CHAPTER SIX

Liquidities for the Essex Man: The Monetarist Eroticism of British Yacht Pop

Benjamin Halligan

The symbolism is vivid. Roxy Music at the Birmingham Odeon on the night Margaret Thatcher was elected Prime Minister. The socialist utopia that had financed the art schools and filled them with Lennons, Keith Richards, Kinks, Hockneys, Bryan Ferry and Enos was over. We were due a season in hell.

(STEPHEN DUFFY, FORMERLY OF DURAN DURAN, RECALLS 1979, QUOTED IN MALINS 2005: 19)

I remember my first cheque for £1 million. I was only twenty-one. Fifty per cent went to Mrs Thatcher but even still.

(ANDY TAYLOR, OF DURAN DURAN, RECALLS 1982, QUOTED IN MALINS 2005: 85)

The tendency for the music video to be a kind of ambient appreciation of a single – often unsubtly visualizing or lazily dramatizing lyrical content while presenting the group/singer in a way that is sufficiently familiar to reassure fans and yet new enough to merit attention – can betray a conception, on the part of the makers, of those for whom the music video is intended, or should ideally be intended. This chapter considers the nature of the ambience of the music, in terms of how the music video came to recalibrate the pop

single as allied to the evolving idea of a glamorous and enviable lifestyle for these intended – that is, how the music video became aspirational, and what kind of new subjectivity such aspirations seemed to signal, and for which imagined constituency.

This consideration is dated to the moment of two significant cultural shifts in the early 1980s. Firstly, the birth of MTV engendered a vacuum in pop music culture, with the sudden need for videos for singles ushering in a whole new genre of music entertainment. As we have argued elsewhere (Edgar et al. 2013), this was effectively a radical remaking of pop music *per se* – demanding a doubling of output, as it were: audio now streamed with visuals. And, as has been noted of Duran Duran's career, MTV's playing of their music videos resulted in substantial sales of records in areas where the singles were not played on radio stations, and controversy later ensued when singles were first debuted on television rather than radio (see Malins 2005: 105, 124, 125 respectively). Secondly, this vacuum occurred at a point of transition in white popular music, in the British experience, from a period of punk and post-punk, and its overlapping with New Romantic subcultures to forms of music that could be considered to be more palatable as entertainment.

The success of a number of British groups at this moment, capitalizing on the imperative of making and releasing music videos, had made for a second 'British Invasion' (as journalists of that moment termed it, around 1983) of North American popular music. And that success was not a matter of revisiting and so validating aspects of North American popular music, as had been the case with a number of British 're-interpreters' of the 1970s, but of proposing and advancing a new set of concerns. From New Romanticism (and the legacy of glam rock), came a kind of post-gender-bending New Romantic 'leading man'. The tension that needed to be resolved, at the behest of the new markets opened by MTV, was over engaging with metrosexuality (as it would later be termed; see Halligan 2011) while not challenging or wrong-footing a pervasive heterosexual hegemony. The New Romantic leading man was in touch with his feminine side, but not to the freely exploratory 'excesses' that had been associated with, say, David Bowie in the previous decade. Indeed, even Bowie seemed to work to distance himself from that period with the aggressively heterosexual music video for 'China Girl' in which, as per the erotic imaginings of some ghastly cut-price package holiday, he winds up having missionary position sex on a beach with a local girl.[1] All waves of 'British Invasion' of North American pop charts seem to have been powered by marginally freer expressions of sexuality, troubling the home-grown mores of the former colonies, as with the longer hair of The Beatles, or the overt sexuality of The Yardbirds and The Rolling Stones. This is not to say that heteronormativity exerted complete domination of the Top 40 charts of the early 1980s – especially since the progressive worth of pop music, for informed commentators, and in terms of identity politics, can be identified with a more subversive glam

rock/Bowie tradition (as seen in the personae of Freddie Mercury of Queen, Boy George of Culture Club, and, later, Morrissey of The Smiths). But it is telling that one of the initial promotion challenges for Duran Duran was to dispel the potentially damaging sense that they were maybe not entirely heterosexual, as Malins notes (2005: 78). Even Andy Warhol expressed confusion, in 1981, when he first encountered the group: 'They all wore lots of makeup but they had girlfriends with them from England, pretty girls, so I guess they're all straight, but it was hard to believe' (Warhol 1992: 525).

Ambitious British pop music was remade as it came to recalibrate itself to the new musical culture associated with MTV, and the need to provide promotional video material for television programming more widely, where live performances were not possible.[2] Such a turn resulted in those now forgotten (and often long out of print) media artefacts of discographies, the Video EP and the Video Album. At their best it now seemed that the evolving and nuanced conceptual continuity once discernible across lyrics, themes, album covers, and live performances for Prog Rock groups and concept albums had been relocated to sequences of music videos. This realignment was especially true of Duran Duran, whose integration of video into their oeuvre (so that they would have been taken more as 'video stars' than 'radio stars') is perhaps the reason why there is little to no critical writing on the group, and they go unmentioned for music journalists, now tending to rewrite British 1980s pop music as essentially dissenting.[3]

