1.

DD: I like drawings that have a narrative, but are kind of mysterious. You can put your own interpretation on them and the longer you look at them, the more you see in them. So, they're not obvious drawings of the unspeakable, they're unspeakable because they don't speak directly with one.

LD: They're not spelling something out. I think that's key to drawing, because you don't just get one thing. With an image, you can say three things at once: an image can hold ambivalence. Whereas quite often, if you start to talk about something, you find you get pushed by language into saying certain things. I think what's mysterious about drawing is that you try to draw a situation, and you can be surprised by what comes out.

DD: I think the unspeakable is because the drawing is more complex than the idea expressed in words. You couldn't put this drawing into words. You couldn't write a paragraph that summarised all the emotions that you've got from looking at a drawing, because it's layered. It has different stories in it, different implications.

LD: I also think that we aren't encouraged to listen in to drawings and to all that they can tell us. People are nervous of images. People don't look naturally, children do, but adults feel they need to *know* about art. We read things and think, yes, I understood that. But trusting yourself to just *look* at something and allow something to work on you is not something that people do easily and often they read the words by the images before looking at the image, as if that's going to tell them what's there. Who is it says: '*You can lie as long as the day with words*'? Louise Bourgeois, I think. She says: with images, when you're trying to recreate an emotional experience, you can't lie. Drawing is powerful, I think, because it makes you think differently. People get into terrible email fights because the words are making them go into all kinds of clichés. In families you have people fighting because the language itself is making the arguments worse, getting people stuck in these corridors, whereas drawings...

DD: We shouldn't try and be articulate through words, you say? Give up writing? Certainly, I agree with give up email conversations because they always escalate.

LD: Yes. That's what I mean, that you get trapped by the language of email, writing on the computer alone, without any nuance, without warmth, or

inflection, or human voice, or physical expression, or looking someone in the eye.

DD: I think everybody can draw really, if they just ignore the rules and don't say ‘Oh, I can't draw, I'm no good at it’. It's a very sad thing for people to say, because actually a bit of paper and a pencil and just draw, you know. You're feeling angry or feeling happy, just draw something: draw a face, draw your child, draw your husband, draw your partner. It’s just people are nervous about visual expression. They feel it's for the expert, this is for the proper artist, and actually to scribble drawings on bits of paper, you know, everyone can do them. I don't know why people are less cagey about words.

LD: Everyone goes on and on in words.

DD: Now we began lockdown with a few little sketches to each other. Is there any record of people using drawing for a conversation between two people? Sending images to each other instead of words in art history? Because if what we're saying is true about the power of drawing, you could insult somebody with your drawing, you could tease them and you could...

LD: It's a good question.

2.

LD: There's Andrzej Jackowski's drawing of Dr. Groddeck of Baden-Baden. It's in the Towner Collection. Dr. Groddeck was a psychoanalyst contemporary of Freud and had a long correspondence with Freud, except he just believed in a thing called the "It". He wrote books *The Book of The It*, and *The Meaning of Illness*. He prescribed massage and diet, as well as speaking on the couch, as part of his cure, which would be a bit controversial now.

DD: How does the drawing say something about him that was striking to us?

LD: I think it's relating to the theme of the unconscious and what is speakable and what isn't and what can be revealed through the body. He very much believed, Groddeck, that we aren't masters, we contain things that we don't know and that, that these manifest through us, that we're not in control of them.

DD: So you better explain this, because otherwise people will look at it and say, 'Why is this happening?'

LD: Well, he believed that things speak through us. I think a lot of artists do believe that because they see it happening in their work: they see that things they didn't foresee come out in their work or images. They make their work to unravel these threads that come out. They trust this sort of darkness, and I think artists also trust that it's something that isn't them necessarily, it's not just them or their genius, it's something that is part of some bigger...

DD: But it's not there because it illustrates this.

LD: We're not looking at drawings to illustrate. Drawings by themselves do illustrate the unspeakable anyway. But it's because Andrzej as an artist is someone who very much works from the unconscious, as we see in his *Voyage Drawings*. It's to do with this trust in something unconscious that's fundamental to Andrzej's work and always has been. Groddeck was an important figure for him, and he says that the *Meaning of Illness* book was very important to him. He's a very accessible writer as well, as analysts go, Groddeck, and the *Book of The It* is in the form of an exchange of letters with a woman. It's an epistolary correspondence.

