BAD Partying

As BAP incentivized, vertigo ruled. Up and down were now fashionable political vectors for progressives, fascists, and neoliberals alike. Left and right, markers of the timeworn horizontal political spectrum were displaced by this 90° tilt. Poli-ethical POV’s were measured in percentages rather than ideological positions. The Roller Coaster model was precarity carnivalized, racing through obvious hegemonic peaks and dips, elations and depressions. Distinctions between owners and the owned crystallized in the dizzying parabolic arcs.

The Bettys saw this gradient disruption as a temporary glitch. Post-millennial activists, fed up with 2D political spectra, horizontal and vertical, would surely seek a multidimensional schema, a non-Euclidean launching pad, a posthuman soup of dis/oriented value logics. They would invent, must invent, a nouveau milieu, unimpeded by spatial and temporal border formations. IRB touted it as a high-intensity, “speed-inapplicable” cosmopolitics.

Carpe-diem types, The Bettys decided to directly enter the fray. Envisaging a performative aesthetico-politico ecology they inaugurated a cap “P” party. This, they proclaimed, was the only way towards. They smelled their moment, primed to be the tenacious avant-garde of an
advent. Brown Betty, normally shy of public speaking, was elected spokesperson replacing the fallen Red and the often incoherent White. Brown B's modest yet thoroughly impassioned rhetoric was clarion clear.

They called their political party the BAD Party, imagining wildly intelligent BAD BAP rallies. They were convinced, most of them, that they were on to something. Brown B explained to the serious media that the acronym for BAD – *Betty Advent Demos* – was not as comedic as it appeared. She announced in public appearances – “BAD Party is down with an undercommons ethos.” Few understood the import of those words. Those that did were on board.

BAD Party needed a symbol. The prismatic rainbow was already taken. Appropriation of cultural and religious icons for political means had proved horrific in the past so they knew to tread carefully. They studied the yin-yang figure for its beautiful rendering of Chi’s unified plurality. They studied the efficacy of Che’s now entirely affect-free T-shirt image, emptied of all significance by its ubiquitous presence. If they were seeking a Chi/Che commodity-fetish item to stir engagement it would require a self-effacing cachet.
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The design meetings were hilarious as predominantly silly ideas were discussed and tossed out. As these meetings grew raucous and uncomfortably weird, the graphic designer Bettys, and there were several, retreated to a corner to undertake the NO-LOGO challenge.

After weeks of disruptive prototyping and bickering, a graphic emerged. The design team felt it encompassed the mute generality of a corporate symbol while affirming a singular impulse. A Betty quality, captured in the cracks between force and form. There were objections. Infrared complained about the inference to binocular vision. They suggested that many species had non-ocular and multi-ocular views of the world so the proposed symbol was reductively anthropocentric. Their argument was overruled as ahead of its time. UVB objected on similar grounds adding that it was overall too cutsey, dismissing the seriousness of The Bettys’ proposition. She was advised by Yellow and Violet to nourish her sense of humor. Betty Bob took a pass finding the entire project misguided.
The Bettys would flaunt a black and white banner with twin circular centers. “Eyeholes” Yellow B called them. A riff on a theme. Their symbol resembled a Goethe illustration or a pair of trippy Chanel spectacles, uniting all the colors of the visible and invisible spectrum in one bizarrenly unsettling frame. This would be the Bettys’ call to arms and legs and wings, their freak flag. A (w)hole and a cut. Their cleaving, haunted wink at a justice to come.