GORILLAZ – THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMAGINATION





Superb performance last night from Gorillaz at Oakland Arena.

Their latest, *Plastic Beach*, has an environmentalist theme, but avoids trite treatment of such a common and pressing matter of concern. (The contrast with the likes of movie Avatar is stark.)

Human concern –

– Damon Albarn, graphic artist Jamie Hewlett, the 2D virtual members of the group (the 3D holograms weren't here in Oakland), and their various musical collaborators (including Mick Jones and Paul Simonon of the Clash; and Bobby Womack – powerfully and uncannily *present*) wove a dense collection of metaphors, media allusions, narrative clips, through a syncretic and surrealist multimedia mélange that prompted all manner of reflection and reaction on this latest manifestation of

the human condition – real merging with the imaginary, the everyday with the spectral, flesh with machinery, utopian idyll and abject garbage …

Not so much human impacts on the environment as co-evolutionary entanglement in an

out-of-control shared world.

I do see archaeology everywhere; it's a neurosis of mine (and that's what this blog is about ;-)). The Halloween accent – zombie flesheater backing vocals, everyone in living-dead gothic horror – highlighted what I call the archaeological – the grubby mess that remains of human aspiration, the collusion of sentiment and fabrication, the fabulous assemblage of people and our "things", our decaying thing-like material constitution that makes us all precisely human –

– the object of archaeological interest

No easy happy-ending stories, hopes of a sunny outlook …

Superfast Jellyfish – fastfood goes toxic nuclear –





Martin Parr – the luminous abject