

HERMETIC HERESIES

Charlayn Imogen von Solms



A Sculptural Revision of the
Iconography
of the Classical Muse

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Iconography
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Dissertation submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Fine Art (in sculpture) at the University of Cape Town, 1998.

Front cover illustration: Mosaic of the Muses from Trier, West Germany, 2nd century A.D.

Back cover illustration: *Nine Malic Moulds*, 1914-15, Marcel Duchamp



Only within the last two or three generations have such images as TRAINS, AIRCRAFT and AUTOMOBILES acquired in the imagination those powerful properties once possessed by horses, serpents and chariots to give expression to our psychic lives. They comprise typical symbolic substitutes ... This substitution-phenomenon merits attention, especially since it indicates the future of symbols, a future which can affect group representation as well as individual images ...

Chevalier & Gheerbrandt: 1996



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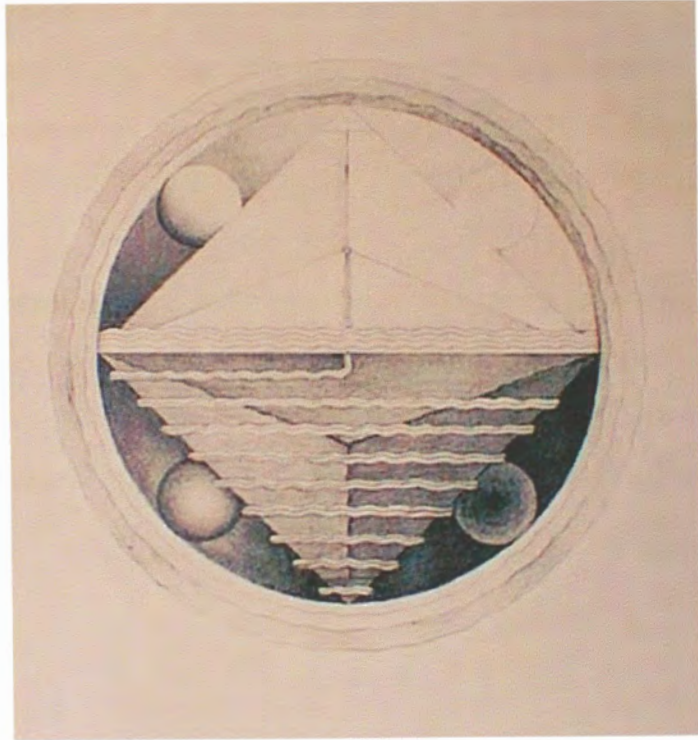
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Acknowledgements

I gratefully acknowledge the generous assistance of the following: The University of Cape Town Research Committee for a University Research Scholarship and the Scholarships Committee for Jules Kramer Music & Fine Art Scholarship, Jules Kramer Grant and MacIver Scholarships. The financial assistance of the Centre for Scientific Development, (HRSC, South Africa) towards this research is also acknowledged. (Opinions expressed and conclusions arrived at are those of the author and are not to be attributed to the CSD or the University of Cape Town).

I sincerely thank my father for invaluable technical guidance and assistance, my mother for moral support, and my brother who helped out when computers crashed. Above all, I thank Associate Professor Bruce Murray Arnott for his excellent and resolute supervision, as well as the time, effort and patience which he devoted to this project.





Myth is the natural language of the supra-individual world.
Only in terms of those symbols and images that constitute a
myth is it possible to give expression, not to that which is
transient, but to that which abides through all change.

Sherrard: 1992



Fig. 1: Mount Parnassos as seen from below the shrine of the muses at the sacred precinct at Delphi. Its connection in ancient times with Apollo and the muses led to its subsequent reputation as mountain of poetic inspiration.

1

Introduction

... the iconography and the gods of this ancient (Greek mythological) tradition have, since Hellenistic and Roman times, and particularly in the Renaissance and post-Renaissance world, been regarded aesthetically, or at best allegorically, and the sense that they correspond to anything real, to an intelligible reality, and that they are dynamic potencies active in life itself, has been lost. (Sherrard: 1992, 135)

Through the vehicle of mythology an extensive collection of symbols has survived the nearly ninety generations that separate the present from ancient Greece.¹ It is tempting to deal only with those inherited mythological constructs that make immediate sense and discard the rest as antiquated. But, since mythological systems record layers of communal history and experience accumulated over millennia, these pervasive "memories" are not so easily circumvented. Considering the enormous time-frame within which mythologies evolve, those symbols which are potent enough to gain a place within the mythos, are unlikely to cease being pertinent: "The symbol remains, but its verbal, visual, audible and emotional settings live and die or remain dormant." (Chevalier: 1996, 943)

It is broadly accepted that experiences leave imprints on the unconscious component of the individual psyche. Jung argued that "Just as the human body is a museum, so to speak, of its phylogenetic history, so too is the psyche. We have no reason to suppose that the specific structure of the psyche is the only thing in the world that has no history outside its individual manifestations." (Jacobi: 1974). When experiences are so common, or important to a society, that they find their way into a "collective unconscious", their influence on the character of a particular culture appears to be considerable, and their appearance in mythic format, assured.

One particularly rich symbol is the classical muse, or rather, one such a concept. For while the notion of an inspirational entity flourishes, the iconography associated with that concept in ancient times does not.

Consistent with other myths, the number of muses varied within the pre-classical traditions of ancient Greece, but, from the eighth century B.C. onwards, their number (nine), names and attributes were slowly canonised. Once established, the nine Olympian muses underwent little iconographic evolution. The notion of the muse, however, has proved to be hardy enough to penetrate contemporary thought and language as an active, not an archaic, concept. This conceptual twentieth century muse is heretical to ancient iconography, since associated imagery no longer has the ability to communicate the idea of the muse as in the past.

The relationship between antiquated iconography and invariable meaning is comparable to an institution, its doctrine and its heretics. Karl Popper paid particular interest to this relationship: "... almost all human societies of which we have knowledge seem to have had an interpretation of the world which was articulated in some myth or religion ... The truth is to be kept unsullied ... For this purpose institutions develop - mysteries, priesthoods ... schools ... should a member of the school try to change the doctrine, then he is expelled as heretic. But the heretic claims as a rule that his is the true doctrine of the founder." (Magee: 1975, 63). An institution can stagnate to an extent where change becomes inevitable, resulting in innovations, often derived from the original instituted idea.²

As an obsolete institution can fail to effectively convey its doctrinal core, so can inappropriate iconography inhibit the development of compelling concepts: "The growth of any discipline depends on the ability to communicate and develop ideas, and this in turn relies on a language which is sufficiently detailed and flexible. The ideas of Pythagoras and Euclid were no less elegant for their awkward expression, but translated into the symbols of Arabia they would blossom and give fruit to newer and richer

concepts." (Singh: 1997, 59). In the way in which mathematics was augmented by a new form of visual expression,³ the concept of the muse can gain from a systematic structuring of conceptual renewal.

Concentrating on the object as vestige of function in the portrayal of muses in ancient Greek sculpture, my aim is to dismiss their traditional representations, and to reconstruct the choir of the muses by iconographic substitution. The hypothesis is that if the muses are prototypes rather than personages, then mythic meaning will survive its own dislocation and continue to function in substitute form, giving the resulting sculptures symbolic impetus.

These sculptures are an attempt to recompose the meanings behind an existing collective iconography through the creation of idiosyncratic visual imagery with equivalent meaning: "... the idea is not to discover the secret ... but to construct it." (Eco: 1990, 383)



Fig. 2: The choir of the muses as traditionally represented in art since classical times.



... they breathed a voice into me,
and a power to sing the story of things
of the future, and things past.
They told me to sing the race
of the blessed gods everlasting,
but to always put themselves
at the beginning and the end of my singing ...

Hesiod in Atchity: 1996



2

The Historical Muses

When discussing the muses within an historical context, it is important to distinguish between the classical (pan-Hellenic) and the lesser known pre-classical (regional) traditions of muses. The classical muses were held to be the nine daughters of Zeus and Mnemosyne. Known as Pieriades, their home was on Mount Parnassos (fig. 3) and they were closely associated with the god Apollo who for this reason bore the title *Musagetes* (he who leads the muses).⁴ These Olympian muses were accorded authority over the arts and sciences and were believed to inspire those engaged in these pursuits. The prototypical pre-classical muses were groups of deities worshipped in the various regions of ancient Greece, and were in general associated with the enlightenment of poets, heralds and seers.



Fig. 3: *Apollo and the muses on Mt. Parnassos*

The classical muse was therefore preceded by numerous musaic cults. While these regional muses share the basic concept of the nature of muses, their numbers, names and wider mythological associations varied considerably (see Appendix I). According to Bell, the earliest sacrifices to muses were made on Mount Helicon during the fabled "Silver Age". Like the three muses worshipped on neighbouring Mount Parnassos (fig. 4), the Heliconian muses were later associated with the cult of Apollo. Another important regional cult existed at Piera in Thrace, widely accepted as the birthplace of the muses. The Pieran muses were related to the cults of Dionysus and Orpheus, and share their name (Pieriades) with the pan-Hellenic Olympian muse (Battistini: 1998). Traditionally the

parentage of regional muses ranged from Uranus and Ge, Zeus and Moneta, Aether and Ge to Apollo as well as a mortal named Pierus.

While the plethora of small and often obscure cults fades in comparison with the distinctive tradition of the classical muse, the role played by them in the formation of the later pan-Hellenic cult of the classical muse can not be ignored.

"Much of the symbolism inherent in classical mythology had its origin in the context of the pre-Olympian religion of the various peoples who inhabited Greece and the Aegean basin in the Bronze Age ... when classical mythographers came to record in writing their inherited web of myths, the symbols and stories had been largely reinterpreted and in many cases overlaid with new elements to adapt them to the Olympian religion which we now know as classical mythology." (Herberger:1994, xx-xxi)



Fig. 4: Three figured column from Delphi where three muses were worshipped.



Fig. 5: Hesiod

About the eighth century B.C., the poet Hesiod (fig. 5) composed a poem known since antiquity as the *Theogony*. In keeping with Boeotian poetic tradition, Hesiod's intention was one of classification and compilation (it catalogues more than 300 deities), not dramatic Homeric storytelling. In this it succeeded, and is considered to form the foundation of Greek mythography. The word *theogony* denotes a particular type of poem, essentially an account of the origin and descent of the

gods. It is found in various cultures and a "cross-cultural survey of ritual theogonic traditions throughout the world reveals that a basic function of a theogony is to confirm the authority that regulates any given social group ... singing a theogony and thus 'authorising' the gods ... is in effect confirming their authority." (Nagy: 1992, 59)⁵

Nagy argues that in many respects, the *Theogony* marks the transition from disparate regional cults to a uniform pan-Hellenic cult. However, a large majority of these regional cults continued to exist alongside the pan-Hellenic Olympian one, and the assimilation of smaller cults resulted in the complex and often contradictory character of the classical Greek pantheon. Dodds maintains that such an agglomeration is typical of religious growth in general, and that: "A new belief-pattern seldom effaces completely the pattern that was there before: either the old lives on as an element in the new ... or else the two exist side by side, logically incompatible, but contemporaneously accepted by different individuals or even the same individual." (Dodds: 1951, 179) Popper conceived of the innovation of ideas in the same way. Any given tradition is regarded as an inherited foundation upon which the new is founded: "This gives tradition an inescapable importance. It is where we start from, if only by reacting against it ... we use the tradition, we ride forward on its back." (Magee: 1975,70)

The *Theogony* affirms these principles. Significantly, it functions initially as a hymn to the muses and is only later expanded to include the entire Olympian pantheon.⁶ In the course of the poem the muses are transformed from local Boeotian goddesses (fig. 6) into pan-Hellenic Olympians.

In the poem Hesiod recounts what he heard the muses sing as they descended from Mount Helicon: They start their theogony with Zeus and work their way chronologically back to the very first deities. Once they encounter Hesiod at the foot of the mountain they begin their ascent of Mount Olympus, singing and dancing the exact inverse of what they had sung coming down Helicon. In other words, they now start with the primal forces and work their way up the Olympian hierarchy ending with Zeus as they reach the summit of Olympus. In this second phase they are called Olympian by Hesiod and he, for the first time in Greek literature, provides the nine names of the pan-Hellenic muses. (see Appendix I)



Fig. 6: Muse on Mt. Helicon

The classical muse is thus never entirely free of local origin, and is probably best approached through these roots. Nagy argues that "Hesiod's relationship with the Helikonian Muses represents an older and broader poetic realm that the poet then streamlines into the newer and narrower one of a pan-Hellenic theogony by way of synthesizing the Helikonian with the Olympian Muses ... for a pan-Hellenic theogony to happen, the Muses have to come down from Helikon and go up to Olympus, through the intermediacy of Hesiod." (Nagy: 1992, 60)

The triple Heliconian muse formed part of the older tradition of gods, while the ninefold Olympian muse is an integral part of the new. The myth of the birth of the Olympian's reveals an integration of both traditions in an elegant manner.

A Genealogy of the Pan-Hellenic Muses.



Fig. 7: Ge/earth, the use of her name in words denoting origin such as genesis and genealogy illustrates the ancient conception of earth as primal mother of all things.

At the beginning of the pan-Hellenic Olympian mythos, Zeus, son of the mother goddess Rhea, grandson of Earth and Sky, defeated his father Cronos and the Titans and established a new divine order.

The Titans were the twelve original children of earth (Ge or Gaea) and her son-consort the sky (Uranus). Judging by the etymology of their individual names, the Titans seem to have personified such broad concepts as time (Cronos), the oceans (Oceanos), the laws of nature (Themis) and memory (Mnemosyne). The battle between

Zeus and the Titans has been interpreted by some scholars as chronicling the collision between the cultures of the matrifocal pre-Hellenic communities of the Grecian mainland and the patrist Indo-European (Āryān) tribes believed to have commenced invasions as early as 2500 B.C. Such a distinctive shift of supremacy within a mythos could suggest a transformation of consciousness.

Within the tribal pre-Hellenic matriarchies, where all things were seen in terms of their relation to the whole, belief-structures such as totemism and animism probably prevailed. "The moral order of the goddess culture, inherited from the Neolithic was based on the principle of the relation of the manifest to the unmanifest. Human, animal and plant life were all part of this epiphany." (Baring: 1993,158) The existence of hyperphysical and psychological animistic beliefs (Read: 1995, 75) suggest an absence of clearly differentiated individual psychic identity. Such perceptions of reality were reflected in a pantheistic conception of the divine.



Fig. 8: The Neolithic Goddess as depicted by the pre-Dorian inhabitants of Greece

The Heliconian muses had their origins within these belief systems. As daughters of Uranus they belonged to the race of Titans and the generation of gods preceding Zeus. Their names, too, are titanic: Mneme (memory), Melete (deep thought) and Aoedte (song). The identity of their mother is uncertain, but the attribution of a sacred spring on nearby mount Parnassos to the muses and Ge (earth) can not be ignored (Petsas: 1981).

