



## REWIND | Artists' Video in the 70s & 80s Interview with Terry Flaxton

Interview by Maggie Warwick, March 2007

**MW:** Which of your works do you consider the most important, and why?

**TF:** I've found that I've got three or four different periods of production, and in each of those periods there is a work, which represents the apex of the concerns of that particular period of production. Really I would be talking about a work that stimulated a set of thoughts, or at least has articulated them in a better way than most of the other works. I think the first mode was with in 70s. A work that meant lot to me was a piece called *Talking Heads*. I believe in the collaborative process, so that's why I will use the word "we." In that case there was a group of 3 of us called VIDA, and we were called VIDA because it's a declining of, 'video'. I had gone to college because I saw an advert saying "Do you want to learn video?" and I didn't really know what it was. We were called VIDA because it's an imperative form. It means 'look at this' or 'look'. Anyway, we made a piece called *Talking Heads*. Basically, I got very angry in a constructive way. I got very angry about the way that we were relating to the media, or the way the media was relating to us. It was the time in the 70's after McLuhan, Edmund Carpenter and Stafford Beer, to start taking apart and to start articulating, what it was that the media was doing. I suppose it reached back into Cinema Verite, when you first got a camera off some sticks and waved it around in a real environment. It suddenly had a relevance to the relationship of the media to the subject. Tony Cooper and Penny Dedman, they were the other two members in VIDA. Tony's proposition was the documentary. The only thing that documentary documents, is the attitude of the maker to the subjects at the time of making. So, the notion of *Talking Heads* was to take apart the gaze that's looking. Given that we were the gaze as well as the gazed at, *Talking Heads* did that work. That's what it was. We put it into the 4th Tokyo Video Festival and got our first award for that. That was why it was a critical thing. Basically, VIDA was doing all the groundwork for a later grouping of people, one of whom was Penny Dedman and the third was Kez Cary, and then Renny Bartlett. They became Triple Vision. That was in the 80s. But, all of the work we were doing in the 70s around things like *Talking Heads*, was about the gaze. That was in the 70s. In the 80s, although we did our documentary work and even though I can remember many festivals where we would be showing our stuff, it had always been in the position of having people waiting with a sense of "What are they doing next?" There was a sense that we really wanted to push the boat out and we really wanted to take it apart. There were many works like that. I can remember one called *Bad Neighbours* where we had to subtitle somebody, but we didn't want to be insulting towards the fact that we were English and he was Pakistani and his English was not very articulate. So, we started to title on the screen. We'd pick out key words and they were words of fear in his case, because he was being racially harassed. So, we could actually subtitle him, convey the information but actually not patronise him. That was the sort of thing. The key work in the 80's for me was *Prisoners*. On getting out of college, I didn't enter education like most of the artists that I knew. I entered the industry and it suddenly put me in the belly of the beast. It put me on the site. I could be in a very existential position, and I could be on very heavy industry shoots in my artistic mentality

sitting inside myself in an existential space looking at what was going off. The *Prisoners* shoot was actually the very launch of the Apple Mac. The commercial was shot in 1983. I'd been engaged by Apple to do *The Making Of* with Mark Chiat. Chiat/Day were the advertising agency. Mark, who was the son, got to go and play with the video crew in London, except we were a bunch of anarchists. I was basically going to steal the footage anyway. We did make *The Making Of*, and the advert itself was only shown once in the middle of the Superball. The footage we shot for *The Making Of* was used to hype the screening of the ad in the Superball screening itself. At the same time, we discovered that the ideologies we were sitting with then, were effectively anarchist. I say this as a kind of badge of honour really. There we were in a Thatcherite ideology and we were working with Chiat/Day of Los Angeles, which was a big corporate representation of Apple. Ridley Scott was directing, there were 150 Neo-Nazi skinheads on site, and there I was shooting all of this stuff. There was no way that I was going to let this footage go, not a chance. I'd probably still get into trouble for it even now. So, I took the material. I worked with it for a year because I found it really hard to make it speak. At that time, friends like Gorilla Tapes and the Duvet Brothers, weren't in the same camp then because they were more of the scratch world. The breaking apart of imagery, had originally derived by a friend of mine coming back from Sydney, Australia, John Dovie. He was an avant-garde who was working with Eisenstein's *Montage of Attractions*. He was working with the placement of two images creating a third meaning but in a kind of mad Australian avant-garde way. I saw that stuff but didn't feel a part of their camp either. So, it wasn't until one night, after I'd been editing it for about a year, I collided a scream of one of the people in it against the skinhead. It was a guy from Bother Boots Agency from Tilbury. They debt collected. During the shoot, there had a stabbing and a rape. It was a heavy number. These guys had been on the Pink Floyd event, *The Wall*, where they had actually rioted. So everybody was really on tender hooks about all of this. But that moment in the edit suite, where I got angry, the collision of the two images gave me a way into it. So, I made *Prisoners*. It was about ideology. It was about the people who wanted to sell the Apple Mac. I wanted to cut up the rationale. I wanted to make some articulation about what was going on with the power of the image. So, *Prisoners* was really about how we are all limited to our ideologies and about trying to pull the ideologies apart. It's better to see the thing. It doesn't do it any justice to speak about this. I got into a little bit of trouble with Apple, because they didn't want it known that there was 150 Neo-Nazis on their product. They still probably don't want it known. Come the 90s, I started getting into installations. I had a piece, which never got made, for the Bonn Biennale. It was called *White Goods*. It was a room of white goods where the objects had been shot and then the image of the objects had been projected back on to it. It didn't happen because the money ran out, badly. The notion was that, you would see a white sofa on which a virtual person would be sitting, you'd see a dinner party in which you'd see the hands of the dinner party guests, you'd see a fridge in which there was virtual food inside and so on and so forth. I mention this because at that moment Paul Sermon was doing *Telematic Dreaming*, which is basically two beds in two different rooms with a person in one bed projected on to the other bed. So a person then lies next to the virtual person in the other room. I was trying to do this with white goods. I eventually made it in 2003, and that's why I mention it as a piece I almost made in the 90s. During the 90s, another friend of mine had made *L'object da Donselage Electronique*, which was the opening programme to *L'asset*, which I think went on in 1991 or 1992, but it quoted people like Baudelaire and Virilio, left bank career intellectuals. I

