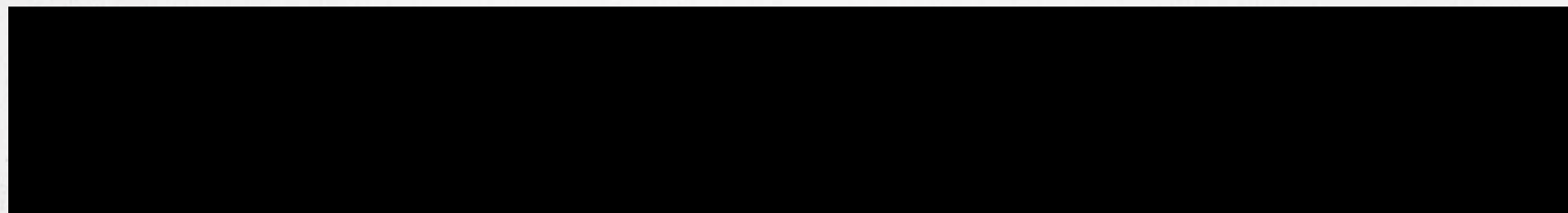


Issue No. 1  
Pay no more than £1.75

Paul McCartney:  
Hold a guitar like a baby

Vivienne Westwood:  
Punk then and now

Joss Whedon:  
Loves Mulan



TO PRINT

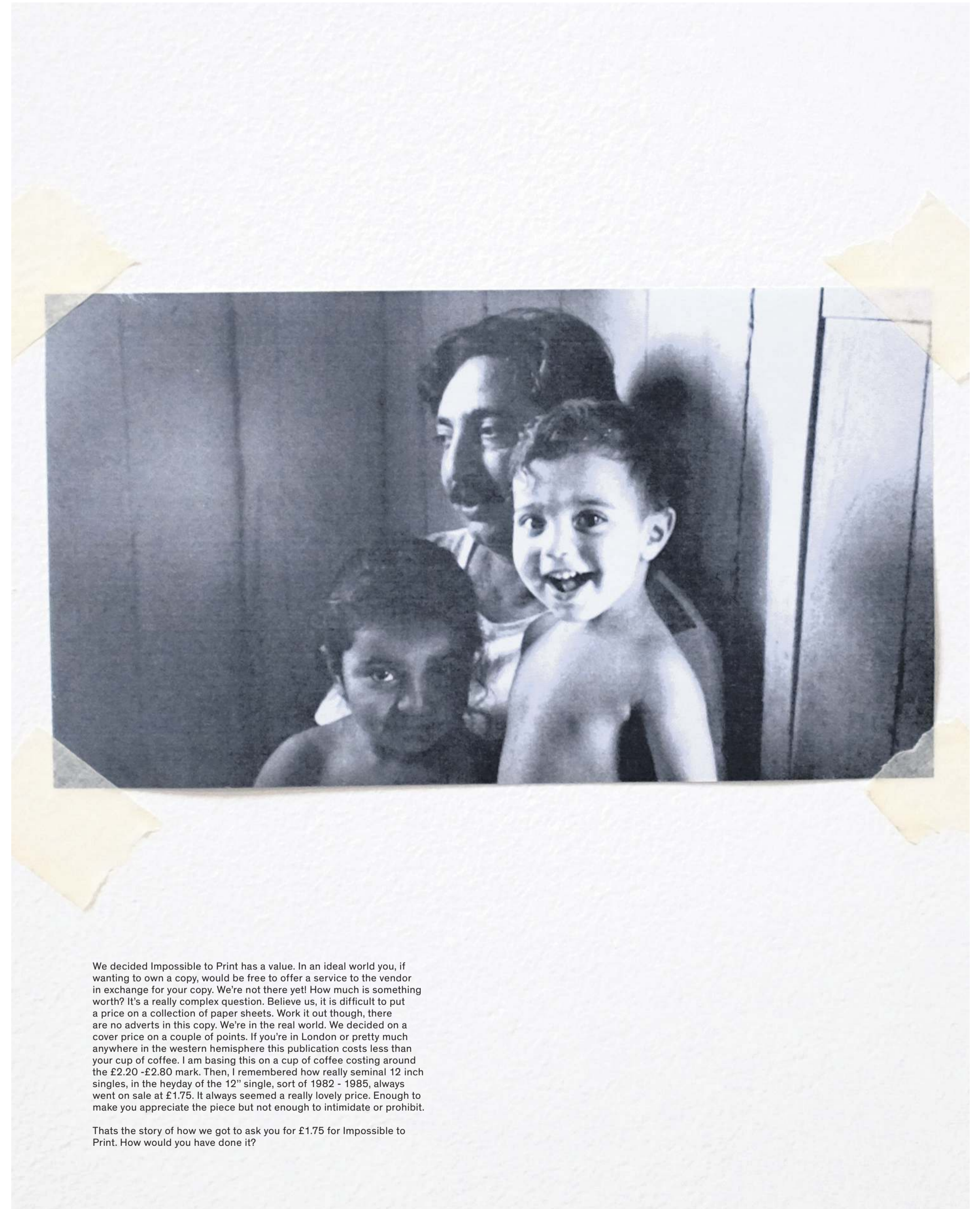
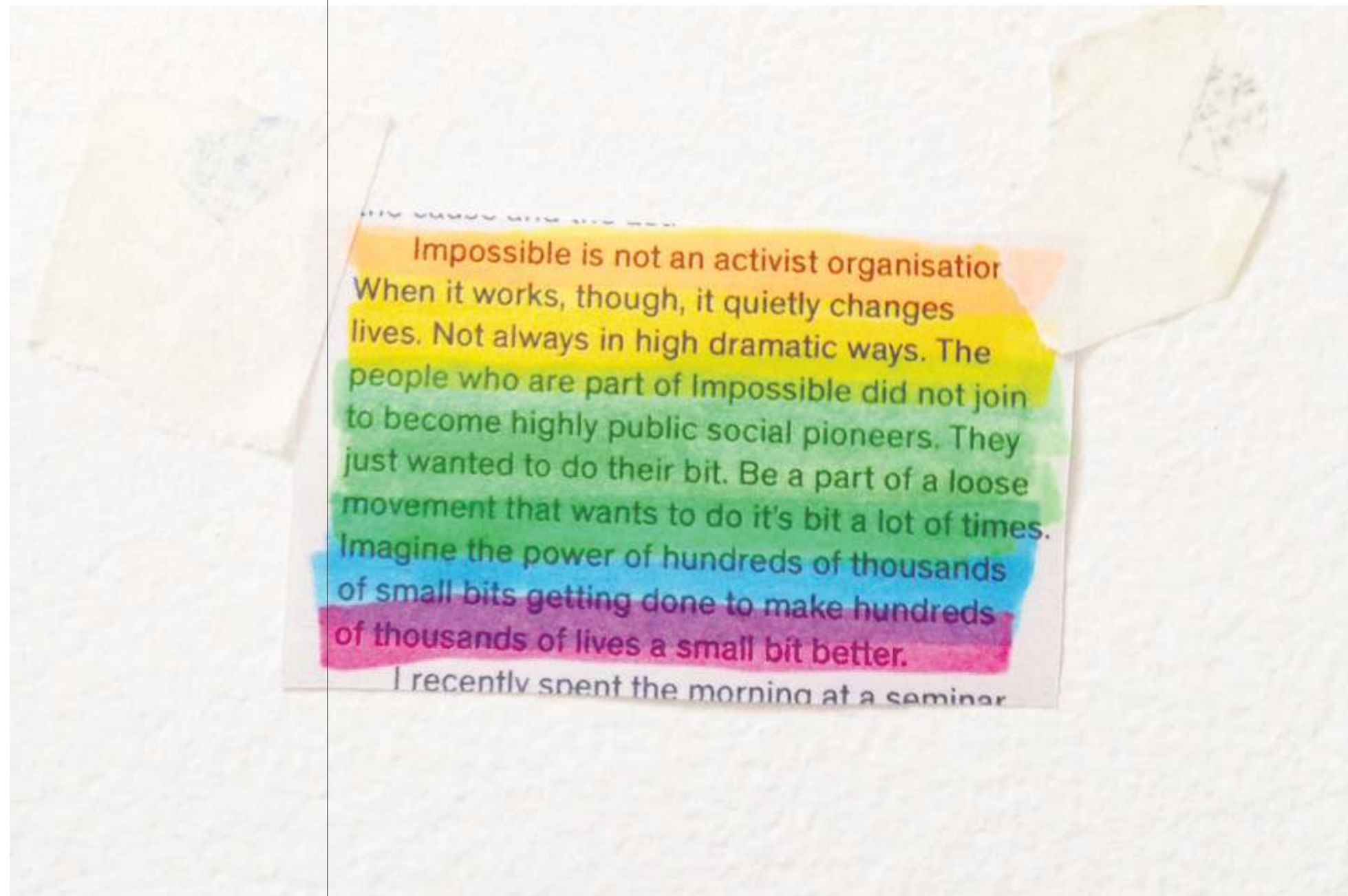




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At Impossible, we know that every person is important, and we know that every product has a story that involves a lot of people. Every thing has a story that weaves together people, eco-systems, even continents. Some stories aren't great.

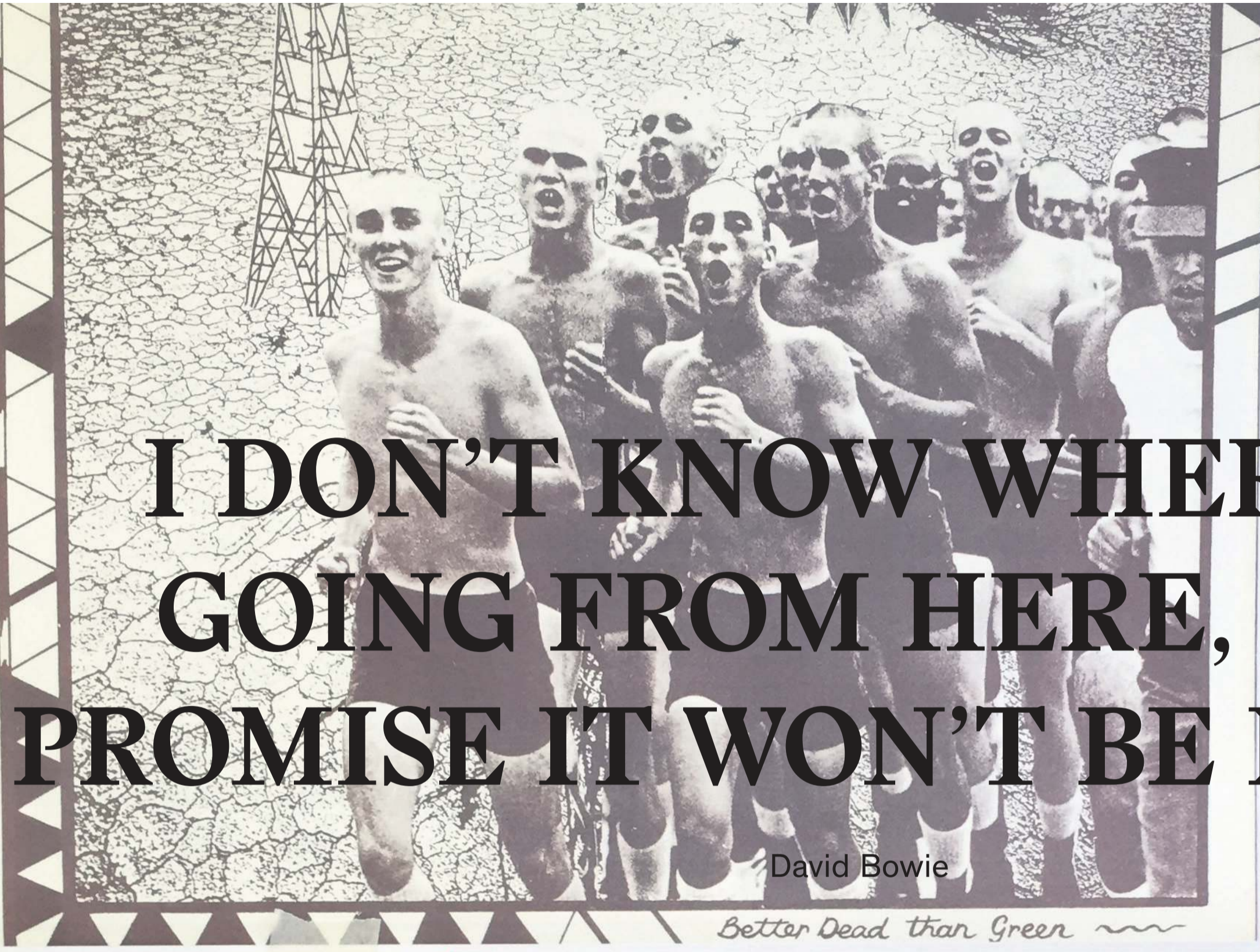
A lot of products have shitty and shady stories behind them, which obscurity has for a long time hidden from the "consumers." But some stories are great. Some stories empower people, and respect the planet. Some stories should be told and re-told.



We decided Impossible to Print has a value. In an ideal world you, if wanting to own a copy, would be free to offer a service to the vendor in exchange for your copy. We're not there yet! How much is something worth? It's a really complex question. Believe us, it is difficult to put a price on a collection of paper sheets. Work it out though, there are no adverts in this copy. We're in the real world. We decided on a cover price on a couple of points. If you're in London or pretty much anywhere in the western hemisphere this publication costs less than your cup of coffee. I am basing this on a cup of coffee costing around the £2.20 -£2.80 mark. Then, I remembered how really seminal 12 inch singles, in the heyday of the '12" single, sort of 1982 - 1985, always went on sale at £1.75. It always seemed a really lovely price. Enough to make you appreciate the piece but not enough to intimidate or prohibit.

Thats the story of how we got to ask you for £1.75 for Impossible to Print. How would you have done it?





I DON'T KNOW WHERE I'M GOING FROM HERE, BUT I PROMISE IT WON'T BE BORING.

During the production of this issue we were knocked, like the rest of the world, by the departure of David Bowie. Some amazing things were said about him by some very good writers. You have probably read most of them. We didn't want to run a token Bowie piece but, similarly, didn't want the issue to carry no mention of him or his passing.

We decided his own words fitted our pursuit. It was from a very old interview of his, probably around 1971/72. A particularly purple period in his creative life.

REAGAN AND THE WORLD TO - ANCE FOR A E HIM . . . . .

THE IMPOSSIBLE





I lived in a caravan I found on Freecycle, and I kitted this out with a wood-burner made from an old gas bottle, which I fuelled using wood I'd gather from the land around me. I cooked my simple fare outside, 365 days of the year, on a rocket stove, and dinner usually consisted of veggies and, being Irish, a pot of potatoes.

**LC** What was your upbringing like – did your parents have much money and what was their relationship to money like?

**MB** My formative years were Eighties pre-Celtic Tiger Ireland, where no one – my parents included – had two dimes to rub together. We lived week to week, with no car or phone or any of the trappings that today's youth would consider to be life's essentials. But I had the best of parents and the happiest of childhoods, and there was a real sense of authentic community on the street where we lived. Everyone mucked in together, everyone had each other's back. Only one house out of 80 had a phone, and if you wanted to use it you simply left 20p beside it once you were done. Doors were always open, children's clothes were passed from one family's toddlers to the next, and if some one was ever stuck for a few bob others came together and helped them out. The streets and fields were full of kids playing and getting up to no good, and we always had food. I go back there now and everyone is much better off financially, but the doors are closed as no one needs each other any more. People meet their needs through money and the technologies it facilitates, and not through intimate human relationships.

