Bill Parker with AD Coleman: Phoenix Gallery, New York City, April 7, 2000.

Artists Talk on Art. A.D. Coleman with William E. Parker, April 7, 2000. Artists Talk on Art records, circa 1974-2018. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC.

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Welcome to Artists Talk on Art, I am Flash, I am the video director, I am going to ask you to all be aware of the videotaping this evening. It is a small room, I know we can all hear each other quite well but unless you are speaking directly into a microphone you won't be recorded on the videotape. So please, if you are in the audience and you have a question, wait for the microphone to get to you before delivering your answer. We are going to turn out the lights when the slides are on, it will get very dark. When the lights come back up, everybody is blinded by it. If you are bothered by bright lights now, please move to the back of the room, we don't want to hear a lot of people complaining when those lights go back on. About one hour into the program, we have to change videotapes. If you are in the middle of a statement or a question, please hold on to your thought and pick it up again when we start the second reel and just repeat that question. And now I would like to introduce our executive director, Donna Marxer.

Donna: Hi everybody, I am very, very pleased about tonight, but we will get to that in a minute. I want to thank the Phoenix Gallery for lending us this wonderful space, once again, absolutely scott free, in spite of our destructive attitude with it. We borrowed a bottle of wine and we didn't really give it back yet. Now speaking of wine, speaking of wine, there is going to be a party afterward, everybody here is invited, at my place right across the street. A lot of you have been there before, or just follow the crowd, but it is 579 Broadway, Bell 4 A. I have to tell you about next week: we are having a panel of outrageous stories, some unfortunate discoveries in our art history, and I don't know if you have ever seen Barnaby Rue in action but it can be hilarious. Adrian Red will hold everything together with a great sensibility and it will be a very funny panel and also very informative, we hope, so let's see you next week, too. And there will be a party afterwards here, next week. We are just partying like mad this spring. How many of you are passholders? Ok, everybody should be a passholder because you get group insurance, medical insurance if you are a passholder, did you know that? Look in our calendar and it will tell all. Now, let's stop this nonsense and introduce two of my favorite people: A.D. Coleman, who may or may not reveal his real name to us, has been called one of the most important people in photography in 1998, by American Photo Magazine. And further thought to be the dean of U.S. photo-critics, that really impresses me. He has written as a columnist, a contributor to the *New York Times, The Village Voice, The New York Observer*, and numerous other publications including the ones we read, *Art News* and *Art in America*. He contributes bi-monthly on the world-wide web to *The Nearby Cafe*: a multi-subject electronic magazine, of which he is executive director. He is a member of PEN, the *Authors' Guild*, and on and on and on, and others. He won the first NEA grant for the first art critic's fellowship in 1976. You are older than I thought. And he also won a Fulbright. He has been a Getty Museum Guest Scholar in 93. He

won a major Hasselblad grant. I can pronounce that, even though I am just a painter. Something about, I can't read my typing here, Critical Focus, an ICP award. And he also, and I didn't know this about him until tonight, writes poetry and fiction. It has been translated into 19 languages. So that is A.D. Coleman. Now this other guy up here, William E. Parker, is multifaceted. He is an artist, photographer, educator. Multifaceted, he just glitters. He is shy. Through his own work he combines art and photography as you will see, he is going to show us a lot of slides. He has won two NEA awards. He is collected in the Getty, the Los Angeles County Museum, the Philadelphia Museum, and on and on and on. And in numerous private collections. As an educator, he served at Pratt, Parsons, and was professor at UConn at Storrs from 1969 to 1994, and is now retired, Emeritus Professor of Art. He was an editor at *Aperture*, both of the magazine and 20 of their books I believe. A frequent lecturer, visiting artist and critic at the Rhode Island School of Design. I say, I insist that he discovered Jerry Uelsmann: he did write the first essay on him, eons ago. I can't say you are older than I thought because you and I are of the same era. He also happens to be a Jungian scholar and a member of the CG Jung Foundation and active member for analytical psychology. Excuse me, I didn't know what 'p-s-y-period' meant. Recognized pioneer in interpretive analysis of photographic and intermedia imagery from Jungian perspectives. You will also see about this. Now he was just honored at the University of Florida's College of Fine Art as distinguished alumnus. He is just back from there after having been wined and dined. And as a matter of fact, there are some other things about the University of Florida, where we were both Gators, Billy and I have known each other since 1952. And we were kind of rowdy classmates in art school, and I'll give you a little example of our humor: Rose, Bill Tulis, Bill Parker and I used to run around together, and Rose, and this could not be farther from the truth, her nickname was Rosa bon whore. Bill Tulis, who went on to lead Pratt's print department, was Tulis LaTrec. I was Donna Tella, which we thought was a very tacky name, and I'll give you a guess who the great genius among us was, was Park-asso. Here they are!