got so fed up with their pronouncements, so I wrote to Channel 4 and said, "Let me answer, let me answer the French," and they said "Yes", they gave me twenty grand to make a piece. In the end it became *The Inevitability of Colour*. *The Inevitability of Colour* took the analogy of colour for meaning and I did this 20-minute work, which went on Channel 4. But, the reason it's quite important to me now, is because by 1992 I'd made two other companion pieces to it, and called it *The Colour Myths*, because the coloured meaning, significance and so on, and I am now up to 10 parts. I intend to finish this year, but it's a long piece of video. It's basically a seventy-minute piece. It's currently called *14 History Lessons, 18 Visions and 21 Beatifications*. So, that's a piece in the 90's that meant something because it was the moment of digitality. It was the moment where the ability to make layers had happened and in fact it was on the second piece of the trilogy called *The Object of Desire*. I used the metaphor of Eco and Narcissus where Eco is sound and Narcissus is image and how the two accompany each other in this medium. *The Object of Desire* is Narcissus being fascinated by his own image reflected in the pool. Eco speaks words to him, but her problem is that she can only answer. The curse she's been given by Hera is to only be able to speak the words of others. So she can have the meaning of her own, which is "I love you," but if Narcissus is on a feedback loop with himself in the pool, and she's speaking as if it's his reflection, they are in a complete feedback loop and they are stuck, basically. At that moment, I was artist in residency at Complete Video in London. Being an industry type, I saw my way of getting access to the kit by going to the industry. Complete were the top commercial service in London. They had the kit. They had Mirage. There was also another 80's piece, which was really important. It is *The World Within Us*. I got commissioned for the Ghost in the Machine. That was the beginning moments of digitality, which came to mean something in *The Object of Desire*. I was working at least 10 layers deep on that, without the disintegration of the image. It meant I could really push the boat out. So, that was very important at that moment.

**MW:** What were your means of production when you first started using video in the 70's? What kind of equipment and editing equipment were you using then?

**TF:** Well, the first things we did were with black-and-white Portapaks. We were trying to get one to record on to another. Editing meant literally recording at the moment when you press 'record' in a kind of hot panic, trying to collide enough images you could. In fact I do remember using a razorblade on a 2 inch machine and when the edits went through, you use sticky tape on it. The whole thing went 'bang' and the image shot off the screen. There were black-and-white Portapaks, then 1 inch colour and then the Advent, the beginnings of the digital. I've got this theory that the digital age began in 1750 actually. I think the Stone Age went until 1750. We had the metal ages but actually we were still trying to deal with metal. We were still whacking it and heating it and doing all kinds of lumpy things, and then Benjamin Franklin discovers electricity and for the first time we start shaving energy into material objects. So, we got Stone Age - Digital Age, that's my take. I guess by the advent of solenoid switches on U-matics, the very early U-matics, we had the old steam machines where you'd get hold of a lever and rack it up and a puff of steam came out when the tape came out. Then it was the solenoid moment, which meant that the machines could be told to go back exactly 5 seconds and then roll into the edit and make a recorded moment that was actually fairly perfect. I didn't go into education. I went into Soho to start off in a place called Video Makers. We had a very early American system for

editing, by ECS I think it was called, or EMS. But you could chain up a bunch of U-matics and actually make a dissolve or you could make several dissolves. For every dissolve you had another machine so you could run 5 machines and get 2 dissolves. So that was clunk-click with every trip. I had my first commercial edit moment when I had J Walter Thompson in and I managed to spill some water over the machines. It was terrible. It was truly terrible. So I was going through the fire of the industry.

**MW:** Is that how you financed the other work, through working within the industry?

**TF:** Well, I'd had some grants at the beginning of the 80s with Triple Vision.

**MW:** Who did you get the grants from?

**TF:** By 1982 we got a grant from Greater London Arts Association to edit a piece that we went to America for, which was called *Towards Intuition in an American Landscape*. It's a 15-minute piece of video art that we made. The grant was £1400.

**MW:** That was with Triple Vision?

**TF:** That was with Triple Vision. There was a morph between VIDA and Triple Vision round 1980 – 1982, when things were crossing over. But at the same time I'd become involved in a studio in Soho and we had editing and shooting. So we'd shoot professionally. We were MTV stringers for a year in 1982. We didn't discover until the end of that that we had Stringer's rights to about 50 interviews with everyone. I mean we were doing The Stones and The Who, we had this slightly dorky, daft professional practice and quite a serious documentary and arts practice going on. It wasn't schizophrenic because we were quite happy in the lunacy of it all. Come 1985, I'd been involved with Complete Video, Moving Picture Company and people. It was very high end. The reason for this is that I was putting on shows with people like Chris Meigh-Andrews in 1979 at the AIR and ACME Galleries for LVA. Because I was involved with LVA and the Americans had access to all that whiz-bang stuff that we didn't have access to, so we were putting on shows with bits of Viola and Gary Hill and you name it, Tony Oursler.

**MW:** So, when you say you were putting on shows, was that in a curatorial sense? Were you curating shows with Chris Meigh-Andrews at ACME and AIR.?

**TF:** Yes. We did loads of those. Sometimes it was only to an audience of three though: me, Chris and Alex Meigh. Dave Critchley, Penny Dedman and Anthony Cooper were usually there too.

**MW:** How was VIDA formed? How did VIDA come about and did you have a base?

**TF:** With VIDA, we were students and we didn't know not to basically, that was it. We made our work, I did communication design, and we soon realised that the teachers were fighting. I mean they were fist-fighting. We had 5 course tutors in 3 years. We sued the college, took them to court, all kinds of madness. So we were on our own and we were basically making our work. We were doing stuff for trade unions, so we were like freelance students

basically. By 1979 we'd done about 150 public shows that we'd set up ourselves. This wasn't via LVA or anything like that. I remember doing a comic convention with about 400 people. It was an early thing we did on comics with a 26" screen. It's mad stuff.

**MW:** So, when you say you've done 150 public shows, how did you get the shows? What were they?

**TF:** We put them on. We rang people up and said, "Let's come and do it." We did the Draw. We did the Birmingham Comic Convention. We did the Diorama in North Oxford Street. We'd just ring people up and say, "Can we come and do some video? Can we put some stuff on?" or ring people up and say, "Come down."