**LC** What was the moment you had the idea to try living without money – was it a specific moment, or a growing feeling? And when was it?

**MB** Studying economics, we were obviously well versed in the benefits of money – a medium of exchange to facilitate the specialised division of labour required for an industrialised society, a store of value and so on. But no one ever explained to us the social, ecological and personal consequences of monetising our lives. It was as if money were the only technology in the world without unintended consequences. So I began speaking out about those for about a year, around 2007, at which point a friend said to me, "if you think money is so problematic, why don't you give it up yourself?" So I did. Within about 30 minutes of the challenge I had put a "For Sale" sign on my old houseboat, the proceeds

of which I used to set up a gift economy website called Freeconomy.

**LC** How did you deal with living without money initially? Where did you live? How did you manage for food/drink? How did you manage for heating, clothes, soap, washing, other necessities..?

**MB** The practicalities of living without money are almost infinite, many of which I've detailed in The Moneyless Manifesto. But some of these were more critical than others. I lived in a caravan I found on Freecycle, and I kitted this out with a wood-burner made from an old gas bottle, which I fuelled using wood I'd gather from the land around me. I cooked my simple fare outside, 365 days of the year, on a rocket stove, and dinner usually consisted of veggies and, being Irish, a pot of potatoes. I gathered up the unused apples from the surrounding area to make cider, and the campfire became my pub, around which friends would sing and dance and make music together. We became participants in life, not only consumers of it. To wash my clothes I used a plant called soapwort which I grow, and washed clothes in either an old sink or the river, where I also bathed. I brushed my teeth with toothpaste made from wild fennel seed and cuttlefish bone. I had a composting toilet and used discarded editions of The Daily Mail for toilet roll – a fine use for it. Sometimes, as I would go to wipe my backside with a newspaper, I would notice a picture of myself staring back – and proceed ahead anyway.

**LC** You say you enjoyed the experience so much in the first year, you decided to do it for longer. Can you explain what you enjoyed so much about the experience?

**MB** Like no other period in my life, I felt fully alive. Having spent most of my life worrying about the future or regretting the past, I was living in the moment, day to day – like wild animals do, I suspect. I had a strong sense of connection to the land and waterways

around me, on whose health I realised my own depended. Instead of consuming food, music, booze and so on, I was producing them with people who I was in a full relationship with. Life was rich, intimate and diverse – every day I learned something new, often about things that had never even entered my awareness before. I was fitter, happier and healthier than ever before. Most of all, I felt liberated.

**LC** What does the gift economy mean to you?

**MB** A gift culture, I suppose, was originally a generic term used mostly by anthropologists to describe many of the societies that existed prior to the notion of money. In these societies, labour and materials were shared according to social norms and without any explicit agreement about what the giver would receive in return, if anything. Nowadays, it's often used to describe any way of matching up those who need something – whether it be a skill, a tool, a couch to sleep on – with those who can help, in a way in which nothing is expected directly in return – except, perhaps, for a thankyou and the feeling of helping someone for no other reason than you can.

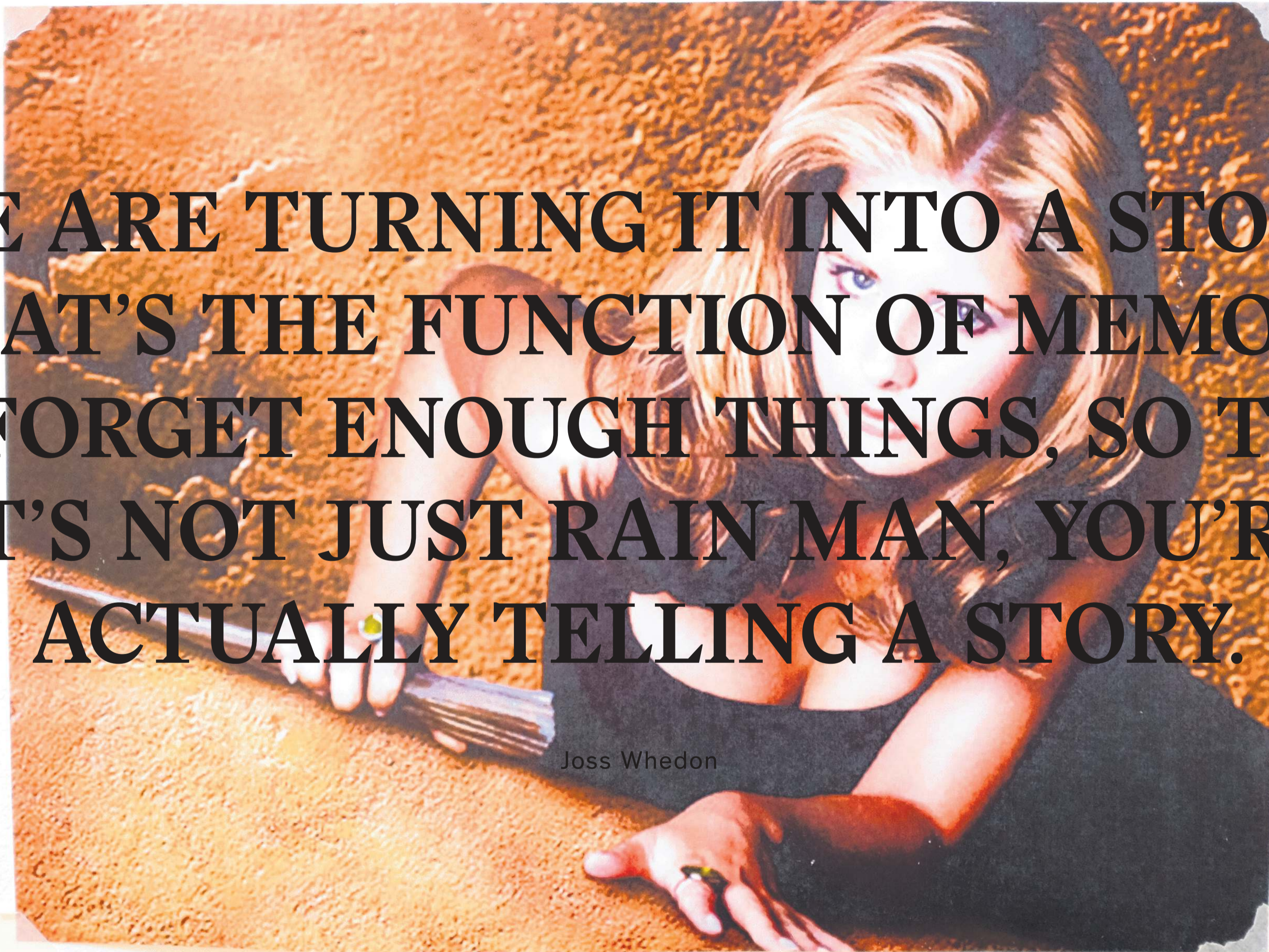
**LC** What are your plans for the space you are developing in Ireland now?

**MB** I moved back to Ireland last year, where we have set up a permaculture- and gift-based project called An Teach Saor (Gaeilge for The Free House). Here we started plans to produce all our needs from the land around us, and to share its fruits with both our neighbours and the people who pass through it. I'm in the process of finishing a building – made from cob, cordwood, wattle and daub and other natural materials – which will open as a free community event space next year. Here we intend to run free courses and workshop, evenings of music and storytelling, skill-sharing, feasts and even serve up some moneyless homebrew. People can stay there for free too, so if they've had a couple of drinks there is no need to drive home!



**WE ARE TURNING IT INTO A STORY.  
THAT'S THE FUNCTION OF MEMORY,  
TO FORGET ENOUGH THINGS, SO THAT  
IT'S NOT JUST RAIN MAN, YOU'RE  
ACTUALLY TELLING A STORY.**

Joss Whedon







# PAUL McCARTNEY

**LC** Impossible is all about doing small acts of kindness, sharing things and time and skills. We've been running for a year now and Paul heard about what we were doing and liked the idea and said, "Can I give a songwriting talk?"

**LC** In terms of music and lyrics, which comes first?

**PM** It depends. Most of the time, if you're lucky, they come together. You just sit down and start... You start blocking stuff out with sounds— I do anyway—and eventually, you hear a little phrase that's starting to work, and then you follow that trail.

**LC** And do you normally write on guitar, or piano?

**PM** Guitar or piano, yes...Guitar is interesting because you kind of cradle it. You kind of almost cuddle it. You hold it to you, and you play. That gives you a certain kind of feeling. With piano, you almost push it away. It's just two different attitudes. I'm not sure whether the song is influenced by that, but the writing of it is. You're a little more in a... 'thing'. When we were writing early on, you'd kind of find a cupboard or somewhere to go away and hide, and it was like a psychiatric session! If you felt really bad, you'd work it out. You wouldn't talk to the guitar, but

you'd kind of put your problems into the song.

**LC** When you're writing songs, do you enjoy the collaborative process? Or do you find it easier by yourself?

**PM** You know, the great thing is, there's no rules... Obviously writing with John [Lennon] was the ultimate collaboration. I think we were both very lucky to find each other, because we played perfectly off each other... I think we wrote just short of three hundred songs together—and I look back on it now in some kind of wonder, because we never had a dry session. Every time we got together and sat down, we'd work for about... only for about three hours... but we would always come up with a song.

...We met through a friend of mine, who was called Ivan... at a village fete... We came together through a common interest of songwriting and then just started having sessions—normally at my house—where we'd just try and write something. We wrote our earliest ones which were very innocent. We didn't think they were good enough, but it was a start and an exciting thing to do. We just gradually started to get a little bit better. And that was the great thing about something like songwriting: if you do get better then it really is a great journey. Our original songs were all very personal and they all had a personal pronoun in them; 'Love Me Do', 'P.S. I Love You', 'From Me To You', 'She Loves You'. We were directly trying to

communicate with the people who liked us. As it went on we felt that we didn't have to do that... That was the nice thing, we actually started to climb the staircase and feel that we could get a little bit more complicated....

I think the point is ... you have to do it a lot. It's that Malcolm Gladwell theory of 10,000 hours. He says that's why The Beatles were famous. We did, without knowing it, probably put in about 10,000 hours. I think the more you do it the more you start to get the hang of it... That is my advice for when kids say to me, "What would you do?" I just say, "Write a lot!" Don't just write three songs and say, "I've written three songs", because it's not enough. Write four [laughter] and then continue with that.

**LC** Do you always take the same approach with structure, or your idea of no rules?

**PM** I think structure's great. But I also like to start with chaos in order to get the freedom. You know, if you structure too early it's like [makes hitting the breaks noise]. But if you're just creating, just free and flowing from chord to chord and idea to idea, something then sort of lands that you think is a good idea. Then I think it's a good idea to structure it.

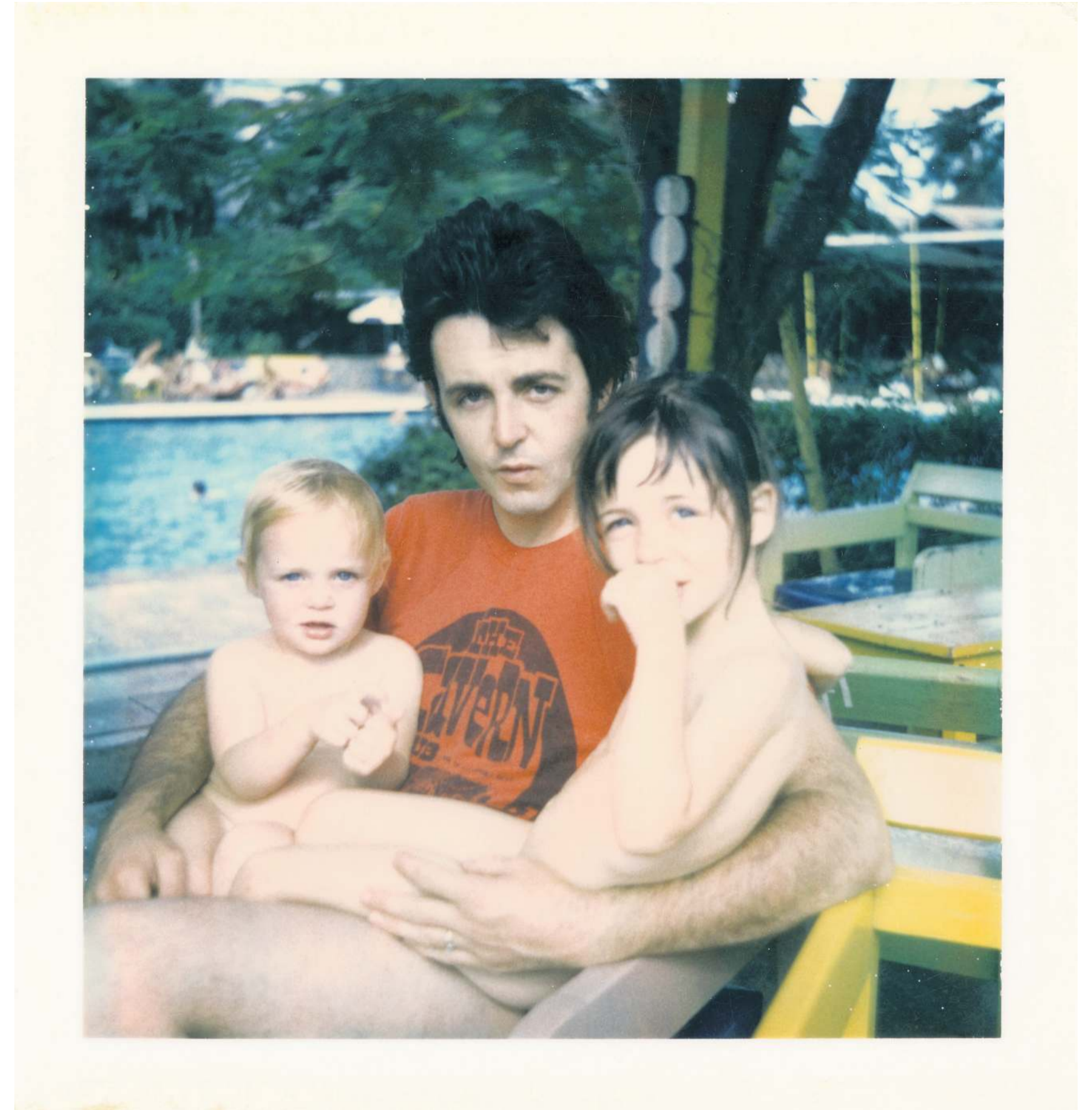
**Impossible Audience Member #7**  
When writing a song do you think about the

audience you're writing for and does that influence the way you write the songs?

**PM** I think sometimes you do... People used to say to me and John, "What's the formula? Who writes the words? Who writes the music...?" And we say, "Well, we both do!" Both. You know, sometimes I'm the words, sometimes he's the music....

It's the therapy session I was talking about, it's just you and your angst, or your love, or your desires, or whatever. You're putting that in your song. But then sometimes the other occurs... Like I said the early songs were always written with fans in mind, so 'Thank You Girl', would literally be... thanking our fans... The other thing is, sometimes you don't know you're putting certain meanings in. I wrote 'Yesterday', the lyrics, and I now think it was about the death of my mum. I didn't then. It was a kind of psychological thing. She died, I think, about six years previously. So sometimes you don't know why things are coming... I think you put your feelings into it and it can sometimes get rid of your "blues".

