

# The 100 Videos

A Steve Reinke Monograph

Ed. Mike Hoolboom



"Like everyone else I've been somewhat unlucky in love due largely to inappropriate object choices. Now I realize that what I've wanted all along is a boy without bones. I know that bones are important, even vital, but I've always found them unappealing. In fact, without my knowing it, they've disgusted me. In particular, the arcanelly overcomplicated bones of the foot, the unnecessary harshness of a jutting hip, the skull which begs to be cracked open like an egg, full of unreachable thoughts." (Ice Cream #34 of 100 Videos by Steve Reinke)

It's his voice you notice first of all. You can't help noticing. Beuys had his uniform, Warhol his silk screen, Steve Reinke has his voice. It is a kind of signature, a costume for the masquerade of personality, but more importantly: a guarantor of pleasure. Listening to this voice, I imagine again the thousands of movie goers who once swooned at the sight of Garbo's face, that mask of light that trapped everyone who passed into the Medusa stare of cinema. Like Garbo, Steve's voice manages a universal appeal and an individual promise, a promise no less real for remaining always a secret.

Reinke's voice offers us an oblivion, a delirium, that is peculiarly Canadian. If Americans are television and movies, Canadians are radio. Reinke's is a voice without range, always set at medium, its entire expressive register limited to a few mild bursts of acceleration. There is nothing flashy here, nothing of the diva in this voice, nor would you ever want to hear him recite Shakespeare. If Reinke's voice is perfect, it is a perfection that brooks no variation. He offers you a five star dinner, and it will be just the same night after night. Like the uniform of Beuys. The silk screens of Warhol. Reinke's voice is the monotone of the inner dialogue, the siren call of conscience, all dolled up in a fantasia of seduction; intractable, compulsive and omnipresent. Like every voice of conscience it never stops. Or never for long. This is both its strength and its sadness. Its pathos. This is a voice that can only promise seduction, endlessly, pitilessly. The voice of the maternal superego. It is not only dangerous, but a sound that presages violence and annihilation. I speak about this with another Mike, who has never seen the work of Steve Reinke, but doesn't need to, he has voices all his own. He explains it to me this way: what if you were assured a night of perfect sex? Here's the catch: the next morning, the firing squad is waiting. You have to die. Who would ever make this choice,

knowing the cost of pleasure? The truth is, at different points in our lives, almost everyone. What impels us towards the night of pleasure, consequences be damned, is the voice. Go on. Go ahead. It will be fun.

The voice coaxes and reminds you. It urges you to enjoy and then to suffer the consequences. It eggs you on towards annihilation. In the cartoons, an angel perches on one shoulder and a devil on the other. Both voices whisper into the ear of Porkie Pig offering conflicting advice. But the voice of conscience is not divided, it is one voice, containing both angel and devil. Besides pathos there is sublime terror.

Steve has a voice that dangles the veil, though it never fully arrives. It never manages, in the end, to offer a totalizing satisfaction. It never consumes or ravishes its listener, content instead to maintain the steady ascent, borne along an effortless breeze, permitting an intoxication without drunkenness, sex without organs.

Joan tells me that she likes to provoke him, make him angry, just so she can hear that mellifluous voice ring down a little longer. Even when he is in the full bloom of his rage, she assures me, his voice continues to comfort and

charm. I know what she means. Steve is a victim of his voice. Steve's voice is a predator of pleasure, and its first outlet, the first person who had to be annihilated, who had to be gotten out of the way so it could fully assert itself, was of course Steve himself. Now, he can only stand idly by while it takes control. It has spoken in his place for so long, only his closest friends can tell the difference between the two.

It will end only when he is dead, and his talking, his tireless mastication of language, is the only way he has to forestall this certainty. It is a vigil he keeps with his mouth, and few have managed it as smoothly. There is a plinth already set aside in his name at the National Gallery where his vocal cords will rest forever in an embalming pitch. We may rest assured that DNA scholars will be able to grant new generations the torso of Brad Pitt along with the voice of Steve Reinke. In the face of a terrifying and incomprehensible future, this may be our only armour. Our last stand.

#### Reinke: The Early years

Only days after his birth, without understanding what was being said at all, Reinke began to imitate the sounds everyone made around him. Just a few weeks old, he recorded and played back, already made to bear the burdensome expectation of prodigies in the prison house of

language. He appeared not quite human, had already taken the form of a medium whose birth would coincide with his own. This much was clear: he wasn't born to make video, but to become it.

Reinke assumed all of his early incarnations—the talking baby, the devoted son and shy adolescent—with the élan of a born mimic. Few could have guessed that the gulf between a word and its meaning, between the compulsions of an inner life and its presentation to others, was growing ever wider. In his earliest years he favored an appearance that was low resolution, he always seemed a little "out of focus," even when viewed up close, hazily rastered, like images produced by early Sony portapacks. When Gertrude Stein wrote "There is no there, there," she might have been describing Reinke's early years, or for that matter, video itself.

Reluctant to assume the certainties, the position taking, that having a personality necessarily entailed, Reinke seemed instead a kind of static, a temporary interference in the circulation of meaning. As a child he longed to be invisible, to live without marking his place, though transparency would continue to elude him. Even as an artist he would continue to sign, to leave his work with a signature, the

name from which he has never fully recovered: Steve Reinke.

One point should be made clear here. He is not trying to escape himself. That happened long ago. He knows better than any of us that instead of ideas we have head shots, and that in place of information we have personalities. For years he was a keen student of personality, realizing at last that most of us clung to our identity the way a monk might devote his life to a single book. Testing the limits of personality, Reinke assumed one after another, leaving each behind in the vapor trail of the wanderer. The reader. Each of Reinke's incarnations flickers inside an appearance so wanting in outstanding characteristics that he is able to assume almost any guise whatsoever, the perfect mirror of his interrogators. This is how he speaks of those who would receive him in casual conversation. The interrogators.

Paul Klee wrote: "Now objects perceive me."

Most of Steve's engagements, his emotional life, his heat, rests with the dead. There are a few composers (although he prefers the big pop sound of the seventies), a painter or two but mostly there are writers. He speaks with them not in order to have the last word, always the prerogative of those who survive, but to

raise from the dead a living book, rescued from the library, the auctions at E-Bay or worse, the classroom. He does not examine these books, he lives them, he throws himself into them. Because he knows that soon there will be no one left to read them. Oh sure, someone will always be able to pick up a book and go through the motions, jerking his/her head from left to right over miles of letters all lined up in a row, like a firing squad. But to really read the book is to feel it as an echo of all the books written before it, and more than that, to find between its covers a model for consciousness. Let's be clear about this: he is not looking for a description of another life, to live vicariously through another's adventures or to gain experience through the safe remove of fiction. For Reinke the book is the thing itself, the embodiment of a way of being. If there is a sadness in this love, it is because he knows that the videotapes he makes with such abandon are helping to hasten the end of the book. He can feel the book falling apart in his hands, even as he reads it. It is difficult for him to enter the library without the sense of accusation, of outrage even, coming from the shelved volumes, pained to be handled by someone who has dedicated his life to destroying the thing he loves. This much is certain: Reinke's video work is hastening the end of the book. And no one could be more

apologetic than Reinke himself, who is the author of every book he reads.

Reinke's work, tirelessly verbose, has relieved him of the need for speech. As a student of the aphorism and the epigram he finds the vagaries of daily conversation painfully contrived. And he's developed a habit he can't escape. While others are talking, he imagines their speech in the pages of a book: he transcribes their conversation, he imagines that everyone around him reads compulsively from a script, and for the most part, he finds this text hardly worth reproducing, frankly dull, and badly in need of editing. Instead, he prefers the act of writing. He likes to go to cyber cafes with a buddy, and write e-mails back and forth across the room. He is no fan of oral culture. He is the book, and beyond it, the machine that produces the book. Don't get me wrong, he's not a recluse by any means: he has many friends, though this word makes him uncomfortable. Instead, he prefers to think of his intimates as volumes, sharing the same shelf, standing upright together, leaning into the same alphabetical wind.

Writing for Steve is a reminder of the necessary solitude we all carry with us, at every moment; and the hope that conversation carries, that this solitude could be washed



away, or forgotten through the momentum of a shared sentence, seems little more than repression. Denial. Community is only the beginning of fascism.

#### First Memory

Steve's earliest memory is not a vision, a bearing of witness but a sound which accompanied him every day of his life. It accompanies him still. It is the shriek wrenched from him in the moments after birth, which he terms his "ejection." "I was squeezed out, ejected, just like a videotape," he remarks, and his mother confirms this. "It was like pushing a button, it happened that fast." In Reinke's vernacular she is "the player," the "hard drive" or more obviously "the mother board."

The sound of Reinke's first memory would never leave him, gaining instead a curious, even perverse kind of momentum in the years to follow. This scream underlies all of today's contemporary art, and certainly all of the movies. Beneath each picture lies a shared, naked need. Look at me! At me! Pay attention to me! The wiles of conversation are not enough. The daily exchange of glances, the small spotlights of friends and acquaintances are somehow wanting. Something is not fully borne in the everyday, some lingering darkness (is it talent? genius?) waits to be discovered

and embraced. Perhaps in the end it is exactly this: the utterly unique and fantastic subjectivity of an individual.

Here lies the paradox: while the primal cry may be the genesis of personality, the individual finds his/her fullest and most satisfying expression only when this cry is separated from the body, when it lies outside of its maker, as an object. A thing to behold. This new genre of objects exists primarily to be seen, demonstrating a narcissism of objects. If its purpose lies in its visibility, we can still surmise, wrapped inside the attention each object requires, the primal cry of the maker. Look at me! At me! The codes of attention—the mid-career survey, the catalog essay, the festival screening—are all part of a subterranean architecture designed to assuage the wounded subjectivities of viewer and viewed.

Perhaps this is overstating the case. Perhaps this reveals only the bent of this writer, this writing, now as you are reading it. Perhaps it is not artists at all, and even less Steve Reinke, who imagine that their words form a kind of voyage, a road leading into the vanishing point of personality. Perhaps I have to concede after all the unutterable difference between us, and offer a more likely conjecture, that Reinke's work issues not from compulsion but from duty,

and that its effects do not reform the vagaries of an inner life, but instead constitute a class of objects designed to apprehend their viewers. Paul Klee wrote: "Now objects perceive me." Perhaps Reinke's work is not designed to edify its maker after all, but to destroy him.

When I die it will hardly be a death since most of what defines me will have already gone... with each book the author murders the author.  
Marguerite Duras

Atten-shun!

It is by now a commonplace that the role of art in the casting call of life is the training of attention. Our bodies have openings to admit the world—the ears for hearing, the eyes for sight—and the story of art describes how our ancestors opened to the world. The history of our seeing hangs in the museum, and contemporary art similarly aims to re-jig the place that lies between beauty and beholder, what cyberfolks like to call the interface.

As a boy I watched *The Grinch Who Stole Christmas* obsessively, keying on the scene which suggested the cause of the Grinch's problems: he had a heart seven times smaller than anyone around him. Even his dog, partner in the sado-masochistic struggle which occupies most of this animated short, is shown

to have more heart than this miserable creature. Years later I understood the particular significance this scene held for me. I had been granted an attention span seven times smaller than most humans, or at least, most humans at the time when the original Grinch was made. By the time the re-make had come around, things had changed considerably, some global warming of the synapses had quickened the pulse of so many viewers I was no longer alone, just a part of that crowd hoping to tune in, turn off, drop everything. But take someone like Mike Snow, Canada's best known, most respected, blue chip conceptual artist. Mike Snow has no reception problems at all. Mike's attention span is almost infinite, he can sit in perfect quietude and watch scratches accumulate on a strip of film for hours. He is the embodiment of a very refined kind of Zen consciousness and I respect him for it, I bow to him for it, only I don't want to watch his movies. They go on too long. When I watch Mike's films, I can feel them trying to kick all the junk out of my head, all the grocery lists and petty anxieties. In order to do this, he resorts to an old Western gunslinger's trick: he's going to outwait me. He's going to stare me down until I give in. But in the end it's no use. The grocery lists and petty anxieties are my personality. I cling to them with everything I've got and leave the theatre unmoved.

Recently I ran into a friend who seemed always cramped up with disappointment. His body had been shouting, "The end is near" for all of his twenty-eight years. Only today, his face is lit up with something like happiness. He had recently been diagnosed with attention deficit disorder, offered a modest script of Ritalin, and within days he had been able to sit alone at his computer playing Firestorm. Never before, he told me, could he manage the concentration required for such an elaborate killgame. I nodded gravely. Attention deficit disorder is hell for anyone who wants to get in some serious gaming time. For more severe cases, only the real thing will do: television itself. So I pitied my friend, because I knew that with his new attention span he had been taken out of the flow of things, he stood outside, in a lonely sort of place where he would be condemned to himself, the only sober face in a world of drunks, a permanent outsider who would, as the years went on, lose the knack of fitting in, and finish his life embittered and powerless. What was that old line from the 60s commercial? "It's not nice to fool Mother Nature."

Most activities are designed for people like me, who lack any attention span whatsoever, so there's no problem. But there's a few holdouts,

a few pockets where resistance is still possible, and one of these is art. It probably goes without saying that like most folks, I don't have time for art. Either I don't understand it or it's boring. Mostly it's boring.

Whenever I walk into the ivory basement of an art gallery, my heart starts racing. I can't help it. It's like being caught behind people on the steps to the subway, the presence of others urges me to walk faster than I normally would, so that I can stay out of the way of strangers. I arrive at a gallery always breathless, heart racing, my right hand twitching, already wanting to seize a remote control channel changer that is nowhere to be found. What I enter is a specialist's world, an orthodontist's convention of micro-speech. Attention is rapt, the tone is serious, the air thick with gestures that could never be understood outside this congregation. I arrive as an unsponsored delegate, hoping always to have my habits of attention re-tooled, but leave most often with some vague sense of satisfied obligations. I've done my duty, taken my vitamins. The doyens of leasure have not yet made a home here.

Fortunately, along with a microscopic attention span, I have a nearly infinite capacity to forget, so continue to manage semi-regular forays into that parallel universe of replicants and



reproduction known as the art world. It was there I first encountered the work of Steve Reinke. It was a video, mercifully brief, and when it was finished I was filled with an uncommon hilarity. The only sense I retained from it was its humour, the color blue, and of course, the grain of that magnificent voice. I longed to return, and began a daily pilgrimage, performing a task I had not indulged since grade school, committing a text to memory. The truth is, my memory is digital, it's either on or off, either I remember everything or nothing at all. I was determined to hold onto this experience, and recount it for you here. The text of what was to be the first of 100 videos.

"I've made a few documentaries before and I like making them. Documentary material is usually more interesting than anything I could imagine and I don't have to be bothered with all the tiresome specifics of a fictional creation. Also I can't be held responsible for material which purports to an actual reality. I'm not personally implicated and therefore can't be blamed. I call this the excuse of the real.

Like everyone else I wanted to do something on AIDS, a close personal look at a guy dying. Wanting the work to be as effective a documentary as possible, that is, as visceral as

possible, I would want to include my subject's death. In fact, the video would not be complete without his death. So I set out in search of a subject. These were my initial parameters. In order not to confuse or blur issues: a white, anglophone, homosexual male, and for added empathy, he should be under thirty. Due to budget restrictions, I would prefer one who would die six to eight weeks after taping was to begin, yet would be strong enough in the initial days of taping that I could get his basic life story in a few days of interviews before settling down to watch whatever complications the guy has play themselves out. What I had in mind seemed fairly simple. He would speak of his childhood and adolescence, his identity emerging through a series of stories, personal remembrances, anecdotes, dreams. The audience would be constructing an image of him even as he himself crumbles away. I would need some home movies, flickering super-8. I would use these as visuals. If my subject didn't have any, another's could be used. Everyone's home movies are basically the same. It would simply be a matter of matching hair color and body types.

There is something else I'd want to show. The steady degradation of his body and mind. Medical charts would be included, reports on blood cells. I would want to provide a record of

each lesion over time, a shifting map of epidermal sores.

This became my problem. As my search continued, I began imagining with increasing specificity the things I would like my subject to say and do. That is, the longer my search took, the more specific my criteria became. And the more specific my criteria, the more difficult, and therefore longer, my search. It seemed an unending spiral. Two sets that might never overlap or share any common points. Even if there were specific points of juncture how could I find the individual that would be at each point? My project risked degenerating into fiction." (Excuse of the Real #1 of 100 Videos by Steve Reinke)

Was it because I was so recently diagnosed that I found this tape so irresistible? Steve had managed to convey, somehow, everything I had hoped to communicate about this inscrutable intruder, which had divided my life and body, forcing me to accept, as the radical root of my new personality, the very thing which was bent on killing me. Reinke's tape offered me the only possible solution. Laughter.

I put another link in the chain, and they called it freedom.

Morton Feldman

#### 100 Videos

In 1989, Steve made a short tape called Excuse of the Real, which showed some grainy, occasionally looping home movie footage of a family gathered beneath the Christmas tree. All the while a voice (that voice!) talks about a proposed AIDS doc. This was the first in a very long series which would take him a decade to complete, and which he named 100 Videos. "I want to complete one hundred videos before the year 2000 and my thirty-sixth birthday. These will constitute my work as a young artist." Arriving at a moment when most self-respecting medianauts were hailed as sultans for dishing out one tape a year, this was a considerable raising of the bar. And he hadn't been out hawking the family silver either. This work had been done on the cheap, this was thrift store goods, and he was bringing it in by the kilo. It was smarter, faster, shorter and more entertaining than anything around it, filled to bursting with ideas.

A friend once confided to me that the reason he finds so much contemporary art exasperating was that it continues to talk about talking. Paintings about painting. Sculptures about sculpting. "After a hundred years of this, I know what the medium is!" he is telling me,

visibly shaking after his fourth espresso of the afternoon. It gives his speech a trembling, slightly out of control quality that he feels endows him with authority. Mostly he makes people afraid. The waiter has stopped coming to our table for instance, though my friend doesn't really notice. He makes each point by stabbing the air between us, as if re-opening a wound that threatens to close. "I want art to say more. I want the work to address something beyond itself."

Steve might have been nodding right along with him. He's never been drawn to art about art, offering the work as a test case of a minutely controlled expression. Nor was he concerned with the transformation of a unique individual into a furiously eccentric style. The stoniness of a piece of stone does not move him. He has left modernism behind.

Steve had great hopes for video when he began. He wanted to make videos that could be fun and useful. He loved reversible jackets, or pens with compasses attached, so you'd always know what direction you were writing in. Sofas that turned into beds. He never had a lot of money, he's never manage to cut a big slice of real estate off for himself, so it was important to him that the few objects he possessed could perform as many functions as possible. He

wanted to make a video you could eat after watching, box covers that could inflate to become pillows or life preservers. He worked on a tape that was so strong you could tow a small car with it, but which was also light and delicate enough to wrap a child's birthday present. Video wasn't just for watching anymore, it would become, in Steve's hands, a Swiss army knife of the soul, its multiplex protrusions quickly unfolding to meet any emergency.

Still, it has to be admitted, a lot of the 100 Videos look pretty crappy. They are badly lit, often shot hastily, in poor conditions and low resolution, with extremely minimal sound work, often featuring nothing more than a voice, or at most, a voice with a single instrument on the music track. This is not work that pretends to be cinema: iconic, larger-than-life, teeming with the luxuries of image and sound. This is temporary work. Fragments of something. Each suggests a small ,neo-scientific excursion into some aspect of understanding, with the tapes offered as evidence and hypothesis, the viewer as witness.

Steve is not afraid to fail. We all make mistakes, he seems to say, and here's some of mine. After all, it's only video. And as soon as it's over, there will be something else. One of

the small joys Steve offers in the 100 Videos is to watch him fail, then see him get himself up off the carpet and try again.

You never have to look far to find other's mistakes. You're probably living in one right now. Architecture, like all endeavors requiring big cash, has a massive failure rate. If there were a tax put on ugly buildings, our level of social services would rise to unprecedented levels. Contrary to popular belief, money attracts failure, the more that's invested in a project, the higher the possibility for catastrophe. Money is inherently conservative, and the kind of hedging that large accumulations of capital require most often ensures bad design and overcoded exchange.

Steve's work, by contrast, is extremely cheap to produce, so his failures are never extravagant. Steve fails pretty much the way he succeeds, with a light touch, rarely managing to take you up to heaven, but never spending too much time in the other place either. To all of his failures, he applies a strict principle of moderation.

Each film/vid is a moving ensemble of parts which requires unities expressed through time. Most art hopes to arrive at this state and freeze it up in a moment which can be returned to

over and over, the lone still point of a changing perception. But movies require that this unity be reinstated again and again, to achieve, as one wag would have it, truth twenty-four times per second. Video of course has upped the ante. Comprised of alternating fields of vertical scans, video offers half truths sixty times per second.

Most cinematic expression is occupied by a viral replication of media rhetoric, a visual Esperanto which permits global visibility. Artists' work insists on a much more personal use of grammar, and while the number of wrong turns has multiplied, so has the possibility of useful mistakes. Inventions.

Because of the serial nature of his production, Steve has produced a kind of democracy of mistakes, finding a way to share the blame, spread the rot, so that it falls more easily and lightly. And while he was amongst the very first to do so, he finds himself now joined by many others, inspired by his example, who have similarly taken on a production in parts, segments, chapters, interlocking episodes. The burden of failure has been lifted a little for everyone, though few have managed to turn it into an asset like Steve has. Failure is Steve's ace in the hole.



Steve shares many of his mistakes with others of his species, other artists similarly devoted to the pixel, other kings and queens of the cathode. Their work also has a lightness, but it is not gratifying, not pleasing, the way Steve's is. I wonder why. I look at so many other's work and find only hastiness, an absence of research, of engagement, a shallow delivery, a misunderstanding of even the most elementary principles of how picture and sound move together. Somehow, all this is forgivable in Steve's work, just as it is unforgivable in all those who surround him, who provide a setting, a background for his efforts. He is the exception who proves the rule.

