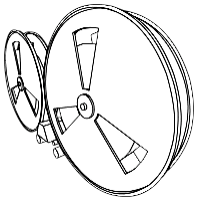

REWIND | Artists' Video in the 70s & 80s
Interview with Rose Garrard

Interview by Maggie Warwick, 29th April 2008

MW: Have you got a work that is more important to you than any of your other works and if so, why?

RG: It seems a very strange question to have a hierarchy of works. I always have thought of my works as like links in a chain, so each is dependent on the next. It's almost inappropriate to single one out. I don't think I could because each one was an exploration of an issue, or a subject, or a question. Then, in exploring that, I was able to go on to the next work. So there isn't a way of doing it. Also, having originally regarded myself as a painter and being made to do sculpture at college before going into what I saw as 4 dimensions by using time-based media, my work moved through each of the core disciplines very deliberately, and then out beyond into performance. So you might get one work that was 3 dimensional and definable as sculpture that lead to a video or a painting or an object that was hardly definable as sculpture. Eventually that would lead me into some sort of linkage where they would become an installation and then I would perform within the installation. So in that way, I can't separate them out. Though some pieces like this one, behind me, were visible as one-off artworks. This was one of four for instance, some were in canvas; some, like this one, were made in plaster originally and cast into resin. But, the idea that they were explorations, breaking out of the frame, lead to a whole series of performances. Some of the others in the series were roller blinds that had been framed or they were curtains that had been framed. So they were all the same size as this one but they made you question the actual categorisation of what was being framed. So in the same way, I can't pick a work. There are works that I like very much. Some of the work that I did with Anna Ridley, *Tumble Frame* for instance was a very ambitious work for television. It wasn't a video of a performance, it was a piece that I scripted for television and Anna produced. That was a new step.

MW: And that is a very successful piece of work I think. It was very ambitious for that time but very pertinent and relevant now I think. The issues and ideas that you work with in that piece are very pertinent. You dress up as various iconic women, which is, in a way a precursor to some of the work by Cindy Sherman for instance.

RG: There has been a long line of asking what my relationship was to art as an artist and as a woman, which were two separate trends. It came from being brought up in a family of artists who were all male, and having gone to art school and being taught by all male tutors and not having realised until about 4 years out of art school that maybe that was a bit strange. Maybe it was a slight disadvantage not having a female role model. So, I began consciously searching for female role models. I remember finding Bertha Morrissey, who was the first woman artist I ever discovered. I was absolutely overjoyed to find that women were there. It lead to a whole series of works that were really about shifting my role as the dynamic life activator in a performance for instance from being the artist, the controller, the viewer, the one who decided what you were looking at, very often through surveillance cameras worked live in the piece, through to

being the model and the thing that was been looked at and been examined and looking at how much power was in the role.

MW: Did you ever align yourself as a feminist or would you not want to be labelled in that way?

RG: I was a feminist or I am a feminist. I suppose it was in the mid seventies that I became more and more aware that what I was doing was labelled feminism. My first one-person show was at the ACME Gallery in 1977, and the first black-and-white reel-to-reel that I ever made was for that show. It was a continuously running tape and that show was all to do with identity. It was questioning male archetypes that we were given – Hitler, Churchill, Ghandi, De Gaulle, Mao Tze-Tung and one more. There were six, but I can't remember the sixth. I took on this persona of a clown so every day I would arrive at the galley as me and in public would gradually change and make up into this very austere French clown.

MW: Was that *Incidents in a Garden*?

RG: Yes. I worked a deliberately tedious performance. I was very aware of what was theatrical. I was very interested in what was time-based and I was interested in pushing the audience's expectation by giving them costume and making them work their way through a task. So, I had a Hitler and Churchill ventriloquist dummy on each of them and I'd explore their characters and personalities as artists or as would be artists.

MW: Because of course they both painted, yes.

RG: I found a huge amount of similarity in their control over things and funny little incidental things that they did, which were also so similar. I made a script out of those quotes. I don't think it was boring, I don't mean that, but it was certainly. I was very static, I was just moving my fingers and it was working to a pre-recorded tape so the audience were just listening to this comparison. I think during that show was the first time that people started to say, "Well you are a feminist. You are a feminist" and I was like, "Am I?" So then I got involved with Women's Images of Men. They had already started researching a group of feminist women and I was invited in looking at the show of time-based work, which eventually became About Time at the ICA, which I curated. That was 1980 when it actually went on show, but we did about 2 years of looking at people's work. That was an extraordinary experience because I had been quite successful within a male dominated world without even really noticing. Then to come and look at women, who were tacked in corners of kitchens, was a real challenge for me to recognise it as art. There were some women who I taught or some women I knew, but a lot of it really challenged my preconceptions of how you evaluate an artist, let alone good art. Gradually a sense of criteria started to emerge in that process with a group of other women and it was absolutely fascinating. Sandy Nairne, who was a Head of the ICA then, was very sympathetic and was absolutely fascinated by how one couldn't just look at a CV. There was no documentation. There was no record. All the things that you look on as underpinning your judgement were very often absent and that was absolutely fascinating for me. I curated a lot of shows after that. I think I might have done one or two before that, but that show made me look at things very, very differently, which was great.

MW: What were the shows that you went on to curate?

RG: There was a show in the Museum of the 20th Century in Vienna. I curated the British end, which was work by 14 women. I think they wanted 7 but I managed to get 14. That was important because they were such good artists and some wonderful women artists who weren't being shown.

MW: Who were they? Who were your contemporaries that you were working alongside? Can you remember some of them?

RG: There was Tina Keane, and there was Rose Finn-Kelsey. Hanna O'Shea was sort of there, she was not really into performance but she was about. Ann Bean was fantastic. There we were in this very Germanic museum, which was a glass building with very revolutionary, panelled hanging partitions that they were very proud of. At the opening, some performance artists had put all the chairs facing in one direction and all the VIPs were sitting in them. Suddenly there was the noise of an electric saw and they all whirled around. She was cutting a hole from behind, through one of these magnificent panels and then through it, put one of her breasts and proceeded to smear paint all over it. They were absolutely ecstatic and horrified all at the same time. It was brilliant. She was great I always loved her. I loved her work.

MW: Yes, she is still doing very good work now.

RG: Yes. But, I suppose the main influences on me were not other artists. I have often thought about this over the years, and I don't really think my influences were so much other artists. It was very odd, but certainly with video. At the age of about 14, I was smuggled into a cinema club for adults by a neighbour called Sonya Keats. She was quite a lady and seen as rather shocking by Malvern people. She took me there with my mother's permission. I am sure my mother didn't know quite what I was going to see, but it was Last Year at Marienbad. All I'd ever seen were war films, which was all my parents ever took me to, The Dam Busters and things. I was absolutely captivated and it stayed with me always. When I started work in time-based media, I realised quite quickly that it was the suspension of time that interested me: this ability to stop the action and actually show people through and under and round things so they had another view of it. Then I read some new novels stuff, I think Ionesco and various others. The parts of my work that were scripted were very much looking and predicting what the audience would see and letting them know it was written in advance. Then I would let them know that something was happening in the present and then fulfil something that I'd speculated might happen in the future and so on. I was using a surveillance camera to do the searching. So they'd be watching live action but then I would become the operator of the camera. I would step out of the action and become the active camera operator.

MW: During the performance?

RG: Yes. So I was making them focusing on to a detail of something and so on. So that was really my way in. I'd done a lot of work in theatre and prop-making for television.

MW: Is that how you financed your work?

RG: It's how I financed the work, yes. But the experience of taking props onto a floor in the television centre at the BBC was always fascinating because it shifting contexts for it all the time. Then it would come alive in the performance through what the camera was seeing. There were people standing 10 yards away, that nobody watching television would know was there. It was those sorts of things that interested me. Then there were changes in scale. I became their model-maker at one time because they couldn't afford to do big sets anymore, so I made these very, very detailed models for everything from Grace Jones specials to Pinocchio and then of course they became a landscape when they were on the screen.

MW: Yes, it's fascinating

RG: I think a lot of that came out in *Tumble Frame* with Anna because I think quite subtly, if you watch the piece, the props get bigger and bigger and the further into the story you go, the bigger Pandora gets and so on. I love all that pushing and pulling of time. So that was really a thread running through and the artist and model is a thread running through. Pandora, very early on became something that I unravelled. It was an image in a book that my father showed me or gave me as a child, which I still have. It was just a book of Greek myths and legends and I'd always known her as this little black-and-white photographic illustration in a Victorian book. One day when I was doing a tape for Audio Arts, which was about artists work in audio, they had the launch at the Tate Gallery. I went along and was browsing in the bookshop and lo and behold there was a colour picture of this Pandora from virtually the same angle. So, I rushed over and talked to the people on the desk and then talked to someone else and discovered that she was in their basement. So I made an appointment to go and meet her, and she was a full, absolutely immaculate, life-size, kneeling figure.

MW: In marble?

RG: It was in marble with this beautiful ivory and bronze casket held suspended in her arms. They had never moved her. They never allowed her out. They never put her on show because they were frightened that the weight of the box would break the arms off. With the help of the Whitechapel Gallery, we negotiated her release and she became one of the objects within one of my installations at the Whitechapel.

MW: When was the installation, can you remember?

RG: It was about 1985, I don't quite remember. It's all merged. Then she went back to the Tate and went on display. So they actually put her on display and then some famous artist painter came along and put her as a little ornament on his table in a painting. It is a painting of Maggie Thatcher with Pandora as an ornament. I thought that was a wonderful full circle. But that was lovely and then from that work with Pandora, came all the women's movement and this whole series of Pandora exhibitions that toured the country. I took part in one of them but the shows themselves weren't mine. I wasn't curating or anything, but it was an initiative, because it was in the air. So that was good. These things ran on that's why I see them almost as chain links. They all go from one into another.

