

*Sandra Bridie*

**Conversation with Andrew McQualter about some films by  
Marcel Carne**

**April 1998**



Conversation between Andrew McQualter and Sandra Bridie  
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Andrew McQualter: Is this where I ask you what you're interested in about Marcel Carne's films?

Sandra Bridie: You can if you want to. I may not give a very succinct answer.

So we've just watched 'Les visiteurs du soir', - 'The Ambassadors of the Devil'?

*'The Devil's Envoys'*

By Marcel Carne.

*Had lunch in front of the telly.*

And it's a very nice grey autumn day, a perfect day for watching videos. And this is going to be the basis for your show.

*Yeah. My original idea for this exhibition was for it to be just the conversation/catalogue sitting on a coffee table at the window of the gallery with a couple of chairs for viewers to sit on and read the pamphlet. There would be no work on the walls. The conversation would have been between you and me, as this one is, about sitting at the window at talk and looking out, or sitting on the roof at talk and we would just see where the conversation led us. So the interview would be the work. But as I went along, in my mind I kept adding components to the show - a video of the conversation, photographs, and different documentation for the web site...*

*That was my first idea, but I wasn't necessarily bound to it. So in the meantime, around October last year in 'end processing'- which is basically covering books at the library where I work - I covered a slim volume published by the British Film Institute, by Jill Forbes on the film 'Les enfants du paradis ' by Marcel Carne. It reminded me of how much I loved that film; how beautiful*

Jean-Louis Barrault was and how enigmatic Artletty was, and how the old clothes seller was a character whose purpose was to disrupt the dreams and wishes of others. So I took the book out and read it studiously. It articulated issues I had glimpsed in the film, such as the gender ambiguity of some of the characters. It made me want to watch all of the Carne films I could get a hold of. So I borrowed my father's tapes of "Les enfants du paradis", "La marie du port", "Le quai des brumes", "Hotel du nord" and "Les enfants du paradis".

The book mentioned 'Les visiteurs du soir' made just before 'Les enfants du paradis'. 'Les visiteurs du soir' had imprinted itself on my memory since I saw it at Melbourne University in 1980, as a hauntingly beautiful film about two minstrels visiting a castle in the thirteenth century who were sent there by a mischievous, troublemaking Devil - I hadn't come across it since. Then a month or so ago I was at Video Easy and was surprised to find a copy.

I took the movie home and while I was watching it I was thinking of the broader picture of the film on my television in the living room - the light coming through from the curtains behind. I began isolating certain images on the screen, creating stills with the pause button of my video remote control. The film is incredibly beautiful, certain images in it have the pageantry, formal composure, spaciousness, blondness and static qualities of a Piero della Francesca fresco, that sense of time standing still (in the film the minstrels make time stand still in order to intervene into events without the 'mortals' knowing). Watching this movie and getting right into the rest of the collection of films by Carne I had gathered reminded me of the things that I am always rewarded by revisiting, like a set of personal icons. These things are the oeuvres of particular filmmakers, authors, and some artists. I like to re-enter their territory from time to time, discovering new works, or finding new aspects in works I have enjoyed before. So I as I was watching 'Les visiteurs du soir', I thought, 'I like these images, the image of a favourite film on the television in my living room, what will happen if I make a show out of this?'

A conversation is something that doesn't necessarily have a structure or go anywhere, it's a form that just revolves around a few points and one of the things that struck me about that film was that - I mean there was a narrative, something did happen - but what happened in the film itself, it wasn't a great drama, it was about internal passions.

*I thought it was about the idea of love, but no one seemed to be convinced about it. It was more about the romantic courtly or poetic conventions of the language of love.*

The only person who seems to be convinced in the film was Anne, the baron's daughter.

*And she was the freshest character and the most contemporary.*

And everyone thought that she was very fresh, most people remarked on her freshness at some point in the film. How did you find her contemporary?

*I thought her metre when she was speaking sounded contemporary, as in 1942, when the film was made, whereas the other characters spoke dialogue - a convention of poetic, rhyming speech, I imagine the French script is quite a rich and word play, with Anne, it sounded to me like she was speaking with a lighter and more contemporary tone to her voice.*

You were saying before that Marcel Carne had worked with a surrealist poet on 'Les enfants du paradis' and 'Les visiteurs du soir'.

Jacques Prevert.

