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Lucia Farinati:

From transcription  
to transduction:  
the voice of Joseph Beuys  
in *Audio Arts* (revisited) <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This is a work in progress script for an audio essay which is part of my doctoral research (2016-2019) at Kingston University: *Audio Arts* Archive. From Inventory Space to Imagined Space. The audio essay is a montage of texts, extracts from original recordings from the *Audio Arts* magazine and unpublished recordings made with William Furlong and artists at Five Years. For this publications the embedded audio clips have been removed and the text slightly edited. The audio references are listed in the footnotes and in the discography.

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Lucia Farinati:

## From transcription to transduction: the voice of Joseph Beuys in *Audio Arts* (revisited) <sup>1</sup>

My fascination to revisit Joseph Beuys' recordings published by *Audio Arts*, stems from 2013, when I invited William Furlong to create a new sound work for Villa Romana in Florence, which today is home to a residency program for German artists.<sup>2</sup> Given the specific context I suggested to Furlong the idea to work with Beuys' unpublished audio material which would have been collected in a publication to accompany the exhibition. While this publication might still happen in the future, in this audio essay I would like to go back to the time when Furlong and Beuys first met, listening to their voices and conversations again.<sup>3</sup> Dipping in and out from the *Audio Arts* Archive, I will reconstruct the history of each recording, following a chronological narrative, yet inviting you

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1 This is a work in progress script for an audio essay which is part of my doctoral research (2016-2019) at Kingston University: *Audio Arts* Archive. From Inventory Space to Imagined Space. The audio essay is a montage of texts, extracts from original recordings from the *Audio Arts* magazine and unpublished recordings made with William Furlong and artists at Five Years. For this publications the embedded audio clips have been removed and the text slightly edited. The audio references are listed in the footnotes and in the discography.

2 *Speaking to Others: Who Speaks to Who*, a solo show by William Furlong, Villa Romana, Florence, 27 June – 27 July 2013, curated by Lucia Farinati. The title which, in correct written English, should read 'Who Speaks to Whom', is both a celebration of informal spoken language as artistic material and a *modus operandi* in itself.

3 The idea of a publication comprising the whole body of recordings made by Furlong with Beuys was discussed at length with Furlong and the art critic Mel Gooding at the time. Concerns over copyright as well as the difficulty of locating each single recording, represented a stumbling block and while the publication project subsequently failed for lack of funding, the research on this material has continued in the past three years as part of my PhD research in collaboration with the Tate archive.

(the listener) to play back these aural fragments which will vividly take you back in time. I will end the essay with a new recording I have made in collaboration with the artist-run space Five Years.<sup>4</sup> This is a response to Beuys' conversation at the Institute of Contemporary Art in London, at the exhibition *Art into Society - Society into Art*. This exhibition was organised in the autumn of 1974, by the curators Norman Rosenthal and Christos M. Joachimides.

In preparation for the project which involved seven German artists, a colloquium was organised in April 1974 in Berlin, to discuss the contents and strategies of the show.<sup>5</sup> At the colloquium Beuys expressed his interest in being present in the exhibition all the time, he said:

...my interest in the exhibition is in my permanent presence. No special space is needed just four blackboards, one red and white chalk and a wooden chest. When I have to be absent the blackboard would stand for my presence.<sup>6</sup>

In the press notice sent out by the ICA on 29 November 1974, we read:

Beuys 'remained permanently at the exhibition for its entire duration apart from the short intervals due to prior commitments in Northern Ireland. During which time he created one of his most important environments of the last few years 'Richtkraefte' (Directive Forces). The environment consisted primarily of seventy-seven blackboards, scattered about the floor of the gallery, which were the result of the permanent dialogue the artist was involved in with visitors to the exhibition.<sup>7</sup>

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4 Five Years is an artist-run organisation established in London in 1998.

5 The exhibition *Art into Society - Society into Art: 7 German artists*, ran from the 30th October to the 24th November 1974 and included the artists Albrecht/d., Joseph Beuys, K.P. Brehmer, Hans Haacke, Dieter Hacker, Gustav Metzger, Michael Ruetz, Klaus Staack. The exhibition was part of the German Month at the ICA.

6 See the catalogue published by the Institute of Contemporary Arts, *Art into Society, Society into Art: Seven German Artists / Exhibition at The Institute of Contemporary Arts, 30 October - 24 November 1974*. London: I.C.A., 1974, p.9.

7 For the original press notice see TGA 200414/2/114/1 (1974-1996), Joseph Beuys Working files, Tate Gallery Archive.

According to the ICA press notice, *Art into Society – Society into Art* 'was one of the most successful avant-garde exhibitions held in London' at that time. In 24 days, it attracted more than 9,000 people, and over 600 people attended a public discussion with the artists which was organised two days after the opening. One of the remarkable features of the exhibition was the permanent presence of all the artists involved during the first week of the exhibition.<sup>8</sup>

William Furlong first met and recorded the voice of Joseph Beuys on this occasion. You can hear Furlong's recollection of his first encounter with Beuys in his public lecture, *Strategic Interventions* given at the Royal Society, London in 1996.<sup>9</sup> Furlong recorded several hours of Beuys' discussions at the ICA with his portable tape recorder. However, only thirty minutes of these recordings were actually published on *Audio Arts*.<sup>10</sup> You can listen to the published recording (*Audio Arts vol. 2 no 1, 1975*) on the Tate website.<sup>11</sup> Here below you can also read an extract from the transcript that was published in 1994 by Furlong in the book *Audio Arts. Discourse and Practice in Contemporary Art*.

