art (1962-63).</p> <p>The satirical magazine Private Eye and the BBC TV show That Was The Week That Was are launched. Anthony Burgess' A Clockwork Orange is published. The Beatles first UK single Love Me Do is released. The Rolling Stones play at the Red Lion pub in Sutton, Surrey during 1962 and 1963.</p>
1963	<p>Jamie Reid's elder brother Bruce Reid (then 21), now press officer for the Spies for Peace, joins fellow members in breaking into RSG-6 ( a Regional Seat of Government) and copying government documents. They then distribute copies of their pamphlet 'Danger! Official Secret: RSG-6' on the 1963 march to Aldermaston.</p> <p>Malcolm McLaren attends evening classes at St.Martin's School of Art, London.</p> <p>Vivienne Westwood's first son, Benjamin Arthur Westwood, is born.</p>	<p>John F. Kennedy is assassinated. American activist Bayard Rustin organises the Civil Rights 'March of 100,000' on Washington. Martin Luther King's 'I Have a Dream' speech. Nelson Mandela is imprisoned for life. Nuclear Test Ban Treaty signed. Great Britain refused entry into the European Common Market. The Profumo Affair political scandal.</p> <p>British Painting of the '60s, Whitechapel Gallery, London. Barry Fantoni begins teaching at Croydon College of Art; The Kinks' Ray Davies joins as a student.</p> <p>The Beatle' first LP, Please Please Me. Colour version of the Polaroid Land Camera introduced. Jeff Nuttall founds My Own Mag: A Super-Absorbent Periodical, inspired by William Burroughs' cut-up techniques. Anthony Hartley's A State of England is published.</p>
1964	<p>Reid leaves Wimbledon Art School and enrolls at the Croydon College of Art, Surrey. He visits the Tate Gallery exhibition 54-64: Painting and Sculpture of a Decade, a major survey of trends in contemporary art of the previous ten years featuring by Pollock, Mark Rothko, Jasper Johns and Robert Rauschenberg.</p>	<p>Harold Wilson becomes Prime Minister. China detonates its first atomic bomb. Civil Rights Bill becomes law in the US. Nelson Mandela is sentenced to life imprisonment. 'Great Train Robbers' including Ronnie Biggs are sentenced to 300 years.</p>

<p><b>1964</b></p>	<p>George Watson MacGregor Reid's son Robert dies of a sudden heart attack.</p> <p>Malcolm McLaren attends Harrow Art College. Leaves home and then art school.</p>	<p>Painting and Sculpture of a Decade 1954-1964, Tate Gallery, London. The New Generation: 1964, Whitechapel Art Gallery, London.</p> <p>Radio Caroline's first broadcast. Mods and Rockers clash at seaside resorts. Top of the Pops is first broadcast. The Sun newspaper is first published in the UK. BBC2 starts broadcasting. The Kinks release their first single Long Tall Sally. Guardian journalist Christopher Driver's book on CND, The Disarmers, is published.</p>
<p><b>1965</b></p>	<p>Malcolm McLaren attends South East Essex College and is expelled. He mounts an exhibition at Kingly Street Gallery, London.</p> <p>Vivienne Westwood's marriage to Derek ends. She meets 18 year old Malcolm Edwards (aka McLaren).</p>	<p>President Lyndon Johnson steps up bombing raids in Vietnam. Race riots in Watts district of Los Angeles. Malcolm X is assassinated in New York.</p> <p>Sean Scully becomes a student at Croydon College of Art (1965-67). The New Generation: 1965, Whitechapel Gallery, London.</p> <p>IBM develops means of digitally storing type (basis for computer typesetting). The Mary Quant-designed Mini Skirt appears in London and will be the fashion statement of the 1960s. The Yardbirds play Croydon's ABC Cinema and Fairfield Hall.</p>
<p><b>1966</b></p>	<p>Malcolm McLaren is expelled from Chiswick Polytechnic and meets Vivienne Westwood.</p> <p>McLaren takes over the Kingly Street Gallery - situated off Carnaby Street - with a forty-eight hour happening involving mazes of corrugated cardboard, films and spotlights.</p>	<p>Cultural Revolution begins in China. Black Panthers formed in the USA. Emergence of the Hippie movement.</p> <p>Strasbourg students and the Situationist International publish On the Poverty of Student Life. The New Generation: 1966, Whitechapel Gallery, London.</p> <p>The underground newspaper International Times (IT) is founded in London. Granny Takes A Trip opens at 488 Kings Road.</p>
<p><b>1967</b></p>	<p>McLaren is arrested with Henry Adler for attempting to burn an American flag in Grosvenor Square. McLaren is involved in the student occupation of the London School of Economics (LSE).</p> <p>Westwood and McLaren's son is born, Joseph Ferdinand Corré.</p>	<p>Parliament decriminalises abortion and homosexuality in the UK. Military coup in Greece installs dictatorship. Che Guevara is killed in Bolivia. Six-Day War (Israel and Egypt).</p> <p>Peter Blake designs the cover for the Beatles album Sergeant Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band. Guy Debord's Society of the Spectacle and Raoul Vaneigem's Revolution of Everyday Life are published.</p> <p>Marshal McLuhan's The Medium is the Message, John Willet's Art in a City and Gabriel García Márquez's One Hundred Years of Solitude are published. OZ magazine is founded in London by Richard Neville and Martin Sharp.</p>

