

I first met Brion Gysin in the middle of a dark Paris winter in 1974. He was living at the Cite des Arts in a great loft overlooking the Seine.

My friend Ariel Kalma a french composer took me to meet him. He told Brion that I had been living in between Paris and Morocco for a few years and that i could play the ney.

Brion was jovial magnanimous and terribly funny; especially when referring to the plastic bag he had tied around his waist that he was shitting in.

He was smoking a fat spliff.

When he found out that i could play the ney which i brought with me he asked me to play and i think he was amused to hear that I had figured out how to get a sound out of it.

Then he played us some of his recordings of Jajouka recorded on his UHER stereo and laid his BOUJALOU/ PAN rap on us with his signature spellbinding jocular eloquence

and nonchalantly segued into a spiraling four hour stream of consciousness prose poem -history lesson - gossip column - with subjects ranging from the Sahara Desert, slavery in Canada, Tristan Tzara' s collage technique, Andre Breton, Paul Eluard, magic spells in Morocco, village politics in Jajouka, The Stones, Burroughs, Bowles and Steve Lacy.

By the end his whorl of thoughts seemed indistinguishable from the rings of spliff smoke circling above his head. He played one of Steve Lacy's records and he told me that i should meet Steve. I told him that had had a chance to meet Steve when I was playing with Alan Silva's "Celestial Communications Orchestra in 1971 and that Steve's bass player Kent Carter played in a band I was in around that same time. Brion also told me that Steve needed an apartment and that he, Brion, had put an ad in Liberation saying that Steve needed an apartment and that he had landed Steve this amazing place thanks to one of his fans.

I visited Brion often after that and each time I was BOLWN AWAY. Brion always gave me the feeling that i was going in the right direction and that I could really believe in what i was trying to do. This was an enormous gift to what was essentially a very insecure and too stoned twenty five year old. I had been trying to decide whether i should go back to New York or back to Morocco.

My father died earlier that fall and i think that Brion became a most unlikely father figure for me. I had a series of recurring dreams the week before my fathers death down to the last details of his funeral. ( He wasn't sick and he died suddenly from a brain tumor so i had no idea because the brain tumor was not part of the dreams.) In the last dream my father was meditating floating above snow peaked mountains. Then in January of 1975 I had a dream that I was in an avalanche in the Atlas Mountains but some how i told my self to rise to the top of the snow and surf it like a giant wave and the wave brought me down to the foot of the mountains and washed me into a steaming hammam pool.

( This dream came true too but that's another story.) So I was very excited to go and see Brion to tell him about the dream and when I got there after listening to the dream he handed me a letter that he had already written to Paul Bowles and he said " This time you must go and meet Paul and this is your letter of introduction..."

This turned out to be an at once wonderful and terrible idea. Wonderful because I did meet Paul and terrible because Brion didn't warn me to watch out for Mohammed Marabet and to not mention Brion's name in front of him. So when I arrived at the Imeuble Intessa in Tangier I knocked on the door and Marabet answered and I said "I'm a friend of Brion Gysin and I'm here to see Paul Bowles." Marabet slammed the door in my face. I stood there frozen but I could hear Paul's voice through the thin wooden door saying "Let him in let him in."

But from that moment on there was an X (just like the the X at the corner of Pauls tapis) over my face. And every time I went to see Paul if Marabet was there he would try to rip me off. When I told Brion this story he was highly amused. One time Marabet stoled a camera. One time three years later I drove from Marrakech to Tangier and I left my car parked in Paul's garage for three months and went back to Europe and the US with two suit cases full of my work at the time. When I got back to Tangier I was relieved to see that the car was still there so I put my bags in the trunk and went up to see Paul (and Marabet who snuck out just after i got there) and when I went back down the bags were gone... Any how I'm digressing. So basically when ever I was in Paris I would go over to see Brion. He finally moved to 135 Rue Saint Martin. And still when ever I'm in Paris I go by 135 and compulsively take a picture. It was during the time that the Pompidou was being built and Brion was photographing the whole thing and using the photos in his painting. He had a Dream Machine set up in the apartment.

After the Pompidou was built I was working at IRCAM doing some recording and so I saw Brion a lot. The Palace club wasn't far form his place and we usually ended up there with him holding court and me trying to figure out who the 'travelos' weren't. (I Could change that syntax but I'm sure that Brion is looking over my shoulder telling me not to.)

I was living in Paris again in 85/86 staying on rue des Archives not far from Brion . The last time i remember seeing him he was very excited about 'Calligraphitti du Feu' and so was I.

I dedicated the track " Desert Equations" to Brion when Sussan Deyhim and I released the record by the same name in 1987.

When Brion wrote letters he always signed off with:

"Soonest Brion"