





Part 1 of 4 – Troubled Sleep (the verb to be)

Excuse my banality, but let me start out as plainly as I can: Cinema is the most powerful artistic medium currently available in our limited existence; literature (writing), music (sound), acting (drama, performance) and photography (cinematography, composition, color, texture) are all utilized and represented as a communal part of the whole. Then of course, all is sublimated through the interaction of the viewer – and therein, creates innumerable definitions – inexplicable evolutions of all said disciplines. When taken in by the audience, the viewer, the voyeur, they all change simultaneously for the entire duration of the work. They do not remain static; each experience is forever subjective and fresh. The meaning is personalized by each audience; their lives, their experiences, their prejudices, fears, loves, hatreds, neuroses, etc. are projected on to the projections and create a unique, personal context. Thereby this art form contains all existing, traditional art forms and serves that phantom other function – interactive, fully subjective experience. So then it stands to reason that it truly is the most perfect and complete medium available to any artist today. Whether used to commiserate or convert, it is always a jackhammer assault on every sense, engaging us completely.

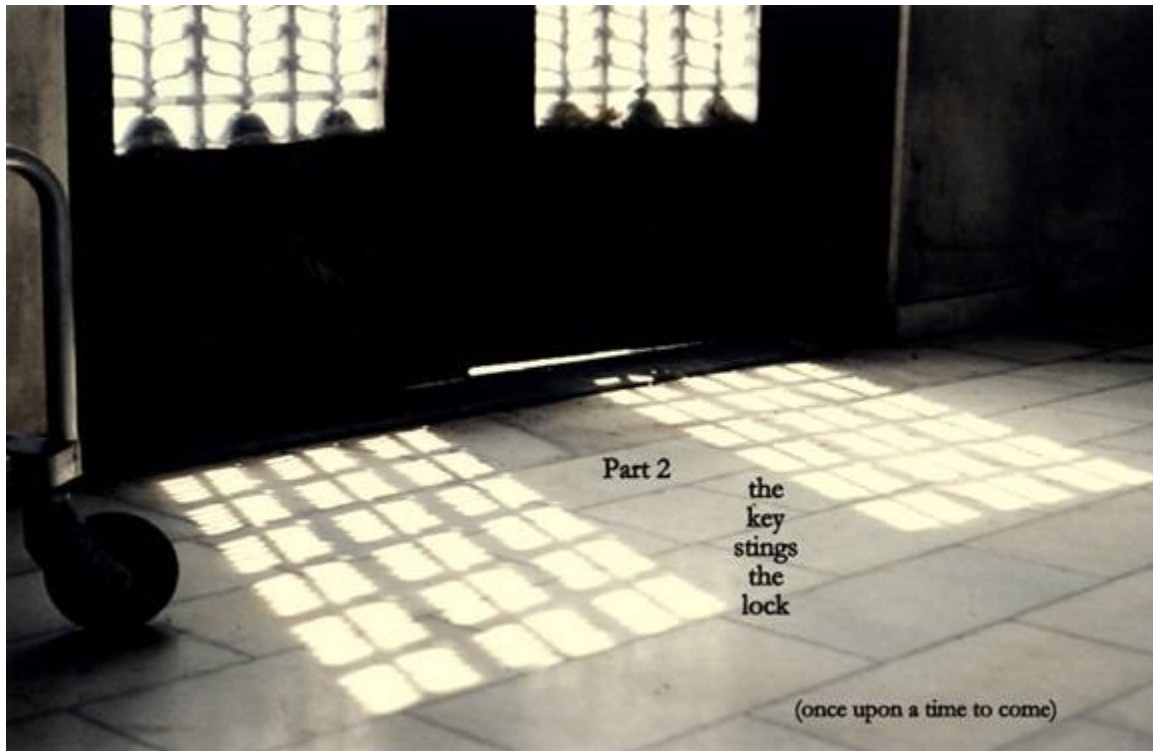
This medium, which incorporates all other mediums into it, has the power of the gospels and the potency of coitus. It is a weapon and a bastion... an immutable piece of the dogma that allows the powers of expression and creation to flourish. We must be unafraid to harness these nameless and abstract ghosts, unafraid to shape them into audio-visual representations of whatever we feel the ache to express, whether we understand what we are doing or not. Fear must not creep into our hearts to stifle and suffocate us with superfluous emotional garbage while behind a camera, while putting pen to paper or