Country house to yacht

The operation of music video as ambient appreciation can be seen in Roxy Music's 'Avalon' (1982, from the album of the same name; video directed by Howard Guard). In a *Country Life* magazine-style country house, the band in tuxedos (Bryan Ferry's is white; the others' are black) play to an immobile audience of ball-goers, seemingly – as the lyrics have it – 'so tired', 'now the party's over'. The music – specifically the warm synthesizer wash which introduces the first chorus – animates a super-model-like lone woman (Sophie Ward; smoky eye make-up, trussed-up blonde hair, pearl and gold earrings, silk ball gown) who entices Ferry away. They dance, and sit, and she then dances alone. Cuts associate the woman with a hooded falcon.[4] And this falcon is presented as a cypher for consideration: is the falcon the female, as enticed to earth by Ferry? Is the falcon a fleeting presence in the proceedings, akin then to the 'could have been' encounter with the woman (both as deadly, noble, and graceful?), who then seems to depart from Ferry? Or is the falcon – as suggested by a two-shot in which both Ferry and falcon simultaneously shift their gazes directly to the camera – in fact Ferry: the hunter who, flying high above social gatherings (he is first seen singing

on a balcony, crooning as he looks down on the ball), spies his prey and swoops? A further visual motif, scattered roses, seems too vague to offer sustained meaningful comment: perhaps they denote that the romance between the two dancers has gone no further, and the romantic gesture of giving roses cast aside.

The video for George Michael's 'Careless Whisper' of 1984,[5] directed by Duncan Gibbins and Andy Morahan, also dramatizes the lyrical content, and in a terribly uninspired way too: narrative tropes familiar from soap operas, with an *in flagrante delicto* climax that would seem clichéd even in a pornographic film. Michael is situated against the Miami night skyline for scenes of romantic intrigue. We see a blonde girlfriend, who looks similar to Princess Diana (and indeed both Michael and Duran Duran's Simon Le Bon then sported Diana haircuts), who then makes love with Michael in a bedroom. They both wear white towelling dressing gowns. But Michael strays to a dark-haired woman (and who is further colour-coded as bad news: black leather trousers and black stilettos seen emerging from a black car), encountered in a harbour. They sail on Michael's yacht, kiss, and make love in the same bedroom – only to be chanced upon by the blonde girlfriend, who registers anger (via a clumsy zoom in on her face), removes her ring (revealing that she was his fiancée), and departs Miami promptly, via a seaplane. Michael is seen reflecting on his misfortune as he moodily walks around the balcony of his Miami apartment and, in moments intercut with the principal music video narrative, the 'psychological' space of a darkened stage (in fact, the Lyceum Theatre, in London), which is draped with ropes and chains.

The difference in sensibility between 'Avalon' and 'Careless Whisper' can be read as the difference between two types of money, old and new (inherited and made, respectively), and so between the 'classy' and the classless. Roxy Music looks back to notions of a (white) rock aristocracy, as institutionalized during the 1970s. The country house acts as a marker of entrée into polite society, with a slight repurposing of the house to the ends of modernization and eroticism (as well as being a soft form of fortification against police raids: space to hide those things and guests that could lead to scandal).[6] One gets the sense that while models are appropriate accoutrements in these environs, there would never be anything as crude as an outright 'love scene'. George Michael's mise-en-scène, in comparison, is one of classless wealth (and even product placement, for Bridgestone tires): nouveau riche trappings, via very modern apartments, with plastic blinds filtering and diffusing the Miami sunset light, a potted bedside plant, glimpses of the leisure industry, and straight lovemaking rather than exchanges of meaningful looks.[7] A ghettoblaster is seen; Michael wears shorts, trainers, and a baseball hat – a transatlantic sartorial development, towards an 'international' Western style. His looks are metrosexual rather than matinée, even in white shirt and shoulder-padded suit. He sports

an earring, sculpted eyebrows, evenly tanned and moisturized skin with highlighted, bouffant hair. The yacht here replaces the country pile – still the status symbol, and still adorned with the desirable, silent female, but with the yacht comes access to freedom and foreign lands, the possibility of a moving bachelor seduction pad, and a newness of acquisition redolent of the understanding that the owner appreciates the newness of pleasures on offer for the 1980s. And Michael sets out into the world (and the new world at that: the Americas) rather than digs in at the inherited country pile. All these things (Miami, women, yachts, shorts, male grooming, and so on) are there for the taking for the new 1980s man.

In this respect, the discussion of yachts here can be distanced from a certain trajectory in which boats just feature as performance spaces, taking in Rod Stewart's 'Sailing' (1975), The Village People's 'In the Navy' (1978), Cher's 'If I Could Turn Back Time' (1989), and Aaliyah's 'Rock the Boat' (2002). Perhaps the yacht status speaks both of cash liquidity and the position of the boat in British post-war children's literature (and subsequent imagination), as with *Treasure Island*, the *Swallows and Amazons* books, *The Kon-Tiki Expedition: By Raft Across the South Seas,* or the *Famous Five* cycle of books and numerous films from the Children's Film Foundation. More appropriate yachting parallels could be made with what effectively seems to be an entire subgenre of rap and hip-hop videos set on boats and yachts, in terms of the melding of the space of partying and performing, and presented as evidencing wealth. But one can assume that all these boats are hired or borrowed and passed off (in the best neoliberal manner) as being possessed by the occupant, and so are just fronts, and/or are bought with an unsecured bank loan of a variable interest rate.