With the emergence of Zeus as prominent deity, a shift in the ancient Greek concept of the divine is perceptible. Zeus as conqueror, and later on as patriarch, defined, demarcated and structured space. His attributes included anthropomorphic outbursts of envy, rage, lust and jealousy. Such a distinctive concept of divinity is antithetical to earlier traditions involving mystical participation.

Within the Mediterranean neolithic tradition, a father-god was born to a parthenogenetic (virgin) mother, whose consort he then became. Uranus and Ge for example. Hesiod recounts that in order to retain their positions of power, Uranus and later Cronos escaped ritual regicide by eliminating their offspring: " He (Cronos) had in mind that no proud son of Heaven should hold the royal rank among the gods except himself. For he



Fig. 9: Cronos, king of the Titans



Fig. 10: Zeus, king of the Olympians

had learned from Earth and starry heaven, that his destiny was to be overcome, great though he was, by one of his own sons." (Wender: 1973, 38) In both cases mother-consort and sister-consort had plotted their demise, hinting at a persistent influence of the old goddesses in determining royal succession. Zeus was later to escape this practice by swallowing Metis (wisdom), the only goddess capable of producing a son stronger than Zeus himself.⁷

Graves reminds that within the matriarchal system "... the kingdom descended in the female line: a man was king only by virtue of marriage to a queen or of descent from a queen's daughter." (Graves: 1961, 356) Zeus is not presented as having any relations with his mother (already a radical break with prior mythological tradition), but is described as celebrating his victory over the Titans in the company of his aunts, in particular, Mnemosyne (memory). The reason for this union, the myth goes, is that he wanted to create a choir capable of celebrating his new order. The result was nine daughters, the Olympian muses, generally called the Pierides after Piera at the foot of Mount Olympus where they were born.

At first it is difficult to understand why Zeus celebrated his victory over the old in the company of Memory herself. Yet, when one considers the importance of past experience to current survival, it is no surprise since "... studies show that the physiological aspects

of perception cannot be separated from the psychological aspects of interpretation. Our responses to the environment, then, are determined not so much by direct effect or external stimuli on our biological systems, but rather by our past experience ..." (Capra: 1982, 321).

Traditionally, Zeus spent nine nights with Mnemosyne. According to some accounts, the Eleusinian Mysteries suggest the belief that consciousness had to pass through nine phases before manifestation. A process which like the nine months of embryonic gestation takes place in total darkness, but results in illumination. (Hall: 1995) One of the less defined figures in mythology, Mnemosyne represented the totality of past experience, but as receptive repository, retaining and guarding her knowledge.⁸ Therefore the nine nights Zeus spent in her company represent a progression from the unconscious confines of Mnemosyne to the consciousness of Zeus, from apparently meaningless images and experiences to understood symbols and concepts.

Mythographers had Zeus seduce virtually every regional female deity in Greece, and like Cronus, make his sister (Hera), his official wife. Hera was one of the most widely worshipped deities prior to the Dorian invasions, and this union was mythologically inevitable. "When he marries the many different goddesses whose rule preceded him, he does not extinguish their powers but brings them under his ordinance. This is to say that the human experiences that the goddesses have long enacted and rendered sacred are now articulated in the psyche in a new way. Zeus' many sons and daughters conceived of those goddesses reflect again, a further capacity



Fig. 11: The marriage of Zeus and Hera. Their union is interpreted as symbolic of the fusion of Dorian and pre-Dorian mythological traditions.

for ordering in the psyche of that time, which was not possible before." (Baring: 1993, 318)

The nine new muses are a cunning combination of titanic tradition and Olympian innovation. Resulting from the union of the repository of the old and the initiator of the new, they mediate two diverse mythological systems. In this reading, Zeus as luminous masculine (attributes include lightning bolts) represents the enhanced consciousness of the patriarchal invaders, Mnemosyne as dark feminine (depicted veiled with her hands hidden) represents the deep unconscious state of the pre-Hellenic matriarchies of Greece, while the muses are symbolic of the sites of cultural and psychic interchange between the old regional and new comprehensive orders. In this model the muse may be equated to aspects of the Jungian notion of the "anima" which is seen to mediate between unconscious and conscious aspects of the masculine psyche. The muse may thus be seen as a cultural equivalent of a psychological phenomenon, functioning on a collective, rather than an individual, plane.

The transition, from old titanic to new Olympian pantheon, necessitated the transformation of the muses (both transitions to be found in Hesiod's *Theogony*) from members of the old establishment, into deities created by Zeus; from vague constructs within diverse pantheons to clearly differentiated aspects of a systematic mythos.

The Muse as Author

"The term *logos*, the root of the word 'logic', refers to the sum total of our rational understanding of the world. *Mythos* is the sum total of the early historic and prehistoric myths which preceded the logos. The mythos includes not only the Greek myths but the Old Testament, the Vedic Hymns and the early legends of all cultures which have contributed to our present world understanding. The mythos-over-logos argument states that our rationality is shaped by these legends ..." (Pirsig:1988, 353-4). The Greek logos may therefore be seen to have been built upon the Greek mythos. Atchity points out that in his poetry "Hesiod also (laid) the foundation for the rational approach to philosophy

that characterized the 'preSocratics' as well as Socrates, Plato and Aristotle themselves."
(Atchity: 1996, 21)

The Greek myths had their roots in ancient oral traditions. The subsequent recording of these myths in written form is comparatively recent, and even the poets to whom they are attributed are likely to have been mythological constructs. Both Homer and Hesiod had cults devoted to them, which suggests that their names may have been epithets used by many poets working within a common thematic framework.⁹ In fact, scholars as early as Herodotus agree that the author of Homer's *Iliad*, the *Odyssey* and the *Homeric Hymns*



Fig. 12: The deification of Homer. The nine muses can be seen on the two tiers in the middle between the procession (below), and Zeus and Hera (above).

was not the same person. There is also no agreement on whether Hesiod composed both the *Theogony* and *Works and Days*, another poem attributed to him.

Poetically speaking, the author of the mythos is the muse. Traditionally the poet's claim to the inherent truthfulness of his poetry lies in his ability to receive this truth directly from the mouth of the muse. As a result "... he preserves the truth about heroic actions without having to be an eyewitness ... Since the singer starts his performance by asking the Muses to 'tell him' the subject, his composition is in fact being presented to his audience as something that he hears from the very custodians of all stages of reality. The poet's inherited conceit, then, is that he has access not only to the content but also to the actual form of what his eyewitnesses, the Muses, speak as they describe the realities of remote generations." (Nagy: 1992, 26)

In the classical (and indeed neo-classical) traditions the greatest -and most individualistic- poets make conventional claims to being the mouthpiece of the muse. In fact, the poet's appellation as "*therapon* of the muse" reveals the nature of this claim. The word *therapon* literally means "attendant", and was derived from an earlier Anatolian word *tarpan-alli* which denoted a ritual substitute for a god. The poet presents the poem as a representative of the muse, and recounts what only she as a goddess could know.¹⁰ The classical muse was regarded as the traditional source of all knowledge, as when Virgil (in later times) appealed to the muses to "disclose the secrets of the sky, the eclipses and the phases of the moon." (Battistini: 1998, 1)

The muse, therefore, not only forms part of a vast mythological system, but is the formal agent through which this system is communicated, and the conventional means by which its structure is determined.

二二



The Muses are not a poetic fiction; but a classical insight into scientific reality we moderns should do well to investigate.

Fowles: 1972

3

Three Contemporary Versions of the Muse

muse *n.* (often preceded by *the*) a goddess that inspires a creative artist, esp. a poet. [C14: ,OF, < L *Musa*, <Gk *Mousa* a Muse]

Muse *n.* *Greek myth.* any of nine sister goddesses, each of whom was regarded as the protectress of a different art or science.

Collins Concise Dictionary of the English Language

While the ancient Muse is a mythological figure which forms part of a group of nine (or three), the more recent tradition of the muse is primarily as a figure of speech, often denoting a particular person as a creative artist's source of inspiration (fig.13). However, there is a contemporary conception of the muse which does not preclude the possibility of the plurality of her traditional predecessors being contained within a complex singular concept; functioning neither as purely mythological construct, nor mere figure of speech, but an amalgamation of both. Works by the poet Robert Graves, psychologist Carl Jung and novelist, John Fowles, provide a view of the muse, or the anima (a comparable construct), as a complex concept, a unit comprised of dynamic parts.



Fig. 13: Gianni Versace and his sister Donatella. She was widely lauded as his 'muse'

Graves: *The White Goddess*

Who calls her two-faced? Faces, she has three:
The first inscrutable, for the outer world;
The second shrouded in self-contemplation;
The third, her face of love,
Once for an endless moment turned on me.

(Graves: 1986, 209)

In *The White Goddess, a historical grammar of poetic myth 1961*, Graves presents the notion of the muse as synonymous with poetry, and her change of status in antiquity (from triple to ninefold), as symbolic of an alteration in the nature of poetry itself. He argues that the "original" muse was a lunar deity consisting of three aspects; in his view, the muse only became nine distinct goddesses when the power of the ancient neolithic goddesses started to fade: "A ninefold Muse was more expressive of the universality of the Goddesses' rule than a threefold one; but the Apollo priesthood who ruled Greek classical literature soon used the change as a means of weakening her power by a process of departmentalisation." (Graves: 1961, 391). In this interpretation a singular muse with multiple characteristics is a more powerful construct than a collection of distinctive muses.

This is, of course, a poetic interpretation. While scholars such as Baring and Cashford maintain that the various goddesses of ancient Greece (and Europe) were derived from a single palaeolithic prototypical Mother goddess (fig. 14), the ancient muse (like the Graces, Furies, Horae and Fates) was always plural, a member of a group of no less than three. The reference to *the* muse so common in classical (and neo-classical) poetry acknowledges her undisputed existence as member of a group, and the traditional concept of various arts and sciences as governed by specific muses. The *White Goddess* is therefore a modern interpretation of the notion of the muse, in line with other contemporary attempts at defining her as singular with distinct aspects.



Fig: 14: *The Goddess of Laussel.*
c. 22,000 - 18,000 B.C.
*This image has been interpreted
as representing the great
protogenic goddess.*

Like Popper's heretic (p.6) Graves, in challenging the tradition of the classical muse, deliberately modelled his new muse on pre-classical Grecian and Celtic goddesses. He does not completely eradicate the classical tradition though: His muse (*The White Goddess*) could easily be mistaken for the classical muse Polyhymnia. A lunar deity, she is inventor

and originator, not only of mythology, but of literature, writing and symbolism, presiding over secret knowledge reserved for the initiated. Her character is one of secrecy and innovation, but also of communication. Graves seems to align these characteristics with pre-Hellenic notions of an all-encompassing goddess: a synthesis between classical and pre-classical traditions of muse and matriarchal goddess, resulting in a uniquely contemporary concept.¹¹

Jung: *The Anima*

In Jungian psychology, the anima is the symbolisation of feminine aspects of the masculine psyche; a psychological equivalent of contrasexual genetic material present in psychological makeup. In the feminine this aspect is called the animus. The animus may be linked to the inventive god Hermes, the psychopomp mediating between the upper and underworlds. The anima, however is comparable to the muse: "As she challenges him, she also encourages him; as she threatens him, she also teaches him. She is his taskmistress and also his muse ... opening the way for him into his own depths." (Singer: 1973, 239)

As the classical muse lies between Olympian Zeus and titanic Mnemosyne, so the anima may be seen to operate between individual consciousness and the collective unconscious. Sharp points out that, in her positive aspect "... a man's anima functions as guide to the inner life, mediating to consciousness the contents of the unconscious. She cooperates in the search for meaning and is the creative muse in the artist's life ... In fact, as an archetypal life force, the anima manifests in whatever shape is necessary to compensate the dominant conscious attitude." (Sharp: 1991, 21). The muse is (as seen above) comparable to the anima in her function as mediator and guide. However, while the anima is primarily located within the psyche, the muse functions as a cultural construct, and may be seen to interact between tradition and innovation.

The Jungian model suggests that the anima, like the muse, is multifaceted, consisting of (at the very least) four broad stages of development symbolic of a man's relation to his



above left - Fig. 15: *The Goddess of Willendorf* 30,000 - 25,000 B.C. as the first stage of the anima, usually based on the image of the mother.

below left - Fig. 17: *Aphrodite Urania* (the heavenly) on her goose. Plato spoke of two aspects of the goddess of love: the spiritual/heavenly *Aphrodite* and the lascivious *Aphrodite Pandemos* (of the people) whose priestesses performed ritual prostitution.



above right - Fig. 16: *The Venus of Arles* after Praxiteles' *Aphrodite* can be seen as representative of the second stage of the anima, a romanticised version of femininity with erotic overtones.

below right - Fig. 18: *Athena*, as typically shown in classical art, is highly symbolic of the anima in her aspect of benevolent guide and wisdom personified.



own unconscious.¹² "The first stage ... the figure of Eve, which represents purely instinctual and biological relations (fig. 15). The second ... Faust's Helen: she personifies a romantic and aesthetic level that is, however still characterised by sexual elements (fig. 16). The third ... the virgin Mary - a figure who raises love (*eros*) to the heights of spiritual devotion (fig. 17). The fourth type is symbolised by Sapientia, wisdom transcending even the most holy and the most pure (fig. 18)." (Jung: 1990, 185) There are however, more aspects to the anima than these, which can manifest in permutations of the above.

The anima may further have positive as well as negative influences; in her negative aspect, a destructive force manifesting as witch, *femme fatale* or riddling sphinx; in her positive role as guide, providing insights into inner nature. The muse as construct may reflect important aspects of the traditional structures of a culture or mythos, promoting an understanding of the principles upon which it is based, and facilitating the creation of new ideas and concepts.

