DOCUMENTARY PRACTICE

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L'Artiste, Le Fermier et Le Paysage focuses upon the non-fragmented lifestyles of the landscape artist Jean Frélaut and that of farmer Gaby Le Gall. Between them they span this century. The tape shows many scenes depicting the rituals of Breton life today, which are echoed in the paintings drawn from earlier times. The commentary counter-points this culture by reference to modern day urban concerns. Folk music evokes emotion and connects the rythmns of work to that of natural elements. The use of the relatively long take interview helps to develop individual lines of character. The long take long shot aims to bring forth qualities of human relationship. Each scene has its own design strategy combining sound-image elements in a particular way to relate to the theme – main cluster of ideas – such as the importance of religion; the respect for animals in this farming community; the dignity, humour and social relationship of its people...

The non-linear improvised approach can usefully be applied to examining other documentaries. It reveals quickly the basis upon which works have been conceived and realised, and upon what basis the viewer engages with the outcome. Hotel reveals interesting differences when compared to The Cruise. Whilst The Belovs demonstrates clearly both the value of non-linear patterns and that of improvised performance in documentary.

The thesis focuses upon re-addressing a documentary debate which has emphasised narrative structures and an objective formal view of the world. In L'artiste, Le Fermier et Le Paysage the textures and patterns generated within the audio-visual flow add to the themes whilst maintaining narrative coherence. It is for audiences to draw from all of these in the viewing and incorporate them into their experience. As I conclude: 'Assumptions about documentary change when the non-linear improvised approach is applied' (thesis: 137). Discussion on documentary which acknowledges the absurdist tradition, silent cinema, improvised performance and the music hall comic generates a view of documentary as a creative activity producing a variety of distinct kinds of narrative form. This is the non-linear improvised approach which can offer illumination, evaluation, reflection and the possibility to be magical.

David Furnham.

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Thanks to Valerie

Documentary Practice

Abstract

The thesis is a development of the making of the documentary tape L'Artiste, Le Fermier et Le Paysage. The central argument is to propose a way of looking at documentary based on the possibility of making and examining documentary material which combines narrative and non-narrative techniques and on the value of comparing non-actor contributions to improvised performance processes and outcomes. The purpose of this approach is to produce an effect upon the viewer where the viewer engages in working out what is happening within an array of possible meanings contained within the audio-visual pattern. The qualitative effect is to offer the viewer pleasure, recognition and a game of intellectual inquiry and assessment. The whole activity is termed the non-linear improvised approach to documentary. It places the maker in an ethical relationship with the participants and aims to create a democratic state of affairs for the viewer.

Key areas of concern are firstly to examine the role of the participant and maker, before and during shooting. The participant develops confidence with the maker and at the time of shooting he or she is in a state of being to produce a performance which can be described as a line of energy drawn from his/her personality. Secondly, within the overall structure of the documentary attention is given to the opening, the ending and the overall patterning. Each scene produces many moments of meaning (beats) reinforcing the main theme which itself contains a cluster of meanings. Comparisons with silent cinema, the films of Jacques Tati and music hall comedians aim to illuminate the discussion.

A key consequence of the non-linear improvised approach is to consider sound and image on an equal footing combining to produce a distinct style. Sound becomes a series of elements – dialogues, atmos. tracks, music and spot effects – which all have a role in the production of beats. Voice elements can be seen as much for their intrinsic poetic qualities as for their objective statements about the social world.

DOCUMENTARY PRACTICE

THE DOCUMENTARY TAPE: **L'Artiste, Le Fermier et Le Paysage**

The French version was mastered onto Digital Betacam. The English version was mastered onto Betacam SP.

THE THESIS: **Documentary Practice**

Introduction

This thesis, centred on documentary practice, is written from the maker's viewpoint and as a consequence of making L'Artiste, Le Fermier et Le Paysage, a 44-minute documentary, made over a two-year period. The tape and the thesis form the PhD submission. The tape is, in part, an experiment in testing documentary propositions, a reaction to the dominant 'journalistic' conventions found in television documentary. As Ken Dancyger notes, 'the most common documentary falls into the general category of current affairs. In this sense the television documentary is very much related to journalism with relationships to newspapers and magazines' (Dancyger and Rush, 1991: 62). These conventions are exemplified by strong narrated stories in which interviews illustrate the veracity of the stated proposition or argument. The tape is also a development of my previous work. This is characterised by working closely with participants over a relatively long period of time and with the intention that the final programme structures would produce empathy and understanding between viewer and the participants' attitudes. L'Artiste, Le Fermier et Le Paysage – see VHS tape copy – consists of the English version followed by the French version. Also included is a breakdown of each shot (Shot Analysis, Appendix 1).

Reflecting upon the making and structuring of the tape has given the opportunity to assess the literature on documentary discourse and the issues it has generated. Such reflection also helps to develop a view of documentary, which places the reasons for the manipulations of sound and image, by the maker, at the centre of the debate. Whilst I have developed my own personal style in the construction of L'Artiste, Le Fermier et Le Paysage, it reveals a way of looking at documentary in general, and I have called this the non-linear improvised approach to documentary. This non-

linearity refers to the ability of the viewer to make connections between shots and scenes, which enhance meaning and the viewer's pleasure. Congruent with this approach is the proposition that performance works through a method of interactions between maker and participants akin to improvisation methods found in drama. The recorded interviews and actions affect the editing patterns – for example, a verbal statement in an interview may not be complete without the inclusion of a participant's gesticulation – so as to enhance this non-linear style, to deepen meanings and to strengthen the viewer's relationship and engagement with the audio-visual flow.

I have found Carl Plantinga's work – Rhetoric and Representation in Nonfiction Film (1997) – most useful, and I have used it extensively. I hope my views add to the debate especially by demonstrating that documentary is capable of dealing with the complexities of social life, and that makers need to consider their own values and working methods carefully, and identify new contexts of production and consumption into which they can fit. The out-dated system of 16mm filmmaking, with its associated professional ethic and institutional setting has gone. It has been replaced with a variety of technologies, computer-based, which are in part accessible within the community. There is a rejoinder to the traditional dominance of television documentary, now carefully commissioned to fit known audience lifestyles and to suit the producers that provide the finance. For example, The Discovery Channel defines its documentary material as a commodity dealing with 'science and technology, exploration and adventure, wildlife and natural history, mysteries and mythology, history and archeology and travel and anthropology' (Discovery Channel, Pact Presentation publicity information pamphlet, October 1996). With its dictum of 'act global but think local' (through versioning), its commodities have three-year shelf

lives which, as described by one of their commissioning editors, Chris Haws, at the International Market for Documentaries (Marseilles, June 23, 1995, unpublished) 'is like the water supply and toilet paper: they are useful disposable stuff.'

I am also indebted to Anthony Frost and Ralph Yarrow's account Improvisation in Drama (1990) and the insights it gives into performance qualities applicable to documentary. Their account of the way the process of developing performance is reflected in the quality of performance achieved provides insight into the role of the writer / director of documentary, the relationship he / she establishes with the participants, and the end result, the recorded interview or event.

I owe a special debt of thanks to Professors Roy Armes and Huw Jones, my colleagues at Middlesex University, for their comments, insights and sustained enthusiasm and support for this project. And to Kathleen, Nicholas and Valerie Furnham, all of whom played their part in the production team. I thank narrators Andrew Sachs and Philippe Monet, interviewer Sarah Brignall, Paul Roberts of Fitzrovia for the sound dubbing sessions, and Bill Ogden, chief editor at Blue Post. Both Paul and Bill gave good professional advice and very special deals that helped the budget!

In chapter 1, I outline the documentary discourse, which leads me to define my own concerns that develop out of the relationships between maker, participants and audience. The search for the truth using scientific apparatus is not relevant to the maker whose agenda is completely different, lying in the need to engage audiences. Attempts to classify tell us little about how to create novel documentary tapes. What

is required is an examination of, 'the what and the why and the ways' of engaging an audience using non-fictional resources. Hence the development of the non-linear improvised approach to documentary in Chapter 2. In order to draw out definitions of non-linearity, I consider the absurdist traditions drawn from theatre and illustrate it by examining some of the structures and audio-visual patterns of the films of Jacques Tati. The improvised qualities of documentary are developed from an analysis drawn from improvisation in theatre, and from the music hall comic. These produce a model for the non-linear improvised documentary, which is applied to the analysis of L'Artiste, Le Fermier et Le Paysage in Chapter 3. In chapter 4, I apply this approach, in terms of appraisal, to a number of television documentaries. These are Hotel (BBC 1998), which is compared and contrasted with The Cruise (BBC 1998), and The Belovs (BBC, 1996), as a fine illustration of the non-linear improvised approach to documentary. I draw conclusions in Chapter 5. Essentially, my argument is that the documentary is both an ethical process and an outcome seeking to record and structure social events, rituals of everyday life, in ways that reflect complexity. But documentary does so in ways which are stated clearly, so as to engage an audience and enable them to make connections of meaning between scenes. Furthermore documentary owes more to qualities found in improvisational drama, variety theatre and early cinema than it does to patterns of classical fictional film narrative. The aim is to engage audiences by combining pleasure with intellectual understanding. Documentaries have the potential to be both illuminating and magical.

CHAPTER 1 Documentary Discourse

> Knowledge, like the ideal-ego figures or objects of desire suggested by the characters of narrative fiction, becomes a source of pleasure that is far from innocent. Who are we that we may know something? Of what does knowledge consist? What we know, and how we use the knowledge we have, are matters of social and ideological significance, Bill Nichols, Representing Reality (1991: 31).

Documentary is an elusive term. At various times its own history, its function in society, its sound-image form, its illusion of reality and its ability to tell the truth have all been discussed and questioned. Just what constitutes a documentary, how it is distinct from fiction films and on what basis one type of documentary differs from another, have been questions central to the documentary discourse. Here are a few definitions. 'A documentary film requires a representation, case or argument about the historical world' (Nichols, 1991: 18). Bill Nichols gives four 'modes of representation' which stand out as the dominant organisational patterns around which most texts are structured: they are expository, observational, interactive and reflexive modes. 'Each mode deploys the resources of narrative and realism differently, making from common ingredients different types of text with distinctive ethical issues, textual structures, and viewer expectations' (Ibid: 32-34). A key question is how to deal with the fact that objectivity is a false god. As Bill Nichols states: 'The notion of any privileged access to a reality that exists "out there", beyond us, is an ideological effect. The sooner we realise all this, the better' (Ibid: 107). His answer is to explore the term subjectivity in documentary, which he sees 'stresses a non-linear, ramifying

world of uncertainty, anxiety, and political ambivalence' (1991: 156). Here documentary subjectivity strengthens the sense of human engagement within the historical world. In the subjective documentary 'great disjunctures of time and space can occur without prompting any sense of disorientation' (Ibid: 157). By 1993, in Theorising Documentary (ed. Michael Renov), Bill Nichols was able to expand his definition of documentary to:

> Documentary suggests fullness and completion, knowledge and fact, explanations of the social world, and its motivating mechanisms. More recently though, documentary has come to suggest incompleteness and uncertainty, recollection and impressive images of the personal worlds and their subjective construction (1993: 174).

This shift was taken yet another step forward when, in 1994 in Blurred Boundaries, Bill Nichols added to his four modes of address, a fifth which he calls the performative documentary. This he sees as a shift in emphasis for documentary: 'this window-like quality of addressing the historical world around us yields to a variable mix of the expressive, poetic, and rhetorical aspects as new dominants' (1994: 94). Others have compared documentary to fiction, as Philip Rosen does:

> Both Hollywood film and the documentary tradition, in their insistence on craft, skill and sequence – in short on aesthetics and meaning – find a function for a specialised elite in the imposition of significance for the spectator by means of the configuration and organisation of documents (1993: 76).

The starting point for Bill Nichols and Philip Rosen lies in the presentation of an argument by using documents. Carl Plantinga takes a different view, seeing non-fiction films as expressive and assertive, and delivered for an audience response:

> By taking an assertive stance toward what they present, the filmmakers cue the spectator to understand and evaluate what is shown as a nonfiction. If we take this definition we do not descend into the confusions raised by notions of objectivity and realism, (1997: 34).

My thesis develops this definition, examining the relationships of process and outcomes, and ideas and purposes, which bring them together.

However, documentary in the UK was seen as a movement of the inter-war years – a bye-gone age – set within the EMB, GPO, and Co-op film units. As a distinct set of films, using a film-based technology, with its own context and mission, the collective output of films formed the documentary movement. The realities of production are described in The Rise and Fall of British Documentary (1975) by Elizabeth Sussex. The Documentary Movement was seen as a cinematic experience opposing the 'repetition of senseless stories revolving round, for the most part, third-rate actors,' (Rotha, 1935: 25). A documentary film was also quite distinct from an instructional film: 'the general knowledge film is wholly suitable to present in illustrative terms the whole world of work, administration and leisure which will confront the child in those awakening years before puberty' (Ibid: 27). Paul Rotha saw documentary as a 'propagandist, social and illuminative instrument' (Ibid: 27).

Finance, Paul Rotha saw, was possible if documentary was for propaganda purposes, with distribution using both theatrical and non-theatrical outlets: 'Above all, documentary must have its roots planted firmly in the soil of facts and necessities. The documentary method of expression must be the voice of the people speaking from the homes and factories and fields of the people' (1935: 113). Paul Rotha here

acknowledges the combination of production, distribution, the role of ideology, and an effective strategy for filming – who and where – which finds resonance today within television. It is the commissioning editors who control and shape non-fiction material set within the economics of the marketplace and in reaction to corporate pressures. The independent producer is left with the task of delivering material which will keep an audience viewing – essentially delivering an entertainment without costly actors and sets. This is the current culture of television documentary and it leads to programmes such as the faked documentary The Connection, about heroin smuggling and made for Carlton Television. Henry Porter in his article in the Independent on Sunday refers to the statement by Paul Corley (ex-Carlton executive): 'documentaries are now regarded as a legitimate part of television's repertoire. Where once the documentary was considered the violet cousin of news, it is now sometimes regarded as having greater pulling power than either drama or light entertainment' (Porter, 1998: 5).

The post-World War Two period saw the rise of television output and the ideas of 'young filmmakers' articulated as 'Free Cinema', films such as O Dreamland (dir. Lindsay Anderson, 1956) and We Are The Lambeth Boys (dir. Karel Reisz, 1959). As Alan Lovell and Jim Hillier note, their main ideas were 'freedom (of expression, and outside the constraints imposed by commercial systems) for the filmmaker; the filmmaker as commentator; and the necessity for "commitment" on the part of the filmmaker' (1972: 136). As Richard M. Barsam notes 'they turned the cameras on ordinary people and everyday life' (1973: 251). It was the ideas of freedom of expression and of the filmmaker as commentator that found their way into television documentaries of the 1960s from the broadcast documentary departments e.g. the

Man Alive strand (BBC), and arts programming such as the Omnibus strand (BBC). Channel Four created the People to People strand, which ran from its start until 1989. My programme John Allin's Hopping was the first to be screened in the series in 1982 and Co-op was screened in the same strand in 1987. Whilst the echo of Paul Rotha's statement of filming people in their communities could still be heard, freedom of expression rather than social comment became the maker's focus. Truth was particularised and local, and history was seen as personally remembered events and attitudes from a variety of participants chosen to tell a particular story allied to a particular theme or social context.

I argue that, contrary to most of the current literature, documentary is best understood as a complex activity binding the maker, the participants, the finished tape – the audio-visual patterns of meaning – and the audience in unique ways. Documentary is essentially a creative process. At the centre of the thesis is the idea that documentary seeks to engage in the chaos and the rituals of everyday life, shaping the sound and images of recorded events and personalities, by using both narrative and non-narrative techniques. The results are tapes of complexity and diversity requiring engagement by the audience. I wish to argue that this not only applies to my own work but also provides insights and a way of assessing across a broad spectrum of nonfiction material. The consequence is to open a debate on documentary which raises questions of audience – their participation – and of the maker – his / her relationship vis-à-vis the subject, the theme, the participants, the production cycle and the audience. Documentary, I consider, is an ethical and democratic process in which all in the chain – participants, maker and viewer – have a claim upon the outcome. In the editing of the tape, sound and image are of equal importance in affecting audience

response.

This is a far cry from the literature of documentary, which jumps around ideas moving through the twentieth century. Realism and truth mix with history, technological development, and so on. Often the arguments developed are difficult to follow. Margaret Dickinson noted, for example, when reviewing Brian Winston's: Claiming the Real, (1995): 'The shift in focus ... is characteristic of a constant tension between chronology and theme, which I found at times made the thread of the argument hard to follow' (Dickinson 1996). I have grouped the various ways of examining documentary under five headings. The first examines documentary in relation to Silent Films made in the USA at the turn of the century, and how one early trajectory of filmmaking aimed to enable the audience to make connections between scenes. Documentary owes much to cinema's historical starting point as an audio-visual (picture with piano or orchestra accompaniment entertainment) set within the context of the variety show. The second, Classification Systems, is the attempt to look at broad categories of output. The third is the critique developed by, amongst others, Brian Winston, based on the status accorded to the photographic image, and the resultant ethical issues, which I call, Not to Tell the Truth. The fourth approach is what I have termed A Matrix System for Documentary. The chief exponent is Carl Plantinga who produces a flexible way of thinking about documentary. Fifthly, I conclude by positing The Maker's Approach, and how this relates back to the possibilities offered by silent cinema, how it relates to the matrix approach, and how finally it suggests the non-linear improvised definition of documentary.

1.1 Documentary and Silent Films

It is the desire to link scenes to themes that makes the contemporary tape different from early silent USA-made films, circa 1904. Yet silent cinema did have a capacity to let the audience create meanings for themselves. Tom Gunning, in his address at the Brighton conference in 1978, noted that the non-continuous style of film he refers to was not only commonplace but took many of its ideas from: 'comic strips, magic lantern slides, popular songs and vaudeville' (Holman, 1982: 220). As far as the vaudeville connection is concerned 'in vaudeville there is no transfer of information from one act to the next. This format encouraged film producers to think of their films as a series of loosely connected turns, rather than a tightly woven narrative' (Ibid: 222). But it is not just this sense of looseness, which marks the connection between silent films and the non-linear approach. It is more the position of the viewer in being able to make connections and hence derive both meaning and pleasure in the process. As an example, Tom Gunning describes a short film, entitled Another Job for the Undertaker:

> The first shot is of a set of a hotel room with a large sign by the gas lamp saying 'do not blow out the gas'. Someone enters and does just that. The second shot is nearly documentary in its style and contrasts with the vaudeville-theatricality of the set and acting in the first shot. It is a street shot of a hearse passing. Again the gap in the action and the change in style of presentation creates a comic discontinuity. Here so much depends on the viewer to make sense of his two rather disparate images (Ibid: 223).

The idea that it is the viewer who engages in making connections runs throughout this thesis, with examples found in the films of Jacques Tati, Hotel and the The Belovs, as well as L'Artiste, Le Fermier et Le Paysage.

1.2 Classification Systems

Understanding documentary as a construct, divided into a number of categories according to specific attributes, was actually proposed by John Grierson – see Grierson on Documentary, edited by Forsyth Hardy (1966: 181). He pointed out a number of styles, which he called – symphonic, analytic and dialectic. The one common factor he saw was that 'they have taken the discursive cinema of the newsreels, the scenics and the interests, and given it shape; and they have done it with material, which the commercial cinema has avoided' (Ibid: 181). What John Grierson offered was an early attempt to see documentary as a construction, the outcome of which was to be set before an audience. In this he located the importance of sound:

> Sound-film is not simply an opportunity of doing what straight plays and magic lantern lectures have already done: it is, in its own right, an opportunity for something individual and different, and imaginatively so (Ibid: 184).

John Grierson's definitions seem surprisingly relevant to this thesis, seeing documentary as a number of sound-image elements, which are cued in for the viewer.

Michael Renov also classifies and, in Theorising Documentary (1993), outlines his 'four fundamental tendencies of documentary', which function as 'modalities of desire, impulsions, which fuel documentary discourse.' They are:

- To record, reveal, or preserve.
- To persuade or promote.
- To analyse or interrogate and
- To express. (Ibid: 22).

Michael Renov notes 1 and 2, but applauds 3 and 4. For example, he says of the function to analyse or interrogate:

> In a culture that valorises consumption – and the disposable culture responsive to that imperative – it may well be crucial for documentarists to consider the stakes of an intervention: to challenge and activate audiences even in the process of instruction or entertainment. In this regard, analysis remains the documentarist's most crucial support (1993: 32).

This does not get us very far. Most documentaries I can think of exhibit something of each of the four qualities, but to separate them at such a level of generality is not useful. The problem of classification systems is that they are rigid, making mixed modes the exception and not the norm. Also, documentary strategies become narrowly defined. For example, narration is referred to as 'voice-of-god commentary' located in the expository mode, rather than as a complicated item with many characteristics and many different uses. A film may be said to be of 'the expository mode' because it has narration, but that narration may be sparse and poetic so that it does not fit this type of documentary concern.

In addition, classification systems are, by their very nature, static whereas the documentary is set within changing financial and cultural contexts. As Carl Plantinga says:

> It is most fruitful to think of nonfiction not in terms of unchanging or universal intrinsic properties, but as a socially constructed category that is fluid and malleable; it changes with history (1997: 37).

1.3 Not To Tell the Truth

A critique of the 1930s Documentary Movement's concern with social purpose forms much of the discussion set forth in the documentary discourse. There are three areas

of concern.

1.3.1 Class Structure of the 1930s

Colin MacArthur, in Television and History (1978), argues that the filmmaker is totally caught up in his or her ideological system and cannot see the world as it really is or as those outside the system see it. Brian Winston has consistently argued through history – a history based on ideas and technology – that documentary has a fundamental flaw, and that is, as Brian Winston in Claiming the Real (1997) proclaims, that the bourgeois context undermines any radical critique offered by the films. He concentrates on Grierson for this attack, offering no insight into the television context of his (Winston's) own day. Truth about working class Britain, he claims, is mediated from the comfort of the EMB (Empire Marketing Board).

1.3.2 Photography as Scientific Evidence

The second argument about truth centres on the word 'document' as evidence. Here, the photographic image within documentary is endowed with the role of carrier of evidence:

> To this day, documentarists cannot readily avoid the scientific because that context is built in to the cinematographic apparatus ... the documentary becomes scientific inscription – evidence (Winston, 1995: 137).

The criticism is that the photographic image cannot claim this. Using John Grierson's term, 'the creative treatment of actuality', as soon as an image is worked upon, you have a contradiction: 'the supposition that any actuality is left after "creative treatment" can now be seen as being at best naïve and at worst a mark of duplicity' (Ibid: 11). Brian Winston's attack on John Grierson develops further:

> The Griersonians worked in a universe which did indeed opportunistically combine ... personal artistic expression and the veneer of social engagements, dramatics (and whimsy) as well as social realism (1995: 55).

This is a reminder that documentaries are paid for, and that the payer (together with the institutional setting) has an enormous effect upon purposes and outcomes. As Carl Plantinga reminds us: 'nonfiction film makes no claim to reproduce the real, but rather makes claims about the real' (1997: 38). Furthermore, 'a nonfiction film doesn't first and foremost "catch" reality; through the assertive stance taken toward its representata, it expresses and implies attitudes and statements about its subject' (Ibid: 38). For Carl Plantinga:

> This emphasis on expression expands the boundaries of mainstream non-fiction to include innovative work not as a violation of the presumed dictates of non-fiction film making, but as work that in its creativity and innovation shows us what the nonfiction film can do at its best, pointing to new means for the exploration of personal, historical, and social issues (Ibid: 38 – 39).

This statement is important in seeing the production of nonfiction as a creative task where stylistic choices depend on the type of material and the maker's intervention and interpretation. For example, in my documentary Co-op (Channel 4, 1987), the problem of understanding the Co-operative Movement's history lay in the fact that much of the written evidence was undertaken by people within the movement as propaganda. The video programme was treated, both in terms of ideas and visually, in such a way as to create an evocation and an evaluation of that propaganda without simply relaying it. In the 1930s, John Grierson's grand idea rested on being an information supplier. He wrote:

> We are no longer concerned just with the cinéastes and the arty-tarty people,

the sort of people in that Sight and Sound ménage. We're concerned with putting the camera and projection into the hands of the doctor-teachers at the most primitive levels. We are concerned with decentralising the means of production, taking the myth out of it, and making documentary film a living tool for the people at grass roots' (cited in Sussex, 1975: 197).

From his position in the establishment this was justifiable. But now control in the media landscape is complex and varied, as are the social groupings. There is neither a single industry nor a single audience. Documentary functions within new definitions and structures of consumerism, production and marketing. These need defining, but in as much as documentary is a televisual form in a competitive marketplace, then it functions to entertain.

Grierson's hope for documentary was twofold; that it would provide information to deprived groups, and that it would act at the local level. The first idea has been overtaken by the ability of satellite and cable to reach world-wide audiences with mass consumer-orientated product. Niche markets have produced material for specialist audiences, for example, medical programmes for doctors. The second idea of its local importance also has the potential for re-validation. But it will not take a form that John Grierson would have foreseen. To the question: Is social purpose dead? Carl Plantinga replies, 'society uses nonfiction films and video for hundreds of purposes – we can no longer think of one as its sole legitimate function' (1997: 29). New forms of communication technologies bring new opportunities. The Internet and CD-ROM material, acting as carriers of ideas expressed through sound and image – sometimes moving – have new socio-economic structures in which to develop. The socio-cultural critique stands outside the maker's need to work. However it is a potent

reminder of the demands of the institutional remit and the power of the institution to set an agenda. The questions raised are reformulated when we come to the vérité output of the 1970s, and now revolve around the issue of ethics.

1.3.3. The Vérité Critique: A Question of Ethics

Brian Winston continues his attack on the scientific 'realist' trajectory moving through anthropological films to the self-effacement film, to direct cinema with its concern, as Winston says, 'to penetrate the private' (1995: 205):

> The victim documentary is Grierson's most potent legacy. Social victims are the realist documentary's staple subject matter into the present (Ibid: 40).

He does have time to comment on the pioneering work in observational documentary of Roger Graef, whose series Space Between Words (1972) and Police (1984) recorded specific events within mainstream institutions. Whilst recognising that the series avoided the 'victim' documentary, Brian Winston nevertheless places Roger Graef with all the others trying to find technological answers to the Grierson problem, and thereby avoiding ethics:

> Fulfilling the technological agenda, which is what direct cinema, cinéma vérité and vérité all did, achieved nothing more than the stark revelation of the persistence of these other more fundamental difficulties ... For instance, ethics (1995: 218).

When Frederick Wiseman argues the case of finding themes within filmed social action and working an editing pattern accordingly, and when Wiseman states that 'documentaries – like plays, novels, poems – are fictional in form and have no measurable social unity' (1994: 6), then Wiseman is ignoring issues of ethics. Again, for Winston, the right to know, in the final analysis, offers flimsy justification for the

costs incurred by the participants.

Roger Graef's achievement was to create insight into the bureaucratic post-holder who held a powerful position. His output is full of improvisational performances, with which we, the audience, can be involved. The timings of recorded meetings lead the viewer into an understanding of the posturing of bureaucrats and invite the viewer into an appraisal of their values, which would have been hidden using journalistic interview techniques. The World in Action strand from Granada is an example that epitomises the journalist's approach to telling factual stories. Each episode was rigorously structured around an opening statement and, through a narration, evidence was presented and a conclusion reached. The role of the audience was to agree. There was no room to consider alternative thoughts or ask if the original question, posed by the narrator, was valid. Roger Graef's success, in comparison, was to work at the level of improvisatory performance in the type of scenes depicted, and their structuring for the viewer.

The concern for letting the camera record the spoken word together with gesture is also what makes Graef's documentaries different from the many other observational documentaries that followed. For example, one locally screened series (Meridian), which followed an ambulance team around the City of Portsmouth was banal precisely because the interviewees and the makers were not free to give of themselves, but were tied to their role and to what their superiors would say. Bringing in the phenomenological paradigm of ideas – basically let people have their say – gets round the problem of ethics when filming institutional life, creating different meanings for different viewing groups. Giving body language and gesture the same

value as the spoken word does much to reveal attitudes and beliefs beyond the institutionally rehearsed, and says much about the power, status and social control mechanisms found in major institutions. Truly, a remarkable achievement for Graef in 1972, and even more in 1984.

I experienced similar insights in the making of Radio, Radio, a 16mm film shot in 1980. When filming the BBC radio professionals at Radio Brighton I adopted a distinctive camera style, filming both the professionals and their 'guests' at very oblique angles. Highlighting the inanity and absurdist nature of their tasks through the editing patterns, I felt that I 'revealed' their posturing, particularly when the station manager articulated that 'this station in order to be impartial had to be slightly to the right – like the town'. Yet in his perception of the finished film, the same station manager was complimentary, since it relayed what he believed. Students of journalism, at an NFT screening, did catch my irony and, unlike the station manager, reacted with incredulity.

By the late 1980s after the wave of vérité films, a sense of gloom for a continuing documentary output was caught by Alan Rosenthal in New Challenges for Documentary (1988). He gives, somewhat surprisingly, the following traditional definition: 'The key function of documentary is to set the agenda and define the most important issues for public debate' (1988: 7) This he says at a time 'when the subjects of documentary seem increasingly hackneyed ... everything appears done' (Ibid: 2). Rosenthal goes on to develop the view that analysis of documentary as construction takes away from this definition based as it is on social purpose:

> The role of documentary, then, is to continue to ask the hard, often disturbing

> questions so pertinent to our age. If documentary can do that, and can do that in a revitalised and more dynamic form, then ... documentary will be able to move confidently into the future (1988: 7).

This was written in 1986, before capitalism, and with it the television industry, was restructured. Looking at the vast factual output on television today, questions of ideological choice seem historically located – before the collapse of the Berlin Wall in 1990. Attendance at seminars at MIPTV (the annual television trade fair) in 1987 and 1991 indicated that television was already rapidly moving from a programme-based industry to the selling of broadcasting space. At the Sunnyside Documentary Festival held in Marseilles in 1995 seminars indicated the right-wing dominance found in the content of the History Channel in the USA, and the need for strong fast paced stories sought by the Discovery Channel for their targeted global audience.

In this environment it is relevant to consider documentary as focussed discourse linked to the film-makers' strategies to entertain, to examine their problematic nature, and to ask questions of the role of audience. This is not to devalue a questioning of value systems, but to think through and identify what and how values are communicated, and to whom and where. The question that arises is, if network television requires only the formularised strand springing from but one ideological starting point, can other ways of viewing material emerge? For me, the local community-based documentary video may be more successful than the earlier portapak attempts of the 1970s, since there is a completely new and different institutional framework, technology and set of funding contexts for this to happen. Regeneration schemes linking local authorities with media centres, arts associations, and higher educational establishments and museums, and the linking of education

with tourism give the possibility of new ways for the documentary idea to re-invent itself. In addition, lower costs, and the increased ease of combining graphic and live action images at the editing stage, may provide the pre-conditions for the social documentary to survive and possibly expand.

The problem of establishing an ethical relationship, posed quite rightly by Brian Winston, is not so restricting if the non-linear approach is adopted, because it places the participant in a long-term relationship with the maker, from the stages of research through to viewing. But the documentarist is more than facilitator. Facilitator, yes, but also script developer and organiser of ideas, i.e. writer / director. Winston seems to have problems with reconciling the idea of empowering participants with the need to deliver an entertainment. When he says: 'this is the ultimate commitment for the post-Grierson documentarist, to transform oneself from creator into facilitator' (1995: 258), he misses the other obligation of the maker, which is to entertain. Elsewhere Brian Winston denounces the boredom generated by the discourse of sobriety, to educate, of the John Grierson tradition. For Brian Winston, Grierson's attempt 'to hide behind science or aesthetics is not just illogical, it is unethical. The documentary needs to break free. In this way, breaking the Griersonian claim on the real brings in a train of liberation from the restrictions of creativity, as the tradition conceived of it, and from the dangerous illusionism of actuality' (Ibid: 258). Concentrating on refuting the pursuit of the scientific claim, Brian Winston acknowledges that the audience is crucial to the validity of the documentary genre: 'Grounding the documentary idea in reception rather than in representation is exactly the way to preserve its validity' (Ibid: 253). But he says nothing of the complex relationship that joins maker, participants and viewer and does not concede that realism is a highly

complex construct.

What is demanded is congruence between the two activities of facilitator and writer / director, and recognition that how events and interviews are structured for an audience is of central concern. On what basis these events and interviews, sounds and images, are played out and cued to an audience is the key starting point of the non-linear improvised approach to documentary. It is a statement, defining documentary in terms of strategies and premises that lead to a depth of understanding and reflection by the audience. Furthermore, and here I agree with Winston, the outcome is contingent upon the ethical process. What documentary is – as a set of manufactured ideological meanings, with its essentially ethical obligations to the participants, and its obligations to its viewers to be offered a pleasurable experience – can more usefully be addressed by attempting to define the dynamics of documentary processes and structures, through the idea of performance, especially improvisation. As William Rothman says,

> Our wish for the world re-created in its own image is itself a wish of "the most primitive type." And in satisfying this wish, the camera is not an instrument of science; it is an instrument of magic (1997: 36).

The absurdist tradition, as I shall discuss later, has a key role to play.

1.4 A Matrix for Documentary

The concentration on the subjective, expressive qualities of documentary seems essential on the grounds suggested above by Bill Nichols. Carl Plantinga develops the point much further and in so doing gives a rejoinder to Brian Winston since he, Plantinga, re-emphasises the assertive and expressive qualities of documentary over

and above the imitative. He says that 'to think of any nonfiction film as a pure copy, or imitation of anything, makes little sense' (Ibid: 40). He also develops an argument that the moving image 'is capable of giving us the same kind of information as if we were there' (Ibid: 53). The key word is informative. Carl Plantinga proposes that, in order to overcome the historical development implied in Nichols's 'modes of address', a typology based on three broad functions and purposes – 'on the degree of narrational authority or its absence' – be defined. These he calls the formal, open, and poetic voices:

> The purpose of the typology is not so much to categorise as to draw attention to some of the major functions of nonfictions and the textual means by which films perform those functions (Ibid: 106).

The three types are seen as categorical, hesitant or explorative with regard to their voice, structuring, and style, thereby determining the viewers' engagement with each: 'To a degree, a film's voice is a determining characteristic, and a film of the formal voice will often use formal structure and style' (Ibid: 192).

The problem is that, as Carl Plantinga admits, these are broad designations. He notes, for example, that open-voice nonfiction films 'have many affinities with the art cinema', and that the poetic voice is 'a broad designation encompassing not only what are generically termed poetic documentaries, but also many avant-garde films, meta-documentaries, and documentary parodies' (1997: 108-109). Again, 'open structure is a limit case, never found in an absolute form in any nonfiction film. It is a goal or a tendency, limited by the fact that a film must have a perspective, and that its discourse implies a way of viewing the world it projects (it has voice)' (Ibid: 135). Although he reasserts nonfiction as being about the states of affairs that occur in the actual world,

and whilst his typology does lead to a useful understanding of the variety of documentary structures, the approach does marginalise questions of nonfiction pleasure and audience. The reasons for audience engagement and the important issues that develop from how and why the relationship documentary processes of social interaction impinge on structural outcomes are also marginalised.

Whilst degrees of assertion by the maker locate narrativity in terms of the nonfiction film, Carl Plantinga still has to account for non-linear choices and he does so in terms of the maker: 'Narrative is but one means of structuring the projected world of the documentary. Nonfictions also use associational, categorical, and rhetorical forms' (Ibid: 120). He cites Fred Wiseman's ending to Hospital as an example: 'The film offers no explicit summing up, but instead a stark, disturbing ending, subject to multiple interpretations' (Ibid: 142). But the ability to understand documentary rests on seeing the centrality of this type of juxtaposition. Yet again a typology pushes it to one corner, in favour of the primacy of narrative form.

The documentary approach has its roots, as will become apparent, in placing its audience in active, intellectual, pleasurable engagement, and it does so through what is most clearly expressed as the non-linear approach to structuring meaning and an improvisational approach to performance. In providing pleasurable moments, documentary delivers on the same basis as some fictional films. The structuring and performance characteristics of the films of Jacques Tati, the way an audience 'surfaces' the scenes and judges the social interactions by making connections, display the same approach as documentary. Whatever the mode, documentary is characterised by believable characters, in free associational juxtaposition of its audio-

visual resources, to obtain audience reaction, involvement and their satisfaction in making judgements.

What I suggest is the need to go beyond a classification system, for whilst nonfiction films have different resources drawn from actual events, low-cost participants and relatively high-cost archive material, it is time to link documentary to the idea of improvised performance. I propose an approach to documentary which places the maker, the resources, the context of production and the viewer in one ethical relationship.

