

# Radio Alice— Free Radio

## Collective A/Traverso

After the events of March 1977, *Radio Alice* became the symbol of the free radios. It was emitted from Bologna, one of the strongholds of the ICP and the explicit showcase for the Historical Compromise.

### DIRTY LANGUAGE OR THE MOVEMENT

When the accusation of obscenity was flung at us, we were a little disconcerted. We had thought about many possible accusations: pirate station, underminers, communists, subversives, but we did not anticipate this one. But that's natural and proper. Language, when it is freed from the sublimations which reduce it to the code and makes desire and the body speak, is obscene (literally: obscene).

The body, sexuality, the desire to sleep in the morning, the liberation from labor, the possibility to be overwhelmed, to make oneself unproductive and open to tactile, uncodified communication: all this has for centuries been hidden, submerged, denied, unstated. *Vade Retro, Satanas.*

The blackmail of poverty, the discipline of labor, hierarchical order, sacrifice, fatherland, family, general interests, socialist blackmail, participation: all that stifled the voice of the body. All our time, forever and always, devoted to labor. Eight hours of work, two hours of travel, and, afterward, rest, television, and dinner with the family.

Everything which is not confined within the limits of that order is obscene. Outside it smells like shit.

### THE VOICE OF THOSE PUSHED ASIDE

All the "unstated" is emerging: from the *Chants de Maldoror* to the struggles for reducing the work-day. It speaks in the Paris Commune and in Artaud's poetry, it speaks in Surrealism and in the French May, in the Italian Autumn and in immediate liberation; it speaks across the separate orders of the language of rebellion. Desire is given a voice, and for them, it is obscene.

Alice looks around, plays, jumps, wastes time in the midst of papers illuminated by the sun, runs ahead, settles down elsewhere.

And yet everything functions in the order of discourse.

Discourse connects, explains, allows no interruptions, organizes, participates, reprimands. . .

*Like an invitation to talk with you about your work where they don't give you anything to eat.*

Silence.

The subject has changed.

Pant, hiss, don't think you're right.

The silence, the uncanny, the "unstated," that which remains to be said, , frightens.

In the program, so many dense headings, as dense as in a newspaper. . . A half-hour with your Carlo. . . Cheek to cheek with folks. . . All that Jazz. . . 1, 2, 3 o'clock bulletin.

*Alice hisses, yells, contemplates, interrupts herself, pulls.*

*Go tell him that it's spring.*

We have received a telephone call from the Technological Institute: "We have occupied the president's office and we are calling from his phone, listen how he yells. . . He wanted to impose upon us a vote by a show of hands and then he'd shove it up our ass."

*It's better that way.*

The discourse of order's desire for power

or the power of desire against the order of discourse.

Radio for the participants

or radio for the uncanny?

In the first case the language is univocal: the announcer's, who announces that the event has happened. They talk about something which means something else and can therefore never be captured because it is over.

*A mirror.*

In this sense, attempts at imitation are pathetically ridiculous: dialects and accents are not tolerated. In the second case something continues to flee from language. This is manifest in outbursts of laughter, words in suspension, the word which cannot be found and which refuses to change into another one, stammering, silence.

*Well, "let's talk about the uncanny."*

One cannot pass from one discourse to another (from inside Italian Radio to outside Italian Radio).

The subject changes? The new subject is collective and does not speak.

Or speaks when it wants to.

Silence: a hole.

Let's allow holes to grow, let's not fear orifices, let's fall into them and pass on elsewhere.

*Wonderland.*

Another direct phone call:

"We are workers on strike, we want you to play some music and we want to talk to you about the 35 hour week, it's time they talked about that in contracts."

Another direct phone call:

"Dirty communists, we're going to make you pay dearly for this radio station, we know who you are."

Another direct one:

"We are from the anti-fascist committee of the Rizzoli Hospital, don't worry about anything, and call us if something happens, we are here night and day."

Break the cycle of the valorization of capital in the process of circulation of the sign-value (no more appropriation of merchandise to interrupt the A-M-A' cycle, but a savage strike in the circulation of the single sign-value A-A').

Interrupt the language of machines, of the work-ethic, of productivity.

"An invitation not to get up this morning, to stay in bed with someone, to make musical instruments and war devices for yourself."

