



# **Secession**

## **Charlie Prodger**

**5 Me mouth noise / Fox ears twitch, Sarah Hayden**

**45 Video stills and production stills, SaF05, 2019  
Charlie Prodger**

**Me mouth noise/Fox ears twitch**  
**Sarah Hayden**

Voice, for Charlie Prodger, is material: a stuff that is subject to variations in texture, weight, and pliancy, charged with sonorous and affective potentialities and open to interference. All that is sayable (*disible*) is divisible. It can be handled in ways that are more and less messy, transmit more and less fully, or spill over species boundaries. It has objecthood. It can be thrown. Language, too, has presence as matter. It occupies territory, accumulates in curious heaps, pulses, dances, makes shapes. Names undergo procedural permutations; texts obey additive rules and serial logic. All the while, it matters.

The speaking voice says “listen to what I am saying” while it also says “listen to how I sound”. In Prodger’s work, these contrary claims resonate together, like harmonising drones. Across her trilogy of single-channel films, voice tussles with soundtrack for acoustic and attentional space; jostling for a share of the subwoofer. The apprehension of sound-as-meaning is obstructed by the pressing presence of sound-as-sound that refuses to recede into the background. The friction that results ruffles, roughens voice’s relation to the audio/visual. The speaking voice says “listen: I am” (or “I was” or “I wish”). But its “I” might be one borrowed, tried on, acquired in a swap. Her “I” can stray; it gets about.

Charlie Prodger is known for using what is commonly referred to (ever so simply) as “voiceover”. This essay is an attempt to press upon and complicate that designation. Beginning by addressing the complexity of voice across Prodger’s work, I focus especially on *Stonemollan Trail* (2015) and *BRIDGIT* (2016): the first two films of the trilogy presented at Secession. Then, I zero in on *SaF05* (2019), to dwell in detail on what happens *to* voice and *through* voice at the conclusion of the trilogy.

What follows is animated by a suspicion that the rigour of Prodger’s formalist image-making is matched (even potentially exceeded) by her formalist approach to voice and writing. Just as she toggles between film formats and aspect ratios, reanimating defunct A/V tech to meditate on mediation, so does she attend to the materiality and even historicity of voice:

in moving image, in storytelling, in prose, in exchange, in live performance. Writing on Prodger rightly emphasises the artist's hyper-attunement to embodied being, and dwells on her "prosthetic" use of technology. But treatments of these topics have tended to dwell on what is caught inside the image frame: the films' registrations (as undulation) of the artist's body's micro-movements, a finger's part-occlusion of a camera-phone lens lighting up the tracery of circulatory system inside.<sup>1</sup> In fact—and as I'll be endeavouring to demonstrate—our entangled extensivity as machines-and-bodies is equally apparent in Prodger's handling of voice: her own and other body-haunted voices. Against the bent of the voice's traditional patrimony, for Prodger, as for Mladen Dolar, voices are always prosthetic and non-"authentic" from the start.<sup>2</sup>

### I, aye

Uniting the films of the trilogy is their marshalling of a kind of "lyric authorial voiceover"—recordings of the voice of the artist speaking in ostensibly autobiographical, first-person modes. And yet, in spite of any biographical correspondences that might be inferred, Prodger's voiced "I" is not innocent of the baggage it bears. Her "I" carries all of the charge and contestation of the "I" of twenty-first-century lyric poetry. It knows the territory to be fraught. Though it might pass, or be parsed as the "I" of raw diary, its every instantiation semaphores scepticism about voice as promise of presence. Prodger's "I" is no index to identity. However tender the recollections it relays, the artist's voice does not purport to channel an "authentic", coherent self. Selfhood is absolutely at issue here, but is never allowed to lie flat. Even where it comes off as straightforwardly transparent, this voice sows polyphony, attenuates illusions of intimacy and under-mines (termite-like) presumptions about who is speaking.

Helen Vendler calls lyric "the genre that directs its mimesis toward the performance of the mind in solitary speech",<sup>3</sup> and this double underlining (of performativity and pretence) is worth remembering here. The coherent lyric subjectivity intimated

by the close-miked *sound* of Prodger's voiceover turns fractal upon scrutiny. Characters, however lucidly drawn, turn out to be composites of multiple memories. Personal history—however precisely date-stamped—is not pulled directly from diaries but is instead a reconstruction. The past has been artefacted: a museum mammoth cast in resin from a jumble of bones. What presents as linear recording time is the product of exquisite frame-by-frame editing of audio. Its seeming integrity is artficed through atomisation, as multiple takes are sliced and spliced. Sub-audible, the seams that remain vibrate in the listener's subconscious. What might be heard as "diaristic" is the furthest thing from the clean immediacy of testimony, the guarantee of integrity that persists—yes, even in art—in the idea of a "living voice".<sup>4</sup> The stable lyric subject takes flight. Meanwhile, acute calibrations of syllabic stresses sculpt modular forms from the rhythms of reading aloud. Attention is redirected from personality to pattern.

Indeed, and as this essay tries to affirm, "voiceover" is a mean term for what's at issue here: suggesting, as it does, the superimposition of something consistent, explanatory, authoritative. "Voiceover" still summons a unifying overlay that slicks into coherence an otherwise-jumble of sounds and (moving) images; it is a glaze that holds the whole, making it satisfyingly smooth and complete. Conversely, a determinedly anti-cohesive agenda everywhere pervades Prodger's handling of voice. The "voiceover" found here is notably non-stable. Surfacing and disappearing, it proves prone to switches in voicer. Shirking responsibility, Prodger's voiceover-that-isn't comes and goes. It intermits. And like the "white space" that punctures (and so negatively creates) a page of poetry—carving typographic matter into lines and stanzas, splitting words apart—its silences signify. Like musicless bars in a score, the intervals in the transmission call out to be read.

Corporeal at the point of production and reception alike, voice is "always a question of bodies, filled with drives, desires, and blood",<sup>5</sup> and simultaneously "*plus-de-corps*: both the surplus of the body, a bodily excess, and the no-more-body, the end

of the corporeal”.<sup>6</sup> The artist’s voice invokes the artist’s body. But as well as herself voicing scripts, the artist works with other voicers too, enlisting vocal performances from friends and familiars, “people I feel an affinity with and affection for”.<sup>7</sup> Their speaking bodies are made present in the audio but do not materialise as speakers on-screen, and the voicers are not usually identified by name either. This predilection for vocal promiscuity rubs intriguingly against personal, often intimate disclosures. Surrogates and stand-ins slip in and out of audibility, swap over, switch roles, their “I”s landing ever less easily.<sup>8</sup> In the resulting mix (everywhere but in *SaF05*), other accents, other timbres and speech styles recur. Prodger returns to these revenant voices as subjectively as a sculptor revisits a particular material, or a composer returns to a particular model of synthesiser. The voices she reaches for repeatedly become familiar, recognisable as is her own.

Dolar writes of the speaking voice as a “vanishing mediator” that “goes up in smoke in the meaning being produced”,<sup>9</sup> and Liz Mills of how language silences sound, of how, as soon as a voice is heard to be speaking, “sound as vibration, sound as energy, and sound as texture are eclipsed by the presence of language”.<sup>10</sup> Against the force of this fate, Prodger uses polyphony to keep the voice-as-material available to perception. If, as Dolar suggests, “a heavy accent suddenly makes us aware of the material support”, causing the listener to “stumble on” the voice, then surely this materialising effect is only enhanced when the textures of multiple different regional accents, patterns of intonation and timbral features can be heard to succeed one another (in out-of-phase concert).<sup>11</sup> Each change of voicer prompts a momentary micro-adjustment in listening stance, an aural refocusing of the frame. In place of the self-abnegating continuity of the single stable voiceover, each new voice summons different spectral bodies to mind. Audible alterity forces the listener to remain sensitive to the ongoing though almost instantaneous work of translating sound received into sense understood.

As a result of Prodger’s always surgical and musical handling of voiced language, these films leave the listener in thrall to an aural/audible analogue of an after-image: host to an earworm that echoes what’s spoken rather than sung. Post-encounter, the listener finds their “inner voice” subject to a possession that is melodic, rhythmic, tonal, timbral, a contagion of the inner voice-track that goes beyond simple physiological synch-up into something more like vocal infection; a transmission of cadence (as Irene Revell points out) from artist-voicer to repeat-receiver.<sup>12</sup> The hearing listener emerges with ears pricked (like those of the fox cub so patiently observed in *Stonemollan Trail*), swivelling delicately (like those of the cat in *BRIDGIT*), or bent in pursuit (like those of the lion-tracking humans in *SaF05*).

### Voices thrown

Whether or not Prodger distributes the script amongst a plurality of voicers, the texture of each film’s voiced text is always heteroclit. Intercut with freshly scripted first-person narrative fragments are instances of sampling and ventriloquism: the respeaking of pre-written (emails, YouTube comments, books, blogs) or pre-spoken (performances, overhearings, conversations) linguistic artefacts. Some revoiced readings of found writing (such as passages from Samuel Delaney’s *The Motion of Light in Water* in *Stonemollan Trail*) are notably sustained. No mere glib nods to the existence of a particular text or idea, these long-form recitations land like vocal homages. Indicative, in their duration, of a desire to disseminate both textual content and literary form, these sustained citations transmit the voice (style) of in-corporated text. Occasionally, as in *BRIDGIT*, Prodger follows something akin to the conventions of critical prose, assiduously relaying Julian Cope’s musings on Aberdeenshire Neolithic humanity in a reportage-collage of what “he says” and “he writes”. More often than not, these revoiced citations go unmarked, withholding their sources until the credits or transcript. Borrowings whose syntax and diction declare their extrinsic derivation, they are liable to be recognised by some listeners and missed by others. In those more widely read than they are secure of memory (the author

waves), this will occasion a curious sensation of running into something *déjà lu* (already read) or *étendu* (heard).

When the source text sampled originated in speech, its revoicing opens up further, fractal possibilities. In the video installation *Percussion Biface*, Prodger's voice relays a bar worker's anecdote, investing the displaced re-performance with something like an acted rendition of the story as it might originally have been spoken. Here, revoicing approaches the inhabitation of a role, animation of an identity via vocal reconstruction. This throwing of voices through differently gendered bodies unsettles essentialising, biologising conceptualisations of gender, voice and identity as given rather than made. In the 16mm film, *A Forest for the Neighbours*, a story first told to Prodger by a young woman in a club is effectively thrown between speakers and through ostensibly differently gendered bodies.<sup>13</sup> The tightly framed and luxuriantly bearded reading mouth is made a voicing machine, stopping and starting as would a tape recorder in response to the artist's murmured cues.

Prodger has form in posing identity as a game of swaps, shifts and programmable moves. Voices speak litanies of interchangeable names for a single/multiple deity, a YouTuber's username (Paleomanjim) is tracked across forums, initials play coy. In *BRIDGIT*, a voice enumerates instances of misascription of gendered identity and intimate relation: experiences of being inaccurately parsed. Later, the same voice reads from a book by "Sandy Stone. Allucquère Rosanne Stone. Allucquère Rosanne Sandy Stone", in which the recording engineer-turned-coder-turned-media theorist-turned-performer explains that "names themselves weren't codified as personal descriptors until the Domesday book", since (as Julian Cope's own career demonstrates) "identity isn't static". In *Passing as a Great Grey Owl*, Prodger reminds us again that voice is a performance that "passes" as index. The film reframes footage of a TV biologist mimicking the male bird. From out of the darkness, her demonstration of cross-species impersonation elicits an answering hoot.