Bill: Thank you Donna.

Donna: Say something, geniuses.

Bill: You have undone me. No, I must say it is wonderful to be with you folks tonight in this wonderful setting. I love the gallery and I love the paintings on view, and also the material in the other rooms, so don't miss it. And I'd like to say that I feel a considerable privilege to be sitting beside the dean. And I was saying earlier, can we imagine where we would have been without Allan Coleman's brilliant contributions to the field of writing and art criticism. It is just unbelievable. We were in an archaic period when I first came to New York, and by the way, I can remember attending several talks at the club years ago, so I realize that this is sort of an extension of that idea. But anyway I wanted to say that when I first came here it was primarily to become involved in the Jung Foundation, because after all, below the Mason-Dixon line people would have thought it Yung and thought I was becoming Chinese or something. But anyway, I was influenced by a number of people in literature and that is where my interest in Carl Jung began, and it continues to this day after many, many moons. My method tonight is to simply try to show

you some image from my past work that, in which photography is either implicated or actually apparent in actual use. And I think that sometimes I am a little embarrassed to think of myself as an artist because I am not as consistently indebted to my work as many of you might be, but I have worked, don't misunderstand me. But the problem is I never work unless I have something I am wrestling with intellectually, and I admit that right from the beginning. I never would have done a thing without an idea to address. And I think often I am mirroring not therapeutically but mirroring in my work issues that I find interesting culturally and also interesting to me personally. So I want to try tonight to sort of indicate some of the influences or things that I was involved in that led to certain series of works that I did in which photography was either implicated or actually made apparent. So I will being going through a group of slides rapidly because I am noted for being prolix, and (laughs) he is a southern talk-a-thon. My daughter did a drawing of me when she was three years old and it is simply just a big mouth and there were two legs. She titled it backwards, *Mouth on Legs* (laughter). So I think she had my archetype fully defined. But, what I am going to do is precede every group of work with some examples of material that I was really researching and exploring and then how they became implicated in the work. And some people have said, well, you've sacked art history and indeed I have and I hope you don't think I am simply a plagiarist. But I think maybe my major subject is other art. And I try to integrate that into my own. So without further ado I am just going to go through these and I will make a few hints and there about what motivated me. When I was living in a little town called Neptune Beach, Florida, I picked up the newspaper and buried in of all places the *Florida Times Union* which reported all things except fish fries, I read a report that the Catholic Church had accepted the papal promulgation of the bodily ascension of the Virgin Mary into the godhead. Now that is not something a native Floridian would get terribly excited about but it intrigued me, that she was taken into heaven and she is now part of a quaternity. So in fact, and according to liturgical law and theological dictates, that a Catholic now believes in a quaternity. Carl Jung felt that this was the most signal event of the 20th century because it is the first time that bodily substance or matter was brought into the godhead, and so that god that was at a distance was brought to bear and through the figure of Mary into the godhead. So that set me off searching through various manuscripts where the Magnum Mater, or the image of Mary, is seen as a sustaining figure. And here she is feeding all men: architects, warriors, engineers, musicians, and streaming from her heart are these strong energy systems. Also my wife and I were in Paris and in the Cluny Museum there is a marvelous little sculpture you shouldn't miss, because if you see it from the outside it is the typical image of Mary holding the Christ child. When you open it up, *she* contains the godhead. In other words god the father, the son, and then right in the background above the head of Christ is the holy ghost in the form of a dove. And underneath her sort of mother chick arms are all of these figures that are in human kind. This is in the National Gallery in Washington and it is the Master of Saint Lucy legend, it is an assumption of the virgin from the 15th century as was the previous work and the first one, the German manuscript, was 12th century. But here you see her being lifted above the earth plane on this crescent moon, going heaven-ward, and there you see god the father, and Christ, and the holy ghost receiving her. So this is clearly something that was not new: the concept of the bodily ascension of the Virgin, and I think that some of you are probably very suspicious that this sounds like some bible-belt fundamentalist getting

