

MOVING SLOWLY
or NOT at ALL

Sarah Jones

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During the period of registered study in which this thesis was prepared the author has not been registered for any other academic award or qualification.

The material included in this thesis has not been submitted wholly or in part for any academic award or qualification other than that for which it is now submitted.

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Abstract

A half of a brick is still a brick. Half a brick is a block. A building block, it is a thing of construction. Repeated, it makes a wall. Unnoticed, it is a stumbling block. It is mobile. When lobbed, it brings the construction down.

This research draws on legacies of minimalism, as exemplified in processes of isolation and the repetition of a singular unit – but it is not reductive. Literal theatricality is embraced and ramped up in the drafting of stage directions, and lighting and effects plots embedded as a part of picture making. As with theatrical scripts, a looped feedback of proposition and account is employed and items are expelled and accumulate around the questions: ‘What is the record?’ ‘What is the thing?’ Within this recursive process motifs appear. Each form, whether it be half a brick, a choral ode, a riddle, a monogram or a rolled butterfly collar, expands on the materiality and mechanisms of the thing itself. The approach is to creep up on it: a form of research by stealth.

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INVENTORY

Painting on Half a Brick

Emulsion, oil-based inks and varnish on found half
of a household brick with mortar residue, 11 × 8 × 6.5 cm
2009

It has six faces. Where it was broken apart is rough; it did not break evenly. The edges are wobbly, with nibbles and the corners worn. One face has a frog¹ or recess. The frog is 8 × 6 × 1 cm and in it an eroded inscription of lettering reads: “EN” and “DON”. The **brick** is painted with layers of ink, emulsion and varnish. The inks are fluorescent candy pink and steel black; the emulsions are white and olive green. The painting is organised in a rectangular grid-like structure around the object and includes unconcealed areas of red clay. The transparent varnished surface makes it slippery.




monogram

Graphic design produced in Adobe Illustrator, dimensions variable
2009


An arrangement of four upper-case letters, “ITIT”, in Mesquite font. The letters are dissected horizontally by narrow pinstripes.



7" phonograph record pressed in transparent
gold vinyl with printed centre labels
24 seconds @ 45rpm, edition no. 250
2009

Cut on one side only; the other has no groove. Both sides have a one-colour print label: burnt umber on bright fairground yellow. On the grooved side of the record, 1mm-thick lines spaced 5mm apart make a pinstripe, dark at the top of the label, fading to pale dust at the bottom. Above the centre line, 15mm-high pale burnt umber Mesquite font reads “SARAH JONES”. The name reads clearly, as does the  monogram; the Mesquite letters are the darkest of the burnt umber brown, 9mm tall, positioned on the lower right


1. ‘Frog – an indentation in one or both bed faces of some types of moulded or pressed bricks’, Brick Development Association, *BDA Guide to Successful Brickwork* (Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann, 2005), xiii.

side of the label in place of a title. Close to the label, “ITIT” is inscribed in the run-out groove. The blank side label also has the pinstripes, dark and evenly coloured. Just inside the top edge and at right angles to the vertical pinstripes there is an elliptical void, 7 × 2 cm. Inside the ellipse, Edwardian Script ITC font reads: “Centre for Useless Splendour”. In the bottom left of the label is the  monogram in 8mm-high Mesquite font. Dissected by two pinstripes, the letters and stripes in the same burnt umber make the letters difficult to read.

7" single record jacket

4-colour print on 180gsm card, edition no. 1,000

2009


The design is the same on both sides, save for being turned 90°. It has a solid 12cm-diameter flesh-tone circle on an olive-green background. Rows of turquoise-blue pinstripes 5mm apart in a rectangle 12 × 13.5 cm are printed over the circle. Above the centre line and behind the pinstripes, fairground-yellow Mesquite font 19mm high reads: “SARAH JONES”. Towards the bottom right side of the circle and on top of the stripes, 11mm tall in the same yellow, is the  monogram. Looking at one side, the record top-loads; turning it over, it side-loads.

Script for the playing of a 7" phonograph record

391 words in regular and italic Verdana font

2009

8 × A5 portrait pages:

Title page	
Page 2	cast of characters and play setting
Page 3	scene setting and stage directions
Page 4	stage directions continued
Page 5	furniture and property list
Page 6	lighting plot
Page 7	effects plot
Page 8	copyright and performance rights

the playing of a 7" phonograph record

Cast of players and bespoke playing unit

Royal College of Art, Sculpture Department Seminar Room

10 December 2009

A group of Royal College of Art students, tutors and guests chat as they gather for a seminar. At the side of the room, between the door and a cupboard, is

a bespoke playing unit: a 230 cm-high cubicle with a rubber curtain-wall at the back and a peachy-pink hemmed American-tan powernet curtain side housing a compact stereo, its speakers, and a 7" phonograph record on the turntable.

The back wall and the side curtain hang off an 'L'-shaped, brushed-steel hanging rail. The short arm of the 'L' is a 6mm rod; a triangular wall plate projects it 70cm straight into the room. Off the wall 10cm, the long arm of the 8mm bar is connected to the rod by a 90° welded elbow joint. The arm runs parallel to the wall 80cm along and is bent back double on itself at its far end, fixed to the wall with a single screw. The American-tan powernet is looped over the shorter, projected steel arm, it is exactly the right length to just reach the floor. The width of this curtain is greater than the 70cm arm and has been gathered evenly along it; a slight upward curve at the tip of the arm keeps it from falling off. The vertical edges retain the finished trim of the manufacturing process and at the foot an ornate peachy-pink velvet brocade trim barely rests on a mat. The mat is a board-backed sheet of smooth flesh-coloured rubber; an elongated pentagon, it is 110cm long and 60cm wide at its extremities. One of its long sides abuts the back wall and there is an angled point on the left end. A similar rubber-coated board is suspended from the steel strap bar at the back of the cubicle, a super-elongated pentagon; it has an additional angle on the left side at knee height, a pointed isosceles triangular top extending above the 'L'-shaped hanging rail and a narrow foot which floats, with a shadow gap, above the rubber mat.

On the mat, in front of the rubber wall, are two upright shoebox-sized stereo speakers. Butting against each other in a 'V' shape, they support a 1980s-style compact stereo record player with integrated radio and cassette player. Peter, an artist and RCA security guard, separates from the group, crosses the room to the stereo record player, lifts its smoky transparent lid, then its tone arm, to place its needle at the outer edge of the groove on the rotating record. As the needle spirals towards the centre label, its vibrations are amplified through the speakers underneath it. In the room the voice of a woman is heard. She is saying "it" repeatedly for 24 seconds, until the needle reaches the end of the groove, when the tone arm automatically lifts and returns to its rest. Peter comes back to the group.

she and we are like this _ _ _

118 words in reddish-brown Bulmer MT, regular, bold, bold italic and superscript printed in landscape format on any A-series paper size, A5 or larger
2010

A riddle printed in landscape format. The title line is left-justified, the remaining 19 lines are right-justified. Words in the italic font are quotations from Tristan Tzara's 1918 Dada Manifesto.

the playing of a 7" phonograph record in a Parisian art academy gallery

Cast of players and bespoke playing unit

Ecole des Beaux-Arts, Galeries d'exposition, Paris

12–21 February 2010

Visitors to the art academy gallery are gathered for the opening of 'Le Weekend de Sept Jours', an exhibition of artworks. In one room among the artworks is a bespoke playing unit. A man approaches this playing unit, lifts the lid of its stereo record player and places the needle at the start of a 7" phonograph record on the turntable. In the room the voice of a woman is heard. She is saying "it" repeatedly for 24 seconds, until the needle reaches the end of the groove, when the tone arm automatically lifts and returns to its rest. The man has disappeared among the other people. Later, in another room of the gallery, the distant voice from the record is heard.²

A Dress A Score

Synthetic, approximately UK size 12

Found 2010

A stripy, long-sleeved, knee-length smock made from thick nylon or polyester. The stripes are olive green, peach-candy pink, sherbet yellow, apple green, pastel green, turquoise and light sky blues; the bandwidths of the stripes vary between 1.5 and 5mm. Home-made on a sewing machine, it is constructed of 14 panels joined with 12 seams, a long zip at the back and a rolled butterfly collar.

Score for IT WHAT UR

Yellow masking tape, complexion-pink face paint

and biro on Silversafe 50gsm paper, 123 × 91 cm

2010

The sheet is divided horizontally by stripes of yellow masking tape, peachy-pink face paint and bare space. From top to bottom, bands of face paint 3cm wide are spaced 5cm apart. In the middle third of the sheet, 5cm-wide masking tape fills in between the peachy-pink stripes. In the bottom quarter of the sheet the edges of the face paint are less delineated. On top of this striped arrangement there are groupings of small biro-drawn figures. Each figure is 2–9cm long: a single line, two short legs at one end, a small ring head at the other. The figures are vertical and horizontal; straight or curled to varying degrees. On the left side of the sheet is a sparsely drawn approximation of

2. The actions described here took place on the evening of 12 February. The bespoke playing unit remained in the gallery until 21 February and arrangements were made for the playing of the 7" phonograph record on each of the days. There is no known record for what occurred.

curtains, tie-backs and a stage; several of the figures, from vertical to bent and curled under, reach out from the drawn line of the stage. This is repeated below on a smaller scale, where there are further groupings of figures, arranged in horizontal, vertical and diagonal sequences.

Each figure is an indication of tone for one of three words: “it”, “what” or “ur”.³


Script for the playing of a 7" phonograph record

prepared for a two-person read-through

818 words in Bulmer MT, regular, italic, small caps and strikethrough

2011

10 × A4 portrait pages printed in grey tones, light sky blue and pale burnt umber:

Title page	 and reading guide
Page 2	cast of characters and players and play setting
Page 3	scene setting and stage directions
Page 4	stage directions continued
Page 5	furniture and property list
Page 6	lighting plot
Page 7	effects plot
Page 8	incidents plot
Page 9	tones plot
Page 10	copyright and performance rights

This script documents *the playing of a 7" phonograph record* on 10 December 2009.

Script for the playing of a 7" phonograph record

prepared for a two-person read-through (performance)

Sarah Jones and Hephzibah Rendle-Short

Public Monument,⁴ Royal College of Art, London

1 April 2011

Two readers are sitting across a table, inside a garden shed in an art gallery. Each has a microphone in front of her leading to a mixing desk. They read

3. ‘ur – forming words with the sense “primitive, original, earliest”’, *Oxford Essential Dictionary of Foreign Terms in English*, <http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780199891573.001.0001/acref-9780199891573-e-7462?rskey=GZCPIR&result=7462> (accessed 22 January 2010). ‘UR – abbreviation “you are or your”’, *Oxford Dictionary of English*, <http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780199571123.001.0001/acref-9780199571123> (accessed 22 January 2010).

4. *Public Monument*, Sean Dockray. ‘Shadowboxing’, Royal College of Art, London, 18 March–3 April 2011. “Sean Dockray conceived *Public Monument* – a temporary recording studio [...] to gather sound clips and interviews for future transmission. These contributions will be [...] stored as an acoustic time capsule for the year 2021, when digital transmission will have made traditional radio obsolete”, shadowboxing.rca.ac.uk/artists (accessed 13 July 2013).

aloud alternate lines from the cast list, scene descriptors, stage directions, production cues and performance rights of a script.

Their voices are being heard in another gallery 50 metres away and are being recorded for future transmission.

two parts an ode or ode be half a brick

172 words, dimensions variable

2011

It is read aloud.

What Is Being Said

12" phonograph record pressed in opaque black vinyl with blank white centre labels, 1 minute @ 33 rpm, edition no. 4

2011

The phonograph record is cut on one side only. At the outer edge 13 revolutions of the spiral groove are packed into 6mm; played at 33rpm, the duration is 24 seconds. The remaining vinyl is glossy, cut with a run-out groove of just one revolution every 5–6mm. Close to the label, “ITITWHAT” is faintly inscribed.

What Is Being Said

Digitally compressed audio file, 1 minute 17 seconds

2011

Recording of the phonograph record *What is Being Said* being played on a Panasonic stereo music system.

*A Play as The Essay as Form*⁵

A4 ruled paper sheet containing 225 handwritten words selected from ‘The Essay as Form’, 2 × John Lewis A4 ruled exercise pads containing handwritten word definitions and usages copied from the *Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English*,⁶ 867 words in Bulmer MT, regular, italic, small caps, upper, lower and title case, and two-tone highlighted

2011

Treatment of a script for *The Chairs* by Eugène Ionesco,⁷ with handwritten word definition and usage sheets.

5. Theodor W. Adorno, “The Essay as Form,” trans. Bob Hullot-Kentor and Frederic Will, *New German Critique* 32 (1984): 151–71, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/488160> (accessed 22 March 2010).

6. R.E. Allen, ed., *Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990).

7. Eugène Ionesco, *The Chairs* (1952), trans. Martin Crimp (London: Faber and Faber, 1997).

Who's Your Pussy

Paint, ink, varnish on reclaimed household brick, 33 × 8 × 6.5 cm

2011

Two stacks. Each is made of a broken half-brick stacked on top of a full brick stood upright. Variously painted in layers of oily inks, emulsion and varnish, they stand side by side in front of a wall. The long body of the left brick is black; the half-brick that sits atop it has a chequer-painted blue and white face. The right stack has the same chequered pattern but running continuously up the front face of both its two parts, the squares of the chequer alternating fluorescent candy-pink ink with midnight blue. They are all coated in layers of thick gloss varnish.

An Announcement Foyer Sheet

89 words in Andale Mono, regular and italic on an A4 sheet

2011

Introducing a performance of *An Announcement*, displayed in the Foyer Bar of Cadogan Hall, London, on 8 July 2011.

An Announcement

Recorded audio and staging of 'Verklarte Nacht' by Arnold Schoenberg for Arensky Chamber Orchestra, Cadogan Hall, London

8 July 2011

A public address system with speakers situated throughout the building sounds bells to ready the audience for a concert performance. In the intervals between the bells a woman's voice broadcasts short scene descriptors for the forthcoming concert as a play. Act 1: two scenes backstage. Act 2: two scenes in the auditorium. She issues stage directions, cueing all, directing them to their respective positions for the concert to begin. The final words are: "ACT 2. SCENE 2." (There is a pause.) "SCENE The auditorium of an old religious meeting hall. Night." (There is a pause.) "PLAYER lean into the BODY." The music is played.

Pat

A1 60gsm flip-chart pad, clout nails, lighting gel

2012

Scored from the top page of the flip chart two flaps flop down. Roughly centred side to side and above the centre line, the flaps trace the pattern of a butterfly collar.⁸ They are not pressed flat; their flop is round and they bounce a little when blown on.

8. The collar is found on *A Dress A Score*, catalogued in *Moving Slowly or Not at All: Inventory*, 4.

The flip chart is hung on clout nails using the manufacturer's pre-cut round holes at the top corners; the hinges of the flaps align with the base of Sarah Jones's neck.⁹ Two punch-cut holes in the bottom corners, backed by yellow lighting gel, echo the holes at the top of the flip chart.

Bar Bar Ra

Silk satin, steel tacks, steel panel pins, 139 × 70 cm

2012

A single drape of taupe silk satin, its fuzzy selvedge visible along its top line, is pierced and hung by three black steel tacks positioned top centre and at the left and right corners. Halfway between the centre and the top line, two flaps cut from the body of the fabric hang down, tracing the pattern of a butterfly collar. The wing-shaped holes left by the cuts reveal the painted wall behind. The hinges of the flaps align with the base of Sarah Jones's neck. A folded pocket at the bottom of the drape sags open as it pulls away from the two steel panel pins pinning it to itself on its left and right sides.

Plucking a La

Silk dupion, powernet, masking tape and steel pins

159 × 118 cm

2012

A single length of light nude powernet is hung along its top edge at intervals marked by narrow strips of yellow masking tape pierced by steel pins. The outer limits of its sides fold in under their own weight. The powernet partially obscures the top section of a rectangle of opaque cobalt-blue silk dupion, 122 × 75 cm. At the centre of the powernet two flaps trace the pattern of a butterfly collar. The wing-shaped holes left by the cut of the flaps reveal the bright cobalt blue of the silk. The hinges of the flaps align with the base of Sarah Jones's neck.

Bar Bar Ra and Plucking a La as scans

Digital images, dimensions variable

2012

Each of the items *Bar Bar Ra* and *Plucking a La* is produced as a scanned image of paper materials approximating the colours, textures and proportions of their double.

9. The height of the hang varies according to heel height on the day selected to determine it.

Choose Your Favourite Pat

A1 60gsm flip-chart pads, clout nails, lighting gel
2012 ongoing

Studio visitors are invited to indicate a preference from a choice of Pats hung on the walls. Each *Pat*¹⁰ is similar in appearance to other *Pats*. Next to each other, the spectrum of differences noticeable is pronounced in the paper coloration and the flop of the flaps.

Pat Black

A1 60gsm flip-chart pad, marker pen, clout nails
2012

Horizontal stripes in hand-drawn black marker pen evenly punctuate the top page of the flip chart. Hung on clout nails, it has two almost identical flaps extending from the page, tracing a pattern of the collar from *A Dress A Score*. They hang down under their own weight just above the centre line. The connecting edge of the flaps corresponds to the height at which the artist's neck joins her body.

Pata

A1 60gsm flip-chart pad, marker pen, clout nails
2012

Horizontal-drawn lines of broad-nibbed yellow uniPAINT marker pen evenly punctuate the top page of the wall-mounted A1 flip chart.


Patable

Lighting gel, foam board, paper, tabletop, 122 × 53 × 25 cm
2012

A plywood tabletop sitting on the floor with its legs folded underneath is the base for grey-tone print cut-outs: a turntable, an iPod, a laptop, an amp, a 7" record jacket on a folded dress, a 12" record sleeve, an A5 perfect-bound notebook and an A4 spiral-bound notebook arranged in a grid-like pattern. They are mounted on a standard length of yellow lighting gel that corresponds to the dimensions of the tabletop. A passport-sized head shot of Sarah Jones on a 15cm-tall foam board support leg stands on the lighting gel filtered

10. *Pat*, A1 60gsm flip-chart pad, clout nails, lighting gel, 84 × 59 cm, 2012. Scored from the top page of the flip chart two flaps flop down. Roughly centred side to side and above the centre line, the flaps trace the pattern of a butterfly collar. They are not pressed flat; their flop is round and they bounce a little when blown on.


The flip chart is hung on clout nails using the manufacturer's pre-cut round holes at the top corners; the hinges of the flaps align with the base of Sarah Jones's neck. Two punch-cut holes in the bottom corners, backed by yellow lighting gel, echo the holes at the top of the flip chart.

tabletop. Her mouth is obscured by the monogram . The location of the foam board figure is not fixed. It takes different positions among the cut-outs.

*IT*³

7" record sleeves, rubber, 18 × 18 × 18 cm

2012

It has six faces. The box is hollow. Its exterior faces are of smooth flesh-coloured rubber and each is lined with a single side of the 7" single record jacket . Some of its faces are joined with crisp turned-in seams while others are continuous lengths bending softly around the 90° angle. The top side is a flap; extending from one side of the box, it folds over and rests unevenly on the top edges of the other three sides, which bulge slightly without, revealing the interior faces.

The Progeny of a 3-Legged Man and Alternate Fruits

Plastic sheeting, card, glue, 35 × 35 × 35 cm


2012

It is a box, with three sides of thin dusty-pink plastic sheeting and three sides of rusty-orange 270gsm card. The 1cm seams are turned out and there is glue residue where some have split. The box has collapsed.

New Contemporaries Catalogue 2012 (Page 46)

Catalogue entry

2012

Centred at the head of the white A5 page is a grey-tone passport-sized head shot of the artist, Sarah Jones. Her mouth is obscured by the  monogram, burnt umber on a fairground-yellow background. Below the head shot is a text: four lines in Mesquite font centred and repeated down the page. The lines are shuffled; neither the number of repetitions or their order, or size of font, is uniform. The contours of the text resemble the silhouette of a matryoshka doll.

Market Trader

Tarpaulin, 25mm split pins, 100 × 155 cm

2012

The tarpaulin stands upright: an upturned bag of two paper-thin sheets of waxy woven striped raffia. Each alternate stripe is a vertical band of white and those in between are either sky blue, sherbet yellow, flesh beige, fawn or nearly black; the bandwidths vary between 2 and 4 cm. The sheets are bonded at the

side edges and the top edges are neatly fastened with nine split pins. The bottom edges sit on the floor, puffing slightly at the middle, and the tarpaulin undulates through storage creases, giving a little under its own weight.

Where's My Cheese Roll I Made That Cheese Roll

701 words in Bulmer MT, regular and small caps

2012

Where's My Cheese Roll I Made That Cheese Roll (performance)

Sarah Jones

ICA Film Salon, Institute of Contemporary Arts, London

29 November 2012

Reading from an A4 sheet of paper, Sarah Jones introduces a film screening Peter Hall cannot attend, quoting herself and him. She speaks clearly but rapidly, her final words cueing the first sounds of cutlery clanking in *The Homecoming*.¹¹

Da

14-count cotton pinstriped waste canvas

29.5 × 22 cm

2013

A silhouette of the right wing of a rounded butterfly collar has been partially cut from the rectangle of cotton. The top line is still connected, making it a flap that has been folded down and pressed flat. The outer tip of the hole just fits inside the outer edge of the fabric. The tip of the folded-down wing just reaches the bottom edge of the rectangle of fabric.

Na!

14-count cotton pinstriped waste canvas

29.5 × 22 cm

2013

A silhouette of the left wing of a rounded butterfly collar has been partially cut from the rectangle of cotton. The top line is still connected, making it a flap that has been folded down and pressed flat. The outer tip of the hole just fits inside the outer edge of the fabric. The tip of the folded-down wing just reaches the bottom edge of the rectangle of fabric.

11. *Harold Pinter's The Homecoming*, dir. Peter Hall, American Film Theatre Collection, 1973 (DVD, Kino International, 2003).

Da Na!

14-count cotton pinstriped waste canvas, 29.5 × 45 cm

2013

A diptych.

Rita's Wheels

Pencil, ProMarker pen, 15 × 46 cm

2013

Two broken circles, each 15 cm in diameter, are drawn on the wall 15 cm apart.¹² A quarter is missing from each. It is almost the outer top quarters that are missing but not exactly; each gap is twisted away from the other 10°. The lines are pencil overdrawn with dusky-pink ProMarker pen; the lines of the dusky-pink curve are not machine-drawn smooth. The height of the drawing is the height of the breasts of a 160 cm-tall woman jumping up against the wall; the two circles correspond to the highest height she can reach.

Stacked

ProMarker pen, steel rod table leg, fine-line masking tape

144 × 60 × 15 cm

2013

On the left a 144 × 18 cm column of horizontal lines drawn directly on the wall in ProMarker pen flesh colours starts 16 cm above the floor. The lines of ivory, satin, blush, dusky-pink and cinnamon tones are drawn in blocks; the colour changes every 18 cm. The lines are a single narrow nib's width, with a 1.5 mm gap between. A section of the lines measuring 9 × 7 cm is missing on the left side; the top edge of this missing section just breaches the divide between the second and third blocks from the floor.

To the extreme right of the column a blackened 70 cm × 12 mm steel rod curves out from the wall above and below its central fixing point. The rod is a leg from an occasional table; a small steel plate at the top with two pre-drilled screw holes and hammered at its bottom end, a flattened foot, hovers 35 cm above the floor.

Between the column and leg, nine 18–20 cm lengths of 1.5 mm fine-line masking tape are stuck to the wall. Their arrangement appears random save that they are vaguely vertical, variance 30°, and are clustered more towards the leg, with no length appearing below the bottom line of the column or above the central screw of the leg.

12. The template for the drawing is 'Rita', a shelving unit designed by Sarah Jones and Eve Peasnell in 2010. A scarlet perspex shelf floats, its sides curving over the outer contours of two transparent perspex disc brackets; each disc has a central screw hole for fixing.

Rita Hooked

Steel panel pins, cavity wall hook, broom handle,
washi tape, pencil, Blu-tack, 120 × 60 cm
2013

Two outer quadrants of a 15cm-diameter circle drawn on the wall are separated by a 20cm length of 15mm black and white piano striped washi tape. The washi tape has torn tail ends and is fixed directly to the wall between the lowest points of the quadrants. A steel panel pin is nailed midway along and just above the striped tape.

The quadrants curve up and out from each end of the tape. The right quadrant line is evenly punctuated along its length by six steel panel pins protruding about 15mm from the wall. The panel pin at the outermost end of the quadrant has a second pin nailed into the wall just next to it. The left quadrant is an exact mirror image, except that it is not nails but the punctures left by nails that draw the line.

A crook with a dark wood-stained, upturned, standard length broom handle is hung on the right-hand nail. The arc of the crook drags it off vertical, slightly to the left, as it hangs freely a couple of centimetres from the floor. There is a blob of Blu-tack, roughly conical in shape and bearing the imprints of fingers or thumbs, 12cm below the tape and 15cm to the left of the broom handle.

Wita's Reels

Plywood, sheet rubber
an uncounted number of discs, each 12cm in diameter and 18mm thick
2013

Discs of 18mm plywood 12cm in diameter each have a layer of smooth matt flesh-coloured rubber on one side. Each disc also has a centre hole 5mm in diameter. The rubber lifts faintly around the centre hole.

Score for Push Push Rita's Wheels with Wita's Reels

Washi tape, complexion-pink face paint, golden-yellow
ProMarker pen, carbon ink and biro on Silversafe
50gsm paper, nails, clear plastic pegs and 2 of *Wita's Reels*
126 × 94 cm
2013

The sheet of paper 123 × 91 cm is gripped by two clear plastic pegs in its top corners. The pegs have pronounced circular steel springs and are hung off long panel pins. The paper is soft and light in weight; relaxing along its top line and towards the bottom, it is rolling away from the wall and slightly in on itself.

Rows of black and white striped washi tape, bands of face paint, bare space and golden-yellow ProMarker pen section the sheet horizontally.

The washi tape is 15mm wide, patterned with a vertical pinstripe of black and white, the black stripes almost twice as broad as the white. The tape is papery and thin and the white of the stripes is so close to the white of the paper that they blend as one. The first row of striped tape is a third of the way down the sheet; the interval to the next one down is half the distance and the next one half the distance again. The intervals between the tapes from here remain constant, repeated to the bottom of the page save for the interval between the fourth and fifth line from the top, where there is an additional row halving the interval. Each of these halves is coloured in with a thick-nibbed golden-yellow marker pen drawn horizontally twice along the paper. One line above the other, the lines wobble; the colour density increases where they falter and there are gaps where the paper is bare. For the most part the yellow is bound by the black and white striped washi tape, but there are minute bleeds.

The lightweight paper ripples heavily in the bands of peachy-pink face paint and the edges quiver next to the bare paper. These peachy bands start halfway between the top of the page and the first line of washi tape. The first, the width of a metal rule, is the palest of peach pink; the second, below it, a rule's width down and the band broadens to half the width again, its colour a minor note more intense. The next gap doubles and again the width of the band broadens a half-width. The bottom edge of this painted band runs along the top edge of the first line of tape. The next band down repeats itself as the painted bottom edge meets the top edge of the second row of tape. The interval between the second and third line of tape is bare. Another bandwidth of face paint follows the top line of the fourth row of tape, which bounds the intense golden-yellow marker pen. The two intervals between the tapes under the yellow are filled by the peachy face paint and a final narrower band of face paint, half the height of the one above it abuts the bottom edge of the ninth tape line. There is a chalky residue where the face paint has breached the tape in these last three intervals of face paint.

