

Access Transcript (Large Text)

That's What the Bucket is For

Alison Scott, Becky Sîk, Rosie Roberts

2023

Premiered as part of Radiophrenia 2023

<https://radiophrenia.scot/artist/commissions/again-and-again/>

For further information contact.againandagain@gmail.com

Key:

Administrator

Computer

Testimony

repetitions/background

[00:03:00] Three Second Orbit

My eyes look up and then down

My eyes are just down scanning keys

I'm back to scanning up and down but I'm in the wrong set of time

A glance to the window

I have the wrong perception of this scale of time

Return

Reset

Begin again

Typing, scanning keys, a jerk of the head upwards, a glance at the screen, this feels more accurate, I think.

My fingers begin to move up and down on the buttons, my middle finger rolls the scroller:

archives, generation upon generation upon generation upon generation upon generation upon generation upon

more than one self, they sit together, this creates a clamour and the central worker needs a break, she disappears into the outer orbit for a bit, it's easier that way. There is one time she comes back and all the others have finished their tasks and there is no task to be done. So they sit at the table and have a cup of coffee and do some mindless talking.

It seems astonishing that one of the most enduring mysteries of modern times should be reduced to a photo of stolen paperwork. Others were more optimistic and - to use the popular phrase - *wanted to believe*.

Letters and emails poured into the inbox. Many addressed to management who had pledged to introduce a freedom of information act, so then the archive had doubled, tripled, octupled. The documents of all the orbits available, fragmented.

[00:05:00] files. Return and change, a ninety day orbit, what changes in 90 days? 3 months, a trimester, a loop of darkness, heat, light, earthing. If they were trying to say - what goes around, comes around - I was trying to make it

real. The small round window in the cabin wall made it difficult to take in the entire cosmic horizon but I knew there were others out there like me.

[00:07:00]

Log from files. Seven hour orbit.

At the 14.30 fly by there was a hazy warmth in the air, most folk were not sleeping, many were still eating their lunch. The Celtic Women's team push for a first ever title win. The match will go to the last day of the season after today's 2-1 win against Hibs at Meadowbank.

There is a fan on the ceiling, white and plastic, but I've never seen it turning, though I feel like I have seen it before, not in a past time or incarnation, but just somewhere else. I think it was the auditorium. The auditorium with the side seats, not like a box or a galley but like seats for watching the watchers. Above: the curved and round black light that I could never work out if it was actually CCTV, perhaps it was too much the archetype of how it is represented on screen.

In absence of a horizon I focussed on the sun - centring it in my vision through the port-hole and dreaming it bigger, closer, pulling its mass in with the gravity of gaze. The hot, blazing oblivion of glaring rays passing through the window's transparent compound. My eyes dry.

I blink and reset the aperture, drop the mechanic outer-shutter, apparently shielded. The rays envelop me, like a rock in a rising river. When I'd revisited myself before, the horizon had always been there. Stable, horizontal, the rotation imperceptible. It's never a returning though, only back to the future and that's no play with words, just situation.

It was just before the moment that the inertia of acceleration knocks you out that I realised you could leave the orbit. I packed everything in the pod into my hanging sleep bag, turned off the anti gravity, and hurled myself tackling it towards the cabin wall. The insignificance of the bump this made cannot be overstated, but it was enough, I veered off course.

At the 22.30pm fly by, around half of the people were sleeping, the air was still mild but had more of an evening breeze to it. Some people had just turned off the ten o'clock news. In Scotland folk just arrived home after buying alcohol before the 10pm cut off. Many convenience store owners were bringing their shutters down. Many nightclub staff were welcoming the night's first punters.

I don't want the lights and jump out of bed to turn them off, but the air catches on bare skin before shocking me out of my senses. And the current stopping mother nature from investigating between her legs. The rim is pretty well lit.

I got back into bed, moved over, and that awful sensation that you're not going to enjoy it after all arrived.

It was 5.30am when I last flew by and almost all were asleep, the BBC digital team prepared to publish this report by Towie star Gemma Collins She said: "It's a taboo subject. It's really sad to know that women are stopping doing their activities because of leaks."

