

1975

O-AR



JIM ALLEN
RECENT WORK

JIM ALLEN: O - AR EXHIBITION.

TRANSCRIPT OF GALLERY DISCUSSION

BRUCE BARBER, WYSTAN CURNOW, JIM ALLEN, JOHN LETHBRIDGE, DAVID HARRIS, BILLY APPLE,

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ADCKLAND CITY
ART GALLERY

O-AR
part I

JIM ALLEN
RECENT WORK

This record is of a discussion which took place at the Barry Lett Gallery, Auckland, on Thursday, 31st July 1975. People who took part are; Wylan Curnow, Bruce Barber, Jim Allen, John Lethbridge, David Harre, and Billy Apple. The subject under discussion is the exhibition of recent work by Jim Allen.

B.B. There seems to be a pun implied in the title O-AR?

J.A. I guess in a way there is. The things I have set up here represent different kinds/types of proposition which are being advanced on a number of levels. I first intended to put OR between the different propositions. On consideration I decided that this was unnecessary and instead carried the notion by way of title. I indulged in some word play which I considered was relevant because it referred to what the work was about. By setting down the word OR as O-AR it can operate on a number of different levels and it goes in and out of synch with meaning so in a sense it is like a membrane of meaning which is stretched, expanding and contracting. I was particularly pleased with the emergence of the word OAR.

B.B. I have taken it as a metaphor, dipping in and out.

J.A. Right. Yes. That in a way would represent a key piece of thinking to the work.

W.C. Are the two parts interdependent of each other, or do they function independently

J.A. They can be read as independent works though they are certainly conceived as of one work. This is called O-AR part 1 and it is related to the environment in which it is exhibited which is small and intimate. I felt able to say things in this space which I will not be able to say in the Auckland City Art Gallery where O-AR 11 will take place in November. Because that environment is so different it poses a different set of problems. I will be on about the same things though it is inevitably going to be modified by the space. Maybe because of my background in sculpture I am very conscious of the space in which things are seen in.

W.C. When I received my notice of the exhibition, Part 1 Barry Lett Gallery July, Part 11 City Art Gallery, November, it made me uneasy. I've got to carry a lot of baggage around for a long time until I get to the sequel and I was anxious as to what I was going to encounter here waiting for a resolution.

J.A. There is no question of there being a sequel. It poses the same argument, which can be read independently. The spatial differences represent an opportunity to represent them in a different manner. It will also have an effect on the content of the message.

W.C. When you say Part 1 you are saying something different than if you were saying O-AR 1 or 11. A little earlier you said No. 11 will be in the City Gallery.

J.A. The explanation given applies. The question interests me because in a way this is another element of the exhibition is about.

J.L. When I first came across it I read it as a testing out, a number of propositions just trying a few things out especially with the words on the walls with the diagrams and the structures in the centre, like a notebook in a way.

W.C. Of course I am talking about things which came to me before I came here and what I call anxieties were lessened when I saw what it was. I was able to take it for what it was and the next thing to be an unknown.

J.A. This argument relates to people who produce work in a series, number 1, 2, 3, 4, and so on. Though this is related to earlier work I don't conceive of things

2
10/11

as numerical progressions though I have to contradict myself as this work does relate to a piece which I called N. Z. Environment No. 2.

B.B. If we get to some of the things positioned on the walls, the photostat which seems to ~~convey~~ ^{convey} ~~the most~~ for me, ~~principally~~ principally because of its size, and an interesting word change, is "the second body exerts an equal and opportunity" which, correct me if I am wrong, is ^a transformation of "second body exerts an equal and opposite reaction, which is a Newtonian maxim, and I am wondering just how much this kind of transformation has occurred through the other quotations which appear on the walls.

J.A. I think it would be fair to say that the basis of the wording arrived at ^{was} by looking at a statement and pushing it around and to subtract from the existing statement and by taking words out of it creating a distortion of meaning and at the same time trying to preserve a residue of meaning rather than a ~~to~~ to easily defined statement in the sense that somebody can pass on to you information in precise terms and you tend to take that statement with an acceptance that does not question and your responsive thought to that corresponds to the matter of the statement. What I am trying to do is to create a gap between the definitive statement and the residue of meaning.

B.B. So it's a matter of potential.

J.A. To create the opportunity for potential with the meaning given and I think the example which you have given "the second body ~~exerts~~ exerts an equal and opportunity" sets up an open ended situation and begins to set out its own parameters. So it becomes a very slippery situation, and I like it because it is like that. If people can get close to that I imagine them participating in the way that you are picking it up and talking about the possibilities in meanings conveyed by the words which are given which differ greatly from normal speech and writing.

J.L. There is an interesting thing also from a purely visual angle in that you have enlarged certain words so that there are some words that you can read from a distance, some that you can just read, and some you cant and for this reason I keep coming back to the "second body....." because it dominates by it's size.

J.A. That's consistent with the intention. One cannot read the exhibition in a glance, certain frustrations occur because the print is small, and ⁱⁿ others, the print is large so that there are all kinds of queries ^{as} raised in your visual perception.

W.C. They do exert a control over your movements ~~in looking at the spatial environment~~. When I came in, maybe because I am orientated towards words, I read the words before I gave a great deal of attention to what was in the middle. And I also moved around this way reading from left to right, and it seemed to me in fact that the mats tended to control my movements, to direct me around the edges and I was walking around with my back to the objects in the middle, and on some occasions, particularly enlarged words were no longer requiring the movement but by and large initially it made it a reading movement and experience and a room experience with my back to the objects.

J.A. This experience relates to a previous work called "Arena" which consisted of a series of perimeters moving towards a centre. This work is very close to what I have done here, almost an identical work, transposed into a different media in communication terms to the perceiver.

The perimeter, the walk around corresponds exactly to the line drawn in space by "Arena" which had four galvanised posts, the outer edge had a single strand of barbed wire set at average head height, a very positive perimeter...which could be penetrated, and then one came up against another perimeter, of a different material, set at a different body height.

W.C. That was a much more aggressive work in those respects.

J.A. A physical set up. Galvanised steel, barbed wire, different weights of rope.

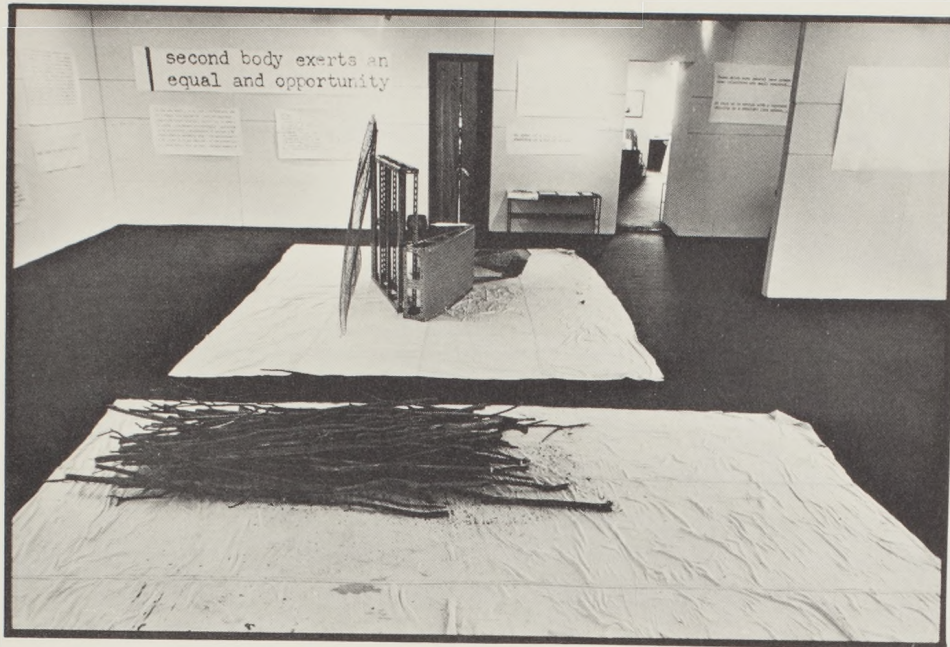
I have become much more conscious and aware since that of the success and failure ~~the success and failure~~ of communication affected by physical means. The concern is about what the work is, be whatever media it is carried out in as a vehicle for communicating ideas, the more I have thought about this the less I have become involved in thinking in terms of structures, in terms of making form shapes and all that kind of constructional effort. I try to isolate the idea and the values attached to the idea, as clearly as possible and think of the simplest means by which the communication of this can be affected, to bring it out into the open, to expose it.. These concerns led me to the use of texts. Even here at the beginning, I was thinking of dry mounting on card, framing. I realised that this was ^ahang up in another area and then decided to use the material in its first state. This avoided the introduction of non relevant aesthetic considerations.