The anima may be "... projected so that it appears to the man to have the qualities of some particular woman." (Jung: 1990, 180)¹³ This scenario is also found in the identification of a real woman with the muse, Beatrice as muse to Dante for example. It is significant that while the muse exhibits a capacity for representing the erotic (Erato) and biological imperatives (Euterpe), she can be neither mother nor wife (two forms taken by the anima), but must, like Duchamp's *Bachelors* in *The Bride Stripped Bare by her Bachelors, Even*, 1912-23, remain single and unattached in a sphere separate from the poet (or in the *Bachelor's* case, the *Bride*. ref. p. 102)



Fig. 19: *Nine Malic Moulds (Bachelors) 1914 -15*
Marcel Duchamp

Fowles: *Mantissa*

With women one always ends up in a bog of reality, alias words. From time to time one even asks oneself if they have not invented literature just to get their own back, deliberately to confuse and to distract their masculine betters; to make them waste their vital intellectual aspirations and juices on mantissae and trivia, mere shadows on walls. It could all be seen as a huge conspiracy really; and who was at the heart of it? Who else but this totally slippery, malicious and two-faced creature beside him? (Fowles: 1993, 185)

In his novel *Mantissa*, John Fowles explores the relationship between novelist Miles Green and the muse Erato, a commentary on both modern literature's relation to literary tradition and the dynamics of creative inspiration. Miles Green's fantasy is to be completely devoid of memory and history. In Cartesian fashion he defines himself in terms of his present thoughts. The muse exists for erotic titillation, his to enjoy and command. At the same time though, she is expected to inspire him to the heights of Shakespeare or Byron. He wilfully misunderstands the function of the muse: expecting her to inspire him, yet (unlike his classical predecessors) is incapable of crediting her as creative source. The muse in Miles Green's view is a footnote, a quaint dispensable idea.

To Miles Green, the source of creativity is consciousness freed from the constraints of history and tradition. He perceives the muse not as an inherent part of the creative process, but, along with memory, an optional extra. Imagining her to be frivolous, ineffective and shallow, he is incensed when his creative output proves to be the same. In the end, Erato, like Circe, transforms Miles into his most base animal nature (in this case a satyr) depriving him of creativity, culture and sanity.

Fowles' Erato bears a striking resemblance to the Erato who emerges from readings of classical symbology¹⁴ (ref. p. 56), yet there are subtle differences: Fowles' muse constantly shifts and changes, assuming numerous personae, as a singular muse she represents a multitude of muses; she also displays qualities characteristic of the Jungian concept of the

anima. *Mantissa* is both misconstrued muse and negative anima (effectively drawing parallels between the characters and functions of the muse and the anima). In fact, Jung's warning against underestimating the impact of a negative anima reads like a synopsis of Fowles' *Mantissa*:

The anima might then have easily seduced me into believing that I was a misunderstood artist ... If I had followed her voice, she would in all probability have said to me one day, 'Do you imagine the nonsense you're engaged in is really art? Not a bit.' Thus the insinuations of the anima, the mouthpiece of the unconscious can utterly destroy a man. (Jung: 1983, 212)



The three versions of the muse construct advanced by Graves, Jung and Fowles have in common a tendency to treat disparate characteristics of the muses as aspects of an all-embracing concept, situated between opposing spheres: consciousness and unconsciousness; present and past; individual and collective. "As we have seen, creative people habitually describe their dependence for inspiration upon sources outside their conscious volition. Moreover, creative people show a wider than usual division in the mind, an accentuation of opposites. It seems probable that when creative people produce a new work they are in fact attempting to reconcile opposites in exactly the way that Jung describes." (Storr: 1976, 287)

To ancient oral poets authorship (hence creativity) was the preserve of the muse as spokesperson of the gods, while individual (human) innovations were discouraged. As creativity was later seen to be located in individuals, the muse ceased to be of primary importance, and became an analogy or a metaphor, and in extreme cases a footnote (in Fowles' argument). However, when modern psychological studies once again stressed the

interaction between the individual conscious and collective unconscious as fundamental to creativity, a multitude of "musaic" synergies became once again available to the modern viewer. The nine different muses may be seen to constitute distinct elements of a system (muse singular) which encodes and decodes psychic data passing between the conscious and unconscious mind; or on a cultural plane, a dialectical phenomenon, traversing traditional collective structures and individual idiosyncratic innovation.

The muse as she appears in Graves, Jung and Fowles continues to be closely associated with creative production. While she is not as antagonistic to individual input as her ancient counterpart, she is nonetheless more of an influential presence than recent tradition acknowledges. Her psychic location between conscious and unconscious states appears to confirm that reciprocal interchange between these spheres is necessary to the "dynamics of creation". Inquiry into the nature of creativity should therefore equally benefit from an enhanced understanding of the nature of the muse.

11

4

An Iconographic Revision

..

11



Plato thought nature but a spume that plays
Upon a ghostly paradigm of things;
Solider Aristotle played the taws
Upon the bottom of a king of kings;
World-famous golden-thighed Pythagoras
Fingered upon a fiddle-stick or strings
What a star sang and careless Muses heard:
Old clothes upon old sticks to scare a bird.

W. B. Yeats in Jeffares: 1989

4.1

Towards a Model: *Museum, Academy, Temple*

Iconology must start with a study of institutions...
(Gombrich in Spivey:1997, 7)

...the decline of the Roman and English nations lay in their failure to understand the institutions that they had created. (Perry: 1992, 878)

In my practical work I have approached the problem of the submerged meanings of the classical muses by developing them as aspects of institutional forms, based upon the etymology of the Heliconian muses. These three institutions are rendered as repositories.

The word "institution" derives from the Latin *statuere* (to place), a meaning it shares with *reponere* from which "repository" is derived. For my purposes a repository is a container which can have any of four functions; it may be used for exhibition purposes, for safekeeping, as a sepulchre for burial, or to protect a secret.

The forms of these repositories (or institutions) were determined by a personal response to Heliconian taxonomy: *Museum* for Mneme (memory); *Academy* for Melete (thought) and *Temple* for Aoedte (song). Within each of these, the nine classical muses are represented in a manner appropriate to the institution. In *Museum*, the nine muses are approached through their etymology, in Aristotelian terms; *Academy* serves as a formal analysis of *Museum*, in Platonic mode; and in *Temple*, the muses are abstract entities, presented in terms of Pythagorean numerology.



Fig. 20: *Museum* (top left), *Academy* (top right) and *Temple* (above) as thesis, antithesis and synthesis

Each of the three Heliconian muses is presented as containing a specific permutation of nine classical muses within herself. The three have a dialectical function: *Museum* acts as thesis, *Academy*, its antithesis and *Temple*, as a synthesis.¹⁵

i

Museum (Mneme)

1996

395 x 300 x 130 mm

Wood and wax.

Museum consists of a repository that refers to the Heliconian muse Mneme (memory). It contains naturalistic representations of nine objects, modelled in black wax, symbolic of the etymological aspect of the nine classical muses. The box was constructed by traditional joinery techniques (box joints and lamination). It was then stained, sanded and finished with a coat of polyurethane wax. The wax objects were modelled and blackened over a flame.



Fig. 21: Sketch for Museum, pen on paper, 1996

Thesis

In works of art of the earlier period the Muses were always represented together in company, all wearing the same kind of dress, and all provided with attributes in the forms of musical instruments - such as the lyre, harp and flute, or with rolls of manuscript. The custom of collecting in such rolls literary works produced under the auspices of the Muses was the first foundation of libraries and museums such as they exist in modern times, and thus the word 'museum' carries us back to the early worship of the Muses, and to the early civilisation so far as it was due to their inspiration. (Murray: 1993, 159)

Museum consists of a mahogany container fashioned in a Victorian style, containing naturalistic representations of symbolic objects modelled in black wax. (see Appendix II)



The descriptive function of the museum is reflected in the processes of collection, preservation and presentation. Classification and categorisation characterise not only systematic collecting of objects but, as in Hesiod's *Theogony*, information as well. And while the individual meaning of an object may justify its place within a collection, the collection itself does not necessarily aim to restore past contexts, but rather the creation of a new context: one that stands in a symbolic relation to reality, resulting in a composite entity, or representational whole.

Aristotle was an avid collector of virtually every kind of data, all of which he painstakingly labelled, classified and categorised. In his theories regarding form and matter (where form's dependence upon matter is stressed), the physical perceptible world forms the only basis from which knowledge of the world can be derived.¹⁶ In his *Physics* he maintains that "if art imitates nature, and if in the arts and crafts it pertains to the same branch of knowledge to study the form and up to a point the material ... it seems to follow that physics must take cognisance both of the formal and of the material aspects of nature." (Macrone: 1992, 99). The museum, therefore, is concerned with the real and the physical, which it processes by describing and naming.

In this sculpture the taxonomy of the muses is approached through the etymology of their individual names (see Appendix II). These names had clearly discernible roots and meanings, and were therefore intended to be understood. The names of things, persons or deities retain powerful symbolism, equivalent to the thing itself. In mythology and religious practice, one of the most potent uses of the divine name is in the act of invocation. Hence the occasional secrecy and multiplicity of the names of deities. The Arcadian goddess known simply as "the mistress" (*Despoena*) had a name so secret no record of it exists.

"The name of something is the sound produced by the activity of the mobile forces which comprise it." (Chevalier: 1996, 694). In most symbolic systems, name and form are considered to be the essence and substance of a thing. As, in witchcraft, naming a person or a thing is to gain insight into and control of their essence. Wax effigies were

commonly believed to summon and trap a subject's life-substance, rendering them susceptible to the enchanter's power. (Chevalier: 1996)

The sculptures comprising *Museum* are poetic responses to the names of the nine muses. The objects chosen are mass-produced, and include toys, bells, castanets and a funnel. They were sculpted in uniform size, in the same material, to stress their status as a consolidated collection.

Museum provides the premise for my hypothesis. It is the representative form devised for the muses, based on their most descriptive feature, their names. In this discourse *Museum* may be understood as thesis, *Academy* - an analysis of these forms - as its antithesis.



Fig. 22: Plato and Aristotle. Plato points upward towards the world of ideas, Aristotle points down towards the physical.

Academy (Melete)

1996-7

395 x 390 x 120 mm

Waxed and enamelled wood.

Academy consists of a repository that refers to the Heliconian muse Melete (deep thought). It contains polychrome wooden forms derived from an analysis of the naturalistic forms in *Museum*. The container was constructed by traditional joinery techniques (box joints, sanded and finished with a coat of polyurethane wax). The forms contained, were carved in wood (obeche) and painted with enamel.



Fig. 23: Sketch for Academy, pen and coloured pencil on paper, 1996

Antithesis

The Academy ... was destined to become the prototype of all subsequent colleges and universities ... The institution as a whole was organised as a cult group, the ancient equivalent in law of a corporate body ... the stated object of the cult was appropriate - the worship of the Muses. (Luce: 1997, 96)

Academy is the repository in its aspect of safekeeping, an Ivory tower. It takes the shape of a container built from *pau marvin* (Brazilian yellow-wood) in an Art Deco style, and contains polychrome geometrical sculptural forms. Like the containers, these forms are also made from wood, a substance often chosen to symbolise aspects of knowledge and learning. Within the Greek system it represented the *prima materia* or primal matter, from which all other substances were derived, and the core at the centre of even the most complex manifestations.



The geometrical "shapes" contained within *Academy* are the product of formal analysis of the objects represented in *Museum*. This process of analysis was motivated by the desire to reconstruct underlying meanings, in order to examine or determine their interrelationships - a reduction of forms to their absolute essential geometry. According to tradition, a motto inscribed above the entrance to Plāto's Academy read: "Let no one enter who is ignorant of geometry." (Heller: 1988, 31). Geometry, as understood by the Platonists and Neo-Platonists, was not as concerned with the description of space as with the harmony of forms. A concern which emphasises the desire for an "aesthetic" underlying structure.

The Platonic system of knowledge was based upon an axiomatic acceptance of the existence of the Ideas (Forms). The Ideas were not unreal abstractions or metaphors for the real world, but were considered to be the very basis from which all things were constructed. The Platonic conception of the muse reflects this: "... for Plato, the Muse is actually *inside* the poet." (Dodds: 1951, 100-1).

Platonic Ideas were considered to be accessible through the application of intensive focused thought. However, while Plato may have placed the highest value on the intellect, Tarnas notes that quite a number of passages in the *Dialogues* indicate that he considered the imaginative faculty to be equal to this task. Therefore, Plato's abhorrence of art in *The Republic* was not due to a renunciation of imagination, but rather, an adverse reaction to the delusory qualities of naturalistic art: "Such impersonations or mimicry (*mimesis*) of the real world perplexed Greek philosophers, especially Plato, who was suspicious of art's deceptions ..." (Boardman: 1996, 23). The work of Marcel Duchamp who "... wanted to recognize and initiate art that was a product of the mind rather than a formal sensual manipulation and even wastage of standard artistic materials ..." (Anfam, et al.: 1993, 380) may be seen to echo Platonic tendencies.

In Jungian psychology, the basic structural elements of the human psyche - which occur as ideas and images - have much in common with Plato's Ideas. However, while in mainstream Jungian theory such images are regarded as psychological equivalents of

physiological instinct, Jung's later work locates these "archetypes" in the "real" world: "he began to move toward a conception of archetypes as autonomous patterns of meaning that appear to structure and inhere in both psyche and matter ... Archetypes in this view were more mysterious than *a priori* categories - more ambiguous in their ontological status, less easily restricted to a specific dimension, more like the original Platonic and Neoplatonic conception of archetype." (Tarnas: 1996, 425)

In his last major work, *The Mystorium Coniunctionis: an Inquiry into the Separation and Synthesis of Psychic Opposites in Alchemy, 1955-6*, Jung describes close parallels between his theories regarding the psychic process of individuation and the alchemical process of Transmutation. The various stages of Transmutation were symbolised by their colours, and while the norm was three or four, the Medieval alchemist Flamel recorded nine (see Appendix II). Flamel was one of the few reputed to have achieved the alchemistic goal of "transforming lead into gold" (I treat this term as a metaphor). Colour in general symbolises differentiation and manifestation, and is an indicator of diversity. As an affirmation of the presence of light, colour also symbolises the intellect in its analytical capacity, as well as consciousness. "Colour, in fact to the alchemists was the most important characteristic of a metal, and so we find throughout Greek alchemical literature an insistence on colour changes and sequences of colour changes ..." (Holmyard, 1965, 26)

In *Academy*, I have based the colours of the geometric shapes on Flamel's sequence, with the exception of the fourth (iridescence) and the sixth (orange) which were replaced with blue and green respectively. I assigned each muse a colour based upon her Pythagorean numerical value (explored in *Temple*). Therefore, Kalliope whose numerical value is one, is painted grey, the first colour in Flamel's sequence.

Temple (Aoedte)

1997

420 x 320 x 160 mm

Wood, glass and lead.

Temple consists of a repository, that refers to the Heliconian muse Aoedte (Song). It contains a glass tablet engraved with a magic square. The numbers in the square stand for the nine classical muses in Pythagorean symbolism. The repository was constructed from wood (curly Maple) and lime-washed, its 'roof' is sheet lead, and the magic square was engraved into the glass.