**You can read the full transcript of the songwriting workshop here [medium.impossible.com](https://medium.impossible.com)**



This picture of Paul, Stella and Mary is, I think, previously unpublished. It is very beautiful and was, of course, taken by Linda. The same Linda whose sausages Lily (and a whole load of other wised up families in 1980's Britain) grew up eating. You know, the same Linda who inspired Stella's beautiful vegan clothes which are available in the Impossible shop. The photograph was graciously given to us by Mary who is not only very lovely but also an amazing photographer. Another precious legacy of Linda I guess. Interesting how a

family snap can open up a thoughtful meander into the gentle force that results when creativity and instinctive generosity are combined.

The only apology I will make is for this being possibly the longest and least concise photo credit ever published. We could have simply said "Photo by Linda McCartney" but that, kind of, felt, well, not enough really. It is instances like this that make me really pleased that we don't have a conventional policy on editing at Impossible To Print.





# A SOHO MEMO

My relationship with Impossible, and Lily, goes back to when they were based in Berwick St in the very middle of Soho. I wanted to feature them in a magazine I was producing. In retrospect I was the enemy. The magazine was funded by an investment team. These things become clear with hindsight. I had a moment of clarity and promptly left the magazine (and the company and a regular pay cheque!) The tourniquet of avarice tightened and forced Impossible out of the street. What happens if you tighten that strap too much you kill the flow, and the life, in an organ. You can see this cultural gangrene creeping up Berwick Street. Sad but true.

Impossible now live in leafy, gentle Borough. Already it seems difficult to imagine them crammed into the Berwick Street store. Other casualties of the rapid and vapid gentrification of Soho were the little vegan joint next to the Impossible HQ, the Record and Tape Exchange and a dozen or so other vital players in the game of life. Across the street the fish and chip shop has gone.

The guys on the market stalls are still there. Hopefully they will stay but as the shadow of development looms across the newly paved street who knows for how long. Anyway, this, sort of, provides a new level of significance to the piece overleaf.

Sermon over!



# I'VE GOT A RECURRING HALF-JOKE I BORE PEOPLE WITH WHEN WALKING AROUND OUR FAIR CITY. "WHEN DO YOU THINK THEY'RE GOING TO FINISH LONDON?" THE CAPITAL IS PERMANENTLY IN FLUX; AN ECONOMY FUELLED ON RECONSTRUCTION - DEMOLITION AND

(HOPEFULLY)

## REVITALIZATION.

## PUBS, PEOPLE

BY ROBIN TURNER

At times, London is so unrecognisable it's almost dazzling, as confusing to the local as to the tourist. Nowhere exemplifies this more than Soho.

I started working in Soho in January 1994. Back then I was a press officer for a little record company on Wardour Street. Our second office was the Ship, a quick stroll from base camp. If people couldn't find us, they'd invariably just turn up at the bar or sometimes ring the payphone on the wall which was placed right next to where we always seemed to be seated. The Ship was a rock pub. The Who had famously rehearsed above there; its proximity to the old Marquee meant it was an established haunt for road hogs and wannabes. It was old Soho in bricks, mortar, hops, malt and water.

The street's transformation is startling. Where once there were film production companies there are now cupcake shops and Vietnamese noodle bars. Where there were gothic pubs, now there are upmarket burger chains. Where once there was a Doctor Marten's Apocalypse, now Pret and Starbucks competed for the coffee dollar.

On a Friday lunchtime at the start of June, I took a seat at the same table I used to spend half my life in, the one tucked away there right at the back of the Ship. Apart from the fact that the payphone has been retired, the pub is very much the still point in a turning world. Tattooed staff represent the next generation of laconic rock kids; the beer is as it ever was – Fullers, brewed in West London; their pump clips as much a symbol of the city as the Post Office Tower, Battersea Power Station, Evening Standard hoardings. I've come to the pub to meet up with an old drinking partner (now sober).

Karl Hyde is one half of Underworld and a founding partner in the design collective Tomato. Back in 1994, I was press officer for his band, feeling my way in the dark with a band who didn't really fit any of the music press' accepted genres. The Ship was halfway between Tomato (D'Arblay Street) and our office. It was also the location for events that inspired Underworld's biggest selling single, Born Slippy: Nuxx. We've come to talk about Soho.

KH Born Slippy was written in here on London Pride back in 1993. I remember staggering out of the loo that night thinking 'That's enough of that'. I walked back to where I'd been sat, pulled out a tenner and handed it to Bill Bailey – who I'd never met before – saying 'Get a round in.' He was with this girl, the most blonde I'd ever met, who was a friend of my friend Graham's. She was incredibly blonde and very pale skinned. She was pretty shocked by it all, Graham had left and Bill Bailey had been with us all night but I'd not noticed him and I was wandering out of the toilet knowing it was time to go. So I left Bill with the most blonde I'd ever met and staggered up towards Tottenham Court Road.

**Were pre New Labour years your honeymoon period with Soho?**

KH I'd lived in Kensington Church Street for a few years before we went to Essex. I lived there with four girls. It used to rock very gently when tube trains went underneath it; it was a pretty dynamic environment. When Tomato moved to

D'Arblay Street, we really did find ourselves at the epicentre of everything. I'd never really had anything to do with Soho – I'd been in Cardiff, Kensington, then Romford. Soho was thought of as a particular place back then but it wasn't one I was attracted to. There was no glam there.

**When I first came to London it was lots of little record shops, a few bars and old fashioned pubs. People used to still drink in pubs – I remember drinking in the Admiral Duncan before it was a gay pub, it was pure grottsville.**

KH And weren't they great? I used to love discovering places – in cities, out in the country – where you could lose time. Old men playing dominoes in the corner. Pubs were brilliant places to eavesdrop. They became the backdrop for my writing, for my version of what Lou Reed had done with New York. You could go with a bunch of mates – three at least – you could ply everyone with drinks, pull back and sit and listen. The George on Wardour Street was somewhere we gravitated towards a lot. What would happen back then is a conversation would start and I'd sit down and take notes. Writing was only ever good in groups of three or more. You can drop out of conversation...

**Otherwise you become voyeuristic.**

KH Yes. Vic and Bob used to be in those pubs a lot. The Fast Show guys were always in there. Darren (Emerson, former member of Underworld) would sleep upstairs in the George from time to time. He'd ring the studio saying, 'I'm going to be a bit late to the studio, I've just woken up in the pub.'

**Back then, for a company like Tomato, there wasn't really anywhere else to go was there? Shoreditch hadn't happened yet, anywhere East was considered the Badlands.**

KH Soho was full of facilities houses. There were places like the Mill, Smoke and Mirrors. There were printers, photographic labs. And of course, Tomato was above Black Market and Duffer.

**One of the things I find myself dwelling on over the years is the change of usage of Soho. Back then, it didn't feel touristy. Now the usage seems to have shifted.**

It really was a village back then. I lived for a couple of years on Broadwick Street and it became apparent very quickly that there was a community of people who live in Soho. On a Saturday it started to feel like a village and on a Sunday, it properly became one. There are blocks of flats all over and you'd see these old thespians coming outside, blinking into the light with copies of Variety under their arms. It's a community unto itself. Very separate from the rest of London. The quarter between Oxford Street, Regent Street and Shaftsbury Avenue. It's a satellite all to itself; the next one is Chinatown. It wasn't on the tourist map. The pubs were reliably rough. This place (the Ship) was rough. The George was a little more upmarket; it had that media clientele. Oddly, it was always a certain day they all showed up – maybe the day they got paid or saw their agents.

There was another pub right at the end of Brewer Street. I remember going there once and the whole place stopped and turned round. It felt like I'd walked into a very different one horse town; somewhere with a whole different ecosystem. I found out later that they were all people from the film industry. It was technicians, editors, cameramen – it wasn't a DJ pub or an art pub or a music industry pub. The whole place was entirely tribal.

**I remember the same thing with the Coach and Horses. You had the real hardcore – Jeffrey Bernard, Norman Balon, the self-styled rudest barman in Britain – and it was a very hostile environment. There was no nicety, no attempt to make you feel welcome. It might as well have been a private members club that you very much weren't invited to join.**

Different communities back then that were not at all welcoming of others. You stayed where your community was. Whenever you thought 'Let's try somewhere else', you quickly tried it and thought, 'Actually, let's not.' The Sun and 13 Cantons became somewhere approachable after you and the Heavenly boys started nights in there (Robin – I ran a club night in said pub – the Heavenly Jukebox – that followed on from the Heavenly Sunday Social at the Albany in Fitzrovia).

**It held seventy people.**

I always thought back then you were doing that thing that a lot of people did at the time - rebelling against yourself. We did that as a band, Tomato did it as a design agency.

**It was a period of drunken Maoist permanent revolution!**

KH Yes! It seemed very acid house, very punk, very DIY. Just get on with it; not too much procrastination. When everybody comes to it, go somewhere else.

**With Underworld certainly, with the Social slightly, I thought that the fact that we'd not been there at the inception point, it meant there were less rules to be followed. Acid house had happened by the time I moved to London in 1990 and by the time Underworld started making records.**

KH We were inspired by what had happened four years before. Darren had been to those clubs but Rick and I hadn't – we'd been to one rave in North London. We got drawn into a world that was very guerrilla. Things could happen in pubs or basement rooms without being part of any establishment structure. It was about being bloody minded.

**What do you miss about Soho? That is, if you do miss it...**

KH I miss what Tomato was; I miss the community of it. People were doing stuff – you guys were, Darren was, Goldie would be coming through in his Merc with his pitbull. Lovely bloke. There was a real cross-pollination which

is something that I grew up with. Just because you were making this kind of music or that kind of sound art - people hung out together – artists, musicians, DJs, anyone. It was the press that started to define genres. There wasn't a period for a couple of years where Soho felt like the centre of the universe – just like Paris, San Francisco or New York had been previously. I really felt it was like what New York in the time of the Factory would have been like. No one cared what anyone else did, we all just hung out together.

(As is the way with these things, we are joined by another friend – publisher and writer Mathew Clayton).

**MC Black Market Records was the most intimidating place. I was reminded of it the other day when I went into a guitar shop in Brighton. It was in a basement, no natural light, just three men of varying ages between twenty and seventy just fixing things and not really communicating with you. It was a man cave; exactly like those old record shops were. I remember at the time not having any fondness for it at all but now I think back. I think I quite like that weird feeling of being outside trying to get in.**

**KH I remember the first time I got served in there and I was mind blown. 'He's served me! I've made it!'**

**I remember coming up from Wales and going in there to buy a Yello 12". And the person who grudgingly served me was (legendary DJ) Ashley Beedle. I got to know him years later, thoroughly lovely chap but he had an incredible deflective wall back then!**

KH Maybe that's a trait that's died out. It was definitely present in record shops and also in music shops. One of my earliest experiences of London was coming here as a teenager. Me and my mates drove up in a Mini Moke; the top was down and our hair was all knotted in our faces after driving for a few hours from Worcestershire. We went to Shaftsbury Avenue which is where all the guitar shops were – they weren't on Denmark Street back then. I'd worked all summer to get the money together to buy a guitar. £110. I was going to buy my first new electric guitar. They had a Gibson Melody Maker in the window. I can remember the colour, it was turquoise, it's burnt into my retinas. I asked if I could try the guitar in the window. And he asked what I was after. He then said to me, 'I know the sound you're looking for, this guitar isn't an SG'. He just wouldn't sell it to me, was trying to talk me round. I was so furious I went to Rose Morris over the road and spent my money on a guitar that wasn't very good. The one I'd wanted would be worth a few grand now; it would have been a great sound, it would have affected my playing. Years later, cash in pocket walking into shops on Denmark Street, the first person that gave me any attitude, I'd head into the next shop. I found one shop where the two guys who worked there were attentive and friendly I gave them all my trade after that. They were really nice guys; I just didn't see why everyone couldn't be like that.



# THE DECISIVE MOMENT

BENJAMIN TIETGE

It's really easy to say you must follow your instinct, intuition and dreams. It's even easier to advise other people to do so. The reality is that it is terrifying to cut the security rope of regular employment. There are ways around it of course. Why define somebody by how they earn their living? – Anyway, that's a different conversation for another time.



Benjamin is a photographer. He is 35. He was born in Hamburg. Home, now, is London. Before London he lived in New York where he was assistant to Annie Liebowitz. At 30 years old he became the first assistant to Mario Testino. This is now the significant point in this tiny story. He worked with Mario for 4 years. A lot of travel, an awful lot of glamour and a very long and clear look behind the curtain of glamour.

If you're hoping for a story which details a sordid and joyless place that had to be escaped then you're possibly going to be very disappointed.

Benjamin is sensible enough to know that people have to pursue infinitely more challenging occupations. Indeed, he is openly and loudly fond of Mario and deeply appreciative of his work. He learned a lot from working with Mario. That confidently surrounding yourself with very clever and gifted people is a very smart move. It takes confidence. There are many people who purposely build a team of people of limited ability in order to highlight and emphasise their own (usually correspondingly limited) qualities.

The work is always evidence of the theory. Travel is one of the valuable benefits of assisting Mario. This took Benjamin to more places than it is worth listing here. You quickly get the idea of where he has been by discussing any geographic zone and Benjamin will nonchalantly mention something that he learned, or did, whilst there.

Benjamin is a compulsive photographer. He carries a well loved Leica with him at all times. He holds it like a musician holds an instrument. In breaks during our conversation he absentmindedly picks up his camera and looks at it from a new angle with the tiniest look of quiet wonder.

In his downtime wherever he was working with Mario he would head off, led only by his,

and his camera's, instinct. The photographs of Benjamin's that first attracted me were taken in Cuba. They are not patronizing or worthy. They distill the greatness in his unknown subjects. He captures the dignity and confidence. They look heroic. Benjamin is, in no way, disdainful of fashion photography regarding it as a critical cultural pursuit.

He, however, is drawn to work that celebrates beauty with no commercial advantage.

That conventional beauty is not critical to glamour is written in his unwritten manifesto.

