



5-2-94 / We sat by the water it was steely blue, and slate blue – no contrast between water and sky only subtly different grey/blue/gun metal hues – the same value as the concrete wall of the pier. Then, riding bikes up past North Ave, the water was two-tone, a whitish opaque aqua with long black shadows swimming through it. We sat down to drink from thermoses a cocktail of tomatoes and oranges that Roy concocted and the clouds grew pneumatically, gradually filling with air and pushing down against the horizon which didn't give but held the drape of calm water hanging loosely in place below its black bar.

6-25-92 / I got up early and drove to the lake but it was a boring lake/sky difference – baby blue blinking water and bland, almost-white sky. Still, a lit morning and I walked to the Pratt coffeehouse and back again to eat breakfast on the beach, the waves not visible but you could hear them. The curve of the sand is just enough to hide the waves' white rim. Red peonies at the farmers' market, tightly closed, one white one loosely blooming.

1-10-93 / The lake is soup, heaving but not able to boil, or animal, steamily breathing, the fog blowing haphazardly and curds of ice sliding side to side. The way the steam closes off the view made me want to take a walk out onto the animal's rising back – I didn't even get out of the car but filmed through the window (it is 20 below).

"The sea is a special kind of medium for modernism because of its perfect isolation, its detachment from the social, its sense of self-enclosure, and above all, its opening onto a plenitude that is somehow heightened and pure ..." *

10-4-94 / I went to shoot the lake this morning – there was a man on the end of the pier before me, with his dog. He shoved his dog off the pier.

"... The sea and sky are a way of packaging "the world" as a totalized image, as a picture of completeness, as a field constituted by the logic of its own frame. But its frame is a frame of exclusions and its field is the work of ideological construction." *

5-4-96 / Trying to get the horizon exactly level and centered shot to shot is an impossible task – even now that I have cast a fitted seat for the camera and cemented it to the lake wall. I have seen the wall heave and crack over the course of winters and by spring roll and sag in a wave. Our eyes compensate like bubbles in levels in relation to uneven ground but the fixed frame of the camera will always register a tilt.

3-9-93 / The lake is not the sea

3-20-95 / My experience of the lake is as an image I can't get inside of (other than twenty feet off the beach on a hot day – and only then if the lifeguards aren't on duty – they won't let you go in over your head) – an illusion of space that makes living here ok. Sometimes it is a field of triangular steel planes bobbing up and down, like sharks' fins, or an expanse of slightly wrinkled rayon, or an immaterial blue haze, like an airbrushed backdrop –

"Ruskin sees the pattern in the carpet, in the sea, in the aspens. Sees their form, their picture. What he does not see, cannot see, is how he has been made a captive of their picture." *

2-11-93 / I met a woman through the personals ads who keeps her curtains pulled all day, preferring to live in an enclosed space with artificial light. It occurs to me that I could manufacture all this footage of the lake in the studio, with filters and dyes and special effects, and straighten the horizon frame by frame. Of course the image would be no less "real" than what results from Kodak's commercial formula for simulating color (metal salts that peel at different speeds), a single point perspective, and a

rectangular frame. But then I would lose the need to go to the lake – "the primary phenomenon is a preconceived idea that takes possession of us" **

9-2-96 / Meanwhile, there is all that I turn my back on in order to film the lake – the holding facility, for instance, in downtown Chicago, where the windows are long thin slits like gun turrets in old castles – not dissimilar to the long thin windows in the South Bend museum that look out over the river. Filming lake and sky is framing denial – a distilled, colored, elaborated form, a picture of all that the city isn't – a picture of escape (a completely different picture than might be constructed inside the holding facility).

6-15-96 / "Danaos' forty-nine killing daughters (who killed their husbands on the marriage bed) were condemned to spend eternity gathering water in a sieve" – Is this a punishment for murder, or for a woman's unwillingness to bear children, the metaphor being never to build anything, for the days to pass without shape or direction, for life and labor to disappear without a trace?

4-12-96 / the sea is a shroud / that Penelope weaves for Laertes / an image of serenity and peace / constructed from perpendicular threads, entwined / then pulled apart – at night / and begun again (it is slightly different) the next day / (prolonging Penelope's decision of who to marry, but also Laertes' life) / making and unmaking time

– but metaphors are supposed to be vehicles – buses, trains (in Athens) – used to get somewhere –

* Rosalind Krauss, *The Optical Unconscious*

** Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Remarks on Color*