

John Lennon and Yoko Ono Interview 'Kenwood', Weybridge, Surrey, England Monday, December 2nd, 1968

From Maurice Hindle's notes:

The following interview was conducted in December 1968 by myself, Maurice Hindle, then a new student at Keele University, England, and a fellow second year student, Daniel Wiles and another student, Bob Cross. We talked all afternoon and into the evening. This interview offers a condensed version of that compelling John Lennon outlook by which so many people have been and will continue to be affected. Such a mind cuts across frontiers, ideologies, religions and histories. What he says cannot be filed away under '1960s hippy rhetoric', much as many would want to do that. The issue over personal politics is as relevant - probably more relevant - now as it was then, or at any other time in history.

As a stimulus to discussion, I showed him 'An open letter to John Lennon' from someone called John Hoyland, a writer for Tariq Ali's radical left socialist paper Black Dwarf. He accused Lennon and the Beatles of 'selling out' to capitalism instead of being what the author of the letter wanted him to be – a socialist revolutionary. I guessed that the condescending tone of the attack would incite Lennon into some interesting comments – and I was right. Both Daniel and I asked questions – often of very different kinds, and the identity of the questioner is indicated in parentheses at the relevant point, (MH), (DW) or (BC). As well as being interested to learn more about John's political and personal beliefs, his values and attitudes, since he was now in close partnership with Yoko, I wanted in particular to draw John out on his view of the arts and the creative process.

- Maurice Hindle

[from Hindle's notes – the tape picks up at the point Maurice has asked John: *Do you like some forms of art better than others?*]

Transcript [part two]

JL: I think it's just a matter of choice, y'know? I think that's a snob attitude to say something's better than something else. I think...

JL: I think it's just a... you can prefer something, y'know? And something might give you a better buzz. The only art I really dig is Yoko's and a few people, like Richard Hamilton [innovative British pop art painter and collagist, who designed The Beatles 'White Album' cover].

Interviewer (DW): *Have you ever seen Steve Dwoskin's films?*

JL: **No, no. But there's very few of them that I prefer, to the others. The others are just ok, y'know. And there's some greats in the past and that. But, there's very few people today that... I mean there was very little art turned me on. It was only discovering Yoko at Indica Gallery that really turned me back on to art. I'd been fishing around, looking at what was going on. And, there was no turn on – it was just the same old rubbish coming out over and over again. It was like pre rock and roll, pop music art, until people like Andy Warhol, Yoko and [John] Cage [leading post-war avant-garde composer and artist] and all those people did what they did. And that concept art is the only one worth bothering about, for me. It's the only turn-on I've had since Elvis and rock and roll.**

Interviewer (DW): *But do you get as much satisfaction from watching it as actually doing it?*

JL: **Watching what?**

Interviewer (DW): *Well...*

JL: **Oh no, no. That's why I'm doing it, y'know? I mean, the same as I heard Elvis and then I had to do it. I got great joy listening to his records, which I'll never forget, and which I can recreate playing them. But *doing* it is something else, y'know? And I've had great joy from Ronald Searle [British cartoonist] when I was a kid. But I had to draw it myself to get the real buzz. And the same goes for Dylan and all the people that influenced me - and Yoko - I've got to do it, man. And if I...**

Yoko (to John): *Is there anything else for him to take?<relating to Lennon's driver about to drive to Apple headquarters on an errand>*

JL: **No, just wrap... the film up. Oh, can you just, bring the two films in here. I wanted him to take it in - the one we watched.**

Interviewer (MH): *The thing about art, then....I mean there are sort of two concepts of art as something different from life. Like in the past say, and then art as...what you, what everybody's doing now. I mean a conscious effort to try and create things that people are going to 'get'... [from Hindle's notes – this question is about the difference between traditional and post-modern art]*

JL: Yeah, well it's sort of Andy Warhol and those people sort of said "everything's art". Like his, your can of soup, y'know. And that. To just sort of show people that it's all art if...it depends... if you look at it with an artist's eye or an open mind, then it's art, y'know.

Interviewer (MH): *But you must still see it as a transitional period... to the point where everyone says, "alright, everybody's got it". You don't have to show it to everybody else, because everybody's there...*

JL: Ah yeah, but there'll always be people that will be showing some other viewpoint to it.

Interviewer (MH): *Do you think so?*

JL: Yeah, I mean that's... when everybody's sort of hip to that in the year whatever... and which won't be too long, because there won't be much else to do, you know...

Interviewer (MH): *Yeah, that's what I was thinking...*

JL: Yeah, right, right. So that's going to be great. But if I'm with some ordinary guy that can't create the way I create, but he can appreciate it in the year two million when I'm reborn, or not, or whatever, I'll be creating something, some other viewpoint of what's going on, y'know. There'll be something for artists, or musicians and all the people like me, to do. Even when everybody's hip to what's going on all around, y'know. There'll still be the performers and the singers and the equivalent of whatever's going on then.

Interviewer (MH): *What makes you think that?*

JL: Because there's always... people are never going to be the same. There'll always be people like me doing something, like I do. The relative thing, y'know. Even if... it'll all be pretty conceptual, and spiritual, and "mind music" and like that. But even if we were all... if I didn't have to sing to you, to sing my songs, presuming none of you can play or sing anything? just presume that... and I was giving you a performance in the year 2012, the stuff I create still comes from inside. Like the language. I've still got to translate it on to this to sing to you. But when I'm... if we had direct communication, I'd still be communicating those songs to you. Now, you can probably do it yourselves. But if I'm a sort of natural musician or something, I'd be able to sing to you songs that you wouldn't be able to create yourself, y'know.

