



REWIND | Artists' Video in the 70s & 80s Interview with Madelon Hooykaas

Interview by Professor Stephen Partridge and Emile Shemilt, 10th
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ES: Which of your works do you consider to be the most important and why?

MH: It is a very difficult question to answer. Concentrating on works from the 70's and 80's, I would consider a work that Elsa Stansfield and I made with the video bursary at Maidstone College in 1979, called *Running Time*. The work was actually shot in the North of England and was finished at Maidstone College, using their facilities. The work has actually been shown in different retrospective festivals. It is an interesting work. We worked a lot during that period with the lines of the black-and-white video, meaning the structure of the video image. Often our work is not just one single tape, but is also often photographic images, which are still images from the video. They were sometimes printed on linen using the structure of the material of linen and the video image. Using that combination, we made different works. This work is a 6-minute long piece of a figure running in the landscape. In our work sound was always very, very important. We mostly made our own soundtracks. Sometimes we worked with composers but rarely, more so towards the end of the 80's. Elsa worked a lot with sound. Elsa and I met in 1966 in London at the Ealing School of Art. Elsa came from Glasgow. She studied at the Glasgow School of Art but she wanted then to work with photography and film. You couldn't do that in Scotland in those in days. Now, of course it's different, but back then she had to come to London, where there was a course where you could do photography and film. My background was also in photography, but I was also interested in film. I received a European study scholarship from the Netherlands for a project I wanted to do. Part of the project was to be a guest student in the Ealing School of Art in London. My project was actually to illustrate the Canterbury Tales as a way of working with photographs. I was the first scholar when came to that school, so I talked about my work. I had my examples with me and Elsa reacted on that. So, I had some contact with Elsa during those few months. Then I had a show in London. I saw her again the year after but then we didn't meet for about 5-6 years. Then we just met in a chance meeting again. There was a photographer named Eve Arnold, who also made films. One of the films she made is called *Behind the Veil*. It's a film that was shot in a harem in Saudi Arabia, in the late 60s. At that time it was very, very difficult for a woman to be a cameraperson or a sound-person. You had to have a ticket from the unions. Eve Arnold was looking for an all female crew because she wanted to film in a harem, and was looking all over Europe to find it. It was a BBC documentary and Elsa was going to do the sound for it. She remembered that I worked with cameras, so she tried to contact me. I was living in Paris at the time. This was at the time of the telegram still, and she sent one to my parents. They didn't take it at all seriously, so when I came back, they had left for filming already. They actually never found a camerawoman. They had a man with red hair as the main cameraman. In Arabia they didn't think that it was really a man with red hair. They thought the camera assistant was a woman. But, I was still curious about the project. Then a teacher from the Ealing School of Art came to

visit me in Amsterdam. He asked if I had heard of Elsa Stansfield, and I said that I had just seen the film on the BBC and that I had seen her credit on it. So, I said that I would like to find out what she was doing. So, they found out and I got her telephone number and then we discussed if there were any possibilities to maybe work together. At that time Elsa had a studio at Neil's Yard in Covent Garden called 8, 9 and 10. That was the number of the studio that was in the town. There was still the market there and she had at least two other people there who were filmmakers. The way we were trying to work on our own projects was by working as a film crew for British Airways or so for 6 weeks. We would then earn a lot of money, so we could then do our own work. We were working then on 16 mm and we had editing there. We were in a converted warehouse in Covent Garden, but it's now very, very fancy. I've seen the white doves flying around in that place.

ES: Do you know who the other filmmakers were?

MH: Patricia Holland. Actually, the other one was not a filmmaker. The other person was Delia Derbyshire. She worked at the BBC in the Radiophonic Workshop. Unfortunately she died, as did their studio. With Brian Hodgson she left, and started their own studio in Neil's Yard. That's also why we worked with them. We worked with Delia Derbyshire and Brian Hodgson on different soundtracks for films. Elsa made several soundtracks for films. Then when we worked together, we worked first of all on a film. We made our first film in the Netherlands actually. After my training in the Netherlands as a photographer I worked in Paris and London and later in New York. I came back to Europe after 5 years of living and working in different places. By then I was getting very interest in Buddhism, so I took a Trans-Siberian train to Japan and stayed some time in a Buddhist monastery, which was very unusual in that time, in 1970. I was able also after some time to make photographs and because of that I had a unique documentation and personal interest from where I had been. So, when I came back to the Netherlands I thought it was a pity to just publish an article. So, I thought why not make a book? So I make a book and it was published in the Netherlands, later in Germany and then in the US. Because of that they also made a film about me for television. When I first started working with Elsa, we first wrote a script and then we made a pilot about this work. Then we tried to get funding here and there. The British Film Institute weren't interested in it so I mentioned that I knew the person in Dutch television who made the film about me. So we managed to get the film financed as a Dutch/British production with music by Delia Derbyshire. We gave her a composition possibility, to make a new soundtrack. We edited it all in Neil's Yard and mixed it all in Britain. The film's title translates as *One of These Days*. The film is in Dutch and about 30 minutes long. I did production and camera and Elsa mainly did sound and editing. But, the strange thing was we couldn't get the production going if I operated the camera, because it had to be male. So, what we did was hire one crew for one day, to get the credits. It sounds so amazing now. Anyway, we then made an English version of the film, which we wanted to show at The London Film Festival. I can't remember who was there, but I think David Curtis was the Director of the London Film Festival at the time. In August of that year, we hired a viewing theatre and showed the film. He liked it but he said that the festival was full already, even though the festival was at the end of November. I was so surprised and said, "How can you run a contemporary festival if by August your festival is full already?" So, he agreed to take it. That was very good for us, to have the film at such a high profile festival. Then it was also possible, later in 1976, to show the

same film in New York and Toronto. So, we made our first trips to two different festivals with our first film, and our first time working together. After studying at Ealing School, Elsa started to make her own films. Then she studied at the Slade. She did film studies, so her background was far more in film than mine. I had just worked as an assistant in Paris working on a film crew, doing documentary work, just to learn the skills. We then made a few more big films, but soon realised that with big films, meaning 30-minute films, it would take you a whole year, at least, to find the money to finance it. To make the film was very expensive, and then of course video emerged, which was very exciting for us. We were commuting between Amsterdam and London according to the project, but because in the 70's we did a lot of projects in Britain, we were able to borrow a Portapak from the Arts Council. It was their first Portapak. It was very important for us, because it was really for artists' video. From the beginning, in Britain they were very clear about it. At that certain moment, they believed that everybody could make video, like nowadays where everybody can do everything. That was the idea of video as well. As a result, there were a lot of community video projects. The Arts Council realised if artists wanted to work with video they wouldn't just have it just for a day. So, you could get it for two weeks sometimes. If you had a project, you could get a Portapak and experiment with it. That was very important for our development. Then of course, what was also very good was Fantasy Factory. That's where we edited. We had one edit an hour, just to get it right, in between the synchs. But, it was also possible to work there because of the atmosphere created by Hoppy and Sue. We made many works there, and I think it was extremely important to be able to do that, with the support of those two organisations. In Britain, it felt as though people were open to what we wanted to do, but, in the Netherlands, we didn't have that at all. So, it was very important that we could work that way.

SP: And then Elsa was at the Jan Van Eyck Academy?

