

VISIONARY VOYAGES - ARTWORK BY ERIAL

PSYCHEDELIC ILLUMINATIONS

VOLUME 1 ISSUE VII

LS& & DEPRESSION

TOM LYTTLE'S HIGH SPEAK

TRANSMISSIONS FROM JONATHAN OTT

2-CB SYNTHESIS

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C O N T E N T S

FEATURES

20 Manna From Heaven

by Steve Kubby

In the old testament, there are many references to a magical food which rained down from heaven and kept the Israelites from perishing as they wandered the badlands for forty years. Did this food, called manna, contain the "magic fire" that allowed Moses to communicate directly with God? Just what was manna and where did it come from? Steve Kubby thinks he's figured it out...

24 Stalking the Spirit of Ibogaine

by Arjuna de Silva

Why does one little shrub from West Africa have the world medical community at odds? Because this little shrub is *iboga*, and it has been used in ritualistic cleansing and "rebirthing" ceremonies for centuries. Some say it is just another drug, but narcotics addicts say it is their only hope. Find out why.

27 Remembering the World Unity Festival

by Randal Factor

At the end of last summer, thousands of people gathered to celebrate world peace and harmony. This retrospective takes a look at the problems and promise of bringing people together for a new tomorrow.

37 Art of the Other

artwork by Erial

How often do we get to glimpse across the dimensional threshold into the nether realms of hyperspace? If we could take a snapshot while we were there, would we? Erial may be the first artist in history to accomplish such a task. Now, for the first time ever, his lovingly-rendered transdimensional postcards are available for public viewing. Erial and PI invite you to take a vacation of imagination into another world.

44 LSD and Depression

by Kimberly Wade

Discover how one woman's suicidal depression was transformed into a love for life with one single session of LSD. Her brave story is recounted in her own words.

47 Hallucinati at Play - Tom Lyttle's High Speak

an interview by Ma'aseh Merkabah

Tom Lyttle, psychedelic publisher and historian, finds himself in all kinds of interesting situations during his periods of intense "research". Find out how blotter is made, how covert police agencies are infiltrating peaceful tribes, and how the more things change, the more they stay the same.

54 Talking Art, Imagination, and Albert Hofmann

an interview with artist Jan Saether by Ron Piper

Robert Zanger, former president of the Albert Hofmann Society, and artist Jan Saether have joined forces to immortalize the Swiss chemist who discovered LSD in a bronze bust. Listen in as Ron Piper discusses the nature of art, imagination, and why this project was so important to both of them.

60 Transmissions from Jonathan Ott

an interview by Ron Piper

Entheogen expert Jonathan Ott has a thing or two to say about the US Government's mishandling of the Constitution. He feels the time has come for change and civil disobedience.

70 Journey through the Assemblage Point

by Runyon Wilde

Runyon Wilde peels back the fabric of reality to show that there is more to being than seeing and feeling. Learn how to focus yourself away from the mundane and towards the unspeakable.



COLUMNS & DEPARTMENTS

3 Psychedeligrams

4 PI Editorial:

Jury Veto Power - Just say "Know"

7 News Vortex

DEA genocide & Research Updates

11 Hemp News

DEA harassment & other news

18 Beneath the Canopy

Building roads is costing lives, and land

34 Mark Riva's Metagrooves

The latest sounds to feed your head

66 Home Alchemy

A trecherous 2CB synthesis

74 P.O.V

Talking Psychedelic with Fred Smith

78 Book Reviews

Books by Myron Stolaroff & Jay Fikes

80 The Cyberdeli

reviews, sources, events, cyber-fragments

About The Cover:

Gaian Brainstorm is a spectacular piece of artwork by Erial, the featured artist for this issue of *Psychedelic Illuminations*. For more information on Erial and his work, see "Art of the Other" on page 37 of this magazine. A full description of the cover image can be found on page 40.



Editor's Note

Winning the War

It's war, and we are the enemy.

Strategically speaking, in the "war on drugs" traditional tactics of engagement just won't work on this particular battlefield, and it's best not to think of the armed legions on their seek and destroy mission as our enemy, per se, but rather as basically normal people just doing their jobs.

For decades many in the psychedelic community have been successfully holding their own against the massive forces intent on stamping out the use of drugs. We guerillas hunker down, keep low profile and exercise discretion when altering consciousness. One thing always seemed comfortably certain: eventually the voice of reason would prevail and the preciousness of psychedelics would be affirmed by the culture at large.