There's obviously something that we're missing out on, not being able to hear it in its original language.

*I think it would be interesting to listen to the films, not have the sub-titles and to try to work out what's going on and to get a sense of the music in the language. The language of these films is playful I think, it's not talking from the heart, it's playing with*

*literary notions of fidelity and love and strangers, they are characters from a fable, I don't think they are attempting in any way to portray a realism.*

Well the film begins, I think with a book, with 'Once upon a time'.

*So it's a fairy tale.*

It's very much set up as a literary film. It's full of contrivances. The two characters Gilles and Dominique arrive at the castle gate, the bout of bad weather that announces the Devil's arrival and his appearance minutes later as a nobleman lost in a storm, the eve of a marriage between the noble man's daughter and a courtly suitor are all pretty typical literary contrivances straight out of a fairy tale.

*And it looks like illustrations from a fairy tale as well, it's very slow, you can almost take stills in your mind watching it. That's where you get the picturesque quality from it. So maybe that's why 'Les visiteurs du soir' has stuck with me for so long because in it's sense of time as well as visually, it feels like it has the same ingredients as memory. You can mix the sequence up, you can mix the images around and it still comes up with the same story, it still reads no matter how jumbled up it gets. I like the fact that this was a film I had seen but almost no one else I knew had, so it was like my own discovery. It would be interesting to read it as an allegory of the German occupation of France. At the time it was made, under the German Occupation, French film making was very highly scrutinised and there were only certain types of films that could be made, hence 'Les visiteurs du soir' and 'Les enfants du paradis ' which was made in the last years of the war, 1943-5, were set in earlier times.*

In both films 'Les enfants du paradis ' and 'Les visiteurs du soir' there's the figure of the theatrical troupe, the freak show, the performer, but the other characters in the film somehow get involved in the world of those performers.

*And the other characters, those that are not living on the margins of society are the strangers or the odd ones out in these films. Carne seems to normalise all of that, to people his films with freaks, travellers, demimondaines, prostitutes, criminals, hoteliers*

*etc and situate them in ports, by railway stations, on the edge of town, which makes the respectable characters in his films become the outsiders to these locales and amongst his troupe, rather than the other way around.*

*I find the attitudes expressed by the characters of Dominique in 'Les visiteurs du soir' and Garance in 'Les enfants du paradis ' to be, (I can't imagine where I got the idea from) I feel there is something particularly French about her character and the attitude towards love in those films its something that I seem to find a lot in French literature, it could almost be from Sartre.*

*There's a transience to the characters, they seem to be just passing through and seeing what turns up and certain characters do have a disinterest to what happens to them and respond to events out of a sense of expedience, to accept what comes in front of them, and take that as an opportunity to which they are not wholly committed to anyway. There's that sense of the situation the characters are in is always shifting, their relationship's are only provisional- with performances changing, fortunes changing, living in a situation always verging on peril, so just go with the moment (which would mirror the kind of provisional existence you would need to adapt to in wartime), or in the case of Garance, the man who seems to be available. If that's what existential is, then that's how the characters respond to the events around them.*

*I still find the ambiguity of gender is something that's really striking in these two films. You have the beautiful and 'fresh' Anne, in 'Les visiteurs du soir' who has fallen madly in love with Gilles to the extent that she is imprisoned with him and resists the Devil's threats to her, and then we have Arletty as Dominique, the woman disguised as a page, who reveals herself to be a woman to the Baron and Anne's fiancé. And then in 'Les enfants du paradis ' Arletty plays Garance, who attracts each of the male protagonists in the film to her but, to me, she is so remote and elusive she is asexual. Then Baptiste who is played by Jean-Louis Barrault, he's the one who's in raptures and can't get by without her. Garance as the female protagonist is desexualised and so I've always found Jean-Louis Barrault to be the most feminine of the characters in the film, his movements are so light, he runs like a ballet dancer, his features are so fine, and ethereal and dreamy that the physical world seems a bit much for him. I remember when I watched 'Les enfants du paradis ' in bed this morning watching Baptise kiss Garance and it was as if he had not had any*

*practice at kissing, it was so unconvincing. But he is so fine and ethereal in the film in his bearing and actions, you can't imagine him being physically passionate - the passion for him is in the head, it's the idea of love more than the physical act of it.*

Gilles gave a pretty sizzling performance in this film.