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8 Ibid.

9 The entire lecture was published in 1997 in the supplement *Audio Arts. Joseph Beuys Lectures 1996: Arts and Science* now available on the Tate website: <https://www.tate.org.uk/audio-arts/supplements/joseph-beuys-lectures-1996-art-and-science>.

10 It is difficult to calculate exactly how many hours Furlong recorded at the ICA until the digitisation of all the recordings will be completed. From the reels of tape so far digitized by the Tate Archive it appears that at least two hours of recordings contained material related to Beuys' conversation at the ICA. See TGA 200414/7/4/44.

11 <https://www.tate.org.uk/audio-arts/volume-2/number-1>  
All of the *Audio Arts* volumes and supplements have been digitized by the Tate Archive by 2013. Most of the published *Audio Arts* recordings are available on the Tate website:  
<https://www.tate.org.uk/audio-arts/volumes>;  
<https://www.tate.org.uk/audio-arts/supplements>.

JB: Now we have to speak once more about the new necessity that the things have to be done. And we see that the government cannot make these things and cannot give out this knowledge, and the specialists in faculties too are not able to do it. We must really collect people who are interested to reach these abilities. This must be the first step. We have to care that we find as soon as possible as large a quantity as possible of people who are propagating this idea, this new way to go, because there is no other way to go.

The established systems in the world are well known. There are only two principal ones - the Western private capitalistic system and the Eastern communistic system with a politburo with the principle of a one-party dictatorship. Both sides are special owners of the means of production. In the West there are private owners of the means of production. The politburo as a private owner is in principle the same thing, with the special difference that in the Eastern countries the lack is that there is no individual freedom. The difference in the Western private countries is that there is not enough possibility for brotherhood in economics, because it still exists abreast of freedom. I can speak about a revolutionary model now, but I could not do it in Russia. Here I can do it but, that is not as a result of politicians, it is a result of tradition. It stems from the bourgeois revolution - the French Revolution - with ideals of freedom, equality and brotherhood.<sup>12</sup>

*Art into Society – Society into Art* was not the first invitation to Beuys to perform in London.<sup>13</sup> However, in Furlong's recollection this exhibition was the first opportunity to interact with him, asking Beuys questions directly but also arguing and disagreeing with him. Furlong, was not the only interlocutor

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12 William Furlong, ed. by, *Audio Arts. Discourse and Practice in Contemporary Art*, Academy Edition, 1994, p. 69.

13 On the 26-27 February 1972, Beuys performs *Information-Action*, two actions akin to seminars on social and political structures held on two consecutive days at the Tate Gallery and the Whitechapel Gallery, London. At Tate, the six-and-a-half-hour lecture/action was part of Beuys's contributions to the *Seven German Artists Exhibition* (24 Feb - 23 March 1972). See Mark Rosenthal, *Joseph Beuys: Actions, Vitrines, Environments*, eds. Sean Rainbird, Claudia Schmuckli. Menil Collection (Houston) and Tate Modern (London): London: Menil Collection in association with Tate Publishing, 2004, p.175.

in that instance. In the original master tapes, the listener can hear other people from the audience asking questions to Beuys. There are also a series of extraordinary photographs taken by Chris Schwarz<sup>14</sup> during that week, in which Beuys is portrayed in various moments of interaction with the audience sitting and standing around him. Moments that proved to be quite theatrical or performative. What is revealing about these visuals and audio records, is how the dialogic space envisaged in that exhibition was indeed a space in which Beuys tested out his ideas on social sculpture as well as introducing his radical ideas on education to a London audience. Part of these ideas soon took the form of a free school, with the establishment in February 1974 of the Free International University, for Creativity and Interdisciplinary Research.<sup>15</sup>

Thanks to the collaboration and support of the British art critic Caroline Tisdall, the Free International University (FIU) soon arrived in the UK. After a first attempt, in 1975, of bringing the FIU in Dublin,<sup>16</sup> Tisdall, together with artists Peter Dunn, Lorraine Leeson, Robert McDowell and Conrad Atkinson co-ordinated the first FIU symposium at University College London (UCL).<sup>17</sup> This was another important occasion for Furlong to present *Audio Arts* to Beuys

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14 See TGA 200414/2/114, Joseph Beuys working files.

