

**FROM THE GATWICK'S
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PERSPECTIVE
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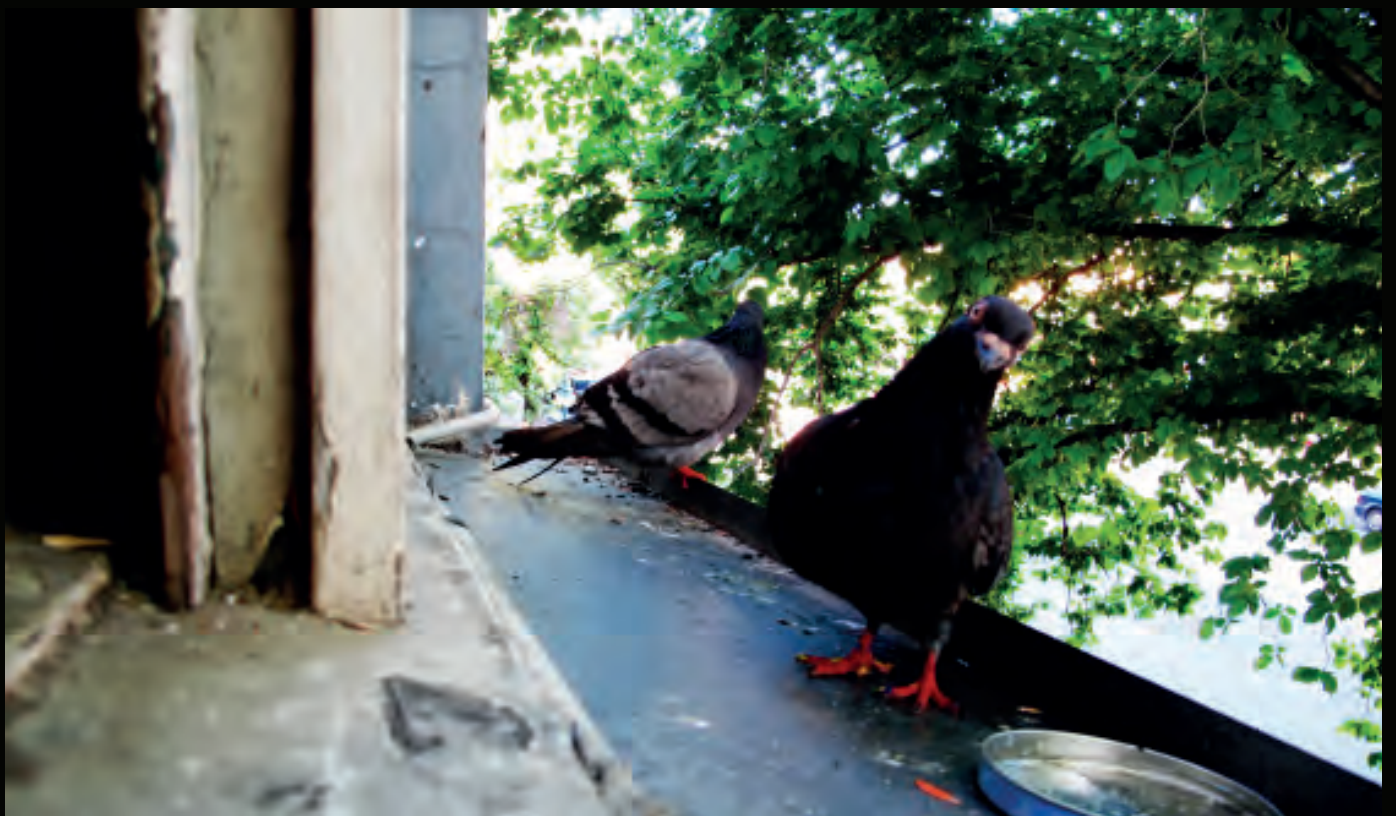
**MAURICIO RIVERA
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PART I:

**LIVE FROM
THE GATWICK**

I. It runs in the family

On February 1998 Victoria Carbone died. She had been running the Gatwick Private Hotel for nearly thirty years. An article titled *Home is a 'hotel with heart'*, published in The Age on 10 October 1998, mentioned how the Queen Vicky's heirs (as she was commonly known around St. Kilda) wanted to sell the hotel.

The article also showed the critical situation of private rooming houses in St Kilda, which number had declined from 636, housing 9500 people in 1954; to 60, housing 1157 people in 1998. Back then, Victoria's daughters and twin sisters Yvette Kelly and Rose Banks decided to buy the hotel from their siblings. Ettie -as Yvette is commonly known- remembers how difficult it was when they decided to buy the Gatwick. They didn't have any credit history, as they had never worked anywhere else: "we tried pretty much every bank, but every time we went asking to borrow 3.5 million dollars they very kindly showed us the door." After placing a mortgage on both their houses, they finally managed to obtain a loan and became the new owners of what already was a rather infamous rooming house.

The Gatwick Private Hotel was built between the late 1920s and the early 1930s, as a luxurious residence for single men. During the Second World War, officers of the U.S. Navy based in Port Melbourne, under the command of colonel Galloway, stayed there and at the Prince of Wales, also located in Fitzroy Street, just a couple of blocks from the Gatwick. Both hotels were highly regarded for the facilities they provided, which the Americans enjoyed together with visiting housewives from wealthy suburbs like Toorak and Prahran.

The Carbone family bought the Gatwick in the early 1970s. During this decade, the growing traffic of drugs prompted a surge of gang related violence in St. Kilda. Then, in the 1980s, property values began to rise.

Ronnie and Victoria Carbone came to Australia from Malta in 1952. Vicky was born in a humble home in the small and rural island of Gozo. Ronnie came from a formerly wealthy family, from the main island, that lost most of its money due to gambling debts. Because of class-related issues, both Ronnie and Vicky's families disapproved of their marriage. This is why they decided to move to Australia. The first one to leave was Ronnie, who back then was in the British Navy. Vicky followed him six months later, together with their eldest children: Mary and Robbie. On the day Vicky arrived to Melbourne, Ronnie was arrested because he got in a fight while waiting for his family at the port. Therefore, Vicky and her children spent their first night in Australia sleeping in the street.

Three months after her arrival, a doctor told the Carbones that Vicky was six months pregnant. Ronnie did not take the news very well. He left his family and travelled to Queensland. Vicky remained pregnant for another five months. During her pregnancy, she was told she was having triplets, but she understood she was having a baby with three legs. After seeing how the date of birth agreed with his own calculations, Ronnie went back to his family. Soon after, Vicky gave birth to two girls: Vinnie and Carmel. When they were born, the Carbone's were told that the third baby, who was supposed to be a boy, had died. But there was never a funeral and they never got to see the body or the death certificate.

After Vinnie and Carmel came Ettie and Rose and after them their youngest brother Frank. In total, they had seven children, although during her lifetime Vicky carried up to 26 babies. The last one she miscarried when she was 52 and Ettie was pregnant with her first born. "My mother used to say that if you put her underwear near my father's she'll get pregnant", remembers Rose.

Ronnie's temper prevented him from holding a job for more than a few days. Therefore, Vicky had to start working, first as a waitress and kitchen hand in local restaurants and hotels, until she managed to save enough money to buy their first house in Dalgety Street. There, the whole family lived in one room and rented the others. That way, she began to save money and buying new properties around St. Kilda.

In 1973, she bought the Gatwick (which she had been managing since 1969). Shortly after that, she was diagnosed with leukemia. Ronnie got permission for his daughters to leave school and start working at the hotel. Back then, the twins were fourteen. On the same day they started working, Ronnie was arrested and remained in jail for one year. For this reason, Ettie and Rose were forced to run the hotel by themselves.