Fig. 24: Sketch for Temple, pen on paper, 1997

Synthesis

Pythagoras conceived the universe to be an immense monochord, with its single string connected at its upper end to absolute spirit and at its lower end to absolute matter - in other words, a chord stretched between heaven and earth. Counting inward from the circumference of the heavens, Pythagoras, according to some authors, divided the universe into nine parts ... 'these sounds of the seven planets, and the sphere of the fixed stars, together with that above us [Antichthon] are the nine Muses, and their joint symphony is called Mnemosyne'. (Hall: 1995, 83)

Temple is constructed in a neo-classical style from wood, and contains a glass tablet engraved with a nine-numbered magic square. It represents the repository as keeper of secrets, but also as a place of death, the ritual death of the initiate before being admitted



to the secrets of the sect. It represents the muses as abstractions, and acts as a synthesis or resolution of conservation in *Museum*, and innovation in *Academy*.

A temple may be seen as symbolic of synthesis. It is generally conceived of as an intersection of the transient and the intransient, or heaven and earth. As such it lies at the poetic centre of the world, a fixed point within constant flux. For this reason *Temple* has not, like *Museum* and *Academy*, been provided with a handle, and is not meant to be moved.



Fig. 25: Pythagoras

The Pythagorean school was concerned with both philosophical inquiry and religious devotion; Hellenic rationality and Near Eastern mysticism. Luce notes that while most of what is known about the brotherhood (which included a large number of sisters) is based upon near mythical accounts. We can however, deduce that the "Pythagorean system that emerges from the totality of all our sources is a strange blend of religious dogma and mathematical speculation." (Luce: 1997, 31)

The use of numbers is one of the oldest methods of symbolising abstract ideas. Conceived of as properties, rather than quantities, numbers were considered to be principles which were equal to truth itself. Pythagoras and his followers devised an elaborate numerological system, and Pythagoras is quoted as stating that "... numbers rule all things" (Chevalier: 1996, 707). Within this system, each of the nine muses was assigned a number in accordance with her attributes (see Appendix II) since the symbolic meanings of the different numbers were believed to mirror individual characteristics. Jung suggested that the ability of numbers to apply to outer, as well as inner worlds, was indicative of "... a tangible connection between the spheres of matter and psyche." (Jung: 1990, 310)¹⁷

I have represented the choir of muses in *Temple* by placing their numerological values within the most basic form of magic square. Known as a *wafk*, this square consists of



*Fig. 27: Mosaic of the muses from Trier, West Germany 2nd C. A.D.
The word mosaic literally means "of the muses" and can be applied to any diversified
whole such as the choir of the muses.*



Muses: the nine aspects of the feminine
power of the Goddess.

Cooper: 1993

4.2

The Ninefold Muse

... the three Muses originally mentioned by Pausanias and Varro: daughters of the Sky, worshipped on the Helicon by the Aloades ... In Varro's account the number nine was reached when three sculptors made three statues of the Muses each, to be placed in Apollo's sanctuary. The statues being all so undoubtedly fine and precious, the clients could not choose among them and kept all the nine Muses. (Battistini: 1998, 1)

Varro's account is both late and peculiar. But, it provides an interesting insight into Hellenistic and Roman attempts at explaining the number of pan-Hellenic muses. In this case, as sculptural multiplication of the three Heliconian ones.¹⁸

The earliest reference to the muses as being nine in number occurs in Homer's *Odyssey* in book 24.¹⁹ In Homer's (as in Hesiod's) work the number nine has ritualistic properties: Demeter searches the earth for nine days; Apollo leaves Delphi for nine years; while nine days and nights separate heaven from earth and earth from the underworld. Nine partly derives its auspiciousness from its status as "... the perfected Trinity in its threefold aspect." (Jung: 1990, 297), hence Varro's conclusion. Numerologically, nine is the number of fulfillment and completion, but also of limitation. It has been used to symbolise the annihilation of the individual in the rediscovery of the whole, which makes it all-encompassing. The establishment of their number as nine makes exact sense, as "... the nine Muses stood for the sum of human knowledge." (Chevalier: 1996, 704). Nine is thus the smallest number required to describe a systematic whole.²⁰

As a choir of nine, the classical muses are both multiple and singular. As a group they are a composite system with its own inner dynamic. Consider this system in terms of a unit and the nine muses become aspects of a highly complex (muse singular) entity. In the

three institutions the nine muses were approached as elements within a system, effectively presenting the *Museum*, *Academy* and *Temple* as a trinity of enneads.

The nine individual classical muses are unique, no two display the same characteristics, yet as a group they form a logical pattern, which includes Parmenides' eternal motionless universe (Kalliope) and Heraclitus' eternal, constantly fluctuating cosmos (Terpsichore). The second group of sculptures exploits the unique qualities of individual muses as defined within *Museum*, *Academy* and *Temple*. Formalistically, these sculptures combine aspects of *Museum* and *Academy*, while etymology, colour symbolism and numerology as found in *Museum*, *Academy* and *Temple* determine the conceptual aspect.

I

Core (Kalliope)

1998

340 x 220 x 220 mm

Wood, glass, brass.

Core is a representation of the classical muse Kalliope as a sound generator. The sculpture consists of a sphere, with two "arms" mounted on a column, contained within a bell-jar. The column rests upon a gear surrounded by nine glass spheres. The overall shape of the sculpture was derived

from a combination of the forms representing Kalliope in *Museum* and *Academy*. The wooden parts of this piece were carved, laminated and eventually treated with paint, black wax polish, varnish and polyurethane wax. The bell-jar, upper part of the base, and glass spheres are ready-mades.

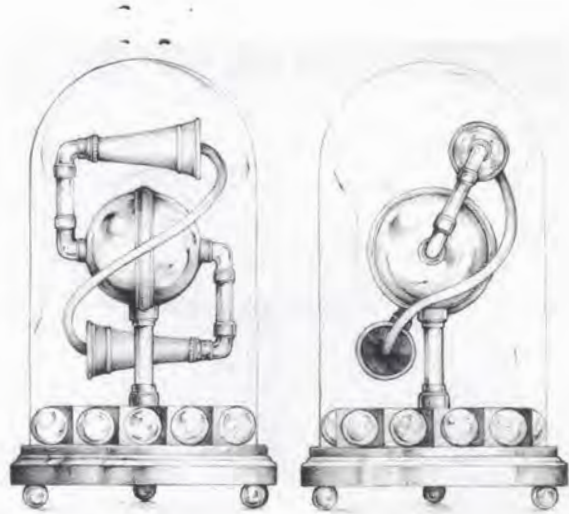


Fig. 28: Sketch for *Core*, pen on paper, 1998

Kalliope

Such wilt thou be to mee, who must
Like th'other foot, obliquely runne;
Thy firmness draws my circle just,
And makes me end where I begunne.

(John Donne in Hayward: 1950)



Fig. 29

Chief and representative of the muses, Kalliope, muse of epic²¹ poetry, is traditionally represented with a writing tablet and stylus (fig. 29), or holding a scroll in her hand, crowned with laurel. Her name is derived from *kalos* and *ops* which translates as the



I

"beautiful / immortal voiced".²² The voice of a muse is an important attribute. Muses are primarily heard, their presence is affirmed, and their knowledge imparted, through their voices. Nagy points out that the name of the poet Hesiod, mouthpiece of the muses, translates as "... he who emits the Voice." (Nagy: 1992 ,47). Homer too places great emphasis on both eloquence and strength of voice. When comparing his vocal abilities to that of the muse he states that even if he had an "unbreakable voice of bronze" he could not rival her. In *Museum*, Kalliope is the horn/klaxon.

Kalliope is the primary muse. Numerologically she is one, the *monad*. In Euclidean mathematics, numbers were aggregates composed of units; one was thus not a number, but the indivisible unit, the foundation of all numbers. In geometry it is a point. The Pythagorean school regarded one as a cosmic and ontological centre, the "First Cause" or "Unmoved Mover" later postulated by Aristotle. One was considered to stand beyond time. It negated both concepts of future and past, existing within a continuous present. Parmenides' conception of reality could well have been based on the *monad*: "What truly exists has not come into existence nor will it pass out of existence. It is both ungenerated and imperishable. It is complete, whole, motionless and unending. Past and future tenses do not apply to it, 'since it is now, all of it together, one and continuous'." (Luce: 1997,53)

Kalliope is thus an *omphalos*, navel and core. This is reflected in her form within *Academy*, resembling the navel-stone at Delphi (fig 30 -31).²³ Her colour too is symbolic of centrality. Grey is neutral, intermediate and symbolic of primordial chaos and ambiguity.



above - Fig. 30 an omphalic symbol: a Hindu Lingam.
left - Fig 31: Omphalos at Delphi

"In colour genetics it would seem that grey is the first colour to be perceived and that it remains at the centre of the human colour-sphere." (Chevalier:1996, 456) In Flamel's sequence, grey represents the untouched state, the *prima materia* of alchemy.

The centre is an intersection, a point of origin and return, and as a result, communication; its immobility makes it an axis around which all things revolve. In the *Thesaurus*, Kalliope receives a pendulum: "Wherever you put it, Foucault's pendulum swings from a motionless point while the earth rotates beneath it. Every point in the universe is a fixed point: all you have to do is hang the pendulum from it ... it isn't enough to worship the pendulum; you still have to make a decision, you have to find the best point for it." (Eco: 1990, 237)

I have conceived of Kalliope (*Core*) as centre. Hermetically sealed within a bell-jar - the shape of which is reminiscent of her Platonic form - she is a core set upon an axis around which nine spheres revolve. The "sounds" generated within the central sphere are emitted from one cone and returned through the other, the core is thus the immobile point, set between emitted and returning sound.



Fig. 32: Core

II

Dart (Erato)

1998

310 x 300 x 130 mm

Wood, brass, wax.

Dart is a representation of the classical muse Erato as a raven. The sculpture consists of a pair of wings, mounted on either side of a wax twist. At the top, a dart's point is held in place by four rods mounted at 45° angles. The shape of this sculpture was derived from the dart in *Museum* and the black form in

Academy. The wings, base and upper circle were carved from wood, stained, painted and waxed. The twist was modelled from wax around a wooden rod, and blackened over a flame.

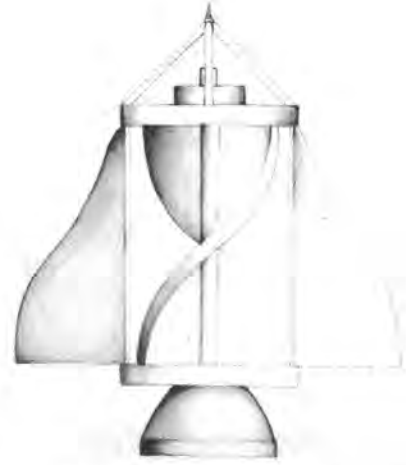


Fig. 33: Sketch for *Dart*, pen on paper,

Erato



Fig. 34: *Erato*

Opposition unites. From what draws apart results the most beautiful harmony. All things take place by strife.

(Heraclitus in Atchity: 1996)

Erato is one of the more popular muses due to her traditional function as muse of erotic poetry. In the plastic arts she has traditionally been shown with a large lyre and a wreath of myrtle (fig. 34). Her name is derived from Eros, god of love. And while considered to be equal to the word "love", *eros* refers more to a forceful impulsive attraction between two things, equivalent to gravity and matter. In Orphism *eros* is the force which separates



chaos into two diverse entities, from whose reunion all things are made. "It is he who 'brings harmony to chaos and permits life to develop.'" (Graves: 1990 ,132).²⁴ In *Museum*, Erato is a dart, which thrown at its target designates a relationship between polarised source and destination.

Erato to the Pythagoreans was the vilified *duad*, the number "two". As the source of contention, lust and duality, which the Pythagoreans considered base and evil, Erato represents the material and the physical. This is reflected in her colour (black) which, to alchemists, signified the *mortificatio*, or dying into matter²⁵, the stage in transmutation known as the "Raven's head". Erato and the raven have much in common²⁶. The raven is a black bird, a solar symbol, sacred to Apollo.²⁷



Fig. 35: Apollo and his raven. He holds a lyre of the same type as pictured with Erato.

Black, when viewed in terms of solar symbolism, is not as indicative of night as it is of the shadow cast by material objects when placed in sunlight. The shadow is evidence of solidity, thus, the colour black and materiality go hand in hand. In contemporary science, matter has assumed a crucial role: "Simply put, we can't find most of the universe. Physicists have calculated what its total mass should be, and that number is about 10 times what we've been able to observe. Either the equations are wrong or there are entirely new classes of matter we haven't found yet." (Hayden: 1998)

I have represented Erato (*Dart*) as a raven-like dart or missile. Between her two wings, acting as a propeller, is a section of a Moebius strip, which twisted once over renders two planes as a single surface. This is reminiscent of Heraclitus' view of opposites: "Their co-existence as part of the same continuum is the fundamental truth about them. Each pair is basically one, not two, and each term becomes meaningful only in the light of the other." (Luce: 1997, 42).²⁸ Erato receives a pair of coins in *Thesaurus*, referring to flipping a coin to receive either of two possible answers.



Fig. 36: Dart

III

Cypher (Polyhymnia)

1998

240 x 190 x 190 mm

Wood, marble, brass, pewter.

Cypher is a reference to the classical muse Polyhymnia as an oracle. The sculpture consists of a white funnel with a hole at its centre, leading into a shaft attached at the bottom to three legs resembling foliage. This funnel is suspended over a

spout emitting a "flame". The design was based on the funnel in *Museum* and the cone placed upon a cylinder in *Academy*. A phrase from Hesiod's *Theogony* is inscribed on the rim of the bowl. The marble base, brass "flame" and pewter legs are ready-mades. The bowl and its shaft were carved from wood and painted with a lime wash. Text on the rim of the bowl was added with decals.



Fig. 37: Sketch for *Cypher*, pen on paper, 1998

Polyhymnia

White acts upon our souls like absolute silence ... This silence is not something lifeless, but replete with life-potential.

(Kandinsky in Chevalier: 1996)

Polyhymnia translates as "multiple hymns/songs", and is the muse credited with the invention of mythology. She was accorded authority over sacred poetry (hymns and theogonies). It seems odd then, that she has traditionally been shown in an attitude of silence, her finger to her mouth, veiled and occasionally holding a scroll (fig. 38). The clue lies in the nature of the songs with which



Polyhymnia.

Fig. 38



III

While knowledge of the moon's phases might have been symbolic of oracular insight and mysticism in the earlier traditions, understanding of these phases becomes indicative of an ability for abstract reasoning and cerebral creativity in Polyhymnia. Baring traces the origins of this apparent contradiction to the neolithic: "do we not see, as the most mysterious phenomenon the moon and the phases of the moon, which constantly change in a way that is constantly the same? The two terms, the constant and the variant, give rise to the first notion of sequence, measurement and time." (Baring: 1993, 18).³⁰ The Latin words for mind, measure and month ³¹ were all derived from the same root, *mene*, Greek for "moon".