ready to heal us. But I just wanted you to know that this is the kind of thing that intrigued me. This is one of my favorite images and I actually have a color slide of it but unfortunately I displaced it. It is an Italian manuscript from the Abbey in Monte Cassino in Italy and I have been there. And it was 11th century and it is a wonderful image. It is entitled, *Earth*. It looks like it is a part of architecture, it is not, it is on a parchment. Anyway it is remarkable how this figure, the upper body becomes personified as a woman and the lower part is the earth mound with all of these vegetative forms and a strange, a sort of chimeric beast, who suckles at her breast to be sustained. At the same time, because of my interest in photography, and early on I was one of these persons that was muckling around teaching the history of photography when there was very little available to work with, and I love how calotypes, both positives and negatives, created this kind of wonderful image in black and white, and I liked the idea of these female forms like in Southworth and Hawes' *Phases of the Moon* portrait on a single plate daguerreotype. There were medallion daguerreotypes they would have originally been cut apart but nonetheless I like this idea of the profile of the figures and then also the fact that the shoulders extend down and become but a kind of suggestion that she is also ascending out of some dark domain. And this wonderful *Handrike as Flora* by Rembrandt van Rijn of the 17th century is in the Metropolitan Museum and I think it is one of the most fantastic images of the feminine I've ever seen. She holds flowers in her skirt as she holds it up, and light illuminates from it and in her hand is a clod of dirt with these wonderful tubers that are ready to burst into bloom and her hat is filled with waxen leaves and rosebuds. And also in the National Gallery in London, these are things I've actually saw, but I wouldn't have been interested had I not been able to do some work on it, and this is his beloved wife, *Sachia as Flora*, a much more imperial kind of image. But it is this same idea of this vegetative goddess. So I did a series of pastiches and I am just going to show you some of these in which I used the photographic idea of the black and white image for the head and face and then allowed the painting to extend around the figures, and with these hats and other forms to give them some kind of definition of vigor. These were very small while others were quite large, anywhere from six feet by six feet and larger. And these are very miniature, hardly more than 8 x 10 inches. But I'll show you some of them close up because I actually used photographs for the hands and then I did these on clayground tablet gesso panels and then what I'd do is laminate them and sand the edges so you can't tell that they are there, but often those are my wife's hands that are there, so that is how I was honoring her, because you know when I was misbehaving she would give me a good swift one on the side of the head (laughter) So that was vengeance. But anyway, some of the faces are painted. That head there is directly photographed from the Handrike image so I included it. These are the small ones of that series, and there again, this is actually photographic in the face but you wouldn't come in and see directly that it looks like just a paste up. The large ones aren't, but they are highly glazed so if you stand to the left of them you get this reflective light like in a daguerreotype and if you come around to the front suddenly it flashes into definition as you see here. Here is a close up detail of one of those where the impasto comes in and brushes up against her forehead so there is some kind of energetic action occurring around her as in her role as queen of the earth. And again her body becomes like that mound in the Abbey of Monte Cassino image. Most of these also use, I was taught very well when I was at the University of Florida by a master painter, named P.R. MacIntosh

