

Studio International magazine: Tales from Peter Townsend's
editorial papers
1965-1975

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Declaration of authorship

I, Joanna Melvin certify that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this is indicated in the thesis.

Tales from Studio International Magazine: Peter Townsend's editorial papers, 1965-1975

When Peter Townsend was appointed editor of *Studio International* in November 1965 it was the longest running British art magazine, founded 1893 as *The Studio* by Charles Holme with editor Gleeson White. Townsend's predecessor, GS Whittet adopted the additional *International* in 1964, devised to stimulate advertising. The change facilitated Townsend's reinvention of the radical policies of its founder as a magazine for artists with an international outlook. His decision to appoint an International Advisory Committee as well as a London based Advisory Board show this commitment. Townsend's editorial in January 1966 declares the magazine's aim, 'not to ape' its ancestor, but 'rediscover its liveliness.' He emphasised magazine's geographical position, poised between Europe and the US, susceptible to the influences of both and wholly committed to neither, it would be alert to what the artists themselves wanted.

Townsend's policy pioneered the magazine's presentation of new experimental practices and art-for-the-page as well as the magazine as an alternative exhibition site and specially designed artist's covers. The thesis gives centre stage to a British perspective on international and transatlantic dialogues from 1965-1975, presenting case studies to show the importance of the magazine's influence achieved through Townsend's policy of devolving responsibility to artists and key assistant editors, Charles Harrison, John McEwen, and contributing editor Barbara Reise. Reise's work with the Minimalists cemented their reputations in the UK. Seth Siegelaub, the innovative New York art dealer guest edited the exhibition in the July/August 1970 issue. Harrison's support of Conceptual art led to *SI* May 1971, an exhibition venture with the New York Culture Center. McEwen was responsible for the Fish issue, May 1974.

Peter Townsend's papers are the only known surviving papers in the magazine's history. They are independent of the publication and provide off-scene accounts into the commissions. Leads found in Townsend's archive trace connections to other archives which led to interviews. In interviews and archives often it is the anecdotal story that raises circumstantial evidence giving fuel to reconsider familiar accounts.

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Editorial note

Townsend encouraged artists to write and he did not edit idiosyncrasies. This has been respected throughout with note [*sic*] where clarity might be needed. For consistency how an article appeared the first time it was published in *SI* is the way it is noted in the thesis. Art movements are noted as follows; Abstract Expressionism, Conceptual art, Constructivism, Cubism, Minimalism, kinetics and happenings. Following the lead of the magazine, formalism and modernism as terms of definition appear as such.

Prologue

The purpose of this prologue is to prepare the reader for what to expect from the thesis and to point out, as much as possible, what it does not address. It is not a part of the thesis as such but explains the thinking behind its construction. It will set out the texts relevant for its theoretical context. These are not directly referred to in the thesis itself but inform the writing of it.

Since the primary material under investigation is Peter Townsend's editorial papers 1965-1975, documents contingent upon his duties to ensure the production of the magazine, it is as well to warn the reader not to expect much investigation of the production processes of the magazine at the printworks managed by the publishers and magazine owners, Cory Adam MacKay's in Chatham, Kent.

There are several reasons for this. The first is that the archive contains only fragmentary records of the decisions taken. The second is that during her discussions with Townsend between 1996 and 2006 the present author concentrated on considering the content of the magazines as it related to the archive and the personalities involved with it. The character of the contributors, the social milieu of the editorial offices and the way decisions were made by Townsend and his editorial assistants regarding the inclusion of articles, have been the driving force of the investigation. Furthermore, details of the printing processes themselves were not covered in discussions the present author had in interviews with the editor's assistants, although there were many anecdotes told about the monthly car journey from London's west end to Chatham in Kent.

These days out were fondly recalled by Townsend and his assistants, in particular Charles Harrison and John McEwen who at different times accompanied him.¹ The day's highlight was after the work was done checking the proofs straight from the press, when they stopped at different country pubs and discussed what had come out well and what needed improvement, with reference to content and design. McEwen remembered that one of the women

¹ Charles Harrison, unpublished interview transcript, 28/03/07, Melvin papers, London. McEwen unpublished interview transcript, 1/11/06, Melvin papers, London.

from the office, Elizabeth Deighton, accompanied them.² She was infatuated with Townsend and frequently used the opportunity to drape herself round him. As McEwen said, it was lucky Townsend did not drive.³

When Townsend left, (the May/June 1975 issue was the last for which he was responsible) Richard Cork became the editor. Cork told the present author that he did not remember having direct contact with the printers and it is probable that this role was undertaken by one of the editorial office staff.⁴ Richard Cork was responsible for changing the ethos of the magazine to present themed issues giving in-depth focus on topics of current interest, such as art and social purpose, video art and art and experimental music.⁵ Indeed, one was given over to publishing the results of a survey of art magazines, based on twelve questions set by Cork.⁶ This was preceded by essays on different magazines.⁷ The present author decided not to pursue the comparison of art magazines in this thesis because it would have taken the discussion further away from the subject of Townsend's editorial papers. Townsend's papers have few traces of the changeover to Cork and this thesis does not attempt to cover it. However, as with investigation of the printing processes and methods of production, Cork's period of tenure might stimulate further research projects. These might complement and extend the present author's investigations. The arena of contemporaneous art magazines and how this thesis is placed within it, is a subject to be returned to below.

In order to help locate the reader it is necessary to provide a backdrop to the current affairs and social circumstances during which Peter Townsend's editorial tenure of *SI* occurred. Townsend was a left-wing intellectual and his political ideals and allegiances were formed by his time in China during the Second World War. He told the present author that from then onwards he was

² McEwen unpublished interview transcript, 1/11/06, Melvin papers, London.

³ McEwen unpublished interview transcript, 1/11/06, Melvin papers, London.

⁴ Richard Cork, unpublished interview transcript, 9/12/12, Melvin papers, London.

⁵ Themed issues as follows "Art & Social Purpose." *SI*, Vol. 191, No. 980, March/April 1976, "Video Art." *SI*, Vol. 191, No. 981, May/June 1976, "Art & Experimental Music." *SI*, Vol. 192, No. 984, November/December 1976.

⁶ "Survey of contemporary art magazines." *SI*, Vol. 192, No. 983, September/October 1976, pp. 145-186

⁷ "Art Magazines." *SI*, Vol. 192, No. 983, September/October 1976.

wary of American foreign policy and suspicious of its imperialist attitudes towards the rest of the world. He considered the war in Vietnam to be symptomatic of this position.⁸ When Townsend was appointed editor of *SI* in November 1965, London still showed the signs of war damage. Townsend described the feeling of optimism and excitement which accompanied social change. These are not topics the thesis attempts to address, although such factors as the Cold War, popularly considered as an ideological struggle between capitalist freedom of speech and communist repression, the increasing power of the workers and strained relations between the TUC and Labour governments, the moon landing, the emancipation of women, the contraceptive pill, Britain's pre-eminence in rock music and the increasing use of recreational and psychedelic drugs, formed the background to the period of Townsend's editorship.

The streets of London also provide a horizontal stage for the thesis. Townsend explained to the present author that many decisions were made during informal discussions while walking between the editorial office in Museum Street, opposite the British Museum, to commercial galleries and the Tate Gallery, the nearby art schools, St Martin's School of Art and the Slade, or in the local pubs and restaurants he frequented, with artists and his editorial assistants. The informality of the verbal exchanges which Townsend recounted and described to the present author were quite different in tone from his correspondence in which he was formal and, to more modern eyes, arcane. Of course, much of the tenor and content of these conversational exchanges remain lost, because at the time they were not recorded by Townsend. However his brother William sometimes quite extensively described occasions when he accompanied Peter in his journals, which have been extensively consulted by the present author.⁹

The slipperiness of rendering conversational exchanges has been an underlying preoccupation of the present author since the start of the project,

⁸ Peter Townsend described his retrospective considerations of the wider circumstances surrounding his appointment to the present author, Melvin notebook 1996, Melvin papers, London.

⁹ William Townsend's Journals are housed with his papers in UCL special collections, London. They have not been catalogued and therefore they are referenced by the Journal number and the entry date.

before the thesis itself was conceived, when Peter Townsend approached her for assistance in putting together his large accumulation of editorial papers. At that point her aim was to develop a strategy whereby the information and material in the archive, that is to say, Townsend's papers, might be rendered transparently readable, without Jo Melvin's inflections. Her desire for anonymity stemmed from a naïve view that archives and documents are somehow clean or, in themselves, pure. This was derived from the more generally held expectation of the archive as a vessel of knowledge, a notion that has since been destabilised by archival theory and its effect on the reading of history. The increasing interest of the present author in archive theory, combined with immersion over a long period in archives themselves, has led to a reconsideration and a revision of the view that it might indeed be possible to have an uninflected archival reading.

To appreciate another factor which influenced how the present author set about this investigation, prior to beginning work on the thesis itself, we must return to the ephemeral nature of conversation and how to record it. The publication of Patricia Norvell's interviews with key New York-based exponents of Conceptual art practices in 2001, was significant and helpful to the solution to this problem, one increasingly pressing after several years of working alongside Townsend, sifting papers and recreating the original files.

The book, *Recording conceptual art: early interviews with Barry, Huebler, Kaltenbach, LeWitt, Morris, Oppenheim, Siegelaub, Smithson, Weiner*, is edited by Norvell and Alexander Alberro.¹⁰ These interviews took place while Norvell was an MA student at Hunter College, New York, where her advisor was Robert Morris. Morris helped her devise a set of questions and establish the list of interviewees, who were all artists except for the dealer Seth Siegelaub. They were all men. *Eleven Interviews, 1969*, was presented for the MA at Hunter College. Norvell explains in the foreword that she was committed to the project as a process piece in oral history format, and for this reason had not transcribed the interviews other than short extracts for Lucy Lippard's book, *Six Years: The*

¹⁰ Alexander Alberro and Patricia Norvell. *Recording conceptual art: early interviews with Barry, Huebler, Kaltenbach, LeWitt, Morris, Oppenheim, Siegelaub, Smithson, Weiner*, Berkeley, Los Angeles and London, University of California Press, 2001.

*dematerialization of the art object, from 1966-1972.*¹¹ It was after the art historian Alexander Alberro approached her for permission to listen to the tapes and his insistence that the material was significant and should be transcribed that led to the interviews being presented in the book.¹² The fact that two of the artists interviewed did not approve the transcriptions for publication is not relevant to this discussion. What is important is the shift in form from thinking about the interviews' status as oral records, to reading them in a book. The printed publication gives the material a much greater prominence than the recordings had were they to remain only in this form. It gave retrospective acknowledgement of Norvell's role within a wider community of research. This exposure, coming as it did many years after the interviews were undertaken is also circumstantially relevant to the writing of this thesis. As already noted, when embarking on the process of sifting and sorting Townsend's papers and recreating the original files, prior to their acquisition by Tate Gallery, the present author maintained a silent presence in the darkened store room at the Gallery where the material was housed temporarily. During a long gestation some components of Melvin's research in the field have entered the public domain and helped to trigger interest for other work, as will be seen below. The increasing interest in archives and art magazines from the period as research material make it particularly relevant to entering the debate now in its current form as a PhD thesis. The other factor relevant to this thesis arising from the publication of *Recording conceptual art* is the gender relationship between the female interviewer and the male interviewee. It invites comparison with the gender politics in *SI's* editorial office.

This researcher, the present author, is acutely aware of the predominantly masculine environment at the *SI* editorial office and indeed brought this up in discussions with Townsend on different occasions. For the reader looking for an analysis of the editorial office's interpersonal relations this thesis might be a disappointment. The women in the office are shadowy figures. They feature in

¹¹ Norvell, "Preface." *Recording conceptual art*, (pp. xiii-xv), p. xiv.

¹² Alexander Alberro, *Deprivilaging Art: Seth Siegelaub and the Politics of Conceptual Art*, PhD, Northwestern University, IL, USA, 1997.

the present author's interviews in a marginal way with comments on their looks, whether they liked drinking with the boys or supplying dope to the office. One apparently used the post scales to measure it out.¹³ Since the implied sexism of the editor and his assistants is not considered relevant to the discussion, because it differs little from the attitudes prevailing in the UK at the time, the present author has left this aside for further investigations. Having noted this, Townsend commissioned women artists to make specially designed covers and female critics to write for the magazine.

Townsend had a series of part-time secretaries. These are largely invisible in the archive although he enjoyed the company of women. William Townsend remarked in January 1966, that his brother's 'pretty secretary was already dedicated to him'.¹⁴ This would have been Elizabeth White who, two years later, assisted William Townsend with compiling material for the *Canadian Art Today* publication that he edited which was published by *SI*.¹⁵ Elizabeth White was listed on the masthead as editorial assistant in 1969. Other secretaries passing through the office were Jackie Collett, Thelma Watt, listed on the masthead as advertising manager in 1972, Zabelle Stenton and Irena Oliver. For a short period in 1971-72 Catherine Lampert worked part time selling advertising space. She was also to write reviews for the magazine and much later, in 1988, became the Director of the Whitechapel Art Gallery, London. Irena Oliver became an assistant editor at the same time as John McEwen in 1972 and was extraordinarily diffident about her role in conversation with the present author.¹⁶

The atmosphere of implicit sexism, however, is more than likely to be no different from that in most offices in London and in the UK at this time. The Equal Pay Act 1970 may have changed this because the employee's sex should no longer affect the salary. The Sex Discrimination Act 1975 meant that employers could not discriminate in law in relation to the employee's sex,

¹³ Harrison remembered that for a short period this happened regularly, once a week or thereabouts. Unpublished interview transcript, 14/7/08, Melvin papers, London.

¹⁴ W Townsend Journal, 1/2/66, Vol. xxxvi, UCL special collections, London.

¹⁵ W Townsend, *Canadian Art Today*, London, (Ed) London, W & J Mackay Ltd, Studio International, 1970.

¹⁶ Irena Oliver, email to the present author, 30/7/06, Melvin papers, London.

marital status or sexual preference. However, these social changes are not the focus of this investigation, although they necessarily inform attitudes found in the archive and explain aspects of the history of the magazine, such as why more women artists were not commissioned for cover designs. It was considered by the present author that further attention given to marginalisation of women would distract from the study and could again be the subject of a future research project. It is, however, clear from the thesis's discussions that Townsend sought contributions from women writers. Those by Dore Ashton, Jasia Reichardt, Barbara Reise, Lucy Lippard, Jeanne Siegel and Lynda Morris are referred to. There were also others, including Catherine Lampert, Suzi Gablik and Rosetta Brookes. This is not the occasion to develop the list, but it is hoped that the thesis will alert researchers to the potential inherent in the archive for further inquiries.

The present author has not attempted to write a social history of the mid-1960s to the mid-1970s, nor an art history of this period. It is not about Anglo-American diplomatic relations, but it is about Anglo-American artists' relations. The parameters of the research are defined by Townsend's papers and explore some of the leads found there by interviewing and also in other archives. The present author has excluded possible avenues if they do not refer directly to the sources in Townsend's material. It is necessary to point out that there are many ways in which it would be possible to explore Townsend's archive and this is simply a picture of some of the magazines as case studies. There is no discussion of the circulation figures and the relationship between news-stand and subscription sales. Nor is there more than passing mention of the ongoing financial difficulties of the magazine and its running costs. This is for two reasons. Although there are minutes of meetings documenting some of these discussions, there is not a full record. The other reason is simply that the present author chose to focus attention elsewhere because her interests lie in the anecdotal history of the magazine and how these stories inform the commissioning processes and the final magazine issues, not least in their translation from reproductions of art in a magazine to magazine-art. The third reason for this is that Townsend himself did not wish to spend time discussing fragmentary records of balance sheets with the present author. However, this

area too might form the basis for further research, particularly if considered in relation to the comparable figures for other art magazines of the period.

The close relationship between the present author, the figure of Peter Townsend and his material gives the study an overtone of an anthropological investigation, where the object and its subject is subjectively perceived, because the present author is a protagonist in the interviewing process and, by garnering new material, adds further layers to the archive. However, the anthropological element remains an implicit component of the thesis, it has not been considered theoretically. The presence of the material compiled during the process of this investigation adds an interpersonal aspect whereby the present author becomes implicated in some of the discussions.

Townsend's upbringing as a Quaker may have affected how he performed his role, which was by listening carefully to his companions rather than openly expressing his opinions. Townsend was interested in artists and how they spoke about what excited them most about their work. He considered the artist to be his own best advocate and wanted to facilitate this kind of direct communication. This approach suggested a strategy for the present author to consider in the manner in which she conducted interviews. However, the interviewees were approached primarily because they might be able to expand on specific details unearthed in the archive.

Oral history and oral history theory has informed the writing of this thesis. Oral history theory has informed the present author's thinking about interviews and how to analyse the material arising from them. This has already been remarked upon in relation to Norvell's book, *Recording conceptual art*, and Melvin's personal concerns about the nature of her presence in the archive at an early point in the research enquiry. There are close connections between the processes of archival sifting leading to interviews and the tradition of oral history and storytelling. The present author aimed to create an opportunity for the interviewees to air their recollections of SI, Townsend and the specific projects they instigated or were involved with. These led naturally to autobiographical accounts, generally beginning with the first introduction to Townsend or the magazine, and then to discussions of their impressions.

Necessary to the encouragement of recollection and to making the interviewee comfortable are sound preparation for the meeting and flexibility to allow the discussion to flow in unexpected directions.

In *Oral History Theory*, Lynn Abrams points out the four forms the process passes through. These are the original interview, the recording of the interview, the written transcript and then the interpretation.¹⁷ Although these are straightforward, commonsense points it is helpful to state them because of what is not immediately identified as part of the four-stage process. Correct preparation for the interview is significant for its outcome. Omissions may be made by the interviewer as much as by the interviewee. They might be conscious or unconscious. Clearly too the interpretation will depend on subjective factors as well as attempts to use extraneous information to enrich the story. In general the way the interviewer and interviewee 'get on' has a major effect on what comes from it. The rapport created is an unquantifiable element and how things are remembered or forgotten is frail and sometimes almost subject to chance. Oral history's methods of listening underpin much of the thinking in this thesis.¹⁸

The dilemma facing an oral history exponent is how to balance the inter-subjective experience of the interview encounter and the subsequent analysis of the material it exposes. As an interviewer, one is necessarily implicated in the interview and this is a direct encounter, unlike that with a document in the archive. However, when dealing with documents created by someone with whom one is in a dialogue, again transforms the perception of the document under examination. Lynn Adams uses a quotation from the oral historian Alessandro Portelli to describe the varying time scales inhabited in the

¹⁷ Lynn Abrams, "Turning theory into practice." *Oral History Theory*, London and New York, Routledge 2010, pp. 1-18, p. 9.

¹⁸ Although the present author has not yet contributed to the interviewing processes of The British Library's Artists' Lives project, many of the interviews she has initiated parallel those in this series. The Artists' Lives are part of the National Life Stories established in 1987 and its mission is to 'record first-hand experiences of as wide a cross section of society as possible, to make them publicly available and encourage their use'. British Library National Life Stories, <http://www.bl.uk/nls>.

interview and explain the ‘controversial, exciting and promising’ characteristics of the method.¹⁹ These are to:

convey the sense of fluidity, of unfinishedness, of an inexhaustible work in progress, which is inherent to the fascination of oral history – floating as it does in time between the narrator and the interviewer, and melting and coalescing in the no-man’s land from orality to writing and back.²⁰

Accounts and anecdotes in interviews lending themselves to a potentially never-ending exchange is very similar to the feelings arising from archival inhabitation, that the story can always continue, following one lead takes one to another and so on.

Theories about archives have informed the present author. This is an area in which she has contributed to the debate. In 2008 she contributed a paper at the Art Historian’s Association entitled ‘The phenomenal archive of *Studio International*’ to the session under the title of “Archival Impulse”. Her premise was that the material apparent in consequence to encountering the primary source of the archive, in this case, Peter Townsend’s editorial papers, is defined as *SI*’s phenomenal archive. This is because the generation of further material by the present author is dependent on Townsend’s editorial papers for *SI* but separate from it, and so becomes another, but related entity. This related entity that is part of the phenomenal archive includes Melvin’s notebook records of conversations with Townsend, interviews and their transcriptions, notes derived from investigations in other archives and so on. Other components of the phenomenal archive of *SI* might be derived from other researchers’ encounters with the material and can continue indefinitely, as long as access remains available.

It is impossible to think of archive theory without mention of Derrida’s widely influential book, *Archive fever: a Freudian impression*, published in

¹⁹ Lynn Adams, “Turning practice into theory”. *Oral History Theory*, p. 1.

²⁰ Alessandro Portelli, “Turning practice into theory”. *Oral History Theory*, p. 1. A Portelli, “Oral History as a Genre.” M Chamberlain and P Thompson (Eds) *Narrative and Genre: Contexts and Types of Communication*, London, Transaction publishers, 2004, (pp. 23-4), p. 23.

paperback 1998.²¹ Derrida ascribes the fever arising from the archive to the duality of the word, *arkhe*, 'archive's' etymological Greek roots. Derrida traces its meaning to be both 'commencement' and 'commandment'.²² '*Arkhe*, [...] names at once the *commencement* and the *commandment*.'²³ He continues by pointing out the Greek work, '*arkheion*, initially a house, a domicile [...] residence of the superior magistrates, the *archons*, those who commanded.'²⁴ For Derrida this means that the commanding aspect of the archive, which is its authority, is as much at stake as the notion of its origin, which is its beginning, prior to archivisation. Derrida wrote the paper for a lecture at the Freud Museum in London given in 1994 during an international colloquium entitled 'Memory: The Question of Archives'. Derrida uses Freud's description of the 'Mystic Pad' as an analogy that represents traces and layers of memory.²⁵ The mystic pad is the child's drawing board with a surface that can be wiped clean and used again. However the wax layer below the surface on which the drawing, writing or imprint is made leaves a faint residual trace which might be slightly visible when it is next used, creating multiple layers of impressions, it is kind of a palimpsest. For the present author, the notion of the mystic pad as a palimpsest resonates as a metaphor to describe the archival encounter. This is because it enables a visualisation of how impressions and traces continuously modify how we understand the meaning and context of the primary source which can be transformed through new interpretations.

In 2007 the present author collaborated with Lucy Gunning who was then artist-in-residence at the Wordsworth Trust, by writing a chapter contribution for her publication, *The Event, The Archive, and its Architecture*. Melvin's essay, 'Notes on inscription: tangential and awry archive stories', addressed the notion of the discursive nature of archival examination, through conversationally pursuing anecdotes, in a site-specific location.²⁶ Wordsworth's library and

²¹ Jacques Derrida, *Archive fever: a Freudian impression*, translated by Eric Prenowitz, Chicago and London, University of Chicago Press 1998.

²² Derrida, "Note." *Archive fever: a Freudian impression*, pp. 1-5.

²³ Derrida's emphasis in "Note." *Archive fever: a Freudian impression*, (pp. 1-5), p. 1.

²⁴ Derrida's emphasis, in "Note." *Archive fever: a Freudian impression*, p. 2.

²⁵ Derrida's emphasis, in "Exergue." *Archive fever: a Freudian impression*, p. 13.

²⁶ Melvin, Jo. "Notes on inscription: tangential and awry archive stories." Lucy Gunning (Ed) *The Archive, The Event and its Architecture*, Grasmere, England, The Wordsworth Trust, 2007, pp. 48-57.

archive is in Grasmere, in the Lake District, and it shows the traces of his reflective inhabitation of the place. This relationship with place was an aspect of Gunning's residency and key to her investigation.

Archive Stories: Facts, Fictions and the Writing of History is edited and compiled by Antoinette Burton. It is a useful contribution to the discussion of archives and how to think about the construction of the archive, its accessibility and its cultural and political framework, and whether it is personal or institutional. She remarks in her introduction on how the growth in respectability of oral history as a research method over the past twenty-five years, (she was writing this in 2005, now it would be thirty-three years), combined with the increasingly available 'Internet-as-archive, has helped to prize open canonical notions of what counts as an archive and what role the provenance of historical artifacts of all kinds should play in History as a disciplinary project.²⁷ Burton is sympathetic to the researcher's relationship with 'their' archive and describes how the book was produced because of the contributing writers' fascination with stories arising from those archives by their users but, perhaps more importantly, as a result of the plurality of the archives themselves as well as the diversity of material contained within each one, to identify and destabilise the triumphant notion of the archive as a fixed vessel of knowledge. In this she refers to Michel Foucault's work on archives as 'documents of exclusion' and 'monuments to particular configurations of power' [being] responsible for the shifting fortunes of archival discourse in the academy.²⁸ The collection of essays also draws attention to the way in which archives are used is affected by what the researcher brings to the investigation. This is as important as considering how the archive was constructed. She remarks that the book, *Archive Stories*, taken as a whole, 'contends that the claim to objectivity associated with the traditional archive pose [sic] a challenge which must be met in part by telling stories about its provenance, its histories, its users, and above all its power to shape all the "narratives" that are found

²⁷ Antoinette Burton, "Introduction." *Archive Stories: Facts, Fictions and the Writing of History*, Durham, NC, Duke University Press, 2005, (pp. 1-24), p. 3.

²⁸ Antoinette Burton, "Introduction." *Archive Stories: Facts, Fictions and the Writing of History*, pp. 2-3.

there.²⁹ Burton refers to Carolyn Steedman's book on the archive, *Dust: the Archive and Cultural History*, and points out that according to Steedman, the appeal of archives is also inspired by the modern romance of dust: that 'immutable, obdurate set of beliefs about the material world, past and present' – whether emanating from the state or from a rag rug – which has its own passions, its own dramas, its own dreams.³⁰ This is interesting because it has a non-hierarchical relationship to the material under investigation, whereby a humble rag rug might also potentially yield a rich story because of its provenance and the circumstances of its making.

The relationship between the researcher and the archivist who is the material's custodian is also very particular. Clearly it depends on how the archive was formed, whether it was an individual's papers or those generated by, say, an institution. It also depends on the status of the archive. If it is part of an institution's collection and available publically to researchers, for example, it has a very different feel to reading papers in someone's home, or indeed, in the present author's case, taking papers and folders from bin liners to relocate them prior to their acquisition at Tate, from 1996 to 2002. A further instance of how archive history can be shaped by its provenance and, following Burton's directive, how exploring it informs us about its conditions and circumstances, is that when Charles Harrison loaned the present author his papers, she had them in a rucksack while cycling across London from Paddington station to her home in Stoke Newington. This generosity of exchange echoes the spirit of the 1960s and 1970s, with casual and trusting attitudes. Now that these papers are part of Tate's archive collection, such an action would of course be impossible.

There are consequences of Melvin's interviews with Charles Harrison, other than his loaning of papers that would, a year later, be acquired by Tate Gallery. This was due in part to her insistence on the value of their research interest while he, with typical diffidence, was inclined to think they held little of relevance. Fortunately he was persuaded otherwise. Harrison described to the

²⁹ Antoinette Burton, "Introduction." *Archive Stories: Facts, Fictions and the Writing of History*, p. 6.

³⁰ Carolyn Steedman, in Antoinette Burton, "Introduction." *Archive Stories: Facts, Fictions and the Writing of History*, p. 7. Carolyn Steedman, *Dust: The Archive and Cultural History*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2001.

present author how he was engaged in an autobiographical account of his career and that he felt its form to be unsatisfactory.³¹ He decided instead to use his spoken accounts by publishing in a series of interviews with recent researchers to form the basis for the book, *Looking Back*, published in 2011.³² Harrison asked the present author to help with the publication and write the introduction.³³ Two of the interviews Melvin conducted with Harrison were included in the book and because there were repetitions and overlaps in the various discussions some of these were edited by Harrison to reduce these instances.³⁴ However, in this thesis, the present author considers it is appropriate to refer to her original transcriptions approved by Harrison rather than the edited published versions.

Gwen Allen's recent publication on art magazines, *Artists' Magazines: An Alternative Space for Art*, explores the way art magazines, especially magazines under the control of artists, used the page for art.³⁵ She concentrates mainly on magazines originating in New York.³⁶ However the epilogue, called 'International activity' focuses on *Interfunktionen* and refers briefly to Seth Siegelaub's magazine exhibition for *SI*, July/August 1970.³⁷ Allen observes that despite Siegelaub's sincere intention to internationalise the magazine exhibition the artists are all from Europe or the US, with one Japanese artist living in New York, On Kawara, included.³⁸ It is gratifying that *SI* gets a mention and with it, in the footnotes, Townsend's 'commitment to covering both conceptual art and international developments'.³⁹ This research into the significant developments

³¹ Charles Harrison, email to present author, 3/6/09, Melvin papers, London.

³² Charles Harrison, *Looking Back*. Harrison is interviewed by Jo Melvin, Teresa Gleadowe & Pablo Lafente, Juliette Rizzi, Sophie Richard, Elena Crippa and Christopher Heuer & Matthew Jesse Jackson, London, Riding House, 2011.

³³ Jo Melvin, "Introduction: Democratise Access to Dialogue." *Looking Back*, pp. 13-19.

³⁴ Charles Harrison, *Looking Back*, "Conversation One; Jo Melvin March 2007." pp. 23-70, "Conversation Two; Jo Melvin October 2007." pp. 71-92.

³⁵ Gwen Allen, *Artists' Magazines: An Alternative Space for Art*, Cambridge, Mass, London England, The MIT Press, 2011.

³⁶ The chapters are dedicated to the following magazines, *ArtForum* in the 1960s and 1970s, *Aspen*, 1965-1971, *O to 9*, 1967-1969, *Avalanche*, 1970-1976, *Art-Rite*, 1973-1989, *File*, 1972-1989, *Real Life*, 1972-1994.

³⁷ Allen, "Epilogue: International Activity, *Interfunktionen*, 1968-1975." pp. 201-225, p. 203.

³⁸ Allen, "Epilogue: International Activity, *Interfunktionen*, 1968-1975." p. 203.

³⁹ Allen, "Epilogue: International Activity, *Interfunktionen*, 1968-1975." p. 203, footnote 7, p. 340. This note references Jo Melvin, "Peter Townsend and *Studio International*: Notes from Inside the Archive." *Art Monthly Australia*, September 2006, pp. 26-28.

in experimental art practices, art for the page and their distribution in magazines shows how important this field is for further investigation into the conditions that enabled them to occur. The magazines Allen selects are artist-run publications, with the exception of *ArtForum* which, like *SI*, was a mainstream art magazine. It is hoped that the publication of this thesis following so soon after Allen's *Artists' Magazines: An Alternative Space for Art*, which began its life as a PhD thesis, will draw attention to the vital contributions made by *SI* to this debate.

To return to Burton's premise that the archive's provenance brings new considerations into the picture, it is useful to add an anecdotal note in connection with *Artists' Magazines: An Alternative Space for Art*. Hearing from Siegelaub that he did not have a copy of *SI* July/August 1970, the present author gave him a copy she was given by Peter Townsend's daughters Sally and Catherine, who very generously gave her his run of magazines which included a few duplicate copies. In a small way, this story demonstrates the circularity of exchange and it is interesting to think of that magazine copy's journey. The project was Siegelaub's and it was realised because Townsend wanted it to happen. The illustration then of the magazine in Allen's book is of a copy that for years rested on Townsend's bookshelves and now it is in Siegelaub's collection.

One of the interviews the present author has conducted with Seth Siegelaub is included in *From Conceptualism to Feminism: Lucy Lippard's Number Shows 1969-74* published in 2012.⁴⁰ The interview took place in 2008 and was set up specifically to explore Siegelaub's collaboration and working relationship with Lucy Lippard. For the same reasons as the published interviews with Charles Harrison, the present author decided to refer to the original transcript when quoting from this interview because the material was greatly cut.

Amy Newman's book, derived from interviews of artist and writer contributors to *ArtForum*, called *Challenging art: ArtForum 1962-1974* makes

⁴⁰ Cornelia Butler, *From Conceptualism to Feminism: Lucy Lippard's Number Shows 1969-74*, "Seth Siegelaub in conversation with Jo Melvin." Cologne Germany, London England, Koenig Books, 2012, pp. 250-262. This is a reduced version of Siegelaub unpublished interview transcript, 28/10/08, Melvin papers, London.

compulsive reading and almost has a filmic quality of character watching.⁴¹ Newman's approach has provided a model for how the present author approached using interviews as source material. However this thesis relies on the archive, the magazine and subsequent interviews as primary sources whereas *Challenging art: ArtForum 1962-1974* presents the interviews in such a way that the speakers' voices narrate their recollection of events, decisions, special issues and articles. The story or stories unfold with a deceptive ease that occurs perhaps because of Newman's restraint, which is achieved because her voice is not present in the text. She organises material chronologically, opening with the magazine's formation, with a brief historical background and context, its West Coast location, contacts and chance meetings, and serendipity, and spirals into intrigue. It is divided into sections by period and, within these, arranged around specific issues, specific articles, or groups of writers put under catchy headings, 'isms' and 'schisms', 'Before Artforum' and 'legacy'.⁴² Period and locale make the structure used to identify the network of relationships. The network is a multi-layered structure. It reveals allegiances, feuds and constant Oedipal struggles, in particular involving the formalist critic Clement Greenberg. Europe's influence on criticism as 'belles lettres' and the shifting ideological emphases at times appear precipitated by, or ruptured by, friendships. The story of these personalities becomes so interesting that the textual narratives in the magazine are overtaken. Perhaps this does not matter because the tale of these friendships opens a line of enquiry to explore networks of idea, location, artwork, politics and ideology.

The network can be tangentially perceived through the anecdote. It is often a seemingly chance or throwaway comment that presents the possibility for understanding complexities. The present author will present two examples to illustrate this.

The art critic Max Kozloff says, 'When I was about 12, my two most important interests were art and cheese. Since a decadent life in cheese was

⁴¹ Amy Newman, *Challenging art: ArtForum 1962-1974*, New York, Soho Press, 2000.

⁴² "Contents pages." Amy Newman, *Challenging art: ArtForum 1962-1974*, New York, Soho Press, 2000, pp. ix-xi.

hard to imagine, I had to convince my middle class family to support my less exotic choice of art.'⁴³

Kozloff's story is poignant because it has layers of inference. The present author recounted it to Barry Flanagan in 2008, during a discussion when she asserted the relevance of the anecdote as a powerful tool to make an understanding tangible. Cheese is smelly, it also in French means money. This is a fact not lost on Flanagan, for whom the whole notion of connoisseurship and being able to reconnect with the past through memories and handholds was especially relevant to him at that time in his life. The notion of cheese, and its smelliness, immediately recalled for him his childhood holidays, staying beside a farm in the West Country.

One of the collaborations the present author worked on with Barry Flanagan which relates to the thesis was her proposal to republish the magazine *Silâns* which he edited and produced while a student at St Martin's School of Art, with the help of a fellow student, Alistair Jackson, and a tutor, Rudy Leenders. It is relevant to this thesis because it was an artist-driven publication and it was produced cheaply using a cyclostyle machine on alternate Mondays during term-time.⁴⁴ It ran to sixteen copies from October 1965 to June 1966 and 50 issues were produced of each, it was distributed free, from the art school and down Charing Cross Road at Better Books. Flanagan used the phonetic sound of the French word for silence to give the title, *Silâns*. It was an experimental publication bringing concrete poetry together with early magazine art for the page and had contributions from artists including Phillip King, John Latham, and Stefan Themerson and concrete poets John Sharkey and Henri Chopin. Through her research investigations, Melvin found that full sets were only available in the Tate Special Collections and Central St Martin's College of Art and Design's Special Collections had three sets, one given by Barry Flanagan at some point during the 1980s. *Silâns* is mentioned by Charles Harrison in his article 'Barry Flanagan's sculptures' published in *SI* May 1968.⁴⁵ The publication

⁴³ Amy Newman, Max Kozloff in "Late 1950s, Early 1960s." *Challenging art: ArtForum 1962-1974*, p. 53.

⁴⁴ Barry Flanagan, unpublished interview transcript, 27/10/08, Melvin papers, London.

⁴⁵ Harrison, "Barry Flanagan's sculptures." *SI*, Vol. 175, No. 900, May 1968, (pp. 266-8), p. 267.

deserves to be widely read, hence the decision to produce a facsimile copy with addenda at the back with full lists of contents and contributors to each issue and a short piece by the present author to provide the background to the magazine.

The exhibition the present author curated at Tate Britain in 2008, *Tales from Studio International*, led in part to the case studies investigated in this thesis.⁴⁶ The intention of the exhibition was to demonstrate the range of work the magazine covered during Townsend's editorial period. For this reason all the magazine covers were displayed chronologically with their backs to the wall, in five long rows (103 in total). They stood on a narrow ridge and had a Perspex cover that kept them flush with the wall. In 1966 the magazine was printed monthly, then between 1967 and 1974 there were eleven a year because of the joint July/August summer issue. In 1975 the magazine became bimonthly and May/June was Townsend's last issue. Some original cover designs were shown in vitrines, including those by Jan Dibbets, James Rosenquist, Joe Tilson, Anthony Benjamin, Dieter Roth and Alexander Lieberman. Framed works by Bridget Riley, Alan Green and Roger Hilton, given to Townsend after they had been used for the covers, were also on show.⁴⁷

The archival material came from the Tate Gallery Archive collection, *SI* Peter Townsend's editorial papers, TGA 20028, and also from the second collection, Peter Townsend archive TGA 20094, but at the time the items were on loan because they had not yet been acquired. John McEwen lent Marcel Broodthaers's work *Feuilleton*, given to him by the artist, which features in the *Fish* issue *SI* May 1974.⁴⁸

The case studies in the vitrines featured one focusing on formalism and exchanges between New York and the editorial office, with letters from Greenberg and Heron. It featured articles from the May and June issues of 1968, including Barbara Reise's article, 'Greenberg and The Group: a retrospective view, Part 1' as corrected page-pull and an interview with Phillip King, published in June 1968, as well as John Plumb's cover used for the May issue

⁴⁶ *Tales from Studio International*, Tate Britain, 4 June - 18 August, 2008.

⁴⁷ These original works are now in Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

⁴⁸ Broodthaers, *Feuilleton*, *SI*, Vol. 187, No. 986, May 1974, pp. 240-1.

and Bridget Riley's cover for June 1968.⁴⁹ This also was designed to commemorate the fortieth anniversary of Riley and King's representation of Britain at the Venice Biennale 1968.

Another vitrine displayed AWC (the Art Workers' Coalition) material sent to the editorial office with photographs mounted on the walls and authors' typescript copies of articles, Lucy Lippard, 'The Art Workers' Coalition: not a history', Dore Ashton's New York commentary review of the *Software* exhibition at the Jewish Museum and Carl Andre's letter responding to the invitation from Charles Harrison to design the November 1970 and Harrison's letter.⁵⁰ Siegelaub's July/August 1970 magazine exhibition was shown with the related letters and dummy designs for the different curators sections.⁵¹ Lippard's Groups exhibition material was shown in another vitrine.⁵²

Jindřich Chalupecký's correspondence with Townsend and his typescripts for the Prague commentary, published in *SI* September 1970, with accompanying photographs were included in a vitrine that also showed Joseph Beuys's postcards sent to Townsend.⁵³ The cover design by Dieter Roth featured here, the reason for the juxtaposition was that Beuys requested two copies of Roth's cover issue because he told Townsend that he admired his practice.⁵⁴ Then there was the collection of artworks given by Marcel Broothaers to Townsend as a sign of their friendship.⁵⁵ Roger Hilton's statement letter was photocopied and wallpaper-pasted onto the wall.⁵⁶

The theoretical exploration of periodical studies is of great relevance to this thesis. So far the *Journal of Modern Periodical Studies*, which began in 2010, has

⁴⁹ These items are in May 1968 and June 1968 files, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

⁵⁰ These items are in November 1970 file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

⁵¹ These items are in July/August 1970 file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

⁵² These items are in March 1970 files, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

⁵³ Jindřich Chalupecký material shown is in September 1970 file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London. Beuys postcards are in Misc correspondence 1969-74, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

⁵⁴ Dieter Roth cover design is in 'artists covers', Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London. Beuys postcards are in Misc correspondence 1969-74, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

⁵⁵ Marcel Broothaers artworks given to Townsend are in Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

⁵⁶ Roger Hilton letter is in Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

concentrated on Modernist magazines from the first half of the twentieth century. Indeed the relevance of Allen's *Artists' Magazines: An Alternative Space for Art*, alongside Melvin's investigations in the archive of *SI*, is an area the present author considers to be an arena for developing discussions with other researchers. It is hoped that this prologue provides the background to the decisions taken in constructing this thesis. The writing of it is intended as much as possible to continue the informal and conversational tone of the present author's discussions with Townsend. The present author hopes that the reader will find much of interest and excitement emerging from the archival papers and their encounter and that it might lead to new research ventures exchanging and developing from the material presented.

Introduction

Peter Townsend's editorial papers of *Studio International* magazine, 1965-1975

Peter Townsend was amused retrospectively that in his valedictory editorial he identified the magazine's history as 'a convenient subject for a thesis. There are so many gaps in the record it would be an easy one to complete.'¹ Latterly he enjoyed the idea of editorial reigns defining the periods of this history and laughed about the convenience of his ten-year span.² This thesis attempts to recreate the conversations that generated articles, and the radical uses to which the magazine page was put, the subjects of the following chapters, by collating the different sources into a collage. These lead to further discussions. The purpose of this introduction is to present an overview for the context of the thesis. It will define the scope of Peter Townsend's editorial papers and the *Studio International* magazine archive. It will give a brief history of the magazine and describe the personnel in his editorial office and introduce key contributors. It will also supply a brief biography of Townsend. The methods used will be introduced separately, in the following introductory section entitled, Methods: The Death of Rubbish, Anecdote and Gossip in the Archive. **Chapter 1** is concerned, broadly speaking, with Townsend's appointment, editorial policy and early decisions, **Chapter 2** considers Townsend's early artistic friendships and the extent of his network of discussions. Thereafter, the chapters present case-studies.

While the distinct components of this thesis will be introduced in headed sections there is some overlap between them and the material to which they refer, as well as some chronological common ground. Likewise, all eight of the chapters will be introduced, but not in the order in which they appear in the thesis. It has been necessary to have chapters and sections within the chapters

¹ Peter Townsend, "Ave Atque...or, a pot pourri of random reflections on putting a magazine onto the presses for month after bloody month." *SI*, Vol. 189, No. 975, May/June 1975, (pp. 168-171.), p. 168.

² Peter Townsend, in conversation with the present author, Melvin notebook 1998, Melvin papers, London.

of different lengths. This is because some topics require more attention than others.

Access to Peter Townsend's editorial papers has allowed the presentation of an insider's view of contemporary history through the pages of *Studio International* magazine (hereafter referred to as *SI* unless in quotation). This perspective permits the combination of first-hand, anecdotal and off-the-record accounts with existing historical surveys such as Francis Frascina, *Art, politics and dissent: Aspects of the art left in sixties America* published in 1999 to demonstrate the significance of the British-based art magazine within the increasingly international art world during Townsend's editorship.³ The present author had sole access to Townsend's material during the creation of the box-lists in preparation for Tate Gallery Archive's acquisition in 2002 (hereafter referred to as TGA). The box lists compiled by the present author will form the basis for Tate archivist's eventual cataloguing, at the time of writing in January 2013, this has not yet happened. TGA acquired a further body of Townsend's archival material in 2008. These are the items he held back, including the specially designed covers he was given by the artists and other artworks, as well as documents related to the setting up in 1976 of *Art Monthly* with Jack and Nell Wendler.

This thesis is based on the operational workings of the magazine, as recorded in its archive, and the figure of Peter Townsend, with whom the present author had extensive conversations. These dialogues constitute a significant element in this investigation during the course of which a substantial body of material has accrued to form the basis of the Melvin archive. The present author maintained notebooks of these discussions as they occurred. The month and date is not always recorded although the year is. This is because between 1996 and 2006 the present author was more preoccupied with the content of the discussions, as they relate to the editorial archive material, than with the potential for using the notebooks as archival items in themselves. Because the majority of the notebooks are labelled by year they will be indicated in footnotes thus, Townsend, Melvin notebook (year), Melvin papers, London. The present

³ Francis Frascina, *Art, politics and dissent: Aspects of the art of the left in sixties America* Manchester, England, Manchester University Press, 1999.

author's interviews with assistant editors, artists, other contributors and readers were transcribed by her immediately following the interview. This in turn, on occasion, generated further correspondence between the present author and the interviewee. During the course of the investigation which began in 1996, technology has developed significantly. At first mini tapes were used and later the interviews were digitally recorded. Townsend's reflections on the material he considered with the present author led to her subsequent discussions with artists, assistant editors and other close readers of *SI*. These contacts' collaboration in interview and willingness to cooperate with the present author was derived initially from their respect for Townsend and his editorial policies.

These and other related discourses led to further research access. The assistant editor, Charles Harrison's loan of his personal papers to the present author between October 2007 and May 2008 supplemented her access to the existing papers from his archive in TGA, which he deposited in 1981.⁴ Subsequent to the loan, Harrison made a further deposit to TGA in 2009, which includes these papers.⁵ The artist-contributor, Barry Flanagan, granted the present author use of his archive from October 2008 and since his death in August 2009, this has been made available by his estate.⁶

Art critic and *SI* contributing editor, Barbara Reise's archive in TGA 786, has been a major research resource, much of which supplements her projects with *SI* and her correspondence with artists and writers also illuminates schemes with which she was not directly involved. After her death in 1978, Nicholas Serota – then Director of the Whitechapel Art Gallery, who was working with Reise on a Carel Visser exhibition for which she was writing the catalogue essay – heard that her family was not interested in her archive and made arrangements for it to be transported to TGA.⁷ Reise's papers testify to her mind-boggling energy and remarkable friendships. She was a voracious correspondent with artists in the UK, Europe and the US, and maintained files

⁴ Charles Harrison papers (1950-1979), TGA 839, London. Deposited by Harrison to the Tate Gallery archive in 1981.

⁵ Charles Harrison papers (1970s-2000s), TGA 200868, London.

⁶ Barry Flanagan archive, London.

⁷ Sir Nicholas Serota, unpublished interview transcript, 24/6/08, Melvin papers, London.

on over 100 artists in whom she was interested.⁸ Reise's project with the New York Minimalists led to *SI* April, 1969, will be discussed in **Chapter 3**.

Townsend's vision for the magazine when he accepted the post as editor was to transform its provincial character by restoring the radical principles of its founders in 1893, as will be seen below. The chronology of events in the thesis is, broadly speaking, linear. However, since there are different accounts of the same matter, there is no attempt to iron out this complexity, indeed, they are able to shed light on each other. By its very nature, even the most well-organised archive must treat time as multi-stranded and the records of particular projects as compressed or elongated and completed, diverted or abandoned without notice. For instance, the material in the archive may relate to a proposal, which the magazine then records. There is a lapse between what is recorded in the magazine, its publication and what happened before the final record. The event may only be known about because of its publication.

The methods used in this thesis are derived from delving into the archive to isolate circumstances surrounding specific publication examples and following leads given by details which might be considered inconsequential at the time and indeed had no value to the published magazine. This led to a series of interviews with the magazine's contributors. Townsend's policy is the underlying thread that binds this thesis together. Even when he did not initiate the actions under discussion, the possibility for their occurrence in the magazine is due to his editorial tactics. The situation is best illustrated by his commissioning of Seth Siegelaub, the innovative New York-based art dealer and publisher, in 1969 to edit *SI*'s July-August issue, 1970 for a special exhibition project. Siegelaub, appointed as guest editor by Townsend, allocated his pages to six critics equally, who in turn invited artists to contribute, with the stipulation that they should use the page as a space for making art without the filter of a critic introducing or explaining their work. Siegelaub's guest issue will be discussed in **Chapter 5**.

⁸ Barbara Reise papers, TGA 786, London.

The thesis

Townsend's editorship of *SI* from November 1965 until the May-June issue of 1975 defines the research scope of this thesis. The archive comprises his editorial papers and the documents he rescued when the magazine went bankrupt in 1977. At first, he kept these under the desks in the office of *Art Monthly* in Museum Street, London WC1 and, later, split between two addresses in north London, at his home in Morton Road, Islington, N1, and his two daughters' home in Petherton Road, Islington. There the collection remained until 1995, when he approached the present author to assist with ordering the material. The first task was to bring it all together. Since Townsend wanted it accessible in a public institution, the archive at the Tate Gallery (as it was then called) was the obvious choice for its destination. The Tate Gallery Archive provided shelving and desk space for the initial cataloguing.

The thesis offers the welcome corrective of a British and European perspective to the art historical surveys which tend to be dominated by an American viewpoint. In these American accounts *SI*'s role in championing artist-driven arguments and contributions, treatment of the page as an exhibition site, the presentation of 'magazine sculpture' and its other innovations, is not considered. Alexander Alberro's assessment of Siegelaub's editorial interventions in his book *Conceptual Art and the Politics of Publicity* records that the artist's reserved rights and transfer of sales agreement was first published in *SI* in April 1971 but does not address the fact that there was no US-based magazine willing to get involved with the venture.⁹ Although this is implicit, it needs to be stated because Siegelaub's decision to approach *SI* for its dissemination was because he was confident of Townsend's interest in his innovations and he did not consider that the editorial approaches of the American art magazines were supportive of his ventures.¹⁰ *SI*'s publication of the artist's reserved rights transfer and sales agreement will be discussed in **Chapter 7**. This was Siegelaub's second major project presented in *SI*. Townsend was regarded at the time as the only art magazine editor willing and

⁹ Alexander Alberro, *Conceptual Art and the Politics of Publicity*, Cambridge Mass and London England, The MIT Press, 2003.

¹⁰ Siegelaub, unpublished interview transcript, 23/2/08, Melvin papers, London.

interested in an analysis of institutional policy, the mechanisms of the art world and what direct actions artists, art writers and curators were taking to effect changes in strategies. The consideration given in Alberro's PhD thesis *Deprivileging Art: Seth Siegelaub and the Politics of Conceptual Art* to Siegelaub's editorial project in *SI*'s July/August 1970 issue is dropped from the subsequent book publication. It is not even mentioned in a footnote. In answering this question at the *Open Systems* conference, at Tate Modern in September 2005, Alberro said the decision to omit the project was imposed by publishing demands. However, the project's omission tells a story by default simply because The MIT press did not grant *SI*'s exhibition project the same status as Alberro's discussion of Siegelaub's other ventures.¹¹ The time span between Alberro's thesis submission, 1997, and the subsequent book publication, 2003, is paralleled by a portion of the timescale of this *SI* project of which this thesis is one aspect of the work undertaken. It is hoped that this thesis will stimulate curiosity for further research.

Chapter 1 considers Townsend's appointment and his conditions for acceptance, his appointment of writers and assistants and the formation of an editorial advisory committee and an international advisory board, the office's location, networks in the London art scene, and his brother's, William Townsend's contacts and role with support and advice. His decision created a British and European base for discussion of art practices that did not defer to US cultural hegemony.

The illumination of US art practices provided from the British perspective gave many artists a platform they had yet to find in the US. Joseph Kosuth's siting of 'Art after philosophy' was not in an American magazine, but in *SI*. The pages were made available to him by Charles Harrison, Townsend's assistant editor, and this project and others initiated by Harrison will be discussed in **Chapter 4**.

Lucy R Lippard's thorough investigative first account of the aims of the Art Workers Coalition, (AWC) 'The Art Workers' Coalition: not a history' was

¹¹ Alberro's response to the question why had the issue not been covered in his book, *Open Systems* exhibition conference, 16/9/05, Tate Modern, London.

published in *SI*. A photograph of the *Q: And babies? A: And babies* My Lai poster conceived for distribution by the AWC at the *Information* exhibition in the Museum of Modern Art, New York, appeared on the cover of *SI* in November 1970. Members of the group unrolled the poster in front of Picasso's *Guernica*. The recent publication of Julia Bryan-Wilson's *Art Workers: Radical Practice in the Vietnam War Era* concentrates on a history of the movement from inside the US.¹² **Chapter 7** concentrates on *SI*'s presentation of the New York artists' grass roots movement the AWC and considers why it was significant to its British and American readers. This thesis hopes to re-examine *SI*'s role in examining how distance was overcome and gave independence of view and how communication between artists and public was facilitated. Hans Haacke noted that *SI* was able to give attention to the AWC actions precisely because it was outside the 'New York political jungle'.¹³

Chapter 1 sets out to present the milieu in London at the time of Townsend's appointment and considers his early editorial policy and decision-making processes, and **Chapter 2** continues to set the scene while introducing a several of his key collaborators and their contributions to the discussions in the early period of his position and to indicate the scope of his policy. Thereafter each chapter examines particular issues of the magazine as case-studies of events and the networks of artists, curators, critics and art institutions at a crucial juncture in recent history. The period of Townsend's editorship was the time when, as Lippard described it to the present author, 'the creative juices were really flowing and no other magazine was up for it'.¹⁴ The period was marked by Lippard's book, *Six years: The dematerialisation of art, 1966–1972*, and ended, as many commentators have noted, with the *Documenta 5* exhibition in Kassel, in 1972. *SI* changed hands in 1972 and a different regime began with the new owner and publisher, the architect, Michael Spens. Townsend remained editor until he resigned under pressure from Spens in 1975.

¹² Julia Bryan-Wilson, *Art Workers: Radical Practice in the Vietnam War*, Berkeley California and London England, University of California Press, 2009.

¹³ Hans Haacke letter to Townsend, 8/6/71, H correspondence file, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

¹⁴ Lucy R Lippard, email to present author, June 2005, Melvin papers, London.

This thesis aspires to be more than a historical record of the published magazine by referring to Townsend's editorial archive, artists' and assistant editor's archives and oral histories in the form of interviews, to present a more complicated and augmented picture of *SI*. This is where the ephemeral nature of the exchange between collaborators demonstrates how much of what occurred was due to personality and chance meetings as well as considerable determination on the part of the protagonists. It shows the results of productive networking.

The research is presented so as to examine the role played by editorial decisions in the growing network between artists and in the contexts of their practices. By reading the archive through, it becomes apparent how its topological shape confounds the strictly chronological structure and narrative of events to alter the relationship of elements within the editorial operation without losing a sense of the whole and its interconnectedness. The research concentrates on the exemplary aspects of the magazine through the investigation of specific issues. It examines office interactions, relationships which are not simply necessary for the purposes of publication but are vital to an ideological concern for collaboration and the investigation of new practices, particularly in artist-driven ventures across an increasingly international network. It considers what the magazine at its best offered, even when it did not succeed, and what was its ideal. This was not a unified effort because Townsend's aims did not necessarily concur with the aims of the publishers, the assistant editors, the contributors and the readers. There are points of consensus, as there are points of dispute, and retrospective views from the protagonists play a part in this discussion.

The scope of Peter Townsend's editorial papers – the *SI* archive, 1965–1975

The first point to be made is that the papers in the office as they were being generated were not thought of as an archive. This is a retrospective designation and one that took effect when the material was brought together for

examination at TGA. Townsend, with characteristic prescience, knew they would become a valuable research resource and so he rescued them.¹⁵ The material, originally generated as workaday office paperwork, has become, as an archive, the representation of a growing network of historically valuable communications, whose centre was the editorial office. Although the archive is necessarily a historical record, it also has many gaps and because it is of the relatively recent past some circumstances can be reconstructed by discussion with the protagonists.

The editor's archive contains correspondence from artists, writers, other editors and museum directors, as well as from disinterested readers. In many cases, this correspondence is directly concerned with the business of editorial responsibility; though necessary, even intrinsic, to the magazine's production, it is not actually a part of the production process. The shape of the *whole SI* archive is bilateral. It is the archive of the magazine and of the editor, in one body. The discretely dual nature of the archive, the editor's own papers, concerned primarily, as suggested already, with editorial responsibility, and those of the magazine's daily business and the mechanics of production, invests it with a unique significance in relation to other archives – for example, those of his editorial assistants, Harrison and Reise and artists such as Naum Gabo and Barry Flanagan. These are separate archives accumulated individually and, with the exception of Flanagan's archive which is managed by his estate, the others are now housed in the Hyman Krietman research centre, which is Tate Gallery Archive.

The diverse material for each issue generally included typescripts and images. The papers were stored in bags, many loose or randomly combined, with some in foolscap files. The copy and relevant items for each issue generally was filed in one foolscap file with the month written on the outside and so is named in the archive according to month and year. For instance, the December 1966 file includes: contents list, contributors' notes, editorial body sheets, copy

¹⁵ Townsend explained to the present author how he returned to the *SI* editorial office when Richard Cork had been in post for about a year (summer 1976) and transported his papers in bin liners to his office at *Art Monthly* where they remained for years under his desk, Melvin notebook 1996, Melvin papers, London.

texts, Patrick Heron's author-corrected text plus handwritten additions and Harrison's file entitled Mondrian in England. The December issue will be discussed in **Chapter 2**.

General correspondence, not specifically to do with any issue was filed alphabetically and in runs of two or four years. At times the system broke down; miscellaneous correspondence was grouped together seemingly without order. There are numerous photographs, some filed according to issue, others in specific photographic files. There are original artworks, and cover designs. The magazine's production generated typescripts, handwritten drafts, articles, photographs for illustrations, cover notes, telegrams, galleys and page-pulls, agendas for planning meetings, tables of printing costs, circulation figures, advertising lists, subscriber's lists, memos and all the relevant documents for production. Magazine production involved following a specific order of stages. Not infrequently, especially for the first two years of Townsend's editorship, the authors sent their articles as handwritten copy, which would need to be typed by Townsend's secretary.

The period marked a crossroads in printing technology. When Townsend was appointed the magazine was using letterpress for the ticketboard section, named by thin card called ticketboard of which it was composed and for the white paper used for the rest of the magazine. A research visit to St Bride Library and Archive with the example of *SI* 1967 (July/August) praised the high standards of letterpress printing. Ticketboard was used consistently until *SI*, June 1974, thereafter it is only white paper and entirely offset litho. However it is most likely that the magazine was printed using a combination of offset litho and letterpress from 1968 onwards although the present author has not been able to ascertain precisely when this change over occurred.¹⁶

The printers sent proof sheets (referred to as galleys by Townsend and his assistants) to the editorial office. There were multiple copies, for the editors and authors. This was the time for corrections because it was easy for the

¹⁶ A research visit undertaken by Colin Maitland on the present author's behalf to St Bride Library and Archive London, 13/2/13 with the magazine issue and sample page pulls drew these conclusions. The present author considers that further investigation in this area might make an exciting research development, using this thesis as a starting point.

printers to rearrange the type. Once the proofs were corrected, they were cut to size for the page, then glued and stuck onto layout sheets.¹⁷ These sheets were used to make the design for the print run. When this was finalised the galleys were adjusted as necessary and the process moved onto the page-pulls, so named because they were pulled from the typeset bed. These were the final proofs. Once confirmed the magazine print run commenced.

The methods of production, reviewing the corrected galleys, the pages laid out by cut-and-paste before the copy was cleared for print and page-pulls circulated, demonstrates the hands-on relationship with production. In the hand-drawn borders on the margins of the text there was frequent last-minute annotation, usually instructions to the printers but occasionally editorial interventions. There are few records of editorial planning meetings, agendas or minutes to be found, which for this research is a significant absence. Townsend explained that this was because plans evolved through conversation, the results of which are the magazines.

Miscellaneous lists and memos give a tactile indication of the office routines. One note, written on a blank postcard, states: 'Peter, John Dugger's studio burnt out last night, urgent, please call, all work lost.'¹⁸ Each word, underlined twice, testifies to the immediacy of action and event.

There was material pertaining to collaborations with artists on their book projects, including Sol LeWitt, John Baldessari and Daniel Buren. Other joint publishing ventures include the catalogues for the *British Avant Garde* exhibition at the New York Cultural Center in 1971 and *African Art* at Camden Arts Centre in 1967, *Play Orbit*, ICA, 1969, *Cybernetic Serendipity*, ICA, 1969, *Canadian Art*, edited by William Townsend, 1970 and *Ben Nicholson*, edited by Maurice de Sausmaurez, 1969. The latter two were not exhibition catalogues.

¹⁷ Some of these layout sheets are to be found in the issue files, January 1969 is a good example. January 1969, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

¹⁸ Postcard, undated, misc correspondence file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

Tate Gallery archive

Peter Townsend's editorial papers are in Tate Gallery Archive, TGA. When the box-listing of Townsend's papers began Jennifer Booth, who was then Tate's archivist, agreed to house it and provide desk space on a temporary basis while the boxes' contents were itemised. This process took several years, and culminated in the acquisition of the catalogued boxes by TGA in 2002. The agreement between Tate and Townsend stipulated that he would retain 'several' original designs for magazine covers during his lifetime, in particular those by Bridget Riley, for June 1968, and Roger Hilton, for March 1974. Patrick Heron and Alan Green were also specified by name; the other artists were not. After 2002 and before Townsend died in 2006, other material surfaced.

This further collection of papers was a mixture of documents, correspondence and diaries to 1952, as well as correspondence dating from Townsend's time as *SI* editor and material relating to the formation of *Art Monthly* with Jack and Nell Wendler. Townsend was the founding editor, a post he held until 1992. There are some items relating to *Art Monthly Australia* which Townsend also founded in 1987 and edited until 1992. Furthermore, the material included a collection of artists' books and dummies, in particular, Marcel Broodthaers's artist's book dummy, *SUR L'ART*, discussed in **Chapter 8** and Lawrence Weiner's artist's book dummy, *Works*, which was not published by *SI*.¹⁹ Also notable is Carl Andre's collected headlines reporting the Tate Gallery's acquisition of 'the bricks', *Equivalent VIII*, 1966 which Andre transcribed by hand onto index cards. This work was typeset and printed in the first issue of *Art Monthly*. There were proofs and correspondence relating to Townsend's book *China Phoenix: The Revolution in China*, published by Jonathan Cape in 1955. This is an account of his time spent in China between 1941 and 1952, as well as correspondence dating from the 1960s until 2006.

In 2008, TGA purchased the remainder of the papers, with the exception of the China-related material, which went to Sheffield University. At that time, Sue Breakell was Tate's archivist, and she and the present author organised the eight series that comprise *SI* Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028. This

¹⁹ Lawrence Weiner, *Works*, Hamburg: Anatol AV und Filmproduktion, 1977.

archive is comprised of 110 boxes. These have yet to be incorporated into the TGA cataloguing system, so the referencing here is according to the file as noted above. This is also the case with the later material acquired by Tate, in 2008, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094 which is comprised of 44 boxes. In total TGA houses 154 boxes of Peter Townsend's material.

It is hard to imagine it now, but access to colour photographic printing was limited in the 1960s, and many artists have recalled in conversation how important *SI* was to them as students or young practitioners simply because of its use of colour. Townsend understood and fought for this, often making applications to the Arts Council for grants, in particular to cover the costs of printing the colour blocks. It was a frequent concern to raise more money from advertising revenue to fund the colour reproductions. Another scheme Townsend employed was for the artist's gallery to pay for the cost of the colour blocks or to provide the ones they had previously used free of charge. Some responded more favourably than others and it made for an uneasy relationship at times, with the gallery expecting a payoff from the discussion of the work.

The fact that Townsend kept the papers on the processes of print production makes his archive relevant for the study of magazines and print during the 1960s and 1970s as well as for the contents. It is remarkable that so much material, preserving each stage of production, has been retained, especially such lowly items as page-pulls from magazines and book production, which are generally discarded immediately. In this context, it is interesting to note that when Alison Bracker was researching for her PhD on *ArtForum* she contacted the office to ask for access to the archive, the reply was: 'the magazine is the archive'.²⁰ This position dismissed the possible importance of separate archival material by a refusal to acknowledge that there may be differences between archival documentation and the published magazine.

This thesis places emphasis on the distinction between the magazine and the archive and on how the magazine is contingent on material now defined as archival, which, through redesignation as a primary source, allows a broader

²⁰ Alison Bracker, *A Critical History of the International Journal ArtForum*, Leeds, Leeds University PhD, 1995, p. 11.

consideration of the magazine itself. There are other distinctions. Seeing the corrected galleys and page-pulls with editorial marks and sometimes personal marginalia (for example, 'verbose bugger', Harrison's pencilled self-admonishment in the margins of 'Virgin soils and old lands', the introductory essay to the *British Avant Garde* in the New York Cultural Center, May 1971) informs an understanding of attitudes and policies as well as exposing views antipathetic to the magazine.²¹ There are differences between the archive and the magazine. The interesting ones are the differences between public face and private doubt. These details and what they reveal feature throughout the argument this thesis seeks to address.

The counter to this position is to see the magazine as an archive to be explored with catalogue, index and cross-referencing systems of retrieval. These are not mutually exclusive. Each informs the other in a way impossible at the time, with the benefit of hindsight making the sum of the parts greater than the original whole, where the parts were blind to each other.

The etymology of 'magazine' as defined in the Shorter Oxford Dictionary is an interesting way to think about the magazine as an archive. This does not stand in contradistinction to asserting the archive's difference, but rather suggests seeing it as a storehouse. The Arabic word, *makzau* – is storehouse – *kazana* – a storehouse for merchandise, a warehouse or depot, a country or district rich in natural products, a centre of commerce.²²

History of the magazine²³

In September 1965, when Peter Townsend was offered the post as editor of *SI*, it was one of the longest-running art magazines in the world. This brief outline of the magazine and its publishers' history provides the context for Townsend's decision to accept the job, which will be discussed in Chapter 1. In 1893 Charles Holme founded *The Studio: an illustrated magazine of Fine and*

²¹ The exhibition and collaboration with *SI* will be discussed in Chapter 4 dedicated to Harrison's editorial projects, May 1971 file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

²² Magazine, Shorter Oxford Dictionary, Oxford, The Clarendon Press, 1993.

²³ The information on dates and location is compiled from the full run of copies of *The Studio*, Westminster City Reference Library, London.

Applied Arts and for 60 years it was published, edited and owned by the family. Writing in 1978, Holme's grandson Bryan Holme declared it was conceived as a 'hobby and for idealistic reasons' and, despite expectations, it was profitable from the first year.²⁴ For the first few years Charles Holme worked with the editor, Gleeson White.²⁵ The radical concept was to bring the fine arts, architecture and the decorative arts together into one accessible journal. It combined reports and criticism on art nouveau, aestheticism and the arts and crafts movement and aimed to cover the range of thinking on the visual arts and related fields in the UK. At a cost of 6d, it was readily available. High design standards and an international perspective combined at the time when the British were becoming more interested in art and design from outside the UK contributed to its success.

The first issue of *The Studio* had a cover design by Aubrey Beardsley and contained five further pages of works by the then unknown illustrator and an article on his work.²⁶ The magazine was credited with launching his career a year before *The Yellow Book*.²⁷ The third issue published the results of a survey sent to artists: 'Is the camera the friend or foe of the artist?' There were positive replies from artists including Frederic Leighton and John Millais, and negative ones included Walter Sickert (surprisingly, considering the use he made of photography later).²⁸ The Lacodicean, a pseudonymous author, covered anecdotal observations in the regular column, 'Studio Gossip'.

The Studio Limited's office was at 5 Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, until January 1903, when it moved to 44 Leicester Square until the office was bombed in September 1940, during the Second World War.²⁹ All the papers

²⁴ Bryan Holme, "Introduction." in *The Studio: A Bibliography: The First Fifty Years*, London, Sims & Reed Ltd, 1978, p.1.

²⁵ In 1891 Holme was one of the founders of The Japan Society, which indicates his commitment to disseminating information on cultural artefacts to a wider audience.

²⁶ Joseph Parnell, "Aubrey Beardsley.", *SI*, Vol. 1, No.1, April - September 1893, pp. 33-8.

²⁷ Aubrey Beardsley, *The Yellow book: an illustrated quarterly*, (Ed) Henry Harland, London, Elkin Matthews and John Lane, Boston: Copeland & Day, 1984-1897, London Ballantyne Press. British Library General Reference Collection Eccles 1085. BLL010028568669, London.

²⁸ Unattributed author, "Is the camera the friend or foe of the artist?" *SI*, Vol. 1, No. 3, April - September 1893, pp. 96-102.

²⁹ The magazine's address information comes from *The Studio* contents pages. The magazine does not record the bombing; the destruction is noted in general terms, Bryan Holme, "Introduction" in *The Studio*, (pp. 1-3), p. 1. The present author has located the date by noting when the office moved.

were destroyed. The next location was 66 Chandos Place, London WC2, where it stayed until 1958 when it moved once more, to Hulton House, Fleet Street EC4. The magazine had a New York outlet as well as book and print publishing ventures in the UK and US. *International Studio*, published in New York City from 1897 until 1921, was made up from parts of *The Studio* with extra American material. Charles Holme's son, Geoffrey, took on the editing of *The Studio* at the beginning of 1900. Geoffrey's two sons worked in the business. Rathbone Holme became the editor in London and Bryan Holme started selling advertising space in the London office before leaving for New York in 1929 aged 21 to run the US outlet on 4th Avenue.³⁰ In 1950 Rathbone Holme initiated the regular commentary columns, from Paris, New York and London, which were continued by both his successors, GS Whittet and Peter Townsend. During his editorship, Whittet frequently contributed the 'London commentary'. When Geoffrey Holme died in 1954, death duties necessitated the sale of The Studio Limited. Frederick Hulton, publisher of *Picture Post*, acquired it and appointed GS Whittet as the editor.³¹

The publishing difficulties continued and from January 1960, Longacre Press, of 161-166 Fleet Street EC4, published the magazine. This continued until September 1963 when, in October, Prism Publications Ltd at Mitre Press, 177 Regents Street W1, took over. At this point two new appointments were made: David Pelham, the designer of Penguin books took on the design and Michael Kinloch, became the advertising manager. Prism Publications had financial difficulties and, in January 1964, their new sole distributor was the National Magazine Co Ltd. In May 1964 there was another publishing change when the National Magazine Co Ltd, Chestergate House, Vauxhall Bridge Road, London SW1, became its publisher as well as its distributor.

³⁰ Bryan Holme, *The Studio*, p. 2.

³¹ Bryan Holme, *The Studio*, p. 3.

GS Whittet's changes

GS Whittet was responsible for the magazine's title change from *The Studio* to *Studio International* in January 1964. The innovations were announced in the December issue. Jackson Pollock's *No.6* was on the cover but the new title format and layout designed by Pelham heralded less a change of policy than a new advertising strategy. The masthead declared *Studio International Art* and the issue introduced the use of 'ticketboard' for the contents and three subsequent pages. Here was a nod towards new internationalism with a précis taken from the each of the articles 'in this number', in French, Italian and German. After the ticketboard section, the articles followed in English.

Ticketboard is thin card, the material itself named the section. It was available in a limited range of colours and a different one was used in each issue. September 1965 was the last issue to include the three-language contents résumé. Between October and December ticketboard was reduced to the contents page only, with an advertisement on the reverse side. An announcement in the December issue 1965 apologises: 'due to circumstances beyond our control the last three issues have been published late.' It requested that communications to the advertising department should be addressed to the editorial office, 37 Sloane Street, London SW1 and stated a press release regarding this move is being issued currently, but all enquiries are welcome. 'Advertisement rates will not be affected.'³² There was no hint from Whittet in his editorial of the changing hands or of his departure. The present author has not been able to trace what happened to editorial archival material prior to Townsend's appointment, when, for eleven years, GS Whittet was in post, nor indeed the material generated by the magazine subsequent to 1940. The fact that there is no known archival material of the magazine except Townsend's papers gives an added twist to his quip in his final editorial referred to at the opening of this discussion. There are also many gaps in the record of his own tenure, the most notable absence being the lack of minutes of planning meetings, a point to be returned to shortly.

³² Announcement, *SI*, Vol. 170, No. 872, December 1965, p. x. The present author has been unable to trace the precise date of the editorial office move.

GS Whittet had a monthly editorial column, 'GS Whittet says...' derived from his opinions about the art world. As if to assert his presence, the magazine issues from July to December 1961, carried a small photograph of him, with his finger to his ear as if he were a bookie making recommendations. In the following six months another photograph was run in which he is looking sideways with no finger to his ear. The column continued without a photograph through to December 1965. (Figure 0.1.)

In September 1965 Anthony MacKay Miller was negotiating to merge with the publishers Cory Adams, based at Chatham in Kent. This is the point at which Townsend becomes involved in the history of *SI* because Tony Adams, of Cory Adams asked him if he would consider taking on the editorial post if MacKay's bid to merge with his company and buy out the National Magazine Company was successful. This would be the magazine's fifth change of publisher in five years.

Townsend was appointed editor on 1 November 1965. At the time the magazine was a monthly publication. He continued this policy through 1966, when there were 12 issues. 1967 heralded the introduction of the summer issue, when July/August was a single publication. This issue also launched the student subscription with tear-out cards announcing its benefits inserted into the magazine. The 11 issues per year continued until January 1975 when the publication became bi-monthly. Discussion of editorial policy and strategy is interwoven in the thesis. The early policy and the appointment of assistants are covered in **Chapter 1**.

In January 1966, the editorial office moved to cheaper premises at 37 Museum Street, WC1, in the heart of Bloomsbury. For the previous two months Townsend had been based in Sloane Street. Museum Street is opposite the British Museum and he considered it to be a prime site, from where it is easy to reach the galleries and a short walk from art schools, the Slade, up Gower Street, St Martin's School of Art in Charing Cross Road and the Central School of Art and Design was near by in Southampton Row.³³ The central location combined with Townsend's social policy of putting people together – artists,

³³ Townsend, Melvin notebook, 1996, Melvin papers, London.

writers, critics, students – with the intention that productive networking would follow meant that the office and the local pubs, the Museum Tavern on the corner of Museum Street and The Plough across the road, became a hub for the discussion of ideas and proposals for the magazine. These occasions were not part of an official agenda and were rarely recorded at the time. Some traces of these decisions are to be found following leads in Townsend's papers – the archive, the scope of which has already been defined.

In 1972 the magazine was bought by the Scottish architect, Michael Spens, in partnership with US businessman DT Bergen. There had been several attempts to find a buyer for the magazine because the financial difficulties were continual. Spens decided to move the office from Museum Street round the corner to a new building, designed by Peter Cook, in West Central Street WC2. When Spens bought the magazine it was tied into a publishing commitment to Cory Adam Mackay's at a cost of £40,000 over two years.³⁴ Spens approached Richard Cork late in 1974 with the offer of editing the magazine. Cork took over at the post at the beginning of July 1975 although he had begun working in the editorial office in January.³⁵ There is scarcely any reference to this situation among Townsend's editorial papers.

Peter Townsend 1919–2006

This biographical section is included to indicate how Townsend's background and experience informed his editorial policy. It will provide the social context in which he operated and how his political allegiances were formed.

Peter Townsend was born in 1919, the third son and fourth of five children of Lewis Townsend, dentist, poet and biographer of Oliver Wendell Holmes, and his wife Jesse, née Ramsey. The family were nonconformists; both parents had converted from the Baptist persuasion to Quakerism. His father delivered anti-

³⁴ Problem correspondence file, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

³⁵ Richard Cork in discussion with the present author did not recall this period which lasted about six months. He remembered feeling honoured and surprised by Spens's offer of the editorial position and the opportunity to refocus the magazine. However his period is outside the scope of this study, unpublished interview transcript, 9/12/12, Melvin papers, London.

war speeches during the Great War and Lewis Townsend's cultural sensibilities, combined with applied social responsibility, were constant influences throughout Peter's life. William, Peter's eldest brother, ten years older than him, was a painter and taught at the Slade, University College London (UCL) where in 1968, he became Professor of Fine Art. He made portraits of Peter from an early age. (Figures 0.2 and 0.3.) William began a daily journal in 1928 in which he chronicled the times, pulling together the current political context with the British art scene from a left-wing, upper middle class perspective. He was involved in anti-fascist politics in the UK, in support of the Basques and the republicans during the Spanish Civil War. In 1938 he was proposed as the Labour candidate for Canterbury, although he turned this down. For Peter, the journals had a mystical significance. He reported an occasion when, as a child, he was overcome by curiosity and stole the studio key to examine their contents.³⁶ After this, he did not see them again until William died. William deposited his early journals in the Special Collections at UCL in May 1966 and June 1968. The remaining journals with correspondence and other items were deposited there by his family in 1974, a year after his death in Banff, Canada, where had spent several summers as a visiting artist at the Banff Centre. He had a protective relationship with Peter; his journals record concern at each stage of Peter's career from childhood and schooling onwards. He mused on Peter's decision-making, his choices between responsibility and expediency, his resolve not to return to Worcester College, Oxford in the autumn of 1939 (where he was reading History) and sign up instead for the Friends Ambulance Unit, (FAU) at the outbreak of the Second World War.

Townsend served in military hospitals in Bristol and London during the Blitz. He responded to the FAU appeal for a unit of six drivers to go to China, learning Mandarin at SOAS before leaving for China in 1941. He described his experiences, from the outward journey to his return ten years later, in *China Phoenix*. The ambulance unit left in a convoy for China via South Africa and the Indian Ocean. He arrived in Singapore the day before the Japanese first bombed the city. The passage out was difficult and the unit's arrival in Rangoon

³⁶ Peter Townsend, "Introduction, Kenneth Martin." *Chance and Order* London, William Townsend Memorial Publication, 1979.

coincided with the first Japanese air raids. He left Rangoon driving a truck without headlights 'through the flame lit horror' along the Burma Road to Kunming.³⁷ Having driven the ambulance into a ditch he decided driving was not for him and after a short spell working in the town's hospital, he was invited to become the English publicity secretary to the Chinese Industrial Co-operatives, (CIC) North-West headquarters in Baoji. The CIC were small-scale local operations, partly funded by foreign aid with the aim of sustaining local industrial development after the Japanese took over China's industrial belt. They were very unpopular with the Kuomintang government. For this work, he received a winter and a summer suit, a room (8ft x 5ft) and enough cash to cover meals, laundry, tea, peanuts and a monthly haircut. He described his life as neither romantic nor Spartan, considering that others kept a family on the same pay.

Initially, he ate with the Edinburgh-educated director, who continued the British diet, eating poached eggs with chopsticks. Later, he joined fellow workers in the local expectation of gruel made from millet and peanuts. The job's real reward, he reported to his father, was being thrown into Chinese society. Later, he said, at that time, about 95% of the population was illiterate. In *China Phoenix*, Townsend describes how he 'was numbed by the conditions that became part of [his] daily life', and by 'the injustices in Chinese society [his] history books had not prepared him for', and he joined children in the school next door to his room to learn the language more deeply. He shared their desire for change, 'revolution was preferable to no revolution'.³⁸ He spoke many Chinese dialects and continued to speak Mandarin throughout his life. (Figure 0.4.)

Townsend's inside knowledge of Chinese society and the evolving conditions for the work force made him invaluable to the British authorities. Motivated by disgust at the atrocities he had witnessed, he travelled to the British Embassy in Chongqing, and then on to the capital, to enlist for the army. The ambassador's response was that 'there were too many Americans about in China.' This was at

³⁷ Peter Townsend, "Twilight of some Gods." *China Phoenix: The Revolution in China*, London, Jonathan Cape, 1955, (pp. 9-18), p. 9.

³⁸ Townsend, *China Phoenix*, p. 13.

the point when the US military presence in China was causing the British concern with increasing civil strife and rising support for communism. The ambassador told him that his position in the CIC was more significant for the war effort than becoming a soldier. In 1943 Townsend moved to a post in Chengdu in West China, where he was responsible for overseeing the use of foreign relief funds to the cooperatives. He moved to Shanghai in 1945 where his work was to promote and advertise the economic and social benefits of the cooperatives to influential people. During this time he met Zhou Enlai, who became a lifelong friend. Enlai gave him a woodcut; this formed the beginning of his extensive collection of rare Chinese woodcuts, now in the National Gallery of Australia. Enlai arranged for Townsend to meet and interview Chairman Mao. He travelled to Yunnan on a military plane under the Chinese name of T'ang Sun, which puzzled the lieutenant in command who was surprised to see the European however if he had used his real name he would not have got on the list.³⁹ Townsend found Mao living with his wife in a simply furnished house wearing his blue uniform open at the neck. While his wife poured tea, 'his wide ranging mind discussed international affairs as easily as the state of the border region' and Townsend confessed his shame at Mao's superior knowledge of US and British policies towards China and felt inadequately equipped to discuss or answer questions on trade unions in Britain, but they agreed on the necessity of keeping the co-operatives going.⁴⁰ Townsend was deeply impressed by the meeting, and kept the gift of the standard uniform as a treasured possession for the rest of his life.

In Shanghai Townsend met Rose Yardumian, an American-Armenian journalist, who wrote for the English-language newspaper, *People's China*. They married in China in 1947. Henri Cartier-Bresson was one of the guests at their wedding. Townsend told him to 'put away his camera and have a drink.'⁴¹ Townsend also worked as a journalist and made regular reports for the *New Statesman* on the conditions in China. He witnessed the fall of Shanghai to the People's Liberation Army, which he reported for the BBC. The Townsends

³⁹ Townsend, Melvin notebook, 1996, Melvin papers, London.

⁴⁰ Townsend "Over the threshold." *China Phoenix*, (pp. 71-76), p. 76.

⁴¹ Townsend, Melvin notebook, 1996, Melvin papers, London.

remained in China during the first years of the Peoples' Republic until 1951 when they reluctantly decided to return to the UK. Settling at first in Barnsbury, later moving to Kentish Town, London, Rose trained and worked as a primary school teacher, and Peter edited the magazine *China Monthly*. They had two daughters, Sally and Catherine. In 1955 Townsend wrote the pro-revolution book *China Phoenix* published by Jonathan Cape. Townsend's standpoint on the communist takeover was informed by his assessment of the political and historical circumstances of China and the effect of Western foreign policy on the country since the beginning of the twentieth century.

Having witnessed radical social transformation in China, he appreciated the way in which education could be spread while at work in an office or factory.⁴² This principle was at the core of Townsend's editorial policy.

Introducing editorial policy

Chapter 1 will cover Townsend's appointment and William Townsend's involvement in Peter's decision-making processes regarding early policy at *SI*. Peter Townsend's strategic use of Whittet's 'international' changes were most immediately manifested in the decision to appoint an International Advisory Board. This marked the beginning of an international outlook, the scope of which brought a different ethos to the magazine, as will be seen throughout the thesis.

Under Townsend's editorship the ticketboard section took on a specific character. It was where the more polemical, conversational, or open-ended discussions took place. The ticketboard section remained at the front of the magazine after the advertisements. It had the contents page, followed by 'letters to the editor', 'news and notes', the 'contributors' brief biographies' and the open-ended articles, followed in turn by the more formal articles, on good quality paper.

⁴² Townsend had seen this in action, watching a peasant who was more literate than his fellow workers taking time to teach them four or five new characters a day, beginning by drawing these on their backs, so they would know the feel of the character traced against their skin, Melvin notebook, 1996, Melvin papers, London.

Chapter 2 explores the extended networks Townsend developed and focuses attention on his artist friendships with Naum Gabo, Charles Biederman and Patrick Heron. Gabo and Biederman had issues dedicated to explorations of their work and Heron used the ticketboard section for his two-part polemic against US cultural power in assessing innovation in British painting. Barbara Reise is introduced in this chapter, through her correspondence with Heron over Anglo-US attention to the art critic Clement Greenberg and her ensuing two-part article that explores the parameters of the subject. In April 1966, for the republication of Naum Gabo's 'The Realist Manifesto', and likewise Patrick Heron's 'The ascendancy of London in the sixties' featured in the December 1966 ticketboard. Both artists were important contributors to *SI*. Their artistic positions, work and friendships with Townsend helped to consolidate and develop his editorial policies.

Townsend marked his appointment by indicating his decision in *SI*'s January issue, 1966, not to write editorials. This decision characterises his self-effacing editorial policy. His second editorial was composed on his departure from the magazine, as already stated at the beginning of this introduction.

Introducing key players, editorial staff and contributors

The small, three-roomed office of four, sometimes five, part-time staff was headed by Townsend, who worked in a book-lined room on his own. (Figure 0.5.) Townsend was the link with the publishers; he attended monthly board meetings in Chatham, taking the art editor with him. When he went to the printworks for the final check before printing, his assistant editor accompanied him. Townsend's secretary, the art editor and the assistant editor shared an office and the advertising man operated from the same space as the manager of Studio Vista, the sister publishing operation, which was responsible for book projects, and exhibition catalogues.

On the production side Townsend was a consummate professional and exacted high standards. For the content he gave his editorial assistants decision-making responsibilities. The key players included Charles Harrison,

Frank Whitford, Tim Hilton, John McEwen and Barbara Reise; the first three were introduced to Townsend by Alan Bowness, who was a lecturer at the Courtauld Institute of Art and a newly appointed editorial advisor. He put their names forward on Townsend's request for recommendations of interesting young postgraduates. John McEwen came via a different route. Like the aforementioned three, he was an Oxbridge graduate, but had worked as an unpaid assistant for Marcello Salvatori, who ran the Centre for Advanced Study of Science in Art in Chalk Farm, London, in association with the art critic Guy Brett, and artists David Medalla and Gustav Metzger. Salvatori recommended McEwen to Townsend and between 1968 and 1970 McEwen worked part time in a general assistant capacity in the editorial office.⁴³

Harrison was the first to hold the post of assistant editor, from October 1967 to October 1971. Tim Hilton replaced him as assistant between November 1971 and August 1972 when John McEwen took on the post from September 1972. Hilton's other writing obligations were extensive and he found the regularity of the office unsuited to his way of working. McEwen had left in 1970 to work with SPACE studios only to return to *SI* as the editorial assistant in 1972 when Hilton resigned. Townsend presented McEwen with the offer of the job over a drink in the Museum Tavern, much to McEwen's astonishment, who was anticipating a quiet social catch-up, and decided on the spot to accept the post.⁴⁴

In 1966, the young US art historian, Barbara Reise, came to London from Columbia University on a Fulbright Scholarship to undertake research for a doctoral thesis on Turner at the Courtauld Institute.⁴⁵ Reise was also teaching art history at Coventry School of Art, where Michael Baldwin and Terry Atkinson, instigators of a radical teaching programme at the School, were working collaboratively shortly before becoming the UK branch of the Art & Language group. Over lunch with Townsend at Bertorelli's Restaurant, Charlotte Street, another editorial haunt, Robert Rosenblum, art historian, of

⁴³ McEwen, unpublished interview transcript, 1/11/06, Melvin papers, London.

⁴⁴ McEwen, unpublished interview transcript, 1/11/06, Melvin papers, London.

⁴⁵ In a letter addressed to 'ones' in January 1966, Reise describes that due to their shared interest in Turner, Lawrence Gowing offered her desk space at the Tate Gallery, where he was Keeper of the British Collection and Deputy Director. Like Townsend, Gowing was a Quaker, and also a conscientious objector during the war, family and friends correspondence file, Barbara Reise papers, TGA 786/4/2, London.

the University of New York, recommended Reise, whom he had met in New York and knew to be looking for an outlet for her art criticism.⁴⁶ Townsend acted on his suggestion and proposed a meeting with Reise to discuss what she may like to write about for the magazine.

Reise's official involvement did not begin until after the realisation of her first commission, a two-part article entitled 'Greenberg and the Group', which was published in *SI* in May and June 1968. This examination of the intellectual dominance achieved by Greenberg and his followers will be discussed in **Chapter 2**. For now, it is relevant to mention that, as a loud and forthright American, Reise somewhat unnerved the young group around Townsend. However, since she was energetic, passionate, outspoken and immensely hard working, these qualities outweighed the irritations she sometimes caused.⁴⁷ Townsend was impressed by her tenacity but more importantly by the way she approached her articles with a combination of informality and more personal reflection and solid research in artist's studios.⁴⁸ Reise's contribution to the discussion of Minimalism will be the subject of **Chapter 3**.

What Harrison later described as Reise's 'currency' in the office – which distinguished her from the young British assistants who were all about the same age – was that she brought with her a discussion of New York art, lifting the magazine from its parochial consideration of the UK.⁴⁹ Reise's contact with the American Minimalists gave the artists a platform outside New York. She had formed these connections while in New York, researching her Greenberg article.⁵⁰

Townsend regarded his assistants' integrity highly, and supported the interests each of them brought to the office, providing that they did not interfere with production. There were constant differences of opinion over what to cover, with Whitford remarking to Townsend that the amount of space given to Barry Flanagan meant that the magazine should change its name to

⁴⁶ Townsend diary, January 1968, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

⁴⁷ Harrison, unpublished interview transcript, 31/10/07, Melvin papers, London.

⁴⁸ Townsend, Melvin notebook, 1996, Melvin papers, London.

⁴⁹ Harrison, unpublished interview transcript, 31/10/07, Melvin papers, London.

⁵⁰ Barbara Reise, "Greenberg and the Group part 1." *SI*, Vol. 175, No. 900, "Greenberg and the Group part 2." *SI*, Vol. 175, No. 901.

