

ONCE UPON A TOMORROW.../UN TRO YFORY...

a sporadic shout from Surrealists in Wales

#3 - January 2021

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We Still Don't Ear It That Way!!*

At the thirteenth stroke of midnight the Celtic Eye surveys the land of the insurgent Rebecca....

Creating new myths and memories, we surrealists in Wales are 'specialists in revolt' (André Breton, 1924) who seek merely to re-enchant the world and make it anew. We proclaim our rejection of the stultifying dead hand of the reality principle and hurl our barbs at the Society of the Spectacle, at a life not lived and one categorised by Miserabilism, alienation and the suppression of the human spirit. It will, therefore, be no surprise that we embroider our banner with Breton's favourite dictum, 'ni dieu ni maître' (No God No Master) (Arcane 17). Echoing Rimbaud's call to 'Change Life' and Marx's to 'Change the World', for us the emancipation of the imagination and humanity's social emancipation are *one and the same!*

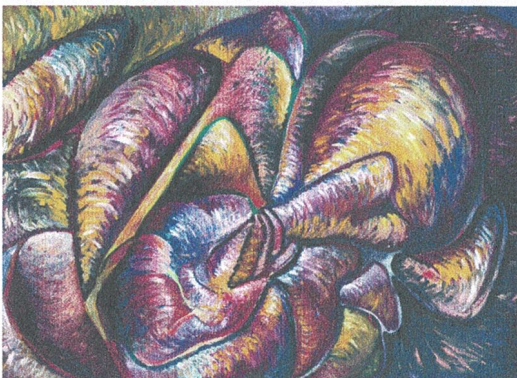
We enthusiastically endorse Michael Löwy's assertion that, '...surrealism is an adventure that is at once intellectual and passionate, political and magical, poetic and dream like' (Morning Star: Surrealism, Marxism, Anarchism, Situationism Utopia 2009). It goes without saying, therefore, that our activities are underpinned by the surrealist ideas of Mad Love, Revolt, Desire, Anti-clericalism, The Marvellous, the Uncanny, Freedom, Objective Chance, Poetry, Dreams, Dérive, the Unconscious and Play.

At the same time, we pour our scorn on the contemptible imposters of surrealism, those so-called neo-surrealists (we only know of *surrealism!*) and other fakers and charlatans who are better placed under the headings of 'Fantasy', 'the Irrational' or 'the quirky'! They are often found in the galleries, seeking to pass off their wares as good coin, anointing others as 'surrealist poets' (many of whom clearly would not recognise a surrealist thought if it fell on – never mind from - their heads!!), or glorying in their 'apolitical stance' (as if such a position were either desirable or possible!). Decorative, occasionally amusing, perhaps, but surrealist, no! For our part we remain intransigent and we will have no truck with those who seek to gut surrealism of its revolutionary, emancipatory content.

We surrealists in Wales are the progeny of Rebecca just as much as we are the descendants of Alice! Beneath the black and red flag of revolt the sons and daughters of Rebecca will spring from the magical teeth of Y Ddraig Goch!!

Jean Bonnin, John Richardson & John Welson
December 2020

* We take our title – détourned - from the famous declaration signed by André Breton & others of the Paris Surrealist Group, protesting against Duchamp's inclusion of Dalí in a New York exhibition in 1960 as a 'religious bigot, (a) fascist painter...friend of Franco' and so on.