Twenty years ago it seemed inevitable that the value of expanding awareness, by whatever means, would be recognized, and psychedelics would be embraced and added to the many technologies for helping humanity continue evolving to ever higher consciousness, a noble endeavor if there ever was one.

Yet time passes and little changes. What to do? Direct confrontation is likely to fail, as the lessons of the nascent psychedelic movement should tell. Although brave, the early advocates for psychedelics were naive and caused as much fear and hostility as they inspired enthusiasm for LSD, psilocybin, DMT and other tools they promoted. But keeping psychedelics in the closet for personal use only seems selfish.

It's encouraging when a Nobel-Prize-league scientist such as Kerry Mullis declares that he has never stopped taking "acid" since he was a student at Berkeley. Despite the attention Mullis has attracted, his example disproves the assumption that psychedelics, especially when used continuously over time, will fry your brains.

Trippers coming out of the closet can aid in setting a reasoned tone in the campaign to delink psychedelics from other drugs.

Although reason *must* prevail, it might take many more decades. One thing the

psychedelic community could do to speed up the process is to apply a strategy focused on the drug war's rank and file foot soldiers (narcs), prison administrators and guards, the DEA command, and prosecutors nationwide, all who who depend on this war to put bread and butter on the table. These working stiffs need their jobs, however reprehensible, to feed and house themselves and their families.

After any armistice, massive layoffs would follow on both sides. What does a narc put on his resume to apply for work when he no longer is needed to go undercover? I don't know, but until we find other, more useful tasks for these people to do, the soldiers and officers in the war on drugs will fight to keep their jobs just as hard as they battle the "drug menace."

—Fred Smith

If you would like to submit an article or some artwork for publishing consideration, please query our Managing Editor, James Kent, at:

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Please have some familiarity with the magazine and the types of articles we run. We are always looking for celebrity interviews (related to expansion of consciousness), new research and experimentation, psychedelic philosophy (as related to nature of consciousness, reality, etc.), book reviews, spiritual musings, ecology and hemp updates, cyber-delic and techno-rave related information, and generally off-the-wall stuff that will never be published anywhere else. Although we may edit submissions for clarity and accuracy, we do not censor.

Articles must be typed & double spaced. Artwork & photos - do not send originals please. Photocopies are fine. No submission will be returned without a SASE



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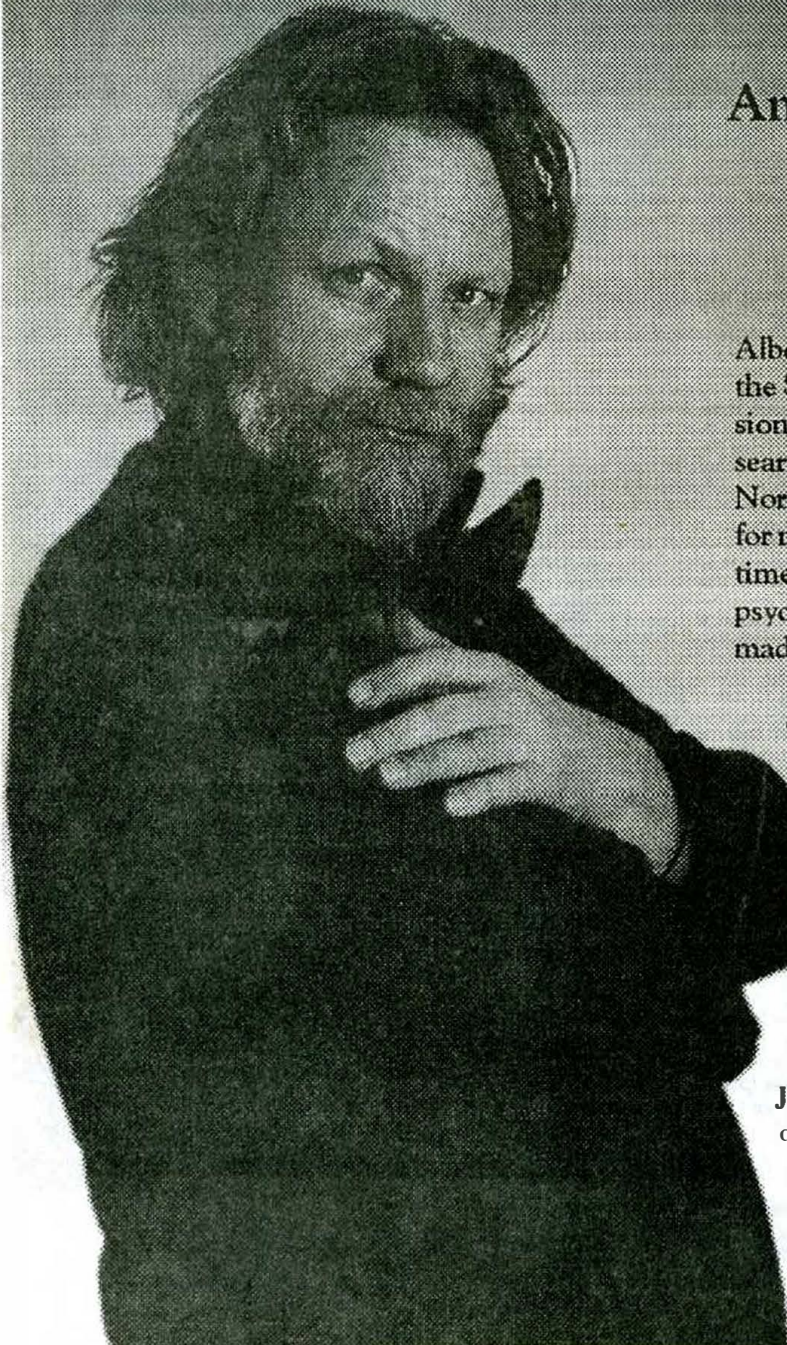


