

john ros
139 Skillman Avenue ((after timm ulrichs – the
photocopy of the photocopy of the photocopy of
the photocopy – after benjamin)
2020

Sequence of 100 black-and-white digital
photocopies
installed 10 x 10
15.25 x 20 in. / 38.7 x 50.8 cm
digital video 1146 × 1500; 39 seconds
courtesy of the artist

(If I were asked to name the chief benefit of the house, I should say: the house shelters daydreaming, the house protects the dreamer, the house allows one to dream in peace. Thoughts and experience are not the only things that sanction human values. The values that belong to daydreaming mark humanity in its depths. Daydreaming even has a privilege of autovalorization. It derives direct pleasure from its own being. Therefore, the places in which we have experiences daydreaming reconstitute themselves in a new daydream, and it is because our memories of former dwelling-places are relived as daydreams that these dwelling-places of the past remain in us for all time. ⁰¹

I am sitting in a room different from the one you are in now. I am recording the sound of my speaking voice and I am going to play it back into the room again and again until the resonant frequencies of the room reinforce themselves so that any semblance of my speech, with perhaps the exception of rhythm, is destroyed. What you will hear, then, are the natural resonant frequencies of the room articulated by speech. I regard this activity not so much as a demonstration of a physical fact, but more as a way to smooth out any irregularities my speech might have. ⁰²

Library Dust

Thoughts are odd Even normal thoughts
Nature within nature Vowels where sex-
cries recover An oddness made your
book a world The whisper furnace
blows bent crackly notes through readers'
delft blue auras Were you afraid
your book would vanish Thought kabbalahs
it Dust notes land immaturely from
joy or have to Race to
perform as a dying man's twin
breaths might sound like turning same
or added pages on the inside ⁰³

Self-Portrait with Impending War

Home is the hodgepodge house,
the vacant lot beside it, the ailing
mango tree, the stingy coconut trees
with nobody left to climb them anyway.
Perhaps, you think, hoe could be this
continent with its confused seasons,
the roads that roll out in front of you,
limitless as the night sky. Home be this
small silence you curl into anywhere you go,
the one hovering in your chest beating
its fleshy time. This planet you scar
with too many clothes and plastic bags: home.
And where to run but everywhere?
What to weep for, but what is going,
somehow, to be gone? ⁰⁴

James Lingwood Walking generates a particular conception of time, of human body moving at a pace when the legs can move easily. The writer Rebecca Solnit suggests the mind moves at three miles an hour.

Is walking, for you, a tool for thinking?

Francis Alÿs It's a perfect space to process thoughts. You can function at multiple levels simultaneously. (...) Also, when you are walking, you are aware of, or awake to, everything that happens in your peripheral vision: the little incidents, smells, images, sounds. Walking brings a rich state of consciousness. In our digital age, it's also one of our last private spaces. (...) ⁰⁵

01 Bachelard, Gaston, and Maria Jolas. *The Poetics of Space: the Classic Look at How We Experience Intimate Places*. Beacon Press, 1994, p. 6.

02 Hoffmann, Jens, et al. *The Arcades: Contemporary Art and Walter Benjamin*. Yale University Press, 2017, p 98.
listen: <https://tinyurl.com/ros-photocopy>

03 Hillman, Brenda. *Pieces of Air in the Epic*. Wesleyan University Press, 2007, p 71.

04 Alleyne, Lauren K. *Honeyfish*. New Issues Poetry & Prose, 2019, p 18.

05 Johnstone, Stephen. *The Everyday: Documents of Contemporary Art*. Whitechapel, 2008, pp 140-141.