

AUDIENCE # 5

Date of event: 2/20/93

Sunset: 5:23 pm

OK (pause and swallows) First off, I have to start with this (holding the shoe). I want you to know that this was probably the most disturbing part of the piece. And, I mean, you know that is exaggerated - I think the shoe in particular was the strangest. I got it at the shoe. The first day there was a red glove, and that was understandable because I said, "what a funny coincidence." It's like, life is really like that. And we left it there. I didn't know whose it was. And the people in the first and second floor both said "Is this your glove?" And then we get this. (holds up the scarf). The scarf was there, and I said, "this is awfully red," was my first thought. But the shoe today is just like - I mean the scarf - someone drops it on the step, that's it -, but this doesn't even look touched, and that was very strange. And I thought, as I was walking out of the door with this, the person that I live with, Martha, said "you know, you really ought to put those in your pocket," (inhale) and it really was - that took me aback, it was an off hand comment but, (pause) I just said, "yeah, that's right." I have these in my pocket. I'm driving to this place, I get in an automobile accident. The police are there and they want to know what am I doing with a red shoe and a red scarf, that are clearly, have no relation to me, so that was , (laughs) very... (swallows) But I think that the piece was like that for me, so I think that was an indicator of other ways that I was dealing with it.

As we talked in the car on the way out, I realized that I had grown up in, and had spent part of my childhood in a setting very much like Concord and I had played in the sort of scrub that was the location of the piece. I wouldn't exactly call it

woods--city-dwellers would perhaps call it woods, I guess, --but it was exactly that sort of place that feels -- you don't know really who the land belongs to exactly, it's sort of there, and (swallows) it really took me back on a number of different levels.

One of the things that (pause) I really had to come to terms with is that there are certain things that I can't talk about (pause), about it, about going back, about doing that, but , (pregnant pause) now I'm stuck (laughs) Ah! let me get my notes, this is illuminating the surface. (exhales and swallows)

This is true, this is true, that when I first began walking down the path where the string was, I kept saying to myself, now just take your time, take your time, because I was just sort of marching, like I was going to march through this piece.

I'm following a path, when I'm in the woods I follow a path, I walk, and the (swallows) and the container with chocolate was very nice, I took that home to Martha. I saved that, and then I saw the stream and I thought, well that's a good place to stop because I can listen to sound. The sound really attracted me and it was really wonderful sound and I thought, here's a place that I can kind of take a breath ,(inhales).

And then I noticed that there was a straw figure on the other side of the water. And then I looked down and I saw this little teapot, it was like Alice, little and red except red was an odd color for it. And then I looked and I saw this porcelain figure, (inhales) and then - this is the truth - I was, like this is a real person!! And I, if there was something, I don't know what your intention was, but I was just stopped (laughs) and, as a matter of fact, I had to start a dialogue with her, because I - you know why. I asked her

her name, I guess, and it was really great because the first thing she asked me was why was I standing in the middle of the stream?(laughs) You know, it seemed like a good place to stand, I don't know why, but that really was funny. And then she said, I think her name was Jennifer? I think that she told me her name was Jennifer...I couldn't remember exactly. But she said "don't you think you ought to be moving along," or something to that effect I'm not sure exactly what it was, but it was perfect, it was great. And then, and this I don't know whether this happened or not, but it sounded like there was someone calling her from behind me somewhere, and I didn't stop to check it out, and I wasn't sure whether I had made that up or was that was someone there? I mean, you were or someone else? (swallows)

And so I started out on this journey and, was my awareness increased? yes (laughs) sort of - frighteningly so. And that's I mean that's (swallows) one of the things about that kind of woods to me, that it carries with it, that I carry with it. I mean, one of the things that it got me in touch with, which was how much I carry this kind of imagination, this kid imagination when I'm in a space like that. That I can, without any of the signs and symbols that you've placed there, I can create my own thing. And so to be in somebody else's imagining was new (laughs), in that regard. Should I just keep going? Okay I have this list here.

What I did was I came home and I wrote down everything I saw, I just started at the beginning, and any step along the way I could have written more, but I just wanted to keep saying, well there was this that I saw and there was this that I saw and I realized like half the way down that I don't remember the order that I saw things. I saw a red cup of chilies

somewhere. But I have no idea whether I saw that before the daffodils, I don't know were there any daffodils? or were there flowers?