'Flanagan International'.⁵¹ Hilton was later to note that any attempt to write a history of Townsend's editorship of *SI* would be fraught with personality clashes. Whitford was interested in German Expressionism, while Harrison asked Townsend to allow him to undertake the reviews of the formalist US painters showing at Waddington Galleries or the Kasmin Gallery. As will be seen, in **Chapter 4**, Harrison spent a lot of time with the sculptors at St Martin's, and was dedicated to the concerns of those emerging in the mid-1960s. Later, his engagement was shaped by his commitment to new art practices, conceptual art and his collaboration with Art & Language, areas of practice of which Whitford was dismissive.⁵² Harrison's aims for the magazine diverged from Townsend's when the former became the editor of *Art-Language* journal. Harrison increasingly felt compromised by his role as an art critic, working within the constraints of Townsend's editorial ethos. Finding that he could not veto articles of which he disapproved, he decided to distance himself by resigning as assistant editor in October 1971, but remained on the masthead as a contributing editor until the January/February issue of 1975.

Townsend enabled the assistants to organise commissions themselves once they had convinced him of their validity. He was not autocratic in his decisions, but he had high standards of excellence in the production process and would not allow slovenliness. Conversation and networking, to get projects off the ground, were his preferred method of working, and this is how he saw the magazine's potential being realised. Townsend wanted the magazine to represent and reflect the differences in interest of his much younger assistants. The discussions in **Chapters 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8** all demonstrate that his editorial policy was to devolve responsibility for commissioning articles and artists' projects and to use the magazine as an exhibition site as well as a forum for discussion. In correspondence, Philip Leider, *ArtForum*'s editor (1962 – 1971) expressed his amazement that Townsend gave his assistants so much freedom, something no other editor of a commercial magazine from the period allowed. This was specifically in response to *SI*'s Minimalism issue, which was prepared by Reise through her contacts with the New York-based artists. The issue will

⁵¹ Whitford, unpublished interview transcript, 25/10/06, Melvin papers, London.

⁵² Whitford, unpublished interview transcript, 25/10/06, Melvin papers, London.

be discussed in **Chapter 3**. The present author's interviews have substantiated this view. The fierceness of competition for position, especially among the assistants, in the liberating atmosphere of the editorial office, gave them all a sense of the magazine's historical continuity.⁵³

The roster of contributors includes Seth Siegelaub who, as has already been mentioned, edited the July/August 1970 issue, which will be discussed in **Chapter 5**. This issue very quickly became celebrated as a paradigm of radical exhibition-making. It is the first and most ambitious mainstream art magazine dedicated to artists' contributions, whereby the page is the artwork and not an illustration of it. It shows how important the magazine's role was in providing a platform for Conceptual art. Siegelaub invited art critics including Harrison, Lucy Lippard, New York writer, critic and exhibition organiser, Michel Claura, a Paris-based lawyer, Germano Celant, an Italian art critic who worked closely with Arte Povera, Hans Strelow, the German curator and David Antin, a poet and Director of the San Diego University Gallery, California.

The point is that Townsend was alert to where the innovations were happening and was prepared to take risks to commission the protagonists to present their ideas in the magazine. Lucy Lippard approached Townsend with a proposal for a magazine exhibition which was the recreation of an exhibition she devised called *Groups* at the School of Visual Arts, in New York. This and other contributions of hers to *SI* are the subject of **Chapter 6**.

The artists' contributions are too numerous to list individually. Let it suffice to observe here that many artists were to develop lasting friendships with Townsend, which evolved from their collaborations in the magazine. These include Daniel Buren, Carl Andre, Marcel Broodthaers, Naum Gabo, Bridget Riley, Barry Flanagan, Lawrence Weiner, Hans Haacke, Sol LeWitt and Patrick Heron.

Townsend initiated specially designed artist's covers. The commissions were of no financial value but contributors regarded the opportunity as being more

⁵³ Whitford, unpublished interview transcript, 25/10/06, Melvin Papers, London, Harrison, unpublished interview transcript, 31/10/07, Melvin papers, London.

prestigious than a solo show.⁵⁴ Important covers include those by Marcel Broodthaers, Patrick Caulfield, Jan Dibbets, Roger Hilton, Patrick Heron, Liliane Lijn, Richard Long and Bridget Riley. Heron's cover will be referred to in **Chapter 2**, Broodthaers and Hilton's covers will be discussed in **Chapter 8**. A further innovation encouraged by Townsend was artists' books, then in an early stage of evolution. Sol LeWitt's proposal for an artist's book is the direct consequence of his contribution to the Minimalism issue, **Chapter 3**.

Townsend was regarded by many artists, writers and museum directors in the UK, the US and Western Europe as being at the centre of the British art scene from shortly after his appointment through to the early 1980s. Although he was retiring by nature he brought people together with an ease that generated friendships and enabled productive networking, with its consequences in print. He made meetings social occasions; they took place in pubs or restaurants. Townsend's flair for putting people together in person and in print and for nurturing artists' writing gave *SI* its generous character. He had unusual strategies for extracting copy from writers. For instance, he went to Robert Hughes's flat in the middle of the night with a bottle of whisky and the condition that he would not leave until the article was finished.⁵⁵

Networks and hospitality

Townsend and his family were generous hosts, putting together artists, writers and the editorial assistants at parties at their home in Kentish Town. They offered accommodation to artists and critics from the UK and abroad. One was the artist Charles Biederman as will be seen in **Chapter 2**.

Harrison and his wife were similarly hospitable; their Islington home had a bed for artists passing through London.⁵⁶ Carl Andre and Daniel Buren stayed with the Townsends and Germano Celant, Seth Siegelaub and Joseph Kosuth stayed with the Harrisons. The generosity and openness of the time is frequently referred to in connection with *SI*. Reflecting on this attitude,

⁵⁴ Liliane Lijn, unpublished interview transcript, 26/6/97, Melvin Papers, London.

⁵⁵ Townsend, notebook, 1999, Melvin Papers, London.

⁵⁶ Harrison, unpublished interview transcript, 28/3/07, Melvin papers, London.

Lawrence Weiner said: 'you could get a bed anywhere.'⁵⁷ For his part, he offered accommodation to artists such as Richard Long when the latter was in New York. Lawrence Weiner recalled the paradoxical contrast between glamorous new internationalism and its relative poverty and how this atmosphere fostered generosity of exchange.⁵⁸ Harrison said a phone call to a New York contact would immediately lead to lecture invitations and inclusions at parties and private views as well as the offer of a place to stay.⁵⁹ Bruce McLean stayed with Dan Graham in New York and reciprocated in London.⁶⁰ Barry Flanagan on occasions in New York was given house-room with Chuck Ginnever or Richard Artschwager and in London he offered to put up Walter de Maria, who did an hour's performance of faux drum beating on the carpet of his living room.⁶¹ Flanagan referred to a three-week rule – which was what he considered to be the maximum time it was acceptable to stay. Most artists were in agreement with this limit.⁶²

Lucy Lippard's conception of an ideal artwork at the end of the 1960s was one to render these connections transparent, showing the linking threads between people, thought-processes and conversations. Two interrelated examples of this approach are Siegelaub's 1969 *One Month*, a calendar-exhibition distributed free to those on his mailing list.⁶³ He selected the month of March and referred to it at the time as 'his International exhibition'. He invited 31 artists each to contribute a page for the calendar. He supplied the dates. It provided a framework which – seen in conjunction with Douglas Huebler's *Site Sculpture Project Duration Piece #10 United States–England–South America*, 1969, in which the same artists were invited to state their location at a particular time during a 24-hour period on 14 March 1969 – illuminated the interconnections between artists.⁶⁴ The topological approach

⁵⁷ Weiner, unpublished interview transcript, 30/3/05, Melvin papers, London.

⁵⁸ Weiner, unpublished interview transcript, 30/3/05, Melvin papers, London.

⁵⁹ Harrison, unpublished interview transcript, 31/10/07, Melvin papers, London.

⁶⁰ McLean, unpublished interview transcript, 5/5/08, Melvin papers, London.

⁶¹ Flanagan, unpublished interview transcript, 21/1/09, Melvin papers, London.

⁶² Flanagan, unpublished interview transcript, 21/1/09, Melvin papers, London.

⁶³ Siegelaub, *One Month*. Barry Flanagan archive, CG/JBF/1969/ONE, London.

⁶⁴ Siegelaub invited the following artists Carl Andre, Mike Asher, Terry Atkinson, Michael Baldwin, Robert Barry, Rick Barthelme, Iain Baxter, James Byars, John Chamberlain, Ron Cooper, Barry Flanagan, Dan Flavin, Alex Hay, Douglas Huebler, Robert Huot, Stephen Kaltenbach, On Kawara,

that runs through this thesis is in part derived from the structure of Siegelaub, Huebler and Lippard's strategies as they trace the interconnections between artists and their geographical locations. Townsend's editorial flair was in recognising the innovations as they occurred and in having the confidence to commission their protagonists.

Methods: The death of rubbish: gossip and anecdote in the archive

*Life is anecdotal rather than expiatory; were it not so, we would not have the anecdotes of Confucius or the New Testament.*⁶⁵

This section considers how sifting through the archive unearths ephemera in the form of gossip and anecdotes which supplied leads for the present author to follow. These lines of investigation have created a new network quite as complex as that revealed in the particular document examined. The purpose of this section is to introduce the methods on which this thesis is based. The approach taken in the study concentrates on the insights to be made by the examination of documents of such little worth at the time that, but for the archive, would have been discarded. In 1970, Jonathan Bentall sent Peter Townsend an article called 'The Death of Rubbish' by Michael Thompson, published in *New Society* of 28 May that year. The sub-heading read: 'People have usually seen society on a vertical model, like the digestive tract, with rubbish like excrement at the base. This could be changing.'⁶⁶ The transfiguration of rubbish has proceeded so far that waste and detritus are read as signs of illumination and commercial value. The investigation of rubbish, known as 'garbology,' to see whether items of saleable value might be among

Joseph Kosuth, Christine Kozlov, Sol LeWitt, Richard Long, Robert Morris, Bruce Nauman, Claes Oldenburg, Dennis Oppenheim, Alan Ruppersberg, Ed Ruscha, Robert Smithson, De Wain Valentine, Lawrence Weiner and Ian Wilson.

⁶⁵ Peter Townsend writings, unpublished notes file, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

⁶⁶ Michael Thompson *New Society*, Vol. XXX May 1970, pp. 916-7, sent to Townsend by Jeremy Bentall, 19/10/70, Technology and art file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

the trash has developed as a result of this observation.⁶⁷ Thompson's article refers to William Burroughs's character teaching his ass [*sic*] to speak (the 'talking asshole' routine in *The Naked Lunch*) and indirectly drew on the anthropologist, Mary Douglas's designation of 'dirt' as 'matter out of place'.⁶⁸ Benthall was working as an exhibition organiser at the ICA. He commented to Townsend how pleased he was in finding a 'very good article by Michael Thompson' in the second *Art-Language* journal with the observation, 'unfortunately it turns out his assessment of conceptual art is now about the same as my own'.⁶⁹ This was low in estimation. Thompson was a 'bright anthropologist, former student of Mary Douglas'.⁷⁰ Benthall's regular column in *SI*, 'Technology and art', elicited some irritation from Harrison and Whitford, two of Townsend's assistants who generally did not agree with each other but considered it an arbitrary designation for a column.⁷¹ This was because they considered that the methods used to produce the work should be part of any discussion of it and that singling out technology was to isolate the practice as if it were unusual.⁷² John McEwen introduced Benthall to Townsend, and to the magazine. He and Benthall were formerly together at Eton and Cambridge.

What to keep and what to discard are editorial decisions common to any project. Research exposes what was once confidential in letters, for example, in notes of ideas committed to paper or recorded from conversations. Often these documents reveal the dirty side: art's interpersonal connections, passions, opinionated reactions, anecdotes, hearsay and gossip. It is dirty matter which gives the archive its peculiar status, and distinguishes it from the 'clean' magazine. It transforms banalities and dirt. Reinforced by its new value, the changed status of the archive's matter adds inflection, nuance to the historicised

⁶⁷ William Rathje and Cullen Murphy wrote an influential and popular book on the subject, *Rubbish! The archaeology of Garbage*, London and New York, Harper Collins Publishers, 2001.

⁶⁸ Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger, an analysis of the concepts of pollution and taboo*, London and New York, Routledge, 1966 reprinted 1991, "Secular Defilement." (pp. 29-40), p. 35.

⁶⁹ Benthall letter to Townsend, 19/10/70, Technology and art file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

⁷⁰ Benthall letter to Townsend, Technology and art file, 19/10/70, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

⁷¹ Harrison, unpublished interview transcript, 28/3/07, Melvin papers, London. Whitford, unpublished interview transcript, 25/10/06, Melvin papers, London.

⁷² Harrison, unpublished interview transcript, 28/3/07, Melvin papers, London. Whitford, unpublished interview transcript, 25/10/06, Melvin papers, London.

magazine, and by establishing a vivid reconnection, it reanimates the original product and purpose of both.

There is a great deal more than the magazine as text, not simply in the authors' copy and all the hopeful unpublished submissions – this is another story – but in the signs of editorial intervention. Often these are naughty asides, humorous, such as the comment 'do ya wanna bet?'⁷³ Charles Harrison penned on John Baldessari's NSEAD exhibition announcement card, which was filled with the line: 'I will not make any more boring art', repeated as a school child's lines. For a short time contributing editor, Frank Whitford, was the correspondent in Berlin. On a PhD scholarship, he had given up a decent salary as one of the *Evening Standard* cartoonists for a thesis on German Expressionism he subsequently abandoned. He wrote to Townsend about his frustrations with academia's alienation from the tangible experience of art. More than exposing personal frustration in their retelling as gossip or anecdote, the letters present a position that became one of the key components in editorial policy. Frank Whitford was *the* contributing editor who from the beginning of this period was not interested in theory. He recalled frequently dropping by the Museum Tavern at the end of the day to meet Townsend, who, as he described, 'loved a gossip.'⁷⁴

In discussions with Whitford the present author raised the question of Townsend's many-headed editorial policy with its diverse positions and conflicts, resulting in frequent changes of personnel.⁷⁵ With the correspondence this can be clarified by a retelling of the story. The discussion in **Chapter 8** of Roger Hilton's statement-letter, published in *SI* March 1974,⁷⁶ gives a perfect example of how the published version and the original seen together trace the course of editorial decision-making.

The act of editorial censorship directly affects reading by obliteration. It gives a particular shape to Hilton's statement on the *kaleidoscopic* nature of his

⁷³ Baldessari, 'I will not make any more boring art', July/August 1970 file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

⁷⁴ Whitford, unpublished interview transcript, 25/10/06, Melvin papers, London.

⁷⁵ Whitford, unpublished interview transcript, 25/10/06, Melvin papers, London.

⁷⁶ Roger Hilton's letter to Townsend was published as "Roger Hilton letter." *SI*, Vol. 187, March 1974, pp. 117-121, Peter Townsend archive TGA 20094, London.

art practice, the network of friendships and relationships between people, objects and locations. Hilton writes 'one could say for instance is Patrick real?'⁷⁷ The implication is where is the real Patrick Heron located in the role he now performs as artist-writer, in other words is he and his posturing for *real*?

The research project

The method used here combines oral histories with 'art history', analysis of the archive with the magazine itself, how the magazine reproduced artworks for discussion in articles, and how, radically, art was commissioned as specially designed for the page. This last policy was Townsend's natural continuation of his initiation of artists' covers. *SI* at this time was the only mainstream art magazine with wide circulation that commissioned covers from artists.

The factual accuracy of some documents in the archive is questionable. There are straightforward differences between the published version of original documents, editorial changes, and alterations between original copy and publication. There are also aesthetic differences; the appearance of manuscript is different from print. Most problematic is where there is an inadequate or non-existent record, and where documents recount something in insufficient detail to contradict what in retrospect is remembered differently. This holed tapestry therefore resists reading from a single viewpoint, hence the emphasis on networks of collateral encounters between artists, critics, art institutions and the magazine's editorial office. Much of the work in the magazine has an elusive and quixotic character. Haphazard, incidental accounts are often excluded from historical perspectives. Jonathan Bentall's sending Townsend a copy of Michael Thompson's 'The Death of Rubbish' is such a serendipitous instance and it is one of the devices used to substantiate this reading. These overlooked details provide a means of reliving the complexity of an event. This transfer of emphasis upsets normal expectations of editorial authority.

⁷⁷ Roger Hilton, "Every artist is a con-man." published *SI*, Vol. 187, March 1974, pp. 117-121, Peter Townsend archive TGA 20094, London.

Townsend regarded his editorial role as akin to that of a conductor, never of a soloist.⁷⁸

Lucy Lippard's observation expressed the concern of many: 'There has been a lot of bickering about what conceptual art is/was; who began it; who did what when with it; what its goals, philosophy and politics might have been. I was there, but I don't trust my memory. I don't trust anyone else's either. And I trust even less the authoritative overviews of those who weren't there [...]'⁷⁹

Both in the archive and by interviews the serendipitous encounter can provide more insight than seamless coherent written accounts. In the essay entitled 'An Archival Impulse', published in 2004, art historian Hal Foster identifies two sides of the coin to this desire that he terms an archival impulse. One is 'the will to connect what cannot be connected', that is to find a logical thread between disparate items.⁸⁰ The other is the researcher's desire to 'turn belatedness into becoming, to recoup failed visions in art [...] and everyday life into possible scenarios of alternative kinds of social relations.'⁸¹ The idiosyncratic archival impulse enables the belated and forgotten to be redesignated and provide a structure for a new dynamic exchange in encountering the event that would turn 'excavation sites into construction sites.'⁸²

This thesis attempts to navigate among the paradoxes inherent in personal accounts of an occasion or situation, with the idea or ideals posited by it, and its various forms of documentation.

The relationship between anecdote and gossip

In considering the social context vital to the magazine this study gives centre stage to the way in which anecdotes grant insight into an event by providing

⁷⁸ Townsend, "Ave Atque." *SI*, Vol. 189, No. 975, May/June 1975, (pp. 168-171), p. 169.

⁷⁹ Lucy R Lippard, "Escape Attempts." *Reconsidering the Object of Art, 1965 - 1975*, p. 17 (1995).

⁸⁰ Hal Foster, "An Archival Impulse." *October*, No. 110, Fall 2004, pp. 3-22.

⁸¹ Hal Foster, "An Archival Impulse." *October*, No. 110, Fall 2004, p. 22.

⁸² Hal Foster, "An Archival Impulse." *October*, No. 110, Fall 2004, p. 22.

humanity and contextual specificity. Anecdotes are often cast out of academic writing as merely incidental to the event and its historical-material analysis.

Gavin Butt's book, *Between You and Me*, presents an epistemology of gossip by drawing on the spoken asides in 'queer backchat' – that is, talking behind people's backs – in particular, in relation to the rumour-mill of the New York City gay scene of the 1950s and '60s.⁸³ Of relevance to this research, Butt enlists gossip as a method of triggering speculative investigation, leading to the reinterpretation of events. He identifies two strands of argument and exploration. These are 'gossip's role *in* history' and 'gossip's role *as* history'.⁸⁴ For Butt, gossip's strength is that as it is a form of 'unverifiable knowledge it might come to *queer* the very practice of historical accounting itself.'⁸⁵ Butt addresses the problem of interpretation by leaving his text is deliberately unconcluded; it has no outcome apart from the playful withdrawal of certainty and denial of fixed interpretation. This allows the method to become more interesting than the subject, and Butt revalidates gossip as a worthwhile research tool by treating it as a knowledge-base, allowing for the possibility that there is another story to be told. Although this assertion is not new, Butt's divergent theoretical position treats the ignored, the scandalous and the anecdotal as material for serious investigation. By concentrating on gossip, Butt also draws attention to the interplay of different temporalities in his investigation, the stories about publication that persist in general in the researcher's mind, the curiosity aroused by differences between the published record and as yet unprinted traces.

The main characteristic of gossip is that each person's account varies, if only slightly, and no objective version of events can be assembled. Much of this thesis has relied on following leads from the ephemera that appear in the diverse archival material, resulting in interviews and their inevitable recourse to gossip. In his account of the editorial atmosphere at the *Partisan Review*, William Barrett noted that 'Certainly people gossip; the main topic of

⁸³ Gavin Butt, "Gossip the hardcore of Art History." *Between You and Me: Queer Disclosures in the New York Art World, 1948–1963*, London and New York, Duke University Press, 2005, pp. 1-22.

⁸⁴ Butt, *Between You and Me: Queer Disclosures in the New York Art World, 1948–1963*, "Gossip the hardcore of Art History." p. 9.

⁸⁵ Butt, *Between You and Me: Queer Disclosures in the New York Art World, 1948–1963*, p. 9.

conversation as Jane Austen remarked is the failings of other people'.⁸⁶ In interview, Patrick Heron would describe his preambles to writing about art as 'anecdote'.⁸⁷ He was speaking about the neologism and jokingly referring to his concerns with anecdotes and stories but when used effectively they helped to give a broader background to criticism. He was a robust storyteller in a social situation and Townsend valued his company highly. As will be seen in **Chapter 2**, Heron had a high regard for Townsend's editorial policy.

The anecdotal is a handhold in this thesis; its necessary subjectivity animates the personal. Far from obscuring, the flimsy and fragmentary accounts provided by anecdote illuminate evidence of the anxieties inherent in artistic practice and other concerns central to editorial policy.

They may describe a failed or unrealised project. They record corrections or revisions, changes of heart or simply miscommunications. These scribes' doodles and jottings in the margins of the archive form its *paratext* a coinage the present author applies to the leads arising from examining marginalia and other asides.⁸⁸

This method demonstrates how the researcher can become tangled in the layers of communication in a particular document. These layers are seen years after the event, and an interview leading from their examination can draw other, different, even contradictory testimony. The many time-frames in the archive introduce further complexity but can animate it, and bring it to life relevantly in the present. Archives map connections between people, their circumstances and locations and they necessarily engender an awareness of time and context, making them both spatial and temporal.

The following is an example of such an instance. It concerns a small notational drawing by Naum Gabo, the circumstances surrounding which will

⁸⁶ William Barrett, *The Truants, Adventures Amongst the Intellectuals*, Garden City, New York, Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1982, "Analytic Exuberance." pp. 35-49, p. 45.

⁸⁷ Heron, unpublished interview transcript, 7/4/96, Melvin papers, London.

⁸⁸ The term *paratext* refers to a coinage used by Gérard Genette to identify different strands of thinking arising from the document. They lead to many different accounts of events. For a discussion of the term see Gérard Genette, "Five types of *transtextuality* among which *hypertextuality*." *Palimpsest Literature in the Second Degree*, University of Nebraska Press, 1997, pp. 1-30.

be returned to in the following chapter. When asked to elucidate, Townsend wrote:

Jo- this drg(?) [sic] is by Gabo. I asked him about his commemorative sculpture in a [Rotterdam] square and said I was surprised and sorry to see it [as] such a static piece. He said he was too and had wanted something with movement and hope, more in the manner of his endless wave (not correct name) in the Tate. And he took this sheet of paper and said "something more like this". Perhaps it should go in its own folder.⁸⁹ (See figure 0.6.)

Considering the archive as a topographical model

This section attempts to recreate the conversations of Townsend and his associates which led to the formation of his policy by collating the different sources into a collage and to interrogate these. As a network of implicit and inferred connections between people, the archive's topography is revealed. The interconnections of its topographical structure can thus be seen as flexible. It simultaneously relates to, and defines, the archive's points of reference, accessibility and hierarchy. To view the archive 'topologically' gives the network of interconnections between artists, writers and the editorial team from various geographical locations a fluid, dynamic shape.

The proposition of archival topography lends itself to geographical description, and it places emphasis on the city with the different routes through its streets. The topographical model is not peculiar to *SI*'s archive, but it gives a form to the networks of exchange between practices and sites as well as between the artists and other protagonists and their interconnecting discussions.⁹⁰ The hierarchical organisation of the archive gives some indication

⁸⁹ Naum Gabo, G correspondence file, 1966-1972, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

⁹⁰ There are numerous uses of typography as a vehicle to provide a shape or structure in different disciplines, for instance, EB Coleman and SC Hahn "Failure to improve readability with a vertical typography." *Journal of Applied Psychology*, American Psychological Association, Vol. 50, No. 5, October 1966, pp. 434-436. Timothy J White, "**Cold War Historiography: New Evidence Behind Traditional Typographies.**" *International Social Science Review*, Vol. 75, No. 3, 2000, pp. 35-45. **Ways of thinking about topography through the topological interconnections of borders and**

of its many strata. The literal geographical location of *SI*'s London office – with its web of streets leading to and from the editorial haunts of galleries, pubs and restaurants – can be conjured up by re-enacting the decisions made, casually while walking between places giving a sense of the horizontality of Townsend's decision-making processes. *SI*'s archive has links with activities in places as diverse as New York and London, Prague and Paris, Berlin, Italy and the Netherlands.

This topography is of the data of interconnections and the ideas that may be so projected beyond the limits of the material Townsend kept. On a scrap of paper Townsend wrote: 'Where would art history be without gossip?'⁹¹ Indeed, during discussions with the present author, he used the phrase frequently. Although he was not a formal diarist, like William, Peter wrote endlessly – on envelopes and scraps of paper, and his archive contains numerous lists and memoranda, brief snippets of prose, some poetry, and descriptions of artwork in shows.

Initially queries about the archive were directed to Townsend himself. This led increasingly to discussions with artists, writers and to their own archives where there was common material. For example, Townsend proposed that the present writer ask Seth Siegelaub for copies of his *SI* projects. In fact, the editorial office had retained most of the planning materials for Siegelaub's July/August 1970 'summer exhibition' issue and for the April 1971 issue, which featured a copy of the artist's reserve rights transfer and sale agreement on the cover, to be discussed in **Chapter 7**.

The *SI* archive uniquely informs our understanding of the magazine. Although this may seem obvious, the archive's situation and relevance has shifted with time and its perceived importance. This is because, historically, it

definitions of space was addressed at Tate Modern, "Topology: Spaces of Transformation" November 2011 to June 2012. It presented keynote conversations with philosophers, artists, writers and theorists including Étienne Balibar, Olafur Eliasson, David Harvey and Peter Weibel to discuss the ways to survey the terrain, which begins with its topography and the relationships between it, such as how it is divided literally in the case of a country's border, or by the consideration of its topologies which enable the visualising of a fluid and porous constantly changing space. <http://www.tate.org.uk/context-comment/video/topology-spaces-transformation-borders-part-1>.

⁹¹ Townsend personal papers, misc files, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

has a completely different context, now that the purpose of the material is no longer the production of a magazine. To view the archive's structure topographically divides the material into territories, with different formations, allowing connections to be made between situations and events and the routes marked between them. The research provides scope for visualising connections between artists, and groups of artists, in particular, with writers and historians and with museums and institutions, all coming together within the environment of the magazine's production.

Vertical and horizontal strata – sifting the archive

This section will consider one particular issue of the magazine to illustrate the idea of topography when applied to studying the archive. The January 1969 issue on sculpture was edited by Charles Harrison who, in addition to his duties as assistant editor at *SI*, was teaching part time at St Martin's School of Art. Departing from the usual format, it featured a wrap-around cover featuring a photograph of a work by Anthony Caro. The present author selected the material from the archive file for display at Tate Britain on the occasion of a memorial event for Peter Townsend in 2006.⁹² This along with other ephemera was chosen because Townsend had considered the issue to be amongst the highlights of his period. Charles Harrison attended the event. It was the first time he had seen the material after a gap of nearly 40 years. He was confused at first by seeing it again but it allowed him to reconsider its relevance.⁹³

Inside there was a report on the Advanced Sculpture Course at St Martin's School of Art, prepared by Harrison, in which twenty-five artists are listed, beginning with the staff – including Caro and Frank Martin – and then the students, noting their dates of study and periods of time teaching.⁹⁴ This listing also noted which artists had exhibited in the *New Generation* Exhibition at the Whitechapel Art Gallery in 1965 and which currently worked at the Stockwell depot, a disused factory temporarily used as artists' studios. The article was

⁹² Peter Townsend memorial event held at Tate Britain, 2006.

⁹³ Harrison, unpublished interview transcript, 28/3/09, Melvin papers, London.

⁹⁴ Harrison's authoring was not acknowledged, but the galley and layout sheets bear his handwriting, *SI* January 1969 file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

illustrated by photographs of work produced in the studios at St Martin's and a cover of *First*, the magazine edited by students and staff in 1961, which shows William Tucker's hand holding the Venus of Willendorf. Also published were Tucker's *Essay on Sculpture*; a transcript from a discussion on Caro's sculpture between David Annesley, Roelof Louw, Tim Scott and Tucker; statements and illustrations from artists working at the Stockwell depot; an article entitled 'Colour in Sculpture', which included statements by Annesley, Scott, Turnbull and Phillip King. One of the illustrations in this article was a photograph, taken by Charles Harrison, at the *New Generation* exhibition. Roland Brener, a Stockwell sculptor, contributed 'the concerns of emerging sculptors'; in 'Some Recent Sculpture in Britain', Charles Harrison presented and discussed work by Barry Flanagan, Richard Long, Bruce McLean, Roland Brener, Roelof Louw. Barry Flanagan's 'Notes 67-68' included observations made during installation of his work in the Biennale des Jeunes of September 1967. Tucker included an untitled series of line drawings as the header to his text. These were not referred to in the discussion and were drawn in ink on architectural draft paper.⁹⁵ (Figures 0.7 – 0.14.)

This illustration of how the archive is can be trawled alongside eye witness protagonists leads to a brief consideration of David Dye's reading of the issue by drawing on the present author's interview.

Dye was a sculpture student at St Martin's and spent a lot of his time reading in the library. In 1970, Harrison invited him to contribute to the magazine exhibition issue planned for July/August of that year, edited by Siegelaub, who in turn had passed the baton for selection to six critics. Dye was subsequently included in Harrison's selection for the *British Avant Garde* exhibition at the New York Cultural Center in 1971, for which the May 1971 issue doubled as a catalogue; these two projects will be discussed in **Chapter 4**. Dye commented recently that 'it did not appear in the least bit odd that [he] was reading about and learning more from [his] tutors and their work through the mediation of an art magazine rather than from actual contact'.⁹⁶ The magazine was regarded by

⁹⁵ William Tucker, January 1969 file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

⁹⁶ David Dye, *Backwards into the future an exploration into revisiting the art of the late 1960s*. Newcastle, University of Northumbria, PhD, 2010, p. 11.

many young artists as containing primary information and was for some considered as important as visiting exhibitions.

Chapter 1

Peter Townsend's appointment and early editorial policy

This chapter examines Peter Townsend's appointment and his early editorial decisions, the magazine's new ethos with the change of editor and publishers and how this was articulated in the press release. The sources are Townsend's editorial papers, this researcher's interviews with the assistant editors and ongoing discussions with Townsend. It will also refer to William Townsend's journal entries; these illuminate the circumstances of Peter's acceptance of the post and cast further light on his appointment of editorial assistants, his instituting of both a national and an international editorial advisory board, as well as decisions regarding the commissioning of authors. This chapter covers the period during which Townsend was offered the editorial post at *SI*, and it examines his initial policy decisions. During this time, he received advice from his brother, William, eleven years his senior. William Townsend was a painter loosely associated with the Euston Road School and was Professor of Painting at the Slade School of Art at University College London (UCL), where the painter, William Coldstream, was Head of School. The former was a retiring figure in the London art scene of the 1960s, whose reputation was more social than artistic, and he played an important role in helping shape Peter's interest in the visual arts during his formative years as a schoolchild.¹

During term-time, William would spend several evenings a week at Peter's family home in Dartmouth Park Road, Kentish Town, NW5.² Aside from time spent with the family, he frequently dropped into the office for lunch or a drink or went to private views with his brother, all of which was recorded for posterity. In this way, the journals provide both an eye-witness account of the London art scene and a fraternal report on Peter's decision-making processes, from the time he was offered the post as editor of *SI* in 1965. As the latter they

¹ The assessment of William Townsend's reputation is derived by the present author from three sources. These are discussions with Peter Townsend, Melvin notebook 1996, London. Charles Harrison unpublished interview transcript, 28/3/07, Melvin papers, London. Sir Nicholas Serota, unpublished interview transcript, 13/12/07, Melvin papers, London.

² William Townsend had a room in UCL halls of residence, Cartwright Gardens WC1. He frequently walked back from his brother's family home because it was late into the night and there was no public transport. It is about a twenty minute brisk walk downhill.

are invaluable since Peter's personal papers include little more detail than entries in his appointments diary. In 1976 Andrew Forge – the British painter and art writer, a contemporary of William's who taught painting at Goldsmiths College and was on the *SI* editorial advisory board and was himself an occasional contributor to the magazine – edited a selection from his journals, entitled *The Townsend Journals – An Artist's Record of his Times 1928-1951*.³

This chapter is particularly reliant on William's journal entries from October 1965 to May 1967, during which time Peter used their discussions as a sounding board for his evolving strategies for the magazine. Material for this chapter is also taken from Peter's editorial papers and correspondence up to 1968, and from formal and informal conversations between Peter and the present author, and subsequent conversations with the assistant editors and other contributors.

In considering the source material for this chapter, it is remarkable that Peter Townsend retained so much miscellaneous editorial material, despite the pressing requirement to adhere to production schedules, plan for the future and review the past while revising policy decisions. Storing it proved a prescient decision, enabling a critique of the magazine's role to be made from the perspective of the editorial office. Exempted from the need to publish the issue, the archival material is transformed in status; having initially been necessary for production, it became tangential to the publication and is now central to an investigation in which the magazine's focus on events can be recast.

As noted previously, when approached in the early 1990s by the researcher Alison Bracker, the editorial office of *ArtForum* considered its magazine to be its own archive. The status of editorial papers is ambiguous when editors and not the magazine office retain them. Philip Leider, the editor from 1964-1971, gave his personal and professional papers to the Smithsonian Institution, Archives of

³ *The Townsend Journals 1928–1951*, edited by Andrew Forge, London, Tate Publications, 1976.

American Art in 2011. The scope of his archive, like Townsend's, appears to be determined by the job's responsibilities and expectations.⁴

This is an important point; in the case of *SI*, the archive is not the magazine, but, through this distinction, it raises the question of whether the magazine may be seen as an archive. In turn, the archive's material difference from the magazine gives rise to comparisons between the published issue and the submitted copy. Written material in the archive offers insight into the pragmatic details of the magazine's production and the ways in which decisions were made. This also helps us to give context to the period, with telegrams frequently being used for urgent matters, when a phone call (expensive in the 1960s) would now be routine, and letters being used where we would use email, both of which deployed what would now be considered arcane, formal language, gradually becoming more informal over a ten-year period. The relatively slow medium of letter-writing allows us to reconstruct the time frame. The time frame is greater.

By contrast, the archives of *SI* assistant editors, for example, those of Charles Harrison and Barbara Reise, do not include details of the stages of production alongside the planning for articles, transcripts and correspondence. When galley or page-pulls are included, they relate to projects or articles they have produced themselves and, unlike Townsend's papers, they do not contain an overview.

This chapter also aims to recreate the atmosphere of the editorial office in London in the 1960s, by introducing the personnel and early policy decisions. As noted in the introduction, the editorial office's move to cheaper accommodation in January 1966 provided a much more accessible location for artists and writers to call in at casually. Peter's office was on the top floor of a house in the tree-lined street. The bathroom also served as a library. It was opposite the British Museum and beside an 'exotic fruit and vegetable shop'.⁵ The Museum Tavern, at the corner of Museum Street, and The Plough, across

⁴ Philip Leider Papers, 1966-1997 donated 2011. 'Correspondence and writings relating to Philip Leider's career as editor of *ArtForum* magazine.' <http://www.aaa.si.edu/collections/philip-leider-papers-15982> last accessed 3/8/12.

⁵ Townsend remarked to the present author that 'exotic' vegetables were very rare in the 1960s, which made this shop particularly notable, Melvin notebook 1996, Melvin papers, London.

the road, increasingly became venues for introductions, discussions and gossip. William brought Slade students and staff there, and staff and students from the nearby St Martins College of Art regularly came along too. It was here that Peter met Richard Long, Barry Flanagan, Gilbert & George and many others.

The editorial office hosted regular receptions in the upper room at The Plough, to which Peter and his assistants invited artists and writers to drinks, which were funded with the proceeds from selling books that had been submitted for review but never sent to the reviewers. These events were considered more imaginative than most art parties or private views.⁶ Peter described to the present author how Gilbert & George came to the Christmas party in December 1971, with their faces painted gold, which was a repeat performance of their upstaging event at the private view of the London showing of the exhibition, *When Attitudes Become Form*, in 1969 at the ICA and not indicative of the usual tenor of the parties.⁷ Anyone passing through London would be invited, and ideas for exhibitions and special publications, commissions for articles or artists' covers were frequently contingent on contacts made at these events.

Aware of the potential of conviviality for bringing people together and making things happen, Peter Townsend sought a venue where he could circumvent licensing laws by which, at that time, alcohol could only be served at certain times because pubs had to close in the afternoon.⁸ Because he was not interested in joining a private members' club, he befriended a waiter at The Kingsley, a local hotel in Bloomsbury Way, WC1. They devised a scheme to achieve out-of-hours drinking by allocating Townsend a room number; as a 'guest of the hotel' he would be free to entertain as long as was necessary. This arrangement began in the spring of 1966 and ended abruptly three years later when Townsend's friendly waiter happened to be absent.⁹ In response to his

⁶ William Townsend, Journal Vol. xxxviii, (May 1967 - November 1968), 12/12/67.

⁷ Townsend remembered both occasions. Since Gilbert & George had not been included in the selection for the exhibition they outmanoeuvred the omission by arriving at the private view as living sculptures. Most people thought they were part of the show. Melvin notebook 2002, Melvin papers, London.

⁸ Pubs had to close between licensing hours in the afternoon in England and Wales until 1988.

⁹ Townsend, Melvin notebook 1996, Melvin papers, London.

request for a drink on the tab for his room, the stiff reply came, 'That, Sir, is a broom cupboard'.¹⁰

The *SI* archive which, as has been explained, is synonymous with Townsend's editorial papers, also allows the wider social and political context of particular artistic or personal issues to be reconsidered. Townsend's treatment of the magazine and the social scene as inextricable distinguished Townsend's editorial policy from that of other editors, such Leider at *ArtForum* or James Fitzsimmons at *Art International*. The key to this difference was the location of *SI* and the way in which Townsend utilised it. The office was geographically poised between Europe and the US, and the increasing availability of low-cost long-haul flights in the 1960s with a stopover at Heathrow meant that artists and writers frequently passed through London.

Townsend would host lunches or offer hospitality in the family home for those passing through. The family home became a centre at which artists stayed; there are numerous letters from those grateful for the Townsends' hospitality.¹¹ They frequently gave parties for art world guests and played host to many contacts made in China or resulting from their connection with China. These groups mixed. Politics were frequently discussed, the main topics being US attitudes and policy towards China and Vietnam, with the other crucial issues of gender and racial equality in the principles of education.¹²

Townsend operated a self-effacing policy, keeping his personal views removed from decision-making. Leider's focus after the move from the West

¹⁰ Townsend, Melvin notebook 1996, Melvin papers, London.

¹¹ The archive (*SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers TGA 20028 and Peter Townsend archive TGA 20094) is full of notes of thanks. Two different sources follow to indicate their variety; Charles Biederman, letter to Townsend, to Townsend, 5/10/69, Misc correspondence files to 1974, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London. Barbara Reise remarks on Townsend's parties and hospitality during the Christmas period, December 1970 to Sol LeWitt, friends correspondence file, Barbara Reise papers, TGA 786/5/1/2. The archive is full of notes of thanks.

¹² The present author forms this conclusion from different sources, discussions with Peter Townsend, Melvin notebook 1996, Melvin papers, London. Townsend's daughters shared their recollections with the present author over a number of years. William Townsend Journals contains frequent records of these occasions, Vol. xxxvi, August 1965-March 1966, Vol. xxxvii, March 1966 May 1967, Vol. xxxviii, May 1967-November 1968, Vol. xxxix, UCL special collections, London. John McEwen recalled the parties' atmospheres, the discussions and people, unpublished interview transcript, 1/11/06, Melvin papers, London. The examples here are indicative, the present author found that all the artists, writers and dealers she has interviewed have remarked on Townsend's parties.

coast of the US to New York City in 1967 was New York-centric in his attention to the contemporary art discourse and Fitzsimmons, operating out of Lugano, Switzerland, had an expatriate mentality, in the present author's assessment, because the magazine did not maintain any relationship with its location. Townsend wanted to utilise connections between artists on an international scale, as shown by his decision at the outset to enlist an international advisory committee.

Background to Peter Townsend's terms and appointment

In September 1965, Peter Townsend was asked by Tony Adams – whose publishing firm, Cory Adams, based in Chatham, Kent, was in the process of being bought out by Anthony McKay Miller, providing he managed to prise it from the National Magazine Company – whether he would be interested in the temporary post as editor of *SI*. Townsend wanted to discuss the proposal with his brother, William, so they arranged a meeting, visiting Signals Gallery in Wigmore Street, W1, an experimental space, run by Paul Keeler and David Medalla. Here they saw an optical and kinetic show of Soto and Takis¹³ and afterwards had lunch at Bertorelli's restaurant in Charlotte Street, WC1.¹⁴ It is relevant to note both of these locations. The fact that the brothers visited Signals Gallery indicates their support and interest in the contemporary scene, while Bertorelli's became a favourite haunt of the editor and the site of many policy discussions and article commissions (with some describing it as an extension of the office), which serves further to demonstrate how often decisions were made in a social setting. One occasion Townsend enjoyed recounting was that a lunch with Carl Andre and Barbara Reise had become dinner before any of the guests noticed the time.¹⁵

¹³ The exhibition *Soundings 2*, 22 July – 22 September 1965 included work by Hélio Oiticica, Lilian Lijn, Otero, Albers, Duchamp, Malevich and Mondrian.

¹⁴ W Townsend, Journal Vol. xxxvi 8/9/65, (August 1965 - March 1966), UCL special collections, London.

¹⁵ William calls Peter's table at Bertorelli's an extension of his office space, W Townsend, Journal Vol. xxxvi, 2/2/66, UCL special collections, London. The lunch with Reise and Andre is one Peter frequently referred to in conversation with the present author. Townsend, Melvin notebook 1996.

When he was approached by Adams, Peter was the editor of the *China Monthly*, where he was well regarded for his professionalism. It is not recorded whether approaches were made to other candidates, nor do Townsend's papers provide any further information about the circumstances of the job offer. Adams's publishing firm principally published poetry and, since Townsend was an avid reader of contemporary poetry, one could speculate that they met through their shared interests and aware of his editorial skills approached him with the job proposal. Townsend did not recall how the offer came about.¹⁶ On an almost daily basis, William detailed his brother's protracted agonising over whether to accept the post. According to him, Peter's anxieties were that though he could do the 'strictly editorial job quite well' but, as an outsider, it might be hard to get co-operation within the specialist field of art. Peter was interested in a job with broader scope than the British Chinese field, which William agreed was limited, noting that 'what authority he has in it he wouldn't lose in a few years, if this new venture proved a failure'.¹⁷ Despite this observation, it took several months before William fully backed Peter's acceptance. His reservations also stemmed from the fact that he considered the editorial job as 'resuscitation' because the previous owners were running it down.¹⁸ This change of heart took place when William saw the way his brother was rapidly assimilated by the London art scene and highly regarded by artists and writers. It was the issue dedicated to Naum Gabo and the Constructivists, *SI* April 1966, that confirmed his affirmation.

Townsend was in a position to negotiate his employment terms, although they took several weeks to resolve. He had been offered a salary of £1,200, the pro-rata equivalent of £2,000. His memo to Anthony Mackay Miller and Tony Adams outlined the conditions on which he would accept the post as follows:

[...] full editorial responsibility subject to Mackay's 'censorship' or veto only on the score of libel, obscenity or possible loss of business, or extravagance [...] a six month term is insufficient and would be unfair to both the magazine and

¹⁶ Townsend, Melvin notebook, 1996, Melvin papers, London.

¹⁷ Townsend, Journal Vol. xxxvi, 22/12/65, UCL special collections, London.

¹⁸ Townsend, Journal Vol. xxxvi, 27/10/65, UCL special collections, London.

myself. Any effective re-shaping of Studio would be difficult, perhaps impossible, over a six month 15 October–15 April period, which would only cover four issues. Moreover 'acting editor' implies a caretaker regime and the instability and tentativeness that goes with it. It weakens my approach when I try to engage the co-operation of other people particularly when the approach is made on personal grounds and I have already been asked by two members of the advisory committee whether I can guarantee to stay with the magazine for at least two years [...] I am asking whether you would make the appointment as 'editor' for a year with notice of termination of say two months on either side. 'Acting' and six months were, of course my own suggestions, but as the job begins to run and some of my earlier reservations get left behind I find these suggestions a positive handicap [...] The job is taking a good deal more than two and a half days a week. I had expected this but [...] would McKay regard my work as requiring three days and pay me accordingly [sic].¹⁹

Townsend's concern about his job title was exacerbated by Adams's being designated as 'managing editor' on the masthead, which embarrassed him and he thought it would confuse readers. He asked for Adams's name to be removed, and, in his memo, he noted that 'editorial director [and] managing editor are synonymous and in the US in particular the expression managing editor is beginning to oust editor as the person who bears editorial responsibility'.²⁰

MacKay Miller agreed to Townsend's conditions,²¹ with the exception of Adams's attribution as managing editor, which remained on the masthead until 1969, much to Peter's irritation.²² This was indicative of the ongoing power struggle in the firm and troubled Peter because it pointed to a lack of clarity in their aims.

William reports a conversation with Rose Townsend, Peter's wife, in which she referred to difficulties between Adams and Peter, although the former had

¹⁹ Townsend memo 26/11/65, EX ICA, SI, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

²⁰ Townsend memo 26/11/65, EX ICA, SI, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

²¹ Mackay Miller to Townsend, 26/11/65, EX ICA, SI, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

²² The graphic layout changes several times through this period, for some months in 1969 April to July/August, Adams's name is left off. This causes problems, however, and the position is finally dispensed with in October 1969. Townsend reported his irritation over this to the present author, Melvin notebook 1996, Melvin papers, London.

put Peter's name forward when Mackay took over financial control of Cory Adams. In her opinion the publishers were backing *Studio* which they considered still had some 'glamour' but as capital it was not enough; she said the new partnership Cory Adams Mackay can 'barely get off the ground.' ²³ Rose explained that there was 'an unwillingness on [Mackay's] part to let Peter take complete control of *The Studio* and to be seen to be in charge without some acknowledgement of Tony's authority and the right to intervene.' More worryingly, she also noted that 'Tony is touting for an American interest to take over his firm and would like to have *The Studio* included in a package deal – surely this change of owner, the fact of the American ownership, would do for *The Studio* what it did for *Britannica*. It would undo Peter's plans, I feel, and hardly make the job worth the effort.'²⁴ In Rose's opinion American ownership would cheapen the magazine and change its character. During the negotiation of conditions, Mackay Miller asked Peter to remain in post throughout 1966. The situation would be reviewed during the year and 'if all [has] gone well we might both be agreeable to putting the appointment on a permanent basis.'²⁵

The conflict between editor and publishers would continue over questions of distribution and costs. William Townsend noted that, at the time Peter was appointed, each issue lost nearly £2,000 but, by May 1967, it had almost balanced the books.²⁶ This financial stability proved to be short lived but its causes were outside Townsend's control. William was surprised by his brother's business acumen and the way in which he handled the organisation and dissemination strategies despite the many distractions from artists or writers speculatively wanting work or soliciting coverage of their exhibitions.

The editorial advisory committee

Before Townsend's appointment officially began on 1 November 1965, he made approaches to individuals who might act as a panel of editorial advisors. While waiting for a decision from Alan Bowness, art historian and lecturer at

²³ William Townsend, Journal Vol. xxxvi, 16/2/66, UCL special collections, London.

²⁴ William Townsend, Journal Vol. xxxvi, 16/2/66, UCL special collections, London.

²⁵ Townsend memo, 26/11/65, EX ICA, SI, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

²⁶ W Townsend, Journal Vol. xxxvii (March 1966-May 1967) 18/5/67, UCL special collections, London.

the Courtauld Institute, he secured the participation of David Thompson, Assistant at the ICA, and the afore-mentioned Andrew Forge, who liked the ideal of 'a journalist editor of the technical non-establishment kind who might make something new of the magazine'.²⁷ [...William] suggested [Edward] Lucie-Smith, but Peter feels he puts too many backs up.'²⁸ Peter Townsend also approached Jasia Reichardt, Assistant Director of the ICA, Lord Robert Sainsbury and the art historian, Michael Kitson, who was a Lecturer and Reader at The Courtauld Institute, for support and contributions.²⁹ Reichardt agreed to contribute a regular monthly column, details of this will follow; Kitson was commissioned to write book reviews and Lord Sainsbury gave behind-the-scenes financial support. The details of this are not documented.³⁰

Dr JP Hodin, the Prague-born art historian remained involved from the previous administration. Dore Ashton, art critic and historian from New York, was also retained for the New York commentary. Edward Lucie-Smith, the historian, art critic and poet, would be brought in to undertake a London commentary. Ashton accepted Townsend's request to become a contributing editor³¹ and, from September 1966, she and Jean Clay, a Paris-based art critic, who had likewise agreed, joined Hodin on the masthead.³² William helped out with a couple of book reviews, published in February and March 1966.³³

While he was recruiting the London-based editorial advisory committee, Townsend also established an international advisory committee because he believed that international names on the masthead would strengthen the magazine's profile. The idea of forming these committees and listing their names on the masthead was a public declaration that the magazine was moving

²⁷ W Townsend, Journal Vol. xxxvi, 18/10/65, UCL special collections, London.

²⁸ W Townsend, Journal Vol. xxxvi, 18/10/65, UCL special collections, London.

²⁹ W Townsend, Journal Vol. xxxvi, 18/1/65, UCL special collections, London.

³⁰ Townsend recalled his assistance but not the detail in conversation with the present author, Melvin notebook, 1996, Melvin papers, London.

³¹ Townsend letter to Ashton, 25/3/66, A correspondence file to 1972, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

³² Townsend letter to Clay, 25/3/66, C correspondence file to 1972, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

³³ W Townsend, Journal xxxvi 22/12/65, UCL special collections, London. The book reviews he referred to were an untitled notice for Brian Brook, "Art in London." London Methuen, 1966, *SI*, Vol. 171, No. 874, February 1966, p. 83, "Gauguin's corrupted Paradise." Bengt Danielsson, "Gauguin and the south seas." London, Allen and Unwin 1966, *SI*, Vol. No. March 1966, p. 112.

away from a parochial outlook and asserting a position of demonstrable expertise in the public domain. It was one thing to have a list of contributing editors on the masthead, as *ArtForum* did, but quite another to have advisory committees.³⁴ Unlike the London Advisory Committee who, as we shall see, would be eligible for a small fee, the International Advisory Committee would be an honorary undertaking. Townsend sent letters to Meyer Schapiro, Professor of Art History at Columbia University, New York, and Octavio Paz, the poet and writer from Mexico who wished the magazine well, but declined to participate due to work commitments. It was Ashton's suggestion that Townsend approach Thomas M Messer, Director of The Solomon R Guggenheim Museum, NY (USA), and Mario Pedrosa, Vice-President of the International Association of Art Critics (Brazil) who was then living in exile in France.³⁵ Both accepted.³⁶

In his journal, William describes Alan Bowness as 'cagey' about joining *Sl*. Apparently, Bowness had confided to William that he didn't think Peter would be as competent as GS Whittet unless he enlisted an assistant editor in touch with the art world; he suggested Reichardt as an ideal candidate. Reichardt was too busy to take this on, in addition to her post at the ICA, although she did meet Peter regularly in the course of discussing her column and these informal conversations fed into ideas for articles and exhibition reviews. William seems surprised that Bowness 'thinks the *Studio* is quite good as it is and is the only person who does of those I know.'³⁷

In November 1965, Bowness told Peter over a drink that he would not be involved 'unless it's going to be a success', saying that he thought a fee payable by the publishers to him and the other advisors would demonstrate

³⁴ The names on the advisory panel attracted Sir Nicholas Serota as an undergraduate subscriber, unpublished interview with author, 13/12/07, Melvin papers, London.

³⁵ Ashton letter to Townsend, responds to his request for people to approach for the international advisory committee, 24/12/65, A correspondence file to 1972, *Sl*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

³⁶ International Advisory panel as listed in February 1966: Austria: Dr Werner Hofmann, Belgium: Michel Seuphor, Brazil: Mario Pedrosa, France: Jacques Lassaigne, Germany: Dr Werner Schmalenbach, Holland Prof AM Hammacher, Israel: Haim Gamzu, Italy: Prof GC Argan, Japan: Shuzo Takiguchi, Scandinavia: Reidar Revold, Argentina: Jorge Romero Brest, Spain: Alejandro Cirici-Pellicer, Switzerland: Dr Carola Gideon-Welcker, USA Thomas (M) Messer, JJ Sweeney, Yugoslavia: Alekса Celebonovic.

³⁷ W Townsend, Journal Vol. xxxvi, 8/11/65, UCL special collections, London.

seriousness.³⁸ Peter agreed but these payments needed regular prompting by him of the publishers who forgot their promises, leaving Peter to mollify the irritated advisors.³⁹ Frequently, Townsend made such payments from his own pocket, something which the editorial assistants did not realise until 1975, when the whole office was polarised by Michael Spens's decision to sack Peter and appoint Richard Cork.⁴⁰

Press release and January 1966 editorial statement

On 26 November 1965, less than a month into the period of Townsend's official editorship, he issued a press release from the editorial office, on behalf of the publishers, to announce all the changes: the takeover of the newly merged firm, Cory Adams Mackay, from the National Magazine Company, stating the magazine's unique position as the only UK-based journal dedicated to contemporary art, the oldest in Europe, first published in April 1893. As such, it was perceived by the publishers to retain 'an unbroken link with *The Studio*, which played so vital a role in promoting *art nouveau*'.⁴¹ The release formed the basis for the editorial statement which appeared in the January issue.

Townsend's most radical innovation in relation to *SI*'s editorial policy was through the involvement of artists. His intention was not 'to ape [the] magazine's ancestor, but to rediscover its liveliness.'⁴² The extent to which this

³⁸ W Townsend, Journal Vol. xxxvi, 8/11/65, UCL special collections, London.

³⁹ Bowness raises 'the question of our fees [...] from October 1965 [we] had each been paid £50 on April 7 1966, [he quoted Peter's letter], "we propose making the next payment in the Spring (say April) and then another in July. Thereafter payments will be made regularly in December and June." But so far as I can see only one further payment has been made of £50 on 8 June 1967.' Bowness letter to Townsend 6/12/67, B Correspondence file 1966-68 & 1968-1972, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

⁴⁰ There is very little reference to this either in *SI*, Peter Townsend's editorial papers, TGA 20028, London, or Peter Townsend archive TGA 20094, London. The present author draws this conclusion from discussions with contributors, including Barry Martin who mentioned how all the younger contributors were dismayed, unpublished interview transcript, 7/3/09, Melvin papers, and assistant editors some in unpublished interview transcripts including Frank Whitford, 25/10/06 and John McEwen, 27/11/06, Melvin papers, London. Richard Cork does not recall any signs of antagonism on Peter's part, but remembers his surprise at being offered the post, unpublished interview transcript, 9/12/12, Melvin papers, London.

⁴¹ Townsend, "Editorial Statement." *SI*, Vol. 171, No. 873, p. 1.

⁴² Townsend, *SI*, Vol. 171, No. 873, p. 1.

succeeded would depend on the responses of artists, critics and readers. These are extracts from his notes while preparing the editorial:

To present catholic and unbiased criticism of younger artists (50-) & trends, concentrating on the British School because of its present international standing, dealing with international schools & providing first rate commentaries in NY, Paris, Italy, Germany & Latin America.

To provide regular, critical articles on the background & history of present art movements.⁴³

Townsend sought the highest quality in critical writing, expecting its effect to be constructive to the artist and articulate to the reader. He continued:

Studio's impact and influence will depend primarily on the success with which it reflects and interprets contemporary trends in the UK and the authoritativeness and reliability of its criticism.

[T]he magazine must make its appeal first, to those in the UK who are in some way – as practitioners, connoisseurs, collectors, students etc – involved with British art; second, to those abroad who are interested in British trends and thirdly to those in the UK who want to follow developments abroad or who, living in the US, Australia or elsewhere, are interested in seeing how trends in the US and other countries are interpreted by British critics.

I do not intend to imply a lessening of the magazine's interest in art movements abroad, only a more selective approach – no coverage of minor figures, temporary shifts of taste, but full & authoritative coverage of artists & movements of international significance.⁴⁴

⁴³ Townsend, Townsend editorial files, November, 1965, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

⁴⁴ Townsend, Townsend editorial files, November, 1965, Peter Townsend archive ,TGA 20094, London.

As noted in the introduction, Townsend's editorial policy was partly characterised by his decision not to write editorials. The only exceptions to this were a statement written on his appointment in January 1966 and another on his departure in the May/June 1975 issue. In January 1966, a champagne party at the Marlborough Gallery launched the new epoch of *SI*, which marked publically Peter Townsend's appointment as editor and, despite dealers' boycotting the event, believing the location reflected possible covert interests between the gallery and the magazine's coverage of work shown there, a crowd had assembled. John Rothenstein, former Director of the Tate Gallery, who retired in 1964, gave an address and many art establishment figures attended, including Lillian Somerville who was the Director of the British Council and Robert Medley, Head of Painting at Camberwell School of Art.⁴⁵

Underwriting the historical lineage of the magazine, in the May 1966 issue, Townsend introduced a new column, entitled, '*The Studio* 73 years ago', which, from the 75th anniversary issue of April 1968, became '*The Studio* 75 years ago.' Charles Harrison spoke of this longevity with a sense of pride in its tradition.⁴⁶

Both of Townsend's editorials emphasised Britain's situation. In the first, he argued that, poised between Europe and the US, Britain was 'susceptible to the influences of both and wholly committed to neither'. For him, 'the resultant activity is positive and creative, and it is important that it be reported and commented on not only by the critics but *by the artists themselves*, and by other people deeply concerned with the arts.'⁴⁷ Under his editorship, the magazine would continue to 'expand its international connections to report regularly on trends in the US, Europe, Latin America and Elsewhere' [sic], while continuing to become 'an authoritative reflection on the current situation in Britain.'⁴⁸

It is clear that Townsend considered his primary area of editorial responsibility to be to the British readers, while aiming to place the discourse in an international arena. He also felt that the British perspective on movements

⁴⁵ W Townsend, Journal xxxvi, 11/1/66, UCL special collections, London.

⁴⁶ Harrison, unpublished interview, 28/03/07, Melvin papers, London.

⁴⁷ Townsend, "Editorial Statement." *SI*, Vol. 171, No. 873, p. 1. Emphasis added by the present author.

⁴⁸ Townsend, *SI*, Vol. 171 No. 873, January 1966, p. 1.

originating abroad would have a specific interest for the non-British reader. Given that this was written at the end of 1965, it shows insight into a new national and local identity in the critical domain, while maintaining the scope of even-handed analysis. Ten years later, Townsend's second editorial marked the abandonment of a policy which had established the magazine's character.

Broadening the network

The newly appointed editor approached diverse writers to make contributions to the magazine, including the established writers on art, Ernst Gombrich, Kenneth Clark, Clement Greenberg and John Berger, and was prepared to pay higher fees than the going rate for reviews to secure their involvement.⁴⁹ At the same time, he was irritated by a constant stream of artists badgering him which we are led to believe he enjoyed and encouraged to commission articles about their work, which began as soon as his appointment was made public.⁵⁰ Townsend asked Bowness to recommend Courtauld students who had something new to say because he wanted 'young art historians and critics who might be approached to do occasional reviews for S.I. and who would be glad of an outlet even though the fees will not be very substantial.'⁵¹ Bowness's suggestions of Charles Harrison, Tim Hilton and Frank Whitford were instrumental in forming the magazine's editorial policy. In the middle of December 1965, Townsend told his brother that, with all the support he was receiving, he was optimistic that he could lift the magazine's reputation.⁵²

From the outset, Townsend worked long hours. His brother noted: 'This should have worked out as a part time job for him but I can't ever see it being that.'⁵³ If he wasn't in the office or checking the proofs at the printers in

⁴⁹ Greenberg wanted \$100 per thousand words, letter to Townsend, 4/1/66, which he received, the word 'yes' is scrawled in Townsend's hand on the letter, Greenberg file, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

⁵⁰ W Townsend, Journal xxxvi, 15/12/65, UCL special collections, London.

⁵¹ Townsend letter to Bowness, 6/12/65, B correspondence file 1966-1972, SI, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

⁵² W Townsend, Journal, xxxvi, 15/12/65, UCL special collections, London.

⁵³ W Townsend, Journal xxxvi, 1/2/66, UCL special collections, London.

Chatham, he was speaking with artists and writers. It was all-consuming in a way his editorial post at the magazine *China Monthly* had not been.

Appointment of assistants and early policy decisions

Townsend immediately acted on Bowness's recommendations by writing to Harrison, Whitford and Hilton to arrange informal meetings in the dead period between Christmas and New Year in 1965–66, in the hope that they could begin freelance work more or less straight away.

In his letter to Harrison, Townsend explained that Bowness had suggested he might be able to help with a review of the *Gauguin and Pont-Aven Group* exhibition recently held at the Tate Gallery. Townsend asked him, if he were interested, to call him either at home, or in the office and they could arrange to meet after Christmas. He hoped Harrison 'would consider this request favourably'.⁵⁴

They met at The Museum Tavern in early January 1966, where they discussed how Harrison might begin to contribute to the magazine. Harrison accepted the commission offered for the exhibition review, and Peter wrote to confirm the arrangements: 'a fee of 15 guineas per 1000 words and pro-rata for any writing you may do for us. I hope you will also bear in mind the suggestion that you do an article for us on the precursors of abstraction in art. This is perhaps not a very happy description but after our talk yesterday, I am sure you know what is in my mind and we could discuss the possibility sometime in the future. I look forward very much to our association'.⁵⁵

His first commission, 'Gauguin and the Pont-Aven Group' appeared in the February issue, 1966.⁵⁶ In May of the same year, Harrison's article on Roger Fry was published. This marked the beginning of a realisation of his conversation with Townsend about the precursors of abstraction in English art, which was to be more comprehensively addressed, in his article, published in *SI* April 1967

⁵⁴ Townsend letter to Harrison, 24/12/65. Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

⁵⁵ Townsend letter to Harrison, 6/1/66. Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

⁵⁶ Harrison, "Gauguin and the Pont-Aven Group." *SI*, Vol. 171, No. 874, February 1966, pp. 60-1.

issue, entitled 'Abstract painting in Britain in the early 30s.'⁵⁷ Harrison remembers these early commissions as 'try-outs.' They quickly led to a long-term commitment. He recalled his uncertainty about becoming more heavily involved:

I had met Peter, who I liked. He struck me as a gentleman professional editor. Following that, Alan said that Peter was looking for an assistant editor and was I interested? I said no, because obviously that was journalism and I wanted a serious academic career. And I drove away from the Courtauld – I was living in Islington at the time – got halfway back and thought that's mad. So as soon as I got home, I phoned Alan up and said, 'Yes I'd love the job'.⁵⁸

In May 1966, Townsend offered Harrison his first editorial task – to take over compiling the Mondrian section for the commemorative issue that was to be published in December 1966. After their discussion, Townsend confirmed that they had agreed that Harrison would 'help collect and edit the material on Mondrian's stay in England, at a fee of 20 guineas.'⁵⁹ Townsend had already secured contributions from Herbert Read, Barbara Hepworth and Naum and Miriam Gabo. He had also written to Ben Nicholson from whom he was waiting to hear and Sir Leslie Martin, from the School of Architecture at Cambridge University, who declined, owing to lack of time. He had considered approaching Nicolette Gray, but would leave this and any other suggestions to Harrison.⁶⁰ When considering what kind of contributions Harrison might propose for the issue Townsend suggested 'personal reminiscences of between 300 and 700 words'. Harrison was ideally placed to approach British-based artists of the inter-war years, because his research at the Courtauld had concentrated on this period, the fruits of which appeared in his book, *English Art and Modernism*, published in 1982.

⁵⁷ Harrison, "Abstract painting in Britain." *SI*, Vol. 173, No. 888, April 1967, pp. 180-191.

⁵⁸ Harrison, unpublished interview 28/03/07, Melvin papers, London.

⁵⁹ Townsend letter to Harrison, 16/5/66, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

⁶⁰ Townsend letter to Harrison, 16/5/66, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

Harrison reported retrospectively to the present author how pleased he was with the regularity of going to an office to engage with specific tasks, combined with the possibility of getting out and about.⁶¹ Initially the position was casual because he was in receipt of a grant while undertaking graduate research at the Courtauld Institute, with Bowness as his supervisor. He described how:

I was dithering about, making a pig's ear of doing research. I'd no idea what I was doing, and was doing it without any real guidance. I was spending time in the basement at the Courtauld copying out entries from catalogues, and thinking, 'Is this research?' – Rather than getting out talking to people, which I enjoyed. I was really floundering.⁶²

Frank Whitford's first commission, a review of 'Tim Scott: recent sculptures' at Waddington Galleries, appeared in the March 1966 issue, following a meeting with Townsend the previous January.⁶³ Townsend asked him to compile the 'News and notes' listing which was located in the ticketboard section. Whitford and Townsend immediately became friends, who stayed in contact until the latter's death. In March, the same month that Whitford's first review was published, Townsend wrote to formalise their arrangements:

[...] to put the gist of our conversation on record we would like to receive from you every month a coverage of interesting events on the art world, say 750 words, for which the fee would be 10 guineas (I hope by the way you wouldn't feel inhibited by the total word count you may find it easier to go up to 1000 words.) As I said when we had lunch the other day, I do not propose using your name when we run news items, and I shall feel free to cut, alter and re-write your material. On the other hand you might like to have some identification as having helped to compile the news material, if so let me know.⁶⁴

⁶¹ Harrison, unpublished interview transcript, 28/03/07, Melvin papers, London.

⁶² Harrison, unpublished interview transcript, 28/03/07, Melvin papers, London.

⁶³ Whitford, "Tim Scott: recent sculptures." *SI*, Vol. 171, No. 875, March 1966, p. 102.

⁶⁴ Townsend letter to Whitford, 6/3/66, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

Alongside his studies at the Courtauld, Whitford made cartoons for the *Evening Standard* and regularly dropped by the Museum Tavern at the end of the day. He describes how he had long, almost endless conversations with Peter in the pub, sometimes with other people, often on their own.

Discussions in the pub very quickly deteriorated into gossip. Peter would say nothing; he was always a great one for gossip. He always preferred gossip to theory. And I must say quite often I'd ask myself, and have no answer, what was someone like Peter doing editing a magazine, which was veering increasingly in the direction of conceptual art and towards theory. And I suppose eventually I concluded it was just because he was a good editor and a good editor doesn't have to be interested in the material.⁶⁵

The appearance in April 1966 of Whitford's short review, 'Trova the Toy-maker',⁶⁶ embarrassed him because it was printed on 'that good quality white paper and [was] made to look terrifically important'.⁶⁷ He suggested sourcing alternative paper for different sections of the magazine, building on the differentials immediately made apparent by the ticketboard section and coated white paper of the rest of the magazine. He investigated the use of newsprint for the review sections, to create a degree of informality and to reduce material costs. To his surprise, he discovered that using additional paper types would be more expensive than sticking to the expensive-looking, shiny one.⁶⁸

Whitford also suggested changing the layout, with reviews grouped after features, and expanding the ticketboard section. Townsend agreed with his

⁶⁵ Whitford, unpublished interview transcript, 25/10/06, Melvin papers, London.

⁶⁶ Whitford, "Trova the Toy-maker." *SI*, Vol. 171, No. 876, April 1966, p. 160.

⁶⁷ Whitford, unpublished interview transcript, 25/10/06, Melvin papers, London.

⁶⁸ The problems with the look of the paper and its cost were ones that Seth Siegelaub and Jack Wendler, both of whom were to have long associations with Townsend, ran into similar contradictions with the publication of the Xerox Book in 1968. Siegelaub had intended to make a cheaply produced book of artist contributions, Xeroxed, with financial support from the Xerox Corporation in New York but because they were not interested he enlisted the backing of the businessman Jack Wendler. When they found the process was more expensive than printing they used offset litho. Alexander Alberro, "Chapter Six: The Xerox Degree of Art." *conceptual art and the politics of publicity*, (pp. 130-151) p. 136, Cambridge, Mass and London, England The MIT Press, 2003.

suggestion and recast it to identify experimental approaches, polemics or enquiries into art education. 'News and notes', followed the opening prepositional article, with the publication of letters to the editor, entitled 'Correspondence'. Whitford later regarded the section's flavour as a precursor to *Art Monthly*'s ethos.⁶⁹ The ticketboard articles, which included lectures and open letters, had a topical, discursive flavour that set them apart from the longer ones falling later in the magazine. In February 1966, Jasia Reichardt was given a regular 'comment' column as the opening article in the ticketboard section; she contributed every month for the first two years and on an occasional basis thereafter. This list, taken from 1966, indicates the diversity of subjects that were always relevant to a contemporaneous event but freer in manner than an in-house editorial would have been: 'The whereabouts of concrete poetry', 'Potted art' and 'The fairness and unfairness of prizes'.⁷⁰

From September 1966, Whitford was listed as a contributing editor on the masthead, alongside Dore Ashton and Jean Clay who joined Hodin. Whitford was the first of Bowness's graduate recommendations to receive an official position.

When Townsend was making his initial enquiries, Tim Hilton was tied to his commitment to *The Listener* and did not feel able to become involved until the following year, when his investigation, 'Millais: the middle line in Pre-Raphaelitism', was published, in the February 1967 issue.⁷¹ Thereafter, he contributed occasional articles for the 'London commentary' section. Hilton accepted the position of assistant editor in November 1971, after Harrison's resignation.⁷² Hilton continued in this post until the following July/August

⁶⁹ Whitford considers that the way his suggestions were taken on by Townsend in *SI*, were later further developed in *Art Monthly*, which Townsend founded in 1976 with Jack and Nell Wendler, unpublished interview transcript, 25/10/06, Melvin papers, London.

⁷⁰ Jasia Reichardt, "The whereabouts of concrete poetry." *SI*, Vol. 171, No. 874, February 1966, pp. 44-5, "Potted art." *SI*, Vol. 171, No. 878, June 1966, pp. 22-7, "The fairness and unfairness of prizes." *SI*, 172, Vol. No. 880, August 1966, pp. 62-4

⁷¹ Tim Hilton, "Millais: the middle line in Pre-Raphaelitism." *SI*, Vol. 173, No. 886, February 1967, pp. 95-7.

⁷² Charles Harrison explained to the present author that his decision to become the editor of the *Art-Language* Journal during the summer 1971, a post he considered untenable with the editorial responsibilities of the 'mainstream art magazine *SI*' was the reason he resigned. Unpublished interview transcript, 28/3/09, Melvin papers, London. Tim Hilton found the editorial position was too time-consuming and agreed with Townsend it would be better to step down. Hilton unpublished

issue, from when John McEwen took the job until the end of 1976. After their resignations, Harrison and Hilton were appointed as contributing editors from *SI* September 1972.

Townsend's editorial assistants describe how the high points in the editorial office were the monthly trips to the print works in Chatham, Kent. Townsend had not driven since his driving accident in China and luckily his assistants had their own cars. Harrison and McEwen both recalled that these days out were opportunities for a long conversation and an extended lunch, after watching Townsend in his element, making final corrections to the proofs before giving the go-ahead.⁷³

One of the great things I owe to Peter is that he taught me the pack of skills and requirements of a subbing editor. Something I always esteemed most about Peter was the sheer in-the-office professionalism, the nuts and bolts of editing. The first thing I did when I was offered the job was to go out and buy the British Standards Institute guide to proof reading and learn how to be a proper proof reader.⁷⁴

Editorial office ambience

The monthly visit to the printing works in Chatham, Kent, was for Townsend one of the best parts of the job. He enjoyed the particular satisfaction to be gained from seeing the issue develop from contributions, to author-corrected galley proofs, editorial corrections to page-pulls, and then seeing the magazine emerging from the presses as the colour and final layouts were being checked. Both McEwen and Harrison recalled the monthly trips with Townsend to check the proofs at Chatham as the most rewarding part of the job. They praised his consummate attention to detail, pulling proofs off the press and correcting them on the spot as needs dictated and not leaving until he was entirely satisfied.

interview transcript, 18/7/07, Melvin papers, London. Harrison and Hilton are listed as contributing editors on the masthead, *SI*, Vol. 184, No. 947, September 1972.

⁷³ Harrison unpublished interview transcript, 28/03/07, Melvin papers, London. McEwen unpublished interview transcript, 1/11/06, Melvin papers, London.

⁷⁴ Harrison unpublished interview transcript, 28/03/07, Melvin papers, London.

Townsend had to keep the balance between different demands and expectations of the art community in the UK but he also saw it as his responsibility to look beyond them, as demonstrated by the presence on the masthead of the panel of International Advisors. He had allegiances to the Euston Road School and that tradition of British painting through his brother, William Townsend. His own interest in watching the debate among younger artists and writers, in particular, was an important consideration to weigh alongside his other obligations. When, during the course of his editorship, the preoccupations of the new generation became the central thrust of his policy the more established were right to consider themselves marginalised.

Townsend ran the office in an exacting fashion but he considered the value of social life was at times greater than that of deadlines. The following stories give a brief indication of Townsend's relationship with his assistants.

Tim Hilton recalled a morning when 'another old China hand, William Empson, the author of the book, *Seven Types of Ambiguity* came into the Tavern [...] the literary giant drank pints of Guinness with crème de menthe chasers. For an hour or more Empson and Townsend discussed Cantonese jokes.'⁷⁵ The magazine was going to print, but Townsend would not be hurried by others' schedules.

Very different circumstances were recounted by John McEwen about the day when William Townsend died, and he was in the office. After a telephone call Townsend suggested they leave immediately to go and see a Kenneth Noland exhibition at the Rutland Gallery in Bruton Street.⁷⁶ On the way, Townsend told McEwen that his brother had just died. They looked at Noland. McEwen remarked that Peter 'was obviously very moved but it seemed to be a bizarre

⁷⁵ Tim Hilton *Guardian* 26/7/06, Andrew Brighton and Jo Melvin *Independent*, p. 32, Frank Whitford, *The Times*, 24/7/06, p. 51, John McEwen *Daily Telegraph*, 7/8/06, p. 46, Jo Melvin, 'Townsend, Peter (1919–2006)', online edn, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, first published Jan 2010, 1316 words. <http://oxforddnb.com/index/97/101097334/>

⁷⁶ The present author is grateful for the information of where the exhibition took place to Colin Maitland who worked a few years later at the Rutland Gallery and was able to check the exhibition schedule records, 17/11/12, email to present author, Melvin papers, London.

thing to be looking at art at all, he wanted to be out of the office. Not to be at home, but to be with someone.'⁷⁷

William's involvement

Peter sometimes found William's attempts to broaden dialogue within the magazine, by following up suggestions made in conversation or through chance encounters, wrong-footed. As an example, an interview with Tom Monnington, the recently appointed president of the Royal Academy was born from a casual remark William made to his brother, who gave him a week to work on it.⁷⁸ Monnington and William met at Burlington House, with Monnington providing a carafe of sherry that they finished during the conversation.⁷⁹ Monnington's only stipulation was that 'nothing malicious' should be included; he did not want to see the copy before publication. William noted that it was hard 'not to respect his views about what the academy should be but as hard to share his confidence that these were possible.'⁸⁰ The interview appeared in January 1967. (Figures 1.15 and 1.16.)

It was owing to William's influence that the sculptor, William Tucker, was offered a commission to review the Picasso exhibition at the Tate Gallery, which was published in *SI* July/August 1967. William's insight was vindicated, and Tucker went on to have a long association as a contributor with *SI*. Tucker's seven-part exploration of sculpture, 'What Sculpture Is', originally commissioned by Townsend for *SI*, formed the basis for his book entitled *The Language of Sculpture*, published in 1977.⁸¹ These articles were preceded by 'An essay on sculpture' in *SI* January 1969, known as 'the sculpture issue'. It was conceived by Harrison and edited with Townsend.

⁷⁷ McEwen, unpublished interview transcript, 01/11/06, Melvin papers, London.

⁷⁸ W Townsend, Journal, xxxvii, 9/12/66, UCL special collections, London.

⁷⁹ W Townsend, Journal, xxxvii, 12/12/66, UCL special collections, London.

⁸⁰ W Townsend, Journal, xxxvii, 12/12/66, UCL special collections, London.

⁸¹ William Tucker, "What Sculpture Is." Part 1 & 2, *SI*, Vol. 188, No. 972, December 1974, pp. 232-4, "What Sculpture Is." Part 3 & 4, *SI*, Vol. 189, No. 973, January/February 1975, pp. 16-19, "What Sculpture Is." Part 5 & 6 *SI*, Vol. 189, March/April 1975, pp. 120-3 and "What Sculpture Is." Part 7 & 8, *SI*, Vol. 189, No. 975, May/June 1975, pp. 188-190. Tucker, *The Language of Sculpture*, London, Thames & Hudson, 1977.

Two of the assistant editors, speaking retrospectively to this writer, Tim Hilton and John McEwen, had a high opinion of Tucker's contribution to discussions on sculpture. Hilton later said he regarded Tucker as 'consistently the most perceptive writer on sculpture writing for *Studio*.'⁸² McEwen – who would visit Tucker's home to collect his copy, ready for editing, in order to extend his deadlines as far as possible – remembers his sympathy for Tucker, seeing him surrounded by his small children, trying to write to deadlines amid domesticity.⁸³

William Townsend's involvement during the first two years of his brother's editorship culminated in a special publication on Canadian art. The magazine consistently drew attention to Canadian art, largely by virtue of William's contacts established during several trips to Canada (to undertake fellowships, research and teaching at Banff). He was disconcerted when Townsend commissioned David Thompson to write a three-part article on contemporary Canadian art.⁸⁴ Townsend was more excited by the younger man's approach, but conceded that his brother would be the best person to edit the book and set aside his concern over nepotism.⁸⁵

On the other hand, when William's daughter, Charlotte, was in Canada, working as the director of the gallery at the Nova Scotia School of Art, Halifax, he was delighted to receive her occasional reports about the radical new practices and he did not perceive her involvement as compromising. In *SI* of April 1970 she wrote on the artist collaboration, N.E. Thing Co. and also on Les Levine⁸⁶ and then, in June 1972, a 'Report from Canada' which was a survey of recent innovations, including the publication *File*, formed under the direction of

⁸² Hilton, unpublished interview transcript, 18/7/07, Melvin papers, London.

⁸³ McEwen, unpublished interview transcript, 27/11/06, Melvin papers, London.

⁸⁴ David Thompson, "A Canadian scene." *SI*, Vol. 176, No. 904, October 1968, pp. 152-7, "A Canadian scene, part 2." *SI*, Vol. 176, No. 904, November 1968, pp. 181-6, "A Canadian scene, part 3." *SI*, Vol. 176, No. 906, pp. 241-44. W Townsend describes feeling irritated, depressed and let down by the way Peter set up the commission, as if his own hard work on the subject had been 'snatched away.' After telling his brother, Peter stated that he wanted William to do the book and that he would not need to use Thompson's material. W Townsend Journal Vol. xxxviii, 8/11/68. Special collections, UCL London.

⁸⁵ William Townsend *Canadian Art Today*, London England, Studio International, 1970. Peter Townsend discussed his concerns over appearing nepotistic with the present author, Melvin notebook 1996, Melvin papers, London.

⁸⁶ Charlotte Townsend, "N.E. Thing Co. and Les Levine." *SI*, Vol. 179, No. 921, April 1970, pp. 173-6.

General Idea, Toronto, to collate the names of all Canadian artists involved in Mail Art and set up a directory of Canadian Artists as well as present news and gossip about some aspects of the Canadian art scene.⁸⁷

Townsend was open to proposals for articles and even for regular columns, if the suggestion seemed interesting and viable enough. Sometimes, these came more or less out of the blue. Jonathan Bentall, who had been introduced to Townsend by McEwen, approached him with an idea for a monthly column on 'Technology and art', which was first printed in *SI* March 1969 issue. The final column appeared in January 1972.

Clive Phillipot, then librarian at Chelsea School of Art, remembers his 'Feedback' column coming about as a result of his decision to send Townsend an issue of the art librarian's newsletter, *ARLIS*, in which he had reviewed a symposium on the structure and functioning of art magazines.⁸⁸ He had initially hesitated over sending it because it contained an implied criticism of Townsend's editorial policy.⁸⁹ Phillipot was astonished when Peter invited him to a drink a few weeks later, to offer him the possibility of contributing a regular column on magazines and other publications. They discussed themes. Phillipot proposed books by conceptual artists. Townsend asked him to start with art and information. They agreed to call the column 'Feedback', the first edition of which appeared in the ticketboard section of the July/August 1972 issue. The column's stated intention was to 'draw attention to articles in other magazines, to new magazines, to exhibition catalogues and other publications that are not

⁸⁷ Charlotte Townsend, "Report from Canada." *SI*, Vol. 183, No. 945, June 1972, p. 235.

⁸⁸ The symposium, staged at the ICA in December 1971, had a panel of art magazine editors, Colin Naylor (*Art & Artists*), John Gainsborough (*Arts Review*), Peter Townsend, (*SI*) and art critic Richard Cork (*Evening Standard*) with Norbert Lynton, the art historian, former art critic of the *Guardian*, who was then the director of exhibitions for the Arts Council and its chair. Each editor identified the provision of information as paramount, and Lynton remarked that 'information appears to be in ascendancy over criticism'. Townsend stressed the magazine's role as a forum, and an international one at that, while noting that there was 'very little feedback' which led 'to questions on the readership of the magazine'. Phillipot concluded his report by pointing out the need to keep 'antennae in trim to detect the new birth cries of new organs of communication – they may be written purely by artists for artists – they may well be worth our nourishing'. Phillipot, *ARLIS*, 10, February 1972.

⁸⁹ Phillipot, unpublished interview transcript, 7/3/05, Melvin papers, London.

normally discussed or reviewed widely, as well as to other media of communication relevant to the visual arts, regardless of origin.⁹⁰

From the beginning of Townsend's editorship, the magazine concentrated on British Constructivism, kinetics, Conceptual art as a phenomenon, formalism, new British sculpture, art education. It also considered the functions of criticism and, significantly, included artists writing on art, artists' statements and, later, art writing or art as writing, typified by John Stezaker, 'Three paradoxes and a resolution' and Joseph Kosuth's 'Art after philosophy'.⁹¹ Townsend also sought to expand the international connections of the magazine, with reports from the US, France, Germany, Italy, Scandinavia and Latin America, while paying special attention to British art and widening coverage of related fields, such as architecture and art in the social context.

Responses to Townsend's appointment were generally favourable, although some readers were disgruntled. Bruce McLean described how his father, an architect and long-time subscriber, did not renew his subscription out of disgust at its new direction. The Slade had a succession of visiting teachers and, in this capacity in February 1966, Reichardt and Harold Cohen reported that Peter had made 'a very good impression' with the policy directions he had taken.⁹²

Editorial policy

Townsend's editorial flair was to put artists' discourses at the centre of the magazine; he nurtured artists' writing about their practice. One collaborating artist, Roelof Louw, describes Townsend as 'bringing sense to the order of his thoughts'.⁹³ Louw frequently called in at the office, to show Harrison photographs of work or to make suggestions for articles. He remembers that,

⁹⁰ Phillipot, "Feedback." *SI*, Vol.184, No. 946, pp. 5-6.

⁹¹ Stezaker, "Three paradoxes and a resolution." *SI*, Vol. 183, No. 944, May 1972, pp. 214-7, Kosuth, "Art after philosophy." *SI*, Vol. 178, No. 915, October 1969, pp. 134-7, "Art after philosophy: part 2." *SI*, Vol. 178, No. 916, November 1969, pp. 160-1, "Art after philosophy: part 3." *SI*, Vol. 178, No. 917, December 1969, pp. 112-3.

⁹² W Townsend, Journal, xxxvii 2/2/66, UCL special collections, London.

⁹³ Roelof Louw, unpublished interview transcript, 2/4/08, Melvin papers, London.

generally, he would ‘nod and greet Townsend across his desk.’ Then, out of the blue, Townsend asked him to lunch to discuss contributing.⁹⁴

Although it took a few years to come about, Louw later contributed an article on Donald Judd and one on Barnett Newman.⁹⁵

Townsend also wanted the magazine to be in the forefront of the debate on education, and, to this end, he encouraged diverse contributors, including David Rushton and Philip Pilkington⁹⁶ (members of Art & Language who had been taught at Coventry by Atkinson and Baldwin), Misha Black (architect and Professor of industrial design at the Royal College of Art) and Harry Thubron (artist and Head of Art at Leeds College of Art, who later taught at Goldsmiths and was highly regarded for his innovative teaching methods).⁹⁷ Richard Hamilton’s project – which involved moving Kurt Schwitters’s deteriorating and incomplete *Merzbau* from a stone barn with students from the Fine Art department at Newcastle University, to the Hatton Gallery in Newcastle – was documented by one of the students, Fred Brookes, and published in the May 1969 issue.⁹⁸ An article on the Nova Scotia School of Art and Design by its President, Garry Kennedy, was more remarkable for its radical presentation as a full-page artwork in October 1972. Kennedy’s article appeared in the series called ‘Aspects of art education’; the other contributors were Roy Slade (Dean at Corcoran School of Art, Washington, USA) and Roy Ascot (former President of Ontario School of Art, Canada).⁹⁹ Kennedy’s text piece functioned as a comprehensive listing of all aspects of the school, beginning with the school’s address.¹⁰⁰ It could have been an advertisement that was designed as a prospectus but it did not appear in the advertisement section. The guise was so successful that Richard Demarco, director of the Demarco Gallery, Edinburgh

⁹⁴ Louw, unpublished interview transcript, 2/4/08, Melvin papers, London.

⁹⁵ Roelof Louw, “Judd and after.” *SI*, Vol. 184, No. 949, November 1972, pp. 171-175. Roelof Louw, “Newman and the issue of subject matter.” *SI*, Vol. 187, No. 962, January 1974, pp. 26-32.

⁹⁶ Philip Pilkington, Kevin Lole, David Rushton and Charles Harrison, “Some concerns in fine art education.” *SI*, Vol. 183, No. 937, October 1971, pp. 120-2.

⁹⁷ Victor Willing, Richard Hamilton, Misha Black and Herbert Read. “What kind of art education?” *SI*, Vol. 172, No. 881, September 1966, pp. 140-4. Elma and Harry Thubron, “The case for the Polytechnics.” *SI*, Vol. 174, No. 892, September, 1967, p. 83.

⁹⁸ Fred Brookes, “Schwitters Merzbarn.” *SI*, Vol. 177, No. 911, May 1969, pp. 224-225.

⁹⁹ Roy Slade, Roy Ascott and Garry Kennedy, “Aspects of art education.” *SI*, Vol. 184, No. 948, October 1972, pp. 138-141.

¹⁰⁰ Garry Kennedy, “Aspects of art education.” *SI*, Vol. 184, No. 948, October 1972, p. 141.

and co-ordinator of Edinburgh Fringe Festival wrote to Townsend to remark on its effectiveness as an advertisement in a letter to the editor published in the December issue, under the heading, 'Not an advertisement.'¹⁰¹ Also in the December 1972 issue, a report, entitled 'The calendar of events' by Lynda Morris, covered the dismissal of Joseph Beuys from his post of Professor of Sculpture at Dusseldorf Art Academy, and was followed by a discussion between the art critic, Georg Jappe, and Beuys.¹⁰² Beuys's contributions to *SI* will be considered in Chapter 8.

Harrison retrospectively discerns that, during the period under consideration in this study, the character of art magazines in the UK was informed by the fine art education offered in the art schools, as distinct from the education of art historians, which generally took place in universities. He is also conscious of the differences between UK art education and that undergone in US universities, where art history was generally studied in close proximity to fine art. His view is that the separation of disciplines in the UK engendered a language barrier between artists and academics. Similarly, a letter from artist and teacher, Stephen Cohn, published in *SI* in December 1967, referred to 'an urgent need for a new kind of university in which the accent is on invention rather than scholarship [as a precedent for which] the art school could be vitally and centrally important.'

During 1966, Townsend made plans to commission artists for specially designed covers. In 1967, six were produced. These were Jesús Rafael Soto (February); Victor Pasmore (April); Patrick Heron (July/August), given to Townsend and hung at home; Jeremy Moon (September); Joe Tilson (October) and Gordon House (November). Artists were not paid for their cover designs, but nonetheless they vied to be invited because it was considered an honour.

¹⁰¹ R Demarco, "Letter to the editor." *SI*, Vol. 184, No. 950, December 1972, p. 215.

¹⁰² L Morris, "The calendar of events." *SI*, Vol. 184, No. 950, December 1972, pp. 226-229, Beuys, "Not just a few are called but everyone." *SI*, Vol. 184, No. 950, December 1972, pp. 226-7, Georg Jappe, "The Beuys example." *SI*, Vol. 184, No. 950, December 1972, pp. 228-9.

