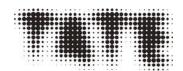
## **Conrad Dossier Part 1: Performance Specification**



ARTIST: Tony Conrad (1940–2016)	TITLE: Ten Years Alive on the Infinite Plain
ACCESSION NO.: L04307	YEAR: 1972 – ongoing
MEDIUM: Performance with live music and film	
<b>DURATION</b> : Approximately 90 minutes <sup>1</sup>	

### DOSSIER INTRODUCTION

This performance specification is the first part of a dossier of information that must be consulted prior to activation and be disseminated to the appropriate parties at the appropriate moments in the lead-up to the performance.

The dossier comprises the following documents:

- Performance Specification
- 2. Guidelines for Projectionists
- 3. Guidelines for Musicians
- 4. Guidelines for Sound Engineers
- 5. Associated contextual and audio-visual documentation<sup>2</sup>

These documents have been written and annotated in such a way that illuminates how they have been created and to highlight the different voices of the different contributors. The contributors are noted in the footnotes after each contribution. Annotations are shown as footnotes.<sup>3</sup>

#### Contributors include:

Andrew Lampert (lead contributor from the Conrad Estate and 'transmitter' of the work, having been the projectionist in three activations in 2005, 2007 and 2017), Angharad Davies, Dominic Lash, Mark Webber, Rhys Chatham, Regina Greene, Rob Kennedy, Peter Spence, Paige Sarlin, Vera Alemani, David Grubbs, Barney Rosenthal and George Maund.

Tate's Time-Based Media Conservation department: Louise Lawson, Hélia Marçal, Ana Ribeiro, Ben Webb, Esther Harris, Patricia Falcão, Lia Kramer, Claire Perrault and Duncan Harvey.

Tate's Curatorial department: Andrea Lissoni and Carly Whitefield.

<sup>1</sup> This is the duration that can be found on Tate's collection management system. Different contributors, including Andrew Lampert, Regina Greene and Andrea Lissoni, have stated different durations between 90 and 100 minutes, often considering silent moments before and after the performance as part of the performance itself

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> The materials contained within this section will be varied and may change from display to display depending on the context of display, size of venue, and so on.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Alterations to this document need to be tracked through footnotes (including details about decision making) and must be recorded in Appendix 2 by Tate Conservation **only**.

## **Conrad Dossier Part 1: Performance Specification**



### **DESCRIPTION**

Ten Years Alive on the Infinite Plain is an approximately 90-minute film and music performance work involving four<sup>4</sup> 16 mm film projectors, a projectionist, a prerecorded audio file of Tony Conrad (hereafter referred to as 'the artist') playing solo violin, and live, amplified accompaniment by three<sup>5</sup> musicians performing on violin or viola (hereafter referred to as 'violin'), electric bass guitar, and a unique instrument called a 'long string instrument' or 'long string drone' (LSD).<sup>6</sup>



Fig.1
Tony Conrad performing *Ten Years Alive on The Infinite Plain* at The Kitchen, New York, 18 May 2005
Photo © The Kitchen

The performance features the three musicians playing a durational, minimalist and somewhat improvisational<sup>7</sup> accompaniment to the recording of the artist. There is, intentionally, no score to guide musicians; the artist has stated that 'My idea was to eliminate the social and cultural function of the score as a site'.<sup>8</sup> The musicians are positioned to one side of a screen, upon which there is a projection coming from four 16 mm projectors arranged side-by-side in a row, whose projected images are lined up edge-to-edge. The 16 mm film loops each contain the same pattern of alternating light and dark vertical stripes which appear to move across the screen. Every third frame, the image switches between its positive and negative form, intended to create an intense, pulsating effect. Over the course of the performance the focus of each of the projections is subtly altered to create different effects. Roughly halfway through the performance the projectors and projections are incrementally shifted

<sup>4</sup> 

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> The number of projections has varied: three projectors were used in the performance in Leeds in 2006 (EVOLUTION 2006 festival, Leeds City Art Gallery) due to the fourth projector breaking just before the performance, and six projectors were used in the 2013 performance in Bologna (Live Arts Week Festival II, Museo d'Arte Moderna di Bologna (MAMbo)). This was agreed with the artist, who was present in both cases.

The number of musicions has varied agrees provious performances, from three at The Kitchen, New York in

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> The number of musicians has varied across previous performances, from three at The Kitchen, New York in 1972 to seven at the performance at BOZAR, the Centre for Fine Arts in Brussels in 2007.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> The term 'long string instrument' is used by musicians and long string instrument practitioners. The reference to the instrument as a 'long string drone' came from Tony Conrad as a form of word play, since its abbreviation carries the double reference to the psychedelic drug LSD. Rhys Chatham, personal communication with Hélia Marçal, Kit Webb and Ana Ribeiro, 24 April 2019.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Given that the artist is no longer able to guide and perform the work following his death in 2016, there exists a tension between his improvisational practice and the need for the musicians to respond to the fixed recording of the artist playing.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Tony Conrad in Hans-Ulrich Obrist, A Brief History of New Music, Zurich 2013, p.194.

