

The King of Rock and Soul, Solomon Burke, became Bishop and spiritual leader of Solomon's Temple, the House of God for All People, on the day of his birth in 1940.<sup>1</sup> At seven years old, wearing a cape fashioned for him by his grandmother, Eleanora A Moore, Burke began preaching to his congregation. Moore had founded the 'House' in 1928 after a prophetic vision.<sup>2</sup> She not only established her grandson's spiritual path but also presented him with his first acoustic guitar when he was fourteen years old. Burke describes his ministry unconventionally as: '... a little more open and a little more flamboyant ... God, money, and women, hey, hey, hey; love, truth, peace and get it on'.<sup>3</sup>

Burke abdicated his Rock and Soul throne to James Brown (after Brown paid him \$10,000 to relinquish his crown on stage in Chicago), but he remains, in some sense, the original Soul artist—the musician for whom the term was coined. In 1960, when Burke signed to Atlantic records, he had objected to being marketed as a Rhythm and Blues singer (with R&B's association with drug use, alcohol abuse, profanity and, by Robert Johnson, with Satan).<sup>4</sup> Burke, reluctant to attract the criticism levelled at Sam Cooke (a fellow musical defector from the sacred to the secular) consulted his congregation before settling on Soul.

Dave Hickey, writing up the American car industry as art industry,<sup>5</sup> explains how the 'glimmering lowriders', the customised cars of Catholic, Hispanic America, were appropriated by the post-war, Protestant North-American industry. 'Chicano car-cultists in the South-west of the States began secularising the polychromatic effigies of their churches with the creation of 'iconic automobiles that embodied, not the Word of God, but the freedom and promise of effortless mobility—honoring the traditions of democratic America that they had inherited as well'.<sup>6</sup> Hickey explains how in Detroit custom-car designer Harley Earl began to incorporate these same principles and thus effect 'one of the great cultural syntheses in the history of Western culture. The masters of American industry would embody—in the Catholic language of material light, of chrome and polychrome—the disembodied intellectual tenets of the Enlightenment: the values of Protestant America's founding fathers.'<sup>7</sup>

Hickey's model forgets the social reality of Detroit—a city built on stylistically cohesive motor-vehicle production and yet racially segregated. Inter-war Detroit sought its workforce, both black and white, from the depressed southern states and this economically motivated migration brought incumbent racial divisions with it. The divide manifested itself physically in the construction of a six-foot high, seven and a half mile concrete wall, separating the city's Mendota and Birwood estates between 8 Mile and Pembroke. Constructed in 1940 by a developer, the wall separated a new white-collar, white housing estate from the existing blue-collared black community. The wall was deemed necessary to satisfy the Federal Housing Administration's policy of precluding loans on racially mixed areas. A better example of cultural synthesis stemming from Detroit would be Berry Gordy Jr.'s Motown stable—a record label 'defying the laws of sociology'.<sup>8</sup> Gordy adopted Burke's secular gospel—Southern Soul—in the North of the United States, introducing black music (albeit a 'sanitised' version) to white America.

The 1964 Civil Rights Act was supposed to have marked the start of a new era in racial integration in the United States, but obstructive State laws were quickly introduced. In California, 'Proposition 14' effectively blocked the Fair Housing components of the Act. In August 1965, a routine traffic police stop in South Central Los Angeles provided a catalyst to the deep-seated resentment of African Americans. The resulting six-day Watts Riots left thirty-four dead, over a thousand people injured, four thousand arrested and hundreds of buildings destroyed. Concurrently Ken Kesey was introducing psychedelic drugs to popular American culture.

*Psychedelic*, formed, with appropriate irregularity, from the ancient Greek *Psukhe* (breath, life or soul) and *Delos* (clear or manifest), was first applied by the psychiatrist Dr Humphrey Osmond in 1957. Osmond, working from the Weyburn Mental Hospital in Saskatchewan, had proposed the use of high doses of LSD in psychotherapy to treat alcoholism, narcotic addiction, character neuroses and juvenile delinquency. Osmond's experiments were closely followed by the CIA and US military, who had been experimenting with lower doses of LSD as a *Psycholytic*—a mind loosener rather than mind maker.<sup>9</sup>