DD: Are they called voyage drawings? Why are they Voyage?

LD: Because they're a sort of journey. This cabin idea. He just called them *Voyage Drawings*. They're a journey. They're a sequence.

LD: So, do you want to look at Ansel now? We went to see his studio together, and afterwards I found out that he was taught by Peter de Francia and Ken Kiff. He told us about how he makes these works. He produces about twenty drawings at once. Say which ones you feel are the strongest.

DD: That one

LD: The Twig Men. They're in kind of concentration camp. It goes with the stocks person as well. It's got barbed wire. Unspeakable ones.

DD: I like that. Not sure what that is.

LD: That's tongues joining, but it's quite unspeakable. Their tongues are all twisted. Tongue twisted, I guess. And that one's good because it's unspeakable. They rammed a block in his mouth and he can't speak.

DD: What's happening there?

LD: I think it's like Baba Yaga, the Russian fairy tale, and they have these skulls on sticks that have white beams of light coming out of them.

LD: They go in a block together, because they make sense as a pattern.

LD: Ken Kiff was in psychoanalysis, and so a lot of his drawings come from the unconscious. He believed in the unconscious, not knowing in advance what you're going to draw, or what's going to come out.

DD: Terrible mistake to be in psychoanalysis.

LD: That's what you think. But for a lot of artists it's very generative for their work. I like *Faces*, it's a strong charcoal drawing, with the face, and this sort of interrogation.

DD: It's a sort of monster. What is it?

LD: It's a creature talking. *Faces*. He did a lot of faces. Here's one that's dismembered. Isn't that an amazing drawing? I wrote to Kiff's daughter, 'Thank you for these beautiful, decapitated heads.'

DD: It's like... it's very much like... I will tell you what that reminds me of... The Zoroastrian religion, they lay bodies out in the open for the vultures to come and collect them. I was once at a cocktail party in the High Commission in Delhi, and a vulture flew across and dropped a bit of rotting flesh amid all the people, lords and ladies, drinking their champagne, because the Zoroastrian base is near the British High Commission.

LD: That's a good story. I think de Francia could draw that as well.

DD: Yes... I think it may be the story I'd heard that made them move, the Zoroastrian thing. I love the strength of these.

LD: I like this one, it's the *Family*. The bride and the husband and they're ripping apart this person.

DD: Who are they ripping apart?

LD: See the person, a body of somebody. It's a child or it's, a family... I think that face is quite demonic, it's about tension and feeling torn. It's an amazing drawing.

DD: You've got your mother looking benign and happy on her wedding day, and your father looking maniacal. So, if that's what you're putting in, that's your affair, but... I refuse to comment on it.

LD: I'm not putting it in to be personal... I don't identify with the character in *Family*. It resonates with me in terms of the wider family, that everyone's pulling in different directions. That's the nature of family. Gripping, ripping, pulling, twisting. I think the charcoal is doing that.

I love this one, it's got words in it. She's killed someone and then she's suddenly got these big strong arms: *She felt her arms again*. Big black arms. It's what I feel like when I start drawing after a long period of not being able to draw. I feel like my hands get big and black like that.

DD: Is this exhibition going to be powerful but gloomy, because it reveals the dark, hidden depths of human imagination?

LD: No, because Kiff is not gloomy, it's liberating. I feel, looking at the drawings... I feel like the woman with the big black hands, *She felt her arms again*, I feel they're strengthening, like medicine.

DD: But that's just your feminism, feminist propaganda.

LD: No, I think she's killed...

DD: Killed a man, obviously.

LD: [Laughs] No, it's *artism*! It's like she's felt her strength as an artist again. From feeling incapacitated or stuck. I read it as being able to draw again.

DD: When I draw, I don't draw very much. When I draw... I always draw gloomy things. Man in black, in a wood, the man behind bars, or the man tied to bars.

LD: Yes, it's your unconscious, even though you deny you have one, that's your unconscious talking. It's your visual thoughts.

DD: But why do we have no drawings expressing joy and exuberance and happiness?

LD: I think Ken Kiff's drawings are quite exuberant.

DD: Yes, but they're macabre, the exuberance. They're all murder and mayhem.

4.

