MAAS Talks
Saturday, March 30th at 2pm
Seth Cluett in conversation with Richard Garet.
The public will have the opportunity to ask questions to the artist.

Garet's work will be closely explored and opened for conversation discussing key aspects of the artist's practice, and putting special attention to Garet's performative work.

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Seth Cluett: Hi Richard
Richard Garet: Hello Seth

SC: We're gonna have a conversation in front of people. I'm going to try to figure out what's ticking underneath your performance practice.

RG: Ok.

SC: There are two performances over the time the exhibition is up in addition to our conversation today. The work in the exhibition is pretty sonorous and has a certain pacing, a certain way that one moves through the space that lapses over time, but that also fills the space in a way that is at one hand immersive, on the other magnified and focused. I'm curious to know if there's any connection with the performances you're trying to do in this space and the installation work, or whether you see them as two separate things - two sides of a similar coin - how do you see the relationship between this?

RG: Um. No. I don't believe there is any separation. Actually, what changes in my opinion is the context and the relationship to time and material. I would put it that way.

SC: So there is a really refined and focused aesthetic to much of the work here - the elements are placed very carefully, the materials are set very clearly, the way that you approach them is separated both between the work and within the works. So - the table filled with your performance equipment is covered with things. Wires and little boxes, microphones and speakers, and radios and cassette decks - correct me, if I'm getting anything wrong. It's a bit of chaos to look at, so I'm just curious, do you see there being a productive tension between how clearly you approach the layout of things in the visual realm of the installations, and the way that you approach extracting or exploring or eking out sounds from this table full of chaos? (If it's a table full of chaos…)

RG: Well I always like to think that in my work, the most important thing is defining the material. Defining the material can be considered 50% of what is going to happen. And then, the rest of it is just making sense out of it and also defining the expressiveness, or the significance, or the proper qualities of the material in a performative or installation situation. You know, if we were going to compare what we have over here in this exhibition, to a situation such as a performance, many of the objects and the functionality of the objects in this exhibition are also participating in a performative way. However, in the installation, a simple gesture becomes constant in time and repeating itself in its own cycle. Then in a performance the same thing can be something that happens in a very small lapse of time. But in an installation type of situation, when the work becomes sculptural, becomes static, become something that is taking shape or, becomes like a site-specific situation in which the work is in a close relationship with the space, it is about isolating a very specific gesture or a very specific thing and making it exist over time and just as that. For example, that piece in the corner over there, it has a modified tape player and a cassette loop - it becomes a noise device, which simulates noise interference in communication. In a performance, that might be explored a little further; it becomes more malleable, more like a stretch over time. Here, it is isolated in a very sole gesture and that's what you hear. It doesn't change much. That's sort of the relationship between installation work, where the media is more object based and the work becomes a repetitive and performative situation in itself. In a performance, I'm changing between themes and creating relationships, and looking for relational structures. They create their own conversation, and they create their own dynamics based on the choices and the relationships that I establish. But here, they're completely isolated, and reductive, and more focused.

SC: I'm curious then, about your relationship to the material. Because in one sense, knowing a little bit about how you work with space preparing for an exhibit - there is a certain amount of exploration and intense observation as well as close listening/looking to find a way to engage the site, while also having the site amplify your ideas - which I think is one of the strongest parts of your visual practice. With the performances, I'm curious how you feel about the relationship between the exploration of the materials on the table - are they things that you know very well and that you are engaging with them in ways that you are hoping might surprise you? Do you set up situations for yourself that you then have to react to? Is it exploration or experimentation? How do you think about the materials you're starting to work with?

RG: I think that it starts with experimentation. I mean, the experiment is something that is very exciting. You're right - you start from an idea of what something might be like. And you experiment with that particular idea. You know, you might incorporate some objects, or whatever, and then if it works, it becomes interesting. From there, you start exploring, and seeking the full expression of that particular thing. And then… to me, it is about language and creating a good conversation about those things. And also, in terms of whether or not I'm going to become surprised - yes, becoming surprised is very important to me. And also, leaving room for things that I cannot predict is also very

important. So yes, there is an element of control and an element of being very aware of the materials I'm working with - but then, there has to be a lot of room for taking risks and for things to become complicated. Every time that I'm about to have a performance, I always rehearse, I always map myself - I create some ideas of structure. I lay out a set of possibilities, which may either go this way, or that way. But then the dynamics and the energy of the moment take you to a new place of direction that is hard to predict. Again, there is an element of knowledge, control, and maybe preconceived imaginations, in terms of where the work can possibly go. It's always so hard to predict the energy of the room, the energy of the people, that particular moment that is fresh, very much in the now, and that may take you to a whole different space impossible to foresee.