Psychedelic Illuminations is a networking and informational resource service. Our purpose is to support and advance scientific, philosophic and literary works related to the phenomenology of psychedelics and shamanic voyaging. Our aim is to explore the notion of "plants as teachers."

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Talking Art Imagination and Albert Hofmann

An interview with Jan Saether
by Robert Zanger



Robert Zanger, former President of the Albert Hoffman Foundation, sought to immortalize the Swiss chemist who discovered LSD by commissioning a bronze bust made in his likeness. His search led him to Jan Seather, an intense Norwegian sculptor and painter with a penchant for mysticism, magical realism, and the creation of timeless moments through art. His experience with psychedelics and his respect for Albert Hofmann made him jump at the chance to work with Zanger.

On September 22, 1994, shortly after the completion of the bust, Zanger sat down with Seather in West Los Angeles to rap about art, imagination, and the passion which led them both to this project. The following article is transcribed from the conversation that evening...

Robert Zanger: Jan, why don't you tell our readers a little about yourself, your background and history...

Jan Seather: Well, I was born about a year after the discovery of LSD, but of course didn't know anything about it until many years later. I started out a fairly early career playing with clay on my bedroom floor and making toys and ending up being more interested in the making of the toys than playing with them. After I did that for several years I started to

get the sense that this was the core of my life. This was the central nerve of my existence, and by the time I was ten I pretty much knew that I was going to do something with this.

I didn't really know very much about art, but I started to form this secret opinion that I was not going to be what my father wanted me to be, although I waited until I was 19 to tell him. And I started painting, as well, in my early teens. When I was 19, I saw a portrait of Rembrandt in an art book that I got for Christmas. Just a tiny picture, but I was completely bowled-over by the ontological presence in this little picture, and it became instantaneously apparent to me that it was necessary to pursue the understanding of how in the world it could be possible to create life in this way, in this fashion, on a two-dimensional plane with paint. So, after that I pursued a typical career through art schools and soon, went to the Art Academy in Norway, and arrived in the United States in 1974.

About ten years after that, I had my first introduction to psychedelic substances and found fairly quickly that these experiences corresponded with mystical experiences that I knew from before. So my take on psychedelic art would be that, as far as I'm concerned, the core of the psychedelic experience is not so much reflected in the kind of optical phantasmagoria of colors and shapes, which seems to have more to do with the early stages of any journey, (although I can't say that I have this visual panoply so much myself under those circumstances). But, rather, it has to do with some deep inner ontological reorientation or reorganizing, and this corresponds with the mystical traditions and with that experience that I had from the Rembrandt.

RZ: How would you characterize your own artistic expressions?

JS: I guess, as a consequence of following my enamoredness with this portrait by Rembrandt, I became drawn into a kind of opposition to the art schools that I went to. Because, when I went to art school, you had the third generation Modernists as professors and they were the victorious generation of that revolution. And now, here comes a bunch of young kids of my own age - there were about five or six of us in Oslo, Norway in the middle 60's - and we kind of threw all that out and said, "What about the old masters?" We want to learn something about them, and our professors answered with things like, "They were great guys, but now we paint like Cezanne."