LD: Veronika Peat was born in Moscow. Her drawing series is called *Autobiography in 28 Drawings*. She made these drawings of feral children in a Russian village. I kind of recognise these people. Wild sort of, you can see the faces in this one. Dodgy types, scary, sort of drunken, fighting. You often get photo documentation of this sort of life, but you don't often see it in drawings in this way. She's a filmmaker and artist. I like the roughness of these drawings.

DD: Very good eye for the shape of bodies. Nice line she's got. That funny thing, I remember you told me once, about Matisse, I think it was you, that way that you make a thin and then a thick and then a thin line, and can suggest the weight of flesh, by the thickness of it, in other words, a single line can be three dimensional. Seems very clever to me.

DD: Did she live in a village?

LD: Yes, I think her grandmother lived outside Moscow. Many of these drawings are to do with memories from there.

LD: And these are drawings by Emma Talbot, from her series *The Tragedies*. She is connecting the current experience of war and of her own family to Greek tragedy, Medea especially, killing her sons as a sort of protection and revenge, thinking about immediate threats and suffering through ancient forms, and in drawing.

LD: And these are figures for Ray Ward's *Whirly Garden*

DD: We like this very much. Why do you like this?

LD: Well, he wrote about how his work is about people who are sort of dispossessed, "a sort of displacement, people living on the margins, without caring or being aware of it", who may not even realise they're dispossessed... That's well put, I think.

DD: Ah yes, and it's mechanical.

LD: Well, this is someone who's worked on a project especially for this exhibition. I met him in Peckham, and we were discussing how to have these figures turning on these turntables, with music.

5.

LD: How about these ones by Emma Woffenden? There's a breastfeeding drawing, *Bell Hat and Baby*, you wanted to include drawings of breastfeeding.

DD: But she's got no hand.

LD: No, no hand and then a cut off arm on the other one.

DD: Very horrible. Children will like that... And look at that drawing.

LD: This one's called *Car Crash*. I think there was a car crash in her family.

DD: God, and it killed the baby?

LD: She wrote: 'this car crash is probably my own father's accident. I had not understood the vulture like butterfly removing the embryos but maybe it's his children being saved and future children dying'.

DD: Now let's just pause on this one, *Head to Head Blue*, because it is very interesting. It's capturing that affection of the child and the child getting comfort from being held close. Then suddenly she does a little real face drawn in. I mean, if you rubbed out the face, it would still be powerful, just as the black lines. You wouldn't need the face, do you?

LD: But I quite like the face. It just holds it there.

DD: As we've seen countless images of Madonna and Child, historically, and usually the child is held sort of on the lap and is a sort of formal presentation of Christ the Son of God by the mother. Sometimes you move to the mother looking down affectionately at the child, you know that way, but this is instantly powerful— mother love, isn't it? Mother affection for the child. Not a dead child. Cheerful, for once.

LD: It's, well, cheerful or ... it's loving.

DD: But love is cheerful, isn't it? Love is uplift, isn't it? Love is positive, yes.

LD: That's another breastfeeding mother and child, except the mother has holes in her breasts. *Empty Breast*. Then there's that one of the mother and child, and there's a few where people fuse together like that.

DD: That's love. That's having sex.

LD: Yeah, some kind of sex. It's quite funny isn't it? ... and then this one is called *I Know the Truth,* it's a very small one...

DD: I don't see what's happening there. What's he got in his hand? Again, bloody sex, it looks like a penis. It's a woman who's castrated a man and is holding his...

LD: Maybe holding the phallus. And she said, *I know the truth*.

DD: But you haven't a clue what it means.

LD: I don't mind, because I don't need to. I sort of know. It says enough. If I get the right sort of feeling of it, maybe I don't know right now. And this is a good one too. That is called *Sleeping Parent.* But who's this creature?

DD: It's the child come to murder the parent.

LD: Like an incubus child. I think her drawings have this sort of mythology where things become birds, or beasts with mysterious shaped limbs or heads, the shapes shift and recur. She's a sculptor. She makes these creatures with clubs and strange legs who beat each other.

6.

LD: ‘Disparates’ a reference to Goya’s series. Peter de Francia made his drawings between 1968 and ‘74, with all these generals and war figures, and people feasting.

DD: They're very forceful drawings of dictatorship and political cruelty... That's extraordinary, that one, the imagery is very weird. You have to look at them carefully to see what it is that's going on and work out who's where and what's what.