1.5 The Maker's Approach

When Carl Plantinga attempts to liberate documentary from classification systems, he says, 'technique, structure and voice all intermesh in one another' (1997: 147). He continues that the idea of style as the patterns of image, camera movement, lighting design and sound helps to develop the film's perspective. True, but the word 'perspective' is vague. A more useful term is 'theme', which underpins the subject matter, and is a central concept in linking stylistic considerations to the ideas to be communicated, working towards the development of sequencing, creating scene objectives and informing stylistic considerations. Carl Plantinga quotes Noel Caroll:

> "The arresting thing about movies ... is that they reorganise and construct ... actions and events with an economy, legibility, and coherence ... which surpass ... naturally encountered actions and events" (1997: 153).

But complex themes, and their communication, for me, require two contradictory things to happen: the simplicity noted by Noel Caroll above, and the creation of a democratic relationship between participants, maker and viewer – the best of ethical

situations. It is the investigation and realisation of this state of affairs that I call the non-linear improvised approach to documentary. I want to examine the games played out regarding editing decisions from the start of the production process to the viewing context. The maker in this state of affairs undertakes a documentary, creating and delivering choices for the viewer to make and recognise. Dennis Potter, when comparing documentary to drama, articulated an interesting idea when he stated:

> Documentaries don't tell you the truth ... they show you what is there, but don't mediate it through all the truths of all the complications, all the inner subtleties of why this person is like that, why this person is like this. Documentary is simply naturalism, simply observing behaviour, with a voice-over telling you what you're supposed to think (cited in Fuller, 1993: 11).

Potter's statement is what documentary has to respond to, if the term is to mean anything for us. Documentary has an unique opportunity, working with non-actors, to access and communicate the complications, and inner and outer subtleties of human endeavour. So much of television documentary verifies Denis Potter's statement, as Brian Winston notes:

> Unless the form is dictated in terms of a specific time span, the average weekly television documentary frequently leaps from area to area of its subject matter like a startled fawn (Rosenthal, 1988: 25).

This statement, from Brian Winston, is used to defend structure. If I understand him correctly he might summarise his case as – let's get the institutional money (this is the maker's mission), get permission and away we go – and the result is another un-tethered unethical documentary. The problem remains, namely, how to get to the desired ethically structured film, and not be boring? Or, how can we begin to think about the specificity of audience needs?

In most of the literature on documentary there is little discussion of ideas generated from music hall and early cinema with their absurdist traditions; of the participants (including the maker) and their ability to give freely of themselves at the time of filming which is something akin to an improvised performance; of the variety of sound-image resources; or of the identification of meanings working within the audio-visual patterning for the purpose of meeting thematic objectives. All of these have been important factors in my experience of documentary making. In the next chapter, I wish to examine these and the way in which I have chosen to establish what I call the non-linear improvised approach to documentary.

1.6 Summary

Makers, by and large, are concerned to be involved in material of substance and relevance. What is important is to reflect the complexity of social behaviour in simple forms. At issue is the need to be entertaining, and this is rarely explored. My view is that to produce entertaining tapes working with nonfictional resources suggests that the maker has to find ways of engaging the viewer, whilst being ethically consistent with the participants. Furthermore, the maker is responsive to the outside world. Not only that, but so is the commissioning editor who releases the funding money. Both groups are constantly seeking to respond to 'ideas in currency' which refers to social events and attitudes found throughout society. There is indeed a strong and complex link between maker, participants, subject resources, and the context of production and distribution.

My view is that in order to entertain it is necessary to understand the relationship of

the processes of social interactions between maker and participants, the need for performance qualities to be generated by the participants, and the final structuring patterns of the audio-visual recordings. It is necessary to go beyond formalistic, essentially static, analysis or classification, and to understand that documentary is, in the age of digital technology, an authored creative genre.

CHAPTER 2 The Non-Linear Improvised Approach to Documentary

> Gentle breath of yours my sails must fill, or else my project fails, which was to please. Now I want Spirits to enforce, art to enchant ... let your indulgence set me free. Epilogue: Spoken by Prospero. From: The Tempest, by William Shakespeare.

A central issue for filmmakers is the problem of finding a way to express how meaning, or rather a particular set of meanings, is created, by adopting different working assumptions and strategies. Meanings are created within the constant flow of sounds and images. They come and go, but are meaningful for the viewer in so far as they support a central proposition – the theme. The viewer is held in expectation as each cluster of meanings – arranged as scenes – leads from an opening statement, from one scene to the next, in a particular order, to the final scene of closure.

Documentary can be defined in terms of combining two seemingly contradictory ideas, namely narrative and non-linear structures. Narrative, storytelling, is what assures attention by the audience. In a feature film, if all else is failing, such as poor acting, sets or dialogue, it is the plot that stops the audience leaving. In documentary terms it is the sense of narrative discourse that keeps a documentary watchable. Not that documentary requires the pattern of the Hollywood model for narrative, such as an inciting incident, three act structure, climax and resolution and, importantly, a protagonist with a problem to solve. Documentary narrative is more a question of following a set of consequences or logic. The passing of time is often more indirectly suggested. In L'Artiste, Le Fermier et Le Paysage, for example, work and lifestyle

inform the narration: just enough for the audience to feel the documentary is about something, but not so overstated that they become reliant upon this.

Non-linearity develops from the idea that in order not to fall into traps of propaganda or crude persuasion, or over-simplification of a story or human predicament, the maker encourages the viewer to create his or her own judgements and engagements with the tape as it proceeds. The viewer can make connections between sequences, from the maker's predetermined plan. At the same time some of the audio-visual materials wash over the viewer. There are two reasons why this should happen: to deepen understanding and to increase pleasure. The viewer evaluates what is presented and gains pleasure in this activity. Reading the meanings, placed on the 'surface' of the tape, by the use of long shots and close-ups, through gestures, articulations and actions, and making connections between shots or scenes, sounds and images, and then recognising them as meaningful in relation to the overall theme set by the maker, becomes a game to play and enjoy. Some of these meanings are accepted and only fleetingly taken in by the viewer. Yet they add to the overall impression of the film. As a consequence, and unlike the situation found in many previous definitions of documentary, sound elements, such as music, voice-overs, effects and atmospheric tracks, are valued equally with the image. As Michel Chion says: 'If we want to receive a message, we mustn't above all acknowledge it nor show we have picked it up, for when that happens, mysteriously enough – but that is how it is – communication breaks down' (1987: 146). One way to communicate, Michel Chion argues, is continually to chop up the elements, so that the audience continues being involved in terms of working out the overall intent. At the same time each image and sound offers both a physical enjoyment and a point of recognition and

signification.

This is to argue an approach to documentary founded on a set of premises quite opposite from the standard Hollywood model addressed by Robert McKee in Story (1998). Typically, in the Hollywood model – what McKee calls 'classical design' – an inciting incident presents the protagonist with a set of obstacles to solve or overcome. Much of the fictional film's time and interest, generated within the second of three 'acts', is concerned with the protagonist recognising his aim but not his needs, until the plot reaches its climax and resolution when the protagonist may get what he needs but not what he wants. He may not get the girl, but is the better man for it! What is of note is how Robert McKee defines both a classical story and its alternatives. For McKee, storytelling has a set of elements which combine in particular ways 'to create a triangle of possibilities that maps the universe of stories' (1998: 44). At each point of the triangle lie very different solutions to storytelling. He describes them as classical design, mini-plot and anti-plot. These latter two are a reaction to the first, which he describes as:

> A story built around an active protagonist who struggles against primarily external forces of antagonism to pursue his or her desire, through continuous time, within a consistent and causally connected fictional reality, to a closed ending of absolute, irreversible change (Ibid: 45).

The 'classical design', set at the apex of this triangulation, is similar to the objective, narrated, journalistic approach found in documentary. The triangle focuses on the individual, dis-equilibrium, continuity of time, place, and the importance of knowing your controlling idea or theme. Like its journalistic counterpart, Robert McKee's classical narrative is driven in one direction. Conflict rather than chaos, realist

characters rather than lines of characterisation, all of which are carefully plotted in advance of production. The purpose of all this as Robert McKee understands is to create empathy:

> Through empathy, the vicarious linking of ourselves to a fictional human being, we test and stretch our humanity. The gift of story is the opportunity to live lives beyond our own, to desire and struggle in a myriad of worlds and times, at all the various depths of our being (1998: 142).

The central question to ask is whether empathy is sufficient for documentary. For documentary, empathy does help to bring recognition of the participant's predicament to the viewer. But the non-linear improvised documentary also aims to place that empathy in relation to a self-made intellectual assessment and reflection – a process of 'mulling-over'.

In developing the idea of the non-linear improvised documentary another key idea in Robert McKee's analysis of narrative is useful. Robert McKee develops the idea of theme, which he defines as 'a sentence that expresses the story's irreducible meaning.' He elaborates further:

> I prefer the phrase Controlling Idea, for like theme, it names a story's root or central idea, but it also implies function: The Controlling Idea shapes the writer's strategic choices... A controlling idea may be expressed in a single sentence describing how and why life undergoes change from one condition of existence at the beginning to another at the end ... The Controlling Idea has two components: Value plus Cause (Ibid: 115).

This concept is a vital and often undervalued part of the documentary make-up. It provides a key to decision making from shooting to post-production. If the maker has

a sense of a controlling idea, this becomes a useful concept in deciding what to film and how to create the 'look' of each scene – all the decisions regarding camera position, composition, sound placement and audio visual editing pattern.

But in order for the audience to work things out for themselves, we need, additionally, an understanding of how to build open-ended structures, and how to develop spontaneous performances from non-actors. The non-linear approach to narrative functions differently from Hollywood narrative with its demand for fast-paced action, hierarchy and individualism. If the aim of documentary is to illuminate social activity, past or present, and to give pleasure through the viewer playing a game of engagement, and the pleasure of cogitation and assessment, and I suggest it is, then applying the Hollywood model is inappropriate. For it is the chance events or actions that happen during the shooting stage, and which intercede with the main meaning, that are of central relevance in the constant search to cue in and enrich meanings as set forth in the tape. Social life is more random and haphazard, and happens less on the basis of individual conflict, than with individuals working within institutions. Documentary has the potential to create dramatic stories less in terms of individual psychology but more as a set of observed rituals where individuals are characterised in quite different ways. We, the makers, film within this social world. If the documentary maker's aim is to illuminate this world then the main tasks become how we think out and develop themes, and what relationship we develop for the viewer with the text. In fact, in the non-linear documentary the controlling idea is not singular, but consists of a cluster of inter-related ideas.

Documentary is at its most effective when it adds meanings to the main theme or key

scene objective. Take a standard documentary, Crossing the Line, (BBC 2 –20.5.98) as an example. Peter Sissons appears on screen within a prison setting. Conditions are barbaric. We are shown the smallness of the cells in which four people live for most of the time. But two other ideas develop. Firstly, the immediacy and ordinariness of the prison itself, filmed in video, allowing us to observe the inmates who look surprisingly bright and cheerful in tee shirts as the journalist walks through the prison courtyard with the Red Cross worker. Secondly, there is the presence of the journalist on screen and his descriptions which begin with the condition of the toilets, a very British counter-point brought to bear on the situation. These are the details, containing many moments of meaning, which we as viewers engage in, in addition to the overall narrative development of how far the Red Cross can or cannot help in such situations.

Non-linearity is about enabling the viewer to access and connect moments of meaning generated within the audio-visual flow. It also recognises that people observed and interviewed are participating in the filming for their own reasons. When Edward Branigan argues that authority in classical documentary starts with the higher levels of narration, such as personal accounts from participants and from voice-over commentary, Branigan compares nonfiction to fiction in the following manner:

> Thus the status of what we see in a fiction is initially tentative and contingent and its definition will depend upon our faith in an implied author that must be created by us; whereas in nonfiction we begin with an explicit mechanism of production and then attempt to build a faith in the accuracy of the results (1992: 205).

What the non-linear improvised approach additionally, and essentially, addresses is the quality of the relationship between participants, maker and viewers and the quality

of the audio-visual pattern has upon the viewing experience. In order to understand the non-linear improvised approach to documentary, I argue that it is necessary to make comparisons with other dramatic forms, drawing out crucial premises upon which they are based, and which aid our understanding of the documentary genre. These are:

- Firstly, the Absurdist Tradition (section 2.1), and here I draw upon the films of Jacques Tati to illustrate the premises.
- Secondly, Improvised Performance – both as a process and outcome (section 2.3).
- Thirdly, the communication developed by the Variety or Music Hall Artist (section 2.4).

2.1 The Absurdist Tradition

There is a tradition that, within the context of theatrical performance, dramatic production and its purpose gets reassessed from one generation to another. Whilst this is difficult for documentary makers to undertake, reliant as they are on the direct commissioning process of a capitalist corporation, constant re-assessment has led, in theatre, to innovation and a new articulation of purposes. One type of articulation, found in the writings on the Theatre of the Absurd, becomes a key to understanding documentary. Here the purpose is to deepen meaning and reflection on the human condition. Martin Esslin illustrates these deeper levels of meaning by quoting, amongst others, Antonin Artaud: 'Behind the poetry of the texts, there is the actual poetry, without form and without text' (1980: 384). This is an important point for documentary, which also seeks to enter the internal world of the participants. The questions raised by the Theatre of the Absurd are the same as those of documentary. Martin Esslin makes the point succinctly:

> How does this individual feel when confronted with the human situation? What is the basic mood in which he faces the world? What does it feel like to be he? And the answer is a single total, but complex and contradictory poetic image (1980: 405).

The key question posed by this line of thinking, for both the Theatre of the Absurd and documentary, is how to arrive at a strategy to manipulate sound and images to articulate this complex level of meaning. The answer is in the form of surface reading by a cued-up 'ready to go surfing' viewer. Martin Esslin again:

> To convert our perception into conceptual terms, into logical thought and language, we perform an operation analogous to that of the scanner that analyses the picture in a television camera into rows of single impulses. The poetic image, with its ambiguity and its simultaneous evocation of multiple elements of sense association, is one of the methods by which we can, however imperfectly, communicate the reality of our intuition of the world (Ibid: 405).

This absurdist line of thinking applies to scenes within L'Artiste, Le Fermier et Le Paysage, Hotel, and The Belovs discussed later but can now clearly be demonstrated by the films of Jacques Tati. I wish to develop three propositions by reference to Tati's work, which begin to define the non-linear approach to documentary. But before I do that I will set out a brief introduction to the films of Jacques Tati.

Jacques Tati, mime artist and filmmaker, made five feature films between 1946 and his death in 1982. They perfectly express the non-linear approach as applied to feature films. His theme – humans pitted against encroaching consumerism or corporate efficiency – allows him to depict his characters with empathy. All the

characters have the potential for generating unexpected consequences, which develop through a succession of 'gags'. Highly worked out, they produce a run of happenings based on a single idea, which produces scenes of differing lengths and, when put together, produce the Tati film. Wayward by Hollywood assumptions, these films are very humorous, have a point, and show that, as in a Samuel Beckett script, humans constantly search for order in the daily chaos by creating rituals out of daily life. In dignity, humour develops, and is applied to characters of any nation, social background, age or occupation. In fact, Tati marks the onward march of capitalism from Jour de Fête and Les Vacances de M. Hulot, to the consumerism found in Mon Oncle, to the darker film of Playtime and the realist Trafic. Nothing much happens overall in a Tati film. In Mon Oncle a father does 'find' his son. But most people wander about reacting in the confusion. A holiday ends in Les Vacances de M. Hulot, nothing is resolvable, as in Trafic where Hulot arrives as the motor-show finishes. It is the journey through time and location that is important.

It is within this context that Tati develops scenes. His technique, highly methodical, is to work and re-work gags – silent gestures and movements towards a point of quiet closure. Indeed, a constant re-working, whether this refers to the creation of the colour print and sound track re-mix of Jour de Fête, or the addition of scenes, as in Les Vacances de M. Hulot, likewise marks the films. His films are democratic, as he allows the other characters centre stage. As Michel Chion says of Tati:

> In his non-dramatised and loitering cinema, in a general shot, which he makes his own, Tati can spread out the signs, gags and characters over the surface of the screen without hierarchy (1997: 29).

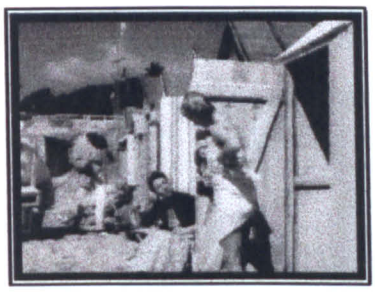
What we understand by non-linear narrative is the ability to move around a subject, to

permit the audience to engage with it from its variety of viewpoints, so it is they who make the meaningful connections. This is precisely Tati's mission. Michel Chion, referring to Noel Burch makes the point:

> Noel Burch has wonderfully described the non-linearity of "primitive" cinema by showing us how the spectator was given time to explore the scene like a surface, thanks to the directors' technique of filming in general shot, and swarming the screen with detail, prevalent in this kind of cinema, and also thanks to what he called the autarky of shots in relation to others. Tati is among the rare writers of the talkies to have taken up again with this way of depicting reality (1997: 28).

And so it is with documentary, time is indeed passing but it need not be made totally explicit. This attitude allows the documentarist to change direction and move to a scene which was not expected. Jacques Tati's inspiring delivery which extends and links 'beats' – moments of meaning – to the whole structure is also a key to a definition of non-linear narrative. How Tati handles the beats of a gag defines a scene. Each scene develops the narrative but it also, and as importantly, multiplies meanings through the system of beats, so that the spectator is given choice. Jacques Tati is evasive: his characters are silhouettes, Hulot talks but we rarely hear him, he mingles with the winds, as in his entrance in Les Vacances de M. Hulot, the spoken lines are never direct, anything gross or direct like sex is obliquely hinted at, never made explicit. Jacques Tati's five feature films each exhibit different qualities. Yet they have in common a search for a democratic cinema where audiences are expected to be a central, active, intelligent part in the proceedings, where artistic expression is found within the frame, the composition, and where comic invention is potentially within us

The Photography Gag Scene



Beat 1

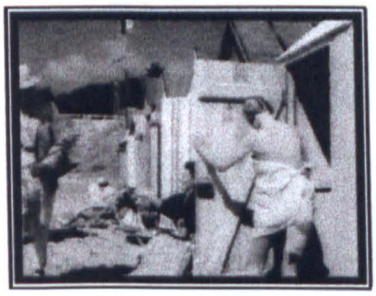
Young woman exits beach hut. Hulot enters upstage briskly with head down.
Woman fixes towel at back then

Beat 2

Young woman hands over wet swimming costume to woman who is seated. At that moment Hulot's pace slows and he looks towards them.

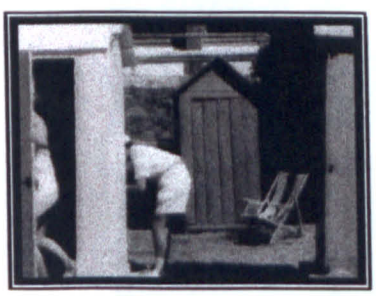
Beat 3

And Hulot looks down again



Beat 4

Hulot looks up again and young woman goes back into hut.



Beat 5

We, the audience, see a man bending over as if he is spying on the woman – in advance of Hulot.

Beat 6

Hulot recognises the same situation.

Beat 7

Hulot takes action.

Beat 8

It appears that Hulot kicks man. There is the thud sound of the kick.

In fact the man is taking a family photograph.

Hulot exits with considerable grace.

The man is angry.

Beat 9

Hulot stopped by woman.

Her speech is barely audible: What a delightful sight, isn't it, Monsieur? I was just admiring the sea: these rocks, these little white sails, everything is so pretty. What is it over there, it's somebody swimming, isn't it? Do you see, over there, in that direction? For me holidays at the seaside are very pleasant and restful. Unfortunately it is a bit windy, isn't it, so difficult to keep one's hair nice, don't you think?

Girl V/O: Mummy come and have your picture taken with me.

Another man: Is your camera all right?

Beat 10

Man with camera enters looking for Hulot.

Hulot runs off behind hut.

Beat 11

Camera tracks backward. Man with camera looks perplexed. At the same time Hulot reappears running in background from where he originally came.

Beat 12

Man with camera turns upon 'weedy' looking man who is cleaning his feet in front of next door beach hut.

Beat 13

Man with camera stalks 'weedy' man (known from previous scenes) who takes fright at this intimidation.

Beat 14

Man with camera looks into hut. Compared to the previous situation of man looking at woman in hut, this time a man really is looking into a hut at the 'weedy' man!

all. This democratic approach is applicable to documentary enabling the viewer to make sense of the happenings depicted.

2.2 Developing Three Premises of Non-linearity for Documentary

1. The Theme as a Cluster of Ideas (Diffusion)

The first premise is based on the idea of a general narrative advancement creating the possibility of developing a scene, which plays to the main theme, but also adds to it in unexpected ways. In fact, theme is, less about a single idea as suggested by Robert McKee earlier, than a cluster of inter-related ideas and feelings which form a unity and can happen within any one scene. In his film Les Vacances de M. Hulot (1952), we see Hulot in retreat from a previous incident. He passes a group undertaking exercise. Hulot interrupts their instructor. The group are left suspended by the lack of another blowing of the whistle in a bent position for what seems like forever. The whistle blows again and Hulot then runs along a line of beach huts – see previous pages, The Photography Gag Scene. The following action takes place: Hulot moves down the line of huts (Beats 1 –3); then the photography gag happens with the man taking a family photograph – mistaken intention by Hulot (Beat 8). Hulot retreats up the same line of huts, and is interrupted by a woman declaiming the virtues of the holiday to Hulot (Beat 9). Then, and to a final point of closure of the scene, the man set upon by Hulot, in his turn, sets upon a weed of a man, who retreats into a hut to escape a menacing stare (Beats 12 – 14). Hulot by this time is no longer in shot. It is the daftness and grace of every action, and every sound, which accumulates meaning. Hulot listens politely to the lady by the beach hut. Her voice is heard as a litany of what Michel Chion has described as sound burps (Beat 9). Language is transformed into poetry. In the organisation of the image and sounds we remember where people

are, both their physical location – on the beach and in the film set – and with their individual thinking – their hopes, ambitions and dreams. Plot is replaced with a general advancement of the themes surrounding taking a holiday – such as companionship, loneliness, family, gender roles, sexuality and isolation, played against comic interruption to produce feelings of warmth and togetherness. The kicking of the photographer is the central gag but the scene continues to reverse the situation of mistaken identity and of the male-female innuendo which is replaced with a male-to-male situation as the 'weedy man' ends up in a hut as the photographer peers inside. This is what actually happens, in opposition to the appearance of the earlier situation with the photographer, who is thought wrongly to be looking inside a hut at a woman. Meanwhile Tati's encounter with the woman in a world of her own produces another meaning, whilst the sound of distant voices suggests other worlds and Hulot's retreat marks Hulot's character. The whole scene lasts ninety seconds and positively bursts with meanings and feelings, which we accumulate as we meet the characters again in other scenes.

Documentary narrative, likewise, needs to be diffuse if the aim is to communicate effectively and with depth. The viewer needs to be placed in the position to cogitate, if he / she is to make judgements, and receive sensations, and not have them imposed.

2. Sound-Image Patterns (Variation, Deviation and Contradiction)

The second premise of non-linearity is concerned with the patterning of sound-image within scenes, which works so that the viewer asks what is happening. Tati constantly demonstrates that repetitions and variations of actions, withholding the obvious conclusion, have immense effect upon the spectator. Martin Esslin sums up the

situation:

> In the Theatre of the Absurd, the audience is confronted with actions that lack apparent motivation ... anything may happen next... The relevant question here is not so much what is going to happen next but what is happening? ... This constitutes a different, but by no means less valid, kind of dramatic suspense. Instead of being provided with a solution, the spectator is challenged to formulate the questions that he will have to ask if he wants to understand the meaning of the play. The total action of the play, instead of proceeding from point A to point B, as in other dramatic conventions, gradually builds up the complex pattern of the poetic image that the play expresses. The spectator's suspense consists in waiting for the gradual completion of the patterns, which will enable him to see the image as a whole. And only when that image is assembled – after the final curtain – can he begin to explore not so much its meaning as its structure, texture and impact (Esslin 1980: 416).

This is extremely important to the non-linear documentary, where there is huge pleasure to be generated for the viewer who looks into a recorded scene, surveying and making relationships within the image and between sound and image and between shots. This process works at several levels. We can recognise characters from previous scenes, we can recognise actions, events and rituals, enjoy the tapestry of sounds and images and we can recognise the value of the ideas imparted, connecting these to others located in different scenes.

The Theatre of the Absurd searches to create a vacuum so that the audience is compelled to experience something itself. And why do this? Martin Esslin explains:

> It is more than a mere intellectual exercise; it has therapeutic effect. In the

PLAYTIME - from royal garden restaurant scene

1. **Duration**: 6"

Waiter with a torn jacket. He is standing in foreground.

Track forward.

2. 22"

Guest seated (the German salesman): Come here, come here (said in drunken manner)

Woman slaps the salesman as she drinks and exits left.

Waiter brings ice bucket – manager mops brow and knows it is not ice.

American(A) asks manager to drink: Here a drink, no! Manager leaves.

A: The chef de decoration – come here. Man in overalls appears.

A slaps salesman on back, all raise glasses.

3. 4"

Dance floor (pillar in foreground)

N.B. establishes dancing. French singer (FS) goes to piano on stage.

4. 47"

American man (A) seen in middle of shot. Female singer (FS) standing by piano.

Heroine (F) playing at piano. F: Is that it?
FS: You are too young – grand success, comme ça. FS shows notes to play. A intervenes singing: Paris…

Man with beard strolls through the scene left to right.

FS looks around at group who are animated.

5. 34"

Camera tracks towards table.

Manager pours drink.

Man with beard walks through shot.

A talks to waiter. F at piano seen in background. A points to waiter's dirty outfit.

Hulot brings in plate and sets on table. A (to Hulot): Go on out.

All raise glasses. Waiter: Santé. A brushes hair from behind man seated.

A: Just a minute. Guests get up and leave A.

6. 9"
Return to shot of singer with American (A) behind in mid perspective on left of frame (creating an uncomfortable cut).

Singer moves to reveal A: Partner, I'm going to make a big change to everything.

7. 22"
N.B. Another jarring cut.

A: That's great! We are going take it to San Francisco.

Waiter leaves hatch with food tray.

A knocks on hatch: There he is (interrupted by drinks waiter who rushes through left to right). A continues: You're going to be Napoleon. The Emperor of French cuisine. Da, Da, Da, Da, Da. (sound as per a trumpet). Waiter arrives.

8. 26"

Hulot tripped up by man exiting doorway but who goes back in.

F laughs at Hulot who offers drink.

Hulot: play.

9. 16"
Dancers are in foreground.

Sound: the humming of singer.

Hulot moves from piano to off screen.

10. 20"
Man without beard wanders through shot

Hulot with drunk at column (Plan de Paris gag (part 1).

Hulot wanders off.

Waiter walks through then changes direction; Hulot returns on same line.

11. 23"
Plan de Paris gag. Hulot: Go to St. Germain, then to the right, you go down. Man with guitar walks past in background.

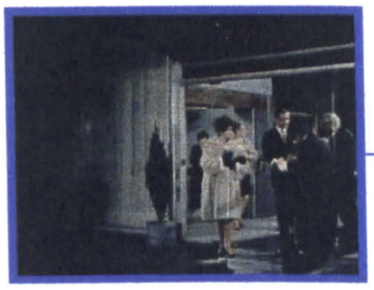
Singing track increases in level.

Man falls off bar stool in background. Hulot leaves shot to help.

12. 15"

Drunk placed in up-turned bar stool and returned to bar.

Man in jacket wanders through shot.



13. 21"

English couple leave.

Woman: I absolutely adore dancing. (door handle gag) – singing: Paris, Paris …

Door handle for belated tip gag.

Young couple enter.

14. 19"

Drunk studies map gag.

Waiter laughs as passes.

Waiter with broken jacket passes, stops and stares.

15. 57"

American gets clients (including 'fat' tourist seen in earlier scenes) and himself 'going'. Man from shot 11 seen playing guitar.

American on his own gets cigarette tray and throws packets.

Customer in foreground writes out cheque (very mannered). Hulot walks through dance floor passing leaving couple. Hulot returns with female.
A puts down tray, moves to man writing cheque: Hey, I'll take care of that. It is my treat. A then does an odd dance.

16. 52"

Waiter comes out, yawns and goes back in.
Couple depart. Man stays outside as woman goes in to collect coat.
Others arrive and one gives him a tip.
Man calls over to doorman: This is not for me.
Doorman with handle places handle where door is and ushers another man through. Hulot and female arrive. He goes to doorway and collides with small man – the doorman has imaginary door closed. Doorman opens 'door' and Hulot goes through.
All come out of cloakroom.
Track back to main entrance.
Drunk leaves ahead of couple.
Track stops outside as Hulot and female leave.
Equilibrium has been restored.

> Theatre of the Absurd, the spectator is confronted with the sadness of the human condition ... Stripped of illusions and vaguely felt fears and anxieties, he can face this situation consciously ... By seeing his anxieties formulised he can liberate himself from them (1980: 414).

Tati's sequence in Playtime at the Royal Garden Restaurant works at this level – See the analysis of a section of the Royal Garden Restaurant Scene from Playtime on the previous pages. The spectator is forced to accept the comedy of disasters as the architect goes around the restaurant, on opening night, as his designs begin to produce chaos. Within this chaos, the loud American tries to create an inner sanctum of a bistro (shots 1 – 9, and 15). But it is forced laughter – it is not authentic – it is a falsehood. Whilst there are 'good' things happening, such as the heroine playing the piano, we are confronted by both the chaos of consumer lifestyles and false bonhomie. We grow tired of the American's good humour. It is gross, misused and drawn too large. But true to Tati and the absurdist assumptions stated by Martin Esslin above, we, as viewers of the spectacle, feel sad at the situation rather than sad at the expense of the American. In fact this state of cognition intermingles with comic invention and timing. Some viewers may assume, after the creation of the inner café, that the subsequent events are hollow, containing nothing like the warmth Tati bestows on the café in Mon Oncle. This is despite many funny gags emanating from the waiters. On the previous pages I have chosen sixteen shots from the Royal Garden Restaurant Scene which illustrate how Tati created this ambiguity for the audience to perceive and feel. All of the following items are cinematic decisions taken for this singular effect – the type of framing, enhanced by the use of 70mm film, the editing which is often deliberately jarring, the use of characters who interrupt the action by walking through shot, the isolation of the American character, the perceived

inebriation of most on screen, and the interactions between waiters and clients.

Jacques Rivette sums up Playtime as a revolutionary film, and his comments resonate with the idea of the non-linear improvised documentary:

> I think Playtime is a revolutionary film, in spite of Tati. In films ... what is important is ... the point where it (the film) becomes the discourse of someone or something else, which cannot be said precisely because it is beyond expression. And I think you can only get there by trying to be as passive as possible at all the various stages, never intervening on one's own behalf but rather on behalf of this something else which is nameless (Jacques Rivette in Jim Hillier (ed.), 1986: 319).

This is the first time Tati makes clear his opposition to the consequences of efficiency and modernity through his characters. In Mon Oncle we do not dislike M. and Mme. Arpel, but in Playtime Tati has created our dislike for the rich clients of the restaurant. But it may also be that what Tati has done is to give the viewer a set of vectors, each of which does not come into contact with the others. By the editing pattern, a system of drunken encounters plays against the inner bistro created by the American, whilst the waiters move in-between. Three separate worlds are created, four if the young who wander in as if by chance are included. This complex arrangement gives rise to a set of feelings, and it is up to the viewer to make sense of them, to experience the different moods they create and also to incorporate the repetitions, both within this long scene, and in other references in the film. Within the few chosen shots are variations on drunkenness (shots 2, 4, 5, 12); and the waiter who, left with damaged clothes, is seen lost (shot 13). All these have counter-parts elsewhere in the film. For example, glass doors obsess Jacques Tati. After several 'gags' about the main door, he chooses to end the scene as Hulot collides with another man entering a non-existent

door. In general, and in this part of the scene, these actions are all played against the American with his plans to set up an instant bistro chain, yet who pays the stranger's bill (shot 15).

The above illustrates the point that it is the building of actions through variations, deviations or contradictions on a theme that is relevant to the non-linear improvised documentary. These variations can be generated by different directorial strategies such as composition, editing and juxtaposition of performance. The length of each shot is also important. The shots under discussion build up a system of variations which deepen understanding and the viewer's relationship with the total meaning communicated. It is the total coherence of meanings created by a definite pattern of audio-visual flow which places the viewer in this role of surveyor of what is happening. In the second, through the allowance of extra beats or meanings, we gain a slight distancing effect, which alters the viewer's assessment considerably. Documentary can have the same therapeutic effect. Often the resultant effect can be expressed as that sentiment, which says – I recognise fully this human being and these social interrelationships, even though they are not within my experience. The question for the maker is what particular audio-visual designs or editing patterns can he or she invent, for this particular project, so that this may happen for the viewer. This brings me to the third premise.

3. Moments of Meaning – Beats

The third premise is the concern with moments in time that produce a specific point of meaning in the collision of sound – and image – producing textures and impacts. In The Theatre of the Absurd, Martin Esslin notes:

> The element of 'pure', abstract theatre in the Theatre of the Absurd is an

Paving Stone Gag Scene

Beat 1.

M. Arpel: Come, come over here.
This is my brother in law.

Beat 2.

Tati business

Beat 3.

Man: M. Pichard.

Beat 4.

Tati business

Beat 4
Continued.

Beat 5.
Tati looks lost for a moment.
Man: And so M. Pichard let me tell you what I am driving at.
Tati finds them, then they walk upstage
Man: My brother needs an opportunity…

Beat 6.

Tati overtakes them
Man: something to get his teeth into.

Beat 7.

And as Tati looks towards them

Man: See what I mean.

Beat
8.
Hulot
tries
again.

Beat 9.

Tati is about to repeat the walk up but the scene is finished and the sound of the next scene takes over.

aspect of its anti-literary attitude, its turning away from language as an instrument for expression of the deepest levels of meaning (1980: 328).

Jacques Tati clearly understood the writing of beats, or moments of meaning, even within the simplest of scenes. The beats created in the Paving Stone Scene, from the film Mon Oncle, see previous page, illustrate the point. The beats in this scene help develop both narrative and theme. At one level, the scene conveys a simple plot line (Hulot must be given work), but by a carefully resolved orchestration of sound and image it resonates much more meaning (Hulot wants to be an insider). What is presented is the simplest of set-ups, or so it first appears. In this 38-second scene there are nine points of meaning or 'beats'. Whilst they are generated in the first place by Tati's visual statements, they are as much an outcome of the interplay of three sound tracks and the image, which uses perspective, to create the beats. The sound track consists of the voice of M. Arpel and his business associate, the sound of walking footsteps, and the atmospheric off-screen track of the women guests talking. These constantly and consistently work with and for the flow of energy emanating from Hulot. The scene marks a plot development – Hulot must improve himself – but this is covered by the resonance of typical Tati inventions. First is the comic action as he advances towards Arpel and Pichard steadfastly keeping on the paving. Secondly is the moment, literally a moment, when Hulot thinks they have disappeared. Thirdly there is the engaging eagerness to be part of their conversation from which they steadfastly exclude him – as if he was not there. Finally there is the turn in direction the group makes at the top of the paving and again at the bottom. Sound complements these visual Tati motifs: firstly the women heard talking quite distinctly but not distinguishable, secondly the heightened sound of footsteps. All these are known from previous scenes that state the Tati world. We, as audience, are party to and engage in

the recognition and enjoy the scene. Thirty-eight seconds for a plot line but nine beats that resonate across the scene. As Michel Chion remarks:

> For Tati, a gag has to manage by itself, in a limited time, and prove its worth and be enjoyed. This is a peculiar bias, which presupposes a constant disinvestment and reinvestment of reality from which you have to detach and to which you have to reattach yourself without stopping (1987: 27).

Jacques Tati develops 'beats' in any number of ways: through alternations in the viewer's visual perspective or through sound perspective. All are there for a purpose, which is to function to develop ideas which we, the audience, have to 'cash in'. Tati, the maker, allows us to make the connections at our will. His films leave an impression and an overall emotional feeling. We do not quite know why at the time. It does not matter. We have gained from the Tati experience. Different sections of a cinema audience can react differently to individual gags, to clusters of gags, or in recognising the various themes he is developing. This ability to communicate at different levels with different people is at the centre of the non-linear narrative approach. The point about the gags is that they already allude to a number of meanings. But it is when a number of gags are put together by a spectator in the audience that meanings begin to multiply and give pleasure that goes beyond that obtainable from the story-line.

Documentaries also have many types of sound and images to use to create understanding. As we shall see, for me, the long shot, the interview, and scenes developed without the central or supporting characters are crucial devices used to develop meanings within L'Artiste, Le Fermier, et Le Paysage. Furthermore, the

engagement by the audience suggests the importance of beginnings in documentary to cue in the viewer's subsequent way of viewing, and of choosing and connecting to specific moments – that is surface reading. Also an audience, in my experience, needs to be given a conclusion hence the importance of endings, with a need within the viewing context to experience a feeling of closure.