**MW:** What kind of stuff were you showing there?

**TF:** We were showing all our stuff. That was the primary concern. It was like, "We've made the stuff, now what?" Distribution is a critical issue. A bit of feedback, like "Do you like this? Is it good? Is it bad? What do you feel?" Then we were sending out to festivals and we got American festivals responding to the stuff and that made us then formulate with. It was a lot of people involved. It was maybe ten people involved including Tony Nichols, Dave Critchley and John Dovie. We did the first national independent video festival at the Film Co-op in 1979/'80. So, we'd put on a video festival and loads of people came through. It was great. We took it over for three days. It wasn't a film event. It was a video event.

**MW:** Have you always worked on video? Was video the medium that you were most drawn to?

**TF:** When I went to college I worked on film but initially, I didn't see the joy of that. I saw the clunk of it and then video came along and it was more of a pain in the ass than film actually. But, it seemed to be instant even though it was the way that you dealt with it, which seemed more instant. More often than not you'd come back with the Portapak with nothing on it.

**MW:** How did you regard it for documentary work?

**TF:** For documentary work, it was good. I never bought that whole thing about "you can shoot loads", I just think it's hogwash. I just think you are an idiot if you shoot loads. You are just going to get loads of editing to do. So, we were quite tight about what we shot. We knew what we wanted. We always knew what we wanted. Maybe that was a fault but we went after specifics, VIDA and Triple Vision.

**MW:** Did VIDA have a base; did you have an office base?

**TF:** Not really.

**MW:** You worked from home?

**TF:** We were students, so really it was just from wherever we found ourselves. We were very active and didn't know not to, that was it then.

**MW:** How was that early work financed?

**TF:** Well, when we went to the States, the three of us went and worked in the stock exchange. My mum was working in the stock exchange, checking stocks and shares and there was a summer job, so we all went to work there. We earned a few quid and we bought a Portapak. We bought a plane ticket, went to Washington and drove across America and shot and made a piece or two. When we got to San Francisco we showed some stuff to Video West, which was a very active cable channel at the time. They said "Come and make a piece" and over the next 3 or 4 weeks, KQED San Francisco shacked up with KABC in Los Angeles and WTTW in Chicago, and we were making pieces that were going out in half of the United States. Then we got back here and were slammed into the brick wall of "No, you cant," "No, you mustn't".

**MW:** You talked a bit about distribution and your involvement with LVA. Was some of your work distributed through LVA?

**TF:** Yes, it was difficult. With LVA, the aesthetic that was dominant was a notionalised aesthetic, which was the correct art aesthetic. At least that's what it felt like from outside. I absolutely would not programme any of our work or my work in the shows that we put on. I don't think I should say anymore because you've just got to follow the history of the shows to know what happens in that environment. It was just a principle not to do it. We did our own shows, these were VIDA shows where we put on all our work, but we didn't put a show on and then say, "Look, we will sneak one of ours in there." It wasn't like that.

**MW:** So, when you had the set up in Soho, the editing suite and everything, did other artists come and use those facilities?

**TF:** Yeah, we were often helping people finish their work because we had a three-machine edit suite. It was quite amazing really and we'd also cracked some technical problems. We'd managed to get the old low-band systems, which were plus or minus 2 frames accurate. So the only way you could get an invisible edit was to do the edit 15 times and then accidentally at some point you get one that didn't look like there was a lump in it. We made this tape called *Circumstantial Evidence* in which starred an actress called Gina McKee. She is quite a powerfully good actress. We made this piece that lasted for 20 minutes and it was a dissolve from front to back. One of the ways we cracked it was by doing a real time edit for 20 minutes, running in with tapes, and whilst another tape was running that bit of footage, putting another one on and doing all kinds of nonsense. Because of that, we then ended up helping one or two people with that sort of thing.

**MW:** Yes, George Barber mentioned you when I talked to him. He came in and was able to access all this amazing equipment to make some of his stuff. Can you say a bit about the change in technology and how that's changed the way you work?

**TF:** Regarding technology, I am a bit of a geek on certain levels but on another level I've been quite schizophrenic. I've got two characters. I can put a hat on and be a cameraperson or technician or I can take it off and deal with art. The interplay between the two for me, goes

right back to being able to splash and paint on to canvas or on to paper and mix it up and let the medium do stuff. Now some people turn up their nose at that work but it becomes something, in doing it. It becomes something and all of the technology that's been there from the very first moment. When you are slashing videotape with the razorblade and you might get it in the wrong place, right the way through to the so-called digitality of digital media. It is all about the artist in relation to the medium and the way it allows you into the making process and unveils itself. Actually the stuff I like best is the happy accidents, which you can line up and join up in some meaningful way. So, the technology right from the front to the end, when I am doing it myself, I am trying to make up a little circuit that does something. I am not very technical on that level but I've tried that stuff right the way through to operating. The piece that I mentioned a little earlier *The World Within Us*, was a piece for Ghost in the Machine. I wrote this piece and I was working with Complete Video. I had to use their technicians. Sometimes I felt like "God, I wish I could just get my hands on this stuff because I am sure I could do it better for a start." But that's another thing. It's the issue of working through somebody else's hands. If you've got very high-end stuff where you barely, at that time, understand the formulation of how all this stuff works, and what it's doing, and how it's doing what it's doing, you are in somebody else's hands. Some artists are always in that place which must be terribly, terribly frustrating. But in *The World Within Us* I got to see the absolute highest standard. We worked out one night that per hour we were working at that time at about £1000/hour with all the kit we had, trying to get it to do weird stuff. There were the downtime agreements in New York.

**TF:** I am not sure if a woman called Lori Zippay was involved with Electronics Arts Intermix, but the Downtime Agreements, which was when we were doing the shows at AIR and ACME and all the yank stuff was coming in, they had all this capacity to do things with the image which came from New York, from the basis that the New York facilities agreed en-block with the artist to work at £5/ hour. So, the artists could raise £5/hour, work through the night and then feed back to the actual technicians in the morning, what they'd discovered by trying to break their equipment basically. They were learning what else could it do. That was one of the issues with technology working through somebody else's hands. But I've always liked the thing where you do something and something goes wrong, but actually it going wrong is quite an interesting thing.

**MW:** A creative moment that can turn into something very positive.

**TF:** Yes, it important to keep your eyes open, keeping your intuition, keeping wide vision so that you are aware of stuff going on.

**MW:** Do you think digital, or the technology now, has dramatically changed the way people work? Do you think they work in the same way, or you personally?

