

Harry Fainlight reads 'The Spider', a dark and very personal poem describing a bad experience after taking the hallucinogenic drug mescaline. Fainlight is suddenly interrupted by a voice crying from the auditorium, 'Love! Love! Love!' After some searching of the audience the camera rests on the source of the outburst: Dutch poet Simon Vinkenoog, in a state of intoxication. Fainlight invites Vinkenoog to come to the stage, but Vinkenoog ignores him, instead demanding Fainlight to 'Come, man! Come!' before slumping into the arms of the woman sitting next to him. This elicits laughter and cheers from the audience.

- Peter Whitehead: *'Wholly Communion' (film), 1965*

HARRY FAINLIGHT

The Spider

Strange that I never noticed it before, that thread of spider's web hanging from the ceiling. But who could have thought of focusing on that emptiness where it floats?

'When tested on spiders, the drug tends to distort the symmetry of the webs they are spinning.'

When chested on spiders, the dugs bend to Detroit the cemeteries of wives they are spawning.

When testicles of spiders in drag blend into the delerium of simpering dicks they are spraining  
...

The radiator is beginning to throb;  
pounding as if with some huge entrapped insect beating to get out.

It is dogging me — that giant spider the tape recorder turned into last time. Its cat's eye glowed green on the ceiling; my voice shaking it like a fly caught in its web — lips up against the microphone —

A WHISPER SHAKES THE ROOM

My stomach is throbbing too.  
I WANT TO VOMIT UP A SPIDER.

Yes, I would feel so much better after I vomited up this spider. I would stagger weakly back up onto my legs and walk away.

AND IT WOULD STAGGER WEAKLY BACK UP ONTO ITS LEGS AND WALK AWAY.

For of course — the center of the web is my ulcer. All lines of power, fiscal or muscular, radiate from there (that dream fading out as the doctor probed tenderly as a vagina.)