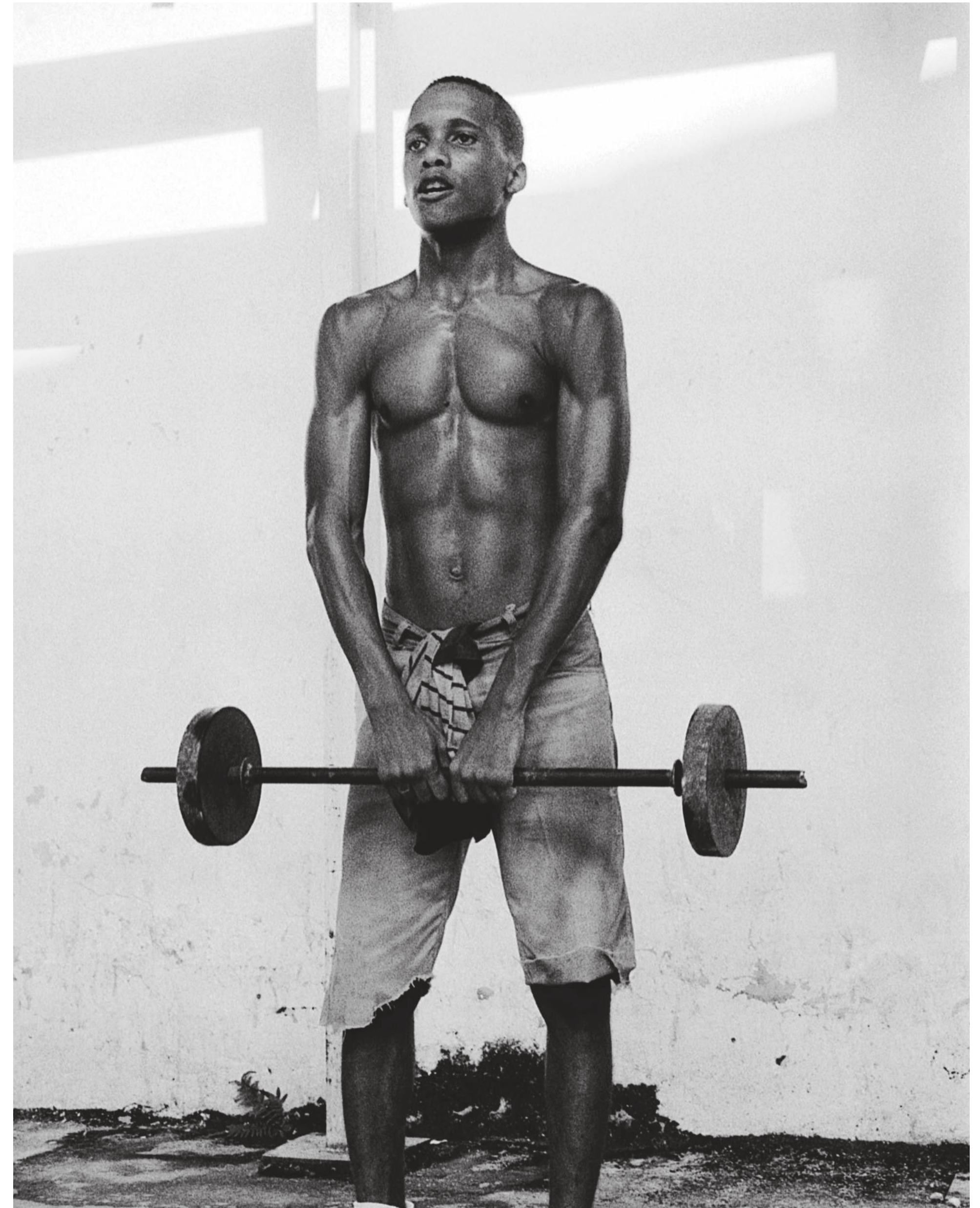
Benjamin, like all of us, is full of contradictions. He then, excitedly, talks of an imaginary fashion shoot by Henry Cartier Bresson with Gisele Bündchen.

He also said his current dream subject would be Kendrick Lamar. I actually presented the question as "Who would you most like to be paid to photograph?" – his answer quickly revealed that no fee would be necessary.

Our chat lasted just over half an hour. It ranged from things we mutually like. Juergen Teller we agree on. His new publication of Kanye and Kim in the French countryside, however, divides us.

To things we don't like. The Westboro Baptist Church. Fireworks we both like. This fact was discovered when I asked him a personal question. The interview was set up by a mutual friend. Benji Wiedemann is an old friend of Benjamin's and a fairly recent friend of mine. Before the interview Benji asked me if I would ask Benjamin (Apology if this is a bit confusing) how he lost his finger.

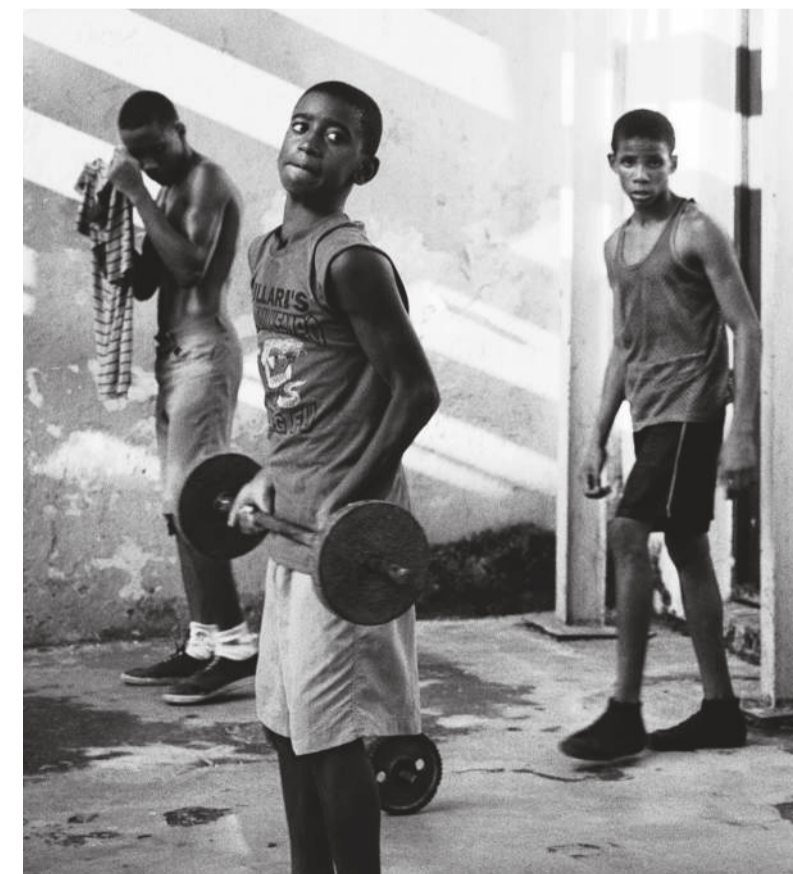
"Why don't you just ask him?" I reasoned. Benji is one of the most, almost uncomfortably, uninhibited people I know. He just said he didn't quite know how to ask.







“Final question was why he uses an old Leica with film. Quick as you like he explains that the camera requires one eye in the viewfinder leaving the other eye to fix, undiverted, on the subject’s own eye.”



Said digit was cleanly removed in a childhood pyrotechnic experiment. To add to the intrigue of this detail I will add that Benji was actually born with 6 fingers. Lifelong friends with the normal number of fingers between them. Just slightly unconventionally distributed. As Mark Twain said “Of course truth is stranger than fiction. Fiction has to make sense”

Asked who he wants his work to be liked by he gives a look of charming bewilderment and says if it is a portrait he, of course, wants the subject to like the photograph.

I then relay a conversation I had. I have been asked not to identify the person. I don't know why as there is nothing, remotely, negative in the story. He asked me so charmingly, however, that it would be ill mannered to go against his request. This kind of diplomacy will, I am sure, prevent me ever being a proper journalist!

Anyway, the anecdote: I was in awe meeting this photographer whose work I adored. I asked him which photographer he admired or even aspired to. I had a good idea of the names he would cite. He looked slightly pained for a second. He then said that he was at a distant relatives wedding. The photographer was a middle aged semi professional snapper. He had, the photographer explained, the most natural fluid way of moving around his subjects. The resulting photographs were perfect in capturing the deep gestures of the subject. He simply said the photographs could not have been any better. He went on to describe the intense joy

and satisfaction on the man's face as he moved around the wedding with his camera. It made the guy, in his opinion, the equal of any photographer ever.

“Whats impossible?” I asked. Being 35 years old with a universe of possibility ahead of him he replied with wide eyed zeal “Nothing man, nothing is impossible” I, 15 years older, countered that age made certain things impossible. We settled on the, if not impossible then at least very unlikely, pursuit of achieving a perfect 900 on a skateboard.

This is where Impossible steps up and shows it's value. Are you, reader, able to teach Ben how to accomplish the elusive manoeuvre? – do you want to be photographed? The real magic bullet would be if Kendrick Lamar is out there reading this and is able to trade skate moves for portraits. Unlikely, but then again, a man with 11 fingers being best friends with a man with 9 fingers is pretty high odds.

Final question was why he uses an old Leica with film. Quick as you like he explains that the camera requires one eye in the viewfinder leaving the other eye to fix, undiverted, on the subject's own eye.

I then photographed Ben I used my phone but shot it through the viewfinder of Ben's Leica. In truth, the process actually sounds more intriguing than the results prove. Then, of course, Ben did the same and the pictures he took were intriguing, complex and very beautiful. Says a lot I guess.





It's not often the fashion world collides with political and environmental issues, but long time activist Vivienne Westwood is definitely the exception to the rule. Using her iconic fashion status as a platform to express her concerns over drastic environmental issues, Westwood has been sharing ideas of sustainability and global responsibility for years.

# Vivienne Westwood

**WV** Welcome Vivienne Westwood: rockstar fashion designer, pioneer of punk, the anti establishment Dame and hard core environmentalist who cycles around London always saying what she thinks. Vivienne and her partner Andreas phoned Lily in 2013 and asked her to do something artistic and different "about impossible and the gift economy" for their S/S RED show. Lily consequently did a pagan live dance as an "Impossible happening" and a short film which they used it to shine a light on the plight of climate refugees.

**WV** I've always cared about the suffering in the world and what to do. That's why I did punk in the first place, because we wanted to challenge the corruption and the mismanagement of the whole world, the whole world politics, that is driving everything that is going to kill us.

So I think I'm very fortunate to be able to open my mouth whenever I can and people will listen to me. And therefore I think it's really important that I stay designing and I do wonderful clothes because I think that helps my credibility you see...It's really good if you can convert that credit into what we've got to try and do. We've got to try and topple our rulers.

**LC** The EJF (Environmental Justice Foundation) have got a very intelligent approach to how they solve and look at problems. A lot of it looks at production chains and looks at business and how we can drive market changes that have systemic change. And then in this instance they're doing a new campaign on climate refugees which is quite a big issue.

**WV** I thought it was very clever, this lovely human thing they've done which is to have a postcard and just ask people to write on it what their home means to them. And then the idea

is they'll send all those postcards, with people saying how important their home is, to Bank Ki Moon at the UN. And we expect that they're also going to send this film as well to try and impress upon him to acknowledge the problem that there are mounting numbers of people who have got nowhere to live, they've had to leave their home. And what are we going to do with these refugees? What can we do with these refugees? We've got to do something!

And so I think it's very lovely for people to sign this postcard because it's very different from just ticking a box or pressing a button and saying "yes I subscribe to this idea". It means you have to think about it. Put yourself into someone else's shoes. And write something on the postcard about your home. And I think that's really good because then you'll really want to send the postcard, you'll feel you're committed, you'll feel that you've done something that's going to help to change the world and help to change the situation.

**LC** The point of the campaign is that there's no legal recognition right now or protection for the climate refugees despite the fact that more people are displaced nowadays than there are by war and famine and poverty.

The point of the campaign is to try and change international law so that people who are being displaced by climate are recognized as refugees because right now a climate refugee wouldn't actually be recognized as a refugee."

**DD** Why did you choose the folktale of The Red Shoes?

**WV** The story is about this incredibly arrogant girl whose shoes are enchanted by a stranger, and she becomes trapped in a dance of the red shoes – she'll die if she stops dancing.

She goes through this terrible landscape getting torn with thorn bushes and there are storms starting to rage and everything. Eventually she gets her feet chopped off and that's the only way she can get rid of the shoes. I just thought it was a brilliant metaphor for the people who have to leave their homes, they are trapped by their environment which is degrading them, maybe its the water or a terrible disaster, and they can't survive there anymore. There are different ways that people are being forced off their homeland now, just like animals, you have to go because to stay there is death.

**LC** It's the idea of being an animal trapped in a very enclosed space, trying to fly, trying to break out. In one scene in the film I'm wearing this feather boa blue dress, which was almost visually like a bird.

**DD** At what point did you decide you were going to perform the dance live on the runway for the SS14 show as well?

**LC** I was on holiday with a bunch of friends and by complete coincidence one of them happened to organise the Red Label show. If that hadn't happened I probably wouldn't have suggested a performance, but in conversation I was saying how I love theatre and had some ideas about how we could perform the film live. It was absolutely nerve wracking but quite fun.

**DD** I would have been terrified...

**WV** She was trembling!

**LC** I was performing trembles.

**DD** It was a very important moment during fashion week, because you stood up and

presented something totally different to any other designers. Why isn't there more social and political commentary in fashion?

**LC** There's an inherent contradiction between appreciating the beauty of clothes and creativity and individuality, and the waste around the ideas of trends and seasons.

**WV** Advertising is all about buying things you don't need. What we're talking about is making a real choice as much as you can. You know, buy less choose well.

**LC** I love beautiful things, I like having nice clothes and I can appreciate why other people do – but I've also started to learn more about the impact of what we buy: how things are made, how much you buy and the quality of everything.

**WV** My husband Andreas said that if people would only buy beautiful things, we wouldn't have an environment problem. That's probably largely true.

**DD** How else can people engage with these issues?

**WV** People wonder "what can I do?" and don't do anything. Just inform yourself about the world – go to the Chinese exhibition at the V&A! It's one of the most life-changing, brilliant things to do. Get a life. If you get a life you can help other people to get a better life as well. Don't be somebody with a hole in your head that can't do anything.

This interview originally ran on Dazed.com



Some words get, over time, distorted. Their meaning becomes bent out of shape. At some point the stretched definition finally breaks and the word detaches, entirely, from it's original meaning.

We now think of melancholia as a negative condition. An illness. The word originally described a mood of serene contemplation. It existed between poignancy and sublime reminiscing. It inspired great works of music, literature and the arts. Poetry is often rooted in the melancholic.

Another victim of this is the word "Anger" - with its central, descending "g" it has a visual elegance. Phonetically it is beautiful. Anger is a positive and vital current. Anger is an energy. As an element it is, too often, bundled together with aggression and spite. It becomes, with these, an ugly, belligerent and quite definitely negative thing.

Anger, like melancholy, has produced some of the treasures of human creativity. Anger is at its very best when it avoids the aggression and physical intimidation.

It is one of the sublime human behaviours when it is laced with eloquence, wit and intuitive intellect. This is the strain of anger that courses through Metal Box (the second album by Public Image Limited) and Ken Loach films. This is the sharp essence of classic kitchen sink dramas, protest songs and free jazz. This anger even makes people look better. It runs with confidence and noble purpose. The facial expression of a person in the throes of positive anger is strangely serene and beatific. Not for them the scarlet, puce and grimace of bad anger.

Anger as an energy only wants to put right the wrongs of the world. This anger doesn't, necessarily, want to instigate witch hunts or public assassination. It is empathetic to human error. It is reasonable. It is precious fuel for a society committed to making a better world.

Ever listened to Robert Wyatt singing Shipbuilding? That is what anger sounds like. Languid, controlled, sad but determined to deliver a message in it's most beautiful form.



Great leaders are often not the person in official authority. Indeed, great leaders do not identify or define themselves as leaders. This is because they are, well, leading.

# ACTIVISM

Quietly, and without any fanfare or ceremony, just doing what they feel is a positive contribution to the world and the people in it. Activism is a similar topic. It is easy to make a loud noise about a cause. It is really easy to be seen, and heard, criticising and condemning an organisation, policy or regime. The people who practice this often don't achieve anything at all. Typically, they may then move on to a new cause, repeating the cycle in a strangely counterproductive pursuit.

This is not activism. The clue is in the word. You need to act. The actual act itself is often lacking in drama. The act can be the most mundane gesture. Simply paying your taxes is activism. Think about that. Nobody ever got sensationally filmed filling in an honest tax return. Low key altruism is everywhere. It gets little, or no, publicity because of the nature of the cause and the act.

