

ODDROG







## THE JACKDAW BIT

Having recently published the first issue of Scythrop since December 1969, it seemed a not entirely inappropriate idea to publish a second issue of Lodbrog. (The first appeared in April 1970.) For the first issue I designed two covers, the first of which is reproduced as the back cover of this issue - and thereby is seen for the third time by some members of ANZAPA, since I also used it (on some pretext or another) in Philosophical Gas 4.

The second cover design sort of surfaced when I was doing a bit of cleaning-up in the back room last weekend, and on sighting it I exclaimed (in tones so well-rounded, dignified, yet vigorous and manly that - had you but heard them - your heart would have swelled within you (or without you, depending on the control you exercise over your internal organs) and you would have understood instantly why, in certain quarters, I am nicknamed Chrysostom) (though once or twice I have had the feeling, when addressing those certain quarters, that they were saying "Christ! 'im again!" - a fleeting and obviously erroneous impression on my part, I'm sure): "Gawd struth! Thort I'd lorst this'n! Cor lumme, eh? Jeez, then, I reckon I'll bung out anuvver Lodbrog."

(A small sample, entirely free of charge or obligation, of the "cheerful Dickensian cockney" spoken by Australians, according to that learned journal, *Time* (24.5.71).)

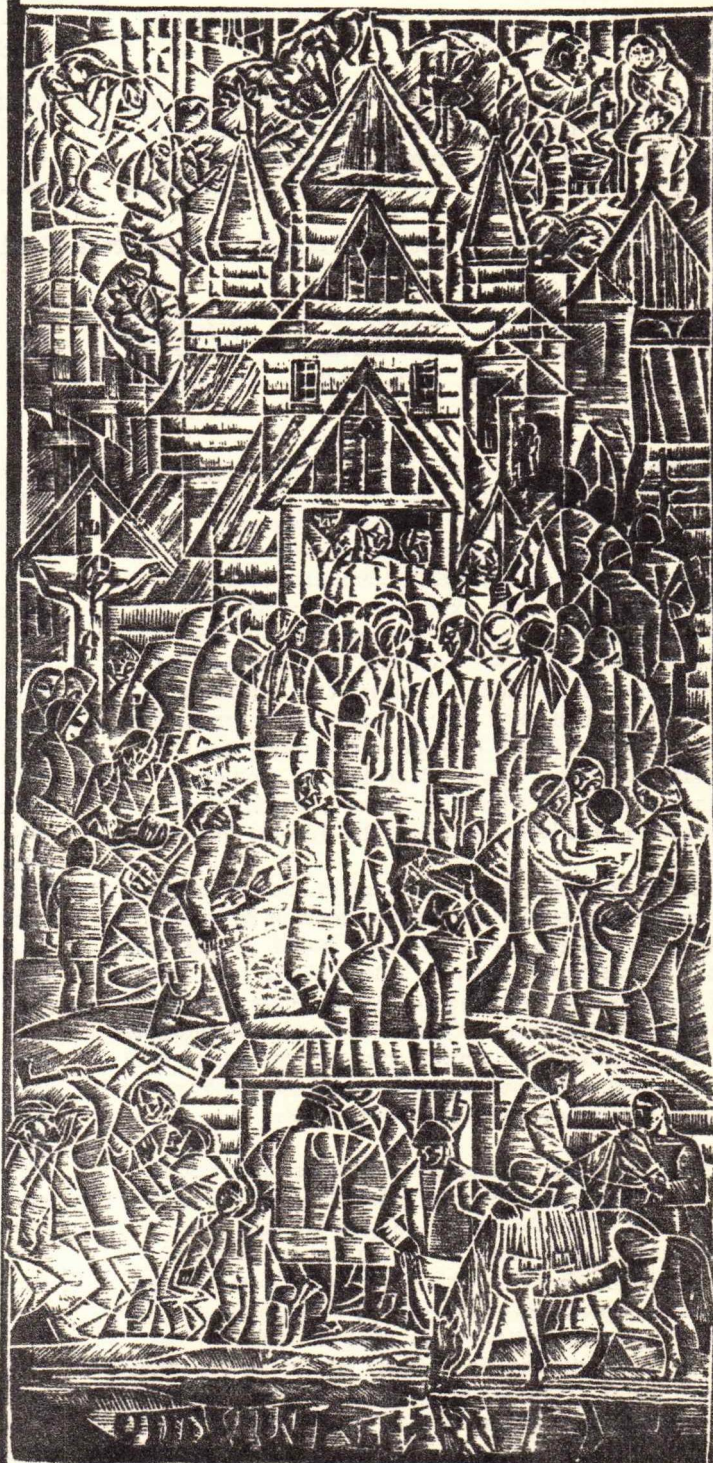
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Robin Johnson and Leigh Edmonds have just had an electricity bill so large they reckon they've been charged for the heat death of the universe.