Line-drawn in biro and carbon ink are arrangements of small figures and pictograms. Among them are typographic ligatures, pointers and curls, a coiled question mark glyph and the figures from *Score for IT WHAT UR*.¹³ The esoteric pictograms, not visible from afar, are scattered across the surface of the sectioned sheet without heed to the boundary lines. None appear in the top third: the highest up is a lone upright figure, 12mm tall, its two arms circling its ring head, its short legs levitating just shy of the third taped line. There are four perforations in the lower fifth of the sheet, where the

13. "... a single line, two short legs at one end, a small ring head at the other. The figures are vertical and horizontal; straight or curled to varying degrees ... groupings of figures, arranged in horizontal, vertical and diagonal sequences. Each figure is an indication of tone for one of three words: 'it', 'what' or 'ur'." *Score for IT WHAT UR* catalogued in *Moving Slowly or Not at All: Inventory*, 4.

concentration of pictograms is highest. In the bottom right corner of the sheet is a milky imprint of a disc in the peachy-pink face paint and a similar partial crescent centred between two of the perforations. The perforations mark the possible points for nails to pass through to pin two *Wita's Reels* to it.

Push Push Rita's Wheels (hook)

Audio recording, 23 seconds

2013

A studio-recorded vocal demonstration of the *Score for Push Push Rita's Wheels*. The recording is transferred to compact disc.

Push Push Rita's Wheels (sample)

Audio recording, 3 minutes

2013

A studio-recorded vocal demonstration of the *Score for Push Push Rita's Wheels*. The recording is transferred to compact disc and it is pressed as a one-off 12" black dubplate.¹⁴

Template

Digital file (variable software)

dimensions variable

2013

Five concentric light sky-blue circles have a printer registration mark at their centre and two further printer registration marks to the right of the outer ring. Centred just below the rings the Calibri black font reads: "SIDE B".

DuurDuh

Music stand, nylon netting

100 × 155 cm

2013

A rectangle of tightly woven sapphire-blue netting joined on three of its four sides makes a giant free-standing mesh pocket. It is turned upside down, bagging a powder-coated blue steel music stand, the kind that has an open folding frame and articulated arms to hold sheet music in place.

14. Dubplate commissioned by Mat Jenner. Distinct artist labels on A and B sides. Side B is intentionally blank. Presented within black inner and outer sleeves. Occasionally displayed and accessed in FOAM, a vinyl project coordinated by Mat Jenner.

The music stand is not attached to its tripod leg – this is missing – and instead it sits flat-footed on the floor; the narrow shelf that the sheet music would normally rest on has become its foot. At the centre of the crossbar a silhouette of a miniature lyre, cut from the same thin steel, stands proud. The ready-made articulated arms, riveted for adjustment, are opened out, extending away from the frame. They are assisted with oversized extensions of uncoated brushed steel. The original arms are thin-gauged, 6mm × 15cm, and each is extended with an additional 60cm length; 15cm along this extension is a riveted scissor joint connecting a further ‘supporting’ arm 60cm in length. The extensions reach out from the frame, splaying at their scissor joint, with each of the supporting arms touching the floor at its outer tip.

The construction of the assisted music stand frame is symmetrical, but the angles of the splayed extensions are not. As it is bagged it is also an armature for the sapphire-blue mesh. One side holds the pocket upright at its outermost corner, while on the opposite side the arm extends along a lower line and the mesh creases as it sinks down.

Olivier’s Chairs feat. Push Push Rita’s Wheels Hook (nailed)

2 chairs, portable stereo CD/radio/cassette player, speaker amp, microphone, microphone stand, *Push Push Rita’s Wheels (hook)*, *Rita Hooked*, *Push Push Rita’s Wheels (sample)*, *Rita’s Wheels*

160 × 380 × 120 cm

2013

As a tableau it can be approached from the front or from a doorway at stage right (that is, house left).

Viewed from the front, furthest left, are *Rita’s Wheels*.¹⁵ At 160cm, they are higher than any other item in the tableau. One pace to the right is *Rita Hooked*,¹⁶ with an adaptation: its black and white striped washi tape is missing. This is replaced by a 25cm length of 15mm fairground-yellow washi tape that falls slightly short of the centre point of the left quadrant of nail holes. Laid over the yellow tape is a 27cm length of 6mm light sky-blue washi tape, turned a greeny turquoise by its yellow underlay. It is only at its furthest left end, where it stretches beyond the yellow tape, that the light sky blue is seen against the white-painted wall. The left edges of both tapes have torn ends.

The broom-handled crook of *Rita Hooked* butts up against the left side of two chairs. The chairs are side by side against the wall facing forward, the exact same design, the left one in black and the right one in yellow. They

15. Inventory, 12.

16. Inventory, 13.

have thin tubular steel frames, moulded glossy plastic seats and backrests. The moulded plastic has been manufactured with 3cm-diameter holes in rows and columns spaced 5cm apart. Two of the 16 holes in the backrest of the black chair are backed by transparent yellow filter gels.

Centred between and directly in front of the chairs is a microphone on a microphone stand. The rubber stoppers on the splayed feet of the adjustable stand correspond with the distance between the two chairs. The stand's articulated arm is angled left, positioning the microphone head at the right speaker of a bug-eyed portable stereo CD/radio/cassette player sitting on the seat of the black chair. Its carrying handle is erect. On the yellow chair is a portable speaker amp. The wires are tidily trailed between the microphone, the CD player, the speaker amp and the sockets on wall to the right of the yellow chair.

The CD player and the speaker amp are on. Intermittently and without warning they play *Push Push Rita's Wheels (hook)*¹⁷ and *Push Push Rita's Wheels (sample)*,¹⁸ the former seven times per hour and the latter five times. The sound volume settings are: CD player 6, amp mic 9, speaker amp 7.

*Score for Push Push Rita's Wheels with Wita's Reels:
an unscheduled demonstration*

RCA Show 2013, Royal College of Art, London
17 June 2013

It is approximately 8p.m. in an exhibition space on the opening night of a show. *Push Push Rita's Wheels (sample)* is being played from *Olivier's Chairs feat. Push Push Rita's Wheels Hook (nailed)*. Sarah Jones hands her coat to Ana Genoves and joins in, performing a duet with the recording. As she and the recording make each sound she simultaneously points at the corresponding figures on the *Score for Push Push Rita's Wheels with Wita's Reels* hung opposite the tableau. Also present in the room is an audience of opening-night visitors, *DuurDuh*¹⁹ and *Madeleine*.²⁰


17. Inventory, 15.


18. Inventory, 15.

19. Inventory, 15.

20. Inventory, 19.

An Artist's Talk

Turntable, chair, table,  7" phonograph record and jacket, speaker, amp, iPod, iPod mic, 12" phonograph record, *A Dress A Score* (folded), *What Is Being Said* (digitally compressed audio file), × 3 PowerPoint slide images, *Sarah Jones* (the artist), an audience, A5 orange perfect-bound notebook, A4 yellow spiral-bound notebook, *Madeleine*²¹, duration and locations variable²²
2011 ongoing

The  monogram is on a computer screen. An audience is in position. The artist places the needle at the start of the record on the turntable. The record plays. She moves around to return the tone arm to its cradle, then she speaks of bullet points. She moves around the table. An MP3 download is played. The artist invites questions from the audience. A discussion follows.



An Artist's Talk Q&A: The Transcripts

9,790 words in Calibri, regular, lower and title case
K College, Fine Art Foundation Degree,
Tonbridge, 3 February 2012
Transcribers: Laurie Schram and Isabel Yellin

2,513 words in Baskerville, regular, lower and title case
Fine Art Research presentations, Royal College of Art, London, 8 March 2012
Transcriber: Sarah Jones

4,890 words in Cambria, regular and bold, lower and title case
New Contemporaries Exhibition, Liverpool Biennial, 21 September 2012
Transcriber: Jess Fugler

21. All the items listed in materials may be included in *An Artist's Talk* but not necessarily. The items present at all 'talks' are:

 7" phonograph record,  monogram as a PowerPoint slide, *What Is Being Said* (digitally compressed audio file), *Sarah Jones*, turntable, iPod, iPod mic. There is not a reliable record of what else is present at any single 'talk'.

22. Index of *An Artist's Talk* as at 1 April 2014:

22 Nov 2011	Fine Art MA programme, University of the West of England, Bristol
3 Feb 2012	Fine Art Practice Foundation Degree, K College, Tonbridge
22 Feb 2012	Fine Art BA programme, Kingston University, London
8 Mar 2012	Fine Art Research presentations, RCA, London
21 Sept 2012	New Contemporaries Exhibition, Liverpool Biennial
26 Oct 2012	New Contemporaries Exhibition, Liverpool Biennial
23 Nov 2012	New Contemporaries Exhibition, Liverpool Biennial
8 Dec 2012	New Contemporaries Exhibition, ICA, London
12 Jan 2013	New Contemporaries Exhibition, ICA, London
4 Feb 2013	Critical & Historical Studies lecture programme, RCA, London
21 Feb 2013	Psychology BA programme, Kingston University, London
14 Jan 2014	Fine Art BA Sound Elective, Central Saint Martins, London
26 Feb 2014	Fine Art Dept, Chelsea College of Art and Design, London

4,652 words in Baskerville, regular, lower, title and upper case
Institute of Contemporary Arts, London, 12 January 2013
Transcriber: Sarah Jones

2012 ongoing

Transcripts of audio recordings made of *An Artist's Talk* at the locations and on the dates listed above. Each transcript limits itself to the Q&A of *An Artist's Talk*.

Seminar Transcript

Research Seminar, Contemporary Art Research Centre,
Kingston University, London, 16 October 2012
9,787 words in lower and title case, regular Cambria font
Transcriber: Jess Fugler

Made from an audio recording of a seminar discussing *An Artist's Talk Q&A Transcript*, from Fine Art Research presentations, Royal College of Art, London, 8 March 2012.

Reading Aloud

10,365 words (not including footnotes) in Bulmer MT
and Arial, regular, italic, bold, small caps, superscript,
strikethrough, upper, lower and title case
2014

An essay.

Sarah Jones

Materials variable, dimensions variable
Established 1997, ongoing

Sarah Jones.

Madeleine

Chipboard, screws, pencil, marker pen, 35 × 35 × 35 cm
1998 – ongoing

It has six sides. A block with mitred seams and screws countersunk at angles connecting the sides. Some of the seams have a brittle 90° angle, their edges and corners wobbly with nibbles, while others are softly chamfered.

In one corner “1.00” is handwritten in thick blue marker pen. Close up, faint orange pencil lines trace the square just inside the edges on two of the sides, and each of the faces bears pockmarks of undisclosed use.

WHERE'S MY CHEESE ROLL
I MADE THAT CHEESE ROLL

701 words in Bulmer MT,
regular and small caps

2012

For this film screening I invited the director Peter Hall but unfortunately he isn't able to make it so instead by way of brief introduction I have some short statements in my own words and others in his

ME – when you make a record of a thing then you have another thing you have two things and to see one of those things is to see something about the other thing too

HIM – in theatre you use your imagination when you go to the cinema you believe that what the camera saw actually existed actually happened so you want there to be you're not going to imagine a bare stage is a room in Hackney you want a room in Hackney. So film although wonderfully illusionist in the sense that we can cut and move from one image to another is absolutely based on reality and you frighten the camera if you ask if you ask it to imagine something which it is not seeing. Audiences don't do that so I would regard this neither as a play nor a film I believe and think and I tried to make it a play which uses certain techniques of the film in order to express a play.

I hope that what we've done is create a surrealistic style which enables one to believe that it is and it is more than it is

ME – when we are speaking there are times when we have no words. When I look at a script I know it is both a proposition and a record I am not just listening to the dialogue I am taking in things around the dialogue – the furniture, the stage directions, the lighting and effects plot

HIM – the interesting thing about Pinter's dramaturgy the way he writes is that from the first he was using three dots which are a hesitation, pause which is an emotional stoppage a transition and silences which are complete crises and they are differentiated very very clearly and the actors have to learn them and they have to learn they are there before they decide why they are there.

Now I think you'll find if you watch the film with the text in your hands that the text is not only accurate but that the pauses and silences are absolutely well placed and are correct and of course film helped us do that in a rather interesting way which I think many people don't quite pick up. Normally speaking you edit a film the juxtaposition of shots according to visual needs and the dialogue shape is often in counterpoint to that I edited the homecoming on the rhythm of the text on the pauses on the silences

I SAY – Ely Landau had a vision that theatre produced by the greatest actors and directors should not be the privilege of the few who lived close to it in New York. The American Film Theatre was set up to commission films

of plays from the original theatrical scripts and in two years cinemas across the states screened 14 films but the subscription and screening process was complicated

HE HAS SAID – I'm not for filming plays I think plays exist because they are projected and spoken and given to a live audience and there is an interplay between the actor and the audience which is once and once only and very precious because it changes from night to night and that's not to say that theatre is better than film or film is better than theatre I think they are two absolutely different things

I SAY – the film we are watching tonight has been transferred to DVD that is another record of the thing. When I watch this DVD there is something strange about the speech the sound it's not that it is out of sync but it is sort of distant or separated. You get used to it in parts

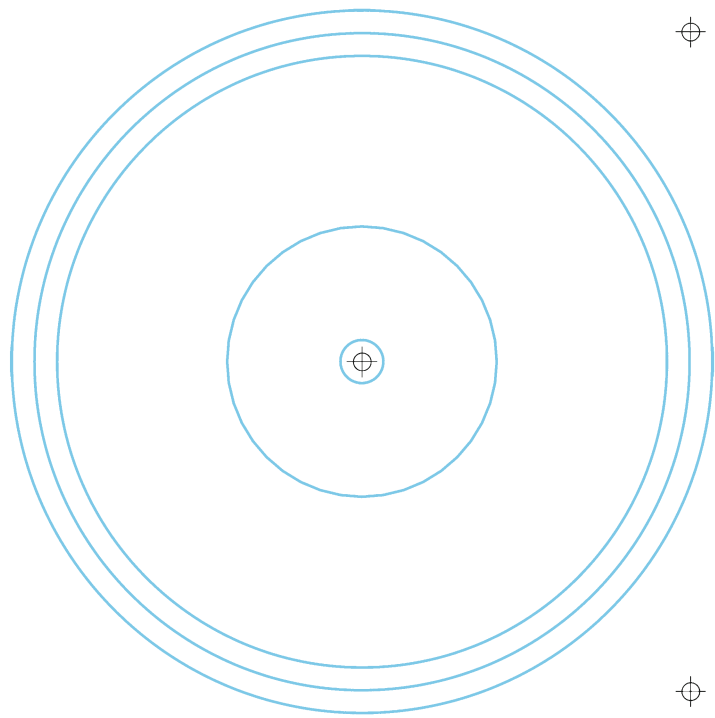
HE HAS SAID –
(SILENCE)

HE HAS SAID – anybody who visits London and engages in conversation with a taxi driver should know what piss-taking is its mocking you so elusively and charmingly and delicately that you're not even sure you are being mocked that's what piss-taking is.

TEMPLATE

Digital file (variable software)
dimensions variable

2013



SIDE B

SCRIPT for the PLAYING
of a 7" PHONOGRAPH RECORD
PREPARED for a TWO-PERSON
READ-THROUGH

818 words in Bulmer MT,
regular, italic, small caps and strikethrough

2011

READER 1 reads aloud all text in light sky blue

READER 2 reads aloud all text in pale burnt umber

The rule of reading left to right along entire lines applies at all times. Heeding colour changes, each reader may be required to read part-way along a line. Rehearsal is advised for navigating the movement from READER to READER.



Produced at the Royal College of Art, London, on the 10th December, 2009,
with the following cast of characters:

GROUP

FOB

PRODUCER

Unnamed (All PLAYERS)

Functional Object (PLAYER)

Sarah Jones (PLAYER)

The action passes in a seminar room at the far reaches of an art school in
southwest London

ACT I

SCENE 1 An afternoon in winter

Time – the present

~~ACT I~~

~~SCENE 1~~

SCENE – The seminar room of an art school in southwest London.
An afternoon in winter.

It is reached off a narrow corridor. There is a set of double doors for the players to enter through. Directly ahead, blackout curtains are drawn across a window and a glass exit door that gives access to a couple of flowerpots on a gravel patch. Located L of the double doors is a hanging net curtain, a suspended rubber wall and a rubber mat. A compact stereo record player is balanced on its speakers on the rubber mat. 2 large sofas are C, facing a wall of telephone, internet and electrical sockets. Behind the sofas are rows of chairs, they are uncounted but enough for all players to sit. Art is in unspecified places. The compact stereo light is on.

(ALL PLAYERS self-conducting thoughts and movement and speech)

FOB (separating from GROUP) (moves to the rubber mat, lifts the compact stereo lid, lifts the tone arm, placing its needle on the record. It plays it)
(He pauses.) (RECEIVING)

GROUP (self-conducting thoughts and movement and speech)

PRODUCER (separating from GROUP) (moves to sit on the edge of a sofa)
(She pauses) (continues. LISTENING)

SILENCE

CONTINUING

GROUP (self-conducting thoughts and movement and speech)

FOB (moves away from the rubber mat and takes a seat.)
(He pauses.) (Returning to GROUP)

GROUP (self-conducting thoughts and movement and speech)

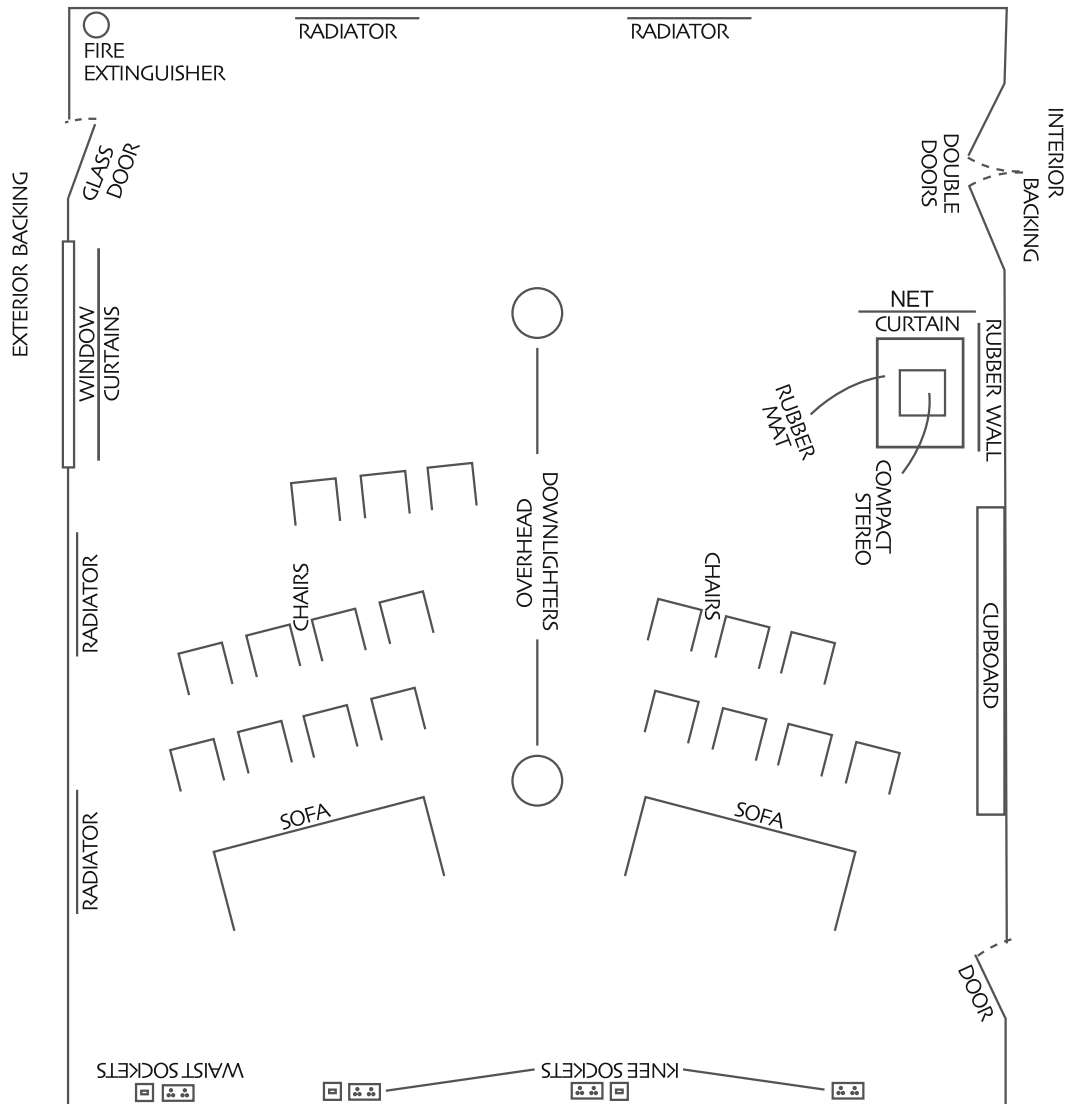
A PLAYER (moves to the rubber mat, lifts the compact stereo lid and places the needle on the record, it plays. (GROUP listening) from the stereo speakers again comes the voice of the producer, she is saying “it” repeating “it” – her voice is interrupted – she continues repeating “it” – the record stops)

PRODUCER
(She pauses) (continues. LISTENING)

GROUP (players in self-conducting thoughts and movement and speech)

the CURTAIN waits

FURNITURE AND PROPERTY LIST



fire extinguisher

2 sofas

chairs

curtains

rubber wall

rubber mat

compact stereo

stereo speakers

net curtain

7" phonograph record



LIGHTING PLOT

To open: Effect of flat artificial light, the sources are 2 overhead lights at centre of room, curtains drawn

EFFECTS PLOT

Cue 1 FOB (...it plays it.) ~~(Page 3)~~

from the compact stereo , the recorded voice of the PRODUCER

Cue 2 A PLAYER (.....it plays.) ~~(Page 4)~~

from the compact stereo , the recorded voice of the PRODUCER

INCIDENTS PLOT (Page 4)

Again	Again
have it again	put it on again
play it again	
instructed once	to play it
say it	
it it it	
its itness	
it answers it	
the record has sarah jones written on it	it's a named it
	or tit
where did it begin	when does it end
leave the lid open	go over and close it
its funny	its quite funny
a deeply serious deadpan gesture	funny doesn't last that long
long silence at 38 minutes	it is certainly looking
maintain the orientation of the seats	it is in the wings
it is not being looked at	it is self-contained

TONES PLOT

we've to remember it because we can't replay it
from a magazine point of sale circa 1973
colours of make up
tights yeah tights American Tan tights
matches the rubber wall and floor
fake flesh supposed to imitate human
an insult to the body
girdles and old fashioned support
net curtain is odd thing of dubious privacy
bespoke metal rail
lightning shaped set with graded shadow relief
view of the future from the past
between domestic and commercial
quite sadistic
caught up with time
synthesized to certain periods
shape behind it and metalwork
is 20s 30s
the selvedge on the net the groove of the record
to a high period of phonography
1930s to 1970s
the technology is fetishised
the open jaw of it
the arm automatically goes back so it does
come to a stop

format is past the player itself a set up
net curtain
a pink brocade floor trim
prosthetic pink it is prosthetic pink
mannequin colours
like surgical tights, band-aid and underwear
pervy grandma
stupidness of the rail going the wrong way
distinctive triangular bracket
early expressionist films
net curtain makes it a booth
between design and production
pleasure
doesn't cohere
record player is late 70s
a reference to 50s dansette
formally everything looks like it
belongs together
the needle glides around and fires
the record player is still current
but specific
that address
is Nora Batty a historical moment
yes

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she and we are like this_ _ _

118 words in reddish-brown Bulmer MT,
regular, bold, bold italic and superscript
printed in landscape format on any

A-series paper size, A5 or larger

2010

she and we are like this _ _ _

BOOM loud alarming

We are laid and lain sundried and fireburnt

BOOM loud knocking

We are interior and our interior is fair-faced

BOOM loud thudding

The mortar slime that bonds our community has weathered

She doesn't draw up a plan

RING loud shrilling

She hears the ringing of rubble

lobbed hurled chucked

Our engineer made us to be load-bearing

to bury and be buried

Arrrrrrrrrrrr ridiculing

She assures _ _ _

there is no beginning and we are not trembling, we are not sentimental

She's not original

disguise *the timid sex of easy compromise and sociability* Okay! – Okay!

We are re-made a wall

We are **BOOM BOOM** Basil Brush

A PLAY as the ESSAY as FORM

A4 ruled paper sheet containing 225 handwritten words selected from ‘The Essay as Form’*

2 × John Lewis A4 ruled exercise pads containing handwritten word definitions and usages copied from the *Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English*†

867 words in Bulmer MT, regular, italic, small caps, upper, lower and title case, and two-tone highlighted

2011

- o A Play as the Essay as Form presented here as:
 - 1 × scanned A4 ruled paper sheet containing 225 handwritten words selected from ‘The Essay as Form’
 - 5 × scanned pages from John Lewis A4 ruled exercise pads containing handwritten word definitions and usages copied from the *Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English*
 - Synopses and cast lists

* Theodor W. Adorno, ‘The Essay as Form,’ trans. Bob Hullot-Kentor and Frederic Will, *New German Critique* 32 (1984): 151–71, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/488160> (accessed 22 March 2010).

† R.E. Allen, ed., *Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990).

Alienated Compelling Discursive Aconceptual Anachronism
 Abrogates Antithesis Autonomy a priori Authenticity Authentic
 Edifice Artifact Creatio ex nihilo Chastised Boundlessly
 Crystallize Decadent Conventional Conspicuousness Capitulation
 Decomposition Complicity Demythologization Anachronistic Convertibility
 Analogously Essence Enlightenment Essay Eclecticism Apparatuses Censure
 Pre Elementary Exemplary Fantasy Feuilleton Fidelity Function Decreed
 Dissociates Dialectically Hybrid Harbour Homme de lettres Hypostatized Fixate
 Cartesian Fissures Implicitly Individualism Ironic Empiricist Bourgeois
 Formidable Doctrine Legitimated Latent Deductive Accentuating Dilettante
 Admonishes Antinomy Linguistic Inductive Anathematized Fragmentary Aesthetics
 Ignoble Axiomatic Invariable Indifferent Insinuation a posteriori Dogma Cites
 Antagonistic Depreciation Canonizes Abstraction Emphatic Derivation Concretely
 Enumeration Fetishized Arbitrarily Arbitrariness Atomistic Indisputable
 Discontinuity Neutralizing Naivete Negates Metaphysical Mediation
 Epistemological Over interprets Objectification Obligation Obviated
 Immanent Meta ~~Pl~~ Ontological Omnipresence Nuances Monad medium Ossifies
 Jauntily Groping Persipacity Philologically Phenomenon Premonitions
 Haphazard Cardinal Primal Prescribe Per se Positivist Plausibility
 Essayistically Protocol Profundity Philistines Primordially Profound
 Exigencies Pathos Personae Pre(-)conditions Phantasy Polemical Praxis Polemic
 Ineffaceability Qualitative Postulated Provisional Primacy Proscribed Proscription
 Dialectical Rigging Resistance Resentment Restitution Reminiscence
 Negation Immediacy Reification Repressive Retuting Rationalism Reproach
 Epiphenomenon Reparation Reciprocal Rhapsodic Relativization Relativism
 Enshrinement Supposition Subjectivism Syntheses Regression Reason Rhetoric
 Sublimated Significations Spontaneity Semblance Status quo
 Sophistic Synthesis Subordination Subtilize Substance Surpassed
 Sanctimonious Sanctity Sedimented Sociality Skeptical Stance Supplements
 Anthropomorphic Transcendence Temporally Taboo Theorem Tautology
 Eternalize Unity Unaesthetically Unmediated Upbraided
 metaphor Humanity Vigilant Verification Utopia
 Disbarred Laments Weltanschauung Yielding Scientific Residues
 membra disjecta Objectionable Logical Equivocation Polarize Concretize

a strong verbal or written attack on someone or something: his polemic against the cultural relativism of the Sixties | [mass noun] a writer of feminist polemic.

