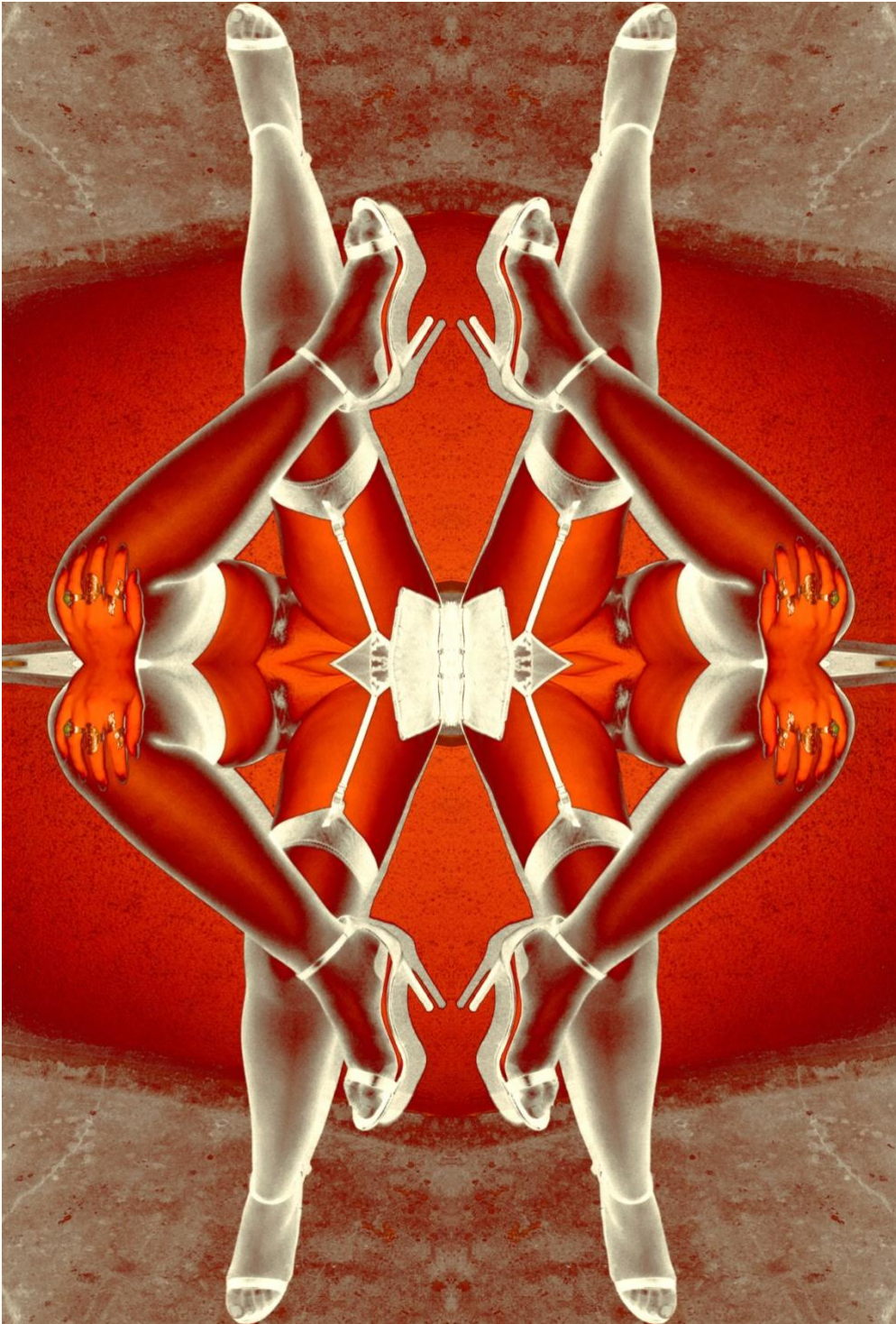


*Divers to Dive:
A Pandemic
Dream
Journal #4*

*David Keenan
Eleni Avraam*

Divers to Dive #4



Sunday 19/4/20

“The terrible speaks must be allowed silence” is one of my favourite lines of poetry, and it’s not even poetry, though written by a poet, in a letter to a friend, Jack Spicer to Jim Alexander. The whole letter is