Interviewer (MH): *But what I'm saying is, you get to that point, where you get to the essence. Y'know, I mean the whole working towards everything by externalizing and showing people... In the end you get to the essence, where everybody's got it, and there's no need to externalize it, so...*

JL: **Well externalize it, no, but it'll still be...I mean...**

Interviewer (MH): *But to say it's music and it's films and that... I mean that presupposes some sort of thing you have to go through to get to it, but you won't have to.*

JL: **Yeah, I see what you're getting at. But I still think there'll be people sort of... er...it's...I can't think of an example, y'know... to sort of show how I mean it.**

Interviewer (DW): *Though I think it's being incredibly optimistic y'know... I can't help feeling that...*

JL: **I am optimistic, you know, and...**

Interviewer (DW): *Yeah, but I can't help feeling that you're sort of...I don't know, in your last three years, you've got out of touch with the masses. I don't mean...*

JL: **Yeah, but what's the masses, man? What do you mean by that? Out of touch with what, y'know? With nine to five and all that? I've never been in touch with...**

Interviewer (DW): *...no, with people's attitudes and sensibilities I mean. I mean, your friends are presumably, sort of, enlightened people...*

JL: **No they're not! My friends are just ordinary people, y'know? There's a friend of mine, now... he's neither enlightened or not enlightened! He is the masses, y'know! See, I'm the masses, man! I've *been* the masses, I *am* the masses... Nothing's *changed*!**

Interviewer (DW): *Well you're not you see, because if you're...*

JL: **But because I'm not living on Old Compton Street or something, doesn't mean a shit, y'know! So, I've never been in contact with the masses, according to the way you're talking. I've never been there, man! I was never there mentally all my life! Why do you think I'm me? The whole point about *me* is that I've never been there!**

Physically, right, I went through it all. And mentally I went through all the things that all the other guys at school did. [to Yoko] I'd like you to get me some Sellotape to stick it down before it all unreels... Y'know? So, using your term of reference, I've never *been* there, in contact with the masses, cause I've always been outside of it. Whether I knew it or not, y'know? That's why I'm *me*! And not doing some gig in Liverpool, at nine to five... or even bumming around the coffee bars!

Interviewer (DW): *But that's why I think you're being terribly optimistic to think that people can ever become as you'd like them to be. Everybody to be... y'know, turned on.*

JL: **Relatively** turned on! That's why I'm saying to him [Maurice] that there'll always be people... If this scene is 2012, or whenever, that maybe early, whatever it is when people are doing... It'll still be relative. But the masses will be where I am today, and me, I should be somewhere else saying, "now this is" y'know... I should be as groovy as Jesus by *then*...

Interviewer (DW): *Yeah*

JL: ...and the masses should be as groovy as the grooviest people around **now!**

Interviewer (DW): *But when you look back, do you think there's been this advance, y'know, over the last few hundred years?*

JL: I think it goes and comes, y'know. Cycles. Y'know, like all the astrologers and all those people say. We've been, and fallen back. And I think it continues on that, and that when the Earth as a whole evolves to its full state of consciousness, there's a good chance it will just fall back into the crap again, y'know! So, I mean it's all, oh, what's the use of it? But the point is, if you believe in reincarnation, the point is that you're going to be around in the future, so you may as well, even for selfish reasons, fix it up for when you come back.

Interviewer (DW): *Yeah*

YO: <laughs> **Are you buzzing?**

JL: **Yeah, a bit, yeah!**

Interviewer (MH): *So you are seeing it [the thing about cyclic change] as a*

vertical rather than a horizontal.

JL: I just see it as a loop, y'know.

Interviewer (MH): *Going round?*

JL: Yeah. And you get up to the top... and [in sing-song jokey voice] down to the bottom of the hill again, and see, agaaain...ooooerp!!

<general laughter>

Interviewer (MH): *Yeah but, I mean, saying...*

Interviewer (BC): ...possibly every loop gets a bit higher...

JL: Yeah.

Interviewer (MH): *I don't personally see it as a sequential thing, upward or downward...*

JL: No, no, no, well... I mean... That's only a way of describing it...

Interviewer (MH): *...Yeah*

JL: ... Like in meditation, they used to say you "go within yourself", like "the kingdom of heaven is within you"... all that. You're not actually going "in", "out" or anywhere. And the whole place isn't actually going up, down, or anything. But it's the only language we've got, y'know? We can't *conceive* of what's happening, y'know. And when Jesus or any of the master types try and tell you... they've got to put it in language like "up", "down", "round"!...

YO: No, but that's one thing that whenever [audio inaudible]...we're not in that state and all that...we never really [audio inaudible]

JL: What... was that?

YO: ...that's the only time that I felt a kind of snobbery in the vertical idea...you know, going to the next stage...[audio inaudible]

Interviewer (DW): *Yeah*

JL: Yeah, but it's only a language of describing a state of consciousness, isn't it?

YO: **No, but...**

JL: **So it's not up, down, round and about. But the way they describe it in all the good old books is you go up and you go down, you know? And you say you're up when you're high and you're down when you're depressed. But you're not. And it's as valid as that.**

Interviewer (DW): *Did you think 'Yellow Submarine' was good, the film? And how much did you have to do with it?*

JL: **Very little.**

Interviewer (DW): *Did you like it?*

JL: **I enjoyed it, y'know, I thought it was alright.**

Interviewer (DW): *...brilliant I thought - 'Nowhere Man'...*

JL: **Yeah, I liked the guy's drawing, you know? And I liked some of the things they did. I thought it was alright.**

Interviewer (DW): *Did you like the Vacuum Man that sucks things up?*

JL: **Oh yeah, they pinched that from an idea I had about the sweeper in the garden; in the pool. But I mean, they didn't pinch it because I was writing a song about it for them, but I never did it - about Horace the Vacuum.**

YO: **You mean you had a song about Horace the Vacuum?**

JL: **Well they were saying, have you got any more songs for the cartoon? And I said I'd write one. They wanted one about monster. I said, I'll write one about Horace the thing that goes around the swimming pool sucking up the dirt. I was going to write about Horace, who sucked up - but I never did it. So they just took that obviously and made out a vacuum thing of it. [to Yoko] **That's for Anthony** [Lennon's driver] **to give to Tony Bramwell** [Senior Apple assistant, and later CEO of Apple Records]. **Has he gone?****

YO: **No.**

JL: **Can you tell him that he's got to hand it to Tony Bramwell personally, otherwise it'll vanish.**

Interviewer (DW): *Is it an underground film?* [Daniel is referring to the film that John is asking Yoko to have delivered to Tony Bramwell]

JL: **Well, I suppose so. It's a film of 'You are Here' show** [John's first art exhibition, held in July 1968 at London's Robert Fraser Gallery]. **Of all the people reacting to it. I had a candid camera team hidden behind the door, watching all the people doing it. Sort of looking at the picture and, you know...**

Interviewer (DW): <laughs>

JL: <laughs> **...not knowing how to take it, and all the art critics and the artists are all...**

JL: [shouting to personal assistant Pete Shotton about the Bramwell errand] **What? Yeah. There might be something for him to bring back, too.**

Interviewer (MH): *Something else I want to ask about is the LP 'Two Virgins'...*

JL: [to Pete Shotton] **Oh yeah, tell him to get Two Virgins and bring that back. Yeah... they should be bringing me back some today... Yeah?**

Interviewer (MH): *Where do we get one?* [Hindle is referring to John and Yoko's new 'Two Virgins' album]