## **Conrad Dossier Part 1: Performance Specification**



inwards at a very slow rate so that they gradually unite to form one pulsating, overlapping projection. The projectors and projectionist are set up on a raised platform behind the audience, which is located in the middle of the darkened space.

The performance is one of the rare instances in which Conrad united his experiments in structural filmmaking with the mode of reductive sound composition he had helped develop within the context of the Theatre of Eternal Music, starting in 1962. According to the artist, the title of the work refers specifically to this ten-year period over which he had been exploring the potential of long-duration sound.

### Contextual artist statements<sup>9</sup>

'Once I dreamed I shared a space with every other thing alive. Great and waiting in the even light stood a wall, full with many windows and doors, all with the markings of many animals and names. Some of the doors stood hoary on their hinges, and some stood unused, and they were of all ages. As we were all there, the door was open as soon as I saw it clearly, and on the other side there flowed the sound current, all across the infinite plain. As I heard on both sides of the great wall, when from time to time



Fig.2
Performance of Tony Conrad, Fifty-One Years Alive on the Infinite
Plain as part of Live Arts Week Festival II, Museo d'Arte Moderna di
Bologna (MAMbo), Bologna, 16 April 2013
Photo: Francesca Liccardi

some other door would open, I would perceive that the sound reverberated throughout each part of the plain, and through each door, sounding differently.

Suddenly there was no thing alive, and yet nothing had changed, and when I had returned, the sound remained.'

Programme notes written by Tony Conrad for the premiere of the work at The Kitchen, New York, 11
 March 1972

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> For more information please refer to the 'Tony Conrad Folder'. This folder aims to share who Conrad was as an artist as well as a person. His persona and character are key to understanding him, his values, and how this resonates with his artworks.

## **Conrad Dossier Part 1: Performance Specification**



'The most exciting thing today about late '60s—early '70s work is how it can be seen in a new light in 2005. Of course, cultural work responds to the immediate environment around it at the time, but at a later point it can also function to redefine other work of its own time and to offer a different set of perspectives on what's happening today. In 1972, *Ten Years*, which has a kind of new age-y title, wasn't so much new age-y as it was driven by an effort to reclaim a spiritual territory for New York that came out of America (the West) rather than from the East. It was to acknowledge that there's a space for contemplation, for the subjectivity of long durations and perceptually driven work within a Western framework. But in order to see how that fits into the design of the film, I have to explain a little bit about what the film really is and does.

My first premise was that it might somehow be possible to subvert or extend the use of ultra-minimal images in a way that would emphasize the emergent complexity they make possible, rather than the images themselves. When I started to work on this film, I decided to restrict the content to a simple pattern of vertical black and white stripes, as I had in an earlier film called *Straight and Narrow*. And by changing the pattern to its negative every three frames, an ambiguous sense of motion could be realized, following the principles of animation. Depending on the direction that your eye starts to track the changes or movement from the positive to the negative pattern, you will see movement to either the left or the right. That kind of ambiguity interested me because it focused the process of viewing internally, and foregrounded what hypnotists call ideosensory information – that is, the qualities of sensation as experienced within the body of the individual. That kind of information is powerfully inducing to meditative and reflective states.

The completed performance involves multiple projections of the looped stripe patterns. Talk about widescreen – with four screens you can stretch an image out pretty colossally. Over the course of the performance, which is a projectionist's performance, the images are moved slowly so that they coalesce and overlap and interact in various ways. They do this in a kind of chaotic fashion so that at points, the qualities of space, light, motion, and colour that emerge are quite unexpected. In that sense, the film offers the kind of reflective environment that a painting might, except that the audience is of course constrained by the temporal aspects of a performance. I also incorporated music that depended on somewhat analogous principles.'

Tony Conrad, interview with Jay Sanders, BOMB, no.92, Summer 2005<sup>10</sup>

## **ARTWORK REQUIREMENTS**

This performance specification exists to detail all that is required in order to activate this performance. As a summary and quick point of reference, the minimum requirements are:

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Andrew Lampert selected these quotations as he felt that they most reflected Conrad and his work. The full article is available at <a href="https://bombmagazine.org/articles/tony-conrad/">https://bombmagazine.org/articles/tony-conrad/</a>, accessed 30 September 2021.