Impossible is not an activist organisation. When it works, though, it quietly changes lives. Not always in high dramatic ways. The people who are part of Impossible did not join to become highly public social pioneers. They just wanted to do their bit. Be a part of a loose movement that wants to do its bit a lot of times. Imagine the power of hundreds of thousands of small bits getting done to make hundreds of thousands of lives a small bit better.

I recently spent the morning at a seminar to explore the value and purpose of activism. I really like the guys who organized the event. I am going to be diplomatically vague out of respect for their feelings. I, clearly, will never make a good activist.

#### What is an activist?

Anyway, back to the seminar. Naturally, it wasn't called a seminar but a workshop. It was held at a 2nd, or even 3rd, division private members club in Central London. One of those clubs where

the members must either get very perplexed at the number of non-members wandering around with name badges on or, simply, have very low expectations of what a private members club should deliver.

I was greeted and asked to take a name badge. The people here sure didn't look like activists. As they circulated the room holding a miniature pan au chocolat and a cup of very polite coffee they weren't acting like activists either.

#### What does an activist look like?

We were divided into groups. Then the grisly reason began to show itself. Like acne vulgaris glowing through thick make up. We listened to a series of talks by celebrated activists. Well, celebrated activists who were willing to participate in this event.

The talks followed roughly the same pattern. We all owed it to ourselves to do something we believed in that would make the world a better place for our fellow humans. Nothing to sneer at there. Then, though, the next speaker stepped up. If the previous speakers had failed to look or talk like activists then this guy was next level. His talk, with gestures borrowed from a hundred Ted talks, got straight down to it. How can activism help your brand?

Maybe, I thought, there will be a reaction to this interloper. Maybe tables will go over and the flipchart might get kicked. All that happened was the room took on a more dense concentration. He was on a roll. Females in the room were slightly glassy eyed. Men looked earnest and thoughtful as they ingested his gift.

Get the kids hooked into the cause and they will buy what you want to sell them. Did, I wonder, the Black Panthers ever do an endorsement or tie in with a breakfast cereal brand. Was there a successful campaign for an insurance company

fronted by Harvey Milk?

This, we were assured, wasn't selling out. It was simply using a brand to get attention for your cause. Oh, yes, and an opportunity for the brand to capitalize on the gesture.

I actually don't think it is a bad arrangement. It was just not what I was expecting. I secretly wanted to be under surveillance as I entered and left the building. Not subjected to a deluge of subsequent e mails inviting me to further innovative workshops designed to optimize my brand value.

So, what does activism mean in 2015? What does the activist look like? Can an activist be impeccably dressed and fly Club Class?

#### Is activism an unconditionally good thing?

Those who go purple faced with rage at immigrants and physically assault anybody not of Anglo Saxon blood: are they activists? Like all of the interesting stuff it is a minefield of pitfalls, sticky contradictions and volatile paradox. You just have to jump into the dialogue without the fear of being caught out.

I think I understand it. I am pretty sure I understand it as much as anyone. Anyway, activism, in any era, has got to be about personal confidence and conviction right?

Be committed approximately 72% of the time. More than this and you become obsessed. Anger is an energy but obsession is just, well, a bit creepy. Likewise, don't cut people out of your life who don't readily agree with your cause. Activism is about making a difference. Only hanging with those who share your defined beliefs is a bad, bad idea. It will lead you to back rooms of bad pubs and badly printed leaflets. The revolution, it is said, will be catalysed not by books but by pamphlets. Not, I can assure you, by the leaflets that get circulated in this way. It becomes socially and culturally septicemic

and nobody wants that.

Contradiction isn't a bad thing. I always thought it was a demonstration of a mind engaged and in motion. Neil Young, for starters, is always contradicting. You could say he has made a career of contradiction and he's pretty good.

Activism is not dogma or tirade. It's human and it errs, gets it wrong sometimes. This doesn't diminish the power of protest.

I originally wrote this piece just before Jeremy Corbyn was elected as leader of the Labour Party. Well, he is in there now - time will tell what happens with this one. As I edit it now we see an increasingly beleaguered David Cameron seemingly hoisting himself up into a very vulnerable target over the future of a very messy Europe. We / I try not to be politically, morally or culturally dogmatic but it would be strange to ignore the surreal sideshow theatre of Donald Trump and his shot at the prize.

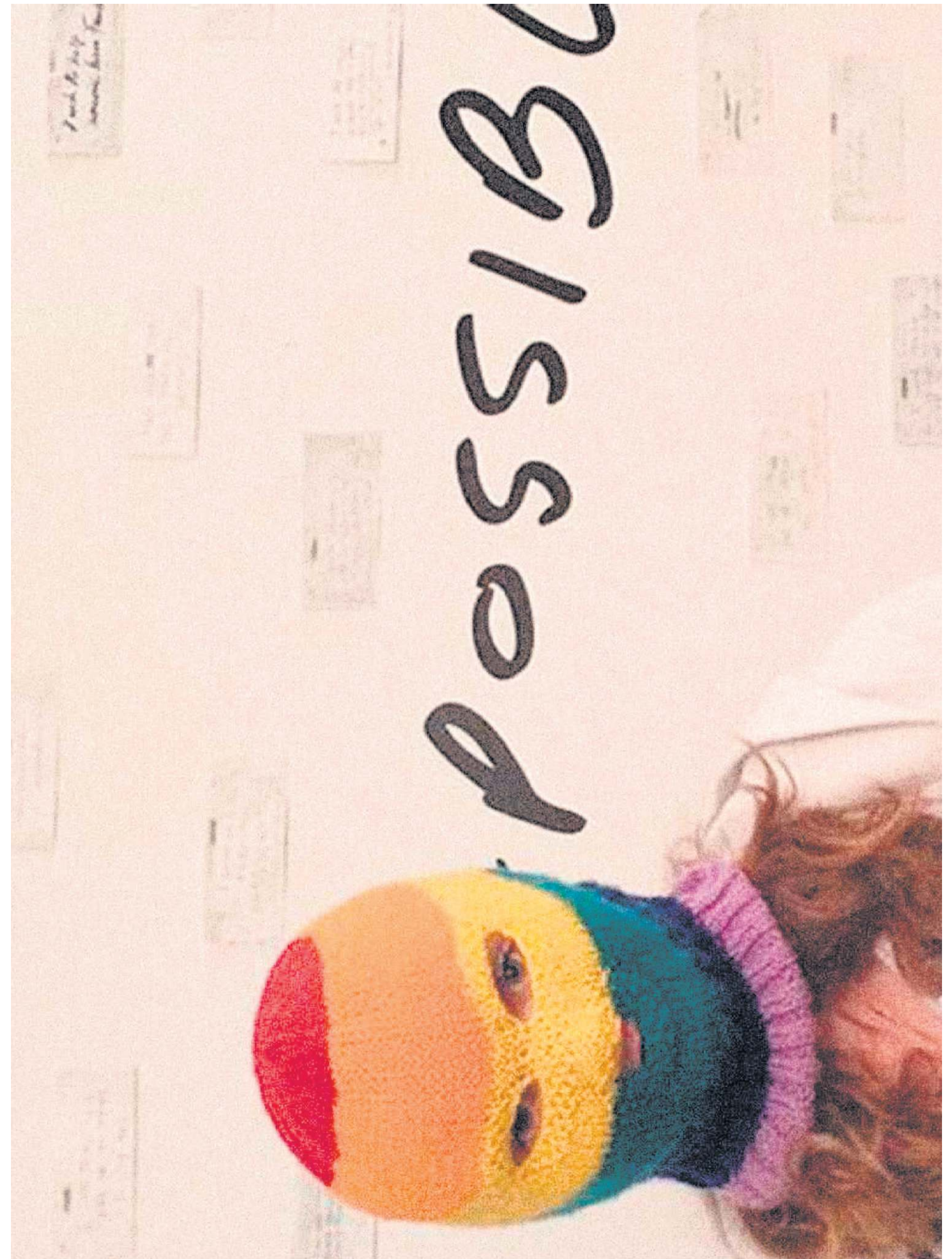
Hopefully, if anybody keeps a copy of this paper for a long time, there will be day where you flick through it and remember, with a puzzled smile, how Donald Trump looked, for a short while like a contender. A younger person, maybe your child or grand child may ask "Who was Donald Trump?" and you will turn the page and say "he's not important"

#### How long can you be an activist?


The theory being: if you are a very effective activist you will achieve your objective. You become a counter authority. This makes you something to protest against. You do remember that activism comes from all political, philosophical and social directions?

A manifesto will always form a cord to choke you.

Just think about it, that's all I am saying.







# DEAR CRANE MAN

One day last week I decided to walk home across London. I bought a sandwich in Hyde Park and, being a busy day, I asked a man sitting by the Serpentine lake if he would mind me sitting in the empty seat at his table. Half way into my sandwich we got talking.

I learned that the man was Irish and was in London to operate a crane at Great Ormond Street Children's Hospital. Every day on his way up in his big red crane he would see a little boy in one of the hospital windows who would wave to him, and so he waved back. For weeks that turned into months, the little boy and he would wave to one another every morning and evening as his crane went up and down. As the weeks passed, the little boy's wave got stronger and more vigorous. Then suddenly the boy vanished.

Not long afterwards, a letter was delivered to the crane operator by his boss. In a child's handwriting, written with some assistance, the letter read: 'Dear Mr Crane Man I was staying in hospital to get a heart transplant and now I am much better and have gone home. Every day I waited to see you, and when I did it would really make my day. So thank you very much for waving to me.'

With an embarrassed look the man told me that the letter had brought him to tears, and he asked his boss whether he might somehow be able to meet the boy. A visit was arranged and when the boy was next at the hospital for an appointment, the crane man was taken down to meet him. "I took him an Iron man figurine" he said "because he had to have a heart transplant too."

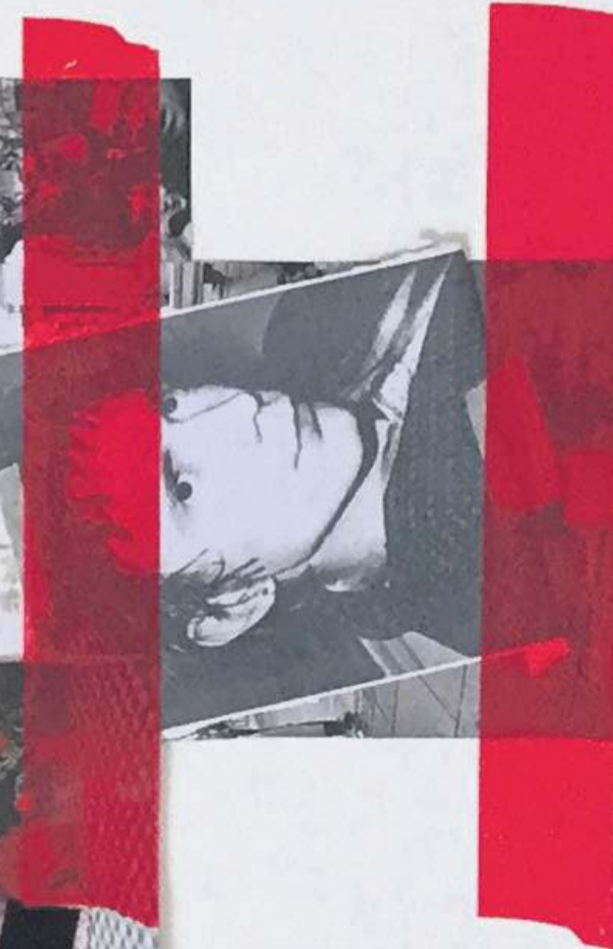
I had finished my sandwich by now and so I said goodbye. As I walked away smiling, I thought about how amazingly contagious the warmth of a stranger's kindness is. The little boy's kindness had been caught by the crane man, which had just been passed on to me, and I hope now, a little bit, to you.



# AIKARNEY



POSSIBLE





Impossible recently discussed climate change with former climate change minister Greg Barker, and former leader of the Green Party Caroline Lucas. They were asked about issues such as the Climate Change Act, carbon taxes, marine energy parks, fracking and the potential for a 100% renewable energy source in the future.

# Meeting UK Politicians

Greg told us how much the UK government is doing for the environment, and Caroline Lucas told us why it's not enough.

**LC** What does the Climate Change Act in the UK involve?

**GB** It involves setting carbon budgets and a pathway to commit in law to the UK reducing its carbon emissions by 80 per cent by 2050. That is huge...

The UK is 25 per cent below its 1990 levels of carbon emissions, although we are the fastest growing economy in the G8. So we've proved that you can grow your economy and continue to cut emissions, and we are actually on course to meet our shorter term and long term commitments to cut emissions by 80 per cent by 2050.

Clearly, as you go through into the next decades, going from 25 per cent to 50 per cent, then 50 to 80, that gets hard, that does call for profound change. You've got to decarbonise our energy systems by the 2030s; shift cars from petrol and diesel to electric; become much more energy efficient.

Ultimately we can argue between ourselves as politicians and political parties and government and NGOs about whether or not

we're pursuing the right policies but "what are your absolute levels of emissions?" is the ultimate exam question and so far we are on track.

**LC** What do you think of the Climate Change Act and the commitment to reduce emissions 80 per cent by 2050?

**CL** The Climate Change Act is incredibly important because it set clear, legally binding, long term targets to cut UK carbon emissions...

Yet, if we're serious about keeping global temperatures below 2 degrees, which is the level at which the UK and other countries agree is essential to avoid catastrophic harm to our economy and society, it's not ambitious enough.

The commitments in the Climate Change Act give us only a 37% chance of keeping below 2 degrees, and even that is premised on global emissions peaking around 2016, which, now, is clearly not going to happen.

Judgements on acceptable levels of risk are political, but a 63% chance of exceeding the internationally agreed 2 degrees threshold is an enormous risk that I don't think we should be taking. We owe it to our children and to future generations to strengthen the Climate Change Act and speed-up and scale-up action to cut emissions.

**LC** Can you tell me the government's position on fracking?

**GB** Fracking has got a bad name because in some parts of the US it's taken place in very lightly regulated states. In the UK we are a very highly regulated environment for fossil fuels, the energy companies have an excellent record of health and safety and of environmental integrity and we've been producing on-shore oil and gas in the UK safely and responsibly for decades.

We need more gas, and we cannot tell the Chinese or other developing economies to stop using coal and use more gas if we're saying at home, "Ooh, gas is dangerous", or "Don't use gas", or "Not for us". One thing we know about energy sources is that you have to be consistent, so we need to use gas responsibly, not as a first resort, but basically when energy efficiency won't do the job.

**LC** What are your thoughts on fracking? Greg defends fracking as an intermediary solution to meeting energy demand, and a better option to coal.

**CL** Many people are rightly concerned about the local environmental and public health impacts of fracking.

The shale gas industry has a terrible track record in the US and elsewhere. The whole industry only got off the ground in the States after being granted an exemption from their Clean Water Act.

Many of these same companies are lobbying hard here in the UK to weaken regulations, and speed up the planning process, cutting local people out of the process, as we're seeing with the changes to trespass law currently going through parliament, which allow fracking beneath people's homes without permission...

There's a final reason to go all out for renewables and not shale gas. That's about who's in control. About ownership: 68% of the public say the energy companies should be run in the public sector. I think we do need to put energy back into public hands, but not via a centralised state-ownership model. What we should be going for instead is more of a decentralised energy democracy, with community and municipal ownership of generation and of the grid too. Renewable energy – whether that's biomass, solar, solar farms, or onshore wind – opens the door to all of this. Fracking does not.