JL: **No, it's not out yet, but they, there's such a lot of fighting and hassling trying to stop it, y'know, and EMI putting it round the world, "don't touch it" to all their companies. And they're meant to be helping us! And I think it's coming out this week. They're sending out the thing to the retailers for them to place the orders, so... The thing is to go and keep asking for it, 'til the retailers say "Oh, they want it". But it'll come out even if we have to send it round in a van, you know?**

Interviewer (DW): *Have you heard about this ridiculous Hendrix thing where they put it in a brown paper bag?* [referring to the nude cover of Hendrix's 'Electric Ladyland' album. U.K. retailers stocked it in a paper bag due to the cover art. 'Two Virgins' was destined to suffer the same fate]

JL: **Oh yeah, yeah.**

Interviewer (DW): *Oh Christ.*

JL: **I don't care even if they put it out in a brown paper bag, as long as it goes out, you know? ... Er, help yourselves to some nice bread she made. Macrobiotic bread... as they say. I'll just get a chunk before it vanishes.** <chuckles all round>

[The tape is stopped while they eat. It picks back up during a discussion of the Beatles' contractual obligations]

JL: **...no, because our output's been to so much, I think we've covered any contract they have. But they do have a thing saying so many songs a year...**

Interviewer (DW): *Really?*

JL: **Oh yeah. But I mean, when you do sign up originally, you sign up cause you're glad to sign up, y'know? And then you go on and on trying get a bit better deal all the time, y'know. But just the last deal Brian [Epstein] made... we signed up for nine years, so there you go...**

YO: **Here's some macrobiotic bread**

JL: **Yeah, I've explained the philosophical content behind the bread!**

Interviewer (DW): *if I can stay for three days, maybe I'll become a...*

JL: **Ten days.**

Interviewer (DW): *Ten days?*

Interviewer (BC): *What do you do after that?*

JL: **Well then you eat macrobiotic food, y'know? Which is quite easy to get. You get some from the health food shop, some from your local farmer – you can always find it. It's mainly 'untouched by human chemicals', is the joke... but it's no meat, no milk, no sugar. It sounds impossible, but it's easy. Once you've got the buzz, you don't want to lose it.**

[at this point, the group continues eating and discussing macrobiotic food. The tape stops, but is quickly turned back on]

JL: **They've got, it's that "Free food and meals. One meal or soup, bread and spread." They'll always give you something to eat. But it costs them so much to get, because it's hard to get it, and there's so few people eating it, y'know.**

Interviewer (DW): *You know the Dragon in <unintelligible> That's fantastically expensive...*

JL: **Well, that's not macrobiotic.**

[the tape is turned off again and resumes with John talking about the press being relentlessly negative about his relationship with Yoko and their art projects]

JL: **...from the balloons that were sent out. "You and your Jap bastard" and all that.** [360 helium balloons were released at the opening of 'You are here', John's first-ever solo art show in London, July 1, 1968, and dedicated to Yoko. Each balloon had a label inviting its finder to send a written reply to John at the Fraser Gallery, many of which made racist comments about Yoko]

YO: <laughs>

JL: **...and photographs of all that's going on there.**

Interviewer (MH): *Did you get much response from it?*

JL: **Oh yeah. And just from 'the gentlemen of the press' and all that: "He should stick to yodeling"..**

Interviewer (MH): <laughs>

[the group continues eating and chatting. Transcription difficult – mouths full of macrobiotic bread!]

JL: **...'Nigel** [replying to question about a poem, 'Good Dog Nigel', in John's first poetry collection, 'John Lennon in his Own Write']

Interviewer (DW): *Yeah, Nigel...'we're putting you to sleep at three of the clock' - my god, that was horrible...you must have been in a bad mood then!*

JL: **No, no. I just write 'em. And then they all sort of end up like that, y'know. I don't have to be in a bad mood to write like that...**

Interviewer (MH): *'Kakky Hargeaves' is another one (character from 'I remember Arnold', in 'John Lennon in his Own Write')*

JL: **That's a very early one.**

Interviewer (DW): *But you seem to be...some of your...well, I don't know which songs you write, but a lot of the writing seems to be very bitter...*

JL: **...Yeah, well..**

YO: <laughs> **...you've had that period, don't you?...**

JL: **...I'm...I've still got it...**

Interviewer (MH): *...the chip...*

JL: **...Mmn?**

YO: **...chip on your shoulder...**

JL: **It's the chip we've all got, and the thing we've been talking about all day, you know, is what I'm talking about. Whether it's just in a man-woman relationship, or man-establishment relationship. It's that, you know. That's what the chip is. 'Manifests itself in many different forms!' [in mock formal voice]**

YO: <laughs>

JL: **But it's the same old chip.**

Interviewer (DW): *But if anyone should have escaped from it, or could have escaped from it...*

JL: [drily] **...Let us know...**

Interviewer (DW): *...it's you...*

YO: <laughs>

JL: **Yeah, but I mean... I can escape from bringing out 'Two Virgins' and getting ostracized for it. If I don't want to... and not doing it - and just live on the income from "Yesterday" for the rest of my life y'know! But I don't want to do that, y'know. It wouldn't satisfy me**

in any way. I'm still fighting in... fighting... for the same things I was fighting about, as a kid.

Interviewer (DW): *What do the others do?*

JL: They're all doing their bit, y'know. George is out in the States, just sort of reconnecting with Dylan and a few people out there that we lost touch with. Seeing who he can pick up for the label [Apple records]. There's a great record he's got. God know how we'll release it: 'The King Of Fuck'. [issued by Apple in 1969 as "The King of Fuh"]

<all laugh>

JL: And it's just fantastic, by a fella called Brute Force. And it's... "Hail the Fuc-King", y'know.

<more laughter>

JL: Just very good bit. It's very good. So we're hoping to put that out one way or another. "All hail the king of fuck..."

Interviewer: [paraphrased] *Do you think you got busted for drugs because you offended the establishment?*

JL: Oh, that was in the 'Black Dwarf' thing... Well, he's probably right. Earlier on, the Mop Top thing was preventing us getting busted. Because, we were open about it years ago. I mean, it was common knowledge. And then, I don't really know the reason they suddenly busted me now. Probably because I've been waving me flag a bit, that's all. Like 'Two Virgins' and various other things. But you see, this guy's one of those, y'know, "the Stones are changing it, you're not." One of them...

You know, the Stones and I are great mates. But the Stones did pull back their album cover. So tell him that [the Black Dwarf letter writer] It's not against Mick [Jagger], it's against him. You know, I'm sick of this sort of... what is it...petty... thing. It's been going on for years. It used to be, "the Stones do that, and you do this," with the fans and that. But now it's all down to these revolutionaries, y'know. And the thing is, the Stones and I are close and... where's he?