and he taught us every technique and media imaginable. He wasn't very imaginative but I certainly learned a great deal about painting and how to create reticulations and how to create elements that would evolve. This is one that is in the New Orleans Museum of Art called Grand Saskia. It is about 8 feet by 8 feet square, and so again, the idea that a very strongly mono-valued or value structured head surrounded by the paint. Now there are certain images that occurred in the interim but the next major series was where I began to use not only collage but actual photographs occurred after a trip to Europe, again with my beloved partner and we were in Comar, France and we had the good fortune to see the multi-paneled Matthias Grunewald Crucifixion panel from the Isenheim Altarpiece. It was originally in Colmar, Germany but after the first world war as you know it became France. And you are thinking of a date of basically 1470 to 1530 when Grunewald lived. The date is still uncertain on this even though there is an actual date that is recorded on the testament that John is making. And also I was in the William Nelson Rockhill Gallery in Kansas City and I became fascinated by this fragment of a panel that was attributed to Lucas Cranach the Elder. His dates are 1472 to 1553, and this is a Daisis, a last judgment where Mary and Saint John the Baptist pray for Christ to deliver all of the inhabitants of the world to grace, but unfortunately as you can see, some of us don't make it. I suspect like Huck Finn, this side looks more interesting to me than those little blue bubblets and the figures marching off to heaven. (laughs) But anyway I was fascinated with the kind of radicalism of this hard edge orange panel behind the figure of these puti figures surrounded by the blue clouds. And it was sort of like what was happening in so much of geometric art, pop art, op art, and so on, and I thought this was an intriguing thing to find something of that nature because it really did, the blue and the organ began to vibrate as you looked at it. So that triggered another relationship to a figure that I very much admired in the 60s, his name and you've probably heard of him, was Dietrich Bonhoeffer. He was in the bunker plot against Hitler, and I might add that there were a number of revolutionaries during that time that were all carrying around the cost of discipleship. And Bonhoeffer believed that if there was evil you don't assuage it you go out and kill it. And so for a Lutheran minister this was a rather radical viewpoint. But he lost his life, he was hung by the Nazis, and I had great admiration and read everything that was available by him. So somehow I wanted to do a series that paid homage to Bonhoeffer, and I called this *The Homage to Dietrich Bonhoeffer Series*, and I began to incorporate a wide variety of motifs from everything about the earlier vegetative motifs, the garden idea, the idea of fertility. I was taking photographs of seed catalogs (laughs) and laminating them to the canvas. I was also taking portraits from Sunday School covers and other things that were utterly banal but nonetheless would appeal to this kind of sense of Bonhoeffer wanting to be amongst the public and try to alter their viewpoints. Then also, the one second in from the right is the Grunewald and I'll show you a close up of that. Many of them had this very obvious semiotics, like the…and the swastika, and saying obey and then Napoleon and other tyrants of the past. And then various images from Hoffman's Christ to the words Bonhoeffer spelled out as though it is a sort of stuttering sound, and I don't mean to be cruel, but the idea of people lacking commitment and not being willing to pay the price of the cause. And then these Audubon birds that I had photographed, actually in the Museum of Natural History in New York. They gave me permission. And then I took the photographs and then produced them and laminated them to the canvas and then the flowers, some actual flow-

ers from my garden and others that were from seed catalogs or seed packages. But you can sort of see the effect of how these things were integrated together and then painted over, and how electrism became involved. Many of them make puns or they are sort of like parodies of earlier works: like in that lower part that looks like an entryway into that upside David's *Napoleon* is the ceiling of the *Last Supper* that most people don't pay attention to (laughs) by Leonardo. But I took a photograph of it and then just simply inverted it. And then where you see the light reflecting, that is where I built up with the clayground these relief structures, so these are not just all one surface, they have multilevels. And then I have Audubon's bird and then a Murillo *Christ* and then I have a Maria Von Osterwieck Dutch flower painting that I photographed and then added things to. And puti figures at the top from a Rubens painting, so the entire shabang of art historical material gets involved because I fall in love with those works and I want to regenerate them or maybe consider it recycling. This is one and I am proud to say that it does hang in an Episcopal Rectory and again relates to the Grunewald panel. But you can see out of this root like structure of the photograph that I took of the actual panel with permission I then developed it and then I carefully varnished it and then laminated it to the surface and from the figure of the Christ spring these flowers and other forms, so it is almost as though as you can see, they are really active as surfaces once you get up to them. And the colors, unfortunately you'll never get in a slide, but through the use of complementaries like blue and orange, and red and green, and even yellow and violet, they begin to really vibrate as you are looking at them up close, you know they have an optical effect. So this entire series, this is called *Escape*, and again the idea that the vulture below was a composite: the bird has tried to attack the robin and he is flying upward. It is sort of based on Keat's *The Singing Bird*, and as it flutters away escaping the predator, at the top it becomes spirit and becomes the butterfly. That is the bird captured in the midst of this sea of blood red paint. And when you look at it, it does have a vibratory effect. And at the very top, I don't know if you can see it in the circle, I did a little picture of the butterfly and placed him there from my garden so that it can show the butterfly as a semiotic motif for the spirit, it ascends beyond the difficulties below. This one was the largest one of that series. It is about ten feet by eight feet and it is called *In the Garden*. And believe me when I say those colors along the edge, the reds and greens and the yellows and violets, they absolutely just flash. They dance in the eye. And then these panels on the two ends, they look like they are black, they are actually over painted with a prussian blue glaze. So again like the daguerreotype, if you look right and left you will see the image beneath it and you will see the Hoffman *Christ*. I'll come a little closer so you can see it showing through, that is where it is fully revealed on the left. So these were a prelude to my reading a great deal of Robert Bly's poetry, and then of course Robert Bly became concerned also with issues of men and so on, and that really had to stay on the back burner because I was reading John Berger's *Ways of Seeing*, and he has a marvelous commentary concerning how most images of the nude are typically of the female. And he says, "The female nude is typically defined as an object, property, and surveyed presence, as a subject representing the primary exploitation by a masculine sighting consciousness." And at the end of this essay he shows Manet's *Olympia*, and he says imagine a male nude occupying this couch, what would that do to us? And that set me off. (laughter) So the first thing I thought of, having been in Pompeii, I began to look for phallic images. Now many of my friends were rather worried

