

## The Flâneur

### Notes on a film by Dorothy Allen-Pickard

*To want nothing. Just to wait, until there is nothing left to wait for. Just to wander, and to sleep. To let yourself be carried along by the crowds, and the streets. To follow the gutters, the fences, the water's edge. To walk the length of the embankments, to hug the walls. To waste your time. To have no projects, to feel no impatience. To be without desire, or resentment, or revolt.*

Georges Perec

#### **[instagram.com/waterworthphil](https://www.instagram.com/waterworthphil) S8 9EF**

The process started two weeks prior. Dorothy Dorothy, a documentary filmmaker was about to Sheffield Docfest where she and others were a weekend and screen it publicly on Monday. was anything 'interesting' happening in Sheffield on film, contacted me wanting to know about how I disabled perspective. We shared ideas, influences crossed for a sunny day as we planned our Odyssey

made contact with me via Instagram. take part in a the film maker challenge at tasked to make a film in a day, edit over Dorothy, asking a mutual friend if there the Friday she was due to make the was encountering Flanerie from a and visions. We held our fingers across the Steel City...

#### **Woodbank Crescent S8 9EF**

Sheffield is not a big city, and walking around it small it is. But, the whole raison d'être of the flâneur is forgotten and overlooked, to see things *anew*. We to my house, We both had black coffee and the dogs, distract. Joe arrived perhaps 30 minutes later, very hot first request was for a coffee. We went upstairs to my arriving and departing in the wheelchair lift. Dorothy As she set up, I started making lines with my pen, house in Meersbrook to Institute of Art in the centre of collage to the brown page, left over wrappers from a maps and cut out arterial lines of major roads through belonged to a shirt I bought the day before for today's circles divided by horizontal and vertical lines. It of 'plan' or aerial view of an industrial complex. I left the I would return later and add further marks after our walk, on my consciousness like a stain.

and filming in one day you see how surely to enlarge the minuscule, the started at 9.30 when Dorothy came Mimi and Iggy tried desperately to and keen to cool himself down. His studio so Dorothy could film me also wanted to film me at my desk. imagining the journey from my Sheffield. I stuck fragments of recent item of clothing, torn bits of Sheffield. The clothing wrapper film. It was a pattern of small resembled elements of some kind piece of work unfinished knowing the memory of place imprinted

The community transport was expected at 11.00 but late or worse still, not turn up. I phoned the office and the assured me it was on its way. No sooner had I put the pulled up outside. I had this driver before, I forget his name. 6music really loud. We get on the bus to some drum n bass comfortable. A next track comes on that Dorothy and I say is year. I go for 1994, Dorothy 1995. A voice then comes from TLC. We laugh and applaud his knowledge of 90s girl bands.

I was anxious it was going to be voice on the end of the line phone down and the transport He doesn't talk much and plays and make ourselves All Saints and we guess the the driver who tells us, It's He says nothing.

#### **Flat Street S1 2BA - Fitzalan Square S1 2AY**

He drives us to the HPO Institute of Art building on Flat disabled space across the road and lowers the ramp. I but my left leg kicks out in spasm, signalling I need a piss. down is to relax, almost allow my body to just go slow. my bladder thinks its time to release. It isn't. The driver helps onto the foot stand. My foot is in place and secure. I am reverse back and propel myself across Flat Street and through building, speeding right past the reception and down the too late but this piece of writing is not about my toileting this here.

Street, parks up in the transfer into my wheelchair The only way to get the leg Difficulty here is by relaxing, me to push my lower leg lowered down onto the road, the entrance of the HPO corridor to the toilet. I am escapades so let's leave

### High Street S1 2GA - Dixon Lane S1 2AL

We wheel over onto Fitzalan Square path that leads onto the tram track and tracks where one's wheels can get stuck. the wheelchair back slightly to get me encounter a shop front painted over immediately striking and we go over a mash up of Yves Klein and Hans abstract expressionism next door to Dixon Lane as I show Dorothy the busy and I warn Joe to keep an people don't seem to care. They

and onto High Street, crossing a cobble stoned then onto the tram track, mindful of the tram Joe, an expert in wheelchair topography, tipped over the ridges. Rolling down Haymarket, we roughly with different shades of blue paint. It is so I can run my hands over the texture. It looks like Hoffman and it's there on the high street, a piece of B&M Bargains. Moving on we loiter around the top of location where parts of This is England was filmed. It's eye on the camera. It's quite clear we are filming but clear a path and watch the passing entertainment.