Steve's engagement is not with primary experience, or the translation of that experience to an audience: I feel sad, feel my sadness, now you are sad. Instead, he is interested in describing how we have come to ideas of sadness. Because these ideas are grounded in a speculative and fanciful, imaginative and hypothetical pata-physic, he manages to elude both the rigors of scientific taxonomy, and the weigh stations of empathetic narrative. Steve is not the Harper's Index, and he's not a soap opera. He's describing our descriptions of the world. The material that he delivers to us is already a re-presentation; it is a picture that has already

been looked over, its emotional content expunged, or left as a kind of hang-over. It's true his montage is weak. His grasp of sound/image articulations are extremely narrow, his cinematography indifferent at best. In all this, he is no different from his peers. But because of the way Steve's work is framed, none of this matters. The bodies and photographs and TV clips that make up Steve's work have already made someone cry. Now these moments are being re-circulated, gathered up again so that we can watch ourselves watching. He opens up a place between a thing and its naming, and here is his genius: it doesn't matter what the thing is.

"It has always been my wish to have been a dermatologist in Philadelphia during the Great Depression. While others took more pleasure in extracting shrapnel from the sleekly muscled hides of young soldiers, or replacing a mislooped section of bowel in a delicate hernia operation, I've always been more interested in the surface of things.

And so they would come to me, these young men damaged by rashes and I would undress them and examine them. I would say this is a very interesting case, I must photograph it. And I would bind them to the table or the chair with long strips of cotton so

they would not move during the long exposures.

Nights I would carefully hand-tint my photographic plates by lamplight. I have a very good memory for colours. There are not enough words to describe the possible purples of a blotch, the crimsons of a blush, so we must turn to pictorial representation for diagnostic efficacy.

They would offer their afflictions to me. I know what this is, I would tell them, and it will not heal if you touch it. Only I am allowed to touch this part of your body. I would bring them relief with salves and ointments and medicated poultices. Relief from the constant itching. Relief from the infernal stench of erupting pustules. I would delight in their afflictions, for if their skin were whole and unbroken I would not have the opportunity to touch it, or to look upon it. In this manner I would acquire great wealth and social position.

Be my leper, be my love. (Wish #26 of 100 Videos by Steve Reinke)

#### Autobiography

"Sometimes it's hard to find out what we really want, in fact, it's impossible to find out what

one's deepest, most profound desires are by any direct means. Desires are small and sneaky animals protected by complexes of defense mechanisms. True desires hide behind masks of false desires, desires only indirectly expressed, indirectly desired.

It takes a true professional of love to tell us what we really want. It is my true desire, Tom, to ascertain your true desires. I want to know what you really want. I didn't bother to ask you because any answers you could give to me would at best be partial. I wanted to capture the truth in its rarest, most primal form. Little animals of desire burrowing into the deepest layers of your psyche. I want to cup their shimmering little bodies in my hands and bring them into the light. So I've been watching you as you sleep. Even though your slumber looks very peaceful I know that inside you are seething. After all, anything of importance happens in our sleep and below our dreams. So I whisper things into your sleeping ear, possible desires transcribed into verbal form, and I watch, I observe you, to see which ones give you an erection.

I must admit I was surprised at how well my method worked. But one erection is very much like another so I could not really determine which of the whispered fantasies really really

turned you on and which turned you on to a lesser degree. As it happened, almost everything I whispered into your ear gave you an erection, so what my system of desire retrieval needed most was a ranking system.

In the last couple of weeks my goal has been to cause you to have nocturnal emissions by whispering these increasingly elaborate scenarios of desire into your sleeping brain. I feel I'm getting closer to determine what it is you really want. I've decided to let you know what I've been doing because lately you've begun to express your dissatisfaction at our relationship. Well now you know why I've started sleeping all day. I'm up all night plying your psyche for some sort of ultimate truth. And of course it's best that for the duration of the project anyway, physical intimacy be replaced by a psychic kind of intimacy. But I feel confident that if you just hang on for another couple of weeks things will be better than ever in the area of carnality. Soon I'll be able to let you know exactly what it is you really want." (Sleep #46 of 100 Videos)

Sleep is the most terrifying of all the 100 Videos. It marks a terrifying moment of transference from Steve, the prodigal ghost of the Reinke family, to Steve the object, the first object of the 100 Videos. Make no mistake,

these are centurions, warriors custom-built to destroy their creator. Here is the revenge of a digital Frankenstein, permitted at last not just a slow bloodletting of its inventor, but more than this, the conversion of its author into a medium, a machine of reproduction. Paul Klee wrote, "Now objects perceive me."

Steve and Tom had lived together for just over a year in their boytown micro-bachelorette before Steve began the 100 Videos. They had met two years earlier, in San Francisco, in an unlikely bathhouse tryst with French philosopher Michel Foucault. After a satisfying three-way they left the bathhouse, convinced they would never see one another again, only to meet up less than a week later, at the LA Airport, boarding the same plane. As it turned out, both Tom and Steve lived in Toronto. While neither were superstitious, these chance events seemed too precipitous to ignore, and flush with the promise of sexual utopia, they resolved to move in with one another. Tom was cute, Steve was smart (if promiscuous) and together they made a handsome couple, everyone said so. For a year all was well. But Tom's most erotic moments with Steve inevitably arrived in Steve's post-coital recaps, which grew increasingly detached from the experience they had both just shared, and then stopped altogether. Tom soon turned his

attention to the lonely waiter at Zelda's, a boy born for disappointment and heart break. Worse still, as Steve plunged into the project, the abyss, of the 100 Videos, it seemed that the only way he could respond to this crisis of love, was to produce another tape. It showed his partner, Tom, sleeping, rendered in extreme close-up, as only a lover, an intimate, might imagine him. While Tom's eyes were closed his ears remained open, unwitting receptacles for a grotesque experiment. Were Steve's emotions part of a distant country he had left behind in pursuit of his work? Is he asking us to watch, right here, right in this video, while he turns into something no longer fully human? Is art the cost of love? And have I, as a viewer, a voyeur now not only of this tape but of their intimacy, occasioned, even demanded, the end of their relationship?

This is how easily it turns into fiction. With a few keystrokes melded together, the proper names inserted, details offered which could only be true, because they are so exact. Of course, all this, all that has already been written, and is about to be written about Steve, is a lie. I never met Tom, and can claim to know nothing of their relation. Neither have I met Steve, nor do I know anything about him, except what even the most casual of observers may glean from watching his 100

Videos. Steve is my necessary fiction. He is what comes between us, though I can't say, not anymore, having gone this far, whether he is my invention, or yours.

"If I was ever on a talk show, the topic would most likely be: People whose life has been so uneventful they have no other reason to be a guest on a talk show. And when the host asked how it felt to be me, I wouldn't repeat what I had said in the pre-interview. Instead I would say:

Every human, Rolanda, is exactly interchangeable. By this I don't mean that everyone is born equal, born with the same human rights, or anything as confusing as that. I simply mean that we are all exactly interchangeable.

Perhaps this is most demonstrable on a genetic level. Slight chemical variations diverge into individuals recognizable enough to be named. Soon the technology will be available to let this genetic information flow more easily between individuals. Then we will finally know what democracy is. Then we will live in a Utopia of endless unsolvable crimes. Love will completely cover the white-noise hum of anxiety and death will become meaningless. And talk shows will be able to use the same



guests every day and we'll never know the difference. We'll be seeing ourselves on the television." (Talk Show #80 of 100 Videos by Steve Reinke)

It is a commonplace that all media artists pillage moments from their own life to make their work, that each maker's body of work constitutes a thinly veiled autobiography. Curiously, these presumptions are rarely applied to mainstream directors. Few imagine that Quentin Tarantino is a homicidal killer, for instance, while anything that Steve writes, no matter how farfetched, is imagined to be little more than diary transcription. The failure to raise capital, to produce expensive pictures, equals a failure of the imagination.

Mainstream movies are the avant-garde of capitalism. The Normandy Beaches of the last century have been swapped for multiplex screens, and soon, the orbiting satellites of a fully digital Hollywood. Movies are the perfect tool of capital, quickly raised on a forcefeed of Yankee bullion which they obligingly disgorge across the screen in a series of money shots. Before selling their automobiles, their sneakers and hamburgers, we are sold the movies. They are the sweetener, the prelude, preparing us for the conversion of everyday life into pictures

which can be bought and sold. Movies are the NASDAQ of the imagination.

In the world of moving pictures there is no middle class. There is the ubiquitous aristocracy, the stars of cinema, kept on permanent display, and then there is the underground—national cinemas the world over which attempt to share in the dream of pictures which float above their bottom lines. Artists' work exists on the fringe of this fringe, having already yielded the possibility of return, of the buying and selling of pictures. This oblivion of capital (or should it be named denial? repression?) is presumed to be autobiographical, following this simple equation: no money equals no imagination. Because both mind and camera are organs of reproduction, if one is found wanting the other must surely follow. As a result, before sending on his latest tape, Reinke advances me a simple, enigmatic e-mail: My mother is not dead.

Space

"The beauty of the world may be all around us, but sometimes it can be hard to spot. Some organisms are so good at camouflage they forget they exist. At that point, they might as well turn their attentions to the heavens. At that point, they

might as well becomes the insignificant heart beat at the end of a telescope. They want to channel all of the universe's light into their optic nerve." (Camouflage #96 of 100 Videos by Steve Reinke)

There is always a remove between Steve and the world he lives in. When experience or encounter reaches Steve's organs of reception, he slows them down, he waits, withholding judgment. In this way, he opens up a place between himself and the primal reflex of reaction. If he appears affect-less, it is because he is still processing, waiting for a reaction to occur to him.

This space is not a cultivated conceit, not something Steve's worked at over the years. Or at least that's what he claims. He says it's part of the wiring. It can be embarrassing, especially at parties, where the meaningless exchange of pleasantries is all about the tempo of exchange. This is the jazz of language, an improvised flux scored for small ensemble groupings. In a word: small talk. Small talk is a skill Steve has never acquired. He simply can't imagine it at all, not his words, the mother tongue, reduced to meaningless volumes exchanged at high speed. In Steve's mouth, talk is never small. As a result, in the company of others, he is largely silent. He allows the

flow to move clean through him, and while he used to experience discomfort, even fear, he is so used to it by now, he doesn't mind at all. It's been happening all his life.

That Steve finds distance an aphrodisiac, even the necessary prelude for arousal, is hardly surprising. He shares this trait with almost every male on the planet. What is remarkable is how he has turned this erotic talisman into a quality of attention. It is exactly this distance, this space he wears like others don a uniform, that has made him an artist. This is a vocation which has not been chosen, but which has arisen out of necessity. He is unto the raster born. His art tries to overcome this distance, but the very act which tries to cross the gap, only makes it larger. Steve is condemned to this distance, and to the art which maintains it.

There was a moment, no longer than that, when this distance could be exactly measured. It was precisely one hundred videos long. And then 101. And then 102. Now, many years after the 100 videos, and after the release of its successors, any measuring is pointless. The divide has been swallowed, it exists within the man himself. It has reproduced Steve as an effect of the abyss. Slowly, inexorably, it has marked him inside and out. Even his organs, the knots of tissue and cartilage, the pathways

of the circulation system carry the tattoo, the stain.

When he dies, the grave of Steve Reinke will be empty.

There are others who carry this distance inside them. Sudden accelerations of fortune are usually responsible; a hit record or best selling book can be enough to turn the trick. In these instances, the grotesque inflation of the image, a single face splashed across a newsstand, is enough to reduce its subject to a media effect, a simulacrum or false copy. The personality is triangulated, there is no longer 'I' or 'you,' but 'he,' 'she' or 'they.' Celebrities can speak of themselves, with no hint of irony, in the third person. "He wants a milkshake." "She's going for a walk." These are the people of People magazine, reduced to ciphers of themselves, forced to go through the motions, to copy the life they used to have, when they were only human.

Steve is no celebrity. No gateway of photographers greets him on his daily morning walk. His strict allegiance to marginal practice has ensured that he will always fly well below the radar. But he shares a condition with the best known people of our time. He is already doubled, divided. His 100 Videos are a map of

this divide, and if there is a terror in this reckoning, this summing up, it is the terror of recognition. This is what we are becoming. Here at last is evidence of the long rumoured change in consciousness which will be borne by future generations. Paul Klee wrote, "Now objects perceive me."

### Secrets

You can't just walk down to the local video store and ask for Steve's 100 Videos. Because his work isn't everywhere, it's nowhere. That's the mass media for you. It's digital, it's all or nothing. So I can't really assume you've seen anything by Steve, nor could I assume that, even if you wanted to, even if you threw everything away, burned your credit cards, sold the car, quit your job, and set off in search of Steve's work, that you'd ever find it. I'd never be able to know whether the fragile and obscure networks devoted to these rare forms of fringe media will survive long enough for you to see the 100 Videos. No, it's worse than that, and I hate to be the one to say it, but sometimes our marginality is all we've got, so we don't want people to find us. We set up signs which can only be read by the initiated, produce maps intelligible only to those who already know the way. What I'm saying is, the very networks designed to make this work visible may make it impossible for you to find.

You can think of us, guardians of the secret, as everyone you have never met. We're a small group, and we don't know so much really, but we're trying to hold onto what we have. And we don't want you in. If you don't already know, we're not going to help you. We've re-arranged our lives so that everything we do, everything we say to one another, is a code designed to make sure that you never walk into the clubhouse. We never wanted to run the whole show, never had big plans, but we're not letting go and that means we have to draw the line somewhere. That line stops at your laptop.

The truth is, if you ever find yourself, through some Herculean effort, in front of a Steve Reinke video, you might not recognize it at all. It might be playing right in front of you, only you'd think it's a bit of dust caught in the projector. You might have seen his work a thousand times already, only you didn't know it, because it looked like something else, all that data flotsam no one pays any attention to. In order to keep Steve's work from an uncaring public, we've designed delivery systems which don't look like video at all. It might appear as a matchbook dropped out of a stranger's pocket, a passing taxi, the night sky. There's no way to know for certain. Unless you've already seen it.

I have to admit to myself this possibility: you might be that person.

I loved Steve's work when I saw it. It gave my brain an erection. I swam around in it, not knowing what it was, just happy knowing that there was so much of it. Steve had uncovered something like the place where videos came from, or the place which separated the videos which had yet to be made from the videos already made. But when I go back to look at them now, they're not quite the same. The jokes aren't quite as funny. The colors duller and uninspired. The soundtracks a little thin. That's when I realize that I'm not looking at Steve's work at all. I'm seeing Steve's work the way you would see it, and that makes me uncomfortable. Because inevitably, the perfect memory of this work, and most importantly, the happiness which accompanied this memory, is being taken away from me, replaced by the cool stare of a stranger. An onlooker. A casual passerby. I feel I have to make a choice between your desire and mine. Imagine yourself at my work station. What would you do?

"These images are from a film the CBC made in the early seventies. It's part of a series about children from different parts of the world although I've only ever come across this



particular episode. It's about an elephant boy from Sri Lanka. I was a child on the brink of puberty when I first saw it and I guess you could say it made a deep impression. I remember it very well or at least parts of it. I can't claim to remember it exactly in its entirety. I mean, memory is just a sub-routine of desire. But what I've tried to do here and I've been pretty successful I think, is to re- create for you the edited version of the film that desire has consigned to my memory. So what you're looking at is in fact a rare and genuine artifact of the psyche. I'm not going to make any attempts to interpret this artifact. Any attempt would be at best partial, half true. It's enough that I've been able to discover and re-create this precious artifact." (Artifact #48 of 100 Videos by Steve Reinke)

Steve never wanted to make the best video, not then anyway. That only happened later, after the 100 Videos were finished. He'd never practiced his Olympian turn on the stand, modestly bowing to receive the honours his long hours, his solitary, had given him. Instead, one video was simply a prelude to another. Steve's was a serial production. Typically ideas, phrases, borrowed television moments, all jammed in the same synaptical flow which would eventually find release in small magnetic fields all their own. His accumulation of videos

was likewise never intended to produce a monumental architecture, an imposing edifice that would stand as proof of the maker's largesse and wisdom. Offered a retrospective at the Rotterdam Film Festival, Steve was horrified to see that the organizers had scheduled his work in a single time slot, as if it were a film. His panic was soon calmed by the friendly bar staff who waited just outside the cinema, busily pouring drinks and serving chocolate, and soon enough the patrons flowed from the cafe to the cinema and back again, stopping in each place to refuel, waiting for lulls in the conversation in order to step back into the projected light. The 100 Videos is 4.5 hours long, and was never intended as a main course, an epic journey, but instead as a series of short appetizers, each whetting the palate with a taste for more.

He had been so careful after all, to remove any trace of the hero from his scheme, and treating his work as cinema risked admitting one last superman into his practice: the audience.

Working in a medium that is disappearing even as it asserts its primacy, its ubiquity, Steve understands that video can exist only as a kind of prelude, a waiting room, for the new forms of audio-visual pleasure that will one day accompany a new kind of human being. There

will be no use for heroes then. The sticky unguent of personality holding strangers in its thrall. He knows that he will not live long enough to see the face of this new human being, or to insert himself into these new machines of hearing and seeing. But he is not without consolation. It would be enough to know that he was clearing the ground so that some new seed could take hold. His radical gesture, as an artist, is that he has built nothing, he has only taken away, removed some of the detritus which might keep the future from rooting. Paul Klee wrote, "Now objects perceive me."

#### Afterlife

The epic art of the twentieth century is not one which is easily survived, or even completed. The ghosts of projects by Stein and Pound and a hundred others lie in ruins, abandoned fragments of ambition, summary works which never yielded to the allure of closure. There are others who managed, by dint of patience or luck or prodigious genetic inheritance, to produce some memorable something—a canvas, an epitaph in emulsion, which shuddered through the traditions of the non-traditional, swept up the storm of the moment and re-cast it into objects to behold. My friend, a high school gridiron hero, calls it "moving the ball down the field." The question is: what

about after? Or even: how do you know when it's done? Not the end of the work itself, that much is clear, but when is it finished inside? The secretion of enzymes, the clearing out of intruders, the entire molecular level of creation devoted to the production of a single idea: when does that end exactly?

For Steve, in the last few vids of the 100, there is a palpable giddiness, an exultation in that sonorous voice, delivered in the same endearing tone a child uses during a particularly glorious shit. I'M ALMOST FINISHED! He already knows it's good, now it's time to show the parents, the makers. He has shown he is capable of production. His body helps to shape the world we live in. Or the world we will one day live in. Now what?

The next thing Steve did is probably the most difficult task an artist can undertake. It is the secret key to the success of any successful enterprise, though you'll find no articles written about it, no tracts or manifestos, no critical checklist to draw out. There's no way to teach it, and it's impossible to demonstrate. Not only that, but everything in our culture tries to keep it from happening. After completing 100 Videos, Steve did exactly nothing. He sat back. Taking stock. He watched time slow down around him.

There are certain days in the life of a writer where everything flows. You turn on the computer, and the words can't come out quickly enough, drawn by the irresistible lure of the machine itself. There are other days when the construction of a single sentence is like triple-bypass surgery. Serious writers work both days, managing the downhill speed plummet, and the uphill muck slog with some measure of grace. But when the days of mud turn to weeks, or worse, when the words manage easily enough, only they don't have quite the same edge, and sound more like they belong in an instruction manual than a novel, then you know it's time to stop. There is a time for writing, and there is a time for not-writing. But such is the lean of our culture that we privilege only the former, in the personal factories that we have all become, only production counts. It is very difficult to learn not-writing, not-art making, not-doing. Think of all those years in elementary school, high school and beyond. Who knew you could fail recess?

When he was working on The Large Glass, Marcel Duchamp took a seven year intermission, allowing his sculpture to "collect dust." An essential and integral part of the process. When the seven years were up, he

wiped off the dust and picked right on up where he'd left off. For artists, Marcel Duchamp is the patron saint of nothing.

Doing nothing is not the same as nodding in front of the television for weeks at a time with an IV drip of tequila. Doing nothing means hanging up the gone fishing sign on the input-output box. No talking, no friends or television, none of the familiar noise and static which passes for everyday life. It means being actively engaged, in the verb sense, in the making and doing and becoming of nothing. It means allowing the world to float through you, as if you weren't even there. It is a state of transparency which falls just short of madness. Who would ever willingly become a ghost, in his/her own lifetime?

As you can imagine, doing nothing is not the easiest thing in the world for someone whose just pulled 100 Videos out of the deck. After almost a decade of non-stop playback, Steve was more used to making videos than breakfast. Sure, his switches are a little worn, cables frayed. But that voice, not the one that comes out of his mouth but the other one, the one behind his speaking, the one that insists on signing his work, this voice had never stopped. Until now. Until the project was finished. Each of the 100 Videos has been

offered to this voice, the way old Greek warriors sacrificed a part of the herd before battle. All of his attentions have been moving towards this still point, when the voice which used to accompany him, and then swallowed him whole, creeping through him like a virus, would one day stop. For years he had been no longer himself, only a vessel for this voice, the meat that this voice could animate. But now, in this brief intermission between makings, he would work harder than ever at what others could imagine only as a vacation, a rest, though nothing could be further from the truth. What he hoped for in this respite was not a return to the prodigy of his youth. He had abandoned the promise of returns, the solace of nostalgia, when he began the 100 Videos. He is no longer himself, nor his audience, nor the person he is about to become. At last, he is ready. Ready to make art. Until the day arrives when this too will be have to be left behind.

