



JEHOVAHKILL: Uncovering Motherlove

by Bruce D. Gilchrist

IT is with trepidation that I write of Jehovahkill, by Julian Cope. Critical responsibilities aside, it is difficult to critique another's religion without introspecting to oneself, yet in me there is nothing to inspect, let alone explore in the unchastened fashion of Julian Cope. For that is what Jehovahkill is about: Religion.

JEHOVAHKILL

CONCERNING THE KILT & THE KRAUT.
THE CROSS & THE SERPENT.
AND VARIOUS RELATED FEMALE ISSUES
THAT THE MOTHER WOULD WISH US TO KNOW

ISLAND/A&M

First Edition 1992 (C.E.)

"I was lost and loveless in your soul desert,
I was packed and kicking in your alien lands.
Blinded I was helpless in your giant sands,
Ignorance and freezing in your alien lands.
And I wanna know, wanna know, wanna know, what to be..."

Although less-angrily echoing Peggy Suicide's "Pristeen" with a more melodic acoustic guitar/soft singing opening, Cope quickly makes "Soul Desert" ascend to a repetitious screaming, even burbling, spiritual rise with the line "Being I'll just

Feeling my body in the shape of a cross...
Feeling my body in the shape of a cross
And trying hard not to freak out."

But all is not weighty and heavily overtone. "Akhenaten" features a two-beat and an almost cute horn accompaniment. Cope has fun on this song, and on many throughout, but for the germination of a fervent belief "Akhenaten" is surprisingly low key, and features no extremity of sound. That is left for later.

What we are given in the rest of the first phase (the album is separated into three 'phases' with the first

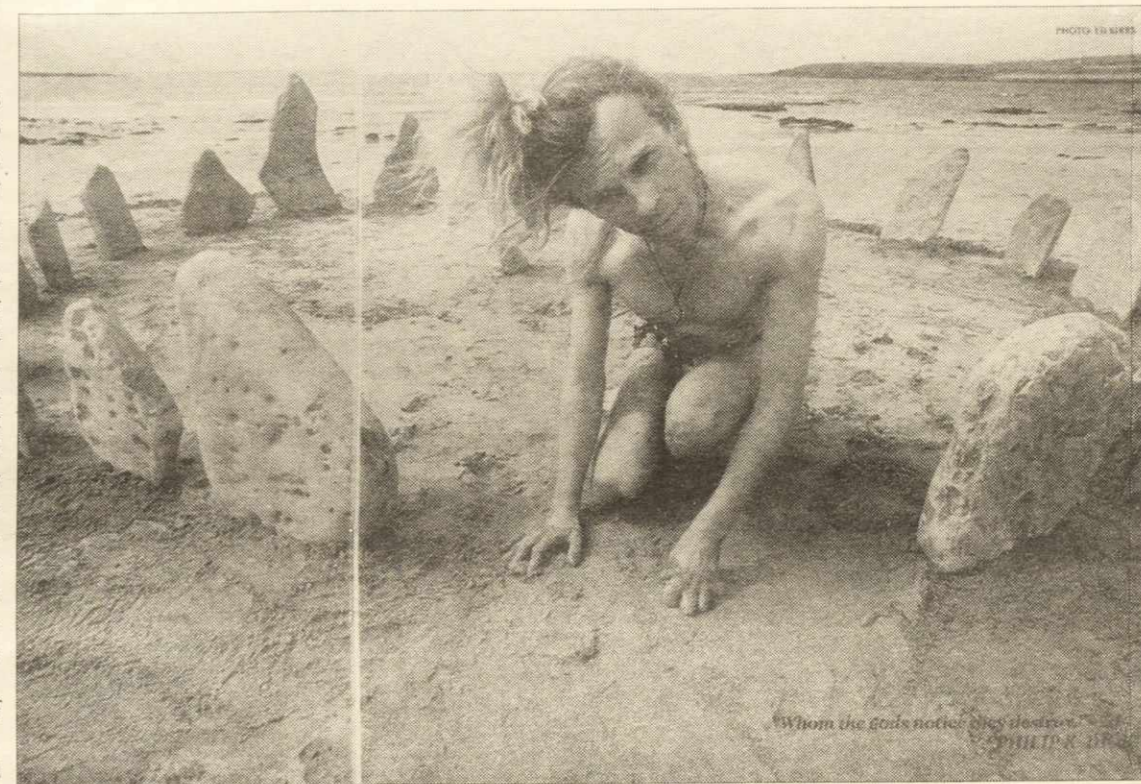
with many rôles which he explores, none the least of which involves another man called J.C.:

"Some people lead their lives on trusting too much,
Some people base their lives on a questionable fuck,
Money's on a winner, yeah the single most
Cataclysm make intrusion of the Holy Ghost
...She walks up to me makes the sign of the cross
she says Julian H. Cope you're a real dead loss."

This song, "J.H.C.", is like a hell-fire campfire tune with heavy acoustic strumming, sing-along lyrics, and

rôle - that of Judas in "Know (Cut my Friend Down)" screaming, begging "Please don't take my life away, please don't take my life away" to an accelerated and heavy bass drum beat, but finally yielding to the Jehovahkill in the title of the song.

