

I - Lee Breuer - 23/V/78 - in re Shaggy Dog

Lee: -- and what happens is he has a tear in his eye because of the idea of being under water -- we have decided to work out with an idea of a tear in his eye. OK? But his eye blinks and the crazy thing is that the blinking of the eye synchronizes so it looks like lip-sync -- so it looks like the eye's talking, you know, I wanted to get so close to the face the face was abstract, you know. It's a lot of fun and we're doing it real cheap down at , you know, United Film-Makers' Cooperative, so if you're interested you may want to look at that tape some time.

Stefan: Well, you asked -- so I've been writing about other people too, and supposedly I have two books coming out in English now, one on Wilson's group and one on what I call Queer Theater, which is Charles Ludlam and (inaudible)

So, my difficulty has ~~always~~ been getting published -- partly because of my writing and also partly because my things are always too long.

L: What about Ralph Pine -- has he published you?

S: That's the -- no.

L: Drama Books Special.

S: I've approached him and --

L: Well, he's the one that published

you know, and he might be a good person. You're not going to make much money with Drama Books.

S: Yeah, well -- that's right. Well, I was thinking that after these things come out -- if they do in fact, you know -- it's been in the works for two years -- If they do come out then I'd have a better chance, showing him (inaudible)

Would you like a cigar? But that's the general idea. My next two books would be -- I like to publish them two at a time -- there'd be one on you and Mabou Mines and one on Peter Schumann.  
L: (Inaudible)

S: Well, I've been following the circuses and so forth.

L: Well that's great -- I just -- the only reason I asked was that a lot of people are asking for articles on The Shaggy Dog and I didn't know whether you were interested or would permit any publication of materials in the book in advance. And so, that if they -- you see, I would -- you know, TDR is doing a big issue on The Shaggy Dog this fall and I thought, you know, that you know more about this piece than almost anybody. And there are these people that are flippin' in from -- and I think from just the little talks we've had you understand where it's coming from better than anybody -- and there's a critic in from L. A., you know, and blah-blah-blah, and he's doing a Jungian deal and then there's this other real nice guy, you know, Silver -- a French critic -- and he liked

it and all but his language is such that he doesn't get a lot of the slang puns and -- you know and the kinky references underneath -- and there are supposed to be five writers that were supposed to write on Shaggy Dog and Cops. It's like a workbook, you know, and I don't know -- Schechner understands the piece pretty well -- and he likes it a lot -- but, hell, now, I mean, I didn't know where you were at but -- I don't know what control but -- I'd rather that you wrote about it than any of these guys, believe me, and if -- I don't know if you want to release any of the material in advance of the books --

S: Yes, sure, but you see like what I have actually, so far -- and it hasn't been typed out yet -- (inaudible)

and that is an account of the play which (inaudible)

running time -- plus comments at the end. Talk about the relationship between sound and image. So anybody you mention me to -- I'll tell them what I have. But I'm not really a professional writer. That is -- it's very hard for me to just -- they tell me 5,000 words -- it's very hard for me to do that. Because (inaudible)

L: Well, doesn't work that way in Performance -- you know, her book. I wrote one thing for her that I like a lot and I don't know whether you ever read that How We Work -- did you ever read that in the first issue of Performing Arts



Journal?

S: Yeah.

L: Yeah. And Gail Merriweather liked that a lot and wants me to write something else about The Shaggy Dog but she wants to publish about half of it this fall. So maybe I would -- she's in India now with and when she comes back maybe she would prefer to publish some of your stuff rather than something that I would write -- or maybe I would write something small and the larger article would be yours. Then, Sainer and are putting out a new book -- it sounds kinda great, it's called Workbook and it's just about work and it's real cheap publication with a lot of material -- it's gonna come out a lot, like every month or a month and a half -- some kind of serialized publication stuff and I was -- you know, and then there's this TDR thing and --

S: Kirby and I don't get along too well --

L: Listen, and Kirby hates my ass. This is the most incredible fucking thing that they haven't done anything on us in seven years. I have a feeling -- you see, Kirby likes Bob a lot -- and I love Bob's work -- but feel that Kirby is a self-styled protector of Bob and Richard who are very good friends of mine, and hates -- he says we're too eclectic and we don't understand



art and -- you know, that we're too theatrical, that kind of stuff, you know -- and I can't believe that he's decided to do an issue on us because he hates me -- at least I thought he did -- and I think I know why, because Foreman really loves Shaggy Dog and Foreman told him to do it -- and I think that's why he's doing it. So, but all I heard was from Schechner -- that he's doing it.

S: Yeah, well he's -- I kind of respect his ideas but he has a kind of very academic, professional critic's idea -- like he wants it to be a science or that --

L: My whole stance is like Annie and -- I mean, you know, I think pretty well but my stance is kind of having fun. I like to have fun -- like to make jokes -- you know, and he doesn't think I'm serious, I think, about anything that I do. I'm serious about my jokes, you know.

S: Sure.

L: It's funny. But anyway, if you're interested in releasing any of your writing in advance then I will tell these people that it's Stefan's material and (inaudible)

and you can make your own arrangement with them -- whatever. I'm sure that in some of these magazines there's no limit on the length and stuff like that. Well that's exciting -- I'm -- I read your thing on Wilson, I thought it was real good. I

don't know whether that's the final one, but I read it up at the --

S: Well that's just a small part of it --

L: It was a big, bound thing -- it was pretty, you know --

I think it was on                      you know, this is something --

like it was a private publication and I think it was -- it was either down at the New York State Council or it was at the CAPS office or something

S: (Inaudible)

L: That's right. Yeah, I liked that a lot.

S: (Inaudible)

L: Yeah. Bob's coming up pretty definitely in France now --

I hear he's doing a lot of work there and getting enough funding --

S: Television and things -- yeah.

L: Doing (inaudible)

Uh -- whatchamacallit did those -- you know, the artist from California -- uh -- Chris -- don't you know about those? (inaudible)

about four or five years ago -- the guy who was at the Payne -- you know, the guy who sits on top of the ladder for five days or -- do you know who I'm talking about? And I met him and he's an interesting guy and he's very Californian, you know, and the thing where he sat on top of the ladder in a basement filled

with water with two wires into his heart so if he fell off the ladder he'd get electrocuted -- that type of thing -- well, he did one, and then he did one -- I saw the videotape of him being shot which is pretty -- his friend shot him in the arm, you know, thing -- and that was pretty -- very interesting, actually --

S: Shot him for real?

L: Yeah. Shot him. Just, you know, wounded him a little bit. You know, scratch -- he was a good marksman. (Inaudible)

And (inaudible)

-- I just forget his name -- but he did a 30-second spot which is very funny. Something -- some title to it -- he put it in where advertisements get put in, you know, and it was something like Climbing the Stars or something and it was crawling nude through broken bottles on the street, you know, for about thirty seconds, only the bottles were lit so that the surface was black and the bottles sparkled so they looked like jewels

And so he was crawling through these --

S: He's interesting.

L: Yeah. It's really flamboyant and theatrical and he's just getting a lot of publicity from this stuff. But you know what his best piece is? -- I think -- he lay on the freeway in L. A. with a blanket over his head -- you know the freeway -- it was



pretty scary -- you know, and to figure out whether the police are going to get there or you're going to get run over first -- you know -- the police get there, the rest is -- you know. I don't know -- I wonder if Bob picked up any of that -- (inaudible)

Well, listen, when I read the letter I knew most of those answers so I could give them to you. Do you want me to just say them --

S: No, now it's 12:30, you decide when you want to go down and --

L: Well, look, let me do this real fast. I'm going to go down and see if she's there. If she's not I'll come back up -- OK?

S: OK. And you can bring her up here too.

L: All right.

S: All right. I'm talking to Lee Breuer here and so the script of Shaggy Dog was written when?

L: The first part 1 was being written in 1976. It began late in 1976 and I've just completed the revisions of it now. So, '76 through '78.

S: Like, one question I had in mind -- you know, you started writing -- let's say -- in '76 some time and at that time was the whole thing in your mind, sort of, more or less or just part 1 or --

L: No. I started something new with this script. I've always been interested in trying to write -- this is a little intricate -- trying to write something about developing material. In other words, a lot of times writers write stuff that's somewhat

9

autobiographical and they write it briefly after they've completed the episode in their life. I wanted to write this while I was doing it a little bit, and so the long period of writing -- there was a very intricate process because rehearsals began when the writing began. Rehearsals began in '76 and the writing began in '76 and it/<sup>was</sup> -- aspects of the piece were being lived and it was being rehearsed and it was being written -- all at the same time. And it took a couple of years for all of that to finish. And so I couldn't write really ahead of where my head was at. And where my experience was at. And I couldn't rehearse ahead of that. In other words, I would be projecting -- I would be essentially manipulating -- you know -- the reality (inaudible)

and so it took its own time to wind itself out and it took that amount of time to complete itself as a work of art, too.

S: Was it written in sequence, then?

L: Yeah, it was written in sequence.

S: And, would you mind saying what was in your life then.

L: Well, it was very related to what I started to understand about -- I guess you could call it romance, American style. The piece is about romantic energy. And I thought that an American point of view on romantic energy was pretty interesting and -- in other words, the piece purports to describe the prototypical American (inaudible)

from let's say circa 1958 to the present. OK? Now, this

atmosphere of romance in America is very tied to music -- very tied to pop music. Very tied to a statement that's essentially electronic statement. When I was fifteen to sixteen years old there was an incredibly important moment in history. It was the first time an R & B record hit the pop charts. In other words, the entire face of sexuality began to change from that place on.

S: A what record did you say?

L: Well, I forget the name -- you know, like early ones -- it wasn't called Rock and Roll then, it was called R & B.

S: Oh yeah. Rhythm and Blues.