"Look. I'm going to take the bull by the horns and finally say it. The best art is the most beautiful art. All that other stuff, ideas and such, just give us headaches and confuse us. After all, art is not philosophy. You've got things to make and things to sell. It all comes down to connoisseurship. For years I've had the nagging feeling that I've been doing the

wrong thing, led down the wrong path. But now it's time to return to first principles. The purest, most basic drives and instincts. I want to be simple and I want to be happy. So from now on, I'm only going to photograph boys and flowers. But it's going to take me a couple of weeks to become proficient with my new large format camera and printing in the darkroom and stuff. So in the meantime I'm going to finish this, my last and final video." (Sad Disco Fantasia by Steve Reinke)



# 100 Videos Scripts



# Table Of Contents

1. Excuse of the Real - 27	42. My Personal Virus - 91	84. Stentor - 139
2. Family Tree - 29	43. Vision (with Birds) - 92	85. New York Loves Me - 140
3. Watermelon Box - 31	44. Self Help - 93	86. Seventeen Descriptions - 141
4. Family Planning - 32	45. My erotic Double - 94	87. Children's Video Collective - 143
5. Eleven Dreams - 33	46. Sleep - 95	88. Three Dreams - 144
6. Emergence of Democratic Memory - 35	47. Dream Work - 96	89. 24 Jokes - 146
7. Speculative Anthropology - 37	48. Artifact - 97	90. Video for Intellectuals - 148
8. Why I stopped Going to Foreign Films -38	49. Monologue (with Provocation) - 98	91. Falling - 149
9. I am not like you - 41	50. Child - 99	92. Notes on the Uncanny - 150
10. Barely Human - 42	51. Windy Morning in April - 100	93. Manifestation/Jouissance - 151
11. Room - 43	52. Love Letter to Doug - 101	94. Ants and Bees - 152
12. Michael and Lacan - 45	53. Three Plays - 102	95. Ghosts - 153
13. Joke (Version One) - 51	54. Screen Saver - 103	96. Camouflage - 154
14. Joke (Version Two) - 52	55. Symposium - 104	97. Underwear - 155
15. Walking the Dog - 53	56. Jin's Dream - 105	98. Candle - 156
16. After Baudelaire - 54	57. Ghost Production - 106	99. Story - 157
17. Language of Rats - 55	58. Minnesota Inventory - 107	100. Why I've Decided to Become a Painter - 158
18. Language of Flowers - 56	59. Re-enactment of a Performance - 111	
19. Introduction to the Logo - 57	60. Three Examples - 112	
20. Deaf - 58	61. Sparky - 113	
21. Squeezing Sorrow from an Ashtray - 59	62. Black Heart - 114	
22. In the Realm of Perpetual Embarrassment - 61	63. Box - 115	
23. 80 Prominent Dermatologists - 63	64. The End of My Death - 118	
24. Visuals Elf - 66	65. Muriel - 119	
25. Pus Girl - 67	66. Attempt to Sing - 120	
26. Wish - 68	67. Assplay - 121	
27. Disturbed Sleep - 69	68. Love Among Corpses - 122	
28. Testimonials - 73	69. Harvey K --	
29. Little Faggot - 75	70. Dr. Asselbergs - 123	
30. Long Train Ride - 76	71. Corey - 125	
31. Lonely Boy - 77	72. My Fear - 126	
32. I Love You, Too - 80	73. Dumbo Climax - 127	
33. Charming Mutt - 81	74. Apology - 128	
34. Ice Cream - 82	75. How to Build an Igloo - 129	
35. Instructions for Recovering Forgotten Childhood Memories - 83	76. Microscope - 130	
36. Request - 84	77. Amoeba - 131	
37. Jason - 86	78. Treehouse - 132	
38. Experiment - 87	79. The Boxers - 134	
39. Editorial - 88	80. Talk Show - 135	
40. Understanding Heterosexuality -89	81. The Hand - 136	
41. Pioneer - 90	82. I have Already Little Monkeys - 137	
	83. Little Monkeys - 138	

# Excuse of the Real

I've made a few documentaries before, and I like making them. Documentary material is usually more interesting than anything I could imagine and I don't have to be bothered with all the tiresome specifics of a fictional creation. Also, I can't be held responsible for material which purports to an actual reality. I am not personally implicated, and therefore can't be blamed. I call this the excuse of the real.

Like everyone else, I wanted to do something on AIDS, a close personal look at a guy dying. Wanting the work to be as effective a documentary as possible, that is, as visceral as possible, I would want to include my subject's death. In fact, the video would not be complete without his death.

So I set out in search of a subject. These were my initial parameters: In order not to confuse or blur issues I wanted a white Anglophone homosexual male and, for added empathy, he should be under thirty. Due to budget restrictions, I would prefer one who would die six to eight weeks after taping was to begin, yet be strong enough in the initial days of

taping that I could get his basic life story in a couple day's of long interviews before settling down to watch whatever complications the guy has play themselves out.

What I had in mind seemed fairly simple, him talking about his childhood and adolescence, his emerging identity through a series of stories, personal remembrances, anecdotes, dreams. So the audience would be constructing an image of him even as he himself crumbles away.

I would need some home movies, flickering super-8. I would use these as visuals. If my subject didn't have any, another's could be used. Everyone's home movies are basically the same and it would simply be a matter of matching hair colour and body type.

This is something else I'd want to show: the steady degradation of his body and mind. Medical charts would be included, reports on blood cells. I would want to provide a record of each lesion over time, a shifting map of epidermal sores.

This became my problem: as my search continued, I began imagining with increasing specificity the things I would like my subject to say and do. That is: the longer my search took, the more specific my criteria became, and the more specific my criteria, the more difficult, and therefore longer, my search. It seemed an unending spiral, two sets that might never overlap,

or share any common points. And even if there were any specific points of juncture, how could I find the individual which would be at this point? My project risked degenerating into fiction.

*Once I went to a party, far across the city and got drunk. When it was time to go the subways had stopped, so I began walking. I knew the general direction home, miles across the night. I was very drunk, all those houses, all those streets. I came across a row of town houses under construction, the basements dug were out to be garages and I climbed down, the earth was hard and cool and I slept for twenty or thirty minutes, awoke and was thirsty, wanting a glass of water and to cup some in my palms and bring it to my face, splashing. I came to a street of large houses. I went around back to one and entered a side door, which should not have been left unlocked. I proceeded up the stairs. Dawn was approaching, a blue and grey light all shadow but I could see a man lying in bed and next to him, on the floor, a German shepherd which looked at me, wagging its tail. The man was facing away, he would not turn around. Is that you, he said. Have you come back to me?*





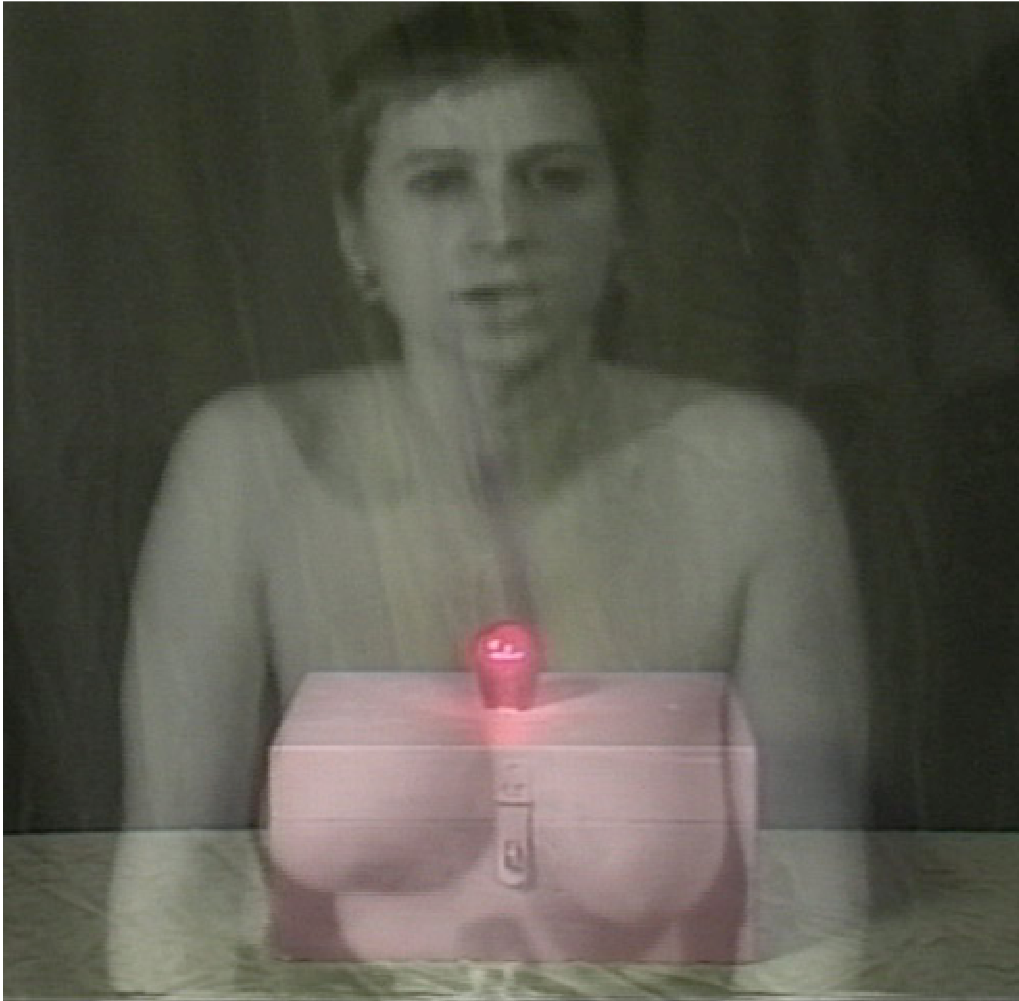
# Family Tree

Lately I've had reason to prepare a list of each of my sexual partners. Though I am young, the list is not unsubstantial. Each name though is remembered, first and last. I have a kept little book. I was not fooled by false names. I sought verification, searched wallets, glove compartments, drawers. So even as the faces have faded from my memory, I can rest assured each name is spelled correctly. The list consisted of 63 names. If typed in single single-spaced column it would occupy 3 pages. But in many cases I was in possession of more information about these individuals. I knew, for instance, that each of them had other sexual partners and I knew the names of many of these. I added the names to my list, each beside the name of the person he had sex with. I use he because only men were put on my list. And if I had knowledge of a woman who had sex with one of the names on my list, the knowledge was disregarded.

The list grew longer and longer with, I might add, a lot of repetitions. It was hard to deal with all the shuffling paper, so I decided to arrange all the names on a chart, sort of like a family tree with me as patriarch, generation one. Generation two was the 63 names I've had sex with, generation three the ones generation two had sex with, all the to infinity. My chart is very large, and growing. It is an unfortunate flaw in the system that names can and often are repeated. I alone occupy the God-like place of uni-generationality. My name can only occupy one space, and that is the first one. This is a project which, even given the possibility of a sudden and continuing celibacy on behalf of each of the names can never be completed. This is only because the others have not kept such accurate records as I.

*I like coffee. I hate most teas. I like pop, but not very often. I hate gin, but I like rye. I like fantasy movies, but I hate science fiction movies. I like country music and I like pop music. I hate Brian Mulroney. I like tea pots. I hate wallpaper. I like posters. I hate ice cream. I like chocolate cake.*

*My great great grandfather moved to Quebec City after the War of 1812. He died of small pox. My great grandfather moved to Windsor. He died of pneumonia. My grandfather worked in a factory in Windsor. He died of natural causes when he was very old. My father works in a different factory. He is still alive but a cousin of mine died in an automobile accident.*



# Watermelon Box

In 1953, JCR Lickleader, a computer scientist at Harvard, invented the watermelon box, probably the first speech-understanding machine. It consisted of a microphone connected to four circuit boards. Each circuit board recognized a single vowel sound. A red light on the top of the box lit up whenever anyone within earshot said the word "watermelon."

People with a moderate level of education use about 9,500 words in everyday conversation. By designing 9,499 more word recognition boxes, it was thought a machine could be made to understand spoken language. Unfortunately, the watermelon box was highly unreliable as it depended on the unusually distinctive sequence of vowel sounds in the word "watermelon."

# Family Planning

My grandmother kept her legs clenched while sweeping. She did not believe in science, but she believed in the possibility of air-borne sperm. And who can be blamed for their beliefs? She was Catholic, but found the rhythm method unacceptable, waiting into the night for the right-tempo song to come on the radio. After five children she began using things around the kitchen as IUDs, common household utensils which would not be missed. Bent spoons and salt shaker bottoms disappeared through her cervix, never to be seen again. They were absorbed, integrated into her internal genitalia. She installed a new one every two years. Tea figurines illustrating famous nursery rhymes. The coroner paled.



# Eleven Dreams

*These are images of me when I was a child and carefree. This voice is mine as an adult. One of the problems I've had to solve as an adult is how my individual identity fits or doesn't fit into some sense of continuing familial identity. In order to accomplish this, I initially felt it necessary to put myself in the shoes of each family member in turn and think as they think, experience things as they do. I tried this for a while but it turned out to be very boring. And so instead I decided to try and imagine their dreams.*

*This is an image of me as an adolescent, when this idea first occurred. And in this video I have each family member speak dreams I've imagined them having. At the time of taping they believed they were acting in some elaborate drama when really they are playing my image of them projected or superimposed back on top of their actual selves. Anyway, the participants are my mother, my ex-wife and our son. My father, after reading the script, refused to participate but my ex-wife's new husband stepped in to take his place. Thanks.*

Anne: It was early spring. I was in the kitchen cooking Kraft dinner for lunch. I was just about to add the milk and the butter when I noticed a large snake on the kitchen floor. I chased it stomping and waving my

arms, guiding it down the hall towards the front door. When we got outside, I had two choices either to take the snake across the highway to a meadow or down an embankment to the river. I chose the latter. As the snake went down the embankment, it rolled over and over again, and I noticed, to my surprise, dozens of tiny legs. Had I known I would have taken the snake across the highway.

Sandy: I was walking after dark and I saw a house on fire. The house was filled with babies and small children. They were trapped inside the bodies of dolls and teddy bears. And so they appeared to be very calm although they were minutes from death. I found a ladder leaning against the wall and tried to climb it but I couldn't. One of the babies jumped, and I caught it, but because it was inside of a doll I found it hard to take seriously and so I threw it into the garbage.

Phil: When I woke up I was a dinosaur and my mom and dad were dinosaurs too. I was as big as a garage and my mom and dad were as big as houses.

Tom: Something is funny, but I'm not sure what and I think it has something to do with me. I'm dining alone in a restaurant and the waiter is a boy of about fourteen or fifteen. Everyone in the place is looking at him, his yellow hair and green eyes. He brings me my soup and it has bits of onion and garlicky croutons floating in it. When he approaches the other tables he has an erection tenting his black pants. Everybody

notices but no one is embarrassed and neither am I, but when he brings me my salad he no longer has one. The salad also has onions and garlicky croutons in it. When he brings me my main course he lifts up his shirt exposing his stomach. I reach out to touch and he smiles and backs off and says I was only meant to look.

Anne: It was mid-afternoon when the policemen came. I was sitting at the dining room table watching the robins on the lawn. There were dozens of them and they looked like wind-up toys. The policemen told me they were leaving a large box for my husband and to make sure I told him. I looked at the box. It looked like a giant vacuum cleaner. I forgot. In the middle of the night I awoke and wondered if the prisoner were dead.

Phil: I was walking to school and I fell down a crack in the sidewalk and I broke my arm and my bone was sticking out.

Sandy: A baby was lying in my arms. I was tired and delirious because I'd just given birth to it. There were nurses there and a doctor, laughing. Congratulations, they said, it's a girl. No, I said, it's a boy. They told me to look and then laughed while I tried to unravel the layers of cloth and tape it was wrapped in. I saw that it had no penis and I knew that this was a mistake. I knew that there was one there, unable to descend.

Phil: I was trapped in a room with a spider with only a shield to protect myself and it was a giant tarantula.

Anne: I am lying on an operating table. The room is all stainless steel. My head is split open. Dr. Penfield stands behind me, inserting electrodes into my brain. He has the patience and proficiency of a switchboard operator. People are lined up around the block waiting for this procedure, a random jogging of the memory. He is waiting for me to tell him something. I begin to speak, in my mother's voice, reciting a recipe for meatloaf. I still make the meatloaf occasionally. I forget to put in the oregano.

# The Emergence of Democratic Memory

When something enters into us and becomes incorporated as a memory, there must be some changes within the brain, but no one knows what they are. Dr. Wilder Penfield spent many years at his Montreal Neurological Institute poking around people's brains in an attempt to discover some of these changes. First on the agenda was a generalized mapping of the brain: identifying the anatomical landmarks and assigning some neurological function to each of them. It seemed great chunks of brain matter were reserved for memory. He would plunge a micro-electrode into this memory area and stimulate a single neuron at random. This would sometimes trigger a memory which the patient, lying awake and alert on the slab, would recount. They would say: I am a child surprised that the puddle I have jumped in is so deep, the water has overflowed into my rubber boots, or: I am taking a mathematics test and the chair is very uncomfortable.

Dr. Penfield was surprised that such a large number of neurons in the memory section seemed to be empty; he stimulated them and nothing came out. This seemed to mean that modern man was not living up to his potential as the thinking creature. He wanted the brain to be more full. He was also dissatisfied with the patients' verbal re-tellings of their memories. He wanted something more objective. He wished the memories could be extracted and examined as they were experienced. He dreamed that someday an apparatus could be hooked to his micro-electrode which would play the memories on a little scientific television.

It is 1956 and a certain song by Bing Crosby (I forget which one) is a big hit. The doctor finds that the song is prominent in many people's minds. Stimulate one neuron and they remember the first verse, another reproduces the chorus, and a bit further down lie the neurons that trigger the second and subsequent verses. He finds it very interesting that the memory of this song was stored in the same precise location in each brain he checked. Finally the exact architecture of the brain was beginning to reveal itself! And this architecture was not random, it stored things in a precise way. Whenever Dr. Penfield hears the song on the radio he can rest assured he is experiencing the same sensations his patients do when he stimulates their Bing neurons.

Now it is 1964 and the doctor is operating on an eleven year old boy. The boy is young enough that he has spent large portions of his life watching television. Penfield is happy and amazed that his head is not as empty as his progenitors. Wherever he places the electrode a twenty or twenty-four second segment of a television broadcast is stimulated into active memory. This marked the discovery of the emergence of a new type of human being, one that used his memory to full capacity. This is why we remember the name "Wilder Penfield" even today, after all his discoveries have been disproved.





# Speculative Anthropology

It wasn't very long ago that the imagination could make its way into the world as an autonomous agent of seemingly repressed desires. I want to return to that time when the world was an unfinished ethnographic map and it was possible to imagine a tribe with a specific set of characteristics and be fairly confident that they would eventually be discovered, naked and scarred and superstitious. But now that hope has degenerated into faith. Now that we have found whatever is out there and can successfully determine what they will develop into, the imagination is useless.

# Why I Stopped Going to Foreign Films

Image: aerial view land

subtitle: I'm flying. Come and get me.

Voice-over: I've never done this.

Image: guy jerking off

Voice-over: But I've done this.

Image: woman asleep (or dead?) lying down, man  
folds her hands, adjusts sheet over her body

Image: girl runs and climbs a tree

Voice-over: I've never done this either.

Image: guy jerking off, guy fucking guy

Voice-over: But I've done this and it didn't hurt and for  
the next two weeks I had a photographic memory. I  
could remember the license plate on every car I saw.

Image: man adjusting/cleaning projector lens

Voice-over: I've never done this.

Image: two men masturbating

Voice-over: But I have done this. It felt very good.  
Afterwards I feel asleep for a day and a half.  
Afterwards I was calm and refreshed but I couldn't  
remember my name. Luckily though my wallet was  
right there on the bedside table.

Image: Japanese woman watches young boy pick  
weeds

Voice-over: This is something else I've never done.

Subtitle: What will you be when you grow up?

Subtitle: A doctor like your father?

Subtitle: By the time you're a doctor, I wonder where I'll be?

Image: guy getting fucked

Voice-over: I have done this though, it made me dizzy. I could feel every bone in my body, every rib, and the plates of my skull. I fell out of myself and I floated up to the ceiling. I went out the skylight and headed downtown. It was just before rush hour and all the little people were pouring out of their office towers. All I had to do was look and I could tell what their favourite food was, what they wanted for dinner.

Image: man and woman onstage in film, she dances he sits

Subtitle: I'm rich, but I'm lonely and unhappy.

Subtitle: What good are palaces and fancy automobiles?

Subtitle: They're an empty illusion — I want a home —

Subtitle: I want children — and a wife like you.

Subtitle: You should have known me when I was eighteen.

Subtitle: Then it's true.

Subtitle: You really love me?

Subtitle: Do you mean it?

Subtitle: You're not trying to deceive me?

Subtitle: You honestly love me?

Man makes a gesture with his hand and she collapses. He goes to her, revives her, audience claps, he bows.

