

Diagramming Perception 1:

Video (0: 00 / 15: 21)

- Speech-based monologue uttered while drawing
- Speech fitted into long pauses, (punctuated as ellipses), breaks for and as reflection, when drawing
- Speech reporting on reflexive engagement through and as drawing
- Recorded interventions inserted into the monologue in **bold**, after the recorded event
- Long pauses inferring moments of silent focus on drawing
- Italics for when giving emphasis
- Screenshots as/between each edited transition
- Reflection – indented prose – on the transcript's initial content and its later interventions

0: 00 / 1: 12

These marks . . . not completely aimless.

So I'm coming into this . . . I'm putting them on here because I'm **um**

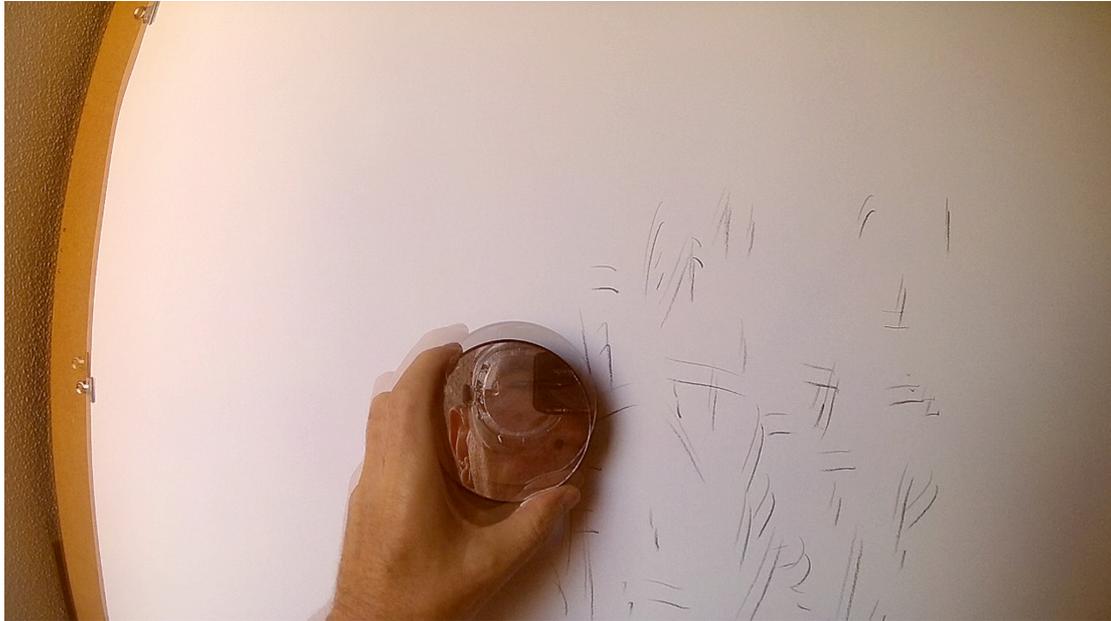
0: 15



expecting they'll be useful **beginning of diagramming . . .**
. and . . . I'm expecting they'll be useful **I'm saying**
diagramming perception . . . In terms of **provisionally .**

. . . looking at my . . . facial image in the mirror,
which of course includes,

0:36



the wearing of the goggles over my face with *the* action-
cam attached. So this will be the . . . motif **So I'm**
referring to *the* or it'll be one of them ***the image in the***
mirror as the *motif* . . . **rather than image I want to**
avoid *image* So these marks are— **in relation to the,**
mirror, view they're going onto the, page in advance of
what I'm . . . planning to do . . . with them . . . but
there's a sense of . . . knowledge and expectation that
they'll be useful.

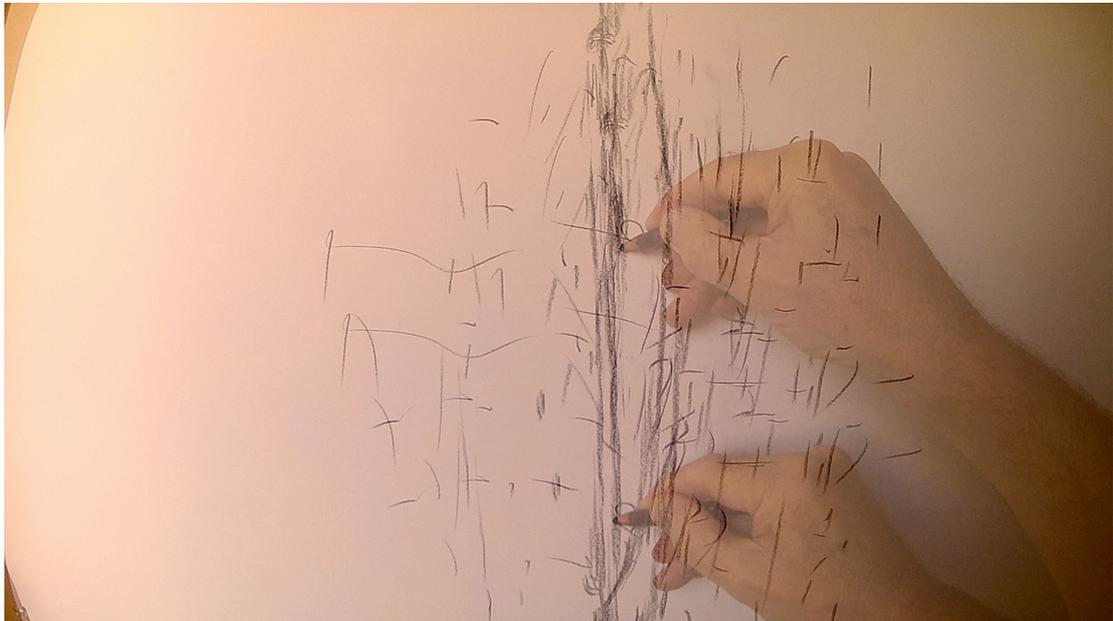
And there need to be many more marks such as this, applied in
advance of matching them to/with the motif. Why do I distinguish *to* and
with in this context? I think it is a matter of emphasis, of efficacy of
each mark, some of them matching as near as to say *perfectly*, others
having to be manipulated a little, which one can do with the re-working
of a mark, still keeping within the reasonableness of the comparison. In
any case, the marks need to accrue until mere accents become
contours, or at least close enough and clustered enough to suggest
contour. The consequence of the process of matching, however, is to