SC: Do you take space into consideration when you prepare the set?

RG: Yeah.

SC: Ok. So it's a part of it. Is there a moment when you are working on the piece, as you are getting it ready for a performance where it locks in place? Is there a point of departure or a set of way posts or markers of things that you're definitely going to try? How much planning goes into the form even if the form includes chaos? Do you know what I mean?

RG: Yeah, well the preparations are always unresolved. There has to be room left for discovery and for things to take shape. So again, I mean the performance itself is about defining the material, and relationship to the space, the context, and then, preparing for it a good amount. But then, also making sure that I don't overdo it. I get to a certain point where I say to myself I'm ok, I think I'm in a good place, and then, I leave it all to the execution.

SC: How do you think about structure? Do you go at it knowing how long it's going to be? Is there a structure to the way that you're conceiving of it?

RG: Yes, always.

SC: Modular? Linear?

RG: I think it starts very much connected to imagination and to getting a sense of time. And then, based on that time period, it is about having a certain set of notions of how things can possibly go. And those notions and cues are also very connected to the sound itself and how those materials unfold over time. And dynamics and narrative are also very much connected to the nature of the material. And how the materials voice themselves out and what they do within the scale of the work. I normally perform somewhere between 30 and 45 minutes, but the duration of the performance is very

much determined by the moment - the choices that are taking place in the moment. So it isn't really set in stone, how long or how short it can be.

SC: I've heard you use the word narrative before. I'm curious whether that word has any relevance for you in these pieces, Do you feel as though - even if it's an avant-garde notion of defining what narrative is capable of, whether there's a structural logic, a following of material to another piece of material? What is narrative for you? Is there any truth to you saying you're interested in narrative?

RG: It's not the kind of narrative that you will find in a storytelling.

SC: Oh, of course.

RG: It is a narrative that is very much related to the way in which things unfold, right? In the way things relate to one another, and the kind of experience that you create. So it's a very abstract notion of narrative. In a relational structure it's very important because you are shaping things, you are putting things into another form or time. So without a narrative you should have an equal amount of force, or an equal amount of energy happening. So you need to have some sort of notion of scale and dynamics, and these same things you could find in more traditional music, with the exception of tonality of course. However, a person with perfect pitch can sure place tonality to every sound they hear.

SC: I think this is a place where the relationship between cinema and music in your work - especially cinema that airs on the side of a phenomenological understanding of vision - might have a baring in the way that your audio work is heard. You have areas of sonority that you may set up at the beginning that you may return to that function as a modified version of narrative. All those things have direct interactivity and stop being about telling a story as you warned earlier, but become cinematic in their approach. I think this may also be a bit of a reflexion of your work in field recording: where taking a recording of a thing in nature is not necessarily about capturing that thing as a thing in itself, it becomes about identifying properties of that thing that have linguistic value, that you then shape in the way you present the material. So I think that one of the things that is particularly strong about the way that you structure time is that there is a reflexivity between moments of return that necessarily mark time, but also modulation, manipulation, morphing, and tweening between materials that pulls the listener through. Not necessarily pushing them through, but leading them in a direction that pulls them in. There's not an arrival point - a certain "yeah, we're here." How do you feel about the experience of time in your work and how you think about duration and whether memory plays a role in that, at all.

RG: Memory is very important and a key thing indeed. I like to have the audience be lost in the work. In that respect about memory, when we observe and listen to things, we tend to remember specific sections of it, and we can place those sections over a time

scale from what we can remember. So in my work I like to establish immersive situations, hoping that the audience would lose track of recognizable structural patterns and then be just in the work, it is almost like floating without knowing what's next. Subsequently, structure in general is very much related to that idea. Therefore, time and memory are indeed very important. Also what you mentioned before about narrative in relation to story, and in relation to cinema – I think is key as well. For example I like to think that in my work the material tells its own story. Because in my moving image work the pieces are always very abstract – then I apply a notion of narrative that is my own, but I always think of it in terms of first person cinema, meaning that the person behind the camera, or the person behind the projector are the ones that become the protagonist; because the work becomes like a mirrored experience. Also in the case of the spectator, and about their subjective relationship with the work, they also become the protagonist in the work because their responses become tangible things and indicative of their own personal experiences in the moment. Further more it activates something visceral in us that is latent inside. These ideas are very applicable to the way in which I work with sound.