(usu. polemics) the art or practice of engaging in controversial debate or dispute: the history of science has become embroiled in religious polemics.

- adjective

another term for **POLEMICAL**

Rhapsodic - adjective

derivative of -Rhapsody - noun

an effusively enthusiastic or ecstatic expression of feeling: rhapsodies of praise.

Music a free instrumental composition in one extended movement, typically one that is emotional or exuberant in character.

(in ancient Greece) an epic poem, or part of it, of a suitable length for recitation at one time.

Enumeration - noun

derivative of -Enumerate - verb

[with obj.] to mention

(a number of things) one by one: there is not space to enumerate all his works.

formal establish the number of: the 1981 census enumerated 19,493,000 households living in a community.

Supposition - noun

an uncertain belief: they were working ~~at~~ on the supposition that his death was murder [mass noun] their outrage was based on supposition and hearsay.

Theorem - noun

Physics & Mathematics a general proposition not self-evident but proved by a chain of reasoning; a truth established by means of accepted truths.
a rule in algebra or other branches of mathematics expressed by symbols or formulae.

Axiomatic - adjective

self-evident or unquestionable: it is axiomatic that dividends have to be financed.

[attrib.] chiefly Mathematics relating to or containing axioms

Doctrine - noun

a belief or set of beliefs held and taught by a Church, political party, or other group: the doctrine of predestination.

US a stated principle of government policy, mainly in foreign or military affairs: the Truman Doctrine.

Antagonisms

NO DEFINITION

Discontinuity - noun

a distinct break in physical continuity or sequence in time, or sharp difference of characteristics between parts of something: changes in government have resulted in discontinuities in policy [mass noun] there is no significant discontinuity between modern and primitive societies.

Epistemological - adjective

derivative of - Epistemology - noun

[mass noun]

Philosophy the theory of knowledge, especially with regard to its methods, validity and scope. Epistemology is what distinguishes justified belief from opinion

Relativization - noun

derivative of - Relativize - verb

[with obj.]

chiefly Philosophy & Linguistics make or treat as relative to or dependent on something else.

Physics treat (a phenomenon or concept) according to the principles of the theory of relativity.

Immanent - adjective

existing or operating within; inherent: the protection of liberties is immanent in constitutional arrangements.

(of God) permanently pervading and sustaining the universe. Often contrasted with TRANSCENDENT

Fissure (s) - noun

a long narrow opening or line of breakage made by cracking or splitting, especially in rock or earth

chiefly Anatomy a long narrow opening in the form of a crack or groove, e.g. any of the spaces separating convolutions of the brain.

a state of incompatibility or disagreement: the fissure between ~~the~~ private sector business and the newly expanding public sector.

- verb

[with obj.]

[usu. as adj. fissured] split or crack (something) to form a long narrow opening: low hills of fissured Silurian rock.

Jauntily - adverb

derivative of - Jaunty - adjective

having or expressing a lively, cheerful, and self-confident manner: there was no mistaking that jaunty walk.

Fallibility - noun

derivative of - Fallible - adjective

capable of making mistakes or being erroneous: experts can be fallible.

Provisional - adjective

arranged or existing for the present, possibly to be changed later: a provisional government | provisional bookings.

Brit. (of a driving licence) to be obtained before starting to learn to drive and upgraded to a full licence on passing a driving test

(of a stamp) put into circulation temporarily, usually owing to the unavailability of the definitive issue.

(Provisional) [attrib] of or relating to the unofficial wings of the IRA and Sinn Fein established in 1969 and advocating terrorism.

- noun

a provisional licence or stamp.

(Provisional) a member of the Provisional wings of the IRA or Sinn Fein.

Grope (e ing) - verb

[no obj. with adverbial]

feel about or search blindly or uncertainly with the hands: she got up and groped for her spectacles.

(grope for) search mentally with hesitation or uncertainty for (a word or answer): she was groping for the words which would express what she thought

[as adj. groping] their groping attempts to create a more meaningful existence.

move along with difficulty by feeling objects as one goes: she blew out the candle and groped her way to the door.

[with obj.]

Informal feel or fondle (someone) for sexual pleasure especially against their will: he was accused of groping office girls.

- noun

an act of fondling someone for sexual pleasure: she and Steve sneaked off for a quick gripe.

SYNOPSIS & CAST LIST

A play is being written

The setting is a pile of A4 sheets of paper inhabited by a *HYBRID* of *The Chairs*¹ from which the following are visible characters:

AN OLD MAN –

AN OLD WOMAN –

AN ORATOR –

The visible characters are engaged in *ANTITHESIS*; introducing a lexicon of 225 words derived from an English translation of *The Essay as Form* by Theodor Adorno.²

The visible characters are assisted in this by the *PERSPICACITY* of a cast of invisible characters:

A LADY

THE FIELD MARSHALL

THE FABLED BEAUTY

THE OFFSET LITHOGRAPHER

3 OR 4 JOURNALISTS

TWIN CHILDREN

A TINY CHILD

THE EMPEROR

SO MANY MORE

Other characters – not present

THE OLD MAN'S MOTHER

THE OLD COUPLE'S SON

1. *The Chairs* by Eugène Ionesco premiered in Paris in 1952, the script was published by Gallimard (Paris) in 1958.

2. Adorno's "Der Essay als Form" was written between 1954 and 1958 and first published as the lead essay of *Noten zur Literatur I* in 1958.

The Old Man is 95 years old

The Old Woman was born in 1958 and is made up to look 94 years old

The Orator was born in 1984 and is a specially invited guest of the Old Couple. For him *writing is a PRIMAL urge*. He has yet to arrive.

The invisible characters have yet to arrive.

A LADY

THE FIELD MARSHALL

THE FABLED BEAUTY

THE OFFSET LITHOGRAPHER

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Other characters – not present

THE OLD MAN'S MOTHER

THE OLD COUPLE'S SON

The Old Man

And

The Old Woman

are in semi darkness. The Old Man is standing on a *gold and silver ARTIFACT* used for climbing up and down the edge of the page listening for the noise of people arriving. The Old Woman reminds him of

“what happened to Henry the Seventh” Robert Maxwell to *EXEMPLIFY* the danger of leaning over the edge. From here he will not recognize the *HOMME DE LETTRES*.

The Old Man puts up *RESISTANCE* to being led away and to the *ENLIGHTENMENT*. They arrive at 2 chairs and she sits on his knee in *SUBORDINATION*.

The Old Man *ESSAYS* a smile and the Old Woman *PRESCRIBES* the story of “the two of us came”.

The Old Man turns he does not want to begin with Adam and Eve. “It’s just too tedious” as *CREATIO EX NIHILO*.

“Can’t we change the subject?” the retelling of the story is not *PHILOLOGICALLY* hardened and sober “it turned to ruins”.

They are *VIGILANT* calculating reason. They do not know what *OVERINTERPRETS* means and ...

.....
.....
.....

As the Old Man speaks the Old Woman begins to laugh. At first with soft senility, but then with increasing abandon, the Old Man also laughing.

The Old Man thinks that *it is not these facts PER SE that are important*. But the Old Woman is looking for a *DECADENT* soak in a scented bath. She *HARBORS* a thought that the Old Man is a dupe of false intentionality. “You could’ve achieved something in life, have mastered far more than the mere mop and bucket”.

The Old Man recognizes this *PHENOMENON* as *he had yet to accomplish anything of SUBSTANCE* working without *SIGNIFICATION*. “Missed it? Wrecked my life? I want my mummy. Mummy. Where’s my mummy? I’m an orphan. (Moans.) Fatherless ... motherless ...” He needs *SPONTANEITY*.

The Old Woman comforts him against this scene of *FANTASY*. Not *CHASTISED* for being afraid. She pleads for *UNITY* “I’m your wife. I’m your mummy now.”

A PLAY AS THE ESSAY AS FORM – SYNOPSIS ATTEMPT NO. 2.

The cover opens, Semi-darkness. The Old Man standing on a ladder used for climbing the social ranks, leans over the edge of the page, stage right. The Old Woman is lighting the desk lamp. Green light. She goes and tugs on the Old Man's leaf.

OLD WOMAN – Please – poppet – close the cover. You're letter the stench of DECOMPOSITION in. Not to mention the ANTAGONISTICS.

OLD MAN – Don't bother me now.

OLD WOMAN – Please – please – poppet – come and sit down. Stop edging. You might fall off. Remember what happened to Robert Maxwell. You can never be too careful.

OLD MAN – Spare me your DOCTRINES

The visible characters are engaged in TAUTOLOGIES; to MEDIATE, that is to say form a connecting link introducing a lexicon of 225 words derived from an English translation of The Essay as Form by Theodor Adorno.

The visible characters are assisted in this by a cast of invisible characters:

A LADY – she HARBOURS a thought and drops an invisible object and is knocked over by the old man

THE FIELD MARSHALL – he is a LEGITIMATED DILETTANTE, he flicks his ash on the floor

'THE BELLE' – under the personae 'Mademoiselle', her arrival causes the Old Man to INSINUATE METAPHYSICAL REMINISCENCE

'THE BEAST' – husband of 'The Belle' brings gift of a picture for the Old Man and Old Woman. The old woman mistakes him for a doctor, when he is in fact an Offset Lithographer, then REFUTING FIDELITY shows him her TABOO TITS

3 OR 4 JOURNALISTS – TEMPORALLY POSTULATED

TWIN CHILDREN – of a rich, bored bourgeois family

A TINY CHILD – the Old Man has a PRE-CONDITION to hold this child's hand

THE EMPEROR

SO MANY MORE PEOPLE – too many for the sheets of paper

Other characters – not present

THE OLD MAN'S MOTHER

THE OLD COUPLE'S SON

An ARTIST'S TALK Q&A TRANSCRIPT

4,652 words in Baskerville,
regular, lower, title and upper case
Institute of Contemporary Arts,
London, 12 January 2013
Transcriber: Sarah Jones

[deep intake of breath]
[clink clunk]
[footsteps]

S - umm this is the part of An Artist's Talk that is now the Q and A (there is a pause) hello

A - what is being said

S - what

A - what is being said

S - yes what

A - what

S - [laughter] thank you what

A - what

S - [laughter] thank you

SILENCE

S - yes

A - what is your preferred shape for a bullet point

S - [click] ahh [deep intake of breath and outtake] I haven't got an answer for that written down damn umm

A - what should I have asked

S - [laughter] I haven't got an answer for anything written down [laughing] I just thought I'd say that to fill the gap umm... [click] I kind of like convention I think a nice solid...

A - the classic round

S - yeah

A - yeah

S - convention by nature

A - what do you put next to the bullet point

S - [sigh] errrr errr t [click] very straightforward things very ordinary things... I think... what do you put next to them

A - lists sometimes

S - yeah they are good for lists yeah... yeah

A - (muffled speech unclear to transcriber)

S - sorry

A - why why use vinyl

S - umm [click] one of the reasons... I use... vinyl's one of the things that I use for sound recording or for playback or to record for playback and umm its only one amongst the many materials that I use but what's particular about vinyl is the... its opaqueness in the sense of it being unread or that its got a script to it its inscribed literally and that umm the the that in order to read it the processes that it might go through in order for it to be read so its it always kind of holds itself umm as a written thing and a hidden thing at the same time and the way that the voice is recorded to it is appealing to me... I think that it still carries some of the umm kind of maybe the histories of a kind of dark missives as well things that have come down umm been [click] ummm been told to us or been ordered of us those kind of dark missive messages that umm its not wholly encapsulated in vinyl and it can come you know from any sources including digital umm but I think that there is something about the the objectness and the physicality of the vinyl that still holds those and kind of brings them with it [click] the second vinyl that's on the turntable you heard was a download so so the vinyl is literally... just its umm its just a visual presence here that's always heard by way of a download its the umm it is it is what's inscribed in that record or what's scored into that record what's cut into that vinyl but its never played its only ever heard by way of the download

SILENCE

S - hi

A - how do you think the bullet has evolved from Columbo to CSI

S - [click] well there's a lot more tricks in CSI [laughter] particularly my favourite is the ummm the errr the fishtank of jelly that they use and sort of like a thick jelly I'm sure they don't call it jelly but its not going to come to me what they do call it errr and then they shoot into it and then they track the bullet and (muffled speech unclear to transcriber) it makes an awful kind of errr brilliant mess inside that Columbo is [click] he wasn't really so ballistics umm he would look and kind of see [with an accentuated voice] 'ahh its got a chip' or he wouldn't necessarily say it like a pirate [laughing] that just came out but its errr its got a nick so that would be followed through in some way so I think that there might have been the occasionally ballistics expert that I might have come across on Columbo but CSI is its all about the... [with an accentuated voice] 'the science' and errr Columbo's just smarter than that really I think probably

A - sarah / you just said it came out and I just wondered what relationship of it to it*

S - hi *hoo oh [laughter]

A - do you understand

S - [breathless] no

A - you just said that it came out in your description of the um mistake you made

S - yes

A - so I'm just curious to see if you have any relationship to that it and the it... the other it

S - [click] well hummmmmmm haaaaah I think it takes me by surprise sometimes and it pops out when I don't really realise it

A - nice

A - well what is it

S - what

[chuckling]

S - umm... [sharp outtake of breath]... yeah (there is a pause) [click] right now its ummm erm...
pauses and hesitations (there is a pause) including

A - I get it

SILENCE

A - would you say that the relationship between it and it could be the relationship between the
vinyl that never gets played and the recording on the computer (muffled speech unclear to
transcriber)

S - [click] say the last bit cos / it was too quiet

A - is it is it umm is the relationship between it and it ahh the same relationship as that between
the vinyl and the download that you said you played to us

S - always (there is a pause) yes... not exclusively... but always

A - can the vinyl be played apart from the download... is it possible

S - not by my hand (there is a pause) if I am here to [click sharp intake of breath]

A - but by another it

S - yeah... yeah (there is a pause) if I am to... that I am to the tone arm what the tone arm is to
the needle that goes on the record (there is a pause) as I might be [footsteps] to that or [rustling]
ooo to that ... its of purpose and of yeah [footsteps] hello

A - what's more important the sound or the absence of sound... / or is neither important or both
important

S - [deep intake of breath and outtake click] I think that... [clipping] I haven't had the
experience of an absence of sound I've had the experience of / oh sorry

A - you you had it on your record here bits where the record plays and bits where the record
doesn't play so you have you have the sound and then you have parts of the record or parts of /
whatever you and so we sit here and we have people talking and we have pauses / what how
important are they how is the relationship important*

S - I see

S - yeah

S - *I think that umm they are all held in the whole in that /the duration

(muffled speech unclear to transcriber)

S - say again

A - is that a round hole

S - its a round hole [laughter]

[chuckling]

S - humph yes its a round hole so its like this spheric round hole err and umm so there is a duration which is the whole so the what you refer to as the absence of sound the parts where maybe its something like the payout part or something like that that's all within the whole

A - where is where is what when it is absent

S - [sotto voce] hold on

SILENCE

S - say that again

A - where is what when it is absent

S - [deep intake of breath and outtake] (there is a pause) somewhat like the absence of sound I've never experienced the absence of it (there is a pause) it remains if I'm not here or we're not here (there is a pause) I think [deep outtake of breath]... I think I might have a little row with myself there cos after I said that I wasn't quite sure whether I thought that or not ummm... [click] if [sigh]... many things can be pointed at that could be it but none of them are decisively or exclusively it so umm [click] to kind of go back to that idea of what if if I were not here or we were not here whether it would be here... sss some of the things that could be pointed at would be here but the it of this here would not be

S - yeah

A - and the what

S - [click] ah because I haven't experienced the absence of it then I don't know what

A - it it presumably it always has an inherent itness / does it always have an inherent whatness or can it be without whatness so can you have the presence of it with absence of what*

S - huh huh *yes in that what is I think is brought by me or us... and I think what is not umm (there is a pause) I think what is a question that is asked of it but it doesn't necessarily ask a question itself (there is a pause) I'm getting quite tied up here is it really obvious [laughter] I'm quite enjoying it but I feel like I'm learning to tie my shoe laces... as we speak

A - so what has no where

S - ohh [laughter] hah its my own fault umm/ just ahhhh [click] [click click click] [click click]

[laughter]

SILENCE

A - is it is it more than one

S - is

A - it a multiple its more than one

S - it could be

(there is a pause)

A - does that relate to the bullet point

S - no not necessarily... I mean there are if we speak literally... I've lost count of the its since we started this

A - is the plosive t relevant at the end of [with accentuated t's] bullet point what it

S - yeah what's really enjoyable about the what's the word that you just used /plosive plosive

A - plosive... it's not I don't think I'm not sure its completely correct language for / the 't' sound

S - yeah, yeah err its err there's a real joy with that 't' because its what it does to the words that follow it... particularly it is what it is and words that follow it can then pick up the t and add it into themselves so whilst [click] whilst politely speaking no forget the... sss strikeout the politely speaking just speaking plainly the it that was in that vinyl was more of a tit than it was an it so err / did you notice yeah but we haven't spent the last however many minutes talking about tits we've been talking about its / so there is a kind of politeness maybe somewhere coming thrown in there so that is yes*

A - disgusting

[laughter]

A - *you stopped yourself I noticed when it did become when it did elide into each other you stopped yourself and it became it again so you said it it it is repeated to the extent and to the stage that it becomes something different / and you deliberately stop yourself again and it becomes it again*

S - yeah *yeah something of the performance of a umm a tongue twister in its matter of not being able to stop it being tit rather than the other way round and the tit forcing itself out rather than the it which I can kind of recover/in repetition

A - yeah yeah * so does that actually say I TIT

[laughter]

S - I really enjoy when that's how its read because its as err its as plainly read as it is plainly written

SILENCE

A - what do you enjoy about what in the same way

S - ah it's a twot

[laughter]

S - which has taken on a recent new umm err ummm a a new revealing to me in that I've recently come across the fact that in err umm some american diction the twat is a twot and its not a twat so its taken on a whole new uncomfortableness for me that I'm not quite sure where I'm not so keen on that but it is what it is so its not whether I like it or not that's going to matter here its that what is the word and what language will do with it

SIRENS IN THE DISTANCE

A - sorry what's this dress got to do with it

S - [laughter] umm... [click] well... there's a story of the umm there wouldn't be a what if it weren't for the dress umm this isn't really a story of kind of a realism it is a story of how umm its possible to account for something umm in a in that is not concerned with being of sense or of of kind of rationale and that is that umm [click] I had made the the 7" single and [click] then I think I adopted... the all too easily the umm what's the word the... the cliché of the difficult second well its usually the difficult second album but in my case it was the difficult second single... and [click] wanted to make another record but was... you know thought well I really thought I could never make another record as good as it really so it was quite troubling [sharp intake of breath] but... there were three words that I found in this dress and it seemed to me remarkably like... I can see it now its not quite as like it as I thought its... remarkably like the iiti record sleeve [click] umm and it seemed to me that it was the score for the second single that dress would be the score for the 12" which followed I didn't know it was going to be a 12" at that time but it was going to be the score for the second single and it was pretty much a kind of an at first sight I knew that it was the score for the second single and umm this little leap here I don't know what fills this leap or gap there's a space and [click] the score was recorded... with me with the dress as the score and three words... one word which you have not heard... here today umm... but that is the score for the second single which is the download which you heard (there is a pause) that's what the dress has to do with it

A - what's the other word

S - ur

(muffled speech unclear to transcriber)

A - is that the third single

S - [click] well if I had enough trouble with the difficult second single [laughing] single even ur only time will tell if there's a third and it might not be difficult but it what ur now does exist but just might not be a recording outside of this room... it just made it in I realised [laughter] thank you

A - can we see the dress... can you hold it up [footsteps] can you can you unfold it or is that

S - no

A - okay

S - I'm thinking about that / I might come back not all things get decided in the moment sometimes they get decided several moments later

A - that's all right that's all right

A - did you record multiple takes of it

S - umm... yes... well... I think so... probably... I'm not trying to be cryptic but I actually can't remember

A - so you didn't choose one that is better (muffled speech unclear to transcriber)

S - [click] I [sharp outtake of breath] I just don't remember its the sort of thing I thought I would remember but I don't umm [click] no no idea um the second single on the other hand is a a was a very very long recording which I took a sample from... hence no ur cos ur's were in other parts of it so I remember that... its possible it was just the once that's maybe why I've got no memory of it being done multiple times... thank goodness we've got the recording so you don't have to rely on me its the ideal thing about recording its not relying on the moment here (there is a pause) [deep intake of breath]

SILENCE

A - so is itit echo like umm double birth or like twins

S - huh [sigh] [click] that's an image that I just can't take [laughing] on I tried and now that just decked me... umm [click] err oh... no you really have decked me... huh I think that probably if find that umm maybe not just because a had a horrible image of giving multiple birth which really threw me over but I think that err its sheer mobility I find umm I find that that it might evoke a single image or something like that... its not possible to kind of follow through on that so I recognise that it might bring forth but from where I sit no it doesn't it stays umm its mobility gives rise to its being other than image or other than an image of another thing another thing other than itself I mean there are plenty of things here... which are the compon' are its and in the whole of it there are plenty of things here there are plenty of things here umm so another image that that might evoke is a line that I don't cross I don't know whether its umm [click] tut tut tut tut... there's something about the... there's something about umm there's something about a thing there's something about what err the it might be that the more it is talked about or the more that is said about it or of it umm the more stupid it makes the umm speaker err appear and I think that umm a way out of that might be to umm call upon kind of certain imagery that might be a way to escape that apparent umm... kind of wallowing or stupidity and umm so that would be an idea to do that

A - to (muffled speech unclear to transcriber)

S - to take a route out... that's an option (there is a pause) but then... [click] I think it belittles the it to do that reduces [click] it

A - wouldn't you say though that the image on your screen is precisely an image

S - [click] yeah... yeah it is... it is and its... yeah how far it travels it does it is an / image

A - it travels quite a long way

S - yeah it came about to pick up with the dress it came about because umm... I don't know what the words are now... umm hah it came about at the same time as the recording or sometime around the recording of the vinyl [click] because it needed a monogram... and it needed a monogram because... it seemed to me that the monogram held on to it in the way that a title might not and the title might slip away I mean titles that I really enjoy... I've had a penchant recently for some pretty ones away from this but the ones that I enjoy or have done for many years are the equivalent of... errr no more nails which is probably the best ever invention of named goods that there's been and I think think that err kind of literalism of which there is such a long tradition and maybe that's why no more nails hit the... spot the way that it did err is because of the err the welcomeness in this culture of of that kind of literalism and that play on terms and words and meaning umm and there's something about the way that they don't travel far from there it or their thing in the way that they did I'm not saying they don't travel at all but the way it clings back to it and I think that's how the monogram kind of figured for me that it might come back to that and err I don't hold to that as a kind of rule but its a penchant

A - but what didn't get the same treatment

S - uh [sharp outtake of breath]

SILENCE

A - what was the question (there is a pause) what did you ask

A - I said what doesn't get the same treatment

(there is a pause) [throat clearing] [click]

SILENCE

S - right now what is not being said

A - but that's not a monogram

S - no I sti' you're right

A - what is a monogram

S - a monogram is the thing that when you wear you're smoking jacket that will be what's on it

A - right but any amount of words any amount of / letters

S - yeah have I got that right have I just renamed something/ just be to think to think maybe I'd used yeah so mine would be... if I were to have a smoking jacket... would be SJ*

A - probably *not necessarily initials though or are they

S - I think I always think of them as initials but that might not be strictly true / is it not true

A - no I don't... think of izod shirts they've got a little alligator here

S - true is that a monogram yeah maybe / I don't know its no good now I need my dictionary

[laughter]*

A - or is that (muffled speech unclear to transcriber) *its always initials

S - is it thank you I like to have an expert in the room [laughter] that wasn't a plant thank you

A - can you believe its not butter

[laughter]

S - another brilliant item of goods properly named err yes I can't believe its not butter

A - can you believe what it is

S - [click] I try not to think about it because all the things I've heard are pretty ugly [laughter] basically I'm going to die quicker because of it I think that's how it works

SILENCE

A - sarah if I was a psychopathologist I'd know what the it was but I'm not

S - what's a psychopathologist

A - I'm not one so I don't know

S - [laughter]

A - if I was a shrink I'd know

S - yeah I'm glad that you're not I don't think this is a place for / no I don't think it is*

A - that sort of thing *why do you say that

S - [laughter] ahh I've provoked the psychoanalyst [laughing] in the room I thought it was dangerous territory knowing you which I do [click] why do I say that... cos its true

A - its true

S - yeah (there is a pause) you don't have to believe me... I think so

A - I can't remember what it was now

S - Roy knows (for this recording Roy is in the audience and is not a psychopathologist)

[chuckling]

A - so is it important in itself

S - yeeessss its the ultimate

A - but there's no comparison for what then

S - [sighing] no you're right I've created a hierarchy... not very fashionable

A - but necessary

S - not even necessary

A - in numerology where you have three of things you have the word the what the it and the ur its almost religious in its / err impact*

(muffled speech unclear to transcriber)

S - *go on

A - that's it [laughter] not only that its that's what and ur

S - did everybody catch that

A - no

S - shall I try and I'll try and repeat it / numerol' numerology

A - yeah yeah yeah... I don't know anything about numerology but the number three is a very important number obviously we have the what the it and the ur could possibly be said to mirror or reflect in some kind of way a religious

S - a religious iconog' iconography

A - yeah

S - or okay so the suggestion that it what ur is a religious /or

A - not religious in itself but in a sense that it reflects the three / of the number three or

S - oh reflects them

A - the trinity

S - say that again

A - the trinity is obviously religious / exclusively

S - yeah... clearly I'll never make the third single... my views will be known I will take a stand... but its impossible not to see what you are saying to follow what you are saying (there is a pause) so I'll have to act I think

A - you'll have to what sorry

S - act

SILENCE

A - sorry act as in action or act as in pretend

S - ahhh [laughter] umm [click] I don't know where pretend stops and I umm... [click]... I would say it is action because I will not act

A - what happens when it is a prefix or suffix

S - for example

A - ummmm... iterate / prefix umm shit suffix are no sorry compos' can't say it comp... compo' compo' composite that's the word I was trying to think of composit and iterate it becomes less important (muffled speech unclear to transcriber) compos' say composite

S - yeah... yeah

A - so that isn't it... it isn't

S - say that again

A - it becomes because it becomes less important when it joins with something else it is diluted so in those circumstances it isn't it

S - it isn't it (there is a pause) but even not being it is an it... its a trap not one that's set but... yeah

A - hi

S - hi

A - hi I I wonder if you remember the first time you met your it and how how did you feel when you when you when you met this it and I wonder w where and how how did you discover it and how did you and what what what what you see in your I don't know how do you feel

S - mm [deep intake of breath click and outtake] I have very very I [gasp] I do have very little memory umm of the occasion err and umm I think it couldn't have been very momentous I think it must have been a little flabby and umm a little unclear what was going on I think that would probably be the occasion that I'd... think about (there is a pause) and I think that perhaps umm... if it is a first word then um um sitting here this evening and I've it has just crossed my mind that what might be the last word (there is a pause) perhaps... I'll... yeah I think it might be yeah I think it might be here (there is a pause)
[deep intake of breath and outtake]
[deep intake of breath and outtake]

SILENCE

MC - okay well I guess this is good moment to stop... its been an hour so thank you very much sarah and thank you to you all there's another performance here at seven so if we could just maybe clear the room and the bar is open

READING ALOUD

10,365 words (not including footnotes) in
Bulmer MT and Arial, regular, italic, bold,
small caps, superscript, strikethrough,
upper, lower and title case

2014

Reading a Play

A man is sitting on a small camp stool beside a hole in the road. He looks into the hole and he waits. In setting the scene for his absurdist play *The Hole*, British playwright N.F. Simpson identifies this man as the Visionary. The hole and the man are at the centre of a cast of characters. Asked if he is expecting anything special to happen, the man says: 'I'm forming the nucleus of a queue.'¹

A series of conversations takes place, with each character wondering at what they can see down the hole. The Visionary describes preparations for the unveiling of a stained-glass window, while the other men see a number of different scenes, including a game of dominoes with boxing gloves and a shuttlecock, a golf tournament, and they count fifteen species of fish in a tank. They attempt to solve the problem of the mix of different fish – coldwater, saltwater and tropical – that have no business swimming together in a single tank.