I found myself in opposition to Modernism, although I liked some of it myself. I was in intense opposition to its ridiculous repetition of the academic issue that enforced a revolution - being told by those who became free a decade ago that you are now going to become free on the same conditions that they became free. Well, this seemed so ludicrous that we launched heroically into our own revolution and fought

this tendency with all our might.

In the process of considering and thinking about all that, I came to feel very deeply that the human imagination is populated with our own image or the images of ourselves. You can't really have a non-figurative, abstract art going on forever and ever. Somehow, abstraction is an aesthetic crowning of a long tradition of refinement. As long as it rides on that and lifts itself up to that level, it can be appreciated, but when that refinement goes away, you get a crude form of art that's basically just ugly and a kind of celebration of rage.

You can have non-figurative art for a while and you can learn from it. You can project into it. But, if your ability to image these realms within yourself is not there, you end up in the end with nothing to project onto these abstract images. You've got to cultivate an imagination that is populated with human beings, otherwise, you end up with no imagination at all; or, a kind of flap-doodle imagination where, "Oh look, I see a frog in there." Well fuck, who cares? I mean, that's a very different thing than, say, *The Birth of Venus*.

So, I started to feel that I was being drawn into a need to come to terms with my own imagination as the source of painting. In doing that, I ended up trying to create a kind of moment that the viewer comes upon that is, for all extents and purposes, highly recognizable. I will recognize everything, except I will start to think that there's something in this moment that is unusual. That I've stepped into a moment in time where I wasn't supposed to be. I've stepped into a privacy that goes beyond what I would ordinarily admit myself to be confronted with. That sort of thing. A kind of a magical realism, where the moment is charged with something that is at the same time both quiet and threatening. That's sort of what I'm trying to do at this point. That's what I'm engaged with.

RZ: Where do you think modern art is headed?

JS: Well, what's happening in the field of art today, we call post-modernism. Nobody really knows what that means, but it certainly means that modernism is over as such. I think that we are looking at a phenomenon that Terence McKenna has described in his notion of the end of history. I understand that to be not the end of time - you have to differentiate here between time and history. History is kind of an expectation, a redemptive expectation in time that the Western world has cultivated for a couple thousand years, and that, in fact, we're kind of running out of steam in this vision, and that what we're seeing now is a continuity or a seamless presence of quantum physics on the one hand and shamanic things on the other. Aboriginal myths are being written down today as we step onto the moon or are planning to go to Mars. There's all of a sudden this act of contiguity, and the linearity of history seems to run out into the sand.

I think that the arts and other creative endeavors

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Opposite Page: Image of Jan Saether
taken from photo by Gao Jarto, 1995.

"I was being drawn into a need to come to terms with my own imagination as the source of painting."



are about to discover this bridge that would put us back in touch with the earlier civilizations where psychedelic substances - and, if not substances, certainly an attitude that had come out of the psychedelic experience - reigned. I think this was probably the case in India, in Greece and in Egypt. We know it was in South America and Middle America. I think we have underestimated the extraordinary peculiarity that early man must have experienced in finding certain substances in nature that imbued him with expanded consciousness. In so doing, he would have probably started to explain reality more in the context of those supernatural experiences than the daily experiences. This is what art always does. It always tries to reach beyond these experiences into something more subtle and profound and pushes the envelope into other realms like that. I think this is what we must do now. We must contribute to this end of history, or the historical expectation, and try to simply live in this world in its time without these kind of maneuverings that historical speculations lead to. I think that they are of a fairly pernicious character and that the balance for them is the artistic, shamanic experience on an intelligent level in congruence with a scientific attitude as well as a poetic attitude.

RZ: I think it's Terence McKenna who says that you see more art in the psychedelic flash - during a psychedelic experience - than in the

entire history of 10,000 years of artwork. What can that mean for the future?

JS: This becomes an issue of education - the way that education is central to any real culture, Egyptian or modern. It's not just enough to douse a lot of psychedelics onto the situation because the issue of integration. How do you integrate these things? What is it that human beings must do to integrate themselves? It can be very useful to have the psychedelic experience, but I think that the experience of integration is more important, ultimately, than the psychedelic phenomenon. It's got to lead towards this kind of integration of inner and outer, strange and known, etcetera. An art form that shrinks back from involving itself with these substances and these experiences can't really respond to what our reality has become.