Ettie met her husband Dennis while he was staying at the Gatwick. When she became pregnant with their oldest son, her family didn't approve of her having a baby out of wedlock. Therefore, she went to live in Queensland for a while, but eventually came back to Melbourne and ended up living at the Gatwick, where she began to raise her oldest son and daughter: Harley and Dona. "During those days the Gatwick was like a big nursery", she remembers.

II. An infamous story

On 30 April 1995, The Age published an article titled "There must be a better place to die than this". The story focused on the death of Ernest Peter Lockett, a Maori inhabitant of the Gatwick who was killed on the 24th of that same month. Lockett was the second person killed at the Gatwick that year and the 14th between 1988 and 1995.

The aforementioned statistics have contributed to the consolidation of a rather obscure reputation, which is portrayed in the following dialogue I had with two longtime residents named Alistar James MacDonald and Bill McGrath:

James: I'm born and raised in St Kilda, I started coming to the Gatwick since '74.

Reporter: How was it back then?

James: It was worse. The word for it is notorious. I got shot in the back by the police when I was nine (as he says so he turns around, pulls up his t-shirt and reveals a small round scar).

Reporter: Why did they shoot you?

James: Because they mistaken me with my brother. My family had a fucking bad name here in St Kilda.

Bill: His brother was obviously bad.

James: Worse than me, that's why the police fucking shot him in '98.

Bill: Shot him dead.

James: I had to fucking bury him.

Bill: A lot of bad people have lived here. Do you remember Victor Pearce?

Reporter: (Shakes his head in ignorance)

Bill: The police shot him in Port Melbourne, well they say they didn't do it, but they did, because, what was it 20 years ago he...

James: (Interrupting) he blew up Russell Street. That's where the police headquarters were during the 80s.

Bill: He put the car full of bomb, parked the car in front of the police station and BOOM! Two policemen died.

James: Two? Think it was three, two died in the scene and another died in the hospital.
Bill: He was bad, his whole family: bad, all of them, proper criminals.
James: They shoot you, shoot the police, they didn't care. If you told him to fuck up he'd just pop the gun and BAM!
Bill: Who else have lived here ... You know Chopper Read?
Reporter: (nods)
Bill: Wayne Glover, the paedophile, he also used to live here.
James: Bad paedophile, he'll never get out of jail.
Bill: Who else? I don't know, there have been a lot of stupid murders for 10 or 20 dollars.
James: The dumbest murder I saw was back in '77. I was in room 212 with my brother, Vicky used to let me in through the backdoor, cause I was a kid and I wasn't supposed to be here. In the room next door, 211, there was a murder over a dole.
Bill: One shot of heroin, he fucking killed him.
James: He broke his neck, just grab him from his fucking throat and smash him against the wall. It was the first murder I ever saw here.

Regardless of these issues, Ettie and Rose claim to have a good relationship with the police. As Rose points out, it is important for her and her sister to keep a balance between the law and some of their less desirable tenants: "We are in a fence, the police is on one side and the bad fellows on the other, and you have to walk right in the middle to keep good with both of them. Otherwise, one day you may be walking down the street and someone could pull a knife on you or something".

Nevertheless, Ettie and Rose have never been harmed during all these years. Only on very few occasions, they have felt at risk of something bad happening: "One night a fellow was sitting downstairs in the basement with a heater turned on near the laundry. 'You can't sit there with the heater', I told him, 'take it to your room'. Half an hour later, I went back and pulled the plug of the heater and he got so upset, he chased me up the basement stairs and around the Gatwick. Luckily, as I was coming to the front the police came for a different reason and I ran into them. He was so angry! Apparently he thought I was possessed by the devil".

III. A clash of two worlds

The suburb of St. Kilda has historically been linked to prostitution. As Ettie remembers, there has been a negative change regarding the women who make a living out of this practice: "I remember when I was a girl we were friends with the prostitutes. They were elegant ladies who we used to go with shopping and they would buy us clothes and make up and other stuff you never buy with your parents. Now the girls work every night to get drugs to shoot up their arms, and what is worse to get the drugs their boyfriends shoot up their arms."

In 1886 the police reported the first cases of this activity in St. Kilda, in Acland Street. In the late 19th century, because of the gold rush, Melbourne became Australia's largest city and one of the major financial centres of the British Empire. During that time, St. Kilda became an exclusive destination for wealthy merchants and professionals. After the collapse of the land boom that followed the end of the gold rush, many of the high profile residents moved from St. Kilda to other suburbs like Toorak and South Yarra.

At the turn of the century, St. Kilda became the main destination for the Melbournians that sought entertainment. This was reflected in the construction of venues like the Luna Park (1912) and the Palais the Dance (1913). During the 1920s, cocaine - which back then was commonly known as “Joe Blow” or “Two Bob” - was broadly sold to a population that considered it a more fashionable drug than alcohol. The 1930s saw prostitution expand to other places like Fitzroy Street, Grey Street and Blessington Park. Neighbours complained about “frog skins” (condoms) found at the park. During that decade, the expenditure of Sly Grog also increased. In 1937, the St. Kilda City Council passed the By law 117, which prohibited any prostitute from soliciting or accosting possible clients, or loitering in public places. It also declared brothel keeping as an offence.

During World War II prostitution became a matter of state, as an increasing number of soldiers contracted venereal diseases. Therefore, in 1941, the State of Victoria started searching for infected women. By 1943, 30 women per week were examined at the Queen Victoria hospital. Also, the US Army set up two stalls at the entrance of Luna Park, where they gave away condoms. In the 1950s, St. Kilda became one of the main destinations for the thousands of migrants who came to Australia after the war. This led to a boom in the construction of rooming houses.

In the sixties, prostitution in St Kilda peaked, as car ownership increased and rents for flats and houses became more affordable. During this time, specific areas of the suburb became known for offering different services: male workers worked in Shakespeare Grove and Chaucer Street, transsexuals worked Barkly, Irwin & Belford Streets and female workers worked Grey, Blessington and Greeve Streets. As a result, residents of West St. Kilda formed a group called ‘West Action’, who wanted prostitution removed from their streets. Its vice-chairman Graham Bradbury once stated: “the victims of prostitution are those people whose home values have eroded, and whose address has become a dirty joke”.

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, there was an increase in the traffic of illegal drugs, especially heroin, which caused problems like drug addiction and gang related violence to increase. However, during that same period a group of young professionals, attracted by the low property values and the suburb’s nightlife, began to move to St. Kilda. With the arrival of this group, the suburb began a process of gentrification, which has led to the closure of most of the old rooming houses.

When the Carbone family bought the Gatwick, they paid 300.000 dollars, “now you can’t even buy a flat for that prize”, says Rose. Because of this, they constantly receive offers for the hotel, which they always turn down. “I’m going to be buried in this place” is the answer Ettie gives when someone asks her about the rumors of a possible sell.

Ettie and Rose often have to deal with complains from some of the Gatwick’s neighbours, “the lady from a place across the road came once to the office and said: ‘I didn’t spend 700.000 dollars to take a look at my window and have to look at that’. I said, ‘well, that was there before they built your place, didn’t you see it before?’ Then she said, ‘what are you going to do about it’ and I said ‘nothing: if you want to paint it you can paint it but I’m not doing it’. She left so angry.”

