

RED IN WOODS DISCUSSION BY PARTICIPANTS 3/13/94

N = audience # 2

M = audience # 4

J = audience # 3

K = audience # 1

C = audience # 6

L = audience # 5

Mar = Marilyn Arsem

Mar Welcome to the presentation on RIW, the piece that took so many years to finish, thanks to the lack of snow in the first several. I'm Marilyn Arsem and I actually conceived of the piece but it was many many people who made it happen with me and I thank them all. and the list is a bit long...

I think what I will do is just start with a very short description of the piece, and then hand it over to the six people who were actually the audience of the piece. And after they're done, some of the performers will say a little about some experiences they've had sitting out in the woods waiting, at dusk, and finally I'll just go through the slides fairly quickly, just so you can have a sense of the site, if you haven't gained the sense of it by way of the verbal descriptions.

When I conceived of the piece, I actually wanted to make a performance that couldn't be documented in any other way other than through memory, and when you see the slides you will understand the problem.

It was a performance designed for an audience of one person. I was interested in doing it a number of times to see what the difference would be between different audience people who witnessed the piece. And what it was a walk through the woods, it needed snow, it happened at dusk, so we could only do one a day. And it is essentially an exploded version of images of Red Riding Hood. What you see in the front room are most of the objects that were placed on the site. It was a hillside that went down into a marshland,

and the length of the path was about half a mile, I think. Its (circuit?) went up and down the hill and around and about.

The audience agreed to meet me on a street corner and park their car and get into my car. I drove them around a bit, and dropped them off at a point where there was a piece of red yarn and I told them, "This is red in woods. It involves all your senses. It is a full 360°, near and far. Engage with it any way that you wish. You'll know when its over, and be careful." (laughter)

So with those instructions they got out of the car and I drove away. And I think we're going to take it from there. This is Kenner, Nan, Landon, Miles, John and Celena. What they're going to do is try to see if they can remember the piece! Kenner did it in 91. We did one that year; the rest were canceled because of lack of snow. Nan did it in 92, and the other four did it last winter.

What they're going to do is see if they can work their way, image by image, through the piece. And describe their experiences and what we'll hopefully hear is that they haven't homogenized by the hour of pre-conversation. What you'll hear are some differences.

(shuffle of adjusting, fixing the mics, taking drinks of water, etc.)

n What was the first image?
The yard, walking through the yard.

m It started by following a piece of yarn, down a path, that led to a stream,

n but before we got to the stream

m I don't remember that...

laughter

n

k there was a small teapot

c yes yes

n and there was a spider web. It was yarn strung through the trees

(multiple voices)

we're getting out of sequence, it could be.

K. there was some red yarn that spiraled up the trunk of a tree, I think

C Really? I never saw that...
(laughter)

Where was the little girl? Where was Jessie? Wasn't she right at the beginning?

L She was right across the stream.

C She was across the stream?

N She was, yeah, she was across the stream

C I thought she was before the stream.

(laughter throughout)

L No, she was on the other side of the stream.

C She was?

N Maybe your year she was before the stream...

C No, I was in 93 so I was with four people who (garbled @ 70)

J I remember being at the stream and not noticing the girl for a (others agreeing) moment or two and being sort of startled, like whether she had just appeared

N I thought she was a mannequin at first, she looked so perfect, (c, yes; j, yes!) she was dressed in perfect red riding hood type muff and cloak, which is out there ,and very rosy cheeks and not saying anything until I got closer to her and then I realized that she was breathing. And then I started talking to her.

M I didn't realize she was real until she said something to me. I was halfway across the stream,

N Well, she looks exactly like a doll that I had had as a kid, which I never played with because it was too perfect, and here's this... (much laughter in audience)

K I don't remember her being dressed that way, (laughter) maybe she wasn't the first year (ed.: and he's right!)

N How do you remember, do you remember what she was like?

K I don't remember. My thought when I saw her was how the red riding

hood and Alice in wonderland

N I didn't think RRH until later, but it was throughout the whole thing I remember being startled by the color red because you're walking through this monochromatic woods and everything is gray and white, winter white, and suddenly you would see these big splashes of red that would suddenly be in your consciousness, and maybe they had been there all along, but you just hadn't seen them.

J You said you talked to her, do you remember the conversation?

N I remember saying hello, and who was she and what was she doing there. She entered a character where her character, she was doing very well and she was being very cryptic and I think she said something about gathering twigs or firewood for her mother and I remember asking her if she would, if she was there to help me across the stream, and she just sort of smiled and said, "no." (laughter) Then I got across the stream and went on and I think she - I don't remember what the conversation was '- but

M (garbled @ 99) I reckon she said something to me first, and asked me what I was doing there, and I said something about taking part in this performance art piece(laughter) you know, I asked her what she was doing and she said she was waiting for her mother.

C Did everyone talk to her?

L Yeah, I talked to her.

K I talked to her a little bit. But I remember it was very different. I wasn't certain she was part of the piece when I saw her, (C; ooh) and I didn't know whether to say something to her or not. And she finally spoke to me, and asked me if I would help her across the stream. Which I did. Badly. She wound up getting her foot in the water. (laughter) None of you helped her across the stream?

N No, she was on the other side. That's why I asked her if she was going to help me across the stream.

K I see. (garbled @ 111) In my year she was on the far side. She headed for her mother. ???????

C Your recollection of issues about assistance across the water - my memory is that she was this side of the stream. She frightened me also because I didn't see her initially and so I was sort of (audible gasp demonstration) There's someone living here, and she seemed so tiny and I was amazed by that because she was 9 years old when she did the piece. I thought she was about 4. you know, and she freaked me out . I felt like I spent half an hour talking with her, and I got very concerned about leaving her there, I mean, all of my issues - it was so obvious that I had moved into a dream state, you know, that my little magical child - the minute I saw little tea pots and stuff, I was deep into it... (much laughter My therapist and I are still processing this piece, you know?... (more laughter)

and I couldn't leave her, I couldn't abandon her, because to leave this little child alone in the woods, and that she wasn't safe, so there was all this stuff around that, and then finally someone, she wouldn't - she was very cryptic with me as well. She seemed very wise, I thought she was like a shape shifter or a crone who had become a small child, (laughter)

L (garbled @108) Just turn, turn your head, this way... the thing about vulnerability was that the last thing that I remember her saying to me was, "Shouldn't you be moving along?" (laughter) It was like, "Whoa! I guess I should!" (laughter) And so moving on from that point.