For the non-linear improvisatory documentary, detour provides understanding in depth. I examine this idea later when analysing L'Artiste, Le Fermier et Le Paysage, Hotel and The Belovs. The maker creates sound-image juxtapositions to produce specific sets of beats of meaning, so that it becomes a game for the audience to make connections, or experience pleasure at the recognition of structures, atmospheres and textures, which linger on after the tape is finished. As a consequence, narrative becomes more diffuse, bounded more by a sense of time passing than by resolutions of questions. The non-linear improvised documentary has a central concern with sound-image structures and patterns that are constructed to give the viewer the opportunity to survey the entire surface of the programme and make connections between meanings. It is also a concern to set this aim within a narrative form, so that the viewer maintains a constant engagement with the programme's overall discourse. The value of this approach is that it closely reflects the realities of the complex exchanges in developing ideas as the programme is researched and produced, which, importantly, are reflected in the final tape. Essentially the documentary form is unique in its potential for spontaneity, for ideas that can develop over time, for reaction and reorganisation within editing, and for the fact they need only be 'cashed in' at the end. Documentary making is a very flexible complicated task leading to one clear outcome.

One consequence of the non-linear improvised documentary approach is in relation to how the audience reacts, and with assumptions about how it reacts, either as a total group, within sub-groups or even as a set of individuals. How individuals react to material is very important indeed. It seems absurd to consider them solely in terms of a consumer category, and to deliver assumed excitements of content and pacing around a strong story or exposition. This reduces the documentary to the formulistic, which in the end can only be abandoned by the viewer as tedious. Communication continues for an audience in as much as sub-groups or individuals recognise different ideas, and react accordingly. This proposition is explored later in relation to one special screening of L'Artiste, Le Fermier et Le Paysage.

Non-linearity echoes the new technological output, in the form of the CD-ROM, to empower the user to access audio-visual source materials. Here the individual user has the ability to roam through a vast amount of defined material and put together information. The multimedia museum exhibition and theme park are now a contemporary context for the nonfictional visitor 'experience'. The visitor is given a sensational experience with an informative intent. In all cases non-linearity is linked to an organised central idea. Above all else, the non-linear documentary welcomes complexity, working towards seemingly simple solutions enriched by designs to involve the viewer in new ways. The relationship of maker – subject matter – participants – process – audience is seen as both complex and problematic. I now wish to discuss the relevance of seeing improvised performance as a further key concept and device for documentary.

2.3 Documentary as Improvised Performance

If carefully planned structures, which enable the audience to join in, cogitate and assess for themselves, are one major element in the non-linear approach, a second element is the recognition of the equally carefully planned, improvisational qualities of documentary. Most discourse has addressed documentary in terms of its equivalence to Hollywood narrative structures – of the protagonist with a problem to resolve. Brian Winston goes into detail of Flaherty's editing of 17,000 feet of rushes to seek out the narrative plot: 'Understanding not just how to manipulate his everyday material, but also what dramatic necessity imposed on that manipulation, is the essence of Flaherty's contribution' (1995: 103). Bill Nichols points out the role of character in documentary in providing access to psychological integrity: 'characters are the agents whereby narrative structure gains coherence and completion etc' (1991: 244). This constant reference to Hollywood misses what should be the over-riding concern of the documentary maker to keep structural options open for as long as possible, and, to provide spontaneous interview material. In the first case, documentaries are made to a schedule and a set of deadlines and budgetary constraints. In as much as this governs content and theme, the concern with complexity suggests the validity of the logic of the open-ended approach. Keeping a look out during shooting for the relevant new scene is a key activity of the conscientious documentary maker. In the second case, documentary relies heavily on what commissioning editors refer to as 'televisual characters'. What is meant by this phrase is that people – individuals – filmed in activities and in interview, have an engaging screen presence. This is not an uncontrived circumstance; on the contrary it is worked for and this process will now be examined.

Lecoq, a key figure in improvisation theatre, sees, according to Frost and Yarrow, performance as needing 'that improvisatory moment when imagination composes new shapes and makes active the knowledge that resides in the body' (Frost and Yarrow, 1990: 65). It is this point which necessarily joins the maker in a relationship with the participants. Since they are participants and not actors, this is essentially an ethical relationship built on trust and mutual respect.

This trust and respect are achieved, in my experience, by four factors:

- that the maker is perceived as having genuine concern for the stories of the participant
- that there is an understanding by the participant that he/she will be placed within a larger story but that this will not cause 'harm'
- that there will be regular contact
- that there is an ability, on the maker's part, to listen and respond

This corresponds to the various play strategies found in improvisation classes. It is the documentary maker's strategy to arrive at the shoot with both the participants and himself / herself ready to record meaning and emotion through gesture and look, and only in part through language. Indeed language is here seen as just part of the physical performance world with its own creative rhythms, lack of syntax and potential for poetic qualities. The interviewees are not mere puppets to be manipulated, but instead become authors who tell their stories in an entirely uninhibited manner. As such, participants gain satisfaction in developing their stories and in being given the opportunity to deliver them in a non-stressful environment.

For Lecoq, there is a state of calmness, of balance, in which the readiness is all in a

performance: 'it is a state in which the truth is revealed, not covered up by tricks. It is the aspiration of improvisation to have the capacity to do and say what is appropriate and to have confidence to make the choice' (cited in Frost and Yarrow, 1990: 152). Exploring physical theatre techniques, I filmed the rehearsals and several performances of On the Verge of Exploding. Rehearsal time was spent on becoming relaxed and subtle, and then on a series of exercises of running across the stage, touching an object and looking momentarily in the direction of the audience. This was the process in preparing for the comic performance which had very clear script, but where at a chance moment something else might happen. Variation occurs in response to the audience reception as when, for example, a person laughs spontaneously. In one performance of On the Verge of Exploding, I recorded a shot of one person in the audience. The communication – its form, content and delivery – allowed this person to delight in the ability to roam the theatrical space and enjoy the comic, physically improvised performance. There is a pleasure in reading textures, patterns and performance, and this example provides an insight into the definition of the non-linear improvised documentary in that it too works for particular audiences and their particular needs and expectations.

Documentary undertakes an equivalent process and for an equivalent purpose. The maker undertakes to relax and energise the participant over a period of meetings. Then, when the recorded interview takes place, the interviewee and interviewer are ready for the moment when the participant says something spontaneously, and the interviewer is prepared to come back with a relevant statement instantly and equally without pretence. What is of note is that the qualities of performance in an interview or action rest, as Anthony Frost and Ralph Yarrow point out, 'on a more radical

acknowledgement of the fragmentation of nineteenth century notions of a consistent personality' (1990: 14). What is at stake is the notion of self and reality. The idea of personality is on the screen – 'running free'– with the possibility of the excitement for actor and audience that all is possible, at any moment. In documentary terms, it is the moment when the participants react on the spur of the moment with total spontaneity through unrehearsed language and bodily gesture. It is the moment of surprise or the registering of integrity or dignity, 'not falling back on habits and clichés of speech and behaviour' (Ibid: 43).

Finally, of crucial importance, is the definition of audience that results from this way of thinking. Keith Johnstone, in Impro: Improvisation and the Theatre (1981), stresses two narrative skills – free association, which takes care of invention, and development and re-incorporation, which means making use of what has already been introduced. Frost and Yarrow sum up his argument:

> The audience, in fact, is enjoying structuring the story in its mind. They are looking for meaning, and making meaning out of what is being offered. Apparent randomness is given sudden illumination by reincorporation. So the applause, laughter or cheering that sometimes greets this reincorporated material is often the audience congratulating itself as much as the actor. They are saying, "Got it, now it makes sense!" – and it's also an affirmation, a way of saying, "Go on! What will happen now?" (1990: 135)

This raises important questions for documentaries – how are they distributed and to whom? Because, if documentary is about recording people and events, and about the quality of responses of the audience, then a reappraisal of the viewing context is overdue. With new technologies and new institutional frameworks, documentary can

be reinvented at the local level, and for specific consumption. The documentary interview or event also bears comparison with the tradition of the music hall comic, clown or pantomime dame, which also works on the basis of spontaneous improvisation. It is to this we now turn.

2.4 Developing Three Premises for Documentary Relating to the Music Hall

The music hall comic, with roots extending back to Joseph Grimaldi who performed in the 1800's, was epitomised by Dan Leno and Little Tich at the turn of the twentieth century, and with more modern counterparts such as Max Miller, Tony Hancock, Les Dawson and Max Wall. What they offer documentary is the quality of performance similar to the surface reading proposed with regard to non-linear structuring. Within their performance, one meaning was constantly supplanted by another, which was different both in content and texture. Three key qualities impinge on the non-linear improvised documentary.

1. Timing, Delivery and Characterisation

Tati admired Little Tich, that 'eccentric' comic genius who performed in Paris and London for over forty years. As Tati notes, in his foreword to Little Tich by Mary Tich and Richard Findlater, 'the eccentric (Little Tich) is a solitary and needs no one to assert himself. He is simultaneously author / actor and his own motivator. The eccentric draws energy from his own movements, from the action itself' (1979: n.p.). Little Tich developed dozens of characters – 'daft miniatures, each individually distinctive not only in make-up and costume but in movement and presence. These included gamekeeper, park keeper, tax collector, farmer, drill sergeant, charlady and so on. The laughter he caused came as a by-product of his impersonating art' (Ibid:

80). Tati did much the same, in cinematic terms, spreading his characters across the scene and over a number of non-sequential scenes.

For documentary this method provides a way of treating characterisation. It is developing a line for a character, which is in part 'magical', energised – ready to burst forth in gesture and action. This explains what we mean when we talk about televisual characters.

Little Tich, up on stage, had to develop an instant rapport with his audience. It was a two-way charge of affection and sympathy. 'As soon as he came on stage he connected with the emotional voltage in the auditorium, concentrated it and somehow intensified it which is why people still call it magic' (1979: 4). So too, the televisual character. Some participants – 'in office' – are trained not to give anything of themselves. The job of the documentary maker, in this situation, is to work against this state of affairs, bringing the interview to a state of performance which probes both the personality and the stories. The aim is to convey a level of comprehension which goes deeper, reflecting ideas on, for example, the transience of life, the dignity of the individual, or qualities of the absurd or bizarre. This I find in my own work, whether it has been interviews with the BBC radio professionals, the farmer, the cinema manager, the naïve artist, the enacted puppeteer, the co-operative guilds-woman, the eel-and-pie shop owner, and so on. It is also witnessed, as we shall see, in the characters of documentaries such as Hotel, and The Belovs. The sigh registering past moments lived, the glint of laughter in the face, a moment's mischievous grin flow effortlessly into the camera lens. It is said of Little Tich, 'at no time can Tich be noticed labouring at his fun; it is all apparently spontaneous, and bubbling with mirth,

as the laughter of a child' (1979: 156). This lack of labouring is what makes us believe in the documentary character.

2. The Relationship of Distance and Close-up

The second idea of performance within the documentary compared to music hall is how each treats distance and close-up contact. In music hall the comic developed intimacy through gesture and verbal loudness and quietness. When Roy Armes states that 'dramatic experience of any kind – the power which captures and holds the attention of an audience – invariably involves a dynamic combination of involvement and separation' (1994: 51), he identifies a very important point relevant to documentary. The audience is both engaged with the participant, and, particularly viewing in a location action scene, distant from the being that is being portrayed. Roy Armes suggests stage presence equates with the close-up: 'What Martin Esslin calls "the sheer magnetism of human personality" is as much a feature of screen as stage drama and hence a powerful generator of meaning in both forms' (Ibid: 54). The value of the close-up interview rests precisely on the above virtues. The interview interacts with other footage and it is this separation which helps create the documentary drama as it unfolds. To the repertoire of visual composition, I would also include the mid-shot, since it permits gestures to be recorded.

3. The State of the Audience

A third aspect of comparison with the music hall rests on the function of the communication:

> As he (Tommy the comic) crept back on stage ... the huge hard rattle rose again ... It wasn't innocent and natural, as the soft laughter between friends

could be – there was something fierce and vindictive about it, not coming from a happy people but from those whose bewilderment deepening to despair was not a mask (J.B. Priestley: 1965: 115).

In a theatrical performance it is the condition or background of the audience which determines the overall response to any one show. As Priestley noted above, audience reaction in the theatre depends on a group mentality. So too with non-fictional material, it is the understanding, already existing in the audience that is worked upon by the maker. It is the participants who tell you that you have articulated their voice and that it rings true to the discourse. Furthermore, reaching the limits of narrativity in performance terms says much for non-fictional construction and qualities needed from documentary participants in giving of themselves to mark the deepest of meanings.

There is much to be gained from seeing the role of documentary maker as being an entertainer with a purpose, creating a cathartic effect. In the first place, the show goes on a prescribed route, with any detours programmed in as 'happenings' for the audience, but, from the performer's viewpoint, a pre-ordained improvisation is called upon at a precise moment. In the second, the comic within action can break out and talk directly to the audience. Thirdly the comic can extend, or contract, time, and with facial and body gesture, punish and reward, empathise and create fear with the audience within seconds. In pantomime the dame character reaches out of the proscenium arch to argue with the audience. Max Wall in his one man show was seen to hold an attitude, seen to rethink it again and again, adding to its original meaning, then at the very last second to let it go and move on. One second later the effect would have been disastrous. As it was, it illuminated the complexity of a particular human predicament. These complex conditions inform and apply to L'Artiste, Le Fermier et

Le Paysage illustrating the point that non-fiction input of ideas from the maker informs style as much as the recorded image and processed sound. My characters have all engaged in social events and have a sense of their own reality. But reality is fragile, and lurking under any one set of individual assumptions are others. These can be set in times past or in the present, and they are generated by the recorded interview and can be perceived by the viewer.

Hence the importance of the 'beat' of the interview given by the syntax of the participant, the length of permitted speech pattern, the pauses, and gestures. There is the total absurdity of the Arsenal war factories seen in Co-op (Channel 4), or going to the cinema as in An Acre of Seats in a Garden of Dreams (1973), or the local Radio Brighton participants Radio, Radio (1980) or pulping apples to make alcohol as in L'Artiste, le Fermier et Le Paysage (1997). This absurdity needs action scenes and interviews, many beats, a consistent shooting and editing style, structured, and all working to produce an effect for the viewer to receive.

The non-linear improvised documentary approach is about reaching the participant's inner life which, can only be achieved by the delivery of gesture, look and the rhythms of body language interacting with the poetics of the spoken word. But the documentary maker is not only working to achieve qualities of performance, he or she is creating 'the script', the rhythms of recorded interviews or events which play within the larger context of theme. The documentary, like a Théâtre de Complicité performance, is created experientially. Frost and Yarrow note of improvised plays that 'they are authentic, carefully crafted and detailed examinations of character and social environment. They are serious and original investigations into real experiences, but

they are also shaped and purposive events, poetic and symbolic statements about ways in which human beings live and relate and fail' (1990: 42). In order to achieve this state of affairs within the non-linear improvised documentary process, a long process of social interaction between maker and participant is called for. Frost and Yarrow again:

> Working through something – provided it is all active working, and not falling back on habits and clichés of speech and behaviour – is a way of setting up feedback loops by which action can evolve to more and more appropriate forms, (Ibid: 43).

This was the case, as we shall see, with L'Artiste, le Fermier et Le Paysage. The farmer and his sister viewed rushes over the two-year filming period which developed a dialogue between them and myself and helped develop both the overall shape and individual scenes.

2.5 The Non-Linear Improvised Approach to Documentary – Summary

I find the development of the non-linear improvised approach to documentary compelling since it provides a key into documentary issues, bound as they are in a changing landscape of technology, new patterns of ownership of production and distribution. In the non-linear improvised documentary, the spectator is able to explore within and between scenes, as if 'reading the surface'. By the use of editing patterns and by creating moments of meaning generated within shots the makers offer the viewer an opportunity to make connections and produce a set of meanings that have due regard to the complexity of historical and personal moments.

The non-linear improvised documentary aims to integrate attitudes and beliefs expressed by the participants into the wider argument or discourse generated by the

maker. By generating ideas from more than one paradigm, the maker can create a complexity of overall meaning. By use of sound – music, narration, spot effects and atmospheric tracks – juxtaposed with images – it is possible to develop potential for meaning to be taken up by the viewer. Interviews are defined as performed articulate conversations – oral history. The interview situation is a performance and an engagement for interviewer, interviewee and ultimately the audience. Observations by the maker are turned into purposeful key sound or visual repetitions creating 'echoes' of meaning. Narration is written to be in empathy with the participants as is the use of music. The recording of gesture and action are a primary concern. Interruption and deviation are key concepts in developing a complex set of meanings, and creating the situation where the viewer, participants and maker all have a claim in the final tape. The tape aims to have both narrative coherence and reflective strategies, both adding to the viewer's pleasure with the tape.

There is a continuous line of resolve from the moments of meaning generated within audio-visual patterns to the overall structure and central to this resolve is the placement of the viewer. My argument is that the value of the non-linear improvised documentary lies in its ability to guarantee, through its narrative techniques, a minimum audience involvement, but also to give the opportunity to engage in making connections within the audio-visual flow in order to deepen knowledge and increase pleasure. Essentially, it is the quality of these latter which is at stake. The method is essentially ethical and democratic since the maker works with participants so they can articulate themselves and their attitudes; the maker delivers a structured tape for an audience.

This approach to documentary has developed out of making L'Artiste, Le Fermier et

Le Paysage. This documentary has given me the opportunity to apply concerns generated in earlier work about facilitating the individual to give a spontaneous performance to camera. But it is also an experiment in exploring the boundaries of narrativity, and examining the relationship of maker to subject matter, maker to participants, and subject matter to audience. It is this tape that I now consider.

CHAPTER 3 Analysis of L'Artiste, Le Fermier et Le Paysage As a Non-Linear Improvised Documentary

> In improvisation the text refuses to progress according to the expected rules. The flow of the text is interrupted, deflected: all sorts of other stories and speculations get in the way. Meanings proliferate: what is fore-grounded is the availability of meaning; the fact that it can degenerate and regenerate from anywhere. The improviser marks this possibility, defining as it were the extreme limit of play. Frost and Yarrow, Improvisation in Drama (1990: 177).

3.1 Introduction

L'Artiste, Le Fermier et Le Paysage is an experiment to see what relationships and boundaries there might exist between the two ideas of offering, on the one hand, narrative coherence, and, on the other, openness, so as to enable a set of ideas to be generated and be recognised by the viewer. The tape was made over a long period of time and the script only completed at the end of the off-line edit, just before the picture-edit, voice-over recording and dubbing session. The central theme is the idea of non-fragmented work in the twentieth century. In order to explore non-fragmented work and lifestyle patterns, the farmer, Gaby Le Gall, became the central figure. His daily routines were set against a spoken narrative alluding to the ideas the French writer André Gorz developed in his book Critique of Economic Reason (1989). But other writers also added to my background knowledge on the idea of work particularly Ronald Dore's Flexible Rigidities, (1988) and R.H. Tawney's The Acquisitive Society (1982), whilst Paul Merricks's and Peter Jones's The Management of Catering Operations (1991) provided a textbook example of an

illustration of the assumptions and practices of one modern workplace. The paintings by Jean Frélaut, and interviews with the farmer's neighbours – Jean-Baptiste and Thérèse – and his friend Rosalie were filmed half way through the shooting period. The open-air religious procession – the Pardon at Josselin – and the Moules Gathering Scene were filmed by chance after remarks made by Gaby and his sister.

In Carl Plantinga's terminology, nonfiction discourse has four parameters – selection of information, order, emphasis and voice. I wish to use these points to begin the analysis.

3.1.1 What is Selected and What is Omitted

The concept of work is at the heart of the tape, or rather how individuals have control over their own work actions at any time. The subject evolved over a five-year period. It was a by-product of a commissioned script I had researched and written for Channel 4, entitled Power and People.

The subject took a great deal of debate before I settled on Gaby, then artist Jean Frélaut, and then the landscape. I had originally contemplated a tape on marketing as seen at a trade fair, but this would not have provided the statements about work and time I thought were important. Corporations were changing their patterns of work contracts, and in both work and leisure people's lifestyles were increasingly being set within corporate terms. I wished to record the opposite – social situations in which people perceived that they had individual control over their daily routines both in and outside of work. Filming a small-holding farmer was in accordance with my previous work of recording events and situations which might disappear – recording the past

with dignity – to paraphrase John Allin's description of his own paintings. Farming is very physically demanding work, yet the Breton farmer appears more relaxed than the corporate post-holder. I wished to explore the fast-disappearing world of the small sized farm and its associated lifestyles.

But the idea of selection is not static. An understanding of the identity of Gaby developed as the documentary was being shot. Peter Berger and Thomas Luckman (1967) have pointed to the importance of combining an interest in language, religion, social action and institutions. These apply to the farmers of the Morbihan region of Brittany. As filming progressed, it became clear that our knowledge of Gaby had to include his particular way of using language, his gestures, his actions around the farm, but also other areas such as the religious Pardon ceremony or Moules gathering, neither of which he attended. The point was that these activities were nevertheless important to his way of life. In the Moules Gathering Scene he is not at the seaside, but the intercutting of him and Antoinette preparing a Moules meal for some of the time, plus the fact there are similar-looking people gathering moules, take away any thoughts of 'where's Gaby?' The same is true of the Pardon scene, which is subsumed within the Birth and Death Scenes. You do not miss Gaby at the Pardon. His re-appearance at the birth, plus again similar farming faces at the Pardon, suggest only that he has been busy. His disappearance only adds to the democracy of characters on screen. Whilst he is a lead character, as is suggested by the title, there are many other characters recorded and arranged within the tape. Indeed the Pardon, focussing on the community of people present linked to the paintings, creates a reference to a wider regional social and artistic history. Work and non-work time in the non-fragmented lifestyle of the Breton farmer give rise to a theme with a cluster of ideas. A significant

choice, given the intent of establishing a democratic positioning of the viewer.

3.1.2 Order

The decision on the ordering of scenes has several principles:

The Opening Scene: This scene is complex. Whilst it defines the three main elements referred to in the title, the narration sets these against the quotation from André Gorz. Whilst the narration is discussed more fully later (see page 69), this scene sets the tone, texture, an expectation and a game for the audience.

The Middle Scenes: It became clear during shooting that developing a social context that referred to the traditional social activities of the wider farming community would inform the viewer's impression of Gaby. It would also link back to the paintings. Hence, after establishing Jean Frélaut's life and work in scene 2, I could concentrate on Gaby, bringing in the paintings so as to make cultural connections at appropriate moments, knowing something of their context. Traditional folk music was used to create a relationship between these distinct trajectories of time. This was an important decision. I had thought seriously about using a contemporary jazz sound from John Surman's repertoire, which would have had the effect of creating distance between participants and viewers. In the end I chose local folk music, which, although it might be considered abrasive by some, would place the emphasis on, and develop empathy for, the local farmers, their landscape and their culture.

The End Scene: The end was used to bring all the elements of the tape together again, but 'in a new light'. The issue of modern work, defined by André Gorz as the modern consumer lifestyle, is again set against the traditional, and the viewer is left to ponder on it. But other ideas are expressed: themes of work and life, male and female, artist and farmer, farmer and animals, food and religion, individual and collective events,

time and the mood of farming activities and landscape, all of which come together without a feeling of disorientation.

3.1.3 Emphasis

This is a useful concept in a multi-layered documentary tape. It is rare to get a new, fresh or fundamental insight. One such was when filming the cider-making scene. Gaby moved nearer the camera position and pulled the mulch across in front of the camera moving right to left (shot 103). At that moment, energy was released exactly like that depicted by the workers in Jean Frélaut's haymaking picture (shot 31). From that moment onwards – it was an early shoot – I could be certain about including the paintings in the fabric of the tape and focussing the recording of any subsequent actions around such a moment of energy.

3.1.4 Voice

Carl Plantinga takes the view that every nonfiction film presents its projection from a perspective (or perspectives), in relation to a tone or attitude. Plantinga says:

> Every film is constructed by humans for some communicative function or functions, and the use of voice to denote the perspective of the narration pays homage to nonfiction filmmaking as a human form of communication. The nonfiction film is a physical text used for, including abstract discourse that presents projected world information, and a "voice" that expresses that information from a certain perspective (1997: 100).

To put it another way, on each occasion the theme, which informs the narrative and is the substantial centre, the root, of all the meanings that are generated, needs to be articulated. But the voice does not appear instantaneously. It develops over a long

period of time, before and during shooting. If the theme of L'Artiste, Le Fermier et Le Paysage is lifestyle – work and time – then the Moules, the Horse-Fair and the Pardon enrich this theme, but they were not known to me during the early stages of shooting. This marks one characteristic of documentary – this quality of openness and preparedness in the maker to the moment throughout the production cycle.

Selection, order, emphasis and voice are four ways of analysing important decisions, but they do not disclose much that happens in the film regarding detailed decisions, how these combine to create the sound-image structure or how that structure works to involve the viewer so that he / she can make connections and judgements. Only the application of the non-linear improvised approach to documentary usefully does that, bringing sound and images together as a unique pattern which allows the viewer to understand and enjoy the material in a particular way, bringing a depth to the understanding of non-fragmented work. I will proceed by giving an overview of the chief characteristics of non-linearity as they apply to L'Artiste, Le Fermier et Le Paysage, consider the concept of beats as they apply to scenes and the role of improvisational performance within this documentary.

3.2 Non-Linearity and L'Artiste, Le Fermier et Le Paysage

What gives the tape a distinctive quality is the positioning of the participants in the exposition, how a rapport is created between viewer and participants, the generalised theme itself, and how the audience is able to make connections without everything being spelt out in a literal fashion. These considerations affect the editing decisions so as to produce a distinct flow of sounds and images.

The author, namely the writer / director in documentary, is responsible for working towards closure. What is problematic for any documentary is how far meanings are left placed, but not referenced. Winston notes this point in his discussion on what he sees as the primacy of narrative in his account of non-narrative when he says that non-narrative: 'works better in the head than on the screen' (1995: 113). I argue that whilst recognising the need for story or purpose, there is a fundamental need to link this to other concerns of a non-linear kind, which work, at different levels, for different purposes, so as to enhance viewer satisfaction. In the previous discussion of non-linearity (pages 39 – 47), I proposed three premises for non-linearity, namely:

- The importance of a general narrative advancement.
- Getting the viewer to ask what is happening.
- A concern for sound-image elements rather than the use of language per se.

These have an effect upon the viewer, so that the viewer is cued in to see the tape, not only as a story or argument which you 'take in', but is also allowed to take pleasure in following what is happening. The viewer makes meaningful connections and gains pleasure in the patterning and texturing of sounds and images. I then relate non-linearity to:

- Improvised performance (pages 48 – 52), defining documentary as essentially needing participants to be themselves if the viewer is to appreciate the participants' 'inner-selves'. This could be advanced if we get the participants to talk as in a conversation between friends, where utterances – sometimes contradictory – are more important than precisely articulated language – a way similar to that noted in the music hall or variety comic (pages 52 – 56).

If we now examine L'Artiste, Le Fermier et Le Paysage in these terms, we begin to

realise that documentary can exist in an entirely different way from the exposition mode which is the usual starting position for talking about documentary.

3.2.1 General Narrative Advancement

The overall pattern of L'Artiste, Le Fermier et Le Paysage consists of eighteen scenes. These are stated at the start of the shot analysis appendix. At one level, they might seem an odd collection. For example, the Moules Gathering Scene could be considered a break in the argument, or the Pardon Scene irrelevant since no interviewees are present, or the Breakfast Scene at odds with the rest of the tape since one shot lasts three minutes thirty seconds. Some might ask, why mix information on an artist with that on the farmer. Applying the premises of non-linearity, these scenes become absolutely relevant. They do act to communicate the state of being, when work and social / leisure tasks are undertaken as one whole daily set of rituals, and deepen understanding of a way of life where work is not separated from the rest of life. The tape is not just any collection of events or interviews. These latter are selected and ordered both with regard to narrative coherence and non-linear aims. Every aspect of the tape interacts with the theme to produce this coherence and the overall structure is such that the film does not complete its patterning until the end. In L'Artiste, Le Fermier et Le Paysage it is a question of the viewer adopting the role of surveying and making sense.

The theme of non-fragmented lifestyle, and its application to both an artist and a farmer, provides a suitable starting point for the non-linear approach. It is open enough to be responsive both for the maker at the time of shooting to make new decisions as to what to include and what not to shoot, and for the viewer to work

subsequently with the material. The tape's meanings were enhanced by the relationship set up, within the tape, between the artist Jean Frélaut and the farmer Gaby. The relationship not only gave an historical dimension, but also gave opportunities to relate to the wider community, and make connections between work represented within the paintings and the work on the farm. But all these potential connections are there to be recognised by the viewer. If the viewer does not recognise them, then the documentary relies solely on the narrative of the tape. Hence the need for a narrative, so as to retain the interest, at least at a minimum level, of all viewers. But this narrative does not have to be of the formal exposition kind, nor a voice of authority. It can also function to support the over-all theme, and echo the poetic qualities generated from the non-linear approach. This is a value-laden state of affairs since the object is, in the audio-visual interactions, to increase a rapport between viewer and the ideas coming from the participants.

Robert Drew argues against narration. 'Narration is what you do when you fail,' (cited in Macdonald and Cousins, 1996: 273). His reasoning is as follows:

> Words supplied from the outside cannot make a film soar. Exposition, whether narration or voice-over from characters, may maintain a certain level of interest but it can rarely build. To do that, a film must generate power from within. The film itself must provide the thread, the viewpoint and the logic, which must be dramatic logic (Ibid: 272).

I would not wish to be so categorical. Narration can be a central device in the dramatic surface. As Alan Rosenthal states:

> The broad function of narration is to amplify and clarify the picture. It should help establish the direction of the film and provide any necessary information

not obvious from the visuals. Narration can also help establish the mood of the film, and is particularly useful in bridging filmic transitions and turning the film in a new direction (1990: 162).

In the non-linear improvised documentary, narration is seen as part of the poetic resources that form the whole. Narration becomes a complex concept both in terms of its function as carrier of logical development, explanation and affective device, and in terms of its physical qualities of delivery – tone, inclination, emphasis of a word or part of a word, pace and space between words.

In L'Artiste, le Fermier et Le Paysage the narration creates the opening propositions linking artist, farmer and landscape to the social context and idea of work. It provides the necessary point of departure, which allows the film to look sympathetically upon the characters – their personalities, their attitudes and their lifestyle. The point of conflict lies between the opening statements on work by André Gorz and, there on in, the viewer is expected to work with the proposition that:

> The culture of work has been cut off from the culture of everyday life, which has splintered into isolated pockets of time and space, a succession of excessive aggressive demands. There is nothing of a life-world (Narration: Shots 12-16).

I have chosen to present lifestyles which stand in opposition to modern work patterns. My aim is that the viewer will be intrigued by the events and people recorded. Narration works throughout the tape to focus upon these matters and keep the film moving forward in terms of narrative. Here are some examples:

> The pieces of cardboard act as a tally counting out the number of petits poussins to arrive – after which Antoinette has to make sure no chicks escape

as the water dispenser is lowered. Gaby and Antoinette show respect for their animals yet to encourage growth the water troughs are raised each day so the chicks have to stretch to reach – the survival of the fittest. It's hard work, as Gaby explains... (Narration: shots 80-83).

The narration in this case functions: to point out the water dispenser recorded in shot, but which is difficult to see; to explain what happens each subsequent day; to re-enforce the brother sister relationship, and to relay a comment by the farmer about the reason for raising the water trough. This places the narrator as sympathetic to the farmer's viewpoint, and provides a traditional narrative link to the interview. The narration is concise and precise. It is not so dense as to be read as if it is over-crowded with words. There is a rhythm to the construction, built on the combination of three or four words at a time. Edward Branigan points out three aspects of narration when he says that, '(1) narrative texts contain special and private spaces for a reader's personal involvement, (2) narrative is a co-operative enterprise whereby both reader and writer contribute by virtue of being members of particular historical communities and (3) narrative is the product of an act of reading' (1992: 110). This makes the narration a delicate and intimate device within the overall documentary repertoire.

Narration within L'Artiste, Le Fermier et Le Paysage quietly adds, like its image counterpoint, to the stock of meanings set forth. Another piece of narration is:

> Cider making is a very different sort of work from rearing chickens – an activity for the autumn. On a wet afternoon Gaby and Antoine, collect a bale of hay and plenty of apples. There are no set targets or quality assurance tests, no schedules or meetings – not even a single 'just in time' technique – if it rains or the light goes it does not matter (Narration: shots 87-90).

Here the narration fixes the activity and time. The narration echoes the laid-back feel of what is to follow. As it describes the language of the modern workplace, which I had seen first-hand researching my previous script Power and People, so the image follows Gaby as he carefully places a sack on the wet seat of his tractor before climbing aboard. There is a rhythm built into the delivery – somewhat wistful – echoing Gaby's action. In fact the narration was constantly re-worked and refined with the intention of providing a distinct voice, showing both empathy and a 'matter of fact' quality in delivery.

The English narrator, Andrew Sachs, and the French narrator, Philippe Monet, were chosen for the warmth (without being coy) that they could project into the words. I received many audition tapes for the French version, but Philippe Monet was cast without hesitation. There is a certain dramatic and poetic quality that he alone has. The main point about the narration is that it is a carefully constructed element, and as such is part of the audio-visual repertoire. Its importance lies in how it creates meaning alongside and within the other elements. It works in L'Artiste, Le Fermier et Le Paysage as any scene does, in that an objective is set for 'narration' which links to the theme. The result has to be a 'quiet' narration with a poetic syntax, being economical in the amount of words, driving an idea forward but also carrying a sentiment which functions to develop empathy and believability. Narration acts in three ways, supporting narrativity and aiding the viewer to engage in making judgements, adding to the choices of meaning on offer so as to deepen understanding and providing a poetic reverberation. Viewers may or may not know of 'just in time techniques' but the statement is there to be recognised.

The paintings are also an essential device linking time past to time present, developing a sense of social continuity and tradition. They, for example, link the energy of humans at work then with the present, reinforce the impact of the countryside and deepen understanding of social bonds. The tape overall moves from the past to the present, the point where the contradiction is set forth within which what we have been watching as a way of life is no longer applicable to the modern world of consumer lifestyle and contracted work. Yet the path of time also moves backwards and forwards as, for example, in the Horse Competition Scene (shots 134-155).

The paintings by Jean Frélaut, of the Morbihan landscapes, depict exactly the emotional resonance I felt in being there – down a muddy pathway, trees, cows, streams and the ever-changing cloud formations. It has been said of his work:

> His work has been the reflection of his soul – it is pious and contemplative before eternal themes such as the countryside or Breton peasant life. He has profoundly and intensely expressed those themes (Roux Frélaut, 1997: 142).

What I find important, in establishing immediate contact between the paintings and Gaby, and quite distinct, is the changing skies through the day and between seasons, as well as the life of the farm worker. Here was an opportunity to place the activities of the farmer, Gaby, farmer, within a cultural / historical context. Despite being separated by class, Gaby and Jean Frélaut had this same respect for landscape and a similar attitude to work, which formed part of one unified way of life.

The other important consideration was the naïve style of many of the paintings. This I had worked with before, with John Allin, the naïve artist from the East End of London. The central idea of the naïve artist is to include several perspectives of a

landscape so as to tell a story and re-create a valued memory. This is linked to a central theme. In the case of John Allin it was to paint the past with dignity, releasing 'fond happy memories' of a way of life almost gone. In the case of Jean Frélaut the theme lay in capturing a physical and social landscape of his farming region underpinned by religious, and joyful and respectful feelings for the countryside:

> Frélaut's peasant scenes conveyed the image of an archaic Brittany free from industrialisation, yet his vision was not a militant one. From haymaking time to harvest time, he described the various works in the fields that punctuate peasant life: ploughing the fields, sowing, hay cutting with a scythe, corn harvesting, flailing and hand winnowing. His main purpose was to paint the universal link between man and nature, (Roux Frélaut, 1997: 143).

In other words, the paintings fitted the resonance of my landscape perfectly. They provide a personal connection for me with my own filmic history, and provide a way to reflect the complexities of human endeavour. When Gaby talks of hard work in the interview (shot 84), he echoes the meanings contained in the paintings as given above. Once the painter, his lifestyle and his paintings have been established, the tape is able to structure a series of echoes linking the past to the present with reference only to the paintings.

Narrative advancement in L'Artiste, Le Fermier et Le Paysage, also comes from the sense of time passing – moving forward. This can be described in several ways. It derives from the general movement of time through the seasons, starting in autumn with the cider making, and finishing with the summer fête. It comes from what the participants say, with the kind of denouement in Gaby's final interview. Narration becomes but one device for advancement and is particularly important in cueing a

judgmental state in the viewer in the opening, and giving a sense of closure in the end sequence. Narrativity itself changes with the non-linear approach, centred, as it is in L'Artiste, Le Fermier et Le Paysage, on temporal and geographic qualities.