An early crisis

The first crisis in the editorial office was caused by the decision of the advertising manager, Michael Kinloch, to leave for *Art and Artists*. William reported he had been:

sabotaging *Studio*'s interests for some time [...] sold *Art & Artists* two page spreads [and] seems to have given his rival very early information about the new features Peter has been introducing so it will appear as an almost self professed rival, competing for the same public. Peter says [Mario] Amaya [editor of *Art & Artists*] has a lot of money behind him [...] I suggested the kind of editorial that I thought could be written welcoming *Arts & Artists* as a colleague 'plenty of room for another magazine with quite a different personality and coverage, to fill one of the many gaps in the contemporary art scene'.¹⁰³

The difficulties included competition for writers, and they agreed that 'there are not many to fight for if any distinction of quality, originality or even sound judgment is a first requirement'.¹⁰⁴ William noted that David Sylvester and Norbert Lynton had agreed to write for both magazines. *Art & Artists* came out in April 1966, according to William Peter was not unduly concerned but he observed: 'Ideas have been pinched; no doubt through the renegade advertising man, and the advertising is also much better organised than in *Studio*'.¹⁰⁵ The first advertisement in *SI*'s April issue featured the slogan, ' "a new magazine to fill the gap between art and life" *Art and Artists*'.¹⁰⁶ In Townsend's view there was no gap.

As noted previously, the press release announcing the policy changes formed the basis of Townsend's editorial for the January 1966 issue. From April 1974, Michael Spens used this as a reference point with which to berate Townsend for what he considered to be rarefied policies. For Spens, as an

¹⁰³ W Townsend, Journals Vol. xxxvi, 9/3/66, UCL special collections, London.

¹⁰⁴ W Townsend, Journals Vol. xxxvi, 9/3/66, UCL special collections, London.

¹⁰⁵ W Townsend, Journals Vol. xxxvi, 9/3/66, UCL special collections, London.

¹⁰⁶ *Art and Artist*, advertisement, *SI*, Vol. 171, No. 876, p. v.

architect himself, the reference to coverage for architecture in Townsend's 1966 editorial was crucial. In a memo to his top-heavy editorial management board on 'current editorial attitudes' Spens wrote: 'The bone of contention here is that the present magazine has drifted a long way from the admirable intentions expressed in the leading article at the outset of Peter Townsend's editorship.' He continued, 'there has not been sufficient coverage of the other visual arts [...and] much of it is beyond ordinary comprehension.'¹⁰⁷

The end of Peter's editorial reign changed the character of the magazine. When Townsend was sacked, many members of the editorial team and contributors resigned, including Charles Harrison. In a letter to Spens, Harrison declared that 'the circumstance of Peter's replacement, at the close of ten years' involvement with the journal on his part, suggest a very uneducated concept of labour relations and "business ethics" on your part.' He continued, 'Peter was a professional editor [Harrison's emphasis.] Not a professional art buff [...] Apart from his competence in the discharge of mundane duties an editor has nothing to offer that's not dependent on the quality of his discrimination and the explanatory powers of the theories he would employ in defence of his judgements.'¹⁰⁸ Tim Hilton and Frank Whitford who, like Harrison, were contributing editors also left at this point, John McEwen shortly after.

Clive Phillpot used the occasion of Townsend's departure to write a tribute to his policies. He described the immediate changes he made and the appointment of editorial advisory committee by drawing on Townsend's January 1966 editorial, his first 'and as it happens the last, since one of the first changes of policy was to spare readers monthly editorial gripes, or the world as I see it.'¹⁰⁹ Phillpot identified the magazine's gradual involvement under Townsend's direction with the growing international avant-garde as

¹⁰⁷ Michael Spens, memo not dated, after 2/4/74, Townsend misc files 1966-78, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

¹⁰⁸ Charles Harrison letter to Michael Spens, 31/01/75, Charles Harrison papers, (1970s-2000s), TGA 200868, London. Copy also sent to Peter by Harrison, misc files, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

¹⁰⁹ C Phillpot, "Feedback." *SI*, Vol. 189, No. 975, p. 224.

transforming its ethos making the 'last decade [...] one of the high points in the 82 year old history of *Studio*.'¹¹⁰

¹¹⁰ C Phillipot, "Feedback." *SI*, Vol. 189, No. 975, p. 224.

Chapter 2

Extending networks: Townsend's influential early artistic friendships

This chapter draws on Townsend's notes and correspondence relating to friendships he made with artists during the first few years of his editorship, particularly those with Naum Gabo and Patrick Heron, which were important to the shape of the magazine. The April 1966 issue of *SI* had Gabo's *Linear Construction No. 2* (1953) on the cover, which was also emblazoned with 'Naum Gabo and the Constructivist tradition'. (Figure 2.17.) As suggested, the issue was dedicated to Constructivism, and provided an in-depth analysis of Gabo's work. It coincided with a retrospective at the Tate Gallery between 15 March and 15 April 1966, which was Gabo's first major exhibition in the UK. Gabo's approach to Constructivism included a dynamic engagement with kinetics which was of particular interest to Townsend. The fluid interface and spatial considerations of Constructivism, embodied in Gabo's work, underpinned many aspects of the practices emerging at the time, leading to collaborations between kinetics and happenings, such as those undertaken by Event Structure Research Group.¹ The April 1966 issue of the magazine was the first over which Townsend exercised full editorial authority, and it was perceived by readers as a major contribution to the subject. During the preparation of the issue, Townsend and Gabo became close friends, a friendship sustained until Gabo's death in 1977.²

Following Townsend's commitment to Constructivism, a Hayward Gallery retrospective of the work of the US artist, Charles Biederman, coincided with an invitation to him to design the cover of the September 1969 issue, with accompanying articles on his work and statements from British artists referring to his influence on their thinking about Constructivism. The same issue

¹ The group was formed in Amsterdam by Jeffrey Shaw, Theo Botschiver and Sean Wellesley-Miller, an artists' collaborative that drew on John Latham's theories of the least event.

² Gabo gave Townsend a copy of *Naum Gabo, Constructions, Sculpture, Painting, Drawing and Engraving*, London, Lund Humphries 1957 which he inscribed a dedication 'for Peter Townsend, Naum Gabo, 13th March 1967'. Townsend kept a postcard from Gabo's wife Miriam in the book with Gabo's last poem which is about his imminent death, dated July-August 1977. The book is now in his daughter Catherine Townsend's collection, London. Melvin notebook 1996, Melvin papers, London.

contained a statement by Gabo on his *Kinetic Sculpture (Standing Wave)* (1920), reviving discussions begun in April 1966.³

Of similar value to the magazine, Patrick Heron's robust polemical assertions on the overlooked qualities of British art, especially painting, were instrumental in ensuring that Townsend paid attention to a group which he continued to feel was not being adequately addressed by British or American critics, who (Heron perceived) tended to focus on innovations by artists from the US. Heron later acknowledged Townsend's role in re-igniting his commitment to, and interest in, writing, through the latter's commissioning of the article, 'The ascendancy of London in the sixties' published *SI* December 1966 and its companion, 'A kind of cultural imperialism?' published *SI* February 1968. Heron's first contribution was precipitated, in part, by an attempt to set the record straight after conflicts brought to the fore when he and Clement Greenberg – the formalist art critic from the US – had served as jurors for the *John Moores Liverpool Biennial*, in the summer of 1965.⁴

Gabo, the Tate Gallery, Townsend and the April 1966 issue

In considering the extended context for Townsend and Gabo's friendship, it is important to place the preparations for the April 1966 issue in a discussion of the broader milieu. This also illustrates the ways in which Townsend's editorial strategies were grounded in the use of networks. As we saw in the introduction and the previous chapter, the Townsends and the Harrisons were hospitable, using their homes as a nexus for introductions. Out of this a transatlantic network of artists, critics and collaborators grew, with Townsend at the centre of the artistic connections in London and eventually the UK.

³ A replica was fabricated by E.A.T. for Pontus Hultén's *The Machine as Seen at the End of the Mechanical Age*, at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, from 27 November 1968 to 9 February 1969.

⁴ Heron stated that Greenberg considered the British painters were better at 'landscapes than abstracts.' William Townsend records a meeting with Heron and Peter Townsend when Heron described their disagreements while jurors for the John Moores exhibition. Journal Vol. xxxvii 9/11/66. Heron referred to the 1965 John Moores exhibition as the trigger that rekindled his writing and explained how Townsend's encouragement played a pivotal role in his renewed vigour, Heron, unpublished interview notes, 15/4/96, Melvin papers, London.

The friendship between Townsend and Gabo began during preparations for the Tate Gallery exhibition. Coming from the US where he was living at the time, Gabo was impressed by the atmosphere in London and the 'humanity and spirit [...] still alive here and in action'.⁵ This spirit was manifested in the Tate Gallery's organisation of the exhibition. Gabo was initially dismayed by the rooms allocated to him and brought this up with the director, Norman Reid, who arranged for the work to be installed in the rotunda and Duveen Galleries instead, surrounded by specially designed partitions from which works could be viewed both up close and from a distance. The Townsend brothers attended Gabo's preview on 15 March, and, the following week, together with the publishers, Tony Adams and Anthony Mackay Miller, hosted a lunch party for Gabo and his wife in a private room at the Terrazza restaurant (Romilly Street, Soho, WC1), described in the obituary of its founder, Mario Cassandro, as 'London's first restaurant of the modern era new in its menu, its presentation of food, its design and its attitude'.⁶ It was a stylish choice and all contributors to the special issue were invited, including Bowness, Forge, John Ernest (American Constructivist sculptor, author of books on sculpture and lecturer at Chelsea Art School), Anthony Hill, artist (who described himself in the contributors' notes as a 'plastician', a Constructivist who taught maths at UCL), Norbert Lynton (director of exhibitions at the Arts Council and art critic for the *Guardian*), David Thompson (introduced in Chapter 1) and Gillian Wise (Constructivist).⁷ William Townsend's description of the lunch party adds complexity to the topic, and will be returned to in the next section.

In order to understand Townsend's decision to commission his first full issue on the subject of Constructivism with Gabo's work and his retrospective at the Tate Gallery, it is necessary to identify how the issue reflected his editorial interests. First, at 75, Gabo was an established artist of the older generation.

⁵ Naum Gabo, letter to Director Norman Reid, (not dated), "Naum Gabo correspondence", Tate Gallery Records (Archives), T992/195/1.121. Tate Gallery Records (Archives) are the gallery's exhibition records and are distinct from TGA which are the gallery's collection of archives.

⁶ Author not acknowledged, "Mario Cassandro obituary" <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/obituaries/culture-obituaries/8601684/Mario-Cassandro.html> last accessed 01/07/12.

⁷ William Townsend, Journal Vol. xxxvi, 23/3/66, UCL special collections, London. Gillian Wise contributed an article on Biederman's Constructivist influence on her thinking in issue dedicated to his work, *SI*, Vol. 178, No. 914, September, 1969.

This consideration corresponded with Townsend's interest in the historical context of art and the ideas expressed in it, especially the artwork's testament to historically vindicated political acumen in the artist. Secondly, Gabo was designated a Constructivist, a term he did not like, preferring to consider construction as an idea on the move, with fluid intent, embracing space (which stood in explicit contradistinction to Mondrian's desire for flatness). The perception of this phenomenological space was, he said, contingent upon Einstein's theories.⁸ What appealed to Townsend about Gabo's practice was the pragmatic realisation of theoretical or philosophical concerns, as well as Gabo's influence on kinetics and the ideology driving public sculpture to make city spaces more harmonious and, ultimately, to create a less unequal society.⁹ The third point was the most crucial component of Townsend's policy because it lies at the core of his interests – an emphasis on the artist's voice. Gabo's various contributions to *SI* (through the April issue and a statement published in the September 1969 issue) demonstrate Townsend's dedication to the artist, to articulating projects rather than having work mediated by critics or referred to by art historians. This is not to say that Townsend did not draw on criticism and other forms of writing – on the contrary, diversity was of fundamental interest – but, where possible, he sought that these positions should be seen in relation to the artist's own account.

Gabo's relationship with *SI* is documented in the archive, through letters between the artist and Townsend, which inspired subsequent recollections in conversations between Townsend and the present author forty years after the Gabo issue was published.¹⁰ More precise details of Gabo's work are provided in the articles prepared for the April 1966 issue by Bowness, Ernest, Hill and Thompson and in *The Realist Manifesto* of 1920, which was republished in the ticketboard section of the magazine. The manifesto was written by Gabo, signed by his brother, Antoine Pevsner, and posted on walls lining the streets of

⁸ William Townsend, Journal Vol. xxxvi, 23/3/66, UCL special collections, London.

⁹ Townsend, Melvin notebook 1996, Melvin papers, London.

¹⁰ This begins with Townsend memo 26/11/65, EX ICA, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London. See also, April 1966 file, G correspondence files, 1966-68, 1968-72, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London. The subsequent marginalia is in the archive, G correspondence files, Misc files, 1974-5, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

Moscow on the occasion of their joint exhibition. Gabo translated the manifesto in 1957, when it was published by Lund Humphries, but it had not been widely circulated.¹¹

As noted above, the cover of the April issue featured Gabo's *Linear Construction No. 2* from 1953. Townsend organised this with the Tate Gallery's exhibition catalogue in mind, which had the companion work, *Linear Construction in space No. 1, 1942-43*, on the cover.¹² The catalogue contained an introductory essay by Herbert Read, the art historian and founder of the ICA who had been in close contact with Gabo for over twenty-five years. Read included a series of extracts from Gabo's *The Realist Manifesto*, with the central tenets formulated as five fundamental principles, which, in brief, are:

1. [...] in painting we renounce colour as a pictorial element [...] colour is accidental, it has nothing in common with the innermost essence of a thing.
2. We renounce in line its descriptive value; in real life there are no descriptive lines [...] it is not bound up with the essential life and constant structures of the body.
3. We renounce volume as a pictorial and plastic form of space; one cannot measure space in volumes as one cannot measure liquid in yards; look at our space [...] what is it if not continuous depth?
4. We renounce in sculpture the mass of a sculptural element. It is known to every engineer that the static forces of a solid body and its material strength do not depend on the quantity of the mass [...] for example a rail, a T beam, etc [...] sculptors [...] still adhere to the age-old prejudice that you cannot free the volume of mass. [...] [W]e bring back to sculpture the line as a direction and in it we affirm depth as the one form of space.

¹¹ Naum Gabo, *Constructions, Sculpture, Painting, Drawing and Engraving*, London, Lund Humphries, 1957.

¹² Naum Gabo, *Constructions, Paintings, Drawings*, Arts Council, (Exhibition Catalogue), Tate Gallery, 15 March – 15 April 1966, London, Lund Humphries, unpaginated.

5. We renounce the [...] delusion in art that held that static rhythms are the only elements of the plastic and pictorial arts. We affirm in these arts a new element of the kinetic rhythms as the basic forms of our perceptions of real time.¹³

According to Read, reprinting the manifesto in English in 1966 represented an attempt to position 'art at the centre of the revolution and show how constructivism was one of the most decisive moments in the history of the modern world and the most revolutionary doctrine of art.'¹⁴ Townsend realised that the magazine issue provided a timely opportunity to republish the manifesto in full, which contained contemporaneous relevance even though it had been written nearly half a century earlier, at the height of the Russian Revolution, and his editorial decisiveness ensured that the manifesto became widely available for the first time. It was prefaced by an introductory note from Gabo specifically written to accompany its republication. In this, he described the manifesto as 'a résumé of my own thinking, what I had been talking about and teaching. It had been written in one night.'¹⁵

On the page before the manifesto, an unattributed editorial note by Townsend explained the issue's attention to Constructivism, in which the movement's centrality to twentieth-century art is asserted as 'one of the few movements centred on an "idea" whose adherents have been deeply concerned with social developments. As such it is very much part of the present.'¹⁶ This fits in with Townsend's abiding interest in access to culture through social development.

Later in the issue, an article entitled 'Naum Gabo talks about his work', was based on discussions held at the Courtauld Institute during preparations for the Tate Gallery exhibition earlier that year, between Gabo, Bowness, Thompson and Peter Townsend. Gabo checked the text and it takes the form of an artist's statement, interwoven with autobiographical touchstones of artistic influence,

¹³ Gabo, "Realist Manifesto." *SI*, Vol. 171, No. 876, p. 126.

¹⁴ Herbert Read, "Introductory essay." *Naum Gabo* Tate Gallery catalogue, 1966.

¹⁵ Gabo, *SI*, Vol. 171, No. 876, p. 125.

¹⁶ Unattributed editorial note, *SI*, Vol. 171, No. 876, p. 124.

alongside social and political considerations.¹⁷ Townsend later recalled that the conversation had flowed freely, with Gabo describing his decision-making processes and saying that he felt most at home in England, where he considered the forthcoming exhibition and ensuing collaboration with *SI* to be his most supportive experience. Peter also interviewed Gabo alone, during which the latter agreed to contribute to the Mondrian commemorative issue of December 1966 issue.¹⁸

Thompson's 'Outlines for a public art' details Gabo's work, *Untitled Z.T.* (1957), a 25-metre-high free-standing sculpture, commissioned for the Bijenkorf Building in Rotterdam. Illustrated with a photograph of the work, the article discussed the ways in which an ideal for public art grew out of the Russian Revolution. This articulates Gabo's ideas on Constructivism as more of a philosophy of life than an artistic credo, in which relationships between art and science would inevitably overlap in the formation of a better society. The Rotterdam sculpture was a consequence of such thinking.¹⁹

Hill's 'Constructivism – The European phenomenon' considered themes that recurred through various European movements – Constructivism, Futurism, Cubism and Nouvelle Tendance – outlining the influence of mathematics and engineering on the formation of structures and discussing proposals by a range of artists of different nationalities including Gabo, Pevsner, Georges Vantongerloo and Lev Nusberg.²⁰ Ernest's 'Constructivism and Content' gave an overview of Constructivism's political and ideological content through an analysis of *The Realist Manifesto*, demonstrating how theory had been realised in a range of constructions from the 1920s to the 1960s. In this, he referred to the 'considerable impact' of the American Constructivist, Charles Biederman's ideas on a loosely associated group of constructivists in Britain, especially through his 1952 book, *Art as the Evolution of Visual Knowledge*. Ernest regarded Biederman as a primary influence on the British constructivists,

¹⁷ Gabo, "contributor's note." *SI*, Vol. 171, No. 876, p. 124, "Naum Gabo talks about his work." *SI*, Vol. 171, No. 876, pp. 127-131.

¹⁸ Peter Townsend appointment diary, 3/3/66, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

¹⁹ David Thompson, "Outlines for a public art." *SI*, Vol. 171, No. 876, pp. 133-139.

²⁰ Anthony Hill, "Constructivism – The European phenomenon." *SI*, Vol. 171, No. 876, pp. 140-147.

Anthony Hill, Victor Pasmore and Mary and Kenneth Martin.²¹ He discussed their work alongside younger artists including Gillian Wise, Anthony Hill, Jésus-Raphael Soto and Eli Bornstein.²²

Favourable responses to the issue were relayed to Townsend by letter, rumour and direct report. Frank Whitford immediately wrote to congratulate him, describing the magazine as 'one of the best publications on Gabo available anywhere [making it] the only magazine to explore so completely the idea of Constructivism. If subsequent issues are so good you will have sold out before you can even think of a re-print.'²³ In the office, it became a yardstick for tackling specific issues, and it retrospectively stands out as exemplary in the minds of many associated with the magazine.²⁴ Nine years later, in May/June 1975 (Townsend's last issue), Clive Phillpot would identify the Gabo issue in his regular column, 'Feedback', as a sign that *SI* had been reinvented. For him, 'Naum Gabo and the constructivist tradition made it quite plain that the magazine really had adopted a new and no longer parochial outlook [...].'²⁵

SI's lunch party for Gabo at the Terrazza Restaurant

The following account is taken from Peter Townsend's recollections of the lunch alongside the relevant entry from William Townsend's journal. Peter described how Gabo gave a revealing account of his involvement with the Russian Revolution, his optimism for societal change and his belief in an art that could change society, through the public sculpture or memorials being erected as part of civic planning. He spoke about Russia after Lenin, the ensuing chaos and the suppression of the 'advanced movement' which had 'disastrous results for the whole Russian culture the effects of which can't yet be seen clearly.'²⁶ He thought the most 'valuable and effective' contribution could be made through the Constructivist concern with architecture. Townsend also recalled Gabo's

²¹ John Ernest, "Constructivism and Content." *SI*, Vol. 171, No. 876, pp. 148-156.

²² Ernest, "Constructivism and Content." *SI*, Vol. 171, No. 876, p. 154.

²³ Whitford letter to Townsend, 13/4/66, W correspondence file, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

²⁴ Ernest, "Constructivism and Content." *SI*, Vol. 171, No. 876, p. 148-156.

²⁵ Clive Phillpot, "Feedback." *SI*, Vol. 189, No. 975, p. 224.

²⁶ W Townsend, Journal Vol. xxxvi, 23/3/66, UCL special collections, London.

concern about US policy in general and cultural policy in particular. Townsend shared this view, being wary of US foreign and cultural policy and, like most of the intelligentsia, they were both opposed to the Vietnam war.

Referring to William Townsend's journal we find an extensive description of Gabo's explanation of an unrealised project in which his intention was 'to show movement purely – it was a composition of movement...[he] worked on it quite a lot but could think of no means of doing the job without devices for driving what were two bulks, which would have become too important a part of the work and would interfere. The work at the Tate is all right because the movement is invisible.'²⁷ Both Townsend brothers remarked that Gabo stated that the technology needed to make it had not yet been developed. Peter Townsend related to the present author that Gabo was confident that through the development of electronics a true kinetic art would become possible.²⁸ 'I have lived to see this possible. I didn't think I would. And an artist will arise who will work with these means as an artist. Naturally I expect there will be one in the next generation. It is sure to come. Movement could now be controlled and produced as remote beams of light open doors.'²⁹

Gabo's long, informal address also referred to the Venice Biennale and whether or not he should exhibit, because he did not like the space he was offered, which, from descriptions, seemed too small. Bowness was emphatic that he should take part, but in the space Giacometti had used, which was larger and more appropriate. 'Alan, David and Andrew gave him advice [and] any question would set him off, warmly, eagerly, [he] made his arguments very clear.'³⁰

It was at this lunch party that Gabo described his collaboration with *SI* as 'the summit of his experience' in London.³¹ He also espoused the responsibilities of the critic and teacher, and the significance of British, as distinct from American, culture. In this, he stressed the role of British cultural ambassadors in which he included *SI*, urging them not to try to become American, but to assert their

²⁷ W Townsend, Vol. xxxvi, 23/3/66, UCL special collections, London.

²⁸ Townsend, Melvin notebook, 1996. Melvin papers, London.

²⁹ W Townsend, Vol. xxxvi, 23/3/66, UCL special collections, London.

³⁰ W Townsend, Vol. xxxvi, 23/3/66, UCL special collections, London.

³¹ W Townsend, Vol. xxxvi, 23/3/66, UCL special collections, London.

Britishness. The lunch discussion was still in full swing when William left for the Slade after 4 p.m.³²

Simultaneous editorial crisis

As has already been seen, the first crisis in the editorial office came in advance of the April issue's going to print, when Michael Kinloch, the advertising man, left to take up a post at the new rival magazine, *Art and Artists*. The April issue initiated a practice of financial appraisal, precipitated by the publishers' need turn the magazine into a profit-generating concern. When the issue was printed in early April, Mackay Miller arranged to meet Townsend to discuss strategy over lunch at Bertorelli's. By chance, William Townsend witnessed the meeting from an adjacent table at which he was discussing Slade policies with Coldstream.³³

In May 1966, Mackay-Miller issued his instructions for streamlining production costs.³⁴ In a bid to soften the pill, he began by applauding the high standards of the April issue, and listed a five-point plan for cost reduction, paraphrased here:

Articles exceeding 'four pages to be avoided where possible'

Apart from 'vital last-minute corrections', there should be no author corrections. The paste-up should be accurate so that no changes to lines needed to be made after make-up.

Economies to be made in materials if this can be done without prejudicing the quality of reproduction, e.g., a cheaper coated board can be used for the cover where four-colour is not used.

A better working arrangement to be aimed at with the printworks, to remove friction and save time and money by the printers 'getting to know what is required by you by empathy or second sight'.

³² W Townsend, Vol. xxxvi, 23/3/66, UCL special collections, London.

³³ W Townsend, Vol. xxxvii, (March 1966-May 1967), 5/4/66, UCL special collections, London.

³⁴ Anthony Mackay Miller letter to Townsend, 3/5/66, Misc correspondence, Blue box, SI, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

Colour blocks not to be proofed before printing unless there is very real doubt about a particular set.³⁵

The Gabo articles were all over four pages long, which meant they fell foul of these financially-driven considerations. In weighing up these expense-reducing proposals, Peter regarded author-corrected galleys as essential. To remove these would deny authors the chance to agree revisions and address more complex questions arising from the presentation of ideas and use of language. While he agreed to the principle of deadlines, so the corrected galleys would be returned to the printworks in time for adjustments, he noted that this presupposed the works would send galleys to the editorial office by the required date in order for them to be distributed to authors.³⁶ Peter reluctantly agreed to avoid proofing colour blocks because, without additional financial backing, he was unable to do otherwise. In the case of special issues, such as that of May 1971, he applied to the British Council for additional funds, but the application was unsuccessful.³⁷

September 1969 issue continuing the Constructivist dialogues

Townsend had become aware of Biederman's work during the discussions on Constructivism which took place alongside Gabo's exhibition at the Tate Gallery. When Norbert Lynton informed Townsend of plans to hold an exhibition of Biederman's work at the Hayward Gallery from 18 September until 23 October 1969, Townsend decided it would be appropriate to devote an issue to his work and its influence on British Constructivists. In this, he had the backing of Bowness and Lynton. Townsend asked Biederman if he would agree to a photograph of his work being used for the cover for September 1969, which

³⁵ MacKay Miller letter to Townsend 3/5/66, Misc correspondence, Blue box, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

³⁶ Magazine production meeting minutes, May 1966, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

³⁷ *SI*, Vol. 181, No. 933, May, 1971. The issue was dedicated to *The British Avant Garde*, the contemporaneous exhibition at the New York Cultural Center organised by Charles Harrison, discussed in Chapter 4.

would be concurrent with his exhibition.³⁸ (Figure 2.18.) Townsend also commissioned the artists, Anthony Hill, Gillian Wise, Robyn Denny, Mary and Kenneth Martin, to respond to Biederman's work and describe its effect on their practices. He also commissioned an article Stephen Bann, History lecturer at the University of Kent, who had recently edited a book, *Concrete Poetry: An International Anthology*, London Magazine Editions, 1967 and was compiling an anthology of Constructivist documents.³⁹

The ticketboard section contained 'Notes on Charles Biederman' by Wise and the Martins, each of whom cited the importance of his book, *Art as the Evolution of Visual Knowledge*, on their practice. Mary Martin described the immediacy of Biederman's writing and his insistence on art as process. She also confessed that she found his emphasis on structural process, as an abstraction from nature rather than architecture, to be a 'stumbling block'.⁴⁰

The issue also featured Denny's article 'Charles Biederman: from the actual to the sublime', in which Biederman's influence was acknowledged through his correspondence with British artists following publication of his book.⁴¹ Denny noted that Pasmore made his first transparent relief after reading Biederman's book, and that Pasmore referred to Biederman's attitudes as significantly shaping his approach. Denny pointed out that, although Biederman was better known as a theorist, he personally found 'an underlying presence in his writings of tenseness, perturbation and frustration which can colour and distort the inner meaning of his argument and leave his readers alienated. [...] A Structurist [sic] relief by Biederman achieves a precisely poised unity between ideas and means, whose conjunction transcends both, freeing the work from any idiomatic constraints'.⁴²

³⁸ Townsend letter to Biederman, 11/6/69, B correspondence file to 1972, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

³⁹ Stephen Bann, "Contributors notes." *SI*, Vol. 178, No. 914, p. 58.

⁴⁰ Mary Martin, "Notes on Charles Biederman." *SI*, Vol. 178, No. 914, September 1969, p. 60. This issue evaluates Biederman's work and writing. It includes articles by Gillian Wise, Mary Martin, Kenneth Martin, Anthony Hill, Robyn Denny and Stephen Bann as well as Naum Gabo, "The Kinetic construction of 1920." It also included Charles Harrison's article "Against precedents." *SI*, Vol. 178, No. 914, September 1969, pp. 90-3. The article was also published in the London catalogue of the exhibition *When Attitudes Become Form*, ICA.

⁴¹ Robyn Denny, "Charles Biederman: from the actual to the sublime." *SI*, Vol. 178, No. 914 p. 65.

⁴² Denny, *SI*, Vol. 178, No. 914, (pp. 65-67), p. 67.

Hill's article, 'The climate of Charles Biederman', used its title from the designation given by George Rickey – author of the book, *Constructivism-Origins and Evolutions*, published by Studio Vista in 1968 – to the group of artists, including Hill, who were influenced by Biederman and so worked in his climate which is to 'emphasise a vertical-horizontal balance' in their constructions.⁴³ Like Denny, Hill commented on the relatively limited awareness of Biederman's work beyond the small group of artists who were engaged in similar terrain.⁴⁴

Bann's contribution was entitled 'The centrality of Charles Biederman', and concentrated on Biederman's 'profound attention to the natural world which he found in the French masters [...] Courbet, Monet and Cézanne'.⁴⁵ This underscored Biederman's practice as a continuation of 'Monet's search into nature as an entirely new view of reality'.⁴⁶

Gabo's statement, published in this issue, described his 1920 work, *Kinetic Sculpture (Standing Wave)*, which he had referred to in his 1966 discussions with Townsend. As mentioned in the previous chapter, Townsend remembered his sense of disappointment at seeing the rigidity of Gabo's sculpture, *Untitled Z.T.* (1957). Gabo explained to Townsend that he had hoped to be able to realise a public sculpture on a large scale that utilised kinetic possibilities akin to those in the earlier work. In his statement, he explains how, when he was invited to include the earlier work in Pontus Hultén's exhibition, *The Machine as Seen at the End of the Mechanical Age*, at the Museum of Modern Art, New York,⁴⁷ he advised the Tate Gallery (to whom he gave the original after his retrospective) that transporting the work might damage it. Accordingly, Hultén asked Gabo for a replica and he agreed, with the proviso that it was not for sale; he recommended approaching E.A.T. to assist in the remake, where he was already in contact with engineers over technical issues related to the possible reconstruction of the work.⁴⁸ Gabo describes how the original took nine

⁴³ Anthony Hill, "The climate of Charles Biederman." *SI*, Vol. 178, No. 914, p. 68.

⁴⁴ Hill, *SI*, Vol. 178, No. 914, pp. 68 – 70.

⁴⁵ Stephen Bann, "The centrality of Charles Biederman." *SI*, Vol. 178, No. 914, p. 72.

⁴⁶ Bann, *SI*, Vol. 178, No. 914, p. 73.

⁴⁷ *The machine*, MoMA, 27 November 1968 to 9 February 1969.

⁴⁸ Naum Gabo, "Statement." *SI*, Vol. 178, No. 914, September 1969, p. 89. E.A.T., Experiment in Art and Technology, were a series of collaborations between artists and engineers at Bell Laboratories that were initiated by Robert Rauschenberg and Billy Klüver in 1966 in New York.

months to make, during which time he modified the design through constant experimentation. Because this was the height of the civil war in Russia following the revolution, materials were hard to obtain. One of the reasons Gabo made the sculpture was to demonstrate to students what he meant by 'kinetic rhythms', which meant that the piece was 'a basic example of one single movement – nothing more.'⁴⁹ Gabo observed in his statement for *SI* that the remaking process was complicated by the engineers' attempt to use new technology, instead of sticking to the methods used in 1920, when 'conditions were such that looking for elaborate mechanisms was to search for a golden plate from the moon!'⁵⁰ (Figure 2.19.)

Gabo's reflections were written several months after the MoMA exhibition had finished. As a point of historical note it is interesting to observe that the work was included in the New York exhibition from which Takis had removed his work on the grounds that it was not displayed as he envisaged it should be, which provided the trigger for the formation of the Art Workers' Coalition (AWC), to be discussed in Chapter 7.

Included in the ticketboard section was a short extract from an interview with Gabo, conducted by Jonathan Benthall in his 'Technology and art' column. In response to a question on the state of kinetic art and machine art, Gabo replied that, since 1920, he had considered kinetics 'merely as the A in the alphabet of new art.' He distanced himself from the Futurists' glorification of machines and explained the distinction between kinetics, which is movement itself, and dynamics, the science of forces making movement.⁵¹

During his stay in London for the exhibition, Biederman gave Townsend a copy of his 1958 book, *The New Cézanne*, when he dined in the Townsend family home, which he inscribed to Peter 'with affection'.⁵² On his return to the US in October, he wrote to Townsend, referring to a visit with Peter and Rose to the Essex area where Constable painted. This visit was made because Biederman told Townsend that he couldn't respond to Constable's work, and Peter wanted

⁴⁹ Gabo, "Statement." *SI*, Vol. 178, No. 914, September 1969, p. 89.

⁵⁰ Gabo, "Statement." *SI*, Vol. 178, No. 914, September 1969, p. 89.

⁵¹ Benthall, "Technology and art." *SI*, Vol. 178, No. 914, pp. 63-4, p. 64.

⁵² The book given by Biederman is in Catherine Townsend's collection, London.

him to see the landscape itself.⁵³ Biederman describes how this experience, and the conversations they had while walking together, changed his perception, enabling him to understand Constable's decision-making processes and to look at the work with a purer eye. This is a good example of Townsend's hands-on commitment, backed up with generosity, regarding his discussions on artistic practice.

The US critics did not review the exhibition at the Hayward, which exasperated Biederman. At the start of 1970, he wrote to inform Townsend that his work would be featured in *Time* magazine on 26 January, which would at least give him widespread publicity.⁵⁴ By contrast, Townsend's strategic use of the magazine in conjunction with the Hayward's exhibition helped to draw attention to the discussions on Structuralism place among artists in the UK, Europe and the US that responded to Biederman's practice. In a letter some two years after the issue dedicated to his work, Biederman told Townsend that *SI* 'has become the only art journal, where in every issue, I can find something of interest to read. Not because I find a lot to agree with, but because now and then I come across a writer who endeavours to appeal to the reason of observation rather than the infantilism of "look at me". The art world is in a pitiful mess [...] one only has to look into the face that Rembrandt has painted of himself, in the work at Kensington, [sic – this should read Kenwood] to see how much art has lost'.⁵⁵

Townsend and Heron

The second editorially influential artistic friendship Townsend cultivated was with Patrick Heron. In 1959 Heron won the first prize at the John Moores exhibition, which was a biennial held at the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool, and named after its benefactor, the owner of Littlewoods. It was the second time the

⁵³ Biederman letter to Townsend, 5/10/69, Misc correspondence files to 1974, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

⁵⁴ Biederman letter to Townsend, 23/1/70, Misc correspondence files to 1974, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

⁵⁵ Biederman letter to Townsend, 14/1/71, Misc correspondence files to 1974, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

biennial had been staged. The John Moores exhibition was entered through open submission and a jury selected the artists and awarded prizes. Heron was well regarded as an artist and critic in the UK, and knew William Townsend from the 1950s, although not well.⁵⁶ Heron had two solo exhibitions at the Waddington Gallery, London, in 1963 and 1964, during which time he met William Townsend, who subsequently introduced him to his brother. The first time Peter Townsend met Heron, in September 1966, they immediately got on, and would develop a close and lasting friendship.⁵⁷ Both were socialist, nonconformist, conscientious objectors, from upper-middle-class families. The immediate informality of their correspondence stands out in contrast with other letters in the archive.

Townsend was sympathetic to the theoretical concerns of painting and to artists' difficulties of describing these. He was also irritated by the naïve supposition that painters were not qualified to talk, let alone write, about painting. He came across Heron's art criticism in the *New Statesman* (1947–1950) when he was in China.⁵⁸ Heron was also known as an art critic in the US, through his *Arts Magazine* column, 'London letter'. He contributed twenty-six articles between 1955 and 1958. As well as writing about French painting, he introduced American readers to what he referred to as the 'middle generation' painters – the British painters whose early careers had been affected by wartime restrictions of the Second World War and who were mainly based in Cornwall, including Alan Davie, Terry Frost, Roger Hilton, Peter Lanyon, Bryan Winter and Heron himself. His involvement with *Arts Magazine* ended with what he took what he called his 'vow of silence', swearing that he would not write on art again because he did not want to 'write criticism' or any 'longer explain, analyse or persuade'.⁵⁹ Heron was loquacious and eloquent, and Townsend persuaded him to begin writing again, convincing him of the

⁵⁶ The present author deduces this from reading William Townsend's Journals, UCL special collections, London.

⁵⁷ Peter Townsend appointment diary, 12/9/66, Peter Townsend archive TGA 90094, London. Townsend described his respect for Heron's painting and his fondness of him to the present author to whom he introduced Heron. Melvin notebook 1996, Melvin papers, London.

⁵⁸ Heron was also writing for *The New English Weekly* and *Nation* at the same time.

⁵⁹ Mel Gooding (Ed) *Painter as Critic, Patrick Heron selected writings*, editor's note p. ix, London, Tate Gallery Publishing, 1998.

relevance of his position to discussions in the UK on the current debates between the UK and the US, in the first instance by articulating what he and other artists perceived to be the US cultural imperialism.

A few days after their first meeting, Townsend wrote to Heron to say that he was glad he may have persuaded him to contribute an article on the Anglo-American discussions and that, in the mean time, he might write a letter to the editor which would be published in the October issue. Townsend also suggested that Heron might like to respond to the poet and art critic, Edward Lucie-Smith's interview with Frank O'Hara, published in the ticketboard section of *SI* September 1966.⁶⁰ O'Hara was a poet, writer, art critic and curator, based in the painting and sculpture department at MoMA. His response to Lucie-Smith's question on whether he was excited by anything in English art at the moment was that 'there were a lot of injustices going on...Pop Art [...] in America is almost universally presumed to be American which it isn't [...] as early as about 1952 or 1953 [...] it had already been done in England'.⁶¹ He continued that it was only after Jackson Pollock's reception by the British art critics that he was recognised in the US, and that, conversely, Francis Bacon's acknowledgement in the UK was due to the excitement his work had generated in New York. This led him to conclude that 'Strangers can appreciate the elements which are too close to you and which you don't really look at'.⁶² He also mentioned being impressed by 'Phillip King, David Hockney and others at the Paris Biennale', stating that 'Henry Moore's reputation is undeniable'.⁶³

In the letter Townsend remarked to Heron that O'Hara's observations on 'the importance of British opinion on the careers of certain American artists is in line with our discussion in the pub that night, and I wondered whether you would be interested in letting us have your own views very briefly in the form of a letter [...]'⁶⁴ Heron was delighted by his receipt of Townsend's letter and ongoing shared interests, and he asked about deadlines and length, remarking

⁶⁰ Townsend letter to Heron, 9/9/66, Heron file to 1975, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

⁶¹ Lucie-Smith, "Interview with Frank O'Hara." *SI*, Vol. 172, No. 881 p. 113.

⁶² Lucie-Smith, "Interview with Frank O'Hara." *SI*, Vol. 172, No. 881, p. 113.

⁶³ Lucie-Smith, "Interview with Frank O'Hara." *SI*, Vol. 172, No. 881, p. 113.

⁶⁴ Townsend letter to Heron, 9/9/66, Heron file to 1975, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

that O'Hara's observation on the 'usefulness of British enthusiasm to American painting [...] couldn't have proved a neater opening for something on the lines of our discussion.'⁶⁵ Townsend requested 400-500 words within a week.⁶⁶

When Heron submitted his text, he stated that he did not want it 'cut by an inch', because it had taken him 'five solid days to get it down to shape'. The article had grown from Townsend's proposed 400-500 words to over 3,000. Heron considered the argument a complicated matter, and successfully compressed. He did not want advance circulation of galley copies but to come out 'with a bang'.⁶⁷ There was no space in the October issue, and Townsend decided that the 'letter to the editor' was not a suitable format. Townsend asked Heron to develop it by including personal elements of his critical engagement with Abstract Expressionism, and that it would be included in *SI*'s December issue instead.⁶⁸

During these discussions, in person and in writing, Heron provided Townsend with a history of his commentary on abstract expressionism, which he was reconstructing from his papers. Heron described a review he wrote for the *New Statesman*, when Jackson Pollock's work was first shown at the ICA in February 1953.⁶⁹ According to Heron's wife, he was not impressed, but he revised his position quickly. He explained to Townsend that his memory had 'telescoped' the time between seeing the exhibition and his subsequent writing and, to his embarrassment, he found seven favourable observations he had made on Pollock between March 1954 and December 1955.⁷⁰ Heron's review of *Modern Art in the United States* at the Tate Gallery, for *Arts* in January 1956, began with a survey of the British critics' responses to the exhibition, 'the talk of the town' for his readers in the US. Heron pointed out that the British critics

⁶⁵ Heron letter to Townsend, 10/9/66, Heron file to 1975, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

⁶⁶ Townsend letter to Heron, 12/9/66, Heron file to 1975, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

⁶⁷ Heron letter to Townsend, 20/9/66, Heron file to 1975, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

⁶⁸ Townsend letter to Heron, 9/9/66, Heron file to 1975, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

⁶⁹ Heron letter to Townsend 22/10/66, refers to his *New Statesman* review published 21/2/53, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

⁷⁰ Heron letter to Townsend, 22/10/66, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

concentrated on the new school of Abstract Expressionism and its influence rather than reviewing the exhibition as a whole. In this, he comments that 'At last we can see for ourselves what it is like to stand in a very large room hung with very large canvases by Jackson Pollock, Willem de Kooning, Mark Rothko, Clyfford Still, Franz Kline and others [...] the fame of these painters just managed to precede the arrival of their canvases in London [it] came at the psychological moment [...] when curiosity is at its keenest'.⁷¹ He then remarked that he was 'instantly elated by the size, energy, originality, economy and inventive daring of many of the paintings. Their creative emptiness represented a radical discovery [...] as did their flatness [or] spatial shallowness'.⁷² He found this rejection of illusionist depth 'fascinating' because it went against his painterly instincts, and he considered that their handling of paint in its 'over-dry immaculateness' and the lack of 'resonance in their colour' demonstrated uncertainty, considering the 'absence of worked-up paint quality such as one never misses in the French' a weakness.⁷³ Although the exhibition included a wide selection of artists, such as Andrew Wyeth and Edward Hopper, Heron chose to ignore them in his focus on the Abstract Expressionists. He concluded that New York should be watched as eagerly as Paris for new developments, but counselled caution in calculating the international influence of these works, in particular on Paris and London.⁷⁴

Early in November 1966, William and Peter Townsend met Heron at the Museum Tavern. Conversation turned to the article Heron was writing on 'The ascendancy of London in the sixties', which he and Peter were in the process of finalising. Heron explained how his disagreement with Greenberg over their choices for the John Moores exhibition was a trigger for the article. Greenberg, Heron and John Russell (former art critic for the *Sunday Times*) were on the selection committee of the fifth biennial in the summer of 1965, and their different priorities created conflicting criteria for judgement, stimulating

⁷¹ Heron letter to Townsend, 22/10/66, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

⁷² Heron letter to Townsend, 22/10/66, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

⁷³ Heron letter to Townsend, 22/10/66, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

⁷⁴ Mel Gooding (Ed) *Patrick Heron, Painter as Critic*, "The Americans at the Tate Gallery", Tate Gallery Publications, 1998, pp. 100-104 first published Arts New York, March 1956.

further discussion.⁷⁵ Heron told the Townsend brothers that, during the judging process, Greenberg's 'line was to play down the abstracts and ask for the landscapes.'⁷⁶ In Heron's view, this strategy on Greenberg's part was aimed at reserving abstraction for US artists. In response to Greenberg's implied position that the Americans were good at abstraction and the British at landscape, William suggested that perhaps the English are 'just outside of the stream', but Heron disagreed.⁷⁷ William Townsend noted that the rejection of his landscape painting in the final selection was probably Heron's decision and not Greenberg's.⁷⁸

To understand the different issues at stake, it is necessary to provide a brief account of Greenberg's reputation in the UK. Greenberg had met Heron in London and also in the US during the 1950s, and visited St Martins to teach on several occasions in the early 1960s. He met Anthony Caro at a party given by the sculptor, William Turnbull, in London in 1959.⁷⁹ After a visit in 1964, Greenberg wrote to Frank Martin (St Martin's Head of Sculpture), to say that, 'St Martin's should be one of the prides of England and some of its graduates are producing the strongest new sculpture done anywhere in the world at this moment'.⁸⁰ He became a staunch supporter of Caro and invited him to lecture at Bennington College, Vermont, where he taught for two summers in 1963–64. Greenberg's influential book, *Art and Culture*, published in 1961, contained articles previously published in *Partisan Review*, *The Nation*, *Arts*, *Art News* and elsewhere, between 1939 and 1958. It introduced formalist criticism and discussed artists from the US as well as from Paris, and was widely read by artists and students in the UK. One essay, entitled "American-Type" Painting', borrowed Heron's phrase – made during a conversation they had had in London. Noting that it lacked the 'misleading connotations of [Harold]

⁷⁵ Irving Sandler expresses irritation at Heron's views in "Art Criticism: Critics at War." *A Sweeper-Up After Artists*, London, Thames & Hudson, 2002, (pp. 179-216), p. 204.

⁷⁶ W Townsend, Journal xxxvii, 9/11/66, UCL special collections, London.

⁷⁷ W Townsend, Journal xxxvii, 9/11/66, UCL special collections, London.

⁷⁸ W Townsend, Journal xxxvii, 9/11/66, UCL special collections, London.

⁷⁹ Ian Barker, *Anthony Caro: Quest for New Sculpture*, London, Lund Humphries, 2004.

⁸⁰ Frank Martin, Personal Papers 3/2/64. Personal papers of Frank Martin, TGA 201014, London.

Hester Wesley refers extensively to Frank Martin's papers and includes reference to this letter, "Rites of Passage: Tradition and Transmission at St Martin's School of Art, 1960-1980" PhD, 2007, London, Courtauld, p. 83.

Rosenberg's concoction "Action painting" – which designated Abstract Expressionism as a mode of production – Greenberg considered that Heron's term 'American-Type painting' located the approach as a sensibility, shared nationally among the so-called Abstract Expressionist painters, which he regarded to be more appropriate.⁸¹

SI December 1966

The December 1966 issue typifies Townsend's policy. It is significant for three reasons; it was the first issue in which Heron's writing appeared; it was a special issue dedicated to Mondrian; and, like the Gabo issue, it focused on his influence on artists in the UK. While Mondrian's work graced the cover, reminiscences of Mondrian's stay in England were collected by Charles Harrison, with contributions from those who were in his circle of friends – including Herbert Read and the artists, Barbara Hepworth, Naum and Nina Gabo and Ben and Winifred Nicholson. (Figure 2.20.)

Heron's article appeared in the ticketboard section, after which there were excerpts from the press release for the Destruction in Art Symposium (DIAS), with statements from the artists involved including Gustav Metzger and Ralph Ortiz. Andrew Forge's article on Kenneth Martin continued the critical engagement with Constructivist practice and its correlations with neoplasticism, and David Sylvester's article on Mondrian stressed his importance in the cross-currents of ideas and art practices in the UK in the 1930s.⁸² It also included an article on Tantra art by the painter FN Souza and Roland Penrose on André Breton.⁸³

Townsend hoped that publication of 'The ascendancy of London in the sixties' might disrupt what he still considered *SI*'s hermetic view of the English art world. Heron used the platform to 'speak out on the two things which

⁸¹ Clement Greenberg, "‘American-Type’ Painting." *Art and Culture*, Boston, Beacon press, 1967, (pp. 208-229), p. 209.

⁸² Andrew Forge, "Some recent works by Kenneth Martin." *SI*, Vol. 172, No. 884, December 1966, pp. 300-5. David Sylvester, "A tulip with white leaves: an essay on Mondrian." *SI*, Vol. 172, No. 884, December 1966, pp. 293-99.

⁸³ FN Souza, "Tantric art: a review article." *SI*, Vol. 172, No. 884, December 1966, pp. 306-11. Roland Penrose, "André Breton." *SI*, Vol. 172, No. 884, December 1966, pp. 312-3.

characterise the present situation on both sides of the Atlantic', which he identified as the 'intense artistic chauvinism that rages now in New York [and] infuriates British Painters [*sic*]' and 'sheer gutless obsequiousness to the Americans which prevails amongst so many British art critics'.⁸⁴ In relation to his second point, no other British critic in the mid-1960s publicly shared Heron's scepticism over Greenberg's claims for the dominance of US painters' inventiveness over the contemporary British painters. GS Whittet who, as will be remembered from the Introduction, was *SI*'s former editor, considered the invitation of Greenberg to chair John Moores's jury 'a masterstroke' because he had 'enviable ignorance of British Art [*sic*] politics and reputations'.⁸⁵ In Whittet's view, this fifth biennial was the best to date.

Heron wrote in his article that he was compelled to take this action because he was 'one of the first Europeans to have perceived the great importance of American painting and to have recorded this at an early stage'.⁸⁶ His article outlined the first encounters of the aforementioned 'Middle Generation painters' with US Abstract Expressionism, describing them as 'open in [their] applause', unlike the 'tight lipped players of the who influenced who game'.⁸⁷ Heron was determined to bring a critical attention to the Middle Generation free of the view that their works were inspired by seeing Abstract Expressionism and by which, even ten years later, they were enthralled. Noting that 'Britain has three generations of painters whose vitality [...] is not equalled anywhere in the world', Heron considered that the recent innovations of this Middle Generation group were being overlooked by critics in the US and UK.⁸⁸ In this, he picked up on O'Hara's previously quoted points – that Pop Art was originally British and that artists were usually recognised abroad before receiving credit at home – aiming his ire in particular at the US critics Michael Fried and Max Kozloff. Citing the opening line of Fried's 1965 essay, *Three American Painters* – which stated that for '20 years or more almost all the best new painting and sculpture has been done in America' – Heron wondered

⁸⁴ Heron, *SI*, Vol. 172, No. 884, (pp. 280-1), p. 280.

⁸⁵ GS Whittet, "Biennial on the Mersey." *SI*, Vol. 171, No. 873, January 1966, pp. 20-21.

⁸⁶ Heron, *SI*, Vol. 172, No. 884 p. 280.

⁸⁷ Heron, *SI*, Vol. 172, No. 884 p. 280.

⁸⁸ Heron, *SI*, Vol. 172, No. 884 p. 280.

whether the rest of the world was supposed to shrug off this remark with a smile.⁸⁹ He also extracted from Kozloff's article, 'British painting today', published in *Encounter* in 1964, in particular his assertion that it is 'hard not to be aware of the deficiencies in British Art [...] timorous [...] does not accurately express itself.' Heron concluded with the hope that US artists and, more particularly, critics on both sides of the Atlantic, would 'wake up [and] see that there is a pictorial scale of values which differs very considerably from [those being promulgated by Fried *et al*]'.⁹⁰

In advance of publication Townsend sensed the moment. He wanted to circulate the galley proofs to artists and critics in the UK and US, to derive responses for inclusion in *SI*'s December issue. He was fanning the flames as well as generating pre-publicity.⁹¹ Townsend pushed Heron for names, saying that he would send galley proofs to Clement Greenberg, Michael Fried and Max Kozloff.⁹² Heron told Townsend that he wanted the discussion to evolve, 'under its own steam (But this is an editorial matter: you may feel that it's in the magazine's interests to generate a rowdy exchange?!)' He agreed that Kozloff and Fried should receive a copy, 'since they're being attacked', and added Robert Hughes and Norbert Lynton to the list. Heron did not want it sent to Greenberg, explaining to Townsend that he had already given Greenberg's views enough of a platform in the UK.⁹³

After publication, Heron's article, and its companion, 'A kind of cultural imperialism?'⁹⁴ (published in February 1968 and discussed below), sent shockwaves through a section of the art world – specifically those artists and the writers engaged in formalist debates – the impact of which would be felt for

⁸⁹ Heron, *SI*, Vol. 172, No. 884 p. 281. Michael Fried, "Three American Painters." (Exhibition Catalogue) Cambridge, Mass, Fogg Art Museum, 1965. USA-CAM-FOG, Tate library, London.

⁹⁰ Heron, *SI*, Vol. 172, No. 884 p. 281. Harrison refers to Heron's article in "Virgin soils and old land", his catalogue essay for the British Avant Garde exhibition at the New York Cultural Center the exhibition catalogue was synonymous with *SI*'s May 1971. This project is discussed in Chapter 4.

⁹¹ This is the present author's assessment and it is based on the evidence in his letters to Heron et al referred to below. Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London. Townsend discussed his tactical letter writing with the present author on different occasions, but in relation to Heron's articles, Melvin notebook, 1996, Melvin papers, London.

⁹² Townsend proposed sending galley proofs to Bryan Wynter, William Scott, John Plumb, Terry Frost, Herbert Read, Justin Knowles and asked Heron for more names, letter to Heron 17/11/66, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

⁹³ Heron letter to Townsend 26/11/66, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

⁹⁴ Heron, "A kind of cultural imperialism?" *SI*, Vol. 175, No. 897, pp. 62-3.

several years and, indirectly, throughout Townsend's period as editor. Heron's article was hot stuff; art students were shocked and delighted, artists took sides.⁹⁵ From an editorial perspective, it successfully precipitated an artist-led discussion on the function of criticism.

Formalist criticism and the ensuing fallout was a part of this debate that Townsend found compelling. He heard from John Latham about an event called *Still and Chew*, which Latham organised with Barry Flanagan. Together they planned to chew Greenberg's book, *Art and Culture*, with a group of students and staff from St Martin's invited to the *Still and Chew* party, which took place at Latham's house in Portland Road, London, W11 on 12 August 1966 from 9 p.m. until breakfast the following day.⁹⁶ Flanagan designed the invitation. They tore up a third of the book and chewed it to pulp which they spat into a flask. It was a direct action challenge to the Greenbergian critical position prevalent at St Martin's, in particular through Caro's teaching, of the notion of taste as being central to the judgement of art.⁹⁷ (Figure 2.21.)

Nonetheless, Townsend was disappointed by the absence of combative published responses. He wrote to the American critics and, despite Heron's reservations, sent a galley copy to Greenberg, to which he received no response (a subject that will be returned to shortly). Townsend's letter to Max Kozloff was framed as follows: '[I]n the hope that, since the article is somewhat controversial and mentions your role in art criticism, you will be interested in making some comment for publication. Some of Heron's statements seem to

⁹⁵ The present author draws this conclusion from the volume of correspondence sent to the editorial office, from many sources including Suzi Gablik, Dore Ashton, Adrian Rifkind, Roger Hilton, Alan Wood and others some of whom will be referred to below correspondence files, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London. Many years later in 1996, Heron and Townsend reminisced about the effect the article caused after Heron's award of Honorary Fellow, Bretton Hall, University of Leeds, September 30, 1996, with the present author. Melvin notebook 1996, Melvin papers, London. Heron's polemical contributions are mentioned frequently in discussions between the present author and the magazine's editorial assistants. Harrison, unpublished interview transcript, 28/3/08, Melvin papers, London.

⁹⁶ Flanagan's design gives the times of the party and an attached note records that Alex Trocchi, a part-time lecturer at the college was included in the invitation, Barry Flanagan archive, JBF/1/3.3, London.

⁹⁷ Flanagan described how he would 'escape' to the painting floors to draw; Flanagan, 26/10/08, unpublished interview, Melvin papers, London. Flanagan returned to this discussion and later said that drawing was 'completely taboo' on the Advanced Sculpture course, Flanagan, unpublished interview transcript, 22/1/09, Melvin papers, London.

require some sort of answer'.⁹⁸ Like Greenberg, Kozloff also failed to reply. Finally, Townsend approached Michael Fried who was rapidly becoming a champion of the US cause, arguing that because 'Heron touches on a number of points with which you have been closely concerned, I wondered whether you would care to make any comments on this article, and I would be very happy to publish anything you might wish to say.'⁹⁹ Fried replied in a letter that was not intended for publication:

[...] the issues are important, particularly as [they have been] raised by someone as serious and distinguished as Patrick Heron [...] makes it even more desirable that they be discussed. Unfortunately I am much too busy [...] to get into this [...] it might look as if I were merely trying to refute Mr Heron, whereas [...] I am sympathetic to him on a number of accounts (for example, his remarks about the lack of independent judgement shown by most art critics). If you are in touch with Mr Heron you might tell him that I am looking forward to meeting him and talking about those things; I expect to be in England through much of next fall and winter.¹⁰⁰

By contrast to the lukewarm reception in New York, Townsend successfully provoked and published several responses from elsewhere. In January 1967, Robert Hughes, the Australian art critic, who was based in London at the time, agreed with Heron's 'alarm at ritual prostration before NY which is now thought proper'.¹⁰¹ In *SI*'s February 1967 magazine, Alan Wood, the Principal of Cardiff School of Art, considered that it was 'up to the British critics to [...] bring out what is under their noses'.¹⁰² In the following issue, Neville Weston, Principal Lecturer in Art at Padgate College of Education, Warrington, opined that it was

⁹⁸ Townsend letter to Kozloff, 28/11/66, Heron correspondence file, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

⁹⁹ Townsend letter to Fried, 2/12/66, Heron correspondence file, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

¹⁰⁰ Fried letter to Townsend, 9/12/66, F correspondence file, 1966-1968, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

¹⁰¹ Hughes, "Letter to the editor." *SI*, Vol. 173, No. 885, January 1967, p. 8.

¹⁰² Wood, "Letter to the editor." *SI*, Vol. 173, No. 886, February 1967, p. 64.

'only by being honest that [we can] escape the stifling effects of parochialism'.¹⁰³ In May of the same year, *SI* published a letter from Dore Ashton, the magazine's New York correspondent.¹⁰⁴ She had written extensively on the Abstract Expressionist artists, many of whom were her friends, and her major book on the subject, *The Life and times of the New York School*, would be published in 1972.¹⁰⁵ Although she observed in her letter that she did not consider Heron's accusations to be addressed to her, she 'warned' him that the 'nationalistic drum beating in which he surprisingly indulges' was tantamount to that which he claimed to exist in the US. Heron replied in the traditional 'letter to the editor' format. Dismissing Ashton's 'high-minded little lecture',¹⁰⁶ he pointed out that he had lobbied the Tate Gallery to purchase works by US artists, to whom they now devoted a large amount of space, whereas MoMA had very few works by British artists (Bacon, Sickert, Lowry, Gilman, Sutherland and Ben Nicholson). He considered that the work of US painters had become over-intellectual and that 'the so called spontaneity is [...] an intellectually controlled formula standing for the spontaneous [...] Art is half way between the intuitive and the intellectual [...] British painting shows far greater resources of intuitive power and taste [...] taste is judgement.'¹⁰⁷

At this point, Alan Bowness felt it necessary to contribute to the discussion with an article called 'The American invasion and the British response' which was published in *SI* June 1967. He observed that 'rightly or wrongly, it is widely accepted in Britain today that New York has replaced Paris [...] as the main source of new ideas and [...] the measuring rod for art.'¹⁰⁸ He remarked that Heron's previously-cited article in *Arts* 'reflects in an exceptionally revealing fashion the reasons for English artists' wholehearted conversion to American

¹⁰³ Weston, "Letter to the editor." *SI*, Vol. 173, No. 887, March 1967, p. 119.

¹⁰⁴ Ashton, "Letter to the editor." *SI*, Vol. 173, No. 889, May 1967, p. 227.

¹⁰⁵ Dore Ashton *The Life and times of the New York School*. Bath: Adams and Dart, 1972. This was later republished as *The New York School, A Cultural Reckoning*, New York, USA, Viking, 1973.

¹⁰⁶ Heron, "Letter to the editor." *SI*, Vol. 173, No. 889, pp. 227.

¹⁰⁷ Heron letter, *SI*, Vol. 173, No. 889, pp. 227-228.

¹⁰⁸ Bowness, "The American invasion and the British response." *SI*, Vol. 173, No. 890, June 1967, pp. 285-93, p. 285.

painting [...] Heron and his friends had to take new bearings in totally changed circumstances.'¹⁰⁹

Although Bowness's article irritated Heron, because it referred to part of Heron's history, to explore the broader context, but did not address what Heron regarded as his paramount concern – which was that the seriousness and inventiveness of a group of British painters was being overlooked in favour of artists whose practices had become formulaic. Nonetheless, Townsend was glad of Bowness's contribution because he considered that 'an even handed, a detached position was necessary at this point in the debate.'¹¹⁰

To keep the discussion afloat, Townsend commissioned a cover from Heron, for *SI*'s July/August 1967 issue, which coincided with his exhibition at Richard Demarco's gallery in Edinburgh. The issue was the first occasion a combined summer publication had been produced, in an attempt to reduce publication costs. Student rate subscriptions were also introduced at this time. After the exhibition, Heron gave the gouache to Townsend, and it remained among the paintings he hung at his home. (Figure 2.22.)

In September 1967, Townsend published Greenberg's article on Anthony Caro. This described Caro as the 'first sculptor to digest [David] Smith's ideas instead of merely borrowing them.'¹¹¹ Greenberg considered Caro had 'made a breakthrough' and remarked that 'Caro's art is original because it expands taste in order to make room for itself.'¹¹² Contribution to the issue meant that Townsend sent him a complimentary copy. Greenberg thanked Townsend for sending the issue, which he found 'interesting and uneven (as most art magazines usually are)'.¹¹³ Townsend responded: 'The September issue was not one of our best, but I know precisely what you mean by "interesting and uneven (as art magazines usually are)". This is precisely how I feel thumbing through

¹⁰⁹ Bowness, *SI*, Vol. 173, No. 890, p. 291.

¹¹⁰ Townsend, Melvin notebook 1996, Melvin papers, London.

¹¹¹ Greenberg, "Anthony Caro." *SI*, Vol. 174, No. 892, pp. 116-7.

¹¹² Greenberg, *SI*, Vol. 174, No. 892, p. 117.

¹¹³ Greenberg letter to Townsend 20/09/67, G file to 1968, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

magazines from around the world and have yet to come across an art magazine which really comes up to the mark. I suppose we shall keep on trying.'¹¹⁴

More seriously, Greenberg wrote to Townsend because he was embarrassed that his contributor's profile listed his Caro essay as having been first published in the Kröller-Müller catalogue when it had, in fact, been written for the *Arts Yearbook* in 1964.¹¹⁵ Greenberg considered that the error rested with the museum who should have acknowledged the reprint as 'the piece shows its date in not taking into account the evolution of Caro's work since 1964.'¹¹⁶ Greenberg was justified in his irritation since he was a staunch supporter of Caro and his approach to teaching at St Martin's, but this error might imply to the reader that he was unaware of Caro's more recent work. Townsend was unaware of the article's previous appearance, and he told Greenberg that, had they known this, they probably would not have published it.¹¹⁷

In the same letter, almost as a casual aside, Greenberg asked for an off-print of Heron's December 1966 article because he was 'simply too lazy to go to the library and look it up.'¹¹⁸ Townsend sent a copy of Heron's article, stating that he should already have received a copy at the time it was published: 'We sent them to a number of American critics hoping that there might be some response. But perhaps American critics are as diffident and uncertain about engaging in polemics as critics of most other countries.'¹¹⁹

The discussion in *SI* continued with Gene Baro's 'British painting: the post-war generation' published in October 1967. Baro acknowledged that the context for the article was discussions carried on in *SI* on the emergence of abstract art in Britain and the influence of American painting since the Second World War. He observed that, until this younger generation, (the youngest of Heron's three

¹¹⁴ Townsend letter to Greenberg 16/10/67, G file to 1968, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

¹¹⁵ Greenberg, "Anthony Caro." *Arts Year book* 1965.

¹¹⁶ Greenberg letter to Townsend 20/09/67, G correspondence file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

¹¹⁷ Townsend letter to Greenberg 16/10/67, G correspondence file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

¹¹⁸ Greenberg letter to Townsend 20/09/67, G correspondence file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

¹¹⁹ Townsend letter to Greenberg 16/10/67, G correspondence file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

generations) emerged, the dominant strains in English painting had been romantic and narrative. He used a current exhibition, *Young British Artists* at the Palais des Beaux Arts in Brussels, to frame his discussion, noting that the participating artists were 'born too late to believe in the innate superiority of British Art [sic]', and they were 'a good index of the current preoccupations of the post war generation asserting their independence [from US influence].'¹²⁰

The increasing tensions between the two camps on either side of the Atlantic, over ownership of abstraction, surfaced in the *SI* editorial office in correspondence and became a topic of conversation with anyone passing through. Hearing from his wife that Townsend had said the American critics were angry about his article, Heron was exasperated: 'The bloody funks! Why didn't they come out into print with anything they have to say?'¹²¹ Townsend told Heron that 'Greenberg says he's too lazy to get to his library. This is bad, but more surprising because we sent him the tear sheets in the first instance. Perhaps they propose doing a knifing job on you.'¹²²

Heron referred to Greenberg's pretence that he had not read his article as 'a clumsy little manoeuvre', and surmised that 'his piece on Caro, and Baro's on the younger British painters are moves to discredit the charge that American critics are chauvinistic.'¹²³ Heron expressed his irritation to Townsend about Baro's historical assessment of British painting as romantic and narrative, and wondered where the 'purely painterly British artists fit', listing Constable, Bonington, Hogarth, Crome, Girtin.¹²⁴ With chagrin, he continued picking apart Baro's words:

who on earth are the 'tottery heirs in the thirties and forties' who believed in 'the innate superiority of British art'?! The innate inferiority of British art was what everyone believed, here, in the thirties and forties. He comes clean at last when he says: 'What is of concern to me here is the nature of the impact of

¹²⁰ Gene Baro, "British painting: The post-war generation." *SI*, Vol. 174, No. 893, p. 133.

¹²¹ Heron letter to Townsend, 21/9/67, Heron file, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

¹²² Townsend letter to Heron, 10/10/67, Heron file, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

¹²³ Heron letter to Townsend, 11/10/67, Heron file, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

¹²⁴ Heron letter to Townsend, 11/10/67, Heron file, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

contemporary American art on the young, the post-war generation [of British painters].¹²⁵

More generally, Heron found Baro's article a 'barely camouflaged piece of cultural imperialism! Only the Americans would pretend that we value the Pre-Raphaelites!'¹²⁶

Heron outlines how thinking about its essential characteristics might make 'our work in Britain so much more fruitful and important than that which we had originally admired so much from New York – it wasn't till I began to try to explain all this...that I hit on such a phrase as "recomplicate"! Having hit on it – one of course found immediate confirmation of it in one's own work and in that of the best of one's contemporaries over here.'¹²⁷ Heron suggested writing an article in advocacy of the British, by way of reply to the pro-American pieces by Kozloff and Baro.¹²⁸

In December 1967, Townsend wrote to Heron, to inform him that Edward Lucie-Smith's interview with Greenberg, in which Greenberg discussed his attitude to British painting and sculpture, would be published in January 1968. He asked whether Heron would write an article, responding to Greenberg's position, and saying that, 'some while ago you said you would like to come back on to this subject. This might be an opportune time, even though Greenberg while mentioning you does not really deal with the period you deal with in your first article for us.'¹²⁹ Townsend sent Heron a galley copy of the interview for his private use in preparing the article.¹³⁰ In his covering letter, Townsend confided that, to his irritation, Greenberg's prevarication over the interview had caused his trip to Italy for the *International Exhibition of Surrealism* to be postponed.¹³¹ The December issue included a letter from Adrian Rifkin, a postgraduate art history student at the University of Leeds, who commented

¹²⁵ Heron letter to Townsend, 11/10/67, Heron file, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

¹²⁶ Heron letter to Townsend, 11/10/67, Heron file, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

¹²⁷ Heron letter to Townsend, 3/11/67, Heron file, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

¹²⁸ Heron letter to Townsend, 5/11/67, Heron file, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

¹²⁹ Townsend letter to Heron, 18/12/67, Heron file, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

¹³⁰ Townsend letter to Heron, 18/12/67, Heron file, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

¹³¹ Townsend letter to Heron, 18/12/67, Heron file, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

that the magazine's reports 'on current British and American art are beyond question, uniquely thorough in art journalism. But [sic] have developed too distinct a style – a habit, appallingly uncritical, of regarding the current, as of its nature, as avant garde or new.'¹³²

To get a real sense of the impartiality of Townsend's strategy regarding the Anglo-American debate in the magazine's pages, this paragraph will provide a parallel conversation as an aside from the central discussion. As already mentioned Townsend instigated the policy of artists' covers. Aware of the forthcoming Roy Lichtenstein exhibition at the Tate Gallery, he contacted Lichtenstein's dealer, Leo Castelli, in November 1967 to enquiry whether the artist and gallery would be prepared to offer the magazine the colour plates at a reduced cost so they could run a work by him on the cover. Castelli replied that since they would be delighted to have the work showcased there would be no charge. He confirmed also that Lichtenstein was happy to contribute the cover free of charge.¹³³ Townsend regarded Lichtenstein's agreement to have a work on January 1968's cover as a coup. (Figure 2.23.) The following issue, February 1968, had a cover specially designed by James Rosenquist. Townsend was delighted with the success of these consecutive covers by American artists which, seen beside Heron's debate and the publication of Heron's cover design, proved that the editorial strategy was not partisan.¹³⁴ (Figures 2.24 and 2.25.)

At the beginning of January 1968, Heron reported to Townsend that he was 'working flat out' on 'an extremely critical examination' of Baro's article on British painters and the Greenberg interview. The length was difficult, but he would make it as 'short as possible, of course.'¹³⁵ He related an incident with the galley of the Greenberg interview that concerned him. He had just shown the interview to the painter Bryan Wynter, 'when who should arrive at the house, unannounced but Alan Bowness!'¹³⁶ There was no time to cover it up and Alan

¹³² Rifkin, "Letter to the editor." *SI*, Vol. 174, No. 895, p. 251.

¹³³ Castelli letter to Townsend, 16/12/67, C file to 1972, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

¹³⁴ Townsend was particularly pleased that the covers coincided with Heron's spotlight assertions of cultural hegemony which he considered to be necessary for strategic purposes, Melvin notebook 2000, Melvin papers, London.

¹³⁵ Heron letter to Townsend, 2/1/68, Heron file, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

¹³⁶ Heron letter to Townsend, 2/1/68, Heron file, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

'immediately recognised it.'¹³⁷ Heron 'had to confess that [he] was going to comment for [SI], which seemed to frighten Alan, who said, "Be careful!" Careful indeed! Why on earth should one be?'¹³⁸ Heron must have been concerned by the situation to remark upon it to Townsend.¹³⁹ In 2007 Harrison's reaction to this story was that Bowness was always telling people to be careful.¹⁴⁰

Heron's second article for *SI*, 'A kind of cultural imperialism?', was published in February 1968. He remarked to Townsend that the 'seeds for it' were conceived in his reply to Ashton's letter,¹⁴¹ published in *SI* in May 1967. In the article's opening lines, Heron reiterated that it is 'about time that we all became conscious of what is happening in the sphere of American Art promotion.'¹⁴² He considered Greenberg's representation of Caro as a successor to David Smith as typifying the problem he identified, because this opinion was held in tandem with the view that the sculptors Reg Butler, Lynn Chadwick, Kenneth Armitage and Henry Moore were minor artists. In Heron's opinion, the assessment given by Baro that the pre-Second World War British artists, broadly speaking, followed either Mondrian or Gabo was limited as in his opinion there were other modes of practice and he nor did consider that the St Ives school fitted these parameters.¹⁴³ Heron's second article elicited many published replies, prominent among which were those from American art historian, Suzi Gablik and Adrian Rifkin.¹⁴⁴

Barbara Reise's first contribution to *SI* continues the Anglo-US debate

SI May 1968 contained the first part of Barbara Reise's two-part article 'Greenberg and the Group: a Retrospective view', the second part of which followed in the June issue. It was not originally planned to extend over two

¹³⁷ Heron letter to Townsend, 2/1/68, Heron file, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

¹³⁸ Heron letter to Townsend, 2/1/68, Heron file, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

¹³⁹ Heron letter to Townsend, 2/1/68, Heron file, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

¹⁴⁰ Harrison, unpublished interview transcript, 28/03/07, Melvin papers, London

¹⁴¹ Heron letter to Townsend, 3/11/67, Heron file, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

¹⁴² Heron, "A kind of cultural imperialism?" *SI*, Vol. 175, No. 897, p. 62.

¹⁴³ Heron letter to Townsend, 2/1/68, Heron file, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

¹⁴⁴ Suzi Gablik, "Letter to the editor." *SI*, Vol. 175, No. 898, March 1968, p. 113. Adrian Rifkin, "Letter to the editor." *SI*, Vol. 175, No. 899, April 1968, p. 173.

issues, but Townsend considered the submitted copy too long to run as a single piece and asked her to recast it into two parts.

As previously noted, Barbara Reise was recommended to Townsend by Robert Rosenblum. In January 1968, she approached Townsend with a proposal to investigate reasons that Greenbergian criticism held sway over London in particular and the British art scene in general. Shortly after her arrival in the UK, on the strength of being a young American art history graduate, she was asked to lecture on 'Recent American Art' in conjunction with an exhibition of that name organised by the Arts Council of Great Britain in Nottingham, in 1966. Reise explained that when she saw the works in the exhibition she thought they looked out of place in the provincial English setting because the names were those found in art magazines and alien to the environment. She described how she dropped her notes and as she put it, 'spoke to the problem' which was to expose the way the works were packaged with presumptions about how they ought to be looked at from reading American art criticism especially Greenberg and Fried.¹⁴⁵ She described to Townsend her puzzlement about the effect Greenberg's writing had on British artists and students, which she later referred to as 'an art world controversy'.¹⁴⁶ Townsend considered that her approach could make a healthy contribution to the debate, and commissioned her to go ahead with what would be her first published article. He hoped it would draw Greenberg into transatlantic discussion and broaden Heron's published position.

Reise began the article by characterising Greenberg's polarised position as 'a Guru [*sic*] to some and a Satan to others',¹⁴⁷ contrasting Edward Lucie-Smith's praise with Heron's scepticism to reflect the familial squabble in the US.¹⁴⁸ She explained that reactions to his views in the UK were partly informed by his book, *Art and Culture*, which had been read both with suspicion and admiration.

Reise did not refer to the *Still and Chew* event since she was probably not aware of it. However she presented an approach to formalist criticism in

¹⁴⁵ Reise, "Career Account." Reise file, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

¹⁴⁶ Reise, "Career Account." Reise file, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

¹⁴⁷ Reise, "Greenberg and the group: part one." *SI*, Vol. 175, No. 900, May 1968, pp. 254-7.

¹⁴⁸ Reise, *SI*, Vol. 175, No. 900, May 1968, p. 254.

sympathy with the aims of Latham and Flanagan which was to overthrow assumptions that there was only one way of reading art. Townsend was pleased with the discussion Reise generated; he enjoyed the humour of her article's subtitle, 'a retrospective view', because it kept positions open.

Heron met Barbara Reise at an *SI* party in March 1968, at which they had a heated discussion on painting and formalism. She was working on her Greenberg critique, and Heron asked her back to his London flat to continue the conversation. Immediately afterwards, he sent her a copy of 'The ascendancy of London in the sixties' and invited her to spend Easter at his house, Eagle's Nest in Zennor, Cornwall with his family.¹⁴⁹ After her visit, she thanked him for his hospitality saying: 'I can't imagine a more concentrated experience of art, Nature and people all involved in Beauty.'¹⁵⁰

Her letter of thanks continued by extending her discussion with Heron on Greenberg's approach to criticism and Heron's *SI* article, remarking that she needed to read it several times before she understood her ambivalence to it. From her remarks to Heron referred to below, the present author considers her ambivalence was instinctive rather than due to the possible obtuseness of Heron's prose. She was in agreement that some British artists 'slavishly follow American type painting', that American art critics had forgotten the role played by the British in focusing critical attention on Abstract Expressionism and that London was an artistic centre rivalling New York now and Paris before the 1960s. However, Reise disagreed with his proposal that the 'only way forward' was what Heron described as the 'recompilation' of the picture surface, for two reasons. Before referring to her two reasons it is necessary to explain what Heron meant by the term 'recomplication'. In the article Heron opined that the 'first generation' American painters, had 'gone into production' since the 1950s.¹⁵¹ The eight he listed were Pollock, Rothko, De Kooning, Kline, Motherwell, Still and Gottlieb they had achieved a 'sweeping away of detail and

¹⁴⁹ Heron letter to Reise, 25/3/68, Heron file, Barbara Reise papers, TGA 786/5/2/78, London.

¹⁵⁰ Reise letter to Heron, Easter Sunday 1968, Heron file, Barbara Reise papers, TGA 786/5/2/78, London.

¹⁵¹ Heron, "The ascendancy of London in the sixties." *SI*, Vol. 172, No. 884, p. 280.

complex division of the picture surface'.¹⁵² They had achieved this 'almost at a bound and since they were unwilling to reverse engines and go in the only direction left open to them [...] some sort of recomplication of the picture surface, they have had to stand still'.¹⁵³ Reise objected to the singularity of 'the only way [...] which implies that forward is a direction carrying quality with it historically',¹⁵⁴ stating 'that there has been an alternative historical development from the Abstract Expressionists in America – that there is not a revolution between generations'.¹⁵⁵ In her letter to Heron, she pointed to a more discursive and fluid interchange of ideas between artists.

For Reise it was the Abstract Expressionists' scale and surface which shifted the relation of painting to viewer. It was not only about extremes of flatness, emptiness, size in relation to what happened before the flatness created a new type of space. This 'made the picture as a whole react in real space, establishing it almost as a sculptured thing'.¹⁵⁶ She considered viewing Pollock, Rothko and Newman as 'a total space experience [...] one either leaves everyday space (feet on ground...) or not'.¹⁵⁷

Reise expressed to Heron her irritation that he tended to characterise artistic developments as a series of revolutions and counter-revolutions, rather than engaging in ongoing investigations. She remarked that she did not intend to prioritise her interpretation of shifting developments over Heron's assessment, but that she would always refute the notion of 'the only way forward'.¹⁵⁸ And, while the cry of 'chauvinism' was easy to make when stylistic characteristics were discussed, with artists labelled by their nationality, she agreed with his 'attack on inverse chauvinism in the London Art World, [...] dealers, exhibition organisers and writers seem to do the same kind of nationalistic over-generalisations in an inverse way; American art is good, French comes next,

¹⁵² Heron, *SI*, Vol. 172, No. 884, p. 280.

¹⁵³ Heron, *SI*, Vol. 172, No. 884, p. 280.

¹⁵⁴ Reise letter to Heron, Easter Sunday 1968, Heron file, Barbara Reise papers, TGA 786/5/2/78, London.

¹⁵⁵ Reise letter to Heron, Easter Sunday 1968, Heron file, Barbara Reise papers, TGA 786/5/2/78, London.

¹⁵⁶ Reise letter to Heron, Easter Sunday 1968, Heron file, Barbara Reise papers, TGA 786/5/2/78, London.

¹⁵⁷ Reise letter to Heron, Easter Sunday 1968, Barbara Reise papers, TGA 786/5/2/78, London.

¹⁵⁸ Reise letter to Heron, Easter Sunday 1968, Barbara Reise papers, TGA 786/5/2/78, London.

British art is “local” and just OK – judgements that are made on political ideas rather than aesthetic confrontations.¹⁵⁹ She approached her correspondence with zeal and was determined in her efforts to get his agreement, promising to send Heron copies of her Greenberg article as soon as it was printed.¹⁶⁰

When Heron received a copy of the first part of Reise’s article, he wrote immediately to Townsend to remark how impressed he was, especially with her ‘excellent notes’ which he thought expressed her thorough knowledge on the subject. He looked forward to the next instalment.¹⁶¹ ‘Are there going, by the way, to be any more letters on the Heron-Greenberg subject? I was wondering whether, when every other voice is at last silent, you would welcome a little rounding up reply from me? Or not!?¹⁶²

Heron and Reise remained friends until Heron gave a talk at the ICA in December 1970, which Reise taped without his permission, causing a major disagreement between them. He was appalled that, in public at the end of his lecture, she declared that she had everything he said ‘on tape’.¹⁶³ He was at pains to establish whether she had taped it to play in New York. She apologised for her presumption, explaining that her reasoning was to have it ready at hand as research material for an article in which she planned to refute his published stance which she described as ‘power hungry imperialism’ which she would address along with those of Charles Harrison and Joseph Kosuth.¹⁶⁴ The sentiment she expressed will be discussed in Chapter 4 where consideration will be given to Harrison’s editorial projects and Kosuth’s involvement in these.

Reise’s extended article on Greenberg galvanised Philip Leider, editor of *ArtForum*, to write a letter to Townsend that was not intended for publication. He began with praise, confessing himself impressed by the quality of the reviews and ‘somewhat amazed to find myself for the first time since *ArtForum* was founded, writing a letter of congratulations to another editor [...] you cannot imagine what pleasure it gives me to see another art magazine at last

¹⁵⁹ Reise letter to Heron, Easter Sunday 1968, Barbara Reise papers, TGA 786/5/2/78, London.

¹⁶⁰ Reise letter to Heron, Easter Sunday 1968, Barbara Reise papers, TGA 786/5/2/78, London.

¹⁶¹ Heron letter to Townsend 3/5/68, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

¹⁶² Heron letter to Townsend 3/5/68, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

¹⁶³ Heron letter to Reise, 4/1/71, Barbara Reise papers, TGA 786/5/2/78, London.

¹⁶⁴ Reise letter to Heron, 7/1/71, Barbara Reise papers, TGA 786/5/2/78, London.

approaching the tone and level of seriousness on the subject which justifies its very existence and which it deserves.'¹⁶⁵ In particular, he singled out the October 1968 issue for its 'excellent and deeply useful material on Malevich and El Lissitzky' and described Aaron Scharf's article on Heartfield as 'nothing less than a revelation – at least to me.'¹⁶⁶

By contrast, Leider was disgusted and embarrassed by Reise's 'two unfortunate articles'.¹⁶⁷ He wondered whether Townsend agreed that Greenberg's writing was 'the single example of the standard that both of us are interested in published in *The Nation* and elsewhere over a long and isolated two decades'.¹⁶⁸ By this rationale, he considered that attacks on Greenberg were only justified from authors who 'have in their own work earned some right to it'.¹⁶⁹ Accordingly, Leider informed Townsend that he considered it his editorial responsibility to ensure that this were the case. He mentioned Sidney Tillim, the art historian and regular contributor to *ArtForum*, saying that 'there's rarely a piece [by him] that doesn't take time out for a passing whack at [Greenberg]'.¹⁷⁰ Rediscovery of this letter years later amused Townsend with regard to 'rights' being earned.¹⁷¹ Leider signed off 'in admiration to clap hands across the sea very, very nice work', referring to the networked dialogues between magazines across the Atlantic. An amusing postscript offered a lighter comment on transatlantic networks, noting it 'hilarious' that *Art and Artists* (SI's competitor) contained 'a deeply felt article on the coke bottle by the editor of my competitor *Art in America*'.¹⁷²

Harrison later described Reise's article as 'dreadful' because, rather than getting to the core of the critical values Greenberg was seeking to establish, she concentrated on the conflicts between artists and critics over how the work was

¹⁶⁵ Leider letter to Townsend 5/11/68, L correspondence file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

¹⁶⁶ Leider, 5/11/68, L correspondence file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

¹⁶⁷ Leider, 5/11/68, L correspondence file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

¹⁶⁸ Leider, 5/11/68, L correspondence file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

¹⁶⁹ Leider, 5/11/68, L correspondence file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

¹⁷⁰ Leider, 5/11/68, L correspondence file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

¹⁷¹ When the present author showed Townsend Leider's letter which he had subsequently forgotten, he was amused to recall how Reise's article had generated so much controversy and reiterated his position that anyone had the 'right' to assert their view, Melvin notebook, 1998. Melvin papers, London.

¹⁷² Leider, 5/11/68, L correspondence file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

being championed. The younger generation of US artists – in particular, Dan Flavin, Donald Judd, Sol LeWitt and Carl Andre – were dismissive of Greenberg's celebration of formalist thinking as the apotheosis of modernism, which they actively sought to disrupt, as will be seen in the next chapter. Nonetheless, Harrison recalled Townsend's irritation over Leider's response to it.¹⁷³ Whatever the qualities of Reise's two-part article, which are slightly peripheral to this discussion, its publication created a stir in the UK because, like Heron, she had dared to question formalist hegemony. In the US, its appearance created an opportunity for her second proposal to Townsend – a thorough investigation of the art practices termed 'Minimal' – which will be discussed in the next chapter.

¹⁷³ Harrison, unpublished interview transcript, 27/03/07, Melvin papers, London.

Chapter 3

Aspects of art called minimal: Reise's project *SI* April 1969

In July 1968, Townsend accepted Barbara Reise's proposal to undertake research on the Minimalist artists based in New York. This was to be the basis of an issue of *Studio International* which offered them a critical platform in the UK and coincided with the exhibition, *The Art of the Real*, at the Tate Gallery 24 April-1 June 1969. In this way, *SI* introduced the emerging movement to British readers, concentrating on a group of artists whose work had, in most cases, not been seen in the UK or Europe.

This chapter takes its title from Reise's section on Minimalism in *SI*'s April 1969 issue, which demonstrates the extent to which Townsend was prepared to take risks by acting on suggestions from his young associates. Even before Reise was given her official capacity as contributing editor, something contingent on this issue's success, Townsend trusted her, while maintaining benevolent, yet detached, control. It considers Reise's role in the planning and commissioning of contributions, and looks at how her introductory article, "Untitled 1969": a footnote on art and minimal-stylehood', identified similar intentions among different configurations of the New York-based artists who had been loosely lumped together under the grouping, 'Minimal art' or 'ABC art.'¹ The chapter explores Reise's intentions in her writing, specifically her use of the literary trope of footnotes as a structural enactment of the spatial encounter with the works she writes about.

Rather than providing a detailed description of the issue's content, this discussion examines the processes involved in the gathering of material. Drawing on archival material and analysing the networks engendered through the magazine, it considers how the planning of the issue evolved. Source material is taken from Townsend's editorial papers (especially the planning file for the issue) and his correspondence with Barbara Reise from July 1968 to August 1969. During her preparations for the issue, Reise regularly corresponded with the contributors. The letters exchanged with Flavin and

¹ Barbara Rose, "ABC Art." *Art in America*, Vol. 55, No. 5, October-November 1965, pp. 55-69.

LeWitt are particularly relevant because their discussions influenced Reise's thinking. Her correspondence with Judd is also referred to because it indicates the lack of specificity in the commissioning brief for the cover design, which was probably due to Reise's inexperience in the publishing field. The present author also refers to her own discussions with Peter Townsend, Charles Harrison, Seth Siegelaub, Barry Flanagan and Lucy Lippard, who have been introduced previously, and John Perreault, poet, art critic and artist, living in New York.

Following the publication of her two-part article, 'Greenberg and the Group: a retrospective view', in *SI* May and June 1968, Reise convinced Townsend of the relevance of focusing attention on a group of artists who had not been given what she considered proper critical attention. *SI*'s April 1969 issue came to be referred to as the Minimalism issue, but its consideration of Minimalism was, in fact, sandwiched between the ticketboard section and the reviews in a section of the magazine which was used for longer articles or features. Reise named this section 'Aspects of art called "minimal"', which was consistent with her approach to thinking about art practice as an interwoven process. Reise deliberately choose the word 'aspects' to provide scope for the section's breadth. Knowing that the artists concerned did not like the term Minimal, she suggested that a variety of approaches could come together as 'aspects', leading in different directions.

SI was by no means the first entrant to discussions on Minimalism. Richard Wollheim, Grote Professor of Mind and Logic, UCL, coined the term 'minimalism' in an essay called 'Minimal Art', published in *Arts Magazine*, January 1965.² Wollheim described the minimal in art as a quantitative characteristic of an attitude which he found embedded in a mode of production from Mallarmé, Dada and Duchamp to Rauschenberg and Johns. By contrast, Reise would point to the specific application of this style as a quantitative aesthetic response. In March 1967, John Perreault's essay, 'A minimal future?' was published in *Arts Magazine*.³ In this, Perreault suggested that the exhibition *Primary Structures: Younger American and British Sculptors*, held at the Jewish Museum in New York

² Richard Wollheim, "Minimal Art." *Arts Magazine*, Vol. 39, No. 4, January 1965, pp. 26-32.

³ John Perreault, "A Minimal Future: report on a phenomenon union made." *Arts Magazine*, Vol. 41, No. 5, March 1967, pp. 26-31.