L: Yeah, Rhythm and Blues and essentially rock music started to dominate American consciousness as the truest and deepest sexual expression in the nation. And there was a long time of adjustment, you know, a -- I mean, it began to dominate white consciousness, you know. And there was a long period of adjustment where white versions of black music were really pretty funny and corny and kinky. We slipped some old films of -- you know the guy that did Rock Around the Clock -- ah -- you know, Bill Haley and the Comets, you know, imitating R & B style music at that point and they kind of look like puppets on strings -- you know, and then we saw the same film of a Little Richard concert at the same time and Little Richard in terms of the presentation of his material was real and Bill Hales was a very gross imitation at that particular point. But it took



time to leak over into white consciousness -- what was being stated here. Prior to that, the romantic of metaphor in America was dominated by people like Dean Martin and Frank Sinatra and a kind of a -- you know, drink a Manhattan kind of, you know, New York effete sensuality of post-war -- you know, it was unchanged from the Bogart era to about 1956 - '57. But when I was fifteen the whole image of romantic energy, which I really associate with creative energy, was in a state of incredible transition. This transition has continued to evolve and it's just about completing its cycle now. I really feel that the '70s is just like the '50s. That the tremendous, you know, reversal that's taken place in the last two or three or four years is putting me back where I felt the world was when I was in high school. You know, 1954. And, in fact, my favorite record when I was a middle teen-ager -- Marvin and Johnny's Cherry Pie -- is the underlying record of the last sequence of the piece. You can barely hear it -- it comes up under Ruth at the very end. In other words, there's a record added to all of this, you know, distortion of changing stations at the very end. There's a record added underneath and that's Cherry Pie -- which was on the Hit Parade in L. A. around 1955 -- I think the guys are dead who recorded it -- it's old R & B stuff -- it's pre- Rock and Roll -- it's wonderful, and they let it on the radio, but they didn't realize, you know, it's ~~just~~ a real dirty record and they just put it on the

radio because it was, I guess, the metaphors were a little too -- they couldn't believe that it was saying what it was saying, you know, and it was all kind of punk -- saxophones and simple thirds and, you know, like early Little Richard style piano -- but this stuff was like pre- Fats Domino music -- you know, and has come back into the consciousness in this kind of '50s nostalgia trip that they had a few years ago. You know, with old Chuck Berry stuff and things like that. But this stuff was totally, spiritually liberating for my generation. There -- you know, it was totally liberating -- it was the beginning of the transition that then moved in its literary phase into the Beatnik structure. From then it moved into the '60s -- you know, Beatniks changed to Hippies -- then Hippies became political -- you know, then it kind of seeped into the consciousness of the country of a sort of, you know, new face of itself, you know, in a way. And that's where it started. And it was tremendously intricate, so I always realized that I kind of lived through an important time in this country and that the consciousness in which the so-called, you know, American illusion was intact through the Second World War -- which is essentially, you know, positivistic, illusion and, you know, had just hit the limit. I mean was -- you just couldn't believe that stuff any more. It was over the hill. There was beginning of the first idea of objectivity -- of irony about, you know -- things were kind of breaking down on a deeper level and what -- the core of this was this -- the



romantic metaphor and the rhythm of romance. So that when Joanne decided to deal with romantic energy in terms of Colette, I was interested in also making a statement about romantic energy, but I wanted to make it precisely and rigidly -- almost obsessively American. So that there was almost no European influence in this piece -- you know -- or outside of quoting of Maldoror (inaudible)

The rest of it is all American imagery, and in order to really dig American imagery I checked to kind of find out just what the message was. Could you perceive advertising art as an art statement. Can you perceive -- you know, and things like that. You know, can you find the aesthetic of this style. The hook -- when it really, thoroughly started to dominate the country -- was the juncture of black music and country music which came with Elvis. You know, this was five or six years later and from then on the consciousness of, you know, of this particular sexual expression -- you know, it became the truth about the country. You know, then with the advent of electronic sophistication -- taping and things like that -- you start to get a language to the country that I felt was as formal, primal and extensive as great classical theatrical language or, you know, Greek -- you know -- the kind of language extensiveness one would associate with classical



English drama -- with Greek drama -- and things like that, only where you heard it was you heard it in people like Stevie Wonder. You heard it in lyricists -- you know -- so what I was trying to find was the formal voice of the American aesthetic. And I thought that it was totally resident in lyrical musical output of the last twenty years. So that in a crazy sort of way, when I (inaudible)

as going back and trying to find out how to do Greek tragedy, you know, by musical and vocal extensions of the voice with an idea of inferring or imagining archaic readings and things like that -- I wanted to find it in James Brown, you know, in records like Please which is played at the first intermission now -- you know, and stuff like that. And I really was looking at this as formal theatrical -- a new formal theatrical language. You know, as precise, extensive and as elaborate and dense as any classically oriented, you know, rhetorical readings or anything of this sort -- as emotionally as deep and much, much more alive. One didn't have to play intellectual games to re-find it or imagine what great Victorian Shakespearean readings were all about or what the Greeks sounded like screaming into their masks and all this sort of stuff. It was there -- it was the same thing -- it was all being stated -- and, not only that, you had the wonderful world of electronics that could play its own game with it and make it more. So, it finally came down to the -- that

it's a description of the era of: you can't say 'I love you' any more without an echo chamber. You know, that's the (inaudible)

-- you can't say 'I love you' any more without an echo chamber -- OK? You know, I can't say don't leave me without a digital delay -- you know, I can't say fuck you without a bass drum, you know what I mean? And in a sense this is -- this, I really feel, is the beginning of American classical rhetoric. Without any European influence. And the key is that it had to break the European influence and it did it with an African knife. It had to cut the fucking thing so that we weren't dealing with classical allusions and, you know, people don't refer back to English scholarship and Shakespeare -- you go to Africa to find out, you know, what's being stated. And now, probably, you go to South America and the Caribbean and you find out what's being stated there. But the juncture and synthesis of that with the elasticity of the English language -- you know -- and with thought English language -- you're not reduced to nothing but kind of primitivist poetry -- you know, or that sort of things, but you can deal with more sophisticated thought but not lose the ground base of the fact that this is a new formalism -- you know -- and not an art formalism. This is a deep commitment to emotional formalism -- the objectivity comes in the balances, but that itself is a deeply emotional statement. So I was trying to find this voice and I realized in the beginning that I



couldn't have a voice unless it was amplified. So your initial decision was that this piece had to be totally amplified. This had to be a live mix. And the balance, I mean (inaudible) is the pivotal point of this piece. You know, that mixing board up there. There is something like -- you know, there are thousands of cues -- there are, you know, maybe a hundred different settings of balances between which speaker, how much echo on this, you know, the piece of equipment is like a miniature recording studio up there in terms of the number of effects that he can get, particularly with the harmonizer, the thing that can double and triple voices, you know, could get that stuff -- so that what we tried to do is to try to take this statement -- the popular statement -- and to join that with a viable intellectual statement. You know, an observation of the popular statement that was not negative and destructive -- that had a lot of praise in it. I think this is viable and important energy -- you know -- it was not a put-down, it's not -- a cheap, oh-how-shitty-it-is-to-have-electronics-screw-up-your-music -- just the reverse, I feel electronics is new music. You know, and so that it's totally accepting of a product and then trying to find out what it's talking about. Not trying to negate it -- not going back to a kind of a pre-electronic, purist statement of some sort. So, therefore, we kind of positioned ourselves



at the precisely opposite end of an aesthetic like Meredith's, who really is trying to go back to kind of purity and wood and the natural voice and, you know, and the bare individual in space -- and, as far as I'm concerned, you know, the new individual space is the individual plus the manipulation of the individual -- you know, (inaudible)

you know, so I started to get interested in hot imagery -- like fashion -- like movies -- Hollywood movies -- you know, recording -- tried to make, you know, our image of the set with the big radio and the cloud over it before -- we wanted to try to look like a record cover. You know, we were committing ourselves to advertising art as an art form.

S: A record cover is exactly what I have in here (inaudible)

L: That's what we wanted. You know, something that had <sup>look</sup> to/like it could be a Stones record cover or it could be, you know, Cream -- old Cream record covers, something like that, you know -- and Allison who's a wonderful artist, just picked up what we wanted just terrifically because she's also done advertising art. But she's really a fine artist and she appreciates that. She did the radio and the radio's the dominating feature -- I mean that points you how to look at everything. Then we wanted to Rose's apartment as close as we could to the kind of -- the way New York Magazine would handle a Soho loft, you know, they would always make it a fashion statement, you know, they wouldn't

pick an artist living in Noho someplace -- they'd pick some fucking gallery dealer, you know, who just put \$500,000 into their fucking loft, you know, and so it had to be very bourgeois to be American enough. In a sense -- as an artist, Rose is a fake. She's got too much money -- you know, she's a doll -- in a dollhouse, right -- and, you know, she's got too much money she's got -- you know, art is therapy for her -- that's all she's using it for -- you know -- and so her awareness is very slow and very developing and doesn't take a jump until she ages to a point that she has to give up the romantic body. You know, she can't do anything any more to look sexy. She can't be an artist to look sexy -- she can't cook to look sexy, she can't have her own tragedy to look sexy -- she's past it; she doesn't look sexy any more. It's a different trip -- getting into a deeper area of consciousness. So she's not -- in that way she finally detaches herself from the aura of self-created male manipulation in which she's simply existing to attract. OK? And so there's a process, you know, and the play goes through a kind of a process like that and I finally got all the metaphors, but -- sure, Rose is a dog -- she is a dog, but I wanted to have a human being about dog size, you know -- I also wanted a metaphor of the classic -- taking literally the word attachment and make a human being with attachments, you know, art, things, this and that. The <sup>Bunraku</sup>~~Bun Raku~~ as a theater has always fascinated me since I saw it in Paris. I always thought that it was -- you know --



an incredible idea about theatrical expression -- the <sup>Bunraku</sup>~~Bun-Raku~~.