SC: Do you have any rules for yourself?

RG: The rules change over time. Right now, one of my rules is to eliminate play back. Play back - let's say I'm working with a computer, I'm playing back my feed to play an actual file that has been pre-recorded and treated. So right now, when I perform, I like to have all my sounds being generated in the moment, throughout a series of processes. Also, I stay away from musical instruments; traditional ones. And that's about it!

SC: No banjos, no playback. (Laughs)

RG: For me, also it is important, when I am preparing for a performance, to seek out the phenomena that emerge out of these colliding forces because that's how I think about those things. I have a table filled with objects and materials and each one of them is very specific, does something specific, and has a lot of potential for changing, morphing, etc. But they are in constant conversation with one another. And I like to seek out things that emerge from that - that's when I think it becomes personal, it becomes unique, because you are voicing out something that was not there before, that you are responsible for, and you're seeking out the expressiveness, the voice, and the color that might emerge from those materials, rather than the obviousness, that might mean to work with something very specific, that may become recognizable, known, that anyone can do. So I like to focus on that thing that I do and that becomes something that I own, that it becomes my own and something personal, that it becomes and extension of me. I like to think of it in the same manner that I would think of—lets say; my silhouette, to who I am, etc. So that's key in my practice of working with sonic materials.

SC: So we met about 10 years ago. Both of us performing unaltered field recordings as a part of a group of people that was pretty didactic about making sure that nothing was

done to the field recordings. Just playback. So I have to ask, what's wrong with playback? I'm curious about the shift in your thinking; what has brought about this allergy?

RG: I don't consider it allergy, or discontent. I think it is more about trying to push the boundaries and possibilities. There are more possibilities for surprising oneself and the audience if all the work is generated in the moment. Playback is beautiful; it has its own level of refinement, and the relationship to time is different. It can be very performative because when you play something back to the audience, to the room, you are performing the room, the whole situation, and the moment. So that can be its own thing, you know? In playback there are many different layers of meaning. There is nothing wrong with playback. It is my own relationship with sound and the performance itself, and keeping the integrity of the performance, in that way, where the execution becomes truly important; and where it becomes a surprise not only to me, but also to the audience.

SC: Do you feel like your phonographic practice from earlier in your career informs this new practice? They both involve a hyper-acute listening and an engagement with the site of listening - but do you see any connection between those two things?

RG: Well, phonography is still very much a part of my work, it's more connected to my studio practice though, and it has a whole different relationship to time and searching for relevant material, and things in the world. But in the way one listens to the world and in the way one records the world, I think it is very connected to the way in which one executes a performance. I'm saying this because when you are establishing a connection to a situation and to a material, you're making specific choices that determines then what you are putting focus on. So I think that in those two very different situations, the relationship to choices and focus are the same. Maybe the technique changes. But the model I am seeking now is very much connected to the model I see in the world, to the things I've been listening to and observing in the world for a long time.

SC: Two words that popped out in your last few answers: expression and surprise. Do you feel as though there is any drama in this work? Do you feel as though surprise is something you want from the audience? Is expression something you desire from the sounds?

RG: Yes, I like drama. I think drama is good. The relationships need to carry out drama. Sometimes you need to have something going for a very long time, so then when you get to a particular moment, you articulate the kind of emphasis that you need to have—a dramatic one, but everything before that moment needs to be there for it to work out. Sometimes you don't know exactly what it is that you want, and you might not know how to get there, but that's how you relate to the material in a performative situation. You are manipulating, you are handling a series of little events and you're trying to put them in a very particular context where they are supposed to do something. And seeking out

those dramatic moments, those expressive moments, those phenomenological moments; is very important. Otherwise, if you take away that, if you take away those elements of surprise, of expression and drama, then the whole work becomes too controlled, too pre-planned – it becomes executed in such a way that you're taking away its essence.

SC: So you're saying that you may experience the surprise as well, before the audience would experience surprise.