15 The issue of free education and the possibility to establish an inter-disciplinary curriculum, was one of the key concerns of Beuys since the early 70s. However, it is only in February 1974, in the same year of the ICA exhibition, that Beuys co-founded with Heinrich Böll, Georg Meistermann, Willi Bongard and Klaus Staeck the Free International University for Creativity and Interdisciplinary Research. The original manifesto for the FIU, signed by Beuys and Böll, is published in the catalogue *Art into Society – Society into Art*. A recorded statement of the FIU's intentions was published on *Audio Arts* vol. 3, no. 3, 1976, now available on the Tate website: <https://www.tate.org.uk/audio-arts/volume-3/number-3>.

16 In 1975 Tisdall wrote a feasibility study on the possibility of founding the FIU in Dublin, see Caroline Tisdall, *The Free University Project*, *Art Monthly* (Archive: 1976-2005); London, Issue. 5, (Mar 1, 1977): 10.

17 The FIU gathering at UCL was scheduled on the 1st December 1976. See the program introduced by Caroline Tisdall (TGA 200414/2/49, Working file vol. 3 no. 3).

as well as to continue a dialogue with Caroline Tisdall.<sup>18</sup> As an active member of the FIU, Furlong ran a workshop on information and distribution on audio cassette. In the proposal for the workshop he wrote:

The audio cassette offers a method of recording and distributing information over a wide area not defined by constraints often associated with printed media. Currently, the majority use of audio cassette is put to pre-recorded music. However, there is a valuable potential function, little realised and virtually untapped is this area of integrated technology. This is the distribution of and communication through human speech.

As a method for the exchange of ideas, attitudes and information based on the primary activity of most human beings, (recorded) speech offers close contact with original sources on an intimate kind of 'pre-literate' society basis. Coded method of communications, as in the case of printed text are absent and the receiver is brought into close proximity with the information source. The processes involved in receiving such information relate more to personal interactive methods where impressions and 'learning' take place on a 'non-linear' reception of material. As speech tends to be 'less dense' than prepared text this gives substance to the notion of speech acting as a common denominator both through and across the various levels of specialisation within social groups.<sup>19</sup>

Furlong attended other meetings of the FIU and also documented other workshops subsequently hosted in various venues

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18 Along with Peter Townsend, Barbara Reise and a number of individuals in Europe, the encounter with Caroline Tisdall was key in developing the idea of *Audio Arts*. The magazine was established by artist William Furlong and writer Barry Barker in 1973. Tisdall was one of the first people to be recorded by *Audio Arts*. She also represented the main point of contact between Joseph Beuys and Furlong. See the letter dated 29 July 1975 sent from Furlong to Tisdall inclosing a letter for Beuys (TGA 200414/2/153/1).

19 *Workshop Project Audio. Information distribution on Audio Cassette*, by William Furlong. See TGA 200414/2/49 Working files for vol. 3 no. 3.

and occasions.<sup>20</sup> Along with other English members of the FIU including John Latham, Barbara Steveni, and Ian Breakwell, Furlong attended the gathering at Documenta VI in Kassel in 1977.<sup>21</sup>

In 1983 Beuys returned to London for his solo exhibition of drawings at the Victoria and Albert Museum.<sup>22</sup> Furlong interviewed him together with the art critic Michael Newman. Unlike the tone of the performative and interactive discussion staged at the ICA, this recorded conversation was the first *Audio Arts* interview with Beuys in which the artist discusses in detail his work on display. The interview was produced and published as a special *Audio Arts* supplement.<sup>23</sup>

Beuys, who had always been a sympathiser of the *Audio Arts* project, agreed on a request by Furlong to sign about 86 copies of the tape supplement produced from the V&A interview.<sup>24</sup> As Furlong underlined in his talk at the

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20 Furlong recorded ‘The Northern Ireland Workshop’ and ‘The Periphery Workshop’ organised at the FIU meeting in Kassel in 1977. Copies of these tape cassette recordings exist in the Whitechapel Art Gallery Archive: WAG/EDU/9/2. A reel of tape titled ‘Free University at Battersea, Prisons, January 1978’, which presumably refers to the workshop held in 1978 at the Battersea Arts Centre ‘Prison and Institutions’, also exists in the *Audio Arts* Archive. See TGA 200414/7/4/193.

21 The meeting in Kassel was organised by Caroline Tisdall, Martin Rewcastle and Robert McDowell. According to the outline of the programme it ran from the 23rd June to the 1st October 1977 and included several workshops. See TGA 200414/2/49 Working files for vol. 3 no 3. The conversation between Steveni, Latham and Breakwell was recorded by Furlong in 1977 and published in *Audio Arts, Documenta VI: Statements and Spaces*, Vol. 3, no 4, 1978. See: <https://www.tate.org.uk/audio-arts/volume-3/number-4>.

22 *Joseph Beuys: Drawings*, Victoria and Albert Museum, London, July 27 - October 2, 1986.