## GRAY, OBTUSE, DANGEROUS

Gray are the coats of the cops who have imprisoned comrade Bifo, gray are their instruments of death. Gray is the prison where he has been locked up, gray are the bedroom communities, gray are the streets of the business district. Obtuse is the constable who holds in his hand the hoods of his colleagues who rummage through the comrade's effects, obtuse are the police who for three months recorded the phone calls (what are we having for dinner today? let's get together on this), obtuse is television. Dangerous are the organs of repression, dangerous because of the latest submachine gun model, dangerous is the judge who arrests first then looks for proof. Dangerous are the roads and squares infested with the angels of death of a system always more minoritarian, dangerous are the factories and the shipyards, dangerous to decide whether or not to let a child see the light of day.

Gray, obtuse, dangerous, they want to impose their scale on the world: gray, obtuse, dangerous.

The totalitarian society of capital lives on the monotonous repetition of the existent. It serves the owners, the cops, the judges. None of them are indispensable to the structure they serve.

They make a life of shit the only model of life possible.

*But communism is young and beautiful.*

COMMUNIQUE No. 2 — from the San Giovanni in Monte Prison, 3/20/76. They ar-

rested me on the fifteenth, submachine guns in hand, in the house where I was sleeping with my comrades. First they accused me of belonging to the Red Brigades. In the space of two days this accusation became so ridiculous that they had to invent another one. So they accused me of being the ideological organizer of an incredible series of criminal plots committed in Bologna in the last few months.

Not the slightest bit of proof of these subversive activities that were supposed to have been mine exists. They are trying to give a recognizable appearance to the incomprehensible (for Power) course of liberation located in the space of separ/Action, of ignor/Action which constructs liberating spaces and moments of collective transformation of existence.

But then let them say it clearly:

*The practice of happiness is subversive when it becomes collective.*

Our will for happiness and liberation is their terror, and they react by terrorizing us with prison, when the repression of work, of the patriarchal family, and of sexism is not enough.

But then let them say it clearly:

*To conspire means to breathe together.*

And that is what we are accused of, they want to prevent us from breathing because we have refused to breathe in isolation, in their asphyxiating places of work, in their individuating familial relationships, in their atomizing houses.

There is a crime I confess I have committed:

It is the attack against the separation of life and desire, against sexism in inter-individual relationships, against the reduction of life to the payment of a salary.

But then let them say it clearly:

*It is dada that terrorizes the gray, the obtuse, the dangerous.*

Guardians of order and of the exploitation of poverty — for them, the transversal writing which runs through the separate orders and reunites isolated behaviors is not just obscene, any more, it is a *crime*.



**THE UNCANNY IS  
WHAT MAKES ME  
CRAZY**

*What makes me crazy is the uncanny. Bifo, Fontana, and Marchi are in prison.<sup>2</sup> Bifo, Fontana, and Marchi are still in prison; Bifo, Fontana, and Marchi are always in prison. There isn't a single comrade who does not ask me, "And what do we do now?" Silence. And they take advantage of our silence. A month has already passed. But it was like a month in the mind of someone who isn't thinking: an instant. A month has already passed since the arrest of Bifo and we have not gotten him out of there. There is no proof, it's all a plot, we know it. And now what do we do? And now what do we do? We must do something, I want to do something, it isn't true that we are powerless before the monsters, the angels of death, the gray, the obtuse, the dangerous, I cannot keep quiet much longer.*

They have killed Mario Salvi<sup>3</sup> in Rome. Silence.

Either the prison must explode or my head must explode. Radio Alice is quiet, the comrades are quiet, they invent words, the habitual masks. They don't speak and they don't even have any ideas. Lethargy. We are already creating the little ghetto: we are or we are not wild cats running through the town. Let's not give free rein to our jailers, strike the tiger's heart every day, in every way, according to our differences, against the sadness and the solitude of cells of confinement, 24 hours of air. This is an invitation to speak and to think, and invitation to be always present in the situations in the town the neighborhoods the schools the barracks the factories the roads, let's exhaust the enemy, let's wear out the giant monster by beating it all over its body. Let's not talk about desires anymore, let's desire: we are desiring machines, machines of war.

*Translated by Richard Gardner  
& Sybil Walker*

1. San Vittore: a prison in Milan. San Giovanni in Monte: a prison in Bologna.
2. Fontana, Marchi: Bolognese students thrown in jail.
3. Mario Salvi was killed in the vicinity of the judiciary prison in Rome after a motorcyclist launched a Molotov cocktail against the prison.

II/1 Felix Guattari with staff of Radio Alice Sept. 1977 Photo Marion Scemama  
II/2 Photo: D. Cortez