My retina detaches, to be reattached later, during a procedure that is rarely done in time to make the difference that is needed.

My unsteady hands pierce a paper plate with a pencil. *Right in the centre!* says a firm voice. *Or thereabouts will do I suppose,* is muttered. The pencil is dull and the lead tip breaks hitting the table as it punches through the slippery, creased disk. It's hard to be exact with such rudimentary tools. They've all had a life after all. *Been round the sun a fair few times haven't you!*. I have actually.. *Wow, look what you've made!* It's noon exactly, according to the wavering shadow that extends across the formica table. But it's not taking the difference between magnetic and solar north into account. It's also not taking into account that my stomach is rumbling and I wish there was something hot and greasy on the damn plate instead of flakes of lead and grey smudgy fingerprints.

- [00:07:00] files. Seven hour orbit

At my desk I am veering. My finger cramps from scrolling. My typing siezes up...As I circumnavigate the information words flood my mind in lists, streams, in rounds, in rhythm, but the ones that find my lips and stick are the words of others in oil and celluloid flavoured milk 'n' coffee grits. Like a safety instruction card, one of those hairy marshmallow biscuits and I've returned my permissions to use them. It was long overdue.

Air is leaking from my ear canal. Dribble is on my shirt. I am asleep, I am awake, over caffeinated, over stimulated I reach for my water bottle, it's not there, and I remember we are not allowed liquids in the registers.

[00:02:00] files. Orbit Unclear. If they were trying to say - what goes around, comes around - I was trying to make it real.

Space and spaces. Off course. The Golden Flood, the weightless seat. The cabins on the pitch black. The growing

beard, the floating crumb, the shining rendezvous. The orbit
wisecrack, the hot space suit, the smuggled knife organ. The
imaginary summer salt and visionary sunrise, the turning
continents, the space debris. The vomit in the bucket.

Debris, the golden lifeline, the spacewalk, the crawling deltas,
the camera moon, the pitch velvet, the rough sleep, the
crackling headphone, the space silence, the turning earth,
the lifeline continent, the cabin sunrise, the hot flood. The
shining space suit, the growing moon. The crackling
somersault, the smudged orbit, the rough moon, the
visionary grande boot, the weightless headphone, the cabin
debris, the floating [00:03:00] lifeline, the pitch sleep.

As I looked back through the supplementary files alongside
the log, I found myself tracking the satellite's trajectory
through the night sky, little did I know it would trigger a web
of curiosities about the barely visible machines and the
experience of circling on a planet. A ripple of reports along its
line of travel.

It was really only after I *had* caught sight of the satellite with my own eyes that I began to wonder, how many satellites are there? What do they do? Who controls them? What can they see? At the time, I imagined the satellite to be removed from everyday life as it appeared, but as I looked into the missives further, I found that all of communications, technology, satellites, perhaps paradoxically have the tightest grip on our world. That was how I got this job. How it began.

[03.00.00] Orbit three days. Author unknown.

I'm sitting here now warming up. I'm in my house but it is feeling very different, I think 3 days ago there was a reset. The returning has been both slow and abrupt. Excitement and overwhelm at all the things held in pause with deadlines circling around them. A new type of company, more refreshing.

I let go.

I see three objects - a round unsteady one, an awkward shaped one, and a flat one in the middle - the safe stone, the

one that everyone gravitates towards. But even this one gets washed over when the waters are high and any residues dry out to slippery.

During the Second World War air crews coined the phrase 'four fighters' to describe mysterious lights that pursued their aircraft during nighttime raids. Also reported were Lights and guided rockets that followed aircraft in a controlled, seemingly intelligent manner. [00:06:00] 28

He had been working on the Peripherique for 3 years, circling, circling, circling the elite inner regions of orbital Paris. The bus route he was assigned to was always the last to go - the only method of transport which didn't leave that highway. The various Portes kept score for him. Once on an evening off he visited Foucault's pendulum (not that Foucault) which was exhibited during the International exhibition of Paris in 1855, and now housed in the church, "Saint Martin des champs". The Foucault's Pendulum makes it possible to highlight the rotation of the Earth on itself by only terrestrial means; he had felt a kinship with it, swaying back and forth.