C Didn't they start calling for her when you were there? Yes, it was like, "Where are you?" and I thought they were calling for me, like it was my mother, and all this ancient stuff came up. And then I realized they were calling for her, and she said something about she had to go which made me very sad because now I'm being abandoned, you know. And actually, I tried to get her to go along with me. I

wanted her to go along the journey with me ,and she refused to. And I was very impressed with her powers of concentration. She was unfazed. I had met my match. (laughter)

J I thought that she was afraid of me and that when I tried to engage her I just felt this aloofness and coolness, and it sort of put me off, like, what have I done?

N Its funny, I didn't take it as fear. I just thought of her as she was in her place, and very serenely there and I wasn't going to hurt her, that was okay she was doing her just and just (garble 127)

J But you weren't a man, so that makes a difference

N That's true

J you're programmed to not respond.. .and remember there was, shortly thereafter there was a cherry cordial in the snow and I wasn't hungry so I asked her if she wanted it and she didn't even respond but there was no getting through to her, but I do remember liking the fact that when I heard the mother calling that , at least when I did, she didn't seem to hear it and respond so it made it seem all the more dreamlike that there were pieces that should be connected, there was a girl saying I was waiting for my mother hears this voice, but its also sliding around - Its not quite [connected] (simultaneous talking 137)

C It was very cinematic experience in terms of images like that - they're so metaphorical and connecting or not connecting within me

M As I went down the path I looked back and she was walking off.

C I got there and by the time I turned around and she was gone and I didn't see her exit so I imagined that , (Garbled 148) one of those kinds of experience, that was really spooky.

J Who say the little tiny teakettle. Who tried to get something out of it? I was disappointed, I thought there would be an elixir.

N Oh, I didn't.

C Oh, wow! I didn't try.
L garbled 154
C It was really gooey. In a kind of red box, wasn't it?
J So I thought someone would be following me somehow, that was part of my experience of the whole piece, feeling watched and followed, but I left the, when the girl didn't want it, I just left the candy in the snow and drew a circle around it so it was pretty obvious.,
N It made me much more alert, and instead of following the path I was looking up and down to see what the next red thing would be, rather than being taken by surprise. But I found myself still constantly being taken by surprise whenever I would encounter something else red, which is a kind of weird experience. I was mentally expecting it, and suddenly to be there and here I thought I was looking for it all along.
C Well the path was sort of circuitous which helped with the turning - like on the amusement rides where you turn and suddenly discover... Did the drop-offs happen before or after the piece? I know they happened after the piece, but did the drop-offs happen before the piece as well at your home?
N I was
C You didn't get drop offs?
N I may have...
(general) laughter
I think about that all the time...
(172)
C We'll get to that... (laughter)
M I remember running into the little girl surprised me because for some reason I didn't expect people in this
K As I remember now the announcement said something like it being interactive, I wasn't sure, so when the little girl appeared and asked me to help her I was all set up for a lot more but it never happened to me
N But did you see ...
K I saw one other person.
J It'd be interesting maybe to talk a little bit about people's expectations before the piece happened.

N What did you think?
J Well, I suppose excited because I thought, I loved the whole concept of putting all this energy into [garbled @ 187]one person , I thought that was very generous and exciting and different. And I'd heard a little bit about 13 Actions in Yellow, a previous piece that Marilyn did, but the fact that this was the color red made me apprehensive that it was at dusk, I knew that Marilyn would pushing some buttons (laughter) so I just, you know, was - beyond that I had no idea what would happen, but I was sort of open, and on the edge, but sort of alert for - let all my senses be open to it
L I did know I was really kind of up tight about - before the piece - knowing how to experience it (general agreement hums) Just feeling somehow as if I - as if I had this responsibility - I had to[@206] in some way, do it some way. I found that when I went down the path to begin with, I went down the path the way I walk down any path, which is that I look at my feet, and I had to keep stopping myself to say, Oh yeah, I'm in this piece... to
N I purposely tried to not have any preconceived expectations before I went in because I wanted to be open to it. The only thing that I remember vividly is thinking when Marilyn picked me up, "What am I doing, getting into a strange car with a woman who I'd never met and then we're driving around for a while, and then she dropped me off into some woods, and then I'm going to walk around through them . That's awfully trusting of me, because I had never - I had no idea who this person is ,but somehow I had enough confidence that that would be okay and that I would experience something that would be perhaps - startling, I didn't know what to expect, but I like the whole idea of it so much that I was willing to overcome any sense of fear or ...
J Did that disappear through the piece ?
N Oh yeah,

J or you didn't experience fear at all?

N No, I didn't experience fear, the only thing that I experienced as far as discomfort was that when my foot hit the stream I found the hole in my boots and that really set me off for the rest of the piece. And as you all know that was very early on and it became very hard to concentrate on anything else but how cold I was

L? You were out there the coldest day, weren't you?

N Yes, I think so - And you didn't know at the time how long it was going to be, whether you were going to be expected to be there for an hour, a half hour, 15 minutes. I lost all sense of time. and I was sort of suspended in this other world that I knew that I would come out of eventually but I didn't know how long it would take. So I would sort of get out of this mental state but the physical one was discomfort.