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In this issue, instead of boring you to tears with my usual load of crap, I am "reprinting" an article which is scheduled to appear sometime in *The Sunday Review* - when, exactly, I don't know at the moment. You have possibly seen a remark in *Locus* to the effect that the *Review* is Australia's best newspaper. And it is. For six weeks or so I have worked for the firm which publishes it, and one day I will write something about

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The quotes around "reprinting" were deliberate. The article hasn't appeared at the moment of writing. But also a few passages from the typescript will not appear in the Review. I am not implying censorship:

Or: HOW MICK STOPPED ROLLING & LEARNT TO LOVE THE MOSS

Plato's idiot behaviour when drunk had no relevance



to the philosophy he preached. Likewise, Jagger's music is logically impervious to the South of France. But the personality of Mick Jagger has always been crucial to the music of the Rolling Stones and, more importantly, to the audience's interpretation of it. Neither Cliff Richard nor even Elvis Presley could have conceived *Get Off My Cloud* or *Satisfaction*, and if by some freak quirk they had, then the message would never have crossed the credibility gap. The Rolling Stones have studiously associated their behaviour and their music with the forces against law and order.

The Blue Book opens with the signing of the Stones' management deal with Andrew Oldham (28.4.63). Equal prominence is given to the hugging of Castro by Krushchev in Moscow, which occurred on the same day. Within weeks the Book records boys being expelled from school for looking like Jagger - "but they can return", offered one headmaster, "if they cut their hair neatly, like the Beatles". And so the myth evolved. A strident jumble of delinquent images. Flag desecrations (their first US tour), a flurry of paternity suits, riots, brawls, rejections from hotels, and, most of all... the music. The sound that shook the sleep out of our eyes. A liberating storm which blew across the world, and still I recall the strength of its impact on Sydney.

Throughout the Sixties both their behaviour and music jostled for our attention, each in mutual reinforcement of the Stones' image. The animosity exerted by authority seemed in direct proportion to the fans' affection. So unpopular was Jagger with the decision-makers of the community that he was sentenced to six months gaol for possessing four pep pills prescribed by his doctor and legally purchased in Italy. Such was the outcry from fans and sympathizers that The Times lumbered to his defence, conceding that the real crime was "the anarchic quality of the Rolling Stones' performances".

In the wake of the Paris events of May '68, the Rolling Stones released *Street*

*Fighting Man*, which was banned from airplay in America and warmed up participants in the Yippie Festival of Life in Chicago. A measure of the bizarre breadth of its influence among radicals was its enthusiastic reprinting in both Black Dwarf and Oz.

Yes I think the time is ripe  
for violent revolution.  
From where I live the game they play  
is compromise solution.

A year later Mick Jagger was cast as Ned Kelly, the outlaw who robbed banks, never the poor, shot policemen and was finally hung. To those of us born in Australia the choice of Jagger for the part was divinely ingenious, if sentimental. "To the dispossessed in both town and country, Ned was a hero," writes Professor Manning Clark in his *HISTORY OF AUSTRALIA*. "In an age in which the gods of the old religions were toppling to their ruins, Ned, or the idea of Ned, was an image in which men could believe, because his life and death symbolized the experience of the native born, their unwillingness to accept the morality of the English, and their groping for a new morality and a new way of life."

Then came *Performance* - that confused, remarkable, psychedelic radicalizer. One can interpret the film as a vicious assault on capitalism - symbolized so felicitously by the bloody East End gangsterism - as





well as a sermon on the potentialities of the drug culture for defusing its terror.

And so it snowballed - the Jagger myth - with him epitomizing multi-level protest for nearly a decade - the myth which a few weeks ago exploded with the champagne corks.

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The great mistake was the assumption that Jagger's anti-authoritarianism was based on the semblance of an idea. For, in truth, he is motivated not by any inkling of the world's ills, but only by his super-id. Mick Jagger is a rebel of convenience. If he was ever an anarchist - a point on which at least he and The Times concur - then it was the anarchy of the child's tantrum, the misbehaviour of a spoilt brat. On 23rd July 1966, the Blue Book reported...

#### ROLLING STONES FINED FOR "PUBLIC INSULT"

The court heard of the night a Daimler car pulled into a petrol station... Eight or nine boys and girls got out and Wyman asked if he could go to the lavatory, but was refused. A mechanic, Mr Charles Keely, asked Jagger to get the group off the forecourt of the garage. He brushed him aside, saying, "We will piss anywhere, man". This was taken up by the group in a chant as one of them danced. Wyman, Jagger and Jones were seen to urinate on a wall outside the garage. The car drove off with people inside sticking their hands through the windows in a well-known gesture.

This incident conveys vividly the exact pedigree of Mick's style of protest. It is the beginning, middle and end of his manifesto, the sum total of his revolutionary programme. Power to the people, in Mick's terms, is nothing more than the power to piss anywhere, man.

When not splashing the forecourt, Jagger's commitment to radical activity (as distinct from enhancing his radical image) is solely verbal. "I'd do anything political I thought would work," says Mick in a typical quote from a typical interview. With friends, much time is spent juxtaposing personal behaviour with political belief, but with people like Jagger this critical curiosity is suspended; part of a pop poet's licence. If rock music is to have any future relevance in the context of underground/left politics, then its practitioners had better start putting their money where their mouths are.

