

19 OCTOBER 1970 – 13 NOVEMBER 1970

I arranged to be able to use the lower roof at St, Martins for a four week period (October 19-November 13 1970) and obtained a guarantee that no-one else would be allowed to use the area-even when I myself was not actually present on the roof. I divided the four weeks up in the following way;-
October 19-30; weeks 1 and 2; preparation of the area and of the material.
November 2-6; week 3; preparation of the costume.
November 9-13; week 4; Performance.

My object was to demonstrate a process of involvement with material. This involvement was, to a certain extent, governed by the proposition that I should 'UNDERTAKE A RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE CONDITION OF AN AMOUNT OF MATERIAL OVER AN UNSPECIFIED PERIOD OF TIME'. The means I decided to adopt in accomplishing this end of demonstration was an activity, designated as Performance to be carried out during the fourth and final week. It was unsatisfactory to me that the equipment for Performance - the material and costume to be used - should be prepared separate from the area in which they would function. To prepare the equipment 'on location' would, seemingly, positively identify it with the location. Performance was not intended to be a demonstration of involvement with an arbitrary material in an arbitrary place for an arbitrary time, but with a particular material in a particular place for a particular time. Preparation on location was intended to emphasize and to clarify this particularity.

A. Preparation of the Area.

After sweeping the roof clean, I divided it into three approximately equal sections, marking the divisions with string nailed into the surface (SEE PLAN).

Area 1 was to be used in the preparation of the material.

Area 2 was to be used in the preparation of the costume.

Area 3 was to be used in Performance, with areas 1 and 2 being used in a support role during this period.

The condition of use of the two preparation areas was that I should continuously work within them on the designated task during the appropriate weeks, unless it was unavoidable that I should be elsewhere (as for instance if I had to use a sewing machine in the preparation of the costume).

Preparing the area took a day and a half. For the remainder of the two weeks allocated to preparing the area and the material I confined myself to area 1 and the preparation of the material.

B. Preparation of the Material.

At the end of the last project Deirdre, Ian and I had collected all the material that remained and stored it in plastic sacks. There were greater or lesser amounts of material - largely due to the variety in the stability of their original states. For instance the glue, the paint and the water had become inaccessible while the cardboard was, in terms of material state, very little changed. My intention was to use these stored remnants, putting them together to form one new material for use on the roof.

To create this new material my plan was to cover area 1 with strips of cardboard, sewing the strips together to form a mat, then to spread some of the other remnants thinly and evenly on top of the mat. Over this layer I was to lay and sew another mat of card, spread more of the other stuff, lay another mat, etc., until either the time or the remnants were used up. I was then to roll up the covering and transfer it to area 3, thus giving a material similar to a large Swiss Roll for the start of Performance.

After a day and a half had passed I had only lain and sewn about sixteen square feet of mat at the door end of the area. Not only was the sewing itself slow, but I found myself having to keep on going back to remake sections ripped apart by strong winds. In view of the fact that only seven working days remained to attend to the preparation of the material, I decided on a modified approach to the laying of the card mat. This was to lay the card in a double thickness of strips, one set going across the area, the other down the length, joining the two layers with glue spread between them.

Adopting this procedure speeded up the covering of the area, over a third being done by the weekend (October 24-25). There was still trouble with the wind tending to get underneath the mat, lift it and cause it to start flapping, then to rip. The edges were weighted down with several stones and two long pieces of timber, but from time to time I had to go back and repair damaged sections.

It rained heavily in London over the weekend and by Monday the card mat, softened by the rain, was starting to break up. To correct this and to strengthen the mat I decided *on* two measures. The first was to lay material between the mat and roof which would not be weakened by damp. This material was polythene and a length of cloth. The second was to damp-seal the top surface of the mat, protecting it and giving additional bonding to the

strips. For this purpose I spread Synthaprufe, a viscous bitumen and rubber based sealant, over the surface of the mat.

It took two days to repair the mat, lay the polythene and cloth underneath and damp-seal the surface. For the remaining three days of material preparation I continued laying the card in a double thickness and damp-sealing the surface, gradually working down the length of the area. It rained often, causing me to stop work and wait. By midday on Friday October 30 a mat covering three quarters of the area was complete. I spread clay and plaster over the mat at the door end but stopped when it became apparent that, despite my repair work, the mat was considerably weakened by the wet and that my actions were ripping it apart. Starting at the wall end of the area I carefully rolled the mat, ensuring that damaged sections were not further harmed. The roll was heavy and sodden. I positioned it across area 3 at the wall end and left it.

C. Preparation of the Costume.

The costume was to consist of a suit and tool belt worn by the Performer and joined to the Performance area by a harness preventing movement outside of that area but allowing freedom within it. The costume was to have a threefold function of signifying, equipping and protecting the Performer.

The suit was a white Boiler Suit; the tool belt was canvas and sewn onto the Boiler Suit. It held a hammer; nails; a paint brush; a pair of pliers; a saw; a screwdriver; a pair of scissors; and a coil of wire. To make the harness I ran strings from corner to corner down the length of the Performance area and threaded a white plastic ring onto each. The two rings clipped onto two snap-buckles sewn onto the tool belt, one each side. This arrangement allowed the Performer to move about freely within the area, though it was liable to snag if he moved fast, and, in order to turn around, it was necessary first to unclip the rings, replacing them after performing that action. The length of the strings was adjusted to restrict, as far as was possible, access outside of the Performance area. It was not, however, sufficient to restrict all such movement. Preparing the costume took three and a half days. The remainder of the week I spent establishing the conditions under which Performance would take place.

Although I was responsible for setting the situation up, I wanted others to use the equipment provided. It did not strike me as being particularly important that I should confine participation in the work to myself. In fact the reverse was true- I felt it to be important that the situation should be open for use by others. Thus the demonstration was intended to be participative as well as

indicative. In establishing certain conditions for Performance I was hoping to retain a certain structure in events, enabling Performance to accomplish its demonstrative intention.

For Performance the whole of the marked out area was to be used-area 3 for the sole use of a Performer; areas 1 and 2 for the sole use of an Assistant to the Performer and areas outside of 1, 2 and 3 (i.e. outside of the delineated area) for the use of Observers. The conditions were set out in the following way:

Performance: Area 3 of the total roof area, 11:15-1:00, 2:15-4:15 daily for one week, 9/11/70-13/11/70. There is an Assistant confined to areas 1 and 2 of the total roof area. Observers are invited to attend at any and all of the stated Performance times. They are restricted to any areas outside of the defined roof area. Neither Performer nor Assistant will speak during Performance time, nor will they acknowledge any remark, statement or question addressed to them during that time.

Function of the Assistant:(a) To inform the Performer five minutes before and at the end of Performance time. (b) To enforce the conditions applying to the defined area and its surroundings during Performance time. (c) To carry out any documentation procedures that have been arranged. The Assistant may not enter into any dialogue with Observers, but merely makes clear and enforces the conditions operating during Performance times.

Role: The roles occupied by individuals during a particular Performance time remain fixed for the duration of that Performance but are fluid in between times. An individuals role during a particular Performance time has no necessary connection with their role during either past or future Performance times.