C I didn't have any, actually I thought Red in Woods was a metaphor, and so I had no idea how literal it was, that we were going to be in the woods and there was going to be red. I took it as something much like - I never got the Little Red Riding Hood thing, early on, that somehow escaped me. For me, because I work in theater, theater is a communal experience. And so to have a piece that's for an audience of one was the hook for me in terms of 'what - is - that - then?' For me, it was redefining a form, of what a theater experience was. So for me it was a - I had no idea what content was , but I was just captivated by the form, the experience. I had

some anxiety around time boundaries, because of obligations that I had later that evening, and I had no idea if I was there for three hours or five hours, or - so when I got the cryptic, 'you'll know when its over,' its like, that's not good enough, curtain's down at -- you know, so that was my piece of resistance, I had to sort of protect myself with it as I went through the piece and eventually set that down. But I also had that pressure about getting

it right, or that there was some something expected - you know, 'you'll know when its over - ' Well, gosh, what if I don't? What if I miss it? Or

So there was definitely performance anxiety or obligation because I was so [up] 158 Though I didn't leave much for other people I had sense of being watched . That was kind of - look at me, now I know I was being watched, that people were signaling with bells to start the piece, and so I wasn't completely losing my mind,

N? I found it comforting.

L There were people out doing things, - later on when we get to the list - I found that comforting that there's someone out here, sort of doing this, and that, sort of feeling that same sort of humbleness, knowing all these people have gone to all this trouble just for one person..

C Yes, that was potent.

N Yes, that was pretty amazing. But did you all feel that you were in some other world, even though, intellectually you might have known there were houses and people,

M IT was funny, my initial expectation was real simple, seemed like a great excuse to get out of the city and take a walk in the woods at sunset, and about the only pressure I felt was 'start to get to work' and

N Didn't you tell me you brought a flashlight?

M I had a flashlight in my pocket, but not much of one . 1 or 280

But, I took my watch off, before it started, and I left it in my pocket, and I thought maybe I would look at it, but I didn't. I never got the Red Riding Hood connection until much later.

C Even when you found the book?

M Even when I found the book! The Alice in Wonderland comment you made, Kenner - I had, every once in a while, the thought, "Curiouser and curiouser..." (laughter)

L Did anyone see a chair in the trees?

M Yes, I did.

J Yes.

N What?!(general laughter)

L I don't even remember, I reached a point where, it was like, "I give up!" I am not going to see everything here, Because I found otherwise, it was like getting incredibly distracted, to keep looking around to see what else Marilyn had devised. (laughter)

M I'd seen the bed, and I saw that chair in the tree, and I had the -, "hey, someone's bedroom furniture is spread out all over the place here!" (laughter)

C Did you hear the music when you saw the bed?

J Yeah, I did, because that was still early on and I don't remember the sequences exactly where or how, where you get a view looking down at the lower part of the field and see a bed and I see a figure at some great distance and I thought well eventually this will wind straight down there and this great gush of music sort of floated up and I thought ah, that's quite a nice image and it was nice to know there were things happening even though they're so far away that you were supposed to (garbled @ 2 or 309)

N After the girl?

J I remember finding a box of berries at some point

C Raspberries?

J Yeah, and again I wasn't hungry to eat them, but I took some because I thought I might need these to

C Ah, provisions

J Well, not for myself. I thought I'd have to barter them, or something (much general laughter in audience.)

C Leaving them behind

N I ate all of them

C I didn't eat the candy, because I didn't want to eat the chocolate, but it really whet my appetite, and I saw them, and "I can eat these" and so I wolfed those down, but I didn't eat the meal. What was the meal? (several talk at once) Are we getting there?

(@2 or 323)

M I missed the raspberries!..I love them. (laughter)

K They were really good!

M I thought they were cranberries. (and for him they probably were - one of the times we couldn't find raspberries...)

L Yeah, lets talk about the meal.

C It was down! from me, when I saw it, I thought someone was actually going to come out and I was going to watch someone.

N Yeah, I wasn't sure whether someone was going to come out , and because it was down in a gully I didn't think that I was supposed to go down there.

J because Marilyn said to stay on (Jointly) Follow the red path, follow the red yarn (laughter)

N I had tried to pick up something once before but it was too high and that had been glued to the spot (not true, perhaps frozen?) So I sort of (@2 or 330) this is there for looks, not for real.

J So you didn't go down.

N I didn't go down.

K Since the little girl had actively engaged me, I thought someone would come join me. And so I sat down and started eating. I stayed there for what seemed like a long time, waiting for somebody to show up (general talk, unclear, 340 half sentences)

L I felt very much, when I was noshing down all this food, that being down in a gully, and you couldn't really see, that I had this great sense of being fattened up, (lots of laughter in audience) The Vikings were going to come over this ... (laughter)

M I remember looking up a little bit and seeing the sky get dark and thinking, "Gee, I sure would like to stay here a little longer, but, its getting dark..." I don't remember if I went back up the way I came in, but there was also a little, sort of a depression and you had to actually slide down some snow to get into it, and there was one spot where you could actually walk out, and I don't remember if I went out that way or if I

went back up to the path. Maybe I (@ 2 or 358)(laughter)

N What was the meal?

L & K Cranberries, um, berries, oh gee, strawberries! Cheese, Bread, Peppers!

K A big loaf of bread!

C The table had the white tablecloth

J I was feeling very vulnerable down there because I could no longer see above it, the path. I thought it was something to participate in but at the same time I had that sense of - hearing little branches click and not wanting to be in one spot for too long. But I did remember feeling afterwards guilty that I didn't leave some sort of note or something because here someone had gone to all this effort and I had taken some if it but I hadn't left anything behind. That was also where I took my first photograph, because I thought that Marilyn always documents her pieces and I thought there's probably a hidden surveillance cameras around here, so I decided to bring a camera with me so that I could cover myself , but... (general laughter)

K What did you all do when you saw the dog?

general talk : I heard the dog,

L I could hear the dog

N He's right, he's over there (pointing to Joannie's dog in the audience)

L Did people hear him bark?

K Did you see the bones that are hanging out.

N I thought he was actively jumping up to try to reach the bones, that he was starving,

C Wasn't there red on the snow, or something, that looked like blood, like he had freshly killed something

N & K Yes, fresh killed, yeah.

J I saw him as ? the lord of evil (?2 or 388)

N He's mellow today.

K Well, he looked mellow to me then, and I remember I left the red road and went over and petted him.

L See, I was surprised that it was the same dog. I saw a vicious, wild dog (laughter)

N Its nice to see him today, because my memory of him then is that he looked more wolf-like than he does now. And by then I was into the red riding hood and so "the better to eat you with, my dear..."