<p><b>1968</b></p>	<p>McLaren attends Croydon College of Art, where he meets Reid and has contact with the Situationist-inspired group King Mob. He and Reid organise a sit-in after French students and workers riot in Paris.</p> <p>McLaren claims to be involved in King Mob's intervention in Selfridges, Oxford Street.</p> <p>McLaren works with Reid and Helen Mininberg (later Wallington-Lloyd) on his film about Oxford Street (1968-71).</p>	<p>Student occupations, riots, general strike, France. Civil Rights Campaign begins in Northern Ireland. Enoch Powell's Rivers of Blood speech. Martin Luther King assassinated. Nicolas Walter publicly declares himself as one of the Spies for Peace. CND is disbanded. Trades Union Congress (TUC) is founded.</p> <p>First issue of King Mob Echo is published (six issues in total, 1968-70). The New Generation: 1968: Interim at the Whitechapel Gallery, London. Bridget Riley and Peter Sedgely assist in founding AIR and SPACE (artists' co-operative for exhibition and studio provision in London). Bruce McLean begins teaching on the Environmental Studies course at Croydon College of Art.</p> <p>Jeff Nuttall's Bomb Culture and Stuart Piggott's The Druids are published. The Kinks release the album The Kinks Are the Village Green Preservation Society.</p>
<p><b>1969</b></p>	<p>Reid begins work on The Cat Book, telling the tale of a "frustrated urban moggie called Poot and her attempts to find the big time and then enlightenment" (Reid &amp; Savage, 1987, p. 17).</p> <p>Malcolm McLaren attends Goldsmiths College (1969-1971), and meets Helen Wellington-Lloyd. He begins a film on the history of Oxford Street, assisted by Wellington-Lloyd and Reid Reid. Lacking funds, McLaren abandons the project. He begins designing clothes and collecting records, and leaves college without taking his finals.</p>	<p>Civil conflict in Northern Ireland, direct rule from London. Vietnam moratorium protests in the USA. President Ho Chi Minh dies. Richard Nixon becomes President of the USA. Women's Liberation Movement begins public demonstrations. Riots follow a police raid at the Stonewall tavern in New York, leading to 'gay rights' movement.</p> <p>Allen Jones creates his works Table, Chair and Hat Stand.</p> <p>Nik Cohn's Awopbopalooobop Alopbamboom: Pop from the Beginning is published. Douglas Engelbart develops the first computer mouse, setting the stage for the future tool of graphic design. The Sun re-launched as a tabloid by Rupert Murdoch. The Kinks release Arthur, featuring the song Shangri-La, a critique of suburbia.</p>
<p><b>1970</b></p>	<p>Reid, along with Jeremy Brook and Nigel Edwards, found the Croydon-based Suburban Press, a radical neo-situationist printing press. They publish six issues of the Suburban Press magazine (1970-75).</p>	<p>President Nixon sends American troops into Cambodia, resumes bombing North Vietnam but also begins withdrawing troops from Vietnam. Conservatives led by Edward Heath win an election in Britain and introduce an Industrial Relations Bill. The Gay Liberation Front is founded in London.</p> <p>Stanley Kubrick invites Allen Jones to design costumes for his film version of Anthony Burgess's Clockwork Orange (1962).</p> <p>First digitised photographs are introduced. The Beatles split up. Richard Neville's Play Power is published.</p>

<p><b>1971</b></p>	<p>Malcolm McLaren opens Let It Rock (named after a Chuck Berry song) at 430 Kings Road in London, in partnership with Westwood.</p> <p>Paul Cook, Steve Jones and Wally Nightingale start thinking of forming a band together.</p>	<p>The Angry Brigade plant bombs in London. The Industrial Relations Act becomes law but is resisted by trade unions. The microprocessor is invented and enables radical developments in computing to take place.</p> <p>Bridget Riley retrospective at the Hayward Gallery, London. Allen Jones Projects is published.</p> <p>The Daily Sketch newspaper folds. The editors of Oz magazine are imprisoned because of their 'School Kids' issue but are set free on appeal. Stanley Kubrick's A Clockwork Orange provokes controversy because of its violent content.</p>
<p><b>1972</b></p>	<p>Reid produces the Suburban Press sticker series (1972-73).</p> <p>Sophie Richmond moves to London after attending university in Warwick.</p> <p>Let It Rock is commissioned to produce the costumes for Ray Connolly's film That'll Be The Day (1973).</p> <p>Let It Rock is redesigned and renamed as Too Fast To Live Too Young To Die.</p>	<p>Bloody Sunday shootings. A national coal strike leads to a state of emergency. Britain imposes direct rule on Northern Ireland. Burglars are caught inside the Watergate Building in Washington DC. Four members of the Angry Brigade are tried and each receive 10 years.</p> <p>Dissolution of the Situationist International. The British artist Andrew Logan hosts the first alternative Miss World competition.</p> <p>Metroset allows fonts to be digitally stored as outlines. David Bowie's Ziggy Stardust album is released, along with the first single by Roxy Music.</p>
<p><b>1973</b></p>	<p>Reid's Suburban Press designs stickers in support of the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM). Reid and Richmond move in together in Croydon.</p> <p>Malcolm McLaren goes to New York with Westwood, attending a boutique fair at which they sell nothing. They meet the New York Dolls.</p> <p>Paul Cook, Steve Jones and Wally Nightingale are joined by Glen Matlock.</p>	<p>The Vietnam War ends as far as the USA is concerned when a ceasefire is agreed in Paris. The Watergate scandal in the USA damages Nixon.</p> <p>Allen Jones designs costumes for the German 'television video fantasy' Männer, Wir Kommen. Spare Rib publishes a critique of Allen Jones' 'erotic' pop art by Laura Mulvey.</p> <p>Elvis Presley gives a concert in Hawaii that was transmitted by satellite television. First commercial fax machines are introduced. Billy Fury emerges from a period of semi-retirement to star as 'Stormy Tempest' in the film That'll Be the Day.</p>
<p><b>1974</b></p>	<p>Reid is involved with layout for Leaving the 20th Century by Christopher Gray, the first English anthology of writings by the Situationist International.</p> <p>Malcolm McLaren and Vivienne Westwood redesign and rename their shop as SEX, and start selling black rubber and leather fetish clothing. Chrissie Hynde works there for a brief period.</p>	<p>President Nixon resigns after the Watergate affair and is replaced by Gerald Ford. In Britain, in January, there is a 3-day working week due to the oil crisis and power industry disputes. Labour government elected under Harold Wilson and (1976-9) Jim Callaghan. The British government introduce an anti-terrorism bill after the IRA explode bombs in Guildford, Woolwich and Birmingham, the latter killing 21 people. Nurses and miners organise strikes.</p>