MW: Yes, they all merge. And your works defies easy definition anyway.

RG: That's quite deliberate. It's almost like fishing with a hook and bait. I love producing things, or I loved producing things, that weren't easily categorized. So, you might think that a work was a sculpture, but then in one context or another, the way that it was produced would change it. It's just that little uncertainty that I think wakes people up and gets their attention. Then they receive something else from the piece. When a work is just a painting, you are only ever going to see an exhibition of paintings. I get rather bored with leaving it at that. I have nothing against producing paintings and producing sculpture but I always think there are other dimensions that can uncover other levels. Looking at my catalogue, which was produced after my accident, in 1994 with Beverly Bytheway for Cornerhouse; my whole idea was to have not one view of my work, but all these different views. My work is always multi-layered and so it was important to have different views. We chose three views, which were my notes, a popular press and art press. It gives very different angles and on the work, which I loved.

MW: Yes, it works very well. Let's go back a little bit. You originally started off as a painter at Art College?

RG: Yes, I regarded myself as a painter in my first year at art school

MW: Was that in Birmingham?

RG: Stourbridge first of all for Foundation, and then on to Birmingham. I remember the Painting tutor getting extremely frustrated because I was so pretentious. I must have been awful to teach because I had been painting for years. I think at about the age of 9 I decided that I was an artist and I had been very prolific in producing all this stuff. My father was a conventional water-colourist while my brother was at ARA, so you can imagine what I thought art was at that point. I would go home every weekend from Stourbridge to Malvern and come back every morning with probably three paintings. His name was Philip Sutton, and I could see him absolutely cringing. They weren't bad, it was just they were closed. In the end, he didn't quite lose his temper but he just said to me, "You think you know what painting is about, so go and do some bloody sculpture!" And it was absolute liberation. So, I had to go and do sculpture. I'd always loved making things and I'd always made little clay models from clay in the garden. There was quite a lot of red clay and my mother used to take me on rambles to find me clay. We'd do all sorts of funny experiments trying to fire it in the oven. I've still got one or two of those in the studio. But it was a joy. It was a joy to do something where I hadn't got my fathers voice in the background saying, "Oh you always mix everything with light" or something. I just didn't look back from that really. My wonderful tyrannical mother, or my father who was you know he was looked on as a professional painter, decided that I had to go for the top most college which he considered to be one of the colleges in London and I failed to get in. I went in my Sunday-Best with my mother and father sitting outside in the car. I was wearing a lime-green collarless coat, which buttoned up like a beetle jacket. I went in wearing long black gloves and little black stiletto shoes and carrying an enormous folio. You were supposed to take less than 20 sheets I think and I took about 45. I went through them, and when I got to the end, this man interviewing me with one arm, said "What's wrong with that?" and I promptly went on for about another hour telling him everything that was wrong with it. And I didn't get in. I got back home and mum said, "Right well, that's it you know, you

are not good enough to be the best so you don't so it" and so I got sent off to see the careers advice officer at Malvern library.

MW: What did they suggest you do?

RG: He sat down and listened to the story and then just said, "Right I am going to ring up Birmingham College of Art" And he rang up and got me an interview. I think his name was Mike Moor, my sculpture tutor at Stourbridge. He said, "I will come and pick you up" which was quite something, because my mother wouldn't let me go to the interview. The night before, she decided that she wasn't going to take me to the interview. She'd decided that it was not right for a girl to be going to art school. She said it was immoral and all of that stuff. I rang up Mike and he said, "Oh I will come and collect you. While I am talking to your mother you load your things in the car" So there was sort of ferrying going on while this row was going on, on the doorstep. Mike was a big man with a beard. He was a big sculptor and all the way to Birmingham I will never forget that he kept saying, "You are good enough, you are good enough!" I was such a wreck from London, but he made me take everything. "No", he said, "You are so prolific, that we are not going to cut it back to the normal amount". He had a van and it was full of sculpture and everything, paintings and folio. We got there and we were asked to put it up. There were about 10 of us I think in one big studio and we were asked to put up our work. And they just wouldn't believe that I'd done it all in the last year. So, I got in basically.

MW: So you've always been pretty prolific then, from a very early age?

RG: Yes, far too prolific probably

MW: So you did sculpture at Birmingham? You concentrated on sculpture?

RG: I did sculpture yes

MW: And then you went to Chelsea to do post-grad?

RG: Yes, by which time I'd started to do things that were *Incidents in the Street*. That's what I used to call them. It was like dropping several life size figures or a barrier or both on a pavement for several hours and just watching what people did.

MW: Seeing what happened

RG: And then putting it back in before the police spotted it.

MW: Did you video what happened?

RG: No, this was pre-video

MW: So what year was that?

RG: It would have been 1969. The first video I remember seeing was at Alexandra Palace. I can't remember the artist's name. He was a very, left wing guy. He was very serious and he had the first ever portable reel-to-reel that anyone had seen I think. He was

very much with Ken Livingstone and he was part of that lot. Anyway, I watched him using it in that show but at that point, I was still doing strange incidents. I didn't even know the term 'installation' at that point, but I'd been doing things that were set up to include the audience or the spectator. Very often, I'd marked a standing point or marked a sitting point so they'd be sculpted figures. There was usually some sort of frame or barrier and then a particular, fixed viewpoint.

MW: So would you say it was quite theatrical in a way?

RG: No, I wouldn't have seen them as that. You could obey or disobey the proposed standing point, so you could get a different point of view. It's the same origins, the same sorts of lines that I followed later. 1976 was the first time I used video and that was for the ACME show, *Incidents in a Garden*.

MW: How was the video used there, because you didn't use that as surveillance so much?

RG: No I didn't. I wasn't using surveillance then. This was a continuous play tape, which you could see really, if you went in sequence on the ground floor and then upstairs through this garden installation. There was a monument to Hitler and Churchill having tea together, so there was this giant figure of Hitler and Churchill, made to look like bronze in armchairs having, each having tea and just between the two armchairs you could see this flickering. When you walked round behind this monument you discovered that there was a) a video screen with a video playing but b) there was all the instructions of how to make the monument, which would deconstruct the whole façade. I think that was the most that I ever referred to the TV work and the sort of prop making directly. On screen, it was just me. I had spent several years interviewing clowns and documenting them and photographing them and in my dictatorial way I'd had the cheek to say to these clowns, "Please don't smile when I photograph you" And I'd got this sequence of photos that at first I was very annoyed about because some of them smiled and then when I put them into a sequence from those who definitely didn't smile through to those who were absolutely grinning themselves silly it was fascinating watching this smile gradually break out across this whole sequence of clowns. And the video was very simple, but in those days it seemed extremely technical, merging of my face gradually with each clown's image and me producing the smile. and then I think going back to not smiling and then producing the next tiny bit of smile or a bigger smile or bigger. Then it ended up as multi-screen and silent screen.

MW: Where did you make that? Can you remember?

RG: I was married to Kerry Trengrove, at that time who was a very gregarious soul. He was forever talking. He would talk much more than me. He would talk to absolute strangers in bars and strike up very interesting friendships with people. He met this young American, I was probably there at the time and this guy was working commercially in some very strange video development place down in Dorset. I started talking to him about some ideas I had and he said, "Oh just come down, come down" he said, "We do that by mixing two images. We can even put you into a 1950's movie." So I was absolutely fascinated. We went down the following week and he filmed the actual thing with a still camera. It took about half an hour and then he showed me all the other things that they could do but he was very pleased to see how I would use just that one

simple technique and it cost me absolutely nothing. It was absolutely brilliant. We made it into a loop and we just played that continuously.

MW: How was the actual show at the ACME Gallery financed? Can you remember?

RG: That was through prop-making. I do love stepping outside my role as a fine artist sometimes and I do find things very fascinating and influential. Things influence me a lot in within television but no, the Arts Council basically turned me down for a grant to do the show and I'd already spent 2 years of every bean I'd got. I'd spent two or three years working on it, making things and I needed £1000 to finish off what I wanted to do for the actual final show. They turned me down completely. In my entire life I have only had one Arts Council grant. I think that was a Purchase Grant or Purchase Award they used to call it. I must have looked very depressed one day at the BBC when I was prop making because someone asked, "What's wrong?" I explained that I had this major show and I'd not been awarded the money to finish it off. They said, "Oh, we've got this mammoth production of Macbeth as an opera." Jonathan Miller was the Director, and "would I like to work on it and do some of the set?" They asked if I would like to do the jewellery and all sorts of other bits as well, but it was mainly to do the set. They wanted a mountaintop of sculls, and they would have a lift, which would bring the three witches up though the centre of it. So you could imagine the scale of it and it had to support the weight of these rather large female opera singers dancing all over it. I had strict instructions from the Director that it mustn't break. None of it must break off or even squeak under their feet. Polystyrene squeaks terribly if you walk on it for example. I literally cursed the arts council with every little cut that I made as I carved off, what I think were over a 1000 sculls in this mountain of sculls. But it looked wonderful. It worked well. Everyone was pleased. I got my money. I did the show. Actually the internal BBC scenic department saved me some paint. Usually they would always chuck out ½ inch, an inch, 2 inches of paint in every tin. So all this paint was always chucked by the end of a session but they saved them all for me. They came down to the ACME Gallery where I wanted to transform the upper floor into a walled garden. It was a simile to my walled garden as a child in Malvern Link and I did an exact reproduction of the tall back gate. It was not a little gate. I built the wall as a task throughout the 3 or 4 weeks of the show so I was laying bricks. I was doing all sorts of feminine and non-feminine activities while dressed as a clown. And they just appeared. They came in, and said, "Don't worry we will do it" and brought old floor cloths. With cameras you can't roll over a carpet, so all the carpets are painted on floor cloths. They carpeted the entire gallery with floor cloths. They brought artificial grass and they painted the flagstones exactly how I wanted them up the pathway. With Jonathan Harvey's consent, they painted the walls to look like high brick walls. Then throughout the show, I gradually built up the actual brick walls and two columns. I hung the gate and then on the last night of the show, I locked the gate and it was wonderful.