YO: I haven't seen that, have I?

JL: Oh, this is the one from the 'Black Dwarf' – it'll get you going!

Interviewer (MH to Yoko): *[It's about] street fighting groups versus the capitalistic Beatles.*

JL: **Yeah, well they'll see, y'know. See, I'm not here to change them. They can get on with it. Let them straighten out a few people's faces and see where it gets them. I'll tell you what, if those people start the revolution, me and the Stones are probably the first ones that they'll shoot. And I mean that. It's just the kind of thing they do. Like Lenin and all... not Lenin. Just whoever... the ones who are really doing it get shot, y'know. It's him, the guy who wrote the letter that'll do it. He'll shoot me just for living here. I mean that's the kind of Christian Communist attitude they've got, y'know - we're all one brother, but you can't live here.**

Interviewers: *Yeah.*

<The tape recorder is turned off briefly. It resumes with John continuing to read and comment on the *Black Dwarf* letter.>

JL: **He's talking about the Stones and the Who, and how they came bursting out. He's forgotten to mention that if it wasn't for us [The Beatles], the Stones and the Who would never have been *allowed* out! Amazing.**

JL: **These people are so bitter, all of them, and they're holding the whole thing back... by their quibbling about... They're already... They're showing with what they write, and how they say it, how they can never *run* a new scene. Because they're already quibbling about... before we've even done anything, they're quibbling about who's doing what, and who's the ethnic one, and who isn't.... And let them go and talk, to the Stones, the Who, Dylan, me, Yoko, Andy Warhol, anybody that's doing anything - *doesn't think like this!* And that's what *none* of them can understand! Is that *they're* the ones that are holding it back by creating...you know, breaking it up in the ranks, already! Before anything has even moved forward half an inch, there's some fools like this... are trying to get it into another bag, before we've even burst the old bag!**

Interviewer (DW): *Yeah. The problem is that the people who have the ideas, like you, and Marx, and Jesus, and God knows what, and then you have...*

JL: <John and Yoko chuckling>: **Me, Marx, Jesus... great** <John and Yoko

laugh> **Yeah!... Ok!**

Interviewer (DW): *Then you have the people who push these ideas. Now, Jesus's and Marx's ideas lent themselves to being pushed. But you say, right, you don't push them, except by gently spreading them. And this is why yours has more chance of success. Christianity now, I mean it was a good idea once, but look at the buggers who are in charge. You know, it's ridiculous. And the same with Communism, and the same with this business [referencing Black Dwarf], I mean...*

JL: The same goes for Capitalism, probably. The idea... I don't know who thought of it. But the idea, I don't see what... What is Capitalism? Like, y'know, I don't really know what the def... I can get Communism and Christianity... But Capitalism is just like... It seems to cover everything else, y'know.

Interviewer (DW): *It's not an ideology; it's just a method of economic, y'know...*

Interviewer (MH): *But some of the Conservatives would have it that it IS an ideology; I mean they all sort of revere it as something unknown, y'know, trying to see the whole thing as just 'natural' for men to do to each other, sort of...*

JL: Yeah, I'm not sure y'know, cause I'm anti them all. I don't believe any of them are doing it. But I don't want to get in any bag about Capitalism, Communism...

Interviewer (DW): *But even the little ones, y'know, Tariq Ali and people, they're all just self-seeking, sort of... y'know, they don't have anything to offer. They just want to get well known and get...*

Interviewer (BC): *...well, I think some of them must have some...*

JL: Well some of them, they believe... like Saint Paul, he cocked up Christianity a lot, I believe. You know. He *thought* he was doing it right, y'know. Like all these sort of mad Tories and the mad Socialists, y'know. They *think* they're doing it right and that's the frightening bit. It's alright if you're up against someone who *knows* he's a bastard, and he's doing it because... he's a bastard, y'know, and he's out to get you! But it's these sort of fanatics like Paisley in Ireland [Rev Ian Paisley, Ulster fundamentalist religious leader and politician] and the ones here, Powell [Enoch Powell, a prominent Tory politician who made what came to be known as a racist 'rivers of blood'

speech in April 1968] **or whoever the equivalents are over here, who believe they're doing right, y'know! And they're the frightening ones! And the same, housewives and everything, who are booing and shouting at the murderess in the case, and would kill her on the spot...all the different things. And all those people that don't know what they're doing. There...that's what's frightening... quantity of people that don't realize what they're up to. If you just know where they're at, well you know what to do about it.**

Interviewer (MH): *This brings up the question of, um... Seems to me what you coming to now is, rather, incorporating more social information, you know, the passing of information? Which, I don't know, would you term art now, any more?... There seem to be two ways of going about describing what people think as artists in the past. Like saying what's wrong with the society at the time. And the other part is just analyzing the great things about life. Y'know, just holding out and saying, "this is the thing that comes out of a large montage of what they behold", y'know...*

JL: **Yeah**

Interviewer (MH): *... But it seems to me there's a tendency of just knocking what everything is, and telling people what's wrong. And out of that will come nothing - but just the apprehension of what's wrong.*

JL: **Yeah, and I think that's what this guy's doing.** [referring to the Black Dwarf letter]

Interviewer (MH): *Yeah, but you don't see that you...*

JL: **I don't think I'm doing that. Because I'm not saying what's going wrong, y'know. I'm doing the montage bit, y'know, just reflecting as fast as I can. You know, reflecting what happens to me.**

Interviewer (MH): *This is what you get from [Revolution] "#9", yeah...*

JL: **Y'know. And, like... the 'You are Here' film and the press cuttings – anything like that, I'm trying to get them out, to show people what's coming at me. That's one little piece of the montage. I'm trying to put that out all the time; to show them my relationship with all these people. And art's a bag you can get it out in. There's no such thing as art either, but we've just got to use the word.**

[JL goes back to reading the Black Dwarf letter again]

JL: If only we WERE in with the establishment, we would have had it a damn sight easier, Roland Muldoon! [Weybridge born British actor and producer of anti-establishment political theatre – John seems to have conflated him with the Black Dwarf writer]

<John eating, Yoko can be heard faintly, in another room>

Interviewer [MH]: *What about the question of Apple?*

JL: What do you mean?

Interviewer (MH): *Do you think there is anything to be answered at all by what he (Black Dwarf writer) accuses you of?*

JL: I've forgotten what he said. What's he say?