City the previous year, launched the minimalist tendency in US public awareness.⁴ Perreault remarked that the exhibition showed 'varied and liberating works of art in a medium [...] off the "pedestal" and no longer a stepchild of painting.'⁵ The term primary structures in relation to sculpture became synonymous with Minimalism, along with the expression 'ABC art' coined by Barbara Rose in her article of the same name when she described the tendency as 'art stripped to its bare minimum.'⁶ The title may also refer to the Lower East side district in Manhattan which is the only area in the city having avenues named by letters, A, B, C and D. It is known as alphabetville and alphabet city.

It was two months after Perreault's article that *ArtForum*'s ground-breaking critique of Minimalism was initiated through the publication, in June 1967, of Michael Fried's essay 'Art and Objecthood'. This identified as 'literalist' artists Carl Andre, Donald Judd, Robert Morris, Tony Smith, Michael Steiner, to a lesser extent sometimes Ronald Bladon, Robert Grosvenor, Sol LeWitt, John McCracken, Robert Smithson, and contrasted them with Caro, Kenneth Noland, Jules Olitski and David Smith. In 'Art and Objecthood', Fried criticised the Minimalist tendency in art for its theatricality and emphasised the necessity for the viewer-spectator to behold the work and complete it.⁷ The issue of *ArtForum* included LeWitt's 'Paragraphs on Conceptual Art', part three of Robert Morris's 'Notes on sculpture' and an essay by Robert Smithson, entitled 'Towards the development of an air terminal site'.⁸

Gregory Battcock's anthology, *Minimal Art*, published in 1968, made the transition from magazine essay to book and was in print by the time of the *SI* issue.⁹ The anthology included Fried's and Perreault's essays, alongside

⁴ Primary Structures: Younger American and British Sculptors, Jewish Museum, New York, April 27 – June 12, 1966, organised by Kynaston McShine and Lucy Lippard.

⁵ Wollheim, *Arts Magazine*, April 1967, pp. 26-32.

⁶ Barbara Rose, "ABC Art." *Art in America*, Vol. 55, No. 5, October-November 1965, pp. 55-69,

⁷ Michael Fried, "Art and Objecthood.", *ArtForum* Vol. 5, No. 10, Summer 1967, pp. 12-23.

⁸ *ArtForum*, Vol. 5, No. 10, Summer 1967, Robert Morris, "Notes on sculpture." pp. 24-29, Sol LeWitt, "Paragraphs on Conceptual Art." pp. 78-84, Robert Smithson, "Towards the development of an air terminal site." pp. 36-40.

⁹ Gregory Battcock, *Minimal Art*, New York, EP Dutton, 1968.

Morris's 'Notes on sculpture', parts one to three, and Wollheim's 'Minimal Art' essay.

In Europe, another factor fuelling Reise's determination that *SI* should make a thorough investigation of the emerging movement was provided by the exhibition, *Minimal Art*, organised by Enno Develing at the Gemeentemuseum (23 March–26 May 1968) in The Hague which travelled to Kunsthalle Düsseldorf and Akademie der Kunste in Berlin. It was originally planned to tour to the Tate Gallery in London. On display were works by Andre, Bladen, Dan Flavin, Grosvenor, Judd, LeWitt, Morris, Tony Smith, Smithson and Michael Steiner. In his catalogue essay, Develing conjectured that 'minimal art objects *might even affect* space to the extent that a *spectator feels himself to be an intruder*'.¹⁰ This implied that a phenomenological encounter happened by default as the sculpture drew attention to the viewer's physicality. This might be related to the experimenter's presence in the experiment, an accepted anomaly in psychology. Develing's interpretation of the Minimalist work was directly contradictory to Fried's idea and that of some of the artists, that the viewer completes the work. Develing's suggestion of the viewer as an intruder within the sculptural space raised the spectre of affect or the performative experience of the self-conscious body, a position on which Reise sought to draw in her article for *SI*'s Minimalism issue. The catalogue also included Lucy Lippard's essay, '10 Structurists in 20 Paragraphs', the title of which signified order and repetition and posited an engagement with artistic intentions. Lippard did not attempt to reconcile diverse artistic approaches, an approach Reise found constructive.

Before the publication of Reise's Minimalism issue, *SI* had laid important foundations for the discussion. The May 1968 issue questioned the nature of sculpture as it is now apprehended and the milieu of Minimalism and other emerging practices. The fluid nature of these practices was brought together in Willoughby Sharp's article, 'Air Art', which introduced an exhibition of the same

¹⁰ *Minimal Art*, The Hague, Gemeentemuseum, 1968 p. 14. Emphasis added by the present author.

name he curated.¹¹ The article included photographs of David Medalla's *Cloud Canyon*, Morris's *Steam* and Graham Stevens's *Pneumatic Environment*. The same issue also contained an illustrated review of Morris's exhibition in Paris, at the Sonnabend Gallery in which Laurent Sauerwein noted how the physical presence of Morris's two sculptures within the space affected the viewer's perception of that space and served as a precursor for experiencing his work in the Minimal art show in The Hague.¹² Sauerwein considered Morris's work to be the most radical of new American sculpture and that it showed a complex departure from the European tradition by offering an alternative to the 'post-cubist trend in sculpture which prevails in Europe today and is best represented by the new English work (Caro, King...).'¹³

Two further articles on sculpture in this issue were by Charles Harrison. These also informed Reise's approach to the Minimalist project. The first was his interview with John Latham under the title, 'Where does the collision happen?' in which they discussed Latham's interest in contradiction and its associated simultaneous paradoxes. Harrison asks whether the roller painting that spells out 'Black is the same as white,' was the sort of contradiction he had in mind. Latham responded: 'The real entity is black/white, the isolated characteristic is a temporary in-phase state.'¹⁴ Harrison took great care with the layout of the article; it was a collaborative venture and a model Reise found instructive.¹⁵ The captions used statements from the interview and give a direct vitality, when read alongside the text which follows the question-and-answer format. One illustration, *Minimal Event*, was shown simply by the white of the printed page. The caption below it read:

the white surface is defined as white and as a surface by the incidence of minimal black on it. (This is a minimal event – not included in exhibitions of

¹¹ *Air Art*, March 13 -31, 1968, Arts Council, YM/YWHA, Philadelphia, toured to four other venues in the USA, artists included Hans Haacke, Les Levine, David Medalla, Robert Morris, Marcello Salvadori, Graham Stevens, John Van Saun and Andy Warhol.

¹² Sauerwein, "Two sculptures by Robert Morris." *SI*, Vol. 175, No. 900, pp. 276-277

¹³ Sauerwein, *SI*, Vol. 175, No. 900, p. 276.

¹⁴ Harrison, "Where does the collision happen?" *SI*, Vol. 175, No. 900, pp. 258-261, p. 258.

¹⁵ Reise refers to the article in a memo to Townsend, 28/10/68, Reise file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

minimal art partly because of different intention, partly because its implications are more interesting – the media makes it available.)¹⁶

In the second article Harrison responded to the experience of Flanagan's work and focused on the ways in which his work emphasised the physical encounter with sculpture's hitherto unanticipated material using cloth, sand and rope. He drew on the shared aims of Flanagan and Latham in destabilising orthodoxies.¹⁷ The temporary and fragile nature of the work's 'human vulnerability'¹⁸ was in marked contrast with the materials employed by the New Generation sculptors. His interventions in the discourse on Minimalism operated humorously through sleight of hand, by introducing a cloth, sand, string and rope combined to hint at anthropomorphism. This was at variance with Minimalist's purism. The way Harrison discussed how Flanagan's sculptures interacted together to affect the space helped to shape Reise's position.

In Reise's essay introducing Minimalism to *SI*'s readers, which will be discussed below, she used Battcock's anthology, *Minimal Art*, as one of the opening premises for her discussion, in which she expressed her reservations about the 'confusion' with which Battcock had assembled his material. She also made tangential reference to Wollheim's essay and The Hague's *Minimal Art* exhibition.¹⁹

Reise's planning of *SI* April 1969

Barbara Reise's commitment to new art practices was all-embracing, and she dedicated her life to the wide dissemination of artistic intentions, approaching the task of raising British understanding of new international art practices with missionary zeal. Reise had high regard for the sculptors from St Martin's, in particular for Louw and Flanagan, but, with the exception of Gilbert & George,

¹⁶ Harrison, "Where does the collision happen?" *SI*, Vol. 175, No. 900, p. 259.

¹⁷ Harrison, "Barry Flanagan's sculpture." *SI*, Vol. 175, (pp. 266-8), p. 267.

¹⁸ Harrison, "Barry Flanagan's sculpture." *SI*, Vol. 175, p. 268.

¹⁹ Reise, "'Untitled 1969': a footnote on art and minimal-stylehood." *SI*, Vol. 177, No. 910, April 1969, (pp. 166-172), p. 166.

she left the magazine's discussion of their work to Harrison in order to avoid conflicts in the editorial office.

Because *SI* was at a remove from the New York art scene with which the artists represented in the issue grappled on a daily basis, contributing to the issue gave them the opportunity to air their views away from the strictures of home and to speak directly to new readers. Importing the New York Minimalists' discussions changed the relationship between artist and a new public and opened up space for new exchanges. It also cast the work in a different light. The thrust of the Minimalism issue would be focused on artist's pages contributions, which fitted entirely with Townsend's approach.

Reise expressed frustration over her ability to manage the issue's deadlines and complained she heard had nothing from Bladen, Morris, or Grosvenor after she left New York.²⁰ Flavin was apparently the only one on time, LeWitt and Judd sent in their contributions at the last minute.²¹ Townsend nevertheless sympathised with her and maintained a pragmatic equilibrium, because he was confident that once the commissioning wheels had been set in motion the project would come to realisation.

Reise's visits to New York

When Reise was in New York during July 1968, a month after publication of the second part of her two-part article, 'Greenberg and the Group: a retrospective view', she contacted Andre, Flavin, LeWitt, Judd and Morris via their galleries to arrange meetings and studio visits. Her letter stated that *SI* London:

[W]ould like to devote an issue to ABC [sic] – minimal – primary structures artists when the [Minimal Art] show touring to Europe goes to the Tate next summer [in the event it did not go to London] – giving each artist some pages to do as he pleases: statements, drawings, etc, to enlighten or titillate the British

²⁰ Reise letter to Flavin, 5/3/69, Flavin file, Barbara Reise papers, TGA 786/5/2/58, London.

²¹ Reise letter to Flavin, 5/3/69, Flavin file, Barbara Reise papers, TGA 786/5/2/58, London.

art world which is really interested in first hand contact. Would you be interested?²²

While still in New York, she requested a further 35 off-prints of 'Greenberg and the Group', with the intention of using the two-part article to draw attention to the existence of *SI* as an alternative to *ArtForum* which could provide a platform for US-derived dialogues in the UK and Europe. She distributed copies to the artists and secured studio visits with all the artists of this group she had contacted. She was to become particularly friendly with Andre and LeWitt, both of whom would stay with her in London. The material she compiled during these meetings gave her the impetus to try to secure contributions from each of the artists. She kept Townsend informed of her progress with regular letters and postcards and during this time she had an intense but playful relationship with Townsend, as indicated by her self-designation in corresponding with him, 'Epistle of Barbara the Apostle to Peter.'²³

Even before Townsend had agreed the date to run the issue, Reise elicited interest in broad terms from Andre, Flavin, LeWitt and Judd. This gave Townsend confidence that they would have enough material to pursue the project. After the summer of 1968, she returned to teach at Coventry College of Art. In October 1968, Judd told Reise that he had realised he should use his article as an opportunity to 'write something to fend off the nonsense'.²⁴ The 'nonsense' he referred to was the critical tool of grouping artworks together purely on the basis of their style, as an absolute judgement without allowing for a discussion of similarities and differences between works. He held Greenberg and his followers responsible for this and considered that contemporary interests in scale, overall colour and wholeness were being overlooked by generalisation.²⁵ He developed this position in his contribution for *SI*, remarking

²² Townsend letter to Judd, 18/07/68 marked ditto Morris, Judd File, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

²³ Reise letter to Townsend 13/07/68, Reise file, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

²⁴ Reise memo to Townsend, reports on correspondence from Judd, Oct 1968, Reise file, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

²⁵ Reise memo, Oct 1968, Reise file, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

that he had 'expected a lot of stupid things to reoccur – movements, labels – but [he] didn't think there would be another attempt to impose a universal style.'²⁶ Reise immediately relayed Judd's intentions to Townsend as proof that her scheme for a special issue was gathering momentum.²⁷

In December 1968, Reise returned to New York to visit studios and have further conversations with artists. Correspondence from this time attests to her immersion in the project. She regularly reported conversations with the artists to Townsend, and she was impressed that the artists were easy to talk to and straightforward, giving her over 150 photographs, including unpublished early and recent work, work in progress and gallery installations.²⁸ She hoped to impress Townsend with her commitment to initiating controversial dialogue, and was determined to convince him that he would not regret the value of an issue dedicated to the US Minimalists. During the December visit, she described how:

ArtForum is out of favour with 'minimal' artists, who are refusing to write for them. This will put *Studio* into an interesting position. And no one likes the term apparently. LeWitt will 'probably' write about the wall drawings in LA washed off by rain after the show and 'the thinking behind it', Flavin, again 'probably' will work on the combination of two lectures, 'why make sculpture' and 'poverty and the artist'. Newman will introduce her to Frank Stella but she's cautioned by Flavin who says 'he's gone Greenberg'. Andre is 'very excited about the possibility of publishing some of his unknown poetry (unknown generally in the US)...and Judd may take on all critics and write on maximal as US minimal art.²⁹

More specifically in relation to *ArtForum*, Reise told Townsend that Barbara Rose, art critic and regular contributor to *ArtForum*, was 'universally disgusted by Flavin, Judd [and] Andre' and that, as an antidote to this hostility at home,

²⁶ Donald Judd, "Complaints part 1." *SI*, Vol. 177, No. 910, April 1969, (pp. 182-5), p. 183.

²⁷ Reise memo, Oct 1968, Reise file, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

²⁸ Reise letter to Townsend, 23/12/68, Reise file, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

²⁹ Townsend letter to Reise, 20/12/68, Reise file, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

the artists 'wanted to crack Britain open'. To Reise, this indicated the potential 'for some good transatlantic relations', signalling her intention to develop the sparring begun with Heron's two articles, discussed in the previous chapter.³⁰

When it came to selecting which artists would be invited to contribute statements for the April 1969 issue, Townsend gave Reise autonomy while retaining the formal position of officially commissioning them. He confirmed to Reise the participation of Andre, LeWitt, Flavin and Judd, possibly Morris, Bladen and Grosvenor, and commissioned a piece from Reise to identify the differences between the artists of approach.³¹

Andre was heartened by Reise's Greenberg articles and subscribed to *SI* as a result.³² Upon receiving Reise's invitation to contribute, he immediately decided on including his artwork *Flags: an opera for three voices, to de Kooning, Pollack, [sic] Gorky, 1964*'.³³ He described it as 'an even spaced concrete poetry styled lined [sic] on four full plate photos.' Reise was slightly disappointed that Andre did not also contribute a statement on his work because she thought his writing was exceptionally direct, but she gave the artists a free hand to use the magazine space as they felt most appropriate.³⁴

Considering herself as a conduit of information, she wanted Townsend to hear how highly regarded Richard Long was in New York, after his show at Konrad Fischer's gallery in Düsseldorf, and said *SI* should 'do something on Long'.³⁵ In *SI* October 1968, Harrison's review of *Prospekt 68, an international showcase* referred to Long's exhibition and to the organisers, Hans Strelow and Konrad Fischer. Harrison remarked that Fischer was, 'a young artist and the owner of a small but extremely enterprising Düsseldorf gallery where the young English sculptor Richard Long staged a strange & poetic first one-man show.'³⁶ Harrison noted 'how cosmopolitan [in comparison with the UK] the continental

³⁰ Reise letter to Townsend, 23/12/68, Reise file, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

³¹ Townsend letter to Reise, 30/12/68, Reise file, Peter Townsend archive ,TGA 20094, London.

³² Reise letter to Townsend, 23/12/68, Reise file, Peter Townsend archive ,TGA 20094, London.

³³ Andre, "Flags: an opera for three voices." *SI*, Vol. 177, No. 910, p.176, retains the original typographical error according to Andre's instruction.

³⁴ Reise described Andre's direct writing style in a letter to Flavin, 5/3/69, Flavin file, Barbara Reise papers, TGA 786/5/2/58, London.

³⁵ Richard Long, cover and artist's pages *SI*, Vol. 179, No. 920, March, 1970, *SI*, cover, artist's projects, Vol. 181, No. 933, May 1971, organised by Harrison.

³⁶ Harrison, "Düsseldorf Commentary." *SI*, 1968, Vol. 176, No. 905, p. 204.

galleries have become and how much work, particularly American, Morris, Andre, De Maria that is unlikely to be shown in London for some time [...].³⁷

During her winter trip to New York Reise formed new contacts. She met the radical dealer and publisher, Seth Siegelaub, who introduced her to Lucy Lippard, Ian Wilson,³⁸ Joseph Kosuth, Robert Barry, Douglas Huebler and Lawrence Weiner, all of whom became her friends, with the exception of Kosuth whom she considered to have an over-inflated sense of the importance of his contribution to new practices.³⁹ Townsend wanted the issue to be as 'inclusive as possible within our limitations of space'.⁴⁰ He told Reise that he thought that the Minimalism project would prove to be, if anything, more successful than predicted. He set the publication goal as April, to give enough time to correct galley proofs and assess the availability of colour blocks from the dealers for illustrations.⁴¹ Nonetheless, Townsend was impressed to hear that she had 'put the screws on [artists]' regarding deadlines. Reise gave the artists the deadline of 15 January 1969 for their submissions.

While Reise was still in New York in December 1968, she heard that the Tate Gallery decided to take Eugene Goossen's exhibition, *The Art of The Real*, instead of The Hague's Gemeentemuseum's *Minimal Art* exhibition. She wrote to Townsend, expressing her frustration,⁴² and articulated how she considered that Develing's more focused attention served the interests of the artists better. *The Art of the Real: an aspect of American Painting and Sculpture 1948 – 1968* was held at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, between 3 July and 8 September 1968. The exhibition was a cross-generational survey of work by thirty-three artists. Its implicit intention was to show connections between artists' aims, although this did not detract from the chance to see individual

³⁷ Harrison, "Düsseldorf Commentary." *SI*, 1968, Vol. 176, No. 905, p. 204. The present author's clarification of Harrison's comparison, which is relevant because at this point Harrison had not yet visited the US.

³⁸ Siegelaub remembered Wilson as an example to all the others, describing his presence as having a restraining effect and an enabling one, unpublished interview transcript, 24/2/08, Melvin papers, London. Reise supported Wilson and organised a discussion event with him at the ICA during the summer of 1975, Ian Wilson correspondence, Barbara Reise, TGA 786/5/2/157, London.

³⁹ Reise declares her views on Kosuth's work in note form, Kosuth file, Barbara Reise papers, TGA 786/5/2/58, London.

⁴⁰ Townsend letter to Reise, 30/12/68, Reise file, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

⁴¹ Townsend letter to Reise, 30/12/68, Reise file, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

⁴² Reise letter to Townsend, 23/12/68, Reise file, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

works.⁴³ In the catalogue, Goossen wrote that ‘today’s “real” [...] makes no direct appeal to the emotions, nor is it involved in uplift [...] it seems to have no desire to justify itself, but offers itself for whatever its uniqueness is worth – in the form of the simple, irreducible, irrefutable object’.⁴⁴ Dore Ashton would later comment, in a review for the September issue of *SI*, that, for her, the assumption of the ‘real’ denoted a shift away from symbolism and idealism.⁴⁵

Including some of the artists from the *Minimal Art* exhibition, *The Art of the Real* is relevant to this discussion for several reasons, which will be touched upon here. In the first place, the London showing of *The Art of the Real*, supported by the Arts Council of Great Britain (ACGB), ran from 24 April to 1 June 1969, so coinciding with the Minimal issue. It was the first time that works by Andre, Judd, LeWitt, Morris, Tony Smith and Smithson, had been shown in the UK. Siegelaub, who had loaned a work by Robert Huot, entitled *Two Suits* (1967), remembered it as an ‘important show, not to be underestimated’.⁴⁶ Thinking about this exhibition forty years later, Tim Hilton described his encounter with Andre’s *144 Pieces of Aluminium* on the floor of the exhibition as ‘unhinging his relations with the world’.⁴⁷

Townsend was impressed by *The Art of the Real* and retrospectively described the experience as unforgettable. He found LeWitt’s and Andre’s work particularly impressive when he first saw it, later reflecting on the qualities evoked by the contemplation of LeWitt’s *Untitled* (1966–68), while the fragility of LeWitt’s wall works more generally appealed to his thinking. Townsend was interested in the dynamic between morphological concerns and the corporeal in Andre’s work. While aesthetically reserved, Andre’s exploration of concrete poetry was likened by Townsend to ‘language without inflection’.⁴⁸ Townsend

⁴³ The other artists were Georgia O’Keeffe, Jasper Johns, Ellsworth Kelly, Paul Feeley, Ad Reinhardt, Jackson Pollock, Barnett Newman, David Smith, Alexander Liberman, Ellsworth Kelly, John McCracken, Frank Stella and Agnes Martin. Tony Smith, Mark Rothko, Clyfford Still, Ralph Humphrey, Patricia Johanson, Lyman Kipp, Antoni Milowski, Kenneth Nolan, Doug Ohlson, Raymond Parker, Larry Poons, Robert Swain and Sanford Wurmfeld.

⁴⁴ Goossen, *Art of the Real*, Museum of Modern Art, London, Arts Council Great Britain, 1968, p. 5.

⁴⁵ Dore Ashton, “New York Commentary.” (reviews *The Art of The Real*) *SI*, Vol. 176, No. 903, September 1968, pp. 92-3, 1968.

⁴⁶ Siegelaub, unpublished interview transcript, 20/6/06, Melvin papers, London.

⁴⁷ Hilton, unpublished interview transcript, 18/7/07, Melvin papers, London.

⁴⁸ Townsend, Melvin notebook, 2002, Melvin papers, London.

suggested that Reise should contact Stephen Bann regarding Andre, because Bann had recently published *Concrete Poetry: An International Anthology*.⁴⁹ In a letter to Bann, Reise described Andre's approach as 'minimal or concrete, related to dada but more visually and conceptually simplified and using the serialisation of page turning as part of the arrangement.'⁵⁰ Bann intimated that he was supportive of such intentions and curious to see the work.⁵¹

Three months after the Tate exhibition finished, *When Attitudes Become Form* opened at the ICA, in which Andre, LeWitt, Morris and Smithson figured in a different context among an international selection of artists.⁵² Flanagan's statement, published in the catalogue, dealt with sculptural relevance, which summed up a collective concern among the artists, arguing: 'Its not that sculpture can be seen as more things and in new ways within an expanding convention, but that the premis [sic] of sculptural thought and engagement is showing itself as a more sound and relevant basis for operation in the culture.'⁵³

The cover and contents

Intending to capitalise on the success of Lichtenstein and Rosenquist's covers, Townsend asked Reise to sound out whether Judd would consider designing something for the Minimalism issue.⁵⁴ He responded favourably, so Townsend formally wrote to commission Judd, explaining the magazine's policy of artist-designed covers and acknowledging that he was aware that it was an 'imposition' as no payment was involved. At the same time, he told Judd that the editorial office was 'very anxious to have his article' and that, alongside the other articles Reise had been instrumental in securing, it 'may make quite an impact over here'.⁵⁵ Townsend was good at demonstrating the advantages of circulation and publicity to ensure the artist's agreement. Townsend specified

⁴⁹ Stephen Bann, *Concrete Poetry: An International Anthology*, The London Magazine, 1967.

⁵⁰ Reise letter to Bann, 20/1/69, Barbara Reise papers, TGA 786/5/1/2, London.

⁵¹ Bann letter to Townsend, April 1969 file, SI, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

⁵² *When Attitudes Become Form*, curated by Harald Szeeman Kunsthalle, Bern, the exhibition toured to Museum Haus Lange at Krefeld. The London showing organised by Charles Harrison was an expanded and reconfigured version of the exhibition.

⁵³ *When Attitudes Become Form*, Kunsthalle Bern, 22.3-27.4.1969, unpaginated catalogue.

⁵⁴ Townsend letter to Reise, 30/12/68, Reise file, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

⁵⁵ Townsend letter to Reise, 30/12/68, Reise file, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

the requirements regarding the masthead and sent sample layouts.⁵⁶ When Judd agreed, Townsend immediately telephoned Reise with the news; she duly told Judd that Townsend was excited he had agreed to do the cover.⁵⁷

Judd told Reise, 'I think you had better let me know what your idea of my idea for a cover would be. Do you want a drawing of one of the pieces? I suppose there are possibilities for using color and things having more to do with the printing process but it's hard to do at a distance.'⁵⁸ He also asked whether the magazine's masthead design could be altered, but these elements were fixed. It is noteworthy that he sought Reise's thoughts, rather than merely presenting a final design, but she did not offer any guidance. One idea he dismissed was to provide a close-up photographic detail of one of the sculptures. Instead he submitted a diagrammatic line drawing in ink on paper with no colour, which he sent with his article, 'Complaints'. His instructions for the cover were: 'instead of running the drawing as a drawing with tonal variations in the line you might run the lines as straight black – but as you want.'⁵⁹ Because the drawing was unique he asked that it be returned to him.

The designer, Malcolm Lauder, thought Judd's cover design drawing 'needed sexing up',⁶⁰ and he decided to insert a turquoise background. Judd was furious because the design for the cover was credited to him. The following issue carried an apology in the ticketboard section, specifying that 'the cover was based on a drawing by Judd, not designed by him'. Alongside this, his drawing was printed as it should have appeared.⁶¹ (Figures 3.26 and 3.27.) Recalling the circumstances years later caused Townsend to hide his head in his hands. At the time, it was not surprising that Reise was angry, because it indicated a lack of management co-ordination, by which she felt increasingly frustrated.⁶²

⁵⁶ Townsend letter to Judd, 10/2/69, Judd File, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

⁵⁷ Reise letter to Judd, 10/2/69, Barbara Reise papers, TGA 786/5/1/2, London.

⁵⁸ Townsend letter to Reise, undated, Judd File, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

⁵⁹ Judd letter to Reise, 26/2/69, Judd File, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

⁶⁰ Townsend regretted the fact that he did not veto Lauder the designer's decision that the cover needed sexing up, Townsend, Melvin notebook 1999, Melvin papers, London.

⁶¹ "Apology cover based on a design by Donald Judd." *SI*, May 1969, Vol. 177, No. 911, p. 211.

⁶² Reise memo to Townsend, lists a series of 'Townsend's editorial blunders and *SI* management inefficiencies.' Reise file, not dated, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London. Her criticisms were frequently recalled by Townsend in discussion with the present author, Melvin notebooks, 1998 and 2002, Melvin papers, London.

In the issue itself, Reise's essay was so constructed as to use the form of the footnote to suggest the scale of the works under discussion. As a device she intended it to draw attention to what is peripheral in sculptural experience as well as what is necessary to illuminate the space in which the work is seen. The footnote provides detail for the body text. The idea of the article's being one long footnote was amusing as well as serious, and it shows how she was toying with treating her text as sculptural form. She used the structure to make an analogy between literature and the visual experience, combining the associated phenomena of viewing and reading. By calling her text, 'Untitled, 1969', she also played with the way the artists used titles.

Reise discussed 'sculptural objecthood', which Morris had identified in 'Notes on sculpture', to set out categories and intention.⁶³ She identified the origin of the idea of Minimalism in Wollheim's 1965 designation. Her introductory text used the idea of the journey as a metaphor for experience's refutation of fixity or unidirectional vision. Reise argues that morphological concerns with style obscured the ideas inherent in the work by highlighting a general homogeneity, based loosely on look and shape, rather than artistic intention. Reise objected to what she regarded as a narrow-minded reading of Minimalism, and took openness as her model by placing it in contradistinction to the formalist critical position.

Reise used the occasion of this text to present alternative groupings of artists, by providing the context for artistic engagement. She also posed a series of questions which considered the decisions taken in presenting the work – relating to size or scale – and how they had evolved. She considered the means of manufacture of the work and the conceptual basis underlying the aesthetic experience. She regarded Andre, Flavin, Judd, LeWitt and Morris as the most 'conceptually interesting' of the artists in this group, on account of the fact that 'their ideas are strong and interesting enough to live beyond the individual phenomenal experience of physical objects'.⁶⁴ Although technical issues were

⁶³ Robert Morris, "Notes on sculpture." *ArtForum*, Vol. 4, No. 6, February 1966, pp. 42-4.

⁶⁴ Townsend letter to Reise, 23/12/68, Reise file, Peter Townsend archive ,TGA 20094, London.

relevant in the fabrication of their work, these were not given a greater emphasis than the thought-processes intrinsic to their construction.⁶⁵

The visual layout of the issue received careful attention from Lauder, giving the reader-viewer a sense of the scope of the work. The section began with a photograph of Judd's *Untitled, 1961-63-65* (no. 9-R), which filled the page the section's title, 'Aspects of art called "minimal"' was at the top. (Figure 3.28.) Reise's illustrated essay, "Untitled 1969": a footnote on art and minimal-stylehood' followed, then Flavin's 'Several more remarks...' in which there were no illustrations.

Flavin opened his article by quoting from a letter he sent to Philip Leider, which stated that, 'When I can engender a sense of cause in fun, I am free to write.'⁶⁶ He used this gambit to connect with an observation that Leider had previously made to Flavin and continued, 'last year the editor of a popular American magazine [...] advised me that the three finest minds of contemporary art were Clement Greenberg, Michael Fried and Sidney Tillim. Significantly, none of these preposterously praised, presumptuous, self-important [...] moderators on art is known as an artist first.'⁶⁷

Flavin's article ridicules *ArtForum* for not addressing the field of art practice outside the direction of 'Editor Leider's "Hitler Youth".'⁶⁸ However, his article is in house, in scene and in gossip (these expressions are of the present author's devising) and would be hard for a reader outside the confines of the New York art scene to follow, other than recognising the obvious dismissal of a small controlling group's personality-led critical agenda which was hogging the pages of the art magazine. In publishing it, *SI* presents an antidote to the narrow New York scene by bringing it to a wider readership.

After this appeared *An opera by Carl Andre*, (figure 3.29), followed by a page of black and white photographs of Andre's works and a double-page spread of works by artists who, for various reasons, had not contributed texts – Bladen, Steiner, Smith and Grosvenor. Then came Smithson's 'Aerial Art' and Judd's

⁶⁵ Barbara Reise, "Untitled footnote on minimal-stylehood." *SI*, April 1969, Vol. 177, No. 910, p. 172.

⁶⁶ Dan Flavin, "Several more remarks..." *SI*, Vol. 177, (pp. 173-175), p. 173.

⁶⁷ Flavin, "Several more remarks..." *SI*, Vol. 177, p. 174.

⁶⁸ Flavin, "Several more remarks..." *SI*, Vol. 177, p. 174.

'Complaints part 1', followed by a colour sequence showing Judd's installation at Leo Castelli's gallery, Andre's scatter piece from Dwan Gallery, an installation view of Flavin's work in the office at Dwan and installation shots of Robert Grosvenor's *Still no Title* (1966) at Fishbach Gallery and Morris's *Untitled* (1967) at Castelli Gallery. LeWitt's *Drawing Series 1968 (Fours)* illustrated the last page in the section. (Figures 3.30, 3.31 and 3.32.)

Judd's article is more measured and less humorous than Flavin's, referring to the stranglehold on critical discussion brought about by mindless adherence to Greenbergian values. In his covering letter, addressed to Reise and Townsend, he referred to it as a 'diatribe'. He insisted that the 'grammar or the contention must not be changed' nor could they add their own title.⁶⁹ He cites the Greenberg interview conducted by Lucie-Smith, published by *SI* in January 1968, with the judgement, 'one of Greenberg's worst statements, attributing everything to money, was in *SI* last year [...] "Minimal Art has swept the museums and art buffs but it doesn't sell commensurately because it is too hard to install".' Judd concluded the article abruptly with the comment, 'See part 2. I've had enough of this.'⁷⁰

The other artists' contributions were entirely different. Andre's was a text as artwork.⁷¹ Smithson outlined possible strategies of artist interventions in an airport site that would draw attention to its unseen qualities.⁷² LeWitt provided an account of instructions for a book devised through a system of four drawings. Townsend was so interested in the article's proposition that he commissioned LeWitt for the book shortly after the magazine went to print.⁷³

Townsend was quite shocked by the way Flavin and Judd had decided to spotlight those in favour with Greenbergian critical positions by personalising it. Although he conceded that the relative positions were interesting to read about, he felt that personality-driven mudslinging did not seem relevant to the

⁶⁹ Judd letter to Reise, Judd File 26/2/69, TGA 20096, London.

⁷⁰ Judd, "Complaints." *SI*, Vol. 177, (pp. 182-184), p. 184.

⁷¹ Andre, "An opera for three voices." *SI*, Vol. 177, p. 176.

⁷² Smithson, "Aerial Art." *SI*, Vol. 177, pp. 180-181.

⁷³ Townsend letter to LeWitt, April 1969, Miscellaneous correspondence, Blue box to 1975, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

British reader. When he received LeWitt's article, he described it as 'straightforward, thank God.'⁷⁴

Before the issue was published, Townsend decided it would be appropriate to warn Philip Leider so he wrote to alert him that some of the articles were controversial in attitude, in particular criticising *ArtForum*. Townsend hoped that the *SI* issue would open discussions and that Leider would commission responses in New York. Instead, Leider replied:

It seems you are informing me that your April issue contains attacks on ARTFORUM by Don Judd, Dan Flavin "and others". This isn't because you think ARTFORUM should be attacked – on the contrary you admire the magazine. It's just that you live "live in a country where tides move slowly and respectabilities (?) are often more highly considered than opinions and principle." If I read you properly, your own opinions and principles, as an editor, are brushed aside in order to give "contributors" what you call "their head". I see. Well. Best wishes to you and *Studio International*.⁷⁵

Leider's response amused Townsend because it showed up their differences. Townsend knew how effective *SI* would be as a platform for the US minimalists because it would import their artistic concerns for the benefit of British readers. He hoped to achieve an exchange of ideas which would raise the profile of the magazine by generating the engagement of a wider readership in current debate.⁷⁶ When the discussion of artistic intention increased sales, as happened with this issue, he felt he had scored a double success.⁷⁷

⁷⁴ Reise letter to LeWitt 17/3/69, Barbara Reise papers, TGA 786/5/2/97, London.

⁷⁵ Philip Leider letter to Townsend 4/1/69, April 1969 file. Copy of Townsend's letter has not survived, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

⁷⁶ Townsend's aim is reported in William Townsend's journals Vol. xxxvi August 1965 - March 1966, Vol. xxxvii March 1966 - May 1967, Vol. xxxviii May 1967 - November 1968, Vol. xxxix November 1968 - June 1970. This is a theme returned to by Townsend and the assistant editors in discussion with the present author. Townsend, Melvin notebooks, 1999, 2002, Melvin papers, London. Harrison, unpublished interview transcript, 28/3/07, McEwen, unpublished interview transcript, 1/11/06 and Whitford, unpublished interview transcript 25/10/06, Melvin papers, London.

⁷⁷ Townsend, Melvin notebooks, 1999, 2002, Melvin papers, London.

The exchanges which led to the artist's pages

What follows here, rather than feedback on the publication itself, which falls below this section, is an account of the correspondence between Reise and Flavin and Reise and LeWitt after Reise had returned to London. This series of letters provides insight into the way the artists used Reise as a sounding-board for their ideas and how this in turn influenced her writing. Since she was an avid letter-writer these exchanges punctuated the various processes leading to the development of the artist's pages for *SI's Minimalism* issue, April 1969.

Correspondences – Flavin and Reise

In a letter to Flavin in January 1969, Reise described his writing as 'garrulous'. Flavin considered the term inappropriate. She was referring to his article 'Some other Comments', which was published in *ArtForum* in December 1967.⁷⁸ For Reise the term was akin to chatter; like gossip and anecdote, it remained on the periphery. These asides were on the edge of epistemological concerns, like fluff, metaphorical signs of culture's by-products that are, as a consequence, perceived as lightweight. However, their subsequent discussion revealed his intention of exposing a network of exchanges in a transparent text, gathered from many sources. His method of collaged text constructed from his correspondence and correspondents with direct quotation or paraphrasing from articles he had read, formed what Reise described to Flavin as 'a sort of protean gossip style'.⁷⁹ Flavin's juxtaposing of these sources gave centre stage to method in what might otherwise as a subject, the snippets and gossip, have been thought of as dull and hermetic. Her own contribution she 'tried very hard to keep straightforward and fair and informative'.⁸⁰ To underscore the seriousness with which she was tackling her article, she told him that the editorial office were referring to it as her *War and Peace*.⁸¹ Reise and Flavin's personal asides to be found in the archive tell a more vulnerable story than the

⁷⁸ Dan Flavin, "Some other comments." *ArtForum* Vol. 6, No. 4, December 1967.

⁷⁹ Reise letter to Flavin, 17/1/69, Barbara Reise papers, TGA 786/5/2/58, London.

⁸⁰ Reise letter to Flavin, 17/1/69, Barbara Reise papers, TGA 786/5/2/58, London.

⁸¹ Reise letter to Flavin, 26/2/69, Barbara Reise papers, TGA 786/5/2/58, London.

published version might allow. Their correspondence is exposing. It echoes Flavin's use of light as sculptural material in his work.

Further into their correspondence, Flavin questioned Reise's use of footnotes in 'Greenberg and the Group', as playing 'the pseudo academic' game of his followers. Reise explained that the didactic framework was an attempt to 'fight fire with fire'. In a deliberate attempt to use the form as an oblique parody of the writing she was criticising, she wanted to publish the notes first, with the body text following in the subsequent issue, but Townsend had 'got scared' of her proposed stylistic innovation and limited her to the convention of body text and footnotes.⁸²

The arrival of Flavin's copy at the beginning of March concerned Reise and Townsend. Reise was particularly 'horrified' that he had involved so many of her acquaintances and friends in New York, in effect drawing them all into his contentions with *ArtForum*, and appalled at how he drew on their correspondence, especially the citation of her attitude to teaching as a method 'to crack them open', a throwaway remark about the frustrations of dealing with students on a particular day.⁸³

Nonetheless, Flavin's article was deemed by Reise, as 'good, irritating, enlightening & not plain sounding (simple sounding maybe).' She told Flavin that Judd's article 'Complaints' paralleled his own because it concentrated on their mutual irritations with *ArtForum*, it had 'a little less on B. Rose and more on M. Fried and much on P. Leider'.⁸⁴ On receiving it, she set about rereading his letters, and decided that Flavin expected too much from what she described as 'the critic's sanctity of judgement'.⁸⁵ She considered this to be hypercritical because by writing for magazines he was taking a critic's position and could not have it both ways, it 'was more than he submitted himself to as a writer and artist' as if he were above the position of the critic.⁸⁶ In private such an exchange is fine, but to present it in the public domain transforms the discussion by violated confidence. 'I've learnt one lesson: be careful what you

⁸² Reise letter to Flavin, 17/1/69, Barbara Reise papers, TGA 786/5/2/58, London.

⁸³ Reise letter to Flavin, 5/3/69, Barbara Reise papers, TGA 786/5/2/58, London.

⁸⁴ Reise letter to Flavin, 5/3/69, Barbara Reise papers, TGA 786/5/2/58, London.

⁸⁵ Reise letter to Flavin, 5/3/69, Barbara Reise papers, TGA 786/5/2/58, London.

⁸⁶ Reise letter to Flavin, 5/3/69, Barbara Reise papers, TGA 786/5/2/58, London.

write to D. Flavin, for you will find whatever self you present there publicised to the world'.⁸⁷

Reise asked Flavin to remove her name from his article by changing the heading to 'Letter to a Young Art Schoolteacher', making it less specific but more valid in outlining a position. Should he refuse to make the changes, Reise declared her intention of writing a letter for publication in the following issue to criticise his critical standards, stating that she would not 'harbor secret vengeful feelings.'⁸⁸ Flavin apologised by telegram and deleted the passage.⁸⁹

Flavin's article compared directly with his methods of compiling Judd's catalogue essay, 'Several quotations for Don Judd', for the Whitney Museum exhibition, which Reise showed Townsend before her visit. It is well thumbed and coffee-stained.⁹⁰ His strategic juxtaposition of many fragments to give voice to an evolving position and maintain the polyphonic sense is not unlike Walter Benjamin's stated ideal to write a text entirely from quotations. Flavin treated his own writing as if it were by another author, parallel to the motion inherent in the controlled exposure of the artwork. Flavin's article's collaged structure is present to read without the archive, but the magazine pages do not do justice to the collaboration between Reise and Flavin. The archive allows a glimpse behind the scenes more illuminating than its published form permits.

Correspondences – LeWitt and Reise

LeWitt and Reise had become close friends since first meeting in New York in July 1968 and they had frequent exchanges until she died. LeWitt sometimes stayed with Reise when in London. Reise invited LeWitt to teach at Coventry early in 1969, and she was instrumental in facilitating his book project with *SI*

⁸⁷ Reise letter to Flavin 26/2/69, Barbara Reise papers, TGA 786/5/2/58, London.

⁸⁸ Reise letter to Flavin 26/2/69, Barbara Reise papers, TGA 786/5/2/58, London.

⁸⁹ The deletion from Flavin's letter reads, '[I]f I were you, I would not try 'to crack' the young art students 'open'. (that claim reads disgustingly.) I have no hope, no expectation for youngsters but they do continue to educate me. Incidentally I do try to inform with them. Please don't 'teach' at but cooperate with.' Flavin letter to Reise 15/1/69, Barbara Reise papers, TGA 786/5/2/58, London.

⁹⁰ Donald Judd, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, exhibition catalogue, 27 February - 24 March 1968, unpaginated, Judd file, Barbara Reise papers, TGA 786/5/2/86, London.

later that year. LeWitt was the only artist correspondent to give Reise financial support over her ArtstrA project; unprompted, he contributed \$500.⁹¹

LeWitt's articulation of intentions in his letters to Reise are a testament to his thought-processes. He used their correspondence to explore ideas about the nature of his practice and these exchanges found their way into the discussions he was having with artists in New York. Reise responded with accounts of conversations she had with her friends and encounters in Coventry. She made frequent reference to her irritation with the London art scene, as well as the strange provincialism of Britain, as exemplified by post offices and public transport being out of action for a long period over Christmas.⁹²

Reise commissioned LeWitt to write a statement about his approach to making work for the April 1969 issue. He began his response by explaining that he knew what he wanted to say but that it seemed too much like an explanation when he tried to write it.⁹³ This remark demonstrates LeWitt's aim to use language as an analogue and not simply as a description of intent.

Since I believe that the work of art concerns itself with how the work is made, the use of a system shows all possibilities and narration, also preliminary sketches and statements are as much a part of the process and not inferior to the final result, this kind of approach is compatible. [...] (The analogy with music: one needn't have the ability or desire to read the 'score' in order to enjoy the piece). But one cannot completely perceive this kind of work without knowing there is a plan.⁹⁴

Reise found that LeWitt's thinking through practice was in line with the way she was constructing her own writing. She yearned to write with his clarity of expression, with description embedded in intention. His text gave her the

⁹¹ ArtstrA was the name given by Reise to a project which would combine an art world information exchange and listings with a propriety club of cheap flights, a publishing house and distribution centre, Barbara Reise papers, TGA 786/5/8/1, London.

⁹² Reise comments on her irritations in a letter to LeWitt, 8/1/70, Sol LeWitt file, Barbara Reise papers, TGA 786/5/2/97, London.

⁹³ LeWitt letter to Reise, 22/2/69, Barbara Reise papers, 786/5/2/97, London.

⁹⁴ LeWitt letter to Reise, 22/2/69, Barbara Reise papers, 786/5/2/97, London.

impetus to rewrite her own article for the issue by using the text as a footnote to the idea of minimal stylehood.⁹⁵

Critical feedback after publication

The responses to the issue achieved Townsend's aims: circulation increased, discussion was generated and the issue was eagerly sought after for the first-hand documentation of the artists' intentions as well as for the reproductions of work. Distant from the backbiting of New York art circles, British readers generally overlooked Judd's and Flavin's barbed comments. They focused instead on the artists' contributions and the opportunity to see good colour reproductions of their work, which was of topical concern to artists and students in the UK.

When the issue came out Barry Flanagan joined the debate on the New York art scene in *SI* in the following issue. He was the only British artist to draw attention in the magazine, albeit obliquely, to the editorial strategy employed in giving a mouthpiece to artists. He called on Townsend, at the office with a letter he had drafted to the art publisher and exhibition organiser, Kasper König, two years previously but not sent.⁹⁶ Townsend was pleased with the way his letter drew out the different standpoints taken by the artists and on the magazine pages.⁹⁷ Flanagan wrote, 'I wonder what tactical genius lies behind the gallant studio's move to cause action in these pages from New York placed artists, literary trained and anxious to expound, and trace the historical trail for themselves [...].'⁹⁸ Flanagan pondered whether the rationale behind the editorial decision to commission the New York artists was strategic, and pointed out that he was interested in 'turnover, not take over.'⁹⁹ Flanagan was sceptical of the view that British artists' approaches were being perceived as influenced by

⁹⁵ Reise letter to LeWitt, 17/3/69, Barbara Reise papers, 786/5/2/97, London.

⁹⁶ Flanagan, unpublished interview transcript, 27/10/08, Melvin papers, London.

⁹⁷ May 1969 file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

⁹⁸ Flanagan, 'An Old New York letter.' *SI*, Vol. 177 No. 911 p. 208.

⁹⁹ Flanagan, *SI*, Vol. 177, p. 208.

American artists, or equally irritating, marginalised by the debates surrounding American artists.¹⁰⁰

Flanagan's contribution to the discussion drew attention to the responsibility of artists in the exchange of ideas and their role of 'public communicators'. He wrote, 'it is about time [the] institutional strata took on some creative responsibility, instead of operating within the safe untouchable historic "professional" cocoon.'¹⁰¹

SI May 1969 also saw published responses from Joe Masheck and Ken Jackson to the Minimalism issue. Masheck regarded it as promoting biased positions and alienating critical responsibility. 'Corn-fed egotism' was the editor's title for his letter. Masheck noted that, 'We've been treated to the spectacle of more published statements by artists themselves, particularly sculptors. The resultant effect cuts two ways. First we happily discovered that quite a few Englishmen turn out to be not just articulate but objective even about their own work [...] but no bullshit artist quite matches the corn-fed egotism of the Big Time American Artist.'¹⁰² The juxtaposition of these with Flanagan's contribution displayed Townsend's commitment to using the magazine as a platform for open enquiry in which artists could present concerns in a level critical arena.

The discussion continued in the June issue, with Reise providing further explanations of the artists' intentions and Enno Develing contributing a letter questioning some of her categorisations of the artists' attitudes. July-August saw a contribution from José Luis Castillejo and replies by Reise to Castillejo and to Develing.¹⁰³

After the publication of 'An Old New York Letter', Townsend encouraged Flanagan to contribute further to the discussion, and 'A literary work' was included in *SI*'s July-August ticketboard section. This statement emphasised the artist's challenge to the mechanisms of the art world and its institutions and pleaded for the visual arts, rather than its theories to take the lead in culture. It

¹⁰⁰ Flanagan, unpublished interview transcript, 27/10/08, Melvin papers, London.

¹⁰¹ Flanagan, *SI*, Vol. 177, p. 208.

¹⁰² Masheck, "Letter to the editor." *SI*, Vol. 177, No. 911, pp. 209-210.

¹⁰³ Flanagan, "A literary work." *SI*, Vol. 178, No. 913, pp. 4-5.

was a rebuke to Judd and Flavin, urging them to look outside their immediate circle and not to be 'servile to particular [...] literary affiliates, this is to "trap a whole thought process" [...] but instead] cut through the semantic stalemate'.¹⁰⁴

Readers in the US regarded *SI* April issue in a different light, because the work was not unfamiliar to them. For those who contributed there were questions about how they had been represented. Jack Burnham, contributor to *ArtForum* and author of the 1968 book, *Beyond Modern Sculpture: the effects of Science and Technology on the Sculpture of the Century*, felt pressed by the Minimalism issue to write to Townsend on the magazine's exposure of cracks within the formalist position:

The problem of the formalist establishment seems to be uppermost as a point of debate in a number of your current issues. I suspect as soon as this became an open discussion, the battle was over. For me as an American, your issue on Judd and Flavin was almost an embarrassment. Not only was there a great lack of taste and good grace in their articles but it is obvious to most everybody that both men are patently formalists involved in a very petty family quarrel. Perhaps there is some merit in allowing such feelings to go on display.¹⁰⁵

In a similar vein, Charles Biederman remarked, in a letter to Townsend, that: 'American artists will continue to remain silly chauvinistic adolescents until they grow up and realize that from differences one can learn more [...] than from agreements.'¹⁰⁶

The contentiousness of Judd and Flavin's contributions boosted sales of *SI* in the US. Over 500 copies of the issue were sold in one New York bookstore and, within six months of its publication, more copies had been sold in the US than in the UK.¹⁰⁷ In a text that remained unpublished at the time, entitled 'Notes on edited publications', Reise provides a reflective account of the immediate

¹⁰⁴ Flanagan, *SI*, Vol. 178, No. 913, p. 4.

¹⁰⁵ Jack Burnham letter to Townsend 17/7/69, B correspondence file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

¹⁰⁶ Biederman letter to Townsend 5/10/69, Misc correspondence, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

¹⁰⁷ Reise curriculum vitae and personal statement, Barbara Reise papers, TGA 786/5/8/1/3, London.

aftermath of publication.¹⁰⁸ In the notes, she acknowledged that the material had a 'scandalous flavour as both Flavin and Judd took the occasion to attack Greenberg and his influence on *ArtForum*. As a result, the issue was a 'hot topic [...] besides being the first serious coverage of the artists' work in English.'¹⁰⁹

One immediate consequence of the Minimalism issue was the production and distribution by Mackays of Sol LeWitt's artist's book. LeWitt proposed this on Townsend's invitation, sending a page-by-page layout. It was simply printed in black and white, sold for 50p a copy and was an immediate success. The following year, a four-colour version was published with Townsend's agreement, in conjunction with LeWitt's exhibition at the Gemeentemuseum and instead of a catalogue.¹¹⁰

Reise's correspondence with New York based artist Dan Graham after the publication of the Minimalism issue engaged with ideas, aesthetics and the framing of discussions. Graham sent some samples of writing to Townsend and Reise, in particular a critical study of Sol LeWitt's decision-making process and the ways in which these were manifested in encounters with the work.

Townsend and Reise both wanted to print Graham's essay on LeWitt, but Townsend reluctantly felt that the effort required to comprehend it would not be characteristic of *SI*'s readers and so did not publish it.¹¹¹ Graham valued Reise's engagement with his writing; she was, he told her, 'the only person who had anything to do with [his] magazine work to understand and aid [him] on it.' He incorporated her suggestions on the LeWitt text when he published it in *END MOMENTS*: '80 pages including photos and line cuts of 5 recent, unpublished articles. It cost me \$150 to produce and absolutely nobody is getting copies for

¹⁰⁸ Reise's account was included in a survey of her writing and editorial involvement in *SI*. The document titled 'Notes on publications' was included by Reise in her application for a Gulbenkian grant to assist with the ArtstrA project. It was unsuccessful, ArtstrAproject file, Barbara Reise papers, TGA 786/5/8/1/3, London.

¹⁰⁹ Reise, 'Notes on publications.' ArtstrA project file, Barbara Reise papers, TGA 786/5/8/1/3, London.

¹¹⁰ LeWitt letters to Townsend, 14/10/70 and 20/10/70, L file to 1972, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

¹¹¹ Townsend letter copy, 24/4/70, Dan Graham file, Barbara Reise papers, TGA 786/5/2/70, London.

free. It's \$2 plus postage. Would you want one?"¹¹² She did purchase one and it is in her file on Dan Graham.¹¹³

On the strength of the issue, Reise was offered the 'official' position of 'contributing editor', which entailed a monthly retainer of £30. Articles would be paid for separately on a freelance basis.¹¹⁴ In addition to this, Townsend gave Reise a letter of introduction to be shown to potential contributors or subscribers, which read:

Studio International has found it essential to secure the services of somebody with the knowledge of the American scene which Miss Reise possesses. Because of the growing circulation of *SI* in America and Canada, and because of our other related publications we are attempting to build up our export markets. In her capacity as contributing editor we will be able to turn to Miss Reise's knowledge of the American art scene and of the publishing possibilities open there to an English publishing concern. We believe that her specialist knowledge admirably fits Miss Reise to act in this editorial and consultancy capacity.¹¹⁵

Knowing that her contacts were valuable to Townsend, after the successes of the Minimalism issue, Reise forcefully made the case that she should be commissioned to write in-depth articles on Jan Dibbets, Benni Efrat, Robert Ryman and LeWitt. She fostered contacts with people she considered important to the magazine and its debates, covering the cost of a year's subscription for Lucy Lippard, Jeannie Weiffenbach, art critic in New York, Sol LeWitt, Mr and Mrs Barnett Newman, Mr and Mrs C A M Hall, art collectors in New York and Mr and Mrs Ira Licht. Ira Licht was an art historian and his wife Jenny an exhibition

¹¹² Dan Graham, letter to Reise, not dated, Dan Graham file, Barbara Reise papers, TGA 786/5/2/70, London.

¹¹³ Dan Graham, *END MOMENTS*, Dan Graham file, Barbara Reise papers, 786/5/2/70, London.

¹¹⁴ Townsend letter to Reise 1/8/69, Reise file, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

¹¹⁵ Townsend memo, 'To whom it may concern' 4/8/69, Reise file, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

organiser at MoMA. Reise also arranged a subscription for Mr and Mrs Roy Lichtenstein.¹¹⁶

Among Townsend's assistants, the criteria for success were open to question because intentions, ideological concerns, opinions and ambitions differed. For a while, during the process of compiling the Minimalism issue, it looked as if there would only be artists writing about critics and the critic, Reise, writing about art, which caused wry comments in the editorial office. Recalling this period, Harrison remarked that:

The issue that really woke me up was the summer '67 *ArtForum* – the one that included Michael Fried's 'Art and Objecthood', all that stuff, the Minimalists and so on. Reading that, I just felt so jealous, because here's this sense of a real, serious controversy – of different sides engaged in a major battle. And it's just not like that in London. [...] I didn't want to be in the provincial fringes. I felt so jealous of that sense of engagement and commitment. That was the call that woke me up. And a lot of other people too, I think. You need to remember that no Minimal art was to be shown in England for another two years.¹¹⁷

Although he had a high regard for Townsend's editorial professionalism, Harrison considered the manner in which Reise approached projects to be brash and impulsive. She, on the other hand, thought Harrison needed to look at the field more broadly.¹¹⁸

The way in which Townsend ran the office would also become a source of conflict with Reise. This became apparent during the work on the Minimalism issue and continued throughout their working relationship. Principally due to a lack of funds, the office was run on a shoestring, with many contributions, cover designs and articles being given freely. This created a level of uncertainty about each issue, and Reise was not prepared to accept what she considered an

¹¹⁶ Reise letter to *SI* distribution office USA, 25/9/69, Barbara Reise papers, TGA 786/4/3, London.

¹¹⁷ Harrison, unpublished interview transcript, 27/03/07, Melvin papers, London.

¹¹⁸ Reise letter to Sol LeWitt, 12/1/70, Barbara Reise papers, TGA 786/5/2/1/3, London.

unprofessional situation. Although frustrated by the office conditions, she saw the opportunity to create a mouthpiece for work she believed to be relevant.

She confided to Dan Flavin that she did not regard Townsend's policy to be a deliberate strategy, or 'Leider-like program', but the result of 'disorganisation or lack of policy'.¹¹⁹ What she failed to observe was that Townsend's policy of editorial self-effacement created an arena for artists, practices and debates which permitted a young writer such as Reise to become so involved with the magazine. It was his ability to draw out a wide range of artists' interests and concerns that made his editorship distinct. In turn, Reise would sometimes overstep the mark, interpreting a favourable response from Townsend to an idea for an article as licence to proceed, in the expectation that her expenses would be covered.¹²⁰ While Townsend trusted her judgment, he found her outbursts difficult to manage.¹²¹

Limited funding and office chaos led to actual conflicts such as Lauder's disastrous decision to select a coloured background for Judd's drawing. This mistake was the consequence of a last-minute failure to oversee the issue, for which Reise should have taken as much responsibility as Townsend. Whatever errors of judgement may have occurred, there was a definite atmosphere in the office that they were contributing to a vital debate by being a conduit for ideas.¹²²

¹¹⁹ Reise letter to Flavin, 15/8/69, Barbara Reise papers, TGA 786/4/3, London.

¹²⁰ Reise letter to Townsend, 9/9/72 trip to Holland, Reise file, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

¹²¹ Townsend in conversation with the present author described how Reise would on occasions phone in the middle of the night when it would be difficult to call an end to the discussion. However he valued her contributions, her commitment and enthusiasm highly and this more than compensated for the annoyances she caused. Melvin notebook, 2002, Melvin papers, London.

¹²² Harrison, unpublished interview transcript, 27/03/07, Melvin papers, London.

Chapter 4

Charles Harrison's editorial projects

This chapter explores the editorial projects retrospectively regarded as significant by Charles Harrison. These brought to the fore critical positions to present new thinking in sculpture and Conceptual Art practices in the UK. In the process, it traces Harrison's own critical position from its origins in Greenbergian formalism to advocacy of the new artistic practices emerging in the UK and the US. Archival sources for this chapter are mainly housed in the Tate Gallery Archive (TGA), including Peter Townsend's editorial papers, Townsend's personal papers¹ and Charles Harrison's archive.² Harrison's personal papers – retained when he deposited his papers at TGA in 1981 – were lent to the present writer between October 2007 and May 2008.³ They comprised a box-file and a foolscap file of material related to exhibition projects and correspondence with artists. For the purposes of the following discussion, the most significant are letters from Joseph Kosuth.⁴ Harrison's 'education' – or the evolution of his critical position was conducted in public, which was not unlike Greenberg's comment on his early career, in the preface to *Art & Culture*, that he would not 'deny being one of those critics who educate themselves in public'.⁵

Biennale des Jeunes, SI September 1967

Townsend enjoyed the 'creative friction' of his discussions with Harrison, whom he regarded as capable, conscientious and possessing 'bite and honesty'.⁶ As previously noted, Harrison had served as a de facto editorial assistant from

¹ *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 200868, London. Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

² Charles Harrison papers, (1950-1979), TGA 839, London.

³ Charles Harrison papers, (1970s-2000s), TGA 200826, London.

⁴ Charles Harrison papers, (1970s-2000s), TGA 200826, London.

⁵ Greenberg, "Preface." *Art & Culture*, Boston Mas and Toronto Canada, Beacon Press, 1967, p. vii.

⁶ Townsend's reference for Harrison when he applied for post at St Antony's College Oxford, 31/12/72, Harrison file, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London. Townsend referred to his working relationship and friendship with Harrison, and to the different interests of his assistant and contributing editors and writers, Melvin notebooks, 1997, 1998, 2000 and 2006, Melvin papers, London.

May 1966 but he could not take up the post officially because he was still in receipt of a grant for his graduate studies at the Courtauld Institute. However, in April 1967 he decided to abandon his PhD in favour of work on the magazine, which he described as a much more exciting prospect.⁷ William Townsend was glad to hear that 'Peter would at last have proper office support', and took Peter and Charles to lunch to celebrate.⁸ From October 1967, Harrison was listed as assistant editor on the masthead.⁹

At first, Harrison did not have free rein with what he or the magazine covered. He was also unsure of where his real interests lay. He drew on his research into the interwar British artists. When artists from the US exhibited in the Kasmin or Waddington galleries, he asked Townsend for the opportunity to review them, which was usually granted. In the resulting articles he sought to emulate the formalist critical writing of Greenberg and Fried both of whom he quoted. Harrison became increasingly interested in the new practices in sculpture being developed at St Martin's and he brought attention to these artists and also to the sculptors from the Stockwell depot. Indeed by the time Anthony Caro had his exhibition at the Hayward Gallery, which opened in January 1969, Caro was concerned that Harrison was beginning to lose his understanding of formalist concerns in favour of experimental work that was not only not subject to the same critical language but had emerged as an antidote to it.¹⁰ As touched upon in Chapter 2, Caro's teaching and the ambience at St Martin's elicited high praise from Greenberg. But Harrison had begun to look outside the parameters of this discourse.

The shift in Harrison's commitment was consolidated on his first visit to New York in April 1969, and it was closely connected with his increasing interest in

⁷ Harrison was awarded it by publication, subsequent to the publication of his book, *English Art and Modernism*, London and New Haven, Yale, 1981. Harrison described magazine work as an exciting prospect, Harrison, unpublished interview transcript, 28/03/07, Melvin papers, London.

⁸ W Townsend reported that Yves Gaucher 'one of the best printmakers, perhaps artists in Canada' joined them for the lunch, during which Peter offered Gaucher the opportunity to design a cover. W Townsend Journal xxxvii, 19/5/67, UCL special collection, London. Gaucher's design, *Black (white lines)*, took a while to come to fruition and appeared on *SI*, February 1969.

⁹ This was over a year after his first ad hoc assistance, as covered in Chapter 1.

¹⁰ Harrison recalled that Caro refused to allow him to make a studio visit in the autumn 1968, while Caro was preparing for his exhibition. Harrison reported that Caro told him 'he had joined up with the enemy', Harrison unpublished interview transcript 31/10/07, Melvin papers, London.

Conceptual Art practices. Harrison remembers that the first *SI* article he wrote with which he personally identified was devoted to the British artists selected for the *Biennale des Jeunes*, held at the Musée d'Art Moderne in Paris from 30 September to 5 November 1967.

Talking about editorial responsibility: [...] the most influential, or rather most formative, bit of editorial work I did at the beginning of my time with *Studio* was on the issue of September '67, which covered the British representation at the Biennale des Jeunes in Paris. For that, my job was to contact each of the artists, to talk with them about their presentation [in the magazine] and organise it and so on. Those [included ...] Jeremy Moon and Barry Flanagan who both became very close friends, more or less immediately.¹¹

This fifth biennial exhibition included artists selected to represent countries in Europe, the US, South America, Africa and Asia, across the categories of painting, sculpture, drawing, photography, printmaking, graphics, architecture, industrial design, music and film. The British Council's selection's committee included Alan Bowness (chair), Norbert Lynton, Jasia Reichardt and David Thompson, all of whom had close ties with *SI*. Bowness met Townsend and Harrison to discuss the artists in the painting and sculpture groups selected to represent Britain, and the consensus was that they, Moon, Flanagan, Mark Boyle, Michael Sandle, Ian Stephenson, John Furnival and Colin Self, represented a range of the practices followed by young artists at that time. The editorial office decided to devote a section to the exhibition in the September issue, and Harrison proposed to include artists' statements alongside illustrations of their work and, with Townsend, decided which artists to include. It was envisaged that this would provide readers with a companion to the British presence in the exhibition. The use of colour plates for Flanagan, Moon and Stephenson was striking.¹²

¹¹ Harrison unpublished interview transcript, 28/3/07, Melvin papers, London.

¹² David Dye, unpublished interview transcript, 6/2/09, Melvin papers, London.

The special section began with Harrison's introduction, followed by the artists' brief biographies and a double-page spread for each of them, which contained statements and photographs. Harrison wrote that the group of artists bought together for the exhibition 'operated over many different areas of activity'. This meant that 'the only characteristic held in common by those illustrated here is their determination to find, irrespective of conventional divisions between sculpture, painting, poetry or action [*sic* the present author considers Harrison meant happenings], the medium and form in which they are most free to communicate their sensations.'¹³ Preparations for the special feature took place during the summer before the exhibition's opening. Harrison visited the artists' studios and photographed their work. His photographs were used in both the exhibition catalogue and in *SI*'s September issue.¹⁴ He decided to focus attention on seven artists – in the painting category, Mark Boyle, John Furnival, Jeremy Moon and Ian Stephenson; in the sculpture category, Barry Flanagan; in the drawing category, Michael Sandle and Colin Self. Of the seven artists featured, only two – John Furnival and Mark Boyle – did not have gallery affiliation.¹⁵

Moon's painting graced the magazine's cover. (Figure 4.33.) Moon's statement was couched in 'interview' format, with Harrison questioning his rationale for using non-rectilinear canvases. When asked whether he felt he had achieved something in abandoning the conventional format, Moon responded that he was not thinking in those terms but that he 'didn't seem able to use colour diagonally in a square [...] he triangle opened things up for [him].'¹⁶

Although included by the selectors in the painting category, John Furnival was a concrete poet. His statement was a concrete poem in response to Harrison's request to present the definition of a statement and its constitutional

¹³ Harrison, "Biennale des Jeunes." *SI*, Vol. 174 No 892, p. 85. This issue also announces the selection of Bridget Riley and Phillip King for the 1968 Venice Biennale.

¹⁴ Harrison, unpublished interview transcript, 28/3/07, Melvin papers, London. The slides Harrison took are now in Charles Harrison papers, (1970s-2000s), TGA 200826, London.

¹⁵ Moon and Flanagan were represented by the Rowan Gallery, Colin Self, the Robert Fraser Gallery, Sandle, the Grabowski Gallery and Ian Stephenson, the New Art Centre; Flanagan and Furnival knew each already because both participated in *Between Poetry and Painting* at the ICA in 1965 and several concrete poetry events.

¹⁶ Moon, *SI*, Vol. 174, p. 86.

elements. Embedded in the middle of the work was his bank statement, with the words 'there's no money in it mate'¹⁷ emblazoned in one of the columns. (Figures 4.34 and 4.35.)

It was a symptom of the chaos in the museum in Paris that it was not Flanagan who installed the work in Paris but his dealer, Alex Gregory-Hood.¹⁸ Conditions at the Musée d'Art Moderne that year were 'even worse than in 1965'.¹⁹ The British Council minutes of the Biennale meeting reported that the press view was held in utter confusion and nothing was ready.²⁰ Even the museum staff admitted that things were out of control.²¹ When Flanagan arrived in Paris, he found that the wrong sand had been delivered and because he was under pressure to return quickly to London, he decided to use it to install a different work, *one ton corner piece* '67, 1967. Gregory-Hood thought the configuration of the three works *4 casb 2* '67, *ringl* '67 and *rope (gr 2sp 60)* 6 '67 should be shown as these were used as the catalogue entry and accordingly caught a flight to Paris to sort it out. The *4 casb 2* '67 comprised four canvas bags filled with sand, each one containing a quarter of a ton.²² Gregory-Hood telephoned round builders' merchants in Paris to find the correct sand and went to the museum to install the work himself with his assistant.²³ (Figures 4.36 and 4.37.)

In the Paris exhibition, each of Flanagan's sculptures acts within the space so as not to be perceived as a hermetic object but as part of a holistic experience in which the viewer's engagement with the work is aesthetically integrated.

Flanagan's pages carried photographs of *4 casb 2* '67, *ringl* '67 and *rope (gr 2sp*

¹⁷ Furnival, *SI*, Vol. 174, p. 96.

¹⁸ Flanagan had gone to install the works but because his second child had just been born he returned quickly to London. Flanagan, unpublished interview transcript, 27/10/08, Melvin papers, London.

¹⁹ British Council exhibition minutes, 1967, British Council, London. Scanned copy of the relevant pages of the minutes sent to the present author by Diana Eccles, British Council, email, 12/7/12.

²⁰ British Council exhibition minutes, 1967, British Council, London. Scanned copy of the three relevant pages sent by email to the present author.

²¹ British Council exhibition minutes, 1967, British Council, London.

²² The type of sand is crucial, if it's too fine it comes through the weave of the canvas, if too coarse it affects the way the bag stands as a vertical form. Flanagan used BS 19, which he obtained from J Arnold Builder's Merchant in Leighton Buzzard. Barry Flanagan archive, JBF/6/1/1.1

²³ Flanagan, unpublished interview transcript, 27/10/08, Melvin papers, London.

60) 6 '67,²⁴ taken by Harrison in the Kilburn studio Flanagan shared with Alan Gouk, one of which appeared in colour.²⁵

Flanagan's statement in the *Biennale* issue of *SI* threw the reader into a relationship with the act of decision-making; it reflected his involvement in concrete poetry and rather than being a description or account of the work it was more like an evocation. The statement's structure is a concrete poem and has sculptural resonance. Use of columns meant that the words could read up, down or across, with the reader at liberty to order the poem at will. The dynamics, rooted in Flanagan's use of language, form a close parallel with the uncertainty of the sculptural experience – this concerned where the work began and ended, in particular, how the spaces between the works became part of the total experience of the work.²⁶

The sculpture issue, *SI* January 1969

In *SI* January 1969, Flanagan was to return to the discussion arising from the three works in the Paris exhibition. His artist's statement, *Notes on Sculpture '67/68* was constructed as a diagram of these interlinked sculptural relationships in the special issue dedicated to new sculptural practices in Britain.²⁷ (Figure 0.13.) The idea for the issue evolved during discussions between Harrison and Flanagan and other sculptors from St Martin's (where Harrison taught part time) and in conversations in The Plough with Townsend.²⁸ Flanagan and Harrison had spoken at length about the way in which the three works shown in the *Biennale des Jeunes* collectively acted to create a total sculptural experience. The issue was one of those singled out by Townsend as exemplary, and he kept several extra copies back for himself.²⁹ This point is significant because it demonstrates his satisfaction that his policies

²⁴ Flanagan, *SI*, Vol. 174, pp. 98-9.

²⁵ Gouk taught at St Martin's School of Art and organised artists' talks and discussions to which Flanagan regularly contributed. Flanagan, unpublished interview transcript, 21/1/09, Melvin papers, London.

²⁶ Flanagan, *SI*, Vol. 174, No. 892 p.98.

²⁷ Flanagan, "From notes '67/67." *SI*, Vol. 177, No. 907, p. 37.

²⁸ Harrison, unpublished interview transcript, 31/10/07, Melvin papers, London.

²⁹ Harrison, unpublished interview transcript, 31/10/07, Melvin papers, London.

bore the fruit of editorial excellence. John McEwen was then editorial assistant and did a lot of the running around for the issue; Reise was not involved.³⁰ Flanagan's statement for the sculpture issue was derived from the instructions he gave to Gregory-Hood when he installed his work in Paris:

Object sculptures, and their configurations within that convention put in a room to be seen is the habitual way of thinking about the exhibition. The ideal state is when each object commands an equal attention to the next, due to its very own identity/separation as an object. When not in this ideal state the observer (accepting the whole convention) uses his faculties to edit out any distractions and confusions to maintain a positive relationship within that convention. As soon as any one object loses its autonomous identity by statement and intention things begin to happen; the whole nature of 'exhibition' is altered.³¹

In 1976, when the Tate Gallery bought Flanagan's three works first shown in the Paris *Biennale*, he would refer the gallery's installation and conservation teams to his contribution to *SI*'s January 1969 sculpture issue. His handwritten note below is in Tate's public record file on Flanagan.

The relation to each other and to themselves as autonomous identities was covered in the statement in *Studio International* [...] as components of a sculptural language their exhibition is, as plays and music are interpreted after authorship at a later date, open to responsible and creative authorship interpretation dictated by time and place given normal consideration to authorship.³²

³⁰ McEwen, unpublished interview transcript, 1/11/06, Melvin papers, London.

³¹ Flanagan, "From notes '67/67." *SI*, Vol. 177, No. 907, p. 37.

³² Barry Flanagan statement, hand-written note, 18/6/76, Barry Flanagan Public Record part 1 1969 - 1977, hand-written note. Tate Gallery Records, TG 4/2/339/1, London.

Background to the relationship between Joseph Kosuth and *SI*

This section considers how Kosuth's three-part article, 'Art after philosophy', published in *SI*'s October, November and December 1969 issues was commissioned as a result of Harrison's commitment to Kosuth's project. The two met in New York in April 1969, and they quickly became friends and collaborators. Kosuth was alert to strategic connections, and the assistant editor of *SI* was clearly a person worth knowing. In conversation and in a series of letters, Kosuth confided in Harrison, describing frustrations stemming from his alignment with Seth Siegelaub.³³

Kosuth had been at the centre of Siegelaub's circle since 1968, when he was introduced to him by Lawrence Weiner, and he would join Andre, Robert Barry, Douglas Huebler and Ian Wilson, among others, for regular discussions at Siegelaub's apartment at 1100 Madison Avenue. The discussions were lively and contentious; there was not one accord. Kosuth declared himself bored with the ideas of Barry, Huebler and Weiner, alongside whom he had worked closely with Siegelaub. Siegelaub has more recently commented that whatever problems Kosuth made for himself in his relations with other artists, he made a significant contribution to the discussion of what constituted art at this time.³⁴

To understand how Kosuth's contributions were published in *SI*, it is necessary to consider Siegelaub's organisational strategies and practice. In January 1969, Siegelaub organised an exhibition by Barry, Huebler, Kosuth and Weiner in a temporary space in the McLendon Building at 44 East 52nd Street, New York, entitled *January 5 – 31 1969*.³⁵ In a reversal of expectations, the exhibition served as a guide to a catalogue of the same name.³⁶ The twelve pages were Xeroxed and spiral bound with card covers, cheap to produce and

³³ Kosuth letter to Harrison, not dated, summer 1969. Charles Harrison papers, (1970s-2000s), TGA 200868, London.

³⁴ Siegelaub, unpublished interview transcript, 27/02/08, Melvin papers, London.

³⁵ The title signified the exhibition's duration. An earlier exhibition catalogue with these characteristics was the exhibition Paul Maenz organised in Frankfurt, entitled *19:45-21:55, September 9th 1967*. 500 numbered copies were printed and circulated after the exhibition which was the duration of the private view. The present author's collection copy is numbered 303/500.

³⁶ It was not the first time that Siegelaub had presented the catalogue as the work; during an exhibition he organised with Douglas Huebler the previous November, Huebler would describe how 'The existence of each sculpture is documented by its documentation.' *Douglas Huebler November 1968* (Exhibition Catalogue), the present author's collection.

easy to distribute. Lacking in the usual commentaries and analyses, it subverted the conventions of museum catalogues. Siegelaub ensured that catalogue space was distributed equally between the participating artists; in a neat mathematical system, they were each allocated four pages, containing two photographs and a one-page statement.

The catalogue contains a photograph of Kosuth's *Time (Art as Idea as Idea)*, which included banner headlines from *The Times*, the *Daily Telegraph*, the *Daily Express* and the *Observer*, the newspapers in which he had inserted into the advertisement sections the word, time. Readers of those papers may have speculated about the advertisements' function. In the catalogue, Kosuth stated that the work dealt 'with multiple aspects of an idea of something'.³⁷ He explained that he had turned to space in newspapers and magazines because:

This way the immateriality of the work is stressed and any possible connection to painting is severed [...] it has nothing to do with architecture [...] can be brought into the home or museum but wasn't made with either in mind [...] can be torn out of its publication and inserted into a notebook or stapled to the wall – or not torn out at all – but any such decision is unrelated to the art. My role as an artist ends with the works production.³⁸

In the UK, Don McDonagh reviewed the project in the *Financial Times*, describing the artists as 'cerebralists whose works do not have locations but exist conceptually in the individual's mind'.³⁹ He commented that 'as a movement art-as-idea seems to have more in common with poetry than with the physical craft of painting and sculpture.' He found Kosuth's use of words, "Existence, Time, Order, Number" [...] imaginative jumping off points [...] whose interest is at times undeniable [...] but whose precise character is subject

³⁷ *January 5 - 31, 1969* catalogue, unpaginated, Special Collections, Chelsea College of Art and Design, London, (Gh 1967).

³⁸ Kosuth, *January 5 - 31, 1969*. Special Collections, Chelsea College of Art and Design, London, (Gh 1967).

³⁹ McDonagh review, *Financial Times*, date cut off, in Harrison file, Charles Harrison papers (1950-1979), TGA 839/1/2/2, London.

to considerable interpretation'.⁴⁰ Harrison kept the newspaper review, which demonstrates that he was alert to the January exhibition before he met either Siegelaub or Kosuth.⁴¹

Dore Ashton, who had taught Kosuth at the School of Visual Arts, (SVA), New York, briefly mentioned the 'January show' in her 'New York commentary' in the March 1969 issue of *SI*.⁴² Her comments were based on a misunderstanding of the artists' intentions, assuming they were 'tired by' or 'bored with' art and speculating that perhaps they could not *do* it.⁴³ This reading presupposed art to be exclusively visual, a constructed artefact. She regarded the catalogue to be a 'clever log book of futility'.⁴⁴ Ashton summarised that the work may be 'interpreted as a criticism of certain contemporary "ideas" concerning the nature of a work of art, but it is weak criticism, and not amusing enough to hold attention. We now know what these artists are unwilling to do (why?) but we don't know what they can do'.⁴⁵ The language of her interpretation was unintelligible within the parameters of that which constitutes art as it was advocated by Kosuth, and it fell into the Conceptual trap that was being set out by the artists.

Harrison's visit to New York, April 1969

As we saw in the previous chapter, Harrison regarded the discourse in *ArtForum* as exemplary. It was a condition he wanted to see brought to editorial conversations and planning meetings at *SI*. In 2007 he confessed to having felt inspired by the dynamics between writers operating under Leider, and the ways in which these positions were central to the magazine's policy, giving it an intellectual credibility he felt to be lacking in *SI*.⁴⁶ Harrison explained to the present author that he sympathised with Leider's irritation over Reise's 'Greenberg and the Group', and agreed with Leider's assertion to Townsend that

⁴⁰ McDonagh review, *Financial Times*, Charles Harrison papers (1950-1979), TGA 839/1/2/2, London.

⁴¹ McDonagh, Charles Harrison papers (1950-1979), TGA 839/1/2/2, London.

⁴² Ashton, *SI*, Vol. 177, No. 909, p. 136.

⁴³ Ashton, *SI*, Vol. 177, No. 909, p. 136.

⁴⁴ Ashton, *SI*, Vol. 177, No. 909, p. 136.

⁴⁵ Ashton, *SI*, Vol. 177, No. 909, p. 136.

⁴⁶ Harrison, unpublished interview transcript, 28/3/07, Melvin papers, London.

Greenberg's writing formed the 'single example of the standard that both of us are interested in'.⁴⁷ It was this assumption that so incensed Heron, as discussed in Chapter 2. By contrast, Harrison regarded *SI*'s limitations being essentially due to its Britishness, its being 'inevitably provincial in a way that New York could not be'.⁴⁸ He also considered it to be circumscribed by the exigencies of a commercial publication. He described his aspirations for *SI*:

My ambition at the time – a quixotic ambition – was to be a serious art critic. And I was incredibly envious of *ArtForum* and the sense that there was serious modern art history being published in the States. There were serious debates going on [...] and there was clearly a cosmopolitan, vital, aggressive art world over there. I wanted a piece of it. I wanted two things: I wanted a piece of it and I wanted to import as much of it as possible into England.⁴⁹

As a formalist critic, attempting to 'empty [his] mind of contingencies',⁵⁰ Harrison's writing had come to the attention of Leider and also to that of John Coplans, on the editorial staff at *ArtForum* and director of the newly opened Pasadena Museum of Modern Art, who offered Harrison the post of assistant curator remarking that, although he had not met him, he was 'sufficiently impressed by the intelligence and lucidity of [his] writing to want to get [him] on the staff'.⁵¹ Harrison told Coplans that did not want to leave the UK and spoke of his loyalty to the group of artists with whom he enjoyed critical discourse.⁵²

⁴⁷ Philip Leider memo to Peter Townsend, 5/11/68, 'A' correspondence file 1966-68, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 200868, London.

⁴⁸ Harrison, unpublished interview transcript, 28/3/07, Melvin papers, London.

⁴⁹ Harrison, unpublished interview transcript, 28/3/07, Melvin papers, London.

⁵⁰ Charles Harrison, "Turner Prize lecture." 14 November 1986, the year Art-Language were nominated for the prize. Tate Audio Visual, TAV 457A. Quotation is from the present author's notes, Melvin papers, London.

⁵¹ Coplans letter to Harrison, 3/3/69, he offered a starting salary of \$10,000 plus a guarantee of at least \$1,500 from writing per annum. There are several letters from Coplans attempting to persuade Harrison between March-June 1969, Charles Harrison papers, (1970s-2000s), TGA 200826, London.

⁵² Harrison letter to Coplans, 12/3/69, and others March-June 1969, Charles Harrison papers, (1970s-2000s), TGA 200826, London. Harrison explained to the present author that he had no desire to 'up sticks and leave England' and moreover he did not want to work in an art museum, unpublished interview transcript, 28/3/07, Melvin papers, London.

Leider commissioned Harrison to write on Phillip King's work for the December 1968 issue of *ArtForum*.⁵³ Subsequently Harrison proposed an article on Richard Long. In a 'rare case of missed judgement', Leider asked for one on Roland Brener instead.⁵⁴ Harrison delivered his Brener text to *ArtForum's* offices in April 1969, on his first visit to New York City. He also gave a lecture at the School of Visual Arts, organised by Dore Ashton, which helped him financially as well as creating new contacts.⁵⁵

During this visit, he met Siegelaub at the opening of a Robert Rauschenberg exhibition at Leo Castelli's gallery. Harrison went there with the intention of meeting Coplans, and expected to recognise him because he knew he had a moustache. He approached 'the strangest looking guy' he had seen for a long time and asked if he was Coplans. 'Hell no!' came the reply, 'John Coplans is ugly!' It was Siegelaub – who 'always had good turn of phrase'.⁵⁶ Siegelaub immediately introduced Harrison to Barry, Huebler, Kosuth, Lippard and Weiner.

At that time, the prevailing critical analysis was centred on interpretation of meaning through a discussion of material qualities, compositional structures and production strategies.⁵⁷ The group around Siegelaub actively sought to rupture these distinctions by positing an art structure that was neither metaphorical nor involved expensive materials.⁵⁸ At first hand, Harrison discovered that the concern of paramount importance to the artists working with Siegelaub was the environment for the production and dissemination of work. This was in New York on his first visit in April 1969, when he was invited to join their conversations.⁵⁹

Their discussions sought the means to overthrow the modernist hegemony of (a) art work as an apotheosis of subjectivity, represented (embodied) for the art connoisseur's delectation and (b) the reductive manner in which the work

⁵³ Harrison, "Philip King's sculptures." *ArtForum*, Vol. 7, No. 4, December 1968, pp. 33-37.

⁵⁴ Harrison, unpublished interview transcript, 28/3/07, Melvin papers, London.

⁵⁵ Harrison, unpublished interview transcript, 28/3/07, Melvin papers, London.

⁵⁶ Harrison, unpublished interview transcript, 28/3/07, Melvin papers, London.

⁵⁷ Harrison, unpublished interview transcript, 28/3/07, Melvin papers, London.

⁵⁸ Harrison, unpublished interview transcript, 28/3/07, Melvin papers, London.

⁵⁹ Harrison, unpublished interview transcript, 28/3/07, Melvin papers, London.

was wrought to create the unique, final object, which had a value, not only aesthetic, but also cultural and capital. The aesthetic value judgement of taste is a means of substantiating art's cultural value. To undermine this relationship would be potentially to expose the capitalist structure of production and value.⁶⁰

In 1964, Marshall McLuhan's book *Understanding Media* coined terms and phrases we now take for granted, such as 'the medium is the message', 'global village' and 'the media' to mean mass media.⁶¹ McLuhan's identification of increasingly horizontal management strategies in companies where centres of decision-making are not tied to any particular geographical or temporal location greatly appealed to the group of artists associated with Siegelaub and Lippard.⁶² Siegelaub was to draw upon this observation when he said to Harrison that his own exhibition ideas could operate simultaneously in different locations because they were not restricted to a gallery.⁶³

When Harrison started working with *SI* he considered that the responsibility of the critic was to assert value judgements by demonstrating how art transcends itself to become more than the sum of its parts.⁶⁴ His review of the Morris Louis exhibition at Waddington Gallery published in *SI* April 1969 is a case in point. Louis's self-referential work exemplifies high modernism, whereby the paint's literal application and stages of drying – staining the canvas – combine action with realisation. In his review, Harrison described the detail, method and application of paint before summarising the work's ability to act as a transformer of emotional affect. He proposed that such great work as this generated the energy necessary to propel the viewer to a qualitatively higher (or better) awareness:

⁶⁰ Charles Harrison, "Turner Prize lecture." 14/11/86, Tate audio visual, TAV 457A, London.

⁶¹ Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media: The extensions of Man* London and New York, first published 1964, reprinted 2003.

⁶² Siegelaub remarked that McLuhan's analyses of society 'were in the air'. Siegelaub, unpublished interview transcript, 24/2/08, Melvin papers, London.

⁶³ Harrison "On exhibitions and the world at large." *SI*, Vol. 178, No. 917, December 1969, pp. 202-3.

⁶⁴ Harrison, unpublished interview transcript, 28/3/07, Melvin papers, London.

These last works of Louis's are unassertive on the one hand and unpossessable on the other. To see them merely as objects is to fail to see them [...] These works come from the immortal, not the mortal part of man: from that quality, in the individual, which is his singular contribution to the life and consciousness of all men. Louis was not just a major painter he was a great one.⁶⁵

The purpose in recounting this is twofold. In the first place, Louis's work and Harrison's reading of it located the cultural practice and critical position which Kosuth set out to expose on the basis of its inherent contradictions and flaws. Secondly, this review marks a turning point in Harrison's approach to thinking about art, which he identified as a touchstone.⁶⁶ As such, Harrison's autobiographical account enters another kind of mythology, a *self-mythology* to create a parody of the nervous young critic. This fictionalised the event to become the story of a young critic's change of heart. Harrison explained that when he was in New York for his first visit to the city he felt exhilarated by the discussions about new art practices and this made him begin to reassess his previous convictions.⁶⁷ Particularly in relation to his recent review for *SI* of Morris Louis, Harrison found his experience of Carl Andre's show at Dwan Gallery 'impressive for reasons [he] couldn't entirely understand'.⁶⁸ Harrison photographed Andre's *144 Pieces of Copper* (1969) in the gallery, and he later used the slide of this work to pinpoint this moment of his Damascene conversion in lectures.⁶⁹ (Figure 4.38.) On these occasions, in order to locate the origins of his critical position, Harrison would describe his first experience of Andre's work which he would later refer to as the moment of his conversion as

⁶⁵ Harrison, "London commentary." *SI*, Vol. 177, No. 910, p. 192.

⁶⁶ Harrison, "Why Art and Language?" This was Harrison's lecture title given at the Tate Gallery when Art and Language were shortlisted for the Turner Prize, 14/11/1986. TAV 457A, London. Present author's notes, Melvin papers, London. Harrison lecture, untitled account of art criticism in the late 1960s, "Conceptual Art and its Exhibitions." Symposium hosted by the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna and Afterall as part of the One Exhibition book series, 29/5/08, present author's notes, Melvin papers, London.

⁶⁷ Harrison, "Why Art and Language?" Tate Audio Visual, TAV 457A, 14/11/1986. Melvin Papers, London. Harrison lecture, "Conceptual Art and its Exhibitions." Symposium hosted by the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna and Afterall as part of the One Exhibition book series, 29/5/08, present author's notes, Melvin papers, London.

⁶⁸ Harrison, unpublished interview transcript, 28/3/07, Melvin papers, London.

⁶⁹ Harrison lectures and references, "Why Art and Language?" TAV 457A, 14/11/86, Afterall conference, Vienna Austria May 2008.

he spoke to Greenberg, who was mystified about how, if he could appreciate Morris Louis he could also fall for Andre.

On Greenberg's insistence Harrison went to another Louis exhibition at André Emmerich Gallery in New York, where Harrison saw his *SI* review displayed 'in pride of place'. He described feeling like a 'marginalized and impoverished provincial' – in the expensive gallery with 'wall papered money'.⁷⁰ This begged the question for Harrison of where one stood in relation to culture, and he wanted to leave immediately. Explaining his reaction to the present author in 2007, Harrison said that it no longer seemed possible to view art history as an inevitable and linear trajectory.⁷¹

Harrison felt compelled to reconsider the problem of criticism and the presumption of the critic's authority. The continued assumption of a (male) position was reaching a crisis, with the apparent concession of privilege to meritocracy in which pluralism and the establishment of feminism, gay rights and racial equality were forcing societal shifts. Criticism as a method of dissemination became the subject of scrutiny and the means for a Marxist analysis of society to revitalise discussion by systematically pointing out cultural alienation. At the same time, the Kantian position of the disinterested viewer was revealed as an impossible vacuum in which experience was divested of personal feeling, which Harrison found increasingly absurd. Harrison discovered that what he wanted to come to terms with was finding a way to address the problem of materialism and culture.⁷²

Kosuth identified the key critical moment of the period as being the separation of the relationship between the idea and its presentation. At the same time, three essays, published in *Aspen 5&6* in 1968, helped to pinpoint a set of theoretical questions that were central to the discourses of authorship, historical contingency and the role or function of art. These were Susan Sontag's 'The Aesthetics of Silence', George Kubler's 'Style and the Representation of Historical Time' and Roland Barthes's 'Death of the Author'. Most significantly in relation to this discussion Sontag proposed that artists should cease

⁷⁰ Harrison, unpublished interview transcript, 28/3/07, Melvin papers, London.