RZ: How would you say that the psychedelic experience has influenced your own art?

JS: Well, quite frankly, I don't think that one gets influenced by the psychedelic experience. I think one completely goes to pieces in the psychedelic experience. One has to find new ground underneath one's feet after such an experience. So, it's not like adding condiments, you know, stuff on top of the cake - twist it a little bit this way or that way. It's a complete and total rearrangement of everything you ever thought you were. The

realization of the fundamental need to move towards play rather than kind of struggling along with some kind of craftsman's attitude which is a dry and sober approach to art.

I think that what the psychedelic experience did for me was this opening up towards the realization that there could be a type of liberty - a type of freedom - that would resemble the discovery of game rules, which is essentially what play is. Play is antecedent to game. You play to discover the rules of the game. Now, once you've got a game, you're no longer playing, you know? Now, you're gaming. You're agreeing with other people about the rules of a game, but the playing is prior to that. And, I think that realm became amplified for me by psychedelics and showed itself as being absolutely essential to any further exploration of what creativity really is.

RZ: These days, when children are thinking about which ways to pursue their careers, our government and culture seems to always stress the importance of science and technology. Do you feel an important need in our culture to reinstate the value of the artist in society?

JS: Well, I probably wouldn't be an artist if I didn't think that was the case. But, first of all, I think we need to recognize, without any sentimentality, that the civilization we live in is already bankrupt. I think it was bankrupt some 15 to 20 years ago, and that it is just the nature of the hardware, as such, that it still hasn't collapsed. But the psyche has collapsed. Inside of the hardware of technology and culture the psyche is collapsing and has collapsed, and it's just a question of time before these manifestations will be even worse than they are now. All the crimes, all the people running into McDonald's and randomly shooting people, these are new symptoms. These things didn't happen like that in the 30's. There were wars and global economic crisis then too, but it did not lead to these kinds of things. This new phenomenon has to do with a general bankruptcy of Western thought.

RZ: Lack of spirituality?

JS: Yes, a lack of spirituality. An erecting of the imagination as the enemy of science. This is absolutely ludicrous. There's no great

scientist who's ever fostered such an idea, but the technocrats love this kind of notion because it puts them in charge and turns the issue around so that it looks like the outcome of these processes is what is important, not what inspires them.

If you're going to get back in touch with what inspires them, we need to look to art because that is the model. In art we see the activity of these things practiced. It's like the zen of art is the showing forth of what these processes are in as clear a form as possible, and they're not utilitarian because their only role is to show this process. You can't sell the process, but Modernist economics has led to us thinking that art objects are something that you own and they're something you put in museums, and so on. But, if you go to the diaries of Kandinsky and the Modernists, they're all talking about process. They're all talking about the similarity of the process of painting to the process of alchemy, to the process of mysticism, to the process of Kabalah, whatever. These are the thoughts of the artists themselves. They know that these are practices that simply try to show how these things move. How things move from the inner to the outer and return again with respect for the source. That's what we must deal with. Whether we deal with it through religion, or we call it art or philosophy. These are the processes that we must approach and apply ourselves to.

RZ: Some time ago, Robert Zanger, former president of the Albert Hofmann Foundation, joined with you in an endeavor to create a bust - a sculptural representation of Albert Hofmann. Could you tell us a little about how this all got started?

JS: First, I have known Robert Zanger for a number of years. He knew me as a painter and he knew that I had shared a studio with some sculptors in Venice. So, when I ran into him again he inquired about these sculptors, and I thought it a providence to assert that I, in fact, was also a sculptor and that he might have forgotten that. But I wasn't going to let him continue to forget that, because the moment he mentioned the idea for a bust of Albert Hofmann, I knew I wanted to do this project.

Before I took LSD I saw Hofmann at a symposium at the Scottish Rite Temple here in Los Angeles, and he talked about the notion of a sender and a receiver as a

metaphor that he had come to regarding the nature of consciousness. And I was very struck by that. It corresponded to a lot of things that I had seen and experienced within the realm of mysticism and artistic creativity. There is something very peculiar about reality and consciousness. You look out into the universe, you look into a microscope. You move out of yourself, essentially, into all kinds of experiences, but ultimately all of those experiences are contained and held by your consciousness. And therefore, in some ways, the distant star really exists inside your own mind, and although the star is sending the light, you're receiving this star, but somehow you become aware that you might also in some peculiar way be sending the star. That you are the star. It's hard to grasp this peculiar thing that happens, but, in the end, the sender and the receiver are like the in and out breath of the same reality. It's really occurring all the time.

