

*“Lost Rambler”*

**Emile Pavlovic**

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*NOTE: Lost Rambler is a play on words and pronunciation of the famous boulevard, Las Ramblas, which cuts through the heart of Barcelona's city centre.*

In 2014, I was provided with an opportunity to pursue in depth a topic of particular interest to me, the Abject. Undertaken within my Media Bachelor degree at Southern Cross University, and based in Barcelona, Spain. The purpose of my visit to Barcelona was to construct a visual research project that documented representations of the abject in Catalan culture.

My academic and artistic pursuit of the abject is a confrontation with that which we may simultaneously fear or identify with, that is, the ambiguous space between our subjective sense of self or self identity and the objective sense of what we are not. The abject is the confrontation between self and other that threatens identity. As Julia Kristeva notes, 'when we are propelled into the world of the abject, our imaginary borders disintegrate and the abject becomes a tangible threat because our identity system and conception of order has been disrupted.'

Originally created for the stage, this film is designed with the intent to cause affect and impact, to cause a visceral revolution, or what Kristeva identifies as, 'a revolt against that which gave us our own existence'. I've blended abject discourse - narrative and poetry - with the fragmented structure of the edit, to provide a forum for exploration of the subconscious and streams of consciousness. The deliciously repellent and alluring state of being, the nauseous recognition of it, the adrenalin-packed acknowledgement of its presence, is my provocation of the abject.

This video came about because I could not present my work on stage as a live performance piece/installation at University, as originally intended. While this caused some frustration, ultimately the creation of a video piece was probably more practical, given some of the more difficult ideas I wanted to stage. However, the video is guided by the ideas I planned for the live performance.

Because I had to rely solely on audiovisual aesthetics rather than the enhanced sensory experience (smell, live bodily interaction and fluids etc) I paid particular attention to the representation of the abject as an 'unnerving' and uncomfortable experience for the viewer, for example, the nauseatingly fast flickering montage of Barcelona images in the opening sequence.

I have divided the film into chapters or segments each of which were a rite of passage. These chapters or principles of purification ritual are: Separation, where the individual is cast out or alienated; Transition, where the individual transitions from isolation to searching for 'the other'; Transgression, where the individual crosses or surrenders to boundaries; Aggregation, where the individual disorientated by dreams and reflections, finds clarity in it midst; Abjection where the individual finds solace in the complete destruction of the self and its relationship to the outside world. The imagery for these chapters came from a type of symbolic interpretation of various experiences I had as a 'dark tourist', someone searching for the abject in Barcelona and finding it in myself.

**Word of Caution:** This film contains scenes and images that may be distressing to some viewers. Strictly for adult audiences only. Please watch at your own discretion.

<https://vimeo.com/123309383>

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