END OF LOG [03:00:00]

I am called to the managerial office. At this point although this is a return, it feels very much like orbit and stasis intertwined. A jam packed itinerary and uncertainty about my location and function in this place. Presentations overlap and I'm hearing quotes repeat, in different formats but the gist is the same.

I'm trying to take in my surroundings on rushed walks between venues. My phone battery drains, although I am quite confident that I know the way intuitively. I switch it off as the device is heating the device too much and is unnecessary. I can't quite find the way to trust my knowledge, or who I am. Light relief arrives in the shape of a woman from Budapest. We share a similar humour and she reminds me of a friend when she laughs. Its grounding, I've landed and other things can fall away, or certainly be observed from a more comfortable distance, with some

humour that allows it to become more enjoyable and to create a bit more understanding.

I am losing myself in the logs, I am sure management has noticed, but I know they cannot have, the sheer volume of information means no one worker can be tracked or singled out, it would require an army.

[00:08:00]

My orbit is a distortion of distance, the ellipsis is not quite around but alongside and turn. Orbiting is a coming back upon. I used to live here on this line of travel, the vacuum and geometry so exact I *can* say that for sure. It is strange to say you used to live on a line of movement. What has changed since is other to this place.

How much did I expect to do at this point, on this returning. It is odd when you are waiting to leave and you need to make sure you don't miss the timetabled transportation. It stretches and contracts. Clearing piles of clothes, packing,

watering, emailing, sound recording a wineglass and backing up files. Sunglasses – check, cap check. Too many clothes as I'm not sure who I will want to be when I get there. I don't get to have my usual daydreams on the journey as I find myself falling asleep on every seat.

I can't remember where I have got to, and the dictation can't keep up. There's an issue with it recognising my accent. A common occurrence. Things fall by like they are memories, but really each time to remember is a revisit from a different perspective, so could be considered a present incarnation of a past feeling. The room is so dark, the decor not the lighting. Any crack in the curtain creates a halo effect that again dazzles my eyes and I feel the urgency of to-do's that can't all get done at once.

A flick to a cinematic moment, by means of a break, a jolt in the neat circuitous rhythm. If one loop joins another, does that make a chain? What is orbit to a plot? What are plot points in an orbit?

As he died, drunk falling into the canal he only then realised that his seeing the sisters was a case of foresight, a glimpse into the near future when the three would be together at his own funeral:

And he saw the vaporetto steaming through the water, not today, not tomorrow, but the day after that and he knew why they were there together and for what sad purpose they had come. The hammering and the voices and the barking dog grew fainter, and 'Oh God,' he thought, 'What a bloody silly way to die...'

archives, generation upon generation upon generation upon generation upon generation upon generation upon generation upon generation, upon generation, upon generation, upon generation, upon generation, upon generation, upon generation upon. Generation upon generation, upon generation, upon generation, upon narration, upon narration.

[00:04:00] Log

Another object looked like this through binoculars. It was tilted up at an angle similar to the drawing. No distinct edge, no port holes or windows, no lights. No vapour trail, no noise, no exhaust trail, no visible attachment to the ground whatsoever.

I'm going to put my eyes under the water.

The object appeared oval in shape with a large cone of light to the rear as bright as a car headlight seen straight on. It was moving northwest at the approximate speed and height of a light aircraft and made no sound in response.

Around the time listed below, what kind of direction are you moving or facing toward, is your movement spontaneous?

Please send me a report about it, which will be edited on a world map with Glasgow at 5:00 PM October 15th.

Amsterdam at 11:00 PM Paris at 11:00 PM.

Mexico City at 4:00 PM. Venice at 8:00 AM. Hawaii zero zero 0:00 PM Is that noon or midnight? Zero. Oops.Greenland at

7:00 PM. Et cetera. And simultaneously, please write your findings in print, by hand, or using a computer. [00:13:00]

The crawling camera, the turning silence, the space crumb, the crackling beard, the mouth. The Orbit mouth organ, the floating song. Chomp chomp chomp chomp.

