FRESH BLOOD A Dream Morphology

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"Vectors"—Kitch and umbrella from Kitch's Last Meal.
FRESH BLOOD: A Dream Morphology

To what extent do shared cultural recognitions influence the language of our dreams, their significations, interpretations? WE ALL KNOW WHAT AN UMBRELLA IS ... BUT WHY DO I DREAM OF IT? The transmogrifications of the umbrella in the dream I call Fresh Blood can only be registered in reference to my particular graphic and feminist concerns. The permutations of the “umbrella” emerge from female sexual experience and a painterly/tactile signification of body, object, and material. The mythic attributes draw on feminist research in archeology; the organic structural energies relate to morphology of form.

To delineate the inter-relations structuring both my dreams and films, it is necessary to allow the “things” to be central, in focus; to keep focus on the preverbal quality of the objects: their entrances, durations, shifts from dark to light, obscure to specific. (And words also maintain a hypnagogic object form.) To explain further the concentration on the form of the dream-object, I have to refer to the fact that my work is based on my background as a painter. The years of “painting from nature” preceded and informed the later developments of media, environment, and performance. Early on I felt the mind was subject to the dynamics of its body. The body activating the pulse of eye and stroke, the mark signifying the event transferred from “actual” space to constructed space. I felt it was essential to dance, to exercise for an hour before going to paint in order to see better: to bring the mind’s-eye alert and clear as the muscular relay of eye/hand would be.

The symbolic range of dream material (images and texts) does not determine how the dream content enters into my film and performance works. Symbol implication, equivalence, and reference remain attached to its specific dream-source: to the visual object, thing, or word to which the symbol-form is moored. The object quality, thing-ness is what guides the occurrence and density of dream material active (and activating) the films and performance works. This objectness can free the symbolic “content” to unravel itself, reattach (magnetize) associative elements which may be repressed, denied or which would otherwise be determined conventionally. I resist the fixity of literary and psychological association projected into personal mythologies. I resist those reflexive constraints against the flexible leaps and bounds (the suspension of self-definition) necessary to pursue how to think about these ways in which thought occurs, how to see what is shown us. (Circumnavigating traditional “resistance” to what underlies our permission to face the unknown, the taboos within our imagining and our cultural moment.)

Feminists are aware of dismantling those analytic, authoritarian hierarchies which male conventions projected onto the scope and implication of the female creative imagination—even our dreams and unconscious recognitions were subjected to pervading male interpretations. The woman’s realm of symbolic event has been confirmed by the male creative will when integrated into his own work (the muse for instance); our unique biological experiences have been permitted definition as masculine invention, description of a female psyche and persona. Our creative works (our dreams) were habitually denigrated, ignored if not correspondent to what the male imagination requires as complement, antagonist or consort. In effect, the male dream of the feminine has been so culturally pervasive that we must still ask: are we dreaming ourselves, or dreaming the dreams of the men dreaming us?
Perhaps for all of these considerations, I refer to the "dream body"—which incorporates "mind," an implicit emphasis denied to the primacy of body in Freud's use of "dream mind." Our unconscious cultural distortions resist integrating the active, physiological networks of the "dream body" as triggering, informing partner, collaborator of "dream mind." There can be no separation. (And if the archetypes of male/mind/culture—woman/body/nature are still active in the communal unconscious, we will collectively dream the negative male destruction fantasies, just as reactionary "politics of the unconscious" will surface in creative and analytic work).

_Fresh Blood_ and the following analysis document a spontaneous process in which several associative layers emerge from the dream-object. The layers as they become graphic could be thought of as physical/topological/morphological* as well as "psychological."

The visual morphology was culled from my own books—in a sense rediscovering material embedded both in conscious and unconscious memory. Selected vector sources were organized into units which were then shot into slides and a super 8 film loop. With the projected images covering a wall I began movements for the body in combination with the changing vectors. The text was then recorded in overlapping sequences of speaking and reading. Gradually the performance work "Fresh Blood" evolved: this form absorbed an initial concept of the work as a film, and in turn the performance itself will be filmed.

*(Topological in the sense of "science of place;" "assisting the memory by associating the thing to be remembered with some place." Morphological as relating to form and structures of organic materials, homologies and metamorphoses governing, influencing form.)
The Dream

Section I

Two English men, Bruce and I sitting in a circle, back of a large taxi (London style or NY Checker). We are being driven to a concert. They are famous writers or "producers." We are relating anecdotes about unexpected violence at "rock" concerts or unexpected little daily accidents... in any event, the handsome older man in suit and raincoat, says "I'm bleeding you know." Bruce & I think it's a metaphor or a joke, until later during this ride, B. looks over and comments, "Why yes, there's a spot of blood on your trousers." We wonder how this cut came about, confined as we are. I have a sudden fear it might be from my umbrella; perhaps I inadvertently jabbed his leg getting into the taxi. He smoothly opens the trousers along the crease over his thigh: we can see vivid, fresh "flower" of blood spurt there. I exclaim, "This could be serious, we must tell the driver to take us to a doctor." I immediately sense that the driver of the taxi is a doctor.
Section II

My shoes were too delicate. I couldn’t remember which direction led to the center of town. When I went to the department store—a very dusty, failing sort of one—I realized the bouquet of “dolls & leaves” you had brought me seemed extremely heavy. I left you in the cafeteria/restaurant on the mezzanine. The basement waiting room of the famous European Veterinarian was crowded. I considered your gift of the bouquet of “dolls and colored fall leaves” might be appropriately left there.

Immediate Dream Surround

I crawled out from your arms and the cats in bed, to take a pee. The dream recall was triggered by astonishment to see my thighs covered with blood. (Each month I forget to expect the period—unless late—and experience the “surprise.” Other women have mentioned the same sort of repeated “forgetfulness.”)

