

TECHNICAL DISCUSSIONS

By S. Hubert



Dallas 507E15
40:41 1984



TRANSCRIPT

S.E. Peter, there's really, um, there's really a lot of things we need to talk about... I know it may be hard for you to understand, but the reason I let this relationship between us go as far as it has, was the fact that, I thought it would put you back on the right track. With your self I mean. I just saw you throwing away a wonderful potential, a whole new start in life. But that bad period is over now. You're back in school. You're just fine... Peter, I guess what I'm trying to tell you is that I can't come here and make love with you anymore. It happened once, but, it can't happen again. And it's very important to me that you understand.

[water stops]

Do you?

P.R.- Do I what?

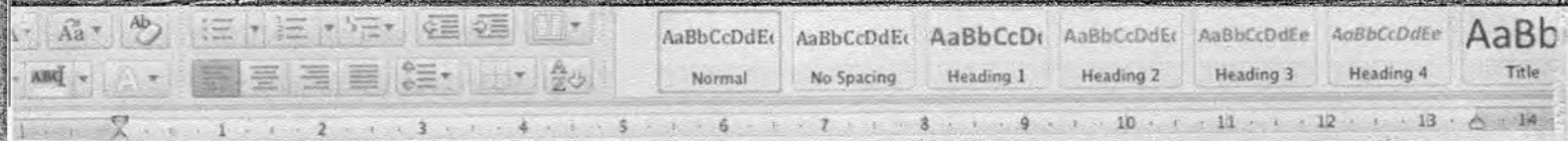
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a little bit

We'd like to tell you about a hitherto not-catalogued plot device. Let's call it *not being able to hear results in a misunderstanding that also has the look and feel of a soliloquy.*

What you need to know:

Sue Ellen, estranged wife of J.R. Ewing, arrives at Peter Richards' apartment. She has come to deliver some bad news: their affair must come to an end. But before she has a chance to say this, Peter excuses himself to resume shaving....

While waiting in the next room, Sue Ellen, shown in the foreground while looking just off camera, struggles through a heartfelt speech.

What happens next:

her words are drowned out by NOISE.

Her speech goes unheard because Peter has the water tap running FULL BLAST!!!

Out View Sec 1 Pages: 1 of 1 Words: 28 of 128



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SOME QUESTIONS

a) ■ Is Sue Ellen rehearsing her speech, wanting to hear it out loud before delivering the bad news face to face?

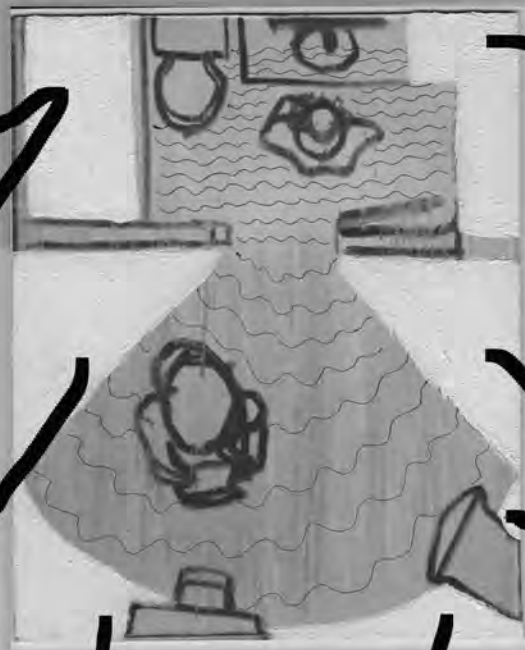
b) Or, are these her inner thoughts ratified through a purely symbolic gesture?

c) Or, does she think Peter can actually hear the bad news way over there?

d) Or, maybe Sue Ellen is pretending to not realize he can't hear so that she can feel good about having said something and, oh well, I guess he didn't really hear.

e) Or,

maybe, Peter can hear and uses the absence of a clear audio signal to feign ignorance????????????
????????????????????
????????????????????
????????????????????



Regardless, this scenario appears to be absolutely dependent on the interplay of physical properties—for example, the proximity of bodies, geometries, and so on—and this compounded by such intangibles as emotional nakedness/clothedness—whether

mutual or pretended, or a combination of the two.

*Bodies, here, referring to all significant nodes within the framework of the scene: human bodies, ears, vocal directionality, sink, water velocity and level, perhaps a scratchy shaving sound.

Al
so,
the
eff-

ect of a
tight opening on
sound waves to produce a
radiating pattern—the resulting cone/pendulum shape.

</i>

INTERVIEW WITH PETER RICHARDS

Date: May 30, 2014

M.E. Hi Peter. Thanks for agreeing to do this interview. I know all of this happened some time ago.