23 See: <https://www.tate.org.uk/audio-arts/supplements/joseph-beuys-va>.

24 See the letter of clarification sent by Furlong to Heiner Bastian and Eva Beuys on 25<sup>th</sup> July 1986 explaining how and when Beuys agreed to sign the tape cassettes. Furlong wrote: Beuys ‘was pleased to support what he thought to be an important initiative in relation to contemporary art, and particularly one that allowed the artists to communicate directly through speech. He had known of *Audio Arts* since the ‘Free International University’ in 1975’. See TGA 200414/2/114/2.

Royal Society, both the recordings made at the ICA and the following interviews are not simply recordings ‘of Beuys, but *with* Beuys’. According to Furlong, Beuys always understood *Audio Arts* as a primary media through which to present his ideas and his ‘verbal sculptures’: a collaborative endeavour, which, according to art critic Mel Gooding encouraged Furlong to continue and further develop *Audio Arts* into an artistic practice which has many points in common with the notion of social sculpture coined by Beuys.<sup>25</sup> The production of the Supplement was not the first opportunity for Beuys to show his support for the *Audio Arts* project. In 1985 he also donated a work of art for the celebrated fund-raising event held at the Riverside Studios. Named as The Audie Ceremony, the grand gala benefit night was organised by artist Bruce McLean and critic Mel Gooding. It was attended by many established London based artists, art critics and curators including Anthony Gormley (who designed the statuette for the awards), Susan Hiller, Richard Cork, and Robin Klassnik just to mention a few. This has been recounted by many of Furlong’s collaborators as one of the most successful and joyful events in the history of *Audio Arts*. But to come back to Beuys’ gift! The story, in brief, goes like this. Beuys apparently donated a hat full of fat which was immediately purchased by his gallerist Anthony d’Offay. There are many curious anecdotes about this episode. Apparently, Anthony d’Offay, present at The Audie Ceremony, in-voluntary damaged the work in the irrepressible desire and hurry to possess it. As a result, we don’t have any trace of the mysterious hat, except the amount of jokes and gossip which it sparked after the gala.<sup>26</sup>

The last recording made by Furlong with Beuys, happened in London again, at the Beuys’ solo exhibition *Plight* at the Anthony D’Offay gallery in September 1985. This time the interview took the form of a one to one

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25 In my thesis I fully discuss Gooding’s theorisation of *Audio Arts* in terms of aural social sculpture. See also my talk in conversation with William Furlong, Villa Romana, Florence, 27 June 2013.

26 In the same letter sent to Heiner Bastian (25 July 1986, TGA 200414/2/114/2), Furlong wrote: Beuys ‘donated an artwork for the *Audio Arts* benefit concert. This was a hat filled with butter, which unfortunately was damaged and is in the possession of Anthony d’Offay awaiting repair’. For the eager listener who wants to have a glimpse of the hilarious energy spread on that night see (and hear!) the *Audio Arts*, vol. 8, no 1: <https://www.tate.org.uk/audio-arts/volume-8/number-1>.

conversation in the gallery space muffled by felt, one of the most loved and symbolic materials used by Beuys in his sculptures.<sup>27</sup>

As Furlong pointed out in his talk, the voice of Beuys in the mid 80s had changed. His way of speaking sounds in fact more focused and somehow controlled compared to the exultations heard at the ICA, but not less mesmeric. This was the last chance to record Beuys in London before his death in January 1986.

We have to wait about ten years after the disappearance of Beuys, for these recordings to re-enter the public sphere. In 1996 Furlong was invited to give his first public lecture on Beuys at the Royal Society. During this lecture Furlong presented extracts from the recordings made with him between 1974 and 1986, which are partly incorporated into this essay.<sup>28</sup> While this body of recordings represents today an important historical source that partly documents Beuys' actions and lectures, what Furlong has captured through every single recording, is a vivid, palpable aural portrait of the artist at work. A portrait that certainly took a more creative route in the late 90s, when Furlong started to create new sound works by assembling original recordings taken from the *Audio Arts* Archive. These are often mapped spatially into a gallery space or staged as site-specific sound installations in outdoor spaces or less formal settings. The first work that inaugurated this creative archival impulse was *Conversation Piece*, a four channel sound work was made in 1998. In this piece the voice of Beuys resurfaces in a constructed conversation with Andy Warhol, Marcel Duchamp and John Cage.

The voice of Beuys recently re-appeared in Furlong's last exhibition *Speaking to Others: Who Speaks to Who* presented at Villa Romana in Florence in 2013. Here Furlong created a continuous sound piece in which various extracts

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27 The interview was published on *Audio Arts*, vol. 8. no 1, 1986.  
See: <https://www.tate.org.uk/art/archive/items/tga-200414-7-3-1-26/audio-arts-volume-8-no-1>

28 His talk at the Royal Society was part of the Joseph Beuys Lecture programme presented by the Laboratory at the Ruskin School of Drawing and Fine Art. A second public lecture given by Furlong on Beuys was hosted by the Gallery Kuckje in Seoul, South Korea in the same year. *Audio Arts* published several Joseph Beuys Lectures organised by the Ruskin School of Drawing and Fine Art from 1995 to 1997.

from the unpublished recordings made at the ICA were arranged spatially along the perimeter of the ground floor of the villa. In discussing with Furlong how *Audio Arts* began and how Beuys responded to it, Furlong underlined the fact that it all started primarily by talking to others, and getting a positive reaction.

