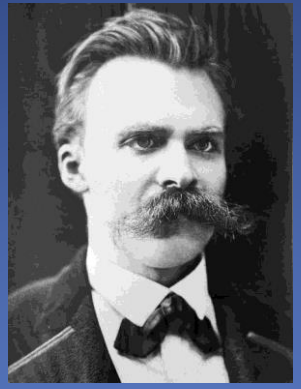






Hello & Welcome

Nietzsche Goes Motorcycle Road Racing

At The Isle Of Man Tourist Trophy (TT) Races

A Study Through The Metaphysical Lens of The Apollonian & Dionysian Duality



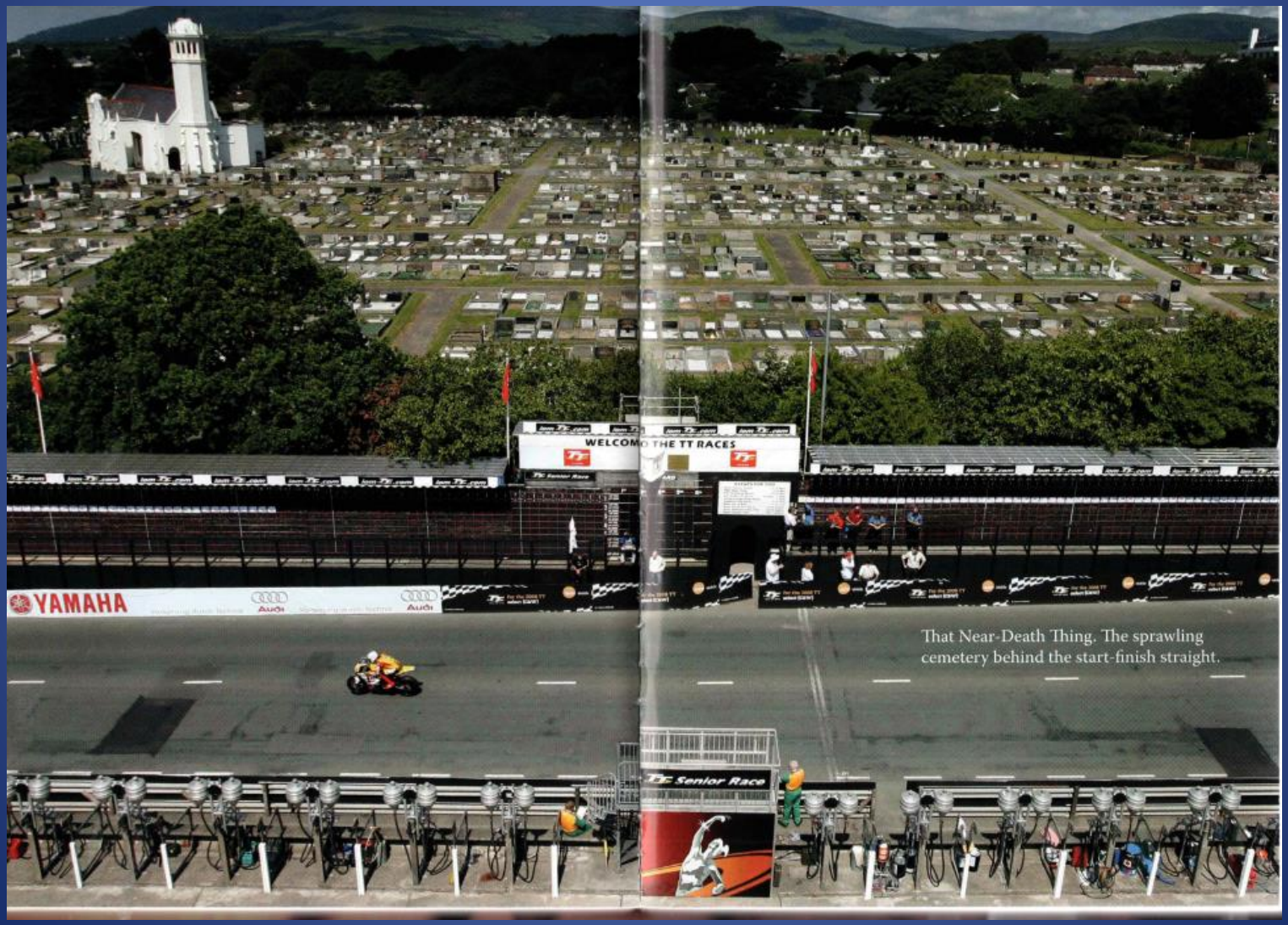
With Tony Cain



Today's Presentation

- The TT Races in context – globally & culturally
- Nietzsche's *"The Birth of Tragedy"*
- Metaphysical creative forces – Apollonian & Dionysian
- Apollonian "veil of illusion" & Dionysian "breach"
- ***My question***! To what extent can the TT be comprehended as a possible synthesis of the Apollonian & Dionysian sensibilities?

The TT Grandstand & The Douglas Borough Cemetery
Between Life & Death
A LIMINAL SPACE
Photo courtesy of Rick Broadbent, (2012)*That Near Death Thing*



That Near-Death Thing. The sprawling cemetery behind the start-finish straight.

Philosophical Perspective

- Nietzsche's interpretation of BC 5th century Greek tragedy
- Interplay of two polarised metaphysical creative forces he termed:

  - ***Apollonian -*** representing structure, order, form, rationality, individuality

  - ***Dionysian*** - symbolising chaos, ecstasy, emotion, primal unity, exclusion of boundaries