See full story at [medium.impossible.com](http://medium.impossible.com)

## GREG BARKER



## CAROLINE LUCAS



All of this indicates that people are not simply dissatisfied with the rising cost of liv-

ing, but with the *way* they live in society. In a sense, we can even understand this senti-

ment. Apparently, shoppers feel insulted by being forced to buy back what they have al-

ready produced as workers. Shopping, however, is as necessary as work. American so-

cietly needs its consumers. People may feel sometimes that in our economy, *things* are





# IT ISN'T A PERFECT WORLD BUT AS LONG AS THERE IS A MAJORITY PROPORTION OF FUNDAMENTAL DECENCY I SORT OF THINK WE'RE GOING TO BE OK.

## EDIBLE ACTIVISM

This is a humble story that takes in political activism, human weakness, disappointment, beautiful food and dignity. It has a really happy ending.

I grew up in the North East of England. My teenage years were lived out against a backdrop of strikes, shutdowns and power cuts.

I hero worshipped a father who was a high profile political agitator. This, to me, made him a sort of Che Guevara in a boiler suit. As an adult I now look back on this time with very mixed, complex feelings. The macho and noble glory of my Dad's commitment to the cause, was made possible, financially, by my Mam's relentless work ethic. This, I remember, was quite a common situation. This, in itself, is a vast subject to cover. Maybe one day I will be sufficiently brave to try and explore it.

The activity, the plotting and the secret strategy that my Dad and his comrades devised were fascinating to me.

London, as a child, was just a place you would occasionally see on Maggie or Blue Peter. I came to London for only the second time when I was fifteen. I came on my own. I never told my parents of the visit. I saved up the money for both the coach ticket and the pair of imported Levi's from Dicky Dirts in Victoria. I came, I got my jeans, I got flashed at and I went home. Again, maybe I will expand on this tale at some point. Let's get back to the story though.

It was probably 1972. There was a current of excitement running through our street. There was to be a march on Downing Street. It was to be joined by Vanessa Redgrave and my Dad was ringleading the North East contingent. I was eight years old. Somebody showed me a picture of Ms Redgrave and suddenly the cause became, well, sexy. This was a really early lesson in how this game works.

The thing seemed to take an age, to an impatient kid, to organize. I remember the excitement as we waved off the trip bus. Forty men, excluding the driver, on board. All earnest and filled with iron commitment. We were told to watch the news in case we saw them. I imagined my Dad, alongside Vanessa Redgrave, defiant. I imagined what it would be like when they returned, victorious, to South Shields.

We never saw them on television. Little was ever said of the trip. I got a Matchbox van as a present. I would, to be honest, have been happier if we had seen the march on the news.

I calculate my Dad to have been around 39 when he made the trip. Around 5 years ago I was back in South Shields to spend a weekend with my parents. As is usual I went for a drink with my Dad. On the way to the pub we passed

the very spot where we waved off the coach. I asked if he remembered it. There was a momentary lapse. I was not alarmed – my Dad is beautifully, gently slowing down. He often pauses to remember our names so this was nothing unusual. He then asked if he had ever told me what happened on the trip. I answered that I was always surprised that no stories or accounts of the trip were ever shared.

He then explained that once on the coach they had started drinking. I could feel the mist of disappointment rolling on the horizon.

The tale he told was not shocking or particularly disgraceful. The coach party never made it to Downing Street. They never even made it to London. The campaign dissolved in a reservoir of McEwens beer. They decided, stopping in Watford, that going to a nightclub was a better option than fighting for the rights of the common man.

Don't ask questions unless you're ready for the answer. Do I feel angry? Not really. In a way, there is a liberation in knowing that your parents, everybody, is capable of making very wrong choices.

It wasn't, even 30 years later, really a funny story. It had bitter traces. The women who worked their factory, cleaning and shop jobs and who arranged precarious financial arrangements, probably will never see the funny side. I kind of agree.

The story gets happier! I fast forward, again, to August 2015. I am again visiting my parents. They are now a whole load older. We walked to their allotment. It is a five minute uphill walk from their flat to the plot.

The allotment is about 5 minutes from the shore of the North Sea. This means, even in the very height of Summer, that there is always a cooling, silvery, sharpness to the air. When the Sun slices through at an architectural angle you can actually see, if you focus, the atoms of sea fret held in the morning light. It was exactly this weather when we went to the allotment. Actually, I now remember the date. It was August 16th, the day after my Mams eightieth birthday.

We had gone for a bit of fresh air and to do a little bit of watering and tidying. Very quickly, as you start work, the real purpose of an allotment begins to reveal itself as a succession of neighbouring gardeners amble over for a chat. The stove goes on, teapot warming. Before long there is a small crowd, maybe seven or eight. All ages. Me, at fifty, being, quite definitely, the

youngest. The talk is of everything from politics, television, health, gardening and grandchildren. The conversation is then about the different skills, and resulting crops, of the different gardeners. The allotment is a single, contained piece of land. Everybody has the same soil and the same weather. It is amazing, though, how differently every plot performs.

This has a very fortuitous result. For instance, my parents seem to excel at growing beetroot. I love the stuff. They, however, are so good at growing it that they end up with more of it than you could ever hope to consume. Their neighbour, he also loves beetroot but, for some reason, is unable to get anything more than a few radish sized pieces. He has, though, a gift for courgettes and squash. You see where I am going with this. So, the sitting round drinking tea bit actually becomes a highly effective barter market. By the time the last cup is drained everybody has a bag of beautiful ingredients. Fresh horseradish to go with the roasted beetroot was one of my ideas. It was, gently, laughed at for being a, well, a London affectation. Sitting in the allotment with an empty tea cup dangling from my little finger I happily imagined my dinner of roasted beetroot with horseradish. This would be served with a fennel and pea salad. Grilled courgette and wild garlic. The meal was about to get a whole lot better.

Coming up the tiny lane was a new group. The light held them in silhouette only. You could see clearly the outline of fishing rods. There was a ripple of excitement in the allotment. Mr Chicken (that is his real name) ninety two years old, explained that these were mackerel fishermen. They camp on the pier the minute mackerel season starts. Like the gardeners, their skill means they land more fish than they would sensibly eat. At the approach of the fishermen the gardeners started packing carrier bags with a selection of fruit, vegetables and herbs. Even some flowers.

The stove goes on again. Teapots and cups are borrowed from other sheds. Over mugs of tea the trading goes on – bags of gleaming mackerel are passed over in exchange for garden produce. Recipes, cooking techniques are exchanged, ridiculed and recommended. It is noisy (remember, the average age here is around 80 – slightly faulty hearing aids are almost mandatory!)

Eventually, it is approaching lunchtime, the crowd disperses. If you are visiting the area I will

explain something: lunch doesn't really exist in the North of England. The sequence of meals goes: breakfast, dinner and tea. So, dinner is eaten at around midday with tea, the main meal, hitting the table at around 630 or so. Just thought I'd clear that up for you.

It then emerges, I am not sure if this contravenes the terms of the allotment so I won't give names, a couple of the gardeners have built very simple smoking facilities. They drop off a couple of glorious smoked mackerel along with some early smoked tomatoes. This is eaten in the sunshine. It is almost difficult to describe the joy of the humble meal. More tea comes. We, my Dad and I, return to the subject of his earlier episodes of political activity. Given the demographic of the allotment it is safe to assume that the majority of the men here were politically active.

This, my Dad, reasoned was probably the most effective political strategy he had ever been involved in. He explained his socialist perspective on his hobby which reduced their cost of living, provided incredible exercise, social activity and ensured a beautiful, healthy diet. The allotments also provide a holiday summer camp for grandchildren. I see what he means. It is socialism in elegant action.

As a result of the activity, commitment and satisfaction they get from the allotment they are refreshingly free from border control fear. When a Phillipino cargo ship was stranded on the Tyne these people took food parcels, knitted blankets and donated clothes, cigarettes and loaned laptops to the crew.

As a post script: the allotments used to be mainly used for growing competition produce. Leeks, marrows, onions and other things were grown, with toxic agents, to almost surreal scale. They had no flavour and very little nutritional value. They were never eaten anyway. The sole objective was to win prizes. Crops, and plots, were guarded, often with violence, against sabotage. The allotments were a hotbed of aggression and hostility. I think there are a multitude of factors explaining the sea change in attitude and purpose of the allotment communities.

Like many subjects, I would love to write about it further at some point. For now, I am simply thankful for the shift. I am also thankful, in anticipation, for the two big bags of sweetcorn, broad beans, potatoes and picallille I will get when my folks next visit.





[WILDRUBBER.COM](http://WILDRUBBER.COM)





In the 1970s a movement for wild rubber tappers emerged led by tapper and activist Chico Mendes. Mendes formed a rubber tappers' union, keen to protect workers' rights, and in the process protect the survival of the forest. The movement united indigenous people, environmental conservationism and a sustainable economic policy based on extraction rather than destruction. They laid the foundation for 'extractive reserves' - state owned and protected areas of land - where local communities could manage the land sustainably. "At first I thought I was fighting to save rubber trees," Mendes famously said, "then I thought I was fighting to save the Amazon rainforest. Now I realise I am fighting for humanity."

On December 22nd 1988 Chico Mendes was assassinated in the back doorway of his home. His wife and two children were inside the house. His two security guards ran away. I visited Mendes' home in Xapuri, Acre, Brazil and was inspired to see how the legacy of his work continues to shine through a complex canopy of environmentalists and entrepreneurs. There are now 70 extractive reserves in the Amazonian forest, and several factories and cooperatives in Acre developed for the sustainable production of forest products such as Brazil nuts, timber, and of course, wild rubber.

Bia Saldanha had met Chico Mendes a month before he was assassinated. A young designer, entrepreneur, environmentalist and founding member of Brazil's green party, she had an interest in the possibilities of wild rubber for fashion. Born and raised in Rio de Janeiro, Bia has lived for most of the last 26 years since Mendes' death in Rio Branco the small town at the heart of this state - Acre, in North West Brazil.

In 2007 Bia was approached by Sébastien Kopp and François-Ghislain Morillon, the founders of the French shoe company Veja. Since founding the company in 2004, Veja had sought to create a socially and environmentally responsible supply chain. They were inspired by the environmental impact of wild rubber and offered to pay a premium to the local tappers for wild - rather than plantation - rubber. Veja currently employs 80 tappers through three associations in Acre, and pay on average 30% more than the regular market for their wild rubber. Rubber is collected, poured into trays with water and coagulating acid, then after a day, it is hung for 5 days to dry.

Veja's cotton is produced by 320 families who farm organically, with mixed farming methods, in Ceará, North Brazil. Veja buys 60% of its cotton from an association of growers located in Tauá, North-east Brazil (ADEC: Associação de Desenvolvimento Educacional e Cultural) and pay 65% more for their cotton than the regular market. The cotton and sheets of FDL rubber are sent to factories in Rio Grande do Sul, South Brazil, where they are mixed with synthetic rubber for stabilization purposes and formed into shoe sole molds. The shoe soles contain 30-40% wild rubber. All of Veja's factory

workers own decent standard houses, with 80% of them are union members. The average wage of the factory workers was equivalent to 238 Euros a month in 2010 (legal minimum wage for the shoe industry in Brazil was 205 euros a month in 2010). Following two social audits to the factory, and improvements they made in response to non-compliance issues, in April 2009, Fairtrade certification was approved.

Veja trainers are transported by boat from Porto Alegre, Brazil to Le Havre in France. Upon arrival in Le Havre, the trainers travel in barges along the canals to the Parisian suburbs where their main offices and designers are based. Veja work with the Atelier Sans Frontières association (ASF) to store, prepare and send out orders. ASG helps facilitates people facing social exclusion to find work. Veja's packaging is made of recycled and recyclable cardboard. The size of the shoe-box was reduced in 2002 to optimize efficiency.

Making things with care costs more. Veja say their fabrication costs are 3-4 times higher than other shoe manufacturers. A challenging predicament when most customers expect trainers to cost a certain price. In order to maintain a competitive price point for their products, Veja spend no money on advertising and only order stock they have got orders for already.

For centuries capitalism has ascribed value through competition, anonymity and opacity. As we move into a digital age of transparency, openness and information, can information, story telling and a greater understanding of provenance and context shift that narrative to one that values the social and environmental imprints of things? Is a sweater more valuable when it is hand knit? Is it more valuable when you know who knitted it? Is rubber that is hand tapped by indigenous communities who walk great distances to find it, and which conserves the forest in the meantime, inherently more valuable? No story is perfect, no story is fully transparent: we want to harvest the power of the crowd to audit the companies we represent. What we consume becomes part of our own story and identity. Economics should be about stories we are proud to tell, to sell, to share, to become. This is not impossible.



Beauty is the promise of happiness. Can a beautiful bag be a weapon against conformity, injustice and a raging tide of toxic product? We say it can. There is nothing about beauty and luxury to be afraid of if you think clearly. These bags are crafted with a strict avoidance of all of the elements that threaten the World. You, should you own one, have a responsibility to continue, and spread, the optimism, the good intent and care that were invested in its creation. It's really simple. Don't get into unmanageable debt to acquire one. Don't demean, or risk harm to, yourself or others in an effort to earn the money to purchase one. If you are unable to afford one of the bags make your own. Do not buy something that looks similar. The word "similar" is amongst the most pointless in our language. If you do buy one of the bags keep it, use it and become close to it. Have adventures with it. Covet it because, and not despite, the knocks, stains and wear it will eventually show. Do not discard it the minute you see somebody famous carrying a new bag. Anyway, just think.

Humans have always used ornamental and decorative objects and adornments to demonstrate belief and belonging.

The objects you are drawn to say a lot about you. That you desire this bag means, I guess, that all of the above is instinctive to you.

Leonard Peltier is Innocent.



  
**Vivienne  
Westwood**

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## THE FUTURE SPARKLES WITH FRAGMENTS OF THE PAST

Everything comes from something. Impossible To Print is a contemporary distillation of things which have happened before. It is difficult, if even possible, to draw a clean line connecting Impossible To Print to early anarchist print. The link is, though, there. The Impossible Dream was a short lived publication. It ran from the early to mid nineteen eighties. Punk, by this point, had decayed into several disappointing backwaters. The glue and cider route and the vacuous New Wave were two well trodden paths. There was an alternative. Crass were more than a punk band. They were a lifestyle. Around Crass orbited a cluster of bands and artists. Detractors mocked their age. They were all noticeably older than their contemporaries. Poison Girls were one of these bands. Led by Vi Subversa they offered a literate and compassionate voice. Vi was in her mid forties when they came to prominence. This fact alone made them shocking. It also made them the target for some astonishing misogynist attacks from the supposedly open minded music press.