aiming light onto a scene. These hypothetical films are ourselves we are photographing, writing and illuminating. We are not ashamed of ourselves. When these works are at long last displayed to the world we will hold our heads high against even the most vitriolic of reproaches, for we will have done what we felt we must have, what we believed we had to – what was honest. We had the courage to be unapologetically human, no matter how confused, angry, depressing, ugly, or beautifully simple and seemingly trite that may have been at the time. The underlying point is that action was taken. Passive inactivity was rejected, creation was given its just due, thereby we will see even our grand failures as great accomplishments.

If there were no structure, no context or even no audience it would not change a thing, for the artist simply creates out of an indefatigable need to create. This lends itself to a definition of “art” “artist”, etc. The definition may be summed up in a single word: Honesty. Divisions cannot be afforded when it comes to art... if they are permitted then the meaning is diluted, the points dulled, the intent sullied by avarice, ego, or pandering. This honesty is creation out of an absolute and genuine need to communicate; communication with oneself, the world, the unknown. Creation out of a need to express something which gnaws away inside yourself, something that must come out- that will come out – in one way or another.

This tool of cinema will forever remain razor sharp and able to gut even the most stubborn of pigs as long as the practitioners of said craft actively acknowledge and revere its complex yet gracefully succinct tenacity to tell the truth – even when it is blatantly lying.

So, take camera in hand, that is the only tool required, as long as you shoot what is honest to you, what is honest and un-affected, then you open yourself up to freely accomplish all which is available via this boundless form known as cinema.



Part 2 of 4 – The Key Stings the Lock (once upon a time to come)

I say: cut out the tongues of all those inefficacious fools who profess the weakness, futility, pomp and death of manifestos. The skies are dark and soot-filled, over-cast with heavy storm clouds rumbling an impending deluge. The land is brittle and cracked, covered by the senseless celluloid of soulless films past; trampled under foot and ground into the dust of past transgressions. It is time to rip open the heavens, soak this soil and create fertile ground able to cultivate the seeds of a new generation, allowing them to blossom and grow. It is time to SHOUT manifestos from every make-shift hill of debris you manage to saunter upon – I currently find myself upon a hill – so please, allow me to shout:

We should facilitate a true communal endeavor, an intricate network of cells all over the world working as a truly independent, yet wholly supported, cinematic community; a Cinematic Communism. A group of unique individuals who are all working towards the common goals of a pure cinematic expression, proudly standing outside of the stale, obvious and accepted industry which has encouraged and fostered pandering and irrelevant works produced by the reigning false idols of cinema; the shameless golden calves forever suckling at the diseased teat of bourgeoisie ideals. Silence cannot be tolerated, inaction must not abide within our community. Everyone must work to be equal, the Marxist nightmare which describes the brutal, capitalist equation wherein the workers do not make enough to actually buy back what they produce will be utterly abolished. Our revolution is for all people, all being equal. All of this is simply a small part of the dogma for people who worship the moving image.

The closed off and restricted industry ruled over by a select few witless gatekeepers, desperate to retain their personal and ultimately empty status, is the exact institution we seek to actively and vociferously topple to the ground. Filmmakers are not required to have deep pockets and loose, prostituted ethics in order to make a film that will be seen by a wide, welcoming and receptive audience, but for reasons far beyond belief it has somehow become an accepted and necessary evil one must endure in order to be part of a bloated design which in the end only stands for rote commerce – which only stands for the death of art. We refuse to continue wading knee-deep through the stagnant cesspool which has been accepted for so long as the film industry, an industry that is artistically bankrupt, utterly impoverished but rich with ersatz ideas and fraudulent inspiration.