Apollonian Training & Practice – Cornering, Body Posture

https://www.bennetts.co.uk/bikesocial/news-and-views/features/racing/fastest-isle-of-man-tt-corners
https://x.com/ttracesofficial/status/1796540659081613380

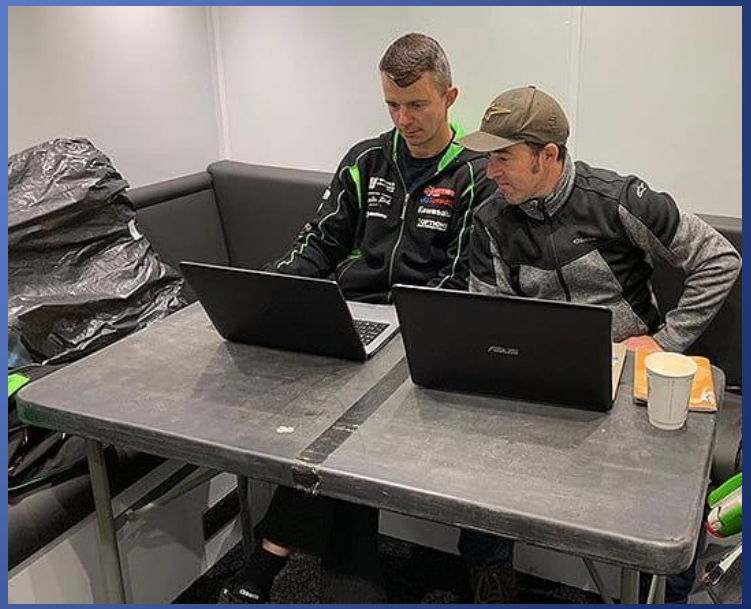




Apollonian Technical Mastery
Engineering & Data Feedback

https://fanofsport.com/isle-of-mann-tt/
https://www.bennetts.co.uk/bikesocial/news-and-views/features/racing/fastest-isle-of-man-tt-corners





Apollonian Risk Management – Safety Protocols

https://www.bennetts.co.uk/bikesocial/news-and-views/news/2022/january/tt-racers-ppe-rules-2022
https://www.iomtt.com/~/media/Secure/Press/Images/Gallery/TT2011
https://www.iomtt.com/~/media/Files/2008/TT%20Raceguide%2019%2027.ashx









Apollonian – Team Coordination At The TT Pits

https://www.asphaltandrubber.com/racing/isle-man-tt-pit-stop-video-peter-hickman
https://www.bennetts.co.uk/bikesocial/news-and-views/racing/isle-of-man-tt/guides/isle-of-man-tt-spectator-guide /





An Apollonian Dionysian Synthesis – Getting It Just Right!
(Quote courtesy of Rick Broadbent, (2012) *That Near Death Thing)*