Across this body of work, Prodger consistently abjures synchronicity, conjuring instead abstract relational propositions from collisions between sound, image and spoken words that rarely, if ever, derive from a shared pro-filmic instant. In *hand-clap/punchhole*, a voice relates a paean to the Sharp GF 767, a boombox renowned "not for its volume, but for its ability to throw sound". The voicer in this instance leans intently on the verb to stress that what is celebrated is not loudness but *propulsion*. The capacity to *throw* sound is what might make a boombox appropriate for use outdoors: whether to be operated by a body-in-motion or to incite bodies into motion. But this line, especially as pitched by its vocal inflection, also points up Prodger's interest—evidenced across the trilogy and beyond—in enacting and extending the spacing of sound from its source. Wherever possible, voices (and other pseudo-statics) will be thrown.

### Voices saved

As well as usually distributing the words to be spoken between voicers, each of the films in the trilogy combines scripted speech with another sort of speaking. Snippets of field-recording-like audio register vocal interactions, often between the artist and friends, frequently while engaged in making these or other films. Partially unintelligible, incompletely captured, these sound snippets register Prodger's pleasure in collecting and preserving speech-as-it-is-spoken. She has a poet's fondness for the arcane lexicons (biface, black butter) of fan-groups (like the "flintknappers") that are always also linguistic communities. In straining to capture meaning, the listener might catch only sound—obdurate sonic objecthood—or (via the affective atmosphere imprinting an exchange) a sense of close relation, inflection as affection. Via this obstruction of readily decoded *semantike* (meaning) we are guided, again, towards *phone* (sound).<sup>14</sup> Sometimes, as in *Stonemollan Trail*, a translation follows later, as speech previously encountered as a blur of sound is re-encountered, transcribed and revoiced. In hearing the voiceover read "cut: 'Is Charlotte in there?' (Katy)", the pre-heard retrospectively resolves in the listener's aural



archives—making memory match. This contrapuntal orchestration of speech-as-found-in-the-wild draws the writtenness of the scripted sections into higher relief. There’s a constructivist energy to how the films make legible (audible) the processes of their own composition. *Stonemollan Trail* revoices an email in which a long-time artist-mentor (Ian White) offers tips on memorising text for performance. The advice incorporated explains how to achieve cognition-free, fully somatic re-performance, but the revoicing of his words will prompt the receiver to move in quite the opposite direction. Whilst the performance under discussion is not one preserved within this film, the revoiced email directs the listener to stay alert to the fact that (most of) what they are hearing said has been composed and deliberately performed.

To translate speech into writing is always to translate askant, in acceptance of the space that separates what was spoken from the transcript that can only ever partially record. However “accurate” or “total” its capture (and this language of seizure will recur at length below), equivalence is illusory. Prodger’s practice stretches the given gap still wider, amplifying inherent inter-version variance in subtle though significant ways. The printed transcripts that accompany each of the trilogy’s single-channel films largely exclude the speech that is not recorded as voiceover (discussed below as the B-voice). What makes these slippages all the more slippery is the inclusion within the transcript of passages of scripted text that did not make it into the film’s final cut. Enriched with some treasures not found in the film and absent of others that exist only there, the “transcript” bends away from the film it claims to transcode. Here, and elsewhere, Prodger counters exposure with evasion. Memorialising a script that might-have-been while betraying the fleeting sound that was, the transcript perturbs in its persistence as supplemental other-than.

### Describing / desiring

Whatever its intended format, Prodger’s writing delights in the affordances of description. In the trilogy, in earlier installations

and in more recently published writing, it’s used to defamiliarise, to extend sensory experience. Description is a method of making sense of experience, and of processing perceptual data. As well as facilitating “the collective, uncertain, and ongoing activity of trying to get a handle on the world”,<sup>15</sup> description (as described by Marcus, Best and Love) also produces pleasure that is “granular, slow, compressed, attentive, appreciative”.<sup>16</sup> Michel Beaujour writes of description as “vector of psychic energy”, as form of remembering, as “functionally perverse”, as integrally bound up with fantasy and desire, and in these films, too, description carries a libidinal charge.<sup>17</sup> In the performance text *Orange Helvetica Title Sequence*, completionism tips the degree of detail beyond audio description convention and into the realm (the romp!) of giddy excess. In describing the music video of New Order’s 1985 “A Perfect Kiss”, the artist’s frame-by-frame analysis of all that transpires on-screen is uncircumscribed by any temporal constraint. Released from audiovisual real-time into the stretch of prose on a page, Prodger is afforded the pleasure—for pleasure it surely is—of describing every move, every camera angle alteration, every sartorial detail (“the right cuff of his leather jacket is scuffed”), even to the point of noting how the logo of a white plectrum that “protrudes from the right corner of [a red-bearded man’s] mouth” is “partially obscured by his lip”. Description encompasses the whole of the artefact spilling round the filmed action to take us from initial “fade up from black” all the way to the “black leader” that “remains for 3 seconds”.

For much of *Stonemollan Trail*, a voice reads Prodger’s characteristically meticulous, chronologically sequenced logging of the audio and visual contents of a trove of MiniDV tapes she shot between 1999 and 2013. Sometimes, these include brief notes about interventions to be made (“take away image”) or degradation that has occurred (“whole tape has pixel corruption down the right side of frame”). Lineated in the transcript like a poem, with a terse, short line per observation (“Me mouth noise/Fox ears twitch/Zoom/Iris fluctuates”), these logs register the role of description in access: searchable text making audio and visual material available in the everyday to the artist

as she works. Sometimes, as is true of a tape titled “Brixton Fox”, these verbal translations succeed the prior appearance of the footage itself, instantiating a staggered audio/visual “snap” effect as the moving image of earlier is re-called to mind. Some extend to encompass description of footage before or after what features in the film. Accessing part of a clip visually and the rest only via its verbal description rubs away at the line between the seen and the heard. Mnemonic contagion threatens.

Voicing, like describing, can be the locus of pleasure and vocal-ity an arena for erotic engagements. On the boombox-thrown tape track of *Colon Hyphen Asterix*, Prodger and two co-voicers read strings of YouTube tags. The trio read in turn, and in rhythm, as though passing a line between singers in a round. Meanwhile, two Hantarex monitors show locked-off views of lowkey interiors. In one, a headless YouTuber performs a solo act of destruction: slicing through a pristine Nike trainer. Care for the fetishised footwear outweighs concern for his blade-threatened (or thrillingly teased) foot. On the other square screen, a headless pair slide through a delicate trainer-swapping ritual that is very nearly a dance. Like the figures on-screen, whose synched slowness is the source of their tracksuited sexiness, the trio on tape cohabit a shared rhythm. The pulsed ecstasy of their reading recalls Adriana Cavarero’s eroticisation of voicing as implicating “a correspondence with the fleshy cavity [that] alludes to the deep body, the most bodily part of the body”, and Nina Sun Eidsheim’s insistence on the involvement of the whole of the body in the “vocal apparatus”.<sup>18</sup> In *BRIDGIT*, Prodger speaks of the power of cool media, reporting that for Sandy Stone, “participating in a narrow bandwidth (for example at that time communicating via a computer, with only text on screen) [means that] we engage more deeply in certain ways, more obsessively even”.<sup>19</sup> In *Stonemollan Trail*, Prodger uses her own voice to test those claims. While the artist reads at length from Samuel Delaney’s memoirs, the screen shows only a black rectangle; this blankness comes to be haunted by projections from temporary cinematic apparatuses, a private viewing dispositive erected in the listener’s mind by Prodger’s voice.

## Pattern recognition

In her 2020 introduction to a screening of Nancy Holt’s *Revolve* (1977), Prodger refers to Holt (with charming reverence) as a “systems person”. Charlie Prodger is herself another such: an artist entranced by grids and preoccupied by the agon of order and entropy. When Prodger revoices Delaney’s recasting of multi-partner public sex as “hugely ordered, highly social, attentive, silent, and grounded in a certain care, if not community”, antithesis in “actuality” to the frenzied chaos of pornographic representations, her vocal performance amplifies the original import. The artist’s metrically measured, care-ful delivery amplifies the modular logic of a system in which “when one cock left”, “a replacement mouth, rectum, another cock” smoothly and consistently slotted into place. In *BRIDGIT* too, the differently coded messiness of bodies in a hospital ward—flesh deemed to be malfunctioning or misbehaving—is transmuted through the artist’s systems sensibility. Equally spaced, transported via the lift to the theatre and then “back up to the ward”, Margaret, Deborah, Eimear and Helen are “points in a moving grid”. In *Stonemollan Trail*, a voice reads from Holt’s April 1977 account of constructing the *Sun Tunnels*. The voicer builds their rendition in four goes, each longer than the last, all but the last running out before reaching the end of the list. Holt’s original list is itself long, but Prodger’s additive choreographing of its rendition (via another voicer) makes the list of collaborators seem even longer, more unlikely in its encompassing of so many different professions. The rule, were it written, might look like this:  $n+1$ ,  $n+1+2$ ,  $n+1+2+3$ ,  $n+1+2+3+4$ .

Prodger thinks in patterns and, as Nicole Yip has observed, is preoccupied with part/whole relations.<sup>20</sup> In consequence, the fervent follower can start to feel distinctly apophenic. Connections proliferate, in subliminal and subterranean ways. The trilogy’s appreciation of dirt, grit and the granularity of ground is pursued across all of its (audio, visual, verbal and conceptual) channels. It’s there in *SaF05*’s recursive camera framings and the artist’s relished repetitions of the word “substrate”. It’s also the cargo carried by Holt’s dump truck

operators in *Stonemollan Trail*, and constitutive of the termite mounds that morphologically mirror the standing stones of *BRIDGIT*. Termites use saliva to make the building material for these implausibly vast structures, mixing it with clay in their mouths, then kneading that round a grain of sand held in their mandibles. While these oral origins of the mounds are understood, what remains in contention is the mound's function in communication. The purpose of neolithic stone systems remains analogously (and only barely more mystically) opaque. A termite mound is an immense ventilation system, managing thermoregulation and climatic conditions for the occupationally organised society within. Strikingly, it is because their tunnels so efficiently facilitate a uni-directional airflow that the termites rely instead on biotremology: a form of "substrate borne vibrations".<sup>21</sup> A ventilator hums hypnotically beneath the voiced database sequences in *SaF05*, barely perceptible until pointed out, then unequivocally in evidence, propelling the near-repetitions around. Holt's *Sun Tunnels* (1973–76) are effectively a set of four huge, empty, perforated pipes. Circular perforations allow for the projection of four constellations—Draco, Perseus, Columba and Capricorn—onto the tunnel interiors, the cosmos translated into patterns of sunlight. The construction of these concrete cylinders—as re-memorialised in *Stonemollan Trail*—occasioned a massive effort of earth moving. As noted above, the film's voiceover dramatises the labour involved; it dwells with enumerative enjoyment on Holt's mega-coordination of contractors. What's more, Holt's *Artforum* account of the process stresses her role as being that of "one individual contacting other individuals".<sup>22</sup> Consistently or compulsively, again and again, Prodger aligns construction with communication and marking (in urine) with mark-making, con-catenating language with the stuff of the world.<sup>23</sup>

### Ok, goats closer

Completing the progression from polyvocality (in *Stonemollan Trail*) to duovocality (in *BRIDGIT*), the voiceover in *SaF05* is assigned to one voice only. This is not to say that there's anything simple about how it works. Prodger carries the voiceover

across all of its six chapters, five of which consist of first person, anecdotal, apparently biographical, reflections, framed in a reanimating present tense.<sup>24</sup> The stories told orbit Prodger's prevailing preoccupations: queer desire, gender, working-class identities, subversions of inherited Scottish rural space and, in "Subs", the incongruous passage, through Loch Long, of nuclear submarines. In the final chapter, "Tunnels", Prodger recounts the last-chance attempt to glean further footage from a moving vehicle being driven at night, with spotlight. The chapter titled "X", which falls midway through the film, combines the vocalised rendition of five logbook entries with an anecdote about a lover coded GaF93. These log entries contain the only explicit spoken references to the work's *ostensible* subject: a fabled maned lioness of the Okavanga Delta, Botswana, known as SaF05.