M I noticed that he was tied up and when I went a little closer he started barking, and I said, "okay, enough of this!"

C I felt - I don't know if Marilyn said it, I certainly heard, that to follow the red yarn, which to me meant to stay on the red yarn, because of my personal ? (305) I am excessively loyal in certain situations, could be if I'm scared, so for me seeing the food it was about not going towards it but feeling what I would feel looking at the food, and not going towards the dog but standing there feeling what I would feel listening to the dog bark, and it was, I got - that was my first real carnivorous moment in the piece, and it really turned the energy in the piece for me, it became much darker at that point...

Was the dog before or after seeing the bed in the field?

N I thought it was after. (simultaneously with)

M Before.

K For me it was after the bed.

L I kind of saw the dog off in the distant. I sort of saw him in a way, because I came back up, standing on top of the hill and I heard the music, with that sound that I thought at first was like a train and then I realized it was music

C For me it was like this real low bass or cello note that just seemed to be really suspended,

N I heard the dog before I saw the dog

C I didn't realize dog was part of the piece, I thought it was just some neighbor's dog, somewhere, barking. But when I saw the bed in the field it was very potent, because I - you know, the early stuff with the little girl really brought me into sort of an early childhood state, and I got a real hit on my mother's death, you know. Hearing

the note to me was just a very 'grief' note, just very bass and very string, and all that, and so I just let myself be overwhelmed with grief, so I really moved into the vulnerability, and just seeing that. And at this point sunset was getting ready to start to happen so I felt, "wow, how did Marilyn get that?" The red in the sky was just incredible, you know, behind it, and cars were starting to turn on their lights, as they were driving off in the distance coming towards... and so that was really potent. And then to go from that - sort of cardinal image of that - to the dog barking and seeing all the blood was really - really packed a wallop.

M I saw a bed, and really had to walk over to it, to see in it, and it was far enough away that I figured "gee, I bet the path, the path takes me back over there later." And I did walk over at that point. And someone walked away from the bed, and it ??(345)

C That was powerful, seeing it twice, seeing it full once and empty the second time out

L I think because there was someone wandering around in white, and I'd sort of look over at them and then they would sort of move away, sort of like two negative poles. I would move this way and they come sort of closer to me, and then I would move sort of...

J It was also, I don't know in how many pieces this was true, but just as the sunset, the time I saw it, the the sky, the clouds did an amazing red shift as it set, and 460

was planned, but it all just stop and watched it

C It really gave me the sense of a lucid dream.

N It definitely had this worldliness ? (466), as if this world had been there before I entered the woods and would be there when I left, unchanged, it was the Narnia in the Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe, where you walk into the wardrobe which looks perfectly normal and then this world, its there..

J Its like stepping into somebody else's dream. And the resonances didn't quite feel like mine, my dream images, but I felt just temporarily invited into this dream state

N

C What was the story? Light the match and the little book

M The next box would be, the box with the chicken liver.

C That was gross! (laughter)

N That really dark thing?

M I took that, and figured that somewhere along the way I'd see the dog again. (laughter)

C You took it with you? Oooh, that's so gross! (laughter) I thought you meant the chocolate. After seeing the chocolate cherry thing I thought 'oh, this is chocolate!' so I touch it, and I think I'll eat it, and then I realize that its raw,

M Well they are chicken liver ? (492)

C Yeah, which really gagged me.

M I took the box and figured I'd pass the dog again. Somewhere along the way I think it did double back and you could see the dog, but it was far enough away. I would have walked over, except in the other direction was this hooded figure carrying a lamp. (500)

N,J,? yeah, yeah,

J Carrying that box - (garble @ 501/2)

M and put it down

N But there were lots of little red lacquer boxes strewn around, there was the one with the heart or whatever in it, and

J I thought it was a tongue

N And the one with the book and the potpourri and

M with the lantern - little candle

N yeah

C uh huh

M and matches. I think at that point I put down the thing with the chicken liver in it and took the lantern with it, and carried that.

N yeah (multiple voices)

C were there other ones?

N yes!
C was there just one little teapot?
M there were lots of little things...
N yeah, dogs (?? 513),and ?
(spiritual?? not N 3 syll) bells...
C It felt like Alice in Wonderland at points because of the size differential that was occurring in a large scape and then a small piece. You know, it was like 'drink me', small/big - kind of experiences.
J The places in the path where you had to crouch really low to get underneath the branches, um, it seemed designed for a particular size
C Yeah
K What did the person in the hood do as you all approached him?
C Now was it a male or female? (her's was the only male)
N Hard to tell, it was in a cloak.
C Cloak?
J Before, for me, before we get to the woman, that was what the, uh, Little Red Riding Hood story was before I approached the woman across that big field (??526)
K The woman in the bed -
J No the woman with the lantern
K With the hood
J Yeah, I could see her in the distance, but I was still at the place where the lantern was and the book and at that point it was getting colder and darker and I tried lighting the matches but they wouldn't light and the story seemed too long to read the whole thing and it was, but I was kind of like - pretty - I said this on the tape - but I just remember getting to the end where the way she gets away from him is to say that she has to go to the bathroom so I thought 'okay, I got to remember that in case I need to use that.' (laughter) 'that's the vital information I'm supposed to have', so...I put that away, and then I started approaching very slowly towards the girl with the lamp, which I had to again make the decision to go off the trail to see what would happen...
C How far did you go? Did you get to her?
J Yeah, I kept walking really slow,

because - Well, I kept doing very odd things with my walking patterns, which I'm curious if any of the people who were - crew personnel had any awareness of it, because I felt like they were always, like I said, always around, somehow, and I didn't want to be predictable. So at times I would run really fast and at other times I would just wait for a while (general laughter) and
C I bet they loved you.
J So, but to go to where the girl with the lantern - you were out in a clearing, so that made me much more vulnerable. I couldn't hide, so I kept approaching her but looking around - all around me, and I could see the dog in the distance. So I went up to her and - I think I just said, you know, um -- 'how's it going?' or something like that (over general laughter) and, but I was just startled, she just like instantly freaked, dropped her - everything that she had, and just started running up the - out of sight. And it occurred to me later, I wonder what would have happened if I had run after her, if I could make that big moment into something more, but I - that was the first part, the first time I sort of started to reflect on that - on the idea that I was - actually - the wolf, and that all these people were afraid of me. Where I thought I was in this dangerous situation, was actually starting to flip over, and so I opened - she dropped this box, and I opened it up, and there were all these teeth, long teeth, and so I took one of those and I left some of the berries in exchange, and (laughter)
M As I got close to her I started walking and he or she started walking off...
N Yeah
J oh yeah?
N Yeah, and I think
J You couldn't tell whether it was a he or a she?
N I couldn't tell whether it was a he or a she either, and I also can't tell whether I'm misremembering it , but I seem to recall that figure was beckoning towards me very, very slowly and

M Yes.