In 1960 Alan Ginsburg was invited to present a paper at the Group for the Advancement of Psychiatry conference in 1960 to address 'the beatnik problem'.<sup>10</sup> There Ginsburg met Dr Humphrey Osmond, who suggested he should visit Dr Timothy Leary, who was experimenting with hallucinogenics at Harvard.<sup>11</sup> Ginsburg is said to have persuaded Leary to widen his experiments to 'turn-on' influential figures in the arts: '... Leary had this big beautiful house, and everybody there was wandering around like it was some happy cocktail party ... they were all so cheerful and optimistic and convinced that their kind of experiment would be welcomed as a polite, scholarly, socially acceptable, perfectly reasonable pursuit and would spread through the university and be automatically taken on as part of the curriculum. Like Leary couldn't conceive of meeting any academic opposition. I kept saying, "You have no idea what ... you're up against," but he was already thinking in terms of, "we'll turn on Schlesinger and then we'll turn on Kennedy" ... so I wanted to calm him down a little, and said, "Why not begin by turning artists on?"'<sup>12</sup> Willem de Kooning, Franz Kline, Robert Lowell, Jack Kerouac, Dizzy

Gillespie and William Burroughs were each approached. Leary was then to begin experiments with LSD. Amongst the hundreds of student-volunteers introduced to the experiment was Ken Kesey.

With his 'Acid Tests', Ken Kesey took psychedelics out of the laboratory to author the mass, recreational use of LSD — renouncing his successful career as a novelist declaring 'I'd rather be a lightning rod than a seismograph'.<sup>12</sup> Six months after the Watts Riots, in February 1966, Kesey's 'Merry Pranksters' proposed transcendence to the communities of Watts and Compton. The Pranksters, loosely led by Vietnam veteran Ken Babbs,<sup>14</sup> were determined to provide an 'Acid Test' at the Youth Opportunities Center, 9027 South Figueroa, South Central Los Angeles. The Pranksters' 'happening' presented experimental film footage of their infamous bus trip across the States,<sup>15</sup> black and strobe lighting and live music courtesy of the Grateful Dead. A vat of Kool-Aid spiked with LSD was provided for refreshment. This seminal event took place just two blocks from the motel where Sam Cooke had been shot dead a year earlier.

The following year, riots broke out in Detroit sparked by a police raid on an illicit bar near to the junction of 12th Street and Clairmount. Two days later, after the intervention of seventeen thousand armed National Guardsmen, forty-three people were dead, over seven thousand arrested and over a thousand buildings (valued at around fifty million dollars) had been destroyed.

Soul music 'can be seen as paralleling the Civil Rights Movement stylistically as well as chronologically'.<sup>16</sup> In the aftermath of the assassination of Dr Martin Luther King and further race riots across the States, American society changed and with it the music industry. The thirteenth National Convention of the National Television and Radio Announcers (an organisation founded to support the R&B DJ) took place in August 1968, four months after Dr. King's death, at the Sheraton Four Ambassadors Hotel in Miami. The annual conference, hosted by Bill Cosby and attended by speakers including the Rev Jesse Jackson, was opened with the declaration by Executive Secretary Del Shields that 'The theme this year is "The New Breed's New Image Creates Self-Determination and Pride," and this loosely is our translation of Black Power and Soul Power'.<sup>17</sup> Shields proclaimed to the assembled audience that NATRA's members were not 'begging the record companies for anything, but they will have to make us part of it if they wish to stay in business'.<sup>18</sup> Over the course of the Convention, a group from New York dubbing itself the Fair Play Committee, set about harassing white executives — issuing death threats, kidnapping and taking hostage industry figures that they perceived to be exploitative. Jerry Wexler (Vice President of Atlantic records and the very man who first used the term 'Rhythm and Blues'), in Miami to collect a special award, was hanged in effigy.<sup>19</sup>

Between 1964 and 1967 Motown had fourteen singles reach the top of the industry sales chart with a further forty-six making the top fifteen. Despite this commercial success, made against a background of civil strife, more divisions developed in Detroit. Motown's in-house song-writing and production team of Lamont Dozier and Brian and Eddie Holland quit after a dispute over money. Berry Gordy sacked Florence Ballard from the Supremes and David Ruffin from the Temptations. The Temptations'<sup>20</sup> response was to develop their own *Psychedelic Soul*. Dennis Edwards, Ruffin's replacement, took the lead bellowing the Temptations' new Funk-driven Soul, articulating the shift in mood as the ebullience of the sixties gave way to the disappointment of the seventies. The narcotic references on their 1969 release *Cloud Nine* expressed a need to escape.