Listening back to the *Audio Arts* recordings we encounter a formidable insight on how Beuys' 'verbal sculptures' (to use the term employed by Furlong in his lecture) – are entangled with the sound of the artist's voice, its modulation, intonation, energy and rhythm. In short, what Roland Barthes would call, 'the grain of the voice'. Listening to the grain of the voice means moving away from the abstract horizon of lexicon and meaning, and instead to pay attention to the textural element of voice, feeling each breath and each utterance. Voice, it has been argued by many authors, is both language and body. And despite the fact that voice is sound, speech is its natural destination.<sup>29</sup> According to Barthes, the grain of the voice is what fails to be written, or remains to some extent untranslatable as it is deeply and ontologically attached to the body. He said:

Transcribed, speech obviously changes its receiver, and thereby even its subject, for there is no subject without an Other. The body, although still present (no language without a body), ceases to coincide with the person, or, to put it better yet, the personality.<sup>30</sup>

If voice does always imply a mouth, a subject, how is it possible to produce a written text without failing a body-subject? Should we simply accept that what Barthes calls the 'grain of the voice' cannot be accurately reproduced? Or is there any (other) way out?

Since the widespread availability of recording equipment in the late 60s and the subsequent growing production of audio recordings by scholars, the use of interview transcriptions as historical sources has largely been debated in the context of oral history since the 70s – remembering also that oral historians have

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29 See in particular the study by Adriana Cavarero, *For More Than One Voice, Toward a Philosophy of Vocal Expression*. Stanford University Press, 2005.

30 Roland Barthes (1974). 'From Speech to Writing.' *The Grain of the Voice*, trans. L. Coverdale, *Hill and Wang*, New York, no.7.

generally been suspicious of the transcript, seeing it as a secondary tool. In his essay *Perils of the Transcript* written in 1972, Marxist historian Raphael Samuel, observed that too often historians transcribe speech according to the conventions and constrictions of written prose. Samuel argues that the collector of the spoken word - of oral memory and tradition - is in a privileged position of creating and interpreting his own archive. He writes:

... unless recordings can be preserved in their original integrity, and made freely available for other researchers to consult, they will remain locked forever in the preoccupations of the collector, immune to criticism.<sup>31</sup>

Almost 50 years after this text was written, it seems that the concerns of Raphael Samuel of preserving the original integrity of recordings have been to some extent addressed and achieved by the establishment of many sound archives and digitization projects. For example the Save our Sounds, a project initiated by the British Library, through which all the *Audio Arts* unpublished recordings, among other sound collections, will be finally digitized.

However, while this project will guarantee full access to the original unpublished material, many questions do remain open: who does have the 'authority' to transcribe Beuys' speech and eventually publish these recordings into a printed form? What is the advantage or the value of a printed publication compared to new digital audio platforms where we can listen to an increasing number of original recordings? And above all, how and who will be granted the permission to use these audio documents without running into the issues of copyright? These questions seem to effect both the work of scholars and artists who will be interested to work with this material in the next 40 years, until the copyright for the voice and the works of Beuys will be completely free to use.

I would like to argue that Furlong's multi-faceted, dialogic approach seems to represent a key turning point here. While the legacy of Beuys' social sculpture has been fully recognised by Furlong as well as by many other contemporary artists,<sup>32</sup> there is also an important legacy of *Audio Arts* project

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31 Raphael Samuel (1972). *Perils of the transcript*. *Oral History* 1 (2): pgs19-22.

which should not be underestimated or, overshadowed by his 'master'. In exploring the use of the audio cassette medium as a new form of information and distribution, Furlong pioneered the communicative, aesthetic, social and political potential of an art magazine by turning it into a dialogic audial space of a new kind. What he simply but aptly called 'a recorded space for contemporary art'.<sup>33</sup>

Inspired by Furlong's expanded sound practice of making, producing and presenting audio recordings within various critical and artistic frameworks, I have started thinking about how a creative engagement with the *Audio Arts* Archive might therefore continue in the future. How, then, might a new generation of artists be inspired by the collaboration between Beuys and Furlong and the legacy that lies (somewhere) in between their artistic and critical practices. Can we play (with), imitate, revisit Beuys' recordings made by Furlong and learn something from this process? Or would this be an irreverent gesture which would discredit the ethos of their work and legacy? How then is it possible to activate this unique body of recordings as a potential utopia for the present?

By embracing the spirit of the Free International University and its predicament on creativity, interdisciplinarity and autonomy, I have begun an experiment with the recording made at the ICA and subsequently published on *Audio Arts* (vol. 2 no 1, 1975). In May 2018, I proposed this recording as material for a workshop organised in collaboration with the artists of Five Years in London. Hosted as part of their project *being together is not enough*,<sup>34</sup> the workshop invited participants to reflect on the challenges of transcription as

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32 See for example the contemporary development of socially engaged art projects, free art schools and discursive artistic practices including lecture-performances.