Read a little bit of history about it -- about the fact that when human beings were banned from the stage and they started performing Noh plays -- you know, by puppets -- that the public appreciated the puppets so much more that when Kabuki -- when performers were then allowed on stage again -- the only way that they could get an audience was to imitate the puppets -- so the entire style of Kabuki theater is an attempt to imitate the way the puppets did Noh. And that's what started the style of Kabuki. The puppets did the Noh plays when, for religious reasons, human beings were banned from the stage -- OK? But then, the style of the way -- you know, the magnificence and the stillness -- the space around that these puppets create -- the kind of Zen space and their, you know -- was so important -- and the magic that was possible with the puppets being able to (inaudible)

brought the whole acrobatic and dance structure -- Kabuki -- so, in order to be popular, men had to imitate their puppet counterparts -- because the puppets were the myth in the Japanese mind and the men, in order to grab some of this myth, to make them attractive performers -- they had to be mythological -- they had to imitate puppet function -- so they had to look like they could fly in mid-air, they could jump, they could do all these incredible things. So, in a way, I do feel that



if the process follows itself out in America -- you know -- and we've got a lot of puppet theater recently -- you know, that the puppets will find the true myth of the American statement and then -- you know, possibly we'll all have to be puppets in order to get anybody interested in stuff -- but it'll be fun. But, anyway, I just simply wanted to find that --

S: Well, in a way, with the sound, you see -- the sound reproduction -- this has already happened to the ear -- and like -- and you're doing it, so --

L: That's right.

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S: Two things -- and I'll forget them, you know, -- I'll just mention them now, but the one is the speaker mix, that is to say: the distribution of things on the speakers was changed for the second part --

L: Yeah -- but, you see, that's the whole point, Stefan. Robin is still improvising. He is free to improvise. I mean, if he feels -- he just sort of gets an idea in the middle of a performance that he'd like to hear that voice out of that speaker, he'll do it. He's free to do that -- he's free to mix as he goes.

S: But there was an overall change, I think, because almost -- most things came through one speaker -- I thought -- earlier -- the left speaker behind us -- and now it was distributed between it and the other much more.

L: Yeah. Robin was just playing with balances and he was -- you know -- he's just -- it's developing. I mean, it will continue to develop. So that he wanted to mix it up to give more of a stereo balance, you know, sort of be able to separate voices. Very delicate how some of this stuff works because big scenes that work perfectly, we find can be totally blown by changing the balance of where the voice is coming to the audience. Because the scenes work because you hear one voice a hair more clearly than another -- so you hear one in the context of another and then if the balance is changed, and

you hear the second level voice in the context of the first -- instead of the reverse -- the scene means something different. You know, without any change in readings -- any change in blocking -- in anything, I mean, you're at the mercy of this but you can also make a new scene -- out of simply changing the fact that a voice comes from the left instead of the right. It's quite fascinating. We found this very, very important. The critical experimentation was done in the Fred-Ruth overlay, where Ruth uses a Puerto Rican accent -- Fred continues with this kind of James Beard business about Bunny back there. Well, we found first of all that we could not set cues -- that Fred and Ruth never knew exactly who was going to cut in when -- that there's rough approximations, I mean there's the little touchstones like Ruth usually always says -- you know:--- you think I blew a fuse? right when Fred says: that blew it. So you get these little cross-associations -- and she usually gets sexy when Fred starts to talk about Bunny getting kinky in his rabbit suit and running into the plants -- you know, so there's this general continuity of this stuff, you know, but, blow-by-blow, every night there's fifty percent different cues of when Ruth's gonna cut in -- what word she says against which words of Fred. It has to stay loose like that because if it's set it just doesn't have that idea of radio-natural. I mean, we want to play -- we want to make kind of fun of naturalism and in order to do that they have to really be quite naturalistic in some of this stuff.



S: They were more separated last night than I'd ever heard them before -- that is to say, Ruth would come in when Fred was not saying something.

L: Yeah, last night it was a little bit more static. But it can grow back again. It depends on how they feel sometimes. Also, there's technical problems like Ruthie uses earphones in order to hear Fred clearly -- to know about her spacing. Sometimes the earphones go out and so it's guesswork, so then they have to go a little bit more to traditional cues. You know -- so all these things kind of influence it a little bit. But I wanted to leave this -- I mean, it's so complex -- but I wanted to leave this loose enough so that there's a tremendous thrust of creativity on the part of the actor each performance. That it's really -- they can't rest. There's too much that they have to do and think anew each time they do it. There's all these cues to think about -- there's all these associations, so that it has a lot of openness and air to catch fire if it's gonna catch fire and it's not a situation that you can go through the motions. The B. Beaver and The Red Horse, somehow -- particularly The Red Horse, which was, you know -- you could go through the motions and the piece would be pretty good. You know. The B. Beaver started to be more dependent upon where the actor was in terms of counter planning -- particularly where Fred was, you know -- whether he was really 'on' or not, you know. And The Shaggy Dog, even more. In other words, it's

a progressive trusting of the art of acting. Of the art of entertaining, actually, because the Mabou Mines actors -- at least we proceed from the point of view that they have to be entertainers. Too -- you know. And so that without being an entertainer it's only like you have -- you can't rest in being a character -- you know -- you have to get out there -- and it's kind of, you know, it's kind of commentary acting -- you know, in the sense of you, yourself are out there as an entertainer. You can choose to be a character -- use an accent, this and that, but you're always yourself -- you know, in a way. You know -- I mean you're always watching Fred (inaudible)

-- it's like story telling -- a lot -- it's very much, you know, there's a lot of sources in epic tradition that we've found and, maybe used -- in the story telling tradition, that I think is good. But we've taken in a whole other route, I think, because our -- and times are different, of course -- Middle America, you know -- but there's a lot of this in it.

S: Yeah. Another question -- I have two in mind. The -- you spoke of Rose going through a process of awareness of some sort -- of character development -- something -- what I was wondering about -- I was wondering about two things. One thing you didn't take up earlier. The one is you indicated this was a personal



experience in your life that was happening from '76 onward -- whatever was down there. My question is: what kind of experience? And then the other question is: you have this what you've described as the new language or the new American voice coming with Rhythm and Blues and following. Now, what about the sort of romantic awareness as distinguished sort of from the romantic energy. In your play, relative to that -- do they relate?

L: Yeah. By awareness do you mean an attempt at objectivizing -- a figuring out what it's all about? Is that what you meant by -- in other words -- be able to see it clearly as an entity? Like a phenomenon -- describe it -- and not be subdued and immersed in it? That kind of thing? The romantic awareness?

S: It's -- I don't quite know what I mean, but for instance, like Rhythm and Blues and later what was more distinctly called Soul sort of have a -- romance is of a completely different sort. That is, the male presents himself quite differently and, well, the female too, but the male thing struck me -- especially in that and in other words it's another idea of romance and another self-conception, sort of, on the part of both sexes essentially. That's what I had in mind -- compared, for instance, to the traditional blues which I collect, but also -- well, compared also very much -- but there -- to Rockabilly -- things like southern country rock traditions. That's the sort of thing I had in mind. Whether, you know,



the, in a general sense I mean the image is clear here as to how Rose is -- feels romantically, but --

L: Yeah. OK, I understand now. (Inaudible)

What I feel here is that -- well, this is where the dog miracle comes in. This is why I used that little cut of the Bacall-Bogart film. Because in my mind when Lauren Bacall says: if you want me, whistle -- that what I'm attempting<sup>is</sup>/to use that as the classic -- absolutely classic statement of the women's role in the totally macho society at this particular point. This was the woman choosing to be whistled for. OK? And it was -- I think -- really fascinating that the two most proto-typical sexual images of that period chose to make this statement. You know -- one could say that Bacall was the perfect Rose and Bogart was the perfect John. You know -- the metaphysical Rose and the metaphysical John. And the image of their relationship, both on film and off, was related to the myth of American macho. And I believe that the transition -- now here's where I get into -- I've had a lot of obviously -- you could guess -- an awful lot of conflict, misunderstanding from women in the women's movement about this particular piece. I feel that the movement that I'm closest to -- that I understand the most about is the ramifications of women's lib in the '70s, and kind of what's been going through and this kind of progressive social, political and spiritual awareness that's

kind of going down -- you know, and practically every woman that I work with or relate to in one way or another is going through one or another phases of this, and stuff like that. Well, the part of this that I'm kind of -- I wanted to get past and not deal with, was the purely political issue. I just didn't think it was either important or worth wasting a lot of time about -- OK -- more money, more power, blah, blah, blah -- but it wasn't that, it was OK, when you get more money, when you get more power -- when you are, you know, strong -- what then? I mean, you know, what is a woman then -- OK? You know, etcetera. So I wanted to deal with it a little bit more on spiritual terms -- you know, in terms of the question of progressive awareness of the feminine persona. Now, I wanted to start with the key to the definition of the John-Rose myth which was this Bogart-Bacall clip -- OK? Now, on the west coast, this isn't a very well known slang term, but on the west coast a dog was used in argot and slang to describe two things: one, an ugly woman -- but that isn't the one I was using, but the second, and more important is a woman who follows -- the Ruth figure in the Bible -- OK? And then John -- S: There's a radio play, by the way, that used that term by Paddy Chayefsky -- with using it -- they're talking about dogs at some kind of a dance, actually, that he and his pal go to. That really struck me that time -- but that's like more of the ugly woman thing than the other thing.



