

Imaginary Places

These Acrobat files are a joint presentation of the California Museum of Photography (University of California at Riverside) and Intangible Publications.

Imaginary Places consists of ten individual files:

IPlaces0.pdf	Introduction
IPlaces1.pdf	Buleria Madrugada
IPlaces2.pdf	Belau Belau
IPlaces3.pdf	Fortress of the Dead
IPlaces4.pdf	Abbe at Urban
IPlaces5.pdf	Plaza of the Patriots
IPlaces6.pdf	Bedou
IPlaces7.pdf	Spawning Ground
IPlaces8.pdf	Space Station M
IPlaces9.pdf	Maoam

For information on downloading files and viewing the online presentation, visit the Intangible Web site.

Acknowledgements

The author and artist owes a debt of gratitude to the U.C.R. California Museum of Photography, to its Director Jonathan Green, and most especially to Senior Curator Edward Earle and his staff for providing access to the Keystone-Mast Collection and permission to use some of the collection images with my own in the making of this work. Thanks must also go to my wife, Dr. Felicia Beardsley, for letting me abuse many of the photographs she has made in the Pacific islands in the course of her career as an archaeologist.

© 1995, 1996 E. R. Beardsley, all rights reserved. You are invited to print and enjoy this document for your personal use. For other publication and presentation permissions, please contact the author at the address below.

Design by Mike Lee.



Intangible Publications is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation devoted to the best in literature and art. Your tax-deductible donations are always welcome.

1430 Willamette #200 ■ Eugene, Oregon 97401

E-mail office@intangible.org

Web www.intangible.org

IMAGINARY PLACES IX

Maoam

E. R. BEARDSLEY



Maoam

In the City of Maoam numbers are thought to hold magical properties, the most potent being the number 2 or numbers comprised of 2's, such as 22, 222, and so on. It is also thought by natives of this city that the number 2 is the number that separates past from future. All numbers are significant, of course, and whole armies of diviners devote the sum of their lives to numeric study and classification.

A sampling from the files will yield lists such as the following:

Rama Rebo's September List

- Found baggage (good)...402.
- Bleeding legs (bad)...990 on weekdays, otherwise 999.
- Tobacco smoked badly (bad)...188.
- Jazz heard backwards (possibly bad)...009.
- Broken egg on the sidewalk (good)...191.

- Losing a shoelace (good or bad, depending on astrological sign)...013.
- Woman wearing red and yellow (bad)...657.

The midgets of Maoam are known far and wide. They first appeared in the city in the late fifteenth century, perhaps in flight from persecution and the general indignities that come to persons whose minds or bodies deviate from the average by noticeable degrees. They were welcomed warmly in Maoam, where deviation from the average is the norm, and where size is as irrelevant as the price of carrots.

The city is also famous for its psychic oils and sachet powders. The oil *Cleopatra* is known far and wide for its power to produce baby girls with hair as black as night and the purest white skin. Sassafras bark is also sold in most curio shops, as it is thought to be effective against skin ailments and bad love.

Trade unions abound, and each sponsors a variety of seasonal events such as expositions and conventions. The most senior and popular of these events is the annual meeting and trade fair of **The Psychic Sciences and Stage Craft Guild**. The first PSSCG fair was held in 1840 and was attended by the famous photographic inventor J.L.M. Daguerre. And, since that time, the fair has been well-attended by photographic enthusiasts from as far away as Japan. Chambeau Blau, **famous horse hypnotist**, holds the record for drawing big crowds at the fairs; in 1962 officials counted 5,478 persons

(coincidentally a very lucky number on most published lists) attending his performance.

The **Institute for Otherly Human Beings** is somewhat of a mystery. Little is known about its founder, Dr. Havlock Liston, or the purposes of the Association of Fellows that governs the activities of the group.

There are two gates through which visitors may enter the city; one brings good luck, the other guarantees utter misfortune. Visitors are never told which is which, a point that is given small notice in most travel brochures.

WHEN VISITING THE MIDGET'S TINYTOWN
DON'T MISS
THE
WORLD'S SMALLEST
MIDGET HORSE
WITH ITS SIX MONTHS OLD BABY

Having Your Hand Read by
THE MARVELLOUS MIDGET
MYSTICS
They Will Surprise and Astonish You.

A Unique Souvenir
Your own PHOTOGRAPH
taken with one of The Midgets. Finished and Framed
in One Minute. You will have lots of fun when you
show them to your friends.

The fabulous Lady G.
Your CHARACTER Read
and Advice given FREE

by the Clever Little Midget Character Readers.
Just buy their Photographs—they will do the rest.



