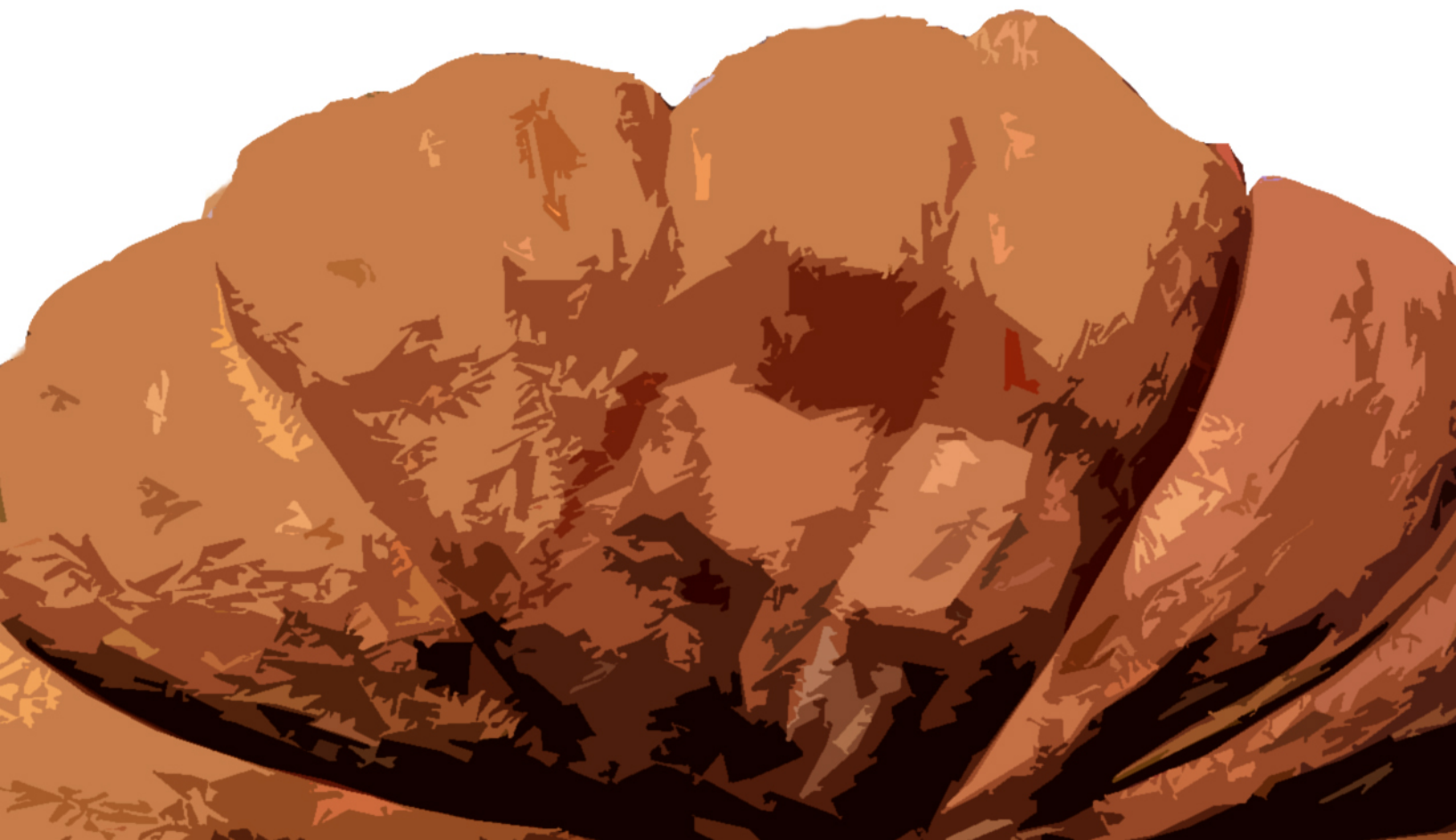


RETURN OF THE ATOMIC GHOSTS
Gregory Sholette, 2001-2011



It is widely known that following the Second World War, but especially during the latter part of the 1960s, a movement emerged across the globe that called for dramatic social and political transformation. Popular worker movements in Latin America, Eastern Europe, Asia and Africa challenged the status quo and demanded immediate reforms. Student movements in Europe, Australia and North America picked up similar themes and in the United States the Civil Rights, Anti-war, Feminist and Gay liberation movements echoed what seemed to be a nearly universal call for greater democracy, an end to racism and colonialism and the institution of radical economic and political justice. Some even called-for outright revolution. Artists, some working alone, and others working in groups and collectives, followed close behind. They used a variety of means to express solidarity with this larger wave of political expression. Photomontage, agitational posters, performance, journals, art made for demonstrations as well as interventions in mainstream museums.



