

In Which My (“Melting”) Image Moved Into, And Out Of, Michael Jackson’s “Don’t Stop ‘Til You Get Enough” (1979; Greatest Pop Song Of the Twentieth Century)

By Michael Farrell



Crunch time! if you could have seen my stooped (bottom heavy) body, which entered the world in 1965 (but the image of which began forming much earlier, and thickened, especially, after 1963, the year my parents met), and if you could have heard the strains—or seen the dance—you might have thought that I was feeling the force of, and trying to replicate in some way, pop music, with the letters of the alphabet. My suspense graph was in operation: my clothed ambition.

Jutting slimness; star-shaped chaos; best tuxedo: through the virtual; kismet. Sweetness took its toll, wax became lyrical, easeful, countering its being a lit candle, that stood to, in a hot army, under fire. Oh Shakespeare, this was not arte povera. It was heaven as a gioielleria, as archived fever, desiring to wash the blues out of existence. “I would not be singing the blues,” he claimed.

That’s what reality as an image was for, as if living in the moment were possible, sustainable, and a mirror could be our friend. Crunch time! it was always great to be trying, mysteries, holy and otherwise, heaving through the plains: iambic, catatonic, bionic people, and metres, always running out of deus ex machinas. Oh Sappho, but trauma would tell. I wanted to be post-conceptual, that was my own dead-end / deadened blues. Dead bees swarmed the carpet, like a scene from a Nirvana video—the light I mean—and I dreamed of Kurt Cobain and Michael Jackson singing, the duet to stop time. Forget Cher (don’t forget Cher, mon cher). I was reading *Jacksonism* by Gilles Deleuze, and couldn’t stop stealing every sentence. Accumulation kept me feeling fine, one hand in a naked pocket: if I was pure I’d be that cuff, or later, that glove.

Mr Lonely, Mr Afterimage, Mr Pinball, grasping the softness, Mr Ooh-not-now, Mr Since-my-baby-didn’t-leave-me-life-was-bliss. Cut the optic nerve now, doctor: it’s been my best day in paradise / the office ever.

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