about me (laughs) particularly a faculty colleagues who sort of edged away when I sat close to them when I was working on this series, but that was their homophobia, and I would deliberately go over there and I would touch them on the shoulder and on their knee (laughter). They got very disturbed. These were earlier and these were from Pompeii and I just wanted to show you some examples. They were commonplace motifs and they were seen as apotropaic, they warded off evil, and they were a sign of fertility. I love this inscription here, some of you know Latin, what it says here, in here was happiness. And I think for every man that has a certain measure of truth (laughter). So anyway these were publicly displayed on the sides of houses, within interiors. Also the Priapus figure anointing his own phallus. You see now most people suggest that Robert Mapplethorpe and others were damaging our consciousness by showing the male nude: there has been an unbroken lineage. It just so happens though that the female became an easier token for exploitation as it were. So I was trying to address the opposite side and I began to explore these. This is the kind of thing that I used to see on bathroom walls (laughter) when I was a kid and then I used to feel like that when I saw this I need not ever worry about competition ever again (laughter) because this gentleman has definitely won it. These are first and second century A.D. Pompeiian frescoes, and the others were bronze and clay statuary. This is from the House of Vetti and it is right there on the wall. And as you can see, his phallus becomes, it is being weighed on a scale, (laughter) and down next to him is all the abundance of fruits and vegetables and grapes and so on: he is a god of fertility. So anyway, I thought this was every man's dream (laughter) a poly-phallic mercury image (laughter) And this is a wonderful motif because actually there were rings on that that held bells so actually could make sound (laughter) announcing his prowess as he entered into the arena. It is a bronze statue and it is very small. But these were absolutely intriguing. And I thought to myself how bizarre or maybe how refreshing that such motifs could be thought of as quasi-religious, sacred, and also could be admitted into public consciousness directly. Here is a wonderful ithyphallic dancer from the House of the Vetti, it is a marvel. I might add that word is i-t-h-y which means stone, and you know Paleolithic, and ithyphallus means stone phallus. And my students would hear me talk about this and one of them said, well what do you mean by "iffyphallus," and I would say that is when you are not sure that it is there. (laughter) But anyway, this fountain, and I suggest you definitely visit Pompeii, this is the House of the Vetti in the Naples Museum. When I was there they would not let my wife see these, and now they have undraped them. Women could not look but men could. So they were admitted separately. But the water obviously emits from where you can just imagine. So that was on this trip, and also these clothed figures, with these preombuline figures, were absolutely intriguing to me. People who know me come to my home and see that I have files of research data, and now the internet is killing me, I get so much information. But that is what signaled the work to try to address this issue of what if the male nude were to appear instead of female. And I was also influenced in coloration by Signorelli's Orvieto Chapel of San Grizio in Italy of the 15th century and these figures are so strange because they are really much brighter and bluer than that slide reveals, but you see through that color to the anatomy beneath. And also Michelangelo's tomb of Julius II, the slaves, most of you know these if you have visited Florence, of about 1527. These figures tend to emerge out of stone, and then as it were, he was trying to work against the fault of the grain in the marble, but then they tend to retract back

