

#### **4-A William Parker at Visual Studies Workshop, July 1977**

Notes on the transcription: Comments made by Parker during the reading of texts are set in ( ) Additional information set in { } Inaudible or gaps in tape indicated by ... Parker laughing indicated by {laughs} Students laughing indicated by {laughter}

Transcription by Bob Martin

#### **Reel 4-A**

Again a portrayal as literally, what shall we call it, subject to some kind of calligraphic contourism in relief, is nonetheless very attentive to the details of the physiognomy that springs from a genetic problem...you might want to deal with the studies even to the point to find out why she was so despised when the reign was overturned, because it is obvious that you will find images of Akhenaten being seated on the same throne as his principle consort, I can't think of his vizier's name. Akhenaten felt as though he had transcended normal identity, and as a result he associates himself as virtually, quote...he uses the term, it is a different word, the idea of the ...of the deity, he is the sole...into the deity's best interest, and it is a sole form of deity, as opposed to ...and his name, Akhenaten, the root of it, originally he was Tutmoses IV, but he makes himself as the son of the sun. He is the direct prefiguration of the idea of light giving birth to flesh. He is the corporealized identity of life-giving light. His wife, from all the evidence... she did have a long neck. She was, definitely...her name means the beautiful one has come, because she was indeed a very beautiful woman. The mystery is, why was this woman involved with, I have to say it again, a freak? Was it because she felt herself a consort of the...god?...I told you before I love National Geographic, and I wonder if you saw the issue the year before last we have now discovered archaeological evidence of the destruction of any image of Nefertiti and most of her temple structures, because she had...and they engaged in acts of endearment...and by textual evidence...as well. And the polychrome sculpture...and this is how you anticipate {?} most of these heads and figures, as highly colored, carefully slipped...to reflect light, crowned, and the elongated neck not only is a sign of...but is also distinct physiognomy, and there are a fine number of these to which you can observe. Even in the portrait reliefs of daughters, and wife, the Frolich's syndrome leads to an elongation of not only of figures but even of the arms. And the telling syndrome is apparent...to indicate the issue. In the female portraits, an almost salacious in their tempt identity of flesh...you see the idea of the swollen belly, the enlargement of the genital region of the female and the enlargement of the phallus. Most of you would like to presuppose that that would be typical feminine physical identity, but that is not the case, because there is a reduction of scale to the waist up and an elongation of scale, and the children, even in those wall paintings,

remember the Amarna period sites, and how the heads were elongated, they are hydrocephalic. And we find that in relief, these are shown...it is like medical attention, I am not saying it was, it is like the obsessiveness of recording something that is subject to observation...and subject to diagnostic attention. Now here is an example of what I meant before: that figure, that unwieldy, and notice that new form of costume, purposely emphasizes the swollen belly. The bend in the legs, where the legs appear, I am not saying this because...I have more of an interest in people who suffer from this distortion, but I have seen a person with Frolich's syndrome...and they have a bent leg, and they walk like this, and the leg bends as though the knee is projected forward, and you can see this...it is constant in these images. The...jaws, swollen lips, the purposeful extension of the crown and as he offers tokens to the sun's disc, and notice what the sun does, it sends down these rays, and all these little hands hold ankhs...they are held to the region of the nostrils so they touch plant life, vegetable life, including animal and human forms. Now I personally think of this as a remarkable paradigm for the principle of ma'at, as it has a profound effect upon earth. In other words we might say that all forms are itself-reflexive in relationship to the light itself. It is the light that affects it, not any other nutritional principle of sunlight...here is Nefertiti, she stands behind, and she is now wearing a peculiar... this is one of the imitative ones, this stele is later in the Amarna period, and she holds her offerings and again in the region of her nostrils...the ankhs are held...and her daughter is standing behind her wearing the same kind of physiognomy and that is true, and if you notice very carefully, the bend in the legs and...she reflects his face. This is a perfect example of what we might call ...or wishful thinking, to hope that all who associate her identity with his identity, so therefore imitation becomes the issue...here again we have a fox, {?} with blossoms, and the various images of the hieroglyphs...literally illustrate this hymn to Aten...a closer view of the region of the nostrils, the same proportion of relief, where the face is much more natural, but what has happened is this idea of an axis which is, Nefertiti still reflects his identity, so we can't call this a mimetic aspect...it might be more amplified like a caricature, like David Levine, certainly is able to capture the appearance of a person in the New Yorker...even by radical distortion, we might say he is an exquisite draftsman in the sense that he understands mimesis to know how to alter and amplify certain forms. Caricature is an important extension of mimesis by the way...But this change in axis, now if you want to try to be an Amarna human being, you will have to walk around like this, and you will find out that for some people that is a perfectly natural disposition of their body. And the important thing is to think in terms of the fact that when we find images of this nature they are still based upon the paradigm of an actual physical human being...and this to me is one of the most extraordinary images of naturalism in the entire period we are talking about. For the simple reason, you will notice several things: if you know about the intertwine of lotus and papyrus, and if you know what the king's throne looked like, and if you know what domestic furniture looks like, then we

can recognize that she, Nefertiti, is sitting on his throne, and that is unheard of. That has never been apparent. No male would give up his possessing seat. She has now taken the royal throne, and that would be considered absolute heresy. I guess it would be comparable to suddenly one day Jimmy Carter saying, you know honey I'm, sick of this why don't you take over, and she sits at the oval desk, and appears before the Senate, or appeared on TV to give a report to the nation. It would be just that...and I don't think we would sit there and say well that is all right, you too would rise up and there would be civil war within your community...this is going too far. But this is the way the man views his own identity. She sits upon his throne. He sits as the woman holding the baby in his arms...like an early Madonna image, and notice how tenderly he touches the back of the hydrocephalic head. And the way he is kissing the child, the intimacy that had been unheard of in any culture prior to this point. Touching, clutching under the chin, kissing, the lips touching, this is a radical expression of mimetic portrayal. The child pointing, Mama! Look at Daddy! And turning up to look at her mother. I am not projecting these things...there are texts...and this is the exact imagery of the intimacy this man professed to the public. This is like giving up your power in order to conjoin with something totally new. How the baby here plays with mother's earring, isn't that a marvelous mimetic gesture? Because in reality children behave that way. We won't find that again until the child in Giotto's *Madonna Enthroned* clutches at her dress and makes her look very uncomfortable with all that...or when Masaccio's *Madonna and Child*...the one with the child eating the grapes, and what does he do, he pushes them in his mouth and his cheeks just overflow, and this dripping coming down from the sides of his mouth. Those are people who knew how to look at things that were natural, admitted the world of things as they occurred...and we would not have even become conscious of such things before the advent of photography. When suddenly every act, every event, every gesture becomes an occasion for importance. I don't know what was peculiarly interesting to Zola, when he wrote about specific details, when the lines {?} on their faces become pox scars, or what is peculiarly interesting to...photographers who photograph fragments of bodies. I don't find anything peculiarly interesting about parts of Dorothy Norman {?} or Georgia O'Keefe, but this laboring upon the gestures or the moments of anatomy, is a point that photography seems most naturally disposed to be attended to for the simple reason that, obviously, the synchronicity that occurs between a figure running--I don't care what kind of distortions are occurring, or the casualness of special events, it is as though the particular details of human existence that can be brought to attention as if they were worthwhile, being seen, in some cases they were intentionally seen. Here is a good example where...all the craftsmen worked under the dictates of the pharaonic figure or household, and here it is insisted upon them to record not only the symbolic, this is so rich in iconography...it is another telling motif. What can you notice about the climate of this outdoor scene? They are...the camp, facing the outside You see the sun... Isn't it marvelous how accommodating light is... all the little