Jim Lambie's signatory work — the *Psychedelic Soul Stick* — is an ongoing series of bamboo canes wrapped with ends of wire, odd socks and other ephemera cocooned in swathes of coloured thread.

Lambie's use of the title of a loose sub-genre of American Soul music, in his native city of Glasgow, recalls the celebration of African-American music in the clubs of the North-west of England and in Scotland in the late sixties and early seventies. As a phenomenon, so-called Northern Soul reverses the process described by Dan Graham in his video essay *Rock My Religion*.<sup>21</sup>

Graham traces the roots of rock music to the North-east of England in the eighteenth century. The 'Shaking Quakers', founded in Bolton in the 1740s, sailed to New York from Liverpool in 1774, on a condemned ship under the instruction of their leader Ann Lee. This ascetic cult fled the social fallout of the British industrial revolution to establish a utopian community in the United States, where they introduced impassioned singing and frenzied dancing (and utilitarian furniture). Two hundred years later, something of this returned to the North-west of England, which by then was in a state of apparently terminal industrial decline. In the late sixties and early seventies Soul was appropriated by youths and recast as 'Northern Soul'. A cult coalesced in clubs including, in Manchester, the Twisted Wheel; in Tunstall, the Torch; in Wigan, the Casino Club, and in Glasgow, Maryland Dancing. In 1977 the Casino Club in Wigan, for many the home of Northern Soul, was voted by Billboard magazine to be the greatest disco in the world. The Casino, with its tea bar and dance floor lit by a single fluorescent strip, was ranked above New York's Studio 54. The Northern Soul all-nighter phenomenon, under the influence of amphetamine sulphate, was the precursor to the MDMA<sup>22</sup> fuelled Acid House scene, which in its turn was a reinvention of Chicago's club sound, at the end of the following decade.

Lambie's *Psychedelic Soul Stick* developed during a four-month period of residency in Marseille, after repeated visits to the city's street markets (popular amongst local inhabitants of North-African origin) and to the Vieille Charité, which houses Marseille's Musée d'Arts Africains, Océaniens et Amérindiens and the Musée d'Archéologie Méditerranéenne. Lambie's *Psychedelic Soul Stick* encompasses something of both the seventeenth-century Baroque Musée<sup>23</sup> and the temporary tented stalls of the markets. As both disembodied fetish and discarded fixture the *Psychedelic Soul Stick* embodies something of the apparently oppositional values of the white colonial proto-anthropologist and the North-African street market vendor. The *Psychedelic Soul Stick* links the extruded polychromatic polypropylene, that litter the markets after closing each day, and the Museum's colonial trophies, displayed far from their origins. In doing so the works recall Roland Barthes' description of plastic: 'less a thing than a trace of a movement'.<sup>24</sup> The casual arrangement of Lambie's *Psychedelic Soul Sticks* suggest that they are objects in continual use and yet, their fine, if again casual, decorative qualities suggest a fragility that should confine them to cabinets. The *Psychedelic Soul Sticks* recall the staffs of André Cadere or the planks of John McCracken — remnants of some unscripted ritual. They embody contradictory values — both homespun and stately, crude and sophisticated.

The abandoned, mass-produced product of the music industry is a continual source of material for Lambie. Records, their sleeves and poster inserts, either found or purchased, second-hand (never new), are utilised by Lambie as he variously paints, pastes over and cuts into them in acts of *détournement*. Lambie avoids referencing a single musical genre. The works are not about specific bands, individuals, labels or their fan bases, but about the nature of the material itself — cheaply pressed vinyl and printed cardboard and paper — at some point in the past sought after, purchased and treasured before being abandoned. Records are resurrected by Lambie with the application of hundreds of strands of multicoloured wool that bisect their concentric grooves, *Voulez Vous* (2001), or resurfaced with glitter, *Love Plus One* (2001). Others have their spindle holes sealed with photographic images of eyes — rendered unplayable they are, in a sense, blinded. Austere, like the all-seeing eye, and yet sexy (with the hint of make-up) ... and then of course there's Bataille. Posters, originally produced as album inserts, are folded out and defaced: *Earth, Wind, and Fire* (1998), sees the seventies Soul band painted out with acrylic paint and then inverted. Kiss receive similar treatment — their iconic brand name, just visible, makes the work recall a Frank Stella painting. In *Imagine* (2000), The Beatles are erased from their (Richard Hamilton-designed) inserted poster (Lambie's own *Erased De Kooning*). *Revolver* (2003) sees the Beatles once again painted out and then inverted. *Head and Shoulders (with Conditioner)* (2003) presents several decades of cover art headshots arranged in an identity parade — ordered without hierarchy, incriminating names and titles are obscured by tape. *Motorhead* sees similar cover stars folded out from their two-dimensional, twelve square inch state and mounted on a motor. Record turntables are adapted in works such as *Graffiti*, *Ska's Not Dead* and *Root* (all 1999) as decks, arms and needles are coated in glitter. They appear as inverted plinths supporting respectively, stalactite-like bundles of entangled safety pins and plastic pearls, a painted glove bearing a plastic eye and an appendage fashioned from black electrical tape and wire.