For the last seven years, Wendy Butler (aged 63), has been living in different rooming houses around St. Kilda. She has become one of the staunchest defendants of their cause. According to her, during the last months there has been a campaign orchestrated against this sort of residences, and particularly against the Gatwick. As a response against this campaign, the Emerald Hill Weekly published an article, promoted by the owners of the Gatwick, which showed a small personal profile of some of the tenants.

Following this, other media outlets have published a series of articles where, according to Wendy, “they say all kind of awful things.” As she says so, Wendy shows me, one by one, all of the articles, which she has cut and archived within a folder that she keeps in her room. The latest of these paper clips shows a story published in The Sunday Age on 29 July 2007. It’s about the murder of a man in a state-owned rooming house. However, the image that goes together with the story is from one of the Gatwick’s rooms.

Roomers Magazine is a publication written for and by people living in rooming houses. Wendy is a regular contributor. One of its latests editions, includes a poem written by Wendy, titled Blame it on the Gatwick. It begins with the following passage:

Homeless camp in Fitzroy Street,

Blame it on the Gatwick.

Rubbish thrown in Jackson Street,

Blame it on the Gatwick.

Keith Richards falls down from a tree,

Football fans doing a spree,

St Kilda player hurts his knee,

Blame it on the Gatwick.

Wendy recently participated in a poetry competition called Poetry Idol, which took place at the St. Kilda Public Library. There, she recited a poems called Gat-Girls, about the prostitutes that live with her under the Gatwick's ceiling. That day, she was selected amongst the three finalists (out of a group of more than 20) who were invited to participate in the grand final, which is scheduled to take place during the upcoming Melbourne's Writers festival.

IV. A Cradle of talent

In the 2007 St. Kilda Short Film Festival, an 18 minute animated documentary called Revolving Door was presented . The movie tells the story of Gillian, a young prostitute who, after being locked as a teenager in a psychiatric institution, ends up working on the streets of St. Kilda. This is the story of Alexandra Beesley, who wrote, directed and produced the film together with her husband David. In the film, Alexandra represents her younger self, who went by the name of Gillian, and became a prostitute to support her heroin addiction. During this period, she was also a resident at the Gatwick.

At age 15, Alexandra was charged for assaulting her father, who used to rape and hit her and her mother. "One day he was beating my mother up and I just snapped. I went for him with a frying pan and just kept hitting him and hitting him and hitting him. Then, I realized he was flat on the floor. I thought I really killed him", she remembers.

Because of this, she was made a ward of the state. She was sent to an institution where she had to share a very small cell with another inmate, and was forced to live and work under extremely unhygienic conditions. Alexandra recently found out how she also received electroshock therapy during this period. This, she believes, explains the lapses in memory she has from those days.

With her documentary, Alexandra wanted to show the problems that prostitutes from St. Kilda face on a daily basis. This is a reality she experienced since she was 17, which made her believe she would not get to be 21. "Every second week I got bashed. You never know if your client is going to rape you, hit you or kill you", says Alexandra.

Another former resident of the Gatwick is writer Kate Holden. In 2005, she published her memoir In My Skin, where she tells the story of her years as a prostitute and heroin addict. In her

book, Kate mentions how she stayed at the Gatwick for a short period, but then having to leave because she and her then boyfriend from back then did not have the money for the rent. “I remember mostly coming home from working on the streets every night, early in the morning, like 3am, and walking in and the place being full of people awake and talking on the landings, and how sometimes it was like a party and sometimes it was like hell. Our room was on the first floor and had a wooden partition, the wood was so warm and welcoming, elegant, and it made things seem like some old-time movie even when we were so poor we had to live on cream cakes from the bakery and were shooting heroin on the floor,” says Kate.

On most weekend days, is common to see a man wearing a blue sweater, sitting under a tree, playing a didgeridoo and selling his artwork, which ranges from large paintings to small book marks. Those who stop to talk to him, often end up ask him: “Rodney, how can someone like you live in a place like that?”. Rodney replies: “well it’s not different than living in jail is it? The difference is that you can walk across the road and get a cup of coffee or something to eat. The people who live here are like the ones in jail, they are on medication, some are worse than those in jail, but there is no difference, I get along with everyone it doesn’t matter”.

Rodney Wharton was born in Cunammulla 35 years ago. He belongs to the Kooma Tribe. He has traveled all around Australia, amongst many other, he has worked in many trades, like picking oranges in South Australia or raising racehorses in Doncaster. However, his real passion is to express his culture through his art.

Rodney arrived in Melbourne for the first time in 1995. This same year, the government gave back the land it had taken from the Kooma. Since that day, he has found an answer for those who criticise his way of living: “people look down on you because they see you sitting in the street, they brag about having a house. But they don’t own their houses, the government does. If they want to build a road they’ll tear it down. But not with me land, they can either go round it, or above it, or below, but they can’t pass through it.”

Regarding his life at the Gatwick, Rodney comments: “I like where I am, I’ve got everything I want in one room. Besides, I can watch the TV all night with out no one telling me what to fucking do. The world is spinning around and I’m sitting to the side, watching it keep spinning. This place gives me the benefit of doing so until I’m ready to get back on it.”

Rodney has painted together with Clifford Possum, who sold the most expensive aboriginal painting (2.4 million dollars). Some of his paintings have been exposed at various local galleries. He has also been invited to play his music and show his artwork abroad. However, at the moment Rodney does not feel like traveling and in Melbourne, he has found a place where he can show his art without having to do so: “Why travel if just crossing the road I can have the world at me feet. I send me artwork all around the world. I’m everywhere with me art. When I’m ready I’ll eventually catch up with it.”

V. Another day at the office

Every morning either Ettie or Rose (sometimes both) arrive at the Gatwick around nine. As soon as they walk up the marble staircase and cross the heavy wooden door, they are surrounded by tenants who rely on them to take care of some of their most basic needs. During the whole day, they would not have five minutes of peace, as there will always be someone asking them to give them a towel, or give them some coffee, or lend them some money, or fix something in their room, or asking to borrow some make up, or who just walk down to the office to have a chat.

Despite their physical resemblance, the owners of the Gatwick have quite different personalities. Ettie’s personality resembles that of their mother while Rose has inherited the strong charac-

ter of their father. Because of this, some of tenants call her the 'dragon lady'. This is also why Rose is the one in charge of collecting the rent and kicking out the tenants that fail to pay or break the rules. However, most of the residents keep calling Ettie by her sister's name. Over the years, she has learned how to take it with grace: "people say I am Rose on a good day and my sister is Rose on a bad day".

Every room in the hotel is different from the others. Just as such, the common areas and narrow corridors are witness to the interaction between characters from a wide range of backgrounds. Young girls running away from home cross paths with elderly men who have been living at the Gatwick for decades. Indigenous Australians, prostitutes, Native Americans travellers, tradies, junkies and political refugees are just a small sample of the people that, on any given day, can be found inside the Gatwick.

Jason Kiri Kiri, 49, is a Maori who came from New Zealand 23 years ago. He travelled to Melbourne to visit his mother and has stayed in Australia ever since. Jay, as he is commonly known, has been a frequent tenant for the last two and a half years. He was recently evicted for not paying rent. While on the third floor Rose is sorting the mess Jay has left in his old bedroom, he is sitting at the central table of one of the big dorms on the ground floor. He is having a beer and a ciggie with some of his mates.

The air inside Jason's former room is thick and heavy. The bed is undone and covered with crumbs of food. A frying pan lies on the floor, with mince meat leftovers, which are starting to turn green. On top of a night table, there's a still-life composition made out of a round-framed religious painting, a pair of pilot sunglasses, a handcrafted bong and one half-smoked cigarette. Despite being evicted, Jason does not have a problem showing his appreciation to Ettie and Rose: "The girls have helped me many times when I've been in trouble, they help everyone around here".