J.I. There was an interesting comment from John Hoby that there is so much information on each piece of paper that he kept on coming back to the visual aspect, of pieces of paper pinned to the wall. Did you place an importance on the visual aspect?

J.A. I am beginning to think of it in this kind of way; that we used to teach composition until the realisation that this was an erroneous concern. ^{Now} There is an acceptance that form emerges from the effort of reconciliation between ideas and media. I think that the same applies to the visual factor. The presentation of idea and meaning fronts its own visual aspect. Wytan is concerned with ideas through writing and in this case to give ideas their proper shape leads to a visual structure of presentation.

J.I. ~~It seems to be a very good point to make. I could not find a better way to say it.~~ You can get involved with the information, that there is just so much information there for you to comprehend so you start working another level and you go on to test out a number of levels of getting in to the work and I think it is a pretty important thing that you pick up on the pinning of things on to the wall and that one piece of paper has a slight tear in it and it gives a kind of balance because you will get all this kind of information from the other side, because I found that I was setting up a number of opposite things and I forgot the information thing, and I started trying to decipher different areas of the exhibition and the part that we are sitting in at the moment I couldnt decipher so I just accepted it as a fact and the information that is going on the wall opposite me is too technical so therefore I cant decipher that so that is a fact and the thing that is going on in between this seems to me to be quite an interesting area.

J.A. I have to admit, and this almost amounts to a contradiction to my previous argument, that when I had come to the point of using words I saw the walls of the gallery being completely covered with texts, from top to bottom, all the way round. I realised that this was saturation and self defeating. ~~It was~~



Please delete as it's not only a ... view.

⁵²
- This viewpoint expressed was not to deny the importance of the information within the pieces of paper but to express that information is information where-ever you get it and that all has to be considered. It is also stating my priorities when first confronted with the work even though these priorities did change as I got into it.

Having experienced it up here now and had the opportunity to ~~think further~~ ^{consider}
I think I would cut this back still further. This will definitely have a
bearing on what I am going to do in the City Gallery in terms of lean-ness
of presentation. All the same I am not to sure that there is an overload. If
that is so I feel that it may have a value.

J.L. I think it is important that there is an overload, and that you move into
another area.

J.A. That was one of the factors in the differences of environment, this is a small
intimate environment compared to the other one. I decided that this was the
amount of material that I wanted to deal with, in fact what is here is what I
prepared, I bought it in and pinned it up so the notion of what was to be seen
was pretty precise.

W.C. When you say that there is an awful lot of information going on, I liked what
you said about the levels of engagement with the different types of information,
and also that process where something is kind of overloaded makes you switch
your attention. But on the business of information, and we have all been
stressing this information on the walls, is a question-begging term perhaps.
When you can read the words so ^{that} there is a lot of information, or, ^{so that} there is
not much information, depends on how you are interpreting the words. One extreme
you can try is what Bruce is trying and that is positing a context for the words,
an origin. Books, shall we say, in the history of thought, "significant" book, or
you can go to the other extreme and say that in fact context is a fairly arbitrary
factor. You are actually being presented with words without context, here
and you are not to go looking for them.

B.B. And in fact your attempts to do so are frustrated.

W.C. That's right. If you say that in a sense the information load is not all that
heavy...

B.B. I dont know. I think it still.....

W.C. It's rich, it's rich, but I mean heaviness also means the kind of demands its
placing on you. I tended, and I hant spent as much time ^{with this} as you, I tended to
allow myself to take this as a shower of words, coming down, a machine gun effect.
One of the things I like about it, from my own experience, was the fact of this
business of ^{coming} out of context, is that it does give words a kind of immediacy,
so that the law is bound to hold ^{that} phrase-is a little bit suppressed because
it is tied into a context. But you take that context away and those words are
stronger because of being out of context. They may not be clearer ^{in terms of} with the
meaning but their demand for meaning, their assertion, their claims upon you
are in some sense stronger in an almost physical sense, how they come at you.

B.B. Especially when they are enlarged.

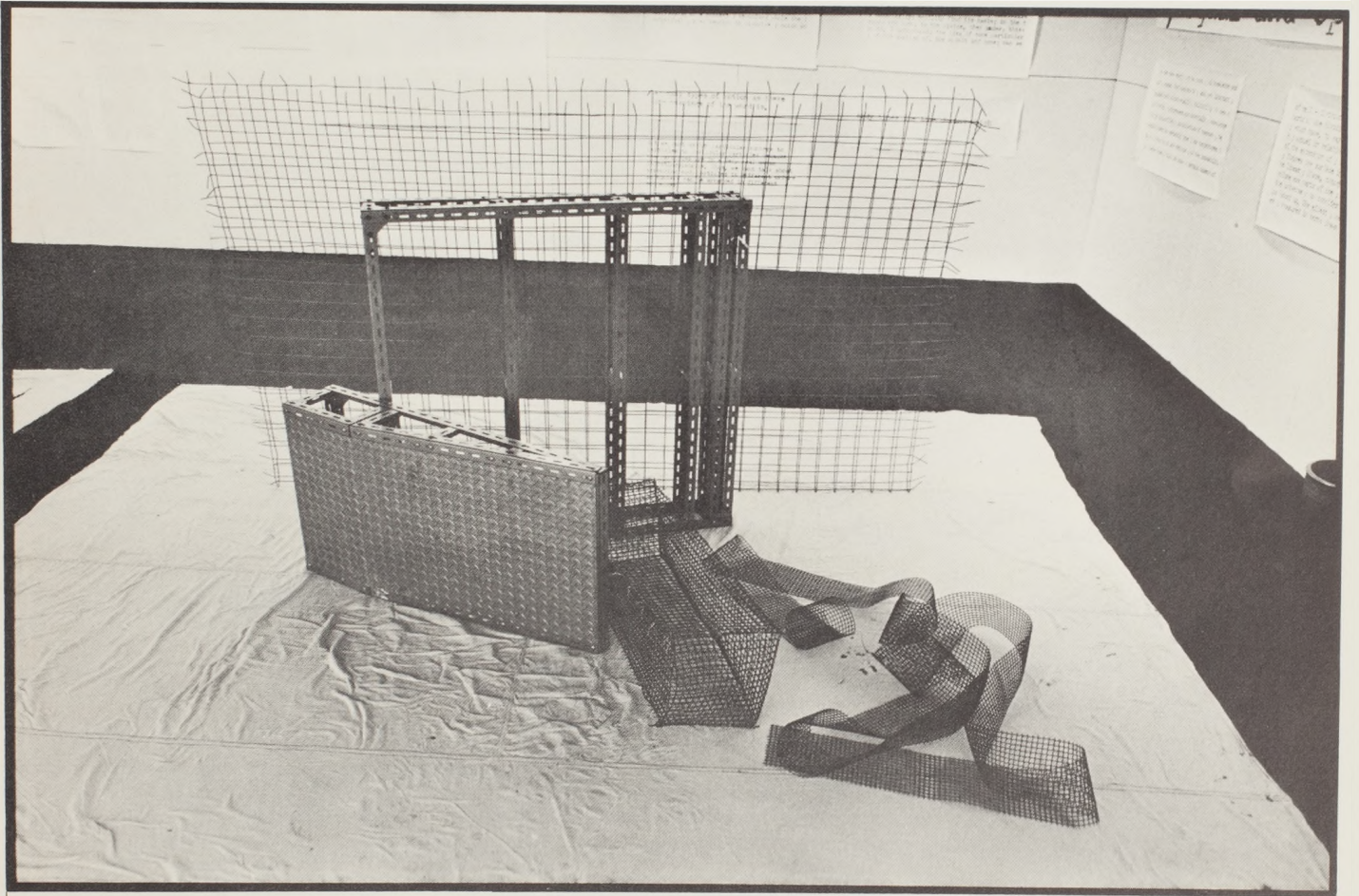
W.C. That's right, and that's ^{the} way I was taking them. Perhaps from my own
experience from using fragments myself.

B.B. There will be a new context especially when you have phrases from ^{one} particular
context that have been placed next to phrases of another particular context,
then you start joining the two together.

W.C. They inevitably look for context, different context, implies different texts
around the walls. I think I would have to accept that.

~~There is also the number of stages, almost a pre-literate stage of information
gathering and dissemination.~~

last sentence ??



B.B. There ^{are} also a number of stages, almost a pre-literate stage, and there is an information gathering and dissemination....and then extremely literate stages and in between that a semi-literate....and there are different qualities too. The thing about potential before the particular signs, information pertaining to structures and so on, and placing it alongside another structure which is a sentence structure and so on.