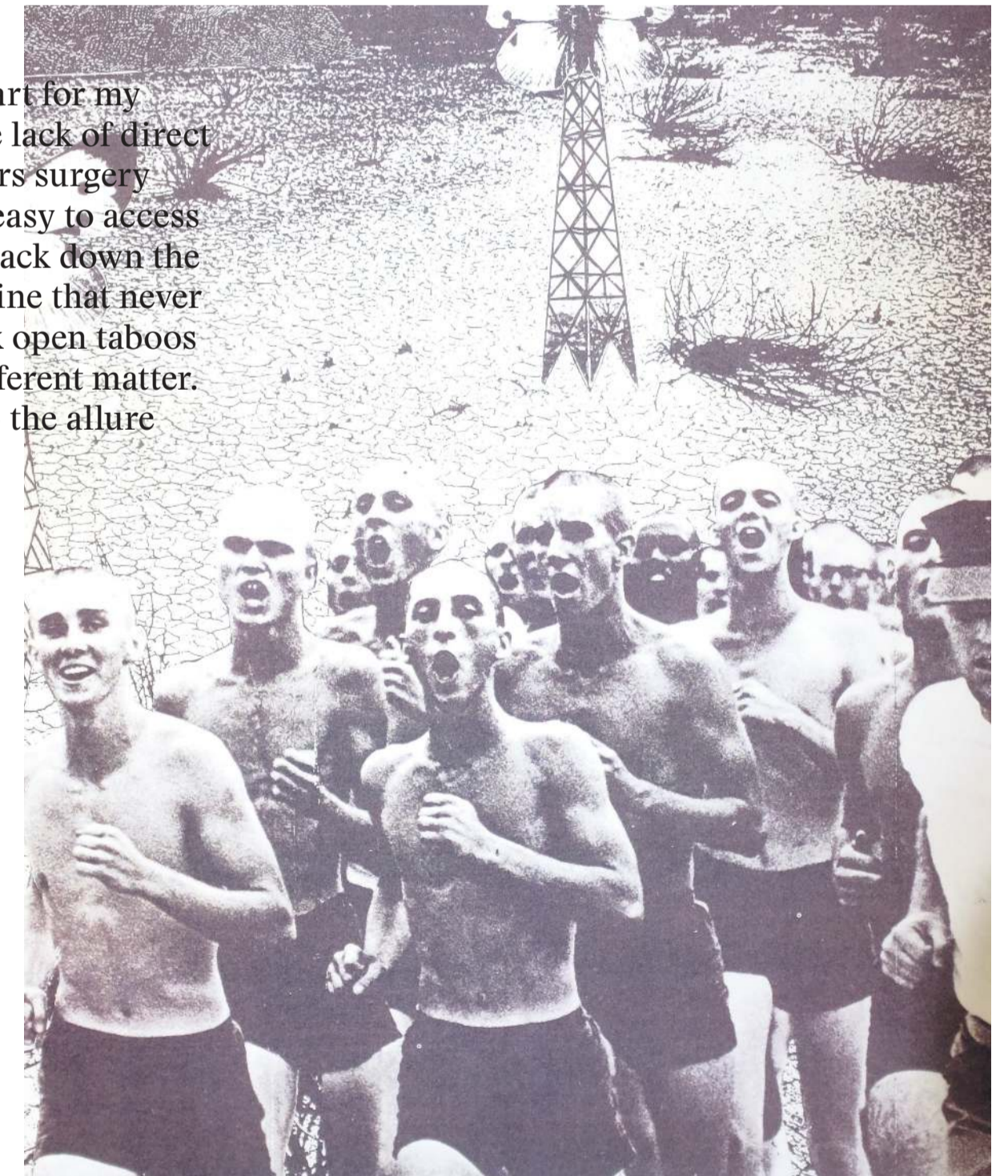
Aside from music The Impossible Dream was their printed communication. The link to Crass is clear. Angry, vitriolic and very provocative collage is the mother tongue. Three and half decades later the entire output still bristles and glowers with a savage grace.

Well, the blistering rage is something we try to curtail with Impossible To Print. Looking at these pieces we do, however, feel righteous and indignantly proud to be a part of this lineage. Curiously, for objects which were either given away or sold at a nominal price, literally pennies, they have become something of a collectors item. The set featured here have a value of around a thousand pounds. Quite how Vi Subversa would feel about this interests me enormously. So much so I have an ambition to ask her in person. Maybe somebody reading this knows Vi. Maybe Vi herself is reading. If so our door is open to her. We feel we kind of owe her something.

We are led to believe that the presence of digital communication and information has made everything traceable. Nothing cannot be solved is the offer. We, Impossible, obviously are made real by the power and capability of technology. I, however, still get a small glow of happiness when technology is duped. I have a friend whose house, indeed, his entire street, does not exist if you believe in every GPS and mapping system. I won't tell you where the street is obviously but it exists. It is in very Central London and remains unknown to the digital universe. This is a good thing.

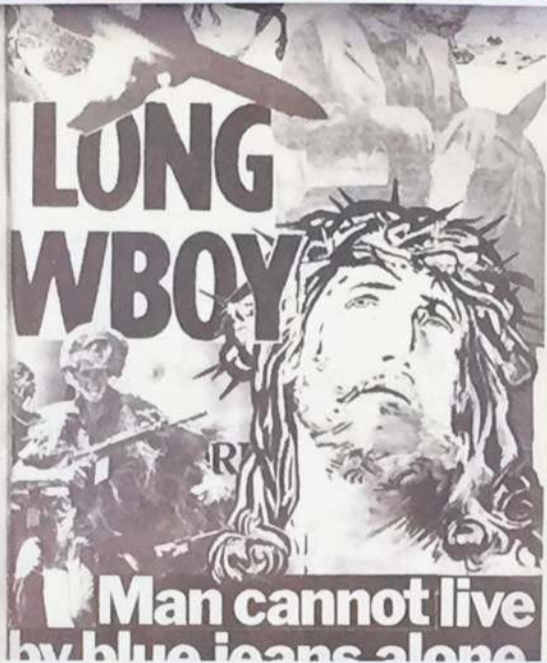
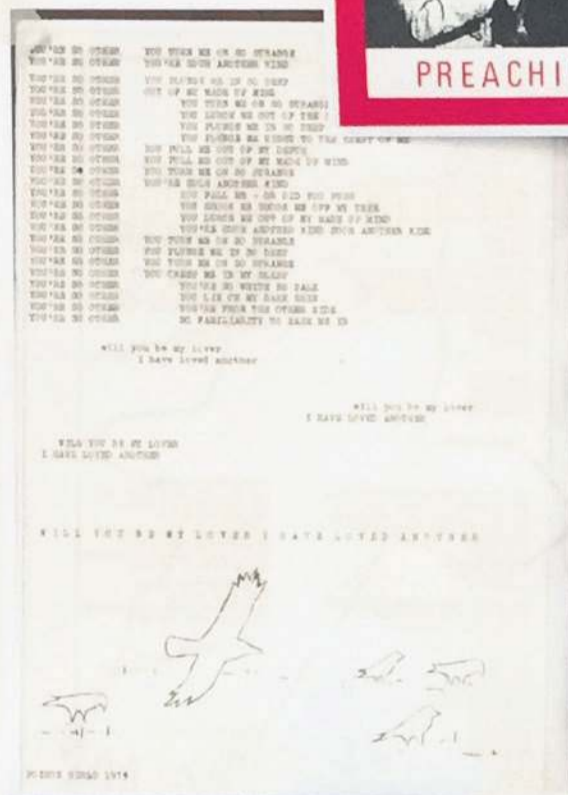
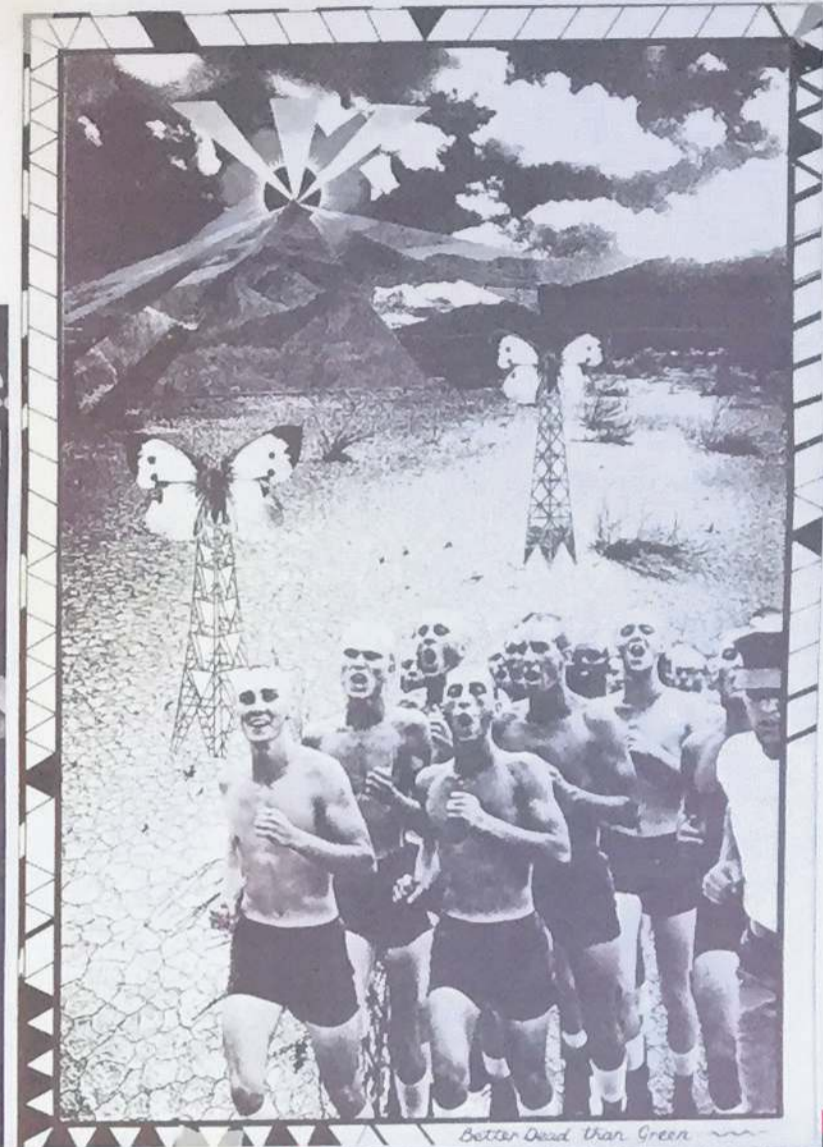
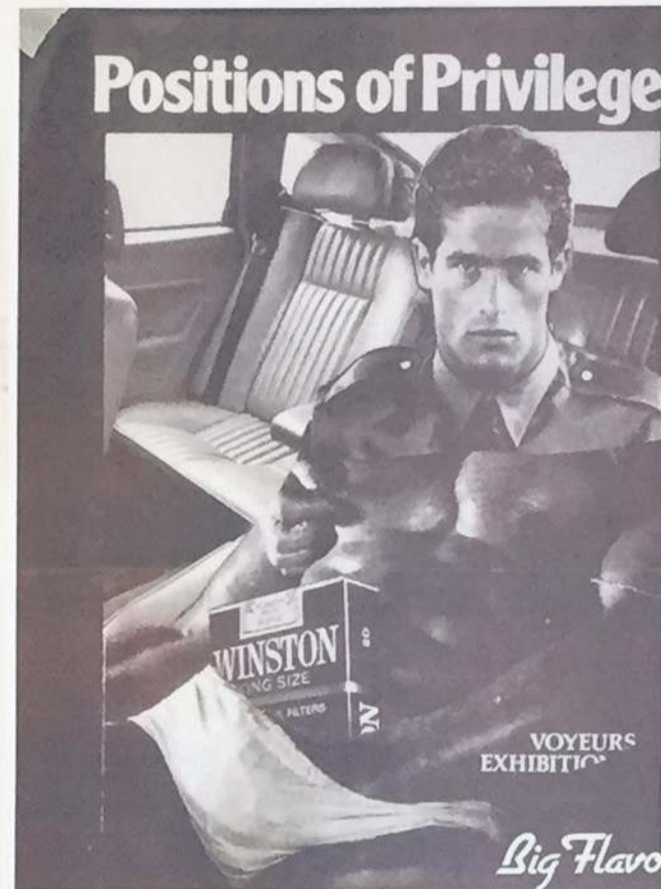
We became enamoured of the Impossible Dream fanzine. Somebody suggested we contact the people involved in its creation. You know, just Google Vi Subversa - she will have a website etc etc. I tried. When I was accused of being too old and unskilled at the art of online browsing somebody else tried. Nothing.

If I am trying to find a replacement part for my washing machine I get irritated by the lack of direct information. Likewise, if I want doctors surgery opening hours I like my information easy to access and conveniently concise. Trying to track down the people behind an idealistic punk fanzine that never made any money, was unafraid to pick open taboos and kick over political statues, is a different matter. Then, the lack of a lead simply adds to the allure and mystery of the thing.



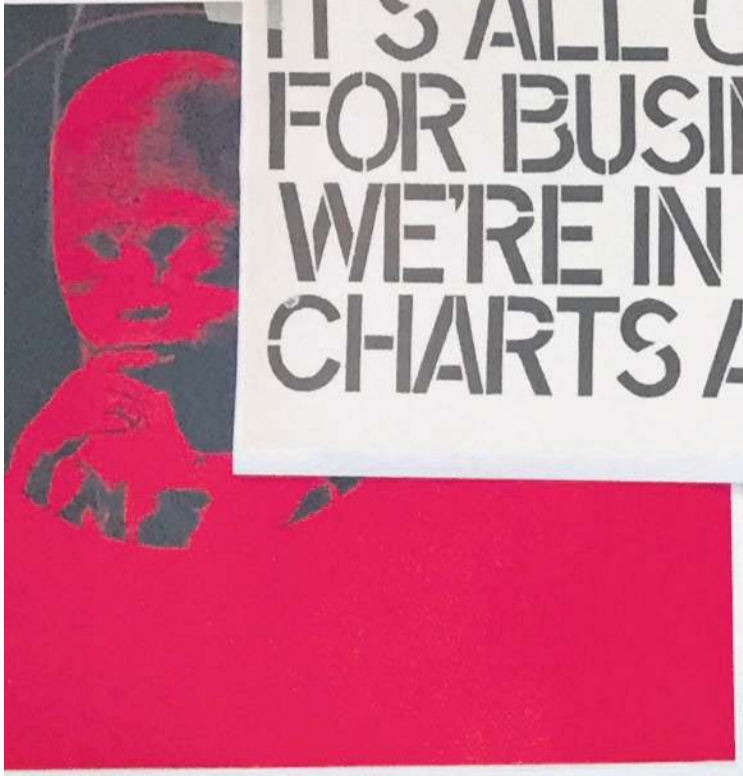


STATE CONTROL  
AND  
ROCK AND ROLL  
ARE RUN BY  
GREEDY MEN  
IT'S ALL GOOD  
FOR BUSINESS  
WE'RE IN THE  
CHARTS AGAIN



IF UGLY BASTARDS LIKE REAGAN AND BREZHNEV CAN FUCK THE WORLD WHENEVER THEY WANT TO - THERES GOTTA BE A CHANCE FOR A GOOD LOOKING GUY LIKE HIM . . . . .

THE IMPOSSIBLE DREAM



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**WE NEED YOUR COUNTRY**

**THE IMPOSSIBLE DREAM**

Way L

4

never mind the Bomb - who's got the Biggest Cock?





FROM A  
CONTRADICTION  
WE CAN DEDUCE  
EVERYTHING

Anybody unsure about the favourable idea of contradiction should study the career of Neil Young. The wily, wiry and taciturn Canadian has made changing direction and views an art form. So much so, in the early 1980's he was sued by his own label (Geffen) for delivering music which was unrepresentative of his name.