I have conceived of Polyhymnia (*Cypher*) as a funnel and a tripod, a channel through which arcane knowledge is passed. The funnel consists of a large white bowl set on a tube. The tripod suspends this funnel above a small "flame". The notion of the moon as a funnel is not unique: In Greek geocentric astronomy, the moon was seen to mediate between heaven and earth: "... the moon's sphere is closest to the earth. Therefore all influences, all transmission of material or effects between heaven and earth must pass through the moon ... In psychological terms, we can say that the feminine principle (symbolised by the moon) is the funnel or gateway between the personal and transpersonal psyche." (Edinger: 1995, 106).



Fig. 41: *Cypher*

IV

Orb (Urania)

1998

280 x 250 x 250 mm

Wood, brass, perspex, planisphere.

Orb is a reference to the classical muse Urania as a body of knowledge. The sculpture consists of a hemisphere suspended between four columns which stand on compass points. On the flat end of the hemisphere is a pyramid

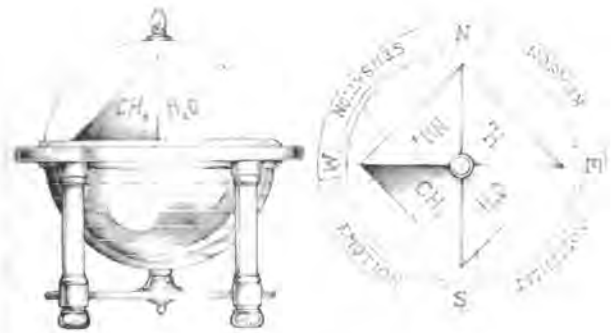


Fig.42: Sketch for *Orb*, pen on paper, 1998

inscribed with chemical symbols. A transparent dome (surmounted by a blue "flame") is placed above the pyramid. The four columns are joined by an octagonal frame containing text and a square constructed from a ruler. The whole structure stands on a circular planisphere. The hemisphere, frame, and pyramid were carved and constructed from wood. The hemisphere was stained blue with water-based paint and finished with polyurethane wax, and the frame and pyramid were stained and varnished. Text consists of decals. The perspex dome, brass 'flame', compass points, ruler and planisphere are ready-mades.

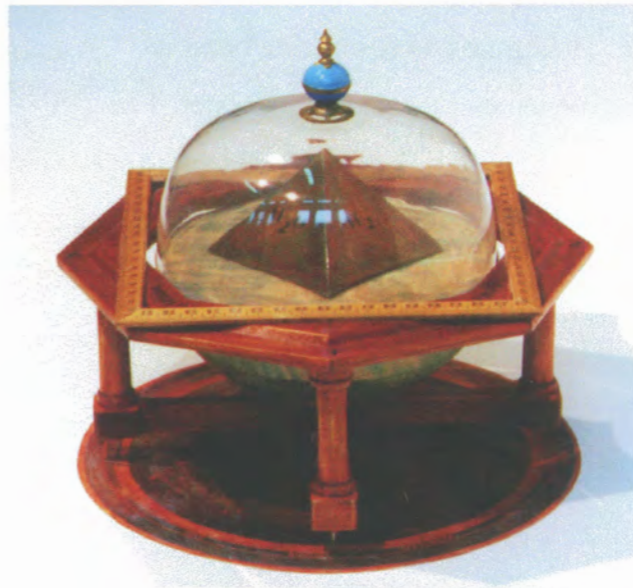
Urania

... there is at least one philosophical problem in which all thinking men are interested. It is the problem of cosmology: the problem of understanding the world - including ourselves, and our knowledge as part of the world. All science is cosmology. (Magee: 1975, 51)



Urania.

Fig. 43



IV

Urania (the heavenly) enjoyed great popularity during the Renaissance, mainly due to her classical association with the science of astronomy. Her main attribute was a globe, accompanied either by compasses or a staff.. This globe was probably derived from the blue sphere found in the iconography of sky deities-such as Zeus and Jupiter, "... considered among the first three-dimensional representations of the celestial sphere ..." (Battistini: 1998, 1).³²

The name "Urania" is derived from Uranus, "the sky", and has a long history. It is an attribute of Aphrodite as daughter of Uranus and goddess of pure and chaste love. Graves points to a connection between Urania and the Sphinx: "The Sphinx, for instance, with her woman's face, lion's body and eagle's wings is Ura or Urania the goddess, with dominion over air and earth ..." (Graves: 1961, 417). This is an interesting observation, since Urania and the Sphinx (fig. 44) both have a numerical value of four. Four is the number of structure, stability and permanence. The Sphinx as composite beast is emblematic of the four elements: earth, air, fire and water. The



Fig. 44: The sphinx of the Naxians. It stood on a tall column overlooking the shrine of the muses at Delphi

Sphinx is also a calendric beast consisting of parts which are symbolic of the seasons as stellar constellations. According to Apollodorus she received her famous riddle from the three Heliconian muses. As riddler, she demands ingenuity and knowledge and is in this aspect again closely associated with Athena.



Fig. 45: Athena aiding Hercules. Her relationship with the hero is comparable to that of the poet and the muse. Hercules' twelve tasks performed with Athena's help have been interpreted as symbolic of the twelve months of the year.

Urania is the muse concerned with observed knowledge, derived from discernment of patterns of events; the production of calendars, maps, theories, systems of classification and description, and the collection of factual evidence in general. As the understanding of the lunar cycle as fourfold, when the unseen phase (dark moon) is included, she symbolises

scholarship as a combination of creative ingenuity (Polyhymnia) and insight, derived from contemplation. Representative of repetitive cyclic time, she is denoted by a timepiece in *Thesaurus*.

Like other "queens of heaven", Urania's colour is blue, the colour of the intellect, contemplation, constancy, heaven and water. As a receding colour, it denotes infinite space, and the transcendental.

I have represented Urania (*Orb*) as an orb. The cross which usually surmounts an orb is here denoted by four elements suspended on four columns over a celestial disc. Water is represented as a hemisphere upon which is placed a clear dome for air and a pyramid for earth. Fire is symbolised by the brass flame on top of the dome. The pyramid contains the chemical symbols for methane, hydrogen, ammonia and water. These four substances were derived from an experiment conducted in 1953 by scientists Urey and Miller, in a successful attempt to replicate the formation of the chemical building blocks of organic life. (Ronan: 1982, 180)



Fig. 46: Orb

V

Siren (Melpomene)

1998

210 x 130 x 210 mm

Wood, chrome, brass, plastic, thread

Siren is a representation of the classical muse Melpomene. The sculpture consists of a closed cylinder, with a yellow funnel protruding from the centre of one end. A cranked handle is placed on the curve of the barrel, while the sculpture is set on a grey pyramid. The design derives from the form for Melpomene in *Academy* which consists of a cylinder fused to a cube, and the whistle in *Museum*. The cylinder was constructed by first laminating pieces of wood into a rough circle which was then carved to the desired dimensions. The cylinder is closed by two circular pieces of hardboard on each side, lime-washed white. The yellow plastic funnel is a painted ready-made; part of the handle is from a pepper grinder, the pyramid was constructed from wood and painted grey.



Fig. 47: Sketch for Siren, pen on paper, 1998

Melpomene

The gods were responsible for that, weaving catastrophe into men's lives to make a song for future generations. (Homer: *Odyssey* 8, 579)

Muse of Tragedy, Melpomene's name is derived from *melpein*, meaning "to sing", and was generally depicted with a tragedian's mask and occasionally the club of Hercules (fig. 48). She was traditionally believed to have been the mother of the Sirens, an association which helps to make sense of her name and



Melpomene.

Fig. 48



..

V

function, since the deadly Sirens seduced their victims with song. In *Museum* Melpomene is a (shrill sounding) whistle.



Fig. 49: Siren tormenting Oddyseus

The word *tragoedia* (tragedy) translates literally as "goat song": "... originally the hymn sung ritually during the sacrifice of a goat at Dionesiac festivals (fig. 50)." (Chevalier: 1996, 435).³³

Tragedies were designed to illustrate the gods' punitive response to excessive human pride (*hubris*), which due to an abuse of choice (free will), results in the subjugation of the offender to fate (determinism). Humans alone were believed to possess consciousness, the source of sorrow. As Homer's Zeus states "... there is nothing more miserable than man among all the creatures that breathe and move on earth." (Homer: 1987, 286).



Fig. 50: Ritual goat sacrifice. The musicians are most likely performing a "tragoedia" (goat song)

Melpomene's connection with Dionysus is to his aspect as the god whose ecstatic rituals promised devotees union with divinity. The Pythagoreans considered her number (five) to be the number of union or marriage since it is the hypotenuse of the smallest Pythagorean (right-angled) triangle: "The Pythagoreans associated this triangle with marriage and Pythagoras' theorem was sometimes called the Theorem of the Bride.

The sides 3 and 4 were associated with the male and female respectively, and the hypotenuse, 5, with the offspring." (Wells: 1987, 58). Five lies in the middle of the first nine numbers, and is central in *Temple's* magic square; it is a bridge and beam of balance. As the pentagram symbolising four limbs and a head, it represents a human being, and consciousness. As median, Melpomene's influence like Dionysus' is ambivalent, she can either "lead to spiritualisation or to materialisation, a factor causing the personality either to develop or to regress." (Chevalier: 1996, 294); in occult symbolism, either the pentagram pointing upward or falling downwards (fig. 51).

Melpomene's colour is yellow, and as indicative of concordant malignant and benign aspects as her number. Yellow can symbolise either consciousness, intuition and understanding, or treachery, falseness and cowardice. As intuition it is Ariadne's thread, symbol of the labyrinth.³⁴ The labyrinth is the perilous route to the centre, promising union with the god-head, but, also containing the threat of the Minotaur. Presided over by a woman and performed by a man, the labyrinth is symbolic of synthesis: "Theseus becomes an



Fig. 51: Occult image of a goat with a pentagram



Fig. 52: Melpomene as a labyrinth

image of the questing consciousness (the 'archetypal masculine' in everyone) that must journey into the unknown psyche to seek the treasure at the heart. Ariadne's thread is then the intuition (the 'archetypal feminine' in everyone) that guides the conscious mind through the labyrinthine turnings leading to the source ..."

(Baring: 1993, 143)

In *Thesaurus*, Melpomene is represented by five bullets, the number removed from a revolver's barrel to play "Russian roulette", a means of testing (and affirming) fate. I have represented Melpomene (*Siren*) as a cylindrical barrel mounted on a pyramid; on the curved side is a cranked handle, representative of the spiral, a labyrinthine symbol and a reference to the Moebius twist in *Dart*. From the flat end a funnel (mouth) protrudes, a reference to *Cypher*. The twist and funnel are symbolic of the numbers two and three respectively, numbers whose union produces five.



Fig. 53: Siren

VI

Ether (Thalia)

1998

280 x 170 x 170 mm

Wood, glass, brass, paper

Ether is a representation of the classical muse Thalia as a flower. The sculpture consists of a green cube with a hexametrical shaft down its centre. This shaft contains a rod surmounted by a four petaled "flower" placed beneath a bell-jar. The sides of the box present a quotation of Plato, numbers and an image (*Pastoral Symphony* by Titian/Giorgione). The cube was constructed from wood and painted, with the images laminated on. The "flower" is a brass doorbell, its centre is painted red. The bell-jar formed part of an old clock.

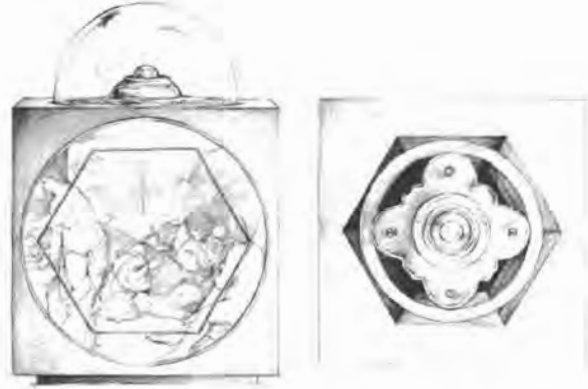


Fig. 54: Sketch for *Ether*, pen on paper, 1998

Thalia



Thalia.

Fig. 55:

Life ascends from red and blossoms in green. (Chevalier: 1996)

Thalia is derived from the Greek *thalein* meaning to blossom or bloom. She is at times represented in rustic garb with a shepherd's crook, and a mask of the kind worn in satyric plays (fig. 55). She was traditionally considered to be the muse of comedy and pastoral poetry. Thalia was also the name of one of the three Graces, personifications of grace, joy and beauty, and frequent companions of the muses. A third Thalia is in some accounts identified with the muse, while in others she is a mountain nymph and daughter of



VI

Hephaestus.³⁵ Yet both these figures display aspects of the classical muse's character. The Grace Thalia, as bringer of joy, and the mountain nymph as primeval and arcadian.



above - fig. 56: Flora from Botticelli's 'Primavera'. Flowers fall from her mouth.
right - Fig. 57: Zeus abducting Thalia



Herberger sees her qualities as reminiscent of Minoan iconography on a vase painting from the classical era (fig. 57). The image identifies the female figure as the muse Thalia, yet pictures an event from a story involving the nymph: "Thalia wears on each wrist a serpentine bracelet. As mountain-nymph and serpent wearer, she is much closer to the Bronze Age great goddess than to the classical Muse, Thalia. This identity is also suggested by the two lilies in the field, a flower constantly associated with the great



Fig. 58: Flower gatherer from a wall painting from Thera.

goddess in Minoan Crete." (Herberger: 1994, 156). Images of female figures amongst flowers abound in Minoan and Aegean Bronze Age art (fig. 58). Flowers are generally symbolic of the feminine principle, harmonious primeval nature, and a paradisaical state of innocence. In alchemy "the flowering" occurred as a result of the successful union of opposites. In mythology, flowers often spring from the spilt blood of gods and heroes.

As receptacle, and the centre regained, flowers are symbolic of paradise - almost always lost, and only regained with much difficulty. In Jungian psychology, the image of the child is analogous to paradise: "... an image of both the irrevocable past and an anticipation of future development ... His pre-conscious essence is the unconscious state of earliest childhood; his post-conscious essence is an anticipation by analogy of life after

death. In this idea the all-embracing nature of psychic wholeness is expressed." (Sharp: 1991, 34).

Green is the colour of both youthful innocence and paradise. As the colour of plants and water it symbolises regenerative nature, life and immortality. In classical paintings, nymphs were painted green, as was Phidias' statue of Aphrodite. In its negative state, green is indicative of decay and death: nymphs were deadly, while paradise can be reached only through death.