*SaF05* presents itself as a video about Prodger's quest to track that lion: hirsute emblem of gender-nonconforming nature. Its title commemorates the encoded name of this queer exemplar of epically charismatic megafauna. But if *SaF05* tells a quest-story at all, it does so in an oblique, diffuse, deliberately evasive way. Instead, through its divagations, it tells us a lot about how voice mediates encounters between human receivers and other-than-humans on-screen. And so, having established some prevailing Prodgerian concerns, this essay now addresses what is achieved via vocality in *SaF05*, and the fates of voice and vision thereafter. Starting with what happens when vision is prefigured by voiceover, speculating on drones and dignity, body fluids and buttonlessness, I want to focus now on *SaF05* as the end of the trilogy, attending with special interest to this film's own murmured ending. The crux of my contention will be this: that through the interplay it orchestrates between modes of vocality, *SaF05* realises a revision of the nature (non) documentary and a retort to reproductive normativity.

### Pre—

While the prevalence of voiceover in nature television and film might make the observation of animals *feel* fuzzily factual,<sup>25</sup> the temporal idiosyncrasies of the form trouble any comparison to

documentary or news reportage. Indeed, most wildlife films, as Derek Bousé observes, “are based on a treatment, if not on a script [...] so that wildlife filmmakers often go into the field with a ‘wish list’ or ‘shopping list’ of preselected actions and behaviors they hope to capture on film, and wait to shoot, sometimes for weeks, until the desired actions occur”.<sup>26</sup> This pre-text predetermines the content of the footage to be captured. Meanwhile, the post-production overlay of the voiceover track hews filmed material into the shape of the story that was foretold. The ostensibly commentating, actually *commanding* voice of what is (still) often called “nature documentary” conceals what John Smith’s 1976 film *The Girl Chewing Gum* parodies.<sup>27</sup> The prefiguring of vision by voice sets the function of voiceover in wildlife film apart from what it is *understood* to be in documentary. Whether delivered by familiar, expert personality on-screen, or unidentified (acousmatic) omniscient interpreter of other species’ behaviours, the wildlife voiceover is invested with a double dose of objective-authoritative aura.<sup>28</sup>

Transcripts, as hinted above, can be tricky. The *SaF05* “transcript” captures Prodger’s carefully recited, studio-clear rendition of precomposed voiceover script. It *excludes* any acknowledgement of the other spoken language and otherwise sonarised communicative content the work contains. I will refer to the voiced material transcribed as the artist’s A-voice and that which is held back from sight (off record, outside) in this way as the B-voice. Aural analogues of production snapshots that capture whom else—besides the authorial, auteurial artist—was on site for a film shoot, these B-vocalisations register traces of the work’s making as collaborative process. This “making of” material is here only just audible to the hearing listener: swept into the edge zones. The B-voice supplement includes the following: in the space between the end of “Revelations” and the beginning of “Fahrenheit”, Prodger’s direction, presumably to the pilot of the drone whose footage we are seeing, saying “and then just start slowly moving up. Slowly. Now hold...” two overlaid instructions—“can we go higher? Little bit higher” and then “hold it...” and in the space between the end of “DuF96” and “Subs”, the more cryptic remark, “ok, goats closer”.

Besides these brief incidentals, the written record also excludes a conversation from which Prodger seems to be absent (or, rather, absents herself): a recording from the walkie-talkies of her collaborators on the shoot at the Botswana Predator Conservation Trust.<sup>29</sup> In a static-laden exchange that follows the final “Tunnels” chapter of the A-voiceover, the B-voiced postscript fringes what is ostensibly already finished with a peering, guttering audio-addendum. This is where the film ends, and the endpoint towards which this essay directs its course.

Beyond the excluded verbal content, the vocal contributions of *SaF05* herself also go un-transcribed. So too do multiple voice proxies that populate the soundtrack: a bagpipe, an alto saxophone, cicada chatter, goat bells, the electronic whine of a drone. The decision not to “transcribe” or otherwise describe this polyphonic remainder should not be understood to imply that what is made audible but not legible is insignificant. Instead, it is in the interplay between scripted text and the fugitive interstitial voices that interject across and interlink its parts—the conversation between voiced text (the written voiceover) and voice-as-such (what vocally transpires)—that *SaF05* articulates its rebuke and redress.

### **A voice**

Particular, corporeal, intimate and biographically frank, Prodger’s lyrical A-voiceover is the furthest thing from the traditional documentary Voice of God and its illusion of immaterial, unfixable, transcendent authority.<sup>30</sup> Similarly subversively, her vocalised log entries communicate information equivalent to what we might expect in wildlife film, but without any of the mastering interpretation: the storytelling that ascribes meaning to animal behaviour. Instead of sourcing footage to illustrate a pre-written script, Prodger decouples voiceover from the image (and, retrospectively, A-voice from B). In place of a voiceover that rigidly (pre)determines and subsequently shapes all interpretation of the action on-screen, her A-voice declines even to *acknowledge* the image track it accompanies. Only the marginalised, incidental murmurs of the B-voice tie voiceover

and image track together—and even then, never securely, never for long, always loosely.

Where nature documentary is all authoritative explanation, Prodger presents memories and scientific log entries alike as tantalisingly partial. Like the camera's focus feature—which is repeatedly shown being pulled to attention, resolving blur into clarity before moving back into blurriness—remembering is made an endeavour of labour. Where the incompleteness of the voiceover anecdotes is an effect of elapsed time and/or faulty mnemonics (“I don't remember because it was thirty years ago”), the sparseness of the log is determined by the terseness of scientific convention. Little about the affective cast of the interaction between SaF05 and a lion referred to as Woody can be gleaned from what is noted. Similarly, the artist's abstracted anecdotes of adolescent sexual encounters surrender allusive flashes of intimacy—a hand (“still in its pocket”) placed between the legs of BaF89, the accidental exposure to DuF96 of a shot of “GaF13 lying on our bed with a clear glass butt plug inside her”. But she delivers these shorn of the narrative detail or biographical backstories that would enable the viewer-listener to understand the webs of relations to which the GPS coordinate-equivalents pertain.

In *SaF05*, there is no map, no aerial view from which to perform a comprehensive, mastering survey of either human or animal sociality. Individual scenes are located in time and space—“it's night-time. I think it's winter”, “I'm with DuF96 at a party on West Princes Street”. But no crib sheet fills in the gaps that makes these atomised reminiscences akin to isolated screen-shots taken from an unguessably vast trove (a whole life's worth) of inaccessible film. People like to call the first-person passages narrated by the A-voice diaristic<sup>31</sup>—and (as admitted above) they do seem close to that. But only if we forget that diaries are written on the hop, impelled by emotional explosions, sullen seepings or knotted ruminations on obsessions. Prodger's lyric voiceover speaks, instead, in luminous units of formally fine prose.

The quested-after lion is the subject of five log entries from winter 2015 and the spring that followed, registering each time as SaF05. The tagging system Prodger devises for naming human and others-than in the video registers as a nod to scientific specificity. It maintains privacy for its referents in the public realm of the work's circulation. It *also* allows the artist to distance her intentions from those common in this context: the anthropomorphising makers of wildlife films who assign human names to wild animals as part of their efforts to develop, in post-production, a celebrity animal character as the anchoring protagonist of a nature “story”.<sup>32</sup> Applied near universally, to humans and cats alike (Woody the lion is the only exception), Prodger's tags prove muddling. Accustomed to proper nouns for protagonists, we find ourselves bewildered by species-non-specific, alphanumeric code names that seem to have been designed more to impair than to aid recall.<sup>33</sup>

A lion might be confused with a lover. Such a confusion might not be unanticipated, unmeant. Aporetically alluring, through the repeated, veiled invocation of SaF05, beast turns myth. Like Hito Steyerl's *Andrea Wolf*, the lion is made (in Erika Balsom's neat phrasing) “absent anchor”.<sup>34</sup> Repeated in each of the five reports in quick succession—steady revenant amid variants on the template (BaF74, GaF93, DuF96...)—the lion's code name accretes aura. A litany of sightings is recited, almost sung. While each log entry is unique, the repetition between them of a limited number of variables (date, start time, location, habitat, recipient ID, etc.) and Prodger's flat, quiet delivery imparts to the whole chapter a liturgical rhythm—as though the artist's erstwhile faith had been displaced onto the lion. The five-part prayer of the logbook chapter is itself bisected by another of those retro-constructive “diaristic” entries. But this interruption only emphasises the lion's magnetic force—by allowing the focus to shift, only to pull it back, resolutely, inevitably.

The log reports precisely and without elaboration on the maned lion's movements and behaviour, noting the location of each sighting as a long sequence of GPS coordinates. A grooming, an unanswered vocalisation, a urine spray in “mixed SP

woodland” on 15 February. Where the nature documentary voiceover interprets and explicates, *SaF05* eschews any performance of presumptive understanding—vocalising instead raw zoological data. Micturition is medium, its message unknown.

The A-voice speaks in two modes—intimate confessionalism and terse data delivery—but the content it voices shares overlapping concerns. While one species is recorded as “marking with urine”, another is noted deploying spittle to make similarly territorial claims. In the “Revelations” chapter, Prodger’s voiceover communicates the fascination of the teenaged artist, then “praying to wake up as a boy”, with the gestures and postures of the “boys for teaching breakdancing [...] smoking with their early moustaches”. One especially mesmerising boy-becoming-man compels close study. In her description of his complex performative choreographies—smoking, spitting, tapping ash—“[flicking] the filter in staccato with his index finger”—an antecedent is set for the observation of gender-freighted behaviours and social interactions among lions. Archetypal, he contains multitudes. Set in proximity to the records of feline marking, the performative excessiveness of his routines—“The oldest spits. It shoots out like a bar of soap from wet hands. He does this every few minutes”—attains a new legibility.<sup>35</sup> His activity is made analogous to that observed among the big cats—its expressive efficacy underwritten by the artist’s precise recall. In the narrated portrait, spittle lubricates the public passage of the adolescent into manhood. In Prodger’s film, bodily fluids function as viscous conduits between surveilled cross-species subjects.