The generosity and good will of the sisters is an asset that Jay prides himself of also having. This is confirmed by his friend William sitting at his right, who nods in recognition while Jason tells how he took him out of the street and brought him to live at the Gatwick. At his left sits his girlfriend Beverly, who despite also showing appreciation for Jason's help is not as sympathetic as his mate Willy. Now that he no longer lives at the hotel, Jay keeps pointing out the fact that he is going to move to a northern suburb in order to live closer to Beverly. But every time he says so, she interrupts him with mumbling complains and ironic remarks full of incredulity.

The fact that he does not live anymore at the Gatwick is not going to prevent Jay from going to the hotel. After all, many of the most common characters one can see on any given day are not current tenants, as David, a tenant who also works at night tending the office, explains without fully understanding the reason: "Most of the people you see don't live here, some even have houses of their own in others suburbs, but they just keep coming every day".

As I accompany Rose while she cleans Jay's former room, in another corner of the hotel a man is being severely roughed up. As a result of this, a few minutes later a group of around fifteen police officers and paramedics arrive at the Gatwick. Earlier that day, the man who is now being taken out in a stretcher had had a quarrel with his partner, which ended with her having a black eye. The police ask questions for a while but apparently at the moment of the beating everybody was conveniently looking elsewhere. While they conduct the investigation, one of the inhabitants of the Gatwick named Ricky keeps teasing them: "I'm here officers, you've got me, take me away".

Richard Li was born in East Timor in 1970. In opposition to the desolation of Jason's room, Ricky's is full of ornaments and other objects that represent his personality. Like for instance a big silver ring resting in his night table, which usually hangs between his nose strings. Various figures and statues of Buda stand next to a television on top of a big desk in front of his bed. Piles of clothes and shoes lie on the floor. A series of Buddhist paintings and posters with Chinese symbols, which represent values like peace and good luck, hang on the walls. Next to them there is a framed photograph of a little child. The kid in the picture is his son Ali who is now eight years old and lives with his mother in Geelong.

Over the head of his bed hangs the flag of his home country. Ricky came to Australia with his foster parents when he was 16 years old. During his childhood, he had to live in the middle of East Timor's conflict, which he still remembers with horror.

“I was there when things happened, that’s why I ended up here in Australia. Killings here, killings there, my god. The bullets fly past your ears. You have to hide in the dark, you shit your pants, you pee in your pants, it’s like hell there man.”

Nevertheless, there is nostalgia in his voice whenever he remembers his homeland, “I’m home sick man, I’m dying to go back to my country. My mother is there, I haven’t seen her since I was three, my biological brothers and sister are still there. I don’t know if they are still alive but I would never lose hope of seeing them again”.

Besides from troublesome encounters with other residents, Ricky says he has also ran into others who were supposed to be long gone. “You know how many people had died here over the last 30 years? Like 945. It’s scary; you can feel the spirits here”.

“I know my mother is still in the building -says Yvette - every time I need something, like a set of keys or something, they always appear there. Things that you knew weren’t there before. Also sometimes I hear her singing the song she used to sing whenever she was upset, How much is the Dummy in the window, whenever I hear her singing I know something not good is about to happen”. According to Rose, the latest of those wandering spirits must be the one of Mr Farago, who lived at the Gatwick for 43 years.

He was already living here when my family bought the hotel. He fell in love with this woman and he wanted to marry her but the father said no because he didn’t had a house and was living at the Gatwick. He told him that once he had left the hotel he could marry her, but he never did. He never got another girlfriend and for the last 40 years he lived in the same room.

Earlier this year, Mr Farago fell down while walking on the street and broke one of his legs. The people at social service took him to the hospital and told him he shouldn’t go back to the Gatwick. Because he was not allowed to return to the hotel, he started a hunger strike until eventually he passed away on 11 July 2007.

Like Mr Farago, most of the long-time tenants of the Gatwick have been dying lately, leaving their spot at the hotel to a new generation of tenants who, as Yvette points out, will either hate it and move out from it as soon as they can, or stay, feeling the allure that the building exerts. Especially in those who, for which ever reason, find themselves amongst the bottom pile of Melbourne’s social structure. Maybe is that bizarre gravitational force what has allowed the Gatwick to survive while others have perished. Remaining as a rare specimen of a species whose extinction has been long-time diagnosed.







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PART II:

**SIX NIGHTS
BY THE SEA**

I.

I am lying on my bed. I've been waking and sleeping: on and off, for a while now. How long? I don't know. Beyond the wall I am facing: the floor's main bathroom. Behind me: room 309 of the Gatwick Private Hotel.

The walls across the hotel's corridors are salmon-pink and the carpet is burgundy red. Inside the room, the walls are purple and the carpet is dark blue. Because of this, and the presence of a window, the environment is much cooler and brighter. Almost soothing.

It must be before eleven, for it's still quiet. The only noise is that phlegmy coughing I've been hearing for the last three days. It might come from the room across the hall.

The silence is interrupted by the voice of a woman, coming from behind the wall. It's a familiar voice. It's getting louder. I can also hear a series of senseless, guttural sounds. Like those made by the bearded fellow who visited the office last night. The interaction keeps getting louder. She starts telling him to leave her alone. Then, she gets desperate and starts screaming for help. Then, silence...

I remain lying sideways, my nose is just a few inches from the purple plaster. The noises have evaporated. Time passes by. How long? One minute? Five? It's hard to tell. All of a sudden, the hotel awakes. Conversations emerge from beyond the wall, as the water from the showers and toilets starts running. The usual noises: laughter, shouting and, in the background, the same sporadic, yet constant, coughing, which seems to be keeping the Gatwick's own peculiar tempo.

I get out of bed and head towards the washbasin that stands in the opposite side of the room. I soak my head in cold water and when I lift my head, I'm once again facing the purple plaster. There are no mirrors the room. There is a paper cup over the wooden desk next to the basin. It contains a sip of red wine. After two days of usage, osmosis has soften the bottom of the cup. I got the cup for one dollar in the Seven-Eleven across the street. The bottle was purchased in a liquor store nearby. It wasn't much more expensive than the cup.

I empty the wine on the sink and pour myself a cup of water, which I drink in one sip. Then, I pour myself another cup and go to sit on the couch next to the window. I've kept the window open since the moment I entered the room. However, the air remains heavy and thick.

Before someone confuses this story with a piece of the so-called 'immersion journalism', I must begin by explaining why I decided to stay a week at the Gatwick. I am aware that seven days is not nearly enough time to make a serious journalistic, ethnographic or in any way scientific research, especially about a place like the Gatwick. A few months ago, when I was doing research for the first article I wrote about the Gatwick, I made a few friendly relationships with some of the tenants. We had good conversations inside their rooms. But now they are all gone and I don't know practically anyone.

The idea of staying at the Gatwick started revolving around my mind when it was suggested to me by a former resident that I met while working on my first article. Back then, I was living with a married couple in a small apartment. At the beginning of the year, another friend arrived from Colombia and stayed at my room while I was traveling. He was supposed to find a place of his own before I returned and then I was to find one for myself. However, neither of us managed to find a room and for the last two months we've been living in overcrowded conditions.

The day I moved into the Gatwick was also the first day of the semester at the university where I study. I went to the Gatwick in the morning to leave my luggage. I arrived with a large backpack which, besides from my clothes, contained a smaller bag. There I carried: a.) three small notebooks; one for taking notes about my stay at the Gatwick, one for random ideas and one for my four university subjects; b.) one iPod, accompanied by two appliances: one set of speakers and one sound

recorder; and c.) three books: the first two volumes of *In Search of Lost Time* by Marcel Proust (in English) and the *The Shadow of the Sun* (Ebano in Spanish) by Ryszard Kapuscinski.