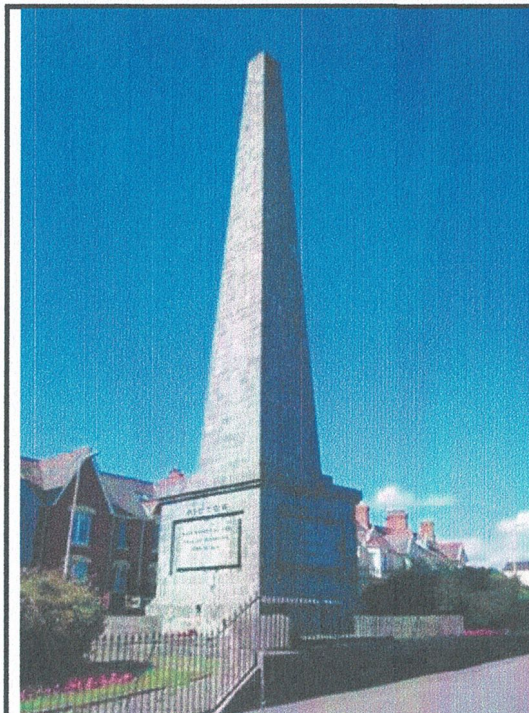
SUMMER LIGHT TIP-TOE
JOHN WELSON 2010



Swiftly & Silently
John Richardson 2020

A Collective Inquiry – The Picton Monument, Carmarthen

Lieutenant-General Sir Thomas Picton GCB was a Welsh officer of the British Army who fought in the Napoleonic Wars. Picton came to public attention initially for his cruelty during his governorship (1797–1803) of Trinidad, as a result of which he was put on trial in England for approving the illegal torture of a 14-year-old girl, Luisa Calderón. Though initially convicted, Picton later had the conviction overturned arguing that Trinidad was subject to Spanish law, which permitted the use of torture. Controversy over the torture and Picton's role in the colonial slave trade continued. In 2020, Cardiff Council voted to remove Picton's statue in the 'Heroes of Wales' gallery in Cardiff City Hall. (Text from Wikipedia, 21 September 2020). However, a publicly funded monument erected to his memory in 1888 remains in place at Picton Terrace, Carmarthen.....

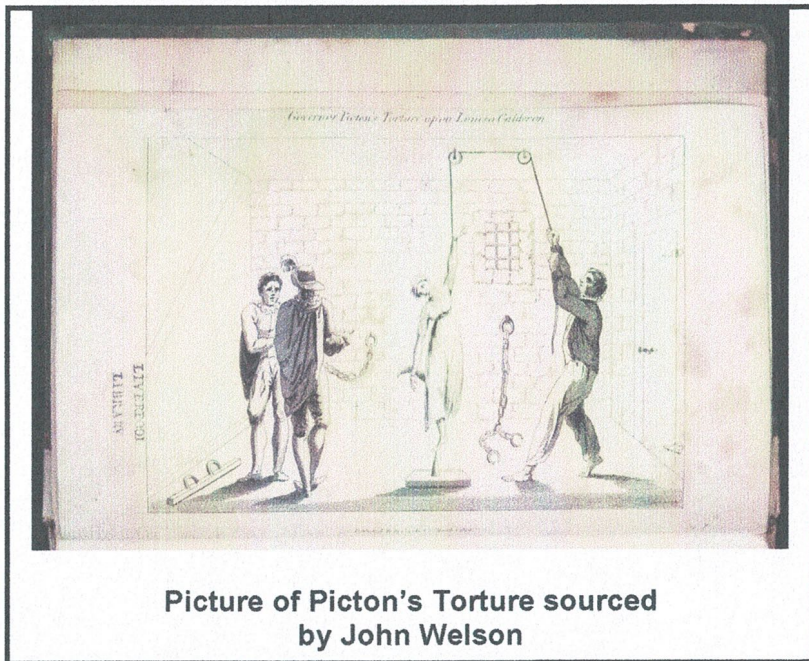


The Picton Monument

Contributors were invited to respond to the following questions and/or to modify the image of the monument:

1. What would you replace the Picton monument with or how would you modify it?
2. What would you call the new monument?
3. When would the replacement or modification take place?
4. Who would you invite to a rededication ceremony?

Responses were received from Jean Bonnin (JB), John Richardson (JR) and John Welson (JW)



Picture of Picton's Torture sourced by John Welson

What would you replace the Picton monument with or how would you modify it?