MW: Yes, it sounds so.

RG: But they were fantastic the way they supported me in my work. It wasn't any one particular person: they just had this lovely rapport. I wouldn't say there was a lot, but there were several quite well known artists who did prop-making from time to time. Once they knew why you couldn't do a job because you were doing a show, because very often you were, and you were reluctant to tell anyone in the art world that you

were doing prop-making and you were reluctant to tell anyone in the TV world that you were doing art; so once that got broken down they were wonderful with me.

MW: Yes, that's great. I think I've read that in *Incidents in the Garden*, that different artists preformed in the space during the duration of the show. So did you invite them to do that?

RG: Yes, very much. I think it was the final week, every single night there were different artists performing in the space and my instructions were that this was the landscape in which they could do whatever they wished. If they wanted to use me, they could use me, or whatever they wished. So, one of the Kipper Kids came and he did a performance with a trumpet on the top of a ladder. I can't remember them all but there were about 5 or 6. Then on the final night, the Royal Ballet School came and they performed a ballet, which went from the ground floor to the top floor and then on both floors simultaneously. So, nobody could see it all, which I thought was wonderful. They used me in my clown persona within it almost like a rag-doll throughout. It was a rather fascistic and worrying piece but I was very much not into censorship. For my private view, because I was completely unknown really, I thought, "How can I-" marketing wise "get people's attention to come to my private view?" I made 100s and 100s of masks of Hitler and Churchill and I got some very nice little brown cardboard boxes as flat-packs and made them all up and just dropped these hand painted masks with elastic into these boxes with an invitation and people got terrified.

MW: That's very entrepreneurial!

RG: People thought it was some sort of nasty cult. People thought it was an IRA bomb because it rattled and it was too light, but literally 100s of people turned up to the private view and a huge percentage of them wore their masks. They all wanted to know why I sent them a Hitler one or why had I sent them a Churchill mask. With the Royal Ballet School, I'd made masks for each one of the 6 dictatorial male power figures and they wore those, so you had these wonderful little tutu-wearing ballet dancers with these masks on. It was a fantastic juxtaposition.

MW: How did you approach the Royal Ballet School to ask them to perform?

RG: I'd met them when I was at Birmingham College of Art. My subsidiary subject was theatre design. I decided to do, much against my sculpture tutor's advice, work in Birmingham REP. They paid me for various productions and I was given my own studio to make things in and it caused a lot of antagonism and jealousy with the other girls on the course. One of my tutors when I came up to Chelsea, who I still used to see sometimes, was a friend of one of the tutors at the Royal Ballet School. He was quite a strange man who had all sorts of interests in Hitler looking for the challis, the search for the Holy Grail and all of that. He was into all sorts of strange esoteric things that even now, I still don't want to know about. He curated this ballet, and because I was on the inside, and I didn't rehearse with them, they just used me in it. It was a one-off. I never really understood what it was all about, but at the end, and with my permission, though I hadn't quite realised what it meant, they destroyed the entire exhibition. So everything, all the images, ended up twisted. They didn't actually destroy them physically, they just made the entire exhibition look as if a whirlwind had hit it.

MW: And you didn't know that was going to happen?

RG: No. But that was part of letting go of the control of it.

MW: That's quite extraordinary.

RG: Yes. That was the final night. It was brilliant. I loved it. I loved being surprised in my own environment.

MW: So that was all part of your idea of inviting people to come in and use the space in whatever way they wanted for their own work. That was all part of the work: to extend the boundaries again outside.

RG: Yes, and to extend my viewpoint again. I am a great believer in that. You think you know what you are doing and then someone comes in, and their intervention gives you a completely different tangent on it. So, it was great.

MW: So after the show at ACME, where else did you show around that time? Did that show travel to other places?

RG: That piece was very much site-specific. There were people who wanted to buy things out of it, which felt almost like decapitating the piece and I refused to sell pieces. It was probably very unwise because I felt they hadn't understood that they were so interlinked. It might look like a painting in a frame but the frame was vacuum formed and hung from invisible strings from the ceiling. Every object, even though it looked conventional and was as beautifully produced as I could make it and was very desirable, had its own innate drawback in taking it out of the context of the show. That was very important.

MW: Yes because it could be misinterpreted. I remember one man stomping out of the gallery because I couldn't sell him one of the pictures. This was 1977, and I think I was doing lots of group shows. I showed at the Hayward and various other places in the next few years.

MW: As project group shows?

RG: Yes and I got very angry at the lack of consideration for performance. For instance, you would be in a space where a lift came up at any time and they refused to stop the lift from being used and making people use the stairs for one floor. So, in the middle of the most silent bit of concentrated performance work, you'd suddenly have this "Krrr Churr" you know going on. Now I remember turning to Helen Chadwick, who was curating one of the shows, and I remember getting very angry with her and turning her down, saying, "No I have performed in that space once too often!" I said, "The thing most at risk is my work, which is the last thing that should be risked".

MW: It's fair enough. It's the politics of exhibition.

RG: I got more and more interested, and angry at how 4-dimensional work was being shown. That's when I got more and more involved in curating myself. On the lecturing circuit, I got more and more angry with how women students were marked. So I got

more and more involved with becoming an external examiner. I think I was one of the first women external examiners.

MW: Where at?

RG: It was all over: The Slade, The Royal College, Belfast, Newcastle. I can't remember them all but it big, long list.

MW: Did you ever teach? Did you ever lecture?

RG: I did a lot yes. I taught regularly for two days a week at Reading University first of all, in Time Based Media. For a time at Corydon, I ran the video department, which had been set up about 10 or 15 years before, so it was very out of date when I got there. But it was lovely. There was a little complete television studio with black-and-white cameras. We did some great work. Bruce McLean was teaching in the painting department so it was interesting because he was moving from painting into performance, which is another link. I taught in Sheffield for a long time. I commuted 2 days a week. I can't remember them all, but I was always, always travelling and that mean that by about 1982/1983, I didn't have to do prop making. So that's when one took over from the other. I did a lot of stand-up lectures all over which I loved doing.

MW: About your own work?

RG: Yes. Being paid to talk about yourself is a wonderful luxury!

MW: Were you part of the Arts Council Scheme, was that in place then or was that prior to that?

RG: I don't think so. I don't remember that at all. This was very much a case of the individual colleges inviting me. Very often then, I became external examiner after being invited to do lectures. The lectures got inordinately long and yet students didn't seem to leave. I remember doing one that was 4 hours long. We had to leave the lecture theatre after 2 hours and they all still turned up at this alternative studio. It was very much question and answers. It was really good I thought.

MW: Did you enjoy teaching?

RG: I did then yes, very much so. I think right up to my accident, I felt I was becoming a better and better teacher. And by that I meant, and this is going to be nasty, but Ron Hazelden, Stuart Brisley and Kerry Trengove, all taught at Reading with me, or I taught with them. I became increasingly horrified by the fact that what they did was produce clones. So, all their best students produced work that was usually, visually indecipherable from their own and at best had the same philosophy behind it, but didn't visually look like it. This horrified me and I saw indoctrination, not learning. What I more and more enjoyed was seeing a student sort of blossom, you know seeing them become confident in the very, very tentative ideas that had come out of them. I hated the way that these men came in and solved quandaries because I never did that. I didn't come in and say, "Well the way you do it is like this". My teaching became more and more, and in a way, this was the bit that I didn't like because it was quite worrying at times, it became more and more a counselling session. Then however they took

that, they expressed it through their art. I think by the time I was teaching at Dartington, I was quite worried about the degree of responsibility. I was worried about the degree of confidence and confidences that I was being given. But it was a very important. I think my best year ever was the year that I was invited to Dartington for the first time. I had a small group and we did 5 weeks working intensely together. They'd never done performance art and they didn't understand the difference between it and theatre, and there is a big theatre department at Dartington, but it went absolutely stunningly, both for me and for them. It was life changing for me and for them, all of them. It was just incredible. Then not that long after that I had my motorbike accident.

MW: So what year was that?

RG: It was 1988 when I had my motorbike accident, February 1988. I didn't start realising that my concussion injuries were connected with the accident for about 9 months, by which time I was in a real mess trying to teach, and trying to show. I couldn't write. I couldn't string ideas together. I couldn't sequence things. I couldn't make decisions. I was frightened to go on the street. I was frightened of letting anyone know I was even having those problems. So there was a lot of covering up going on and eventually, through a solicitor, I got referred for counselling and was diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder. By which time I'd been trying to cope for two years so it was very difficult. It meant unravelling all sorts of things. I'd compensated for something I couldn't do by learning something else. I'd been quite creative, but it had to be unravelled so that I didn't avoid things because I was afraid of them. But I am still aware of that. I was very sceptical about even the diagnosis. It was nice to be diagnosed with something but I didn't know quite what that meant. I think as the years have gone on, certainly my memory has improved. I think some of the inexplicable fears have meant quite strange things. I now have a tremor, which I in some way feel is connected. It's an undiagnosed essential tremor. It means I am extremely nervous of private-views. I avoid them at all costs now and if I am tense I just shake. But even when I get up in the morning and I am trying to make a cup of coffee, some mornings I can't even hold the cup. So it's very peculiar.

