



| : So, we'll have a brief conversation and then we have a microphone and we'll open up to questions for the audience... and after is a book signing and hope you'll be engaged and read the book...

... It is interesting that in the conclusion that there is a poem that you still have doubts about in terms of the editing.

0 : Well I've changed a few things in here [pointing to the book]. When I give the book to my friends, or I can anticipate giving the books to friends I make little changes. One is in your introduction...

| : You changed my introduction?

Laughter

O: No no, I didn't ...

| : You can...

O : I wouldn't dream of changing your introduction...

| : There is one about hot dusk... you referred to this particular poem and it is interesting to me, where is it, ...Hot Dusk on page thirty nine. I got the impression from what you wrote that the cabby, 'In the dwindling light - a thousand ACs - give up the ghost - The taxi's interior - dimly glows - like that Hopper diner - the cabbie - bends - to return my gaze...' And from what you wrote, you have the impression that the narrator is inside the cab.

O : In actuality, the narrator is outside the cab, looking at the taxi, so in some copies I change it... "the cabbie bends to return my gaze," ... what about, and like the alliteration, 'the cabbie turns to return my gaze...?' Would that put the narrator outside the cab?

Laughter

0: A lot of these are autobiographical, based on small daily incidences of life in New York... and elsewhere. Yeah, I was outside the cab, he was waiting for a light, it was a hot night and he turned to return my gaze as I passed him. Interesting.

Laughter

| : I think probably it was a misreading on my part except for the fact that I got cued, for me, by the taxi's interior, earlier in the poem, which placed you in the back. And if he turned, I think you'd definitely be in the back.

0 : When you are in a cab the light isn't on but for some reason the light was on in the cab so...

Laughter

| : You know, I do remember, I wasn't going to bring this anecdote up... 0 is very generous. When I was a student, I went up to the a train station window and wasn't able to pay for the ticket. And 0 ended up walking up and asking if there was problem. She paid for the ticket for which I was rewarded by having a train ride with you. And there was this one sentence you said, ... there were kayakers on the river and you said: 'Oh look, a flock a of kayakers out the window.'

0 : I said that?

| : You said that.

0 : During this train ride?

| : During that train ride, which I remember because I translated it into a poem. But the only reason I bring it up is because you actually end the sentence by saying: 'out the window'. Which in terms of the poem ...because you actually, you didn't just say 'look at those kayakers', you literally situated the scene even though we are in the scene.

0 : Wait, will you repeat that?

| : There is a kind of spatialization that does happen in your writing which is curious. You made sure I remembered that there was a window.

Laughter

0 : It was unnecessary that window be mentioned?

| : But it was better for it. In my understanding, ... it was a better situating of site.

0 : Where else where would the kayakers be when you are in a train? Out the window.

Laughter

| : Or on the river.

Laughter

| : To come back to that - this moment and also the dynamic of recollection that happens in a lot of these poems... Do you, ...what actually prompted the writing of these?

0 : Yeah, I mean it is very curious to me how the words came in a particular form, not that I didn't struggle with some of the poems and revise and check the source. My partner said, 'How can you write poems and work with a thesaurus?' A lot of poets do that don't they? It doesn't all come spewing like Minerva out of your head. So... but it was in this last period when I finished my last film in 1996 and I think the following year, I think it was '97, my sister-in-law died. And I was very close to her. And then I traveled in Spain. There are these poems that are situated in Seville. And then returned and I didn't know what I was going to do. I did not want to make another film and wasn't sure what I was going to do. And it was a relief, after all the production, film production, which I was not always completely happy in, to be alone and just write and deal with words. And so a lot of these poems deal with death. They deal with love, travel, daily life.

| : For me, a real telling line, or at least maybe a reveal, not telling, is maybe in Seville which you speak of the effort of parsing memory into logic. The way in which you are kind of bordering of things on a page can actually allow that kind of memory to exist, because it is not going to spring from Minerva as you said. Did you see your method revealing other work that you had done previous or was it completely anomalous?

0 : You mean did any of this work have a connection to dance or film?

| : Or how did you situate it with to what you had done before even compositionally?

0 : No I didn't. It was a whole different form. I was not reading poetry. I mean I read poetry in my twenties and went to poetry readings. But during this period I was not. So, I didn't expect to publish them. It was something to keep me busy, and I didn't try to publish them and somehow X came along and offered and so...

M: You kept them around?

F: They're in my computer.

Laughter

0 : What's so funny?

| : At one point people put them in drawers and there there. They're preserved, ...they're preserved, they're just computerized, they are digitized...

0 : I wrote very few on paper, written on the computer...

| : It is actually a very brief... there is a brevity and directness. There is a containment, shall I say to each of the poems... even though they intersect, they play off one another. For example Saga followed immediately by Ladies who Lunch. In the organization of it...so there is even a wit that comes up. In these different moments, you know there is a cutting away.

0 : So okay... Then that's a kind of juxtaposition that informs the way I think about choreography. Yeah there is a connection, unpredictability. Maybe suddenly you are laughing then next minute you are dealing with something awful, heart wrenching, ... whatever.

| : And there is not one comprehensive narrative line that actually contains all those different things. I mean obviously. No, I mean within each of these parts there is kind of narrative that I guess surprised me a little. I remember that you had told me once that you know because you were around X, X, X, you had exposure to them. You were at the first reading of Howl, how that it was... I think your description was drunk.

0 : Huh... what?

| : Drunk.

0 : What drunk?

| : X.

0 : Oh! X was drunk. He was holding a bottle of cheap red wine. He seemed drunk, yeah.

Laughter

| : And here though ...actually along those lines... Did you see this even as it was on your computer? You had some distance from them. One, it has a certain goal, with the everyday... but if not procedurally having to deal with your other work - Did you never the less situate it? Or where within poetry did you see it? Or did you not even see necessarily see them...?

0 : Well, when I read them there is definitely a X influence, but I was hardly aware of it being so many years. But you know, I went to the X which was this X X place where jazz and poets were interacting, so X, X, and X, they were all there. I was so impressionable. I guess it is in my blood. I see some of that in these poems in here, do you?

| : Oh definitely, I thought so. And yet the economy of each line, for me, the spare quality... concrete, is too strong of a word, I thought that some of your choreography and choreographic impulses were discernible, for me...

0 : Oh right.

| : I don't know if necessarily, if your sustained phrasing would qualify here, but definitely the embodiment of language. Their way in which is a cadence to the language resembling those that actually you might enact in the space, seems palpable to me but beyond that... absolutely more than a ...X... or something like that. There is probably a beat element to it even if it's more plain spoken; there is none of the same sort of romanticization.

0 : Yeah there is a pedestrian aspect to it... and experiential. It is not abstract and metaphorical in the sense of having to be deciphered. It is pretty straightforward stuff.

| : Did you do a lot of editing?

0 : Shortening or?

| : Aside from now that the book is published...?

Laughter

0 : No, well in working a single poem, I'd change words, order, yeah sure.
| : On that I think I'd like to open this up for a broader conversation.

For J.M.
0 October 18th
| 13 minutes