prongs/prompts {?} so you breathe the light in? we talk about the nostril image, the pneuma and the breath image, that is exactly what they are doing. They are breathing. Just like that bull at Lascaux, and the hand...a reverence toward life, pneuma. And notice how the serpent sends out a disc, the sacred cobra as a sign of life. But what do you notice about the atmosphere?...Isn't it like an early Daguerrean portrait, can you see it? There we are in Boston...time of day, the wind is such and such, the recording of the fact that we can tell what the weather is like here. Is it windy or is it calm?

Student: Windy.

Students: It is coming In two directions.

Isn't that interesting, it certainly is. And now how do we know that? Because of the ribbons that determine their climate. You know what that is folks? That isn't wind, that is what I told you but don't get confused, but you noticed it and you got it, very nice, because people always say, "it's windy, it's windy" and I say you fools, wind doesn't blow in two ways at once unless you are in a hurricane. But I say no no that is the pneuma passing through. But virtually, it is so active, the pneuma is so generated and vitalized, that is why the ankh life- giving forces of the sun, that even their ribbons flow in disparate directions. It is those sacred winds, it is not the natural wind.

Student: It must be gentle though, the children are naked.

Exactly, and that is another thing...if you can find me a single example prior to the Amarna period of the child being seen as naked, you will find in genre sculpture...children appear constantly naked, little boy with his thumb in his mouth, with the forefinger, little girl holding her arm up behind her head, always naked, but in these forms, this is a radical departure...and the other element I will call attention to is the fact that this transfer will cause a very complex element... into mimesis. But if he is indeed an androgynous figure, that is if he perceives himself to be both male and female, he is a very early prototype for one of those mandalic symbols for the idea of the conjunctio, for the androgyne includes all things in his own being to the point that he has no shame in transferring his throne to his wife and letting her partake of power while he plays the role of the mother kissing the child...it is a radical departure...It takes more courage, that is a point at which a man might let his daughter, and it would literally change the entire history of humankind. In later Egyptian art, we have a transfer, for example we have, I'll show you examples from Dynasty 26: notice what happens. Again we have the fusion between naturalism and idealization, but no figures are no longer... so the canon of constancy, the cubic form, the sense of a figure being in command, and of the material out of which it is made, now is ideal. Let me show you this as an example. There is

something embarrassed about the way that figure's hand is made into a fist. The way it wants to be very empowered with the cubic orientation, it looks like it wants to get up and walk away, even though the head still obeys the same canonic principles that occurred, for after all, there was now a neo-conservatism. It is quite likely that Akhenaten was murdered...we know for a fact that there is a period in which he is eclipsed, and then we know the priests began to control, a kind of coup, and as a result we have a return to the earlier conventions...the idea that if you return to the old, it never seems to work, you ever notice that? {laughs} You know, be like it used to be? It never seems to work.

Student: Do you think he had that tattoo on his arm in real life?

That is not a tattoo, that is his cartouche. No, no, he did not...that identifies his identity... and you notice that the writing on the cartouche which identifies a person, is destroyed...there are two ways to destroy the image or the actuality of the figure of the Ka, the spirit, that is in the sculpture, one is to strike out the cartouche or to peck out the eyes. That is why in so many Egyptian forms that you find this peculiar destruction which takes place while they...and guess what? This is another thing, a neat trick, if you don't have time to get your own image made, what you do is you strike out the cartouche and get them to carve yours on there... another problem that Egyptology has to deal with. The other thing is to peck out the eyes, that was a mean thing to do, what else can I say. I told you earlier that this is the first example, in the introduction we got the grand image of the...eye, but you also have the eye as the seeing consciousness and intention, going all the way back to...intent in that...and that will persist right into the eighteenth century. The basic cultural intention of modern witness {?} imply. Here I am going to show you...his work is approximately four and half inches high, in the...museum. It is a late period work, like most of you know, there are certainly more of Egypt beyond the 18th dynasty, we talk about the continuation through the Ptolemaic periods, and certainly we all remember Cleopatra, and the consorting with Rome, and then of course the continuation into the Coptic...art. A gradual progression with the culture synthesizes, for example, how early Greek sculpture is influenced by Egyptian sculpture, and vice versa, and later Roman art influenced by Egyptian art: we have the degeneration of the earlier canons, but basically toward mimesis, toward...here are a few portrait figures of the late period of Egyptian art, in fact this is fourth century BC. It is so similar to the Middle Kingdom heads, but you will notice that...and there are stylizations involved in the eye region, and on the other hand the eyes show direction, you can see it with the incision made by the...pupil. But notice particularly what happens in the juncture of the eyebrow ridge, where folds in the brow, and vein structures along the eyelids, and the mouth is very stylized. Those marks by the way are destruction marks....this one is even more emphatically naturalistic...In Roman art you

will find a continuation notice how the cranial lobes project into the upper part of the...it is beautifully illustrated...those intentions...that lobe of the lower lip, that cleft, the bilateral symmetry of the lip, because we all know we really came out of that...remember how we were at one time, what is it I can't remember is it... gastrula, anyway, one of the singular confirmations of your bilateral symmetry is to feel that little thing underneath your tongue, what is it called, that little connection of flesh, what is it called? Then put your tongue on the roof of your mouth and you feel the line...you are basically a bifurcated donut. {laughter}... Even in late sculpture...and king...even though this is an attempt to mimic certain characteristics of the bird, it is extremely naturalistic, and even the figure of the king as he bends forward, notice how there is a repression of the cubic structure, the musculature of the upper and lower leg, the...arms, all defined by the principle of observation...here is the Greco-Roman...it is in the Cairo Museum, it is limestone, it is a head, it is about eight point five centimeters...about 30 BC, by this time the synthesis had occurred, for here is an Egyptian sculpture, at this point still not identified by the artist, trying to behave with attention to the principles of mimetic portrayal...and isn't that tragic, that stylization combined with naturalism combined with expressionism combined with the cubic orientation...trying to synthesize attitudinal structures. I use that word attitudinal structures because they are not brought together, they haven't coalesced. However, it is within those...Roman...these are done by Egyptian craftsmen of the so-called Fayum mummy portraits and others. Here's one that is actually very late, second century AD, and it is a mummy portrait, and this is typical of how you would find these figures...that is the mummy encasing and all the canonic imagery is of the... is present on the case, but that encaustic wax portrait delivers us the photograph. I am going to call it that if you don't mind my saying so, of the figure. This is not unlike those tomb markings that are even made today that show everything from the pet canary to the human being, encased in a photo behind glass. This is an exact rendered portrait...occasional distortions and idealizations, but the majority are naturalistic. Done in wax, why? Not because encaustic was a better medium and there was nothing else available. One of the principle reasons was it gives you the translucency of flesh, a re-constellation just as we saw in the first and fourth slide I've shown you today, a spirit trap. But in this case, the simulacra that reconstitutes the image of the figure in its most youthful stage. Not the figure just prior to moribund. And placed atop the upper structure of the mummy case...let me show you a series of these. You will see the Roman...this is from the first century BC. Here is...you know Keene who does the little girls and boys with the large eyes? This is the Keene... the eyes are definitely large, but I told you already to see the consciousness of perceptual attention, and the idea of the eye being literally that which observes...but such elements as reflective light..., and I have one...there are two examples of this in which a reflection reflects an environment, which is astounding...of course the Egyptian is seen as a Roman figure...there is also an interesting fact here because the encaustic...this is