His uncompromising confidence in his own, often baffling, path made him one of the few old guard musicians to be embraced by punk. Indeed, he was, and remains, one of the heroes to another great contradiction John Lydon (who created a hit single around the lyric refrain "Anger is an Energy" - you see, there is a logic and cohesion in this!)



There's not a lot I'm going to say about the business. I will blather for a bit and then we can open up and I will get specific if there are questions. Just because everybody's position in the business is so different and I'm also in a country where it's very different – I don't know a lot about the BBC or... and honestly, I don't really know what's going on in America either.

# Joss Whedon

I just love *Mulan*. I've watched it like 20 times... I almost got a tattoo of *Mulan*.

'Respect!' is, for me, sort of the essence of everything that I write 'about' and everything [that] informs 'how' I write. I do not actually respect people\* in life - that would be weird. But at the core of everything, for me, is this thing - this idea, that everybody matters.

It started with villains. I read something years ago that Willem Dafoe said that stuck with me forever, something I still, y'know... He had just done 'Last Temptation of Christ' and 'To Live and Die in L.A.' (yes I'm very old) and somebody asked him y'know, what do you like better - heroes or villains? - and he said 'there is no difference, everybody thinks they're righteous.' And that was one of those blow-the-doors-open moments for me, because it's like, yes, everybody does, and the more my villains have, a perspective - not just an agenda, but a perspective - the more they're right, the more, whatever story I am writing, if it's y'know horror or action, whatever, becomes a story, becomes a journey, and less becomes a spoof or a series of set pieces.

The second thing that I would bring up which is 'intent.' I will only talk about it briefly. Intent is actually something that I read about from Kurt Busiek, cos er, he's a comic book writer, and I don't know where he got it, it was just the reason, 'why am I writing this?' And you know, the reason

is not an external thing - it's not to break into the Academy – and the external portion of it is very important, we'll get to that, but the intent being...

For example, when we did 'Buffy' as a show, every episode had to be about something different. Every episode had to be about something in your life that happens, but it didn't have to be 'and that's how I learned, it's not good to drink beer.\* And y'know, it's different than a moral, and it could just be, 'remember what it was like in that weird time.'

The Outside World... this is a little bit about the business but it's more about your relationship with the audience, and the difference between intent and intention... because intent, again, is that thing, is that part of you that makes you need to write, and I cannot stress enough, that need is the only thing that a writer must have. And a pen is good.

Because I've had so many people come and be like, 'y'know, I'd like to write,' [soft pitiful voice] and I'm like, 'just leave.' I know writers who, it's torture for them, they hate it, it's like 'AARGH AARGH!' but they can't stop. I myself have never enjoyed anything more than writing. I love to live in that world. In fact, I need to.

The reason I mention this in terms of intent... is because of intention. Intention is something I've seen as a rookie mistake a lot, which is that I'll read something and it's very muddled and unsure about what is trying to be accomplished, or

what the perspective is, or where the momentum is supposed to be taking me, and I'll y'know, talk to the writer about it though, 'well no... but what I meant... what it... what it does is... what I meant to do...'

As soon as they're talking about that, they're missing the part where it didn't work. Where whatever they wanted to convey, did not get conveyed. And it's very easy to cram something with intention instead of with pure intent...

Y'know, you have to make yourself very clear, and this has to do with this other audience - it has to do both audiences - and it has to do with structure, in terms of the audiences, you've gotta bring that thing that only you have and then you have to turn it into something that they can digest. The idea of, 'oh I'm going to make them laugh, so I can carry over my protocol idea, is basically, a huge part of why and how I created Buffy - I could've pitched 'Buffy The Lesbian Separatist', but I thought y'know, let's work from underneath - that's a very exciting show. This idea of getting them through it, of coming to them with this idea, so that you're not excluding them, y'know you're not 'I want to talk about what it was like for me growing up.'

Well that's, y'know, by the way that's all we're fucking writing about. I don't know about you guys but I've never written about anything except myself, and mostly didn't know it back then - hugely embarrassing - suddenly found

out... 'Oh, it's me...'

I am obsessive about structure. I am a slave to it. Structure is something without which you are lost. And in terms of just the day to day business of writing, the moment to moment business of writing, having it is everything 'cos you're not so of going 'whaaa... 'You're going, OK I need to accomplish this. I need to get from here to here, I need... The more you can break things down like that, the more you can also write, if you have another job.

And honestly, this is a true story, that even I don't believe, 'cos it happened to me. I was working on the script for *Serenity* and I was making one of my charts and I had all these different categories. There was like sex, tension - wait now - Suspense, Tension, Eroticism, Romance, Funny, Action, and... I would sort of put a first letter for each of them, if for every scene I was charting what every scene had. Well this had some funny and it's tense, that's erotic, it's romantic and there was one scene - I don't remember which one it was or if it's in the final film - that had every single one of them and when I wrote out - Funny, Action, Suspense, Tension, Erotic, Romance - it said 'faster.'

See full story at [medium.impossible.com](https://medium.impossible.com)







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 & LEAVING IT FOR A WHILE. A DAY  
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 TO CREATE BY HAND. INSPIRED BY  
~~THE~~ THE LO-FI BEAUTY OF THE  
 IMPOSSIBLE DREAM & THE URBAN  
 PRIMITIVISM OF FANZINES (PRE-1990s)  
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 A TINY STEP TOWARDS A PLACE  
 OFF THE GRID & UNDER THE  
 WIRES — COME WITH US!!





This newspaper is a collaborative effort between Wiedemann Lampe, Graham Erickson & Lily Cole. It, obviously, could not happen without the input of EVERY Impossible member!

Of course, there would be no point to it without readers so, importantly, we thank

YOU!

Impossible to Print is the result of a whole lot of help, inspiration and goodwill of an awful lot of people. We would like to thank, in no specific order, the following people: Flo Kohl, Jefferson Hack, Tyrone Lebon, Felicity Shaw, George Bradshaw, Benjamin Tietge and William Fox Wiedemann.

We're human so please forgive us if we forgot you!

Thanks XXXX Impossible to Print

Publishing remains a critical quality filter. There is still a thrill in seeing your work printed on paper. Impossible to Print destroys the fourth wall. We are happy, like, really happy, to print pieces submitted by readers. The sentiment or moral objective is more important than grammatical perfection. As long as you understand we do have a limit to content plus a critical responsibility so may not print your piece please feel free to submit. Like proper magazines we cannot return material and are not responsible for any submitted content.

PLEASE DON'T LET THAT PUT YOU OFF!!

Putting together this, a first issue, of Impossible to Print has been great fun. This is fortuitous as it does not earn us anything! - it is, to date, a commitment of passion and curiosity. When you discuss the idea of publishing it is amazing how many people come out of nowhere with advice. Some good - thanks where appropriate - some bad. Commercial publishing dictates that you need to see advertising to make the thing sustainable. We get the idea. We just really wanted a first issue to be free of it. Nothing against it. Seasoned advertising pros discuss magazines like property developers talk towns. In these conversations the back cover is a holy grail. It is the green belt with a sea view. We made a decision to protect our back cover. For the foreseeable future it is for, well, whatever we want it for. We may be romantic but we're not silly. It may become unavoidable that we make revenue from it. Who knows what the future holds?

Right now, it belongs to us. It belongs, therefore, to you. Not trying to sell you something you don't need by telling you how much better your life will be if you get into debt by buying the something. All of that stuff. Not here. Not now. So, we will always make every effort to ensure that any advertising is morally responsible. For now, though, we will simply enjoy the luxury of our back cover.

Thank you for reading Impossible to Print. You're welcome, it's our pleasure!



# GOING (HOPEFULLY)

Can an obituary be something to smile about? is it a paradox or a direct contradiction? who cares? In the newspaper industry there is a ready file of written obituaries. These are written when a famous person, usually very old, starts to appear close to their demise. Younger people, if they live a ruinous lifestyle are all included. Famously, obituaries have been long written for celebrated hell raisers Keith Richards and Shane MacGowan. Thankfully, these, to date, serve no purpose.

We, however, have taken great delight in predicting the messy, painful and undignified death of Donald Trumps political career. Wake up America! At Impossible we disagree and debate limitless subjects and matters. Occasionally something comes along that we all agree, wholeheartedly, on. The very wrongness, the ugliness and the grotesque intent of him and his promise is one of those rare things.

The ghastly infected wound of Europe continues to baffle politicians. We see deals getting cut to Turkey that promise a fresh identity in exchange for just a little, dirty favour. Across the Atlantic a nightmare clown, a McVillain with hair the colour of cowardice and TweetyPie and skin the colour of an ulcer is creeping around in the bushes at The White House. At home our government resembles a ghastly Home Counties retelling of Lord of the Flies.

Maybe it's just that I'm getting older. To that age where my Dad lost faith in politics and invested his hopes in personal politics. Micro socialism. My kids are concerned but not daunted. Somebody very wise once said, beatifically, "Crisis equals opportunity" - well, if that's the case there is a vast, ripe and very juicy opportunity out there.

I am watching the OJ Simpson series. I'm on episode 3 of 10. It is grotesque. I wish I found it more unbelievable. I wish I was watching it and shuddering at how terrible the world had got to. Watch the news. Trigger happy goons keeping control. Keeping the peace. Black funerals continues to be a growth industry.

Nancy Reagan just died. Hillary is still doing battle against the weird yellow haired one I mentioned earlier. Bernie Saunders, well, I cannot help but hope, he fails to get the prize. I fear his rare, pure positivity will be polluted by entry to the Whitehouse. It's a very toxic chalice. Maybe something happens when a really decent, outstanding person moves up to the top political tier. I mean, Jimmy Carter was cool but where is he in the Top Trumps (oh god, that fucking word again) of american presidents?

Protect yourself. Look after everybody you care for. Then, extend some care and compassion to a few more. Tell them all to do the same. It will spread. Just don't give it a name or it becomes a movement and we all know what, inevitably, happens to movements.

America, you gave us denim, cinema, pop culture, you redefined literature, walked on the moon, moonwalked. You gave us Dylan, Burroughs, Didion and Hemingway. The Fonz, Miles, Lady Day and Woody Allen.

OK, you made some odd choices along the way. We know, and love, you too well though to believe you're really going to fall for this sideshow goon. A clown with a really nasty weapon hidden inside his ridiculous costume.

Obituaries often end with the words "we shall never see his like again" let's hope, this time, it's true!

# GONE



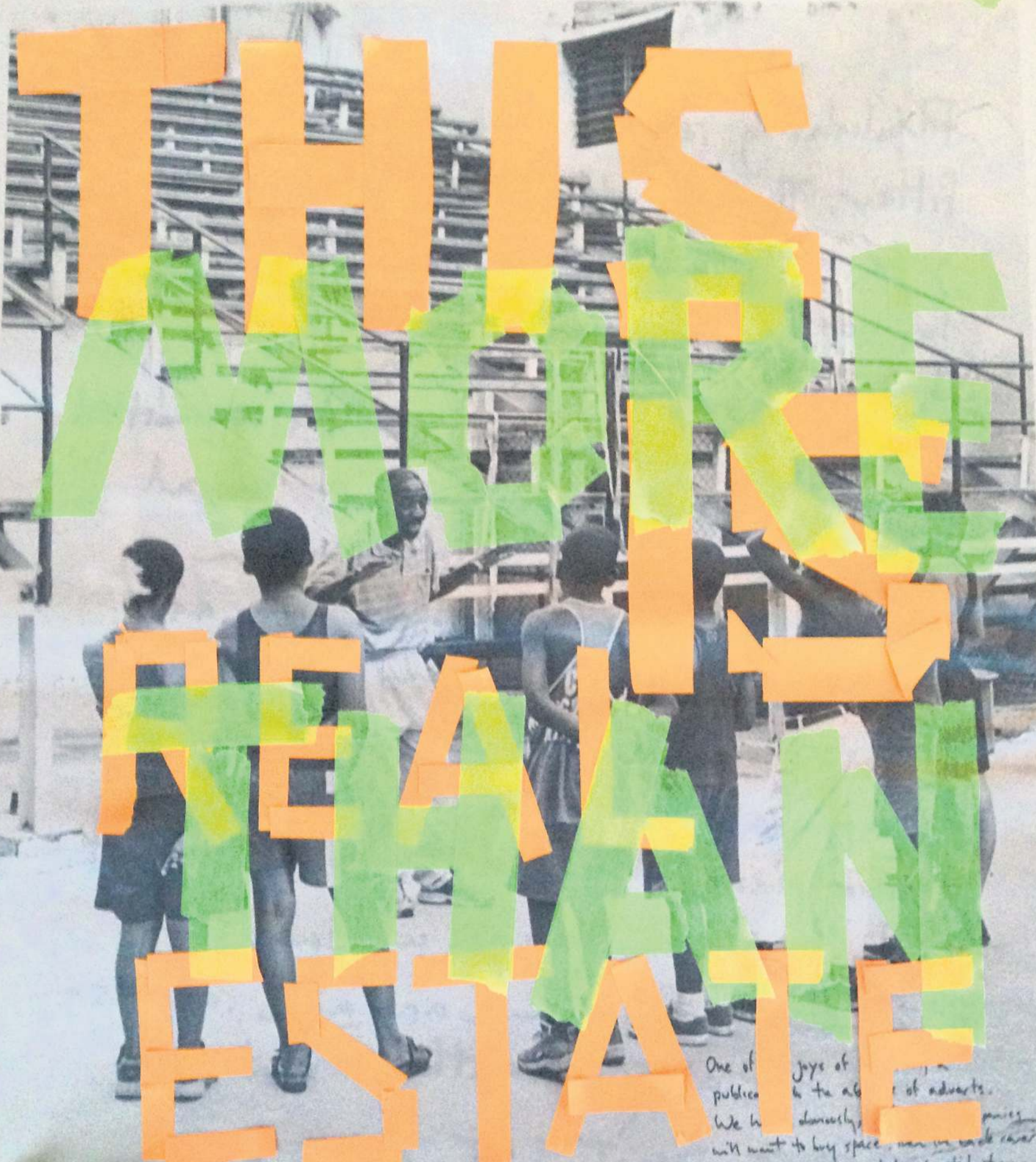
As we prepared and tweaked the launch issue of Impossible to Print it came to my attention that Vi Subversa had passed away. She, of course, has significance to us by being the singer of the Poison Girls and also, more relevantly, the brain and force behind The Impossible Dream. It is featured in this issue. We were in the process of trying to contact Vi to somehow get her involvement or, at least, her blessing to run the content.

Life huh! - It is almost instinctive to declare how sad that great people have to go so soon but Vi was 81 years old. OK, not extraordinarily old by today's standards but still, well, a pretty decent innings. Especially when you start playing the numbers game. Vi was 44 when her debut record was released. The scabrous, visceral but strangely sensitive Hex. Think about it - she was older than Jagger, McCartney and more than twice the age, literally, of her punk contemporaries. In fact, remarkably, she was the same age as Elvis (Presley not Costello!)

Her thorns concealed a gentle, humane soul which was allowed to reveal itself on the lovely Promenade Immortelle. Try and listen to it. Maybe even try to buy a copy of it. That would be the best way to wave off a unique and fascinating figure. Goodbye Vi. And thanks.



# THE NEW REAL ESTATE



One of the joys of public life is to be able to see the work of artists. We have always done this in our own way. We will want to buy space, and we will want to become valuable artists. Until then we will walk in the quiet luxury of being able to choose an image for ourselves. The image is part of our life. It is not just a picture. It is a part of us. They were shot by...