N I don't remember whether I started to go towards it, or whether I kept going.

M I remember..

N But it was very mysterious and it was - that was frightening, because I wasn't - at that point I get -right (595) into (read the?) the fairy tale and I found the heart and I was starting to feel very sensitive.

M I remember the fairy tale being much further down the path. I remember going on and seeing the bed again and walking off toward the bed, coming back to the path, in a sort of S shape there, with the dog here, then coming off down this way, finally going back up , see the dog over here, and seeing the hood over there - the image that I found ? 608 quite by accident, with the lamp, and then coming back around and seeing the bed out this way, and walk off to the bed

L Actually going to the bed?

M Yeah

L I was surprised that- my path, when it didn't go anywhere near the bed. (general agreement)

N Yeah

L It felt like it was going to go to the bed, but then it didn't.

N That's right, (general agreement)

M Well, the second time I saw the bed I figured, 'okay, its not getting any closer, I'll walk off. I actually saw the person walking away from the bed the second time, at which point I walked over, saw some, saw the blood on the bed. I don't think I walked all the way to the bed, I walked far enough to see what was going on, saying, 'I'm not going to walk through the marsh that far,' and came back, and then that's when I recall finding the story and the candle and the matches.

J I would have had to walk all the way down to the end almost and come back if I was going to find out what the bed was in the way that you describing. To me it was always at the end of the

M I think we're approaching this place twice

J And by that point it was already so dark by the time that I got there that I

couldn't see, I wouldn't have usually found it because the path

N I don't remember everything so close, it was always, but there were trees, plenty of trees

C There was like this drop-off, and brush that I don't think I could have gotten through, and what seemed like marshland. It was almost like a proscenium arch, in a sense. It was a separation, I felt. My experience of it was that it was so far in the distance that it was like a long shot. I had been experiencing these intimate things and having this very up close interior union with the piece, and then there was this thing that suddenly made the piece 360°. The bed and the sunset, were sort of connected that way. For me the person in the hood (551), hooded cape, was definitely male (the only time, actually) because I could see the beard, did anyone else have that??

N I wasn't that close. I think it was mostly in profile.

C He was definitely [stand pepper ?? 559] lantern and doing this slow beckoning and definitely the gender thing kicked in very strong. It was very sexual for me. I stood there and I thought , "Maybe I should chase the guy..., you know, maybe...I wonder... you know, well then there's this like, "I know I'll have to go off the yarn, and so should stay here... you know, and I thought, "Well, he is beckoning..., you know" So I thought, "Well, I'll just stand here and have a fantasy, you know" And so I got to sort of just experience my longing, and it was very fierce, um, it was very - because of all the really potent images that I'd been through before, and then he started to retreat, and I had this sense of lost opportunity, or the one that got away, you know. He was it, you know, and (general laughter covers phrase? 579). So that was good fun, because it was just really a little drama in and of itself, you know, that he was gone.

K I did try to chase the figure, but what happened was that - about the first

time I saw him or her, I was having trouble finding the thread - the night I did it there wasn't that much snow, and there were a few stretches where there was no snow, so the red thread was hard to see against the ground, and so I was checking the thread to see, I guess, I think, to see whether it was approaching this figure now or not, and I looked up again and the figure was gone, and so then I went over there and tried to find it, and I went around looking in the woods for a while, until she hid behind the rock, or something,

M Now somewhere along the way...

J No one else experienced it clearly as a woman?

L Yeah

J As an attractive, blonde woman? (much & long general laughter)

C No.

L At that point I had just had, I had had so many things happen that I was just going to leave that, I was just going to leave that one alone! (general laughter) That was about it. (?? 638?)

M I probably would have paid more attention...

J Was it darker then?

M I don't remember it being that dark, but yeah. Now somewhere along there, there were apples under it, and then some voices calling out of the woods right after that...

J Calling your name?

M (pause) Yeah, I don't remember if they were calling my name, or just calling something.

J Because there was a section where, to me, that came after - I don't remember where the apples were, I do remember that image now as you mention it, but I remember shortly after the experience with the caped figure, going through an area that had all those bells hanging-

C mmm

J and it being very low and it being sort of like, "okay, they're definitely going to know where you are -" the path is - how am I going to get through here without making a lot of noise? So once I realized that, I made a lot of noise, I

figured, "why not?" (laughter) But that was when, after that, then I started hearing somebody whispering my name through the woods, and it was so thick and it was getting dark, I just - it was very fierce, because I couldn't see, figuring, I thought the voice was someone in the Mobius company who I know, but turns out it wasn't. So I tried to call back, and I didn't get a response, and I asked if they had a message for me, just sort of generally - , and no response at that question either.

M I really don't remember the bells at all, however I do remember taking the apple and eating it. Did anybody else do that?

N No. I do remember the bells vividly.

C I remember the bell. I bumped into it with my head which caused me to look up and then, I believe I saw the spider web - that was woven, that was sort of up, and that reaffirmed what I was experiencing, that I could trust the piece, that something would happen to trigger me to look where I needed to look, to see things, so I wasn't worried about missing things, I figured if I tripped over something I was supposed to, and then I would see something so - because I kept having these serendipitous experiences of seeing things. I don't know if that was because I was being guided rightly, or if there was just so much stuff I couldn't avoid missing something, but my experience was trusting the piece, you know, with the bell and the spider web.

M Did anybody else see some red berries on the branches?