Classlessness, in these new respects, is understood as an essential component of nouveau riche cultures, as with Michael. The newly wealthy are to create their own modes of existence and, in so doing, challenge and reinvigorate the old modes (whose denizens now come to risk the danger of a depletion of their powers, and a flood of cultural vulgarity). Such a development occurred in defiance of what seemed to be a predominant economic trend of downward mobility in the UK in the early 1980s. During his first budget speech, in 1979, the new Conservative Chancellor of the Exchequer, Geoffrey Howe, noted, 'in the last few years, the hard facts of our relative decline have become increasingly plain, and the threat of absolute decline has gradually become very real'. The 'new beginning' that was suggested was one of allowing 'hard work, talent and ability' to be rewarded, particularly via a dismantling of the income tax structures that, for Howe, 'might have been designed to discourage innovation and punish success'.[8] Video pop stardom, and the media industries that promoted it, can be placed as a cultural and economic vanguard in this respect. Howe's meritocratic vision required an unrefined classlessness for a generation of

new money, freed from old industrial paradigms. In this respect, liquidity (in the sense of readily available, and so spendable, money) typically sought leisure status symbols for quick purchase, such as yachts.

Young Birmingham

Duran Duran may not have seemed like obvious candidates for a transfiguration of suburban wannabes into global pop stars for the first few years of the 1980s. From the outset, as York notes, there were credibility problems with these upstarts associated with the Birmingham Rum Runner club, from that quarter allied with the London Blitz club and Spandau Ballet: Duran Duran were perceived as 'hopelessly naff and provincial' (York and Jennings 1995: 36). The bluster of their debut self-shot music video, for 'Planet Earth' (1981, from the album *Duran Duran*, of the same year), confirmed as much: billowing dry ice, 1970s disco balls, and mirror-tiled walls, dancefloor 'types' (spivs and debs, furs and tinsel, women dancing slinkily in bondage gear, made-up mannequins executing robot dance moves) packed into the Birmingham Cedar Club, and the stage only discernible through a fuzzy video smog of club lighting diffused through big bobbing hair dos. But the obvious contenders for promotion may have failed to function in a sufficiently generative way: some potential options would have lacked friction and indolence (surely the lesson of punk's popularity?), which would lend character to the descent into the mainstream.[9]

Typically such a conspiratorial reading of pop stardom is one that is considered in respect to the co-option and de-fanging of what once seemed radical or dissenting. But the opposite vantage point is worth considering too: the continual need to regenerate and refresh contemporary mass culture via a modicum of radicalism or dissent – an industrial prerogative. The assimilation seems to occur around a belated reorientation of the vernaculars of pop to new movements, looks, and atmospheres. In this respect, Duran Duran, as potentially also-rans in the New Romantic phase (and lacking in the diffidence and disdain of other New Romantics, in favour of an upfront clamour for acceptance and affection, as per 'Planet Earth'), must have seemed the most malleable and so the least problematic option for elevation to stardom.

Eroticism, and only then exoticism, cut with a frisson of existential unease (the character-generating friction), would seem to have been the initial response to the need for newness from early Duran Duran and their creative team. A principal culprit in this – he freely condemns himself – was music video director Kevin Godley (formerly of the Stockport soft/art rock band 10cc), of 'Girls on Film':

> It had glamour, it had polish, it had sex, it had good-looking boys, it had girls sliding on poles. It was a dirty film. In hindsight, it had the ingredients that became MTV-able. If it was influential, I'm sorry. I can only apologize. (quoted in Tannenbaum and Marks 2012: 46)

The naked models (wrestling, catwalking, flashing) gave way to a homoerotic futurist dalliance (the official 1981 'Planet Earth' music video), and then to a Eurotrashy detour (a Helmut Newton homage to fetishized models – with one such seen driven through London council estates, for 'The Chauffeur' of 1982, from *Rio* of the same year). This videography seems to chart the exit from Birmingham and to a widening of the spectrums of aspiration. The chief marker of this occurrence is the very visible presence of relatively substantial budgets for the making of music videos. For a cynic, the music videos seem to oscillate between the need for the makers to assemble a Hollywood calling card/show reel (aping what would soon be termed 'High Concept' filmmaking: music videos viscerally given over to effects, explosions, adventure) and the desire for a foreign holiday. But even these holidays, in terms of their distant locations (distant, that is, relative to Birmingham), arrived as 'high concept': developing world tourism, unspoiled beaches and teeming markets, temples and elephants – the full payload of exoticized Orientalism.