astounding, where we have a full understanding of reflected light, and I promise you won't find it earlier... it is in the diamond portraits, you don't even find it in Roman painting, you don't find it until late Roman painting...this shows the consciousness of the phenomenological effects of light, I love this one. This is first century BC, it is the early period. In this case I would suspect that the figure probably is Roman, but I want you to notice that we have a problem with...and that is the physiognomy of the Roman nose. And I also suggest that you notice the treatment again of the eyes...and the sausage, the fleshy tissue around the terminus of the eye, and the sense that there is not any sense of idealized confidence, but the slight pursing of the lips...a typical expression of the figure. How about this gentleman: also early period. Look at that...tentativeness, fear, cynicism. We want to read a personality into these incredible mimetic portrayals, and yet they seem not to have their...if you did not understand what I meant when we were talking about Benjamin ala... 's commentary on...or that strange paradox in which we seem to be in the presence of the person defined as opposed to it being in the presence of us. Here is an early... these are not interpreted, they are as objectively declared insofar as that medium can hold the objectivity. What they lack is a capacity for us to fall into the image and I use that metaphor as I spoke of before. To find ourselves successively inhibited to a sub-level in which the syntax of the poured wax and the brushed wax of the encaustic will prevent us from seeing the image in infinitesimal detail. It isn't as though the photographic were able to leave the realm of the descriptive identity which becomes perfectly...to fix that this is a direct... simulacra of the original reality of the person's physiognomy, and to find the photograph, when we look at this close, we find, the scarifications, the setting of the wax, the granulation of wax, the left over identification of the engraving plus...the photograph, and early photographs, and certainly, particularly, those albumen prints, we find ourselves seeking further and further and further to find the syntax, as Ivins spoke about it, and we don't, and that is not to say...because there are a lot of problems with Ivins...what I think I am trying to say to you is that photographic images... and become the culmination of mimesis, and then introduce phenomenalism and realism...and redefine the etymology of that word. And this is the precedent for that kind of attention. The only thing it lacks is the medium that can communicate and become a channel in which we are not terribly concerned with the various code systems of that channel...one more...Roman, this one I always name him for my students, I call him...what's his name from MASH, the bearded guy, yes, Elliot Gould. Particularly in the eyes. You will notice another thing too, the hair behaves, there is not typical that you can find in Greek Art, the hair tends to somewhat behave... locks coming down the side, the treatment of the mustache...and that reflection in the eye...they are indeed to the principle of observed reality because they start showing the effects of...supporting the body. They are among the first to follow that. We all know about... and the time the bird coming and laying on the branch to eat the grapes: we don't know what Greek painting looked like, we don't have any of it, I mean

any of it, not a single example. So we know that Plato was very disturbed by artists in his own time in...and no wonder in the Republic, and as Jung once said, "Nobody reads Plato, neither do you." You ought to some time, because you will find out what would have happened to you...particularly as photographers because you'd be put to death immediately. {laughter} Despicable. How dare you reflect the reflection? And after all, they were obsessed by the world as being not subject to any import except that it is but a mere reflection of a more perfect world of the ideal. That is not a simplification. That is basically the way he states it through a number of measures. But the idea of recording reality, mimicking reality, was despicable in Platonic thought, because it was nothing more than compound {?} than that which was already inadequate in the first place. It is a reflection of a reflection. And some will say that using that Platonic apology towards spiritualizing matter, a neoplatonic attitude where matter is always in service of spirit, therefore forms begin to define themselves at the service of distortion, attenuation, thinning out, ascendancy, and a lot of other issues we have been talking about. But in forms like this, we find a real attention to the confirmation of the physicality, the concreteness, the substance, of the original human subject. And that reflected light in the eye... the sense of the presence, the aura...that confirms that we almost feel as though the figure is extant, with us. That issue appears only...but in ancient near eastern cultures other than Egypt, I want to show you a few examples of slides from this group. Here is a copper...it has oxidized and lost its patina...and the inlaid eyes, and this is I mentioned about the wandering eye of the bull. Now please, please do this for me, please note...I am sure in the agriculture department at RIT {laughs} somewhere in a lab in Rochester, where you can show students what happens when a bull is mad, and those nostrils, the way they lift, see the muzzle the way it is lifted? The bull is snorting, and that strange peculiar appearance of the muzzle, I don't know the name you call it, the lips of the bull, the way they open, the nostrils are snorting and there is an exhalation of air, and they appear to have that peculiar kind of smile. And then the way the eyes...no wonder, bulls, when they get mad, they get extremely furious and they go cock-eyed. That is where the whole meaning of cock-eyed comes from. And there is a tendency for the ears to project forward. That again shows the issue of an interest in objectively observed reality. It is comparable to what we will discover with the advent of photography..we had to wait a long time before we could reconfirm what the Paleolithic artists already knew. Only when Muybridge photographs horses do we really know how their legs behave relative to galloping, and yet Paleolithic already confirmed that fact...because most people fail to look. Somehow people have the intense capacity to observe in the early Paleolithic, and observe things that normally we could not see until we had an instrument that could record that infinitesimal moment of an event. Most people don't stare in the face of a mad bull: they run. {laughter} And someone did it. And there are too many examples: there was a bullfight, there had to be ,where a number of variations, yes, the beard is stylized, yes they will appear in later images of billy-goats