⁷¹ Harrison, unpublished interview transcript, 28/3/07, Melvin papers, London.

⁷² Harrison, unpublished interview transcript, 28/3/07, Melvin papers, London.

production as 'exemplary renunciations of vocation'. She argued that the turn away from production undertaken by Wittgenstein, Duchamp and Rimbaud did 'not negate their work. On the contrary, it imparts retroactively [sic], an added power and authority to what was broken off; disavowal of the work becoming a new source of its validity.'⁷³ Harrison was particularly interested in Sontag's proposal of withdrawal, whereby claims of authorship were held in abeyance. When he attempted to write about the underlying preoccupations of Conceptual Art, in his article, 'Notes towards art work', published *SI* February 1970, he opened it with the following observations: 'Art now has no object in view. Some withdrawals are more operative than most engagements.'⁷⁴ Building on this he quoted from artists' statements which referred to the value of negation, including those of Flanagan, Ad Reinhardt, Christine Kozlov and Kosuth. Harrison asserted the possibility of an art practice that was not dependent on Greenbergian formalist visual qualities which he referred to as concerns with 'the picturesque'⁷⁵ and 'the comparative rightness of size, surface, etc [which was] patently ridiculous.'⁷⁶ Harrison's polemical article will be returned to below.

Another factor in Harrison's changing engagement with artistic practices and criticism was *When Attitudes Become Form*, the exhibition devised by Harald Szeemann, which included over sixty artists working in cutting-edge practices.⁷⁷ Harrison heard about it from Flanagan, who had been to Bern to install his work.⁷⁸ In the spring of 1969, Harrison was asked if he would be interested in curating an exhibition of young British artists at the ICA. Shortly after this the ICA was offered the possibility of hosting the Philip Morris-sponsored *When Attitudes Become Form*, which was properly funded. Harrison was invited to extend the selection of British artists and he agreed, on the condition that he could include the artists he had already approached with the offer of a

⁷³ Susan Sontag, "The Aesthetics of Silence." *Aspen* 5&6, 1968. Dore Ashton "New York commentary." Reviewed *Aspen* 5&6 *SI*, Vol. 175, May 1968, pp. 272-273.

⁷⁴ Harrison, "Notes towards art work." *SI*, Vol. 179, No. 919, February 1970, (pp. 42-3), p. 42.

⁷⁵ Harrison, *SI*, Vol. 179, No. 919, p. 43.

⁷⁶ Harrison, *SI*, Vol. 179, No. 919, p. 42.

⁷⁷ The exhibition opened in the Kunsthalle Bern (22 March-27 April 1969) before touring to Museum Haus Lange, Krefeld 9 May-15 June, 1969.

⁷⁸ Harrison, unpublished transcript, 31/10/07, Melvin papers, London.

prospective group show at the ICA that autumn. The condition was accepted. Harrison asked Victor Burgin to make site-specific work and Barry Flanagan, Roelof Louw and Bruce McLean to include more work than in Bern or Krefeld.⁷⁹ Richard Long was too busy to make new work.⁸⁰ Gilbert & George were not included in the new selection and to the present author it would appear to be a serious omission. However, Harrison was not convinced by their practice and so did not wish to include them.⁸¹

Gilbert & George's artist's pages which they defined at the time as *Magazine sculpture*, were published in *SI* May 1970.⁸² They had two double-page spreads, the second showed a black-and-white portrait photograph of each of them, George on the left, Gilbert on the right, with paper cut-outs of the words 'George the cunt' and 'Gilbert the shit' pinned to their respective clothing.⁸³ The offending words were deliberately crudely censored by Townsend.⁸⁴ The caption underneath noted, *Magazine sculpture, completed April, 1969*. Harrison recalled receiving an irate telephone call from George Passmore who tried to convince Harrison to include Gilbert & George. Harrison explained the selection had been organised by Szeeman and that he was not in a position to make adjustments.⁸⁵ The reconfigured version of the exhibition opened at the ICA on 28 August 1969 when Gilbert & George performed a coup, by presenting themselves with gold faces as living sculptures and, in so doing, undermined the selection process and the very notion of exhibition. Some of those present assumed that Gilbert & George were officially participating and that this event was part of the arrangements.⁸⁶

⁷⁹ Harrison's exhibition installation slides, Charles Harrison papers, TGA 200868, London.

⁸⁰ Harrison, unpublished transcript, 31/10/07, Melvin papers, London.

⁸¹ Harrison, unpublished transcript, 31/10/07, Melvin papers, London.

⁸² Gilbert & George, *SI*, Vol. 197, No. 922, pp. 218-221.

⁸³ Gilbert & George, *SI*, Vol. 197, No. 922, pp. 220-1.

⁸⁴ Townsend described to the present author the occasion when Gilbert & George's magazine sculpture was shown, in 1969 he received a phone call, the work would be seen for half an hour only, to avoid the censor, at Robert Fraser Gallery. He noted a lot of people received similar calls, as the gallery was very crowded, Melvin notebook 2002, Melvin papers, London.

⁸⁵ Harrison, unpublished interview transcript, 28/3/07, Melvin papers, London.

⁸⁶ Townsend described the occasion, which he considered less shocking than when Gilbert & George attended a *SI* party with their faces covered in gold paint, Melvin notebook 2002, Melvin papers, London. Flanagan remembered the stir Gilbert & George created at the ICA, unpublished interview transcript, 27/10/08, Melvin papers, London.

The London showing had a new catalogue, which featured an essay by Harrison, entitled 'Against precedents', which introduced the new practices. This was also published in *SI*'s September 1969 issue, discussed in Chapter 2. It provided the opportunity for Harrison to include several illustrations not in the catalogue. Among these were installation photographs of Andre's *144 Sheets of Copper* 1969, Morris's *Felt* 1967–8 and Louis's *beth-beth*, 1958.⁸⁷ The rationale for reproducing the two latter works is to be found in a visit by Harrison to Morris's studio during which the artist explained that his hanging felt pieces had been constructed as a three-dimensional response to Louis's falling veils of paint.⁸⁸

Harrison and Kosuth

Although only 24, Kosuth had an impressive range of connections between ideas and people influential in the New York art scene. For instance the gallery he set up in 1967, which he named the Museum of Normal Art had as its trustees Richard Bellamy, Director of Green Gallery, John Gibson, Director of Park Place, the Gallery of Art Research Inc, Klaus Kertess, Director of Bykert Gallery, John Weber, Director of Dwan Gallery, the writer and critic Lucy Lippard and publisher Kaspar Konig.⁸⁹ They were all involved in showing experimental and new art practices. The Museum of Normal Art had an interesting programme. His opening exhibition was called 'Fifteen artists present their favourite book'.⁹⁰ Kosuth had an authoritative conviction of his work's relevance. When Harrison returned to London at the end of April 1969, he discussed with Townsend the possibility of *SI*'s commissioning Kosuth to write a statement on his attitude to practice. Townsend's policy of actively

⁸⁷ Also illustrated were Flanagan's announcement card for Gerry Schum's *Landart* television exhibition; *a hole in the sea* (1969), a postcard with a hole mechanically cut from the middle; Latham's *Skoob tower 2*, burning outside Senate House, Joseph Kosuth's *Matter in General (Art as Idea)* from Siegelaub's *July/August/September* exhibition catalogue; Douglas Huebler's site sculpture project, *duration piece no. 9*.

⁸⁸ Harrison, unpublished interview transcript, 28/3/07, Melvin papers, London.

⁸⁹ Barbara Reise's Kosuth file contains the Museum of Normal Art headed notepaper, Barbara Reise papers, TGA 786/5/2/88, London.

⁹⁰ Kosuth opening exhibition is listed in Lucy Lippard, *Six Years: The dematerialization of the art object from 1966 to 1972*, Berkeley, Los Angeles California and London England, p. 30.

seeking artists to write about artwork made him amenable to commissioning a relatively unknown young American on the strength of Harrison's recommendation. He wanted to know 'from the horse's mouth' what was at stake in the 'new practices in conceptual art'.⁹¹ Harrison was grateful to Townsend for granting him autonomy over so much space.

Over the next few months, Kosuth and Harrison corresponded regularly. Their discussions as recorded in Kosuth's letters to Harrison contributed to the formation of Kosuth's three-part article, and will be dealt with here.⁹² Harrison's archive provides the material for a more vulnerable account of how the article evolved into its more dogmatic published state. (Figures 4.39 and 4.40.)

In May 1969, Kosuth commented to Harrison that 'creating new forms for art (possible?) is just one of the various ideas for art to deal with. It seems somehow not possible'.⁹³ This remark was written on the back of a letter to Kosuth from Lippard, asking for Kosuth's participation in a benefit in February 1969 for the student mobilisation committee to end the war in Vietnam,⁹⁴ and this suggests that it was important to Kosuth that Harrison was aware of his political allegiances.

In another letter, sent shortly afterwards, Kosuth told Harrison he was 'surprised and disappointed' that Coventry-based artists, Atkinson and Baldwin, who taught alongside Reise, had used the subtitle 'the journal of conceptual art' for the first volume of the *Art-Language Journal*.⁹⁵ Kosuth expressed his concern that they were using what he considered to be his property, his words,

⁹¹ Townsend used the expression 'the horse's mouth' frequently to denote the artist. Melvin notebook, 1996, Melvin papers, London.

⁹² Harrison and Kosuth were in contact during the following five years, staying with each other, holidaying together, until ruptures within the Art & Language group and the break between the UK and US collaboration. The correspondence is indicative of their friendship. The present author discussed it with Harrison, unpublished interview transcript, 28/3/07. Melvin papers, London.

⁹³ Kosuth letter to Harrison in an envelope post-marked 16/5/69. Charles Harrison papers, (1970s-2000s), TGA 200826, London.

⁹⁴ Kosuth verso of letter to Harrison in envelope post-marked 16/5/69. Charles Harrison papers, (1970s-2000s), TGA 200826, London.

⁹⁵ The *Art-Language* journal was published in May 1969 and contained Sol LeWitt's 'Sentences on Conceptual Art', Lawrence Weiner's 'Statements' and Dan Graham's 'Poem Schema'. Kosuth was appointed American editor for Volume 1, Number 2, which was published in January 1970. For the avoidance of confusion the name of the artists' collective is Art & Language. The title of the journal published by the Art & Language group is *Art-Language*.

by remarking to Harrison that this would create ‘an aesthetic ghetto leaving us all vulnerable to next season’s urban renewal’, and he advised Harrison to ‘tell them that the grand master of American “Conceptual art” would like to inform them that the quickest way to end a revolution is to – from the outset – tell the government that “some day when we are strong, we hope to over throw you”.’⁹⁶ As will become clear, inclusions from the correspondence are relevant to the discussion of how Kosuth distanced himself from his former associates in his contribution to *SI*. The letters also show how he found a way to bring his ideas together in the article for *SI*.

The statement, ‘A Wall of water one half inch thick by one mile square’ written at the top of a letter Kosuth sent to Harrison demonstrates how he attempted to find a viable distinction between the finitude of objecthood, the prison of reality, and the ephemeral or immaterial quality of language as the transmitter of ideas – the tangible object as something finitely thinking as material in itself. It shows Kosuth’s formalist leanings and reading of Hegelian aesthetics in the designation of art as ‘the sensuous representation of the idea’.⁹⁷

Art seems to be the man-made theory or idea made perceptible, yet useless. The idea of beauty in art has simply expanded to mean the enjoyment – appreciation – interest in something transmitted to our consciousness that has importance in itself without any direct or implied usefulness as something else. By its uselessness it is beautiful; there we have its importance.

My work is concerned with the elimination [of] the gap between the experience and the idea of the work of art. The only valid context in which to question the nature of art is that of the context of art itself; I can accept no other contexts as being valid. Art made from materials are first and foremost that material from which the art is made. The ‘meaning’ (ie its connection to art) is brought to it secondarily and explicitly. Thus, finally, it’s the application of a general (art) to

⁹⁶ Kosuth letter to Harrison, undated, one of several placed together inside envelope dated 16 July 1969. Charles Harrison papers, (1970s-2000s), TGA 200826, London.

⁹⁷ Brian K Etter, “Beauty and the transcendence of the ideal” *Between transcendence and historicism: The ethical nature of the arts in Hegelian aesthetics*, Albany New York, State University of New York Press, 2006, (pp. 37-67), p. 44.

a specific (the qualities of the material). I find the immateriality of language interesting, because at this moment, you are experiencing my ideas, not the language.⁹⁸

The idea of instantaneous communication is embedded in the modernist ideal of transparency of feeling experienced directly through the materials in encountering the work. What is different in Kosuth's position is that, by concentrating on the structure of the aesthetic process, he calls attention to its system as a thing in itself. The system becomes an art object, rather than a philosophical discussion.

Kosuth's letters to Harrison reveal complex and contradictory thoughts and reactions, but it was through writing these letters that he found a way to articulate his position in the essay for *SI*. To go through language and to get beyond it suggests belief in a core meaning that is transcendent which would enable the object to be apprehended on its own terms without the blanket of words in the way. This would enable his reader-viewer to experience the system of art through language, which is not what he states. If the reality he intends to present is transcended through the portal of language and so no longer dependent on its form, because it exists in the mind of the reader-viewer, then his main purpose is to attempt to define metaphysics as form without form, which is a contradiction.

In July 1969 Kosuth told Harrison that he was 'finally getting down to the writing for Studio'.⁹⁹ Although he remarked that he had been procrastinating it was now nearly there. In the letter he asked if he could count on two pages of pictures to accompany it and that he was reckoning, with the typeface and point-size he wanted, it would come out at a thousand words a page. However, he made no reference to the overall length of the article.¹⁰⁰ In the same letter,

⁹⁸ Kosuth letter to Harrison, undated, envelope postmarked 16 May 1969. Charles Harrison papers, (1970s-2000s), TGA 200826, London.

⁹⁹ Kosuth letter to Harrison, undated, post-marked 24/7/69. Charles Harrison papers, (1970s-2000s), TGA 200826, London.

¹⁰⁰ Kosuth letter to Harrison, post-marked 24/7/69. Charles Harrison papers, (1970s-2000s), TGA 200826, London.

Kosuth relayed his anxieties to Harrison about a plan for the art critic, Jack Burnham, to interview the group of artists associated with Siegelaub.

Recounting this here is relevant to setting the scene of the discussion on which Kosuth embarked in his article. Kosuth told Harrison he had heard from Siegelaub that Leider told Burnham that their work in Conceptual Art 'was the one area of art that had been neglected'. Kosuth asked Harrison whether it was he who had influenced Leider's commission. More recently, Siegelaub has reflected that Leider only covered the project involving his circle as a report on current ideas, not because he had any specific engagement with its intentions. This is quite different from how Siegelaub regarded Townsend's perception and relationship to their practices.

Burnham's conclusions on the group around Siegelaub were drawn together in the article, 'Alice's Head', published in *ArtForum* February 1970. It appeared beneath the stand-first, 'conceptual art's ideal medium is telepathy', which reductive claim probably arose from 'live in your head', which was the stand-first to the exhibition *When Attitudes Become Form*. Burnham stated that 'the printed page is to conceptualism what the picture plane is to illusionistic realism: an unavoidable belabouring of the point, inelegant communication.'¹⁰¹ From the letters Kosuth sent to Harrison it is possible to extrapolate that Kosuth sought to distance himself from Siegelaub's way of working and the artists he associated with because he did not wish his practice to be subordinated, along with other artists' practices, to an overall curatorial scheme. This helps to explain the reasons for his concerns over Burnham's article.

Art after philosophy

When Kosuth submitted his copy to Harrison, he commented, 'look at the size though you will want to kill me but I really couldn't make it any smaller so much to be said'.¹⁰² The length of his final contribution exasperated

¹⁰¹ Jack Burnham, "Alice's Head." *ArtForum*, Vol. 8, No. 6, February 1970, pp. 37-43.

¹⁰² Kosuth letter to Harrison, undated, summer 1969. Charles Harrison papers, (1970s-2000s), TGA 200826, London.

Townsend.¹⁰³ The total extent of his three-part article was in excess of 7,000 words, with the first part over 4,500 words, an enormous amount of space to give to a young, unknown artist. Nonetheless, the editorial decision to publish it raised the stakes for the magazine's radical precepts and precipitated a range of responses. Kosuth's articles quickly acquired a reach beyond the expectations of the editorial office, generating correspondence to the office from artists and critics for two years and privately for much longer.¹⁰⁴ Arguably, the series still generates controversy, and, although it has been softened by the distance of historical overview, it never fails to spur students to discuss their premises for making work and to reflect on the meaning of judgement and definitions of what constitutes 'art'.¹⁰⁵

In part one, Kosuth outlines the historical context for conceptual art practices by considering the separation of traditional connections between aesthetics and art. He assembles a series of philosophers to represent a linguistic approach to art's trajectory concerns by following a path through AJ Ayer, Hegel, Kant and Wittgenstein.¹⁰⁶ He remarks:

Traditional philosophy [...] has concerned itself with the unsaid. The nearly exclusive focus on the said by twentieth century analytical linguistic philosophers is the shared contention that the unsaid is unsaid because it is unsayable. [...]

[In considering] the separation between aesthetics and art I propose to consider Formalist Art [...] and assert that art is analogous to an analytic proposition, and that art's only existence is as a tautology which enables art to remain 'aloof' from philosophical presumptions.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰³ Townsend recalled his irritation and exasperation over the length of the article, Melvin notebook 2001, Melvin papers, London.

¹⁰⁴ Kosuth's contributor's notes for *SI*, Vol. 178, p. 103, listed him as a faculty member at SVA, the founder and director of the Museum of Normal Art (1967).

¹⁰⁵ Reflections are drawn from the present author's experience of teaching Fine Art students 1995-2012.

¹⁰⁶ Kosuth, "Art after philosophy." *SI*, Vol. 178, No. 915, pp. 134-137.

¹⁰⁷ Kosuth, *SI*, Vol. 178, No. 915, p. 134.

He continues by giving an account of Greenberg's, and thus formalism's, approach to critical judgements which are governed by taste:

[Greenberg's] taste reflects the period he grew up in as a critic [...] the fifties [...] formalist art and criticism accepts as a definition of art one which exists solely in morphological grounds [...] formalist critics and artists [...] do not question the nature of art. Being an artist now means to question the nature of art. If one is questioning the nature of painting one cannot be questioning the nature of art. If an artist accepts painting or sculpture he is accepting the tradition that goes with it. [...] and is accepting the nature of art to be the European tradition of a painting-sculpture dichotomy.

Duchamp [...] changed the nature of art from a question of morphology to a question of function. [...] all art after Duchamp is conceptual in its nature because art only exists conceptually.¹⁰⁸

Including a list of names of artists who have investigated the nature of art, Kosuth remarks in a footnote:¹⁰⁹

I analyse art's function and subsequently its viability. And I do so to enable others to understand the reasoning of my – and, by extension, other artists' art [...and] provide a clearer understanding of the term Conceptual Art. I arrived at these conclusions alone and indeed it is from this thinking that my art since 1966 (if not before) evolved. Only recently did I discover after meeting Terry Atkinson that Michael Baldwin and he share similar, though certainly not identical opinions to mine.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁸ Kosuth, *SI*, Vol. 178, No. 915, p. 135.

¹⁰⁹ Kosuth, 'Malevich, early Rauschenberg, Johns, Lichtenstein, Warhol, Andre, Judd, Flavin, LeWitt, Morris and others.' *SI*, Vol. 178, No. 915, p. 136.

¹¹⁰ Kosuth, *SI*, Vol. 178, No. 915, p. 137.

Kosuth closes the article with the statement, 'Art's only claim is for art. Art is the definition of art.'¹¹¹

Part two of 'Art after philosophy' has the subtitle, "Conceptual Art" and Recent Art'.¹¹² Following a series of artistic quotations on the nature of art, Kosuth uses the article to distance himself from Barry, Huebler and Weiner, the three artists associated with him through Siegelaub's projects.

[They] are not concerned with, I do not think, Conceptual Art [...] Huebler [...] uses a non-morphological art-like form of presentation (photographs, maps, mailings) to answer iconic, structural sculptural issues directly related to his formica [sic] sculpture (which he was making as late as 1968.) [...] Huebler [...] in his mid forties and much older than most of the artists discussed here – has not much in common with the purer versions of 'Conceptual Art' as it would superficially seem. [...] Robert Barry and Lawrence Weiner – have watched their work take on 'Conceptual Art' associations almost by accident. Barry [...] has in common with Weiner the fact that the 'path' to conceptual art came via decisions related to choices of art materials and processes. Barry's post Newman/Reinhardt paintings 'reduced' [...] along a path from two-inch square paintings, to single lines of wire [...] radio wave beams to inert gases, and finally to 'brain energy'. Weiner [...] gave up painting in the spring of 1968. [...] by the summer of 1968 he decided to have his work exist only as a proposal – that is under a [...] museum, gallery or collector [...] necessitated his work to be made. [...] later he went one step further in deciding that it didn't matter whether the work was made or not.¹¹³

Kosuth then gives a list of artists whose work is 'purely' conceptual, which includes Atkinson and Baldwin, whose various projects he summarises, noting their creation, with David Bainbridge and Harold Hurrell, of the *Art-Language Journal*, for which Kosuth was by now acting as US editor. He remarked that Christine Kozlov, Ian Baxter, James Byars, Frederick Barthelme and Hanne Darboven had 'been working along conceptual lines since 1966', and that 'some

¹¹¹ Kosuth, *SI*, Vol. 178, No. 915, p. 137.

¹¹² Kosuth, "Art after philosophy: part 2." *SI*, Vol. 178, No. 916, November 1969, pp. 160-161.

¹¹³ Kosuth, *SI*, Vol. 178, No. 916, p. 160.

of Bruce Nauman's, Barry Flanagan's, Bruce McLean's and Richard Long's works [were conceptually initiated].¹¹⁴

Several other artists are 'peripherally' related to a 'conceptual' form of work, including Mel Bochner, who 'gave up work heavily influenced by "Minimal" art and began such work'.¹¹⁵ Kosuth remarks that he agrees with Atkinson that LeWitt paved the way for conceptual practices and Siegelaub provided a curatorial framework as: 'the first exhibition organiser to specialise in this arena of recent art...[he] has had many group exhibitions that existed no place other than the catalogue.'¹¹⁶

In part three, Kosuth states that his 'first conceptual work was the *Leaning Glass* from 1965'.¹¹⁷ He describes this and the works made using dictionary definitions. He includes illustrations of seven artists' work. Three are by him and the others are represented by one work apiece.¹¹⁸

Responses to 'Art after philosophy'

Over the course of this three-part article Kosuth attempted to redraw the battle-lines determining what constitutes art. He argued that Greenbergian criticism is unsuited to the discussion of Conceptual Art practices because it assesses art as a taste-driven aesthetic experience.¹¹⁹ But it was Kosuth's claim on historical dates that would dominate subsequent discussions, with the main issue hinging on when his 'art as idea' was conceived. He asserted this was in '1966 or before' and the work he used in defence of this claim was *Leaning Glass*, 1965.¹²⁰

¹¹⁴ Kosuth remarks, 'Steven Kaltenbach's *Time capsules* from 1968 [...]. And Ian Wilson's post Kaprow 'Conversations' are conceptually presented.' He mentioned Benar Venet and Ed Ruscha's books. *SI*, Vol. 178, No. 916, p. 161.

¹¹⁵ Kosuth, listed in this category 'Jan Dibbets, Eric Orr, Allen Rappersberg, Dennis Oppenheim, Donald Burgy' and the 'beginnings of conceptual work in Saul Ostrow, Adrian Piper and Perpetua Butler, Ian Burn, Mel Ramsden and Roger Cutforth'. *SI*, Vol. 178, No. 916, p. 161.

¹¹⁶ Kosuth, *SI*, Vol. 178, No. 916, p. 161.

¹¹⁷ Kosuth, "Art after philosophy: part 3." *SI*, Vol. 178, No. 917, pp. 212-3, p. 212.

¹¹⁸ The artists illustrated are, Atkinson-Baldwin, On Kawara, Christine Kozlov, Douglas Huebler, Robert Barry, Fredrick Barthelme. Kosuth, *SI*, Vol. 178, No. 917, p. 213

¹¹⁹ Kosuth *SI*, Vol. 178, No. 915, p. 135.

¹²⁰ Kosuth, *SI*, Vol. 178, No. 917, p. 212.

When 'Art after philosophy' was published, the main objection from artists and critics was provoked by Kosuth's claim that he had originated a new way of thinking and as if it was autonomous and independent. Kosuth claimed to Harrison that he had begun to work in this way late in 1965 and not, as Huebler told Burnham, late in 1968.¹²¹ This was a source of annoyance for the artists directly involved with developing new practices in conceptual art, as will be seen below.

The storm over Kosuth's claims for his own initiation of these ideas engendered a huge amount of correspondence, some of which was published in *SI*. Michel Claura, a Paris-based lawyer who collaborated with Siegelaub to organise a Conceptual art exhibition, entitled *18 Paris iv. 70*, wrote a letter published in January 1970. In this, Claura made fun of Kosuth's conviction over the date at which he allegedly conceived conceptual art, by pointing out that ambiguities surrounded the artist's date of birth.¹²² Kosuth's biography in the catalogue *When Attitudes Become Form* reported his date of birth as follows, 'January 31, between 1938 and 1948 in Midwestern United States'.¹²³ Claura noted that it was 'surprising that a conceptual artist should not know when he was conceived'.¹²⁴ Claura's attention was focused on the comprehensive fashion in which Kosuth had attempted to insinuate himself into the linear trajectory of philosophical thought. He also drew attention to the way in which Kosuth dismissed the artists associated with him through Siegelaub's projects by referring to their practices as rooted in painting or sculpture, noting that if 'you knew [the] work you can judge the accuracy of this remark'.¹²⁵ What Claura missed in his exasperation was the opportunity to build on Kosuth's position and continue to develop an exploration of Conceptual art processes.

Reise privately told Claura that his 'comprehensive' and to-the-point letter 'makes anything else potentially redundant. Atkinson & Baldwin were upset by

¹²¹ Kosuth letter to Harrison, undated, one of several placed together inside envelope dated 16/7/69, Charles Harrison papers, (1970s - 2000s), TGA 200826, London.

¹²² Claura, "Letter to the editor", entitled 'conceptual misconceptions', *SI*, Vol. 197, No. 918, January 1970, pp. 5-6.

¹²³ Kosuth, *When Attitudes Become Form*, (Exhibition Catalogue) Kunsthalle, Bern, 1969, unpaginated.

¹²⁴ Claura, "Letter to the editor." Entitled, "conceptual misconceptions." *SI*, Vol. 197, No. 918, January 1970, p. 5.

¹²⁵ Claura, *SI*, Vol. 197, No. 918, p. 6.

it and have a tendency to dismiss it as a French (phenomenology/existentialism) attack on Wittgenstein and his British appreciation/comprehension. They may well cause more sparks to fly.'¹²⁶ Reise was alluding to the potential storm of *Art & Language*'s second volume of the *Art-Language Journal* which contained a refutation of telepathy as a means of transmitting art concepts, so questioning the basis for Robert Barry's art practice.

At the beginning of January 1970, Barry stayed with Reise in London, and told her about the 'flak' *SI*'s publication of 'Art after philosophy' had attracted in New York, especially the last part, in which Kosuth to be the prime mover of the new practices. Both were incensed and Reise felt an urgent need to address publicly the fact that Kosuth had no greater claim to their ownership than many of the other artists engaged in Conceptual practices. She told both Barry and Claura that publication of the latter's letter to the editor had 'partially absolved [her] from her feeling of public responsibility'.¹²⁷ Nonetheless, she continued privately to make lists of responses to Kosuth using *Art & Language*'s title of their article published in *SI* January 1970, 'Status and priority' as a heading, above the remarks that 'the road to status and priority is paved with good intentions' and 'that handy dandy piece of pseudo scholarship'.¹²⁸

After Barry returned to the US, Reise sent him a verbatim account of a conversation she had with Atkinson and Baldwin in Coventry. Reise told Barry that LeWitt told Atkinson and Baldwin that he had 'dis-affiliated' himself from Joseph's article but that 'A & B announced that, of course, Sol wasn't really a "conceptual artist"'.¹²⁹

In a letter to Reise at the beginning of February 1970, LeWitt vented his anger at the article, describing it as 'drivel' and 'offensive'.¹³⁰ He was surprised

¹²⁶ Michel Claura letter to Barbara Reise, 8/1/70. Claura and Reise exchanged several letters privately over the whole business, Michel Claura file, Barbara Reise papers, TGA 786/5/2/1/3, London.

¹²⁷ Reise letter to Claura, 12/1/70, Barbara Reise papers, TGA 786/5/2/1/3, London. Reise letter to Barry, 8/1/70, Robert Barry file, Barbara Reise papers, TGA 786/5/2/1/3, London.

¹²⁸ Reise notes for her response to Kosuth's articles, Kosuth file, Barbara Reise papers, TGA 786/5/2/88, London.

¹²⁹ Reise letter to Barry, 8/1/70, Robert Barry file, Barbara Reise papers, TGA 786/5/2/1/3, London.

¹³⁰ LeWitt letter to Reise, 11/2/70, Sol LeWitt file, Barbara Reise papers, TGA 786/5/1/2, London.

that Townsend agreed to publish it, and could not believe that Harrison would take 'this shit seriously' because it did not contribute 'to any understanding of this kind of art'. He described Kosuth's historical assertions as self-indicting galloping Duchampianism. 'Reinhardt would be turning in his grave to be lumped in such company.'¹³¹ He repeatedly stamped the word 'bullshit' over the letter in purple ink with a rubber stamp.

Further investigations in Reise's archive cast light on numerous reactions confided to her over Kosuth's article. In one amusing exchange we see the bullshit stamp featured again on a postcard LeWitt sent to Weiner. On the front is a photograph taken by the celebrated French photographer, Jacques Henri Lartigue. Showing a racing car, it was taken during the Prix de Circuit de la Seine, 26 June 1912. LeWitt's stamp appears behind the car. Weiner re-used the card and send it to Reise. He stuck paper over the words on the back and noted 'this is a Sol LeWitt card under the skin', which shows a tangential reference to the ongoing controversy generated by Kosuth's article as well as manifesting a humorous take on the circularity of ideas.¹³² (Figure 4.41.)

Also at the beginning of January, Huebler responded to Kosuth's article in a letter to the editorial office which has since disappeared from the files. He decided to withdraw it from publication, since the act of writing it dissipated his annoyance and, on second thoughts, he did not want it printed. Harrison regarded it as a more urbane response than many of the others, indicating that, if Huebler had 'second, second thoughts', he would happily reinstate it.¹³³

In *SI*'s February 1970, a response from Kosuth to Claura appeared alongside a letter from Ashton. Kosuth's reaction to Claura's letter was to defend and reassert his position, and to describe Claura's attack as personal.¹³⁴ Ashton sought to test the 'factual aspects of Kosuth's contribution', arguing that, while a student in 1965, he was engaged in exploring painting 'distantly related to De Stijl philosophy' and had written a term paper for a course on Ad Reinhardt. She

¹³¹ LeWitt letter to Reise, 11/2/70, Sol LeWitt file, Barbara Reise papers, TGA 786/5/1/2, London.

¹³² Weiner postcard to Reise, postmark 22/6/70, Lawrence Weiner file, Barbara Reise papers, TGA 786/5/2/154, London.

¹³³ Huebler postcard to Harrison, 4/1/70, Harrison letter to Huebler, 6/1/70, H file, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

¹³⁴ Kosuth replies to Claura, *SI*, Vol. 179, February 1970, p. 44.

commented on Bochner's role as Kosuth's teacher, highlighting the work Bochner did with a Xerox machine.¹³⁵

Reise privately wrote to Ashton to thank her for putting the record straight on Kosuth's 'own history'. Reise distanced herself from the article, seeing it only 'post-facto', and admitted to feeling less 'begrudging of the controversy which Studio's editorial staff think is good for the magazine's circulation' now that Ashton and Claura had put it into perspective. She commented that it was ironic that 'an artist of a group usually so critical of critics' instant history – should engage in propagating it – and so embarrassingly badly, too.'¹³⁶

The February issue also contained a letter from Bochner.¹³⁷ It concerned damage sustained by his work, *13½ Sheets of Graph Paper*, while being exhibited in *When Attitudes Become Form* at the ICA. In a covering note sent to Townsend, Bochner asked that his letter to the editor be shown to Harrison (as the exhibition organiser) before publication, to see if he thought that the ICA would pay for the piece, in which case he 'would glad[ly] withdraw this letter [...].'¹³⁸ Bochner remarked that he had insured the work during transit; but that the gallery had informed him six months after the 'origin of the exhibition that no insurance was available for work of this kind'.¹³⁹ Harrison's reply was published alongside Bochner's and he addressed the work's full title that framed its definition, *13½ Sheets of Graph Paper (from an infinite series)* stating we must assume 'that the series being (physically i.e. impossibly) complete, the six defaced sheets are irreplaceable, or that of the whole hypothetically complete series, only thirteen specific sheets were eligible for presentation in the first place'.¹⁴⁰ Harrison's assertion was that either the work was the idea, and therefore the sheets of graph paper were interchangeable, or it was a unique piece, and thus not part of an infinite series. It could not be both. It is clear that Kosuth's separation of art from idea influenced Harrison's response, and he later acknowledged in interview that Kosuth was 'the ghost in the

¹³⁵ Ashton, "Kosuth: the facts." *SI*, Vol. 179, February 1970, p. 44.

¹³⁶ Barbara Reise letter to Dore Ashton, 25/1/70, Barbara Reise, TGA 786/5/2/1/3, London.

¹³⁷ Bochner, "Art at risk." *SI*, Vol. 179, February 1970, pp. 44-5.

¹³⁸ Bochner letter to Townsend, 25/7/70, Misc correspondence problems 1970-4, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

¹³⁹ Bochner, "Art at risk." *SI*, Vol. 179, February 1970, pp. 44-5.

¹⁴⁰ Harrison, "Reply to Bochner." *SI*, Vol. 179, February 1970, p. 45.

particular situation'.¹⁴¹ Harrison's handling of the situation continued to rankle still for Bochner in 2005.¹⁴²

During February and March 1970, Dan Graham wrote several letters to Townsend concerning Kosuth's articles. In the first, which was not intended for publication, he told Townsend that, although he considered that the 'direction at Studio generally seems good [...] the outright misrepresentation as to facts and dates of work documented and lack of lucidity of Joseph's pieces really startles' him.¹⁴³ Graham proceeded to provide Townsend with his version of events which, with Ashton, noted Bochner's teaching role and stated that, in 1966, Kosuth was exhibiting Reinhardt-'influenced paintings'.¹⁴⁴ His next letter, sent a week later, set out a series of corrections, as noted in the following paragraph.

Graham pointed out to Townsend that the first mention 'of the subject' of conceptual art, was made in Sol LeWitt's article, 'Paragraphs on Conceptual Art', published in *ArtForum* in June 1967. Although this text did not discuss artworks, Graham observed that it included 'reproductions of works by Eva Hesse, Mel Bochner, Dan Graham, Ruth Vollmer and Jo Baer'.¹⁴⁵ With the letter Graham enclosed a copy of *Schema*, (March 1966) his text piece published in *Aspen*, no. 5+6. This was to demonstrate the situation of his work in the public domain.¹⁴⁶ In pointing out Kosuth's inaccuracies, Graham noted that, at a panel discussion arranged by Siegelaub to coincide with the Windham College exhibition,¹⁴⁷ in 1968, when Siegelaub invited Graham to chair the discussion the invited artists, Andre, Barry and Weiner, had an opportunity to discuss their work, the only artist Graham recalled 'voicing conceptual concerns was

¹⁴¹ Harrison, unpublished interview transcript, 27/3/07, Melvin papers, London.

¹⁴² Mel Bochner, email to present author 2005, Melvin papers, London.

¹⁴³ Dan Graham letter to Townsend, 25/2/70, G file to 1972, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

¹⁴⁴ Dan Graham letter, 25/2/70, G file to 1972, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

¹⁴⁵ Sol LeWitt, *ArtForum*, Vol. 5, No. 10, June 1967, pp. 79-84.

¹⁴⁶ Dan Graham, *Aspen*, no 5+6, Fall 1967.

¹⁴⁷ Windham College, Putney, Vermont, outdoor exhibition with one site-specific work made by each artist 30 April - 31 May, 1968, listed in Lucy R Lippard, *Six Years: The dematerialization of the art object 1966-72* [...], pp. 46-8, p. 46

Weiner'.¹⁴⁸ Kosuth had not been included in either the exhibition or the discussion. Graham remarked that 1968 was the year when Siegelaub and 'his people' emerged.¹⁴⁹ Graham also asserted that his own work from 1965 to 1966 was known to his friends, Bochner, Smithson and LeWitt, and that Kosuth knew of it through Bochner, and this 'was *all* there was extant in the later designated field of "Conceptual Art" until (before) Kosuth and Siegelaub commenced their aggressive promotion campaigns.'¹⁵⁰ He described Kosuth's gallery, the Museum of Normal Art, and how he managed to get 'famous people to present work'. Finally, he commented that 'Joseph was not doing [conceptual] work then; it may have been (as he now claims) in his notebooks (the only 'real' form of his work he now says), but he wasn't putting it on paintings and showing it to anyone until one and a half to two years later.'¹⁵¹

In a third letter, sent eight days later, he qualified the second with the following proviso: 'it wasn't to be a formal letter to the editor – just a private note to you [...] maybe just the first sentence would be worth printing' which was: 'Joseph Kosuth's three-part article, "Art after Philosophy" [sic] is misleading and factually incorrect – the errors need correction'.¹⁵²

In reply to Graham, Townsend stated that neither he nor 'anyone in this country' would be in a position to confirm or deny Kosuth's claims.¹⁵³ Townsend said that, if he had not received the later letter, he would have published the earlier one.¹⁵⁴ He told Graham that he was 'disturbed at some of the reactions' and 'anxious lest too much emphasis be placed on the question of

¹⁴⁸ Windham College panel organised by Seth Siegelaub during the exhibition, Lucy R Lippard, *Six Years: The dematerialization of the art object 1966-72* [...], p. 47.

¹⁴⁹ Dan Graham letter to Townsend, 1/3/70, G file to 1972, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

¹⁵⁰ Graham, 1/3/70, G file to 1972, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

¹⁵¹ Graham, 1/3/70, G file to 1972, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

¹⁵² Graham letter to Townsend, 9/3/70, G file to 1972, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

¹⁵³ Townsend letter to Graham, 13/3/70, G file to 1972, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

¹⁵⁴ Townsend letter to Graham, 13/3/70, G file to 1972, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

personality. I am afraid Joseph's article was responsible for this, and I do feel it was a mistake because it obscures the real issues.¹⁵⁵

As far as Townsend was concerned, the real issues to consider were about the work being made, with particular attention to the ways in which this work precipitated a different type of writing about art.¹⁵⁶ It also opened up the space of the magazine – the page – for artists to use in the manner in which they saw fit. Whether this gave rise to a statement, art as text, or work created specially for the page was immaterial. In the debacle following the publication of Kosuth's article, Townsend considered that claims about authorship limited the discussion rather than allowing a focus on criticism. He thought the level of discussion was beginning to sound like that in a school playground. Townsend would have preferred the correspondence to have concentrated on the dialectical proposition of art after philosophy rather than becoming a battleground for arguing who did what and when.¹⁵⁷

In June 1970, Kosuth published 'An answer to criticisms', in which he reasserted that his motivation was to distinguish his intentions from those of Barry, Huebler and Weiner. He was scathing in response to Claura's 'unprovoked attack' and Ashton's account of his artistic evolution, which, he implied, was because Bochner had put her up to it.¹⁵⁸

In private to Harrison, Kosuth also refuted Burnham's view that Siegelaub was the 'real' artist in the group.¹⁵⁹ Siegelaub agreed that the designation was inappropriate, and, in interview, he confirmed that he had never regarded his involvement as art.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁵ Townsend letter to Graham, 13/3/70, G file to 1972, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

¹⁵⁶ Townsend recalled his exasperation at the time and was retrospectively irritated by the amount of attention given to and generated by Kosuth's articles. Melvin notebook 2000, Melvin papers, London.

¹⁵⁷ Townsend, Melvin notebook 2000, Melvin papers, London.

¹⁵⁸ Kosuth, "An answer to criticisms." *SI*, Vol. 179, June 1970, p. 245.

¹⁵⁹ Kosuth letter to Harrison, dated February 1970, Charles Harrison papers, (1970s-2000s), TGA 200868, London.

¹⁶⁰ Siegelaub, unpublished interview transcript, 28/2/08, Melvin papers, London.

In a letter to Siegelaub, Harrison described his article, 'Notes towards art work', published in *SI* February 1970,¹⁶¹ as being 'in part a response to Kosuth'.¹⁶² In this, he sought to create a forum for Conceptual art practice that would be subject to rigorous critical assessment.¹⁶³

SI's September 1970 issue included an admonishment from Reise, in the form of a letter to the editor entitled, 'Come on Joseph', in which she insisted that 'no one with any mature sense took your art-critical, art-historical [...] generalisations seriously', asking why, if Ashton, Bochner and Claura were really insignificant in their assessments, did Kosuth continue to defend himself by 'bad mouthing' them.¹⁶⁴

Harrison noted later: 'had I known how many hares [Kosuth's trilogy] was to set running perhaps I wouldn't have pressed Peter so hard to print it in full.'¹⁶⁵ Townsend was irritated by the frequency with which 'Art after philosophy' was reprinted in anthologies because he considered that there were many other contributions of greater relevance to the discussion of art to be found in *SI* which did not have this degree of exposure.¹⁶⁶ This thesis attempts to shed light on these contributions.

'The British Avant Garde': A joint venture between the New York Cultural Center and *SI*

In May 1970, when Harrison was staying in New York on a research and study trip, Kosuth introduced him to Donald Karshan who was the founding director of the newly opened New York Cultural Center (NYCC), affiliated with the Fairleigh Dickinson University at Columbus Circle. Karshan was the first

¹⁶¹ Harrison, "Notes towards art work", *SI*, vol. 179, no. 919, February 1970, pp. 42-43.

¹⁶² Harrison letter to Siegelaub, 9/2/70, July/August 1970 file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

¹⁶³ Harrison, "Notes towards art work." *SI*, Vol. 179, No. 919, pp. 42-3.

¹⁶⁴ Reise, "Come on Joseph." *SI*, Vol. 180, p. 71.

¹⁶⁵ Harrison, unpublished interview transcript, 28/3/07, Melvin papers, London.

¹⁶⁶ Kosuth, "Art after philosophy." *Art in theory 1990-1990: An anthology of Changing ideas*, Oxford, England, Blackwell, 1994, (Ed) Charles Harrison and Paul Wood, pp. 845-6, "Art after philosophy." Joseph Kosuth, *Art after philosophy and after: collected writings, 1966-1990*, Edited with and introduction by Gabriele Guercio. Foreword by Jean-François Lyotard. Cambridge Mass, and London England, The MIT Press 1991. Kosuth, "Art after philosophy." Alexander Alberro and Blake Stimson Edited *Conceptual Art: A Critical Anthology*, Cambridge Mass, The MIT Press, 1999.

millionaire Harrison had met.¹⁶⁷ They shared a commitment to conceptual art practices. Karshan's exhibition, *Conceptual Art and Conceptual Aspects*, had just opened at the NYCC. This exhibition included Art & Language and Kosuth. Karshan invited Harrison, together with Kosuth and his partner, the artist, Christine Kozlof, to spend a weekend in the country with Karshan and his partner, Frances Archipenko, the widow of the artist Alexander Archipenko, to discuss the possibilities of collaboration.¹⁶⁸ Karshan asked Harrison to consider organising an exhibition of British artists for the following year, and Harrison was pleased of the opportunity. Their initial discussions explored the possibilities for a joint project with a special issue of *SI* magazine and simultaneous publication of the exhibition catalogue. The catalogue would use the same material as the special issue, minus the regular ticketboard section, reviews or advertising.¹⁶⁹ At the time Harrison was working on his pages for Siegelaub's *SI* July/August 1970 summer exhibition in which Kosuth and many other artists who were currently showing in the NYCC were also involved. Siegelaub's exhibition in the magazine's pages will be discussed in Chapter 5. What Harrison offered by way of his direct connection with *SI* and its radical policies was of great interest to Karshan. Both men were alert to the possibilities of judicious networking.

They also discussed Karshan's essay, 'The seventies: post-object art', which was written to introduce the *Conceptual Art and Conceptual Aspects* exhibition. The catalogue sharing the same title as the exhibition, contained text-based art and did not have an explanatory or introductory essay.¹⁷⁰ Harrison believed Karshan's accompanying article presented a clear explanation of the move away from the tangible material properties of painting and sculpture exemplified by

¹⁶⁷ Harrison was not sure how he had made his money, but he had an impressive country estate. Harrison, unpublished interview transcript, 31/10/07, Melvin papers, London.

¹⁶⁸ Harrison, unpublished interview transcript, 31/10/07, Melvin papers, London.

¹⁶⁹ Harrison letter to Karshan, 12/6/70, NYCC file, Charles Harrison papers, (1950s-1979), TGA 839/1/3/3, London.

¹⁷⁰ *Conceptual Art and Conceptual Aspects*, (Exhibition Catalogue), exhibition curated and catalogue organised by Donald Karshan, New York Cultural Center, New York, 1970. The catalogue is in the present author's collection. Karshan's article, "The seventies post-object art" was published in *SI*, Vol. 180, No. 925, September 1970, pp. 69-70.

the new art practices, which Harrison thought, if Karshan agreed, would be very useful to publish in *SI* as soon as there was space available.¹⁷¹

Back in London, Harrison and Townsend explored the possibilities for a special issue, linked to the NYCC exhibition, which would take place some time the following year. Harrison needed Townsend's consent not only in relation to commissioning the magazine issue but also to ensure that there would be no conflict of interest in accepting Karshan's offer (because the opportunity involved a commitment from Harrison which would be independent of his role as assistant editor). In general terms, Harrison broached possibilities of proposed sponsorship from Karshan for joint ventures, and even the suggestion of his acquiring the magazine from the publishers.¹⁷²

After speaking with Townsend, Harrison wrote to Karshan, sending an outline exhibition proposal and reporting Townsend's positive reaction to the joint project and to Karshan's interest in purchasing the magazine. To ensure that there was enough lead-in time for both the exhibition and the magazine-catalogue, Harrison and Townsend had agreed a publication date of May 1971. In his letter to Karshan, Harrison asked whether this would work with Kashan's exhibition schedule and suggested that the exhibition could then tour in the US, with 'NYCC and SI [as] co-sponsors', as per his agreement with Townsend.¹⁷³ Harrison suggested that the exhibition should focus on between ten and fifteen artists, allowing each to be adequately represented, and he outlined that he would 'expect to include only those British artists working in areas beyond conventional interpretations of "painting" and "sculpture".'¹⁷⁴ Harrison confirmed that he would 'undertake full responsibility for selection, presentation and dispatch of the work, in return for an organiser's fee of \$1000'.¹⁷⁵ He also told Karshan that he hoped that Arts Council of Great Britain (ACGB) might contribute financial assistance and that the British Council might

¹⁷¹ Harrison, unpublished interview transcript, 31/10/07, Melvin papers, London.

¹⁷² Harrison, unpublished interview transcript, 31/10/07, Melvin papers, London.

¹⁷³ Harrison letter to Karshan, 12/6/70, NYCC file, Charles Harrison papers, (1950s-1979), TGA 839/1/3/3, London.

¹⁷⁴ Harrison letter to Karshan 12/6/70, NYCC file, Charles Harrison papers, (1950s-1979), TGA 839/1/3/3, London.

¹⁷⁵ Harrison letter to Karshan 12/6/70, NYCC file, Charles Harrison papers, (1950s-1979), TGA 839/1/3/3, London.

be approached to fund 'cultural exchanges across the Atlantic', and asked whether the NYCC may have anything to add to the pot.¹⁷⁶

On the question of Karshan's possible acquisition of *SI*, Townsend and Harrison had 'guesimated its commercial value at around £60,000 bearing in mind the previous losses and the possibilities involved in supplementary projects'.¹⁷⁷ Harrison remarked to Karshan that Townsend and he 'would in principle welcome the involvement of someone who could see its potentials in an international context – where the present owners' gaze scarcely penetrates – as an outlet for art information and a facility for artists'. He mentioned the possibility that the owners Cory Adams & MacKay might part with a minority shareholding in return for assistance in realising supplementary projects and some general support. Harrison made a point of securing Townsend's editorial freedom, saying that the 'one real advantage offered by the present owners is their willingness to allow Peter Townsend the complete editorial autonomy on which he has always insisted. I am sure you'll agree with me that it is to the maximum benefit of *Studio* that his autonomy should continue to be respected.'¹⁷⁸

Karshan asked Harrison to send 50 copies of Siegelaub's *SI* July-August 1970 issue (to be discussed in Chapter 6) as soon as it was printed. Harrison was willing to oblige even though it was a large number because he thought that Karshan's contacts would prove to be useful for the promoting and developing the potential interest in New York in the new art practices and also the opportunity for getting *SI* more widely promoted.¹⁷⁹ Harrison told Karshan that he was pleased with the issue, and that he had obtained Townsend's agreement to run Karshan's introductory essay (which would appear in the September issue).¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁶ Harrison letter to Karshan 12/6/70, NYCC file, Charles Harrison papers, (1950s-1979), TGA 839/1/3/3, London.

¹⁷⁷ Harrison letter to Karshan 12/6/70, NYCC file, Charles Harrison papers, (1950s-1979), TGA 839/1/3/3, London.

¹⁷⁸ Harrison letter to Karshan 12/6/70, NYCC file, Charles Harrison papers, (1950s-1979), TGA 839/1/3/3, London.

¹⁷⁹ Harrison, unpublished interview transcript, 31/10/07, Melvin papers, London.

¹⁸⁰ Harrison letter to Karshan, 12/6/70, NYCC file, Charles Harrison papers, (1950s-1979) TGA 839/1/3/3, London. Karshan's article 'The seventies: post-object art' appeared *SI*, Vol. 180, p. 69.

Responding to Harrison's proposal for up to fifteen Conceptual artists, Karshan thought 'it seemed a little thin' and expressed a desire for 'a broader sweep more like thirty artists including painters and sculptors'.¹⁸¹ In fact, Harrison restricted the selection to artists who, broadly speaking, were engaged in Conceptual art, sculpture using non-traditional materials, film, sound, light and text pieces.

The magazine-catalogue and catalogue

In September 1970, Harrison alerted artists to the exhibition he was selecting for NYCC. He informed them that it would be a joint project with *SI*'s May 1971 issue, so they could begin to think simultaneously about what they might want to show in New York and how they might like to treat the magazine pages.¹⁸²

In his initial discussions with Karshan, Harrison had hoped that he would be able to provide additional funds himself for the exhibition in New York.

Harrison made applications to the ACGB and the British Council. Neither body would support the joint venture between the NYCC and *SI*. Townsend applied for £250 from the ACGB to cover the cost of making additional colour plates for the issue-catalogue and explained to Peter Bird, the Assistant Director of the ACGB that the exhibition would showcase the work of a number of young British artists, including Gilbert & George, Flanagan, Long and Louw.¹⁸³

Harrison explained to Karshan that *SI* could not be of any financial assistance for the exhibition. The magazine's special section would be treated by the artists as an extension of the exhibition, as well as a record of it, and would comprise a minimum of forty pages printed in black-and-white offset litho. Harrison would edit the issue, write the introduction and commission artistic contributions on the understanding that, 'where appropriate artists would work

¹⁸¹ Karshan letter to Harrison, 23/6/70, NYCC file, Charles Harrison papers, (1950s-1979) TGA 839/1/3/3, London.

¹⁸² Harrison letters to Arnatt and Arrowsmith, 17/9/70, NYCC planning file, Charles Harrison papers, (1950s - 1979) TGA 839/1/3/3, London.

¹⁸³ Townsend to Bird 8/3/71, Arts Council file, A correspondence, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

direct for the printed page'.¹⁸⁴ As planned, the resulting material formed a dedicated issue of *SI* and it included acknowledgement of the NYCC's involvement.¹⁸⁵ The colour plates for Richard Long's *Stones on the Isle of Skye* on the cover cost £80 and it was underwritten by the NYCC.¹⁸⁶ The three other colour plates were pre-existing.

An extra run of the forty pages of *SI*, lacking the usual masthead, would be printed as the exhibition catalogue.¹⁸⁷ (Figure 4.42 and 4.43.) This was sold to NYCC at a price which covered the run-on cost and an additional 10 per cent to cover administration, spoilage, printing and binding.¹⁸⁸ Harrison sought to secure Karshan's commitment to an advance order, because this would greatly assist the editorial office in negotiations with the publishers and facilitate more comprehensive distribution and marketing, and he tried to pin Karshan down to confirm the budget and cover transport and installation costs. In the event, Karshan agreed to purchase 2,000 copies of the catalogue at a unit price of 90 cents and to pay a further \$200 for handling and other charges.¹⁸⁹ The NYCC also inserted *SI*'s subscription card with the exhibition announcement and invitation.¹⁹⁰

Harrison disapproved of Karshan's decision on the title of *The British Avant Garde* for the exhibition, and he was further dismayed when Konrad Fischer informed him that Karshan was planning an exhibition series including *The Swiss Avant Garde*, *The French Avant Garde* and *The Avant Garde from South America*. On hearing this 'disturbing rumour', he wrote to Karshan to say the

¹⁸⁴ Harrison letter to Karshan, 8/1/71, Charles Harrison papers, (1950s-1979) TGA 839/1/5/1/7 London.

¹⁸⁵ Editorial announcement, *SI*, Vol. 181, No. 933, May 1971, p. 200.

¹⁸⁶ Townsend-Karshan agreement, 30/3/71, May 1971 file, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

¹⁸⁷ *The British Avant Garde*, (Exhibition Catalogue), W & J MacKay and Co., 1971. Barry Flanagan archive, CG JBF 1971 AVA.

¹⁸⁸ Townsend-Karshan agreement, 30/3/71, May 1971 file, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London

¹⁸⁹ Townsend-Karshan agreement, 30/3/71, May 1971 file, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

¹⁹⁰ *The British Avant Garde*, (Exhibition Catalogue), W & J MacKay and Co., 1971. Barry Flanagan archive, JBF CG JBF 1971 AVA.

title sounded like 'Swinging London in a Bowler Hat'.¹⁹¹ He continued that, since he was not attempting to make a 'comprehensive or even representative selection and that the concept of the avant garde seemed dated', *New Art from England* would seem a more appropriate title. His suggestion was ignored by Karshan.

The contributing artists in magazine-catalogue order were Bruce McLean, Keith Arnatt, David Dye, David Tremlett, Roelof Louw, Barry Flanagan, Gilbert & George, Gerald Newman, Richard Long, Terry Atkinson and Michael Baldwin, Sue Arrowsmith, Colin Crumplin, Andrew Dipper and Victor Burgin. Each was allocated a double-page spread with the exception of Flanagan, Louw and Burgin who had three pages each and Sue Arrowsmith and Andrew Dipper, who had one apiece, and Atkinson and Baldwin who had seven pages.

McLean's submission was the juxtaposition of two stories featured in the *Daily Mirror* involving the removal of turf. One featured portraits commissioned by the Duke of Bedford of himself and his wife in the lawns at Woburn Abbey and the other concerned a 'soccer mad policeman' who, as a long-time supporter of Port Vale football club, had secured permission to remove the turf from the penalty spot, which he proudly planned to give to relatives in Canada. The *Mirror* supplied McLean with the photographs for his project.¹⁹²

Arnatt's left-hand page was a full-page photograph of him climbing the steps to the Tate Gallery. The page to the right showed the accompanying photo-text work, *I have decided to go to the Tate Gallery next Friday*. This was followed by three excerpts about the process of decision-making and the nature of intention.¹⁹³ In the text, Arnatt declared that deciding to be a form of deliberation connected with intention.

¹⁹¹ Harrison letter to Karshan, 8/1/71, Charles Harrison papers, (1950s-1979) TGA 839/1/5/1/7, London.

¹⁹² McLean *SI*, Vol. 181, No. 933, May 1971, pp. 206-7.

¹⁹³ Arnatt's sources as listed, Jack W Meiland, *The Nature of Intention*, A Kenny, *Action, Emotion, Will* and Brice Noel Fleming, "On Intention." *Philosophical Review*, Vol. LXXIII, p. 208. *SI*, Vol. 181, No. 933, May 1971, (pp. 208-9), p. 208.

I have decided to go to the Tate Gallery next Friday can be substituted as I intend to go to the Tate Gallery next Friday. It is an expression of an intention where the intention formed is the result of deliberation.¹⁹⁴

David Dye's contribution utilised the action of page-turning as intrinsic to the viewing process. To realise the project, he asked Harrison if he could have another artist's page-pulls. Harrison sent him those of David Tremlett.¹⁹⁵ Tremlett had worked with a tap dancer, to realise a score, and photographed her while she danced. Dye asked the photography lecturer at St Martin's School of Art (where he was a student) to photograph him, seated with Tremlett's pages resting on his knees as he turned them. The photographer stood behind and above Dye to show him holding the pages. His left hand is seen holding the page with his name, David Dye showing, while his right is in the act of turning the page over to reveal Tremlett's name on the left with the score and dancer on the right.¹⁹⁶ Dye's work is a photograph of the magazine pages being turned. (Figure 4.44.)

Tremlett's permission for using his work was not sought at the time, or at least neither he, nor Dye, nor Harrison have any recollection that it may have been, nor is there any documentation to prove otherwise. Discussing Dye's appropriation recently with the present author, Tremlett recalled the atmosphere of collaboration whereby artists would generally support each other's endeavours even if they did not know each other personally. Referring to Dye as 'the new kid on the block', Tremlett was amused that his sleight of hand had involved his work.¹⁹⁷ Tremlett's own contribution follows Dye's in the magazine-catalogue.¹⁹⁸ (Figure 4.45.)

After this, Roelof Louw presented instructions for *An aesthetic of engagement*, and photographs of viewers participating in its enactment taken at his exhibition at the Whitechapel Art Gallery in February-March 1971. This

¹⁹⁴ Arnatt, *SI*, Vol. 181, No. 933, May 1971, pp. 208-9, p. 208.

¹⁹⁵ David Dye email to present author, 2/4/12, Melvin papers, London.

¹⁹⁶ David Dye, *SI*, Vol. 181, No. 933, May 1971, pp. 210-11.

¹⁹⁷ David Tremlett, phone discussion notes, 9/4/12, Melvin papers, London.

¹⁹⁸ David Tremlett, *SI*, Vol. 181, No. 933, May 1971, pp. 212-13.

work was included in the NYCC, as was *Sculpture* (June 1968) which was photographed for the magazine-catalogue.¹⁹⁹

Flanagan's pages followed Louw's. In these *ringn* 1966 and *No.1. '71*, 1971 were illustrated and also exhibited in New York. Harrison's photograph of *4 casb 2 '67, ringl '67* and *rope (gr 2sp 60) 6 '67* taken for the *Biennale des Jeunes* catalogue and illustrated in *SI* September 1967 was also included but of these only *4 casb 2 '67* was exhibited in New York. In his pages, Flanagan included the text piece *THE OPERATION OF THE SCULPTURE IS BETWEEN THE CRUST AND THE IDEA*.²⁰⁰

Gilbert & George's contribution to the publication showed them photographed with the Houses of Parliament in the background, standing on the embankment of the River Thames, with the text of *There were two young men who did laugh* printed across it.²⁰¹ Gerald Newman presented documentation of both *Piece* (1971), a sound work on a looped tape which was included in the NYCC exhibition, and *Piece for two lights* (1970),²⁰² which differed from the light piece he included in the exhibition. The right side of Richard Long's spread had *Stones on Isle of Skye* (1970) on it; the left showed a photograph of him beside his tent during the walk.²⁰³ Atkinson and Baldwin's *De Legibus Naturae* accompanied their text-work, *Theories of Ethics*, which was shown in the exhibition.²⁰⁴ Sue Arrowsmith's page showed a sequence of five photographs taken looking up one side of a street, mirrored by five taken looking the other way down the street.²⁰⁵ Colin Crumplin's double page, *11 3.71*, was a spattering of dots across the page that was mirrored on the facing page.²⁰⁶ Both Andrew Dipper's and Victor Burgin's magazine contributions were art text pieces. Dipper's *Towards an understanding of the within* discussed phenomenological exploration of object perception,²⁰⁷ and Victor Burgin's *Rules*

¹⁹⁹ Roelof Louw, *SI*, Vol.181, No. 933, May 1971, pp. 213-6.

²⁰⁰ Barry Flanagan, *SI*, Vol. 181, No. 933, May 1971, pp. 217-9.

²⁰¹ Gilbert & George, *SI*, Vol. 181, No. 933, May 1971, pp. 220-1.

²⁰² Newman, *SI*, Vol 181, No. 933, May 1971, pp. 222-3.

²⁰³ Long, *SI*, Vol. 181, No. 933, May 1971, pp. 224-5.

²⁰⁴ Atkinson and Baldwin, *SI*, Vol. 181, No. 933, May 1971, pp. 226-232.

²⁰⁵ Arrowsmith, *SI*, Vol. 181, No. 933, May 1971, p. 233.

²⁰⁶ Crumplin, *SI*, Vol. 181, No. 933, May 1971, pp. 234-5.

²⁰⁷ Dipper, *SI*, Vol. 181, No. 933, May 1971, p. 236.

of thumb presented his explorations of ‘art’s primary situation [which] is not unique to art’.²⁰⁸

The exhibition

The exhibition was held at the New York Cultural Center from 19 May to 29 August 1971. In March 1971, Harrison contacted Karshan with instructions regarding the installations, so that the gallery could obtain necessary items. The issuing of instructions to realise works was increasingly consistent with Conceptual Art practice. Harrison sent these requests three months before the exhibition was due to open. He told Karshan that some of the work was already framed, but he needed stands, tables and Plexiglas covers for vitrines and for framing. He also asked Karshan to obtain the sand necessary to install Flanagan’s *ringn* (1966), noting that Fischbach Gallery should still have one hundred weight-bag of sand following Flanagan’s one-person exhibition at the gallery in 1969 in which the work was included.²⁰⁹ If they did not have the sand, it would need to be obtained from elsewhere, and Harrison advised that ‘It just sits on the floor and I’ll execute it’. For *ringn*, one ton of ‘fine dry sand’ would be needed; delivered in bags, the sand should be ‘as golden yellow as possible; but must be fine and dry’.²¹⁰ Harrison would also need a ton of sand to install one of Flanagan’s other works, *4 cash 67*.

Flanagan wrote in his letter, published in *SI* May, 1969, referred to in Chapter 3, that ‘[*ringn*] was just dry sand poured on the floor [...]’²¹¹ But, as any builder knows, sand varies in colour, grain, shape and texture, and each type behaves differently. Visiting a builder’s merchant in the UK, Flanagan selected dry sand BS 19, which poured in a specific way.²¹² During April 1971 Flanagan made a film called *The Lesson* which demonstrated how to construct the sand piece *ringn*. This film resulted from a conversation between Harrison and Flanagan in

²⁰⁸ Burgin, *SI*, Vol. 181, (pp. 237-7), p. 237.

²⁰⁹ It was first shown in London, Rowan Gallery, August 1966.

²¹⁰ Harrison list sent Karshan a list of requirements, 15/3/71, Charles Harrison papers, (1950s -1979), TGA 839/1/5/1/9, London.

²¹¹ Flanagan, “An Old New York Letter.” *SI*, Vol. 177, No. 911, May 1969, p. 208.

²¹² J Arnold Builder’s Merchant in Leighton Buzzard, Barry Flanagan archive, JBF/6/1/1.1, London.

which Flanagan explained how to install the work, *ringn*, so that Harrison would be able to do it at the NYCC. Both men were interested in the procedural aspect of the work, and Flanagan thought its narrative nature would be best documented in a film in which he 'demonstrated how to realise the piece' that would become a work in itself. Harrison assisted him and took some photographs of Flanagan in the studio during the process of filming. Using chalk on blackboard, Flanagan drew a directional diagram of the sand heap with arrows going north, south, east and west from the centre to indicate how the four scoops should be taken from the top of the sand. (Figure 4.46 and 4.47.)²¹³ The film is now lost but it is possible to reconstruct the way it looked from these photographs.²¹⁴

When Harrison arrived in New York, with a week to install the exhibition, he discovered the importance of the type of sand. The NYCC had ordered wet sand which would not pour in the right way to make *ringn*, nor could it be used to fill the canvas bags to install the other work requiring sand, *4 casb 67*. Harrison had to reorder supplies from the builder's merchant, which was a nightmare to find in the middle of Manhattan; he only had a week to install the exhibition without assistance. In the time between Karshan's invitation to Harrison to devise the exhibition and his arrival in New York relations between them had become strained. This was because Harrison found Karshan unsupportive during the planning and, as already noted, Harrison disapproved of the exhibition title. Harrison was also irritated that Karshan did not follow up his interest in buying the magazine and felt he had been used as part of Karshan's own plans for the gallery. When Harrison got to the NYCC he found that Karshan had left for the country without giving Harrison access to the director's suite and its facilities or even giving him advance warning that he would not be there. This meant that Harrison had to leave the building to use public telephones every time he needed to order materials or equipment.

²¹³ *Film Show*, shown at Situation Gallery, London, September 1971, was part of *Prospect 71: Projection*, exhibition organised by Konrad Fischer, Jürgen Harten and Hans Strelow, included *The Lesson* and other films by Flanagan along with those by Hamish Fulton, Bob Law, McLean and Tremlett. *Prospect 71: Projection* (Exhibition Catalogue), West Germany, Düsseldorf, Art-Press Verlag, 1971. CG JBF 1971 PRO, Barry Flanagan archive, London.

²¹⁴ Harrison, unpublished interview transcript 31/10/07, Harrison's plans & installation photographs are in Charles Harrison papers, (1950-1979), TGA 839/1/5/1, London.

Richard Long sent twigs for his work to Dwan Gallery with instructions for them to be delivered to the NYCC. Harrison installed the work, using a rope barrier to prevent entry to the room. Louw went over to install his work and prepared a full sheet of documentation in case he could not locate any tape recorders.²¹⁵

It was at Karshan's insistence that Gilbert & George were included in the exhibition, late in the planning process. Harrison discovered that they had no work available for loan because it was all in demand elsewhere. Accordingly, he managed to secure the agreement of MoMA to lend the recently acquired work, *To Be with Art is All We Ask* (1970), which comprises three large panels, described by Gilbert & George as 'a charcoal on paper sculpture'.²¹⁶ MoMA stipulated that the NYCC cover the panels with Plexiglas, but the NYCC did not provide the panels nor give Harrison a purchasing budget and so, to Harrison's embarrassment, he was unable to abide by this condition. After the opening of the exhibition at the NYCC, MoMA insisted on the immediate return of the work. Years later, Harrison described how the walls left blank by the work's absence compounded the embarrassment he felt regarding the show.²¹⁷

Keith Arnatt's *Countdown* was installed as it had been in *Idea Structures* at Camden Art Centre in June 1970. The work included a digital counter that counted down the number of seconds to the end of the exhibition, which would be terminated by the read-out '0000000'. The duration of the exhibition could be sold in one-second units; through a sliding scale of value, the first and last unit would be 'incredibly expensive'.²¹⁸ Arnatt specified that 'The sale of "time" is to be restricted to "present or future time". Past or unsold time would be considered "lost" and therefore unsaleable. The cost per unit of time would be determined by the gallery. Upon purchase of "exhibition time", the buyer will receive a date- and time-stamped contract with photograph(s) of the

²¹⁵ Harrison list sent Karshan a list of requirements, 15/3/71. Charles Harrison papers, (1950s-1979) TGA 839/1/5/1/9, London.

²¹⁶ MoMA catalogue entry, Gilbert & George *To Be with Art is All We Ask*, http://www.moma.org/collection/object.php?object_id=36585, last accessed online 31/6/11.

²¹⁷ Harrison, unpublished interview transcript, 27/3/07, Melvin papers, London.

²¹⁸ Keith Arnatt card instructions, 'An exhibition proposal given to Barry Flanagan', 1971. Barry Flanagan archive, JBF/7/12.1, London.

appropriate digital counter number(s).²¹⁹ Four index cards issued instructions to make the work which is an exhibition of the duration of the exhibition.

A text-piece by Arnatt, entitled *Decisions*, 1971, was pinned to the wall. After the exhibition, Arnatt gave Harrison the work. It was made up of a series of thirteen sheets that could be arranged in an order decided by the installer, which read as follows:

DECISIONS

I'M GOING TO DECIDE WHAT TO DO AND THEN DO IT

I'M NOT GOING TO DECIDE WHAT NOT TO DO

I'M GOING TO DECIDE WHAT NOT TO DO

I'M GOING TO DECIDE WHAT TO DO AND THEN NOT DO IT

I'M GOING TO DECIDE WHAT NOT TO DO AND THEN DO IT

I'M NOT GOING TO DECIDE WHAT NOT TO DO AND THEN DO IT

I'M GOING TO DECIDE WHAT NOT TO DO AND THEN NOT DO IT

I'M NOT GOING TO DECIDE WHAT NOT TO DO AND THEN NOT DO IT

I'M NOT GOING TO DECIDE WHAT TO DO AND THEN DO IT

I'M NOT GOING TO DECIDE WHAT TO DO AND THEN NOT DO IT

I'M NOT GOING TO DECIDE WHAT TO DO

I'M GOING TO DECIDE WHAT TO DO

Before the exhibition, Harrison supplied Karshan with a Xerox copy of Atkinson and Baldwin's text-work, *Theory of Ethics*, for reference. It is a theory of the ethics of the production of artwork as an artwork in itself.²²⁰ The book

²¹⁹ Keith Arnatt card, Barry Flanagan archive, JBF/7/12.1, London.

²²⁰ Terry Atkinson and Michael Baldwin, *Theory of Ethics*, 1971, Tate library collection, 1971, transferred to Tate artwork catalogue in 2011.

<http://library.tate.org.uk/uhtbin/cgisirsi/?ps=fvooiUpv6K/LIBRARY/144790004/9>

was published as an artwork in an edition of 200 for the exhibition, as Karshan himself had suggested.²²¹ Harrison was surprised to learn that Karshan had copied the book and lent it to Jack Burnham without asking either the artists or Harrison. He sought an assurance that no further copies would be made, informing Karshan that 'he had made the copy at his own expense as a safeguard against the original typescript not returning in time for the offsetting as indeed happened.'²²² Harrison discussed this situation with the artists and they were 'considerably alarmed at the idea of Xerox copies being issued to anyone of a work for which they were responsible.'²²³ They proposed that five copies could be made and given to interested parties, and asked for a record of who received them.

David Dye's two works, *Distancing Device* – a series of vertically mounted mirrors in hoods with which the viewer read the single letters of the words, 'k-e-e-p-g-o-i-n-g' – and *Evasive Device* – which operated the same system but in a horizontal version. The constructions demonstrated how the viewer needed to move slowly away from the vertical arrangement while facing it all the time for the letters under the hoods to become visible one by one and thus read while they were in the act of viewing the work. The horizontal construction operated on the same principle, the movement required was from left to right.

Bruce McLean exhibited a group of drawings of plans for sculptures and landscape paintings. He made the paintings in Scotland, putting the paper on the ground and painting directly over the terrain to record it as a sort of 'rubbing'.²²⁴ Louw, Crumplin and Tremlett had sound works and Newman showed a light work. Several of the artists' films were also on show.²²⁵

²²¹ Harrison letter to Karshan 20/4/71, Charles Harrison papers, (1950-1979), TGA 839/1/5/1/13, London.

²²² Harrison letter to Karshan 20/4/71, Charles Harrison papers, (1950-1979), TGA 839/1/5/1/13, London.

²²³ Harrison letter to Karshan 20/4/71, Charles Harrison papers, (1950-1979), TGA 839/1/5/1/13, London.

²²⁴ McLean unpublished interview transcript, 18/5/08, Melvin papers, London.

²²⁵ The following films were shown: Arrowsmith, *Street Walk* (1971), Flanagan, *The Lesson* (1971), *The Phantom Sculptor* (1971), *Atlantic Flight* (1970), *a hole in the sea* (1969), Gilbert & George, *The Nature of our Looking*, Long, *Ten Mile Walk* (1969), McLean *In the Shadow of your Smile Bob* (1971) and Tremlett, *English Locations* (1970-71) tapes.

Victor Burgin's text work, *ANY MOMENT PREVIOUS TO THE PRESENT MOMENT*, was a series of fourteen statements typed on fourteen sheets, framed and hung on the wall. The statements were numbered 0-13 and directed the viewer to undertake a reflective contemplation of their immediate time-based encounter with the work. Burgin had included the artwork in the pages Harrison commissioned for Siegelaub's July/August 1970 issue, which will be discussed in Chapter 6.

In embarking on this project, Harrison stretched himself to the limit.²²⁶ The exhibition in New York took place at the same time as another one he was organising at the Centro de Arte y Comunicación (CAYC) in Buenos Aires, entitled *Art as Idea from England*. There were overlaps with some of the artists.²²⁷ As soon as the Buenos Aires exhibition opened, Harrison left for the week-long installation of *The British Avant Garde*. Jorge Glusberg, the director of CAYC was easier to work with than Karshan, and on his return to London, Harrison referred to the difficulties he had encountered in NYC, issuing a general warning to Glusberg: '[t]o be careful in your dealings with the NYCC.'²²⁸ Harrison also to Glusberg commented on a need for collaboration between the organisers to make a representative selection of new young artists. It is not surprising Harrison felt let down because he was responsible for the exhibition but did not have the proper backing from the institution.

Responses to the project

In a review for *The New York Times*, Peter Schjeldahl noted the removal of work by Gilbert & George, describing them as 'the most unheard of thing Harrison brought with him – the life sculpture of two gentle young artist-poets' and noting that 'Unfortunately only one short film represents them'. The article was illustrated by a still taken from Gilbert & George's film, *The Nature of Our*

²²⁶ Harrison, unpublished interview transcript, 31/10/07, Melvin papers, London.

²²⁷ Victor Burgin, David Dye, Bill Woodrow, art & language group: Terry Atkinson, David Bainbridge, Michael Baldwin, Harold Hurrell.

²²⁸ Harrison letter to Glusberg, 24/6/71, Charles Harrison papers, (1950-1979), TGA 839/1/3/3, London.

Looking.²²⁹ Overall, Schjeldahl's review was supportive, despite incorrectly making British synonymous with English in his assertion that the exhibition 'brought to Conceptualism the kind of discrimination and stylishness typical of English modern art', a movement he felt had not 'exactly electrified art-world discourses these past few seasons'.²³⁰ Bored by avant-garde bandwagon repetitions of 'the end of art as we know it', he welcomed the opportunity to see the new British art; most of the artists were unknown in New York, with the exceptions of Flanagan and Long, whom he remarked were not conceptualists. His favourites were 'the vivid informal sculptures of Barry Flanagan – for instance, a tepee of sticks containing a square of green felt and the actually charming work of Richard Long, redolent of an Englishman's fondness for walks in the country, on which he may pause to arrange some rocks [...] rightly fall outside the canon'.

The Flanagan work Schjeldahl referred to, *No. 1, 71*, was reproduced in David Shirey's review in the *New York Times*.²³¹ Shirey was scathing, picking up on the exhibition's title exactly as Harrison had feared: 'what looks avant garde to Mr Harrison in England looks manifestly derriere garde to some observers in the United States'.²³² John Perreault reviewed the show in his regular *Village Voice* art column, calling Conceptualism 'global whether we like it or not'.²³³ Harrison described Perreault's review to Siegelaub as a 'hippy dippy' reaction.²³⁴

In October 1971, *ArtForum* published a review by Robert Pincus-Witten of the exhibition, in conjunction with one organised by Willoughby Sharp, the founder and editor of *Avalanche* magazine. According to Pincus-Witten, *SI* was a 'magazine as dogmatically attached to conceptualism as is Willoughby Sharp's *Avalanche*'.²³⁵

²²⁹ Schjeldahl, *New York Times*, Sunday, 27 June, 1971. Charles Harrison papers, (1950-1979), TGA 839/1/5/1/19, London.

²³⁰ Schjeldahl, *New York Times*. Charles Harrison papers, (1950-1979), TGA 839/1/5/1/19, London.

²³¹ David Shirey, *New York Times*, date cut off. Charles Harrison papers, (1950-1979), TGA 839/1/5/1/19, London.

²³² LeWitt letter to Reise 11/2/70, LeWitt file, Barbara Reise archive, TGA 786/5/1/2, London.

²³³ John Perreault, *Village Voice*, June 3, 1971, p. 16.

²³⁴ Harrison letter to Siegelaub, 13/6/71, Charles Harrison papers, (1970s-2000s), TGA 200826, London.

²³⁵ Robert Pincus-Witten, "Anglo-American Standard reference works: Acute Conceptualism of two survey shows Projects Pier 18 with documentation at the Museum of Modern Art and the British

The influence of the magazine-catalogue and exhibition

Harrison felt he had let down the artists in the New York exhibition because he did not think it represented their work in the best light. On top of his own assessment, the fact that it was a shambles and that the exhibition 'had been panned by the critics'²³⁶ reinforced his view. The experience contributed to his decision to withdraw from criticism, to resign as assistant editor and to move out of London. However, despite Harrison's deeply-held reservations, the May 1971 issue of *SI* was almost immediately regarded as a reference point for new practices in British art. When the ACGB were planning *The New Art* – the first museum survey of new art practices by British artists in the UK – Nicholas Serota (who was assisting the exhibition officer, Ann Seymour), contacted Townsend to ask for twenty-five copies of the issue.²³⁷

Harrison was understandably chary when the ACGB gave full institutional backing to Seymour's 1972 show at the Hayward Gallery. Although he understood that his exhibition provided the basis for *The New Art*, the fact that this occurred without public acknowledgement of it is something the present author considers need to be rectified. The exhibition included many of the same artists,²³⁸ and there were overlaps between several of the artists' films shown at the NYCC screened at the Hayward.²³⁹

Another indicator of the effect that *SI*'s attention to younger British artists had on their reputations being consolidated was *Seven exhibitions*, organised by Michael Compton, the Tate Gallery's assistant keeper, which opened in February 1972. Organised quickly, seven artists were given sequential solo exhibitions, in

Avant Garde at the New York Cultural Centre." *ArtForum*, Vol. No. October 1971, Long, *Untitled Sculpture* and Arrowsmith, *Streetwalk* (1970) were illustrated. pp. 82-3.

²³⁶ Harrison, unpublished interview transcript, 31/10/07, Melvin papers, London.

²³⁷ Serota letter to Townsend, 27/6/72, Arts Council file, A correspondence to 1972, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

²³⁸ In addition to the artists in *The British Avant Garde* were Keith Milow, Michael Craig Martin, John Stezaker and John Hilliard.

²³⁹ Bruce McLean's decision to withdraw from *The New Art* show at the Hayward after his *King for the Day* exhibition at the Tate Gallery, which was one of the *Seven Exhibitions* organised by Michael Compton in February 1972 may have generated more attention than accepting the invitation. Ann Seymour remarked in *The New Art* catalogue: 'Bruce McLean, whose area of operations might be defined somewhere between Gilbert and George [sic], has recently renounced his status as an artist and he felt it would be inappropriate in the circumstances for him even to allow his previous work to be exhibited in an art context'. *The New Art*, August 17 - September 24, 1972, p.5.

space created by the cancellation of Robyn Denny's exhibition. Younger Tate assistants, including Compton and Richard Morphet, had a policy of keeping files on young artists,²⁴⁰ which formed the basis of this project and enabled Compton to persuade the director, Norman Reid, of its relevance. The exhibition was reviewed briefly by Anthony Everitt in *SI*'s April 1972 issue. It mentioned Keith Arnatt, Michael Craig-Martin and Joseph Beuys, the only non-British artist to be invited. Beuys performed a lecture in the Duveen Galleries, and the magazine published photographs of the lecture, showing him talking to Richard Hamilton and Gustav Metzger.²⁴¹

Despite the satisfaction Harrison had from his role as an editorial assistant and art critic, he considered the expectations of this responsibility to be incompatible with the Conceptual Art practices which consumed his interests. What he perceived as his failure with the NYCC exhibition precipitated his fully engaged commitment to the Art-Language collective, which continued until his death in 2009. Harrison would later be surprised to learn how important the exhibition of *The British Avant Garde* came to be regarded in showing British artists in New York.²⁴² His installation photographs supplement the May 1971 magazine issue as well as the catalogue and provide the opportunity for reassessment of the exhibition. (Figures 4.48, 4.49, 4.50 and 4.51.)

²⁴⁰ artists were Bob Law, Michael Craig Martin, Hamish Fulton, Tremlett, Arnatt, Mclean and Beuys, 23 February - 23 March, 1972, TG, *Seven Exhibitions LON-TAT*, (Tate Public Records), London.

²⁴¹ Everitt, "London commentary." *SI*, Vol.183, pp. 176-80, p. 177. The photographs are in April 1972 file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

²⁴² Harrison, unpublished interview transcript, 31/10/07, Melvin papers, London.

Chapter 5

Siegelaub's summer exhibition, Townsend's summer issue¹

The title of this chapter is taken from a letter to Townsend from the New York dealer and publisher, Seth Siegel Aub in which the latter outlined his proposal to edit the July/August 1970 issue of *SI*. This issue was to become particularly important for discussions of magazine art because it demonstrated a radical view of printed matter aligned to a new method of curatorship by presenting the magazine-as-exhibition. Its publication consolidated Townsend's reputation as an editor who was prepared to take risks. The issue allowed artists to respond to the magazine page as the medium for making and distributing art itself rather than reproducing photographs of existing work. It also did away with critical commentaries. In this way, as indicated in the introduction to this thesis, the summer 1970 issue reasserted the magazine's founding editorial intentions – to generate dialogue without granting any greater authority to the critic, by presenting art practices through reproduction. The difference with Siegel Aub's project was that there was no distinction between artwork and its documentation, because the two became synonymous by being commissioned for the pages of the magazine. The artwork and its documentation were interchangeable. Tracing the project's genesis helps us to understand how the magazine became a site for the visual unfolding of the germination of an idea while simultaneously presenting a radical interlocution amalgamation of site, situation, location and intent.

This chapter draws on Siegel Aub's planning file for the project and on Townsend's editorial correspondence files, which had input from Charles Harrison. Alongside this, Harrison's personal papers, loaned to the author, were consulted. Reise's archive is a further source. This account also relies on the present author's interviews with Siegel Aub, Townsend, Harrison, Lippard, Perreault, Flanagan, Weiner, McLean and an email correspondence with David Antin, Director of the Gallery, University of San Diego, California, all of whom were participants in Siegel Aub's project.

¹ Siegel Aub letter to Townsend 20/5/69, S correspondence file to 1972, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

Although Siegelaub had not yet met Townsend when he phoned him from New York on 19 May 1969, to discuss a joint venture between his publishing imprint, International General, and *SI*, he was confident that Townsend would be interested because he had heard about Townsend's policies from Harrison and Reise.² Townsend, in turn had been made aware of Siegelaub's activities by Harrison, who had just returned from a visit to New York, and also from Reise, who met Siegelaub there in December 1968. Further detail of the background between Townsend, *SI* and Siegelaub will be provided here and should be approached alongside the consideration of Anglo-American exchanges that was made in Chapters 2, 3 and 4. What Siegelaub outlined over the telephone was a plan whereby he would distribute an exhibition, available only as a publication, which he initially referred to as a catalogue, with the magazine's summer issue. The following day, he wrote to Townsend, confirming their discussion and outlining his terms:

To co-publish the catalog within the following considerations;
Print 7,000 copies (for newsstand only) – the cost will be about \$1,700.00.
The catalog could sell separately for \$1.50 (\$1.00).
The format of the catalog would be the same as the magazine.
The catalog would be distributed with the *Studio International* July/August issue

International General would
1) Put up 50% of the cost of printing
2) Supply the (tri-lingual) catalog "ready for camera"

Studio International would
1) Put up 50% of the cost of printing
2) Distribute the catalog along with your July/August issue.³

² Siegelaub letter to Townsend 20/5/69, S correspondence file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

³ Siegelaub, 20/5/69, S correspondence file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

Although, at this point, the idea was of a piggyback insertion, Siegelaub referred to the project as 'An Alternate Proposal', describing it as 'My Summer *Exhibition* Your July-August issue'.⁴ In this scheme, profits would be divided 50-50, and Siegelaub signed off by asking 'any thoughts on this possibility???'⁵

Overall, the proposal showed a straightforward business-like approach which appealed to Townsend's sense of fairness. As costs were shared between *SI* and International General, Townsend convinced the publishers to go ahead with the idea; but he was angered by the board's decision, in February 1970, that the cover price would be raised just before the summer, in response to increased paper costs, rather than directly relating to the forthcoming summer magazine exhibition which was an unfortunate coincidence.⁶

Townsend was also interested in Siegelaub's idea of a magazine as the primary source of information for an international exhibition, and, over the following months, this collaborative editorial project evolved. Townsend proposed that, rather than running an insert alongside the next year's summer issue, he would commission Siegelaub to edit the features section of the issue.⁷ Siegelaub agreed to this suggestion, but stipulated that he also wanted the features section printed separately as a hardback book. This would be produced at run-on cost by the magazine's printers.⁸

In turn, Siegelaub would mirror Townsend's action in commissioning him by allocating his pages, in equal proportions, to a number of critics who would select artists to use the pages as they saw fit. Before considering the planning of the issue, it is appropriate to provide background to the developing relationship between Siegelaub and *SI*'s editorial strategies, as formed during Townsend's regime. It is necessary to explore more fully the context of the issue and in particular the use of the page as an artwork in itself. The artists' collaborative

⁴ Siegelaub, 20/5/69, S correspondence file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

⁵ Siegelaub suggested printing 7000 copies, 20/5/69, S correspondence file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

⁶ Deighton letter to Siegelaub, 2/4/70 refers to the increase, S correspondence to 1972, TGA 20028, London. Townsend recalled his irritation with present author, Melvin notebook, 2001, Melvin papers, London.

⁷ Deighton refers to the arrangement, letter to Siegelaub, 2/4/70, S correspondence file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

⁸ Deighton, 2/4/70, S correspondence file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

project management, which is the editorial rationale for this issue, was something Townsend consistently supported.

Always alert to new practices and methods, Townsend was intrigued by the reports of Siegelaub he received from Reise and Harrison. In addition to this, Dore Ashton referred to Siegelaub's 1969 exhibition, *January 5–31*, in her *SI* New York commentary of March 1969. Furthermore, in the May/June issue of *Art in America*, Thomas M Messer – the director of the Solomon R Guggenheim Museum, who, as noted previously was on *SI*'s International Advisory Board – had contributed the first part of a two-part feature on Conceptual Art, called 'Impossible Art'. In this, Messer outlined the characteristics of this new art; comprising 'extreme fragility [...] moves towards invisibility, disembodiment and sheer non-existence [...] It is useless to all but those who would accept it for its own sake'.⁹ In the second part, David L Shirey located the artists' work in such categories of practice as 'earthworks, waterworks, skyworks, nihilworks and thinkworks'¹⁰ and referred to Siegelaub's 'January show' as being in the 'thinkworks' category where he placed the latter's approach to art alongside that of John Gibson, the director of Dwan Gallery, who was identified as a thinkworks dealer.¹¹

These articles consolidated Townsend's thinking on the relevance of Conceptual Art practices, but he noted that Messer and Shirey concentrated exclusively on US artists as if these art practices were geographically limited to North America.¹² He was aware that Siegelaub's outlook, like his own, was focused on a much broader understanding of contemporary practices. Townsend agreed that Harrison should conduct an interview with Siegelaub during his trip to New York in September 1969, which would locate *SI* as a discussion platform for Siegelaub's approach and highlight its relevance in the

⁹ Messer, "Impossible Art." *Art in America*, Vol. 57, No. 3, May/June 1969, p. 31.

¹⁰ Shirey outlines the practices, without consideration of the international element of exchange. "Impossible Art. What it is." *Art in America*, Vol. 57, No. 3, May/June 1969, (pp. 39-41), p. 40.

¹¹ Shirey, reports John Gibson as saying, 'You can call me an idea broker, not an object merchant.' "What it is." *Art in America*, Vol. 57, No. 3, May/June 1969, p. 40.

¹² Artists referred to in Shirey's article were Robert Barry, Iain Baxter, James Lee Byars, Christo, Walter De Maria, Michael Heizer, Bici Hendricks, Douglas Huebler, Joseph Kosuth, Les Levine, Sol LeWitt, Robert Morris, Bruce Nauman, N.E. Thing Co., Claes Oldenburg, Pulsatilla, Richard Serra, Robert Smithson, Lawrence Weiner and Ian Wilson.

international art context. This interview was to prepare the ground for the issue Siegelaub would edit the following year.