into it. So they have this wonderful expanding, contracting element and appearing and disappearing, presence and absence at the same time. And also Salviati's work, I don't know if you know his frescoes, they are in the hall of the Farnese Palace in Rome. Go there, this is just majestic from the mid-16th century. Most of the figures you see right through: they are transparent, sort of like x-ray vision in the torso region. And that was the trigger for my working on a series I called the *Tattoo/Stigmata* series. Tattooing meaning the body being colored, and then also stigmata, when a male receiving the imprint of coloration to make it more flamboyant, and to quite frankly exploit it as directly as the female nude has been exploited. So these are definitely based on classical poses. Some of these were professional models and others were students who modeled for the art department at the University of Connecticut. And I would typically hand them a plate and have them find a variation and then of course once the image remains, most of them are in the 16 x 20 or 20 x 24 range, I would then work on them very carefully with oil paint and very minuscule brushes to get some of these striping effects and I did a whole series relative to the seasons: fall, spring, winter da, da, da. So that the body is so frankly displayed but at the same time not personalized, because I am not guarding the faces but I don't want the personality to be read, but simply the idea of the form. And I think that is what had essentially been the nature of many images of the female nude over the centuries. Someone said this would make a great costume for a Broadway play and that they should have used it in *Old Calcutta*, (laughter). Anyway, some of them are quite frankly, just like the Pompeiian images, they are definitely ithyphallic, and I can tell you right now that at Light Gallery when these were shown years ago in a group show, I had five of them, two of them were absolutely attacked by one man who had become enraged and destroyed them. And I was constantly being subject to saying that this was obscene material, and anyway I just fought back and kept doing it. Here are the ones that are clothed and draped, and they tend to struggle out of their binding scrims and so on, and I thought of them as sort of the raising of Lazarus. And I suppose that is obvious there because he is coming back to life as a phallic symbol as opposed to one that is just simply salacious. This extended into a series, these are just installation studies, because the work was shown in Belgium and these were actually 10 by 10 inch prints on which I had painted. These are polaroid studies, and then they were installed on walls directly, without framing, but they all link to Robert Bly's thesis about the idea that men have lost the sense of identity, particularly for their children, of having no real work identity that a child might mimic. As he said, what am I going to do, take my son to my office and show him my IBM computer? So he was speaking a lot about regaining the idea of the instinctual, and eventually this became the subject of his whole book, *The Wild Man*. And this one called *Cigars and Carrots* about the various myths of encounters with serpents and beasts and so instead of it being a serpent it is just a big rope that the man struggles with and fights out of and then he was a surveyor, so he takes his geologic pick and holds it up against his heart and he is holding the serpent up as though he is combating it. Some of them from a distance have a floret type of pattern so that these figures appear and they are sending out semaphoric signals like the crossed arm and the dominant arms akimbo: masculine signs but at the same time showing other motifs that indicate extreme vulnerability. So as you can see, many people would see these from a distance and say oh that is so attractive and then they would come up and they would be somewhat disturbed by the fact that they were male nudes. And this was the