LD: They have these recurring symbols, don't they? The doll and that knife going through the woman, with a rat on their head and a knife plunging through the...

DD: Plunging through the woman, the canvas of the woman, from behind.

LD: I think that crept into my dreams, that one.

DD: Fascism.

LD: Fascism and war. Live subjects. Remember I gave you that book, by Curzio Malaparte, about the Second World War. Those incredible descriptions of feasts, with German officers. This feels like these characters could be from Malaparte.

DD: I mean, what's interesting is they're real storytelling, and you need to look at them and work out what's going on. And the more you look at them, the weirder they become. The immediate symbolism isn't obvious until you work out who's doing what and why and who... I mean, what's happening here? Somebody's being tortured here, aren't they? Sitting on the chair, yes?

LD: Light being shone in his eyes.

DD: And electric...shock... The other thing is there's a sort of emotionless cruelty in the faces. You feel that they're not enjoying the cruelty they're inflicting, they're just inflicting it because it’s what they do. They seem emotionless.

LD: He taught at the Royal College for ten years or more. He taught some of the artists shown here, like Timothy Hyman and Ansel Krut, both very different artists.

DD: Was all his work bleak like this?

LD: He had a strong faith in socialist art and in representational art at a time when...

DD: So, this is propaganda really, you think?

LD: No, no, it's... I suppose it's like Léger. It's not propaganda. It's using art to show your convictions, which all art is, in a way, showing your convictions.

DD: But some of these, some of these verge on propaganda. In the sense that...

LD: ...The bad capitalists. Yes. Well, the man in the suit?

DD: Yes, bad capitalists, maybe that, but more... Bad autocrats, dictatorships. And I think he equates capitalism with that. In terms of the drawing, what I love is they're very simple line and very clear and...

LD: But they're quite hard, I mean, that sort of drawing as well... There's a lot of knowledge in the drawing, there's so much redrawing where the charcoal's rubbed out and then redrawn. See all those traces? It's quite sophisticated and clear. He's got a hand grenade as well.

DD: That reminds me of a scene in the film. Where the people are on a luxury cruise and it's raided by Somali pirates, a grenade is thrown and the guy on the yacht, this rich, powerful arms dealer, looks down at this grenade that's about to explode and says, "Oh, I think that's one of ours" at which point the yacht blows up. Let's look at this one —somebody with a cloth over their head, sitting there...

LD: And the megaphone, that's sort of blocking the mouth, I think that fits with this unspeakable. They can't project anything out of it. It's like this empty sound, or an empty trumpeting... A silent trumpeting, and the violence of the knife.

7.

LD: This is a Denzil Forrester drawing. It is the back of the police car, it's about his friend who died in police custody.

DD: I remember him.

LD: He taught me drawing. At Islington Arts Factory, on Saturdays I used to go to draw. He's my first drawing teacher, really, from the early nineties.

DD: Oh, well, let's talk about that. How did you learn to draw?

LD: From Denzil and his partner, Philippa Clayden, at Islington Arts Factory. They were very keen on this book called *A Natural Way to Draw* by Kimon Nicolaides. Also, Cecil Collins who taught them, it was very much about drawing through your senses. So, your hands: the tactility, blind drawing, gestural, impulsive drawing, and the molding, kind of going inside the form and growing out of it through drawing, trying to imagine that you are in the core of the drawing and building out a kind of form, like Denzil's doing here, with the figure, with those kind of charcoally marks.

DD: Sounds very highfalutin' to me.

LD: No, it was the opposite of that. It's a slow process of finding the form. It also relates to Bomberg. It was key this thing about the imaginative inhabiting of the body or the imaginative engagement with the thing outside you, and it also works for things inside you, that there's real physical contact with the body.

DD: Interesting. What's happening there? He's being driven somewhere, isn't he?

LD: It's a police car, so he's being held down. Like so many deaths, you know, too much suppression in the back of the van.

DD: Did he do the funeral painting?

LD: He did a beautiful painting of the funeral, yes, the funeral of this same friend of his who was killed by the police, Winston Rose.

DD: I remember that.

LD: That funeral one was shown by Peter Doig at his gallery. I think it got bought by the Tate. It's got strong drawing in it, and that was done in the eighties. This was done in 2014 but is a memory of that same time.