The former set of music videos (the calling cards) – around 'Hungry Like The Wolf' (1982, from *Rio*), 'Union of the Snake' (1983, from *Seven and the Ragged Tiger*, also of that year), and 'The Wild Boys' (1984, from *Arena*, also of that year) – are bombastic and arresting and yet at times fall short of their ambitions. Diegetic sonic effects, seemingly mixed willy-nilly into the full soundtrack, distract from the experience of the song. Those relatively substantial budgets still fall short, so necessitating endless cages and ropes in darkened studios, populated by dancers. And the music video narratives, which seem to revolve around a future dystopia and the band as cyberpunk/New Romantic renegades on the run, become fragmented to the point of incomprehensibility. The latter set of music videos (the on-holiday strain) – 'Save a Prayer' and 'Rio' (both 1982, from the album *Rio* of the same year) – seem more organic in their conception. In that they are actually products of holidays the band took, it is as if the music videos seek to rise to the songs themselves, as ambient visual riffs and insights into the exalted or rarefied mindset of the band, who of course feature in these videos. These music videos seem to seek to present a mise-en-scène for an appreciation, or unpacking, of the music itself.

The songs then soundtrack the life on display. This boat is not Michael's yacht – used for getaway, privacy, and lovemaking – but a yacht that is both party venue and mobile performance platform. In this respect, the yacht enables social and professional functions, and so is indicative of a

lifestyle that capitalizes on such liminal spaces. But further complications occur: the hint of a side plot involving location photography (as one of the fantasies of the band members) seems a means merely to an end, so that the music video's unreconstructed voyeurism – of the models, as seen throughout – is given a narrative justification. The photography also casts calls the models in the first place: 'Rio' is a movement through exotic supermodel photoshoots, intrigues, and after-parties.[10] (Even the song's name is designated as a 'her', as well as a city of relative – for the times at least – exoticism.) The models then assail the band, and are cast as day-glo sirens who disrupt their performance, and insinuate themselves into the band's affections. In turn, they are subject to drenchings, across scenes so many in number as to suggest some sort of fetishistic or obsessive liquid ritual. Water (plain and dyed) and paint are poured on women, melted cherry ice-cream splatters onto a female's hips and behind, another has champagne poured onto her midriff, and another still is covered in shampoo suds.

For 'Save a Prayer' the band has landed, and the onshore tropical existence involves sporting New Romantic variants on colonial white cotton suits, with bare feet, across scenes dominated by boats, beaches, sunsets, cocktails, surf, and deep blue skies and seas. The vantage point is sometimes that of a helicopter tour (aerial vistas of ruins and forests) and sometimes that of a snap-happy tourist (shots of the locals). As with 'Rio', the song concerns a problem associated with a desired woman who does not seem to be fully in the possession of the singer. But 'Save a Prayer' develops without resolving such a narrative of unfulfilment: the singer encourages a lonely and seemingly thrill-seeking woman to have sex with him, which involves her moving out of her comfort zone: 'so you're looking for a thrill', he asks rhetorically, and reveals that, in his opinion, she 'know[s] just what it takes and where to go'. This, it is surmised, is some sort of social event with dancing. Seemingly, she may feel sorry for him – but this empathy (the 'say[ing] of a prayer'), it is suggested, can be delayed or waylaid and so make way for a night of passion, hence 'don't say a prayer for me now/[but, rather] save it 'til the morning after'.

The key lyric, and one that has been repeatedly quoted as a matter of derision, for its clunky construction and faux-poetic conceit, comes after the moment that the dancing starts (narrativized as '[a]nd you wanted to dance/so I asked you to dance/but fear is in your soul'). The singer attempts to disarm the subject of his affections in relation to the fleeting nature of the proposed encounter: 'Some people call it a one-night stand/but we can call it paradise.' It is only with a mention of dancing that a woman first appears in the video, but she pushes Le Bon away and walks off as he sings these words: 'Some people call it a one-night stand' (extra-diegetically, as if parsing her argument); 'But we can call it paradise' (diegetically, confirming that this is his position) – returning the music video almost exclusively to frolicking

and half-clad men and boys. While the rest of the music video at first seems to hold no connection with the lyrical content, this moment dramatizes and indeed nuances the nature of the exchange. In the 'Classic Albums' documentary *Duran Duran: Rio* (George Scott 2008),[11] Le Bon offers his own interpretation of this lyric (indeed, for him, 'the most important line in [the song]'):

> This idea of let's not think about what it means, let's not think about tomorrow, just think about now, you know: that's all that matters. That feeling that now is the important time. [...] It got over the rumpled sheets aspect of it and concentrated on the [*sic*] philosophy idea a bit more.[12]

That philosophical position – on the one-night stand – takes on more of a resonance with respect to the signature synthesizer sound or hook of the song: the use of the bender to vary the note pitch. A certain pan-pipe tone suggests the space of the surroundings, with the echo of such sentiments travelling (like the helicopter) across the forests, the sand, and sea, or reverberating in the Buddhist temples. This landscape, very clearly, is presented as an Edenic paradise, and so equated with the paradise that Le Bon anticipates or promises from qualm-free, seize-the-moment sex. What he seems to suggest is a synchronizing of ecological pleasure with sexual pleasure, and with a discovery of this exotic and unsullied surrounding with a 'discovery' of the woman. And such cerebral instinctiveness on Le Bon's part seems to arise as specific to an existential and spontaneous position of living in the moment. Despite the deeply problematic (from post-colonial and feminist perspectives) realization of this thought in the music video, the guiding notion of freedom itself is indicative of a freed strata of society, unencumbered by the hardness of the working life of previous generations (for Duran Duran, the industrial Midlands), and who find psychic completeness in pleasure rather than duty.[13]