L: Right. It's used as ugly woman at times but it's also -- and particularly in California when I grew up -- it was used as a way of describing a woman who follows -- you know, someone who's always there, manipulatable. A manipulatable woman. Then, the term 'John' is a whore's term -- as, you know, they call their men Johns. But the idea that John is a manipulatable man -- the man who will always follow -- that when somebody intimates that they're attracted to him -- he'll do anything to be in the presence of this feeling of -- you know, having his ego support. OK? Well, the idea of a John and a Rose to me in terms of this music -- to get back to your question, and the terms of the sexual roles and the way they' (inaudible) --

has as its base image a relationship between a whore and a pimp. In this term there would appear that there's a separation between a pimp and a John. That the pimp is in control and the John is not in control. But in reality, the little bit that I know about this -- the pimp myth -- is that the pimp myth is really the reverse side of the John coin. That the power hit that the man gets in controlling a great number of women -- having virtually a harem and stuff -- he's actually totally in control of his own obsession -- for control -- OK? So that, in other words, in my language a pimp is a John and a John is a pimp -- in a sense -- you know, but the bit here is that I wanted to take this -- an abstract of this and determine it through almost every male-female relationship that I know. Because there is



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Stefan,

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that aspect -- it's something that I understand and I feel. You know. The innate obsession to want to control a woman is in itself a function of one being controlled by the very image that one projects. OK? So this is the plight of John, and, well, I'm trying to tie it <sup>to</sup> here -- now, there's a little ritual that Rose goes through in this play. And it's not very related but I did take some information from a ritual called Chod -- I think is the pronunciation -- Chod, and ~~there's~~ <sup>there's</sup> a description of it in one of -- I think the Tibetan Secret Doctrines -- it's a Mimapa ritual and it's a ritual about the elimination of the ego. OK? Now, it goes through its -- its an old school ritual -- in, just traditional sense, it's supposed to be performed throughout one's life in graves, you know, and it's supposed to deal with making the ego look absurd by putting oneself in the presence of heavy images -- you weren't supposed to perform it in places where -- this is called the awe-inspiring place. Places where Greek tragedies have taken place -- graveyards -- you know, this sort of thing. And I translated my interpretation of the meaning of the ritual into my terms, or American terms -- you know -- so that it has nothing to do with the Tibetan basic imagery. But it's my subjective interpretation of what the American basic imagery would be. Well, I didn't -- Rose only undergoes half of the ritual in this play because I don't understand the second half because I haven't experienced it. OK? I project the part that she could possibly experience in relationship to part three

in the piece. Where she ages. But the parts that I've dealt with thusfar -- and this only has to do with the image track -- OK? -- this is parenthetical, but my idea about this play was to -- what I did with the original idea about the construction of the play -- was to write two plays: one that talked about the other one -- OK -- and have them go on at the same time. The first play -- as a description of the way you think. The first play is the obsessive narrative of the Rose and John story which is the radio narrative. The second play is what's happening on stage in the present: Rose in her apartment -- you know -- listening to the radio and going through these very literal but somewhat ritualistic acts. Now, the acts are pretty simple and they are to identify what is determined as the five parts of the ego.

S: Greed and so on and so forth.

L: Greed, pride -- and the kitchen is hate and the cutting room is jealousy and then the living room is stupidity. OK? Now, the idea about the way this is done -- in the beginning of the ritual they're called the elementals in the translation that I read -- and the first level of experience is to identify them. Identify with them. In other words, to truly and deeply imbed oneself in greed and then pride and then hate and then jealousy and then stupidity. Stupidity is supposed to be the



central factor -- all of them branch out from stupidity. All of them are functions of stupidity. And stupidity in itself is interpreted as the opposite of awareness. OK?

And so what I tried to do in the set -- I mean, the idea of using the Gordon Matta breaking space idea in the set -- fragmenting of the space -- is I wanted -- there's a statement that's in now, right before the ax touches -- in which Greg says: the dog identifies her dog house in the form of her own interior decoration -- she starts to shatter her illusions. Then the ax touches and the floor breaks up. So I wanted from that point to project the reality of the doll house as Rose's precise illusion and the literalness of shattering the set as the literalness of shattering the illusions of attachment. OK? In other words, shattering the ego, OK? So that she's only identified with two of the elementals by that time: greed in the bedroom and pride in the bathroom. But then in the abstraction I wanted to be able to perceive the entire as a mandala. So that the entire psychic space of the apartment was her moral mandala: the bathroom was the area of pride in the mandala -- the bedroom was the area of greed -- the workroom, art was the area of jealousy -- the kitchen -- you know -- I just went nuts -- I loved the deep freezer, you know, the big boiler, you know, all this stuff is the image of hate and then the central place -- the, you know, the space, the party, the social atmosphere was the image of stupidity. There are

certain metaphors in the ritual -- there was stupidity characterized as a vampire -- you know, and things like that. So from that came the inference of "Rose, see yourself as a sucker." Because the idea of stupidity was essentially based on the image of sucking. OK. Deriving self-sustenance from -- you're getting the area that I'm trying to deal with on this?

S: Uh-huh.

L: So the second play is perceiving the behavior and consciousness pattern of the first play at this particular point. The first part of the ritual -- and the transition to ritual is cutting away -- so this comes in between the acts -- it's simply -- I took a lot of information from Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism. And so the image of the ax which is a joke on ax-guitar -- OK? -- is also the cutting sword which is a ritual object for cutting through illusion -- OK? -- and besides I like axes, I always used to get off on images of ritual ax-murders in the mid-West and stuff like that -- it was a woman stalking through cornfields, you know -- they're exciting images to me, you know, -- and so I wanted to deal with this idea of cutting through the illusion of the ego and how the idea of being in love was in a sense the key to this kind of illusionistic self-sustaining. In other words, would it be possible to deal with being alive without being fed by the ego-manipulation of a lover. OK? And the



idea of the dog chain -- the chaining to the master is the linkage of necessity -- the suck in which one cannot live without following unless you get on the leash, somehow. And then it's very scary. So Rose gets this far at the end of part two -- as dumping her garbage -- which is essentially the end of the first part which is a dance. It's the dance of five directions. And, in fact, the only quote from this ritual is some of the stuff Ruth says behind the mirror in the pride. You know, she goes through other metaphors for the color blue, the sound of tapping -- all this -- the image in the ritual is each one of the poisons -- in other words, this is, you know, pride, greed, this and that, is supposed to be transmuted to a wisdom. So in dealing with pride correctly it transmutes itself to an awareness of the meaning of pride. In other words, it isolates itself in a corner. So in this way I talk about it as being autobiographical. I mean, for me to get to a point that I could be able to perceive my role as an artist in terms of jealousy -- I think is a fairly healthy place, you know -- I mean, I know a lot of real well-known artists that deny it. They won't deal with it -- you know -- they won't deal with the social implications of what politics are to the art world and this and that -- maybe I'm looking at it a little heavier, but I wanted to kind of look at it at its blackest. You know -- and to see. So, in a way, I was writing a piece to learn a little



about what I've been doing over the last ten years -- or even longer. And I also thought -- and the Duchamps rip-off -- the joke about Rose the misspelled Duchamps -- you know -- and the art world -- at least (inaudible)

-- is I felt that I wanted to make a choice of objectivity that Duchamps made when he objectivized himself a persona of a woman. That, you know, well, se la vie. So that I wanted to steal Rose Se la vie -- perceive, you know, my persona from the feminist stance -- the other side of the coin -- in order to objectify the situation. So that I don't feel -- I feel that the course of Rose's existence here is more me -- as much me as the John, scene, you know. So that -- and I didn't want to deal with homosexuality because I didn't think that that was the idea -- I wasn't dealing with the homosexual metaphysic. I was dealing with the heterosexual metaphysic, but two parts of it. Because I don't know enough to understand the homosexual metaphysic, you know, I really don't. You know, I would guess it. So the Chod ritual that is dealt with in the play, pretty much ends at the end of part 2 when she, according to the ritual, identifies with the elemental (inaudible)

-- that's in dumping the garbage. In other words,

S: That was added now.

L: Yeah. But it was added but I had always planned to add it

because I had never gotten -- that part of the writing is very difficult for me because I want it very minimal -- just enough to be able to trace what's happening. You know, just trace it. And to get the absolute precise phrase -- not make it too Formanesque -- you know, there's a lot of announcements which are a lot like Richard's style of editorializing -- and I knew there was a right way to do it but I didn't want to copy him and how to get -- you know -- the right kind of trick in there. So it took a while to work it out and I got the rest of it all done. Before I can look at it to make comments on it, the rest of it had to be done. But I was guessing what I was looking at. Because I wasn't trying to comment on the rest, I was trying to comment on the whole production. So the second part of the ritual that I really haven't dealt with is the ritual that deals with giving up the body. And the only aspect -- you know, once you identify with the elementals, the next step is you have to offer your body for sacrifice. In other words, you have to give up your youth, in terms of this play. But the only way to really understand youthful energy and romantic energy and youthfulness -- is to be old. You don't understand it until then. So that idea of Rose jumping from twenty one to twenty eight years -- you know, dog time: seven years to one -- you know, and why she becomes another generation is this image of giving up the body which she can't quite because she's always had this enormous desire to be reborn at eight in the

form of Clover as the super-sexual romantic being. You know, and Clover comes out of her bath in fur and, you know, stuff like that -- my implication is that while Rose is in heat she's reborn sexual and she's reborn as the primal sexual image which I think is the eight-year-old. I think that's kind of what Fellini was talking about. That sexual romanticism is born at eight. That's when it locks in -- I think that's what eight and a half is. You know, and so Clover is eight years old and it seems just ideal -- that Clover's the seat of it all --

S: It works well -- in that scene in particular --

L: And, so that you get Ruth's tremendous aggression and anger at herself for wanting to be reborn as a romantic and Clover going right on and being reborn as a romantic, you know, at the same time. The anger resulting from knowing what it means -- that it's just a circle -- that it's just an end -- that it's incomplete -- that it'll never complete itself -- in other words it comes back to the phrase 'how do I know what I know and do what I do' -- I mean, there, the woman who is aware of the meaning of romantic energy and cannot resist sensually and sexually allowing herself to be reborn for two weeks a year while she's in heat -- you know -- go get laid. And so -- but what I haven't dealt with because I don't really understand is the -- yet -- is the true idea of a



decision to give up one's body, because I'm finding it very difficult doing it myself. I'm forty-one. You know, I'm in this kind of middling ground between living the life of a twenty-five-year-old on one level and being a father of two children and thinking of a third, you know, and trying to be responsible on one level and fuck around on another level and, you know, it's -- in a very plebian way it's the typical middle-age crisis, you know, both for men and women -- like, are you gonna -- can you live with getting old, you know, that's it -- can you do it. And I talked to a really close friend of mine at Yale, who's teaching up there, Mary, who's seventy and she says that she couldn't live with it until she went right through menopause, you know, and there she was, sixty-eight, still fucked up -- now she's seventy-two, she's all right she thinks. So it's really pretty funny because it is unending and therein is the Shaggy Dog Story. That almost doesn't ever conclude.