MW: And you think it's related to that time?

RG: I think it's related, yes. It's something that goes back to the shock of that because I was nearly killed. I recovered my physical injuries very quickly, well it was 6 months, but it was all this manoeuvring round things that I couldn't understand why I couldn't do any longer. I couldn't work in my studio on my own, which is why I started doing listening pieces. I did 4 listening pieces at Manchester Cornerhouse, South London Gallery, Calgary Art Gallery and Vancouver Art Gallery. Each one was a month long, standing in a space not knowing anything about the site and asking people to tell me what they cared about and it was absolutely superb!

MW: And that was just after the accident? While you were going through your recovery?

RG: It wasn't immediately afterwards. 1994 I think it was. 1992 was Calgary I think, so yes it was quite soon afterwards. It was while I was still having counselling. I found that very relaxing. I had to clear my head. Everybody is so much happier when they feel they know everything, but I did exactly the opposite. I went to each space saying, "I know

nothing. Tell me." It was really wonderful and it was a really transformative experience for me. People brought me stories, incidents, objects that they associated with incidents that changed their lives, based around what they did. I did an outreach programme that was to people who never went in galleries. I asked the gallery in advance to identify organisations and individuals who never went into their shows. These were big public galleries and I asked them to arrange an outreach programme each morning with me and visit a key person in a key job in that key organisation. I would go out to them and interview them. The first thing I would say was, "What do you do?" They'd explain and I'd say, "Why do you do it?" It would get a bit trickier then, but this was all to do with my way of tutoring as well. Then I'd say the third question, which was "What does it feel like?" And they'd burst into tears. I was amazed. I didn't know they'd burst into tears or that they would have huge confessionals. I would say it was the majority of them that had gone into really socially supportive jobs because of some previous trauma in their lives. They'd been doing it for 5 or 10 years and they were still stuck with their trauma underneath this helpful job with other people. So they were enabling other people, but had not moved themselves. Then I started to talk about the future and ask if they could design a future for themselves what would it be. I talked to them about the original incident, very lightly though. These weren't great heavy sessions. They were half an hour at the most. I would say, "Has there been anything that brought you out of that trauma? Is there something that helped you and if so, would you be prepared to bring it into the gallery? I said "It doesn't have to be the story, it could be something that symbolises it for you" And they brought absolutely fantastic texts, images, funny little quotes from things. When you are down, some things just light you up. I started to group these in glass cases on the floor, but they weren't like museum cases. They were plexi-glass, so that I could lift them off and group them into what I called "conversations". They became thematic very quickly. From the first one of these that I did, it became very evident that they were things that people cared about. So, there were environmental issues, there were racial issues and cultural issues. Very, very quickly you identified the things people cared about at that particular place at that particular time. They were very moving things and I had at least three people who'd been in tears when we'd had our initial meeting who would then come into the gallery. I took these images and texts and so on and in some way, different in each, I introduced them to a continuous image on the wall with texts in little frames. When they saw their bit translated, not interpreted in any way, just translated and put up, enlarged or framed or whatever, they literally were skipping around the gallery. So you went from this tragedy to this complete transformation and several people, I think about 5 people, chucked-in their jobs. There was one man working in Peckham, a black guy who was constantly being undermined by nasty little semi-racial comments. He'd been to South Africa just after liberation and come back absolutely full of it. Then he'd gone back into this job and when he came into the gallery you could see him weighed down with it. By the end of the show, he'd got a job in South Africa, and was going back to help.

MW: Wow that's extraordinary!

RG: There was a woman in Vancouver who was built like a tank and she ran a drop-in centre for down-and-outs. Her story was that she'd been a drug addict and all sorts. She'd been as rock bottom as you can get. It came as a shock to me that such apparently civilised places as Canada have nothing like a social security system, so there is no official help if you loose your job or anything. They have these amazing

soup kitchens and places where middle class people who are out of work have to go to get their daily supply of food. But this was a particular down-and-out centre really, full of tramps and alcoholics. It was run by this very formidable lady and she really had no time for me whatsoever, so I was taken right into the middle of the canteen, sat at a Formica table with metal chairs, with lots of clanking and banging and noise. So, I did the basic 4 questions and she was very resistant. By the 4th question, by I think the time I had said, "Why do you do it?" she told me that she'd been a drug addict. She had recovered and had been doing this for 10 years. It was all very, very tough. I said "And what do you want to do in the future?" and she just burst into tears in the midst of the entire place. She just crumbled. She completely melted into this person and she was as shocked as I was. She said that she'd never allowed herself to think of that. I asked her if there was anything that made her make that change in her own life, before she took this huge responsibility on. She said there was a text and I said, "Would you bring it into the gallery?" She'd never been in an art gallery and it was a big impressive museum and art gallery. The Vancouver Art Gallery is huge. She came in the next morning with this text and then she came in every other day. She was one of the ones who leapt around the gallery when she saw what I'd done. In Vancouver I was taking charity shop clothing that was all white and priming it. Every day I did one complete set of clothes and painted on them. So there would be a male and female until it surrounded the entire gallery and then you saw this landscape of Canada moving across with all the personalities and all the images I've been given merged one into the next, with the texts inside frames let into the clothing. She just couldn't believe it. On the very last night I had a closing show and I invited everybody who'd participated so it wasn't just the big wigs from the museum, which in itself is quite a revolution. She turned up with a bookmark. She came with this little bookmark all done out of minute cross-stitch and she said, "I've done this because I want you to know that everything we talked about, I've thought about, and everyone of these stitches is one of my thoughts" And when I got back to England about 6 months later I had this wonderful letter from her saying that she'd given in her notice and she now ran a nursery growing plants. She'd never been so happy. She'd always cared for other people. She'd never switched the intension back on to what was her future going to be. It was such a surprise to me that this piece had this apparently transformative effect on a significant number of people. I saw it as designing futures. I was not designing them. I was creating a space where the conversations that you need to have in order to design a future can take place. That was a very valuable lesson for me in my circumstances.

MW: And at that point of time, you had to reconsider your own future as well, after your accident. You had to allow yourself a space to do that, which was presumably quite difficult?

RG: Yes. I was very much in a recovery period. Part of me wanted to just run away from it and pretend everything was alright. But I had to tackle it. With the money I got as compensation from the accident, I eventually bought this house. It was quite by accident on a trip back to Malvern. I'd been advised to take the stress out of my life, to stop teaching, to move out of London, to find somewhere big enough to have a studio where I lived. The studio should not be outside because I couldn't work in an outside studio, I was too petrified of an accident or being on my own if something went wrong. It was very difficult. I made a proposal to Malvern Town Council in response to an appeal in the paper from them for ideas to regenerate Malvern, which had been my hometown. I rang the council and I said, "Two things: you don't celebrate any of the

famous people who have lived here and you don't celebrate the Malvern water, without which there wouldn't have been a town." In fact, in Great Malvern by then they had piped every remaining spring into the drains. I said, "Would you consider doing a sculpture trail that I would curate and commission other artists to make sculptures as we recover each spring, make a contemporary work?" And so, after about a year they commissioned me to come here to do 2 months residency to identify the lost springs, which was fantastic. I just took the model that I'd created in those 4 previous art gallery venues. I was very intrigued in taking it out of an art context and I created a mini version in a vacant shop in Great Malvern Town Centre. I was actually there for two months as opposed to the previous works being one month. I used the glass cases again and did exactly the same sort of thing, not as personal but I asked people their memories and their feelings about the springs and so on. I had 2 enormous, and I mean enormous, maps of the town centre and of the whole of the 9-mile range of the hills. I asked people to put dots on little blue dots where they remembered where the springs were. I think there were 246 springs, spouts, wells, fountains and ponds, which was absolutely astonishing to everybody.

MW: Yes, that's an amazing number.

RG: A significant number of those were given in confidence because at that point, I don't know if Severn on Trent still do it, but water had been privatised during that sequence of works, which I was very angry about. It had gone, all without hardly a comment from the British public.

MW: It's very true. It just happened.

RG: I was invited to a Salish Village in Canada, an Indian village, which as an experiment, had been given independence to see how they'd cope with it. It was a very patronising concept. And they'd rebuilt their village, log cabins, long houses and everything. I was invited over there by this woman elder called Therese Jeffries whose grandfather had been Scottish. She was brought up by her grandmother and hers was a tragic time, one of these children who was taken away from her family and not even allowed to speak her language and so on. In our conversation, I rather patronisingly said, which British people tend to be when they heard this story, "was there anything I could do to help?" She just had this wonderful way of looking right into my soul and not answering. We went on talking and she said that the one thing that they were beginning to regret, the elders, was that they had sold their water rights. I think it was 3 years before, and even in that time, at that point, they had began to realise. It was her phrase. She said, "Water will be the new gold of the 21 century".

MW: It's absolutely true. That was very prophetic.

RG: That was 1992. No one was thinking like that. It was like lights going on and I told her about Malvern. I said, "my home town had 100s of springs". This is before I came back and did the residency. "It had 100s of springs and now there are no more than half a dozen that you can drink from." She just looked at me. She looked straight through me and said: "Go home." It was a revelation. London was my home, but this was absolutely Malvern. It was "Go and help there. Don't think we need your help. We've had enough of colonial help". One of the first things they'd done upon independence, was turn down all charity. This was just amazing. They got self-help

groups for all the addicts and completely transformed the place. They got a filling station. They got a dredging company and a logging company. They were self-sufficient within their town.

MW: Was this in Western Canada, near Vancouver?