There was a further connection between Townsend and Siegelaub, which was informed by a shared commitment to left-wing politics. Townsend's convictions were consolidated during his experience in China working with the Industrial Cooperatives where he saw the direct and immediate benefits of collaborative working. This made him naturally interested in Siegelaub's curatorial methods.

Siegelaub–Harrison interview, December 1969

The title given to the interview, which appeared in the ticketboard section of the December 1969 issue of *SI*, was 'On exhibitions and the world at large'.¹³ Conducted while Harrison was a guest in Siegelaub's apartment on Madison Avenue, it examined Siegelaub's strategy and intentions and defined the characteristics he considered vital in the work he promoted. It was the first public statement in the international art press to address Siegelaub's practice as a curator and it marked a shift in critical attention towards new art practices. The contributors' list for the issue described Siegelaub as a 'dealer, publisher and curator-at-large, [who] has been actively involved during the last two years with finding the means to promote new art'.¹⁴ The term 'curator-at-large' was Siegelaub's definition of his practice, making clear the implication that he was not tied to a particular gallery space. At that time, this designation was not in regular use, but it is now readily applied to freelance and institutional curators, with even Tate having an official 'curator-at-large'.¹⁵

During the course of his discussion with Harrison, Siegelaub made a clear distinction between what he referred to as 'primary information' and 'secondary information'.¹⁶ He explained that the artwork he was interested in

¹³ Harrison and Siegelaub, "On exhibitions and the world at large." *SI*, Vol. 178, No. 917, pp. 202-3.

¹⁴ Siegelaub, 'Contributor's notes.' *SI*, Vol. 178, No. 917, p. 202.

¹⁵ Anthony d'Offay's gift of his collection to Tate and the National Galleries of Scotland, in 2008, has led to the creation of the 'Artists Rooms'. These tour to museums around the country. The curator appointed is known as the curator at large.

¹⁶ Harrison and Siegelaub, "On exhibitions and the world at large." *SI*, Vol. 178, No. 917, p. 202.

could be directly presented to its viewer-reader in printed media as 'primary information' and that rather than being a vehicle for the 'secondary information' of commentaries and data pertaining to the work and its medium, the printed form could in itself be the medium.¹⁷ In the process Siegelaub pointed to two key developments a) radical shift in the exhibition site, and b) a change in the relationship between work and documentation.¹⁸

Attention was focused on his recent projects, *The Xerox Book*, 1968, 5-31 January 1969, known as the 'January show' and the *One Month* show of 1969, referred to as the 'March show'. *The Xerox Book*, organised and published with Jack Wendler, treated the pages of a book as an exhibition space; there was no commentary and seven artists were each allocated 25 pages. For the *One Month* exhibition, Siegelaub invited 31 artists to use a page each for the days of the month; the exhibition was the catalogue, distributed free via a worldwide mailing list.¹⁹ With this, Siegelaub sent a standard letter listing the artists and allocating them a specific date in March. The exhibition-catalogue opened with a copy of the initial letter, sent to the artists giving them three choices: 1) to have their name listed with a description of their work and/or relevant information; 2) to have their name listed with no information; 3) not to have their name listed. Seven did not reply but Siegelaub took this to fit the third category so they were represented with a blank page each.²⁰ Some artists were irritated that their decision should form a part of someone else's scheme.²¹ It implied a loss of autonomy in the decision-making, whereby the individual's act was subsumed under a grander scheme. Siegelaub's intention was to develop a strategy that would show the complete process of exhibition management and

¹⁷ Harrison and Siegelaub, *SI*, Vol. 178, No. 917, p. 202.

¹⁸ Harrison, *SI*, Vol. 178, No. 917, p. 202.

¹⁹ These catalogues and other Siegelaub mail-outs now command collector's premiums. Specific object website lists *One Month* at \$1500 on 20/08/10. In November 2011, Primary Information New York launched several of Siegelaub's publications for free downloading via their website. James Hoff, Primary Information, informed the present author by email in March 2012 that in the first week 70,000 downloads had taken place.

²⁰ The seven non-participants in *One Month* were Andre, Asher, Flavin, Kawara, Le Witt, Nauman, Ruscha. The calendar exhibition is also known as *March 1969*.

²¹ Siegelaub interview with Patricia Norvell, *Recording conceptual art: early interviews with Barry, Huebler, Kaltenbach, LeWitt, Morris, Oppenheim, Siegelaub, Smithson, Weiner*, Berkeley, Los Angeles, California and London England, University of California Press, 2001, (pp. 31-55), p. 36.

organisation and keep the ideas accessible.²² The present author contends that this ethos set the scene for the summer issue.

According to Harrison, the *SI* interview was 'a fiction, Siegelaub set up the questions and the answers'.²³ In interview with the present writer, Harrison explained his position, saying, 'I didn't like being used as the mouthpiece for a dealer, which effectively it was. So the interview was cooked up. I mean Seth had his bits more or less already worked out'.²⁴ Harrison's role as interlocutor was purely nominal.²⁵ Correspondence between Siegelaub and Harrison from 1971 substantiates this account.²⁶

Planning and logistics for the summer exhibition issue

Townsend secured funds from MacKays to enable Siegelaub to live in London for several months while he was working on the issue. He stayed in a hostel close to the editorial offices, and spent a great deal of time talking with Townsend, formally in the office and informally in the Museum Tavern or The Plough, as well as being a frequent dinner guest at the Townsend home in Dartmouth Park Road.²⁷ Although Townsend handed full responsibility for the section to Siegelaub, he remained keen to represent a geographical and, for the time, a global breadth. Townsend remarked to Siegelaub that in *SI* US West

²² Anne Moeglin-Delcroix discusses Siegelaub's One Month exhibition, *Esthétique du livre d'artiste: 1960-1980*. Paris: J. M. Place, Bibliothèque nationale de France, 1999, pp. 142-143.

²³ Harrison unpublished interview transcript, 28/3/07, Melvin papers, London.

²⁴ Harrison unpublished interview transcript, 28/3/07, Melvin papers, London.

²⁵ After hearing from Battcock that Harrison did not want his previously published articles in Battcock's forthcoming anthology, Siegelaub contacted Harrison to say that Battcock had asked him for some material 'by or about me [...] on the area of non-object art' would Harrison consent to the republication of 'the interview we did together [...] I think it still reads pretty well.' Harrison explained: 'I think the interview is/should be your 'property' rather than mine, and I therefore feel that you should be able to 'dispose' of it in any way you wish regards republication. I would only request that the introduction should be replaced with something more up to date, authored by Gregory or yourself, and that reference to myself should be kept to a bare minimum, you could just put me down as interviewer [...] My reservations have nothing to do with you - nor the nature and content of the interview, merely with the role of the 'interviewer' which seems unsatisfactory.' Letter from Siegelaub to Harrison 1/6/ 71, Harrison to Siegelaub, 24/6/71. Charles Harrison papers (1970s-2000s) TGA 200868, London. Gregory Battcock's anthology, *Idea Art*, New York, Dutton in 1973, reprinted the article for the first time. It is included in *Conceptual art: a critical anthology*, (Ed) Alexander Alberro and Blake Stimson. Cambridge, Mass, The MIT press, 1999.

²⁶ Siegelaub writes that he understands Harrison's position in the letter dated, 1/6/71, Charles Harrison papers (1970s-2000s), TGA 200868, London.

²⁷ Siegelaub unpublished interview transcript, 20/6/06, Melvin papers, London.

coast practices had not received much attention and that they differed in intent from the East coast of the US and asked him to take this into consideration with his selection of critics.²⁸

In December 1969, Siegelaub contacted the critics. Writing the addressee's name by hand, he sent letters of invitation to David Antin (US West Coast), Germano Celant, (Italy), Michel Claura (France) Lucy Lippard (US East Coast), Charles Harrison (UK) and Hans Strelow (Germany) as well as Yusuke Nakahara²⁹ (Japan), who did not participate in the end, and Harald Szeeman (Switzerland), who declined the invitation because he was too busy with his own projects.³⁰ The nationalities are relevant because they reflect the desire to be inclusive in the increasingly international art world at the time, although this did not adjust the bias towards the US and Western Europe. The invitation to Harrison, dated 8 December 1969, sits in the archive and reads as follows:

I am asking eight critics, from different parts of the world, each to edit an 8-page section of the magazine, and to make available their 8 pages to the artists that interest them.

These 8 pages can be used by the critic and the artists he recommends in any way he likes: possibly in connection with an exhibition he is organising already, or as an 8 page exhibition, or anything.

But I do not want the critic to write an 8 page essay on his favourite artists – I would like the artists to use the 8 pages directly.

Would you like to participate as one of the critics?

You will be paid £41½ for the organisation of your 8-page section.

In order to avoid duplication of artists, please submit a list of artists you wish to invite.

²⁸ Townsend, Melvin notebook, 2006, Melvin papers, London.

²⁹ Neither Siegelaub nor Townsend recalled in conversation with the present author how the contact with Yusuke Nakahara had been established. The present author surmises that it was through the artists that participated in the 1970 Toyko Biennale, *Between Man and Matter*, many of whom were in close contact with either Townsend or Siegelaub; these included Flanagan, Louw, Andre and LeWitt. Siegelaub and Townsend, with present author, 15/06/06, Melvin papers, London. Tokyo Biennale, *Between Man and Matter*, 1970, (Exhibition Catalogue), Tate Library, J-TOK-MET, London.

³⁰ Siegelaub unpublished interview transcript, 20/6/06, Melvin papers, London.

Artists should not necessarily be limited to your area or country.

I would like to receive your list of artists as soon as possible. Final photographs, drawings, text and layout design will have to be in by April 1970.

Kindly advise me about your thoughts on this proposal.³¹

At £41½ the fee was a significant increase on the standard fee for an article or review, which was then £15-£35, depending on the writer more than the length. The submission deadline, three months before publication, indicated the timescale in preparing a project of this kind, including the length of time necessary for printing.

Apart from the stipulation that the critics should not describe or analyse artwork but instead allow the artists and/or their work to speak for themselves, the only requirement Siegelaub would impose was that any texts should be published in three languages – English, French and German.

Elizabeth Deighton, who managed *SI*'s book publishing, drew up a revised breakdown of costs for the magazine and the cased hardback version. The costs for the magazine itself were estimated at £7,130, which could be offset against anticipated advertising revenue of £6,200. The estimated income on magazine sales was £360, leaving a shortfall of £610. The hardback publication would need to generate sales of £3,217 to cover its costs. Deighton explained to Siegelaub that, in order to break even, 'quite a bit over 4000 copies' of the hardback catalogue would need to be sold. She continued by saying that the price would be thirty shillings and trade price fifteen shillings, pointing out that it is 'not quite as grim as this. Some will be sold at full price; but we can cut a bit off *Studio* production by decreasing editorial pix, but as I know Peter has explained we still need to have some firm sales in advance. How are things going?'³²

³¹ Siegelaub letter to Charles Harrison, 8/12/69, S correspondence file to 1972, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

³² Deighton letter to Siegelaub, 2/4/70, S correspondence to 1972, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

Siegelaub's first draft of the press statement for the summer issue was on *SI* headed paper. It is necessary to labour the point that Townsend was clearly listed as editor, Siegelaub's name was not mentioned. At this point, Siegelaub was still hoping Nakahara might participate, and the announcement stated that '56 pages of this particular issue will consist of a three-language text (English, French and German) with 7 critics selecting artists from America, Europe and possibly Japan. The artists have been requested to make work specifically for presentation in the magazine'.³³ When the magazine was published the critics and their selected artists were listed with critics heading their chosen artists on the cover and contents page with Siegelaub's revised project statement, in English, French and German. This time Siegelaub's announcement had his name attached to it.

Harrison later reflected that 'Seth planned [the issue] and negotiated it entirely with Peter and I had nothing to do with that; in fact, I think I was quite surprised that Seth went straight to Peter, if I remember it correctly.'³⁴

During the planning phase, Siegelaub asked Harrison for a copy of the February 1970 issue because it contained Harrison's propositional article, 'Notes towards art work' in which he sought to define a critical forum for the discussion of conceptual art practice. When he sent the issue, Harrison pointed out that, 'as you will probably notice, my piece is in part a carry on from some points raised in our [interview] together with others raised by Joseph, etc'.³⁵ The article opens: 'Art now has no object in view. Some withdrawals are more operative than most engagements.'³⁶ There is a hint of his eventual selection of artists for Siegelaub's magazine exhibition because he opens with quotations from Flanagan, Burgin and Kosuth. In relation to his participation in the July/August issue, he noted: 'I will be letting you have a complete list for the

³³ Siegelaub, draft press release, July/August 1970 file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

³⁴ Harrison unpublished interview transcript, Melvin 28/3/07, Melvin papers, London.

³⁵ Harrison letter to Siegelaub, 9/2/70, July/August 1970 file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

³⁶ Harrison, "Notes towards art work." *SI*, No. 179, No. 919, February, 1970, p. 42.

July/August show in the near future, though if you suddenly hit a deadline let me know and I'll give you the list over the phone.'³⁷

Ancillary content

The summer issue was almost entirely dedicated to Siegelaub's project, with the notable exceptions of the advertising, the book supplement and the ticketboard section. In order to provide a flavour of context of the magazine issue, it is relevant to consider these sections before launching into the discussion of the exhibition issue.

The advertising pages included announcements of exhibitions by many of the artists selected by Siegelaub's critics, and the issue provided the ideal opportunity to link what the artists did in the magazine exhibition with the commercial and public sectors. Dwan Gallery, New York,³⁸ took the inside front cover and the inside back cover advertised *Idea Structures* at Camden Arts Centre, which Harrison curated.³⁹ In the middle was an announcement for *Conceptual Art and Conceptual Aspects*, organised by Donald Karshan at the New York Cultural Center, signalling the beginning of the relations between it and the magazine developed, as we saw by Harrison in the previous chapter.⁴⁰ Among the other commercial galleries advertising were Nigel Greenwood,⁴¹ Ricke,⁴² and Eugenia Butler.⁴³

The book supplement announced *SI*'s latest publication, a Sol LeWitt monograph which was described as 'a finely produced book of drawings by this

³⁷ Harrison letter to Siegelaub, 9/2/70, July/August 1970 file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

³⁸ Artists included in the Dwan advertisement and *SI*, Vol. 180, No. 924, July/August, were Andre, LeWitt and Long.

³⁹ Artists included in *Idea Structures* and *SI*, Vol. 180, No. 924, July/August, were Arnatt, Burgin, Kosuth, Atkinson, Bainbridge, Baldwin and Hurrell.

⁴⁰ Artists included in *Conceptual Art and Conceptual Aspects* were Kosuth, Barthelme, Kawara, Atkinson, Baldwin, Bainbridge, Hurrell, Kaltenbach, Dibbets, Huebler, Baxter, Barry and Weiner [listed in the order of adj] and *SI*, Vol. 180, No. 924, p. xvi.

⁴¹ Roelof Louw, *SI*, Vol. No. 924, 180 p. vi.

⁴² Sonnier, *SI*, Vol. No. 924, 180 p. ii.

⁴³ Artists included in the advertisement and *SI*, July/August issue Baldessari, Barry, Huebler, Kaltenbach, Vol. 180, No. 924, p.ii.

important American artist, designed by LeWitt himself'.⁴⁴ This was the project that resulted from LeWitt's contribution to the Minimalist issue, mentioned in Chapter 3.

Townsend maintained direct editorial control over the letters chosen for the ticketboard section, and paid special attention to those that were of relevance to the enclosed artists' projects. Significantly, Norman Reid, then director of the Tate, wrote that 'there is a clear need for an archive of 20th century British art and artists working in Britain'.⁴⁵ He outlined plans for an air-conditioned storage room for archive material and described material already in the archive, relevant to, in particular: Henry Moore, Naum Gabo, Barbara Hepworth and Ben Nicholson.⁴⁶ He requested further donations. It was not until 2002 that the Hyman Kreitman research centre opened with the facilities he envisaged, shortly after the purchase of Townsend's archive, in which Reid's original letter can now be found.⁴⁷ The ticketboard section also carried Peter Sedgley's announcement of the Art Information Registry, AIR.⁴⁸ Townsend was a founding trustee of SPACE Studios in 1968 and AIR in 1970 (with Bridget Riley and Peter Sedgley). He regarded this as intrinsic to his responsibility as the editor of a contemporary art magazine.

Also included in the ticketboard section was an obituary of Eva Hesse by Barry Flanagan. He gave it to the editorial office attached with paper clips as a handwritten note to his copy of the catalogue for *Art in Process IV* at Finch College, Museum of Art, New York. He wrote: 'It was my fortune to meet [Hesse] and see some early pieces last year, also new pieces more recently. Her maturity and courage are reflected completely in the strength of her work; the loss of such an artist is acute. The statement of Eva's tells far more than one can say'.⁴⁹ The exhibition was organised by Elayne Varian who acknowledged special

⁴⁴ *SI*, advertisement announcement of *SI* publications lists *Canadian Art*, *Ben Nicholson*, *Cybernetic Serendipity*, *Play Orbit* and *Sol LeWitt*, 34 pp. Price: 10s Postage: UK 1s, overseas 2s, Vol. 180, p. 52.

⁴⁵ Reid, "Tate Gallery archive announcement" *SI*, Vol. 180, No. 924, p. iv.

⁴⁶ Reid, *SI*, Vol. 180, No. 924, p. iv.

⁴⁷ Norman Reid letter, July/August 1970 file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

⁴⁸ Sedgley, *SI*, Vol. 180, No. 924, p. iv.

⁴⁹ Flanagan, *SI*, Vol. 180, No. 924, p. v.

assistance from Siegelaub. Flanagan was the only British artist in the exhibition.⁵⁰

We gain more understanding of the broader context of Siegelaub's issue by considering Beth Coffelt's report on the art strike boycotting the US print pavilion at the Venice Biennale. Notice of this decision was received in June and the article was processed immediately. The action was in protest at the US government's continuing atrocities in Vietnam. It listed artists withdrawing permission to show prints in Venice, including Oldenburg, Dine, Lichtenstein, Stella, Kitaj and Ruscha. In fact, Ruscha showed the groundbreaking chocolate screen prints in the biennale that year, so the report was not wholly accurate.⁵¹

Appearing after the ticketboard section, Siegelaub's issue conformed to the standard format. The hardback book version contained exactly the same exhibition content as the magazine, but it had a black cloth cover and no advertisements, ticketboard or book supplement. (Figure 5.52.)

July/August 1970 magazine-exhibition

As outlined above, Siegelaub treated the magazine's pages as an exhibition site. It was the first time that a mainstream art magazine had presented itself as an art exhibition. The way in which the project was conceived followed the paradigm Siegelaub had pioneered with the *January 5–31* exhibition catalogue in which the page displayed the work and the exhibition was secondary to the book. In the case of the summer exhibition of 1970, there was no supplementary staging in three-dimensional space. The magazine's pages exclusively formed the exhibition.

The July/August 1970 of *SI* issue is now celebrated as an exemplar of radical exhibition-making.⁵² There are two main reasons for this. First, it broke the

⁵⁰ *Art in Process* (Exhibition Catalogue), the other artists were Carl Andre, Lynda Benglis, Bill Bollinger, Mel Bochner, Rafael Ferrer, Eva Hesse, Robert Morris, Bruce Nauman, Robert Ryman, Richard van Buren and Larry Weiner, New York, Finch College, Museum of Art, 1969, July/August 1970 file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

⁵¹ Beth Coffelt, *SI*, July/August 1970, Vol. 180, No. 924, p. 11.

⁵² Sir Nicholas Serota pointed out this issue at the Tate Britain exhibition, *Tales from Studio International* curated by the present author, as one that had a lasting effect on his perception of the

mould in representing work for its own sake, rather than through reportage or critical commentary. Secondly, its wide availability at the time reconfigured exchange value relations. Unlike art in its commodified state, the magazine was cheap to buy.

The simple fact that this exhibition could be purchased from news-stands or received through the post was a radical departure from the viewer's customary mode of encountering exhibitions in the gallery or museum. Through this perceptual adjustment, the private space of reading was rendered in sharp contrast with public institutional space. This marked a shift in the dissemination of ideas about art as praxis, and directly addressed perceptions of portability, circulation and exchange as the magazine was passed between readers, in libraries and among friends.

The cover of the summer issue served as a statement of intent. Conceived and designed by Siegelaub, it comprised a series of names, listed in six groups, set in white on a mid-grey background below the usual masthead. A reader unfamiliar with *SI* would, perhaps, be struck by the simplicity of its visual impact. To regular readers, its graphic informational immediacy must have stood out as different, being neither a photograph nor the familiar artist-designed cover. (Figure 5.53.) On the contents page, below the list of ticketboard contributions, fell Siegelaub's statement for the issue, in English, French and German, which read:

The contents of the 48-page exhibition in this issue was organised by requesting six critics to each edit an 8-page section of the magazine, and in turn to make available their section to the artist(s) that interest them.

The table of contents lists the name of the artist(s) under the critic who was responsible for their participation.⁵³

inherent possibilities of exhibition organisation and distribution. He agreed with the present author that Siegelaub's guest-edited volume had a far-reaching effect stemming from 1970.

⁵³ Siegelaub, *SI*, Vol. 180, No. 924, p. I.

Beyond this, the organisational layout was consistent with Siegelaub's prevailing ethos, in which he actively sought to demystify exhibition and catalogue organisation in a bid to make them non-hierarchical. In this case, each participant was accorded equal treatment, in relation to the number of works included and the number of pages allocated in the publication.

The six critics' pages

This section presents each critic's selection of artists, describes how the pages looked and provides an outline of their editorial decisions. The visual juxtapositions encountered in the magazine create other readings; as the pages are turned, surprising or uneasy relationships sometimes arise between artists because of their diverse intentions. Artists who may have otherwise felt it inappropriate to be seen alongside each other accepted the situation largely due to their regard for Townsend's overall editorial scheme as much as their respect for Siegelaub's or the critic who invited them.⁵⁴ Coexistence was crucial to Townsend's sense of editorial purpose; passing the baton to Siegelaub – who responded in kind by handing the invitation to critics – typified this strategy of openness. The area created by the viewer-reader's interpretative questioning remained elusive because it is not filled by critical or descriptive commentary. It was for the viewer-reader to engage with rationales if they wished. Siegelaub said, 'I've tried to avoid prejudicing the viewing situation',⁵⁵ which was a position Townsend had already adopted.

To reiterate, the six critics who agreed to participate in the project were David Antin, Germano Celant, Michel Claura, Charles Harrison, Lucy Lippard and Hans Strelow. Both Celant and Harrison presented their selected artists alphabetically, as did Strelow, who gave four pages to each of his two artists. Claura invited only one artist; Antin and Lippard applied a different method to their ordering.

⁵⁴ Weiner remarked: 'How else would my work sit beside On Kawara but for my regard for Peter, Seth and Lucy?' Unpublished interview transcript, 29/3/05, Melvin papers, London.

⁵⁵ Harrison Siegelaub interview, "On exhibitions and the world at large." *SI*, Vol. 178, No. 917, p. 203.

Antin later recalled an evening in Lucy Lippard's Manhattan loft with Lippard, Siegelaub and Eleanor Antin, David's wife, an artist friend of Lippard's, during which Siegelaub first discussed the magazine exhibition and invited David Antin to participate.⁵⁶ Antin offered eight artists a page each.⁵⁷ He remembered that Siegelaub set no limitations on his choice of artists, and so he took the decision to present the 'most radically interesting' photographic documentation from exhibitions he had recently organised at the university gallery, accompanied by artists' statements. Although this did not adhere to the brief, Siegelaub did not ask him to revise the scheme.⁵⁸ Three of the artists he selected were New York-based Dan Graham, Richard Serra and Keith Sonnier; the others were Eleanor Antin, John Baldessari, Fred Lonidier, George Nicolaides, and the British artist Harold Cohen who was then living in California.⁵⁹ Antin did not meet Townsend, but he went over the layout, in general terms, with Lippard. He arranged this according to what he thought made the most logical sequence.⁶⁰

Celant's section followed that of Antin. He invited Giovanni Anselmo, Alighiero Boetti, Pier Paolo Calzolari, Mario Merz, Giuseppe Penone, Emilio Prini, Michelangelo Pistoletto and Gilberto Zorio. With the exception of Calzolari, who submitted an installation photograph, they all made work specifically for the magazine exhibition. From Genoa, Celant sent a hand-drawn and easy-to-follow mock-up of the whole layout to Siegelaub. Prini's page, *Part of a comedy script for 4 actors Jean Christophe Amman, [sic Jean-Christophe Ammann] Kynaston McShine, Prini and Tucci [sic Antonio Tucci Russo]* came with specific instructions.⁶¹ It was to be printed on *SI*'s headed paper, with Townsend cited as editor at the usual address. The comedy script was developed from telegrams sent between the four 'players' in response to Prini's invitation from McShine to contribute to the *Information* exhibition at MoMA.

⁵⁶ David Antin email to present author, 3/5/06, Melvin papers, London.

⁵⁷ Antin email, 3/5/06, Melvin papers, London.

⁵⁸ Siegelaub unpublished interview transcript, 20/6/06, Melvin papers, London.

⁵⁹ Antin email, 03/05/06, Melvin papers, London.

⁶⁰ Siegelaub thought contact came through Lippard's friendship with Eleanor Antin; he didn't know Antin personally nor had he come across his poetry until subsequently. Siegelaub unpublished interview transcript, 20/6/06, Melvin papers, London.

⁶¹ The only text on Prini's page to appear in three languages was the title noted above.

These were presented in narrative sequence. However, being transposed onto headed paper and then printed inside the magazine made the script ambiguous. It set itself up as a fiction, with actors playing or performing their roles in an altered context and Townsend apparently controlling the dialogue as editor. (Figure 5.54.)

Celant's section contained another interesting dynamic – the humorous interplay devised by Pistoletto. He made a tracing of William Turnbull's cover design for the October 1966 issue of *SI*, dedicated to 'British Sculpture: the developing scene', which featured a steel sculpture called 3/4/5. The present author suggests that Pistoletto's appropriation economically addressed contemporaneous concerns of authenticity and authorship, by playing on the idea of the artist as a copyist.⁶² There is no documentation of Turnbull's permission being sought or granted in connection with Pistoletto's realisation. The only trace in the exhibition planning file is a remark made by Celant to Siegelaub: 'I hope you have resolved the problem about the page by Pistoletto'.⁶³ (Figure 5.55 and 5.56.)

Zorio's page is largely black, with a white horizontal strip at the top, across which a short text is written in Italian with three columns of parallel translation (English, French and German) underneath. The English translation reads: 'The border is that imaginary line made concrete by violence. At the border I give my documents to Celant'. Zorio's text was the most complex of the contributions submitted to Celant, and it underwent several revisions. The proofs are scrawled with handwriting in an effort to attain a transparency in translation.⁶⁴ (Figure 5.57.)

Claura worked with exclusively with Daniel Buren. Buren and Claura provided no information and no text, simply eight pages of yellow vertical stripes, running in large blocks continuously across the spreads, with the white

⁶² Townsend discussed with the present author what he described as 'the spurious notion that the artist should copy nature' and the way in which artists played with popular assumptions about the requirement for the artist to have copying skills, Melvin notebook 2000, Melvin papers, London.

⁶³ Celant letter to Siegelaub, undated, July/August 1970 file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

⁶⁴ Zorio's statement, translated from Italian by Reise, it underwent different versions, including: 'The boundary is that imaginary line which (very literally) [concretises itself] [becomes concrete] (less literally)'. [Sic] July/August 1970 file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

of the magazine's pages showing through beneath. There was an incremental shift in register, and, although the disposition of the stripe was repeated, it moved spatially across the pages. (Figure 5.58.) The juxtaposition of Buren's yellow and white vertical stripes and Zorio's page is visually striking. The viewer could follow the work by replicating the act of reading; by turning the pages either forwards or backwards, they would participate in an activity that brought them directly into a temporal engagement with the work's sequential structure. This act of simultaneity resonated throughout the issue and is most engaging in Lippard's section, in which a subtle, but clearly present, humour pertaining to the subjectivity of communication comes into, or rather slips into, the arena of the page.

Harrison's selection encompassed the diverse group of artists he supported at that time, including representatives from St Martins, the Stockwell depot and Art & Language. He invited Keith Arnatt, Terry Atkinson, Michael Baldwin, David Bainbridge and Harold Hurrell, Victor Burgin, Barry Flanagan, Joseph Kosuth, John Latham and Roelof Louw. (Figures 5.59, 5.60, 5.61, 5.62, 5.63, 5.64, 5.65 and 5.66.) Arnatt's statement followed the last of Buren's pages:

This statement appears on this wall
This statement appears on the other wall
The other statement appears on this wall
The other statement appears on the other wall
This statement appears on this side of this wall
This statement appears on the other side of this wall
This statement appears on this side of the other wall
This statement appears on the other side of the other wall
The other statement appears on this side of this wall
The other statement appears on the other side of this wall
The other statement appears on this side of the other wall
The other statement appears on the other side of the other wall

Exhibit simultaneously, all separate statements as individual statements.⁶⁵

⁶⁵ Arnatt, [untitled text-piece] The instruction to Harrison, the critic-curator was part of the piece and printed in the magazine-exhibition, *SI*, Vol. 180, No. 924, p. 25.

In this work, the page became a wall and a witty spatial allusion to the ‘other side of the other wall’, requiring a form of mental gymnastics to get one’s head around the metaphorical space. The following two pages featured a collaborative text piece by Atkinson, Bainbridge, Baldwin and Hurrell, which questioned the nature of sculpture and its experience, framing it as an electro-magnetic encounter that used the Lecher system.⁶⁶ The Lecher line was named after Ernst Lecher, (1856-1926) an Austrian physicist who devised the apparatus.

Burgin’s work – a series of statements numbered 0-13, shown a year later in Harrison’s *British Avant Garde* at the NYCC referred to in chapter 4 – demanded the reader-viewer’s focus on time, duration and spatial awareness.

Flanagan’s page followed. He sent his instructions to Harrison in a telegram from Tokyo, where he was participating in a biennale.⁶⁷ This was addressed to ‘Straw International’, an oblique reference to the financial difficulties of the magazine, to Flanagan’s own lack of revenue from the art industry at that time and to drawing the short straw.⁶⁸ Flanagan’s instructions were for Harrison to use his photographic documentation of the former’s contribution to the 1969 *Six at the Hayward* exhibition. This was to be printed alongside the instruction telegram, which read: ‘Best Hayward photo from Rowan stop light sight life quite different Tokyo space stop please use cable also page stop’.⁶⁹ Townsend found Flanagan’s wry lightness of touch a strong antidote to the overall dryness of Harrison’s section and to Conceptual Art practices in general.⁷⁰

After Flanagan’s page comes Kosuth’s *The Sixth Investigation Proposition Seven*, which was followed by Latham’s *A one second Drawing*. Louw’s page

⁶⁶ The Lecher system was installed at the *Idea Structures* exhibition, Camden Art Centre. The system entailed an ‘apparatus of two parallel wires [...] along which a high frequency radio wave is guided.’ ‘The complete arrangement possesses a “sculptural morphology” and an electromagnetic morphology.’ Atkinson, Bainbridge, Baldwin and Hurrell, *SI*, Vol. 180, No. 924, p. 26.

⁶⁷ The Tokyo Biennale was titled *Between Man and Matter* curated by Yusuke Nakahara. The catalogue comprised two volumes and artists were invited to contribute three pages in whatever form they chose. This was additional to the requirement to supply biographical information. *Between Man and Matter*, (Exhibition Catalogue) Yusuke Nakahara, “Between Man and Matter”, translated by Joseph Love, Mainichi Newspapers, Tokyo Biennale exhibition catalogue, 1970.

⁶⁸ Flanagan, unpublished interview transcript, 27/10/08, Melvin papers, London.

⁶⁹ Flanagan, *SI*, Vol. 180, p. 29.

⁷⁰ Townsend, Melvin notebook 1999, Melvin papers, London.

showed two documentary photographs of his installation at Museum of Modern Art, Oxford, in 1969, together with a diagram of the layout and the statement:

Two 9 in x 1/16 bands of grey black rubber were stretched along the walls of the gallery between each corner. They were extended by a third to half of their original length. The bands were fixed at the corners to battens projecting 1 in. from the wall, at a height of 5 ft. 10 in. from the floor to their upper edge. The lower bands overlapped the upper bands by 4 ½ in. at each corner and were stretched with slightly less tension so that they sagged by 1 in. to 4 ½ in. more at the centre.⁷¹

Lippard's section follows Louw's page. It begins with the standard letter she sent to each artist, outlining intentions and instructions for participation:

I have 8 pages and have asked 8 artists to do one work (1 page) each, within the following framework: Each artist is to provide a situation within which the next artist on the list is to work; he in turn will do a piece within the situation provided him by the artist before him on the list. If you want to wait until you have received your situation from the previous artist before you send yours on, the section might become a kind of "carrier piece" in itself but how you want to handle it and what the nature of your work and the situation you impose on anyone else is entirely up to you. The previous artist's "instructions" will be printed at the top of your page in small print (and in three languages) so be sure to send them along with your piece. The rest of the page is yours (page size is 9"1/2 X 12").⁷²

Lippard's explicit instructions introduced a degree of structured control regarding spatial layout similar in consequence to a physical gallery space's limits on scale and other practical demands. The final paragraph of her letter, which was not printed, instructed artists to allow space for translations of any

⁷¹ Louw, *SI*, Vol. 180, No. 924, p. 32.

⁷² Lippard, *SI*, Vol. 180, No. 924, p. 33.

captions or text. It also advised that, if artists wished to control the layout of their page, they must provide a sketch along with all other material by 1 April at the latest (preferably by mid-March). They could also contact her with any questions or objections, and if they did not want to participate, they must let her know quickly.⁷³

Lippard's artists in order of appearance were Robert Barry, Stephen Kaltenbach, Lawrence Weiner, On Kawara, Sol LeWitt, Douglas Huebler, N.E. Thing Co. and Frederick Barthelme. They all wanted to be involved, and responded quickly to her request, providing the working situation for the next artist on the list, which set up a dynamic and, to some extent, collaborative exchange event not unlike a relayed conversation or a game of consequences. In Lippard's section, each page becomes spatial and structural like three-dimensional chess, whereby part of the previous situation informs the following one. It is this skewing of time that in the present author's view makes this 'round robin' section the most interesting.

The circularity of Lippard's approach presents an explicit subversion of the finality of beginnings and endings. This addresses the issue of demarcation – of one's self and one's practice – and engagement within the dialogue of dematerialised propositional work. It humorously focuses attention on the strategies employed to address phenomenal considerations of subjective consciousness. It also alludes to questions of authorship and its demarcation. (Figures 5.67, 5.68, 5.69, 5.70, 5.71, 5.72, 5.73 and 5.74.)

The last artist on Lippard's list was Frederick Barthelme. He provided the situation for Robert Barry who was listed first. Lippard's invitation-instruction letter was printed at the top of Barry's page; below this was Barthelme's condition:

March 7, 1970

Robert Barry:

The situation is: the late arrival of this notification.

Frederick Barthelme

⁷³ Lippard copy of her letter sent to the artists 26/1/70, July/August 1970 file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

Barry's submission to Lippard was dated 14 March 1970 and incorporated the instruction for Weiner simultaneously with commentary for Lippard:

February 10, 1970 R.B. to L.W. "He'll probably send me something at the last minute saying 'hurry up, you only have a little time to do something."

February 14, 1970 R.B. to L.L. "I told L. that he'd probably send me something at the last minute saying 'hurry-up, you only have a little time to do something!"⁷⁴

It was amusing that his page was an aside to Weiner and Lippard remarking before the event, as indicated by the dates on Barthelme's likely tardiness.

Barry's instruction for Kaltenbach was: 'Make something that is completely open, direct, explicit, without any obscurity or ambiguity.'⁷⁵ Kaltenbach responded by printing the text *EXPOSE YOUR SELF*, centred on the page in large type, with diminutive French and German translations placed beneath.

Kaltenbach's prescription for Weiner was that 'The piece should be based on a concept at least one year old.'⁷⁶ For Weiner, this raised specific considerations about what to submit, because the ages of his works were measured from their first public showing.⁷⁷ This meant that a year-old concept would have to have been exhibited as art a year previously and so existing in the public domain, rather than an idea he had been harbouring for the past year.⁷⁸

The instructions Weiner sent to Lippard along with the work, regarding its presentation, were simple. He did not mind how the page looked as long as it contained the following information: Kaltenbach's request, his work, name and the enclosed 'conditions of receivership. The order or precedence is left completely to your discretion'.⁷⁹ Since Weiner's participation in Siegelaub's

⁷⁴ Barry, *SI*, Vol. 180, No. 924, p. 33.

⁷⁵ Kaltenbach, *SI*, Vol. 180, No. 924, p. 34.

⁷⁶ Weiner, *SI*, Vol. 180, No. 924, p. 35.

⁷⁷ Weiner unpublished interview transcript, 30/3/05, Melvin papers, London.

⁷⁸ Weiner unpublished interview transcript, 30/3/05, Melvin papers, London.

⁷⁹ Weiner letter to Lippard, 26/2/70, July/August 1970 file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

exhibition, 5 – 31 January 1969, this statement had become an inseparable component in Weiner's work.

1. The artist may construct the piece
2. The piece may be fabricated
3. The piece need not be built.
4. Each being equal and consistent with the intent of the artist the decision as to condition rests with receiver upon occasion of receivership.⁸⁰

Weiner's text work, *AND THEN THERE WERE NONE*, is centred on the page with the work translated into French and German and below it are the receivership conditions.⁸¹

It is significant that, in his reply letter to Lippard, Weiner referred to her commission as 'the Studio International show forthcoming'.⁸² It demonstrates his awareness of theoretical context, rather than his conceiving of the invitation as a chance to present some material in a magazine.

To On Kawara, Weiner provided the following, 'Dear On Kawara, I must apologise but the only situation I can bring myself to impose upon you would be my hopes for your having a good day. Fond regards etc.'⁸³

This elicited a telegram from On Kawara to Sol LeWitt reading *I am Still Alive On Kawara*. The telegram was simultaneously a response to Weiner and the framework for Sol LeWitt. It is reproduced on On Kawara's page, below Weiner's wishes for him.

At the top of LeWitt's page, Kawara's telegram to LeWitt is printed in trilingual translation. In response, LeWitt constructed a text piece in three parallel columns, one for each language. Starting with the word order of

⁸⁰ Weiner letter to Lippard, 26/2/70, July/August 1970 file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

⁸¹ Weiner, *SI*, Vol. 180, No. 924, p. 35.

⁸² Weiner letter to Lippard, 26/2/70, July/August 1970 file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

⁸³ On Kawara, *SI*, Vol. 180, No. 924, p. 36.

Kawara's telegram, he presented a line-by-line reordering, systematically omitting words, to deconstruct the explicit meaning of the original phrase:

I AM STILL ALIVE, ON KAWARA

I AM STILL, ON KAWARA

I AM STILL ON KAWARA

I AM ALIVE, ON KAWARA

This process became a series of questions:

AM I STILL ALIVE, ON KAWARA?

AM I STILL, ALIVE ?⁸⁴

It played on the reordering of meaning through the reordering of words. LeWitt used Kawara's suggested idea as if in a state of curiosity, throwing up possible reconfigurations to see how they fell. He then compiled these as a text piece that veered between the poignantly absurd and ridiculous while remaining structurally strategic in linguistic repetition. The role of translation is completely transparent but reaches its natural limits when it comes to word play since 'On' remains a name in French and German, the inferred ambiguity and the fun that this engenders being untranslatable.

In turn, LeWitt provided Huebler with the following instruction:

BEGIN AT THE BEGINNING

END AT THE END

BEGIN AT THE END

END AT THE BEGINNING ⁸⁵

⁸⁴ LeWitt piece text typed in red capitals on three sheets of paper. July/August 1970 file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

⁸⁵ Huebler, *SI*, Vol. 180, No. 924, p. 38.

Huebler sent a text to Lippard, on a page with LeWitt's instruction at the top, asking that she 'set up like this with as much space for the point [sic] as possible', adding that 'These works have no "title" as the language does that job.'⁸⁶ Huebler's instruction for the layout was part of the submitted piece. The text work he sent read:

The point represented above, exactly at the instant that it is perceived, begins to expand in every direction towards infinity: it continues to expand at the speed of light, for the entire time that these words are being read, but returns to its original essence instantly after the last word has been read.⁸⁷

This text was placed some way underneath the point that was the full stop, which was roughly central in the page. While the viewer engaged with the construction of Huebler's piece, their experience of simultaneity in the work would be seamless. The point of the work and its point (the full stop or dot) in the middle of the page are ambiguous, being simultaneously artwork and punctuation. A year previously, Huebler told Lippard that he was less interested in what is perceived than in 'the act of perceiving'.⁸⁸

In turn, Huebler provided Iain Baxter of N.E. Thing Co. with an 'optional situation', instructing 'Release all "claims" to a work previously claimed and return it to its former existence or establish an authentic claim to every aspect of the "after life": or both.'⁸⁹ Huebler was making direct reference to the way N.E. Thing Co. 'claimed' objects as ART which is an anagram for aesthetically rejected things or ACT, an anagram of aesthetically claimed things. The take-it-or-leave-it tone implied by making the condition 'optional' created an ambiguous situation for the object's status and played with the notion that in

⁸⁶ Huebler letter to Lippard, not dated, July/August 1970 file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

⁸⁷ N.E. Thing Co., *SI*, Vol. 180, No. 924, p. 38.

⁸⁸ Alberro cites letter from Huebler to Lippard during Siegelaub's *January 5-31 1969* exhibitions *Deprivileging Art: Seth Siegelaub and the Politics of Conceptual Art*, PhD, Northwestern University, Illinois, USA, 1997, p. 203, note 59.

⁸⁹ N.E. Thing Co., *SI*, Vol. 180, p. 39

N.E. Thing Co.'s practice, ART was not an art object, but that ACT, the aesthetically claimed object, might become transformed as such.

On his page Baxter included a newspaper clipping from the announcements column of business opportunities and property lets in *The Citizen* from Friday 13 March 1970, to which his claim had been relinquished. Also on his page was a speculation on the values contained in the business column, which requested that enquiries be directed to N.E. Thing Co. Beside the column was a certificate issued by N.E. Thing Co., which provided an explanation of the company's practice of claiming or rejecting things as art. This process necessitated the issuing of certificates for 'aesthetically claimed things' (ACT) or 'aesthetically rejected things' (ART). The terms ACT and ART are part of N.E. Thing Co.'s glossary and listed as such in the exhibition catalogue, *Trans VSI Connection NSCAD-NETCO* held at Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, Halifax.⁹⁰ The acronyms were presented on sealed certificates similar to a share certificate. Baxter's page showed the certificate that had claimed the items, noted as follows. 'It is elevated for eternity to the realm of aesthetically claimed things.'⁹¹

Baxter's instructions for Barthelme read: 'Trans-V. S. I. Situation: Imaginary transmission of visual sensitivity information'. It appears at the top of Barthelme's page and like the other artist's instructions in Lippard's section, above Barthelme's contribution. N.E. Thing Co.'s definition of 'Visual Sensitivity Information' is 'a term developed and used by N.E. Thing Co. to denote more appropriately the meaning of traditional words "art" and "fine art" or "visual art". Refers to the handling of visual information in a sensitive manner.'⁹² Barthelme's page comprised the back page of advertisements from *SI*'s previous year's July/August issue, minus the top two which made room for Baxter's situation to be placed.⁹³ At the bottom of Barthelme's page is the magazine's

⁹⁰ N.E. Thing. Co., "Glossary." *Trans VSI Connection NSCAD-NETCO*, Sept 15-Oct 5, 1969, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, NSCAD press, 1969, unpaginated.

⁹¹ N.E. Thing Co., *SI*, Vol. 180, p. 39.

⁹² N.E. Thing. Co., "Glossary." *Trans VSI Connection NSCAD-NETCO*, Sept 15-Oct 5, 1969, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, NSCAD press, 1969, unpaginated.

⁹³ Barthelme wanted Baxter's telegram reproduced 'so small it can't be read but large enough to tell what it is', letter to Lippard, 9/2/70. July/August 1970 file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

Baxter's telegram was set in type in keeping with the size of all the situation instructions at the top of Lippard's section.

page number, 40. It correlates precisely with the last page in the advertisement section of the 1969 July/August issue and repeats all this information with the addition of his name, *Frederick Barthelme, STUDIO INTERNATIONAL Vol. 178, No. 913, 1969, page 40*. The page is where the full conditions of sale and supply of the periodical were printed. Barthelme insisted on these details. In this fashion he claimed artistic ownership retrospectively of the previous year's back page of advertisements.⁹⁴

Barthelme's page directly returned to the propositional encounter with the circularity of the idea – the idea being the situation and its material realisation in the magazine as well as the inferred possibilities of associated, relational, procedural time-based thought processes. The imaginary situation set by Baxter for Barthelme is nebulous, and the latter used it to comment on the time lapse between the 'real' appearance of advertisements that is to say when they were paid for as advertisements with sales and other announcements and their subsequent repetition as magazine art a year later when their original function was redundant. Barthelme's use of the previous year's advertising page also referred to Baxter's practice of reclaiming the act as art for aesthetic purposes. The idea of aesthetically claimed pieces has a currency through the section, playing on the time lag, and the idea of exchange between artists and in-between readers, as well as graphically in the layout.

Strelow was the final critic to curate a section. He presented work by two artists – Jan Dibbets and Hanne Darboven. Darboven's *Index for one century* and *Index for circle of centuries* were each followed by a different work but with the same title, *1st and last drawing*.⁹⁵ These drawings were mathematical notes, like coordinates, and mysterious in character. Dibbets sent Strelow precise diagrammatic instructions for the layout, which showed art world interconnections. His proposal was 'to publish the project I did for Art and Project [Gallery, Amsterdam]. 200 people wrote back. There are four maps, Europe, world, Benelux, Amsterdam.'⁹⁶ He asked Strelow to print a photograph

⁹⁴ Barthelme, *SI*, Vol. 178, No. 913, p. 40.

⁹⁵ Darboven, *SI*, Vol. 180, No. 924, pp. 45-8.

⁹⁶ Dibbets letter to Strelow 28/1/70, July/August 1970 file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

of the *Art and Project* bulletin, followed by the names, in columns, of those respondents with the bulletin number they had received and then the maps connecting the respondents back to the source, with Dibbets, in Amsterdam. He told Strelow that he was pleased with the scheme and asked if Strelow 'like[d] the idea, if not, critique it'.⁹⁷ The interstices of the lines linking the responses on the maps displayed topographical links; visually, these create a matrix of multiple textural spaces and they also allude to other structural and location simultaneities. Unlike the *One Month* show, only those who replied remained in the documentation. (Figures 5.75 to 5.78 and 5.79 to 5.82.)

Theoretical frameworks for the issue

In the interview with Harrison published in *SI* in December 1969, Siegelaub had observed the potential for magazine art, noting that 'When art concerns itself with things not germane to physical presence its intrinsic (communicative) value is not altered by its presentation in printed media'.⁹⁸ He continued by pointing out that 'how you are made aware of the art is common property, the same way that paint colours or bronze are common property to all painters and sculptors'.⁹⁹ Siegelaub's intention was lofty, but at the same time full of self-abnegation, and was not dissimilar to Townsend's editorial withdrawal. They had a shared objective of providing the conduit for the exchange of ideas.

Thinking about the idea of viewing itself and its context as intrinsic to the changing definitions of art was constantly surfacing in discussions. It is relevant to draw attention to André Malraux, France's cultural minister's important contribution to the grassroots debate on the concept of *Museums without Walls*, the first of three volumes to constitute his book, *The Voices of Silence* published in 1967.¹⁰⁰ In *Museums without Walls*, Malraux wrote of the difficulty the viewer experiences in engaging directly, at an emotional level, with work displayed in a

⁹⁷ Dibbets letter to Strelow 28/1/70, July/August 1970 file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

⁹⁸ Siegelaub Harrison, "On exhibitions and the world at large." *SI*, Vol. 178, No. 917, p. 202.

⁹⁹ Siegelaub Harrison, "On exhibitions and the world at large." *SI*, Vol. 178, No. 917, p. 202.

¹⁰⁰ André Malraux, *Museum Without Walls*, London, Secker & Warburg, 1967.

museum, where each work proposes 'Let it suppose that.'¹⁰¹ He identified the proposition as a form of spectacle, its intent he considered to be derived from the Renaissance, as 'a revelation of the unreal as well as the most convincing expression of an enormous fiction, that of a world of harmony.'¹⁰²

This overarching schematic inclusion Malraux's way of viewing museum artefacts relates to Siegelaub's designation of the seven non-participating artists in the *One Month* show as participating by not participating; whereby they became subsumed within the structural, organisational scope of his project. Each of these non-submissions was present in the exhibition via a blank page. Also relevant is the idea of an internalised or imaginary museum, existing in the mind. The suggestion is that this museum is potentially boundless, because it has no walls, either for enclosure or on which to fix work. The subtitle of the exhibition *When Attitudes become Form* (Live in Your Head) was another case in point since it picked up precisely on the shift of emphasis to the viewer's engagement, to become an interplay of response, recollection and association from the externally perceived encounter with the work, or with the *idea* of the work, to its internalisation.¹⁰³ Another contemporaneous exhibition was called *Art in the Mind*.¹⁰⁴ Drawing on 'the attitude of pioneering art dealer Seth Siegelaub', its organiser, Athena Spear, referred in the catalogue to the fact that 'exhibitions of idea art can consist only of their catalogues'.¹⁰⁵

In Malraux's imaginary museum, the collection of artefacts is unlimited, and each addition enables a relational modification independent of historical chronology, based on subjectively perceived connections. This museum also changes the present into the past.¹⁰⁶ Maurice Merleau-Ponty drew on the idea of the silent voiceless communication produced by the artefacts in Malraux's

¹⁰¹ Malraux "Chapter I." *Museum Without Walls*, (pp. 13-32), p.15.

¹⁰² Malraux *Museum Without Walls*, p. 15.

¹⁰³ Harald Szeeman, Kunsthalle Bern, March-April 1969 and Charles Harrison ICA September 1969. Keith Sonnier said the phrase 'Live in your head' was his originally. Unpublished interview transcript, 31/03/05. Szeemann acknowledged this in the catalogue. Sonnier presented the phrase in 557, 087 Seattle, Sept-Oct 1969 exhibition organised by Lippard.

¹⁰⁴ *Art in the Mind* Oberlin College, Allen Memorial Art Museum, Ohio, April 17-May 12 1970, overlaps with artists shown in *When Attitudes Become Form* and *SI*, July/August 1970.

¹⁰⁵ Athena Spear exchanges a copy of the catalogue (out of print in April) for the July/August issue, and declares her admiration of the magazine generally. July/August 1970 file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

¹⁰⁶ Malraux, "Chapter IV." *Museum Without Walls*, (pp. 163-240), p. 234.

museum as unrepresentable, as untranslatable into language. The idea of the silent voice was a tacit but also implicit accumulation of meaning. He noted that: 'art contains better than ideas, matrices of ideas [...] whose meaning we never stop developing.'¹⁰⁷ This was an aspect of 'the voice of silence' that, for Malraux, was unreal because its only representation in language can be in translation, from one form (the visual) to another (the written or spoken). During the symposium chaired by Dan Graham at the time of the 1968 exhibition at Windham College organised by Siegelaub,¹⁰⁸ Robert Barry referred to 'the idea of spanning a space, trying to define the outer limits - somehow bridging the *inbetweenness*.'¹⁰⁹ The fluid concept of inbetweenness surfaces in different contexts at this time – from Malraux's and Merleau-Ponty's discussions to Barthes's designation of the currency of ideas contained in text or in art as the 'inter text [...] is that circulation of anterior or contemporary texts in the artist's head or hand.'¹¹⁰ Others, the present writer included, may call it *Zeitgeist*.

In discussing the problems of exhibition contexts, Siegelaub's comment was that 'in a large sense, everything is situation'.¹¹¹ The situation is literal and metaphorical - where we site ourselves within the broad arena, the exchange of subjectivities and the structural vehicle for the work's existence all converge in the term situation. Siegelaub described how 'The art we're talking about goes from mind to mind as directly as possible.'¹¹² Moreover, 'The art I'm involved with and concerned about has less to do with materiality than ideas and intangible considerations.'¹¹³

¹⁰⁷ Maurice Merleau-Ponty, "Indirect Language and the voices of Silence." *Signs*, (pp. 39-83), p.77.

¹⁰⁸ This exhibition included work by Lawrence Weiner, Robert Barry and Carl Andre and is mentioned in relation to the Kosuth debacle in Chapter 4.

¹⁰⁹ Alberro *Deprivilaging Art: Seth Siegelaub & the Politics of Conceptual Art* PhD 1997 p. 103.

¹¹⁰ Roland Barthes "The Wisdom of Art." *The Responsibility of Forms*, trans Richard Howard, University of California Press, 1991, (pp. 177-94), p. 190.

¹¹¹ Harrison Siegelaub, "On exhibitions and the world at large." *SI*, Vol. 178, p. 202

¹¹² Harrison Siegelaub, "On exhibitions and the world at large." *SI*, Vol. 178, p. 202

¹¹³ Seth Siegelaub interviewed by Patricia Norvell, in *Recording Conceptual Art, Early interviews with Barry, Huelbler, Kaltenbach, LeWitt, Morris, Oppenheim, Siegelaub, Smithson, Weiner, (Ed)* Alexander Alberro and Patricia Norvell, Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of California Press 2001, (pp. 31-55), p. 32. The gap of 30 years between the interview and its publication is significant. Patricia Norvell conducted a series of interviews with the protagonists of new art practices in New York in 1969 for her MA thesis at Hunter College, New York, under the direction of her tutor Robert Morris. Norvell was committed to the project as Oral History and for this reason reluctant to publish transcripts, other than a few excerpts that were included in Lucy R Lippard's *Six years: The dematerialisation of the art object from 1966 to 1972*. Norvell, "Preface." pp. xiii-xv. The interviews

An editorial structure can be considered as less to do with materiality and more to do with ideas. Editorial strategies of invisibility and this includes Townsend's withdrawal, and his conceit of apparent indifference can be connected at least with an idea of the work Siegelaub was talking about; though clearly, with Siegelaub's projects, there is an object in the form of documentation, whereas, with the editor, the object is the magazine. In the July/August issue, the co-existence of ideas in art practice, strategies of art practice and their phenomenal form through the works on show and the manner in which they are shown all converge.

In this, *intangible* situations become manifestly phenomenal, where structural palimpsests depict non-visible systems. The present author is using the term palimpsest to emphasize the process whereby early traces are still visible through the additional layering and in the magazine exhibition the layers relate to each other, in proper meaning of the word, the overlayering does not relate to the traces that might be visible underneath. In Siegelaub's issue, there are two such palimpsests – Jan Dibbets's map in Hans Strelow's section and Lippard's 'round robin' scheme. Both cross the threshold from ideality, at the edge of non-existence, to the printed encounter. In an interview in 1969, Barry described his work's propositional status as on the edge of non-existence, to assert that '[...] if it exists, it exists right at the edge of non-existence, which is sort of the nature of the piece.'¹¹⁴ Thereafter, he concerned himself with the location of oneself, the body in the world as a phenomenal realisation of the Heideggerian being in the work, through reading Merleau-Ponty. Barry speaks of the attempt to define limits and the definition of this search for finitude in the limits of existence 'include transmitting ideas through telepathy, transmitting ideas from one mind to another'¹¹⁵ for instance in *Telepathic piece 1969* 'a series of thoughts that cannot be transmitted either by language or in images'.

The idea of thoughts that cannot be transmitted except telepathically is to be found in Sol LeWitt's "Sentences on Conceptual Art". He writes: 'A work of art

were not published in full until 2001. Their eventual publication concerns visibility, authorial and editorial, specifically the gendered visibility, through the voice of the female interviewer with the male interviewee.

¹¹⁴ Robert Barry interview with Patricia Norvell in *Recording Conceptual Art*, (pp. 86-100,) p. 92.

¹¹⁵ Robert Barry interview in *Recording Conceptual Art*, p. 86.

may be understood as a conductor from the artist's mind to the viewer's. But it may never reach the viewer, or it may never leave the artist's mind.¹¹⁶ It also corresponds with Malraux's idea of silence. The emphasis on understanding is placed on the viewer or the reader and in their encounter. It is up to the beholder to activate the work. And its 'over to you' attitude is like a game with the reader. These elusive proposals perplex thinking. Barry's work attempted to address this ambiguity, for instance, *All the things I know but of which I am not at the moment thinking*, 1969, suggests a well-spring of the possible. Although the sublime was associated with the concerns of Abstract Expressionism and aesthetically linked to formalist criteria, it specifies that which is obliquely transferred onto the idea of the unrepresentable phenomena of experience, the being of the moment. The action, or rather the *process* as action, happens off centre, implied rather than specified in the work itself.

Townsend's strategy for the issue was to hand over the specific space of a number of pages, 48 in the end, to Siegelaub as an *open* commission, without the usual expectations. In turn, Siegelaub passed the situation to those indicated, who, in turn, identified and approached the artists for their particular contributions. Strategies of delegation are clearly delineated and transparent, but, significantly, they mark a shift towards non-hierarchical responsibility, through the issue of control passing to each individual in relation to the group. The groups' subsequent relational reconfiguration within the space of the magazine's regular features indicates its situation, *my summer show, your magazine*,¹¹⁷ as literal and meta-structural.

The idea of curatorial transparency was implicit in Siegelaub's approach to presenting work and it is a subtle echo of the authorial hand's institution that determines work as authentic. When the summer was over, Siegelaub returned to the US, leaving his favourite hat at Peter's house by mistake. In October, Townsend wrote, 'Your hat is a constant hung reminder of your head'.¹¹⁸ A few

¹¹⁶ Sol LeWitt, "Sentences on Conceptual Art", *0 to 9*, Number Five, January 1969, (SL) Ugly Duckling Presse, 2006.

¹¹⁷ Siegelaub letter to Townsend, 20/5/69, S correspondence file to 1972, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

¹¹⁸ Townsend letter to Siegelaub 5/10/70, S correspondence file to 1972, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

weeks later, Siegelaub wrote to tell Peter: 'It is with much pleasure and pride that I herein announce the fact that I have received the check for my services'. He took the opportunity to add that he was 'no longer directly involved in the Art world',¹¹⁹ but nonetheless he hoped to see Townsend soon 'and perhaps discuss what is going on in my perverse head. To say nothing about yours.'¹²⁰

¹¹⁹ Siegelaub letter to Townsend 28/10/70, S correspondence file to 1972, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

¹²⁰ Siegelaub letter to Townsend 28/10/70, S correspondence file to 1972, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

Chapter 6

Lucy Lippard and *SI*

This chapter draws attention to the contribution to *SI* of Lucy Lippard. The discussion focuses in particular on the transposition of her exhibition *Groups*, shown at the School of Visual Arts (SVA), New York, to the magazine. It aims to build a broader picture of the multiple currents and interconnections obtaining at the same time as events introduced in Chapters 3 and 4. Lippard's involvement in Siegelaub's special issue of July/August 1970 was considered in the previous chapter and her account of the actions and demands of the Art Workers' Coalition (AWC) will be considered in Chapter 7, making this one shorter than other chapters. The discussion draws on the magazine archive, published issues, Harrison's papers, Lippard's exhibition publications, the present author's correspondence and interviews, as well as other retrospective accounts.

In 1969 Lucy Lippard was at the centre of new art practices in New York. She had incredible energy for organising exhibitions and writing articles, and she had a wide circle of friends and collaborators in the US, South America and Europe. In February 1968, she and John Chandler, art critic, wrote an article, entitled 'The Dematerialisation of Art', which was published in *Art International*. In this, they sought to identify characteristics shared between Fluxus, Pop, Minimal and Conceptual Art, as manifested in the Anglo-American art world.¹ Lippard coined the neologism 'dematerialisation' in a bid to identify the common thread. Because Townsend kept abreast of what was happening in the other mainstream art magazines, including *ArtForum*, *Arts* and *Art International*, and acted on recommendations from his assistants, the article came to his attention. At this time, Lippard and Siegelaub were living together in her loft on Prince Street in SoHo, and Townsend was keen to establish contact.

During September 1969, Townsend went on a short trip to New York to consolidate discussions with artists and other contributors and generally to be

¹ Chandler John and Lucy Lippard, "The Dematerialisation of Art." *Art International*, Vol. 12, No.2, 1968, pp. 31-36.

seen about town. Extending a social network was his preferred business strategy. During this visit, he arranged to meet Siegelaub, about whose innovative exhibitions ventures he had read (as observed in the previous chapter, Ashton reviewed his *January 5 – 31* in the March 1969 issue of *SI*). Siegelaub had contacted Townsend with his proposal for using an issue of the magazine as an exhibition in itself, which was discussed in the previous chapter.

Lippard was interested in the correlation between structure and writing strategies and how these could be effectively unified and experimented with, as shown in '10 Structurists in 20 Paragraphs', the essay she wrote for the *Minimal Art* exhibition held at the Gemeentemuseum (referred to in Chapter 3). Lippard experimented with the idea of a novel based on incremental differences between perceptual relations. The result was the book *I See/You Mean*, published in 1979.² She subsequently described it as 'boring reading'.³ She was also experimenting with 'abstract conceptual fiction [...] and tried alternating pictorial and verbal paragraphs in a narrative'.⁴

For Lippard, writing served different functions; it could even be a readymade. The height of her experimentation with the readymade was her essay in the catalogue for the Duchamp exhibition at MoMA.⁵ She presented a collaged text, applying a system of random selection from a dictionary. The point was to select readymade words.⁶ Kynaston McShine commissioned her to write an essay for the catalogue and, to Lippard's surprise, he accepted the result. She later reflected that it 'was remarkable what we got away with then'.⁷

At the time of Townsend's meeting with her at her loft in SoHo, Lippard was interested in finding a way of presenting time-based narrative art via text and

² Lucy R Lippard, *I See/You Mean*, Los Angeles: Chrysalis Books, 1979.

³ Lippard email to present author, April 2006, Melvin papers, London.

⁴ Lucy R Lippard, "Escape Attempts." *Six Years: The dematerialization of the art object from 1966-1972: a cross reference book of information on some esthetic boundaries* [...] (pp. vii-xxii), p. x.

⁵ MoMA Duchamp exhibition 1973 – delayed due to PASTAMOMA strike – the situation was first covered Jeannie Wieggenbach, "PASTAMOMA or the strike bound Modern" in *SI*, Vol. 182, No. 938, November 1971 and subsequently by providing regular news updates for the magazine.

⁶ Lucy R Lippard, unpublished interview transcript, 9/10/08, Melvin papers, London.

⁷ Lucy R Lippard, "Escape Attempts." *Six Years: The dematerialization of the art object*, p. x. Lippard's comment was made to the present author, unpublished interview transcript, 9/10/08, Melvin papers, London.

image.⁸ She wanted writing to be a notational record of the decision-making processes involved in artistic projects. The written outcome would, in effect, provide a parallel documentation. This showed how the structure of writing evolved through a schematic net of interwoven thoughts, inextricably bound to the final outcome. Lippard's textual projects were energetic and experimental; most importantly, they were also low cost and inclusive rather than elitist.

Describing her approach in 2006 to the present author, Lippard remarked that she had regarded some of these projects as throwaway and ephemeral, and it was only afterwards, when considered retrospectively, that they took on a different significance.⁹ The *Groups* exhibition, which took place at the SVA in October 1969 – and the magazine version of the exhibition, which was published in *SI* in March 1970 – was a case in point, and will be elaborated on here. If the exhibition had not been published, neither it nor the circumstances leading to it would be known.

For Lippard and others experimenting with representations of unfolding sequences of simultaneous events, Walter Benjamin's ideas on history as parallel temporalities resonated. In his essay, 'Theses on the Philosophy of History', Benjamin liberated the notion of historical time from the past, as a separate, discontinuous event, and situates it clearly in the present.¹⁰ Benjamin wrote '[h]istory is the subject of a structure whose site is not homogenous empty time but time filled by the presence of the now.'¹¹ Lippard described how her ideal for a project at that time was to devise a system that would transparently present all the connections and interconnections between the circle of artists with which she associated – from the streets and routes between studios and homes to the ideas being explored and discussed.¹²

While Townsend was in New York, Lippard floated the idea of restaging an exhibition in the magazine in a way that would extend its context, thereby

⁸ Townsend recalled meeting Lippard in SoHo with Siegelaub, Melvin notebook 2002, Melvin papers, London.

⁹ Lippard email to present author, April 2006, Melvin papers, London.

¹⁰ Walter Benjamin, "Theses on the Philosophy of History." *Illuminations*, London, Fontana Press, 1992, pp. 245-55.

¹¹ Benjamin, "Theses on History." *Illuminations*, pp. 252-3.

¹² Lucy R Lippard, unpublished interview transcript, 9/10/08, Melvin papers, London.

opening up the idea of a venue not tied to a particular geographical location. Siegelaub had produced catalogue exhibitions in this way, when the publication was the exhibition, one was the March 1969 calendar exhibition and another was his July/August/September 1969 exhibition which also only existed in publication form. However, since they were living together at the time it is not unreasonable to speculate that these ideas were a topic of discussion. In any case, Lippard was transforming the exhibition's form from a physical location to the magazine's pages, and it is the first time a mainstream art magazine performed this action. Lippard recalls that, since Townsend was the only magazine editor who was interested in the idea, she 'did not even bother to suggest it to anyone else'.¹³ Commissioning her contribution, Townsend agreed with Lippard that it would appear some time in the spring of 1970. In the event, Townsend became seriously ill in December 1969 and was unable to return to the office fully until February 1970, which meant that Harrison was responsible for day-to-day decision-making to ensure publication of the first three issues of 1970.

To turn again to Townsend's increasing interest in the discussion and presentation of 'dematerialised' practices, in *SI* May 1968, Willoughby Sharp's essay, 'Air Art', cast art's position as necessarily ephemeral;¹⁴ Cyril Barrett addressed spectator participation in Lygia Clark's work in *SI* February 1967;¹⁵ in *SI* July 1966, Dore Ashton wrote on the anti-compositional attitude in sculpture.¹⁶ These texts destabilised the distinctions between art, its creator and its beholder, to generate a huge amount of correspondence and refutations. The arena was prepared for a lively dialogue between artists and readers of different points of view. The idea of views and the act of viewing becomes critical in modes of thinking about art, art as thinking and art as procedural act. As a concept, the word 'view' plays on its fluidity as a part of speech, existing

¹³ Lucy R Lippard, unpublished interview transcript, 9/10/08, Melvin papers, London.

¹⁴ Willoughby Sharp, "Air Art." *SI*, Vol. 175, No. 900, pp. 262-3.

¹⁵ Cyril Barrett, "Lygia Clark and spectator participation." *SI*, Vol. 173, No. 886, pp. 84-9.

¹⁶ Dore Ashton, "The anti-compositional attitude in sculpture." *SI*, Vol. 172, No. 879, pp. 44-47. (This list is simply indicative, it could be reconfigured in many ways.)

simultaneously as a noun or a verb, to say nothing of its meanings as a mental attitude or position and a vista.¹⁷

Groups exhibition, New York, November 1969

From her loft in Prince Street, Lippard ran seminars on writing under the auspices of SVA. Most of the students who attended were painters. Exasperated by the fact that they could not write, she set up strategies to encourage them to adopt a freer approach.¹⁸ These included passing wrapped up objects between them and considering objects that could only be seen in peripheral vision. Lippard would then have the students write careful descriptions of the objects they had perceived.¹⁹ The idea for the *Groups* exhibition in the gallery at the SVA (3-20 November 1969) evolved from this work.²⁰

The exhibition was the result of a letter Lippard sent to about 30 artists in October 1969. This contained a series of instructions relating to the procedure of making an artwork. Extracts from the instructions Lippard sent were published in *SI* in March 1970 as follows:

- A. Photograph a group of five or more people in the same place, and approximately the same positions in relation to each other, once a day for a week. (No posing or gimmicks, no diversion from the conventional group photo taken for school year books [...])
- B. Develop the photographs [...] note each day [...] what people are wearing so [...] that when the prints come back the chronological order can be established. Prints should be ordinary snapshot size.
- C. Describe each photograph in writing, in *detail*. Simply say what is observed, but look closely. Type up the descriptions separately. Date each text and [...] photograph.

¹⁷ Many artists made direct puns on the definition of viewing at this time. Marcel Broodthaers used the word view for his cover design of *Interfunktionen*, No. 11, Cologne Germany, 1974.

¹⁸ Lippard, unpublished interview transcript, 9/10/08, Melvin papers, London.

¹⁹ Lippard, unpublished interview transcript, 9/10/08, Melvin papers, London.

²⁰ Lippard, unpublished interview transcript, 9/10/08, Melvin papers, London.

D. The photographs will be hung in a single horizontal line in one of the following orders (your choice):

1. Pictures with their texts below them in chronological order.
2. Pictures in chronological order, but texts scrambled, either randomly or systematically (your own system).
3. Texts in chronological order, but pictures scrambled.
4. Scramble the whole thing by system or at random (still noting dates of each text and photo) so that the time sequence is entirely broken, 'illustration' and description diverge at times, coincide at times.²¹

Lippard received twenty-four replies to her letter, and their interpretations of her instructions constituted the SVA exhibition.²² The participating artists were all local and New York-based with the exception of Iain Baxter who lived in Vancouver: **Robert Barry, N.E. Thing Co. (Iain Baxter), Mel Bochner, Jon Borofsky, Martin Bressler, Frazier Dougherty, Stylianos Gianakos, Gloria Greenberg, Alex Hay, Douglas Huebler, Robert Huot, Alex Katz, Christine Kozlov, June Leaf, Leslie Miller, Francis Moyer, Henry Pearson, Adrian Piper, Alejandre Puente, Peter Robbins, Peter Tangen, Joyce Weiland, Lawrence Weiner, Kestus Zapkus.**²³

At the outset, Lippard anticipated that the artists' projects would look broadly similar. She favoured the use of the black-and-white snapshots for their anonymity and uniformity. Her interest in 'low energy', undifferentiated images stemmed from her writing on Reinhardt and an increased commitment to 'dematerialised' processes. Emphasis on the informational possibilities characteristic of the photographic document intensified her engagement with the snapshot, low-cost format of these images. Her interest in the documentary possibilities of this type of photography came to fruition although she would comment to Townsend, as will be seen shortly, that her expectations on the

²¹ Lippard, "Groups." *SI*, Vol. 179, No. 920, p. 93.

²² There is no record of those who were sent a letter and did not receive it, or chose not to respond, Lippard unpublished interview transcript, 9/10/08, Melvin papers, London.

²³ Bold type indicates those artists whose work was also included in the magazine version of the exhibition.

similarity of outcomes were confounded and the work produced by each artist was distinctly different.²⁴

The artists' projects

Lippard herself followed artist's instructions for the exhibition she organised at the Seattle Art Museum, *557, 087*. Robert Smithson had liked the way she executed his instructions for the Seattle show, which were to take 'four hundred square snapshots of horizons, empty, plain, vacant, common, vacuous, ordinary, dull, level beaches, unoccupied uninhabited deserted, scanty lots, houseless, typical, average, void, sandbars, remote lakes, distant etc.'²⁵ She was interested in seeing how transferable the instructions were for the artist's approaches. Three will be described below to show the variety.

N.E. Thing Co. (Iain Baxter) showed seven photographs of children from a nearby primary school standing in the playing fields in a line, by school year in order of height, the line 'accentuates Classical renaissance perspective.'²⁶ During the seven days the position of the photographer changed, that of the children remained the same, showing different perspective aspects of the line of children. In one a dog came into the frame. Adrian Piper's group stood in the same room each day in the same order, their clothes, mood and expressions changed. The text documentation she provided described the areas of each photograph in scales between black and white, off-white, light grey, dark grey, black, and noted the different proportionate configurations in each photograph, for instance, 'dark gray: approximately 3/4 sq.' randomly distributed over top surface in 9 irregular shapes'.²⁷

In Douglas Huebler's group a third party held up a sign with two contrasting words. The photographs taken 'literally five seconds after the words were

²⁴ Lippard letter to Townsend, 1/1/70, March 1970 file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

²⁵ Smithson, *557, 087* index card catalogue. Lippard installed the exhibition following artists' instructions which she requested to be sent to her on index cards. She compiled the catalogue from index cards. Lippard in 'Two', *SI*, Vol. 186, No. 959, p. 162, noted that it was more difficult than anticipated to follow Smithson's instructions 'especially as there was nowhere flat.'

²⁶ Iain Baxter, March 1970 file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

²⁷ Adrian Piper, March 1970 file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

flashed' when the group was told to think 'of nothing other than one of the two words [...] but in no way allow that thought to be expressed on his or her face.'²⁸ During the exhibition, Huebler invited viewers to identify the word combination they thought was the one that had been flashed. The compiled data was included in the magazine exhibition. His summary stated that 'a consensus of all judgements so charted will be accepted as representing the truth as there is no other way of determining it'. He noted the inevitability of communicative ambiguity: 'it is of course a matter of private speculation as to which word in the set was fixed in the mind of any one person at any one time.'²⁹ Huebler's statement adds a sense of delayed reaction, between the effect of the word combination on the individuals and then by the viewer who completes the work, first drawing their own conclusion and then noting it on the sheet.

The *SI* Groups exhibition project, March 1970

Lippard remarked to Townsend in her letter enclosing the material for the magazine exhibition that 'the show was a great surprise to me because my preconceptions were totally unjustified'.³⁰ Nonetheless, she was pleased with the results and 'the enthused cooperation from the kids in continuing the experiments in word and image description.' In her letter she enclosed specific layout directions for the magazine version of the exhibition, and stated that the format must be horizontal and that the first page should include the original instructions sent to the artists. The horizontal format meant that readers would be compelled to turn the magazine through ninety degrees to view it. This is the one of a few instances in Townsend's editorship that the spatial relationship departed from customary reading.³¹ Because the magazine did not have the space to include everything shown at SVA, Lippard devised a layout that ran

²⁸ Douglas Huebler, March 1970 file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

²⁹ Huebler, March 1970 file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

³⁰ Lippard letter to Townsend 1/1/70, March 1970 file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

³¹ In December *SI* 1969, Rauschenberg's cover was an image taken from his suite of prints, *Stoned Moon*, and he contributed a 'collage comment' in the print supplement. The design assumes the reader-viewer will turn the magazine to read the text. His instructions were easy to follow. Rauschenberg, cover design and "collage comment." *SI*, Vol. 178, No. 917, December 1969, pp. 246-247.

over seven pages, like the days of the week, corresponding to the project's timeframe. (Figures 6.83, 6.84, 6.85, 6.86, 6.87, 6.88 and 6.89.)

The first page of the magazine exhibition printed Lippard's instructions and below these in smaller type, was her account and description of the process. Lippard reported that '[t]hose reproduced in the magazine represent a fair cross-section of the work'.³² She had chosen the participants 'almost at random', based on a desire that the work would 'span a broad range of current styles [...] sculptors, so-called conceptual artists, art students [...] a figure painter'.³³ Lippard's published reflections described the project as 'unnecessarily complicated and difficult to execute'.³⁴ She 'had insisted on groups of people because of personal preoccupations [...] and ...wondered [whether] expressions [...on faces might] produce an almost subliminal plot'.³⁵ She declared her interest to lie 'in the area of individual experiences and the occasional overlappings that occur between them', finding 'raw data far more interesting than any conclusions [...] [t]he show was provoked by [...] curiosity and commitment to the relationship between words and physical (sensory, visual) experience, the location of distinctions between the verbal and the visual "message"'.³⁶

In Lippard's introductory statement for the magazine version of the exhibition she wrote that: 'Groups was less an art show than a visual-verbal experiment dealing with an imposed experience [...] it is transferable into other media, such as this magazine'.³⁷ Deviating from the standard organisational approach, it presents the plan and conclusion together, with both as intrinsic to the project. The scheme is both present in the layout and an aid to navigation through the pages of the magazine exhibition. Lippard's description of what happened in the SVA exhibition, which was included in her introductory page for the magazine exhibition, brings in self-reflection on how the project needed modification as it evolved. Reflection is part of the process.

³² Lippard, "Groups." *SI*, Vol. 179, No. 920, p. 93.

³³ Lippard, "Groups." *SI*, Vol. 179, No. 920, p. 93.

³⁴ Lippard, "Groups." *SI*, Vol. 179, No. 920, p. 93.

³⁵ Lippard, "Groups." *SI*, Vol. 179, No. 920, p. 93.

³⁶ Lippard, "Groups." *SI*, Vol. 179, No. 920, p. 93.

³⁷ Lippard, "Groups." *SI*, Vol. 179, No. 920, p. 93.

Lippard's focus on the ellipses or misunderstandings caused by the communication slippage between linguistic intention and visual sign opened a zone of ambiguity which was identifiable through her schemata. Huebler's contribution, in particular, resonated with parallels to Lippard's interests. It compressed timeframes and sets up correspondences between the word-sign, the photographs and the documentation. There was a shared humour, which brings lightness to the project.

It is important to emphasise how crucial transparency of intention was to the execution and documentation of the project. When *Groups* was presented at the SVA gallery, it showed how it was possible to engender a loose, open variety of responses from a set of banal instructions that were often ignored. This created a relationship between different kinds of descriptive modes, whereby both the photographic descriptor and the textual account involve seeing. However, although Lippard was inclusive in her attitude to art practices and, like Siegelaub, possessed a desire for transparency of method, the presentation of the instructions was a strategy Lippard adopted from Siegelaub.³⁸ Lippard was much too pragmatic to be concerned about the source of an idea; if it worked she would use it. This attitude she and Siegelaub shared. She described him as unencumbered intellectually.³⁹

Lippard and Siegelaub were working together on the *557, 087*, Seattle 1969 and *955, 000*, Vancouver 1970 exhibitions. Although these were Lippard's projects, Siegelaub's role was to distribute the catalogue and he also assisted with installing the work. In the Vancouver catalogue Lippard described the freedom of art's exchange potential and wrote that '[a]rt intended as pure experience doesn't exist until someone experiences it, defying ownership, reproduction, sameness. Intangible art could break down the artificial imposition of "culture" and provide a broader audience for a tangible, object art.'⁴⁰

³⁸ Chapter 5 referred to Siegelaub's *One Month*, calendar exhibition which showed the list of invited artists as well as the instructions.

³⁹ Lippard email to present author, 30/12/08, Melvin papers, London.

⁴⁰ Lippard, "Introduction." *955,000*, Vancouver Art Gallery, January 13–February 8 1970, Melvin collection, London.

Summer 1970

The magazine layout was not how Lippard had envisaged it; reproductions were small and the texts so tiny that they could not be read. The magazine's reader-viewer would have been hard pressed to see the contents of the individual contributions and most likely would have thought it was Lippard's intention to give an impression of the SVA exhibition rather than relocation, in which case it was an interesting failure. From April and throughout the summer of 1970, Lippard stayed in Jean Clay's house in Carboneras, Spain. As soon as she received her copy of *SI*'s March issue, she wrote to Harrison, saying:

one thing I want to get over with is the bloody Studio/Groups layout which I hate. I also hate to join your American complaint club in which I suspect the company would black ball me [...] I don't have a carbon of my letter to you/Peter but what did I ever do to make you think you shouldn't set the stuff in type [...] what especially happened to the Huebler page with all that empty space while everything else is illegible? And what happened to Bob Barry's one line of immortal text even if he did borrow it from Wittgenstein? [...] I am very bitchy about magazine layouts because I have a clear picture in my mind about how everything should look (or at least read) and I don't seem to be able to communicate that picture no matter how verbal I get or feel because it's constantly fucked up.⁴¹

In consulting Barbara Reise's archive we find that Barry was angered on Lippard's behalf by the layout of Lippard's *Groups* in the magazine. After hearing from Lippard about the presentation, who was especially concerned that his line of text had been omitted, he wrote to Reise to ask: 'who fucked up Lucy's SVA "Groups" show in SI?'⁴² During this correspondence, he let it slip that '[Lippard] was quite pissed off by the unreadable presentation and the omission

⁴¹ Lippard letter to Charles and Sandra Harrison, 19/4/70, Charles Harrison papers, (1970s-2000s), TGA 200868, London.

⁴² Robert Barry letter to Reise, 11/5/70, Robert Barry file, Barbara Reise papers, TGA 786/5/2/13, London.

of his text which included a line from Wittgenstein.⁴³ This refers to Barry's use of 'what can be shown cannot be said.'⁴⁴ He also told Reise, in confidence, that he would not have complained to Lippard because he had fulfilled her instructions to supply text, but he considered that the work was better without it, and, besides, he rarely presented work in the same way twice.⁴⁵ However, the editorial file for March 1970 includes Barry's work for *Groups*, which was a reproduction of a seventeenth-century painting in the manner of Franz Hals. The descriptive text was included: 'photo #1 – A photograph of a photograph of a painting of a group of people' then the sequence, 'photo #2 – same as #1, photo 3# - same as 2#' and so on but the Wittgenstein quotation was sent as typescript with the images but not printed.⁴⁶ The point of recounting this is to show that Lippard followed through her project and expressed her annoyance not only to the magazine's editorial office but to Robert Barry, by apologising that his work was not represented as she thought it should have been. However despite Lippard's irritation at her instructions not being followed by the editorial office, the artist in this case was not only ambivalent about the change to his work, but relieved.

While the various shortcomings in reproduction caused a flurry of correspondences between Lippard and Harrison and Robert Barry and Reise, Townsend would later regard the whole issue as exemplary of his policy for three reasons: Lippard's *Groups*, Richard Long's contributions (his cover photograph and artist's pages, *Nineteen Stills*) and Daniel Buren's statement, 'Beware' (translated into English by the editorial office).⁴⁷

A month or so after her initial letter, Lippard wrote again to Harrison wondering whether he might be in Turin for Celant's show, *Conceptual Art, Arte*

⁴³ Robert Barry letter to Reise, 11/5/70, Robert Barry file, Barbara Reise papers, TGA 786/5/2/13, London.

⁴⁴ Robert Barry, March 1970 file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

⁴⁵ Robert Barry letter to Reise, 11/5/70, Robert Barry file, Barbara Reise papers, TGA 786/5/2/13, London.

⁴⁶ Robert Barry, March 1970 file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

⁴⁷ Townsend in conversation with present author, Melvin notebook 1996, Melvin papers London. Harrison also regarded this issue, he sent a copy of it to Athena Spear in response to her press release and details for the *Art in the Mind* exhibition at Oberlin College, Ohio. Harrison took the opportunity to alert Spear to the work of Burgin and McLean, (consequently she included them in the exhibition) letter dated 13/2/70. March file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

Povera, Land Art,⁴⁸ to which she had contributed an index, cross-referencing artists' names, ideas and intentions to create a web of connections. This was an effective strategy, although eclectic in realisation, which provided an openness allowing the reader to continue the experiment under 'A', 'APG; insertion of interruptive factor (artist) into existing conventions (business)', 'Ad, see Kaltenbach, Kosuth, Wilson' then under 'K', 'Kaltenbach, see the world itself', Wilson crops up under 'E', 'errata' along with an extended group that includes 'Acconci, Barthelme, Burgy, Huot, Kozlov, Louw, McLean, Perreault and Piper'.⁴⁹ In her note to Harrison, Lippard described the index as 'a miserable little contribution'.⁵⁰ However, it may be regarded as consistent with her intention to make sense, from the inside, of the diverse intentions of the avant-garde community, by making connections between themes, ideas and people. It literally set out communication lines and links and the points of intersection and exchange through deflection and inferred connections to show how her mind worked. Since Siegelaub was then staying in London, working on his 'summer exhibition' for *SI* July/August 1970 (discussed in Chapter 5), Lippard remarked familiarly, 'has Seth has driven you up the walls yet?' She also commented on the debacle following *SI*'s publication of Kosuth's article, 'Art after Philosophy', that it was 'his paranoia thing that [she] can't take and he probably doesn't do that with [Harrison] as he knows [Harrison] like[s] him. Most people, he'd be surprised to hear, do like him and would just as soon ignore the machinations.'⁵¹

After the publication of *Groups*, Lippard proposed to Townsend that she undertake an analysis of the work and intentions in the exhibition, *Idea Structures*, organised by Harrison at Camden Arts Centre, London (24 June-19 July 1970). Lippard thought the subject of Conceptual Art needed addressing clearly in the pages of *SI*, and this exhibition provided a good opportunity to do so.⁵² It was an exhibition that Nicholas Serota later described as 'important for

⁴⁸ Lippard letter to Harrison, 29/5/70, Charles Harrison papers, (1970s-2000s), TGA 200868, London.

⁴⁹ Lippard, "index." *Conceptual Art, Arte Povera, Land Art*, Ex Cat, Galleria Civica d'Arte Moderna, 1970 unpaginated.

⁵⁰ Lippard letter to Harrison, 29/5/70, Charles Harrison papers, (1970s-2000s), TGA 200868, London.

⁵¹ Lippard letter to Harrison, 29/5/70, Charles Harrison papers, (1970s-2000s), TGA 200868, London.

⁵² The artists exhibiting were Keith Arnatt, Victor Burgin, Ed Herring, Joseph Kosuth, Terry Atkinson, Michael Baldwin, David Bainbridge and Harold Hurrell.

reasons I couldn't entirely understand because it was not a good-looking show'.⁵³ While the exhibition may not have been aesthetically pleasing, the catalogue – designed by Malcolm Lauder and published by MacKays – was well-presented and beautiful; its economic design is consistent with the exhibition's emphasis on the pure possibility of ideas, rather than the technical means with which to realise their embodied content.

When Lippard's article arrived in the editorial office, it was the length of a feature rather than the review that Townsend had anticipated. Combined with the fact that several of the artists as well as Lippard herself, were contributing to Siegelaub's July/August exhibition issue, Townsend decided against publishing her article. Harrison apologised to her, and explained that Townsend 'was understandably chary about an "in group" situation to appear to be developing within the pages of *SI*'.⁵⁴ Lippard was irritated, and responded to Harrison: 'What have we done to deserve our fuck ups? [...] I understand the schedules part of it but am not sympathetic to the "in group" aspect. Studio hasn't had much and no general article on so called 'conceptual art' except Joseph's things of which I feel no part of an in group.'⁵⁵ The article was not published because, on this occasion, Harrison was unable to convince Townsend of its relevance to the broader discussions on Conceptual Art practices. This did not affect her continuing respect for Townsend and her on-going friendship with Harrison. She had described her attitude as 'omnivorousness' in discussion with him. Harrison used the term in a letter he sent to her, slightly wistfully recognising that he did not have her flexible and inclusive approach to art practices.⁵⁶

⁵³ Sir Nicholas Serota, unpublished interview transcript, 24/6/08, Melvin papers, London.

⁵⁴ Harrison letter to Lippard, 16/6/70, July/August 1970 file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial files, TGA 20028, London.

⁵⁵ Lippard letter to Harrison, 19/8/70, Charles Harrison papers, (1970s-2000s), TGA 200868, London.

⁵⁶ Harrison letter to Lippard, refers to what he described as her omnivorousness, 3/2/71, Charles Harrison papers, (1970s-2000s), TGA 200868, London.

The *Information* exhibition at MoMA, 1970

Another project under way in the summer of 1970 and of critical interest to the *SI* editorial office was *Information* in New York. It was the first large-scale exhibition of Conceptual Art in a US museum. Curated by Kynaston McShine, the exhibition took place at MoMA, from 2 July-20 September 1970. It was the first exhibition in the US to include artists from Argentina, Brazil, Canada, the US and Europe. Perhaps surprisingly, given the breadth of McShine's inclusions and that the press release announced that there were '150 artists from 15 countries',⁵⁷ there was no work from eastern Europe. McShine noted that much of the work selected for the exhibition may be familiar in Europe but not in the US. When the exhibition opened, Lippard told Harrison that it was 'stirring great controversy and a lot of people hate it but I like its ambience very much. It provides a diametric counterpart to your [*Idea Structures*] show and the two fuel my schizophrenia nicely'.⁵⁸

The catalogue provided a reading list, a bibliography and a list of artists' films, as well as a page or two on each exhibiting artist. Keith Arnatt's statement clearly indicated the theoretical intentions held by many artists: 'The content of my work is the strategy employed to ensure that there is no content other than the strategy.'⁵⁹ The other British artists included were Art & Language, Terry Atkinson, Michael Baldwin, David Bainbridge, Victor Burgin, Barry Flanagan, Hamish Fulton, Gilbert & George, John Latham, Richard Long and Bruce McLean.

McShine and Lippard first worked together in the library at MoMA in 1958-9 and then on the exhibition, *Primary Structures: Younger American and British Sculptors*, at the Jewish Museum, New York (27 April-12 June 1966). Lippard contributed an essay to the *Information* exhibition catalogue. It was an experimental essay entitled 'absentee information and or criticism'⁶⁰ It was 'in

⁵⁷ MoMA press release, 2/7/70, November 1970 file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

⁵⁸ Lippard letter to Harrison, 19/8/70, Charles Harrison papers, (1970s-2000s), TGA 200868, London.