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Throughout the same post-war period, a series of individuals, governmental bodies, and secretive institutions emerged that sought to curtail this drive for social change. Working within the law as well as above it, the House Un-American Activities Committee, CointelPro and the Red Squads, to name a few of the better known organizations, actively undermined the legitimacy of the popular protest movements as well as radical labor and Left Wing groups. Scores of artists, actors, writers and academics were investigated and many lost their jobs. With the fall of the Berlin Wall and in 1989 all of this nefarious activity suddenly seemed like ancient history.

Until now...

Less than one week after President George W. Bush Jr. challenged the world to either join him or face the consequences, the first in a series of disturbing discoveries is made on an experimental farm in California. Unusual markings and patterns on the skin of several oversized, transgenic pumpkins reveal what look like the portrait of a human being. Both scientists and locals are at a loss to explain the phenomenon or to identify the mysterious, face-like splotches.



A similar discovery was made about one month later. Shown here are graduate students working with genetically modified pineapples at The American University in Washington DC. Just as before, no logical explanation is forthcoming, nor is any suggestion made regarding whom these peculiar markings might represent, if they in fact represent anyone.



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And then nothing further happens for six months...



But at 7:16 PM on June 19th 2003 an un-named employee at a WalMart in Ossining New York chances upon something unusual as he re-stocks frozen food. Rather than panic customers, the manager invokes the “unpaid-overtime clause” forcing his workers to clear and clean the shelves throughout the night. Nevertheless, one employee used a digital camera from the electronics department to capture this remarkable image just before the shelves were completely scrubbed down.

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Shortly after the WalMart incident officials within the Department of Homeland Security began to take an interest in the phenomenon. They opted to initiate a little known provision of the USA Patriot Act of 2001 that establishes a Joint Task Force focused on Ectoplasmic Security and Defense or ESD. ESD was launched in the Fall of 2003, and their initial investigation, which I make public today for the first time, revealed the identities of the mysterious apparitions including:

1. The pumpkin likeness is that of the young Whitaker Chambers, who along with Richard Nixon sent Alger Hiss to prison on charges of espionage in January of 1950.

2. The twin images in the transgenic pineapple are the Dulles Brothers: Allen Dulles, cofounder and first director of the CIA from 1953 to 1961 on your right, and his brother John Foster Dulles on the left. John was Secretary of State under President Eisenhower and helped to engineer the overthrow of legally elected governments in Guatemala and Iran among other actions.

3. And the manifestation at WalMart? None other than attorney Roy Cohn who in the early 1950s worked with Senator Joseph McCarthy to convict Ethel and Julius Rosenberg on charges of stealing the secret of the atomic bomb for the Soviet Union. They were later executed even though no evidence has ever linked Ethel to the crime. Furthermore, no actual "secret" ever existed since the bomb technology was already known in the USSR by 1950.