*Yeah, you can imagine being kissed by him.*

But again there were quite a few supposedly passionate kisses in this film. I don't think you get to see anything raunchy in kissing in movies until the sixties.

*But the sex is alluded to, it's pretty racy.*

And that's the thing I found interesting about the film, into the picture book landscape these two characters Gilles and Dominique, they come in and disrupt everything. They turn it all on it's head.

*Yeah, they are troublemakers, that's what I like. And they enjoy it. The devil in 'Les visiteurs du soir' is really great. I was watching the film with my daughter Rubie; she thought the devil was fantastic, that he was hilarious*

The devil was so camp.

*There's a lot that's camp about that film.*

There were so many men in tights in that film.

*Yes some very nice bottoms! And then the women look like the men. A transgender experience!*

They look like men or they look like dolls. The other thing I found interesting was towards the end - I was trying to construct this as I was watching it - I was thinking how you said you thought that the films were in some way informed by surrealism, there was this idea of purity against absolute evil, there was the moral of surrealism the weirdness of morals that you find in someone like

Breton or Eluard, or who did 'One Hundred Headless Women'? I think it was Ernst, there's this obsession with pure femininity and also the prostitute, and wanting the woman to be both and the same. And then I was looking at the end of it and just for a little while I got the feeling that all the male characters in the film were trapped in an Oedipal relationship where they seemed to want the woman, and there was the threat of killing off the father. But the father's were redeemed and the sons died; like Anne's fiancé died, Gilles didn't die but he was turned into stone and the Devil survived and the Baron rode off after Dominique. So it was like an Oedipal battle for the younger men to take control and to take the object of both men's desire, because Anne was the object of desire for both Gilles and the Devil and Dominique was the object of desire for both Anne's father and his son-in-law. There was this battle but it was reversed, the sons didn't kill the fathers, the fathers triumphed over the sons. I found that very interesting.

*In other Carne films there is that age difference between the men and the women, or there that choice that the younger women can choose between a suitor of their own age or someone who is like a father figure, or it's a choice between two men at least twenty years their senior. I don't know where that comes from. In 'Les enfants du paradis ' though, Garance would be the same age or even older than some of her suitors.*

I thought it was interesting in relation to what you'd said about surrealism in films - surrealism's relationship to psycho-analysis to a supposed sexual freedom - the empowerment of people to act on their desires and the way that the film might have taken a psycho analytic figure like her Oedipal or maybe her Electra complex and turn that on it's head in pretty much the same way surrealism might have done.

*I think the central women in Carne's films are pretty strong and feisty and often have the best lines and they do create choices for themselves, or at least they might be in the same kind of a quandary that the male characters are in. In 'Les visiteurs du soir' I think they are more classic, Dominique seems to be cut off from her feelings and is able to move through the world (like a man), whereas Anne, who is able to love is turned into stone. In 'Les enfants du paradis ' Garance seems to be the strongest character and the one who's able to still make choices at the end and is the realist as well. She moves in a man's world and that provides*

*her with company and shelter, but she makes it clear she will not be beholden to any of her lovers or protectors - they cannot possess her.*

*In a way the interesting thing about Arletty as Dominique and Garance is that they seem to have come to terms with the sway that her protectors have over her destiny, and 'Les visiteurs du soir' Dominique has pretty much come to terms with her tie to the Devil, the fact that the Devil has control over her fate. She seems to have found a kind of freedom in that.*

*In 'Les enfants du paradis' there's a kind of emotional deadness about Garance, she takes whatever comes up and can't fully respond to her emotions. The only time we glimpse an authentic liveliness is for a second when she talks about her happiness as a child with her mother who was a laundress. She sparks up; she loses her world-weariness and irony momentarily. She says that at the age of fifteen her mother died and she says, "...At 15, around here, a girl who grows up too fast... is never alone..." So there's a sense of selling herself off, taking whatever protection is available to her. With 'Les visiteurs du soir' Dominique has been in the company of the Devil since she was very young and once again it seems like a relationship born out of expediency and a type of protection to her. She speaks of her inability to respond in the same way that Gilles (who has also made a pact with the Devil) has in falling in love with Anne, that she was caught by the Devil when she was younger than Gilles was and so is incapable now of love or normal emotional attachment.*