MH: That was much later. We made our first work with video in Scotland at what was then the Third Eye Centre, in 1975. The Third Eye Centre, at that time, was very advanced because they had their own Portapak, which we could work with. Mostly with that kind of work, we would go and look at the location where we would exhibit, then develop an idea often to do with the geography of where the gallery was. With the Third Eye Centre, it was in Sauchiehall Street. We used an idea that related to a market place. Sauchiehall Street has been a shopping street and so we made that relation in our first work. The work also had live video in it. A lot of our work is a combination of live video, pre-recorded work and photography. People could also give their own comment. We had made different questions and people could relate to that. So we would prepare our work, shoot it and edit it in London, then go back to Glasgow and show the work, with maybe only a few months in between.

ES: In your first experiments with video, were they very different to your work with film, given that you were making documentary work?

MH: They were very different because we wanted work very directly the image. I worked a lot in that period with Polaroids and sequences. I used the idea that you made your Polaroid and you immediately could react when you looked at it, then you could make the next work. There were sequences like film, but it was actually from working with Polaroid that I

came to work with video. It was a very different way of working from film. You had 15 minutes in your roll and it was very expensive. Working with video was very different, and it was far more conceptual as well. You would be able to make the work very spontaneously. You could look at it immediately.

ES: When you were using film, you were using it in a particular way, but you were also showing it in a particular way, showing in festivals and in a cinematic context. When you started using video, did you see that as work for the gallery?

MH: Yes, it was very different. It was unusual for us because a lot of video artists, to use the term, in those days wanted to make work for television. Of course we started as filmmakers making our first work for television. We realised that maybe 100 000 people or 200 000 people would see it, but where was the feedback? You could have worked on it for a whole year. There is a lot written about the piece if I look at it now, but comparatively, there are so many other possibilities from television now. Because both we came out of visual art background we found it interesting to use the medium in a visual art surrounding and in galleries. Of course it was very unusual at that time for artists to work with the video medium. We were very interested in space. We called our work 'Environments' in those days because they were not just single channel works, but even from the very beginning, were all installation works. They were multi-channel works with live video often in it. Often there were also other media like photographs or materials like earth or stone. We made very site-specific works. There would be only one specific work for each gallery. Sometimes we used other materials, which we might use again in another piece, but then we would change the whole scene. It always became a new work.

ES: The transition that you made is quite interesting. As a photographer you classified yourself as an artist, as a filmmaker would you call yourself an artist or would you say that was documentary?

MH: It was a little bit in between. I chose photography first because I thought I could earn my living with it. I did some photo-journalism and other things but very quickly, I saw that I wanted to do my own work and started to experiment with Polaroid. For a traditional photographer it wasn't interesting at all, but in the art world of course, there were a number of artists working with Polaroid. It was when I started to work with sequences and then with video, that my interests developed.

ES: Did you show your Polaroid photographs in the gallery context as well?

MH: Yes, I was showing my work in Photographers' Galleries in London and in Milan in 1971/72 around the time I had started to work with Elsa, so I was already a little bit known in that field. The work that we did for television was a one-off, but we made two or three other films, which were shown in festivals and sometimes in museums when they started showing artists' films. The films we made were all in colour, but video was black-and-white. We found the structure of the video image very interesting and we worked very much with those lines. Another key work is called *Horizontal Flow*, which we made at Teesside College of Art. We used the horizon as a line, and we made an environment using two tapes but five monitors, so the horizon continued on the monitors. That work was also

shown in the LYC Museum in Banks. It is a small museum that was run by a Chinese artist who died a few years ago. We managed to get five of the same small monitors in order to take it to another museum and show the work there.

ES: Was that one of the first video works that you made?

MH: The first one was *What's It To You?* It was shown in the Third Eye Centre in 1975. We were also invited to make a piece by Jasia Reichardt, who was the director of the Whitechapel Art Gallery then. So we made a five-tape installation work for the Whitechapel Art Gallery. It was also quite interesting because after 1975 we had to move out of Neil's Yard because Covent Garden was transforming. We were moved to what is now another very fancy part, Wapping in East London. We were in a warehouse there, and very close to Whitechapel. So we made interesting work there inspired by the surroundings, which was a very mixed area with lots of immigrants. We used memory a lot in our work, and Elsa wrote an important article in one of those magazines on memory. I think she also got a grant from the Greater London Arts Association, GLAA, to work on memory in combination with the Slade School of Art. But, because of that show in the Whitechapel Art Gallery, we got a show in the Netherlands, at De Appel Foundation. We made work in a number of different places, including a very interesting work, which we made in Chapter Art Centre, in Cardiff. It is called *Sea of Light*. We made it using the four galleries there, but also using the surroundings of Cardiff near the sea. So, in Great Britain we made a lot of key works in that period. There is an art gallery idea that you have in Britain, which does not exist all over the world. We don't have it in the Netherlands. They were very interested in artists showing new work. Because of the medium and the way we were using it specifically to make something for that place was at that time also quite unusual. They supported the site-specificity of it.

ES: When you started using video, you were using multiple monitors. Was that a direct relationship from when you were exploring sequences and the Polaroid?

MH: Yes, I think so. But, we also worked in a far more sculptural way. The space became a very important part of the work. When Elsa Stansfield died in November 30, 2004, the best newspaper in the Netherlands wrote about it, and the heading was 'Sculpturist Video'. That notion was also very important.

ES: So you saw the space surrounding the monitor set against the space within the screen and the image, as an interesting juxtaposition? That notion is especially interesting because it allowed the monitor, and thus video, to be read as an object.

MH: Yes, the monitor became a sculptural part of the work. Later on of course, we would refer to our work at the end of the 80's as 'video sculpture'. We participated in some important shows, including the Video Sculpture show in Germany. But, our work often used a lot of other elements as well.

ES: The apparatus is important in your work as well, particularly in The Wind works, for example.

MH: Yes absolutely. I would say that The Wind works were key works through the combination of live video and pre-recorded tape. In 1982 we made a work *Inside/Outside*, which is actually conserved by Montevideo. They made a whole conservation project of that together with the Institute of Cultural Heritage in the Netherlands. It was in the European Conservation Project

ES: How did that come about?

MH: They started a project on 30 Years of Dutch Video. They wanted to take some of our work as case studies. It was in the European Context of trying to conserve ephemeral works and they choose our work. So, they reconstructed the work. Elsa was very much a part of that. With being a duo at the time, we worked in a way where Elsa would concentrate on some things, and then I would concentrate on other projects. So she was very involved in the conservation of that work. That was in 1982. In 1984, we showed another version called *Compass*. It was more elaborate, and was in a famous show called Luminous Image. It was a very important show of 22 installation-works in the Stedelijk Museum of Modern Art in Amsterdam. Many of the works were all specially made for that show.

ES: Regarding the concepts in your work, you've mentioned memory as being quite an important one, but there's also place and history and association. Is that fair to say?

MH: Yes, but in the beginning, there was also the structure of the video image, the line. The line in the image was very important, and we made works like *On Boundaries*, using that line.

ES: You also made a piece called *Magnetic North* using magnets.