have a remainder of marks that cannot be matched, which then need to be removed or at least suppressed, so that each new addition stands its best chance of being matched.

1:12 / 2:29

I mean what I'm doing now is something, quite different . . . and . . . I'm basically . . . tracing *around* . . . *the* . . . thin imploded rectangle . . . which I see in front of me— I'm having to stay, very still for this— I see in front of me, of *the* action camera You the viewer don't see it

1:46



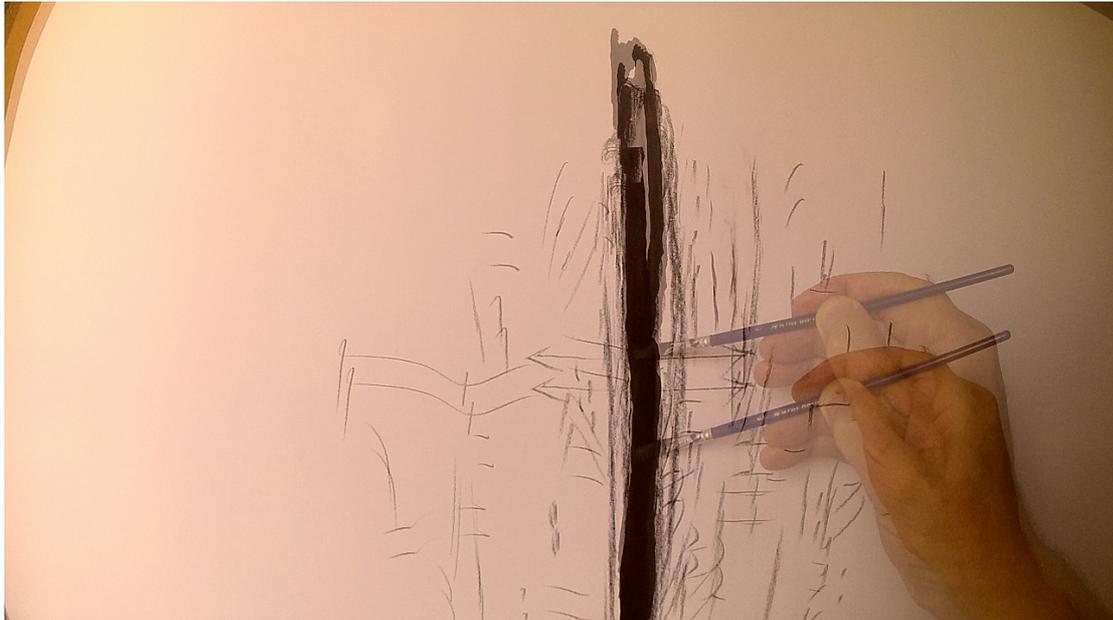
Ah, you'll see . . . of course what I'm doing You'll be seeing what I'm doing on the video clip I'll also be seeing what I'm doing on the video clip At the moment how *you* see the situation . . . um, is different to me Insofar as I'm tracing this . . . shape . . . as carefully as I can . . . I can't see— just about see *the*, contour . . . but I can't see in the inside except if I move to the . . . right . . . or the left

The inserted screenshots are transitional frames between edited footage and, as such, mostly show some disparity due to the overlap of two separate moments in time. What is also sometimes given, however, especially evident in the above frame, with the overlaps, is the sense of the drawing hand being behind, or in a sense *inside*, the mark making. One wishes that this could be the case; that one could physically enter into the process, since part of the inclination that one is suggesting space by applying marks, is that one's fingers, if not hand, can reach in and between and even rearrange. While I do my best to make the mark-making mobile, the content of my speech here concerns something that endorses the mark-making as forever fixed on the page: to see how I'm drawing behind the action camera's long thin distorted shape – distorted optically, only to me – I have to physically move to the right or left.

2: 29 / 3: 24

If I fill it in . . . or if I re-draw it . . . re-draw it . . . and in the process fill it in because the medium is different . . . in black ink . . . it's there very emphatically on the page but where the brush is at this precise moment I can't see . . . because it's in front of *the* . . . imploded black shape . . . of *the* action camera. It will be a *huge* interference . . .

3: 09



over *the* . . . the drawing of the . . . face image, in
the mirror . . . but it might at the same time be useful
. . . .

3:24 / 4:34

So these two elements . . . *the*— these marks . . . are
more or less, I can say more or less gratuitous at the
moment And this . . . imploded rectangle of *the* .
. . . action camera is also . . . more or less gratuitous .
. . . But in terms of what . . . I'm expecting to do . .
. . . then these marks are not completely . . . gratuitous .
. . . Neither is this one but it's more of an
interference It *will* be . . . more of an
interference . . . um . . . unless . . . I can get it to
. . . work **So gratuitousness and interference** for me . .
. . **both interesting terms** . . .