*I guess the reason why I swapped my original idea, of us sitting on the roof at talk, or in the gallery and having a conversation about whatever came up, to talking about these films was that another idea I had was that I wanted to do a series of interviews with artists about the kind of films that they liked. So this is meshing two ideas into one.*

*It's interesting that recently the interviews at talk have become more and more object based, specifically talking about the process of making the work that will be exhibited in the gallery and less about the ideas of how the work came about, the conceptual framework. That may have something to do with the fact that I am often talking to younger artists often and so the material aspect is very important when you are having one of your first shows in a gallery. But I for my own show I thought, well,*

*let's talk about something else. The work is about something else. My talking about the process behind the photographic images that will be in the gallery, would take about two minutes really. My criteria for making work has increasingly been that it be as painless and unconsuming as possible, so I guess I put a bit of thought into how I can make the experience of making work pleasurable, a part of things that I like to do, extend that to make it meaningful somehow. I like the surprise factor of taking snaps, having to create a show out of the limited range of what you get back from a roll of twentyfour film, selecting eight images in the case of this show, but getting the enlargements back from the photo shop (which is usually two or three days before the show goes up, sometimes if I'm slack, I get the photos on the day of the show, but I always know my time frame) is a real thrill because you never know what will emerge out of the shadows in an image through enlarging. Having said all that about producing a pain free experience of exhibiting, I still managed to lose my wallet this week, which is a fairly classic symptom of pre-exhibition stress.*

I remember a while ago you were talking about taking the practice more into the realm of making videos and I guess that links into your idea of talking to artists about the films they like. I'm probably not a great person to talk to because I hardly ever go to the movies. I guess it is interesting at the moment to think about the amount of artists who are influenced by film and the amount of artists who profess a disregard for the object in favour wanting to get some of the qualities of film, or the mass media into their work.

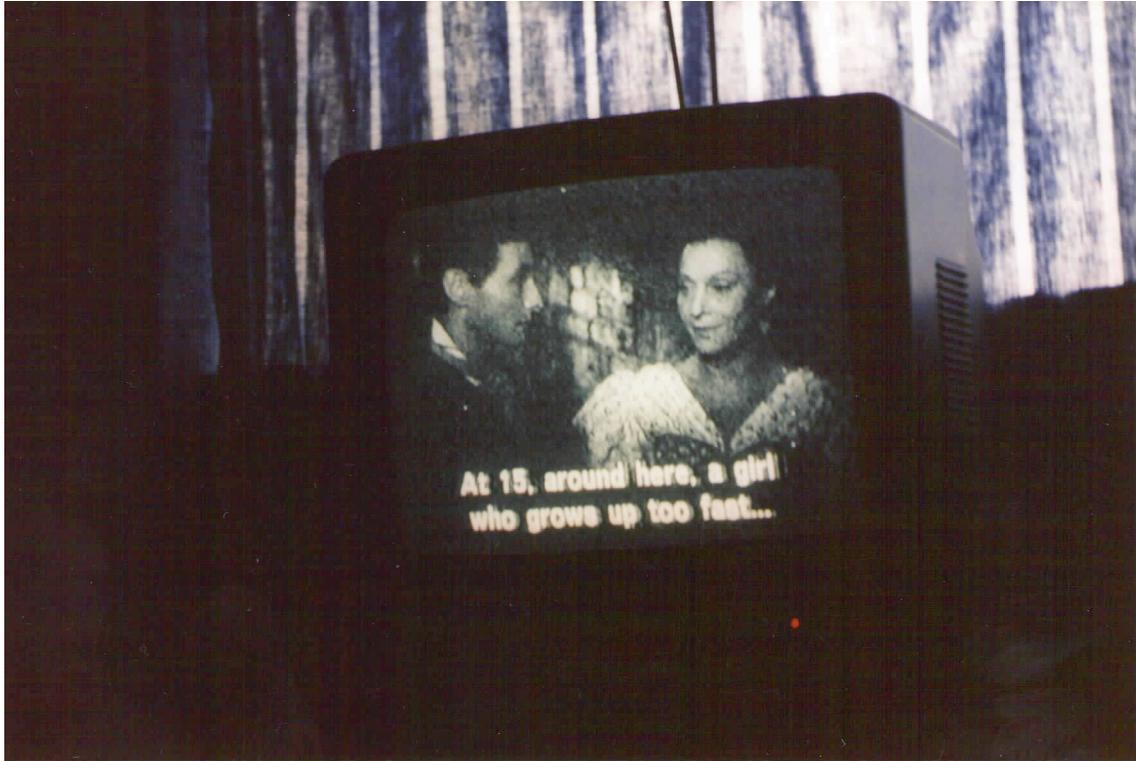
*I would like to make some videos again. I haven't yet because of the cost of equipment and also because I'm not sure whether I can create work, the kind of stories I would like to, with the kind of ease that I am now creating work. I would have to create videos with very low production values and limited means, a sort of solo production.*

Your practice - I would be at pains to emphasise the technical aspects of your work.