Meanwhile, on the image track, transitions between wildly different terrains scramble the connections between creature close-ups and the spectacular panoramas within which animals are ordinarily situated on-screen, inscribed as dynamic components in a complex, site-specific ecological system. Painterly abstractions of winter-whited Scottish landscapes roll by ... slowly. The ground underfoot is shot from so near that the visual turns haptic—a texture tempting touch. A snow-covered mountain range is viewed from a plane, with plane

sound, and then a(nother) snowy mountain is surveyed from a moving vehicle, on the ground. Locations, like subjects and species positions, proliferate and become strangely entangled: the delta plains of Botswana are not twinned with a single location but connected instead and in complex, interlayered ways with sites in the Ionian Islands, Scottish Highlands, Great Basin Desert, Glasgow city. Unexplained sonic transfers (like the busy water sounds inexplicably accompanying the pre-title sequence of close-shot snowy terrain) augment disorientation.

### Genre / Gender

When *SaF05* is set against a wildlife genre dominated by what are (for Bousé) “essentially narrative adventures”, and (for Cynthia Chris) “structured almost exclusively by heteronormativity”, it can be seen as a queering of the apex predator’s typically binarised profile as a species whose behaviours split along roaming independent males and prides (or co-ops) of collaborative, mutually nurturing females.<sup>36</sup> Wildlife film-making’s preference for filming without sound, its capacity for footage to be repurposed and re-voiced to illustrate a different narrative, its scope for substituting an individual representative of a species with another: all these features make it historically susceptible to being manipulated as propaganda.<sup>37</sup> Though recent decades have witnessed a vast expansion of the appetite for footage of animal mating and predatory behaviour once deemed unshowable,<sup>38</sup> the purposes to which this footage is set remain bizarrely narrow and tend inevitably back towards depictions of animal families as discretely defined (nuclear) “units”.<sup>39</sup>

When wildlife films centre on the life story of a single protagonist, the footage is shaped into the mould of a “coming of age” story that, writes Chris, maps an “arduous trajectory”, in the course of which “the animal experiences a series of dramatic conflicts but eventually reaches adulthood, which is represented as the opportunity to mate and reproduce”.<sup>40</sup> Chris also describes the strange devices by which programme-makers have attempted to write non-procreative sexual behaviour out of the record, minimising or studiously ignoring

the experiences of female animals in representations of reproductive behaviours.<sup>41</sup>

### No simile, no system

Having rerouted the nature narrative away from the received, reproductive channel, Prodger does not then supply a pat alternative story; the artist does not project human non-binary, butch or trans identity onto the lion. Even as she exposes continuities and implies comparisons, Prodger is not doing anything so blunt or crude as pointing up a simple simile or analogy.<sup>42</sup> Instead, the relation being instituted is more akin to the associational logic that Harun Farocki ascribed to the soft montage of the split-screen, which institutes “a general relatedness rather than a strict opposition or equation”, in which “one image does not take the place of the previous, but supplements it, re-evaluates it, balances it”.<sup>43</sup> As Laura Guy rightly insists, “a lion is not a metaphor”.<sup>44</sup> Though largely inaccessible, invisible or disappearing, Prodger’s lion is preserved from evanescing into mere metaphor. Rather, the elusive beast is a nodal point in a complex, slippery system of associative, incomplete relations: no elements of which can be mapped neatly onto each other. Notwithstanding the metaphorical allure of SaF05, Prodger concertedly pushes back against the oppressive extent to which (as Pooja Rangan puts it) “our understanding of animal lives is oriented by narcissistic narrative tropes”.<sup>45</sup>

SaF05 is not isolate, but she is singular.<sup>46</sup> The video offers no suppositions, and draws no conclusions between or beyond the log entries. Prodger’s inclusions point up the more unusual aspects of her profile, but she does not extrapolate from those (marking, grooming, etc.) behaviours and locations any newly constricting social function. Behaviour observed is inconclusively described; the video emphatically avoids licensing the audience to imagine that its meaning can be deciphered. Deviations from social expectation and normative codes mass equally among humans and lions: in the bible study of Prodger as the teenaged child of “atheist parents” who “don’t approve”,

and in the moment of seeing, in a lover’s pubic hair, “for a split second [...] my mother’s dark triangle”.

SaF05 queers expectations of the reproductive trajectory of nature narrative; it also queers broader conventions of wildlife film. Screen representations of nature typically centre constructions of grand schemes and complex, hierarchically organised systems.<sup>47</sup> Prodger presents no such overarching codification of how SaF05 “fits” into any putative system. The artist avoids projecting onto that animal presence any equivalent to these familiar sorts of cog-and-wheel schemas. Though logged, the lion’s movements are not shaped into a perilous journey or funnelled into a coming-of-age narrative.<sup>48</sup> The maned lioness is seen (or rather heard) to exist relationally, but is not presumed to have been assigned a particular, delimited function within an ordered ethological system.

### A voice?

In “Revelations”, the maned lioness registers *materially* as both visual and sonic presence in the landscape. Her vocalisations, reportedly unusually frequent, breach an ambient thickness of insect sound. Hearing the lion—here or anywhere else—it is hard not to attribute more than merely mechanical explanations to its socially significant sound-making. Roars emanate as intensely idiosyncratic beastly figures against non-specific sonic ground. On the screen, SaF05 rises from a supine position to standing, stretching throat and extending torso to roar, in fluent illustration of the physicality of her synchronously audible vocal production. Witnessing the lion so deliberately adopt the posture most conducive to amplify that roar—her pose enabling it to carry across the plains and into the audition of other animals—makes it impossible not to conceive of that roar as “destined for the ear of another”, as a voice that “implies a listener”.<sup>49</sup> Recalling the sound of that roar on hearing the voiceover’s blank registration (in an entry dated 2 March 2016) of a “vocalisation” recorded as lasting from 19:21–19:42 brings Cavarero’s “relationality of the vocalic” into relief: a behaviour among similarly embodied and

social (grooming, marking, rubbing) others.<sup>50</sup> *Phonos* without (discernible) *logos*, the lion's voice is received by the human hearer as coded transmission. To be a non-lion watching the video is to perceive the metadata but not the message. But the human incapacity to divine the intent or interpretation of any such vocalisation does not diminish its status as (to cite another of Cavarero's definitions of voice) "invocation that is addressed to the other and that entrusts itself to an ear that receives it".<sup>51</sup> In *SaF05*, the lion's low, improvised vocal soloing is succeeded by the strangely similar drone of a bagpipe. Later, the equally plaintive wavering of an alto sax reprises the roar theme—picking it up to play afresh via human-voice prosthesis.<sup>52</sup> The sequence illustrates what Norie Neumark identifies as the polyvalent "musicality of voice in natureculture", and Dominic Pettman swells into the notion of an interspecies *vox mundi*.<sup>53</sup>

### Drone

This preponderance of drone-type sounds also invokes the aerial drone that is used in some of the filming, but never to get a fix on the lion. The "never-before-seen" close-up footage that was first made possible in wildlife film-making by the Heligimbal (a mount enabling long, stable filming at a great distance by helicopter) was pushed onto another level by the mass availability of drone technologies. Writing on the phenomenology of the drone, Nasser Hussain alleges that "we have become too accustomed to seeing from the air, which violates all the familiar geometry and perspective of our mundane, grounded vision. The exhilaration of the bird's-eye view, or the god's-eye view".<sup>54</sup> And yet, what I want to suggest is that just as it does away with the Voice of God through voiceover, *SaF05* undoes the god's-eye view through *how* it deploys the drone.

As "seeing machine" that observes without being seen, the drone stands as metonym for a new kind of war-making in which the overhead shot (as geographer Derek Gregory has it) "neither invites nor permits participation in its visual economy", ensuring "there is no possibility of returning the gaze".<sup>55</sup> This asymmetry recalls that which John Berger identifies in

the modern encounter with the zoo animal that is "always the observed", can never be expected to return the human gaze, such that in "looking at each animal, the unaccompanied zoo visitor is alone".<sup>56</sup> In the *SaF05* audio track, the drone is sustained through the first four paragraphs of "Revelations", cutting off only when Prodger begins to describe the event that precipitated her always already inevitable disengagement from the evangelists. Throughout most of the A-voice passages, an additional soundtrack plays in parallel, distracting listener attention with, for example, the drone of a bagpipe for the first four paragraphs of "Revelations", and a whirring throughout "Fahrenheit". Still another drone variant is supplied by the sound of the drone itself: a mechanical whine that sonically refutes the fantasy of unmediated access that sustains humans' representations of animals' lives.<sup>57</sup>

As Hussain observes, although drones can hover at heights that render them invisible, "they *can* be heard. Many people from the tribal areas of Pakistan (FATA) describe the sound as a low-grade, perpetual buzzing [...] The locals call the drones *machar*, mosquitos".<sup>58</sup> In *SaF05*, these differently derived buzzings and dronings segue into, and substitute for, each other so often that it becomes hard to distinguish entomological from electronic sound. An audio analogue to *Stonemollan Trail's* attention to offcuts is discernible here: in the bagpipe drones that are themselves by-products of the making of notes, the preservation of pitch fluctuations that betray a player's failure to maintain even pressure at the elbow, and the film's insistence on showing only pre-roll frontal footage (the film-making equivalent to a prefatory throat-clearing) of the termite mounds. Accompanying the melody of a voiceover passage for long enough that they cease to be registered, these drone variants announce themselves again only at the point when the listener is surprised by their sudden stopping. The abrupt absence of a sound you barely noticed anymore, except as the ground against which the figure of the voice was delineated, is an apt counterpart for the evaporation of religious faith. This sonically underlined unguessability stands, too, for the fickle unpredictability of the wildlife film-maker's animal. Prodger realises the



assertion of interchangeability underlying the insectile analogy, drawing a line between inter- and intra-species menaces. The pattern established here repeats across the video, as sounds (the insistent beep of a camera's low-battery alarm or the stridulation of insects) are made to intrude lastingly.

### **“Patte”<sup>59</sup>/Proximity/Proxy**

Committed to making manifest the material co-imbrication of bodies and media, Prodger's semi-structuralist film-making practice draws attention to the effortfulness of technologically enabled attempts to see and to show. In *SaF05*, visually discernible variations in the footage shot from a range of different cameras (“smartphone, drone camera, Blackmagic Pocket Cinema camera, and an Arri Amira camera”)<sup>60</sup> prime the viewer-listener to stay alert to the means—the mediation—of image production. In “X”, the artist is shown in dim silhouette on a massively smeared reflective surface, bronzed and almost opaque with gestural fingermarks. Camera mics are audibly buffeted by wind. And throughout *SaF05*, transitions between shots are overtly blunt; zooms, vertiginously sudden. Camera-trap footage is shown with timestamp, details of date, time, duration, location, temperature still in frame rather than cropped out. The pipes' pressure drops and cameras' pre-roll bar-scrolls are not cut. Taken together with the distinctive monochromaticity of the infrared images, the effect (and the intent) is to keep the viewer-listener conscious that what is presented has been “captured” through the use of sensory prostheses that dramatically enhance human seeing and hearing capabilities. Via mensuration, mediation is kept in view.