RG: I think for me it is very different than for the audience. I do want to get surprised with something in the work, but in the moment, it becomes a meaningful matter because whatever happens is not only something that I executed, but also something that becomes meaningful through choice after choice in an empirical process. So to get to that level of surprise and true engagement with the work, it means that I have to weigh and measure, to put the time, to focus, and if everything falls into the right space, I can hope for the work to reach the right level of accuracy and significance. And that's what I'm seeking out. For the audience, it becomes an immersive situation and surprise exists in the constant present – especially because they don't know the work and they are listening for the first time. In my case I already have a relationship with my material - it allows me to know more than they do. And for them it is very subjective, it also is psychological and physical, and they may experience a whole bunch of different things just by taking the work in. And I think that's part of the conversation, like in any exchange in life - it's a two-way thing. I'm responding to a moment in front of people by doing a whole series of actions; they are receiving that and doing the same thing.

SC: How are sounds from short-wave radios and contact-phones, speaker-phones meaningful? What does that work mean for you, when you use it? Meaningful? What is meaningful? Where does meaning come from?

RG: Meaning emerges out of the relationships that are created between those things and events.

SC: Between the elements on the table? Sounds next to one another?

RG: Yeah, yeah. Each single material does its own thing, creates its own outcome, that is very obvious maybe… But meaning emerges between the capacities of the artist, and how the artist's choices create and relate those objects-and-materials amongst themselves. And how these relationships create a language that establishes a whole different set of situations - listening situations or how they create feelings… Feelings as being the result from the relationship between oneself and anything in the world; there is the external response first and then we may internalize that as a part of the responsive process. But that's like anything else. Things in their own way, in their own context, maybe they are very dull, but once you retrieve those things from their own context and you start making relationships, and once they start voicing out at us, I think that creates

meaning, that creates something meaningful. It's like in painting when you start relating colors. The color of the tube is red, but you know, when you start mixing it with another color and you put it in a pictorial situation then it becomes very powerful. I guess I'm thinking about sound materials in a similar way.

SC: When we are watching you - listening to you, are we doing something similar to watching you paint?

RG: Maybe.. yes.

SC: Because you have a relationship to these objects, they have a relationship to each other and to sound. You are engaging those relationships in real time and you're performing the materials in front of us. But why is it important that you're up there in front of us?

RG: It's also connected to why I don't do playback anymore. It's because I am doing something in front of people and it becomes like a conversation, like a two-way situation. And also the execution of a performance is completely different than studio work and composing something, or making a sound installation. I mean in the studio you have a lot of time to break things apart and to construct them and to make them happen. In a performance there is a tactile relationship to the material that is immediate and a direct connection to the moment that enhances the physical experience of what's in the room. Additionally, it could be focused on a bold physicality of sound or on its opposite end where sound is delicate and subtle and right at the end of the hearing threshold. Additionally, the relationship to the constant present is very unique in a performance, and you cannot translate that to something that is offered to experience on a CD, or in a sound installation. Each context requires different approaches and considerations. There is something very unique and very specific about performing in front of an audience that cannot be translated, and that kind of awareness is very important.

SC: You have a lot of technological stuff on the table, do you feel like what you're doing is some dialogue with technology, is it about technology, is it against technology? How do you feel about - I mean, you're using some objects that are pretty nostalgic; cassette decks, radios, things like that. Is there nostalgia there?

RG: Well, yeah, I mean… Nostalgic is a good word, and it is a good observation the one that you just made. I like the wide range of technology that exists and the possibilities of today's technology too, and I enjoy combining current and past technologies. Also I pay attention to how technology relates to the culture of consumption, and the culture of cull-electronics, and the getting rid of things. So I'm always looking in the garbage and I go around paying attention to other people's trash seeking out electronic devices. I look at the potential of my finds and use them in my work if suitable. But I also use the computer, and the technology that is available and within my capacity, because there is

a lot of advanced technology that is out of my reach. But with the personal computer and the applications that we can use today, the possibilities are far out. And then, you know, I - for a while, back in the day - was working strictly with my laptop, doing a lot of different things that had to do with computer synthesis and stuff of that sort, but the aesthetics of that were very specific and, after a while I was bored. And that's how I went back to using analog media and using nostalgic devices. And combining those with the digital world, I found that to be a much richer and a more expressive palette.

SC: Did you have a Walkman growing up? Like a cassette Walkman that you listened to?

RG: Yes. Yes, yes.

SC: Did you have those headphones with the nylon? The little ones with the fuzz around them?