J.A. To me this emphasises the contribution made by the children's work as a key to the whole work and as a trigger to all my thinking. I came home one day and this work was all over the floor and I was impressed with the obvious grappling with ideas and concepts and the progressions shown in their work. Also by the repetition of the same thing and yet setting it down slightly different each time, changes taking place...accidentally?...but also there was the objective in the number work, and the evaluation, the ticking of right and wrong.

W.C. There was an exploration going on, a playing with something.

J.A. Right.

B.B. It's a sort of natural progression, like that statement over there which says something about natural numbers and implies natural progressions, it's like cat, mat, sat, fat and so on, 2, 4, 6, 8, 10 zig zag in some ways these are natural, in some ways unnatural progressions. A sentence structure which has the main body of the information taken out of it, it is essentially an unnatural sentence structure when you start looking for additional information which you aren't privileged to have. The same works for "the second body exerts an equal and opposite force." It's nonsensical in isolation, it's unnatural but in this context it takes on another kind of relevance. I'm not sure that you can relate that to the natural kind.

W.C. It depends on...

B.B. It is culturally dependent...

W.C. This is Chomsky I suppose...

B.B. Kick!

W.C. A small thing, still on that, Macnamara says the ticks are adult ticks but they are not uniformly so are they's

J.A. They are not adult ticks they are all children's.

W.C. I thought most of them were children's ticks myself.

J.A. He was singularly imperceptive about the whole thing.

W.C. The stamps were obviously the equipment of the teacher, the equipment of school, the equipment of learning...putting across a structure. In fact all sorts of possibilities are being generated, the stamp of approval takes several forms there and it is played with and turned in upon itself.

J.A. The thing I liked about that work, it couldn't be misread as being fine examples of children's art...the exhibition is an avoidance of this kind of connotation, of being caught up in making those kind of distinctions. Everybody is so familiar with examples of children's work set up in the Fine Art context...so by avoiding that I hoped to focus attention on a more normal situation.

W.C. On what most children do.

J.A. And in fact the individual process of grappling with new information...

W.C. Except that this is more free play.

J.A. The question arises also, the inclusion of the pieces on the floor, the Ti-Tree

165. what I meant here was that there are a number of categories in the show, from preliterate i.e. school children and pre-schoolers, semi-literate relates to some way to the fragments of conversation and the engineering diagrams and the extremely literate ... fragments from books. This happens through choice a statement or information gathering and to dissemination and possible assimilation of that information. The whole thing is relative ~~most particularly~~ ^{particularly} to context ... i.e. I am an adult conversing with a pre-schooler about a problem in wave mechanics as opposed to consulting the pre-schooler as to whether he or she needs to go to the toilet. "Do you want to have a wee?" This last is aligned to the notion of potential - the potentialities of signs to convey meaning in radically altered contexts. The potential for gaining meaning ... added meaning or alternatively losing or acquiring a completely new meaning. Nice!?

← If ~~one was~~ ^{one was} a Jack Burnham (Student of art) you could apply the Cross hypotheses - Oedipus being asked the question by the sphinx. "What walks on ~~four~~ legs in the morning, two in the afternoon and three in the evening?" - The "natural": progression of the three stages of man. But the journey which Oedipus goes through to ultimately confront the question of the sphinx and the results of answering this question successfully. ... The incest involvement with his mother etc etc throw new light on the question itself, ... what's happening on the surface is often completely dependent upon the sub-surface or latent content. However the surface is not always that transparent. One only has to look at the number of interpretative evaluations and/or additions to the Oedipus myth to understand that latency (in this case read potentiality ... existing but in a sense not developed or unseen) is not always unambiguous. BB.

- wood etc. and the structures of the other one. I almost didn't include them. One of the reasons I did was because they relate closely to what I intend to do in the art gallery. So this comes back to what we discussed earlier regarding the sequel but I hoped that they could be read without creating a gap of understanding with what is going on here.
- W.C. They fit in with what Bruce was saying about the idea of the natural being at work.
- J.A. Yes they do. I started off by laying the Ti - Tree out haphazardly all over the sheet until I realized that this was related to another concern, about undifferentiated fields, an anti-form situation which doesn't have a central bearing on the present work. . So I threw all the pieces back into a bundle again, which created the situation about potential we spoke about earlier. The other layout of materials has a much more obvious relationship to the graphs on the wall, mathematical calculations, so there exists a quite literal relationship. But a question is raised by the fact that the elements are not structured in their relationship or any sort of form semblance...
- B.B. I think they are.
- J.A. The reason they occupy the position that they do is the necessity to try and support the steel reinforcing which I wanted standing up rather than lying down.
- B.B. I was here with a 1st year group and a couple of them felt that all the information on the walls is almost a programme of what could happen in a literal sense, with the objects on the floor. How do you feel about that kind of a notion?
- J.A. I don't object to it, what I have done here deliberately is to create open-ended possibilities.
- W.C. But it would only take you so far wouldn't it? that viewing of it.
- B.B. But still carries forward a potential even though the materials are limited.
- W.C. Otherwise you would be looking for an exhaustive presentation with something which was very much of setting up words and plans against physical materials.
- J.A. The kind of questions which are being brought up now are also important to the work, as it became very much, having established this kind of plane, a questioning of what was there. This is why I personally value the presence of the physical structures. The kind of thinking and the kind of answers they generate is central to the whole. Its a question of attenuating or tensioning the things between the words even more.
- W.C. The things in the middle.
- J.A. Well, the quantities of the things on the wall.
- W.C. You used the word 'field' before and in that sense that notion expresses what you said, the tension within the field, its perimeter, its expanse, how much it holds, and the way in which it holds. Things ^{link up} ~~like~~ to each other across ^{spaces} ~~pieces~~ rather than in a line, or in a progression.
- B.B. ^{one can} think of field in the sense that 60's abstract painting is a field.
- J.A. Talking about 'field' in the terms of scatter pieces.
- W.C. This is offering it at a mental level which these precipitate in a sense, the amount of place in the mental field.
- B.B. I found that it was interrupting that mental field, I can see direct relationship, the simple binary opposition, culture, nature thing, engineering plans,

→ In view of your own uncertainty (overstatement?) about including the material at all, and in view of the disagreements about them here, it could be that these questions are vital to the success of the piece, more so perhaps than you are recognizing here. It strikes me, as possible that the problem ~~is~~ of realizing your intentions, ^{in this matter} as I see them - comes from the fact that the statement the materials make in relation to the words is too simple, too little open to ^{the} possibilities you want. What happens, say, if you add: a ball of wool, scales, seaweed, light bulbs, human hair, etc.?

I was thinking here less of 'field' painting than of the aesthetic of OPEN FIELD composition in poetry as described by Charles Olson + Robert Creeley. And at the back of my mind a phenomenological epistemology that relates to these aesthetics.

- Maybe scatter pieces can be directly related to the 'field' painting of the 60's

various natural orders, I can see that, but I think that information is all given on the walls without being reaffirmed in a literal sense with the material on the floor.

J.A. There was a doubt in my mind as to whether to leave them there or not, but I felt that they created their own kind of value in terms of questioning about them.

to this:

W.C. What happened, with me anyway, I come in and see all these words on the walls and I say I am oriented towards words and I am going to read and I walk around the walls reading and I realise as I said before, that I am being ~~forced~~^{cued} to do this by the mats, but nevertheless I felt that there was something improper, that in order to read the walls I was turning my back physically on art objects and in that sense there was an interruption, I felt a kind of guilt in the situation if you like.

J.A. So you see a certain sense of decorum demanded in looking at art works?

W.C. Yes, an inevitable degree of decorum, I don't think anyone making a work of art can avoid ^{the} a sense of decorum he calls up by the situation he uses. Using an art gallery is not just using a space, it using an art space and therefore predicting and being in a position to predict the behaviour ^{of} people entering it. My behaviour in some sense may be extreme because I ^a have this visual/verbal double role that I play nevertheless I think it is fairly predictable kind of response and I therefore felt that the way in which I took the words ^{should} be conditioned by the presence of the things there. I was reminded by these things of the physical potentiality of the words, ~~that~~ (making things, ~~the~~ actions, doing things) it did to me, ~~to some extent~~, remind me to subvert the verbal. The verbal opening out into the action thing was what the things said to me, regardless of what particular things they were, how ^{specially} they related to the words on the wall.

J.A. John, what do you think about them.