Can gratuitousness and interference be subjectified? If they can and should be subjectified, Lacan's distinguishing interplay between *tuché* and automation is relevant theory. *Tuché*, which is chance in the Lacanian context, is on the side of the Real, which cannot be elucidated. Lacan states of the Real in the context of psychical

experience, that it ‘...stretches from the trauma to the phantasy – in so far as the phantasy is never anything more than the screen that conceals something quite primary, something determinant in the function of repetition...’¹ Repetition, on the other hand, that results in a certain degree of similarity of noticed chance encounters to one another, is what is addressed by the analyst in their interpretation of the analysand’s transference.² Lacan states: ‘What is repeated in fact, is always something that occurs – the expression tells us quite a lot about its relation to the tuché – as if by chance....’³

Lacan’s theory relates to Freud’s *pleasure principle*, illustrated by Freud’s first noticing an infant playing at losing and recovering a cotton-reel tied to a thread that it tosses over the side of its cot in a game famously termed *fort-da*. The mother’s tendency to depart and return is the ‘...cause of a *Spaltung* in the subject’ (psychic splitting).⁴ As a mere game, the fort-da is a representation of a psychic circumstance that forever repeats itself in the subject. Lacan asks: “What will become of the *Verstellung* (dissimulation; misplacement – my brackets) when, once again, this representation of the mother – in her outline made up of the brush-strokes and gouaches of desire – will be lacking?⁵ The keyword would seem to be *Spaltung*, the splitting indicated in Lacanian theory similarly to *lack*, *division* and *loss* with which the human subject is imbued.

The thread itself constitutes a ‘gap’, which is ‘...the cause of a centrifugal tracing in which the subject is projected...’, at the end of which the reel can just as well be any object as long as it resonates somehow to suggest the fundamental signifier, not of loss of the mother as such, but of her instatement as the originary desire, which is

¹ Lacan (1981, p.60).

² Ibid., p.63.

³ Ibid., p.54.

⁴ Ibid., p.63.

⁵ Ibid.

specifically termed the object *a*.⁶ According to Lacan, of the object metaphorically thrown by the infant over the side of its cot:

It is with his object that the child leaps the frontiers of his domain, transformed into a well, and begins the incantation. If it is true that the signifier is the first mark of the subject, how can we fail to recognize here – from the very fact that this game is accompanied by one of the first oppositions to appear – that it is in the object to which the opposition is applied. To this object we will later give the name it bears in the Lacanian algebra, the *petit a*.⁷

Tisseron (ibid: 32), discussing the correspondence of writing and drawing in the context of Freud's fort-da, relates the infant's first efforts at mark making to the beginnings of this physical and psychical separation from its mother.⁸ Tisseron foregrounds the aspect of 'gesture' and the 'exploration of movement' in his idea that '...the child's hand replaces some parts of the maternal body or hand and supplies the pleasure which the mother initially gave to the child – which both reconstruct the connection symbolically and replace it with other more independent needs'.⁹

4: 34 / 6: 10

So if I look at this . . .

in relation to how I, I think I this I think I image approach drawing I can . . . Now here there's another word . . . see this about to come in which is *disparity*; another interesting word . . . for me. . . . I can say that this one is . . . this one—ah, *matches*— *To match*, so this one *matches* You see

⁶ Ibid., p.62.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Tisseron (1994, p.32).

⁹ Ibid.

the shadow just below my, just below *the* . . . curve of
the . . . lens goggles . . . there's the line of the—
the shadow of my . . . fold of my flesh there . . .
You see when I'm pointing out . . . the same as here . . .
. . . **I'm actually tracing— As I see it I'm tracing the** . . .
. . . I'm saying that *this* . . . **motif** . . . **in this case**
the goggles . . . is . . . **here the side of my face** . . .
the ear **there's a disparity** where my **disparity** . . . of
the . . . dark, shadow **the, tracing, is considerably to**
the left in this on the left of the side of my ear
instance I'm saying that *this* . . . is . . . the
beginning of the curve of the . . . of the goggles . . .
. . . **And this is due to the calibration** I'm saying that this
. . . **of the camera** is again on this . . . **The**
lens of the camera on this curve **is to the right** . . . of
the box

The question of disparity between evidence of my tracing around something and its apparent misalignment, as shown in the video, concerns the position of the lens to the left of the action camera box when it's facing ahead, and the centring of the camera box on the goggles that enables me to see equally either side. I could of course, by trial and error, work out the optimum position of the box on the goggles to alleviate the disparity, but the latter rather suits me, particularly due to the fact that I am left-eye dominant. A feature of the technology is therefore mimicking a biological and to some extent optical condition, the left-sided calibration of the camera lens conferring with the dominance of vision of my left eye as left-ranging displacement observable in the video.

6:10/7:03

I'm saying that *this* . . . and *this*— Okay this whole section here . . . is to do with the action camera. . . .
Ha! I'm saying that *this* . . . Again you see I can see

the . . . Is the lens of the action camera itself **I can see the, right-hand—**

6:40



There you see I'm saying that this I can see the action camera with this arrow, that I've drawn in the mirror. Now this here, is the lens itself which I can see is the line of the top . . . of the lens goggles So this is actually now wrong it needs to be moved down . . . But that was a gift, you see

The *gift* I refer to is of the indexical, in this instance the '*this*' that I'm fond of accentuating, which, even without its enunciation, points to the place of something, and by so doing indicates its worth. This suggests the value of the mark that is apparently itself, an indexical-inclined signifier – even if it achieves the latter – before the assigning of it a role in representation. Need it even have such a role? Come to think of it, the mark pure and simple is at its least as a *this*, or a *here*, or, slightly less productive, a *there*. The *there* is a mark broken away from its cluster, or separate enough to eventually, if needs be, contribute to the representation of some other thing. But really, this is interesting! Before and unless the marks do start to serve the purpose of representation, they are simply means of indexing either one's presence as the mark

maker, or the presence of something else on the basis that there is an addressee apart from oneself who also has knowledge or awareness of a thing that is there potentially but not yet visible. In this case, the addressee is whoever I am assuming will be watching the video, so the mark making demonstrates something that will be seen at a later date through the filter of another medium. But is this to outsource the idea of addressee too soon? More fundamental, and infinitely closer at hand, is oneself as one's own interlocutor. In bothering to transcribe my speech, I am placing considerable attention on the content of my self-directed speech, more so than how it will be received by any other listener, listening in the context of visual recording of action.