An artistic virility must be maintained against the stubborn and painful constipation of an industry which no longer understands the medium they mass-produce and fob off upon the hungry, slowly drowning souls of the public. Our garages are filled with individuals who will no longer suffer the constant dilution and repudiation of basic artistic integrity – the principles of honest, unaffected articulations.

Our mission is to free the cinema from the insulting and demeaning bonds which it has been held within for far too long – violently divorce it from the homogenized commodity it has become and return it to the vagrants, outsiders, eccentrics, fetishists and artists who began it.

This is about resuscitating the small parts of yourself which you've been trained to ignore, little by little throughout the years. It is about communicating with the world on a universally understandable level using twenty four still frames of photography every second.

The internet and the digital revolution have indeed made the indentured servants, the poor huddled masses of the cinematic world into landowners, royalty and honest-to-god-damn practicing filmmakers; but to what end? If the content is not the direct culmination of the years spent fighting for scraps, if it does not ignite the world anew or at the very minimum fan the slowly dying embers of the world's cinema then what good has this "revolution" been? Has there even been one, or have we just simply, at this point, only armed the peasants and wait still for their actual revolt?

I say we have only been precariously perched upon an edge and the real revolution has yet to materialize. This is why we have opened the garage doors; an upheaval of the underground. The demons we've had stored away in the cellars are being released; we've become intimate with the tools that control them and now is the time to put them to practical use. This spirited and sincere rebellion beckons all who have ever felt the presence of a question that threatens to disrupt their ability to function unless they confront it head on, unashamedly. We will give voice to the voiceless, an outlet to the underdogs and the truly independent.

We must condemn the pitiful, toothless dogs who whine miserably for their master's to guide them through the darkness of portraying life as a trite and soulless play of egos.

Denounce the endless trivialities which are shamelessly paraded in front of a half somnambulist audience, numb to the predictable and condescending tones of the forever repeating and pale specters of what amounts to so much advertising disguised as entertainment. Reject their despicable need to attach a dollar sign to everything we do, see, think or feel. We have no choice but to innately, animalistically understand these precepts, to give ourselves over completely and convulsively – to bend and to be loyal servants to the tips of our swords; subverting hearts and minds by carefully crafting the content delivered to the ears and eyes.

So we must stand up and shout, yes. Not only shout, but we must sincerely believe our convictions. We can only harness the limitless potential of this medium if we truly carry the faith and remain lucid in our brilliant, feverish insanity.

A thousand different choirs singing a thousand different songs... dissonant, perhaps, yet deeply, richly textured with the beauty of human creation.

The anarchists of this new cinematic venture will always have their trigger fingers expertly poised upon the camera's control, ready to shoot at a second's notice. Ready to focus upon the scenes created out of the unassailable desire to reveal to the world something it may not have yet seen. Forever guiding the steady, unblinking and unflinching eye of the camera upon the myriad of secrets which are hidden in plain sight; the image must be pure to the point of horror.



Part 3 - the stick (the pig)

Part 3 of 4 – the stick (the pig)