<p><b>1974</b></p>	<p>Paul Cook, Steve Jones and Glen Matlock think of calling themselves The Strand; McLaren suggests QT Jones and the Sex Pistols.</p> <p>McLaren goes to New York to style and manage the New York Dolls.</p>	<p>Christopher Gray edits the first English language anthology of Situationist texts, Leaving the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.</p> <p>Offices start using a very primitive word processor that resembles a typewriter. The Bay City Rollers release Shang-A-Lang.</p>
<p><b>1975</b></p>	<p>Suburban Press sells up. Reid moves to the Isle of Lewis, along with Sophie Richmond. They live with John and Carola Bell, who had run the Crest Press.</p> <p>Malcolm McLaren returns to London after the New York Dolls split up.</p> <p>The Strand play their only gig at a party in the King's Road. McLaren suggests that Nightingale is replaced, he suggests Richard Hell but the band choose John Lydon. The line-up of the Sex Pistols settles with John Lydon (Rotten) as singer with Glen Matlock on bass, Steve Jones on guitar and Paul Cook on drums. Sex Pistols first performance at St. Martins' School of Art.</p> <p>Jordan begins to work at SEX, which is raided and charged for selling pornographic clothing.</p>	<p>South Vietnam surrenders to North Vietnamese forces and the American evacuate their embassy in Saigon. Khmer Rouge wins power in Cambodia and begins mass extermination. Margaret Thatcher elected leader of the Conservative Party. In Britain, unemployment increases to 1 million, Equal Pay Act and the Sex Discrimination Act become law.</p> <p>John A. Walker's Art Since Pop and Laura Mulvey's important essay 'Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema' are published.</p> <p>The Sony Corporation market videocassette recorders. First laser phototypesetter is introduced. First personal computer is introduced. Patti Smith releases her debut album Horses.</p>
<p><b>1976</b></p>	<p>Malcolm McLaren contacts Reid on the Isle of Lewis, and asks Reid to work with him on his new music-based project, The Sex Pistols. Reid produces the very first Sex Pistols promotional artwork, printed at the Aberdeen Free Press in Scotland.</p> <p>The first bondage suits are designed, first worn by the Sex Pistols at the Club du Chalet du Lac in Paris. SEX exhibits clothing at the ICA. The Sex Pistols enter into a management arrangement with Malcolm McLaren/Glitterbest (September).</p> <p>Anarchy in the UK is released (EMI) and the Anarchy Tour – the Sex Pistols' first UK tour – takes places but, following their appearance on the Today programme with Bill Grundy, all dates are cancelled save for seven.</p>	<p>In China, Chairman Mao Zedong and Chou En-Lai die; and the so-called Gang of Four are arrested. Democrat Jimmy Carter is elected President of the USA and the country celebrates his bicentennial. Harold Wilson resigns and Jim Callaghan becomes Prime Minister. In the summer, 130 colleges, polytechnics and universities have occupations protesting about the closure of teacher training colleges.</p> <p>COUM Transmission's 'Prostitution' at the ICA cause contempt amongst both the press and public. Dawn Ades' history of photomontage is published. T.J. Clark becomes Professor of the Fine Art Department at Leeds University.</p> <p>Derek Jarman films the Sex Pistols in super-8 and directs Sebastiane. Rock Against Racism is founded. Roger Eagle and Pete Fulwell establish Eric's Club on Mathew Street in Liverpool. David Widgery's The Left in Britain is published.</p>

<p><b>1977</b></p>	<p>430 King's Road is renamed as Seditonaries.</p> <p>Reid is attacked whilst wearing one of his God Save The Queen T-shirts. EMI fires the Sex Pistols. Sid Vicious replaces Glen Matlock. Sex Pistols sign with A&amp;M and are fired within a week. They then sign with Virgin who release the singles God Save The Queen, Pretty Vacant, Holidays in the Sun, and the LP Never Mind The Bollocks Here's The Sex Pistols. Scandinavian tour (July); SPOTS tour 'Sex Pistols on Tour Secretly' (August); Dutch tour (December); Never Mind the Bans Tour (December). McLaren starts to work on a proposed Sex Pistols film. Never Mind the Bollocks court case.</p>	<p>Queen Elizabeth's Silver Jubilee (1952-77). Murder of Steve Biko, founder of the Black Consciousness movement in South Africa. The National Front marches in Lewisham, South London, and violent clashes occur between the police and anti-Nazi demonstrators.</p> <p>Roland Barthes' Image-Music-Text is published, featuring the essay 'Death of the Author'.</p> <p>The Clash release their first album The Clash. Derek Jarman starts work on his film Jubilee. Elvis Presley dies. John Samson's short documentary film Dressing for Pleasure is released.</p>
<p><b>1978</b></p>	<p>Sex Pistols tour America (January). John Lydon splits from the band and later forms Public Image Limited. Steve Jones and Paul Cook go to Brazil with McLaren where they film and record with Ronnie Biggs. Virgin release The Biggest Blow featuring Bigg's Punk Prayer and Vicious's My Way. In New York Sid Vicious is charged with killing Nancy Spungen (October). John Lydon initiates legal proceedings to freeze Glitterbest's Sex Pistols assets and holdings (November).</p>	<p>Workers at Ford car factories win a 17 percent wage increase after a seven-week strike. Industrial action by various groups of British workers is dubbed the 'Winter of Discontent' (1978-79). The IRA plants bombs in Britain's provincial cities and IRA prisoners begin a 'dirty' or blanket protest.</p> <p>The ICA mounts an exhibition of Allen Jones' work – feminists are offended by his sculptures of women as furniture.</p> <p>Derek Jarman's film Jubilee is released. The Boy Looked at Johnny: The Obituary of Rock 'n' Roll by Julie Birchill and Tony Parsons, and Fred &amp; Judy Vermorel's Sex Pistols: The Inside Story are published. Rock Against Racism holds its first carnival in Victoria Park, Hackney, London. Tony Wilson and Alan Erasmus founds Factory Records.</p>
<p><b>1979</b></p>	<p>Sid Vicious dies in New York of a heroin overdose. Virgin release The Great Rock 'n' Roll Swindle LP as well as From Beyond the Grave (Something Else and Friggin' in the Riggin'), Some Product – Carri on Sex Pistols.</p> <p>Julien Temple writes and directs a film about the Sex Pistols, The Great Rock 'n' Roll Swindle.</p> <p>World's End opens at 430 Kings Road.</p> <p>Reid designs promotional posters for the American hardcore band Dead Kennedys.</p>	<p>The Conservatives win a general election and Margaret Thatcher becomes the first woman Prime Minister. British police hunt for the so-called Yorkshire Ripper, a serial killer of women. Saddam Hussein becomes President of Iraq.</p> <p>Art colleges in Britain report cuts in their budgets. Peter Kennard designs posters for a revived Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. Sony introduces the Walkman portable cassette player. The Sugar Hill Gang release the first commercial rap hit, Rapper's Delight, bringing rap off the New York streets and into the popular music scene. Robin Scott's band M: Pop Muzik. Dick Hebdige's Subcultures: the Meaning of Style is published.</p>