7:03 / 8:06

That circle was an absolute gift, in relation to to the edge of my, forehead **matching . . . the marks the random marks . . . to the motif . . .** There might be some disparity when I point to a— because of *the . . .* the calibration of the . . . lens **and the more apparently** positioned camera to its **gratuitous mark making. . .** right . . . **the more likelihood there is . . .** there's a slight there's a sort of . . . **of finding the motif in the random marks** inconsistency.

7:38

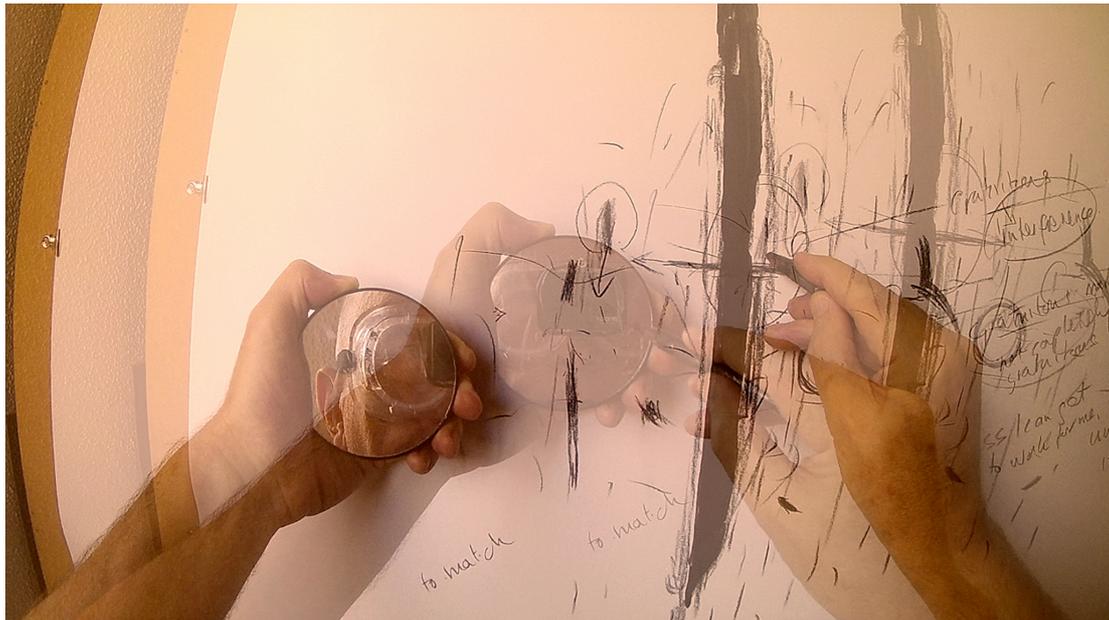


I'm saying the if I make the mark on the . . . on the mirror, here . . . which for me, is the edge of my forehead For you the viewer, it's probably gonna be this way slightly I think it'll be slightly to the right, or slightly to the left but actually gonna be off This is an inconsistency that . . . we have to live with

8:06 / 9:35

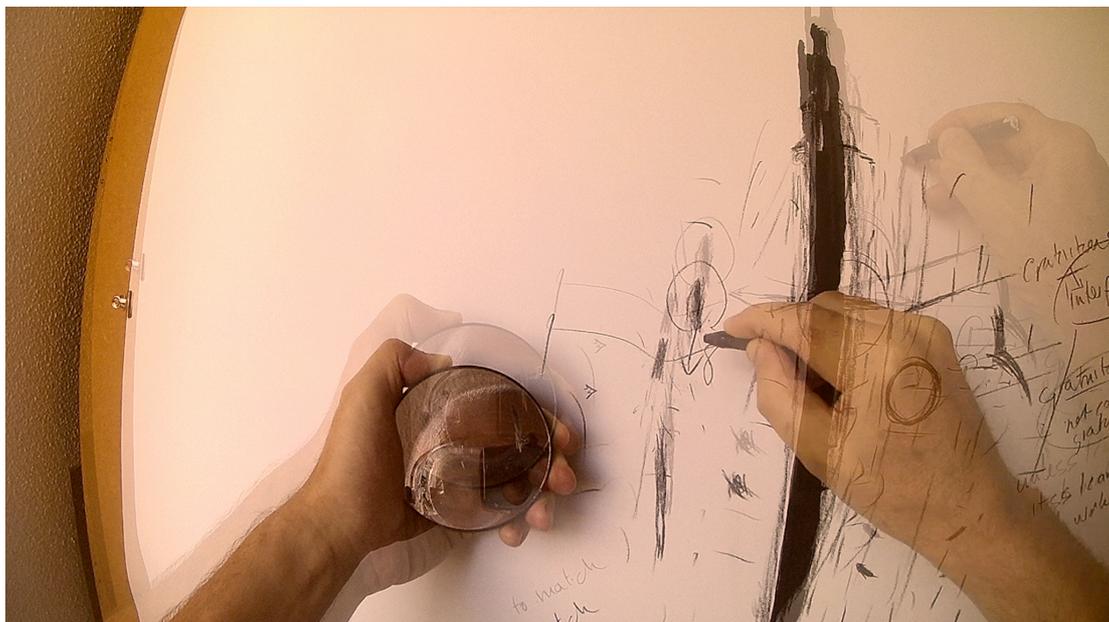
So this . . . is *the* . . . curve of *the* . . . outside edge of the lens goggles Okay this also seems to be about— This and this also about the lens goggles So of this apparently . . . gratuitous mark-making . . . quite a lot of it . . . can be matched . . . with the motif