Fig. 59: 'Pastoral Symphony' 1508, Titian/Giorgione, epitomises the ideal of nature as unspoilt paradise. The two female figures have been interpreted as either nymphs or muses

Numerically, Thalia's number is also Apollo's. As the first "perfect" number, six was particularly auspicious. The early Pythia at Delphi delivered oracles in hexametrical verse. As the number of sides to a cube, six stood for harmony, symmetry, proportion, beauty and peace.³⁶ Thalia's shepherd's crook identifies her as a psychopomp, guiding the souls of the dead. She shares this aspect with Hermes, another divinity closely associated with primeval nature. In later times, the "Emerald Tablet" (*Tabula Smaragdina*) probably dating from the 6th - 8th centuries A.D. was believed to contain the secrets of the Hermetic arts as handed down by the "Moses" of alchemy, the legendary Egyptian Hermes Trismegistus. (Roob: 1997)



Fig. 60: Ether

I have represented Thalia (*Ether*) as an "etherial" aspect of Utopian Arcadia. The sculpture consists of a cube with a hexametrical shaft containing a four petaled "flower" (doorbell) encased in a bell-jar. The bell-jar refers to the *omphalos*; the four "petals" of the flower refer to the four rivers of paradise, flowing from the centre. One side of the cube contains a reproduction of *Pastoral Symphony* (a painting by Titian and/or Giorgione which epitomises the notion of nature as perfection).

VII

VITRIOL (Kleio)

1998

220 x 220 x 220 mm

Wood, brass, plastic

VITRIOL is a reference to the classical muse Kleio as the underworld. The sculpture consists of a vault made up of a cylinder surmounted by a dome. At the top is a purple eye. Two seams along the sides of the cylinder suggest that it is possible to open the piece. An alchemical code (VITRIOL) is inscribed around the base. The form was derived from the desk-bell in *Museum* and the purple form in *Academy*. The sculpture was constructed from a hemisphere carved from wood (*meranti*) set upon a cylinder. The cylinder was made by laminating two different types of wood (*obeche* and *pau marvin*) into a rough shape from which the final form was carved. The eye at the top is a modified spy-hole. Text was applied with decals.



Fig.61: Sketch for *VITRIOL*,
pen on paper, 1998

Kleio



Fig. 62: *Kleio*

Visita Interiora Terrae Rectificando Invenies

Occultum Lapidem, or 'Explore the inner things of Earth and by distillation you will find the hidden stone'. (Chevalier: 1996)

Kleio, muse of history is traditionally represented with a manuscript, wreathed with laurel. Her name is derived from the word *kleos*, originally referring to hearing. Appropriated by poets, it came to designate the nature



VII

of what they sang about. In other words, what the poet hears (from the muse) he presents to his audience, rendering the heroes he famous by making their stories known. Homer wrote: "You [Muses] are gods: you are there [when things happen] and you know everything. But we [singers] know nothing: we just *hear* the *kleos*." (Nagy: 1992 ,26).

While the *kleos* is what the poet has heard, it is also all that the muse has seen. Kleio is thus representative of the knowledge of past events which only gods could have, and muses disclose. Hence the desk bell as Kleio in *Museum*. Its purpose is to announce one's presence. The mechanism of the bell is hidden, and sound is emitted from within. Kleio is designated by a deck of cards in *Thesaurus*.

Kleio functions as a collective memory of the gods, which poets can approach through the muse. This is comparable to Jung's notion of the collective unconscious, "... the kind of subliminal material from which the symbols of our dreams may be spontaneously produced ... Such material has mostly become unconscious because - in a manner of speaking - there is no room for it in the conscious mind ... but just as conscious contents can vanish into the unconscious, new contents ...can *arise* from it." (Jung: 1990, 37).³⁷ As containing material no longer conscious or "alive", the unconscious is often symbolised as the underworld or Hades.



Fig. 63: Coin depicting Athena and her screech-owl. The owl-goddess of the neolithic presided over the underworld.

The notion of unconscious material entering consciousness, has a parallel in the neolithic conception of the underworld as synonymous with the dark phase of the Moon.³⁸ Here, death is a temporary state within a cycle. The myth of Persephone's annual descent and subsequent return, exemplifies this.

Storr and Baring maintain that the often "unruly" nature of unconscious material renders the underworld and its inhabitants hazardous: "The greatest danger about

unconsciousness is proneness to suggestion. The effect of suggestion is due to the release of an unconscious dynamic, and the more unconscious this is, the more effective it will be. Hence the ever widening split between conscious and unconscious increases the danger of psychic infection and mass psychosis." (Storr: 1991, 147).³⁹ Myths and rituals involving a descent into the underworld constitute an initiation into an understanding of the "... paradigm of the 'Great Below' as the essential counterpart of the 'Great Above'." (Baring: 1994, 224).

The colour sacred to underworld deities like Persephone and Hecate is purple/violet. It is also the colour of royalty, vestals and the muse Kleio. Composed of chthonic red and celestial blue it stands for the congealed blood of kings and heroes, hence, ancestral heritage. It symbolises victory and spiritual dominion, but also invisibility, death, catastrophe and terror. As the compliment of yellow, it stands for the world of dreams and nightmares.⁴⁰



Fig. 64: Persephone and Hades. The rim of the bowl is divided into seven parts, a number often associated with the underworld.

The number seven is also closely associated with the underworld, and dark phase of the moon. It is the number of dreams, visions, and the parthenogenetic "Great Mother".⁴¹ In the myth, Persephone is bound to the underworld when she eats seven pomegranate seeds. Descent into, and ascent from the underworld, involves seven stages styled on the days of the waning and waxing moon: "The horizontal journey involves the number four ... The vertical journey involves the number seven." (Edinger: 1995, 154)



Fig. 65: VITRIOL

I have represented Kleio (*VITRIOL*) as a domed container with an eye inserted at the top. Its contents remain hidden, yet seams of different wood suggest that the cylinder may be opened. Along the base of the cylinder, the hermetic code *VITRIOL* has been written, offering a clue to accessing this vault's contents.

VIII

Arc (Euterpe)

1998

260 x 195 x 135 mm

Wood and brass.

Arc is a representation of the classical muse Euterpe as energy. The sculpture consists of a sphere separated into two parts which are mounted on two rods on a dark red box. The rods are attached to each other by a red concertina spring reminiscent

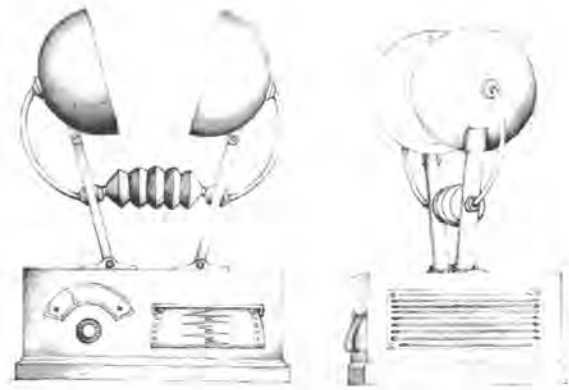


Fig. 66: Sketch for *Arc*, pen on paper, 1998

of Brancusi's *Endless Column*. At the centre of each half of the sphere is an indentation with a small opening leading into a pipe connected to the concertina. The sculpture was derived from the pair of castanets in *Museum*, and the red sphere split in two in *Academy*. The hemispheres were carved from wood (yellow-wood) and lime-washed white. The indentions in the parts are two halves of a hollow brass sphere (formerly a decoration in a clock). The rods and box were constructed using carpentry techniques, and varnished. The concertina was carved from wood (*jelutong*) and painted with red enamel paint.

Euterpe

the flute's sound on naked feet

which trod your sleep in the other, the submerged life.

(George Seferis in Sherrard: 1992, 220)

Euterpe, meaning "pleasure", was the muse of Lyric poetry. She was generally depicted playing a double flute (fig. 67), resembling the maenads of Dionysus: "... flutes and tympana or kettledrums ...



Euterpe.

Fig.67



VIII

accompany the maenad dance in the *Bacchae* and on Greek vases (fig. 68). To the Greeks these were orgiastic instruments *par excellence* ... They could cause madness and in homeopathic doses they could also cure it." (Dodds: 1951, 273) Eūterpe's symbolism is connected to Dionysus, the Cretan Rhea, Demeter, and Cybele. In *Museum* she is a pair of castanets, suggesting a rhythmic clapping and evocation of ecstatic frenzy.



Fig. 68: Flute player

In the fourth century B.C. the Cyrenaics (followers of Aristippus advocating pleasure as the highest good) conceived ethical behaviour to be indulgence in pleasure through immediate sensual gratification. The Epicureans (3rd century B.C.), emphasised enduring intellectual pleasure as the ultimate attainment, and the need for wisdom when indulging. In this view pleasure was achieved through the elimination of pain, and the restriction of desires to those which can be easily gratified. However, the majority of Greek philosophers rejected the equation of pleasure with happiness: Plato regarded the pursuit of pleasure as inconsistent with the pursuit of virtue. Aristotle relegated pleasure to an aspect symptomatic of happiness. While the Stoics regarded pleasure along with three other "primary emotions" (pain, fear and hope), as a defect and disease of the soul.



above - Fig. 69: Retinue of Dionysus, including a satyr.



right - Fig. 70: Athena discarding the flute she has invented to be appropriated by the satyr Marsyas. Plato argued that the flute could induce hysteria and madness. Hence, Athena's discarding of the flute may be interpreted as an indication of an "irrational" aspect of the goddess not in keeping with her Olympian character, an aspect incorporated into the Dionysian cult in the pan-Hellenic system.

Pleasure posed a problem to rationalistic post-Socratic Greek thought in that it seemed to be inherently instinctive and "irrational": "... they could describe what went on below the threshold of consciousness only in mythological and symbolic language; they had no instrument for understanding it, still less for controlling it; and in the Hellenistic Age too

many of them made the fatal mistake of thinking they could ignore it." (Dodds: 1957, 254). Excessive indulgence in orgiastic pleasures by devotees of the cults of Dionysus, Cybele and the Cretan Rhea, further encouraged the view of pleasure as depravity.

Euterpe's number, along with Demeter, Cybele and Rhea, is eight. Eight symbolises rhythm, regeneration, counsel and tuition. It is Cybele who initiates Dionysus in the Mysteries, as it is Demeter who instructs Triptolemus in the art of cultivating corn. Geometrically, eight is the first "cube of energy". In Sumeria, Egypt, Crete and Greece, eight was the number of the "Great Year", celebrated when the full moon coincided exactly with either the shortest or longest day, reconciling solar and lunar time, heralding a rejuvenation. As the repetition of the number two, eight stands for female reproducing female, or matrilineal descent ($2 \times 2 \times 2$).



Fig. 71: Triptolemos, Demeter and Persephone

Euterpe's colour in *Academy* is red. Like her name it is indicative of festivity, passion, energy, ferocity and sexual excitement. Red is further indicative of blood, wine⁴², fire, anger, fertility, vitalised earth and supernatural power. It is the apotheosis of colour;



Fig. 72: Arc

explosive and expressive. Euterpe stands for the irrepressible; for energy which, if not allowed expression, might wreak havoc. In her positive aspect, she provides insight into nature, and promotes the development of civilisation, in her negative aspect, she destroys it.

In my *Thesaurus*, Euterpe is represented by narcotics, suggesting a reaction to overt rationality; attempts to achieve

pleasure through synthetic means, and the attendant dangers. I have conceived of Euterpe (*Arc*) as an invisible spark or arc between electrodes. She consists of a sphere split into two parts, mounted on rods, and a concertina connection which suggests a reciprocal action; a synaptical system driven by the dynamics of opposition.

IX

Aeon (Terpsichore)

1998

160 x 90 x 310 mm

Wood, glass, brass, steel, silver, embroidery ring

Aeon is a representation of the classical muse Terpsichore as recurrent cycle. The piece consists of a four-legged case containing an embroidery ring, surmounted by an alarm-clock's chimes and a Minoan snake goddess. The embroidery ring is attached to an axis by three spokes. The design is based on the yo-yo in *Museum* and the seam on the golden sphere in *Academy*. The container's shape is a reference to the three institutions as nine-compartmented repositories. The container was constructed from wood, painted and sealed with polyurethane wax. It stands on four brass legs (formerly curtaining attachments). The chimes at the top are from an old alarm-clock while the Minoan Snake Goddess is a piece of silver jewellery. The embroidery ring is attached to its wooden axis by three brass rods.

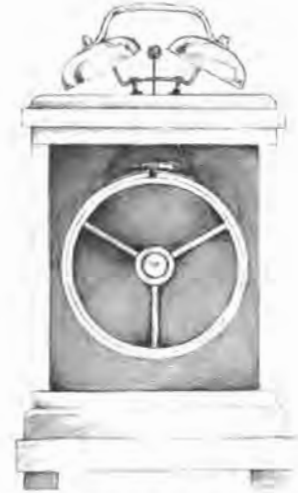


Fig. 73: Sketch for *Aeon*, pen on paper, 1998

Terpsichore

In my end is my beginning. (T. S. Eliot 1990)

The name Terpsichore consists of two words: *terpein* referring to delight/pleasure and *koros*, referring to dancing. She was generally depicted wreathed, and with a small lyre (fig. 74) or a pair of cymbals, and in later times a *cithara*. As the muse of Dance, she was also shown engaged in this activity. In *Museum* she is represented as a yo-yo (dancing on a string).



Terpsichore.

Fig. 74:



IX

Dancing may be seen to symbolise tensions between creative and destructive energy. Huxley maintains that "... ritual dances provide a religious experience that seems more satisfying and convincing than any other." (Dodds: 1957, 271). In the Greek tradition, ecstatic dancing sometimes involved nocturnal mountain processions by female participants. At Delphi, dancers would climb to the Corycian Cave, sacred to Pan and the mountain nymphs, indicating strong links between mountains and dancing symbolism in Greek mythology. Rituals involving ecstatic dancing have been interpreted as a "preventative cure" to mass hysteria by providing an outlet. Ecstatic dancing may have an analgesic effect⁴³, and



Fig 75: Siva dancing. In one hand he holds the flame of destruction, in the other the drum of creation.



Fig. 76: Dancer with a snake coiled around her arm

snakes were also handled (fig. 76).

The Pythagoreans considered Terpsichore's number (nine) to be the number "... causing all numbers to spiral into a dance" (Hulse: 1994, 44). The use of "spiral" is notable: Mount Helicon according to Graves "... took its name as much from *helice*, the willow-tree sacred to poets, as from the stream which spiralled around it." (Graves: 1961, 441). Nine is the number of circumference - the river Styx was said to circle the underworld nine times - and also the number of the circle with one as its centre. It stands for completion, fulfillment and manifestation but also for limitation and closure.