Such a preference for living in the moment, regardless of the consequences, dovetails with the idea of a new regime of life as pleasure, as also exemplified in 'Careless Whisper'. This is the dominant position of the hedonist/secular society: pleasure as available, and perhaps the movement towards such pleasure requires the rejection of stationary positions or fixed abodes (achieved via the yacht). Or, that the yacht is the getaway vehicle for pleasure – like a marauding Viking (in keeping with the given sexual politics), to be able to hastily make off with the woman found on the mainland and who is now, surrounded by the sea, imprisoned: the yacht as rape-enabling. With better manners, Ferry also isolates a precise moment and a suggestion of pleasure for a secular age: a fleeting and mysterious encounter, at the point at which the party/dance has finished but before the party-goers/dancers have dispersed (i.e. the last chance of arranging for a night of passion). The position of sexual liberation, in this new regime of life

as pleasure, is one that is more familiar from the late 1960s counterculture: the sense that women ought to be available to grasp the pleasures of the moment, rather than be hung up on bourgeois mores that puritanically and oppressively mitigate against such 'letting go'. (Early Second Wave feminist thought, reflecting back on 1968, held that this represented a continuum of exploitation: failure to be sexually promiscuous opportunistically presented as a failure to be sufficiently anti-bourgeois.) But our singers all get their comeuppance: Le Bon's philosophical argument seems to insult rather than persuade the woman he dances with; Michael's moment of passion with another woman (sex in silhouette during the impassioned saxophone solo) results in guilt, the termination of his relationships, and the promise that he will not or now cannot dance again; and Ferry winds up alone. The same problem seems to occur for Spandau Ballet, in the Hong Kong-set 'Highly Strung' (from *Parade*, both of 1984): although the exotic model appears on a variety of boats (ferries, yachts, fishing junks) for nude photoshoots with or for the band, she seems to fail to go further. Her bourgeois 'uptightness' (i.e. being 'highly strung') is doubly annoying for the singer who seems to address her as someone he once knew, seemingly when she was more available – engendering an uncomfortable frisson of the yacht/sexual assault scenario, as mentioned above.

Cultures of monetarism

What unifies such lifestyle music videos is that the protagonists all capitalize on a sense of autonomy to make headway into new landscapes of pleasure. But this is pleasure allied to 'the leisure society' (of which the yacht is a primary symbol): not pleasure as arising from de-alienation and getting back in touch with one's 'natural' inclinations (as with much 1960s West Coast pop), and not pleasure that looks to amassing sexual conquests (as with the commercial elements of disco, or 1970s 'New Man' crooners).[14] Rather, pleasure becomes the orientation of the moment, taking in new locations, new women, a new look, and an escape, and makes for the foundation of a new and enviable lifestyle. The proposer of the new mode of life for the new decade of the 1980s is the post–New Romantic leading man. The vehicle is the music video. And the implied recipients of this knowledge would seem to be the newly wealthy (or aspirationally newly wealthy), unversed in how to spend their (or others') money. Boy George noted the Thatcherite ambience in Duran Duran's music videos, and termed the 'champagne-swilling, yacht-sailing' tendencies as 'playboyeurism' (quoted in McSmith 2010). It is an apt description, not least since *Playboy* magazine, as Preciado has argued (2014) was far from a collection of nude models: its aspirations were along the lines of the construction of a lifestyle for bachelors, in respect to architecture, cuisine, luxury goods, travel, and so on.

Howe's broad intention of junking a taxation structure that 'punish[ed] success'[15] represented only half of the battle – and that half related to the initial period in office of the Conservative Party. The envisaged economic structure on the other side of this battle was monetarism, which resulted in something of a struggle for the soul of the Conservative Party between advocates of an ascendant neoliberal policy of considering market measures of economic wealth to be the index of actual well-being (in addition to determining financial policy), and the patrician, one-nation Tory moderates, who were denigrated as 'wets'. (In the context of this chapter, this political difference now emerges, in a perhaps very simple parallel, between the old and new money settings of music videos discussed.) The actual effects of this economic revolution, in the early 1980s, seemed dire: further de-industrialization, mass unemployment, race riots and immiseration, state violence and conspiracy against striking workers at home and in the former colonies, and inner city decline.

In this context, yacht pop emerges with a specific ideological role or function: a talisman to shoo away such bad news by looking beyond (or just ignoring) the immediate troubles in favour of glittering visions of what could be. Aspiration and lifestyle lie behind the proliferation of erotic imagery: adventure and freedom of (global) movement, reinvention of purpose through picaresques of pleasure, vague vistas of meaningfulness for the protagonist to navigate (unspoilt countries and sites of ancient religions, nascent capitalism in the global south, and high capitalism in the global north), and evidence of material wealth and the easy use of material wealth to pleasurable ends. Simon Le Bon, in an Antony Price suit and with the wind in his hair, and singing about Rio from the bow of his yacht as it cuts through warm waters, assumes or comes to assume just such a finessing of monetarism.