The anxiety created by the impossibility of agreeing on what is down the hole builds up to a frenzy of marching and non-sequitur war cries from all except the Visionary. He remains committed to just the one image: he is waiting for the stained-glass window to be unveiled. Alongside this, a conversation takes place between two women about the problems of their respective male relations. One's problem is a desire for perversity – wanting to be different from everyone else – while for the other it is the case that he is perverse but wants to be the same as everyone else.

Whether the characters are striving for reversal or staring into the abyss and hoping to see, *The Hole* is a play of anticipation. It is a play of waiting, and of waiting for something. Where in the work of Simpson's contemporary Samuel Beckett there is an anticipated event, waiting is present as a thing in itself. For Beckett, the question 'What are you waiting for?' may never be answered. This is not true in *The Hole*. From the outset, the Visionary declares the object of his vision and we see what comes in its place. Such anticipation of a longed-for event is reminiscent of the old man and woman in Eugène Ionesco's *The Chairs*,² as they await the arrival of a great Orator to deliver the old man's message to save humanity. When the Orator finally shows up, both an imagined audience on stage and the real audience in the theatre recognise that he is a deaf-mute.

A one-act play made up of a single scene, *The Hole* contains numerous stage directions – almost as many directions as there is dialogue, despite the script being heavy on conversation, with few pauses or silences. In this sense, the directions run with the dialogue. A shape is formed through the reading of these directions, one that criss-crosses the stage as the characters (apart from

1. N.F. Simpson, *The Hole* (London: Samuel French, 1958), 1.

2. Eugène Ionesco, *The Chairs* (1952), trans. Martin Crimp (London: Faber and Faber, 1997).

the Visionary) constantly move to and from the hole. What pauses there are function as a space for active looking, which is different from the pauses in a Harold Pinter play, for example, where the pause is a kind of temporal space, or vessel, that anxiety can flow into.

The anxious space of the pause is the ground of the composition for *An Artist's Talk*. A recent performance at Chelsea³ was deemed to have been a success because it resulted in an overtly chatty atmosphere. I was disappointed, however, because of the lack of pauses in this particular presentation. The format of *An Artist's Talk* calls for the pause in the shock of the seemingly premature Q&A session that would customarily fill only the final minutes of an event. One recognises the awkward silence between the end of a lecture or talk and the invitation for questions, and *An Artist's Talk* aggravates this by calling for questions after only six minutes. In this respect, I am borrowing from Pinter when I use the terms of pause and silence. Hesitation is the shortest gap, the pause is slightly longer and silence is longer still.

During an interview discussing the process of directing *The Homecoming* for the American Film Theatre, Peter Hall spoke of Pinter's specific use of pauses, hesitations and silences, and the anxiety that fills such spaces: '... the interesting thing about Pinter's dramaturgy, the way he writes, is that from the first he was using three dots, which are a hesitation, pause which is an emotional stoppage, a transition, and silences which are complete crises'.⁴

Through Pinter, Hall understands silence as complete catastrophe – a total breakdown of the social space. I am conscious of the necessity for speech gaps in *An Artist's Talk*; if these do not occur it is not a successful object. Anxiety enters through the silence on my own part, there are consequences from this in terms of a mood in the piece, how it plays out, if it is overcome or not. Perhaps the most successful of the talks so far has been *An Artist's Talk* staged at the ICA as part of New Contemporaries in 2013. As its resulting transcript reveals, the scene was punctuated with pauses and silences never fully recovered from: a mild air of irritation reigned. This annoyance draws attention to the constructed nature of these performative spaces where an artist imitates a presentation of the self before an audience who may or may not be familiar with their work.

The question that is most often posed during the Q&A of *An Artist's Talk* is: 'Are you performing now?' The answer is always: 'Yes.' On occasions, this response is joined with a comment intimating *I don't know when I am not*. There is no script in the traditional sense of a written text for dialogue, but a core of stock answers to questions has been developed through rehearsal and

3. Chelsea College of Art and Design, 26 February 2014. *An Artist's Talk* took place with students and tutors from the Fine Art BA programme. The judgement that it was a success was offered by the programme leader.

4. Interview with Peter Hall, special feature: *Harold Pinter's The Homecoming*, American Film Theatre Collection, 1973 (DVD, Kino International, 2003).

repeated performance of the work. When I say ‘developed’, it would be better to describe it as accreted through feedback. As a work it provides a setting for questions I have batted away or evaded prior to its realisation. Repeated performances of it, and listening to audio recordings of it, have produced recognisably similar answers in improvised replies to these and other questions asked by audiences. The stock answers are the initial measurements in a portrait. David Levine alludes to the purpose and use of a script when he describes acting as ‘an antiquated technology of representation, but it’s a novel technology of artificial intelligence. I like using actors who have prepared and rehearsed because they don’t have to default to a script and they don’t get freaked out when you double up on a question.’⁵

The study of the performance of subjectivity, however, is not the focus of this work or this text. What is of interest is the *yes*: the idea that points to the object of *An Artist’s Talk*, one that incorporates both what precedes and what follows the Q&A. The implications of this object of performance are that the audience are also within this object. Through their presence and placement, they are cast within this scene. In this sense, *An Artist’s Talk* is a play. There is a protagonist and there is a chorus. This role-playing informs the shaping of the ensuing transcript of the act. Within these documents there is a single voice that is identified with the initial ‘S’, which represents myself performing the role of The Artist, and this is in dialogue with ‘A’, which signifies The Audience: a single body made up of a multitude of voices.

Another anxiety that fills this space lies around illusion – the illusion of a real of The Artist and a real of *An Artist’s Talk*. Treating the event as an object serves as a reminder of this illusionary premise. On this stage, the object of the artist as an illusion is called into question as well. Rather than being understood as polarities, the movement between imagination and evidential fact is here fluid. In this sense, *An Artist’s Talk* does not sit comfortably within the genre of the performance lecture, or its recent revival within contemporary art. On the surface, there are potential similarities, in the sense of the occurrence of a talk that can discuss its own object as form, as practised by artists such as Mark Leckey and Andrea Fraser. The performance lecture is a monologue. *An Artist’s Talk* is a play with more than one character. There is a set, there are stage directions, an effects plot, costumes and prompts for scripted speech. However, for most of the time, what takes place is a play between who is speaking and who is listening, between what is being projected and what is being absorbed. I have thought of *An Artist’s Talk* not as breaking an illusion but as projecting one.

Bertolt Brecht’s proposition of distanciation continues to influence contemporary theatre, as exemplified in Katie Mitchell’s ongoing practice of constructing and capturing a play for video that is projected simultaneously

5. David Levine, “Act Natural: David Levine”, interview by Dan Fox, *Frieze* 156 (2013), www.frieze.com/issue/article/act-natural (accessed 23 January 2014).

to the audience. The idea of showing what something can be is employed in the staging of ... *some trace of her*,⁶ a 2008 adaptation by Mitchell of Dostoyevsky's *The Idiot*. Actors are both in front of the camera and following the directions of the story when not needed in shots, dipping in and out to become the camera operators and live-action foley artists. On occasion one scene in the video may occupy several divisions of the stage, with a camera and microphones trained on each. For example, a camera is pointed at a 'close-up tabletop' set with a breakfast. The tabletop is lit from above; that which is outside it is in the dark and out of frame. An actor/hand model reaches in carefully and starts to cut the bread on the plate, stack a mouthful of food onto a fork, lifts it and returns it to the plate, lifting and replacing a cup back on its saucer. The hands are isolated as objects moving other objects around the table, and as they move they create the foley sound for another part of the stage, where the two lovers Myshkin and Aglaya are having a discussion over breakfast. Sitting facing each other across a small table with cameras set to frame them at a distance, they are mirroring the movements of the hand model at the 'close-up table' but not exactly; they are only mimicking the scraping of plates and clinking of crockery that accompany their conversation. The sound is simultaneously synchronised on stage with the screen above, where the video cuts between the long shot of the lovers having their discussion and the disembodied close-up action of the other table. The unified effect of the projection is to bring these bodies together as one character played by many parts. It is not just the characters or players that are unified on the screen; the scene's visual and aural dimensions are also made seamless. The construction of illusion is shown/revealed and in doing so there is a reminder to the audience that they are present. This is not the opposite of immersion, but more like a flic-flac⁷ movement.

Yet *An Artist's Talk* is not an attempt to perpetuate theories around distanciation in contemporary theatre. It is not just that *An Artist's Talk* embraces the construction of illusion, but that it does not intend to show its construction in a transparent manner to the audience. It is a work of obfuscation. A range of tactics have been employed to sucker-punch, dodge and sidestep. Despite this, I cannot deny that the questions and answers that are part of *An Artist's Talk* show that the audience do become aware of the construction of the illusion: there is a conscious plane evidenced in the subsequent transcripts. But perhaps this is the point.

6. 5 ... *some trace of her*, directed by Katie Mitchell, Cottesloe Theatre, National Theatre, London, 3 August 2008.

7. A flic-flac 'is an acrobatic move in which a person executes a complete revolution of the body by lunging head first from an upright position into a vertical position and then pushing off (i.e. "springing") from the floor with the hands so as to leap back to an upright position' – definition <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flic-flac> (accessed 14 April 2014).

So I might suppose and we might suppose that the bullet point is for making something less complicated and it makes the complicated thing less and in making that thing less it gets rid of the complicated thing. And if this is the case it is open to a criticism that it is seeking to reduce complexity and in doing so it reduces the number and the range of our thoughts. Or not, because I would say to stay on the point here thinking literally the point of a bullet is its tip its tip which might not be pointed but could be rounded. A round thinking of a point is dependent on the matter that that point hits. And if any of you have been like me addicted to *Columbo* or more recently *CSI* you will know that once it is shot a bullet's shape changes and its changes depend on the material properties of the bullet itself and the material properties of the matter that it hits.⁸

And when *An Artist's Talk* is positioned in the realm of sculpture, it is in the way that the Artist Placement Group positioned a conversation as sculpture – an idea relating to the object of art within social contexts: ‘... APG experimented with a debate-based exhibition format: the main exhibit was a boardroom table entitled *The Sculpture*, where APG hosted live discussions between artists, industrialists and government representatives.’⁹

Within the context of the gallery space – in the above instance, the Hayward Gallery – it could be said that a sense of a fourth-wall tradition of theatre is here invoked, with *The Sculpture* at centre stage and its boundaries clearly defined from the audience. *An Artist's Talk* is a sculpture with blurred edges. The boundaries of this object are unfixed. They leak. The duration and the playing of roles may be indicated, yet they remain uncertain, as it is a play in an image. With each subsequent staging and restaging, and through the process of this research, the elements that constitute the act become more familiar.

What remain in flux are the boundaries of the object as one that is taken to a social context and one that seeks to assimilate itself. Within this context the ‘you’ of the audience is essential. As in much Structural/Materialist film, the ‘you’ here is not rendered mute, but is an active presence within and throughout the encounter. This complicity extends beyond the voice that poses the question ‘Are you performing now?’ and, on some occasions, redirects this same question back to itself. The transcripts of *An Artist's Talk* contain records of this unsureness in the words of ‘A’ (as audience), expressing an awareness of the document of the act – of the formation of a script – and of their role within its dialogue. What becomes perpetually uncertain is the appearance of a true and false image.

8. Sarah Jones, excerpt from a reading entitled ‘the point of a bullet point’ that precedes the Q&A of *An Artist's Talk*, 2011–ongoing.

9. Antony Hudek and Alex Sainsbury, foreword to *The Individual and the Organisation: Artist Placement Group 1966–79*, exh. cat. (London: Raven Row, 2012), 5.

In his essay ‘Theory and Definition of Structural/Materialist Film’, Peter Gidal discusses ‘the way that “image” is presented’ and the necessity for ‘a continual attempt to destroy the illusion’:

In Structural/Materialist film, the in/film (not in/frame) and film/viewer material relations, and the relations of the film’s structure, are primary to any representational content. The structuring aspects and the attempt to decipher the structure and anticipate/recorrect it, to clarify and analyse the production-process of the specific image at any specific moment, are the root concern of Structural/Materialist film.¹⁰

If a root concern of *An Artist’s Talk* is an attempt to destroy an illusion of representation, it lacked a formal strategy. *An Artist’s Talk* is an object that is now an artwork, but it once wasn’t. An invitation was made to me, as an artist, to give a talk about my work to students at the University of the West of England in Bristol.¹¹ But there was a problem. Having refused or avoided doing any artist talks for several years, I also had no images, photographs or films of works made during this time. These two elements were not designed to be coincident, but this was the situation at the time of the invitation. The choice to accept was based on a choice to amuse myself, enjoying a perverse pleasure in recognising the problem. It was also an acceptance made following the request of a friend, one who would be likely to relish or even aggravate the perversity.

As opposed to a knowing decision to play with the convention of an artist’s talk, this combination of elements in and of themselves meant that once they were put into the same space there was a certain inevitability that a play with form would transpire. The artist’s talk has a protocol or conventions that bring with them a presumption about what is being anticipated. Conventions are established by way of repetition and recognition. The expectation of *I know what I am going to get because I have seen or done this before*. While the subject will differ on each occasion, the choreography of the event is familiar. There is a presentation, a showing: a monologue with visuals that elucidate a work, or a series of works. And there is a time for questions and answers that concludes such a proceeding.

It is possible to say that my approach to giving the talk was flippant. I took three things with me. One was a 7" phonograph record. The second was an MP3 file that was the recording of the playing of a 12" phonograph record. The third was a single PowerPoint image of a monogram, which stands in for the title of the 7" phonograph record. The hosts provided a turntable (it was

10. Peter Gidal, “Theory and Definition of Structural/Materialist Film”, http://www.luxonline.org.uk/articles/theory_and_definition (accessed 9 March 2013).

11. The invitation was made by Roy Voss, Fine Art MA programme manager. The talk was given on 22 November 2011.

quite toy-like), I played the 7" record and the MP3 file and talked about bullet points and PowerPoint presentations for a couple of minutes, and then invited questions.



monogram
graphic design produced in Adobe Illustrator
dimensions variable
2009



7" phonograph record pressed in transparent
gold vinyl with printed centre labels
24 seconds @ 45rpm, edition no. 250
2009

What Is Being Said
digitally compressed audio file
1 minute 17 seconds
2011

I was prepared not to over-prepare to fill the silence. I know that I enjoyed it, but in hindsight how much I was ready for it is uncertain. And reflecting on this is similar to being in the role of Red Peter in the play *Kafka's Monkey*, adapted by Colin Teevan from a short story by Kafka.¹² Red Peter is invited by an academy to describe what it is like to be an ape. Instead he demonstrates the impossibility of describing what it is like to be an ape now that he has been trained to be like a human.

What is heard when the 7" record is played is the word 'it' being repeated: ititititit. It is a woman's voice. The 'it's join together and sometimes make 'tit's. The design of the label at the centre of the phonograph record is yellow; it has the stripes of the monogram and it reads 'Sarah Jones' in the same Mesquite font as the monogram. The monogram is an image that stands in for a title. Sarah Jones is also an image.

12. *Kafka's Monkey*, directed by Walter Meierjohann, Young Vic, London, 27 March 2009; 'Red Peter' was played by Kathryn Hunter.

On 1 August 2012, Sarah Jones was reviewed by Lori Waxman¹³ for dOCUMENTA 13:

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Sarah Jones

Sarah Jones is the name of an artist. "Sarah Jones" is also the name of an artwork. This was not always so. Once the artist known as Sarah Jones had a slightly different name, which was given to her and which she prefers to keep to herself. The one that she has chosen herself, and which she willingly gives out is, curiously, one of the most common names that a girl from England could choose. There goes the cliché of originality that the avant-garde birthed. But the avant-garde is nevertheless extremely relevant here, since it was Duchamp who decided, with his invention of the ready-made, that intention and naming and context are what make an artwork an artwork. Duchamp's bottle rack is an artwork but other bottle racks are not, unless someone else decides that they are and presents them as such. "Sarah Jones" is an artwork but that does not mean that all of the other Sarah Joneses, or their names, or the concept of their names, are also artworks. Which is too bad, because it would make England a hell of a lot more interesting.

—Lori Waxman 8/1/12 3:50 PM

Sarah Jones ist der Name einer Künstlerin. „Sarah Jones“ ist auch der Name eines Kunstwerks. Das war nicht immer so. Es war einmal, dass die Künstlerin, die man als Sarah Jones kennt, einen leicht anders lautenden Namen trug, den man ihr gegeben hatte und den sie bevorzugt, für sich zu behalten. Den Namen, den sie sich selbst wählte und den sie auch gerne preisgibt, ist eigenartigerweise einer der gebräuchlichsten Namen, den ein Mädchen aus England sich wählen kann. Nichts von dem Klischee von Originalität also, das durch die Avantgarde zur Welt gebracht wurde. Trotzdem ist die Avantgarde in diesem Zusammenhang in hohem Maße von Bedeutung, war es doch Duchamp, der vermittels seiner Erfindung der Ready Mades entschied, dass es die Absicht und die Namensgebung und der Kontext seien, die aus einem Kunstwerk ein Kunstwerk machen. Duchamps Flaschentrockner ist ein Kunstwerk, andere Flaschentrockner sind es hingegen nicht, zumindest solange nicht, ehe jemand anderes entscheidet, sie seien solche und sie auch als solche präsentiert. „Sarah Jones“ ist ein Kunstwerk. Das bedeutet jedoch nicht, dass alle anderen Sarah Jones, oder deren Namen, oder das Konzept ihrer Namen, ebenfalls Kunstwerke sind. Das ist schade, denn wäre dem so, wäre England entschieden interessanter.

dOCUMENTA (13)

In 1958 John Cage described the indeterminacy and dualism that inversion brings forth in Earle Brown's score for *4 Systems*, writing that 'the original notation is a drawing of rectangles of various lengths and widths in ink on a single cardboard having four equal divisions'.¹⁴ The image and the score are interchangeable. If you forget that Cage is talking about music and imagine that he is talking about writing, it still holds true.

When I pursue a habit for things to be non-dualistic, a mistake sometimes occurs in that I neglect the possibility that there might be value in dualism. Further on in *This is a Lecture on Composition*, Cage is quoted 'from a dualistic point of view, on the other hand, each thing and each being is not seen: relationships are seen and interferences are seen. To avoid undesired interferences and to make one's intentions clear, a dualistic point of view requires a careful integration of the opposites.'¹⁵ When the record is played the record player's speakers throw out the 'it'. 'What is *it*?' is the question. If the sound and the look of the record play up to that interchangeability of the *it* and the *what is it?*, what is *it* itself? And what is it that *it* is referring to? Or is it?

13. Lori Waxman, *60word/min art critic*, dOCUMENTA 13, Kassel, 1 August 2012. Artists submitted a work to be reviewed by Waxman during dOCUMENTA 13. Twenty-five minutes were spent looking at the submitted work and writing an on-the-spot review for the artist to take away. The review was published in *60word/min art critic* (Paris: Onestar Press, 2013).

14. John Cage, "Composition As Process. Indeterminacy", 1958, quoted in "This is a Lecture on Composition", *Cut & Splice: Transmission*, ed. Daniela Cascella and Lucia Farinati (London: Sound and Music, 2010), 113.

15. Ibid.

At the start of this project I did not anticipate how being immersed in an environment concerned with the discipline of painting would highlight illusion. Gertrude Stein said she never got tired of looking at pictures. In *Lectures on America* she stated a preference for focusing her attention on oil paintings; however, she was liberal in her approach to where these might be found – that is to say, she didn't restrict her preference to oil on canvas but also extolled the virtues of signwriting.

A resemblance is always a pleasurable sensation and so resemblance is almost always there. That is not the business so to speak of the oil painting, that is just a pleasant human weakness. Anybody and so almost everybody pleasantly likes anything that resembles anything or any one. Then there is another thing another pleasant human weakness. There is another thing about an oil painting. It makes you see something to which it is resembling makes you see the thing in the way it the oil painting resembles it. And that too and that again is a pleasant thing. But then really and this everybody knows, very soon anybody that is everybody really forgets about this resemblance. They naturally do so because things change at least they seem so to do or any way they look as if they did change that is they look different and so the resemblance of the oil painting that is to anybody that is to anything is only a thing that has become historical.¹⁶

Getting to things that look like things and things that sound like things, we are nearing the transcript.

Reading a Transcript

I might expect, and you might expect, that the transcript would be limited to dialogue. But as a record, it is not. The transcript resembles dialogue. It resembles a script. It resembles evidence. The transcript is indexical in the way that a photograph is sometimes used as an index. It is like Gertrude Stein's oil painting in that the transcript of *An Artist's Talk* resembles *An Artist's Talk* but isn't *An Artist's Talk*. It isn't dialogue. It is words on a page that resemble dialogue. It makes the dialogue that it resembles historical.

The transcript is transcribed. The transcribers are many, and include me. We are not consistent. They are advertised for. They are available. They are commissioned. They may not be shown the transcripts that have been transcribed before their transcription. They are given instructions:

16. Gertrude Stein, *Lectures in America* (1935) (London: Virago Press, 1988), 79–80.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Sarah Jones <sarah.jones@network.rca.ac.uk>

Date: 24 January 2013 16:48

Subject: FWD: RCA FTS – transcribing

To: sarah.jones@network.rca.ac.uk

You sent the following message to xxxxx@network.rca.ac.uk

Sarah Jones from Royal College of Art invites you to download the following file:

AAT Liverpool 21Sept12 to transcribe.mp3 (37,283 KB)

<http://fts.rca.ac.uk/?k=TCkLEIKZMsiK1359046137>

This file will be available until 14/02/2013 16:45

MESSAGE:

Hello

I'm attaching the mp3 link here. The recording is of a Q&A with an artist, the artist is the first to speak and you can easily track her voice, the questions come from the audience; if you could layout the text like a script with questions separated from answers that would be ideal. There are times when it is difficult to decipher what is being said especially in the beginning. If you really can't decipher or are having to heavily guess could you mark this in the transcript in some way that I can track when I look through it.

I think that's it but if you've any questions please give a shout.

Many thanks

Sarah

The transcriber returns the transcribed audio. I receive a transcript. No transcript is the same. Each transcript is different. Noises other than word noises are named. Words that resemble noises are used. The noise is transcribed. A word has been selected to resemble that noise. Each transcriber might select a different word to resemble a noise. Or ignore the noise. Therefore the transcript is mute in this regard. Otherwise it speaks the words that are not words but are noises that resemble words that are not words. Transcripts don't record volume.

Some indicate the over-talk and the choral discordance, including the forward slash, as used by Caryl Churchill in her plays to direct one character to speak over another.¹⁷ Some indicate the transcriber themselves:

(can't understand?)
(beginning inaudible)
(?)
(comment inaudible)
(unclear.. Warhol?)
(Unclear??)

Sarah Jones is differentiated from the audience. Her **words** are in bold. She is S and the audience are A. They are undefined, but for the space of one line. Some transcripts contain words that have been guessed. Some contain words that have been misspelt. Some contain words that were never spoken and form names that were never mentioned. Errors remain. Kafka's *The Cares of a Family Man* is now *Chaos of the Family Man*.¹⁸

One of the things that a transcript can be accused of is misdirection. By listening to an audio recording one can gather all sorts of context the transcript does not carry, including things like tone. In the realm of the court recording, this is a critical part of contextualising evidence. For example, a statement made in an ironic voice becomes a statement of fact in the transcript, though in the audio recording it may well indicate a dismissal of such a fact. Through listening, melody becomes apparent.

The entire songbook for *London Road*¹⁹ is made from transcripts of conversations with the workers, residents and news reporters interviewed by Alecky Blythe during the 2006 hunt for the killer of local prostitutes, and his subsequent capture and prosecution, in the East Anglian town of Ipswich. These audio-recorded interviews formed the libretto for the National Theatre production, with music by Adam Cork, in 2011. What is striking about using word-for-word transcripts for the libretto is the imprecision of idiosyncratic syntax. This gives vocal prominence to incomplete sentences in a way that is not usual in other scripts for musicals or operas, except maybe when they are used as speech patterns specific to someone as a form of characterisation. In *London Road*, incomplete sentences are left to hang; they are accentuated as phrases through choral repetition. Verbatim ensemble.

17. The adoption of the forward slash in scripts to indicate overlapping speech is recounted in Mark Lawson, "Caryl Churchill, by the people who know her best", *Guardian*, 3 October 2012, <http://www.theguardian.com/stage/2012/oct/03/caryl-churchill-collaborators-interview> (accessed 5 October 2012).

18. *Seminar Transcript*, Research Seminar, Contemporary Art Research Centre, Kingston University, London, 16 October 2012, transcriber: Jess Fugler.

19. *London Road*, directed by Rufus Norris, Cottesloe Theatre, National Theatre, London. 19 August 2011.

Reading a Script

I differentiate between the script and the transcript. The transcript is a record that doesn't assume it will be replayed. It is backward-looking only. The script is both a future proposition for performance and an exposition of, a record of, a performance.

I have not seen *The Homecoming*, a play by Harold Pinter: that is to say, I have not seen it performed live on a theatre stage. But I have seen the film of the play screened at the Barbican (October 2002) and I have two print publications of the script and the DVD of the film. Each of these is an encounter with the play and a source in the recursive process of adaptation of objects and performances.