**TF:** It's certainly ubiquitous. I've just been to a digital arts conference. Apparently You Tube have 70 or 80,000 clips going up every day. I teach sometimes, I teach students that seem to not need to learn the programmes, inasmuch as I was a part of the television generation, they seem to be part of a digital generation where they may not know how to operate the programme but they can poke it enough to make it do something. So, I think that we are in a post-modern moment or rather in the post-post-modern moment. We are in a moment after post-modernity, where digitality enables us to quote everything in sight.

What is it Lev Manovich says? "The operations, the ability to select or originate, the ability to composite, and the ability to publish". So digitality to me is that and it's ubiquitous access. I think the problem then is your creative parameters, when you are making something. I think the boundaries are down. I think it's all a bit running riot. There are a million screaming voices out there and that's the problem. The problem now, is to make stuff that in a way is quiet and can talk through the hubbub if you like.

**MW:** Going back to the very early days and VIDA, can you talk a bit about some of the work that you produced then?

**TF:** I think the first bit of video I was involved in was in 1976. I'd shot film before in 1971. But my art practice started around '76. We made a few pieces, one was called *U2 38* which was a very early promo. It was a punk anti-nuclear promo, which was a combination of film and video and then we made *Presentiments*, which was looking at the way in which you read the screen, how you read duration, when are you bored, why are you bored, what does boredom mean, what happens after the moment of boredom, all that stuff. It wasn't as stringent or pure as some of the work that was going on like those all day things or John and Yoko sleeping for 8 hours. This was a piece that was looking at the way that you read. You encode or decode stuff. Then we did a couple of documentaries because we wanted to try to begin to understand the documentary form. We did one on Chinese comics, which is how the comic form was used in Chinese propaganda. We did one on comics when I had my first moment of the media canon. It was 1977, and I found a guy called Neil Adams who drew Superman, then discovered Siegel and Shuster on the door at DC Comics. He took DC to court to get him a pension because they had invented Superman, but they were just working guys on the door, literally doormen. It was a terrible situation. Anyway I'd made the programme, we made the programme, VIDA, on comics, and then I took it up to Arena who said they weren't interested, but 3 months later it was on. So, there's my first moment of media engagement, read of that what you will. So we did some documentaries. Then *Talking Heads* happened and that was when we wanted to rip apart the documentary, we wanted to articulate, tried to articulate what's going on. Then we did *Money Talks*, we really started ripping apart our practice at that time. It was an unfinished piece, it still is unfinished, but it's better as an unfinished piece because we'd got to the point where we destroyed it. We ripped it to bits and destroyed it. But I still like the piece. We did a piece on Eisenstein called *Programme of Attractions* about what formed him, why he was neurotic about film.

**MW:** So, there was a kind of politicisation of all the work that you were doing, and a lot of the work that you have done since then?

**TF:** Well, the art and the politics of it bleed right through to a project that I am working on right now, I suppose I should mention it now because it links the two, the *Blink* project. I always saw art as the most political act you could do and that was problematic for the academy, because some of them didn't want even to have it in the same sentence with art. "Art is neutral," but that's a nonsense I think, it's just a complete nonsense.

**MW:** When you say 'the academy', do you want to define that?

**TF:** The academy to me is just the dominant nepotistic control mechanism of any given moment in any countries. It's there with the Academy in France. I've met French filmmakers that scream about their academy but it's good to have somebody to rail against, isn't it? So, by that I just mean the people that were benefiting I suppose from being in alignment with the academy, i.e. the Arts Council, The British Film Institute or whoever was giving the money out. It is useful being outside if you can keep producing, because it gives you a keen political awareness. I mean the politics of aesthetics really, if you see what I mean, as opposed to standard, down-the-line politics, but we were involved in some straight down-the-line politics.

**MW:** As well as the politics of aesthetics?

**TF:** It was always the unit. It was always the same and that's the relationship between my industry practice. If I am on a set as a cinematographer, when you are in the middle of it all, going off in that quiet centre sometimes you can't help but know the politics of the environment, of the situation, of the existentialist problem that you've got. The aesthetics are the dominant aesthetics of the production that you are doing. It's the aesthetics that you have inside you in relation to those aesthetics. It's been a very fertile place to be, it is constantly informing my practice.

**MW:** And how do you deal with that, in that situation has it sometimes been very difficult to deal with it?

**TF:** I've given up smoking if that's what you mean. I used to have roll-ups. I've shot 4 feature films, so when you are in the middle of a feature film production and there's 50 people on set and it's all going off and everybody wants an answer from you, the cinematographer, there's only one place to go. That's doing a roll-up, because you've got to concentrate, so they are talking at you but you can be quite focused and you are actually thinking "Oh, go to hell," whilst that's happening. It gives you a moment to think about what you are doing.

**MW:** How have you reconciled the politics of the two situations, do you sometimes find that a difficult position to be in, like working for a big commercial?

**TF:** I've never made anything bad although I've done lots of things that are bad. I've turned things down. One of the first things I got offered was a ritual slaughter of a bull. It was an Islamic thing. It was about 1978. I thought, fuck that! I am a vegetarian for Christ's sake! There was not a chance. I do happen to have election stuff from when it was Neil Kinnock's time. We happened to do the casting for it and let's just say that a bloke called Alan Rasbridge got a scene in front of the shadow cabinet one day with our footage. It's funny, they said, "Oh, we can handle it" and then they lost the election of course. But about two years later somebody offered me to shoot the Tory party commercial. They obviously don't do their checks. The reconciliation of it is simply about one life. It's one life. It has got heavy, very heavy once, but generally I can keep out of trouble and it's the bouncing around between all of the different practices that actually is the valve for all of the different things. I'm still not very articulate but what I mean, it gets me out of anxiety and forces articulation to some degree.

**MW:** To go back again to how you produced work, I know that you produced work for Channel 4 in the early days when they were first formed. Can you talk a bit about that and how you worked with Channel 4?

**TF:** We made this overtly political tape called *Health Emergency* for Brent Health Emergency, that were doing a sit-in at a local hospital. It was an anti-Thatcherite thing. Anyway, we sold that to Channel 4, which was completely mind-blowing because they paid us twice what it cost and then we realised that there we were mucking around with video-makers, doing straight down the line shoots for commercial companies or whatever it was and Channel 4 beckoned because they actually wanted something from us. This is around about 1984. Then we made a few other bits and pieces. We got commissioned. I think Luton 33 had got a development commission from Channel 4 to do something about video art in England, and something had gone wrong, it didn't get produced. So, we got a phone call after producing *Health Emergency*. Would we want to take up the development? So we said "Yeah, of course we do" and that eventuated in 2 programmes on British Video Art called *On Video*. This was exactly the same moment as *Ghost in the Machine*, the first one. John Wyver at Illuminations didn't seem to want to do too much about context, and it was very, very important to us about why people were producing what they were producing, so we did interviews with the artists. There are 2, one-hour works on there. It was 1985 that it came up. 1986 and '87 saw *On Video* 4, 5 and 6, which was European Video Art and we did a cast around.