The opening and closing scenes are crucial to the way an audience receives the tape as a whole. The setting out of the exposition of L'Artiste, Le Fermier et Le Paysage illustrates the complexity of what is at stake. A number of premises have to be established, which include: imparting a clear statement which acts as a reference point upon which the theme of work and lifestyle can be assessed throughout the tape, and establishing the three aspects of the tape, the painter, the farmer and their landscape. In addition there is the need to bring each of these elements into a relationship with the others. The intention in developing such a complex system, whilst having one chief purpose, is to call upon the viewer to work with the material, for the purpose of finding pleasure in recognising structures, sound-image patterns, atmospheres and textures. This is very different from Carl Plantinga's discussion of openings for 'formal nonfictions':

> The beginning of formal nonfiction – the titles, and credit sequence, prologue and preliminary exposition – carries as much weight as does the beginning of a classical fiction film... The violation of the steady state is the formal function of such a beginning; its epistemological function is to raise the question that the narrative will gradually answer (1997: 125-126).

The question arises: whose question? The purpose of the non-linear approach is to empower the receiver to take on the question and not just assume it as unproblematic or without resonance to other questions, which may not be consciously made by the viewer during the running of the tape.

In comparing the narrated journalistic documentary to L'Artiste, Le Fermier et Le Paysage, there is a noticeable difference in the length of time it takes to set up the different approaches. The non-linear approach needs more time, something which does not fit easily with the broadcasters' assumptions of accessible but fast-paced narrative launches.

The opening of L'Artiste, le Fermier et Le Paysage could have developed in many different ways. In the end, I decided not to pursue a more orthodox approach, which would reduce the impact of Jean Frélaut, and give a more linear approach to the opening. I therefore set out statements about Frélaut and Gaby, then set these statements ahead of, but next to, the André Gorz quotations, which are set against images of the same rural landscape, now being developed as homes, shops and supermarkets. The writing of the narration was difficult, since it could easily be patronising or obscure. The overall intent was to give the viewer the way into the tape, and I am conscious that the tape can be seen differently overall, by different groups of people, depending in part what is taken as important in this opening scene.

The ending takes on as important a function as the opening. In the non-linear approach, the viewer not only draws a conclusion from the cues and guides that have been constructed, but also accepts that the search is not for immediate answers. The aim is also for an acknowledgement, by the viewer, of the tape's appeal in terms of the atmospheres, textures and audio-visual temporal construction. Hence, in L'Artiste, Le Fermier et Le Paysage, the ending is constructed on the same formal basis as the opening. Carl Plantinga says about endings:

> Formal endings guide the backward-directed activity of the spectator in

comprehending the film. The ending may fill in gaps, sum up points, or suggest a 'correct' frame by which the previous data can be interpreted (1997: 131).

This indeed fits the narrative part of L'Artiste, Le Fermier et Le Paysage. I do want the film to end and to assert it was about something. But I also want to emphasise the atmospheres and textures and sound-image patterns generated on the way. The end is a reassertion of the opening concern – modernity. It is also a final reminder that Gaby and Frélaut shared non-consumer lifestyles yet were worlds apart in social terms. This leads back into the narration and statements from André Gorz on work, which direct a question back to the viewer, set, as these words are, against images of modern consumerism. But within the ending there is also a concern for atmospheres and textures. They are 'quietly' cued in – there to create an impression rather than to make a formal statement. Examples include the painting of the horse and cart which precedes the modern shots of a motorway (shot 306); the sound of a cat as it moves towards a pail of milk in the cowshed (shot 305); and the sounds of laughter in the cider-making shed (shot 333). Finally the music sounds towards the very end like a barrel-organ, full of repetition as the final images play out as a set of mixes, of one shot to the next, set to the timing of the music – life goes on (shots 336 – 346).

3.2.2 Surveying and Making Sense

The second premise of non-linearity is the need to create a structure and pattern enabling the viewer to make judgements, deciding what is important, and to gain insight and pleasure in so doing. It is the viewers who have to recognise human beings and their predicament – it is they who survey and make sense of the entire tape. They bring themselves to a state of realisation and satisfaction: it is the opportunity to roam

and mull-over. The non-linear approach creates sets of ideas over a number of scenes. The placement of the Birth of the Calf Scene works to show physical work, but it is also placed in immediate proximity to an open-air mass (the Pardon), Frélaut paintings, depicting earlier religious processions, the death of the cow, a funeral procession as sketched and painted by Frélaut over a thirty year period, and the departure of the chickens. These form a unity of ideas which lie after the Moules Gathering Scene and before the Breakfast Scene, each of which has quite different statements, patterns and textures. A shot analysis summary of this unity which I call the Birth and Death Scenes is given on the following pages and the full shot analysis is given in Appendix 1.

Birth and Death Scenes (Shots 197 - 234)

197 7" 24' 00"

Painting: La procession de Belz, 1905.

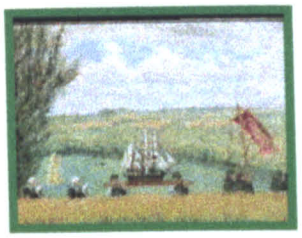
Religious singing

198 4" 24' 04"

Painting: CU of La procession de Belz, 1905.

Religious singing

NAR: Pardons give hamlets and villages the opportunity

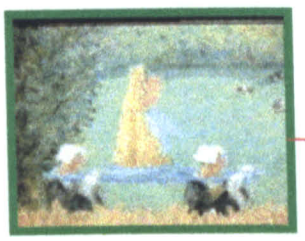


199 6" 24' 10"

Painting: La procession de Béquerel, 1951.

Religious singing

NAR: to join together in a public expression of piety where an open-air procession is followed by mass.



200 4" 24' 14"

Painting: CU of La procession de Béquerel, 1951.

Religious singing

NAR: Frélaut painted pardon at Belz and Béquerel

201 5" 24' 19"

Sketch: La procession de Josselin, 1910.

Religious singing

NAR: and at Josselin where the pardon is known as Le Pélerinage à Notre Dame du Roncier.

202 13" 24' 32"

Atmos.

Thérèse: It is the Notre Dame du Roncier in Josselin. There's a pilgrimage here every year on the 8th September. The pilgrims go to the fountain of Notre Dame du Roncier.

203 15" 24' 47"

Atmos.

Thérèse: They drink the water and wash their eyes and mouth with it. There's the procession and Mass on 8th September. It's lovely – with all the banners

204 3" 24' 50"

Atmos.

Thérèse: of Josselin and the surrounding villages.

205 3" 24' 53"

Atmos.

206 9" 25' 02"

Singing

207 7" 25' 09"

Singing

NAR: There are very few tourists present and their day is set by the collective devotion of the people. The Church offers and gives

208 4" 25' 13"

Singing

NAR: opportunity for this expression.

209 5" 25' 18"

Singing

210 9" 25' 27"

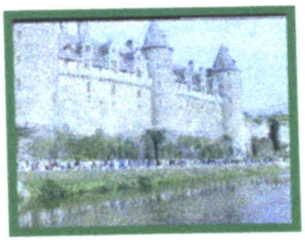
Singing

211 3" 25' 30"

Singing

212 6" 25' 36"

Singing



213 4" 25' 40"

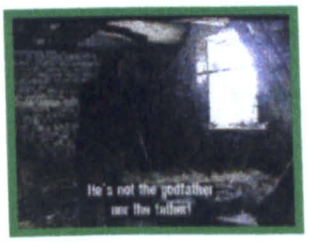
Singing – with sound perspective.

214 Pan left to right 20" 26' 00"

new singing

215 18" 26' 18"

Sound tempo increases: Alleluia chorus.
Note the swaying trees in background.



216 1' 33" 28' 51"

Sound overlap – singing echoes

General conversation: Here we are, salt and water.
He's a lovely little thing.
What a beauty! Poor animal!
Yes, that's how you get them to move.
Is he a Charolais? Yes.

Gaby: I'm not the godfather, nor the father!
Thérèse: It's a male. He's a healthy one.

217 2" 28' 53"

Sync. Atmos.

218 8" 29' 01"

Sync. Atmos.

NAR: Three days later and despite medication the cow died. The body had to be disposed of

219 11" 29' 12"

Sync. Atmos.

NAR: immediately, at the same time the milk was being collected; a reminder that the routines of life go on even in death.

220 6" 29' 18"

Atmos.

221 5" 29' 23"

Atmos.

222 6" 29' 29"

Atmos.

Music starts at end of shot

223 5" 29' 34"

Sketch (1): L'enterrement, 1908.

Music

NAR: Frélaut knew

224 6" 29' 40"

Sketch (2): L'enterrement, no date.

Music

NAR: of the importance of acknowledging death in the Breton community in these sketches, which he began in 1908,

225 5" 29' 45"

Painting: CU of L'enterrement, 1953.

Music

NAR: and only completed as a painting in 1953 – one year before his own death.

226 5" 29' 50"

Painting: CU of L'enterrement, 1953.

Music

227 5" 29' 55"

Painting: CU of L'enterrement, 1953.

Music

228 5" 30' 00"

Painting: L'enterrement, 1953.

Music

229 4" 30' 04"

Music overlaps and ends

NAR: The 35 days are up

230 6" 30' 10"

Atmos.

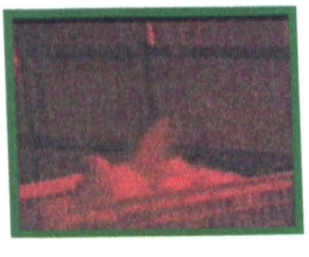
NAR: and the 20,000 chickens' leave to meet their fate.

231 12" 30' 20"

Atmos.

232 16" 30' 36"

Atmos.



233 11" 30' 47"

Atmos.

234 23" 31' 10"

Atmos.

Pan with tractor and workers leaving.

1. Birth and Death Scenes

See Previous pages: (Shots 197 – 234)

The Birth and Death Scenes are made up of six scenes that flow together to form a sequence (shots 197 – 234). The development of these six scenes happened during shooting. The actual birth of the calf (shots 216 – 217) took place six weeks before the open-air religious procession – the Pardon. This Pardon was not known to me beforehand, except that Gaby took me on a visit to the village the day before, telling me where to park the car, which necessitated visiting other farmers on the way, plus the bars of Josselin. This day is recalled for its value in developing a rapport with Gaby, even though he did not turn up for the Pardon itself. The death of the cow was not expected. I had not translated the Thérèse interview, part of which is used as voice-over near the start of the open air mass. No music had been chosen. All running times of the scenes could have been longer or shorter. For example, the open-air mass was visually so interesting that I spent the day filming the activities, which is why I could incorporate the early gathering of people (shots 203 – 205) with the actual mass four hours later (shots 214 – 215). In other words the structure was shaped over a period of time. It was only by being at the Pardon, where there were many farmers similar to Gaby, that its immense importance to the tape came to be perceived, that Gaby stood not only for himself but represented a whole way of life for the whole community. Being in the cowshed at the time of the birth gave another insight. The cowshed was part of the longère, with its thick stone walls, and earth stone flooring. It was quite different from other separate and modern cowsheds. The light, the hay strewn across the floor and the fact that his helpers were Thérèse, Jean-Baptiste and Antoinette all added to this sense of community. Gaby's sense of humour when he addresses the camera directly in shot 216 could be expanded upon in my intervention

by overlaying the music and adding reverberation to make a very obvious connection between religion and the cowshed. It remains a respectful joke, not breaking the empathy between participants and maker.

Part of the pleasure for the audience lies in the sound-image 'orchestrations' and the movement in attention as either sound or image predominates. For example, in the beginning (shot 197), the audience hears the music and sees a long shot of the entire painting (La procession de Belz, 1905). A close-up of the same painting follows, as the narration starts. The language of the narration uses key works or phrases – 'join together', 'public expression', 'piety', as well as describing the dates and places of the paintings before ending on Josselin and the poetic name of its Pardon – La Notre Dame du Roncier. It appears as a simple ordering of ideas, which I hope it is. But it does, at the same time, say that the open-air mass is part of local history with importance for the farmer (Frélaut's marks upon the canvas are saying so) reinforced by the singing played underneath a narration, with its fully resolved word patterns and texture. The orchestrations of so many sound-image beats give choice, as the constant movement between paintings and live action events creates an opportunity to make connections between religion, the past community and the present-day lifestyle of the farmer.

Pleasure is created within the detail throughout all the scenes in question. In the open-air mass procession, sound is given perspective (see shot 213) and pace through a sound edit between shots 214 and 215. The transition, from Pardon to cowshed, is partly marked by the trees seen swaying in the wind. Whilst the sound of the Alleluia chorus predominates on the sound track, this image is important in helping to connect

religion with the energy of the trees as they sway, to the energy that will be expended by Gaby and helpers at the birth of the calf. In the Birth of the Calf Scene it is the constant change from listening to what is happening to seeing individual participants' movements that produces pleasure. In the scenes of the removal of the dead cow and the paintings and the start of the chickens being collected the music plays meaningfully upon image, and with the narration, as a lament. This dolefulness is as much a part of Celtic tradition as is Gaby's sense of humour. As we noted, part of the aim of the non-linear approach is to get the viewer to ask what is happening.

In the interplay of sounds and image, the maker constructs meanings, purposefully, both very directly, and also indirectly. At one level, editing patterns give pleasure but, at another, there is also the possibility that the viewer can engage and make connections whether consciously or of the order of a general feeling of satisfaction. Giving equal value to the types of sounds and image functions to deliver diversity and choice is indeed a key concern of the non-linear improvised documentary. Within these scenes, themes alluded to areas as follows:

- community and the social history of the procession – the Pardon – seen as a traditional ritual with its own local religious music.
- the importance of religion as a celebration of death and life.
- small scale farming methods, that is work.
- the recognition of emotion.
- the seriousness of devotion versus the humour in recognising the allusion to the nativity and hearing Gaby's direct address to camera.
- the death of the cow which is sad after seeing what she just went through.
- the sobriety of the funeral procession in the painting reinforcing the live action

procession.

- the fact that life at work and devotion goes on absolutely; and finally,
- the reaction to the fate of the chickens seen earlier as day-old chicks, which brings us forward to the breakfast scene, re-establishing the main themes of work, lifestyle and individual control over time.

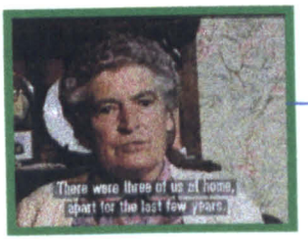
A different orchestration of sound and image emerges around the Horse Fair Scene, where interview, paintings and live action weave with music and atmospheric and spot effects tracks, to produce a run of meanings linking the historical role of the horse, in activating co-operation in the community, with the physicality and comradeship of contemporary horse competition. The placing of the Horse Fair Scene is now considered.

132 Zoom out from Thérèse 14" 18' 20"

Music: note fades

HORSE FAIR SCENE (Shots 134 - 156)

NAR: Thérèse and Baptiste are Gaby and Antoinette's neighbours. Retired farmers they are now helped by their large family in the vegetable garden and recall earlier times

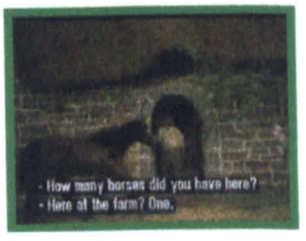


133 45" 19' 05"

Thérèse: There were 3 of us at home, apart from the last few years. My sisters moved to the city and I stayed on the farm. (To Baptiste) How many were there in your family? Baptiste: There were five of us. Thérèse: 5 children. How many stayed on the farm? Baptiste: Just two of us. Three actually. Later on my sister got married and got her own farm. Thérèse: Ah, yes. Baptiste: So there was my brother, me and my parents. Thérèse: And your parents. Baptiste: Yes.
Interviewer: Was it normal for all the children to stay on the farm? Thérèse: Yes.

134 8" 19' 13"

Interviewer: Has it changed a lot since then? Thérèse: Oh yes.
Interviewer: What was it like before? Thérèse: We had horses then.



135 4" 19' 17"

Interviewer: How many horses did you have here?
Thérèse: Here on the farm? One.

136 42" 19' 59"

Interviewer: Did he do all the work? Thérèse: Yes, everything
Interviewer: And was it the same on all the farms? Thérèse: At Gaby's there was also one horse. Yes, on all the farms. There were 5 or 6 farms in all but some young couples didn't have a horse. Others had to help them farm the land. There were 4 horses altogether in the village.
Interviewer: If someone didn't have a horse were they lent one?
Thérèse: That's right – we helped one another.

137 4" 20' 03"

Painting: Chevaux á la pâture ou Baie de Kerdelan, 1920.

Music

138 3" 20' 06"

Painting: CU of Chevaux á la pâture ou Baie de Kerdelan, 1920.

Music

139 3" 20' 09"

Sketch of painting: Marché aux Chevaux, 1953.

Music

NAR: The horse fair

140 4" 20' 13"

Painting: Marché aux Chevaux, 1953.

NAR: of Frélaut's – Le Foire aux Chevaux, 1953,

141 2" 20' 15"

Music

Atmos.

NAR: is echoed today at the local breeding competitions at St. Marcel.

142 2" 20' 17"

Music

Atmos.

143 3" 20' 20"

Music

Atmos.

144 4" 20' 24"

Music

Atmos.

145 3" 20' 27"

Music

Atmos.

146 4" 20' 31"

Music

Atmos.

147 3" 20' 34"

Music

Atmos.

148 8" 20' 42"
Music
Atmos.

149 1" 20' 43"
Music
Atmos.

150 3" 20' 46"
Music
Atmos.

151 4" 20' 50"
Music
Atmos.

152 2" 20' 52"
Music
Atmos.

153 2" 20' 54"
Music
Atmos.

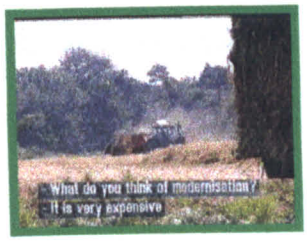
154 1" 20' 55"
Music
Atmos.

155 2" 20' 57"
Music
Atmos.

156 4" 21' 01"

Painting: Le champ de blé, 1937.

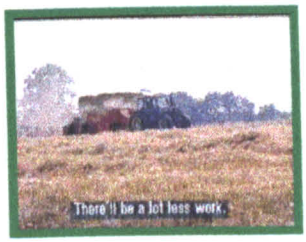
Music ends.



157 8" 21' 09"

Atmos.

Interviewer: What do you think of modernisation? Thérèse: It's very expensive. Interviewer: Does it change things? Thérèse: Yes, many things.



158 7" 21' 16"

Atmos.

Thérèse: There's a lot less work. Interviewer: Less work?
Thérèse: There will be less work because everything will be modernised

159 9" 21' 25"

Atmos.

Thérèse: We'll need a lot of money. Yes, that's right. It'll be expensive.
Interviewer: The countryside is wonderful around here. Thérèse: Yes,

160 3" 21' 28"

Thérèse: but small farms like this won't be able to afford it.

2. The Horse Fair Scene

See Previous pages: (Shots 134 – 156)

This passage includes Thérèse's interview, and the paintings of a horse fair intercut with the live action horse competition. The energy and power of the Breton horse, work and non-work time, community self-help and inter-dependence, now and in the past, man and the horse are all themes located in this section. They have been created through the juxtaposition of images, voice-over, atmospheric tracks, spot effects and the evocative music. They are also derived from a concern with movement, energy and gesture.

The shots under discussion follow from Thérèse's opening interview, where she turns (unexpectedly) to Jean-Baptiste and they talk about the family nature of farming. Thérèse has thereby established herself as capable, friendly and articulate. After forty-five seconds of conversation the pace changes by a shift to the horse competitions, then relating this event to Frélaut's painting of a horse going into its stable which is part of a longère. Going back to Thérèse for a further forty-two seconds reinforces the idea of a conversation, now on the subject of horses. This started (shot 136) after Thérèse has given a voice-over in the previous shot. This conversation finished thus:

> Interviewer: 'If someone didn't have a horse were they lent one?'
>
> Thérèse: 'That's right – we helped one another'.

The interviewer checked the information on offer. We are in no doubt that community help existed. As maker I am now in a position to develop a different kind of editing pattern, relating paintings to live action, and music to live action and paintings. The live action images show dexterity of horsemanship (shot 141), the largeness of the animals (shot 143), their energy (shot 151), the seriousness of the competition and the

work relationship the men have with the horses (shots 144, 145, 147, 148, 152, 153, 154). These qualities are echoed in the paintings with which the live action is inter-cut. The scene ends (shot 156) on a long shot of the painting of the opening horse by the longère (shot 135) which sets the farm perfectly in the countryside. The whole of this scene is set against the next scene dealing with the impact of modernisation.

Movement and gesture become significant by the juxtaposition of live action and the paintings. The gestures registered in the live action can be compared to those found in the paintings. The man standing on moving horses and the shot that follows (shots 141 and 142) and the live action horses on the move from low angle camera position (shot 151) can be directly compared to the energy depicted in Jean Frélaut's horse fair painting (shots 140 and 146). The movement and gesture fit the music track. At one point (shot 144), one of the judges gives a sweep of the hand gesticulating to one of the contestants. This was edited to an exact spot in the music track, so it appears that he is conducting. As the music reopens, so the shot restarts the action from the previous shot of detail from a painting (shot 151). Finally the cut-away of two thoughtful men not only shows their concentration and interest, but also marks a slowing down, a return to a conclusion, and the end of this particular narrative which finally happens when there is a cut to the painting of the longère set within the landscape. The whole construction is made into one narrative flow from disparate shots separated in the chronology of shooting. The principal theme in this scene of contemporary non-work time is added to by 'echoes' of other themes, one key aspect being the comparison through the paintings with a time when the horse fair was a part of the work experience. I did not shoot the horse fair as a filmed reportage at a modern horse competition. Rather the shots are taken to create both a simple narrative

centred on the horse parades, so that the shots have the potential to be used in editing to develop the 'echoes' of meaning.

The final example associates, by juxtaposition of events portrayed, Gaby with the Moules Gathering Scene he would have rarely attended, but which he was nevertheless proud to relate to me. He preferred to buy his moules from the local travelling shop.

Moules Gathering Scene (Shots164 - 196)

164 5" 21' 51"

Music: Accordion (recorded live in bar)

NAR: Fridays are still traditionally

165 3" 21' 54"

Music

NAR: fish days, and shellfish are part of the Breton way of life.

166 5" 21' 59"

Music

NAR: If you don't buy your mussels or oysters at the stall by the church,

167 3" 22' 02"

Music

NAR: or visiting fish van, then, as Antoinette recommends,

168 7" 22' 09"

Music

NAR: the only thing to do is to go to Damgan where high tides allow you to collect your own moules.

169 5" 22' 14"

Atmos.

Music

170 6" 22' 20"

Music

171 3" 22' 23"

Spot sound effect: seagulls.

Music

172 2" 22' 25"

Music

173 13" 22' 38"

Spot sound effect: seagulls.

Music

174 7" 22' 45"

Music

175 6" 22' 52"

Music

176 3" 22' 55"

Music

177 2" 22' 57"

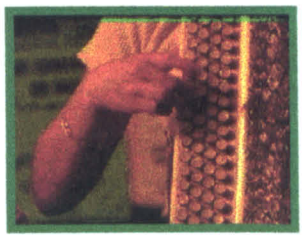
Music

178 1" 22' 58"

Music

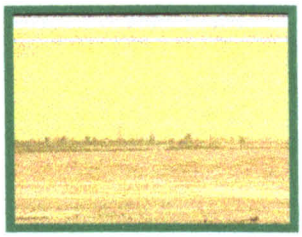
179 3" 23' 01"

Music



180 5" 23' 06"

Music



181 2" 23' 08

Atmos.

Music

182 3" 23' 11"

Seagulls

Music

183 3" 23' 14

Seagulls

Music

184 2" 23' 16"

Music

185 3" 23' 19"

Music

186 3" 23' 22"

Music

187 2" 23' 24"

Atmos.

Music

188 2" 23' 26"

Atmos.

Music

189 3" 23' 29"

Atmos – sound of moules being poured into pot.

Music

190 4" 23' 33"

Atmos.

Music

191 3" 23' 36"

Atmos.

Music

192 2" 23' 38"

Atmos.

Music

193 5" 23' 43"

Atmos.

Music

194 2" 23' 45"

Atmos.

Music

195 4" 23' 49"

Atmos. – Gaby heard talking

Music

196 4" 23' 53"

Music ends. A moment of silence then –

Gaby: Ah! Bon.

3. The Moules Gathering Scene

See Previous pages: (Shots 164 – 196)

This scene is different from all other scenes, standing somewhat alone and singular in the overall pattern, being a 'silent film homage', a homage to the graceful silhouette artists and to the cultural pursuit and ritual of moules gathering and eating. Apart from an introductory narration and some important spot effects, the scene is a set of action images (gestures) played against a piece of local accordion music. There was a silhouette feel to the people gathering the moules reminiscent of the silhouette pictures created by Brighton artists, who, after the well-known black and white shapes, developed the genre by the use of pastel colouring. Again the energy of the participants and of the sea and the relationship between the two was important: hence mostly long shots were used. The whole event is over in a few hours, but is marked by the ritual narrative of going down to the mud islands, picking moules and returning – an almost silent story. Now silent films were far from silent. They had piano accompaniment, if not an orchestra, and audience reaction. Gaby becomes the audience, in a way, since he provides a verdict on the moules he is eating, when he says at the end of the scene: 'ah, bon'. I do not think it too fanciful to think that he, as participant, is commenting on the value of the Moules Gathering Scene's activities as well.

The scene is placed as a break away from the texture of farming and all that this implies. It is a seaside landscape without Jean Frélaut. The rather quaint accordion music is different from, but not unlike, the Breton music. It is a contemporary sound of the region, much liked by all age groups, and played both at home and in local bars. Humans, set in the cold winter's day with the thin sun giving an orange light, work as

part of their leisure to collect moules. They look Breton through and through. Their repeated actions take place amidst the fast moving water of the low tide estuary. Energy from natural forces mixes with that from these Breton folk present.

The Moules Gathering Scene interacts with Gaby and Antoinette preparing and eating the moules. Two activities separated in time are brought into a comparison. Both are largely silent activities except for the sound of the occasional seagull at the estuary, or the clanking of shells being prepared. Most of the estuary shots are in long shot, placing the people in this distinct landscape, and their movements are set against that of the sea. This contrasts with Gaby and Antoinette's kitchen, its smallness and the intimacy and detail of the preparations. When we return to the kitchen for the big breakfast (scene 14) we will know it already. As was stated earlier in the narration (over shot 47):

> NAR: 'Gaby and Antoinette's longère maintains a traditional kitchen/ living room, where everyone meets'.

We are involved with some of Gaby and Antoinette's properties: the wire basket where the shallots are kept; the dresser where the bread is kept; the kitchen cupboard, the table with its oil cloth; the pots; the old radio in the background, and of course, the moules. There is a dignity and relevance about the two occasions bordering on the religious. Not unlike the birth of the calf – interior and intimate – compared to the religious service, the Pardon, exterior, large and windy – where a community is activated through ritual. Hence the scene is active in creating patterns of atmospheres, gestures, and feelings about a particular lifestyle.

These three examples indicate, how the non-linear idea creates what I call moments of

meaning. These exist for a moment as a beat. They exist, to be spotted, and they build up over the entire length of the tape. Taken together, they function to produce empathy between viewer and the participants – as viewers, we do not know the people filmed, but we acknowledge them as human beings. We can build up a set of meanings that relate the history of the community, to contemporary events in the community, and to the local non-fragmented lifestyle of one individual – Gaby. Empathy is one idea, its power noted earlier when considering Robert McKee's idea of empathy. But the beats can also imply other meanings for the viewer. The viewer has to work out, for example, the relationship between Gaby and Antoinette, between Gaby and the others, and indeed who Gaby is, as an individual.

3.2.3 Beats

The use of the long shot, I found in L'Artiste, Le Fermier et Le Paysage, forces the viewer into asking what is happening. It is a powerful device for documentary. Within the long shot a number of 'beats', or moments of meaning, are generated. The non-linear improvised approach focuses on the individual elements, and how they interact to produce meanings which exist, but are never stated so emphatically as to be 'God-given'. They are there as materials for the viewer to work with and build a deeper level of understanding. They may be contained within either the sound track or the image, or indeed the movement of the camera. In the latter case, a small forward movement of the hand-held camera registers both the camera-person and the camera's presence, which together are accepted by the participants as another element of the on-going action. Analysis of the Birth of the Calf Scene, and the Breakfast Scene demonstrate how meanings are created, so as to await recognition by the viewer.

The Birth Of the Calf Scene (Shots 216-217)

Beat 1. Alleluia chorus with echo and set within pulling of tackle sound as calf's feet are seen. Jean-Baptiste stands legs apart pulling at rope. Antoinette pulls at cow's skin to aid delivery. Thérèse enters from right picks up straw to wrap around hands and helps in the delivery.

Beat 2. Gaby is heard off screen. Music finishes, followed by some random speaking. A moment's quiet. A small bellow is heard coming from the cow. Then a much bigger bellow. Sound of tackle. Calf 'plops' out.

3.

Camera pans to calf. Window in background where light pours in. Antoinette moves forward to collect bucket and takes it nearer the calf. Antoinette: Here we are – salt and water.

Beat 4. Thérèse moves in front of calf as Antoinette returns with straw in hands. Camera moves. Jean-Baptiste moves to collect bucket.
Thérèse: He's a lively little thing. What a beauty! Poor animal!
Antoinette – ever practical – checks sex of calf. Camera follows and pans.
Jean-Baptiste throws water over head of calf. It moves. The quaintness of the cowshed is registered. Jean-Baptiste: Yes, that's how you get them to move. Calf struggles but can't stand up.

Beat 6. Camera pans to line of Antoinette, Thérèse, a neighbour, and Gaby. Pan back to Antoinette with calf.
Therese: Is he a Charolais. Antoinette: Yes. Antoinette walks off as…

Beat 7. Gaby enters in front of camera with some salt.
Gaby (to camera): He's not godfather nor the father! Laughter.
Gaby gives the salt to the calf. Many hands are in shot.
Gaby: It's a male. Camera realigns its position then Gaby moves calf to mother's head.

1. <u>The Birth of the Calf Scene</u> (shots 216-217)

The scene runs 1' 35", the first shot lasting 1' 32" the second shot lasting just 3". The energy of the scene is focussed on the birth of the calf. You can hear the cranking of the pulley tackle but the camera remains with the main event. The people helping are never referred to, but the main helpers for Gaby are Thérèse and Jean-Baptiste, interviewed earlier, and Antoinette, whilst neighbour Philippe is seen only fleetingly as a bystander. The opening of the shot shows Antoinette reacting and laughing. Thérèse is standing in the centre, Jean-Baptiste is positioned to pull the rope. All three take a legs-astride position. Patches of light reflect off the walls; hay is strewn across the floor:

Thérèse/Jean-Baptiste: 'Here it comes, here it comes'.

This is followed by an interplay between the sound of the pulley tackle, voices, the cow bellowing, and the image of all three working together, using all their energy as they pull hard. Pleasure is derived from the sound-image interplay, which is improvised, from seeing the basic way a calf is delivered and from the location itself, but for me the quality of their particular gestures is very important. They mark the human energy of work – its physicality, which can be seen elsewhere in the tape: in the paintings (see shots 24, 25, 29, 30, 31), in the chicken arrival scene (shots 75, 78), in the cider making scene (shot 107), during the moules gathering (shot 174), and when the chickens leave (shot 233). This was an insight I gained when, after recording the paintings, I began shooting the cider-making scene. That exact same moment when energy is used could be seen in both paintings and live action. It provided ways of composing shots of work and their relevance to the overall pattern. It fulfils the criteria of improvisation at every level. At the birth, there was total freedom between myself and the participants. The material was a consequence of

previous shooting occasions, so I was very conscious of the need to show the energy of work and, in structuring, I knew that echoes of meaning could be established which gave the viewer the opportunity to feel emotionally for the participants. Work in this community is both physical work (in the case of the birth of the calf) which creates direct income, and also leisure activity (the Moules Gathering Scene or the Cider Making Scene, for example), and has cultural and historical significance as is shown through the paintings. This quietly stated focus of the tape is intended to give added pleasure to the viewer who is prepared to roam across the surface of the tape and piece together a feeling for this farming community.




Breakfast Scene (Shot 241- the long take)

Gaby gesticulates to man and eats.
Gaby: And the next day there was a cockerel sitting on the eggs!
Have you ever seen that before?

Pan to man by window (3 shot)
Woman: We saw it, we did!
Gaby: It was sitting in front of the tractor.

Pan to Rosalie: (who is standing by the fireplace)
As Rosalie says: He showed us last week
Rosalie: Come and see it, he said, I've got something to show you. It was sitting on the nest, but the tractor was running, wasn't it?

Pan to Gaby.
Gaby: He just sat there – he's used to sleeping through it.
Man: Just like you!
Pot picked up from table by Rosalie.

Conversation continues (not translated).
Plate of sausages put on table by Rosalie
Man by window: I had an old jacket in the garage that I used for gardening.
Woman laughs towards camera.
Man again: And one day, I used my fork to get it down …



Pan away to Antoinette who is collecting food from dresser.
Pan with action. Rosalie crosses in front of Antoinette.
Man: and found some chicks in one of the pockets!
Rosalie returns with bread as plates of meat are put on table.



Man cuts chunk of bread, offers remainder to Gaby who sees piece left on table which he takes. So man passes remainder to woman seated next to him.

Man by window is heard: There were these chicks in my pocket. Yes.

Woman speaks as camera moves up line. Woman cuts bread.

Gaby is talking about house next door.

Camera moves again to young woman.

She is cutting bread the modern way.

Woman speaks as camera pans back to Gaby.

There is a moment of silence.

Pan back to young woman who is cutting second slice of bread.

Young woman: I'm not cutting the tablecloth!

Woman: Young people don't know how to slice bread!



Pan back to Gaby: This is how to slice bread.

Woman: Young people aren't very clever nowadays, are they?

Things aren't what they used to be!

NAR: This is a convivial way of life with time to spend chatting and with no other motive than to enjoy the moment.

2. The Breakfast Scene (shots 236 – 241)

See Previous pages for long shot take shot 241

The breakfast scene (shots 236 – 241, shot 241, the long take, being 3' 26" in duration) is the centrepiece of the tape, showing the complementary nature of work and non-work time. Workers sit down to a full Breton breakfast, after collecting the chickens. A breakdown of the long-take shot 241 is also given in the Shot Analysis pages 44-46 and a smaller-sized version is given on the previous page. Not every word is translated in the English version, but the relaxed atmosphere is very noticeable. The small kitchen, and the number of people, meant that I could film from only one position. We were all tired, since work had commenced five hours earlier at 4 a.m. The participants saw that filming chickens was just as much of a job as the one they faced. Bringing the camera in from the cold meant I faced problems of condensation. I decided to use a microphone which was non-directional, i.e. it would not highlight a particular person speaking which is normally the case using a 'rifle mike'. The scene that appears on the tape is a section selected from about twenty minutes of rushes.

There are three important points relating to this scene. Firstly, it was improvised in the same way as the Birth of the Calf Scene, which is to say, although the action was one familiar to the participants, they were prepared to perform at the moment of shooting. Everything was possible both for myself as cameraman and for the participants. Of the eight participants, seven are active in the scene. This is the second important point. Whilst Gaby remains the centre of our attention, we are nevertheless engaged with the others on equal terms according to the action. The viewer's appreciation of community is bounded by the gestures and interactions within the room, and by what

the people allude to through language, outside. Here is a group of people, at ease within themselves, not acting for the camera, believable through this improvisation. The third point is the aim of recording the ebbs and flows of conversation. It is the ability to carry silences that marks non-competitiveness between people who are in an employer-employee relationship which we have just seen in the gathering of chickens. The aim is achieved through the camera following both the main conversation and the action. The result is a symmetrically constructed scene as follows:

Gaby – eating soup, gesticulates and starts the story of the cockerel.

Pan to

Man by window, who continues the story

Pan to

Rosalie standing by fireplace, who continues the story.

Pan to

Gaby turns the story into a joke. Soup-pan goes and is replaced with a dish of food. Gaby: 'He's used to sleeping through'. Other: 'Just like you'.

Pan with action to long shot

Man by window continues the story, then the woman laughs towards me and into the camera.

Pan from table to Antoinette at dresser

Then pan back to table (Long Shot) then follow the action of Rosalie with the bread who shoos the dog out of the way with bread, then passes the bread to man at the table who cuts the bread and passes it to the lady seated next to him. She then passes the bread to the younger woman. The image is now back to the Long Shot at the table as the bread story is told.

Small pan to

Gaby re-instated at the centre.

The movement of the camera into its seven positions is both reactive to the stories told and the action. Indeed the language gains from the fact that on occasions more than one person is talking at the same time. The camera works with both speech and action, capturing the moments of movement with both Antoinette and Rosalie, who have prepared and who are serving the food. Gesture and speech are part of one whole, which supports the overall theme where work is part of an non-fragmented lifestyle.

Beats are also created in the interview and, in terms of the non-linear improvised approach, require the active involvement of maker as interviewer and interviewee to make it happen in a situation akin to the improvisational approach found in the theatre. It is to this area that we will now turn.