A monument a little like Mount Rushmore, but with the heads of all of the members of Boney M. (JB)

See modified images, page 3 (JR)

I would leave the existing monument in place, but, carve into it, cutting away at the threatening phallus like slab of overbearing and unwelcoming stone..... and I request that the figure of Luisa Calderón be carved into the existing stone. Retribution for the most heinous actions perpetrated by Thomas Picton against Luisa Calderón, her phoenix like figure rising from the cold stone of Thomas Picton's actions of torture, corruption and subjugation in his governorship of Trinidad. (JW)

What would you call the new monument?

A Bone of Contention. Or Dial 'M' for Boner (JB)

The Negation of the Negation (JR)

The Tide of Time (JW)

When would the replacement or modification take place?

Dunno – when the construction company had some time free I suppose... But, sorry, don't know really the answer to this question. I'll phone around a few companies and get back to you. Um, what is our budget? ... Is it Welsh Assembly money? (JB)

On Calan Mai – May Day – remembering both the ancient celebration of the Beltane and the Festival of the Oppressed (JR)

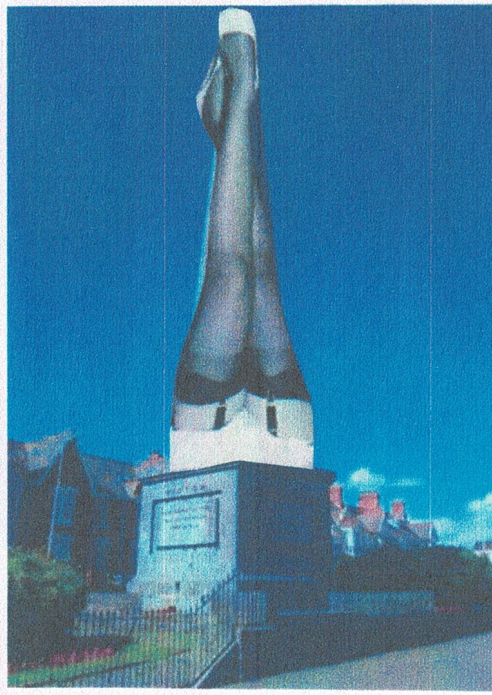
As soon as possible (JW)



Nun On A Purple Day

Jean Bonnin

Unrelated to the Inquiry, but fits the space!!



Negation of the Negation I & II (Response To Q1)
John Richardson

Who would you invite to a rededication ceremony?

I would arrange a Zoom meeting with the grandparents of the members of the Finish band, Kojo, who scored nulle points in the Eurovision Song Contest, with their marvellous song: 'Nuku pommiin'. In what year, I hear you ask? 1982. Boom!!! Drop the mic... Timo Kojo has left the building. (JB)

The Multitude – who celebrating, and conscious of their own desires, will construct situations for the 'new conditions of chance'! (JR)

An invitation to the world (JW)

Somewhere between by Jeremy Over

I am six to seven months pregnant and can feel the baby kicking in my belly although there's not much of a bump to speak of just yet. I am going to the hospital but it's more like an airport. With a bunch of Quakers. I am making a giant art installation out of piles of logs. It looks like a bird hide crossed with a woodstore. I am reading a dull and impenetrable artist statement. No, I am writing it. I am in a house by the river pulling down metal shutters against the incoming flood. A hand is trapped in the shutters. I want to buy it still. I am pretending to be grown up in a terraced house. With a small bunch of broccoli. I am asked to carry out a tour of the House of Commons. With some girl guides. One girl in four later dies in a house fire. I am in an open train carriage. I am thinking Buster Keaton in his last silent film. With a flock of small lambs. They jump off as it slows. There are three ways to do something. Three things to throw down on someone. I am moaning to a woman about knee pain. She is walking away from me. The backs of her legs suddenly crawling with caterpillars so we go to the backyard and throw them all away. In a tunnel I am told a light must shine. I am driving a coal lorry. I do not know about the West of England. I am in Whitehall looking for somewhere for Gwen to sit down. I am vicious. A Shrike? I pounce on the chestnut nape of a sparrow-sized bird and peck its eyes out. I am watching homemovies before the anniversary of my dad's death. I am conscious in the dark. I am waiting. The man in the shroud refuses to die. He is embraced. She is embarrassed. She has had just one glass of wine but she's now incapable and I need to take over. She cannot speak at all and is only making noises. I am putting my hand on what I think is a dog. The toddler runs back and forth underneath his mother's legs. Damson jam & bread. I am a little lost in the Olde Cheshire Cheese. Possibly haunted. And like an appliance of some sort - rubbery. Somewhere between nougat and normal.