J.L. To begin with, I didn't have any question of whether they should or shouldn't be there, I accepted the fact that they were there and worked on that level that all that was given I had to deal with. I found them pretty important in the fact that you got this non-verbal proposition on the floor and also when I had an overload reading some of the pieces of paper it brought me back to the fact that the realisation that to begin with that there is just a piece of paper with words on it pinned on to the wall; and I quite like that, it reaffirms just what you were looking at and I found them very important. That there are a number of other levels in which it can operate besides just dealing with the information and I like that, because you can come back, because then there are two things which I keep coming back to, like things in the large phrase and the two pieces on the floor.

J.A. I became very conscious in the planning of it, the almost compulsion I had to make something, and also the concern of presenting something and I had to work my way through that, because every exhibition up to now there has been the automatic circumstances. You make something, wrap your idea up in the made object, and you concern yourself as to how well you make the object and how carefully you present it. To look at. So I am wrapping myself here with an idea which carried me along on one course and having to resist all

My objection to this view derives from doubts I have that "material" can in, Bruce's sense, "reaffirm" information at all. My interest in the work depends a good deal on my feeling that it confirms such doubts. That is the fact that it is known not just through reading, with the eyes, but with the body, through space containing "material", brings out ^{the} point that the openness spoken of, the potentials spoken of, ~~and~~ not just invoked but made necessary by experience.

This is a rather narrow account. The materials exist as being ^{prior} ~~before~~ and subsequent to the concepts in the text.

→ The main point that I was trying to get across here is that we to begin with, experience more than we analyse. Because of the seemingly importance of the statements on the wall this order was reversed (analysed more than experienced) after a period of time. When I began to analyse the ground materials which were mainly non-verbal, the original order was re-established.

A backing up to this line of thought is contained in the largest type sheet - "The second body exerts an equal and opposite reaction" to every action there is an equal and opposite reaction, which all fits in, in a round about way that when positive facts are given, all the negative facts are also given. To put a heavy emphasis on the analytical aspect of the work is to also put emphasis visual i.e. pieces of paper pinned to wall. The positive propositions presuppose the existence of the negative propositions.

these compulsions from the other direction and question myself as to the reason why these things being here - because I wanted them or planned them, that they are just expressions of the compulsion. Having decided to put them in it became a real question as to how, and that forced me into making a decision to establish a standpoint as to relationship to these pieces. Which may not be of great moment to anybody else but certainly raised the question to me of the artist's relation to the showing of his work publicly, and perhaps that's not such a personal argument after all. They are an anti-form gesture and the bringing forward of the kind of question which that raises.

B.B. I know my First Year group were extremely worried about it. They saw Billy's show first and then yours. With Billy they almost walked past it until their attention was drawn to certain things. With this one the information load was so much that they withdrew as well, ^{in the first instance} ~~at that time~~ became something so subliminal that you almost walk over it.

J.A. ~~Mind you, their adequacy to cope with either of these situations must necessarily be limited.~~

B.B. ~~Yes, sure, but they were worried that perhaps they couldn't cope with it, here they were at art school, what's the ordinary man in the street going to do with it. I know this is a completely different issue.~~

J.A. ~~Yes, it gets around to that great wrong question - that you are to feel guilty that your work doesn't communicate to the public at large.~~

J.L. It is interesting that I read that one lot as being quite unstructured and that one lot as being quite structured. The bundle of sticks to me is a structure, the fact that they are all lying in the same direction and that the other one didn't have structure and I just took it as it was offered in that way.

W.C. That's what occurs to me, that when you are talking about the interest in the paper, its been ^{pinned} ~~primed~~ and so on, you have to forestall that at the point that you recognise the casualness.

J.L. I must admit that I saw it much more formalised than that. I saw it in terms of opposites and once you start setting up that whole scheme, placing things in lines and one thing under another.

B.A. But not as formal in a sense that is generally accepted; they are trimmed unevenly and they seem to be optically spaced.

J.L. To me that fits into a whole line of thinking.....

B.A. But floor pieces, this particular piece to me seems to be very mannered in the sense that the smallest coil of plastic grid has been somewhat beautifully laid out.

J.A. That's not true, it was thrown into that area of the mat, it just happens to form those configurations by its natural springiness.

B.A. Probably, but it appears to be.

J.L. It is interesting that your justification of positioning some things works for you in one way and I can arrive at a different justification.

W.C. Except that you say ^{just} that a whole line of thinking, ^{is} one has always got a variety of lines of thinking with work in a situation like this; the point is, where they start cutting out, and for me there is a point where a line of thinking only goes so far and then it has to be twisted around another line or subsidiary. I feel a strong need to set up priorities.

of the flesh, much as; that I detected in all; a
month, therefore the enigma; to help in shoulder
ing a portable; since infancy. They were simply
looking; of the blue and absolute; one moment st
rung; constantly shifting, a strange; at a point
where there; were identical. That moment for; lo
ng as an equal stress; identical intoxication; a
ll alike than differences; factor to an absolute
; that vision, my eyes; blue sky that, like; dow
n and soared; of tragedy, the tragic; sensibilit
y momentarily; nobility find its basis; in the t
ragic are born; to the divine, then under; this
sight, I understood; the idea of some particular
; of the dualism of; the spirit and come; own se

- J.L. It is interesting that I kept on coming back to that so therefore it did have a priority for me.
- W.C. Where the end of the line cut out.
- J.L. It didn't cut out for me. If I look at a piece of paper on a wall and I can't decipher what is going on, therefore I accept that fact and I then work on it from a visual point of view, to me there is no other alternative. I don't start looking somewhere else, I just go on working at the same thing, in this case I start looking at it as an object, which might contradict some other areas of the show. I still read it that way.
- W.C. The other way of going back is to the piece of paper on the typewriter, xeroxing and blowing up.
- J.A. This is the argument that led to the four 6' x 3' sheets of paper with pencil marks on them.
- J.L. When John Hoby and I were looking at them we were speculating on the process of how these came about.
- W.C. Can we go back to this business of the relation of the things on the floor to the paper pinned to the wall. That seems to me to be a very crucial area, that's where you had some worries Bruce.
- B.B. Yes, I'd rather see it out
- B.A. Yes, I would too.
- B.B. Though there are dimensions.....
- B.A. It is interesting that if the walls contained a book, a table and a chair to sit down to read them..
- J.L. I think in terms of dealing with what's there
- W.C. Yes, but if you don't want to work with them.....
- J.L. But it's like eliminating a whole side of someone's piece....
- W.C. Okay. I walk around the walls reading and then I am conscious of turning my back to the objects in the middle of the floor. If this is a right thing to do, to what extent do the things in the middle set up about my experiences of reading that wouldn't be set up if there was nothing there.
- B.A. I would like to ask Jim how he feels about the table and the two pieces of pottery sitting there and this chair here.
- J.A. I accepted the clutter in the space. Rodney asked me if I wanted anything moved but I was happy that they should stay. The question you asked came up in my mind. These things are part and parcel of this environment. The idea of moving them out relates to my standpoint on how you present things and that seems to cross the path of a decision I had already made which was not to get involved in gallery aesthetics.
- B.B. In a sense you have already framed everything in the space whereas ~~you~~ Billy ~~is~~ is dealing with whole spaces and the space becomes very much a part of what you are dealing with.
- J.A. It is part of the pattern of non-assertion, non-definition, with word structures and the things between words.
- B.A. How about when you come to the end of a line and the word is broken and you carry the rest of the letters in the next line.

is the name every ; is to make ; of knowledge and
of ; reason that assigns to ; and yet important ;
modest and almost equally ; fallibility it does n
ot resign ; progresses and especially ; knowledge
is by unjustified ; anticipation of guesses ; be
established as certainly true ; our conjectures i
s of ; that is of any serious ; of the probabilit
y ; never know - that is know ; certain moment of

J.A. This has nothing to do with a formal consideration of terminating lines at the same length; it's to do with setting up a break in continuity and having to make the effort to set up the visual and verbal link, which is consistent with having broken the normalcy of statement and being placed in a different situation which permits a free or more varied area of association.

B.B. So you see this as a device for interruption?

J.A. Yes

B.B. This is not an attempt to confuse

J.A. Only an attempt to break the even plane of meaning.

B.B. The plane of meaning?

J.A. The residue of meaning in the statements, even though the plane is broken, is carried forward but it is carried forward in a different vehicle than the one which it had previously which was the definitive statement, and this vehicle which is coming is indefinite with holes in it. The perceiver is much more actively brought into the situation in relationship to the meaning than if it is left on the even plane. I was hoping that by creating gaps like that.....for example the series that deals with statements from people about different things. Each one of them adds up to a state of mind about a particular thing, a particular relevance, a deliberate juxtaposition of states...

B.B. It becomes almost a compendium of so-called avant garde tendencies. It can become a critique.