Interviewer (MH): *Well, you know, in that letter, about creating a hierarchy again in the organization [the workforce]...*

JL: Well there's a danger of creating that.

Interviewer (MH): *...Alienation, you know...*

JL: Yeah, y'know... there's a danger. But that's... so, we're not gonna just not do it. The thing what Apple basically was originally, was... so as we could control our own records completely. And then we got this idea – “oh, if we could do this, if we could do this...” And we tried to do a million things at once y'know. And it was all idealism. And now we're getting back to, we've just got to get a record company, and possibly electronics, so which just happen to know this guy who seems to be turning out this mad stuff [“Magic Alex” Mardas]. And it's down to that. At first it was going to be everything, you know. And if... we're going to lose, y'know... it'll give the guy a laugh, because we either make or break in the next three months... it'll either all collapse, and we'll all be broke, and it'll make 'em all happy, and they'll think we're ethnic again...

Interviewer (MH): ...be acceptable...

JL: ...Yeah, we'll be acceptable! Or, it'll break even, y'know, and it'll be a record company that, he'll be getting all his records, the ones he wants from America through, because all those people want to be with us...

Interviewer (BC): *It'll help you there won't it, because you'll be able to issue virtually what you want, or...*

JL: **Yeah, just to have control of our own records was the bit, but we still have the tie up with EMI so we have to do that, anyway. But just to channel some things through, y'know. To have some kind of... just for the workers. And we *are* the workers, to control what we put out. That's all we're trying to do. And at first we were trying to do a big conceptual idealistic thing, which we found impossible. And Apple hasn't made any money yet. You know, it's just a complete loss. And it's one of the biggest laughs to the establishment. Y'know, the *real* establishment are dying for it to break! They don't want anybody like us in the scene, y'know!**

Interviewer (DW): *Do you care if it breaks?*

JL: **I care that it breaks, because our idealism is *real*. And we'd *like* it to be something that helps other people, as well as helping ourselves and that brought out records that people want... And just...But there's, it's just... If it breaks, it breaks, y'know. Ob la di, ob la da. And it's just that. That's my attitude all down the line. Whatever will be. But don't... not the bit about sitting in the shit and hoping, y'know, accepting the will of Allah. Because you do have a choice of some kind. But if it breaks, it breaks. If it doesn't, it doesn't. It's not going to break me, y'know. I'm not Apple.**

Interviewer (MH): *We've got through quite a lot now, haven't we?*

JL: **Hmm...** [reading Black Dwarf letter again]

JL: **The thing...he, he might get his wish, here; that I hope they get so fucked up with their money (chuckles)... he might be right. For obscurity Ronald, Roland... dear lad.**

Interviewer (MH): *What would happen?*

JL: **Mmn?**

Interviewer (MH): *You'd be just the same? I mean the fact...*

JL: **... Sure I would! I mean I've lost a fortune this year on friends, relatives and divorces. Compared to the other Beatles I'm, like, broke!...**

Interviewers: <All break into open laughter>

JL: <unable to resist a big smirk himself> **You know, that's true – it's just a laugh, y'know. I don't give a shit!**

Interviewer (DW): *You would if you didn't have it!*

JL: **I will... I haven't...not had it!... How many years have I had it? Twenty-three years without it, and four years with it, right? I've got the ability to earn me living, anyway! I don't need Beatles, or Apple! I don't rely on them to provide me with a living. I can live. I've lived all me life, without being in any bag, y'know. And I'll continue, whatever happens to Beatles or Apple, y'know? That's what the trouble is with these people, and anybody that's putting us down on that level, y'know? The Beatles is a nonexistent concept. A few people who got together to do something, like, y'know... And... 'Black Dwarf' isn't... doesn't exist either. It's just a few people y'know... and that's what the Beatles is. But I'm not going to live or die by whatever happens to the Beatles... England...the world or anything. It makes no odds! I believe in the inside bit!**

Interviewer (DW): *Do you ever sort of lie in bed at night and think, "Christ, what the hell's is going on"?*

JL: **Oh yeah. Yeah, about once a week!** [chuckles]

Interviewer (DW): *I mean about your success and about...*

JL: **I don't think about my success. I think that the success I've had, is to enable me to do what I'm going to do, from now on.**

Interviewer (DW): *What, do you think you're pre-destined?*

JL: **I don't know about pre-destined... that's what I was saying about the luck and that bit. I think you get a choice, y'know, of which path you're gonna take, but there's only like, a couple of them. A couple of paths, y'know. And I think the path I took through music was the path that took me here, y'know. And until I was fourteen the path was going to be art, or writing. But there was just that choice, at about was eighteen, twenty or something. And it was music... and music brought me here. But it's only to enable me to do whatever I'm doing now.**

Interviewer (DW): *Were you ever really unhappy when you were rushing around making money, you know?*

JL: **Oh, that was the most miserable time of our lives, was the mop top, MBE, cop-out period...was the *torture!* Y'know, and that's why we dropped touring. It wasn't even a physical fact. It was the thing we were put through, to get where...that, that we earned, y'know?**

Interviewer (MH): *But it's what brought you here...*

JL: **Oh yeah, yeah... but it's put me back where I started, y'know. That's what I'm saying, that it wasn't worth the drum. It wasn't worth the MBE and that. Or whatever happened then.**

JL: **Yeah, but it was in retrospect. But it wasn't...anybody listening, or gonna read it... Don't bother, y'know. Cause you're back where you started. Just, er, play it by ear, but forget about making it, y'know. There's nothing to make. And it's... I could never have done it alone, that. There was always had to be one of us carrying it at the time, to do the compromise, and everybody else was, "Fuck off!" Everyone else was in such a state. That we had to take it in shifts to be the Mop Top. Y'know, and you look back on all them old photos that just... there's usually three faces, or two...**

<all laugh>

JL: **...And just one [contorts face] just sort of, you know... it was... the real, what happened then, is a story beyond, beyond me, y'know. And it was really hard grind. And it was a joke. I mean, we dropped it, as soon as we got a moment, to think about it. It was "whaw-whaw...whaw-whaw-whaw-whaw-whaw", like that (makes a whirring noise like a machine under load) And then we just stopped it, for a second...got off, and stayed off. And that was about two or three ago.**

Interviewer (DW): *People were very upset about that, though?*

JL: **Yeah, but I mean, they'd want us to carry on like Flanagan and Allen [long-lived traditional English Music Hall act], the wheeling-'em-on-at-eighty-one, you know. I mean, but that's what they don't... they still think we're that, y'know..**

Interviewers: <laughing>

JL: They still... those are the people that haven't realized that we're not your all-round-boy-next-door entertainer. Never have been, y'know! [Smiles, responding to the mirth he's caused in the interviewers] I mean... that's what they want, y'know. The Crazy Gang, or the Marx Brothers or something!