3.3 Improvised Performance and the Interview

The key factor to the interviews was that they were to be located as taking place amongst friends, in the spirit of finding out. In this way meanings would accrue and a sense of being established. Peter Berger and Thomas Luckman note the power of conversation:

> The most important vehicle of reality-maintenance is conversation ... At the same time that the conversational apparatus on-goingly maintains reality, it on-goingly modifies it. Items are dropped and added, weakening some sectors of what is still being taken for granted and reinforcing others. Generally speaking, the conversational apparatus maintains reality by 'talking through'

various elements of experience and allocating them a definite place in the real world (1967:172-173).

The actress Sarah Brignall was cast for the role of interviewer, because of her work in physical theatre, notably in John Wright's On the Verge of Exploding. The main interview with Gaby, although arranged in advance, turned out to be impromptu. Gaby was ill when we arrived, and it took two days to make contact with him. In the meantime, I spent time with Sarah travelling around the countryside, talking about the project, developing a set of questions and a strategy of how Sarah might play them according to anticipated answers. At the interview, in the kitchen of his home, Gaby arranged for his sister Antoinette to be there also. His illness, together with the fact that he did not quite know what was going to happen and that the interviewer was an attractive female actress, gave an edge to the proceedings. The interview was recorded in about forty minutes. The intention was that it should be as if it were a conversation. Gaby, in previous encounters, had been totally unaware of his mannerisms. If, for example, he had an itch on his back, then he would find a nearby post and rub his back against it, whilst continuing the conversation. It was this quality of Gaby I wanted to register in the interview. Hence the interviews appear in the final tape as long takes where the body language of Gaby plays with the rhythms of speech, for Gaby, the interviewer and Antoinette. What Gaby says seems to me to be truthful in that it is really what he believes, shows his sense of humour, and is spontaneous. The takes are long so as to register the layers of meaning generated within the flow of conversation around a single theme. Take the following interview shot number 84 as an example.

Gaby Interviewed (shot 84)

84 50" 10' 24"

GABY: There's ploughing to be done, sowing, making hay, cutting the grass. Afterwards storing the corn but the Company takes care of that.
INT: What about the straw?
GABY: Straw.
INT: What about the grain?
GABY: The grain- yes; and so on.
INT: So you are busy all year round?
GABY: Oh – yes.
INT: That's good, isn't it?
GABY: Yes, it's good but
INT: It's too much work, isn't it?
GABY: 24 hours a day. We never stop – no holidays.
INT: No holidays?
GABY: Never, never.
INT: If you had a choice would you rather do something else?
GABY: Oh no. I wouldn't start anything new now. I'd rather be a tramp ~ laughter ~ I'm fed up with work.

1. Gaby Interviewed

See previous page for shot 84

The typical journalist's approach would be to cut at the end of a single piece of information, such as after the following exchange:

Interviewer: 'So are you busy?'

Gaby: 'oh, yes.'

In fact if the take continues you are rewarded with a further thought that Gaby has never had a holiday, plus the sight, through interaction with Sarah, of Gaby turning the seriousness of the conversation on its head:

Interviewer: 'If you had a choice would you rather do something else?'

Gaby: 'Oh, no. I wouldn't start anything new now. I'd rather be a tramp ~ laughter ~ I'm fed up with work'.

This is an important example of documentary improvisation. The interview cited needed the interplay of the moment to get the result, and for that to happen it needed the 'accidents' that led to that point. In this case the illness of Gaby and the resultant time given for talking with the interviewer. The documentary maker needs to work with these risks which are essentially to do with improvised performance. The same method was applied to the other interviewees, Cécile Roux-Frélaut and Thérèse, who brought her husband to sit nearby for the interview. Cécile, for example, an energetic and ebullient character, decided, upon meeting me, to take me straight away to Frélaut's various homes and the landscapes, which he had painted in the Vannes area. This confirmed her a place within the tape, and the modernity theme, since the Vannes landscapes have been transformed into a new housing estate and modern out-of-town shopping areas. Her character and home, and what she had to say, defined that the artist's life style was under his control, as much as the farmer's, although he

belonged to a very different class.

There is a game between the maker and participant, which is: can I, the maker, get the participant to reveal those specific aspects of knowledge and information I know that person to have, and also offer a character statement, recorded in the scheduled and limited time available to me. Equally, the participant will be asking: will I be able to give this maker what he is looking for; will I not reveal too much; will I, do I, trust this stranger? Both share the question. What's in it for me? In the times spent getting to know Gaby and Antoinette, their strength of character was very noticeable. Gaby was instinctive, with little formal education. He knew his farming and exhibited both a warmth and directness. He was capable of playing to his audience – since he would say one thing to one person, something else to another. How was such a documentary character to be filmed?

2. Improvised Performance during Live Action Recording

Paul Gray in his seminar on directing film drama is very helpful to the documentary maker when he refers to character breakdown in the following terms:

> Identify activities: what the character physically does that is of some consequence or importance e.g. unbuttons button ... select the single important action central to the scene ...determine the goal of the character which covers the entire scene and which covers the key action (International Forum Seminar, London, 1990).

This is very useful as an aid to developing the documentary character. For example, in the Breakfast Scene, the scene objective for Gaby is of the order:

> I must be at one with my workers and friends who have just finished loading

some 20,000 chickens into crates since 4.00 a.m.

The key phrase is 'be at one', and how this is accomplished fits in with the notion of not being a clock-watcher. Hence the importance of the scene in the tape, and its shooting as a single long take. Time is not fractured as Gaby leads the meal, allows spaces for other people to join in the conversation, and generally presides over the goodwill that passes between them, as they eat a traditional hearty Breton breakfast.

Whilst the Breakfast scene is stage-managed, it is done so entirely by the participants. What happens at the time of shooting is entirely spontaneous. Two patterns are produced. The first is within the action and dialogue of the participants. The other pattern is from the maker's intervention, through the camera movements and types of microphones used. Like the small movement of the camera in the Birth of the Calf Scene, here the movement of the camera also acknowledges the maker's presence as it follows the conversation and the serving of the meal. Also of note is the woman who talks to me during recording. There is no barrier between maker and participants – the recording really is a piece of improvised performance.

Of course, Gaby is not the only participant. He has his sister, Antoinette. Thérèse, who is married to Jean-Baptiste, parallels them, and Cécile who links to Jean Frélaut, and for a short time is seen with her sister Anne-Marie. Then there is Gaby's friend called Rosalie. The other characters are minor – helpers, and represent what might be termed documentary extras, as in the Moules Gathering, Horse Fair and Pardon Scenes. In fact all have their place in the fabric of the tape. They are seen to be active, whether in work or leisure. They add greatly to the texturing of the tape as they bend to collect moules or carry a religious figurine.

The music hall techniques are not lost in this improvised world. All the characters have their mannerisms located in the tape. Gaby has his typical gestures, which are registered both in the interviews and in live action. Thérèse has her noticeable speech patterns, slow and thoughtful. Cécile is consistently enthusiastic and energised. They all speak out unrehearsed, their language spoken in phrases, alluding to images lived in the past, which mingle, as the occasion demands, with attitudes to the present.

3.4 Sound in the Non-Linear Improvised Documentary

In L'Artiste, Le Fermier et Le Paysage the main theme sets forth others, which get recognised in discreet scenes, but there are many overlaps. This, together with the volume and type of beats, marks the non-linear improvised approach of this documentary. Of particular relevance is the part played by the long-take, wide angled shot, the ensemble of participants of whatever level of contribution and the variety of sound-image inputs. Which brings me to the point that documentary owes more to interplay of its elements than to anything else.

Sound consists of a number of distinct groups. These are synchronous dialogue, voice-over, music, atmospheric tracks, and spot effects. These groups are traditionally used to develop narrative pace, a sense of continuity, as well as to give information or create an affective response within the audience. In a non-linear improvised documentary sound exists as a complex set of distinct inputs. They are always used to support the main theme(s) of the tape, and to give the viewer the opportunity to engage in making judgements, creating space to enjoy the 'being' of the many participants and empathise with the social milieu. Noises of activities well known in the community stand for much more than 'the noise', which is emanating at that

moment. They stand for the values of the community. For example, the noise of the moules as they enter the pot will be recognised as a familiar and 'friendly' sound for those watching the tape who are from the region or similar regions. This is a similar use of sound, which has been described by Bordwell and Thompson as when isolating an object to its sound: sound as a spatial dimension because it comes from a source, and that source may be characterised by the space it occupies (1985: 191). In our case, the sound of moules as they are placed in the pot becomes a deliberate 'spot effect' to make a particular meaning. This can be compared to the Breakfast Scene where the use of a non-directional microphone works in an opposite way to highlight the overlapping of the conversation. At times we lose contact with particular meanings generated from the conversations, so that the viewer accepts the poetic flow of language which enriches both contact between the participants filmed and the viewer to both the participants and the theme of the tape.

The folk music was used to create an association with the region, the farmer and the landscape. Many of the village fêtes are still for local farmers, rather than tourists, and each has its local folk group and dance music. A key property of the music is its energy and its 'whirling' quality, as when a note reverberates and is repeated. This is folk music to be played outside enhanced by the wind. Its energy echoes the energy of the farm worker, and the elements around him. For example, in the Eau de Vie scene (shots 130 –133) music complements both the flowing liquid as it is poured into a cask and the swirling smoke which is purposely held to register its connection to the landscape where trees are seen in the distance. Music controls mood. The opening music has a sense of purpose in its direct style and tempo. This contrasts with the accordion waltz played over the cows to field in scene 3 (shots 54 – 66). Gaby is seen

puzzled, since the cows do not follow him into the lower field. There is a lightness of touch and humour to the music which 'fits' this occasion. It is the same kind of sound as the music for silent cinema, which was explained by cinema pianist Ena Baga in my film An Acre of Seats in a Garden of Dreams, where music is played 'to fit the action on screen'. The connection of music 'energy' and human work is seen in the cider making scene (shots 96 -106), where Gaby pushes and pulls the mulch, over layers of hay, to form a cube. In the Moules scene (shot 174) a man is seen moving moules from one bucket to the next. It is like, and in time with, the movement of the accordionist whose music we hear playing, and who is seen in shot 180. Over time a mood and atmosphere is built up, which is derived from these similarities and, coming as they do from the juxtaposition of sound and music, they are equally as important as carriers as is the narration. The viewer is expected to appreciate the value of such repetitions to the overall theme, both within the surface of the shots and between them. At the end of the film (shots 333-340) the musical repetitions provide a barrel-organ effect, which I first noticed from the barrel-organ playing live in John Allin's Hopping and used again to create a succession of dissolves timed to coincide with static images and paintings to provide an ending.

Most of the music is recorded separately and especially for the film. At two points it is from a disc. Le Group Folklorique de Meriadec recorded the original music. But twice the music is recorded 'live' and in sync. One time this happens is at the Fête Scene where it is used dramatically. Here the dancers join hands and move forwards as a group (Shot 292). The following image is of Gaby who looks on. The suggestion is he looks on into the next shot of a Frélaut painting. The music continues over these shots and is played under the narration. This is one example of music having an equal

position in developing meaning. The other is at the Pardon during the procession. It is a religious song of the Pardon recorded in the street with the sound coming from a loudspeaker. What these two recordings do is to bind the exterior argument and structure developed by the maker with the interior life of the farmers and their landscape, thereby developing a sense of oneness for the viewer

Sound effects and atmospheric tracks can help develop pace, and provide further interaction between the general discourse and the events recorded. With shot 214 and 215, it is the sound cut that gives pace and the sense of narrative development, as we move forward with the priest, hear the Alleluias begin being chanted, and finally see the priest walking onto the podium, set up for Mass, and towards the altar, with a background of 'earthy' trees, which act to help set up the return to the farmer in the cowshed. This marks the end of the scene since I have linked religion to the community and to nature via the trees. I now am able to reconnect with Gaby delivering the calf. At the start of the live action Pardon (shots 202-205) sounds are synchronous. Sound mostly, but not always, underneath the voice-over brings the viewer closer to the social situation recorded. The point is to recognise that sound is a system of elements which play in complex ways to produce ideas for the audience to recognise, or be affected by.

3.5 Conclusion

The relationship between making (the process) and outcome (the tape) is very strong indeed. From the social interactions of production comes the quality of performance, and with it, depth of meaning in registering human experience. It is an ethical experience. As has constantly been remarked, the final tape is a function of the

coming together of the separately recorded sounds and images. It is now possible to place these into a structure, and this frame constitutes the outcome of the non-linear narrative approach whose mission is to give pleasure.

Noel Carroll has stated that 'movies reorganise and construct. They evince visible order and identity to a degree not found in everyday experience' (cited in Plantinga, 1997: 153). In developing the concept of beats, which I define as moments when a meaning or emotion exists within a shot, documentaries not only evince order but they can also, taken collectively, produce a depth of understanding. The beats may be contained within any of the sound tracks or the image track. They can be generated from the improvised performance, in interview or recorded action event, or from the particular placing of a sound and image, by the maker. They can be explicitly laid or implied. By implied I refer to those moments as when, for example, the music notation 'fits' a movement on screen, which implies a meaning, or when an interviewee gives a gesture challenging or altering the verbal communication. When they are repeated they create echoes. The echoes can generate the same point in different ways by using different sound-image combinations.

The final event is the viewing of the tape. This may be through a television screen in the domestic context of the home, or in a public place for a specific purpose. In either circumstance, creating meaning is something the viewer does. The impact of the tape depends on the circumstances of viewing. Over the years I have had the opportunity to view my films or tapes in a variety of public performances. Examples include: Radio Radio, which played a South East Arts Tour of the regional film societies including a venue in a hospital hall complete with patients wandering through, and

An Acre of Seats in A Garden of Dreams, which was screened at the Magic Society theatre to the cinema organists club whose members were ecstatic. This latter compared with the audiences at the National Film Theatre and regional film theatres who were enthusiastic as film 'buffs'. A common feature was the fact that if the audience had an existing interest in or relationship with the material, then the audience response was that much stronger. For example, when I took the L'Artiste, le Fermier et Le Paysage into the homes of farmers, the group would consist of several men on one side of a large kitchen table, whilst the womenfolk were seated separately. Gaby was present and would ask on occasion for the tape to be stopped whilst someone was recognised in the tape. At other times there would be agreement with a point in the commentary or in the interviews and 'very true' would be heard. This is precisely the point of improvised theatre where the audience recognises what is happening and applauds that point – the audience becomes the theatre. This is not always the viewing situation and the non-linear approach suggests a structure and pattern to the tape whereby a different audience might respond primarily to the tape as a narrative document.

The development of the non-linear improvised narrative I find compelling since it provides a key to documentary issues, bound as they are in a changing landscape of technology, new patterns of ownership of production and distribution. It highlights qualitative differences. I can now apply the approach to a number of documentaries before drawing conclusions.

CHAPTER 4 The Non-linear Improvised Approach Applied to Other Works

> "What do I see?" and "What do I hear?" are serious questions, and in asking them we exercise our freedom and renew our relation to the world. Michel Chion, Audio-Vision ... Sound On Screen (1994: 186).

This thesis developed from making L'Artiste, Le Fermier et Le Paysage, which, in its turn, stands in relation to my previous documentary work. The key elements of the thesis rest in seeing documentary as (a) the product of 'surface' reading by the viewer and (b) as the product of the maker working with the participants, over a period of time, in the manner of an improvised performance. These two propositions interact, since both work towards the goal of producing many and varied moments of meaning – beats – some of which may contradict, extend or interrupt each other. Whatever the case, beats work within defined scene objectives, so that they function to support the main theme and story. The result is to produce an effect on the viewer. His / her pleasure rests in the game of recognition, anticipation, judgement and reflection, in addition to the empathetic state enjoyed vis-à-vis participants, locations, and archival or other audio-visual sources (such as music and sound effects).

In making a non-linear documentary the concern is to create echoes of meaning and a depth to knowledge, by timely relevant interruptions to the narrative flow, which might be seen as unnecessary deviations, if we apply the normal story rules of the Hollywood movie. As we have seen, in L'Artiste, Le Fermier et Le Paysage, or Les Vacances de M. Hulot, interrupting the flow is what produces depth of meaning, keeping the communication going. Interruption can happen either within structures,

taking us somewhere unexpected, or in visual performance, when one look or gesture changes, or is interrupted with another of opposite meaning. It is these two factors – the interruption of narrative structure and performance – combined, that make the non-linear narrative approach so powerful and appealing, creating a capacity to develop within the viewer an understanding of the complexities of social life and the participant's inner consciousness. The approach is democratic since participant, maker and viewer all have a claim to make upon the final outcome. The approach's strength is the acknowledgement it gives to the complexity of relationship between participant – maker – outcome - audience. It is a vibrant approach since it gets away from the more static idea of classification. Every documentary is a single creative endeavour where the theme or controlling idea emerges in the dynamic of the production cycle, and where the recording and editing of scenes is in dynamic exchange with the theme. Hence the relevance of John Corner's statement:

> The requirement is still to explore further the different levels at which documentarist practices relate to the 'real' and the different ways in which 'creativity' can operate, within various political and social conventions of representational propriety (1996: 20).

The non-linear improvisatory approach to documentary enables the individual to access documentaries, providing a flexible mode of assessment. My premise, in this chapter, is that the non-linear improvised approach usefully demonstrates the key assumptions working within a particular documentary, whatever the philosophical underpinning or sound-image pattern adopted. It will quickly reveal the underlying philosophy and aims of a programme – the theme and the overall-editing pattern, and what resultant consistency and congruence there might be between these and the beats

generated within scenes. For example, some documentaries focus on the improvisational qualities of the participants, others on traditional exposition, focussing on a narrated story line, whilst still others have the same ambition creating a flow of beats but use a participant as an on-screen presenter to organise material. The non-linear improvised approach should be able to evaluate work according to the consistency and complexity of the pattern produced, and its success or otherwise to engage an audience through improvisational techniques of performance to achieve a successful participant performance, that is, a good televisual character. I will take the first programme in the 1998 documentary series Hotel (programme one) as my first example, which set a precedent for many subsequent series which are now known as observational narratives or docu-soaps. The programme comes closest to fitting the definition of the non-linear improvised documentary which is rarely found within the genre of low cost television documentary. I will then compare it to one of its successors, The Cruise, showing the non-linear improvisational approach's potential for assessment. As a final example I wish to consider The Belovs, a remarkable film documentary where there is a continuous line from performance beats to the overall sound-image editing pattern.

Hotel (Shot Analysis)

1.

NAR: Grand National Day; the busiest three days of the year for

2.

NAR: Liverpool's Adlephi Hotel.
General Manager (GM): You've got dirty ashtrays in the Crosby Room, will you go and sort it out.

3.

NAR: General manager Eileen Downey copes with a full hotel.

4.

Receptionist: Are you happy now?
NAR: Senior receptionist, Christine, must keep track of the 391 rooms sold.
Receptionist: If you read the letter as requested!

5.

GM: You again, Do you hunt in a pack boys?
Man: We're just looking for another four rooms.
GM: the basement.

6.

NAR: Whoever wins today's big race, the Adelphi is favourite to make big profits. This weekend the cheapest single room costs £95.

7.

Receptionist: 384, third floor, I'll just get the key for you.
NAR: Christine is building up to her own big event –the birth of her first baby. She has to check in over 700 guests.

Off-screen questions by director followed by on-screen answers from receptionist.

Director: Do you always work your pregnant staff so hard? Receptionist: Yes, I'm still contracted here. Director: Would you miss the Grand National? Receptionist: No, I wouldn't miss the Grand National, not at all – not for anything. I'd rather be there, but maybe next year, with me pram.

8.

Receptionist to camera: And the suit Christine is modelling is the new delightful range from Dorothy Perkins also known as Britannia Hotel. She's brought me no luck, my driving instructor, it's a smock.

9.

RACING COMMENTARY: the winner.
NAR: At Aintree racing has got off to a good start. With all her guests

10.

NAR: at the course, Eileen and her staff traditionally watch the National together.

11.

GM: Hey, they were all here last night – we know them all.

12.

NAR: This year things will be different.

13.

NAR: The race meeting is abandoned.
GM: Oh my god. How many people do you think there are?
Staff: 70,000.

14.

Atmos.

15.

GM: Hey, maybe they will run tomorrow. We will get an extra night out of them.

16.

GM: Yes: go and get the 'A' board.

17.

NAR: If racing is called off

18.

NAR: guests will return early and there'll be little time to prepare.

19.

GM: Get your bars ready.

20.

GM: Hullo, give it a good hoover, and get round the edges there.

21.

GM: Get yourself ready to get your restaurant open.

22.

GM: You going to get your bar open first before you get your table ready for forty. Their rooms are ready so they will be on time.

22

GM: Ashley, I did not want to see them in this building again. I'll get cross! No big earrings!

23.

GM: It's been abandoned. They'll all be coming back.
Let's go.

24.

NAR: It's four o'clock and

25.

NAR: guests start flooding back to the hotel. Those already checked in with their luggage are the lucky ones.

26.

NAR: Others have had to abandon everything at the racecourse.

27.

MAN A: We cannot get in there to get our gear; get anything in, get anything out.
We are thrown out the dressing room like this.
MAN B: We are thrown out the dressing room like this.
No money!
MAN A: No clothes.
MAN B: Jockeys all over town.
MAN A: Jockeys all over town – with breeches on.
MAN B: No money – nothing.
MAN A: Nothing – sort yourself out.
MAN B: Can't get in – we've been told it is shut till twelve.
MAN A: It is shut till twelve – tomorrow.
MAN B: So.
MAN A: You can't get in – nothing.

38.

NAR: It is nearly two hours since the race was cancelled. Although the Adelphi's full thousands of homeless race-goers are now searching for somewhere to sleep.

39.

Atmos.

40.

Receptionist: It's going bananas because at Aintree there's a lot of people who were travelling home and they can't get to their cars, and they can't get any information as to when; so they can drive home. So nobody's got any accommodation for to-night. All the hotels in the city are full.

41.

NAR: They may be legend on the race track, but when it comes to finding somewhere to stay, jockeys get no VIP treatment.

42

Atmos.

43.

Jockey: They told us go out of the weighing room. So we stood outside. They would not let us go back inside to get wallets, keys clothes – anything. Everything is still locked in the weighing room. We were supposed to be going home. We can't get cards out – money – nothing. There are a few other lads staying here, so we will probably stay with them. We can sleep on the sofa.

44.

Man: My keys are at the races. GM: What room number are you Mr. Walsh.
Man: 654 – 645.
GM: 645. You poor little thing.

45.

Man: We're homeless.
NAR: Despite having no clothes, no money and nowhere to stay

46.

NAR: the jockeys are determined to have a good time.

47.

NAR: 723 people returning from the course do have rooms at the Adelphi, but some of them have had enough, and have decided to leave.

48.

MG: Scott – anyone wants to check out tonight you charge for tonight.

49.

Atmos.

50.

RECEPTIONIST: You know I am going to charge you £149 for this evening.

MAN: I do, I think it is unfair.

RECEPTIONIST: Sir, I didn't put the bomb at Aintree. It's not me personally who is charging you to stay over.

51

GM: Excuse me. Somebody is coming in to use the gents.

52

GM: This is not a public lavatory.

NAR: Others are even less welcome.

53

Police siren

Man in street whistles.

54

What's that?

55

NAR: Eileen reserves a special reception, for certain young ladies.
GM: Excuse me – are you resident in the hotel. Well I know you're not that is why I'm asking. It's residents only unless you want to use the public bars – Yeah – can we just wait here our friend has just gone there.
GM: Watch her.

56
Mrs. Owens: I'm awfully sorry you're waiting.
NAR: In the normal tranquil lounge Mrs. Owens is trying to serve tea and sympathy to the unexpected influx of disappointed race-goers.

57

Mrs. Owens: I was surprised when he said this morning why I didn't – telephone rings – why wasn't he getting served and I explained the races had been cancelled, and we didn't expect them back till eight o'clock. On phone: Room service; can I help you. I'm awfully sorry sir, you are going to have to wait up to 15/20 minutes.

58

Receptionist: Even our regular guests who practically live here Monday to Friday.

59

their rate goes up to whatever they have been paying room and breakfast. I just can't reduce it, I'm afraid.
Guest: We'll take it. Receptionist: You are going to take it.

60

NAR: The last rooms are sold to a fortunate few. Other people's fortunes

61

NAR: rest on avoiding Eileen's eagle eyes.

62

Atmos.

63
Mrs. Owens: You're always picking on me. Aren't you. You don't pick on the young ones. I'll have to wear a short skirt like Cathy, and I'll be all right.
NAR: Usually on a Saturday they only sell 30 teas. So far today they have already sold 150.
Mrs. Owens: Get on with your job, shut up. Chef knows everything. Where is me sandwiches.

64

Atmos.

65

NAR: The eagle has landed. In the bar Eileen has caught a glimpse of her prey. The eagle is about to land.

66

NAR: Even guests who would normally be welcome are now being turned away.

67

Receptionist: We are fully booked but we do have sister hotels in Manchester. Everyone's in the same situation.

100

Mrs. Owens: Milk! Richard, take the milk jug. If you call me a soft old cow again, I'm going to report you to the management.
NAR: Mrs. Owens is now on her 321st tray.

Mrs. Owens: tell you what, I've got another jug of milk out there.
Mrs. Owens: You put that there someone will be come out and look after you.
NAR: The lounge has become the meeting point for stranded race-goers. Some of them refugees from The Street (*Coronation Street*).

101

Woman: It's better than Gail's cafe!

102

Television producer: It's a fabulously safe place. There's a bomb at Aintree, so we immediately said, let's go back to the Adelphi. It's funny – it's the first thing that came into everybody's head. Let's go back to the Adelphi.

103

Mrs. Owens: Does anyone want coffee?
Woman: Another three cups.

104

Man: Yeah: Would it be possible to –
Mrs. Owens: keep the bill, you might be able to claim it back.
Man: Can we have two bottles of white?

105

Mrs. Owens: I'll bring a nice big bottle. It'll be cheaper that way.

4.1 Hotel – Episode 1 As a Non-linear Improvised Documentary

See Previous pages: Hotel (Shot analysis, Shots 1 – 27, 38 – 67 and 100 - 105)

1. Non-Linearity

What is striking is how the scenes are bound by the coherence of time passing, relating to the unfolding story of people looking for beds for the night, and of the insights the viewer gains into both guests and employees. The programme concentrates on the conflicts that develop as a consequence of too many people seeking too few rooms. The narrator, Andrew Sachs, quietly orientates the viewer to what is happening. The edited events are small individual narratives. Combined they multiply meanings giving a sense of the power and status divide that exists between staff and staff, and staff and clients. It is this that drives the programme from episode to episode. We, the viewers, are left to assess a range of social interactions. Each character gives a performance. Some characters are stilted at first, but they develop their improvisation abilities during the series. The pace of editing is fast, echoing the chaos of the Aintree race day. In the opening scenes what is remarkable is that, in the sound-image interplay, from a large quantity of material given, we as audience become involved in the many characters and their actions in the ensuing chaos, accepting whatever we observe. My argument is that it is pleasurable, as a non-linear improvised documentary, in relation to the many implied meanings generated about two communities, the static one of the hotel staff and the ever-changing one of the clientele. We, the audience, access such meanings through a process of 'mulling over', and the idea of improvisation as an unconscious performance, where all is possible, adds to our pleasure and our ability to assess and reassess. Moreover the editing pattern through scene juxtaposition and the character-led improvised performances point out the absurdities of the total situation. Hotel does fit the non-

linear improvised approach. A detailed analysis shows just how fragmented the shots are. Each shot almost stands as a narrative statement with its own scene objective, its own beginning, middle and ending. Whilst the overall narrative is time-based, we are reacting to more intangible, more implied meanings, and these develop through the placing of characters – workers with different status, and clients with different social backgrounds.

2. The Opening (Shots 1 – 27)

The set-up is contained in the first twenty-seven shots. The Aintree race is cancelled, and the staff responds to a perceived opportunity. The idea of upper management needing to maximise its income is constantly referred to, although we never in the series depart from the immediate staff of manager and her employees. The chief characters are set out, namely the general manager and her pregnant 'front of house' manager. Within the opening sequence, shots 19 – 23 reinforce the power and status of the main character. The opening also establishes the geography, a time, colour and texture of the programme. For example, the revolving door of the main entrance (shot 24) is reinforced in shot 25 by a low angle of the same setting with people's feet seen entering the hotel. The important sound is of the creaking door, which reinforces the slightly dilapidated feel to the hotel, as well as adding to the idea of 'the rush of the incoming hordes'. This idea of dilapidation is taken up again later in a shot of a mattress with stains being taken out of a cupboard to maximise income rather than to offer desperate clients an additional service, as is established by the maker in the tape. This is an example of a connection to be made by the viewer. The idea of dilapidation is created through a sound cue (creaking revolving door) then later by a visual one (the old mattress).

One key strategic method in developing the relationship of maker to participants, and participants to the viewer, is set up in shot 22. Here, the manager goes to the bar, then turns to an employee to tell her off about the size of her earrings. Compare this with shot 44 where she comments upon one man who has a room: 'You poor little thing', she says to the client. In both cases an intimacy is created for the viewer. This relationship is developed in the street interview (shot 27) where humour is shared between two participants. It is pure music hall comedy. Two men outside the hotel speak to the maker about the problems of not finding a room. The maker – never seen and rarely heard – has created a precedent for interviews which become the second strategic method defining the maker to participants. Anything is possible, and in shot 27 the poetry born out of repetition, timing and visual expression is captured in one take. Within these 27 shots a way of looking at what follows has been established. The viewer has been given an orientation through a diversity of ideas and a range of characters in different social situations. We know that a hotel hierarchy exists to meet the incoming hoards. All these documentary strategies – interviews, self-articulations, scenes as single shots, many locations leading to many social statements, consistency of time and location as well as camera compositions and movements – become repetitive patterns within the overall organisation of the programme, making it easier for the audience to make connections between scenes and leaving the viewer with something to reflect upon. The scenes used below demonstrate how abstract ideas are made concrete within scenes and between scenes and how improvised performance is an integral part in generating both beats within scenes and spaces in between, allowing the viewer's attention to be informed by the image or other sound statements.

3. Themes, Scenes and Beats (Shots 38 – 67 and 100 – 105)

Whilst the episode is centred on the largely masculine world of the Grand National guests, it is nevertheless remarkable for weaving in very powerful statements about women at work. Humour is generated through the visiting prostitutes and creates a noticeable empathy between the narrator, the maker and the main character, the general manager (Shots 53-55; shots 61-62; shots 64-65). Meanwhile another definition of the working female is forthcoming with the appearance of Mrs. Owens – the tea lady. Her character is explored by the camera following her about – panning and tracking – which links the world of the kitchens to that of the main lounge and its guests (Shots 56 – 57; shot 63; shots 100 – 105). We understand Mrs. Owens by her placement against the surrounding shots as well as the shots of her, which occur three times. It is a very complex pattern, where narrative is shaped by the voice-over, but where non-narrative juxtapositions leave the viewer to create meaning. Mrs. Owens is placed after the arrival of the prostitute (shot 56) which locates her in the lounge. Bending over a tray which is on a coffee table, she is apologising to a customer in sympathetic tones:

Mrs. Owens: 'I'm awfully sorry you have waited so long...'

The narrator takes this up:

NAR: 'In the normally tranquil lounge Mrs. Owens is trying to serve tea and sympathy to the unexpected influx.'

Shot 57 relocates Mrs. Owens in the kitchens. She is under pressure and talking indirectly to the camera. She is on her own, the phone rings and we learn that she is also undertaking room service duties. By Shot 63 time has moved on, which is indicated by the focus in the narration on the large number of teas she is having to dispense. Mrs. Owens' main contribution is seen in shots 100 – 105. Starting in the

kitchens we register her dedication, her energy and fortitude, her skill, and her dignity – 'if you call me a soft cow I'm going to report you to the management', she says to a chef. In fact it is the chef who will feature in subsequent episodes. Another possible connection is set up. Shot 100 shows Mrs Owens moving about from kitchen to lounge. She pauses to speak to a customer by the connecting door. As she moves on, turning into the busy lounge, the narration sets up the cut into the interviews with customers (shots 101 and 102). Then there is a cut back to Mrs Owen, first with the group, then with a single male customer. The customers' predicament gives them needs, but we fully appreciate Mrs Owens' state from the long take (shot 100), and we closely empathise as we listen to her good advice to the customer about how to save money by buying a larger bottle of wine. In themselves the shots are meaningful. Within the single take of shot 100 we, as viewers, are affected by Mrs. Owens' care, fortitude, energy, dignity, social and technical skills and her resignation to the social situation set forth. But the shots of Mrs. Owens are also to be compared to other scenes of women at work. In one scene a prostitute is caught and ejected through a bar side door by the manager, into the cold winds blowing outside. Mrs. Owens's scenes can also be compared with the shots referring to money proffered by the manager, to the shot of the middle class lady with her gesture of resignation (shot 67) as she is told there is no room available, and to shots of the chambermaids, as they make ready the 'dormitories'. What is being built up is a statement about women at work, whereby the viewer has to make these connections. Women are chosen for difference. It is notable that short scenes with their cameo improvisations do much to extend our knowledge and feelings about the hotel. Implication rather than any overt statement have made meaning from the narration. This is the same kind of relationship posited for the audience in early silent cinema, referred to earlier, and which is central to the

The Receptionist, the General Manager and the Drunk Scene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BEATS WITHIN <u>THE RECEPTIONIST, THE GM AND THE DRUNK SCENE</u>

1. Man: £200 that is fair. Receptionist: £250. Man: £200 is fair enough. Receptionist: £200
2. Arm outstretched. Drunk arrives. Man: I own one of the horses that was due to run today. Receptionist: Was it going to win?
3. Drunk gestures. Man: It would have won today – General Wolfe. Receptionist: £199.
4. Man: £199 ok.
5. Form filling by receptionist
6. Man: We backed this horse today to win 2 million pounds. And we don't know what's going to happen. Drunk it's a nag. GM V/O Do you know this man or will I eject him? Man: I don't know this man, I don't know who he is.
7. Drunk: I've got a room here. Waves directly to camera. GM: Do you realise how silly you are going to look … You don't care do you. Drunk: Yeah, I don't care. GM: You will care tomorrow Drunk: no way!
8. I'm paying more than double the tariff.
9. Will you sign both of these for me please Mr. Newman.
10. That's great as V/O.
11. GM: There's no room at the Inn. Not even if He comes with his donkey. The star in the sky – Full !
12. Your room has now been released. Drunk: Well that's your problem not mine. I need a room.
13. He's the one outside,
14. That's been going … you going to do it. Thank you.
15. Drunk: Thank you very much (he thinks for a moment he has a room).
    GM: It was only confirmed for you. OK It's after nine p.m. in the evening. We release our rooms by six o'clock that are unconfirmed. Drunk: We were here at 12 o'clock this morning and it was too early. We were told to come back later. We asked was it OK. GM: Did you ask if it was OK to come back at this time of evening? Drunk: yes.
    GM: I don't think so sir … I don't have a room for you. Your room reservation has been released.

16

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24

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26

27

28

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30

31

16. Receptionist: I'm explaining to you – if you listen to me.
17. Drunk: We were told at 12 o'clock that we could not book in at that time.
18. We said that is not a problem – your rooms are booked.
19. Receptionist: The whole of Aintree has been evacuated. You came back into the hotel at 9.30. Drunk: I don't really care.. At 12 o'clock, this morning, we tried to book in. We were told our rooms were booked. We confirmed our rooms at 12 o'clock. Receptionist: Your room was booked. Drunk: So it is not a problem. Receptionist: Your room has now been released. Drunk (emphatically): No.
20. Receptionist: Yes it has sir. Drunk: Well, it may, but that is your problem.
21. Receptionist: Yes it is. Drunk: We were here at 12 o'clock this morning. Drunk gets agitated.
21. GM interrupts: Ay! Don't you shout at my receptionist. Drunk: I will shout at whoever I have to shout at. I was here at 12 o'clock this morning. GM: Now I'm asking you to leave sir.
22. GM: We asked to confirm our rooms and I was told they were confirmed. I asked to book in at 12 o'clock and I was told I couldn't. GM: 2.30 is check in time.
23. Drunk: I explained we were going to the races and that we would be back later and we were told that is not a problem. GM: It is now 10 o'clock in the evening. Drunk: And there was a bomb warning and it has taken me this time to get back here.
24. GM: All my other residents have come back. But can I just say to you, you have had far too much to drink, you are not going to shout here, and I am, in the politest possible manner asking you to leave. No! Well, I will have security remove you – one moment.
25. Argument continues. Drunk: We tried to pay at 12 o'clock. GM: You didn't try to pay. Drunk: Yes we did. GM: You tried to check in sir, that was a totally different matter. Drunk: And we did try to pay for the room.
26. The gentleman's leaving Malcolm. Security man: Come with me, please. Drunk: Excuse me, take your hands off me. Track (hand held) through the hotel to entrance swing doors.
27. Receptionist: I want to go to the pub now, then I want to go home – have my glass of Guinness for my baby – strength and iron for my baby. So yes, I'm not happy with the Grand National. I look forward to the Grand National every year – a very happy happy time, but today hasn't been.
28 and 29. Drunk ejected through swing door and beyond. Drunk: Excuse me, what are you doing?
30. Receptionist: I have had about three fights with guests. I'm too pregnant to be fighting with guests now. I can't give them as good as what I normally can … she laughs.
31. The bed issue is now closed. We have run to about 117 per cent extra.

non-linear improvised approach to documentary.