incredible, this letter, which begins “It is not the monotony of nature but the poems beyond nature that call to each other above the poets’ heads”, is one of the greatest articulations of exactly how it feels to get deep into poetry or prose, and when someone asks Jack, in one of his final Vancouver lectures, dead a month later, by alcoholism, at age 40, whether the poem comes from the poet, he replies, is a radio set the creator of a radio programme? He also answers several questions in *Martian*. He brings up Blake, and Yeats, and Crowley, and Dee and Kelley, too, and Olson (or maybe I do), this idea of the external source of energy that the poet must receive, as channelled, as dictated, with himself as far out of the way as possible otherwise it’s just his own *mere tongue*, second guessing. In another amazing letter he talks about the magic of reading Proust, though really, he talks about the magic of the best reading. NONSENSE IS A FORM OF MAGIC, he announces. Then: “I am reading Proust for the emteenth time and am more than considerably impressed. The whole book consists not only of what he is able to remember but actually to evoke from the past and the process of this evocation leads the reader to do likewise with his own past so that the reader is soon not only reading a novel but (in a passive way) writing a novel and for every page he reads there is a ghostly page the reader recovers from his own life. It is the nearest thing to a time machine that I am likely to see.”

My friend Stuart and I, the last time we were in the mountains, in Assynt, one of the magic places in Scotland. We are camped on a beach near the foot of Stac Pollaidh, we had come there through our mutual love of the mountains and of that weird old fruit, W.A. Poucher, and his amazing photographs of the Scottish peaks, one in particular, of Stac Polly, as she is known, had sparked the adventure, one that looked like a window onto eternity, onto a pure land of never changing scale and sunshine and fixed stone. In the morning we climbed the hill, and I took a photograph from almost the exact same spot that Poucher did.

Except you can see our tent, a tiny dot of colour, in the distance. Spicer writes to a lover halfway around the world on New Year's Eve. I am in 1954, and you are in 1955, he laments, and you can never travel back in time to be with me. We set camp for three nights and climb a bunch of local mountains. At night there are comets that make the Bayeux Tapestry seem realistic. The stags are rutting in the hills, their baying all night is so horny. A storm comes in, our tent floods. Stu and I stand outside in the silent storm, it is so warm, in the night. In the morning Stu runs up Stac Polly while I make us food, chunks of beef and baked beans heated over a gas stove and served in mugs. Making tea with water from the loch. By the time he gets back we are both deliriously happy and laughing at anything, but best of all when he strips to his boxers and runs straight into the loch, but just keeps going, the loch never getting any deeper, eventually resorting to belly flopping into a pool three feet deep. So many ghostly pages.

Monday 20/4/20

Re-reading *The Art of Memory* by Frances Yates. Yates' description of the Memory Theatre is of an actual theatre, with the participant on stage, looking out, and in all the boxes and rows are images. Images can best hold memory, and images are best held by place. And now I have the vaguest memory of a book, a book set in a train carriage, where a paralysed man has placed all of his memories in order that he might survey them once more before his death. The poet Robin Blaser writes: "Were I in this theatre, and before I could take responsibility for the images of the whole universe or hold them, I would have to hold on to those images first, to dwell upon them, which hold the nature of two stars eminently important in my life:

Taurus: A man ploughing, a man bearing a key, a man holding a serpent and a spear. This is almost clear, but I can't say in which hand he holds the snake and spear, as the memory is incomplete, or uncreated.

and Saturn: A man with a stag's head on a dragon, with an owl which is eating a snake in his right hand. It is my view that the nature of this star cannot be held in a poem until the uncreated dragon is created."

Tuesday 21/4/20

First day of Taurus. My birthday. Out-lived Malcolm Lowry by two years now.

For my birthday my mum got me:

- a birthday card with a Dalek on a stairlift on the front
- a book
- four cans of Punk IPA
- two tins of Bovril

Wednesday 22/4/20

Playing Lou Reed's *The Blue Mask*, again, that record is all about Robert Quine (see the Appendix for an out-take from *This Is Memorial Device* about Quine).

Thursday 23/4/20

A series of texts from a friend in Mexico.

What a fuckin times

My man
David
My brother
I'm worry
About Tijuana
When this shit pass away
We have to go
To Tijuana
To spend some money
Yeah
This is a lessob
Lesson
We gonna do
All the things we don't do

Amen, brother, poet, see you on the other side.