Last night we made love on the couch. I got into a curious acrobatic position tipped up, almost balanced on my head upside down; your penetration so intensely deep, full, felt “you came out the other end of me”, or “made a hole in the top”. (Exquisite.) Later we went down the hill for a drink at our local country bar. In the back room we heard an incredible rock and roll band, the five men were dressed in bizarre sequined outfits. We stayed to dance.

As for the English men; I had been reading Waugh off & on. Another mutation of you and A.McC?—your shared British ancestors? My recurrent dream interweaves to relay the past into present; spaces in me/with me you both have or do occupy...or the years lived in England now “dreamlike,” where I studied dream analysis....

(The degree of sexual denial, blood taboos there...made the first blood pages and blood performance works, London ’71, ’72.)
The Dream Morphology

...something about the bouquet of "dolls & leaves" continues the umbrella symbol...what is it?

I have the umbrella: instrument, covers, protects, shields, pierces. (In England the "furled umbrella"—sartorial convention/in case of rain/can be used as a weapon, for defense, and quixotically: props open doors, dislodges cats from trees. Jokes of switching, stealing umbrellas. Can indicate endearment, cherishing as in: be sure to take your umbrella.) (My use of umbrellas on motors in early constructions/environments I built; turned at different rhythms, speeds. Living four years in England and don't remember my umbrella there. Remember Anthony's black one with instant spring-opening.)

I'm responsible for a man bleeding. He bleeds from a flesh surface adjacent to genitals—as if there is no way to project a vagina "into" a man. He has to be "wounded" to bleed—no other way. (A. had periodic nose bleeds.) This reverses the male projection of female as "wounded" inside. My menstruation brought on by fucking (cock/umbrella opens up inside to start flow, blood/rain). The male can only release, cleanse from within to without, burst, "flow" by ejaculation. Fluid transmission. But in reactive male mythologies the men wound each other to "spill blood," blood revenge, blood lust, bad blood between them, blood brothers. This grandiose blood in contradistinction to proportionate, periodicity of menstrual blood. The usual male taboos around menses... (often exaggerated, disproportionate fear, revulsion).

The weapon. The wound. Physical complexity of female genital: cunt strength, vulnerability, transformations. (Blood nourishment, birth canal...passage, journey out from within. Creates two genders: one in her own mould, the "other" is male.) Clitoral and vaginal orgasms further shift cunt as homologous with cock—multiple range of functions, sensations increase male/female differentiation. Which should not be antagonistic. How to avoid internalizing male archetypes. The negative-male aggression on "what lies within:" attacks, rape, mutilations enacted on woman, and is trope for the "unconscious," the dream—to tear into the invisible, rip apart, to turn his body into brutalizing instrument; to use physical power as instrumentality, subsuming procreative instrumentality of the female by assault on his source. Distortion of desire, pleasure, mutuality, drained into over-determination of cock-weapon. All women live along the fine thread delineating "good men and bad men," all the time. For men (though they often obfuscate the facts) there is no correspondingly constant, daily condition of living as potential sexual victim; an object provoking rage, attack by the "other" gender.
In the dream the blood "flower petals" his thighs: depicts as dream image the sensation of blood actually spurting within me, flowing out as I slept. The coursing, expanding blood flows from source in an "umbrella" shape: spread from an apex. The vagina itself is represented by a V (apex below). Add the vertical cock in cunt from above: or below: Add a little curve—as if for balls: UMBRELLA.

(now I see the handle; getting a "handle" on the dream: but also the inverted handle introduces a question mark!)

The quickening of bleeding after loving. Particular pleasure of fucking during the period: hotter, softer inside. The come and the moistening and the blood mix like paints. Red dominates the colorless fluids. Signifies greater power of the body, of the moment: RED BLOOD. The thighs, bellies look painted with the shared fluids. Penis is bloody—like a paint brush out of paint pot. (Your softened cock is not "diminished"—the orgasm power radiates within me. Pours out. If the erection persisted, inability to "come," be in, merge, a machine. Whose desire for that?)

1. the penis caused a bleeding wound
2. the penis is wounded, bleeding
3. the blood consecrates, integrates, demonstrates fusion: bright red, sticky, metallic aroma
4. special effects of conjoined periodicity—ritualistic sexually

umbrella cunt UMBRELLA both cunt and cock unfurling it expands and contracts covers the body the head is a hollow shaft a tissue thin fabric rigid supports umbrella is ridged ribbed tactile ridges of cunt cock is wet covered with rain rain pours down

cunt full of dolls dolls equal babies leaves—kittens born wrapped up in leaves (summer Milano dream) leaves—who leaves sheds goes away drops down mulch penis "leaves"—goes out of vagina cock leaves bouquets of little babies/dolls inside cunt the ridges are full inside has shape of umbrella or the bouquet of leaves umbrella/cunt/cock: rises up opens out all wrapped up turled unfurled cunt clasping cock

THE POWER OF THE BLOOD MADE OVERT HAS THE RISK OF SOCIAL CENSURE EMBARRASSMENT PUTTING OUT SECRET ESSENCE INTERIOR FLOOD FLOWS IF BLOOD WERE A MENTAL PRODUCT WOULD IT BE ACCEPTABLE?

(if males bled it would be sacred life essence rather than taboo)
LEFT: Group 1
1. Drawing C.S.
4. Drawing C.S.

Group 2
2. Stevens, Patterns in Nature, p. 82.
4. Rawson, Tantra, image extraction.

LEFT: Group 3
1. Drawing C.S.
4. Drawing by C.S.

Group 4
1. Drawing C.S.
2. Rawson, Tantra, detail plate 7 “Icon of the Divine Vulva, stained with the coloured powders used to worship it, South India, 15th Century. Carved Wood.”
4. Drawing C.S.