C Not that I recall. (simultaneous talking 672)

N I think I misplaced the bells, I put the bells at the end and now that I'm thinking back over it I realize that they were earlier...

M The red berries, I still can't figure out if they were part of the piece or not.

C As it got darker, its harder for me to remember, and things seem to mush.

J Did you hear the voices?

C I'm deaf in one ear, so I don't know if that curtailed that, but I don't remember hearing my name or hearing any voices

M It would have been to your right

C Yup, that's probably why..

K Well, I'm deaf in my left ear, and I didn't hear any voices. (laughter)

pause

N How about the lanterns - in the cattails ..., at the end?

C mmm

M oh yeah

L Yeah

J Yeah

N Actually, I think, they were - they were wonderful -

K Yeah

N They were just, - just so - beautiful; they were the biggest cattails I had ever seen...

M When I first ran into the battery lanterns, it struck me as coming awfully close to that overlook (hero?, pillow, ? 716) -, or at least at the overlook where I lit the candle,

C I don't remember the cattails

N (non verbal sigh/exhale of air)
ahhh

C I was relieved when it was, when it was over, when it was that I stepped up onto the street, and I was back in reality -

N You had no idea?

C No, I didn't know how it was that I would know it was over. But she cryptically said that I would know when it was over, so it was, like, "OH!, okay, this is really obvious, I'm really glad I know, there's no doubt in my mind, that I'm not missing something, or ...

N I had a sense of-

J Did you find the note?

N closure when I came to the cattails, and the lanterns in the cattails. I don't know how, but I just - I did, and I guess instinctively I knew that we were, that my car would be right around the -

C hm, oh really? I didn't...

N And I also remember thinking I wish I could back in and experience this again, but I'm so cold that's all I can think

of - but it was just - Then it was pretty close to sunset and they were over (mihidit 48 on second side)

J Well I seem to remember at the very end of the - there was another box that you opened that said the piece was over

N yes

men's simultaneous voices: yes

C Oh yeah!

J But before that, that's when the piece got the most interesting for me, this is still, when I think back on the whole experience, the thing that first comes to mind, because, well, two things that I hadn't mentioned. Earlier, when there was still enough light that I could see the clearing and see the figure of someone off by the bed, I also saw another figure crouched in sort of black clothes, moving in the distance, just really low, through the trees, and I thought , Well, that's obviously somebody moving from one location to another to do something, and they don't want you to see them, and so they're being - they really look mysterious about it. So, that was fine, and then when I got to this area where the lanterns were hanging. Right in front of me, in some thicket of branches right in front of me, I heard somebody making tons of - you know, all along I heard little - cricks and things, that I felt were people sort of following me around. But this was like so exaggerated that it was almost funny that they were trying to, like, scare me by seeing how much noise they could just make right in front of me. So I decided to run, not out of fear, but just to move along to other things, not realizing that it was right at the end, and I was very disappointed that it was so quickly over. So you go out, and your car is there, and I looked back and there was still enough light that I saw one more figure, in some kind of long dress or coat that had sleeves that sort of hang down like this, move - walk away. Now Marilyn tells me that there were no - that no one was walking around, that once they were in position, they were in

position, that no one was breaking all these branches and things, and so I assume that we conjured up some kind of spirits. (hesitant laughter) It absolutely happened.

C Yes, there was too many magical elements involved, you know, - for that not to happen...

J And I'd like to know the history of that land, and what was going on there. It definitely felt very charged, and...

L That's curious, because, (dog Michael barks one abrupt bark)

C Yes!
general laughter

C (softer) so there...

L Is that it? (laughter) That, actually, going back to saying what the words, "Red in Woods," that I was, to me, initially, saying, "This isn't woods! This is just a little scrub land that's in between these two places. And that when I was walking through I realized that, I spent part of my childhood in Connecticut and that's precisely the kind of woods I would play in and called it woods and had adventures and stories and the whole thing, and so it became very evocative almost because of the memory, in terms of that . But just that the space itself seemed to me - I think one of the things that was not so much that it, that it - it almost like sort of didn't happen, in that regard, but that it was sort of like this in between little place that nobody had ever done anything in before. Which would be precisely the kind of place that maybe a kid would want to go to because there was nobody around.

M I had a sense of how compact it was, because when I got to there, in the first place, so early, that I had driven up the road a little bit, and from my car I had seen the bed, in the swamp, and so, despite Marilyn's best efforts, the three mile drive in the beginning, with lots of bad curves, I remember asking if we were going in a circle, and getting a totally, uh, uh, nebulous answer. I sort of had the sense of where I was, in relation to the bed and the car, and its sort of amazing how much had been crammed into that

fairly small area.

pause

C The drop offs for me were really - uh, potent. I live sort of back off the road on a large lot, (?107) in front of big banks of snow, so its very obvious. I think the first one was a glove, a red glove that I found. I get there saying, the reason I am confused about whether it was before or after is that there was a red cigarette lighter that was dropped definitely before the piece began and I assumed, once the other drop offs happened, that they'd actually had been planting it beforehand. Marilyn says they didn't, so I'm wondering if UPS dropped it. But I was, like, programmed, you know, like I was in some cult of red, and so I was triggered by red, wherever I saw it. In a group, or , I thought, "Marilyn's been here," you know. In a movie theater, or whatever, - following me...

J So the first drop off, you thought immediately, was a setup, you didn't think it was -

C No, I didn't. I thought, "oh, UPS has left their lighter. I'll leave it there in case they come back for it, because they come often." Then when I saw - then a glove was left there, and I thought, "Oh, my neighbor left her glove." This was after the piece. And then the next day, the glove had been moved to my mailbox, I live in a two-family, so I thought, "Well my neighbor must think the glove is mine, but its not mine." Then the next day was a very conspicuous, I still have it on my desk, a small, about this big, red patent leather little girl's shoe, little Mary Jane shoe. That was a dead giveaway. And then I thought, "Oh my G-, they're following me." And then I realized that the glove was a drop-off, and then I thought "and the lighter's a drop-off too," and then there was a scarf, yeah - Oh! You've got the other glove! (K is holding it up) yup, yup...