⁵⁹ Arnatt, *Information*, (Exhibition Catalogue), New York, MoMA 1970, p. 8.

⁶⁰ Lippard, "Absentee information and or criticism." *Information*, (Exhibition Catalogue), New York, MoMA 1970, (pp. 74-81), p. 74.

lieu of an Index to the INFORMATION [sic] catalogue that did not arrive on time.⁶¹ She devised a numerical system with which visitors could navigate the gallery card catalogue and the art index entries; although it would require a substantial amount of patience on the part of the gallery-goer to enact, it was intended as an active performance of an index.⁶² Lippard's text, for the MoMA catalogue, concluded with two statements of intent: one regarding Vietnam; the other the AWC. In the first of these, she asked the 'American artists in the exhibition to sign a letter that states the necessity to go AWOL from the unconstitutional war in Vietnam and Cambodia.'⁶³ In the second she requests for an 'insert' to be made in the *Information* catalogue, detailing 'all available information on any extant proposed reforms regarding artists' rights, such as rental fees, contracts, profit-sharing, artists' control over works sold, shown etc.'⁶⁴ Lippard was included in the list of artists, and McShine wrote in the acknowledgements that he especially wished 'to acknowledge the "presence" in this book of the "critic" Lucy R. Lippard, who also made available to me her "information" on so many of the people represented here.'⁶⁵ This suggests that Lippard's role was much greater than simply a contributor to the catalogue and the present author considers that McShine's designation was appropriate.

At the same time, Lippard was commissioned by Townsend to write an article on the Art Workers Coalition (AWC), a protest group in which she was a principal activist. While many of members of the AWC were taking part in *Information* as individuals, the group was collectively engaged in a series of tactical political activities, a brief overview of which will be provided here, with a more comprehensive treatment given in Chapter 7, in relation to the movement's contextualisation in *SI*'s November 1970 issue.

In January 1969, a group of artists and critics who sought to redress the power relationship between the museum as an institution, specifically MoMA but also the Metropolitan Museum of Art, came together to apply pressure on the boards of trustees to incorporate a series of management changes. Their

⁶¹ Lippard, *Information*, (Exhibition Catalogue), New York, MoMA 1970, (pp. 74-81), p. 74.

⁶² Lippard, *Information*, (Exhibition Catalogue), New York, MoMA 1970, pp. 74-81.

⁶³ Lippard, *Information*, (Exhibition Catalogue), New York, p. 81.

⁶⁴ Lippard, *Information*, (Exhibition Catalogue), New York, p. 81.

⁶⁵ McShine, *Information*, (Exhibition Catalogue), New York, p. 137.

demands included: artists to be represented on museum boards (with a ratio of one third artists, one third patrons and one third museum staff); equal gender and racial representation in exhibitions and purchases; artists retaining control of the way in which their work is presented, whether owned by the museum or not; free admission at all times rather than a token day or evening a week.

Information took place at MoMA while the AWC was sustaining a serious campaign against the museum. Lippard's position might have appeared compromised because she was heavily involved with both the AWC and with the catalogue for the exhibition. However, her situation was by no means unique; most of the US artists who were included in the exhibition were active participants in the AWC.

As has already been seen, *SI* was at the forefront in noting new trends and, when Townsend received an unsolicited article by Les Levine, which reflected the impact of the *Information* exhibition on artists' considerations of their role in society, he decided to commission him.⁶⁶ Levine considered that MoMA's position of power was strengthened by the exhibition, noting that protest became nullified by absorption.⁶⁷ Published in June 1971, Levine's article, 'The Information Fallout', addressed the key theoretical positions arising from the organisational principles of *Information*. It is interesting to note that, although Levine was not listed as one of the contributing artists, he had four films included in the film section and so was writing from the position of an insider.⁶⁸ Crucially, he focused on the shift of emphasis from the individual artist or group onto the curator, noting that 'the style of the show was photographic – while at the same time there was no style. No one stood out: it was clear the only outstanding figure was the curator. The curator in this situation becomes the artist. These people are brought together under the authorship of the curator.

⁶⁶ Levine letter to Townsend, June file 1971, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

⁶⁷ Levine, "The Information Fallout." *SI*, Vol. 181, No. 934, June 1971, (pp. 264-267), p. 266.

⁶⁸ Levine's films were *Critic* (1966), *White Noise* (1967), *The Les Levine Movie* (1968) and *Paint* (1969). The film section reported: This a partial but representative list of films that reflects many of the concerns and attitudes of the artists represented in the exhibition. Most [...] will be shown in the "information machine" during the exhibition a few in the auditorium [...]. *Information*, catalogue MoMA, pp. 193-198.

The curator presents the media with a package'.⁶⁹ For Levine, the curator made an 'artistic break through [...] he has garnered information, made information [it] is a non-hierarchical system of equal support.'⁷⁰ This engendered an egalitarian approach through which the success or failure of artwork became irrelevant, and Levine concluded with the heuristic suggestion that, in the future, the artist would cease to exist.⁷¹

This question of artworks becoming a curatorial medium would resurface in a review by Peter Plagens of Lippard's exhibition, *557, 087*, at Seattle Art Museum, published in *ArtForum* in November 1969. Plagens commented that 'there is a total style to the show, a style so pervasive as to suggest that Lucy Lippard is the artist and her medium is the other artists.'⁷² Reise later commented to Lippard: 'Dammit though you don't like to think of yourself as an 'artist', as a writer/researcher/critic/art historian, you are an artist rather than a commodity maker and you should be treated with respect as such.'⁷³

In interview with the present author in 2008, Siegelaub spoke about the fluidity of the distinctions between artist-critic and curator-artist, describing how, as the hybrid approach became more acceptable, the curator set out to use artwork to demonstrate a thesis. For some, this may present an ethical problem, implying that individual authorship and/or autonomy is subjugated to a total framework. Siegelaub noted that this did not dispense with the question of intellectual property, a legal designation, but drew attention to how its definition needs careful attention.⁷⁴

Townsend relished Lippard's initiatives. He liked her, and admired her commitment to the breadth of art practices and political causes. In May 1973, several years after Lippard's first contribution to *SI*, she proposed a series of numbered columns to Townsend. These would address questions arising from the hermetic approach which 'trade' journals take to writing about art,

⁶⁹ Levine, "The Information Fallout." *SI*, Vol. 181 No. 934, June 1971, (pp. 264-267), p. 266.

⁷⁰ Levine, *SI*, Vol. 181, No. 934, p. 266.

⁷¹ Levine, *SI*, Vol. 181, No. 934, p. 267.

⁷² Plagens, "557, 087." *Artforum*, Vol. 8, No.3, November 1969, pp. 64-67.

⁷³ Reise letter to Lippard, 29/1/71, Barbara Reise archive, TGA 786/4/6, London.

⁷⁴ Siegelaub unpublished interview transcript, 31/10/08, Melvin papers, London.

speculate on the role of criticism and consider gender politics and 'Ethnic Art'.⁷⁵ She told Harrison that she hoped to become 'slipperier with it if Peter would allow it'.⁷⁶ Throughout her series of columns, Lippard sought to establish a critical framework for non-Western practices, to illuminate cultural difference without resorting to the ethnographic. Townsend regarded this as a significant contribution to the magazine.

The first of seven columns, 'One', published *SI* September 1973, was divided into two, separated by three of Lippard's photographs of ruins in New Mexico and two details of rocks, showing their geological formation. The first part formed a series of questions and statements that set out to generate momentum, and it was for the reader to make connections.⁷⁷ Lippard began with the Imagist image of the fallen column to emphasise horizontality and a non-hierarchical position. She asked questions such as: 'has art historically worked itself into a position where it is relatively meaningless to most people, and are artists unable or unwilling to deal with this?' and 'is something more valuable if done first or done most effectively?'⁷⁸ In this article, Lippard concentrated in broad terms the artist's concern for societal relevance as well as a desire for displaying originality.

The second column was a testimony to Robert Smithson who died in July 1973. It was through his work as a writer that Lippard 'was most affected by Smithson, though emulating him was out of the question, [she] envied him his "immersion in the sedimentation of the mind", those "oceanic" pages into which he plunged with such disregard for logic and fact and then emerged unexpectedly with so much meaning'.⁷⁹ She referred to the flow of his words, their physicality, suggesting that, as a writer who made art, he had something to 'tie' his explanations to as a visual writer.⁸⁰

⁷⁵ Lippard letter to Townsend, 12/5/73, L file 1972-4, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial files, TGA 20028, London.

⁷⁶ Lippard letter to Harrison, 6/9/73, TGA 200868, London.

⁷⁷ Lippard, "One." *SI*, Vol. 186, No. 958, September 1973, pp. 102-103.

⁷⁸ Lippard, "One." *SI*, Vol. 186 No. 958, September 1973, pp. 102-103.

⁷⁹ Lippard, "Two." *SI*, Vol. 186, No. 959, September 1973, p. 162.

⁸⁰ Lippard, "Two." *SI*, Vol. 186, No. 959, October 1973, p. 162.

'Three' reflected on artists' interventions in the land through the ages and continued to draw on Robert Smithson's writings about art, landscape and the interrelationships between nature and culture. She referred to *Man in the Landscape* by Paul Shepard a book recommended by Robert Smithson and *A Sense of the Earth* by David Levesen.⁸¹ In 'Four', Lippard considered photography and the snapshot as used by artists.⁸² 'Five' described the actions of the Ramona Parra Brigade – untrained, though skilled, artists who created murals in protest against Pinochet's regime in Chile – before outlining the demands of the striking museum workers at MoMA, both of which were causes she fully backed.⁸³ Her final column for *SI*, 'Seven', described some Native American ceremonies in New Mexico.⁸⁴

'Six', published in February 1974, addressed the position of women's art. It played with male-female voices and uses a ventriloquial model to explore the cliché of logical interrogation, 'the male', 'prick' set against the 'cunt' were the terms Lippard used to polarise the conversation.⁸⁵ It is the 'crazy lady' whose interjections disrupt the unity of the text.⁸⁶ Lippard's conversational tone embraced the way women's art practice was frequently characterised by the artist's gender, and how women artists were using this objectification to critique its claim on, or over, the body. Female experience becomes the subject matter.⁸⁷ Lippard noted that Eva Hesse described 'the female part of her art as its sensitivity and the male part as its strength. Hopefully a year later she would have realised it could all be unified, that strength is female too.'⁸⁸ The occasion of this article in *SI* is remarkable because feminism was not a discourse the office engaged with, and it marks the first instance of feminism as a theoretical position to appear in the pages of the magazine.

A few months before writing her sixth text, in May 1973, Lippard organised an exhibition called *7500*. This was the last of her four 'number' exhibitions,

⁸¹ Lippard, "Three." *SI*, Vol. 186, No. 960, November 1973, p. 202.

⁸² Lippard, "Four." *SI*, Vol. 186, No. 961, December 1973, p. 254.

⁸³ Lippard, "Five." *SI*, Vol. 187, No. 962, January 1974, p. 16.

⁸⁴ Lippard, "Seven." *SI*, Vol. 187, No. 964, March 1974, pp. 15-6.

⁸⁵ Lippard, "Six." *SI*, Vol. 187, No. 963, February 1974, p. 96.

⁸⁶ Lippard, "Six." *SI*, Vol. 187, No. 963, February 1974, p. 96.

⁸⁷ Lippard, "Six." *SI*, Vol. 187, No. 963, February 1974, p. 96.

⁸⁸ Lippard, "Six." *SI*, Vol. 187, No. 963, February 1974, p. 96.

beginning with *557, 087* at Seattle Art Museum in 1969, then *955, 000* at Vancouver Art Gallery in 1970 and *2,972, 453* at Centro de Arte y Comunicación, Buenos Aires, in 1970.⁸⁹ Each exhibition catalogue comprised a set of index cards and included an introductory essay, list of venues and acknowledgements, with one or more card being dedicated to each participating artist. *7500* involved only female artists, and, as Lippard stated in the introductory essay, it was 'an exasperated response to the claim there were no women conceptual artists.'⁹⁰

⁸⁹ The numbers denoted the population of the cities at the time of the exhibition.

⁹⁰ Lippard, *7500* (Exhibition Catalogue) special collections, LON-EAR, Tate Gallery Library, London.

Chapter 7

*'Stop it, man, you're fucking up the vibe'*¹

The Art Workers' Coalition (AWC) provides a rich case study with which to illustrate the *SI* editorial attitude to art and politics. The group were politically motivated and their art practices were conceived against a backdrop of anti-war protests in New York. The actions of the AWC stimulated a critical reappraisal of historical events in the politically-driven movements of Constructivism and Dada. For Townsend, this became a vital conduit for understanding the interconnections of art with politics, allowing historical discussions to be reframed with contemporary relevance. This chapter discusses the ways in which the AWC became a focal point in Townsend's policy, showing how the *SI* editorial office followed news of AWC actions from the beginning, from its formation in January 1969. It considers *SI*'s November 1970 issue in which the importance of the AWC as a model for political action was prominently featured. It also discusses the ways in which Townsend's commitment to stressing the relevance of the AWC and their demands to *SI*'s readers led to the commissioning of a series of articles published in 1970 and 1971. The purpose in describing the following events is to indicate the diversity of groups convened under the umbrella of the AWC, and the variety of activities it coordinated.

The second section of the chapter concentrates on the artist's reserve rights transfer and sales agreement, drawn up by Seth Siegelaub in consultation with the lawyer, Robert Projansky, as a direct consequence of AWC demands. This agreement was featured in *SI* in April 1971, and the cover design featured the agreement's first page.

The final section of this chapter focuses on *SI*'s reporting (in June and July/August 1971) of a debacle surrounding three exhibitions: the removal of Daniel Buren's work from the *Sixth Guggenheim International*, on 10 February 1971; the cancellation of Hans Haacke's solo exhibition at the Solomon R Guggenheim Museum, New York, scheduled to open on 30 April 1971; and the

¹ Harrison, unpublished interview transcript, 28/3/07, Melvin papers, London.

temporary closure of Robert Morris's exhibition at the Tate Gallery, London, in May 1971. These discussions were engendered through the editorial office's conviction about the validity of AWC demands.

The first section refers to photographs of AWC actions, taken by Mehdi Khonsari and Jan van Raay (who came to be regarded as the official AWC photographer), which were sent to accompany articles commissioned on the relationship between the AWC and Carl Andre, some of which were published in *SI*'s November 1970 issue. This chapter also relies on the present author's interviews with Peter Townsend, Charles Harrison, Lucy Lippard, Seth Siegelaub, John Perreault, Hans Haacke, Lawrence Weiner and email interviews with Jan van Raay and John Elderfield (art historian, contributor to *SI* and from *SI* September 1973, he was also a contributing editor).² Its title is taken from artist and editor of *Avalanche* Willoughby Sharp's riposte to a man playing a penny whistle on the steps of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, during a protest organised by the New York Art Strike, an offshoot of the AWC, on 22 May 1970.

Townsend deplored the US foreign policy which had precipitated the Vietnam war, and he actively supported Americans he encountered who were critical of their government. In early January 1969, Reise returned from a trip to New York (discussed in Chapter 3), during which she built on her friendship with Andre and met Lippard and Siegelaub for the first time. Lippard and the artists of their circle regarded Andre as the only artist who made politics his art.³ Lippard described him as 'the resident Marxist' since he was the only one in the group who had really read Marx.⁴ She described how, for Andre, Marxism was not a theoretical or detached position; rather, it permeated all relations and operations in art and life.⁵ Siegelaub recalled that, while reading philosophy was naturally part of most artists' lives, it was Andre who put what he read into

² Townsend letter to Elderfield asking him to become a contributing editor, 6/6/73, Elderfield file, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094.

³ Lippard, unpublished interview transcript, 9/10/08, Melvin papers, London.

⁴ Lippard, "Curating by Numbers." Paper given at a symposium hosted by the Academy of Fine Arts, Vienna and Afterall as part of One Exhibition book series, 29/5/08. Present author's notes, Melvin papers, London.

⁵ Lippard, unpublished interview transcript, 9/10/08, Melvin papers, London.

practice.⁶ Andre was to become lasting friends with Townsend. The latter recalled that Andre told him 'I have been subject to politics as long as I've been alive [...] starting with the New Deal. Hence since I've made my art, my art must reflect my political experience [...] my art will reflect not necessarily conscious politics but the unanalysed politics of my life.'⁷ This initial discussion will focus on Andre because he was a prime mover in AWC circles and responsible for the editor's decision for the cover of the November 1970 issue.

The first time Andre appeared in *SI*, in October 1968, was after a protest against Chicago's city administration following the police brutality in the city suppressing peace protests during August 1968 and the impossibility of expressing dissent in the city. He sent a letter to Townsend, which he and several other artists, including Hans Haacke, Eva Hesse, Jack Burnham and Robert Smithson had signed. In contradistinction to those artists boycotting the museum's exhibition which, in this instance, Andre considered would damage audiences rather than expose the local government, the signatories to the letter regarded participation in the *Options* exhibition at the Chicago Contemporary Museum a more effective strategy in drawing attention to police corruption. In his letter Andre declared that the success of their action was contingent on receiving publicity through as many means possible, including art magazines.⁸

In the editorial office, Reise relayed what she had heard of the artists' grass-roots protest plans. She was kept in the loop by Liza Bear, a philosophy graduate from UCL who was based in New York and working with Willoughby Sharp, artist and exhibition organiser, on plans to edit and produce a New York-based magazine called *Avalanche* (which was published between 1970 and 1976).⁹ The previous year, Bear and Sharp undertook an extensive interview with Andre which helped launch their first issue. Bear was an intermittent correspondent with Reise, on the subject of art magazines and art politics.¹⁰

⁶ Siegelaub, unpublished interview transcript, 31/10/08, Melvin papers, London.

⁷ Townsend notes reflecting on Carl Andre, 2002, 'misc' file, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

⁸ Andre, "Letter to the Editor." *SI*, Vol.176, No. 904, p. 127.

⁹ Liza Bear letter to Reise, Jan 1969, Barbara Reise papers, TGA 786/5/1/2, London.

¹⁰ Liza Bear letters to Reise, Barbara Reise papers, TGA 786/5/1/2, London.

Sharp also routinely corresponded with Townsend, over specific articles and, more generally, in support of *SI*'s policy.¹¹

Context for the protest group

The AWC campaign took place at a highly politicised time in the US, against the backdrop of the Vietnam war, when even the more conservative galleries displayed anti-war posters.¹² Siegelaub remembered the weekly auctions and benefits held in aid of anti-war activities, with artists regularly solicited to make donations. In the art community, it would have been rare to find someone in favour of the war.¹³ The peace activist and member of the US branch of the Socialist Workers Party, Ron Wolin, ran a peace group from New York's public Shakespeare Theatre.¹⁴ The peace group was given accommodation for an anti-war office on Lafayette Street, in SoHo. Wolin joined forces with Lippard and Robert Huot to organise a benefit exhibition for peace on behalf of the Student Mobilization Committee to End the War in Vietnam, which launched Paula Cooper's new gallery in October 1968, the proceeds of which went towards the anti-war effort.¹⁵ Another exhibition at Paula Cooper Gallery, entitled *Number Seven* (May-June 1969), curated by Lippard, was held in aid of the AWC. During this exhibition, Siegelaub announced his plans to develop an artist's reserved rights and transfer of sales agreement, which will be discussed later in this chapter. Perreault described the exhibition, and the plans for artists' contract as 'para-visual',¹⁶ which implies that the exhibition showed what was at the edge of vision and is peripheral to it.

¹¹ Sharp letters to Townsend, S correspondence, to 1972, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028.

¹² Siegelaub, unpublished interview transcript, 31/10/08, Melvin papers, London.

¹³ Siegelaub, unpublished interview transcript, 31/10/08, Melvin papers, London.

¹⁴ Siegelaub, unpublished interview transcript, 31/10/08, Melvin papers, London.

¹⁵ Lucy R Lippard, *Six Years: The dematerialization of the art object from 1966 to 1972*, Berkeley, Los Angeles and London, University of California Press, 2001, p. 57.

¹⁶ Perreault commented on Haacke's air current and Nauman's violin with strings tuned to DEAD (instead of GDAE). Perreault, "Para-visual." *Village Voice* 5/6/69, p. 14. Perreault, an artist-poet participated in the aforementioned *Seattle 557, 087* organised by Lucy R Lippard and *Art in the Mind*, organised by Athena Spear at Oberlin College, Allen Memorial Art Museum, Ohio.

The Art Workers' Coalition

On the afternoon of 3 January 1969, Vassilakis Takis removed his electrical work, *Tele-sculpture* (1960), from the exhibition, *The Museum as Seen at the End of the Mechanical Age*, curated by Pontus Hultén at MoMA. The work formed part of the museum's collection, but Takis disagreed with the way it was shown in the exhibition; as its creator, he did not want to be represented by an old work and he wanted to assert his right to decide how it should be presented. He had told Hultén that, if this work was the only one representing his practice, he did not want it included, and suggested other, more recent, works that were readily available. Surrounded by several witnesses, including Bear, Sharp, John Perreault and Gregory Battcock, Takis unplugged the sculpture and carried it into the garden, refusing to leave until he received an agreement from the museum's authorities that the work would not be included in the exhibition.¹⁷ Perreault remembered how extremely cold it was while they waited for several hours in the garden in the dark.¹⁸ Eventually, Bates Lowry, the museum's Director, went to the garden and gave his assurance that a meeting to discuss the artists' demands would be held at the end of January; this was deemed sufficient for the group to leave the site.¹⁹ This provided the spark that spurred the formation of the AWC.

In January 1969, Bear wrote to tell Reise what had happened at MoMA.

You might like to hear the latest developments of our confrontation with the museum [...] the meeting with Bates Lowry did take place [] under different circumstances than anticipated. There were 10 people from the press on our side including John Perreault and Gregory Battcock and in spite of two hours of closely argued discussions with Elizabeth Shaw, the public relations officer, Bates Lowry wouldn't agree to confront the whole group with his curators – though he did talk to us.²⁰

¹⁷ Perreault, "Art Whose Art?" *Village Voice*, January 9, 1969, pp. 16-7.

¹⁸ Perreault, unpublished interview transcript, 31/3/05, Melvin papers, London.

¹⁹ Perreault, unpublished interview transcript, 31/3/05, Melvin papers, London.

²⁰ Liza Bear letter to Reise, January 1969, Barbara Reise papers, TGA 786/5/1/2, London.

She continued that, in order to bring about the meeting, the group agreed to a smaller delegation of six or so, provided there were no restrictions on who they were. Battcock and Perreault were chosen, not only for their political affiliations but also because they had regular columns in local newspapers; the others were Bear, Sharp, Takis and the artists, Wen-Ying Tsai, Tom Lloyd and Hans Haacke.

In advance of the agreed meeting the demands Takis and his group formulated were that: works should not be shown without artists' consent; museum ownership of work should not grant the institution exclusive privileges of display; consultation should take place between museums and artists over the display and maintenance of work; photographs of artists' works should not be used for publicity purposes without permission. These conditions were absorbed and extended by the group, which grew to include all those in the art community in New York who were interested in having a voice in matters to do with museums and their policies. On 28 January 1969, the group presented Lowry with a list of thirteen demands, extracts below:

1. The Museum should hold a public hearing in February on the topic 'The Museum's relationship to art and society'.
2. A section of the Museum should be set aside for black artists and held under their direction.
3. Museum's activities should include Black, Spanish and other communities showing exhibitions with which the groups identified.
4. A committee of artists should be appointed annually to curate exhibitions.
5. The Museum should be open twice a week until midnight and free at all times.
6. Artists should receive a fee when work is exhibited.
7. The artist has the right to refuse exhibition of his work owned by the Museum other than in the permanent collection.

8. The Museum should declare its position on copyright legislation and proposed arts proceeds act. It should also take active steps to inform artists of their legal rights.
9. The Museum should institute a registry of artists to which artists can submit information.
10. The Museum should exhibit experimental work requiring specific conditions in locations outside the museum.
11. The Museum should dedicate a section for artists not represented by galleries.
12. The Museum should employ technological specialists for installation and maintenance of technically complex work.
13. The Museum should appoint staff to deal with artists' grievances.²¹

Lowry's reply, dated 14 February 1969, was sent to the group he had met and widely circulated by them. It thanked them for raising complex concerns which the museum needed time to consider how to address. He believed a public hearing would be an inappropriate forum, and would be recommending to the board of trustees that a special committee of artists' relations should be set up, 'made of objective and fair-minded individuals'.²² A report compiled by this committee would be made public, and would 'constitute a great service to artists everywhere and to the public and to the institutions that serve both'.²³

The original group replied to Lowry a week later, expressing regret that their proposal for a public hearing was not being addressed by his suggestion for a committee. This meant that they would proceed with arrangements to set up such a hearing, to enable anybody to express their views concerning the museum's relationship with artists and society.²⁴ Another letter to Lowry, dated 10 March 1969, reasserted that a committee, appointed by MoMA to investigate the group's demands, would not be impartial and so was unacceptable. This

²¹ *Documents 1, AWC*, compiled demands, information and news reports in 1969. New York, republished Primary Information, 2008, p. 13.

²² Lowry letter, 14 February, 1969, in *Documents 1*, New York, republished Primary Information, 2008, p. 18.

²³ Lowry letter, 14 February, 1969, *Documents 1*, p. 18.

²⁴ *Documents 1*, p. 22.

stated that representatives from the museum would be welcome to air their views at the open hearing ‘under the same conditions as other participants.’²⁵

The artists Faith Ringgold and Tom Lloyd formed what we would now call a focus group and organised a lobby centred on letters sent to Lowry containing a questionnaire based on the demands of the ‘Artists and Students United’ for a Martin Luther King Jr Wing for Black and Puerto Rican Art at MoMA. They also demanded to know how the privately owned museum could justify public funding.²⁶ At the same time, another group of committed campaigners was meeting regularly at Lippard’s Princes Street loft. Core members were Carl Andre, Kes Zapkus, Tom Lloyd and Brenda Miller and ‘probably several others; people wandered in and out’.²⁷ Siegelaub remembered that these discussions about strategies and interventions happened two or three times a week.²⁸ Many similar conversations were taking place among different configurations of people, and, although they initially found common cause around the issue that museums should listen to artists, some groupings were more politicised and evolved towards feminism or as with Ringgold and Lloyd’s actions taken to address the implicit racial inequality in the Museum’s policy.

The artist Takis, whose actions spurred the group’s formation, was known in the London art scene after exhibiting in the Signals Gallery.²⁹ On 8 March 1969, *The Times* correspondent in New York, Innis Macbeath, reported that ‘The Museum of Modern Art has responded cautiously to a group of exasperated artists by promising to appoint a special committee to investigate and report on its dealings with them. The artists who want a public hearing on the museum’s dealings not only with them but with society as a whole, now propose to hold a hearing of their own.’³⁰ Macbeath continued with an account of Takis’s decision

²⁵ *Documents 1*, p. 28.

²⁶ Lucy R Lippard <http://www.aaa.si.edu/collections/images/detail/students-and-artists-protest-letter-to-bates-lowry-new-york-ny-9965>, digital ID 9965, last accessed 9/8/12, the papers are not dated.

²⁷ Lippard email to the present author, 12/11/08, Melvin Papers, London.

²⁸ Siegelaub, unpublished interview transcript, 23/2/08, Melvin papers, London.

²⁹ The exhibition *Soundings 2*, 22 July - 22 September 1965, included work by Hélio Oiticica, Lilian Lijn, Otero, Albers, Duchamp, Malevich and Mondrian, referred to by William Townsend in *Journal xxxvi* 8/9/65, UCL special collection, London.

³⁰ Innis Macbeath, “Artists may hold museum sit-in.” *The Times*, March 8, 1969 complied in *Documents 1*.

to remove his work from the exhibition, stating that, although Takis did not want it shown in that context, he accepted its display within the permanent collection. Reporting on the open hearing, she summarised the group's demands as follows: 'a section of the museum should be dedicated to black artists, a curatorial committee of artists to advise on exhibitions, a section dedicated entirely to artists without gallery representation, a grievance officer, rental fees, and some power of veto on exhibitions [...] except for the permanent collection.'³¹

A photograph by Mehdi Khonsari, inscribed on the back as 'the first AWC press conference at the "Museum" on March 17, 1969', showed a large, somewhat derelict, warehouse interior with a smallish group of artists sitting on foldaway chairs around the space.³² They were discussing the press release, issued by Andre, Haacke and Lloyd on behalf of the group.³³ Siegelaub seems to be among the group; the others are unidentified, their backs to the camera.³⁴ This photograph was among several sent to the *SI* editorial office by Lippard and Jeanne Siegel, New York-based art critic some time before the publication of *SI* November 1970, for which they were both commissioned to contribute articles, Lippard on the AWC and Siegel for an interview with Andre, which as he was actively involved, would provide further illumination of the group's aims. It is not stated exactly when the group started to refer to themselves as a coalition, but it was certainly an agreed description from the time of the Open Hearing.³⁵

At 3 p.m. on Sunday, 30 March 1969, a planning meeting for the Open Hearing was held in the sculpture garden of MoMA. An announcement about the

³¹ Macbeath, *The Times*, March 8, 1969.

³² Mehdi Khonsari, photograph, November 1970 file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London. The 'Museum for living artists' as it was called, was a space the AWC used at 729 Broadway, New York, *Documents 1*, 14 March, 1969, p. 31.

³³ *Documents 1*, 14 March, 1969, p. 31.

³⁴ Siegelaub agreed with the present author's suggestion, unpublished interview transcript, 15/6/08, Melvin papers, London. November 1970, file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

³⁵ *Documents 1*, 14 March, 1969, p. 31.

meeting had been addressed to the broad art community,³⁶ and about three hundred people attended.³⁷ The week before, members of the group had distributed the announcement as a handbill in MoMA's lobby. As a gesture to the demand for open access they attempted to gain free entry to the museum using an Art Workers' annual pass devised for the occasion by Joseph Kosuth.³⁸ Despite some of the artists' having free passes in their own right, they were denied entry.

Many photographs, which convey the atmosphere, were taken of the demonstration in the sculpture garden. In one, a blonde girl, sits on a low wall holding a daffodil. She steadies a hand-painted poster propped on a suitcase that reads 'artworkers won't kiss ass'. The paint is thickly applied; the case, with a Kodak trademark on the side, is the sort used for large photographic equipment. This image, by Mehdi Khonsari, states on its reverse 'first major demonstration 30 March 1969'.³⁹ (Figures 7.90 and 7.91.)

A smaller photograph, taken on the same occasion and published, in *SI* November 1970, to illustrate Lippard's article discussed below, shows a man reading out the artists' demands through a megaphone.⁴⁰ Behind him stands a group holding posters with slogans such as 'make MoMA modern make the scene now' [sic] and 'Roland Bleaden an exhibition now' [sic] – the latter in a bid to stimulate exhibitions of non-white artists who were barely represented in

³⁶ The list addressed architects, choreographers, composers, critics and writers, designers, film makers, museum workers, painters, photographers, printers, sculptors, taxidermists, etc, Flyer, *Documents 1*, p. 37.

³⁷ Perreault, unpublished interview transcript, 31/3/05, and others present agree on the numbers in attendance, Melvin papers, London.

³⁸ Kosuth's design was used on the cover of the AWC publications, *Documents 1* and *Open Hearing*, 1969.

³⁹ Numerous other photographers documented the event and many photographs in the file are unidentified. One was published in *SI* to illustrate Lucy R Lippard's article, "The Art Workers' Coalition: not a history." *SI*, Vol. 180, No. 927, November 1970, (pp. 171-4) p. 172. Attempts by the present author to contact the photographer Mehdi Khonsari have been unsuccessful. During the summer 2008, at the same time as *Tales from Studio International* (4 June to 18 August) curated by the present author at Tate Britain, when some of these photographs were exhibited, there was an archive exhibition of the AWC material at PS1 New York, organised by Primary Information to coincide with republication of the *Opening Hearing* and *Documents 1*. The photograph of the girl with the daffodil in the garden at MoMA became a poster. Primary Information were also unable to trace the photographer.

⁴⁰ Lucy R Lippard, "The Art Workers' Coalition: not a history." *SI*, Vol. 180, No. 927, November 1970, (pp. 171-4), p. 172.

either the programme or the collection. Others handed out posters and leaflets against the Vietnam war.⁴¹

The Open Hearing

The AWC's open hearing 'for everyone in the arts' took place in the auditorium of the School of Visual Arts (SVA) between 6 and 10 p.m. on 10 April 1969.⁴² This was an important event, bringing together a range of artists to express their concerns, and it precipitated changes in the Museum's policy, leading to the inclusion of artists on the boards of trustees and the introduction of non-charging days. Another announcement, circulated widely by hand, stated its intention to discuss 'What should be the program of the art workers regarding museum reform and to establish the program of an open art workers coalition [sic].'⁴³ It also stated that a complete record of the hearing would be compiled and an unlimited number of copies made available at cost to those who wanted them. Freely circulated, this report was 'intended to form a solid basis for a permanent organisation designed to represent the best interests of the artworker.'⁴⁴ The announcement became the first page of the report.

Almost as many people attended the hearing as had been at the demonstration in MoMA's sculpture garden.⁴⁵ The demographic composition was mixed, men and women, black and white, established and unknown artists, critics, museum workers and other interested parties. The term 'artworker' was taken to represent the group. It was favoured by Andre because, as he was to remark in an interview published in *SI* in November 1970, it was an inclusive, non-hierarchical description of anyone 'who made a productive contribution to art'.⁴⁶ Anyone who wanted to speak could do so, and seventy took the opportunity, with each speaker allocated two minutes. Richard Artschwager

⁴¹ Lippard, *SI*, Vol. 180, November 1970, p. 172.

⁴² *Open Hearing* flyer, *Open Hearing*, compiled material from the Open Hearing meeting on 10 April 1969, AWC, New York, 1969, republished New York Primary Information, 2008, p. 69.

⁴³ *Open Hearing* p. 1.

⁴⁴ *Open Hearing* p. 1.

⁴⁵ Haacke, unpublished interview transcript, 1/4/05, Melvin papers London.

⁴⁶ Andre specifically discussed the term in the interview with Siegel, "Carl Andre: artworker." *SI*, Vol. 180, No. 927, November 1970, (pp. 175-9), p. 175.

made an exception, he used his slot to let off firecrackers.⁴⁷ The statements drew attention to the role of museums in artists' lives (attention was focused mainly on MoMA and the Metropolitan Museum of Art). Dissatisfaction was expressed about the race and gender bias in museums, and some of those present used the occasion to make anti-war pronouncements.

Reise read a statement from Barnett Newman, on his behalf, because he was unable to attend, which said that, in order to exhibit work, artists needed a 'new society of independents, where anybody, black or white [...] can show his work'.⁴⁸ Newman considered that the problem with museums' ownership and organisation of exhibitions was that due respect was not paid to the artists' wishes, and museums' policies could become exemplary in this way.⁴⁹ Reise was heckled as she read her own statement which was a personal tribute to the paintings in MoMA's collection.⁵⁰ Battcock drew attention to the Black Panthers and emphasised the complicity of the 'art loving, culturally committed trustees of the museums with the war being waged in Vietnam'.⁵¹

The artist Rosemarie Castoro called for wealthy artists and non-artists to support artists by buying their work and that stipends should be awarded on the basis of need. She concluded with the suggestion that the best situation for viewing art was in-between places for which we would now apply the generic term of alternative space.⁵² Castoro's modest statement illuminated a shift in attitude away from gallery-museum hierarchies. As had already been demonstrated by SI and Siegelaub, a prime in-between place for exhibiting work was the magazine page. Siegelaub spoke about the fabric of the art world, using the analogy of art as a rock in a pool around which swim all the dealers, critics, museums and other functionaries of the art world system. He considered that anyone interested should try to change the machinery, or context, in which the

⁴⁷ Lucy R Lippard, "The Art Workers' Coalition: not a history." *SI*, Vol. 180, No. 927, November 1970, p. 171.

⁴⁸ Newman statement, *Open Hearing*, (pp. 87-8) p. 87.

⁴⁹ Newman statement, *Open Hearing*, p. 90. Grace Glueck reported that Newman turned up after the meeting was adjourned to greet well-wishers on the pavement, *New York Times*, Sunday April 20, 1969, *Documents 1*, p. 96.

⁵⁰ Reise, *Open Hearing*, pp. 89-90.

⁵¹ Battcock, *Open Hearing*, pp. 7-10, p.9.

⁵² Castoro, *Open Hearing*, p. 15.

art was made, discerning that the artist's great asset was to make art, 'no one else does'.⁵³

Andre's solution was more radical; he announced that, in order for artists to solve their problems, rather than getting rid of the turnstiles, they should rid themselves of the art world – turn away from commercial galleries and reject cooperation with museums – only then could a true community of artists be formed.⁵⁴ Haacke called for MoMA to pursue the policy it had announced in 1947 – to sell its 'classical works to the great museums for the history of art in the country. This would provide space, [...] money and an unfamiliar urge to look out for contemporary work.'⁵⁵ Sol LeWitt's statement focused on the 'relationship of works of art to museums and collectors'.⁵⁶ He proposed that art made by a living artist would remain the artist's property; the collector would be its custodian. The artist should be consulted when their work was displayed or reproduced and the collector would pay a fee for its display. This would be above and 'beyond the original purchase price', like the payment of royalties. The artist could buy the work back at the original purchase price, or at a mutually agreeable price. The artist would be compensated with a percentage of the resale value of a work when sold by its collector to another collector. The artist also 'has the right to change or destroy' his work. LeWitt wanted MoMA to be restricted to purchasing work not older than 25 years, with work over 25 years old sold to maintain a contemporary collection.⁵⁷ LeWitt's proposals for the ongoing involvement of artists with their work after it had been sold directly tied in with the issues of control to which Takis had drawn attention to when he removed his work from exhibition. They also formed the basis for the artists' rights agreement.

Following the hearing, the AWC issued two publications. *The Open Hearing* was comprised of transcripts of all the representations made at the SVA on 10 April. The other publication was *Documents 1*, comprising material generated by the group, including facsimiles of posters and leaflets, statements,

⁵³ Siegelaub, *Open Hearing*, p. 59.

⁵⁴ Andre, *Open Hearing*, p. 30.

⁵⁵ Haacke, *Open Hearing*, p. 47.

⁵⁶ LeWitt, *Open Hearing*, p. 54.

⁵⁷ LeWitt, *Open Hearing*, p. 54.

newspaper cuttings of reports on the activities as well as copies of letters sent to museums and funding bodies. It also contained lists of demands and museums' responses. On the front of both books is a facsimile of Kosuth's aforementioned design for a Museum of Modern Art annual pass, stamped with the AWC stamp, A.W.C.⁵⁸ The two books were made at a party in Robert Barry's studio on 14th Street, and each published in an edition of about a thousand copies. Siegelaub explained that 'it was done like a Xerox, paper was offset litho [...] 200 pages or whatever [...] everyone would take one page, two pages and the whole length of the book was on the floor in order [...] then we sent it off to be bound, glued'.⁵⁹ He remembered the event as purposeful and fun, greatly enhanced by large quantities of beer. Despite, or perhaps because of, the party atmosphere, the task was rapidly accomplished.⁶⁰

Although Harrison had not been at the hearing, he attended a feedback meeting in Lippard's Prince Street loft, where he heard reports about it from Kosuth, Lippard and Andre.⁶¹ Many of the artists he met during his first trip to New York had been present, and most of them made statements. He was very impressed by the artists' commitment to change and discussed their demands with Townsend.⁶²

Information exhibition and AWC Poster: Q. And babies? A. And babies

The AWC was invited to participate in Kynaston McShine's *Information* exhibition at MoMA,⁶³ and contributed a poster that was available in the shop. Designed by Frazer Dougherty, Jon Hendricks and Irving Petlin, the poster used a photograph, taken by US army photographer, Ron Haeberle, of a massacre by

⁵⁸ *Documents 1*, reprinted New York, Primary Information 2008.

⁵⁹ Siegelaub, unpublished interview transcript, 24/2/08, Melvin papers, London.

⁶⁰ Siegelaub, unpublished interview transcript, 24/2/08, Melvin papers, London.

⁶¹ Townsend recalled how impressed Harrison was by the actions being taken by the artists, Melvin, notebook 2002, Melvin papers London. Harrison unpublished interview transcript, 28/3/07, Melvin papers, London.

⁶² Townsend, Melvin notebook 2002, Melvin papers London.

⁶³ *Information*, MoMA, New York, the exhibition dates were 2 July - 20 September 1970.

US troops of residents of the My Lai village in Vietnam on 16 March 1968.⁶⁴ Printed over the grisly image were the words '*Q. And babies? A. And babies*'. This related to an interview, conducted for CBS by Mike Wallace, who was questioning Paul Meadlo, one of the US soldiers involved in the massacre about the ages of those killed.⁶⁵ The widespread publication of Haeberle's photographs exposed the atrocity and attempted cover-up, which resonated across the US and beyond, adding fuel to the condemnation of the war. McShine had agreed to the distribution of the poster during the exhibition, but, when the museum authorities and trustees saw the proofs, they vetoed it.⁶⁶

Lippard knew William Rubin, who worked at MoMA, and, of course, McShine. Both of them were sympathetic to the aims of the AWC, but they were marginalised from the power mechanisms of the museum. As a way of bypassing the prohibition, at least as a principle, Lippard's catalogue contribution for the exhibition proposed to 'Xerox and publish as an insert to the catalogue of the *Information* exhibition, all available information on any extant proposed reforms concerning artists' rights, such as rental fees, contracts, profit-sharing, artists' control over works sold, shown, etc.'⁶⁷

On 26 December, the NYC Lithographers Union printed about 50,000 copies of the posters which were distributed through the AWC's network of artists, students, peace protestors and political activists.⁶⁸ Dougherty, Hendricks and Petlin organised a protest at MoMA, during which they held the poster in front of Picasso's *Guernica*, which was then in New York by Picasso's instructions that

⁶⁴ Francis Frascina, explains that Haeberle used colour film alongside the black-and-white shots taken for official military records. Haeberle's photographs showed a pile of bodies, of women, children and infants, shot at point-blank range on a road outside the village. Haeberle sold the photographs to *The Plain Dealer*, Ohio, and they were printed on the front page on Thursday 20 November 1969. Two weeks later, on 5 December 1969, *Life* magazine ran the photographs. "My Lai, *Guernica*, MoMA and the art left, New York, 1969-70." *Art, Politics and Dissent*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1999, (pp. 160-208), pp.167-8.

⁶⁵ Francis Frascina, "My Lai, *Guernica*, MoMA and the art left, New York, 1969-70." *Art, Politics and Dissent*, p. 171.

⁶⁶ Francis Frascina gives a full chronology of events, and the veto specifically by trustees Nelson Rockefeller and William S Paley, a director of CBS; it was widely rumoured that they took this decision because they wanted to avoid a scandal and that, since they were openly pro-Nixon, they were also in favour of the Vietnam war. *Art, Politics and Dissent*, pp. 182-3.

⁶⁷ Lippard, "Absentee information and/or criticism." *Information* MoMA New York, (Exhibition Catalogue) 1970, (pp. 74-81), p. 81.

⁶⁸ Frascina, *Art, Politics and Dissent*, p. 184.

the work could not be housed in Spain while it was a fascist country.⁶⁹ This painting refers to a similar rout of civilians. The reality of a massacre of innocents is always possible, and the ever-present horror of war reinforces its currency, stimulating reflection and action even now.

At the same time the poster was displayed all over New York and other US cities.⁷⁰ Mehdi Khonsarai photographed it stuck on the rear wheel panel of a car parked in a working class area of New York. Beside it stands a black man; it is uncertain whether he was a bystander or part of the protest. Viewed at an oblique angle, the horror of the poster is the more shocking because of the casual nature of the scene.⁷¹ (Figure 7.90.) This photograph was amongst those sent to the *SI* editorial office. There is no record in the editorial archive of who sent them, and neither Townsend nor Harrison could recall these details when questioned by the present author.⁷²

Planning *SI* November 1970: focus on art and politics

Several months later Harrison was again in New York on a scouting visit during April and May 1970, and was present at a protest on the steps of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, organised by the New York Art Strike (an offshoot of the AWC).⁷³ On 22 May 1970, a group of around 500 gathered on the steps leading to the Met for about 10 hours, which had the effect of blocking access to the museum. Harrison remembered the heated atmosphere, and, when someone starting playing a penny whistle, Willoughby Sharp snatched it and uttered the words that give this chapter its title.⁷⁴ Of the many photographs taken, two by van Raay were reproduced in *SI* in addition to the one on the

⁶⁹ The protest took place at MoMA on 3/1/70, as noted by Frascina, *Art, Politics and Dissent*, p. 184.

⁷⁰ Lippard, unpublished interview transcript, 9/10/70, Melvin papers, London.

⁷¹ This photograph was one of three by Mehdi Khonsari exhibited in *Tales from Studio International* curated by the present author at Tate Britain, 4 June to 18 August, 2008.

⁷² Townsend, Melvin notebook 2002, Melvin papers, London. Charles Harrison came to the exhibition *Tales from Studio International* curated by the present author when he vividly remembered the photographs but not the circumstances of their arrival in the office, 14/7/08, Melvin papers, London.

⁷³ Lippard explained that The Art Strike was more directly politically motivated, and regarded the AWC as bourgeois do-gooders. Lippard 16/10/08, unpublished interview transcript, Melvin papers London.

⁷⁴ Harrison unpublished interview transcript, 28/3/06, Melvin papers London.

cover.⁷⁵ One accompanied an interview with Andre; the other illustrated Lippard's article on the AWC. In one, Andre was photographed standing in the middle of a large crowd, like an apostle or an Old Testament prophet. Robert Morris stood beside Andre, and Mel Bochner is in the frame. The other photograph is a more distant view of the crowd on the steps. A policeman and a museum guard stand out, because their hats are explicit signs of their authority.⁷⁶

While in New York, Harrison met Jeanne Siegel, an art historian and critic, who told him about her plan to interview Andre. Hopeful of securing the interview for *SI*, he mentioned Siegel's proposal to Andre, who told Harrison he was in favour of the plan. Andre saw the interview as an opportunity to focus attention on what the art workers were doing to expose the politics of museums whose trustees had connections with armament manufacture and the war in Vietnam.⁷⁷ Back in London, having not yet heard from Siegel, Harrison wrote to her in May to see how the interview was progressing. In the letter he reported that Andre was keen on the 'chance of getting his rocks off about art and politics' and 'agreeable about it being published in *SI*'.⁷⁸ Harrison hoped this information would convince Siegel that *SI* was the right outlet for the interview. Harrison continued that he anticipated that the November issue would have 'a fairly heavy slant towards the discussion of art and politics' because the editorial office planned to publish an article on Marx, Lenin and Trotsky's views on art.⁷⁹ He also asked Siegel whether other relevant interviews by her might be available.

⁷⁵ van Raay remembered Peter Moore, a photographer and friend, saying that, since she attended all the meetings, he would drop out. He saw his involvement as professional, whereas she was committed to the group's aims. van Raay outlined how her participation as a photographer for the AWC began, through her friendship with Jean and Virgi Toche, artists who were involved with the movement whom she had known since 1959. van Raay email 29/12/08, Melvin Papers, London.

⁷⁶ van Raay's photograph was used to illustrate Jeanne Siegel's interview with Carl Andre. Siegel, "Carl Andre: artworker." *SI*, Vol. 180, No. 927, November 1970, (pp. 175-9), p. 175.

⁷⁷ Harrison letter to Siegel 29/5/70, November 1970 file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

⁷⁸ Harrison letter to Siegel, 29/5/70, November 1970 file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

⁷⁹ Harrison letter to Siegel, 29/5/70, November 1970 file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

In her reply to Harrison, Siegel explained that she had been holding off contacting him until she had something concrete on the interview with Andre. She had now conducted it and thought this would be an excellent piece, 'certainly different from the usual run of interviews'.⁸⁰ Another she had available was one with Ad Reinhardt, in which he expounded on the value of art for art's sake, advocated the separation of artistic disciplines and defended museums. As Siegel noted that, 'in the light of recent events [this] makes Reinhardt look like a traditionalist'.⁸¹ Harrison told Siegel that *SI* would like to see the Reinhardt interview. Another possibility was her proposal for an interview with Hans Haacke.⁸² Harrison indicated that the office would be interested in a discussion with Haacke, although the decision ultimately rested with Townsend.⁸³

Harrison wrote to Andre to confirm his agreement to the publication of Siegel's interview, and asked whether he would be willing 'by any chance to design the cover'.⁸⁴ The discussion of Andre's involvement with the cover will be returned to in detail shortly. Stressing the political in his letter, Harrison emphasised that the issue 'promised to be serious', including 'a piece on Berlin Dada and the abortive German revolution, an article on the relationship of the ideas of the Russian revolutionary artists to the political realities as seen and discussed by Lenin and Trotsky on art and politics in the Russian revolution'.⁸⁵ Harrison also mentioned Lippard's article on the AWC and commented it would be fortuitous to run them both together since they were both actively working towards change in the art world's political and institutional operations. Andre replied by return, by hand, in block capitals:

⁸⁰ Siegel letter to Harrison 15/6/ 70, November 1970 file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

⁸¹ Siegel letter to Harrison, 15/6/ 70, November 1970 file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

⁸² Siegel letter to Harrison, 15/6/ 70, November 1970 file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

⁸³ Harrison letter to Siegel, 29/5/70, November 1970 file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

⁸⁴ Harrison letter to Andre 18/8/70, November 1970 file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

⁸⁵ Harrison 18/8/70, November 1970 file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

ALL THINGS CONSIDERED, I WOULD SUGGEST FOR YOUR NOVEMBER COVER THE AWC POSTER OF THE MY LAI MASSACRE IE "AND BABIES" IT IS TIRESOME AND BORING ETC BUT FOR MYSELF IT EVER RENEWS THE STING AND THAT IS OUR PROBLEM. MY LOVE TO PETER & BARBARA & BLOODY OLD ENGLAND. BE WELL Carl Andre.⁸⁶

It is relevant to stress that, given the opportunity to showcase a piece of their own work in the international context of an art magazine cover, most artists would not hesitate in doing so, but Andre chose to use the occasion to highlight the protest.

As noted above, and referred to in Chapter 6, Harrison and Townsend commissioned Lippard to write a report on the AWC's demands for the November 1970 issue. That summer, Lippard expressed concern that it was taking longer than anticipated and remarked to Harrison that it was 'underway but will be a little late'.⁸⁷ She remarked on how exhausted they all were after the protests, and how everybody hated her and Andre because of their constant hustling for change when the other participants just wanted a rest.⁸⁸

The pragmatic protests of the grass-roots New York artistic community combined in the November 1970 issue with the historical and theoretical grounding given by John Elderfield in an article on political responsibility which investigated Dadaist intentions. These two currents combined to form an exemplary discussion through the juxtaposing of contributions. As we saw in Chapter 2, Townsend was particularly interested in the contemporary context of Russian Constructivism and in how intentions informed practice. The November 1969 of *SI* included an article on Tatlin by Elderfield, entitled 'The line of freemen: Tatlin's 'towers' and the age of invention',⁸⁹ and the September 1970 issue ran his article, 'Constructivism and the objective world: an essay on production art and proletarian culture', which opened with Marx's statement on the theses of Feuerbach, that 'the philosophers have only interpreted the world

⁸⁶ Andre 24/8/70, November 1970 file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

⁸⁷ Lippard letter to Harrison 19/8/70, Charles Harrison papers (1970s-2000s), TGA 200868, London.

⁸⁸ Lippard letter to Harrison 19/8/70, Charles Harrison papers (1970s-2000s), TGA 200868, London.

⁸⁹ Elderfield, "The line of free men and the age of invention." *SI*, Vol. 178, No. 916, November 1969, pp. 162-7.

in various ways; the point however is to change it'.⁹⁰ This assertion underscored the common purpose felt at that time between Townsend, his editorial assistants and the AWC.

Reports continued to reach the editorial office from AWC participants, for instance of a protest in January 1971 at the Metropolitan Museum which targeted a trustees' banquet.⁹¹ In a letter sent to Reise in the middle of January 1971, Andre reported that 'Last evening Lucy Lippard and her gang broke up a private banquet at the Met, releasing cockroaches. The last vestiges of militancy are being nurtured by women.'⁹²

SI November 1970 cover and content

Carl Andre's suggestion for the cover was taken up, with Townsend deciding to run van Raay's photograph of the protest at MoMA, during which members of the AWC held the poster in front of *Guernica*. This seemed the best way to convey politics and art as an instrument of change, because it connected the current crisis with Picasso's representation of the atrocities of war and a broader lineage of protest. (Figure 7.94.) Earlier, the AWC had tried to run the poster simultaneously on the covers of *Arts*, *Artforum*, *Art in America* and *Art News*. But, since Tom Hess, editor of *Art News*, decided against it and *Art in America* would only publish it if they all did, this did not happen.⁹³ Townsend

⁹⁰ Elderfield, "Constructivism and the objective world: an essay on production art and proletarian culture." *SI*, Vol. 180, No. 925, September 1970, (pp. 73-80), p. 73.

⁹¹ van Raay remembered that the AWC received a tip-off from inside the museum that a private dinner would be hosted in the Louis XVI room. Taking place on a Tuesday night, when the Museum was open to the public, it would be easy for the group to gain admission. They planned to enter separately and converge upon the room. Van Raay went in first, to take photographs as the others entered. When she arrived the guests were waiting to be seated, and the museum director, Thomas Hoving, asked if he could help. Events gathered pace; Lucy Lippard, Jean Toche, Tecla, Brenda Miller, Ann Arlen, Poppy Johnson, John Giorno, Ilene Astrahan and Kes Zapkus rushed in and threw flyers on the table. Ashton Hawkins, the museum secretary, stood up to try and reason with them while Zapkus threw a jar of cockroaches over the tables, which was his initiative and not part of the plan. Van Raay kept shooting photographs; the guards tried to wrestle the camera from her. As she was heavily pregnant, she screamed at them to keep their hands off her and, in the confusion, managed to take the film out and hide it in the waistband of her skirt, while loading a fresh film. The guards told her that it would not be good to be arrested in her condition, so she 'reluctantly' agreed to hand over the film but not the camera. They took the blank film and escorted her off the premises. van Raay email to the present author 29/12/08, Melvin Papers, London.

⁹² Andre letter to Reise, 14/1/71, Barbara Reise papers, TGA 786/5/2/4, London.

⁹³ Haacke unpublished interview transcript, 1/4/05, Melvin papers, London.

was appalled by the British government's failure to take a stand against Vietnam and the intellectual nervousness in the UK about public pronouncements criticising US foreign policy.⁹⁴ He knew he risked alienating some readers by putting the horror of the My Lai massacre on the cover, but he said later that this was the least he could do.⁹⁵

Lippard's eventual article on the context and actions of the AWC was entitled 'The Art Workers' Coalition: not a history'.⁹⁶ Asked about her choice of subtitle, she explained that the article was intended as 'directional and it was too early to have a history but people needed to know something about it'.⁹⁷ The article listed the demands made by the group, which included: artists being represented on museum boards (with a ratio of one third artists, one third patrons and one third museum staff); equal gender and racial representation in exhibitions and purchases; artists retaining control of the way in which their work was presented, whether owned by the museum or not; free admission at all times rather than a token day or evening a week. Lippard also reported on 'the devastating summary of failures that had been delivered to the AWC by Carl Andre at a meeting in October 1969, which argued that "We have failed to convince Artworkers [sic] that it is futile to recapitulate in the art world the enormities and injustices of the American economic system [...] we have failed to convince art workers that the profession of art is not a career but a constant witness to the value of all life".⁹⁸ Elaborating on the atmosphere of protest in the US at that time, Lippard also outlined the continuing campaign against mobilisation, Kent State, etc.⁹⁹ The October meeting referred to was the 'Moratorium of Art to End the War in Vietnam', which closed MoMA, the Whitney Museum, the Jewish Museum and some commercial galleries for the

⁹⁴ Townsend, Melvin notebook 1997, Melvin papers, London. Peter had many discussions about the Vietnam war with his brother William. These are reported in William Townsend's journals, in particular, 1966-67, Vol. xxxvii and 1967-68, Vol. xxxviii, UCL special collections, London.

⁹⁵ Townsend, Melvin notebook 1997, Melvin papers, London. Haacke remembered the plan and Townsend's decision to go ahead. Haacke unpublished interview transcript, 1/4/05, Melvin papers, London.

⁹⁶ Lucy R Lippard, "The Artworkers' Coalition: not a history.", *SI*, Vol. 180, No. 927, pp. 171-174.

⁹⁷ Lippard, email to present author, 6/6/06, Melvin papers, London.

⁹⁸ Lippard, "The Art Workers' Coalition: not a history." *SI*, Vol. 180, No. 927, p. 171.

⁹⁹ Lippard, "The Art Workers' Coalition: not a history." *SI*, Vol. 180, No. 927, p. 174. The continuing campaign against Kent State was in reference to the shooting of four unarmed students by the Ohio National Guard during a protest at the university against the war in Vietnam, 4 May 1970.

day. The Metropolitan and Guggenheim museums did not close, but the Metropolitan postponed the opening of its *American Painting and Sculpture* exhibition, scheduled to open on that day, and the Guggenheim was picketed.

One of the photographs used to illustrate Lippard's article was of the AWC protest in the sculpture garden at MoMA on 30 March 1969. There is no indication from the archive files of who took this photograph. As previously mentioned, another photograph documented the Art Strike at the Metropolitan Museum on 22 May 1970 (attended by Harrison) in which a poster's message is clearly visible, ART STRIKE AGAINST RACISM WAR REPRESSION, this one has van Raay's name clearly written on the back.¹⁰⁰ Another photograph of a further protest at the Metropolitan Museum on 26 May 1969 shows pickets at an opening of the Nelson Rockefeller Collection with hand-painted poster, 'artists refuse an identification with war' it underscored their aim to expose the interconnections of the institutional power structure between the trustees and government policy.¹⁰¹ The members hand leaflets to smartly attired guests while a policeman looks on warily. The photographer is also not named. The present author speculates that perhaps because some photographs were unattributed a editorial decision was taken not to credit the photographer.

Siegel sent Harrison several of van Raay's photographs to illustrate her interview with Andre. Despite repeated correspondence between van Raay and the editorial office, these were not returned. Lippard had also sent a batch of photographs with her article. The double source might account for editorial confusion, and the images were distributed between Siegel's interview and Lippard's articles. A happy consequence of this failure is that they remain in the archive for people to consult, recording the events in a vivid way.¹⁰²

Van Raay was not asked for her permission to use the photographs Siegel sent to the editorial office, which meant that it would have come as a surprise when her image was used on the cover. She was irate on two counts – first, that her photographs were not returned, and secondly that no payment was

¹⁰⁰ November 1970 file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

¹⁰¹ Lippard, "The Art Workers' Coalition: not a history." *SI*, Vol. 180, No. 927, p. 173.

¹⁰² November 1970 file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

offered.¹⁰³ Consistent with AWC demands, she regarded payment for published photographs to be part of the job. She contacted Siegel to apply pressure on the editorial office and get clarification, although it could be argued that it was van Raay's responsibility to be specific about their use when she supplied the photographs to Siegel. It was clearly a misunderstanding which surfaced after publication. The office had assumed that the images were free to use.

Attempting to compromise, Siegel appealed to Harrison. It must have been awkward for all concerned – Harrison on the receipt of her invoice for \$200, for which he had no budget, Siegel not wishing to exploit her situation and van Raay mystified by what appeared a flagrant (mis)use of her work. Apologies were forthcoming but no resolution was reached.

Nowadays, this situation reads differently; owing to slackness and disorganisation a bonus that was not envisaged at the time emerges because the photographs are in the archive. The use of van Raay's photograph brings the total number of covers by women during Townsend's editorship to 7 out of 103. It is a salutary reminder of the prevailing sexism in the UK which relates to the proportion of successful women artists rather than conscious prejudice in the editorial office, not that the comparable statistic for *ArtForum* is much better, with 12 covers by women out of a possible 95.

Elderfield's essay, 'Dissenting ideologies and the German Revolution', explored the relevance of Dada to contemporary concerns. He identified common ground in that Dada 'effectively replaced an attitude of complacent creativity with one of ideational awareness, even if this meant that the quality of the "art" was to be reduced [...]'¹⁰⁴ The distinction between propaganda and political art was a difference Elderfield deemed important to outline. This distinction persisted within the AWC, and some artists were wary of their work being tainted by the political label. It was fine to make a protest – this could be done in a personal way, by giving money, donating work, handing out leaflets – but to make radical political art involved a different relationship with its

¹⁰³ van Raay, 28/2/71, V/W correspondence file to 1972, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

¹⁰⁴ Elderfield, "Dissenting ideologies and the German Revolution." *SI*, Vol. 180, No. 927, November 1970, (pp. 180-7), p. 180.

production. Siegelaub said many artists would not want the protester label attached to their work because they feared that it would affect its reception and interpretation in critical terms.¹⁰⁵ Some circumvented this through a diffusion of activities, like Kosuth's MoMA membership cards and graphic work for exhibition benefits, which were devised for the campaign but not perceived as art.

Among the editorial papers for the November 1970 issue is a copy of a questionnaire by Andre prepared for an AWC discussion meeting. The questions address the frameworks of practice and artist's intention in the context of production, reception and responsibility. They are: who is an artist, what is art, what is quality in art, what is the relationship between politics and art and why do I continue? The five questions each had five possible answers. While this was not published in the magazine, it is relevant that Andre's open-handed demystification of the creative process is similar in intention to Siegelaub's equal treatment of artists with transparent processes of negotiation. Townsend regarded Andre's attitude of constant reflection on his motives as central to the process of making art.¹⁰⁶

The artist's reserved rights transfer and sale agreement¹⁰⁷

Siegelaub's decision to develop and organise a contract and sales agreement for artists was a direct consequence of the demands first made by Takis, using the principles outlined by LeWitt in his statement at the Open Hearing. Emerging directly from artists' demands, it was expanded upon in response to comments and feedback received during AWC meetings. Conceived and drafted with the European model of the moral rights of authorship in mind, the contract aimed to protect the artist in both the primary and secondary markets because

¹⁰⁵ Siegelaub unpublished interview transcript, 25/2/08, Melvin Papers, London.

¹⁰⁶ Townsend, Melvin notebook 2002, Melvin Papers, London.

¹⁰⁷ The present author is using lower case for the agreement as published in *SI*, Vol. 181, No. 932, April 1971. It is sometimes published using upper case as in Maria Eichhorn, *The Artist's Contract*. Cologne, Walter Konig, 2009.

Anglo-American law did not enshrine these rights for visual artists.¹⁰⁸ Siegelaub enlisted the assistance of New York-based lawyer, Robert Projansky.

Siegelaub worked tirelessly on this legal document; it was his specific contribution to effect policy change and equality before the law. He put himself under pressure with the schedule and relied on responses from artists and dealers to stick to his deadlines. Siegelaub received support in this endeavour from Ray Dirks, a Quaker philanthropist businessman, who lent his office for the purpose of photocopying the questionnaire and composing early drafts of the contract.¹⁰⁹

At the beginning of January 1971, Siegelaub wrote to Townsend and Reise, to outline his proposal and its timeframe and to enlist their help. He was actively collecting information from artists and dealers on the issues the contract should cover. This was to form the basis for the draft contract which, by the end of January, he would put into circulation alongside information on how to use it. At the same time, a questionnaire solicited responses to the draft agreement, which would assist in its further modification. He hoped to receive this feedback by the middle of February, enabling a final draft to 'be put out in the form of a poster and mailed to everyone on the international art scene.'¹¹⁰

Siegelaub asked Reise to discuss with Townsend the possibility of using pages in *SI* to reproduce the contract and to print artists' statements on its use. He also requested the name of a lawyer who would be prepared to read the contract and check on its use in England. And, finally, he asked for help in contacting a small group of British artists and dealers, so that he could send

¹⁰⁸ Maria Eichhorn discusses the context of moral rights of the author with the *droit d'auteur* and the distinctions between Anglo-American and European civil law. "Introduction." *The Artist's Contract*, 2009, (pp. 7-20.), p. 9

¹⁰⁹ Siegelaub explained the support given by Ray Dirks in the following extract from unpublished interview transcript, 31/10/08.

SS: He put a little money in occasionally, bought work, but he also provided travel vouchers which allowed people, including myself, to go to California for nothing. He was a progressive, a Quaker and against the war; he was the first broker to use women [...] down on Date Street.

JM: That was a very important contact then.

SS: It was extremely important and actually probably for a year or so, in the 60s, I used his address on Date Street for International General; it's no longer there, doubly ironically. The street was taken over by the World Trade Center, so it doesn't exist any more and now, of course, the World Trade Center doesn't exist any more. Melvin papers, London.

¹¹⁰ Siegelaub to Reise 2/1/71, Barbara Reise papers, TGA 786/5/1/5, London. Letter also sent to Townsend, Siegelaub file to 1972, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

them the drafts and questionnaires.¹¹¹ He signed off by stating: 'It's a lot of work for nothing but you know me I wouldn't have it any other way.'¹¹²

Townsend replied immediately and favourably. He wanted to see the material as soon as possible, and told Siegelaub that he would like to reproduce the contract and information on it, together with artists' statements. He also would need the material promptly if there was to be any chance of its inclusion in the April issue. Townsend suggested that Siegelaub contact Lord Goodman, the chairman of the Arts Council because he was 'more concerned with the arts than any lawyer in England'.¹¹³ It is not surprising that Townsend responded with enthusiasm to Siegelaub because he had a high regard for his work and innovations and shared his political affiliations. The publication of the contract in *SI* cemented their friendship which lasted until Townsend died.

Siegelaub replied to Townsend by return, stating that he was 'giving the project his full attention (for no money) until early March'.¹¹⁴ Siegelaub stated that he was working with a number of lawyers in the US and Europe to produce a workable and enforceable bill of sale contract to provide the artist with basic controls after selling their work, the aims for which he set out as follows:

1. Control over where the work can be shown
2. Control over reproduction in books
3. Retention of 15% residue interest in work when it is sold at an increased price

¹¹¹ Siegelaub to Reise 2/1/71, Barbara Reise papers, TGA 786/5/1/5, London. Siegelaub contacted Bridget Riley, Allen Jones, John Hoyland, Bill Turnbull, Anthony Caro, William Tucker, Richard Smith, John Kasmin and Leslie Waddington. The present author has not found any records of responses from them.

¹¹² Siegelaub to Townsend, 2/1/71, S file to 1972, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 2008, London.

¹¹³ Townsend letter to Siegelaub, 15/1/71, S file to 1972, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

¹¹⁴ Siegelaub reported to Townsend that neither he nor Robert Projansky received payment; it was done 'for the pure pleasure of the problem.' 18/1/71, S file to 1972, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

There were two additional important points: the artist's consent must be sought before the work's inclusion in an exhibition (although this should not be unreasonably withheld), and the artist would have the right to borrow back the work for a maximum of sixty days in any three-year period.

Siegelaub told Townsend that he was speaking to everyone he could in the world about what it should contain and 'so far the response has been very good.'¹¹⁵ Hastening his original time-frame, he agreed he would supply camera-ready copy by 1 March.

Townsend received Siegelaub's instructions for circulating the draft, information and questionnaire at the beginning of February 1971.¹¹⁶ It was a standard letter, sent to 500 people in the international art community and declaring Siegelaub and Projansky's intentions to 'remedy some generally acknowledged inequalities in the art world, particularly artists' lack of control over the use of their work and participation in its economics after they no longer own it.'¹¹⁷ In this letter, Siegelaub predicted that, within a few months, the agreement would be 'the standard instrument for the transfer of all contemporary art'.¹¹⁸ The first circulated draft of the contract had twenty articles, the last of which required any breach of the agreement to be settled by 'arbitration in accordance with the rules of the American Arbitration Association'.¹¹⁹ In the event, a decision was taken by Projansky to delete Article 20 before the agreement went to print. He and Siegelaub considered that removing the article since it referred to specifically to American Arbitration rules would make it useable internationally.

The questionnaire was very simple, asking if there were any additions needed, or parts of the agreement the reader would not use and, if not, why not. Respondents were also asked 'do you have a public statement to make about the agreement, its use and implications? May we say publicly that you endorse

¹¹⁵ Siegelaub letter to Townsend, 18/01/71, S file to 1972, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

¹¹⁶ Siegelaub letter to Townsend, 31/1/71, S file to 1972, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

¹¹⁷ Siegelaub, 31/1/71, S file to 1972, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

¹¹⁸ Siegelaub, 31/1/71, S file to 1972, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

¹¹⁹ Siegelaub, 31/1/71, S file to 1972, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

the use of this agreement?’¹²⁰ Each recipient was asked to copy all the documents freely and circulate them to anyone who may be interested. The covering letter announced that he and Projansky would hold a feedback meeting on 8 March, at the Graduate Art Students Club of New York University in Washington Square.

In March, Townsend wrote to Siegelaub to tell him they would be running the contract in April despite the fact that ‘it takes up too much damned room’!¹²¹ Townsend expressed the hope that Siegelaub would like the way it was set out, because they had to separate the introductory text (which they put in the ticketboard section) from the actual contract (which sat in the main body of the magazine).¹²²

Christos Gianokos, a New York-based artist who had participated in Lippard’s *Groups* exhibition, designed the layout of the contract and the poster insert discussed below. SVA covered the cost of preparing and printing the final publication.¹²³ A colour facsimile of Gianokos’s design for the poster formed the cover of *SI*’s April 1971 issue. Siegelaub’s introduction explained the contract under a series of headings and asserted its rationale to address the inequalities regarding artists’ control of their work.¹²⁴ The first heading: ‘what the agreement does’, outlined that it would provide: 15% of the increase in value any time the work was transferred; a record of who owns the work; the right to be notified on exhibition, to advise on it or to veto it; the right to borrow the work for 2 months every five years; the right to be consulted if repairs were needed; half the rental income if any came to the owner during exhibition; full reproduction rights. The other headings were: ‘when to use the agreement’,

¹²⁰ Siegelaub, 31/1/71, S file to 1972, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

¹²¹ Townsend letter to Siegelaub 16/03/21, S file to 1972, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

¹²² Townsend, 16/03/21, S file to 1972, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

¹²³ Siegelaub informed the present author of the SVA’s involvement. This contact came through Joseph Kosuth who enlisted the support of Silas Rhodes the head of the school. Unpublished interview transcript, 25/2/08, Melvin papers, London. See Chapter 6 Lippard’s *Groups* exhibition.

¹²⁴ Siegelaub, ‘The artist’s reserved rights transfer and sale agreement, the background.’ *SI*, Vol. 181, No. 932, p. 142.

'how to use the agreement', 'the dealer, the facts of life, you, the art world and the agreement', 'enforcement' and 'summation'.¹²⁵

In his introduction, Siegelaub remarked that, for the dealer, the agreement formalises information that is more generally haphazardly acquired, through exhibition lists and catalogues, dinner party conversations, gossip or rumour.¹²⁶ Ideally it would operate as a database of all works in circulation. Favouring collaboration and partnership, he believed that the artist, dealer and collector would each benefit from this clarification of their roles. He concluded, 'what we have done for the artist is the legal beginning point for the transfer of a work of art, as a substitute for what presently exists now [...] nothing'.¹²⁷

When the magazine went to press, in April 1971, Siegelaub was still operating as an art dealer,¹²⁸ although he had already begun negotiating with the gallery owner, Leo Castelli, about representing his core group of artists, to ensure a smooth transition when he withdrew from the art world to concentrate on radical left publishing innovations.¹²⁹ Siegelaub expressed the view that dealers should be given a fee by the artists from their percentage share of the resale value, and he suggested that one third might be a fair proportion.

The artist's agreement comprised a series of points determining the scope of obligation and responsibility. The contract covered details such as terms for payment by instalment, who would be responsible for transport costs and rights over how and where the work is displayed. Siegelaub's introduction stated that the agreement was ready to use, but that the artist should get his lawyer to check it over.¹³⁰ The introduction further elaborated that the collector would only pay 15% to the artist if the work made money, nothing if not. This meant that artificially inflated values would have to be agreed between artist

¹²⁵ Siegelaub, "The artist's reserved rights transfer and sale agreement, the background." *SI*, Vol. 181, No. 932, pp. 142-4.

¹²⁶ Siegelaub, "The artist's reserved rights transfer and sale agreement, the background." *SI*, Vol. 181, No. 932 p. 143.

¹²⁷ Siegelaub, "The artist's reserved rights transfer and sale agreement, the background." *SI*, Vol. 181, No. 932 p. 143.

¹²⁸ Siegelaub's work as a dealer and publisher has been discussed in Chapters 4 and 5.

¹²⁹ Siegelaub, unpublished interview transcript, 31/10/08, Melvin Papers, London.

¹³⁰ Siegelaub, "The artist's reserved rights transfer and sale agreement, the background." *SI*, Vol. 181, No. 932 p. 143.

and collector so the collector would raise the stakes and the artist would benefit. Siegelaub observed that this may increase the collector's standing in the art community by demonstrating commitment and an act of faith in the work.¹³¹

A couple of months after publication, Siegelaub updated Townsend on how his strategies for the contract's distribution were evolving, according to three principal tactics. The first was printing the agreement as a poster in magazines and newspapers; 'as of this moment about 150,000 are printed with many more to come'.¹³² The second strategy involved meeting dealers and their lawyers and accountants, to explore how the contract would affect them from a tax, legal and administrative perspective and explain how it could be used most effectively, and he remarked that some galleries might distribute it as part of their literature. The third strategy involved soliciting translations from lawyers in France, Germany, Italy, Spain and Japan, which were also to be distributed as a poster via the art press, and he listed some of the artists who were in the process of using it.¹³³ In June 1971, Siegelaub told Townsend that, by the middle of 1972, he hoped to have one million copies printed and distributed. He also expressed his appreciation of Townsend's support for the project.¹³⁴ He had secured the agreement of Harald Szeemann, the organiser of *Documenta 5* in Kassel (1972) that the contract would be reproduced in the catalogue in English, French and German.

SI was the first magazine to publish the contract and instructions for its use. *Domus*, Milan, included the poster 'the artist's reserved rights and transfer sales agreement', in April 1971, but not the instructions. Siegelaub's plans for distribution in other magazines as poster inserts were also realised.¹³⁵

¹³¹ Siegelaub, "The artist's reserved rights transfer and sale agreement, the background." *SI*. Vol. 181, No. 932 p. 143.

¹³² Siegelaub letter to Townsend, 8/6/71, S file to 1972, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

¹³³ The listed artists were Beuys, Mangold, Dibbets, Novros, Metz, Andre, Ruscha, Diao, Rauschenberg, Huebler, Haacke, Rockburne, Bochner and Marden.

¹³⁴ Siegelaub, 8/6/71, S file to 1972, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

¹³⁵ Eichhorn, *Artist's Contract*, lists the publications of the contract, including *SI*, Vol. 181, No. 932, April 1971, *New York Element*, New York, June-July, 1971 poster insert and an interview with Siegelaub and Projansky was published in the issue, in September 1971 the *Museumjournaal* Amsterdam, included the poster insert, in February *Data*, Milan included the poster in English and French and translated Siegelaub's introduction for its use into Italian. In 1972, *Documenta 5*, catalogue had the insert poster in English, French and Italian. (pp. 302-3.)

At the end of January 1971, Townsend tipped off Caroline Tisdall, art critic for the *Guardian*, about Siegelaub's intention to bring artists' resale rights more in line with the music industry. Tisdall responded by writing an article in February, entitled 'Fairer Share of the Spoils', in which she described how Siegelaub – best known as an exhibition organiser in the Conceptual field – had drafted the contract after extensive discussion with artists, dealers, collectors, museum staff and lawyers. She perceived that this project was driven by 'a general feeling of indignation about the treatment of the artist once his work is subject to the inequities of the art market'.¹³⁶ She gave an example of the net gain, with a work priced at £50, sold after ten years for £3,050, the artist's 15% share would be £750, and speculated that the question of whether or not it would work was dependent on universal agreement over its use.¹³⁷

The widespread use Siegelaub desired for the contract was not forthcoming for several reasons. In the first place, friends and collaborators undertook the translations,¹³⁸ and the law varied from country to country, making the process more complex than anticipated, especially since the legal work and translations were all being done for free. However, some artists, such as Hans Haacke, consistently used the contract. In 1987, Roberta Smith reported in the *New York Times* on the resale at Christie's of Haacke's 1975 work, *On Social Grease*.¹³⁹ She described the sale as 'a little bit of history' because it was the first time a work by Haacke had been sold at auction, and, since the sale was linked in to the 'Artists' Reserved Rights and Transfer of Sales Agreement [sic]', the artist received royalties of \$13,500 based on the sale price achieved of \$90,000.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁶ Caroline Tisdall, "Fairer Share of the Spoils." *Guardian*, 23 February 1971, p. 8

¹³⁷ Tisdall, *Guardian*, 1971, p. 8.

¹³⁸ Michel Claura in France, Paris-based lawyer, Konrad Fischer in Germany, the dealer and gallery owner and exhibition organiser and in Italy the art critics Germano Celant and Tommaso Trini.

¹³⁹ Haacke, *On Social Grease*, 1975, consists of six rectangular magnesium plaques, each engraved with a different quotation from businessmen and politicians concerning the validity and importance of the arts to business practice. One of the most striking is from David Rockefeller. At the time of the work's creation he was vice-president of the Museum of Modern Art and chairman of Chase Manhattan Bank.

¹⁴⁰ Roberta Smith, "When artists seek royalties on their resales." *New York Times*, 31 May 1987, accessed 26 December 2010. This was more than double the estimated sale price of \$30,000-\$40,000, when his dues would have been between \$4,550 and \$6,000.

In interview, Lawrence Weiner reported that the contract was the only scheme Siegelaub organised with which he could find no accord. Weiner could not understand why someone who had bought a work some time ago, stored it and so on should not be entitled to all the gains made – if any – since they had made the investment in the first place. Weiner compared art transactions with those made in real estate, in which the vendor retains any net gain accrued during their period of ownership.¹⁴¹ The present author's consideration is that his analogy does not account for the different character of intellectual property.

Nonetheless, the efforts of Siegelaub and Projansky made a significant contribution to the debate.¹⁴² While there was idealism in the project, its main tenet was that the artist should be held responsible for how work should be shown, and that the rights for reproduction remained the property of the creator. That this was not enshrined into law until 1988 in the UK and 1990 in the US is quite astonishing.¹⁴³

Conceptual Art and politics: Siegelaub's reply to Benjamin Buchloh

In 1989, the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris organised an exhibition entitled *L'art conceptuel: une perspective*. The art historian, Benjamin Buchloh, contributed an essay to the catalogue, 'Conceptual Art 1962–1969: From the Aesthetic of Administration to the Critique of Institutions', a revised version of which was reprinted in the *October* journal, in winter 1990.¹⁴⁴ Rather than providing a full discussion of Buchloh's analysis here, it is sufficient to note that which is strictly relevant to it. Buchloh concentrated on the formal qualities of the movement within a historical trajectory, from Minimalism, to Conceptual Art's confrontation of 'the full range of the implication of Duchamp's legacies'

¹⁴¹ Weiner, unpublished interview transcript, 30/3/05, Melvin papers, London.

¹⁴² Siegelaub, "Information about the use of the agreement." unpaginated typescript, S file to 1972, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

¹⁴³ Eichhorn, "Introduction." *Artist's Contract*, p. 9.

¹⁴⁴ Buchloh, "Conceptual Art 1962-1969: From the Aesthetic of Administration to the Critique of Institutions." *October*, Vol. 55 (Winter, 1990) pp. 105-143.

without drawing attention to the atmosphere of protest, social upheaval at that time and the Anglo-American-European exchanges between artists.¹⁴⁵

The lack of context in Buchloh's history of the period, in which Vietnam is not even mentioned in a footnote, caused Siegelaub to come out in print – one of few occasions he had done so after his withdrawal from the art world in 1972. His published response to Buchloh's essay was printed in *October*, winter 1991.¹⁴⁶ Siegelaub's reply focused attention on Buchloh's formalist interpretation of Duchampian precedents in Conceptual Art practice as divorced from the context of the period. In the process, he noted that Buchloh's analysis 'has little, if any relationship to the social, economic, cultural, i.e., historical period it pretends to describe [...].'¹⁴⁷ In his reply to Buchloh Siegelaub noted that 'the exclusion of Andre from the beginnings of this history is especially revealing; it is nothing less than the exclusion of the political.'¹⁴⁸ Siegelaub observed that the influential critics from the period focused on by Buchloh were no longer engaged with writing about it, with the exceptions of Lippard and, to a lesser extent, Harrison and Claura. One reason he gave for this may be because the artists 'identified with this current were so vocal and literate about their work and thus partly excluded the need for a critical backup.'¹⁴⁹

To emphasise the atmosphere of common purpose, Siegelaub presented a 'random list' of about a hundred artists, 'pressure groups, magazines, editors, critics, sponsors, gallerists, movements, organisations, who contributed in one way of another to the formation of a movement called [...] Conceptual Art'.¹⁵⁰ It included Andre, Dibbets, Arnatt, Flanagan, Merz, Long, Darboven, Kozlov, Willoughby Sharp, Peter Townsend, Germano Celant, Michel Claura, Konrad Fischer, Tomasso Trini, the AWC, Guerrilla Art Action Group, the Black

¹⁴⁵ Buchloh, *October*, Vol. 55, p. 107.

¹⁴⁶ Joseph Kosuth and Seth Siegelaub, "Replies to Benjamin Buchloh." *October*, Vol. 57, Summer 1991, pp. 152-7. The replies are separate, Siegelaub's reply follows Kosuth's.

¹⁴⁷ Siegelaub, "Reply to Benjamin Buchloh." *October*, Vol. 57, p. 155.

¹⁴⁸ Siegelaub, *October*, Vol. 57, p. 157.

¹⁴⁹ Siegelaub, *October*, Vol. 57, p. 155.

¹⁵⁰ Siegelaub, *October*, Vol. 57, p. 157.

Panthers, the US Servicemen's Fund, the Bay of Pigs, Kent State and 'lest we forget, the Vietnam War.'¹⁵¹

In interview with the present author twenty years after his response was published, Siegelaub recounted finding it astonishing that the effect of the Vietnam war had consistently been evacuated from accounts of the period, as if it had been irrelevant to art practice.¹⁵² This omission stills rankles with Siegelaub, who presumes that the elimination of history from the discussion of art explains why the Iraq war has largely been overlooked in contemporary practice.¹⁵³ In much the same way, Townsend regarded Buchloh's insistence on a formalist analysis – to the exclusion of the social and political – as a serious oversight; he could not give credence to an analysis which failed to mention historical context.

'Gurgles around the Guggenheim'

The title of this section is shared with the title of *SI*'s report published in June 1971 considering events at three exhibitions perceived to have shared concerns. Two of these were held at the Solomon R Guggenheim Museum in New York; the third was at the Tate Gallery in London. These were: the removal of Daniel Buren's work from the *Guggenheim Sixth International*, without his permission, the day before the opening on 10 February 1971; the cancellation of Hans Haacke's exhibition, which had been due to open at the Guggenheim on 1 April 1971; and the temporary closure of Robert Morris's exhibition at the Tate Gallery on 4 May 1971, which saw 'the main part of the exhibition – primarily designed for participation [being] removed on the grounds that it had become dangerous through the *overzealous participation* of visitors'.¹⁵⁴

SI's treatment of the Guggenheim's withdrawal of Buren's work and the cancellation of Haacke's exhibition plus the decision by the Tate Gallery to close the Robert Morris exhibition and reconfigure it on health and safety grounds is

¹⁵¹ Siegelaub, *October*, Vol. 57, p. 157.

¹⁵² Siegelaub, unpublished interview transcript, 24/2/08, Melvin Papers, London.

¹⁵³ Siegelaub, unpublished interview transcript 24/2/08, Melvin Papers, London.

¹⁵⁴ Reise, "Gurgles around the Guggenheim." *SI*, Vol. 181, No. 934, June 1971, p. 246; emphasis added by present author.

characteristic of the magazine's focus on political discussion. Townsend's decision to present a thorough investigation of the cancellation was grounded in his confidence in Reise's commitment to fair representation of each party's position. Reise and Townsend were interested in the way these three exhibitions, which were handled differently, raised the question of political and social responsibility in an art context. Discussion of Haacke's intentions for the exhibition entered the public domain following the decision taken by Guggenheim Director, Thomas M Messer, to cancel it.

In an interview, published in *Arts Magazine* in May 1971, after the Guggenheim exhibition had cancelled, but recorded a few months earlier, Haacke alluded to his proposals for the exhibition. One, *The Gallery Goer's Profile*, was a demographic record of the places of residence of visitors to his exhibition at Howard Wise Gallery (New York, 1970), during which visitors were invited to mark their home with a blue pin on a map of the city. Haacke photographed the 730 or so locations, which he planned to exhibit, arranged by location. The work demonstrated that most gallery-goers lived in the areas inhabited by the middle and upper income strata of society or 'their drop out children',¹⁵⁵ as represented by downtown locations. The work, *Real Estate Piece Number Two*, which provoked the controversial decision, was not referred to in the *Arts Magazine* interview. From Haacke's statement published in *SI*, June 1971, we learn that it involved the presentation 'of large Manhattan real-estate holdings, photographs of the facades of the properties with documentary information taken from the public records of the County Clerk's office'.¹⁵⁶ The third work was a poll of visitors to the exhibition, comprising ten demographic questions and ten opinion questions on current socio-political issues'.¹⁵⁷ It would use the same principles as those of the *MoMA-Poll* (1970) when the answers would become part of the piece.

In the *Information* exhibition, Haacke's *MoMA-Poll* drew attention to the connections between the trustees of MoMA and the Metropolitan Museum and

¹⁵⁵ Jeanne Siegel, An interview with Hans Haacke, (Ed) Alexander Alberro and Blake Stimson, *Conceptual Art: a critical anthology*, 1999, MIT, previously published *Arts Magazine*, No. 45, May 1971.

¹⁵⁶ Haacke, "Statement." *SI*, Vol. 181, No. 934, June 1971, p. 249.

¹⁵⁷ Haacke, "Statement." *SI*, Vol. 181, No. 934, June 1971, p. 249.

US foreign policy decisions. The work invited visitors to answer a question and put the paper into a ballot box. Haacke used the catalogue to announce the work's remit, 'a question referring to a socio-political issue posted above two transparent boxes, one for the answer of 'each either/or question.' The ballots would be counted photo-electronically and the poll results would be available during the exhibition.¹⁵⁸ The question was: 'Would the fact that Governor Rockefeller had not denounced President Nixon's Indochina policy be a reason for you not to vote for him in November?'¹⁵⁹ The *Information* show recorded 12.4 % visitors participated in Haacke's *MoMA-Poll*, 68.7 % voted against Rockefeller, 37.3 % for him.¹⁶⁰ David Rockefeller – one of the brothers of Nelson Rockefeller, a previous trustee and chairman of the board of MoMA – was incensed by the AWC's distribution of the My Lai Massacre poster during the protest at the museum and also by Haacke's work, which was included in the *Information* exhibition.¹⁶¹

Reise's editorial in the June issue of *SI*, 'Gurgles around the Guggenheim', presented the background to, and links between, the three events. Reise identified these events as 'interrelated because they call into question the relationship between the public museums or galleries and artists whom they invite to exhibit, the responsibilities of such institutions when they exhibit the work of living artists and the responsibilities of the artists themselves to both institution and public.'¹⁶² The editorial noted that the July/August issue would contain interviews conducted by Reise in New York at the Guggenheim and at the Tate Gallery and would deal with the issues raised and address the implications caused by the institutional handling of the circumstances.¹⁶³

Five pages of the ticketboard section were given over to the investigation of the two Guggenheim occurrences which began with Reise's overview and was

¹⁵⁸ Haacke, *Information*, MoMA 1970, New York, Exhibition catalogue, p. 57.

¹⁵⁹ Hans Haacke "Lessons Learned." Tate papers, Landmark Exhibition issue, <http://www.tate.org.uk/research/tatesearch/tatepapers/09autumn/haacke.shtm> last accessed 30/12/2010.

¹⁶⁰ Haacke noted the gallery numbers in attendance as 299,057, "Lessons Learned" Tate papers, Landmark Exhibition issue.

¹⁶¹ David Rockefeller states his opposition to the 'infamous *Information* exhibition' *Memoirs*, New York, 2002, p. 254.

¹⁶² Reise, "Gurgles around the Guggenheim." *SI*, Vol. 181, No. 934, p. 246.