For or to whom was this assumed ideological function understood? One can only speculate about the affective ideological nature of yacht pop in terms of the sway it may have held over a certain mindset. In this, yacht pop advances a timely argument, or possesses a certain talismatic power, rather than just reinforcing or validating or verifying, albeit from a cultural quarter, the wisdom of political machinations that have occurred or are occurring. The mindset in question is one that found in Thatcherism the opportunity for betterment or enrichment: the non-aligned or now dealigned voter, perhaps early out of formal education and so seeing in the idea of a meritocratic, classless society the ways in which to ensure that a reinvigorated capitalism also spread to his corner of the world, which was typically taken to be the stockbroker belt, or the home counties and the south-east of England. This voter was now on 'the more pro-Conservative side of a broadly defined middle ground of policy preferences', and so made for the key constituency in Särlvik and Crewe's analysis of the Conservative victory in 1979 election (1983: 235). Later, such dealigned blocs would be termed

'floating voters': those with a total mobility, as if on a floating yacht at sea, and so able to move with (or find themselves moved along by) the currents of the moment. And the potentials of movement in general identifies such blocs: of physical and geographical movements into exotic climes for erotic encounters, via a sense of the liquidity (rather than staid – institutionalized/married-off) of a spontaneous sexual picaresque; of living and movement (the sudden colonization and regeneration of commuter belts, rather than the immobility and illiquidity of the long-term mortgage near the wider family); and of the state of readiness for financial movements (a liquidity of assets, typically as banked cash). Such figures could disconcertingly and disruptively 'float' since they had unmoored themselves from elements of their class and locale.

In their discussion of the emergent 'Essex man' (as representing that strata of the newly wealthy who ditched their traditional working-class allegiance to the Labour Party in favour of voting for Thatcher's Conservatives in 1979), Biressi and Nunn (2013) track the economic and geographic case for this development. Essex man was understood as vulgar and crass, self-centred and materialistic, lacking in culture and education, and yet newly rich not in spite of but, to some measure, thanks to such personality traits. He was, in this sense, the personification of deregulation: of a freeing of the desire to make money from old mores and societal norms, and even legal restraints. The newness of these newly rich was both in the sense of breaking with previous modes of financial accumulation and in the generation of new money, and founding of a new culture. Bastions of the British Establishment reacted accordingly, and the authors note the distaste or, at best, highly guarded admiration, expressed by commentators on the right, and satire of this culture by those on the left.[16] Yacht pop, however, presents itself as directly aligned to this mindset: it intends the projection of a vision of the new capitalist horizon for those receptive to it – the aspirant nouveau riche, who felt that better was to come.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Completing the Mystery of Her Flesh: Love, Eroticism, and Identity in Björk's Videos

Vera Brozzoni

Introduction

Music, it can be argued, is often used as a means of self-expression, as a reflection on the musician's life, experiences, and choices; by matching songs with videos, the musician can delve deeper into this self-investigation and paint an even clearer picture about the motivation that informed their music in the first place.

Throughout her career, Björk has constantly used music and visual imagery to comment on her life; her recent work is inextricably linked to her love relationship with artist Matthew Barney, which spanned from 2000 to 2013. By musically and visually documenting the rise and fall of her love story, she reflects on her role in it and on the role of love and of a beloved partner in her life. By sharing her experience of the erotic side of love, she reflects on her nature, her desires and needs. In the video documentary *Inside Björk*, the singer herself confesses, 'There's always been an erotic side to what I've been doing'; further on, Icelandic poet and collaborator Sjón explains more in depth that in her work '[T]here is a constant conflict between the inner and the outer world, and the battlefield of this conflict

as a short before Demme's *Stop Making Sense*. In London it played with Nicolas Roeg's film *Insignificance*. It also played in international film festivals' (n.d.).

6 It is increasingly difficult to separate out the mythologies that surround the founding and operation Factory Records from the actual history of the label. Michael Winterbottom's film *24 Hour Party People* (2002) plays its part in the blurring of fact and fiction, but there are a few sources which do confirm some elements of Winterbottom's representation while contradicting others, perhaps most significantly John Robb's *The North Will Rise Again: Manchester Music City 1976–1996* (2010).

7 While sadly not available in English translation, Alekan's *Des lumières et des ombres* ([1979] 1997) details the technical innovations he brought to cinematography as well as the philosophy of the image that lies behind them.

8 Elsewhere in the studio and visible in another shot is a poster that the American conceptual artist Lawrence Weiner, at the invitation of Shamberg, designed for a concert New Order played at New York's Paradise Garage on 7 July 1983. Shamberg later arranged for Barbara Kruger to design a poster to promote the cinema and festival screenings of Demme's video for 'The Perfect Kiss'. As such, New Order's visual identity does not just connect with a remarkable range of film and video artists, but also with two of the most important and influential graphic and text-based contemporary artists.