RG: Yep.

SC: So what was your first tape?

RG: My first tape?

SC: Yeah, do you remember your first tape?

RG: Actually I do not..

SC: I'll tell you mine, after. This is an earlier day than the laptop day?

RG: Yeah. I was born in the early seventies. So the first relationship to music that I had was radio; the second one was either the record or the cassette player. I skipped the whole record thing, and therefore it was radio and tape for me. So I would listen to music on the radio, and tapes - you know, recordings from the radio. And yes, there I was listening to music, and using that type of material. And then, later on, 15 or 16 years old I started playing music - playing electric guitar. And before I even learned how to properly play the electric guitar, I was making expressive-sound with it, and making tapes from it. And then recording from tape deck to tape deck combining up to three tracks I think; I was making noise tapes without knowing it. But you know, that was my first relationship to sound and music. Then, a whole lot happened following that, and now 25 years later of exploring a whole range of different sonic approaches, I'm still doing something similar.

SC: So.. you're going to tell us your first tape? Mine was Van Halen, 1984.

RG: I don't remember.. I remember making tapes of punk rock. I listened to a lot of latino-american pop music, that my older brother and sister were listening to, but I don't remember what my first tape was…

SC: Was there something about dubbing? To digress for a second - I work a lot with cassette decks, so I'm pushing on this cassette thing because it is close to me. For me, there was something very visceral about calling a radio station over and over again, and asking for them to play a song, waiting by the radio for the song to come on, and then striking the record button so that I could get that song on tape, and then dubbing that song to a mix tape. I got a very strong sense of collage from the very physical interaction with buttons that did things, that I had to time correctly to get the sonic result that I wanted, which was a tape to show whatever girl I liked that she was cute. I'm just curious whether there is just something about the physicality of these media - these dials, antennas, knobs, twisty things, spinning stuff, and tape material that can elapse onto the floor… It is almost a physical manifestation of time. Is it about tactility?

RG: You know, I like the material; I also like the functionality - like how mechanic tape players are. I like the nature of the tape itself; we're talking about micro-particles of magnetized iron that carry out sound, and how those things start to disintegrate, and as they disintegrate they start changing. So they become completely ephemeral and expressive. So, in a way, it's almost like a very sculptural object, but it has a very specific time relationship. Or relationship to time. But then, you know it also has a very romantic connotation to it, because it was a part of my life - I completely ignored the relevance of those years - and now that I look back to them, they bring up a sort of romantic and nostalgic notion to them.

SC: I felt like stopped lying to myself when I went back to cassettes. When I went back to using cassettes in my performances, I felt like "Ah, thank God, I don't have to lie about this anymore. I can do what's comfortable". The cassette breaks, it doesn't playback at the same speed all the time, it's got a weird little heart in it that's touchy. If you're not respectful of it, it fights you - there's something about it that is physical. A lot of your tapes are broken…

RG: Yeah. For me, it started many years ago when I encountered the work of Reynolds. And I listened to *Blank Tapes*, and I thought it was amazing. And then, that moment made me think about tapes completely differently. So in my studio, I had a large case full of recorded tapes - my tapes, my wife's tapes, a whole lot of different tapes - that were pretty much were about to be taken to the garbage. But, I just kept them there. And then, I decided to start exploring that material, and seeking out for any possibilities they could offer. So immediately I felt inspired to work with them but I was aware that they needed to have some potential for creativity, for materiality, rather than the playback listening. And I did not care for it as a device that is utilized to listening music. So, I started submitting them to all sorts of systems, you know, for destruction or decay, to the point that they were almost useless. So that's how it started. And then, it became

a situation in which there was a tape, and then there was a playback device. And the playback device also needed to be modified - it had to add something else to the material. So then at the end, we have a relationship going; we have a damaged audio-cassette object, you know, with magnetic tape, and then we have a modified playback device that with the two things combined, the result becomes very unique and special. You know, because I'm changing the way that things are supposed to function. The playback device doesn't do anything right anymore. And then, there is the attempt of trying to amplify something that is already damaged, modified, and taken completely out of context for creative purposes. So in that situation, it becomes, very special and meaningful; I'm seeking out not only for layers of meaning and significance but also for the beauty that arises from working with audiocassette technology.