Forget the analog paper, I'm back in the room and the film is still playing. I thought I was gone much longer, but it's hard to tell in a house on repeat, the same meals, the same music on a loop that I could never quite grasp. The duration of returning to the space was like stepping into the future as much as the past. [00:20:00]

I knew we would never break this rhythm, the set sequence that offered a sense of solidity, a sense of home, and for her, a comforting return. I wished there was a function on the VHS player to record how many times the film had been played. The manual stop, start, rewind, refuses this impulse. How many times since my last being there had these images been watched?

The pressure in the room is strange and heavy, shifting each time I tilt my head. The patterns it weaves exhibit a certain *"Repetition and doubling - themselves an uncanny pair which double and repeat each other."*

In a double bounce, one person can transfer kinetic energy to the other when the force of their impact pushes the surface down and the surface gains elastic energy. This energy can be transferred to the other's kinetic energy when the surface moves back up.

Don't ask me and don't tell me I was there. It was a bang and it was big. I don't know what went before. I came out with it. Think about that. If you want my credentials, think about that. Me as I recall now, swinging in my space time. A hammering noise as you lay, a moon or two watching you. What am I? You don't know. [00:14:00]

It doesn't matter. I am the witness. I'm not in the dark. I love matter and I love auntie. Listen to me, listen to my pattern or what a day! If it was a day that was, it was as if a fist had

been holding fast, one dense particle packed, two hot to keep, and the fingers had suddenly sprung open, and the burning call, the radiant mechanism had burst and scattered the seeds of everything.

When Sputnik was launched in 1957, people around the world turned towards the skies to witness Russia's historic satellite circle the globe. An early bird followed in the early 1960s. These launches made possible a series of live satellite television experiments, including the International Bureaucrats Celebration of the Inauguration of the Log art auction, and the annual town meeting of the world.

Sometimes I am asked for things, dossiers, information, new understandings gained from my time spent in and amid orbits, but usually the impulse is a given, and my co-workers see me as lost in transit. They'll grab me on the slowest spin.

8,000 satellites in orbit. Now at the core of our global telecommunications infrastructure. And they have become the means by which we see and know the world. The cosmos of the old satellite dishes, spec, hardware speckled rooftops,

dotted all over apartment buildings, suggested that there are more direct satellite broadcasting services than there are terrestrial viewers now.

Evidence of an orbital body. Logged with no timestamp.

Topics. Reels. Tapes. Beams. Fast food. An experiment.

Overloaded by the imagery of all those floating bodies and the piles of paperwork I divert myself to schema.

1. The plan of the pendulum oscillation is fixed compared to the Earth.

2. The apparent movement of the pendulum occurs in the direction of the needles of a watch in the northern hemisphere and the contrary direction in the southern hemisphere. This movement is apparent because the pendulum doesn't rotate, but the Earth does.

3. The pendulum is not related to the terrestrial reference frame because its point of anchoring is specific.

4. The period of the pendulum is independent of the mass of the sphere.

Did it even matter what scene was playing as I walked in the room? I was sure I could spin it again in my head. A boy in the supermarket looking for his mom, knocking tins of soup rolling, spending time being caught in the hypnotic twirl of rotisserie chickens. A ding from the kitchen breaks her attention. The potato in the microwave has finished its orbits, a grumble as the chair turns to face me, the potato is rescued from its final spin. It's earlier in the film, but there's evidence of a meal in the sink. A few morsels of potato and its eyes hawed out [00:21:00] on the side of the plate sinking into yellowed bubbles. Nice one. Done. Beautiful.

I get the spins due to a disturbance in the equilibrium of the fluid of the inner ear. The winter solstice. You haven't lived, if you haven't seen us running around banging on pots and pounding and shouting come back, sun, Goddammit come back. Come back. There's the summer solstice too but that's rather different.

The autumn equinox, the vernal equinox, the flowering of trees, the flowering of bushes, the planting of seeds. Happy population. Unhappy calculation, longing, jokes, leaves falling

off with the suggestion, acquiring new shoes, wearing the same birth. Contemplation of a work of art, marriages, divorces, [00:25:00] Anything at all.