4. The Receptionist, the General Manager and the Drunk Scene

In the previous pages each beat (defined as a moment of meaning) has been located (Beats 1 – 31). A shot may have one or more beats. Below I refer to both beats as contained in beats 1 – 31 and the earlier analysis of shots as contained between shots 38 – 67 and 100 - 105.

Men, in Hotel, are mostly defined as the race-going public. Again diversity brings knowledge and understanding for the viewer. The jockeys (shots 41-46), the owners and trainers (shot 50), the BBC producer (shot 102) are all located, as is the drunk in The Receptionist, The GM and the Drunk Scene which is placed towards the end of the programme. This scene puts the viewer to the test – are we against the drunk or does he possibly have a point? It is a telling scene. In the detailed analysis given on the previous page this scene is analysed into a number of beats. Three characters interact and we, the audience, view in several ways. We gain pleasure out of recognising what is happening. We gain pleasure from the gestures on display. We do not feel as if we are watching an 'amateur performance' as we do in shot 8 where the reception manager 'acts' for the camera. We view in a judgmental sense – the drunk has a point to make about his booking, which is not recognised by the manager. As the security guards eject the drunk, the viewer is possibly in two minds about the situation. We may not find drunkenness easy to watch, but we may also care less for the treatment given by the hotel management. But the scene works, as do so many of the scenes, on the improvisational qualities of the participants. The previous scenes, often one shot, have functioned so as to prepare the way to this scene. The beats

register the social exchange precisely, how the encounter with the drunk is initiated, how it plays out, and onward towards the eviction. Here are a few examples. In Beat 7 the Drunk pulls faces directly at the camera giving him more direct contact with the viewer than anyone else. In Beat 21 staff line up against the Drunk so that from that moment he is a loser. By Beat 26 the security man has arrived and the event is registered as being part of some ritualistic physical theatre performance as the following conversation takes place:

> GM: 'The gentleman's leaving Malcolm'.
>
> Security man: 'Come with me, please'. Drunk: 'Excuse me, take your hands off.'

4.2 Impact of Hotel

Many other series, which have become known as documentary soaps, or observational narratives, and where personality vignettes are given, followed this Hotel series. The problem is – is this sufficient? The same key question was raised by Brian Winston about Primary, (1960), on the Democratic presidential primary race:

> They have no aim to contextualise what is being shown with any other material. Any understanding we gain of the campaign is a sort of fortunate by-product of our own political and, now, historical knowledge (1995: 152).

In fact, Hotel does note the low pay of its employees, over-work and issues of women at work, but the meanings are more on the surface than set out explicitly. Hotel works on the level of performance believability, which is in part built up through the seriousness of making money set against, it would appear, underpaid over-stressed workers interacting spontaneously – using their own personalities – to cope with work-related stress. Because so many ideas are placed for us, the viewer, to recognise, and because of the spontaneity of the participants both in live action and interview,

Hotel (episode one) is an example of the non-linear improvised documentary. The definition of documentary offered by Rosenthal, relating to 'social impact' is impossible to adopt. Does Hotel mislead or illuminate, is it accurate or inaccurate? It is impossible to say, since we do not know the full circumstances of the relationship between maker and hotel management. Applying the parameters offered by Carl Plantinga to the finished tape - of selection, ordering, emphasis, and point of view or voice – Hotel does illuminate, but only to a point. But it is the application of the criteria of the non-linear improvised approach that reveals the precise ways Hotel can be accounted a success as a television programme. We can see that, in the absurd situations, the tape's structure and patterns make the viewer work to appreciate what is observed – i.e. the many characters and events. And the improvised performance, from the participants, is seen to be a key device for recording and locating many meanings that create an understanding of the chaos and social complexity of one human community.

Hotel is very original and entertaining but, as has been subsequently seen, it has led to a rash of similar programmes, which are noticeable for their uncomplicated editing styles. This series was one the first in a number of documentary series to be screened during the autumn of 1997. Many series were to follow, based on the same filming of institutional life – life of the holiday hostess, life on board a cruise liner, life of an estate agent, warring neighbours, life of prostitutes, departmental store employees, a vet, a retail park, and on and on. A story, theme, action, an interesting location, and a line of 'televisual' characters – these are the ingredients of the contemporary television documentary. The assumptions of each institution – for example, the decisions of senior management and the economics of an industry – remain hidden.

The Cruise

Example of three personalities hierarchically arranged into inter-cut narrative sequences.1 is the singer, 2 the married British couple, Dale and Mary, and 3 an ill lead singer of a new production in rehearsal.
Scenes are assigned one shot below to illustrate the inter-cut narrative pattern.

Key: 1 the singer in scene 1 (for reference only) – **1ocation 1, a taxi interior.**

1 – 1 **Duration: 18"**

Singer (S): Michelle, the lead singer, I mean she's got such a bad throat – a virus and everything. She's really ill and she's the lead vocalist. The last thing she wants to do now is push her throat and get a new show on.

2 – 2 (Stage) 10"

The Cruise ship's entertainers are left on-board to rehearse an unexpected new show. This provides glamour, fast movement colour. It also reinforces the difference to being on dry land – away from the ship the British can be themselves!

3 – 3 (Turtle farm) 25"

The two secondary characters act as a comedy duo. Given a free reign to represent married life and British sexual innuendo. They like the singer become on screen personality presenters.
Dale: He, he! Mary: Oh look! Dale: They've got nowhere to stand up on – they've got to keep moving all the time. Mary: They're Turtles! Dale: They don't eat them do they? Mary: I hope not! Dale: I've never seen so many turtles in my life. They must eat them – turtle soup! Turtle sandwich with tomato ketchup, please!

4 – 4 (Marks and Spencer's store) 15"

The singer has now arrived at Marks and Spencer's Department store.

Singer talks directly to camera and to director.

S: I can't believe you're going to film me buying my undies. She looks to camera: Marks and Sparks – these are fab! Do you like them? Very nice, yes! They don't cover much, but hey! This is me being happiest – when I am shopping. I could shop professionally. In fact, I do! Especially now I'm earning my own money again.

5 – 2 (Stage) 5"

Back on board rehearsals continue…

Song: Lights, camera, action…

5 – 3 (Turtle farm) 18"

Dale: Oh look you can pick them up. Mary, come on, it says 'at your own risk.' Mary: I'm not doing it. Dale: It says at your own risk. Mary: I'm not touching any of them. They are disgusting and horrible. Dale: Come on! Mary: No, I'm not touching any of them. Dale: Let me see if I can get one. Mary: No, don't put it at me. Dale: They are strange aren't they? Give him a kiss. Mary: No! (laughter). Dale: Just pick up a smaller one. Mary: No, I'm not touching one. Dale: Just for a while. Mary: No. Director (V/O): Get a picture of her holding one. Dale: Yes, please. Mary: I hate the BBC. I hate the BBC. Its legs are going. Dale: Just hold him. Mary: Screams!

6 – 4 (Marks and Spencer's store). 43"

S: Have you got this in black have you? We are so glad you're here. We are so glad we found a little bit of England here. Have you been here long? Sales Assistant: Yes, nine years, almost. Mary: There's a lot of Brits here you know, we do get around us Brits. We travel a lot. Now then, my knickers are here (camera follows).

7 – 3 (Turtle farm) 19"
Mary: Dale look, its like the Loch Ness Monster! Look at this. Dale: I had a tortoise once but it never grew that big.

8 – 4 (Marks and Spencer's store) 46"

Director: Are you very fussy about your underwear? S: Oh extremely fussy about my undies, I am actually. I think it is a personal thing anyway – underwear. But I am not the only one that's fussy – my partner at home is very fussy. He'll go: 'what on earth have you got on.' Director: What does he like? S: He's a typical man. He likes stockings and suspenders and the whole bit. He does not like big knickers which is what we all wear really. When I am not with Henrick I wear 'me draws'. I like comfort. But of course I like to get dressed up as well. Even for me I like to feel sexy underneath. For then it makes me feel sexy, even if I might not look sexy I feel it. I've just seen some very nice G-strings behind you, so!

9 – 3 (Turtle farm) 29"
Mary: My word. Dale: The mating process can last up to six days. Mary (to camera): Turtle sex in six days! Dale: Six days for turtle sex. The female will normally nest twenty eight days following mating. That's not its 'willy' is it? Mary: I hope not. Six days of that … Bloody hell!

9 – 4 (Marks and Spencer's store) 12"

Sales assistant: £76.20. S: That's the only problem. Sales assistant: Enjoy your day here. S: Nice to meet you anyway – bye bye.

10 – 2 (Stage) 19"

Dancing

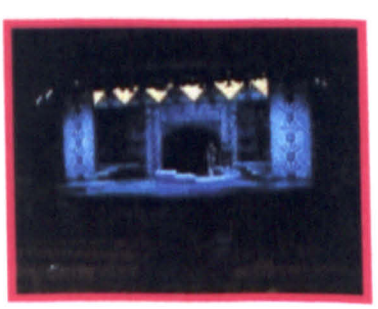
Musical director: We are lost. We are lost.

11 – 5 (Dale and Mary in taxi) 20"

Dale: Can we get Heinz beans? You don't know what bangers and mash is? Mary: Sausages. Dale: I wondered why you looked at me when I said bangers and mash. It's mashed potato and sausages. Sausages in England – the slang word is bangers. Okay!

12 – 6 (The Cayman Arms Pub) 20"

S: So here we are in the Cayman Islands. It's packed out so we will have to wait twenty minutes to get a table. It's all full of Brits. So many Brits here. We are all like – sad (laughs). We are all sad and we all need British food. So this is the place to be.



13 – 2 (Stage) 21"

Music – rehearsals

14 – 6 (Cayman Arms Pub) 32"

S: So look who's here. (To Dale): Excuse me. Dale: Oh, hullo.
S: I'll show you my knickers if you show me yours. They are quite nice, aren't they? I'm not going to wear those, I'm just going to hang them out.

15 – 2 (Stage) 16"

Dancing: sexy routine followed by dancers looking tired.

16 – 6 (The Cayman Arms Pub) 30"

Director (V/O): Have you got what you wanted?
S: Have I got what I wanted. Look at this … bangers and mash and baked beans. It's a good job I'm sleeping on my own, isn't it really? It's fabulous (the food on ship) but you just get sick of it week after week after week after week! After a while everything tastes the same. So we crave something like this – ordinary food. Beans on toast we would die for, so this is great.

17 – 2 (Stage) 1' 30" to end credits.

Rehearsals

4.3 Comparison with The Cruise

See previous pages: The Cruise

The numbering for The Cruise is for convenience and each number (1 - 17) indicates a scene. The second number indicates a location. Each scene continues from the previous one. The purpose is to demonstrate the overall pattern between the rehearsals on board ship and the visits the couple and the singer make on dry land to the different locations.

The Cruise appears to be a similar series based on observational narrative. The basic question posed is how will the workers survive the gruelling task of servicing the needs of short-cruise holidaymakers. On the previous pages each image indicates a scene, thereby showing the overall inter-cutting between scenes and how the overall pattern is created. Basically three events are covered: the preparation for a new show on board the liner, and visits on shore made by the singer and a British married couple, Dale and Mary, employed on the liner. What is striking is that, using the non-linear improvised criteria, the tape is revealed as focussing solely on following individuals around ship and shore, and getting the characters to comment on screen to situations encountered. On screen talking to the unseen maker cues in the next scene, rather than revealing any inner consciousness of the participant. The viewer is not required to do anything. There is little diversity or range of characters. Narrative is slender, the pace even-handed and the locations not interesting – what you see is what you get, the sort of modern-day victim documentary which would be decried, quite rightly, by Brian Winston.

In The Cruise shot analysis on the previous pages, the on-board victims – the

entertainers – go through a punishing ordeal of rehearsal (Scenes 2, 5, 10, 13, 15 and 17). This is inter-cut with none-too-bright Dale and his wife, Mary, visiting a turtle farm, leading to British sexual innuendo (Scene 9), and the singer, as she goes to Marks and Spencer's to buy her 'undies' (Scenes 4, 6, 8 and 9). They re-meet for a bangers-and-mash meal (Scenes 14 and 16) whilst the rehearsals continue (Scenes 10, 13, 15 and 17). The on-screen comments and commentary given by the participants provide everything. There is nothing beyond what is presented. The director exploits them directly when he encourages Mary to pick up a turtle which makes her scream and provides a narrative conclusion to scene 5. In the episode considered, its strength is the articulation of the inexperienced British abroad, craving for bangers-and-mash and Marks and Spencer's underwear. This more hidden kind of exploitation is exampled throughout the scenes on the previous pages. Dale at the turtle farm, for example, realises belatedly that the turtles are for eating, and explains in scene 3 – 'Turtle sandwich with tomato ketchup, please!' Whilst the singer confesses in scene 16, that after a plate of bangers and mash and baked beans, 'it's a good job I'm sleeping on my own, isn't it really.' Only as an exploitative documentary is Hotel successful.

This thesis has concentrated upon the making process. In drawing on documentary's qualities of improvisation, the first assumed audience to please, as far as the television-funded maker is concerned, is the commissioning editor. Thereafter, the concern of the maker, and the legitimacy of documentary itself, is based on the relations the maker establishes with the participants so as to facilitate their storytelling or attitudes, and the ability to place these within a pre-decided theme. How it does this – its design strategy – relates to how far an audience is expected to make connections

and work with moments of meaning discussed earlier. Pierre Bourdieu's analysis of class taste and life-styles indicates the complex ways groups develop separateness (Bourdieu: 1984). His analysis is helpful in understanding the usefulness of the nonfiction programme on television which adopts the non-linear improvised approach. Different groups are able to engage in different ways. Bourdieu's exhaustive study highlights differing tastes across a range of activities according to differing social groups. In one example, he looks at different reactions to a painting depicting an old woman's hands noting the following comments: 'Oh she's got terribly deformed hands'! ... 'From the culturally most deprived', through to, 'It's the very symbol of toil. It puts me in mind of Flaubert's old servant-woman.' (1984: 44-45). The non-linear improvised documentary can work to include a wide range of social groups who pick upon different qualities of personality and place different value on the possible social connections on offer. In Hotel, the viewer may watch a narrative based on actions and reactions to chaos, or engage in the more reflective process of understanding the position and interaction of differing social groups.

Documentary differentiates itself from fiction in terms of its resources, namely, the non-paid actors, choice of locations, and lack of design teams such as hair-dressers, set designers and costume departments and, to an extent, by its limited technological resources, the lack of labour specialisation and the assigned scheduled production time. What documentary on television is doing is to replicate, under one departmental structure, infinite varieties of essentially the same genre. Hence we can evaluate difference in documentary according to its degree or ability to combine narrative strategies with non-narrativity. I, as an academic, with the paid time to undertake analysis, appreciate through detailed analysis the complex editing patterns of Hotel. It

resonates with meaning. Its successor The Cruise pales by comparison. Its observational techniques are noticeably far less structured, with fewer participants portrayed in any one episode or scene. Yet the latter had very high viewing figures – twelve million per episode. The difference lies as much in audience taste and each viewer's testing of the recorded events as it does with the director's desire to develop themes and meanings through editing of sounds and image.

The programmes are examples of a difference in approach to defining audience pleasure: Hotel is more and The Cruise is less driven by the viewer in the sense of working with the text to gain pleasure. This leaves The Cruise voyeuristically observing the personalities of the staff to create audience engagement. Hotel operates using the more interesting non-linear narrative approach, since the viewer gains pleasure in judging not only the personalities of the participants who are many – but also upon judging their status, their power and function as men and women in the broader domains of work and leisure. This is denied in The Cruise by its focus exclusively on the participants' personalities. We, as viewers, understand without any necessity to engage by making connections. And the performance, as improvisation, is poor. There is no sense of risk in what we observe and no engagement in finding underlying connections of meaning. The characters in The Cruise are portrayed simply as personalities. They and their situations are not drawn with the same charm and whimsy found in the absurdist tradition. Tati took characters, drew them and spread over a film 'canvas'. Contact with an audience became direct, immediate, sometimes seemingly dangerous and unknown for the audience at least, and often profound. Documentary relies on selecting and working with the non-actor for the same effect. I suggest the absurdist tradition, with its concern for one moment of

meaning succeeding another and another from imagery and audio utterances to generate evaluation and engagement for the audience, is an appropriate paradigm for the documentary idea. Furthermore, it is a useful means to assess non-fiction material from a broad range of television output. And we can begin to assess each one, not in terms of comparison to the non-linear improvised approach but to use this approach to reveal the internal assumptions centred on the controlling idea and actual editing patterns and the consistency and congruency found therein.

4.4 The Improvised and Non-linear Qualities of The Belovs

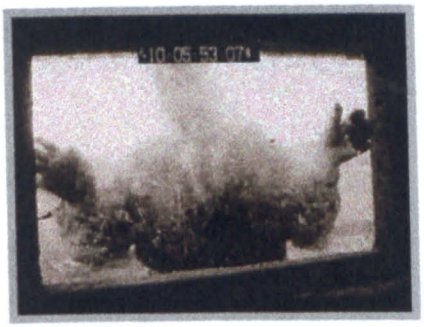
The Belovs (1992) is a film made by the St. Petersburg documentary maker Viktor Kossakovsky. It was screened at the Amsterdam Documentary Festival in October 1994, and is described by Nicholas Fraser in Imagining Reality: The Faber Book of Documentary, as 'consisting of Gogolesque dialogues between a drunken old man and his sister, featuring many farm animals. (The film) is the only documentary I can think of in terms of the greatest feature films of the twentieth century' (1996: 369). Set firmly in the context of Russian peasant farming culture, it comes closest to being a totally improvised performance from these two remarkable individuals. A second feature is the editing pattern with its emphasis on the long shot long-take, with the characters talking either to each other or aloud to the filmmaker. The Belovs is a fine example of the non-linear improvised documentary. Jean Renoir, is quoted as saying:

> I don't want the movements of the camera to be determined by the actor. This means working rather like a newsreel cameraman ... it is possible for us to see the spectacle, rather than the duty of the spectacle to take place for the benefit of the camera (cited in Mamber, 1974: 17).

According to Stephen Mamber, 'cinéma-vérité adapts Jean Renoir's idea of the

camera and uses it as a recording tool, so that the events themselves, "the knowledge of man", become the standard we use to judge the film' (1974: 17). In other words, we, the viewers, must be convinced by the performance of the participants if documentary is to be a meaningful genre. The loitering technique of the non-linear approach is able to register, through the long-take long shot found in The Belovs, the beats of meaning quite distinctly, permitting meanings to accumulate. They do so as a series of interactions between image, the spoken word – on and off screen – playing against natural sounds as, for example, the sound of rain or cows mooing.

THE BELOVS (Three Scenes Introducing Anna)



SCENE 1
Scene introducing Anna, peasant farming, earth, air, and her relationship to her cows.

Duration 57"

Carefully pulls back shutter – exits frame – returns to take away pane of glass. Cow bellows.

A: I'm coming, my darlings. Granny is coming, my little darlings. She talks to them (the cows) looking past camera.

She walks back to pile of wood.

A: Just look what you've done you naughty things ... for God's sake!

She rearranges wood and exits.

A: Let Granny get these flies off you.

Oh, those awful flies, they've eaten you alive.

SCENE 2
Scene continues from last, Anna is now milking the cow. The scene makes much use of naturalistic sounds such as the rain, the cow munching the grass and the noise of the milking.

It is a very intimate scene showing the closeness of Anna, the cow, and natural elements. It consists of one shot.

Duration: 1' 59"

Slurping sound as cow is milked by hand. Raindrops falling in foreground.
A: Keep still my little ray of sunshine, my baby, my little cow.
My dearest, my little daughter.

Pan up as cow eats food. Second cow enters through doorway in background.

A: Get off! Anna hits second cow with towel.

A: Thank the Lord!

She kisses cow.

A: Thank you my daughter, my provider!

She makes the sign of the Cross.

A (to second cow): Go away!

Cow bellows whilst eating.

A: Push off!

A: Oh! you want some milk too, do you?

She leaves cowshed.

A: Come on, let's go. Granny will give you some.

Cow looks up and around as she leaves.

A: Closes door.

We are left with the cow and the sound of dripping rain.

SCENE 3

Scene continues from last. The camera pans with Anna throughout ending with the closing of the scene as Anna exits through gate in centre of frame suggesting a return to equilibrium. In this scene Anna reveals, unexpectedly, intimate details of herself.

Duration: 1' 34"

A: This is my brother, Mikhail.

A: Why bother filming us? We are just ordinary people.

Pan to

A: We just live here, where the river begins.

Signal sound (of distant factory) heard throughout this scene.

Pan back

A: There is nothing special about us.

Goes inside, collects two poles and comes out again.

Silence except for signal sound.

Dog walks past and inside.

A: Some women stay with one husband and they enter old age together, hand in hand.

A: I buried the first, I buried the second.

A: That was God's punishment.

A: I rejected a guy when I was young.

(very emotional) she steps forward

A: My mother didn't like him, and I didn't stand up to her.

Ever since then my whole life has gone wrong.

A: Seriozha, get up.

She composes herself.

Pan

A: By the way of the Pike – potatoes dig yourselves up!

Pan

She exits through gate.

Gate swings back.

Please note the three scenes above are numbered for convenience 1,2,and 3. Each scene is one shot and the images here are chosen to help show the change in composition as Anna moves about.

1. The Belovs (Three Scenes Introducing Anna)

See Previous pages

The three scenes are situated near the start of the documentary immediately after the first scene. Each scene consists of one shot and the images reproduced indicate Anna's movement.

In the first encounter with Anna, the sister in The Belovs, the noise of the rain, the mooing of the cow and the talking by the sister all work to add to the visual timings of movement within the cowshed to create a scene of immense beauty, insight and respect. This scene has its own beginning, middle and end, meets an objective which adds equally to the story and the themes. In fact, it is a powerful scene since the sister is seen to be close to her cows and the elements – water, hay, and the located cowshed with its smallness and meagreness. The peasant farmer is a woman at work without support, and we, the viewers, recognise her situation in its entirety. The complexity can be seen in the shot analysis given in the previous pages – see The Belovs. The first shot is consciously composed when Anna takes a window out from the cowshed wall, and returns to moving the wood. We are immediately taken into her character and her work. The second shot is the cowshed. The camera moves very little. The spaces between her spoken comments register the noise of rain. The interruption of the second cow adds to the scene. Anna genuflects, and finally the scene closes when the cow looks at Anna leaving and continues feeding. There is a completeness to the scene where improvised performance links in the sound-image elements to produce a rich pattern of meanings. The number of beats is large as we constantly recognise relationships between Anna, her animals, and the physical environment.

The above scene is introductory to peasant farming. Our knowledge of Anna is increased in the next scene where – out of nowhere – Anna declares to camera that she married the wrong men and they died. She cries, regains composure, then calls her brother to get up, and with humour goes potato-digging, exiting through a gate by a stack of logs. The camera, having panned around her walking, is situated so that she leaves up-stage through the gate – Anna has departed to work. The use of perspective re-establishes her and our equilibrium, which marks the end of the scene. We are gaining information about Anna's character both through her talking to camera and her actions. We see her role as woman, and farmer and her attitudes to life. We see her vulnerability, and all this will be important when set against the brother's comments and actions. Anna is a warm tough woman whose language is not only poetic but also absurdist in its ability to leap through differing emotions. Anna says for example:

> 'Some women stay with one husband and they enter old age together, hand in hand. I buried the first I buried the second.'

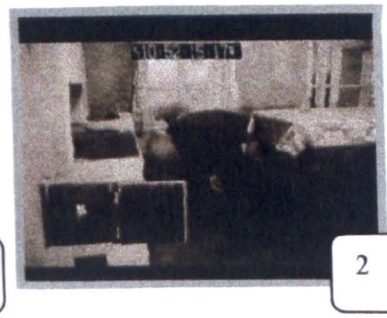
Then twenty four seconds later is disclaiming:

> 'By the way of the Pike, potatoes dig yourselves up!'

The viewer immediately takes account of Anna's mood swing.

THE BELOVS (Closing Scenes)

1



2

Anna puts logs on fire. (1)
She watches brother.
B. topples onto floor drunk. (2)
Sound of fire and Anna laughing.

3

Anna is seen with headphones on. She is laughing at a sound track. (3)
She looks towards camera.
She becomes anxious and cries.
She laughs then becomes tearful again.
She takes off headphones and walks to other room. Camera pans with her.

4

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9

Anna puts on some music. The dance with Anna concludes the film. Constant sound of shuffling feet as she dances.
She sings: I shall dance and wiggle my bottom (4). Hey, you all must look at me! What nice buttocks you can see! (5).
Isn't it cold in winter, dear? Are you darling happy here? (6).
I don't mind I'm barefooted (7). My dear feet won't freeze at all. We together will be warm. My sweetheart started dancing, right!
The samovar is in front, and the smithy is behind. My beloved darling has hair that curls. I wouldn't swap him for all the gold in the world.
Snoring heard – camera finds drunken brother still on floor.
Oh, my dear husband is a melon and I am an apple tree. When my husband is away I'm happy and full of glee. Anna now dances around camera and camera follows. Don't scold me, mother dear, that I eat a lot of bread. Will you sew a white bag, then I won't stay long in bed.
Berry and Annie, Annie and Berry, a coin for the hay, two for the cart – three pence for a triple ride (8).
Isn't it cold in winter, dear, Aren't you darling happy here? Anna is crying. She tries to continue to dance. Harken! Split I was and remade I was. Seven times gave birth and still a virgin was (9).

2. The Belovs (Closing Scenes)

See Previous pages

The images show Anna's progressive obsessive behaviour over the closing three shots. Images 1 and 2 show the drunken state of her brother. Image 3 shows the pen-ultimate shot of Anna listening to her previous comments through the headphones attached to the film sound recorder (the Nagra tape recorder). Images 4 –9 shows Anna's final dance and the position of the camera which becomes positioned at the centre of her circular movement.

The improvisational qualities are seen again perfectly in the final scene. The drunken brother is asleep (Image 1), his body askew across the dining table. He falls over, onto the floor, unconscious of anything around him (Image 2). Anna is then seen listening to sound recordings where she laughs, cries, laughs again, then becomes tearful (Image 3). Anna then gets up and completely unexpectedly starts a dance and sings (Images 4 – 9). The camera pans with her as she goes to put on some music but as the scene progresses, the camera, being in the centre of the room, allows Anna the chance to dance around the camera and the camera to follow. But first, Anna has moved, without any warning and without hesitation, into the centre of the room, taken her shoes off, and started to dance. It is a remarkable action, which confronts us, the viewers, minutes later, when the tone of dancing changes. It reverts to the sadness and the loneliness we have witnessed so many times before. The film ends. This is improvisational performance at its most riveting and has nothing to do with realist narrative drama. Anna's character is drawn from the absurdist line of caricature, drawing a line of truthfulness, easily recognisable, rather than a completely three-dimensional character. Her unpredictability has forced us the viewer into asking what

is happening. Her song seems both traditional and personal. At times it is difficult to understand. Yet we can understand her sadness and fortitude as in the closing moments (Image 9) she cries but continues to dance.

THE BELOVS (the Maker's Intervention - 1)

1

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In this scene the camera follows Anna's actions whilst her brother (B) declaims (to the director).
Anna laughing and eating. Off screen her brother, (B) talks: They say never mind me. I've suffered…
Camera zooms out
B: But my grandchildren will have a better life. No, I totally disagree…
Zoom out continues.
B: They will live under different circumstances in a different society. They'll build their own lives. I'll give a sweet to my child rather than eating it myself (1).
Anna's still amused. Zoom out ends.
B: No! I say, you've got to eat it. In his time, he won't want your sweet or even your chocolate.
Anna's finished eating – she gestures with her hands that is so.
Anna(see1): Can you cut my hair please? Look how long it has grown. What will my brothers say when they come to stay? (2).
B: As I was saying…
Anna turns back tablecloth: Pass me the hammer please.
B: I'll die so that you can live. I'd like to smash this theory of yours!
Anna bangs hammer to flatten something on table. (3).
B: You're only been given this one life.
Anna gets up.
B: You don't get a second chance.
Anna goes to oven.
B: So why die for someone else? (4). Then what's the point of being born? You are unique in this world.
Anna takes pot of hot water into back room. (5).
B: I'm for treating people as individuals not as a mass. Why do you think there's been talk about capital punishment?
Anna puts hot water into tub. Steam rises up.
B: You see I would abolish capital punishment. If you can prove the opposite go ahead! Okay! I'm all ears. He slurps tea.
Anna is cleaning clothes
B: Everyone calls on the name of the State. I would break this thinking.
Anna comes back into room.
B: The State is you and me. I asked Yelstin, are you the State?
Anna returns to outer room.
B: So tell me what exactly is the State? You and me, both of us together.
And that is it. He slurps tea as Anna comes back in.
B: You know what? I would have prohibited the State,
(whilst Anna changes her shoes), from making toys for children. Then a girl would make her own doll. (Anna puts on coat). B: If they were ready-made, she wouldn't look after them as much, would she?
Camera zooms out.
B: And the boys could construct something. There's big potential there. I am producing a perfect Ideology.
Anna puts on scarf.
B: To prohibit all production of toys and all that consumer rubbish!
Anna interrupts: Hey, you all must look at me! What nice buttocks you can see! (6). Anna leaves and puts out light in outer room.
B: In the present stage of civilisation we don't realise that we are destroying ourselves.
Anna exits with walking stick.

THE BELOVS (the Maker's Intervention - 2)


1


2


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At various times during the film, the director decides to cut away to another kind of sensibility. (1), (2), (3), (5), (7), and (8) above integrate into the whole.

In (1) we see a hedgehog. A hedgehog was previously depicted earlier in a scene with Anna and her dog. The dog was annoying the hedgehog. Here the hedgehog is free. Set against fast paced music the hedgehog moves slowly at first then runs up the road.
Cut to (2). Anna's brother is on tractor with dog running ahead.
Cut to (3). Anna's brother, Misha arrives. Music replaced by sound of car.
They all sit down and talk as in (4).
Cut to (5). Anna declaims: Yeltsin, Yeltsin is bad. That's what they are saying at every beer stand, foul drunken sots! And he, poor man, is working day and night. He's travelling all over to please everyone and put things right. And they just sit there and criticise. Dear Yeltsin, castrate the lot of them. They have never been up to the mark, not since the war. Real impotents – their cocks forever at half past five – all cold and wrinkly (signal sound). Cut back to others as in (6).
Cut to (7) a wall. Anna: I can't whistle today. Men in conversation: National education is the source of all national culture. The Russian Empire conquered vast territories and ruled by trampling on other people's national feelings. Other countries evolved naturally.
Cut to 8, a family photograph. Conversation flows between the men and Anna. Take no notice, he's older than you. Anna: He lived through the siege of Leningrad. I didn't humiliate him, Why bang your fist on the table then? Man: Just to make the point. Anna: We can all bang our fists on the table. Man: I can't talk to you when you're like this. When your banging your fists on the table and spilling tea on me. Anna: Calm down, Vasily. You're brothers. I am ashamed of you. If our mother were here she wouldn't recognise you. May she rest in peace! What arguments and proofs have you got? Tell me. Let's sit at the negotiating table. I'm here as your brother not as a negotiator. Let's join forces at the Elbe! Laughs. Let's go to bed. Anna: Hey Lenin, go and call the dog. Brother: To hell with the dog. Anna: What do you mean? You'll go and I'll be on my own again. At least the dog is company.
(9). Scene set in the sauna. Music.

The Belovs (The Maker's Interventions 1 and 2)

See Previous Pages

In The Maker's Intervention 1 key moments beats are located as Anna's actions interrupt the brother's declaration. In The Maker's Intervention 2 images are illustrative of a set of progressive scenes so as to demonstrate the maker's intervention by the use of the long shot.

Of particular note in The Belovs are the non-linear qualities of the overall-editing pattern. The examples chosen are editing decisions made by the maker which enable the viewer to judge the value of rhetoric spoken by the brothers set against their existence. But more than that we feel for Anna - we respect her.

In the first example, The Maker's Intervention 1, the director plays the interview off-screen of one of the brothers as we watch and hear Anna as she interrupts. Firstly she asks for her hair to be cut (Image 2), then she asks and gets a hammer to repair the table (Image3). Then, unexpectedly she gets up and starts cleaning clothes, she makes reference to her buttocks (Image 6), then gets ready to go out by changing her shoes, putting on her coat, then her scarf. All this action is set against the home-spun philosophy of her brother.

In the second example, The Maker's Intervention 2, the maker deliberately cuts away to make points. The images depict a set of continuous shots from the programme. The hedgehog (Image 1) and the tractor (Image 2) provide some light relief taking us outside where freer association – played against fast paced music – provides a reminder of other values. The hedgehog, for example, moves slowly at first then

scampers up the road, similar to the brother on the tractor, who zigzags his tractor at top-speed up the road. Image 5 provides, like images 7 and 8, cut away shots from the dialogue conversation. In Image 5 we are presented with a pan down from sky to landscape. It is Anna who is speaking giving her support to Yeltstin. In Image 7 we are given an unyielding wall and Image 8 a family portrait. By having these images over the conversation concentrates the viewer's attention on the meaning within the words. Two histories are alluded to, namely the Soviet Union and one poor family. They are remarkable juxtapositions. The use of cutting-away to the night landscape, the stone walls, and the old photograph as the dialogue continues becomes a stylistic device to mark the conflict between brother and sister. Our sense of their realities continually expands, as we are repeatedly asked to work out whether we are sympathetic to them or not, and to get a sense of the communist mentality that produced their farming existence. There is indeed distance and a closeness for the viewer watching a non-linear improvised documentary, and the long-take long shot has immense value in creating sound-image interactions that mark out beats within scenes and thereby enrich the viewer's experience. The total effect of The Belovs is produced by this combination of effort by the participants and the maker, and finally by us, the audience.

4.5 Conclusion

The non-linear improvised approach, with its emphasis on diffusion, deviation variation and contradiction and on the development of beats, applied as a way of assessing other documentaries, is useful in that it does not place the straight linear form at the centre of the documentary debate. In Hotel and The Belovs we are not just viewing in order to empathise, but we can delight in the sound-image elements in

themselves and we can mull-over the relationships represented. The linear form, as exampled by The Cruise, is revealed to have a different qualitative effect upon the audience – one that is based entirely on an emphatic relationship between viewer and the participants represented. On the contrary the non-linear improvised documentary, as exemplified in Hotel and The Belovs, is worked into an original pattern by the maker for the audience to engage in at both imaginative and intellectual levels.

CHAPTER 5 Conclusions

> It is perhaps not too far-fetched to say that the universe improvises. And certainly the ability to do so is universal. Anthony Frost and Ralph Yarrow, Improvisation in Drama (1990: 180).

5.1 Documentary Practice

Dai Vaughan states:

> Throughout the process the editor is engaged in a curious mental exercise: to attempt, from the rushes and from the testimony of those present, to form an intuitive impression of the event as if it were first-hand experience; and then, in settling upon the presumptive happening 'behind' the material, to use that material to say it (cited in Crawford and Turton, 1992: 108).

In fact it is the maker, who is undertaking this exercise from start to finish. It is the relationship that is established earlier in the production process between maker and participant that marks a key aspect of the non-linear approach. The participant has a space created to speak and to do so in an uninhibited way. The maker may or may not be on their side, agreeing with the attitudes expressed. At the moment of shooting the participant is in a safe environment created especially for the purpose of allowing deeply held views, attitudes and knowledge to be recorded within a set time span. The participant is not placed in the role of victim. This is similar to the strategies for performance found in physical theatre and, in particular, exemplified by John Wright's On the Verge of Exploding. In this production, much rehearsal time was devoted to preparing the actors' mentality for the show, inducing a state of 'no conflict' – a state where anything was possible within prescribed limits. At the post-

production stage of video making that material which has already been edited according to the maker's perception of story and themes is finally placed within an overall pattern which extends or expands upon the original specific meanings generated by the one recording. The whole outcome is then placed before an audience and it is they who engage and make final sense of the variety of meanings on offer.

As Dai Vaughan reminds us:

> Documentary's images are ideally, not illustrative but constitutive. They are constitutive of the viewer's meanings, since it is the viewer who constitutes them as documentary (cited in Crawford and Turton, 1992: 114).

The non-linear improvised approach recognises that not all audiences, or all people in one audience, are the same, and it does so by offering choice. In L'Artiste, Le Fermier et Le Paysage there is the key character of Gaby, the farmer, but of equal standing are the other contributions. This is also the case in the films of Jacques Tati. The sense of completeness derives from the range and difference in the characters portrayed, all of whom support the central theme. The sense of understanding derives not from the maker duping the audience into believing, but from the activity of evaluation by the viewer. In L'Artiste, Le Fermier et Le Paysage, there are images of happy contented workers and beautiful landscapes past and present. But also viewed is the hard-graft of farm labouring, and there is the importantly located final statement by Gaby indicating that all his efforts have been side-lined in the face of modernity and that he as a character is thoughtful, intelligent and humorous. The non-linear approach is the opposite of suppression or oppression.