**MW:** Right, and can you remember the British artists that you interviewed for that?

**TF:** I can't remember whether we did the Gorilla Tapes. I think they were the second run. The primary makers around that period were Marty St-James and Anne Wilson, Jeremy Welsh, Dave Critchley, although he was from a slightly earlier generation of video makers. I don't really remember, but these exist as documents. They just need to be looked at and then people will find out who. There's the work in there plus the people talking about their work. It was mainly people around LVA at the time.

**MW:** And at Channel 4 who commissioned you? Who were you working with at Channel 4?

**TF:** I was quite video-y then as an oppositional stance and we had basically Alan Fountain, Caroline Sprime and Rod Stoneman to work with. I always had a bad relationship with Rod Stoneman, but it was very productive. We were always arguing about stuff. I think Alan commissioned the first thing and then Rod took it over, that was the deal. Then they rang us up a few times about other projects that were kind of hairy. We were doing one on Mark Thatcher on the Oh You Mama project and it was huge. We were doing a documentary on the involvement of Mark Thatcher in the Oh You Mama, which Margaret Thatcher was brokering with the Saudis. We had our commission. We did the research, and on the morning of the first day of the shoot, we got a phone call from Channel 4 saying, "Stop it". So, that one went down. We had some trouble. Peter Savage did a piece about Margaret Thatcher in the *On Video* series, and we had Number 10, Channel 4, and ITN ringing up "Stop this, you mustn't put it out". Well, we put it out of course, because Jeremy Isaacs got behind it.

**MW:** So there was quite a lot of pretty feisty, high-end political statements that you were involved in?

**TF:** Yes, I can't go anywhere with the politics without the art and I can't go anywhere with the art without the politics. That's just the deal.

**MW:** Are there works, which are important to you in the development of your practice but aren't necessarily more widely acknowledged as important by other people or the external viewers?

**TF:** That's a kind of joke question for me because you probably get every artist ranting about the fact that nobody recognises them. "Nobody recognises me, my work's great!" They want to say that of course. I hate the histories. I'm not going to hate the people that write the histories, but the histories are just complete rubbish as far as I am concerned. They've got no resemblance to what went on as far as I remember it.

**MW:** Are there works that are important to you in the development of your practice, but aren't necessarily more widely acknowledged as important by the greater viewing public or critics?

**TF:** All 150 of them. The stuff that's in one's own mythology about oneself and what you produce, and in amongst that group of people that write about the work, there are certain things that get noted and in various books there are references to things like *Prisoners* and *The World Within Us*, but there are a few pieces that mean a lot to me in certain ways. There is one piece, which was made in 1981, called *Towards Intuition in American Landscape*. We went to America in search of intuition and the landscape, the topography. What we were learning to do was to think of one thing in terms of another, which has become easier in digital terms, but it's getting at something by articulation, through the premises of another thing. That work did that for me. It did get some write-ups. For me, a lot of these works are just buried in time, but that was significant. *Zagorsk* was a significant moment because I was in Russia on shoots. I went to Russia a couple of times. Once we did a thing called *Women in Soviet Cinema* with Sally Potter. *Zagorsk* was looking at the rise of the Russian Orthodox Church and decline of the Jewish religion in Russia. Basically, I was working as a cinematographer-cameraman and the director got sick for weeks, so I was in control of all the interviews and stuff. Most camera people can turn into a director quite easily. I ended up in *Zagorsk*, which was like Canterbury only multiplied by eight. Basically, they've got this octagonal square with cathedrals on each of the facets of the octagonal space. I was just coming out of one of the cathedrals and I got picked up by a policeman, physically picked up and put in a square in this octagon. Then out of another door came the Patriarch of all Russia and 30 Archimandrites dressed in lime green and gold. They were Neophytes. There were all kinds of things going off and I was getting in the mix. So, I had to make a piece, which was about the spiritual transmission. It was about the political transmission between old people and young people and this missing generation of middle-aged people in Russia. The piece *Zagorsk* is very important to me just because, the thing about being a camera person is sometimes you're hidden in there amongst it. If you are just a cameraperson then you abrogate your self and you just

do the camera thing, but if you get a slight displacement with yourself in existential terms, then you can't help but be opened up in some way. *Zagorsk* was that moment for me.

**MW:** Was that shown anywhere, that piece?

**TF:** It was shown in loads of festivals. That's the other thing. Whilst the English scenario trundled on, while this little country of ours with our little 60 million population is knotted up with its history and its video art, all of that stuff, out there our work was going off. From the first moment when we were students, we were sending tapes off to festivals. We had a fantastic time. I was with some people recently. One of whom, who is an extreme jetsetter in this world, was saying that video art is like that. Apart from being a sports person or a celebrity, you are jet-setting. We were doing untold festivals. Our work was going all over the place. But it wasn't for the Academy practitioners in this country. Here was the deaf point. You wouldn't really see their work out there. Out there, you'd see Triple Vision. You'd see Gorilla Tapes. You'd see the Duvet Brothers, George Barber and George Snow. I don't want to do anybody down here, but there was some work that was happening out there in all of the festivals.

**MW:** And where did you go?

**TF:** Where didn't we go! We went to Kuala Lumpur, Montreal, Madrid, Rome, Barcelona, Berlin, all over the bloody show. I remember sitting around in Madrid in 1987 with a group of artists. I was with David Larcher and a few others, and sitting around the table, was Bill Viola, one of the present day stars. There we all were, still quite green and excited by the whole thing, and these days of course the Brits are nowhere and the Americans are opening at the Tate, the Hayward, the Museum of Modern Art in New York and Los Angeles. I remember at that time the only person to sit around the table with the curator was Bill Viola. He was pretty switched on. We weren't very switched on. But that group of makers who weren't very regarded here, or they were regarded but as The Barnum and Bailey Circus, what are they up to now? What are the Duvets up to and so on? Actually, out there, were very, very, very seriously regarded makers. And the people that were regarded highly here, weren't really regarded very much out there.