The circle symbolises recurrence and cyclical motion. In this it bears a relation to Heraclitus' theory of reality: "This order, the same for all things, no one of gods or men has made, but it always was, and is, and ever shall be, an ever-living fire, kindling according to fixed measure, and extinguished according to fixed measure." (Atchity: 1996, 112). This notion is best illustrated by the ancient symbol of the *ouroboros*, which consists of a snake biting its own tail, encircling an *omphalos* or cosmic egg. The *ouroboros* which

"... begets, weds, impregnates and slays itself" (Cooper: 1993, 124)⁴⁴ stands for totality. In Orphism it is called Aeon, the life-span of the cosmos. The serpent handled by ecstatic dancers, is symbolic of death, destruction and the underworld; but also of renewal and healing. A festival every nine years at Delphi, commemorated the death of the serpent Python, former guardian of the oracle.



Fig.77: The ouroboros: representing an endless cycle of creation and destruction.

In alchemy, completion and wholeness are symbolised by gold. Gold is effulgent, producing its own light like the sun, and so stands for illumination and enlightenment. Terpsichore receives a gold ring in *Thesaurus*. The ring signifies status and accomplishment, but also constraints and obligations. "The hole in the middle of the ring is the Monad, as well as being the void in the hub on which the wheel turns." (Chevalier: 1996, 806).

As the circumference surrounding the centre, I have represented Terpsichore (*Aeon*) as a repository containing a wheel. This wheel consists of an embroidery ring attached to its axis by three spokes. A representation of the Minoan snake goddess stands between two chimes taken from an alarm-clock; to be struck with each revolution of the wheel.



Fig. 78: Detail of snake goddess on Aeon

11

4.3

Two Keys:

Thesaurus & Index

Two additional works were produced to provide means of accessing the sculptures representing the Heliconian and classical muses. The contents of these pieces are ready-mades and recognisable (extant) words and symbols. Hence, their meaning is derived from the manner in which they are organised and presented. *Thesaurus* is a collection of physical objects; *Index*, of words and numbers.

The Heliconian muses (i-iii) and the nine muses (I - IX) were constructed by combining traditional joinery and sculpture techniques. Thus, while aesthetic reference is to furniture and machined objects, the hand-crafted nature of the pieces renders them "precious".

The *Thesaurus* and *Index* stand in opposition to this aesthetic. The objects displayed are mass-produced ready-mades; the words and numbers are commonly used, and the boxes were made from skirting-board. These objects, words and numbers are not explanations, they are similes, intended to provide alternative means of accessing arcane meaning.

Thesaurus

1997-8

150 x 340 x 340 mm

Wood and ready-mades.

Thesaurus consists of a stand, the top of which has been demarcated into nine squares. On each of the squares a ready-made object or objects is placed: (Pendulum; two coins; three glass marbles; wristwatch; five bullets, pair of dice; pack of playing cards; various pills; brass ring). These objects, representative of the nine classical muses, are intended to act as keys to the meanings of the other sculptures. The squares (and their contents) are arranged as a magic square. The stand was constructed from pieces of skirting board, while the objects were bought or found.



Fig. 79: Sketch for *Thesaurus*,
pen on paper, 1997

Providing a Key: *Thesaurus*

Fig. 80: *Thesaurus*

The objects used in *Thesaurus* (see Appendix II) were selected by the same empathetic principle by which votive objects or sacrifices to a deity are selected. The *Thesaurus* is therefore both an altar and treasury. "Sacrifice is linked to the notion of interchange on the level of spiritual or creative energy ... Because a material asset

symbolises a spiritual asset, to offer the former attracts the gift of the latter ..." (Chevalier: 1996, 819). The various objects in the *Thesaurus* reflect a means of communication specific to each muse.



Index

1998

150 x 340 x 340 mm

Wood

Index consists of a wooden structure similar to *Thesaurus*, except that it contains nine recessed compartments. The sides of the compartments are inscribed with the titles, names, numbers and colours attributed to the muses. Whereas *Thesaurus* is a simile, *Index* is a directory. The sculpture was constructed from pine skirting board and planking using carpentry techniques. Text was added using decals.



Fig. 81: Sketch for *Index*, pen on paper, 1998

Providing a Key: *Index*



Fig. 82: *Index*

The words and numbers inscribed on the sides of the nine compartments are indicative of four approaches to determining the characteristics of the nine classical muses.

Each of these words and numbers indicates a category of meaning. The original names of the muses (the alphabetical order of which

determines the allocation of compartments) informed the structure of *Museum*; the colours are incorporated in *Academy*; the numbers in *Temple*; while the titles of the nine individual sculptures (I -IX) refer to all three.



二二



I'd just like to see you trying to be eternally young
and several millennia old, all at the same time.

Erato in Fowles: 1993



5

Summary

... artists who imagine they are going back to the beginning are, whatever they do, taking things up at a highly advanced stage and standing on the shoulders of innumerable generations. In everything we are, and everything we do, we inherit the whole past, and however much we might want to make ourselves independent of it there is no way in which we possibly can. (Magee: 1975, 70)

Within their modern setting, the traditional names and attributes of the classical muses have largely lost their capacity to convey inherent meaning. Perceptions of traditional figurative representations of the muses as decorative imagery exacerbate the modern viewer's inability to read intended meaning. Boardman argues that "(w)e have learned to discount the impression given by the realistic appearance of classical art and to recognise how much it depended also on formula, convention and even mathematics ... the rich subject matter, mythical and genre, that had seemed simply a valuable illustration to texts had a far greater contemporary significance and conveyed important messages about status, politics and religion." (Boardman: 1996, 26)

My aim was not to compromise the concept of the muse, but to develop it; necessitating the "dismissal" of the traditional representations of the muses in favour of new imagery capable of functioning within a contemporary context. This process of iconographic substitution required a deeper understanding of the muse construct in order to gain a clear view of the exact nature of what was to be represented. The muse as she appears in ancient Greek mythology, poetry and numerical symbolism played an important role in this process; the individual characteristics depicted in each sculpture being a combination of references to classical mythology, etymology, Pythagorean numerology, colour symbolism and the Hermetic process of Transmutation. Thus, while the traditional (instituted) representation of the muse was deconstructed and replaced, the original

concept was revisited and elaborated upon (not unlike Popper's view of the development of heretical ideas); in particular, the traditional use of the object as vestige of function in the depiction of muses. Since it is primarily the object and not the "figure" which determines the meaning of the classical image, the representation of the muse may be reduced accordingly.

These sculptures may therefore be seen as "autonomous extensions" of an existing tradition, the result of a dialectical process between the mythological collective tradition of the muse and modern individual means of representation. These sculptural "muses" are idiosyncratic versions of the muse construct which both adhere, and stand in opposition, to the classical muse.

And the Muse's voice gains a reticent private timbre.
That's the birth of an eclogue.

Brodsky: 1988, 81

6

End Notes

Introduction

- 1 This period is approximately equivalent to the length of time separating Homer and the last of the Neo-Platonists.
- 2 Popper's philosophical approach to the growth of ideas was based upon a view of established theories as valid only as long as no better system of description exists. Traditionally accepted theoretical structures are thus open to constant challenge from new hypotheses, which if proven superior will then form a new theoretical basis, open to be challenged by new hypotheses in the future.
- 3 Ancient Greek mathematics was written in a variety of complex systems. The Homeric system, and later the Pythagorean one, used letters from the Greek alphabet, such as *Iota* for one and *Pi + Delta* for fifty. Numbers were thus cumbersome to write and would often include many letters. The Arabian system, involving a single symbol for the first nine numbers, and combinations of those (plus zero) for all others, enabled complex calculations to be done with less confusion and more speed.

The Historical Muses

- 4 Other deities associated with the muses include the Charites, The Horae, Eros, Aphrodite, Harmonia, Artemis (who participates in their singing and dancing), and Athena, (who in Ovid's *Metamorphosis* is described as adopting the role of the muses), Athena is to the hero what the muse is to the poet. Winged Pegasus is the horse of the muses, the bees are their messengers.

- 5 A theogony confirms the positions and interrelationships of deities within a hierarchical structure.
- 6 Nagy identifies only two hymns as proper hymns to the Muses: Hesiod's *Theogony* and *Homeric Hymn 25*. A third *Hymn to the Muses* by Mesomides dates from the Graeco-Roman period and was only recently (1995) notated and translated by John Opsopaus. (see Appendix I)
- 7 Metis was pregnant with Athena who was then born from Zeus' head. Athena was to become goddess of wisdom in the Olympian mythos and retained a plethora of symbols associated with the goddesses of the neolithic, yet was one of the more "Olympian" of the pan-Hellenic gods. She can be interpreted as a transformed version of the neolithic goddess, an element which no longer holds the potential to destroy the set order (as Ge and Rhea did), but rather to maintain it.
- 8 In Orphic mysticism, "Memory was worshipped as the repository of all knowledge ... mother of that knowledge which leads to perfection." (Chevalier: 1996, 911) The initiate knew not to drink from Lethe (forgetfulness) upon reaching the afterlife, but to drink the waters of Memory and so assure "wakefulness and immortality".
- 9 "The Homerodai (sons of Homer) were a guild of professional singers. Maybe their name originally meant 'harmonious men', 'sons of harmony', and the name Homer was invented for their eponymous founder, *then* applied to the author of the epics they sang." (Wender: 1973, 151)
- 10 Female poets were, however, not considered to be mouthpieces of the muses, but rather earthly counterparts. Plato referred to Sappho as the "tenth Muse", while Antipater styled his canon of Greek women poets to include exactly nine: "These are the divine-voiced women that Helicon fed with song ... Great Heaven gave birth to nine Muses and Earth to these nine, the deathless delight of mortals." (Atchity: 1996, 170).

Three Contemporary Versions of the Muse

- 11 *The White Goddess* essentially functions as a manifesto for Graves' poetic output, which he styles on the ancient mythological poetry of the Mediterranean and Northern Europe. His description of the muse is thus, not surprisingly, a fusion of modern and ancient traditions.
- 12 "...the whole system of Jungian thought is based upon the fundamental importance which he attached to the number four ... 'the archetypal basis of the human psyche' ..." (Chevalier: 1996, 406). As the number four is considered to be symbolic of empirically derived knowledge, Jung's initial view of the anima's stages as fourfold is in keeping with the status of psychoanalysis as a "science" and not a "mysticism". However, the anima like the muse displays a multifarious character which can not be contained within such a narrow context. It is reasonable to assume that the anima's characteristics (like those of the muse) will increase as they are differentiated.
- 13 This might explain the tendency in Ancient Greece to describe female poets as human equivalents of the muses.
- 14 In the light of Miles Green's Cartesian fantasy, it is fitting that the Muse should approach him in the guise of Erato, the Duad herself. She responds to his erotic fantasies by splitting herself into two distinct opposites: the cool analytical, white Dr. Delfie, and the passionate, erotic, black nurse Cory.

Towards a Model

- 15 Neuroscientist Steven Rose maintains that "...one of the problems of studying memory is that it is a dialectical phenomenon. Because each time we remember, we in some senses do work on and transform our memories; they are not simply being called up from store and once consulted, replaced unmodified. Our memories are recreated each time we remember." (Rose: 1994, 91). Thus, the muses as daughters of memory are in a sense dialectical as well. Chevalier also applies a dialectical quality to

the language of symbols: "Very often the deep message conveyed by this language can only be read by experience: giving rise to quite unexpected dialogue between one age or one civilisation and another." (Chevalier: 1996, 456). Tarnas further identifies a dialectical aspect of Jungian notions of the unconscious: "A new dimension to Hegel's understanding of historical dialectic emerged with Jung's insight into the collective psyche's tendency to constellate archetypal oppositions in history before moving to synthesis on a higher level." (Tarnas: 1991, 385). The concept of the collective unconscious as discussed under Kleio (p.76)

16 All such perceptions of the physical world had to be retained in memory, either personal or artificial, i.e. books and records. "On the basis of a mass of similar memories we become experienced in certain perceptual situations and are able to make generalisations and predictions about our environment." (Luce: 1997, 114)

17 Jung draws a further comparison between numbers and dreams: "Mathematics goes to great pains to create expressions for relationships which pass empirical comprehension. In much the same way, it is all-important for a disciplined imagination to build up images of intangibles by logical principles and on the basis of empirical data, that is, on the evidence of dreams." (Jung: 1983, 341)

The Ninefold Muse

18 This story becomes intriguing in the light of late Graeco-Roman enthusiasm for Theurgy, in particular the manufacture of sculptures of divinities, magically infused with the powers of the god depicted. "We are told by Zosimus that the theurgist Nestorius saved Athens from an earthquake in 375 A. D. by dedicating such a *telesma* (a statue of Achilles) in the Parthenon, in accordance with instructions received in a dream." (Dodds: 1951, 294)

19 In Odysseus' account of Achilles' funeral, nine muses are mentioned for the first time: "The Nine Muses chanted your dirge in sweet antiphony..." (Homer: *Odyssey*, 24)

20 "The HIV virus is essentially a scrap of genetic code - a pack of nine genes dressed in a protein coat." (Newsweek, Dec. 9, 1996, 44). Duchamp also uses nine as systematic when he depicts the bachelors in the *Large Glass, 1912-23* as nine in number, each standing for a different masculine role. Russel argues that the *Large Glass* can be read "... in terms of the 'philosophical marriage' through which the alchemist aims to produce gold ... it seems likely that ... the lower part, the (nine) Bachelor's apparatus, is connected with the alchemical concept of sulphur." (Russel: 1991, 177) The bachelors are, of course male, but like the muses they are "virgin" in the sense that they are single and not about to amalgamate with the object of their attention (the poet to the muses; the bride to the bachelors).

21 "Epic" is derived from *epos* a word initially used to denote a dactylic hexameter: "... the self-same words spoken by the Muses themselves ... the *epos* is truly an epic utterance - an epic sentence - from the standpoint of the Muses or any character quoted by the Muses ... There are even some subtle grammatical distinctions, in traditions of formulaic behaviour between the *epos* that the Muses quote and the *epos* that they simply narrate." (Nagy: 1992, 27) The importance of the spoken (or sung) word in the tradition of the classical muse is emphasised in Kalliope's name and function. Odysseus' boast regarding the superiority of an eloquent man (in Ancient Greek culture) is thus not unfounded. (Homer: *Iliad*, 3: 200-233)

22 Some scholars translate *ops* as meaning "face", however it can be argued that the qualities of the muses (of being primarily heard and rarely seen) negates this. Graves, in particular justifies his translation by reminding of the lunar qualities of the muse, "face" referring to the full moon. Kalliope, though is not one of the two lunar muses within the choir, these being Polyhymnia and Kleio.

23 This shape is also reminiscent of a hive. The ancients drew a connection between bees and voice in the expression "honeyed words" meaning "eloquence". The Pythia was also referred to as the Delphic bee.