33 In the *Audio Arts* catalogue Furlong named the project as 'A primary medium and space for the articulation and dissemination of debate, theory and practice in relation to contemporary art'. See William Furlong, ed. by, *Audio Arts Recordings*. London: Audio Arts, 2001. The sentence 'A recorded space for contemporary art' also appears on some of the CD back covers. See for instance vol. 22 no 2 & 3; vol. 22 no 4; and vol. 23 no 4.

34 The project was initiated and coordinated by Edward Dorrian, one of the co-founders of Five Years.

a creative practice. Four readings were created from four different methods of transcription including true verbatim, edited transcript, affective verbatim and embodied transcript. Used as scripts as well as scores for re-enacting Beuys' speech, these transcripts were read aloud and performed live for (making) new audio recordings.<sup>35</sup> I have called this experiment *transcription to transduction*, to name a process which shifts from the simple production of a written text from an audio source, to a double process in which the original audio source is turned into a text and then (via a 'transducer') converted back into sound. As I have learnt from sound-reproduction technologies, a transducer is normally a device which, as in the case of the telephone, turns the voice into electricity, sending it down a phone line and turning it back into sound at the other end.<sup>36</sup> Transduction is therefore a metaphor adopted here to convert one form of energy to another, using the human body at both ends. The energy of Joseph Beuys' voice recorded, revisited and, finally, converted back into sound again.

## Discography

- 1974** Joseph Beuys at the Institute of Contemporary Art, *November 1974*. In *Audio Arts* vol. 2 no 1, 1975, cassette tape. Digitized by Tate Gallery Archive: <https://www.tate.org.uk/audio-arts/volume-2/number-1>.
- 1977** Free International University in *Ideology & Consciousness*, *Audio Arts* vol. 3 no 3, 1977, cassette tape. Digitized by Tate Gallery Archive: <https://www.tate.org.uk/audio-arts/volume-3/number-3>.
- 1978** Documenta VI: Statements and Spaces (1977), including Ian Breakwell, John Latham, Barbara Steveni, *Audio Arts*, vol. 3 no 4, 1978, cassette tape. Digitized by Tate Gallery Archive: <https://www.tate.org.uk/audio-arts/volume-3/number-4>
- 1983** Joseph Beuys. Interviews with William Furlong and Michael Newman at the Victoria and Albert Museum, *Audio Arts Supplement*, 1983, cassette tape. Digitized by Tate Gallery Archive: <https://www.tate.org.uk/audio-arts/supplements/joseph-beuys-va>.
- 1986** Joseph Beuys talking on the occasion of his installation *Plight* at the Anthony d'Offay Gallery, October, 1985, in *Audio Arts*, vol. 8 no 1, 1986, cassette tape. Digitized by Tate Gallery Archive <https://www.tate.org.uk/audio-arts/volume-8>.
- 1996** William Furlong in *The Joseph Beuys Lectures 1996: Arts and Science*, *Audio Arts* supplement, 1996, cassette tape. Digitized by Tate Gallery Archive: <https://www.tate.org.uk/audio-arts/supplements/joseph-beuys-lectures-1996-art-and-science>.
- 1998** William Furlong, *Conversation Piece*, 4 channel sound installation, 1998.
- 2013** Lucia Farinati in conversation with William Furlong, Villa Romana, Florence, 27 June 2013, unpublished recording, recording by Richard Crow, authors archive.
- 2018** *From transcription to transduction: Joseph Beuys revisited*, Five Years, London, 18 May 2018, unpublished recordings made with the assistance of Richard Crow, authors archive

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35 The recordings were made at Five Years with the assistance of artist Richard Crow, London, 18th May 2018. Participants in the workshop included artists Ana Čavić, Esi Eshun, John Hughes and Edward Dorrian. I would like to thank them very much for their enthusiasm and support in making these recordings.

36 Jonathan Sterne, *The Audible past: Cultural Origins of Sound Reproduction*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2003.



**Selected unpublished recordings by *Audio Arts* with  
Joseph Beuys / Free International University**

**Tate Gallery Archive**

TGA 200414/7/4/44. Reel of tape titled 'Joseph Beuys at ICA, November 1974'.

TGA 200414/7/4/193. Reel of tape titled 'Free University  
at Battersea, Prison, January 1978'.

TGA 200414/7/4/1331. Cassette title 'C Tisdall, Beuys, Ulster Museum date nd'.

TGA 200414/7/4/69. Cassette Tape titled 'Beuys ICA 74 tape 1'.

TGA 200414/7/4/86B. DAT titled 'J. Beuys Extracts 1974 & 1983'.

**Whitechapel Art Gallery Archive**

WAG/EDU/9/2. Tape Cassette titled 'Free International  
University. Documents 6, Kassel, June 1977'.

WAG/EDU/9/2. Tape Cassette titled 'Free International  
University. Periphery Workshop, Kassel, 1977'.