When I got there, my room was not yet ready, so I took the small bag out and gave the big one to Rose, who stored it in a small compartment inside the office, below the hotel's main staircase.

On my way out I saw a bunch of food containers piling up over the counter. Rose offered me to take one, which I did, and as it was a lovely sunny day -warm but not too hot- I decided to have a picnic on the Beach. I sat on a patch of grass next to the waterfront and opened the lunchbox, which contained two cold sausages and a salad made of cauliflower, peas and diced carrots. I ate everything in less than five minutes and went away.

As I mentioned before, it was the first day of the semester. I had a class from six to eight in the evening. When the class finished, the university was almost empty and while waiting for the tram, a harmonious chorus of birds saw me off from the peaceful eastern suburbs. When the tram reached Glenferrie Road, I changed to the 16-line. On Carslile Street the tram started to get crowded. In front of me sat a man of about 160 cm, bald and with a moustache. He had a green eagle tattooed on his left arm and a couple of thick scars on his right. He carried a single metal crutch that helped him walk. While riding through Ackland Street, he politely asked a middle-aged woman standing next to him if she could give him her ticket, in case the inspectors got in. She told him that she'll get off on Fitzroy Street and that he could have it then. After hearing this, he looked away. I got off at the stop that is almost in front of the Gatwick, together with the man with the crutch and the lady with the ticket. He walked surprisingly fast. I followed watched him turn at the Gatwick's entrance, but when I entered the lobby he was gone.

There were three men sitting at the velvet armchairs on the main hall. One of them was working the night shift at the office. At the beginning of the year, the regular night guard (who I interviewed for my first story) had to leave the city. Because of this, Ettie and Rose had been working most of the nights during the last few weeks. I told him I was staying in room 309 and that I left my bag inside the storing compartment. After checking the register, he gave me the key to my room but told me he didn't have the key to the storing compartment, so I needed to wait until morning.

As I climbed the stairs everything was quiet, but when I reached the third floor, R2D2 appeared. It was rolling along the corridors, turning, spinning and beeping, operated by a remote control from one of the rooms next to the staircase. When I reached the end of the stairs, I turned right and walked through the corridor looking for my room. An old man was standing next to the entrance of his room, looking at the droid. On his door hung a piece of paper with an inscription that read: "John Herrington, member of the Chickasaw Tribe and the first Native American to go to space (2002)."

I kept walking down the hall, looking at the numbers on the doors to my left: 305, 306, 307; after 308 came the entrance to the bathroom (which has no door) and then a door with no number. I introduced the key, which easily turned, and entered the room.

Once inside, I opened the window, threw my bag on the bed, grabbed a notebook and wrote down my last impressions of the day. Then, I lied on the couch and began to read the first volume of *In Search of Lost Time*. After struggling for a while, trying to get through the initial pages, I decided to change from Proust in English to Kapuscinsky in Spanish. I went to my bed and induced myself to sleep reading about the African adventures of the Polish journalist.

II.

On Tuesday morning I woke around nine and went downstairs to pick up my bag. The office was still empty. Back in the room, I decided to plan the day's work. Before sitting on the couch, I pulled my head out the window and took a breath of fresh air. The view from my room consists mostly of the white wall of an apartments' building, which stands a few metres away. The wall has a large window, which lights the building's staircase across three floors. To my left, there were two pigeons standing on a ledge, less than a metre away from my window. I stared at them for a while. They remained still. After a couple of minutes of conscious breathing, I decided to give *In Search of Lost Time* another go. About half an hour (and just a couple of pages) later, I closed the book and went back to the office. This time I found Ettie, with whom I had a brief chat before she gave me my bag. She also gave me a towel, which happened to match the walls of my room, as it had eight embroidered squares, which went from the pink to the blue, in a scale of faded-out pastel colours. Like the dry palette of an impressionist painter.

The walls of the floor's main bathroom are covered with light-blue plaster. The floor is made of hard, dark concrete. In the wall opposite to the entrance there are two washbasins. Each of the lateral walls has four beige, wooden doors. The first two doors to the left lead to two partitioned bathtubs, the other two, to a couple of toilets. On the opposite side there are two more toilets and two showers (which stand precisely in front of the bathtubs). The walls around the showers, bathtubs and toilets are covered half way through with rectangular white tiles. There is only one drain between the two showers, which is located in the shower in the middle of the room (between one of the toilets and the shower closest to the entrance). There is a square hole on the bottom-right corner of the wall that separates the two showers. Through this hole, the water from the first shower flows towards the drain in the second one.

After thinking about it for a couple of minutes, I decided to use the first shower (the one with no drain). There is no lock in the showers' beige wooden doors. Instead, on the door's top right corner, there was a folded piece of paper that kept it closed. On the following morning the paper was gone. There are two, barely readable signs, written in dark-blue ink on the tiles above the water tabs. The one on the left says 'cold' and the one on the right says 'hot'.

After having a nice hot shower, I dressed up and went down to the lobby, where I sat on an armchair and watched as people and time went by. Then, I decided to go to the library and check some news on the Internet.

Meanwhile, on the opposite side of the world, Colombia had entered its biggest diplomatic crisis in a century. On Saturday, 1st of March, planes of the Colombian army crossed the Ecuadorian border without authorization and bombed a camp of the FARC, killing Raúl Reyes: second in command of this guerrilla group. The news on that Tuesday morning (which in Colombia still was Monday evening) told how Ecuador had broken diplomatic relations with Colombia and Venezuela had expelled the Colombian ambassador in Caracas. On the other hand, the Colombian government revealed that, according to certain information extracted from Reyes' computer (which was found when the Colombian Army recovered his body after the bombing), the Venezuelan government had given \$300 million USD of financial aid to the FARC.

After reading about this and other, less sensational news, I went back to the Gatwick. On the way to my room, I ran into Wendy, who was on her way out. She invited me to see her perform that night in one of the Poetry Idol competitions organised by the St Kilda library. A few months ago, when I was doing research for my first story, I saw her recite her poem *Gat-Girls* (dedicated to the prostitutes that live at the Gatwick) for which she was selected as one of the finalist, and earned her

right to compete in the major event, which was part of the Melbourne's Writers Festival. When she told me the time of the competition I understood it was at 9.30pm. I stayed at the lobby for a while, but as there was not much going on, I went up to my room and began another unsuccessful reading of *In Search for Lost Time*.

At around 8:00 pm, I went to get something to eat and then headed towards the library. When I got there (around 8.30pm) the place was empty. On my way back, I stopped for a bottle of wine and then I went to a Seven Eleven on Fitzroy Street, located across the street from the Gatwick, where I bought a one-dollar paper cup.

