

Holt Review Continued...

Without, at least, spending a working day on minimum wage (and presumably forgoing food) you can't get access to see Jagger swagger on a screen with a blurry on stage referent, while songs of total cultural ubiquity play with suspicious clarity. And this of course assumes you can get the cheapest available ticket, which you won't and have no real life expenses, which you will. It can, and no doubt would be, argued that all this goes into the creation of a 'complete concert experience' full of riggermarol and regalia. However being born in 1990 to a former hippy has made the experience of the documentation of the Rolling Stones the way in which I understand their existence. This would be my primary referent for the band; the psychic resource I would use to understand the experience of seeing and hearing the band before me. Whereas, my father, growing up in Nova Scotia as a teenager in the 1960s had such limited exposure to such media (or concerts for that matter) that his reference was occasional contemporary news print reproduction of photographs, album artworks and typography and the way in which the vinyl LP made the air shake, with the appropriate provocation. The beginnings of creating *the desert of the real* I'm left with today.

This has all been pretty Baudrillard so far, and in that sense it's not new, but in some ways that's quite interesting. The ideas Baudrillard expressed; representations being more real than the real phenomena to which they refer¹ has been accepted as cannon by some and intolerably boring by others. The point being that it's not shocking, at least not to those in the academy or those who have seen *The Matrix* (liberal as its interpretation may be). The post modern complaint, expressed by David Foster Wallace in his self critical account of 9/11, 'we have seen this before' is now a common experience, a foil to excitement; the standard issue premise for the construction of commercials, movies, new media and bands.

I have never attended a Rolling stones concert. My argument here is derived from attending other large scale musical acts (Radiohead, The Smashing Pumpkins) who have begun or failed to create very different but as dense mythologies around their existence, always though, with a reference to what the Stones created. I doubt I'll ever see the Rolling Stones, with their exorbitant ticket prices, of which I have been told they insist on 125% as their fee, they seem determined to keep me away both by poverty and on principle. Even if I attended, I'd doubt that I'd believe I had seen them, there at that moment. I'm sure I would, as I have done before, attempt to measure what I thought was going on against the culturally selected images and montages of sound that the media has used for half a century to stand in for the Rolling Stones, compounding the original rock band on top of the dietary concerns of wealthy elderly men.

So, with the echoing of the concert blurring into the low frequency distortion that seems to happen as sound emanates over space, my mind awash with images of over 50 years of pop culture experiments and no immediate article for comparison I was in the aura of a Rolling Stones artwork. Without the distraction of the bizarre facticity of the event I listened to the aura of 'Sympathy for The Devil' in Hyde Park but perhaps at the same time closer to how my father would have heard it in 1968. The artwork did not get in the way.

¹ It's the apocalyptic consequences of this idea people find really distasteful/ problematic. The idea of trying to win a battle that may not even exist is quite a pickle for left-wing thought to have put itself in.