"It's the danger aspect. It's the trees and brick walls. You have to find the edge of your barrier line and that's the hardest thing you'll ever do in your life. To find it at Handley's with two brick walls flying at you is madness. It's a thin line. A pencil line. If you go over, then it could be over" (Rider Michael Dunlop)

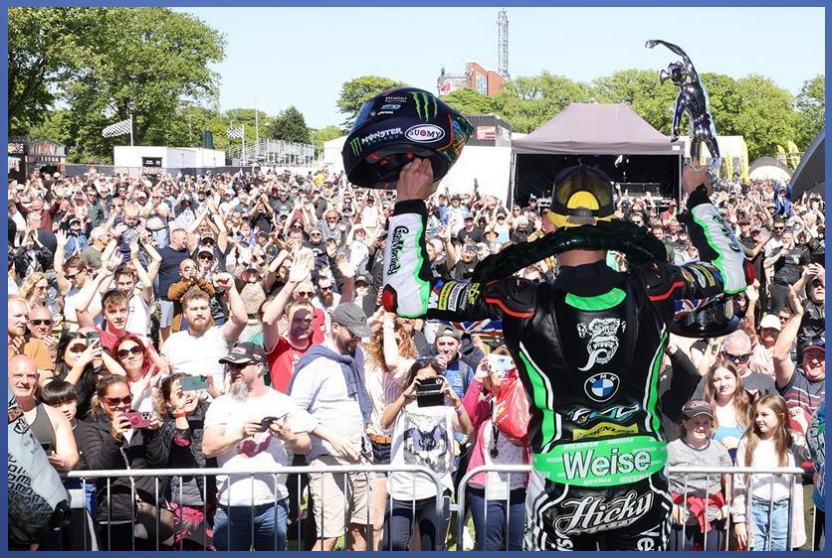


An Apollonian Dionysian Synthesis – Rider Individuality & Crowd Energy = Shared Ecstasy

https://www.motorcyclenews.com/news/2018/september/isle-of-man-tt-survey/https://www.motorcyclenews.com/news/2022/june/isle-of-man-tt-locals/







Apollonian Control &
Dionysian “Boundary "Miscalculation

Photo (bottom right) courtesy of Rick Broadbent, (2012)*That Near Death Thing*









A Dynamic Tension!

Apollonian Control – James Hillier ‘wheeling’



Dionysian Chaos – James Hillier ‘out of control’



Dionysian Chaos – Potential Tragedy

(Quote & photos **courtesy of Rick Broadbent, (2012)*That Near Death Thing)***

"The buzz from that was unbelievable. That moment between crashing and almost dying. That's raised the benchmark. I want to get back to that point. Money can't buy it" ***AND*** ***"You can't replicate the buzz. It's that near-death thing"*** (Guy Martin 2010)

"You must be ready to burn yourself in your own flame; how could you become new if you had not first become ashes." (Nietzsche, 1983, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*)



'I'm not scared of dying.' Guy Martin's bike erupts in flames, 2010.



The luckiest – fate, luck, providence? Martin survives.

Apollonian Dionysian tensions at the TT
Applying Nietzschean quotes/aphorisms

Dionysian chaotic energy forged with Apollonian structure & clarity

- ***"One must still have chaos in oneself to be able to give birth to a dancing star." (Thus Spoke Zarathustra, 1883)***

Bridging the gap between Apollonian control & Dionysian chaos

- ***"Man is a rope, tied between beast and Overman—a rope over an abyss" (Thus Spoke Zarathustra, 1883)***

Dionysian Vitality

- ***"For believe me, the secret for harvesting from existence the greatest fruitfulness and the greatest enjoyment is to live dangerously! Build your cities on the slopes of Vesuvius! Send your ships into uncharted seas!" (The Gay Science, 1882)***

Bottom of Bray Hill, June 2013 – Crash involving rider & several spectators who were standing centre left (1st photo)

https://news.sky.com/story/isle-of-man-tt-race-crash-10-spectators-hurt-10443623

IOMTT as a powerful modern-day analogy for a Nietzschean interpretation of BC 5th century Greek tragedy

Apollonian Veil : Order & Illusion

Dionysian Breach : Chaos & Reality





Some Conclusions

&

Thank you very much

Questions, Thoughts, Ideas?