S: Yeah.

L: Does this clarify any of the point of view on this at all?

S: Yeah. I mean, it's very complex so I wouldn't -- I kind of follow you from step to step, more or less -- yeah. From part to part -- yeah.

L: That's what I was trying to say -- that's, you know, I mean I don't know how much of that comes out -- a lot of people pick up different parts of it -- you know, understand

it on different levels, but it's --

S: You were speaking at the end of the previous run about their adding a ritual to part 2 -- wanting to do that. I don't quite get your use of the term ritual, but, for instance, washing your hair is a ritual.

L: Yeah, I actually didn't want to add a literal one. I didn't want it to be literal. The only aspect that I thought was the ritual of turning her house into a mandala of her ego. You know, literally seeing her house as the mandala of her ego, you know. Just like one can see one's clothes -- what one wears is the mandala of one's ego and things like that --

S: I don't -- what is a mandala? I mean, I've read a little bit about it but what do you mean?

L: OK. A mandala is a painting or a work of art -- it's like, well, on a primitivist level it's like American Indian sand painting -- it's a spiritual picture that attempts to describe a certain kind of abstractive result. And that certain -- Jung dealt with these a lot -- they're multi-circular, you know, but the best mandalas are four-square. They're also like -- relate to houses and temples. I don't know a great deal about them either -- I'm almost<sup>not</sup> interested in getting a great deal of technical knowledge because I have a subjective image that's important to me, you know. But, it's like if you could paint your mind. Not, precisely on a psychological level but the deepest, most abstract directions of your mind, OK?

And that there's, in a Jungian sense, there's an agreement -- or where people's minds do not differ but are collectively similar -- you know -- there's always the romantic thrust -- there's an idea -- there's always the negative thrust -- there's an idea -- there's always, you know, the desire for awareness -- there's always the idea to hide from awareness. I mean, these areas are represented either by certain figures in the mandala, and things, or certain gates that go from one thing to another, you know, but they -- I would say the cross is a mandala -- it's like a more esoteric interpretation of psychology. In fact, what interests me tremendously about this area is it is not precisely mysticism and not precisely psychology. It's been termed parapsychology essentially, you know. It does have its roots that lead back into very typical psychology and it does not quite ground itself -- I mean it -- you know -- Freudian interpretation particularly is just like a tiny little corner of this -- I mean, it's so much more enormous than that, you know. So, generally, the animations -- now in this kind of Eastern parapsychology which is --



II - Lee Breuer - 23/V/78 - in re Shaggy Dog - side 1

L: The Animations, all three of them, The Red Horse and the B. Beaver and The Shaggy Dog, are three parts of a six part work -- they're the first half. The whole work is gonna be called The Loci. And they're pieces dealing with each of the six realms. Do you know the six realms? -- OK. This is the parapsychological metaphor -- OK -- that one lives in six realms. Instead of living in ego, id and super-ego -- forget that. That's all part of one realm in this. But one lives in six realms, basically. Lives in the animal realm, lives in what's called the Preta realm, which is the realm of the hungry ghosts, lives in the Hell realm. Now those are the three realms below human beings. Now, the Beaver is the Preta play, the Red Horse is the animal play and The Shaggy Dog is the Hell realm play. Each of these realms is characterized particularly by a different attitude. Different basic attitude about living. The animal realm is characterized by kind of obsessive unrest -- they're always moving -- you know -- sniffing, changing position and stuff like that. This is the horse's travelling idea -- of always, you know, trying to carry messages further and further across the desert. The Preta realm which is a wonderful realm is the realm of the hungry ghost. The image of the Preta is a fat man with a tiny neck. And the tiny neck is too small for him to be able to get enough food down through the neck to fill as fat as his

stomach is. And so he's always hungry. So it's a world about hunger. Now in Western metaphor, this would be closer to Purgatory than anything else. Not in Hell -- not in Heaven, and is always bouncing. And supposedly pretas used to run around graveyards and howl at night and good people would go out and put out bowls of food for them, and stuff, you know. And I think a Preta probably comes from a baboon-style image, or something like -- you know, that kind of -- but this wonderful idea of the always hungry. So Fred is very perfect as a Preta. He's -- you know -- but it's hungry for everything -- not just food. You know, hungry for self is really kind of what it's all about. The person who is -- and Fred and I have really kind of wonderful talks about this -- you know -- Fred is a builder too and was building a house while we were talking about the Beaver building a dam. You know -- the house never got finished -- Fred's always building. He's always building a life or building a house or building something -- and it never quite gets finished and it never -- you know -- it's always -- he's a hungry man and I understand. I'm a hungry man too and I understand that level -- a lot -- and we have this very deep communication about that. And it's very funny. Fred is kind of a comic figure -- you know. And it's a comedy of misery and it's kind of fun. And it's characterized by this need. It's characterized by need -- you know. The Hell realm is characterized by aggression. OK? And it's



characterized by a very deep-seated commitment to negativism.

(Inaudible)

And so my feeling is that these three pieces, in my own subjective terms, deal with these three areas as I understand them. Now, according to <sup>the</sup> information that I have on the realms, the real metaphor for human existence is that one lives in all the realms all the time. And has this kind of electric switching ~~back~~ and forth from one to another. But the basic metaphor for human existence, if a choice is made, is the animal realm. Therefore, the Animations deal with three animals in this stuff. There's three more realms. There's the human realm -- it's the fourth one up, the one above that, which is a really interesting one -- which is the one I'm going to work on next -- is the Ajura realm. And this is often translated as the jealous gods. What they mean are great figures. Nixon was an Ajura -- I guess maybe Joe Papp could be called an Ajura -- you know, Dwight Eisenhower or MacArthur is a perfect Ajura -- perfect Ajura. Now, these are people and they're characterized -- you know, they're called the jealous gods or the human gods, OK? -- and they're characterized by paranoia. That is the basic idea. Because they have no time in their lives to deal with anything except defending their position -- their power. There's literally no time to do anything else except watch who's gonna get 'em next -- right? That's the Ajura. And this is the character -- great warriors are Ajuras -- you know -- right? Yeah. And it's -- and so the wonderful idea about



the Ajura is that they're considered great men but they're probably trapped by projecting their position -- they're playing King of the Mountain for their whole life -- right? You know. And so that realm on one level is to be considered above the human realm and on another level is below it. In a way, they're all below it. But -- and then the last realm is the Diva realm -- or the peaceful gods. And so there's a balance between the jealous gods and the peaceful gods. The peaceful gods are characterized by obliviousness in which they are so into being peaceful that there's no movement at all -- you know -- I guess the Pope is a peaceful god or whatever it is -- you know, he just goes around -- but what I'm going to do with the peaceful gods is Disneyworld. I'm going to (inaudible)

a piece about Disneyworld. Because I think it's a perfect place for the Divas. You know, it really feels like you should hear "When You Wish Upon a Star" coming from here -- you know -- and children floating by and, you know, castles rising in the air and all that stuff. And it's a certain heaven -- you know. And supposedly -- at least the basic myth of this parapsychology is that the only -- and you're reborn from world to another<sup>, you're born</sup> as an animal or a Preta or a Diva or something like this -- but when you go through your lives you end up basically in one of these six realms and the other psychological metaphor is that a human being is

sp? living in all of these realms all of the time, and it's -- one part or another comes out in these different realms. And the human realm is the realm characterized by passion. So, you know, the -- now, this in itself is a subjective interpretation -- it's not a classical interpretation -- this is more Trunghpa's interpretation -- who's attempted -- who -- this Tibetan who's got this ashram in Colorado and all -- a lot of people, you know, hang in with him a little bit -- I think that Chaikin and you know, particularly Jean-Claude goes over there -- teaches there a lot -- and I don't do that a lot but I'm real interested in his attempts to Americanize and give psychological terminology to some of these things, because I always -- it helps my understanding on this level, you know. But the --

S: His name is Trunghpa?

L: Trunghpa, yeah. It's an interesting book -- if you're interested in it it's -- take a look this book called Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism because it is --

S: That's by him?

L: Yeah. It is a book about the process of cutting through or cutting through the ego -- or dividing the ego down into the mandala so that you can see the parts of it -- you see how it's a structure -- what the puzzle of it is -- what the different chemical pieces of the ego are -- how they fit together and interlock -- come together -- it's almost like a



chemistry -- the ego, you know. So, the idea here is that -- is that the Animations are half of this work and that -- I was just trying to --

S: (Inaudible)

-- how do you fit that in? I mean, maybe it doesn't matter -- because like -- but -- this is aggression, not passion, this particular thing.

L: Yeah. I felt --

S: I mean, when you said aggression I had a sort of intuitive agreement, but on the other hand then when you mentioned passion I was hesitant.

L: Yeah. Well, <sup>I mean,</sup> /this is the work on the human realm -- I'm doing another (inaudible)

This is the work on the Hell realm. I feel that the characteristic attitude of the piece is aggression and I think that it's aggression against passion. In other words, I think that the image track, what Rose is doing to herself, is trying to cut through passion with aggression. And so that the texture of the play is from the aggressive stance and that this is the key to the parody of the passionate stance. The passionate stance is this long, lyrical, you know, repetition of this obsessive love affair with John. But the present stance of the puppet, the actors, and everything, is toward parody and irony and sometimes cruelty about this passionate stance. This is where the irony of --



because all the influences of American lyrical records -- these voices are done just at the side of them so that there's always an ironic point of view on them. They're not <sup>direct</sup> imitations and they're not intended to be direct imitations. They're intended to be rather sophisticated ironic points of view on the imitations but the imitations are done so well that sometimes people are kind of confused about whether it's just rendering them or having a point of view on them. But we attempted to have a point of view on them -- to always show that we were standing just to the left of this idea so that you could look at it -- you're not imbedded -- not in the bath -- the Jello bath -- but you're just on the side looking at the bathtub, you know. So this is about aggression -- I think it's correct. I think that the central stance is aggression.