LD: This is the one that we found in the Towner Collection. We love it. A person with their arms upstretched in protest. We'd never heard of George Fullard but we really liked this drawing. It's this speech, again, shouting. It's a silent protest. Outstretched arms.

DD: Outside against the policemen, yes.

LD: It reminded us of Goya and Daumier. It also feels close to Josef Herman's Tribute to Goya's Black Pictures (In Memory of the Fighters of the Warsaw Ghetto, Auschwitz). The outstretched arms, imploring to be heard.

8.

LD: These are Catherine Goodman's drawings. He's mute, a man who can't speak.

DD: How old is this person?

LD: That's what's so strange, he's a man who looks like a boy, he's grown up, but had the body of a six-year-old child and he was in this, place called L'Arche, a community for people with severe disabilities in France. He never spoke. So, drawing the unspeak—

DD: The unspeakable, or the unspeaking.

LD: The woman was called Marie-Jo, she was also mute. They're part of our wall of faces. We chose some portraits, faces, by many artists there's one by Barbara Hepworth, Joash Woodrow's self-portrait, a wonderful face by Phelan Gibb, and a young woman by Christopher Wood both from the Towner Collection. A lot of the good drawings are from the Lucy Wertheim bequest. She had a good eye. There are also these drawings by Thomas Hennell, who was a friend of Bawden and Ravilious, he was a patient at Claybury, a psychiatric hospital and made these drawings there. And there is this incredible portrait by Alice Neel, of her lover Kenneth Dolittle, who was an addict, and Arnold Daghani's image of a lost child, presumably a refugee, you were very struck by that one.

DD: The portraits, do they fit into the selection, as unspeakable?

LD: I think the ones that we selected when we looked at the Towner Collection are ones where there's a strong emotion coming from a face. Where the drawing, the face of someone, when you're just showing a face, faces are a bit inscrutable and faces can't be put into words, you can't put the look of someone... You can't show it by saying they had a snub nose, or she had sad eyes, or she, you know, you can't convey that...

DD: Virginia Woolf can,

LD: Sometimes she can, not always, she's better at describing fields.

DD: Corduroy.

LD: Corduroy fields of Asham, yes. I mean she's a brilliant describer of landscape. But there's something also about the face being fundamental. There's something very strong that is almost like the first drawing, the face. When a child does their first drawing, they draw a face. First thing – head, eyes, nose, mouth. And we want to have a drawing that looks back at us, unless you're like the man you met at the opening last night who said, 'Oh, I can't stand people in paintings'... Most people see faces even when they're not there, even in a house, they see it as a face, like the way we look at windows and we see eyes and a mouth. So, we do see faces in things or in trees. We're looking for the first face, the first face that looks back at you, that's the first world we have.

DD: So those pictures of houses that grin.

LD: Yes, they're something fundamental.

9.

LD: These three are from a series called *Pain Drawings*. That's a body in a bed with an exploding stomach. The artist is Laura Footes, she's drawing her illness, which is her Crohn's disease.

DD: Does she talk about that?

LD: Yes, it's part of her dialogue about her work.

DD: The one with the castle, That's extraordinary. Her head is up in the air.

LD: That's *The Fortress*. She's become a kind of landscape, which I suppose is what's happening with the other body in the bed... But there the landscape is outside of her body. *The Other Side*

DD: [pointing at *The Fortress*] Look at the little bridge and cannons. It's like Gulliver.

LD: The cannons, it's such strange imagery? But it's on the hospital bed as well. I wonder if its morphine induced. She's on a stretcher, isn't she? Or maybe it's the battle going on inside her body. The battle raging.

DD: Isn't that strange? Then the hand is sort of calming her or holding her down. It does look a bit like Gulliver held down. Somehow, she's trapped in the bed. What's that done in? It's ink, isn't it?

LD: I think it's in biro on that dotted paper that you get in notebooks.

DD: It's like that kind of doodle that's just grown and gone on and on.

LD: There are lots of drawings of beds, and wards. The tiny pen and ink drawings by Leon Kossoff made of his fellow patients when he was in the Mildmay Mission Hospital.

DD: I love that one with the strange shadow looming up. It's ambiguous, isn't it? The man holding his side, maybe it's a vision of death.

LD: And these ones by Nikki Gardham, of her partner having chemotherapy. She said the coloured space is almost like a protective encasing ... and the way she writes about it it's as though the making of the drawing itself was a way to try and protect him, and to channel her own pain and fear.