2003

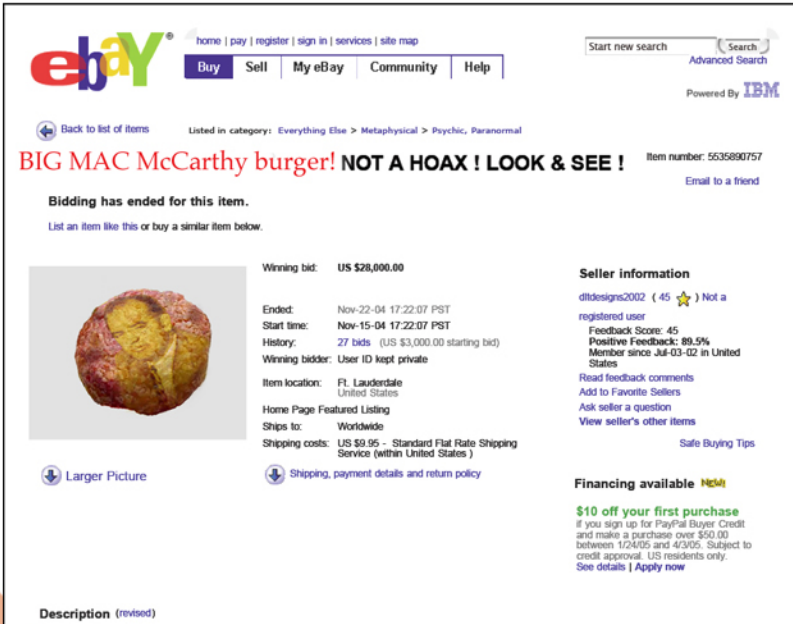
Doctor Craig Baldwin of the ESD Task Force observes that it is not unusual for strange, even occasionally terrifying incidents to take place during times of political and social turmoil. Typically, these phenomenon, begin with seemingly random incidents. Before long they accelerate, at which point a pattern emerges. Tragically, this is often followed by events of a catastrophic nature.



Not surprisingly, McCarthy's specter turned up shortly afterwards in a mustard-slathered Big Mac hamburger. The customer who discovered "Joe" in his greasy, granulated patty turned a nice profit by auctioning off his find on Ebay.

Winter 2004 near Rochester New York, Judge Irving Kaufman appears in a bowl of raspberry Jello. (Judge Kaufman as you know sentenced the Rosenbergs to death.)

And in the Spring, in Atlanta's Third Ward, Mary Kemp ordered her daily Grande Latte with double shot and skim milk. Her thirst was not quenched however. Floating in the foamy lather was what appeared to be Richard Milhous Nixon. Kemp sent the apparition flying across the counter of Starbucks, but not before a crowd had gathered and someone took this remarkable snapshot.



ESD investigators were not convinced that either of these apparitions are authentic. Likewise, the University of Buffalo student who reported his cell phone was "haunted" by J. Edgar Hoover has since turned out to be a practical joker.

2004

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Less cut and dried however, is the case of the phantom voices that have turned up on numerous iPods in the United States. ESD investigators have concluded these unexplained voices are indeed that of J. Edgar Hoover and that it comes from no known archival recording of the late FBI chief...

Several years later Professor Baldwin's theory of imminent, metaphysical warfare appeared vindicated when a second, and fully antithetical wave of unusual manifestations erupted. The first of these startling new images was the re-appearance of Patrice Lumumba, first Prime Minister of Democratic Republic of Congo, who was assassinated by a CIA-backed coup in 1961, now appearing on the outskirts of Kinshasa, Congo.



Word of the apparition spread fast, first becoming the talk of the nation, then the talk of the entire continent. The next incident took place across the Atlantic at the US Embassy in Guatemala City. You can see here the ghostly apparition of the democratically elected leader Jacobo Árbenz Guzmán standing in the embassy garden. As you know, Árbenz was overthrown in a CIA backed coup in 1954.

Since then a series of highly sensitive documents have been obtained with great difficulty from an unnamed, White-House photographer.



Inside Air Force One on the tarmac in Hamburg Germany another apparition is reflected in a small, convex mirror just behind the president's seat. The image is that of of Salvador Allende: democratically elected President of Chile who was killed during a CIA backed coup on September 11th, 1973.

2008

And the phenomenon continues...



