

Recreating the Conditions for *Long Film For Ambient Light* (Anthony McCall)

12 noon Friday 16 March - 12 noon Saturday 17 March, 2007.

Teaching and Learning Cinema (Lucas Ihlein and Louise Curham)

<http://teachingandlearningcinema.org>

Interview 03: Friday 16 March, 2007, 1640h

Lucas Ihlein, Pete Volich, Brian Fuata, Katie Dyer

- - -

Pete ...should I introduce myself?

Lucas Sure, everyone should introduce themselves.

Pete Hello my name's Pete Volich and it's the sixteenth March 2007.

Lucas What time is it?

Pete Roughly four - around four o'clock.

Katie We can be specific, if we're going to do this.

Pete Should be absolutely specific.

Lucas Yeah.

Katie It's twenty to five.

Lucas Ok.

Pete Four forty.

Katie Correct, Peter.

Lucas And where are you, Peter Volich?

Pete I am at the CarriageWorks in Lucas Ihlein's studio space during his – is this the first re-enactment of...?

Lucas Yep.

Pete Sorry, what was the artist's name again?

Lucas Anthony McCall.

Pete Anthony McCall's work titled...

Lucas 'Long Film for Ambient Light'.

Pete Yes.

Lucas And what's the light like in the room at the moment, Pete?

Pete Glowing, it looks like it's glowing, there's a light – there's one light bulb, maybe 60 watt or something, 60 to 100 watt...?

Lucas 100.

Pete 100 watt light globe in the centre of the space at eye level and there are white – is that paper or material over the windows?

Lucas Yeah it's a kind of vinyl, it's starting to peel off on one of them, we're waiting for the technician to come and fix it for us.

Pete Yeah I'm actually not too happy about that Lucas, I saw that.

Katie You think it was a big rough?

Pete Yep it's the first thing I noticed.

Katie What's that?

Pete No I'm just mucking around.

Katie Oh - was it though? Did you notice it straight away?

Pete I did.

Katie Wow that's funny.

Pete I did because everything is so, everything is so minimal and ambient and beautiful, and then that was the first thing I saw.

Brian The vinyl?

Pete Coming off.

Katie No, no, the coming off bit, it stands out because even though that space over there is raw, it's so kind of pristine.

Pete So my first question to Lucas is, 'in recreating this art project to the hour and second, what exactly have you learned about this work?'

Lucas Um.

Pete That maybe isn't in the documentation of what you've read?

Lucas Yeah, yeah – well my theory is that there are things we can learn that only we can learn by doing it, I mean only we can because when we do it it's going to be different from the way that it was done anywhere else; in the way like, the fact of him reducing kind of content to the point of nothingness, and expanding time to the

point of almost the scale of normal life means that you know, you can't deny your own participation in the event as a kind of key factor, so – so I suppose like, I don't know, things I've been noticing involve, include like, waxing and waning of my own attention span, relaxation and sometimes feeling kind of really nice in here, other times feeling kind of irritated and...

Pete Have you ever felt guilty because you're not thinking enough? Or that you need to be thinking more?

Lucas No I usually have the opposite I'm usually like over-, I'm someone who over-thinks so the challenge for me is to actually reduce my thoughts and just kind of you know, breathe and be here; it's not easy to do, especially when the vinyl started peeling off and you know we went around getting a ladder to stick it back up but the ladder they had wasn't, you can't get into the corner bits so that's why we're waiting for another ladder, so those sort of things are quite irritating and obviously within the scope of Long Film for Ambient Light they're very much, that's just a part of this particular run of the film, that's part of the content of this part but it's hard to sort of – that's the thing that's difficult to accept.

Pete Yep.

(laughter)

Katie The lack of perfection.

Lucas Yeah.

Pete That would be very frustrating.

Lucas Slightly irritating thorn in the side, but you know it's – I don't know.

Pete What's your – has your perception of this room changed? In the sense of have you, are you seeing it differently? What I suppose I'm trying to say is that you have been in this space continuously...

Lucas Yep, for a week and a half, yeah.

Pete ...and so, setting up this infrastructure where you know you are actually so much more aware of what you are thinking about, like what, what's your commentary on how the room has changed, or how you've seen it differently?

Lucas It's a bit like the space and the time are kind of, they go together. Like for example in the last two days we've been racing around getting everything ready for this event; trying to find the right vinyl, trying to – making the time chart, photocopying up the zines and stuff and in those periods of time it's like time is just your kind of a tool that you use to get things done it's not really a thing that you inhabit very well, so and the space is kind of like the same – it's just this tool that we go inside to do stuff. But this – I mean I, you know for me there's a sort of, this work is quite didactic in that way because it says, 'you shouldn't use time and space like that you should use them like this', you know? You should let them have their own

qualities and enjoy them for their own sake you know, without just doing them to achieve some other end. So in a way that's like you know, two days ago this room was full of equipment and all sorts of – even last night, a jumble of junk and stuff and now it has, it feels a lot more kind of peaceful for me, in that way. So I suppose we're seeing it in a different light in that sense.