and other creatures, which are highly... in structure, but these show the effects of intense observation, not casual observation...and that uniquely occurs in the treatment of the animals, notice how in the so-called *Vaphio Cups*. The Mycenaean examples will often appear in art history texts, there are two: either *Vaphio One* or *Vaphio Two*, it makes no difference...the necks of the bulls and the cows, I should have put this one on first, you see the animals...virtually turned upside down, the behind portion, and the roping of the legs and through the body. But what is interesting about these...hammered cups, which have a flat interior and an exterior that has been hammered in relief, which in itself is a feat, but the definition of the rope, the definition of the struggle of the animal...this is the other side of it, notice.. the human figures are extremely sharp, wasp-waisted, they are very stylized and elongated, and yet the animals are complete in perspective. Here is one...try to make this as the feet, the legs as they project over...of the bull, see the head turned to the side with the horns, has obviously succeeded in escaping from this human figure...animals are treated naturalistically...although the wasp waist and the upper chest and the head are treated rather calligraphically: a notation of what a figure would look like as opposed to a literal portrayal. I include these in the mimetic tradition simply because of the fact that these works do represent, for the Mycenaean...see the little figure with the hand outstretched, there is a lot of detail in the head and the upper chest region, all those...in the rib cage...carefully observed...notice the treatment of the nostrils of the creature, the...eye is apparent...lips and the muzzle. Here again, this is cup two now....now look at the figure in the...the huntsman. Notice the way the tail lifts, after all this is not a significant accomplishment, because even Paleolithic cave hunters understood the principle of animal's anger or fear or physical excitement being expressed by the whip of its tail: how long, how long we might ask, do we have to wait until we start becoming attentive, and a number of sciences, to specific details of things that only by virtue of even the natural or microscopic structure that photographs offer us. I talked to a person the other day who said that without photography, she could not engage in...and I said why, and she said because I am a major in microclimatology...and I said yeah and I am an artist and I am going to tell you a little about astrology, twinkle, twinkle little star {laughs} how I wonder what you are. I mean she began to speak to me about a language system that was so difficult that I became fascinated and she told me more about microclimatology...it primarily has to do with microscopic adjustments to climate, particularly in plants. And purportedly these people are going to save our world. They are going to find a way to adjust leaves to engage in photosynthesis and get rid of all the poisonous particles in the air, so we won't have to worry about the ozone sphere and the upper spheres...I hate to sound demeaning to certain ecological concerns, but it always amazes me how people are so openly concerned with the outer atmosphere before they really turn to something that is next to their nostrils...a good example of detailed attention--almost like the neglected attention to the human form, although certain, as I said, certain expressions...even in

the *Harvester Vase*...you have that expression of the pumping of the cheeks..they are detailed observations. But where the observation is most apparent is in the lifting of the tail. And like my friend as I talked to her, my new-found friend, I discovered that, she said the only way we really can understand the processes, it has nothing to do, obviously chemistry is important, and so is physics, but our real service is finding out what happened visually. That is the part...it is microscopic photography...It is interesting how this idea of unit detail begins as we pointed out very early and becomes singularly evident in forms like this, where we would have to wait many centuries, I tell you now folks, even in what we call the apogee of mimetic vision certain examples of Renaissance art, I would have to argue with you on that, because much is deliberately removed, and things are carried into postures and gestures that no human being will ever take or make. And it is interesting because here is an example where that consciousness of the way things look, and how they can be given... whereas other aspects like figuration of self there is still a lack of awareness...this is cup two again, you can see the bull, the head turned. And the culmination is in another ancient near eastern culture, appears in great...both tumult, tragedy, crisis, fantastic activity, and so on that appears in Assyrian art...it is like utter schizophrenia,...you ever notice horses when they are stabled or penned? Or any animals like the young bulls or the ram bucks, sometimes don't look at John Wayne, see what is happening with the cows in the herd, when they are pushed next to one another, their heads are bumping and they are avoiding contact and so on...this is one of the more relaxed images, on the left you see the capture of the animals. These animals are showing the first stages prior to being moved away from the tumult of the capture with the net, and so the idea of turning the head and moving his head out of the way. Again, it is an extraordinary observation and mimesis of what happens in terms of the transition...we have already seen that kinetic identity earlier. But again I would say it is that kind of attention, I cannot think of a single example of art during the Renaissance, and I wish you would tell me if you know of one...in which you have quite the same type of natural observation. You have far more complex tumult, melee, interaction and so on not observed...fictional, idealized, what I might call the perfect type, even Leonardo's maelstrom series, somehow his destructive avalanches, even those grotesques, which...have the mimetic aspect, but certainly when we have that obsessive atomistic detail identity, but many of those forms deal with crisis events, or pressures, claustrophobic clustering of things, all of these things appear to be invented. At least we don't find their parallel in nature...But is in Assyria that I mentioned that conflict, and this is virtually a conflict of vision. I don't know why it is, and nobody has corrected me yet, and I can't find anything that argues with it that identifies certainly examples of the Ashurbanipal temple and citadel where you find this true point of bifurcation between the naturalistic and the stylized...these massive, virile figures: enlargements of body structures, some of the distortions...a power identity that implies the amplification of body parts of Michelangelo...he is one of the most arch alterationists

in the history of human consciousness. But in these lion hunts...Ashurbanipal...and keep in mind folks, we are basically talking about a period that is pushing close to the golden age of Greek art, sixth century BC...I want to show you a series of a telling interest in what happens on the hunt: the horsemen...according to canonic rule. The lion has been uncaged, now keep in mind the celebration and ritual of the wall painting shows the king getting two in one thrust with the harpoon. If he is to be proved the benefactor, the benefitter, the nourisher of his subjects, he must prove all super human. The king must never... this is a record, this is fact, it proves his prowess, so therefore he hunts lions, and tigers, and...and ibexes, but keep in mind they are caged: they are not in the natural world, they are let loose, and the king in his chariot with all his huntsmen in a kind of vicious way track these animals down...pull their tails and destroy them. It is a kind of ritual, the same with the bullfight. If you object to this sort of thing keep in mind you wouldn't have been king for very long unless he engages this myth of the eternal return to prove his power. This is the lion being uncaged in the lower return, we are not going to deal with the whole sequence...it is fascinating, sequential imagery: the first example, and there are examples in Mesopotamian art...that suggest sequentiality, but nothing is more grandly sequential than these Masurpal images. As I told you before, that sequentiality, a lot of people think is a new discovery, we know that is not the case, we are all aware of it certainly in literature, books, graphic illustrations, and so on...I am including very early... Lascaux and Altamira, there is sequentiality implied. It is a very ancient archetype: 627 BC. Look at that dog springing and its leash. How is this for comparable conduct {?}. It is the animal massacre. When an animal is pierced by an arrow, and particularly you will notice that many of these are auspiciously present in the upper region between the shoulders, or in the spine, it becomes paralyzed. And one of the ways of destroying the animal was to first pierce it behind the shoulders so that the back hindquarters were paralyzed, then one would approach it in hand to hand combat, so that the arrows still struggle to...notice the telling detail, the tongue held out from the mouth, the paralytic presentation of the hindquarters, the turning over of the back, the way the neck stretches out, the strain of the musculature, in other words there is still a degree of fight left in the hindquarters...in other cases the animal is turned, in other cases the animal is trying to turn or rise up...paralyzed...these are incredible observations. You can't know how an animal will behave unless you look at it, and most people don't know even how a person walks because they've never looked at a person walking...this animal, notice the way not only how it tries to escape but it is actually trying to attack a horse with a rider...an arrow is piercing its upper body. Now what do you notice about the front paws? They splay. Have you ever looked at a cat? I am always amazed at...people got very interested in the late 50s...I saw more photographs of dead animals on roadways, and you just use your own favorites because there are dozens. Have you ever seen animals who have been, let's say had their hindquarters crushed, what happens to their forepaws? Or particularly how their paws splay.