MH: Yes. That's right. Elsa was born in Scotland, and partly educated there. But, she was very attracted to the North. She liked it very much. So, we made a number of works. All of that work used the 60th latitude around the Earth. So, we made special works in Stockholm in Sweden, and Bergin in Norway. We were in Shetland and in Finland. We made a number of works on location. We were closer then to performers. We started to make more and more works just for one evening and we were beginning to have more of an active role in the work. What made a big change in the work was always the first day in the gallery. It was about 1980 when we first started to make these types of pieces and we made *Magnetic North* in Umeå, in the far North of Sweden, in 1982. For artists working with video, De Appel Foundation in Amsterdam had an exchange with Franklin Furnace in New York. So about 10 artists went to New York. We went and made a piece in the Kitchen using our own breathing. That was also for one evening. The work what was called *Video Void*. It was work that we actually made in Wapping when we had our studio there. It was a very inspiring time near the river. We used the Wapping-Rotherhithe Tunnel through the Themes. Actually, Elsa walked thought the tunnel and that made the soundtrack for the piece. There are huge ventilators in that tunnel. It takes 20 minutes to walk through the tunnel. It only has a small path and all the cars drive right next to it. That is an interesting work I think. Often we made work, which at first might be a single-channel work, but then we would make different variations on it, which might become installations. Sometimes we used to change the title as well. In the Kitchen we rented two huge, industrial ventilators.

We also had a live camera on a stick, which we turned around. It was a kind of pre-Wind piece. We created wind through the ventilators. In the space, the camera was moving and the people were sitting around and we were part of that installation as well. It was quite exiting being able to run the huge ventilators on Canal Street for a night. All the electricity blew in the Kitchen.

ES: The other interesting thing about your work is that while moving image was creeping into the gallery context, you took video and the monitor outside. You seemed to take it beyond the gallery to lots of site-specific environments, like *The Wind* pieces, which were constructions. They were outside in nature. With *Video Void* however, you created an artificial wind. It seems like you brought nature back inside into the gallery.

MH: Yes, it is certainly true. It is also interesting with the work we developed in the 1990's. We made a number of pieces for the public space but not always with video. It came quite naturally because we wanted to bring it outside. In 2000 we used video with projection, but outside in specific places for a short duration with those possibilities. I think we always liked having the work in the context of the museum or art gallery, but we also tried to take it outside, so that just a passer-by could experience it. We started to make those works in the beginning of the 90's. There were possibilities to do with financing, in making sculptures for a public space. So, we proposed at first, on art channel in the Netherlands, which doesn't exist anymore unfortunately, that we were going to make a video art piece and that because it was on cable television, it was a public artwork. So we asked them to give us their money to make it. So they thought about how that could be. It was only temporary and they only had the tape. They didn't really have the artwork. They gave us the commission but then they said they would like to have something else, which one can see. So, we made some large colour photographic transparencies from the tape and so they had something they could show. Later on other artists got commissions like that also, but it was an exciting idea to use the cablecast as a public venue instead of only a museum or art gallery.

ES: Going back to the lines in video. What was it that attracted you to that? Did you see that as an imagistic quality or did you see it as a kind of material?

MH: We were quite influenced by painters in those days, people like Agnes Martin who were also working with lines. I actually met Agnes Martin several times in New Mexico. I think she was one of the most important women painters. Also, Elsa directed a lot of the images for Bridget Riley. She became a good friend of hers and so she was quite influential. Bridget Riley had a big show in the Hayward and on 35 mm she directed a Bridget Riley retrospective more or less. She made all the images, which was later used for a film about Bridget Riley. We were also quite well connected. Elsa had been an assistant to John Latham when she was very young before she even went to Ealing. She still has some of his book-work. Elsa was also part of Arts Lab. This was before I worked with her. She programmed the cinema of the Arts Lab. She was very much involved with that. She knew all the people who ran the first video scene and was very involved in that scene in the 60's in London. She knew a lot of those artists, so to go back to your question, we were also influenced, I think, by what was happening in the art world. People were busy

with those connections. With working with lines, you could make a clear reference from what was happening then in painting and conceptual work in the seventies.

ES: Was the technological process of making video important in your work?

MH: Yes, to be able to work with open reel and portable equipment was really quite exciting, although it was rather heavy if you compare it to nowadays, and the batteries were often flat. The equipment wasn't so great, but later on, we were able to get our own equipment on open-reel with funding from the Netherlands. I remember once, we borrowed a camera from the Arts Council. You had to be very careful with that type of camera, because you couldn't look at the Sun or a bright light with it. But so it was. We did make a big black mark on it. We were very worried, but you learn with those things. We were able to make our own images and edit ourselves though and we were making photographs from the video. Coming from an artist's background, scale was very important. If you make a work nowadays, artists will probably want to project it. They will make work for projection. I give workshops on video installation and often the students don't think about why they make the image big. It makes an obvious difference. You have to really think about how you film something. Scale was very important in our work. If you compare having the work on a small monitor to having it on a bigger one, the work looks rather different. So, we often used that as a way of preparing our work. We used the frame of the monitor as part of the work. It was like recycling it more or less. You make the work. You show it on the monitor, maybe on a big one and a small one and then you record it again. By recording it again, you see the structure of your video image. The frame and scale of the same image becomes different. It looks different. Using the possibilities of the monitor, how you tune a monitor, you can have the same image. In *Sea of Light* we had one tape, but because we used the ebb and flat of the sea, we made 4 different spaces or environments using the cycle of the sea. We used the same videotape but we tuned every monitor differently, so one was very dark, you could barely see the image. It was really using the medium. With the video image, if you suddenly got a white sea coming in, the video monitor really didn't know how to handle it. We used the lumens. We didn't try to turn it down or change it. We saw it as though the video image was breathing. So we had the same image but we then tuned every monitor differently. It added other possibilities to the use of the monitor in that way. In *Split Seconds*, from 1979, which is also an important work, we had made recordings of somebody splitting a tree trunk. Then, by having a monitor with the same images and placing in front of it a small monitor with the same image it looks like you split the monitor in two. It is actually a comment on television. Some people thought that it was illustration, but actually the whole idea was that we showed the work like that. We often used photographs around us as a little installation. Because it goes so quickly when it splits that you can't see the moment it actually splits. The eye thinks it sees it. If you take one photographic frame out, you see something, but the eye cannot really see it. So that work was very much to do with perception. We have done a lot of work using still images in combination with the moving images.

ES: How has video evolved as a medium for your artistic practice? You were working with the black-and-white imagery and then video become colour later on. How has that affected your practice?

MH: We used colour a lot. The second work we made with colour was called *Flying Time*. The work was shown as part of the Sidney Biennale, a big exhibition in Australia. We were representing the Netherlands at that time. So, we took our Portapak with us. In order to do that, we had to buy two Samsonite suitcases. One was the Portapak, and the other was for the camera. They were very difficult to carry with the equipment in them, so it was quite an event getting them there. We had bought our first colour camera and we used colour particularly in *Flying Time*. The piece consisted of two images. It had been an installation and was later shown at the Tate as well. In the work, you see the shadow of a woman on a beach. Actually, the shadow is of myself. I was shooting the material. Then the wave comes in. The shadow is very, very blue. We made it so blue, that it wasn't then real. We used the colour in that way to see the waves coming in. The other image is from the sea. All the animals were shot in an aquarium. So, we used this image in an installation and the stills were part of it. Later we made a single tape version and we used editing for the first time. It was interesting because you couldn't do that before. We had the two tapes. I think they were both 8 minutes. The main tape was the shadow of the woman and after that and on the other tape was of course the images of the undersea world with the animals. So we were just editing by chopping into the edit. That was how we made that work; because that was the only way you could do it. You couldn't take a little bit like here and then take a little bit like there. If you started with two tapes the same length you could create the idea that the sea was still there under the image of the women at the seashore. So, it was an interesting way of doing it.