J.A. No, I was engrossed with the problem I had set myself. If it can be read as such, I have to accept that.

B.B. But positioning it in that way, does it relate to everything else....

J.A. That was the second thing that I developed from the children's sets of relationships and it represents a progression of growth in my thinking from Step 1 to Step 2. Obviously they are grappling with progression of numbers and progressions of words and meanings and this section directly relates.

B.B. There is an interesting process that you went through to gather this material ~~at such a rate~~ thought processes ^{were} translated into verbal communication and that in turn was recorded on the tape recorder and then translated again. It went through another process and then put down with the typewriter.

J.A. No, there was no editing, the only changes which would have occurred was where a word was inaudible in the recording.

W.C. Whereas these other texts are from books.

J.A. Yes, different books. There is a plane of thinking in this which relates to what sculpture is about, a question of what sculpture might be about. So there is philosophy, poetry, engineering, Darcy Wentworths 'Growth and Form' - they are introduced as the position elements which are important aspects of our thinking which lead to the development of things. The amount of text given here was selected on the basis of a quantity which was sufficient to establish that issue.

W.C. You've got a set of processes here: you've got tape recording, presumably the grammatical casualness of speech corresponds to the grammatical absurdities created by the editing. What you get with a tape recording is a naturalistic situation. Both those things contain opening up and incompleteness, potential of statement in their casualness. One involves an interfering on your part of the text. How would you justify that interfering?

of cell - divisions in the attractions ; of the
parts of the dividing ; operator forces and the
; which have, to say ; learn and learn but neve
r ; actual or relative, in various directions ;
of the extension of ; in the several dimensions
; figures the surface increases ; the cube of t
he linear ; place, though growth in length ; in
volume are parts of one ; of relative magnitude
the universe ; to consider the inevitable ; it
is bound up. The effect ; narrow bounds of inch
es ; measured in terms drawn ; other order of t

- J.A. Well, it's easier with the statements from people which were tape recorded in the context of the exhibition.
- W.C. That's to do with the choice of the text in all cases isn't it?
- J.A. It's to do with the choice of the text also, but its the question which you asked is in the distortion of the texts.
- W.C. Okay, I'm beginning to get it. So the lack of your identifying yourself, your intention with those statements is parallel to the interfering with these texts. That's the coherence....yes that fits. It's a distancing from the text of yourself....is gained by leaving the objects in the centre.....is a conciseness of statement.
- B.B. They are vehicles of another kind of information as implicit in the general order of things in the space and in that sense I find them interrupting. It's not a question of going in and seeing twenty pieces of sculpture in a room and turning your back on three or four of them and losing out by doing that in relation to them, ~~that~~^{this} is getting back to your decorum problem, It's just different qualities of information as these are hinge points, relevant points.
- D.H. If these statements are important why do you use a space, why don't you direct the person more by video taping the sequence so that you actually bear that person's life along so that they actually see the relationships.
- J.A. I don't think it would have done the same thing David. The fact that these are not moving, they are not suddenly going to disappear on you, means that you have a certain amount of freedom, to come in contact with it. You would have to re-image this thing - to make the conversion to a different media.
- W.C. There's no sequence around here is there? It comes down to the point whether it's important to the piece for one to be confronted with physical things, generated by the statements on the wall, that's the crucial issue..... that there should be physical things to go with verbal things.
- D.B. It seems that all these things had been processed several times, why not carry on to the point of having them on video tape?
- W.C. No, that's all he has done, there seems to be something missing here which is to do with your response, it's to do with how the viewer takes his aesthetic experience from there and what he makes of it. It seems to me in that sense the physical things act as a type of instruction or context in which to read those pieces.
- J.L. Would you say that a grid on a piece of paper was a physical fact or would you number it as information.
- W.C. I read it initially as information.
- J.L. I place importance on the visual aspect, would you?
- W.C. Much less than you do. I take the grids as composition, as information. I then move to that kind of box-like grid, an idea of a physical thing, so I take it largely at the mental level, and I see it as perhaps pointing towards these things rather more than the words do; nevertheless there being some kind of important distinction between information on the wall, and the materials for making things that are in the middle.

but something else, some residue, that; sunlight and implements fashioned; body precedes language with every appearance of extreme; already as goes without; of plain wood, then the white; correlative function - just as; reality to abstraction for or transmission; fluids that digest and gradually; process could already be; loyally with the corrosive function; words and to make; possessed the reality of; function and escape; to maintain the purity; action lest it suddenly; fetishism. Without doubt, too; and setting reality, the flesh;+ the outset was devoid of; the flesh came late at the beginning; by reality, and reality would; things, it ought to have made; other men - all men without; body - the ideal existence must; arts must lie solely in; function and to strip reality; should have dealt with never; this way my mind without; and this increased still; the flesh, mu

(excuse the value judgement)

36
By placing importance on the visual, I meant it in the widest sense - you still deal with information on a visual level but it's a type of non-verbal information, it also operates on a mental level. To me information is something to be "worked through" as Wittgenstein said - he must so to speak, throw away the ladder after he has climbed up it. This statement works also for the visual aspects. So what's left? When you push away the information ladder and the visual ladder, you're left in a between state, between systems. The main question - can you through systems move into a non-system - beyond systems. This is probably too "loose" for your thinking. Sure but this is where it leaves me. Though to my way of thinking, this is the most important area to be left in.

- J.A. One of the key things about the grids and those objects is that they are signifiers for systems and signifiers for system thinking and the question of putting in one kind of system along with another kind of system is the basis for the selection of the grids. The engineering calculation regarding certain stress is resolved by the evolution of a system which enables the solution to problems. The texts are related to different systems. The statement by John Maynard relates to the system and function of skis, and our conversation endeavours to focus on the system element. So the statements are quite coherently centred around system organisation of different kinds.
- W.C. What about the sentence as a system?
- J.A. I can't say that the sentences were seen as systems because the statements were taken as they came.
- W.C. Still take the case of your editing, it could be said that this was a case of breaking systems.
- B.B. There are some fragments of inductive reasoning and fragments of deductive reasoning and when you have elements like this you get into another series of opposition which fundamentally the epistemological versus the ontological but I don't know how far you can carry that when you have so many isolated fragments. The only complete things, and even those are extendable, are the grids and the box shape which, correct me if I am wrong, is that out of a Don Judd?
- J.A. No, it's a standard graph for evaluating certain physical situations.
- B.B. The ontology comes in very strongly in things like this and on the children's drawings ^{though at} ~~the~~ a very basic kind of level. I don't want to get into too heavy a discussion, ~~and~~ also with the elements on the floor the epistemology comes in when you are gaining information from other people and other sources, different qualities, different types, levels of information, knowledge - call it whatever. It's quite interesting to think of that and be interrupted all the time, seemingly confused so that you can't separate and isolate different things, without making cross references until ultimately you come down to a metaphor level and that is the O-AR for me, a very strong metaphor - dipping in, lifting the oar out of the water, and the drops fall off. It seems a very simplistic level to take it at.
- J.A. I think this is very true. We had a discussion about this before.
- W.C. But Bruce you are saying that you want the ontology out.
- B.B. Yes, ^{however} there is still ~~ont~~ology in the rest of it.
- W.C. Yes, but it's all in uniform terms
- B.B. ~~Yes~~, but the literal information is confusing; you are adding information to tie things up, not reading.
- W.C. They are all the same plane, they are words to words, information to information.
- J.L. Grids to grids. I was following though the idea of an oar, and that you use an oar to go somewhere, putting the emphasis on the going, instead of arriving at some place. ~~A lot of things seem to be put into the future. When I do a piece I do a lot of writing, testing out the idea, this is probably why I said earlier that I saw this as something like a notebook.~~
- J.A. The ^{fiction} ~~fiction~~ framing is the clearest and most obvious example of system thinking, systematised, modular, utility.
- D.H. Its quite frightening for those reasons, the same for writing, just as much a system.

of things and other ; physical forces, some act
; is the cubes of the several linear dimensions
; are as the squares of ; from structures livin
g ; which suffice in the case of ; happens that
the forces in action ; system some way as one ;
and it and its ; of matter cohesion ; precisely
the same height of the utmost limit ; its boll,
broad based upon ; high to a similar but strict
er plan ; most developed opposite to the direct
ion ; or of physics, how small ; species is the
difficulty of a contest ; organised whole the i
ndividual ; ever tending to dissolve ; quick an

— But I would maintain an effective area to delve into and a beneficial
way of coming to terms with the show... — Metaphor as a basis for further
discussion???

BB

JL.
— please delete as it has nothing to do
with what's being talked out.

... generation, experiment
realment, variation and contribution
as significant as the annihilation.