## **Conrad Dossier Part 1: Performance Specification**



- A space of the desired size (variable)
- 4 x performers (1 x projectionist and 3 x musicians)
- 4 x projectors (and all technical peripherals)
- 1 x projection platform
- 16 mm film media (supplied by Tate)
- A projection screen/surface
- 1 x long string drone (LSD; supplied by Tate)
- 1 x violin
- 1 x electric bass guitar
- Amplifiers (and technical peripherals for musicians)
- 1 x PA system (and all technical peripherals for media playback, monitoring, etc.)
- 1 x sound technician
- 1 x digital sound file (supplied by Tate)
- 1 x static video camera (and all technical peripherals for audio-visual documentation)

#### **GALLERY REQUIREMENTS AND LAYOUT**

The overall dimensions of the space are variable; while the artist did not set any minimum or maximum parameters for the space, the practical requirements of the display will determine the minimum requirements, and the nature of the space will shape the layout within it.<sup>11</sup>

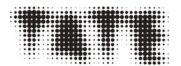
## Audience space:

• The space must be able to accommodate all the elements outlined in the Artwork Requirements above plus an audience of the desired size who will be positioned between the projection platform and the projection surface. The dimensions of the audience space vary depending on the desired arrangement of the space in general. The aim should be to give the audience more room rather than less; the desired space for the audience will both determine and be determined by projector lens choice and the corresponding throw distance to achieve the desired screen size.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> The work has been shown at several art events and music venues. There are no minimum or maximum specifications for the size and shape of the space and the flexibility of the work permits the use of unconventional spaces. It has been adapted to different spaces such as The Kitchen in New York (1972 and 2005), the Empty Bottle in Chicago (1996), Museo d'arte Moderna di Bologna (2013) and The Tanks, Tate Modern, London (2017).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Care should be taken to ensure these dimensions are calculated with full knowledge of the available lenses. As an obsolete technology, 16 mm lenses can be difficult to source.

## **Conrad Dossier Part 1: Performance Specification**



### Flooring:

 No specifications have been provided as to the colour or appearance of the floor within the space. There may be aesthetic, practical or technical considerations that prompt decision making with regard to this; for example, carpet<sup>13</sup> or rugs<sup>14</sup> may be installed if the floor is visually and/or acoustically reflective or deemed to be too uncomfortable for the audience to sit on for an extended period of time.

## Walls and ceiling:

 No specifications have been provided as to the colour or appearance of the gallery walls and ceiling, though if the projections are to be projected onto a wall, the surface must be an appropriate colour (e.g. white) or painted with screen paint.

### Lighting:

- Light levels should be very low, without it being completely dark, with the projections being the brightest light source in the room. There should be enough light to permit the public to move safely and confidently around and in and out of the room (which they are free to do).
- A dim spotlight should illuminate the musicians. Care should be taken to ensure the spotlighting does not spill onto, or interfere with, the projections.

### Adjacent spaces:

- An adjacent space should be allocated as a 'green room', a space wherein personnel can take
  breaks between rehearsals and performances. Ideally, this space would be positioned so as to
  allow the musicians to enter the performance space. Water and snacks should be supplied to
  the performers during rehearsals and performances.
- The music is to be performed at high volume. Given this, proximity to other artworks or spaces should be considered.

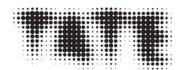
### PHYSICAL COMPONENTS

- 1 x LSD (with 1 x metal cylinder/slide used to play the instrument and 2 x clamps to secure it to a table):
  - o Tate component number: L04307.002.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Carpet has been used on some occasions but not in all instances.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Persian rugs have been used for some performances; it is assumed these were brought in by the musicians themselves.

## **Conrad Dossier Part 1: Performance Specification**



 Conceived by the artist, the LSD produces a drone sound when played with a bow or similar. This LSD was produced by Conrad's estate and can be replicated in the future.
 Musicians can use other materials to play with the instrument.<sup>15</sup>

#### **MEDIA**

- 1 x .aiff audio file of the artist performing the work on violin:
  - o Tate component number: TBC.
  - o Duration: 1 hr 30 min 9 sec 250 ms.
  - o File size: 1.56 GB.
- Exhibition film print to make 4 x 16 mm film loops:
  - Tate component number: TBC.
  - o Duration: each loop is approx. 10 ft in length (or around two-and-a-half arms' lengths).
  - o Aspect ratio: 1.34:1.
  - Loops are to be prepared by the projectionist; they should be large enough so that they
    do not create tension in the projector, and small enough not to sag.

#### TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS AND EQUIPMENT LIST

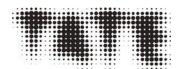
### Projection:

- 4 x 16 mm projectors, either with variable frame rate, or two with 18 fps and two with 24/5 fps:<sup>16</sup>
  - Kodak Pageant 250S are preferred owing to the ability to change frame rate between 18 and 24/5 fps while the projectors are running.
  - If only 24/5 fps projectors can be found (e.g. EIKI / ELF or Elmo slot loader projectors)
     then these are acceptable.
  - All four projectors must be equally bright and have the same lamp wattage.
  - It is recommended that at least one spare projector is at the site of the performance, and two spares if two speeds of projector are being used.
- 4 x identical lenses:
  - Ideally prime lenses with a focal length of 25 or 38 mm depending on desired throw distance.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> One of the performers has handled the LSD using different materials, including a metal rod and a water bottle. Performers are advised to experiment with different sounds during the rehearsals.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> The artist preferred that the 16 mm projectors are able to shift between 18 fps and 24 fps as the sensation of the movement and flicker feels different at these rates. Information provided by Andrew Lampert.

### **Conrad Dossier Part 1: Performance Specification**



- The artist preferred not to use zoom lenses as it creates the risk that the size of the image will change during the performance.<sup>17</sup>
- 4 x halogen projector lamps (plus spares).
- 8 x rollers (in place of take-up reels).
- Materials to aid the gentle, incremental movement of the projectors (e.g. felt sheets).
- Transformers for the projectors (if required).
- 1 x 16 mm splicer and tape.
- Projector maintenance materials.

## Audio:

 A PA system suited to the technical requirements of the work and the size and qualities of the space is required (exact specifications are variable and should be determined in consultation with the chosen sound engineer).

Requirements include:

- o Monitoring the sound of the instruments by the performers and managing output levels.
- Playback and equalisation of the artist's audio track.
- The system must be set up in a stereo configuration, be well adjusted to the space and deliver undistorted sound.
- 1 x computer with output to mixing desk (to play the audio track during rehearsals and performance).
- All necessary cables should be provided.
- Hearing protection must be provided for everyone involved and attending the event.

### **Instruments:**

Other than the LSD, the instruments (and stands) will be provided by the relevant musicians:

- 1 x concert acoustic violin (with bow and resin).
- 1 x electric bass guitar.

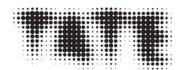
The following requirements are set for equipment to be used by the musicians:

- 1 x guitar amplifier is to be use for playing the LSD (Fender Twin, Roland JC-120 Jazz Chorus or equivalent can be used).
- Bass amplifiers can be Gallien-Krueger (400RB, 800RB or 1001RB), Laney RB9 300-Watt Bass
   Head, Trace Elliot, Ampeg, SWR (but not SM-900 or SM-1500), Euphonic, or equivalent.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> Information provided by Andrew Lampert.

## **Conrad Dossier Part 1: Performance Specification**



- Bass speakers are to be from brands such as Hartke, Ampeg, SWR, Trace Elliot, Mark Bass, Bergantino, Hughes & Kettner, EV, JBL, Peavey or Laney (but **not** Gallien-Krueger).
- 1 x acoustic instrument clip-on contact microphone (for violin) is required.

#### OTHER MATERIALS REQUIRED

- 1 x projection platform large and strong enough to accommodate the projectionist and projectors<sup>18</sup> (e.g. Prolyte StageDex 2000 x 1000 x 8000mm (1200mm/4ft deck legs)).
- Projector table(s):
  - It is of the utmost importance that the platform and tables are well secured and sturdy enough so as not to disturb the projectors/projections upon movement by the performer.
- 1 x table for the LSD. Requirements for the table:
  - The table should be at least 1600 mm wide.
  - It should be neither made of material that audibly resonates nor be made in a way or contain components that cause audible resonation.
  - o It should have a thin top to which the LSD will be clamped.
  - o It should be sturdy and not move when the instrument is played.
  - It should be of a comfortable height for the chosen performer.
- 1 x projection screen or white wall surface/wall with a projection area painted to the desired size:<sup>19</sup>
  - o The dimensions of the projection area should be generally proportional to the space.
  - The projected area needs to be at least the size of the four adjacent projections (whose individual size will be determined by the chosen projector lens and throw distance).
- 3 x straight-backed chairs with no arms for the musicians.<sup>20</sup>
- Audience seating (optional):
  - o Cushions (enough that the audience may feel comfortable within the space).
  - o A limited number of chairs should be made available for those who may require them.

### PERFORMERS, ADDITIONAL PERSONNEL AND TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED

The venue is advised to contact relevant personnel at least two months in advance of the performance and to provide all related documentation as far in advance as is deemed appropriate.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> The platform is designed to allow people to stand and move below the projected images during the performance without affecting the projections. Information provided by Andrew Lampert.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> Both screens and wall projections have been used in the various activations of the work.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Information provided by Regina Greene and Carly Whitefield.