ES: Were there any other techniques that you discovered through video that appealed to you?

MH: I think we have worked with about 15 different formats in our video lives. Of course it changes very much according to whether you have a small camera or not. Your work would be very different from having to carry a big Portapak. Elsa used to make a lot of sound work. She had a big machine for audio. With that, you find your shoulders in all sorts of positions. Now of course, with digital, the machines are very little. I think you can make different images and different sounds because of that. Of course now, you can work with non-linear. That's amazing. We made non-linear DVD works using the shuffle method on the DVD. We were always trying to use the possibilities, which very few people would actually use. The work was actually shown here at the Visual Research Centre in Dundee Contemporary Arts in 2004. It was the last show that Elsa and I had together. The work was called *Day for Night*. We used techniques like that. We were always trying to explore the possibilities with what the techniques could give us, but then using it in a creative way.

ES: Being an artist working in the Netherlands and working in Britain, did you find any notable differences in terms of opportunities or attitudes towards video as a medium?

MH: Yes. We had more opportunities in Britain. Of course Elsa was British and I'm Dutch, but there weren't many artists working together anyway. That was very unusual. So, in the beginning we had an artists' name. We called ourselves White Bird but people couldn't understand it. They would ask us if we were a company. But then we just began working under our own names. In the beginning, we used our whole names, but later on we just used 'Hooykaas-Stansfield' or 'Stansfield-Hooykaas' depending where we were. We

mostly got our works financed. If a gallery would ask us, we generally said that we needed some materials and that we needed some money to make the work, plus a small honorarium. That was the way we started to work. Elsa would be working in Industry making soundtracks or working on a commercial and I did some photography works to earn some money as well. From the Polaroid work, I started to make silk-screens and I sold those also. Then I think, more or less for every project, we tried to get finances. That obviously helped a lot because we could get the equipment. We worked at Fantasy Factory and the prices there were very reasonable. Sometimes we had projects in the Netherlands or we were working in other countries like Belgium. We had an important show in Antwerp. The gallery had their own equipment there, but generally it was very difficult to find the equipment for each show. You had to really look all over the place and you couldn't really rent it commercially, it was far too expensive. But, some art galleries had some equipment or you had to try and borrow it. At first we were using U-matic players. What made them completely different was that you could loop the material, but it was open reel so somebody had to actually physically be there to do that. So the funding came project by project. But, it was quite hard to survive as an artist. We had an opportunity when Elsa got a grant from Maidstone College of Art where David Hall was. She got the first video bursary to use the facilities there. I'm sure that some of the tapes we made during that bursary will be at what is left of Maidstone, given that it doesn't exist anymore. *Running Time* was partly done there as well. It was mainly in the editing. We used the editing facilities there. Generally, we were still commuting between the Netherlands and London, and then we got a call from De Appel Foundation. De Appel Foundation, which started in 1975 in the Netherlands, did a lot with video and video performances. It was well known internationally. The Jan Van Eyck Academy, in Maastricht in the south of the Netherlands, wanted to start a post-graduate school and they wanted to use video and audio. So, they approached people from De Appel Foundation because they were the few people who were actively promoting artists working with video. They asked who could possibly be head of their department and so they proposed Elsa and she went there for an interview. They still had to set it up, so it was a big job. It was a full-time position as well. She started in December 1980, but we were in New York for her first month of employment. We were there because we were doing the exchange project with De Appel Foundation and Franklin Furnace, when we showed in the Kitchen. Elsa decided that she would try it for a year to start with, but and she had already called the department 'Time-Based Art'. In March 1981, she organised a show called *Video Manifestation*. She had several tapes to establish the video department and also had the students' work. At that time they didn't call them students because they had already finished their art college undergraduate degrees. So, they were more like participants showing their first works. She invited several people from Britain to show including Mick Hartney and other people from Germany. It was mainly people we knew from our travels who we thought had interesting work. There was somebody I got from Poland as well. That's how it started and she soon accepted the full time job. It was a five-year contract and she moved from London to Maastricht and had a house there. I was living in Amsterdam, that established us more in the Netherlands, but we had already started to do lots of projects internationally by then.

ES: How did you get into working on the international scene?

MH: I had already lived already in other countries, so I had a lot of contacts. Then through De Appel Foundation, people rented our work and we were invited for Biennales. So, for example, we went to Sidney, Australia for nearly 3 weeks to make a new work. I had been in Japan earlier and hadn't been back, so I suggested that since we had the opportunity to go to Australia, maybe we could go via Japan. But that wasn't possible and because the tickets were paid for by the Dutch government. But, when we were there in Australia, we met some Japanese artists who had their own exhibition space. They invited us to go to Japan the year after, in 1983. That was the start of another very important series of work called, *From the Museum of Memory*. We made seven important installations; two of those installations are in the collection of the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam. *Museum of Memory 1* was very much influenced by the visit to Hiroshima and the connection of the monitor sending out electro-magnetic radiation. The work of course suggested the atomic bomb, but it also inferred the combination of that with the beginnings of television in 1945. With *Museum of Memory*, we took the monitor out of its case and put it in a vitrine. It was in a glass case like in a museum. The work has been shown several times in different locations. We made another piece for that called *Shadow Pictures*. A shadow picture is another word for an ex-ray. It came from an idea to do with people just disappearing when the explosion from the atomic bomb hit them, but their shadows were burned onto stone. It's very powerful image. Stone became as sensitive as paper. That influenced us a lot.

ES: Yes it's using the trace of existence.

MH: It's using traces, yes. Elsa was born in 1945, so she also felt related to it. I was born in 1942, so I experienced a bit of the War, but 1945 was important to the work.

ES: So when you were travelling through De Appel Foundation, was that through scholarships or funds? Was it through them that you first started to travel?

MH: The first trip we did to the States in 1976 was as an exchange. We went with our films and showed in the festivals there. That's how it started but obviously it was a very important visit in the art context. It was important to go to New York with De Appel Foundation because that's where we met people from the Museum of Modern Art who invited us later in 1988 to do a piece there. So it goes from one thing to another and when we were in New York, we were asked to show in Canada, in Halifax. There was a centre for artists' video there, so we were invited. Of course through De Appel Foundation, we also met a lot of artists who came from the States or from Canada to the Netherlands.

ES: So how did you get involved with LVA?

MH: That was through Hoppy and Fantasy Factory. It was through people we knew in London that we got involved. We did a piece in the AIR Gallery on Shaftsbury Avenue and we were part of some kind of group shows in Biddick Farm. We knew several of the artists such as David Critchley, Mick Hartney, Steve Partridge and Tamara Kirkorian. We also knew David Hall of course.

ES: Did you feel part of the community in Britain with these other artists, while you were based in London?