<p><b>1980</b></p>	<p>Reid produces artwork and materials for the Sex Pistols' feature film entitled The Great Rock 'n' Roll Swindle. Reid produces artwork for Malcolm McLaren's new protégés Bow Wow Wow.</p> <p>Reid sells an archive of his Sex Pistols artwork to the V&amp;A Museum in London for £1,000.</p> <p>Reid meets partner Margi Clarke and moves to Paris, where he works on an unreleased stage performance of Leaving the 20th Century entitled Chaos in Cancerland. 430 King's Road is redesigned and renamed as World's End. Within six months Seditonaries designs start to be sold by BOY (John Krivine) under licence.</p>	<p>Margaret Thatcher tells the Conservative Party conference "U-turn if you want to. The lady's not for turning." James Callaghan announces his resignation as Leader of the British Labour Party. Robert Mugabe is elected Prime Minister of Zimbabwe. Cold War continues.</p> <p>Keith Haring begins to create 'graffiti' art as a student at the School of Visual Arts, New York.</p> <p>Terry Jones Launches i-D, which begins as a street style fanzine. John Lennon is murdered in New York. Ian Curtis, singer/songwriter of acclaimed post punk band Joy Division, is found hanged. Bow Wow Wow release their first single C30 C60 C90 C90 GO.</p>
<p><b>1981</b></p>	<p>Reid and Clarke move back to the UK from Paris.</p> <p>McLaren and Westwood's first catwalk show, the Pirate collection (A/W 1981-2), shown at Olympia followed by Savage (S/S 1982).</p>	<p>Racial tensions lead to riots in Brixton and other areas. On 3 July racial tension and social deprivation erupts into three nights of street rioting centred in the Liverpool 8 area. The event is quickly dubbed the 'Toxteth Riots' by the media. Hunger strike by Republican prisoners ends after ten deaths. On 29 July in Britain, Prince Charles marries Lady Diana Spencer.</p> <p>Ken Knabb's Situationist International Anthology is published. Tony Cragg's Britain as Seen from the North.</p> <p>IBM launches its personal computer. Music Television (MTV) launched in USA. Bow Wow Wow release the album See Jungle! See Jungle! Go Join Your Gang, Yeah. City All Over! Go Ape Crazy.</p>
<p><b>1982</b></p>	<p>'Margi MacGregor' releases the single Beauty/Beauty and the Thief, with sleeve design by Reid.</p> <p>Westwood's Buffalo (A/W 1982-3) and Punkature (S/S 1983) shown in Paris. Westwood and McLaren open a second London shop called Nostalgia of Mud.</p>	<p>Falklands War. Economic recession leads to high unemployment. Michael Fagan breaks into the Queen's bedroom in Buckingham Palace. Vietnam War Memorial is built in Washington DC.</p> <p>Cartoonist Gerald Scarfe's animations play a major part in the success of the film version of Pink Floyd's The Wall. Channel 4 is launched in the UK. The first CD player is sold in Japan. Pop star Michael Jackson releases the single Thriller, the video of which becomes an iconic statement of dance and ironic horror.</p>
<p><b>1983</b></p>	<p>Reid moves to Brixton, South London.</p>	<p>Conservative Margaret Thatcher, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom since 1979, wins in a landslide General Election victory over Michael Foot. Anti-nuclear demonstrators marched in cities across Europe in the biggest anti-nuclear demonstrations in 20 years.</p>

1983		<p>Malcolm Garrett teams up with Kasper de Graaf to launch Assorted iMaGes design studio.</p> <p>Microsoft Word is introduced. ARPANET officially changes to use the Internet Protocol, creating the Internet. The grandson of Alexander Graham Bell answers the first commercial mobile phone call. Microsoft Word is first released. Compact discs began to sell on the High Street.</p>
1984	<p>Reid holds a solo exhibition at the Brixton Art Gallery, where he constructs the Sex Pistols Mural.</p> <p>Nostalgia of Mud closes. Westwood moves to Italy.</p>	<p>12-month Miners' Strike over pit closures begins. IRA bombers strike at the Conservative Party conference in Brighton. Widespread Famine in Ethiopia after political conflict with charities believing as many as 10 million people are facing starvation. Hundreds die on December 3rd from the effects of toxic gases which leak from the Bhopal Union Carbide Factory. English pound notes taken out of circulation.</p> <p>Bridget Riley's essay The Pleasures of Sight. The Turner Prize is awarded for the first time; the winner is Malcolm Morley.</p> <p>Apple releases first Macintosh computer, featuring bitmap graphics. Robert Maxwell buys the Mirror Group. Sony makes the first 3 1/2" computer disk. Irish rock singer Bob Geldof adopts the famine in Ethiopia as a cause, beginning with the Band-Aid records sold at Christmas 1984 in the US and Britain.</p>
1985	<p>Reid produces the Say It With Bricks image.</p> <p>Reid designs album artwork for Jayne Casey's Pink Industry.</p> <p>Reid completes the poster for the Liverpool-based film Letter to Brezhnev, starring his partner Margi Clarke.</p> <p>Reid takes up a part-time teaching position at the Liverpool School of Art &amp; Design.</p>	<p>The British Coal Miners' Strike ends and coal mines continue to be closed. Live Aid pop concert raises money for the famine in Ethiopia. French secret agents sink Greenpeace ship, "Rainbow Warrior". Mikhail Gorbachev becomes Soviet leader and calls for glasnost and perestroika. Anglo-Irish Agreement.</p> <p>Charles Saatchi's collection opens to the public, arousing interest in Neo-Expressionism.</p> <p>In-ear headphones, CD-ROMs, Hi-8 camcorders and taxis with carphones are first sold in the UK. Pink Industry release the album New Beginnings.</p>
1986	<p>Reid holds a solo exhibition at Hamiltons Gallery, Mayfair, followed by another at the Josh Baer Gallery, New York (1986-87). He begins to work out of Assorted Images graphics studio, also in London, where he is based until 1990.</p> <p>Reid and Clarke perform How To Become Invisible at the Mardi Gras Club, Liverpool.</p>	<p>Major national industries are privatised. The world's worst nuclear disaster strikes in Chernobyl in Northern Ukraine in April expelling 190 tonnes of highly radioactive uranium into the atmosphere. John McCarthy is kidnapped in Beirut.</p> <p>Interaction, curated by Jon Wozencroft, at the Camden Arts Centre, London. National Museums and Galleries on Merseyside (NMGM) is established.</p>