8:43



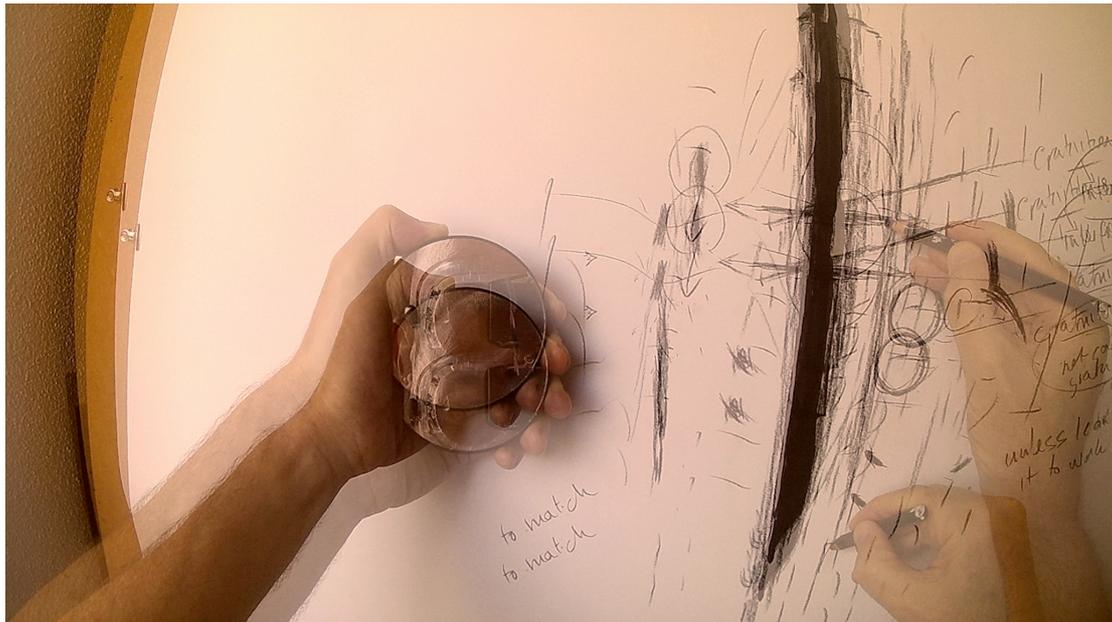
If I take *this* . . . and project it down . . . it starts to talk about *the* elastic . . . that's holding *the*, action camera to the screw I mean what's very interesting about this, imploded rectangle, is that for me it's a blind spot, it's literally a blind spot The top of my head I would say is about **It's an** here **albeit** okay this **thin area** is useful **space**

9:13



that **I**/This again is the/**cannot see**/edge of the . . . and yet, it's *the* most, dominant/action camera . . . um . . .

9:22



this/**element of the-er, of the-er, drawing/blue** . . . is
the edge of the, mirror, frame

9:35 / 10:24

So I'm now . . .

working differently I'm working . . . from the *motif* . .
. from . . . looking at the motif . . . and responding .
. . into the drawing

Here it's interesting I'm saying, into . . . So working
from here **into the drawing** whereas *before* as **opposed to**
onto which is what I've— **the drawing** These are
the things I was wanting to talk about . . . **This,**
especially where **due to**— I'm working from, this
apparently gratuitous mark-making . . . **by sensing the**
into the motif **the drawing as surface at the moment** . . .
.

I am making a distinction here between working *onto* the drawing as an indexing of a surface and *responding . . . into* in the sense that the indexing surface gradually starts to suggest to me the readability of space. The tension between the medium's materialism and the idea of optically forging a middle-ground of space is a reiteration, in a sense, of

orientating one's gaze between the point at one's eyes and the object the gaze extends to, or, alternatively, that which the gaze extends from to the point at one's eyes. Lacan attributes to phenomenology the idea that '...perception is not in me, that it is on the objects that it apprehends'.¹⁰ Bergson alludes to the sense of middle in and to the perceptual process when he states: '...zones of indetermination, these zones must occur along the path of what is termed the sensori-motor process'.¹¹ There is not only sight that I am involved with in such drawing; the process also involves the feeling, coursing through my arm of the resistance of the medium against the surface, how much the pressure provokes the penetration of space. The time-lapse between *responding* and *into* might also suggest the Bergson sense of 'zone of indetermination' through enunciated language, which has as much to do with sound as it has with the communication of linguistic meaning.