K And I also found this yesterday, but I can't remember what was in it. Its a little box. Did anyone get anything

like this?

M I remember

C Those were very potent for me.

M I remember a glove, which I thought someone had dropped, and I just tossed it. The next day there was a scarf tied to the door handle, and that freaked me. (laughter) It was too much. And my daughter really like it, so its still buried in her room somewhere. Then the day after that, there was a broken piece of a brake light reflector, a red one, which I think Marilyn told me that she hadn't dropped off.

C Spirits...

M Yeah

N I 'd be interested to find out if anything was dropped off, because I went - there was-she's not - because I live in the city and there are things, there are gloves, there are things just dropped everywhere, and nothing seems ..

K Things like this just couldn't be inadvertently dropped near my door.

N Oh yeah, well, see, people drop gloves, especially in the winter, when...

K Also there was a little, a small pile of cranberries (laughter)

C Wasn't it great watching those, I left mine there and they melted through the snow and they got smashed in the spring...

K I wonder if any of you did what I did. It was after maybe the second day of this sort of thing, I decided to leave something in exchange.

J Yeah, I did that.

K And I forget exactly what all of the things that I left, one was - I couldn't find anything in the house that was red, strangely enough - so one morning I got a - there was a red envelope that someone had sent a valentine in, and I took it and cut it and made it into a box, sort of like this, just a box. And another part I cut a heart out of a valentine and wrote, "To Red" on the heart, and put it in the box. So the next day when they left something they were gone. And then the last one that I left was - again I had nothing red. I found this rubbery insect, spider-like thing, which was kind of pink, but also

had some blue in it, and it didn't seem quite fit so I grabbed my daughter's finger nail polish and painted it red. (laughter) And she was, she was really taken aback as to what this was all about. The evening after we had finished the piece, or the next day, I was talking to her mother over the phone or something, and my daughter called me and said, "Dad, I hear you've been out dancing out in the woods..." She told me that she had told her friends that she didn't know what I had really been doing, but she wasn't going home to (Concord?? 166 or find out.)" And so in the next few days this whole thing went on, and she got very interested in it. So I hung the spider out from this post that the light is on, right outside the door, before I went to bed. And my daughter was out late that night. She came in, and she thought it was left by Marilyn, and she (170 brought?) it in. And so the next morning I came downstairs, and it was in the kitchen with a note from my daughter saying, "Look what our friend left us." (laughter) So, I think, if I remember, I put it out again, I'm not sure, but they had picked up their last thing, I think. And at the interview Marilyn wanted the spider, so I don't have it.

me I've got it here. Do you want to show it?

J Was it hard to be with your daughter because you were under orders not to talk to anyone about the piece, or were you...

K Well - , I don't take orders all that seriously. (laughter) I didn't tell her much, but I knew she wouldn't, you know. The only people I told were, I guess, her, her mother around, even long Let tell her mother around 182 But John, you said you did something like that?

J Yeah, well I think I got the glove first, and I wasn't 100 - I was very suspicious, but I wasn't 100% sure it wasn't just an accident. I do find stray gloves in the winter and I (bet they were barred 189) all the way from my house,

but then the next day was the shoe, and
C Oh, you got the other shoe!

J and it was obvious at that point that they were up to something. So I looked around my apartment, and I happened to have a little image of a red wolf in a magazine, so I cut the wolf out and I attached it to something that I would sit in the snow and set down. It disappeared. And then I got the scarf.
pause

me (? 199ish) Do you have any last comments before, I think, some of the performers might have some comments, or do you have questions of the performers...

C I just say that I'm still sensitized to red. I don't think I'll ever experience the color, like just looking at your shirt, or seeing people in the audience, that are wearing red, very transformative.
(movement)

me Margaret, you had something about performing that you wanted to say. Some memories? Margaret was in the bed, with the music, similar, I think, to the issues (212)

Marg One thing that was funny that John said is that noise. I heard noise, when I was in the bed, and I'm in the marsh, and I didn't know what it was, and it was coming closer and closer and closer, and I was thinking, "Good, I'm supposed to be in the bed. Still, what am I going to do - I'm going to ruin the piece, but I can't let whatever this is come closer and closer to me, and I kept trying to twist my neck around to see what it was, but I don't know where it was, and it didn't actually - nothing ever touched me. But something was in the marsh...

J It's also interesting that you feel, that you - that even just moving your head a bit would ruin the piece, because you were at such a distance - and, you know, I wouldn't have, you know, any movements, from where I was, I wouldn't have noticed, unless they were very dramatic, or if, where I was out, in a (??225 clear patch and where I could)

actually see, most of the time I couldn't see the bed.

Marg (??225) The other thing I told Marilyn that was so nice is that part of the set up was , my husband Larry would get me ready in the bed, that he helped me into the marsh, so I didn't fall down, and guide me with this big cumbersome nightgown on, and then he'd get the covers flat. Literally tucked me in. And then he would go off to the side to help me later, when I would get up - and walk away, that part, get up and walk away,

and he'd help and lead me out and I was also carrying the music, But it was a most wonderful experience for me to be tucked in, in the middle of the marsh, (laughter) and just lie there and watch - and have the sun set, and the birds all diving, and then what you'd said about you just death (241)... One night, in particular, I felt like I could die there, I felt, if I could ..Could I sleep there or would I just freeze to death, and I was almost like toying with the idea, "wouldn't it be nice to die this way." It was so quiet. So I had dreams of death out there too...

C Yeah, I wonder how much our projections, perceptions, you know, interior experiences, were altering yours? You know, like the quantum physics where the particles respond to the belief system of the scientists looking at them? If you were picking that up...

Marg When you said that I wondered.
(simultaneous talk)

Linda I loved it. I loved lying in the bed. And thought it was so nice that Marilyn gave me a chance to lie out in the marsh, and so I had that same - and I thought, I'd like to go camping, I like sleeping out under the sky, and I had never done it in winter. I could have gone to sleep, and would I have been able to survive it? After a while it got pretty cold so I (261)

me? I was sometimes in the far end as one of the name whisperers, and a number of other people here... We had

to wait the longest , because we were at the end of it, and there was a really amazing point in the - at twilight, where everything is incredibly still, and the light is just shifting down to nearly nothing... I mean, it was a very magical moment... And of course we were standing in the trees, trying not to move too much, because it really is easy to see through trees, and , waiting to try to figure out if the rustling sounds were the audience person arriving or whether they were rabbits running by,. It was a very (hard to believe I would say it that way??)278

M You mean you didn't see the brown bear running around?