**MW:** And did you win any awards at festivals?

**TF:** Yes, it started off in 1979 at the Tokyo Video Festival. We got an award there and from Montpellier and Lugarno.

**MW:** And what pieces were they for?

**TF:** *World Within Us* was the one that struck gold. In terms of it being a commission for Ghost in the Machine that was one that got awards all over the show. It was a complex and difficult piece, because a friend of mine had just died of cancer, so there was that issue going off. I'd just seen Bertrand Tavernier's 'A Sunday in the Country'. I love Tarkovsky and I'd just read a Glastonbury Romance by John Cooper Powers. The line that informed *World Within Us* was one where an old gardener comes in and the housekeeper is washing potatoes at the sink. The description was "She listened with the patience of

women of all ages, as men as they are wont to do, muse upon things greater than themselves." It struck me humorously on one level, but it actually made me think of the silly preoccupations of men and hubris of men, and the death of my friend. Sunday in the Country is about a famous painter. It finishes with a man. The camera tracks around and you find you are looking at a man looking at a canvas. The camera tracks around to over-shoulder and the canvas is completely bare. He is 80 years old. It means he's never painted the picture he ought to have done and he's always played to the gallery. So when I went downstairs in the cinema there were loads of men all over the show, just crying their eyes out.

**MW:** And *World Within Us* is a drama, isn't it? Not a documentary as such?

**TF:** It's not a documentary. To me it's just a straight down the line piece of video art, but it was video art with a narrative and that was problematic for the British Academy. It didn't play the academy game here, and I think narrative has always been seen as impure. To me it's just part of the pallet. Of course you will use it. Why wouldn't you? You'd be silly not to. Of course it's got traps. I showed this piece *One Second to Midnight* to Gary Hill about 2 weeks ago and it was really funny. He said, "It's sort of Hollywood, isn't it?" That's the problem with narrative - it starts and it ends and you've got deliveries to do. I suppose a good use of narrative is to not deliver, or at least, you've got to be very careful. You can't mess around with an audience if you are going to play with narrative. But, you can deconstruct. I think it's your responsibility. If you going to enter the narrative line, the timeline, and actually all pieces of moving images, they start here and they end here - even installations to my mind. You go into a gallery. You are in there. You come out of the gallery. It starts at A and it ends at Z. It's a narrative experience. I've always seen that as a very, very important issue. So, *The World Within Us* is a narrative.

**MW:** You've written quite a lot about video or video art and video technologies, what kind of things have you written?

**TF:** I tend to write on the outskirts I suppose. I do my industry articles for Showreel Magazine and High Definition Magazine and all that. At the moment with the Blink Project, one of the issues is to create a theoretical resource, a documentation of the process of making this thing. So, instead of being looked back upon in terms of the theory. I should just deal with the theories that come up as we go. I've written the odd thing here or there.

**MW:** And you are writing a book at the moment?

**TF:** Yes, I'm writing a novel actually. But, that's just men's midlife crisis, coffee table stuff. It's a social obligation in the '00s to write a novel. It's just something I have to do. It's to do with text being a problematic area for me. But this is a critical moment for me, and I probably won't get it but I'm pitching up for a creative research fellowship in High Definition and I should be hearing in the next couple of weeks. I didn't get it last time. I got a 'resubmit'. If that goes ahead then I've been talking to the Leonardo Series about writing a thing on high definition, which is a bit of a head banger to make it available in theoretical terms as well as experiential terms, and the sheer technicalities involved.

**MW:** How do you see High Definition in relation to your own practice?

**TF:** I first came across it in 1992, which was the old 1250 line Philips system - an analogue high definition system. It was sparkling, amazing and fantastic. We are now with this rather below par Sony system. What they don't tell you about is that they throw 500 pixels away before they even stick it on tape. So, you only get 1440 pixels. It's things like that, little con tricks like that. There's a lot of stuff in there that I won't get into. It's quite nerdy. I suppose I've shot a fair bit in lots of different formats because there are many High Definitions and there will be many. High Definition is a doorway out of the format laden analogue world. You have to look at the language. 'High' it suggests behind closed doors, an inner sanctum if you are getting really psychoanalytical. Then there are all the flying issues around 'High' - the bullet flies high and all that stuff. 'Definition' is about resolution so there's a lot of promise in the language, even the naming of it. Within the practice, it's a bit like holding a carrot out in front of people. They have to trudge on after it. I think it's a pivotal moment in digital technology that promises wide cities covered in skins of screening, where you have no textures to anything and you just infuse it from the high resolution generation. It's wacko sci-fi territory. It's what it promises. And the practicalities of the medium as it stands at the moment, are just like the old black-and-white PortaPak, you couldn't make the sodding thing work properly.

**MW:** How do you think it's informed your work, as a creative practice? How do you think the potential of it will manifest itself?

**TF:** It's buried in a image for me, High Definition. I remember the day we were told we were getting a single tube colour camera, low-band U-matic. We'd been working on black-and-white reel to reel, and tomorrow we were going to be doing High Definition. It's tomorrow isn't it? It's the in-formation of the practice. It's the way in which we get the camera. We go out on shoot. We are dead pleased with it. In five years time we are looking back and thinking, "God, what a load of old crap that was." So that's what I mean about it being arcane and hidden and high priests and high resolution. There is this other thing going around with High Definition with me because I'm doing some research on it. It's a bit like when the Lumière Brothers put on the thing with the train, everybody ran out of the cinema screaming because they thought it was a real train coming in. In Super High Vision, which is the 8K version of high definition, they've only managed to record three minutes with 16 SR decks. But when they played it back, it was of a car ride, everybody ran out throwing up because the hyperrealism of the medium is beyond what we are used to at the moment. So to me, it's just a doorway and the way it informs the practice is simply that I am doing it. I will be doing it. We'll all be doing it. It will have technical and aesthetic repercussions to be dealt with. See Tomorrow. Note to self, "Keep awake." I'd love to be talking to more people to get some articulation about the aesthetics of the medium because I'm not a theorist. I'm not fundamentally practicing the use of metaphor. I was talking about that with *Towards Intuition* where you looked at something within another thing's terms. I think what theory is, is you look at something with the terms of another so that you can unveil something about it. I am not practiced enough at the moment. I've used high definition, but I am not practiced enough in finding my analogies and my metaphors to get at it. But, I am working on it. First of all, I'm trying to understand the technicalities. For me, it's important to understand what it's doing whilst it's doing it - what's under the bonnet.