Meanwhile Jagger has fed more into the system than Edward Heath. (Note the shared fascination with yachts.) In other directions there have been impulsive token gestures of such half-heartedness that they have barely made contact. Last year the London drug-bust organization, Release, was depending on Jagger's personal appearance at the premiere of Performance. He not only failed to appear, but was also infuriated by Release boss Caroline Coon's disappointment.

"Fuck her," he said, "I couldn't get a plane out of Paris - and, anyway, the Orly Hilton isn't the most comfortable place on earth." Once he donated about £200 to Release, for which he claimed a one-night stand with Caroline.

"Could you lend us money for our trial?" asked Abbie Hoffman when he met Jagger in Chicago. "We've got our own trials," drawled Mick, walking away.

Not that one expects Jagger to subsidize every tinpot revolutionary, but simply to try to comprehend what is happening in his own cultural constituency: to extend a little help where he can, like John Lennon. For all his wearying idiosyncrasies, false trails and gushing naivety, John Lennon has survived the gauntlet of success with his humanity intact. With time, energy and money, Lennon has conducted many a rescue operation. There is a breath-taking integration between his words and deeds which has enriched his art, making him the only Beatle left worth seriously listening to. Appropriately, it was Lennon himself who recently fingered Jagger with such merciless accuracy:

--- "What do you think of the Stones today?"

--- "I think it's a lot of hype... I think Mick's a joke... I would just like to list what we did and what the Stones did two months after on every fucking album... He imitates us. I would like one of you underground people to point out, you know, Satanic Majesty's Request is Pepper. We Love You - it's the most fucking bullshit - that's All You Need Is Love. I resent the implication that the Stones are like revolutionaries and the Beatles weren't. If the Stones were or are, the Beatles were too. But they are not in the same class music-wise or power-wise, never were... Mick said "Peace made money". We didn't make any money from peace."

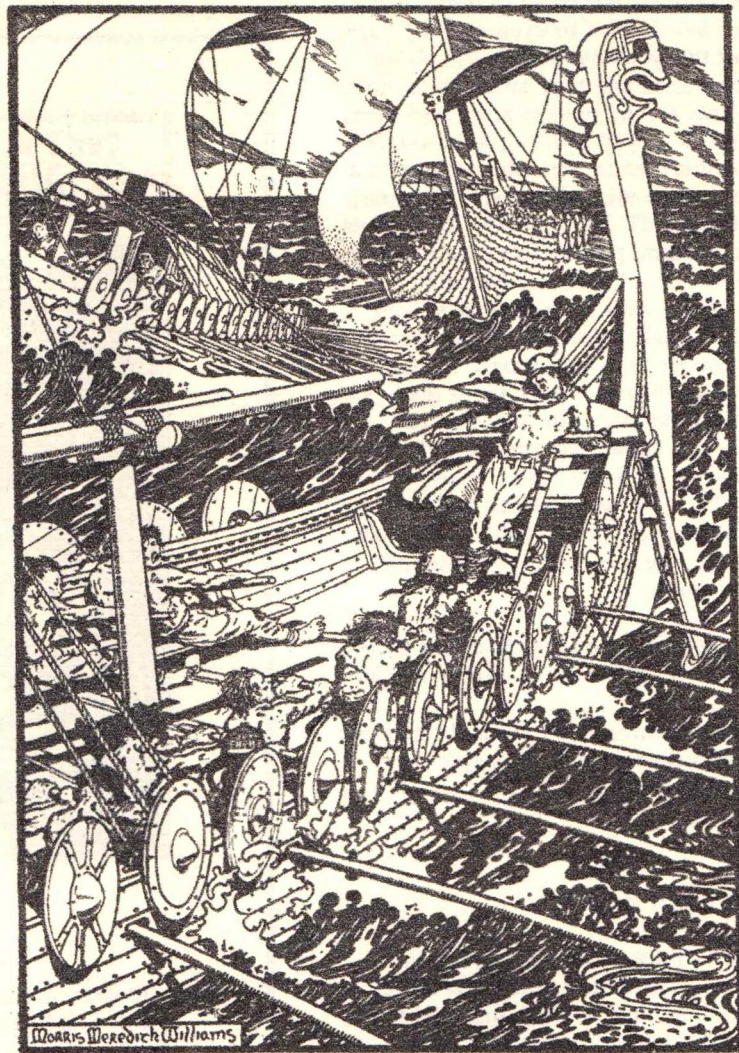
No, Mick, peace doesn't make money, as I'm sure your Mafia friends (said to now control your finances) would agree.

At exactly the same time as Jagger was gilding his marriage bed in St Tropez, 50 000 people marched on Washington in desperate determination to block, if only for a few hours, the arteries of military aggression. They were united not only by this objective, but also by music of the kind the Rolling Stones pioneered. 13 400 of them, bolstered by free rock groups, went on to be arrested, many of them confined in makeshift concentration camps. I wonder if Mick spared a thought for such people, people who have almost certainly spared dreams and pocket money for him, people at that time in a situation which received less attention in this country than his wedding. They couldn't even piss anywhere, Mick.



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