And then, coming upon the embankment with the wonderful table set in this gully. As I'm going along, I look over the edge, I see this table set, very nicely, and then I hear this bell and then I hear this sound that sounds initially like a train far off, actually it sounds like the train in Jamaica Plain. And then it wasn't the train, it was some music. I'm a musician, I should know this piece of music, but I didn't, I couldn't quite recognize it. (swallows) But it seemed to beckon, so I stood for a long time above this embankment looking down at this food, and then listening to the sound. And I saw there was a person walking around down there dressed in white, that (inhales), well (laughs) I'll talk about that in a minute.

I think that the hardest thing was that the snow was very white going down the embankment, and I didn't see - I was sort of looking around to see if there was some other way that people had walked around so as not to disturb it. (inhales) And that was a really wonderful moment because I said "I'm hungry, that looks really good," and I just really "blluuuhhhh". It was like "bump, I did this!" you know, and I would have made up my mind sooner had I been able to see steam coming out of the teapot, but I wasn't quite sure whether it was real. When I got down there I looked and I saw, ah, there's a candle burning under this tea, and that it was warm, and the cheese, and the (swallows) and the red pepper, was it red? it must have been red, it had to have been red - and the strawberries. I saved four or five and took them home to my son because he loves strawberries. And at that too, I felt like a thief, (laughs) like I had come upon this table and reaching down and stuffing

these things, I mean I wanted to take the bread with me too but I felt kind of embarrassed about it. I should have, you know, it was good bread, and afterwards I thought to myself God the birds are just eating that bread out there and I could have taken it with me,"(swallows), figuring that you probably would not have gone back to it...Did you go back to turn out the lights? That was a question I had, or did you leave the lights on, at the end of the path? I was curious if it had stayed over night. Somehow I had imagined that food all sitting there being eaten by these birds, overnight.

I felt, down in that gully eating that I could have done without the music at that point but, that's personal taste, I guess. But it was cold, (inhale) it was just crystal clear, it was as if everything was just crystal clear. It was very nice and you couldn't see anything, (inhales) and it was, like am I being ripened up here?, or fattened up? I had that sort of... That is kind of a kid kind of imagination - it worked, and that was very nice. (pregnant pause)

It was very sad, I mean it was very alone. (pregnant pause) (swallows) I wanted to share that and and knowing that you can't really do that, exactly, in the same way... That was the one point where I was very touched at all the trouble that you'd gone to for one person, to come and do this, I felt - (inhales) I felt kind of honored to be present in, to be this audience of one. I think I have a prejudice about that anyway, because I actually like to go to things by myself and I do sometimes. For instance, our talking that we did in the car, that actually kind of made me nervous, I don't like to talk before I'm going to go to a performance. I like to just do this and go because I.. I don't know, it's kind of like I want to be

taken, I want to be shown something, I guess. (pregnant pause)

And that's when I heard the dog barking, when I was down in the gully. (pause) (swallows) I thought, is this dog barking because there is music or because the dog heard the bell. I didn't really associate the dog with being part of it. I certainly didn't see an image in my mind of these bones hanging and this dog tied to this tree. (swallows) One of the things that I just was very - about the dog was (swallows) you know you are walking up this path and -

One of the things that you've got is three people in this piece that I can see. One of them, with the lamp, wandering around in the background, and then approaches me. Then you've got another person with a tape deck, sort of floating above the reeds, because you are drifting away from me I I tried to go over closer. (laughs) As if we were magnets with opposite ends or something. And then you had, in the beginning, this person who was just sitting there. And so you have somebody sitting there, you have somebody approaching you shaking something, and then you have someone drifting away from you, (inhales) as being your human contact, in this thing. (swallows) I'm not drawing meaning from that exactly, but it was striking because when I got to the third person with the hood and the the lamp, it must have been very cold at that point.

(laughs) That was the other thing, I didn't know, am I taking too long with this? That was a problem. And then I thought for sure that when I climbed out of the gully with my (laughs) bread and cheese in hand, sort of scarfing this stuff down, that I thought for sure that the path was going to lead right to that tent or whatever it was that was sitting out in

the middle of the marsh. And then it didn't, and so went by it and and, (swallows) and began going up the hill and opened up another container that had something bizarre in it. what did I say, what did I think it was? (turns pages) stinky brown stuff: excrement? calf liver? butterscotch? rubber cement? I didn't know what it was, (laughs) but I was not going to taste it, whatever it was (swallows).