## **Conrad Dossier Part 1: Performance Specification**



### Key personnel<sup>21</sup>

### Projectionist:

- 1 x projectionist.
- The projectionist should be an experienced, professional projectionist, well versed in handling and operating 16 mm film and projectors.
- Ideally, they should have an understanding of and sympathy towards Expanded Cinema.

### Musicians:

- 3 x musicians (minimum).
- The musicians should be able to play the required instruments; however, the artist has noted that while they need to have fundamental skills in order to play and rehearse regularly, the musicians do not need to be trained musicians or need to know how to read music.
- The musicians need to be comfortable, physically and mentally, with durational playing.
- Ideally, the musicians understand the concept of minimalism and have knowledge of the artist and his contemporaries.<sup>22</sup>

#### Facilitator:

- 1 x facilitator (minimum).
- The facilitator is an individual or individuals who have either worked with the artist or who have performed the piece before. Their role is to ensure that the work is effectively and faithfully activated at the venue.
- Ideally, facilitators would also be performers.<sup>23</sup>
- A key role of the facilitator is to provide their experience and guidance in moments of revision and to guide the improvisational responses to the audio file of the artist playing. This would normally happen during the preparation period, including installation and rehearsals.
- Facilitators should provide oversight and experience without overly constraining moments of decision making. For example, they might advise on tuning or sound levels, but it may be better if musicians reach an agreement collectively regarding cues and moments of exchange.
- Should the facilitator not also be a performer, it is recommended that, at the very least, they are present for the rehearsal period.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> For more information on specific roles see the Projectionist, Musicians and Technical folders.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> Information provided by Andrew Lampert and Regina Greene.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> I.e. not an additional person, but one or more of the individuals listed above.

### **Conrad Dossier Part 1: Performance Specification**



### Sound Engineer:

- 1 x professional sound engineer is required for the installation, rehearsals and performance.
- They should be able to specify and operate a sound system appropriate for the chosen space and requirements of the work.
- They are responsible for starting the audio track and should familiarise themselves with the practicalities and aesthetics of the performance as a whole.

The above individuals should be provided with the relevant parts of the dossier prior to the installation and rehearsals, with enough time given to allow them to familiarise themselves with the work and to ensure any conversations that are required in advance of this time can take place.

### Additional personnel:

The number of individuals needed for installation will vary depending on the size and nature of the space, size of the PA system, positioning of the PA system and whether or not a screen is installed (as opposed to being projected onto a wall surface). Personnel and knowledge needed in addition to the above list include:

- Producer(s), whose role it is to coordinate all other individuals involved in the activation, the call for performers, rehearsals, performances and ensure all equipment and materials are provided.
- Trained technicians to build/install the platform (the platform installation may be carried out by the company providing the platform).
- One or more scissor lifts may be required for the installation of a screen. If required, technicians
  with the appropriate licences will be needed.

#### **INSTALLATION AND REHEARSALS**

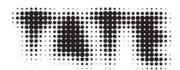
At least three days (4–6 hours each day) should be set aside for:

- Load-in.
- Set-up of the film elements: platform, tables, projectors, screen.
- Unpacking, condition checking and construction of the LSD.
- Setting audio playback and levels of the artist's violin recording through the PA.
- Rehearsals and finalising the audio setup and physical arrangement of the space.

## Criteria for rehearsals:

• Rehearsals must take place in the same space as the performance.

## **Conrad Dossier Part 1: Performance Specification**



- All performers, facilitators, the sound engineer and producer (or key producers) should attend the rehearsals.
- Not all rehearsals need be of the same duration as the performance itself; rather, shorter rehearsal sessions are advised. At least two shorter rehearsal sessions are required.
- Time must be allocated for at least one full-length rehearsal in advance of the performance, but two full rehearsals are advised. These rehearsals will include the venue's full production team so that technical/backline considerations can be addressed and worked out.24

Rehearsals are an opportune time to determine exactly where the musicians will sit. This decision depends upon a number of considerations:

- The dimensions and architecture of the space and the desired layout within it.
- Technical considerations or limitations, such as potential feedback from the instruments.
- Musicians are normally positioned to the side of the film projections.
- It is important that the musicians are able to connect within one another, so placing them in a very slight curve can work, depending on the space.
- The personal preferences of the musicians themselves, specifically in relation to how they interact with each other and the screen.
- The ability to see the screen is important but, first and foremost, the musicians are responding to the artist's recording, not the projections.
- Often the LSD is placed centrally between the violinist and bassist.<sup>25</sup>
- There have been instances where the musicians were positioned in front of the projections, such as in Bologna (2013).26

musicians. If it is decided that the musicians should be placed in front of the projections, this must be agreed

with the musicians in advance.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> Information provided by Andrew Lampert and by the Time-Based Media Conservation team.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> As seen in the 2017 Tate Modern performance and the 2019 Tate Liverpool performance.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> This should take into consideration the stroboscopic nature of the film and the impact it might have on the