- 24 In Jungian terms "Eros belongs on one side to man's primordial animal nature ... on the other side is related to the highest forms of the spirit. But he thrives only when spirit and instinct are in right harmony." (Sharp: 1991, 51)
- 25 The connection between gravity, materiality and blackness is exemplified in the astronomical notion of the "black hole": "The fact that so dense a body is black does not surprise astronomers, almost 200 years ago French astronomer Pierre Laplace calculated that if a body were massive enough, it could stop light escaping." (Ronan: 1982, 82)
- 26 The association between Raven and Goddess of the animals (the material world) can be found in the symbolism of such goddesses as Freya, Danu, Artemis and Athena, hence the epithet "Coronis".
- 27 Darkness here is not as much night as shadow. Edinger illustrates the dangers of encountering a shadow figure such as Circe (a daughter of Helios/the sun) or Erato: "... when the immature aspect of the ego embraces the unconscious: it undergoes death or dissolution. For the immature ego, it is very dangerous to have any dealings with the unconscious. This is illustrated frequently in the phenomenology of erotic love." (Edinger: 1995, 38)
- 28 Edinger echo's Heraclitus' notion: "Coming to consciousness involves in a very profound way, the number two ... namely the ego confronting an other. One cannot achieve consciousness without an other, and of course the two aspects of the other are the outer other and the inner other. They constellate one another and both are needed." (Edinger: 1995, 124)
- 29 In this aspect three stands for passage from one state to a higher one: "transcending the pairs of opposites in the dualism and polarity in the manifest world ... The passage is impossible for the profane material body so can only be achieved at

spiritual level..." (Cooper: 1993, 126). The passage is often used in rituals involving, and symbolic of, initiation.

30 Edinger affirms this: "the contents that are emerging from the unconscious into the ego, passing through the lunar factor from the eternal atemporal realm to the ego realm, acquire the qualities of time, space, quantity and measurement as they come into conscious existence." (Edinger: 1995, 112)

31 *mens; mensura; mensis*

32 The use of the sphere in mythological iconography probably stems further back than the first recorded assertions of the earth's shape being spherical. Although Pythagoras, Hicetas and other members of their school postulated that the earth may be a sphere, spin on an axis, and is not the centre of the universe, such beliefs were not widely held.

33 While offerings to the muses generally consisted of libations of water, milk and honey, at Sparta "... where bloody offerings were customary, sacrifices were made to them before soldiers entered battle." (Bell: 1991, 314) Graves also connects the number five to ritual regicide of the half-year king symbolised by Hercules. The intoxicated king to be sacrificed, is led into a stone circle, containing an altar and an oak tree: "He is bound to it with willow thongs in the 'five-fold bond' which joins wrists neck and ankles together." (Graves: 1961, 125). The oak tree was symbolic of the human body, but also of thunder and lightning, in turn used to symbolise consciousness.

34 Ariadne was Dionysus' consort. In art, the image of her embracing him stood for union between worshipper and god.

35 Hephaestos symbolised terrestrial fire; as red, his daughter would logically be green. In most symbolic systems the colour green ascends from, and eventually returns, to red.

36 The number six when cubed (6^3) symbolised the number of years which was believed to lapse between the regeneration of souls. This number (216) is also known as Plato's number. He describes it in *The Republic* in enigmatic manner: "But the number of a human creature is the first number in which root and square increases, having received three distances and four limits of elements that make both like and unlike and wax and wane, render all things conversable and rational with one another."
(Wells: 1987, 144)

37 Jung's understanding of the unconscious aspect of the psyche differs from Freud's in that it involved a "... vast archetypally patterned collective unconscious which was not so much the result of repression as it was the primordial foundation of the psyche itself." (Tarnas: 1996, 424). In Jungian theory, repression, along with subliminal perceptions and contents not yet ripe for consciousness, in fact, all unconscious material not inherited, is restricted to the personal unconscious. However, the personal unconscious is allied to the collective, not the individual: "The unconscious is useless without the human mind, It always seeks its own purpose and never your individual destiny." (Sharp: 1991, 147)

38 In Mediterranean neolithic tradition, the goddess of the underworld was depicted as an owl. In Greece it is sacred to Athena, Hecate, Persephone and Atropos (the Fate who cuts the thread of life). As nocturnal it is antithetical to day and sunlight, thus symbolising second sight and wisdom. This owl-goddess later becomes goddess of war, Athena aiding heroes, and Kleio who records their deeds.

39 Edinger notes that "... the unconscious (also) makes its presence very definitely felt by memory lapses." (Edinger: 1995, 291) According to some accounts, the muses were reputed to have punished Thamyris' impertinence (he boasted he was a better musician) by depriving him of his memory.

40 "At Troezen, where Ardalus had introduced their worship, they (the muses) shared sacrifices with Hypnos, the god of sleep." (Bell: 1991, 314)

- 41 Seven is also cryptically called "the motherless" virgin. Though this is a good description of Athena in Olympian mythology, the concept did not originate there. The motherless virgin is the primeval mother goddess, devoid of origin, who produces offspring by impregnating herself. In the neolithic, the death/owl goddess takes on this role, the dead serving as material from which to produce new life.
- 42 Wine and blood are symbolically interchangeable, and wine is often used to symbolise the blood of a divinity, drunk by the initiate. Intoxication in such rituals is then interpreted as being possessed by the god. Potential damage and inherent danger seem to be inherent in religious ecstasy. A Christian equivalent is the ecstasy of St. Theresa repeatedly pierced with a burning arrow by a divine manifestation. The ultimate aim is thus an intensity of emotion.
- 43 The Epicurean ideal of achieving pleasure by eliminating pain, is achieved here in reverse order, the existence of pleasure resulting in the absence of pain.
- 44 The presence of destruction in a cycle of evolution is noted by Whitehead: "The major advances in civilisation are processes which all but wreck the societies in which they occur." (Dodds: 1951, 179)

7

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Visual References

Facing Title page: *Cypher* 1998

Facing Contents page: *Arena II* 1998, pen on paper

Facing Acknowledgements page: *Nine/Gold* 1997, coloured pencil on paper

page 2: *Mythical World* 1996, pen on paper

Fig. 1: Mt. Parnassos (Petsas: 1981, 40)

Fig. 2: Detail from *Mars and Venus* c. 1497, Andrea Mantegna. (Jacobi: 1980, 56)

Fig. 3: Detail from *Parnassos* 1509 -11, Raphael (Clark: 1974, 132)

Fig. 4: Acanthus column c. 332 -322 B.C. (Petsas: 1981, 87)

Fig. 5: Hesiod (Barnett: 1996, 34)

Fig. 6: Muse on Helicon 440 B.C., The Achilles painter. (Boardman: 1996, 203)

Fig. 7: Ge (Graves: 1990, 89)

Fig. 8: Neolithic Goddess c. 5th Millenium B.C. (Baring: 1993, 65)

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Fig. 10: Zeus ,400 B.C. (Graves: 1990, 99)

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Fig. 12: Deification of Homer 2nd C. B.C., Archalos of Priene(Boardman: 1996, 239)

Fig. 13: Gianni and Donatella Versace (Femina, October 1998, 44)

Fig. 14: Goddess of Laussel 22,000 -18, 000 B.C. (Baring: 1993, 44)

Fig. 15: Goddess of Willendorf 30,000 -25,000 B.C. (Streep:1994, 27)

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Fig. 17: Aphrodite Urania 470 B.C. Pistoxenos painter (Boardman: 1996, 202)

Fig. 18: Athena (Streep: 1994, 161)

Fig. 19: *Nine Malic Moulds 1914 -15*, Marcel Duchamp (Cabanne: 1997, 94)

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- Fig. 29: Kalliope (Murray: 1993, 160-1)
- Fig. 30: Lingam (Jung: 1990, 91)
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- Fig. 34: Erato, relief 1st C. B.C. (Patrick: 1989, 39)
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- Fig. 73: Sketch for *Aeon* 1998
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- Fig. 78: *Aeon* 1998
- Fig. 79: Sketch for *Thesaurus*, 1998
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- Fig. 82: *Index* 1998

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Appendices

Appendix I

Regional Muses:

Athens: Eight Athenian muses were originally recognised. Their names are not known.

Delphi: Nete, Mese and Hypate, taken from the three strings of the lyre, or alternatively they were called: Cephisso, Apollonis and Borysthenis. These muses were believed to be daughters of Apollo.

Helicon: Melete, Mneme and Aoedte, daughters of Uranos.

Sicyon: Three Muses, the name of which one, Polymatheia is known.

Four Muses of unknown origin were also known: Thelixinoe, Aoedte, Arche and Melete.

Pierus was said to be the father of seven muses: Neilo, Tritone, Asopo, Heptapora, Achelois, Tipolo and Rhodia.

Alternative names of the Muses include: *Aganippes*, from a spring on Helicon; *Castalides*, from the Castilian spring at Delphi; *Ilissides*, from an altar at Athens; *Libethrides* from a grotto on Mount Libethrias; *Mneiae* (Rememberances); *Olympiades* as daughters of Zeus; *Pierides* from Piera, their birthplace, and *Thespiades* from the town at the foot of Helicon. (Bell: 1991)

Hymns to the Muses:

1. Homeric Hymn 25.

I will begin with the Muses and Apollo and Zeus. For it is through the Muses and Apollo that there are singers upon the earth and players upon the lyre; but kings are from Zeus.

Happy is he whom the Muses love: sweet flows speech from his lips.

Hail children of Zeus! Give honour to my song! And now I will remember you and another song also.

(*Perseus Project*, Tufts University)

2. An Ancient Greek Hymn to the Muses

Oh Muse, Thou dear one, sing to me,
Commence and order my song.
Cool breezes blowing from Thy groves
In-spire my breast and rouse my heart.

Calliopeia Thou wise
Principal of the Muses delightful,
Thou too, wise mystery Guide,
Leto's child, Thou Delian Paeon,
Be Propitious and stand by me.

(Mesomedes in John Opsopaus: 1995)

Olympian Muses

All these things the Muses who have
their homes on Olympos
sang then, and they are nine daughters
whose father is great Zeus:
Kleio and Euterpe, Thaleia and Melpomene,
Terpsichore and Erato, Polyhymnia and Ourania,
with Kalliope, who holds
the highest position.

(Hesiod in Atchity: 1996)

Appendix II

Museum

Etymology and objects assigned:

Kalliope < (*kalos*+*ops*) the beautiful voiced - horn/klaxon

Erato < (*eros*) the beautiful/attractive - dart

Polyhymnia < (*poly*+ *hymnus*) multiple hymns/songs - funnel

Urania < (*ouranos*) the heavenly - spinning top

Melpomene < (*melpein*) to sing - whistle

Thalia < (*thalein*) to blossom/bloom - jingle bell

Kleio < (*kleos*) to make known/famous - desk bell

Euterpe < (*terpsis*) pleasure - castanets

Terpsichore < (*terpein*+*koros*) delight in the dance - a yo-yo

Academy

Flamel's sequence:

"Flamel watched the revealing colours, they came, and in the correct sequence: from grey to black 'the crow's head' then from black to white ... Now the rest of the colours appeared one after the other: the white turned to the iridescence of the peacock's tail; this to yellow, the yellow to orange, the orange to purple, and finally the purple to red - the red of the Great Elixir... 'and then I made projection of the Red stone upon half a pound of mercury ... which I transmuted truly into the same quantity of pure gold'."

(Holmyard: 1968, 245)

Colours assigned to Muses:

Kalliope - grey

Thalia - green

Erato - black

Kleio - purple/violet

Polyhymnia - white

Euterpe - red

Urania - blue

Terpsichore - gold

Melpomene - yellow

Temple

Numerological values and Pythagorean terms:

| | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| One/Ennead: Kalliope | Six/Hexad: Thalia |
| Two/Duad: Erato | Seven/Heptad: Kleio |
| Three/Triad: Polyhymnia | Eight/Ogdoad: Euterpe |
| Four/Tetrad: Urania | Nine/Ennead: Terpsichore |
| Five/Pentad: Melpomene | |

Thesaurus

Objects assigned to muses:

- Kalliope - pendulum on grey square
- Erato - two coins on black square
- Polyhymnia - three glass marbles on white square
- Urania - wristwatch set at four-o'clock on blue square
- Melpomene - five bullets on yellow square
- Thalia - pair of dice on green square
- Kleio - pack of cards on purple square
- Euterpe - narcotics on red square
- Terpsichore - ring on gold square

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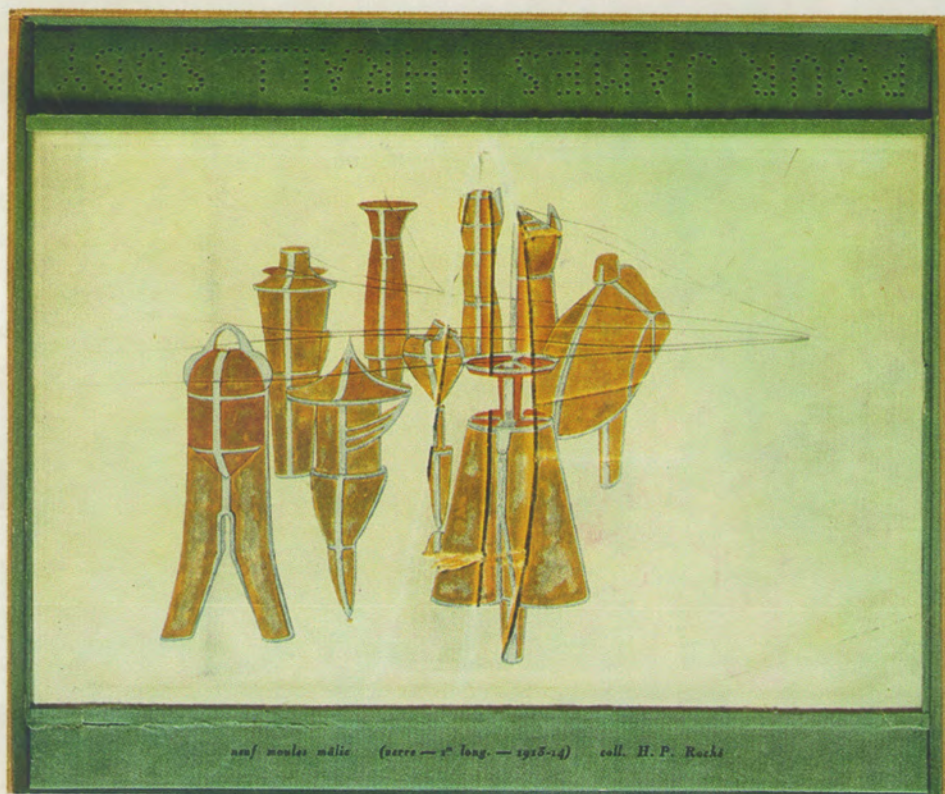
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