In defining this thesis I have taken the documentary idea back, in part, to the early

cinematic achievements and to their antecedent – the music hall entertainer. The purpose is to illuminate the value of non-linear structure, and, how meaning deepens through gesture and the look. Silent cinema was formed within the context of the variety stage. The two forms come together at a point of concern with a flow of meanings generated within an audio-visual pattern, and a certain quality of performance. The timing of a look, a comment, a gesture, the instant impact of character and absurdist humour were all part of this early cinematic milieu. Documentary owes much to this tradition, with its emphasis on atmosphere, texturing, structuring and in the portrayal of vibrant characters. It is my contention that documentary needs to acknowledge these traditions. Placed within the traditions of absurdist theatre, improvised drama and music hall comedy, documentary can be seen as a distinctive combination of audio-visual elements. These elements are gesture, utterance, dialogue phrases, music, special effects and atmospheric sound tracks, and the image track, which can itself alter from close-up to long shot and give different perspectives and involvement, according to its position and movement.

The interplay of these elements creates a distinct kind of narrative form; one which is bound by a sense of purpose and unity of time and place, rather than one where the protagonist has a problem to solve as in Hollywood drama. The approach is different from the standard model of fictional construction, where inner thought has to be turned into external actions, driven by the dialogue, and where the three act structure and all its ramifications, realised through a fully pre-planned script, is a necessary pre-condition to filming. But it is similar to the model proposed by Michel Chion when, in his discussion of speech in cinema, he identifies three types – 'theatrical speech, textual speech, and emanation speech.' Chion suggests that the third type, 'what we

might call decentered speaking cinema,' which is akin to the non-linear improvised approach, 'could give rise to the third period of narrative cinema' (cited in Altman, 1992: 110). For Michel Chion:

> Emanation speech ... is not necessarily completely heard and understood. In any case, this type of speech isn't tied to the heart of what might be called action, in a general sense. Speech becomes therefore an emanation of the characters, an aspect of themselves, like their silhouette: significant but not essential for the mise-en-scène (Ibid: 105).

Michel Chion also compares this emanation speech with that existing in silent cinema:

> Since characters spent a lot of time talking and much of what they said was not translated, the content of their speech, therefore, did not force the mise-en-scène and the interpretation to value it word for word (Ibid: 106).

Michel Chion is referring to a 'de-centred speaking cinema', and again, 'a decidedly polyphonic cinema' (Ibid: 110). This idea is also at the centre of the non-linear improvised approach to documentary. Alongside what participants say are the complicated layers of annunciation and delivery which sit within a system of sound patterns.

The non-linear approach is also distinct from the output of the Documentary Movement of the 1930s, where propaganda films were made that told, by means of a very formal narration, what the viewer was to think. It develops from a different trajectory. Two key areas mark the difference. The first lies in the process of production and the second are the effects upon narrativity.

5.2 A Different Approach to the Processes of Production

The stages of production, research, planning, shooting and editing intertwine so that the maker can respond and assess incoming information from participants during shooting, and use all his / her knowledge in shaping the final tape in editing. Documentary relies on the dynamics of developing ideas. As Richard Cawston says:

> The thing that I've believed in ... is the absolution of the script before you shoot. If you write a script in advance of making a documentary, then the film can only be as good as the script, no better. If you confine yourself to making a kind of plan of what you're going to do but allow the film to develop during the shooting, allow events to happen which you could not have foreseen, you find gems, and you have to pick them up (cited in Levin, 1971: 84).

As a maker, I recognise the relevance of this statement, but this thesis has enabled me to probe further, so as to find a way of understanding documentary which links process to outcome and reception – a way of understanding that method is intertwined with the communication of ideas.

The thesis proposes an ethical relationship between maker and participant. Working with unpaid participants suggests a need for an on-going relationship from the moment of first meeting to screening and beyond, so as to develop an on-screen presence akin to that of the improvised performance. The common factor between documentary and improvised performance is spontaneity for both participant and maker. For that to happen in front of camera, participants in the non-linear improvised documentary need to have established a trust relationship with the maker and the ideas which he / she brings to the tape. In this respect the maker's role is that of facilitator enabling the participants to speak for themselves, linked to that of

writer/director. This is very different from the journalistic approach to nonfiction programme making. In the non-linear improvised documentary, the event or interview exists for the maker in some way before the shoot, where knowledge and trust is gained. At the shoot the maker and participant(s) have reached a level of understanding so that both sides are ready for the unexpected, although certain sequences or responses are already decided upon. This differs from that of the journalistic interviewer-interviewee situation where there is no time allocated to encounter the participant on a personal basis. In the non-linear improvised documentary the trustful situation is created for the benefit of the tape's mission. This mission, in its essence, is to represent the participant as a human being who is allowed space to talk and gesture at his / her own pace, and who has a sense of control over proceedings. This again is very different from the professional journalist's stance, which is to interview according to an agenda set by the journalist not by the interviewee.

At the start of my career I worked on Tides of Fortune (BBC 2: 1969), three episodes each of fifty-two minutes, where Ian Trethowen interviewed Harold Macmillan. It was a salutary experience. At first inspection it appears to fulfil the non-linear criterion where the interviewer is in a trusted situation with Macmillan and the interview flows as if it were a natural conversation. However, the interviewer's 'noddy' shots, which are reaction shots of the interviewer and the set questions, both of which are recorded after the interview is finished, are then cut into the interview so that it appears to be a continuous piece of naturalism. These methods perfectly fit the staged, over-mannered, performance of Macmillan, a contrivance always contained and constrained to the pre-determined autobiographical stories. The 16mm film

technology, with its separation of post-production sound and image routes, created a hierarchical professional work practice. Control of meaning remained with the journalist through the written transcription, separate from the daily rituals of the physical editing process. The ideology was controllable through institutional practice, through the trustworthiness of the interviewer and an unmoveable agenda. In contrast, the ideology of the non-linear documentary rests on the openness of the agenda, which has to be worked out between maker and participants, and leaves space for the unexpected during the recording of the interview. In Tides of Fortune there was never any negotiation. This is a denial of the input-potential of the maker as writer. The documentary maker brings with him / her a whole range of previously gathered audio-visual techniques and obsessions, research knowledge and interpretative devices which need to be resolved against the subject matter, the theme and the energy of the participants.

All this points to a view of documentary driven by the maker, but in constant negotiation and undertaken in a state of trust. Proposals, treatments, scripts are necessary in communicating to others, and to oneself, in order to clarify intentions, acting to give confidence, rather than as a drama script does, as a 'blueprint' (i.e. master-plan) of precisely what is going to happen. Useful 'tips' on the nonfiction production methodology are given in Alan Rosenthal's Writing, Directing, and Producing Documentaries, 1990, and in W. Hugh Baddeley's The Technique of Documentary Film Production, 1975, but neither engages in linking processes to outcome structures, patterns or textures.

5.3 A Different Approach to Narrative

Questions of narrativity have been at the centre of the thesis. The non-linear improvised documentary relies on an opening sequence to cue the viewer into structural and textual awareness, together with a sense of narrative and an ending, so as to reconcile the narrative with the non-linear, providing a sense of completeness. The scenes in between each have a single objective, but collectively they can be cross-referenced by the viewer. As Plantinga says 'documentary is more than the sum of its documents' (1997: 72).

This sense of 'never getting away from narrative' has been a general concern. Brian Winston, for example, states the necessity of 'dramatic narrative':

> The real work of the stage of organising is, in my experience, almost entirely taken up with making one's materials conform *as closely as* possible to a 'chrono-logical' and dramatic narrative (1995: 118).

The important point is to note differences in what underlies dramatic narrative. My claim is that there are two primary types. The first belongs to realist theatrical performance and found in the classical Hollywood film, and assumed in documentary work from Flaherty's Nanook to, say, Leacock, Pennebaker, and Drew's Primary. The second follows the absurdist tradition, which, as we have seen when assumed in the non-linear improvised documentary, is reflexive, democratic and not without a sense of humour. Both have a concern to affect an audience but each highlights different qualities. Roy Armes is helpful in drawing out the distinctions in his discussion of reception:

> Common to both stage and screen action is the fact that the unfolding action offers no pause for reflection. Therefore the spectator has to offer an active

> and constant participation in the action as it unfolds, what is seen and heard at any given moment being transformed by recollections of what has already gone before and by anticipations of what is still to come. This combination of immediacy, retrospection, and anticipation, which is the key to a spectator's comprehension of the action, has to occur as the play or film continues to move forward. Moreover the precise interpretation of these events – a weighing up of the meaning to be attached to them – also has to be decided personally by each spectator as the present unfolds (1994: 60).

Whilst immediacy, retrospection and anticipation are key concepts for the audience of both fiction and non-fiction, I argue that non-fiction operating with the non-linear improvised approach, purposefully creates the opportunity for the viewer to muse and reflect. The situation is rather like the absurdist plays of Beckett (for example, Waiting For Godot), or the films of Jacques Tati. In the loitering tapes of the non-linear improvised documentary it is the number of beats and the spaces between them, and the variety of scenes, that give rise to such reflection, as the viewer accesses and assesses social situations and human beings holding attitudes presented with the maximum of credibility.

One of the main devices shaping documentary narrative has been the use of commentary. Roy Armes, for example, points out the primacy of the narrated exposition and sound in documentary when he states:

> Commentary, ubiquitous since the 1930's gives us information, comment and argument directly. In this way the customary balance of sound and image is reversed, since with documentary it is the sound track which, by logically ordering the exposition, points out the issue being raised. Just as the caption of

> a news photo is crucial to removing ambiguity of the photographic image, so too the commentator's voice in documentary shapes our involvement and brings together the various types of images (film clips, still photographs, graphics, maps, diagrams etc.) which are used as illustrative support (1988: 149).

In L'Artiste, Le Fermier et Le Paysage I was testing the limits of narrativity, what happens to it when combined with non-linearity, and how the maker can follow the non-linear path without losing audience involvement. It was not provoked by any desire to be obtuse but out of a concern to promote an appreciation of atmospheres and audio-visual patterning and their usefulness to increase the level of meaning communicated. Representation using the non-linear improvised approach is multi-faceted. In L'Artiste, Le Fermier et Le Paysage viewing is of the order: consider this statement, this activity, this person's relationships to work, land and people, this sense of being. This is congruent with the naïve painter who gives particular sets of images, space and a line of importance. For instance, in Jean Frélaut's painting La longère ou Paysage du Morbihan (1911) the foreground farm integrates with a background depicting the Golf du Morbihan islands. Whilst such a combination might not exist, it nevertheless shows the importance of these two facets of the area into one unity. As in the naïve painting so in the non-linear documentary: statements are juxtaposed and implied, and then exist when they are recognised by the viewer.

Assumptions about documentary change when the non-linear improvised approach is applied. Narration is neither ridiculed as in vérité films nor left to give categorical statements. Music in the sense of portraying the rhythms of life, work and soul becomes essential, interviews are genuinely two-way, recognising the input of maker

and participant. Narrative does not so much disappear as have an equal role running alongside meanings that add to the totality of coherent ideas set by the theme.

Brian Winston argues for subjective treatments and stylisation which 'could seek a broader audience' Comparing Errol Morris's The Thin Blue Line to Frederick Wiseman's 'six hour prize-winning voyeuristic and stultifying intrusion into death and grief', Near Death, Brian Winston says:

> The clue to succeeding in that search is tone. Documentary must abandon its limited and always serious tone. It must cease to be always and only one of Nichols's "discourses of sobriety" ... A documentary could be on occasion satiric, irreverent, comic ... Documentary is editorialising in its essence. (1995: 254/255).

Whilst I agree with these statements, my argument is that the outcomes are a negotiation partly of maker with the subjects, and partly with the maker's obligations to the intended audience. The non-linear improvised documentary, if it is to be ethical, needs to reconcile these two factors. I find that humour has had a key role to play in my films or tapes. Like a Jacques Tati film, the humour, for me, develops out of observation, and is delivered quietly and without exaggeration or over-emphasis. This is a way to produce empathy and credibility – an all important aim for the documentary. Radio Radio is full of ironic humour if the viewer cares to see it, but it does not belittle the participants. Humour develops out of the strange absurdity of events, the juxtaposition of one thing at odds with another, the timing of one action in relation to another. In this way people are represented as they are.

5.4 Reworking the Finished Documentary

An unexpected aspect of the non-linear improvised approach arises out of the possibility of reworking the finished article. As contexts become more varied, and the use of imagery becomes more local, and with a low cost technology to hand, it is possible to consider this as a serious proposition. There is a precedent for the desirability of re-working material that is in keeping with the non-linear improvisatory approach. It comes from, of all people, Little Tich:

> It is before an audience that I seek my effects. I add to them, eliminate, modify according to re-actions in the theatre. I work like a sculptor who models his statue for what he sees in front of him. The laughter of the audience serves as my model (cited in Tich and Findlater, 1979: 58).

Jacques Tati constantly modified his films in the same tradition – adding scenes, creating new sound tracks, gags and characters. Tati acknowledges Little Tich: 'He (Little Tich) spent time bringing into question and reconsidering his comic action. I am one of the few to have followed this forerunner in the defence of artistic freedom' (Ibid: n p). Control for an effect, an audience response linked to personal vision, is the name of the game: time for the maker to assess or re-draft according to new circumstances seems appropriate to the documentary maker. Documentary is more likely to be enhanced by screenings to audiences, with the maker present, and the maker taking account of their reactions. A similar situation found in the preview screenings undertaken before general release of the fiction film or preview performances of a stage production.

5.5 Assessing Documentaries

Developing this approach to documentary places creative effort at the forefront. If, for example, a part of the process is left out, and the maker concentrates exclusively on a narrated story-line, then whilst this is a viable viewpoint, it is also an extreme variation of what documentary can achieve vis-à-vis its ability to combine sounds and images into complex, flexible and meaningful patterns. If improvised performance is the focus, then films like The Belovs may result. The non-linear improvised approach gives: (a) a way of recognising key strategies adopted in individual documentaries, (b) a method of assessing, by virtue of the consistency found within the strategies.

Audiences or viewers are not neutral nor are they one single mass. Rather they come together with a whole lifestyle pattern then waiting – expecting – material with which they can interact. The non-linear improvised documentary recognises that entertainment works with different groups in different ways. In The Puppet Man series, the puppeteer Walter Wilkinson, played by Roy Hudd, ruminating at the end of his travels says:

> I knew now that a simple puppet-show could, in these clever modern times, amuse the three races of mankind, the vulgar poor, the vulgar rich, and that other race which is not concerned with riches, poverty, or vulgarity, the highbrows (The Puppet Man, Episode six, Channel 4. 1985).

Documentary, in the non-linear approach, does seek to be inclusive of its audiences. Documentary can communicate to different groups with differing ideas and expectations. It is the maker who is centrally placed, working creatively with the source material, the participants, so as to engage the defined audience into an active mental process.

5.6 The Viewer, the Participant and the Maker – Whose Knowledge?

The documentary has been defined by those whose starting point has been with the questioning of the status of image as the provider of comfort for the spectator set in a superior position. Susan Scheibler states:

> Premised as it is on basic expository proposals, the documentary form creates an expectation in a spectator trained to read codes associated with authenticity. Firmly situated within a space of cognitive desire, the spectator expects to be fulfilled in terms of the real conditions of existence, the pro-filmic event apart from the mediation of the system of textual codes. Appropriating its photographic genealogy, the documentary form is able to offer itself as a metaphysical guarantee, offering presence and coherence through the possibility of knowledge. The document promises that the limitless text of existence will take on a manageable form and substance, providing the spectator with a position of mastery over a potentially threatening world' (in Michael Renov, 1993:137).

The assumption is that the viewer (in Susan Scheibler's terms – the spectator) is passively carried along or lapping it up, gaining pleasure both through anticipation and recognition, and being in a position of power over the threatening world projected. The non-linear approach argues differently, demanding that the viewer puts effort into the viewing as did the participants and maker into production. In this triangulation between participants, maker and viewer, power and its surrender go hand in hand. Indeed, sometimes, the participants and maker are the viewers.

Philip Rosen, (see Renov 1993: 83), outlines the post-modern critique of representation and knowledge seen ultimately as a possession of intellectuals, which

can interrogate power and direct history – where in contemporary society representation dissolves into simulation. It is a critique applicable to the Grierson trajectory of ideas. As Philip Rosen points out under this critique: 'the claims of documentary representation are definitely wrong-headed in the age of simulation' (cited in Renov, 1993, 84).

However persuasive the post-modern argument is in pointing out the potential for documentary output to be elitist, documentaries are still meaningful at the level of representation. As Philip Rosen argues: 'a claim of historical representation does not depend on the existence of an imaginary Ideal Chronicler, but is instead implicated in the inseparability of the chronicling activity and sequenciation' (Ibid: 86).

This brings me back to restating the important link of participants, maker, and the fact that sound-image tape is made up as a system of beats of meaning within and between shots and scenes. Drawing on improvisation actually connects this judgmental state of knowledge of the viewer with the performance activity. This might account for why it is indeed difficult to define, or to create, a classification system for documentary. The non-linear approach is a model, based on the maker's concern with theme. This theme can be expanded upon, working with the participants, and in the editing, so as to set the viewer a task and a role – to surface both the overall pattern and discreet moments down to the detail of reading meanings within and between shots. Pleasure (like its opposite) is both concrete and complex and it is this which accounts, above all else, for the validity of the non-linear approach to the documentary form. The non-linear approach is also partly a game between maker and the audience, which like its music hall referent from the earliest days of cinema, lives by the moment, a moment

constructed out of spontaneity, risk and open structures.

The moment Anthony Frost and Ralph Yarrow define, when the theatre audience rewards itself for recognising what is happening, and which I witnessed filming On the Verge of Exploding, is also relevant to documentary. A similar situation can be developed working through the non-linear documentary method for new contexts. Documentary can, in its essence, be defined in relation to local audiences. This was the situation, noted in chapter 3, when L'Artiste, Le Fermier et Le Paysage was screened to local farmers. The farmers, their relatives and friends gained pleasure in the consonance between recognising and affirming the film's themes, in recognising detailed connections – and a shared set of beliefs. Points in the narration indicating 'sharedness' are not only there so as to help narrative continuity for the outsider, they also fundamentally connect the maker to the participants. Today, with a set of low-cost technologies at hand to give quality sound and image recording and editing, there is a possibility, if anyone has the tenacity to operate with arts funding bodies, to take this democratic documentary approach towards the twenty-first century, developing the documentary in new ways. In the meantime, the showing of the tape to the farmers provides a poignant image of a documentary audience. The farmers were seated on one side of a kitchen table, whilst their wives sat opposite, the setting sun dipping under the trees outside. Their hospitality and their lively participation in the whole of the tape, with interruptions as they recognised someone, or agreed with a statement, created the final link between the source material, the tape, the participants and the audience. Communication was made by fragmentation, diffusion, variation, interruption, the unexpected and the unexplained, just as in L'Artiste, Le Fermier et Le Paysage, and provides the point that documentaries are able to be – magical.

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David Furnham Selected film / video credits.

Writer / Producer / Director

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The Seaside Room. 1978. South East Arts. Brighton Museum exhibition.

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John Allin's Hopping. 1981. Channel Four. Launched 'People to People' series.

The Puppet Man. 1985. Channel Four and S4C. Six part drama series. Repeated 1986.

Co-op. 1987. Channel Four. 'People to People' series. Feature documentary.

As I See It. 1989. Brighton Museum. A tape on the life and work of artist Polly Binder.

L'Artiste, Le Fermier et Le Paysage. 1997. Middlesex University. Sheffield Film Festival 1997.

Writer

Power and People. 1989. Channel Four.

Harriet and Her Harmonium, 1989, a proposed animation musical written with Polly Binder.

Treacle Terrace, 1989 a musical written with David Henecker and Polly Binder.

The G. I. Wallahs, adaptation of Linda McCullough Thew's experiences growing up in the ATS during World War Two.

Producer / Director

The My First Series. 1991-1994. Dorling Kindersley. Children's 'infotainment' series including My First Green, Art activities, Science, Nature. Distributor: DK world-wide.

Media Waves. International Festival and Conference. October 1995. Brighton.

PhD Submission

By David Furnham

Title: Documentary Practice

1999

APPENDIX 1

SHOT ANALYSIS

L'Artiste, Le Fermier et Le Paysage

L'Artiste, Le Fermier et Le Paysage Scene Outline.

The tape consists of eighteen scenes as follows:

1. Introduction to Jean Frélaut and his paintings – Gaby and landscapes – work proposition – programme proposition (shots 1 –19).
2. The lifestyle of Jean Frélaut – his work – the paintings (shots 20 – 43).
3. Introduction to Gaby and Antoinette, history, character, and the cows (shots 44 – 66).
4. Chickens arrive – work (shots 67 – 84).
5. Cider making and Eau de Vie making – a kind of work (shots 85 – 131).
6. Neighbours Thérèse and Jean-Baptiste speak of staying on the farm, leading to the story of the horse on the farm, and co-operation (history) (shots 132 – 136).
7. Evocation of horses – their strength, energy, and importance – linking the present to past by use of the paintings (shots 137 – 157).
8. Thérèse inter-cut with harvesting – talking of consequences of modernisation (shots 158 – 163).
9. The Moules scene – social activity (nearly work) develops into a set of very enjoyable regional eating rituals (shots 164 – 196).
10. The Pardon. Paintings introduce the wider farming community ritual of the annual open-air religious service (shots 197 – 215).
11. The birth of the calf scene – meanwhile back in the stable a calf is born – Work (shots 216 – 217).
12. Death as part of the Breton way of life. The death of the cow followed by Frélaut's cortege painting (shots 218 – 228).
13. The chickens are ready to meet their fate – more hard work (shots 229 – 235).
14. The big breakfast scene. A key scene portraying Breton hospitality, and how time, work and lifestyle are all one (shots 235 – 241).
15. A visit to Rosalie and the local church add to this statement (shots 242 – 263).
16. Gaby understands the changes in social relationship (shots 264 – 266) but
17. even so, at the fête, Gaby is with his friends and neighbours, separate from the tourists (shots 267 – 298).
18. Finale: Gaby and Frélaut share the same way of using their time despite their different backgrounds – this is in opposition to the modern ways, and one to recognise as important (shots 299 – 346).

SHOT NUMBER 1 **DURATION** 5" **TOTAL** 5"

Painting: Autoportrait de Jean Frélaut, 1904.

Music

NARRATION (NAR): Artist Jean Frélaut

Mix to

2 Zoom Out 7" 12"

Painting: La Lavandière du Pargo, 1924.

Music

NAR: painted the Breton people and their landscape.

Mix to

3 5" 17"

Painting: La Neige ou Paysage d'hiver, 1929.

Music

NAR: 'It is in my character to hang on to that which does not change

Mix to

4 4" 21"

Painting: Orage sur les Monts d'Arré, 1949.

Music over

NAR: in appearance, to where I can see memories again, exactly like some months

Mix to

5 5" 26"

Painting: La charretée de foins ou La fenaison, 1909.

Music Over

NAR: or years gone past'.

6 3" 29"

Change in music tempo to fast

7		4"	33"

Music

NAR: Gaby Le Gal farms the same Breton landscape

8		7"	40"

Music

NAR: at Launay a small hamlet 30 kilometres inland from the Golfe du Morbihan. He and his sister, Antoinette, in the

Mix to

9	Zoom out	6"	46"

Music

NAR: late 1990's, follow the Breton traditions not as a heritage centre but by way of their daily rituals

10		4"	50"

Painting: Paysage de Luscanen, 1909

Music

NAR: and routines. Frélaut lived on the outskirts of Vannes and painted this landscape,

Mix to

11		4"	54"

Music

NAR: and this is the same landscape today.

12		4"	58"

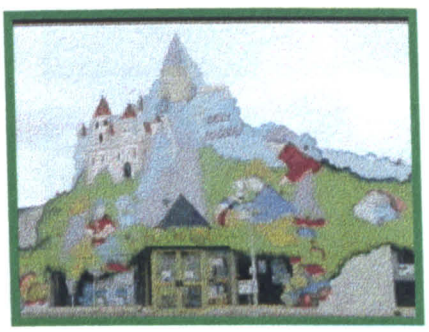
Music

NAR: André Gorz, the writer and philosopher, states: "The culture of work

13 5" 1' 03"

Music

NAR: has been cut off from the culture of everyday life which has splintered into



14 2" 1' 05"

Music

NAR: isolated pockets of time and space,

15 3" 1' 08"

Music

NAR: a succession of excessive aggressive demands.

16 3" 1' 08"

Music

NAR: There is nothing of a life-world".

17 3" 1' 14"

Music

NAR: Time is surrendered and a different lifestyle evolves.

18 4" 1' 14"

Music

NAR: On the route de Luscanen business and pleasure rush past,

Mix to

19 Zoom out 21" 1' 39"

Painting: Le Vallon Route de Luscanen, 1927.

Music

NAR: but there is another way of life, a culture of shared lived experience – linking the present to the past – and where life and work go hand in hand (title appears).

20 1" 1' 40"

Music

21 3" 1' 43"

Painting: Laboureurs au repos, 1925.

Music

22 2" 1' 45"

Painting: CU from Laboureurs au repos, 1925

Music

23 16" 2' 01"

Music

Cécile Roux-Frélaut (CRF): My father painted in this style during the cubist era. Of course that just didn't do! That's why his work was never recognised. It was too realistic you see, my father painted true.

Mix to

24 zoom out 11" 2' 12"

Painting: Les ramasseurs de pommes de terre, 1923.

Music

NAR: "My dream is to retreat as soon as possible to my corner of Brittany, to stay there for three quarters of the year, to paint the landscape in all its aspects and habits,

25 zoom in 13" 2' 27"

Painting: Femmes battant au fléau, 1923.

Music

NAR: to paint the intimacy of man and nature, to represent strength by simplicity, and to help people understand that happiness is closer than they think – in a life that is simpler, more natural, and less driven by the passion for gain or gold."

26 5" 2' 32"

Preparatory sketch for La charrette de blé, 1920.

Music

Mix to

27 Electronically matched shot 6" 2' 38"

Painting: La charrette de blé (Le Logeo), 1920.

Music

N.B .music dips to anticipate shot 28

28 18" 2' 56"

Music

CRF: My father loved painting and even when he was an engraver he always painted, he was first and foremost a painter. I don't think he painted for posterity, but rather for pleasure.

29 zoom out 5" 3' 01"

Painting: Les cribleuses 1909.

Music

CRF: He'd say "country people..

30 2" 3' 03"

Painting: CU from Récolte des foins, 1904

Music

CRF: will recognise

31 3" 3' 06"

Painting: Récolte des foins, 1904.

Music

CRF: my paintings by the seasons".

32 11" 3' 17"

Music

CRF: My father was very open, very happy, he loved children. He was a family man. We had very - very happy times.

33 6" 3' 23"

Music: fades at start of shot

CRF: My father bought this home in 1923 as a holiday home.

34 4" 3' 27"

Painting: private collection.

CRF: We were renting a place in Locmiquel at the time

35 4" 3' 31"

Painting: Fênetre de ma chaumière au Paludo, 1938.

CRF: so he looked for something to buy there but in the end he bought this little cottage

36 15" 3' 46"

CRF: and we lived there until his death in 1954.
We spent holidays there – there were lots of cousins.
We all slept in the large attic – boys and girls.

37 6" 3' 52"

NAR: Each day Frélaut would set out around the Pointe de Berchis sketching and painting.

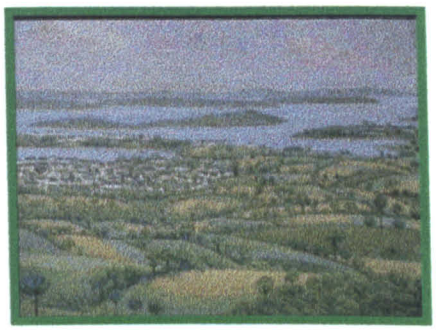
38 10" 4' 02"

NAR: "I know nothing more beautiful than his Panoramas of the Golfe du Morbihan where, in minute detail, and with perfectly accurate perspective, he renders

39 6" 4' 08"

Painting: private collection.

NAR: the succession of woodland and tiny fields stretching from his observation point to the coast and in the



40 8" 4' 16"

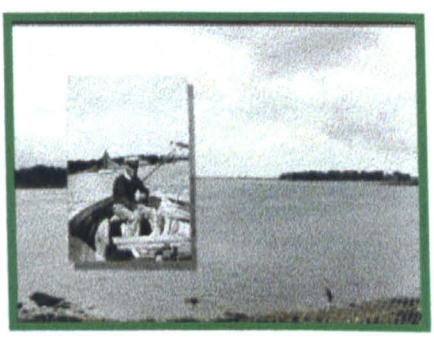
Painting: CU from La longère ou Paysage du Golfe du Morbihan, 1911.

NAR: distance, the small islands sprinkled around the coast" Charles Chassé – Journalist – 1955.

41 5" 4' 21"

Painting: private collection.

NAR: As always Frélaut's work was a part of his family life.



42 5" 4' 26"

Live image with photograph superimposed.

NAR: He would sail or collect shellfish or play in the garden outside his cottage.

43 hand held shot – looking at photograph – pan up to Ann-Marie. 27" 4' 53"

CRF: He was looking to buy something and he found this small cottage.

CRF: He took a photo to show what he had bought. He had only three children when he came back from the war in 1920 – my brother Jacques, my sister Armelle and Ann-Marie here ~ laughter.

Pan to Ann-Marie.

Ann-Marie: And the field! And the field!

44 1" 4' 54"

Music starts

45 4" 4' 58"

Painting: La longère ou Paysage du Golfe du Morbihan, 1911.

Music

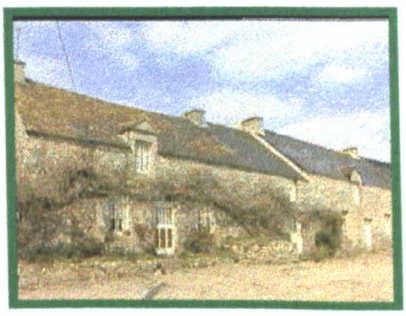
NAR: Frélaut's La longére ou Paysage du Golfe du Morbihan,

46 11" 5' 09"

Painting: CU from La longère ou Paysage du Golfe du Morbihan

Music

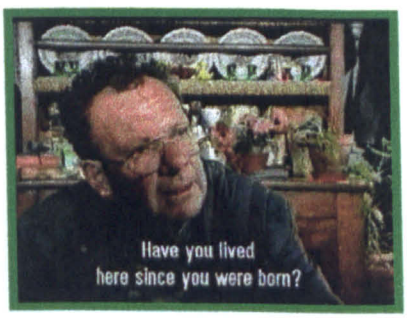
NAR: 1911, shows the typical Breton Longère consisting of the family home at one end, the stable with its own door in the middle and workers quarters at the other – hayloft above.



47 5" 5' 14"

Music

NAR: Gaby and Antoinette's Longère maintains a traditional kitchen/living room where everyone meets



48 8" 5' 22"

Music

INT(Interviewer): Have you lived here since you were born?
Gaby: Yes, always.
Yes and Antoinette too.

49 1" 5' 23"

Music

Antoinette: Oui.

50 6" 5' 29"

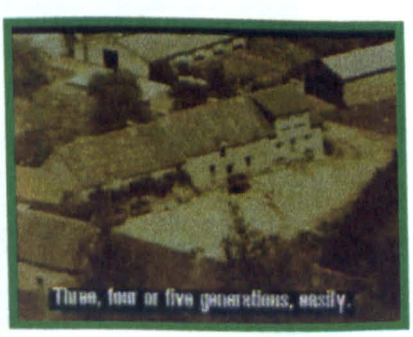
Music

INT: What about your parents, did they live here too?
Gaby: Yes, grandparents and parents,

51 3" 5' 32"

Music

Gaby: the whole family.



52 13" 5' 45"

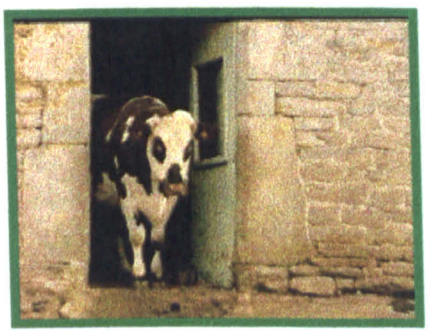
Photograph – electronic zoom out

Interviewer: How many generations?
Gaby: Three, four – five generations easily.

53 13" 5' 58"

Music

Interviewer: Do your cows have names?
Antoinette: Yes, they have names.
Interviewer: What are their names?
Antoinette: One is called Swallow ~ Factory.
Interviewer: Factory!



54 16" 6' 14"

Music

55 Pan 21" 6' 35"

Music

N.B. end position of shot

56 3" 6' 38"

Music

57 3" 6' 41"

Music

58 7" 6' 48"

Music

59 7" 6' 55"

Music

60 2" 6' 57"

Music

61 3" 7' 00"

Music

62 2" 7' 02"

Music

63 5" 7' 07"

Music

64 3" 7' 10"

Music

65 7" 7' 17"

Music

66 10" 7' 27"

Music

End of Scene.

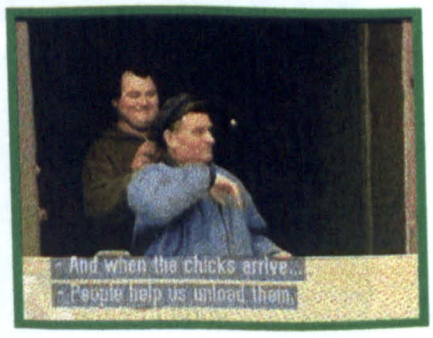
67 5" 7' 32"

Atmos.

Interviewer: Does Gaby look after the chicks?
Antoinette: Yes, and me too.

68 6" 7' 38"

Interviewer: You too?
Antoinette: Yes, both of us.



69 2" 7' 40"

Atmos.

Interviewer: And when the chicks arrive?

70 6" 7' 46"

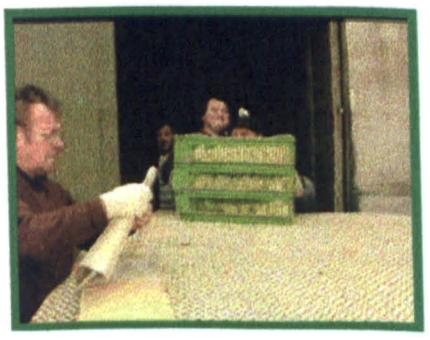
Antoinette: People help us unload them

71 2" 7' 48"

Interviewer: Are they locals?

72 2" 7' 50"

Antoinette: Yes – they do it for free.

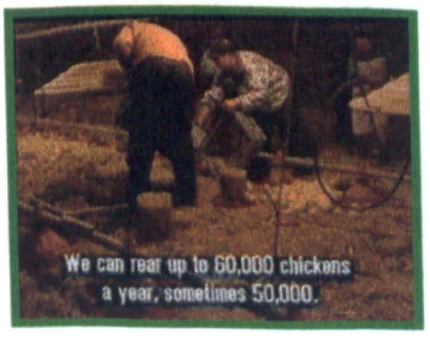


73 4" 7' 54"

Sync. Atmos.

74 14" 8' 08"

Interviewer: Do you get new arrivals every 6 weeks?
Gaby: Yes, and every fortnight there's a health and safety check. Then new chicks arrive after 7 weeks and so on.

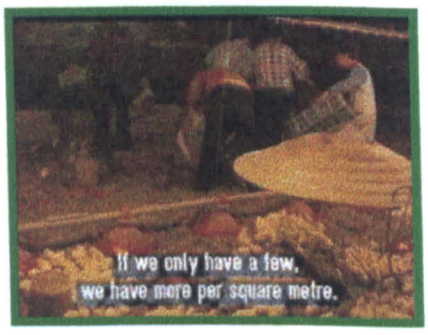


75 6" 8' 14"

Gaby: We can rear up to 60,000 chickens a year, sometimes 50,000,

76 6" 8' 20"

Gaby: because if we rear a lot at one time we have less



77 10" 8' 30"

Gaby: per square metre. And also we can reduce the time between arrivals,

78 4" 8' 34"

Gaby: we can make it 2 weeks instead of 3.

79 1" 8' 35"

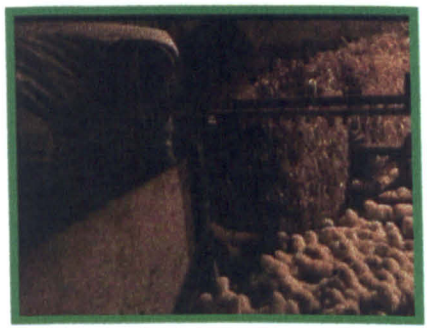
Chick sounds.