## **Conrad Dossier Part 1: Performance Specification**



### **TIMING**

- Performers are positioned to one side of the screen, ideally at a slight angle so that they can view the four projected images at their full width to facilitate engagement with the projections and assist their timing.
- Should the space not permit a full or convenient view of the projections, or should the performers choose not to rely on the projections for visual cues, a timepiece may be positioned in close proximity to the musicians.<sup>27</sup>

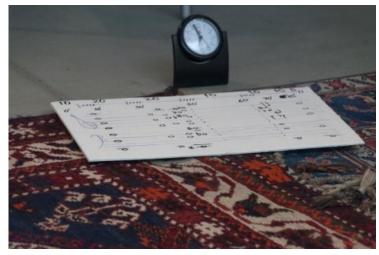


Fig.3 Improvised score and clock used to aid timing during the performance at Museo d'Arte Moderna di Bologna, 2013 Photo: Francesca Liccardi

• The artist was very specific about the type of timepieces to be present on stage.<sup>28</sup> They should be discreet and plain, with no lights and making no noise, and can be digital or analogue.

### PERFORMANCE TIMELINE

The performance is approximately 90–100 minutes in length. The duration of the music and projections has become fixed to the duration of the recording of the artist playing the violin. The additional time is accounted for by the two moments of darkness and silence at the beginning and the end.<sup>29</sup>

Below is a timeline for the performance (an enlarged version can be found in Appendix 1):

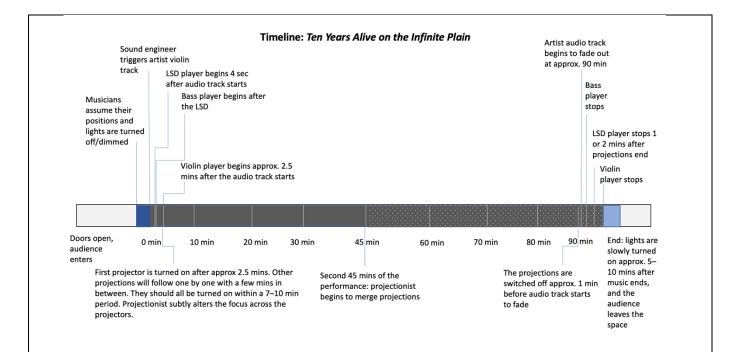
<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> Information provided by Angharad Davies, Rhys Chatham and Dominic Lash.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> Information provided by Carly Whitefield.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> Information provided by Andrew Lampert, Andrea Lissoni and Regina Greene.

## **Conrad Dossier Part 1: Performance Specification**





#### Beginning:

- When the performance is ready to start, the musicians assume their positions with their instruments, chairs, instrument stands and amplifiers.
- When ready, the lights are turned down to create a darkened space.<sup>30</sup> There is a dim spotlight on the musicians throughout the performance.
- The performance begins with the playback of the pre-recorded audio track, triggered by the sound engineer. This represents the first violin of the performance; the remaining musicians are considered to be supporting the artist's audio track.<sup>31</sup>
- The LSD starts after four seconds of playback.
- The bass player starts immediately after the LSD player.
- After around two and a half minutes, the violin player begins.
- Also at around two and a half minutes, the first projector is turned on. While there is no set order in which they must be turned on, it is considered helpful to start from one of the two middle projectors and then move outward.<sup>32</sup>
- After a few minutes the second projector is turned on, followed a few minutes later by the third, and then the fourth a few minutes after that; it should take around 7–10 minutes for all four projectors to be turned on.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> Information provided by Andrew Lampert.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> Information collated by Time-Based Media Conservation based on the feedback session, Tate Liverpool, 16 May 2019

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> Information provided by Andrew Lampert and Mark Webber.

## **Conrad Dossier Part 1: Performance Specification**



 Once all projectors are all on, the projectionist continues to slowly move between projectors, gently and incrementally adjusting their focus, creating different visual patterns within the linear row of projections.<sup>33</sup>

### Middle:

At roughly the halfway point in the performance, the projectors are gently manipulated by the
projectionist so that the projections very slowly merge into one single image during the
remainder of the performance. Over this time, the projectionist continues to adjust the focus.

