The keeper and the phenomena

This item was submitted to Loughborough University's Institutional Repository by the/an author.

Citation: SAWDON, P., 2018. The keeper and the phenomena. Stimulus > Respond, June 2018, p. 31.

Additional Information:

- This article was published in the magazine Stimulus:Respond. The website is at: http://www.stimulusrespond.com/

Metadata Record: https://dspace.lboro.ac.uk/2134/33434

Version: Published

Publisher: Stimulus → Respond (© Phil Sawdon)

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The Keeper and the Phenomena ...

I was born in late February 1955 ...

Consequently and anecdotally I might have been ten years old for most of 1965 ...

To the best of my knowledge I do not use psychedelic drugs ...

Nevertheless I experience hallucinations ...

From time to time I am The Keeper of and contributor to The Fictional Museum of Drawing. The walls of the galleries are hung with fabulistic pseudo-visionary works. Any disturbances (visual or otherwise) in the catalogue or claims for altered consciousness are scrutinised by The Keeper.

The Keeper claims that the hallucinations mature over the course of a few minutes. They move with his eyes. When they occur he has a blind spot, a scotoma, in the centre of his vision. He feels unsteady. The scotoma enlarges and is surrounded by zigzag and undulating coloured lines escorted by the occasional scintillation as it transverses his field of vision.

On such occasions he habitually and separately closes each eye. He notes that he can see it regardless and again when both eyes are closed.

He now thinks of it as a harmless electrical storm in and around the museum’s galleries that resolves itself as a phenomenon in no more than half an hour.

However the aura of vein-like contours makes it awkward for him to focus on any of the images, real or imaginary, near or far away.

The Museum Council reports that it may be an ocular migraine and that any attention to the spasms in the blood vessels of the walls of the galleries will be subject to funding.

Words by Phil Sawdon