80 8" 8' 43"

NAR: The pieces of cardboard act as a tally counting the number of petits poussins to arrive – over 20,000

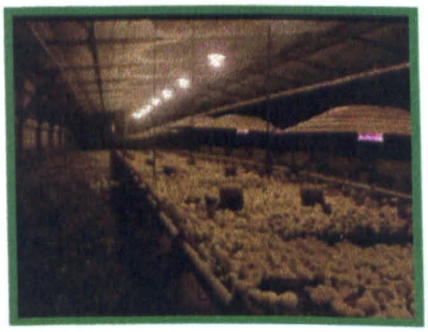
81 3" 8' 46"

Sync: Salute.



82 41" 9' 27"

NAR: After which Antoinette has to make sure no chicks escape as the water dispenser is lowered. Gaby and Antoinette show respect for their animals yet to encourage growth the water troughs are raised each day so the chicks have to stretch to reach – the survival of the fittest.



83 7" 9' 34"

Loud sound of chicks

NAR: It's hard work on the farm as Gaby explains.
GABY: Year in, year out,

84 50" 10' 24"

GABY: There's ploughing to be done, sowing, making hay, cutting the grass. Afterwards storing the corn but the company takes care of that.
INT: .What about the straw? GABY: Straw.
INT: What about the grain? GABY: The grain- yes; and so on.
INT: So you are busy all year round? GABY: Oh – yes.
INT: That's good , isn't it? GABY: Yes, it's good but
INT: It's too much work, isn't it? GABY: 24 hours a day. We never stop – no holidays.
INT: No holidays? GABY: Never, never.
INT: If you had a choice would you rather do something else? GABY: Oh no. I wouldn't start anything new now.
I'd rather be a tramp ~ laughter ~ I'm fed up with work.

85 6" 10' 30"

Atmos.

86 6" 10' 36"

Atmos. (Hear bale of hay being put down).

87 6" 10' 42"

Sync. Atmos.

NAR: Cider making is a very different sort of work from rearing chickens,

88 3" 10' 45"

Sync. Atmos.

NAR: an activity for the autumn. On a wet afternoon

89 13" 10' 58"

Sync. Atmos.

NAR: Gaby and Antoine collect a bale of hay and plenty of apples. There are no set targets or quality control tests – no schedules or meetings – not even a single "just in time" technique,

90 33" 11' 31"

Sync. Atmos.

NAR: if it rains or the light goes, it does not matter.

91 6" 11' 37"

Sync. Atmos.

92 8" 11' 45"

Sync. Atmos.

93 10" 11' 55"

Atmos.

Music fades up.

NAR: Rosalie, their friend from Trevere, the next hamlet, often helps out. There is a system and technique to cider making which is easy to spot.

94 8" 12' 03"

Music

95 20" 12' 23"

Music

NAR: There are assigned jobs. Antoine and Antoinette carry the apples to the mulching machine…

96 17" 12' 40"

Music

97 7" 12' 47"

Music

NAR: Rosalie puts the mulched apples onto a layer of hay whilst – le chef – Gaby carefully spreads the apple pulp and builds up the layers into a perfectly shaped cube.

98 6" 12' 53"

Music

NAR: This is something they have done many times before but it is done in the spirit of co-operation.

99 9" 13' 06"

Music

NAR: Gaby presses apples for the neighbours and in return gets help when the chickens arrive, or if there are

100 4" 13' 10"

Music

NAR: fence posts to fix. In this way reciprocity and barter become

101 2" 13' 12"

Music

NAR: ways of sustaining the community.

102 5" 13' 17"

Music

103 3" 13' 20"

Music

104 6" 13' 26"

Music

105 3" 13' 29"

Music

106 12" 13' 41"

Music fades

SYNC: Conversation
Antoine: et fini!
Antoinette: fini.

107 50" 14' 31"

Sync. Conversation

Noise of wooden block

Rosalie: It's coming now.
Antoine: Of course it is, there is 50 kg weighing on it now.

108 8" 14' 43"

Atmos.

109 6" 14' 49"

Pan down to fluid going into bucket.

Rosalie: Here we go, it's coming.

110 8" 14' 57"

Sync Atmos. Sound of running cider.

Rosalie: There's loads.

111 12" 15' 09"

Sync atmos. Continues.

Conversation: Good cider?
Very good. It's very slow filtering through.

112 17" 15' 26"

Rosalie: It's very good. Have some!

Rosalie: There's a lot of Marc.
Gaby, off screen: Yes, there is a lot of pulp in it.

113 5" 15' 31"

NAR: Cider making is not exactly paid

114 7" 15' 38"

NAR: work, nor is it leisure. It is a useful undertaking providing both cider and the basis for eau de vie.

115 7" 15' 45"

Sync. Atmos.

NAR: It's April the next year and Gaby and his mates get ready to make the eau de vie.

116 zoom out from CU 22" 16' 07"

NAR: The problem is how to get heavy barrels out and onto the trailer.

117 28" 16' 35"

Conversation – in french – cow bellows in background.

Antoine: (in disgust) Idiots.

118 2" 16' 37"

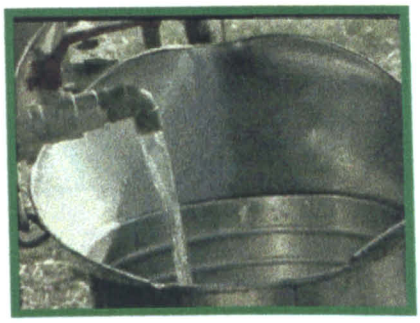
Atmos.

119 4" 16' 41"

Sync Atmos: Birds singing

120 4" 16' 45"

NAR: The problem solved, Gaby sets off down the road to the mobile distillery,



121 3" 16' 48"

NAR: which calls every year at Trevere where the cider is

122 3" 16' 51"

NAR: distilled into alcohol.

123 4" 16' 55"

NAR: While waiting his turn Gaby has time to complete the formalities.

124 6" 17' 01"

Atmos

125 11" 17' 12"

NAR: The barrels are positioned so that Gaby can pump the cider.

126 5" 17' 17"

Sync atmos.

127 3" 17' 20"

Sync Atmos.

128 16" 17' 39"

Sync sound

NAR: Then there is time for a chat.
Gaby talks about the weather.

129 3" 17' 39

Atmos.

130 16" 17' 55"

Music fades up

NAR: And what goes in from the big barrels comes out as eau de vie in the small.

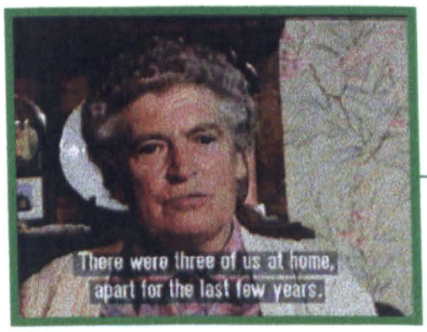
131 11" 18' 06"

Music carries over to link next scene.

132 Zoom out from Thérèse. 14" 18' 20"

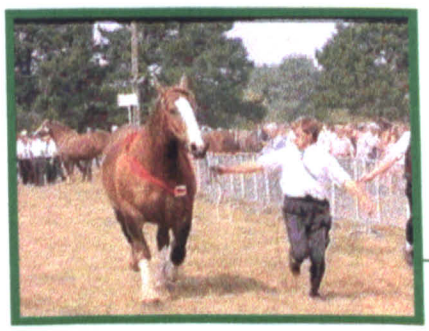
Music: musical note fades.

NAR: Thérèse and Baptiste are Gaby and Antoinette's neighbours. Retired farmers they are now helped by their large family in the vegetable garden and recall earlier times.



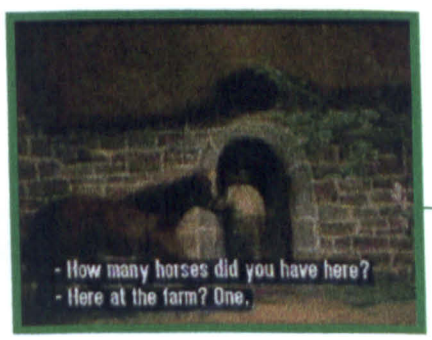
133 45" 19' 05"

Thérèse: There were 3 of us at home, apart from the last few years. My sisters moved to the city and I stayed on the farm. (To Baptiste) How many were there in your family?
Baptiste: There were five of us.
Thérèse: 5 children. How many stayed on the farm?
Baptiste: Just 2 of us. 3 actually. Later on my sister got married and got her own farm.
Thérèse: Ah, yes.
Baptiste: So there was my brother, me and my parents.
Thérèse: And your parents. Baptiste: Yes.
Interviewer: Was it normal for all the children to stay on the farm?
Thérèse: Yes.



134 8" 19' 13"

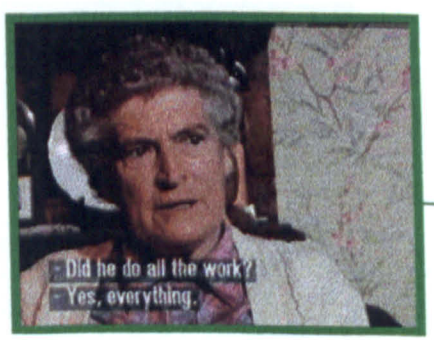
Interviewer: Has it changed a lot since then?
Thérèse: Oh yes
Interviewer: What was it like before?
Thérèse: We had horses then.



135 4" 19' 17"

Painting: CU from Le champ de blé, 1937.

Interviewer: How many horses did you have here?
Thérèse: Here on the farm? One.



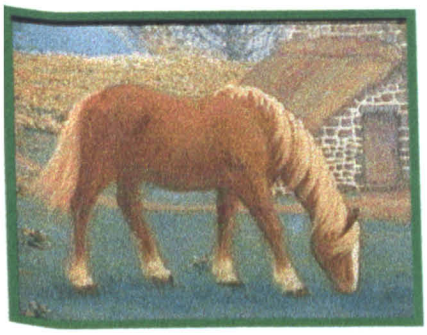
136 42" 19' 59"

Interviewer: Did he do all the work?
Thérèse: Yes, everything
Interviewer: And was it the same on all the farms?
Thérèse: At Gaby's there was also one horse. Yes, on all the farms. There were 5 or 6 farms in all but some young couples didn't have a horse. Others had to help them farm the land. There were 4 horses altogether in the village.
Interviewer: If someone didn't have a horse were they lent one?
Thérèse: That's right – we helped one another.

137 4" 20' 03"

Painting: Chevaux à la pâture ou Baie de Kerdelan, 1920.

Music



138 3" 20' 06"

Painting: CU from Chevaux à la pâture ou Baie de Kerdelan, 1920.

Music

139 3" 20' 09"

Sketch of painting: Marché aux chevaux, 1953.

Music

NAR: The horse fair

140 4" 20' 13"

Painting: Marché aux chevaux, 1953.

NAR: of Frélaut's – Le Foire aux Chevaux, 1953,

141 2" 20' 15"

Music

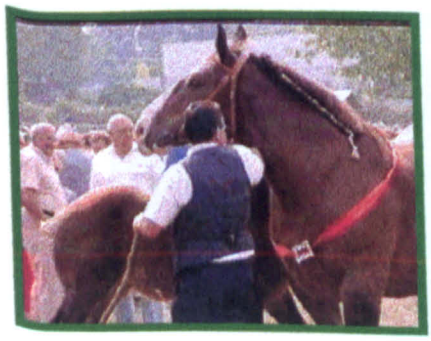
Atmos.

NAR: is echoed today at the local breeding competitions at St. Marcel.

142 2" 20' 17"

Music

Atmos.



143 3" 20' 20"

Music

Atmos.

144 4" 20' 24"

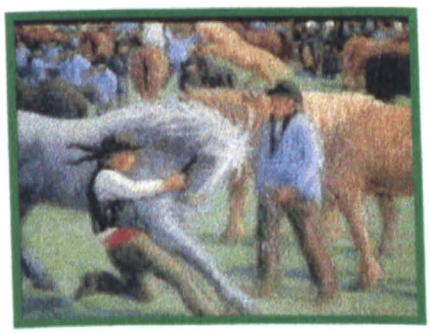
Music

Atmos.

145 3" 20' 27"

Music

Atmos.



146 4" 20' 31"

Painting: CU from Marché aux chevaux, 1953.

Music

Atmos.

147 3" 20' 34

Music

Atmos.

148 8" 20' 42"

Music

Atmos.

149 1" 20' 43"

Painting: CU from Marché aux chevaux, 1953.

Music

Atmos.

150 3" 20' 46"

Painting: CU from Marché aux chevaux, 1953.

Music

Atmos.

151 4" 20' 50"

Music

Atmos.

152 2" 20' 52"

Music

Atmos.

153 2" 20' 54"

Music

Atmos.

154 1" 20' 55"

Music

Atmos.

155 2" 20' 57"

Painting: CU from Marché aux chevaux, 1953.

Music

Atmos.

156 4" 21' 01"

Painting: Le champ de blé, 1937.

Music ends.

157 8" 21' 09"

Atmos.

Interviewer: What do you think of modernisation?
Thérèse: It's very expensive.
Interviewer: Does it change things?
Thérèse: Yes, many things.

158 7" 21' 16"

Atmos.

Thérèse: There's a lot less work.
Interviewer: Less work
Thérèse: There will be less work because everything will be modernised.

159 9" 21' 25"

Atmos.

Thérèse: We'll need a lot of money. Yes, that's right. It'll be expensive.
Interviewer: The countryside is wonderful around here.
Thérèse: Yes,

160 3" 21' 28

Thérèse: but small farms like this won't be able to afford it.

161 9" 21' 37"

Atmos.

Thérèse: Only farms over 50 hectares will be able to have things like…

162 4" 21' 41"

Atmos.

Thérèse: milking sheds, cow sheds, septic tanks and a dunghill. You will need at least 50 hectares

163 5" 21' 46"

Atmos.

Thérèse: in order to manage.

164 5" 21' 51"

Music: Accordion (recorded live in local bar)

NAR: Fridays are still traditionally

165 3" 21' 54"

Music

NAR: fish days, and shellfish are part of the Breton way of life.

166 5" 21' 59"

Music

NAR: If you don't buy your mussels or oysters at the stall by the church

167 3" 22' 02"

Music

NAR: or from the visiting fish van, then, as Antoinette recommends,

168 7" 22' 09"

Music

NAR: the only thing to do is to go to Damgan where high tides allow you to collect your own moules.

169 5" 22' 14"

Atmos.

Music

170 6" 22' 20"

Music

171 3" 22' 23"

Spot sound effect: seagulls.

Music

172 2" 22' 25"

Music

173 13" 22' 38"

Spot sound effect: seagulls.

Music

174 7" 22' 45"

Music

175 6" 22' 51"

Gaby and Antoinette prepare meal

Sync. Atmos.

Music

176 2" 22' 53"

Sync. Atmos.

Music

177 3" 22' 56"

Sync. Atmos.

Music

178 2" 22' 58"

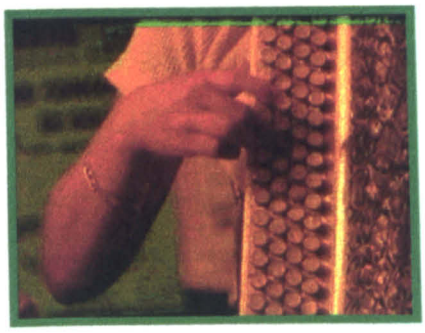
Sync. Atmos.

Music

179 3" 23' 01"

Sync. Atmos.

Music



180 5" 23' 06"
Music

181 2" 23' 08"
Atmos.
Music

182 3" 23' 11"
Seagulls
Music

183 3" 23' 14"
Seagulls
Music

184 2" 23' 16"
Music

185 3" 23' 19"
Music

186 3" 23' 22"

Music

187 2" 23' 24"

Atmos

Music

188 2" 23' 26"

Atmos

Music

189 3" 23' 29"

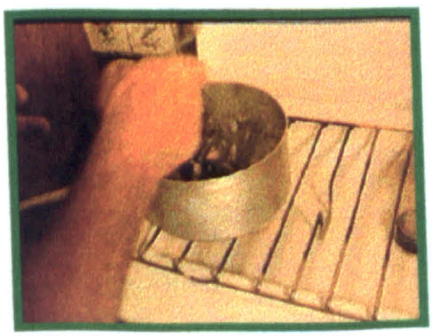
Atmos – sound of moules being poured into pot.

Music

190 4" 23' 33"

Atmos

Music



191 3" 23' 36"

Atmos

Music

192 2" 23' 38"

Atmos.

Music

193 5" 23' 43"

Atmos.

Music

194 2" 23' 45"

Atmos.

Music

195 4" 23' 49"

Atmos. – Gaby heard talking.

Music

196 4" 23' 53"

Music ends. A moment of silence then –

Gaby: Ah! Bon.

197 7" 24' 00"

Painting: La procession de Belz, 1905.

Religious singing

198 4" 24' 04"

Painting CU: La procession de Belz, 1905.

Religious singing

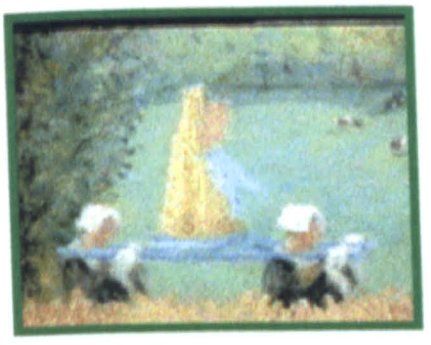
NAR: Pardons give hamlets and villages the opportunity

199 6" 24' 10"

Painting: La procession de Béquerel, 1951.

Religious singing

NAR: to join together in a public expression of piety where an open-air procession is followed by mass.



200 4" 24'14"

Painting CU: La procession de Béquerel, 1951.

Religious singing

NAR: Frélaut painted pardons at Belz and Béquerel

201 5" 24' 19"

Sketch: La procession de Josselin, 1910.

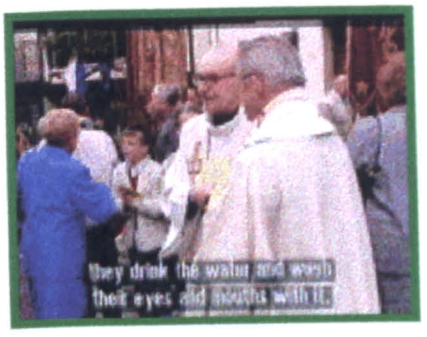
Religious singing

NAR: and at Josselin where the pardon is known as Le Pèlerinage à Notre Dame du Roncier.

202 13" 24' 32"

Atmos.

Thérèse V/O: It is the Notre Dame du Roncier in Josselin. There's a pilgrimage here every year on the 8th September. The pilgrims go to the fountain of Notre the Dame du Roncier.



203 15" 24' 47"

Atmos.

Thérèse: They drink the water and wash their eyes and mouth with it. There's the procession and Mass on 8th September. It's lovely – with all the banners

204 3" 24' 50"

Atmos.

Thérèse: of Josselin and the surrounding villages.

205 3" 24'53"

Atmos.

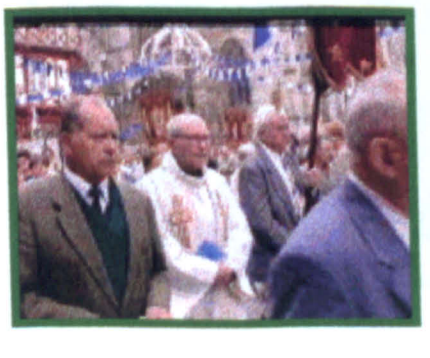
206 9" 25' 02"

Singing

207 7" 25' 09"

Singing

NAR: There are very few tourists present and their day is set by the collective devotion of the people. The Church offers and gives



208 4" 25' 13"

Singing

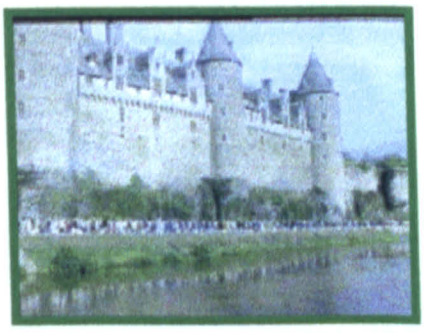
NAR: opportunity for this expression

209		5"	25' 18"
	Singing		

210		9"	25' 27"
	Singing		

211		3"	25' 30"
	Singing		

212		6"	25' 36"
	Singing		

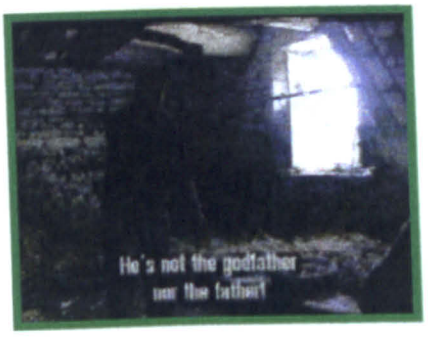


213		4"	25' 40"
	Singing – with sound perspective.		

214	Pan left to right	20"	26' 00"
	New singing		

215 18" 26' 18"

Sound tempo increases: Alleluia chorus.



216 1' 33" 28' 51"

Sound overlap – singing echoes.

General conversation: Here we are, salt and water.
He's a lovely little thing.
What a beauty! Poor animal!
Yes, that's how you get them to move.
Is he a Charolais? Yes.

Gaby proclaims to all: I'm not the godfather, nor the father!

It's a male. He's a healthy one.

217 2" 28' 53"

Sync. Atmos.

218 8" 29' 01"

Sync. Atmos.

NAR: Three days later and despite medication the cow died. The body had to be disposed of

219 11" 29' 12"

Sync. Atmos

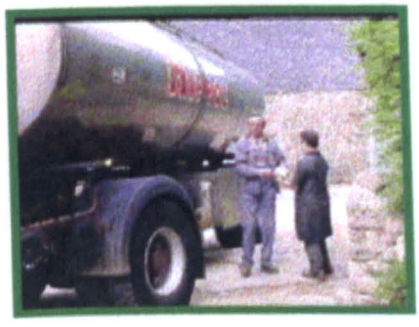
NAR: immediately, at the same time the milk was being collected; a reminder that the routines of life go on, even in death.

220 6" 29' 18"

Atmos.

221 5" 29' 23"

Atmos.



222 6" 29' 29"

Atmos.

Music starts at end of shot

223 5" 29' 34"

Sketch (1): L'enterrement, 1908.

Music

NAR: Frélaut knew

224 6" 29' 40"

Sketch (2): L'enterrement, no date.

Music

NAR: of the importance of acknowledging death in the Breton community in these sketches, which he began in 1908,

225 5" 29' 45"

Painting: CU from L'enterrement, 1953.

Music

NAR: and only completed as a painting in 1953 – one year before his own death.

226 5" 29' 50"

Painting: CU from L'enterrement, 1953.

Music

227 5" 29' 55"

Painting: CU from L'enterrement, 1953.

Music

228 5" 30' 00"

Painting: L'enterrement, 1953.

Music

229 4" 30' 04"

Music overlaps and ends

NAR: The 35 days are up

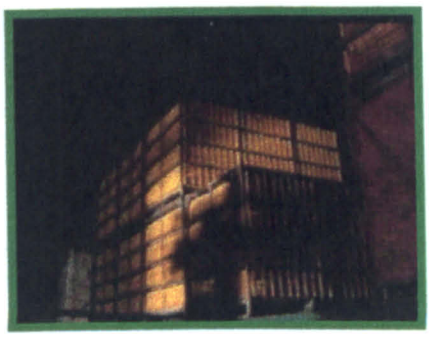
230 6" 30' 10"

Atmos.

NAR: and the 20,000 chickens leave to meet their fate.

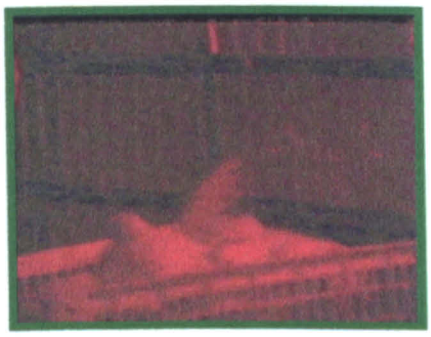
231 12" 30' 20"

Atmos.



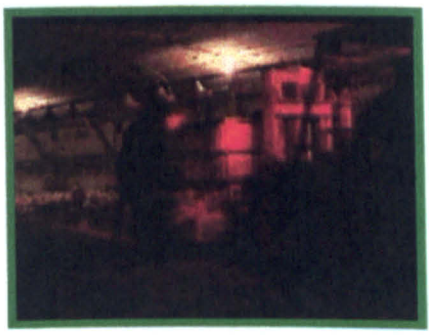
232 16" 30' 36"

Atmos.



233 11" 30' 47"

Atmos.



234 23" 31' 10"

Atmos

Pan with tractor and workers leaving.

235 6" 31' 16"

Atmos.

NAR: Work started at 4 in the morning

236 3" 31' 19"

Atmos.

NAR: and Antoinette has also had to milk the cows

237 3" 31' 22"

Atmos.

NAR: By nine everyone's ready for breakfast.

238 4" 31' 26"

Atmos.

NAR: Rosalie came to prepare the meal

239 3" 31' 29"

Atmos.

NAR: where the conversation ebbs and flows.

240 4" 31' 33"

Atmos.

241 3' 26" 34' 59"

Sync – The long take of breakfast

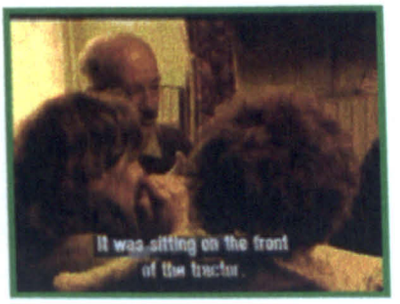
Gaby starts by eating soup

N.B. Breakdown of the shot follows over next 3 pages



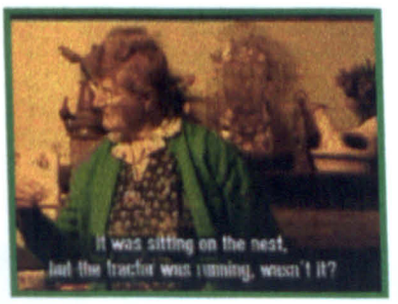

M.S. Gaby — He gesticulates to man and eats

Gaby: And the next day there was a cockerel sitting on the eggs!
Have you ever seen that before?



Pan to man by window (3 shot)

Woman: We saw it, we did!
Gaby: It was sitting in front of the tractor



Pan to Rosalie: (who is standing by the fireplace)
As Rosalie says: He showed us last week

M.S. Rosalie: Come and see it, he said, I've got something to show you ... It was sitting on the nest, but the tractor was running, wasn't it?

The Big Breakfast 43a

Pan to Gaby.

Gaby: He just sat there – he's used to sleeping through it.
Man: Just like you!

Pot picked up from table by Rosalie.

Conversation continues (not translated)

Plate of sausages put on table by Rosalie.

Man by window: I had an old jacket in the garage that I used for gardening.

Woman laughs towards camera.

Man again: And one day I used my fork to get it down

Pan away to Antoinette who is collecting food from dresser.
Pan with action. *Rosalie crosses in* front of Antoinette.

Man: and found some chicks in one of the pockets!

Rosalie returns with bread as plates of meat are put on table.

The Big Breakfast 43b



Rosalie: be, be, be, be (to get dog out of the way).

Pan to Rosalie who gives the man at near end of table the large stick of bread.

Dog moves, and camera repositions to see bread being cut into large chunk.

Man by window: There were these chicks in my old jacket.

Man with bread hands bread to woman next to him who talks and cuts bread (the traditional way).


Younger woman: I'm not cutting the tablecloth.

Woman: Young people don't know how to slice bread.

Pan back to Gaby

Gaby: This is how you slice bread.

Woman: Young people aren't very clever nowadays, are they? They aren't what they used to be.

Pan to Gaby and man on end.

NAR: This is a convivial way of life with time to spend chatting and no other motive than to enjoy the moment.

The Big Breakfast 43c

242 6" 35' 05"

Atmos.

Music

243 7" 35' 12"

Atmos.

Music

NAR: In the evening there is time to set off in the Citroen at a snail's pace to call in to see Rosalie.

244 9" 35' 21"

Atmos.

Music

245 4" 35' 25"

Atmos.

Music

246 4" 35' 29"

Rosalie: Bonjour Monsieur David.

David: Bonjour – Bonjour.

247 2" 35' 31"

Music

248 18" 35' 49"

Sound effect: grandfather clock chimes 9 o'clock.

NAR: Rosalie is keen to show us her photographs and award for raising 7 children.

249 7" 35' 56"

Sync. Atmos.

Gaby: show the photo to camera.

250 2" 35' 58"

Rosalie laughter.

251 2" 36' 00"

Rosalie laughter.

252 3" 36' 03"

Spot effect: church bells.

253 6" 36' 09"

Spot effect: church bells.

260 3" 36' 12"

Bells continue.

NAR: For a few others, there's time to go to the Saturday Lizio.

261 2" 36' 14"

Bells

NAR: service, the church

262 7" 36' 21"

Bells

NAR: where Jean-Baptiste and Thérèse were married many years previously. A tradition caught in Frélaut's

263 4" 36' 25"

Painting: Église de Sénéne par temps de pluie, 1929.

Bells

NAR: Église de Sénéne par temps de pluie of 1929

264 9" 36' 34"

Atmos.

NAR: while some are still finishing harvest.

265 7" 36' 41"

Atmos.

Interviewer: Has technology changed a lot of things?

Gaby: Ah, yes.

266 1' 01" 37' 42"

Gaby: Yes, things change People don't mix as much as they used to. Our neighbours used to come here or we would go round their place. Nowadays, it's each for himself. Well, that's the way it is.
Interviewer: Ah yes – it's a shame, isn't it?
Antoinette (Off screen): Family life isn't what it used to be.
Interviewer: People are cut off from each other?
Gaby: Yes, definitely.
Interviewer: And is that what's changed?
Gaby: Very much. When people needed help, we used to go and give a hand and people would help you in return. It was good.
Interviewer: But you still do that, don't you?
Gaby: Yes, but nobody asks us anymore and we don't ask them anymore either, no – no. There are people round here we haven't spoken to for two years. Whereas before, we used to see them all the time.
Interviewer: Really!
Gaby: yes, but nowadays people have the wrong outlook.
Interviewer: The thinking has changed.
Gaby: yes
Interviewer: Do you get many tourists round here?
Gaby: Yes, but a quick hullo, now and again, is enough.
Interviewer: she laughs.

267 3" 37' 45"

Music

268 2" 37' 47"

Music

269 2" 37' 49"

Music

270 2" 37' 51"

Music

272 2" 37' 53"

Music

272 2" 37' 54"

Music

NAR: For Gaby the Lizio Fête

273 2" 37' 56"

Music

NAR: is a chance to meet friends,

274 3" 37' 59"

Music

NAR: undertake some stewarding for the benefit of the village and

275 4" 38' 03"

Music

NAR: generally has a good time. He is oblivious to the

276 2" 38' 05"

Music

NAR: stall-holders arts

277 2" 38' 07"

Music

NAR: and crafts. He, like the other farmers, moves in between the tourists and visitors.

278 3" 38' 10"

Music

NAR: For the day the two worlds mingle in each other's company

279 6" 38' 16"

Music

NAR: and each supporting the other.

280 3" 38' 19"

Music

281 4" 38' 23"

Music

282 3" 38' 26"

Music

283 9" 38' 35"

Music

284 5" 38' 40"

Music

285 10" 38' 50"

Music

NAR: In 1909

286 11" 39' 01"

Painting: Repas de noce en Bretagne, 1908.

Music

NAR: Frélaut painted Repas de noce en Bretagne.
CRF: It's a typical Breton wedding

287 3" 39' 04"

Painting: CU from Repas de noce en Bretagne, 1908.

Music

CRF: I think there were three marriages

288 6" 39' 10"

Painting: CU from Repas de noce en Bretagne, 1908.

Music

CRF: They were in a field and there were lots of people. I think the whole village was invited.

289 4" 39' 14"

Painting: CU from Repas de noce en Bretagne, 1908.

Music

CRF: about 800 people. As dad used to say – it was a real.

290 6" 39' 20"

Painting: CU from Repas de noce en Bretagne, 1908.

Music

CRF: Breton knees up!
Interviewer: What?
CRF: Breton knees up.

291 3" 39' 23"

Music

292 2" 39' 25"

Music

293 5" 39' 30"

Music

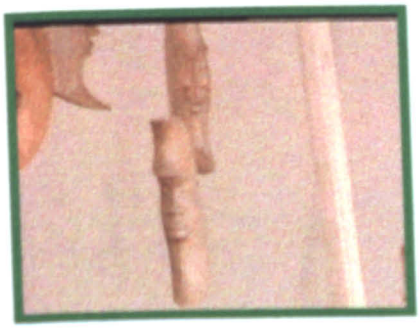
NAR: But the tourists have a different agenda.

294 5" 39' 35"

Music

295 10" 39' 45"

Music



296 5" 39' 50"

Music

297 5" 39' 55"

Music

298 20" 40' 15"

Music

299 22" 40' 17"

Music

NAR: Gaby Le Gal inhabits

300 4" 40' 21"

Painting: Neige en Bretagne, 1924.

Music

NAR: the same landscape as Frélaut painted. Between them

301 3" 40' 24"

Painting: CU from Neige en Bretagne, 1924.

Music

NAR: they span the twentieth century. They have in common the fact

302 4" 40' 28"

Painting: CU from Neige en Bretagne, 1924.

Music

NAR: that they control their own lives. Their time is not fragmented,

303 7" 40' 35"

Painting: La Neige ou Paysage d'hiver, 1929.

Music

NAR: an integration of family, work and leisure into one whole.

304 9" 40' 44"

Painting: Saint Nicholas-des-Eaux, 1927.

Music

NAR: For Frélaut, painter, engraver and curator of the Vannes Museum, his work was an outcome of his love of the Breton landscape,

305 2" 40' 46"

Painting: CU from La route du Vincin, 1930.

Music

NAR: the life of its people,

306 3" 40' 49"

Painting: Jacques et Armelle, 1919.

Music

NAR: and his own family.

307 4" 40' 53"

Sketch: Jacques et Armelle, 1919.

Music

NAR: For both Frélaut

308 8" 41' 01"

Music

NAR: and Gaby religion, art, conversation and unfilled moments of time and pleasure have shaped their lives.

309 4" 41' 05"

Music

310 5" 41' 10"

Music

Atmos.

311 5" 41' 20"

Music

Atmos.

312 3" 41' 23"

Painting: L'auberge de St. Avé, 1921.

Music

313 5" 41' 28"

Atmos.

Music

NAR: Gorz says of work that

314 3" 41' 31"

Atmos.

Music

NAR: "it is not just the creation of economic wealth but the means

315 7" 41' 38"

Atmos.

Music

NAR: of self-creation. The quality of life depends on the intensity of human bonds and cultural exchanges – relations

316 9" 41' 47"

Atmos.

Music

NAR: built on friendship, love and mutual aid and not on the intensity of commodity relations."

317 7" 41' 54"

Atmos.

Music

NAR: As work is set to become one activity

318 9" 42' 03"

Atmos

Music

NAR: among a number of others, he poses the question: Are we richer or poorer as human beings for our day's activities?

319 6" 42' 09"

Atmos.

Music

NAR: Patterns of work change and our relationship to time changes with them

320 electronic zoom to farmer and tree 13" 42' 22"

Music

NAR: This question of what to do with our time becomes increasingly important and it is personal, and the shared lived experience of the artist and the farmer a document of an unsentimental alternative.

321 5" 42' 27"

Music

322 5" 42' 32"

Music

323 2" 42' 34"

Music

324 2" 42' 36"

Music

325 8" 42' 48"

Atmos.

Music

326 3" 42' 51"

Music

327 3" 42' 54"

Music

328 2" 42' 56"

Music

329 2" 42' 58"

Music

330 9" 43' 07"

Sync. Atmos.

Music

331 2" 43' 09"

Atmos.

Music

332 2" 43' 11"

Atmos.

Music

333 12" 43' 23"

Sync. Atmos.

Music

334 2" 43' 25"

Music

335 2" 43' 27"

Painting: Paysage d'automne, 1927.

Music

336 2" 43' 29"

Painting: CU from Paysage d'automne, 1927.

Music

337 3" 43' 32"

Music

338 1" 43' 33"

Music

339 3" 43' 36"

Music

Mix to

340 2" 43' 38"

Music

Mix to

341 3" 43' 41"

Painting: La chaumière aux lauriers, 1924.

Music

Mix to

342 3" 43' 44"

Music

Mix to

343 3" 43' 47"

Painting: Chasseur dans le vallon, 1923.

Music

Mix to

344 4" 43' 51"

Music

Mix to

345 19" 44' 10"

Painting: CU from La longère ou Paysage du Golfe du Morbihan, 1911.

Music

End credits mix to

340 12" 44' 22"

Painting: La longère ou Paysage du Golfe du Morbihan, 1911.

Music

End credits