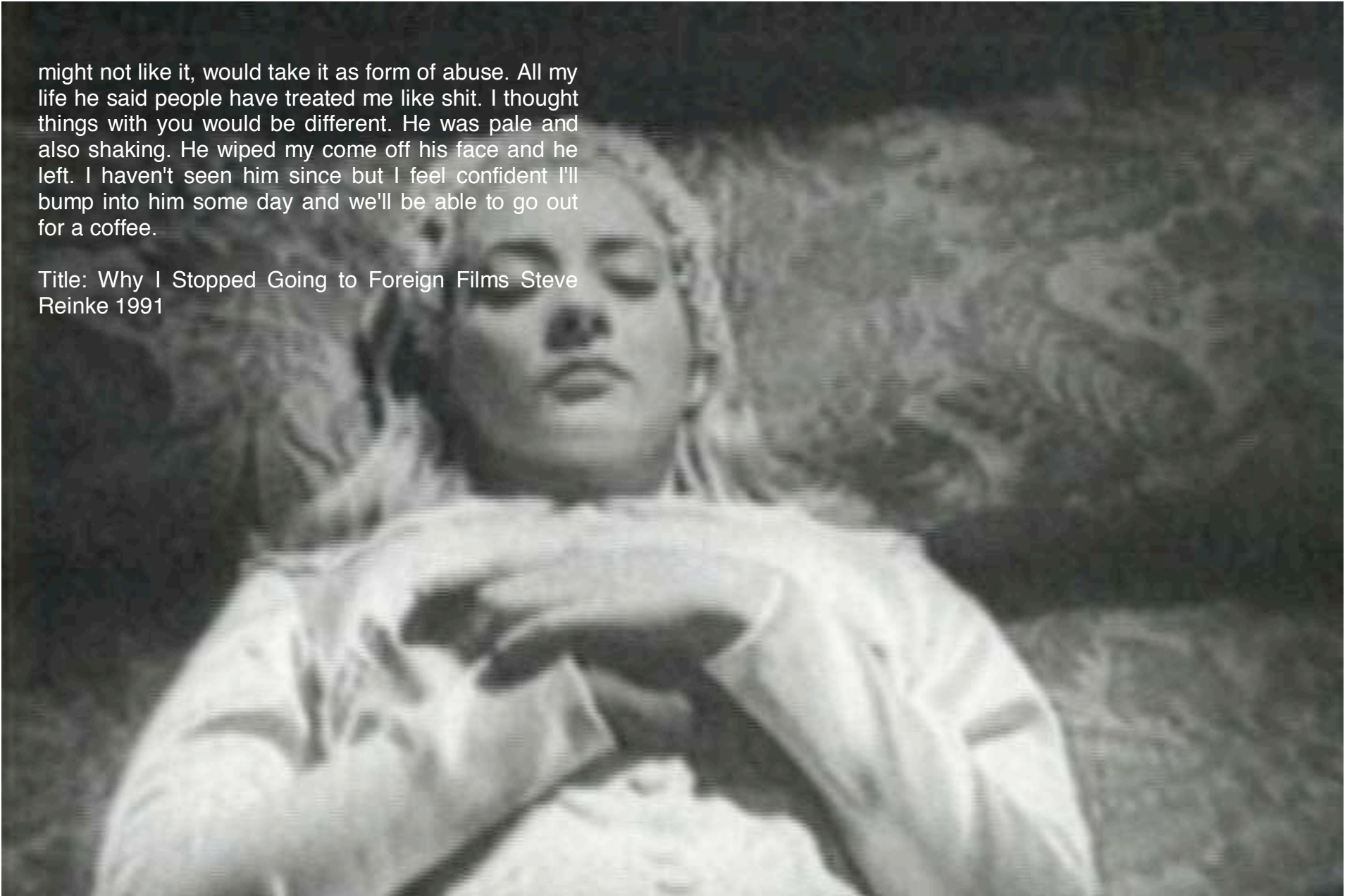
Voice-over: I have never done this.

Image: guys kissing, one man comes on another's face

Voice-over: But I've done this. I had been dating a guy for two or three months. I t never occurred to me he

might not like it, would take it as form of abuse. All my life he said people have treated me like shit. I thought things with you would be different. He was pale and also shaking. He wiped my come off his face and he left. I haven't seen him since but I feel confident I'll bump into him some day and we'll be able to go out for a coffee.

Title: Why I Stopped Going to Foreign Films Steve Reinke 1991





# I am not like you

Your curiosity will not be satisfied.

You expect things to be different.

You form patterns through constant fidgeting.

Even when your hands aren't moving your eyes are.

You face a certain direction.

You dress in clothes that match according your mother's criteria.

You are under the impression that free will is an impossibility.

You automatically associate the word "grace" with the idea "automobile."

When you think your thoughts follow in the tracks of other thoughts.

You never understood trigonometry.

You do not think that three-dimensions can ever be effectively rendered on paper.

You are thankful for repression but suspicious of sublimation.

You highly recommend a passive-aggressive lifestyle.

You prefer the Gothic to the Romanesque.

Although you do not feel inadequate it must be acknowledged that you feel others are superior.

You open your eyes and the world snaps into focus.

Your brain is a triumph of engineering.

You're no clown.

You have developed past a certain point.

You think wars are sometimes justified though domestic violence is inexcusable.

You can squeeze sorrow from an ashtray.

Your heart becomes erratic at the stethoscope's touch



# Barely Human

I think it's true: sexual pleasure is located in the head — specifically the face.

They are barely human. They verge on the angelic. I guess that's how they get away with it, why it doesn't kill them.

I am not so much interested in the rest of their bodies. I am glad for the erectile tissue of the nipples, the blood-gorged shaft of the glans and penis, as well as there little dilating assholes, but when the cum spreads all over their chests and bellies, it is only their faces I want to gaze upon.

There is no satiation to this desire. It doesn't wear me out physically so I can go on and on, making my way through all of mankind, person by person, an endless chain of seemingly indistinguishable individuals.

To best see their faces, a certain distance is required — three or four feet — but this distance is hard to maintain at the same time I am manipulating their genitals

Don't get me wrong, I'm not a voyeur, I don't seek a complete removal from the sexual act. Instead, I wish for myself a new physiology, to have no arms or legs,

just a central lump which would combine the trunk and head. Out of this would emerge five or six limbs, flexible and about five feet long, each with a specific final articulation. To stimulate the exterior of the penis, to caress and massage and strike the body, to enter the anal or urethral canals. One of these trunks would end in a single large rectangular

# ROOM



For the past five or six years a great many smaller companies have sprung which deal in custom imaging software. One of these, TARDOV, developed the first version of their software package ROOM (which is not an acronym) in 1986. Even today, after the third version of ROOM has been issued and used in a wide variety of applications, the ramifications of this technology are not widely appreciated.

ROOM has the ability to take a two-dimensional representation of space (any photograph, painting or drawing which follows the laws of perspective) and by super-imposing a three-dimensional grid, begin to reconstitute the space, at least in visual terms. Because it has the ability to approximate the view from any position within the grid, it allows one the privilege of entering a photograph (or painting or whatever) and looking around. It must be stressed that the program does more than simply zoom in; it breaks open the space allowing the viewer to explore a given object from any angle, snoop in all the nooks and crannies.

My reasons for undertaking a project using ROOM are complex and vague. Basically, I believe that the incredible utility of ROOM has obscured its significance as a paradigm-challenging entity. As I am

sure you are aware, some of the main paradigmatic changes that came along with modernism circle (or cluster) around the Heisenberg Uncertainty Principle, which is a mathematical formula which states, in layman's terms, that one can know the position of a particle (space) or its velocity (space/time), but not both. This is basically a problem concerning narrative. It tells us we can freeze the action (and lose the plot), or follow the action (but never be able to objectively examine any specific event).

Narrative has come the closest to solving this dilemma in one of the few indisputably modern genres: the detective story. The detective story seeks to examine a particular event in terms of both space/time and space. The narrative seeks one thing only: the re-creation of a specific event at a specific time and specific location. This re-creation, however, moves as all plots move: through time

ROOM finally makes postmodern narrative possible. A single image gives rise to an infinite number of other images. This procession of images forms the narrative, but it is not a narrative that moves through time. Time has been flattened, done away with. This narrative is still a mystery, but it is a mystery already solved, all laid out. One becomes simultaneously the transgressor and the examiner of this transgression. Simultaneously the author, narrator, and reader. The true moment of voyeurism is finally realized.



# Michael and Lacan



Michael: Stephen, is the camera rolling? Hi. I'm here.  
Still. This is my home.

*[genesis of the ego: imaginary identification]*

Suzie: Is there sound on it?

Michael: There's sound. Of course there's sound. Is there sound? Yeah, okay. Aren't I great looking.

Suzie: Okay where's my empty glass?

Michael: I love this camera.

Suzie: How much more filmage do you have?

Michael: I want to make it...

*[mirror stage: narcissism]*

Suzie: With the camera.

Michael: ...with each and every one of you. If you something up here.

---

Michael: This is my interview, right?

John: What have you been up to?

Michael: Right, camera?

John: Do you record as well? Sound. Oh better not say anything. Anything stupid that is. So what have you been up to lately?

Michael: Adapting.

John: Adapting? To your new environment.

*[fragmented body: aggressivity]*

John: This new environment. It looks different. I like it like this.

Michael: More chains.

John: You've got a lot more room.

Michael: Look at this.

John: Yeah, where did you get this from. I thought it was that.

Michael: Got new shoes and everything.

John: *{to people off-camera}* Hi. It's Twiggy.

Michael: Whip it out.

John: Not right now.

Michael: Close the doors and whip it out.

John: Close the door, whip it out.

*[production of the subject: symbolic identification]*

John: You whip it out.

Michael: Fuck off, he's the camera man.

John: Well, he can whip it out just as well.

Michael: Well okay, I'll wait for a man.

John: I guess so.

Michael: Or a woman.

*[the dead father: primal repression]*

Michael: So.

John: So.

Michael: You're not my interviewer. Steve, is it filming.

Steve: Mm-hmm.

Michael: That's good. You know, it started a long time ago.

John: What started?

Michael: It started... Don't interject.

John: Oh, I'm sorry.

Michael: You can...

John: I'm interjecting again.

Michael: You can mumble. If you can't come across, you can mumble.

*[illusion of autonomy: production of love]*

Michael: It started in L.A. Hollywood. What's the camera doing over that way. It should be over here. Thank you.

John: Like closer, eh, like closer. Zoom. That's a nice pillow. Trendy.

Michael: I bought them all. It started there and ended up here.

John: He was born there. Weren't you?

*[consciousness of self: infatuation]*

Michael: Yes, but what I went through between then and now, you know. I'm glad, because I've learned from people, their mistakes and...

John: You told me once you were glad that you grew up here.

Michael: Where?

*[formation of the ego: law of the heart]*

John: You told me once you were glad that you...

Michael: Yeah I did, okay. That's what I'm talking about.

John: Oh, I see. I thought so. I just wanted to clear that up.

Michael: You made me loose my train of thought.

John: I did. You were saying about how it all started there and its ending here.

Michael: Not ending!

John: Oh, oh, its...

Michael: Its come across here.

John: Oh I see.

*[paranoia of the ego: cunning of reason]*

Michael: I'm fortunate, because, I guess, I can do what I want. And be happy with myself doing, not feeling. Not feeling, you know...

John: Oppressed?

Michael: Yeah, oppressed. That's the word. Thank you.

John: No problem.

Michael: Oppressed by the outer/inner limits of my mind...

*[geometry of the ego: topology of the subject]*

Michael: ...my space. So I feel fortunate. But I was abducted a few times.

John: Abducted!?

Michael: Yeah.

John: Physically?

Michael: You're not the interviewer. I'm talking to the camera. But you can... Yeah okay, go ahead.

*[locus of the other: enunciation]*



Michael: Yes, I was almost forced into situations, sexual situations. And I handled them very well. And life is a salami.

John: Like the ones you have in your fr... like the salami you made.

Michael: Like the salami I made out of day-glo.

John: Yeah they're really groovy, I love them.

Michael: Wow, I feel right now with this lighting system, I feel like daylight in a tropic climate.

*[rhetoric of the unconscious: metonymy]*

John: I know what you mean.

Michael: A nice tropic climate.

John: With a tropical blanket.

Michael: Where's the palm trees? There's one. There's one. There's one. In my mind. I don't have to hear...

John: I like the chain effect.

Michael: ...the sound. I do want to hear...

John: Did you buy the chains especially?

*[point of desire: metaphor]*

Michael: ...everything. I do I want to hear everything. Experience it. And hear it. Seriously.

John: I like your room this way.

Michael: Well its not set up totally. Chair goes over there, rug goes over there. Chains.

John: Yeah, I like that effect.

Michael: Canopies.

John: Canopies?

*[discourse of the imaginary: empty speech]*

John: {looking around} Oh yeah, yeah.

Michael: Okay, look around my room.

\_\_\_\_\_

*[subjectification of death: full speech]*

Michael: Can you hear me? Just watch me.

*[l'objet 'a': mini-phallus]*

---

Michael: What? It's the truth. Some of it. Most of it.

*[jouissance: castration]*

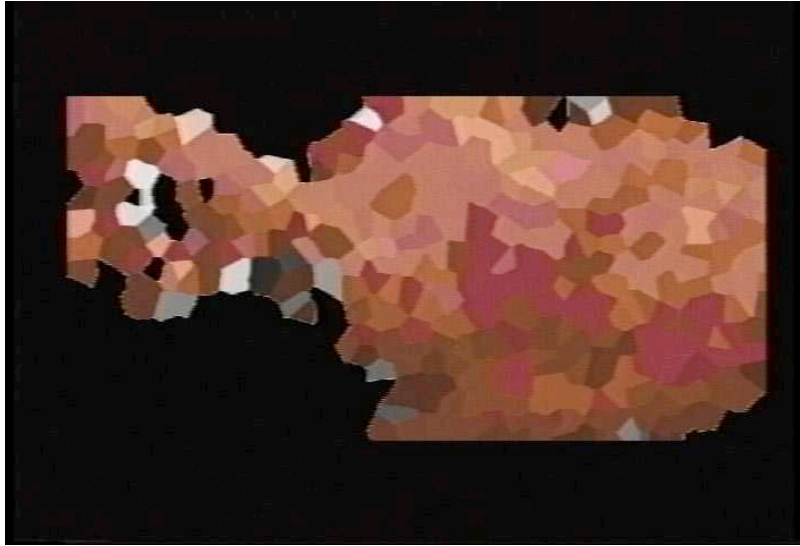
Michael: Okay. It comes from here. Okay? Okay. Til next time we meet. Which will be soon. I need a light. And a cigarette.

---

Michael: I need to get some one thing. Get some one thing. Its a good word. Get some one thing.

*[perversion: scopophilia]*

Michael: The noise here in the background is nonsense. Only because it's nonsense. It's my house. It is. Anyway. As I was saying. For the record. I am. Me who. Are you. Thank you. Where you hubbub. Steve is this video one here happening shit. Stop it



# Joke

I never threw all the toys from my crib for the fun of having them returned to me. And when my father would play with me by hiding bright little toys behind his back, the squeals of delight I emitted as he magically produced them were not because I was fooled but because the expression on his face as he thrust the toys in my direction gave me joy. Unlike most infants, I was never an uncoordinated collection of natural capacities. I never had any problem distinguishing between myself and others. I knew where I stopped and other people began. I was unwavering in the belief that the mouth was mine and the breast belonged to someone else. Consequently toilet training was unnecessary and I have never entertained a single sado-masochistic fantasy. I have never experienced the slightest glimmerings of a split between my sense of self and my experience of my body.

There is no void. The world is full.

When my father died I was sad for awhile, but I thought that that would be that. I was already an adult and had no reasonable expectation of needing his presence in the future. One afternoon I was sitting in a shopping mall and I overheard someone telling a joke. It was a joke I remember my father telling and I associated it with him. I could not understand how someone could possess a piece of my father and unknowingly carry it around. I was jealous of this boy who owned a piece of my father while I was left with nothing. Then I realized that the joke is a mechanism whereby language wraps itself around a particular individual creating and defining this person. A highly condensed nodal point where webs of discourse meet to construct a subject. And so when I present this joke to you, I am not presenting a memory or impression of my father, I am, rather, literally presenting you with my actual father.

*A man gets a new job and every day when he walks to work he sees, through the window of a house, a woman hitting a little boy with a loaf of bread. This continues for many months. One day he sees the woman hitting the boy with a chocolate cake. He goes up to the window, he can't resist. "Everyday I see you hitting this little boy with a loaf of bread, why are you using a chocolate cake this time." "Well," the woman replied "today's his birthday."*

# Joke (Version Two)

When my father died I was sad for a while but I thought that that would be that. I was an adult I had no reasonable expectations of meeting his presence in the future. One afternoon I was sitting in a shopping mall and I overheard someone telling a joke. It was a joke I remember my father telling and I associated it with him. I could not understand how someone could possess a piece of my father and unknowingly carry it around. I was jealous of this boy who owned a piece of my father while I was left with nothing. Then I realized that the joke is a mechanism whereby language wraps itself around a particular individual creating and defining this person. A highly condensed nodal point where webs of discourse meet to construct a subject. And so when I present this joke to you, I am not presenting a memory or impression of my father, I am, rather, literally presenting you with my actual father.

*So there's this guy and this guy gets a new job one day and he starts you know, walking to work, he walks a new route to work one day he doesn't walk*

*every day and every morning he passes this window that's facing the street and he sees inside the window that this woman is beating this little child over the head with a loaf of bread, just hitting him over the head with a loaf of bread. Every morning it's like the same you know he walks to work he passes then he sees it, it's the same constantly, day after day, month after month. Finally he's been working at this place and walking the same route every morning seeing this for about nine months he this every day and one morning he approaches the window because now it's common for him to pass the window and see this before he goes to work and he looks inside and instead of a loaf of bread the woman is hitting the little kid with a chocolate cake. Why? Why the change? Month after month, day after day it's been a loaf of bread. So he gets up to the window he starts knocking at the window like, "Excuse me. Excuse me, why is it today different? Why is it chocolate cake?" And the woman says, "Well, today's his birthday."*



# Walking the Dog

Sometimes its difficult to know what to do next. I am sleeping and then I wake up and go to work but what about after that? There is all this time to fill in and I am standing here with no ideas, not even knowing if I am bored or not.

Luckily though, it isn't as bad as all that. I buy objects and the use of the objects structures my leisure hours. With some objects the use-value is obvious. Other objects though are more obscure. I bought this video camera and it took a fair amount of time to learn how to use it and all its fancy digital titling and graphics effects, but after that I put it away because I couldn't think of anything to do with it. But it was so expensive I felt it hadn't lived up to its use-value potential so I had to figure out what else I could do with it.

I decided to take walks with it, up and down these streets, as if it were a dog, always a different route. Most people are asleep, and dreaming, and a lit window attracts attention in this city, so late at night, a lit window with no curtains, no blinds. I never look in these windows but when I do I know what I will see.

Sometimes I think I am like Frank Sinatra, then I try to think of specific examples of similarity, actual points where our beings might overlap and of course can think of none.

Take care of the minutes and the hours take care of themselves.

A man with short brown hair, wearing a dark t-shirt, is holding a small, patterned lizard in his hands. He is looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. The background is a soft, out-of-focus blue and green.

# After Baudelaire

I am no longer happy. I could make a little catalogue of sorrows, but it would beg the question: was there ever a moment of bliss in my unfortunate existence? Yes, once as an infant I was the victim of a perverse and cruel joke. I was laid at the breast of my father, and sucked and chewed, but could not receive any milk. But I hated milk. Was slightly allergic, it made me bloated and woozy. I hated the thickness and warmth, scalding to an infant mouth, too viscous for a gullet constricted from fear. And the unwelcome intrusion of maternal antigens, spiraling through to the bloodstream.

# The Language of Rats

I am already dead. That is why I am able at last to be calm, or to be excited maybe, but without desire. I feel refreshed, but bloodless. It is probable I lack the energy necessary for locomotion, but I without the motivation to test this hypothesis.

Look, look. This is my brain, slice by slice, section by section. It tells you nothing. Describes only itself. An anatomy with no corresponding physiology. If it were a leg lying before you, flaps of skin pinned to the tray, it would be obvious that the muscle contracts exerting force in a certain direction. But who would surmise that the brain thinks, throwing off thoughts in certain directions?

Okay I am dead, I am dead. Now I realize that any attempt at self-knowledge prior to this point would have been foolish. Now I can look down and examine myself with a certain detachment, secure in the knowledge that things cannot change.

My skull has been cracked open. It was only my brain the scientists wanted. And who can blame them? They through the skull shards out the window to the

squirrels waiting below. The squirrels ran off with them and now my skull lies stored in the hollows of a dozen trees. And when winter comes they will try to bite into them and it will break their teeth. The trees that surround this building will be stuffed with skull fragments and squirrel teeth. I take no joy and no sorrow in this prospect.

My wisdom is excessive. I am not without advice for those who survive me.



# Language of Flowers

Flowers express an obscure vegetal resolution.

It appears the symbolic meaning of flowers derives not so much from their function as from their appearance.

The beauty of flowers, as compared to the beauty of boys, is so widespread it should be considered a parody of the latter.

Even the most beautiful flowers are spoiled in their centres by hairy sexual organs.

Unlike leaves, which age honestly, losing none of their beauty, flowers are a ridiculous travesty which remind us that love smells like death.

dandelion: expansion

narcissus: egoism

wormwood: bitterness

columbine: sadness

snapdragon: desire

water-lily: indifference

rose: facetiousness

camelia: purity

phlox: pettiness

trillium: reservedness

morning glory: tardiness

african violet: colour

blue-bell: wit



# Introduction to the Logo



I am a person, an artist, and a company. Otherwise I'd have to pay a lot more taxes. As an artist texts are produced and grouped together under the authority of my name. Up until a few years ago my company name was the 29th Room. I've decided since then to let my artist name become my company name as well. It seemed appropriate to develop a logo.

But I am not simply a logo.

I am a radical critique of the complex tyranny of the phallic signifier...

...as well as a fully developed cartoon character.

Let me take this opportunity to demonstrate my goofy wit.

A man pays women to blindfold, restrain and whip his buttocks and genitals.

The man's doctor tells him of another patient who pays boys to bind, gag and whip his genitals and buttocks.

"Perhaps you would like to meet. You have a lot in common."

"But doctor, we have nothing in common! That man is a homosexual."

My father exists in a large room where he lectures to an audience which remains mesmerized even though they do not understand the language and are, moreover, deaf, and so do not even have recourse to lip-reading.

## Deaf

My father exists in a large room where he lectures to an audience which is mesmerized despite the fact that they are deaf and, moreover, are not even able to read his lips as they speak a wholly other language.

He said: Listen, listen, listen. Everything changes. The world moves in a long steady arc which describes a slow betrayal.

He said: Your grandmother died from eating only butter.

He said: When I was a boy giant turtles would rise out of the river and walk slowly through the village late afternoons and just before dawn.

He said: A father doesn't just drop out of the sky. I've been here always and I know everything.

He said: Look, look, look at me. And he was standing before me naked, expansive on tiny stick legs with tufts of hair in unlikely locations.

