

but they have no power here and their roles are open to scrutiny, not only by others but also by themselves. The building is so different from most that it is easy to be self-critical within it. Firmly held views need not be maintained. The design informs you that you are there to communicate and it is difficult not to use the space in this way. A curving row of eleven wooden stools gives an immediate humanity. The construction as a whole has a beauty and this is important because it helps the function but this building insists on being recognised in term of its purpose rather than its appearance.

MURDO MacDONALD

THE WELL OF PATIENCE

Pearce Institute, Glasgow.
June—September 1990

*'The wild geese do not intend to cast their reflection
The water has no mind to receive their image'(1.)*

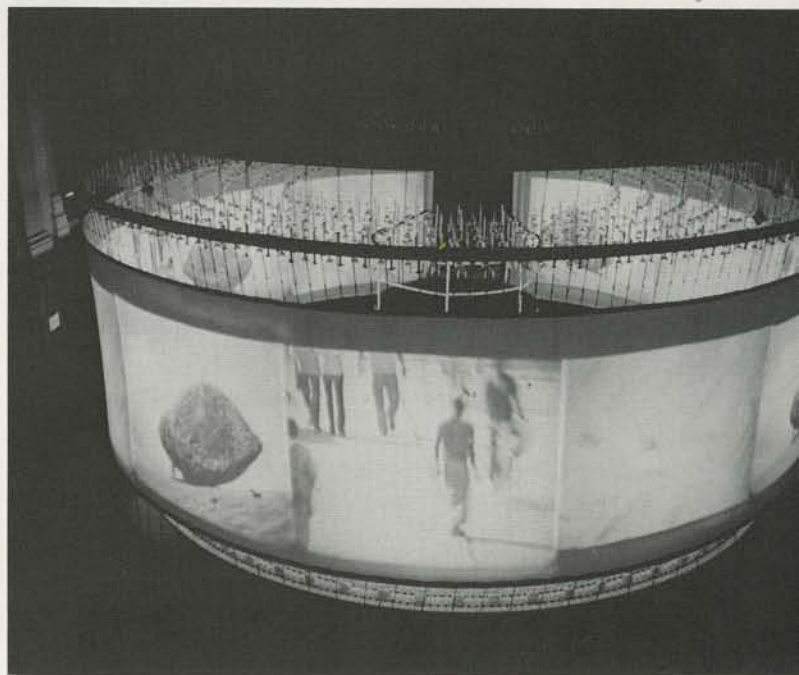
Much modernist and late modernist work uses montage and fragmentation of imagery and content to dissect social reality or to speak of anomaly and loss of meaning. Buddhism, which informs **Daniel Reeves'** 90 minute video installation **'The Well of Patience'**, and western Gestalt theory, tolerate empty spaces in the life experience. Willingness to stay in a state of confusion and uncertainty enable sensation to emerge as a figure from a ground which is at once empty and chaotic with possibilities and potentials. Thus 'futile voids' are transformed into 'fertile voids' (2.). 'The Well of Patience' uses deconstructive devices towards an integrative end, and paradoxically, *authentic individual* experience is achieved without recourse to empathy, linear narrative, or expressionism. For 90 minutes the visitor enters a distinct, dynamic, transitive space which places the person at the heart of the matter; body and consciousness come together, in time, the subject of the work.

The installation is located in a darkened room. Walking up a ramp to stand on a raised platform the visitor is encompassed by a circular video screen 12 metres in diameter and 10 feet high. A shifting triptych or rural and urban imagery surrounds the viewer; particular shots are shown singly or repeated simultaneously to form a moving kaleidoscope pattern on all sides of the screen. (The rotating video turntable on which the projectors sat would have heightened the perception, but were out of order when I visited.)

Natural sound accompanies each sequence, so for example, a dog barking, the cutting of foliage and sitar music intermingle. The images are cut continually and experienced as a sequence of unintentional moments as in the poem above, operating in the manner of the 'empty spaces' discussed earlier. Each moment is a new set of beginnings.

Below on the floor, representing the earth and sitting on rat-traps, seven concentric circles of Buddha's face inwards. At head level, in the 'Heavens', 7 sets of forty-nine 8 inch wine goblets hang paired with white

hammers of equal size. Activated by a fan, random but continuous chiming disrupts engagement with the video sequence, maintaining the spectator in the *eternally real present* and reinstating the installation's physical structure. The 10 feet video screen is the 'horizon' and stunning juxtapositions - huge soft flames, hail on water, a floating lily, compell an intense physical experience. The camera zooms in or out, from left to right. Equivalences are established. Breathing is something a person does, and is constantly, a living rhythm. Here the 'horizon' is also the body, the



DANIEL REEVES *The Well of Patience* 1990

PHOTO: KEN GILL

sequence of video images reflecting the self as a temporal process. Rhythms are established between images, between movements, between ideas, as in the Gestalt cycle of sensory awareness, echoing the kaleidoscope effect. However, although the experience will be different, these perceptions are not only particular to Buddhism as the following Haiku poem and quote from Louis MacNeice demonstrate, the latter catching something of the completeness of Reeves' installation:

*'You light the fire,
I'll show you something nice -
A great ball of snow!'*

'Snow

*The room was suddenly rich and the great bay window
was
Spawning snow and pink roses against it
Soundlessly collateral and incompatible:
World is suddener than we fancy it.*

*World is crazier and more of it than we think,
Incorrigibly plural. I peel and portion
A tangerine and spit the pips and feel
The drunkenness of things being various.*

*And the fires flames with a bubbling sound for world
Is more spiteful and gay than one supposes -
On the tongue on the eyes on the ears in the palms of
one's hands -
There is more than glass between snow and the huge
roses.'*

Louis MacNeice