Raccoons, woodchucks. You see this splaying causes a relaxation of the frontal paws and shows that the animal has suffered the preliminary stages of paralyzation. Whereas notice the rigidity and expressed musculature...veins...a very emphatic clustering together, a pulling together of the pads. This is mimesis of the highest order. This is someone seeing with what I will call camera vision, because you don't see that when you are involved in a fight, you don't see it after it, you don't see it before. You have to notice it in the immediate second of its identity. So obviously, this position to see things with a sense of directness and verisimilitude was part of a vital...a long time before the advent of photography. Look at this resting lioness under the tree.

Student: It seems to me that photography frees you from the need to do that because the instrument does it for you.

Yes, Lee, and what do we have to say about that? That frees us from the need to see things specifically, doesn't it.

Student (Lee): You can then look at the image after it has been made, but really with the camera you don't have to see a god-damn thing, you just go around clicking the shutter..

Well don't be so cynical about it. {Laughter}

Lee: It is true! We were talking about Eskimo art and it seems that most Eskimos were artisans. Everybody within the community was capable of creating a sculpture that was realistic. And it is only recently with the advent of the snowmobile and more powerful weapons that that art is disappearing. But prior to that time, because people sat for eight hours observing a seal, for example, anybody could make a seal.

And not only that, but the idea of being attentive to your environment was cultivated.

Lee: Right.

Even in Scandinavian countries that is quite common. You see it is valuing the idea of being able to learn empirically. I love very much what you are saying...and I don't disagree with it, I would say that you are absolutely correct...I would say that I wish I would have more than fragments of reports from anthropologists and sociologists about the behavior of humankind, or types of humankind, and the kinds of attentions they give to things. We are obviously beginning to see that there are...one of the ones I included, *Does Culture Have Perception?* That was one of the extras...I chose that as an example of exactly what you are talking about. Notice what it says about the depiction of nature,

like elephants and giraffes, as they differ from culture to culture. Obviously we are affected by what is cultivated and how we are ingrained {?} by the need for attention...we were talking about leisure a moment ago and there is considerable evidence on this...this is another type of coursework that really should be taught by someone who is expert...although what I am saying to you is in fact, researched. That modes of attention: that is exactly why I had you read Owen...second commentary, are very much based upon motivations for attention...from several reports of research, that when we lose the necessity to become involved in detailed analysis of things, an attention that is not given to hierarchical order, but in essence all things are of equal value, then we suddenly find ourselves moving toward idealization, expressionism, alteration, and a denial of the world. This is sufficiently researched. There is another issue here: it is as if we can say that those who would postulate that the camera view, and I mean that in the broader sense than photography, has delivered us from the necessity to have an acute awareness of our world. Seen to decry this as a loss...and they compelled us now in certain cultures that are inundated with visual images that are substitutes for perception, in other words we see it second hand and we also look at dead matter, we see the past tense, we don't see the present. It has removed from us the necessity to be able to sense our world directly. Ironically... If it isn't peculiar to our time that we have a category called "earth art." We have a category called "site art." We have people recording the phenomenology of light, like that Dutch...who records the effects of light falling upon a doorway or the interior of a room during successive periods of the day, well Lumiere was concerned with that sort of thing but for different purposes. We have those who are... constantly bombarded with simple phenomenological renditions of the change in time. We also have the need for people to attend institutes to learn body-touch. I know myself, I am not a sensation type, believe it or not, I once read with great seriousness a book called *Sense Relaxation Will Blow Your Mind*. And when I finally got to the level of finding my body, I felt kind of silly, because why am I doing this? So I went out and did something physical, chopped wood, or mowed the grass, things like that. Well one thing I did, I picked it up from a friend of mine, he said, "Wait until it is night, Bill, roll up a series of pieces of newspaper into a big tube, something heavy" -- this is called Bioenergetics and I found out later why didn't this fool give me good advice, I tried it and it worked. He said, "Put a rubberband around it, you go out there, take off all your clothes, and you know that apple tree in your backyard, beat the hell out of it." I did it. Then he said, "Then go into your study...take your tennis racket, tell your wife and daughter nothing is wrong, close the windows so your neighbors don't hear it. Again, get naked, take the racket and beat the hell out of your bed! It wasn't my bed, it was a couch in the study. "And scream as loud as you can scream." Then I found that other people go to doctors, and their rooms are lined with cork, and they have double doors, and they are padded, and people scream and yell, and suffer torments and pain, and they suffer physical exertions-- primarily to get back to their body, to matter. And all I

know was that I read the literature of ...institute, and I don't know what in the world we think is going on with Esalon, it is not some hanky panky, with people running around...literally, people are desperate to find their sense of touch again, or their sense of materiality, corporeality. And you know...popularizing, even Psychology Today...has an article in every issue...I like popularizing magazines because they know what everyone else is interested in. Things like body image...the way you hold yourself...like some Middle Kingdom sculpture...gesture. Or you show the tendency to not walk...you can walk brilliantly like this, on your toes...You are starting to become attentive to what? To what was there in the first place. We found ourselves making a science out of kinetic, and kinestheology. Why people who go through physical education courses now have a very complex and difficult course of study. They must be taught how exactly muscle contracts and acts in certain kinds of gestures. And not only do they have to observe that, they have clinical studies. We had to return to making a science out of what is obviously evident: and there are those who might suggest to us that because we live in a world that is bombarded constantly with visual signals, and they don't even have to be photographic by the way...and they just become a substitute for direct perception. We perceive now through an intermediary. And ironically we don't get away with it even on the subliminal: I am not playing some...trick, and I am not saying the medium is the message, I am saying the fact that it is already the past tense, is working a terribly severe problem upon our psyche, because we substitute the dead world for the one that is right there before us. And I only say that to suggest to you that there is an issue here that we probably are even dealing with now, and I think those remarks, Lee, are quite accurate...Of course you know this lioness: this is a supreme example: that arrow has missed the upper vertebrae...this arrow comes in from the side as you will notice, from the contour...so it has not hit the vertebrae, the paralyzation occurs in this one, which is coming from the top...so that is severing the vertebrae, and so as a result you see the...and that has caused the paralyzation of the hindquarters of the lioness...and again, notice the slight splaying of the paws, and in the back, they drag. And yet this extraordinary sense of defiant power, this lioness howls. That is not stylization, those are veins projecting through the muscle. And then the paws, notice how they cluster, and the claws are extended as a cat would when it is angry when it wants to climb a tree or scratch a person. Notice the exertion of the musculature in here, and the way it sets up a...of exerted musculature, and how the neck raises, and how the blood drips...and how exquisitely defined that sculpture is. But what astounds me is not the accommodation of animal form in desperation, but the extraordinary observation.