Peter Hall directed the film *The Homecoming* in 1973 for the American Film Theatre.²⁰ Unlike a 'filmed play', produced on stage and viewed from the auditorium, it is made on a studio set, with the camera moving around and filming close-ups (often very close up), but otherwise preserving the set, dialogue and stage directions of the theatre production. The DVD of the film contains 'extras', including an interview with Peter Hall giving the history of the production premières in London (1963) and New York (1965). Describing the making of the film, he says the pause in Pinter is a line and 'if you watch the film with the text in your hands [you realise] that the text is not only accurate but that the pauses and silences are absolutely well placed and are correct'.²¹

Both of the print publications contain the scripts, one published by Samuel French and the other by Faber and Faber. The French edition is formatted with performance in mind, in that it provides details of performance rights and introduces the script as a record of a particular production. As well as the scene descriptors, dialogue and stage directions (a mixture of present simple and present continuous tenses), it records the cast, furniture and props, and the lighting and effects plots of the production. The Faber and Faber edition confines itself to scene descriptors, dialogue and stage directions (directions are shorter than in the French edition and are in present simple tense only), a character list and a selected index of première and revival production dates, venues and casts. It is as if it is to be read as a novel, and has no individuated descriptions for furniture, props or effects.

Each of the items – scripts, performance, DVD, film and screening – is a discrete object from a recursive process of writing, reading, playing and recording. Declaring any one as an originating item is problematic.

20. The American Film Theatre (1973–5) was established by Ely Landau to produce film adaptations of seminal works of theatre and distribute them to American cinemas.

21. Interview with Peter Hall, special feature: *Harold Pinter's The Homecoming*, American Film Theatre Collection, 1973 (DVD, Kino International, 2003).

Adopting the content protocols of Samuel French, the first of the scripts for *the playing of a 7" phonograph record* was written from observation and is set in a seminar at the Royal College of Art in 2009. The discussion dialogue is not prescribed. The first script recurs in its successor, in a feedback loop: that is to say, the second script is an account of its performance on 10 December 2009. The second script has additional stage directions for the movements of the cast, but it does not record the dialogue of the performance in an explicit or conventional way; instead, two plot descriptors have been invented and added to the Samuel French protocol. The ‘incidents plot’ and the ‘tones plot’ comprise truncated quotes from the cast during the performance. Quotes in the ‘incidents plot’ pertain to actions and those attributed to the ‘tones plot’ to the attitude towards, or of, the materials. This subsequent script has been formatted for a two-handed read-through but without the customary dialogue; at the point of read-through there is nothing to say. So instead it calls for the other aspects of the script to be brought forward and to be read aloud as opposed to being acted out. And as a duologue it is presented in a two-coloured font, with the words and phrases under each of the new plot descriptors arranged across a vertical spine to effect a rhythm of call and response. *Script for the playing of a 7" phonograph record prepared for a two-person read-through* is a performance of the script of another order, putting all the parts of the play that are outside dialogue into the realm of listening. A staging is as much a record of the script as the script is the record of a performance.

Another addition to the protocol of the script is inspired by Earle Brown’s *4 Systems*²² and his use of the prefatory note that prepares the musicians/players to perform the score. The prefatory note for *the playing of a 7" phonograph record* is perfunctory, if not slack, in its detail for casting and rehearsal. Each player in the cast plays themselves. In addition, one of the players is identified as FOB, an abbreviation of ‘Functional Object’. There is no requirement for the player, FOB, to build or research a background character. In the process of casting, Katie Mitchell advises on measuring the interest of an actor in the play, not just their character, by asking what they think of the play: ‘A complete absence of any thought about the overall play should ring a tiny alarm bell in your head.’²³ But not in mine.

For Robert Bresson, ‘To create is not to deform or invent persons and things. It is to tie new relationships between persons and things which are, and *as they are*.’²⁴

22. Earle Brown, *4 Systems* (1954), <http://www.ubu.com/sound/brown.html> (accessed 30 January 2011).

23. Katie Mitchell, *The Director’s Craft: A Handbook for Theatre* (London: Routledge, 2009), 100.

24. Robert Bresson, *Notes on the Cinematographer*, trans. Jonathan Griffin (Copenhagen: Green Integer, 1997),

Properties of the crate:

- 1 × rubber-coated board for suspended wall
- 1 × rubber-coated board floor mat
- 1 × 'L'-shaped steel curtain rail/wall track
- 1 × tan stocking curtain
- 1 × midi stereo
- 2 × speakers
- 1 × 7" single
- template showing arrangement of the stereo on the mat

Instructions for installing:

Please use gloves provided whenever handling the rubber-coated board. The rubber cannot be cleaned but can be dusted with a soft cloth.

1. Fixing the wall track and stocking curtain

The metal wall track is fixed at the triangular plate and at the opposite end of the steel rail. It should be centred over the electrical socket. Start with the top of the triangular back plate at 185 cm. The curtain is doubled with a braided hem; loop it over the steel rod, gathering it evenly for a uniform hem that barely reaches to lightly touch but not rest on the floor. The curtain stretches a little each time it is exhibited and the height of the rail may be need adjustment to achieve the exact drop necessary.

2. Placing the rubber wall and rubber floor mat

Use the hooks on the back of the rubber wall to hang it off the steel rail; the shadow gap at the foot should be no more than 10mm. Slip the rubber floor mat under the curtain and suspended wall to butt up against the gallery wall. Tape on the back of the mat indicates the intersection with the curtain.

3. Setting up the stereo

The paper template demonstrates the arrangement of the speakers on the rubber mat. Speaker A is on the right, B on the left, and each has a corner marked on the bottom to align with the corners marked on the mat.

25. This prefatory note was sent to Eric Rosoman, curator of 'Choon', an exhibition at the Great Central, Leicester, 12–30 June 2013.

The stereo sits on top of the speakers, square on to the back wall; to find the most stable position have the speakers slightly forward.

The speaker wires plug into their respective socket clips at the back of the stereo, with any trailing wire taped to the back of the speaker. The power cable path to the socket is down and around the back of the suspended wall. Tidy and hide any trailing cable as best as possible to be invisible.

The script prescribes the action for the playing of a 7" phonograph record. All present at this action are PLAYERS, identified in the cast list as GROUP. FO_B is identified apart from GROUP as an abbreviation of 'Functional Object' and FO_B's task is to play the phonograph record. Only the 'player' FO_B need be aware of the script in order for the work to be completed. The duration is unspecified.

Casting FO_B

Identify a woman or a man to play this part. They should have an authoritative function in the institution, and their presence will be familiar in the surroundings: it could be the director of the gallery or somebody in a similar position (at its first performance, FO_B was played by a school security guard). It is essential that FO_B is not a professional actor.

In preparing to be FO_B, the selected player should:

- watch Robert Bresson's film *A Man Escaped*, paying particular attention to being inconspicuous and how the actions of the non-professional actors are neutral and unremarkable; they are 'models'.
- repeatedly rehearse the actions prescribed by the stage directions in the script for the playing of a 7" phonograph record.
- read Robert Bresson's writings on non-professional actors being 'models' (optional).

Scheduling and Announcement

The playing of a 7" phonograph record was originally devised for a seminar of work presentations by students at the Royal College of Art. Participants and guests had been pre-invited and the schedule of presentations sent out in advance. There was no further announcement to mark a beginning of the work.

In a public exhibition situation, the playing of a 7" phonograph record by FOB should occur only once per day. Any announcement should be minimal; it can be listed in printed matter, but a vocal announcement or sound alert marking any sense of beginning is not appropriate. The work may reoccur at additional scheduled events during the exhibition with the agreement of FOB, who decides the time to perform each day. Announcement protocol should be maintained on all occasions. The stereo lid is closed at the end of the day.

PLAYERS:

GROUP (<i>persons present of undetermined age</i>)	Unnamed
FOB (<i>a worker of undetermined age</i>)	Functional Object

SCENE – *It is a room; it is a large space. It is an artist's run space. There is a doorway for all the players to enter through. Entering through this doorway, to the R is a turntable, an amp and stereo speakers. A phonograph record sits on the turntable. Art is in unspecified places. The compact stereo light is on.*

All PLAYERS (in thought, movement and speech.)

FOB (*separates from GROUP crossing to the turntable, lifts the lid and places the needle on the record, it plays*). (*From the stereo speakers comes the voice of the producer; she is saying 'it', repeating 'it' again and again – her voice is interrupted – she continues repeating 'it' – the record stops.*)

GROUP (*players continue*)

FOB (*rejoins GROUP*) (*pause.*)

All PLAYERS (continue)

∞

Reading a Record Reading a Score

A record, or more particularly the phonograph record:

... it's got this glossy surface, and it's hand-sized, lightweight; highly fetishised. The glossy surface is inscribed with figures and these figures are tightly packed, it takes a needle to course over them and shudder, making the vibrations that are not legible to the eye, but with the aid of an amplifier

are legible to the ear.²⁶ There's a particular machine that does this job, the compact stereo with a hinged lid that opens like a mouth to uncover the turntable and a spindly arm. The mechanics of a record player are simple and largely unchanged since their discovery. But the external design has gone through many changes. I'm interested in those different looks, the attempts to appear robust; to have the strength to boom out the industrial projection; to appear humble and invisible in the brown wood furniture of the living room; to appear light and shiny for the future. In this there is a form of disguise because always there is the frailty of this awkward arm that has to traverse the rotating platform.²⁷

Unlike the photograph, the phonograph record has not developed a music/noise/sound that is specifically intended for its form. While the visual artwork of the record label and jacket are spaces of what can be, the inscribed sound plate itself has not spawned an industry of creators in phonography. There are photographers, but not phonographers. Theodor Adorno details this difference and elaborates on the limit of the phonograph record:

The phonograph record is an object of that 'daily need' which is the very antithesis of the humane and the artistic, since the latter cannot be repeated and turned on at will but remain tied to their place and time.

Nevertheless, as an article, the record is already too old not to present us with its riddles, once one forgoes considering it as an art object and explores instead the contours of its thingness.²⁸

Adorno goes on to describe the physical space the phonograph record occupies and how, unlike an oil painting, it can't look down on us and it doesn't scale up. Lamenting how musical notation and the configuration of the musical score impose themselves on composition, he asks us not to be surprised when music might turn itself into writing. This is happening in the phonograph record. It is the spiral groove that is inscribed.

When Adorno bemoaned the determinacy of the musical score, it was a particular kind of score: he was not thinking about the scores that were to be espoused by his younger contemporaries, typified by John Cage and Earle Brown and their compositions that embraced a range of approaches to indeterminacy and highlighted interpretation in the act of making (music) from reading (scores). While avant-garde composers such as Brown expanded the directions for interpretation in his physical scores, this is against the

26. Legible here stands in for visible and audible.

27. Sarah Jones, email response to Margarita Dorovska, 9 January 2010, following an attempted telephone interview: 'Hi Sarah, I couldn't hear you very well, the line was awful.'

28. Theodor W. Adorno, "The Form of the Phonograph Record", trans. Thomas Y. Levin, *October* 55 (1990): 58, www.jstor.org/stable/778935 (accessed 5 January 2011).

dominance of an established alphabet/lexicon of notation for writing music that might be called a standard notation.

If the script is for dialogue and spoken word, the score is for music and song. The script is also for movement, found in its stage directions, but there is another kind of score, for dance. Unlike musical notation, there is no standard notation for the language of dance. Images of dance scores are various and fluid, expressed in symbols and numeric and diagrammatic figures, the layout/organisation of these on a page showing how a figure might cut a path through space.

In the late seventeenth century, the first printed notations for choreography were by Raoul-Augur Feuillet. His *Chorégraphie, ou l'art de de'crire la dance*²⁹ is a manual containing diagrams for individual postures, poses, the placement of feet and the movements that take the dancer from one position to the next. The dance score is headed by a five-bar musical stave; its key, crotchets, quavers and rests run along the top of the page. The remainder of the page below the stave is a room. It has a single line drawn between a start and end point, making sharp or curved turns as it travels around it. Clinging to this line are drawn crotchets with legs in various states of bending, splaying, together and upright.

In 1976, David Cole called for a 'moment for theory' in considering visual scripts, identifying these as both visual and verbal hybrids when actors are given words supplemented by graphic directions, or, as Noel Llinos writes in *Notations*, 'make shapes that speak for themselves, [that] tell the eye what the ear will hear'.³⁰ The visual script provides an alternative to the established model for standard notation in the way that Cage and Brown opened up the visual score for music. Establishing the existing experimentations in visual scripts and graphic notations standing in for or replacing words, Cole's essay slips between the terms 'visual script' and 'dance score' without apology. The expanded visual vocabularies of these scripts and scores speak to the making of the music/dance/performance as a physical manifestation, excessive to a procedural reading.

The phonograph record stands in for and contains voice. The voice is cut into the groove: it is inscribed, but the writing is legible only to the eye of a needle. The components obscure an origin and the point of reference, the something the voice is referring to. Pointing in different directions for what is inscribed, being said, being read. It would be fruitless to photograph a phonograph record as a record.

29. Raoul-Augur Feuillet, "Chorégraphie, ou l'art de de'crire la dance" (1701), *Public Domain Review*, <http://publicdomainreview.org/collections/collection-of-dances-in-choreography-notation-1700> (accessed 12 May 2014).

30. Noel Llinos, 'Notations' (1969), cited in David Cole, "The Visual Script: Theory and Techniques", *Drama Review* 20, no. 4 (1976), 28.

Reading a Riddle

What is a leg? I envy the man who knows what a leg is.³¹

What is it, or what am I? The riddle is biographical, or more specifically, in Anglo-Saxon form, it was autobiographical, and its shape is still present in simple verse puzzles and our daily cryptic crosswords. In this latter regard the cruciverbalist seeks to find a solution, and once found the riddle has served its purpose. But approached again, the riddle is an invitation to get to know a thing, to make multiple approaches to that thing from different angles. The invitation is to seek the thing itself beyond its naming, to hear its voice.

The Anglo-Saxon riddle was an oral tradition, voiced in a time when the power of an object was given credence outside of human agency. This power can be seen today in slapstick when the menace of the gunman at the saloon door is thwarted as the swing action of its hinges results in a smack on the bum.

Introducing itself, the riddle positions us at a threshold. The riddle is the door opener. Speaking in the first-person voice of the thing, it is the verbal identity of an object speaking on the occasion of its manufacture and revealing important details about its social and imaginative identities. It can tell us its material properties, the process of its manufacture, its setting and also the time in which it exists, its use and its effects. Found within the riddle is the agency of the thing to speak for itself.

I am fire-fretted / and I flirt with Wind;
my limbs are light-freighted / I am lapped in flame.
I am storm-stacked / and I strain to fly;
I'm a grove leaf-bearing / and a glowing coal.³²

The Anglo-Saxon riddle is a form of inscription sometimes literally applied directly to the objects themselves. In 'Lyric Substance: On Riddles, Materialism, and Poetic Obscurity', Daniel Tiffany writes:

One object, for example, declares, 'Cross is my name. Once, trembling and drenched with blood, I bore the mighty king.' Evoking the form of the Anglo-Saxon riddles that end with an exhortation such as 'Say who I am,' or 'Say what I am called,' the first statement in this inscription ('Cross is my name') is the solution to the riddle posed by the second sentence. A riddle containing its own solution (in the title or embedded in the enigma itself) is a common feature of the Latin tradition, refined considerably by the Anglo-Saxon poet.³³

31. Sarah Jones misquoting 'Lenny' in Harold Pinter, *The Homecoming* (London: Samuel French, 1967), 27.

32. *The Earliest English Poems*, trans. Michael Alexander (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1966), 97. The book suggests that the object in this case is a beam of wood.

33. Daniel Tiffany, "Lyric Substance: On Riddles, Materialism, and Poetic Obscurity", *Critical Inquiry* 28, no. 1 (2001), 73.

The inscription makes evident the assumption that the thing itself has agency, without agency needing to be granted or bestowed upon it. There is not a human sovereignty to all things – a move that is not against the human being and not for the sovereignty of the object. The riddle provides for a certain ludic approach to the biography of an object.

Writing in the early part of the twentieth century, Sergei Tret'iakov proposed a new way of approaching the novel from the point of view of the object, in his essay titled 'The Biography of the Object'. For Tret'iakov, object biography opposes the more familiar trajectory of human networks and the causal merry-go-round of emotional responses. This approach was aimed at breaking the tradition and the aesthetic rules of placing the human subject as hero: 'The hero is what holds the novel's universe together. The whole world is perceived through him. The whole world is, furthermore, essentially just a collection of details that belong to him.'³⁴

With these rules the psychological picture of the subject dominates, and other factors that could be pertinent to their biography, such as their professional actions, are relegated. This even has consequences for the physical illnesses they are allowed to suffer.

If we recall that the novel's aesthetic rules invented a particular fantastic illness for the hero and the heroine – the nervous fever – and that it also made sure that wounds and grave illnesses never afflicted the hero below the belt, we come to realize just how arbitrary the novel's physiology actually is.³⁵

It would be possible to misread Tret'iakov as simply wanting the object to be put at the centre: that is to say, instead of the human subject being the hero of the novel, the object is the hero of the novel. This really doesn't deny subjectivity, but it may counter it, and in doing so change the sovereign status of the subject, by changing what is placed in the forefront of that spotlight. Tret'iakov describes how his own attempt to write a biography of a real person in the travelogue *Den Shi-khua* failed, despite his efforts towards the highest objectivity, because of the dominance of habitual reading towards 'biographical psychologism' making 'factual numbers and observations ... on the threshold of aesthetic metaphor and hyperbole'.³⁶ Approaching the novel as a biography of the object is undertaken with a view to heightening a set of relations that are material, social, political and physiological. This links to the necessity of having a blind spot in relation to subjectivity. It is not a denial of the existence of subjectivity, but a realisation of the necessity to turn away from it rather than engage with it, for the moment it is engaged with, it becomes a self-fulfilling inquiry into subjectivity. It is not a matter of denial, but of not attending, of looking in another direction.

34. Sergei Tret'iakov, "The Biography of the Object" (1929), *October* 118 (2006), 58.

35. *Ibid.*, 59.

36. *Ibid.*

When an artist gives a talk about their work, how can this event not put them in the situation of hero? How can it not stumble into the picture painted by Tret'iakov? What can be done to circumvent the expectation of format that is the ground of the act? Tret'iakov offers a method that may be transferable to the artist for an artist's talk. The artist can purposefully maintain a blind spot to their own subjectivity in favour of a voice as an object among many other objects, non-human and human. There is an assumption with objectivity that one is outside oneself, looking in, but the object here does not have regard to the self. Taken to its nth degree, there is no artist subject.

In Guy de Cointet's performances, produced with a number of actors, there are implicit scripts and explicit riddles. In the play *At Sunrise ... A Cry Was Heard* (1976) a typographic print is in a frame on the wall. A woman enters the room, points at the various printed symbols and delivers a story of what she is reading in these graphic forms, as if they were words. There is an inference that the object contains all this information within itself, that it has a prima status.

The riddle has within it the limits of reading. A form may have the same name twice but an approach to the second iteration necessarily infers an approach from a different angle and a different viewpoint. Then there are forms that on the surface are similar but are distinct. These differences are not necessarily resolvable. The difference is hanging.

And when put into the ambit of art these approaches are all ways of thinking about work that don't necessarily define the work. They are different modes of thinking about the work that get you closer to this thing that you may never pin down. Ultimately the nature of reading here cannot be gauged in terms of giving an accurate or close reading. There is an uncertainty; it leaks outside, or beyond, each viewing point and at times it goes all over the place, and that is close to the nature of the work. What is the nature of the thing? With the score, it is not just an object to be read. The relationship of reading to looking invites a deciphering, but at the same time it is also the stuff of work: something that is beyond solution, something that is quite undecipherable.

His sets, at least the abstract, geometric ones, were similar to the phonemes of a language ... They were visual phonemes, primal forms. He used language in an abstract way. In his drawings, too, he used the shapes of letters in an abstract, graphic way, although from time to time he arranged them into recognizable words or phrases. It was the same thing with his performances, where he also played on the tension between abstraction and representation.³⁷

A riddle is an image text. It is an object itself and an image of an object. As it is read it is imagined. The riddle is spoken, and as it speaks each characteristic

37. Mike Kelley, quoted in interview by Mary de Brugerolle, discussing the work of Guy de Cointet. Marie de Brugerolle, "Fragments et Bribes", *Trouble* 2 (2002), 112.

of the thing it describes is shown by changing the angle of observation. When our position for looking is changed, the tone and volume of what we hear are also changed. It may be a different voice; a chorus of voices bringing the dialogue of a script into play.

The granting of agency to things is odd in the context of a play, as it confounds the expectation that, in a performance, agency is embodied in an actor: a human actor. In *The Homecoming*, tables are active participants in the action of the play, organising and ordering the individuals, establishing and transforming the dynamics of their relations. In her essay “So Specific Objects” for the catalogue of the exhibition *Not to Play with Dead Things*, Patricia Brignone examines types of objects as types of props.

We may consider three possible approaches to our subject: the prop in the traditional meaning of the word; its challenge by the avant-garde and its followers through the use of the marionette or the animated figure (an inanimate object bearing the qualities of an actor object), and the object which is ‘active’ for the actor or stage manager (or even for the author: Beckett).³⁸

It is with this latter identity that de Cointet’s stage objects play. In *Tell Me* (1979), the stage set is inhabited by blocks of geometric colour. Some forms might be recognisably named as furniture or clothing, while others might be categorised as cubes, blocks or paintings. But the naming of an item is not static in this work, as is shown when the painting that has a broad horizontal white band dissecting a green rectangle is removed from the wall to become a functioning tabletop for arrangements and rearrangements of black and white building blocks shown to be symbols, words/phrases and provocateurs.³⁹ Agency is interchangeably vested when the scripted dialogue of conversational soundbites and storytelling vignettes are sent off in tangential directions when a non-human object and a human actor literally touch. The props are ‘by turns acted upon, actors themselves, and manipulators’.⁴⁰ They touch and press upon each other.

A care for touch is visible in Juliette Blightman’s practice: it has been written about as a recording of time and likened to still-life paintings.⁴¹ At the ICA, London, Blightman placed a goldfish bowl next to a pot plant and an apple on the gallery windowsill. *please water the plants and feed the fish*

38. Patricia Brignone, “So Specific Objects”, in Marie de Brugerolle et al., *Not to Play with Dead Things* (Zurich: JRP Ringier, 2010), 62.

39. ‘Blocking’ is a term in theatre for the process of planning where, when and how actors will move about the stage during a performance. Coined by W.S. Gilbert, who used small wooden blocks to represent actors, moving these about on a miniature set of a planned work.

40. Marie de Brugerolle, ed., *Guy de Cointet* (Zurich: JRP Ringier, 2011), 76.

41. Jennifer Higgie, “Juliette Blightman”, *Frieze* 126 (2009), http://www.frieze.com/issue/article/juliette_blightman (accessed 14 February 2013).

(2008) is an exercise in care – the goldfish noticeably alive (or not) and the same for the plant – the necessary care for both is ‘taken care of’, with an instruction to her brother to attend the gallery daily and follow the directions of the title. Caring for an object puts you in the service of the object. It recognises the needs of the object. It may be obvious: the fish and plant would die without this, but this instruction by virtue brings the necessity of care for the object as artwork. The work evokes performance, but there is no pre- or post-performance. This is not a stage in waiting; it is not a thing waiting to be acted on or with. It is not turned off and on again. It is constantly acting.

When de Cointet’s blocks are picked up we see how they lack density, how light and easy to move they are; how they call to be handled with care that is neither brutal nor tender but is perfunctory. They are not solid. They are the shapes of blocks and they resemble blocks. They are mobile and have the quality of an image. Neither heavy nor light, an image is without the material properties of gravity and the pressure of touch. The image can resemble weight, recalling Gertrude Stein’s lecture ‘Pictures’. Weight is imagined.

On the floor in the Chisenhale Gallery is a TV monitor, the box kind, not a flat-screen one. It is among hundreds of image objects, purposefully arranged in a spatial grid by Christina Mackie in *Painting the Weights* (2012). The screen is a ghostly animation of pulleys in motion. The exhibition title refers to a term in animation for the process of imaging gravity,⁴² of attending to the push and pull of a material’s physical properties, to picture one material pressing on another, how it rests, how it rubs, how it pressures or puts pressure on that which it touches. In her 2007 exhibition *This, That and The Other*, at Herald Street gallery, Mackie exhibited three works. They weren’t called ‘this, and that and the other’ but there was an inference of the play between those things.

... the first thing that I saw when I walked in to that exhibition was an almost life size hippo and it was cast in black rubber. Really thick, I don’t know, like a skin that would stretch, but not stretched, laid over an armature, a kind of rod armature, which is pertinent to this in terms of the thing itself.

... It’s quite easy to find photographs of it because it’s a superbly photogenic piece of work. It sort of poses for the camera. It’s photogenic in a way that a rubber duck is, you know you kind of . . . these things that you know, you know you get a sense of a kind of rubber and you get a cartoon, the form. And that’s a part of its photogenic appeal. In seeing the object itself, you sense something quite different about it. And that’s the weight, it’s really this drag of material and the weight in the steel armature. It’s rod spine the back, but not through the head which is solid. The spine

42. Christina Mackie in conversation with Phyllida Barlow, Chisenhale Gallery, London, 1 March 2012.

is a ... a ridge, there's the rod ridges, crossing the apex of the spine. And as the rubber is laid over that armature, the drag of it will pull through it. So you understand the weight of the material. But also it bears, it bears a thing-ness to itself as this heavy weighty thing. The making of it and its production, the weight of material and the drag that has bearing in both the thing that it resembles and the thing itself of the material properties of the rubber. There is a comic effect that occurs at the base of the hippo's feet where the rubber has been cast as though it was a pool, so it puddles at the base, around each of the four feet. Which both locates it on the ground, but also it's like its own mud. It's like its made of, in the rubber its own mud, it is how it comes attached. So there's this difference between a photogenic image that works for the camera and what it is in terms of material and understanding of how it is weighted through that material resemblance. And its being different to that of a photographic, photogenic resemblance. So that has, what I'm thinking of it in terms of a thing to itself, an approach to a thing.⁴³

In *An Artist's Talk* the artist Sarah Jones is an object. A speaking object answering questions from an audience and other objects about what can be done. How an artist can be of use to another object. A body as a motor moving an arm to lift a tone arm, to place a needle on the spiral groove of a phonograph record rotated by the electric motor of the record player. It is a work of multiple record players. Other things are present: the chair, the table, the turntable, the dress, the phonograph records, the iPod, the amp, the laptop. But with the exception of the dress, these items are rarely directly addressed in the discussion transcripts. All these things are being presented to the audience but not through the mediation of the PowerPoint image. They are present and doing the describing of themselves and their function. An object's function in *An Artist's Talk* also permits it to be categorised as equipment. It is important when answering queries around the status of the dress that the artist's replies are kept droll, limited to describing it and its function as a score. It conceals a wry pleasure, found in the non-sequiturs of N.F. Simpson.

43. Excerpt from *Seminar Transcript*, Research Seminar, Contemporary Art Research Centre, Kingston University, London, 16 October 2012, transcriber: Jess Fugler.

two parts an ode
or ode be half a brick

172 words to be read aloud
dimensions variable

2011

As an ode it is to be spoken or sung.