But there is no yielding to Nietzsche, for in T.S. Eliot's "The Waste Land" fashion, Cope continues to look for other voices to assume, although we already know where he will end up. In doing this in Phase Two, Cope brings out all of his favourite Peggy Suicide toys, namely his 12-string infinitely distorted guitar, his fuzzbass, and programmers and sequencers of really strange and weird noises combined in spectacular fashion. In short, Phase Two is massively electric, and also massively chaotic, wild and unbridled. It opens with an instrumental (!) answer to Peggy Suicide's magnum opus "Safesurfer" called "Necropolis". It is an uptempo insane guitar riffing driven piece with meshing reverb and phlanger effects and a crazy harp-like Yngwie Malmsteen style solo. It also features thunderous synth-drumming and the prototypically Coplean weird kabobing sounds coming back after the song is over. This is the Cope of recent, for while Phase One was lyrically heavy, it was also tremendously anti-Peggy Suicide in style, and rather frustrating in that respect. It's not that it should sound like anything else, but the progression from the previous album was initially denied. But this is the crux of Jehovahkill, that we not follow a linear progression of religion, but instead look back, and actively search our past to understand and deal with our seemingly insane present world.



Whom the Gods notice they destroy. PHILIP S. DRON

Yeah, but will it ever Cell?

by Robert Currie

With the deluge of publicity about the "Seattle sound" and the commercial success of bands like Nirvana and Pearl Jam has come a flurry of imitators, clones, and albums that just don't deserve to take up shelf space.

Cell
Slo Blo
MCA/Geffen

One of these is Cell, a four-piece New Jersey-based band with little to offer in the way of innovation or

depth. Their album *Slo Blo* starts with nice cover art, but from there it's a steep slide to mediocrity.

Slo Blo's ten songs suffer from ponderous, often intrusive drumming, set-piece guitar solos and uninteresting lyrics. Yet even more damning are the droning, draggy vocals, which efficiently kill off any life the songs may once have had. Still worse, the songs all sound the same. After listening to *Slo Blo* four times, I still couldn't tell what song I was listening to without looking at the listing.

Cell never rises above its deficiencies. The result is a bland reworking

of the staler clichés of grunge. A few songs, like "Two" and "Atmosphere" show brief promise, but soon get bogged down in Cell's general dullness. And what can you say about a band that rhymes "atmosphere" and "disappear"?

Walls of guitar fuzz and harmonics makes for an album that sounds like bad Hüsker Dü played through a dusty, worn-out 8-track. It's prime distinguishing feature. Nirvana, Pearl Jam, and even The Replacements do what Cell tries to do, but they all do it better.



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"Jesus Christ is not the cross" -Julian Cope-

A Spiritual Rise

The album is far, far above simplistic dullard-style Christ-bashing, although destruction, as the title informs, is carried out. Cope explains himself better through his songs than through confrontational liner notes that tell us "Jesus Christ is not the cross", that ancient (5th Century B.C.) Dracontium (Serpent Worship) Temples were ruined by "destructive sin-obsessed small-minded do-gooders in the name of the Christian God", and that the Fall is "vague & pious kaka written in the 8th Century by anti-female churchmen." These statements are inflammatory but Cope backs them up through his songs by exploring the reasons he feels angered.

In the opening song "Soul Desert" he plaintively expresses his alienation at being an expellate of the Christian world:

watch you, coz being is just too hard for me." Fully setting the album's tone, the song emphasizes crescendo dynamics and Cope's willingness to look to alternate spirits while avoiding spiteful atheism.

When Cope says "Jesus Christ is not the cross", he has all the monumental evidence he needs: "The Standing Stones of Callanish (Scotland) have a groundplan of a huge Celtic Cross Ha Ha Ha Ha Ha Ha Ha Ha Ha Ha 3000 years before the Jesus Age." The cruciform temple points to common experience and heritage and Cope sings of "feelings" for a rebirth of this experience in "Akhenaten":

"I held my body in the shape of a cross,
I was hypnotized.
These were brand new feelings for me,

being primarily acoustic based) is lyrical exploration into the oddities of Cope's existence giving way to rising, transcending songs. One of the most beautiful songs is "The Mystery Train", where Cope sees himself riding religion inside a train, looking at the strange people around him ("idiot savant at the back of train") all the while lushly crooning above a soft yet bouncing reverb guitar line, through a high-toned almost baroque harmonica, and to a shuffling snare beat. The overall effect is wonderful.

The Rôle of Jesus

The answer to Cope's disillusionment is given early in the album, yet it is recapitulated throughout in a reverse order fashion with him going back farther into his past while the album progresses. Cope plays around with his self-image, and comes up

filtered marimba beats dissolving into a guttural, jowly song about being the Devil, which is great because it starts off with a hellbent laugh. Sound transcendent?

Cope also imagines himself as being a disillusioned leader: "Loving was the face of Jesus/smiling is the Mona Lisa...Earth is a canon of love/shake me on Socrates/who's to blame like the man like any man/who's to blame but the man who leads/Going upwards at 45 Degrees..." In accepting this rôle, sacrilegious undoubtedly, Cope shows us how he as Christ fails himself. It is not a disbelief in Christ, but rather an awareness that Christ cannot provide the spiritual completeness Cope is desperately looking for - thus he is only "Going Upwards at 45 Degrees". To deal with this, and end Phase One, Cope assumes the most twisted Christian

Poet is Priest

And what can be said about "Poet is Priest" other than dammit, it's even weirder. Cope doesn't really seem to care, he just wants to let the snakes out of his head and into our ears. It sounds like some sort of bizarre Foufounes Électrique dance track

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