# Squeezing Sorrow from an Ashtray

## 1. Title:

"We know the air is filled with vibrations that we can't hear. In *Variations VII*, I tried to use sounds from that inaudible environment. But we can't consider environment as an object. We know that it's a process. While in the case of the ashtray, we are indeed dealing with an object. It would be extremely interesting to place it in a little anechoic chamber and listen to it through a suitable sound system. Object would become process; we would discover, thanks to a procedure borrowed from science, the meaning of nature through the music of objects." — John Cage

## 2. Voice, Computer Animation

We've been working on ashtrays for a couple of months now. Basically, we put an ashtray in the chamber and subject it to a series of pulses of a specific frequency. Sensors placed around the chamber pick up the resulting sound waves. This

information is sent to a computer which mathematically subtracts the original pulses, so whatever is left over is the sound of the ashtray. So far we've tried eleven ashtrays and found most of them don't really produce much in the way of sound. One ashtray though produced a remarkably coherent set of information that could only be described as musical.

## 3. Shot/Counter-Shot (ashtray and scientist)

Q: So that's the ashtray in question.

A: Yes, it's a crystal ashtray produced in Vienna around 1906.

Q: Why do you think this ashtray produces music while the others you've tested barely emit noise?

A: We think it has something to do with the crystal lattice structure. But keep in mind the ashtray doesn't emit its music directly. Rather it produces a series of inaudible sound waves which we translate into mathematical formulae. If we discover pattern and coherency in these formulas we can translate the information into a traditional music score. With different algorithms we might have found all the ashtrays produce music.

Q: Can we hear some of this music?

A: Sure. [Music plays for 2 min.]

Q: Why is the music so sad?

A: The ashtray, after all, comes from Vienna, before the wars.

Q: What will you be working on next?

A: Goblets





# **In the Realm of Perpetual Embarrassment**

Now I know why they call them animals. It's just how the language works — things have a name and that's what they end up being called.

In these fortunate and primitive creatures, cilia direct a constant flow of plankton into hollow and often transparent gullets.

I am a machine that produces sentences. Fish are a machine that produce other fishes, usually of the same species. If I were an amoeba, it would be unlikely I would ever divide. I would subvert the amoebic order, not through any sense of rebelliousness but merely because of an overall listlessness and vague sense of embarrassment.

These beautifully coloured molluscs are called nudibranchs and have gills that are often exposed like a bouquet.

I don't know what the root of this embarrassment might be. I am certain though it has been with me always. I would like to stress that it is completely unrelated to guilt, and consequently unable to partake of the motivational forces generally associated with guilt. Also, I am not sure what it is I am embarrassed by, or of. I am not embarrassed by my face or genitals, and unlike many I hold my feet in high regard. So its no body-ego thing.



Here is the marmot which withstands the winds full fury by its luxurious pelt and the underlying thick layer of fat.

This mountain goat is able to browse at the uppermost limits of plant growth due to its highly specialized feet. A rubbery pad protrudes from each hoof acting like a skid-proof suction cup.

I guess I'd have to say that I find it a little unbearable to exist in this form. I'm often surprised that more people don't exist in this realm that follows me as storm clouds trail certain unfortunate cartoon characters, the realm of perpetual embarrassment. But they seem so tentative, so unaware, unselfconscious. When I encounter them on the street I am always shocked when they speak to me in the same language I use in my sentence production. I expect them to be as dumb as animals.

Say hello to the black bear who likes honey and can use giant claws to rake through undergrowth for a tiny pawful of red or purple berries.



# Eighty Prominent Dermatologists

These images are from a book The American Dermatological Society published in 1957 to commemorate its seventy-fifth anniversary. Its title is A History of The American Dermatological Association In Commemoration of Its Seventy-Fifth Anniversary 1876-1951. The dedication reads: "To the American Dermatological Association, which in the seventy five years of its existence has contributed so much to the progress and teaching of dermatology in America. To the sixteen founders of the Association whose foresight, courage and devotion launched it on its successful career, to the future members who, I feel sure, will carry the Association to even greater heights of glory."

The forward reads: "Seventy five years ago a small group of dermatologists met and founded the A American Dermatological Association. They were aware that in a newly established specialty of medicine an association based on a common interest and composed of congenial personalities should be conducive to solidarity and progress. Throughout these seventy-five years the membership has been selected with these percepts in mind and the American Dermatological Association has never been merely a medical society. It has reached its present position because these members were close friends professionally and on that basis theories and ideas could be freely exchanged, the science of dermatology thereby steadily advanced. The past and present membership contain the names of those

dermatologists who by their scientific curiosity and by their intellectual attainments by their integrity and their loyal affection for each other have shaped the architecture of American dermatology. With pride in the past and confidence in the future the Association cannot do otherwise than continue to be a guiding light for the specialty which it represents. The Association is indeed fortunate to have as its historian Dr. Paul E Bechet whose interests in the history of dermatology and unselfish devotion to the tremendous task of compiling the data, have made this memorial volume possible.

And finally I'll read the final passage of the volume. "May this volume, no on its way to the some of the members of the American Dermatological Association receive an affectionate welcome. It was born through the combined mind, heart and hands of the historian in appreciation of the pleasure a membership of twenty-two years has given me. Much of the Association's charm is due I believe to the happy combination of scientific work and the warmth of old friendships. In 1895 there were fifty-six members. In 1951 there are 157 members. Will we continue to advance at this rate? And if so, will we gain by the mere weight of numbers or lose the close association we have hitherto enjoyed. Only time will tell. But the new York and the Manhattan Dermatological Societies can furnish a possible clue by remaining small yet increasing their scientific growth. No one has ever refused an invitation to join despite a living

membership of about eleven in one and eighteen in the other.

The small amount of space available for each biographical sketch limited me to list only the teaching positions and hospital appointments, offices and memberships in dermatological societies, authorships of books and articles and the man's most outstanding contribution to dermatology. If it were connected to some fifteen or twenty hospitals it was manifestly impossible to name them all. Only the number of his appointments could be stated. Dates proved to be an occasional headache as those stated in the present biographical sketch differed from those stated in previous sketches. Also the cart was sometimes placed before the horse. An associate professorship might be mentioned first and the instructorship later.

I trust I will not be censured for omitted the military careers of the members. To have done so omitting many of their dermatological attainments and to have mentioned some and not others would not have been fair. Suffice it to say, the overwhelming majority of the members of the Association served their country well and faithfully in the war between the States and in both world wars."

So it is I think a pretty interesting book and a little bit rare. It would have been nice to present you with the entire membership but I thought it would take too long. So instead you're seeing about one quarter of

the photos, a pretty good cross-section. I chose not necessarily the most attractive doctors but the ones I would most like to have sex with. So it's pretty subjective I uses but my taste is broad. I don't just like one type.

Title: Eighty Prominent Dermatologists

# Visuals Elf

People often ask me, "Steve, how do you manage to make so many films? What makes you so prolific?" And I say, "Oh they are not films but video. It is a simple and effortless process. It's just me talking. I record these little speeches on a video cassette and let them sit for a week or a month. When I come back the pictures are all in place. I have a visuals elf who takes care of all that stuff when I'm asleep or not looking, not paying attention. Then the only thing left to do is come up with a title and pull some dubs."



# Pus Girl

It's partly a disorder of the blush, but it extends further than that.

Mostly on my chest and arms, but also on my face, neck and back.

They're large pustulous sores.

I have very few sweat glands. Most of them have been replaced by pus glands.

They can erupt really quickly. Any little jolt of adrenaline and they begin to form.

Although its not life threatening, it tends to be isolating.

I've never really had a relationship, or even a date.

I always wear two layers of clothing.

I tell people I'm allergic to sunlight.

I used to dream of falling in love with someone who had the same condition, but my doctor told me there are only three or four more people under forty in the whole country who have it.

This is a comic I drew when I was thirteen or fourteen. It's about a girl who's a super-hero. She fights crime by shooting her pus at villains, kind of like Spiderman. I guess I based it on myself. In this episode, pus girl is walking home from school when she sees a house on fire. By covering herself in pus, she is able to walk into the fire without getting burnt. She rescues children, pets and houseplants, and leaves anonymously just as the fire trucks pull up.



## Wish

It has always been my wish to have been a dermatologist in Philadelphia during the Great Depression. While others took more pleasure in extracting shrapnel from the sleekly muscled hides of young soldiers, or replacing a mislooped section of bowel in a delicate hernia operation, I've always been more interested in the surface of things.

And so they would come to me, these young men damaged by rashes and I would undress them and examine them. I would say this is a very interesting case, I must photograph it. And I would bind them to the table or the chair with long strips of cotton so they would not move during the long exposures.

Nights I would carefully hand-tint my photographic plates by lamplight. I have a very good memory for colours. There are not enough words to describe the possible purples of a blotch, the crimsons of a blush, so we must turn to pictorial representation for diagnostic efficacy.

They would offer their afflictions to me. I know what this is, I would tell them. And it will not heal if you touch it. Only I am allowed to touch this part of your body. And I would bring them relief with salves and ointments and medicated poultices. Relief from the constant itching. Relief from the infernal stench of erupting pustules. And I would delight in their afflictions, for if their skin were whole and unbroken I would not have the opportunity to touch it, or to look upon it.

And in this manner I would acquire great wealth and social position.

**Be my leper, be my love.**



# Disturbed Sleep

Announcer: Disturbed Sleep. Five Case Problems.

Robert Rackel, M.D.: We all may see patients who complain about fatigue and then ask us to help them get rid of the insomnia which they feel causes it. Sometimes I personally get stumped by perplexing cases and wish that I could discuss them with a sleep-disorder expert like Dr. Kramer. I'm delighted to have the opportunity to do so now. From time to time,

I'll ask multiple choice questions and ask you to participate by answering them. Circle the number of your choice on the NCME medical tv guide.

Milton Kramer, M.D.: After Dr. Rakel outlines each case, I will discuss diagnostic and treatment alternatives based on our experience here at the sleep disorder centre.

Dr. Rakel: Lets begin with a situation that most of us have faced. The patient, like 45 year-old Jack Apple, who complains at the end of a routine check-up that he's not sleeping well and wants medication. His former physician several years ago prescribed secobarbital which Jack has been using as needed at relatively frequent intervals. He's currently getting a divorce, and can't sleep even though he has increased his bed-time dose of secobarbital to three 100 mg capsules. Jack says that it takes him more than an hour to fall asleep and that he wakes up feeling tired.

Question #1: What therapy would be indicated at this point?

- a. prescribe a new drug
- b. reduce the dose of the current medication and observe the reaction
- c. increase the dose of the current drug

Dr. Kramer: For several years Jack Apple has periodically been on a high level of the drug. He's beyond the reasonable maximum dose and has developed a tolerance to it. The medicine has lost its effect because Jack has adapted to it. The insomnia may even be caused by drug dependency. Many medications have cross-tolerance, so to immediately substitute another drug probably won't help. I recommend that you very slowly withdraw the drug until the patient is off the medication.

Dr. Rakel: Our next case involves insomnia that had lasted for two weeks before Dan Brown, a young executive, came to see me.

Dan Brown: I don't know what the matter is. I can't seem to fall asleep at night.

Dr. Rakel: How are you feeling in general?

Dan Brown: I've had some stomach pains and occasionally diarrhea.

Dr. Rakel: Are the pains worse in the morning or in the evening?

Dan Brown: I'd say in the evening.

Dr. Rakel: Are you taking any medications?

Dan Brown: No, I'm not.

Dr. Rakel: Would you describe what happens when you go to bed at night?

Dan Brown: I just lie there, thinking. I'm about to be transferred to another city and I've been running around tying up some loose ends.

Dr. Rakel: Do you toss and turn much when you're falling asleep or have any tingling in your legs?

Dan Brown: No.

Dr. Rakel: Are you eating okay? How are you eating?

Dan Brown: Mainly its been junk food on the run, mixed in with large business luncheons as well as some farewell dinners with some friends.

Dr. Rakel: Are you drinking much alcohol?

Dan Brown: Some wine with lunch, two or three drinks at dinner time and an occasional brandy later to help me sleep.

Question #3: What is Dan's probable diagnosis?

- a. depression
- b. anxiety
- c. alcoholism

Dr. Kramer: Dan's stomach problems get worse as the day wears on and may exacerbate his night time sleeplessness. Fortunately, he isn't using stimulant drugs which often contribute to wakefulness. However he'd be better off with a light diet and reduced alcohol intake. If depression had been the problem, it's more likely that Dan would have complained of early morning awakenings and not being able to get back to sleep. Also his stomach pains might well have diminished as the day progressed.

Dr. Rakel: In cases of situational anxiety, I often first prescribe physical exercise or deep muscle relaxation exercises. I recommend jogging, swimming, handball, or whatever the patient enjoys doing and what's most available. I find that exercise seems to help the patient's whole mental outlook.

The next patient, Jim Bowen, is a 22 year-old master's degree student presented perplexing symptoms which he reluctantly disclosed. On falling asleep Jim complained that his legs sometimes became paralyzed or that he heard frightening noises although no one was there. He often woke up during the night and had difficulty getting back to sleep. Then, unexpectedly, two or three times a day he'd fall asleep for five or ten minutes. And occasionally, when he laughed, he'd feel weak in the knees and have to catch himself to keep from falling.

Question #4: What is Jim's probable diagnosis?

- a. primary insomnia
- b. night terrors
- c. sleep apnea
- d. narcolepsy

Dr. Kramer: We observed Jim's sleep in the lab for three nights. We taped electrodes to his head, face and chest to measure brain waves, eye movement, chin and other muscle activity and heart rate.

Dr. Rakel: What characterizes REM sleep? How did you treat Jim's narcolepsy? Here's a case that gave me a problem. Jenny Thompson, a 72 year-old retired school teacher couldn't get to sleep at night because of cramping feelings in her legs. When she did fall asleep, she would often awake, and have difficulty getting back to sleep again.

Jenny: I wake up in the middle of the night with these creepy-crawly sensations in my legs. I can't lie in bed and I get up and walk around. I can't stand it. My husband complains I keep him awake too.

Dr. Rakel: How do you keep him awake, by getting up out of bed?

Jenny: No, by kicking him.



Dr. Rakel: How many times do you get up a night?

Jenny: Oh three or four times.

Dr. Rakel: How long has this been going on?

Jenny: Ten to twelve years.

Dr. Rakel: And how long does it take you to fall asleep at night?

Jenny: One to two hours.

Dr. Rakel: Do your legs feel restless then?

Jenny: Yes. My God, you can't imagine.

Dr. Rakel: Have you ever had epileptic attacks?

Jenny: No.

Dr. Rakel: Do you drink much liquor?

Jenny: No, just a glass of wine with dinner.

Question #5: What is the probable diagnosis?

Dr. Kramer: Women in the second half of life seem more susceptible to this disorder, nocturnal myoclonus. The best treatment we can offer is

benzodiazapenes taken an hour or two before sleep to suppress the jerking movements.

Dr. Rakel: Are there guidelines for dealing with the sleep problems of the elderly?

Dr. Kramer: Yes.

# Testimonials

Yudi: I guess Steve was the first person I went out with that didn't have a lot of hair. I'm used to going out with people who have a lot of hair on their head, but I really like the fact that I could run my hand through his... his hair and feel his scalp. This was a really sensuous thing for me, to feel his scalp.

Jin: He embraces this wonderful masculinity with a very sensitive touch. He caresses very gently and he, you know he's not like others, he wouldn't be very abrupt. You end up with all this very satisfying warmth in your system. Its a prolonged experience where every little gesture, every little caress or kissing or hugging is blown up to wonderful, wonderful proportions.

Louisa: I don't think I'd ever spend that long or so much time making love with someone before. The hours were endless. It was pretty wonderful. I can't believe how detailed, how every inch, every part of my body felt like it was known, or covered. Or in some way explored.

Yudi: I guess just sitting and watching tv was one of my most favourite things to do with Steve. Because it would allow me to touch him in a way that was, that wasn't focussed on. I could touch him, but we'd be



watching tv and then we'd be concentrating on the tv so when I touched him it wouldn't be as big a deal so I could do what I wanted to. So we watched a lot of tv.

Louisa: In fact I think in some ways that maybe I took over a little bit. Like maybe it was more of my own fantasy that came out. I mean Steve definitely had a presence and that was important but I think he allowed me to kind of just let go and be in some ways a little crazy or a little explorative with my own body definitely, but definitely with his as well. He's very generous.

Joe: Steve and I get along mainly because of his physical prowess. I've never met an athlete with a better body than Steve had. He could do things just with pure flexibility and strength that I've never seen another human being do before. I think mainly that's why... He could play tennis really well and I think that's what first attracted me to him sexually was the way he would hit a top-spin lob. I've never seen a top-spin lob hit with quite such finesse. He brought that finesse into his love-making. Not that there's any real connection between his tennis and his love-making... Well there was, in a way. I mean, he knew how to control his body, he knew how to move in space. He knew where he was.

Hall: He's much lighter than a lot of other people. He's very caring, I find. He's someone that I feel I can reveal or at least expose various parts of what I am

and what sort of a sex partner I am really. I feel that Steve as a sex partner is... I said he was warm, I also said he was light. As well he... Steve has nice legs and he has nice arms and it seems to me he's a lot more than that too. He's a lot of things that I look for.

Louisa: Almost every time it was as if he was finding out something new about my body. Trying things but always in a very respectful and kind of curious and maybe even a little boyish way. I mean definitely, definitely.

Hall: He reflects me to a great extent. But outside of that I really, I don't know. I would imagine that part of what Steve has been is certain proximity to truth, in some sense. Truth about what kind of sex or how sex really is. Sex is a thing that you really shouldn't be dishonest about, I guess. Not that that makes any sense. Steve is a good sex partner for a lot of reasons—A lot more than I've really outlined.

# Little Faggot

Little Faggot: I am a baby lying in a crib and my name is Little Faggot. I just lie here, nothing much happens. Occasionally someone bends over me and talks for a while. And just because I cannot yet keep my saliva contained within its oral cavity, just because my eyes tend to go blurry, just because I seem to enjoy wallowing in my own shit and piss, doesn't mean I don't listen to their monologues, and doesn't mean I don't understand them. For I understand them with the innocence and purity of a new-born, although I am already four months old.

Father: How do we end up believing in things we know not to be true? There is a superstition that if a woman conceives without orgasm the child will have a mean streak. Yes, the more dismal the coupling the more likely a sociopath will result. Let me admit to you, Little Faggot, that your mother never orgasms when I have intercourse with her; it takes manual or oral stimulation. Believe me, there is nothing unusual in this and I have no complaints, but still I was worried about the superstition. If I ate her out after intercourse, conception would likely occur prior to orgasm, so I couldn't be sure if the orgasm would count or not. And for her to orgasm prior to intercourse seemed inappropriate. But when you

arrived all my worries left, for you are truly sweet-tempered, Little Faggot.

Scientist: Well Little Faggot, although science has not yet completed a full mapping of the human genome, we have managed to map certain chunks of it. We've been assessing the quality of your genetic material and the happy results are in. When fully grown you will be 6'4", highly intelligent with green eyes, largish genitals, and translucent fingernails. It seems you are immune to all known diseases. Also your hair will grow very fast and the ends will never split. Well, good bye for now blessed Little Faggot. I will keep you updated as more results come in.

**Grandfather: Many years ago, Little Faggot, when I was a young man, I was in love with a boy and his sister. Yes, Little Faggot, it's true. On Tuesdays the boy would carry me up to his tree fort and we would make such passionate love I was sure the little wooden structure would come unstuck and we'd fall forever earthward. Then on Thursdays the sister would take me into her bed and we'd rock and rock as if we were a raft come unmoored in the gentle Pacific. When they were simultaneously killed in the same tragic accident I turned my back forever on the world of love and resolutely entered the world of commerce. And I was very good at it. That is why, Little Faggot, you are a millionaire in your crib. Your trust fund collecting interest with every shit you take.**

# Long Train Ride

Song:

*I might be ugly, but soon I'll be clean.*

*I have washed away all desire.*

*It went swirling down the drain.*

*All desire has been loosed from my frame.*

*Now each day stands before me like a freshly laundered shirt.*

*Now my desire roams the earth.*

*It is free. It is nebulous.*

*Sometimes it calls to me, but I don't have to answer.*

*I am clean. I am clean.*

If you followed this desire where would it lead you?

**It would be a long train ride to grandmother's house.**



# Lonely Boy

Teen girls scream: We want Paul. (repeat)

Image: Kip reading magazine

Teen girl 1: He's so nice, oh I love him, he's a doll. He's such a wonderful, I can't describe him. He has such a wonderful personality.

Teen girl 2: He's so sweet and so cute and I like him.

Image: Kip reading magazine

Woman: He's perfectly charming, he's delightful, he sings beautifully. I just love the boy and he's so full of enthusiasm and so grand.

Image: Kip reading magazine

Woman: He has a sympathetic personality and a very keen mind. Precise person he thinks in a straight line. Practical person with very good judgment. Very versatile, there's a great many things he can do. He's optimistic, always optimistic.

Image: Kip jerking off

Photographer: I do this too much.

Image: Kip jerking off

Image: girls scream

Image: Kip jerking off

V/o, Paul: When I was fifteen years old I was a fat kid. I was 170 pounds. I had a part here and a part there. This went up and this came down and it looks as crazy as it sounds. I was a heavy kid and it didn't look like I was meant for show business at all but I had this bubbling inside of me and I wanted to sing and I did. After I got in the business I made up my mind that one of the things that you gotta have or you're gonna go this far and you're gonna stop and you can't get over it, you gotta have appeal. You have to act and look like you're in show business or you're not going to make it. And I had to lose thirty-five pounds. So I went to the coast when I was out there and I went to a guy and I got a guy and I said take it off I don't care how. I worked out in a gym four hours a day, I steamed, running, everything. Had to fix my hair. Touch my, I kept putting it back, letting it go, I had to brush it and I had to keep putting stuff on it and I had to keep doing it, it took me a year and a half to get it like that.

Image: girls scream

Image: Kip jerk off

V/o, Paul: On the subject of girls, you asked me about their reaction? Well I'll tell you this business that I'm in I would say sixty percent is on emotion and a word which we all know and I'm no averse to using but it's the only word which can sum up what I have say which is sex. It inspires the girls who turn out and to scream, and standing, crying, something I wouldn't knock. It's something I'm not against. It's something I don't disapprove of. It's something I'm very happy of.

