

Surrealisms 2024, Paris

The Passive Vampire and The Inventor of Love: Ghérasim Luca and the Totalitarian Force of Post-Oedipal Desire

This paper will examine the work of Romanian Surrealist, Ghérasim Luca, in its immersive and all-encompassing drive towards the destruction of external forces generated by social regulation, and their replacement with an interiorised and totalising erotic of liberation from self. It will specifically focus on the hybrid texts he created during the 1930s whilst central to the organisation and activities of the Bucharest Surrealist group, namely *The Passive Vampire* and *The Inventor of Love*.

These texts demonstrate the multiplicity of methods used by the group and more particularly the ways in which surrealist experiment as group activity allows for hasard objectif to operate at full force in the dismantling of Luca's previously configured self-knowledge.

The paper will argue that Luca's work represents perhaps the purest example of submission to the Surrealist project in its evolution of a philosophy of liberty necessarily requiring a direct confrontation with conceptual-physical limits.

It will go on to suggest that Luca's exploration of self at the extremity of ludic encounter with the 'totemic other' constitutes a difficult, problematic mode of self-encounter; one in which processual activity appears to serve as ballast against the everyday death he sees in life; and which makes of his eventual death by suicide a startlingly tragic full-stop in a completed surrealist sentence. The paper will end by speculating on the Surrealist encounter with death as concept, death as iteration.

BIO:

Dr Stephen Sunderland completed his practice-led PhD 'Diving to *The Cinema Beneath the Lake*: a novel as immersive, synthetic-magical exploration of the surrealist prose of Claude Cahun, Ithell Colquhoun and Leonora Carrington' in 2022 at the University of Salford. He is currently working towards completion of his first post doctoral research project at Salford, entitled '*The Everyday Marvellous*: Surrealist Methods and the Re-Storying of Group Therapy'.

He is a writer and a lecturer in experimental creative writing. Recent publications include *Alsdorf: a collaborative novel* (Hesterglock, 2023), *Refrains* (Steel Incisors, 2023) and *Oneiroscope* (Kingston University Press, 2023)

Email:

stephen.sunderland@rocketmail.com

Postal Address:

Green Gables, Flash Lane, Rufford, Ormskirk, Lancashire L401SN