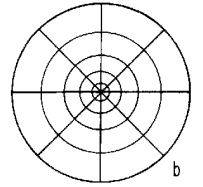


## Lucy Bull: First Meetings

In a mescaline induced hallucination lasting weeks on end Sartre ascribed crabs to his visual apparitions. Day after day a pack of little crustaceans followed him around the streets of Paris prompting him to seek advice from a young Lacan who inscribed the creatures further as representations of the loneliness that accompanied the transition from adolescence to adulthood.

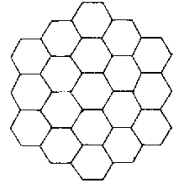
Tea leaves, clouds, ink blots;  
the compulsion to Know the  
Abstract is grand and hard-  
wired.



Once painting discarded the need for subject and content, once Sontag persuaded us against interpretation in favor of sensual experience, the remainder of this descriptive foil still falls on the shoulders of ‘Abstraction’: A neatly packaged linguistic default for that which is not-yet scribed with meaning.

Dear Abstraction, what is your source? You concede to a subjectlessness, but I’m not convinced. If visual stimulation is deprived for long enough a ‘prisoner’s cinema’ casts a screen of abstract prismatic projections.

The Surrealists were keen to hack this place of non-form by way of automatism and yet being conjoined to the interpretive project of psychoanalysis, they didn’t linger in the formless for long.

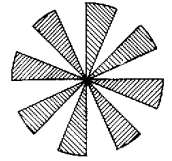


"Had a transcendental storm of colour visions today in the bus going to Marseilles. We ran through a long avenue of trees and I closed my eyes against the setting sun. An overwhelming flood of intensely bright colors exploded behind my eyelids: a multidimensional kaleidoscope whirling out through space. I was swept out of time. I was out in a world of infinite number. The vision stopped abruptly as we left the trees. Was that a vision? What happened to me?"

-1958 diary entry from painter Brion Gysin

Along with collaborators and advancements in neuroscience, Gysin deduced that a light flickering at a twenty hertz frequency is similar to the waves of a non-aroused brain. Using a record turntable, sturdy paper cut with slits, and a lightbulb, Gysin invented what would be known as the Dreamachine in Paris' Beat Hotel.

Gysin aimed to create a space for the functioning of thought outside of control.



Lattices, cobwebs, spirals, tunnels...

These primal geometries define the Form Constant.

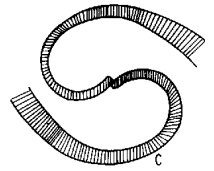
Delirium of fever, a near-death experience, from waking to sleeping and back again, psychotic breaks, electrical stimulation, sleep deprivation, drug induced intoxications...

The diversity of conditions that provoke entropic patterns suggests the Form Constant reflects some fundamental property of perception.

No cultural contingencies. No history. No future.

Like Sartre's crabs, the viewer eventually must locate herself reaching for familiar shapes, faces, figures, or places to transcribe onto such visions.

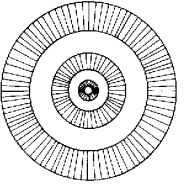
“If you managed to look into the very heart of a thing  
you would see that it is the same  
As your own self’s”



-Wols

First Meetings: The fact that these common abstractions, hallucinations, and visuals are universally accessible interlock our experiences as we mentally relocate our consciousness to that of the other.

Like intimacy with a stranger, the familiarity of this shared psychic space is recognized in the other as alarmingly canny to ourselves. This fundamental connection spirals infinitely entangling intersubjectivities.



In the paintings on view cocktails of contending colors are applied in porous layers. Biomorphous vapors expand until meeting the corners and cannibalizing inward.

Light and pigment build, condense, spiral, melt, feather, tunnel, break, and radiate with the pre-symbolic energy of Abstraction.

Marie Heilich