## End:

- The end of the performance is determined by the end of the audio track (which fades out with about a minute remaining); in anticipation of the end of this, each performer has a role to play in order to finish the performance:
  - By one minute prior to the end of the audio track the projectionist should have converged all the projections and turned off each projector, one by one.
  - o Shortly after the final projector is turned off, the bassist stops playing.
  - After the bassist, the LSD player stops.
  - o After the LSD player, the violinist stops (dampening the strings of the instrument).34
- The exact timing of these final steps is dependent on the musicians' flow, so for example if the musician is in the middle of a bow, they finish their movement.<sup>35</sup>
- A moment of darkness should be allowed after the music and projections finish.<sup>36</sup> Only a dim light should be on in order to allow the audience to leave the space. The lights should not be immediately brought up to full brightness as this detracts from the power and aftereffect of the work on the audience.<sup>37</sup>
- House lights can be turned on after around 5 to 10 minutes.

### PROJECTIONS<sup>38</sup>

- Projections should not fill the walls and need to be proportional to the space.
- Enough space between projections should be given to allow for re- or unfocusing without bleeding onto adjacent walls or projections.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>33</sup> Information provided by Andrew Lampert and Regina Greene.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> Suggestion from Rhys Chatham during rehearsals at Tate Liverpool, May 2019.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>35</sup> Information provided by Regina Greene and confirmed by Angharad Davies and Rhys Chatham.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> Information provided by Andrew Lampert, Andrea Lissoni and Regina Greene.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>37</sup> Information provided by Andrew Lampert.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>38</sup> For more information see the Projectionist folder.

### **Conrad Dossier Part 1: Performance Specification**



- The projectors should be placed in a way that limits vertical and horizonal keystoning as much as possible bearing in mind that the changing angles of the projectors throughout will inevitably produce a certain degree of horizontal keystoning.
- The projectors should be spaced in fairly close proximity to one another (to combat this horizontal keystoning) but there needs to be space between each projector for the projectionist to make adjustments to the focus and the projectors' position.

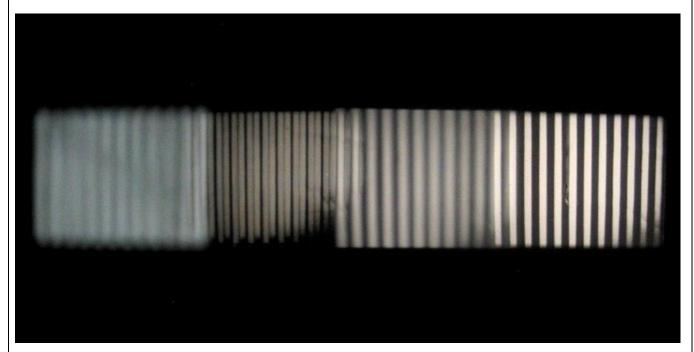


Fig.4
Performance of Tony Conrad, *Ten Years Alive on the Infinite Plain* 1972 at The Kitchen, New York, 18 May 2005
Photo © The Kitchen

#### **AUDIENCE**

- There are no specifications regarding the audience.
- The audience is expected to stand or sit in the available space.
- It is not a requirement to provide seating for the audience, but cushions may increase comfort given the duration of the piece and chairs should be provided for those who may require them.
- The audience is not required to remain static during the performance, and individuals are free to move around (though most people typically choose to sit or recline).
- As the sound will be amplified to a potentially uncomfortable volume, supplying ear plugs for the audience is recommended.
- Signage should be in place or advance notice provided when advertising the performance, as the strobe-like effect of the film could be problematic for those with photo-sensitive conditions.





Fig.5
Performance of *Fifty-One Years Alive on the Infinite Plain* at Museo d'Arte Moderna di Bologna, 2013
Photo: Francesca Liccardi

## **LOGISTICS**

## Installation and de-installation:

 Installation and de-installation times will vary for each display/performance. A minimum of 5 days should be allocated for installation and 3 days for de-installation.

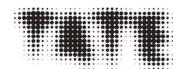
## Advertisement of performance:

• The performance can be advertised.

## **DISPLAY COSTS**

High costs are expected in relation to the provision/hire and maintenance of equipment,
 production of 16 mm film elements and hiring of all personnel.

## **Conrad Dossier Part 1: Performance Specification**



**DATE**: Dec 2019

### REQUIREMENTS FOR DOCUMENTATION

The artist documented each of his performances<sup>39</sup> and the requirements outlined below intend to represent his practice:

- The minimum requirement for documentation is to have one still video camera (ideally with a global shutter, as opposed to a rolling shutter) recording video and audio of the entire performance space (projections, musicians and public) from a static position.
- The recording must begin from the 5–10 minutes prior to the beginning of the performance and end 5–10 minutes after the performance finishes.