RG: Yes, outside, on one of the islands, Shishalh. It all fell into place. I was coming back twice a year to Malvern and by 1995 this thing appeared in the paper and I rang the council and it just roller-coasted from there really. I did the two months residency. I did the same installation virtually as Vancouver. I got all these wonderful texts and objects and images and a map and so on and I did the report to the Council of 14 sites for 14 commissions to 14 different artists. They gave me my residency money, which wasn't very much. Then in the middle of the residency they said, "Oh there is a local resident with a cast iron pump in the back of their Volkswagen, and they want it fitted on Belle Vue Island. Now, unless you can design something quickly and make it, there will be a Victorian pump on Belle Vue Island, which is the town centre." It was literally blackmail and so for the residency money I made the Spout, which is bronze and stone. Through a competition in the town, through the local newspaper, they named it. I had 60 names suggested and I selected *Malvina*, which was a Gaelic Princess. She was probably mythological, but it was a lovely name and it had been the name of a tomato company in Malvern many years before. It seemed very appropriate. And so that went in place and has been running ever since. It's had no problems whatsoever and then they took about a year to actually commission me to do the major commission. They'd always said I would do the first commission. That was the Municipal Fountain, (*The Enigma Fountain*). The fountain part I love and it has a figure of Elgar. They had 4 things to choose from and they chose the most conventional, which was Elgar. So I did the live-size figure of Elgar.

MW: Was he born in Malvern?

RG: No, he wasn't born in Malvern but he did a lot of his writing here. He lived in all different villages all round the area. He was born just outside Worchester, so not that far away. But before this, there was no sign of him in Malvern. I'd researched 14 sites with 3 potential themes for each site all based on aspects of Malvern's history and the council did absolutely nothing. The main municipal sculpture, they funded it with their own funds, £50,000. I designed everything from the pipe work, the mechanisms, the drains, right the way up through the whole thing. I was on site for 2 weeks overseeing every move that the builders and stonemasons made. It went in on budget and on time and at that point they got rid of the arts officer. So all the discussions were lost. My aim was to do this and then curate this sculpture trail because they weren't really skilled at that. All that happened was that all my discussions with the Arts Council, who were quite keen to fund the whole thing – and the £50,000 was to be 10% of the total amount I could apply for, so it was a big, big financial budget – but because they dismissed the arts officer, and it wasn't even as dramatic as dismissed, they didn't replace the arts officer, and so they were absolutely black-listed. They wouldn't give us any money. So the whole thing was lost. It was an election and the Council changed, which is always a danger. They just let this project disappear. But then I got involved with trying to rescue what springs I could. In the following year, 1998 *Malvina* went in and that September a group of us formed the Malvern Spa Association with the specific aim of raising enough money to restore up to 20 springs. We raised nearly

£300,000. It took years to do it. It took years to get it all through, by which time the money was given a non-amateur status. I suppose that is how you would describe it, although I didn't look on us as amateurs. The people who founded the Spa Association were each specialists. There was a landscape architect. There was a sculptor. There was a historian. So as a group, we were very dynamic. We were all doers. It wasn't a committee thing and we would have made a marvellous group to do the restoration. Instead it was given to another organisation that was salaried, not voluntary and they controlled the budget and we ended up as advisors. I suppose is the nicest way of putting it. But again, I found it a very patronising. So, I resigned from that last year. By which time I'd become chairman. I'd helped to put in place a list of 18 definite Spas that were to be restored. Some with water, some they wouldn't consider restoring spring water to without filters and so on. But most were to have their structures restored. I saw the first two through before I resigned and then found there was a lack of consultation. I felt like a little grey-haired old busybody. That's what they made me feel like in the end. I was complaining about the shoddiness of work or the lack of supervision over what builders were doing, destruction of listed sites etc. They really didn't want to know. So, in the end I was not allowed, or not invited to site meetings and I thought, "I can't do this anymore" Anyway, I'd done plenty.

MW: At least you kick started it.

RG: Yes, my energy had been there. Well they got the money, they got the sites, and they got the information by then. I'd done a huge amount of research, as had some other people. If they weren't going to let me on to site, then it was just that little bit that I couldn't supervise. They were determined to do it to a less high standard than I would have liked. But they've done about 12 now and there maybe even some more money to do some more so it will be brilliant. Hopefully we will go from 6 sites that you can drink at, at the most to maybe 12 even. So it's taken 9 years of my life, but it's been important. Part of that has been trying to promote the springs to the local community who had forgotten them. They were so neglected and they were so used to seeing these little derelict sites. So, I helped to revive well-dressing in the area. From my performance background, I'd been very interested in folk traditions and so on. I couldn't believe that Malvern didn't have well-dressing tradition and I found out at least 4 sites dating back to the 12 century. Intermittently, at least 4 had had well-dressing. So, I did a book on well-dressing at the springs and I became the organiser of the annual well dressing. Last year 28 sites were dressed. I always tried to get people who lived nearby to dress them so they became aware of their condition and people used to the idea that they didn't have to have water flowing for them to dress the site. The whole point was to draw attention to where they were. It wasn't that I was interested in flower arranging. I saw this as a big landscape artwork. On the maps that I made in the residency, with the local people's help, it was very clear that there was a strata around the hills where the vast majority of springs came up. It was like a necklace right around and I always had that image in my head. That was really what I was doing. I was trying to orchestrate this little necklace coming alive again. It was great, but in the end I was worn ragged with all the silly, small town politics of it all. I had no patience with it anymore. I had achieved what I set out to achieve. It's now a very worthy organisation of people who like to sit on committees and like other people spending the money. They don't go on the site and they don't complain about how things are done. I am sure it will be very eminent little organisation but I never wanted to be chairman. I am still a bit bitter, and it was a lot of work for a long time, but it was a

very useful period for me. During that, my brother was found wandering at Heathrow airport. I had a brother who was a phenomenal scholar. He qualified as a barrister having gone to Oxford. He became Clark of Courts at the Old Bailey for a year and then fled my mother's attentions. Apparently she pestered him endlessly. Then he turned up two years later in West Africa where he had written the Ghanaian Constitution, or drafted it as the only white man in the government. He survived 3 or 4 Coups and then decided it was all getting a bit much so he went off to UCLA and did a PhD in Archaeology. He had a monomaniac memory and then he got more and more eccentric. Then one day, I had a phone call from the police saying, "Do you have a brother?" I said, "Yes" and they said, "Well, we found him. We've been watching him for 2 hours wandering around Heathrow Airport, lost." Within a minute of them phoning me, they'd sectioned him and he was later diagnosed with dementia. So I got him back to Malvern, where he was in hospital for 6 months, and then I got him back to his house. It was not so much a full time occupation, but more a full time engagement because he wasn't married. Very soon after that, a few months later, I had to put him into a home. It was tragically ironic watching this person, whose whole life had been their mind, and seeing this mind disintegrate. He died last year. So, for 4 or 5 years I have been looking after his life, his finances, his house, contacting what friends I could find and so on. Now I am trying to make sure that his life's work doesn't disappear. He wrote a lot of books on African history and African art. I don't want those to disappear or just get thrown away. So it's been tough. I felt totally unable to do artwork. My head was not free to do it. So, I've been writing these local history books, one on well-dressing and this winter I've been researching one on the donkey-hire trade in Malvern. That was a major facility that Malvern would rather forget. But donkey rides in Malvern were as famous as the water cure at one point.

MW: More than that, it's a kind of social history and record as well.

RG: Yes, it illuminates a history of Malvern that seems to be consciously avoided by the other historians who write about the springs and wells and the water cure very much from an aristocratic and gentrified point of view. This is the history of the poor and how they survived from the 12th century right through to the 1940, so it's been a fascinating exploration for me.

MW: There are still lots of connections to your early work because a lot of your work suggests an interested in mythology and nature and the goddess figures. You made a video called *Celtic In Mind*?

RG: Yes, in 1989 I made that. It was for Glasgow 1990. It was made with Steve Partridge at Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art in Dundee.

MW: Before that of course, it was Pandora who was significant in a lot of your work.

RG: Greeks myths and legends, yes.

MW: So that ties in with Malvina and Celtic history, and also the power. There is a lot of looking at different powers and strategies. A lot of your performance is involving the viewer and as you said, making the viewer and yourself look at things from different perspectives and different positions of power or, not power or involvement, or spectatorship. So it would seem to me that there are still crossovers in what you are

doing now and what you are interested in. There are very strong links it would seem between your performances or installation pieces and the works that you did in Canada and here in Malvern, which are probably are unclassifiable.

RG: I just call them live works.

MW: You brought that formula to Malvern to research the spring projects.

RG: I think one thread through it, it is role models that intrigues me is you know there's some stuff that you are born with and there is other stuff that you absorb like myths, legends and superstitions. Certainly Kerry's mother was a great big 22 stone Cornish women who was terrified of a robin landing on the windowsill.

MW: Is that because it's bad lack?

RG: It signified death. The power of those things always fascinates me.

MW: Do you think growing up in a place like this that you kind of saw a lot of superstitions?

RG: My mother was an antique dealer, and was regularly bringing objects to the table in this very house. You wouldn't believe how tense this household was. I was beaten by her on a daily basis, from the age of about 3 or 4 until I was 16 when I actually grabbed what she was hitting me with. I snatched it off her and turned to threaten her back. I never hit her, which I was always very proud of but she never hit me again after that. The fascination, on the other side of her was this unravelling of the potential history of every object over a meal. So there were these very tense meals with every knife and fork. Our etiquette had to be absolutely exact but the relaxation of letting your mind speculate what and where this object had been, how old it was, who might have owned it or what was it used for, was fascinating. I think that was a real gift. Then there was my dad. He had a room that was a library, where he'd numbered every book. God help you if you put it back in the wrong place. It was that sort of exactitude. I suppose as I got into answering questions about my own position as an artist and as a woman. The role models that women were given had this funny double standard. Role models men were given seemed to be positive however far you drilled into them. Role models for women, like Pandora, were apparently positive and then caused destruction. She opened the box she let everything out and the only thing that saved the world was the spirit of hope, which wouldn't leave the box. But these myths were extraordinarily undermining. Joan of Ark, who was one of the ones in this series, was the warrior woman who gets burnt at the stake. So God help you if you put on men's clothes. I translated that right through to the women terrorists in Berlin who shot people, the Baader-Meinhof Group. The idea was that intellectually she'd understood all this stuff and was so frustrated by it that she took up the gun, which I saw as the ultimate male power weapon. Being a Colonel, my father had a gun in a lock box. I used a simulacrum of that in my performances.

