

## EXTRACT #23 CONAL MCSTRAVICK

*Can we make out anything at all from the images?*

Certainly. We are able to see events at different stages and presented in different ways, sometimes static, more often in motion. As though with a rapidly turning head we would move from side to side down a long corridor, like a hotel corridor, room after room, door after door, and just as we focus on what we can see in passing one, we move on to the other.

*For example...?*

For example...these are vignettes you understand? A passing show?

*I understand that, yes.*

For example, in one room, what appears to be a large hand, a metre and a half tall, clad in a very smooth and shiny, tan leather glove. The hand moves, begins to formulate a gesture but before we can see what the gesture is, we have already passed the door. A light, a very strong spotlight in the next room lights a hole directly below it from which a sinister creature emerges, writhing, like a bat with a long tail. Another door, a rotund man on a black velvet dais in regal pose, a Henry VII with hands on hips who stands opposite another version of himself while a voice repeatedly proclaims 'I am my own sixth wife...' Another room is filled by a very large bed, itself filled with sleepers whose snore appear to have some sort of rhythmical energy or purpose. Through the next door, a group of naked men in a circle, breathing heavily, their shoulders heaving. Then an entire room stocked to the rafters with the alternating and leering heads of wild boars and black bears. The next

room contains a series of geometric copper plates held in place or ornamented by various metallic rods, twisted into perfect shapes, the plates may be coloured or may hold images but we have already moved on. Sometimes the spaces are empty...

*Is the feeling one of frustration or of being tantalised? What do you think is happening or what is not being allowed to happen? Is it nightmarish? Feverish?*

*There is no suggestion we are part of someone else's dream?*

Not here, no. Sometimes that is effective, sometimes sickening, don't you think so?

*How is it achieved that we don't feel this way particularly? How deliberate?*

It is probably achieved through the fact that the whole thing, the whole movement through the space and the rhythmical turning from side to side very much has the feeling or atmosphere of a performance, of something set up deliberately rather than events merely witnessed that would unfold whether we were there or not, like slapstick with no visible pratfall or jokes with deferred punch lines.

*Are there more rooms?*

Yes, there are many rooms. It is difficult to imagine the corridor that contains them ever stopping.