Additional forms of documentation can include:

- Photography of the performance.
- Photography and video of the rehearsals.
- Recordings of each channel of audio from the musicians.
- Multiple static or roving static or roving cameras and operators.

REPORT CREATED BY: Louise Lawson, Hélia Marçal and Ana Ribeiro

The individuals and equipment required for documentation must be discreet and must not distract from the performance. The parameters of documentation for each performance must be agreed with Tate beforehand.

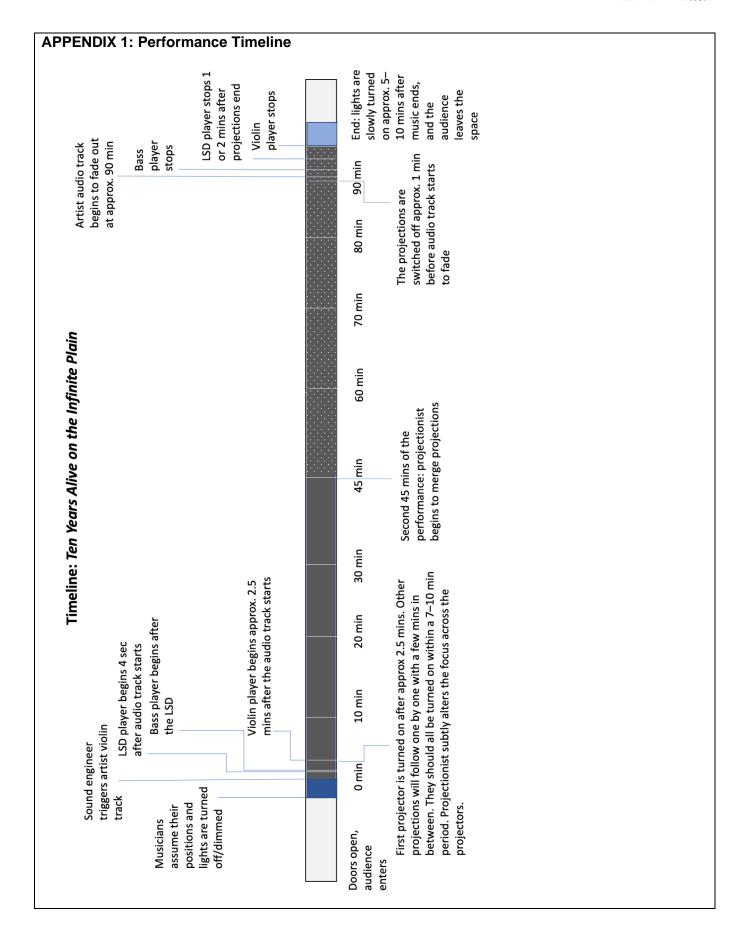
REPORT UPDATED BY: Duncan Harvey	<b>DATE</b> : Apr 2021
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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>39</sup> Information provided by Regina Greene.

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## **Conrad Dossier Part 1: Performance Specification**





# **Conrad Dossier Part 1: Performance Specification**



APPENDIX 2: Document Creation and Version History		
Initial version of document created using the following sources:	September 2018	
1. Performance in 2017: Information was gathered and produced between	- May 2019	
December 2016 and January 2017 for the 17 January 2017 performance		
at The Tanks, Tate Modern, by Esther Harris, Ben Webb, Louise Lawson		
and Patricia Falcão. Paige Sarlin, Vera Alemani, Angharad Davies,		
Dominic Lash, Andrew Lampert, Rhys Chatham and Andrea Lissoni		
directly participated in the event and its documentation.		
2. Projection test at N-Space, Tate Store, 6 March 2019: Information was		
gathered and produced by Tate Time-Based Media Conservation (Ben		
Webb, Claire Perrault, Hélia Marçal, Lia Kramer, Louise Lawson and Ana		
Ribeiro) with contributions from Kit Webb, Lucy Bayley, Mark Webber, Pip		
Laurenson, Sarah Haylett and Stephen Huyton.		
3. Document for projectionists created by Andrew Lampert, May 2019.		
4. Interviews with past collaborators up to 3 May 2019.		
First complete version for initial distribution created by Ana Ribeiro, Hélia Marçal,	3 May 2019	
Louise Lawson and Pip Laurenson, with contributions from Lucy Bayley.		
Revision, based on 13–17th May 2019 installation, rehearsals, feedback session	September 2019	
and interviews performed after 3 May. Revised document created by Ana Ribeiro,		
Hélia Marçal and Louise Lawson.		
Completion of annotated version.	January 2020	
Revision of all documentation in preparation for loan. Revisions carried out by	August 2021	
Duncan Harvey.		