*It's not something you look for to assess the work?*













No, it's not something I look for in your work. I think your practice is one that has always, to some extent, taken the emphasis away from the product into the text or the context, and so I wouldn't look at your last show simply as a random series of photos, I saw them as something quite different, I think we talked about that in the interview.

*Yes, I am not a photographer.*

*Often in exhibitions there are aspects that herald what the artist is going to do next. This show of photos of the work of a film maker could well be a kind of learning-by-looking, or modelling experience for me, where I am trying to glean as much as possible by looking at the images and narrative techniques of a film maker I admire. We shall see, but I would certainly like to embark on a different sort of storytelling for my fictional artists.*

*In the last interview we did, in May last year, we were talking about Rohmer and his banal, recognisable, seemingly realist sensibility and I exhibited photos of my most recent seaside holiday, the seaside being the setting for many of his films. This time I am looking at a more classical image-maker who is happy to utilise visual artifice that comes more from theatre, dialogue that is consciously literary, and plots that are formally constructed and elaborate. Carne has created contemporary, more realist films as well, set in grimy contemporary settings although I think the scripts, particularly by Prevert were always musical with a lot of punning and word play, even if they were spoken in the vernacular. But at the present I am very interested in the constructs of a certain type of fiction, and the history of the story telling, what happens with the retelling of stories. 'Les enfants du paradis' was based on theatrical figures of nineteenth century Paris and 'Les visiteurs du soir' was said to be a 'cinematic reinterpretation of one of the monuments of French art.'<sup>11</sup>*

*These films, 'Les visiteurs du soir' and 'Les enfants du paradis' make up part of my constant collection of reference points that I return to over and over again. Each time I review a film by one of my favourite filmmakers, or re read a book by one of my*

*favourite authors or read about one of my favourite artists it reads differently. So with each viewing you get a little bit more of what the author sets out to say, but you are also recognising something new in it, another bit of where you are up to at the time.*

I was just thinking about one of my initial comments, I guess at certain points during 'Les visiteurs du soir' my sense was that there wasn't really a narrative, there's a kind of stillness to the film and there's a similar quality in 'Les enfants du paradis'. There's the same stillness, although it's a lot more elaborate that you get in Greenways film. They are films that make constant reference to allegorical painting, the Baroque period or the Rococo period, images that have so much detail packed into them that they are an object that is there to be deciphered over a long period of time. And that's maybe something also that's in the particular authors that you've been interested in.

*There's that habit of, the act of looking being an artificial act. In 'Les enfants du paradis' it seems almost every shot in the film is framed by a proscenium arch, and every story told on the stage, (and there are several different types of drama depicted on the stage, mime, pantomime, melodrama, fairground, Shakespeare), they tell a version of the story, the greater story we are witnessing in the events of the film, at the identical stage at which it is being told to us. It's like someone taking a photograph in their living room - which is what I'm doing - the art object is a total reflection of the events, a selected depiction perhaps, which are being told in the larger world of the film.*

That's the intriguing quality to this kind of allegorical story. I guess the enduring fascination with that. With someone like Greenaway - he's lost it in a way; it's pushing things to the point where it's no longer bearable. Maybe he underestimates his audience in their capacity to know they are being told a story.

*It could be the difference between a rampant individualism in Greenaway, there doesn't seem to be anyone to put the stops on him, and producing movies with collaborators who are equally established artists in their own right. There seems to be a balance of components in the films of good collaborators.*

I think Rohmer also employs that ensemble method to film making, as does maybe Kieslowski who made the 'Three Colours' trilogy. But backtracking a little bit, with Rohmer's films they appear very naturalistic but there's no excess of detail, but they are still highly allegorical in a way in that things only happen within the film because they serve the purpose of the general idea behind it.