Interviewer (DW): *Do you like entertainment films?*

JL: Yeah I like all sorts... I can watch anything. Depends what mood I'm in. I don't go and see many films. I prefer to go and see something that I go specially to see.

Interviewer (DW): *Don't you get worked up about pretentious films?*

JL: I try not to get worked up about it, because it's a waste of energy. But of course, when I see... But I try not to let it carry through that, because I believe in conserving your energy. And the more you control your emotion, and not control it like restricting yourself... But why waste your time on it? There's always going to be Englebert Humperdinck and it doesn't matter, y'know. I don't agree with the people that knock Englebert Humperdinck just because he's doing that, you know. Or, just because he's not singing "Street Fighting Man", y'know... is a narrow concept of life. It's fascism!

Interviewer (DW): *Yeah, yeah.*

JL: That is complete fascism. And what's wrong with the housewives and Engelbert Humperdinck? I don't want to listen to it, I don't want to *hear* it, I don't want anything to *do* with it. But I'm not going to denigrate the people, I'm not such a snob as to denigrate the people that want to listen to that, or George Formby [English comedic singer and actor popular in the 1940s and '50s] or anything, y'know...

Interviewer (DW): *...I like George Formby...*

JL: And here's this guy'll be listening to Englebert Humperdinck when he's sixty as a bit of camp, y'know, and he'll think it's "in", or maybe it'll be Ken Tynan [prominent English theatre critic and writer], I don't know. But you know, the whole thing'll evolve in that circle. Who is anybody to say that Englebert Humperdinck isn't as valid as anything else, y'know? Why go on about it and waste your energy? Just dig what you like, dig what you dig, and let other people dig what they dig! They're all just snobs about it. And most of the snobs, are the uncreative snobs, y'know. The ones that are just listening

and forming their little clubs.

Interviewer (DW): *That's the vast majority of people...*

JL: **Yeah, yeah.**

Interviewer (MH): *So you believe it'd come out in the end? You know, the good things would come out as a natural thing?*

JL: **Well, you know. I go through, y'know, despair and hopefulness, y'know. I try and hang on to the hopeful bit. Otherwise, there's just no point at all, y'know? I mean, I really don't think... There's really no point to our music, or Yoko's art, or my art, or anything. When I get down to it, on one hand, it's just all... what's the use? You know, what are we up against? But there is a point, because er... those, the Blue Meanies are working at it like, like mad. And that's the only point, y'know.**

Interviewer (DW): *So long as you enjoy it, that's the main thing...*

JL: **Yeah, yeah.**

Interviewer (BC): *How do you go about writing the songs for the group?*

JL: **Well, we haven't written together since Pepper, really.**

Interviewer (BC): *Oh.*

JL: **Cause we sort of... vaguely in India we were writing a bit together. But this album we wrote least of all together. Just cause of circumstances and all that, y'know. Or maybe we didn't feel like it. I don't know what. But, we do it any way, any combination you can think of, we do it, y'know. From a line, from nothing – like "Birthday" was written in the studio from nothing, "Let's do one like that". We did it. And, it could...Just... there's no way of describing it unless I'm going into, sort of, "and when we wrote this, I was on piano and he was on guitar". And then it's alright, that kind of talk, but I've said it all, y'know, somewhere or other. It's just a bit of a hassle to say it. You know, I can have a verse of a song, and we write it from then... Actually, just read the Rolling Stone article. There's quite a lot about it in there. Cause I went through it a bit, just about the album and different things.**

Interviewer (BC): *What's that in?*

JL: **Rolling Stone. Have you heard of it? It's a good paper.** [interview by Jonathan Cott with JL in London on September 18, published November 23, 1968]

Interviewer (MH): *Oh, Rolling Stone magazine? Yeah.*

JL: **Yeah, yeah. That's the one that's carried our 'Two Virgins' ad.**

[Hindle looks at the Rolling Stone magazine, sees the price and laughs – John notices]

JL: **What, is it expensive?**

Interviewer: *That's it, you see? You say it's no good...*

JL: **Well, I mean you can steal something like this. I mean, when I didn't have it, I just took it, y'know. Especially papers and anything like that. How much is it? Three and six – oh that is dear, isn't it? [three shillings and sixpence] Here you are. You can have this one then. I suppose I've got another somewhere.**

JL: **...I think the inside's missing.**

Interviewer (MH): *Oh yeah, I saw the 'Two Virgins' advert, that picture on the back cover...*

JL: **Yeah, International Times wouldn't take the front cover photo, [of John and Yoko, full-frontal naked] unless we gave them an indemnity against it, y'know. They're so established... Amazing. But this paper just took it, and this paper... was cooled by it, cause they've had the biggest circulation they ever had. So, that's where they [International Times] missed out. If you wanna sort of get into the song business, you can...they won't care if you pinch their article, or pinch bits out of it, y'know, to... if you wanna get... cause there's a lot about the songs and different things like that in it.**

Interviewer (MH): *Can I take a few pictures, while we're talking?*

JL: **Yes, yes.**

Interviewer (MH): *...carry on talking!*

JL: **No, it's ok...**

Interviewer (DW): *...Oh christ! [ran out of cigarettes]...*

JL: **It's alright, y'know. I'm rich with ciggies, yeah. [Dunhill International]**

Interviewer (MH): *Does Ringo still take photos?*

JL: **Yeah, yeah.**

Interviewer (DW): *Does he live round here?*

JL: **No, he's moved**

Interviewer (DW): *How many cats have you got?*

JL: **Seven or eight. They breed like cats...**

YO: **They do don't they?**

JL: **...Mmn, all over the landing.**

Interviewer (DW): *Do you ever use the swimming pool, for swimming?*

JL: **I did when it's sunny, you know. But I'm hoping some established pop star'll buy it, but they're all buying the other ones. Englebert and Tom Jones are all moving up here and they won't buy it. I don't know what's the matter. I had it specially designed for Hollywood-style living and I can't get rid of it! [laughs]**

<general laughter>

Interviewer (DW): *Is that just the swimming pool, or the whole house?*

JL: **No, no, the pool y'know. I was conned by some firm who said they were gonna build me a covered one. But after they built it, they said "we can't build a cover". Amazing. Conning people with a capital "C". We've got more of this haven't we? [to Yoko, referring to 'Rolling Stone' magazine]**