S: In a positive sense --

L: We feel in a positive sense because you feel that without this aggression he's lost, in a way -- you know -- that it's not an attempt to produce evil from this aggression, it's an attempt to produce clarity. Classically, the sword that cuts through is the use of aggression for awareness. In other words, he also has written another interesting essay called-- that's about not being afraid to use negative energy. Now I feel a very good interesting use of negative energy is comedy. In other words, I think that -- particularly comedians like

Lenny Bruce -- is a brilliant example of the use of negative energy. And there can be a tremendous amount of truth in the use of negative energy. When it goes too far -- when it comes over into kind of -- I mean, an interesting history in -- I think in going too far -- is Celine. Whereas his first -- the real major works had this incredible brilliance and truth and clarity based on his negative energy. Then when he got sicker and sicker -- you know -- the negative energy -- it just started to feel uncomfortable, that he was falling into his own toilet bowl and finally he flushed himself down, you know. But for a while he was sitting there, very together, on top, looking at that toilet bowl -- able to perceive it, you know, from the idea of still being a human being, and then he just became a turd, you know. You know, but you saw him sink into the sea of it, and it's a very difficult stance to be able to use it and not to let it envelop you into a wash of shit, you know. So, that's the idea. And it's always true -- some performances, I feel, in other words, last week and the one before -- the performance before the one that you saw -- were so aggressive I got scared. It wasn't even funny. ~~They weren't even~~ funny in the fucking thing. Because there was just -- the people were just indulging in the aggressive aspect of it. I got scared, you know. If we let it go that way it's nothing but a hate play, you know. And it isn't -- I don't feel it is. It's still an attempt to find clarity in this morass of



kind of sexist behavior, you know. And then we lightened up particularly for the Sunday performance and I thought that was much more the balance that I wanted -- you know -- still not quite funny enough.

S: Yeah. I see/ <sup>the thing.</sup> I don't -- yeah, you lightened up.

L: Not much -- but, you know, I mean, I don't want to -- I don't want to make it schtick -- you know. But I don't want it kind of imbedded into nothing but, you know -- into too much hate. It's about hate but it can't be hateful, you know. Or it means nothing.

S: (Inaudible)

-- kind of missed as a spectator. I mean, there's a difficulty here, sort of -- the way it looks. Because what you want is richness --

L: Yeah.

S: -- and that relates to what you were talking about earlier, also. Namely, the tension and the energy needed because of the amount of freedom that is left in the actual performances. And so that can also be endangered, I think, by what you call 'lightening up'.

L: I agree.

S: That sort of thing, you see.

L: And you're always dealing -- Stefan -- the tricky thing is that you're dealing with <sup>the</sup> tremendously complex idea that people are relating to this play in a very subjective way.



And what's light for somebody is heavy for somebody else and what, you know, like you and I might find it funny when it's pretty heavy and other people might find it too disturbing -- in order to get the point of it, it would have to be a little -- it's just you have to choose where, you know, where it's going to get balanced. It's like this incredible dirigible balanced on a pin, you know, I mean, this whole fucking thing is just balanced on a single metaphor and a gag and this whole fucking thing is going like this on it -- and sometimes it just tilts too much, you know, that's all. It's like a great, big balloon, you know. Did you want to talk about any of the specific things --

S: Yeah, I guess so. This is really fascinating and, you know, you got into those things that I hadn't thought of at all. So -- Oh, one more thing: the writing. There is a certain amount of -- you get a collaboration from the writing too -- it's --

L: No, not sort -- no, that's yours?

S: -- it's of a different sort -- no --

L: No.

S: -- that's yours?

L: No. The only --

S: There must be feedback -- in rehearsals -- (inaudible)

L: Oh yes, right. There is. There's a tremendous amount of feedback. There's some ad libbing -- you know -- in it, that I like a lot. And there's a writer in the cast who -- I like

his style a great deal -- it's Terry O'Riley. He's a really good poet. And he thinks a lot like I do and he's given me a lot of good ideas -- you know -- and he's made a number of really good ad libs. One that I put in -- that, you know, -- I forget what it is but it's just so great -- oh yeah, in the very end of part 2, Fred has this little passage that he begins three times: "Because you cannot wait unoccupied".

Talking about the whole idea of finally Rose coming to become  
(inaudible) can wait

where she can wait for awareness or wait for knowledge and the fact that theater -- the play itself -- is literally a way of marking time. You know, dealing with material -- creatively -- just a way of waiting without too much anxiety. Entertainment, you know. Self-entertainment. The idea of being a creative person is entertaining yourself while you wait around to get a little knowledge, you know. And so when I had this line -- because you cannot wait unoccupied -- Terry came up with: because I cannot work unamplified. And I wanted to throw it right in -- right (inaudible)

But he comes up with wonderful things like this, you know, and he's been very, very humble. Everybody's -- there's been an incredible amount of input on this. The basic -- the really, really, deep, solid, heavy-weight input on the literary-staging level have been Ruth, Bill and Fred, on this.



Joanne's aesthetic is a little bit different, and Joanne was critically important on The Red Horse, you know, in terms of that. But this is a little far from her aesthetic. -- And it's not -- her input is a little more formal, you know. And Fred really understands it on a pretty deep psychological level -- Ruthie actually -- this whole staging of the John scene is Ruthie's idea -- you know, the one against the open window -- I think it's the best staging idea in the piece.

S: It certainly is very powerful and beautiful.

L: And a lot of the Country-Western aesthetic -- you see, there's where the writing is influenced. I rewrote the whole Country-Western opening from an acting choice that Bill made in which he was using this Country-Western accent that he does real well. So, instead of writing the actual words, he gave me the key to the whole rewrite of the dialogue. from his acting choice, you know. So they're not actually putting words in the script but the performing itself is forming the writing -- as much as the writing is forming the performing. And that's where it's really different. I actually -- I rewrote some of the lines for Ruthie's Puerto Rican accent -- I rewrote the whole Bunny chase scene to match with Bill's acting choice -- you know -- this idea of the three guys on the Old Oprey stage -- you know, stuff -- you know. And so I would say that the writing was totally

influenced by the performers -- but not the fact that they're acting as writers -- they're not saying: here's a good line -- but their performing choices -- and this is the way we interlock in a very intricate way -- we all work off of each others' -- are all subjective images of each others' creative potential. So that my imagining of what Bill can do can produce what I would write for Bill -- but then he'll do something else -- and I'll rewrite because I like what he did better -- you know? He was screwing around with a Johnny Cash imitation and then when finally he hit it, he got something that sounded really close to Merle Haggard. And I thought: how fabulous, man, Merle Haggard's the one -- that's the man, you know. And I rewrote the whole thing like a Merle Haggard monologue, you know -- because Johnny Cash was too sweet. Merle Haggard was evil enough, you know, man, he's a real hippie-hater, you know -- it's the kind of thing I finally realized you just couldn't do without a can of beer in your hand and that was it, you know, and it just --

S: This is what ~~you~~ you're talking about (inaudible)

the chase?

L: The Bunny chase and (inaudible)

-- the stuff that starts with: ~~just~~ this is the sad part, John -- you're waiting for the sad part.

S: Yeah. Except that's a little different -- that's more --

L: That's a little more Cash. Yeah, that's more Cash. The



chase is a little bit more -- yeah. So, anyway, a lot of this stuff -- and I really feel that I wanted to take these performer images and these readings that they give as -- for the real poetry that's -- I mean, this is a very -- Merle Haggard energy is/<sup>a</sup>really specific and precise attitude about American energy that's just -- I mean it's Celtic in its basis, maybe -- you know, but it's just the trip -- you know. It's the trip as much as some of the early -- some recordings of Elvis are the absolute linkage of the romanticism of that trip -- you know -- so the writing is totally influenced. And I'll tell you who was the other absolutely classical influence in this piece is Linda. Because Linda is the only person in the cast who can catch the perfect -- absolutely perfect -- fifties, manipu-  
~~latable, romantic~~, Hollywood tone. You know: oh John, da-da-da, and, ~~the~~ closest thing I wanted to get -- it was a popular record done by The Sunshine People, or something -- like a 50s group. Well, she is the perfect peg on the flower child voice, and so I wanted the central narrative voice of Rose to be my subjective, ironic take on the flower child voice. And then the opposition to this is Ruthie who is doing the take on the Joplinesque voice. So that what you get is the fourteen-year-old flower child, you know, strung out on LSD, sitting somewhere in Malibou -- you know, looking at the ocean -- and Joplin, you know, masturbating on a microphone -- and you get the two sides of this energy -- so that -- and then Joanne forms a triangle because she brings

jazz sophistication to it. You asked in a question what was Joanne's sources. We started out with Billie Holiday -- it's taken its own course since then -- I was interested in Norma Hendricks as a base. She was part of La Belle -- she was the -- she had the big dyke energy in La Belle. You know, she was always wearing Trojan helmets and silver boots and stuff -- you know. But Joanne started with Billie Holiday where she got the shhh and stuff, you know, and it was real beautiful -- real good -- and so that that put -- that was more objective and sophisticated so there was two somewhat contemporary images, you know -- I know -- this girl is the lead singer of the Poppy Family and the record that did it for me was something called Where You Goin', Billy. You know, and it was a big hit about eight-nine years ago, you know, and Linda is the only one who can do this. Jessie is a wonderful imitator -- and she substituted for Linda when Linda had the baby -- for two performances -- she came close, but she couldn't hit it.

S: Now where -- where -- you see, I don't hear Linda much. I often don't really know if it's she doing it. Where would this be?