The ode is a spatial form, described by the divisions of the strophe and the antistrophe originating from a choral ode in Greek theatre. The strophe is sung as the chorus moves from right to left of the stage, the antistrophe as it moves back to the right. The movement can be literal, with the chorus crossing the stage from one side to the other, or it can be a movement in rhetoric by the repetition of words in reverse order.

so easy to lob
easy to lay and

easy to grip so

it is made with a cut away in one side – this is the frog – so
not a regular oblong, not for being broken

it shines
showing red clay through clear glossy varnish and
almost obscured by blocks
painted on all of its 6 sides

missing a $\frac{1}{2}$
a full half of a London Stock brick and
half a brick, that is, it is a brick that has been broken in $\frac{1}{2}$

it is
It

It
it is

half a brick, that is, it is a brick that has been broken in $\frac{1}{2}$
a full half of a London Stock brick and
missing a $\frac{1}{2}$

painted on all of its 6 sides
almost obscured by blocks
showing red clay through clear glossy varnish and
it shines

not a regular oblong, not for being broken
it is made with a cut away in one side – this is the frog – so

easy to grip so

easy to lay and
so easy to lob

APPENDICES

An
ANNOUNCEMENT
Foyer Sheet

89 words in Andale Mono,
regular on an A4 sheet

2011

AN ANNOUNCEMENT

by Sarah Jones for the Arensky Chamber Orchestra performing
Verklarte Nacht at Cadogan Hall on 8th July 2011

The action passes in a concert hall in South West London with
the following cast of characters:

The PLAYERS	6 musicians
The BODIES	2 violins, 2 violas, 2 cellos
The APPURTENANCES	6 bows
The OTHERS	uncounted women and men

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

ACT I

Backstage

Scene 1	An afternoon in summer
Scene 2	Later that afternoon

ACT II

The Auditorium

Scene 1	Evening
Scene 2	Night

An ARTIST'S TALK
Q&A TRANSCRIPT

9,790 words in Calibri, regular, lower and title case
K College, Fine Art Foundation Degree,
Tonbridge, 3 February 2012
Transcribers: Laurie Schram and Isabel Yellin

Transcription from 18min to 1hr31min58sec

Q:

If you decided not to take photographs your work anymore, was there a point when you were making the same work but not taking photographs of it? Was there a point when you were kind of conducting the same early parts of your art making but then just weren't taking a photograph anymore? Or was there a complete kind of break from the work you were making before? Or did you set up an installation to kind of present that or did it just move completely away from it...

S:

Mmm. Good Question. The answer is quite muddy, really, because the decision was taken on a particular day. You know it had been building up ever since I was a student probably. The annoyance of portfolio on my BA or whatever that might have been and 'what's going in it' and 'why isn't it the thing', and all of that kind of like, and the investment. And, you know particularly, my portfolio was pre-digital, therefore the *extraordinary* cost of photographing work and I, you know, you may attest to this, or I'm not quite sure, or any of you may kind of have this, uh, familiar thing of, ok so the work on kind of, if we take out labor, although I'm going to include that later, the work - found objects blah blah blah, sort that myself, found that, made that, ok photographing that piece of work, 50 pound-on having my slides processed, buying new film, really being unhappy with it, going back to it, returning to it, and you know all the compromises, and the amount of time that might be spent on that. And a set of accounts going on at the end of the year with all the columns set out ready for me to prepare them, and the most expensive column was photography, and I don't take photographs. So ... really? So um it kind of built from that and there was a decision on a day when I decided not to do that, so I didn't willfully jettison from a practice, but the result is that its changed it so radically, that I now don't know the difference. Is that a kind of answer to your question? Were you asking that question?

Q:

Yeah but I'm just wondering if there is any point. Presumably you get asked to show in various places, and they originally there will be or maybe still they expect some photographs, so

S:

Oh, I do produce...

Q:

Was there a point when you gave them something that was almost like a photograph or not?

S:

Yeah, well if I talk about the (hard to hear 20:36) this is a monogram, which I designed for, um, for the first record that you heard. And the monogram is what takes the place of the photograph of the works or wherever you would expect to see ... So it has, there is a performance for the playing of that record, which is a scripted performance and part of the script has been published, which stands in for the photograph, but also if somebody wants a visual, I mean in the case of the catalogue that this was in, they wanted something, so doing a montage on the cover of each work from a group show, so this is the design for the monogram, so I do have visual work... And it is, the monogram, I think, you know, kind of, looking back on it, seems really obvious to me now, that the monogram is the thing, that it's the name, that it kind of tags to, which the photograph was otherwise doing that similar sort of job, it just becomes uh uh you know that photograph equals that work, so now I have the monogram equals this work. So there are certain visual things that I send, or sometimes I send textual documents as well.

Q:

Do you see your work as living, or ...exists more in the present, as a photograph is (very hard to hear 21:59-22:08)... or do you think it is kind of more very present?

S:

Um yeah.

Q:

Go on...

S:

Um. *Sigh*. I'm hesitating because, um, I think you are pointing at something that is the case. Um, but, I'm hesitating because of the pejorative ness of the way that its living or like as there is some problem with the past. I don't think I have that kind of a relationship with its *pastness* being a problem. It is much more the, kind of, the familiarity of photograph and how I register what a photograph of the work is or how they might be registered. Um and, the kind of, the ubiquity of them. And so I think maybe a consequence of that is somethi-, is something to do with a um because ... I have not found a single solution that solves it that would make it equally as past if you see what I mean because each time, each time an encounter, so if it's a request for a catalogue image, or if it's a proposal, because I mentioned a competition because I want to be included in that, you know, that each time I have to go you know ok, um, how, how can I how can I communicate the work if the work's not there, and it produces another work, so there is a *liveness* in that aspect.

Um, I mean you know, that discussion about the dissatisfaction with a photograph. It's a sophisticated discussion in that kind of that the knowledge that we have about it, it is not kind of like 'really, a photograph isn't the thing?' There is nothing kind of profound in that kind of claim, you can have it, and know it, and equally I can be having that - all of those thoughts, but I still use photographs to see artworks all the time. I mean, you know, I have never seen millions more artworks in real life than I have by flicking through a book and looking at pictures of them. So it's not, it's not resolved if you like, this thing, it is kind of ongoing and maybe that is why I am making decisions about where photography is used in my practice, rather than just having some kind of blanket ban. Had to maybe start from that point to build back into it again in a more knowing way.

Q:

Your talks or, rather, you talk about the bullet point. Is that, I am slightly confused, was that specifically for us, or was that a stand alone piece, because it was beautiful um writ – I mean it was a poem in itself. Is it a stand-alone piece or was it for us?

S:

I wrote it for you.

Q:

Thank you. So I'm going to say it could be a piece of art. And I'm going to ask how you would have shown that how you would have dealt with that, but um... cause it was totally about you...

S:

I think it totally comes to, I mean how on earth do you do an artists talk when you don't have photographs of your work and you have to produce a piece of work. And it's, I, it's uh, I initially trialed – no, that sounds like I knew what I was doin' and I didn't! I just did it! I did know what I was doing or... I gave another talk at another art college two months ago and during that talk I talked about the bullet points and I played the 7" record, the 1st of those two records. That was the embryo of this talk so it did come from another artists talk but in terms of how it was today and the script that I wrote for it, was for today, I did write it for today.

Q:

I was going to say I hope you didn't read them our poem!

Laughter

S:

No! I can't make that claim it's especially for you and then take that away! That would be just horrible, wouldn't it? What a fraud.

Q:

I mean would it be would it be fair to say I mean I think I'm getting a grip of what your practice is, but would that be very comfortable within your art practice?

S:

It's becoming true. Yes. It's becoming true. Um, until I muck it up again. One of the things I'm doing is I'm recording this. So I can work with the recording of this perhaps for another work. I'm not saying I will, but I, it's the material that drive the work. Potentially there.

Q:

So what are you going to do after this presentation today? Is it going to get bigger and bigger or maybe change direction?

S:

Yeah I mean I think it could change direction. It may be that, I think there could be a particular phrase or that comes out of this discussion that seems so personal (Word?) or that has a force or an energy of its own so I can tell you in a years time, *gasp*, you know you were the one that said, or I said this and this, and this is where it turns into what...

Q:

You know there is no more room to hide, is there? If you bring in a power point like most visiting artists do, and you are shown a body of art to talk about, it's not real, whereas you are real. You are very real,

S:

Haha we are all real.

Q:

But they, in a way have something they can hide behind, because there is a sort of routine, or kind of a dance that goes along, I called this so and so and I have done this so and so that is this size. And as a person who doesn't do two-dimensional things, I get quite irritated because I'd like to actually see it in front of me so I can see the texture of it and the size of it and the photograph is quite inadequate. It doesn't speak to me and it allows the artist to just sort to be... I, I just sort of think TV presenter, whereas you are actively having to be your art.

S:

Yes, although, so that is not untrue, but there are necessary fictions that any artist needs to work with. Including, I mean whether one says it's hiding behind whatever that might be there is a necessity because there is...the public-ness of a painting that's it and my view is that is an extraordinarily vulnerable thing, act. I don't necessarily have this as any more or less real, so in the context of an artists talk if you have a power point of things it's because that act that's made is elsewhere so it just can't operate in an artists talk so it is necessary to have a series of images. And I don't think there should be any apology for that, for that necessity to protect the practice that occurs...

Q:

There is a difference in the dynamics in, or about... the difference in enthusiasms in your desire to communicate with us, and maybe this is very unfair, but I don't get in the same way as when someone is like, 'this painting is inspired by this, or blah blah, or that photograph or what not'. It's interesting, it gives you loads of ideas, and it fills you with all sorts of desires to go out and

do stuff. But, it's like a box of chocolates they brought along, prepackaged, not particularly personal, but art is personal...

S:

Yeah well it is happening. That personal thing is happening in a different place, I think that's it. Not all things adapt to all situations. They are maybe limited by certain situations, but they are not un-, without any value at all I think.

Q:

It is a sort of ambiguity with new technology, I think, which we all sort of feel, we feel a certain necessity like for instance that this projector doesn't give very good images. It always looks sort of a bit crap.

S:

I was saying how that didn't matter for me today, that's pretty good isn't it?

Q:

But as kids looking through books of beautifully produced photographs of paintings we were inspired, we thought they were wonderful, you know, they were fantastic, there was an issue of quality, and selection and one of the issues with new technology is the ubiquitous-ness, and any number of crap that is just produced on a daily basis, the huge number of meaningless images which are posted every single second, thousands every second...

S:

Only it's you know, uh, I went to a talk on painting a few months ago, and Mark Leckey was on the panel, and he was, um, brought onto the panel, I think, to sort of say outrageous things about why painting isn't relevant or something I don't know it was a pretty trite sort of surface sort of thing, um, but one of the things which was fascinating in relation to what you are saying is that he doesn't think to it because he thinks of painting in terms of the image, and if he dreams of any image at all he can go on the internet and find it. And he made this clay and I think it's a fantastic clay, literally in what the term fantastic might mean, it is soo over itself as a clay, but I think it's a really good clay, you know to kind of think through that, but it was just so much of it, it's just like uuuhhh it's exhausting ...So anyway yeah he can get anything. So that is sort of the flip side of that...it was a pretty interesting part of the talk, but I won't tell you about the rest of it because it was pretty grim otherwise...

Q:

Have you heard of google _wack?_ (32:59-33:04 illegible)? He was trying to find words to put two words into search and he was trying to find words with absolute no, no pre words, trying to find a pair that had no presearch (?). Only one came up. It was quite amazing how extreme these combinations of words had to be before we got that. It was really quite entertaining ...

S:

It's like the flip side of 6 degrees of separation ...that you can connect, but, don't, actually everything, you don't even need 6 sides when it's in a search engine. It's like that? I don't know? It's turning on its head

Q:

Can I just ask about your decision to use the record and what pointed you to use the recording of the past, the noise, rather than... cause then the next one is digitally produced...

S:

Mmm well it was for today. It's both. It is also on that record. It was played as a digital file, but it exists on that bit of vinyl. It was cut into it; it was etched into it, the same way as the first record.

Q:

Then not play both one way

S:

Good, god there is loads in that question! I'm going to be waah huuhhh! Ok I'm going to start with that. Today. So today, to the decision to play through the digital I think is a matter of repetition and or a pun through repetition in that um not only does it say what but it says on the screen what is being said so you have both the visual image and the aural as well so that kind of adds a *duh* moment that whilst I do use vinyl and particularly, well I want to go two ways with this answer I want to say two sort of things: one is, that I want to briefly say, that vinyl is a material and I'm interested and, well not a material, it is a matter itself, that I will come back to, and it brings with it, a certain nostalgia with it, I am not going to refute that, but I don't underline its importance by always adhering to it. So its really necessary to kind of bring in the technologies that start to put that into context where that nostalgia might lie rather to just buy into it whole sale.

On the - we can come back if you want to pick that up, but I'm going to come over here to say something about matter, which is that with regard to inscription and the writing of the voice and the, not just the process, but the actuality of the physicality of the voice that is written into the matter and the dark missive-ness of a held voice and the source of the radical change that occurred and the radical difference in life that it is to have the recorded voice into the world existing after life as it were, which was its, um very, in terms of Edison's development was absolutely at the heart of his thoughts, is that the dead would speak, and the agency of the voice as its inscribed and there's something about the physical-ness of that matter, but keeping it, not just 'oh that's nostalgic,' but keeping that weird, it brings that to bare to still hearing the voice through digital means, it brings it to bare and understanding, or not understanding, but a kind of recognizing that those things are more complicated than just going 'oh yeah it's just a voice', and what it is to hear the agency of a voice, and its authority as well, the difference when a words becomes inscribed and it kind of speak out from technology - the difference between me standing here and that voice speaking out. It is received differently.

Q:

Is there is a difference in technologies though?

S:

Can you say a bit more?

Q:

You are making an association between the technology and the spoken voice of a human being, as in the physical act of speaking like me now. But is there a difference between the technologies is it recording it from a digital file, a cassette, a vinyl, or an original gramophone or what have you?

S:

There is certainly In terms of accessibility and a process of availability you know whether you are talking about... so the production method absolutely makes a difference. It is possible. I could make my own vinyl records. I know people who have cut their own. I have been to gigs where people have been cutting them live. I have mine pressed. They are sent up. This is in my bedroom, and it's in millions of other people's bedrooms as well and so there is that kind of point, which is absolutely critical and I think that is why I am kind of maintaining the implication of that, that voice still speaks out as an authority even if it is accessible for more to speak. If you like, on a kind of political level, there might be more voices. But the idea or the sense that certain voices are given power or given more authority is still existing. You know add to the babble.

Q:

Do you think in maybe 50 years time we wouldn't use this anymore? You know it is still within our culture... (Hard to hear 39:37)

S:

I think it is such fetish object already that I'm not sure it's going to get more fetishized in 50 years... haha... it is already obsolete in terms of a production method in terms of for mass hearing, um, and it is incredibly fetishized as an object. Whether there is something that will come out of digital technology, which is become equally as fetishized or whether that relies on matter, uh, that is quite interesting and I hope I am around to see it.

Q:

I feel vinyl has more body hasn't it? It's richer. The sound as well...

S:

It's different yeah, I don't know. I mean really, they're really. You are absolutely hitting the nail about what's fetishized about it cause like when you use words like it is 'more this' like 'uhh' like this *uhh* it's 'more than that thing' its like stroking the curve of that material as you say that. Vinyl. And it's shiny as well! It's great.

Q:

And you get some great artwork on your vinyls...

S:

I make my own! Of course you do!

Q:

Well it's all just nostalgia though, isn't it just nostalgia?

S:

Well I think, you know, I suppose I am saying...

Q:

Well if we go back to earlier technology even...

S:

Such as?

Q:

Well, (muffled response 41:16) yeah exactly I mean they don't have the same significance to us I suppose, but...

S:

It's a generation

Q:

You are drawing a line that is vinyl. And society does as well doesn't it. James is a (muffled 41:44) Cultural statement now to say you are into vinyl now, can't you? That is saying something about your self by saying I like vinyl?

S:

But you know what I can use as a claim? Is that I don't listen to recorded music.

Q:

Why?

S:

I mean it gets in cause you can't help it. I do go into shops and they do play recorded music so I can't help it. Uh I just haven't invested in it and now I realized that I don't want to. I didn't switch to CD and I've dispersed my vinyl collection because I don't have any nostalgia for it, and I haven't got into itunes.

Q:

Do you listen to the radio?

S:

I do, but it's speaking

Q:

Mmhmm

S:

Yeah, I entered art school and came out listening to radio4. It is very very bad for you, art school. *Laughter*

Q:

You are probably expecting this question, but are you a Luddite, do you think?

S:

No, Ooh, god, no. I'm much, it's uhh...

Q:

In the traditional sense of the word, in that you are anti-technology ...

Crowd:

Ha no, she is recording this right now!

S:

That's what I thought you meant and that's why I could easily say no to that. Definitely. It's much more about picking up the necessity of understanding certain things. And I think the wax cylinder thing... is not un-interesting and I wouldn't rule it out if there was a ... It's the particularity of wax and the body and you know and uh that the phonograph I think brings with it the dark missive and it's to do with the black-ness of the vinyl even though I had this pressed in transparent vinyl.

Murmurings: ooo beautiful

S:

Wahhhuuhuh

The kind of counter to the dark missive. I think the kind of black-ness I think it is about the choice of what that material brings with it. And that is literally inscribed not just because it is cooked but because it is written and we can't see that writing but we can hear that writing and the wax isn't impossible, but it is a very different type of body, I haven't really thought that through and that doesn't make me a Luddite either, but that it is just the intention of what that work is.

Q: (quite hard to hear 44:34)

...Is there work that brings you to start working backwards ...to bring you to record voice on matter... within crystal or something. You would do that?

S:

Yes, why not?

Q:

So it's not about it being vinyl, but it's about putting voice to matter.

S:

Yes it's the relationship with the inscription on the physical matter. Yes definitely, and that voice becomes agency. That is really critical. And that is picked, taken up; with the, um, 'it' of what is it? What is being said? What is the 'It' in it, here? And then the type, the name... the name is separated, well, becomes connected to the voice but separated from the body because then it comes in this and becomes here that goes out into the world and that is sold or purchased or given away. But separated so the name and the voice get somewhere so you can hear and then you can see and so the name as a label becomes connected to the voice as opposed to the body in the way that the voice is being inscribed as a disembodiment. These are the layers of my thinking that I am telling you about to come back to your question. They aren't reasons as such, but they are present in my thinking, I would say.

Q:

When a track is put on digitally, um, is there a physical element to it? Suppose I am thinking out loud, but it becomes a file.

S:

No, it is a binary code...

Q:

There is something physical, an element of a digital file. There is something physical?

S:

No it is binary code. Maybe to make the differentiation, maybe you are getting at this, I don't know, but we hear analog, we have no, we don't hear digital. So at the point where we encounter it, because digital is a storage system...it's storage of a binary code of systems, so at the point we hear it out here it is analog. It is analog by the time it is here and gets into our ears. So digital is almost a kind of an odd thinking of what we ... we are hearing a digital file being made into analog.

Q:

We are making things far to sophisticated than we actually need it to be

S:

It is just a storage system...

Two Q's conversing:

But are you saying that if there was a memory stick and it was blank and we stick it in and put a file on it then.. Yeah. That there is something physically going on there.

S:

Oh I see yeah nice question yeah I get it now.

Two Q's conversing:

That the sheet of vinyl is your foundation is your frame your canvas, just as your memory stick is your canvas. So, you're saying, that at some atomic level it is possible to draw the change. There will be, yeah.

S:

Oh yeah there will be, interesting.

(47:53-48:00 inaudible commentaries)

Q:

Does it go back to how it was? There is probably a trace

S:

I think probably that atomic thing. That scale of it....

Q:

We've hit like a non _____ it's all really light....

(Inaudible 48:11-48:24)

S:

We've hit duhh

S

We've hit: the computer says "no"

Q

If you did transcribe the record into just binary and it was just sheets and sheets and sheets and sheets of binary code

S

Yes well it does exist but I just don't know the code. It exists in that digital file as that binary thing but you mean I could write out 2's and 1's oh sorry! 1's and 0's. I mean I could write 2's and 1's but that wouldn't be right! That would be a wholly different thing. Yeah. I could, I won't.

Q

I mean that would be it, just existing in a physical way

S

Yeah well by doing that then you turning it into analog

Q

Yeah

S

Yeah that would be the only way we can encounter it. As analog

Q

So if you were writing... or talking about it in 1s and 0s and therefore be in physical matter again.

Q

So do you think or there would be some reason you would go back into photography if you went digital...

S

Actually, it should have given me a way out because it's when it got cheaper. It was only three years ago so I was already working, already deciding between, the difference between seeing the analog slide with the light transmitted through it, and how that illuminates a work in comparison with the digital projection, and already having all those little rows with myself about how it was, you know how you were saying, ahh it was more than that, and all these terms about that and eventually art school stopped looking after their slide projectors and even if you had all that kept you have to carry in your own and I was doing that the other day and they are heavy.

Q

It's a bit similar though, isn't it, to having a digital file and an LP you know you got those old silver halos and they are just so far superior to what we can get digital and we have all seemed to accept a less quality medium now

Q

Sorry what was superior?

S

Yeah not sure about terms

Q

These negative films. Silver halo had these tones that were beautifully... (Hard to hear 50:43-50:53)

S

That is about aesthetics and about taste. That is exactly where that lies.

Q

Like Tacita Dean uses...

S

Yeah, very much. I mean I used to use I don't know about those of you taking photographs pre-digitally in terms of the work - the standard choice was between Fuji film or Kodak film. Kodak was on the orange-red side of the spectrum and Fuji film was on the green-blue side of the spectrum. So if you were an artist who liked it cool you were Fuji-ing, and if you were an artist who liked it warm, you would be Kodak-ing. I was cool. The wall needed to be grey, green, and white. Not yellow. Ahhh, I had a fear of taking a photograph of a work on a yellow wall behind it because it would be all sunny and that would be terrible. This is why I gave it up, the ridiculousness of my own arguments for why I was taking. Needed to cut them out.

Q

Has that decision ever really negatively impacted your ability or getting some work or an exhibition or being able to..?

S

Yeah I think so, well I know so

Q

So it has?

S

Yeah but also what I can't tell you is the amount of time, of how I am doing something now that I wouldn't have been otherwise. It definitely... I can't tell you what the balance is, I don't spend time doing the pros and cons, but definitely the answer to your question, has it negatively affected, the answer is yes. And I, because I am working it out and it's prone to error, wonderfully prone to error. And somebody I know, there was something I put in and they were on a panel for a competition and they said, we had no idea what the hell your work was, and so how do we make a decision about it? A fair game. And if you had sent us a photograph we might've had a clue, and that was a fair comment, you know they weren't making an unreasonable request and I was me continuing to say no I won't! And not just so I can say fuck off. I was going to return to that, not to prove that I can persuade them, but because there is interest in that.

Q

Do you know other artists that have made that same sort of decision? Is there something that sets you apart from that?

S

Yes there is a whole host of artists that have taken all sorts of decisions and I think that I think the expanded notion of want of a better term the documenting art practice and you take the artist taking into control their destiny thing and setting up that sort of thing and we have 50+ years on that now and if you think about somebody like Ed Ruscha and Ruscha is a painter that could be arguably credited with establishing what our notion of the artist's book is. (Mumbling – 'gas station...'). Yeah exactly, and if you see um if you see if you were to take uh if you were to take a lineage of where the artists book is, he would be so prominent in that, and he is a painter and it wasn't a problem to kind of say there were two things that matter in the practice. So it was kind of that.. And then other forms of documents through conceptual art practice, as what constitutes the art work which I think there is the lineage that is here, and then in the present day there is somebody like Tino Seghal, do you know Tino Seghal? He, well in the UK he is being commissioned quite often, and he develops performance works, he isn't the performer so it's not like, not the, doesn't follow the tradition of live art body endurance performance, but much more around certain kinds of sets of social relations. So he 's reenacted certain parts of Bruce Nauman's works, he sets up works with something like British Bulldogs is enacted across a gallery or something like that, but he has no photographs taken, no photographs of the work, and so the entire documentation of that if you'd like, which we are really talking about in a glib way is that photographs equal documentation, he spends a tremendous amount of his practice on the legal contracts of the work, and so without saying they are documentation, they actually become the way in which the works exist in the world. I would add to it, although he is very controlling of that side of it, I would say that his work exists exactly as it does now, which is anecdotally, and the anecdote is huge. I think it is one of the most important. If you put it next to the photograph I think it is one of the most important ways to encounter and interact with art works. So there is that.

Q:

So we all have a problem with research...(mumble 56:52) is that because you don't represent yourself visually, do you see, haven't really finished that sentence have I, I guess I mean you can't really self promote in a way, because it is very difficult for people to access what you do

S:

And because there's another Sarah Jones

S:

And she takes quite a lot of finding because there are lots of us

Q:

So how do you get around that if you want people to know what you are doing that is the classic way of people finding you?

Q:

Well she was just talking about the anecdotal and we are all going to talk about the right Sarah Jones to everyone we know.

Q:

Well we also have to make sure we know the right Sarah Jones

S:

She came, we spoke about it for an hour, and we still don't know what it is. I think you answered it, in your question. I know there is another Sarah Jones, with a bigger web presence than my practice does. Um um I um.

Q:

Well is it even an issue...?

S:

It has implications, which is different from it saying it isn't important. I get emails to her and she now is starting to get emails that are to me. And we never met, and I can work out, she is a photographer, wah, there is nothing to do with my decision, but it's like neeoou. But I can work out from the nature of the content that they are for her, and she just wrote back, 'ugh I don't know why this is happening!' and I wrote back, I don't think you realize that I have been forwarding to you for quite a few years now! *Laughter*. But now, well we have this really really minor communication and it hasn't really developed into anything...and I go I think this one is for you and I get a cheers back and I get one down the line and you know this gets exacerbated because you know I am a student at the Royal College and she is a tutor at the Royal College, and yeah so, it's even better now. And I love it. Once sitting at home and watching the tele I ran the marathon 7 times, because that is how many Sarah Joneses were running it. Misinformation is part of the anecdote and of all of it.

Q:

So what was your practice when you first discovered it, and you wanted to ...

S:

Well Greg didn't know, I was a surprise to him. (Muffled chatter 1:1:15-1:2:09)

So it was the correct link, but the wrong person?

Q:

I know Sarah Jones through the Kingston PhD program.

Q:

So you know Sarah academically, but not her practice

S:

Exactly that is why it would be a surprise to you

Q:

So you knew we were looking up the wrong Sarah Jones

Q:

Greg did you think we were going to find the right Sarah Jones

Q:

Well it depends if you enter the Kingston website

Q:

Yeah I found a Sarah Jones at Brighton as well!

S:

Yes, recently I found an organic body lotion line

Q:

You are a real multi-talented

S:

Yes, yes I am. I am also a silver smith on my own street

Q:

On the street you live?

S:

Yes my own street. Or a street down, but yeah a silver smith.

Q:

What is your fascination with the bullet point? How did that start?