WAG/EDU/9/2. Tape Cassette titled 'Free International  
University. Recording from N. Ireland W'shop'.



Exhibit Art ut Surely, Surely into art - Colloquium  
- Established free art society in the year

JOSEPH BEUYS

Description of existing world social and economic systems

JB: Now we have to speak once more about the new necessity that the things have to be done. And we see that the government cannot make these things and cannot give out this knowledge, and the specialists in faculties too are not able to do. We must really collect people who are interested to teach these abilities. This must be the first step. We have to care that we find as soon as possible as large quantity as possible of people who are propagating this idea, this new way to go, because there is no other way to go.

The established systems in the world are well known. There are only two principal ones - the Western private capitalistic system and the Eastern communistic system with a politburo with the principle of a one-party dictatorship. Both sides are special owners of the means of production. In the West there are private owners of the means of production. The politburo as a private owner is in principle the same thing, with the special difference that in the Eastern countries the lack is that there is no individual freedom. The difference in the Western private countries is that there is not enough possibility for brotherhood in economics, because it still exists abreast of freedom. I can speak about a revolutionary model now, but I could not do it in Russia. Here I can do it but, that is not as a result of politicians, it is a result of tradition. It stems from the bourgeois revolution - the French Revolution - with ideals of freedom, equality and brotherhood. There is a bit of heritage here. I need now the heritage possibilities not the results of the politicians. The politicians will take care that in the future there will be no more freedom. They will take this freedom from our heritage and they will destroy it too. Then there will come a very world-wide economical fascistic system without freedom, without equal laws and without socialism in economics.

Therefore it is necessary to start with this very intensively. This is the first step in organising these things, and then you can make proposals and you have to collect people who already have a knowledge in this new way - and there are already a lot of people with such, I am not alone. For instance, my Office for

Glasgow, in Dublin and in Belfast this type of a school.

Re-structuring of society by individual creativity and self-management

I speak about the fact that all theories and ideas have to be after the idea of art.

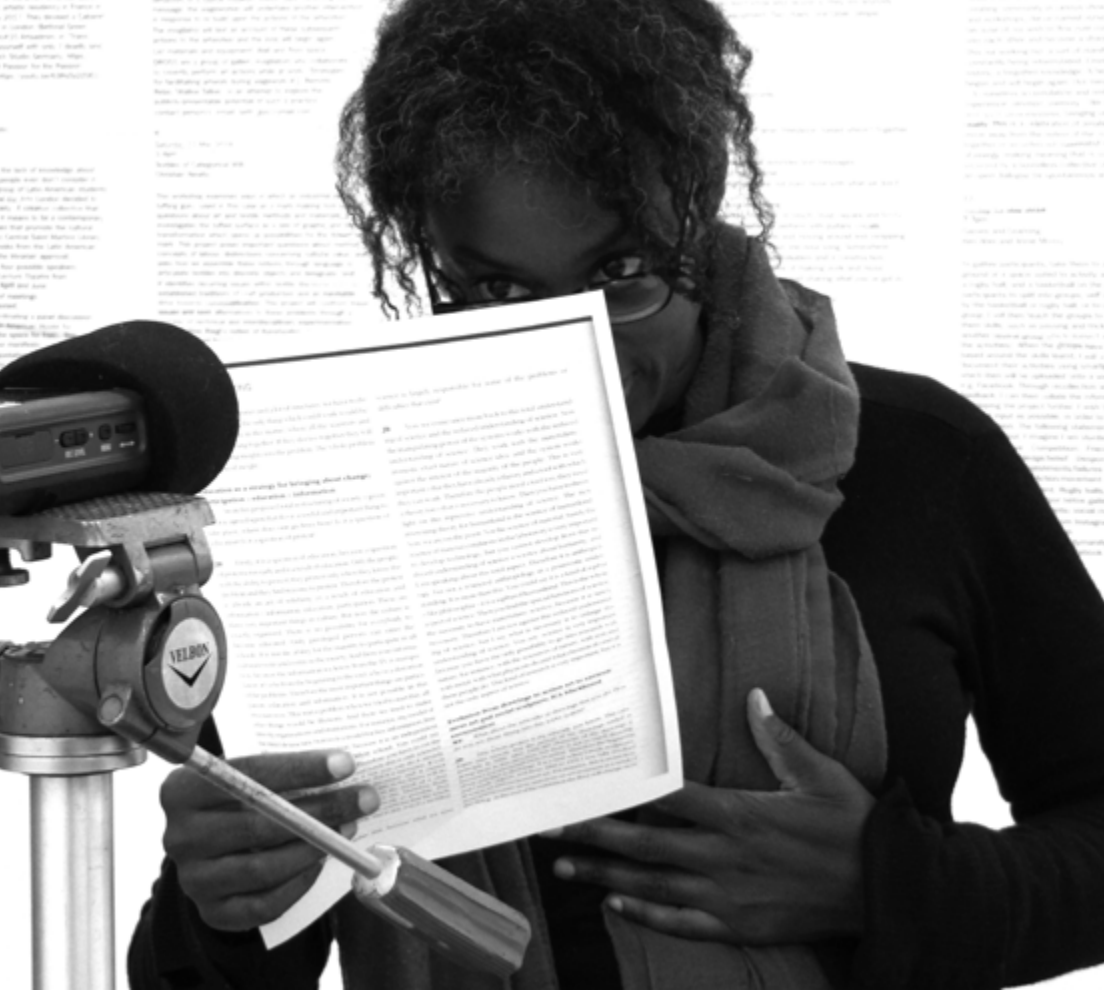
The idea of art is the principal means for other things in that the people do it by their own creativity; it is a very simple thing. I find it the rule that everybody is in a special way an artist in different fields. Surely not all people are painters - this is a reduced understanding of art; but in all fields every living being is an artist. Then he has only to create from his ability in the field of the society. First, it is a culture organisation, then the democratic sphere; two, then the result will be a change of behaviour in economics. All this whole field, all this sub-social field is material for the moulding power of everybody. This is the principle, and we have to find more effectiveness in this direction, because the existing political structure is struggling against this idea of freedom, equality and brotherhood. Therefore all the systems are from the devil, and you can really say the systems are anti-human. The actions of the political parties are anti-human.