Co-indicated for capturing footage of unusual animal sociality as well as for capturing (and eliminating) the agents of spectral, specious WMDs (weapons of mass destruction), the drone spills across terrains. In wildlife film-making, as in twenty-first-century, pre-Putin war-making, trespass onto the habitats of others is achieved with tools that absent the operator from the scene of seeing. Motion sensors save the human from huddling in the dark, awaiting sight of a creature who may or

may not visit that log tonight; unmanned autonomous vehicles save other humans from return fire. Prodger abjures this approach, focusing the drone instead on the mutely mysterious, unmoving mounds. Derek Gregory writes of how drones enable remote operator crews to become close observers of the interactions and behaviours of those they will ultimately annihilate: remote, but privy to a “palpable and pervasive” optical intimacy.<sup>61</sup> The last line of Prodger's A-voiceover, “and all the different planes keep on appearing and disappearing: further, closer, tree, broken tree, further, far, tree, closer”, narrates the activities of the drone being used to track the lion. It also encapsulates the paradox of how drone warfare is waged—as remote and intimate at once.

As Svea Bräunert points out, “drones operate not just on the level of manifest violence but also on the level of a mental threat of what could happen next”.<sup>62</sup> Their buzzing, as Hussain observes, is “a signal that a strike could occur at any time”.<sup>63</sup> The drones that are so appallingly audible to their prey are, themselves, unable to record sound. Invocation of a submarine in “Subs” summons the possibility of a periscope as drone antecedent: covert remote-viewing apparatus before the twenty-first-century UAV (unmanned aerial vehicle). The “Subs” chapter is accompanied for about two and a half minutes by an unlikely musical addition: a prolonged, haphazard (as though motion-activated) tinkling of bells. These bells function as voice proxies for the goats. Sounding their passage through space, the bells supply the sonic bridge for the relation between animal and machine (or machine-human assemblage) predators: a correspondence already established sonically in the often interchangeable co-presences of mechanical whines from machines and insects alike. The metaphor surfaces when we notice Prodger's B-voice murmur, “ok, goats closer”, perhaps in an attempt to draw *SaF05* into view by baiting her with live lures, prey made even more vulnerable by the bells humans tie round their throats. Ungulate equivalent to the “indistinct chatter” preceding the horror film event, this chiming is troubling because of how it makes us anticipate its sudden, inevitable cessation. “Ok, goats closer” might be mis-heard as

a direction to “go closer”—but is, maybe too neatly, a far cry from that.

### Angle

Barely ever present on-screen, SaF05 herself appears only in the video’s opening frames. These short clips are sourced from camera traps: a form of what Michal Šimůnek calls “buttonless” image-making.<sup>64</sup> The apparatus is triggered automatically and operated in the absence of human presence, a machine for seeing without being seen. In *The Autobiography of Video*, Ina Blom describes how, “in nature documentary, the camera invariably works as a stand-in for the curious human eye, spying on other species. Hence, the most common movement is a wide-angle shot that zooms in on particular details”.<sup>65</sup> In place of that curious human eye, a camera trap is fixed. Just as the drone camera operates under constraints which mean that, as Grégoire Chamayou explains, it blurs figures “into facelessness”, so the static traps installed in Botswana are imperfectly sighted, the view confined by their placement and the limits of the frame.<sup>66</sup> The first time SaF05 can be seen on-screen, she is faceless (and so maneless, anonymised). Moreover, she is also half-in and half-outside the image, the back-end of a proverbial pantomime horse. The infelicitous angle does not (could not) divest her of dignity, but maybe it rids her of some weight, diminishing the expectation that the quest-quarry will deliver big beastly mystique.

It is as a result of the *form* of “seeing a lion” in which the video invites its audience to engage that the creature is permitted to maintain its essential creaturely inscrutability.<sup>67</sup> Because not made subject to the dubious para-proxemics of facial close-ups and artficed point-of-view shots that stage (as Bousé puts it) contrived “moments of impossible intimacy” between viewer and viewed (and not over-looked by the drone-at-distance either), the image of SaF05 is preserved from being falsely, violently invested with anthropocentrically conceived signification.<sup>68</sup>

For Anat Pick, it is not the fact of visibility but the presence of the seeing human subject that violates animal dignity.<sup>69</sup> Invoking Simone Weil’s suspicion of the mastery of the gaze and fantasy of vision “untangled from power”,<sup>70</sup> Pick proposes “removing [one]self from the ocular equation” as a model: “the possibility of not-seeing [...] as a more progressive modality of relation to animals”.<sup>71</sup> Prodger’s video does not entirely escape this bind; the sighted are permitted to *glimpse* the lion after all, and the hearing, to witness her awesome roars. This is not *not-seeing*. But the artist does deliberately, repeatedly distance herself as image-author (in time, in space) from making the lion subject to her gaze. She never gets “up close”; nor does she get to observe, unseen, from on high. In its coy substituting of lionless images from far-away places and its contemplations of distance and intimacy, *SaF05* plays out the web of tensions that vibrate at this point of scopic encounter between technologically extended human and other animal.

Šimůnek’s notion of “buttonlessness” helps to describe these images which, while captured by autonomous, automatised apparatuses, still “represent rather than operate”.<sup>72</sup> In the camera-trap scenario, the animal is imaged for human analysis after the fact. Its mechanism aligns it with the category Šimůnek terms “set-and-forget”. Thinking with Rangan’s idea of “the radical potential of giving the camera to the other”,<sup>73</sup> Prodger’s use of camera-trap material reads as relinquishment of the artist’s authorial agency: an instantiation of what Rangan calls “a mimetic ethic of surrender”.<sup>74</sup> By using camera traps, the artist surrenders to the chance effects generated when the lion’s unchartable movements meet the camera’s stasis. In so doing, she makes SaF05 another image-maker.

### Contract, consent

Bringing wildlife films into the frame of documentary immediately opens troubling questions of consent.<sup>75</sup> Attempts to approach, desires for intimate contact and nonverbal negotiations of consent and assent surface in multiple forms in the A-voiced audio. In “Fahrenheit”, Prodger’s voiceover talks of

an assignation with BaF89 “in the mirrored external doorway of Finnies The Jeweller on Belmont Street in the city”. Her account ends with the lines: “Still in its pocket, I put one hand between her legs. She says nothing, just my name. I take my hand away”. The infrathin registration of resistance passes between them almost wordlessly and the hand is almost immediately removed.

This is how the encounter looks in the transcript—but as heard in the video: it’s different. The story told is made subject to minor interventions pulled from B-voice audio of the artist’s soft-toned, consultative instructions to collaborators or crew. The first of these (“can we go higher? [...] Little bit higher”) falls after her A-voice says “it’s night-time” and before it supplies the detail that “we’re on acid”. The second, “hold it”, is inserted between stimulus—“still in its pocket, I put one hand between her legs”—and equivocal response: “she says nothing, just my name”. The imported B-voice interjection (that imperative “hold it”) introduces or underlines an ambivalence here: “hold it” is heard as a request for the note to be sustained even as the A-voice describes its suspension when “I take my hand away”.

Exposure and scopic intrusion figure repeatedly in *SaF05*’s tracings of encounters between humans. At a party, the A-voice narrator scrolls too far when showing DuF96 “pictures on my phone of a sculpture I just finished”, with the result that she unwittingly shows the GaF13 butt plug picture. While the image shows a snowy, mountainous landscape flowing by on an initially glitchy then super-smooth track, and the vehicle sound supplies a background hum, the voiceover talks of how a mis-measurement of thumbable phone-screen spaces causes the scroller to transgress a social boundary. While the narrator thumbs quickly “back to the sculpture shots”, DuF96 is unflappable. Unconcerned by this unexpected exposure: “she just smiles”. What is clear is that in this instance, a risk is averted, potential disaster (or at least social embarrassment) is defrayed. Against the odds, the circumstances, the apprehension, dignity is preserved.

While the A-voice delivers the Botswana sighting reports in “X”, the screen shows static camera footage of what looks to be a (Glaswegian) townhouse, shot from outside after dusk, with plant life in the foreground and some lights on in uncurtained rooms. Via another of the video’s massing overlays and transpositions, the audio of the scientists’ SaF05 surveillance records float over to attach themselves, associatively, to this intra-species spy scene. Prodger intersperses this apparently voyeuristic footage—the domestic interior filmed from somewhere akin to a wildlife photographer’s “hide” in the garden—with fleeting snippets of another kind of peeping. Images of carved stone lions, apparently torn from books, have been taped onto a set of glass doors. If not striding purposefully into the middle-distance, the blue-chip nature film-maker tends otherwise to fully efface themselves from footage. This, so as better to fake the illusion of raw, unmediated “pristine wilderness”, nature without culture, unsullied by human presence, human-engineered environmental destruction.<sup>76</sup> Partial, incidental-looking, the recognisable figure of the artist slides past from various angles, each time pushing by or through those doors, as though unaware of being watched: the artist who is “both like and unlike” the animal (apparently) captured unawares.<sup>77</sup> Of the metaphorised, marginalised animal at the zoo, Berger writes that “however you look at these animals, even if the animal is up against the bars, less than a foot from you [...] all the concentration you can muster will never be enough to centralise it”.<sup>78</sup> The artist’s movements are tracked, behaviour logged. But just as in Berger’s zoo, “the view is always wrong. Like an image out of focus”.<sup>79</sup>

### Capture

As Eyal Weizman points out, “cameras record from both their ends [...] Blurs, for example, are important in revealing things about the photographer. Rushed and erratic camera movements might indicate the risk involved in taking some images”.<sup>80</sup> Weizman’s claim that “a blur is thus the way the photographer gets registered in an image”<sup>81</sup> is here realised in hyper-literal form—no longer an inflection of the image but the indistinct,

semi-incognito, unlabelled imprint of the artist herself within the image. Untranscribed (and so unreadable), uncentred, incompletely audible and diffuse (because incompletely anchored in a single speaker), Prodger's B-voice registers as a kind of blurred vocality. It is only in the video's last chapter that the A-voiceover commits to speaking from an authorial position—narrating, still somewhat obliquely—the final hunt for SaF05.

Since its inception, wildlife film-making has been the scene and occasion for the commission of acts of physical as well as specular violence against animals.<sup>82</sup> Prodger's inclusion of plates depicting a lion hunt from the Ashurbanipal wall reliefs—removed from the Assyrian palaces of Nimrud and Nineveh (645–635 BC) and held (captured) by the British Museum points up both the long endurance of cross-species violence perpetuated by humans (who are, paradoxically, driven to image the same species they kill) and another of the ways that imperialist human cultures have wrought violence upon fellow members of their own species. In wildlife film-making, the use of the verb “to capture” to signify success in registering footage of a particular animal is especially apposite.<sup>83</sup> Mutterings over the use of foley sound to augment or artifice the sonic appeal of an on-screen animal attest to the endurance of audiences' faith in an implied, rarely fulfilled contract. It is not enough for the viewer to receive species-accurate sound, they want to hear it emanate from the specific individual animals they see on-screen. Curiously, the more these spectacles are advertised as made possible only by virtue of bleeding-edge technical innovations, the more the viewing public presumes these same medial advances will deliver immediation.