P.R. Well, first of all, I remember it like it was yesterday.

M.E. Is it strange? I mean, you're quite a bit older now. Older than Sue Ellen was when you were together. Has time given you some perspective on what happened that day?

P.R. You know, things back then weren't done like they are now, where everything, effects and so on, can just get added in post-production. Instead, when I turned on that tap, one of the sound crew guys had to literally turn on a big stereo with the sink sound just cranked. So I really couldn't hear a thing Sue Ellen was saying. I had to have her lines memorized. I had to turn off the tap at just the right moment. Right before she says "Do you?" And I say "Do I what?"

M.E. But when you read the script the first time, did it all ring true? I mean, did it really feel like Sue Ellen could have gone on that long without realizing that you couldn't hear her?

P.R. Well to tell you the truth, a lot of her speech was improvised. And with things the way they were on the Dallas set, we were all pretty focused much of the time. You know, just like the sound effects, things had to be done in a very real way back then. You couldn't change water to bourbon in post!

M.E. ???

P.R. Ok. Let me be clear. Something did happen that day on the set. And let me remind you that we—I mean the cast and crew—we were all thinking differently back then. Like, you're talking a lot about cause and effect. "Who heard what?" and "Did you read the script?" It wasn't like that at all. J.R. used to come on the set—he was directing then too—and get us all riled up with his experiments. Like "What if Sue Ellen addresses the camera directly?" In the end we opted for a long gaze soliloquy instead. But there were no rules. Everything occurred moment to moment.

M.E. I read an interview with you from that time where you described yourself as a 'pataphysician' at heart.

P.R. Well let's see. Ha ha it was so long ago! I guess it was when I was working with a friend on another project. She had asked me to help her dub a lecture on Alfred Jarry. She had this mail order service back then [mumbling...] so, yeah, I was copying the tapes. Anyways, what is Pataphysics exactly? Here's what I learned from the tapes:

"[it's] the science superinduced upon metaphysics...[It] is the science of imaginary solutions, which symbolically attributes the properties of objects, described by their virtuality, to

their lineaments". That's from The Exploits and Opinions of Dr. Faustroll, Pataphysician [1905] by Alfred Jarry.

M.E. So, um, I take it you see a connection between the scene with Sue Ellen and pataphysics?

P.R. Yes that's right! So one day I realized something: the key to understanding that scene is to think of it like drawing, like in terms of its virtuality, and this made intelligible in the contours of objects, like points in a diagram!

Now, for the sake of brevity let's suppose that virtuality in this case can fit in somewhere between a weak form= (say, representation of any kind) and a strong form=(something like Cronenberg's Videodrome, the breathing video cassette, or, how Dr. Oblivion can be contained in an extensive video library). Now add "lineaments" and presto! You've got drawing!

M.E. Um....

P.R. Ok consider the drawing process Deleuze describes in Logic of Sensation. It's practically the same:

At this point Richards pulls out a copy of that book and turns it to the very last page. He's distracted while reading and so he doesn't seem to notice a folded piece of paper fall to the floor

Highlighted passage from LoS:

as we will "seize hold of life." But the fact itself, this pictorial fact that has come from the hand, is the formation of a third eye, a haptic eye, a haptic vision of the eye, this new clarity. It is as if the duality of the tactile and the optical were surpassed visually in this haptic function born of the diagram.

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* THERE'S A USEFUL CHART AT THE END TO HELP WITH FIGURING OUT WHAT HE'S PROBABLY TALKING ABOUT HERE

THE MIRROR

by
Peter Richards
"pataphysicia"

I stare deeply
into my own eyes
in the mirror.

I am young and alive.

I am a good camp Counselor,
and I'm saving up money for school.

The mirror
full of marks
looks like an old wrinkly face.

But after a few seconds I'll wipe it off to get
a second
look.





CLOSE-MIC'D WATER-RUSHING-SOUND AND THE VERY LONG-DURATIONAL-SOLILOQUY AKA ~~THE~~

of Sue Ellen

~~faces~~ The Many Faces of Sue Ellen:
HER PERSPECTIVE

I go on youtube to check out motorcycles. If I search for a passport c70 I find lots of examples. The videos are POV, almost invariably. No talking. The person shows the bike first and then walks up to it. He then starts it. The bike idles.

Then a hand extends out, takes the throttle in its grip and gives it a rev. So you see a bike and hear it. The hand comes back, revs it again. This happens again. The bike sits still, leaning on a kickstand. There might be a bit of smoke. No one rides the bike. The view meanders through a series of close ups of different components. The video ends abruptly. It is possible at this point to watch another similar video. The hand on the throttle is vaguely pornographic.