... clutching of soul in their
umbilical cord.

... freedom awareness of inner real
etc. Marxist awareness of sac
... from the rational logic
... mind to the full
... of the unconscious.

... use of insect to ... into a
... hand. Crickets in a tree
... with lead
... with ...
... quality of ...
... the ... to woman.

O-AR PART II, AUCKLAND CITY ART GALLERY,
11th to 19th November, 1975

The Art Gallery exhibition is primarily concerned with the development of the propositions advanced in O-AR PART I, but the format is obviously influenced by the nature of the environment both physical and social, and in one sense I was almost seeking a reverse polarity to the basis of the previous work. On a simple level PART I raked ground over posing different situations of perceiving, and as such uncovered a lot of territory apparently unconnected which promoted a climate of enquiry. So much information was given that the situation was almost one of saturation and the resultant perceptual field seemed to lead to the creation of a blank upon which the mind could scan isolated fragments.

Physically, PART II was given as a negation to this mass of verbal statement by having a single sheet of polythene plastic 11' wide and 72' long in each of the two galleries. This situation was set in motion firstly by the plastic in one room being black and in the other clear, and secondly by the physical juxtaposition in that the viewer could stand at a central point and view the full length of both galleries at the same time. I was concerned with a Yin and Yang situation and it seemed that by setting up these reversals a situation was created which would provoke a verbal exchange at a concentrated and intense level of thought which gave room to development and exchange and on-going process. By contrast I think PART I in some respects was a destructive self-negating situation.

Of course what I am really looking for is to set up the format for speculative play.

Transcript of a conversation between Wystan Curnow, Bruce Barber, John Lethbridge and Kim Gray concerning Jim Allen's O-AR PART II.

B.B. Well what shall we look at - Jim's statement first or our individual impressions of the show in relation to O-AR Part I or what? John, Kim and I were discussing before that there's not much we can really quarrel about in relation to the first paragraph of Jim's text except... "That I was almost seeking a reverse polarity to the basis of the previous work"... I would question that. I'm not sure whether it is a reverse polarity... I'd like to know in what terms.?

W.C. I don't really know what that means for a start. If he is saying with this work I was doing something opposite to, something antithetical to what I had done in the previous work... is that what he means?

B.B. I don't think it is. You remember in our last discussion we talked about the opposition between ontology and epistemology and how it was working with O-AR Part I. Well we touched on that at least.

W.C. Yeah sure.

B.B. Whether he's accepted that that was about one or the other of those things and he has in this show accepted the opposite notion is really hard to say. I think the key probably lies in the statement at the end bottom of his text about the Yin Yang thing.

W.C. In the previous work the emphasis was on verbal material. O-AR Part I wasn't a very sculptural piece whereas this is very obviously so. With the verbal and sculptural thing in O-AR Part I there was a great complex of oppositions.

B.B. Yeah.

W.C. Dialogues going on between the elements there and the radically simplified positive/negative thing that he talks about here. You can see that.

B.B. Culture/nature.

W.C. Yeah. I only saw... that doesn't take you to an opposite pole... it takes you to....

B.B. Another aspect of it.

W.C. Yes that's right. You can say that O-AR Part I provides a context for it. A context for interpretation, in that degree Part II is in fact generated by Part I. But my feeling in these terms is that what is actually presented in Part II is only one of many things that could have been generated by I.

~~... I think that was O-AR Part I... that could be followed by little pieces of it... only in that sense do I see them related.~~

J.L. To me there is one way in which it could seem that they are opposites. In the way that in Part I there was so much information within it that you had to go back to it many times to really get involved in it. But Part II, once you had got involved in it initially, there was no real need to go back, you could contain all the information in one reading. That's the thing that really struck me about it. That you could visually retain everything you could see of the piece right down to very small details, and in that sense you could see the information that was lost because there was so much of it and the information that you could retain of the whole piece. And I found then in those terms that there was an opposite being set up there. In fact if you wanted to you could trace the sort of opposites operating even within each piece... like the idea of wanting to justify that ground piece in Part I... it is an opposition because it is essentially non-verbal to what is on the walls, as with the black/white or rather transparent plastic works in Part II.

W.C. Yeah. I think that works analogously.

J.L. But keeping it on a very simple level.



W.C. Though you can't not go into the City gallery piece and get everything out of it in the sense that you can say in a certain type of conceptual work, at least it has to be experienced.

~~It's not that I get... that you get... who walk through it and come out... well that's that... the audience seem to approach... The information that I took and that was... standing in the place... from one place to another. You couldn't grab it all that easily.~~

J.L. But once you'd kind^a grabbed it you could retain it without too much trouble. I agree that you have to experience it and a certain amount of time must be spent to get certain sensations but once you've got it... not like the first show where you can get quite involved with reading a few phrases from the wall there and then about ten minutes later you get involved in another set of phrases and you've lost the previous information.

B.B. Instead of the dipping in and out metaphor in O-AR I, there seems to be a wave metaphor operating in the second instance. I found that quite a useful guide to my attitudes when reading both pieces.

W.C. Yes this certainly has no dipping in and out quality.

B.B. No its certainly not. There is a definite phenomenological relationship between the perceiver and the work, and the work primarily operates on that level.

W.C. And the ontology is contained in that... yeah.

B.B. The dipping in and out metaphor... maybe getting nowhere contrasts with the stability...

~~... the only way you can apply the metaphor, is in fact by stepping back from the surface of the work and looking at it...~~

B.B. I think this is what he is talking about perhaps when he says in some respects Part I was "a destructive self-negating situation".

~~... the information that I took and that was... standing in the place... from one place to another. You couldn't grab it all that easily.~~

J.L. Well what about the idea of taking in information and then 10 minutes later you lose that information. In a sense that is a self-negating system within O-AR I. You know one of the things that interests me, I have a very hazy recollection from I all except for one phrase which is the big one on the wall and yet Part II is a very clear thing and in this way Part I has negated itself because there was so much there... overload.

W.C. Yeah, but...

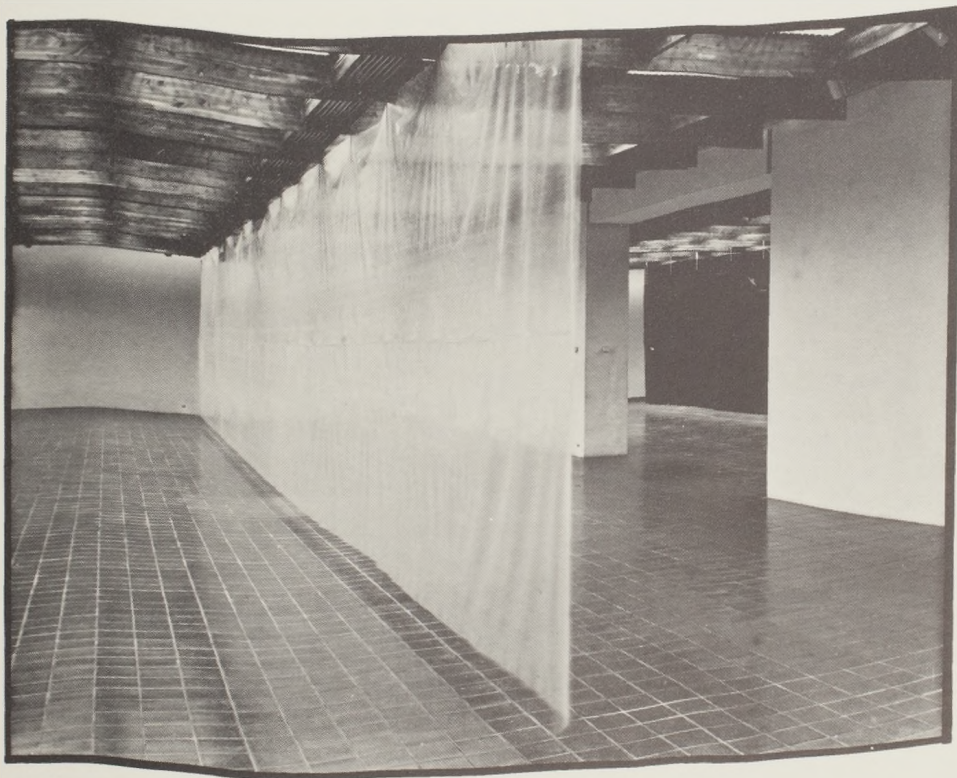
J.L. Yeah, or maybe the specifics of negating itself...

B.B. Well instead of paring down...

W.C. That's true of any complex work though. Lots of complex works do that to you.