MW: And then you did framed images of women, with the frames made out of guns. They were almost tumbling.

RG: Yes I had the gun and the Madonna. My mother always put a Madonna by my bed and my father always had this gun in the lockbox. This was sexual imagery of the penis

and so on, and the Madonna of course being the ultimate, impossible role model: being a virgin mother. So the first frames in my triptych were guns as flaccid penises basically. They were melting guns. Then the Madonnas all melted, forming a frame. Then the centre of the frame opened up, and going upwards was covered with what was actually a dead bird, but was also the spirit of hope from Pandora's box. And those images and those symbols ran through all my performances. People became very familiar with what I meant by using them. The scripts in the performance flipped from the myths, such as the actual text of the mythology of Pandora, across to the personal as political. It went to my own personal history of watching my brother shoot a bird and feeling totally impotent to stop him. So for every little tiny fragment of the Pandora myth, there was a real memory. The script would switch from one and then sometimes, in fact very frequently, I would interrupt the taped script and bring up a really priced memory.

MW: Then *Tumbled Frame,* your video piece, which you made with Anna Ridley and her production company Annalogue, you work with these concerns in that as well.

RG: Yes, it was very much a mature performance by then. I'd done it a number of times and it developed each time. Then I was given this wonderful opportunity to create a ½ hour work for television but with a professional crew.

MW: Was that for Channel 4?

RG: Yes. I'd previously done a ½ hour work for TV South West, so I knew that the drawbacks as well as the benefits of it.

MW: What was the work for TV South West?

RG: It was *Pandora The Bringer of Gifts*. It was the same theme, but very different. That was done I think, in about 1983/'84 and was not long after I'd left my husband who was having affairs with my students. So I walked out and slept on my studio floor for a month. Then I was offered a sumptuous pad in Kensington with one of those whirlpool baths. So I spent Christmas there, which was fantastic. Anyway, that's another story. Yes so I think in the work for TV South West, I look absolutely worn out and haggard. By the time I worked with Anna on the next one it must have been another year at least. My head had settled and the ideas had shifted more into televisual ideas. I still like both of them very differently. I think the emotion is more raw in the TV South West one. In the one with Anna, I was going back to the influence of Last Year at Marienbad. I'd started to play with time moving from what you can see. So, this little figure of Pandora gets bigger in every shot. Sometimes you don't even notice it. As a performer, I am getting smaller in other words. The figure is looming bigger and bigger and bigger. We visited places that I'd gone as a child and had not been allowed to go in because I was a girl and because they were dangerous. There were all sorts of wonderful threshold ideas about how I couldn't do it then but I could do it now. Anna was marvellous to work with and she really produced the whole thing, but I did a story-board and a script and we talked through every aspect of what was possible and what wasn't and modified some things.

MW: And how did you access equipment for that? Was that still reel-to-reel at that time or did you move on to newer technology?

RG: I think it was a broadband then.

MW: How did you get the equipment to make it?

RG: I didn't do any of that. Anna did all of that. It was a completely professional Channel 4 crew. She was working within the industry at the time and I'd known her for quite a time.

MW: Where did edit can you remember?

RG: It was in a professional edit suite, which was in the centre of London somewhere in Soho. It wasn't one of the arts places so it was very, time-constrained. There was quite a tension but they were very good. I was very happy with how that piece turned out. The later piece *Celtic in Mind* was an overlay. My idea was that there would never be, for more than a second one image on the screen. There would always be this double image moving into the next double image. And they just didn't get that. I was very dependent on them getting it and there was one particular chant that the women made when they were making tweed, when they'd actually woven the tweed and were smashing it down on the the tartan tweed to shrink it and it's this wonderful "Fwumf-a… fwumf-a" and I wanted that to go right on through the piece. It's just dropped in for what feels to me like just a few seconds, and I wanted it to really thunder its way right through. So, I look at some things and think "Uhhh". Three quarters of that piece, of *Celtic in Mind*, I love and then the last quarter I don't. It doesn't need much tweaking to make it what I'd like it to be, but it still works very well. I like the procession through from the ancient mythology. Most of the script was taken from surviving Celtic writings, so it was from very ancient manuscripts. Somehow almost miraculously as I read and read and read them, because I didn't substantially change them, I just interlaced them and it became this, this wonderful bardic script, which for me was great.

MW: You did another piece called *Between the Lines*, where you worked within a girl's school. Can you talk a bit about that?

RG: Yes. Literally in the middle of leaving my husband, I was in the middle of a residency at a local girl's school in Bow. I was working in this enormous hall where they had assembly. They had a mezzanine above the Hall, and I was working up on this mezzanine. I found it absolutely fascinating. It was fascinating working with the girls who were from all racial backgrounds. There was a lot of racism in the school, which we tackled one day because I asked everyone whose grandparents were English to cross the room, then whose parents were English, until there was about 3 people who were actually English, and that shut the whole lot of them up. It was amazing, but there were lots of ups and downs in that residency. It was just before my final show there, which was a big show. My husband and I had always roadied for each other and he suddenly decided he wouldn't come and help. That was it. I didn't go back. I packed a bag and left. But anyway, the wonderful thing about that school was they allowed me amazing access. One holiday, they gave me the keys and I went in with a portable U-matic camera, which weighed an absolute ton. And I performed in front of the camera. I was sort of in different costumes and dancing through a strange melange of childhood memories and the terrors and fascinations of school. I'd found

quite early on that they had a walk-in safe. It was a room that was built like a bunker with a door that was about 6 inches thick. Inside it were these records of the school going back to about 1830 or 1820. It was one of the very first schools in the East End of London. It was formed by this mad parson who was evidently sent to the East End as a way of trying to get rid of him. He built a roof between the churchyard wall and the church and pulled all these little urchins in off the streets and stairways – he described them as being schooled on stairways – and formed the school. So the safe had all these photos from about 1830. It had all sorts of things, and then there were these little tin boxes. Being Pandora obsessed, I used them with one class. We opened them up and they were full of receipts. Each little bundle was tied with a piece of ribbon or a piece of string; and so each girl was given one bundle and asked to make a decision whether to unwrap it or not, thereby doing a Pandora. Some of them did and some of them didn't. We looked at what they contained and they were receipts for food and wine and it was how this man had raised the money to build the school. He'd created these grand banquets and invited all the gentry and then asked them for donations. So they were actually handling the things he would have handled. It brought the whole of their history absolutely to life. Then when the Headmistress found out, she got petrified. I was banned from going in the archive, but they did call in an archivist. I had certainly made them realise what they had got. They'd not even got an inventory of it. So all that influenced the *Between the Lines* tape. I was quite a naughty child at school because I was so disciplined at home I think. So, I was forever getting in trouble. But it was quite a lot of joyous trouble sometimes. It was a mischievous trouble. There was an element of that in it I think. There were some wonderful wartime photos of the kids and stories written of how they had to hide in bunkers and things as well. The East End suffered terribly in the Second World War so I had various soundtracks in it, echoing nostalgic things like Attlee coming back and saying, "I have this paper with his name upon it. We won't go to War." and obviously we did. It was those things. It was a very different piece. Working on my own in control of the camera and in front of the camera in an empty building with so much resonance in it was absolutely fascinating. It was a funny little piece. It was a ½ hour piece.

MW: And that was paid for by the residency?

RG: Yes it came as part of the residency.

MW: Was that then shown in another space besides the school?

RG: Yes, it was quite widely shown. I had a wonderful turn out to the school exhibition and people were incredibly nice. I think Marina Warner came and various other people from the Whitechapel Gallery. The show at the Whitechapel Gallery came from that. I don't know whether they were sympathetic because I'd left my husband, but I like to think it was a bit more than that. Even one of the art critics in the newspapers wrote very nice half page extolling it.

MW: Did you actively go about distributing the video works?

RG: No**,** I don't remember doing that. They became quite popular, which some critics thought was not on. It was not on to do popularist work. I remember people talking to me about my work being popularist.

MW: Whatever that means.

RG: Yes. It wasn't intended to be popular, it just was. It was accessible work.

MW: So was it distributed through London Video Arts?

RG: Sometimes, yes. I was quite open to people inviting me to take part in shows and so on, and London Video Arts had been great. I think I edited that piece at London Video Arts. But I was never really on the circuit, in quite that way. I wasn't part of a video arts group. I was never quite a video artist. I was sort of seen as this mixture between being a sculptor, a performance artist and a video maker. I made tapes that would be seen as works, I made tapes that were to be continuous play in installations and I used surveillance in performances. So, there were all sorts of ways I was using video. It wasn't just as tapes. Somewhere I've got a certificate from a Japanese Video Festival. It was from some sort of prize that I had won. The works went around Australia and all over, probably with LVA. They had a good airing and I think that was why Calgary got in touch with me. It was because they'd seen one of them.

MW: So that's how you got to go to Canada?

RG: The curator was over here and she rang me up and said could she come and meet me. Then my first visit to Canada was because of that. It was fascinating, how they all interwove. You can see how I can't say which is the best.