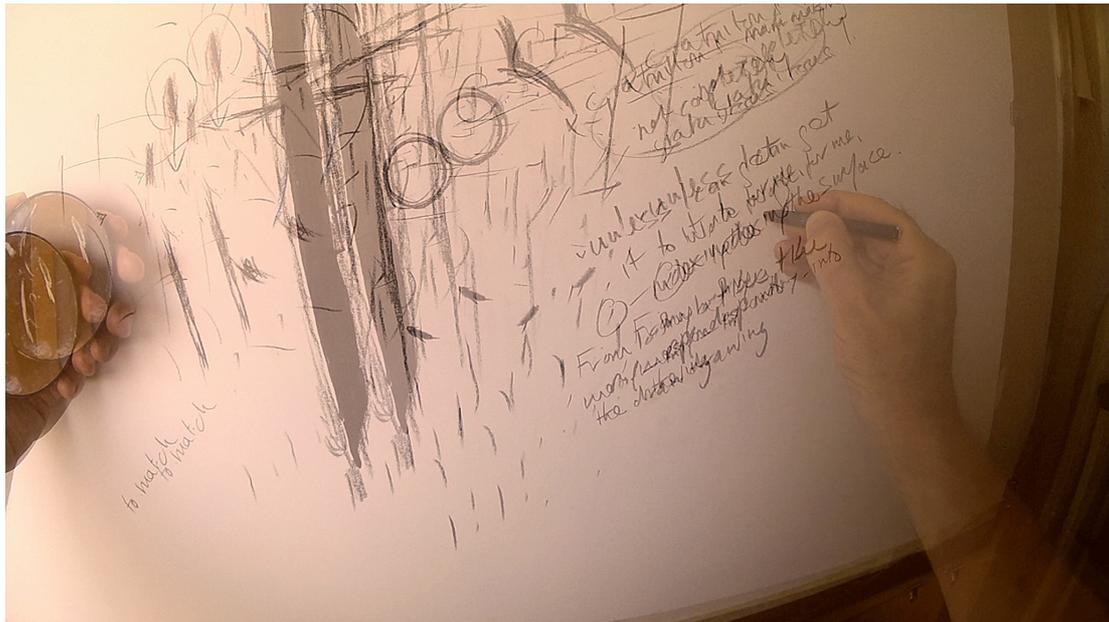
10: 24 / 13: 59

Insofar as the mark-making is grat— gratuitous . . . and insofar as it's— As simp— as marks, it's **It's important that I see the important drawing as a surface** direct onto the page they're a kind of **because the marks I'm indexing about to say, are indexical** the surface **of the surface**

10: 48

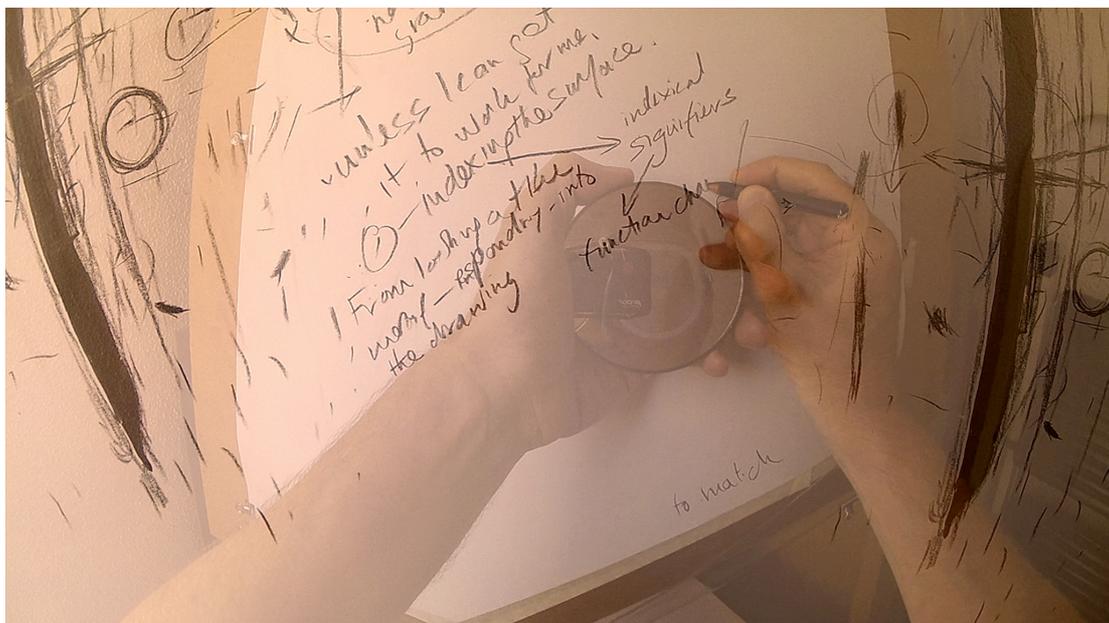
¹⁰ Lacan (1981, pp.80-1).

¹¹ Bergson (2004, p.37).



I mean insofar as they index the *surface* . . . in semiotics . . . they **indexing** might be considered, signifiers. **the surface**. I think this is an important point Indexical signifiers When I take them . . . and I match them . . . to the motif **But it's also an I'm— um interesting question whether this,**

11:19



can actually be the function changes case to whether we can consider, mark-making gestures, traces, smudges, runs . . . to being . . . whether we can consider them as,