prelude piece to a series I did that I was most blessed by a very positive review by none other than Allan Coleman in *The New York Observer* which thrilled me, But that was the first introduction to these faces that are screaming or yelling. And that sent me out on a search for the whole idea of physiognomy and temperament. The idea of how the human soul and the temperament of the individual is expressed in the face. After all the word *physis* means nature, and *gnoma* means interpretation, so physiognomy is the interpretation of the temperaments of the individual and I was very much influenced with a whole series of images from the past such as Leonardo's studies of grotesque heads, and they are inventions of the 15th century, and Giambattista Della Porta's parallels of humans and animals of having characteristic types, and also Charles LeBrun showing the same thing. It is absurd but on the other hand it is a way of trying to indicate personality traits through showing animals that have a parallel to the person's nose bridge, or their cheekbones, or their head shape or what have you. This is Bartolomeo Passarotti, I love his work. He is an Italian artist and primarily we have only drawings by him, 1555 or there about, and they are just really wonderfully expressive faces, that tongue protruding and so on. This began to get me thinking about the possibility of what could I do, and of course the great master of physiognomist, we are coming close to the end believe it or not folks… this is a LeBrun again, and that figure down on the lower left, it is probably the most expressive, but these others are showing signs of despair, or anger, or perhaps wonder, and contemplation, and things like that. So it has been a centuries old tradition of trying to search out temperaments in the face. And of course this is most notably identified with that whole series of studies, this was published in the 19th century, but actually Lavater's work is 18th century, and it is called a *Group of Mean Faces*, and not all of them tend to strike me that way, but they are very strongly caricaturesque, and I like this idea of compiling, or grouping together the images, and he would also set these faces into scenes, such as this, a *Bar and Tavern* scene, and we were supposed to read the various faces within the scene and understand all human temperamental types. This is Hogarth: he did the same thing in many examples of his paintings and drawings showing all the varieties of types of human personas. And my favorite is Xaver Messerschmidt, Austrian/German, sculptor. And what is intriguing is that he was working in the late 18th century and if any of you have been to the Belvedere in Vienna you can see a whole display of Messerschmidt's work, they are all self portraits. And he screws up his face, and he creates every conceivable kind of grimace, and then these are then cast in bronze. And so they are wonderful expressions of this extension of physiognomy expression. Another thing I played around (laughter) with is the idea of the evolution of human to animal and vice versa. This is the figure known as Grandville, Jean Isadore Gerard, French of the 1840s. And these were very popular caricatures and they appeared in publications, but they were taken very seriously as almost scientific studies. So as you can see we still weren't very enlightened, even in the 19th century. (laughs) But, and then this was a book that was published, I own this book and I treasure it. And I think my wife was a little worried that I was giving my retirement away to buy it, but it is a book published by Charles Bell. It is called the *Anatomy and Philosophy of Expression.* He was a Scottish writer, I mean he was a Scotsman, and he wrote incredibly and interestingly on this idea of the human face and temperaments of the soul and so on. And the book was published in 1893. We don't even know who did these images. But here you have, fundamentally this is called, *Fear with Won-*

der. And here is another Charles Bell, (laughs) I feel that way quite often, particularly when the IRS calls. This is called, *Terror*. (laughs) And this is called, *Rage*. So you can see they are very obvious. But the point is I often thought that so much has been forgotten in our, and that is why I love the work in those great tondo images in the back room that have the various words, because I would love to be involved in a show with that person because I think we'd make a neat pair. So this is the last group that I want to show you. These are gigantic scale photographs that I did myself, some people asked when I did these and I said I am an oceanographer because when I built these big troughs to develop these things in, after I've printed them, and I have to get the enlarger on the ceiling as it were. And then I have to roll them through the developer and the stop bath and the fix so by the time they get to the water bath they get heavy and you have to be careful because they crimp. So I am moving them around like Namu with an assistant. And then once they are dry, I dry them on blotter paper, and all you have to do to flatten them is roll them up on a plastic roll and they just come out bone, plate straight. So these are images that, this is now in the DeCordova Museum in Massachusetts, they acquired this. They are all based upon definite temperamental types and I won't bore you with all, I'll just give you a few of them as I go along. These are called the temperaments and this is called *Vengeful*, and I think you can see the obvious features of it. This is one recently purchased by the L.A. County Museum of Art, and this is called *Fearful 2*. His arm looks almost like an Indian club he holds and grasps, but the thing is, the integration of the factual nature of what I am going to call the photographic image, and you do realize that you are looking at a actual eye and certain aspects of the teeth, although I clearly perform all sorts of cosmetic surgery: I break jaws and I close up eyes and I add additional teeth and I add furrow lines and so on. But they are integrated sufficiently so the fictive aspect doesn't just overlay the factual aspect of the photograph. This is called *Choleric 1*, it is in the Eastman House. And I liked the fact that this man was an extreme introvert but he asked if he could pose for me, and I was absolutely frightened from behind the camera (laughs) because this is his pose, although I amplified it somewhat. This is someone I call the *Loser's Smile*. This is called *Sanguine*, it was one of three of that subject that was in the Philadelphia Museum of Art. But I like the way the teeth go all the way up to the ear, I just invented them. And this is called *Icarian*. It is like the presumption on the part of the Wildman to fly. I had gotten birds from the Zoology department, and you can't see it in here but there is a wax resist in the background so there are feathers growing out his shoulder. And then I used these little points of light to implicate the idea of what a camera obscura would do if it diffused the light. And we only have just a few more. And the same thing is evident in most of these. This is called *Defiant*. I think you see that typical arms akimbo stance that Irving Goffman and others insist is the masculine way of showing defiance although it leaves oneself very vulnerable. And this is in the Museum of Photographic Arts in San Diego, California. And this is one I call Homage to Grandville. I did a whole series of men turning into other creatures, and this is my fish image. You can see the sort of muzzle and then the little dappled dot-like elements as though he is beginning to grow gills and breathing holes, and that is in the Museum of Art at Rhode Island. And this is called *Melancholia 2*. There is a big tear that is coming out of his eyes and he is in anguish and he is showing a certain level of sadness and I am pleased to say that Fritz Scholder, the wonderful painter of Native Americans, bought this and sent me a picture of