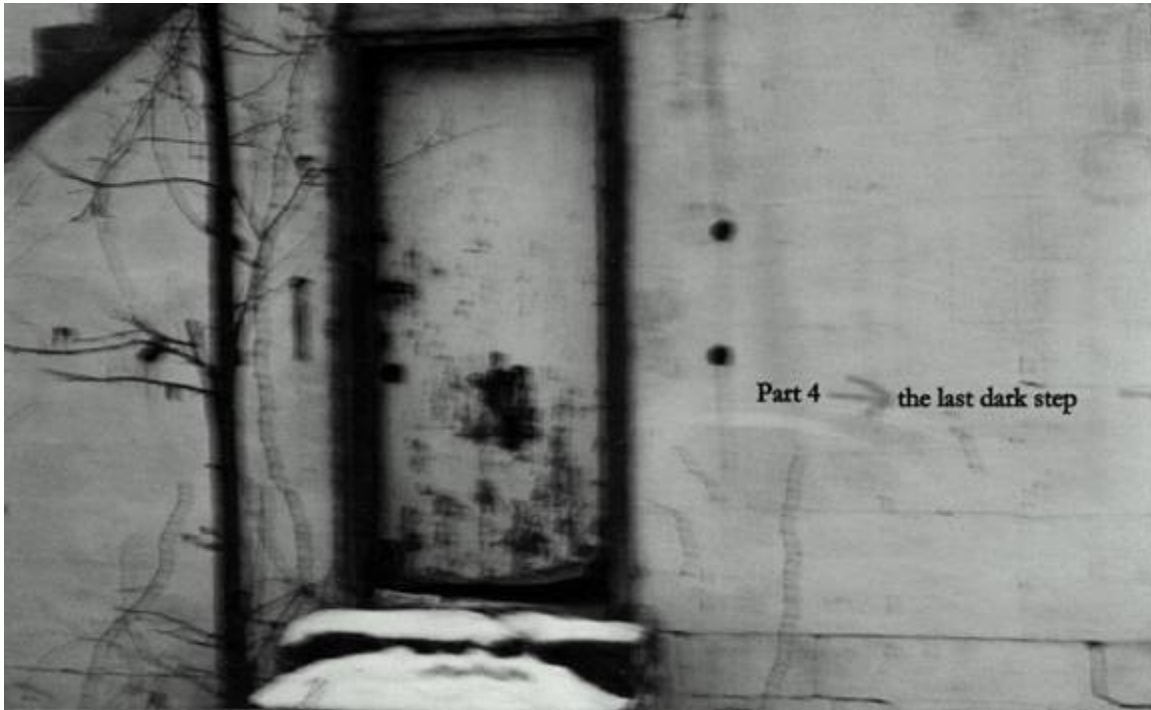
The fog is receding and we're starting to regain our focus. What will we see – and more importantly, how will we show it to others?

This is a fundamental question which begs, on raw hands and knees, to be answered in vicious and assured strikes of sturm and drang. We humbly posit to grasp this elusive and erudite language of intimacies, comprised as it is of the pen and camera, of sound and vision moving in time with one another to construct endless textures and extract endless pleasures from within all reality and ghosts in equal measure.

Camus once said; “What is a rebel? A man who says no.”: A person who says no, one who will not only refuse to abide the ugly prostitutions of our philosophies, but is also compelled to be vocal about their heartfelt disdain in regards to said prostitutions. We must show the world how dissatisfied we are with all the weak answers we've been afforded thus far in the game. Our goal is to not only provide fresh answers, but to pose entirely new questions as well.