Lambie further adapts battered and worn record sleeves as he cuts around pictured artists and folds them out to reveal an abstract symmetrical form. These crude investigations of paper engineering appear at once like a child's first foray into iconoclasm, and then again as some misguided exercise in psychoanalysis. Lambie's forms recall the ten Rorschach Test ink blots.<sup>25</sup> Just as the psychoanalyst attempts to isolate disorder in their patient, it is as if Lambie is attempting to isolate music from its prosaic packaging, as cardboard sleeves with their high gloss, airbrushed, four colour portraits, once cut open, are revealed to be cheap, acidic, yellowed and spotted.

The Rorschach-like form recurs in a series of larger abstract symmetrical shapes. The former Director of Waldau Psychiatric University Hospital's approximation of animal hides, butterflies, bears, caves, caterpillars, crabs, gorillas, masks, moths, men in heavy coats (some with long noses and goatees), rabbit's heads, spiders, tits and ass are recalled (via Andy Warhol's *Rorschach* paintings) in works such as *Supernature* (2000) and *Master Blaster* (2001). Teenage pin-ups (boy bands, guitar heroes and women baring their breasts) are appropriated by Lambie, cut-out, mirrored and obliterated—resurfaced with literally thousands of coloured eyes of different shapes and sizes cut from the pages of fashion magazines. Like the Rorschach, the more you look the more you are looked at as a multitude of eyes return the gaze.

The animal hide of the Rorschach re-appears more literally in a series of forms fashioned from the backs of leather jackets. *Digital* (1999) co-opts the timeless icon of rebellion to create another archetypal form. Bandanas, bag straps, belts, hair bands and buttons—things that link or bind other things together—are in a sense taken apart by Lambie as if to see how they work. *Du-Rag 20/20* (2001) consists of a quilted table-cloth assembled from the uniforms of opposing street gangs. Both bandana-wearing and quilt-making are clichéd means of expressing very different identities. Lambie combines these hackneyed forms to create something instinctively right but at the same time something wrong. Similarly *Span Dancing* (2003) sees a succession of multicoloured bag-carrying straps attached to an immobile edifice. *Tandoori Nights* (2002) consists of an expansive array of rigid hair bands. These brightly coloured hair fixtures are themselves fixed with black gaffer tape to form something like a molecular diagram. *Venom Wild Pitch* (2002): a single pink belt rising from the floor; and *Acid Perm* (2002): a mass of belts descending from a wall (emerging from collaged eyes applied to twelve-inch vinyl). *Bed Head* (2002) and *Dreamadelica* (2003) are formed from mattresses covered by a multitude of mismatching buttons.

