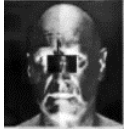


# VISITOR NOTES

## Mouths of Illusion: Beyond the Machine



1. **A metaphysical poem in 37 colour panels** marks a journey of the psyche: from the mental extremisms of our 'me versus other' identities, to a fluid borderless awareness where experience and experiencer are one. The texts are set in nature imagery, foreshadowing contradictions of our New Garden of Eden and its narcissistic mirrors.

2. **Floor panels** notate the progress of mentality and its language: from rigid, machine-like paradigms to deconstructive, fluid metaphysic gestures.

3. **Ourobouros and artist face panels** evoke a wheel of self-consuming need and suffering, of 'me-other' visions of time and flux, birth and death. The water-borne faces are all of us, throwing up 'objectified personae and repressed shadows' that flag psychic and emotional turmoil while (as in all the panel series) mantras of alienation give way to fluid, commonsense Tao-like utterances.

The key mantra '*no this without that*' underpins all **persona-shadow / me-other dualisms**, where 'two co-dependent charged particles cannot exist without their other, so that 'no independent arising' means neither actually exist. Ourobouros, combining *oneness* (presence, borderlessness, simultaneity, *nirvana*) with *becoming* (linear time, 'other', 'progress', *samsara*), contains all circumstance and clinging and freedom, in a self-consuming *simultaneous* dance. It is only our awareness that shifts, entertaining both the unlimited or non-particular, and the egoic self-limitations of habit, memory, judgement, particulation...

4. **Video imagery** delivers hypnotic soundscapes and 'visual wallpapers' - insidious affirmation loops by big-brother faces that beguile us yet warn, at the level of '*manufactured optimism*' followed by '*massive discontent*', and an '*it's up to you*' call to recognise our independence beyond need, possession or control.

5. **Mirrors** present 'objectified' images of ourselves (that arise from early age, according to the psychologist Lacan), entrenching our egoic, alienated, instagram-loving identities! Yet, the mirrors, splattered with koan-like mantras, also encourage us to witness our self-productions in the 'internal mirror' of clear awareness.

6. **Chaotic 'totems' of boxes and picture frames** evoke a consumer paradise (or dump) of symbolic commodities. Record turntables carrying Eve, baby and buddha spread *samsara* (flux) to the world's

edges, reinforcing the Ourobouros in its mode of 'eternal desire-circle of becoming' that underpins our rigid 'me-other' choices.

7. **Babies**, hung by the neck, clutch phones splashed with mantras, and stare into 'little black mirrors' as they pile up notions of 'self versus other'. Sensory, symbolic and language worlds of fragmentation and labelling are born. The unformed psyche is dosed with objectified, fake ('othered') knowledge, abetted by information technology, our utopian panacea for all ills. Innocent fleshy souls 'turn to gold', disgorging from golden toilets around a withered 'tree of knowledge'.

8. Semi-wise **buddha people** hang dissipated and inverted in air, becoming, like golden dolls, commodifications of philosophic-religious attainment. Worshipped (against Buddha's instructions!) as elite, precious, ineffable, are they awakened beings or more fake gods?

9. **Eve or World Goddess** staggers under obsessive labels, and with limbs dissipating in air, becomes an androgenous being. The 'commodified self', smothered in 'othered' knowledge, ensures our mental machine 'identity fraud' rolls on. Eve dispenses apples from the fake-knowledge tree, and bears all the judgements of the world.

10. A dessicated **tree of knowledge** rises in **The New Garden of Eden**, and babies, buddhas and Eves float in its branches. It is the **Christmas tree**, bearing gifts on toilet scrolls from golden toilets (its leaves) and accumulating as a dump: an atomised vision of gold babies, old tech, drugs, fake news, debased slogans, chains, random signposts, dead leaves; with 'sold' stickers confirming the commodification of happiness.

11. Gold toilet cores with **take-out messages** (not AI-generated) whisper advice to visitors, while books in the commodity stalls, authored by Nicholas Frost, support the educational gesture.

13. **In summary**... an overweening jumble of affirmations, images and faces evokes the dominance of language and image according to the externalising, symbolising, judging medium of *mentality*, of 'atomised, commodified, false knowledge'. Yet mantras are also a sword of deconstruction and detachment, of *satire*, an in-your-face call to *witness* all our 'me-it visions of identity'. As we walk mental forests of unexamined, rigid, circular, narcissistic self-alienations, a random item or phrase or gesture may spark enquiry into the presence of a *hidden Real*: that is, 'ourselves as borderless wholeness, as elusive flow'. We thereby sift a bit of gold - and take a chance to talk with our hosts... letting the installation be an unlikely temple for communication.