Lee: Is there an explanation for why this particular period of time...

No, none whatsoever. It is a mystery. I would say to you it is a definition of...exactly what you said, the, by the way there are audience scenes, spectators, this is a spectator

sport taking place, the figures are as crude as what we would call the public, as crude as some of those Egyptian workmen in the tombs and so on. Only the king and his carriages and horsemen are given definition. They are highly stylized. Their musculature is anything but...the literature of Assyrian art is full of descriptive detail, of the grain and vegetables and animals and creature life, and the references to humans are always full of fabrication and heroism and amplification of types and personalities and so on...As I said before it still shows incredible respect for the nourishing world of the animal or the vegetable, or the earth. And I would say that is as close as anything I have ever heard anyone, the simple need to be attentive, that observations are attentive to that which sustains one, the environment and the sustaining elements of the environment. The lack of attention to the human is simply because, one, there is one school that talks about the lack of self consciousness. The other is that not so, but it is really an attempt to make the human super-human, and heroic in identity, therefore the idealization or radical alteration occurring. But there is no answer to that disparity, and it is a disparity. But what is astounding is, even beyond that, I wish we could explain, and that is why I talk about the primal human impulse that finds its best media for that kind of attention in photography. Is it really the human necessity or is it primarily an invention of the media that occurs with the invention of photography...in 1826 or 39, whatever you choose...Or is it an occasion out of which that primal impulse to be attentive to detail, and to see things in a rather astounding, to witness again the howl of the animal. I don't think people around here are saying, Oh, today I saw a lion, she was wounded, and I noticed she was dragging her hindquarters. Someone had to observe that happening, with intensity, and obviously...had to be acutely aware. People don't believe things that are of short-hand images.

Student: I think that today you don't see this type of imagery, maybe low grade media like video, like Wild Kingdom, so you don't see this attention to detail at all.

Say that again?

Student: The only time you see this, animals like this, would be on television.

Listen, don't you have a house pet? My cat, I have observed all of the features of this animal except, save for, I've never shot an arrow through its back to observe that phenomenon, (laughter) and I won't do so. But I know how it expresses... when its fur ruffs, or its tail blows up gigantic...or when it is stalking, or its teeth chatter {makes a loud chattering noise with his teeth}...Here is a perfect example to show you not how, it is not how observant I am, but how much I believe in the images of things and creatures...when we were in Florida, my daughter was very young, and this I remember she was about...three. And you know how parents dote on their daughter's playtime,

and she used to pretend she was a bird, and she would flap her wings, and she would fly at the table with her food, her carrots and so on. And I remember this little ritual: I would be daddy bird, and my wife became momma bird, and we would all fly at the table, and... {inaudible, laughter}. Then I noticed one day, I was watching two things come together: I kept watching my cat on the back porch, it's a swing porch, and the seagulls would fly by, we were right on the ocean, and the cat would sit there and chatter, you've heard cats chatter, you know they look at...birds {makes loud chattering noise with his teeth} they click their teeth together, and the cat was chattering, he did in on the front porch and on the back porch...at that creature, sending semiotic signals of intention...birds...Then, one night, it was very rainy...up through the...came the foam, and the ocean is just really whipped up, waves are splashing up against the rocks, and against the bulkhead, and my wife and I are in bed, and there is a curtain behind our window, and beyond that, this is toward the back of the house...and behind that was a palm tree, and there was a telephone pole with a light. And the light was causing the shadow of the palm tree to appear against the curtain, and quite frankly I had never noticed it, it could have been there all the time, but I had never noticed it I think we were originally watching the television and so on, and suddenly...we are asleep, and suddenly I hear this chattering noise {makes loud chattering noise with his teeth} and I thought the cat was on the headboard, because I looked up and I thought, we thought momma bird and daddy bird had gotten real and the cat was going to attack us {laughs}...looking at it going (makes distinct chattering noise with his teeth)...and what it was looking at was the shadows of the palm ferns caused by that light projecting...creatures, seagulls...It is the idea that you can observe such elements, I don't think you can say, because we no longer see except in *Wild Kingdom*, bizarre creatures or what have you, unusual habitats and so on, is the reason we don't find ourselves observing details. I don't think persistence of a type of environment, or persistent experience of a type of creature...is necessarily a signal to be either attention or non-attention. And everything I've read seems not to confirm that. What I am saying is that the attitudinal mode that has been cultivated within us, and what we value as important enough to look at it is, we are taught to see in gestalts, if you will accept that as a term, wholes and not parts. And we are also taught to cut the corners as rapidly as we can...those tests, did you ever take, to know in the eighth grade whether you would go to college and so on, all deal with what I call generic categories. Seldom do they deal with issues that are reasonable {?} I am dwelling on this, but...these are vicious, because they show an insanity, a cultivation of attention given to what we might call schemas, and it is part of our literature, it is part of our imagery that we are surrounded by, and even permits us to neglect the details of the world...unless you have some evidence... from what I've read...let's stop there.

End of session.



I use this to illustrate... and then we have a ...of mimesis as being continuous... a popular text, and I always love to point out the discrepancies between fact and invention in the Newhall *History of Photography*, because they liberally use elisional dots to leave out information, to twist it to their own point of view, I'll comment on that directly, that is not an unfair side shot of a very important person who has made profound contributions, but nonetheless, one of the reasons I use that illustration is to notice the commentary on Weston: and where he is an arch-Platonist, it is a common stock thing, just read the literature for yourself, the *Daybooks*. Read also his application for the Guggenheim which wasn't even published until the 60s. You will realize this is a man extremely interested in universal orders and transcendent states, and when he uses the word essence, you have to go back to the beginning and follow the route through. And somehow he got confused with the... objective, (laughs) straight photographic concern, as it is so-called. Here is a comment too that has to be doubted: only to represent, because I have two of them, and I don't presume that I know these things, but sometimes when I have doubt about something I am inclined to try to find the original material. This is a commentary from HW Jansen's chapter on Greek art in his million dollar (laughs) industry called the *History of Art*, it has just been revised by the way, rather stunningly: He says this, "The Knidian Aphrodite by Praxiteles achieves such proverbial fame that she is often referred to in ancient literature" (and here she is, I'll show you the slide) "as a synonym for absolute perfection." Now you notice in the first we are saying 'proverbial fame often referred to in ancient literature,' what literature, 'as a synonym for absolute perfection.' And I wish that were the case, but however the prime source he is referring to shows us that we have a debate, and at this moment in time the debate is the bifurcation of two intentions in relationship to the treatment of form and certainly for the purposes of figuration occurs. He says, "to what extent her renown was based on her beauty, or on the fact that she was insofar as we know--and that is a very important issue, and notice what he says here, this is where golden *nuggetism* first among works of art becomes very important -- insofar as we know and to this day no proof to the contrary has been given, she is the first completely nude cult image of a goddess...is difficult to say, for the statue is known to us only through Roman copies that can be no more than pallid reflections of the original." Now most Greek art is subject to these pallid imitations by the Romans, however I think we might express that what is interesting is that few have been adjusted, or altered, so they represent what we might call this idea of imitation of a paradigmatic form by another culture indicates...the dying of any image when it is reproduced, and of course we have the first aspect of constant reproduction in Roman *imitatio* of Greek art. He goes on to say this, "She must have had countless descendents in Hellenistic and Roman art." And then he says, "A more faithful embodiment of Praxitelean beauty is the group with Hermes with the infant Bacchus of Olympia, and it is of such high quality that it was long regarded as