- MW:** In order to be able to use it creatively and aesthetically?
- TF:** Well, if you're going to break rules you're going to know what the sodding rules are.
- MW:** As a cinematographer, camera operator in the industry, how does that crossover with your knowledge and work? How has that influenced your practice, or has it influenced your practice?
- TF:** It's all about light as a cinematographer. That practice involves a certain set of skills that you have to obtain. It's good to know the history. It's good to know why bounced light, soft light is in dominant use at the moment. Going back to Nestor Almendros and his mirror smashing in 1953 or whenever, and the Interior of Cuba, he was trying to bounce sunlight down the corridor and a mirror falls over. He notices the light bouncing off the walls and sees that it's beautiful. He sends his documentaries off, or the Cuban Ministry of the Interior or whoever sends it off, to the documentary festivals in Paris in late 50's. Truffaut and Rohmer and all those people, whoever, see it and go, "This is great. Get this guy over!" Then eventually the Yanks see it and get him to do Close Encounters. But in that moment of noting an aesthetic, that's what I'm talking about. I've had to learn the dominant skills, what's fashionable in commercials, whether we burn our windows out or whether we leave them, whether you can see through them or whatever. All these dominant aesthetics that are practiced have had to inform and could not help but inform my practice in terms of making images. If I made a bad image it would be an intentionally bad image, because I know what a good image is. It's a terrible thing to say and it sounds terribly arrogant, but knowing what the criteria is about the production of images means that you've got to tread a bit lightly as you go. So. it has meant, in terms of producing art, that it has been informed by my cinema practice. It's quite hard question to answer though. It's really quite hard.
- MW:** The influences that you mention there are of film cinematographers and film directors, so how do you translate that into video?
- TF:** From the very beginning, I was absolutely video-nuts. Even when we had 10 tones between black-and-white in black-and-white PortaPaks, we thought we could do something interesting with the image. It was like, there was a moment in video history, the technology of video that unless you had peak white or 1 Volt you couldn't even get a focus in the image. That was back in Marconi days with turret cameras and one-inch video and all that stuff. There was a moment also when cameras could get a focused image with 75% of white being exposed and so on and so forth down the scale, and in VIDA and Triple Vision, we were pushing quite hard for good lighting to happen in the production of images. It was very observable in video art up until about 1985, that most images being produced were lit like this. They were just dreadful. They didn't care about the aesthetics of the production of the image, and yet they cared about aesthetics - work that one out. So, come 1987, I shot a feature film. It was a Channel 4 feature film, the first one on video to be transferred, as far as I know it anyway. We shot on Beta SP and it was transferred to 35mm for cinema distribution. It's called *Out of Order*. Anyway, at that moment I had to pull everything that I knew about video, or was learning about lighting, and tried to push it

into video. In those days, in the early days of video, it wasn't even generally obvious. People didn't know and I needed to stumble over it by accident. If you put something in front of the lens and balance through it, it will change the colour. It would lie to the camera about what white was. I did this extensively on that piece of work for Channel 4, really pushing it all over the show. Now it's common parlance that this is what you do. So I'm talking about how the discoveries in technicalities from my cinematic involvement, crossed into the artwork. So yes, they would naturally be carried over. We'd be trying to make good images. In fact the criticism we gave, the bullets that we gave to the other side - the Purists - were that we were too sodding sleek because we did care. We really did care.

**MW:** You've mentioned quite a few people who were influential in terms of your videographic practice aesthetic, are there other people or things that you feel have been influential in your work?

**TF:** I love Robert Cahen's work. I think he is pretty top actually. He's pretty amazing. He's a very nice guy, humble. He's a great artist.

**MW:** He is a French video artist?

**TF:** He is a French video artist, yes. He made a seminal piece of work called *Juste Le Temps* in about 1981/'82, which used slow motion. When slow motion became one of those technical moments in production – available, some people really, really knew what to do with it. Viola plays with it all the time but that's a whole other thing. I like some of Viola's work. I like his simple stuff. I like the one with the tap where you go in down one end of the room, and there is a huge distorted image coming from a projector, with the whole space that you are in. Down the other end, there is a tap dripping and the image of this end comes into being and goes out of being. It's a Buddhist statement. Basically he's got a little camera down the other end on the tap as it is dripping. It's a great piece of work. At that level there's that and over here you got Tarkovsky who's not afraid of narrative. He's not afraid of making fantastic images. Then there's Ridley Scott for Christ's Sake even. In terms of literature, there are all the greats. It all goes into the mix.

**MW:** We've talked about things that you've written and are writing, but have people written about your work?

**TF:** Yes, all the usual suspects have. There are a few books including, *Diverse Practices* by Julia Knight, *Picture This* by Philip Haywood, *Timeshift* by Sean Cubit: those sorts of things. I don't know what it all means really. I like that some of them seem to like it. I like that.

**MW:** Can you talk about what you are working on at the moment? I know that you are still doing work and that's important to you.

**TF:** At the beginning of this interview, I'd started to talk about production of work. I've mentioned key works from the 70's, key works from the 80's, and key works from the 90's. Now we are in the 2000s, and the reason I mentioned earlier on in this interview, the *White Goods Project*, was that it wasn't realised because money didn't come through for the