YO: **Um, well, we can get more...**

JL: **Yeah, ok. Three and six, y'know. It's a bit expensive!**

<laughs>

YO: **Oh – and also, I'll give you this one, it's some last copies of like... some handouts for our 'Film Number Five' and 'Two Virgins'...there's some writing by John and me. That's the only copy I have, so...**

Interviewer (MH): *Great, thank you.*

JL: [looking again at Black Dwarf letter] **I wonder what that guy'll say when the Stones record company comes out? Really throw him...**

Interviewer (DW): *Record company?*

JL: **Yeah, they're bringing out Mother Earth. They've got an 'Apple' round the corner for their publicity...Big offices and all that.**

Interviewer (DW): *That was fantastic when you gave away all that stuff [from the Apple Boutique in London]*

JL: **It was a 'happening', but it was written up as a kind of madness, you know. But it was a great happening. If Yoko had done it, it would've been a piece of artwork. But we did it, and they said we were daft.**

JL: **That was one... closing down of one section [of Apple]. We just couldn't handle all that. It was just turning into that, into a money-making thing... and we *aren't* in it to make money! As long as it breaks even, y'know, and that'll do. But it's not even breaking even. I should think Mary Hopkin should sew it up, though... Records all over the place!**

Interviewer (DW): *Did you bring Tiny Tim over to England?*

JL: **Er, well, Derek did, our sort of press guy, y'know. [Derek Taylor]**

JL: **Oh, I'll play you the Christmas record, 'cause Tiny Tim's on it. George was with him in the States.**

<The tape is stopped here while John plays the Beatles' latest Christmas record for Hindle. When the tape resumes, John is farther away from the recorder for a brief period.>

Interviewer (DW): *...Is that for release at Christmas? The um...*

JL: **...Fan club thing. We do one every year...**

Interviewer (DW): *Is there another side to it?*

JL: **No, no, they put it on little loose plastic discs...**

Interviewer (DW): *Oh, like the Private Eye ones [English satirical magazine]*

JL: **Yeah**

Interviewer (MH): *...be good to release an album of them...*

JL: **Yeah, we might do it one day...**

Interviewer (DW): *...be really good actually, because then...well*

JL: **Yeah, well it's good for the fans, too, y'know. Special contact for them that they get exclusive, y'know – that nobody else gets. But the ones that are sort of still into that... being in the fan club groove. But in America, they just broadcast it like a normal record, y'know.**

YO: **They did?**

JL: **Yeah, yeah.**

Interviewer (MH): *Do they print it like a normal record?*

JL: **No, we didn't used to release it in the States 'cause it was too expensive giving it away and that. Millions in the States. But we're doing it this year. I don't know how it got less expensive, but they're doing it.**

Interviewer (DW): *What do you think of your fans? Do you think it's sort of old fashioned to be in a fan club?*

JL: **I think it's up to them, y'know. If they get anything out of it. I never joined any fan clubs.**

YO: <laughs at that idea>

JL: **But if they want to, y'know...If they want to get Beatles pics and all that stuff that the fan club gives out, y'know. I mean, we just**

can't control the fan club, y'know. It'd be too much for us to put out what we'd like them to really get. I mean we try a bit and try and change 'Beatle Book' a little, and things like that... But we can't do it all, y'know. They're all by-products of what we are.

Interviewer (MH): *Do you see that as something separate?*

JL: **No, no. It's just a by-product, and it's not harmful, and nobody's conned by it. We just check out and see, hope that they're all getting the right... the letters they wrote in and getting an answer. And they're getting what they want from it. That's about all we can do.**

Interviewer: [paraphrased] *Do you ever answer the fan mail?*

JL: **No no, we couldn't handle them. A lot of them just write straight to us anyway. I answer any if they've got a stamped, addressed envelope...they usually only want an autograph. Otherwise, you'd spend all your life answering y'know, still, "where'd you get the name Beatles" and all that.**

YO: <laughs> **And about the hair...**

JL: **Well we have a girl working for the two of us, but not... If I get a stack of fan letters, I'll send them to the fan club. But I don't get many to the house. Cause they never know where I am these days. Hospital or prison.**

YO: <laughs> **Yeah.**

Interviewer (MH): *There's something in that 'Rolling Stone' about you doing some pre-[production for a new album]*

JL: **No, it's just a... I think we're going to do... we might make a live album next... about January or something. And then we just let whoever gets there in free, probably... just be that. It's built up into a tour of the States, free with charity... and they're all writing already, saying "I'm an old age pensioner with fifty stone legs, and my husband died... and he was a musician" <laughter>... and that, y'know. It gets into all that. So...**

Interviewer (DW): *Do you ever feel any obligations to the society putting you where you are?*

JL: **No, no, I put me where I am. I've only got myself to blame.**

Interviewer (DW): [paraphrased] *But there are "stars" who feel that way.*

JL: Well, you say it... I mean, those people *do* owe them their life 'cause that is their life, y'know. And that, they'll revolve round it for the rest of their life, in one form or another. So to them, the public is that. And even though a lot of it is just a lot of PR whitewash, y'know, "my great public" and that... We did a lot of that when we were *hating* the public, in the madhouse days. We were under such pressure, we didn't give a damn about anybody – just surviving y'know. And er... but we'd say, "Oh, this is great, we love our fans!" "Just get them off my roof, or my garden, or my back!" or anything. "Get away from me!" Like that! But, there's a lot of those people, like Frankie Vaughan's one [English singer of traditional pop music] that mean it, y'know. And they try and do their bit, and good luck to them, y'know. And they mean it. But I don't - I've never owed anything to the public. I mean I bring out a product, and they buy it. It's like that. I never expected Mr. Rolls Royce or Mr. Mini to allow me to sleep in his garden or have anything else. You know. I don't expect anything from anybody...it's the product that's put out. And I'm not for sale! ... My products are.

Interviewer (DW): *Do you get any trouble from fans?*

JL: Now and then, y'know. There was some bird here last night, there was a bit of trouble [to Yoko], wasn't it?

YO: ...yes, we had to...

JL: ...Just some bird suddenly turned up. She said she's out of a mental home in Holland, or something, and...

JL: ...At first I said, "well come on, what do you want?" She said, "I've come all the way from Holland" – which a lot of them do as justification, y'know, "and now I'm your responsibility". So I was saying, "Ok, you've come from Holland. What are you going to do now?" She just sort of... I thought she was on a trip or something was wrong with her...

YO: ...She was sitting here...

JL: So, we just sort of fed her, and I got my driver to take her to the embassy, or to the macro restaurant, or whichever she wanted to go to.