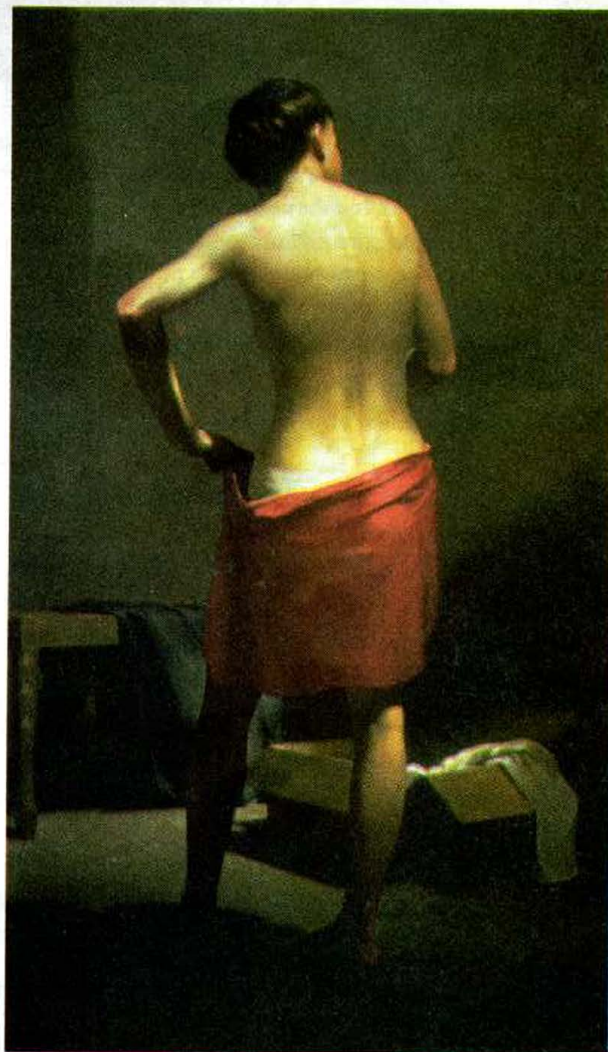
RZ: The TAO of consciousness?

JS: Yes, the TAO of consciousness. It's the emptiness of the Buddhists. It's the fullness of Gnostics. It's the stone in the elixir of the alchemists, and so on. I think that the psychedelic experience is very hard to verbalize if you haven't experienced it yourself. I suppose, if one were a poet, one could put some kind of essential clarity to this issue, but there really isn't anything existing outside of consciousness. That's sort of the bottom line. So that was my draw to become part of the project. I wanted to respond to that by making a beautiful and alive expression of Albert Hofmann as another bronze figure dialoging with bronze figures of Mozart by Rodin, or Lørdon, Ibsen, or whatever. That it would have some depth and density, that dialogue with that tradition.

RZ: In preparing this sculpture, many things probably crossed your mind about how to

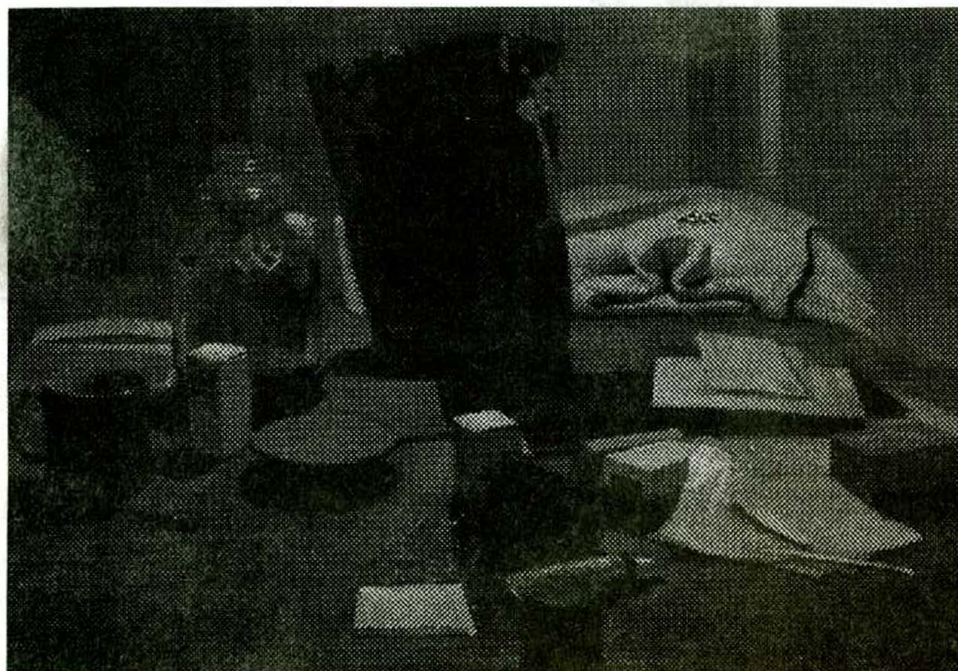
approach the actual form in order to leave some type of eternal monument - to display the man in his best light.