MH: Yes, far more in London at that time than in we did in the Netherlands because there wasn't anything. In 1982, in fact, Elsa and I were some of the founding members of the Association of Video Artists in the Netherlands. I was president of that for 4 years when it started. It later became Time-based Arts, which existed until 1993. Then it became Montevideo Time-based Arts, when it and Montevideo merged together. So I was a founding member and president of that for 4 years. At that time also, at the Jan Van Eyck Academy, there were a lot of international participants so they often showed at Time-Based Art in Amsterdam and so made that connection. Of course Elsa invited lots of other artists to talk about their work in Maastricht. She also invited John Latham for example. He would come to Maastricht and also show in Amsterdam at Time-based Art. Those combinations were made so we used all the connections we had. Also, Elsa travelled. So she would invite people like Joan Jonas or Ulrike Rosenbach to Maastricht for a month. It was not particularly because they were woman artists but because we knew each other through other shows. We were quite often representing the Netherlands in the 1980's more than Britain. But Britain changed enormously. Elsa left Britain when Margaret Thatcher came in. The whole atmosphere changed enormously in Britain. We continued to do some other pieces in Liverpool at the Tate because we knew some people from there. We knew Eddie Berg. So we kept in contact with some of the people in Britain, but the opportunities were much less in the 80's. That was the early 90s though.

ES: It's interesting talking about the international perspective during the 70's and 80's, because for artists in Britain, certainly for David Hall, who as a sculptor was recognised as an international artist, but then when he moved to video, he found the attitude from the art institutions very difficult. They didn't really seem to get video, or understand or appreciate his work in the same way that they did when he was a sculptor. Talking to you as an international artist, it seems that the institutions seemed to appreciate video more outside of Britain.

MH: That was true of organisations like Time-Based Art. They started to organise shows in Switzerland for example. But, we always referred to ourselves as Artists Living in the Netherlands, because it was always very international in the Netherlands. I don't feel so Dutch because I have always worked with non-Dutch artists, but I am always part of that community of people who all gather in Amsterdam. I might even be the only Dutch person around. . It is also a bit strange that we got our first retrospective of videotapes in Montreal. That was in 1988. Recently as well, after Elsa Stansfield died, they gave us a retrospective of more recent works and people wrote extensively about our work in Montreal. Just last year, I finished another piece that I started with Elsa. When Elsa died there were six projects we were working on. I have now realised four of them. One of the big projects was with another artist from Montreal. There was a great interest in Montreal in our work, probably because the art scene in Montreal is very advanced. I think our work has a big appeal because it is European but we are using the technology in a North American way. What made a difference was that I also speak fluent French, and Elsa also spoke very good French. Being able to communicate with people made a big difference. We made a number of pieces there and I also taught in a university course there, and so things like that develop.

ES: What critical feedback or public attention did your work attract?

MH: I think what was of major importance was the Luminous Image show. Elsa got very involved in that because she organised a symposium in the Jan van Eyck Academy with all the artists who were there, including some of the critics. There were 22 artists there. Elsa actually suggested that David Hall wrote in the catalogue, also because in Holland people hadn't really heard of him. Having had the bursary in Maidstone she knew him rather well. So that symposium was rather important. Everybody was around in those days. For the first time there was a European show with many installations making clear what a video installation is or video sculpture is. So, we were actually very happy to participate in that. It was also the first time that the Stedelijk Museum actually got funding for a new piece. Nowadays of course the museums and galleries get very much involved in finding the money for big films even like the museums that have helped Barbara Gladstone make her productions. But, in 1984 that was very unusual. They also produced the catalogue. For the first time there was a very big catalogue, but there was also a U-matic tape with all artist interviews on it. On the roof of the museum was that our wind sculpture. I think Elsa was interviewed in the space, but I was interviewed on top of the roof. We were the only two artists who worked together in that show. In 1989, we made a work here in Scotland, in Edinburgh called *Intercom Island*. We had a stone TV on top of Calton Hill in Edinburgh and we had another in the space in the Abbey. It was part of a group show during the festival. The stone TV had an antenna and phosphorescent paint on it. It was like when you switch off a monitor and you see the phosphorescent material. We have used that a lot in our work also because it's part of a monitor. It's light phosphor. So, in the Abbey we had another stone TV with an antenna and a phosphorus screen. They were 5 miles apart but they related to each other. We also had a speaker cone as a kind of sculpture with silver leaf on it. In the room, we opened the window and you heard the sea and the seagulls and many people thought that the sound came from the speaker. But there was no electricity used in *Intercom Island*. So in that way, we were using those very sculptural elements, but actually using materials. Later on in our work, we used a lot of copper and electromagnetic radiation. We made a work called a *Field Free Space*. It is a huge Faraday Cage placed very close to high electricity poles so when you are inside that space, you feel different. You feel different because you are in a copper space. All the elements we use come from video. Without magnetic particles you wouldn't have videotape, but if you can destroy a tape with a magnet. That is the great difference with the film and you can still look and say, "This is my image". With video it's totally immaterial. When projection started video came closer to film. The young students I have always talk about film despite making video. They have no idea. They think it's the same. We had all these symposiums in the 1980's about the difference between film and video. We had endless discussions about it. But it's changing over now. That's what they think now.

ES: Something that's fascinating about your work is that you have this very substantial usage of physical materials, like the stone and the copper, set against the moving image part of it, which seems immaterial and ethereal. Yet the texture of the image seems to have a material quality. Were there any particular contextual, critical writings about your work that you felt were important?

MH: The articles in the catalogues have been important, especially the text by Josine van Droffelaar in the *Audio Video Installations* catalogue. She was one of the people who worked also at De Appel Foundation. I was just reading it again recently, and I think it's very much still true of the way we were working, even nowadays. But in the Netherlands we don't really have any very critical art magazines unfortunately. Because it's such a small country, they always seem to think what is outside is better. It was like when we had our first show in the Whitechapel or in the Museum of Modern Art, then they would say, "Oh, we think this is probably important. They should have a show in the Netherlands". That's when we got our first show in De Appel. It was because we showed somewhere else first. But over the years there has been quite a lot written about our work, very much so in Canada, in Quebec, but mainly in French. A recent article has published about our work in a magazine with colour photos, but again, it is from outside the Netherlands where we have more feedback. There is also a gallery in Bremen in northern Germany, which has published three catalogues of our work. They gave us a big show in a very large old shirt factory. It was not that that gallery had a particular interest in video artists. It was more based on the content of the work. The content would interest the gallerists rather than the medium. I think it is quite different in Britain. Because we are recognised as video pioneers in the Netherlands, they asked us our opinion about the funding of video pieces. I don't know if it is better, but we have always believed that video should be recognised as an artists' tool like in it is in Canada, particularly Quebec, where there is separate funding for film and video. We had been associated with traditional filmmaking and documentaries, which have completely different budgets and ways of working from artists' video. We wanted to be funded or to have a grant in a way that said, "OK, you've got so much money, now make a work or several works". Because some of the works are very conceptual, you cannot say like with a film production that your budget will cover 10 days shooting with a crew. As an artist, you don't work that way. We often got our original material during our travels. We were artists in residence quite early on. Now, it's a bit fashionable. Everybody has their artists in residences, but we were being asked to come and work in places quite early on in our careers. We always made recordings, but they would not always be produced as a work. Part of our policy was that we wanted maybe three months of a year as what we called "R&R". It was for research and reflection. It was so we could have some time, not to constantly produce or make exhibitions, but have time to do research in a new medium or something non-technical. Maybe we would read about Faraday and what he did or about Bell or Tesla or the ideas of Marconi. There is often a reference to scientific procedures in our work. It's often to do with perception. They were very creative people who were working with new possibilities. It was interesting to be working as artists like that. So, those three months of "R&R" were often when we were artist in residence or if we had sold a piece. Then we would maybe take a trip. So, it was our second trip in 1984 when we went to Japan again. We partly financed it because we had sold a piece to a museum.