WF: So do you feel, then, that on the one hand art and science can determine or define an aspect or a facet of society, and on the other hand you have got political systems or systems of constraint on human beings that also shape or provide a facet for human beings and their existence?

JB: Exactly. As a result of having history and as a result of this government structure with the so-called parliamentary democracies, as a result from the French Revolution, surely. There was one step in history with a bourgeois revolution and with different results. For instance, technological results, the results in science, the result in the so-called exact nature of science idea. But together with this exact nature of science idea the whole point of creativity came out of discussion. This was a ruling idea, therefore, and a repressive understanding of science, a materialistic understanding of science. Nevertheless it has a special function

previous Embodied transcript of Joseph Beuys' speech performed by Esi Eshun, Five Years, London, 18 May 2018.

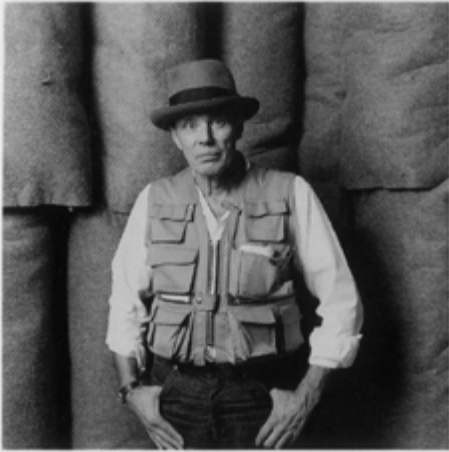
left Score for an embodied transcript of Joseph Beuys' speech performed by Esi Eshun, Five Years, London, 18 May 2018. Courtesy the artist.



Installation views,  
*From Transcription to Transduction: Joseph Beuys revisited,*  
Five Years, London, 18 May 2018

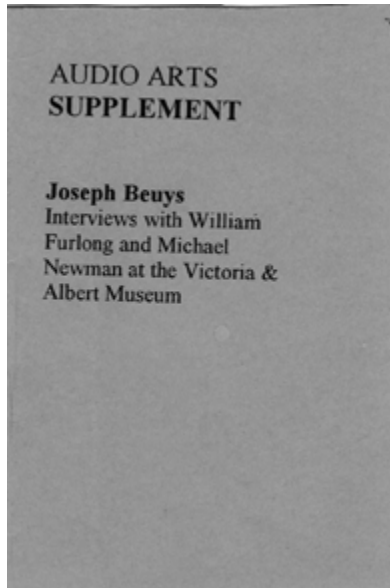
left Esi Shun  
right John Hughes

AUDIO ARTS



Joseph Beuys in his installation *Flight*  
at the Anthony d'Offay Gallery, October 1985

Joseph Beuys, Les Levine  
Krzysztof Wodiczko,  
Stephen Willats,  
New Records & Tapes,  
Turner Prize, Audie Awards



AUDIO ARTS  
SUPPLEMENT

Joseph Beuys  
Interviews with William  
Furlong and Michael  
Newman at the Victoria &  
Albert Museum



left images of *Audio Arts* tapes  
clockwise from top

(tape with Beuys photo)  
*Audio Arts*, vol. 8 no 1, 1986,  
cassette, inlay cover, Courtesy  
William Furlong/*Audio Arts*

(Green tape) Joseph Beuys Supplement,  
*Audio Arts*, 1996, cassette, inlay cover,  
Courtesy William Furlong/*Audio Arts*

*Audio Arts*, Memorex cassette,  
1973. Courtesy William Furlong/  
*Audio Arts*, Tate Archive

above William Furlong, *Speaking to  
Others: Who Speaks to Who*, Villa  
Romana, Florence, 2013, curated  
by Lucia Farinati, installation view