JS: Well, following on what I just said, the peculiar thing about a sculpture is that it's primarily form. Before it's anything else, it's form, whereas perhaps one would say that, in issues of mysticism or consciousness, there is an emanation from consciousness towards form. But, in a sculpture, it's form first and then some essence emanates from the form. That's a funny thing. We are ourselves like that to each other. I look at you and I see all of you. I see you as a whole. I don't see myself whole. I don't have a head, that particular paradigm. We don't experience ourselves that way, but, when we deal with art we experience ourselves through this peculiar thing that comes out towards us through the form. So, the manipulation of the form is very



"I think the experience of integration is more important, ultimately, than the psychedelic phenomenon."

"When I work on something I end up in a kind of a trance.... the dimensions of reality change."



important in sculpture. The architectonics of it becomes the carrier of the subtlety. So, if you're sloppy with it, you might create moods and sensations, but the peculiar thing about capturing the essence of personality is that it seems to work best when the form is architectonically congruent with the real head. In other words, a kind of precision regarding the form.

RZ: What are we celebrating in creating such an artwork?

JS: Well, three things. First, we are honoring Albert Hofmann as a great scientist, and secondly, we are celebrating the discovery of LSD – the most powerful psychoactive substance known to humanity – its potential as a research tool, as an aid in psychotherapy and as an inducer of mystical experience. But thirdly and, most importantly, I think, in celebrating the discovery of LSD we're really celebrating ourselves, because these discoveries have led to the mapping of human consciousness in a way that was not possible before. We have had a number of great scientists using this tool to explore the full breadth of what the human being is. We have uncovered parts of ourselves that are normally hidden and this is of immense importance. Fifty years is not much time in the history of new ideas coming into expression. In history, we see

that it often takes a century and a half before things really come into manifestation. I have no doubt that in the longer run, the discovery of these substances will have a much more central role in the way we view ourselves than we can see now.

RZ: What were you trying to represent in this piece?

JS: In creating a traditional sculpture of Albert Hofmann – a bust – one is dealing with a tradition that you see represented in Europe since the Romans; the bust of the "great man", the installing in the halls of fame of the image of the important man. Well, this is not entirely trite because in doing that we are preserving the image of the human being who has achieved something extraordinary. We make for ourselves a familiar image so that perhaps one notices some unique essence to it, some spark in that human being that makes that individual different from others.

Roman busts were superbly well done in that fashion. If you take a brutal man, a man who had violent associations with history, you can see that reflected in the face. With men like Albert Hofmann, Aldous Huxley, Albert Einstein or other geniuses, we get to participate in something subtle if we train ourselves to it, because it is there in their presence, and it is the artist's role to try to

capture that and bring out this subtle essence.

RZ: You talked about attempting to render two aspects of Dr. Hofmann and two aspects of the human situation in this piece.

JS: While I was working on this piece, it became apparent to me from looking at Dr. Hofmann – seeing him as an old man – that there was this quintessential thing that he had distilled throughout his life that was youthful and vital that shone out of this old and sort of decaying face. The man was eighty years old in his pictures, and all of sudden it became apparent to me that this was the solution to grasping him. To have differentiated the simultaneous presence of him as an aging man with flesh that is no longer plastic and is collapsing with wrinkles and all of that, and yet, showing through that, somehow, an eternal spirit, a youthful glimmer or Apollonian smile, an openness to other dimensions. This juxtaposition of the youthful and the eternal with the aging and dying was such a paradox that I wanted the sculpture to be an expression of that.