L: Well, Linda does that passage after "I'm crying" -- when Rose is on the bed. You know -- she's in a sarong, you know, and "I'm crying" -- (inaudible)



I mean, it's this. It's the heart-breaker. It's the kind of thing that's supposed to go over -- you know -- you know what I mean? It's that trip. And it's what every fifteen-year-old girl in L.A. is lying back on their bed crying over. You know, I mean it's the high school romance. It's the image of the high school romance. And so's the leather jacket -- of John's -- the image of the high school romance. I wore a leather jacket when I was fifteen all the time. Still do. Because I like to kind of associate with that (inaudible)

And so Linda is essentially the basic voice of Rose's totally illusionistic persona. And that is of the romantic flower child.

S: OK. All right. I hope you give me a tape because -- incidentally, I'll pay for it, I want to pay for it, but I'd like to listen to --

L: Just the cost of the tape, Stefan -- just the cost of the tape -- that's fine. We have the whole thing taped now. We did part 3 -- the whole thing -- OK? Were there any more specific things -- you want to know some little things about cues --

S: But we don't have time. Yeah. And it really doesn't matter that much. I have it sort of pretty well in hand on the whole -- let me -- wait a minute. First of all, you've got to be somewhere --

L: About another twenty minutes -- why don't you pick out

ones that you think are --

S: Well, that's a little hard for me too now because --

L: Well, we'll go through them and then we'll get them on another session. I've got more free time now. This is kind of fun for me because I haven't spoken to anybody, really, -- you know, I've been given a lot of short term stuff, you know, people -- and most of it I haven't -- I mean I've never talked about the Chod ritual to anybody -- or anything -- and it's been an important source and it's published so you can read it if you're interested in it, you know, so --

S: It's published?

L: Yeah. I'll bring you the book --

S: Oh, that book -- yeah. I was thinking --

L: Why don't you ask a couple --

S: Rehearsals started when?

L: We started when the writing started --

S: Yeah. That's what you said so this would be actually in '76?

L: Well, we actually did a little of this thing in '75. What happened is that we started to work on a piece before I had anything written -- but I had an idea about it -- we started improvising. And then the first performance of the piece was at the Paula Cooper gallery in the winter of '76. After we'd put in about -- that's the first -- then, the big breakthrough was when I finally got the prologue written, which was right



about then. And -- uh --

S: The winter of '75-'76 -- no.

L: No, I wrote the prologue in the fall of '75 actually, you know, and then we rehearsed it in the winter -- early '76 -- and performed at the Paula Cooper gallery with very minimal equipment -- just standing up to microphones -- we performed the prologue. And did four performances -- about that. And then, I thought -- (name? ) was in it then and then he quit the piece after that. And also Tom was in it -- and he left the company at that point and we tabled it for a long time. Joanne then did Cascando and it stopped. You see, it stopped two or three times during rehearsal period. Then we kept playing with that prologue for almost a year. We did it again at the Theater for a New City as a benefit -- we did it in Connecticut as a benefit -- I mean, in Connecticut as part of a residency there -- that next fall -- so that's almost a year since I started writing it and we're still working on the prologue. And then we started doing this kind of heavy, heavy work on finishing part 1 and half of part 2. And then -- in the early spring of '77, now, we did at the -- down on Wooster Street -- we did a work in progress of all of part 1 and half of part 2 with a kind of a mock-up set and Rose -- we had Rose by that time. And it was the first staging that we did on it -- and that was about half the play.

Then we stopped again while I did a lot of revision -- you know -- and Joanne directed Dressed Like an Egg. OK? And then, after that, I finished the writing of part 3, and I had everything done one year ago -- last summer I was writing on -- I was finishing -- the last thing I wrote was the art world sequence which was the tie-together of part 2 -- and I was finishing that last summer. And we ended up -- after we did the prologue on Wooster Street -- we did a revision and a purification of that, but essentially the same amount of material and we did it at the Public Theater for the first time a year ago. OK? And I think maybe you saw that -- that was -- OK. And that was half the piece, right at that point, and I --

S: (Inaudible)

L: I still hadn't finished writing and I had a draft of the whole thing done this fall -- you know -- and we started finishing -- going down the line to finish the piece -- you know. Still -- essentially I was beginning to rewrite by that point, OK? And I worked all fall on it, writing while we were rehearsing and then when we finally opened -- the day before my birthday -- I knew I had to get it done before my birthday -- so we opened the day before my birthday -- when I was 40 I swore I was going to finish it that year, and it was done the day before I was 41 -- so that's when it was done -- (inaudible)



And then, just little bits of revision here. I think there still may be -- we probably will do it next year and it probably will be shorter. I'll probably cut -- keep trimming in part 2 -- and things like that, because I want cut another 20-25 minutes out.

S: It's longer now by a quarter of an hour than when I last saw it --

L: Oh well, it's not the longest. The longest it has been has been about four hours and ~~ten minutes~~. And we came down at about three forty the night that you saw it. Three forty, three forty five -- because we went up ten minutes late. So -- we went up ten minutes late -- so it's actually shorter, you know.

S: It feels very short to me. Like, I always enjoy it on every level, but also I've seen it so many times that somehow that shortens it for me. (Inaudible)

L: I like it at this length. I do like it. I don't feel it's too long a piece -- I don't know, I'm still playing around. Usually now it takes time to sort out any -- the longer you hang with it, little things become less necessary and they're on the way of going, you know, and then --

S: Then let me ask you again -- like -- does this piece and the writing of it relate to a particular love relationship

that developed over that period -- that you started out talking about (inaudible)

L: Sure. Yeah. I had a long affair with somebody in California and simultaneously my son was being born and I was living with Ruthie. And so, in a way, the piece is a combination of my life with this -- my affair and my life with Ruth at the same time. So it's half about Ruth and half about this other person. And in many ways they became kind of identical. This other person's kind of a movie star. You know, kind of -- many movie star -- it was the whole Hollywood illusion. It was wonderful, you know, because it was just a complete bath in the whole shit, you know. And I lived at Venice Beach and everything, you know, so the whole trip was just -- it's really almost documentary.

S: But it developed over that time?

L: Oh yeah, I was writing while I was in the middle of it. That was my experiment. I wanted to see if I could live with writing the material as I was living it, you know --



II - Lee Breuer - 23/V/78 - in re Shaggy Dog - side 2

L: It was as heavy as it could get. The piece almost bogged down four or five times because everybody was just too angry at each other to even deal with it. It all got kind of sorted out. In fact, it kind of just got sorted out this last weekend because the Friday before the Sunday that you came, the woman who was essentially who part 1 was written about -- saw it -- because she was in New York shooting a film and she loved it -- it was really wierd, the whole thing. It's so strange -- but I've never had the guts to do that. There's only one other writer who I know that does that and we have a very special communication. It's Carolee Schliemann. She's the only person that writes what's happening while it's happening. Not afterwards -- not after it's cooled down, but while it's happening. And I thought I had to do it. I had to try to try to gut it out. You don't know whether writing it itself is actually making it happen. You don't even know whether you're living to make your own material. Or whether you're getting material from your life. It's very confused. It totally sets the illusion of the creative response with the idea of a so-called real response of living in perfect perspective because you really don't know whether you're in a play or writing a play or having an experience in your life. It's almost irrelevant

which it is. It's just the energy at work and it's at work both ways. And I wanted to try to experience it. I'm glad I <sup>lived</sup> ~~went~~/through it but it was touch and go for a while.

S: The other interesting aspect on that is that --

L: But it is -- there's only -- I had a long talk with this other writer who's gonna do a feature on it, who really -- she really understood it: Vicky Khan who's director of the Voice and she said that she had never really -- she finally understood that what was happening was the -- it was being created while it was being lived and, you know, and so the play's half about me and Ruthie and half about me and (inaudible)

S: And also half about yourself and half about the other person.

L: That's right. And there's also influences from the lives of a lot of people in the piece, but they're mostly seen subjectively. It's basically sort of biographical but so are the other two Animations. The B. Beaver is just me in Paris in that fucking toilet mess around 1968 and The Red Horse relates to a -- when I was trying to hitchhike to India, you know, about three or four years earlier. I wrote it after the B. Beaver but it was related to an experience that was earlier -- when I kind of bogged down and ran out of money at the end of Turkey -- you know. And in fact, was hitchhiking on a truck that ran over a red horse that I then identified with



my father and that was it, you know -- so it's just playing with the images as they come. Also, what was the final connection on this is my dog, Little, that went into the advertisement, you know -- I don't know whether you -- you've seen the dog in the advertisement?

S: Yeah.

L: That's my dog and she shoots exactly like my girlfriend Susie -- same blue eyes -- (inaudible) so, it just all kind of came together and seemed to me to be very humorous.