### “Diary”, again

When, in the final chapter, “Tunnels”, Prodger is heard to say, “we continue to look in the evening when it gets dark”, there can be no ambiguity about what it is that the film crew seek to see emerge from the murk. The urgency animating this journey—“our last chance”—reflects, or rather, refracts, a narrative device prevalent in the genre, one Eleanor Louson has identified

as the “just-in-time” late save of wildlife film-making.<sup>84</sup> More recently, instead of merely weaving allusions to this “making-of” process into the voiceover narration, wildlife film-makers have taken to producing supplementary mini-films that chronicle the process of the film's production. The effect is paradoxical. Wildlife film crews ingeniously and concertedly efface their efforts in the moment of display that brings species into apparently unmediated (actually elaborated coordinated) encounter. But then bombard viewer-listeners after the fact, sometimes in dramatically narrated accounts, with details of extraordinary lengths gone to, long hours spent in the hard graft of trying to engineer the pre-requisite shot, dire perils risked, etc.

As Jan-Christopher Horak points out, these film-diary post-scripts frame the behind-the-scenes narratives as quests undertaken in adversity, mirroring (or rivalling) those undertaken by, for example, the creature embarking on an epic migratory journey, the beast who must find a way not to starve in spite of the (human) destruction of its habitat.<sup>85</sup> We are *supposed* to be awed, first by the experience of footage that feels so immediate and intimate, it's “as though we were there”, and then by the bravery and fortitude of the intrepid animal (footage) hunting team. Tellingly, these “diaries” (with inverted commas here, as for Prodger's) focus much more on the elaborate efforts expended in the field than on those spent in post-production. Time spent suturing together footage from disparate sources, or, controversially, cueing extraordinary foley sound to equally extraordinary footage (a close-up, can you even imagine, of an infant sloth's yawn) is not commemorated.

### No close-up, no power, no save

The video peters out in a walkie-talkie exchange. Prodger's tight voice, emitted from a barely-open mouth, as though undercover or in hopes of not being heard, gives a last (ever gentle) instruction: “Ok and bring it down. Just very slowly. Just keep going, all the way”. The drone zeroes in. Its target: a knobbly termite mound—to which the cameras throughout have seemed magnetised—almost as though this monolithic

mass stands as memorial to, proxy for, the unviewable lion. The unifying narrating force of the artist's voiceover A-voice, previously interrupted by incidental-sounding snippets of her B-voice, has by now fully dissipated. At this point, authorial control is relinquished. Voiceover gives way, surrendering control of the text, and of the soundtrack which is now occupied instead by the voices of her collaborators: a member of a specialist wildlife documentary film crew and Bakaji Jacks Amos (referred to in audio as Jacks) from Sankuyo community.<sup>86</sup>

By limiting lion visibility to the camera trap footage, *SaF05* has already resisted the pull of the astonishing close-up. By eschewing what Rangan calls the “strategic edits that eliminate uneventful ‘lag time’ and dramatize the temporality of animality as one of spectacular action”,<sup>87</sup> it undoes the pull of pace. But most strikingly, Prodger's video resists wildlife film-making convention by denying the final save and the final (pre-authored and authoritative voiceover) word. In place of a triumphant tale of animal elusiveness or camera-inclement environmental conditions outwitted by derring-do, this audio-addendum bears witness to the team's tiredness. It testifies to the disappointment of giving up. Their conversation is logistical, pragmatic, strung together with phatic “uhs”, “ums”, and resigned “oks”. The identity of a lion “that you heard this morning” is unclear; “it's probably Woody” (recipient, we've learnt, of “rubs” on 16 November 2015) rather than *SaF05*, but it's agreed that they'll “keep following them and keep updating us”. Meanwhile, the crew is about to move off. Though the one they seek continues to elude, “soon, in the next 20 minutes, I have to drop back and do the other pick up” and “as soon as you guys are done, we're going to stop tracking because we have other work that we need to do”. The battery alarm beeps a lament as power fails, and then the image shuts off, leaving only voices (small, situated and unseeing) in the dark.

- 1 See, for instance, Frances Whorrall-Campbell, “The Queer Subjectivity of Charlotte Prodger's ‘BRIDGIT’”, *Another Gaze* 03, 30 September 2019; Erika Balsom, “Openings: Charlotte Prodger”, *Artforum* (October 2018); Mason Leaver-Yap, “Aesthetics and Anaesthetics in Charlotte Prodger's *BRIDGIT*”, *October* 2017, republished in *Charlotte Prodger: Selected Works*, ed. Lynn Kost and Chris McCormack (Cologne: Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther und Franz König), 2022. For a pleasingly sonically oriented take, see Seán Elder, *DOWSER* Issue 5, ed. Marcus Jack (Glasgow: Transit Arts), 2021.
- 2 Mladen Dolar, “What's in a Voice?”, *Literatura e Sociedade*, vol. 19, no.18 (2014): pp. 79–90, here p. 88.
- 3 Helen Vendler, *The Art of Shakespeare's Sonnets* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press, 1997), p. 2.
- 4 Mladen Dolar, *A Voice and Nothing More* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press 2006), p. 109.
- 5 Adriana Cavarero, *For More than One Voice: Toward a Philosophy of Vocal Expression*, translated and introduced by Paul A Kottman (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005), p. 134.
- 6 Dolar, *A Voice and Nothing More*, p. 71.
- 7 See “Charlotte Prodger Interviewed by Lisa Le Feuvre”, in Kost and McCormack, *Charlotte Prodger: Selected Works*, p. 219.
- 8 For one 2012 performance, in which a cassette tape already served to trouble any expectation of liveness, the writer Isabel Waidner was tasked to “walk onto the stage with a boombox, insert the tape in question, hit play and walk off”—as part of a performance practice that prompts Irene Revell to invoke Pauline Oliveros's *Theater of Substitution*. See Revell, in Kost and McCormack, *Charlotte Prodger: Selected Works* p. 187.
- 9 Dolar, *A Voice and Nothing More*, pp. 14–15.
- 10 Liz Mills, “When the Voice Itself is Image”, *Modern Drama* 52, no. 4 (Winter 2009): pp. 389–404, here p. 394.
- 11 Dolar, *A Voice and Nothing More*, p. 20.
- 12 Denise Riley is extraordinary on how “inner speech is no limpid stream of consciousness” but crammed with all manner of detritus. See Riley, “A Voice Without a Mouth”, *Qui Parle* 14, no. 2 (Spring/Summer 2004): pp. 57–104, p. 70; Revell, “Sound and Friendship”, p. 186.
- 13 On this particular beard, see Conal McStravick, “Learning in a Public Medium 2”, *LUX*, 2016, <https://lux.org.uk/conal-mcstravick-2-learning-public-medium/>.
- 14 On *phone* and *semantike*, see Nina Sun Eidsheim, *Sensing Sound: Singing & Listening as Vibrational Practice* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2015), p. 126.
- 15 Sharon Marcus, Heather Love and Stephen Best, “Building a Better Description”, *Representations*, no. 135 (Summer 2016): pp. 1–21, here p. 4.
- 16 Marcus, Love and Best, “Building a Better Description”, p. 14.
- 17 Michel Beaujour, “Some Paradoxes of Description”, *Yale French Studies*, no. 161 (1981): pp. 27–59.
- 18 Cavarero, *For More than One Voice*, p. 4; Eidsheim, *Sensing Sound*, p. 147. Of course, Cavarero's conception is predicated upon one way of speaking, one way of hearing.
- 19 Dominic Pettman writes of how voice can be “more interactive and involving than the body itself”. Dominic Pettman, *Sonic Intimacy: Voice, Species, Technics (Or, How to Listen to the World)* (Stanford: Stanford

University Press, 2017), p. 18.

- 20 See Nicole Yip, "In Focus: Charlotte Prodger", *Frieze* 153 (March 2013).
- 21 See Sebastian Oberst, Joseph C.S. Lai, Richard Martin, Benjamin J. Halkon, Mohammad Saadatfar and Theodore A. Evans, "Revisiting stigmery in light of multi-functional, biogenic, termite structures as communication channel", *Computational and Structural Biotechnology Journal*, vol. 18 (2020): pp. 2522–2534.
- 22 Nancy Holt, "Sun Tunnels", *ArtForum* (April 1977): pp. 32–37.
- 23 Consider, here, Prodger's predilection for pissing *en plein air*.
- 24 Prodger's chapters are titled, in sequence, "Revelations", "Fahrenheit", "X", "DuF96", "Subs" and "Tunnels".
- 25 Derek Bousé, "False intimacy: close-ups and viewer involvement in wild-life films", *Visual Studies*, vol. 18, no. 2 (2003): pp. 123–132, here p. 130.
- 26 Bousé, "Are wildlife films really 'nature documentaries'?", *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, vol. 15, no. 2 (1998): pp. 116–140, here pp. 121–122.
- 27 John Smith, *The Girl Chewing Gum* (1976), b&w 16mm film, 12 minutes. By overturning the conventional (albeit sometimes obscured) temporal relation of voiceover to image track in documentary proper, Smith exposes its inherent, disavowed illusionality. *The Girl Chewing Gum* stretches the voiceover's potency from magisterial (making sense of all it sees) into fully magical (making things happen). In the film, the voice of the unseen artist seems to prescribe the gestures and movements of passersby at a busy London junction. Smith's voiceover commands actions undertaken by those on-screen ("Put the cigarette in your mouth/Good" [...] And I want the two girls to come in from the right talking to each other") as well as the actions of the camera ("And I want the clock to move jerkily towards me/Stop/Now"). This performance of voiceover omnipotence is a flagrant transgression of voice-over temporality; it prompts the listener-viewer to evaluate the givens and apparent transparencies of voice/image relations.
- 28 See Cynthia Chris, *Watching Wildlife* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006), p. 94 and p. 119; and Eleanor Louson, "Taking Spectacle Seriously: Wildlife Film and the Legacy of Natural History Display", *Science in Context*, vol. 31, no. 1 (2018): pp. 15–38, here pp. 17–18.
- 29 In Linsey Young's essay on *SaF05* for *Scotland + Venice*, she notes that for this film, Prodger worked with the biggest network of specialists yet, including "conservationists, researchers, professional camera and sound women, editors, producers, engineers, musicians and a circle of friends with whom she shares and discusses her work in progress". See Linsey Young, "Hidden in Plain Sight", in *Scotland + Venice: Prodger/SaF05*, ed. Linsey Young [pamphlet] (Scotland: Cove Park, 2019), pp. 11–17, here p. 14.
- 30 In the first and longest chapter, "Revelations", Prodger speaks of her brief, adolescent involvement with an evangelist youth fellowship in rural Scotland. Here, the sudden extinction of the artist's ardent religious faith is posed as either coincident with (or maybe even caused by) her exposure to the Voice of God. In a polemical film projected during an open evening at the manse hall, "an American male voiceover tells about the imminent coming of the Antichrist, saying, 'He will come from the East.' The missile is Gorbachev. It's 1985". Post-screening, the withdrawal of religious feeling is swift and absolute; freeing as the