where it is hanging among his extraordinarily world-known collection of masks. And this is another one of that series called *Choleric 2*. And this one I call *Szarkowski's Indian*. I call it, again, as Szarkowski said, "Bill, that is obscene that you paint on a photograph." And I said it is obscene that you think there is a problem with that. (laughs) But nonetheless, I would often take the same figure and then work it in different ways, so it is not identical to it, but this is to show that idea of contemplation and wonder. And then finally, this again is one that is in the Harn Museum in Florida, and I like the fact that he is wearing a false beard that is festooned with teeth, sort of like an African mask. But I called it again, *Sanguine*. This one is called *Fearful 1*, the other was another *Fearful*, where he clasps his hand and looks back while his tongue wallows from his mouth and he is obviously terrified. These are *Accors*. And then finally, *Tormented One*. That is a friend of mine, a very close friend, and I actually created that sewn- shut eye, and you can see the threads as if he had surgery (laughs) And the interesting thing is he got into a fight the night before he saw this and his eye was closed up like that (laughs) So he said, "How did you know?" Then I began to combine them and solarize them. I was doing composites. This is called **Schizual** *Persona*. It is like the Jungian idea of the dual personality, not so much schizophrenic. And last, just as a trailer. These are some images from medieval cathedrals on the Greenman theme. So this is what this has turned into. I am currently now working on a large series of images that have vegetation being disgorged by the models or coming out their bodies or they are holding it next to them. These are not mine, in Ireland and in other territories they celebrate the Greenman annually and I like these images, I have been collecting images of that kind of festival. And there is one of the images where I used the male nude again and had him festooned with these vegetative motifs. And then here is one from a cathedral in Birmingham, England. I like the way the youthful face holds those fronds. And I imitated that by showing this young man holding the images of vegetative, fertility, and male force relative to the earth. Thank you very much. Now you really get to hear something.

AD Coleman: Yeah, right, that's a hell of an act to try to follow. I am reminded of the fact of the wonderful and terrifying novel *The Killer Angels*, which was made into the movie, *Gettysburg*. The writer Michael Shaara says that, has one of his characters say, southern women like their men religious and just a little mad. That is why they go for preachers. (laughter) So, (knocks his knuckles on the table next to Parker) and some of us northerners like people religious and a little mad. And Billy is a little religious and a little mad. And we have got a lot of shared history which is maybe where I'll start a bit just to give you a sense of why Donna, in her wisdom, brought us together here. Billy got interested in the work that had been done by Jerry Uelsmann and other people who were photographers, who in the 60s were beginning to explore the full range of human experience, including the unconscious in a much more overt and public way than I think photographers had been doing up until then. And Bill wrote one, a very long and complex analysis of Uelsmann's work that appeared in *Aperture Magazine* back around 69, 68 or 69, which at the time was, in fact I think quite possibly the single most serious analysis of any photographer's work from a psychoanalytic standpoint that had been produced. Billy coming very much from a Jungian position. And I found much of it impenetrable at the time, which is not that surprising, I didn't know that much about Jungian thought at

the time, but the seriousness of it was very evident. And what I could understand was very cogent. Jerry of course would probably laugh at much of it, and probably has laughed at much of it in Billy's presence I am sure, but that is some ways is neither here nor there, because I think Jerry and Billy and I would probably agree that once the work leaves the studio it is up to other people to make what they will of it.