Praxiteles' own work. Today some scholars believe it to be a very fine Greek copy made some three centuries later. The dispute is of little consequence for us except perhaps in one respect, it emphasizes the unfortunate fact that we do not have a single undisputed original by any of the famous sculptors of Greece. Nevertheless, the Hermes, the most completely Praxitelean statue we know, the lithe proportions, the sinuous curve of the torso, the play of gentle curves, the sense of complete relaxation enhanced by the use of an outside support for the figure to lean against, all of these agree well enough with the character of the Knidian Aphrodite. We also find many refinements here that were originally lost in a copy such as the caressing treatment of the marble, the faint smile, the meltingly soft modeling of the features, even the hair...the bland lyrical charm of the Hermes makes it easy to believe that the Knidian Aphrodite was the artist's most successful accomplishment." Now I had to read through that whole thing to let you know that obviously here we have the presumption of value without debate, ultimately. Now let me show you the image, and I ask you to recognize from this work, and it was a commissioned work, even though we are dealing with this highly Roman copy, twice and multiple times removed from the original, even in this rather tragic slide...I am going to give you the postulate, and you tell me...Now let me say a few things about the figure first, and I am not dealing with the psychology...presume that Aphrodite is associated not only with generation but also Eros personified and not only, it is a sort of bipolar image of Aphrodite: she is seen as the *Venus Pudica*, which means that she shelters, and please don't laugh at these terms...she shelters her pudenda, {laughter} that means that she shows the act of modesty, but at the same time she shelters or cloaks it from certain viewpoints...but as one moves around it, she is the first, and that has not yet been discovered to be otherwise, nude, totally nude cult goddess of the ancient world. In fact we might say she is the first nude female of any period which has not been altered by associationism, or transformation of...from say the *Venus of Willendorf* forward. And as I said, she is definitely subject to the principle of ritual identification. But as I said, she guards her pudenda at the same time she reveals it. So it is one of those classic, that is not a pun, it really is, more towards the idea of possibilities, and we can speak of them as a sort of ambivalent gesture. Not ambiguous, but ambivalent because it is almost offered to the observer to view the work as one moves around it, once again it requires peripatetic observation, and I might add in this case, the drape, the urn...are articulated as one moves around it as they are in the front. One thing that would identify this as a Roman copy is that supportive plank between the draped urn and the body itself. That is where reproduction often leads us to accept larger dot patterns, or certain types of value destruction in a reproduction. Because we are so obsessed with the idea that we want the gestalt of the image itself that we fail to recognize the validity of its original authenticity as a form...certainly it is quite improbable that the original marble would have included that. And it is just that simple, one of the telling signals. Those works that are extant, that we know, for example, particularly Archaic works in the

Metropolitan, the Kouros and Kore figures, where some rather dramatic elements occur without supports, but typically it is in the Roman reproduction that offer these support elements because they were working with faulty marble...so I will tell you this, she originally appeared in a temple, in a precinct, round in structure, so that one could in essence visit her from all particular viewpoints. It is said she not only reveals her identity as the chaste, and thus in that sense don't think of it as modest when you say the *Aphrodite Pudica*, or other types of *Venus Pudica*, it means that she is seen--if we thought of it as modesty we would make an error because there is not any proscription against the nature of her identity: she is a rather radical form in terms of her complete nudity, and that is atypical of most female forms until the *Knidian Aphrodite* of Praxiteles.

Student: {inaudible question}

They are simply decorative, the rings are upper arm bracelets. And they are quite tactile...you will find a number of post-forms of this nature will appear to wear necklaces, and of course that persists, it is a sign of her association, now if I say that Cranach will introduce his reclining Venus or Aphrodite, and Manet will show later the Olympia, which has an echo of that, she wears jewelry, lace...that is a reference to the harlot in the nineteenth century, in the earlier period that is a reference to virtually a woman who is not only associated with nature but she is in essence a courtesan, but that image is associated with the idea of her being a signal of Eros, prime earth... it is like accoutrement, it is not just wearing a bracelet, it signals her attention of being a woman of considerable charm, and at the same time also associates more directly with the cult of the prostitute, but she is not to be thought of, she is a goddess, but associated with the cult of prostitution in which we might say prime generation without responsibility occurs. The earth sends forth leaves as well as flowers. But there is nothing special...and we will find that image transfer through to a number of references. The Venus of Modesty, or the Venus who guards her pudenda, appears as a one-time form from this point forward in a number of major artworks...There are a number of things you will notice as you look at this work formally...that indeed the head seems slightly reduced in scale compared to the body. But please don't think of that as semiotic or iconographic in any particular way, this is rather typical of Praxiteles' work. He has broken the typical seven heads high canon of structure that persisted through the Periclean Age, fifth century BC. But he has also admitted certain suppressions as well as certain amplifications in forms, so there are certain elements that we can speak of as stresses, or transformations of body structure that are for the purpose adding to the dimension of uniqueness, that is she is not to be thought of, she is idealized, but not according to a canon, but according to the idea of a definition of parts that may amplify or reduce in scale, so this pushes her out of the realm of the human...I'd also like to

add, it is...vantage point, she is distinctly seen...most scholars would determine about her original location, she would be seen approximately at the eye level of the upper thighs and therefore one looks up. So that the head being reduced in scale further amplifies her scale, her size, her hierarchical size in relationship to the witnessing subject below. And you can see this...she slightly crouches forward...and we can also see that there is Praxitelean, which is often called, the guarding of unit structure within anatomy, despite the staining, she would have by this time by the way sculptures were not polychromed, and so that she originally had no color, and certainly Roman copies, one would not have wasted the time in reproduction to introduce that. It is quite likely in her cult she might have been clothed, rouged, eye shadowed, and actually had been...but that would have been part of the celebrational ritual investing her, or animating her identity. Now I ask you one question: here is the postulate, she appeared in the temple, she was visited by the minions, they valued her, highly valued her. Another group of people, and I won't say where or why...devalued her. In fact, they had originally commissioned Praxiteles to produce this wonder of the ancient world. And what in the world could have been the debate? Why would those who had commissioned her find her unacceptable, and why would those who valued her find her acceptable? Take a guess, that is all I'm after. Because if you guess, you will also understand one of the primary reasons for...the bifurcation between idealization and imitation. And represent how people responded less to the issue of whether a work is satisfactory to the eye, or to the senses, or to one's concepts of iconographic import. It is a very simple issue, what might that be?