The floor provides Lambie with a further working surface. *Plaza* (2000) comprises of a line of the cheapest, thinnest, coloured (or black or white) polythene shopping bags filled with household gloss. The bags, slashed, spill their contents into streams down the wall, forming pools below. *Zobop* (1999), *Chops* (2002), *Paradise Garage* and *Male Stripper* (both 2003) cover the remaining space of the gallery forming a platform for the other works and their audience. *Zobop*'s narrow strips of vinyl tape are applied in concentric angular rings (sometimes brightly coloured, sometimes metallic and sometimes monochromatic) echoing their surrounding architecture. *Male Stripper* sees Buren-esque, straight, parallel stripes of black and white tape running the length of the gallery. The work actions the viewer's eye, making the gallery walls appear fluid—simultaneously converging and receding. The work is loosely inspired by a piece of furniture by the Memphis design group. Memphis took their name from Bob Dylan's *Stuck Inside of Mobile with the Memphis Blues Again* (1966)—Lambie's title comes from Man to Man meet Man Parrish's disco anthem *Male Stripper* (1987). *Paradise Garage* (named after the legendary night club of the seventies and eighties in King Street, New York) appears as a chopped up, Baroque version of *Male Stripper* (although it predates it). *Chops*, similarly, is rendered in shorter lengths of tape—although it is black gaffer tape rather than the more refined vinyl. The tape is applied in a crosshatch manner, again filling all the available floor space to appear, perhaps, as a stage choked with an accumulation of fastenings applied by generations of successive sound engineers. Thick, intoxicating black—dirty and yet somehow reflective and new—*Chops* resembles a sheared seam of coal—which of course has the physical potential to eventually transform into diamonds.

*Diamond* (2000) is derived from a Neil Diamond's Greatest Hits package—a black sleeve bearing the legend 'Diamond' plotted in rhinestone (Lambie obscures all other detail and text with tape) is placed on top of an irregular stack of black record sleeves to form a multi-pointed star—a locus with a multitude of converging trajectories. *I Believe in Miracles* (2003) fabricated from mirrored acrylic, takes the form of a cut diamond (not quite as big as the Ritz, but bigger than the Kohinoor). On top is a plastic human

skull. Blue gloss paint has been poured over the ensemble. This recent work brings to mind an earlier arrangement of carrots and orange gloss paint, *18 Carrots* (1996) and, between them, Captain Beefheart's *A Carrot is as Close as a Rabbit Gets to a Diamond* (1980).

A series of works made from found mirrors, such as *Chemical Kebab*, *Mental Oyster* and *No Problemo* (all 2003) provide additional loci. Lambie lifts the silvered glass from domestic mirrors, treating them as mirrors of mythology, in a series of attempts to perhaps explore the space 'beyond'. Something of that space is revealed with the application of an appropriate mess of materials . . . household gloss, coloured threads, collaged eyes and glitter. Dismembered doors, cut up and folded in on themselves also bear mirrored surfaces in a crude visual pun, in part after William Blake,<sup>26</sup> albeit via Aldous Huxley's *Doors of Perception* (1954), in turn via Jim Morrison's *The Doors*—and, more particularly, via a much replayed performance of the band's *Light My Fire* on the Ed Sullivan Show (when the band performed on a studio set dressed with hanging household doors).

Both Glasgow and Detroit were built on the labour of African Americans in the southern states of American. Glasgow initially profited from the Virginian tobacco, a trade reliant on slavery, before expanding with heavy industrial manufacturing—building ships and trains for the British Empire. Detroit's transport manufacturing industry would later become reliant on labour recruited from the South. Although differing in scale, both cities physically reflect the economic times in which they were built—their centres being laid out in a grid pattern. The urban grid, as described by Marshall McLuhan, owes its shape to the railroad: 'the non-organic separation of production, consumption and residence'. However, McLuhan continues, 'It is the motorcar that scrambled the abstract shape of the industrial town, mixing up its separated functions to a degree that has frustrated and baffled both planner and citizen.'<sup>27</sup> Unlike Glasgow, Detroit's rapid decline in population and wealth is one of organic self-destruction as, in the late sixties and seventies, its white, middle-class population drove themselves out of the city across the 8 Mile. Although Glasgow, like Detroit, has suffered from a declining population, it can perhaps be seen as Detroit's antithesis in having historically one of the lowest car ownerships per capita in the developed world: Nomotown rather than Motown. Whilst the Cadillac didn't cross the Atlantic, the cross-cultural, cross-continental transfer of Soul music demonstrates how it is not rooted in time or place, but transcends it: 'Our electric extensions of ourselves simply by-pass space and time'.<sup>28</sup> Likewise Jim Lambie's *Psychedelic Soul Sticks* appear simultaneously as both abstracted earths and aerials, roots and tendrils—at once receiving and transmitting, drawing and extending, an apparently infinite amalgam of histories and traditions. In the midst of Lambie's unlikely points of cohesion, his clash of means and materials in the *Psychedelic Soul Stick* operates as something of a meter, albeit an irregular measure, suggesting a means to quantify not our physical but our metaphysical surroundings.