### Haymarket S1 2AW -

We turn left onto the as a public graffiti gallery. The flâneur. Joe goes for a cig exhibition. Not many people along newly constructed asphalt as Walter Dorothy films close ups. move past them but by a wonderful moment of between takes, to me, and I am mirrored surface and struck by the originality 'reflect' our particular, the we cast and

### Exchange Place S1 4RE- Broad Street West S1 2BQ

vacant space where the Castle Market was. It is now used surface here is smooth, an Island of Solace for the disabled while I wheel around, looking around at this ever-changing pass by. We roll down towards Exchange Place, taking a right paths separated by flowers beds. This really is botanising the Benjamin proposed! I touch the plants and flowers on display as This is new for me, observing these plants. We normally just filming close up here, a pause has occurred late morning and it is colour, texture and smell. It's getting warm so I put on my hat in remembering to move it later for continuity. This is a new language fascinated by the detailed planning of each shot. Dorothy notices a wants to capture this. On seeing this later in the finished film I am of the image, how Dorothy saw a surface that could quite literally movement. It strikes me that she is responding to the space, in architecture. Rather than filming myself and Joe, filming the reflection choosing this in the final edit.

### Park Square S1

It is nearing roundabout and outside of Ponds quality as if work There are small across the road, in fast moving, traffic like a slow time washed and decollaged We bid farewell to Greggs.

### 2BQ - Commercial Street S1 2AT

lunch time and hunger is lurking so we move along to Park Square loiter a bit on the odd bit of unkept ground on Commercial street, just Forge Pool. This is a curious patch of smooth terrain, it has a 'forgotten' has stopped and no one knew what else to do here, what to place. notice boards with torn fragments of events from two years ago while the centre of the roundabout, a large electronic billboard, animated and changes with alarming frequency. Sitting here, the sound of passing tide, you can feel like you are occupying a disregarded promenade in a holiday resort. Over there is progress, here is overgrown grass, graffiti notice boards showing events hidden by the void of Covid lockdown. the sea, to our smooth harbour and move up into town to find a

### Fargate S1 2HE-

Fargate is busy maintenance crews in erected to form a filming purposes I imagine in register from the relative encountered at Exchange Place, flower beds imbued a sense of calm. confusion as people try to negotiate their

### Chapel Walk S1 2PD-Mulberry Street S1 2PJ

by the time we arrive and there is disruption caused by the centre of the pedestrian area. Barriers have been makeshift path to areas of commerce. For this is brilliant, showing a change peace we

where the Now it is all noise and way around the barricades. We enter and leave Greggs as soon as we can, try and find a space to sit on Fargate, to which there is nothing. We take a route down Chapel Walk, a side street off Fargate, to see if we can find a shaded place to sit. We find our own furniture on some steps outside the Crucible. It occurs to me that I always have a seat but it doesn't stop me seeking out seats for others. I think maybe I

have become more alert and attuned to spotting makeshift street furniture since I have been disabled. I don't know. As a teenager, maybe 14 or 15, me and my mates occupied the streets at night, trying to find places to sit and be sheltered. School grounds were open back then and we would sit in entrance ways until being moved by the police. If we ever found an actual bench it was akin to finding a bed. Even now, 33 years on, I can still recall corners in doorways that were always the prime position. It warms me now to see Joe and Dorothy and members of the public sat on these steps, making a claim, a seat just while they eat. I never thought I'd be the one not joining them, out of their communal seat as I sit in my assemblage of metal like some Ballardian witness.

### **Balm Green S1 2JA - City Hall S1 2JA -**

We finished our lunch and took Mulberry street, what a glorious the camera attached to my A guy walks past us singing Back his two huge dogs because they High Street and move past the Taking a left onto Balm imposing architecture. This front of the building, we way back 2018. This is I drew showing the existed then and I still drawing a map, are we include? My first to be fair, they were than an exploration showing passage, We walk The heat is the streets are

### **Peace Gardens,**

We wheel toilet. I point out fought against of Hiroshima. We this day. Joe goes and through to the I emerge from the sees Dorothy's aggrieved at the grace, informs the Sheffield. You'd think take this as our cue