S:

On a certain, uh, um, a certain, um, certain constructions of language and the graphics of language that it probably sorted from there. Also because I now write as much as I do so it has become a necessity so as in terms of for this for instance as it is. I've found I use certain codes and systems, and that has become very prevalent in the work, so rather than letting it in I go oh look there is one of those! I'll have to have a chat about that so it came about through its use. And also realizing in terms of in the idea of it being ubiquitous and such right? That the familiar place to find it comes from or is the power point presentation. So much of the artists talk is the power point presentation as you were so kind to bring up, so to take a part of the power point presentation and to bring it back to you as Talk, the moment, the particular pinhead, of the talk. It is the 'it' of the talk today... it is sort of movable, but it is the 'It' of the talk.

Q:

(Muffled 1:04:54-56) ...a bit of a list, he was writing out what he wanted to say using bullet points, so why no A, B, C, or 1,2,3 they are sort of ...why the bullet point

S:

They are a sort of 20th century phenomena most certainly, in terms

Q

My friend used to tell me his notes, and we used to write these lists, but we were using this kind of form, but not the term. We used to call them dibbles...a dibble so we would say the point and then say dibble

S

What a beautiful word

Q

Yes and even for small ones we would call them dibbles...

S

You know when I was saying there might be a moment ...

Q:

I have been thinking about them all the time

Q:

What was your dissertation on, Phil? Dibbles and Tobias. There is something isn't it to sympathize that has taken over hasn't there? There is no shortage of things like that. I can't

think of others, but you frequently encounter things and it was just brought in to make things easier and now its just headlines and such. It's science it's easier (hard to hear 1:05:40)

Q:

It's reduction isn't it? Head bites sound bites. Back to the telegraph if you will.

S:

On that kind of telegraph thing, I was listening to a magazine program that was talking about the death of Tolstoy which was the, uh, timeliness of the telegraph at that moment and its whole hearted popularization in terms of getting information and communication and how it was getting across and the comparison was being made to Twitter and how everything is available and Tolstoy's death hadn't been predicted and journalists all flocked to report on the death of Tolstoy and it didn't happen for a few days but because of the insatiable appetite for news and the telegraph was being used to say ET2X and it was constantly going through tsst tsst tsst (telegraph sounds) so the reporting of that was absolutely down to the nth degree I thought the suggestion of twitter being something so kind of modern in terms of the overload of information an the banality of that kind of thing, but linking it back to something like the telegraph I really enjoyed that kind of line ettt ettt 2x two more eggs ett ett have the butter ett and the rest ett ettt *Laughter*

Q:

Are you represented by a gallery?

S:

No, that would obviously make a difference in your web search because the gallery would ensure that it did I'm sure

Q:

Were you represented before you banned the photograph?

S:

Briefly but I don't think the photograph thing was anything to do with it I think representation is um what's the word, it happens for a time and maybe that time is 80 years or maybe that time is just 8 weeks and it shifts and it is kind of part of a negotiation with public-ness but it is the business of the gallery because it is concerned with how it makes money as well and so it is in its interest to tend to certain aspects of its thing. And the gallery would find ways um to serve its interest, which is absolutely fine which wouldn't necessarily mean its need for photography but that would make a difference in terms of web presence. So it is not just the photograph that determines that activity that I know is there, that is undermining to the straight route to that access...

Q:

(Hard to hear 1:09:35) Do you feel your art comes out of this hard form...It seems like you are making life difficult for yourself? Is this as an inspiration, or to create a kind of history...?

S:

I don't know whether I am making it difficult for myself; I can see that it brings difficulties with it, but it is interesting. So whether it is making it more interesting for myself I don't know I don't know I think you or anybody else is going to have to judge that cause I don't I definitely don't think about 'oh I am making; or it's whatever is in front of me or maybe the longer term thing in the sense of this kind if impetus that *I just must do that*. So the terms of it in terms of difficulty or spending time analyzing it as being difficult or not is really hard to... well I can't even work out how to answer the question so maybe that is sufficient...

Q:

This has been really interesting because you are just working on your work and not concerned about the sensation or representation or through anyone else

S

Oh, I am definitely concerned about the reputation, I would say, I wouldn't be... of or representation of it through someone else. All of these things are about representation. Definitely concerned. It is not a secret activity. I am not here...the difference between kind of the negotiation that it might be difficult or any of those things definitely isn't a kind of a stepping away from or like 'you can't get me'. It is quite the opposite. I am really interested in that thing.

Q

Is it more about the choice of departing from, less decisions to make about photography, less about note taking, less spent...?

S

That is very interesting I think yes if I was to say I haven't thought about those details but in terms of where authorship in a practice begins and ends. Yes. Or I don't know where it ends. Can't recognize those boundaries, but maybe somebody who might recognize those boundaries might be able to willfully to enter the power point because it doesn't clutter their practice it doesn't need to clutter their practice and it doesn't need to clutter their practice and are therefore absolutely untroubled and maybe not completely but they are able to produce the art they are willing to produce because they are able to use their art to keep those things away from them...

Q

Almost like a focus

S

Yeah I think it is almost like this idea I mean I teach regularly and sometimes discussions turns to what is research and I attend meetings discussing what is research and also it comes up sort of informally what is professional and things like that and I think that goes to something you are maybe hinting at that maybe I was or that I understood that I am not doing something that I am not entering into a deal with something and you might have something there in the sense that if being an artist is this big, then being professional is inside that and might be this big and what is being professional might be this big and I do something similarly for research and I cant tell you all the names for this but I cant that would be ridiculous and my arms don't stretch but anything that can be named and discuss the impact of what that is it starts to become smaller inside the breath of what can be named. It gets smaller and it might be in there and to sort of take on that other side of your question... what the other space is...

Q

What I was trying to say sort of intellectualizing it or use my brain or to not ever photograph my work

Q

... Your choice not to photograph your work... (1:14:28) ...How much is that sort of fueling your concept about the work or running parallel to other concepts in your work

S

It is so engrained itself it that I wouldn't be able to unweave those things from each other. In fact almost immediately it started the impact of the decision started to be so immense that um yeah sometimes maybe I wont say always but sometimes you know it could be very boring.

Q:

How did you traditionally realize your ideas artistically? Without asking what did you do...?

Laughter

Was it that different?

S:

Oh

Q:

Before you got into identity theft, what did you do?

Laughter

S:

Not going to admit that. Um. I don't know. Whilst it might not have appeared as slippery as it appears to you now. My art education was and still is and my practice is still totally indoctrinated with this as a sculptor and the materials that I continue to use are. I still invest in matter and material and um the space of imagination through matter and material hence something like this and its lick-ability and its object-ness in the world and so I don't know whether there is a before and after because that is still there and it hasn't disappeared by these other things and the sort of the enigma of the object and the riddle of the object I think has maybe been more overtly played out now in the practice and more named. Actually naming has become really important, um, to me personally to try and name things. And that yeah kind of enigma with the object and the matter and that certain agency that can be given to matter and material and from this thing of talking about the voice and inscription to the writing and that to the um, the kind of absurdism of something, the kind of agency of the object. The thing that trips you up and you go back and kick it and like it knew you know the curve that you fall off of that you can get pissed off with... this kind of agency this naturally occurring thing... this is all still at stake at the work. Slapstick is still a big reference point with my work.

Q:

You know how you said you don't listen to recorded music, um is that because it is not authentic, it is the same version played over and over and do you find that the same with programs ... (hard to hear 1:18:58)

S:

Oh, I'm big on rubbish TV.

Q:

So you don't mind pre-recorded TV?

S:

No addicted. TV flows through me. Music is harder to bear.

Q:

So do you listen to music live?

S:

Yeah I did a work last year with an orchestra which was a staging of a piece by Schoenberg, *Verklarte Nacht*, and I wasn't familiar with it at all but classical music is something that I know that other people tell me about as opposed to something that I have come to on my own and I cant really tell you what the difference might be but it is something and once I recognized the name of it I didn't know it all. So in order to work with them I did download that piece of music and I did listen to it and I just uh I had no thoughts about it at all and so what I did and I can look back on it and see it was so damn obvious now, but I didn't recognize its obviousness at the time, so I attended the orchestras rehearsals and so through that the staging developed and I find it similar so to go back to what your question was of what you did before I do write now quite a lot and whether that is published today isn't the case and it is always a kind of means of thinking and I didn't have a studio for three months last year and although I said it before I cant say enough how important it is that I cant write without material around me, physical material around me, it's in that order: the material comes first. There is no word to be said unless there is a material that brings it. And I thought it was a pretty smart thing to say then, but when I didn't

have a studio for three months and everything was in boxes and bags I had nothing to say. At all. Nothing.

Q:

Where does radio4 fit in? Is it allowed to be on whilst your working or...?

S:

No silence is needed when I'm working. I mean maybe it sort of depends in terms of the equivalent of doing the ironing, it is something that is labored and kind of space that develops in that. But any kind of talking, when I don't know what I think and I need to have space to fill that in and there is talking that is disastrous. Really disastrous. I have a very close friend that is the antithesis of that, she doesn't do anything unless the TV and the radio and possibly Spotify might be on together and I just can't believe it. I know never to visit her ever when that is going on because she will talk to me while doing it too and I'm going 'too much information I can't hear!' it's single tasking. I do single tasks. Multitasking is way overrated.

Q

What was your art piece with the orchestra?

S

What I did was well they were a young chamber orchestra and they were and are interested in some of the traditions of chamber music and it's encounter amongst people, which is different from the developed tradition of stage / audience and you know the sort of classical concert set-up. They're not radically changing that, but they are interested in what that is. So it was at Cadogan Hall which is an enormous venue, which holds about 3,000 people and it really is quite daunting and they were keen that the audience on the stage or at least a significant part of it would be on stage and they had this kind of immersive, in their terms, idea. I originally had proposed to them and I would make an announcement, so a simple record that I would script and record for the production. This developed well really from going to the rehearsals not listening to the recorded side of, but going to the rehearsals, that this announcement could actually form the set of instructions to the audience to enter the stage so the announcement became an instructive announcement so it announced not only the event itself and the timing of it, and from there I wrote from the imagined bodies of the instruments. Uh uh... Schoenberg wrote two scores that were split by about 40 or 50 years, one for a sextet and one for a full orchestra. You know what, listening to Schoenberg, I realized, once I got to hear it, is like watching Alfred Hitchcock... it is the music from Alfred Hitchcock. That's it. That is absolutely it. And it turns out Schoenberg tutored one of the composers that wrote for Alfred Hitchcock all the time so it was like, 'oooh is it a cliché really oh it's all right I quite like it. I like Alfred Hitchcock'. And so the instruments that were being played the two violas, the two violins and the two cellos as the bodies and scripted, uh, wrote a script for the bodies from which was written for that day of the performance which prescribed the bodies and the musicians and the appurtenances which were the bows, they're entering the concert hall, their preparations in terms of the tuning, which came from the rehearsals as well, and the exercises that were gone through, so the back of stage. So act one, the scenes were from the arrival. The stage directions for the arrival at the hall and the preparations in the green room were scene two. And act two scene one was the entrance to the stage. You know where the bodies were coming from whether they were coming up the stairs as they entered the portal at the back of the stage and then ending in scene two in the final act was just one line which sets the scene of an old religious meeting hall in a darkened room and then the stage direction, player lean into the body, and that cued the first note of the piece. And so it became interspersed with the stage directions for the bodies were the stage directions to the audience and in the stating of it I included in it, into the wells, so as it was heard in the concert hall which was through an

integrated system of both the concert area and the foyer so the bell that called the audience in, was also included in the recording, was imperceptibly merged into the same thing so as those announcements were made, calling people in, it also included what actions they might take, so it referred to both the musicians the bodies the things and then the first note as it was cued and that was the end of the piece so it sort of blended those things. I refer to it as a sort of staging of the *Verklate Nacht* on that one night when I say I recorded that script I had it recorded by another artist and had it played over a recording system. My own view is that every time a score is played, not unlike something like giving a talk from a set of notes, that becomes another record so the score isn't just the record it is a working document like the script is. It is both a proposition to be interpreted as well as a kind record of what needs to have been before. (Lots of background noise 1:27:00 onwards)

Q;

So it's not just the music you went and dealt with the whole place...?

S:

Yes the place. I went and visited the hall a lot and kind of built up this description of all the architecture, which amounted to a kind of books of description but then was reduced down to some kind of choice sentences, I guess a kind of um a sort of the particulars that described it as not just any concert hall, but that particular concert hall and Cadogan Hall was an old religious meeting place and it kind of made it located and that so that was the piece I did with the orchestra.

Q:

I think we better

S:

Stop.

Q:

Take a break...

S:

Thank you so much for your questions it was really good!

Q:

I was worried after sort of about 20 minutes...

Q:

Can I ask you one more question... you are recording this... this could be part of your artists work

S:

Yeah there is no line

Q:

On the vinyl is it a piece on its own when its not being played

S:

This? Is this an artwork is that what you asked? Why not, is my answer?

Q:

Well that is the material so it can do it its stuff, so unless it's playing is it really doing its stuff

S:

It is definitely an artwork today

Q:

... Right...can we download it? *Laughter*

S:

Actually this, I, you can't at the moment, but this was made to be downloaded, so what you heard was it being played on the record player so the recording that was played on there was a

recording of it being played on the record player as opposed to a digital file of original, and it was always intended to be downloadable and it was available to download for 6 months.

Q:

So someone could buy your art and never be able to play it

S:

Uh, what do you mean if they don't have a record player?

Q:

Yeah

S:

Well probably quite a few people have those today

Q:

Yeah it's pretty difficult to get one of those today

S:

Yes, thank you for that!

Q:

Yeah how did you get it?

Q:

This guy Dennis.. He's a... lovely guy, went home, checked it...

S:

It's beautiful, isn't it? I could steal it...

Q:

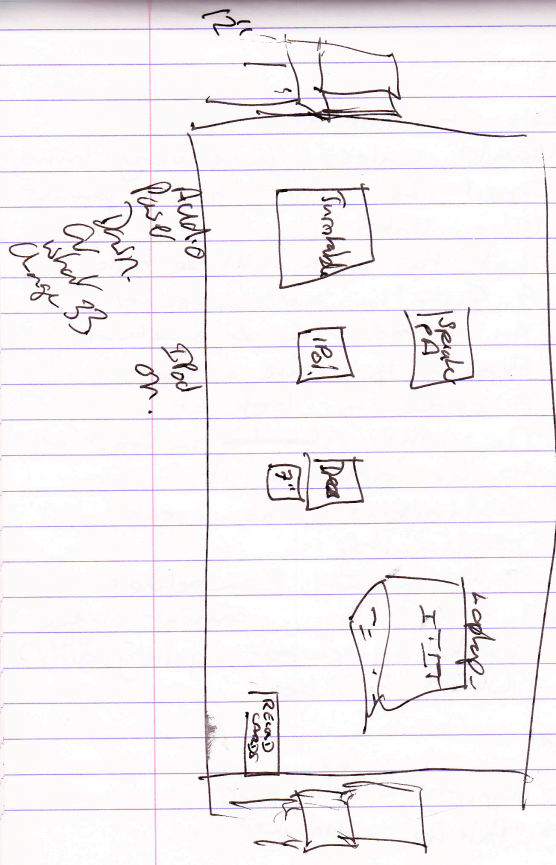
(Muffled 1:31 52-58)

An ARTIST'S TALK
FURNITURE and
PROPERTIES DIAGRAM

(Scanned from A5 Orange Notebook)

2012

The ... is an introduction and it is a primary role to an architect's role. It is a critical component. There might also be an MC. ...



PA System
181 or 181
181 or 181

An ARTIST'S TALK
SET UP and
STAGE DIRECTIONS

(Scanned from A5 Orange Notebook)

2012

Set Up.

Chair on left by turntable ^{in front} ^{at table}

~~Amp~~

Turntable - Full Volume - Speed 45

Amp - at '3' volume

Turntable plugged into amp

IPOD Voice Memo On

Laptop on ITIT Manogram

~~etc~~

Changeover - Put 12" on Turntable.

Move Chair to Right side

Turntable - '0' Volume - Speed 33

Amp - at Full Volume

Laptop - plugged into amp

~~Laptop - press power point on~~

Turntable - ~~put~~ move tone arm to play

~~Laptop - press power point~~

Sit Down - press power point

End - press power point.

Go to Turntable ~~move~~ replace tone arm

An ARTIST'S TALK
Q&A TRANSCRIPT

2,513 words in Baskerville, regular,
lower and title case

Fine Art Research presentations,
Royal College of Art, London, 8 March 2012
Transcriber: Sarah Jones

Rumbling

Footsteps

Rumbling

Throat clearing

A – rhubarb rhubarb

Footsteps

S – this might be us

A – who's not here

A – rhubarb rhubarb

Footsteps

S – I think this is us all

A – it is us all actually

A – what's the time quarter past

A – twenty past according to my watch

A – maybe we should get going

A – is this this was the kind of response to the artist talks that is over to the audience now

S – yes its erm

A – is it being recorded

S – it is. The purpose of recording it at this well there are purposes unyet known unyet known (laughter) unknown but there is a specific one that I can name which is that the role of the script is ermm continually returns as this project develops and I would say it is an integral part of it and in terms of what that is it is both proposition and record. Erm and the transcript is a kind of ermmm its in terms of today and what I am doing here I have been thinking about the transcript as a as a potential object component that is generated through this discussion

A – would that would the transcript just be the words that you have spoken or is everything and what

S – (interrupting A) and so I suppose what I am saying is that it would be a transcript of this discussion

A – (interrupting S) everything is being transcribed yeah

S – yeah so there's three parts the two parts that I was sort of in the introduction I was naming the different sorts of process or procedure for the talk and how that it is developed through the recursive process and then which is the form of recording and feedback erm the script for play and replay with the accrual of what feedback brings with it. And then there is the invention of

ermm of the introduction as a singular setting erm providing the set for the talk and then the transcript as a third form of where that might be in terms of what is here today

A – in relation to that the elision of what is being said is that the kind of central point

S – is what the central point

A – well the the the phrase what is being said seems is I was wondering what position that takes I was wondering if that comes from a particular place or is it in reference to the process of articulation

S – ermm it ermm I would position its errrr starting point as a statement of a repetitious statement of in a different material between the voice the phonograph and the words that are written on the screen

A – cos I've just been looking a little bit about the relationship between what's saying and said and I was just wondering if that's something you've been

S – (interrupting A) I mean oh I oh I I don't know if I'm trying to avoid I don't know whether I'm trying to avoid your question or I'm trying to just realign it really so what matters here the what is being said it doesn't have a question mark at the end of it

A – it's a statement

S – it is a statement. Is that erm yeah

[words unintelligible to this transcriber]

A – it just didn't sound like a statement in the what and the you know the sound that you played on the record

A – but there was a phase in wasn't there between it and what it is being said and what is being said

S – mmm

A – and that's the feedback is it not

S – uh huh yeah yep yep

A – how is that done or is it my imagination

S – how is what done

A – that phase in that movement from one to another what's that

S – do you want to know about the physical

A – yes

S – when you say the how you mean the how today

A – where

S – today

A – the where

S – (laughter) ohhhhh oh what does it matter what does it matter to describe technical ermm

A – (interrupting S) no no that's not necessary

S – (interrupting A) no it's a question I'm just asking it back I am asking what does it matter sorry I was just thinking how how I'd sorry ermm

A – (interrupting S) I don't want to know what bit of software you used

S – say again

A – I wasn't asking what bit of software you might you have used

S – yes so so what yes so there's something else you're getting at

A – was something (loud bang) was there a shift or was that something that I perceived or was led to perceive was there actually a shift between those two words on the recording

A – it was two different records

A – but the / second one

A – the last / the last piece of recording

A – was so different/

A – so it it / it and then what what what /

A – it it it and then what what /

A – [recording unintelligible to this transcriber]

S – yeah it it was repeated at the beginning of what what what

A – yeah

A – so it is what it means

Laughter

A – I found it erm I mean a slight observation but I would quite like to hear you know I found it quite formal quite a formal piece of work.

S – yeah

A – and I don't know if it was kind of quite I suppose not depressing but depressings the wrong word but you know I mean there is a degree a kind of degree of hopelessness about the artist's talk. You know it sort of reminded me of like Paul McCarthy videos of something like *The Painter* where he kind of goes at goes I don't know why I mean its completely different but like where he is sort of saying to his gallerist give me the money and stuff like that. It is a really great piece of work actually but erm but it's very funny but it there's a kind of hopelessness about the artist erm yeah

A – but there's also sort of like desperate sensitivity and empathy

A – yeah / yeah yeah yeah

A – (interrupting A) and I think that its one of the most I mean cos when I first saw it I thought it was a cruel jab at de Kooning but actually I think it's really the opposite / I mean this is de Kooning for gods' sakes, this is what it is

A – (interrupting A) no it's very movin /

Laughter /

A – and this is /(impersonating Paul McCarthy) "no, no, no, no, no"

A – he keeps repeating he repeats a lot in that yeah he just repeats and repeats and repeats and / yeah

A – but I think that's kind of the thing the same I think its really brilliant that you've brought that film up I wouldn't have done it but it's absolutely exactly the right for me that's totally I see massive parallel there in that and that's kind of a desperately empathetic thing

A – yeah cos there is an empathy yeah massive empathy but so it's not hopeless in a cynical sense / it's a like a kind of melancholia of some kind

S – mmm

A – it's a kind of attitude you take to hopelessness because the attitude you take towards hopelessness in your presentation is quite wry

A – mmm

S – what word did you just say

A – wry

S – wry

A – double you are why

S – right

A – so there's a real humour and but a kind of distanced humour and its kind of that I don't I don't know this film [the Paul McCarthy film] but it sounds like it's a similar kind of dynamic but really ramped right down and pared down and presented with a very different kind of attitude towards it which is a different kind of way of negotiating a relationship that might allow you to take control or ownership of that kind of sense of hopelessness you know to face it and relate talking about it without it crushing you and to make it your own and turn it into something else

S – mmm

Silence

A – I suppose I'm just sat here thinking and if I say this wrong forgive me but what what are the best questions to ask what I've just experienced with your artist's talk and I'm struggling to find out what those you know of course one wants (putting on a ridiculous voice) "well what were you trying to do?" you know what I mean of course that's very immediately one wants to ask that erm what I mean I suppose I do have to ask you that what questioning what line of questioning what mode of questioning do you feel would be good for you in in this situation

S – erm its errr I think the site of it err you know its one of the things is its fine to ask that question I'm glad we didn't start with it because already what you've introduced in terms of me not anticipating was this sense of erm of a person an artist is a person / as opposed to **an object** [? transcriber] yes the way you are speaking about it was not anything I was thinking about in relation to the production of this as an object / erm

A – ohh

A – so there's no artist

Laughter

S – well that you might witness one is of interest to me in terms of your response so I think so that when you were just talking about what you were I almost my silence is more kind of like I'm sinking in this part of the discussion is sinking in that it would have anything cos my own erm errrrm you know this process of objecitfizi objectivising? thats definitely is not a word objectifying the the artists talk and then pursuing the notion of a model as both of something of a containment of something but also something aspirational and the disjuncture between these not that's a word and I'm not sure it's the right one but you know that that these things are of and at the same time so disjuncture is not the word I'm seeking but they are of and at the same time so you know I'm thinking less about these emotional / erm erm leakages in terms of the (heavy sigh) the why

A – mmm

A – it seemed to me and I don't know whether this is the right reading of it but for me it seemed I seem less interested in the idea of it as an artist's talk and more as a mode of conveyance and the what is being said / (words unintelligible to transcriber) is almost completely covered over what you said as a kind of statement and I do think that the idea of what we are saying now then becoming the script again is interesting in relation to this morning where there were very different modes of speech emerging out of text or out of different forms of text. I do think that way of configuring a process of saying something is quite beyond the notion of the artists talk and it maybe of itself more I don't know the thing more significant or

Coughing

S – There is a willingness on my part to erm what's the word to engage with obscurity and the obscuration of the the object so when you saying it covers it over that's erm I would follow. So you know I find that suspect there I've said it but I also find it suspect in the sense that there is the thing beyond which is nameable. So when I was thinking in the introduction I talking about Christina Mackie the what and the where of what and of where and then showing what things are near you know there's this sense that there's a process of naming, of defining and then there is the enigma that will all those processes of naming and defining are the nearness to the thing not the thing itself you know that there is something that remains charismatic in this kind of thing that previously for those of you have been to presentations I've done before ermm about 12-18 months ago I presented a riddle and a riddle is something as a form that I erm I erm I erm erm have engaged with precisely because its existence acknowledges and is

predicated on a form the voice of an object written from the first person an agency that is provided to the thing and that it is in a process of naming the properties of itself and being defined but equally it also it is acknowledging, no it is not acknowledging, it remains an enigma so that there is so much of it that can be done and that is built into what the riddle is and how it comes into being and how it operates and how no operates is a bad word and how those things are in being. So that's form there's different kinds of forms / that are finding their root amongst the work as it were so the model is something in terms of aspiration and containment and then the riddle is of both concrete and that which can't be named as well. So this matter of obscurity comes to bear here like a kind of weight bear it

Coughing

A – what I mean in terms of its a really bad question but I don't know what else really to what what can I do with that weight to experience that weight / that's obviously important is that is that sufficient is that to know that weight

S – mm

A – also you are very light with that weight / you are so flippant with that weight somehow no no no it's the no no no that's what I mean its like you are talking about a weight / which you're experiencing but actually the way you deliver it is very sort of / like that kind of thing. I was thinking as you partly because of the conversation about de Kooning I was thinking of course about the Rauschenberg erased de Kooning thing as a model to look at what you're talking about being against somehow and with that the weight is really really obvious you know and that our response was actually quite an emotional one is absolutely identified in that drawing and it seems that you are dealing that you are talking about the same sort of thing but you are doing it with this very flippant

A – no no I just I don't feel it its because because there its

A – yeah

A – off the cuff or yeah /

S – (interrupting A) yeah

An ARTIST'S TALK
Q&A TRANSCRIPT

4,890 words in Cambria, regular
and bold, lower and title case,
New Contemporaries Exhibition,
Liverpool Biennial, 21 September 2012
Transcriber: Jess Fugler

So that's the first part of this artist talk. Is there any question?

Well um, I'm glad that you in (central) investigating in It does break it down...

I;m not quite sure where you are taking it really. It almost felt as a voyeur... being an artist comes natural to you..

I think that um what I'm interested in is how closely you can get to things and what a thing might be and I think that the relevance to the bullet point to that is in its bureaucratic sense of that it suggests that we might get close to knowing the thing that is made clear to us through the use bullet point but I am interested in it as a material, as a physical material, and what happens to try and approach the thing or what the thing might be and how pressure might be applied or the shape of something changes the closer you get to it till you never quite know what it is. Maybe if you might think of it something like a nature of a riddle. A riddle has lots of concrete aspects to it and tells you lots of things and about how you'll know the things the riddle is of. But for as many there are the concrete parts of that. Apart from maybe the simpler sense you can solve it by that I think that you don't know the thing, you might get to a name of something, but that doesn't really bring you closer to the thing itself, you kind of circumnavigate it the riddle has something of that aspect of it. I think that's how I would continue to as to what you sort of started, as to where does it get you. It's about approaching the thing, getting close to it. But that's not about, there's a kind of accretion through that and maybe a mutation of what the thing might be hence the idea... that pointed to there, which is the bullets. You know? The point in where it is shot, it immediately changes. It immediately changes.

Where is what?