9 The presence of a doorframe connects Demme's 'The Perfect Kiss' to the clip for Joy Division's 'Love Will Tear Us Apart', which is the only video the band filmed while active. Like 'The Perfect Kiss' the video for 'Love Will Tear Us Apart' was recorded on a single day, 28 April 1980 at a former rehearsal space. In its original form, the sound was recorded live, but this was later replaced with a recording of the track. The video begins and ends with the opening and closing of a door, with 'Ian C.' etched into it, to reveal an empty room.

10 For more, see Javier Panera's *This Is Not a Love Song* (2013), which is a catalogue from a 2013 exhibition at Loop in Barcelona that traced the tangled history of video art and the music video from the 1950s to the present day.

Chapter 6

1 For those in the know, the sequence pays homage to the film *From Here to Eternity* (Zinnemann, 1953). Bowie rerecorded the song he first wrote with and for Iggy Pop, and which appeared on the Bowie-produced Pop album *The Idiot* (1977), for his *Let's Dance* album of 1983. The video was directed by David Mallet and circulated in both censored and uncensored versions. This heterosexual gambit was triumphant: the video was awarded MTV's Best Male Video.

2 It is these ambitious groups and singers who, rejecting the miserabilism of the music of the years associated with punk and post-punk, were then in a position to elevate themselves globally with and through a bold use of music videos. Ironically, in doing so and having to absent themselves from the usual routes of local pop promotion in order to do so (that is, not appearing on the BBC's *Top of the Pops* or being able to engage with the music press), it seems that they may have made way for more progressive chart music. Howard Jones recalled (Royal Northern College of Music concert, 18 February 2016) that the expected competition from Duran Duran and Spandau Ballet had vanished in November 1983. He took them to all be abroad, shooting music videos. In Jones's recollection this allowed his single 'What is Love?' to chart at number 2 in the UK, and so introduce his relatively 'difficult' debut album of that year, *Human's Lib* (which opens with a consideration of false consciousness and closes by advocating a radical refusal of work, and bisexuality), to the record buying public.

3 See, for example, Stanley (2015). And, while it is difficult to cite a comparable strain to Duran Duran's videos at this time in chart music (which other groups were seen as so consistently partying with models, around the world, in their videos?), their influence seems to have been extended to the entirety of music video production. The Duran Duran video EP, termed a 'Video 45', was released in 1983 with the cut version of 'Girls on Film' (1981) on VHS and uncut version on Betamax, as well as a B-side equivalent of another video. A video album, called *Duran Duran*, was released later in 1983 and included videos for album songs that had not been released as singles. The uncut 'Girls on Film' was originally intended for play on video screens in nightclubs, although perhaps strip clubs then proved to be a more receptive or appropriate destination.
The cover of the album *Rio* was eventually provided by Patrick Nagel, whose graphic work was first seen by the band's manger in *Playboy* magazine.

4 This association recalls the Peter Saville-designed cover of the album: model Lucy Helmore hidden beneath a Medieval helmet, and with a falcon perched on her hand.

5 The single was also released as by Wham! 'featuring George Michael' in some countries, and then appeared on the 1984 Wham! album *Make It Big*, although in the UK at least the single was intended to represent Michael's post-Wham! solo debut. Michael's Wham! colleague, Andrew Ridgeley, is credited as co-writer of the song.

6 The erotic ambience of the music video recalls stories of the modernizing Alexander Thynn, the Seventh Marquess of Bath, and his country house in Wiltshire, Longleat. Thynn's psychosexual novel *The Carry-Cot* became the erotic horror film *Blue Blood* (Andrew Sinclair, 1973), starring his model/actress wife and shot in and around Longleat. In this, a sophisticated hedonism becomes a force of modernization for the old aristocracy, and their haunts. This strain is quite different to the British anti-Establishment take on the upper classes and sexual promiscuity, as found in, say, the films of Joseph Losey of the 1960s (particularly *The Servant*, *Accident*, and *The Go-Between* of 1963, 1967, and 1971, respectively). This take found unchecked predatory and exploitative passions and stratagems in operation, undercutting the sense of an equitable and patrician ruling class. A threat to the continued existence of the country house and estate was indeed a theme for British Conservatives (of the one-nation, patrician type) across the 1970s, particularly as articulated through the Victoria and Albert Museum's 1974 exhibition The Destruction of the Country House 1875–1975, overseen by Roy Strong; see (Strong, Binney and Harris, 1974) and, on its political effectiveness, (Adams, 2013). So such impulses of modernisation would have been understood as an considered response from the old aristocracy, keen to be seen to be conceding ground to upstarts, even if only to safeguard their own positions.

7 The Miami elements of the video recall aspects of the look of *The Conformist* (Bernardo Bertolucci, 1970) and, in the shot of the women reflected in mirrors, a recurring visual motif in the films of Max Ophüls. But more generally the video shares something of the presentation of Miami for the opening credit sequence of the *Miami Vice* television series (1984–1989) and the film *Scarface* (Brian De Palma, 1983): beaches, cars, boats, sun, models in bikinis, designer suits, new apartment buildings. One could argue that Miami was the ideal neoliberal city in that such a regime of pleasure (along the lines of new wealth, deregulation, and libertarianism) is understood to be a cultural front of the anti-Castro aspect of the Cold War.