Bonn Biennale. However in 2003 I made *The Dinner Party*, which is what it would be like if you shot a dinner party from above on a 16 by 9 table. That is then projected right back down on to the dinner table with 8 chairs around it and 8 white plates to catch the virtual food. That one's running permanently in Milan at the moment. I'm talking with a restaurant in Bristol who want to purchase it too. Blimey, it's taken 15 years to get that into being and currently, I proposed an extension of that. It's called *In Other People's Skins*. It's a kind of homage to Da Vinci's *Last Supper*. That's booked for Wells Cathedral, Bristol Cathedral, Bath Abbey and Gloucester Cathedral and a couple of other cathedrals. Salisbury didn't want it because they are too busy. So that will be a lark, *The Last Supper*. What it is, is a table that you sit at and people just engage with each other. What's more, I've never seen so much delight on people's faces when they play with the work. The art is "touch it" rather than "don't touch it". The thing about *In Other People's Skins*, I use lots of different races' skins so that the white can put their hands in the black and the black can put their hands in the white because they imitate what's going off at the Last Supper. There's that, and there is the *Laying on of hands*, which is another table piece. But, the key work was *Wings* from 2003. I found a quote about Georgia O'Keeffe. I visited Abecue which is the place where Georgia O'Keeffe lived and I had a picnic in the cemetery there, which was pretty fantastic. We'd come across a piece of writing by Georgia O'Keeffe when she was late on in her life - 92-ish. She'd lost her sight and she took up ceramics. She talks about creativity as coming to the edge of a precipice and looking over into the dark, and how the only thing to do was to dive off of the precipice because then your fear would turn into wings. This issue that was evoked in that piece of writing is also related to the approach, the digitality for a generation that grew up with analogue video and has had to embrace new forms of digital video. I'll pull all of this in, but there is somehow in which the kids that we are teaching, those of us who come across students: the digitality is of them. They've practiced it from the very beginning, whereas, we have to approach it in a different way. The point about *Wings* was it forced me to engage very heavily with an issue within digitality, and to try and find the way that I'd approached analogue video to find the plasticity of the medium. I've been trying to find a way of, using the metaphor, tipping paint on to paper. I've been trying to use digital media in that way, where happy accidents were occurring and how I could have a relationship to digitality that would unveil the same area of creativity. That's it. That's what I was trying to say. So, *Wings* is a piece that does that for me. It opened that up.

**MW:** You made that in 2003?

**TF:** Yes, in 2003. In terms of when I've been making pieces, I subsumed my creativity around about 1993/94 and became a full time cinematographer, but started pulling it back out again around about 1997. I got a 50 grand production award from South West Screen to do something in 1997, which was a narrative piece. It was a straight down the line narrative piece that I'd written. But, art started coming back into my mix again in 1998, 1999, 2000 and by 2003 I was making *Wings* and never really having put to bed the *Inevitability of Colour*, I keep making pieces that add on to that. I'm talking about digitality because that was shaped at the beginning of digitality. Now, I'm up to 10 pieces deep. It's called *14 History Lessons*, *18 Visions* and *21 Beatifications*. Added to that is the *Blink Project*, which includes *One Second to Midnight*, which I made in the last 5 or 6 months. One night I decided I had to make something. So, I switched on the television, picked up

the camera, pointed the camera at the TV and went for that aesthetic where you actually see what the TV image is constructed of and tried to start taking it apart again. The *Blink* project is about making a piece of work between 30 seconds and 3 minutes, and then handing it on to another artist who makes a piece in response to that. The proviso is that they come from another country and eventually 30 pieces of work thereabouts will be made. The whole collective work, *Blink*, is about a gaze. It is about a snapshot of the world as it exists at this moment of time, the artistic gaze. It will be sold as a collector's item and the money that's raised will be donated to a children's refuge in Lima in Peru to make some political statement out of the art that was made.

**MW:** And you've got some people onboard already?

**TF:** Yes, the artists involved in *Blink*, are to me really important makers. They are people like Robert Cahen, whose work I love. There is Gary Hill who's at the Tate at the moment, and Woody and Steina Vasulka, who basically taught everybody how to do video in the first place. I saw Steina Vasulka doing a performance the other day. She must be about 68 or 69. She's got a violin in her hand, she is hacking away and basically chopping up the image because she is all connected up digitally. It was fantastic. Bill Seaman is also involved. I can't remember the rest, but there are some quite substantial makers, who are going to give their work for free.

**MW:** How long do you envisage it's going to take to make?

**TF:** Well, I made my piece fast. Robert is in the process of making his. He is going to come here actually, and I'm going to be his technician, and we are going to make his piece here. There are 30 people, multiplied by 2 months each. It's going to take about 6 years. I hope it's faster than that. But it's very important that it is from people from all around the planet and from all continents. This is the digital moment.

**MW:** In a way it's almost like going back to what you were talking about in the very beginning with *VIDA* and the gaze and quite politicised documentary. You were using documentary in a very informed way and almost deconstructing the genre of documentary. So in a way, it seems to me, that between *Blink* and your very early work there isn't a great divide there.

**TF:** *Blink*'s about collective behaviour and I'd probably take a little bit of issue with documentaries, probably documentation. Because artists needed to validate themselves, they documented their work. Then Academia looked at the documentations and tried to systematise it. So, documentation has become part of art and documentation is art and documentaries are art. It always was. That's what happened I think. That is what is happening. I think that's good.

**MW:** Is there anything else that you want to talk about, that we haven't touched on or that you think is important?

**TF:** We've touched on a lot of things but there is also a lot under the bonnet. One of the principles of *Blink* is that it is not only between 30 seconds and 3 minutes, and not only from people from other countries, which is an important thing, it is that we can actually

spend the time together. We can have an evening, where we can have a glass of wine and some food and actually get on well as artists and as people, in a social context that is also a political context and an artistic context. That's an absolute proviso in this project. That's probably come from the fact that I'm getting older. So there is a lot under the bonnet as I say and one could take any of these issues apart and have some fun with it, but there's so much. As well as that, I made a nice piece recently. I am finding in the new work, that I am actually going back to one of the principles of the old work. An artist can make a piece wherever they are with whatever they've got. It just so happens that I work in moving images. There was this moment in Video Art, when people had to start making prints and little sculptures, which is where installation comes from and all these things about making a product that's sellable in the art market. But there was this moment before, where, if you had a camera for 5 minutes, the artistic gaze could actually produce something out of those 5 minutes. So, I made a piece recently, I happened to be in this rather extraordinary place which is called Cirali in Turkey, and just down the road there is the 4000 year old city of Olympos and then down the other end there is a place called Chimera where the flame of Chimera burns and has burned for the last 20 000 years or whatever. So, I made a piece. I had a friend's camera and I just went up there. You have to climb up the sodding mountain basically, but I shot for about 10 minutes and I made a piece. That's what's happening now. I went through this long, long period because of my technical involvement in the cinema game, where it would become very laden with dollies and tracks and big post-production scenarios and all of that stuff and the work became very pre-planned. You think everything out at the beginning, and everything is with a dot and a coma to it, even your practice after the moment you've made the script. It's a very British thing of writing about visual images with text beforehand like a script, as if that's the dominant form. In fact, once you've chucked the script away, the next script is the visual script. I don't mean the text version of it, but the actual doing of it. You chuck that away and it's the editing script, messing around with stuff. So, I suppose that my current work has the kind of exuberance of the first work, because before we didn't know not to. Now I know not to but I don't give a fuck actually, so I'm just going to do it.



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