- sudden cessation, just a paragraph earlier, of the bagpipe on the audio-track. In the wake of the watching—or, rather the hearing—of the film, "it was like a switch went off and I didn't go back or feel the need to". God loses dominion over the artist in the moment that she turns against film's acousmatic voice of authority, with its inherent promise of "Revelations".
- 31 Curator Linsey Young terms it "diaristic" in "Hidden in Plain Sight", and in the Venice press release, with the result that references to diaries and diaristic sources abound in reviews of the film. See Young, "Hidden in Plain Sight", p. 16.
- 32 David P. Pierson, "'Hey, They're Just Like Us!' Representations of the Animal World in the Discovery Channel's Nature Programming", *Journal of Popular Culture*, vol. 38, no. 4 (May 2005): pp. 698–712, here p. 702.
- 33 Laura Guy notes this resemblance to passwords in "After Lioness", in *Scotland + Venice: Prodger/SaF05*, p. 31.
- 34 Erika Balsom, "Curses and Blessings", *Cinema Scope*, vol. 21, no. 79 (Summer 2019): pp. 62–65.
- 35 On spitting as "like the sexual act carried out in broad daylight, [...] scandal itself", see Michel Leiris, "Mouth Water" in *Encyclopædia Acephalica*, ed. Georges Bataille, translated by Iain White (London: Atlas Press, 1995), pp. 79–80. See also Christof Migone, *Sonic Somatic: Performances of the Unsound Body* (Berlin: errant bodies, 2012), p. 108).
- 36 See Bousé, "False intimacy", p. 123; Chris, *Watching Wildlife*, p. 157. Arguably, Jean Painlevé got here first. His 1934 *The Sea Horse* portrays the male of the species nourishing and eventually giving birth to the young that hatch from eggs laid by the female in his abdominal pouch.
- 37 Jan-Christopher Horak writes of how nature films made in Germany in the 1930s were able to present the social systems in play in *The Ant Colony (Der Ameisenstaat, 1935)* and *The Bee Colony (Der Bienenstaat, 1937)* as insect analogies for the German fascist state. See Jan-Christopher Horak, "Wildlife documentaries: from classical forms to reality TV", *Film History: An International Journal*, vol. 18, no. 4 (2006): pp. 459–475, here p. 465.
- 38 Chris, *Watching Wildlife*, p. 105, p. 125.
- 39 David Pierson argues that the Discovery Channel's nature programming reproduces both "traditional nineteenth-century Romantic Rousseauian images of self-sacrificing motherhood" and "traditional images of physically and sexually aggressive mature male animals". Cynthia Chris explains how the behaviour of wildlife on-screen is consistently (and sometimes wildly inaccurately) framed in ways that affirm and promulgate fictions of heteronormatively delineated mate selection, romantic pair-bonding, same-sex activity as only ever competitive, and paired-up care of offspring—contributing to a socially conservative mission to uphold traditional conservative (and manifestly, absurdly) *human* "family values". Pierson, "'Hey, They're Just Like Us!'", pp. 700–701 and Chris, *Watching Wildlife*, p. 140.
- 40 Chris, *Watching Wildlife*, p. 124.
- 41 Chris, *Watching Wildlife*, pp. 127–128.
- 42 In "After Lioness", Laura Guy warns about facile invocations of animal traits "to serve the logic of non-animal systems". See Guy, "After Lioness", p. 31.

43 Harun Farocki, quoted in Paolo Magagnoli, *Documents of Utopia: The Politics of Experimental Documentary* (London: Wallflower Press, 2015), p. 65.

44 Guy, "After Lioness", p. 33.

45 Pooja Rangan, *Immediations: The Humanitarian Impulse in Documentary* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2017), p. 188.

46 Of the lion/ess, Laura Guy notes: "As with other females, she exhibits scent-marking behaviour and mates with males. However, she is prone to an overt marking posture more commonly seen in males and has been known to mount females. She roars at a higher than normal rate, is likely to be infertile, and spends most of her time alone. Perhaps she is less vulnerable because of her size. She has been known to kill in plain sight". Guy, "After Lioness", p. 29.

47 Pierson, "'Hey, They're Just Like Us!'", p. 705.

48 Chris, *Watching Wildlife*, p. 156; Bousé, "Are wildlife films really 'nature documentaries'?", p. 132.

49 Cavarero, *For More than One Voice*, p. 7.

50 Cavarero, *For More than One Voice*, p. 169.

51 Ibid.

52 This bleed-through of a sonic motif resonating across human, animal and technological vessels is apt, not least because early attempts to designate voice as a capacity limited to human species alone relied on the positing of an equivalence between the sounds produced by an animal and what sounds (as Pettman puts it) "a bicycle horn might [produce] if stepped on". Pettman, *Sonic Intimacy*, p. 93.

53 Norie Neumark, *Voicetracks: Attuning to Voice in Media and the Arts* (Cambridge Mass.: MIT Press, 2017), p. 55; Pettman, *Sonic Intimacy*, p. 73.

54 Nasser Hussain, "The Sound of Terror: Phenomenology of a Drone Strike", *Boston Review*, 16 October 2013.

55 Derek Gregory, "Drone Geographies", *Radical Philosophy*, issue 183 (Jan–Feb 2014): pp. 7–19.

56 John Berger, "Why Look at Animals", in *Why Look at Animals?* (New York: Pantheon, 1980), pp. 1–28, here p. 16 and p. 28.

57 Rangan, *Immediations*, p. 186.

58 Hussain, "The Sound of Terror".

59 On Duchamp's framing of the artist's hand as a paw leaving prints, see *Dialogues with Marcel Duchamp*, ed. Pierre Cabanne (London: Da Capo, 1979), p. 106.

60 Jaclyn Bruneau, "A Satisfyingly Fruitless Search: On Charlotte Prodger's SaF05", *Brooklyn Rail* (Dec 2019–Jan 2020).

61 Gregory, "Drone Geographies", p. 9.

62 Svea Bräunert, "To See Without Being Seen: Contemporary Art and Drone Warfare", in *To See Without Being Seen: Contemporary Art and Drone Warfare*, eds. Svea Bräunert and Meredith Malone (St. Louis: Mildred Lane Kemper Art Museum, 2016), pp. 11–25, here p. 15.

63 Bräunert, "To See Without Being Seen", p. 15; Hussain, "The Sound of Terror".

64 Michal Šimůnek, "Buttonless Cameras" [conference paper], FAMU 2020, article forthcoming

65 Ina Blom, *The Autobiography of Video: The Life and Times of a Memory Technology* (Berlin: Sternberg, 2016), p. 84.

66 Grégoire Chamayou, *A Theory of the Drone*, translated by Janet Lloyd

(New York: The New Press, 2015), pp. 117–118.

67 In Jan-Christopher Horak's history of wildlife documentaries, he remarks on the increasing tendency for film-makers to try to make viewers feel as if they themselves were "there". Horak, "Wildlife Documentaries", p. 470. Holding herself and her audience at a remove, Prodger preserves us from implication in any such invasion or trespass.

68 Bousé, "False intimacy", p. 123.

69 Here, Pick is using Lori Gruen's theory of relational dignity. Anat Pick, "Why not look at animals?", *NECSUS European Journal of Media Studies*, vol. 4, no. 1 (2015): p. 109.

70 Pick, "Why not look at animals?", p. 121.

71 Pick, "Why not look at animals?", p. 108.

72 Šimůnek, "Buttonless Cameras".

73 Rangan, *Immediations*, p. 9.

74 Rangan, *Immediations*, p. 22. Rangan writes persuasively of how such attempts abandon "the humanitarian discourse of immediation and its inherited preconceptions regarding the human and the less-than-human" still found (albeit in new forms/on new sites) in participatory documentary (p. 157).

75 Brett Mills describes how, within wildlife film-making, the divisions commonly understood to separate public and private realms are not considered to pertain. Any activity intended to further shield the animal from observation is understood as a challenge (even a provocation) that solicits only more ardent attempts to make that creature visible. Behaviour that can be discerned via the consent-free installation of a camera inside a burrow or nest is not understood to be any more private than that witnessed to be performed on the open ground at the watering hole. See Brett Mills, "Television wildlife documentaries and animals' right to privacy", *Continuum: Journal of Media & Cultural Studies*, vol. 24, issue 2 (2010): pp. 193–202, here pp. 198–199.

76 Louson, "Taking Spectacle Seriously", p. 19; Horak, "Wildlife documentaries", p. 470.

77 Berger, "Why Look at Animals", p. 4.

78 Berger, "Why Look at Animals", p. 24.

79 Berger, "Why Look at Animals", p. 23.

80 Eyal Weizman, *Forensic Architecture: Violence at the Threshold of Detectability* (Brooklyn: Zone, 2017), p. 40.

81 Weizman, *Forensic Architecture*, p. 40.

82 Muybridge's 1884 sequences from the Philadelphia Zoological Gardens included images of a tiger attacking a buffalo that had been tethered, live, for its destruction and the tiger's delectation. Topsy the elephant was electrocuted *for film* by the Edison Manufacturing Company in 1903; pet lemmings were launched en masse from a turntable over a cliff by Disney in the late 1950s. See Bousé, "Are wildlife films really 'nature documentaries'?", pp. 460–461.

83 See, for example, Horak, "Wildlife documentaries", or Pick, "Why not look at animals?", p. 116.

84 Louson, "Taking Spectacle Seriously", p. 24.

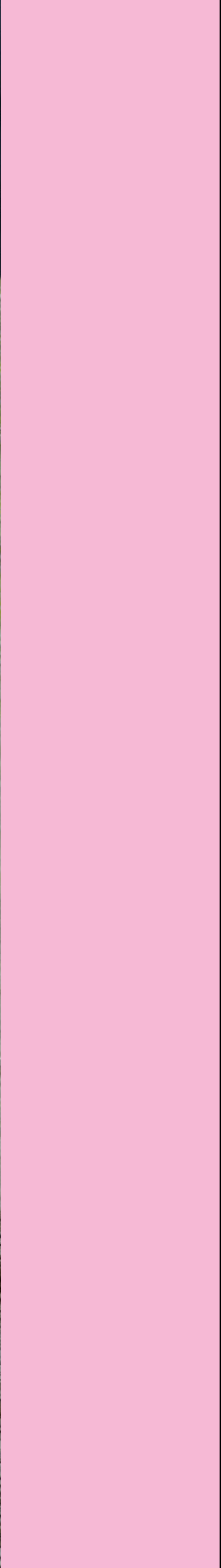
85 Horak, "Wildlife documentaries", pp. 193–194.