<p><b>1986</b></p>	<p>John Lydon's case against Malcolm McLaren finally comes to the High Court in London. McLaren agrees to hand control of the band's assets back to the Sex Pistols.</p>	<p>British newspapers move to Wapping , East London in an attempt to break print union stranglehold over the newspaper industry. Wireless pocket-sized telephone is introduced. Fuji introduces the first disposable cameras. IBM unveils the first laptop computer.</p>
<p><b>1987</b></p>	<p>Reid holds a solo exhibition at the Feature Gallery, Chicago.</p> <p>Faber and Faber publish <i>Up They Rise: The Incomplete Works of Jamie Reid</i>, with text from the British music journalist Jon Savage.</p> <p>Reid completes cover artwork for Transvision Vamp's singles <i>Revolution Baby</i> and <i>Tell That Girl</i>.</p> <p>Reid's artwork is featured in the exhibition <i>Music Art Music</i> at the Camden Arts Centre, London, and <i>Disc Cover</i> at the City Art Gallery Edinburgh and the Arts Centre, Burnley.</p>	<p>Conservative Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher wins a third term. Fourteen people are killed by gunman Michael Ryan in the Hungerford Massacre. Fifty billion pounds is wiped off shares in the London Stock Market after panic on Wall Street in New York. Terry Waite is kidnapped in Beirut.</p> <p>Barbara Kruger's <i>We Don't Need Another Hero</i> billboard appears in Liverpool and in sites across the UK, initiated by Artangel.</p> <p>Digital audiotape is introduced. 1987 (<i>What the Fuck Is Going On?</i>), debut album by The Justified Ancients of Mu Mu, later known as The KLF. Transvision Vamp's singles <i>Revolution Baby</i> and <i>Tell The Girl</i> are released. Simon Frith &amp; Howard Horne's <i>Art into Pop</i>, and John A. Walker's <i>Cross-Overs: Art into Pop, Pop into Art</i> are published.</p>
<p><b>1988</b></p>	<p>Reid produces artwork for Boy George's <i>No Clause 28</i> single.</p> <p>VAGUE magazine featuring artwork by Reid.</p> <p>Reid takes part in group exhibitions including the <i>International Graphics Fair</i>, Earls Court, and <i>Critical Montage</i>, Chiswick, London.</p> <p>Impresario: Malcolm McLaren and the <i>New Wave</i> exhibition at the New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York.</p>	<p>The Iran-Iraq War ends. Suspected Libyan terrorist bomb explodes on Pan Am jet over Lockerbie in Scotland on December 21st killing all 259 on board and 11 on the ground. Laws restricting opening times for UK are changed allowing pubs to stay open all day.</p> <p>Tate Gallery Liverpool opens on 24 May.</p> <p>CDs outsell vinyl records. Boy George's single <i>No Clause 28</i> is released. Stewart Home's <i>Assault on Culture</i> and Jonathon Green's <i>Days in the Life: Voices from the English Underground 1961-1971</i> are published.</p>
<p><b>1989</b></p>	<p>Assorted Images publish <i>Celtic Surveyor: More Incomplete Works of Jamie Reid</i>.</p> <p>Reid begins work at The Strongroom recording studio, East London, producing murals, paintings, logos and general artwork. This work continues to the present.</p> <p>Reid holds a solo exhibition at the Art Workshop, Glasgow. Another solo exhibition, <i>Up They Rise</i>, takes place at the Parco Gallery in Tokyo, and travels to the Parco Studio, Osaka and the Parco Gallery, Nagoya, Japan.</p>	<p>Superpowers USA and Russia declare an end to the Cold War. George Bush Sr. becomes President of the United States. The Berlin Wall falls; collapse of Communist Eastern Europe begins. The Chinese Army turn on student demonstrators in Tiananmen Square. England enjoy the hottest summer since 1976. Liverpool beat Everton 3-2 to win the FA Cup, but the Hillsborough Stadium disaster make it a tragic year for football, claiming the lives of 94 football fans.</p> <p>ARK and Bluecoat Arts Centre present <i>Pop Mechanica: Perestroika in the Avant-Garde</i>, bringing Soviet musicians and artists to Liverpool for a series of events.</p>

<p><b>1989</b></p>	<p>'On the Passage of a few People through a Rather Brief Moment in Time: The Situationist International 1956-1972' Sex Pistols mural featured in travelling exhibition curated by Elizabeth Sussman. Musée national d'art moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, France, February 21, 1989 - April 9, 1989; Institute of Contemporary Arts, London, England, June 23, 1989 - August 13, 1989 ; Institute of Contemporary Arts, Boston, Massachusetts, October 20, 1989 - January 7 1990.</p> <p>Reid takes part in the group exhibition Thatcher, Young Unknowns, London and another exhibition at Kettle's Yard Gallery, Cambridge. He also takes part in a John Heartfield exhibition at the Bluecoat, Liverpool, and Punk Shook Us Alive (Then Dead) at the Melkweg, Amsterdam.</p>	<p>Adbusters magazine is founded by Kalle Lasn. Tim Berners-Lee develops the world wide web, along with HTML and the concept of website addresses. Satellite TV network Sky is launched. Craig Bromberg's The Wicked Ways of Malcom McLaren is published.</p>
<p><b>1990</b></p>	<p>Reid's solo exhibition Celtic Surveyor opens at the Dixon Bate Gallery, Manchester.</p> <p>Reid begins work with Rhys Mwyn and Anhrefn, a Welsh-language punk rock band. This included designing the sleeve for their album formerly titled Rhowch Eich Teitl Eich Hun /Fill in your own title. Later titled Dragon's Revenge.</p> <p>Reid designs the cover for the anti-Poll Tax compilation album Rise of the Phoenix.</p> <p>Reid produces artworks for In Our Time album by Cactus Rain. Reid also directs the videos for the singles from this album. Reid produces the art work for the Half Man Half Biscuit/Margi Clarke single No Regrets.</p> <p>Reid produces poster and title graphics for the film Blonde Fist.</p> <p>Reid takes part in Images Of Rock at the Kunsthallen Brandts Klaedfabrik, Odense, Denmark.</p>	<p>Anti Poll Tax demonstrations end in riots and Margaret Thatcher resigns from office. John Major becomes the youngest Prime Minister this century at the age of 47. A ban is lifted on anti apartheid parties and Nelson Mandela walks free after 27 years in prison.</p> <p>British Art Show at the Hayward Gallery shows work by Young British Artists (YBAs). Robert Mapplethorpe's The Perfect Moment show of nude and homosexual photographs opens at the Cincinnati Contemporary Art Centre, in spite of accusations of indecency by Citizens for Community Values.</p> <p>Vivienne Westwood is the first fashion designer to be profiled on London Weekend Television's arts programme, The South Bank Show. Tim Berners-Lee publishes a more formal proposal for the World Wide Web and the first web page is written. The Half Man Half Biscuit/Margi Clarke single No Regrets is released.</p>
<p><b>1991</b></p>	<p>Reid's Celtic Surveyor/ Punk Yng Nghymru at Oriol Pendeitsh, Caernarfon. Celtic Surveyor also travels to the Britannia Hall, Derry; 051 Media Centre, Liverpool; Cornerhouse Manchester (1991-92); Kunsthhaus , Berlin; Dresden (1991-92).</p> <p>Reid designs artwork for Half Man Half Biscuit single No Regrets. He also directs the video for the same single.</p>	<p>The Gulf War is the first televised war and more than ever before is fought from a distance - using remote-controlled missiles as a part of a strategic bombing campaign. On 25 December, the Soviet Union officially ceases to exist. The world is mystified by 'crop circles', which first appeared in Britain but were soon reported across the world.</p> <p>Young British Artists exhibition at the Saatchi Gallery. Damien Hirst solo exhibition at the ICA.</p>