S: All right. Jessie Nelson. I don't know what I should ask but it's a strange thing there on the margin of it and roughing into it -- set into the whole thing like that --

L: It's not entirely organized. Jessie is a super-talented student of mine -- she's was a student of mine, she's a professional now. And I wanted to -- this never got quite clear, Stefan -- Jessie came into the production first of all on a practical level as being Linda's understudy because we knew we'd have to understudy when she had the baby. But secondly, at the time <sup>that</sup> we built the set we hadn't devised an idea <sup>of</sup> where the punching bag was accessible to the actors. The original idea was that the actors were each supposed to be able to go up and work on the punching bag themselves. In fact, Linda was supposed to wear the boxer's outfit. But later on I got

an idea that the punching bag was really the orchestra. The rhythm section. And that I wanted a two-part objectivity. One was the sound effects person like the person in the old radio station who would do the sound effects -- which was Gregg and the other, the musician -- the person who would formulate the rhythm on the punching bag. The whole image never got complete. There was really supposed to be a speedback too -- but we never were able to get the speedback up and integrated rhythmically -- some of the speeches were supposed to go to these kind of chi-chi-chikada-chikada -- stuff on the speedback but we never got it together and the punching bag seemed to be formal enough because it alluded to that fantastic kind of disco thump that you get under the stuff, you know, and with the amplified punching bag which came from an idea by Dickey Landry -- he was going to originally do rhythm dynamics and he suggested that we use an amplified pillow. And then I thought, well, my real image is boxing -- I want to talk about a fighter. This one's a fighter. And so I wanted it to be with a body bend. Well, there's also a little passage of dialogue -- the only one that I haven't finished yet. And I probably can't include in this production because it's too long as it is, but it's a little part of the art world -- it's only maybe half a page long -- in which -- there are two little characters that were



cut out of the play -- just for timing -- they just didn't seem to fit right, rhythmically. One was Broadway, Rose's dog lover, the wino who really is the father of her puppies and not John, metaphorically -- and the second is Lou Lunch who is -- in my mind is her agent -- her uptown agent who gets ahold of her when she becomes a funding phenomenon in the art world -- and in which they talk about the role of dogs in society. And I was writing this parody about how the development of the -- you know-- when dogs are moving, that they're going to follow the whole structure that every ethnic group in the United States follows. That they will move over to the Lower East Side first and then after that they will become a dog Mafia -- then they'll dominate the heavyweight division in boxing -- OK -- right? -- and they'll be moving up, they'll be just behind Spanish -- you know -- just behind the Cuban -- you know -- South American boxing domination -- because within about fifteen years the heavyweight champion isn't going to be black any more, he's going to be South American -- because, you know, Spanish-speaking boxers dominate every division and when the blacks came into<sup>boxing</sup>//-- when there was a Jewish heavyweight because the Jews had gone through that trip -- right -- you know--- Max Baer was a heavyweight -- then in the lightweight division everything were black champions. Then when the blacks took over the heavyweight champion, then the Spanish comes up -- and the Spanish get there and then -- you know -- and if women were going to go into boxing and they were

going to have a, you know, a sexist Mafia -- then -- so this is this parody on the ritual of ethnic domination in America -- you know -- that you always grow up through the same deal -- you know -- and it keeps going from there. After boxing you go into show business. And the Irish and the Jews ~~are dominating~~ show business now -- you know, right? -- and from then on they'll move into buying property -- right? -- after buying property they'll become, like the old English structure -- then they'll die. Then they die off. After property, then they start to dissolve and they vanish from the face of the earth, right? So I was gonna write this little parody about dogs following suit, you know. And it was gonna be a statement to her agent Lew Lunch and that's missing. But that was supposed to put the pin on the boxing metaphor -- on why all this boxing. Because the mark of a stage in, you know, social credibility was being heavy weight champion -- you know -- the one before going into show business and the one after having the dog Mafia, right? You know, but they're somewhat linked -- you know -- like -- because it's intricate transition -- I mean, you get the black Mafia fighting the Italian Mafia for the drug trade -- simultaneous with the blacks dominating the heavy weight division. But as blacks are moving into show business now and they're beginning to take over show business -- a great big year -- five black shows on TV, you know -- they're beginning to move over -- in other words, to start to move the Jews and Irish out of show business, right? But as they do this they're going to lose



the heavy weight division -- right? -- you see? -- so there's room for the next one on the way up, see. So I was just going to put dogs in line/<sup>right there</sup>-- and it's a passage I really want to put in there because I think it's a good point of view on it, you know -- so that's the bit about boxing --this is where Jessie fits in -- because I think she's tremendously talented and I wanted to have a kind of a Ruth -- not so much look-alike, but an aura. You know, she's built like Ruth -- she's kind of squat, you know, and she has the same kind of power acting as Ruth does, and, you know -- so that she was really the orchestra but she's also technically -- she and Greg are both understudies, in case we need them -- you know, in terms of the cast -- and I wanted to give her a chance (inaudible)

because she's possibly the most talented student I ever had, I think she's going to be a wonderful actress -- and she's only about twenty (inaudible)

Very conscious, very bright girl. Greg's super talented too. And he's more of a conceptual talent -- more than an acting talent. He's helped me a great deal conceptually -- he's a director, primarily. But both of them -- well, I picked up three fantastic students from Santa Cruz. Both Greg and Jessie and Allison Yurcsa who designed the radio -- all came from my Santa Cruz workshop.

S: I have a question -- maybe I should ask it later, but -- I don't know -- but this whole thing, visually -- you know, it's -- the place is a mess and gets worse as the play goes on.

L: Yes.

S: OK. That's one thing, but -- it registered -- but it -- you know, it's very scattered, and then, also the way people move in it really kind of presumes that -- they're moving within this extended space, you know, where the emptiness -- space is almost like the main thing to the spectator. And now the boxing thing, you know, is way over there and, I mean, you're stretching things when you do that -- I mean, moving the camera in that direction, like -- but, what -- like -- I don't even know what my question -- would you have something to say on the use of space? It's peculiar.

L: Yeah. I've always tried in Animations to give --

S: I think it's great, by the way, I mean I think it's just a very powerful and beautiful thing the way you use space and, I mean, actually I can't say anything about technically, but --

L: I'll tell you what the ideas are in it, OK? I wanted to do a live film. I wanted you to be able to go from here -- to here -- to here -- to there -- to there -- in other words, make your own cuts. I want you to be -- see, it's written in cuts -- and directed in cuts, not scenes, so much, you know. And so I wanted you to be able to cut -- you know, be watching Bill back there when he says: tum-tum-tum-go-choom-batchoo-batchoo-batchoo -- back to Bill, you know -- over to there -- you know,



Joanne behind the (inaudible)

to turn your head like you're cutting from thing to thing so you make a film in your head by the way you do it. The second implication is that I always -- since in a way, it's a moral pageant play in contemporary terms -- I wanted to allude to old pageant staging. And the old pageant staging was this raised platform where the gods, the orchestra and the chorus sat and then the rear action -- <sup>and</sup> the hell world was over -- this is like, you know, medieval pageant -- the hell world was over here and the center -- you know, scene, whether it was Christ being crucified or the virgins being, you know, wiped out or whatever it is, was down in the center. Everybody's looking down at them, like this. The orchestra was over here, and the -- you know -- so, in a sense all the performers are gods to Rose the puppet -- the manipulators, OK? So, I wanted them up there looking down -- that we descend into the world in order to manipulate it -- change the space around, move the kitchen here, move that there, and be able to come up to make the rhetorical statements about it. All ironically, but I want to allude to real pageant staging, so I just want a center where there's you. And, you know, and we finally got -- and I also wanted it to fit into this thing like it was a studio -- like it was all -- all this space crammed into a matchbox so that there was this feeling that

it was like a -- you know, a -- like you were in a recording studio, too. This is an image I got in a film that just wiped me out -- did you ever see an old Goddard film called 1 + 1 ?

S: Yeah, but I don't remember it.

L: Well, it was halfway -- it was a very conceptual film -- half of it was shot to nothing but The Rolling Stones recording --

S: Groups and all that --

L: -- yeah, recording Sympathy for The Devil -- you know?

And then the other half was kind of a flippy parody of black militancy in Europe -- you know -- throwing out machine guns -- very funny and stuff. And so I loved just watching -- you know, that was before Brian died and everybody -- I loved watching the Stones sitting there plodding at this recording -- you know, smoking cigarettes, drinking pop, you know, Richard's doing his kind of kick and Jagger being/camera-shy and all this sort of stuff -- it just -- be doing a recording -- it was really fascinating.

So I wanted this image -- then I did a lot of dubbing in Paris.

And a lot -- Fred did a lot of dubbing, did a lot of dubbing -- saw a lot of dubbing studios and I love this image of watching somebody's back looking at a screen, because, you see, the idea of turning around came from the dubbing studio. Because in dubbing -- you know, when you dub dialogue onto a film -- you have the screen and then the dubbers sit up at this rail with microphones and they match the voices and stuff -- an inspector, he sits behind them, so you see their backs -- and they do all



these corny things -- like they're doing a bike scene and they gotta go ugh-ugh-ugh-ugh -- and you see all this stuff from the back, you know, and it's very abstract -- and it's very corny and funny -- you know -- so the idea that I want also the image of a rock concert scene from backstage -- so that they're lit from this way -- you know -- we at one time thought we would show the inside of the ~~radion~~ instead of the outside so it would look like the radio (inaudible)

we thought that was too little -- it was better if they were just facing the face of the dial -- you know -- and that it would be a better balance. But that's where the idea of turning around for the whole prologue came -- plus the way that it alluded to -- I also wanted -- you know, there was a lot of attention paid to the color. Like everybody seemed green except Fred. And they're all under the green dial -- Fred doesn't have the right costume because we couldn't afford it. I really wanted him to have a velvet overcoat with a hat that would allude a little bit to <sup>something like</sup> Super Fly -- and a little bit to the old Jean Gabin films like -- if I could get -- if I could have made a red velvet trench coat with a hat with ermine lining -- you see, I also want it to be Santa Claus, right -- but he's under the red knob which is the power knob and what I really felt -- now we're thinking

of getting that image, you know, of that store that has on the boxes -- ~~it has a rose on~~ the box -- it's a perfect bourgeois image -- it's the perfect image of, you know, New York, upper-middle -- you know -- property -- it's just wonderful. But I wanted the rose to be all this green of the dial and the blossom to be Fred under this power thing, see -- you know -- and also alluded to over here where we put the VU meter up over Jessie -- you know -- the power dial. So, these are personal images but I just -- the whole color scheme is green and red, you know, formally, and it's about Santa Claus and the elves, gifts and the rose and all of this sort of stuff and then I wanted to make this kind of analogy that I'm talking about the counter flower to the lotus. The lotus is supposed to be the flower of awareness and the rose is the flower of passion -- or anti-awareness. You know, and so that was Linda's joke -- that added dialogue -- I mean, you know, the many-petalled version of the wrong fucking flower -- that she yells out in the Statue of Liberty thing -- you know -- so, it all kind of connects -- that way -- Listen, I'd better head down -- but we can have another session if you'd like -- I'm enjoying this so, you know -- it's OK with you --

S: Oh, I'd love to -- just apart from what I'm writing -- it's just great.