Friday 24/4/20

The first story I ever completed, that I was in any way happy with, was set between Eastbank Primary School and Craigvicar Gardens, in Shettleston, in the east end of Glasgow. Today I cycled there, where I grew up. The east end of Glasgow is eternal. It never changes. It is the Glasgow I recall. The Glasgow that can still be glimpsed in, say, Partick, the Glasgow of Garscube Road, the Glasgow where my father worked in a shoe shop and bought his own house in an estate in the east end of Glasgow. Glasgow of blue skies and endless horizons, just like today. Once, when I was small, peacocks escaped from Calderpark Zoo and sat in the trees of Beech Avenue as I walked home from school. I have returned to it, so many times, this house named Tara, but mostly in dreams, dreams that we have bought it all over again, and that we are moving back in, and I'm overcome by the opportunity to relive it

all, as a family, and I enjoy walking there so much, this going back. Though even in dreams I know it can't really be true, and I approach the house like a burglar, or a stowaway.

Saturday 25/4/20

Spent the afternoon doing live tarot readings at this year's virtual Sea Change Festival, curated by the amazing people behind Drift record shop in Totnes and Rough Trade Books. I have been studying tarot for decades but only really made the breakthrough into reading when I co-designed my own deck with the artist Sophy Hollington, *The Autonomic Tarot*, published by Rough Trade Books. Reading tarot has been one of the most rewarding things in my life. It facilitates a very intimate conversation between strangers. And there are no 'negative' cards in tarot; change, too, is a gift, and a blessing, is what the cards have taught me. How many more begin agains do we get, in this life? How many opportunities left to rebuild The Tower? Begin again, begin again, in gratitude, Fortune.

Appendix A

This Is Memorial Device (Out-Take)

Tonight All About Robert Quine: Tam Gracie says that once upon a time everyone in Airdrie was in awe of Danny D'Angelo.

The best solo ever recorded is by Robert Quine on Lou Reed's *The Blue Mask*. Plus he is responsible for one of the best live recordings by The Velvet Underground. My friend Danny D'Angelo said that without Robert Quine the Voidoids would have sounded like The Boomtown Rats. Now every time I hear Richard Hell I think of Bob Geldof.

Danny was always coming out with these grand proclamations. For instance, he told everyone that he was enlightened, that he had attained enlightenment. Then he would say, that's a joke, because when you're enlightened there is nothing to be attained. I asked him what being enlightened meant in that case and he just shrugged and said, it means you are happy to be here.

One time we had a party at my mum's house. No one had seen Danny drink or even do drugs but at the start of the night he boasted that he could drink any one of us under the table. His model was that monk who lived in the Borders and drove his Ferrari through the window of a toy shop while drunk and on cocaine. Danny called it crazy wisdom. We all smoked marijuana and sat out in the garden. Danny put on *The Blue Mask* on a portable record player and everyone sat there looking up at the early evening light through the trees. Listening to this record in complete silence. By the time it had finished we noticed that Danny had drunk virtually a whole bottle of whiskey on his own. Then he disappeared.

After about half an hour I went to look for him and found him naked, in my mum's bath, sitting in about two inches of lukewarm water

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reading an old copy of *Zig Zag*. He had emptied a bottle of Vosene into the bath thinking it was bubble bath. He turned round to look at me and held up a page of *Zig Zag*. Tonight all about Robert Quine, he said, and then he slumped unconscious against the side of the bath. Afterwards everyone agreed that if anyone was enlightened, it was probably Danny D'Angelo.

Appendix B

Diving | April 2020

The Writer's Garden Jackie Bennett

A True And Faithful Relation Meric Casaubon

NME 70s/80s charts Spotify playlists from @Birmingham_81

The Blue Mask Lou Reed

Caterpillar journal ed. Clayton Eshleman

Juniper Fuse Clayton Eshleman

The Gothic Cathedral Wim Swann

QBL Frater Achad

New Gold Dream Simple Minds

Sparkle In The Rain Simple Minds

Searching For The Young Soul Rebels Dexys

Don't Stand Me Down Dexys

On Having No Head Douglas Harding

Case Histories: 'Dora' and 'Little Hans' Freud

The Art of Memory Frances Yates

"She Wolf" Shakira

Gislebertus: Sculptor of Autun

The Great Naropa Poetry Wars Tom Clark

Flower Wreath Hill Kenneth Rexroth

War Money Freedom West Coast IPA O Brother Brewing

Moravagine Blaise Cendrars

The Secret Garden, An Anthology In The Kabbalah ed. David Meltzer

The Sacred Conspiracy George Bataille

"Ultima Thule" Tangerine Dream

The Book of Jewish Food Claudia Roden

"Outside" The Dead C

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Collected Poems Edward Thomas