It is time to make our youth into soldiers of a non-destructive nature; these poor youth who have been seduced by the systematically lowered standards of what is shamelessly passed off as art today. The sad-sack suckers who think, dialog is passé, “toilet” is the only type of humor, black and white only means old and CGI equals instant cinematographic grace. There is an entire generation wasting away from a methodically bred lack of enthusiasm, a manufactured lethargy, both intellectual and physical. The advent of the hyper-information age has reduced all content to instantaneous blurbs and bit streams; text messages and commercial laden television, filled with shapeless, soft, dull angles mindlessly rubbing up against the legs of any hapless viewer in its path; this indecent pandering is constantly taking place and much worse, being accepted, becoming the standard... we need to re-sharpen the edges, we need people to cut themselves wide open in order to make them take notice once again. Sometimes you have to kill the ant with a sledgehammer. The English language is now routinely sacrificed to the short-hand slang gods; nigh unrecognizable to the eloquent authors who are marginalized further with every passing day. The same foolhardy bastardization can be seen sickly leaking out into all other forms which language influences; our communication at its most base level has become sluggish and diluted, therefore it follows that our various expressions of said language will crumble away in a corresponding, dissonant harmony. We have taken this for granted too long and for too long has there been a void in the film world where people could go to SHOUT against these things without having to fear the censor's edits and the producer's avaricious indignations. A place that stood for HONESTY not just commercial gain, a place where people could look if they knew they wanted to see a film that came right from someone's passionate guts, right from an intellectual and artistic integrity about the art of making films. People have been chasing the phantoms of expression for all time, desperately trying to pull close the ghosts of their obsessions, trying to create a mobius strip of their fetishes. But you cannot put your arms around a ghost, these concepts are intangible and abstract, this is why people look towards art; they need to see what they've been fighting and spitting to express said in way that had thus far eluded them. This is what we are here for, to provide a catalogue of the sufferings which have for so long been obscured by this fog of an intellectual war, the war to simply

keep people entertained, not engaged in any meaningful way. We are here to provide an outlet, a confessor, a catharsis.



Part 4 of 4 – the last dark step

Now please, do not take my posturing as any sort of solipsism or banal egoism. I'm not above anyone (my stance is quite sincerely that all men are equal, without a second thought, some have just been fooled into ignoring this very important fact), if they want to watch the most recent explosions-tits-pop music-product placement laden piece of sub-entertainment that slithers its way into the cinema, then by all means, have at it. I'm in no position to judge anyone, I'm just offering my opinions here. I certainly sound militant and bullheaded in my tenor but I assure you, I want people to have some way to escape, even if it means they're being condescendingly shown what amounts to a despicable advertisement disguised as a film. Whatever guise it may take; people NEED to escape. My position here is that it is simply unacceptable for that to be the customary way. People deserve some substance and if they are not afforded the opportunity to consume it in, at the very least, equal measure, than we are committing an atrocious act of negligence to not only the healthy escapism of an individual but to the continued intellectual evolution of the species as a whole. On that same note, please do not think I discount, ignore or am downright ignorant of all the truly beautiful, honest and enlightening art that is being and has always been created in the filmic medium. There are people making pertinent and honest films, just not nearly enough, or if they are, they have to fight tooth and nail while constantly having to maneuver adroitly through the standardized system, sweating bullets the whole time to meet insulting requirements or to appease target audiences, demographics and share-holders. This is not an acceptable breeding ground for art, it is an artist producing, against all odds, with every side falling in on them, art through the filters of commerce. It is ever increasingly difficult for an artist to create what

they need to create without having to sacrifice their personal ethics in some way or another, and this is indeed a very troubling fact... yet a fact nonetheless.

The story is even more depressing for young, anonymous filmmakers who have not yet produced a noteworthy canon of work thereby having made a 'name' for themselves and cemented their stature in the industry in any significant, albeit small, way. The youth, the new blood, needs a new way to deliver the message of rebellion to a new generation raised on the internet and cellular phones. Digital cameras and powerful computers sit in every home, these are the guns and mortars of this revolution, these are the armaments our soldiers must become effortlessly efficient with, the technology which will win this war for us.

This fog may well represent a new dark age, when lucidity and poignancy in art are sadistically enshrouded by fanaticism, oppression and insincerity driven by bourgeois, economic ulterior motives. This then, must serve as the new Renaissance, a rekindled and impassioned Enlightenment. We need our community to be united towards a common goal; a goal of pure cinematic expression, a goal of honesty in the face of a society that does not pay well for honesty. We need to agree upon the basic tenets of artistic integrity and intellectual veracity, and shout their importance and glorification at every turn, into every ear available to us. We must fearlessly stomp our foot down upon, and then past, this last dark step in order to walk into the vividly bright futures we all deserve.

- Jonathan Douglas Duran – late 2009