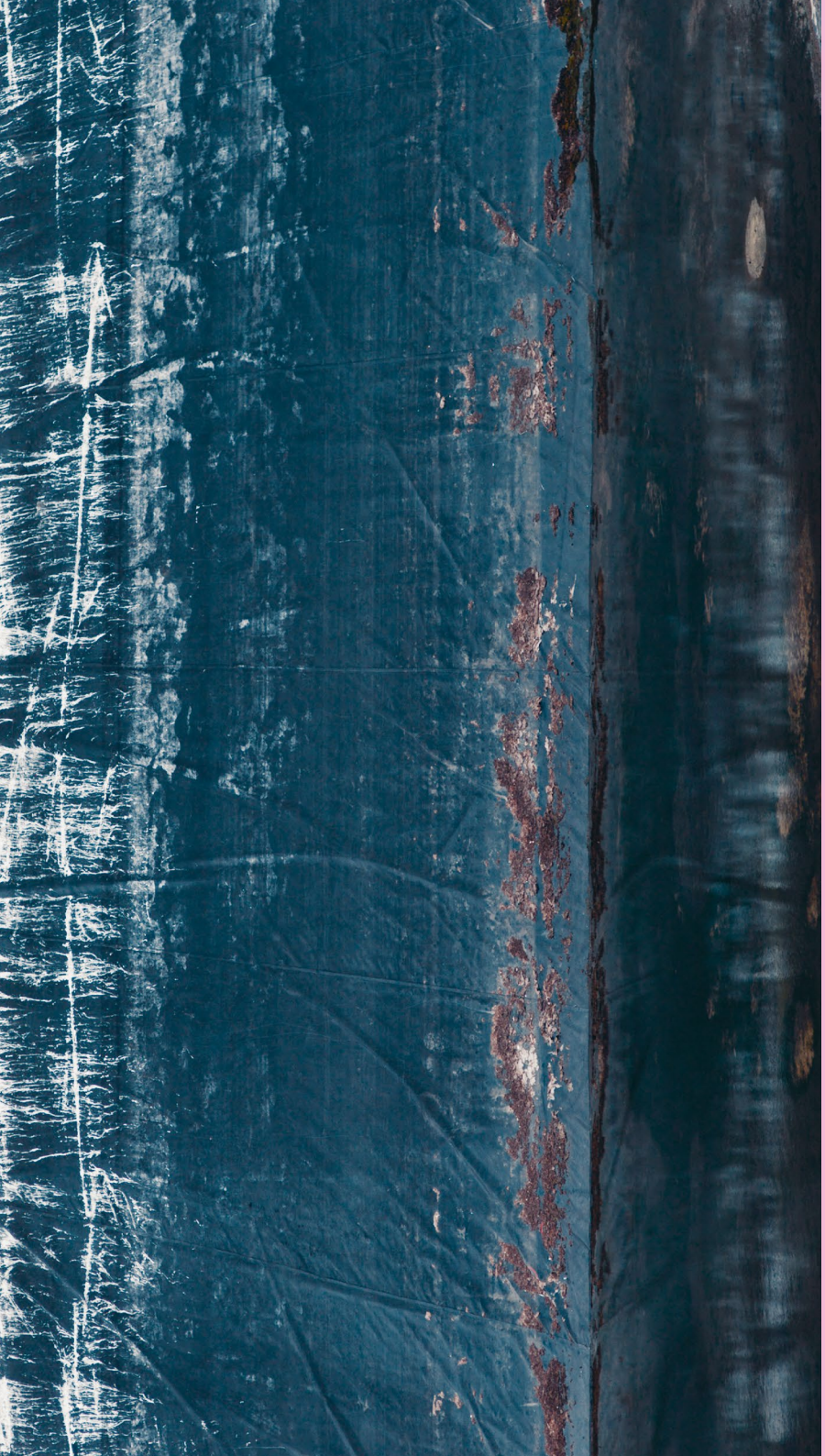
86 Young, "Hidden in Plain Sight", p. 15.

87 Rangan, *Immediations*, p. 187.

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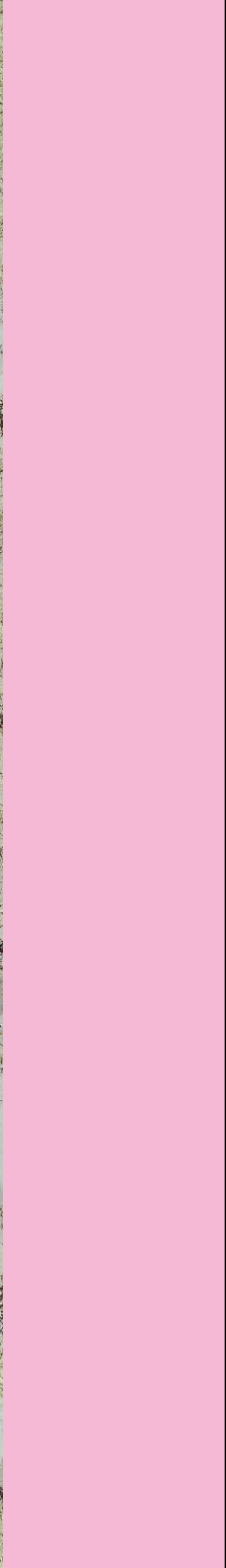






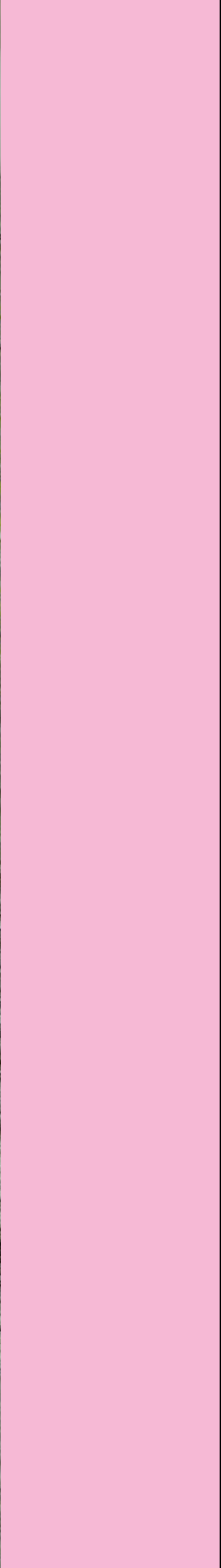


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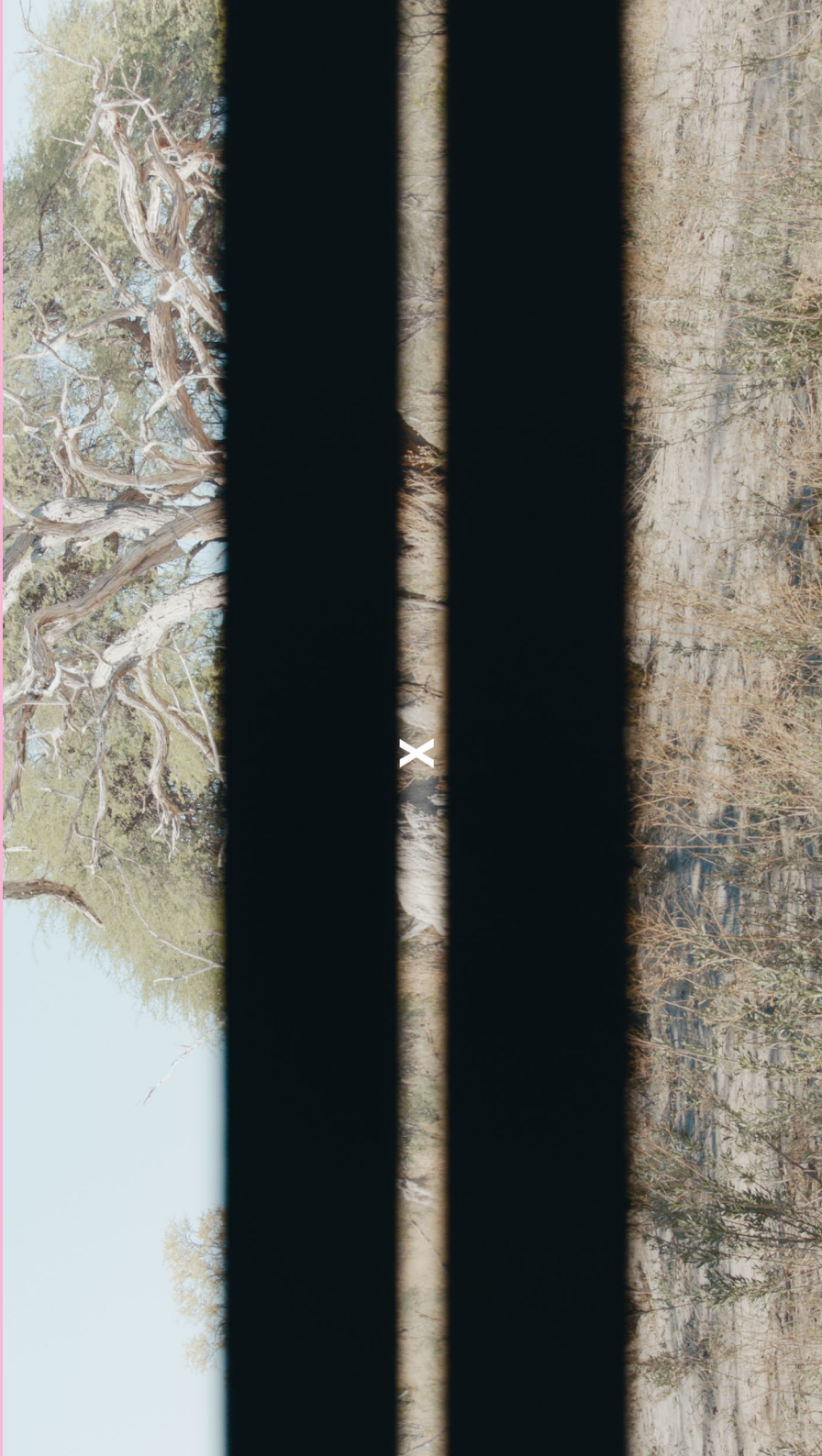
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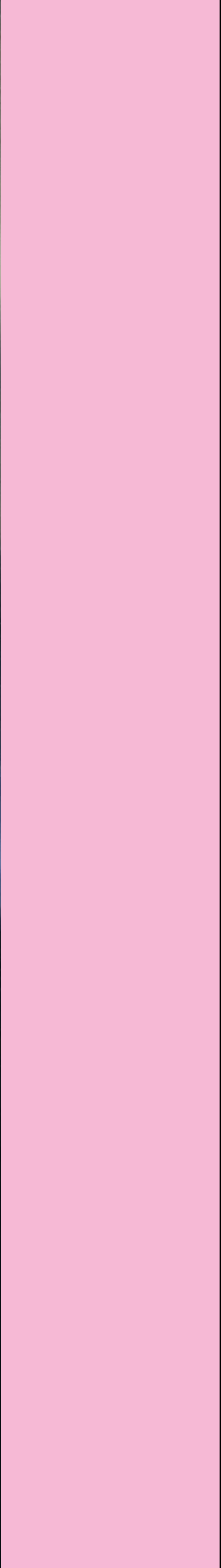
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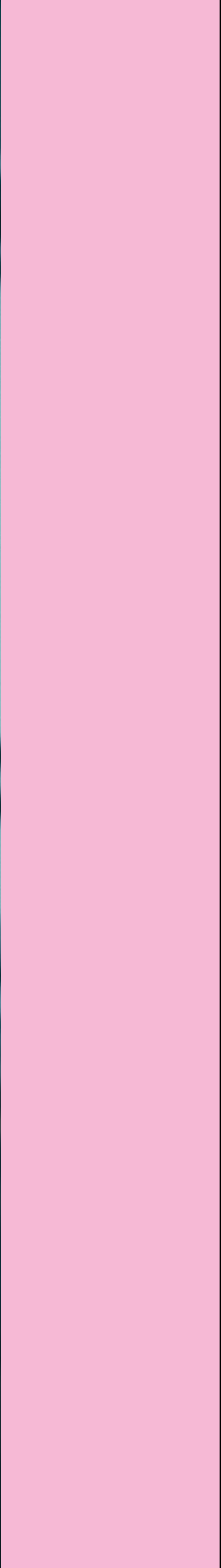


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