“Brackstone Abroad” Andrew Weatherall

“Pathetique” Fushitsusha

Pacific Ocean Blue Dennis Wilson

The Litanies of Satan Diamanda Galás

“The Rings of Saturn” X-102

“Transport” Juan Atkins & Moritz von Oswald

Birding

Selected Poems Rainer Maria Rilke

Closer & Live at University of London Union Joy Division

“Is Your Love in Vain?” Bob Dylan

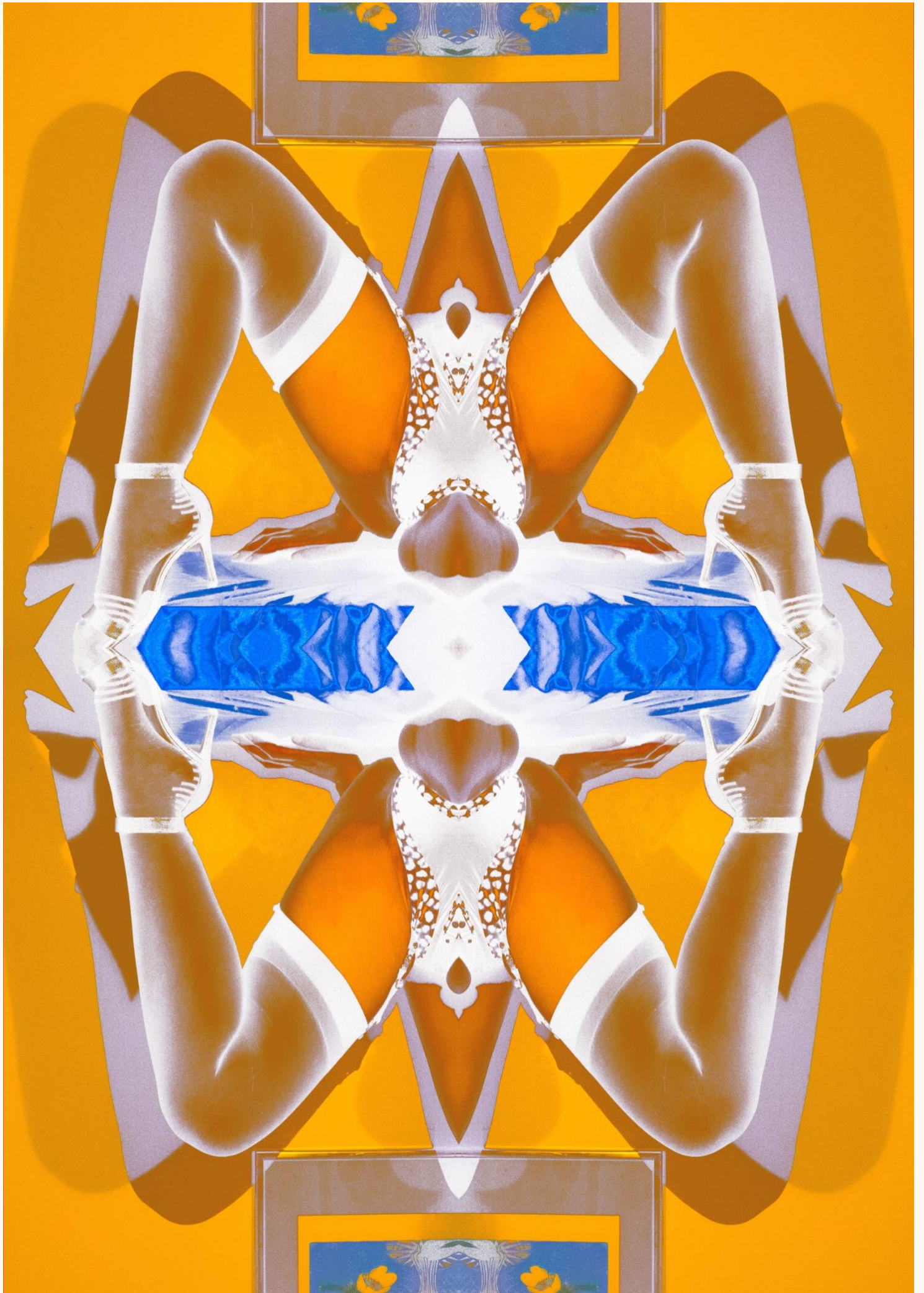