A man named Billy was covering the night shift at the office. I've seen him doing so, somehow regularly, since my early visits to the Gatwick. No one else around. I went straight up the staircase and while passing in front of the door with the note about the first Native American astronaut, and noticed how on top of its lintel frame it also had a sign carved in wood, which read: *Tipi Wasichu*. After that door came the one that leads to room 318. This is the room of Mr. Alessandro: an old kind man who rarely speaks, always pays his rent on time and never locks his door. Once inside my room, I kept thinking about the people who lived and have lived for decades in this place. Later that night, I found a piece of relative enlightenment in the words of Kapuscinski in a passage where he explains how different is the perception of time between Africans and Europeans:

The European and the African have an entirely different concept of time. In the European worldview, time exists outside man, exists objectively, and has measurable and linear characteristics. According to Newton, time is absolute: 'Absolute, true, mathematical time of itself and from its own nature, it flows equably and without relation to anything external.' The European feels himself to be time's slave, dependent on it, subject to it. To exist and function he must observe its ironclad, inviolate laws, its inflexible principles and rules. He must head deadlines, dates, days and hours. He moves within the rigors of time and cannot exist outside them. They impose upon him their requirements and quotas. An unresolvable conflict exists between man and time, one that always ends with man's defeat – time annihilates him. Africans apprehend time differently. For them, it is a much looser concept, more open, elastic, subjective. It is man who influences time, its shape, course, and rhythm (man acting, of course, with the consent of gods and ancestors). Time is even something that man can create outright, for time is made manifest through events, and whether an event takes place or not depends, after all, on man alone." [1]

[1] N of A: Taken from the translation from the Polish by Klara Glowczewska.

III.

On Wednesday morning I woke up and remained in bed for a while, observing the flying pattern of three flies that buzzed around the room; listening to conversations taking place between the showers, in the bathroom next door. When I stood up I went to the window and pulled my head out. There they were: the same two pigeons standing on the ledge. On my way out, I ran into Wendy, who was busy recycling the hotel's rubbish (as she often do during the mornings). I asked her about the Poetry Idol and she told me it had been at 6.30pm (not 9.30pm) and that she didn't do as well as in the previous occasion.

I went back to the library to check the news from the other side of the world. Ecuador was accusing Colombia before the UN's Human Rights Council because of the air raid. On the other hand, Colombia threatened to denounce Venezuelan president Hugo Chavez before the International Criminal Court, for endorsing the FARC guerrillas, which after 9/11 were declared a terrorist organisation.

After leaving the library and taking yet another walk around St Kilda, I came back to the Gatwick, where I ran into the old man who had the sign about the Native American astronaut hanging on his door. I was wearing a t-shirt with the photograph of three North American indigenous men holding shotguns and an inscription below that reads: Homeland Security, Fighting Terrorism Since 1492. He approached me and asked me which tribe did the men in my t-shirt belong. I answered him that I believed that was a portrait of the Apache warriors: Geronimo, Cochise and Mangas Coloradas. He told me they couldn't be Apaches, because they were holding Winchesters, which were never carried by the tribes from the southern states. Therefore, he told me, they could be Sioux, Cheyenne or from one of the other tribes that inhabited the Great Plains. This led to a longer conversation about Native Americans, where I learnt many things, including the fact the members of the US Cavalry used to receive the Congressional Medal of Honour for killing 'Indians'. Then, he told me he had something to show me and headed upstairs. A few minutes later, he returned carrying two peace pipes and one small totem. He showed them to me, but when I tried to take them he pulled them away, letting me know how I didn't need my hands in order to see them. He then told me how he had been buying Native American artefacts and studying their culture for several years, and invited me upstairs to check the rest of his collection.

When we reached the entrance to his room, I asked him about the meaning of the term: 'Tipi Wasichu'. The answer was White man's lodge.

Next to the room's door, there was wooden cupboard, where he kept what seemed like hundreds of small relics. He picked some and told me when and where he got them. Then, he opened his door a little bit more, in order to show me a few posters he had hanging on the wall next to his bed, with images of eagles and wolves. On top of the bed lied the little R2D2 that I saw rolling on the first night I stayed at the Gatwick.

When I exited his room, I asked him if I he could tell me something of his own story to included to the one I was writing. He said no. Because, he argued, there's been many stories written about the Gatwick and they were always negative, they never focused on the positive things that happen inside the hotel on a daily basis.

Later on I went back to the lobby. That night Ettie was working at the front desk. However, she was away cleaning rooms and sorting out problems. In her place, I found a group of four women sitting inside the office. At one point, one of them made a call to her mother, to let her know she was moving out of the Gatwick on the following morning. Her name was Vicky and, like the owners of the Gatwick, she also had a Maltese background. In the middle of her conversation, Ettie came back to

the office and, knowing that she was talking to her mother, said something in Maltese. 'Shush', said Vicky, 'don't say that, my mother is very religious.'

After the phone call, Vicky began to talk about her days at the Gatwick: 'I've been here since July last year and there's never a dull moment. Actually, when it's quiet, you think, someone go and do something will ya! When I first got here, there was a rumour that in the room where I've been staying, the woman who used to live there committed suicide, that she killed herself in the room, with a knife, that she stabbed herself. But what actually happened is that she overdosed. I asked the guy who used to do the night shifts, is that true? Cause if it is I'm out of here... When people start talking the stories change, sometimes they change bad. When I first came, someone told me: if you can live at the Gatwick then you can go and do jail, no worries, and I said jeez, thanks but I don't really plan to do jail.'

Following this, Vicky left and so did Ettie, who went back to her duties. The other three women stayed, talking loudly, gossiping and playing around like schoolgirls. In the middle of this, a middle aged indigenous man, with long white hair and thick grey beard, entered the office and began to harass one of them. He had a speaking disability and was only able to make intelligible, guttural sounds. He approached her insistently, while her friends kept telling him "leave her alone, she doesn't love you." After a while, the man left and the women returned to their childish female bonding. Feeling out of place, I went to my room.

In the way up, I ran into Ettie, who asked me to help her fix a window in Vicky's room. It was room 225, the first room I ever saw at the Gatwick. On that occasion -almost a year ago- it was a complete mess. It was full of food crumbs and empty syringe wrappers all over the floor. On one of the walls someone had written the word 'Babydoll' with a black magic marker. During the following months, I saw contractors doing repairs, repainting the walls, changing the carpet and replacing the lamp that hangs from the ceiling. Less than a year later, the room was once again in chaos. Somebody had broken one of the windows, after throwing something from outside. I assisted Ettie while she replaced the frame. When this was done, I went to my room.

IV.

The Organization of American States has restated that a nation's sovereignty over its territory is inviolable. However, it has refrained from explicitly condemning Colombia for its incursion in Ecuadorian soil. Chavez has threatened to nationalise Colombian companies operating in Venezuela. The Colombian government is saying that the FARC wanted to obtain Uranium, but that there is no proof that they wanted to build a nuclear weapon.

I can't stop thinking about the screams I heard in the morning. About my reaction (or the lack of one) when this happened.

I have a class in a few hours, but I've decided to skip it and stay around the Gatwick. I run into Wendy at the main hall. She is telling an old man about the assault she recently suffered. 'What happened?' I ask her in a semi-hypocritical fashion, 'I don't want to talk about it', she replies, 'especially to you.' I know Wendy is one of the staunchest defendants of the Gatwick and the few rooming houses that remain in St Kilda, but, does she know I was just a few metres away when she was being assaulted? She storms out of the building and I watch her go. Afterwards, I go to the office, where Rose talking with a skinny, middle-aged man, who everyone call Cookie. He is going to be working at the front desk that night. I introduce myself and tell him I am writing a story about the Gatwick. Then, I ask him if it's all right for me to come down during the evening and interview him. He kindly accepts.

I come back around ten. Few minutes after the beginning our interview, the bald man with the metal crutch (the one I saw on Monday night arriving on the tram) enters the office and asks me if I can give him my chair. I do so and remain standing there, listening to them as they talk: 'Did you hear about this morning?', asks Cookie, 'What?', the bald man replies, 'Wendy was attacked', 'Really!?', 'Yes, in the third floor, in the bathroom. Remember the deaf guy who's crashing here last night?', 'The dark fellow?', 'yes, apparently he went after her and chased her all the way to her room.', 'that's fucked up.' While they talk, I try to reconstruct the events. The only thing close to a logical explanation, regarding my lack of courage during the situation, comes when I recall an article I read in a random magazine which name I can't remember, that exposed how one person's impulse to perform heroic actions is determined by their DNA.