¹⁶³ Reise, "Gurgles around the Guggenheim." *SI*, Vol. 181, No. 934, p. 246.

followed by accounts from the main protagonists; in both cases, the host institution and the artist had their say. First came Daniel Buren's statement, entitled 'Round and about a detour', which set out the facts, timescale and the eventual veto of his work, *painting 1*, by artists, led by Dan Flavin, who threatened to withdraw their contributions unless the Buren work was removed. They objected to the fact that the scale and siting of Buren's work interferred with their own works. Buren explained that his proposal, which involved the installation of two interrelated works, one to be installed in the museum's central atrium, from the dome to the first ramp at the bottom and the other sited externally at a location specified by the museum, had been accepted by the Guggenheim in October 1970.¹⁶⁴ He remarked that when he arrived to install *painting 1* a group of artists led by Flavin threatened to withdraw from the exhibition unless his work was removed. Buren reported that the museum asked him to show only the externally sited work and offered him a solo exhibition immediately after the group show finished. Before he could reply the work was removed.¹⁶⁵

The statement by Diane Waldman, the organiser of the *Sixth Guggenheim International*, followed. In this, she explained that the aims of her exhibition were 'to highlight some of the developments of the last five years, that is since the previous *Guggenheim International* in 1967'.¹⁶⁶ She also pointed out that many of the artists made work intended to be sited specifically within the architectural situation of the rotunda, and that this was a unique opportunity for the museum as well as the artists. She related how artists had been asked to move to accommodate others, resulting, in some cases, in ideas being recast or different work being presented. In her statement, Waldman noted the need for compromise between artist and curator and between curator and institution. In effect the curator was the buffer between the artist and the institution. She noted that 'this was a strenuous exercise at best.'¹⁶⁷ When the work for the exhibition had yet to be created the division of responsibilities between artist and curator became more complicated than the simple binary division of

¹⁶⁴ Buren, "Round and about a detour." *SI*, Vol. 181, No. 934, p. 246.

¹⁶⁵ Buren, "Round and about a detour." *SI*, Vol. 181, p. 246.

¹⁶⁶ Waldman, "Statement." *SI*, Vol. 181, p. 247.

¹⁶⁷ Waldman, "Statement." *SI*, Vol. 181, p. 248.

responsibility for the work as the artist's and responsibility for the presentation of the work in the exhibition as the curator's.¹⁶⁸ In this exhibition, it was a case of accommodating one artist at the expense of several or the other way round.

The letter Thomas M Messer sent to Haacke was published next, under the title: 'The cancellation of Haacke's exhibition, Thomas M. Messer's misgivings'. Dated 19 March 1971, Messer's concerns over a libel suit were paramount, specifically in relation to Haacke's proposal 'to devote separate exhibits to physical, biological and social systems. From subsequent detailed outlines it appeared that the social category would include a real-estate survey pointing through word and picture to alleged social malpractices [...] naming and thereby publicly exposing individuals and companies whom you consider at fault [...] we cannot go ahead with such an exhibition outline'.¹⁶⁹ After raising doubts about the legal point of view that Haacke's finding could be unassailable if a libel suit were directed at the museum he pointed out that 'a muckraking venture under the auspices of The Solomon Guggenheim Foundation raises serious questions'.¹⁷⁰ He referred to the museum's charter that was in pursuit of the aesthetic and educational objectives which 'are self-sufficient and without ulterior motive'.¹⁷¹ And that this should be done without 'using political means to achieve political ends'.¹⁷²

The next section of the magazine presented Haacke's statement on the cancellation, interspersed with Messer's subsequent reply to Haacke. This was organised as if it were the transcript of an interview, with Haacke's statement laid out in Times New Roman and Messer's responses italicised in the same typeface. Edward Fry, the curator responsible for Haacke's exhibition, who had worked closely with the artist, co-signed the artist's reply, as a result of which he was sacked by the museum. Haacke explained that the information he

¹⁶⁸ Waldman, "Statement." *SI*, Vol. 181, p. 248.

¹⁶⁹ Messer, "The cancellation of Haacke's exhibition: Thomas M Messer's 'misgivings'." *SI*, Vol. 181, p. 248.

¹⁷⁰ Messer, "The cancellation of Haacke's exhibition: Thomas M Messer's 'misgivings'." *SI*, Vol. 181, p. 248.

¹⁷¹ Messer, "The cancellation of Haacke's exhibition: Thomas M Messer's 'misgivings'." *SI*, Vol. 181, p. 248.

¹⁷² Messer, "The cancellation of Haacke's exhibition: Thomas M Messer's 'misgivings'." *SI*, Vol. 181, p. 249.

presented alongside the Manhattan real estate holdings were collected from the county clerk's office and that there was no 'evaluative comment' in the work.¹⁷³ The last word in *SI*'s layout was Messer's, stating that he had consulted the museum's board, which had agreed to his recommendations that the work was unsuited for presentation in the gallery.¹⁷⁴

One confusing aspect of these events which rankled at the *SI* editorial office, not to mention with Haacke, was that the political character of his work was known at the time the Guggenheim exhibition was being discussed, for example, his work with the AWC and involvement in protests at MoMA as well as his contribution to the *Information* exhibition in 1970. This makes the response to Haacke's proposed work more surprising if one considers that the Guggenheim management knew what he was proposing to do.

The July/August 1971 issue of *SI* again dedicated a significant amount of space to the controversial exhibitions and to Reise's analysis of the connections between them. Since she had already begun her account of the debacles of the three exhibitions in the previous issue, she used the Reiseian trope of continuation in this issue. Four articles, beginning with 'A tail [*sic*] of two exhibitions: The aborted Haacke and Robert Morris shows', then two interviews, one conducted by Reise between Messer and Fry, followed by one with Messer alone, the discussion concluded with the Tate Gallery Director, Norman Reid's article entitled 'The limits of collecting'.¹⁷⁵

In her introduction Reise pointed out that, despite the exhibitions in question having been scheduled a year in advance, the museum's staff discovered late in the process that artists were 'planning something with which the museums could not deal: and told them so'.¹⁷⁶ Both Haacke and Morris had been asked to adjust their proposals in order to be accommodated by the galleries; but the institutions handled the situation very differently. The Tate Gallery set up close discussions with the artist and the gallery staff responsible for the project and

¹⁷³ Haacke, "Statement." *SI*, Vol. 181, p. 249.

¹⁷⁴ Messer, "The cancellation of Haacke's exhibition: Thomas M Messer's 'misgivings'." *SI*, Vol. 181, p. 250.

¹⁷⁵ Reid, "The limits of collecting." *SI*, Vol. 182, No. 935, July/August 1971, (pp. 39-40), p. 39.

¹⁷⁶ Reise, "A tail of two exhibitions: The aborted Haacke and Robert Morris Shows." *SI*, Vol. 182, No. 935, July/August 1971, p. 30.

took a calculated risk to go ahead with the exhibition and open it as planned on the 28 April but had to close it because the public ‘went mad’. Reise noted that the Tate Gallery’s decision enabled Morris’s work to have a public trial and that the decision to close it on what would now be called health and safety grounds was mutually taken by the artist and the gallery. The discussion of the Morris exhibition, continued in Norman Reid’s article, which comprised the answers to five questions Reise put to him, will be returned to below. By contrast the Guggenheim’s decision was not arrived at jointly. Reise pointed out that the Guggenheim’s assumptions about Haacke’s photographs ‘with names culled from public records’, without bothering to check the legal implications of their display, meant that the ‘rationale for cancellation was based on untested assumptions used to criticise the work before it was seen in public.’¹⁷⁷ After Reise’s scene-setting the discussion segued into the interviews, ‘Background to the foreground: the Haacke exhibition Edward Fry and Thomas M. Messer’ the transcripts of which both of them checked and approved before publication.¹⁷⁸ It was obvious from the interview that the museum’s internal parameters of responsibility were not clearly defined. This was followed by ‘ “which is in fact what happened”: Thomas M. Messer in an interview with Reise’ and the publication of six of Haacke’s photographs of different Manhattan tenement blocks.¹⁷⁹ In response to requests from *SI* to Haacke for the information on the form of publication, captions and the works relation to public records, he provided the following statement in a letter to Barbara Reise, printed in the issue as follows:

The quotation marks on the photos are to indicate that these are fictionalized personal names. All other information is real. The caption and the photos are essentially the same as those presented to the Guggenheim. [...] I retained the fictionalized names for Studio because I thought the material should appear in the form in which it was rejected. All information is collected from the public

¹⁷⁷ Reise, “A tail of two exhibitions: The aborted Haacke and Robert Morris Shows.” *SI*, Vol. 182, No. 935, p. 30.

¹⁷⁸ Reise, “A tail of two exhibitions: The aborted Haacke and Robert Morris Shows.” *SI*, Vol. 181, No. 935, p. 30.

¹⁷⁹ Haacke, photographs, *SI*, Vol. 181, No. 935, p. 33.

records at the New York County Clerk's Office, [...], both deeds and contracts on mortgages are there (photostats).¹⁸⁰

Significantly, these articles on exhibition management were included in the main part of the magazine, rather than the ticketboard section, which would have been the expected place for news, interviews and polemical statements. Reid's article was illustrated with a Garland cartoon from the *Daily Telegraph*, in which Ted Heath stood among Tate staff, holding a newspaper with the headline: 'Tate action sculpture wrecked', which contained the caption: 'We wanted people to participate, the trouble is they went bloody mad!'¹⁸¹

In the wake of these two issues, many letters were sent to Townsend, expressing admiration for Reise's even-handed reportage, and the fact that the magazine published Haacke's photographs. Willoughby Sharp wrote to congratulate Townsend on a 'thankless task on a subject no American magazine would (or could) do in depth'.¹⁸²

¹⁸⁰ Haacke, "Statement." *SI*, Vol. 181, No. 935, p. 33.

¹⁸¹ Reid, *SI*, Vol. 182, No. 935, p. 39.

¹⁸² Sharp to Townsend, not dated, received 19/8/71, S file to 1972, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

Chapter 8

Kantor and Beuys: Hilton and Broodthaers: connectivity and the *SI* archive

During his ten-year tenure as editor of *SI*, Peter Townsend assembled a disparate group of artists as an integral part of his work. When Townsend was asked to review the highlights of his editorship he would list the projects referred to here. These cases, along with those presented in the previous chapters, he considered the most significant in ensuring the magazine's importance. This chapter continues the narrative of the magazine by drawing attention to the contributions of Tadeusz Kantor, Joseph Beuys, Roger Hilton and Marcel Broodthaers. Kantor, the Polish artist whose radical Constructivist practice combined painting, sculpture and performance, came to Townsend's notice through Richard Demarco, who directed a gallery in Edinburgh and organised events during the Edinburgh Festival. Joseph Beuys, Professor of Sculpture at Dusseldorf Art Academy, was introduced to Townsend by Georg Jappe, the art critic and friend of the innovative dealer and gallery owner Konrad Fischer. Roger Hilton, a painter of the St Ives School and friend of Patrick Heron, had exhibited with Waddington Tooth Galleries in London and won the John Moores Painting Prize, Liverpool Biennial in 1963. Marcel Broodthaers, Belgian artist and former poet, was introduced to Townsend by Barbara Reise when Broodthaers lived in Kentish Town, London, near Reise's home, on and off between 1974-6.

Constructivism in Eastern Europe

While a comprehensive treatment of the practices from behind the Iron Curtain that were represented during the period of Townsend's editorship merits a separate survey, this discussion serves to draw attention to this key area in the history of *SI*. Townsend was sympathetic to small artists' cooperatives like those which flourished in the Eastern Bloc. This grew out of his experience in China, where his allegiances were to equality of education and the shared profits of cooperative farming and industry. Richard Demarco sent

Townsend regular information about his plans. Demarco directed an innovative programme of exhibitions and related events which became particularly diverse during the Edinburgh Festival. Demarco was the key figure who connected Beuys with Kantor and Townsend and provided a venue in the UK for artists from Eastern Europe to show their work. The focus of the following discussion is to set out how Townsend responded to these practices.

Since *SI*'s Gabo issue in April 1966 there had been a clear editorial commitment to Constructivism as well as to its fluid influence on kinetics and happenings. In February 1970, Eugen Brikcius,¹ Czech artist and writer who was studying at UCL, suggested to Townsend that Jindřich Chalupecký, critic and art historian should write about recent conceptual practices in Prague. Townsend was favourable to the idea, because there had been little documentation of east European art in the mainstream western art magazines.² Following Brikcius's suggestion, Townsend wrote to Chalupecký at the beginning of April 1970 to request an occasional article on contemporary art in Prague and Czechoslovakia.³ Chalupecký accepted the commission and a week later sent an outline of what he considered to be the diffuse practices evident in Czech and Slovak art at the start of the decade. For him, this formed 'a complicated picture [...] with no cohesion of schools [in which] artistic personalities made themselves more felt than aesthetic doctrines'.⁴ *SI*'s September 1970 issue included Chalupecký's first column. It also contained Joseph Beuys's artist's pages. Beuys's contributions will be examined after a consideration of Chalupecký's article.

In June Chalupecký wrote to Townsend asking him to omit the article's opening paragraph in which he explained how Czechoslovakian artists were

¹ Eugen Brikcius, "Happenings in Prague." *SI*, Vol. 179, No. 919, February 1970, pp. 78-9.

² *Schmuck* (1972-8) magazine, edited in Dorset by Filipe Ehrenberg, Martha Hellion and David Mayor, Beau Geste Press, eight editions produced, dedicated to art specific countries, Czechoslovakia, France, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Japan, Yugoslavia and Poland. Special Collections, Chelsea College of Art, London.

³ Townsend letter to Jindrich Chalupecký, 3/4/70, C correspondence to 1972, *SI*, Peter Townsend's editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

⁴ Jindrich Chalupecký, typescript, "Letter from Prague." September 1970 file, *SI*, Peter Townsend's editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

organised into a union.⁵ He told Townsend that the information was 'misleading', as the situation had changed in the intervening months. Townsend left it out as requested. However it seems relevant to include it here because it explains the background to the connections between state sponsorship and the policies of avant-garde galleries.

Twenty years ago Czechoslovakia adopted the Soviet system of organising artists. Until then art life centred around [*sic*] art associations the way it was customary in Central Europe. These associations which represented various art trends had also their own galleries. The abolition of these associations and the concentration of all artists into a single official organisation undermined this traditional system and there was a danger that the majority of conventional artists might gain absolute power. This did not happen however. After sometime the old traditions were re-established within this new form, and the monopolistic union of artists has put galleries in charge of commissioners whose own artistic persuasion varied, achieving thereby again a differentiation. Actually one of the best galleries at one of the main streets of Prague, the Spalova gallery, is put at the disposal of the avant-garde artists. No changes occurred even during the recent political upheavals. There could have existed a legitimate fear that the situation could have been exploited by unsuccessful artists, but exhibitions continue unhindered by the assurances of politicians that they do not intend to intervene is borne out into practice.⁶

Chalupecký referred to a series of exhibitions at the Spalova Gallery. These included Eva Kmentova's one-day event, *footprints*, in which a series of plaster cast footprints led to a floor-to-ceiling window on the upper floor. Otherwise the gallery was empty. Chalupecký referred to it as 'a paradoxical sculpture, [...]

⁵ Chalupecký to Townsend, 5/6/70, September 1970 file, *SI*, Peter Townsend's editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

⁶ Chalupecký to Townsend, 5/6/70, September 1970 file, *SI*, Peter Townsend's editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

of absence, [...] abandoned space [...] was the meaning of these empty footprints, leading into empty space above the street.’⁷ (Figure 8.93.)

Chalupecký explained that performance art events in Prague were called manifestations, and these were indigenous to the city and independent of the ‘happenings’ in the US. The most striking was *A Homage to Gustav Oberman* which took place on March 4th 1970. The artist Zorka Saglova, with a group of friends, went at nightfall in freezing temperatures to fields near Prague, where they lit nineteen fires in a circle a hundred metres in diameter. The photographs show a beautiful snow-covered landscape with the strong contrast of fire and shadowy figures. Chalupecký reported that Oberman was a cobbler ‘who used to walk through the fields spitting balls of fire but this forerunner to fire-land-art was little appreciated and was beaten up for his pains.’⁸ His article concluded by referring to an exhibition at the National Gallery in Prague of Henryk Stazewski, the Polish artist and member of the Warsaw ‘Group of Cubist Suprematists and Constructivists’ known as the ‘Blok group’ after their magazine with the same name, whose work was a continuation of that of the revolutionary Russian avant-garde.

The reason for including Chalupecký’s reference to Stazewski’s exhibition was that as an artist associated with the Foksal Gallery PSP in Warsaw, he provided a direct link between the Constructivist approach to painting and sculpture and the happenings emerging from the gallery in the mid-1960s through Kantor and Edvard Krasinski, who were to be included in Demarco’s exhibition of Polish Art, *Atelier 72*, at the Edinburgh Festival in 1972. This was the first time Polish art was brought to the UK. Wieslaw Borowski, art historian, and one of the directors of Foksal Gallery founded in 1966, conducted an interview with Stazewski for *SI*, published September 1974.⁹

Kantor’s actions in theatre were the logical extension of a trajectory from constructivism to happenings, to the theatre’s representation of temporality. It was the revolutionary performances organised by Kantor at the Edinburgh Festival that alerted Townsend’s curiosity to his practices that combined art,

⁷ Chalupecký, “Letter from Prague.” *SI*, Vol. 180, No. 925, September 1970, (pp. 88-9), p. 88.

⁸ Chalupecký, *SI*, Vol. 180, No. 925, p. 88.

⁹ Borowski, “A conversation with Henryk Stazewski.” *SI*, Vol. 188 No. 969, September 1974, pp. 72-3.

theatre and performance. Stazewski's paintings created a field of forces; these energy sources fuse lines outwards into the space.¹⁰ The Constructivist, spatial experience grounded the context for the exploratory happenings of the Polish artists connected to Foksal Gallery and included Kantor's practice of a 'total art'.

When Borowski, visited London in 1973, he stayed with the Townsends.¹¹ He and Townsend remained friends until Townsend died in 2006. Kantor collaborated with a group of artists and poets in Krakow with whom in 1955 he formed a theatre performance company called Cricot 2. It was an extension of an underground theatre which explored critical practices in visual art that Kantor had formed during the Nazi occupation of the city during the Second World War. Under Kantor's direction, Cricot 2 enabled far wider contacts for the artists involved, leading to further collaborations, later at Riverside Studios, London and in Polish exhibitions in Paris and in Stockholm in the 1980s. Borowski's article on Kantor and Cricot 2, his theatre company, was published in *SI* January 1974.¹²

In providing a context retrospectively for the discussion of Kantor's practice in *SI* magazine, Borowski described to the present author how the set-up for artists in the Eastern Bloc varied, with Poland being more liberal than its neighbours.¹³ He explained that the country's application of socialism as the political system removed the need for commercial success, which directly affected how the Foksal Gallery operated. He said that, in contrast to Soviet models, in Poland abstract art was not perceived as controversial, because it was not considered to serve as propaganda. Removed from the need to survive through sales and lacking in aesthetic prescriptions, artists had enormous freedom. At Foksal, the directors and artists had daily meetings to discuss and collaborate on writing manifestos of the gallery's aims. With the information Borowski sent Townsend from the Foksal Gallery were sheets of 'documentation' of a day of Happenings at Osieka, Poland, on the Baltic coast,

¹⁰ Borowski, "A conversation with Henryk Stazewski." *SI*, Vol. 188 No. 969, September 1974, pp. 72-73.

¹¹ Borowski, unpublished interview transcript, 6/4/09, Melvin papers, London.

¹² Borowski, "Tadeusz Kantor and his Cricot 2 theatre." *SI*, Vol. 187, No. 962, January 1974, pp. 22-3.

¹³ The other founding directors were Mauriusz Tchorek, a poet and art historian, and Anka Platszkowska, a writer and art historian.

which took place in August 1967.¹⁴ The *Panoramic Sea Happenings*, the title given to the day's activities, were interconnected events on the beach which drew anyone who was there into the performances as either participant or viewer. Townsend found the happening called *The Sinking of the Gallery Archive* particularly intriguing.¹⁵ In this performance three men took a large chest addressed to the Foksal Gallery and marked 'fragile' on a rowing boat a few hundred metres out to sea where they threw the chest overboard. Reputedly it contained all the papers that gave the gallery its status since its inception a year or so previously, these were exhibition reviews, announcements and other signs of worthiness.

Beuys and Kantor at the Richard Demarco Gallery, Edinburgh

The point of departure for the discussion in this section is *SI* September 1970 because it includes Joseph Beuys's artist's contribution: 'Four Pages'. Beuys's first appearance in the UK was in 1970 at Richard Demarco's exhibition *STRATEGY: GET ARTS* held at the Edinburgh College of Arts, 23 August-12 September in which he showed *Pack* 1969, a Volkswagen van with 24 sledges trailed behind with, strapped on each, a survival kit comprising of a lump of tallow, rendered animal fat, a roll of felt and a torch.¹⁶ Beuys had proposed to Harrison including the work in the London showing of *When Attitudes Become Form* but, when Harrison found that the cost of its transportation would use most of the exhibition budget, he decided against it.¹⁷ Beuys's artist's pages contribution in *SI* coincided with the Edinburgh exhibition.¹⁸ Townsend had written to establish contact with Beuys in June 1970 at the prompting of Georg Jappe, German art critic who met Townsend at Cologne Art fair. Konrad Fischer, the director of the Konrad Fischer gallery introduced them.¹⁹ Townsend was

¹⁴ Foksal Gallery PSP, "Documentation." Misc files 1974, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London. The gallery operated under the auspices of the Laboratory of Arts Plastycznych, Poland, hence PSP after the name.

¹⁵ Townsend recalled his response to the happening with the present author as one of 'baffled curiosity', Melvin notebook 2002, Melvin papers, London.

¹⁶ Richard Demarco Gallery organised the exhibition in conjunction with Kunsthalle Düsseldorf.

¹⁷ Harrison, unpublished interview transcript, 31/10/07, Melvin papers, London.

¹⁸ Joseph Beuys, "Four Pages." *SI*, Vol. 180, No. 925, September 1970, pp. 90-93.

¹⁹ Townsend, Melvin notebook 1999, Melvin papers, London.

impressed with Jappe and his commitment to art practice.²⁰ Townsend asked Beuys if he might like to produce artists' pages, similar to those by Richard Long, published in *SI* March 1970.²¹

Beuys replied to Townsend in July and apologised for the delay explaining that his 'photographs are always on the road.'²² He enclosed some photographs with the remark that if were too late Townsend can 'perhaps use the material for the next edition.'²³ Beuys commented that he had not had time to write a text and that he sent a selection of alternatives. Among these was one by the artist Per Kirkeby which Beuys said could be used instead of the one he himself had been unable to write. Beuys was allocated two double-page spreads. On the first page Townsend included Beuys's letter as a facsimile, beside a photograph of the artist and underneath a brief introductory text, noting Beuys's teaching post as Head of Sculpture at Dusseldorf Art Academy and his reputation as 'probably the major figure in German post war art'. He referred to Beuys's appearance in the UK in Demarco's *STRATEGY: GET ARTS* and quoted Beuys's statement: 'to be a teacher is my greatest work of art. The rest is a waste product, a demonstration.'²⁴ Facing this page is Per Kirkeby's text-piece. The caption for this somewhat ambiguously noted that it was to be interpreted in 'a figurative but not unreal sense' because the content pragmatically but inexplicably described Beuys's illness and death on a holiday in Spain which was witnessed by Kirkeby, his wife and Beuys's wife.²⁵ Kirkeby wrote:

Beuys had a chest complaint and was in a very poor state. [...] Far from all houses, in the hazy, dusty landscape, they had set up a large tent. One like Roman generals have in film epics. In this lay the dying Beuys. [...] his body was

²⁰ Jappe proposed an article on kinetic artists in Germany, undated, J correspondence file to 1972, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London. Georg Jappe, "Kinetic Art in Germany." *SI*, Vol. 180, No. 926, October 1970.

²¹ Townsend letter to Beuys, 15/6/70, September 1970 file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

²² Beuys letter to Townsend, 20/7/70, September 1970 file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

²³ Editorial introduction, Beuys "Four pages." *SI*, September 1970, Vol. 180, No. 925, (pp. 90-3), p. 90.

²⁴ Editorial introduction, Beuys "Four pages." *SI*, September 1970, Vol. 180, No. 925, p. 90.

²⁵ Caption for Per Kirkeby text-piece, in Beuys, "Four pages." *SI*, September 1970, Vol. 180, No. 925 p. 91.

covered with a sheet, and his head partly covered with a paper bag with holes cut out for the eyes. The whole lower half of his face was ravaged by disease, eaten away, so that only his upper teeth, with the skin drawn tight over them, projected. Stuck in what had been his mouth were five or six cigars, no doubt because he liked cigars. With his eyes he signalled to his wife to come to him, and he lifted his head so that she could put her hand beneath it. That was his last gesture of love. He said to me in a strange voice produced somewhere deep in his throat, that his life as an artist was shorter than we believed, less than a year, and that he was departing with a feeling of horror and paralysis at his own fate.²⁶

The following double-page spread shows a series of *Manresa* 1966 photographs which documented Beuys's performance. Manresa is the village in the Spanish Pyrenees where the founder of the Jesuits, St Ignatius Loyola, devised his spiritual exercises. The Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius are a meditative system of prayerful contemplation which includes physical deprivation. Kirkeby and Beuys had collaborated on a performance involving an imaginary journey to Manresa because they were interested in St Ignatius's exercises, hence Kirkeby's text. Jappe sent further material about Beuys and insisted on Townsend's returning all Beuys's photographs directly to Beuys.²⁷ On this occasion they were returned.

Following the success of Beuys's contribution to *SI* and the interest generated after his exhibition in Edinburgh, Townsend commissioned Jappe to present a thorough investigation of his practice and approach to teaching and, in *SI* September 1971, his article, 'A Joseph Beuys Primer' was published.²⁸ It made clear that teaching was the core of Beuys's work. Jappe observed that the political group he had founded 'The Organisation of Non Voters' was to get away from empowering figureheads by returning to basic laws.²⁹ Beuys regarded 'the whole world as an academy' whereby anyone could learn but not

²⁶ Beuys, "Four pages." Per Kirkeby, text-piece, *SI*, September 1970, Vol. 180, No. 925 p. 91.

²⁷ Jappe cover note, undated, September 1970 file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

²⁸ Jappe, "A Joseph Beuys Primer." *SI*, Vol. 183, No. 936, September 1971, pp. 65-9.

²⁹ Jappe, "A Joseph Beuys Primer." *SI*, Vol. 183, No. 936, p. 69.

through monopolistic institutions and that he considered both thinking and speaking to be sculpture.³⁰ Beuys sent Townsend a series of twenty-nine photographs to illustrate Jappe's article.³¹ The photographs were not returned immediately. Beuys's irritation over the delay prompted a series of postcards to Townsend. With wry humour, Townsend would later consider this episode as typifying editorial ineptitude, which was partially resolved, in this instance, by the return of the photographs.³²

The story of their eventual return is documented by Beuys's seven postcards to Townsend. This began in November 1971 and ended in December. At first, their tone is courteous, 'please return my photographs', then plaintive, before becoming steadily more exasperated, 'a boring story with 29 photographs, isn't it?, isn't it?' until, finally, they are no longer addressed to Townsend but to his editorial secretary, Zabelle Stenton, 'every time the same trouble with photographs other people will, photos have to shit, happy 1972 to you.'³³ It is interesting how a series of oversights, or a disorganised office, may, through its anecdotal retellings, reveal the humanity of both the irritated artist and the over-stretched editor. The importance given to the return of Beuys' photographs speaks of a past era, which has become superseded in the digital age.

Kantor at the Richard Demarco Gallery, Edinburgh

Richard Demarco invited Kantor and the group of artists who worked with him, Cricot 2, to the Edinburgh Fringe Festival in 1972 with a performance of *The Water Hen*, based on the play by Stanislaw Wiekowitcz. This ran concurrently with an exhibition of Polish art that Demarco had organised, called *Atelier 72*, which included Kantor and the Cricot 2 artists. Kantor presented *A Line of Demarcation*, 1972, which was a line drawn on the floor, metaphorically

³⁰ Jappe, "A Joseph Beuys Primer." *SI*, Vol. 183, No. 936, p. 68.

³¹ Jappe, "A Joseph Beuys Primer." *SI*, Vol. 183, No. 936, pp. 65-69.

³² Townsend frequently referred to this episode with the present author, Melvin notebook 1999, Melvin papers, London.

³³ Beuys postcards, Misc correspondence 1969-74, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

demonstrating the line between East and West Europe. Also alluding to the creation of art, it referred to the thin meeting place between success and failure, drawing attention to how this judgement is made and, crucially, by whom, although whether this is an aesthetic or a political one is an open question.³⁴ Demarco was a regular correspondent with Townsend, who had a high regard for the energy and commitment the gallery owner showed in bringing artists to the UK from the Eastern Bloc at a time when access to the West was complicated. While artists, like Kantor, who were considered ambassadors for their countries, would have a passport and relatively easy passage, younger, less established artists or those who might present a challenge to the status quo of their prevailing governments would find it difficult, if not impossible, to leave their home country.³⁵

Kantor's methods and the scope of his art practice spanned happenings, performance art, theatre, painting, sculpture and Constructivism. This made a deep impression on Townsend. It was quite unlike western European and US contemporary artists' approaches to practice, which he regarded to be singular.³⁶ Townsend considered Kantor's significance to be misunderstood by being considered as theatre and that his work should be seen in an art context.

Beuys and Kantor appear alongside each other in Edinburgh

Intending to bring the discussion of Kantor into an art context Townsend commissioned an art critic, Lynn Hershman, to review the 1973 Edinburgh festival for *SI*. She was bemused by the Demarco Gallery, which seemed to serve as 'headquarters for the pandemonium but nonetheless a viable alternative to academia, the juxtaposition of artists, nationality and age was a tremendous catalyst for those who were able to assimilate the freedom and exchange of

³⁴ The question of Kantor's politics in relation to art and politics is a contentious issue; it has not been covered here.

³⁵ Cricot 2 comprised artists who would not have been able to leave Poland at the time had they not been part of Kantor's operation. This explanation is drawn by the present author from her discussions with Wieslaw Borowski, unpublished interview transcript, 4/4/09, Melvin papers, London, as well as discussions with artist members of the group, Andrzej Welminski and Teresa Welminski, unpublished interview transcript, 5/5/09. Melvin papers, London.

³⁶ Townsend, Melvin notebook 1999, Melvin papers, London.

ideas, drinking and smoking together [...] Kantor and Beuys were the best-known advertised artists to appear.³⁷ Kantor orchestrated the Cricot 2 theatre performance of *Lovelies and Dowdies*, at the Forest Hill theatre. Hershman noted that the tuxedo-clad Kantor issued instructions to all, including the audience who became part of the cast as they entered, with Kantor remaining involved with the action throughout the performance.³⁸ Kantor and Beuys respected each other's practice, and met at the Edinburgh festival in 1973. Although Kantor had spent some time in Paris and New York in 1965, Beuys was better known in the UK. Kantor asked Beuys to take part in *Lovelies and Dowdies*, the play in which Borowski was also performing.³⁹

At the Poor House, Beuys gave a twelve-hour lecture on his theories of action; the body is an environment for thinking, for producing reality. Hershman reported Beuys's assertion, 'Art now must be viewed as the idea made manifest by man or preferably woman who creates individual structures in accordance with their own energy.'⁴⁰ John McEwen, who was one of the volunteer helpers at Demarco's gallery during the festival, remembered the sudden pressure to borrow the blackboards from a nearby school because Beuys needed them to document the processes of thinking visually and no one had thought to get them organised in advance.⁴¹ One of the boards from the 1973 Edinburgh festival lecture ended up in the collection of the Hamburger Bahnhof Museum für Gegenwart Berlin.

Seeking to further the discussion of Kantor's work and to provide a broader context for the British than the newspapers had attempted, Townsend commissioned Borowski to write an article. 'Tadeusz Kantor and his Cricot 2 Theatre' was published in *SI* January 1974. Borowski explained that Kantor's

³⁷ Hershman, "Visual arts at the Edinburgh festival." *SI*, Vol. 186, No. 959, October 1973, (pp. 158-160), p. 158.

³⁸ Hershman, "Visual arts at the Edinburgh festival." *SI*, Vol. 186, No. 959, pp. 158-160.

³⁹ Borowski explained that he and Beuys were performing in the play, unpublished interview transcript, 4/4/9. Melvin Papers, London. Demarco told the present author that the others performers not part of Cricot 2 were Sean Connery, actor, and Sandy Nairne, now the Director of the National Portrait Gallery. Demarco unpublished interview transcript, 2/6/09, Melvin papers, London. Demarco Archive, Edinburgh has photographs of Connery and Nairne. Nairne described the performances and 'stepping in at the last minute' to the present author, unpublished interview transcript, 30/4/09, Melvin papers, London.

⁴⁰ Hershman, *SI*, Vol. 186, No. 959, October 1973, pp. 158-160.

⁴¹ McEwen, unpublished interview transcript, 1/11/06, Melvin papers, London.

experimental practice had its roots in Constructivism and Dada, and that for Kantor art represented the totality of experience in which the methods to achieve the work are part of it rather than a separate entity. He wanted to show realism in action. Borowski explained that at the 'conspiracy theatre' Kantor formed during the Second World War, which was part of the underground university in Krakow, '[H]e would point out that the reality on the stage should become a reality as definite as the audience [...] the drama was not presented on stage but "came into being and grew before the eyes of the spectator".'⁴² This intention correlates directly with contemporary performance art practices and is why Kantor's work was seen in the 1970s by Demarco and David Gothard, the assistant director of Riverside Studios London, as a bridge between certain aspects of 'dematerialized' practices. Sir Nicholas Serota also held this view.⁴³ In 1976, when he became director of the Whitechapel Art Gallery, the Kantor exhibition was the first in his programme. Townsend considered Kantor's work to be astonishing and mysterious.⁴⁴

Alan Green and Roger Hilton: Two British painters collaborate with Townsend

In his homes in Dartmouth Park Hill and, later, at Morton Road, Townsend hung the originals of four cover designs. These were gouaches by Roger Hilton and Patrick Heron, referred to in Chapter 2, Alan Green's painting and Bridget Riley's original artwork for the June 1968 issue (the year in which Riley and Phillip King were chosen to represent Britain at the Venice Biennale). These gifts remained separate from the material Townsend rescued when the magazine was going into liquidation. (Figures 8.94, 8.95 and 8.96.)

Townsend liked and respected Green and supported the dealer, Annely Juda, who had recently started representing the artist in her gallery. Over a drink in The Plough, Townsend asked Green to design a cover.⁴⁵ Green was pleased to

⁴² Borowski, "Kantor and Cricot 2." *SI*, Vol. 187, No. 962, January 1974, (pp. 22-3), p. 22.

⁴³ Sir Nicholas Serota, unpublished interview transcript, 24/6/08, Melvin papers, London.

⁴⁴ Townsend, Melvin notebook, 1999, Melvin papers, London.

⁴⁵ Townsend, Melvin notebook, 1999, Melvin papers, London.

accept the commission and his design was used for *SI*'s September issue, 1973. Townsend was interested in the way Green told him about his working processes and artistic influences. Accordingly he asked if Green would consider writing an artist's statement.⁴⁶ Since Green found writing it difficult, Townsend suggested that they should repeat their conversation over another drink while Townsend would write up their discussion. This strategy worked and the statement was published the following month. This covered Green's aims and intentions. It was direct and unpretentious. It did not reveal that it was based on an interview nor was there any acknowledgement of Townsend's role. The statement declared how Green balanced his obligations between the studio and teaching. It opened with a description of his working day: 'I'm a fairly regular worker. On average, counting the days I don't work I probably do about five hours a day [...] I teach three days a week [...] I got into art because it was the only thing I was good at.'⁴⁷

Art students would have been interested in the daily life of the artist. Asserting that he liked 'paintings to start ordinary', Green described how the works evolved through a combination of intention and chance, the second of which scared him somewhat.⁴⁸ Green shared with Hilton a lack of concern about the viewer's response, and, as a result, he did not pander to his audience, saying: 'I don't worry about people's responses very much [...] very arrogant in a way. But when I do something that's right – only one in five – you know it's right; you don't measure your paintings against your public, you measure your public against your paintings.'⁴⁹

Roger Hilton: context for Townsend's commission

Gusto and scandal surrounded Hilton's appearances in the art world. For instance, in his acceptance speech for the John Moores painting prize in Liverpool in 1963, he said to Moores: 'Give me the cheque, you look like a

⁴⁶ Townsend, Green interview transcript, red notebook, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

⁴⁷ Green, *SI*, Vol. 186, No. 959, October 1973, p.144.

⁴⁸ Green, *SI*, Vol. 186, No. 959, October 1973, pp. 144-5.

⁴⁹ Green, *SI*, Vol. 186, No. 959, October 1973, p. 145.

decaying oyster.’⁵⁰ After the speech, he harangued the Labour MP, Bessie Braddock’s husband, John about his hairstyle. Peter Lanyon, painter from St Ives, who was one of the judges, saw the potential difficulties Hilton was creating and took him off around the galleries. Leslie Waddington, Hilton’s dealer, who might or might not have been able to have a calming influence on him, was not included on the table for VIP guests, unlike the MP and her husband.⁵¹ This is notably different from today’s arrangements when the dealers of celebrated artists are automatically VIPs as well.⁵² At the ceremony, John Braddock had a heart attack and died instantly. Andrew Forge who was a guest at the dinner and a brilliant raconteur, according to John McEwen, particularly enjoyed revisiting the horrific aspect of the event – that, after Hilton’s tirade, Braddock slumped forward, burying his face in his pudding and, when someone dragged him up, there was ice cream melting down his face.⁵³ The following day, the *Daily Mirror* announced: ‘Artist’s behaviour kills Alderman’; ‘I’m sorry, artist tells Bessie MP.’⁵⁴ Braddock’s widow, to whom Hilton gave half his prize money, insisted it was not Hilton’s fault that her husband died. By way of explanation, Hilton was quoted in the paper as saying, ‘I’d had a few, it was a big day for me.’⁵⁵

Roger Hilton’s contributions to *SI* March 1974

Townsend was keen to secure a cover design from Hilton to coincide with his exhibitions at the Serpentine Gallery and Hester van Royen Gallery. He had known Hilton for a number of years; Hilton and Peter Townsend’s brother, William, had exhibited together in 1933 at the Wertheim Gallery in *The Twenties Group*. William introduced them before Peter Townsend took the

⁵⁰ Andrew Lambirth, *Roger Hilton: The Figured Language of Thought*, London, Thames & Hudson, 2007, “Tasteful or Turbulent? First Waddington show and John Moores.” (pp. 139-202), p. 186.

⁵¹ Leslie Waddington, unpublished interview transcript, 21/04/09, Melvin papers, London.

⁵² Leslie Waddington, unpublished interview transcript, 21/04/09, Melvin papers, London.

⁵³ Leslie Waddington, unpublished interview transcript, 21/04/09, Melvin papers, London.

⁵⁴ “I’m sorry artist tells Bessie MP.” *Daily Mirror*, 14 November 1963. British Library, Colindale, London.

⁵⁵ *Daily Mirror*, 14 November 1963.

editorial post.⁵⁶ From the early 1970s Hilton was largely confined to bed due to illnesses caused by alcoholism. Peter Townsend met Hilton's wife Rose when she was visiting London in the late autumn 1973 by chance at a private view.⁵⁷ She told Townsend how Hilton worked through the night while the family slept and explained that he would leave them letters to find in the morning, with instructions, interspersed with drawings, listing his requirements and describing his work and frustrations. Townsend was immediately intrigued and asked her to convey his interest in commissioning Hilton to write a letter to him, describing his working approach, for publication in *SI*. Rose Hilton conveyed Townsend's request and Hilton agreed to write a statement letter to Townsend for publication in *SI* March 1974. Townsend proposed that it should be published as a facsimile. Hilton also agreed to design the cover.

In November 1973, Townsend commissioned Alan Green to conduct an interview with Hilton in St Just, Cornwall where he lived, to be published alongside the statement letter. Townsend thought an artist would get more information and that Green's approach was sympathetic to Hilton's intentions. Green would tape their discussion which he would hand over for editing. Green accepted the commission and Hilton agreed to the plan. Before Green arrived, Hilton wrote the statement letter to Townsend. It opened with an explanation of how he adapted his working processes to accommodate his bedridden circumstances:

Because I have peripheral neuritis I have largely lost the use of my legs, the arms and midriff are going. I have a skin condition which is driving me mad. All this is caused by alcohol. The usual vicious circle. You have to have more to cover up the pain it creates.

I say this to show how, being bedridden, I fell back on gouaches. I use paper and poster paints.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ William Townsend refers to *The Twenties group* on the entry in his journal, when Hilton left the Priory hospital at Roehampton, after an attempt to dry out, William Townsend offered him some teaching at the Slade, W Townsend, Journal Vol. xxviii, 22/10/67, UCL special collection, London.

⁵⁷ Peter Townsend did not recall which private view, Melvin notebook, 1999, Melvin papers, London.

⁵⁸ Hilton, "Every artist is a con-man." *SI*, Vol. 187, No. 964, March 1974, (pp. 117-21.), pp. 117. Hilton letter, misc file, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

In the letter he maintained the immediacy of the two-way conversation between himself and a rhetorical Townsend, drawing his reader into a fly-on-the-wall relationship. He made several references to Green's pending visit, 'I don't know what you want to know Mr Townsend no doubt Mr Green will make it clear' as well as his apprehension at the tape recorder.⁵⁹ Hilton's manner of writing is a mixture of a direct account of his working practice, verbatim phrases, quoting the instructions he leaves for his family, and reflection. He also explained that he was using gouache on paper because they are flexible and easy to use in bed and to dispose of when necessary.⁶⁰ The letter was something of a coup.

Green went to stay with Hilton and Rose. After he returned he asked Townsend to arrange for a box of paints to be sent to Hilton as a gift. Townsend organised the delivery and Hilton wrote to express gratitude for the 'marvellous Pandora's box of paints.'⁶¹

Facsimile publication of Hilton's statement letter

The equable tone of Hilton's thank you correspondence did little to prepare Townsend for an undated letter that followed a few days after he had dispatched the statement letter. This third letter was written on heavy-duty cartridge paper, which was torn, clumsily folded and stuffed into an envelope. The way it was addressed, handled and written indicated the artist's rage. It was a demand for payment for the reproduction of his contributions for a total of £400. He told Townsend that his gouaches sold for £145 and that he did not 'care what Studio International is up to [he] didn't like it.' He continued that without payment there would be no deal and if Townsend dared 'to publish anything without payment [he] would sue [...] bring on action.'⁶² If the project was to go ahead Hilton would expect payment within 'the next 2 or 3 days [...]

⁵⁹ Hilton, "Every artist is a con-man." *SI*, Vol. 187, No. 964, March 1974, p. 119.

⁶⁰ Hilton, *SI*, Vol. 187, No. 964, March 1974, p. 118.

⁶¹ Hilton letter to Townsend, 27/1/74, Problems file 1972-4, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

⁶² Hilton letter to Townsend, undated, 1974, written on torn-off piece of cartridge paper, roughly folded, envelope addressed directly to *Studio International*. Problems file 1972-4, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

otherwise the deal is off', and an injunction would prevent any reproduction.⁶³ Hilton also suggested that the idea was cooked up between Townsend and Hilton's wife, and that Townsend had 'attacked her soft underbelly' in order to secure the commission and stated that it was 'no use talking to that silly wife of [his]'.⁶⁴ Townsend was aware that Hilton's mood swings were exacerbated by his illness and decided that, likely as not, in a few days his concerns would resolve naturally.⁶⁵ And, sure enough, a letter with a very different tone arrived, written, unlike the earlier one, in neat restrained writing on tidy paper with the instruction: 'Please ignore my previous letter and go ahead in any way you please and good luck.'⁶⁶

Hilton's pages had two double spreads following a lead-in page. The statement letter was printed as a facsimile below the interview across the first four pages; the last page showed a group of reproductions of Hilton's paintings and drawings. The letter formed three groups of six, three by three, with one group of four, two by two. Censorship was necessary owing to concerns over libel and privacy. This resulted in the redaction of some names; the fact that the letter was addressed to Townsend was removed, as was reference to Harrison. Hilton's comment that American art critics were German Jews and were letting the world down was censored. Although Hilton's father was a German Jew, it was considered anti-Semitic, and the reports of liaisons occurring 'under my roof' were censored to protect the individuals concerned.⁶⁷

Townsend selected the title 'EVERY ARTIST IS A CON-MAN'.⁶⁸ It arose during the interview when Hilton explained to Green how people outside the art world regularly called him to account for his actions. Hilton gave an instance of such an encounter:

⁶³ Hilton letter to Townsend, undated 1974, Problems file 1972-4, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

⁶⁴ Hilton to Townsend, undated 1974, Problems file 1972-4, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

⁶⁵ Townsend to present author, Melvin notebook 1999, Melvin papers, London.

⁶⁶ Hilton letter to Townsend, undated, Sunday, 1974, envelope addressed to Peter Townsend Esq, etc. Problems file 1972-4, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

⁶⁷ Hilton letter, misc file, Peter Townsend archive, TGA 20094, London.

⁶⁸ Hilton, *SI*, Vol. 187, No. 964, March 1974, pp. 117-21.

Harry White, a roofing specialist, tried to get the hang of things. It's very difficult to say. You just say 'well, I haven't the faintest clue', and they think you're an idiot. In fact he said, 'you're a con-man'. And you are. Every artist is. Some are better con men than others. You've got to get away with it somehow. I mean one knows the history of art [...] every single bugger was a sort of con-man, and some of them were more successful than others there's no doubt about it.⁶⁹

The notion of the artist as a con-man set an anarchic tone in the magazine. It undermined the hierarchical status and mystique surrounding the creative process as well as the preconception that artists are somehow different from the rest of society. No doubt, in some circles, it served as an antidote to the Beuysian phrase 'every man is an artist'.⁷⁰ More significantly, publishing the statement letter permitted generosity in understanding an artist's prevarication, ambivalence and doubt during the process of internal questioning, justification and self-reflection.

Hilton's contribution appealed to Townsend's quietly subversive streak. In answer to a question on his use of colour in the interview, Hilton commented: 'I was taught by Blossom the master of Brown', referring to the name of boot polish, Cherry Blossom.⁷¹ As McEwen remarked to the present author, 'poor Green thought Blossom was a painter!'⁷² No doubt the implication was twofold: to look at his boots, and brown-nosing, as Hilton continued: 'I did a lot of browns for a bit, perhaps too many.'⁷³ Townsend took a chance with his readers. The interview was a frank discussion and there was no editing out of swear words – both 'bugger' and 'fucker' are included. He also writes: 'As I say,

⁶⁹ Hilton, *SI*, Vol. 187, No. 964, March 1974, pp. 118-120.

⁷⁰ The present author draws this conclusion from numerous discussions with Townsend and his editorial assistants, Melvin papers, London.

⁷¹ Hilton, *SI*, Vol. 187, No. 964, March 1974, p. 118.

⁷² McEwen, unpublished interview transcript, 01/11/06, Melvin papers, London.

⁷³ Hilton, *SI*, Vol. 187 No. 964, March 1974, p. 118.

painting is a personal thing, like a shit or a fuck.'⁷⁴ Expletives pepper his writing, which was a rare occurrence in the mainstream art press in 1974.⁷⁵

Townsend's decision to publish the letter in facsimile provides more insight into Hilton's working process than a typescript of the text would have done. Hilton's writing records his reflections and sometimes leads towards a poetic use of language. As a project, the letter is arguably a form of art writing in which the calligraphic look of the letters and words on the page contribute greatly to the 'reading' of the text, both for its intrinsic meaning and for the lines and shapes scrawling across each sheet. The look of the crossed out words showed a mind at work, writing as a form of thinking connected with drawing as a form of thinking. (Figures 8.97 and 8.98.)

The title page declared that the cover was 'specially designed'. It was an untitled gouache from 1973. After publication, Hilton wrote jointly to Townsend and Green to point out: 'The cover was not specially designed, it was just picked up from the hundred sheets of gouaches I have.'⁷⁶

In February 1975, Hilton died. Green reflected on his contribution to post war painting in the UK in the obituary published in *SI* May/June 1975. Green regarded Hilton's gouaches as moving towards a new realism.⁷⁷ Some years later, in a retrospective exhibition of Hilton's work at the Hayward Gallery, in 1993, Charles Harrison described how his paintings 'could not be so redolent of human states as they are unless some form of mimesis had been established in the process of their composition.'⁷⁸ The publication of his 'letter to Townsend' in *SI* March 1974 provided a personal insight into Hilton's methods of working that go a long way towards an explanation.

Some years later, the *SI* publication of Hilton's letter inspired another project. In 1980 his widow, Rose, decided to publish a facsimile selection of his letters.

⁷⁴ Hilton, *SI*, Vol. 187 No. 964, March 1974, p. 118.

⁷⁵ Gilbert & George's *magazine sculpture completed April 1969*, published in *SI*, Vol. 179, No. 922, May 1970, had the offending words censored, as observed in Chapter 4.

⁷⁶ Hilton letter to Townsend and Green, not dated 1974, Problems file 1972-4, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

⁷⁷ Alan Green, "Roger Hilton obituary." *SI*, Vol. 189, No. 975, May/June 1975, p. 227.

⁷⁸ Harrison, "Roger Hilton, the obligation to express." in *Roger Hilton Hayward Gallery (Exhibition Catalogue)*, South Bank Centre, London, 1993, (pp. 16-31), p. 16.

Rose Hilton included the *SI* letter as as printed text in the introduction to the book of *Night Letters*. This was considerably to reduce its impact by comparison with the previously unpublished ones.⁷⁹

Townsend and Broodthaers

In 1974 and 1975 Marcel Broodthaers made four artist contributions to *SI*. Townsend met Broodthaers through Barbara Reise and they immediately got on, sharing a deep interest in poetry, and in particular they discussed the ellipsis in conversation.⁸⁰ Broodthaers lived with his family for a few years in Kentish Town, which was not far from the Townsend's home, nor from Reise and Jack and Nell Wendler. Jack was a businessman and the Wendlers were collectors and sponsors of the visual arts. Townsend introduced Broodthaers to John McEwen who joined them for several informal social occasions. During these meetings they discussed art and the art world. Broodthaers was interested in the idea of magazine art, to which *SI* had not only given space but pioneered it as an art form. The combination of word and image as a 'multiple' was something in which he was naturally adept.

It is significant that Broodthaers adapted the feuilleton form for art work. He was to use it differently with every commission for *SI*. The journalist Louis-François Bertin is credited with inventing the form at the time of the French Revolution. It was a supplement inserted into the political section of a newspaper and included gossip, fashion, epigrams and literary game play. Bertin named it after the diminutive of the French word feuille meaning leaf and hence leaf of a book. It might also be detatchable. Typically feuilletons were in smaller print than the rest of the newspaper.⁸¹ The history of its invention would have appealed to Townsend as well as Broodthaers. On each occasion Broodthaers used the feuilleton in *SI* he labelled it accordingly, in the three art

⁷⁹ Roger Hilton, *Night Letters*, Newlyn Orion Galleries, 1980, unpaginated. In 2009, a further publication of Hilton's night letters was devised and edited by Timothy Bond, *Night Letters*, London, Archive of Modern Conflict, 2009.

⁸⁰ Townsend, Melvin notebook 2002, Melvin papers, London.

⁸¹ William Rose Benét, *Feuilleton, The Reader's Encyclopaedia*, London, Book Club Associated, 1974, p. 347.

pieces the word is handwritten and intrinsic to signature and autograph which were key themes in his work. The text piece, on the Belgian artist, Antoine Wiertz, was typeset.

Early in 1974, John McEwen proposed editing an issue of *SI* on the theme of fish and fishing and because he was interested in ecology it would reflect this concern. He also wanted to open up the discussion on work made in the landscape, especially the documentation photographs taken by Richard Long of interventions in nature, such as on the cover of *SI* May 1971, *Stones on the Isle of Skye*, referred to in Chapter 4. Townsend encouraged McEwen to develop the proposal and was keen to get him to start writing.⁸² McEwen said later to the present author that it was Townsend's encouragement that 'got him into writing for which he would always be grateful.'⁸³ McEwen asked Broodthaers if he would consider 'doing something' for the Fish issue and he agreed to contribute.⁸⁴

Broodthaers first contribution to *SI* was for the 'Fish' issue of May 1974, for which Townsend handed over full editorial responsibility to his assistant John McEwen. The 'Fish' issue was a bold statement in itself. It was conceived by McEwen to draw attention to the idea of the 'complete artist', which provided the title for his editorial and was derived, in part, from Izaak Walton's ideas of the complete angler.⁸⁵ McEwen described 'the habits of fish and the art of angling, the pleasures of good food and company, salubrious inns and even the moral attribute of happiness.'⁸⁶ The symbolism of Pisces-as-the-artist as well as the character of Piscator, the counterfoil to the pilgrim, Christian, in *The Pilgrim's Progress*, were the other driving factors in his editorial argument. McEwen deliberately selected these traditional sources because he considered this emphasised the deep-rooted connections between artists, fishing and pilgrimage.⁸⁷ McEwen's brother, Rory, an artist and fly fisherman, investigated the ecological sensibilities of the fisherman by interviewing professional fly

⁸² Townsend, Melvin notebook 2002, Melvin papers, London.

⁸³ McEwen, unpublished interview transcript, 27/11/06, Melvin papers, London.

⁸⁴ McEwen, unpublished interview transcript, 27/11/06, Melvin papers, London.

⁸⁵ Izaak Walton, *Compleat Angler*, first published 1653.

⁸⁶ McEwen, "Complete Artist." *SI*, Vol. 187, No. 986, May 1974, p. 214.

⁸⁷ McEwen, unpublished interview transcript, 27/11/06, Melvin papers, London.

fisherman, Ivan Marks, on the last day of the season. Rory McEwen included a photograph with the article. It is of a river scene in an urban landscape with two fly fisherman surrounded by industrial buildings. It was designed to refer to Long's use of photography, with which he recorded himself on location, marking the spot of *a sculpture at 19,340 ft, Mt Kilimanjaro, Africa 10/8/69*, which was reproduced in his artist's pages in March 1970⁸⁸ and the photograph of Long standing beside his tent on the Isle of Skye, which was shown in *SI* May 1971.⁸⁹ The idea for the cover came to McEwen as he passed through the food hall at Harrods, admiring the fish display.⁹⁰ He had some difficulty persuading the fish stall manager to allow the fish spread over the counter to be used as an artistic statement, but he eventually gave his permission for it to be photographed by James Sneath for the cover.⁹¹ (Figure 8.99.)

Broodthaers's feuilleton in the Fish issue was a double spread, with each page containing twelve small square fragments with references to the sea, in form ranging from image to musical notation to words. The blocks were set on a black background.⁹² In the process of constructing the piece, Broodthaers mistakenly translated the French, *muet*, as dump, rather than dumb. He and McEwen enjoyed this serendipitous mistake and decided to retain it. Broodthaers commented at the time to McEwen that the North Sea was used as a dump, while McEwen had an ecological and 'green' agenda ahead of current awareness. Broodthaers gave McEwen the original artwork for the feuilleton. The configuration is at slight variance with the published version, which was printed in black and white, with the use of red for some words; several of the square fragments were positioned differently.⁹³ (Figure 8.100.)

Townsend asked Broodthaers to design the cover for the issue of *SI* dedicated to Belgian art, published in October 1974. He accepted the commission and made another contribution inside, a text piece, printed in English and French, which drew attention to the artist Antoine-Joseph Wiertz,

⁸⁸ Richard Long, "Nineteen stills." *SI*, Vol. 179, No. 920, March 1970, pp. 106-11.

⁸⁹ Richard Long, *SI*, Vol. 181, No. 933, May 1971, p. 234.

⁹⁰ McEwen, unpublished interview transcript, 27/11/06, Melvin papers, London.

⁹¹ McEwen, unpublished interview transcript, 27/11/06, Melvin papers, London.

⁹² Broodthaers, cover design, *SI*, Vol. 188, No. 970, October 1974.

⁹³ Broodthaers, "Feuilleton." *SI*, Vol. 187, No. 986, May 1974, pp. 240-1.

an eccentric and comparatively unknown Belgian artist whose remains, after his death in 1865, were embalmed and his home and studio left to the nation as a museum.⁹⁴ Broodthaers wrote: 'Save Wiertz and his memories – Wiertz the unintentional caricaturist of a proper-thinking society needs today the backing of good architects.'⁹⁵ Reise was involved in the planning of the issue, but, although she was an advocate of Broodthaers's work and had been instrumental in introducing him to Townsend, she was not directly involved with his contributions.⁹⁶

According to McEwen, the cover designed by Broodthaers was one of Townsend's favourites.⁹⁷ Townsend described to the present author the only time he had directly interfered with an artist's initial concept was with Broodthaers's.⁹⁸ He explained that Broodthaers had intended to base the design on the painting of a schooner, used in his film *The Voyage on the North Sea*, over which he had inscribed the word 'cack' in red. When Broodthaers showed Townsend his layouts, Townsend responded 'but Marcel you can't say painting's shit when some of your closest friends are painters'.⁹⁹ Townsend was later to muse in conversation on a number of occasions whether or not he should have intervened, although he reported to the present author that Broodthaers was ultimately glad of the prohibition.¹⁰⁰

Instead of using the schooner, Broodthaers made a rebus cover for the front and the back of the issue. The rebus is a visual-verbal puzzle used in play to teach children to read the alphabet with a riddle in picture form, symbols as objects for words. Following the form, Broodthaers used a series of nine circular discs on the front cover which are strikingly set against a black background. The back cover is white in contrast, its light tone plays again the child's game of letter association, Z is for zebra, Q is for queen and so on. Underneath the discs he's written, *elements du discours ne peuvent servir l'art une faute d'orthographe*

⁹⁴ Broodthaers, "Wiertz Museum." *SI*, Vol. 188, No. 970, p. 14.

⁹⁵ Broodthaers, "Wiertz Museum." *SI*, Vol. 188, No. 970, p. 14.

⁹⁶ Reise went to Belgium on a research trip funded by the magazine, Reise file, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

⁹⁷ McEwen, unpublished interview transcript, 27/11/06, Melvin papers, London.

⁹⁸ Townsend, Melvin notebook, 2002, Melvin papers, London.

⁹⁹ Townsend, Melvin notebook, 2002, Melvin papers, London.

¹⁰⁰ Townsend, Melvin notebook, 2002, Melvin papers, London.

cachée vaut un fromage. [Elements of speech cannot serve the art spelling error a hidden cheese.] The word fromage, cheese, in French is slang for money, or cash. (Figure 8.101.) Broodthaers was making a reference to the typographical error in his exhibition *Court-Circuit*, 1967, when the printers omitted the letter 'h' in Broodthaers and he wrote it in by hand, turning the mistake into an autographed work and therefore more valuable than an unsigned work.¹⁰¹ The back cover also advertised Galerie MLT Art in Antwerp. This was a humorous play on the general sale of back covers as advertising space, with the few exceptions of artists' wrap-around covers.¹⁰² It also drew on the use of advertising space to situate an art object like Kosuth's placement of the word 'Time' in the series *Art as Idea as Idea* in newspapers' advertisement space,¹⁰³ but with Broodthaers's back cover the art object became the advertisement for the gallery, thus serving a dual purpose as a double bluff.

Broodthaers was also working on a cover design for the November issue of the German art magazine, *Interfunktionen*, which at that time was edited by Benjamin Buchloh. The cover was a text piece as follows: 'View according to which an artistic theory will function for the artistic product in the same way as the artistic product itself functions as advertising for the order under which it is produced. There will be no other space than this view, according to which etc. ...'¹⁰⁴ It is a succinct conjunction of art's visual and economic function, printed in three languages, French, German and English.

Townsend was pleased, as a matter of pride, when Rosalind Krauss referred to Broodthaers's *SI* cover during her Walter Neurath lecture at the National Gallery in 1999.¹⁰⁵ However he himself was more interested in the way

¹⁰¹ Rosalind Krauss, in *Voyage on the North Sea*, London, Thames & Hudson, 2000, points out how this refers to two aspects in Broodthaers's work. She writes: 'it performs a riff on the fable of the fox and the crow from La Fontaine, his film and exhibition. An implicit meaning is that money is all he wanted, since cheese is money'. Footnote 6, p. 57.

¹⁰² Other than Broodthaers's cover these were Anthony Caro, January 1969, Nick Munro, July/August 1972, David Hockney, November 1974, Robert Natkin, February 1974 and David Diao, July/August 1974.

¹⁰³ Kosuth, *Time (Art as Idea as Idea)*, 1968, (published in *The Times*, the *Daily Telegraph*, the *Financial Times*, the *Daily Express*, the *Observer*, all December 27, 1968, in 5-31 January 1969 (Exhibition Catalogue) Siegelaub, New York, 1969.

¹⁰⁴ Broodthaers, cover, *Interfunktionen*, No. 12, 1975. Special Collections, Chelsea College of Art, London.

¹⁰⁵ Krauss, *Voyage on the North Sea*, London, Thames & Hudson, 2000.

Broodthaers had adapted the commission as a consequence of his intervention, something which was not considered in Krauss's analysis although it would be unlikely that she, or indeed many people, knew about it.

Broodthaers book dummy *SUR L'ART*

Broodthaers's final collaboration with *SI* was a book called *SUR L'ART*. This was published as a facsimile in *SI* March/April 1975. The cover announced that the contents included 'A Book by Marcel Broodthaers'. (Figure 8.102.) The project was conceived as a two-sided poster insert that could be removed, then folded and cut into book form. A list of detailed typed typographic instructions provided by Broodthaers for the printing of the project was the first page and it led into four double-page spreads. The rest of the layout followed the form of the feuilleton. (Figures 8.103 – 8.111.) It depicted incidents in the adventures of *les Pieds nickelés*, Louis Forton's comic characters who were a gang of old-style tramps, called Shortbread, Filochard and Ribouldingue. *Pieds nickelés* in French literally means nickel-plated feet, or shoes too valuable to be worn on the job. In Forton's stories the gang became infiltrators in society to poke fun at conventions and morals. The gang of three are subject of several of Broodthaers artist's books.¹⁰⁶

Instead of undermining the political status quo, Broodthaers's captions and images took a neatly subversive position on art, using the characters to 'tell' an ambivalent story. There are references to Duchamp, 'decorate Duchamp's urinal with the insignia of the eagle smoking the pipe' to Cézanne, Ingres and prohibitions on the treatment of art, 'forbidden to piss, forbidden to write, forbidden to photograph, forbidden to publish on art.' The ambience is set by the three characters who perform 'nouveaux trucs nouvelles combines [new tricks, new schemes.]'¹⁰⁷

Broodthaers sent the original artwork for the book to Townsend some time in January 1975. At the time, Broodthaers was temporarily living in Berlin

¹⁰⁶ Louis Forton created the characters and designed the comics 1915-1949. Thereafter they were continued by Pellos and various designers. Broodthaers used and developed Forton's satire.

¹⁰⁷ Broodthaers, *SUR L'ART*, *SI*, Vol. 189, No. 974, March/April 1975, pp. 107-115.

where he was preparing for his exhibition at the Nationalgalerie, Berlin, 25 February to 6 April. The dummy sheets were hand cut and slightly uneven in size, roughly 15.8cm x 11cm. For some reason the editorial office treated the dummy as a final proof and it was printed as a facsimile. The instructions issued by Broodthaers instead of being followed were printed as if they were part of the project. The reader who wanted to construct the book would have to take the sheets from the magazine and fold them according to the instructions provided. There is no documentation in the archive explaining why this occurred. Neither Townsend nor McEwen could recall to the present author what had gone awry, except to remark that at the time the office was in general disarray because Michael Spens had served Townsend notice.

In October 2011, *Frieze* magazine published a version of Broodthaers *SUR L'ART*. This project was organised by Cathleen Chaffee who translated the text.¹⁰⁸ In her introduction Chaffee pointed out that Broodthaers regularly supplied the instructions to typesetters in this fashion. The magazine contained the poster insert that would make up the book. Townsend was aware that the publication of the dummy was not done as it should have been, although there are no traces of the discussion which may have followed between Broodthaers and Townsend over the work's misrepresentation. However Townsend regarded Broodthaers's practice and his friendship with him very highly. When Broodthaers died, Townsend commissioned Richard Hamilton to design a memorial work for Broodthaers and it was published in the first issue of *Art Monthly*, October 1976.

Broodthaers and Townsend a celebration of their friendship

Broodthaers gave Peter one of the multiple, *Le Manuscrit trouvé dans une Bouteille*, (*The Manuscript Found in a Bottle*), 1974, which he produced with René Block. He customised it, so it is a unique work. On the base of the box he dedicated it: 'To Peter, on the occasion the bottle was found, 16 December, 1974, MB.' The bottle is empty. The sheet which declares the edition, number,

¹⁰⁸ Cathleen Chaffee, 'SUR L'ART', *Frieze Magazine Archive*, http://www.frieze.com/issue/print_article/sur-lart-on-art, last accessed 4/4/12.

date and collaboration with René Block is gone. The title is taken from Edgar Allan Poe's 'MS. Found in a Bottle', published in 1833 at Baltimore. In Broodthaers the date features on the used clear glass bottles, and printed in black, 'Bordeaux 1833'. On the box in Broodthaers's work the two dates are joined, 1833-1974. The amusement of the play on full and empty bottles was with a sense of humour they shared. (Figure 8.112.)

Townsend spoke of Broodthaers with reverence, and Broodthaers gave him several other works – an artist's palette, with oil paper cut to the edge and glued onto the surface, signed 'MB' using fountain pen, and the print, *La Souris écrit rat (A compte d'auteur)* (The Mouse Writes Rat [at the Author's Expense]) (1974) – which he hung on his wall at home. He represented for Townsend something more extraordinary than the combination of artist and poet. Townsend wrote that he loved 'Marcel more maybe than any other artist'.¹⁰⁹ While Townsend was writer-in-residence at Canberra School of Art in 1994, he wrote:

He reached into the cupboard and brought out a bottle of magnificent wine. He was something of a wine fancier, but his doctor had forbidden him to drink. He poured it out for us. And at about 1 in the morning he too conceded. 'Yes perhaps there are absolutes.' He was a person of great purity and hard won simplicity. He also had a marvellous sense of humour, without any acid. Perhaps those were his absolutes.¹¹⁰

Broodthaers made Townsend a ticket for entry to the Cologne art fair. Drawn in fountain pen, it is a series of figure boxes, with general 'art' shapes inside, and written on it: 'ticket for travel to Cologne the owner of this paper is Peter Townsend. Signed MB 1975'. This was the only item Townsend himself framed, in a clip-frame which stood on his desk.

¹⁰⁹ Peter Townsend, "All my own work." *Australia Art Monthly*, No. 193, September 2006, (pp. 37-40.), p. 39.

¹¹⁰ Peter Townsend, "All my own work." *Australia Art Monthly*, No. 193, September 2006, p. 39.

Concluding observations

Peter Townsend's editorial policy was all but fully formed from the time he was offered the post. His decisions in the appointment of assistants and advisors created an atmosphere of sociability, which was central to his technique of making his actions appear informal, while he was carefully strategic in its use. Townsend's personable character and his editorial gift in recognising innovations as they occurred and in having the confidence to commission their protagonists to contribute to the magazine were assets he deliberately deployed to develop discussions on the magazine's pages. This thesis has shown that the milieu in the editorial office was lively and sociable, with young artists and writers made to feel welcome. Out of this grew an operational network based on social interaction, and the ideas born of chance meetings and from an ever-widening acquaintanceship led to proposals for articles and to the formulation of new policies, alongside the revision of existing ones.

The April 1966 issue of *SI* demonstrated the contemporary relevance of Gabo's work and ideas while placing his artistic legacy in its historical and political context. Although he was undoubtedly internationally recognised it was more for historical reasons than for his effect on current developments within art practice. The magazine presented an examination of Gabo's influence in the discourse of contemporary artists in the UK and Europe, giving him an entirely new recognition. The issue devoted to Charles Biederman, *SI* September 1969, drew attention to how the tenets of Constructivism as a Europe-wide movement were present in Structuralism. The Biederman issue was important because it gave British artists, such as Robyn Denny, Anthony Hill, Gillian Wise and Kenneth and Mary Martin, the opportunity to express how Biederman's work and thinking had informed their practices.

The US-UK polemic took a different turn with arguments over cultural dominance. Heron's two articles staked out alternative lines of exploration in what he regarded as the more viable approaches to painting originating in the UK, rather than the US. In Heron's view, British artists had introduced 'a re-

complication of the picture surface',¹ an innovation deserving the proper acknowledgement. Despite Heron's rambunctious manner and his assertions based on gut reaction, the purposeful questioning of prevailing assumptions became characteristic of Townsend's allocation of space to artist-driven concerns in the magazine. Although he was aware of the self-interest inherent in Heron's promotion of the 'middle generation' of British painters, he considered this to be characteristic of artistic endeavour and irrelevant to the validity of the points Heron addressed.² The attention given to Gabo's work and the continuing relevance of his practice to British Constructivism as well as Heron's determination to get critical assessment not based on American generalisations developments reassured the prominence of *SI* as a dynamic magazine. The excitement generated by the magazine was because of Townsend's determination to raise its profile by taking risks and make it noticed and valued internationally. Townsend's decision to enlist an International Advisory Committee from at the start of his appointment was indicative of his determination. It was this crucial action that was indicative of action Townsend's intentions that enabled the magazine to rediscover its ethos as a radical publication and so to reinvent Charles Holme's, its founder's intentions. This was the aim that Townsend asserted in his first editorial in *SI* January 1966.

Something of the lively up-to-date quality necessary to a journal of contemporary art was characteristic of our ancestor, *The Studio*, whose honourable tradition is now part of Britain's art history. Liveliness and a wide sweep made it an interesting and internationally-influential publication from the very first volume (carrying Beardsley's first published drawings to the scandal of art lovers and the enrichment of European art), touched on most of the topics then engaging artists, and included a long discussion on whether photography was harmful or not to painters. (To this discussion Sickert rather surprisingly contributed a letter beginning: 'In proportion as a painter or a draughtsman works from photographs, so he is sapping his powers of

¹ Heron, "The ascendancy of London in the sixties", *SI*, Vol. 172, No. 884, December 1966, p. 280.

² Townsend in conversation with the present author, Melvin notebook, 1996, Melvin Papers .

observation and of expression. It is as much as if a swimmer practices in a cork jacket, or by tuning a barrel-organ.')³

Although he sought the advice of his editorial committee, Townsend was prepared to go out on a limb and commission young unknown writers, such as Barbara Reise, with the possible consequence of jealousies in the office and criticisms from further afield, because he thought she, and others like her, could make a useful contribution and 'stir things up', as he remarked in recollection to the present author.⁴ He also hoped the opportunity might enable her to launch a successful career. For a period Reise's critical writing and her wide network of artist friendships exerted a considerable influence on the way art criticism was approached in *SI*.

In agreeing to give the Minimalists magazine space, Townsend demonstrated an understanding of the potential to develop *SI*'s critical relevance for the British reader. This moved the debate on formalism initiated by Heron into a different area, which was into the studios of younger New York-based artists, using non-traditional sculptural materials, and making site-specific work whose propositional nature held greater interest for the editorial office than did the work Heron championed and advocated. But, as with Heron's contributions, the artist's voice was central as the favoured form of articulating the work's intentions, as opposed to relying on the mediation of critics.

SI's April 1969 issue gave the New York artists a platform outside the US. The coincidence of the magazine's interest and the two touring exhibitions, *Minimal Art* and *The Art of The Real* cemented the artists' international profiles at the time when their practices were emerging in Europe. To the British reader, it demonstrated the range of work that had been assembled under the rubric of 'minimalism'. The magazine's coverage of Minimalism brought about the eventual disintegration of the critical authority of formalism, via the contributions of Flavin and Judd which pointed out the inability of Greenberg and his followers to address the concerns of the new movement.

³ Townsend, "Editorial statement." *SI*, Vol. 171, No. 873, January 1966, p. 1.

⁴ Melvin notebook, 2002, Melvin papers, London.

The juxtaposition of Townsend's archive with the archives of his assistants, Reise and Harrison, presents a more vulnerable version of events than that encountered in the magazine publication. It becomes clear that, in Reise's approach to research and engagement with practice, she appropriated Flavin's methods of compiling information and by identifying the differences of approach, rather than the similarities, she aimed to open a broad discussion. LeWitt's writing gave her the impetus to continue experimenting with her literary structure. In June 1972, she would simultaneously publish two articles on Jan Dibbets, one in *Art News* the other in *SI*. The one in *Art News* was called, 'Jan Dibbets: A Perspective Correction', and the one for *SI* was 'Notes (1) on Jan Dibbets' (2) contemporary (3) Nature (4) of Realistic (5) Classicism (6) in the Dutch (7) Tradition (8)'. Her idea was to develop the footnotes from the *Art News* article into the *SI* one when the title indicated the footnoted words and each 'note' is a mini-essay on the referenced word.⁵

The degree to which Townsend trusted to his assistants' integrity and ability to determine the magazine's content is again demonstrated in this the consideration of Harrison's magazine projects. Townsend was alert to young artists; he enjoyed their company and was excited by the diversity of practices that were emerging in Britain, Europe and the USA. The commissioning of Kosuth makes this evident. He considered it appropriate for the magazine to take chances and the scope the pages gave might be risky. The responses to Kosuth's articles were part and parcel of the tactics of he employed, to devolve responsibility for selection to his assistants; and, although he was disturbed by the inaccuracies and the promulgation of them by the repeated republishing, it did not make him revise his approach nor lose faith in Harrison's judgement.⁶

Townsend's editorial position was one of neutrality. Granting artists freedom to use the page as they saw fit was what mattered. There were strong differences of opinion among his editorial assistants. Harrison was supportive

⁵ Reise, "Jan Dibbets: A Perspective Correction." *Art News* June 1972, pp. 38-41 with footnotes referring to the other magazine's footnotes. Reise, "Notes (1) on Jan Dibbets' (2) contemporary (3) Nature (4) of Realistic (5) Classicism (6) in the Dutch (7) Tradition (8) *SI*, Vol. 183, No. 945, June 1972 and in "Jan Dibbets: A perspective correction."

⁶ Townsend discussed his irritation that Kosuth's article had been republished more than other articles in *SI*, or at least had received more widespread attention than for instance, Seth Siegelaub's July/August 1970 issue. Melvin notebook 2002, Melvin papers, London.

of Kosuth's position, as shown by his reply to Mel Bochner regarding the damage to his work *13½ Sheets of Graph Paper (from an infinite series)* at the ICA and whether it was the art object in itself that was significant or the dematerialised aspect that it proposed. Bochner referred to Harrison as Kosuth's henchman.⁷ On the other hand, Harrison wanted to continue to make space for the exploration of art's philosophical status. Reise avowed in a letter to LeWitt that the article by Kosuth, 'Art after philosophy', was only published because Harrison was not fully aware of the context of Kosuth's discussion.⁸ Townsend later agreed with the present author that her assessment was probably correct.⁹ In his correspondence at the time with Dan Graham he admitted that neither he nor 'anyone in this country' would be in a position to confirm or deny Kosuth's claims.¹⁰ The backstage presence of Kosuth's letters to Harrison show that although he was using the article to distance himself from the group of artists around Siegelaub, he was also exploring a more subtle position concerned with art as a thought process that was not about forms and colour but about the production of meaning. His reflections in these letters show a tentative investigation that is unlike the dogmatic qualities of his published article.¹¹ They cast it in a different light. The present author hopes that this thesis will draw attention to the richness of the different collections in Tate archive and suggest different avenues for research.

SI provided a platform for magazine art which was artwork made for the page. This is a central component of the magazine's significance and influence. The way Townsend enabled these experimentations to occur meant that artists sought out the opportunity to present artist's pages and create magazine sculpture and art-for-the-page. The fact that during this time printing technology was at a cross-roads helped to develop the possibilities. A research

⁷ Bochner to Townsend, 25/7/70, misc correspondence problems 1970-4, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

⁸ Reise letter to LeWitt, 12/01/70. LeWitt file, Barbara Reise, TGA 786/5/2/1/3,

⁹ Townsend was amused to hear that Robert Barry described Joseph Kosuth's articles to Reise as 'that handy dandy pseudo-scholarship'. Townsend in conversation with the present author who showed him a copy of a letter sent to Reise, 11/5/70, Barbara Reise TGA 786/5/2/13 London.

¹⁰ Townsend letter to Graham, 13/3/70, G file to 1972, *SI*, Peter Townsend editorial papers, TGA 20028, London.

¹¹ Kosuth's letters to Charles Harrison, 1969-1974, Charles Harrison (1970s-2000s), TGA 200868, London.

visit to St Bride Foundation, Library and Archives, London, led to the following conclusion because production standards were so high even to the practiced eye, the effective difference between offset litho and letterpress was slight. Always a stickler for high production standards, the magazine used both letterpress and offset litho to achieve the best results. It is not certain at what point the decision was made to go over entirely to offset litho as there are scant records of this in the archive. However it is certain that *SI* July/August 1974 issue is the first one to dispense with ticketboard, which according to the librarians at St Bride Foundation, library and archive London, was printed using letterpress.¹² The present author would suggest that since costs were a constant anxiety and the publishers were the printers, once the technology was good enough Townsend would have selected it. The developments in printing technology and how *SI* utilised these during this ten year span, might make an exciting further research investigation.

Townsend's decision to offer Siegelaub the space to realise his exhibition proposal placed *SI* firmly at the forefront of new practices because it was the first time a magazine exhibition had been realised. In handing responsibility to Siegelaub Townsend was emulating what he had seen when working with the industrial cooperatives in China, methods he adapted and tuned to the prevailing ethos of collaboration and the use of existing distribution networks created by mailing lists and to extend these contacts in the expanding community of Conceptual art practice. The issue of *SI*, July/August 1970, Siegelaub's summer exhibition also provided a fuller representation of the new art practices than had been presented in other magazines. It showed the exchange of ideas between artists without privileging one nation at the expense of another. The issue quickly acquired exemplary status among many of the artists included, who listed the exhibition on their CVs. The radical questioning of where to view art and how to view it demonstrated by the issue consolidated the policy already established in the magazine's pages. It also cemented a productive working collaboration and friendship between Townsend and

¹² These are the results of a research visit to St Bride Foundation, Library and Archives, London, undertaken by Colin Maitland on behalf of the present author, 13/2/13.

Siegelau and extended Townsend's relationships with artists in an arena he found both fascinating and culturally relevant.

Lucy Lippard's methods of collaboration and engaged participation set vivid precedents for contemporary art practices. As part of a community of artists exchanging ideas, she was not alone in her ideological concerns, and many ideas evolved through working alongside Seth Siegelau – whom she described as 'pragmatic and intellectually unencumbered' – as well as in conversation with artists.¹³ This new wave of exhibition-making pushed conceptual boundaries to their logical conclusion, whereby text-pieces gave instructions for projects, which might or might not be realised, and their documentation alone might serve as the artwork. Lippard stated that her ideal exhibition could be transported in a suitcase.¹⁴ In the case of the magazine exhibition it was reduced to a large envelope.¹⁵ The publication of Lippard's *Groups* exhibition in the magazine was the consequence of incisive actions on Townsend's part. Although the office failed to follow Lippard's layout instructions, which rendered the experiment unsuccessful in fulfilling her intentions, this does not undermine the importance of Townsend's willingness to use the magazine in an innovative fashion, antagonistic even to its mainstream appeal.

The part played by the different people who had links with *SI* demonstrates how effectively Townsend used the magazine as an arena. He was always concerned with the broad social context and naturally sceptical of an abstracted formalist critique in which the work's ontological status could be considered as a thing in itself, separated from society. Townsend regarded work as cultural production, implicitly grounded in all the circumstances of its making. He considered that it was impossible to understand work without an awareness of

¹³ Lucy R Lippard, "Escape Attempts." *Six Years: The dematerialization of the art object from 1966 to 1972*, Berkeley and Los Angeles California and London England, University of California (pp. vii-xxiii), p. ix

¹⁴ Lippard, "Escape Attempts." *Six Years: The dematerialization of the art object from 1966 to 1972*, Berkeley and Los Angeles California and London England, University of California, p. ix

¹⁵ Lippard's number exhibition catalogues including *557, 087 Seattle* 1969 and *955, 000 Vancouver* were artist's instructions for realising artwork on index cards were distributed in envelopes, they had the address of the Museum printed on the outside, MoMA New York has retained the original envelope, Jenny Tobias, email to present author, 26/11/08, Melvin papers, London.

the cultural situation in which it was made.¹⁶ In discussions with the present author to make the point he would refer to the difficulties of understanding Renaissance art without knowledge of the society in which the work was made. And for instance the lack of religious context would render the works meaningless.¹⁷

The grass-roots artists' protests of the New York art community were a cause Townsend sympathised with strongly. He found the overriding aims extremely interesting and worthy of serious attention. The issues raised by the AWC, identified by Takis's protest at MoMA in 1969, addressed rhetorically by LeWitt and honed into a usable format by Siegelaub, remain pertinent to the sale of work and the transfer of responsibility for decision-making processes. In legal terms these are the moral rights - which in the UK became law in 1988 by the Copyright, Designs and Patent Act, and in the US in 1990, in the Visual Artists Rights Act. As well as the issue of resale rights, which allow for a small percentage of the increase in value to be payable to the artist, the re-exhibition of work is still a thorny issue, because artists have no say in how the work is displayed and remain unable to veto the display of their work when owned by a museum in conditions of which they disapprove. Some museums inform artists, or their estates, as a matter of courtesy when an artwork will be shown, but, all too often, this is overlooked as there is no requirement for this to happen. The present author has encountered many instances of this when an artist has heard from a friend that the work is on show. The area in which an artist can exercise control is over copyright, any breaches of which give the artist the right to insist they are rectified. This includes the incorrect presentation and or the installation of work. The artist's contract was intended to rectify inequalities at the end of the 1960s during a time of social unrest, increasing awareness and politicisation of rights, including artist's rights and disgust at the trampling of human rights in the Vietnam war.

¹⁶ Townsend in conversation with the present author, Melvin notebook 2002, Melvin papers, London.

¹⁷ Townsend in conversation with the present author, Melvin notebook 2002, Melvin papers, London.

The existence of the AWC enabled *SI* to reflect on the relationship between politically-driven art and aesthetics as part of a humanitarian engagement with society and its culture. The editorial ethos was in alignment with Marx's statement in the *Theses on Feuerbach*, cited by Elderfield, that the purpose of philosophical interpretation of the world is to change it.¹⁸ It is clear that the kind of radical ideology emerging at the time was determined by a political stand. The collective actions fed artistic innovation. The AWC's demands were motivated by ideals of equality, and the work made and actions taken attempted to address the social and political problems of the day.

A refrain Townsend often used in conversation with the present author was that *SI*, the magazine and its ethos could not happen again. The conditions of its success were such that once it had achieved what it set out to do, it would only continue in a repetition. The innovations cemented the magazine's relevance in providing space for artists' political and social, as well as artistic, concerns, and especially in the attention given to art made for the printed page, the magazine as both gallery and exhibition.

However, the ways in which *SI* magazine and its archives can continue to influence critical thinking are not immutable. Two instances explored in Chapter 8 indicate ways the archive can be re-evaluated in the present to permit experience of it, independent of its historical moment, and connect the past with a continuous discourse of ideas. Both of these cases came about owing to their inclusion in the exhibition curated by the present author, *Tales from Studio International* at Tate Britain in 2008. (Figure 9.113.) These are the republication by *Frieze* magazine in October 2011 of Broodthaers's *SUR L'ART*, which, for the first time, followed his instructions correctly, due to Cathleen Chaffe's persistence in realising the project as Broodthaers intended. The existence of Broodthaers's dummy would not have come to light without its exhibition. The other instance concerns the display of Roger Hilton's letter at Tate Britain in the exhibition *Tales from Studio International*, which was pasted onto a wall for ease of reading and to emphasise its visual qualities. Tate was legally required to redact some passages sensitive to data protection

¹⁸ John Elderfield, "Constructivism and the objective world: an essay on production art and proletarian culture." *SI*, Vol 180, No. 925, September 1970, (pp. 73-80), p. 73.

regulations. (Figure 9.114.) The magazine issue, *SI* March 1974 was obliged to act similarly by obscuring material to avoid accusations of defamation of character.

On 14 September 2012, *Materializing "Six Years": Lucy Lippard and the Emergence of Conceptual art* opened at the Brooklyn Museum of Art (to 3 February 2013). It used Lippard's book *Six Years: the dematerialisation of the art object* as the basis for the artist's selection and presented Lippard's curatorial projects. Initially the curators, Catherine Morris and Vincent Bonin had planned to include facsimiles of *Groups*, first shown as an exhibition at the School of Visual Art in New York in October 1969, then reconfigured for the magazine exhibition in *SI* March, 1970.¹⁹ Its representation in the Brooklyn Museum would have been a further testimony to the still active relevance of encounters with Townsend and his collaborators to exhibition-making today. However although the archival material was not included in the exhibition, reproductions from N. E. Thing Co. contributions are included in the catalogue.²⁰

There are other plans for the realisation of projects deriving from the *SI* archive. One is the present author's proposal for an exhibition which focuses on the special issues of the magazine through the juxtaposition of artwork, archive and magazine, at Raven Row, London in 2015.

This thesis has relied on Peter Townsend's *SI* papers as the primary source. The information and leads found in it have led to further investigations and interviews with the protagonists. The combination facilitates a re-examination of the publication itself and its historical importance as a site for text based art, magazine art and for its efforts to extend the international nature of its discussion. It presents a picture of these new experimental developments from a British perspective. Townsend's free-form editorial policy was only possible thanks to the social and political circumstances of the time. This combined with the publishers, Cory Adams & MacKay giving him carte blanche with content

¹⁹ Vincent Bonin email to the present author, June 2010.

²⁰ Vincent Bonin, "Lucy R Lippard's Writing in and around Conceptual Art." *Materializing Six Years, Lucy R Lippard and the Emergence of Conceptual Art*, (Exhibition Catalogue) Brooklyn Museum, New York, Cambridge Mass and London England, The MIT Press, 2012.

created the circumstances for the magazine's operation. When Townsend left the magazine it was because he could not accept the policies of Michael Spens the publisher and owner. His left-wing thinking combined successfully with his native egalitarianism and commitment to a generous even-handedness. (Figure 9.115.) These characteristics and the editorial ambience he created remade a mainstream art magazine as a forum to put the operational workings of the art world on public view. Its effect is still being felt today, as is demonstrated by the testimony of many artists, writers, and museum directors who acknowledge the role of *Studio International* and Peter Townsend's editorial ethos in their careers.

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Chronology of artist covers *SI* January 1966 - May/June 1975

*cover specially designed for *Studio International*

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January	Vol. 171, No. 873	Richard Anuskiewicz, based on <i>Water on the Rock</i> , illustrated in the article "American Abstract Expressionism and Hard-Edge: some comparisons"
February	Vol. 171, No. 874	Rupprecht Geiger, <i>E240</i> , 1955
March	Vol. 171, No. 875	Mackay graphics, based on Oskar Kokoschka's <i>self portrait</i> , 1965
April	Vol. 171, No. 876	Naum Gabo, <i>Linear Construction No. 2</i> , 1953
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June	Vol. 171, No. 878	Barbara Hepworth, <i>Sea Form (Atlantic)</i> , 1964
July	Vol. 172, No. 879	Benson Zonena, based on paintings and drawings by Paul Klee in the collection of Ella Winters
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October	Vol. 172, No. 882	William Turnbull, <i>3/4/5</i> , 1966
November	Vol. 172, No. 883	L S Lowry, <i>Coming from the Mill</i> , 1930
December	Vol. 172, No. 884	Piet Mondrian, <i>Composition with Red Yellow Blue (unfinished)</i> , 1939-44

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March	Vol. 173, No. 887	Bridget Riley, <i>Descent</i> , 1965-6
April*	Vol. 173, No. 888	Victor Pasmore
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September	Vol. 176, No. 903	Josef Albers, <i>White Line Square XIII</i>
October	Vol. 176, No. 904	John Heartfield, <i>War and corpses - the last hope of the rich</i> , 27 April 1932
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March*	Vol. 177, No. 909	Richard Hamilton
April*	Vol. 177, No. 910	Don Judd
May*	Vol. 177, No. 911	Liliane Lijn
June	Vol. 177, No. 912	Mark Boyle, movement from a light performance 'sensual laboratory'
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September*	Vol. 180, No. 925	Michael Tyzack
October*	Vol. 180, No. 926	Bruno Munari
November	Vol. 180, No. 927	Jan van Raay, Members of the AWC protesting in front of Picasso <i>Guernica</i> in MoMA, New York
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February	Vol. 181, No. 930	Richard Hamilton and David Hockney, postcards from the exhibition at Angela Flowers Gallery, London
March	Vol. 181, No. 931	Costume design L Popova, Costume for <i>The Magnanimous Cuckold</i> , 1921
April	Vol. 181, No. 932	Seth Siegelaub, The artist's reserved rights transfer and sale agreement
May	Vol. 181, No. 933	Richard Long, <i>Stones on the Isle of Skye</i> , 1970
June*	Vol. 181, No. 934	Colin Self, <i>Single Women</i>
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November*	Vol. 182, No. 938	Allen Jones
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