**indexical signifiers . . . um um of the in the um,
linguistic sense**

Kristeva, in a context of reference of the *chora* in Plato's *Timaeus*, describes the *semiotic* and *symbolic* as forming a 'necessary dialectic' that is 'constitutive of the subject' within language.¹² The question posed in the transcript concerns indexical signifiers that are visual, rather than linguistic, but I am suggesting that they may be positioned in their raw non-representational sense in an equivalent *visual* domain of the semiotic. While the use of linguistic theory to elucidate visual forms is debatable, there is a certain degree of accommodation of the visual in semiotics, such that the visual medium may be considered as also a language. According to Kristeva, referring to "semiotic" in its original Greek meaning, it is the 'distinctive mark, trace, index, precursory sign, engraved or written sign, imprint, trace, figuration', a choice that suggests the visual-material as much as linguistic.¹³ Kristeva explains of these values of the semiotic in Freudian-founded psychoanalysis: 'Discrete quantities of energy move through the body of the subject who is not yet constituted as such and, in the course of his development, they are arranged according to the various constraints imposed on this body...'.¹⁴ The quote suggests that the semiotic, insofar as it can be indexed in various ways, is a condition that begins its emotional journey in the body and psyche from one's earliest time, gradually finding its places in relation to, and through, one's socialisation and experience of culture. This "energy" and "psychical" marks (double parenthesized by Kristeva) are part of what forms Kristeva's theorisation of the *chora*, which she defines as 'a nonexpressive totality formed by the drives and their stases in a motility that is as full of movement as it is repressed'.¹⁵ The relevance of these quotes from Kristeva is to suggest that the mark-making that I can be

¹² Kristeva (1997, p.34).

¹³ Ibid., p.35.

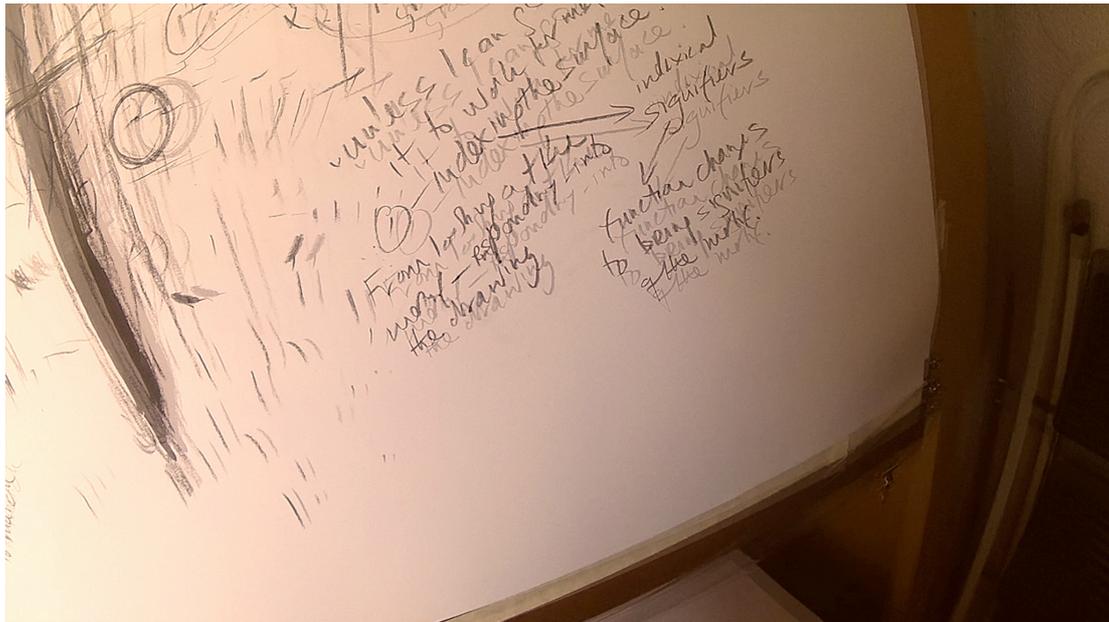
¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

seen conducting as the start of the drawing in the video, now referred to in the transcript, is such as to transfer a degree of psychical import of myself as subject through a variety of gesture and pressure determined as much by movement as by the application of centrifugal, seemingly static pressure. I am here interpreting Kristeva's term 'stases', which may relate to how aspects of the psychical drives become fixed in one in terms of their expression, as the forward movement that is resisted by the surface, in contrast to the availability of movement from side to side. While this instinctually based indexicality is that which is arguably negated by one's intention to form a representation, as part of the *chora* it is prior to signifying practice and is as yet not even of 'signifier' status.¹⁶ By making marks first, before matching them to the motif, I am allowing them the space, as it were, to be considered from this more psychical perspective. If such marks cannot yet be considered signifiers, then this would justify their limited character; that they are of very limited range before one starts to over-consciously determine them, determined mostly by the simplest, most immediate tendencies of the various mediums involved in making marks: pencils dot and flick, ink absorbs and/or runs, oil paint smudges, acrylic dries overly soon, the sides of shoes skid along the wall, hands leave greasy prints, and with the latter's reference to the body a range of indexicality can be added to the list.

11: 37

¹⁶ Ibid.



motif. I won't say **of here, there** that they're **you**
 they're . . . **it**. signifying . . . the motif . . . because
 to . . . signify the motif . . . is . . . already . . .
 to **Since signifiers are a component . . . in semiotics**
 complete Even this **I don't know whether, a**
signifier itself is Even this drawing around **capable** of
 the . . . **of it's** imploded rectangle **signification** of the
 camera **complete signification**. as I see it . . . it's
 not— It's not, sufficiently signifying the motif there's
 not enough, there's not— There are not enough clues . . .
 . to its signification . . . um The clues are
 provided by my-um . . . description . . . by my language
 . . . and . . . by your being able to see here and piece
 things together . . . in terms of the context . . . use
 the context . . . to, work out . . . what this is
 In itself, as an element of the drawing . . . er it lacks
 . . . it lacks **Okay** clues to provide **important point** it
 with signification **that the**— so . . . it's still working
 on the sort-of . . . indexical . . . signifier basis . . .
 . . It's most suitable **So an in**— speak **indexical** about
is dependent on, context, um surface of the page itself .
 . . in the way that these **in order for it** marks are. **to**
have meaning. Even though this has come from a . . .