Manager: Paul's features are excellent. His eyes are great, he has a great mouth, and it's no secret that last year we had a plastic surgery job on his nose and if you were to look at some of his pictures four years ago and then see Paul today you've believe it's the same person and people even say this now. If they haven't seen any of the new pictures and they then see him in person, this is the comment, I'm sure that you must have heard it around, he doesn't look the same as his pictures, he's so handsome. Now Paul will be twenty in July and it's very simple for me personally to keep him working and to keep all the other young stars working on one night tours. But when you're planning a career you say well where do you go from here?

Image: Kip jerks off

Club owner: You want the waiters to move around a little bit? Bruno. Tell the waiters to move around. You know what I mean? He has a terrific personality. The

public takes to him, they like him, as soon as he steps out on the floor he has no problem with entertainment in any shape or form. Is it alright if I light a cigar? No cover charge. (laughs) Yes.

Image: Kip jerks off

Manager: Many nights we sat down and we've discussed this thing till the wee hours of the morning and I've told him I've said Paul, you no longer belong to yourself, you belong to the world. God gave you something that I don't think he's given to anyone in the past five hundred years. But he's given it to you, he's given it to you to make other people throughout the world happy.

Image: Kip jerks off

Image: girls scream

Image: Kip jerks off

Image: girls scream

Image: Kip jerks off

Image: girls scream

Image: Kip ejaculates

Image: girls scream

Image: Kip ejaculates slow motion

Image: girls scream

Image: Kip ejaculates

Image: crowd

Image: Kip ejaculates

Image: girls in crowd

Image: Kip's face flickers

Image: girls in crowd

Image: Kip fade out to black



# I Love You, Too

Lately I've been receiving rather desperate and obsessive letters from several persons who've seen my videos and decided to fall in love with me. They've never met me and have no idea what I look like. It is simply the grain of my voice which has inspired their apparent devotion.





## Charming Mutt

I once had a lover who would occasionally transform into a dog — and not even a purebred. Instead, some patchwork mutt of scrappy fur — but not without charm, not without beauty. It happened when I rubbed his prostate a certain way, and then I'd be trapped, I wouldn't be able to pull out. So I'd have to finish fucking him and after a few minutes I'd be released from his butt. Then I'd be really tired, I'd want to take a nap, but he'd want to play so I'd give him a biscuit and take him out for a walk. We'd go to the park and roll down green hills. I'd rub his belly and everyone who passed would rub his belly. They'd say, "Oh what a nice looking dog you have, what a charming mutt."



# Ice Cream

Sometimes it takes a little while to figure out what it is we really want. At certain time many things can look very good but really it is probably something very specific that we crave, something we may not even have a name for as we have never come across it. This is the same basic impulse that results in the creation of new and unlikely ice cream flavours.

Like everyone else, I've been somewhat unlucky in love due largely to inappropriate object choices. Now I realize that what I've wanted all along is a boy without bones. I know that bones are important, even vital, but I've always found them unappealing. In fact, without my knowing it, they've disgusted me. In particular, the overcomplicated bones of the foot, the unnecessary harshness of a jutting hip, the skull which begs to be cracked open like an egg, full of unreachable thoughts. It is with sorrow that I acknowledge that a boy without bones could exist in any viable form and of course I have other criteria, so even if a small village of such people were found, there may not be one among them that appealed to me sufficiently that I could fall in love. But one always has recourse to fantasy, or, as it is more generally called today, creative visualization. What follows is a creative visualization designed to give me comfort and pleasure.

— Hello.

— Hi.

— I couldn't help noticing, but you seem not to have any bones.

— That's true. Like a shark or nose, I am composed of thick sheets of cartilage. It makes my body somewhat squat.

— But still appealing, and you have a very nice face.

— Thank you. I'm not very graceful on land, but put me in water and I can swim like nobody's business.

— Do you like to watch television?

— Yes.

— Which do you like better—*The Simpsons* or *Star Trek: The Next Generation*?

— Of course I like them both, but have a marked preference for the *Simpsons*.

— Of yes, me too. Do you prefer the Gothic to the Romanesque?

— Oh no, I'll take the Romanesque any day.

— And finally, what is your favourite colour?

— That is a difficult question, for all colours have the capacity to delight me. Orange.

— Bingo. I am in love. Is reciprocation a possibility?

— Yes.



# Request

Phil

Hi.

Hi, I'm doing a video. I'm wondering if you would take your clothes off for the video?

Sure, do you want to do it here? Come in. Come in Steve.

I think there might be a problem with the light.

(whispering) I'm embarrassed. It was too fast.

No, it should be OK

Sacha

Come in. Come in Steve.

Hi Sacha. I'm doing a video where I'm asking people to take their clothes off so I'm wondering if you could take your clothes off.

Sure. Can I keep my boots on?

Well, sure.

Well this is an interesting way to start the day off. I kind of like these shorts. I figure I'll keep them on.

Well, that's acceptable I guess. Let's change places though because you're pretty harshly back lit.

Jack

Uh, hi Jack. I'm doing a video where I ask people to take off their clothes so I was wondering if you'd take off your clothes for the video.

OK, sure. So just start taking off my clothes?

Yeah.

Robin

Hi Steve.

Hi Robin. I'm doing a video where I ask people to take their clothes off and I was wondering if you would take your clothes off for the video.

Sure, I'd love to.

Robert

Hi Steve.

Hi Robert. It looks like you're busy but I'm doing a video and I'm wondering if you could be in it.

. . . but I have been really bad about it because, because I, don't feel strongly about submitting it, but they are an incredible group of people to work with. I have nothing but praise for their project officers, the work they do and how they're worked with us. And I cannot say that . . .

Like wise they were very complimentary not only about you, but in general about the organization.

So the other thing is that I should be getting them in on time.

OK. So do I set that?

Yes.

Oh.

It is fairly easy to do. It's a matter of — occasionally — like I'll get this, they want, the next will be July 10, and Barr and I will be . . .



# Jason

When I was twelve my mother died and I went to live with my grandfather who was very old. Every morning we had fried eggs and at night we had beans and hamburgers. Every couple of days he gave a twenty dollar bill. I put most of it in the bank. I could play my music as loud as I wanted because he was pretty deaf. When I was fifteen I got my first tattoo. It was proof my skin had been touched at least once.



# Experiment



During this film you'll need to take down notes and readings from the screen.

We are going to investigate and we shall need to be able to measure how much.

We shall use this machine.

First of all let's take a look inside to see how it works.

It looks complicated but the principle is simple.

For this demonstration let's turn out the lights.

**What.**



# Editorial

What is the difference between science and life? Step away from that microscope for a second and I'll tell you.

As many of you are aware, a startling discovery was made in late '92 by a team of marine microbiologists. They discovered, in the belly of a species of fish indigenous to the Great Barrier Reef, a new type of bacteria — one ten times larger than any previously known, so large (in the neighbourhood of .4 or .5 millimeters) that we cannot even refer to it as a micro-organism.

We have believed for well over eighty years that bacterium have definite size restraints dictated by their structural simplicity. Presented with the fact of this monstrous new species, we are forced to consider what we know as possibly false. It seems, for instance, that we can no longer believe that internal protein transportation occurs merely by diffusion — more complex bio-chemical pathways now seem likely, and we must work to articulate them.

A stream of words leaves our mouths and cuts a path through the dumb world. Behind us monsters and other anomalies slowly come into being. They are defined by our words. They are the somewhat disagreeable agents of speech- proliferation.

**But what about the fish? It has iridescent blue markings and all along has been fairly popular with tropical fish enthusiasts.**



# Understanding Heterosexuality

I've always been curious about heterosexuality. The fact that heterosexuals exist seems to me improbable. But you just have to throw a rock and you're likely to hit one-they're everywhere. I've tried asking them about the roots-the genesis-of their heterosexuality, but they are unable to understand the question. It seems they think of heterosexuality-a term, incidentally, they rarely have any reason to use — as the degree zero of sexual identity, so normal it is completely without qualities or attributes. Recently though I found this magazine. It's from 1977. Its called *Rendezvous: The Midwest Voice of Swinging* and I think it sheds some light on the phenomenon of heterosexuality. I've been using it as a guidebook to the spectrum of heterosexual behaviour. Like many strange and foreign things it is simultaneously alluring and repulsive. Mostly, though, it's repulsive. I'm fairly appalled that the continuation of the species seems predicated on certain types of heterosexual behaviour. But I look forward to a more biotechnologically advanced future when this will no longer necessarily be the case.



# Pioneer

Recently I attended my maternal grandparents 55th wedding anniversary. It made me a little bit sad looking at them and thinking how a fully articulated spectrum of sexual pleasures had been denied to them. How it was only by a supreme act of will my grandmother was able to squeeze out a few milliliters of vaginal lubrication. The passionless missionary humping that produced a half dozen stunned off-spring, aunts and uncles of varying sexual ineptitude. And then it occurred to me that I'm in the unique historical position of being a sexual pioneer, an investigator into the once forbidden realms of sensual pleasures. I'm developing new territories and boundaries for the body — both my own body, and the body in general. I am working toward the reclamation of an Edenic purity, a totally pre-lapsarian delight where one body flows into another, and its not important where an individual ends and the universe begins.



# My Personal Virus

So this is a particle of me, this little sketch. Its pretty schematic, but it should give you some idea of how it functions, my personal virus, my envoy into the world of corporeal intimacy.

This is the hard protein shell and these are site-specific proteins on the surface of the shell. Site-specific in the same way that much contemporary installation art is, for instance. On the inside are the strands of genetic material.

It enters your body kind as a smell, a scent kind of like bay leaves. It sticks in your nose, it gets lodged, and it burrows until it hits a capillary. And then it begins to do its work, which is reproducing: reproduction. It doesn't want to take over or anything; it isn't really a threat to your autonomy. Of course you will produce antibodies against me — some of you even develop a full-blown allergic reaction — but it will be too late. You'll be in love.





## **Vision (with Birds)**

I had a vision — it wasn't a dream because I was awake. My father was dragging my mother into the forest by her hair. She was on her back and it was really shitty weather, huge thunderstorm, lots of lightning. I know she's kind of conscious because her head's swaying and she's moaning. He gets to this tree and he starts climbing it, pulling her up by the ankles. It's a really tall tree, the tallest around, and he keeps climbing, her dress is soiled and ripped, she's full of little cuts and bruises, but still her hair is perfect, held in place with pins and lacquer.

My vision ended there, but the most probable conclusion is:

My father climbs down from the tree. He goes home, fixes himself a little snack, listens to some distant symphony on his transistor radio.

**When my mother wakes up its morning. She yawns and stretches, the sky blue all around her, birds singing. She's so high up she can see the whole village. She climbs down the tree, goes home, cleans up all her little wounds with disinfectant and flesh-toned bandages. Her hair is still perfect, so she just has to change and then she can go to church.**

A photograph of a person driving a car, seen from the passenger side. The driver is looking forward. The car's interior, including the steering wheel and dashboard, is visible. The background shows a blurred view of a road and other vehicles. Overlaid on the right side of the image is a list of ten self-help statements in a light blue, monospace-style font. The title 'Self Help' is in a large, bold, white serif font in the bottom left corner.

# Self Help

I spend too much time worrying about the future.

I have difficulty expressing my wants and needs to coworkers and family members.

I don't eat as well as I should.

If my car broke down, I wouldn't know how fix it.

I can't even change a tire.

I don't always recycle.

I prefer the Gothic to the Romanesque.

I have never voiced an original thought or opinion.

I frequently wish I possessed a wholly different life.

My heart becomes erratic at the stethoscope's touch.

# My Erotic Double



Let me introduce my erotic double.

Hi.

What is your name?

I do not need a name. You can call me Steve.

Are you a wholly libidinous creature?

Yes, I am wholly libidinous. I glow.

What did you have for lunch?

My nutrition is psychic, three square meals. I eat desire. I seek it out. I'm swimming in it.

What do you look like?

I'm covered with tendrils. A thousand or so cilia projecting into the three dimensions of space and undulating in the fourth dimension: time.

How do you experience time?

Of course I do not wear a wrist watch. I am the paramecium of lust. I experience time as a gentle wave, a steady hum which sets me vibrating in my ditch.

Nice meeting you.

Likewise.

Thank you.

Thank you.

# Sleep

Sometimes it's hard to figure out what we really want. In fact it's impossible to determine what one's deepest, most profound desires are by any direct means. Desires are small and sneaky animals protected by complexes of defense mechanisms. True desires hide behind the masks of false desires, desires only indirectly expressed, indirectly desired. It takes a true professional of love to tell us what we really want.

It is my true desire, Thom, to ascertain your true desires. I want to know exactly what you really want. I didn't bother to ask you, because I knew any answers you could give me would at best be partial. I wanted to capture the truth in its rarest, most primal form. Little animals of desire burrowing into the deepest layers of your psyche, I want to cup their shivering little bodies in my hands and bring them into the light. So I've been watching you as you sleep. Even though your slumbers look very peaceful, I know that inside you are seething. After all everything of importance happens in our sleep, below our dreams. So I whisper things into your sleeping ear, possible desires transcribed into verbal form, and I watch. I observe you to see which ones give you an erection. I must admit I was surprised how well my methods worked, but one of your erections looks pretty much

like another so I could not tell which of my whispered fantasies really really turned you on and which turned you on to a lesser degree. As it happened, almost everything I whisper into your ear does give you an erection. So what my system of desire-retrieval needed most was a ranking system.

In the last couple of weeks my goal has been to cause you to have a nocturnal emission by whispering these increasingly elaborate scenarios of desire into your sleeping brain. I feel I'm getting closer to determining what it is you really want. I've decided to let you know what I am doing because lately you've begun to express your dissatisfaction at our relationship. Well now you know why I've been sleeping all day — I'm up all night plying your psyche for some sort of ultimate truth. And of course its best that, for the duration of this project anyway, physical intimacy be replaced by this psychic type of intimacy. But I feel confident that if you just hang on for another couple of weeks, things will be better than ever in the area of carnality. Soon I'll be able to let you know exactly what it is that you really want.



# Dream Work

We have been encouraged to analyze our sexless dreams as being latently sexual, full of repressed writhing bodies and blood-gorged organs. This project, this analysis, is referred to as dream work. It assumes latent thought is transformed by the processes of condensation and displacement into the manifest content of the dream.

Perhaps you've heard that sexually explicit dreams are rare, all the x-rated bits condensed and displaced into their coded manifest form. But my dreams are so full of graphic sexual acts, I've had trouble tracing back to the kernel of latent thought that should be hidden within. The latent and manifest have seemingly been transposed.

There are three possible explanations:

1. Repeated exposure to the banality of pornography has made it unnecessary for me to repress explicitly sexual thoughts.
2. When I am dreaming of spurting dicks I am really dreaming of something else.
3. There has been a total breakdown in the mechanisms of condensation and displacement, short-circuiting the usual movement from latent to manifest. I am dreaming in reverse, which makes my waking hours increasingly tenuous.



# Artifact

These images are from a film the CBC made in the early seventies. It's part of a series about children from different parts of the world, although I've only ever come across this particular episode. It's about an elephant boy from Sri Lanka. I was a child on the brink of puberty when I first saw it, and I guess you could say it made a deep impression. I remember it very well, or at least parts of it. Of course I can't claim to remember it exactly in its entirety. Memory is just a sub-routine of desire, so what I've tried to do here, and I've been pretty successful, is to re-create for you the edited version of the film that desire has consigned to my memory. So what you are looking at is a rare and genuine artifact of the psyche. I'm not going to make any attempts to interpret this artifact-any attempt would at best be partial, half-true. It's enough I think that I have been able to discover and re-create this precious artifact.





# Monologue (with Provocation)

— Yeah. I did. Did I telling you the truth. Do I never. I don't know what it was it just. The same thing, same thing. I wish I could help, I really do wish I could help you. I never did it again and again. I only did it four times. If I can answer that lady I'm gonna answer it. You get those people who did it to me. I hate myself. Everything was working fine and I was finding things out. No. Yes and I'm paying for it. I'm paying dearly for it. I've lost the respect of my children. I've lost the respect of my wife. I'm just a man in prison. I don't have no friends. Feel sorry for. You mean everything in the world to me. You mean everything to me and I'm so sorry. Think of me. I have to live with you the rest of my life. I know I never will. Everybody think so when was. Am I could be. My education isn't that good. A father of a son and three daughters I raised them all except this one, this one was punished for it, this one punished perfect but she paid for it. You want to know something, answer me.

— Why don't you get psychiatric help? (question from talk show audience)

applause, black out.



# Child

This child has confused the concept "angel" with the idea "snowman."

The warm air is shot through with small icy arrows.





# Windy Morning in April

I dreamt I could suck myself off but when I woke up I found my spine was nowhere near that flexible.

Is it time to dismiss impossible desires?

It was a windy day in April and I awoke thinking summer was ending.

# Love Letter to Doug

I think it's true what they say in all those songs: falling in love requires overvaluing the tiny ways in which one individual varies from another. It's true, but also beside the point. When I say I value your tiny ways, cherish is the word that could be substituted. I like things better when you are around. You are my preference. If I were ever to replace you, for whatever reason, however much I liked the new person, there would be a space, a lack, left from your departure that would remain forever empty, unfilled.

When I was in grade 8 I would sit in history and dream about the other guys in class. My imaginings were vague but systematic; I went through each of the boys in turn, not alphabetically but according to their proximity. I seized upon whatever boy fell into my line of vision. The classroom became a libidinally charged arena of possibilities. In my promiscuous imaginings I had them all, and liked them all, though some more than others. It was a series of crushes, each lasting three weeks which took me till the end of the school year. I imagined the warmth and luminance of skin beneath t-shirts and jeans. I imagined them jerking off as well as jerking them off. But mostly I

imagined some distant future as an adult and what it would be like living with them. Of course, at the time these seemed impossible imaginings. Two men, a husband without a wife. I didn't think about that though, I kept myself a genital blur, erasing everything but my myopic eyes and a little patch of skin. All I knew for sure was that I wanted the guys to be guys, even if that meant I had to be nothing.

Anyway Doug, this letter is just to say that whether or not you are the product of all my pre-pubescent imaginings, you are the one I want to live with. And now when I imagine the future you are always there.



# Three Plays

How I Imagined It Would Be

Marshmallow Roast

Game of Catch



# Screensaver

I am your screensaver. I am your therapist.



# Symposium



*I dreamt the University of Minnesota held a symposium of serial killers and Joseph Beuys gave the key-note address.*

I am here today to talk about social sculpture.

We must begin with the wound. A wound of sufficient depth [gravity] that it is a matter of resurrection rather than healing.

Every nation has the artists it deserves.

Democracy is fun [merry].

The road to utopia is messy. It is littered with many innocent [indifferent] corpses.

The cut worm forgives the plow.

Honey turns to sand.

The difference between lead and copper is superficial.

I am not speaking of blood-lust but of a concern for the flesh of a nation.

**It does not take so [too] long for shadow to turn to bone.**

# Jin's Dream

I dreamt that I went to art school and when I woke up — I mean when I graduated — I got this job designing pornographic playing cards. It was more or less just a paste-up job. I was given a pile of pictures and the templates for all the cards. All I had to do was decide which image went with each card. But instead of just doing it randomly, which would have pleased the boss just fine, I had this feeling — like a really important premonition — that it would really make a difference which picture went with which card. I thought that if I got it right, I would unlock some hidden key and some important piece of information would be revealed to me. Of course with the eighty pictures I had to choose from, there was a possible 80 times 52 factorial combinations — that's about  $6.45 \times 10^{69}$  zillions and zillions. With those odds I was convinced something important could be learned from the proper arrangement. I just needed the time. So after working day and night for about three days, all I had accomplished was finding the dozen or so guys who might possibly be the Ace of Hearts. But then the boss came in and I was fired.





# Ghost Production

At those places where an object known to be lost is desired a ghost is produced. The tentative, partial fulfillment of an unrealizable wish; the residue the process of mourning deposits as a fine chemical dust over all the objects in our mother's and grandmother's living rooms: melancholia. These ghosts consistently fail to speak in a language we can readily comprehend. Of course they know we want something from them. After all we have called them into being for — apparently — a specific purpose. Still they refuse to tell us why we have conjured them. Instead they just go about their business. It seems our ghosts are not pure, they are caught in their own webs of desire. So our ghosts have ghosts.

Is this why there is so little grace in our imaginings? Will we be left alone with our dwindling bank accounts and the taste of metal at the root of the tongue?