Women’s Rites Jeanne de Berg

Astral Weeks Van Morrison

“Roll Away The Stone” Mott The Hoople

The Towers The Fields The Transmitters David Keenan

Woman In Heels or Eden Eleni Avraam



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Caught by the River

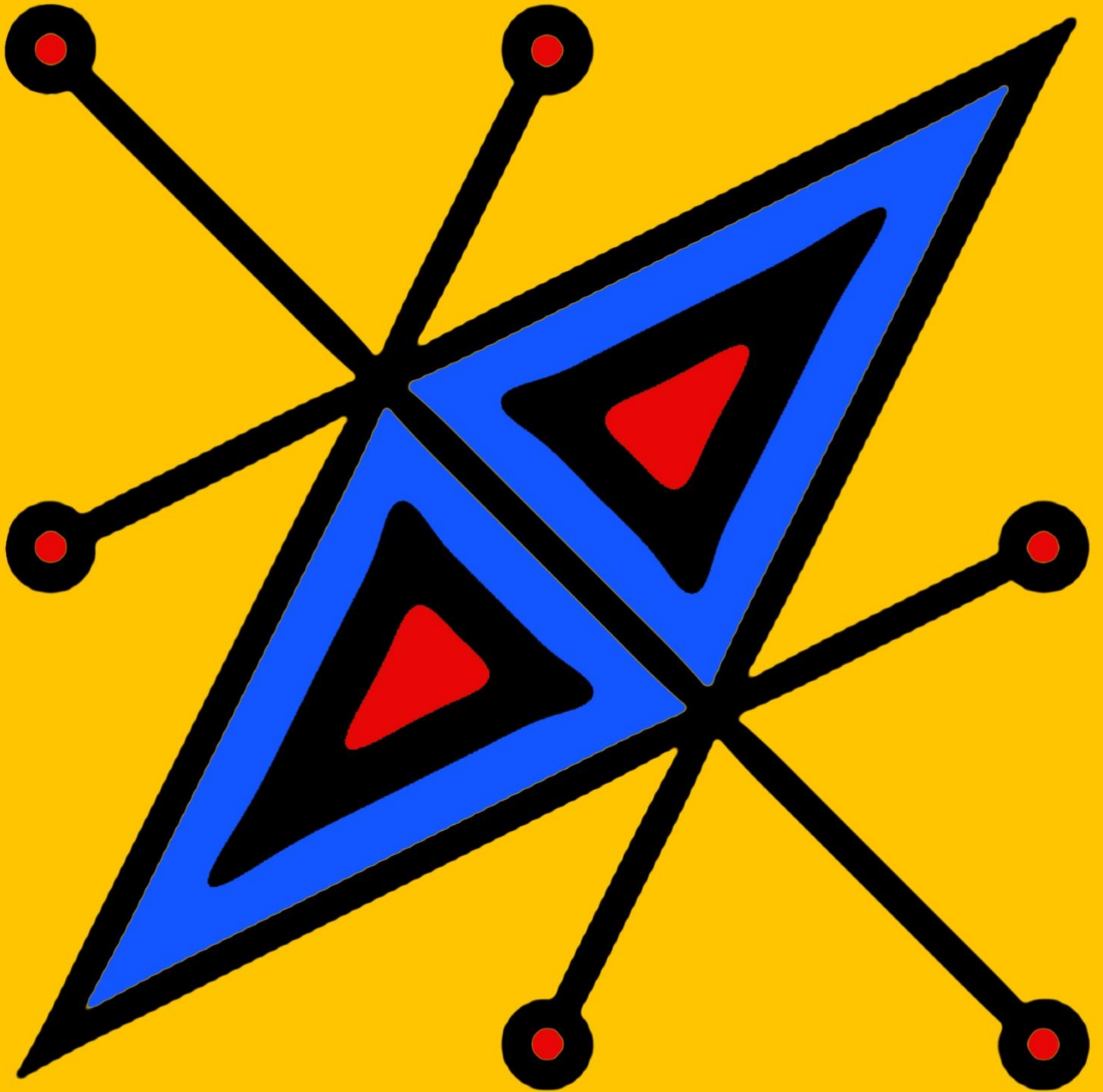


Divers to Dive

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BEGIN



AGAIN