We consider which absolutely does Sheffield. It's days like days of very early youth the habitat of a British drawing go the city hall and watching later after the pause acts as a tender third person just at the side of shade. It is such a beautifully speaks something central and public space differently but

### **Barker's Pool S1 1LZ**

a back street back onto the main roads. name. We encounter rough ground here and have wheelchair so Dorothy can get footage of the terrain. For Good by Take That and then proceeds to shout at attempt to eat something off the floor. We emerge onto busy bus stops as people look at us with the camera. Green, we roll around the back of City Hall and we marvel at is a smooth run in the wheelchair and wheeling round the can experience one of the first Islands of Solace I encountered, ground zero for the Disabled Flaneur project, site of the first map Islands of solace for the disabled flaneur/flaneuse. A problem grapple with now, that of translating 3D space onto the 2D page. In drawing a 'map' or are we drawing 'directions'? Plus, what to drawings showed detailed drawings of aerial shots of buildings, and more about the 'drawing', its legitimacy as a 'good drawing' rather of urban space. Five years on, my drawings now are simply lines, traversal. I am not there yet. This is still an itch I need to scratch. down Barker's Pool and head over to the Peace Gardens to see a friend. ferocious and Sheffield is alive. In the words of Richard Hawley, 'tonight ours'.

### **Pinstone St S1 2HH**

around the footpath to get to the Millennium Galleries so I can go to the memorials to Dorothy commemorating the International Brigades who Franco in the Spanish Civil War and the plaque dedicated to the survivors talk briefly about the socialist leanings of Sheffield and this still remains to for a cig so Dorothy takes over and pushes me into the Winter Gardens Millennium Galleries toilets. Dorothy meets me at the bottom of stairs as toilets. A museum assistant assumes a stance of authority when she camera, have you got permission to film in here? She seems really sight of a camera. Dorothy, batting off this question with diplomatic assistant, I am part of Sheffield Doc fest, we can film all across this would resolve the matter but the assistant still looks rattled. We to leave this inner city greenhouse.

coffee but something cold as well. Dorothy proposes an ice coffee the trick as we sit in Cafe Nero watching the 3pm heat blaze these you dream of, summer days that follow on from summer as children. The magic is still there, that luminous, slow joy that is summer. I sit in the middle of the Peace gardens and do a line while Joe sits on wall. Dorothy records these afternoon pauses edit, I am struck by how this scene, in its slow moment of moment in the film. In the scene there is me and Joe and a the wall Joe is sat on. A bin man taking a rest in the shot moment where nothing happens, that I feel it important about the film. Three people, occupying connected by the relationship in space.

## The Moor S1 4PA - Cumberland Street S1 4PT

Here is our plenary, our YES!, our downhill path push me for a while and then at my nod, let me go as roll smooth terrain. Thus is my favourite point in Sheffield. I independently to the bottom. It almost makes you feel We cross the main road at the top of The Moor and Dorothy wheelchair. The lens is pointing out capturing the surrounding people. One thing I notice is it doesn't feel as smooth as it think it was just because I had to go slower because of the Normally I floor it down here! For now, a slower meander down required.

We reach the bottom where the path is split by Cumberland Joe goes for a sit down while Dorothy and I set up the camera to film face as I move around in circles at the foot of the Moor. This is a to notice the oncoming people walking down The Moor. I look around noticing the street furniture on tops of buildings. I hate being in a miss walking. It's like a grief that is with me every day and every night. me to just get up and try to walk, but I would fall and I would not be able loss of not being able to just move, to stand and stride out takes a lot out this moment, on this patch of ground at the outer margins of Sheffield city for 30 minutes, before my transport arrives, wheel around in a smooth that allows me to read the landscape like a book. A true Island of Solace for flâneur.

Around the corner, I see the community transport arrive and we get in leaving our Sheffield Odyssey at the foot of Cumberland Street and yes, unbelievably there is a dropped kerb.

home. The plan is to let Joe down this archipelago of can roll down here happy to be in a wheelchair. attaches the camera to my landscape of shops and normally is. On reflection I amount of people. the Sheffield Ramblas is

Street and we stop. by upper body and wonderful moment as I wheel around, wheelchair and I Thoughts occur to to get up. That of you. But at centre, I can, choreography the disabled

the bus,

Words by Phil Waterworth 24th June 2023