ES: You mentioned earlier that you were a founding member of the Association of Video Artists in the Netherlands, which later came to be known as Time Based Arts. Can you expand a little on how that came about?

MH: At first, we wanted to create an association, which was the Association of Video Makers in the Netherlands. Then, because we wanted to get funding, we needed to become a Foundation. So, we called it, the Foundation Time-based Arts. Time Based Art was a new

term in the Netherlands, but actually I think the term was invented by David Hall, because video is very much time related media. But, by calling it Time Based Art, we were not only talking about video. We were talking about audio and we were talking about performance. So, it was an expansion from being just about video. We always wanted to have it in a larger context. So it became not just about what the medium was, but what the medium could do. Because it was time related, there were some film artists there as well.

ES: Were you aware of any writing during the 70's and 80's addressing the concepts of time-based art?

MH: There was not very much. There was a little bit written because it was a new medium and there were questions as to whether it was art or not. But there was not very much written to any depth. In the 80's there was more because important shows were happening internationally. Museums were beginning to accept it as a medium. We had the first exhibition in the Stedelijk Museum when they started a video space. It was called "The Video Stairs". We had the first exhibition. They thought they could put video in the cellar, like Museum of Modern Art, which had a video space in the cellar. They always thought video had to be in the dark, but of course, we didn't want our work to be in the dark because we used other media. So, the idea became one, which would have people sitting on the stairs and have some monitors there. It was ok because the Stedelijk had done their bit, but we also used other spaces around it. We made *Two Sides of a Story* using also live video and monitors in there. We were using the screen of the monitor as a sculptural material. The screens for those monitors weren't flat. They were rounded. So, we were placing them very close to each other and were using the reflections from the monitors. You would normally have a lot of reflection, and if you have reflection, you can't see the image. But, if you put monitors standing face to face, you can actually use the image. You can see the reflection from the one video image on the other screen. So, that was very much so using the material properties of the screen rather than saying "Isn't that terrible? It's not straight, it's round and it causes reflections". We were using it as part of a new piece. People could place their heads in between and look at each screen from each side. If you looked from the other side, it would look different. So they wrote about that work, but that was also because it was the first exhibition in that space. It was in 1984. They also wrote about our work in the Dutch equivalent of The Times Newspaper, but it was still a questioning of whether it was really art or not. They never went into the content. It had started because we were the few who were using live video in combination with pre-recorded video. It is something, which still interests us. I still talk in the plural and continue to use our name Hooykaas / Stansfield, because all the reflections and thoughts of Elsa are still in the work.

ES: It's interesting that they were still talking about the medium and not necessarily the content. Were there terms being thrown around at the time as to how one might describe your approach to video? You mentioned referring to it as 'video sculpture'?

MH: Yes, we started to call it video sculpture in the 80's. We felt that 'installation' was such a strange word. If you talked to other people they ask if you were a plumber or something. We used the word 'environments' in the 70 because we created whole spaces, using all kinds of things. It was not just putting a monitor somewhere. We were very considerate as

to where we put it, how we put it, how the light was and how we would put the photographs with it. It is something that nowadays maybe a curator would do. We were doing all that, so we called it 'an environment'. At first, they were 'video environments', but then the work became, in our case, sculpture. We made a large satellite dish of copper, which could stand on a tripod with a monitor in the middle. As though it was sending and receiving signals. It could stand wherever, like now, where you can see all these big satellites all around. So, that was more a sculpture that you could walk around. There was no sound with it. It was just a video image, so it was very much a video sculpture. If it was something site-specific then I think that is more an installation, but anybody could place that work without the artist. Otherwise, Installation instructions were very complex because if you want to use a space, somebody else could do it, but it wouldn't be the same as the artists installing it. I think that is where the word 'installation' comes from. It is when the artists install it themselves and not a curator or a gallery assistant or whatever.

ES: We were you aware of other artists working in a similar way?

MH: Early on, we were quite good friends of Nam June Paik and his wife, Shigeko Kubota. We actually made a piece for De Appel, which was quite a different piece. It was called *Vi Deo Volente*. We made it in 1985. I showed it again last year in De Appel and I dedicated it to Elsa and to Nam June Paik who had also died. It referred to the history of Paik's video when he made his first images of the Pope arriving in New York, which he then showed in Café à Go-Go. In 1985 the Pope was visiting the Netherlands and we thought we would use the opportunity. We tried to get it on cable television and it didn't work out, but then we met with De Appel and we started to make a site-specific work. De Appel produced the tape, but it was not shown in their gallery. We worked with them, but we used a space, which is now a café in the middle of Amsterdam, where you could look down on to the crowds. The images of crowds that Paik made for his work were taken from a taxi if I remember. We used a live vision of the Pope arriving in the Netherlands. We turned the television towards the wall, so that you saw the reflection of the Pope kissing the ground. Then we made a tape called *Vi Deo Volente*, using the word 'Deo', which means God. Deo Volente means 'as God wants'. So using 'Vi Deo Volente' as the title, we made quite an interesting videotape referring to Paik and other video pieces like Jan Dibbets' *TV as a Fireplace*. So, we used different references to pieces by Paik and other people. We also had a lot of contact with Bill Viola. The content of our work is close to his, because we worked more and more in spiritual directions. I mentioned earlier that I was in a Zen Buddhist monastery. I became a Buddhist and Elsa also got very interested in Buddhism. We travelled extensively in Buddhist countries in the 80's, starting with Japan in 1983, Thailand in 1984, and in 1986 we went to Burma and Nepal. We were shooting images, but most of the time the work was not really about the exotica of those locations, but more the content and philosophy of the Buddhist way of thinking. There is a Buddhist Broadcasting Foundation in the Netherlands, which is unique in the world and recently we made two, 30-minute television works for it. The second piece is called *Revision* and Elsa died when we were in the middle of making it. I finished the work and it's dedicated to her but they were both really art works made for television. The first piece is called *Deep Looking*. It's very much about perception but in a Buddhist way. That was a very unique opportunity to make a work for television and 75,000 – 100,000 people saw the work. I was invited to represent the Netherlands in South Korea in 2005 and I took *Deep Looking*.

I made an installation version of it for the show. So, in that way you can see it not as a television work, it can also be shown in an art context.

ES: Has it ever been necessary to compromise your work because of exhibition opportunities or lack of opportunities?