# Minnesota Inventory

title scroll left to right from beginning to end of video:

I like mechanics magazines. I have a good appetite. I wake fresh and rested most mornings. I think I would like the role of a librarian. I am easily awakened by noise. I like to read newspaper articles on crime. My head and feet are usually warm enough. My daily life is full of things that keep me interested. I am about as able to work as I ever was. There seem to be a lump in my throat much of the time. A person should try to understand his dreams and be guided by or take warning from them. I enjoy detective or mystery stories. I work under a great deal of tension. I have diarrhea once a month. Once in a while I think of things too bad to talk about. I am sure I get a raw deal from life. My father was a good man. I am very seldom troubled by constipation. When I take a new job, I like to be tipped off on who should be gotten next to. My sex life is satisfactory. At times I have very much wanted to leave home. At times I have fits of laughing and crying that I cannot control. I am troubled by attacks of nausea and vomiting. No one seems to understand me. I would like to be a singer. I feel that it is certainly best to keep my mouth shut when I'm in trouble. Evil spirits possess me at times. I am bothered by acid stomach several times a week. At times I feel like swearing. I have nightmares every few nights. I find it hard to keep a task or job. I have had very peculiar and strange experiences. I have a cough most of the time. If people had not had it in for me, I would have been rich and successful. I seldom

worry about my health. During one period when I was a youngster I engaged in petty thievery. At times I feel like smashing the things. Most of the time I would rather sit and daydream than do anything else. My family does not like the work I have chosen. My sleep is fitful and disturbed. Much of the time my head seems to hurt all over. I do not always tell the truth. My judgment is better than it ever was. Once a week or oftener I feel suddenly hot all over, without apparent cause. When I am with people I am bothered by hearing very strange things. It would be better if almost all rules were thrown away. My soul sometimes leaves my body. I am in just as good physical health as most of my friends. A minister can cure disease by praying and putting his head on your head. I am liked by most people who know me. I am almost never bothered by pains over the heart or in my chest. As a youngster I was suspended from school one or more times for cutting up. I am a good mixer. Everything is turning out just like the prophets in the Bible said it would. I have often had to take orders from someone who did not know as much as I did. I do not read every editorial in the newspaper every day. I have not led the right kind of life. Parts of my body often have feelings like burning, tingling or like "going to sleep." I sometimes keep on at a thing until others lose their patience with me. I loved my father. I see things or animals or people around me that others do not see. I wish I could be as happy as others seem to be. I hardly ever feel pain in the back of the neck. I am very strongly attracted to members of

my own sex. I am an important person. I have often wished I were a girl. I get angry sometimes. My feelings are not easily hurt. I sometimes tease animals. I think I would the kind of work a forest ranger does. I am easily drowned in an argument. Any man who is able and willing has had a good chance of succeeding. These days I find it hard not to give up hope of amounting to something. I am entirely lacking in self-confidence. I would like to be a florist. I usually feel that life is worth while. It takes a lot of argument to convince most people of the truth once in a while I put off until tomorrow what I ought to do today. I do not mind being made fun of. I would like to be a nurse. I think most people would like to get ahead. I do many things which I regret afterwards. I go to church almost every week. I have very few quarrels with members of my family. At times I have a strong urge to do something harmful or shocking. I believe in the second coming of Christ. I like to go to parties and other affairs where there is lots of fun. My harshest battles are with myself. I have little or no...

Man talks in sync sound, he is naked and masturbates throughout:

I'm trying to like, when I see this film I want to, I want to know what it was like for those cops in the country jail to see me sitting on a toilet taking a crap because later I'll probably watch this and jerk off. I look in the

mirror and I jerk off all the time, it gives me a hard-on. It turns me on. People order my free photos and I'm sending them out, putting them in an envelope... Sometimes I'm putting it in an envelope and I look and when I see myself and it's like I'm looking oat someone else because all of a sudden I get real turned on and I have to drop to the floor like a ton of motherfucking bricks and my knees hit the floor and I get that picture down, down to the rug and I take my motherfucking clothes off real fast and just jerk off about seven times in a row.

Now last time I took a shit what more can I do? Besides jerk off in front of everybody, beside whack off in front of everybody and shoot my sperm out in front of the camera so everybody can eat it. I have sucked myself off and swallowed the come that was hot. The at was some of the hottest sex I've ever had, ever. I think that jerking off in front of everybody, letting everybody see it is actually ultimate. Then I experience ecstasy that people will see this happening, thinking about my prick. I think about sex, that's what I feel like. I feel like a piece of sex, that's what I am. I exists as a piece of sex. I am sex.

Sometimes when I walk down the street I can come in my pants if I get excited. If it's a real scary situation I can throw a wad right in my fucking pants man. A cat pulls a blade on me walking down the street I know he's gonna try and cut me and shit, usually before I take it away from him I come in the process like



standing on the edge of a cliff that's exciting. I could jerk off like that fuck around with rattlesnakes.

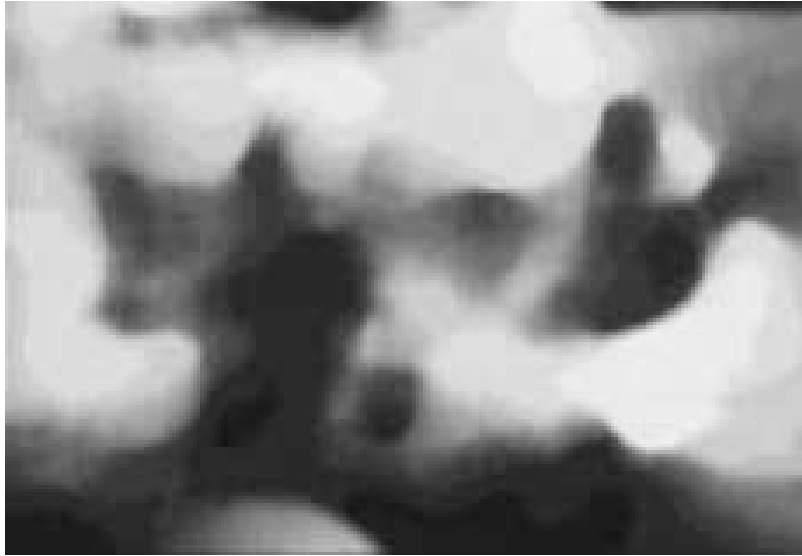
But this is cool, I've got another way to do it, watch. I hate to flush this good shit down the toilet man it's a waste. People would pay a lot of fucking money to have that, even more if you eat it, a lot more. Don't be surprised, most people are not surprised, I know some people are, don't be. I can spit on a piece of paper and sell it. I have. I sold my fingernails, my clippings, everything you can sell, my used clothes, jockstrap, underwear, pants, everything. Come? I used to sell it by the gram.

Put the camera over here, I think it's time I get stripped down so there's nothing on even my feet should be seen by people. You know the reason I want people to see shit and come and the violence and rape<sup>3</sup> like that I don't want evidence that I'm fucking crazy on film you dig? I'd much rather come to something that's socially acceptable. I can come to anything at all if it's a guy or a girl or come or shit or piss or cock or tits or anything. But the world will accept this. Look at her. Christ. That is unfuckingbelievable. Blows my mind. They're even more subservient than guys. They do really crazy things they scream and everything. Look at that. Unfuckingbelievable. All right. It's like I have a harem. I've done this before, that's why the pictures are all cut out like this. No body's ever gotten to see this. Not even gotten to pay to see it. It's a secret.

(he lays out pictures of nude women on the floor)

Sit on the floor like a little scumbag and point the camera. That's what you're here for. Look at that. You're beautiful. This one here. She's ready to get fucked. I can tell. Look I'll come for her anyway. Yeah. How many eggs left in your pussy, must be about time get down between her legs and lick it, fuck her real hard. (blows her a kiss) Look at the size of that prick. Do you realize how many people in the world have sucked this prick? Thousands, literally thousands of people have sucked this prick and taken my wad either in the pussy or in the asshole or in the mouth. Can you imagine what's like for me? Orgasm after orgasm. You know how many guys and girls I've had in my life, given sperm baths to and pissed on and fucked? Know how many checks are going around pregnant right now? Little kids out there who don't know their fucking father? Ain't my fault man I didn't know any better, don't blame me. I couldn't help it. Oh Christ. Oh God. I'm a caveman. I'm reptilian. I'm an animal. I'm going to come.

That's what. That's what it's really like in early life. When we were cave men, reptilian mind. There's no such thing as inhibition, nothing fucking matters man. It's just a bunch of neutrons and protons coming down from the sun and bombarding us all day long and fuck it. What does it all mean? It's like..."



## **Re-enactment of a Performance**

This video is a re-enactment of Joseph Beuys' important performance "How to Explain Pictures to a Dead Hare."

It was necessary to make some changes.

We can no longer be certain of the efficacy of any discourse on aesthetics or visual representation.

We can only be skeptical of the need for lectures to be delivered at a sub-audible level.

We openly question the ability of deceased animals to comprehend arguments, whether complex or relatively simple, whatever their abilities when alive.

There is no need to bring anything into focus. We capture all material with perfect acuity.

An example of mountains:

## **Three Examples**

An example of mountains:

One sees them on hunchbacks and on those with thick and enormous growths.

An example of eclipse:

This can be seen in faintings and in heart failure or suffocations of the womb.

An example of stones:

One sees them in persons from whom one has extracted them.

One sees them on hunchbacks and

The first Apollo moon landing was not televised live. Instead a seventeen minute delay was implemented to avoid any potentially embarrassing incidents. It has long been rumoured that the voice of Neil Armstrong was replaced by the voice of an actor - possibly

## Sparky

The first Apollo moon landing was not televised live. Instead a seventeen minute delay was implemented to avoid any potentially embarrassing incidents. It has long been rumoured that the voice of Neil Armstrong was replaced by the voice of an actor — possibly Mel Blanc. What did Astronaut Armstrong say and why was it necessary to suppress his words?

When I was five my parents gave me a puppy. I grew up with it and was very sad when he suddenly died the day after my eleventh birthday. I was sure it was because I fed him too much cake. So I dedicate these first small steps to Sparky. I am sure that I can look down to earth and pinpoint the exact spot of his grave, somewhere in our backyard. I can imagine Sparky up here now, in a little doggy space suit and I wish we had brought along a frisbee.

# Black Heart

These tattoo images are the work of Toronto artist Robert Windrum. When I asked him if I could use his work in a video I said I was interested in exploring the set of questions that hover around the iconography through which the individual becomes gendered, but really I just wanted to set up a computer model of how different tattoos might look on me. I'm all for rebellious gestures, but I think they ought to be carefully considered. So anyway, sit back and enjoy the show and maybe later you can let me know which one you think would suit me ☐☐☐☐☐





interested in pornography:  
degenerate

**Box**



Oprah: When you were at his home, there was a time when you were at his home after he had moved to Milwaukee, I know we're skipping a lot here.

Lionel Dahmer: My mother's home.

Oprah: At your mother's home. And you had gone to look at a box and he had said, "Don't open the box," because there was what, pornography in there?

Lionel Dahmer: I had found some pornographic material prior to that and I thought there was pornographic material...

Oprah: By this time you know your son's a little off though, right.

(title: Lionel Dahmer, Jeffrey Dahmer's father)

Lionel Dahmer: Well, I don't know, what do you mean a little off?

(title: a little off: gay)

Oprah: Exhibiting unusual behaviour.

(title: Exhibiting unusual behaviour)

Lionel Dahmer: Interested in pornography, there's probably a lot of young men that are interested. It didn't occur to me that that was greatly different. In other words I often thought of him as being very, very shy

(title: very, very shy: gay)

having feelings of inferiority

(feelings of inferiority: faggot)

you know looking at pornography, it didn't occur to me...

Oprah: So when you opened the box...

Lionel Dahmer: ... anything greatly strange.

Oprah: You didn't see that there was anything to be greatly concerned about?

Lionel Dahmer: Well I found, my mother had found the box. It was unopened, it was locked. And I asked Jeff to open it.

Oprah: Thinking there was going to be porn in it. And he opened it and what was there?

Lionel Dahmer: He resisted opening it.

Oprah: Yeah.

Lionel Dahmer: I insisted, he got made. He tore up the birthday cheque I gave him, that same day it was his birthday.

Oprah: How old was he?

Lionel Dahmer: He was in his middle to late twenties. And he said, "Can't I have just one square foot" — that's how big the box was — "of privacy?" Let's wait until tomorrow morning and I'll open it then because my mother was there and he said let's not create a scene I'll open it and I'll show you it's what you think. I still went downstairs after a tool to open it and grabbed the box and he said "Wait, please," and I acceded. I felt the feeling of empathy as he was so shy and he just felt he couldn't have any privacy.

Oprah: When he finally opened the box, what?

Lionel Dahmer: I didn't open the box, no. He brought it down the next morning, and there indeed were pornographic materials in there which satisfied me.

Oprah: Because that's what you thought was there.

Lionel Dahmer: Well frankly Oprah I don't know what I would have done if I would have opened the box, forcibly opened the box and seen what was in there.

Oprah: What was in there?

Lionel Dahmer: A human head.



# The End of My Death

I watch Oprah whenever I get the chance. She has a calming effect on me. I find her the very embodiment of benevolence. Her head and bosom appear to become larger as the rest of her body melts away to something pretty close to slimness. It helps that her topics have become increasingly banal — last week she did a show on the dangers of household dust, the stage littered with guests who had experienced various levels of mild allergic reactions. But whatever the topic, I remain mesmerized. Today my father was her guest and they talked about his book, which I read when it was still in galleys and found to be accurate, and even moving, though it blushed too easily at matters of sex and glossed over his pretty ugly first marriage.

He tries so hard, my father, to claim me for the land of the living, but it is too late, I am already dead, something other than human. He brings out those family photos trying to demonstrate some constituent normalcy, to show that I, too, am only human and came from humans, but it backfires in a way that confuses him and pushes him stunned to the periphery of the story. It's so clear to everyone that he

has little to do with the Dahmer myth. I think he was even a bit dismayed that so few gave any credence to the allegations that he had abused me.

Really I'm just another pointless enigma, nothing to solve. Still everything I've touched has become apocryphal — all those retold childhood incidents and stupid generic photos. Suddenly this ordinary chronology of scraped knees contains within it the genesis of a monster. But even that monster is dead now that I've reached the end of my death. When I worked in the chocolate factory I didn't need to eat any meals — the chocolate dust collected at the back of my throat and when it formed a little ball I washed it down with vodka hidden in an Evian bottle. Now I eat three square meals and all that starchy nutrition has made me a little bit fat, so I don't feel at all like the same person. Everyone wants to know what do I think about when I masturbate, but I'm on medication now, so I don't really do it very often and when I do I find I can't really think of anything. And everyone wants to know if I still dream of picking guys up and dismembering their drugged bodies. But really its hard to think about social interaction when your body image is so low — I'd have to get back into shape first.



# Muriel

I remember when he took me to the fair. I put on ribbons and my prettiest dress. He put cologne on his stomach and chin and wore new socks. He bought me a hamburger, coke, a ride on the tilt-a-whirl, and a rag doll with frilly underwear sewn into its body. I bought him pizza, a candy apple, a teddy bear, a pogo, a few candies and a stuffed alligator. Together we bought seats on the ferris wheel and when we got to the top it started to rain so we drew ourselves into a tight ball so as to leave the minimum combined surface area exposed.

# Attempt to Sing


Attempt to sing beautiful and obscure hits from the past but forget the words and be reduced to humming. You will be ensured of discovering every marble left behind by some sloppy or careless group of children.

Parade systematically through each street to the muffled drumming of a heart in crisis.

*he words and*  
**each Str**

# Assplay

Recently my psychiatrist dismantled his practice in favour of becoming a baker. My interminable analysis had been going on since the first days of his practice so I had hoped to get the brown leather couch which my shoulders and back had worn into their likeness. There was no more comfortable in the world for me. Instead he gave me the rough notes for a paper he'd been thinking of working on, "Ass Play: Anal Eroticism as Transformative Agent in Disney's Pinocchio" in the hope I would complete it.



*inversion of desire  
fragmented body*



# Love Among Corpses

When we die the part of us that belongs to other people becomes an angel. This angel visits those who do not realize they are still mourning, stands at the threshold of their rooms and reminds them of the loss. And the part that of us that belongs to the universe - the spiritual part — flies to heaven and prepares to reincarnate. But the most personal part of us, the part that belongs to the self alone, stays in the ground and rots. While there may be no love among corpses, there is conversation. I've buried little microphones throughout this graveyard to get some indication of what the dead talk about.

# Dr. Asselbergs

In 1961, Edward Asselbergs, a food technician at the Experimental Farm in Ottawa, developed instant mashed potato flakes. When Steve and I decided to make a video about this important Canadian invention, I set out to do the necessary research. I discovered Dr. Asselbergs retired and living in St. Catharines. He agreed to be interviewed. —Robert Chandler

Instant mashed potato flakes were developed by the military in the 1920's. A consumer version was patented in the late 1950's in America. This version — more of a granule than a flake—is rarely used today. Most of the instant mashed potato flake product found on supermarket shelves is manufactured using Dr. Asselberg's method.

Dr Asselberg: The American method was boiling the potato for 45 minutes in steps — very complicated, and that was the expensive part. But I developed the method that after you boiled the potatoes and made the mash then you cool it to zero degrees C — that straightens out the starch molecules so instead of amino pectin you get straight starch.

Dr. Asselberg continued to explore the possibilities of instant food flakes.

Dr Asselberg: With the potato flakes originally they could be combined with fish or with meat and you'd end up with an instant potato fish flake-half of it was fish, half of it was potato, or meat-I thought it would be more profitable for industry to use the combination patent but they never picked it up.

Intertitle: Dr. Asselberg suggests that another invention he worked on at the same time-an infrared apple peeler — might be a more interesting subject for this video.

Dr Asselberg: Infrared apple peel — 4000 degrees C — I have a movie of that. There is a tunnel and the apple goes in there and the steam underneath the skin evaporates and it cannot escape so it builds up pressure and the peel is loosened-it pops in ten seconds.

It was a mistake for me to collaborate with a researcher. I wanted only the bare facts to speculate around. Instead I have too many details from an unimpeachable source. Once again I have been cheated by history. My role as author has been usurped by our luck in tracking down the actual Dr. Asselbergs, who remembers things differently than I would have preferred. I thought potato flakes would be an ideal subject — although mundane, I saw the potential to make them glamorous. But Dr. Asselbergs was right in suggesting that we instead focus on the infrared apple peeler. It is a beautiful lost machine,

abandoned technology, an almost hypothetical invention. I invite you to think of the metaphoric possibilities, the apples marched through a triangle of infrared, their skins rubbed off between enormous soft rotating pillows. Instead I'll be thinking about the potato, pulled from the ground and transformed into a box of snow which could in any appropriate season fall from this enormous fake sky

# Corey

Dear Corey,

I am sorry you lost the tournament to that pimply-faced guy. You are really the better player and deserved to win. I was rooting for you the whole time. When is your birthday? Is this the last year you will be able to play in the youth league? It looks like you are pretty much a man to me. Do you have any pen pals? I used to have a few, but I got tired of them. I guess when you start to get older its time to re-assess who you want to spend your time on. Anyway, I'm looking for new pen pals. I don't use a pen any more though, as you can see. Now I use a computer. I have over a hundred fonts, but I only ever use Courier and Helvetica. This is done in Helvetica. Do you have a girlfriend? You are so good looking you probably have lots. I don't have a girlfriend or anything like that. I am not so good looking, but I have plenty of other good qualities. I am not so much into superficial things like good looks, but when I close my eyes at night, all I can see is your face. I would really like to look as good as you, then everybody would want to be my friend. Don't get me wrong though, I'm not jealous. I think you are a very kind person. I can tell because you were such a good loser, even though you gave it your all. I was never interested in bowling before I saw how you throw the ball. You are very strong and

graceful, and also full of dignity. I am embarrassed whenever I watch gymnasts and figure skaters, but bowling seems much more direct. You just throw the ball and try to knock over the pins. There aren't any ulterior motives involved. I know in regular bowling there aren't any showers or anything, but in professional bowling do you have to hit the shower? Just wondering. You didn't seem sweaty at all, but that other guy sure did. They said that you were a freshman in university. Do you live at home or at campus? I think it would be fun to have a room mate and live in the dorm. I hope that if you do your room mate is a nice guy too. It's too bad bowling is such an under-appreciated sport. If you were a hockey or tennis player and the second best in the country you'd be rich. It would still be a good idea to stay in school though because you have to plan for the future. You have the kind of face that will age well. You will still be handsome in your middle age, and possibly even when you are fifty and over. And bowling looks like a total body work out, so if you keep that up you'll have no problems with your body getting out of shape. Heart attacks run in my family, but that's still better than cancer or muscular dystrophy. Anyway Corey this letter is pretty long so I think I'll sign off for now. I know you're very busy so I may write to you again before you have a chance to respond to this letter.



## My Fear

Because I was afraid of everything, I developed extraordinary powers. I ruined most of my father's home movies by telekinetically stopping down the shutter. The vague and murky pictures seemed to please me. I did not want to be a subject. I was sure my fear would be exposed on the film and the others would know my weakness and attack me and tear me apart. Already they were laughing at me and making me carry their dainty packages. Now I wish I hadn't ruined the films. I wish I had the power to correct the exposure. I wish that everything that is dead would remain dead but I could remember it with infinite acuity.

Their flesh is lovely by the lake. They crowd around the dock and the water spreads all around them. They can only be touched by the water, the miniscule portion of the water that flows against the skin.

# Dumbo Climax

I am the voice of your subconscious, your inspiration. Now concentrate. Remember, a pyramid of elephants is standing in a ring, waiting for a climax. You are now getting that climax. How's the reception? Coming through OK? Suddenly from the sidelines comes your climax, across the arena, he jumps from the springboard to a platform at the pinnacle of your pyramid. He waves a flag. What a glorious finish. And who is your climax. The little elephant with the big ears. The world's mightiest midget mastadon, Dumbo. Dumbo. Dumbo. Dumbo.



# Apology

I don't know why I'm showing this video to you. I am certain it is a failure and should be removed from *The Hundred Videos*. Indeed I have deleted many videos which are more interesting, more worthwhile, more deserving of your time and attention. In general when an artist appropriates material they do something with it, they turn it back on itself, they fool around with it to reveal latent meanings, any number of worthwhile and radical things. But I haven't done this. I made a few changes to my appropriated video clip hoping that something latent would manifest but nothing did. Everything is on the surface here, the little changes I've made are merely irritations, useless reframings.

— Do you wish anything madam? You've always to see this room haven't you madam? Why did you never ask me to show it to you? I was ready to show it to you ever day. It's a lovely room isn't it? The loveliest room you've ever seen. Everything is kept just as Mrs. DeWinter liked it. Nothing has been altered since that last night. I'll show you her dressing room. This is where I keep all her clothes. You would like to see them, wouldn't you? Feel this, it as a Christmas present from Mr. DeWinter. I keep her underwear on this side. They were made especially

for her by the nurses at the convent at St. Clair. I always used to wait up for her no matter how late. Sometimes she and Mr. DeWinter didn't come home until dawn. While she was undressing she'd tell me about the party she'd been to. She knew everyone that mattered. Everyone loved her. When she finished her bath, she'd go into the bedroom, and go over to the dressing table. Oh you've moved her brush haven't you? That's better. That's where she always laid it down. Come on Dani, hairdo, and I'd knock away twenty minutes at a time. And then she would say good night Dani and step into her bed. Did you ever see anything so black? Look, you can see my hand... Do you think the dead come back and watch the living?