SC: Do you feel like there is translation going on in your work? Because I think there is what the machine does to tape, which is form of translation, but there is also something that the photosensors that you use to project light on a wall and to have the photosensors pick up the quantity of light that's a form of translation or transduction from one medium to another. Is translation or transduction important to your thinking?

RG: Translation is very important. Transformation, transposition… all of that is very important and connected. Yeah, I mean, I like what happens when you find an object or material where you think about that particular thing as something that has a lot of possibilities. And then you work on it, and use these translation methods - the important thing is always to mask the origin, to get rid of the origin, and then to use the translating process in such a way that you get a newer layer, or a new set of informative events, that come from that particular device or system. But then, you get rid of something - and you get something new. And that, besides being a translation process is also a transformative process. And that's something that happens a lot in my work - happens in my installations, in my performances; in the way in which I work my material, and I treat the material. I see that as a way of digging deep into the material and owning what I'm doing.

SC: What do you mean by owning?

RG: Yeah, by taking ownership of what I'm doing. If you go anywhere nowadays, and you find something playable and you put it into a playback device, and you listen to it - let's say and audiocassette - if you do it, or somebody else in the room does it, it won't change much and it would sound to the purpose that was intended. But when it changes is when you change the nature of it, when you establish a connection to it as a material, and you focus on what you can get out of it. Then it becomes an issue about that thing that you do to it, that only you can do, and you are the only that can do it that way. So that's what I mean by owning it. So I seek for a close and personal relationship with the material, in which there is a level of sophistication, state, and taste, which I can then, take responsibility for and say that it’s mine.

SC: Is it important that the translation be an exact translation? Many of your translation mechanisms take something sonic and turn it into light, or take light and turn it into sonic, or something working and turn it into broken… How important is it that there be messiness in the translation? Do you seek out an effect, or do you seek out the verb, and you don't care what the result is?

RG: I participate in the treatment - I'm executing whatever is happening, but I'm also an observer. So if I see the potential, I use it. If it doesn't work, I get rid of it and move on to the next thing.

SC: Maybe we should have people ask some questions.

RG: Sure.

Audience 1: I would like to speak to a quality that really defines the difference between these installations and the performance for me, which is, I guess the physical interactivity of the audience with those… The slide piece and these pieces over here, define the way in which the audience interfaces with them, and they define a certain type of movement and it's very clear, and it seems to be very well thought out. And I guess I was wondering how much you're considering audience movement and audience interface in the process of defining projects…

RG: Very much. Yes. It's very important. I mean for example - that piece needed to be absolutely intimate. It had to be perceived by one person at a time, and had a very specific way of interacting with the work, and receiving the work. So when I came here for the first time, and saw that corner I thought "It's perfect!". I mean, it couldn't be more perfect, even if I wanted to. It's amazing. So that to me is very important. It's all about perception. So articulating the space is as important as articulating the work, and the work and the space become one once they are placed out there for the people to experience the work.

Audience 2: You've talked about immersiveness. I guess there's something I look for when talking about immersive work. Are you looking for immersiveness that creates awareness of the body, or are you looking for an immersiveness that creates a loss of awareness of the self and body - specifically with an emphasis on body. So I guess I was wondering is how would you fall in - how would you consider yourself in relationship to awareness of the body?

RG: It always starts with my own awareness, and how I affect myself, and how I create the work from my own perspective. And then I think of the other of which you're speaking… But I also think that everybody is different, and that although there is a lot of theory and a lot of thinking - a lot of knowledge - about how we respond to things, it's always subjective. So I like for myself, first to feel comfortable with the idea or process, and second to sit on it a great deal until I trust it enough to then put it all there. So it is a

great deal of emotional investment and risk as well as being involved in the process. So, I guess at the end, it ends up being a very optimistic thing, hoping that the spectator is going to get something out of the work. That's the hope and the optimism of being an artist. Because the work is not an imposition by any means, as an artist I really want to reach out with something honest and pure. You really want to create a connection with the audience, and affect the audience in the same way that you're affecting yourself, as part of the conversation, as part of the intention behind the work.

SC: I just want to follow-up on something… There seems to be two different types of interaction that one has with the work in this show on the one hand you're participating in a long tradition of encouraging movement around the space to bring about the work - an emergent narrative that unfolds as a result of walking. In many of these pieces moving brings a further understanding of the way the piece works, creating a narrative and making the audience a performer. But the other pieces - the little tape machine, and the piece with the projection screen - you put the audience in a traditional spectator position to look at/listen from a pre-defined location. How do you see the dichotomy in the work?