Broadside, 1932

Lady G. delighted audiences at Furston Pavilion for more than ten seasons. A ballerina of exceptional grace, she was eventually invited to join the Bolshoi in Moscow, where she spent three happy years dancing the part of a small swan. Lady G. subsequently married Peter Effing, a six-foot-two New York investment banker, and then took up permanent residence in her beloved Maoam. Though their arrival in Maoam was kept a closely guarded secret (in an effort to preserve a degree of privacy), they were met by large crowds of well-wishers, film photographers and representatives of the daily papers. Mr. Effing abandoned his career in banking to become *le Regisseur* of the Municipal Ballet Company, his chief accomplishment being a revival of romantic themes in ballet productions. Lady G. died in 1969, her husband and two daughters at her bedside. Both Lady G. and Peter Effing were devoted sunbathers, and most their holidays were spent at Bennet's Farm, a private club for like-minded souls. A large share of her considerable fortune was used to establish a foundation to promote healthy feet, as she was ever mindful of the suffering endured by professional dancers everywhere.



Eugene Armond, Psychic Gymnast

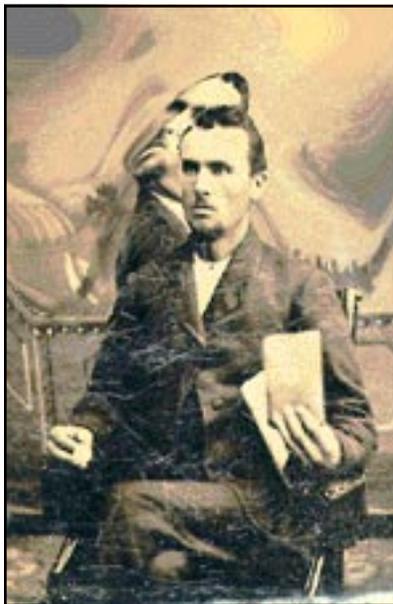
Eugene Armond served for more than thirty years as President of The Psychic Sciences and Stage Craft Guild. He appeared regularly at the annual trade fair until an accident in 1952 prevented him from engaging in further public demonstrations. The accident occurred at home during breakfast and involved an electric shock from a toaster. The shock made critical alterations to his psychic energy field and paralyzed eight of his ten toes.



Chambeau Blau

When Chambeau Blau died of equine fever in 1971, newspapers proclaimed the end of an era. Blau was the last and best of the horse hypnotists. At left we see Blau with the horse named Billy. Billy was more mule than horse, but he was Blau's favorite subject. Blau died in Copenhagen during an afternoon performance in the gardens of the Tivoli. Billy, still in a deep trance and despite the best efforts of Denmark's most skilled veterinarians, was humanely dispatched with a single gun shot. Billy was buried near the Viking memorial located in Amalienborg Square not far from the present Royal Residence. Blau's remains were returned to Maoam, where he was buried amid considerable pomp and ceremony.

Blau may have been the last living descendant of a distinguished line of persons begun by Robert Clef, the celebrated inventor of many mechanical novelties and the author of the medieval classic, *Light & Virtue Through Observation of the Differential Gear*.



Dr. Liston, Holding the Book of Universalities

This will have to do so far as Dr. Havlock Liston is concerned. It is a fragment believed to have come from the so-called *Book of Universalities*, a text that may have informed both the methods and purposes of Liston and his associates in the many projects conducted at the Institute for Otherly Human Beings:

I speak with greatest regard for Truth and Sincerity, rest assured.

In following the Universal Laws articulated herein you will be assisted in overriding all hostility, bad luck, unfortunate astrological advice, and so on. By tuning in the Ultimate Power you will immediately turn the tide of suffering and misfortune in all its instances to find Happiness and Light. Wisdom, too, will follow, as Wisdom is the Keystone of Otherliness.

Never doubt the fact of your Otherliness. You belong to a special category of people for whom the Natural Laws of Science do not apply.

Use Chart 57 to determine your level.

Before he went mad, Liston made some rather astonishing claims. Of all his assertions the most astonishing was his claim to be able to see into the present. Next to this all of his other claims to rare arts and gifts—hypnosis, reflexology, acupuncture, dousing, and the use of psychic wands—were but commonplace tricks. To be able to see into the present—that irreducible moment in the flow of time, that precise instant when future plunges irretrievably into past—outranks even the marvels of mathematics.

We can only hope that in the future more may be known of Liston and the Institute. The scant artifacts (at the moment, consisting of this photograph, this morsel from the *Book of Universalities*, and a handful of newspaper reports) tempt us to want more.