1991	<p>Reid produces <i>Peace is Tough</i>, based upon an iconic image of John Wayne.</p> <p>Reid takes part in <i>Images of Rock</i> at the Gotenborgs Konstmuseum, Gothenburg, Sweden and the Leopold-Hoesch Museum, Duren, Germany.</p>	<p>Douglas Coupland publishes <i>Generation X</i>. Jon Savage's <i>England's Dreaming: Sex Pistols and Punk Rock</i> is published.</p>
1992	<p>Reid's <i>Celtic Surveyor</i> exhibition opens at <i>Back to Basics</i>, Leeds.</p> <p>Reid produces cover artwork for <i>Shamanarchy</i> in the UK, a compilation album by the London-based collective loosely known as <i>Evolution</i>, who also produced the <i>Encyclopaedia Psychedelica</i>.</p> <p>Reid takes part in the <i>Ideal Art Exhibition</i> at the 051 Media Centre, Liverpool.</p>	<p>'Black Wednesday' forces withdrawal of sterling from the ERM. The Conservative Party is re-elected with their leader John Major. The Democratic Party candidate William J. Clinton is elected US President. Channel Tunnel opens. The Queen describes 1992 as her <i>Annus Horribilus</i>.</p> <p>Trophies of Empire exhibition at Liverpool's Bluecoat. Tracey Emin organises <i>The Phone Box</i> project, which involves placing artworks in telephone boxes in the red light districts of London and Liverpool.</p> <p>WH Smith announces they would no longer be selling LPs. Steven Spielberg makes <i>Jurassic Park</i>, a film that expresses anxieties about genetic cloning.</p>
1993	<p>Reid and Clarke's daughter Rowan is born.</p>	<p>Buckingham Palace opens its doors to the public. Bill Clinton becomes President of the USA. Czechoslovakia becomes two countries: the Slovak Republic (Slovakia) and the Czech Republic. Benazir Bhutto is sworn in as prime minister of Pakistan. Robert Thompson and Jon Venables, both 11 years old, are convicted of the murder of two-year-old James Bulger in Liverpool.</p> <p>Jay Jopling opens the London gallery <i>White Cube</i>. Venice Biennale shows several works by Young British Artists including Damien Hirst's <i>Mother and Child Divided</i>. KLF award Rachel Whiteread the title of 'Worst British Artist'.</p>
1994	<p>Reid's <i>Celtic Surveyor</i> is held at the National Slate Museum, Llanberis.</p> <p>Reid donates copies of '<i>Peace Is Tough</i>' (John Wayne image) and '<i>Corporate Slavery</i>', to the charity <i>War Child</i>.</p>	<p>Prime Minister John Major launches his '<i>Back to Basics</i>' strategy to revive Britain's family values, only to discover stories of cabinet ministers indulging in a variety of sordid affairs in the Sunday tabloids. Nelson Mandela becomes the first black leader of South Africa. British Coal is privatised with the sale of 22 deep mines and 32 open-cast pits.</p> <p>Edvard Munch's painting <i>The Scream</i> is stolen in Oslo, and was recovered on 7<sup>th</sup> May. The Turner Prize is won by Antony Gormley.</p> <p>American football and movie star OJ Simpson is pursued live on TV by police trying to arrest him for the suspected murder of his wife. He is later acquitted on live TV. The National Lottery is launched.</p>

<p><b>1995</b></p>	<p>Reid works with Zion Train, producing artwork and participating in an "interactive interview" on CD-ROM.</p> <p>I groaned with pain: Sex, Seditonaries and the Sex Pistols, Eagle Gallery, London.</p>	<p>Britain's most notorious female serial killer, Rosemary West, is sentenced to life imprisonment 10 times over. Financial dealer Nick Leeson, whose trading led to the collapse of Barings Bank, is jailed for six and a half years.</p> <p>The Turner Prize is won by Damien Hirst.</p> <p>Bill Gates' company Microsoft launches Windows 95. Simon Ford's The Realization and Suppression of the Situationist International: An Annotated Bibliography, 1972 – 1992 is published.</p>
<p><b>1996</b></p>	<p>Reid meets his future wife Maria Hughes.</p> <p>Following a visit to The Strongroom, the Afro-Celt Sound System form, then release their first album "Volume 1: Sound Magic", incorporating sleeve designs by Reid.</p> <p>Reid, along with the Liverpool arts collective Visual Stress, works with the Afro-Celt Sound System at live gigs.</p> <p>Reid starts his ongoing collaboration with Russian computer laser artist Alexei Blinov/Raylab.</p> <p>The Pistols original line-up returns - Lydon, Cook, Jones &amp; Matlock - for the 'Filthy Lucre' world tour.</p>	<p>Belgium, France, the Netherlands, Portugal and Sweden ban imports of British beef as cases of BSE are discovered in humans. A gunman murders 16 children and one of their teachers in an attack on a primary school in the Scottish town of Dunblane. Prince Charles and Princess Diana get divorced.</p> <p>The Hacienda Must be Built: On the Legacy of Situationist Revolt conference takes place at the Hacienda in Manchester.</p> <p>DVDs are launched in Japan. Jah Wobble releases the Inspiration of William Blake.</p>
<p><b>1997</b></p>	<p>Reid exhibits a retrospective entitled Peace is Tough in New York's Artificial Gallery.</p>	<p>Scotland and Wales vote in favour of devolution. Britain hands Hong Kong back to China. A car accident in Paris kills Diana, Princess of Wales; 19 million viewers watch the funeral coverage on BBC1. Tony Blair leads Labour to election victory and begins the Cool Britannia PR campaign.</p> <p>Sensation exhibition of YBAs at the RCA, London.</p> <p>Negativland release the anti-pop album Dispepsi, including disfigured Pepsi jingles. Jon Savage's Time Travel: From the Sex Pistols to Nirvana and Michael Bracewell's England Is Mine: Pop Life in Albion from Wilde to Goldie are published.</p>
<p><b>1998</b></p>	<p>Reid's Peace is Tough is held at the Gazi Arts Centre, Athens.</p> <p>Reid is featured in Destroy: Punk Graphic Design in Britain exhibition at the Royal Festival Hall in London.</p> <p>Reid paints the Four Elements series, based upon the Druid Wheel of the Year.</p>	<p>Good Friday Agreement establishes a devolved Northern Irish assembly. Bill Clinton becomes the centre of a sex scandal. Asian currencies and stock markets plunge, creating an economic crisis for the continent. 18 year old Michael Owen becomes the youngest footballer to play for England this century.</p>