RG: I think that the works can also have performative quality to them individually and as a collective, because in all of them you participate as a spectator but you also create your own experience of the work. That has to do with the way in which you engage with it and navigate with your body and head the work in the space. You listen to it as you move your head - it really does something to your listening. It's not just a frontal situation – and you approach the work in the way that it's not always the same. You basically participate in the creation of the work. And in the back piece, it's also interactive - there is a photosensitive sensor that responds to the light of the projection, and if you get in between, you interrupt the work, and in a way you also participate in your experience of the work.

SC: Do you feel like the audience is a performer to a certain extent?

RG: I don't deny the idea. But I don't like to say that, as if it's set in stone.
Audience 3: With the guitar and the amplifier, how much of it, percentage-wise, was based on the visual, and how much was based on sound? Was that guitar chosen specifically because of the sound it made or the way it looked? And the amplifier too.

RG: That guitar is my guitar, my personal guitar that I have had for so many years - that's the last of me as a musician. And that's why that guitar is so important. In a way, that piece is in conversation with my past and it opens up to the present. But yeah, that's also a visual arts piece in every sense. … That amplifier is a found object; it's a street find type of thing. And then, I've been working with resonating objects for many years, and I did a piece back in the day, when I was resonating two guitars based on a particular set of ideas. So this piece is a revisiting theme applied to a new work - I revisit these set of options, but the execution and the content are completely different. So

yeah, that answers the question? But yes, the orchestration of that piece is very particular, because of the mirrors - it's taking the whole room into the work, through reflection, and then also expanding from the work into the space and sucking you in with it in the reflection if you look into the work while you listen. And the cables - everything is orchestrated very specifically to tailor the way in which we experience the work. Also, the relationship between the voice and the sound - the amplitude of the amplifier is a little bit above the voice, so the voice doesn't completely disappear, but the first impression is the sound from the guitar and then as you start getting engaged with the work, you arrive at the voice, and then you discover who the actual person behind the voice is. So there are various ideas and much thinking behind the work.

SC: Is it overtly autobiographical?

RG: Uh, no, I mean… The relationship with the electric guitar is a very special one because it's my entrance to sound, but it's also about who I am not anymore. However, there is that sort of personal connection. But then, there is also the iconic symbolism of the electric guitar – for example America is such a "rock-n-roll" country. So in that particular sense, it becomes very symbolic and iconic.

Audience 4: I'm interested to know how you're sourcing these everyday sounds, how they're based here for the most part, but where those ideas come from?

RG: For a long time, I was just paying attention to sound only aesthetically, without taking into consideration the relevance or the significance behind each sound so to speak, or how those particular sounds fit within our lives. And then I felt inclined to investigate more about the implication of sounds connected to its source of origin, or what are the sounds in the world associated to. And that's how I came to the idea of investigating and focusing on background noise. Because background noise is a collective experience and it is created collectively in a very phenomenological and organic way. Moreover, every sound that we hear in the world is associated to a specific function, source, and origin. All sounds in the world are very much related to what we do, what we choose, what we consume, what we get rid of, what we absorb, and who we are… And that, to me, became very interesting. It became very political. And then, it wasn't just about listening, and utilizing sounds that just sounded good. It was just not only about making choices based on aesthetics, but it was also about taking in consideration the relevance of what sounds are associated to. And now, I'm very conscious about that, and when I work I'm seeking for a blend of aesthetics, ideas, and content.

Audience 5: So a piece like this with the window is very site specific, because you're grabbing what's here.

RG: Well, this particular piece draws attention to the specificity and function of the windows in this particular place. The functionality of the window has a very specific

purpose, I mean. And also, we usually ignore the window especially in an art gallery. When we enter a space, the windows are like see-through conduit, see-through objects. It's also an object that keeps the outside from getting inside. But we ignore it. In a gallery space, the last thing you want to look at is at the window because it takes away space from the art. So for me, it was about inverting the functionality of the window and drawing attention to something that normally, you would ignore. And then drawing attention to the window and not knowing what you're listening to - if the sound is coming from the street, or the windows itself. So the sound that is on the window is a very specific volume that blends with sounds that you can almost hear from the outside. So it creates that sort of focus and situation. That was my take on making a site-specific piece.

SC: Great, thank you all for coming!