- Sue Ellen, 2014

At the outset of this interview it must be noted that Sue Ellen seemed distracted. But her demeanor warmed noticeably after I turned the discussion over to her current career in interpretive mask making. There are many of her works displayed in her study where we met in her palatial home in Beverly Hills. Here is the uncut version of our conversation.

INTERVIEW WITH SUE ELLEN

Date: June 15, 2014

ME: Hi Sue Ellen.

SE: Hi.

ME: Well I guess you know why I'm here so I'll get started.

SE: Can I fix you a drink?

ME: Sure. I'll have what you're having.

SE: OK one whiskey coming up.

ME: Thanks.

Her: ...

ME: Can you tell me about the scene where you have a long speech while an obviously close-mic'd sound of running water drowns out what you're saying? And so it seems like you're really delivering a soliloquy for the viewers' benefit and not really for Peter to hear it at all. Because it goes on for so long?

SE: Well it sounds like you already have your mind made up.

ME: Sorry. I guess that was a leading question.

SE: Yes.

ME: Well was it improvised?

SE: All acting is reacting.

ME: Yes. I've heard of that.

SE: Well then you already know my answer. Don't you.

ME: OK let me start again. I'm working on a project comparing physical properties of sets with, um, I guess you could say, unusual outcomes. Like. Would Laura Dern have acted differently in Jurassic Park if the dinosaurs were real? Or, was Brad Pitt a surfer on the side when they were filming Legends of The Fall. Like was he still just learning or...

SE: So you're asking me if I was interested in dressing in Valentino when I was off-set? That's ridiculous. Of course I was!

ME: OK. Fair enough. But I can see your interest in fashion continues even now. What's that you're wearing?

SE: What this? It's just something I picked up at Nicola Bertti...

ME: But it's not even leather!

SE: Well what's a girl to do. She's diversified recently.

ME: What's with all the masks Sue Ellen?

SE: Oh I started drawing facial expressions back during the days on the Dallas set because the days were long and I needed something to do when I wasn't in a scene. The drawing turned into physical masks after a while.

ME: Wait. You made all these?!

SE: Sure. Why not?

ME: What are they made of?

SE: The early ones were papier mache and they were pretty rough. I liked to work fast. Like at the same speed as drawing. Later I used plaster casts and embellished them with surface treatments. Gilding, stucco, stained glass, pipe cleaners, loose bits of yarn, steel cable. It got to be where the materials were more important than the faces themselves. Pretty soon they were just blobby and ornamental but I scaled back after a while and now the masks are somewhere in between.

ME: I love this one here.

SE: That's a recent one.

ME: Do you work from specific inspiration? Like a face you see by chance one day? Are they based on people you know?

SE: They were based in my experiences at first but after a while I just started working from memory and from some learned sensibility where I was working quickly and in the moment.

ME: And what's this writing over here? [At his point we're walking around the room and I notice something scrawled on a big sheet of paper—seen on the preceding page.]

SE: Oh well that's something I'm working on. A response to all these videos I've been watching. I was looking for a cheap form of transportation for getting around and I really like those old Honda scooters. But I was amazed at the brazen and suggestive videos that kept coming up in my searches. Like, I was just hoping to find out about fuel economy and performance but I kept getting these little shows where guys are revving their little motorbikes. I have to admit. It can be pretty sexy!

Me: Do you have a motorbike now?

SE: No. Not yet. Still comparing reviews.



Pictures from Sue Ellen's Place

This is what I figured out from what Peter Richards was saying at the end of the interview.

	Dallas (s07e15)	Deleuze (LoS)	Pataphysics
Diagram	The physical layout of the apartment, the rooms, the open doorway, the bodies within.	Composition, Diagram (?) (the weak point if you ask me)	Surface Tension
Hand	Sound	Movement, related to the body	Peter is shaving
Eye	Placement in cinematic space: lines of sight; the foreground off-camera gaze and/or the indirect mirror gaze; Soliloquy gaze	Seeing inflected by the effect/affect of the manual	See poem above (by Peter Richards, Pataphysician) (The Mirror)
3 rd or "Haptic" Eye	Misunderstanding as perceived across the 4 th wall: the intellectual and emotional dissonance created by a lack of tropes to explain the scene.	The drawing or painting as it is produced through the juggernaut of multilevel feedback of sensations—as perceived by the viewer in all its richness	* see below

*The particular experience of making [2D work, possibly 3], with its feedback between hand and eye, producing as it does new virtualities on top of other virtualities all the time, and especially with respect to their lineaments—their distinctive features and characteristics—make Pataphysics, with its emphasis of the particular over the universal, intuitively well-suited to the interests of drawing. One could even be so bold as to suggest that the Pataphysician's approach *is* drawing.