J So how much did you see, of what the audience was doing.

me Nothing.

J Or what we would

me Uh, well - None of us could see what you were doing.

N Really

C mmmm

me I mean, we'd catch maybe that much, between branches, as you went by, but it was not, it was not a full view. Just the moment when that person in the bed stood and watched the person walk down the hillside, but then the tree - the, as soon as you got low the bushes were blocking the view, and there was a point where she was moving towards you, I think Landon who also noticed that , there was a point when she was actually walking towards you, but then the bushes were in the way, and she walked along them and you were going the opposite way.

L So when - what was the time point at which you would have the music? Was that playing all the time and you would sort of hear it? Or did you actually turn it on?

me What was the cue, Larry? Larry had the cue, with the bell.

Larry The cue was when - I would watch, or at least in the last year, I would watch for the audience to come along the path. There was a very narrow window where I could see you, and I'd ring a cowbell, basically, and that would be the cue for

whoever was in the bed to turn the music on.

Marg Press Play (laughter)

N Did it change from year to year? Were there any variations, or did it stay the same?

me The piece? Kenner was right, in the first year Jessie did not wear that black and red coat. That came - that was in the second two years. And in the first year the person in the bed - I think Nancy did most of those - stayed the entire time, and then when Kenner suggested that if he had seen it he would have gone and - (chuckle) grabbed the person in the bed, we decided that we needed to have her leave mysteriously, similarly to the caped person, who disappeared before there was actual contact.

Linda Jessie wasn't always on the other side, was she?

me She was always on the other side. She always sat on the same

Linda I thought there was a time when she (320)

me No, she always sat on the opposite side of the stream, where

Linda And there were all these flowers! No one ever mentioned any flowers!

K Flowers?

me there were always live flowers, in the ground?...

N & K Did you see them? I never saw them... (simultaneous voices discussing)

Linda I had put - one time, I - it was so cold and I (325) this earlier, and they were so beautiful in the snow, they were just perfect. At the end of the piece, and they were out there for about an hour, they were so beautiful, and it was bitter cold out, "Gee, how did they survive this?" And as soon as I brought them up, - pff. (laughter) They'd, like, frozen perfectly.

L They were in that sort of flat area, just before the marsh?

me Yeah.

L Is that where they were?

me yeah.

L I think I remember looking at the

bed and sort of coming around this corner and there were flowers.

C Right, coming around the corner, now I remember

N I don't remember any flowers...

J I think I was too tired.

M Were those berries up in the tree part of the (set? design 338) piece.

me Well, of course! (laughter) ... I think your question is, "Did I put them there" (laughter)

M Well, let me rephrase the question. (laughter) Did you?

me Um - berries in trees? (laughter)

M There was, like, a little vine, with some red berries.

me Oh no, you're right! They were perfect! No, they - the, the- site came with those.

N What is the history of the site.

mered The land belongs to Middlesex School, which is on the other side of the road. And some of the land, I don't know that it bordered onto - it may have actually bordered onto our neighbor's house, but its mostly Middlesex. I don't know, other than the apple orchard, where the hooded figure walked away, the orchard, up there. The only thing I don't know, there is, I believe they had used it as a

(garbled, too low, 359ish)

?aud? What was the sex of the person in the cape, that you usually denied to the audience?

me What was the question? Actually, five out of the six times it was a woman.

L? Did you change it to the opposite sex for the one?

me No, that particular performance our various caped people were ill with flu, and I went through about 30 phone calls before my husband, Bob, finally said, "Why don't you have a man do it? (laughter) And, it was, in fact, Milan. (much laughter) Oh, it was also Rochelle, and Cathy. You did it once, Jennifer? We had - because the thought of trying to convince people to obligate every weekend, potentially every weekend of the winter, three years in a row, seemed (laughter). Everyone knew various tasks

in the piece, and so we - it took about eight people to set it up each time, and, um, you know, perform it, so there were different people on the site almost every time. And it did go over three different winters, so we had different groups of people that were there some years and not others.

M Did you keep track of who did it which one?

me I do have a whole list, actually. I could tell you who was there for you.

C What was the average running time of the piece? I have no sense of the time, even now.

me The shortest was 20 minutes and the longest was an hour and 15 or 20 minutes.

C Wow

me And I think it usually took 40 or 45.

C? Who took 20 minutes and who took an hour and a half? (laughter)

N I took the 20 minutes, right? I was, I was numb.

me She was in the minus 5 degrees and her boot leaked and her foot got wet when she crossed the stream, right?

N yeah

me And she, and she kept going. She should get the combat duty award. (laughter, and applause)

me Do you want to see the slides? or do you want to (?)

? Straight out, were there footprints all over the place, and did - were they?

me Yeah, try to figure out how to fly across the site!

? No, but, for the audience, were the foot prints, following along the path -did that kind of -

C Actually I didn't see any footprints... (laughter)

me It worked!

C Who took an hour and 15 minutes?

me John

J Doesn't surprise me.

M An hour... I remember when I came out it struck me, "gee, this wasn't long enough," and I ended up walking up the road for a while, before getting in

the car.

L I, just say, one thing about um - that the original thing that you had said for us to, kind of, in a way, to explore difference, and that in fact what has been wonderful to hear is similarities in experience. That's sort of reassuring. (laughter)

C Yeah, that was - you know, I debated about coming to this experience but I realized it was a little bit like a funeral or an open casket wake or something, because back to the communal experience of theater - it is very strange to have such a powerful experience and not be able to share it, and even though this is not a true sharing of the moment kind of experience, there is a completion that I am experiencing right now. Thanks.

J? I would like to ask if any of the performers felt that they, felt that they would be almost like predators? long pause. and then a lot of laughter.
446 ended there