FROM THE LABORATORY OF DÉTOURNEMENT

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a combination of parody & seriousness...

This phrase, the title of the book's preamble, is a quote from 'Détournement as Negation and Prelude', Situationist International (1959). An A4 book with over 80 pages, the works – mainly in colour - were mostly made in 2019 and 2020, and are presented in 4 themed sections: Revolt, Mad Love & Desire, New Proverbs for New Times, and A Gallimaufry....together with a couple of poems & a preamble!



John Richardson



Humphrey Jennings
Poetry & Prose: The Surrealist Vision

Edited by Michel Remy & Neil Coombs
With an interview of Charlotte Jennings by Antony Penrose

Published by Dark Windows Press

Available January 2021
for details email: neilcoombs@me.com



Published by Dark Windows Press in 2020

Wordworks by Desmond Morris
The Surrealist Art of the Kana by Desmond Morris
Surrealist Familiars by Desmond Morris

SHE DANCES

She dances with eyes closed and head gently tilted
In her dimly lit room to the sound of the pelting rain
But all she really hears is the music
- The music coming from out of her mirror
Where people are dancing and swaying just out of sight
They toss back their heads and laugh
And spill their champagne and laugh some more
They are elegant and beautiful and confident
And though every evening they remain hidden
She knows they are there
And she knows it is only a matter of time
Before they invite her into their world
And so each night she dances and sways
To the faint music
Until the moment
She can escape her monochrome existence
For the colourful land
She can almost touch

Jean Bonnin

Surrealism in Wales by Jean Bonnin
£29.95 ISBN: 978-1-9998215-4-8 230+ pages
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For the first time in print Black Egg Publishing presents the incredible story of Surrealism in Wales.

The history, the radicalism, the mystery, the art and the poetry... From Stonehenge to Merlin, King Arthur and Guinevere; from the Welsh Bards to The Prisoner and Brian Jones; and from Monty Python's Terry Jones and the Miners' Strike, to Punk and the Velvet Underground. And along with a consideration of Surrealism within Welsh Cinema and Welsh Music, at long last the nagging question of whether Elvis Presley was Welsh is finally answered. This is a book both for those who know little about Surrealism as well as for those who have followed the movement for some time... Not only is Surrealism, Wales, and Surrealism in Wales covered, but the overlapping movements of Dada, Situationism and Fluxus are also touched upon. For those who thought Surrealism was only to do with melted clocks, why not try a bit of Dragon in your surrealist soup...



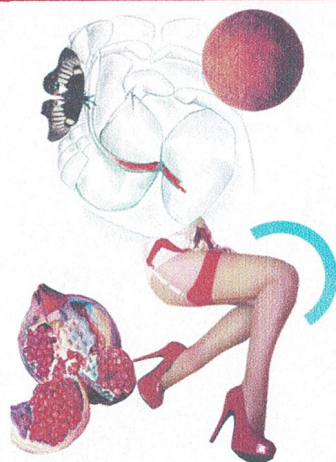
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The Northern Lights Rise
Like A Kiss To the Sea
Nelly Sanchez, John
Richardson & John Welson
2020

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Clyro, Wales

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were:

Jean Bonnin, Neil Coombs,
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