Where it immediately has be shot. It immediately changes.

Shot?

Yeah, it immediately changes shape. So a bullet changes shape at the very point when it leaves. So there is a kind of material..

Physical..

Yeah, even when you get close to something it moves away and you can't know it in its completeness but you can know lots of things about it ,you approach it... Knowing is a really dodgy word, I'm going to withdraw the word "knowing" because I'm not quite sure about that one and replace it with "approaching."

Okay. Yeah, the link to the physical property

The repetitious....it..it..it.. Can you explain that?

Can I explain it? I can try to talk about it. I'll try to do that. Yeah, well let me say some dumb things first. It makes me laugh when you say it over and over again because you say "tits" so I quite like that about it. That's all my dumb things, retractions. And then, where does this take me? Where does that take me? I want to admit to that bit. Uh, "it" ... in relation to the voice and naming, it situates the voice that's of the recording, it situates the voice

as something that might be something that might be biographical but not necessarily it takes it outside something that might be intensive, knowing the voice. The voice becomes separated into the "itness" rather than into the.. ohh this is a really good question because I'm really struggling! It something about the voice belonging to a person and at the point it becomes recorded there is a separation to that belonging. And it brings with it that association. So the industry of record making and the original kind of recordings, Edison's recordings, the idea of the notion was that it was a voice speaking beyond the grave. One of it's achievements, he talked about one of his achievements as being a voice that could be sustained beyond the life of the body that have given the voice to it. I think there is still some aspect in recording that I still connect to that I idea. There is something about the voice.. It's like who's voice is it? You never really know because it has become separated from that. So in this case you could say this is the voice of Sarah Jones but just as equally it is the voice of it, too. So it's self-referencing in that. And that's maybe biography is interesting to me then. Not in terms of the autobiography, or the who, but the biography of what. It seems to me. That's where my interest lies. Very much in terms of an object as opposed of a subject. Definitely.

Did the theory be true.. In organic spoken word..

Yeah, I think that's true. I do. A little bit like photography, once we are so familiar it so ubiquitous, it is so familiar. It's possible to recognize that and still believe it is the same thing. Like looking at a photograph and knowing it's not really the painting but, I still know that that's the only way that I know the painting. So it becomes kind of mixed up. So ubiquitous, you can hold that knowledge inside yourself and still forget it. It becomes like a short cut to.. yeah yeah that's the voice of.. Donald.. you just, it's maybe perverse to try to go around it all the time. There's a difference between not going around it all the time but then my interest in drawing back to the intention of that, is still the case that the separation of that. In the case of recording and re-recording it becomes mutated as well. So there is a sense that it becomes adapted or mutated through that recursive process. Or maybe there is something about the process of recording where the accretion can become so great that it actually obliterates the thing that makes you say "yes, it was Donald" because what you got it all the accretion of recording around it. And that takes on a different character. In this, the objects that I'm using, and the mechanics that I'm using are part of a recursive process of recording. Record and play. Record the play. Play again. It builds up through that.

I think sometimes record a photograph you get in the mail and understand and knowing the voice of the original taker...

It's also what we have sometimes. We are sort of judging those things. I wouldn't know as many voices, I certainly wouldn't know as many paintings if it weren't for photographs.

No

This work and my process doesn't propose something that is anti those things. Continuing to approach what that thing that might be using the recording systems or the ways we might find out about it. That includes an artist talk precisely.

Yes, I see

Today I would describe this is as much about what an artist talk is, as it is an artist talk.

When you imagined this artist talk, did you...

Yes, my first hope would be there would be an audience. Which given your experience, wasn't necessarily the kind of assumption I would be able to make. The talk would have gone ahead without an audience and it's duration and content would have been changed dramatically. But it has changed through time as an audience because the difference between balance of being prepared to speak and load of address is something that I hope, that my intention is that it is rarely interrupted, although that is not always the case. It started out, it developed when I was invited to go give talks in art schools. And because I don't take photographs of my work, well I haven't done for about five years now.. when invited to go give an artist talk I have to think about what it is that I can take to that situation. And there are variety of art schools.. I was invited to Bristol last year and the record, this seven inch record already existed and I think that the 12" was just about pressed by then as well. Although I don't have photographs of my work doesn't mean I can't transport some sense of what the work is. And it's a record of it and it is the thing itself. So in the course of presenting the records of it, literally the records of it, this developed as a kind of performance. I was invited by the artist Roy Boss who runs the course and he was a really... um what's the word? You know pain in the ass sort of person in a talk who doesn't do any of the things you know you would like them to do? It became a performance just in the moment. In that moment. So it then shifted. And then, subsequently, I did three other talks in other art schools and this is the first time... I think the background, maybe, is useful in one of the things that happens in that situation is that the audience expects you. They've even Googled and checkout out what they think you are and what they think they're going to get already and might even have questions.. certainly have attitude about whether they think is interesting or not already. And so all sorts of things that are already prescribed by that situation. And this is the first time that I've ever performed it, where I would describe it as a performance of an artist talk rather than I am really living the artist talk in the art school and I don't know the audience and I have not been invited by you to be sitting in front of me, so you have nothing. And that's the transference of the expectation and the content of this work. It has really left me with a lot of questions about the expectations of audience because the construction is utterly changed in this situation. To the fact that we are even talking at all is.... I don't know that sentence.. it just is..

You say you don't owe us ... a record..

A photograph, there are lots of ways I record my work. I just don't photograph them.

Yes, yes but you've recorded it in a sense where you write it down, you spoke it very particularly ... would you have ever done it....

It has developed. It was the first time, absolutely not. In fact, nothing like it. As I recorded it, I then started to.. I then, sorry, I play as in I perform it. I record it. I mend, from that recording, I transcribe it. I then mend it for the

next performance. So it's played again. And that's recorded. So it's the same recursive process, the feedback that feeds back in to the next time. So this has been recorded and what is happening today will be fed back into the future talks. And that's what determines how they change.

(Question not understandable)

The laptop there to play the download which is the MP3 of that turntable playing that record. And what you didn't hear, you didn't hear it played on that template. You heard the download played from here. It played the picture. And this played the sound.

So that becomes a device for what? (the turntable)

The turntable played the first 7" but this 12" vinyl record you hear, this was made precisely to be a download. The only way it is a heard thing in the world is a download. It was made in order to be recorded, to be downloaded. Did that make sense?.... We don't know each other that well, we only met last Friday!

That 12" is that..

That actually, I recorded that being played on a record player and made a download of it. And that's what you're listening to, the download. I'll show you. If you look at it you can see the scoring. This is the..... You can only hear it as a download but you can see it as a picture still.

It actually wasn't changed, because I thought that every time it would change because of the media...

No, the media MP3 does have some change but it really is to our ear virtually acceptable and it deteriorates through playing over an extended period of time. What you were talking with, the crackles, is the immediate recognition of difference between one and the other. The 7" is played on that, and that you can hear the difference of the technology each time is in this first single. So this is played for this performance. You get the immediate atmospherics in here, you get the nature of the tracked MP3 slow degradation and a kind of mutation that happens through playing a recorded download through the 12." It's a very slight adaptation, but it does matter in terms of when you come across it. Matter in the sense of matter. The other thing is, that I think that, I don't particularly fetishize vinyl. But I understand it. I resist it as a fetishistic kind of object and just fondling over it and its black, silky... I keep going with it! It is a pictorial thing, vinyl. It is a picture. And the sound is inscribed in it. You know that cut, as a picture it is totally illegible. But something that I think is really, really important about that legibility is being something that only the record knows, if you'd like. It's kind of inscribed in, it knows that sound and it is completely a thing. It is a picture and the writing of something that we cannot literally read. It could be read by another machine, a needle. You know the thing that it goes through to get there. And I think that that form of inscription and for me, that knowing something, you know, how close you can get to what that matter is. I think that's what I'm most interested in about vinyl. How that the inscription kind of works as a material and as a matter and as an object that can be seen, known, and yet not be able to be read simultaneously it is right in front of you. You can run your hand around it, you can know everything about it. But it will still keep what words are, whatever the inscription is, is kept to itself. Anglo-Saxons have

really good riddles, like the best kind of riddles, you know objects that talk in the first person about their making and what they're made of- even though you got it in front of you, it will say "I am gold" "I am made by.. I am.." They're inscribed into them. And I think there is something about the concreteness, about the speech and the knowing of the riddle and that the object tells you about itself whilst you're there looking at it, and yet it's still a riddle. I think that there's something about the vinyl record that I would really put next to that. It's about how close you can get to a thing or how much you can kind of come close, just keep approaching it. The "it." Keep approaching "it".

The second word you repeated what "what" "what" "what" ... Can you talk about that?

Can I?

(Not understandable response) something about the "Whats" compared to the "it's"

Yeah, I think that's a good way to answer that. Yeah.. That's a really brilliant way to answer that. I'll note that. In my recording...there will be credits. I think that's exactly.. I would have used too many words to do what you just did. That's exactly right, that's perfect.

(Question partially inaudible) Contradiction of the what. To understand it..

It's around and people talk about the work and that's the titles. Lots of people were talk about "That's the IT word" and so questions came up about information technology. It's a lucky break, that, in the 90s, that sort of thing. A really luck break for me. Because it's not irrelevant, but it's... what's the word? It is relevant but just, chance. You know? It's without intent. It's a relevance without intention. It's arrived at through the blue cable.. that's it

Can you say what type of art you do? Can you give it a title? Can you define it? Or has it changed or progressed over time?

Okay, there are two questions. The answer to the first question is "no." And the answer to the second question is "possibly not."

Do you like (inaudible)?

[laughter] **Yes. Yes, um. Uh, yeah.. it's...**

It's I've just been on holiday, for four weeks, with artists. And it turned out that all of them, four of them, were teachers. And it did seem to be that they have settled. In their 30s and 40s or something. I mean we are teachers, not lecturers or tutors or something. They were just settled into their lives. In the four weeks they didn't change. They always did the same thing. And maybe working with (6 - 4?) for many years.. I just see it to when I talk to people humbled in their developments. As I say talking to these 6-4 teachers the other day.. Maybe they don't got time to do, to develop their own sort of art. I'm just worried that I ..., but I'm sure you're not. No, you were just telling us now that you wouldn't review a In Liverpool.. it seems

Yeah, the next talk here will be not the same as this one. Ostensibly, it is a repetition of this, but it will have feedback, which is the difference between the repetition of loop. Repetition that has all the feedback and picks up changes through dirt and the kind of mess that comes around it each time it goes through there. And that's kind of different from a closed loop that is kind of clean or something. So there's different ways of repeating and I'm

not sure the question of progress I think is, um.. I ought to say possibly not... I could get on my horse.. Shall I get on my horse? Okay I'm going to get on my horse for just a moment. My horse says, I know, my horse says "yes." I think progress is overrated. The assumption to progress is a good thing is something I would put a question by before I can continue with that thought. And so there's been an interest in recursion and recording and how something might change, mutate, or adapt.. is much, much more what I am interested in. It's a specific, maybe it's a specific kind of tangent of what might generally be called progress that I'm focused on. And all of that dirt and all of that mess is a consequence of putting in place a set of processes. What I don't succumb to is something that idealizes the.. or to come back to the fetish.. idealizes the mess as being, you know I'm going through the process so it's a good thing. It's just a set of consequences. The judgments about, the judgmental aspect of those things, that's another thing outside the art because that political, art isn't political. Politics is something that done to what you think about.

Politics is what?

It's politics that has its own ends and it makes you sort art but it isn't art itself. So that's when I talk about the judgmental thing being outside art, and I'm not arguing that it's a judgmental thing, but I'm separating those things out very, very clearly.

That's fine.

I might climb down, off my horse.

It might be a bit of a climb

Okay... It might be ready for you... [laughter]

(Question inaudible)

If you can expand that a little bit, so we can see where our differences might lie or maybe or similarities might lie...

(partially inaudible) Have the choice you made seemed political ?

Uh, yeah.. If I come from a background of feminist thinking, absolutely. I think it's political in that sense, and those ideas are the way that I've lived, I have said that very, very same statement. I've hold it, but it needs more further definition, and the definition is that the choices that you make are.. It's the aim of it, the aim that a choice puts something to use or something that's put too political. The way that art isn't. Art is definitely, definitely in a political world. I'm not suggesting that it's separated or some way escapes, you know, like it's some rarified thing that is above or beyond the political. It's absolutely in the political world. I think it's relevant to kind of bring it back down, not to take it into the abstract too much, the kind of concrete thing is here, if you take a recursive process the... my query about progress, the development of work.. I would say that's a political aim. That's what I'm kind of saying, I would have a question mark after. What I'm telling you about is that this is the process that it is put through, consequences of those processes. Consequences don't have political aims, judgments of those processes does. So that's when it becomes political. The actual fact, there is a process that's kick off, whereby.. um.. It's a little.. Okay.. I'm going to take you away from art for a minute, there's a.. this is a really interesting story called "Bayumus" that's by Stephen Femisin (spelling not correct, couldn't find) it's about the theater of semantic poetry. This would be a really good

title to have in this conversation... And Bayumus is a three-legged man, on his third leg he's got a roller skate. That's my kind of man.. He talks about himself in this book, he's the lead character and he has a mutation and he has an adaptation that happens over the course of reproduction. What he wants to do, he wants to continue this adaptation into the future of human kind. So he tries to sleep with as many women as he can. And he is found very, very attractive by women because he has a third leg with a roller skate on the end of it. His complaint is, is that they all use double contraception because the last thing that they want is a child with three.. so he gets more sex but he doesn't get his aim, which is to have more children with a third leg which will have a roller skate on it, that is a political aim. But the point that the reproduction is happening, there's not politics in that, it's just going on because it's just a bodily, matterly thing, there aren't politics inside that thing. Politics is what you think of it or what's done with those choices. The point of conception is not a political act. Does that make sense? The political act is him wanting to have sex and wanting to have the mutated children, actually the conception itself is not political. So there's a separation of things something of what's political and what's not. Conception is an action and things are happening, but there's no political aim in them. So art has aspects of it, which isn't about.. it is.. something else is going on. It is not rarified, it doesn't make it special but it is in a political world, like conception. So conception has a political world, so it does matter politically. It, itself, isn't a political thing. Does that make sense as an illustration? Because I haven't made that illustration before, until this question has just come up. And I'm not very good at describing that. I once listened to Jean-Luc Nancy, the philosopher, speak about what's the difference between politics and art and I found it very, very convincing. And it threw me on my head. Up until that point, I could not.. I felt much more comfortable stating that everything is political. It was a lecture that I went to of his, that made me step back from that idea and think about it. (partially inaudible..) The consequence of politics.. or ... the situation. The fact we are speaking English now is the consequence of politics. **Yes, but I don't know that that totally convinces me that that makes art political. You see there's lots of sort of things that are** Not meaning to argue... (inaudible) **That's all very good. That's fine, I'm just going to do this. I can do that. You know, I don't.. I like questions like that. I felt very uncomfortable, really superbly uncomfortable, but, thank you.** English is a political consequence but speaking is not.. (female voice inaudible) **Making laws is political, apart from going wrong. Language is political. Noise that is coming out of the mouth, it is when it's turned into language.** The weird thing is, you don't teach what you speak. Talking to people or animals through.. You take a child from Cuba and one from New York and their language would be completely different... **So that's language, and language is definitely political. That's something different. Politics has aims. Politics means the aims to do something. It comes back to the thing that I'm interested in, is that politics does things to the thing. It changes what the thing is, it pushes what the thing.. it makes the thing change its shape. You know, you talk about things like resistance,**

and all sorts of things like that, there is an understand of the physics and the chemistry and the biology of stuff.. and there is also a understanding.. and that is a resistance. And that changes the shape of thing. And there is politics that changes the shape of things. But biology changes the shape of the thing too, and that's not politics. It can be construed politically, but it doesn't make it.. if two cells split, that isn't political.. it isn't politics but it can be political. To me, two cells split isn't political. Does that make sense? I think that's the sensory that I was saying about art, and art not being political in that sense. That there are things apart from the political that is as well, or is unknown to that. You have to understand what the thing is and how you approach the thing and how, you know, the bullet being a really brilliant example that you can't think of something as an object. The most expansive object in politics, the bullet, it's the end of or also the beginning of the round. But the fact that it changes shape when it hits air, according to whether it's made of copper or silver or something like, that's not politics.

We could go on and on..

We could. And it's a very good question. Do you know, talking about language, do you know a play by Pinter called Mountain Language? Which is a really, it's one of his most politically... what's the word?.. headlined. His plays became increasingly, politically clear in motivation and it's a play, a very short play and it's about people's willingness to hear languages or to refuse to hear languages or to speak certain language. So to refuse to recognize a dialect because it's politically not going to be recognized. So, therefore, anybody who is going to speak that language doesn't have a voice politically. You know, it's exactly in that kind of spirit that you initiate. It's a really good play. I've never seen in before, but it's a good read. I'm interested in those things that you're interested in, but that's.....

I might want a cigarette soon, I can feel that. [laughter]

My question is there is your performance and there is this. And those things are so wildly different... does it make you want to go outside and have some space..? As a construction or as a form, yeah. I'll just say okay to that.

All those things, I just wanted to say things..

I think that you're all about what the audience will take away, I have submitted to you today in terms of the conversation that could be had. I have done that once before in one of the talks I did in the art schools. I prefer it. I think that it doesn't make it tricky. But still you got to think about the cleanliness or the cleansed nature, the kind of, no matter what the questions are I know things that I'm going to tell you about. I mean some of that has happened a little bit today. But that's about being ready, prepared, being able to talk about something and the difficulty of questions and answers, to not close down questions that are outside a kind of perimeter of what this might provoke as a situation. Yeah, okay, it's been a bit tricky. I might change it next time. I don't know. I think it might be a problem in terms of form. Yeah, we all get cigarettes maybe. Is that alright with you? I'm going to close the recording..

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Works, Performances, Exhibitions and Events

Antonioni Project. Directed by Ivo van Hove. Barbican Theatre, London, 2 February 2011.

A Storyteller's Inadequacy. Eva Kotátková. Modern Art Oxford, Oxford, 30 November 2013 – 2 February 2014.

Atelier EB. Lucy McKenzie and Beca Lipscombe. Cabinet, London, 17 November 2011.

At the Moment of Being Heard. South London Gallery, London, 28 June – 8 September 2013.

Audience. Barbara Hammer. 32 min. 1982. 16mm.

Aural Contract. A short course devised by Lawrence Abu Hamden. The Showroom, London, 13 June – 18 July 2012.

Avant Garde Visions: The Themersons and the Gaberbocchus Press. Queen Mary University of London, 15 June 2012.

Babette Mangolte in conversation with Anne-Sophie Dinant. South London Gallery, 27 April 2012.

Beckett on Film. Produced by Michael Colgan and Alan Moloney. 622 min. Ireland: Blue Angel Films/Tyrone Productions, 2001. DVD.

Blok/Eko. Written and directed by Howard Barker. The Wrestling School, RADA Jerwood Vanbrugh, London, 29 June 2011.

Boxed Tunes. ICA, London, 19 October 2011.

Box with the Sound of its Own Making. Robert Morris. Walnut box, speaker, and three-and-one-half-hour recorded tape, 1961.

Bruce Nauman: Raw Materials. Bruce Nauman. Online interactive audio/graphic, www.tate.org.uk/modern/exhibitions/nauman (accessed 27 February 2011).

Cady Noland Approximately: Sculptures & Editions, 1984–1999. Triple Candie, New York, 21 April – 21 May 2006.

Christina Mackie in conversation with Phyllida Barlow. Chisenhale Gallery, London, 1 March 2012.

Cornelius Cardew: Play for Today. Drawing Room, London, 5 November – 13 December 2009.

Cut & Splice: Transmission. Wilton's Music Hall, London, 4–6 November 2010.

Décor: A Conquest and Bricks: 1966–1975. Marcel Broodthaers. Michael Werner, London, 21 November 2013 – 18 January 2014.

Ding Dong the Wicked. Written by Caryl Churchill and directed by Dominic Cooke. Royal Court Theatre, London, 11 October 2012.

The Discursive Object. Royal Academy Schools Forum, Geological Society, London, 5 October 2012.

Education: Not Knowing. Raven Row, London, 13 November 2012.

Einstein on the Beach. Directed by Robert Wilson. Barbican Theatre, London, 13 May 2012.

Folio and 4 Systems. Earle Brown. www.earle-brown.org/works/view/12 (accessed 30 January 2011).

The Forest and the Field. Directed by Chris Goode and Company. Ovalhouse, London, 8 March 2013.

4 Systems and December 1952. Earle Brown. Scores, concerts and rehearsals, www.ubu.com/sound/brown.html (accessed 30 January 2011).

Four Pieces by Morris. Babette Mangolte. 94 min. 1993. 16mm.

Fragments. Directed by Peter Brook. Young Vic, London, 22 September 2007.

Fräulein Julie. Directed by Katie Mitchell. Barbican Theatre, London, 30 April 2013.

From Visual to Textual: Typography in/as Conceptual Art. ICA, London, 29 February 2012.

Watt. Directed by Tom Creed. The Pit, Barbican, London, 9 March 2013.

Graphology. Performances and presentations by Pierre Bismuth, Anna Barham and Peter Kubelka. Drawing Room, London, 16 June 2013.

Hanne Darboven. Hanne Darboven. Camden Arts Centre, London, 20 January – 18 March 2012.

Harold Pinter's The Homecoming. Directed by Peter Hall. 111 min. American Film Theatre Collection, 2003. DVD.

Holes of Light. Nancy Holt. Wall, lights, timer, 1973.

How Can You Relate? A Case of Alienation and Closeness. The Showroom, London, 8 February 2014.

The Humans. Alexandre Singh. Sprüth Magers, London, 24 January – 29 March 2014.

Hysteresis. Martin Westwood. Bloomberg Space, London, 14–31 October 2009.

The Invisible Show. Brian Griffiths. Vilma Gold, London, 12 January – 19 February 2012.

Jean Genet ... The Courtesy of Objects. Marc Camille Chaimowicz. Nottingham Contemporary, Nottingham, 16 July – 2 October 2011.

John Cage Lecture on Nothing. Performed and directed by Robert Wilson. Barbican Theatre, London, 25 February 2013.

Kafka's Monkey. Directed by Walter Meierjohann. Young Vic, London, 27 March 2009.

Keren Cytter: Performer/Audience/Mirror. Keren Cytter. Tate Modern, London, × October 2012.

Kill the Workers. Janice Kerbel. Chisenhale Gallery, London, 1 April – 15 May 2011.

L'homme à la valise. Directed by Chantal Akerman. 60 min. 1983. 16mm.

Light Reading. Lis Rhodes. 20 min. 1978. 16mm.

London Road. Directed by Rufus Norris. Cottesloe Theatre, National Theatre, London, 19 August 2011.

A Man Escaped. Directed by Robert Bresson. 101 min. 1956.

Marc Camille Chaimowicz in conversation with Michael Bracewell. Nottingham Contemporary, Nottingham, 11 August 2011.

The Method. Paulina Olowaska, with readings by Wojtek Pusłowski. Studio Voltaire, London, 2 May 2013.

Mother 200. Paulina Olowaska. Simon Lee, London, 13 April – 31 May 2012.

My Name is Ulises. What's Yours? The Showroom, London, 12 June 2010.

Notations. Vicki Bennett. Café Oto, London, 29 November 2013.

Not I. Written by Samuel Beckett and directed and performed by Lisa Dawn. Royal Court Theatre, London, 22 May 2013.

Not Ideas About the Thing But the Thing Itself. Wallace Stevens, www.writing.upenn.edu/pennsound/x/Stevens-Wallace.html (accessed 5 January 2010).

Orange Brainwash Tribute. Sue Tompkins, www.bbc.co.uk/arts/0/27029368 (accessed 16 April 2014).

Outlandish: Strange Foreign Bodies. Phillip Warnell. 20 min. 2009. 35mm.

Painter. Paul McCarthy. 50 min. 1995. Video.

Painting the Weights. Christina Mackie. Chisenhale Gallery, London, 20 January – 11 March 2012.

Phillip Lai. Phillip Lai. Modern Art, London, 13 January – 11 February 2012.

please water the plant and feed the fish. Juliette Blightman. Plant with Tipp-ex marking, apple, goldfish bowl and stand, 2008.

Presto – Perfect Sound. Manon de Boer. 5 min. 2006. 35mm.

Raw Materials. Bruce Nauman. Tate Modern Turbine Hall, London, 12 October 2004 – 2 May 2005.

Reality Flickers. Katrina Palmer. MOT International, London, 5 December 2013 – 1 February 2014.

Rhinocéros. Written by Eugène Ionesco and directed by Emmanuel Demarcy-Mota. Barbican Theatre, London, 16 February 2013.

Richard Tuttle in conversation with Richard Shiff. Geological Society, London, 16 January 2012.

Shun-kin. Directed by Complicite/Simon McBurney. Barbican Theatre, London, 11 November 2010.

60wrđ/min art critic. Lori Waxman. DOCUMENTA 13, Kassel, 1 August 2012.

... some trace of her. Directed by Katie Mitchell. Cottesloe Theatre, National Theatre, London, 3 August 2008.

T.E.O.R.E.M.A.T. Directed by Grzegorz Jarzyna. Barbican Theatre, London, 17 October 2010.

Theatrical Methods: Adaptation. Workshop led by Catherine Alexander (Complicite), organised by Sarah Jones, Drawing Room, London, 25 June 2012.

The Thing-Uummy-Bob (That's Gonna Win the War). David Heneker and Gordon Thompson, performed by Gracie Fields, www.monologues.co.uk/First_Ladies/Thing_Uummy_Bob.htm (accessed 10 January 2014).

THIS IS WHY PEOPLE O.D. ON PILLS/AND JUMP FROM THE GOLDEN GATE BRIDGE. Jennifer Walshe. 2004. T-shirt and audio.

This That and the Other. Christina Mackie. Herald Street, London, 10 October – 11 November 2007.

Trial of Ubu. Directed by Katie Mitchell. Hampstead Theatre, London, 4 February 2012.

Two Times 4'33". Manon de Boer. 10 min. 2008. 35mm/video installation.

Ubu Roi. Written by Alfred Jarry and directed by Declan Donnellan.
Silk Street Theatre, Barbican, London, 13 April 2013.

Un jour Pina a demandé. Directed by Chantal Akerman. 60 min. 1983. 16mm.

Untitled. Ann Veronica Janssens. LED lights, wood beam, dimensions variable, 2006.

Untitled (Anvers). Ann Veronica Janssens. Concrete bricks, glitter,
151 × 195 × 19 cm, 2010.

Valie Export. Royal Academy of Arts, London, 22 June 2012.

Visions, Waves and Roads. Mary Heilmann. Hauser & Wirth, London,
23 February – 5 April 2012.

Water Motor. Babette Mangolte. 8 min. 1978. 16mm.

Who is Poly Styrene? Directed by Ted Clisby. 40 min. 1979. Arena TV
documentary.

Work No.1020. Martin Creed. Sadler's Wells, London, 20 June 2011.

Yellow Movies. Tony Conrad. Emulsion on paper (painting series), 1973.

Yves Peintures: Re-evaluating Conceptual Painting. ICA, London,
2 November 2011.

Yvonne Rainer AG Indexical with a little help from H.M. Babette Mangolte.
44 min. 2007. Video.

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