DD: I think it's wonderful

LD: There are drawings of people who are ill, of people dying, a partner, a parent. Drawing as a way to try and heal or protect someone who is ill. John Davies' *Attempted Healing* and the extraordinary *Be a Phoenix,* with all the lit candles on the body, willing people to rise again from the ashes. He believes that art has an ancient votive function.

DD: She seems almost to be smiling through the candles. There's an ambiguity isn't there? She isn't in pain, she seems pleased. I like the way the body is giving off flames. Will she be regenerated or will there just be ashes?

10.

LD: Eric Ravilious, the Three Brothers, they're quite weird, they're puppets. The brothers are sort of marionettes. And the curtain, the Eric Ravilious curtain, and then the man in Stephen Darragh's drawing.

DD: Now let's just talk about the curtain. Why did we like the curtain? The curtain seems to...It's a very suggestive curtain.

LD: It's different because people who come to the Towner regularly, or people who have a preconceived idea of Ravilious, will look at his watercolours of the downs and the Sussex landscapes and they're beautiful, but then there's something about this concentration on the ruckles of a curtain. He may not have intended it, but there's something strange, a bit like the Prunella Clough glove, where you just isolate something quite every day and do a drawing of it and it acquires a strangeness.

DD: I wonder why he liked that curtain. It's not a kind of mysterious curtain which you're going to pull back and reveal something because he's not that kind of artist, is he? Not like Hopper. If it was Hopper... There'd be some mystery behind it.

LD: There'd be a murder going on behind.

DD: Yes, but this is a very domestic curtain, just hanging in a domestic curtain way. What is this... Stephen Darragh?

LD: It's a drawing of a man looking out of a dark window. It's always interesting to find artists in collections, ones you've never heard of, that you like. It gives hope as well to other artists. They might end up in a collection. There are also these drawings of ordinary things, like these tables by Daisy Richardson. One is a memory of her grandparents dining room, but a meteorite has come sailing into the room. And there is also a table in Liam Walker's *Man Under a Table Hiding from Absolutely Everything*.

DD: He looks rather like me. But he looks very anguished.

LD: And Paul Anthony Harford's *Boy Weeping on the Seafront*.

DD: I think it's very powerful. It's a completely uncontrolled grief, an impotent grief. It circles out of control like the rain, and the shoelaces not done up. Everything out of control.

LD: Except for the lines themselves, the drawn lines are very controlled, as if holding things in place by the detail, it's the same in the bedroom drawing. The wallpaper, the bedspread, the patterns on bed and wall, as if the room has become his whole world that he controls by this slow, delicate drawing.

11.

LD: Do you want to look at the *Numimeserian* books?

DD: Oh the boats, I like them very much. These are the ones from Paris?

LD: Yes. They're part of a group project by refugees, making books out of cardboard boxes. These are pictures of people's homes they've left behind.

DD: Is this the one with the camel being led?

LD: Yes. There's a camel. *J'aime mon chameau*… I love that boat, because you just think it's really seen. I mean, someone really did that, made that journey and drew it.

DD: And what are these funny labels?

LD: That was the name of the project, *Numimeserian*, the title was suggested by one of the group. It means "don't overlook the little things". They've got stickers on them to show that they are part of a library.

DD: So, the point of these is the unspeakable because these are the experiences of refugees. What I'd like to know is, were they provoked into doing them? In other words, was it a kind of session of settling them in France? Draw where you've come from...

LD: It was an open session. I saw it going on. I was in Paris with Anna-Louise (Milne), who works with refugees, so I was there when they were doing these. They were encouraged to draw but they weren't directed to a specific subject.

It was part of the group that she is involved with. Every morning she gets up and does breakfasts in the neighbourhood, giving out breakfast to the refugees in the camps. The camps are around a library called Václav Havel in the 18th arrondissement. There's a lot of open-air refugee camps there that keep getting broken up and reforming, but broadly in that area, and the library has become a sort of focus point for them. What I saw was a voluntary session, you can come and draw things and make books. People would pass by and join in and look at each other's drawings. Then they decided to make them into books. Homemade books, cardboard and paper, sewn with string. Artist's books.

DD: Do we know where they're refugees from?