1998		<p>John Moores establishes the A Foundation to support the development and exhibition of contemporary art in Liverpool. Michael Wilford completes the second phase of Tate Liverpool's development. Angel of the North by Antony Gormley.</p> <p>Apple Computer unveils the iMac. The Digital Millennium Copyright Act is created to extend and clarify the copyright protection for creative works online.</p>
1999	<p>Reid marries Maria Hughes.</p> <p>Reid's Peace is Tough takes place at The Workhaus, Liverpool, in Bangor, Wales and the City Gallery in Dublin.</p> <p>The Afro-Celt Sound System release their long-awaited second album Afro Celt Sound System Volume 2, incorporating further sleeve designs by Reid.</p>	<p>Britain decides not to join the European Single Currency. Two students kill 15 people including themselves at a high school in Colorado, USA. The World Trade Organisation (WTO) conference is disrupted by violent anti-globalisation protesters.</p> <p>The Stuckism movement is founded by Billy Childish and Charles Thomson. The first Liverpool Biennial takes place.</p> <p>Metro is launched: a daily newspaper distributed free to travellers on the London Underground. MySpace is officially introduced to the internet. Emigre and five other design magazines publish the First Thing Manifesto 2000, calling for greater awareness of the role designers play in promoting corrupt corporations.</p>
2000	<p>Reid decorates the Magic Room at the rock'n' roll Hotel Pelirocco, Brighton, East Sussex.</p> <p>Reid takes part in the British Arts Council exhibition Sound Design (2000-2002).</p>	<p>Global stock markets tumble as the 'dotcom bubble' bursts. Y2K passes without serious, widespread computer failures, despite fears to the contrary. The human genome is deciphered. The UK fuel protests take place. Dr. Harold Shipman is found guilty of murdering 15 patients between 1995 and 1998 and sentenced to life imprisonment. President Slobodan Milošević leaves office after widespread demonstrations throughout Serbia.</p> <p>The Tate Modern Gallery opens in London.</p> <p>Julien Temple's Sex Pistols documentary film, The Filth and the Fury, is released. Tom Vague's King Mob Echo: English Section of the Situationist International and King Mob Echo: From Gordon Riots to Situationists &amp; Sex Pistols are published.</p>
2001	<p>Reid's Peace Is Tough exhibition shown at the Arches, Glasgow, the Waterside Theatre, Derry, and Jump Ship Rat, Liverpool (2001-02).</p> <p>Reid produces 'Maridala' image for Legalise Cannabis Campaign. He also produces the cover artworks for Afro Celt Sound System's third album Further In Time.</p>	<p>Almost 3,000 are killed in the September 11, 2001 attacks at the World Trade Center in New York City, The Pentagon in Arlington, Virginia, and in rural Shanksville, Pennsylvania, USA. George W. Bush succeeds Bill Clinton, becoming the 43rd President of the USA. Britain joins the USA in strikes on Taleban-controlled Afghanistan. Tony Blair's Labour Party wins the UK general election.</p>

	<p>Throughout the entire period Reid continues to produce drawings, paintings, photos, and hangings used in shamanistic rituals, festivals and club events. He also produces cover artworks for a string of other artists including Boy George, and the Almighty, to name but two.</p> <p>Reid takes part in Art Tube 01, and Punk at the V&amp;A, London.</p> <p>God Save the Queen is voted number one in Q Magazine's top ten record covers of all time.</p>	<p>An estimated \$100 million worth of art is destroyed in the September 11, 2001 terrorist attack. Martin Creed wins the Turner Prize for his work The lights going on and off.</p> <p>Stephen Colegrave &amp; Chris Sullivan 's Punk: A Life Apart is published. Apple releases the iPod. Pop Idol begins on ITV.</p>
2002	<p>Reid takes part in the 2002 Liverpool Biennial with his installation Bizarre Bazaar, and the multimedia project Time for Magic, produced in collaboration with Raylab's Alexei Blinov.</p> <p>Reid exhibits new works alongside those of artist David Liddell at Jump Ship Rat, Liverpool.</p> <p>Reid takes part in the group exhibitions Golden at the Britart Gallery, London, and Viva La Republique! at the Centre of Attention, Shoreditch, London.</p> <p>Reid's artwork is displayed at the Northern Green Gathering, Pontefract.</p> <p>Reid's collaborator Brian Jones creates a 'Jamie Reid' logo in the style of his Sex Pistols ransom-note lettering.</p>	<p>The 'Party in the Palace' takes place at Buckingham Palace, London for the Queen's Golden Jubilee celebrations. The End of the foot and mouth crisis is declared after 11 months. The Euro becomes the official currency of twelve of the European Union's Members. The Queen Mother dies.</p> <p>Second Liverpool Biennial staged.</p> <p>BBC6 Music, the first new BBC radio station in decades, is launched.</p>
2003	<p>Reid's Sex Pistols mural is installed as a triptych at Tom Tom, 42 New Compton Street, London.</p> <p>Reid discusses his artwork in the BBC 2 TV series Designing the Decades.</p>	<p>Britain joins the USA in an invasion of Iraq. Saddam Hussein is captured by US forces. The highly-infectious SARS spreads from China. The Hutton Inquiry begins, with judge Lord Hutton opening an inquiry into the recent deaths of weapons expert Dr David Kelly.</p> <p>A hoard of 19 long-lost William Blake watercolours sells for £5m to an anonymous bidder. Foundation for Art and Creative Technology (FACT) is established in Liverpool. Liverpool is awarded 2008 European Capital of Culture status. Charles Saatchi opens his eponymous gallery at the County Hall in London, filled with art by British artists, such as Damien Hirst.</p> <p>Apple launches iTunes which becomes a major success selling 10 million songs within 4 months of launch.</p>