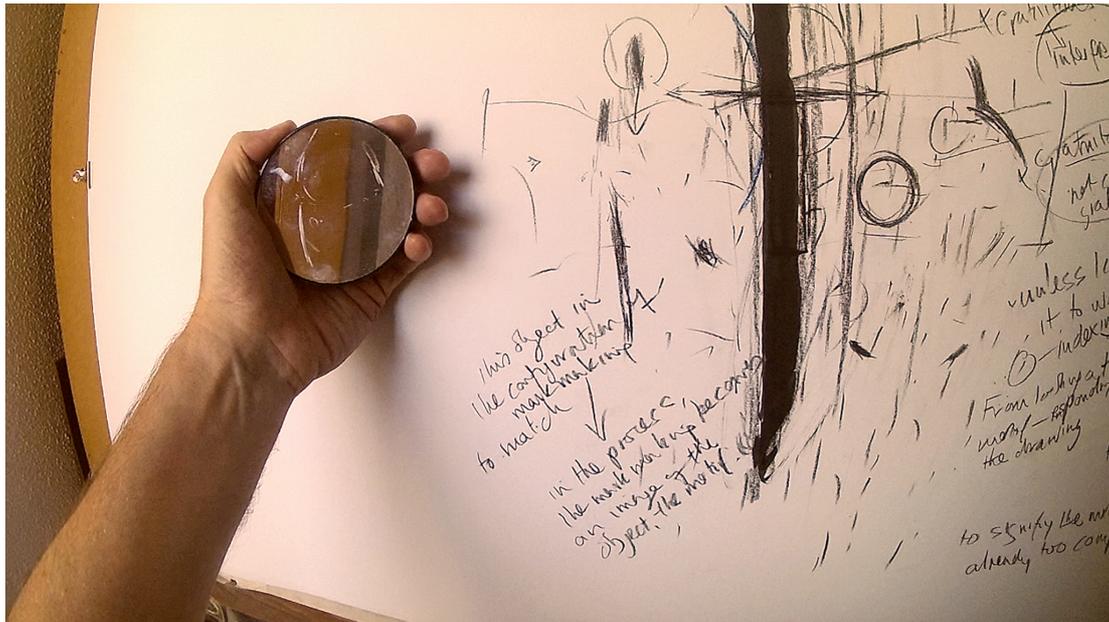
different source different origin— The origin of this
Exactly, that's the context. is in **The mark-making**
responding to . . . something that I'm **the context of the**
mark-making . . . looking at. is the surface of the paper
whereas *the* origin of the marks on the . . .page . . .
is to do with . . . mark making . . . as an activity in
itself

13:59 / 15:21

As I . . . contribute these extra marks . . . I'm
increasing the likelihood . . . of finding more of this—
14:10

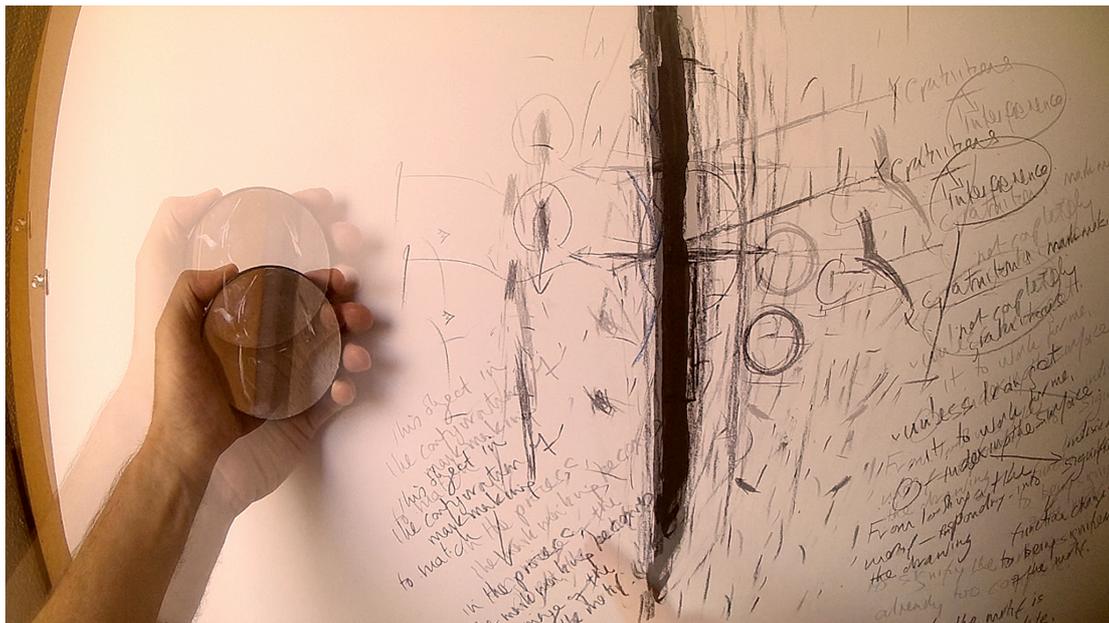


Let's say more of this, object . . . in . . . *the* . . .
configuration, of . . . **Now I should be saying motif . . .**
.
mark-making **for consistency** and in the process .
. . . I'm wanting to avoid the word *image* . . . in relation
to the the mark making **mirror.** becomes . . . an image .
. . . **So it could be object . . . of the . . . but for**
consistency I should be referring to it as the motif
object . . . the motif **The term *image* I'm**
15:06



But it's barely capable,

15:08



reserving for **the** it's barely capable of **drawing itself**
 reading as an image even there as **it develops**
 Even this-um as **it develops a sense of imagery on the**
page. ink, thin ink shape here.

References

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