Do you guys want some tea? There's tea here which is called, 'Tea to Think With' which has fennel and various other things in it, but there's also regular tea.

Katie That's not the kind of tea you need Lucas, if you're trying to slow down.

Pete That's what I was going to say, you need to get off that tea.

Katie You need to get off the thinking tea.

Lucas It's 'tea to think with', like it's not that it enhances your thinking, it just goes along with it...

Katie As you're thinking.

Lucas ...whatever those thoughts happen to be. Or else there's peppermint, cardamom, green, black...

Pete Normal?

Lucas Yeah, normal.

Katie I think I'll have a thinking tea.

Pete I'll just have a straight up, normal tea.

Lucas Alright.

Brian I might have a straight up normal tea as well. Please. And have you ever had a compulsion to perform?

Pete I was going to (ask that?).

Lucas You mean in here, now?

Brian Mhm.

Lucas Not really - I mean what do you mean? What sort of performance?

Brian Well like some (heightened sense of performativity?) in terms in which like, like you're kind of conscious that you're going to go – like you're making tea, and also now you've introduced the device of recording, so you actually know that the, all the, this moment is archived and that you – that there's a sense of memory when you're conscious of performance.

Katie Right, all your activity, actions and...

Brian Yeah.

Pete Because it's so – is it more heightened? Well there's nothing else going on.

Lucas But I don't feel like we're performing right now.

Brian Oh god, no (neither do I?)!

Pete Maybe I am! No...

Katie So Brian do you mean like for Lucas to – not just be interacting with people but doing something...

Brian Yeah, like...

Katie ...that creates a spectacle?

Brian Yeah, or just doing something...

Lucas Not really.

Brian And whether or not that something is actually thinking. Do you know what I mean? Like you're actually feeling an obligation to do something.

Lucas No not at all.

Katie Good!

Pete Good!

Lucas No I feel like the work doesn't really need me you know? I'm interchangeable with anybody else, I just happen to be interested in seeing what happens here.

Brian Right.

Pete I'm interested by what you mean when – because that's the second time you've said that now, when you say, 'the work doesn't need me', but what do you mean – like, I think I'm just being stupid – what do you mean?

Lucas Ok, for example at twelve noon the film started, right? And Katie was still upstairs sort of photocopying those zines, and she was aware that the film had started – it had started without her regardless; there's no waiting, you know? It's quite happy to run even when we're not in the room, you know?

Katie Yep.

Pete Yep, I see.

Lucas And when we had to go off and get the ladder we closed the door and said, 'back in 5 minutes' – the film was still running, so there's no kind of pause button or anything. I don't know that's a kind of silly way of thinking about it. Sorry, I don't have any milk to go with your tea.

(Brian?) Maybe I should go and get some?

Katie (Upstairs?)

(Brian?) I want to see upstairs – are you going to go up to the offices?

Katie Ok, 'the interview was terminated'...

(laughter)

Lucas Do you want a bit of cheese and tomato?

Katie No thanks I had a little snack on the way here. And so you don't really have any idea do you? Who may come or not come, or...?

Lucas We've had a few RSVP's, a friend of mine said he was going to ring me at four in the morning to come for the morning shift. One of the things that I should have said while Pete was here, it probably would have pleased him, that you know it is, there is a kind of content in the work which is about the changing light patterns, and you know McCall did these charts? And this black line is the constant electric light in the room which never changes and this one that goes, that's like the light that comes in through the windows. So when the, this kind of transition period here, it's quite interesting where the electric light becomes more important and the light from outside becomes less important.

Katie Yeah.

Lucas Until such time as the only light we have is the electric light.

Katie The electric light, yeah.

Lucas So those kind of, those are like events in the film, I guess.

Katie Yeah that's true, isn't it?

Lucas Yeah, so it has a certain narrative but it seems to be a cyclical narrative rather than a linear one.

Katie Yeah because at the moment those windows are quite a beautiful thing the way they create that...

Lucas Mm.

Katie ...you sort of, you get taken over, the light bulb kind of disappears in a way, but then eventually it will become the focal point of the room.

Lucas Mm.

Katie So this is the chart he did after the film and he actually just sort of...?

Lucas That one there is, like we've reproduced that on the wall over there.

Katie Did he have, he had that in the original room that he was filming in though?

Lucas Yeah.

(end of recording)