LD: Many are from Africa, from Libya. A lot of them are waiting in camps in Paris trying to get across the Channel. It’s interesting a lot of these people are waiting to get in another boat, even though they've already been in their boat and had a horrible time, they want to get to the shores of the South Coast.

LD: Oh, these are these tiny drawings, *Darby's Hole*, they're quite beautiful,

DD: What's Darby's Hole?

LD: It was a cave, they're delicate, tiny holes, and black. This is maybe pushing a point, but I thought key to this exhibition is for me, the image of the black open mouth hole, the mouth trying to speak or trying to cry, and no words coming out. I would like to compile a whole collection of kind of cries, drawings of black holes. And when we found these black holes in the Towner Collection, we put them in, they relate to the sea and the ocean and...

DD: The falling cliff.

LD: Exactly, and the ocean and Naiza Khan's drawings of water and floods. The ocean is emerging as a theme, because of Naiza's film and her drawings. *City wrapped in a Web* was made when she was in Karachi during the floods of 2011. She saw a picture of spiders seeking refuge in the trees, spinning their webs in the tree to escape drowning. Even the spiders are threatened.

DD: These tiny Eastbourne Lifeboat drawings, with the gale from the southeast.

LD: And we thought about the refugee boat drawings and how different their boat drawings are from these sea drawings, but this is where they're trying to come—to the South Coast.

LD: Then there is Geraint Ross Evans' huge work *Above Water,* showing the rising tides and refugees, and Cardiff as a sort of embattled island. John Davies' *Flood* drawings also envisage this ancient and all too present dread. This sense of an imminent deluge, the reality of global rising waters is a strong theme in these works and part of present fears. The artists bring it forth.

DD: Its happening now, today.

LD: Andrea Maclean whose *Star-lit Harbour* is here, has also been making drawings of arks, again present and ancient deluge. Her works are about protection, the hope of being able to hold something intact.

DD: I like the light in that. It's very luminous.

LD: The drawings we have of family encompass so many things: tenderness as well as menace, sometimes in the same drawing, as in the playground drawings of Ann Dowker, Oona Grimes' works and in Paula Rego's family drawings.

DD: Everything is incest and impropriety. There is something sinister about everything. Things are never quite what they seem, if you look carefully.

LD: Oona Grimes *Big Pokey Pokey Stick* series deepens the sense of darkness in the nursery.

DD: There is shame, shamefulness and terror, a whole mix of emotions.

LD: And Ann Dowker's *Strange Children*. She's drawing the dark forces in the playground games, the strong and the weak children, the power at play.

DD: Always, always. I think children are very sinister.

LD: There are almost abstract drawings by Louise Bourgeois and Merlin James and the very intense drawings by Leon Kossoff of his infant son. We have drawings of sex and birth and the exuberant childlike drawings that Roger Hilton made, bedridden in the last year of his life, with his children's paint set.

DD: Children are much less inhibited when drawing, because they're not thinking 'Is this a good drawing?'. They just draw.

LD: And they often have a natural sense of space, and a strong determination, believing that what you make is the thing. They say, 'This is a house because I say it's a house', or 'This is my dad because I say it's my dad'. Not because it looks like an old man.

DD: So a lot of these drawings are artists trying to, in a way, go back to the form of expression that children have naturally... Why did drawing come before writing? Where did we get the idea of drawing from? When did anybody ever first think of making marks?

LD: Because we have arms and we have mud, and we have sticks, and we perceive the world visually. We're always looking out to the world and we're trying to navigate our way through the world. It's, you know, the beast is

over there, or the honey is over there, like the bees dancing. We're spatial, visual animals. We are visual even though we try and suppress our visuality a lot of the time. So a child will draw big, sharp teeth, really sharp and frightening 'cause they will draw the feeling of the teeth as well as the teeth. I think that's what people want to get back, from academic drawing, not just what something looks like, but actually how it feels by the strength of the line or by the intensity of a line. It's like you draw the feeling of the thing.

14.

LD: Shall we talk about these Lowry drawings?

DD: When the word Lowry is mentioned, the first thing that comes to mind is lots of tiny figures scurrying around behind huge factories, as though the humans are the victims of the machinery of factories and work, set in the north of England. I had no idea about these drawings, which also suggest humans as victims. They're thought to be erotic. They didn't seem to me erotic, they're more to do with humans being constrained and tied up and... dehumanised I suppose. In a way, they're an extension of the trap that the industrial landscape sets for the scurrying figures. This is another way of demonstrating that human beings are not in control.