B.B. It says here... "So much information was given that the situation was almost one of saturation and the resultant perceptual field seemed to lead to the creation of a blank upon which the mind could scan isolated fragments". I'm not quite sure what he means here by perceptual field. And if he means by "blank" a tabula Rasa, I don't think that's what in fact it does. In some ways the elements weren't as isolated to me as I'm lead to believe by reading this statement because fragments though they may be they could still be connected and they could in fact be completed in a certain way by the spectator. But I don't think that his behaviour led to the creation of that blank effect in the mind of the spectator.

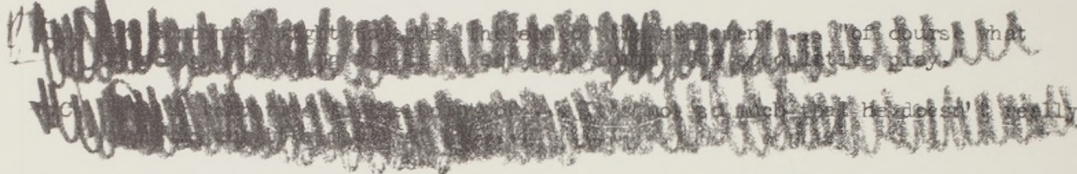
* Jim said that the spatial differences between the locations of the 2 parts presented an opportunity to make the same point in a different way. He said later that what he brought into the Barry Lett space was determined in part by the intimacy of that space; it was, for instance, sympathetic to the use of verbal material in a way. The City Gallery space was not. I suspect he knew from the start that Part I was to be followed by a strong, simple, physical statement, that this was what the City Gallery space said to him.



W.C. No

B.B. ... where one could scan isolated fragments and move out to the sense that one is saturated to the point of negativism. So on the one hand we've got something which the author of the works presumes to be a negative thing in O-AR I and seemingly a positive thing in O-AR II. I don't think its as simple as that and some of the discrepancies in the writing of this seem to point to a bit of confusion as far as that's concerned... for me at least.

W.C. Part of the problem is in this instance he's not really wanting to commit himself. All the way through he's using words like "I was almost seeking a reverse polarity..." "in one sense I was almost..." Now that's incredibly tentative and its followed by something which is disturbingly definite... "... a reverse polarity to the basis of previous work." You know that's a tremendously definite thing and again "...so much information was given that it was almost one of..." and " ... the resultant perceptual field seemed to lead. Again that's the sort of thing that bothers me.



B.B. But maybe this non-committal attitude is part of the work? The statement is certainly - maybe the works ... though the first part I feel is quite strong ... and there is a certain amount of commitment to ideas presentation and so on for both works. If he feels that there is a certain amount of autonomy on the spectators part to react and indulge in this speculative play and complete the work.

W.C. The second part was the most direct use in sculptural terms of those two galleries I've ever seen, including Billy's pieces. He took those spaces as spaces and attacked them in a very frontal, a very simple way. This made a very strong thing spatially... I really liked it... it was offset very strongly going into the Mezzanine and seeing the Hansells sculpture prize... a room full of fussy little pieces.

B.B. That was the tabula rasa effect.

W.C. Right... very refreshing indeed. Displacing the space of those two rooms I think he elaborated a system by generating a third room...

B.B. There were actually four corridors.

W.C. Yes that's another way of putting it. I thought that the system of the two galleries was elaborated in a very nice way ... subverted in some sense the verticals of the two galleries, and you got that most strongly when you were in the middle of the fictional room created by the two sheets... and that very thick wall that divided the two contrasted with the thinness of the plastic, that was a very nice factor indeed and I thought of it as it related to O-AR I. To me the relationship between the lines, the difference between Jim's dividing up those two spaces and the kind of experience from the Robert Morris type environmental walkways, passageways, mazes was interesting. As a maze or passageway through which one was guided or required to move it was a much more generous and accommodating thing than you get with the Morris/Nauman type maze or wall corridor.

K.G. Because of the relationship between the thin membrane and yourself it elicits that kind of response.

W.C. Yes its the thinness - moving - the fact that one of them you can see through.

J.L. One of the things Jim said about Part I was that he just moved into the space and set things up... there was no pre-conceived order involved. Part II was considered in every sense of the word. Nothing was left out... nothing left to chance. Two different approaches within the same work as it were.

K.G. Funnily enough, I didn't get that feeling, exactly the opposite in fact. There was a lot more intention within the first work and the thing that came out of it. I'm not too sure about this but maybe Jim didn't realise what was to happen with Part I, which in a sense would trigger the Part II.

B.B. O-AR Part I is very much a labyrinth for the mind. I'll just take off from the Robert Morris/Bruce Nauman terms. I can think of Part II in minimal terms but not as a labyrinth. Its a very direct existential physical kind of experience. I find myself wondering why O-AR II came out of O-AR I. If its going to be part of the yin yang thing, then I don't think its a very successful part of the operation.

J.L. To me, that's the problem. O-AR Part II works very well. The problems start occurring when you start relating it to Part I. The whole thing becomes so complex ... you can make numerous connections. But its very hard to get any structure out of it that really ties them together.

~~... the high level of formal separation that the shows. This could be as a result of what was going on.~~

Cut?

~~... also ... started his mind to ... was ...~~

~~... was out to an interesting ... that O-AR Part II ... in ...~~

B.B.

he succeeded in doing was to change the space in an extremely dynamic fashion. This is my own bias probably but in some ways I would have liked to see him take some of the features of Part I and work with some of these things in a more direct expanded fashion.

W.C. Yeah.

J.L. But he didn't.

B.B. Of course but some of the things that were explicit in Part I held incredibly fruitful avenues which could have been explored.

W.C. I would think that he went from O-AR I straight to II ... a not very great move or change except that the relationship between the work and spectator is a lot more generous and O-AR I seems to explain some of the groundwork for some of that more generous accommodation of the spectator. Thats about all.. I would have liked to have seen what came after O-AR I, whether it was Part II or not, to sustain the kind of complexity Part I had.

B.B. What you've got in II is a veritable Tour de Force as far as the gallery space is concerned.

W.C. Yeah - its a very successful piece. I enjoyed it very much.

J.L. Maybe the fact Part I did exist makes Part II a very complex piece anyhow.

W.C. Thats the problem. It doesn't make it more complex.

J.L. Well it makes it more complex for me just trying to connect one to the other. You get into some amazing problems because you've got the auto-complexity of the first and the simplicity of the second which surely makes it complex anyway.

~~... but ... a ... useful quality of a work is ... complexity that you can ... that ... a valuable quality to ... So that the ... or not is whether the complexity ... is useful....~~

~~... makes O-AR I more ambiguous ... the ...~~

~~... that do produce ambiguity, there are ambiguities also ... There are ambiguities that enrich meaning.~~

~~... of ...~~
~~... would be very different ...~~
~~... in latest OAR Part I ...~~
~~... Part II ...~~

J.L. ... heading of ...
B.B. ... I get a lot more out of the pieces if ...
W.C. ... the continuity of it ... you expect a continuity, you expect connections.

~~... always as discrete as Part I ...~~
~~... Part I Part II ...~~
~~... Part I Part II ...~~

B.B. Jim says that 'physically' Part II is given as a negation to Part I... then we can either read it as that or refute it. I would prefer to refute it and separate the two out so that I can handle them adequately, or in the fashion that I feel they should be handled given my experience etc...

J.L. I get a bit worried when you start regimenting a certain amount of the information that the artist has given.

~~... really ...~~
~~... do you ...~~
~~... think that ...~~
~~... it didn't work ...~~
~~... it doesn't work ...~~

W.C. We have to be careful how we interpret that information. In the first discussion I started out by asking Jim 'Could I take OAR Part I quite separately.. in other words could I look at this work and understand it by itself, would I not have to wait until OAR Part II to make it quite clear?' he said no... the work stands alone ... so...