MW: And they were written about quite a lot I the art press, weren't they? Not just the video works but your work in general, the performance work and the installations.

RG: There were a lot of time-out reviews and that level of review. There were not that many high art magazine articles. I don't ever remember seeing a major article about me. There was art press in the papers, in which I got plenty of attention.

MW: Although in the publication that Cornerhouse produced in the early 90's for the exhibition there, there are quite a lot of quotes from the art press that you use as part of that.

RG: But they were from the glossy magazines that were just coming ensemble, in the beginning of that period.

MW: Yes Art Monthly and things like that. You weren't reviewed in that?

RG: I don't think I remember being reviewed very often in those. It was mainly in The Sunday Times.

MW: But that's quite prestigious?

RG: Yes, absolutely. I have no complaints whatsoever. Sarah Kent used to pick up on my work very often. John Roberts was another. Waldemar Januszczak was a great friend and supporter. So, there were plenty of people who were very, very supportive of what I did. It was great. The only problem I had, I suppose, was from my own point of view. Once I was labelled a feminist my audience distinctly changed. In other words, it was

after 1980. Pre-1980 my audience had been at least 50% men and after 1980 it was far less than that, which I regretted. But things shift. Things change all the time. So the labels might clarify one thing, but it's at the expense of another.

MW: Yes, and you don't like them. Although it sounds like some good things came out of being labelled a feminist, like the ICA show and everything?

RG: Oh absolutely. Apart from anything else, I found clarity for myself on a lot of issues that I had only began to scratch the service on. But I still made a distinction between what I called hard-core feminists who were very much the ones into French theory. I didn't go down that route at all. It was much more from a personal exploration, point of view, which was equally legitimate. I fought for it to be legitimate in conferences. In conferences I would fight to defend not only myself but other artists working, and women artists working in that way against onslaughts by feminists who had read all the books. I just saw it as another system of bullying women: making yourself superior to these other women. Luckily, there wasn't that much of it happening, but there was enough.

MW: Did you write about other people's work ever? Did you write about art in general?

RG: I did write quite a lot. I really don't remember much of it though. I used to write a lot of stuff for Kerry, which he put out as his statements. He was not very good at writing. I don't remember, but I probably drafted stuff for the ICA catalogue for Women's Images or something like that. It was very collaborative I think. I don't think I wrote anything particularly on my own except about my own work. I know I did quite a lot of writing on and off, but I don't remember who I wrote about.

MW: Talking about collaboration, do you feel there was quite a strong sense of collaboration in your work? You talked a bit about how the BBC obviously were very supportive in that particular piece and how you opened up that piece to other artists, so was that a very conscious form of collaboration?

RG: Yes I think so. With the BBC, it was out of necessity and their generosity, but certainly with other artists coming in, it was very much that.

MW: Do you think the atmosphere at that time was mutually supportive?

RG: Yes, very much so. It was all very new. I remember one night, Jonathan Harvey, who was probably very drunk, looked up at the blank wall and said, "We are making history" There was that sort of feeling. It was the feeling that you were right on the cutting edge of everything. It was lovely. Equally, in Women's Images of Men and About Time. It was about time that women appeared in major galleries in London. They'd not been shown.

MW: Yes, that was a seminal show that. It was really historic.

RG: Yes, and again the collaboration of women of all different levels of skill and discipline. It was fantastic. That did very soon deteriorate into jealousy and backstabbing, and so I soon stepped back out of it. A group of them went to New York very soon after the show and didn't even think of including me, which I felt a bit hurt by. There were other

things, both from men and women. Once I had the show at the ICA, a one-person show, and there was a lot of jealousy. I kept saying to people, "It's not just one cake. It's not that I've got the whole cake." I said, "I've got a tiny slice and there are a lot more slices". It's funny. I don't know whether that's a particularly English thing, but certainly as you got more successful, people's resentments got bigger. So it was nice to be able to go to Canada for a bit. But then Cornerhouse was fantastic. They were immensely helpful and supportive. That was the first major show after my accident and Bev had waited and she'd been in touch with me without pressurising me. I was very aware of that. She just kept in touch to see how I was doing after the accident without ever forcing me into a deadline or a decision. Then gradually she eased me into the idea of doing this one-person show. A The Catalogue wouldn't have been done without her really giving me the confidence to do it and to put it down and then feel, "Well that Catalogue at least won't disappear". At least my work is now down how I want it to be recorded. Just as each year and what I'd done. There is none of my public artwork in it, but all my gallery work is in it. And that was an immense weight off my shoulders because at that point I didn't know whether I'd ever work again. So it was great. That was a good period. There have been some brilliant people that I couldn't have worked without. But I am not like Ann Bean. Ann Bean is another person that I love. I think she is just so creative and wicked, absolutely wicked. But she is someone who collaborates so absolutely. She genuinely collaborates. I don't feel I've ever done that. I think I've always felt awkward. I am a very bossy person. I haven't learnt the social skills to not be seen as bossy. I am not that manipulative. So letting go of some of that control in a collaborative way, I do find difficult. That's in a way why, thought it's sometimes very difficult. I loved working with Anna Ridley. I loved working with her, because she is another powerful woman. We tended to negotiate our piece over each compromise. I don't feel that I had to step back from what I was trying to express because of her feelings, which was probably wrong. She was probably, utterly fed up with me. But, she has enabled me to do some great, great things.

MW: Is there anything else that you think we haven't covered or that you'd like to talk about?

RG: I suppose there is how I gradually came out of video. Having done all those fairly major ½ hour works with the television people and major half-performances with *Tumble Frame* and so on and *Between the Lines*, in 1983, I was working in Corydon College of Art. I was in charge 2 days a week of the video department, which I inherited. It was like a 1950's TV studio, built absolutely, with the control panels and everything. There were 3 black-and-white cameras on tripods. Someone had evidently set it up at that period to train people.

MW: Were they U-matic cameras or broadcast cameras?

RG: No, they were reel-to-reel black-and-white. Editing was done with a scalpel and you taped them together. It was a brilliant tool for working with the kids and getting them to understand how a studio worked as well as engaging them with video art. We did some amazing scratch video with it in those days. We were recording off the screen, getting interference and getting endless tunnels of images. We were doing all those sort of things so that they would really understand the medium. That was great fun. Bruce McLean was teaching in the painting department so there were collaborations between my students and him on performances and things so it was a very intriguing period. Then I went to Dartington and I was there for about 6 years. One of the areas

that became mine when a member of staff left was the video/performance area. I was essentially teaching sculpture but again I moved across. We had visiting artists coming and I would document what they did and edit tapes and send them to the tapes. So I did a lot of work in that area both with the students on producing art works but also on documentation. And that updated me into what had happened with the technology. Then I gave up teaching, so I became completely disconnected from where it went after that.

MW: And where was it at when you disconnected from it? What kind of technology was being used at that point in time?

RG: I should think it was probably 1-inch, in colour and with proper editing facilities. Everything was good. And it had become integrated into the performance work I was doing with the students as well, so it was very nice period. I managed to do what I felt was some really valuable teaching there. But when I had the accident, evidently I gave up my teaching. I had done one year of teaching Worcestershire as well. I went for an interview and they were absolutely overjoyed to have me it seemed. I went and taught foundation level. It was with very unruly kids. It was a little complete core of hyperactive kids who were absolutely uncontrollable. The Head of College wouldn't do anything to discipline them and they would deliberately go at break time and drink 5 cans of coke and come back completely out of their heads. They didn't have any video facilities at all and at that point. I was beginning to get interested in becoming more skilled on computer. I'd gone to computers as a result of my accident because I couldn't string an article together. I couldn't string thoughts together in a sequence so computers were a brilliant discovery for me and I asked permission as a 2-day part-timer to be allowed to take one of the classes on computers. So I wanted to come in for another session, when I wasn't being paid to teach, but I was refused. I felt dreadful cause it meant my skills levels were dropping away. Finally I came back the following September to start the term having not heard anything, and I hadn't had a contract, which I'd had the previous year but I just assumed, having not heard anything. Anyway I was called to the Principle's office – and I can laugh now although I was in tears at the time – and he said, "Oh no, you have to wait for another of the women to get pregnant". Apparently I had been taken on, on this contract because someone was away having a baby.

MW: And you didn't know?

RG: No. It was extraordinary! So I stormed out in tears. And that was the last of it.

MW: How terrible! That's so unprofessional on their part!

RG: Yes, well that was Worcestershire all over. It's a very strange place. I've never been anywhere, where the expectation is that professional artists will do everything for nothing or for an absolute pittance. In the past, when I arrived, and most of them had given up now, but there were people running galleries and putting on exhibitions and so on and not expecting to be paid. Once you get a culture of that in a town then nobody expects to pay you. I did 3 major sculptures in the town and was paid a proper fee. I also curated a sculpture trail at the Three County Showground with 14 nationally known sculptors, one or two of them were locals but most of them were nationally known. It was in the middle of a Spring Gardening Show, so I had a sculpture trail

through the show all mapped and leafleted and everything. It was properly funded by the Arts Council, which I'd applied for the funding from and with proper artists fees, which the management were absolutely astonished at. The level was £200 a day / £250 a day and I had 7 of the 14 doing daily workshops with different sorts of outreach. Some were working out on site open to anyone. Some were aimed at children. Some were aimed at the blind from the blind colleges near here. Some were aimed at local teenagers. Others were aimed at the 2 together where I got them budding with each other. They were a brilliant series of workshops.

MW: When was that?