After a while, the bald man goes back to his room and Cookie resumes his story:

'I've been living in St Kilda all my life, my parents died when I was twelve and I've never had big family ties. I knew Ettie and Rose's parents and I have always been in and out of here. Now I am in a time of my life when I've got to settle down and just... I am dying... I abandoned my family because I didn't want them –especially my children- to find out. They all think that I have just gone away. My objective now, while I'm here, is not to sob around and be sad, but to help the girls, cheer them up, make them happy, because when I see them happy I am happy. You know, Ettie and Rose are the best people I've met and I'll protect them with my life. And they like me working at the office at night, because I keep things quiet. I get along with everybody, just ask around. See all these muscly guys who work here? You don't need that. You just have to treat people with respect and they won't cause any trouble.'

Mr Alessandro, the old man from room 318, has come down to pay his rent. After collecting and registering the payment Cookie continues, 'I think I have six months, not much more than that, and the way I'm feeling at the moment... I know that when the time comes I'm just going to take a holiday and probably go north, maybe in Western Australia and live my last couple of weeks there...' after a brief silence I ask him what is the thing that he will remember the most about the Gatwick, 'the best memories I have', he replies, 'is seeing people that are homeless, down and out, with virtually no real life, but when they come here it's like one big family and that's because of the way the girls treat everybody. There is always a spare blanket.'

V.

Friday morning. After my conversation with Cookie, I went to my room to get some sleep. I have an early class today. I arrive to the university half an hour earlier than usual and take a shower. After class, I meet with some friends and decide to take the afternoon off and go to the city. During this time, I am tempted with an invitation to a party in a house that apparently used to be a brothel. I go back to the Gatwick. When I arrive, there is no one at the main hall, except for Cookie, who is once again covering the night shift. I keep him company for a while and then go out for a walk and head towards the St Kilda pier.

There is a high-school party at the pier's café. The strident techno music drives me away. I go to grab something to eat and then buy a bottle of wine and a new paper cup. When I return to the Gatwick, the bald man with the metal crutch is once again sitting at the office, talking to Cookie. I wave at them and head to my room.

VI.

Saturday. I am sitting in a random café, calculating my expenses while staying at the Gatwick. Although Ettie and Rose didn't charge me anything, it's been an expensive week. The reason: an average of two meals a days in some of the local restaurants (the cheaper ones) and several visits to coffee shops like this one. From what I've heard at the Gatwick, most of the tenants are not allowed in most of these places.

On the morning someone knocked at my door. It was Wendy. She asked me if this was the fat guy's room. When she left, I went towards the window and when I pulled my head out I saw a couple going up the staircase of the building in front, having what looked like a heated argument. The pigeons were still there.

After finishing my coffee, I go back to the Gatwick, where Ettie and her husband Dennis are busy fixing the pipes in one of the first floor's bathrooms. Ettie asks me if I can stay at the office while they work on the repairs. I sit there and see a note resting on top of the desk. It's from Vicky, from room 225, 'Dear Ettie and Rose, thank you for everything. There are a few things that I couldn't find in my room. If you find them I'll appreciate if you can save them for me. They are: one photograph of myself, a teddy bear and a drawer full of stuff.'

When Ettie and her husband come back, I go to my room. After a short while, the hammering noise from the multiple repairs taking place in the hotel, together with the never ending coughing from across the hall, drive me away.

I walk around St Kilda until dusk. Then, I head towards the pier. This evening there's no high-school party. It's quiet and peaceful. While working on my first story, after my visits to the Gatwick, I used to come here to sit on the rocks and take notes. I watch the seagulls that fight against the wind and walk by the fishermen who come to try their luck night after night.

It's another quiet night at the hotel (something rare in a Saturday night). I go to the third floor's bathroom to wipe my nose. Looking for paper, I open one of the toilet doors and find an old bearded man sitting down. I apologise and close the door. As I leave, I can hear him mumble some sort of insult.

I have no energy to go to the lobby nor the concentration to read. I spend my last night listening to Brazilian music and finishing the bottle of wine.

On Sunday morning I wake up before the sun has fully risen. I've decided to have bath. I have thought about doing so after reading the following message, from an email sent to me by Kate Holden, whom I interviewed for my first story: 'I never felt the Gatwick was haunted in a bad way... though in the bathrooms, alone having a bath in the afternoon, in the echoey room, I did always expect to see a ghost, there was just a strange atmosphere.' I check both bathtubs, but can't find a plug anywhere. I open a yellow plastic container that stands next to one of the tubs, but instead of a plug I find a bunch of used syringes.

I decide not to take a shower either, and go back to my room to start packing.

On my way out, I toss the key through the slot on the wooden partition that separates the the office from the lobby. As I walk towards the exit, I see a skinny, wrinkled man resting against the frame of the door, he is not wearing a shirt. I keep looking at him with the corner of my eye and he remains still, gazing at a horizon that appears beyond my perception.

As I cross the wooden door, I take one last look back and then head towards the tram-stop, where I wait for my ride back to reality.

PORT PHILLIP POST

Friday, September 23, 2067

NEWS FROM THE FUTURE



The Gatwick Times

NEWS FROM THE FUTURE

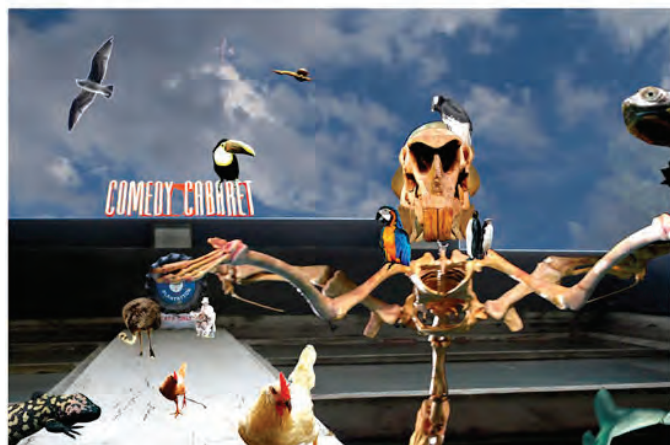


image by: Mauricio Rivera



PART III:

PRODUCTION NOTES:

‘SONNETS FROM THE GATWICK’

INTRODUCTION

The Sonnets from the Gatwick are a series of short documentaries I made between July and December 2009, together with a street artist named Sandor 'Budapest' Somok, whom I met at the Gatwick.

The Sonnets were conceived as an experiment in digital publishing and editorialising. Departing from the premise that there is no such thing as objective journalism, the aim was to present the story of the Gatwick through the eyes of those who live and work there.

The series is divided in seven parts (or Sonnets), which cover seven different subjects. These subjects were decided based on a meeting I held with Ettie and Rose (the owners and managers of the Gatwick). In this meeting, Ettie told me about Sandor, who had recently moved into room 225 (after living in one of the dorms for a couple of months).

The original idea was to form a production crew with various tenants, but in the end it was only Sandor and I. During our first recording sessions, we only managed to interview Ettie and Rose and film background shots of the building. However, in time (thanks to Sandor's mediation) we managed to convince some of the tenants to appear in the documentaries.

Approximately six months after finishing the production, I received an email from a social worker, telling me there was something delicate she had to tell me. When I called her, she told me Sandor had died and I was the only contact he had left.