MH: We were very, very against compromising. It's amazing with young artists now when they are invited for shows and they just accept whatever conditions or whatever context they are given. Maybe it is because of our background, or maybe it was because we were two women working together, people often thought our work was feminist work. The content however, is totally non-feminist. We were invited to participate in feminist shows several times, and we always said that we didn't want to be part of it because of its political context. Our work is not part of that. We were two women working together but it had nothing to do with the feministic point of view. They didn't often like it that we refused. They couldn't really understand it. There was another occasion when we heard that a show was being sponsored by Peter Stuyvesant Tobacco. We didn't want to participate because of that. Nowadays young artists have shows sponsored by Shell or Deutsch Bank or whatever. It doesn't matter to them. They don't think about it so much. They just want to have the opportunity to show. I can understand that, but I think the context of one's work is extremely important. Of course sometimes we made mistakes when accepting shows. I remember once, we were invited for a show while we were artists in residence in Spain. Somebody else was in my house and we got an invitation to go Berlin. In the 1980's we did a lot of work in Berlin. West Berlin had a very exciting atmosphere. Then, after the Wall came down, we were chosen from the Netherlands for a show. They had already asked the Mondrian Foundation to pay for our travel. We hadn't even said yes or no. We came back from Spain and found that we had a show in two or three month's time. Of course we didn't like it that this had happened. People think of a group show and they use your name to get money and you have no idea about it. It's not right. Anyway, we said ok, and we went to Berlin to see how it was. It was in an old station, which was actually quite an exciting space, but it turned out to be a mistake because it was badly organised and there were not many other good artists. We knew one or two of the other artists, but the show as a whole, as a group show, didn't work. But, you can't always tell that in advance. I miss it a lot now, but after we had a show, Elsa and I would discuss how it went. To be honest if this show hadn't been in Berlin, we wouldn't have done it. It was just nice to go to Berlin and see the rest of the art scene and talk to other artists we knew. But, it really wasn't such a good show. That happens however.

ES: Were there any specific facilitators or curators who were important to the exhibition of your work?

MH: Yes, the people of De Appel Foundation were important for us. Unfortunately they died in an airplane crash in 1983. We made quite an important work called *The Force Behind This Movement*, which we dedicated to them. Josine van Droffelaar who wrote in the *Audio Video Installations* catalogue, learnt to fly an airplane and we flew with them one week before that airplane crashed. We made images in Norway together. They became good friends of ours. Another important curator for our work was Dorine Mignot, from the Stedelijk Museum who gave us our first show there in 1981. She also showed us as part

of the Luminous Image show in 1984. Then she showed us in 1986 and again 1995. So she was quite an important person. At that time of course, there were no specific film and video curators. She was a curator for painting and sculpture. Nowadays in museums there are very specific curators in that way, and she was quite important for us. Because of that, some other shows came up, and we were selected to represent the Netherlands in shows. So we've done some interesting exhibitions and met many people in that way.

SP: Were there any ideas beyond video that influenced your work, for example music?

MH: A video artist who certainly influenced us was Nam June Paik, who was a personal friend. Elsa was quite inspired by David Hall and so indirectly I was too. Having been in Maidstone and seeing the other people in the 70's from the British video scene, we felt quite related to that as well. Because we were showing our work in places like Third Eye Centre, Chapter Arts Centre or at Biddick Farm, we felt part of that scene. In London, we were part of the Space Studios. There were 55 artists in that building. They weren't particularly video artists but we related to the other artists and their work. It was mostly with people who worked in a sculptural way. Regarding music, when we used the line pattern from video, meaning the structure of the video image, we were very much influenced by people like Terry Riley and Philip Glass. It also related to painters who were also inspired by those composers, such as Agnes Martin and Bridget Riley, who was also personal friend of Elsa's. Our work certainly felt related to some of the work, which she did. You can find the inspiration from minimalist painting and music in our video work.

SP: You mentioned that Elsa make a film on Bridget Riley?

MH: Yes, she made a film about Space Studios. The material was all shot by other artists on video, and they wanted to make a little film about Space Studios as an idea. At the time, Bridget was on the board of Space Studios and that's how they met. Then when Brigit had her retrospective she said, "Well I should really put it all on film" and so Elsa organised all that. She directed it more or less. It was all shot on 35mm film, which was later used for a film about Bridget.

SP: Did you collaborate with other artists on any of your projects over the years?

MH: Yes, we worked with several other composers, like Delia Derbyshire who I mentioned earlier. We worked with Luis Andrews, and Frances-Marie Uitti, who is somebody who plays the violoncello. We made a piece recently, which Elsa and I started, but I finished later with another artist in Montreal called Chantal duPont. We made a very large piece. Once or twice, we made work with other artists, but that was more during the period when we made performances at the beginning of the 80's. It was when we were making works for short durations over just one evening or one moment. Often we were part of that work so it was not pure performance work, it was more installation in combination with performance.

SP: Could you talk about the residences that you've undertaken, because you've done an extraordinary number?

MH: Yes, that's right. We started doing residences before it became quite fashionable to do them. One of the first residencies we did was near San Francisco. The residency was mainly for artists from America, but once a year they would ask European artists. That was through the curator of a museum who proposed us.

SP: What year was that?

MH: That was in 1989.

SP: Years before that though, you did a residency at Maidstone?

MH: There was Maidstone of course. You could call that a residency I suppose. But this was more to art centres and we've done several. We've done them in Ireland and in Banff in Canada and all over the place including here in Dundee.

SP: So that's been quite important?

MH: Very important because that was the time when we didn't have the restraint of all the other things. Nowadays of course with email and mobile phones you always seem to be connected to your base. But often the residencies were to get away from everything and have new inspiration and the possibility of meeting other people. It was also for the possibilities that you wouldn't have at home, to be able to really work for a long time on a project or sometimes just you wouldn't have any facilities like they had there. Sometimes it was just to be able to make new images in a certain place of nature. Sometimes it was for the periods of research and reflection. It was about being away from everything and just concentrating on a special project without producing. So you might reflect on what you are doing or be able to read some books. Residences were always a big inspiration.

SP: I suspect they might become fashionable again, in the sense of being not connected. I was at a conference last year and one of the speakers talked about the importance of being not connected. I am sure you have come across situations where a new person enters your environment or something like that, and the first thing they do is they go online, so they are ignoring all of the experiences and new things that are there. I think there are a lot of people now thinking about that, thinking about pulling the plug. Quite a lot of the people that we've spoken to have worked closely with other people and sometimes they were in a position of facilitating other people, not just through teaching. Have you been in a position of facilitating?

MH: When Elsa was at the Jan van Eyck Academy, she wasn't really seen as a teacher because they weren't seen as students. They were seen as participants because it was post-graduate. So Elsa helped a lot of people in that way. She gave them possibilities to edit there or to do things like that. She started officially in December 1980 and she left in 1991-'92. She did one year while she was still living in London and then she moved to Maastricht. She did a contract of 5 years that was still a full-time job but then they wanted her to stay on although she only did it for 2 days a week. She got much less salary, but she had more or less the same amount of work. It wasn't such a good idea. Then in 1991 they changed the whole Academy. Originally it was just for art, but then it became art,

design and theory. They got a different director and the whole thing changed. By then of course, it wasn't really necessary to have a separate video department because video was integrated. So Elsa then saw her role as not so important anymore but she wanted to do more of her own work anyway.

SP: I often resented the notion of experimental and new in the early days, which you still get now with new media. I feel I need to ask when will this stuff will stop be called 'new' or 'experimental'. When video became 'old', I saw that as a release. I saw it as a freedom. Do you share those feelings?