When I work on something, I end up in a kind of a trance. I don't really know what's going on when I'm working – when things go well. It's like the dimensions of reality change, somewhat in correspondence with what happens on psychedelics, only in a much milder form. The body sensations are not as intense as they are on psychoactive substances, but it is a psychoactive state. It's an altered state that you are in when these things are happening. So, one thing in creating the essence of the man has to do with getting your fingers to come into contact with his features; becoming so familiar with those features that they become a part of yourself. The making of this head is now a part of me in the sense that any point on that sculpture is infinitely well known to me. If I come back to it after many years, looking at it or touching it will trigger elements of the experience I had when I did it. It will bring it back.

I feel like I know him intimately from having done this – not just the form – in terms of each part, but in terms of the spirit that emanates from him, I feel like I know him intimately.

Psychedelic Illuminations Is Proud To Announce
A Fine Art Limited Edition

Bronze Bust of Albert Hofmann

Albert Hofmann, the discoverer of LSD and psilocybin, natural scientist, author and philosopher, will be remembered as one of the great men of the 20th century. To honor Dr. Hofmann on the occasion of the 50th Anniversary of the discovery of LSD, internationally known artist, Jan Saethier, was commissioned to create a bronze bust of Albert Hofmann. The sculpture is a realistic rendering of the mature man in 3/4 life size.

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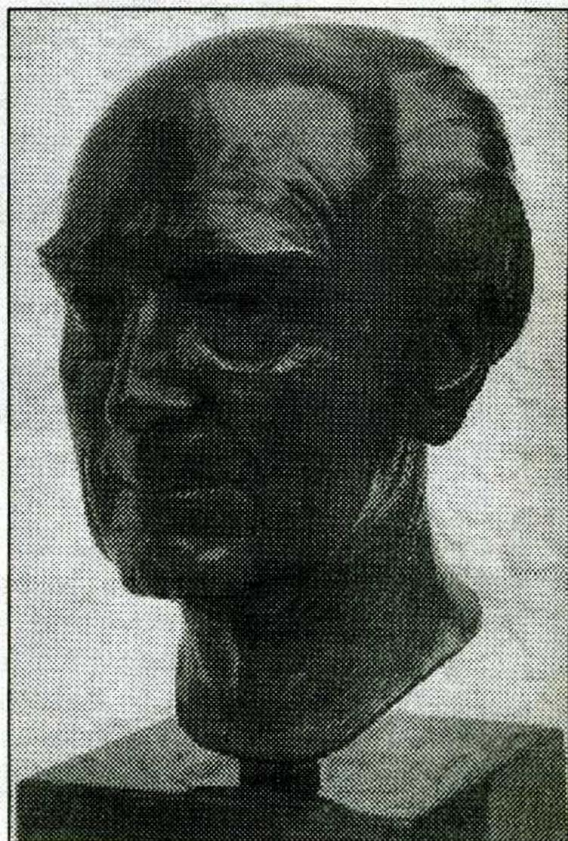
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An absolute must for fans of Dr. Hofmann!

About the Artist - Jan Isak Saethier is a Master Painter and Sculptor in the Renaissance Tradition. Originally from Norway, he has taught drawing, painting, and sculpture in Los Angeles for the past 20 years. Mr. Saethier is Director and Artist In Residence at The Bruchion Center For The Arts. His work is on display at The National Gallery of Norway, Oslo, and in major private collections in both Europe and the United States.

We are now accepting orders for both editions of this unique and historic piece. To order you copy now send check or money order to Robert Zanger, PO Box 3186, Fullerton, CA 92634. For more information call (714) 733-1252.



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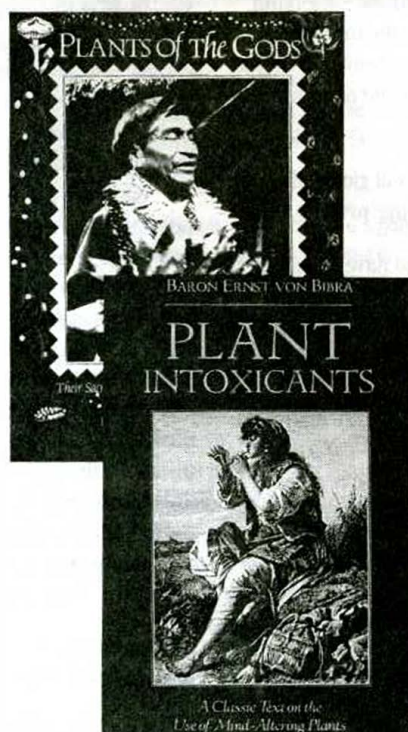
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