RG: It was the year after the Foot and Mouth Crisis, so 2003. It was supposed to happen in 2002, but because of Foot and Mouth, the site was closed down. It was going to be an annual event, but because they lost money due to Foot and Mouth, the management left and they were replaced with an accountant. I seem to attract these situations. I have to say that again, my belief is that he had every intention of stopping the event but was unable to. It got to the point where I had £40,000 worth of sculptures being shipped from London and he had promised to get the insurance cover out of my budget but he wouldn't do it and nothing had happened until the night before. I managed to get the wonderful Carter to use his insurer to cover them. So there were lots and lots of bear-pits at the set up and on route. But we did it all and it looked fantastic and people really enjoyed it. At the end he had the cheek of having banned me from the offices. I couldn't even go in to use the toilet and neither could the artists. He came up to me and he said, "You know I do, I do admire artists really. I do play the guitar, I rather like The Beatles". I just stood there. They'd had all these VIP gardeners who I would have loved to have the opportunity to meet. People like Charlie Dimmock were walking within inches of us and not one artist nor me was introduced to them. The artists were working on site, on continuous installations, building installations and I just thought that was unforgivable. At the end of the show, to then feel the thing was a success. Anyway he's been ousted since, but sadly what was to be a major platform for Midland sculpture annually, never happened again. It was another of those 'never happened again' stories. So there've been a lot of things I am really pleased in having a part in and achieving here and a lot of things that have fallen by the wayside, which I think is a total utter waste of the talent that's in the Midlands and the opportunities that are here. I really think the artistic community here is utterly used, but not appreciated, which is very strange for somewhere like Malvern that has a fairly art-y reputation. But, I am quite realistic about it now. The opportunities that I felt I created for myself, I insisted on being paid for professionally. And if someone says, "Oh just do us a sketch" I'd say, "No I don't just do sketches, you'll have to pay me to do a project"

MW: Would you consider using video again now for any of your projects?

RG: I'd love to, yes, especially now that I am about to have a bit more money. I was actually thinking of buying a digital camera now. Quite how I'd use it I don't know but it's one of the things that I've thought, without wanting to get back into the whole showing circuit, I would actually maybe like to work on video again.

MW: Some of the historical things that you are working on, would perhaps lend themselves very well to an oral history project?

RG: Given some of the people I've met and the stories I've gathered that would definitely interest me. That would probably lead on to something more creative from my point of view. But, you feel that these people in their 80's and are on the brink of disappearing. Nobody is recording their own memories from childhood, not their parents' stories. So you are going back quite a long way, a good 100 years or so. I've retained quite a lot of the things that people told me in my residency. I made a lot of notes and things and I've written about the history of well-dressing, which hadn't been acknowledged here and I found 4 sites where intermittently well-dressing had happened since at least the 12th century, maybe even earlier. With so many wells around the hills I felt there was bound to be a tradition. I used to organise it but I resigned last year, we've now got a really community-based festival of well-dressing that happens every year. I got it up to 28 sites. This year's new organisers got it up to 35, which I find absolutely brilliant. That helps people to value and respect and take care of the wells.

MW: You were saying that he's got young people involved, schools?

RG: He's got 7 children's groups involved. I only ever managed to get 2. Most of the people on the national curriculum, their stock answer is they don't have time within the curriculum to do it. So, in Malvern the two I normally got were public schools who were quite happy to take part. I think that's really brilliant because that's the next generation of people who are going to care about the springs. With all this talk of global warming, it's important for people to be aware that they are sitting on a hill full of fountains. That's what Malvern originally meant. The Victorians had a whole period of jostling around what did Malvern mean and it went from Moel-Bryn meaning bare hill to Mial-Chiurn, which is Gaelic for Hill of Fountains. We are sitting on a hill of fountains that are all being disrespected, neglected, piped underground, damaged, taken utterly for granted. Already we are seeing these large floods in the Severn Valley and people's water supply is completely polluted for several weeks. They all come up to the hills and there are only 6 springs left that they can collect from. So, if I've done something to double that number it'd be good. So I am going in all sorts of strange directions. Now I am doing this one on the once very famous donkey hire trade in the Malverns, which goes from the 11th century onwards. It was how people got up and down the hills to the Holy Well. In Victorian England at the height of the water cure here, there were over a 100 donkeys in Great Malvern alone. They were clogging up the streets. The trade went on until the Second World War and no one has ever traced it or written about it. So, that's what I've been doing last Winter. There all these obscure things, but they've turned out to be fascinating because most of the histories that I know of Malvern, are involved with the aristocracy and the gentry coming here, to this little town built on springs, to take the waters. Then it became a commercial venture with some doctors and then they faded away. Since they faded away, nobody has traced what happened to the poor in that period. When you look at the history of the donkey hire trade it was the utterly impoverished who undertook that trade. The little children who actually climbed with the donkeys went up the hills 10 times a day with the gentry's children on the back of the donkeys. So it's a real tangent across this rather glowing history of Malvern. It just shows the stamina and resilience of people who had absolutely nothing. There is a story of one family who came from Wales – a grandmother, a pregnant daughter and a grandchild on at least 4 donkeys and a white pony. It took them 4 days just to get here. Then they had to sleep in hay rakes when they arrived until they found two derelict cottages up the road and moved in there. Then they started donkey hiring up to the Beacon. There are all these incredible

stories that have just not been noted by anybody. It's a very curious direction I've gone in, but as long as I am doing something fulfilling and that I think is valuable in some way, I am pleased. It's a hidden history that's almost lost. I am just speaking to the very last children of the last donkey women.

MW: But your earlier work was about hidden histories as well. I mean the histories of women painters and artists that you re-discovered really not even re-discovered but brought attention to.

RG: Yes, I brought to prominence them. When I was showing in the Tate, I can't even remember what the show was called, but it was this big review of the year show of artists throughout the world, so I was very flattered to be included. They wanted to include my triptych of paintings with the opening frames and the Madonna and the Flaccid Gun - as one of them was called. So, I was very pleased and those were the frames around three self-portraits by women holding tools of the trade. It was very important to me to show that these women wanted to be seen as artists and they covered the period from the Renaissance to the 19th century. Even most artists at that point didn't know about them. Then I discovered that I was one of only 3 women in the show, from a total of about 90 artists. So, the real situation was all put back in perspective again. I think things have improved a bit now though.

MW: Didn't you have a show at the V&A that was censored?

RG: Yes. That was down to my naivety. It was called the Body Box Exhibition and it was about the human body. They had everything from Salvador Dali's *Mae West's Lips Sofa* to a cast of Atlas, the weight lifter. It was a live cast so it was pretty comprehensive. It was a very interesting educational show and Roy Strong was the Director at the time. I'd become friends with the lady who ran the sort of educational section and I don't know how it arose, but she asked me if I would do a performance. This was before I performed.

MW: What period was this? Just to put it in context.

RG: It was the very early to the mid 1970's. I knew a very strange man called Genesis P-Orridge. He had a very peculiar body because he had something wrong with his adrenaline gland. He'd been on all sorts of drugs to try and balance it. I don't know whether that was the cause or not, but he had an extraordinary long torso and very short thighs. So when he had his clothes off he looked rather odd. But, he was one of the few men that I was acquainted with who was quite happy to take his clothes off in public. He took a bit of controlling because again the piece was a task. *Universal Man in Forty-Five Tasks* was the title and it was to take place in the middle of the Private View. It was to start as the Private View started and continue right through until the Private View ended. The idea being that people would at first think, "I'll stand and watch this" and then you could see what was going to happen so you could walk away and come back. What was happening was he was completely covered in black when he started and the black was in segments, stuck on with Velcro. I think he started with his feet, but I can't remember now. There were 7 different panels showing different ways of representing him. So, one was a shadow. One was a cast. One was where he hung his sections of clothes up. Basically, he started with his feet. He uncovered his feet, and uncovered the section that showed the shadow of his feet. Then he

assembled the plaster feet of the plaster cast and suddenly the staff realised that this meant this man was going to be completely naked in the middle of their Private View, and that there was going to be a live cast of him hung up on this panel, completing every detail. What I was told was that the women staff were outraged that this man was doing a striptease in their Private View. This had gone all the way up to Rory Strong and then it came all the way back down again as a message the night before the Private View. I was very into rehearsals given that this was all going to be live. We didn't rehearse on performance stuff very often. It was a principle difference between theatre and performance. Anyway, the dictate came down that I had to do a run through of the piece the night before. So a select group of staff-members formed this little committee and came to watch this very, very boring performance. It lasted about 2 hours. So, it began and then we got to the middle, by which time he was half-naked. Then gradually he got completely naked and it was all stopped. "Oh no you can't do that!" they said. I said, "Well what do you want done? How are you going to censor it?" They said,"He's got to wear shorts and you have got to fix something over the live cast." I said, "Well what?" And they said, "A fig leaf!" It was so funny. I found a pair of black, almost like swimming trunks for him, and I made a black bar and glued it over the genitals of the plaster cast. It became the absolute point of focus for the entire Private View when every little boy and teenager tried to peel it off. It was just hilarious, but they let me do it. There is a video of that. There was documentation of that done by the Education Department. So, there are so many anecdotes about these crazy situations. But it's a strange old life. There always seems nothing straightforward. Everything has to some extent, be fought for. But, most of the time I get things through one way or another.

MW: Do you enjoy that in a way?

RG: Yes I like that. I don't like it so much that I get hyper over it all and start jumping up and down. In retrospect it's very funny. I always think it's hilarious that this poor man had to strip off in front of V&A staff, and the fact that they sat there doggedly for an hour and a quarter, until he got down to his genitals. It was supposed to be a situation where people in situ incidentally glimpsed as they walked around this person moving very slowly and gradually uncovering and assembling. But they sat there, utterly focused and waiting. The world is mad really. But yes, it's not been a dull life. And it will continue not to be a dull life I am sure.