*Yes, there's a lot of prophesising and fatalism, or a sense of destiny in his films, coincidences as well. Things happen to come true.*

So in a way films like 'Pauline on the Beach' or 'The Green Ray', have this sensation of them happening in a kind of clockwork universe where the character fulfils their destiny either by the mechanism of the world they're in or of their own volition. There's some question about who's manipulating what or what's manipulating the characters or whether both is happening. That's also something that's happening in 'Les visiteurs du soir', there was not excess of detail.

*It is really pared down.*

Things happened to serve the structure of the well-developed place for each character to fulfil their destiny.

*I think the beauty of 'Les visiteurs' is its spareness, spareness of detail in the settings and the dialogue is incredibly sparse. But the plot is quite convoluted, the roles turn in on themselves - there's that going on - but within that there is a static quality that lasts for the whole film. That's why I think the film stays with you, you can remember it, and because it is so slow you have time to ponder each image. It has the quality of a dream, you could fall asleep and then wake up again and not necessarily miss out on what the fabric of the film is about.*

We were talking about traditions in narrative and traditions in story telling before and the richness of films like the one that we've just seen and of books that draw on a tradition of storytelling and about your own work in terms of drawing on narrative and

narratives and narrative structures, and I guess where I thought you may have been leading to was how your building the same thing up in your own practice.

*I'd like to be able to say things through a more literary approach. To a large degree my fictions have been based on aspects of my biography with the premise of - if my life was slightly different then how do we tell that? I think I'd like to construct in amore literary way, create a new kind of object, a new mode of telling stories. I don't know if I've got the skills to do it necessarily. I seem to be perpetually stuck between mediums, or the emphasis of the work I produce seems to hover between the mediums that I use.*

What's to say that the gallery isn't the place to see a video or read a piece of fiction?

*I think the art world does allow those things in. I think one reason I am happy to nominate myself as an artist and not move into another field (including the fact that my skills may not be up to it) is that I still find the artist is an amazingly rich subject for my fictions. I guess because I started out as an artist then the artist as protagonist is still the most native thing for me to talk about.*

It's interesting, because I've always thought of you as an artists and I've never really thought of you as anything else, I guess what I find most intriguing, that is if in someway I was to construct a narrative of your practice, it seems that there are junctures where things can go either way (I'm talking in terms of fiction and not the reality), where the artist would either, after a long period of really questioning the nature of the art object, would suddenly break through and begin to create works of art from a place that was no longer a place of scepticism, or that the artist would, having gone through that period of scepticism about the nature of the artwork and construction of the artists identity, would decide to cease making art altogether. What I find interesting...

*- is I'm stuck in the same groove year in, year out!*

What I find interesting is you stick with this and you continue to find things in the place where you are. There's no resolution and I find that interesting - I'm not saying a lack of resolution is a bad thing, because it's what keeps our interest.

*It's like a Beckett play you begin at the point that seems like the end, there seem to be no more possibilities left. These Carne movies also seem to perpetuate an end point, many of the characters begin world weary, they have learnt to be sceptical of accepted truths, are quite openly lacking the conviction that what they say to one another is true, or can be held on to, honesty is not a big point with them. They seem to hold up to ridicule or scrutiny notions of what is true, what is loyal, what is good, bad etc all these notions are only contingent or only hold in the circumstances in which they arise.*

I guess the artists in a lot of your fictions are placed in a situation where their destiny is pretty much sorted out for them, the same way as a character in a film is obliged to go through the plot because there is no other choice. The way that the characters in Perec's novels simply serve to move about in the narrative in a very set structure that Perec has invented before he actually set out to write the novel, so the artists in your fictions are on these little pathways and they come across something which means that something unexpected happens and they can't fit into that groove that they find themselves, something extraordinary happens and they can't continue along the path that's been set out for them.

*I suppose the juncture that I'm at, at the moment, is wondering why artists need to exhibit their work. Why do they need to externalise things within the structures of the gallery situation, why isn't that process able to be internalised? I think there are lots of reasons why. What is it about the artist that they can't internalise the experiences that are at hand rather than making a product of them?*

I was thinking the other day about another artist that I know who seems to continually refute the importance of an object, my friend Chad who's in Japan, and he's started making music recently. He said it was because you can make something and you don't have to put it into a gallery and wait for everyone to come and see it, you can just give a tape to your friends. He sent me a letter saying that he'd made a piece of music out of, a rubber band, a drum machine and a bit of computer processing. I had quite an extraordinary reaction to it and I was thinking that for some people the way they see the world, the concentration on the way that they experience the world is so inspiring that it doesn't make sense for them to be anything else except an artist I was

thinking of Chad's work, he sees these details in things like a detail of very tiny sounds or in his visual work in his draftsmanship in the things he would draw...