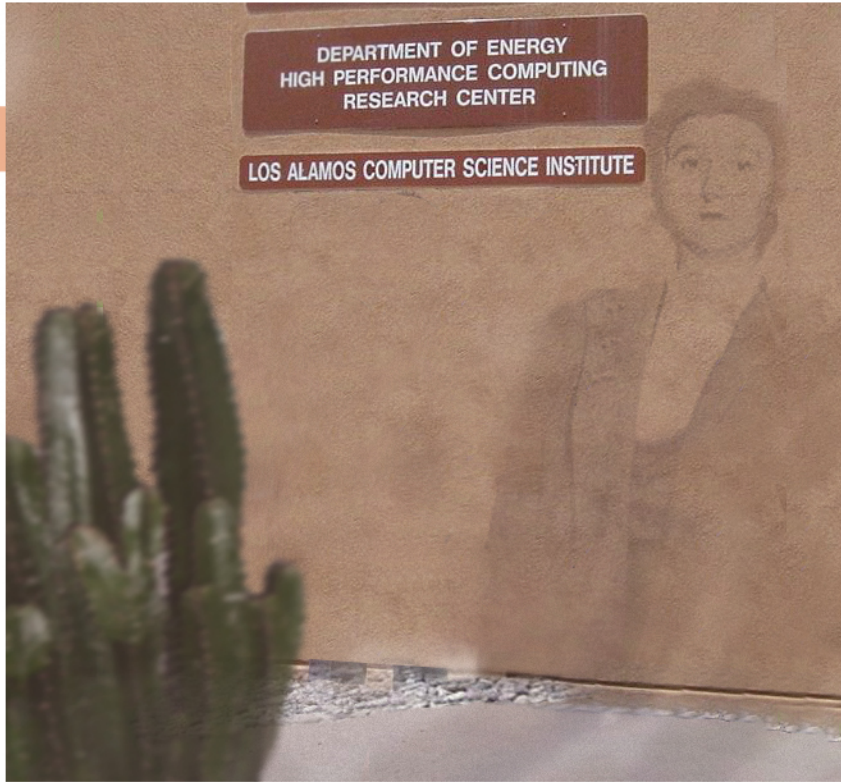
Slain Black Panther leader Fred Hampton appears inside offices of the Chicago police department early this year. (Hampton was shot to death by Chicago Police and FBI agents in August of 1969.)



Former CIA director James Woolsey during a public lecture can be seen here with the visage of Doctor Mohammad Mossadegh of Iran hovering nearby. Mossadegh was overthrown in a CIA-backed coup in 1953 and replaced with the widely despised Shah Pahlavi of Iran.

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And one decade after the attacks of 9-11, an eerie shadow resembling the slain Ethel Rosenberg is photographed just outside the Los Alamos center in New Mexico:



Clearly these extraordinary events underscore the current uncertainties of post 9-11 America but they also raise a series of troubling questions for us to consider.

Are we on the brink of a new, sweeping social and political conflict unlike anything we have experienced before? Or is it really the return of old conflicts, submerged ideological battles and repressed histories that are gathering like dark clouds on the edge of the future? And what, if anything, can be done to prepare ourselves for what might be ahead?

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El Gigante
Dispara versiones sobre el comienzo de clases en la Escuela Especial 20
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Aprueban proyecto sobre la Terminal de Omnibus

LAPICERAS AZUL + 1 UNIDADES	\$1,00	LAPIZ COLOR BARBIE LATA + 12 LARGOS	\$4,70
LAPICERAS + 10 COLORES DIFERENTES	\$2,20	REGLA 30 CM MOTIVOS DIFERENTES	\$2,40
PLASTICOLA A 30	\$0,35	REPUESTO RAYADO 48 PAJ. 40ml	\$0,95
CUADERNO 24x36 RAYADO TPLEX 40ml	\$2,35	LAPIZ COLOR + 12 LARGOS	\$2,20
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CARPETA 3 ANILLOS 40x50	\$2,50	ESQUADANTE MOYUN + 800 CC	\$1,20
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LAPIZ NEGRO 40ml	\$0,20	ROLLO COCINA MOYUN + 3 UNDS	\$1,20
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Return of the Atomic Ghosts (2011): documents evidence of an impending paranormal clash between a horde of resurrected cold warrior “spooks” including Richard Nixon, Whitaker Chambers, and Joseph McCarthy (among others) and an equally spectral posse of former cold war victims including Patrice Lumumba, Mohammed Mossadegh, and Ethel Rosenberg.

All of the images in the piece were found on Google’s image search and modified using Adobe Photoshop. This pamphlet is based on an “interventionist” lecture I gave at the College Art Association conference in Atlanta Georgia in 2004 on the topic of the Patriot Act.

In order of appearance the characters include:



**President George W. Bush
Whitaker Chambers
Allen and John Foster Dulles
(AKA the Dulles Brothers)
Judge Irving R. Kaufman
J. Edgar Hoover
Richard M. Nixon
Roy Cohn
Joseph McCarthy
Craig Baldwin**



**Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba
Jacobo Árbenz Guzmán
Salvador Allende
Fred Hampton
Prime Minister Dr. Mohammad Mossadegh
Ethel Rosenberg**