- B.B. Maybe we have to look at those connections as they exist... and I think there are, as you say Wystan, discrete connections.
- W.C. Yes
- B.B. Other connections you really have to work at... But if he describes that as OAR Part I and this Part II then we should work with that as a base even though we don't like doing it ... you may end up like myself and start treating the works separately, just to handle them properly and avoid problems.
- J.L. I suppose you're quite right... certain people wouldn't have seen Part I, so then Part II had to stand on its own. Its a matter of necessity.
- W.C. I think it does. I've seen the connections. I see that I'm perhaps ahead of the game because I've seen Part I. I mean like you say you feel claustrophobic when you go down that first passage. But I would say that I'm ahead of the game on that because I would then add I feel claustrophobia even though the plastic is some four inches above the floor... there's an opening there provided.
- B.B. In fact that wave effect when one passes the plastic, wouldn't happen unless that gap was there.
- W.C. That's right, and I got very ... I like what that wall is ... its a very seductive wall. A ~~man~~ I knew regarded the work as a very sexy piece of work altogether. And she responded very strongly to the quality of the material... and I think that's reasonable. One of the other things that was nice to me was when you went into the other lane on the centre gallery side of the West gallery and you saw this reflection, right at the end of the gallery. There was a slash of green light along the wall. There was apparently no source for that green reflection at all, perceivable source. In fact it was a couple of deflections from Albert Park through the library door. Now if you looked down at that door you saw that yellowy brown light that you get through the door... on the plastic you got a green flash ... now you couldn't see the greenery through the library door.
- B.B. In no way could you do conservation in that room.
- W.C. But it was nice you know and it was part of the opening out of the piece. The cues I got from Part I was for these kinds of openings the work provided as it was at the same time cutting up your space and tracking you through it. I followed an almost pre-determined route through it.
- J.L. Just as a matter of interest how did you approach the poster of OAR Part II, because that gave to me a certain amount of clues and caused a number of problems as well.
- W.C. I can't recall it very well.
- W.C. What about the lighting?
- B.B. It seemed to be very even, a daylight effect.
- J.L. He turned on the fluorescents...
- W.C. No wall lights at all...
- J.L. ...and dimmed them a bit.
- B.B. It didn't give off shadows very easily.
- W.C. Not very easily... the interesting thing was either side you were on you got a shadow, at least with the black sheet.
- B.B. The reflections were very high.
- W.C. But the walls were dimmed. They were quite gloomy... the higher up you went. It did serve to dissipate the central wall particularly... what was he talking about in the statement... about people... the sense of people in the space.
- B.B. What one has is a central focus, a Baroque kind of sense of grabbing the whole.
- W.C. And secondly he spoke of physical juxtaposition in that the viewer could stand

W.C. continued:

at a central point and view the full length of both galleries at the same time...
Now where's that central point?

B.B. Right in front of where the poster was placed.

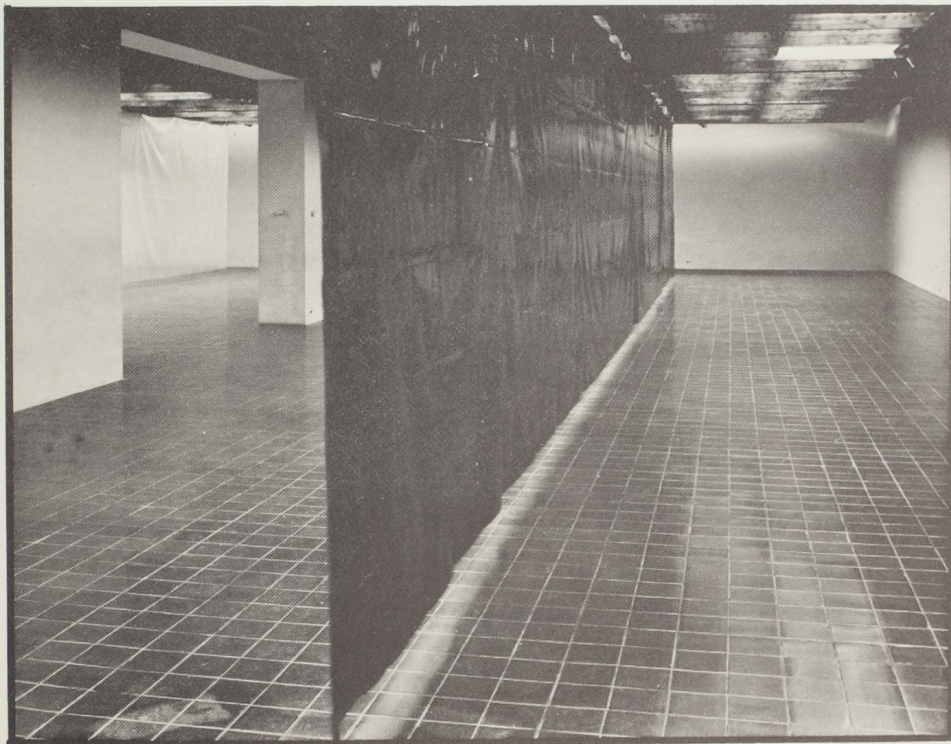
W.C. This is the centre of the lobby part of the two galleries, not the centre of the doorway. It was a good position for viewing the work because you had the cue thick/thin...

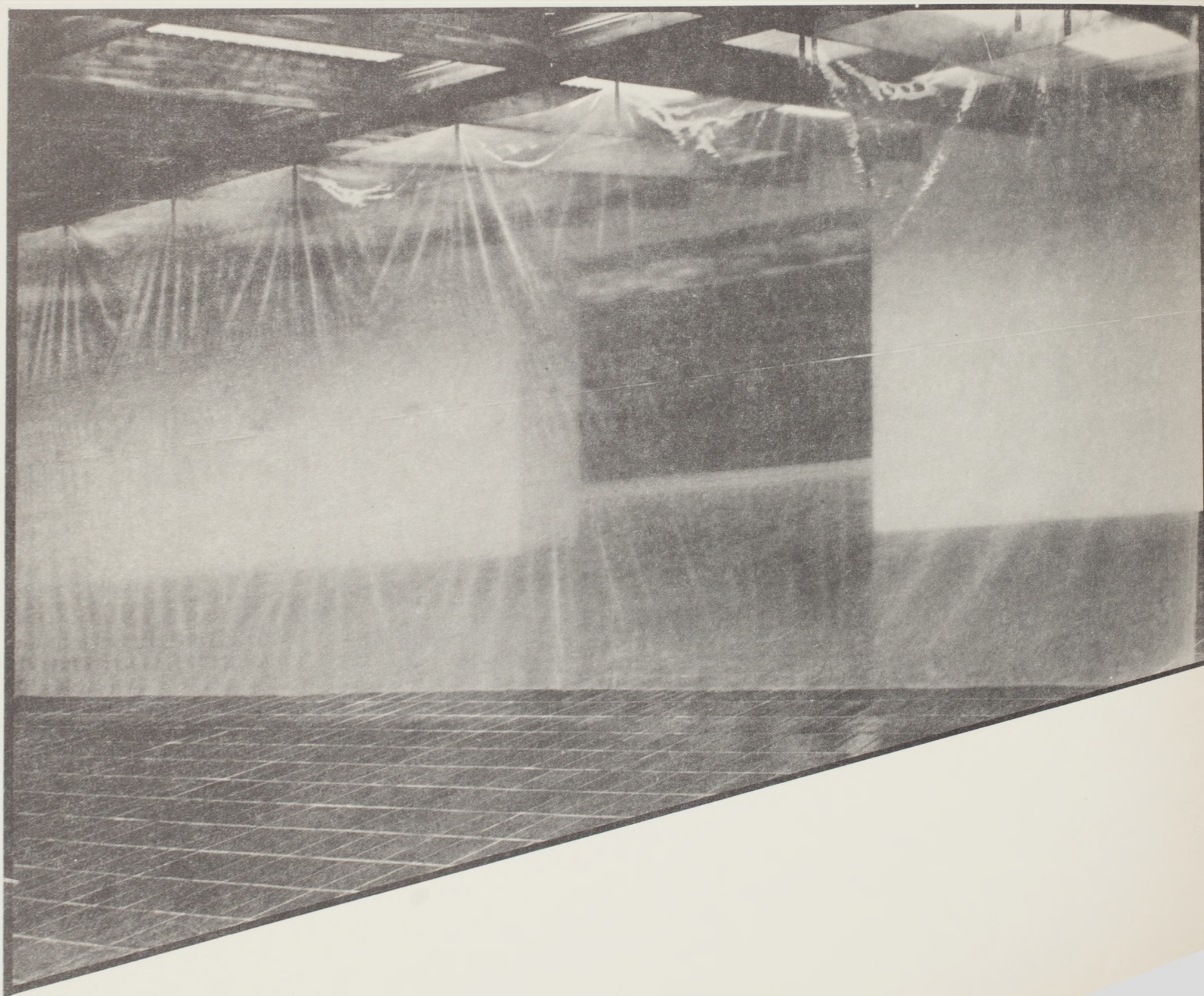
B.B. The corridor effect happening... the galleries seemed even longer than they were.

W.C. I did like the choice of putting the black sheet in the West Gallery, clearly dictated by the fact that there were more openings in the other gallery, entrances and exits. You can enter the clear side four ways whereas the black in the other gallery gave you two ways.

B.B. Two ... four, two times four...?

W.C. Ha... you can't yin and yang that one. That's what you're left with... a phenomenological piece.





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