*Sounds like he is putting those qualities into the tapes, it's the same thing really.*

I had a very strong feeling of frustration of Chad saying, 'Well I'm not an artist, I'm going to make music now' when he is actually taking his quality of vision into the aural world. In a way it was on par with any of the objects he had made. I have trouble with the whole thing of why be an artist? But I'm beginning to feel more and more and with some people, that's what they want to do and they find their media and they don't really have much choice in it.

It's the choice that's presented to the characters in this film, in a way, the Devil says, 'you can have what you want if you follow me' or 'I can leave you for the executioner', I think that's the option that represents to Anne, or "you can lose what you really love if you don't follow me", or "if you follow me, what you love will go free, but you have to follow". Maybe in a way, there's a comparable choice as an artist, because with someone like Chad, I don't think he would be happy if he wasn't making things, but he has this extreme scepticism about the things that he makes.

*With me it's 'what would I do if I didn't' and I know I would be very frustrated not producing something every once in a while. I think a lot of artists have this problem, it's a primary identification, or a very early identification, and so they don't know what to do without that sense of themselves being propelled by their art activities, being an artist. For me the identification as an artist was a very late one. It took a lot of concentrated work to get to the stage where I could nominate myself as an artist and almost the minute I defined it I lost sight of it again, began questioning 'the faith' - the artist and the art object once more.*

It often seems like the education process for artists is to get to ask them those very questions, and it's if you survive this, then you're going to make it. But I don't think scepticism about the object or about audience or about the way people see it is necessarily a bad premise for making work.

*I'm not unconvinced that it's a valid belief for a lot of people, because I know a lot of people have made a life out of this trust in what they are doing, but for me I can't stick with the object, it has to move somewhere, and I never quite know what it's going to be.*

So is the next show you are going to have at talk finally the show without the object?

*The point I was trying to make about this show is that object is the things that I return to, the things that act as guides for me; the books I enjoy, the music that I return to, the film makers and actors that I watch again and again, and maybe pictures, works and stories of artist's lives that I return to. These things can be the subject of work. This acknowledgment is not 'appropriation'. Appropriation, I think, is a more cynical kind of act. Appreciation, acknowledgment, or recognition of the influence of a precursor to your way of seeing the world can be a work like homage; this work is not quite that, it's more documenting the process of reception of the ideas of someone else. And so I guess that is a kind of affirmation finally that the output of someone can mean something to someone else in an ongoing way.*

So in terms of things that you keep returning to, this situation that we are in now seems to encapsulate a number of things that have been present in your work over the last couple of years.

Such as you?

*Well, I guess there's that, there's the issue of narrative, narrative in film, there's the issue of a conversation, and the issue of a dialogue between people who are like-minded to some extent.*

*Yeah, these ongoing conversations between you and me, and we are usually each at a different place each time. Because there has this history, I know that by having a conversation like this with you that I will end up somewhere different to where I expected to take it. By now you're quite comfortable with the taped interview format, and I have also told more about my work to you through these conversations. It's always valuable.*

But these seem to be the things that you are interested in foregrounding about the nature of an artist's practice, are those three things, the narrative behind the work, the place that the work has within a dialogue between like minded people, and the place that the work fits in the context of the more mundane life, in the life of the artist who goes to work, comes home, cooks eats, has a family or has a personal life apart from the art of the artist sitting alone in their studio trying to resolve problems in their art practice.

*I suppose in the interviews I have been doing lately, the work has been talked about as an isolated object, not contextualised into the fabric of the artist's environment. I have a grave need to either place things almost out of reality into the imaginary realm into fictions, or contextualise them within the literary format of a biography with supporting images. The reality base, the intense focus on the artwork in interviews of late has been - not stifling, but it's really hard for me to stick to. Obviously I have played my part in navigating things this way as much as the artists I have been speaking to, and the process of physically making work is a very rich area. But for me here for this show, I wanted to talk about something else with someone who knows how to do that too.*