Student: The casualness of the pose?

The casualness of the pose, very good. What do you mean by that, I agree with that.

Student: Well, the bent knee, the hand holding back the drape, the shoulders tilted, the body tilted.

Could we speak of her as being--the emotion is guarded, the gesture seems to be slightly, very slightly unrestrained. Is she too forward? Meaning by that in the sense of people who are pushy. What do you think?...I will have to draw this distinction very carefully later, but is the slight movement forward, and is that an ambivalent gesture? Both to reveal and to conceal. Something that might perplex the human being, even you as you look at it today. Can you think of any parallels...rather than my selecting an image, of some contemporary image that might be of a highly ambivalent nature, where one group will despise and reject, whereas another group will value and accept? And let's try to intuit what might the argument have been? Could it be that she is too beautiful? Now this may not be your ideal of beauty. I am not asking for the right

answer, I am just asking what might run through two differing groups' minds when they observe this...

Student: Too voluptuous?

Is she too voluptuous? In reality, compared to other female forms, despite the fact that the majority are clothed or only partially revealed. We might suggest that Praxiteles is somewhat guarded in more ways than just the gesture of the hand, and the idea of her...or voluptuousness. However we do have the possibility that...the gesture is in potentia. When I use the idea of her tendency to be too forward, and I am not talking about the leaning. Does her gesture look static or active? Let's deal with it in that sense.

Student: Active.

Exactly, it does. Is it at the point of the beginning of an action or at the resolution of an action?

Student: { inaudible }

It would, exactly, and in essence what I meant about her aggressiveness, it is a very subtle aggressiveness, but indeed the arm, if you just think of simple physiognomy...the way the hand is held, that it would move to the side, it would move out, agreed? And what about the engaged and free leg? That laying upon, stress is expressed, and notice the free leg...what do you notice about the right foot? What do you notice about this articulation of the pressure of the toes.

Student: She is about to stand back on it.

Is she about to stand back or is she about to project herself forward?...The toes, if you notice, have already left the platform...you will see the pressure of the large toes, a flattening, a spreading of the pad of the larger toe, as though in reality, even though she stands in the engaged free leg contrapposto...typical, and echoes that concern of the inverted S curve...this figure, let me show you by contrast before we come back to the debate, just to give you a male figure and show you that this interest in action or possibility of movement has been apparent before in prior century...The figure originally had arms and hands and he would be tying a bronze fillet or ribbon. He is a victor, and he is proceeding forward in the arena, frankly nude, considered barbaric by the Romans, but to the Greeks is an unabashed presentation of one's skill in the arena, or using the stridgel to wipe the perspiration from the body, and then upon being crowned the victor he steps forward and ties the ribbon of victory before the crowd, and this is

exactly what is happening with this figure. You will note what happens, this foot is very visible to you, and you notice the...engaged leg and the free leg, and it looks as though indeed the issue is he is stepping forward. And he is in essence not only having stepped beyond the... he is honoring himself by the extension of the crowned ribbon. But what do you notice about those toes, they are very relaxed...it is as though we have stopped in the last moment of gesture walking forward, and there is basically a relaxation of the toes and the musculature structure...of the foot itself. So it is not that I am saying we don't have a figure standing in contrapposto or moves forward in proud images...let me take another example and show you the same articulation, the Deriverus...Plutos, again, a typical classic Periclean form...he would originally have appeared, again with spear in hand, a Roman copy used as a structural support, he would originally appear obviously as a figure who had performed in athletic games and would be carrying the javelin...he also gives us the apparent identity of stepping forward. Even though the heel is lifted, the toes do not show the exertion of projection. All you would have to do, at some point if you find this interesting or not, is find that you too can stand in contrapposto and relax your foot, and still have the heel lifted. But then just do this, notice how when you are walking, you have to project yourself, and your toes bend, and they press against whatever you are wearing...or on the floor...Notice the difference, and observe the fact of what happens with the stress of the musculature, so we have a similar construct but we have an entirely different attitude in the projection of the toes against the base. All of this is coming to a point in a moment. Now let's go back to our figure one. Now I am stressing the fact that those toes...there is a distinct sense of pressure on these toes, and there is a distinct sense of tension within the toes that shows she is preparing to move forward. So in that sense we can talk about the subtle sense of her aggressive stance: that sounds paradoxical, I know it sounds downright dumb, but the point is I mean it that sense, it is an extreme subtlety. This figure was perceived, by some, to be literally, emphatically, oriented toward progression to the observer. It was not so much the gesture of her hand, although that motion would be indeed out, so that she is in essence in a state of *in potentia*...that old saw of becoming as opposed to having been, or have rest {?} to the conclusion of the termination of a gesture. She is in the transitional state, and part of it is expressed through this articulation of the pressure of the toe against the base. Let's look at the companion piece of the Hermes with the infant Bacchus or Dionysus...You will see that Hermes which represents one of the earliest examples of what will emerge as the intentional image of the hermaphrodite, because of the suppression of the musculature, and his feminizing traits...I just want to point out the fact that you can certainly see a sufficient indication of a foot in this slide to indicate that he tends to obey the image of earlier prototypes, in that he originally held in his arm a cluster of grapes...and the Bacchus who would later become the god of sensuousness and wine, associated primarily with vegetative rituals and things of that nature, and of spiritual ecstasy, and with the experience of the daemon, which became

a provocation towards creative interests. He reaches for the grapes, now that is a radical unwieldy gesture: hold the baby in your hand, hold something above the ...the child reaches, you can't stand with such exquisite grace looking rather...of beauty model, and then also not have your feet have to brace themselves. And I am not being projective, I am simply saying that these feet behave as if the figure indeed has the pressure on one leg, the engaged leg, the other is free but it shows no exertion. Now I want to go back to...Aphrodite and read you the text, and you will find out how really simple the argument was, why she was rejected by one group... now let's find out what the debate was...this is a commentary by Pliny, from his *History*, and he dates Praxiteles in the 104th Olympiad, 364 BC...Olympiads are periods in which particularly associated with gods, and it says, "I have mentioned the name of Praxiteles in my discussions of sculptors who worked in bronze" ...the Jansen edited series of sources and documents, the most trustworthy source of documents..." yet it was in his fame there was a work of marble that has surpassed even himself, there are works by him in the Ceramicus at Athens, but, superior to all the works not only of Praxiteles but the indeed the whole world is his Knidian Aphrodite, which many people have sailed to Knidos in order to see" (this by the way is pretty much, not second hand, he did sail there) "he made two statues and offered them for sale at the same time. One of them was represented with the body draped, for which the people of Kos whose choice it was, as he had put the same price on both, preferred it, judging that this was the sober and proper thing to do. The people of Knidos bought the rejected one, the fame of which became immensely great." So now I have told you, I have played a little trick on you: there were two, one had clothes on, the other one didn't. {laughs} It is like, I love what Michael Lesy says, we should play tricks on people...

End reel 4-A