Sandor left Hungary towards the end of the 1970s and, after living in Paris for a while, migrated to Australia in 1980. He spent his first years in Sydney, where he made part of a movement of industrial art. He used to say he was the first person to paint on stage in Australia -he did so while a band led by the (also Hungarian) musician Jackie Orszaczky was playing.

Later on, he moved to Melbourne, where for 25 years he walked up and down Brunswick Street (Fitzroy), selling samples of his art. His outgoing personality, the cards he painted with female and abstract figures and his peculiar walk (as a child, Sandor contracted poliomyelitis), turned him into a somehow famous character around the suburb. Nevertheless, I was the only person present in the memorial ceremony that the office of social services organised when he died.



- I. The story of the Gatwick and some of its tenants.
- II. The relation between the hotel and its neighbours.
- III. The organisations that provide food and medical treatment to some of the tenants.
- IV The nightlife of St. Kilda
- V The art produced in and inspired by the Gatwick.

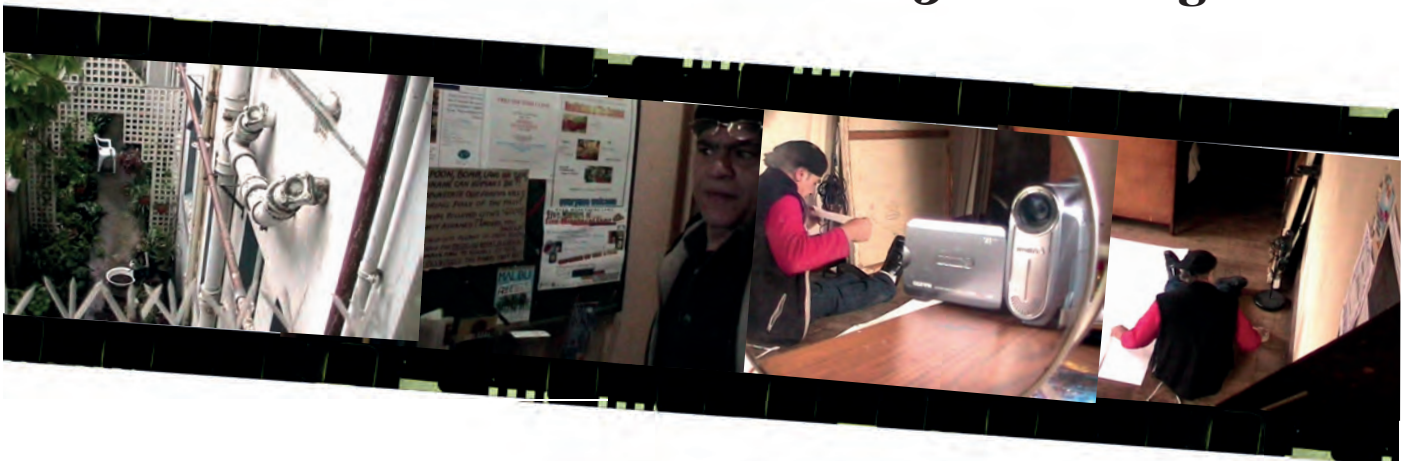
Tells part of the story of the Gatwick and its owners; and explains how the hotel is perceived by both its tenants and its neighbours. Originally published on 19 September 2009.

Sonnet # 2 - The spiritual realm



Starts by introducing the rumors about ghosts and spirits that dwell in the Gatwick. After this, it introduces 'Johno' -the first tenant we managed to interview- who is a Hare Krishna and became Sandor's closest friend at the Gatwick. Originally published on 27 September 2009.

Sonnet # 3 - Backstage ballad



Starts with the rumors about ghosts and spirits that dwell in the Gatwick. After this, it introduces 'Johno' -the first tenant we managed to interview- who is a Hare Krishna and became Sandor's closest friend at the Gatwick. Originally published on 27 September 2009.

Sonnet # 4 - Food van



Presents a quick, behind the scenes, view of the production of the documentaries and of Sandor's studio/room at the Gatwick. Originally published on 18 October 2009.

Sonnet # 5 - Wendy Wanderlost



This Sonnet focuses on one of the Gatwick's tenants: the poet Wendy Butler.
Originally published on 8 December 2009.

Sonnet # 6 - Retracing steps



It registers the visit of writer Kate Holden, who lived at the Gatwick a few years ago.
Originally published on 12 December 2009.

Sonnet # 7 - A fountain of inspiration

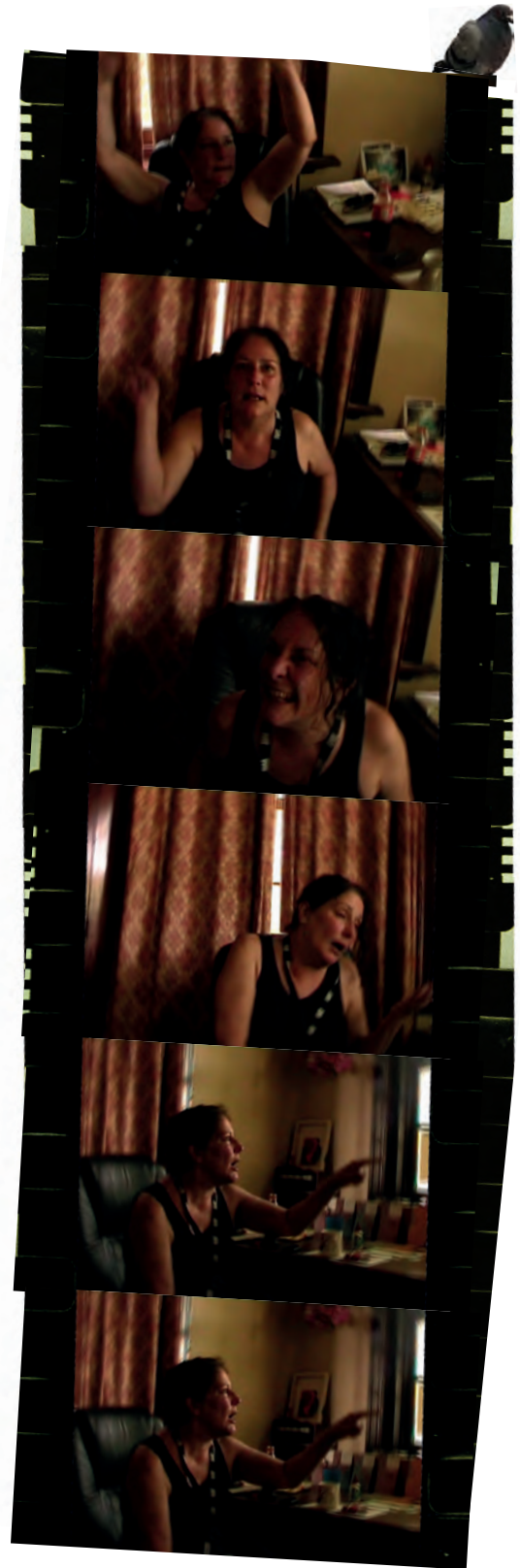


The final Sonnet showcases some of the artworks produced at the Gatwick.
Originally published on 13 December 2009.

EPILOGUE

While we were recording the Sonnets from the Gatwick, we organised a series of projections at the St. Kilda Library and other commercial venues, where we moderated discussions about the Gatwick in particular and the situation of rooming houses in general.

A few days after we officially ended the production of the documentaries, we managed to do one final interview (which include a strong political message), with an American tenant named Mayora. When Sandor died, I decided to edit and publish this interview as some sort of posthumous homage.



[illegible]