YO: We tried to turn her on to the macrobiotic diet.

JL: 'Cause she said she's had mental trouble and that, which is probably true, but, you know, the macro thing would cure that. I believe that... so maybe she could try it, so we gave her a few bags of rice, and sent her off, with a few addresses in Holland or Belgium to get in touch with.

Interviewer (MH): [paraphrased] *Have you thought about dismantling the fan club because it might sustain that kind of obsessive behavior?*

JL: Yeah, well, we had the decision of whether to keep the fan club or not, y'know since we stopped being Mop Tops, as it were, two years ago. It would've been suitable for us not to have the fan club. It doesn't give us anything. We don't earn from it, we don't get anything creative from it. But the point was to stop it, just because we didn't really have anything to do with it. Or, to weigh it up whether we should take... if they want it, a fan club, y'know, to let 'em have it. It's just like that. And we thought of just packing it in, you know. We don't need fan club, Beatles book, or anything. But the thing is, I think they want it, and until they don't want it, we'll let it run. It's just like that. I can't see the point of stopping it, just because we're not to do with it... which we never were, y'know. I mean, it was a good thing to have fan clubs. It was part of the deal. It was a bag. It was them getting a flag to wave, you had your fan club and that. It was the point of whether to just stop it because it didn't mean anything to us as people. Only that, y'know, it's nice for people to be in your fan club. Apart from that, it's nothing. So, I don't think... I think if you tried to just stop it, if they want it, if there's still twenty thousand or so, waiting for news from Tony Barrow [Beatles press agent], or whoever it is; it just tells them what we're doing, or where we are. And we just make sure they get the first information on what we're doing. So it gives them that. So whether to stop it or not, is that, you know - why stop it?

JL: Cause we went through it, to think...stop it, you know. It's not morally right. We're not to do with it and we're not... we don't owe them a fan club. Why should we bother with it? But it's no skin off our nose to have it.

YO: It's convenient too, to have it though, because otherwise there'll be letters pouring in and all that, or...

JL: Yeah, well there's that too, I suppose, but then...

YO: **And that takes care of it too...**

JL: **...then we'd have to either dispose the letters or try and answer them all, whatever. Or maybe there wouldn't be any letters, if there was a fan club. Or less of them. It's just that choice, y'know. As long as it's wanted and it doesn't do anything, let them have a fan club.**

Interviewer (MH): *You mean you sort of don't care as long as people are enjoying it?*

JL: **Yeah, yeah, y'know. I believe in that... just for the sake of enjoyment; apart from any messages, and changing the world. Just, pure circus, y'know.**

Interviewer (DW): *Does it matter to you... [paraphrased] that you're fame has made it impossible to walk around with anonymity?*

JL: **It does a bit, you know. But it is, like they say, the price of fame. And it matters a lot to me not to be able to go around. And I keep dreaming of the time I might be able to get out. Now, I could cut all my hair off and get around for a few weeks, till they spotted me. Or I could disguise myself, but I don't want... I'm me, and I look like this because I like being like this. And, so I've been through all the reasons of how I could to do it. And I don't enjoy it at all, y'know, not being able to do things. Well that's the price. It's too late to change it. [telephone rings]**

Interviewer (DW): *But I shouldn't think you would, would you?*

JL: **I don't know what I'd do if I had to do it again. I don't know... To do it again would mean I'd have the experience I've had now, so obviously I'd do it differently, so as I wasn't so well-known as a person, y'know. I'd do it...**

Interviewer (DW): *Would you spend less time as a mop top?*

JL: **Oh yeah, I would've skipped the mop top bit altogether, retrospectively speaking!**

Interviewer (MH): *You couldn't do it, could you? You couldn't do it again. Because that's just how it happened!*

JL: Yeah, yeah. There's no way of... It's just speculation just to talk about it.

[Tape recorder is turned off, so John can take a phone call. It resumes mid-conversation at end of talking about recording the 'White Album']

JL: ...it's just getting at it...

Interviewer (MH): *And even with being restricted to something, you can get more and more out of the...*

JL: Yeah, well we learned how to use the sort of basics, then... without the experience of all the ordinary stuff, y'know.

Interviewer (DW): [paraphrased] *I understand your books have been translated into other languages.*

JL: Oh yeah, they always send me one. <Does German impression> God knows how they translate it. They just get some nut in... I don't know what they've written, y'know. Just somebody else has written the books. I 'spose I get paid for it. I don't know how they translate things.

Interviewer: [paraphrased] *It must be difficult translating your work.*

JL: Yeah, yeah. I just don't know how they do it. I mean, how to they do Joyce or anybody? Or Shakespeare, anything. How do they do it?

[Brief, somewhat off-mic discussion of language and book translation]

JL: Yeah, I'd just like to know what they're saying, y'know...

YO: I had an experience of reading Shakespeare and things like that in Japanese. It's so funny, though. It's a different thing, a different world altogether.

YO: You know about these things that we did... Coventry thing and all that, do you remember?

Interviewer (DW): *Coventry? Oh yeah, Coventry...*

JL: ...the acorns...

Interviewer (MH): *Yes, I read about that...*

JL: Well, we could give 'em a little handout from each thing we've done...have we got them something?

YO: Yes, we have something. Because you see, the thing is, that's actually the most important thing we did this year, creatively.

JL: The first thing we did together. [to Pete Shotton] Ok, Pete, see ya!

JL: And she just said "there's a sculpture show on, why don't you come in it?" So I said, alright, well... sculpture. It was all Henry Moore [famous English abstract sculptor and artist] and all that, just at Coventry. So I thought, I'll... just... putting an acorn in, and then, cause I thought that was the end of sculpture, y'know? It's living sculpture. And they said, "Oh yeah, come along, come along". But they wanted something, they wanted... like she said in the articles. So we gave them a seat 'round it for when the tree grows; you can sit on it and wait for it to grow. But we had such a bloody hassle getting it in... and they didn't want it with the Henry Moores and that. A real battle. And then we finally buried it... the acorns and that.

[John and Yoko chat off-mic]

JL: Her piece was pinching the acorn idea from me, so...we put two in. It was pretty good. It's the best thing we've done. It got the least amount of... whatever.

[a visitor arrives]

JL: Hi.

Visitor: *Hello.*

JL: Yeah, sit down. These are guys from Keele University. He's from Guildford College of Art.

<audio unintelligible>

JL: Yeah, we're almost lovers.

JL: Y'know that could be anything, couldn't it?

[In December 1968, John and Yoko visited *Guildford Minus 40*, an exhibition by 40 part-time teachers dismissed by Guildford School of Art]