8 Hansard record of 1979 budget speech; available at: http://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/109497 (accessed February 2016). The importance of this speech is central Jenkins's thesis in respect to Thatcher's rise to power, as the definitive break from the 'socialism' of the Labour Party of the 1970s (Jenkins 1988; Jenkins also discusses the speech specifically, 48, 49).

9 At any rate, a number of candidates can be disqualified, in terms of a pop culture transition from post-punk to the New Romantics: too incapacitated, too posh, 'too' gay (in the sense of 'too' far out of the closet), or overly associated with radical political formations, or within the orbit of subcultures and formations around paedophilic preferences. Duran Duran's association with the Rum Runner seems to have been essentially innocuous, whereas other breeding grounds for new pop and youth cultures (such as the Thames Valley disco the Walton Hop) were considerably murkier. In addition, the gossipy and back-stabbing social strata around the Blitz Club was probably just too much for music company scouts looking to sign new bands, and even Duran Duran members clocked the two very different 'vibes' (see Malins 2005, 55; for a fuller discussion of the Blitz ambience, see 54–57).

10 In the nouveau riche/'trophy wife' manner, Duran Duran's John Taylor clarified (or reassured himself and his public?) that these were 'high-class models' and not 'the kind who do stripteases', as well as recording his sexual successes with them (quoted in Malins 2005, 90 and 63, respectively). Malins opens his book by noting that Le Bon '[chose] his future wife from a model agency portfolio' and that '[n]ow in 2005, [the band members'] beautiful wives from the 1980s have maintained their looks ...' (vii, viii, respectively). In these terms as well as the use of the models in the music videos, it is as if one is pushed to read their presence in terms of financial assets – albeit without the liquidity of yachts.

11 The DVD documentary was made and released by Eagle Vision/Naïve Vision.

12 There is a continuity in Le Bon's writing in this respect; the 2010 Duran Duran single 'All You Need is Now' revisits the theme of living in the moment as equated with a time of youth, and the urging that such a philosophical position enables a rejuvenating reacquaintance with one's younger years: 'You sway in the moon/the way you did when you were younger/and we told everybody/all you need is now.'

13 This question of what actually constitutes freedom in terms of demanding pleasure, to turn to Frank Zappa, is one that he critiques as indicative of post-1968 muddle-headedness on the part of rebarbative youth – whose articulations of as much he mimics as '[f]ree is when you don't have to pay for nothing/or do nothing/we want to be free/free as the wind'. For a fuller discussion of Zappa's take on the legacy of the counterculture across the 1970s, see Halligan (2013).

14 As with, for example, Rod Stewart's 'Do Ya Think I'm Sexy?' of 1978, the video for which involves Stewart impressing a girl in a bar by showing her a video of himself performing the titular song, and who reciprocates by intimating fellatio with her drinking straw. Stewart then has sex with her in a bedroom while his video continues to play on a television set in the background, as if some sort of erectile aid.

15 Hansard record of 1979 budget speech; available at: http://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/109497 (accessed February 2016).

16 On the left, and from around this moment of emergence, *Abigail's Party* (a television film, Mike Leigh, 1977) and *The Long Good Friday* (John Mackenzie, 1979/1980) are frequently noted. *Abigail's Party* details the paucity of the middle-class aspirations of those who saw in Thatcher a chance to realize their goal, and *The Long Good Friday* sees the redevelopment of the Docklands area of East London as an entrenchment and legitimization of criminal cultures.

Chapter 7

1 It is not clear if and when the robots are expected to be ready to leave the laboratory, while it can be inferred that at the end of the video they still need adjustments. Perhaps they will never leave and both their improvement and their embrace are going to last forever.

2 A comparison can be made with the beginning of the music video 'Cocoon' (2001) directed by Japanese fashion and costume designer Eiko Ishioka. In the opening sequence, a series of Björk-like white porcelain dolls are shown standing still with their eyes shut, until one of them comes to life and starts to perform the song.

3 The cover was possibly conceived to avoid censorship, although sheer nudity would have been consistent with the subject of the video. This work was commissioned by MoMA as part of a Björk-dedicated public exhibition, which might have influenced artistic choices.

4 One can even wonder whether the polyp might have been indirectly triggered by the stress of her relationship deteriorating.

5 More precisely, it comes from the Greek *ou* 'not' + *topos* 'place'.

Chapter 9

1 'Anaconda' is a track off Nicki Minaj's third Studio album, *The Pinkprint* (2014). It was composed by Minaj, with Jamal Jones, James Strife, Jonathan Solone-Myvett, Ernest Clark, Marcos Palacios, and Anthony Ray. It was released on 4 August 2014 as the second single for album. It reached no. 2 in the *Billboard Top 100*.

2 Roberto Saviano's (2009) book *Gomorra. A história real de um jornalista infiltrado na violenta máfia napolitana* is a great model. The situations narrated there are seen as typical of *splatterkapitalismus*. The expression