<p><b>2004</b></p>	<p>Reid contributes artwork to group show Pax Britannica: A Hellish Peace at the Aquarium Gallery in London on behalf of the Stop The War Coalition Exhibition also features work by Richard Hamilton, Anthony Caro and Ralph Steadman. He forges relationship with Aquarium that leads to long term working relationship.</p> <p>Reid's first solo exhibition at the Aquarium, Slated, is held later that year. Reid also begins a publishing relationship with the gallery.</p> <p>Reid's work is featured in the exhibition Lust, Art &amp; Fashion - Signale der Kleidung at the Podewil, Berlin.</p>	<p>Ten new states join the European Union. The CIA admits that there was no imminent threat from weapons of mass destruction before the 2003 invasion of Iraq. The findings of the Hutton Inquiry are published in London. An Osama bin Laden video airs on Arabic TV, in which he threatens terrorist attacks on the United States, and taunts US President George W. Bush over the September 11 terrorist attacks. Boxing Day Tsunami disaster in Indian Ocean.</p> <p>No Future – Sex, Seditonaries and the Sex Pistols at The Hospital, London. A fire in the Momart storage warehouse destroys major works by Helen Chadwick, Tracey Emin, Patrick Heron, Damien Hirst and other British artists.</p>
<p><b>2005</b></p>	<p>Reid holds a solo exhibition entitled Time for Magic at the Aquarium, London.</p> <p>Reid holds a solo exhibition entitled Culture My A**e at Microzine, Bold Street, Liverpool.</p>	<p>Labour wins a third consecutive term with Tony Blair as Prime Minister. Suicide bombers kill 52 people on London's transport system. Kyoto Protocol on measures to control climate change comes into force. Civil partnerships give same-sex couples legal rights. The marriage of The Prince of Wales and Camilla Parker Bowles takes place.</p> <p>Controversial drawings of Muhammad are printed in the Danish newspaper Jyllands-Posten. Adam Stout's Universal Majesty, Verity and Love Infinite: A Life of George Watson MacGregor Reid is published.</p>
<p><b>2006</b></p>	<p>Reid and his wife Maria Hughes hold an exhibition of their photography at the Egg Cafe, Liverpool.</p>	<p>Saddam Hussein is charged and found guilty of crimes against humanity and sentenced to death by hanging. President Bush acknowledges secret CIA prisons around the world outside of US legal jurisdiction. More than 1 million take to the streets in France in the largest nationwide protest ever over the 'Contrat première embauche' (CPE - First Employment Contract or Beginning Workers Contract). World Trade Talks break down with blame shared equally between the developing and the G8 countries of the world.</p> <p>Liverpool Biennial 2006 staged..Several European newspapers reprint controversial cartoons depicting the Prophet Muhammad, sparking outrage and rioting in the following weeks.</p>
<p><b>2007</b></p>	<p>'May Day May Day' exhibition at Aquarium Gallery – retrospective survey featuring primary archive pieces from Reid's artistic career from 1968 to date.</p> <p>Reid's God Save The Queen image features in Panic Attack! Art in the Punk Years at the Barbican.</p>	<p>Gordon Brown is elected Leader of the Labour Party and becomes Prime Minister 3 days later. BBC journalist Alan Johnston disappears in Gaza City, the Gaza Strip. Former Pakistani prime minister Benazir Bhutto is assassinated.</p> <p>The Turner Prize is held at Tate Liverpool.</p>

2007	<p>Reid and Isis also begin to place key pieces of archive in important private collections in the US and UK. Organisation of major museum tour begins.</p>	<p>Apple Inc. announces and introduces the highly speculated iPhone. Ronald Hutton's <i>The Druids: A History</i> and Geoffrey Ashe's <i>The Offbeat Radicals: The British Tradition of Alternative Dissent</i> are published.</p>
2008	<p>'Time for Magic', Reid Reid's collaboration with world renowned Japanese fashion company Comme des Garçons premieres in Paris.</p> <p>Reid's artwork enters permanent collection of Tate Britain.</p> <p>Reid holds an exhibition entitled <i>Stained Glass, 'Art or science, ancient or modern, macro or micro, spiritual or political...., running from 1<sup>st</sup> August to 20<sup>th</sup> September 2008 at the Aquarium.</i></p> <p>Reid's Sex Pistols mural and accompanying works featured in <i>Rock My Religion</i> at DA2 Salamanca with Joseph Beuys, Richard Hamilton and Andy Warhol.</p>	<p>Global financial crisis. Barack Obama is elected the 44th President of the USA. Fidel Castro announces his resignation as President of Cuba. The 2008 Summer Olympics take place in Beijing, China. Pervez Musharraf resigns as President of Pakistan, under impeachment pressure from the coalition government. Former building society Northern Rock is the first bank in Europe to be taken into state control, due to the USA subprime mortgage financial crisis.</p> <p>A two-day auction of art by Damien Hirst raises £111m - setting a new record for a sale dedicated to one artist. It is the first time an artist sold a substantial body of work this way.</p> <p>Former Beatle Ringo Starr performs on the roof of Liverpool's St George's Hall to launch the city's year as European Capital of Culture.</p>
2009	<p>Reid forms the artist collective Red Rag to a Bull, along with Jimmy Cauty, Billy Childish and others, in order to defend the actions of a teenager who used a reproduction of his work in a collage, and whom Damien Hirst threatened with legal action as a result.</p> <p>Reid is involved with L-13's Art Hate Week, along with Billy Childish, Jimmy Cauty and others.</p> <p>An ice-cream company called The Icecreamists copy Reid's <i>God Save the Queen</i> artwork and are threatened with legal action by the Sex Pistols' lawyers.</p>	<p>Barack Obama is inaugurated as the 44th President of the USA. Ongoing financial crisis and recession which began in late 2007 continues with many calling it the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression of the 1930s causing house prices to decline, and unemployment to increase. Swine flu is declared a global pandemic. Israel and Hamas declare a unilateral ceasefire in the Gaza War.</p> <p>William Blake's first solo exhibition is restaged at Tate Britain, reuniting nine of his surviving works 200 years after they were first displayed. Jon Savage's <i>The England's Dreaming Tapes</i> is published. Ray Davies releases <i>The Kinks Choral Collection</i> featuring artwork by William Blake.</p>
2010	<p>Reid's latest solo exhibition of small, painted works on canvas, paper and slate takes place at L-13 from 14<sup>th</sup> May to 13<sup>th</sup> June 2010.</p> <p>Reid launches a new website, <a href="http://www.jamiereid.org">http://www.jamiereid.org</a>.</p> <p>Malcolm McLaren dies on 8<sup>th</sup> April 2010.</p> <p>On 21<sup>st</sup> September 2010, The Druid Network is given charitable status by the Charity Commission for England and Wales, making Druidry the first pagan practice to be given official recognition as a religion.</p>	<p>The Conservatives win the most MPs in the UK general election but fall short of a majority, leading to the first hung parliament since 1974. Gordon Brown resigns and Conservative David Cameron becomes the next Prime Minister. Prince William and Kate Middleton announce their engagement.</p> <p>Volcanic ash from one of several eruptions beneath a glacier in Iceland begins to disrupt air traffic across northern and western Europe.</p>