But anyway, by the time I got to the third person who was shaking this box, I just - (inhales) I think it's somewhere in that point after I had eaten and was going down the hill and I kept seeing red like everywhere. There was this scarf that was in the bushes, which was very strange because there was a little bird in the bush and you know it's was like - I look at this scarf and then I see this bird back there and a little later I saw a rabbit running up the path and (inhales) at first, when I first began noticing things, like the little teapot and the (swallows) what do you call those little red canisters, what do you call those? The boxes, you just call them the little boxes, I didn't know what the name of those were. It's a game, you know, like "there's a little chair over there, I see the little chair," but after a while it was like, (inhales) "I'm sure I'm not going to see everything. I don't want to see everything." (laughs) It was just like so many things coming in, that for me it felt that I needed to stop looking for these things. I mean, either they're going to appear to me or they're not going to appear to me, and that was a better way to be in the piece. (long pause).

The story about the werewolf and the little girl was - I couldn't get the little lamp lit, (pause) which didn't really - I mean, I could read it, but I really wanted to light the lamp I guess. (laughs) And I

realized I was really cold at that point, sitting on that log, reading that story. I was really, really cold.

But by the time I got up to go to the person with the lamp, I just couldn't deal with it. I couldn't deal with her. (swallows) I had regret, as I was walking away from her, because I could hear her following me down the path or shaking this little thing that had something in it but (laughs) I wasn't going to find out what it was, so that was very - (swallows) There was regret. (pause)

I just thought - you've got these chances to interact with something, and then after you do it, then you are stuck with what you did, and I really (inhales) felt that. I don't know if that is the word. I just kept coming up against that - (swallows), like I shouldn't have talked so much with that first person I saw, I should have moved on, I should have taken the bread, I should have spent more time looking at the bed out in the middle of the marsh.

I came back down, I read the story and then I went back down to look at the bed again because I realized that I wasn't going to go out there, to see it, and so I hadn't really looked at it . and that was sort of interesting because I couldn't see it as well because it was getting dark. And that was something in and of itself too, that I could walk back down the path. It hadn't occurred to me until that moment that I could walk both ways on this path. I could have walked all the way back up to the parking space. It wouldn't have done me very much good, because (laughs) I would have had to have walked all the way down through, but nonetheless - (swallows long pause) I'd seen too much already.

I think that the kind of trick that I really love is - I love a trick where you can see

exactly how it's done, if there is going to be a trick. And I thought that arriving back at my car was wonderful, because clearly (laughs) that's what you were doing, and I kind of half realized it but then I figured I had my eyes open - I knew where we were - and yet it never occurred to me until I picked up the apple box and I picked out the note, that "Oh, of course, you just drove around to disorient me a little bit and then drove back down some other little street." And I don't whether you even drove by my car again - I didn't think that you had done that, so you had just taken another little road and it was perfect. (pause)

I realized when I was doing this part of it that I just kept coming up with these images of berries on a log, crossing the path; berries or beans or something - aduki beans? (exhale pause) And there were a lot of different things like that where - maybe not a lot, but a few anyway, that - (swallows) I assumed that I saw - one of the things that happened that was striking to me, among all of the other striking things, (laughs) was that there was this stuff speckled, it was just scattered in the snow going over to that dog, which I assumed was not blood because I think that blood is darker when it (swallows) was it blood? (pause) I assumed that that wasn't, but if if you had taken chicken blood or the beef bone blood and spread it out it would have been really dark at that point

So I was looking at this and saying "oh yeah, blood, it looks like blood, it's supposed to look like blood," and this is something that I can deal with, you know, this is artifice (laughs) you know, but then I saw the bones, and I'm holding this piece of bread with the cheese in it and the dog is barking and I just lost my appetite. I thought to myself (laughs) I was hungry a second ago, and I look at

this and I'm completely caught up by this and it bothered me a lot that it was just so obvious. You had the dog and you had the bones hanging and you had just entrapped me in this funny kind of way. (pause) I even tried to approach the dog but then I realized that he was tied up and I wasn't and so he probably wasn't going to be in a very good mood.

(long pause, turns page, sighs, turns page again and sighs and then starts to laugh) Oh man there were some berries or something in a little box? I just started eating immediately and I then I said to myself "God, man, these could be Juniper berries, or something!" (laughs) I immediately assumed that they were edible, which they were - they were delicious.

I think that death was in the air on a kind of metaphysical level or some level, that - (swallows and long pause) I start down that path and it doesn't interest me for some reason or other, there's just something, there's something about -- (pause) In the same way that (long pause) coming upon this person was important, and that I had sat out in the woods dressed as warm as I could for as long as I could. That was something that I had not expected to find. I really couldn't conceive of what you had in mind, I really couldn't, I don't do this sort of thing very often. (laughs) So it just never dawned on me that you'd have people out there. I figured I'd be out there by myself, sort of an outward bound or something.