12 am or pm I get them mixed up often so it's noon, we'll agree on noon.

The log is no more than a scrapbook, really. Cut and paste. Accounts dissolving testimony, fact and history. I feel an affinity with its construction, and before I can stop my scissors run a swift skipping dance among the pages and the highlighter blazes meteoric trails across the type. Office supplies revel! Total abandon of protocol!

Choice phrases burrow into my lexicon and lodge themselves there. I learn that with the advent of telegraphy, the connection of vibrating harmonies across space flowered easily into figures of interpersonal contact. We speak of 'being on the same wavelength', 'having a brain wave', 'tuning in', 'switching on'.

Tuning in. Switching on. Tuning in. Switching on.

Tuning out. Switching off.

Is that allowed?

Returning to previous obsessions and cycles of knowledge.

The order identifiable to the shading of the paper. I'm

yellowing with my caseload.

But by now I was green around the ears as they say. Freaked

out and totally broke, in resources and energy. I'd been to the

peak and back, reeling. Clouds made faces and animals and

grew jaws and teeth shuddering, quaking. I could walk on

rock and feel rain. Shivering, I came down to the shallows and

turned back out the light.

The darkened clouds made semi-transparent twists in the sky.

They made animal, vegetable and mineral and fake hope and

charity. They made me read receipts and out of office replies.

They generated an income that no-one could stop.

Volcanoes wouldn't stop them. Something got out from

inside the story day and night and left and night. [00:14:00]

No frame is secure. All attempts at filming it turn on and off, and things were never quite the same.

I remembered watching the coin disappear into the hallucinatory bucket after each trip swimming - round and round it oscillated making black and white waves seem like a corkscrew spiral pulling - willing - the coin into the dark void at the centre. To die at the crossroads or at least to defect. Shaping the lens into the most lucid mosaic of theories.

I must remember to give more to charity, set up a direct debit or something.

Tap tap! Were you falling asleep? I hoped and imagined they crossed paths. They who wrote this, they who said that. Or a tragedy it is, only to be in relation to a central unit, rather than others on the edge.

Satellite witnessing [00:21:00] is audacious. Imagine this military image data not as dormant state property, but rather as a volatile discursive field that can be used by citizens and

viewers to expose questions and critique military technologies of observation, intervention action assistance, and peacekeeping. Imagine this data circulating beyond its intended. Into the hands of. I shudder.

[00:15:00] Silhouettes of dust and towers, thunder, heads, tornadoes, and then the blue starlight. I'm not a beautiful laugh, said the dust grains. I've got charm. I laughed away the orbits of my mind and of the institution as they clamped and clashed and clustered, exploding in showers and taking with it my heart.

On repeat I see cities usually of two to three domes. Where did I put that drawing again? . White blank. Child of the universe. The domes are very large in size, housing 1 million systems in each, the domes rise, and before midday, they descend into the planet. They like acting and using different languages with respect to each other.

The Problem, however, is that having this witness causes a state of non-age - a functional feeling as if he or she or they may be misinformation. The state is likely to cause vomiting,

but having the spins is not life-threatening. That's what the bucket is for.

It is not life-threatening unless of course other interventions occur. The most common general symptom of having the spins is described by its name, but there is also the emotional ruffle which occurs, and is the main reason a person may vomit. It goes without saying how much it does to unravel the sequence and order of the log. [00:41:00]

“(Recalls) it was something about how we live on a twisted braid. All I could picture were a child’s two plaits as if spiralling away into oblivion, tight at the scalp and unravelling, straggling towards the end. They said our lives blur from one to the other without even knowing it. I feel like I’ve lived many lives, I’ll give them that, I became new people all along the way.

The fourth-dimensional curve takes you out into the other who is the whole world, which is really a twist back into yourself, only a different self. I’m just coming around. My circadian rhythm must be well off. What am I, the bear, the

wolf, what was it... the hedgehog? Na that wasn't it. But they're nocturnal, right? I've turned my back to the sun. Others were more optimistic.