MH: Yes, when video became very common and you saw it everywhere in documentary form, you had to spend at least a week to see everything. People have asked us as video pioneers, did it help us to show our work now. Actually, it was to the contrary, because everybody was doing video. Some of the pieces weren't very interesting at all. In photography, you could see the same movement. Everybody can make a video. Everybody can write. Everybody can do everything. All the artists were doing everything. They were curating. They were writing. They were making art. So, everybody began multitasking. Nowadays if you see someone's CV, they are doing at least 6 or 7 things. There is less separation. There is less specialisation because everybody says, "I can do everything. I can make web design, I can make such and such". In one sense this is a disadvantage, on the other sense maybe it's now far more about content than it is about the form.

SP: Let's talk a bit about your current work and works in progress. You said you were finishing off quite a lot of works?

MH: Yes, when Elsa died we still had 6 projects going. With the film, which we made for the Buddhist Broadcast Corporation, Elsa wanted to edit it in the hospital. She was very keen on it, so it was the first work I tried to finish. The way we work is that we don't really script the whole thing in advance. We have an idea of how we might make a design or how we make a tape, but because of the circumstances I think it changed a little bit with the way I edited it. So, it was obviously quite complex work to finish. But I knew Elsa would want very much for me to finish it. Since the beginning of the 90s, we also made a number of sculptures for the public space outside, which were very site specific. The piece we made, which we started here in Dundee called *Day for Night*, we actually showed for the first time in a Botanical garden in Montreal. It was very specific. It consisted of a round screen hanging from a tree. It related to the memory of the tree and a memory of cinema. We then made another version of that work. We changed it and showed it at Vondelpark in Amsterdam next to the Film Museum. This version also had the screen, but a different soundtrack. The soundtrack related to the space. It related to the place where you showed it. The sounds in Botanical garden in Montréal are different from the sounds in a park in the Netherlands. So, we would change those details. Later on we showed it in Dundee, but this time it was inside. So, it became different again. But, we had also made sculptures. We made quite an important sculpture, which is on the seaside in Wijk aan Zee, in the Netherlands. The form is like a satellite dish. You walk up some steps and sit in the focus of the dish, which points towards the sea. Because of the form, you sit there and you hear the sounds from far away. It's a very meditative piece because only you can

listen to the sounds if you are quiet. The sounds are always different because it's a natural sound. So it's a sound piece without any technology but using the scientific form. It's actually quite a popular artwork. It's still there. It's about 40 minutes from Amsterdam on the coast. It also relates to other works, which we made using satellite dishes, like *Echo... from the Personal Observatory* and other works like that. We have also made a number of works with wind and light. Wind has always been a very big inspiration for our work. We made a work with LED lights, where the lights would change according to the wind's direction and the strength of the wind, the blow force of the wind. The work was for the Ministry of Cultural Affairs and Education in the Netherlands. It's the largest, highest building in The Hague and it has a wind sensor machine on that. So it was using all those possibilities. We made about 7 or 8 works for the public space, which are mostly related to technical possibilities but with animated images or animated lights. So, in that way, it is also very much related to the moving image.

SP: So why is wind a theme that runs through your work?

MH: I think it is to do with the location in the Netherlands, but we also liked the fact that it is unpredictable. It's like with that piece which we put on the roof of the Stedelijk Museum. You never know from which way the wind will come. So the work was partly of pre-recorded images, which are already decided, but with that is the unpredictability, which makes it very exciting, even for the artist because you don't know what will happen. For the viewer, it is interesting because the work is always different. So nature was influencing the work. I think that is very exciting and it makes it very lively. It makes the people also aware of which direction the wind is coming from and how strong it is. In a city, you often don't know that. You don't remember or you don't really know the direction. You don't know which way is North, which way is South, or when the full moon is. People are not so much in touch with that. But, if you incorporate it in an artwork, then people can become more aware of it again. That's one of the main ideas in our artworks. Elsa used to say, "Does art work heal or does it reveal". I think that is a very clear statement. Art is not about making opposites of each other. Those things could happen both ways, but that's often what we like to happen. Artwork is very much an experience. It's not something you look at, but something you are a part of.

SP: You think there is a sort of spiritual aspect to that?

MH: Certainly, yes. As I mentioned earlier I am a Buddhist, and Elsa got very interested in Buddhism as well. Maybe she wouldn't call herself a Buddhist, but she was interested in Buddhism, not as a religion, but as a way of living and being very aware of all those things. Our work has a lot to do with the invisible things, which we want to make visible. That includes electro-magnetic radiation, which we use in the work, *Field Free Space*. By standing a Faraday cage placed in a landscape next to electric poles, your body becomes incredibly sensitive. You question if you feel different in there or not. So, you make the people aware of that. That's our main idea. With the sound piece on the seashore, people go and sit there. Often when I go there, somebody is usually in it and they are not thinking, "Oh I'm sitting in an artwork". They experience something. It makes something available for a person when they sit and look and listen. If that happens like that I think it's

perfect. Our work isn't really to do with aesthetic values, it is far more meant to create another level of consciousness.

SP: And it connects with traditions like the landscape tradition.

MH: Certainly, yes and several other art critics have made that connection. However, I don't think our work is quite so romantic in that way. It often has an edge to it. Maybe it appears romantic in the beginning, but then there is also something not so agreeable, like in the sound. Sometimes it reveals something you don't like. We want the work to be seen on different levels. Some people may only see the first level, but if you look at it again and again you get all the different levels in the work. Often there is a spiritual level but sometimes there is also a critical level in it, but it's always very hidden. It's subtle and not obvious.

SP: You had some connections with John Latham. Can you talk about that?

MH: When Elsa moved to London, she was about 18. She went to art school very young. I think she was 16 when she went to Glasgow Art School. She wanted to change and go to London to study there. Because she had to earn a living, through some connection, she became an assistant to John Latham. She was in that whole scene when John chewed up Greenburg's essays and spat them into a bottle. Elsa was there and she told me about it. She knows Barbara Steveni as well. When Elsa got the job at the Jan van Eyck Academy, she got John Latham to come to Maastricht. At that time people had no idea about the Artist Placement Group. While I was president of Time-Based Arts in Amsterdam, I got him to a lecture there, but he wouldn't really have come if Elsa hadn't invited him. It was a personal invitation. We also got Bridget Riley to come over and other people like that. Sometimes, because Elsa would leave when we travelled, she would try and get somebody else to come to Maastricht and do a project. So people like Joan Jonas or Ulrike Rosenbach would come. Marina Abramovich came and did a project as well. Because we knew all those people, it was a good opportunity for the participants to be able to get to know all those people as well. These people would only come to the Jan van Eyck by Elsa's personal invitation. They got very well paid for it but they had to see the context and do it for a few weeks.

SP: Is there anything else you'd like to mention?

MH: Because Elsa was always very modest about it; I should mention the 60s and Arts Lab because Elsa played a quite important role. I knew Elsa in 1966, but just after that, she was involved with Arts Lab. She was there around 1967 or 1968. She ran the cinema for a whole season and programmed all the films. She met many of the now well-known artists through that. She was obviously quite young still and still in Ealing making her own films, but she was very involved in it.

SP: Yes, I think it is important to place her in that history.



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