LD: I think erotic is a charged word, but there's certainly something slightly sexual about the neck brace and...because they're all girls with these big bows and she's showing her bottom. Lowry's quite a minimal drawer, so if he's showing a bottom and a skirt up and these big boots... I mean they're very different to the matchstick men.

DD: They're being tortured really.

LD: There is torture, a sort of violence in them. I think that's why they appealed to Paula Rego, she referenced these drawings in an interview in 2011, the interviewer said, 'I'm surprised Lowry was allowed to the Slade. He would have been so unfashionable'. And she said, 'he was the one teacher who really got me'. Everyone else wanted her to become an abstract artist. Paula Rego said that Lowry at the time was considered kitsch. She said that these "doll" drawings were key to understanding him as an artist.

DD: I made a film about Lowry once, and I went to his studio.

LD: And no one told you about these drawings? They do show them, they were in a recent *Unseen Lowry* exhibition, in Salford.

DD: I can't see why people should be squeamish about them.

LD: They weren't a secret because Mervyn Levy's book *The Drawings of LS Lowry*, published in 1976, has one of these drawings at the back. Look at that one with the big breasts sticking out and the high heels. Levy titled the drawing *A Study in Erotica*. He wrote that the work was "Strongly fetishistic, cruel, and sadomasochistic."

DD: What I find disturbing about these drawings of Lowry's is that unlike most of his drawing, which are fairly free and loosely done, there's a sort of slightly sinister clarity. There's an intensity that comes through in the way he's drawn it. The clean line and the cutting off the head, whatever it is that suggests. But the whole appearance of it, unlike all his other work, it's going to something deep inside, a kind of anger inside him that he's expressing, something that to him I think would be unspeakable. He is literally drawing the unspeakable.

LD: It's interesting because you say that you see it in the way that it's drawn. It's to do with the way he's handling the pencil in this, compared to the way he handles the pencil in his street scenes. It's to do with those lines.

DD: There's a kind of cruelty, isn't there, in the clarity?

LD: Very good... I think we can finish there.

DD: That was praise... Cruelty in the clarity.

DD: So, you think psychoanalysis opens the imagination?

LD: I think it can: Louise Bourgeois, Ken Kiff talk of it... Paula Rego, lots of artists, but... I don't think they're using it to hear, 'Oh, how difficult for you'.

DD: Psychoanalysts don't do that.

LD: It's quite rigorous. I think for artists who are working from that unconscious, it's always a work because it's the nature of the unconscious that it resists giving up its secrets and its ideas, and so it's that the art making is pulling it out... I think drawing is something that does do that. It pulls out the...

DD: The subconscious or whatever it's called.

LD: Unconscious, or just these images, these image-thoughts that are different to word-thoughts.

DD: But looking at these, are we like a psychoanalyst hearing the subconscious, or consciously subconscious, thoughts of the artist?

LD: I felt there was a point when, I'd been looking at all these powerful drawings, and I felt overwhelmed by responsibility, because I thought, 'God, I've got all these psyches'... it was a bit like being an analyst who had too many people on their books, all at a state of high intensity, because when you look through a lot of drawings that are very strong, it feels like you're getting a lot of deep content from people.

DD: You see, when the first drawings that we know of, like the Lascaux cave drawings say, were done, do we assume that they must have come from an instinct to show something that words or what speech they had couldn't encompass? Fear of animals, or love of the animals, or setting up animals as gods, or whatever it is.

LD: I think it's also a bit to do with magic. You make the likeness of a thing and it's part of your imagined world, but it is also outside in the real world, as a drawing, and in that real world of the drawing you have a certain power over it, but it is the drawing that leads you. It's a bit like what goes on in dreams, we conjure things up in our dreams, people who we have lost or love or fear, come alive, and things happen that we don't necessarily have control

over, and something might shift or change completely. Many of these drawings feel as if they were done in a mood of listening in rather than imposing, something to do with the way the page is marked, these dense pattering enclosures of marks, holding an inward world, like rain at night. Some of them were *made* at night, a sort of vigilant dreaming, as Andrzej Jackowski put it. Lorna Robertson's *Insomnia drawings* were made when she couldn't sleep after her brother died suddenly. Drawing to hold something that's not there, a charm against loss or death, a way of mourning.