— I don't believe it.

— Sometimes I wonder if she doesn't come back here to Mandalay to watch you and Mr. DeWinter together. You look tired, why don't you stay here awhile and rest. Listen to the sea. So soothing. Listen to it. Listen. Listen to the sea.

# How to Build an Igloo

Easy to build once you know how. Two Eskimos admire the wooden buildings of the white man. Like all good architects they use the materials found around them. A row of heel marks.. the Eskimo knows his snow. His need is for a temporary home, familiar, rounded beehive shape. No covers. Perspire freely. Ticklish jaw. Chinking. Caribou sleeping robes. Extra skin. Like the man who paints himself into a corner. A chosen spot on the snow. Igloomaslo says Akioutok. It is warm, this is my home.

# Microscope

Whenever I look into a microscope, I feel I'm looking inside of something. A barrier seems to have been broken; the surface of an eye, the limits of a body. Underneath the microscope, on the stage, everything is either wet or dead, dry-mounted.

Maybe because I look so often at my own blood, or cells scraped from the inside of my mouth, I feel that whenever I am look at something through a microscope I am looking into my own body. And the longer I look, the more I indulge my curiosity, my thirst for physiological detail, the more damage I am doing.

# Amoeba



This amoeba describes the libido, which is not solely my libido, but a force, an external force. The amoeba is everywhere all at once, not by going there directly, but simply through its endless flowing. Every direction is merely a redirection, a redirection about to be revised. So for the amoeba movement is not movement, but simply a way of being. Because it does not move through space but simply is, the concept of space is obliterated by the amoeba's virtual omnipotence. Also, it is sexless, and through this sexlessness, immortal. It survives every division. Any attack on its body can only accomplish reproduction, asexual, but effective nonetheless. As it is for the amoeba, so it is for the libido.

# Treehouse

I am looking for ways to map myself onto other things, an apparatus and method by which I can connect myself to another world which is simultaneously actual and metaphorical. In other words these worlds must exist as separate and investigatable sites of knowledge. And yet the discourses produced by investigating these sites must primarily serve to metaphorically describe the self. This is the process I call mapping.

Everyone has portions of their life in need of revision or remapping. To this end, I have begun to construct this model of a little neighbourhood in a little town. This fictional space is meant to be used as a setting in which the subject is free to revise their life story. I don't think its really necessary that people believe they've actually lived there - though many inevitably will. Even if you know that your stories are fictional, I still think that a helpful remapping could occur. What I need to figure out is how to make a video that presents my little town as empty of narrative yet having it conducive to the viewer's producing their own narratives. I'm finding it impossible to strip the model of details which suggest specific stories. I don't want the model to become an apparatus which simply triggers memories of certain movies. This isn't a

landscape to run model trains through, but a possible clinical tool.

— So can you imagine yourself somehow in the town or...

— Sure.

— Another way to do it may be to have in mind a portion of your life that you'd like to re-map. I don't know if you have a portion in mind.

— No.

— Okay, well if you could just imagine yourself then in the town.

— Right. Okay. Do you want to me to be walking down the main street?

— Sure, you could be walking down the main street.

— Going to the factory. To work.

— Okay. Um, I haven't actually put a factory in the town.

— Oh. Okay.

— But we could say...

— I'm going to the fields to work.

— Okay, you could be...

— Is that good?

— Well, sure. Anything is good.

— I'm going to pick apples.

— Okay.

— In the orchards.

— In the orchards?

— Outside of the town.

— It would be good — I mean there's no orchard in the town, it would be good if you actually use the town. I mean if you just imagine things that are outside of the town, I don't know what the point of actually building the town is.

— How 'bout if I'm the babysitter going to babysit the kid that's in the treehouse?

— Okay, sure. And, and...

— I'm walking down the road. To get to this house. With the family and the kid.

— Right. And you get there, you get to the house...

— Yeah.

— And?

— And I ring the door and the mom is there so she lets me in and after she tells me about Johnny and she tells me Johnny has been in the tree house for a long time so I don't really have to babysit him, but just in case, I might have to pay attention to what's happening in the tree house.

— Okay. Not much happens. How are you feeling about..?

— Fine.

— Fine, its good. They pay well, and uh...

— I can eat all the Oreos I want. Oh, and then it starts raining.



# The Boxers

pure sensation

pillow of flesh

white cotton sheets

emerge into daylight

spring mechanism



## Talk Show

If I was ever on a talk show, the topic would most likely be: People whose life has been so uneventful they have no other reason to be a guest on a talk show. And when the host asked how it felt to be me, I wouldn't repeat what I had said in the pre-interview. Instead I would say:

Every human, Rolanda, is exactly interchangeable. By this I don't mean that everyone is born equal, born with the same human rights, or anything as confusing as that. I simply mean that we are all exactly interchangeable.


Perhaps this is most demonstrable on a genetic level. Slight chemical variations diverge into individuals recognizable enough to be named. Soon the technology will be available to let this genetic information flow more easily between individuals. Then we will finally know what democracy is. Then we will live in a Utopia of endless unsolvable crimes. Love will completely cover the white-noise hum of anxiety and death will become meaningless. And talk shows will be able to use the same guests everyday and we'll never know the difference. We'll be seeing ourselves on the television.

# The Hand

The hand is composed of thousands of individual bones, some fused, some loose.

The fused bones form plates, which drift with age.

The loose bones come and go.



# I have already

I have already imagined everything.

# Little Monkeys

Those little monkeys raised in isolation with only a little chunk of fur stapled to wire mesh would have been far less maladjusted if it had been revealed to them that they were being watched and photographed. They would have felt a certain larger purposefulness in their daily endeavours, which would have mediated the loneliness.

# Stentor

The stentor has no decisions to make, no personal dilemmas, and so has no need of a subconscious. This stems from its basic design, which keeps it in constant, unstoppable motion. With no time to think, there is nothing to think about. The stentor does not know whether it creates a current of its own or is simply moved by that current. With or without this knowledge, the same amount of plankton gets channeled into its gullet.

As humans, all of our movements are determined in our subconscious. We are all so physically repulsive, special psychic forces are necessary for us to couple. A thing as simple as the exchange of saliva would be unlikely without these forces; the idea that we would tolerate, let alone crave a more sustained physical intimacy would be unthinkable. The main force which allows us to overcome this repulsiveness is the libido. As has already been determined, the libido's movements are roughly analogous to that of the amoeba. I wish to postulate another psychic force whose movements are roughly analogous to those of the stentor. I call this force the "stendo." Where the libido roams and divides endlessly, the stendo is simultaneously rooted and in constant ineffectual rotary motion. Where the libido describes a trajectory which may be taken by desire, the stendo creates tiny variations in the psyche's internal pressure, localized



# New York Loves Me

39 people address the camera: "I love you Steve."

Then a large audience says, "I love you Steve."

Superimposed title reads: NEW YORK LOVES ME. NOV. 11, 1995

Steve: "Thank you."



# 17

## Descriptions

The guy in the shorts has never had the area between his testicles and anus licked.

And that guy, the one in the over-alls, makes little whimpering sounds as he ejaculates. His cum doesn't shoot very far, just puddles around the head of his penis. There's a fair amount of it.

This guy has legs that can be folded in any direction. He's obviously not circumcised.

It'll be a few years before this guy discovers how sensitive his nipples are. His penis isn't very long, but its quite thick.

This guy can ejaculate very far — four or five feet. His cum is thin and bitter.

This guy has only one testicle. He is very proud of his slightly-curved, circumcised penis. He sometimes shaves most of his body hair.

And this one — the one in the white t-shirt and black shorts — this man is clearly bisexual.

He likes to be stimulated as much as possible. He's capable of multiple orgasms. He can cum from anal stimulation. His whole body vibrates. His eyes roll back into his head. And his cum is thick, white, and sweet. He purrs as his feet are licked. His feet and his toes.

This guys penis appears longer than it is because it is really thin. He is capable of devastating hair-trigger orgasms.

He's masturbated in the last twenty minutes. The cum's drying on his belly.

The guy in the plaid shirt dreams that his bearded friend will fuck him. And this guy sticks fingers up his ass as he masturbates. Otherwise it would take him a very long time to cum.

He hasn't masturbated in three days. Maybe four.

The guy with the beard doesn't realize how large his penis is. But the other guy knows his is very small, and compensates by being over-attentive. And this guy masturbates three or four times a day. His guilt drives him to do it over and over.

This guy has crabs, herpes, and chlamydia. His nipples are very large and red. And this guy, this big guy, masturbates by humping a

pillow. His cum covers the sheets, and tastes a little bit like saffron.

This cyclist believes that sexuality is a healthy, positive thing. Every morning he masturbates in the shower, and then eats a bowl of Bran Flakes. Although he is not actively looking for a life partner, he is confident he will find one.

# Children's Video Collective

In the early seventies I was a founding member of the Children's Video Collective. Although it only lasted six or seven months — after we came back from summer vacation we found we'd been put in different classes — the CVC has proved an institution of seminal importance in Canadian media arts. Though no work of any note was produced, we proved that children can organize into a radical political force and, as individuals, we mastered the technical apparatus of reel-to-reel portapak video.

Looking back over our old tapes I'm struck by our clumsy cynicism and shallow oppositional politics. I had assumed that we'd show a more child-like innocence and naiveté. And looking specifically at the work I authored within the collective, I'm struck by how little my concerns and strategies have changed.

*In the future, children will cease to exist. As a social category, we will simply become irrelevant. My generation is likely the last generation of children. Or rather, the last generation to experience childhood. That doesn't necessarily mean that now is the time to put away childish things. Instead it may mean that the use of childish things may be extended indefinitely, until death.*

# Three Dreams

So, in the first dream I'm in Chichen Itza and walking from the ballcourt to the big pyramid and it's just about to get dark. The ruins are placed on this flat expanse of grass that make it look like some big east coast university campus, which, in a sense, I guess it was. But then I realize that there's going to be a big performance tonight, more than the usual laser light show. There's going to be a big art performance and Kika Thorne is the director and I'm one of the performers, but I'm not sure what to do. I only know we're supposed to wear these black turtlenecks and kind of dance up and down the four sides of the pyramid, but I can't find my turtleneck.

So now I'm about to go back to the Yucatan and repeat more or less exactly last year's trip, which included some snorkeling and a day trip to Chichen Itza. And so the challenge, the challenge of Chichen Itza, is to try and tap into the profound ancient spirituality of the place. But this is very hard to do. I mean you know it's there and if only you were an ancient Mayan you'd be totally in awe and for sure you'd have spent your money's worth, not just for the day's trip but for the whole vacation. And so you have all these tourists walking around these vast ancient ruins and they're all trying very hard, they're concentrating to tune into the spiritual profundity of the place. And the only way, or at least easiest way

to do this is to imagine you're one of the first Europeans to discover the place, some happy scientist in search of dead ancient wisdom. But then after this I dream I'm a European and I'm sitting in my library and what I do is I imagine primitive tribes. I just make them up and give them whatever attributes I want. But I am sure that sooner or later this imagined tribe will be found and it will be more or less exactly as I imagined it.

And so my second dream sort of follows this scenario, but this time there's a kind of breakthrough and instead of just imagining the tribe, I'm part of the tribe. I'm a young man and I'm at a pig slaughtering ritual and I'm very hungry. I've been fasting for a while and only drinking this mildly hallucinogenic tea but the effects are wearing off and I'm sitting there watching my uncle slaughtering this pig and all I can think about is how hungry I am. I'm so hungry, but I know the pig won't be ready for a day and a half. It's a ritual pig, ritual pork, so all I can do is look around for some more of that tea and imagine being in another life.

And the last dream, the last dream sort of follows from the dream before. It might even be the same one. I'm traveling around and I come to this island and the island is full of finches. All different types of finches and they're all identical, except for their beaks. And their beaks are so functional, so utilitarian — kind of like the Flintstones. They can be used for opening tin

cans or coring pineapples — every function has its own special finch. There are even spiritual finches for extracting the ghosts of the dead from thin air and divining finches for locating fresh water, as well as syringe finches for taking blood samples. And I thought, Wow, these finches, these finches are really nice birds, but they have no personality. Everything's so beak focused, they have personality apart from their beaks.

## 24 Jokes

How do you stop a black guy from drowning? Take your foot off his head.

What do you call two Ethiopians in a sleeping bag? Twix.

What's green and smells like bacon? Kermit the Frog's fingers.

Why did the native Indian have such high cheek bones? (puts hands to face) Wonder when the liquor store's opening?

How do you circumcise a Newphie minister? Slap the choir boy in the head.

Why is a woman's asshole and vagina hole so close together? So you can carry them like a sixpack.

OK, a girl gets in the shower with her mother says, Mom, what's that up there? Breasts. Mom's what that down there? A vagina dear. She says when will I get that? When you're older sweetheart. A couple of months down the road she hopes in the shower with her father and says what's that? A penis. When will I get that? He says every Sunday when your mom goes bowling.

What do black people and snow tires not have in common? Snow tires don't sing when you put chains on them.

This drunk guy walks out of a bar finds a magic lamp and rubs it and out pops a genie. The genie says I'll give you one wish. Oh he says I want to be skinny, uptight and surrounded by a lot of warm pussy. Poof he turns him into a tampon. The moral of that joke is you can't get anything free from a genie without strings attached.

This twenty year old is fucking this ten year old girl in her dad's house on her dad's chair. Dad walks in and says hey. Twenty year old looks up and says, 'You're in my chair, get out.'

How do you babysit a black kid? Lick his lips and stick him to thee wall.

Hear about the gay burglar? He couldn't blow the safe so he went down on the elevator.

Hear about the gay lawyer? He blew his first case.

Hear about the two queer judges? They tried each other.

Let's play turkey-I'll shoot you gobble.



I know they're these two guys they're the bubblegum twins, eh? One blows and one chews.

You hear about the gay midget? He just came out of the cupboard.

What do you call two lesbians in a closet? A liquor cabinet.

What do you call a lesbian dinosaur? Lickalotofpus.

What do you call a gay dinosaur? Megasoreass.

This gay guy goes into a truck stop and says Can I have a beer please. He says sorry we don't serve your type. Anyways one beer, I just want one beer I haven't had one in a month. Just one beer. OK, I'll serve you one beer you go sit in the corner shut up and don't say a word. So he walks to the corner drinking his beer when this black trucker comes and says I've been on the road for five months I'm so horny I could fuck a cow. Gay guy in the corner says moo.

Black kid sitting on a fence. Mother come up and says Leroy get off there before the train comes and sucks you off. So he gets off and next morning he's back there with his pants down. His mother says Leroy get down. Leroy says C'mon train.

Why did Frosty the Snowman have his pants down?  
He saw the snow blower coming.

# Video for Intellectuals

Sometimes it appears that we're reaching a period when our senses and our words will not longer respond to moderate stimulation. We seem to be approaching an age of the gross, persuasion through speeches and books is too often discarded for disruptive demonstrations aimed at bludgeoning the unconvinced into action. The young (and by this I don't mean by any stretch of the imagination all the young but I'm talking about those who claim to speak for the young) at the zenith of power and sensitivity overwhelm themselves with drugs and artificial stimulants. Subtlety is lost and fine distinctions based on acute reasoning are carelessly ignored in a headlong jump to a predetermined conclusion. Life is visceral rather than intellectual, and the most visceral practitioners of life are those that claim themselves intellectuals. Truth is to them revealed rather than logically proved and the principle infatuations of today revolve around the social sciences, those subjects which can accommodate any opinion about which the most reckless conjecture cannot be discredited. Education is being redefined at the demand of the uneducated to suit the whims of the uneducated. The student now goes to college to proclaim rather than to

learn. The lessons of the past are ignored and obliterated in the contemporary antagonism known as the generation gap. A spirit of national masochism prevails encouraged by an effete core of impudent snobs who characterize themselves as intellectuals. (applause)

# Falling

Well, *The Hundred Videos* is almost over and its time to find a job so I thought I'd like to be a Hollywood scriptwriter and so I thought I'd start locally and write for TV. And so I wrote a script for *Anne of Avonlea* and I sent it off to Kevin Sullivan and I waited almost ten weeks and I didn't hear anything so I went to his house in Rosedale and surprisingly enough he answered. And he looked very well-groomed, all clean and powdery and I thought, Oh my god, I should have shaved. Then I introduced myself and asked about the fate of my script and he said that he'd seen it and I chose to believe him. But he said that they weren't very interested in it. And he looked kind of nervous, so I adopted my least aggressive body posture, turning my palms outward and letting my jaw fall slack. But still he just said goodbye and shut the door.

I've noticed watching *Anne of Green Gables* and later *Anne of Avonlea* that the characters fall over a lot — into water or mud, off or through roofs — and the scripts, the very strange scripts were based on the idea — not really of retribution-but of something more like comeuppance. And a character got their comeuppance by falling, usually witnessed by another character. And this gleeful humiliation drove the group dynamic of Avonlea, a town of happy bruises and justly soiled clothing.

And so in my script I chose dispense with all the humiliations and petty moralizing and so I just had all the characters fall down a lot. The characters would be doing something, something mundane, they'd be peeling potatoes and then they'd suddenly fall over — boom. But it wouldn't be like comeuppance because all the other characters would fall over too. And then they'd all get up, one at a time. And then a little while later, maybe in the middle of some dialogue or something, maybe just walking down the street, they'd just fall over again.

But now I see that my script was just too conceptual. I took a simple, a simple but rich, idea and I let it play itself out. So I thought, well Steve, for your next *Anne of Avonlea* script, you've got to do something less conceptual and more narrative. So write now I'm writing a script and in the script there is a big county picnic or fair or something and all the characters, they all eat this potato salad with mayonnaise, mayonnaise that's been left out in the sun, and they all get really sick. And they need to find a toilet really fast before they soil themselves. But there are many more characters than toilets and so its sort of like musical chairs, all the characters just have to run around and fight over the toilets for the whole episode.

# Notes on the Uncanny

Here in Montreal, every corner has its own video arcade and they play a few new releases, but mostly its older, more obscure stuff. You go to the counter and you change your money for tokens and then you pick a booth. Each token gives you a specific length of time so the booth is like its own universe, a regression chamber, without minutes and hours, but instead its own unit of time: the token. And then you just flip through the channels until you something that pleases you, something that holds your attention. I keep expecting to see something familiar: a scene filmed in the living room of my grandmother, or my Kindergarten teacher, Mrs. Lett, fingering herself through her panties as the janitor looks on. This expectation is fed by the fact I find so many of the videos to be uncanny. They have a quality of disturbing familiarity, a familiarity which withdraws and causes me to become disoriented, a slight nagging anxiety. The uncanny, the Unheimlich, occurs when a known object suddenly presents an unfamiliar aspect. The real and imagined become blurred. There is a confusion between animate and inanimate, the usurpation of physical reality for psychic reality. When Freud said "Love is homesickness" he thought it was

a clever joke. This place is familiar. I have been here before. For Freud the uncanny was exemplified by things from his immediate historical past: wax figures, automatons. Today, perhaps the uncanny can best be seen in old video tapes

# Manifestations/ Jouissance

After a sharp blow to the head one sometimes gains extraordinary powers. I've lately been struck by the gift of superior critical abilities in analyzing Hollywood films.

Not all energy can be contained by the body and the surplus escapes and, generally, dissipates. In the little self-contained world of a film, the energy is sometimes not able to disperse and sticks around the unlucky actor. Nothing, for instance, can escape the tyranny of the close-up.

Now that I have succeeded in making this filmically trapped surplus energy manifest, I am searching for a mechanism which will allow me to draw it from the screen and into the realm of everyday life.

# Ants and Bees

It seems to us that ants, like bees, are always working. But if you look closely you'll find that they take all kinds of breaks. During these breaks they contemplate their mortality. And when these contemplations become too intense for the tiny ants to stand, they return to work.

Like the ant and honey bee I must get to work making more videos. Today looks like a day when a lot of people will be crying, so I'm going to take my camera into the street and tape some of these tearful persons. Okay, here I go! Bye.

# Ghosts

Periodically, ghosts inhabit the bodies of the living. And when they depart they always leave a token, a gift which may be taken as an oblique sign. Often these tokens are small, hard representational objects — little chairs or telephone — which migrate like splinters through the body but always at some point break through the skin and emerge into daylight like repressed yet inconsequential memory.



# Camouflage

The beauty of the world may be all around us, but sometimes it can be hard to spot.

Some organisms are so good at camouflage they forget they exist.

At that point, they might as well turn their attention to the heavens.

At that point, they might as well become the insignificant heartbeat at the end of the telescope.

They want to channel all of the universe's light into their optic nerve.

# Underwear

I'm not wearing any underwear.

# Candle

Quiet observation is the key for discovery. The more ordinary the phenomena the more ordinary and mesmerizing the better. The idea is just to observe this candle for a certain period in the hope that after a while something will click and we'll be looking at this ordinary thing in a whole new way. At that point we'll be ready to do something empirical.

# Story

— Okay, Henry, you’ve just sat through the first 98 videos. What have you got out of them?

— Perhaps, Steve, the motto of the series could be, “Falling in love requires overvaluing the tiny ways in which one individual varies from another.”

— No, I don’t think so. My motto is, “A big prick’s better than a pretty face,” but even that general purpose maxim is only tangentially related to *The Hundred Videos*.

— Personally, I’m beginning to think of them as a hundred little corpses. Little corpses apathetically searching for a grave.

— That could well be. Everybody needs a home.

— Yes Henry. That is most likely true.

— I think so.

— Henry, Henry, you appear to be agitated. Are you bored or are you hungry?

— Life perhaps is a series of snacks. We are always searching for the perfect hors d’oeuvre. But I am not

really hungry or bored. I have the urge to tell a story. But I can’t really think of anything.

— That is a very good idea, Henry. Tell a story as night approaches, and falls.

# **Why I've Decided To Become a Painter**

So the pink one turned out okay.

Lately, I've been thinking a lot about orange.

It's not that I consider these pieces small. It's more like they're affordable.